



Horses Without Carriages International™
global support for a ban on horse-drawn carriages



The shelter in Valletta for horses was removed when St George's square was rebuilt.

Malta Today - July 7, 2011

Horse dies from sunstroke, animal rights activist calls for midday curfew

By Nestor Laiviera

Animal rights activist Moira Delia says government has to enforce ban on horse-drawn carriages during the 11am-4pm time-slot in the summer.

The death of a horse that collapsed in the road on Wednesday while pulling one of the traditional karrozzini has prompted animal rights activists to lodge a complaint with Transport Minister Austin Gatt.

Delia said animal rights activists are feeling helpless and want an effective ban on animals being made to work in the afternoon sun during summertime, and to compensate karrozzini owners financially until adequate shelters are provided for their horses.

"Year after year, we work so hard to protect the animals, yet the issue of adequate shelters from the sun remains out of our control," Delia said.

Delia added that while government has plans to build the shelters, these are nowhere yet to be seen. "Does this mean the horses will have to go through another summer without shelters? Summer is already here."

She insisted on the need to build shelters not only in Valettta, but wherever there are kazzozzini in operation, such as Rabat. "Shelters need to provide water and shade," she insisted.

She also said karrozzin drivers were also responsible for the animals' plight. "They don't care, as long as they get income. If you really care for your animals, you wouldn't let them suffer in this way. It is very irresponsible for them to keep operating in this way," she said.

Delia said government should ban the use of horses working in the midday sun. Asked about cabbie drivers' loss of income in such a ban, Delia said that losses should be compensated for by the government. "Government has been helping out in other problems, so why not help in this regard?"

She also called for cabbie drivers to be fined if they don't use the shelters or respect the 11am-4pm curfew.

Contacted by MaltaToday, a woman who witnessed the collapsed horse on Wednesday said the incident took place close to the Bank of Valletta branch along the Msida waterfront at approximately 1pm. "Both the horse and the karrozzin were on their sides, and the horse was bleeding from its nose," the witness said.

"I didn't see any cars nearby or damaged. The first time I drove past there were only the horse owner and his family. They looked distraught. It looked like it collapsed from the heat. It is not the first time it's happened."