

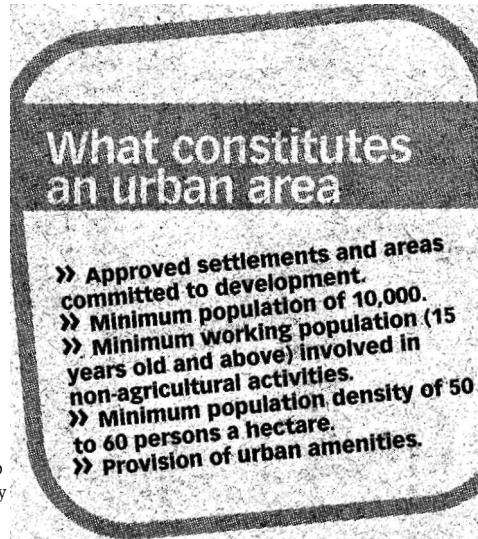
# 100 more urban areas by 2020

by **Liew-Ann Phang**  
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

KUALA LUMPUR: By 2020, when Malaysia is expected to achieve developed nation status, the number of urban settlements will grow from 144 now to 245. That is a 70% increase over 14 years.

Federal Town and Country Planning Department director-general Datuk Mohd Fadzil Mohd Khir told *theSun* the urban population in Malaysia makes up 65% of the total population, exceeding the 2000 global ratio of 50%.

The biggest issue the department faces in drawing up the National Urbanisation Policy (NUP) is the increasing urban



population, which gives rise to other problems, he said.

These include the worsening air quality and noise levels, and the pressure for more job creation.

- The current ratio of public to private transportation is about 10:90, while the department's model for the Ninth Malaysia Plan is 70:30.

"In 2004, we achieved most of the standards for housing and jobs. But there is a reduction in safety as crime rates are still high, and environmental standards need improvement" Mohd Fadzil said, citing Malaysia's nine most polluted rivers in some urban areas.

He said the NUP's objective

was to develop planned, progressive and sustainable cities while addressing issues of local authorities, heritage site preservation and the need for the Malaysian identity to thrive in small settlements and big cities.

The NUP's six priorities are:

- » Creation of efficient and sustainable urbanisation.
- » Development of a resilient, dynamic and efficient urban transportation system.
- >> Establishment of an integrated and efficient urban transportation system
- >> Provision of quality urban services, infrastructure and utilities, Creation of a conducive urban living environment with a distinct identity, and
- » Establishing effective urban governance.

The need for an NUP was mooted in the Eighth Malaysia Plan. It was completed early this year.

It will be launched in conjunction With World Town Planning Day, themed *Towards Livable Cities - The Asean Way*, by Housing and Local Government Minister Datuk Seri Ong Ka Ting today.

A two-day convention, which begins tomorrow, is jointly organised by the Malaysian Institute of Planners, the Malaysian Association of Town and Country Planners and the Malaysia Board of Town Planners. It will see countries sharing their experiences in achieving livable cities.