

27 SEP 1997

Anwar-architects

COME UP WITH DESIGNS TO IMPROVE COMMUNITY LIVING, ARCHITECTS TOLD

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 27 (Bernama) -- Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim today called for architects to exercise their creative imagination to the full to come up with designs for urban housing that would ensure the preservation, if not, the improvement of the community living.

As a matter of fact, he said, the Klang Valley had been suffering some of the urban blight for some time now.

"The average urban dweller is almost a stranger to his neighbours even if he lives in one of those rows of link houses and is separated by thin walls", he said at the annual dinner of Malaysian Association of Architect tonight.

"As our nation progresses, we expect better living standard. The big challenge to architect is to design not just residential areas, but healthy community," he said.

According to him, an urban house must not only be affordable to an average urban dweller but must also be part of a real neighbourhood, one that promotes a real sense of community among neighbours.

In moving towards the creation of an information society, he said the approach to town-planning, design and architecture would change increasingly into something quite different from what they had been accustomed to.

"For example with sophisticated multimedia technology in future, our daily task would be made easier," said Anwar.

He said city development would have take into account the need to install information infrastructure, capable also of adapting to future application softwares which were continually changing at dazzling speeds.

Anwar said new technology in transportation, power production and waste disposals would also have an impact on the planning concept.

He urged architects not only to think of themselves as among the most important agent of human development but also to demonstrate that they care for the social good by making themselves more visible as members of the community.

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At the function, Anwar was awarded the seventh PAM's honorary membership, conferred to any person who had shown interest in architecture and the arts and sciences connected therewith.

The association, in its 30 years of existence, had only honoured six individuals with the award, among them Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamed.

Earlier, PAM's president P. Kasi said that there was a need to review and study the whole development process in the country to keep up with changing conditions in the country.

He said alternatives need to be explored both on development strategies and statutory requirements.

"For example, to cope up with our situation, would higher density city living be better or can high density high rise with more open spaces and facilities be designed to provide better urban living environments?" he said.

Anwar also presented awards to winners of the PAM Architectural Awards 1997 in different categories such as the industrial buildings, commercial buildings, institutional buildings, hotel/resorts buildings and interior design. --BERNAMA

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