

Perak traders and hawkers give a pass to 'drive-thru' Ramadan bazaar concept



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IPOH: Some small traders and hawkers in Perak are not keen on the state government's "drive-thru" Ramadan bazaar concept.

While saying it was a good effort by the state, Perak Malay Small Traders and Hawkers Association deputy president Zahari Abd Murad ([*pic*](#)) said it was not practical and was risky.

He said such a bazaar would need a large area, and not many places in the state can offer that.

“Such a concept can also lead to traffic congestion.

“And with a limited time, customers might have to wait a long time for their food.

“There could also be the risk of infection,” he said when contacted.

Zahari added that he has received some suggestions from small hawkers to set up the Ramadan bazaar as usual, but with precautions.

“There were some suggestions to have stalls be placed at least 2m apart and customers should wear face masks at all times.

“There should only be three workers for each stall and the local authority must monitor the number of customers entering the bazaar compound,” he said.

Zahari said he believes that a cash-on-delivery system should also be encouraged.

“The current movement control order (MCO) has allowed traders to look for alternatives in setting up their business.

“Cash-on-delivery is safer and more practical than the drive-thru bazaar.

“Customers also do not need to drive out to buy food, saving petrol money as well as their time,” he added.

The Perak government recently announced that the state would implement the drive-thru bazaar concept after the MCO ends, and will also set up a digital online platform for the bazaar.

To be known as the S.M.A.R.T iftar@Perak, it is being planned to be held from 3pm until 6pm during the fasting month.

The state government is now looking for suitable locations in the state for the bazaar and is working with Digital Perak – the state e-service – for the online platform.

Syed Azili Syed Jaafar, 53, said he does not plan to join the bazaar.

“Although I applaud the initiative, I've decided to only do my food business on a small scale and only do delivery near my home.

“There are a lot of things to consider if I were to join the bazaar.

“My family does not have time to pray and we also missed our terawih a few times the last time we joined a bazaar.

“I think it's better for me to prepare the food at home and do deliveries. I've already received some orders for Ramadan,” he said.

Aminah Mohamad Rafik said she was looking forward to trying the new concept.

The 34-year-old, who has been operating at Ramadan bazaars for over 10 years, said she believes that it was a good opportunity to earn more income.

“My business has been badly affected due to the MCO,” she said, adding that she operates the business with her husband.

Aminah, however, also said she was concerned about the risk of not being able to sell all her food.

“We are worried that we would not be able to sell everything, causing losses due to the limited operating hours – it is certainly a risk,” she said, adding that she sells fried rice, tomato rice, chicken rice and fried noodles.

“I think we'll take out some items from our menu,” she said.

Aminah said the MCO has put a damper on this year's preparation for the bazaar.

“It just feels different and not as cheerful when compared with last year.

“We also plan to join the online platform,” she added.

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