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Singapore Government

PRESS RELEASE

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**Speech By Mr Yeo Cheow Tong,
Minister For Communications And Information Technology
On The Official Opening Of The E-Biz Hub
At Technopark @ Chai Chee, 10 April, 11:00 Am**

1 Barely two weeks ago, we witnessed the opening up of the telecoms sector in Singapore. This significant policy change reflects the government's commitment to develop the info-communications sector as a key engine of growth in our economy. More importantly, it will accelerate the development of our high tech info-communications industry and promote the development of technopreneurship.

2 With the launching of the government's Technopreneurship 21 program, we are seeing more high tech entrepreneurs start their dot.com companies. The challenge now, is to provide the necessary infrastructure and networking facilities for these new age companies to flourish in Singapore.

3 In the past, it was sufficient for a building to have just twisted cables, as

the requirement was mainly to provide telephone services. With the arrival of the information age, plain old twisted cables will no longer be enough to meet the growing demands of infocomm devices in both offices and homes. Property developers will therefore have to decide very quickly whether they are going to cater to the New Economy, or to remain in the past. I am therefore glad that several developers have taken the initiative to broadband-enable their buildings, by deploying the latest technologies, including fibre-cabling their buildings. This will allow them to cater to tenants who are intensively using the latest infocomm technologies in their business operations.

4 Developers who have announced such plans include DBS Land, Pidemco and Keppel Land. Pidemco has announced plans to outfit its new-generation office buildings and luxury condominiums with high-speed wireless computer networks, while Keppel Land and Keppel T&T have announced a joint venture to invest and develop property-related technology and e-businesses.

5 It is indeed very encouraging to note that developers are responding rapidly to the e-revolution, by ensuring that their buildings are broadband-ready. This is rightly so, as it is better for broadband-enabling of buildings to be voluntary and led by industry, instead of being mandated and driven by the government. This reflects that our local developers are aware of the tremendous benefits of such a move and are responding positively to market demands.

6 In this new multi-operator telecoms environment, property developers can choose from more than one Public Telecommunications Service Provider. I would expect that these new telecom companies will very quickly be knocking on the developers' doors to offer a wide range of services. There may be pressure on the property developers to sign exclusivity deals with a particular telecom provider. Developers may be interested to know that under the government's open access policy, all Public Telecommunications Providers have rights of access into buildings. Tenants in these buildings have the right to choose their telecom service provider. An exclusive deal is therefore not valid. Where the vertical cabling in the building is already built and owned by a particular telecom company, the other telecom service providers can either lease the existing vertical cabling, or put in their own vertical cabling after discussion with the property owner. Ideally, the property developer should own the vertical cabling and allow the various telecom companies to access the same cabling and provide telecommunications service.

7 In this regard, let me congratulate DBS Land and 1-Net, for their

initiative in creating this E-Biz Hub. With its broadband infrastructure connected to the Singapore ONE core backbone, coupled with a strategy to provide substantially lower bandwidth and connectivity cost, the 500,000 sq feet complex will benefit its many fast growing dot.com tenants. This is a prime example of Singapore's readiness for the new broadband age. For Singapore, the future is already here, right here, right now.

8 In conclusion. Let me urge all property developers and owners to take up the challenge of making Singapore a truly broadband-enabled island. The infocomm revolution is here to stay. Our companies will increasingly be incorporating infocomm technology into all aspects of their business, in order to remain competitive and be linked to their customers, suppliers, and other business partners. Developers and owners of commercial buildings will need to ensure that their buildings are broadband-enabled, if they are to retain quality tenants. \

9 With that, let me end by wishing DBS Land and 1-Net all the best for the future. It is now my pleasure to declare E-Biz Hub officially open.

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