



Persatuan Pengguna Pulau Pinang Consumers Association of Penang

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Letter to the Editor

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It does pay to break laws in Malaysia

Giving discounts for outstanding summonses is giving people a wrong perception of flouting the law... it does pay, at least in Malaysia. Take for example, it was reported in the media that a private company paid outstanding fines totalling about RM500,000 after a 70 per cent discount given out of the generosity of the government.

If 30 per cent of the summonses are RM0.5 million, it means that the original amount of the summonses would be RM1.7 million! If, assuming that each summon is RM300, it meant that the company had accumulated 5,500 summonses. How long has the company not paid its summonses or how many vehicles does the company have? If it had not settled them, how did its vehicle/s renew its road tax and insurance? This is really baffling and the Consumers' Association of Penang (CAP) wants to know how the authorities can be so proud about their 'achievement' of being able to collect RM1.6 million instead of RM5.3 million from 21,476 summonses.

Such 'seasonal' discounts are giving motorists the impression that they can continue to break the law and get rewarded with hefty discounts. The main objective of imposing fines is to serve as a deterrent measure and a reason why a jail sentence is added on if an offence is repeated but in Malaysia, discounts are also encouraging people to accumulate their fines until the availability of 'seasonal offers' when traffic violators enjoy great savings.

We urge the government not to emasculate legal measures that punish errant motorists just to please them. If they do not pay their fines, they are already breaching the law and thus should be punished. They should not be able to renew their road tax and insurance, particularly when everything is supposed to be shared online among the relevant authorities. Moreover, motorists who blatantly flouted the law should be considered dangerous to road users. The government's generous gestures will not produce good motorists but instead encourage good ones to become bad because the offer of discounts on summonses does not incentivize obedient drivers.

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