

01 AUG 1996

ASIANS SHOULD BE MORE REALISTIC AND PROACTIVE, SAYS ANWAR

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 1 (Bernama) -- The Asian community should be more realistic and proactive in terms of thinking and working together instead of only reacting to the initiatives made by others, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said today.

"We would certainly be left behind if we start imagining ourselves to be able to survive in a cocoon and lacking the drive to be able to work together," he said.

Speaking at the closing of the Asia Oil and Gas Conference and Exhibition '96 here, Anwar said cooperative networks and synergies between Asean and East Asian countries would enable continuous effective rapport and dialogue with other economic communities such as the European Union and the Nafta (North American Free Trade Area).

"Without those cooperations, the Asians would be further compartmentalised and the old history of the super powers dictating or attempt to segregate would continue," he said.

He said the development arrangement for the overlapping Joint Development Area involving Thailand and Malaysia was a notable example of how the future could be planned and shaped.

The three-day conference, opened by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad on Tuesday, was organised by the Asian Strategy and Leadership Institute. -- BERNAMA

RAZ RM