

JABATAN PERKHIDMATAN VETERINAR MALAYSIA

LAPORAN LIPUTAN MEDIA

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DISEDIAKAN OLEH:

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JABATAN PERKHIDMATAN VETERINAR MALAYSIA**

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SUNDAY VIBES





CLOCKWISE, FROM LEFT: A beautiful puppy up for adoption; Waiting for their meal; The dogs in her shelter are well taken care of.

Siti Fauziah's heart is big enough for the hundreds of dogs she cares for.

Shelter of love

This woman has enough room in her heart and shelter to provide refuge for stray animals, discovers **Elena Koshy**

"JALAN BAPAK AKU, OK" (My father's road, okay) scrawled on a board pinned to a road sign looks to be a harbinger of doom of sorts. On any other given day, I would've chuckled but I'm about to drive off the beaten path through an off-road that seems to lead to nowhere. Well, if nowhere is where a shelter for unwanted animals is located, that is.

There's no tarred road ahead. But the white Myvi I'm following doesn't stop. Tires crunch the gravel beneath, and I nervously place my foot on the brake pedal. "Oh no," I groan inwardly. What is this place I'm going to? Jalan Bapak Aku indeed. There's no other road sign. There's no road. This little offshoot path bridges the main road to another industrial area located further in.

As I'm driving, a brown dog is sunning itself by the side of the clearing under the blazing afternoon sun. It looks up disinterestedly and then proceeds to tuck its head between its paws.

Another sign, I think. Sentinel dogs guarding the entrance. The Myvi keeps moving ahead slowly. "Where are we going?" I moan inwardly, praying that my little Axia would make it in one piece past the stones and potholes.

More dogs appear out of nowhere. Tails wagging, they follow the white car ahead. The Myvi is beginning to look like a strange pied piper of sorts. The strays don't appear to care that another car is tailing behind. They're congregating around the car that's finally slowing down to a stop in front of a nondescript-looking structure surrounded by corrugated metal gates.

I slow down in tandem and slide to park next to the Myvi, carefully trying to avoid running over excited dogs circling the car next to mine. A deafening cacophony of barks and yelps greet me as I get out of the car. Siti Fauziah Abdul Jabbar finally gets out of her Myvi and beams.

A young Indian boy opens the gates and the barks reach fever-pitch excitement. "They're hungry. It's almost feeding time," she explains simply before walking inside and introducing the boy as her son.

"My children help me run the shelter," she shares proudly. The cavernous space inside contains huge cages where dogs of every size and shape are pressing their noses between the bars and barking wildly.

Fauziah isn't what I expect an animal rescuer to look like. Not that I thought there was a type but I was half-expecting someone a little like me. To be called an animal person isn't necessarily a compliment, not when it implies that you love animals with a passion matched only by how much you loathe your own species.

Animal people can be judgmental, self-righteous and cranky, all of which I was becoming. I was expecting a twin flame but this cherubic smiley woman in corn-rows, make up, and jewellery wasn't ticking any of those boxes.

The banner hanging on the wall at the back says: "Fauziah Paw's Care" with a phone number emblazoned across the tarpaulin sheet. Adopt, don't shop, it says on a giant paw etched by the side.

"What do you think?" she asks me waving her arms around the space. The barks are deafening. Something cold and wet touches my hand. I look down into brown eyes that stare right at me.

Fauziah bends over and gently pats its head. A rescue, she tells me. "All of them are rescues. I can't bear to see them suffer. I take them in, clean them, treat their wounds and diseases, feed them and eventually put them up for adoption," she reels off her roles one by one.

"Yet, people call me a scammer!" she adds dryly. She gazes at me through kohl-lined eyes and smiles widely. Look around, she tells me. "Does this look like a scam to you?" she asks. A rhetorical question no less, but I shake my head anyway.

She beckons and I follow with a curious dog in tow who keeps sniffing at my hand. Most dogs under her care look healthy and clean. The cages are spacious and according to Fauziah, there are at least about a few hundred dogs in this space. "It's a struggle to care for them," she concedes, adding grimly: "...but at least in here, they're alive and healthy. Outside, they're either killed or left to fend for themselves."

