

IBS Part 1 (2015):

New Straits Times (NST):

PM unveils 'balanced, practical' Budget (For full article click the link below)

23 OCTOBER 2015 @ 6:32 PM

Najib said the government would also promote and encourage companies to increase the use of technology such as adopting the Industrialised Building System in the construction sector.

Read More : <http://www.nst.com.my/news/2015/10/pm-unveils-%E2%80%98balanced-practical%E2%80%99-budget>

Hold off property purchases, says buyers association

BY ZARINA ZAKARIAH - 24 SEPTEMBER 2015 @ 11:00 AM

KUALA LUMPUR: Property buyers should hold off on purchases until at least next year to enjoy lower prices as cooling measures implemented by Bank Negara Malaysia set in. Prices have stayed stagnant and the property market slowed somewhat in the last year, indicating that tighter lending rules and related measures are achieving their desired impact. National House Buyers Association (HBA) secretary-general Chang Kim Loong said property buyers should wait as the cooling measures were working well. Prices have gone down and are expected to reduce further. "Do not buy new property this year. There is still the secondary market and auction properties that can be considered at cheaper prices," he said after speaking at the forum, themed "Does Greater Prosperity Come With Less Housing Affordability?" here, yesterday. Before the central bank's cooling measures, property prices were on a steep climb, particularly in key markets, believed to be spurred by excessive speculation.

Chang said the investors club were now rushing to sell their properties at lower prices as there were no takers, and predicted "many foreclosure cases soon due to this". He said new properties were not only more expensive but also developer-controlled, despite the lower construction costs. Chang said HBA had forwarded several recommendations to the government ahead of the 2016 Budget announcement. Among the suggestions were higher stamp duties corresponding to the number of properties owned, and making mandatory the Build-and-Sell scheme as decided in 2012 but was put on hold. He said utility companies should also shoulder the cost and responsibility to construct water reservoirs and substations for residential developments. "The utility companies are now corporatised, so they should not be factoring in the cost of such utilities onto the developers as this will in turn be factored into the house prices," Chang added.

Meanwhile, Khazanah Research Institute managing director Datuk Charon Mokhzani said Kuala Lumpur and Penang had properties that were "seriously unaffordable" and the problem needed to be tackled fast. "If the problem is not resolved, in addition to the low supply of affordable houses, other states may end up in the same 'seriously unaffordable' category in 20 to 30 years," he said. Charon said more affordable houses needed to be built, and this could be done by incorporating the

Industrialised Building Systems. “We should bring in new technologies that can reduce construction costs,” he said, adding that this could be encouraged with the proper incentives. Charon also emphasised that using skilled workers could help reduce reliance on foreign workers as well as increase the industry wages. “If we get this right, the economy can benefit from this. If not, the whole country could turn into the state Kuala Lumpur and Penang is in now,” he said. The forum, organised by the Malaysian Economic Association, also featured speakers from the National Housing Department and Real Estate and Housing Developers’ Association Malaysia.

Read More : <http://www.nst.com.my/news/2015/09/hold-property-purchases-says-buyers-association>

Steady housing supply needed to resolve affordability issue

23 SEPTEMBER 2015 @ 4:35 PM

KUALA LUMPUR – A steady supply of housing at affordable prices and measures to improve the efficacy of the construction industry to deliver them are needed to resolve the property affordability issue. Malaysian Economic Association (MEA) President Tan Sri Mohd Sheriff Mohd Kassim said the stakeholders needed to appreciate the problems and find ways to resolve them. “If we don’t deal with the problems now, they will get bigger,” he told Bernama on the sidelines of a forum titled “Does greater prosperity come with less housing affordability” here today.

Organised by MEA, the forum was aimed at achieving a degree of convergence on what needed to be done to resolve the property affordability issue. Mohd Sheriff said the forum was prompted by a research on affordable housing conducted by the Khazanah Research Institute (KRI). KRI Managing Director Datuk Charon Mokhzani said if the issue is not resolved, property prices would keep rising across the country as what is happening in the capital and Penang. “Industry players should start looking for better ways of building houses, including using construction technology,” he said.

National Housing Department director Murali Jayabalan hoped the government would provide an allocation in the 2016 Budget to build 10,000 more affordable houses on top of the 30,000 units approved nationwide last year. “The houses will be priced between RM45,000 and RM300,000,” he said. He said the government would come out with a paper on the industrialised building system initiative and set up a housing databank to address the affordable housing issue. – BERNAMA

Read More : <http://www.nst.com.my/news/2015/09/steady-housing-supply-needed-resolve-affordability-issue>

Innovation a priority in 2016 Budget

BY DR AHMAD IBRAHIM - 29 OCTOBER 2015 @ 11:01 AM

The 2016 Budget has been tabled. The positive and negative comments are expected. Some applauded the budget, while a few questioned the measures proposed. Considering the fact that it was prepared during trying times, the government deserves credit for a fairly balanced budget. It

addresses the major concerns, yet maintains a small deficit of 3.1 per cent, despite the apprehension about income. The low crude oil price has taken a toll on the nation's revenue. An average price of US\$48 (RM204) per barrel is used for the budget, meaning the income from petroleum would deplete significantly. The low palm oil and rubber prices are not helping. There is hope that the dry El Nino weather will support palm oil prices. As for rubber, the mood is sceptical, especially with the slowing Chinese economy. Even the weakening of ringgit is influenced by the Yuan devaluation. Luckily, we have the Goods and Services Tax (GST). As gestured cynically by the prime minister, GST has become the nation's saviour, making up for the shortfall from petroleum.

The GST income in 2016 may touch RM39 billion. This puts to rest the earlier complaints about GST. Essentially, the budget has outlined five priority targets; strengthening economic resilience, increasing productivity, innovation and green technology, empowering human capital, advancing Bumiputera agenda and easing the cost of living of the rakyat. But, for us scientists and innovation activists, the priority to increase productivity, innovation and green technology is highest on our radar. This is because we are convinced that innovation is the investment that will take the nation towards the high-income, inclusive and sustainable economy that we aspire. However, implementation is key. The budget has proposed implementing three measures to boost productivity through innovation.

The target is to attain an annual labour productivity growth of 3.7 per cent. One is to accelerate innovation and entrepreneurship. As the custodian of this strategy, RM1.5 billion is allocated to the Science, Technology and Innovation Ministry (Mosti). And, in 2016, the ministry will anchor the Malaysia Commercialisation Year initiative. Small- and medium-scale enterprises (SMEs) are the principal target for productivity increase since they contribute significantly towards job growth. The budget has proposed that for those SMEs spending up to RM50,000 on research and development (R&D) projects, they can claim double tax deduction automatically. The Malaysian Innovation Agency, which promised the world in R&D commercialisation when first formed, is given RM100 million.

A recent addition to the innovation ecosystem, MaGIC (Malaysian Global Innovation & Creativity Centre), has been getting rave reviews from the media, gets RM35 million. While another new initiative, the Public-Private Research Network, is allocated RM50 million to accelerate demand-driven innovation. These allocations confirm that the government is serious about innovation. The construction industry was also featured highly in the 2016 Budget. With the recent research by Khazanah highlighting the declining housing affordability issue, the budget gives clear signals to the industry that it has to change and embrace the deployment of new cost efficient technologies.

One which stands out for mention is the Industrialised Building System (IBS). More companies will be asked to adopt the IBS technology. For this, an IBS Promotion Fund of RM500 million will be set aside to provide soft loans to developers and contractors. This should lead to the adoption of sustainable construction as is advocated in the recently launched Construction Industry Master Plan by the Construction Industry Development Board. In a world where the depletion of resources is very much evident, green and sustainable practices have definitely caught on. Green technology is the way to go if the country is to carve a slice of the global expansion in the green economy.

This is where the Energy, Green Technology and Water Ministry will take the lead. The government targets to reduce the intensity of greenhouse gas emissions to 40 per cent of gross domestic product

in 2020. But, in pursuing the green business, we should avoid repeating the mistakes made when the nation ventured into electrical and electronics. We should not neglect to invest in R&D and technology development and design, as well as branding. Otherwise, we will only get the crumbs of the green economy! The writer is a Fellow at Academy of Sciences Malaysia

Read More : <http://www.nst.com.my/news/2015/10/innovation-priority-2016-budget>

Much-needed boost for builders

BY FRANCIS DASS - 24 OCTOBER 2015 @ 11:01 AM

KUALA LUMPUR: MALAYSIA'S construction industry has received the much-needed boost with the numerous infrastructure projects announced in the 2016 Budget, say industry players and analysts. Master Builders Associations Malaysia (MBAM) said the pace of the 11th Malaysia Plan (11MP) should pick up considerably with the various projects announced. "The nudge in public spending will definitely help the construction industry in 2016 where construction is expected to grow 8.4 per cent," it said in a statement. The association welcomed projects that include building 351,000 houses under various schemes (such as PR1MA, Rumah Mesra Rakyat, Felda, Risda, and Civil Servants 1Malaysia Housing Programme) and more schools, Cyber City Centre in Cyberjaya, KLIA Aeropolis, Malaysia Vision Valley, improvements to infrastructure and upgrading of airports. Under the 2016 Budget, a RM267.2 billion allocation will see a sizeable chunk being channelled into infrastructure and various development projects.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak outlined numerous mega developments that will define Malaysia in the coming years with tens of billions of ringgit being allocated for road projects, mass rapid transit and light rail transit lines, as well as for housing schemes, an building of new schools and hospitals. The government aims to encourage the use of the Industrialised Building System (IBS) in the construction industry and has set up a RM500 million IBS Promotion Fund through SME Bank as soft loans to developers and contractors in category G5 and below. MBAM said although it welcomed the RM500 million fund to promote IBS, it is disappointed as there was not enough reduction in import duties for heavy construction machineries and incentives given to industry players who adopt and implement the "use of IBS, such as equipment tax reduction and tax holidays incentives".

Hasleen Isnin, chief financial officer of Perbadanan PR1MA Malaysia, said developers working with PR1MA were encouraged to get IBS and buyers could expect lower home prices due to shorter construction tenure. "IBS shortens construction to 40 days and loans are shortened to lesser years with tremendous savings and it also increases the number of houses that can be built, besides offering more flexibility in design as well," he said in a phone interview. Under the budget, PR1MA's target for next year is to build 175,000 units of homes. "The allocation of RM1.6 billion would help to partly finance the development works of PR1MA housing projects. Prior to the budget announcement, PR1MA, in August 2015, signed a RM3 billion bridging loan facility with Maybank Islamic Bhd, which will be used to also partly finance the construction of our homes nationwide. "With continued support from the government, as well as from our partners, we are optimistic of delivering these homes," PR1MA said in an emailed statement.

