

PRESS RELEASE

7 July 2010

INAUGURAL MALAYSIAN NGO COALITION TO TACKLE ZOO ANIMAL WELFARE ISSUES

Kuala Lumpur, 7 July 2010 – Six Malaysian NGOs signed a Memorandum of Understanding yesterday to establish “myZOO”- a Malaysian NGO coalition dedicated to tackling zoo animal welfare issues. Two international organisations, ACRES (Animal Concerns Research and Education Society) and the World Society for The Protection of Animals (WSPA), will play advisory roles in the coalition.

A 2009 survey conducted by ACRES into the welfare standards at thirty-nine zoos in Peninsular Malaysia revealed that the majority of the zoos failed to meet acceptable standards for the well-being of the animals. In 2010, a follow up survey of ten of these zoos revealed that welfare standards remained unchanged, or had in fact worsened in some zoos.

“There have been increasing numbers of reports of cruelty to zoo animal and members of the public have also been actively voicing their concerns. It is our responsibility to end this cruelty and take positive action” said Dr. Kavita Kaur, spokesperson for myZOO.

Green Wings, Malaysian Animal Welfare Society, Sahabat Alam Malaysia, Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) Johor, SPCA Penang, SPCA Selangor are the founding members of “myZOO” whose Vision is “A future where all zoo animals experience optimal welfare in Malaysia”. Its Mission is “To encourage all stakeholders to prioritise zoo animal welfare and strive towards achieving optimal standards”

“The establishment of this coalition is timely as Parliament just started debating the Wildlife Conservation Bill 2010. This enactment of this law is pivotal for the welfare of zoo animals. The seven Malaysian NGOs and their members are fully supportive of the Bill and are confident that the passing of this Bill will signal our country’s strong commitment toward the protection of animals” said Mr. Ahmad Kamal Bin Mohd Ali, protem Chairman of myZOO and Council Member of Sahabat Alam Malaysia.

The MOU was signed at the 2nd Malaysia Zoo Animal Welfare Roundtable Discussions from 5th – 6th July and witnessed by Department of Wildlife and National Parks (PERHILITAN) and Senator Dr. S. Ramakrishnan.

“The formation of myZOO is the first humble step on a very big mission to relieve and prevent suffering of zoo animals in Malaysia” said Senator Dr. S. Ramakrishnan.

myZOO will begin work immediately and initially focus on making improvements at the ten Malaysian zoos covered in the above survey. myZOO will also create awareness on the importance of zoo animal welfare amongst the community, so that everyone can play an active role. Through partnerships with PERHILITAN and other relevant authorities and organisations, myZOO aim to make a positive difference for zoo animals in Malaysia.

Contact:

Dr. Kavita Kaur

Email: myzoo2010@gmail.com

Hp: 012 262 3091

- ends -

Notes to editors

- The ten zoos covered in the survey are: Danga Bay Petting Zoo, Saleng Zoo, Malacca Butterfly and Reptile Sanctuary, Port Dickson Mini Zoo, Kuala Lipis Mini Zoo, Taman Teruntum Mini Zoo, Bukit Merah Laketown Resort Ecopark, Lye Huat Garden, Kemaman Mini Zoo and Kuala Krai Mini Zoo
- Photographs are available on request.
- **Green Wings**
Green Wings is an experiential environmental education awareness programme based in Malaysia. It proposes to educate the community about the ecological, economic, and social value of nature and its elements. Our niche is that of being information and process providers. As educators, we teach a process that allows participants to understand and listen to the opinions of others as well, before deciding on inclusive solutions to difficult environmental, social and resource management questions.
- **Sahabat Alam Malaysia**
SAM is an environmental NGO dedicated to the protection of the environment and issues affecting humans and the local communities such as pollution, degradation of the environment and issues affecting fisherman and farmers. They are also dedicated to the conservation of wildlife and the protection of their habitats.
- **Malaysian Animal Welfare Society**
The primary function of the Malaysian Animal Welfare Society is an animal rights advocacy group that actively addresses animal cruelty and abuse cases. MAW is uncompromising in its fight for the freedoms, the rights and the welfare of all animals, be they wildlife or otherwise. MAW believes that the kind of animal abuses and cruelty that take place in Malaysian zoos have no place in a civilized country. The welfare of these animals should be given as high a priority as education and the economy.
- **SPCA Johor**
SPCA Johor was formed in 1996. Their main focus has been on education, neutering of animals and attending to cruelty cases involving domestic animals. Since 2006, they have widened their horizons to include all animals.
- **SPCA Penang**
SPCA Penang was founded in 1948 and is the oldest local animal welfare organisation in Malaysia. SPCA Penang believes that respect for life begins with respect for animals and the environment.
- **SPCA Selangor**
SPCA Selangor exists to protect defenceless animals and to alleviate their suffering. Established in 1958, SPCA Selangor runs an Animal Shelter and Adoption Centre, Inspectorate, Humane Education, Government Lobbying, Klinik Kembiri Spay Clinic and Mission HELP. It is a registered NGO with tax exemption status and enjoys good support from members of the public and the business community.
- **ACRES**
ACRES is a Singaporean animal protection charity aimed at fostering respect and compassion for all animals. It currently has more than 20,000 individuals on its supporter database. ACRES has been actively tackling zoo animal welfare issues for the past 9 years.
- **WSPA**
WSPA has been promoting animal welfare for more than 25 years. Their work is concentrated in regions of the world where few, if any, measures exist to protect animals. With consultative status at the United Nations and the Council of Europe, WSPA is the largest alliance of welfare societies.

[PRESS RELEASE] Inaugural Malaysian Ngo Coalition to Tackle Zoo Animal Welfare Issues

Star newsdesk@thestar.com.my

NST news@nst.com.my,

Malay Mail <mmnews@nstp.com.my>;

BH News bhnews@bharian.com.my

AP apklnews@ap.org

Nanyang <editor@nanyang.com.my>;

China Press <news@chinapress.com.my>;

editor@themalaysianinsider.com

The Sun: newsdesk@thesundaily.com

Malaysiakini: editor@malaysiakini.com

Berita Harian:

Sin Chew:

Louis +6597968592