

'Some have manipulated noble plan'

Rumah Selangorku homeowners and those on waiting list want individuals renting out units to be penalised

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SELANGOR started its Rumah Selangorku (RSKu) housing scheme in 2014 to ensure low- and middle-income earners in the state can afford to own homes.

The scheme, although noble, has been manipulated by unscrupulous individuals to make a profit. Successful RSKu applicants were found to have abused the terms and conditions of the agreement, which clearly state that the units cannot be rented out and can be sold only after five years.

StarMetro's investigation has revealed that RSKu schemes state-wide show that at least 10% to 20% homeowners have rented out their units to third parties, while in some areas in Klang and Kajang, it is 30%.

Real estate agents have also cashed in on the situation by offering the owners attractive rental rates.

Hot property

Klang councillor Lee Fu Haw said the programme, created to help the poor, has become a money-making scheme that was brazenly advertised on the Internet.

"These individuals have no qualms about renting out their units and they are openly advertising on social media," he said, adding that more units were being offered for rent on various property websites and online market platforms daily.

"I have been monitoring the issue for some time now and the numbers are growing each day. I am appalled at how some selfish individuals are cheating the system," said Lee.

A check online showed that agents are indeed advertising units on behalf of owners, offering rent between RM1,000 and RM1,500 per month depending on the location.

Lee, who owns an RSKu unit at Apartment Trifolis in Bukit Tinggi, Klang, said he received calls every day from people desperate to own units in Rumah Selangorku, and agents were pushing to find out if he knew any potential tenant.

Another RSKu homeowner, Khairul Nizam, said he was baffled as to how the agents got his contact number.

"I am also concerned that with outsiders renting the units, the place will become dirty and messy with facilities breaking down faster from rough use.

"Rumah Selangorku was intended to help low-income earners buy a home, it was never meant to be an investment scheme. This is wrong," he added.

Lee added that when he told the agents they are not allowed to rent out the units, the agents told him they have "contacts" with the authorities and would not be investigated.

Lee and other residents raised the matter with the authorities, but no action had been taken against the culprits.

Good intentions

RSKu was initiated by the Selangor government in 2014 with the aim of delivering affordable homes to deserving citizens within the state.

There are various housing schemes that come under the RSKu programme.



An online search shows property agents pushing rental for Apartment Trifolis units.

Developers are required to build a stipulated number of affordable housing units in their development.

The programme promotes a variety of unit types all over Selangor, depending on the applicant's preference and income level.

RSKu has five categories - A, B, C, D and E.

For type A, the maximum household income of an applicant should be RM3,000, while for the other types, the maximum household income is between RM3,001 and RM10,000 a month.

For stratified properties, Type A costs RM42,000, Type B (RM100,000), Type C (RM150,000), Type D (RM200,000) and Type E (RM250,000).

The waiting list for Type A units



As thousands wait anxiously to own affordable RSKu units, hundreds of successful applicants are abusing the scheme by renting their units out. - Photos: MUHAMAD SHAHRIL ROSLI/The Star

Approved Rumah Selangorku projects

As of September 2019

Local council	Number of projects	Number of units
Petaling Jaya	3	1,269
Shah Alam	34	18,699
Hulu Selangor	12	1,915
Kuala Langat	17	6,680
Kuala Selangor	28	8,588
Sabak Bernam	3	219
Ampang Jaya	8	1,500
Klang	23	10,204
Kajang	58	24,778
Selayang	31	16,926
Subang Jaya	20	11,246
Sepang	40	19,671
Total	277	121,695

Source: State housing and urban living committee

Applications for Rumah Selangorku projects

as of September 2019

Status	Number of applicants	%
Total number of successful applicants	23,509	13
Those yet to have signed Sales and Purchase agreement	4,882	2
Unqualified / those who rejected offer letters (reasons including deaths, blacklisted etc)	25,419	13
Active applicants (waiting list)	56,782	29
Expired applications (more than two years)	81,972	43
Total registered applicants*	192,564	100

* Total registered applicants include those who have not been screened for eligibility. Source: State housing and urban living committee

is the highest.

Units mostly rented out are Type C and D.

Qualified applicants are required to sign a declaration that the unit will be for self occupation only and cannot be rented out.

Other terms and conditions state that the applicant cannot be already owning a property, and successful applicants cannot sell their unit within five years.

However, the declaration they sign is not a sworn statutory declaration, but a mere guideline that does not come with punitive action.

"The law should not be seen as an ornamental piece that can be ignored, where the chances of wrongdoers getting away by renting out the units is high, said National House Buyers Association (HBA) secretary-general Datuk Chang Kim Loong.

"And if enforcement is lax, more

and more people are going to abuse their privileges, so it is crucial that something is done about it and quickly," he added.

Bukit Gasing assemblyman Rajiv Rishyakaran concurred with Chang, saying the government should make it a law to stop owners from renting out units.

"I urge KPKT (Housing and Local Government Ministry) to make this a law so that it can be enforced.

"We are also studying if the state has such legislative powers but this does not seem likely, so Parliament has to enact such laws to make it clear that units cannot be rented out for five years or so and specify the punishment if they do it," he said.

Since the RSKu was launched seven years ago, 23,509 people