

Water policies have been watered down

I WAS shocked to learn that logging is rampant in important water-catchment areas such as Ulu Muda. Even more shocking is that the logging in this forest reserve received approval from the authorities.

Ulu Muda is an important source of water not only for Kedah but also Penang.

It was reported that 80 per cent of Penang's water supply and 96 per cent of Kedah's water supply come from there. So why was the logging approved?

Some may argue that logging can bring more wealth to the state, but as a consumer, I want the water that comes out of my tap to be clean and without disruption.

Even if the state becomes richer, it will be meaningless to residents if they have water woes.

There are statements from the state government saying logging did not pollute the water source, but other state government agencies are saying logging can destroy water-catchment areas, and some were even unaware of the logging.

Villagers near the area say the condition of the river has deteriorated. Whom should we believe?

This discrepancy is a sign that not enough attention is given to the protection of water-catchment areas.



Water is a basic human right, so it should be given the highest priority.

We have approvals given to carry out logging despite the presence of a water-catchment area, and we also have water that has turned murky, even though the official statement says that logging has not affected the area.

We have government agencies that want to protect the water source, but there are also those who do not care much about it.

In the end, we get half-baked environmental protection and enforcement efforts, which put our water resources in danger.

Water is a basic human right, so it should be given the highest priority.

Ulu Muda is only one example of a threatened water-catchment area.

Can we be sure that similar problems are not occurring in other water-catchment areas?

The country is running out of space to develop, so it becomes even more important for development around water-catchment areas to be prevented.

Revenue may be important for a state's development, but the method used must also be sustainable.

Was the hot weather and critical dam levels not a harsh-enough lesson?

I hope the state authorities give more attention to protecting water resources.

Policies to protect water-catchment areas exist. What we need are cooperation and good communication between government agencies, as well as enforcement of these policies.

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