

Renato Marques

**T**HE Anima - Society for the Protection of Animals in Macau is giving the government its last "wake-up call" after nine years of campaigning to call attention to the problem of greyhounds at the Canidrome facilities, the president of the association, Albano Martins said in press conference this week.

While conducting a review of all the processes that began approximately nine years ago, Martins noted the "constant warnings" that Anima gave to the government, in particular to the office of the Secretary for Economy and Finance, Lionel Leong who "never gave us one single reply to all our letters."

In the letter to the Secretary, Anima reaffirmed its intention to provide solutions for the adoption of the 650 greyhounds currently in the possession of the Canidrome Company.

As shown to the media, the association claims to have found, through several international organizations, adopters for all the dogs currently in the Canidrome. "To prove to them that we have adopters, we [found organizations that accept the dogs for adoption]. In just two days we found 650 adopters, and we have here 650 adoption forms filled and signed by me and validated by Anima and by the international organization," Martins said, while showing off a big pile of forms and adding,



Albano Martins (center)

## Anima makes its last 'wake-up call' to the gov't

"Now I want to see what the Canidrome will say."

As explained by the president of the association, these applications will be delivered today to the Civic and Municipal Affairs Bureau (IACM).

According to the same representative and due to the fact that the Canidrome says that it cannot find local adopters and intends to send the animals to the mainland, the government needs to "finally

wake-up and make a decision." There are two possible solutions: "Either we take care of the place [Canidrome facilities] on our own or in cooperation with IACM, or the government should take

care of it through IACM." In either situation, Martins claims it is necessary to keep the facilities where the dogs are kept operational in order to allow the adoption and shipping processes to happen quickly in accordance with the rules of each country or region. "That's why we ask the government to allow the Canidrome to continue being operational for one more year but without the gambling [betting and greyhound races] to allow us enough time to process the adoptions." He noted, for instance, that to be allowed to travel to Europe, the dogs required blood tests at least three months prior to travelling, while to be adopted in and shipped to the neighboring region of Hong Kong, "there is a quarantine period of four months."

Since there is no possibility for the local market to absorb the current high number of dogs, the Anima proposes to partner with international organizations to Europe (Italy) and the USA to allow the transfer and adoption of the animals in Europe and in American continents, and become responsible for the adoptions in Macau, Hong Kong and Australia.

According to the list of potential adopters, only around 10 percent of the greyhounds currently possessed by the Canidrome could stay in Macau or Hong Kong. The remaining ones will be redistributed worldwide for adoption, "free of charge."

## Indonesian Muslims celebrate Eid-al-Fitr in town

**S**OME one hundred Indonesian Muslims in the city have celebrated Eid-al-Fitr at the Macau Mosque and Cemetery, with an Eid prayer and following its tradition of asking and receiving forgiveness from one another.

Popularly known among Indonesians as "Lebaran," the tradition marks the end of Ramadan, making it one of the country's most important holidays.

In Macau, Indonesian Muslims are served by a few Indonesian Islamic migrant organizations, such as Majlis Taklim and Halimah, in addition to the city's only mosque in the Nossa Senhora de Fatima

district.

Kumbang Toh! News, Macau's Indonesian radio talk show and news program, also celebrated the Lebaran festival, holding a "Lebaran Special" on its Sunday show with guests including Indah Ponco and Amalia from Majlis Taklim, Vitri Esposito from trio Devita, one of Indonesia's female pop music groups in the 90s, as well as Aya Ibrahim, vocalist of Indonesian band Fatik.

Esposito, who has been a resident in Macau for a few years, told Kumbang Toh! News that this year's festival was "merrier" because she invited her family members from Indonesia

to celebrate the festival.

"It's my second time [celebrating] Lebaran in Macau. The first time was a few years ago and I remember going to Macau Mosque and came back home alone right after [...] I felt so lonely and sad that I decided to book a flight on that day and flew back to Indonesia the next day," Esposito recalled.

During the radio show, the guests talked about their new year's resolutions, as the festival is considered by many Indonesians to signal the start of a new year.

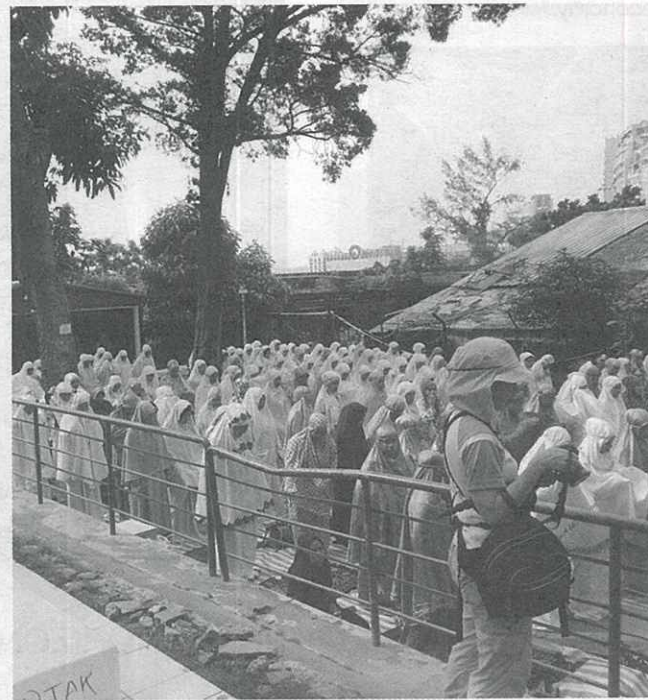
"I will get in touch with my family back home more often and I will try to finish

my work here in Macau as soon as possible so that I can go back and be reunited with my family sooner," said Ponco.

"Even though Indonesians come from different religious and cultural backgrounds, let's continue to be united," Esposito added.

There are currently some 4,900 Indonesian migrant workers in the SAR, the majority of which come from Indonesia's western region.

Yet Indonesian community leaders noted that the number of undocumented Indonesians, including those working illegally in the city, may be up to a hundred.



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