

# NEW STRAITS TIMES

Our deepest condolences to the families of passengers and crew of flight MH370

HOME NATION STREETS WORLD BUSINESS TIMES SPORTS LIFE & TIMES OPINION GALLERIES 7 DAY NEWS CHANNELS RED

## COLUMNIST

11 October 2013 | last updated at 11:18PM

[Email](#) [Print](#)

### Beware of complacency

By Datuk Dr Ibrahim Ahmad Bajunid | [iabaiw@yahoo.com](mailto:iabaiw@yahoo.com)

comments  0



DURING the last half a century, the Malaysian nation has come a long way in building infrastructure and creating opportunities for human capital development. There are pockets of excellence in many aspects of the functioning of society. There are the five-star services of hotels, of airlines, of PLUS Highway toilets and R&R areas. However, something is missing in development over the last half a century. That missing factor is the resolve, spirit, the will to be steadfast in the course of excellence.

A complacent society has no eye for detail, no care for aesthetics, and no true culture of continuous improvements. A complacent society has the habits of learned helplessness and acceptance of substandard goods and services.

A complacent society does not have the mass of individuals who take responsibility for their own sense of personal integrity and accountability. The argument for the loss of ethics is always the "big fish" argument.

If the big fish can be corrupt, and get away with it, if the big fish behaves with low culture, then the little fishes argue that they could do the same. The big fish getting away provides the licence and the modelling of bad behaviour for the ordinary people.

In an educated and enlightened society, the citizenry with strength of character, will not unwittingly follow the bad examples of the rich, famous and powerful. The ordinary people can be rich in their values, ethics, integrity, and strength of uncorrupted character.

A complacent society has the following characteristics:

DEPENDENT on foreign labour for the basic services required;

NO sense of shame and low pride;

#### OPINION

[Editorial](#)

[Columnist](#)

[Letters to the Editor](#)

[Comment](#)

#### STREETS



[Duo shine for Kelantan](#)



[Guardian promotes brand awareness in awards contest](#)

#### MOST READ

#### MOST COMMENTED

- [MH370 Tragedy: Chronology on missing plane](#)
- [MH370 Tragedy: More ships rush to probe signals in plane search](#)
- [MH370 Tragedy: Hunt homes in on ping signals](#)
- [Badminton: Chong Wei wins India Open again](#)
- [Xbox One makes hot debut as console war revs up](#)
- [Man held over offensive posting](#)
- ['Too early to confirm pulses'](#)
- [Superbike rider crashes into car, dies on the spot](#)
- ['Paintball markers not illegal'](#)
- [Facebook account holder nabbed over Rosmah's doctored picture](#)
- ['No US, Russia war over Crimea crisis'](#)
- [MH370 Tragedy: China ship detects 'pulse signal' in Indian Ocean](#)
- [Four bombs rock Yala, killing 2, injuring 23](#)
- [Sizzling hot ginger tea, crispy keropok lekor, S'pore PM's choice for tea](#)
- [Najib hosts Singapore PM, wife at River Cruise Tasik](#)

[MORE](#)



MEAGRE dreams, is idyllic and accepts mediocrity as the standard;

A consumer society which is indulgent, quite low in productivity, low in creativity and innovation;

IN such a lackadaisical society, people take every opportunity to shortchange the next person;

ACCEPTS poor quality of service, tolerates sub-standard goods and services;

THE media presents materials uncritically in biased, indoctrinating ways, knowing that there will be little criticism;

DOES not seek feedback. (If feedback is given, the matters raised would be ignored by the authorities);

SQUALID environments would be seen frequently with shut down facilities and amenities;

THINKS in the short term; and

DOES things half-heartedly with no idea of standards or accepting of minimal standards.

A complacent society does not understand the nature of sacrifices including ultimate sacrifices of property and life.

A complacent society is unwilling to learn and does not understand continuous improvements. A complacent society repeats the same mistake again and again, without going forward. There are the recurring cases of food poisoning in schools, restaurants, and wedding parties and incidents of salmonella, leptospirosis, time honoured hot spot areas of crime and careless accidents.

It is instructive to reflect on what historians have observed in the march of civilisation and its various cyclical stages: 1. From bondage to spiritual faith. 2. From spiritual faith to great courage. 3. From great courage to liberty. 4. From liberty to abundance. 5. From abundance to selfishness. 6. From selfishness to complacency. 7. From complacency to apathy. 8. From apathy to moral decay. 9. From moral decay to dependence; and 10. From dependence to bondage.

Tan Sri Arshad Ayub, who in his 80s, with passion for excellence, continues to learn and contribute, and reminisces on the past, present and future of society. He sums up the generational experiences of his colleagues, students and the Malaysian people as a whole, for the best of 50 years.