The sick dogs are kept separately so as not to infect the healthy ones. She points out to the separate cages away from the main space. Some dogs are in worse shape than the rest. One emaciated dog catches my eye. He's nothing but skin and bones, and he's kept in a smaller cage.



Unwanted animals have found a refuge in Siti Fauziah's shelter.

"I'll get him better... just you wait and see. I'll send you pictures once he gets healthier," she promises, before adding softly. "They come to me in terrible shape, ranging from accident cases, abuse, malnutrition to being infected with tick fever, distemper and parvovirus. I don't turn any dog away. I do what I can to help."

SCAMMER ALERT

All she wants is to give these animals a chance to survive. She rarely uses the term "dogs" as she talks animatedly. To Fauziah, they're all her "puppies". How can she not do anything? The need is desperate. "I mean, you've seen how dogs are being treated in this country. It's not a 'dog problem'. The real problem is people," she points out bluntly.

The reality of the homeless, hungry, frightened, often tormented dog or of the equally pathetic if less visible dog chained to a post — sometimes with a dilapidated "shelter", sometimes without — is a tragic contrast to the sentimentality about dogs that pervades the media and pet food advertising.

It's our species' fault. We moulded a resourceful carnivore into an animal critically dependent on humans for survival. But while we made dogs dependent, we haven't held ourselves accountable. We lose dogs, let them run unchecked, give them up when they're a nuisance or difficult. And so, there are too many dogs running around, and the excess must be killed.

Stray dogs aren't a new problem. Wherever there have been humans, there have been dogs. People generally attack stray dogs, kill or take away their puppies and call for their mass slaughter in retaliation. In short, they've always been given the end of a short schtick.

In the greater scheme of things, the welfare of stray animals — dogs in particular — has often been overlooked. Why bother, some argue. They're more of a nuisance than anything else. They're unclean animals and deserve to be put down. Do stray animals even have value?



Siti Fauziah has been rescuing animals since she was a child.



Siti Fauziah's shelter in Sungai Buloh. **INSET:** She shares a strong bond with her animals.



Dogs and puppies in quarantine just after being rescued.

Do their lives even matter? Fauziah seems to think they do.

"Aren't they God's creation too?" she asks pointedly. "Why are they being treated differently then?" While overpopulation is an issue and shelters are reaching breaking point, Fauziah believes in helping the animals as opposed to culling them.

Street animals, particularly dogs, are often a part of the urban landscape in developing countries. This endangers human health. They bite, and their faeces on the street may be a serious hazard, containing microorganisms that aren't only pathogenic to humans, but in some cases, are also resistant to antibiotics.

The most serious consequence is rabies. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), more than three billion people, about half of the world's population, live in countries and territories where dog rabies exists.

"It doesn't mean we have to get rid of them," she insists, adding: "We have to try to get over the problem of overpopulation with compassion."

She cites Turkey as an example of how dogs are treated with dignity. Animals in Turkey's urban centres get services from local governments: shelter, regular feeding,

sterilisation and medical checks by trained veterinarians. "Why can't they carry out the same practice here in Malaysia?" she asks.

Here, homeless animals are often euthanised, neglected or die of disease. "Sterilisation can help manage free-roaming dogs and cats and related disease control concerns," she adds. "Just stop abusing or killing them!"

She's willing to save any dog and often goes out of her way to rescue them, sometimes even crossing border lines.

"I can't bear to say no when I'm asked to take in an animal. How can I say no?" she says softly, adding: "I take the sick, the abandoned, the handicapped and abused dogs. They're all welcome here."

She can't bear the thought of dogs being euthanised so she rushes everywhere to rescue animals that have been caught and sent to other overcrowded shelters. "It's a tragedy when their lives are cut short," she confides, voice catching with emotion. "Why do their lives not matter?"

