

# A need for greater integrity at every level

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THE report ("There's a leak in our civic virtue" — NST, June 3) was commendable. Khairy Jamaluddin is spot on when he asks: "Why is it that things fall apart so quickly?"

He then adds that "the last few weeks have become a joke", referring to flooded government buildings and caving roofs, with no one wanting to be accountable.

Interestingly, he points out that the contractors who provide poor building maintenance "will be considered for

new construction projects after ingratiating themselves with the right decision makers". I agree that this is unfortunately often the case.

But all this raises the more important question: Why have government agencies not put a stop to this abuse?

As long as the government does not take action to penalise poor performance by contractors and others, we will be seen as condoning inefficiency and declining standards of transparency, in-

tegrity and accountability.

Khairy is also right when he says Malaysians lack "civic virtue". Here again, we have to ask why our people do not take enough responsibility for what is in the public realm.

The culture of selfishness and the disease of "each one for himself and to heck with the rest" then becomes more debilitating to our society.

The government, therefore, has to re-dedicate itself to its many noble promises to raise standards of good governance

sooner, rather than later. This will help it to obtain higher quality of excellence and pride in good performance.

The challenge today, after 50 years of achievements in peace and progress, will be to ensure greater integrity at all levels of society, to assure ourselves of sustainable national unity, strength and stability up to Vision 2020 and beyond.

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