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'PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP'

3rd Malaysian-born giant panda cub named Sheng Yi

KUALA LUMPUR: After almost a year of being born, the third cub of giant panda couple Xing Xing and Liang Liang from China has finally been given a name: Sheng Yi, which means peace and friendship.

Energy and Natural Resources Minister Datuk Seri Takiyuddin Hassan said the female cub, born on May 31 last year weighing around 140g, was in good health and now weighed more than 27kg.

"The government hopes that Sheng Yi can boost the friendship between Malaysia and China," he said after attending the naming ceremony here yesterday.

The ceremony, held at the Giant Panda Conservation Centre in Zoo Negara, was also attended by Deputy Energy and Natural Resources Minister Datuk Ali Biju, Chinese Ambassador to Malaysia Ouyang Yujing and Malaysian Zoological Society president Datuk Zaharin Md Arif.

Sheng Yi has been on public display since December last year.

The panda couple's first baby, Nuan Nuan, was born on Aug 18, 2015, and sent back to China on Nov 14, 2017.

The second, Yi Yi, was born on Jan 14, 2018.

Zoo Negara deputy president Rosly @ Rahmat Amat Lana in April had said the zoo was waiting for the green light from the government regarding Yi Yi's repatriation to China.

The giant panda pair, which became a symbol of 40 years of diplomatic ties between Malaysia and China, arrived in the country on May 21, 2014 and will be here for 10 years under the Giant Panda International Conservation Cooperation Agreement Programme.

Former energy and natural resources minister Datuk Dr Shamsul Anuar Nasarah, in a report on Dec 2, 2020, had said that every cub born to the giant panda couple must be sent back to China at a minimum age of 24 months and not beyond 4 years old. **Bernama**



Sheng Yi eating bamboo at Zoo Negara in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. PIC BY MOHAMAD SHAHRIL BADRI SAALI