

PM: URBAN RENEWAL ACT TO ENSURE BETTER HOUSING

Legal status of land won't change, says Anwar, refuting false claims of an agenda behind it

KUALA LUMPUR

PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim yesterday reiterated that the government introduced the Urban Renewal Act to provide Malaysians long trapped in dilapidated housing with better living conditions.

He said the legal status of land involved in urban renewal projects would remain unchanged, regardless of whether they were

privately owned, under state authority or on Malay reserve land.

"Some people live in public housing flats that are more than 50 years old. They live in overcrowded, uncomfortable conditions, plagued by serious social and disciplinary issues, all due to prolonged pressure and neglect.

"That is why it is our responsibility to focus on these areas and rebuild the housing.

"Unfortunately, this initiative is being politicised and falsely portrayed as an attempt to steal Malay land or as part of a so-called 'Chinese agenda' to displace Malays from the city," he said at the launch of the "Warisan KL: Warisan Ibu Kota Malaysia Madani" project yesterday.

Present were Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Federal Territories) Datuk Seri

Dr Zaliha Mustafa, Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Shamsul Azri Abu Bakar and Mayor Datuk Seri Dr Maimunah Mohd Sharif.

Anwar cited the Seri Perlis flats as an example of poor living conditions, describing them as "most suffocating" and expressing disappointment over the situation.

"If we continue to allow such conditions, I wouldn't be proud as prime minister if I didn't do something to rebuild and improve these homes."

He said Kuala Lumpur City Hall would ensure that temporary housing provided to residents affected by urban renewal projects would prioritise comfort and essential amenities.

He gave his assurance, that the development projects would be

implemented as soon as they were approved, emphasising the importance of quick action to alleviate the suffering of affected families.

"Delaying the project by three months means prolonging the hardship of these families for three more months.

"For those causing the delays, I will send them to live in those temporary homes to experience first-hand the hardship and suffering of having to wait."

Previously, Anwar said urban renewal was not a new agenda under the Madani government as it began in 2012 with the formulation of the Urban Renewal Guidelines.

He said initial discussions on the Urban Renewal Act began in 2013, with the formal drafting of the act announced in 2015.