

# IIUM to set up animal shelter

On-campus facility for strays to be nation's first

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**PETALING JAYA:** An animal shelter that not only provides a safe haven to the stray animal population on campus, but also teaches students compassion and improves their mental health.

That's the mission of the animal rescue club at International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM).

"We not only save cats but all sorts of animals. Dogs, monkeys, squirrels, birds, you name it."

"Anything to give them a new life," said Zarinah Jan Yusof Khan, who is an adviser to the student-run Abu Hurairah Club (AHC), an animal rescue club started in 2011.

Now, it wants to follow in the footsteps of Karabek University in Turkey, which has set up an animal shelter on its campus in 2016.

Zarinah, an animal lover, said: "In Turkey, everyone takes responsibility to take care of animals. We want to start this here."

And that is IIUM's aim. It wants to be the first public higher learning institution in the country with an on-campus animal shelter, just as how Karabek University did it.

For now, Zarinah, who is a senior lecturer at the university's English language division, and a group of students are raising funds to run their rescue, medical treatment and adoption programme on their



**Deliberators:** Zarinah and Zukifli discussing the proposed animal shelter at the latter's office in IIUM Gombak.

Gombak campus.

"IIUM is also trying to cooperate with the Turkish government to get them to come here and share their expertise in looking after the strays," she said.

The university, which does animal rescues via the AHC, sees the shelter as more than just a solution to its stray animal population.

It could teach students compassion and grant benefits to their mental health, said IIUM deputy sector (student development & community engagement) Assoc Prof Dr Zukifli Hassan.

"It is very important for us to not only look after the environment, but also animals.

"Everything must be protected. If we fail that, we fail in our mission."

"If we help the animals, the barakah (blessings) will help us. We strongly believe that," he said.

He said mental health was one of the issues faced by varsity students.

"If we have this shelter, we can have programmes such as pet therapy and play therapy which can help students release stress and also show compassion towards animals," he said.

Zukifli said IIUM could also generate income by opening a pet hotel business.

IIUM is trying to get sponsorship from the Turkish government for the animal shelter before the end of



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this year, with Zarinah spearheading the project.

"The estimated budget is between RM50k and RM70k for a good structured building," she said.

Zarinah said the AHC had now started its cat education programme of the Gombak campus in collaboration with the Malaysia Animal Association.

"This will be an ongoing TMI (Trap-Neuter-Release) programme to give the strays a new life," she added.

Other than IIUM, universities such as Universiti Malaya and Universiti Putra Malaysia also have programmes to manage strays on campus.

## Inisiatif UIAM selamatkan kucing jalanan

LOS MO-PG37-24/9



**REKTOR UIAM Prof. Tan Sri Dzulkipli Abdul Razak (berdiri enam dari kanan) merasmikan program Catch-A-Cathon: Relocation and Adoption Event anjuran Kelab Abu Hurairah di kampus UIAM di Gombak semalam.**

**PERLINDUNGAN.** Kira-kira 80 sukarelawan menyertai program menyelamatkan kucing jalanan yang berlangsung di sekitar Universiti Islam Antarabangsa Malaysia (UIAM), Gombak, Selangor semalam.

Program Catch A Cathon: Relocation and Adoption Event itu dianjurkan Kelab Abu Hurairah, sebuah kelab penyelamat haiwan dengan kerjasama klinik veterinar Maya dan Mama Cat Wangsa Maju, Kuala Lumpur.

Penasihat Kelab, Zarinah Jan Yusof Khan berkata, program itu menyasarkan untuk menyelamatkan 30 sehingga 40 ekor kucing jalanan di sekitar kampus tersebut.

"Selepas diselamatkan dan diberi rawatan sepatutnya, kucing-kucing itu akan ditawarkan kepada orang ramai yang berminat untuk mengembalikannya sebagai haiwan peliharaan," kata Pensyarah Kanan Jabatan Bahasa Inggeris UIAM itu ketika ditemui selepas perasmian program tersebut semalam.

Jelasnya, matlamat utama kelab itu adalah untuk menubuhkan rumah perlindungan haiwan khususnya kucing jalanan pada awal tahun depan.