



With the closure of Jalan TAR on Sunday, visitors have more space to walk around and shop with more ease.



The noticeably smaller crowd at Jalan TAR on a recent Sunday is attributed to the road closure by some observers while others blame it on the rain earlier. — Photos: SHAARI CHEMAT/The Star

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SHOPPERS and business proprietors are not of one mind about the weekly Sunday closure of Jalan Tuanku Abdul Rahman (Jalan TAR) in Kuala Lumpur, three weeks into its implementation.

While customers welcome the less crowded atmosphere, many traders lament a drop in business because of lower foot traffic.

Budget hotel employee Khalish Raman, 42, said many guests complained of having to walk far to find public transport after checking out.

"Due to the road closure, guests must now walk all the way to Merdeka Square to get a taxi or e-hailing service.

"Thankfully, we have not suffered a drop in occupancy," he said, adding that half their guests booked rooms online while others preferred to walk in.

The road closure implemented by Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL) from 6am to midnight every Sunday took effect on Aug 28.

The closure is from Sogo shop-

Mixed reaction to Jalan TAR closure on Sunday

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Visitors enjoy smaller crowds, traders complain of drop in business

ping centre at the Jalan Esfahan junction until Jalan Tun Perak near Panggung Bandaraya.

A check by *StarMetro* found noticeably smaller crowds than usual, with several street artists and buskers performing along the road.

There were also chairs and tables with tents placed at certain spots for shoppers to rest and enjoy their meal.

Mamak restaurant cashier Mohamed Kader, 39, said the eatery was getting barely half the number of customers it normally would.

"This is bad as we bank on the

weekend crowds to make a profit and now, we can no longer count on Sundays.

"In future, we may prepare less food in anticipation of the reduced number of customers," he said, adding that motorists used to stop by the road to pick up their order but now, this was not possible.

A bookstore worker, who declined to be named, said the shop might consider closing early on Sundays if the trend continued.

"People still prefer to come by car when buying lots of books," he said, while pointing to an empty parking lot nearby.

Clothing trader Harpizam Darui,

65, however, welcomed the road closure and suggested that more cultural performances be held there.

"DBKL should also place more benches for people to sit and enjoy the performances.

"This will draw more visitors who will take the opportunity to also shop at our premises," he said, while attributing the smaller crowd to an earlier downpour.

Cartoonist Mohd Nasir Azman, 40, was among several street artists who was encouraged by DBKL to take up a spot in Jalan TAR.

"Before this, I used to set up in

Merdeka Square and Bukit Bintang. This is good exposure for street artists," he said, adding that he had about 20 customers on the recent Sunday.

For caricature portraits, Mohd Nasir charges RM10 for black and white illustrations and RM20 for coloured ones.

Sufyan Mohd Hassan, 28, who was shopping for clothes with his wife, said the reduced foot traffic made it more comfortable to shop.

"We do not have to jostle for space and can take time deciding what we want," he said, adding that it was also easier for parents to monitor their children.