



Dr Corray cutting a cake while others look on.

## QEH Director warns smokers of the risk

**KOTA KINABALU:** Individuals who smoke are always exposed to a variety of chronic illnesses, in addition to the risk of being attacked by dangerous diseases anytime without warning.

Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH) Director, Heric Corray, said smokers are exposed to diseases and are susceptible to serious ailments such as heart attack, stroke, lung disease and various types of cancer.

He said smoking in any form would be detrimental to health, adding that scientific evidence suggests that tobacco, especially cigarettes, contain more than 4,000 types of poison and is the main factor that contributes to the deteriorating health among smokers.

According to him, the health economic study conducted over the last five years shows the estimated cost of treatment for

three types of disease caused by tobacco - heart disease, lung cancer and chronic lung damage - comes up to over RM3 billion a year.

"These diseases will lead to a huge loss from the rising cost of treatment, decreased productivity and loss of working capability besides premature death," he said when opening the Non-Tobacco Day Celebration Ceremony and the QEH Stop Smoking Clinic Customer Appreciation Ceremony at its Twin Towers building, here, Thursday morning.

He said the Non-Tobacco Week Celebration Programme, which is celebrated annually, is not just a programme to encourage smokers to stop smoking alone, but rather to provide awareness and exposure to the public, especially residents of the hospital, on the importance of knowledge and the adverse effects of smoking

on self, family, the society and country in general.

"The hospital also offers a Stop Smoking Clinic service at level 1, PGMC Building, for individuals who want to change their lifestyle and stay away from cigarettes. This clinic service is available during office hours from Monday to Friday," he added.

He pointed out that the 2016 statistics showed that more than 31 smokers have been able to quit smoking after receiving treatment from the clinic.

For individuals who are trying to stop smoking or who have stopped smoking, Heric said they are advised to try and avoid places that will entice the urge to smoke.

"The decision to stop smoking can be a stressful and challenging process, and during the treatment phase these individuals are exposed to various surrounding factors."