

The IBM 5100 Portable Computer was a desktop computer introduced in September 1975, six years before the IBM PC. A single integrated unit provided the keyboard, five-inch CRT display, tape drive, processor, several hundred kilobytes of read only memory containing system software, and up to 64 KB of random access memory. It was the size of a small suitcase, weighed about 55 lb (25 kg), and could be transported in an optional carrying case, hence the "portable" moniker. While the IBM 5100 seems large today, in 1975 it was an amazing technical accomplishment to package a complete computer with a large amount of ROM and RAM, CRT display, and a tape drive into a machine that small.



TECHSPOTLIGHT

'Made by Nokia' takes on 'grey' phones

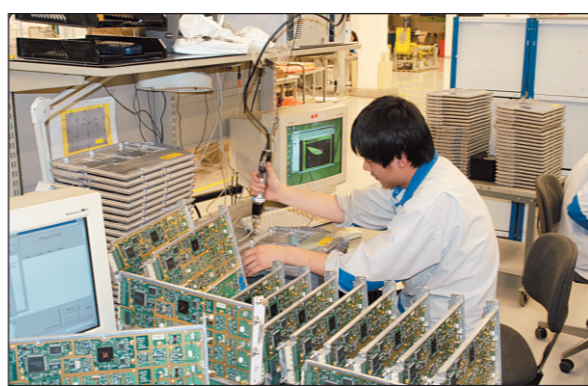
NAFID IMRAN AHMED, back from Beijing, China

THE eastern coast of China has an economy high on steroids. Fuelled by massive infusions of foreign capital and technology, and guided by a single-party government determined to turn the country into a socialist superpower through dominance in manufacturing. Eastern China has been completely transformed. All of the major cities on the east coast have new airports, new highway systems, and hundreds of new, modern-looking skyscrapers. Construction cranes pierce the skyline for as far as the eye can see.

The Nokia plant in Beijing is a unique example of the booming Chinese industrial sector. It has state-of-the-art automation and relatively few workers. Furthermore, the Chinese government helped the company establish a large, new



A view of the Xingwang (International) industrial park



industrial park known as the Xingwang (International) industrial park that now houses most of Nokia's major suppliers too. The close proximity and increased face-to-face communication with suppliers helps Nokia speed up development of new products and simplify production logistics.

This world class mobile telecommunications manufacturing base is one of the largest foreign investment projects in Beijing that attracted more than 20 leading suppliers of Nokia.

Nokia also sponsors a joint cafeteria and health club for all managers in the industrial park to help build relationships between Nokia managers and their suppliers. Nokia and their suppliers have even consolidated their commuter bus system so that inter-company networking can continue on the ride to and from work.

In a presentation at the factory premises, Hera Siu, vice-president, Nokia (China) Investment Co Ltd mentioned that China is the world's largest mobile phone market, which

is almost 20 per cent of world's total mobile phone subscribers. She also mentioned that the resources China offer to build Nokia's global competitiveness includes -- large supply of skilled labour, good infrastructure for research and development (R&D) with 500,000 annual graduates in IT and government incentives and policies for business. The plant manufactures handsets for the China and Asia Pacific countries.

Gerry Wong, senior manager, Quality APAC Operations & Logistics, Customer and Market Operations, Nokia (China) Investment Co elaborated the factory operations and how the plant maintains the international standard and test every single handset that comes out of the plant.

There is a perception in our market that products made in China are not of good quality. But visiting the Nokia plant in Beijing one thing was quite clear that when Nokia produces its products in China, it is not a Chinese company that manufactures the products. Nokia

itself, maintaining its global standards and quality, manufactures the handsets that meet the international standard.

We have two types of Nokia handsets in the Bangladeshi market. One, that comes through proper channel and are distributed through authorised distributors, and the other known as the 'Grey' or unauthorised handsets.

"In Bangladesh, if we look back 12 months, the market was 6070 per cent grey. We have started campaign and also the reductions in duty have reduced the grey market to 50 per cent," Prem Chand, general manager, Emerging Asia Customer and Market Operations, Nokia, said while describing the present market situation.

"The Sri Lankan market is about 80 per cent grey. It's a significant issue in Sri Lanka which comes down to two issues. First of all the duty in Sri Lanka is not in the same level as Bangladesh or India, that leads to the illegal trading of the handsets. And the other is about consumer education campaigns.

We have already launched a campaign in Bangladesh about 2 months ago and we are starting to see the results of that and we will be launching a similar campaign in Sri Lanka by the end of August," Prem added.

"The important part of buying an authorised Nokia handset is that the consumers get value out of their handset. They might save a dollar or two, through purchasing a grey handset but the battery and the charger are made by third party, so the performance is poor."

