



KEMENTERIAN TENAGA DAN SUMBER ASLI

# KERATAN SURAT KHABAR

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**Your opinion**

EMAIL: editor@thestar.com.my or MAIL: The Editor, Menara Star, 15, Jalan 16/11, Section 16, 46350 Petaling Jaya. Letters must carry the sender's full name, address and telephone number. A pseudonym may be included.

## Landslides and their devastation

I REFER to *The Star* report *Too close for comfort* (Dec 29) concerning floods and devastation due to landslides.

In the wake of the frequent landslides in Cameron Highland and elsewhere brought about by inclement weather and illegal land clearing activities, the need for concerted efforts by all parties concerned to preserve and protect Malaysia's natural environment has become more urgent and compelling.

The problem of landslides has proven to us that if we are not going to make peace with our environment, the destruction will be all the greater in the future.

Installing more early-warning systems at high-risk areas in the country will not be the ultimate solution to the problem.

All sectors of our economy should work towards ensuring that the economy and the environment prosper together.

We can and should demonstrate that sustainable development is not an indulgence but a precursor for success.

As our focus is on sustainable growth and the need to embark on environment-friendly development, it is therefore essential for both the public and private sectors to develop their environmental auditing systems and provide annual reports on the impact of their economic activities on the environment.

At a time when environmental concerns in the business sector are being given greater focus across the globe, environmental auditing should be an integral part of corporate management.

As the issue of climate change is gaining intensity, there is a need for businesses to be more conscious of environmental issues.



**Environmental and human cost:** Rescue work being carried out after a landslide occurred at Simpang Pulai-Cameron Highlands whereby a van was buried underneath the earth earlier this month. — RONNIE CHIN/The Star

Companies must realise there is more to gain by preserving the environment.

Problems relating to illegal land clearing, deforestation and dumping of hazardous industrial waste by irresponsible companies or smoke emissions from factories have time and again been highlighted in the media.

Unless those concerned are prepared to address these issues, they will not only have to bear the full brunt of the law, but eventually lose out as trade barriers fall in the global market.

Environmental reporting is basically about the company's disclosure related to the

impact of its economic activities on the environment. The disclosure may provide vital information to the investors who need it to protect themselves from unexpected losses incurred due to the environmental costs which will prove detrimental to their investments. To the public, such disclosure will enable them to evaluate the social commitments undertaken by the corporate entity.

As has been observed, there is now an emerging trend among corporations, particularly at the international level, to disclose information on environment policies, objectives and programmes to the public.

The fact that Malaysian companies need to improve their environmental accounting system is based on the realisation that this trend may well become an established corporate practice worldwide which governs investment decisions.

Hopefully, the proposal on environmental accounting by companies will lead to a change in the mindset of top management of companies on environmental issues.

Securing profits by a company should not be at the expense of the environment as it too has a social responsibility to inform their stakeholders of the impact its business has on the environment.

Shareholders must also be conscious of the fact that money is not made at the expense of the environment and that companies should be more responsible for the future generations.

It's now time for all nations to work towards a World Sustainability Community.

**TAN SRI LEE LAM THYE**  
Kuala Lumpur

Unit Komunikasi Korporat | Kementerian Tenaga dan Sumber Asli  
No. Tel. : 03-8000 8000 | Faks : 03-8889 4763 | Web : [www.ketsa.gov.my](http://www.ketsa.gov.my)