Some places no longer have room for animals and are forced to euthanise animals based on their duration of stay so they'll have enough cage space available. And because there are no health standards, some shelters are often forced to euthanise sick animals to protect the health and safety of the general animal population. Some diseases, she points out, are treatable but in a shelter setting, they can rapidly spread to other animals and even volunteers.

"I can't bear the thought of these helpless dogs dying. Most of the time I use my own money but sometimes I raise funds to redeem them out of those shelters. Let me take care of them. Here, these dogs are safe. I'll take care of them the best I can and for as long as I'm around."

She's often misunderstood, of course. "I've been called many things, including a scammer," she says dryly. "But those who've accused me of many things never took the trouble to visit me here at this shelter. All I want to do is give these animals a decent chance at survival."

With another shrug, she continues: "You can call me a scammer if you can come over here and try running this shelter for one day. Spend that time cleaning the cages, feeding them and washing my puppies' faeces. If you haven't done that, then stop calling me names."



HARD LIFE

It's time to feed the animals. Another 4WD vehicle rolls into the compound and her daughter gets out, bringing in the pots of food to be doled out to the animals. The barks get even more frantic. The stray dogs that have been milling around Fauziah's car have now entered the compound. "They want to be fed too!" she tells me, chuckling.

The dogs, she adds, are fed twice a day. "I order chicken by the bulk. Around 50 chickens go into their meals each day. Most times, it comes out from my own pocket," she says.

Continuing, she says: "You've come today and seen my puppies. Come again in a month's time and see how they're doing. Only then you'll understand how committed I am to taking care of these animals."

She pauses and crouches down to talk gently with a female dog who's just been nursing her puppies. "Can I take your baby for a while?" she asks in Tamil, reaching inside the cage and lifting a sleeping puppy.

The puppy nestles in her hand and she bends over to place a light kiss on its head. "Aren't they simply wonderful?" she whispers, eyes sparkling before placing the puppy back into the cage.

I can see how Fauziah can be misunderstood. She's street smart, tough talking and all she wants to do is to swoop in and take in as many stray animals as she possibly can. That's just her nature, she admits, a little embarrassed, adding: "I'm only Form Three educated and I can't speak much English, so I guess a lot of what I say gets lost in translation."

The truth is simply this: she loves animals and has been bringing home strays for as long as she can remember. "I just wanted to help them and take care of them. They seemed so pitiful. I've saved birds, monkeys, dogs and cats. No animal is more important than the other." She somehow understood their sense of helplessness and abandonment.

TURN TO PAGE 18



Animal saviour.



Emaciated dog just rescued off the streets.

Compassionate soul

FROM PAGE 15

The youngest of three siblings, Fauziah's mother passed away when she was just 1. "My mother's older sister — my aunt — took us in and raised us as her own. She never married, and I call her *Amma* to this day," she reveals, her voice choked with emotion.

I can immediately see where she gets her compassion from. "Yes, we were in need of a home and a mother, and my aunt did it without reservations. I guess I kind of understand the pain of losing a home and I do identify a lot with these 'unwanted' animals!" she muses quietly.

She thinks all animals are sentient creatures and can't even bear to kill an insect. "I just can't do it!" she shakes her head vehemently. "The value of a life is infinitely precious and I simply want to ensure that all animals under my care are treated with dignity."

Fauziah got married at the age of 20 and has three children, all of whom are animal lovers like her. "My husband isn't into dogs but he supports my work and allows me to do what I do," she tells me with a smile.



Female dog and her puppies transported back to the shelter in Siti Fauziah's vehicle.

She's not rich, maintains the 39-year-old, adding that she runs an online business selling Punjabi suits and material to make ends meet. "My husband has health issues yet he does some work with transportation but nothing too heavy," says Fauziah matter-of-factly.

All of her money, she shares, gets channelled towards running the shelter. She's grateful that her American benefactors have been paying towards the rental of the shelter. "I used to have these dogs located near my house but the neighbours weren't happy. We had to move over here," she adds.

