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Dear Animal Friends

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Today I have a very sad subject to inform you of.

The past 3 weeks have been spent continually checking all 300 dogs at the Rescue Center to see if they were showing any signs of illness.

In with a very short period of time we lost 43 dogs in a terribly tragic way. Why all these dogs died remained a mystery to us.

It started with Sporty in compound 5, she began to suffer from internal bleeding and consequently died two days later. Then we found Moustache with the exact same symptoms lying dead in the compound. Next Tichen became apathetic her skin had turned yellow in color, despite infusions and drugs to support her liver we were unable to save her.

Things continued in this manner and every day more dogs got sick and died in with a very short time. Every day we all went through each compound checking every single dog, paying particular attention to their stomachs and gums, we began finding more and more dogs with jaundice. Of course we immediately set about trying to find out what was killing our dogs. We sent blood tests to the laboratories of Bangkok Hospital, hoping they could determine which disease or diseases we were dealing with. These were very expensive and unfortunately didn't bring us any steps further.

After so many deaths we started to think poison might be the reason, so we checked everything to try and establish the cause. We disinfected all the food, water bowls, not using any of the water from our well (after all the rains, we are now sufficiently supplied with public water).

A stretch of land behind our shelter had been cleared and we supposed that lots of pesticides had been used and may have contaminated our well water.

We were trying every avenue to find the cause, every day we receive food leftovers from the hotels for the dogs, even these we boiled again before serving, the resulting soup was greatly appreciated by all the dogs.

We also considered the possibility of rats -via the drinking water - as having infected our dogs with a disease but simultaneously in all the compounds??

Despite all our efforts we got no where, we could only helplessly watch our dogs die.

We did however, notice that there were significantly more deaths in our back compounds, these dogs eat mainly dry food.

In our house at Chaweng we have around 50 dogs, none of whom were infected. These dogs are fed a lot more on the food from the hotels and rarely eat dry dog food. They also get given dry food from tourists and some Thai people but not the same stuff as the dogs at the shelter.

So, the only thing left to be checked was the dry food.

We ceased using our dry food and bought new food from Macro. Jay and Linda also collected all the food which they delivered to the temples. They found a couple of suspect cases of jaundice, but thankfully no deaths. We sent samples of our dry food to Bangkok and ordered a small "Lab-kit" from Bangkok for ourselves so that we could test for poisonous toxins. The results showed that the food was seriously contaminated with Alpha-toxin.

Even though the findings terrified us, we were at least glad to know what had caused the death of so many of our dogs.

After a few days of "non-toxic" food it was obvious that many of the dogs were getting better, they started to play again and were much livelier. Unfortunately we still find sick dogs for whom treatment may be too late, but it's only a few individual cases now. We really are doing our best, still checking all the dogs every day. I'm sure for some dogs, once their system is compromised it's very difficult for their bodies to expel high levels of toxic residue. As a result of this we have started every dog on a course of liver supplement drugs, in a hope that they will survive this poisoning.

I am sorry to admit that we have had some procurement problems, as we need a lot of medicine and right now at first we were forced to buy what we needed at huge expense from pharmacies around the island but next week we expect a large mail-order to be delivered.

For the last 3 weeks we had a vet from Sweden, staying with us. Dr. Sith was so happy to have her as she supported him extremely well. Every day Bärbel and Günter spent never ending hours checking the compounds for sick dogs.

When we finally understood what our dogs had died of, we immediately contacted the producer of the dog's dry food in Bangkok. He explained that production had been changed in December from using rice to using corn and that the contamination must have occurred then. This "Gentleman" must have already known as he was not at all surprised when we contacted him.

Now we must find out how we proceed. Please consider that in Thailand there are no rules of law like those we are accustomed to. Next week we will talk everything through with our president and we will see how far the producer (a veterinary doctor) is willing to take back the dog food and refund our expenditure but would not accept us dumping all of the poisoned food in our incinerator.

First he told us he would reproduce the food for fish - a great idea, isn't it! In his thinking if people eat the fish, if they do not overindulge and eat too much, they may only suffer minor liver damage or have a nose bleed from time to time. He has now changed his mind and said that he will blend the food with non-toxic food, so the total contamination will be less serious. Providing that the animals do not eat too much they will certainly not die as fast, rather at a much slower rate. Words fail me! With such an unscrupulous businessman it will certainly be very hard to have our claims compensated. Furthermore for several unmentionable reasons I do not know whether it

would be prudent to inform the press; when our president returns next week, I will discuss things with him.

The supplier is now angry with me because I contacted Soi Dog in Phuket. My goodness, of course the first thing I would do is call them, knowing that Phuket uses the same food. John from Soi Dog also suffered the loss of 5 dogs at his shelter. Fortunately he received his order later than us so was able to prevent more deaths from occurring. The supplier is willing to take back the food from John and refund their costs. I will talk to John about how he wants to proceed.

At this point of time, we are waiting for the 106 000 Bath (2500 Euro) which had been submitted as a pre-payment for the next food delivery.

Then we have to see what we'll do with the poisoned food, the value of which is about 2500 Euro.