"They may be paying a little less but the value that they are getting are significantly lower. And the other thing is that the authorised handsets have localised operator settings, which the illegal handsets do not have," Prem stated.

"In terms of localising the product, for Sri Lanka we shall launch a new device with Sinhalese and Tamil language options. Which means when someone switches on the device has the option of choosing from English or Tamil and the whole experience in terms of menus, text

and everything will be in local language. For Bangladesh, we have done a similar thing from the beginning of this year, all the entry-level handset devices such as Nokia 1110, 1600, 2310, 2610, 6030, are coming into the market with the local Bangla language. We are setting up our local office in Dhaka and in the next four weeks we shall have at least 10 devices that will have local language options."

In addition to localising the product and developing local campaign Nokia are focusing mainly on customer care. "After sales service is very important for us and we are looking at developing our 'care' network to ensure that all consumers get the same experience," said Prem.

Globally Nokia provides 12 months warranty for authorised handsets, therefore anything that goes wrong within that period, free of charge service to the consumers will be provided. When it comes to

unauthorised handsets, the care centres will still be providing support, however the consumer will have to pay for that.

At present there are 27 service points in Bangladesh and within the next three months Nokia will set up their branded care centres, which will have the look, feel and the Nokia experience.

Prem also mentioned Nokia phones with the label 'Made by Nokia' has been out in all markets for the last 3-4 years. When asked about the Indian factory, Prem said the factory started production from February this year, and they predominantly manufactures product for their local market.

"In Bangladesh, we estimated about half a million handsets are sold every month and in Sri Lanka around 70,000-100,000 handsets are sold monthly. Nokia has a major share in these two markets," Prem said when asked about the volume of the market. Nokia handsets are in great demand globally.

TECHNEWS

Satellite L30: great value against price for the locals

RIDWAN A KABIR

TOSHIBA Singapore Ltd. (TSL) and their local computing partner and sole distributor, International Office Machines (IOM), held a press conference at the IOM office grounds on July 18 on the occasion of launching their latest entry-level notebook, Satellite L30, which offers a blend of exceptional value for money and latest notebook mobile technology.

While presenting the keynote speech, Jeffrey Quek, country head (Bangladesh), TSL, specifically mentioned how Toshiba now has planned on penetrating the local laptop market of the country by following strict and austere marketing and distributing strategies.

"Technology is all about changing one's lifestyle in a positive and productive way, and the Satellite L30 is surely believed to bring in definite change in a user's lifestyle," stated Quek, citing on the configuration that the L30 notebook carries, and also on how it is specifically designed for the style conscious, price sensitive consumer, offering compelling multimedia capabilities and seamless, wireless networking and extended connectivity functionalities for a powerful notebook experience, either at home or in the office.

Weighing only at 2.4 kg, allowing its stylish mobility

and elegance, the Satellite L30 carries an Intel Celeron M processor, the Toshiba Configfree configuration, the ATI Radeon Xpress 200M, an exceptional widescreen WXGA TFT 14 inch display, CD-RW/DVD-ROM combo drive, along with a series of software utilities, the Microsoft Office OneNote, the Microsoft Windows XP Home Edition, and the Toshiba Touch and Launch keypad feature, and all these for a perfect balance of mobile performance and value.

"The Configfree feature automatically switches between LAN/WLAN/WWAN depending on the user usage habits, either private or corporate usage, for instance it can automatically dial up with Mobile Data/3G card when both LAN and WLAN are disconnected, and on one window to select all network switches," stated Hazel Yap, product marketing manager (Bangladesh), TSL, also citing the Satellite L30's auto launching capability of a virtual private network (VPN) client or any other application after a dial-up connection has been set. "It has never been so easy to connect to a network," she continued, "the in-built advanced Graphics radar enables it to visualize the nearest WiFi access point, while an in-built connectivity doctor application analyses the network configuration and assists in fixing the problem."

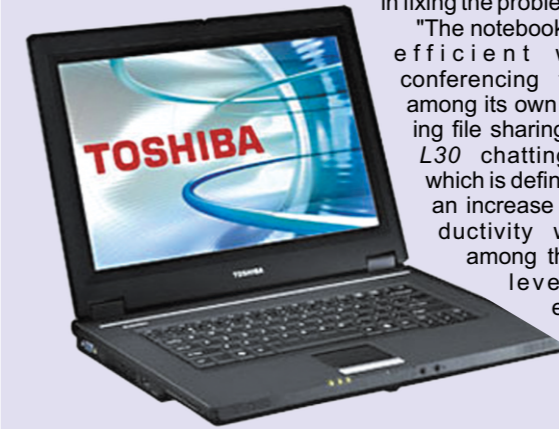
"The notebook also has an efficient wireless conferencing functionality among its own kind, including file sharing and L30 to L30 chatting capacity, which is definite to bring in an increase in work productivity when used among the corporate level network engineers."

