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Safety and landscape: Labuan Corp striking a balance

LABUAN: Labuan Corporation (LC) is taking a thoughtful approach to balancing the safety and wellbeing of the islanders with its ongoing beautification programme.

As part of its commitment to creating an aesthetically pleasing environment, the island's local authority has undertaken several initiatives to improve the island landscape while keeping public safety at the forefront of its decision-making process.

LC Chief Executive Officer Rithuan Ismail (pic) said one of the initiatives is to get rid of the ageing and rotting trees in the town centre and along several main roads, such as at Jalan Tenaga, Jalan Kilan, Jalan Ujung Pasir, Jalan Tun Mustapha, Jalan Susur Taman Damai, Jalan Ganggarak, Jalan Batu Manikar and Jalan Pohon Batu.

He said the authority has identified 576 trees of various species, aged between 10 and 30 years (located at eight main roads and two areas) that pose a high risk to the public.

"Based on our data, 192 cases of falling trees either being uprooted or rotting had been reported between 2022 and July 2023, with 80 per cent caused by strong winds and the remaining 20 per cent due to the ageing factor.

"As the local authority, it is our responsibility to ensure public safety with any of our beautification development programmes.

"We are not just getting rid of these trees, but we will replace them with new trees that are with low-risk to public and low-maintenance works to be carried out," he told a press conference at Wisma Perbadanan Labuan, here, Tuesday.

Rithuan said a total of 700 new trees are to be replanted with the recommendation from Forest Research Institute Malaysia (FRIM) after the completion of the tree-cutting works.

However, he stressed that the new tree-planting programme would be carefully curated to ensure it does not obstruct visibility or create potential hazards for pedestrians and drivers.

At least 14 species of trees will be replanted at six main roads namely Jalan Ujung Pasir, Jalan Kilan, Jalan Pohon Batu, Jalan Susur Taman Damai, Jalan Pohon Ganggarak and Jalan Tun Mustapha, he added. -Bernama