

# THE ENGINEER

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## **Making Light Work**

*“A laser made from cheap silicon could open up the potential for widespread optical computing using light rather than electricity to process information, according to its US developers.”*

*“The breakthrough could also allow cheaper access to the mid infra-red range used for radar, biochemical sensing, missile defense and secure communications, said Bahram Jalali, the*

*professor of electrical engineering at UCLA, who led the DARPA-funded team.”*

*“In the past researchers have tried to create electronic transitions in silicon by adding impurities or nanostructures,” Jalali said. ‘But even if these methods had been successful the resultant impurities would be incompatible with silicon manufacturing.’”*

*“The first commercial application is one to two years away, said Jalali. The next milestone is to operate a continuous laser, rather than pulsed.”*