

TODAY
WE SET YOU THINKING

MANAGING DIRECTOR & EDITOR
WALTER FERNANDEZ

DEPUTY EDITOR
CARL SKADIAN

ASSOCIATE EDITOR
YVONNE LIM

EXECUTIVE EDITORS
LOH CHEE KONG
RAZALI ABDULLAH
PHIN WONG

DIGITAL MEDIA EDITOR
EDRIC SNG

EDITOR-AT-LARGE
CONRAD RAJ

NEWS
LEONG WEE KEAT

COMMENTARY
ROSNAH AHMAD

VOICES
DERRICK A PAULO

FOREIGN
TRIXIA CARUNGCONG

BUSINESS
DAVID BOTTOMLEY

SPORTS
GERARD WONG

FEATURES
CHRISTOPHER TOH, MAYO MARTIN

SPECIAL PROJECTS
ARIEL TAM

SUB-EDITORS
AMIR ALI

OPERATIONS • RICHARD J VALLADARES
CORPORATE SERVICES • ROSALIND PNG
CIRCULATION • SUNNY ISSAC
MARKETING • CAROLINE JOANNE BONE
EDITORIAL SUPPORT • DOREEN SABAI

MEDIACORP PRESS LTD
today@mediacorp.com.sg
www.facebook.com/todayonline
www.twitter.com/todayonline

Caldecott Broadcast Centre,
Andrew Road, Singapore 299939
Tel: 6236 4888 | Fax: 6534 4217

NEWS HOTLINE 6822 2268
CIRCULATION HOTLINE 1800 698 6329
ADVERTISING HOTLINE 6333 9888

Legal action not neighbourly

FROM KWAN JIN YAO

Law and Foreign Affairs Minister K Shanmugam's proposal to introduce new norms to curb social nuisance, as reported in "Framework needed for neighbourly conduct" (Sept 1), sounds like a practical solution to anecdotal expressions of dissatisfaction.

Residents are unhappy that there is no peace because a neighbour's child is constantly jamming on his instruments; that someone's frying of food makes their laundry smell; that a person's pet is noisy at night, et cetera.

A legal framework seems straightforward: Constituents, cognizant of the restrictions and associated penalties, would be on their toes, rendering the neighbourhood more harmonious and conducive.

Yet, this route appears to be unnecessary and contrived. It could cause

more undesirable ramifications instead of addressing present unhappiness in a sustainable way.

Demanding residents could become nitpicky, finding the slightest fault with their neighbours. Legal liabilities could be perceived as draconian and legal resolution could harm relationships.

It is not that we should relish in the status quo; everyone should heighten their civic comprehension and communal sensibility. Unfortunately, this remains an impossible ideal.

A household could adapt to another's characteristics and idiosyncrasies, and compromise; nevertheless, they might remain subject to inconveniences, since there are now only sanctions to halt disturbances or misdemeanours in public spaces.

Between these two extremes, we could strike a balance. A public con-

sultation could be conducted to ascertain common residential issues. Through discourse with political representatives, ideas could then be generated to tackle the concerns.

A customary framework could finally be published, in which dispute resolution strategies could particularly come in handy.

Such endeavours could be carried out by constituency, if it is opined that individual estates have dissimilar challenges or problems.

No mechanism is perfect, and some would persist in the "my way or the highway" mentality.

When dispute resolution options are snubbed, say, a party refuses to attend mediation sessions despite multiple reminders, the law could then feature.

It is about striking equilibrium, on a case-by-case basis.



LETTER WEEKEND BUILDING WORK AN ISSUE FOR RESIDENTS

Scan the QR code using the reader app on your smartphone, or you can visit tdy.sg/ltrwork0911 for the letter from Jansen Chong.

Let us be gracious, not timid

FROM FOO MAO CHEEN

At the National Day Rally, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong raised the matter of being a gracious society. I feel that we need to ponder what being gracious means.

When faced with frequent problems of noise nuisance and dripping laundry, I have sought help from the town council and the Housing and Development Board (HDB), usually after personal attempts to resolve these issues proved fruitless.

At first, the agencies were prompt and aggressive. But when the offenders were recalcitrant and flouted warning letters, the agencies usually told me to "put up with", to "give

and take" and to "understand the demands of high density living".

