

Group hopes tougher rules animal cruelty rules out by year-end

Monica Leong

The long wait for the government to come up with an animal protection law has caused frustration amongst local animal lovers, particularly a local animal protection group which finally decided to step up the pressure by proposing to the government on Friday to simply beef up the fines set out in the current regulations.

The non-profit-making organisation Anima held its monthly adoption day yesterday in Praça do Tap Seac, drawing about 50 people who dropped by and played with nine abandoned dogs that are being taken care of at its Coloane shelter.

Just four people who attended yesterday's campaign decided to sponsor the dogs there, out of about 250 currently living at the shelter,

alongside about 100 abandoned cats. No-one came forward to adopt any dog or cat.

Albano Martins, president of Anima, told *The Macau Post Daily* yesterday that although there have been more adoptions and sponsorships than in the past, the number of rescued animals the shelter handles every day is also increasing.

The number of animals being dumped was getting worse, to an extent that the action should be considered animal abuse, a predicament that needed to be stopped as quickly as possible, Martins said.

"We proposed to Secretary for Administration and Justice [Florinda Chan Lai Man] on Friday a new set of regulations, which is more convenient and faster to implement than a

law because it takes such a long time for the legislature to go through [a bill] and pass it," Martins explained, adding that he was hopeful that the regulations can be out by the end of this year.

According to Martins, an economist by profession, the proposed regulations include a definition of animal cruelty, a fine of up to 60,000 patacas for those caught abusing animals such as abandoning the animals and a higher pet licence fee, the proposed amount is 1,000 patacas for owners who do not wish to have their dogs neutered and 200 patacas for those who do not wish to have their cats neutered.

"To encourage people to have their dogs neutered, we propose a licence fee of 100 patacas," Martins said.



Also under the proposed regulation, those who dump their unwanted pet at the government's kennel will be banned from applying for a pet licence five years after they abandoned their pet.

"At the moment, people can throw their pets away at the Civic and Municipal Affairs Bureau's (IACM) kennel as many times as they like. This is animal cruelty," Martins said, pointing out that the regulations his group is proposing take references mostly from an animal protection law in Singapore and the US.

At the same time, Martins will appeal to the Australian Consulate-General in Hong Kong today to stop sending greyhounds from Down Under to the Macau Yat Yuen Canidrome if the dog-racing operator fails to run a re-homing programme for their dogs that are no longer profitable.

The Canidrome had a deal with Anima in March to have a re-homing programme so that the "retired" dogs are not culled. However, the programme never got off the ground.

"We've tried to work with them [Macau Yat Yuen Canidrome] but they lied to us. They told the government they will have a re-homing programme but it never happened. We don't want to compromise anymore. We have asked the government not to renew their [greyhound betting] licence which runs out on December 31, 2015," Martins said.

According to Anima's proposal, the greyhound racetrack in Fai Chi Kei should be turned into a park with an underground car park for the densely populated area there.

"We're pressing the government very strongly to end their concession [agreement with the Macau Yat Yuen Canidrome]," Martins said. ■



Local centre hosts youth hair-styling & make-up contest

Ellie Leong

The Macau General Union of Neighbourhood Associations' Pak Vai Activities Centre yesterday held a youth hair-styling and make-up competition, in which teams of young people showed their skills in putting on make-up, hairstyling and ensuring that the two are compatible with the outfits the models were wearing.

The entrants in the competition included several males, proving that the beauty industry is no longer the exclusive bastion of the fairer sex as still widely perceived.

Co-organised by the centre and Macau Pak Vai Voluntary Social Service, the one-day competition

was sponsored by the Civic and Municipal Affairs Bureau (IACM), Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC), Social Welfare Bureau (IAS) and the local Fok Ying Tung Foundation.

The competition began with preliminary rounds last month where 18 three-member teams were trimmed down to just three teams to compete yesterday, with the event aiming to "encourage [local] youths to show their talent, increase their creativity and imagination," Fong Siu Lan, the centre's assistant to the chairman, told reporters after the competition concluded yesterday.

"The competition allowed the young people to learn more about



Annie Chan (right), standing next to her model, speaks to reporters after winning the competition yesterday. Photos: Ellie Leong



The three teams and their models show their hair and make-up creations on stage at the Pak Vai Activity Centre yesterday. The centre is run by the Macau General Union of Neighbourhood Associations (known in Cantonese as Kai Fong).

these three aspects of professional design knowledge and encourage teamwork," Fong stressed, adding that it was the first such competition to be organised by the centre.

"We shall continue to organise this kind of competition in the future, Fong said."

Annie Chan, whose team was declared the winner yesterday, told reporters, "The competition was so hard ... [but] I learnt a lot from the competition. I encourage other teenagers to participate more in these kinds of activity to learn more skills." ■



These photos taken yesterday show Anima's shelter dogs, wearing bandanas around their neck, during the organisation's adoption day at Praça do Tap Seac, while some dog-owners took their canine friends to the square to make donations. Photos: Monica Leong

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