

GBI launches green rating tools for industrial buildings

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KUALA LUMPUR: Following the launch of four rating tools over the past two years, Green Building index (GBI) has launched two new ratings for industrial buildings: the Industrial New Construction Tool and the Industrial Existing Building Tool.

The new industrial rating tool was developed to address the growth of Malaysia's industrial sector, while the tool for existing industrial buildings is intended to encourage these facilities to be retrofitted green and future ready, in line with the principal of sustainability.

"Just as it had driven Malaysia's development as we progressed from an economy dependent on primary commodities to one that is manufacturing and export based, the industrial sector has also been fueling our energy demand, consuming over 40% of our energy resources, and almost 50% of our national electricity output," said Pertubuhan Akitek Malaysia (PAM) president and chairman of GBI accreditation panel Boon Che Wee at the launch on Tuesday, June 7.

Working with the Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers (FMM), the tools are based on six established GBI criteria of energy efficiency (EE), indoor environmental quality (IEQ), sustainable site planning and management, material and resources, water efficiency and innovation.

Emphasis has been placed on EE and IEQ to improve energy performance as industrial buildings often operate 24 hours a day all year round, said Boon.

The emphasis will also enhance the productivity with improved working conditions of these buildings as they house hundreds or thousands of people under one roof.

"We believe this is also our opportunity to leap frog and differentiate our manufacturing sector and spur our global positioning and competitiveness," said Boon.

He also took the opportunity to congratulate the Ministry of Energy, Green Technology and Water for the completion of Suruhanjaya Tenaga's (ST) Diamond Building, GBI first completed, verified and fully certified GBI Platinum building.

"One of the key findings from the development of ST is that the incremental cost of a GBI certified building is only 6%," said Boon, adding that the issue of additional cost of a green building has been a concern for many developers.

ST was officiated on May 31 by Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin.

Meanwhile, Energy, Green Technology and Water Minister Datuk Peter Chin Fah Kui, who officiated the launch, said that the ministry is planning to come up with a scheme to encourage the construction of solar panels for homes as a mean to reduce energy consumption.

The scheme will enable house owners to obtain loans from banks to construct solar panels for their homes. The scheme is still in the early stages of planning, and the ministry will consult Bank Negara Malaysia soon on the matter, said Chin.

The launch also saw the presentation of GBI certifications to eight developments, including The Horizon by UOA Development Bhd, The Treez by Exsim Sdn Bhd, First Residence@Kepong Baru by TSI Domain Sdn Bhd and Hotel Penaga in Penang, which is owned by architect Hijjas Kasturi.

Since the launch of GBI two years ago, it has received 179 applications for registrations, 35% of which are new residential buildings, 59% new non-residential buildings, 2% existing non-residential buildings and 4% townships.

There are now 27 GBI certified green buildings, including 1First Avenue, GTower, KRC Sales Gallery, Menara FELDA, Elken Distribution Centre, S11 House, 3 Harmoni, Bangunan Perdana Putra and Bangunan Suruhanjaya Tenaga.

GBI is currently working on rating tools for hotel, shopping mall and health facility, which are all scheduled to be launched this year.