Meanwhile, MIDF Research, in its note, said the construction sector would see sectoral growth that would be largely driven by infrastructure-related largesse from the implementation of various projects in the 2016 Budget. “We remain positive on the sector due to positive underlying dynamics evident through high outstanding order book, which is supported by development policy implementations. “We don’t expect the long-term emphasis on infrastructure development to fizzle out despite the recent volatility in crude oil prices and prevailing pressure on the ringgit. Among the main objectives of Economic Transformation Programme, Government Transformation Programme and 11MP is to accelerate Malaysia’s growth towards a high income nation,” MIDF said. For these reasons, it said it is imperative that the infrastructure-centric policies continue until 2020 and beyond. To date, PR1MA’s Members of Corporation has approved 199,172 units of houses for development nationwide.

A total of 64,974 units of PR1MA homes are currently in various phases of development nationwide, of which 10,000 units are expected to be completed next year PR1MA has been mandated to develop 500,000 units of affordable market quality houses nationwide for the middle-income group with household monthly income of between RM2,500 and RM10,000. Construction Industry Development Board (CIDB) chief executive Datuk Seri Dr Judin Abdul Karim said CIDB welcomed the budget as it provided a considerable allocation for construction projects. “This include the development of the Vision Valley on 108,000ha land from Nilai to Port Dickson, the Cyber City Centre in Cyberjaya, the development of Aeropolis KLIA, the MRT projects and the Pan Borneo Highway.

This will definitely spur construction industry growth. “CIDB urges industry players to implement all their projects in an effective manner and in line with goals stipulated in the Construction Industry Transformation Programme (CITP). Next year will also see the CITP implementation kick off,” Judin said. Malaysia Airports Holdings Bhd (MAHB) also gave the budget a thumbs up, saying that it was pleased that the KLIA Aeropolis had been identified as one of the budget’s key priorities. Its managing director Datuk Badlisham Ghazali said in an email the KLIA Aeropolis was centred on three development clusters — air cargo and logistics; business and aviation parks; and MICE and leisure.

“These development clusters are perfectly aligned with national agenda, such as the National Logistics & Trade Facilitation Masterplan anchored by the Transport Ministry; the National Aerospace Blueprint 2015-2030 anchored by the International Trade and Industry Ministry; and the various National Key Economic Area tourism initiatives,” Badlisham said. He said MAHB had identified more than 20 development projects covering KLIA and several other airports, and estimate investments, both foreign and domestic direct investments, of up to RM7 billion over the next five years.

Read More : <http://www.nst.com.my/news/2015/10/much-needed-boost-builders>

IBS gets a boost in 2016 Budget

BY ZARINA ZAKARIAH - 23 OCTOBER 2015 @ 10:41 PM

KUALA LUMPUR: The 2016 Budget will include an allocation to promote Industrialised Building Systems (IBS) for the construction of homes. In the 2016 Budget today, it was revealed that there

would be an IBS Promotion Fund of RM500 million which would be provided by the SME Bank. The bank has been tasked to provide soft loans to developers and contractors in the category of G5 and below. 1Malaysia People's Housing Programme (PR1MA) chief financial officer Datuk Hasleen Isnin said the government's initiatives would benefit developers greatly in producing quality homes at a faster rate.

"Although PR1MA is not eligible for it, contractors working with PR1MA to produce affordable homes are. And they are definitely encouraged to apply for it. "This will tremendously help developers build better quality homes at a faster rate resulting in higher volume of units to cater to the increasing demand for affordable homes," he told Business Times today when contacted. In the 2016 Budget announcement, PR1MA's target for 2016 is to build 175,000 units of homes. "The allocation of RM1.6 billion would help to partly finance the development works of PR1MA housing projects. Prior to the 2016 budget announcement, PR1MA had, in August 2015, signed a RM3 billion bridging loan facility with Maybank Islamic Bhd, which would be used to also partly finance the construction of our homes nationwide. "With continued support from the Government, as well as support from our partners, we are optimistic of delivering these homes," PR1MA said in an emailed statement.

Read More : <http://www.nst.com.my/news/2015/10/ibs-gets-boost-2016-budget>

Full text of PM Najib Razak's 2016 Budget speech (For full article, click the link below)

23 OCTOBER 2015 @ 7:53 PM

Measure 2: Leveraging Advancements in Technology. To enhance the use of technology in the construction sector, the Government will promote the use of Industrialised Building System (IBS). In this respect, the Government will encourage more companies to adopt the IBS technology. For this, an IBS Promotion Fund of RM500 million will be established through the SME Bank to provide soft loans to developers and contractors in category G5 and below.

Read More : <http://www.nst.com.my/news/2015/10/full-text-pm-najib-razak%E2%80%99s-2016-budget-speech>

Eversendai hopes for tax cuts, incentives in 2016 Budget

23 OCTOBER 2015 @ 12:48 PM

KUALA LUMPUR: Eversendai Corp Bhd hopes that the government will look at tax reductions as well as incentives for the upcoming Budget 2016, to ensure the country grows its manufacturing, industrial and construction footprint. Managing director Tan Sri A K Nathan said this includes the reduction in corporate tax rate, real property gains tax rate, personal tax rate and goods and services tax (GST) as well as provision for incentives including export incentive. "While tax is a positive contributing measure to the country's economic stability, there is room for further enhancements. The government should consider reducing the tax rate as well as providing incentives to stimulate

the manufacturing, industrial and construction industries as well as revive the dampened property market," he said.

He added it could also provide more disposal income of the Rakyat and generate employment. Nathan said besides reducing the GST rate, the government should also consider to shorten the refund period for GST and expand the zero rated list of goods and services which will ultimately benefit businesses and as well as the Rakyat. Meanwhile, he said while focusing on developing the skilled labour workforce in the country, the government should also address concerns about the escalating cost of foreign worker recruitment, which is becoming a huge financial burden to businesses. "This can be achieved by driving further usage of Industrialised Building System (IBS) to reduce foreign workers and simultaneously improve quality and productivity. Incentives can be offered to encourage contractors to switch to IBS," he said.

To address the escalating cost of foreign workers, he also proposed for the abolishment of the current 10-year work permit cap for foreign workers. "The rationale for this request is based on the premise that by retaining the skilled foreign workers, business can increase productivity by trimming training downtime, and improve overall efficiency," said Nathan.

Read More : <http://www.nst.com.my/news/2015/10/eversendai-hopes-tax-cuts-incentives-2016-budget>

Construction industry needs to embrace new technologies

BY DR AHMAD IBRAHIM - 9 OCTOBER 2015 @ 11:00 AM

WHEN I first started working in the early 70s, as a fresh graduate with a government statutory body, I was earning a salary of RM850 a month, or the equivalent of RM10,000 a year. The cheapest car then, a Mini Clubman, was only RM6,000. For someone staying with parents and with minimal spending on living expenses, the car could have been bought cash after working for a year. I took a government loan to buy a Mini and I only paid RM80 a month. At that time a single-storey terrace house in Ampang Jaya was selling for around RM10,000. They were, therefore, more affordable. And that was in Kuala Lumpur. It is very different now. A recent study by Khazanah Research Institute has found that houses were now less affordable. As expected, the developers have disagreed with the findings. Let us look at the facts.

A fresh graduate nowadays cannot hope to earn much more than RM2,500 a month. That is about three times the salary in the 70s. But, the cheapest terrace house in Kuala Lumpur is now selling at no less than RM400,000. In fact some are saying it is more like RM600,000 a unit. This means while a graduate's salary has increased three times, house prices have jumped almost 40 to 60 times. Buying a house is almost out of the question. You may have to spend a lifetime paying the housing loan. The cost escalation is not just limited to the housing sector. The entire construction industry in the country has seen rising costs. Why are our construction costs high? Is it because the industry is less efficient? Or is it because construction companies operate on too high margins? Has it got something to do with supply and demand? Comparisons made in the study with other countries suggest that here we are less cost efficient.

For example, we spend a longer time to build. In the Philippines, the study reported that some basic houses can be built in less than a month! Technology is definitely the deciding factor. Here, builders still shy from using cost-saving technologies like the Integrated Building System (IBS). Such technology is already widely used in the developed economies. Why? Because IBS uses much less labour. And, the quality is more assured because the parts are mostly fabricated in a factory. Here, we are still happy using the labour intensive approach. This is because we are still able to source for inexpensive labour from nearby countries. What will happen when these countries improve their economic conditions? We may not enjoy the abundant immigrant labour as we do now. Are we prepared for this change? Nowadays, developed countries are not just talking about using labour efficient construction technologies. They are also busy implementing material saving technologies. And, energy efficient technologies.

Green design construction has increasingly become common in the developed economies. They invest heavily in construction research and development to bring such resource efficient technologies to the industry. In Malaysia, I believe this is what the Construction Industry Development Board is also doing. But, the industry is unfortunately less responsive. Even the suggestion for houses to be first built before they are sold has met with strong resistance from the industry. This does not augur well for the future of the industry. Buyers are the ones who suffer when projects are abandoned, especially when monies are already paid and loans already committed. The Construction Industry Transformation Programme blueprint, launched last month by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak, provides positive recommendations for the nation's construction sector. It is a comprehensive implementation plan which encompasses 18 initiatives, four strategic thrusts in Quality Safety and Professionalism, Environment Sustainability, Productivity as well as Internationalisation.

Najib had said the construction industry would be one of the key sectors that will propel Malaysia into prosperity and catapult it towards a high-income nation. What needs to be done now is to translate the plan into action. Implemented properly, it will go a long way in supporting the nation's green economic ambitions. The elements in the blueprint which spell out the strategies for sustainable construction will not only improve the safety and environmental record of the construction industry, it will also prepare the industry in good stead to compete for global construction projects. It is time the industry recognises the importance of the blueprint. It is the recipe that the industry needs to transform for the betterment of the nation. The industry cannot forever remain complacent and be dependent on foreign labour. The writer is a Fellow at Academy of Sciences Malaysia

Read More : <http://www.nst.com.my/news/2015/10/construction-industry-needs-embrace-new-technologies>

Temporary shelter for homeless starts operating

BY ISKANDAR TAJUDDIN - 25 SEPTEMBER 2015 @ 5:43 PM

KUALA LUMPUR: The temporary shelter for the homeless at Lorong Medan Tuanku 2 began operating today, said Federal Territories Ministry secretary-general Datuk Seri Adnan Md Ikhsan. He

said the shelter will be opened to serve 1,850 homeless in the city. "The operators of the shelter are Pertiwi Soup Kitchen, Kenchara Soup Kitchen Society, Need to Feed The Needy, and Kaseh4U," he said during a visit to the shelter, here. Adnan said the shelter provides medical room, toilet, space for meals and rooms. He said the shelter was built using the Industrialised Building System (IBS) beginning May this year by a company from China.

"We have also asked City Hall to build a permanent building for the non-governmental organisations to distribute food and other services to the homeless," he said. Adnan said, at the moment, City Hall was planning to build another homeless shelter at Bulatan Pahang. "The three-storey building costing RM10 million can hold an estimated 250 homeless," he said. Adnan said the ministry was planning to coordinate with a number of agencies to establish a committee to ensure the shelters were run smoothly. "We will combine various agencies such as City Hall, the Health Ministry, Yayasan Kebajikan Negara and volunteer organisations in order to ensure the smooth operations of the shelters," he said.

