

New goals for new ministry

Balancing population patterns in urban areas merits equal attention, says academician

THE new ministry to be set up to tackle socio-economic issues in urban areas should function in a more comprehensive manner than what the Federal Territories and Urban Wellbeing Ministry could offer.

Academicians and youth leaders said the objective to provide quality public housing to the young generation in urban areas could be implemented in an easy and structured manner if the government combined functions of the proposed new ministry with the ministry that was once led by Datuk Raja Nong Chik Zainal Abidin.

They said replacing the word 'Federal Territories' with more suitable words would give a clearer picture of the more comprehensive roles that would be played by the new ministry.

"If the motives of its establishment were to empower

the young generation to own a house in urban areas, then the change in the name of the ministry will inspire the young to believe that the government was concerned about the young people nationwide," said Dr Amini Amir Abdullah of Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM).

Amini Amir had earlier said through the new ministry, the government could balance the population pattern in urban areas nationwide, and not only limited to Kuala Lumpur, Putrajaya and Labuan as focused by the Federal Territories and Urban Wellbeing Ministry.

He said the combination of the two ministries would also lead to a major transformation in the population pattern in urban areas nationwide.

Extreme focus by the existing ministry on efforts to enable low-income earners

to own a house in urban areas should be reviewed by the new ministry as the middle-class Malays in the urban areas also need the same attention, he said.

Malaysian Youth Council president Mohamed Maliki Mohamed Rapiee said the new ministry should be able to function in a more comprehensive manner to prevent migration of young people to urban areas.

He said this was not only vital to balance the population pattern, but to ensure that construction of public housing should not focus in major towns, but also must be expanded to suburban areas.

"The new ministry should also focus on balancing the population in certain areas to prevent racial monopoly," he said.

To fulfill the young people's aspiration to own a house, Mohamed Maliki

proposed that the price of houses for them be fixed between RM200,000 and RM250,000, and that the new ministry should come out with a special mechanism to facilitate bank loans.

He said the candidate to lead the new ministry must be an expert in economy and town planning the individual must be brave enough to make decision when dealing with developers, financial institutions and town planners. — Bernama