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BETTER CITIZENS

TEACHING ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

New subject may be introduced in schools, universities to improve civic-mindedness

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ENVIRONMENTAL education in schools and universities may become a reality to inculcate civic-mindedness and increase awareness of environmental issues.

Natural Resources and Environment Minister Datuk Seri Dr Wan Junaidi Tuanku Jaafar said the ministry would hold talks with the Education and Higher Education Ministries on this matter after finalising the proposal to introduce Environmental Education as a subject in schools and varsities.

"I have directed the secretary-general (of the ministry, Datuk Seri Azizah Ahmad) to get things done (in gathering details on the scope that Environmental Education will cover).

"We will then talk to the ministries to make Environmental Education one of the subjects in schools and

universities."

He was speaking after the ministry's Innovation Symposium 2017 at the Forest Research Institute Malaysia here yesterday.

He said such a subject was needed to improve civic and social consciousness among children and to produce citizens who were concerned with protecting the environment.

"Look at our rivers... Despite telling people not to litter and throw rubbish into the rivers, many still do it.

"They fail to listen because they lack civic consciousness.

"This is why we must inculcate the habit from young and educate children on the importance of preserving the environ-

ment.

"In South Korea and Japan, for example, children are

taught to clean and do chores since young.

"Here in Malaysia today, some call it child labour if children were asked to do some chores.

"We hope that with the introduction of the subject, we will have citizens who are concerned about environmental protection and be sensitive to environmental issues, such as pollution, recycling and waste management."

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