

SPEECH BY
YAB DATO' SERI ABDULLAH BIN HAJI AHMAD BADAWI
AT THE NATIONWIDE LAUNCH OF AMD ATHLON PROCESSOR-BASED
SYSTEMS, AT THE NEXT GENERATION AT MANDARIN ORIENTAL
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Ladies and gentlemen

It gives me great pleasure to officiate at the nationwide launch for AMD Athlon Processor-Based Systems: the next generation.

2. I have been made to understand that this new generation processor is able to meet the most demanding computer applications. I congratulate AMD for their achievement in developing this processor. I also take this opportunity to congratulate Timecom group, in particular time technology, for enabling the world's most powerful processor currently to be available to I.T users in Malaysia.

3. Recently, there were news reports on how the early age computers are now much sought after by collectors and fetch very high prices. How early can early age be? Like watches and coins which are hundreds of years old? No. We are talking about computers that are less than twenty years old. That is how fast and how much information technology has progressed and it also shows how today's technology is tomorrow's history.

4. The knowledge revolution has hit the world with a fervor never seen in history. To keep pace with this technology, we have to be on our toes all the time for if we lag behind, then we will be left far behind the rest of the world and when we are left behind by the technology of tomorrow, our future, too, will be bleak.

5. In Malaysia, we have made much progress in the digital revolution. Today, I.T is becoming a way of life. The government acknowledges and realises the importance of I.T and it was thus that we spearheaded the setting up of the Multimedia Super Corridor to ensure that Malaysia can keep abreast of the rest of the world.

6. Still, there is much to do and we cannot afford to rest on our haunches because of the constant changes and advancements taking place in what has certainly become the most competitive technology in the world. It is also a technology to which there are no bounds or limitations in what can be done and improved upon.

7. In this respect, the government will continue to constantly and relentlessly campaign for wider use of computers at all levels - in homes, schools, businesses and government. We cannot just acknowledge the essentiality of I.T; we have to embrace its use to ensure there are beneficial advantages.

8. Today, most businesses have installed computer systems. Some people merely use their systems for word processing; some for typing which essentially reduces a great technological tool to the level of an expensive typewriter.

9. But let us look at word processing. Today, word processing programs, which are the simplest of I.T business tools, have improved tremendously. New softwares have transformed functional word processing programmes to include desktop and multimedia publishing capabilities. Hence, with a dash of creativity, a person can

produce a professional document with a word processing programme.

10. As we can see, a common I.T business tool like a word processing programme can transform the way we do things, but of course, this depends on how a person explores the advantages of the power of such programmes. The same applies to other areas of I.T both in using hardware and software.

11. When I was a young kid and when Instamatic cameras were unheard of, a trip to the local photography shop was a treat for those who wanted to record family portraits for posterity. Today, our kids scan in old photographs and send it to friends half a world away by e-mail and they can print out hundreds of copies on their laser jet printers. From their digital cameras, they instantly put in photographs into their computer. Technicians use these photographs for their plans; planners use it for their projections and presentations. Even in things like this, the uses are limitless.

12. The advancement of I.T is, to put it simply, remarkable. Therefore, those who lack I.T proficiency have to acquire the knowledge now lest they be left behind.

Ladies and gentlemen,

13. From internet technology, electronic commerce has emerged. E-Commerce is the future way of doing business. However, the adoption of E-Commerce into everyday business has not taken off in the way we would like although huge advancements have been made in Malaysia.

14. If businesses here take steps to be prepared, when the wave comes, they will be adequately equipped and in a position to have the competitive edge.

15. The government is making determined efforts to nurture the development of E-Commerce in Malaysia. E-Commerce, the manifestation of I.T use in trade and commerce, is the way of doing business in the new millennium. It is not only transforming businesses, it will in due course transform the very nature of the economy of a country. Society, too will be transformed as this manifestation of I.T use revolutionizes the way Malaysians conduct our daily commercial activities.

16. We intend to be the communications and E-Commerce hub of the region and lead in this areas for countries in the south too. However, this will necessitate the greater use of I.T applications such as E-Commerce locally and more transborder E-Commerce projects and activities to help position the country at a vantage point internationally.

17. To help achieve this Malaysia has put together the Cyberlaws to facilitate the conduct of transactions in the networked environment and will be unveiling the national policy framework on E-Commerce later in the year. In the meantime work to finalize the national E-Commerce masterplan is on-going. Our international efforts in the area of E-Commerce is expected to increase in momentum with the implementation of a coordinated strategy to make Malaysia the communications and E-Commerce hub.

Ladies and gentlemen,

18. An enormous effort by the government to spur the development of I.T in the country is the creation of the MSC - multimedia super corridor. The MSC will be our

next engine for sustainable growth. The MSC provides a no- restrictions environment needed to nurture the innovativeness and creativity that information and Multimedia Technology demands. To date, more than 230 companies have been awarded MSC status with 33 of them being the world's top I.T companies. The MSC will help propel Malaysia into the information age. As we approach the 21st century, global economic activity rapidly shifts towards one that is based on information technology.

19. However, there is an urgent need to meet changing manpower demands that will be created by the shift to an information - and technology-based economy. In the knowledge society of the information age, most, if not all, jobs will involve the use of information technology. Even managers and bosses will need to use I.T systems in order to handle their jobs efficiently, effectively, and productively. The mentality of regarding the computers as only office equipment for staffs to do their jobs has to change. We have to recognize computers as business tools that are not only for staffs but also as business tools of managers and bosses. Business managers who are either non- I.T literate or who have shallow I.T knowledge may shrink from participating in the process of creating an appropriate I.T environment that will enhance their business.

Ladies and gentlemen,

20. Certainly, I.T literacy learning is not just about putting computer hardware and software. To ensure I.T literacy learning to be appropriate and relevant, the courseware is a critical factor. If not, eventually, we may end up with the inability to use I.T systems appropriately and effectively as business tools. So let us not ignore the humanware - the people who are required to use I.T systems appropriately as an efficient and effective business tool.

21. Good and powerful I.T systems are incomplete without appropriately developed humanware. I.T companies, such as AMD, will continue to develop and give us powerful systems. At the same time, we will need to develop effective I.T users. I appreciate that Timecom group, besides enabling it users in Malaysia with the access to powerful pc systems, has also embark on the drive to enhance I.T literacy among students for the past 15 years.

Ladies and gentlemen,

22. I would like to thank the organisers for inviting me. I wish you success in marketing your now processor and hope that its use will bring Malaysia one step closer towards becoming an I.T-adept society.

Thank you.