



**MAJLIS PERBANDARAN AMPANG JAYA**  
**BAHAGIAN PERHUBUNGAN AWAM DAN SEKRETARIAT**  
MENARA MPAJ, JALAN PANDAN UTAMA,  
PANDAN INDAH, SELANGOR,  
55100 KUALA LUMPUR

**KERATAN AKHBAR**  
**4 MAC 2020 (RABU)**

**AKHBAR**

**MUKA SURAT**

**The Star**

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## Councils should tackle car parking woes

PENANGITES have been facing the perennial problem of finding public car parking spaces in commercial areas, as many of them are taken up by office workers for long periods of time – usually more than eight hours.

The Consumers' Association of Penang (CAP) calls on the Penang Island City Council (MBPP) and Seberang Perai Municipal Council (MBSP) to introduce regulations to limit the time one can park in a public parking lot, for example not more than two hours.

Anyone who violates the regulation should be fined. This will be fair to those who run errands for less than two hours.

Parking fees on street car parks in the commercial areas are very low and should be substantially increased. In fact, areas in Kuala Lumpur's central business district (CBD) increased the parking fee from 80 sen to RM2 for the first hour and RM3 from the second hour with effect from July 18, 2016.

Such a system has been adopted by local governments in many cities in countries such as the United Kingdom, United States of America, and Australia.

However, time limits need strong and effective enforcement.

To give a rough indication of the



cost of a two-hour parking in 2017, in New York, it was US\$32.97 (RM139.33); Hong Kong, US\$11.74 (RM49.61) and Seoul, US\$8.71 (RM36.81).

To prevent people from hogging a parking space in a particular area longer than the allowed time limit, the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency requires a person to move his vehicle at least one block away or at least 152m, whichever is farther.

It is considered cheap for office workers to park in the MBPP and MBSP's parking lot at a rate of 80

sen per hour, and parking for nine hours would only cost RM7.20.

They would park their cars even before business hours and would be among the last to leave the area, thus depriving others in desperate need to park just to carry out an errand.

When that happens, vehicle owners tend to double park or illegally occupy motorcycle lots. Such action leads to traffic congestion in the area. Some drivers would also park their cars in free public car parks and carpool to work, depriving others with legitimate reason to

be in the area of parking space.

The councils should also take action on riders who park their motorcycles on car parking lots. It is common to find motorcycles sitting in the slot meant for cars. It is also puzzling to find obstructions such as stalls, tables, chairs, wooden pallets or tyres in car parking spaces placed there by shop owners or traders. No action is taken by the authorities on those responsible for these abuses.

We urge the councils to look into the dire need for car parking spaces by people who need them for short errands. The councils should implement the two-hour limit to also encourage people working in CBDs or have to run an errand in the area to opt for public transport, either because of the hassle or the price.

There is a paradigm shift for parking in many countries because land for parking is becoming scarce and expensive besides the issue of pollution and an urgent need to push for the use of public transport. Malaysia is not an exception in facing such a dilemma.

**MOHIDEEN ABDUL KADER**  
President  
Consumers Association of  
Penang





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This spot along Jalan Hulu Langat in Bukit Ampang is popular as it offers a panoramic view of the city. — Photos: ART CHEN and LOW LAY PHON

By SHALINI RAVINDRAN  
 shaliniravindran@thestar.com.my

A NEW batch of hawkers have started operating illegal roadside stalls at Bukit Ampang in Ampang, Selangor barely three months after the earlier operators were relocated.

The stalls that operate only at night, are located at the top of a steep slope known for its panoramic view of Kuala Lumpur city centre.

Customers come in droves parking their vehicles along Jalan Hulu Langat, oblivious to the dangers of being knocked into by cars, buses and lorries that ply the route.

To them eating a meal with a view just makes the food taste that much better - to the extent that personal safety often takes a back seat.

## Popularity of Bukit Ampang lookout point draws diners

Patrons learn about stalls through word of mouth, say hawkers

Just as the Ampang Jaya Municipal Council (MPAJ) were finally able to clear the area, they will now have to figure out a way to once again deal with the illegal hawkers who are putting their lives and those of their customers at risk.

MPAJ president Datuk Abdul Hamid Hussain said the hawkers

continued to break the law because demand by customers to dine at the risky area was high.

Closure of the popular Ampang Look Out Point (ALOP), located about 200m from the stalls, in 2012 resulted in the emergence of roadside stalls lining the junction of Jalan Hulu Langat and Persiaran Saujana.

As such, the hawker site has now become the new lookout point.

Diners can be seen occupying plastic chairs and tables sitting on boards that doubled up as drain covers.

The hawkers even set up tables and chairs at the slope across the road. Currently, there are 16 stalls operating every night.

### Good business

A trader, who declined to be named, said no other place could draw that many customers apart from the lookout point.

"We don't even have to advertise as people know about the stalls through word of mouth."

"We are only providing a service as customers want to have a bite while enjoying the view," he said, adding that he served more than 100 customers each night.

