

14/04/1997

Employ horticulturists on projects

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I HAVE been following the New Straits Times' reports on the the Federal Government's drive to green the country. This refers to ongoing efforts to save trees from greedy developers and contractors, not to mention ignorant members of the public and civil servants.

While the onslaught on trees by individuals is less glaring, what nature lovers are most concerned about is the scale of the destruction wrought by the very people who are supposed to bring progress to the nation.

These people, most notably the developers and contractors, are ruthless in their quest to make huge profits.

So great has the destruction been that it has invoked pronouncements from no less a personality than the Prime Minister, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Naturally the rakyat is more reassured now that the Prime Minister himself has taken an interest in preserving our environment.

Laws have been passed by the Housing and Local Government Ministry which compel developers to survey areas to map existing trees and then relocate or replace them.

I hope this works, because with so many projects ongoing, I am worried the authorities will be too hard pressed to study the tree survey plans and will be unable to conduct thorough counter checks.

Thus the large scale destruction of greenery would continue unabated as any loopholes could be exploited.

Allow me to suggest that a law be implemented making it compulsory to appoint botanists, horticulturists and plant physiologists to take charge of this aspect of development projects.

The Government should consider making it compulsory that at least one such professional is employed on each project exceeding RM15 million. I am confident there are enough such graduates to meet the needs of every developer.

For the good of the nation's greenery, I would urge Dr Mahathir and the relevant authorities to study this humble suggestion with a view to implementing it.

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