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ANNUALLY, on March 22, the world joins hands to celebrate World Water Day to remind people of the importance and centrality of water and also create awareness of the importance of access and wise and conservative use of water for everyone. World Water Day also advocates for the sustainable management of water resources for water security.

World Water Day is more important for South Africans as it falls just a day after the Human Rights Day in the country. Access to sustainable water is a human right and this clearly shows the importance of access to water for enjoyment of human rights.

Access to sustainable water is a human right

This year, this important day is celebrated under the theme “Valuing Water” highlighting the worth of water and also asking the important question, how much value do we attach to water?

This theme is more important than ever before. People in urban areas with regular water supply in their households sometimes tend to take the value of water for granted as they normally do not experience water challenges.

They start taking notice of the value of water when there are challenges in their water

supply systems and resources and experience water restrictions and shortages. This must not be the case as we must always respect and value every single drop of water at all times.

In contrast, people in the rural areas are the ones who value water in an important manner as they normally struggle to access it. They get water from tankers that come sometimes once a week or they have to risk their lives to fetch water in dangerous rivers and streams.

These people know the value of each and every drop of water as they

struggle to access the precious source of life. Governments have a serious task to ensure that these people also enjoy their human rights and have access to sustainable water.

Water is more valuable than ever before, especially as we are faced with the deadly Covid-19 pandemic which requires regular handwashing as one of the key preventive measures.

Water is life. Let us value each and every drop by using water wisely, sparingly and in a more conservative manner to ensure water security in our water scarce and dry country.

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