

Azalina defends night sports programme

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JOHOR BARU: The Youth and Sports Ministry's recently-launched Night Sports Programme will provide youth with a healthy outlet for their energy. It will not promote the Mat Rempit culture as some quarters have claimed.

Minister Datuk Seri Azalina Othman Said said: "We can't deny the fact that youths go out at night. So we must have an activity platform for them,

otherwise they will just hang around and get involved in negative activities."

Azalina said the programme had been a hit with youths in Kota Baru, Kuala Lumpur and Shah Alam.

"We are scouting for a permanent location in each of these cities. At the moment we are using Sports Department centres," she said.

Activities like futsal, basketball and motor sports are organised after working hours so young people can unwind.

"Our facilities are usually

closed after office hours. We would like to open at least one after-hours youth sports centre in Kuala Lumpur, Shah Alam, Kota Baru and Johor Baru to begin with."

She was speaking at a press conference after launching National Youth Week at the MBBJ Square yesterday.

She also said young people must grab the opportunities offered by the Iskandar Development Region.

"Youths have to be ready to seize the opportunities in Iskandar because it is the city

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Datuk Seri Azalina Othman Said signing a plaque after the launch of National Youth Day at MBBJ Square yesterday. Looking on are (from right) state exco member for Youth and Sports, Abdul Aziz Kaprawi, and Malaysia Youth Council president, Datuk Shamsul Annuar Nasarah.

of the future," she said, adding that the emphasis of Iskandar was creativity, knowledge and technology.

She also said the National Youth Act would be tabled for its second reading in parlia-

ment soon.

"The country does not have an act to define Malaysian young people. This act will empower young people and the movement for youths," she said.

Also present at the press conference were state executive councillor for Youth and Sports Abdul Aziz Kaprawi and Malaysia Youth Council president Datuk Shamsul Annuar Nasarah.