

MOH official finds rojak stall dirty with food stains and presence of cockroaches

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SINGAPORE — The stall was dirty with food stains and showed signs of cockroach infestation.

These were among the findings by Ministry of Health (MOH) Senior Public Health Officer Abdul Rahman Osman during his inspection of the Rojak Geylang Serai stall on April 4 last year, following an outbreak of food poisoning.

The stall at the Geylang Serai Temporary Market was “poorly maintained”, he told a coroner’s inquiry yesterday.

Two women, Aminah Samijo, 57, and Norani Kassim, 59, died after eating rojak bought from the stall in early April.

Inspections by MOH officials following the food-poisoning case found that the stall’s operators had “poor housekeeping” skills.

Two types of bacteria were

found on a chopping board used to cut food items at the stall.

Deputy Public Prosecutor Toh Shin Hao told State Coroner Victor Yeo that one of them is commonly found on human skin, while the other pointed to faecal cross contamination.

When cross-examined, the stall’s licensee, Mr Sheik Alaudin Mohideen, said the outlet was cleaned with soap and water daily after closing.

He added that his staff — his two sons and another father-son pair — wore gloves when they handled cooked food.

However, when questioned by the prosecution, a stall assistant, Mr Abdul Jappar Peer Mohamed Mohamed Abdul Jappar, said that he was the only one to wear gloves at the stall and his job was to cut the rojak.

Mr Sheik Alaudin and his stall assistants stressed that all

unsold food items, including the rojak gravy, were thrown away at the end of the day.

The food was freshly made every day before the stall opened for business, they added.

Apart from the two deaths, the food poisoning outbreak also saw some 150 people fall ill after eating rojak bought from the stall.

The hearing resumes tomorrow.