

No pollution

By Maulana Wahiduddin Khan

Pollution of any kind is against the scheme of God the Creator. It is man's duty, therefore, to maintain the purity of nature. The failure to do so is, in religious terms, a sin and, in legal terms, a crime. Man is permitted to exploit natural resources for their benefits, but he must do so without destroying the natural order of things.

One verse worth quoting from the Quran on this subject is from the chapter entitled *Al-A'raf* (The Heights); another relevant verse is from the chapter entitled *Al-Ankabut* (The Spider): "Do not corrupt the land after it has been set in order. This is for your own good, if you are true believers" (7:85).

"Corruption has appeared on land and sea because of the evil which men's hands have done: and so He will make them taste the fruit of some of their doings, so that they may turn back from evil" (30:41).

The message of these two verses is that God Almighty has created things in their best order and man is allowed to enjoy these things for his own benefit. But he is not allowed to destroy the balance of nature. Man was born as a free creature, but man's freedom ends where his mismanagement of nature begins.

Man is not the creator of this world. Man is only a beneficiary of God's creation. Man ought to be aware of this fact, for transgressing his limits will prove to be disastrous for him. All kinds of pollution are man-made (pollution is unknown in nature; nature never created any kind of pollution), but where man has the capacity to pollute nature, he does not have the power to create another world. So, becoming sinful before God and depriving himself of the only source of life, that is, nature, is a double loss for man