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Zuraida (front) officiating the launch of MGB-Sany Group's new IBS plant in Nilai last Saturday, witnessed by (from left) MGB executive director and CEO Datuk Richard Lim, chairman Datuk Abdul Majit Ahmad Khan, Hock San and Wang. – **ASHRAF SHAMSUL/THESUN**

Full adoption of IBS for govt affordable home projects by 2024

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NILAI: The Housing and Local Government Ministry (KPKT) wants all affordable housing projects under KPKT to be built using the Industrialised Building System (IBS) by 2024, said Minister Zuraida Kamaruddin.

She said the 100,000 affordable houses to be built this year under KPKT's plan are of a combination of conventional and IBS methods, of which IBS adoption is about 30-40% now.

"As we progress, by the third or fourth year we should be able to do 50-60% and by the fifth year onwards (2024) we should be able to go 100% on IBS for the affordable homes under the national affordable homes project," she told a press conference after opening MGB Bhd's IBS precast concrete plant last Saturday.

With an investment of RM40 million and built-up area spanning 119,017 sq ft, MGB's new IBS plant will produce, market, sell and install a range of IBS components from precast concrete panels, concrete wall panels, concrete slabs to column and beam. The plant is a joint venture between MGB and Sany Construction Industry Development (M) Sdn Bhd, a subsidiary of China's Sany Group Co Ltd.

Zuraida said current IBS adoption in the country produces

about 19,000 units of properties per year, including for affordable homes. The addition of MGB's new plant will now increase production by another 4,000 units to 23,000 units per year.

In May 2018, MGB, a subsidiary of LBS Bina Group Bhd, deployed its first mobile IBS plant at LBS Alam Perdana township with a production capacity of 2,000 units of properties per year and has produced and supplied for the pilot project of 673 units of double storey terrace houses in LBS Alam Perdana.

With IBS, the pilot project was completed within 12 months instead of 18 months, which led to a saving of 33% on construction time. It also reduced dependency on manual labour by 31%, achieving a 49% reduction in total on-site labour costs. Combined with the newly-launched Nilai plant, MGB will be able to produce 4,000 units of properties every year.

"To us, the costs may be the same but IBS saves on time. The quality is good and labour costs are reduced," said LBS and MGB group managing director Tan Sri Lim Hock San.

He said the new IBS plant would put MGB on a firmer footing to capitalise on the expected rising demand for IBS and enable it to broaden its product lines to cater to the needs of different housing projects. He said currently,

production from the new plant caters mainly to internal projects, starting with Kita@Cybersouth. When the plant is operating at full capacity, it hopes to expand its supply to government and external housing projects.

To date, LBS has delivered over 35,000 affordable homes, while MGB has delivered more than 15,000 units of affordable properties to the nation.

Lim said MGB has been using IBS for more than 10 years and previously its focus was mainly on IBS steel formworks and aluminium formworks. Today, it is stepping up its efforts in adopting IBS system, by expanding its operation into IBS precast concrete, which it believe is the future in the construction industry.

On the plant, MGB is looking at breaking even this year and hopes to be profitable next year.

Sany Construction Industry managing director Wang Zhenyi said in 2016, the Sany industrialised housing entered Malaysia. Within three years, it has invested in three IBS plants and participated in three affordable housing projects while nurturing many local industrialised housing talents.

Through the joint venture, it will commit to the transformation and upgrading of traditional construction to IBS construction for a fully developed industrialised housing system in Malaysia.