



Home is where the heart is

23 years is a long time to be away from home. But for Mohd Khairil Abdullah, Group Chief Marketing and Operations Officer of AXIATA Group Berhad, there's never been a better time to return due to the vast opportunity the country provides.

You've returned to work in Malaysia after more than two decades, why now?

It's the opportunity. Malaysia, I believe, at this point of time has the right fundamental and conditions for someone with the right skills and talent to seize and create the opportunity for themselves. For example, from my perspective, AXIATA is a multinational company and, in a way, an emerging regional champion. With that, it requires people who have skills and experience working across borders and cultures. This, along with the potential Malaysia has, provided the perfect platform and environment for me to return.

How many years were you working abroad?

It's been a total of 23 years that

I've been overseas working in places like Singapore, Germany, the UK, the US and Australia. That said, I did move back here for two years in 1997, when I got married, before uprooting myself again to go to the U.S.

What did you miss most about Malaysia?

I think it would be the familiarity of the working environment. The nature of my work does require me to go around a fair bit and when you go into a different country, you do tend to get a bit of a culture shock, especially in terms of work. Coming back to Malaysia, and gaining the perspective on what to expect in terms of work and in the office, is probably what I missed the most.

Did you miss the food?

Who doesn't?! When I got back, I spent some time visiting some of my favourite eateries and stalls and eating local delicacies like nasi lemak and so on.

Would you encourage other Malaysians abroad to return?

Yes, for sure. When I started the local office, I had to recruit and I made it a point to recruit some Malaysians who were working overseas for some of these positions here. I think there's definitely a lot of room for personal and professional growth at the moment here. And for them to utilise the skill sets that they've acquired and accumulated overseas to create the things they want to do in Malaysia. I would go out of my way to try to convince people to come back.

Bio

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