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Be more pro-active against open burning

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IT was nice to read that Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, while undergoing treatment for a blood clot at the ankle happened to see from his hospital bed smoke billowing from a nearby construction site and decided to do something.

He called Science, Technology and Environment Minister Datuk Law Hieng Ding's handphone to complain.

I suppose, since the call was made by the country's leader, action would have been taken immediately.

But every day we ordinary citizens notice open burning, especially at construction sites, housing estates, plantations, and some industries.

I wonder, if we are talking about responsibility of certain enforcement agencies, if one has to wait for a report or complaint to be made officially. I am sure most of the time smoke from fires, or even dust can be seen a few kilometres away.

If even one of the agencies entrusted to act in cases of environmental pollution notices the pollution, they would have no reason to wait for someone especially the Prime Minister to highlight such a situation. After all it is their responsibility.

I am sure those enforcement officials who patrol the areas would have realised that regardless of the haze situation one can see open burning in most areas towards the evening or at dawn.

Calls were made regarding such cases but met with no positive response.

And the Government itself has programmes to make Malaysians care for the environment.

What we see now is that, when the haze gets worse everyone goes overboard to get things under control, like asking people to sprinkle water from highrise buildings (remember we have water shortage now). When the haze has reduced slightly no one bothers to even talk about it.

So I would like to ask the authorities to be more observant in tackling the situation.

Oxygen is not taxed at the moment, so please do not make Malaysians pay for oxygen cylinders.

Take care of the pure free air before it is too late.