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Speed up approvals for low-cost homes, Ting urges States

KUALA LUMPUR, Tues. - Housing and Local Government Minister Datuk Dr Ting Chew Peh today said State Governments should expedite approvals to developers to build low-cost houses.

"The speed with which this is carried out is still unsatisfactory," he said, adding that Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad had written to all State Governments instructing them of this.

"It is important to build more low-cost houses as this is a sub-sector that can help revive the country's economy besides providing job opportunities.

"The Federal Government is also making efforts towards this end and will build 35,000 low-cost houses at a cost of RM1.4 billion in the Federal Territory. This comes under the Program Perumahan Rakyat."

Ting said this after addressing the National Housing Summit at the Sunway Lagoon Resort Hotel.

Other problems facing the low-cost housing industry include the high cost or unsuitability of land.

On the proposed point system for housing developers, Ting said the ministry was confident there would be no objections over its implementation.

"The intention of the system is not to penalise anyone but to safeguard house buyers. However, the parties affected will be consulted first before it is implemented. The ministry secretary-general has met with the Housing Developers Association Malaysia and will be meeting other parties soon."

Under the point system, developers who had a good track record would be given a green licence, those with minor problems a yellow licence and those with bad records a red licence. New developers will be given a white licence.

On amendments to the Uniform Building Bylaw 1984 to enable developers to get a certificate of fitness for their projects within two weeks, Ting said it was still awaiting the Attorney-General's approval.

In his address, Ting said the categories of houses built at present could not meet the needs of consumers in terms of their income and location.

"Those from lower or middle income groups still have problems securing houses. As such, housing development should be well planned and houses built in accordance to the needs of the public. Those in the industry should, therefore, keep in mind the country's policies when embarking on projects."

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