

Al-Aqar eyes assets to boost portfolio

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JOHOR BARU: Islamic real estate investment trust group, Al-Aqar Healthcare REIT is looking to acquire yield accretive third party assets locally and abroad to add to its portfolio.

Chairman Datuk Kamarruzaman Abu Kassim told *StarBiz* the fund had received several local and foreign business proposals offering healthcare related assets. "We are weighing the proposals including evaluation of the assets to ascertain their

viability for our portfolio," he said. The acquisition of these assets would enable Al-Aqar to be less reliant on its parent company, KPJ Healthcare Bhd, hence broadening its income base and future earnings.

"Our experience in cross-border deal acquisitions in Indonesia and Australia has increased our confidence to further explore such deals (third party acquisitions)," said Kamaruzaman.

Apart from hospitals, nursing colleges and aged-care and retirement homes, he pointed out that Al-Aqar Healthcare REIT would also look at

pharmacies and wellness centres for acquisition.

When Al-Aqar started in 2006, it only had six properties in its portfolio which had since grown to 25.

The properties included 21 hospitals and four healthcare-related properties in Malaysia, Indonesia and Australia which are inter-related to KPJ Healthcare.

"The increase in number of properties involved five acquisition exercises and their value has increased over three folds from RM486mil in 2006 to RM1.48bil last year," he said.