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Cuepacs-Housing

BUILD LOW-COST HOUSES AT PUTRAJAYA, CUEPACS URGES GOVT

IPOH, May 23 (Bernama) -- Cuepacs, the country's largest public service employees union, has asked the government to build low-cost houses at the new federal administrative capital in Putrajaya to cater for the large number of civil servants moving there from June onwards.

In making the call, its president Siva Subramaniam said developers were focusing on building only medium- and high-cost houses in areas surrounding Putrajaya about 50km from Kuala Lumpur.

As the bulk of the civil service comprised workers in the support group who could ill afford such homes, the shift to Putrajaya would be a financial burden on them, he told a press conference today.

Siva said that he had brought the matter up with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

According to Siva, the prime minister's response was encouraging.

"I am sure something positive will be done soon," said Siva after the launching of Taman Bercham Raya by Perak Menteri Besar Tan Sri Ramli Ngah Talib here.

Prior to the launching of the low-cost housing project, the state government, Cuepacs and Zaman Teladan Sdn Bhd, the developer and subsidiary of the Emkay Group of Companies, signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU).

Siva said he had also brought up the matter with Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Halim Ali who promised serious consideration.

Earlier, Ramli said Perak would exceed its target of building 17,200 low-cost units under the Seventh Malaysian Plan, thanks to a state government "crash programme" which has seen 8,000 units already completed and 10,000 more due for completion by the end of next year.

The programme expedited approvals for low-cost housing projects in line with the emphasis on stimulating the vital housing and construction sector as part of national economic recovery efforts.

For example, Ramli said, work on Taman Bercham Raya would start next week, just five weeks after the developer obtained state approval and during which time it also completed site preparations and put up a model house.

Emkay's executive chairman Datuk Mustapha Kamal said that under the MOU priority would be given to eligible civil servants to buy a portion of the 1,439 low-cost housing schemes the company would develop in three areas in Perak namely Taman Bercham Raya, Taman Bercham Jaya and Taman Ulu Kinta Jaya.

The company received altogether 2,037 applications, including 702 from civil servants, for the low-cost units.

As for Taman Bercham Raya, the first of the three projects, he said 746 units costing RM32,000 each would be built.

The company also provided a one-stop centre at the site for successful applicants to seek end-financing for up to 95 per cent provided by Arab-Malaysian Bank and Malayan Banking Bhd.

For a loan of RM31,350 (which is 95 per cent of RM33,000) on which nine per cent interest is charged and repayable over 25 years, the monthly repayment is RM258.

-- BERNAMA

MR RYN