Also present at the visit were City Hall Project Implementation and Maintenance executive director Datuk Tan Keng Chok, Federal Territories Ministry Policy Planning Division undersecretary Datuk Azizi Ahmad Termizi, Pertiwi Soup Kitchen chairman Munirah Abdul Hamid and Kenchara Soup Kitchen Society project director Justin Cheah.

Read More : <http://www.nst.com.my/news/2015/09/temporary-shelter-homeless-starts-operating>

PM launches construction industry blueprint

BY ZARINA ZAKARIAH AND NURADZIMMAH DAIM - 10 SEPTEMBER 2015 @ 4:10 PM

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia's construction sector is expected transform into a new landscape with the Construction Industry Transformation Programme (CITP). The blueprint, which forms part of the 11th Malaysia Plan, is a comprehensive implementation plan which encompasses 18 initiatives, 4 strategic thrusts in Quality Safety and Professionalism, Environment Sustainability, Productivity as well as Internationalisation. Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak said the construction industry will be one of the key sector that will propel Malaysia into prosperity and catapult it towards becoming a high-income nation.

"The construction industry is expected to maintain its momentum and maintain a double digit growth this year after growing at 10.8 per cent and 11.8 per cent in 2013 and 2014 respectively. "To do away with dependency on foreign labour, the government has proposed to enhance human capital development by streamlining construction-related courses, creating a training map and curricula reviews for up-to-date content.

"One of CITP's initiatives also aims to induce faster adoption of Industrialised Building Systems (IBS), mechanisation and modern practises," said Najib in his keynote address at the 14th International Construction Week before launching the blueprint today. The four strategic thrusts will transform and improve public and international image of the industry by the adoption of QLASSIC, raising the culture of safety and health, implement sustainable construction systems and practices as well as focus on key productivity drivers such as workforce, technology and process.

Read More : <http://www.nst.com.my/news/2015/09/pm-launches-construction-industry-blueprint>

Transforming the construction sector

BY ZARINA ZAKARIAH AND NURADZIMMAH DAIM - 11 SEPTEMBER 2015 @ 11:01 AM

KUALA LUMPUR: MALAYSIA'S construction sector will be transformed into a modern, highly productive and sustainable industry under the Construction Industry Transformation Programme (CITP) blueprint launched by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak, here, yesterday. The CITP, spearheaded by the Works Ministry and Construction Industry Development Board (CIDB), also aims to strengthen Malaysian companies to compete with international players. "The construction industry has proven its mettle in terms of physical and economic achievements. But in order for the industry to sustain the virtuous circle, it must take a leap and transform," said Najib when launching the CITP at the 14th International Construction Week.

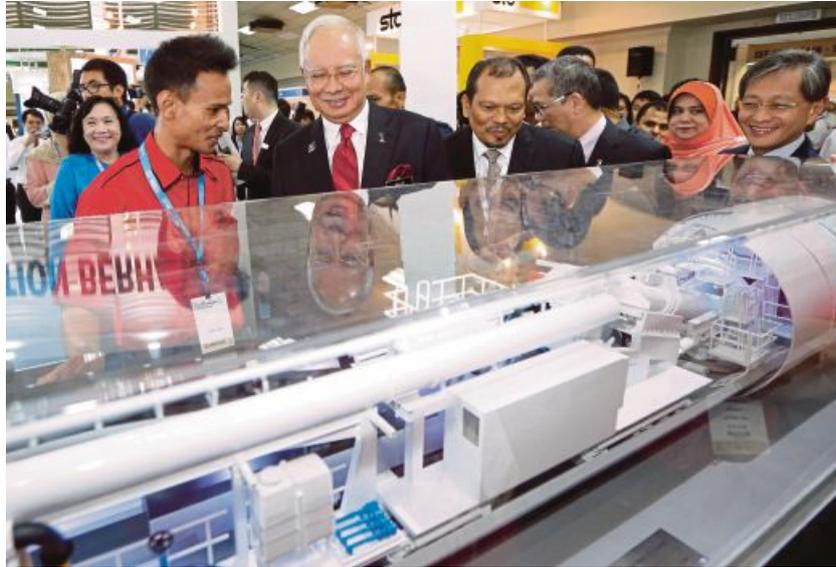
The blueprint, which forms part of the 11th Malaysia Plan, encompasses 18 initiatives under four strategic thrusts. The four thrusts focus on ingraining quality, safety and professionalism into the industry; ensuring environmental sustainability measures are in place at the design, construction and subsequent maintenance of buildings, cities and infrastructure; raising overall productivity level of the industry; and, focusing on improving the competitiveness and subsequent ability of construction players to internationalise. To ensure quality, for example, the CITP will push for adoption of the Quality Assessment System in Construction (QLASSIC), which measures the quality of workmanship in building construction. "The CITP targets to make QLASSIC mandatory in all government projects by 2018. But I urge that all government projects start now and take the lead in implementing a high level of quality," said Najib.

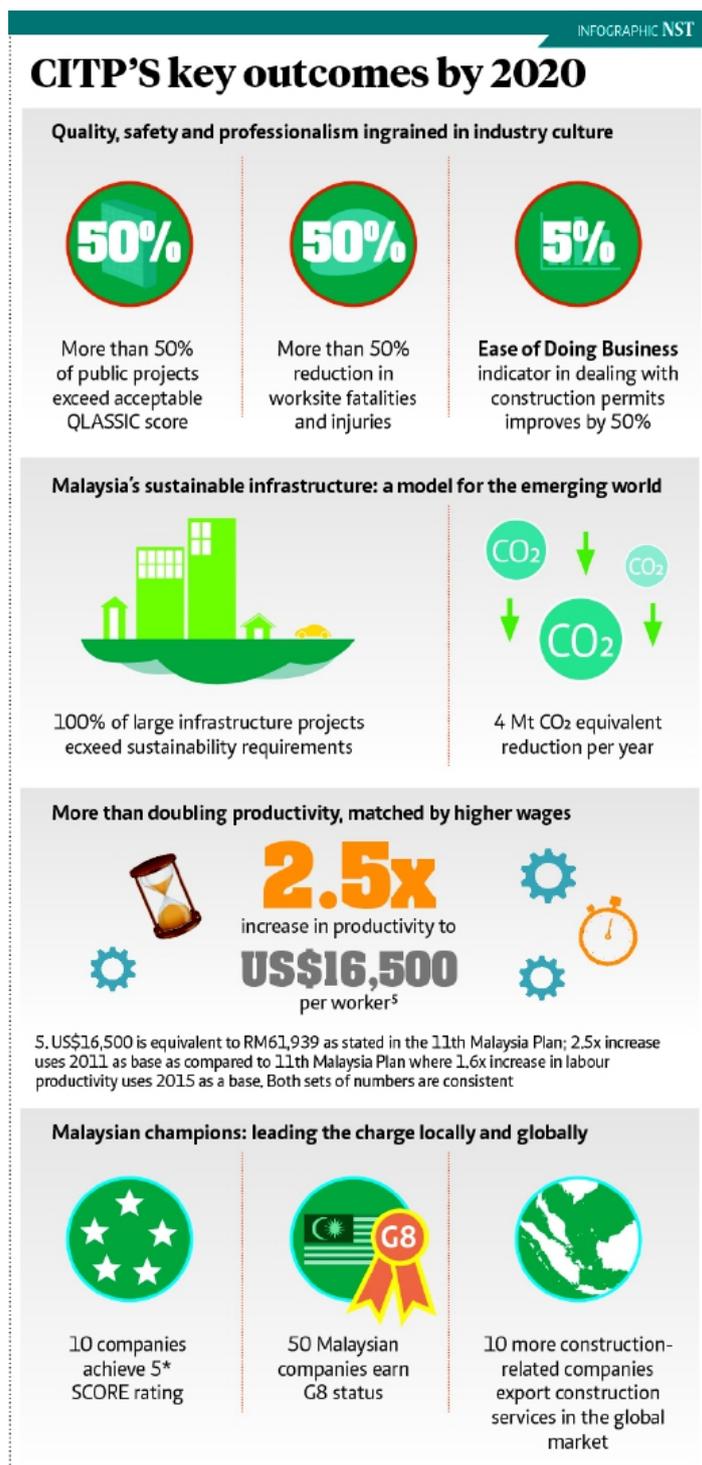
More stringent requirements would also be introduced to ensure accidents and fatalities were significantly reduced, he said, adding that many clients and contractors had in the past overlooked the expenses needed to ensure adequate safety in the name of cost savings. The CITP envisions the Malaysian construction industry as a low carbon, sustainable building and infrastructure model, especially to Asean member countries. A Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Construction will be established to develop, promote and implement sustainable construction systems and practices. Irresponsible waste generation is another challenge that the blueprint will address. "By January 2018, it will be mandated for contractors to comply with waste management programmes, as part of the requirement in Environmental Management Systems certification ISO 14001. This will be implemented in stages, starting with G7 category contractors," said Najib.

Productivity improvement, meanwhile, will focus on three key drivers — workforce, technology and process. "To do away with dependency on foreign labour, the government has proposed to enhance human capital development." One of the CITP initiatives aims to induce faster adoption of Industrialised Building Systems (IBS) by establishing economic mechanisms and modern practices. CIDB chief executive officer Datuk Seri Judin Abdul Karim said it was time the nation moved away from a labour-based construction sector towards a mechanised, automated and advanced one. "A large proportion of the construction workforce consists of low-skilled foreign labour and solutions

must come now to have a more healthy and productive industry. One of them is to invest in machines (IBS) which will reduce dependency on foreign workers.”

Read More : <http://www.nst.com.my/news/2015/09/transforming-construction-sector>





IBS usage in Malaysia's construction sector still low: MIDA

11 MAY 2015 @ 8:01 PM

KUALA LUMPUR: Despite being in the industry for almost 50 years now, the adoption of industrialised building system (IBS) in the construction sector is still low and represents only about 15-20 per cent of the overall projects in Malaysia. Malaysian Investment Development Authority

(Mida) deputy chief executive officer, Datuk Phang Ah Tong, said the fragmented and disconnected construction supply chains were the leading causes of the limited uptake. He said the IBS supply chain required close control of materials and resources management to ensure continuity and time delivery. This called for Mida and the Construction Industry Development Board (CIDB) to find ways to promote and enhance the IBS adoption in Malaysia, he said. Phang said MIDA is now taking an ecosystem approach just like any other industries it is promoting such as semiconductor, solar and medical devices to enable it to be more focus and to identify the gaps.

The ecosystem approach involved developing every part of the IBS value and supply chains, starting from designers, manufacturers, contractors and developers and to fill the gaps whether in terms of technology, materials or incentives, he said. "Slowly and surely we will see the rate of adoption increasing," said Phang at a press conference here, today, in conjunction with a 'Dialogue on Enhancing the IBS' in collaboration with CIDB. He said he did not see a reason why Malaysian could not adopt it when it was successfully implemented in other developed countries such as Japan, Italy, Germany, the United Kingdom, Australia, the United States, and even Singapore. "At present, IBS construction is gaining traction as a mainstream method in the industry and its implementation has moved from prefabrication towards mecahnisation, automation and robotic applications. "Once the competition sets in, it is a matter of time that the perception would change as using the technology will make construction faster and cheaper," said Phang.

