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Blaming nature for our follies

M.N. Mahmud

MANY reports in the past have attributed many natural disasters in the country to an act of God. Recently in a report in the New Sunday Times (Dec 10), nature was blamed for the recent water woes in the Klang valley.

I quote: "This is not the company's fault. It's nature's fault. When there is heavy rain, the water washes away rubbish into the river." Whilst agreeing that the public is partly to be blamed, I definitely disagree that nature is to be blamed. I will definitely agree if it was said that human nature was to be blamed.

If the disasters have been due to an act of God, I have often asked myself why has God allowed them to happen and why has God seemed so angry with us of late.

This time around nature was blamed.

As was reported, one of the reasons given for the disruption of the water supply was because the water was too murky to be treated.

Was it rubbish thrown into the river that caused the murkiness or something else, more likely silt and mud, that we can now see in most rivers in the country?

On Dec 11, it was reported that it could be partly attributed to sand mining upstream and that the recent unusually heavy rainfall stirred up mud from the bottom of the river.

It is not fair and not right for us to blame nature or God for our failings and our weaknesses. Nature has provided us in this blessed country with abundant resources, especially water.

In many arid countries, the people there would likely be singing in praise of God and Nature for the amount of water falling from our sky. Water comes down from the sky clean and pure. We humans dirty the water as it comes down by dirtying and polluting the environment.

We can still get clean water if it can be retained in the ground long enough to be filtered naturally by the earth and to gradually seep into the rivers, providing water during the relatively drier times of the year.

But alas in many parts of the country we allow it to run off quickly into the rivers carrying with it silt and mud because we have deforested our land near the rivers and catchment areas, like what happened in Perak recently.

We are even building dams to retain the water that will run off quickly into the rivers in the country.

We have been blessed in this country with so much resources, more than what every one needs but certainly not for every one's greed or even the greed of a few.

I am certain that if we plan our development well and not disturb nature, where it should not be disturbed, then nature will be kind to us.

Our Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has on many occasions reminded us in our pace of development to protect our forests, to be careful when developing our hills and mountains and to take care of our rivers.

We need not have to go very far from Kuala Lumpur to see whether this is really happening. If you fly, as I occasionally do, it will break your heart to see the destruction of our forests even on hilltops in many parts of the country.

Most of the rivers are murky and the unmistakable brownish looking logging tracts winding over hills and mountains are very obvious from the

air.

Please do not blame nature for our follies for nature is very kind and generous although it took 160 million years for it to develop our rainforests.

But He has a way of talking back to us if we are unkind and uncaring, usually in a subtle way but He can also be harsh when the occasion arises.

We must be blind, deaf and heartless if we cannot feel the displeasure of nature of late. For the sake of our future and our future generations please be kind and take care of nature. He will remember us well.