



Nation

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Girl's five hours of terror >N20

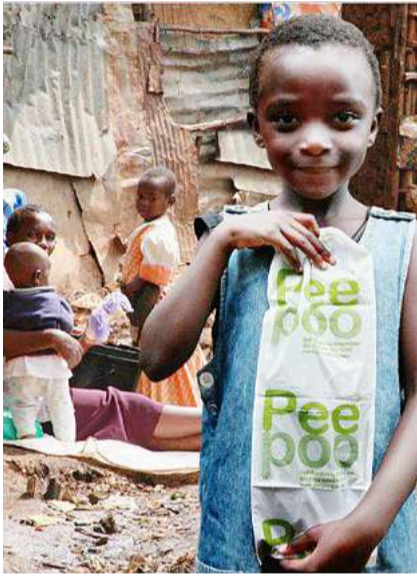
Mat Rempit mum and dad held >N27



Varsity City to house 330,000 >N10

> PULLOUTS

StarTwo



Swede success

A strong culture of innovation has transformed a poor agrarian country into a highly industrialised nation within a few decades. StarTwo takes a look at the Swedish miracle.

StarBiz

Future gains from Indonesia

IJM Plantations Bhd expects its Indonesian venture to significantly contribute to the company's production and earnings by end-2014 onwards.

Metro

Stop smoking

Smokers with school-going children are urged to cut down on cigarettes and use the money for their children's educational needs.

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PRAYER TIMES

	Subuh	Zohor	Asar	Maghrib	Isyak
AlorSetar	5:46	13:18	16:34	19:27	20:39
Penang	5:47	13:18	16:35	19:26	20:38
Kuala Lumpur	5:44	13:13	16:31	19:20	20:31
Johor Baru	5:38	13:05	16:23	19:08	20:20
Kuantan	5:40	13:08	16:26	19:13	20:25
Kota Baru	5:43	13:11	16:27	19:20	20:28

TOP 5 MOST VIEWED STORIES ONLINE

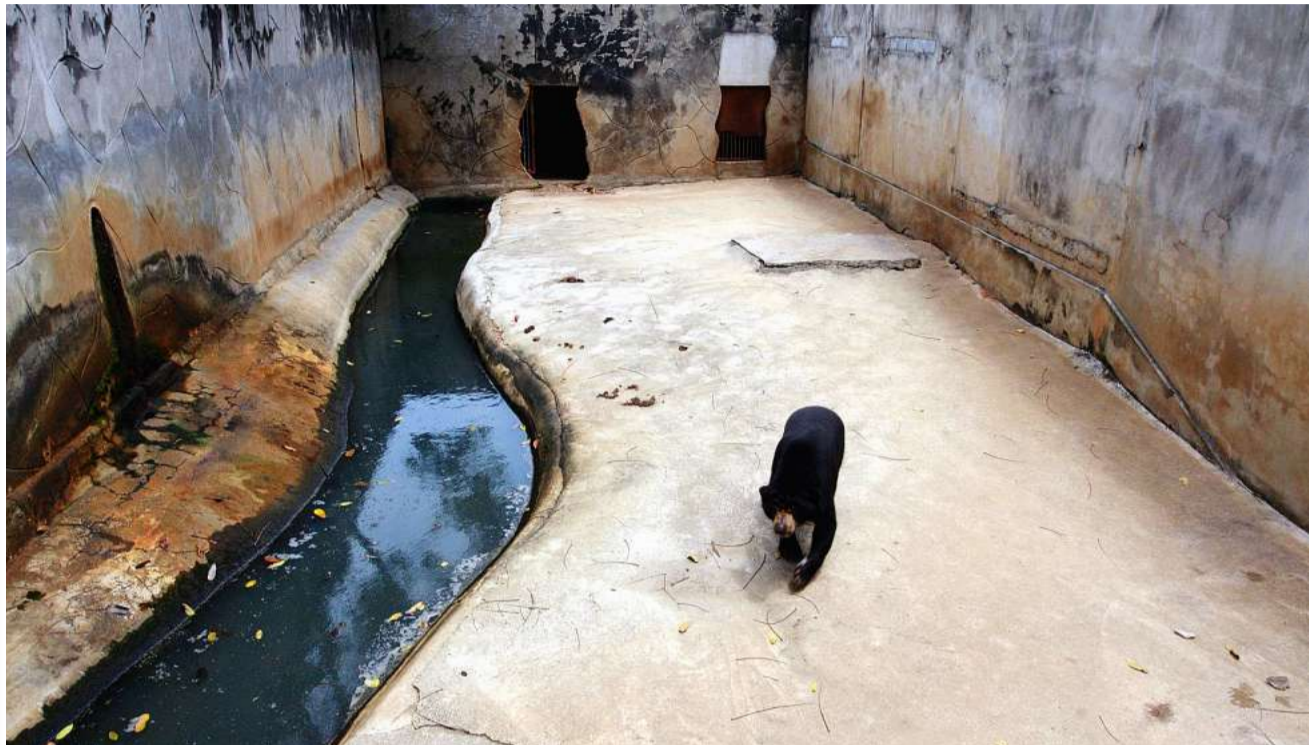
- 1) Najib earns wife's ire with his nightly iPad jaunts
- 2) Thieves walk away with RM3mil worth of diamonds
- 3) Libya says Gaddafi survives Nato missile strike
- 4) Reveal identity of man in sex footage soon, says Rahim
- 5) 136,000 who filed returns in March get tax refunds

