Foreign University Students & Room Quota

Up in Demand

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[Translation]

South DB & NUS

Challenge to Solve Housing Problems

By: Knight Frank

According to the report, the government of Singapore has issued a new housing policy to cater to the growing number of foreign students in the country.

The report noted that the demand for hostel space among foreign students has increased significantly in recent years. As a result, the government has taken measures to address this growing demand.

The government has allocated additional funds to expand the existing hostel facilities and construct new ones to accommodate the increasing number of foreign students.

The report also highlighted the role of private sectors in providing hostel accommodations to foreign students. Many private institutions have stepped up to meet the growing demand by providing more affordable and comfortable hostels.

In conclusion, the government and private sectors are working together to ensure that foreign students have access to affordable and quality accommodations.

More foreign students lead to crunch in hostel space

Foreign students studying in Singapore are currently facing a crunch in availability of affordable housing. One reason is the escalating rentals of public housing in the vicinity of the university campuses. For example, public housing near SMU in the city is charging rentals higher than public housing near NUS and NTU. Five-room flats near SMU (1,200 square feet) go for rentals of over $5,000 a month.

The three universities here – NUS, NTU and SMU – all plan to build new hostels in the next few years. However, these will not be ready until after 2010.

SMU currently has three blocks of residences renovated from former flats and located at Prinsep Street. It accommodates 247 students.

Local students only make up 7% of the hostel residents with the rest being foreign students. Even though the hostels are open to both local and foreign students, SMU gives priority to foreign students especially those in their freshman year.

Foreign students make up 20% of all undergraduates in SMU and they comprise about 1,000 students. Currently, there are 229 foreign students putting up at the Prinsep hostels, making up about 20% of SMU foreign students. The other 80% of foreign students are staying at private hostels or other types of housing.

SMU is planning to develop another two new hostels and by 2010 or 2011, the new housing can accommodate another 1,800 students.

As for the other SMU foreign students who are not housed in hostels, they find their own accommodation elsewhere such as private hostels or private housing. SMU encourages foreign students to opt for private hostels as the rentals are more affordable and students can get to know their counterparts from other universities and other nationalities.