

ON THE BEAT

Sports Ministry to build new rugby stadium

KUALA LUMPUR — With the Kuala Lumpur Sports City being redeveloped, Sports Minister Khairy Jamaluddin said he will still keep his promise to build a home for rugby soon.

“Based on our discussion with Malaysia Rugby we will build a new stadium,” he said.

“I’m in discussion with the association to pick the most suitable site.”

With no home, the national squad have had to train at University Putra Malaysia field.

Malaysia will host the Asian Rugby Championship from May 14 to 20 in Ipoh. The SEA Games competition in August will be held at MBPJ Kelana Jaya Stadium.

Separately, Khairy announced Putra Stadium has been renamed Axiata Arena, making it Malaysia’s first stadium named after a corporate body.

In a 10-year partnership with Malaysia Stadium Corporation worth RM55 million, Axiata Group Berhad secured exclusive sponsorship to jointly work on the redevelopment, modernisation and digital lifestyle national venue.

“We are looking to rename all the stadiums in the country, including the soon-to-be opened national velodrome in Nilai.

“Only two stadiums — National Stadium and Tun Razak Hockey Stadium — won’t be renamed.”

Axiata Group chief executive officer Tan Sri Jamaluddin Ibrahim said: “This is another step in our commitment to national contribution which follows our other sponsorships, such as the Celcom Axiata Malaysia Open and in the past, Axiata Cup.

“As a leading regional brand, Axiata Arena will augment our international branding ahead of the SEA Games later this year.

“The venue will be a launchpad for our latest technologies and digital services with the use of the apps and online applications for services, sales and real-time information, making the arena one of the most digitally advanced sporting and entertainment venues, equal to the very best globally.”