

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

'LOW-INCOME EARNERS CAN OWN HOMES TOO'

Govt schemes reduce socio-economic gap, say analyst

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PUBLIC housing programmes have enabled low-income earners to buy houses as the prices are within their means, said an economist of Universiti Putra Malaysia.

UPM Business School economic analyst Dr Ahmed Razman Abdul Latiff said affordable housing schemes introduced by the gov-

ernment had removed property glut, long-term rentals and spike in property prices.

He said the affordable housing initiatives should be continued to help people, especially those in the Bottom 40 per cent (B40) and Middle 40 per cent (M40) income groups, own a house.

He added that such programmes could reduce the socio-economic gap among the people, especially those living in cities.

"Imagine what will happen if the government does not provide affordable houses. It will affect the people economically and socially. It will cause a glut in the housing sector due to high prices to own houses.

"This will have an impact on the financial sector as not many peo-

ple will take out loans, and we do not want to reach a point where developers pressure the government to allow foreigners to own houses priced below RM1 million."

Based on the Federal Government's pledges between 2013 and this year, 145,983 units of affordable housing have been completed, 310,498 units are under construction, 447,750 units at the planning stage and 95,769 are at the consultation stage.

Affordable housing initiatives are undertaken by agencies, including the Malaysia People's Housing Programme (PRIMA), ministries and the private sector.

Razman said the introduction of rent-to-own schemes should be intensified. **Additional reporting by Nursyahirah Marzuki**

PROVIDING AFFORDABLE HOMES

