

# Comfy homes within reach

## PM: Affordable houses should not be pigeonholes

By RAGANANTHINI  
VETHASALAM  
raga@thestar.com.my

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Affordable homes should not simply be “pigeonholes” but instead must be comfortable to live in, says Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

“We have to make changes,” the Prime Minister said, adding that upcoming affordable home developments would have the necessary amenities, including parks and swimming pools.

“We have thought about all this to the best of our ability.”

He said the government would be able to realise this as there is no money wasted to corruption.

“There is money to be returned to the people,” he added, at the groundbreaking ceremony of the Rumah Belia Madani and Rumah Mampu Milik developed by BMG Global Sdn Bhd here yesterday.

He said there are affordable housing complexes that have not been upgraded since the 1960s

and some that have remained the same since his first stint in government more than two decades ago.

Anwar reiterated that the focus of his tenure would not be on building skyscrapers but instead on developing meaningful projects for the people, especially homes.

“Development is not about skyscrapers or mega projects. It must be meaningful to the people,” he added.

He said over 80% of Kuala Lumpur residents buy meals from small restaurants or stalls, while only a small number could afford to feast at luxury hotels.

“If that is the case, why is it that when it comes to development, we give less attention to projects that would benefit the masses?” he asked.

Therefore, he said the government’s focus should be on developing projects that would cater to the needs and interests of the people.

The Rumah Belia Madani project will feature 1,048 residential units and be equipped with a community hall, surau, laundrette and stalls, and even vehicle charging ports.

A mosque named after the late former Domestic Trade and Cost of Living Minister, Datuk Seri Salahuddin Ayub, will also be built.

BMG Global will also be developing 1,996 units of affordable homes in Kuala Lumpur.

Anwar said he wants the project to be implemented as soon as possible and that there should be no delays.

Housing and Local Government Minister Nga Kor Ming, who was also present at yesterday’s event, said the homes will be equipped with solar panels.

“After the project is (completed) successfully, the company will hand over 1,048 units which cost RM115mil to the government for free,” he added.

“We will set a reasonable rental

rate for the project.

“(For) one square foot, we only charge one ringgit in rent in Kuala Lumpur.”

Nga said BMG Global had bagged the project through an open tender project which 10 companies had bid for.

He said the government is also on track to hit the target of constructing half a million affordable homes under the 12th Malaysia Plan, after having built 468,000 units.

“As of this afternoon (yesterday) we have achieved 468,000 units, which is about 95%,” he said.

He added that Anwar will also launch the biggest affordable housing project in Penang, which is set to feature over 80,000 units.

Additionally, the Bandar Madani project, which is expected to be launched at the end of this year, will feature some 13,000 units.

“With this, the target will be achieved,” he said.