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Abdullah-homes

AGENCIES TO SUBMIT HOUSING PROGRESS REPORT FORTNIGHTLY

KUALA LUMPUR, April 29 (Bernama) -- Ministries and related agencies, including those at the state-level, have been directed to submit fortnightly progress report on construction of low-cost homes to the Implementation and Coordination Unit (ICU), Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said today.

The move was to ensure accelerated implementation of public housing projects, he said.

"We want to ensure fast action on decisions already taken. No more unnecessary delays," he said.

Bureaucratic red tape should not be allowed to deprive the masses from benefiting from public low- and medium-cost housing projects, he said.

Abdullah was speaking to reporters after launching an information technology centre and home page for Taman Equine in Seri Kembangan here.

Abdullah said the National Economic Action Council (NEAC) chaired by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad would go through these progress reports.

"The NEAC wants the construction of low- and medium-cost homes to be expedited," said Abdullah, who is also NEAC deputy chairman.

Although construction of public low- and medium-cost housing projects was progressing satisfactorily, the government felt that the pace could be accelerated further, he said.

In his speech earlier, Abdullah assured the poor and low-income earners that they would not be neglected and that the government was constantly drawing up new policies aimed at improving their lot.

Abdullah said for instance, it had set aside a supplementary allocation of RM600 million for low-cost housing.

He said 35,000 units of low-cost homes would be built as part of a squatter relocation programme and 15,000 more for the rural hardcore poor.

So far 90,032 units or 45 per cent of the targeted number of low-cost homes have been completed with the public sector erecting 26,774 units or 44.6 per cent, Abdullah said.

He expected the National Housing Company, which was established in 1997 with a RM2-billion revolving capital, would offer more homes costing RM150,000 and below.

Up to last October, the company approved RM733 million in bridging loans to put up 50,725 units of homes of which 13,644 units were low-cost, 13,482 units medium-low cost and 35,599 units medium cost, he added.

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