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KUALA Lumpur City Hall (DBKL) issued summonses to several business operators in Brickfields yesterday for obstructing tactile paths and pedestrian walkways.

City Hall officers organised a walkabout to check on damaged tactile tiles and obstacles along pedestrian walkways after *StarMetro*'s report on June 10 highlighting the difficulties faced by the visually impaired in navigating streets in the area.

Section 46(1)(d) of the Street, Drainage, and Building Act 1974 states that it is an offence to cause an obstruction in a public place.

Business operators were seen scrambling to remove obstacles when they saw DBKL officers checking on tactile tiles for the blind.

A coffeeshop operator along Jalan Thambipillay was seen clambering to remove chairs and tables while a stall owner was told to get rid of a cooking station placed on the walkway.

Broken and missing tactile tiles as well as obstacles blocking tactile paving are among major barriers faced by the visually impaired.

The walkabout was led by DBKL Building Control Department director Ismawijaya Zah Mohamed Jais alongside Enforcement Department officers, Local Agenda 21 (LA21) Safe City KL coordinator Ghani Mohamed and Brickfields Rukun Tetangga chairman SKK Naidu.

The officers followed Abian Jambot, a visually impaired person, as he walked along tactile paths in Brickfields.

When asked about the outcome of the walkabout, DBKL did not comment.

Non-governmental organisa-

Fined for blocking tactile tiles in KL

DBKL moves in on business operators hindering footpaths for the blind in Brickfields

tions and residents groups are calling on the authorities to take drastic measures to make public areas more inclusive and accessible for persons with disabilities.

Malaysian Association for the Blind (MAB) chief executive officer Datuk George Thomas said seamless and barrier-free tactile tiles were vital for the blind to navigate around Brickfields.

"I hope DBKL will look into these areas because the visually impaired need a properly constructed and well-maintained tactile path to move around safely.

"The current tactile tiles here are coming off the paths and I hope DBKL replaces them with more durable material.

"There is also a need to educate people on the importance of tactile tiles to the blind," he said.

Naidu is hoping DBKL looks into the concerns raised.

"Now that DBKL has seen the issues faced by the blind, I hope to see positive changes on the ground," he said, adding that more enforcement could address such issues.

"Motorists who park on pedestrian walkways and block the tactile path, as well as those causing an obstruction should be penalised," said Naidu.



A restaurant's workers removing the cooking station that was placed on a pedestrian walkway. — Photos: LOW BOON TAT/ The Star

Abian is unsure where to go due to the missing tactile tiles.