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Mechanism

HAVE MECHANISM TO ENFORCE POLICY ON LOW-COST HOUSING, SAYS KOH

PULAU PINANG, March 20 (Bernama) -- There is a need for a mechanism to overcome the problem of enforcing the low-cost housing policy in the country, Pulau Pinang Chief Minister Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon said today.

The mechanism should be backed by enactments or by-laws to ensure housing developers adhered to regulations, he added.

He said there should be understanding between state governments and the Housing and Local Government Ministry to streamline enforcement of the policy on low-cost housing as well as that on bumiputera allocation to avoid different forms of action.

Dr Koh was asked to comment on the statement by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad yesterday that the Cabinet had decided that local authorities should issue Certificate of Fitness (CF) within six months after the completion of building construction.

Dr Mahathir said other unrelated conditions like the special 30 percent quota for bumiputera should not prevent the issuing of CFs which could lead to losses to both developers and buyers.

Recently, the Pulau Pinang government directed local councils in the state to withhold CFs if developers failed to meet the condition requiring them to fulfill the quota for low-cost units in their projects.

Dr Koh said the state government respected the Cabinet decision but it hoped a more concrete mechanism or guideline could be formulated since there was no law to ensure that the quota was met before the issuing of CFs.

"What was raised at the meeting of Menteri Besar and Chief Ministers with the Prime Minister is that we need a mechanism or a set of guidelines to ensure the policy on low-cost housing as well as that on bumiputera allocation was enforced," he added.

He said that was why the Pulau Pinang government used the CF issue as a way to ensure the state housing policy was adhered to since it did not have other means to act against errant developers.

The Pulau Pinang government had no intention of causing problems for developers, he added.

The issue would be discussed with the ministry and a study was being conducted on whether to set up a special committee at state-level since it involved regulations at the federal level.

Dr Koh said by withholding CFs, errant developers came forward to explain their problems. -- BERNAMA

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