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Malaysia secures
ownership of
revolutionary chip

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PUTRAJAYA: Malaysia yesterday officially acquired ownership of the Malaysian Microchip (MM chip) and also secured the right to design, manufacture and market a chip that will revolutionise the use of technology in everyday life.

The Government signed an agreement with Japanese R&D company, FEC Inc, to own the next generation radio frequency identification (RFID) chip, with a broad range of applications from fighting forgery to killing cancer cells.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad witnessed the signing of the agreement at his office here.

Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Dr Rais Yatim represented the Government while FEC Inc chief executive officer Kunioki Ichioka signed on behalf of the company.

Dr Mahathir declined to reveal the amount of money involved in the venture saying it was "a reasonably price transaction and 50-50 share."

"The Government is acquiring ownership of the chip and we have the proprietary right to the design, to produce and market the chip.

"We believe we are ahead of the others because the others (chips) are much bigger. The advantage of this chip is its built-in antenna, which could be used for various applications from health to security," he told reporters.

The chip, measuring 0.25sq mm, would initially be produced in Japan. Malaysia is making preparations to produce the chip with local wafer fab, Silterra Malaysia Sdn Bhd, in Kulim.

"As soon as we have the capacity, we will do it here. It may take a little bit of time.

"This is a venture. We are not looking at the actual money but rather the technological advancement," he added.