The construction industry contributed 3.9 per cent to the country's gross domestic product in 2014, and real estate accounted for a huge share of investment in the services sector at over 59 per cent valued at RM88.5 billion, he added. Despite its contribution, the industry is under constant pressure to improve its performance particularly in adopting better technology such as IBS as well as to reduce the employment of foreign workers, said Phang. Meanwhile, CIDB general manager, technology division, Noraini Bahri, said the use of IBS technology could reduce up to 50 per cent dependency on foreign workers which indirectly would also curtail the negative social impact related to foreign workers as well as lowering the outflow of the ringgit.

She said CIDB had been championing various policies, incentives and programmes, and one of the goals in the roadmap was to maintain commitment on the use of IBS content in government as well as the private sectors. She said it was already mandated to have 70 per cent IBS content for government projects and CIDB was trying to mandate the use of 50 per cent score for the private sector. In Malaysia, she said about 1,700 buildings had used IBS as of 2014, most of which are government buildings. Noraini said the perception among the people on IBS technology being expensive, was of less quality and too standardised compared to conventional system were among the barriers that limited the adoption of IBS among private developers and this needed to be addressed. -- Bernama

Read More : <http://www.nst.com.my/news/2015/09/ibs-usage-malaysia%E2%80%99s-construction-sector-still-low-mida>

Houses won't be ready in time for monsoon season

BY VEENA BABULAL - 22 AUGUST 2015 @ 11:00 AM

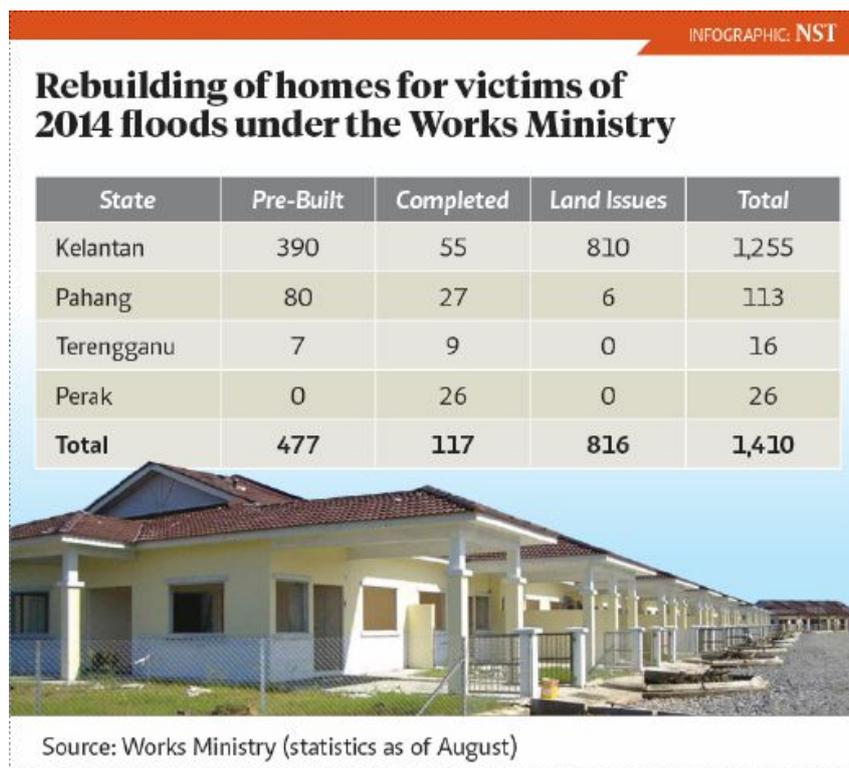
KUALA LUMPUR: Half of the permanent houses to be built for victims of last year's floods in Kelantan cannot be completed in time for the monsoon season at year-end due to outstanding land issues. Works Minister Datuk Seri Fadillah Yusof told the New Straits Times that only 700 of the 1,410 houses are expected to be completed by the deadline as a result of a hurdle it faced with the state government. As a result, up to 5,000 people displaced by the floods since last year have no choice but to spend several more months at National Security Council (NSC) shelters. As of this month, the snag has prevented 810 houses from being built in Kelantan, the hardest hit by last year's rainfall and floods.

The houses were meant for Kuala Krai (734) and Gua Musang (74), while in Pahang, similar issues prevented six houses from being built in Jerantut. "These 814 houses are subject to land availability and the settlement of these issues by the state government. "The ministry can only construct houses on land allocated by the state governments as all land matters are under their purview," Fadillah said. The Federal Government had pledged RM500 million for rebuilding and RM10,000 per household for repairs but the disbursement has been hampered by bureaucratic red tape. The Kelantan government had come under fire earlier for its hesitance in giving suitable land to build houses for flood victims who did not have their own land. Fadillah said the Federal Government had resorted to buying land from private owners and using unutilised federal land to manage the setback.

"We would like to appeal to all state governments to expedite the identification and alienation of land for the purpose of building these houses." He said the ministry was using an Industrialised Building System to hasten the construction of the 74.3 square metre houses from 90 days to just 50 days. So far, 117 houses have been completed in Kelantan, Pahang, Terengganu and Perak, while 477 houses in Kelantan, Pahang and Terengganu are being built or in the pre-built stage. The process of buying land and managing acquisition for the houses required time as it was under a separate entity — the Post-Flood Recovery Unit — under the Prime Minister's Department. "After the completion of land ownership arrangements, the unit will issue a letter to the Public Works Department." The letter will authorise the ministry to perform work planning, design, preparation of the bill of quantities and construction work.

"This includes land surveying, construction of infrastructure such as roads, utilities and the construction of the houses." He said that the houses would be built on higher ground on sites that were not affected by floods. They would also be constructed on 2.4m concrete stilts as the material is believed to be the most flood resistant. Fadillah said there was no such thing as a flood-proof house. The NSC had identified 1,983 houses damaged beyond repair or washed away by the floods last year. The state governments were supposed to build 573 houses while the ministry was tasked with building the rest.

Read More: <http://www.nst.com.my/news/2015/09/houses-won%E2%80%99t-be-ready-time-monsoon-season>



The Star:

Cementing pact of giants (For full article click the link below)

Saturday, 14 November 2015

BY DANIEL KHOO

New building methods such as using precast concrete that adds another layer of manufacturing to the supply chain also allow these precast makers to source the raw material cement from many different manufacturers at more competitive prices. Precast technology to build buildings, namely in the residential development and even at the mass rapid transit and light rail transit stations today, allows the procurement of raw materials like cement at a lower cost. The new building technology shapes the concrete into ready moulds to allow it to set in a controlled environment before being sold to the contractors.

Such a process saves a lot of construction time. Property players are familiar with this new technology as industrialised building systems or more popularly known by its acronym: IBS. The IBS inserts another level of sophistication into the cement supply chain, but could come at a cost to the upstream manufacturers. "The makers of such IBS precast products could be the ones benefiting from the change in building trends, but it will be interesting to see how this development pans out for cement makers eventually. They may be tempted to also invest in this new midstream segment eventually," an analyst says.

<http://www.thestar.com.my/business/business-news/2015/11/14/cementing-pact-of-giants/>

Govt to expand use of IBS to lower prices of houses

Monday, 9 November 2015



“Currently, the use of IBS has not grown. Imagine, if it grows and with Perbadanan PR1MA Malaysia and the Urban Wellbeing, Housing and Local Government Ministry using the system, more people would be able to buy quality houses at lower prices,” Ahmad Husni said.

IPOH: The Government will expand the use of industrialised building system (IBS) in the housing industry, said Second Finance Minister Datuk Seri Ahmad Husni Hanadzlah. He said the emphasis on the use of the IBS was to enable the rakyat to buy houses at lower prices. “Currently, the use of IBS has not grown. Imagine, if it grows and with Perbadanan PR1MA Malaysia and the Urban Wellbeing, Housing and Local Government Ministry using the system, more people would be able to buy quality houses at lower prices,” he said.

Ahmad Husni said this in an interview with Perakfm at Radio Televisyen Malaysia yesterday. He said Syarikat Perumahan Negara Bhd had started using IBS to build houses under the Rumah Mesra Rakyat scheme. — Bernama

<http://www.thestar.com.my/business/business-news/2015/11/09/govt-to-expand-use-of-ibs/>

Vibrant bash to mark 25 years (For full article click the link below)

Friday, 6 November 2015

BY JESSIE LIM

Not one to rest on its laurels, Ajiya aims to become a one-stop manufacturer with integrated building solutions by combining its two key strengths, thus developing the Ajiya Green Integrated Building Systems (IBS) that is highly efficient with versatility in design and eco-friendly. The IBS can also be incorporated with Ajiya's eight series of housing component systems - lightweight steel wall framing with wet wall system, metal door and window frames, composite floor decking, metal ceilings, sunshades, lightweight truss system, metal roofing, and safety glass with aluminium sash.

<http://www.thestar.com.my/metro/community/2015/11/06/vibrant-bash-to-mark-25-years-1000-guests-attend-companys-silver-jubilee-dinner/>

Debating DIBS for the property market (For full article, click the link below)

Sunday, 1 November 2015

For Wahid, it is crucial for developers and those in the property sector to innovate and embrace new technologies to keep costs low. He points out that the construction industry is facing productivity-related issues that need to be addressed. These issues, according to Wahid, include a low-skilled work force, inadequate or a mismatch in training and development, over-reliance on low-skilled foreign labour, limited adoption of modern practices, mechanisation and industrialised building systems (IBS), the lack of data and information-driven decision-making, and a limited adoption of information technology such as building information modelling.

<http://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2015/11/01/debating-dibs-for-the-property-market/>

First-time buyers of affordable houses not left out too (For full article click the link below)

Saturday, 24 October 2015

Real Estate and Housing Developers' Association Malaysia president (Rehda) Datuk Seri F. D. Iskandar saw Budget 2016 as positive and helpful for homeownership, especially for the middle income earners. He said the allocation of RM200mil as deposit for first-time house buyers was good news for the industry especially in this current challenging times. "Payment for deposit has always been the biggest barrier to house entries and we fervently hope that the deposit will help spur homeownership among the rakyat," he said. He said Rehda lauded the Government's move to provide a special fund to encourage the adoption of the Industrialised Building System (IBS) in Malaysia. "The RM500mil promotion fund for developers and contractors will not only help to accelerate project delivery but also reduce development cost as well as dependency on foreign workers. "We hope such an incentive will encourage more developers and contractors to adopt IBS in their projects," he said.