He added that most people did not mind the lack of facilities, such as toilets or proper carparks, as they were only there for a short period of time.

Another trader said the area should be developed into a tourist spot.

"The previous lookout point was very popular, so a similar concept could be done here."

"It can be made safer by strengthening the slope and setting up proper parking facilities further down the road," he said.

Customers too seem to pay little mind to the dangers of dining there as they take in the view and cheap hawker food.

"To get this view, we would have to pay exorbitant prices at hotels or rooftop restaurants."

"Here, we literally dine under the stars and we don't have to pay steep prices," said regular customer Mohd Anuar Mohd Ishak said.

On the dangers of dining at the particular location, he said most drivers were cautious driving in the area.

"Those who use this road know that they would need to slow down as it is narrow."

"Perhaps MPAJ or the stall operators could hire Rela members to

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MPAJ enforcement officers confiscating tables left overnight by the stall operators at Bukit Ampang.





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Food trucks and stalls along Jalan Hulu Langat make the road narrow for vehicles.



Diners at the roadside stalls seem to show little concern for safety as they dine close to the edge of the steep slope.

direct traffic and parking to limit the congestion," he said.

In 2018, MPAJ went on a blitz in an attempt to relocate the hawkers including continued enforcement and legal action.

MPAJ had even taken eight of the hawkers to court for failing to adhere to compound notices issued, but they still refused to vacate.

The hawkers were issued notices under the MPAJ Hawker Bylaw 2007 for operating without a licence and Section 46 of the Street, Drainage and Building Act 1974 for obstruction.

While the first batch of hawkers eventually moved out, they were quickly replaced by new traders as there was demand by customers.

*StarMetro* reported that MPAJ joined forces with the police to slap motorists with summonses for parking illegally by the roadside.

Weekends and public holidays are the busiest time as the stalls are set up as early as 6pm and continue operating until the wee



This roadside stall along Jalan Hulu Langat has installed a generator and gas tanks, perilously close to moving traffic.

hours of the morning.

Abdul Hamid said they would continue to take action against the hawkers.

"Enforcement personnel are stationed there every day from 5pm to 10pm. Unfortunately, the hawkers will immediately set up stall once the officers leave," he said.

In the past, MPAJ has confiscated

items at the stalls that were left overnight, but the move did little to deter the hawkers.

"We are still firm that no businesses will be allowed to operate here and will continue to work with the police to carry out enforcement.

"But, if the public continues to patronise these stalls, they will continue to operate," said Abdul

Hamid, adding that they were lucky there had been no major untoward incidents so far.

MPAJ councillor Salmah Ismail, who is in charge of the particular zone, advised visitors to be wary of visiting the stalls.

"There is no clean water supply and some of the hawkers also store dishes at the site overnight, which is unhygienic," she said.



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## Boost for small contractors through DBKL projects

By SHALINI RAVINDRAN  
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FOR small contractor Mohd Ismail Mohd Ishak, getting a Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL) contract could mean the difference between staying in business for the next several months or folding up.

"We are struggling to survive because people are being cautious with spending, they do not want to spend money unless it is for major works.

"As a small contractor, we do not have the benefit of handling big projects, and business has been slow," he said.

Mohd Ismail added that he has not been able to get a contract for the past six months and has even laid off two workers.

The 43-year-old was one of more than 600 hopeful applicants who turned up at the 'Cabutan Kerja Undi DBKL' event in hopes of being awarded a DBKL contract through a balloting session in Bandar Tun Razak.

"Hopefully, I will be lucky enough to have my name picked during this balloting session," he said.

The session was the first such initiative by DBKL in an effort to



Nor Hisham (right) congratulating a contractor chosen to receive a project during the 'Cabutan Kerja Undi DBKL' event in Bandar Tun Razak.

boost business among registered small contractors in the city.

About 250 contracts worth RM50mil were awarded through balloting with a limit of RM200,000 each.

The works involve upgrading and maintenance that do not

require a change in structure, comprising the scope of public works, electrical and mechanical works.

Kuala Lumpur mayor Datuk Nor Hisham Ahmad Dahlan hoped this would help stimulate the economy, in line with the 2020 Economic

Stimulus Package.

"There are about 3,000 such contractors in the city with between 80% to 90% not having jobs for more than a year.

"This will help inject momentum into the economy, especially in the development industry," he said, adding that DBKL would consider another such session in the future.

"I hope the successful applicants will carry out their work sincerely using quality material equivalent with the cost of the work," he said.

Nor Hisham added that the contracts would also include preparatory work as Kuala Lumpur plays host to three major events this year namely Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (Apec) Summit, Kuala Lumpur World Book Capital 2020 and Visit Malaysia 2020.

On another matter, Nor Hisham said the city council collected RM4mil in outstanding traffic compounds last month.

DBKL offered motorists special traffic compound rates as low as RM15 for motorcycles, cars and heavy vehicles from Feb 1 to March 3 in conjunction with Federal Territory Day.

One vehicle owner even paid more than RM18,000 in unpaid fines.