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Five years of animal welfare

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Source ::: THE PENINSULA/BY RAYNALD RIVERA

DOHA: As the Qatar Animal Welfare Society (QAWS) celebrated its fifth year of existence yesterday, people behind it felt a mixture of happiness and despair over growing support from people who care about animals even as the number of animals who need to be adopted has risen steadily and their long overdue request to be recognised as charity is still awaiting approval.



People view the different items on sale during the QAWS fifth anniversary yesterday. □ RAYNALD RIVERA

"The greatest challenge we face is getting recognition to be a charity. Unless we become a charity, we cannot accept donations from companies. As of now we can only accept personal donations," said Kelly, one of the committee members.

"There are companies who want to sponsor us annually, like pay our rent for a year, but we just cannot accept their help right now," she said, adding that becoming a charity would help them expand their services and extend their reach, by carrying out activities such as educating children on the need to respect animals.

Compared to five years ago, Kelly noted there had been a significant increase in the number of people who adopted pets, though she said the number of animals that need the centre's attention was also swelling fast. "For every one pet adopted, we rescue ten," she said.

Currently, the shelter houses 50 cats, 50 dogs, a donkey, a bull, chicken and ducks, among other animals. Around QR30, 000 is spent monthly on the shelter. The money comes from generous donations by individuals, but the group is faced with a challenging situation following a rise in the rent.

While celebrating its fifth birthday, the animal welfare group yesterday took the opportunity to raise funds for its expenses this summer.

Kelly said the summer months were the most difficult for them because it is very hard to collect adequate donations with many people away on vacation.

The volunteers were elated with the overwhelming response from the hundreds of people who came to show their concern through donations made in exchange for old books, DVDs, stuffed toys, display items, accessories, and QAWS caps, mugs, and t-shirts.

In less than an hour, the huge tent especially set up for the occasion was filled with people who not only showed their support financially but also visited the sheltered animals.

"Please consider adopting rather than buying pets. There are many animals in this country that need your help," Kelly concluded.

THE PENINSULA

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