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## INDUSTRIALISED BUILDING SYSTEM

# Govt, private sector urged to make IBS mandatory in 3 years

**KUALA LUMPUR:** The government and private sector must take steps in making the industrialised building system (IBS) mandatory within three years, said Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Abdul Rahman Dahlan.

However, he cautioned that like many other crucial policy shifts, the IBS implementation would face many challenges ahead.

"It is important to understand that IBS is no longer a new issue in Malaysia.

"As a matter of fact, the IBS Strategic Plan was published by the Construction Industry Development Board (CIDB) way back in 1999 after the formation of the IBS Steering Committee.

"The government and the private sector should now discuss how to make mandatory IBS a reality, with a deadline in mind, instead of postponing it once again.

"Since the Real Estate and Housing Developers' Association Malaysia (REHDA) has been in

talks with the government on giving added incentives to developers who voluntarily adopt IBS, I do not see why REHDA cannot take this dialogue further by making IBS mandatory within three years.

"We can and should make this happen, for the good of the people and the country," he said in a statement yesterday.

Rahman was commenting after REHDA Institute chairman Datuk Jeffrey Ng Tiong Lip wrote in a local daily about making IBS mandatory within three years.

In the article, Jeffrey urged the government to engage property developers before making it mandatory.

Rahman said REDHA president Datuk Seri Fateh Iskandar Mohamed Mansor had previously echoed the same sentiment, saying the government must take the lead by making it compulsory for government projects to implement the modular construction method.

Fateh was quoted as saying at

the 19th National Housing and Property Summit last year that the government needed to take the lead by telling the developers that 60 to 70 per cent of the contracts awarded by the government must use IBS, or they won't get the contract.

"I understand that there are some contentions on whether IBS can indeed reduce property prices.

"However, most industry players agree that the adoption of IBS could slash construction periods and labour costs by as much as 50 per cent, ultimately reduce dependency on foreign labour and ensure a safe and clean construction environment," said Rahman.

Rahman said for a technology that has been advocated by the government for close to two decades, the adoption rate still remained low.

The industry players would still be resistant to change so long as foreign labour was readily available at a low cost, he said.