

Eateries, food courts new hotspots for prostitution in capital: Dr Zaliha

KUALA LUMPUR: The KL Strike Force, established by the Federal Territories Department, has identified eateries and food courts around Jalan Pudu and Jalan Loke Yew here as the latest hotspots for prostitution activities, the Dewan Rakyat was told Thursday.

Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Federal Territories) Dr Zaliha Mustafa said the modus operandi of prostitution syndicates has become increasingly creative, using these premises as fronts to advertise immoral services.

"In the post-pandemic era, the challenge for KL Strike Force is to combat prostitution activities that have shifted from conventional venues to digital platforms. Homestays, hotels and private residences were also used as hubs for such activities.

"In this regard, the government urges the local community to act as 'watchdogs' and report these activities to Adu@KL 2.0 or any complaint channels of agencies under the KL Strike Force, simply by using #KLSStrike-Force in social media posts," she said during the question and answer session.

She was responding to a question from Zahir Hassan (PH-Wangsa Maju) on reasons for the increase in prostitution activities and fights involving illegal immigrants and the influx of foreign street vendors in Kuala Lumpur despite the establishment of the KL Strike Force.

Dr Zaliha, who is also KL Strike Force advisor, said that since its inception on May 27, the special unit has raided 209 premises in the federal capital linked to prostitution activities.

Through the raids conducted in collaboration with the police and other enforcement agencies, 781 individuals have been arrested, comprising 149 locals and 632 foreigners aged between 18 and 61.

"It's inaccurate to say there has been no reduction in prostitution cases in Kuala Lumpur as data showed that only 159 raids and 540 arrests were made in 2023, compared to the figures reported as the third quarter of the year," she said.

She further said that Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL) led integrated operations targeting foreign business premises, with four operations carried out until September.

"During these operations, 11 business premises were monitored, and four of them were immediately shut down under Section 101(1)(v) of the Local Government Act 1976, as they were fully operated by foreigners," she said. – Bernama