

Canidrome introduces dog adoption scheme

But animal rights campaigners are sceptical, in view of the canidrome operator's need to renew its concession

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Greyhound racing company Macau (Yat Yuen) Canidrome Co Ltd has begun a dog adoption scheme in response to criticism of its treatment of its animals.

But an animal rights campaigner has said the company is not acting in good faith.

Macau (Yat Yuen) Canidrome advertises its greyhound adoption programme on its website.

The website says anybody can apply to give a home to a retired racing greyhound.

The company has formed a team to evaluate the suitability of retired greyhounds to become pets, and to train them accordingly.

"We have always striven to safeguard the rights of greyhounds," the website says.

It says one five-year-old dog has been adopted so far.

Animal rights campaigners have often criticised the canidrome operator, accusing it of treating its dogs cruelly and putting down those that can no longer race.

A former member of the executive

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Fátima Galvão,
Animal rights campaigner

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board of the Macau Society for the Protection of Animals (ANIMA), Fátima Galvão, is sceptical about the canidrome operator's intentions.

"A friend of mine applied to adopt one a year ago," Ms Galvão said.

"He gave them all the papers and information required but there has still been no reply," she said.

"I really don't believe they are acting in good faith. They put a lot of obstacles in the way of people willing to adopt."

The canidrome operator's website says an applicant must fill in a form and show proof of identity and proof of address.

The owner of an adopted dog must renew its pet licence every year if he or she wishes to keep the animal, the website says.

Macau (Yat Yuen) Canidrome's exclusive concession to run greyhound racing expires at the end of next year.

ANIMA has demanded that the government refuse to renew the concession.

Dogged by controversy

The company has had the right to run greyhound racing here since 1963.

Its concession was last renewed in 2006.

Ms Galvão was asked whether the

adoption scheme was a just a ploy to improve the Canidrome's image and so improve the operator's chances of having its concession renewed.

"I don't know... but it is so strange," was her reply.

"That place, in the middle of the Macau peninsula, is worth hundreds of millions," she said.

"They can maybe earn more money by building something else there than by running dog races."

Gaming mogul Stanley Ho Hung Sun's Sociedade de Turismo e Diversões de Macau SA (STDM) is reputedly the biggest shareholder in Macau (Yat Yuen) Canidrome.

Mr Ho's fourth consort, STDM director Angela Leong On Kei, is the managing director of the canidrome operator.

Macau (Yat Yuen) Canidrome's latest financial report says its annual profit shrank by 17.7 percent to 85 million patacas (US\$10.6 million) in 2012.

Revenue from betting on greyhound racing has been falling since 2009.

Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau data show annual revenue from betting on the dogs fell by 13.2 percent to 178 million patacas last year.

Ms Galvão said that every year 400 to 500 greyhounds that could no longer race were put down.

Business Daily invited Macau (Yat Yuen) Canidrome to comment but the company had failed to reply by the time we went to press.

The Sydney Morning Herald has reported that international animal rights group Grey2K has urged the Australian government to ban the export of Australian greyhounds to Macau, saying they are mistreated here.



Revenue from betting on greyhound racing fell for the fourth year in a row last year



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