

No condition of only Bumi lawyers for govt housing loans

Implementation of panel lawyers by LPPSA is meant to ensure that all related documents are in order to minimise backlogs

by **AZREEN HANI**

DEPUTY Finance Minister Datuk Chua Tee Yong said there is no requirement for civil servants to use only law firms with Bumiputera partners when applying for government housing loans.

He said he had been briefed by the Public Sector Housing Finance Agency (LPPSA) that such requirement did not exist.

"The implementation of panel lawyers by LPPSA to process civil servants' application for government housing loans is meant to ensure that all related documents are in order to minimise unnecessary backlogs," Chua said.

He said the strict assessment on law firms to be selected as the panellists has resulted in disqualification of many small and medium law firms.

He said condition of Bumiputera partnerships should not be used as a yardstick in the



Pic by Hafzi Mohamed

Chua says condition of Bumiputera partnerships should not be used as a yardstick in the assessment

assessment, instead it should be open to all firms that are qualified.

Chua was responding to a statement by the National MCA Youth legal bureau head Ng Kian Nam who claimed that the Ministry of Finance is fostering racism in the legal profession through the requirement.

Ng said the rule was unfair as borrowers did not have the

option to engage lawyers of their choice.

Chua said he has directed LPPSA to review the assessment and qualification system to enable more small and medium law firms to be included as panel lawyers so they can also process civil servants' application for government housing loans.

LPPSA will officially take over the function of the hous-

ing loan department starting Jan 1, 2016.

This follows the announcement by Secretary General of Treasury Tan Sri Dr Mohd Irwan Serigar Abdullah in July that the housing loan department under the Finance Ministry will be transformed into a statutory body.

The aim is to improve the administration of housing loan financing to civil servants.