

Headline	Traders get 12 months to settle electricity arrears		
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Jalaluddin (right) speaking to some of the traders during his visit to D'Rejang food court in Setapak.

Traders get 12 months to settle electricity arrears

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FORTY-EIGHT traders at a Setapak food court will have 12 months to settle their electricity bill arrears amounting to some RM55,000 to Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL).

Deputy Federal Territories Minister Datuk Seri Jalaluddin Alias said the local authority would call the traders to draw up a repayment schedule soon.

He warned that anyone who failed to show up for the meeting with DBKL would have their account and Tenaga Nasional Bhd (TNB) meter disconnected.

"DBKL has agreed to pay the arrears in the meantime.

"It will also start the process to change account holders' names from DBKL to the traders," he said.

D'Rejang food court comprises 75 shoplots in total, all under separate accounts with TNB, but these accounts are currently overseen by DBKL.

Jalaluddin said DBKL had until Dec 31 to change the ownership of the accounts to the traders.

The issue came to light after TNB contractors disabled the meters belonging to 19 shoplots on Sept 13, prompting the affected traders to alert DBKL.

City Hall, in a statement, said it

had issued two notices to traders on June 1 and Aug 23 reminding them to pay the arrears.

It said that it received a notice from TNB to recover the money owed.

"Following the reminders, two traders have come forward to start the process of changing the name of account holders," said the statement.

Jalaluddin said the traders defaulted on their electricity bill payment over a year ago, with one lot accumulating over RM8,000 in arrears.

"The reason they gave was that they were unable to do any business because of the movement control order.

"But if there was no business, the electricity bill should be lower," he told reporters during a visit to the food court.

The traders' representative Roslan Ramli said the 12-month repayment plan was a welcome relief.

"Many of us are still recovering from the lack of business due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

"This will give us some space to pay our arrears," he said.

The DBKL-owned food court in Taman Setapak Jaya opens daily from 6am to midnight and has been operating since early 1980s.