



Persatuan Pengguna Pulau Pinang Consumers Association of Penang

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Letter to the Editor

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Consider motorised vehicles to pull chariots

The Consumers' Association of Penang (CAP) attention was drawn to an incident that occurred during a chariot procession related to the Chitra Pournami festival in Teluk Intan, Perak, where a video recording showed bulls struggling to manoeuvre the chariot. At the suggestion of a devotee, it was reported that the handler proceeded to hit the bulls to make them pull the chariot.

We are appalled by the way the bulls were treated in this time and age and we would like to suggest that the Malaysia Hindu Sangam (MHS) to come up with a ruling on the humane treatment of animals. If possible, use a small tractor and devotees can join in to pull the chariot.

Reverence and respect for all animals is one of the cornerstones of Hinduism and thus we hope that the use of bulls to pull chariots will cease as it is very cruel to inflict suffering on an animal. Below are changes that had taken place regarding the use of bulls to pull chariots over the years:

- The Penang Hindu Endowment Board (PHEB) prohibited the use of bulls to pull the Thaipusam chariot in 2016.
- In India, particularly in the southern states, the use of bulls in temple chariot processions had ceased. Devotees came together to pull the chariots instead. They have also used tractors for the same purpose.
- The 5-tonne silver chariot procession to Batu Caves, Kuala Lumpur, is drawn by a motorised vehicle.

We reiterate our call on the Malaysia Hindu Sangam (MHS), Hindu associations, and temple committees to end the use of bulls to pull the chariot during processions nationwide.

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