"You can basically create

a virtual meeting room, inviting colleagues to access your files," Yap further added.

The Microsoft Office OneNote allows one to capture information in multiple ways, organise, reuse and share notes electronically. The application allows for integration of audio recording, typed notes, video, digital ink, photos, drawings, web links and more. "Data security is another vital feature exhibited through the Microsoft Office OneNote application," said Yap, pointing out how data security is a paramount for mobile workers on the go. "OneNote flaunts the Toshiba EasyGuard feature, with which the data on your notebook remain secure with Trusted Platform Module, Executable Disable Bit, and a fingerprint reader," she sustained. "It basically recognises its owner and thus provides a better security to prevent data theft." OneNote also offers automated backups that help protect one's notes from accidental changes, corruption or deletion.

"With help from IOM we have done a rigorous market research, and decided to conclude on a tax-included price tag of Tk 55,000, which is the lowest notebook price in the local market from a branded vendor," Quek mentioned, and this is just one of Toshiba's strategies towards achieving a market penetration. The notebook may also be available through financing from the BRAC Bank NoWLoan feature, under two schemes of payments, one for a two year period, and the other for a period of 18 months for full repayment at applicable interest rates. IOM also plans on exhibiting shopping mall road shows for the L30, and the other latest notebooks from Toshiba, the Tecra A5, and the Tecra A8, the latter two configured to be more focused towards the corporate establishments of the local industry.



TECHNEWS

Vector MP9 Intelligent cutting cure for local apparel industry

LECTRA (France), considered one of the world leaders in production and development of software, CAD/CAM equipment and related services dedicated to large-scale users of textiles, including leather and industrial fabrics, held a seminar on July 17 in the city. The event was organised and supervised by Texas Resources Ltd., Dhaka, who served as the sole distributor for Lectra services for the nation for past five years.

David Leprovost, account manager, Lectra, presented the keynote speech at the event on how the company's latest 'Vector MP9 fabric cutting solution' would indisputably present a market-specific solution on productivity and cost-efficiency that the current garment industry of the country needs to meet the local industrial challenges and the stiff international competition.

"We believe every customer is unique and we tend to supply innovative ways to support the development of products and connect the designers, product engineers, and the manufacturers all in one tie," said Leprovost, further relating his statement to the local scenario by how Lectra currently listed a total of 120 local clients from the industry using Lectra services, while the company held a 80 per cent share on garment utilities being used locally.

"Since the quotas were lifted, the challenges for manufacturing countries have changed, and thus manufacturers have had to adapt the way their production is organised to the new demands of contract providers," Leprovost stated,

while throwing his direct views on the presently occurring prospects from the local garment industry, auxiliary affirming that the Vector MP range would meet the manufacturers' needs in terms of productivity, responsiveness and quality.

With the ability to cut spreads up to 9 cm, an equivalent of 250 slices of raw fabric, the MP9 cutter claims to have proven achievement of 50 per cent greater productivity than standard market cutters with unparallel precision, regard-



Cut pieces from the Vector MP9 fabric cutting solution

less of geometric constraints and the nature of the material being used, increasing speed and quality, automatic anticipation of delicate cutting areas, predictive compensation for blade deflection and real-time control of cutting effort.

"The associated software installation in your cutting control room allows visual monitoring and real-time tracking of cutting processes with practical performance report-

ing functions," said Leprovost. "Its cutting optimisation parameters are pre-programmed and instantly accessible, and its exclusive blade control system enables pieces to be cut at a tangent without loss of quality," he added.

"Achieving a 1000 piece jeans cut per minute, and jeans here being simply exemplified as a fabric, your cutting process is more fluid, and you achieve greater productivity even with a tight work flow," claimed Leprovost. Hereby, it should be mentioned how one single machine MP9 cutting performance is an equivalent of two regular cutters.

"The system also contains a 'Variable control material hold', which uses a vacuum pressing adjustment technique, which is the ideal tool for controlling cutting quality on non-porous materials and highly compressible fabrics, substantially saving electricity consumption by eliminating the heavy charging required by some distribution networks," Leprovost stated.

The Vector MP range is a result of a deliberate Lectra research and development policy of pooling expertise acquired across the various markets it serves to develop complete, coherent solutions for each of them, towards satisfying the needs of the apparel manufacturers in the major sub-contracting countries regions, including Bangladesh, China, India, Vietnam, Turkey, North Africa, and Central America, alongside the prime contractors from Europe and North America.

RidwanAKabir

PHOTOTECH



BUG BOT

A woman looks at a huge robot of praying mantis exhibited at a shopping mall in Marunouchi business district in Tokyo on July 22. The 6.3-meter-long and 3.4-meter-high mantis attracts businessmen, passers-by and shoppers until July 30.

PHOTO: AFP