

No ban on 24-hour eateries, says PM
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The government will not impose a ban on 24 hour eateries, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak said today.

Najib's assurance comes days after Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Shahidan Kassim said that the government is considering banning 24-hour eateries to contain social ills.

"The existing operation hours are comfortable for many," Najib said, after distributing bubur lambuk at Kg Baru today.

He said that restricting operation hours will cause inconvenience to many and will also affect businesses.

Shahidan previously said that the government was studying the possibility of curtailing 24-hour outlets, including nightclubs, to prevent social ills among youths.

Najib also dismissed Shahidan's comments as his own personal suggestion.

The proposal had invited the wrath of 24-hour nasi kandar restaurants whose owners said Putrajaya should leave their outlets alone and instead focus on monitoring outlets like nightclubs to curb the rise of social ills among youth.

Penang Muslim League vice-president, Shahul Hameed Syed Mohamed said nasi kandar restaurants, namely those in Penang which is known for its famed Indian Muslim cuisine, are part of the state's heritage and their food are loved by Malaysians and tourists.

"Nasi kandar restaurants are among the most popular places for tourists in Penang, especially after dark. The restaurants at night give their customers a different ambience and are good spots for hanging out and having discussions.

"They are far from being the cause of social problems among the youth in this country," he said at a press conference in George Town today.

Shahul also said food outlets that operate past midnight, which included fast food restaurants and those run by Malays and the Chinese, had better things going on than spreading social problems.

"These are businesses frequented by people after a long day at work. People go to such places to spend time with their family members too.

"There are more positive than negative activities going on at restaurants," he said. – June 27, 2015.

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