

By JAROD LIM
jarodlim@thestar.com.my

Pasar Karat traders adamant on staying put

FLEA market traders at Pasar Karat in Lorong Petaling are adamant on staying at their current location despite efforts by Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL) to relocate them.

They are resisting calls to move to the vacant land next to Lee Lam Thye Market on Jalan Tun HS Lee.

Malaysia Chamber of Rural Industry Entrepreneurs traders and hawkers committee chairman Saimon Syam said DBKL had now asked traders to move just after Hari Raya Aidilfitri.

"We had a meeting with DBKL in March, and April 15 is the deadline for us to relocate.

"But there is no better location than this one, and we have been operating here for a long time," he said.



Flea market traders are reluctant to move. — YAP CHEE HONG/The Star

On Jan 16, *StarMetro* reported that DBKL had issued an eviction notice on Oct 18 last year to the traders to vacate the back lanes

of Lorong Petaling on grounds of fire safety.

DBKL had received complaints from stakeholders that fire

engines had difficulty accessing the back lanes as traders were occupying the space.

The move, however, did not materialise as the new site was not ready then.

On Jan 5, DBKL had torn down illegal structures using excavators that were placed on the new site, to make way for the Pasar Karat traders.

Meanwhile Saimon said the group, which manages Pasar Karat, also raised concerns to DBKL that the allocated space would not be enough to house all the traders.

"We have about 200 traders operating in Pasar Karat but there are only 129 lots allocated at the space beside the Lee Lam Thye Market.

"Also, we have asked DBKL to add tiles to the vacant land and fence up the site but that did not happen.

"The current location is iconic and many associate us with the area," he added.

StarMetro visited the new site recently and noted that the area had been resurfaced and the road curb had been upgraded.

However, the land had not been cordoned off and vehicles were using it as a parking lot.

Kuala Lumpur Advisory Board member Andre Lai said the move to relocate the Pasar Karat traders was likely final.

"DBKL decided on the move and is rather firm about it, as it is for the fire safety of the shoplots in Petaling Street," he said.