

PINGAT JASA MALAYSIA (PJM)

Set out below is a list of many concerns submitted by those supporting the fight for the right to wear the PJM. The list is not a comprehensive summary of those concerns and is not in priority order.

“They talk about double-medalling as an objection. There are any examples of double-medals in the Rebuttal so why did they concoct the double medal excuse?”

“Then there is the 5-year rule. It’s not a ‘rule’. There are many examples of medals in the Rebuttal accepted for wear more than 5 years after events or service, so why did they pick on the PJM?”

“Their treatment of the PJM is contradicts what HMG said they were trying to do with the first year of so-called Veteran's Day. The ‘first’ thing HMG does is to mean-spiritedly deny veterans the right to wear the medal they have been awarded. Why?”

“This time, the Government cannot claim it’s a cost issue. Veterans have had their rights withheld even though, when we all have to consider budgets, it will cost this country nothing because the Malaysians are kindly footing the bill.”

“Why are issues such as the discussion on the PJM so secretive? More open discussion before the event will usually avoid bungled decisions like that discredited Ministerial Statement, and that would have saved everyone a lot of time and resources.”

“Have the civil servants acted ‘ultra vires’ (in a manner of speaking). I have read and re-read the Foreign Decoration Regulations and Rules from 1969 and 2005 respectively and I can’t see any scope in any of the provisions to enable the HD Committee to waive ‘rules’ to receive a medal and then raise the same objections to stop the medal being worn. Where did that interpretation come from?”

“Why is it all one-way traffic? We have not received any help from the Government - no suggestions on how best to move our case forward, and no suggestions as to issues we should look at.”

“Why do they refuse me access to information about the recommendation (according to their interpretation of the FoIA)? What are they hiding?”

“Why is there such an all-pervading air of suspicion in this matter? We are told that the rules in force at the time of a medal request are the ones that are used. Was there any discussion behind the scenes about changing the Foreign Decorations rules after the Malaysians offered the PJM?”

“Is there not an obligation in the Civil Service Code for civil servants to consider our case even though it may not be something they wish to hear? Has the code been broken?”

“One allegation made about the PJM is that it is yet another medal implying we have many others. In reality, medals were not often awarded pre-1969 but after that date official policy changed to encourage more medals to acknowledge service.”

“I am concerned about the clear lack of compassion and sensitivity from the government. Will the Government show any compassion for those that cannot speak for themselves?”

“HMG show contempt for the PJM, downgrading our medal to a souvenir or keepsake.”

“The Ministerial Statement is divisive and discriminatory. The Queen has given all other Commonwealth countries the right to wear the PJM - except the British. Why?”

“The Ministerial Statement is divisive and discriminatory as between British citizens and British taxpayers. Allegedly, British citizens with Dual Nationality can wear their medal but those with Single Nationality may not. Why? (Especially since the Statement says that HM The Queen has said that UK citizens cannot wear it)”

“The Ministerial Statement is divisive and discriminatory because British citizens with Dual Nationality have been told by some civil servants that they can wear their medal. But the Queen has said no. Is it OK to wear it in e.g. New Zealand but they must go to the cost of remaking their medal bar for the UK? Or can they wear it in the UK?”

“The Ministerial Statement is divisive and discriminatory because British citizens with Dual Nationality have been told by some civil servants that they can wear their medal in their country of residence. But the Queen has said no. If they wear it, are they being courteous to the Queen of e.g. Australia, and discourteous to the Queen of the UK?”

“The PJM decision is divisive and discriminatory as between formations e.g. 28 Commonwealth Infantry Brigade which had three contingents, Aussies, Kiwis, and Brits (including Gurkhas). Guess which contingent is the only one not allowed to wear the PJM! Why?”

“The decision is divisive and discriminatory as between squadrons/sub-units (e.g. the Life Guards) that had men serving in Borneo, while others from the unit served exclusively on the Malay Peninsula. The former have a wearable medal, the latter do not. The PJM would be the only wearable medal for those who served exclusively on the Peninsula.”

“Why all the fuss and costs the civil servants are going to try and stop our case for wearing the PJM? The problem is easily fixed. Repeal the withholding of formal permission statement. What possible harm can it do?”

“There is a history of myths surrounding British medals. The PJM is yet another sorry débacle for the MoD and others. There is a history of myths that goes back many years. See Portsmouth Today articles on the Fight4thePJM web site.”

“The recommendation is ill-considered. It sends the wrong signals when we are "at war" on several fronts and need to encourage trust in the Government that it will support our Armed Forces, both those serving and veterans.”

“The Ministerial Statement reflects the incongruous and illogical application of ‘rules’. Having applied new rules retrospectively, they then waived two of those new 'rules' in order that British veterans could receive the PJM and then invoked the same two 'rules' to stop them wearing it! Ludicrous and mean-spirited.”

“The Ministerial Statement is inconsistent and misleading when claiming long-established rules and principles. They say they don't allow medals more than 5 years after the event but medals are being worn for service 50 years after the event (e.g. from Russia and Malta). And we mustn't forget the many others including Britain's very own Accumulated Campaign Service Medal.”

“The PJM decision is an insult to Malaya-Borneo veterans.”

“The PJM recommendation is even more insulting to the Agong, Government and peoples of Malaysia.”

