

Jalan TAR closed too early in the day to be useful, say traders

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KUALA LUMPUR: The first day of closure of Jalan Tuanku Abdul Rahman (TAR) to vehicles on Sunday experienced more than a few hiccups, ranging from grouches by businesses to complaints by visitors due to a lack of parking spaces.

Some traders said the closure was too early to be useful to visitors.

Amir Abbas, 45, a sales manager at Cosmic Wholesale Emporium, said pedestrian traffic along the popular shopping stretch usually picked up about mid-morning to noon.

“The road closure starts at 6am. When I arrived to work at 9am, there still wasn’t much of a crowd, so I don’t really see the point of the closure.

“This could also catch out-of-town folk by surprise. Those from outside Kuala Lumpur who are unaware of the new ruling may be caught off guard and left scrambling for a parking space.

“This, in turn, could affect our business because if they can’t find

a suitable parking spot nearby, they may just lose interest, give up and decide to shop elsewhere.”

Amir claimed that some traders were unaware of the new plans.

He claimed that no representatives from City Hall had told them about the Sunday road closure.

“This should have been a two-way discussion. At least give us a letter of notice. Then, we can ask them how it would work so that everyone can have a better understanding of the situation.

“We only caught the announcement on Facebook. However, shop owners who don’t have a social media account may have no clue as to why the road is closed today (yesterday).”

A store manager with Downtown Design Haus, who wanted to be known only as Arin, 42, disagreed with the closure.

“We usually get customers this time of the day (afternoon), but it has been empty so far.

“The main car park is behind Jalan TAR. From what I can see, not many vehicles are parked



People crossing the traffic-free Jalan Tuanku Abdul Rahman in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. PIC BY ASYRAF HAMZAH

there as some people couldn’t find the entrance, especially those from out of town.”

A pedestrian, Amir Hamzah, 35, from Johor, said he found driving to the shopping district difficult.

“I rarely visit Kuala Lumpur and wanted to look around the area and buy something for my wife.

“But I did not know that this road (Jalan TAR) was closed today (yesterday), which forced me to look for a different route to get to the parking area.

“After about 30 minutes of driving, I decided to park at the Sogo shopping mall’s basement.

“That came with another challenge of finding an empty spot as

there were many shoppers there.”

Checks by the *New Straits Times* found that a number of drivers chose to park illegally.

But there were policemen monitoring the situation.

The incessant rain proved to be a deterrent for pedestrians, with very few people seen walking on the road. **By Luqman Hakim**