

Headline	One million houses in 10 years achievable - Zuraida		
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One million houses in 10 years achievable – Zuraida

PUTRAJAYA: The government is on track to achieve the one million affordable housing units within 10 years for the B40 by 2028 promise as outlined in the Pakatan Harapan (PH) manifesto.

On the development of various housing projects that are being developed and planned throughout the country, Housing and Local Government Minister Zuraida Kamaruddin said private developers have expressed their willingness to build more houses priced at less than RM300,000.

She said to date, 39,864 units of affordable housing nationwide have been completed and 181,211 units more are under construction, while 386,340 units are being planned.

"For the ministry, this is a major promise with a target of 100,000 units a year. Private developers have been actively involved in the construction of these affordable homes," she said in a recent interview with Bernama.

Other categories of houses are also being developed, including 3,898 units under the people's housing project (PPR), 4,448 units for youth transit homes and 4,245 units under the civil servant housing

scheme (PPAM), all of which are to be completed this year, she said.

She added that Syarikat Perumahan Negara Berhad (SPNB) has provided houses to 4,989 families nationwide, of which 3,019 were Rumah Mesra Rakyat, while another 1,970 units were under SPNB Affordable Housing scheme.

Sharing her experience in several meetings with private developers, Zuraida said they understood that the market needs for houses priced under RM300,000, and would respond to the government's call to reduce the construction of luxury houses.

"They understood that many luxury houses are unsold or are still in the selling process, so it would not be appropriate for them to keep building it," she said.

According to Zuraida, the issue of unsold luxury houses was due to the mismatch of demand and supply following the lack of proper data for planning activities.

To address the issue in the future, KPKT is developing a big data system that will provide information based on projected housing demand according to location and price, she said.

"The system is expected to be ready by the end of 2020.

This data will provide a more accurate analysis of housing planning especially for private developers," she explained.

Zuraida said KPKT also highlighted the comfort of the home buyers in the National Affordable Housing Policy (DRMM) by setting a minimum area of the affordable housing at 900 square feet, as well as other amenities such as recreational facilities and halls.

"We are refining this mechanism. Houses that follow this new method are in the process of tendering, so by 2020, the construction of houses under KPKT will follow the DRMM specification," she said.

She said the government is also working to increase home ownerships through various programmes including rent to own (RTO) scheme to assist potential buyers of PPR units that were not eligible for financing through financial institutions.

"If they are able to pay the monthly rent consistently, it can be used as a supporting document to apply for a loan when they are ready," she said.

She said, currently there are seven RTO projects with two each in Selangor and Kelantan, and one each in Kuala Lumpur, Negeri Sembilan and Penang. - Bernama