

'ADDITIONAL COSTS'

SELANGOR HOUSE BUYERS FACE HURDLES

Extra requirements make it harder for low- and middle-income groups to own homes

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THOSE in the low- and middle-income brackets will find owning a house in Selangor financially challenging because of "additional requirements" imposed on housing projects, economists said.

They said the additional requirements would only be counterproductive to efforts to assist them with home ownership, as new costs would be added on to implement projects and homebuyers would be forced to absorb them.

Universiti Tun Abdul Razak economist Dr Barjoyal Bardai said such requirements by the Selangor government would only increase prices of homes.

"Additional requirements mean additional costs and time."

He said homebuyers, who were mostly in the bottom-40 (B40) and middle-40 (M40) groups, would have to bear the additional costs.

To overcome the problem, he suggested that the Federal Government build public housing on leasehold land.

He said rather than building homes on land with a 99-year lease, the Federal Government



The Federal Government's Perbadanan PRIMA Malaysia programme caters to the low- and middle-income group.

could adopt the practice of China, whose land had shorter leasehold tenure of between 30 and 60 years.

"Maybe the Federal Government can go for a 50-year lease. Building houses on land with shorter leasehold tenure reduce costs.

"Or, we can go shorter than that. Some countries opt for a 30-year lease and this is sufficient. The houses are cheap and the low-income earners can afford them.

"Affordable homes are needed by B40 and M40.

"They need a comfortable place to raise a family and pursue their careers."

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak, when highlighting the issue on Saturday, pledged that the government would review the

additional conditions if Barisan Nasional wrested the state in the upcoming polls.

He said Selangor imposed conditions on developers, including Perbadanan PRIMA Malaysia (PRIMA), the Federal Government's housing programme that catered to the low- and middle-income groups.

Universiti Malaya economist Dr Fatimah Kari commended the government's efforts to build more affordable homes, which, she said, could boost the economy.

"The working class needs to buy houses and when they do, it will boost the country's economic performance and growth.

"But, the government must ensure that prices are affordable.

"At the moment, with additional requirements imposed, it leads us to the question 'can B40 and M40 buy homes?'"

On March 6, Urban Wellbeing, Housing and Local Government Minister Tan Sri Noh Omar reportedly said the Federal Government's efforts to provide affordable homes were being restricted by the Selangor government's policies, especially those involving conversion of land status and exorbitant land prices.

He had said PRIMA had planned to build 60,000 houses in Selangor, but only 7,000 could be completed, with 27,000 more under construction.

'STRANGE REQUIREMENTS'

BN to tackle Penang housing issues if it regains state

GEORGE TOWN: Barisan Nasional will review requirements imposed on homebuyers and developers by the DAP-led Penang government if the coalition wins back the state in the 14th General Election (GE14).

Penang Federal Action Council chairman Datuk Seri Zainal Abidin Osman said a working committee comprising stakeholders, government agencies, planning authorities, local councils, housing developers' associations, homebuyer groups and non-governmental organisations would be involved to review the requirements.

He said this was to address housing issues affecting the people.

He said some of the requirements would be abolished and amended, according to housing types.

Zainal said development costs for housing projects in the state had increased by RM130 psf.

"This resulted in an increase in house prices, making them no longer affordable.

"If BN comes into power after GE14, we will build more affordable homes for the people.

"That is our priority," said the state Umno chief.

Zainal said development charges, which used to be RM5 psf for residential properties and RM7 psf for commercial properties, had been increased.

"After 2008, the charges were increased to RM15 and RM21, respectively."



Datuk Seri Zainal Abidin Osman

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak, at the launch of the national edition of the nine-day "Ekspo Jualan Perumahan: Ke Arah Sejuta Impian" at the Putra World Trade centre yesterday, said the opposition-led Selangor and Penang governments had imposed strange requirements on homebuyers and developers.

He said Penang had imposed conditions like requiring homebuyers to register as voters in Penang, to buy a house in the state.

Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng yesterday denied imposing such requirements on homebuyers and developers.

He said it was normal for the Penang government to give priority to voters in Penang to buy a house in the state.

EKSPLO JUALAN PERUMAHAN

Youth happy with homes on offer

KUALA LUMPUR: The presence of youth at Ekspo Jualan Perumahan at the Putra World Trade Centre here shows that there is an awareness about owning a house at a young age.

Most of them were happy with choices of affordable housing on offer.

Kamarul Nadzim said the expo helped young people realise that they, too, could afford to buy a home, thanks to the government's housing initiatives.

The 24-year-old, who is also a part-time student, said he was surprised that housing developments on offer were affordable and in attractive locations.

"Location plays an important part in anyone's choice of a place

to call home. Travelling back and forth can be costly, so this is important for anyone to take into consideration.

"For a first-time buyer like myself, this expo has been an eye-opener in terms of information and bank loan eligibility.

"There is a counter for us to check our CCRIS (Central Credit Reference Information System) status."

The nine-day expo has more than 100,000 affordable homes on offer in Perak, Sabah, Johor, Pahang, Negri Sembilan, Melaka, Kelantan, Sarawak, Perlis, Kuala Lumpur and Selangor.

It is an initiative of the Urban Wellbeing, Housing and Local Government Ministry.

	SUBUH (Jam)	SYURUK	ZUHUR	ASAR (Jam)	MAGHRIB	ISYAK
Melaka	5:58	7:14	1:19	4:19	7:22	8:31
Penang	6:04	7:19	1:27	4:31	7:30	8:39
K.Lumpur	6:00	7:14	1:22	4:24	7:25	8:34
Johor Baru	5:52	7:07	1:13	4:13	7:16	8:24
Kuantan	5:55	7:09	1:17	4:18	7:19	8:28
Ipoh	6:02	7:15	1:24	4:28	7:27	8:36