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BEGGARS and the homeless are an increasingly common sight in the heart of Kuala Lumpur and it has become a cause for concern.

An office worker who only wanted to be known as Lisa, 29, said she would typically see three to four beggars in the vicinity of a popular mall along Jalan Tuanku Abdul Rahman (TAR) on weekdays.

"Some of them sit at the entrance to the mall.

"This does not give a good impression, especially since this is a popular area with tourists," said Lisa.

When *StarMetro* visited the area during the day recently, a woman was spotted begging on the pedestrian walkway.

The 78-year-old, who identified herself as Fauziah, said she had to beg as she was unable to find work.

Most employers did not want to take a chance on her, said the woman from Kelantan.

As someone who has no children or spouse, she has no other means of supporting herself other than begging, she said.

"I have siblings, but they have their own families and I do not want to burden them.

"Usually, I can get around RM40 to RM50 in a day," Fauziah said, adding that she was renting a room nearby.

Another beggar who wanted to be known as Watie, 33, said she would also get around RM40 to RM50 in a day.

"I have two children at home and sometimes, there is no one to look after the younger one, who is only six years old.

"We would ride the bus to the mall and hope we get enough (from begging) to buy necessities.

"My children go to a *tahfiz* school as it is free and if there are fees, I would not be

More beggars sighted in centre of Kuala Lumpur

Vagrants, homeless marring city's image among visitors to these areas



People pictured sitting or lying down at the five-foot-way along Jalan Raja Laut in Chow Kit, Kuala Lumpur. — Photos: CHAN TAK KONG and WILLIAM GARY/The Star

required to pay a lump sum," she said.

Other popular spots for beggars in the city include Bukit Bintang, Jalan Masjid India and Chow Kit.

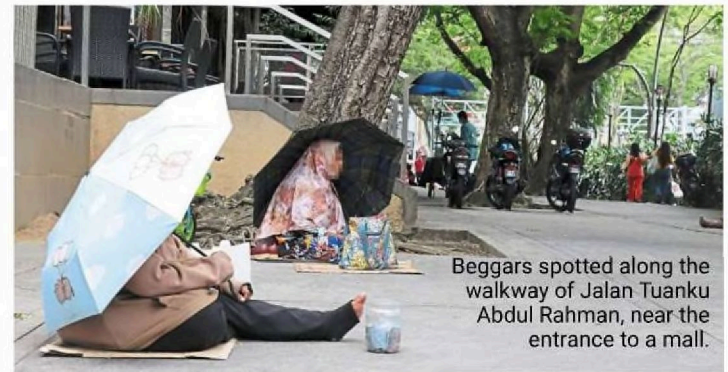
Homeless people were also spotted in the area around a wholesale mall in Pudu.

When contacted, a Kuala

Lumpur City Hall (DBKL) spokesperson said beggars were not under its purview.

"They fall under the Welfare Department's (JKM) jurisdiction. And if a crime is committed, the case will go to the police."

JKM could not be reached for comments at press time.



Beggars spotted along the walkway of Jalan Tuanku Abdul Rahman, near the entrance to a mall.