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FRIM to set up Antarctica Trust Fund to encourage scientific research

KUALA LUMPUR: The Forest Research Institute of Malaysia (FRIM) will set up an Antarctica Trust Fund next month to encourage more local scientists and researchers to carry out scientific research in Antarctica.

Its Director-General, Datuk Dr Abd Latif Mohmod, said it was hoped that the fund, when in place, would help cover the costs of scientific research to be carried out at the South Pole by the local scientists and researchers.

“The trust fund will be utilised to cover the costs of research conducted in Antarctica. We would also like to encourage more scientists, as well as FRIM researchers, to carry out scientific research especially on whether certain seeds, which cannot be planted anywhere else in the world, can be planted there.

“We will send some high potential seeds to be planted at the South Pole. The lifespan of the plant will also be studied because we want to see how the mineral content in

Antarctica can help encourage the germination of the seeds,” he said.

Abd Latif said this to reporters after attending the seminar on the “Journey to Antarctica” delivered by former FRIM director-general Tan Sri Dr Salleh Mohd Nor here yesterday.

He said among the seeds that would be sent to Antarctica were “cengal”, “balak” and other plants to be used for medical and pharmaceutical purposes, as well as food.

Meanwhile, when sharing his experience during the journey to Antarctica, Salleh said the public, especially the young generation must grab the opportunity to carry out scientific research in the South Pole to produce new inventions that would contribute to the country’s development.

Salleh, who is also the Malaysian Nature Society president, also proposed for an Antarctica Club to be set up to lure the young people to carry out research in Antarctica. - Bernama