

Headline	Zuraida: Mega project tests govt`s new housing policy		
MediaTitle	The Star		
Date	20 Apr 2019	Color	Black/white
Section	Nation	Circulation	175,986
Page No	2	Readership	527,958
Language	English	ArticleSize	245 cm ²
Journalist	ZAKIAH KOYA	AdValue	RM 5,880
Frequency	Daily	PR Value	RM 17,640



Zuraida: Mega project tests govt's new housing policy

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PETALING JAYA: The revived Bandar Malaysia will be the test bed for the Pakatan Harapan government's new housing policy, with 10,000 units of affordable homes to be built on prime land in Kuala Lumpur.

Housing and Local Government Minister Zuraida Kamaruddin said that along with great facilities and affordable homes, there would be a 60ha park at Bandar Malaysia.

"The land (on which the affordable homes are to be built) belongs to the government.

"These 10,000 units of affordable homes are the government's commitment to cater for the lower

income groups of M20, B40 and first-time house buyers, including the youth. The housing units will be built vertically but are not high-rises.

"These units will be at least 900 sq ft for families with children and 550 sq ft for couples without children and singles. The price will be capped at RM300,000 and it will be on a rent-to-own basis.

"The affordable homes will showcase the National Housing Policy 2018-2025, which we passed last year, as these units will be connected to established infrastructure.

"The park will be designed like Hyde Park (in London)," said Zuraida.

The National Housing Policy has five core focuses: improving acces-

sibility and affordability; quality housing for all; cohesive neighbourhoods; good coordination between housing and transportation and institutional relations for the housing policy.

Zuraida said Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad had earlier given the ministry the green light to proceed with the affordable homes in Bandar Malaysia, provided she could settle the land matters on which the units were to be built.

Bandar Malaysia covers an area of 196ha and is situated at the old airport site in Sungai Besi, just 7km from the Kuala Lumpur city centre.

It was mooted by 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB) during the tenure of the previous Barisan Nasional government.

It will be developed by a joint venture between a consortium comprising Iskandar Waterfront Holdings Bhd and China Railway Engineering Corp Sdn Bhd (IWH-CREC) and the government in a 60:40 ratio.

At the initial stage of the project under the last government, the affordable homes were a point of contention because they would be built on prime land.

The initial masterplan included 5,000 affordable homes to be built in the first phase of the development of Bandar Malaysia.

Before the mega project was deferred by the Pakatan government, Bandar Malaysia was also expected to house the main hub for the Kuala Lumpur-Singapore High

Speed Rail (HSR).

Dr Mahathir had stated that the HSR project was too expensive then.

On Wednesday, the government made a U-turn on its decision and would go ahead with Bandar Malaysia.

Sources said Cabinet members were in full agreement that it should be revived.

"The CREC had agreed to the new deal offered by the Pakatan government," said the sources.

They also said that when the project was suggested to be revived, there was unanimous approval from all in the Cabinet.

"The Finance Ministry is wrapping up the deal with CREC. The Economic Affairs Ministry is also involved," said the sources.