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Swiss firm setting up waste recycling plant in Penang

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LANGKAWI, Sun. - A comprehensive waste recycling plant using the latest European technology is being set up in Penang by a bio-tech engineering company from Switzerland.

With an initial investment of RM10 million, the hi-tech venture is introduced to the country by a former Malaysian citizen, Jeffrey Sandragesan.

He is now a successful entrepreneur in Switzerland after leaving Penang to seek his fortune 25 years ago.

Sandragesan, the honorary counsel for Malaysia in Switzerland, together with his Swiss partners decided to bring the venture to Malaysia out of love for his former homeland and also because of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's quest to make Malaysia a technology-based nation.

Sandragesan, who frequently visits his hometown, said preparations to set up Decontamination Technology Sdn Bhd, near the Bayan Lepas International Airport, was underway.

Swiss bio-tech engineer from the Swiss environment firm Horeak AG, Dr Anton Kuhne, is spearheading the project with support from Universiti Sains Malaysia where the modules for the various technologies for the plant are being set up.

Dr Kuhne said they were planning to build a complete recycling plant for treatment of solidwastes which included paper, glass, plastic, heavy metal and others.

"We will also have a plant which houses all the procedures under one roof, separation of the different types of wastes and recycling."

In many countries in Europe including Switzerland, waste is brought to a company and after separation, it is taken to different companies recycling for instance, paper or plastic.

"This involves high transportation costs but in Malaysia, we will have a plant containing both the elements of separation and recycling, though collection of the garbage will be handled by other parties."

Kuhne said Malaysia would be the first country to have modules for technologies in one plant including tackling liquid wastes and air pollution.

He said the modules for the plant were expected to be ready in a few months.

Another first in the country will be the recycling of computers, computer parts, radios and televisions.

Kuhne said there would be direct technology transfer to Malaysians in the area of bio-technology.

There will be a demand for highly-skilled personnel especially in bio-technology besides the creation of numerous jobs.

He said Malaysians could also export the technology to other countries.

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