

# IT in schools starts to look smart

NS - 25/4/2007

■ **By Koh Lay Chin**  
laych@nst.com.my

**PUTRAJAYA:** No more wastage of funds, poor use of resources and overlaps when it comes to information technology in schools, said the education minister.

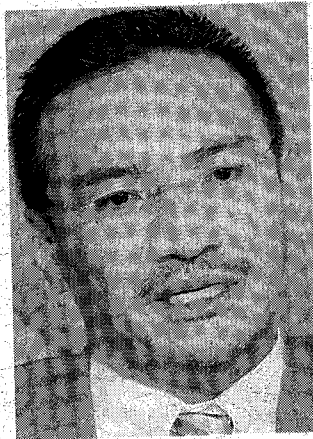
Students can use and learn IT more efficiently under the Education Ministry's plan to make schools truly smart.

"No more excuses. Now we have a clear direction and the National Education Blueprint to guide us, as well as getting the private sector on board. It is a combined effort and all will answer to any weaknesses

that come up," Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein said after launching the Smart Partnership programme to make schools smart yesterday.

Speaking to a crowd filled with education officers and IT sector players, he said in the past, there had been no streamlining of IT programmes and its effectiveness could not be measured accurately or thoroughly.

He said there was also a lack of information and vision for stakeholders when implementing information and communication technology (ICT) initiatives or projects.



**Education Minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein**

This resulted in problems related to the schools' requirements and procedures for assistance.

"There was a lot of involvement at various levels and involving many parties. It was not planned strategically and there was often no standardisation, with financial sources, content and human resources not optimised fully. This resulted in overlaps and wastage," he said.

It has been almost a decade since the ministry started highlighting the use of ICT in schools, eventually leading to the establishment of 88 flagship smart schools and efforts

to provide ICT resources to the other 10,000 schools.

Over the years, public and private initiatives were a confusing mix when it came to ICT. Millions were spent on efforts to provide hardware, prepare software and train teachers at the same time, with unclear or unknown results.

But he said yesterday that those days were over, as there would be smart partnership between all stakeholders to make sure funds and resources would be used wisely and optimally, especially with collaborations and input from private sector players.

In the hall yesterday were representatives from AMD, IBM Malaysia, Intel Electronic (Malaysia), Maxis Communication Berhad and Microsoft (M) Sdn Bhd.

Some of them signed memoranda of understanding, and others involved in collaborations presented reports on their projects to the ministry.

At a press conference later, Hishammuddin said the ministry wanted 19 out of the 30 recently-announced cluster schools to work to become smart schools, following in the footsteps of the 11 other cluster schools which are already "smart".