

## **PERASMIAN KOMPLEKS PINTAR IRIS**

TAMAN TEKNOLOGI MALAYSIA, KUALA LUMPUR, 23 MARCH 1998

Saya ucapkan berbanyak terima kasih kepada Pengurusan dan kakitangan IRIS Technologies (M) Sdn. Bhd. yang telah menjemput saya untuk merasmikan Kompleks Pintar IRIS (IRIS Smart Complex) hari ini.

2. When I first heard about the potential of smart technology, and that one of the best brains behind the leading edge smart technologies may belong to a Malaysian residing abroad, I was intrigued. I have always believed that Malaysians have the capabilities and skills to participate aggressively in the Information Age, but that we had an intellectual gem amongst us was very exciting.

3. For a long time now the Government has advocated a policy of bringing home Malaysian experts who are working overseas. This applies not only to doctors and engineers but to anyone who can contribute positively to the development of S & T in our country. Intellectual wealth is a cornerstone of our future in the Information Age. Inventors are especially important as they have the capacity to innovate and develop ideas into products which we can manufacture and export worldwide.

4. These inventors, especially information age technologists, can also contribute to the country's overall intellectual capacity and eventually inspire more people into taking research and development to new heights.

5. In this respect, we are indeed fortunate that IRIS Technologies brought home an inventor who had innovated several core technologies for further development.

6. Today, I stand in Malaysia's first smart technology complex, conceived by Malaysians, built by Malaysians, and staffed by Malaysians who are developing 21st century products and applications based on technology innovated and owned by Malaysians.

7. It is precisely this kind of spirit of innovation that I was talking about for the past decade, and which I reiterated barely a month ago, also in Technology Park Malaysia.

8. For too long we have been overlooking talented and ingenious people within our midst because we believe only foreigners are competent. But I believe that intellectual capabilities are not restricted according to region. Malaysians, too, have the capacity to design, innovate, develop and apply technologies and products that can be used both in the country and overseas.

9. We have had several success stories where Malaysian technology and products have reached the international markets. And as a Malaysian I am very proud of these achievements and of the companies concerned.

10. In this day and age of the microelectronic processor, the Internet and satellite

communications, there are so many opportunities to bring forth new ideas to be developed into products and services that can propel us into the information age.

11. The Multimedia Super Corridor is being developed for the benefit of the country. While it is formulated to attract foreign investment and facilitate the transfer of technology, it also aims to identify and encourage creative experts among Malaysians, people who have the ability to anticipate this world' s needs and develop products and services to serve those needs using home- grown technology.

12. We know of Malaysians working in multinational corporations in Malaysia who have designed products for their employers based on the latest technologies; Malaysians who have innovated manufacturing methods, and designed new machine tools to manufacture those new products. These Malaysians are among the assets which draw foreign companies to invest in the country, and we are most appreciative of their contributions to the country.

13. In IRIS Technologies we can find some of those Malaysians doing what they do best, but this time for a Malaysian company.

14. But as we sit in this auditorium, let us not forget the challenges these pioneers faced in their quest to establish a technology bulkhead. From their experiences, we can see that there is a need for the finance sector and venture capitalists to keep an open mind and understand the value of intellectual property.

15. While it is true that investors have to exercise prudence before they put in a single ringgit into their ventures, it is advisable that they understand emerging technologies and their impact on the future. New and emerging technologies have the potential to bring tremendous rewards to investors, and subsequently to the country. If investors do not take the effort to understand the technology, it is unlikely that they will invest, and if they do not invest, not only will they eventually lose out, but the country will have also missed an opportunity to increase its wealth, raise gainful employment, educate the people and pursue profitable follow-up technologies and corresponding products.

16. Perhaps it would also help if potential investors realise that Malaysians are capable of innovating, inventing, designing, manufacturing and delivering on their promises. We should not disregard the skills and ideas possessed by locals because of an inherent inferiority complex which rejects everything local. More importantly, we should take note that technology is an intellectual property conceived far ahead before any product gets manufactured or produced, and that nobody has a monopoly on ideas.

17. It is heartening to note that IRIS Technologies Sdn. Bhd. has developed a set of core technologies that provide a secure environment for smart applications. The IRIS core technology - Image Retrieval Identification System - provides many enabling derivative technologies which can be adapted to a myriad of global applications.

18. Since 1995 until the present, IRIS Technologies has registered one generic technology for copyright and seven other technology derivatives as patents at the Patents Office in Washington D.C., USA. This proves that Malaysian technology is recognised worldwide and that Malaysians can lead in the technology sector. IRIS also has to be commended on its adoption of existing technologies. The IRIS team has decided not to re-invent the wheel, but it does believe that even the wheel can be improved. It is the same with all technologies.

19. It has been pointed out to me that when IRIS needed an antenna for its contactless passport book insert, it found that such a device was not available as it did not exist. Reverting to its in-house R & D capability, IRIS developed a very stable and reliable antenna for its own use in the unique book insert product. The antenna was also designed to be low cost as well as for ease of manufacturing. Having developed this special state of the art antenna design capability, IRIS Technologies realised that it was also suitable for contactless chipcard application.

20. It is without doubt that technology advancements made by IRIS Technologies are being closely monitored by others in the industry. Companies in Australia and in the USA have worked out technology sharing agreements with IRIS Technologies.

21. At present, I have been informed that IRIS has contracts with several companies in Australia and USA, to manufacture antennas for their requirements. These companies recognise the expertise of IRIS in antenna design and manufacturing, and has selected IRIS as their preferred technology partner in the development of state of the art antennas for their contactless chipcard products. IRIS is now assisting these companies in lowering the cost, extending the read range and reducing the size of their antennas.

22. IRIS Technologies has also developed a printable antenna that is made from high conductivity ink, bonded together with an adhesive which has low residue properties. The technologies combined to develop the newest antenna come from the printing and adhesive industries, reflecting on IRIS Technologies' ability to source and combine disparate technologies in innovative ways.

23. An example of an innovation here is the security aspects for authenticating electronic travel documents. In these times, the need for security is overwhelming, and new ways are necessary to combat fraud and terrorism.

24. Government-issued travel documents are increasingly being upgraded to accommodate new security features, the most recent additions being loosely termed as electronic- based security features. There has been much confusion caused as most of the so-called electronic features are nothing more than paper-based security features that are read electronically. The most common feature in travel documents today are Machine Readable Passports (MRP). These documents offer a printed code that can be read by an optical reader and to automatically load simple details -- such as the bearer's name and passport

number -- into an electronic medium such as a computer file.

25. True electronic passports are now emerging. These passports incorporate a silicon chip with many orders of magnitude higher than paper-based security. The chip cannot be electronically tampered without destroying the chip, and the chip cannot be duplicated. The data can be digitally encrypted and even configured to be non-erasable after encoding to prevent fraud. These vastly superior security features, differentiate the true electronic passport from its lesser cousins, the passport with paper-based security features that are read electronically and which are sometimes regarded as 'electronic' passports.

26. We have all seen what these people here at IRIS Technologies are capable of, and we must acknowledge their capabilities in this field. When we have a problem that may lend itself to an electronic solution we should consult and give them a chance.

27. It is hoped that such achievements do not end here and that many more Malaysian companies will emerge with the same spirit and determination to succeed with indigenous technologies.

28. Dengan ini, saya dengan sukacitanya merasmikan pembukaan Kompleks Pintar IRIS.