<http://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2015/10/24/putting-roof-over-heads-groups-what-about-the-environs-firsttime-buyers-of-affordable-houses-not-lef/>

Move to reduce dependency on labour

Thursday, 8 October 2015

BY ZAZALI MUSA



Fadillah (right) visiting the World Skill Malaysia Belia workshop at the Construction Industry Development Board. -Photos by ABDUL RAHMAN EMBONG

JOHOR BARU: The Government wants to encourage more construction companies to incorporate the industrialised building system (IBS) in their projects. Works Minister Datuk Seri Fadillah Yusof said by using the method in their projects, the construction companies could reduce their dependency on labour, especially foreigners. He said the Government had already made it compulsory for contractors undertaking public projects worth above RM10mil to use the IBS. Fadillah said although it was not mandatory for the private sector to use the IBS now, many contractors handling projects worth RM50mil each had already started using the method. "It will be good if more private construction companies were to come forward and use the IBS," he said in a press conference on Monday.



Fadillah (centre) posing for a group photo with winners of World Skill Malaysia Belia.

Fadillah said this at the closing ceremony of the finals of the World Skills Malaysia Belia at the Construction Industry Development Board here. He said encouraging more construction-related companies to use the IBS was one of the activities underlined in the Construction Industry Transformation Programme (CITP) 2016-2020. "It will also be good (for the construction industry) if more players are willing to incorporate the IBS five years down the road," said Fadillah. He said apart from the IBS, another method that the Government would want to encourage the private sector to use was the building information modelling (IBM).

Fadillah said by using the IBS and IBM, it would help to elevate the standard and quality of the local construction industry. Fadillah said that in order to achieve the standard, Malaysia needed to produce more skilled workers in the construction industry and use technology in building methods. "We have to encourage more locals to work in the construction industry and in future the industry will use more technology and reduce its dependency on manual labour," he said.

<http://www.thestar.com.my/metro/community/2015/10/08/move-to-reduce-dependency-on-labour-construction-companies-encouraged-to-use-prefabricated-component/>

Scientex wants equal balance in expansion plans (For full article click the link below

Saturday, 3 October 2015

BY DANIEL KHOO

On the property front, the company says that it is confident that margins will continue to be stable due to the processes that it has put in place amidst the relatively subdued sentiment among consumers presently. "We undertake in-house construction, and undertake efficiency-driven methods such as the Industrialised Building System (IBS)," he says.

The company deals mainly in the affordable property category which it says had seen sustainable and encouraging demand in spite of the economic cycles. "In our property segment, revenue increased to RM516mil in FY15 compared to RM398mil previously, attesting to buyers' acceptability of our products despite the tougher climate," Lim says.

<http://www.thestar.com.my/business/business-news/2015/10/03/scientex-eyes-property-expansion/>

Iris sees better performance in FY16

Tuesday, 22 September 2015 | MYT 11:59 PM

KUALA LUMPUR: Iris Corp Bhd anticipates a better performance for its 2016 financial year (FY16), driven by its trusted identification division, waste-to-energy incineration plant in Phuket, Thailand and property development segment. Its group managing director and chief executive officer Datuk Tan Say Jim, said the trusted identification division had submitted proposals in two countries. "We will hear news regarding the proposals within the next 90 days as we are actively pursuing it," he told reporters after the company's annual general meeting on Tuesday.

For the financial year ended March 31, 2015, Iris Corp recorded a pre-tax loss of RM17.04mil compared with a pre-tax profit of RM35.08mil previously, while revenue amounted to RM564.49mil from RM573.23mil. For the first quarter ended June 30, 2015, it registered pre-tax profit of RM1.18mil compared with a pre-tax loss of RM2.05mil in the same period a year ago while revenue was RM109.74mil against RM127.27mil.

On its sustainable and affordable Iris Koto industrialised building system for property development, he said the company had launched a housing project in Papua New Guinea last year and would start developing it by the second half of 2016. Domestically, Iris has submitted a proposal to the government for a project in Putrajaya under the 1Malaysia Civil Servants Housing Programme. "We have submitted a proposal to the government and within the next 60 days, we should hear some news regarding it," Tan said.

Iris had completed the Rimbunan Kaseh Smart Village projects for the government in five locations and had several other projects under construction, he said. The company is currently undertaking a project in Perak, will start the construction of a project in Sarawak and is halfway through the construction of the Rimbunan Kaseh Smart Village project in Kedah. - Bernama

<http://www.thestar.com.my/business/business-news/2015/09/22/iris-sees-better-performance-in-fy16/>

Good start but be bolder, SEC

Published: Friday September 18, 2015 MYT 12:00:00 AM

Updated: Friday September 18, 2015 MYT 8:11:20 AM

ALTHOUGH the Special Economic Committee (SEC) is new, many Malaysians expected a special package of policy measures to give more substantive backing to its mandate to “strengthen the fundamentals of the economy”. The SEC is made up of well-known experts with wide experience in the government and business sectors. They have gone through many economic cycles and contributed much to economic recovery solutions in the past. Hence, it is surprising that the SEC did not announce a policy package of structural changes to stop the current and steady weakening of our fundamentals, which include the falling ringgit!

True, it’s not a case of “doom and gloom” as yet but neither is it all happy and bright. So the SEC has to be bolder and take the bull by the horns so that our economy is not gored. It is true that external factors that hurt our economy are beyond our control. But are we doing enough to solve our internal problems? Bank Negara governor Tan Sri Dr Zeti Aziz has said that some domestic issues have affected confidence and need to be resolved. Are we taking enough tough measures to solve these domestic problems? Most will say no, so what can the SEC do now?

The new RM28bil boost to the economy is nothing special. About RM20bil of it will be provided to revive ValueCap to boost the stock market. Bumiputra equity shares will hopefully rise, but how long can ValueCap shareholders benefit from this shot in the arm? More importantly, how much will this stock market boost contribute to economic productivity and growth and how would it enhance the welfare of the bottom 40% of the poor in our country?

I would think this is the ideal time and opportunity to really introduce special policies to enable Malaysia to counter the internal and external challenges by making the country more open, more competitive, liberal and innovative. Abnormal times require abnormal and special treatment. We cannot tinker with the spoiled engine. We have to overhaul it or, better still, get a new engine of growth. This would be the time to boldly adopt the New Economic Model (NEM). The NEM was drafted by a highly reputable group of experts including some outstanding economists from abroad. But it has been unfortunately gathering dust so far. But perhaps the SEC is waiting for Budget 2016 to make the big bang? I hope so.

The SEC has to be commended for making a start in alleviating the problems faced by the poor. Hopefully, it will firm up its own fundamental strength and show that it can influence the Government to make more significant policy changes. Admittedly, some measures introduced by the SEC are welcome. The provision of 16 more 1Malaysia clinics this year and another 33 next year is most welcome as the rakyat, who are facing the brunt of the economic slowdown and rising costs, will directly gain from this essential medical service. Similarly, the opening up of 25 more Kedai Rakyat this year and 12 more next year will help.

Youth housing schemes are welcomed and will benefit about 20,000 young married couples. Here, the SEC could take the lead to expand housing in a bigger way. Why not push for massive use of industrial building systems (IBS)? This way, we can do away with unskilled foreign construction workers and raise industrial wages for our own trained workers. About RM28bil is repatriated by

foreign workers every year. Is this not a serious leak in our economy that needs urgent “adjustment”?

The Government could provide tax incentives to use the IBS, and this can be incorporated in Budget 2016. For unemployed graduates, the 1Malaysia Training Scheme (SLIM) and the Graduate Employability Management Scheme (GEMS) will be upgraded to train 10,000 graduates this year and 15,000 next year. This is beneficial but why are we spending precious funds to train graduates who should have been made employable by the universities in the first place? The problem is none of our universities are listed among the Top 100, so how can we expect to get more employable graduates even when, ironically, the economy is facing severe shortage in skilled workers and talent?

Can't the Education Blueprint be implemented at a faster pace? More technical schools could be opened up to give our youth more productive employment. The SEC could recommend that the technically inclined students be given more scholarships, incentives and higher pay. Khazanah will be investing RM6.7bil “to support the economic measures” and growth. We already know from bitter experience that Government involvement in business can burn us up! And now we learn that RM4.5bil of this RM6.7bil will be spent on developing the Desaru tourist resort in Johor! Should this be our priority now?

The SEC has made a good start but there was much hope for a faster and stronger take-off. However, it is still hoped that the SEC will make more significant proposals to restructure the Malaysian economy. We need further economic boosts to promote greater growth, income equity, national unity and sustainability in the longer term! The SEC has to overcome more tough challenges and we all hope it will have the strength to deliver well and on time to remove the present gloomy and hazy outlook.

TAN SRI RAMON NAVARATNAM

Chairman, Asli Center of Public Policy Studies

<http://www.thestar.com.my/Opinion/Letters/2015/09/18/Good-start-but-be-bolder-SEC/>

Double-digit growth for Malaysia's construction industry

Wednesday, 16 September 2015

By: EUGENE MAHALINGAM

KUALA LUMPUR: The Construction Industry Development Board (CIDB) is confident that the local construction industry will achieve a third straight year of double-digit growth in 2015, based on the number of projects undertaken year-to-date. CIDB corporate and business sector senior general manager Sariah Abdul Karib said construction projects undertaken last year totalled some RM160bil, comprising both public and private projects.

“We’re still projecting double-digit growth. We’re confident we can achieve it despite the current market environment,” she told a media roundtable yesterday. “We’ve been achieving double-digit growth since 2012 and the momentum is still there.” In June, Sariah was quoted as saying that the

construction sector was expected to grow 10.3% this year compared with 11.8% in 2014. It grew 18.1% in 2012 and 10.6% in 2013. Separately, Sariah said CIDB expected productivity to increase by 2½ times to US\$16,500 (RM61,939) per worker by 2020.

She said once the Construction Industry Transformation Programme (CITP), which was launched this month, picks up steam, productivity would be boosted by the modernisation of technology, with specific emphasis on building information modeling and industrialised building systems (IBS) as effort multipliers. Sariah said currently, all government projects exceeding RM10mil must incorporate IBS into their developments. “But it’s not 100% yet. Currently the utilisation rate is around 42%.

“This is because a lot of projects are in remote areas and it is hard to bring technology into the areas,” she said. The CITP is a five-year plan to transform the construction industry by 2020 in the areas of quality, safety and professionalism, environmental sustainability, productivity and internationalisation. Meanwhile, CIDB chief executive Datuk Seri Dr Judin Abdul Karim said there was a need to reduce the number of foreign workers in the sector. “We could do with less. We need to mechanise the industry, whereby the machines can do the work of up to 10 people. Over-reliance on foreign labour also affects our competitiveness.”

Judin said CIDB was working with Master Builders Association Malaysia to deal with the issue of foreign labour. The construction sector currently employs about 400,000 foreign workers. Judin also said local companies need to be better prepared to be able to handle competition from foreign players.

<http://www.thestar.com.my/Business/Business-News/2015/09/16/Doubledigit-growth-for-construction-industry/?style=biz>



Precast concrete products maker eyes expansion

Published: Thursday June 18, 2015 MYT 12:00:00 AM

Updated: Thursday June 18, 2015 MYT 3:09:48 PM

KUCHING: Sarawak Consolidated Industries Bhd (SCIB), which manufactures precast concrete products and industrialised building system (IBS) components, is looking beyond Sarawak to expand its business. According to chairman Tan Sri Hamid Bugo, the group sees the need to expand its presence in other markets, like Sabah and Kalimantan, Indonesia. "The group has always been on the lookout of further expansion into new markets and sectors outside Sarawak where it is very well positioned and enjoys an excellent reputation," he said.

