



# Persatuan Pengguna Pulau Pinang Consumers Association of Penang

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Letter to the Editor

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## CAP: Frozen meat cartel needs to be nipped at the bud

Malaysians are shocked to know that their favourite beef dishes such as *daging masak kicap*, *daging rendang*, or beef burgers at one time could have been made from horse, kangaroo or non-Halal beef.

This is the reality as the latest report on the frozen meat cartel revealed that kangaroo and horse meat imported into the country by means of deception is being repacked and sold as beef to consumers. To make matters worse this practice has been going on for 40 years.

There are 4 government agencies involved in the approval of the import of Halal meat from other countries. These agencies have not explained to the public how Non-Halal meat could have escaped their supervision. Obviously the import of Non-Halal meat has been made possible due to corrupt officers of the agencies and fraud on the part of the syndicate. The government must take these matters seriously and make all those responsible accountable for their action.

One could not imagine such an unscrupulous practice is taking place in our country which is made possible through the corruption and malpractice. For a mere RM150 to RM300 this merchandise gets to elude the eyes of the enforcement officers involved.

Since the news of the frozen meat cartel surfaced at the beginning of December, media has been carrying the news. Investigations are being carried out by the authorities but there is no recall of the imported frozen meat. This means that consumers are still consuming the tainted meat despite of CAP's calls to do so earlier.

Due to the high price of local meat, restaurants and other food establishments are using imported frozen meat in the dishes they serve to the customers. Processed meat manufacturers are also using imported frozen meat in their products.

As it is, we cannot even say that the Halal labelled meat is genuine. Consumers are advised to refrain from buying imported frozen meat and processed meat products until the authorities can ascertain that the imported frozen meat in the market are genuine Halal meat.

In view of the latest report on the smuggling of imported frozen meat in the country, the Consumers Association of Penang calls on the authorities to:

- > Set up a Royal Commission of Inquiry to investigate the failure of the system in place for Halal meat and make recommendations so that it does not take place in the future.
- > Immediately recall imported frozen meat in the market.
- > Take severe action against the smugglers of imported frozen meat and the government officers involved in corrupt practices as it concerns the Muslim faith.

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