

## **KL targets world-class status**

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### **Datuk Seri Tengku Adnan Tengku Mansor wants more people to use public transport. — Picture by Zuraneeza Zulkifli**

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 27 — Datuk Seri Tengku Adnan Tengku Mansor faces a big challenge in tweaking strategies adopted by local authorities and in changing the mindset of civil servants and the public to ensure the Federal Territories continue to prosper. The Federal Territories Minister speaks with *Malay Mail's* HARESH DEOL and LOGHUN KUMARAN about building more affordable homes, addressing traffic woes and educating the people to play their part in turning Kuala Lumpur into a world-class city.

### **MALAY MAIL (MM): Prices of homes have risen ridiculously. How will those from the lower and middle income groups buy houses in Kuala Lumpur?**

TENGGU ADNAN (TA): We have been given the Key Performance Index (KPI) to build 80,000 units of affordable homes, 20,000 in Putrajaya, 10,000 in Labuan and 50,000 in Kuala Lumpur. We have come up with a new initiative where developers, even when developing on their own land, must build affordable houses or Rumah Mampu Milik Wilayah Persekutuan (Rumawip). The government has set the ceiling price of these units at RM300,000 but we realised those in the B40 (Bottom 40) and M40 (Middle 40) brackets aren't able to purchase them. So, we have allowed higher plot ratios and higher densities for developers. We are selling units from RM188,000 to RM198,000 (800 sq ft). And they are not simple units as the floors and toilets are tiled, good sanitary, three rooms and two bathrooms.

### **MM: Youths, especially, are finding it hard to rent or buy homes in KL.**

TA: We are looking at building council homes for young people. We understand some of them, especially those in the service industry, cannot afford to rent expensive places. These council homes will be rented out at about RM50 or RM75 per month, and will be built near LRT or MRT stations.

### **MM: Will developers agree to build cheaper homes?**

TA: Some developers had insisted affordable homes, including Rumawip, should cost RM300,000 each. I disagreed and managed to reduce the prices to RM260,000 per unit. But the idea is to get it below RM200,000.

Even with development that has higher plot ratio and higher density, we will try to control the prices, depending on the location. If it is a 1,000 sq ft unit, it will only be RM500,000 instead of RM700,000 or RM1 million which are ridiculous prices.

We are trying to assist the rakyat. Developers don't realise they can make money from volume. And when there is volume, it helps us to achieve our KPI of building more affordable homes.

### **MM: But vandalism is often associated with such public housing schemes.**

TA: In Putrajaya, I've seen government servants pushing their motorcycles into lifts and taking it all the way up to their doorstep. This is ridiculous. We have to educate the people and civil servants as well. We have to think out of the box. When I walk around, I see plenty of things that must change. There are pillars that are erected in the middle of walkways and it is not disabled friendly.

People tend to take these things lightly but we live in a challenging world and need to make changes. There were certain things I had proposed and some of my officers were against me. But towards the end, they realised what I was doing and that the concept is good. As Putrajaya MP, I have secured closed-circuit television cameras at most residential blocks that are managed by the residents' associations. This is to empower them and for them to understand the difficulties we go through (in maintaining facilities).

**MM: What about traders who lease their licences?**

TA: I get upset when I see traders leasing their stalls. They come to us saying they want to conduct businesses but once they get their licences, they sublet the stalls, including at food courts. We rent it at RM200, they sublet it at RM1,000 which is unfair. Instructions have been given to (City Hall's) licensing department to relook such leases. If traders are not operating the stalls themselves, then we will revoke the licences and give it to those who want to genuinely operate.

**MM: Traffic congestion remains a big problem in KL. The prime minister had during Budget 2016 announced that RM900 million will be allocated for the Jalan Tun Razak Traffic Dispersal Project.**

TA: We are working to upgrade traffic flow in the whole of KL, not just Jalan Tun Razak. We have spoken to the operator of Duta-Ulu Kelang Expressway to help ease congestion near Bulatan Pahang. There is a possibility of us getting a tram in the city but without wires and using a flywheel system instead. Traffic is a problem. But we cannot impose things on the public as there are many construction works going on, such as the MRT and road expansion projects. We want people to be comfortable.

**MM: There seems to be a fixation with building intercity highways.**

TA: We are looking at the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) from Klang to Kuala Lumpur. We believe once the MRT begins operations, and with BRT and other feeder services, congestion will ease. We would like to see more people using public transport. We are also toying with the idea of not allowing car parks to be made in new buildings, to deter people from using cars.

**MM: Open spaces and fields are almost non-existent in KL.**

TA: We are thinking of what to do with the Perdana Botanical Garden, Titiwangsa Lake Garden and Metropolitan Park, among others. We have such facilities but they are not being used. We must enhance and promote them so that people can use these facilities day and night. We have enough green lungs. Recently, we started a small green lung with (developer) Eco World at Jalan Ipoh. The land is ours but they financed it and will maintain the place for three years. In Kampung Baru, we're working with Perbadanan

Pembangunan Kampung Baru and Khazanah Nasional to adopt one area to have a park and to come up with pocket parks.

**MM: How are development plans for Kampung Baru coming along?**

TA: The prime minister had allocated a RM100 million loan to UDA Holdings for development of Kampung Baru, to which I am thankful. We hope this will be the catalyst for development there. Uda will be given a piece of land to built Uda Tower and apartments. We are working closely with land owners there. The problem is with the prices and some of the demands are quite high.

**MM: Many seem to overlook Labuan.**

TA: Labuan is a challenge as it is an oil and gas centre and the industry is hitting us bad due to low prices. So we need to relook how to place Labuan ... maybe we need to consider more tourist activities.

**MM: What is your advice to those living in the Federal Territories?**

TA: We have given the public a lot and it is time they use such facilities diligently and not destroy what is provided. We need to educate them to ensure they change their attitude. KLites and Malaysians want first-class facilities but refuse to fork out a single sen.

This attitude must change.

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