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New laws soon to better protect tenants, landlords

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KUALA LUMPUR: Following findings that people have faced discrimination over their ethnicity when seeking a place to rent, the Housing and Local Government Ministry will come up with new laws to protect tenants against such prejudice.

Its Minister Zuraida Kamaruddin said they are looking at drafting a Residential Tenancy Act to better protect landlords and tenants.

"The new law will include provisions against discrimination in accordance with international law," she told reporters after unveiling the new National Housing Policy (2018-2025) here yesterday.

"Models used in Australia and Scotland will be considered," she said.

The study on the proposed law, she added, will also look into bumiputra housing quota.

The proposed enactment comes under the new policy, which is set to be passed by Parliament in 2020.

In a recent exclusive, *The Star* reported that in a survey of one in five Malaysians or 21% of 1,204 Malaysians, aged 18 and above, respondents had claimed to have experienced discrimination based on their ethnicity when seeking a place to rent.

The findings were based on a survey carried out by YouGov Omnibus.

On the other aspects of the new policy, Zuraida said housing devel-



Towards better rules: Zuraida flipping through a copy of the new National Housing Policy during its launch at the Nat Sime Darby Convention Centre. Looking on are (from left) Housing and Local Government Ministry sec-gen Datuk Seri Mohammad Mentek, Deputy Housing and Local Government Minister Datuk Raja Kamarul Bahrin Shah and National Housing Department director-general N.Jayaselan.

opers must obtain a Quality Assessment System in Construction (QLASSIC) certification for new projects in 2020.

She said the certification will be issued by a competent assessor appointed by the Construction Industry Development Board Malaysia and will ensure that the workmanship of homes adheres to the Construction Industry Standard.

On the build-and-sell concept, Zuraida said the government is still studying whether to compel housing developers to implement it.

"The concept was introduced under the previous housing policy and was tried out on six housing projects but found to be not viable," she said.

She noted that the present government is leaning towards the

rent-to-own concept, which has been successfully adopted in Penang and Selangor.

Zuraida also said that in March, some 180 developers will be participating in a property fair offering about 22,000 varied properties worth RM22.5bil.

She added that 24% of the properties on offer there will be affordable homes priced below RM300,000.