



Headline	SIA report a must for all development
MediaTitle	The Star
Date	21 Mar 2017
Section	Nation
Page No	18
Language	English
Journalist	N/A
Frequency	Daily



# SIA report a must for all development

## Noh: Projects' impact will be assessed

**PUTRAJAYA:** All development projects must have a social impact assessment (SIA) report before they can be considered.

This is mandatory following the gazetting of the Town and Country Planning (Amendment) Act 2017 on Jan 16. Parliament had passed the amendment last October.

Urban Wellbeing, Housing and Local Government Minister Tan Sri Noh Omar, who announced this yesterday, said an evaluation alone would not be enough.

"We want a detailed report to be submitted for experts to evaluate how development will affect people in the surrounding area or whose land, homes and livelihood are disrupted by it," he told reporters after his ministry's monthly assembly here.

The SIA's recommendations are aimed at reducing potential negative impact through changes in the design or operations of the projects and also to determine compensation issues.

Projects needing a detailed SIA report, as stated under Section 22 2(A) of the Town and Country Planning Act, include the development of new townships for populations exceeding 10,000 or areas covering over 100ha.

These include development projects that affect hilltops or hillslopes. SIA reports are to be prepared by consultants accredited with the Town Planning Board.

Noh said that in the past, those who wanted to reclaim land would only provide a report on how this would affect the environment "without much study".

"Now, project developers must provide us with information on how the reclamation will impact fishermen in terms of their homes and livelihood, and how it will affect their catch.

"This is the latest effort by the Government to ensure all issues caused by development are identified with solutions in hand," he added.

Noh also said new people's housing projects (PPR) and low-cost flats would have larger lifts to accommodate stretchers.

"We are asking local authorities to ensure that low-cost houses built in their areas have these stretcher lifts," he added.

Noh also announced the rebranding of the Town and Country Planning Department to be known as PLANMalaysia with the tagline "Planning beyond Conventional".