

# New strategy to accelerate building of affordable, quality low-cost houses

Not 2 1 SEP 2002

THE Housing and Local Government Ministry will be implementing a new strategy to accelerate the construction of low-cost housing to provide more opportunities for the lower-income group to own quality and affordable houses.

The strategy will allow the ministry to determine the needs for low-cost housing, identify sites and acquire land besides calling for tenders and constructing houses for sale.

Proceeds from the sales will be ploughed into a revolving fund while end-financing for house buyers will be provided by financial institutions, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said.

He said next year, the Government

was allocating nearly RM1 billion for various public low-cost housing projects while the interests of the poor will continue to be safeguarded.

A total of RM190.9 million is being allocated for programmes such as the Development of Mindset, Development of Urban Society and Bumi-putera Unit Trust Fund to benefit 67,200 people.

Dr Mahathir said to achieve the Government's objective of zero squatters by 2005, a sum of RM700.6 million was being allocated for the implementation of 51 projects being continued and 13 new projects involving 65,778 housing units.

And under the house ownership programme, RM202 million is being

allocated for the construction of 6,000 housing units.

Children from poor families also benefit from the Budget.

A total of RM470 million a year will be spent on primary school pupils under the programme to supply food supplements and textbook loans as well as school uniforms and others.

And to reduce the burden of poor families, the Government has proposed to provide a one-off allocation of RM120 a year in cash to every student from poor families for uniforms and school paraphernalia, involving an annual expenditure of RM87.8 million which is expected to benefit 730,000 students.