NIKKEI

EdgeCortix CEO: “From Japan, Leading the World in High Power Efficiency AI Semiconductors”

EdgeCortix CEO Sakyasingha Dasgupta (May, Chiba City)

Japanese semiconductor startup **EdgeCortix Inc.** (Chuo Ward, Tokyo) has finalized a deal with the U.S. Department of Defense, drawing significant industry attention. CEO **Sakyasingha Dasgupta**, who previously worked at Microsoft and RIKEN, stated, *“We aim to become a global leader in energy-efficient AI semiconductor infrastructure.”*

— You've secured a contract with the U.S. Department of Defense's Defense Innovation Unit (DIU).

"We're excited to be the first semiconductor company in the world to achieve this. The DoD has evaluated our chips and software, and we will begin supplying them shortly. Normally, defense-related contracts take time, but when a technology is designated as critical by DIU, the procurement process accelerates."

— It's rare for Japanese technology to be chosen for U.S. defense applications, isn't it?

"This is thanks to the strong U.S.–Japan partnership. Our AI technology was recognized for its low power consumption, an advantage over U.S. firms like NVIDIA, especially in resource-constrained environments such as space and defense. For example, our chips may be used in lunar landers or for AI-guided navigation. In the defense sector, use cases include drones and unmanned vehicles."

— Why did you establish the company in Japan?

"When we launched the company in 2019, we anticipated the growing importance of AI semiconductors, but Japan lagged behind the U.S. and China in AI semiconductor R&D. That seemed like an opportunity. Shortly after founding EdgeCortix, the Japanese government has also begun prioritizing TSMC's (Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company) presence and the strengthening of AI infrastructure, which has provided a tailwind for our business."

"Back when I was a student, I used a Sony Walkman, and was always impressed by Japan's remarkable spirit of innovation. It made me realize that innovation is a continuous journey with no endpoint. As a company based in Japan, we want to become a global leader in energy-efficient AI infrastructure."

— How do you view the current state of Japan's semiconductor industry?

"Rapidus, which aims to produce cutting-edge semiconductors domestically, is a great idea, but it needs Japan-based partner companies that outsource their chip designs for in-country production. We must grow together—and those moves are starting to take shape. Japanese companies and investors have historically been risk-averse, but recently, their attitude toward cutting-edge technologies is beginning to shift."

About Sakyasingha Dasgupta
Holds a Ph.D. in Complex Systems Physics from Germany's Max Planck Institute and a Master's in AI from the University of Edinburgh. Has worked at Microsoft, IBM Research, and RIKEN. Holds over 20 patents globally.

(Interviewer: Ryo Mukai)

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