

# Private-property dwellers should adopt kampung spirit

I REFER to media reports about neighbours in private estates squabbling over minor irritations.

This is sad as the incidents drew attention to the ugly behaviour of some well-heeled individuals living in exclusive neighbourhoods.

The kampung dwellers of the early 1960s, who lived in small wooden houses with at-tap roofs, did not display such hostile and ill-mannered behaviour.

They lived harmoniously

with their neighbours in the spirit of *gotong royong*, or mutual aid.

They showed respect, kindness, patience, tolerance, trust, understanding and courtesy to one another.

Middle-class individuals living in public flats may not be as close-knit as kampung dwellers, but they are still willing to settle their grievances between themselves without resorting to court action.

It thus comes as welcome news that Mr Jack Sim, found-

er of the World Toilet Organisation, and architect Tay Kheng Soon are seeking to revive the kampung spirit by building such a village in Johor, to let young Singaporeans have a taste of kampung life.

It would be good for those who live in private properties to spend some time in such villages, to experience the camaraderie that binds a community, and thus learn how to be considerate neighbours.

**Mr Nelson Quah**