

**SPEECH TEXT BY PRIME MINISTER : OPENING CEREMONY OF  
INFINEON KULIM 3**

By : DATO' SERI ANWAR IBRAHIM

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**SPEECH TEXT**

**YAB DATO' SERI ANWAR BIN IBRAHIM**

**PERDANA MENTERI**

**FOR**

**OPENING CEREMONY OF INFINEON KULIM 3**

**8 AUGUST 2024 (THURSDAY)**

**KULIM, KEDAH**

Assalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh dan salam sejahtera.

**YAB Dato' Seri Haji Muhammad Sanusi Md Nor,**

Menteri Besar Kedah;

**YB Senator Tengku Datuk Seri Utama Zafrul Tengku Abdul Aziz,**

Kementerian Pelaburan, Perdagangan dan Industri;

**YB Dato' Seri Haji Norizan bin Khazali,**

Setiausaha Kerajaan Negeri Kedah;

And of course, we are pleased to welcome

**Mr. Jochen Hanebeck,**

Chief Executive Officer of Infineon Technologies;

**Mr. Rutger Wijburg,**

Chief Operating Officer of Infineon Technologies;

**Mr. Ng Kok Tiong,**

Senior Vice President and Managing Director of Infineon Technologies (Kulim); dan

Rakan-rakan yang saya muliakan.

1. Saya ucapkan setinggi-tinggi penghargaan, ini merupakan satu penghormatan besar kepada negara Malaysia kerana apa yang kita saksikan hari ini bukan sahaja satu perasmian industri tetapi industri teknologi tinggi yang selari dengan dasar mengurangkan karbon, dasar teknologi hijau dan yang lebih utama adalah teknologi yang menakjubkan dunia, dan kita tentunya terharu kerana Malaysia dipilih sebagai tuan rumah. Oleh itu, saya ucap terima kasih kepada MITI, Menteri Besar dan Kerajaan Negeri serta Kulim Hi-Tech atas kerjasama yang diberikan dalam mempercepatkan dan melicinkan proses. Lebih utama, penghargaan kepada Infineon Technologies dan rakan-rakan yang bekerja menjayakan projek ini.

Excellencies ladies and gentlemen,

2. Of course, I am extremely delighted to have Infineon here which surprisingly have excited not only because my friends is here but the entire region. You are probably aware that we have exploited the presence and the support of Infineon as a pillar in our effort to encourage investments into this country. So, for that I salute Infineon. When I was in Germany in the invitation of Chancellor Olaf Scholz, in my discussions with him, Infineon of course was mentioned. He was extremely delighted that welcoming that Infineon

have agreed to expand your activities here and becoming a very large semiconductor enterprise. In fact, he was joking in a lighter mood, note saying that “Well Prime Minister Anwar, I would have wished that they expand and focus in Germany”. But on a serious note, you know that it is a major activity in industry in Germany. Well known to the world and for us it is certainly a remarkable feat indeed.

3. So, there are few issues that I like to raise here. First, your presence is not only an entry into what is considered a new technology with green technology, with a highly focused and precise industry. And I want Malaysians to share this, to understand that this was built through research, highly skilled professionals and dedicated workers and great discipline. And that’s why you have created Infineon as a major semiconductor enterprise, fab industry and now a leading edge in this field.
4. This does not happen as you know, except for a clear direction, of course policies of government that encourage those, but the enterprising professionals and researchers of all fields. We are fortunate again because when you enter this way with value added activities it becomes a potential catalyst for us in Malaysia. For example, to understand that nothing works without a clear discipline and focus. Nothing works without focus on research and development and creating highly skilled professionals that can fill this gap.
5. So, in the decades that Infineon was involved here in the first wafer fabrication at the back end. But what is to me astounding is the Infineon’s interest, commitment and confidence to enter into a new

enterprise in the front end of fab industry. Which is to my mind a great feat and I think Malaysians should understand that it is not a normal wafer fab technology. We have now been recognized to be able to receive an outstanding technological enterprise that now cater for a front end. Therefore, it shows that Malaysia has now gone up the ladder and we then need to be prepared. The infrastructure must be great. This involves Kulim Hi-Tech, the state government and the federal agencies. We should not or even cannot tolerate inefficiency, any delays. Because when companies like Infineon gives us that confidence, we must reciprocate with clear commitment. That's precisely number one.

