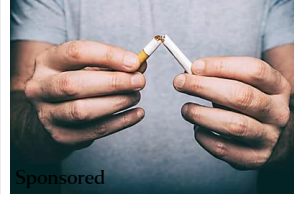




Former Indian foreign minister



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Ban on PMDs at void decks takes effect from Sept



The move would mean PMD riders would have to dismount and push their devices at the void decks in the majority of the 10,000 HDB blocks here. The ban does not apply to personal mobility aids, such as motorised wheelchairs and mobility scooters. ST PHOTO: DESMOND WEE

🕒 PUBLISHED 5 HOURS AGO

It will cover HDB blocks in all 15 PAP town councils; WP town council looking into similar move

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Zhaki Abdullah (mailto:azhaki@sph.com.sg)

From next month, the use of personal mobility devices (PMDs) will be banned at the void decks and common corridors of Housing Board blocks in the 15 town councils run by the People's Action Party (PAP).

This is to ensure the safety of residents, PAP town council coordinating chairman Teo Ho Pin said in a statement yesterday.

The Bukit Panjang MP added that the move follows a review of the common property and open spaces by-laws of the town councils, although he noted that any amendments are subject to approval by the Attorney-General's Chambers.

The move would mean PMD riders would have to dismount and push their devices at the void decks in the majority of the 10,000 HDB blocks here. The ban does not apply to personal mobility aids, such as motorised wheelchairs and mobility scooters.

The Straits Times understands the Workers' Party-run Aljunied-Hougang Town Council is also considering a similar move, though it did not respond to queries by press time.

The ban was first announced by Senior Minister of State for Transport Lam Pin Min in Parliament on Monday.

The use of PMDs in such areas was debated in Parliament two months ago, following an incident where a 65-year-old woman was hit by an e-scooter rider at the void deck of her Bukit Batok HDB block.

Dr Teo said the 15 town councils had received 190 complaints about reckless PMD riders over the past year. The town councils will use the 70,000 police closed-circuit television cameras and lift surveillance systems at the void decks and lifts to identify reckless PMD riders, he added. PMD users found violating the ban will be penalised.

In response to queries regarding the penalties, a town council spokesman said that offenders can be fined or taken to court. She did not specify the fine amounts. She said there are no plans to allocate people to catch offenders for now.

PMD ban

The use of personal mobility devices (PMDs) such as e-scooters will be banned at the void decks and common corridors of all Housing Board blocks under the 15 People's Action Party town councils. The move will not affect personal mobility aids, which refer to devices such as motorised wheelchairs.

Personal mobility aid

e.g. motorised wheelchairs, mobility scooters



Personal mobility device

e.g. kick-scooter, electric scooter, hoverboards, unicycles



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Dr Teo said: "PMD users are encouraged to practise safe riding habits by dismounting and pushing their vehicles at void decks and all common properties."

Operations manager Caroline Lim said the ban is a welcome move in ensuring the safety of people in these areas, though she questioned how effective the cameras will be in catching offenders.

Ms Lim, who is in her 40s, hopes that more can be done to protect pedestrians, such as by restricting the use of PMDs in other areas such as on pavements, where it is currently legal to ride. She said: "The argument is that if PMDs go on the roads, it will endanger them. But if they remain on the pathways, they will endanger pedestrians."

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