Hamid said the group had enhanced its manufacturing capacities at its three plants here, and was expected to deliver a sustainable financial performance in the next few years. In the past two years, he said the group had implemented a strategy to reposition itself in driving consistent growth, and that the management team had executed a medium term business plan to support the growth. "The improving market conditions in our core business, coupled with the growing demand of our products, bode well and gives us the confidence in the company's future."

Reviewing the group's 2014 performance, Hamid said its revenue grew by RM10.2mil or 19% to RM63.1mil from RM52.9mil in 2013 largely contributed by the increase in construction activities of both the government and private sectors as reflected by higher sales in precast concrete products and IBS products. Total production tonnage rose to 148,681 tonnes from 137,315 tonnes in 2013 as a result in the increasing demand and sales of foundation piles and IBS products. Traditional products and IBS products contributed 87% and 13% respectively to the total production tonnage in the year under review.

Despite higher turnover, Hamid said SCIB group incurred pre-tax loss of RM2.9mil due to impairment losses on trade receivables, inventories' written down and share of associate company's loss totalling RM5.6mil. However, he said, the company was confident on the full recovery of the impaired debts in due course. In the first quarter ended March 31, 2015, SCIB recorded group's pre-tax profit of RM1.3mil against RM90,000 in the previous corresponding period as revenue jumped to RM17.7mil from RM12.9mil. The improved earnings were attributed to higher sales of foundation piles and IBS components.

Hamid said the group's order book had grown to RM32mil as at last month, and that its focus now was to improve quality and reliability of its delivery of the products to clients. "We continue to work with major contractors on large construction projects and top property developers in the industry and to actively promote the usage and benefit of IBS in the projects," he said, adding that the IBS products had received positive acceptance by the market.

On this year's prospect, Hamid said SCIB was bullish about its performance, adding that the company would be a beneficiary from the implementation of the Pan Borneo Highway's upgrading project, new power transmission lines and water supply projects as well as other property development projects.

<http://www.thestar.com.my/Metro/Community/2015/06/18/Precast-concrete-products-maker-eyes-expansion/>

Mida upbeat on new technology

Tuesday, 12 May 2015

PETALING JAYA: The adoption of new and relevant technology such as Industrialised Building Systems (IBS) will help promote global competitiveness among local players and reduce the dependency on foreign workers, according to the Malaysian Investment Development Authority (Mida). However, the implementation of IBS was still low in Malaysia, said Mida deputy chief executive officer Datuk Phang Ah Tong in a statement yesterday.

“The industry’s dependency on foreign workers could be further reduced with the adoption of technology such as IBS. Ultimately, this will also curtail the negative social and cultural impact associated with foreign workers, as well as the lower outflow of the ringgit. “At the same time, IBS will contribute towards improving productivity, safety and competitiveness of the industry players, which, in turn, translates into economic gains and growth. “This is in line with Mida’s focus on talent, creativity and innovation, which will enhance the eco-system of the construction industry,” he said.

Phang was speaking at a dialogue on “Enhancing the Implementation of IBS in Malaysia”. The event was co-organised by Mida and the Construction Industry Development Board. The half-day event aimed at nurturing the local construction players towards global competitiveness. Phang pointed out that the Government had begun promoting IBS since 1999. This led to the establishment of the IBS Steering Committee in 2003 to drive the first IBS Roadmap (2003-2010) and the second IBS Roadmap (2011-2015).

“Nonetheless, the implementation of IBS in Malaysia is still low compared with other developed economies such as Japan, Italy, Germany, France, the United Kingdom, the United States and Australia.”

<http://www.thestar.com.my/Business/Business-News/2015/05/12/Mida-upbeat-on-new-technology/?style=biz>

Prototype of affordable housing unit unveiled

Published: Thursday March 19, 2015 MYT 12:00:00 AM

Updated: Thursday March 19, 2015 MYT 10:43:57 AM

Bayer Co (M) Sdn Bhd on Monday announced the completion of a prototype house built at the Construction Industry Development Board’s (CIDB) Industrialised Building System (IBS) Show Village that is part of the Affordable Housing Project undertaken together with CIDB. The project is a result of a partnership established in 2013 between Bayer MaterialScience and CIDB to promote sustainable construction in Malaysia.

Built on a 2,000sq ft site provided by CIDB, the model house, which was commissioned last August, was completed within five weeks. The project also marks the successful technical cooperation and knowledge sharing between Bayer and CIDB for a more sustainable construction sector in the longer term. "We are in the process of evaluating the implementation of this technology by building 200 homes in Kedah, based on the concept of sustainability. The Energy Efficient building solution from Bayer MaterialScience will be combined with renewable energy solutions in close cooperation with other Bayer MaterialScience business partners such as Philips, Schneider and local builders," said CIDB chief executive officer Datuk Seri Dr Judin Abdul Karim.

Richard Northcote, executive committee member responsible for sustainability at Bayer MaterialScience said, "The completion of the model house brings us a step closer in our aim of contributing towards sustainable development and to enable better access to affordable and comfortable housing to those who most need it, especially low-income families. "We are delighted that Bayer MaterialScience's expertise in products and technology for the construction sector, as well as our sustainable construction materials, are able to help make sustainable housing in Malaysia a reality."

Bayer MaterialScience is Bayer's high-tech materials division and one of the world's largest polymer companies. The company produces composite construction materials that have insulation properties to make homes cooler, flood- and fire-resistant, and able to withstand strong winds. Works Minister Datuk Seri Fadillah Yusof, who was present to unveil the completed model house said, "This Affordable Housing Project is in line with the Government's aim to build one million affordable houses for the people.

I am very pleased to see the strong collaboration between Bayer MaterialScience and CIDB to provide us with affordable solutions to tackle the issue of housing shortages and meet the need of both low-income segment of the population, as well as society at large". With Bayer MaterialScience's affordable housing solution, houses are built using lightweight polyurethane composite panels that can be installed easily and quickly. The solution enables construction time to be reduced as much as 35% compared with using precast concrete.

The panels can also be easily loaded into standard family-sized trucks, to facilitate construction even in remote areas. The polyurethane panels have excellent insulation properties to make the house more energy-efficient by reducing temperature inside the house, leading to lower electricity consumption, as well as reducing carbon footprint. According to Judin, going forward CIDB would continue to leverage on Bayer's technical know-how and expertise in line with its recently proposed establishment of a Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Infrastructure that would serve as a knowledge-sharing platform to promote better living conditions and community well-being. "Sustainability forms an integral part of Bayer MaterialScience's business strategy, and we are firmly committed to the principles of sustainable development.

We look forward to continuing to use our expertise in innovative products and technological know-how to bring about affordable and comfortable housing and to partner with CIDB to drive sustainable construction in the country," added Northcote. Other partners who contributed towards the development of the model house include PU Profile Sdn Bhd, a polyurethane products manufacturer that constructed the model house using Bayer's expertise in innovative products and technology, Square Panels, and Philips Malaysia which sponsored lighting for the house.

<http://www.thestar.com.my/Metro/Metro-Biz/2015/03/19/Building-it-better-Prototype-of-affordable-housing-unit-unveiled/>



Iris sees development potential in countries in the Pacific

Saturday, 21 February 2015

By: FINTAN NG

PROPERTY development will become Iris Corp Bhd's biggest earnings contributor by 2017 should plans put in place over the last two years bear fruit. While it is still early days, the agreements and proposals of the last few years is certainly setting the company on that path. The technology-based conglomerate, better known for its smart card solutions for passport and other identity documents,

is planning to develop property in Papua New Guinea's (PNG) capital, Port Moresby, the neighbouring Solomon Islands and the tiny island-nation of Palau. This is in addition to inking another deal last month to jointly develop 11.69ha of land in Bukit Jalil, Kuala Lumpur with Technology Park Malaysia Sdn Bhd, a government agency and current projects jointly developed with other Malaysian government and state government agencies.

Iris chief executive officer/group managing director Datuk Tan Say Jim sees a lot of potential in these countries located in the Pacific, given the need for quality residential and commercial properties. He jumped at an opportunity to develop property in PNG using Iris' proprietary industrialised building system (IBS) technology, called Koto, after a failed proposal to set up an e-passport system for the country. "I wouldn't be surprised that property revenue will overtake trusted identification solutions turnover by 2017," Tan tells StarBizWeek in Port Moresby recently. For the financial year ended March 31, 2014, the latest full-year available, trusted identification solutions' revenue of RM391mil is approximately two-thirds of full-year revenue of RM573.23mil. Iris has eight divisions with trusted identification solutions the bread-and-butter of the group. In comparison, the group's property development activities, which comes under the sustainable development division, posted RM75mil in revenue.

Iris' first property venture in PNG is Gerehu Heights, a 13ha gated project that it is jointly developing with Kida Maru Holdings Ltd with a gross development value (GDV) of RM300mil. In a private preview last May of the first of the project's four phases, the 50 units of single- and double-storey villas were sold out within two days with prices ranging from RM700,000 to RM1.6mil. The project is scheduled for completion by end-2016. The group also signed an agreement last September with the Central Province government and Jayacorp Holding Ltd to jointly develop a 303ha township located in the eastern extremities of Port Moresby known as Ilimo Estate with an estimated GDV of RM5bil to RM6bil. Also in the cards is a mixed project near the Solomon Islands' capital of Honiara with an estimated GDV of RM1bil but that project has not been firmed up. Central Province is the area surrounding Port Moresby.

The Port Moresby property market

Tan's optimistic view of the PNG property market is largely due to the dynamics of demand and supply as well as the nature of landholding in the South Pacific island nation, where most land is either communally owned or state-owned. As such, property development is restricted with activity, transactions and rentals largely restricted to Port Moresby. "I first came to PNG last September. When I looked at the houses that are being built or are available and the kind of rentals that are being commanded, I saw a tremendous opportunity," he says.

According to property experts in the country, only land that has been subdivided with individual titles and recognised as such by the government will have services such as roads and utilities. Because of such issues, subdivided prime land has a value premium and even wooden-and-zinc type residential properties on stilts can fetch from RM800,000 to well over RM1mil. Tan says it is not uncommon for middle-class Papuans including senior civil servants to live in such housing.

In contrast, expatriates either live in the hilly suburbs next to the central business district overlooking the Coral Sea or in gated communities in the northern suburbs. Century 21 sales associate Thomas Hola says Gerehu Heights, with its planned 290 units of single-and double-storey

units, is likely the largest project of its kind (by PNG standards) in the market. He says there are several game changers that Iris is bringing to the local property market besides the size of the project. "Most property launches will only have the 3D models of the units but with Gerehu Heights there is an actual show unit that potential homeowners can walk through and experience," he says.

