

Public projects: We'll pay more for good quality
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Malaysian politicians are so fond of sweeping 'true facts' under the carpet as opposed to facing the truth and living with it. Pretty soon, the carpet would be as high as our landfills which and this is very much in keeping with our character of throwing away usable things to savour the new things in life.

Malaysians tend to have a very short memory. We need scandals, we need breaking stories, we want to criticise, we want to blame someone. But at the end of the day, we have only ourselves to blame for the way the country is being run now. With all the headlines on sub-standard government buildings, one wonders when our elected politicians will wake up and take action. Do we need to have a tragedy that involves a loss of lives before remedial measures are taken?

We have, in a way, accepted that every nation and government is in a way corrupted. Can we then hope that despite the corruption that prevails, a certain amount of standard or quality is provided in every government project?

A quick example will be the road works that are done after they laying of water pipes. Somehow or rather, the road will never be the same again. If you are lucky, you will get the road tarred. Otherwise, they will just lay some sand and stones to cover up the holes. Then comes a new contractor with proper equipment to so-called re-tar the roads.

Amazingly, the tar is laid but never rolled over by a steamroller. A lay person would know that after laying the tar, you need some heavy equipment to even out the tar and ensure that it bonds. As vehicles ply the 'newly tarred' roads, new shapes start to form with bumps and holes.

Eventually, after constant complaints by the residents, you will see proper machineries and workers at work, laying out the gravel and sand evenly and finally a new coat of tar is laid. The problem is finally solved but after going through three different contractors at three times the cost.

Another option is to award a favoured contractor a job at a higher price but ensure that the right quality of work is put into the project. Yes, we tax payers will pay a higher price but we solve the problem of shoddy workmanship once and for all and carry on with our lives. Do we have another option? The true fact is that we do not.

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