

China to strengthen affordable residential housing access management

The crucial issue currently faced by the affordable residential housing system is how to strengthen access supervision and management, said Hou Ximin, head of the Department of Housing Security under the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development.

Recently, a number of issues have emerged in the examination, verification, distribution and usage of affordable residential houses, triggering extensive attention from the public on the affordable residential housing system.

Hou emphasized that all regions in China should continuously improve the access, examination and verification mechanism for supply targets, establish fair, impartial and open examination and verification procedures, strengthen construction standards and provisions on the administration of market transactions as well as intensify punishment for violations. Meanwhile, they should strictly investigate and punish behaviors such as pressuring customers to purchase affordable residential houses and colluding with administrators for personal gain.

Hou believes that affordable residential housing is an effective way to resolve housing problems for urban low-income households. Moderately developing affordable residential housing is still of great significance in different areas in China, in particular in large and medium-scale cities with relatively higher housing prices. Meanwhile, conditionally supporting citizens to purchase housing helps promote social harmony and stability.

With 46.8 billion yuan investment, the construction of 480,000 affordable residential houses, which will cover a total area of 33.88 million square meters across China, started in the first half of 2009. Affordable residential housing is an important part of the "housing support project" and plays a significant role in resolving housing problems for urban low and medium-income households.

Relevant government branches will improve access and exit systems to ensure that low-income households with housing problems will be given priority access to affordable residential housing, to guarantee fair, impartial and open distribution.

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