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KUALALUMPUR: Forest Research Institute Malaysia (FRIM) and Labuan Corporation signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) in FRIM, Kepong on Tuesday (Sept 26) to establish cooperation in the management of urban forests and mangrove forests in the Federal Territory of Labuan.

According to a joint statement from FRIM and Labuan Corporation, this cooperation will make Labuan a green, safe and healthy federal territory, and it will take advantage of FRIM's expertise in conservation of mangrove forest areas that have the potential to become an ecotourism attraction.

"With this cooperation, FRIM will be able to provide expert technical services in aspects of urban forest management and arboriculture including amenity trees, landscapes as well as roadside trees that give shade," said the statement.

The statement also said that Labuan Corporation will improve the management and maintenance aspects of the Labuan Botanical Gardens, which is one of the oldest botanical gardens in the country, besides housing a collection of plants. The Labuan Botanical Gardens is also an urban recreation park visited by many.

At the signing, Labuan Corporation was represented by its chief executive officer (CEO) Rithuan Mohd Ismail whereas

FRIM was represented by its director-general (DG) Dr Ismail Parlan.

Also present were Labuan Corporation deputy CEO Fadzilah Mahmud; FRIM deputy DG (Research) Dr Norwati Muhammad; FRIM Forestry and Environment director Dr Wan Mohd Shukri Wan Ahmad; FRIM Ecotourism and Urban Forestry programme head Ahmad Azaruddin Mohd Noor; Labuan Corporation legal advisor Shuhaimi Sainan; and Labuan Corporation Municipal Services Department director Gilbert Chin Hsing Lin.

In his speech, Rithuan said with the MoU, Labuan Corporation hopes FRIM will be able to provide advisory services and technical expertise on information management systems, data and inventory of basic amenities more efficiently.

With regard to the Labuan Botanical Gardens, he hoped that through the MoU signed with FRIM, it (FRIM) would provide advisory services and technical expertise to improve the Labuan Botanical Gardens in terms of landscape management and plant collections.

According to the statement, in order to make the cooperation between FRIM and the Labuan Corporation a success, both parties have held a series of discussions, technical visits, and site surveys to identify the scope as well as suitable projects to be implemented. — Bernama