

**Zahid: Noh Omar's housing loan proposal never discussed by cabinet**  
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Deputy Prime Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi today revealed that the proposal for housing developers to act as moneylenders was never discussed at cabinet level.

"The proposal was never discussed by the cabinet and we are asking him to provide an explanation," Zahid said in reference to the [initial announcement](#) made by Urban Well-being, Housing and Local Government Minister Noh Omar.

Zahid said this during a press conference at Menara Bank Rakyat in Kuala Lumpur, after officiating BN component Parti Makkal Sakti Malaysia's 8th Annual General Assembly.

On Thursday, Noh said developers can now apply for moneylending licences to provide loans to home buyers who wish to buy their properties.

He had said the interest rate of the loan would be capped at 12 percent with collateral or up to 18 percent without collateral.

Following a public outcry, Noh later clarified that his proposal was meant to give home buyers a choice, in the event they could not secure a bank loan.

**'Kidnap for ransom'**

On another matter, Zahid revealed the three fishermen [abducted](#) near Pom Pom Island off Semporna, Sabah, early this morning were believed to be victims of a 'kidnap for ransom' group that have been operating below the authorities' radars.

"In this case I have contacted Esscom, the Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency and also the navy to increase surveillance along all 1,700km of Esszone coastline," he said during a press conference after officiating BN component Parti Makkal Sakti Malaysia's 8th annual general meeting in Kuala Lumpur.

Zahid said there could weaknesses in Esscom's equipment but he assured that it would be upgraded soon.

Zahid, who is also home minister, also confirmed all three abductees are not Malaysian citizens but permanent residents.

He further stressed the Malaysian government has had on-going discussions with its counterparts in the Philippines on issues related to border security.

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