



Persatuan Pengguna Pulau Pinang Consumers Association of Penang

檳城消費人協會 பிளாங்கு பயனீட்டாளர் சங்கம்

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Press Statement

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CAP: Do Not Drive Our Children Into The Streets

Youth involved in Basikal Lajak should be provided suitable space and facilities to express their talents in a safe environment. This is something natural. They should not be driven into the streets where they can be considered a nuisance and endanger themselves and others. Trying to ban such activities will not be successful and will reappear later on.

The Basikal Lajak or Mosquito Bicycle issue had been simmering since 2001 in small pockets around the country until the tragedy in 2017 when 8 children lost their lives, blowing the issue to the current level.

Road accidents, express bus tragedies and Mat Rempit issues seem to be familiar to Malaysians. We have yet to see the light at the end of the tunnel in all of these issues which just appear and reappear when we least expect. Now the Mosquito Bicycle issue will meet the same fate, if we do not address the social issues brought about by our education system, lack of space and facilities for appropriate recreation, supported by proper enforcement and parental supervision.

We cannot blame the kids for their activities, nor classify their activities as mere escapism. No doubt the majority of the children involved in such activities come from B40 families or broken homes. The children are the victims of what we have deprived them of all these years.

Most of the people have blamed the Mat Lajak kids for poor discipline. All this can be traced back to the kind of education system we have today. Discipline has to be fostered from a very young age until the children become adults. They carry everything they have acquired at school and at home into their adulthood and into the outside world.

Today the police have difficulty enforcing the laws because enforcement has been all along weak and because of our complacency in disciplining our children in the past.

So parents have to be responsible for their kids and be aware what their kids are up to all the time. The authorities have to provide education in parenting for young parents who are at a loss especially when both parents are struggling to put food on the table. The authorities have to be strict with parents and enforce the laws accordingly.

Our authorities have been investing heavily on motorising and providing infrastructure for private vehicles without much consideration for public transport and other modes of transport. The infrastructure rob the space which otherwise can be developed into parks for people for all ages. Youth can also be provided space to carry out their cycling activities on tracks or velodromes.

Those engaging in cycling activities should be given training in safety awareness, including the type of safety gear they should wear to protect themselves from injuries.

Consumers' Association of Penang (CAP) calls on the authorities to take the following steps:-

1. Ban Basikal Lajak activities on public roads and provide the necessary space and facilities for youth to hold their activities with necessary guidance and training;
2. Parents have to be taken to task for negligence in caring for their kids and the laws have to be applied appropriately;
3. Invest wisely in our education system for the long term.

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