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# Call to revive Razak housing policy

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**KUALA LUMPUR:** The Tun Abdul Razak Housing Policy, which provides alternative housing for estate workers who face eviction from their quarters, should be revived.

In making the call yesterday, the Human Rights Commission of Malaysia, or Suhakam, said the 1973 policy had proved successful in the Glenmarie area in Shah Alam and Thennamaram in Batang Berjuntai.

"Both are successful housing areas today and examples of responsible compensation for estate workers," said Suhakam board member Datuk Siva Subramaniam Nagarathnam.

The policy was a RM10 million initiative by the second prime minister as a means to provide housing for estate workers whose quarters had been reclaimed for development purposes.

Siva Subramaniam yesterday met with 30 workers from five oil palm estates who are also facing a similar predicament.

Led by Dr Jeyakumar Devaraj of the Marginalised People's Network, the workers, who claimed to be fourth generation employees with the estates, were angry that their loyalty and hard work had been ignored and they had not been properly compensated when their quarters were reclaimed.

"All this while, the workers were paid only RM16 a day.

"But they were given the assurance that their housing, utility bills and basic schooling needs for their children would be handled by their employers as part of their payment," said Dr Jeyakumar.

"So, if their quarters are part of their payment, alternative housing must be provided when the estates are reclaimed for housing development projects."

Subramaniam promised the estate workers that Suhakam would look into the issue and meet with the estate owners to arrange for a dialogue session.

"Suhakam can only get involved if there is a violation of human rights.

"We will meet with the other board members on Oct 8 to discuss the next course of action," he said.