

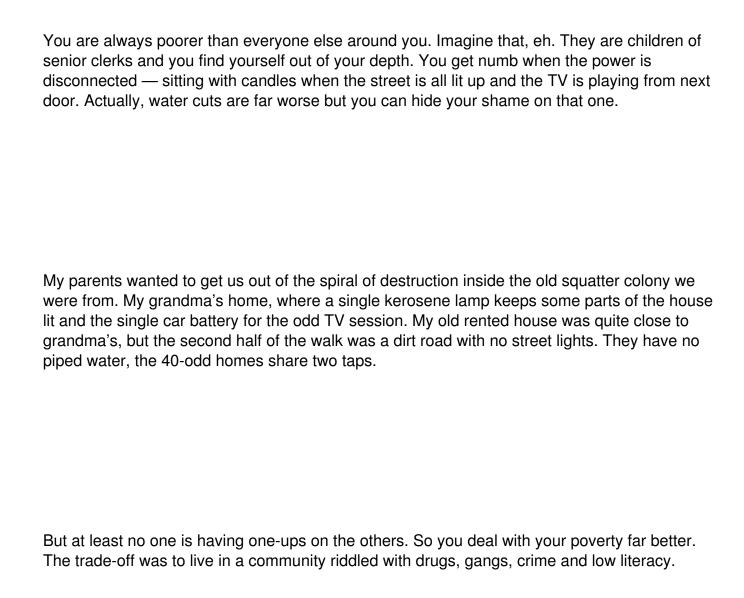
By Praba Ganesan

First published in The Malaysian Insider

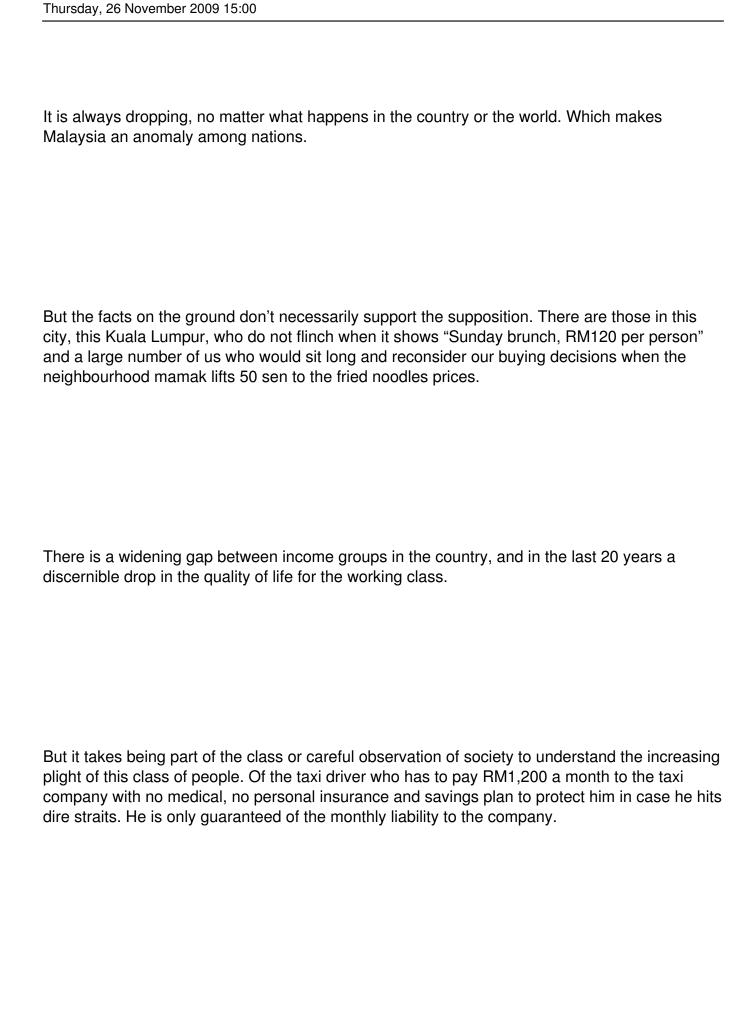
NOV 26 — There is a corner in KL, just across the street from my school I remember too well. It is where I wait for father after school on Fridays. He never comes on time, no matter how much I hope he does. He can't. Government drivers don't plan their time, they live someone else's schedule. And so must their children.

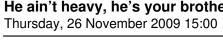
And this son wants to talk a bit more about poverty.

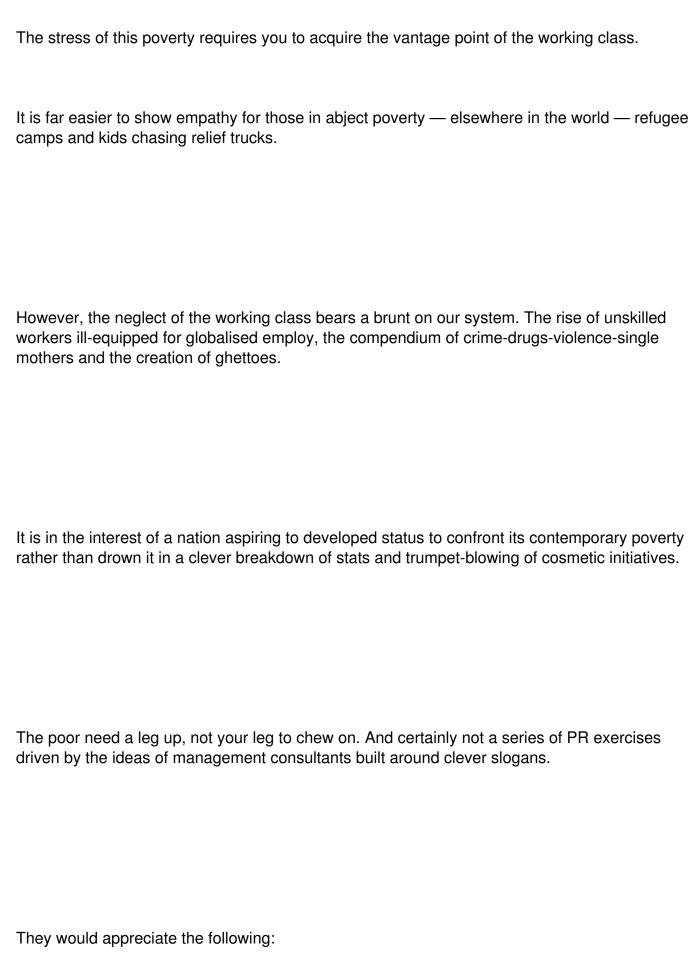
My family was never in the poorest category, we got by far better than a lot of people. I know, I am related to many of them. But my parents did make a choice which complicated things a bit, we moved to a life beyond our means — settling down in lower middle-class housing while being a working-class family.



Which leads me to the present debate about poverty in Malaysia, or rather the playing down of it. Since the inarguable portion of the New Economic Policy was the eradication of poverty irrespective of all other considerations, the government has always had to be hugely defensive about poverty alleviation levels.







Public transportation which does not punish people for not being able to afford private vehicles.

Thursday, 26 November 2009 15:00
I'm not poor today. Choices and effort have taken my boat to better harbours. I had a lot of help, which makes me lucky. But that luck is not universal or a given.
Our society has to decide on how much help we can afford the weakest among us.
They are the easiest to ignore. They don't dictate legislation, nor demand for funding or influence the civil service — to better their lives enough.
I guess I am asking our large middle class to act. You'll be surprised at the power you possess, and you will be even more surprised on how much the ruling class fears a conscientious middle class.