6. Number two, the ecosystem. Why is Malaysia now regarded as a hub in the region for ecosystem. We are able to compete with our neighbors because we have an edge for the last two, three decades. So, the ecosystem helps now, but it needs to be improved. I've always emphasized the need for resilience. This culture of complacency or culture of contentment will not lead us anywhere. Of course, I'm delighted and thank you again, but that is not sufficient. What is lacking? I am naturally proud to see some of our local players working with the German professionals in developing this new fab culture. Which is to me mind boggling. I come from liberal arts background. So, find back to force me to listen to this is part of a torture by itself (joking tone). But I'm again delighted because we have seen these young professionals coming up. But is it sufficient? No. That is why the synergy in the ecosystem must add. Must be prepared to make the necessary shift.

7. The universities, the TVETs must then come up with new plans, new directions to ensure that the change is happening at a faster pace. Now, I'm not here to state what is already known and Tengku Zafrul is here in terms of the new investments, new focus and support that we are getting from many countries. As I said to even Chancellor Scholz, that we are fiercely independent. We want to befriend all our neighbors and want to attract their interest into Malaysia. And we have been rather successful. But that is only a beginning. The infrastructure, the ecosystem, the training and we have called upon universities. I'm sure USM here, UUM and the TVETs and the institutions in Kedah, Penang in particular, must be receptive and undertake the changes at the faster pace. You can't talk about digitalization, innovation, AI and expect to obtain good results with a normal pace of change or development. That is why I have called on universities. We give all the necessary support in terms of the funding for research, and new disciplines.
  
8. I have mentioned this in Kuala Lumpur that a normal university, when they want to start a new discipline, will take at least one and a half years. It goes through a department and then through the Dean, through the Board of Studies to the Senate and then to the Ministry of Higher Education. I say "If you use that pace, it's no longer postnormal world". Postnormal world requires change which is spontaneous, at an unprecedented pace, because once you slow down you will lose the race and competition. Therefore, setting up for example AI department or faculty, what more universities would require us to deploy the best from the country, from any religious denominations or race, and from the region or from international community who can serve and contribute.

9. So, the pace of change and to appoint those who are very qualified is of course a prerequisite to ensure the success of this endeavor. And we require 60,000 highly skilled engineers by 2020. But now we have adjusted probably by 2027 at the rate we are given the support and the interest shown. As I've alluded earlier, Malaysia now is considered to be a hub for semiconductor industry and this again is a remarkable feat. Thanks to all the stakeholders for playing their part. But my concern as I've said, and I think, you can hear this because to show that we are not sitting on our laurels, we are pushing this agenda forward. And to push the agenda means all agencies, all departments, all levels of professionalism must undertake this measure. This needs to be emphasized.
  
10. I believe my colleague, the Minister and Menteri Besar would share this sentiment with me that we cannot expect to be regarded as a successful player in this new technology if we continue to work at a normal pace. There are some other challenges. Infineon is known. I'm not going to talk about fab, you have the expertise but I understand the ecosystem that is required. It's not the old Infineon started because you require green energy. From where? From the country. Which means we have to push ahead. So, you have highly skilled workers that you need, new highly trained engineers, you need green through hydro, through gas, through solar. Now we are moving towards green hydrogen and ammonia, whatever is required, then you get that in place, of course infrastructure is less challenging but more importantly is the ecosystem that I have related to.
  
11. I think for the Malaysian government we'll do whatever is necessary. We'll continue to engage with you to make sure that we remain a very

attractive destination for investments and I'm proud to say not only Infineon but industries in Germany as a whole have chosen Malaysia as one of the major investment destinations. Our visit organized by MITI, MIDA and colleagues have shown that even in the SME's and conference that I have attended and also Hamburg with more aristocratic environment where they forced me to use a black tie, but I have seen this interest. My focus is now to ensure that we do reciprocate and we take the adequate measures now so that our economy will continue to grow. Today's event marks a major, a huge milestone for Kulim, Kedah and for Malaysia to showcase that we are able to attract world class investments.

12. For Mr. Hanebeck, thank you very much because it is not just an ordinary feat. Because if you follow some of our discussions with potential investors, I would say "Look, Infineon have decided, surely for good reason for the infrastructure, for the attractive incentives. But for the professionalists and workforce, discipline and that's why they choose and because of your presence and to place a world's largest 200 mm silicon carbide power fab, that alone is a major selling point for us in the country. So thank you very much.

Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh.

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