



Spacious rooms and affordable prices are the reasons why RSKu units are much sought after.



A bedroom of the Type D unit in Trifolis Apartment.



Chang says if enforcement is lax more people are going to abuse their privileges.



Lee says the housing scheme, created to help the poor, has become a money-making scheme.



Rajiv says Parliament has to enact laws to make it clear that units cannot be rented out and state the penalty for doing so.

have managed to buy the units. However, the waiting list (to buy units) registered by the Selangor Housing and Property Board (LPHS) currently stands at 56,782. This staggering number raises questions about who is really benefiting from Selangor's initiative to help first-time homeowners.

Waiting list

Sharon (not her real name), a marketing executive who lives in Taman Sentosa Klang, has been on the waiting list for a unit in Apartment Trifolis since 2017. But the 29-year-old's application was rejected by LPHS, not once but twice. The marketing executive who takes home a monthly income of RM4,500, was very disappointed as she wanted a unit close to her workplace. "I qualified in every aspect as per the LPHS requirement, but was rejected based on the fact that the quota (for Chinese applicants) was already full," said Sharon, who currently lives with her parents. Similarly, Sherina Lim, 31, also applied for a unit in Klang in 2016, and is still waiting for a response



Another heavily advertised property is Asteria Apartment in Bandar Parklands, Klang, which is under the RSKu scheme.

from LPHS. "My income of RM4,000 per month is barely enough to survive, let alone afford an apartment outside the scheme. Rumah Selangorku is the only property that I can afford," said Lim. On the other hand, Jarod (not his real name) qualified for a unit in Klang, which he has rented out to a couple. The young engineer continues to live with his parents in Shah Alam. Similarly, Mohd H (not his real name) just listed his fully furnished apartment in Klang as a homestay on Facebook for RM189 per night.

Jarod and Mohd have no qualms about renting their units even though they know that it is against the rules. "I am not the only one doing it (renting out). The way I see it, I bought this place and it belongs to me, so I can do whatever I want," said Jarod. Like Jarod, hundreds of others in Selangor have properties under the name of their parents, siblings or spouses, but have bought RSKu units for investment.

Useful scheme

Critics of the scheme say the state government has missed its mark by helping a certain group of homeowners while barely doing anything for the targeted group. However, Rajiv disagrees that the scheme is a failure. "I will not say that it has failed its target. The Selangor government is on track with its targets. We urge them to do more as the demand for affordable housing is high. But clearly the laws need to be in place for the system to work," he said.

State looking at by-law that will include 'escape clause'



Haniza says a mechanism must be in place to prevent abuse of the system.

THE Selangor government is studying the feasibility of drafting a by-law to prevent further abuse of the Rumah Selangorku (RSKu) scheme. State housing and urban living committee chairman Haniza Talha said should the enactment be passed in the state assembly, it would stipulate that RSKu properties cannot be sold within the first five years and would include an "escape clause". "The escape clause would allow the owners to rent the property only with a valid reason such as being transferred for work to another area. We understand that there are situations where owners genuinely are not able to stay but they do

not want the units to be left empty. However, owners would still be subjected to the five-year moratorium," she said, adding that the exception would be on a case-by-case basis. Haniza added that the state was currently obtaining feedback over the proposal including from legal advisers and the National Housing Department. "This will take time as we would have to go through the state assembly and we need expert advice to ensure the law would not go against the Federal Constitution and would not be detrimental to buyers," she said, adding that it would apply to old and new buyers of the RSKu scheme. Haniza hoped to implement the

law by the end of next year. On reports that rental of RSKu units were advertised online, Haniza said the state was aware of it. "We are investigating if these are owners or agents acting on behalf of them," she said. She added that although those renting out their units were low, they needed a mechanism in place to prevent abuse. Currently, Haniza said there was no monetary penalty on any owner found to have rented out their property. "So far, we have taken action against 19 RSKu unit owners by giving them a warning letter and the tenant was asked to move out immediately.

"One owner in Klang was found to have rented out the unit to foreign workers while another had illegally installed partitions to turn the unit into six rooms to be rented out. At the moment action can be taken under the Strata Management Act 2013 and the Street, Drainage and Building Act 1974 for causing disturbance or illegal renovations," she said. On calls to do away with the quota system for the RSKu scheme, Haniza said it was meant to create racial integration and not to deny low- and middle-income earners the right to own a home. "Different areas will have different quota for bumiputra and non-bumiputra," she said.