

# Traders blocking LRT station walkway in KL

## Commuters want pedestrian areas at Masjid Jamek free of obstructions

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PETTY traders operating illegally around Masjid Jamek LRT station in Kuala Lumpur are playing a cat-and-mouse game with the authorities.

Every time they see an enforcement officer from Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL) or staff from the LRT station making their rounds, they would immediately pick up their things and leave.

However, once the officers leave the area, they are back to business at the site.

*StarMetro* caught them in action recently when traders returned about an hour after being told not to operate in the area by LRT personnel.

Since it was not rush hour, there were only a handful of traders operating near the staircase leading towards Jalan Melayu.

*StarMetro* was following up on complaints from readers about encountering obstructions after getting off the train at

the station.

They say the pedestrian walkway towards Masjid India is constantly blocked by traders operating there.

"It gets really congested during peak hours and the presence of these traders makes things worse," said Aisha Ali, 23.

The secretary who works in a law firm nearby said she had witnessed altercations between members of the public and traders.

"There was a man carrying a huge bag and he was struggling to manoeuvre around the traders operating at the steps of the station leading to Jalan Melayu, and he accidentally hit a woman.

"Angry words were spoken between them, but nothing untoward happened. But what about next time?" said Aisha.

Leela Wati Subramanian, 45, said the traders operating at the station could become a nuisance especially during peak hours and festival periods.



(Above) At noon, the traders returned to the Masjid Jamek LRT station just an hour after the walkway was cleared at 11am (left pic) when the traders were told to leave. — Photos: LOW BOON TAT/The Star

"They should not be allowed to operate at spots with high pedestrian traffic such as train stations, as their presence also endangers the public in the event of an emergency like a fire.

When contacted, a DBKL officer from

the Bukit Bintang branch said traders were not allowed to operate on public walkways, staircases and bridges.

"If they are operating there, they are doing so illegally," he said, adding that DBKL would look into the matter.