

Construction firm's HQ to be built from recycled waste

JTC, Samwoh sign deal – a key step in push for sustainable building materials

Joy Pang

The first step in developing sustainable construction material using local waste was taken yesterday, with the signing of an agreement that will include its use in the building of the new headquarters of a local construction company.

The agreement between JTC Corporation and Samwoh Corporation will see recycled materials processed from construction and industrial waste, like sedimentary rocks excavated from Jurong Rock Caverns, being used to erect the four-storey building near Kranji Reservoir.

Senior Minister of State for Trade and Industry and Education Chee Hong Tat, who witnessed the signing of the memorandum of understanding (MOU) between JTC and Samwoh, told The Straits Times he is confident Singapore can play a key role in sustainable technology.

The Government will continue to provide opportunities for companies to test-bed new concepts, he said, adding that such eco-friendly projects need to be commercially sustainable as well.

"With the right methods, using recycled materials and adopting eco-friendly measures need not incur higher costs," Mr Chee said.

"Samwoh's commitment to sustainable construction in its very own building is a great example that it can be done."

The company's current headquarters, the Samwoh Eco-Green Building, is a testament to sustainability



Samwoh chief executive officer Eric Soh (right) handing Senior Minister of State for Trade and Industry and Education Chee Hong Tat a sample of recycled material in the Samwoh Innovation Centre at Samwoh Eco-Green Building. PHOTO: SAMWOH CORPORATION

as it is the first building in Southeast Asia that was constructed entirely with recycled concrete aggregates, said its spokesman.

The new headquarters, to be called Samwoh Smart Hub, is slated to be completed by next year.

It will adopt state-of-the-art technologies to bring down its energy consumption.

Also, about 30 per cent of its area

will be dedicated to greenery that will blend in with Singapore's park connector outside its compound and add to the plant life surrounding the reservoir, its spokesman added.

The company said it will be the first positive energy industrial building here that will produce 20 to 30 per cent more energy than it uses. The excess energy will be

used in an upcoming asphalt plant to be built by the company, a market leader in the production of the sticky, black and viscous material commonly used in building roads.

The MOU will also allow JTC and Samwoh to explore and collaborate on research and development (R&D) in such areas as digital technologies and automated solutions to improve productivity and maintenance.

Additionally, they will share resources such as equipment, laboratories and manpower to help defray the high costs of R&D.

To improve productivity, they will work towards developing smart machines and equipment to build higher-quality and more reliable roads at lower cost.

Samwoh noted in a statement that the sedimentary rocks being

SUSTAINABLE CONSTRUCTION

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used to build its smart hub are prevalent in the geological formation of Singapore and a common byproduct from underground developments.

The collaboration will, among other things, increase the applications and commercial value of these rocks, it added.

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