

48 abandoned buildings identified in federal capital

KUALA LUMPUR: A total of 48 abandoned buildings have been identified in the federal capital as of Feb 20, said Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Federal Territories) Datuk Seri Dr Zaliha Mustafa.

She said based on the latest records from the Kuala Lumpur City Hall, 25 were residential buildings while 23 were commercial buildings.

"The abandoned buildings are in several areas, including in Jinjang Utara, with at least seven premises, majority of which are residential buildings. This may be due to local issues stemming from old housing.

"At Jalan Sultan Azlan Shah or Jalan Ipoh, there are several abandoned residential and commercial units, reflecting urban decay or stunted development.

Several premises in Lorong Tiong Nam are listed and mostly rows of dilapidated shops," she said during a question and answer session at the Dewan Negara yesterday.

She was responding to Senator Tan Sri Mohamad Fatmi Che Salleh who enquired on the number of abandoned buildings in the federal capital and the government's plans for them.

Zaliha said several strategic areas such as Jalan Bukit Bintang, Jalan Pudu and Jalan Gombak also had abandoned premises and buildings, which meant that the issue was not only occurring in suburban areas but also in prime commercial locations.

"It is also surprising that several neighbourhoods which are considered mature and stable with consistent land demand, such as Kampung Baru,

Taman Tun Dr Ismail, Setapak, Cheras and Kampung Pandan also have abandoned buildings.

"This is likely due to the issue of layered ownership, stalled heritage planning or failed property investment which have caused the premises to be left vacant for a long time."

She said City Hall had taken several proactive steps, including issuing notification letters and notices under Sections 74 and 75 of Act 171 (Local Government Act) to all owners of the affected premises.

However, to date, only nine building owners have taken action after receiving the notices, Bernama reported.

Zaliha said Section 74 empowers local authorities to direct owners to repair or clean up dirty and

unsightly buildings, while Section 75 allows action to be taken if the owner failed to comply.

She added that provisions under Section 83(1) of the Roads, Drainage and Buildings Act 1974 (Act 133) allow local authorities to order the repair, renovation or demolition of any building deemed to be a danger to public safety or to damage the aesthetic value of the environment.

Zaliha said City Hall was also examining redevelopment strategies with appropriate partners so that buildings could be restored and reintroduced into the market cycle.

She also agreed to set up a special team to look into the acquisition of abandoned buildings to renovate, resell or rent them.