

# City Hall cracks down on illegal alfresco dining

By **BAVANI M**  
bavanim@thestar.com.my

KUALA LUMPUR City Hall (DBKL) is declaring war on eateries that turn public walkways into private dining areas.

In a written reply to *StarMetro*, DBKL said it had launched a full-scale crackdown, with 24 targeted enforcement operations annually, aimed at reclaiming five-foot ways and public spaces from unauthorised commercial use.

City Hall said it would also intensify monitoring through regular patrols and strategically placed closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras all over the city, especially at tourist locations such as Jalan Sultan and Jalan Petaling.

Operators who break the law would face action, it added.

“No tables or chairs on roads, road shoulders, parking bays, back lanes or over drains.

“Cooking or washing dishes in public spaces is strictly prohibited,” it said in the statement.

“Only licensed restaurant, cafe and coffeeshop operators may apply for limited use of pavements or open areas and even then, only under stringent conditions.”

According to DBKL, approval would only be considered for specific locations such as five-foot ways, the front or side of premises with a width between 1.5m and 3m, road shoulders wider than 3m, as well as corner or end lots with available open space.

For premises located mid-row or at end lots without such space, applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Eligible premises must also not be situated near road junctions (a minimum distance of 6m is required), along main roads and should ideally be located in dead-end roads or less busy lanes.

## Targeted raids hit Jalan Sultan, Jalan Petaling in Kuala Lumpur

Additional conditions have also been imposed by City Hall.

“Only structures approved by DBKL are permitted for use.

“Traders must maintain cleanliness of the surrounding area during and after business hours.

“Tables and chairs that are not in use must be neatly stored within the premises to avoid obstructing public pathways.

“DBKL reserves the right to seize or dispose of any equipment exceeding the permitted limit.

“The mayor may also impose additional conditions and take action under existing laws,” it said.

Roadside stalls and food trucks, meanwhile, are prohibited from setting up tables and chairs on the road and can only operate on takeaway basis.

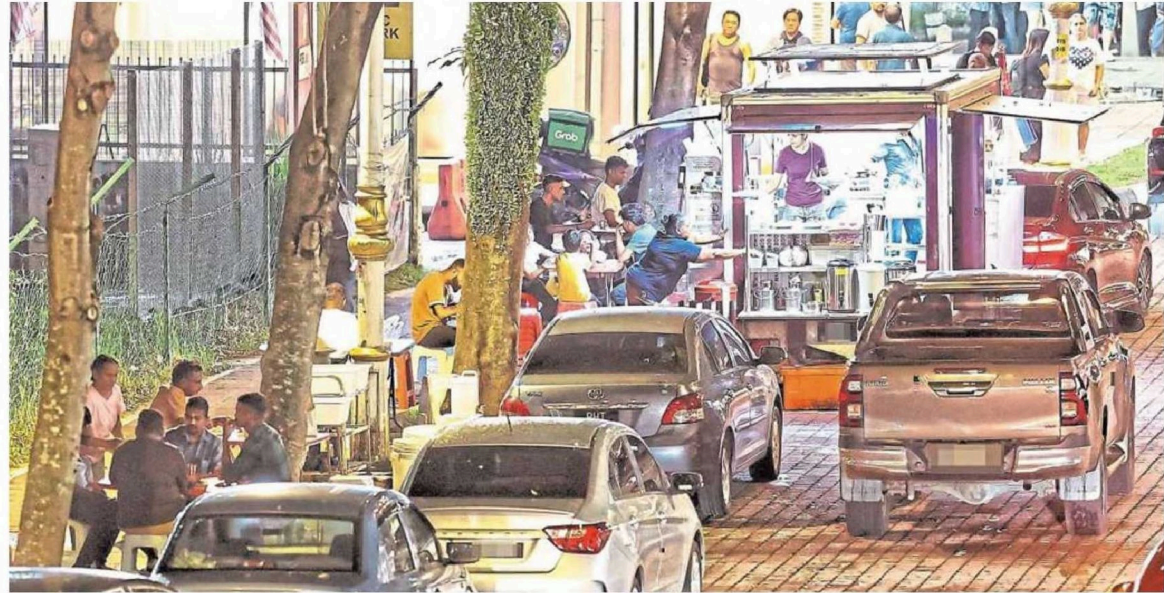
DBKL was responding to *StarMetro*'s front-page report on April 7 titled “Dining in the street”, which highlighted the unchecked spread of eateries and traders placing tables, chairs and merchandise along public walkways and five-foot ways.

Addressing known hotspots such as Jalan Sultan and Jalan Petaling, DBKL acknowledged the issue of restaurant operators occupying five-foot ways and public areas, particularly in high-traffic tourist zones.

“Enforcement teams have carried out five targeted raids earlier this year in these areas which are notorious for alfresco setups.

“DBKL takes this matter seriously, as it not only disrupts pedestrian movement but also poses significant safety risks to the public.”

DBKL said to date, 224 offence notices had been issued under



Diners gather around a food truck parked in Jalan Tun Sambanthan, Brickfields, enjoying meals on makeshift tables and stools along the sidewalk. This goes against DBKL's no-table rule for food trucks. — Filepic



*StarMetro* report on April 7.

Section 46 of Street, Drainage and Building Act 1974 for obstruction in both Jalan Sultan and Jalan Petaling.

The five enforcement raids resulted in the seizure of 23

tables, 67 chairs and five other business-related items.

Citywide, DBKL reported issuing nearly 4,000 notices in 2024 for illegal setups, with seizures including over 2,300 tables, 2,500

chairs and more than 1,600 other items.

Regarding allegations of conflict of interest between enforcement officers and food operators, DBKL stated that it had not received formal complaints through its official channels.

Nonetheless, the authority maintained that its officers were under continuous scrutiny by its Discipline and Integrity Unit and any misconduct would be addressed in accordance with its disciplinary procedures.

DBKL referred to its Enforcement Integrity Plan 2022-2026 as part of its effort to improve transparency and rebuild public confidence, stating that the plan was aimed at instilling a culture of accountability among its enforcement officers.