

# Stiffer penalty for pet abusers

> Ministry proposes RM50,000 fine, jail term for those found guilty

**PETALING JAYA:** Pet abusers may find themselves confined in a “kennel” of a different kind – the prison – under a proposed amendment to the existing Animal Act 1953 (Revised 2006).

This is the penalty which awaits pet abusers under the proposal, Deputy Agriculture and Agro-based Industry Minister Datuk Chua Tee Yong said yesterday, adding they could also be slapped with higher fines.

He said the ministry would consult the relevant parties, including non-governmental organisations, industry players and the public, before a final decision is made on the proposal.

Chua noted that the current act is insufficient to meet the requirement of animal welfare due to the current lifestyles of the pet owners.

“We will include a lot of things which are not inside the Animal Welfare 1953 Act as times have changed.

“More requirements and new lifestyles of the pet owners also need to be taken into consideration, especially involving animal abuse.

“As for now, we are looking to

increase the current penalty for pet abuse from RM200 to RM50,000 and of course, it must include the jail term meted out by the court,” he said.

The deputy minister was speaking to reporters after officiating the 10th canine obedience training graduation ceremony at the Central Park Bandar Utama here.

The outdoor community project on dog obedience and agility training programme was organised by the Malaysian National Animal

Welfare Foundation to nurture and develop human-animal bond and socialise the pets.

Chua said the ministry would also come up with few initiatives, including introducing the Animal Welfare Guidelines for pets and livestock owners to assist them with the best practices on handling the animals.

The ministry was also looking at developing an accreditation system for pet shops and breeding centres, he said. – Bernama



Chua presents pet food to Alice Yong, 45, after the graduation ceremony at Central Park Bandar Utama.