

PM: Gov't revived 75-pct of abandoned house projects

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The government has rehabilitated 74 per cent of abandoned housing projects, Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak said today.

He said 10.7 per cent more or 23 projects were in the process of rehabilitation while 15.3 per cent or 33 projects were in the planning stage.

"Government intervention in rehabilitating housing projects is in line with its objective to champion and give preference to the people's interests," he said when handing over house keys of the Bandar Salak Perdana redevelopment project here.

Najib, who is also the finance minister, handed over the keys in a symbolic gesture to five purchasers of houses in Bandar Salak Perdana, a project that had remained abandoned for 12 years.

The prime minister said it was beyond the responsibility of the government to rehabilitate abandoned private sector housing projects because the house purchase was a transaction between the buyers and a private company.

"If the government were to state that it was not its responsibility, no one can blame the government for that. It is the responsibility of the original developer.

"As the government is a concerned one, we have worked out a method to revive abandoned housing projects. This is a special additional measure of the government," he said.

Najib said Malaysia Building Society Berhad (MBSB), a government-linked company, revives abandoned houses on the government's directive.

"This has helped to raise the property value from RM140,000 a unit to RM400,000 besides creating a new growth centre," he said.

A million affordable homes

Bandar Salak Perdana was previously known as Taman Kenanga.

It was declared abandoned on Dec 31, 2002, after the developer faced financial problems. The project has been redeveloped by MBSB and NCT United Development Sdn Bhd.

The rehabilitation of the abandoned project was completed in two years with an injection of funds totalling RM213 million.

The rehabilitation encompassed four phases covering 369 units of double-storey terrace

house, 180 units of 2-1/2-storey terrace house and 164 units of medium-cost apartment. A total of 713 buyers and house owners were involved.

Najib said the rehabilitation of abandoned housing projects was also a government measure to achieve one million units of affordable housing in five years.

Meanwhile, Deputy Urban Well-being, Housing and Local Government Minister Halimah Mohd Sadique said that between 2009 and Oct 31 this year, there were 215 abandoned private housing projects involving 59,748 units of houses and 39,691 purchasers.

Of these, 159 projects involving 43,768 units of houses and 28,714 purchasers had been revived, she said.

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