

IBS solution for low-cost housing construction

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TAWAU: The rapid, cost-saving and durable interlocking brick construction system (IBS) could provide the answer to providing low-cost housing, said deputy Minister of Higher Education Datuk Dr Mary Yap Kain Ching.

Launching three houses built with the system here yesterday, Mary who is also Member of Parliament of Tawau, commended Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM) and Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) for inventing the system which saves up to 20 per cent building cost.

Prof Abdul Karim Mirasa, Dean of the Faculty of Engineering, said an IBS house is estimated to be able to last 50 years.

Although the 650 sq foot house took only two weeks to build and costs 20 per cent lower than a house built conventionally, the durability is

without question, he said yesterday at the launching of Rumah Komuniti Parlimen Tawau, Translational Research Project and Ministry of Higher Education's New Blue Ocean Strategy (NBOS) programme at Jalan Bukit Quoin here.

The three Rumah Komuniti houses were built with a RM1 million research grant of the two universities.

Mary, who officiated the event, said Rumah Komuniti is aimed at helping the needy people in Tawau to have decent housing.

"These houses were built with the IBS approach developed by the universities, and by students who were able to see the realization of theories.

"The students benefited because they were able to translate something from paper into reality, and learnt to appreciate a bit of volunteerism."

The Rumah Komuniti pro-

ject aims to build 10 houses with the IBS approach, three of them have been handed over to their owners while seven are under construction.

Lo Ngum Ngo, 65, could not hold back her emotion when asked about her feeling of moving from her previous house that had broken walls and leaking roofs. She could only mumble repeated thanks to the government for the 3-room house. Lo has five children and 10 grand children.

Lo's new house complete with water and power supply were built by 10 students from UMS, UTM as well as the Vocational College and Community College here.

Also present at the event were Vice Chancellor of UMS Prof Datuk Dr D Kamarudin D Mudin, and UTM's director of the engineering faculty Prof Dr Mahmood Tahir.



Mary Yap launching Rumah Komuniti in Tawau yesterday.