

KL BAZAAR ONLINE BOOKING WINS PLAUDITS

City Hall's new system has made things easier, kept out foreigners, say traders

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TRADERS at this year's Ramadan bazaars have lauded Kuala Lumpur City Hall for easing the stall booking process by taking it online and enforcing regulations barring foreign traders.

While some older traders miss the "human touch" of manual applications, the overall feedback is that the process is better organised.

Previously, securing a bazaar spot must be done manually, with many requirements to fulfil. Foreigners also crowded out local traders in stall applications.

Now, those wanting to apply can do it online and deal directly with City Hall. More spots have also been freed up by the strict enforcement of regulations barring foreign traders.

Muhammad Danial Hakim Hamka, 24, who has traded at various bazaars for several years, said the absence of foreign traders had created a fairer business environment.

"So far, I haven't seen any foreign traders. City Hall seems to be enforcing the regulations strictly, which is a good move."

He added that City Hall's management has been well-organised this year.

"Under the previous association, things were not properly accounted for and were disorganised. New traders, especially, found it difficult to secure a spot.

"But now, City Hall has made the process more accessible and well-regulated."

First-time Ramadan bazaar trader Norshida Ahmad Azizi said securing a stall was much easier this year.

"Before this, getting a spot was very difficult due to the numerous processes involved. Now, we can deal directly with City Hall," she said.

Traditional kuih seller Anuar Saifudin expressed gratitude for the lower rental introduced by City Hall.

"When City Hall first took over, rent was nearly RM1,000, the same rate charged by the previous management. But when they reduced it to RM500, we were really grateful," said the 65-year-old, who has been in

business for nearly a decade.

However, he hopes that City Hall will improve communication as updates are sometimes delayed.

One of the main issues faced by traders is the requirement to dismantle and take home their tents daily.

"The problem is that when we remove our tents, some motorists, unaware of the bazaar, will park their cars there for extended periods, making it hard for traders to set up their stalls later. Sometimes, we are unable to operate at all."

Pau seller Yusri A. Latif, however, found the shift to online applications challenging for older traders.

"Previously, the traders' association handled everything related to licensing, including e-licences. They liaised with City Hall and managed the process on our behalf.

"But now, we have to manage everything on our own, and it's all online. People like me, who are not tech-savvy, find it quite difficult (to navigate the system)."

While City Hall has given its assurance that no foreign traders are allowed, the association has raised concerns about the reduction of trading spaces from 65 to 40 locations, limiting business opportunities.