

**S'gor gov't challenges MCA to debate land premiums**  
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**By Joseph Sipalan**

The Selangor state government today challenged MCA Selangor to a public debate over the new system of residential lease renewal recently adopted in the state.

Faekah Husin, political secretary to the menteri besar, said MCA Selangor's Theng Book had blindly accused the state government of "cheating" the public of full home ownership without knowing what he was talking about.

She turned the tables on Theng Book - who is MCA Selangor's public services and complaints department chief - accusing him instead of representing BN cronies who are now "pressured" by the new premium structure.

ngo pro selangor government rally 230111 faekahFaekah (left) claimed that random checks carried out by the state government on thousands of acres of land handed over to BN cronies found that none had ever bothered to pay the land premiums over the past decade.

"The government has since decided to cancel the ownership of these lands due to their failure to pay the premiums on time.

"There have been numerous appeals received by the Menteri Besar's office asking to revert to the old premiums. Theng (Book) is the spokesperson for this 'tortured' group," she said in a statement.

Faekah was responding to Theng Book's claims yesterday that the state government is depriving Selangor residents full ownership of their homes through a RM1,000 extension scheme for their lease.

mca anti ong dinner puchong 160508 theng bookTheng Book (right) accused the state government of misleading the public into taking up the new scheme, which he described as no better than a temporary occupational lease (TOL).

Faekah said it is clear that Theng Book's accusations are a ploy to revive his and MCA's political fortunes and not in the interests of the people.

"We also want Theng (Book) and MCA to apologise to the Selangor state government and the staff of the Selangor Land and Mines Department who have worked hard to come up with this formula for the benefit of the rakyat," she said.

Theng Book clueless of new system

Meanwhile, Land and Local Government law expert Derek Fernandez slammed Theng Book for shooting his mouth off without even knowing the subject matter.

He explained that while the RM1,000 scheme does not allow homeowners to sell their properties to third-party buyers unless they pay the full premium, the whole point is to give vulnerable groups peace of mind in extending their lease at a low cost.

government appeal on allah case 060110 herald lawyer derek fernandezDerek (left) stressed that the policy is to make sure senior citizens and homeowners who cannot afford to pay the premiums at market value do not need to worry about paying too much to continue living where they are.

The policy is not designed to create a windfall for owners of leasehold land, but to help senior citizens of Selangor who want to live in their homes and are unable to pay the normal premium to extend their leases because they are too old to take loans or repay loans," he said.

Derek pointed out that it would be unfair on property owners who have paid out the full premiums on their houses if homeowners who take up the RM1,000 scheme are given the same free hand in selling their property to third parties.

"If they want to sell, then they have to pay the premium. If you can afford to pay the premium, then you don't need the RM1,000 scheme," he explained.

Derek went further to say that even if homeowners decide to pay the full premium, they can still enjoy a 30 percent discount if it is paid within the first six months.

"Of course if you can afford, it's better to go for full premium and take 30 percent discount as market values rise over time. So no one is being cheated, the policy is to help those who can't afford but want to live there with their families.

"Under the previous administration, nothing was done to allow leases to be renewed without conditions or restrictions on transferability for RM1,000, so why criticise now?"

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