

Intriguing System for Future Soldier

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A Future Soldier System (FSS) has been recently sported by the Malaysian Army. The system is an element of the Armed Forces' wider Network Centric Operations (NCO) program.

The FSS comprises a wearable computer mounted in a backpack, a tactical display unit (TDU), a head mounted monocular display, personal role radio (PRR), remote control unit (RCU), central energy unit, and a head-mounted video camera. The system – which is integrated via physical cables as opposed to wireless connection – has been developed by Malaysian company Sapura Defence.

The core of the assembly is the backpack computer, which can be accessed via the RCU. The army representative told janes.com that the RCU also enables the user to operate the radio and camera, as well as control the flow of imagery over different communications systems.

The TDU is a chest-mounted android tablet, displaying a cut-down version of Sapura's battle management software. According to an army representative the central battery pack will provide four hours of operation with all the peripherals running, but this can be extended to eight hours if communications are restricted to voice only. The batteries are hot-swappable and can be recharged when the soldier is traveling in an armored vehicle.

The PRR is the internet protocol (IP)-based Thales ST@R Mille UHF software soldier radio, which weighs less than 380 g without a battery. It has an embedded GPS system and provides simultaneous voice, data, and tracking information. The system can be linked to other networks, including 3G communications and recently-acquired X-band mobile satellite communications system.