Hola adds that most developers in Port Moresby selling to locals tend to build their houses close together and have not deviated much from the local wooden houses on stilts model or block residential units with a common corridor. He says examples of these projects include projects in the Castleknock, Carpenter and Yorkshire Estate neighbourhoods. These projects offer at most 20 units for sale. On the commercial property scene, the Waigani and Gordon districts to the north of the CBD has a mixture of non-descript single- and double-storey properties interspersed with together with a handful of malls. "Port Moresby needs more retail and warehouse properties," Hola points out. The CBD is where multi-storey office and residential properties can be found.

Another dimension to the local property scene is the security concern. Even housing on communally-held land is enclosed by a barrier of some sort and barb wire is often seen along the perimeter of these properties. For expatriates, the security issue translates to higher rents in the few gated communities in the capital, with monthly rental for a double-storey semi-detached house of RM26,000 to RM32,000 not unheard of.

Pacific expansion

Tan sees a future for Iris with its Koto technology in PNG and the surrounding Pacific nations. "There are a lot of Malaysians here and they are making good money developing property," he says. Iris has a 75% stake in the Gerehu Heights project and a 51% stake in the Ilimo Estate township development. Margins is one reason why Tan sees a future for Iris' property ventures in the region. "We're looking at 300 kina to 350 kina per sq ft (1 kina:RM1.30) compared with RM120 back home. From the construction margins alone, I'm already very excited. The property development business is ultimately about the value of the land. I've two bites of the cherry, construction margins and property development profits," he says.

As for the Ilimo township project, Iris is looking to build 5,000 or 6,000 properties encompassing landed and highrise residential, commercial and industrial properties. A factory for the IBS panels used in the construction will also be built in the township. There are plans to ship these panels to the Honiara project site once the joint venture is firmed up. Tan says property development is only part of the group's strategy in the region. Last April the group signed an agreement with Alvery Resources Ltd, to jointly develop 100,000ha of land in Oro province to the west of Port Moresby for agricultural and business purposes. Iris has a 35% stake in the venture.

<http://www.thestar.com.my/Business/Business-News/2015/02/21/Iris-property-gambit-It-sees-development-potential-in-countries-in-the-Pacific/?style=biz>



Iris Corp plans RM130m property venture in Bukit Jalil

Tuesday, 20 January 2015

KUALA LUMPUR: Iris Corporation Bhd plans to invest RM130mil in a property joint venture with Technology Park Malaysia Corp Sdn Bhd in Bukit Jalil. Iris Corp said on Tuesday it had signed a teaming agreement with Technology Park to combine their resources to develop, build and manage a proposed residential development project on a parcel of land in Phase 3 TPM Bukit Jalil. “The company proposes to invest in an initial investment sum estimated at RM130mil for the implementation of the first phase of the project.

“The estimated investment sum will be utilized for the project subject to and conditional upon the procurement of all approvals, fulfilment of conditions precedents and terms and conditions under the agreement,” it said. TPM is the beneficial owner of the land and it will provide 28.89 acres for the project. TPM shall sub-lease the land to the special purpose vehicle at a nominal consideration for the purpose of the project.

“Iris Corp shall play the role of investor, contractor and developer and shall inject and provide the investment to construct, develop, complete and manage the project at its own costs and expenses,” it said. Iris Corp said the JV would enable it to expand its business by constructing residential accommodations (including but not limited to town houses and hostels) and high rise apartments using the IRIS-KOTO Industrial Building System (IBS). The target market for the residential units would be students.

“This project will further synergise the efforts of the company and TPM in creating a holistic technology educational hub proposed to be established in TPM Bukit Jalil,” it said. TPM is a government agency under the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (MOSTI). Its core activities are to provide a comprehensive technopreneur and entrepreneurship programmes for

industry clusters in ICT, biotechnology and life sciences and providing advance engineering, ICT and incubation services.

<http://www.thestar.com.my/Business/Business-News/2015/01/20/Iris-Corp-plans-RM130m-property-venture-in-Bukit-Jalil/?style=biz>

Iris sees better performance in FY16

Tuesday, 22 September 2015

KUALA LUMPUR: Iris Corp Bhd anticipates a better performance for its 2016 financial year (FY16), driven by its trusted identification division, waste-to-energy incineration plant in Phuket, Thailand and property development segment. Its group managing director and chief executive officer Datuk Tan Say Jim, said the trusted identification division had submitted proposals in two countries. "We will hear news regarding the proposals within the next 90 days as we are actively pursuing it," he told reporters after the company's annual general meeting on Tuesday.

For the financial year ended March 31, 2015, Iris Corp recorded a pre-tax loss of RM17.04mil compared with a pre-tax profit of RM35.08mil previously, while revenue amounted to RM564.49mil from RM573.23mil. For the first quarter ended June 30, 2015, it registered pre-tax profit of RM1.18mil compared with a pre-tax loss of RM2.05mil in the same period a year ago while revenue was RM109.74mil against RM127.27mil.

On its sustainable and affordable Iris Koto industrialised building system for property development, he said the company had launched a housing project in Papua New Guinea last year and would start developing it by the second half of 2016. Domestically, Iris has submitted a proposal to the government for a project in Putrajaya under the 1Malaysia Civil Servants Housing Programme. "We have submitted a proposal to the government and within the next 60 days, we should hear some news regarding it," Tan said.

Iris had completed the Rimbunan Kaseh Smart Village projects for the government in five locations and had several other projects under construction, he said. The company is currently undertaking a project in Perak, will start the construction of a project in Sarawak and is halfway through the construction of the Rimbunan Kaseh Smart Village project in Kedah. – Bernama

<http://www.thestar.com.my/Business/Business-News/2015/09/22/Iris-sees-better-performance-in-FY16/?style=biz>

Pesona tipped for RM250mil contract

Monday, 23 March 2015

By: NG BEI SHAN

PETALING JAYA: Mid-sized contactor and developer Pesona Metro Holdings Bhd is tipped to be the frontrunner for a contract worth RM250mil in the Klang Valley, sources said. Sources said the final

announcement for the mixed project should be out soon, without giving a definite timeline. “The company is targeting to boost its order book to RM1bil from RM580mil since it expanded its capacity last year,” he said. The contract would be the company’s second win this year.

In February, the company bagged a RM172.73mil contract for roadworks from Gua Musang in Kelantan to Relong in Pahang. Works for the road project are expected to be over three years, starting March 17. The firm is actively tendering for new jobs worth RM1bil.

The construction firm’s other projects include Port Klang bridge, the Election Commission building in Putrajaya, the Government Building Complex in Johor, a hostel for University Malaysia Perlis (UniMAP) and high-end service apartment, The Mews. Besides construction, the company produces industrialised building system components. It also manufactures polyurethane architecture moulding and decorative items, which are mainly exported to the European market.

For its financial year ended Dec 31, 2014 (FY14), revenue was RM267.41mil or 9.92% lower compared with RM296.89mil in FY13. Net profit for the period was 30% down to RM8.22mil compared with RM11.72mil in the preceding year. The lower profit last year was mainly due to the completion of several projects as well as a depreciation charges following the purchase of construction machinery and equipment. Depreciation for the period jumped 68% to RM5.63mil from RM3.35mil in FY13.

Meanwhile, the company’s cash and cash equivalents were lower at RM43.17mil versus RM70.8mil a year earlier. Earlier this year, chairman Datuk Lee Tuck Fook said the company wants higher recurring income to buffer its construction earnings. One of the moves it made was the acquisition of SEP Resources (M) Sdn Bhd for RM29.15mil. SEP Resources holds a 22-year concession for managing and maintaining the UniMAP building on top of constructing the hostel for RM129.8mil. Late last year, the company rewarded its shareholders with a bonus issue of one warrant for every two shares held.

It declared a single-tier interim dividend of one sen, amounting to RM5.1mil, to shareholders. Its net asset per share stood at 17.4 sen as at Dec 31, 2014. Managing director Wie Hock Beng and non-independent non-executive director Wie Hock Kiong are the largest shareholders, owning a combined stake of about 60% in the company. The counter closed unchanged at 82 sen on Friday.

<http://www.thestar.com.my/Business/Business-News/2015/03/23/Pesona-tipped-for-RM250mil-contract/?style=biz>

The Malay Mail:

Putrajaya says will boost use of industrialised building system in housing industry

Sunday November 8, 2015



Second Finance Minister Datuk Seri Ahmad Husni Mohamad Hanadzlah speaking at a press conference after giving an interview to Radio PerakFM Nov 8 in Ipoh. — Bernama pic

IPOH, Nov 8 — The government will boost the use of the industrialised building system (IBS) in the housing industry, said Second Finance Minister, Datuk Seri Ahmad Husni Hanadzlah. He said the emphasis on the use of the IBS was to enable the rakyat to buy houses at lower prices. “Currently, the use of IBS has not grown. Imagine, if it grows and with Perbadanan PR1MA Malaysia and the Ministry of Urban Wellbeing, Housing and Local Government using the system, more people would be able to buy quality houses at lower prices,” he said.

Ahmad Husni said this at an interview with Perakfm at Radio Televisyen Malaysia here today. He said Syarikat Perumahan Negara Bhd has started to use the IBS to build the Rumah Mesra Rakyat. China used the system to build a 30-storey hotel, he said. “The use of IBS has also grown in the Philippines where it uses the system to build three-bedroom terrace houses. The houses were sold at low prices,” he said.

Meanwhile, Ahmad Husni said, the government did not control the prices of houses. Instead, he said, the government left it to the market to decide, taking into consideration the costs of building the houses. — Bernama

- See more at: <http://www.themalaymailonline.com/malaysia/article/putrajaya-says-will-boost-use-of-industrialised-building-system-in-housing#sthash.rIF19EjG.dpuf>

Najib: Government to boost human capital development to curb foreign labour

SEPTEMBER 10, 2015



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak said the Construction Industry Transformation Plan will serve as a platform for graduates from Akademi Binaan Malaysia, technical and vocational education training institutes to be hired as apprentices by industry players undertaking large projects. — Picture by Saw Siow Feng

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 10 — Enhancing human capital development is one of the initiatives outlined under the Construction Industry Transformation Plan (CITP) to reduce dependence on foreign labour, Datuk Seri Najib Razak said.

The prime minister said the proposed measures included streamlining construction-related courses, creating a training map to chart progress towards a skill trade, conducting curricula reviews, and ensuring up-to-date industry training content. “A specialist apprenticeship programme would be initiated,” he said at the launch of the five-day International Construction Week (ICW) 2015 themed ‘Building A Greener Future’ theme here, today. Najib, who is also finance minister, said the programme would be a collaboration between the governing body and industry players.

It will serve as a platform for graduates from Akademi Binaan Malaysia, technical and vocational education training institutes to be hired as apprentices by industry players undertaking large projects. One of the CITP’s initiatives is the introduction of a more stringent requirement to significantly reduce accidents and fatalities in the construction industry, he added. “This will ensure that all contractors bidding for a particular project to estimate adequately the costs to meet the safety and health requirement,” he said.

As part of the CITP’s thrusts, he said a Centre of Excellence (CoE) for Sustainable Construction would be established to promote and implement sustainable construction systems and practices. Najib said the centre was part of the government’s targets to showcase the Malaysian construction industry as a low carbon, sustainable building and infrastructure model, especially to Asean countries.

