

'GET STERN WITH PPR FEE DEFAULTERS'

Enforcement the best way to deal with maintenance fee defaulters, say residents, groups

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PEOPLE'S Housing Project (PPR) residents and managements want the authorities to get stern with maintenance fee defaulters, saying it is unfair to those who abide by the rules.

Retiree Mohd Ali Mohd Yusof said he was annoyed by the indifference of some residents of PPR Pantai Ria in Pantai Dalam who refuse to pay the RM42 monthly maintenance fee.

"Some people here own more than two cars, but refuse to pay," said Ali, who is a member of PPR Ria's Rukun Tetangga.

"It is not fair. No matter how difficult my situation is, I still fulfil my responsibilities."

He said the maintenance fee went towards the upkeep of the PPR's lifts and cleaning services.

Last week, Housing and Local Government Minister Nga Kor Ming criticised PPR residents who refused to pay the maintenance fee even though they could afford it.

He said the ministry planned to introduce access cards in future public housing projects, given only to those who pay the maintenance fee.

Ali is not the only PPR resident who is frustrated.

A PPR Danau Kota resident, who only wanted to be known as Khatijah, 63, hoped the authorities would crack down on maintenance fee defaulters.

She said she used a portion of her RM500 monthly allowance from Baitulmal to pay the RM42 monthly maintenance fee.

"I pawned my jewellery to pay the maintenance fee. Others have huge cars, but don't pay the fee."

National House Buyers Association of Malaysia honorary secretary-general Datuk Chang Kim Loong called for tough action against those who refuse to pay their dues.

With more than 10,000 qualified people on the waiting list for a



A graphically modified picture of a People's Housing Project in Kuala Lumpur. A resident of one project in the city says some residents own two cars, but refuse to pay the RM42 monthly maintenance fee. FILE PIC

PPR unit in Kuala Lumpur alone, Chang said defiant residents who could afford the maintenance fee but did not pay should be evicted.

He called for an annual "audit" of PPR residents' financial status to see who could afford to pay and who could not.

Federation of Malaysian Consumers Associations chief executive officer T. Saravanan welcomed Nga's proposal on access cards, saying it would make it easier to enforce the rules against maintenance fee defaulters.

"This can heighten a sense of security and community among residents and promote more responsible behaviour."

Federation of Kuala Lumpur Public Housing and PPR Associations chairman Ismail Shaari said while access cards would help, the key to solving the problem was strict and regular enforcement by the authorities.

He said local authorities must issue notices to residents who fail

to the pay maintenance fee for three months to spark a "sense of urgency".

Currently, notices are only issued to defaulters after more than six months to a year.

"It will be hard for tenants to settle overdue fees for such a long period.

"If enforcement is not strict, they will take it easy because they think the government does not mind, when the government is the one bearing the burden."

PPR Danau Kota Joint Management Body associate Vivian Lim believed fear of punishment from the authorities was a better solution to the issue than access cards.

"They (defaulters) know we (Joint Management Body) cannot take drastic action against them."

She said about 30 per cent of the PPR's 1,482 residents did not pay the maintenance fee.

"Currently, we can ask the Kuala Lumpur City Hall to issue a warning notice to residents after six months of non-payment."

She said defaulters usually paid up when they got the notice.

"This is why I believe more frequent notices will be better. They

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KHATIYAH, 63
PPR Danau Kota resident



The maintenance fee goes towards the upkeep of the People's Housing Project's lifts and cleaning services. FILE PIC

will pay up faster."

Mohd Ishak Ayob, chairman of Pendekar Apartment in Cheras, said though the property was not a PPR, it faced similar challenges.

He said the management introduced access cards five years ago to boost payment of the maintenance fee, but the move did not work out as the lack of an access

card only made it difficult for defaulters to drive into the apartment.

He said enforcing the rules had been challenging.

"When I was strict, my house and motorcycle got splashed with paint," he said, adding that only 40 per cent of residents paid the maintenance fee.