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International awards for FRIM researchers

TWO Forest Research Institute Malaysia (FRIM) researchers, Dr Nor Azah Mohammad Ali and Tnah Lee Hong, received awards at the International Union of Forest Research Organisations (IUFRO) World Congress, held in Seoul, Republic of Korea recently.

Dr Nor Azah, the recipient of the FRIM Scientist of the Year 2009 award, was among 11 scientists worldwide to receive the IUFRO Scientific Achievement Award.

FRIM research officer, Tnah Lee Hong, who is attached to the FRIM's genetic laboratory, received the student Award for Excellence in forest sciences. She was one of the three

winners for this category.

Dr Nor Azah has 23 years of research experience and leads a team in natural product chemistry specialising in essential oil research related to forestry, agriculture and herbal industries.

The research areas covered include essential oil extraction technology, olfactory evaluation, chemical profiling, bioactivity and product formulation.

She filed three invention disclosures for her research and her work has been taken up and commercialised by the herbal industries. She is also directly involved in agar-

wood research.

Tnah's research areas cover molecular markers technology, forensic forestry, phyllogeography and plant population genetics.

With her Master's thesis on 'DNA fingerprint Databases of Chengal (*Neobalanocarpus heimii*) for Forensic Forestry Investigations', she has developed comprehensive databases, which are the first for tropical species.

The availability of DNA fingerprinting databases for the important timber species in Malaysia will help to enhance the forestry enforcement officials' capacity to curb illegal logging.