

Panasonic starts solar panel production in Malaysia

The Associated Press

TOKYO, Dec. 13 (Kyodo) — Panasonic Corp. started manufacturing solar panels Thursday at a newly built plant in Malaysia, boosting the global production capacity of its cutting-edge solar batteries to 900 megawatts per year from the current 600 megawatts.

The factory is the electronics giant's first overseas base for handling the entire battery production process, from making wafers to cells and panels. Its "HIT" brand solar panels are one of the most conversion-efficient in the world, according to Panasonic.

Though domestic sales of solar panels have been somewhat supported by brisk demand for home use, Panasonic faces fierce competition from overseas manufacturers in the solar battery business. The company said in October it decided to cease additional investment in the Malaysian plant.

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