

Government will continue to hear from singles & 'calibrate quite carefully' the overall demand for housing: Sim Ann

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When posed a question regarding single homeowners, the Senior Minister of State for National Development, Sim Ann, shared that the government will continue to hear from singles and "calibrate quite carefully" regarding the overall demand for housing.

Sim was answering a question posed to a panel at the Institute of Policy Studies 35th Anniversary Conference on Jun. 12, 2023. A member of the audience asked what is to be done to stop young singles from moving out of Singapore as they are unable to own a Housing Development Board (HDB) flat until they are 35.

Have relaxed restrictions on singles who wish to purchase homes

Sim acknowledged that the topic of singles' homeownership is something that the government has heard before.

She stated that over the years, the restrictions on singles who wish to purchase a home have relaxed, such as an expanded range of resale flats that singles can purchase.

Build-to-Order (BTO) flats are also open to singles to purchase, though Sim noted that there are still restrictions in place on what BTOs singles could purchase.

"This is something which we will continue to hear from singles on, and we do have to calibrate quite carefully, bearing in mind the overall demand for housing", Sim said.

Need to revisit how Singapore thinks about public housing

Another panellist, Associate Professor Walter Theseira, pointed out that the current housing system policy structure favours traditional families.

"That is the group in most societies is considered to be, somehow, the most deserving or the most important to be prioritised," he explained.

Another reason Theseira brought up was the "outcome Singapore wants is to have more families with young children".

Theseira stated that it was worth considering whether the housing system needs a broader and new perception of social objectives, but Singapore needs to be careful not to "deprioritise our family with children".