A Member of Parliament even told me to be "gracious". There is a reluctance to take punitive action to improve the situation, and people acting ungraciously are tolerated, while the victims are told to be "kind, polite and generous".

We have a skewed view of what being gracious means.

The root word of "gracious is "grace", which may be defined as "God's mercy and favour towards mankind; influence and result of this".

Thus, in the process of showing grace to someone, that party is to be influenced to change for the better.

A desirable outcome is expected.

Graciousness does not mean blind tolerance without soliciting proper behaviour from the offending party.

If repeated generosity and forbearance is shown and no change is made in poor behaviour, then this has gone from graciousness to permissiveness. Blind tolerance leads to licentiousness.

Inconsiderate behaviour is being empowered because people are given the idea that "looking the other way" and doing nothing is "being gracious". At some point, graciousness has to shift gear from mere kindness and politeness to stronger actions that influence behaviour.

Grace that does not eradicate bad behaviour is not grace but timidity.



LETTER NOT GRACIOUS TO WASTE FOOD

Scan the QR code using the reader app on your smartphone, or you can visit tdy.sg/ltrfood0911 for the letter from Jeffrey Law.

Travel + Leisure World's Best Award 2012

3D2N Boracay BEST ISLAND NO.1 fr\$ 358

3D2N Free & Easy

- Manila fr\$ 258
- Bohol fr\$ 298
- Cebu fr\$ 308
- Davao fr\$ 338
- Palawan fr\$ 368

SPECIAL GROUP DEPARTURE

4D Manila & Tagaytay Highlands
3N accom at 4* Berjaya Manila, Seafood dinner with cultural show*
Tagaytay Highlands - Taal Lake and Volcano, Bamboo Organ, Jeepney Factory, Deluxe Lunch at Josephine's Restaurant *Manila City Tour - Rizal Park, Intramuros, Fort Santiago, San Agustin Church *Buffet dinner of over 200 choices at Dad's (Continental Fare), Kamayan (Filipino Cuisine) & Saisaki (Japanese Specialties)
Dep: Sep 6, 27 Oct 11, 26 Nov 22, 29 Dec 6, 12 fr\$ 538

4D Cebu & Bohol Delights
* 3N accom at 4* Summit Circle Hotel
* City Tour - Fort San Pedro, Magellan's Cross, Basilica Minore del Santo Nino, Corordo Museum, Taoist Temple
* Countryside Bohol Day Tour - Backbayon Church, Loboc River Luncheon Cruise, View the 'Tarsier', Mahogany man-made forest, Chocolate Hills * Island Hopping Tour with BBQ lunch
Dep: Sep 6, 27 Oct 11, 26 Nov 22, 29 Dec 6, 12 fr\$ 728

NAMI RESORT fr\$ 518
* Special promotion rates

FRIDAYS BORACAY fr\$ 548
Book 2N - 1 Complimentary set lunch for 2 pax
Book 3N - 1 Complimentary set lunch and dinner for 2 pax
Book 4N - 1 Complimentary set lunch, dinner and aromatherapy massage for 2 pax

AMBASSADOR INN PARADISE RESORT fr\$ 558
* Stay 4 nights pay 3 nights

DISCOVERY SHORES BORACAY ISLAND fr\$ 738
* One time Chef's lunch and dinner w/iced tea at Sands Restaurant for 2 pax

SHANGRI-LA'S BORACAY RESORT & SPA fr\$ 828
* Stay 3 nights pay 2 nights

PATIO PACIFIC RESORT fr\$ 398
* One (1) Complimentary set dinner

LE SOLEIL DE BORACAY HOTEL fr\$ 438
* Complimentary dinner for min. 3N stay

ESTACIO UNO-BORACAY LIFESTYLE RESORT fr\$ 468
* Complimentary daily dinner, Free 1 time large pizza, PHP 2,00 discount in Estacio Uno Yacht Rental

SEAWIND RESORT fr\$ 478
* Stay 6 nights pay 5 nights

Jetabout Holidays 6734 1818 TA0754
Konsortium 6392 5000 TA1210
Smart Saver 6736 4576 TA0895
CTC Travel 6536 3345 TA0704
Euro Asia 6339 9133 TA0610
Five Stars 6533 5555 TA0752
Focal Travel 6536 3033 TA0883
Giamso Int'l 6534 1010 TA0354
Imperial Tours 6339 1866 TA0383