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LOW-COST HOUSE PRICE INCREASE CARRIES RESPONSIBILITY FOR HIGHER QUALITY

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 29 (BERNAMA) -- Housing developers recognise that the increase in the price of low-cost houses carries with it a greater responsibility to provide dwellings of higher quality.

"With the price increase we expect to deliver a dwelling that is socially (and) environmentally conducive to humane and happy living," the Housing Developers Association (HDA) Federal Territory (KL)/Selangor branch chairman Eddy Chen said tonight.

Speaking at the branch annual dinner here, he said the price increase would make building low-cost houses viable, and developers in the Federal Territory and Selangor in particular would benefit from the new price reality.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said recently that the price of low-cost houses would in future be fixed according to location.

The government felt that the RM25,000 ceiling set more than 20 years ago was no longer realistic because land prices and the people's income had increased.

Chen said: "We totally agreed with this statement, a statement that we have been waiting for the last few years."

This would give new impetus to the challenge facing housing developers to meet the government's low-cost housing target under the Seventh Malaysia Plan, he added.

Chen also expressed support for the setting up of the National Housing Company announced in the 1997 National Budget unveiled last Friday.

It was a positive step in the direction of fulfilling the housing needs of the nation, he said.

He also said the general outlook for the properties industry looked promising in the next few years but there would be challenges for certain segments of the industry, particularly in the retail commercial and medium-high to high-cost condominium market. -- BERNAMA

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