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AT FIRST glance, Pangsapuri Selayang Segar in Batu Caves, Selangor, seems to be in a satisfactory state.

The building looks newly painted, rain gutters and downpipes appear recently installed.

Its perimeter roads, including the square, are well tarred with no potholes.

However, residents said the upgrades were not carried out by a joint management body (JMB), instead funded by local councillors and Selayang Umno.

They said without this continuous financial intervention, the flats would have been left with serious maintenance issues.

Lee Seang Heng, who has lived there for more than 20 years, said one of the issues stemmed from a historical problem with water leaks.

"In the 1990s, when residents on the lower floors complained of leaks, those living above did not want to pay for repairs.

"So, those on the bottom floors sealed off the main drain pipe, leaving those living above with clogged kitchen sinks."

He said upper floor tenants then installed pipes from their kitchen sinks to the perimeter drains below.

"Now the pipe extensions are a problem," said resident Goh Eng Guan.

"They are badly cracked and in some parts, the sides have collapsed."

The poor condition of the drains has residents worried about water running underground and affecting the stability of the building's foundations.

"Waste management is another issue that has plagued this community for years," Goh said.

"Though the general area is reasonably clean, the corridors are cluttered with discarded furniture.

"The refuse area is also an eyesore with rubbish strewn around the bin.

"Although rubbish collection is done regularly, removal of bulk waste is not included as part of the service," he said.

He added that residents were also concerned about tree roots growing on one of the block's rooftops.

Lee and Goh said Pangsapuri Selayang Segar had no JMB.

No JMB leads to upkeep issues at Selayang flats

MPS looking to appoint managing agent as long-term solution



Pipes extending from upper-level units at Pangsapuri Selayang Segar into perimeter drains. — Photos: FAIHAN GHANI/The Star

"The residents, including myself, tried to form one several times, but failed due to lack of cooperation from other residents who refused to pay the maintenance fees, although it was only RM30 a month," said Lee.

Although the flats have received government funding over the years for repainting, road resurfacing and installation of rain gutters, residents have been left to deal with general upkeep on their own.

Community activist Yee Poh Ping, who organised a site visit, said the authorities should intervene so residents could have better living conditions.

"As a short-term measure, allocate funds to repair the damage.

"At the same time, the Commissioner of Buildings must also coordinate with residents to form a proper management and make sure all individual owners

pay their maintenance fees.

"Otherwise, the issue will never be settled," said Yee.

A check with residents revealed that they are exempt from paying assessment tax as the flats fell under the low-cost housing category.

However, they are required to pay quit rent of RM18 a year.

Selayang Municipal Council (MPS) councillor Ahmad Zahiri Zahid Sofian acknowledged the many maintenance issues faced by the flats and said he had previously intervened twice over the blocked sewerage pipes.

"We have asked the residents to form a JMB many times, but to no avail.

"As such, we have to look at alternative solutions," he said.

In a statement to *StarMetro*, MPS' Commissioner of Buildings reiterated that it was the responsibility of owners who reside in



strata properties such as flats, condominiums and service apartments to manage and maintain the building by collecting maintenance charges in accordance with Strata Management Act 2013 (Act 757).

However, it said that since Pangsapuri Selayang Segar resi-



Above: Lee says he previously tried to form a JMB but faced resistance.

Below: Yee (second from right) showing the overflowing refuse area at the low-cost flats in Batu Caves.

dents were not prepared to administer their residence and had failed to carry out their responsibilities as listed under Act 757, MPS' COB Department has planned to list the scheme to be considered for the appointment of a managing agent under Section 86 this year.