

PRESS RELEASE



11 November 2004

“ANIMALHUNT” FOR PET TIGER AND MALAYAN SUN BEAR INTENSIFIES

SINGAPORE 11 NOVEMBER – The Animal Concerns Research and Education Society (Acres) has intensified its search for the pet tiger and Malayan sun bear in Singapore.

Acres today distributed leaflets to all houses in the Sixth Avenue vicinity to ensure that all residents in the area are aware of our search and urge them to come forth with any information with regard to the tiger kept there. The Acres Wildlife Rescue Team vehicle also patrolled the area with a large toy tiger in a cage, placed on top of the vehicle, to raise awareness on this issue.

Yesterday (10 November 2004), a total of seven officers from the Acres Wildlife Rescue Team and the Agri-Food and Veterinary Authority (AVA) launched a search in the Mandai area for the pet Malayan sun bear. The team was however unable to locate the bear due to the large number of houses in that area.

In the interest of public safety and the welfare of the animals, Acres once again urges the public to come forth with any information which can at least narrow down the search. The ideal information however, would of course be the exact address.

The reward for any information leading to the successful confiscation of either the tiger or the Malayan sun bear has also been increased. **Acres is now offering a S\$3 000 cash reward for any information leading to the successful confiscation of either of these animals.** This increase follows a pledge of an extra S\$2 000 for each animal by Mr. Ramachandra, from the Ananda Bhavan Restaurant.

Some concerns have been raised as to whether or not the tip-offs are true. The fact however remains that a pet Malayan sun bear was previously confiscated in Singapore in 1993. With regard to the tiger, the number of tip-offs and eye-witness accounts received by Acres make it difficult to believe that it is a hoax.

“Whether or not the tip-offs are true, we have to make every effort to investigate them. If there is a possibility that a tiger and a Malayan sun bear is being held in captivity in some home in Singapore, we cannot take any chances. Acres takes every tip-off seriously, we will make every effort to locate these animals. If at the end of the day, we are unable to find them, at least we tried our very best. However, if we do indeed find and rescue these animals, then it was worth every effort and cent we have spent” said Louis Ng, President and Executive Director of Acres.

Anyone with information can call the 24 hours Acres Wildlife Crime Hotline at: 9783 7782.

Contact:

Louis Ng (President and Executive Director)

Email: louis@acres.org.sg

Office: +65 6296 7758

Handphone: +65 97968592

Mr. Ramachandra (Ananda Bhavan Restaurant)

Handphone: 9736 1647

- ends -

Notes to editors

1. The Acres Wildlife Crime Hotline (9783 7782) provides an avenue for those who know of anyone who buys, owns or trades in exotic animals, to blow the whistle on these wildlife traders and buyers.

2. Founded by a group of Singaporeans in 2001, Acres is a non-profit organisation aimed at fostering respect and compassion for all animals. Acres’s approach to raising animal welfare issue is to focus on education and back up our advocacy with scientific clarity accrued through research. Using our findings, we will inform the public and work towards synergistic partnerships with the authorities and related parties to improve animal welfare.

ACRES 'WILD BUT NOT FREE' CAMPAIGN

On 3 November 2004, Acres launched the 'Wild but Not Free' campaign, empowering Singaporeans to stand up for the victims of the illegal pet trade and put an end to this illicit trade.

The Acres Wildlife Crime Hotline was also officially launched then, to provide an avenue for those who know of anyone who buys, owns or trade in exotic animals, to blow the whistle on these wildlife traders and buyers.

The campaign also involves a month-long roadshow, which has since travelled to Plaza Singapura, The Heeren and Suntec City Shopping Mall. The roadshow involves an exhibition, 3-dimensional displays explaining the inhumane ways animals are smuggled and brochures explaining the detrimental effects of the trade and what is considered illegal to keep as pets in Singapore.

The roadshow opens daily from 11am till 10pm and is currently at Suntec City Shopping Mall (in front of the Singapore Ducktours). From 12 to 14 November 2004, the roadshow will be at Whitesands Shopping Mall (in front of Swensen's restaurant).