VALUING LIFE

It takes at least around RM10,000 a month to manage the shelter. "I work hard," she insists, adding: "These animals are an extension of my family. So, I'll always care for them despite the challenges."

The biggest issue is the vet bills that eat into her tight budget. "If I have to beg for these puppies, I will. I often beg the vets to treat my 'children' when finances are short and I promise to make good on the payments later. Sometimes I have to do that because funds are really tight," she remarks, shrugging her shoulders.

She grows quiet for a while. It's not been an easy two years since she set up this shelter. On one of her rescue missions, Fauziah contracted Covid and unknowingly passed it on to her whole family.

While they were admitted in hospital, she managed to get some volunteers to come over and help run the shelter in her absence. "It was tough," she admits, wiping her face.

On another occasion, the heavy rains led to her shelter being flooded. "We're located just next to the river," she points out, adding: "The waters rose quickly and I had little choice but to open the cages and let the dogs loose. I hoped they'd find some shelter on higher ground. I couldn't do anything else. I felt really helpless and hopeless," she reveals.

Once the waters receded, the dogs



Waiting to be adopted.

returned. She didn't lose a single animal. "They simply knew how to come back home," she tells me, eyes glistening.

Her mobile phone rings suddenly and she takes the call. After short exchange in Tamil, she looks up to me and asks: "Would you like to follow me and rescue some puppies in Klang?"

She looks at me so expectantly making it hard for me to say no. Fauziah quickly gives me the Waze location and we leave in our respective vehicles. She leaves her Myvi behind and drives the 4WD this time.

It's a long drive from Sungai Buloh where Fauziah's shelter is located to an undisclosed location in North Port, Klang. I'm an animal lover but I can't imagine the extent this amiable woman would go to rescue these animals. About 45 minutes later, I arrived at the location and Fauziah's vehicle is already parked there. There are at least around 30 puppies and a nursing dog waiting to be picked up.

"Are you taking all of them?" I ask in disbelief. She smiles and quietly replies: "How can I leave any behind?"

The puppies are promptly placed in cages. Some have to be separated

because they're clearly sick. "Distemper," she says shortly, shaking her head. The female dog and her puppies are promptly carted into her backseat. Her son helps her in arranging the cages at the back of the vehicle.

One puppy is clearly terminally ill. "He's not going to make it," she says softly, cradling the animal in her arms. "I'm taking this puppy anyway. At least he'll be fed some milk. He'll know that he was loved before he dies," she whispers as she gently strokes its head. The pup is struggling to breathe and I can't hold back my tears.

"How long do you plan to do this?" I ask her, and she smiles. "For as long as I'm alive," she replies simply.

I watch as Fauziah leaves with her vehicle full of squeaking puppies. They're on their way to *Jalan Bapak Saya, Okay* where sentinel dogs roam and puppies like these will have a chance at living out their lives in safety and, most importantly, be loved fiercely by a cherubic woman with cornrow hair and Kohl-lined eyes.

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For information on how you can contribute to Fauziah Paw's Care, go to www.facebook.com/fauziahpawscare.

Wajib label setiap ayam siap diproses

Pemegang sijil perlu letak label halal di bahagian paha ayam mentah

Oleh NORAWAZNI YUSOF

KUANTAN

Jabatan Agama Islam Pahang (JAIP) mewajibkan semua pemegang sijil pengesahan halal Malaysia bagi rumah sembelih di negeri ini supaya meletakkan label pada setiap ayam mentah selepas siap diproses.

Pengarahnya, Datuk Dr Zulkifle Ali berkata, pemegang sijil perlu meletakkan label halal

di bahagian paha ayam mentah selepas siap proses dan boleh menggunakan bungkusan plastik.

Menurutnya, arahan itu dibuat selaras dengan ketetapan Manual Prosedur Pensijilan Halal Malaysia (Domestik) tahun 2020.

“JAIP kerap menerima aduan orang awam berkaitan bekalan ayam diperoleh di semua pasar raya dalam negeri Pahang dan keliru dengan label sijil halal yang dipamerkan.

