



Persatuan Pengguna Pulau Pinang Consumers Association of Penang

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Press statement

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Break fewer coconuts during Thaipusam Devotees urged

Devotees celebrating Thaipusam on January 20th are urged to break fewer coconuts. The money used for breaking coconuts can be channeled to fulfill the various needs of a fraction of Indian community that still lives below poverty level.

Breaking coconut during Thaipusam is a cleansing ritual practiced by Hindu devotees. It is a symbolic representation of surrendering one's ego in the feet of God which is done with full determination and devotion. Broken coconut then collected and the flesh either eaten raw or used for cooking. Such is the beauty of the Hindu religious practices which ensures that food item is not being wasted. Whatever food item offered to God should be treated as prasadam and consumed by devotees and not discarded as waste.

Coconut is used in every Hindu religious ceremony due to its high level of nutrients. Contrary to popular notion that coconut has high level of cholesterol, Hindus used coconut in their cooking and as treatment for variety of ailments. Thus it has become a fruit that is revered by Hindu in their religious ceremonies.

Many devotees particularly from the Chinese community are ill-informed of the reasons behind coconut breaking ceremony. They think that the more coconuts they break the more lucks are showered unto them. They break thousands of coconuts every year which ultimately end up in landfill and being burned and eventually turned into fumes that pollute the environment. This very act itself is surely not favoured by God.

Breaking coconut which has been ingrained in every Hindu's heart should be implemented in right manner by breaking one coconut which should be done with full devotion.

Spending money to buy thousands of coconuts is not considered wise especially with the current economic situation. The price of coconut too is expected to increase during the Thaipusam celebrations. The market price of coconut is RM 1.50 per fruit. During Thaipusam the price is expected to increase from RM 2.20 to RM 2.50.

Hindu devotees are urged to give a thought on this coconut breaking issues and follow right religious practices so as to become a good role model for younger generation of Hindus.

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