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Pathetic existence: This pit-style enclosure for a Malayan sun bear has no shelter and the only source of water is stagnant.

Beastly conditions

Enclosures at many zoos not fit to house animals

Starprobe
YOUR RIGHT TO KNOW

PETALING JAYA: The condition of zoos and parks in Peninsular Malaysia has not improved since a survey by an animal welfare group in 2009 showed this to be bad.

A revisit last year by the Animal Concerns Research and Education Society (Acres), which conducted a survey on animal welfare in all 39 zoos and parks in 2009, found that conditions were not better and in some cases, worse.

It went back to 10 of the worst zoos on its list – two each in Johor and Pahang, and one each in Malacca, Negri Sembilan, Perak, Kedah, Terengganu and Kelantan.

After checking 159 enclosures, its executive director and founder Louis Ng said many animals were still subjected to deplorable living conditions.

"In some cases, the situation was even worse than what we have observed the previous year," he said, adding that the animals were housed in substandard conditions with most or all enclosures failing to meet minimum international standards.

He said almost 88% of the enclosures had unsuitable flooring such as wire mesh or concrete which was detrimental to animal's health.

Ng, whose group is based in Singapore, said poor hygiene was a widespread problem with several enclosures found to have dirty floors covered with food and faeces, excessive algae growth and had filthy bathing pools, and food and water receptacles.

"This lack of good hygiene can cause severe health problems for the animals and lead to a spread of disease," said Ng, pointing out that almost all enclosures had no suitable landscape to cater to the animal's needs with some even left barren, and all had little or no enrichment.

The survey also found that visitors could easily come in contact with the animals at



Choking point: This macaque is tied to a short rope, meaning it can hardly move.

more than three-quarters of the enclosures with there being no signs in most zoos advising them against touching, teasing or feeding these creatures and insufficient staff to monitor them.

Ng also said that almost all enclosures did not have areas for the animals to seek private shelter if they were stressed from too much public attention, adding that many were found to be either inactive or exhibiting abnormal behaviour.

A major concern was the use of neck tethers, leg chains and leashes for elephants, gibbons and macaques at some zoos.

A zoo in Johor had subjected its animals to circus-style shows in contravention with international guidelines and ethics, and Perhilitan's ban.

At the same zoo, a tiger was handled forcefully and beaten around the face with sticks during photography sessions.

Acres, which has handed its report to Perhilitan, is now working closely with Perhilitan to address zoo animal welfare issues.

Another group monitoring local zoos is

Nature Alert which, besides looking into the animals' well-being, is also monitoring any illegal trade activities.

Nature Alert, based in Britain, has set its eyes on a zoo in Malacca which was exposed for illegally obtaining many orang utans which have since been returned to Sumatra.

Its director Sean Whyte said the park still had eight orang utans, which were now housed in concrete buildings.

Although it had tried to stop its elephant show, a recent visit by *The Star* found that it was still on.

It was the group that alerted Perhilitan to the case in a zoo outside Johor Baru after a visit in February found a female orang utan to be depressed and malnourished, and that its male companion, given by the department in 2009, had recently died.

The female is now housed under quarantine at Perhilitan's zoo in Malacca.

Whyte said it had also informed the department about the zoo's newly acquired gibbon, which is a totally protected species, and that a worker had claimed that tiger parts were for sale with claws going for RM3,000.