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Nature walk: Participants taking pictures during the walk.

Caring for nature

Participants celebrate International Day of Forests by planting trees at FRIM

MORE than 500 people visited the Forest Research Institute Malaysia (FRIM) recently to celebrate International Day of Forests (IDF) 2013 by planting trees and participating in the various activities organised at the Kepong Botanical Garden in Taman Ehsan, Kepong.

Some 350 people planted 500 saplings of heavy hardwood species, including *belian* (*Eusideroxylon zwageri*), *balau pasir* (*Shorea materialis*) and *chengal* (*Neobalanocarpus heimii*), with guidance from FRIM researchers, foresters and forest rangers.

FRIM director-general Datuk Dr Abd Latif Mohmod thanked and congratulated the participants for taking part in the meaningful celebration.

"The experience of planting trees in FRIM is unlike any other. Here, we choose the right species for the site, plant the trees and continue to care for them," he said.

Abd Latif expressed hope that the IDF 2013 programme would help create a sense of belonging and togetherness among FRIM employees and the participants in caring for trees and in efforts to ensure the conservation of forests.

He also said FRIM's campus in Kepong had

been declared a natural heritage site in 2009 and a national heritage in 2012 and the institute was working towards attaining the Unesco World Heritage Status by 2017.

FRIM natural forests and environment director Dr Ismail Harun gave a briefing on the planting site, the selection of species and planting techniques before the participants were divided into groups of 20 for the tree-planting activity.

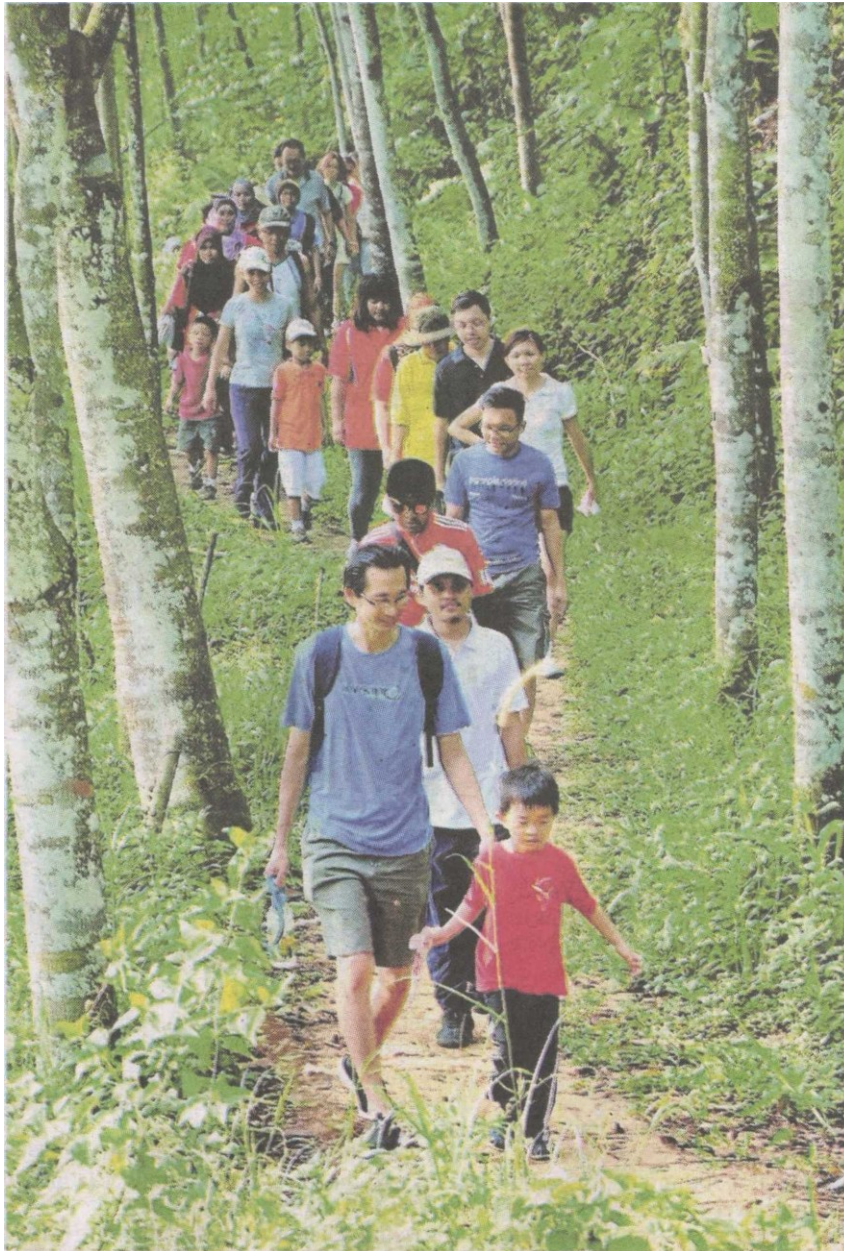
The participants comprised members of the public, joggers, nearby residents, schoolchildren, college and university students and corporate citizens.

Several top FRIM officials including deputy director-general (research) Dr Mohamed Nor Mohd Yusoff, deputy director-general (operations) Dr Norini Haron, forest products division director Dr Rahim Sudin, and forestry biotechnology director Dr Norwati Muhammad were also present.

Other activities organised included a colouring contest for primary school pupils, a botanical hunt for students and young adults and a guided nature walk.

The event concluded with a prize-giving ceremony for winners of the various competitions.

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In a single file: Nature lover, young and old, being led in groups during the event at FRIM.