

Asian military budgets rising

New Straits Times

17 April 2012

By ADRIAN DAVID

SECURITY CHALLENGES: Countries looking for value-for-money products and services

KUALA LUMPUR: SECURITY challenges and the development of technology and products increases procurement activities, especially in Asia, said Defence Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi.

He said whereas countries in Europe had slashed their military budgets because of the economic crisis, Asia was growing robustly.

"Defence expenditure is no exception, which points to a rosy future for sales and policing in the region," he told delegates and participants at the Defence Services Asia 2012 exhibition.

However, Zahid added the exhibition was not simply a market for technology and equipment, but also provided a golden opportunity for regional nations to take advantage of opportunities in manufacturing, research and development.

"Nations are more prudent and look for products and services with better value for money when expanding their defence capabilities.

"Thus, equipment manufacturers are expected to go beyond their contractual obligations in terms of transfer of technology and offset programmes."

Zahid added that countries were also concerned about the sharing of technological know-how to create lasting partnerships in a competitive market environment.

He called on participants to take advantage of smart partnerships and strategic alliances offered during the show to establish networks and business collaboration.

"The multi-billion ringgit defence industry is highly capital and technology-intensive.

"It offers bright prospects for the growth of a nation, and it augurs well for the growth of our local defence industry."

He added that such events allowed security players to keep abreast of industry advancements through a hands-on approach to products and technology.

"Nevertheless, do not forget that protecting territorial integrity and strategic interests is of paramount importance.

"Thus, defence and security spending is set to rise further as governments tackle traditional and non-traditional threats."

With geopolitical, economic and military trends shifting towards the Asia-Pacific region, it was the right time to start complementing each other's strengths to develop a more integrated environment, he said

Copyright © 2012 The New Straits Times Press (Malaysia) Berhad.

Source: <http://www.nst.com.my/nation/general/asian-military-budgets-rising-1.74738>