



Zuraida: Foreign investors interested in financing rent-to-own schemes

KUALA LUMPUR: Foreign agencies in countries like China have expressed interest in financing Malaysia's rent-to-own schemes, and agreements could be signed as early as this month, said Housing and Local Government Minister Zuraida Kamaruddin (*pic*).

She said her ministry has been in touch with agencies in China, South Korea and the Middle East, and some of them are interested in participating in projects rolled out under the government's national affordable housing policy.

"I am talking to foreign investors to see whether they want to come into this scheme and assist us as the financier," she told a press conference here yesterday.

"Somewhere around the end of April, the prime minister is going to Beijing to attend a Belt and Road Initiative forum. Hopefully, we are going with him and probably [we] could have identified three to four agencies from China itself [by then], to be able to sign MoUs (memorandums of understanding) with," she added.

Zuraida stressed that while the agreements could be signed this year, the financing will only kick in sometime beginning 2021, assuming that the first housing project under the policy takes around three years to complete.

The minister earlier delivered a keynote speech at the "Constructing and Financing Affordable Housing across Asia" Conference organised by Cagamas and the World Bank Group.

According to Zuraida, the mortgage agency can act as a conduit for the investors by undertaking administration and distribution roles of funds parked under the institution.

Meanwhile, Zuraida shared that Cagamas is expected to propose to the ministry a home share equity or ownership programme.