

# Dire need for civic-minded citizens

## Concerted effort required to resolve poor upkeep of PPR flats and public facilities

JOURNALISTS often have to report on issues raised by residents unsatisfied with the way their neighbourhoods are looked after or not as the case may be – it's part of our job description.

But for all the complaints, much of the smaller albeit more frequent problems are avoidable and boils down to a lack of maintenance and enforcement.

Though residents of a community undoubtedly have a part to play, issues such as potholed-roads and crumbling sidewalks are the responsibility of local councils.

People's Housing Projects (PPR), for example, mirrors the same problems of neglect but on a smaller scale.

It took two fatalities of children falling through rusted stair railings a couple of years ago before the neglect of such facilities in the PPR surfaced.

Frequent breakdowns of elevators are a daily occurrence with little consideration given to the needs of the elderly, sick and disabled.

Many PPRs are notorious as dengue hotspots because of the unkempt surroundings and clogged drainage.

The lack of civic-mindedness



among residents is commonly cited as one of the reasons for unsightly PPRs.

PPR residents face a unique set of problems because of their social economic background and the shortage of funds for upkeep.

Though, it may be true to a degree, there are other considerations too; many families living in PPRs are struggling to put food on the table.

As in any community, there is always a certain group of people looking to profit off others by not paying their service fees.

Although local authorities cite insufficiency of funds, additional PPRs continue to be developed without resolving these long-standing issues.

Apart from stricter enforcement and better maintenance, what else can be done to spur residents to take responsibility?

Although countless campaigns

perfect livin' '17  
Home & Lifestyle Exhibition  
28 - 1 | PWTC  
SEPT OCT | Thurs - Sun  
10:00am - 9:00pm  
www.perfectlivin.com  
free admission

have been implemented to educate residents on better practices through *gotong-royong* and by promoting recycling and waste separation, the impact of these campaigns seem to be minimal at best.

Possible solutions could include coming up with maintenance schedules for PPRs and properly vetting the contractors appointed.

There should also be a better communication system between residents, the authorities and their elected representatives.

Wonders can be done when a community works together cohesively in the spirit of mutual cooperation.

But without a concerted effort from all parties, these and similar problems will persist both in PPRs and public facilities as a whole.



The lack of civic-mindedness among residents is one of many reasons for unsightly PPRs. — filepic