The CITP is also aimed at inducing faster adoption of Industrialised Building System (IBS), mechanisation and modern practices, he added. “This, together with the use of other technologies already available, as well as, with a healthy dose of innovation, will place Malaysia’s construction industry in good stead to achieve continuous growth whilst providing a good foundation for Malaysia’s construction players to expand internationally,” he said.

The prime minister expects the construction industry to gain a bigger number in the coming 11th Malaysia Plan as it recorded RM102 billion worth of projects in 2011 and grew incrementally to RM157 billion in 2014. He said the CITP, formed part of the 11th Malaysia Plan, was aimed at creating construction industry players that were sustainable at home and able to compete in the international arena.

The CITP is a comprehensive implementation plan, encompassing 18 initiatives from four strategic thrusts, namely quality, safety and professionalism; environment sustainability; productivity; and internalisation. “Each of the four strategic thrusts seeks to transform and improve the public and international image of the industry,” he said. Present were Works Minister Datuk Seri Fadillah Yusof, his deputy, Datuk Rosnah Abdul Rashid Shirlin, and Construction Industry Development Board chief executive Datuk Seri Judin Abdul Karim. — Bernama

<http://www.themalaymailonline.com/print/malaysia/najib-government-to-boost-human-capital-development-to-curb-foreign-labour>

MEA chief: Steady housing supply needed to make them more affordable

SEPTEMBER 23, 2015



Workers build homes and shops in a partially completed new township about 40km away from Pengerang Integrated Petroleum Complex in Pengerang, Johor, February 4, 2015. — Reuters pic

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 23 — A steady supply of housing at affordable prices and measures to improve the efficacy of the construction industry to deliver them are needed to resolve the property affordability issue. Malaysian Economic Association (MEA) President Tan Sri Mohd Sheriff Mohd Kassim said the stakeholders needed to appreciate the problems and find ways to resolve them. “If we don’t deal with the problems now, they will get bigger,” he told Bernama on the sidelines of a forum titled “Does greater prosperity come with less housing affordability” here today.

Organised by MEA, the forum was aimed at achieving a degree of convergence on what needed to be done to resolve the property affordability issue. Mohd Sheriff said the forum was prompted by a research on affordable housing conducted by the Khazanah Research Institute (KRI). KRI Managing Director Datuk Charon Mokhzani said if the issue is not resolved, property prices would keep rising across the country as what is happening in the capital and Penang. “Industry players should start looking for better ways of building houses, including using construction technology,” he said.

National Housing Department director Murali Jayabalan hoped the government would provide an allocation in the 2016 Budget to build 10,000 more affordable houses on top of the 30,000 units approved nationwide last year. “The houses will be priced between RM45,000 and RM300,000,” he said. He said the government would come out with a paper on the industrialised building system initiative and set up a housing databank to address the affordable housing issue. — Bernama

<http://www.themalaymailonline.com/print/malaysia/mea-chief-steady-housing-supply-needed-to-make-them-more-affordable>

Protasco presents six houses to families affected by Kelantan floods (few images)

SEPTEMBER 10, 2015



Newly completed homes for Orang Asli flood victims in Kg Teranik, Gua Musang which were built by EPIC Homes and sponsored by Roadcare (M) Sdn Bhd.

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 10 — Three Orang Asli families from remote Kampung Teranik who lost their homes to the massive floods that struck Kelantan last December were presented with new homes recently. Roadcare of Protasco sponsored the construction of three 800-square feet houses by EPIC

Homes, a social enterprise that builds safe homes, for Orang Asli communities using a modular design and prefabricated panels and components. Since the floods struck in December, Nazri A/L Labai and his wife Sarinah A/P Acai had been sheltering in a narrow lean-to at a neighbour's house with their four children, one of whom is handicapped.



Part of the Orang Asli community in Kg Teranik, Gua Musang at one of the three houses built by EPIC Homes.

“For almost eight months, we lived under the shelter of a piece of wood leaning against a wall,” said Sarinah. “Thank you for our new homes. We have new hope in life.” EPIC homes are designed to be sustainable with rainwater harvesting and filtration, waste management systems built in. It took about two weeks to raise each of the three homes in Kampung Teranik, a small, isolated Orang Asli settlement, four hours' drive from Gua Musang, Kelantan. “We believe in rebuilding lives in the communities we operate in. Protasco has been actively involved in earlier post flood aid efforts. Now, it is time for proper rehabilitation,” said Datuk Ir Jamal bin Datuk Nasir, Chief Operating Officer of Roadcare (M) Sdn Bhd. “These new houses will provide much awaited safety and security for the 18 affected flood victims,” he added.



The back view of the temporary shelter belonging to single mother Puan Ruzaini.

With four bedrooms, two toilets and one shower each, each family will have a spacious and comfortable home, added Nenggiri ADUN Mat Yusoff bin Ghani. Meanwhile, another three houses

were also completed in Kampung Kolam Mas, Galas and handed over to their new owners last month. Single mum, Puan Ruzaini bt Abdullah receiving the key to her new house, presented by Galas ADUN, YB Ab Aziz Yusoff and Roadcare (M) Sdn Bhd. One of the new owners is single mother Ruzaini Abdullah who in with her three children ranging in ages from 17 to 22.



Single mum, Puan Ruzaini bt Abdullah (in purple tudung) and her children in front of their new house, presented by Protasco and Roadcare (M) Sdn Bhd.

Ruzaini, whose husband died 10 years ago, said the timing was perfect as her youngest daughter Nor Mashitah bt Zainal Abidin is sitting for her SPM examination this year. “It will be easier for her to do her revision now.” Nor Mashitah added, “With a room to read in, I can focus better.” For the last eight months, a makeshift canvas has served as a temporary roof for this family. “Our neighbours have been very helpful in assisting with what we need every day,” Nor Masbitah said.

The new house also provides the family with a greater sense of security. “Now we do not have to trouble our neighbours to look after our belongings when we are at work or in school. And we don’t have to worry about our things getting wet when it rains.” said Ruzaini. All three houses in Kampung Kolam Mas were completed in time for the Merdeka celebrations. This means Roadcare, a subsidiary of Protasco would have built six new homes in total for flood victims in Kelantan. As part of Protasco Group’s mission to build and support sustainable communities, Roadcare team has plans in the pipeline to build more new homes for still displaced flood victims in Kelantan and other affected states.

<http://www.themalaymailonline.com/print/malaysia/protasco-presents-six-houses-to-families-affected-by-kelantan-floods>

Prefabricated houses to be built for flood victims, says Fadillah

JULY 09, 2015

MACHANG, July 9 — The federal government will use the Industrialised Building System (IBS) to build permanent houses for flood victims in Kelantan. Works Minister Datuk Seri Fadillah Yusof said the system would be extended to the state if the pilot project to build eight houses under the IBS in Pahang succeeded. “The IBS or prefabricated house is quicker to build, which is around 60 to 65 days, compared to the conventional method of 75 days. However, the cost is still the same.

“The federal government will make every effort to expedite the construction of the permanent houses for the flood victims, especially in Gua Musang and Kuala Krai,” he said. He said this at a press conference after a one-day working visit to Pasir Puteh and Machang, here today. Fadillah said the main challenge being faced in the construction process was the land issue in Bertam, Gua Musang and Lebir, Kuala Krai.

“Even though there is no objection against the proposed sites, a problem occurs when investigation revealed that the sites were located in remote, forested and hilly areas. “To date, the construction of houses for 810 families in the two provinces is still pending because of the problem,” he said. He said the construction of 92 permanent houses had been completed so far, including 41 units in Kelantan while 298 units were still under construction.— Bernama

<http://www.themalaymailonline.com/print/malaysia/prefabricated-houses-to-be-built-for-flood-victims-says-fadillah>

168 permanent houses to be handed to Kelantan flood victims before Hari Raya

MAY 26, 2015

KUALA LUMPUR, May 26 — Of the 261 units of new permanent houses to be built by the federal government for flood victims in Kelantan, 168 will be handed over before Aidilfitri. The 261 units comprise the first phase of 1,255 housing units to be built by the federal government for flood victims in Kelantan. Meanwhile, seven units have been fully completed, according to a statement by the Post-Flood Recovery Unit (UPPB), Prime Minister’s Department (PMD), here, today. “In order to expedite the construction period, the new permanent houses will be constructed under the Industrialised Building System which enables a house to be completed in 30 days compared with 75 days, if implemented conventionally,” the statement said.

The statement was issued to clarify allegations by DAP National Organising Secretary Anthony Loke that the party had managed to build more houses to be handed over to the flood victims in Kelantan compared with the federal government. Anthony Loke was quoted by news portal The Malaysian Insider yesterday as claiming that Putrajaya could only build five houses for the Kelantan flood victims before Ramadan, compared with 22 houses built under the project ‘Impian Kelantan’ by the party (DAP) in collaboration with non-governmental organisations and that these were expected to be handed over to the owners on June 11.

According to the statement, the federal government remains committed to its promise to build the 1,255 new permanent house units, and repair 1,209 houses of flood victims in the state. “While there are some constraints in its execution because there is no land to accommodate as many as 580 victims and the status of dubious land titles which involves 407 victims, the government is confident all this can be resolved quickly with the cooperation of the state government,” the statement said. — Bernama

<http://www.themalaymailonline.com/print/malaysia/168-permanent-houses-to-be-handed-to-kelantan-flood-victims-before-hari-ray>

Hishamuddin: Two pre-fabricated bridges planned for flood-hit Pahang village

JANUARY 03, 2015

KUALA LIPIS, Jan 3 — A floating bridge, also known as a jetfloat, and a Compact Bailey bridge will be constructed soon to temporarily replace the Sungai Tanum Bridge in Kampung Aur Gading, which collapsed during the floods. Defence Minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein said the construction of the jetfloat and the prefabricated bridge will be undertaken by the Malaysian Armed Forces and the Public Works Department.

“The jetfloat is 50 metres long and two metres wide and can be used by motorcyclists and pedestrians only, while the Compact Bailey is 40 metres long and can be used by vehicles not exceeding 60 tonnes. “They are needed to enable the residents to enter and exit Kuala Lipis and to facilitate travel when schools reopen soon,” he told reporters during a visit together with Works Minister Datuk Seri Fadillah Yusof to Kuala Lipis to inspect the damaged Sungai Tanum Bridge.

Fadillah and Hishammuddin also inspected two other bridges on the same river, which were damaged by the floods. The Sungai Tanum concrete bridge is the main route for Kampung Aur Gading villagers to travel to the Kuala Lipis town, which takes about half an hour.

The collapse of the bridge has affected 3,000 residents of Kampung Aur Gading, Kampung Berkam and Kampung Bukit Betong from commuting and the only route now is via the Felda area, which can only be traversed by 4WD vehicles. — Bernama

<http://www.themalaymailonline.com/print/malaysia/hishamuddin-two-pre-fabricated-bridges-planned-for-flood-hit-pahang-village>