

Penang now has its first Certifiably Green Sports Complex

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A new sports complex in Penang boasts an Olympic-size swimming pool in certifiably green settings. Photo Credit: Flickr

A brand-new sports complex in Penang has top-notch facilities, including easier access for the disabled. Better yet, it's now officially the island's first sports center that's fully eco-friendly.

The City Sports Complex in Relau, which boasts an Olympic-size swimming pool, 10 badminton courts and two gyms, has been built so as to incorporate features specified by the Green Building Index, the Star Online reports. The two-story building has cost RM21.4 million to construct and has been designed "in line with the state's cleaner, greener, healthier and safer Penang vision," according to the island's Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng.



Penang's latest sports complex in Relau boasts top-notch facilities and green features alike. Photo Credit: The Star Online

"I hope the sports complex will be a platform for Penangites to lead a healthy lifestyle," the minister told the newspaper last April, when construction of the complex's Olympic-size pool began.

In a welcome development, green buildings, from homes to offices to sport complexes, are becoming more common across Malaysian cities. The country's Green Building Index (GBI) was set up in 2008 to assist developers and construction companies in how to build in more environmentally sustainable ways.

A building is certified green if it has been constructed from materials obtained in an environmentally friendly manner. It also needs to be designed to use resources, such as water, judiciously and rely on renewable forms of energy in order to reduce its carbon footprint.

The idea behind green buildings is that they reduce their impact on the environment throughout their lifecycles. Ideally, a true eco-building's energy savings should be net zero. That is to say, a zero net energy (ZET) building should use only as much energy as it can itself save or produce on site by help of renewables. Malaysia's government has been providing tax incentives and other benefits for home owners, companies and developers who incorporate energy-saving and recycling technologies into their buildings.

The new sports center in Penang is proof that when there's a will, there's a way to live, work and enjoy various forms of recreation in true green style.