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## Buying low-cost houses for rental to squatters

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KLANG, Sat. - The Federal Government may buy low-cost houses from developers, especially those in the Klang Valley, to be rented out to squatters whose dwellings have to be demolished to make way for development projects.

Housing and Local Government Minister Datuk Dr Ting Chew Peh said the move was one of several being studied by the ministry to speed up the relocation of squatters.

He said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad had directed his ministry to study the proposal to complement efforts already taken by the State Government to rid the country of squatter colonies especially in areas where their presence has hampered Government development projects.

"Dr Mahathir has also met with representatives from the ministry, Selangor State Government and Kuala Lumpur City Hall to discuss the squatter problem in the Klang Valley.

"The Prime Minister is very concerned over the problem and was disturbed at the high number of those who have no proper place to live. He has also directed the representatives to come up with ways to overcome the problem," he told reporters after the oath-taking ceremony for Selangor MCA Youth last night.

He said the ministry would table a report to the Cabinet once the study on the proposal had been completed.

Ting did not say when the report would be completed but said that if it was accepted by the Cabinet, it would first be implemented in Selangor and Kuala Lumpur where the squatter population was the highest.

"If the programme succeeds, it will be extended to other States with large squatter populations like Johor and Penang," he said.

The Government, he said, was committed to tackling the squatter problem but it would take a long time before it could be successfully overcome.

Earlier in his speech, Ting urged MCA members to work harder to acquire new knowledge, especially technology-based knowledge, to enable them to survive in the information age.

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