“We have not received any help from the civil servants as evidenced by the persistent lack of cooperation, the secrecy, the obduracy and the malicious obfuscation. In the context of all the thousands of messages and questions received by us over the last 18 months, at no time have we seen anything from the MoD, FCO or Cabinet Office that might in any way be helpful to British veterans. All they do is repeat the very words we are querying. That is not civil.”

“The Ministerial Statement promulgated in Parliament implies the presence of rules binding on civilians. Is that acceptable? Is that right? Is that lawful? I don't think so.”

“What lengths have they gone to to manipulate the situation? The Malaysians first offered the PJM to the world, and inevitably to the British, in 2004. Did the British send them away? Did the Malaysians try again on the 17th February 2005 but were sent away to re-think the terms only to re-offer it on one month later on the 17th March 2005. Why?”

“It’s rubbish for them to claim the rules are long-established. The Double-medal rule was first inserted in Foreign Decorations Rules in November 2005.”

“We are struggling to get a fair hearing. The Police (the civil servants) police and thereby please themselves.”

“This whole matter of the PJM and the way the civil servants have mismanaged it is inappropriate, undemocratic and unacceptable in this day and age.”

“Nobody in the Government or in the civil service has justified this discredited decision. There is absolutely no tenable reason why the PJM should not be worn. None.

“Why are they manipulating the rules so much? The only rules applying at the appropriate time gave the HD Committee the option to reject or accept the medal, not to stop it being worn once received.”

“There are many examples of obfuscation on the part of the civil servants. Why was the double medal rule (which was both new and retrospective) invoked and used in Press Releases and Media replies from the Foreign Office when the majority of those eligible for the PJM do not have a medal?”

“More civil servants’ obfuscation - the Ministerial Statement and subsequent utterances made by HMG and its staff both here and abroad have been carefully phrased to obfuscate the truth e.g implying that we could wear the medal.”

“If their decisions are made "in the public interest" (the excuse for withholding information from us) then the public should be aware of how their decisions affect that interest. In the case of the PJM recommendation, the matter is dealt with in secret.”

“Will the Petition to The Queen be taken into account? Our Petition seeks Her permission for us to wear the PJM with Her approval, not the civil servants’ approval.”

“Will HMG intercept our Petition and reject our appeal? If so, will The Queen be advised of that, and that our Petition to her has been rejected on the advice of civil servants?”

“If HMG or the HD Committee reject our appeal will they in effect be rejecting the Petition to the Queen - on Her behalf?”

Is the current British ‘Imperial’ Honours System relevant in today’s world? Secret Honours in Confidence in matters like PJM cannot be relevant in a 21st century democracy.”

“It’s against my human rights that they apply rules retrospectively that take away my rights. The Government and civil servants have said that when a medal is offered it is assessed by the rules that apply at the time of the offer was made. Why were the new November 2005 rules applied retrospectively?”

“In order to deny British citizens that right, the Foreign Decoration Rules were re-written one year after the PJM was offered by Malaysia. This is neither fair nor ‘legal’.”

“We have been told that we have no right of appeal. With decisions that touch on so many ordinary lives, that is unsafe and unsatisfactory in this day and age.”

“Why do the civil servants have to create spin and myths to stop the honourable PJM being worn? They say that it is long-standing practice that Foreign medals are not worn by British citizens - ask those who wear medals from Russia, Malta, Brunei and many, many, more countries (listed in our Rebuttal).”

“Do the suits know what went on in Malaya-Borneo (and Indonesia!) in The Forgotten War? Many operations in Malaya-Borneo were so secret that they were not divulged until the mid-1980’s because the dangerous operations were carried out the other side of the border in Indonesia. Is this why they, the civil servants, think nothing happened out there?”

“The British Government should consider the Malaysian Perspective. Next year is the 50th Anniversary of Merdeka in Malaysia. The PJM’s status must reflect that, as a wearable and honourable award, because without PJM service, Merdeka would not have happened.”

“This is the 40th Anniversary of the end of Confrontation and 40 years after the time of PJM service. The Malaysians remember that and their views should be of paramount importance to us.”

“Having read the Citation that accompanies the PJM when sent in the post (it is on the Fight4thePJM web site), there is no tenable reason why recipients should have permission withheld to wear the medal they have received.”

The lack of goodwill behind the infamous PJM decision beggars belief. Nothing is at stake yet the decision is mean-spirited and it is incomprehensible to most right-minded people.”

“The decision on the honourable PJM is made at an unfortunate time, and their assertion that the PJM compromises the integrity of the system is insensitively promulgated, when "cash for honours" is in the UK news!”

“What is meant by “compromise the system”? This is pure obfuscation. Who and/or what are going to be compromised?”

“When applying medal rules, there is a need to differentiate between uniformed personnel who are subject to enforceable regulations and uniform code, and civilians who are not.”

“They are trying to exert unpleasant pressures on British veterans, tantamount to blackmail. We are told that the wearing of unauthorised awards is a grave discourtesy to Her Majesty The Queen. Why, then, are we being actively encouraged by HMG and its civil servants to wear the PJM without Her approval?”

“We are told the HD Committee made their decision on 7/12/2005. We are told The Queen approves all these recommendations. On what date did HM The Queen sign their recommendation?”

“We are told The Queen approves changes to the Foreign Decorations Rules. On what date did The Queen sign the new November 2005 rules?”

“We are told The Queen approves exceptions to the Foreign Decorations Rules. Did The Queen sign the exception that was the recommendation that she approved?”