



PUTRAJAYA: The Health Ministry (MOH) is planning to introduce the Drinking Water Quality Act (DWQA) soon, as a measure to further fortify protection against health hazards due to unsafe drinking water, says Minister Khairy Jamaluddin.

"Drinking water is a basic human right," he said at the virtual celebration of World Health Day 2022 today while pointing out that in reality one in three people globally lack access to safe and adequate drinking water.

He said the Ministry has carried out one of the oldest environmental health programmes in the country, the Rural Environmental Sanitation Programme through the Water Supply and Environmental Sanitation Unit (Bakas) and for over 50 years, the programme has played a major role in providing clean and safe water supply to rural communities and contributed to the near full coverage of clean and safe water supply throughout the country.

Together with the implementation of the National Drinking Water Quality Surveillance Programme (NDWQSP), the MOH has managed to help raise the quality of health by ensuring the safety of drinking water provided to the public and monitoring quality thereby reducing the incidence of water-borne diseases or illnesses associated with poor quality of public water supplies.

"The surveillance programme alerts public health and water work personnel if the quality of drinking water deteriorates and enables them to undertake preventive or remedial measures before the occurrence of any major outbreak of disease or poisoning," he said.

On another note, Khairy said the MOH will table a new act in Parliament to ban smoking, as well as vaping and possession of tobacco products, in July this year.

"There will come a time when the coming generation will no longer know what a cigarette is," he said.

"According to the National Health and Morbidity Survey (NHMS), more than 27,200 of Malaysian deaths annually were attributed to smoking," he said. - Bernama