

Govt wants to introduce law on proper housing for foreign workers

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KUALA LUMPUR: The government is looking into tabling a Bill under the Human Resources Ministry to ensure that contractors build proper housing for their foreign workers.

Works Minister Datuk Seri Fadillah Yusof said by having proper housing it will help improve their productivity and there will no longer be the unsightly "rumah kongsi" at construction sites.

"Contractors who refuse to follow the new regulations once approved by Parliament will be penalised but that will be the last resort.

"We would prefer to educate and get industry players to understand how this new regulation will help them improve the construction sites," he said at a press conference after opening the Eight Malaysian Construction Summit.

Fadillah admitted that it would be difficult for small and medium contractors to build proper workers housing at construction sites if the project would only last 12 months to two years.

He said to sort out this problem the ministry under the non-profit company Construction Labour Exchange Berhad (CLAB) had built accommodation for 1,000 workers in Subang.

The Works Minister said these accommodations will be rented out to small and medium contractors at a minimal cost for them to house their workers.

He said more projects are expected to come on-line and the government is mulling building larger accommodations to meet the needs of small and medium contractors.

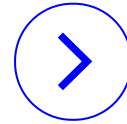
Fadillah pointed out that those involving large scale projects such as the Refinery and Petrochemical Integrated Development (Rapid) and the MRT will be responsible for building their foreign workers housing at the construction site.

He said this is because these project will last seven years or longer.

On safety at construction sites, the Petra Jaya MP said his ministry is working closely with the Construction Industry Development Board (CIDB) to reduce the number of fatalities at developments sites.

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