

'Collective efforts needed to solve affordable housing issue'

KUALA LUMPUR: There is a crucial need for a collective effort from all stakeholders in addressing the issue of affordable housing and ensuring the efficiency of the reform.

The World Bank said efforts by many institutions, including banks and various agencies, were vital to the country's provision for affordable housing.

World Bank country manager for Malaysia Faris H. Hadad-Zervos said the issue of affordable housing was a topic at the forefront of budget speech.

"I think the story is not about what model is most effective, but rather very substantial deep and wide reforms that require all parties to coordinate together.

"I think the priority now is how all parties can come together and coordinate the reform, because it is going to have a lot of moving parts," he said after a panel discussion on "Navigating the Affordable Housing Market in Urban Cities", here, yesterday.

The panel discussion was held in conjunction with the World Urban Forum 9, a conference on urban issues.

Meanwhile, Bank Negara Malaysia assistant governor Norzila Abdul Aziz said a centralised affordable housing initiative and database would enhance efficiency in planning, implementation and execution.

She said Malaysia needed to adopt a more advanced construction methods and smart placement of assets that would lead to clear cost-effective management.

"Public housing is in its infancy stage as we are still grappling with the right public housing model."

Norzila said Malaysia's public housing market was fragmented with multiple agencies, which could result in inefficiencies in the implementation and execution. **Farah Adilla**



(From left) Former director-general of Thailand's Real Estate Information Centre Samma Kitsin, World Bank senior housing specialist Dao Harrison, World Bank urban development director Sameh Naguib Wahba Tadros and France's Social Housing Policy senior consultant Claude Taffin participating in a panel discussion in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. PIC BY HAFIZ SOHAIMI