

# Everyone's environment

**WHAT** Natural Resources and Environment Minister Datuk Seri Azmi Khalid is attempting to do is an excellent idea. It is a worthwhile effort to enlist everyone, including MPs and State Assemblymen, to combat the growing environmental problems that the country is facing.

That he had this brain wave and announced it while parts of the country are flooded to the extent that several lives had been lost and thousands evacuated from their homes to shelters on higher ground is most propitious.

Rivers clogged up due to siltation caused by logging in their upper reaches could be a contributory factor to the floods. Some operators of log-

ging concessions go about cutting down trees and moving the logs without proper observance of the rules.

But who is looking at them and preventing them from removing the soil cover when moving the logs? And then there are the illegal logging activities going on in forest reserves. Those living in the areas where this activities are carried out are aware of them but others, especially government officials, are unaware of the situation.

Many of our rivers are dead because we have turned them into giant sewers into which we dump all our rubbish. Surely we need to resuscitate them.

During those months when the country is assault-

ed by haze caused by open burning in a neighbouring country, we too contribute to it by happily lighting up our own bonfires.

Many of our parks have been violated by greedy developers with tacit consent from those whose business is to prevent such things from happening. Don't people realise that once these green lungs are gone they are probably gone forever.

So the minister's suggestion is most brilliant, to say the least. Of course, we have heard numerous and even better sounding suggestions before. But who knows, maybe Khalid can succeed in putting into effect this daunting task where others had failed. All the best to you, Sir.