

Headline **Eco nomic paper by FRIM**  
Date **23 Apr 2011**  
MediaTitle **New Straits Times**  
Section **Local News**  
Journalist **N/A**  
Frequency **Daily**  
Circ / Read **136,530 / 330,000**

Language **English**  
Page No **13**  
Article Size **255 cm<sup>2</sup>**  
Color **Full Color**  
ADValue **7,543**  
PRValue **22,629**



# 'Eco-nomical paper' by FRIM

**Roy See Wei Zhi**

**KUALA LUMPUR:** The Forest Research Institute Malaysia (FRIM) is planning to produce environmentally-friendly paper from oil palm waste by year-end.

FRIM director-general Datuk Dr Abdul Latif Mohmod said the paper would be made from empty fruit branches (EFB) of oil palm trees and it could be used to produce a wide variety of products such as wraps, boxes and carry containers.

"The paper will degrade into natural compounds within 10 days after being buried, leaving the environment relatively unscathed," he said yesterday.

He said the project would be economical because five million tonnes of EFB waste nationwide could be used to produce two million tonnes of paper a year.

Conventional paper made of tree fibres cost RM1,500 a tonne.

Latif said FRIM had also developed another type of paper using fibre extracted from Mahang trees.

Mahang trees, or *Macaranga baccata*, were considered to have no commercial value as they are small and the branches break easily.

"But these qualities make them an excellent raw material to produce fibre used in paper manufacturing.

"The trees can be harvested within two years of planting, which is much faster than trees used to make regular paper."

Two factories in Sabah and Perak were already producing the new product.

On helping to protect the environment, Latif said workers and residents at the FRIM forest reserve here would not be allowed to use plastic bags starting from June.

"Plastic bags will be replaced by containers made from bio-degradable wrapping paper," he said, urging the public dispose their garbage outside the forest reserve.

He said it would be better for visitors to bring their own food in reusable containers.

Earlier, an Earth Day 2011 celebration was held with a wide variety of environmentally-friendly activities. Winners of a photography contest organised by FRIM were given cash prizes.

Champions of the open, wedding couple and student categories went home with RM3,000, RM2,000 and RM1,500, respectively.

This year is also the International Year of Forests.

The International Federation of Accountants (IFAC) and the Malaysian Institute of Accountants (MIA) donated RM60,000 to FRIM for the celebration. The donation was also part of IFAC and MIA's pledge to off-set the carbon footprint.

The money will be used to plant about 600 trees in the forest reserve.



Lin Joe Yin, first place winner of the open category in the FRIM photography contest yesterday, standing beside his picture. — NST picture by Aizuddin Saad