

The following article appeared in the Irish Daily Mirror on July 26, 2011, regarding dreadful inhumane treatment of a baby elephant in Johor Zoo, Malaysia. The editor of the article is Mike Swain, Science Editor (news@irishmirror.ie). The elephant's name is Paloh. She is kept in an area which is out of bounds to paying customers. This zoo allowed an orangutan to become a chain smoker and junk food addict which was reported in the Mirror in May. We urge everyone to write letters to the Malaysian Embassy (see contact information, below)

July 25, 2011

Paloh the baby elephant — horror at Johor Zoo

Investigators checking on Malaysia's zoos were shocked last Friday to find a baby elephant with its front legs chained together and unable to lie down for at least 48 hours. Powerless to walk she literally attempts tiny two-footed hops from side to side. Her front legs are held together by a chain a few inches in length. Weak from standing so long and with no shade, her legs are seen to buckle.



The rope and chain together prevent this baby from moving in any direction. Nature Alert's chief executive, Sean Whyte said: "Checking on Malaysia's zoos we have come to expect the worst, but this cruelty to a baby elephant is one of the most sadistic treatments of a wild animal (elephants are also a protected species) we have witnessed so far. The elephant's front legs are chained together making it impossible for her to move either leg by more than a few inches. During the time we monitored her day and night she had been standing in the same place and mostly in one hundred degrees heat for 48 hours."

Johor Zoo is no stranger to animal cruelty or complicity in the illegal wildlife trade. In 2010 it was found to be operating a shop inside the zoo which was openly selling illegal wildlife. A report by Nature Alert resulted in the closure and demolition of the shop. In May of this year Shirley, a chain-smoking, junk-food eating orangutan at the same zoo, hit the headlines throughout the world.

'Paloh' is never allowed out to join the other elephant held at this zoo. She is forced to spend day and night alone, beside a rubbish bin. A rope passed between her front legs appears designed to limit 'Paloh's' movement even further. It is entirely possible this baby elephant is never able to lie down or even stand in the shade.

A sign at the zoo says, 'Zoo Johor was established in 1928 by Sultan Sir Ibrahim Ibni Almarhum Sultan Sir Abu Bakar. Because of his love and interest towards animals, he named it 'animal farm.'

It is such a great shame his love of animals is not shared either by the zoo management or Perhilitan. The zoo's management has consistently failed Sultan Ibrahim and in so doing they bring shame on Johor and all of Malaysia.

"We call upon Perhilitan to prosecute the zoo management for this dreadful act of cruelty. There can be no excuse. Now we must wait to see if Perhilitan will urgently save this baby elephant or, as it more often does, save zoo management from prosecution. We also call upon Prime Minister to throw out the top management of Perhilitan for the consistent failure to do their job properly and to uphold the law," added Whyte.

Nature Alert is UK based non-profit organisation which works closely with Malaysian investigators. In the two weeks alone we have filed with Perhilitan 12 detailed reports on other zoos, detailing cruelty. Perhilitan claims to be visiting such zoos, but our evidence suggests if the visits do take place the officers are either inexperienced, incompetent or corrupt. What we see and report on is there for anyone to see – if they want to.



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