

# NST LEADER

## TELCO TECHNOLOGY

### Our way

My way or no way isn't the best path to technology dominance

**T**HERE is a revolution going on in the next generation of wireless technology, but the developed world is worried dead about security. They even have a Five Eyes intelligence sharing community — the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand. We are glad Malaysia is not as paranoid as the West. Malaysia's stand is an expression of the country's attitude towards technology: it is all for it. We say it is the right attitude to adopt.

Consider the case of the proposed merger of Norway's Telenor Group and Malaysia's Axiata Group Bhd. There are two pieces of good news here. One good news is for the country. Three national funds are shareholders of Axiata: sovereign fund Khazanah Nasional Bhd, Permodalan Nasional Bhd and Employees Provident Fund. According to an analysis by Reuters, the enterprise value of the merged entity

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would be more than RM160 billion. This spells good dividends for our national funds. There is surely a business case here.

The second piece of good news is for the people. Wireless technology is about connectivity, about one device communicating with another. It is about living in a world driven by the Internet of Things (IoT). Of smart

cities, smart homes, smart cars and smart other things one can't even imagine. In short, it is smart living. All this spells a growing digital intelligence. In the estimate of digital news portal ZDNet, there are more connected things than there are people in the world.

In 2017, there were 8.4 billion IoT devices in use around the world. Expect this to spike to 20.4 billion by 2020, 12.8 billion of which will be consumer products. Malaysians will be dumb to live without it.

The brouhaha about Huawei isn't really about national security. It is about dominance. It is about the US wanting China's advancement kept in check. The US attempt at pressuring its allies to stop using Huawei's devices and equipment must be read as such. If it was really a security issue, the US should only be concerned about its national security, not that of the rest of the West. Some statistics help support this argument. Last year, Huawei replaced Apple as the second largest seller of mobile phones. By 2025, Huawei is expected to replace the current No. 1, Samsung. As pointed out by some analysts, this is not the first time free commerce and national security have clashed. History's text is full of trade-security tensions. Geopolitics abhors some businesses.

*Forbes* magazine in a Oct 16, 2018, article titled *The War for the World's 5G Future*, concedes to this view. And its transparently clear conclusion is: whoever wins this technology struggle — the most decisive being the contest over 5G wireless — will become the dominant superpower in the 21st century. Because the country that wins the 5G war will have a say on not only how information is transmitted, but also who can have access to it. Perhaps the US is reading too much into the Asian giant's "Made in China 2025" plan that sets its sights on controlling 90 per cent of the world's most advanced industries.



Education Minister Dr Maszlee Malik says the centralised all-in-one portal is a step forward for the ministry. PIC BY AIZUDDIN SAAD

## PREVENTING MISMATCH

# PORTAL HELPS STUDENTS CHOOSE CAREER PATH

It will be launched next year, says minister

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**T**HE Education Ministry is developing a centralised all-in-one portal that will not only provide Form Five leavers their Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia examination results, but also help them determine their education path upon completing secondary school.

This portal is targeted to be launched next year, Education Minister Dr Maszlee Malik told the *New Sunday Times* in an interview at Balai Berita here.

He said the portal aimed to prevent mismatch and to provide students with a general picture of their education and career out-

look in the next five years.

The information will be personalised in accordance with the student's academic and co-curricular achievements, as well as psychometric tests.

"Through this portal, SPM students would not only get to view their examination results, but they would also be able to see recommendations on their best-suited pre-university courses and even available scholarships for them to apply.

"Using artificial intelligence (AI), the machine will crawl Internet databases and give recommendations on appropriate courses, the universities or institutions that offer the courses, and available scholarships and other financial aid."

Maszlee said his ministry was gathering student data from departments to populate the portal.

He said the establishment of the portal would not burden teachers or result in extra administrative work for them as all the information required was already

available.

Teachers need not input anything extra.

Currently, students could obtain their SPM results directly from their schools or state Education Departments.

They could also check their results via short messaging system (SMS) or the Examination Syndicate website.

The Education Ministry does not have a dedicated platform to guide students on an education path based on their examination results.

Students have to figure out their path on their own through various sources, including teachers, career guidance talks and education fairs.

Taking inspiration from Jordan's Education Ministry, Maszlee said the portal would include the students' school data, presentations and projects, co-curricular activities, and psychometric tests from Year One right up to Form Five.

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