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Integrated project on bamboo to be developed in Kepong

KUALA LUMPUR: The Forest Research Institute of Malaysia (Frim) and the Malaysian Association of Creativity and Innovation (Marci) will develop a 4.8 hectare site in Kepong into an integrated project on bamboo in a move to create awareness on the importance of the plant.

Frim director-general Datuk Dr Abdul Latif Mohmod said the area, located beside the institute in Kepong, would be developed in five components which would include a mini bamboo plantation.

“A bamboo production and treatment area, a bamboo village, a bamboo spa and restaurant & cafe will also be built in the area,” he told reporters after officiating at a forum entitled ‘Bamboo: Material of the New Millennium’ at the National Science Centre here yesterday.

Earlier in his speech, Abdul Latif said although the global annual trade value of bamboo was in the region of US\$1 billion, Malaysia’s contribution was less than 0.5 per cent.

He said the bamboo industry could make a

significant contribution to socio-economic development of the country since there was ample opportunities for bamboo products to be traded in local and overseas niche markets.

Towards this, Frim has been making progress in producing more value added products, especially in the utilisation of ‘Bambusa vulgaris’ and ‘Gigantochloa scortechinii’ which have been reported to be suitable for manufacturing of cement-bonded particleboard, particleboard, laminated bamboo board, plybamboo,

bamwood, v-bam, c-bam and phenolic-treated plybamboo among others to realise the plant’s potential for commercialisation.

“Currently, a project aimed at establishing an industry based on bamboo laminates is being undertaken by Frim in collaboration with Maju Kastera Sdn Bhd and it is hoped this will provide an impetus towards the development of a more value-added bamboo industry in Malaysia,” added Abdul Latif. — Bernama