

“Animal Cruelty and the Public Opinion on using Elephants for Perahara”: Special Reference to Mahanuwara Dalada Perahara

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ABSTRACT

Acts of violence or neglect perpetrated against animals are viewed as animal cruelty. Animal cruelty laws vary according to the state, and violations may constitute a crime or an offense, depending on the jurisdiction. In Sri Lanka, according to the Ordinance, it has been cited that the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Ordinance can be implemented if any person who shall (a)cruelly beat, ill-treat, over-drive, over-ride, abuse, or torture, or cause or procure to be cruelly beaten, ill-treated, over-driven, over-ridden, abused, or tortured, any animal; (b) by any act or omission cause unnecessary pain or suffering to any animal; or (c) convey or carry, or cause to be conveyed or carried, in any ship, boat, canoe, or in any vehicle, basket, box, or cage, or otherwise, any animal in such manner or position as to subject such animal to unnecessary pain or suffering. On the other hand, when considering the use of elephants in the perahara the question seems to arise as to whether elephants are subjected to cruelty. So our main objective was to understand the public opinion regarding the use of elephants in the perahera.

This research has been done with special reference to the Mahanuwara Dalada Perahara. Both primary and secondary data including questionnaires were used for this research. Questionnaires were distributed among 100 people randomly who were watching Mahanuwara Dalada Perahara in 2015. In addition, books, web sites, online magazines were taken as secondary data. Since the collected data was quantitative, data analysis has been done quantitatively.

According to the findings, the majority of the people like to use elephants for Perahera. They do not agree with the idea that elephants are subject to cruelty or inhumane treatment because of the Perahera and they believed that elephants must be continuously used in the Perahera.

Keywords: *Animal Cruelty, Elephant, Perahera, Culture, Cultural Identity*

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