A Thai vet, who is breeding huskies in Bangkok, also bought from the same supplier. As of today, he has lost 10 dogs and another 3 are currently fighting for their lives.

It is also in the vets' interest to put a stop to the production of this company (and boss!). We have sent 2 of the original dry food-bags to Bangkok for testing and this vet is prepared to make these tests will be carried out thoroughly.

The dirty bastard of a producer had told us that this food had only been delivered to US!
As sad as it all is, surely it will be easier to proceed against him with a Thai person by our side.

I ordered all the sacks of food to be removed from our food store and had them all labeled "Danger-Toxic", in Thai as well, of course!

Our store was completely crammed full, around two hundred 20kg-sacks of dry dog food.

Unfortunately when the supplier comes to pick up his toxic waste, I will be giving away all the evidence, perhaps he will not refund anything afterwards. Meanwhile, we must wait for the written test results from Bangkok University and then we will see....

In the rescue center, we have many dogs waiting for their departure to Europe or other parts of the world. Usually they are chosen by their new families here on Samui. These dogs are then waiting with us around 4 months until they are ready for take-off.

Coco was already in Bangkok awaiting her flight when she had a sudden nose bleed, of course we couldn't allow Coco to fly, she is back with us and recovering well. She's inside our house, where the dogs hardly eat any dry food. Hopefully after a couple more blood tests Coco can join her new family in Germany.



Unfortunately we also lost one of our "flyer-dogs". Thai recently flew to Germany and died shortly afterwards from the same poison - he bled to death internally. Thai was also eating our dry food at the shelter for quite some time. Somehow I don't think we'll be reimbursed for flights and vet bills for these two dogs!

The bills will have to be translated into Thai and court procedures here are interminable and very often end with a settlement-where we can only lose our case.

Moreover, legal fees and court costs will certainly be at our expenses. Perhaps I have lived for too long in Thailand and have therefore lost all confidence in law courts and justice.



In this country, a dog is neither of importance nor of value. In the north-east of Thailand, you can buy an adult dog for 300 Baht or a puppy for 100 Baht, just then to kill and eat him. So, what's the value of a dog from an animal shelter?

Certainly not more.

I have no idea how long we will have to fight for the refunding of 2500 Euro for the food and of course all the additional costs involved. The blood test alone passed by Bangkok Hospital was 150 Euro. Our little test laboratory was not for free either.

On top of that we have to pay much more for our new food, but I do hope, we can enforce our claims for indemnification better with big companies such as Macro or Tesco.

Now we have our own small test lab and after a day of study, Dr. Sith is well versed. We have tested the cat food and it is ok. If in the future we have cases where the cause of death is unclear we will certainly be taking the dry food into consideration.

I hope that such a calamity will never occur again. You cannot imagine how it is to see so many dogs die and not be able to help them.

We deeply mourn the senseless death of all of these dogs, many who were with us for 6 or 7 years and who all had a sponsor\Godparent who helped support us throughout.

Dear Sponsors, I am very sorry and sad if your protégés were amongst the victims.

We will be contacting all of you, but at the moment, as you can imagine, we are still very busy at the Rescue Centre and a lot of office work has been piled up. Please be a little patient and understand the sometimes much delayed reply to your email.

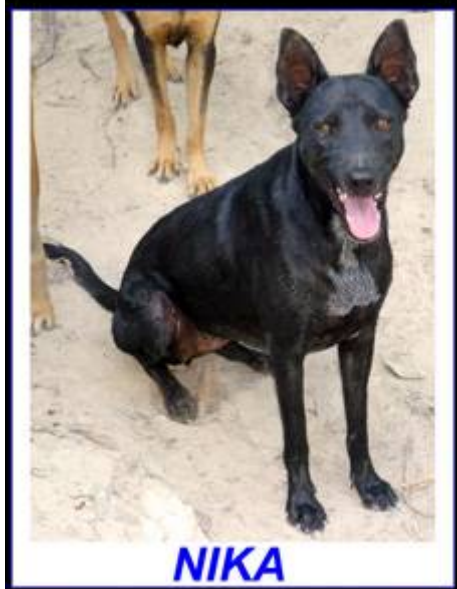
So please continue to support us with your donations!

Contributions for food are always welcome, especially now as the cost for dry food will be about 500 Euro a month more than before. This is a serious blow, but since we cannot order our food with our former supplier, we have no choice but to buy elsewhere.

I will get back in touch with you in about 2 weeks and hopefully with only positive news.

With a very heavy heart
Brigitte

These are the tragic victims of this unscrupulous "human being".





REINER



SPORTY



TRAVIS



CHANEY



BULI



HANNA



MONTE



JACK



TINCHEN



GIAP



JORMA



FATTY



OLIVIA



NENI



NOK



SISSI



YASMIN



GIOCCA



POCKA



MONICE



MOUSTACHE



CALVIN



GHINA



NEGRA



SMOKY



KERRIGEN



BRISA



TUNE



FOXY MAMA



ROGER



PIZZA



PUI



HAH



BONNY