"We had little or no resources, we did not have models of excellence, but we had the will to achieve and succeed. We were mission driven and understood that we had the responsibility to improve the lot of the people and the destiny of a nation.

"Every day counted, every person whose skills were developed and talents honed mattered and was of great value. Despite adversities, despite lack of resources we gave of our best and stretched ourselves, we made sacrifices and loved what we did with steadfast passion. Complacency was not an option."

When complacency is pervasive and there is lacklustre leadership everywhere, national boredom becomes the overarching climate. The digital era is no excuse for indiscipline.

In fact, the digital era should be the catalyst to a more enlightened and disciplined society. There is no point in having a politically active

#### NSTP FAMILY SITES

|                                |                                  |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <a href="#">Harian Metro</a>   | <a href="#">Berita Harian</a>    |
| <a href="#">Business Times</a> | <a href="#">My Gadget Planet</a> |
| <a href="#">Travelific</a>     | <a href="#">Harum</a>            |
| <a href="#">Eats</a>           | <a href="#">Properties</a>       |

[News Image Bank \(NIB\)](#)

#### HIGHLIGHTS

|                                    |   |
|------------------------------------|---|
| <a href="#">New Economic Model</a> | <a href="#">NST Reviews</a>             |
| <a href="#">NiEXUS</a>             | <a href="#">Friends of Travel Times</a> |
| <a href="#">Property News</a>      | <a href="#">NSTLIVE Archive</a>         |
| <a href="#">Spell-It-Right</a>     |   |

#### COFFEE BREAK

[Sudoku](#)



generation which is complacent and apathetic in other domains of life. Contemporary society and the future generation must not be complacent because complacency will ensure the decline of the nation.

iabaiw@yahoo.com

-- Google + --

#### RECOMMENDED

[MISSING MH370: Geostrategist says passengers can sustain up to 2...](#) (New Straits Times)

[Serial killer set to die after court reverse](#) (New Straits Times)

[MH370 Lost in Indian Ocean: Puspanathan spoke to mother in dream](#) (New Straits Times)

[Alex Ferguson to become a Harvard lecturer](#) (New Straits Times)

[2 women killed at lawyers' offices](#) (New Straits Times)

[Minister orders probe of topless female athlete](#) (New Straits Times)

#### FROM AROUND THE WEB

[Singaporean in critical care after being hit by tour bus in HK](#) (Channel NewsAsia)

[Lufthansa to cancel 3,800 flights due to pilots' strike](#) (Channel NewsAsia)

[8 ways you should never describe yourself in a job application](#) (The Naked CEO)

[AirAsia X - would it have run out of cash if it didn't list?](#) (Investor Central)

[Is Shenzhen the new Silicon Valley?](#) (BBC)

[What is the cost of getting your holiday wrong?](#) (Travel Daily)

Recommended by

#### RELATED ARTICLES



[2013 MERDEKA AWARD: 'I believe in giving second chances'](#)



[A trip through time with 'Pages from my Past'](#)



[HARI RAYA TREAT FOR ORPHANS](#)



[Maxis wins Platinum Award for trusted brand](#)

[Virtual classroom contribution to national education](#)

#### Leave Your Comment

 Login With Facebook

| HOME           | NATION   | STREETS  | WORLD | BUSINESS | SPORTS    | LIFE & TIMES           | OPINION        | GALLERIES    | 7 DAY NEWS | CHANNELS       | RED |
|----------------|----------|----------|-------|----------|-----------|------------------------|----------------|--------------|------------|----------------|-----|
| Top News       | General  | Central  |       | TIMES    | Soccer    | Tech                   | Editorial      | Image        | Monday     | Gadget         |     |
| Latest         | Politics | Northern |       |          | Badminton | Health                 | Columnist      | Video        | Tuesday    | Eats           |     |
| RSS Page       | Extras   | Johor    |       |          | Cricket   | Style                  | Letters To The | Infographics | Wednesday  | Travelific     |     |
| Didik Malaysia |          |          |       |          | Racing    | Travel                 | Editor         |              | Thursday   | Harum          |     |
|                |          |          |       |          | Other     | Showbiz                | Comment        |              | Friday     | Learning Curve |     |
|                |          |          |       |          |           | Live                   |                |              | Saturday   | You            |     |
|                |          |          |       |          |           | Sunday Life &<br>Times |                |              | Sunday     | Niexter        |     |

[Mobile](#)
[News Archive](#)
[1Klassifieds](#)
[Property Auction](#)
[Twitter](#)
[RSS](#)
[Personal Data Protection Notice](#)
[Disclaimer](#)

Copyright © 2011 The New Straits Times Press (Malaysia) Berhad. All rights reserved.