

Malaysia's advantage

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THE government is confident that the biotechnology industry in the country will draw more investors in the near future.

This is based on feedback from several international conferences attended by representatives from the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation and Malaysian Biotechnology Corporation (BiotechCorp).

Over the year, Malaysia has attended high-level biotechnology events in the United States, Europe and Japan and several companies have since expressed interest.

These companies, mainly from the US, Europe, South Korea and Taiwan, are keen to share their technology, carry out research and development as well as set up manufacturing industries in Malaysia.

BiotechCorp took part in the BIO Chicago 2006 international biotechnology convention, which was attended by Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation Datuk Seri Dr Jamaluddin Jarjis and a 150-member Malaysian

delegation.

The event was the world's largest gathering of biotechnology industry players, with 20,000 participants and 1,600 exhibitors.

Malaysia is confident of meeting competition from other countries using its strengths in human capital, good infrastructure and intellectual property protection.

The country's vast biodiversity, including the world's oldest rainforests, unique and assorted marine life and astounding coastal mangroves offer great opportunities for scientists to conduct research for new medical cures and ailments such as cancer, AIDS and multiple sclerosis.

As more modern pathogens make their presence felt in modern society, alternative means to combat them may be locked in Mother Nature's vast treasure trove.

Malaysia's strong industrial background, particularly in manufacturing and the knowledge economy, is a vital advantage in attracting biotech companies to

offer distinct value in the area of contract manufacturing and contract research operations.

In addition to this, Malaysia also has a track record in vaccine production, clinical trials, diagnostic and agro-biotechnology arenas. Investors will find a wide range of opportunities in Malaysia.

With key assets in place, BiotechCorp will play a major role to help coordinate and guide the seamless integration of these assets into the global biotech value chain.

With the oldest rainforest in the world — that include more than 182,000 species of fauna and flora — biotech firms have the opportunity to work in an optimal environmental location, within a strategic gateway to Asia.

Under Malaysia's National Biotechnology Policy, BiotechCorp is responsible for identifying good value propositions in both R&D and commerce, and assisting these ventures via financial support and developmental services.