

Malaysia: Removing the stigma of public housing

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PUBLIC housing is commonly perceived as being cramped, with few rooms, less-than-average quality building materials and the most Spartan of architectural designs.

Aesthetically, such homes, although priced at the most affordable rates, might not be appealing to many. One can't be too picky, but a house should be more than just a zinc-roofed shelter.

Iskandar Malaysia's public housing project removes such a stigma through its Iskandar Malaysia People's Housing Project.

It was recently launched at Lima Kedai in Gelang Patah here.

The homes are not your typical terraces or flats but four-storey apartments ranging from 83.6 to 111 sq m per unit.

Each unit has two bathrooms and between three and four rooms.

The neighborhood is equipped with broadband, 24-hour close circuit television surveillance, and two community police centres.

The RM200 million project consists of 1,500 apartment units built according to the "industrial building concept", which ensures optimal manpower and construction completion for the project.

Other facilities include a recreational park, a surau, a kindergarten, two football fields, six badminton courts, a community centre and 16 playgrounds.

The units are leased for a two-year rental of between RM360 and RM560. Families earning less than RM3,000 a month are eligible to apply.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak, who launched the handing over of the keys ceremony, said he was pleased with the development. He hoped similar housing projects would be carried out in other states as well as to provide better homes for the rakyat.

"This is about putting people's interest first. Everyone from all walks of life should be living comfortably. This is social justice through inclusive development," said Najib in his speech.

The apartments were also tailored according to the Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design Standards concept, which focuses on security and green technology.

This is also said to promote interaction among community members.

"This is the kind of sustainable development we want for the people. We are serious about providing quality homes to the middle- and lower-income group," said Najib.

He added that quality homes and housing areas could serve as a barometer of quality family life, which he said was critical in creating harmonious living.

Menteri Besar Datuk Abdul Ghani Othman, who accompanied the prime minister, said the development of Iskandar Malaysia is to create a better quality of life for the people.

"Iskandar Malaysia will benefit Johoreans, and the state government appreciates every support that has contributed to the development of the region.

"Today, we are witnessing the rise of networking infrastructures and more job opportunities," said Ghani in his speech.

Iskandar Regional Development Authority chief executive Ismail Ibrahim said in 20 years' time, Iskandar Malaysia would be a metropolis of international standing.

"Iskandar Malaysia is into its fifth year now. We have delivered on our promise to the people that we will realise our objective," said Ismail.

Read more: [Removing the stigma of public housing - Johor - New Straits Times](http://www.nst.com.my/streets/johor/removing-the-stigma-of-public-housing-1.21774?localLinksEnabled=false#ixzz1h466ZyAq)

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