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► **Forestry dept, FRIM to conduct research on flora species on Gunung Ledang**

THE Peninsular Malaysia Forestry Department (JPSM) and the Forest Research Institute of Malaysia (FRIM) have begun a six-month scientific study on the more than 1,000 flora species on Gunung Ledang. Deputy Minister of Natural Resources and Environment Datuk Hamim Samuri said the outcome of the study will be documented and publicised for commercialisation of medicinal and beauty products as well as other applications. "It is a scientific study to identify the nutritional values, potential, diversity, advantages, benefits and uses of the plants there. "The study, conducted by scientists and experts from JPSM and FRIM, began early this month and will last for six months to explore Gunung Ledang which is rich in natural heritage but has not been fully researched and harnessed," he told reporters after launching a community service programme of the Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia in Kampung Orang Asli Tanah Gembur in Tangkak yesterday. Hamim said there were many plant species especially herbs and roots on Gunung Ledang which had high nutritional value and properties but no specific research had yet been done on them. He said the people living on Gunung Ledang especially the Orang Asli community had used these plants as traditional medicine as they were aware of the high medicinal properties and their various uses. During his speech, Hamim, who is also MP for Ledang, urged the Orang Asli community to assist in the research as they were familiar with these nutritional plants and their properties. He said these people who were closer to the land should share their knowledge of these plants. "This can be done through education so that the children of the Orang Asli entering public or private universities can specialise in studying the benefits of these plants," he said. — *Bernama*