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Malaysia calling

Expats in Pattaya briefed on real estate and tax incentives designed to get them to shift south

By Jim Pollard

DAILY Xpress

Leave Pattaya. Come and live in Malaysia.

That was the message given to dozens of foreigners who attended an expats club meeting in the Eastern Seaboard on Sunday morning.

A foreign lawyer and two representatives of Beyond, a Malaysian company that offers advice to expatriates, spelt out some of the incentives designed to attract farang to shift south.

Buy land

The Malaysia My Second Home (MM2H) programme is an official government policy now run by Kuala Lumpur's tourism ministry. It has some powerful hooks, most notably that well-heeled foreigners can buy land and have a home listed in their own name.

They also offer a 10-year visa for successful applicants. So there are no "border runs" or tedious journeys down to the Immigration office every three months to register your address.

Lawyer Jouni Ollila, a Finn who runs the Hans Lankari ("Your Humble Helper") firm in South Pattaya, briefed local Expats Club members at the Grand Sole Hotel on Sunday.

"Malaysia is the number one country offering the most to foreigners to live there. Then there is the Philippines and Vietnam is coming up. But Thailand has not really paid attention to the business potential [from expats and foreign retirees]. Here they focus more on short-term tourists," he said.

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www.beyondcorporatehouse.com