

Rehda Youth's tour focuses on green buildings

Tan: We want to stress the importance of protecting our ecosystem by creating a conducive one within the workplace.



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Inspired by mangrove trees, the S P Setia HQ boosts columns that sit on a rainwater-harvesting reservoir

Next on the tour was S P Setia Bhd's new Grade-A corporate headquarters in Setia City, Setia Alam's commercial centre in Shah Alam, Selangor. Completed in 2014 with a gross development cost of about RM104.28 million, the building has a gross floor area of 33,798 sq m and houses about 500 employees.

Sited on a three-acre parcel, the headquarters was the first privately-owned office and third building in Malaysia to be certified GBI Platinum. It also has a GreenRE Platinum rating.

"After Malaysia's GBI was launched, we decided we wanted to improve our standards and quality," said Dr Tan Loke Mun, the architect of S P Setia's headquarters. However, the payback period for green investments are not attractive despite savings of around RM14,440 from rainwater harvesting and RM31,300 on electricity per year, he added.

The building has energy-efficient features such as double-glazed windows, energy-harvesting solar photovoltaic panels, flexible lighting controls and auto sensor-controlled lighting. It also has a rainwater-harvesting system for landscape irrigation.

"We were inspired by the mangrove trees and their adaptability in rainforests," Tan said when talking about the building's façade, which has columns sitting on a reservoir that collects rainwater.

To lessen its carbon footprint and environmental impact, the building used GBI-certified

architectural products and construction materials together with sustainable construction through system formwork, storage and construction waste management. Recycling bins and GBI-certified water-saving sanitaryware are provided on the premises.

There are also preferred parking spots for car-pool and green vehicles, parking bays for bicycles and an elevated pedestrian pathway that connects to the surrounding buildings and amenities.

In keeping with the theme of being in harmony with nature, the courtyard on Level 8 boasts a water wall that reuses air-conditioning condensate water and harvested rainwater.

Indoor environmental quality is maintained through efficient air-conditioning system designs — the architects had implemented a raised floor system so that building services such as air conditioning, power and data-cabling are beneath the floors to allow fast and inexpensive reconfiguration of office spaces and lower energy costs.

A common thread through most of the Green Tour presentations was a need for more green buildings.

"We think the government should subsidise green initiatives. With government support, the recovery period would be significantly reduced," said Hong.

Tan echoed, "We want to stress the importance of protecting our ecosystem by creating a conducive one within the workplace." He said the need for green buildings and sustainable developments will only increase in the future. **E**