

# Engineer on a green mission

Dane goes to great lengths to promote conservation

## EXPAT@HOME

By YIP YOKE TENG

teng@thestar.com.my

Photos by BRIAN MOH

**D**ENMARK-born energy engineer Gregers Reinmann is one expatriate who does not mind taking pains to make Kuala Lumpur greener.

He works for a company that offers consultancy services on low or zero energy buildings; projects handled by the company include

the iconic Malaysia Energy Centre, Energy, Green Technology and Water Ministry headquarters as well as Energy Commission that mark the country's green commitments.

Apart from that, the 37-year-old is often invited as guest lecturer at universities here and abroad, including Austria and Singapore.

Beyond work, Reinmann lives green in all the ways one can



**See this:** Reinmann showing newspaper cuttings on his company's green projects.

think of.

He cycles to work as often as he can from Bukit Bintang to Bangsar, despite the busy traffic and sweltering tropical weather. "Malaysian drivers are used to looking out for motorcycles, that makes cycling safer," he said.

To facilitate cycling to work, he has created a 'makeshift' yet convenient and practical shower in his office building, simply by keeping a shower hose in a cabinet, and attach it to taps in the washroom when needed.

At his condominium in Bukit Bintang, he has also introduced a recycling system that encourages residents to separate their waste when disposing of them in the trash room. The condominium's recycling rate is at least two times higher now, everyone is happy; and apparently the same system has been copied in at least five other condominiums.

Reinmann has been working in Malaysia for seven years now. He also studied briefly at UPM in 1999 when his father was the then ambassador to Malaysia. He has also lived in Holland, the US, Singapore and Africa.

"The diversity of cultures in Malaysia makes it easy for a foreigner to adapt to the life here.

You won't be seen as the odd one out, whereas it is not easy for a foreigner to blend in in countries like Denmark that is so homogeneous," he said.

He added that it was interesting to live and work as a green advocate in Malaysia.

"One can really make a difference here as greening in Malaysia started from below scratch, mainly due to the heavy energy subsidy. The energy prices here are four to five times cheaper than in Denmark," he added.

For example, he shared, shop attendants had no clue why he insisted on using his fabric bag when shopping back in 2005, and someone actually thought an energy engineer was the one to call to tweak TNB meters.

Aside from exploring Malaysia's jungles and islands, he spends his leisure time giving talks and classes on greening measures at various locations, including a refugee school in Kuala Lumpur.

"I once asked the students how long they think it'd take for a plastic bottle to degrade. Some of them answered two minutes when the right answer is 1 million years. The answer of two minutes was a factor 263 billion times wrong!" he said.



**For all:** Reinmann shows off his shower hose adaptor.