

Headline	FRIM researcher to receive Japan International Award		
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FRIM researcher to receive Japan International Award

KUALA LUMPUR: Forest Research Institute Malaysia (FRIM) Researcher, Dr Tnah Lee Hong, will receive the Japanese International Award for Young Agricultural Researchers 2013 for outstanding research achievements at a ceremony to be held in Tokyo, Japan this Wednesday (20 Nov).

The official announcement of the awardees was made recently by the Japanese Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF).

The award is presented by the ministry every year since 2007 to deserving young researchers who showed outstanding research achievements that lead to future technological innovation.

The selection of three awardees was made by the Japanese Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Research Council (AFFRC).

The purpose of the award is to increase motivation among young researchers contributing to research and development in agriculture, forestry, fisheries and related industries in developing countries.

Tnah, who is working at the FRIM Biotechnology Division Genetic Laboratory, was selected

for her research on timber tracking system of an important timber species, Chengal or *Neobalanocarpus heimii* (Dipterocarpaceae) using DNA approach.

She was also a recipient of the International Union of Forest Research Organisations (IUFRO) Student Award for Excellence in Forest Sciences at the XXIII IUFRO World Congress in 2010.

Tnah, 32, joined FRIM as a research officer in 2004 after graduating from Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM) with a Bachelor of Science degree in Industrial Biology.

She received her Master's degree in genetic resources from Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) in 2007 and her doctorate in phylogeography and evolution from University of Malaya in 2011.

Her research areas cover molecular markers technology, forensic forestry, phylogeography and plant population genetics.

Tnah has developed comprehensive DNA fingerprint databases of Chengal (*Neobalanocarpus heimii*) for forensic forestry investigations. The availability of the DNA fingerprinting databases, the first of its kind for a tropical timber species, is expected serve as a

model for the development of similar databases for other important species, and it is expected to help enhance the forestry enforcement capacity to curb illegal activities.

The two other recipients who will join Tnah at the commendation ceremony to be held at U Thant International Conference Hall, United Nations University, Shibuya-ku in Tokyo this Wednesday are Dr Nouhoun Belko from the Senegalese Agricultural Research Institute (ISRA), Burkina Faso, and Dr Panuwan Chantawannakul from Chiang Mai University, Thailand.

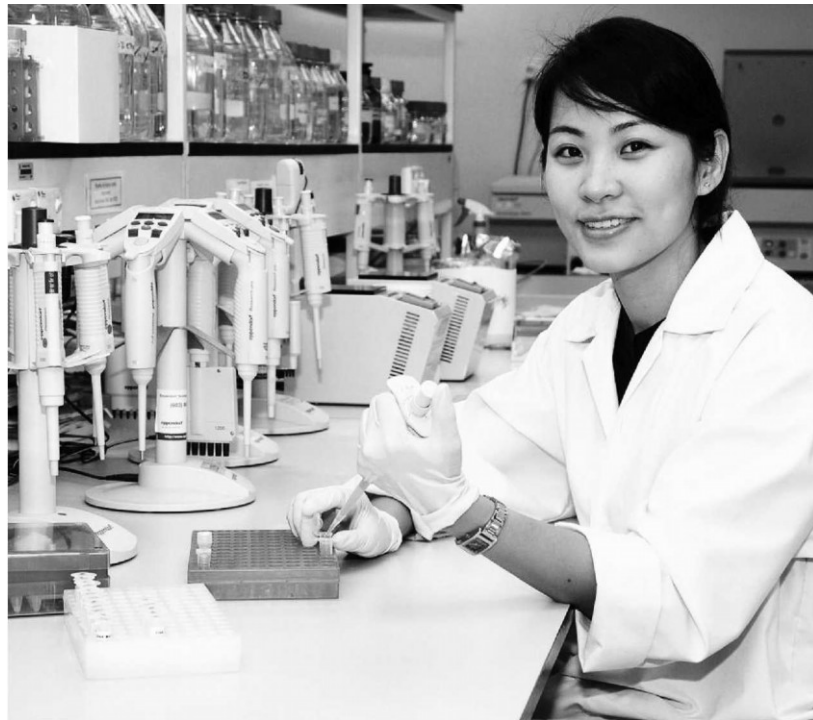
The recipients are expected to deliver their respective lectures prior to the award presentation by AFFRC Chairman, Dr Eitaro Miwa, and Japan International Research Center for Agricultural Sciences President, Dr Masa Iwanaga.

Tnah is the second FRIM researcher to receive this recognition. The first was her colleague, Dr Kevin Ng Kit Siong, who was awarded in November 2009 for his exemplary performance and innovative research achievements in the field of spatial structure and impact of logging on genetic diversity of selected tropical tree species.



TNAH during one of the field trips to Sg. Karang Forest Reserve, Selangor.

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