

Tale of two night markets



There was a steady stream of customers at the AU2 Taman Keramat night market after it reopened on Saturday night. — Photos: SHAARI CHEMAT and FARID WAHAB/The Star

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AFTER more than half a month of inactivity, traders in Kuala Lumpur are grateful that the ban on night markets has been lifted.

However, while the AU2 Taman Keramat night market was abuzz, the once-popular spot of Lorong Tuanku Abdul Rahman was all quiet.

Drinks trader Mimi Fazura Aziz Rahman, 39, said she was glad to be able to earn an income again at the Taman Keramat night market.

The single mother-of-one said she had been operating by a roadside in Jalan Setiawangsa during the day but the foot traffic was much lower compared to night markets.

"Night markets are frequented by more people so business is better," she said when met on Saturday.

Ramlah Baba, 59, who sells fried rice, said she reduced the amount of food prepared as she anticipated a smaller crowd for the first few days.

"I usually cook about 30kg of rice, but I only prepared about 15kg today. I also cooked only 10 chickens compared to the usual 25," she said.

Asked if she was worried about the spike in Covid-19 cases, Ramlah said night markets employed a strict standard operating procedure (SOP).

"As long as everyone abides by the rules such as wearing a face mask properly and keeping their distance, there should not be any reason why we cannot operate," she said.

Bihun sup seller who only wanted to be known as Ida, 45, said there were stricter SOP at night markets compared to roadside stalls.

"If roadside stalls can operate,



These food trucks were among the few traders operating at the Lorong Tuanku Abdul Rahman night market.

why can't night markets?

"Before people can enter a night market, they have to queue and register via MySejahtera.

"There are also Rela personnel manning the entrances, so it is very safe," she said.

While the Taman Keramat night market was bustling, the same could not be said for the market in Lorong Tuanku Abdul Rahman.

A check by *StarMetro* on Saturday evening found it was largely deserted, with minimal stalls and customers.

Food truck operator Muhd Azmi Yunus, 45, who sells fried burgers, said the traders here relied on workers and customers of nearby stores.

"But most have been closed since the second movement control order on Jan 13.

"I think most traders are not keen to operate because they are not confident of making much sales.

"My sales have also dropped significantly since the MCO started," he said, adding that he had been doing business there for the past 15 years.

Apam balik seller Ramli Kadir, 55, who has been trading since 1989, said although his business had taken a hit, he still preferred to open his stall.

"At least I can make some income," said the father-of-two from Sentul.

Tidbits seller Parameswari Punusamy Nadar, 61, said there was a lack of office workers in the area due to the work-from-home directive.

"There are very few people here now," she said.

Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL) enforcement officers were seen doing their rounds in the area.

DBKL officer Long Muhd Shazwadi Long Saleh, 27, was spotted at Sogo shopping centre.

"We have three duty shifts, namely 8am to 4pm, 4pm to midnight and midnight to 8am.

"We ensure traders comply with the SOP and there is no overcrowding," he said.

Watch the video
[thestartv.com](https://www.thestartv.com)