“Jadi, bagi mengelak kekeliruan, kita memutuskan untuk mewajibkan semua pemegang sijil pengesahan halal bagi Skim Rumah Sembelih di Pahang menerusi edaran surat



DR ZULKIFLE

pada 14 Februari lalu,” katanya ketika dihubungi pada Sabtu.

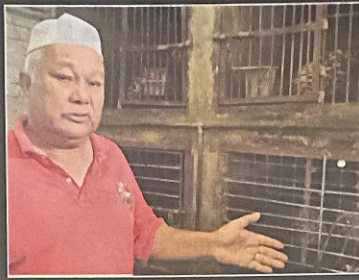
Sebelum ini timbul isu apabila penjual ayam menggantung sijil halal milik rumah penyembelihan yang bertentangan syarat Manual Prosedur Pensijilan Halal Malaysia (Domestik) tahun 2020.

Beliau menjelaskan, maklumat yang perlu dilabelkan perlu mengandungi nama produk, alamat pemegang SPHM, logo halal berserta nombor MS dan nombor rujukan fail.

Katanya, setiap label pembungkusan hendaklah dicetak dengan jelas dan tidak mudah dipadamkan.



LANDAK raya tidak mempunyai risiko kematian akibat penyakit.



ISMAL menunjukkan landak raya yang dimerak di rumahnya.



LANDAK makan semua jenis makanan termasuk nasi.

Oleh Ahmad Rabiul
Zulkifli
am@hmetro.com.my

Hulu Terengganu

Biarpun sudah berusia 70 tahun namun tidak menghalang seorang warga emas menjalankan penternakan landak secara komersial.

Ismail Mohamad dari Kampung Baru Sungai Binjai, Ajil memelihara lebih 100 ekor landak raya di rumahnya sejak lima tahun lalu.

Katanya, dia menggunakan wang simpanan RM10,000 untuk membeli 12 ekor induk landak raya untuk dibiakkan.

"Bermula 12 ekor pada

JUAL RM4,500 SEPASANG

*Warga emas mula dengan modal RM10,000
kini ternak lebih 109 ekor landak raya*

2018, sekarang landak raya saya membiak sehingga 109 ekor tidak termasuk sudah dijual.

"Sangat berbaloi memelihara landak raya itu kerana permintaannya sangat tinggi terutama dagingnya.

"Sebelum ini, saya bekalkan juga daging lan-

dak yang dijual RM130 hingga RM150 sekilogram, tetapi sekarang hanya menjual induk landak sahaja," katanya ketika ditemui di kandang landak miliknya, semalam.

Ismail yang mempunyai anak berusia antara 34 hingga 48 tahun ber-

kata, harga landak raya sentiasa meningkat dan sekarang dijual dengan harga RM4,500 sepasang.

"Kelebihan memelihara landak raya itu kerana ia tidak mempunyai risiko kematian kerana penyakit selain tidak cerewet.

"Landak raya makan

RM150

Harga sekilogram
daging landak raya

semua jenis makanan termasuk nasi, buah dan sayuran. Ternakan eksotik itu juga cepat membiak berbanding ternakan lain, paling kurang dua tahun sekali bera-

"Tambahan, penternakan landak raya dijalankan itu di bawah seliaan Jabatan Perlindungan Hidupan Liar dan Taman Negara (Perhilitam).

"Semua landak raya

diternak mempunyai lesen memiliki yang dikeluarkan Perhilitan kerana ia di bawah akta pemuliharaan hidupan liar 2010. Saya juga mempunyai permit jual beli, permit memburu landak raya yang hanya diberikan tempoh di antara Mei hingga Ogos sahaja," katanya.

Katanya, dia akan meneruskan penternakan landak raya yang dijalankan berikutan ia memberi pulangan yang sangat lumayan.

"Di samping menghasilkan pendapatan, penternakan itu juga secara tidak langsung membantu mengekalkan haiwan liar itu daripada pupus," katanya.



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