Mining for golfing treasure in Malaysia

By Brad Klein

The Malaysian town of Kajang is a ramshackle stretch of two-story wooden structures that seem to teeter on the brink of collapse. Everyone, it seems, travels on a bicycle or on one of those little two-stroke motorcycles. The local version of fast food is "sauté," a sizzling skewer of pungent chicken, lamb or beef cooked in sidewalk stalls. The weather is usually hot and steamy, and a foreigner walking down the crowded streets cannot help but feel like the man who has just lost his American Express card.

If the sights and sounds are familiar, that's because visitors have encountered them before in films and spy novels about Southeast Asia. Yet this time, the attraction is not war but golf course development. A new project, called The Mines Resort, is underway 12 miles to the north, on the outskirts of Malaysia's capital city, Kuala Lumpur.

The brainchild behind The Mines is Lee Kim Yew, a 39-year-old native of Kuala Lumpur who serves as managing director of the project. Soft-spoken yet hard-driving, he has a clear vision of future goals and surrounds himself with people who will get the job done right. His two assistants, marketing manager C.S. Ong and project manager T.G. Ng, are constantly at his side and meticulous in their attention to detail.

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