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S`pore workers still parking wherever they please in JB

The Star, Malaysia



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Businesses at several hotspots say they are affected by irresponsible motorists taking up bays meant for customers



Many workers travelling by bus to Singapore park opposite Larkin Sentral Bus Terminal. — Photos: THOMAS YONG/The Star

By VENESA DEVI
venesa@thestar.com.my

ALL Saiful Azri wanted was to see a doctor after waking up with a fever.

However, what should have been a quick visit to the clinic turned into a frustrating search for parking along Jalan Garuda in Johor Baru.

Saiful had opted to ride a motorcycle instead of taking his car, hoping it would make the trip easier, but was still left disappointed.

"I know it is not easy to get parking in the area.

"That is why I decided not to drive as I didn't want to waste time looking for a spot.

"However, it didn't make a difference as I still faced the same problem on the bike.

"It just shows how serious the situation has become.

"I managed to find a parking space eventually, but it shouldn't be this difficult," he said.

The factory operator who works in Singapore was speaking to *StarMetro* after parking his motorcycle in the area just across from Larkin Sentral Bus Terminal, which serves as a travel hub to other parts of Malaysia as well as to Singapore.

Saiful is not alone in facing such situations, as more people are finding it difficult to find parking, especially near bus terminals and bus-stops.

Barista Muhammad Adib Muhammad Rizal, who works in

a cafe in the same area, said finding parking was a common problem faced by both workers and customers.

"It is not a lack of parking as I believe there are ample bays for motorcycles and cars.

"However, many of these spaces are utilised by people taking buses from the terminal here, especially those working in Singapore," he said.

The motorcycle rider said he normally parked his bike along the five-foot way in front of the cafe he works at.

"I know it is not a proper place to park but I have no choice because all the motorcycle parking bays are taken.

"Similarly, a lot of our customers have to double-park when

making a quick coffee stop," said Adib.

A restaurant owner, who wanted to be known only as Johari, said he sometimes had to place objects like water bottles or chairs at parking bays in front of his shop for customers.

He said most of the cars in the area belonged to those working in Singapore, but there were also vehicles that have been left for weeks and even months.

"It is not fair for us and our customers, especially since there is a proper parking area at the terminal with more than enough bays.

"They prefer parking here to avoid paying at the bus terminal, without caring about how it will affect others," he added.



Despite the presence of paid parking areas such as the one near Kim Teng Park with free shuttle service to BSA CIQ (above), some motorists still choose to take up non-designated spaces. (Right) Vehicles parked under a pedestrian bridge in Skudai.





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Motorcycles parked in a haphazard manner opposite Larkin Sentral Bus Terminal.

Selfishness abounds

Also affected by the issue are residents of Larkin flats, situated less than 1km from the bus terminal.

Ratna Bahtiar, who has been living at the flats for over two decades, said the parking problem had gotten worse as more people working in Singapore were leaving their cars at the flats.



"There is hardly enough parking for residents to begin with, and now we also have to compete with outsiders for the limited bays.

"It is easy to gain access to this area because there is no fence surrounding it.

"So people view it as a free parking space, especially those working in Singapore."

At times, Ratna said, she had to park her car elsewhere after failing to find parking space.

"It is frustrating not being able to park your car at the place you live in, because outsiders are taking up the bays," she said.

At Kim Teng Park, located less than 3km from Bangunan Sultan Iskandar Customs, Immigration and Quarantine Complex (BSI CIQ), residents have also been dealing with the issue for years.

Lecturer Vincent D'Silva said the problem had persisted despite being highlighted in the media and brought to the attention of the authorities numerous times.

"Most are people working in Singapore who park their cars in the area before heading to work, and only retrieve their vehicles at the end of the day.

"This is not only a nuisance but also dangerous, as some even park their cars at the sides of narrow roads.

"Accidents have already hap-

pened. In fact, in the recent power outage, technicians were unable to access a substation because it was blocked by a car.

"As a result, we had to go without electricity longer than expected and Tenaga Nasional Bhd had to bring in a generator to supply power temporarily."

D'Silva, who has lived in the area for over 40 years, pointed out that there were paid parking bays nearby that motorists could utilise.

Instead, he said, these motorists chose to take up bays meant for business patrons or park along road shoulders.

He urged the authorities to find a solution as soon as possible, as the problem is expected to worsen once the Rapid Transit System (RTS) Link is completed at the end of next year.

Echoing him was 23-year-old M. Ajay, a manager at one of the restaurants in Kim Teng Park.

"It has affected a lot of traders as customers are discouraged from coming when they know they can't find a parking space.

"Most of our customers end up double parking, making the already narrow road even narrower, while others just park by the roadside," he said.

Ajay added that this also made it difficult for businesses to load and unload goods in their heavy vehicles.



Patrons of businesses at Kim Teng Park say it is difficult to find parking, while some motorists are also leaving their cars on road shoulders.



Saiful Azri says even parking his motorcycle is a challenge at Jalan Garuda.



Ratna often cannot even park near her own home at Larkin flats, which is near the bus terminal.

Cap on parking needed

Businessman Henry Teo faces a similar problem, with customers finding it hard to park near his shop, which is located near a school in Taman Ungku Tun Aminah, Skudai.

"The problem started after the Covid-19 movement control order was lifted, and has persisted until now.

"Technically, these drivers are not doing anything illegal by parking here, so it is difficult for the authorities to take action.

"It is a convenient spot, being near a bus-stop where they can wait for a bus or van to Singapore," he said.

Checks in the area found several vehicles parked along road shoulders and even under pedestrian bridges.

Teo said the matter had been raised with Skudai assemblyman Marina Ibrahim, who has been highlighting the issue.

"I hope this will lead to a win-

win solution for everyone. It is not just a problem here.

"We see the same thing in other areas, especially those near CIQs and bus terminals."

He added that other hotspots included Bukit Indah and Gelang Patah near the Second Link.

Teo said the state government should consider implementing a three-hour parking limit at certain locations to prevent motorists hogging bays meant for business customers.

"They could follow what some local councils, including Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL), have done by introducing a two-hour limit in some areas.

"Personally, I feel two hours is too short, but three hours should be enough for people to get their errands done," he said.

Teo added that there was a need for more designated parking spaces in areas where people working in Singapore usually left their vehicles.