



Press Release

Boni and Beni Returning to Kalimantan

Penajam Paser Utara, 18 August 2021 – After spending years in Java, Orangutan (*Pongo pygmaeus*) Boni and Beni have finally returned to their homeland, Kalimantan.

Boni, a male orangutan with a history of being an illegal pet, was rescued by Magelang police force, Central Java, on 14 October 2006. The same thing happened to Beni; he was also an illegal pet who was later rescued by the community in Langen Mulyo, Salatiga, Central Java on 29 January 2013. Registered under E.2006/P/P.py/2003, Orangutan "BONI" is estimated to be around 20-25 years old, roughly the same with "BENI", registered under C/2013/P/P.py/006.

The Ministry of Environment and Forestry (KLHK) through the Natural Resources Conservation Center (BKSDA) Yogyakarta and East Kalimantan together with ARSARI Djojahadikusumo Foundation (YAD) through ARSARI Orangutan Sanctuary Center (PSO-ARSARI), as well as the Jogja Wildlife Rescue Center (WRC), and related parties have carried out a translocation process to return the Boni and Beni back to Kalimantan. Upon arrival in East Kalimantan, Boni and Beni were temporarily placed in a quarantine cage at PSO ARSARI, located in the area of PT. ITCI at Maridan Village, Sepaku District, Penajam Paser Utara Regency together with Bento, a senior resident orangutan.

"PSO-ARSARI was established to answer the need for a sanctuary for elderly orangutans, due to various conditions that makes it difficult for them to be released into the wild. Apart from that, we have also received approval from the Regent of Penajam Paser Utara regarding the plan for an island sanctuary, where all orangutans in PSO-ARSARI will spend the rest of their lives in nature, not in cages," said Hashim Djojahadikusumo, Chairman of YAD.

Boni and Beni's translocation went smoothly; they departed from WRC Jogja to PSO-ARSARI on 17 August 2021 at 5:00 WIB. They journeyed from New Yogyakarta International Airport to Balikpapan. After landing at Sepinggan airport, Balikpapan, Boni and Beni were translocated by boat from ITCI Kampung Baru pier and arrived at Jetty ITCI Kenangan at 15:30 WITA. Finally, at 16:00 WITA, Boni and Beni have successfully inhabited rehabilitation cage at PSO-ARSARI.

The next day, during the handover ceremony which took place at PSO-ARSARI Mess, the Head of the Yogyakarta BKSDA Muhammad Wahyudi explained that his institution has been trying to realize efforts to save animals through translocation and wildlife release. "Yogyakarta BKSDA has been trying to conduct efforts to save animals through translocation and release

them into the wild, which is also in line with the directive of Director General of KSDAE that animals rescued from illegal trade or taken back by the community must be immediately returned to their habitats," Muhammad Wahyudi explained.

It was also on this occasion that the Head of the East Kalimantan KSDA Office, Ivan Yusfi Noor, remarked that East Kalimantan BKSDA through the Balikpapan Region III Conservation Division, had previously checked the preparation and technical feasibility of habituation cages and other maintenance facilities. "And thus, we deemed PSO-ARSARI suitable to receive Boni and Beni to be cared for and nurtured until they can eventually be released into the sanctuary island," said Ivan Yusfi Noor.

Director General of KSDAE KLHK, Wiratno, also gives his continuous support. In his speech, he expressed his appreciation for all parties participated in the translocation process and requested that the plan to establish a Wildlife Conservation Center in PSO-ARSARI area can be realized as soon as possible. "I hope we can immediately disseminate information to the Minister of Environment and Forestry regarding the plan for the conservation center, together with the local government of PP,U so that the plan to return orangutans to their homeland can finally come true," Wiratno concluded.

Further Information:

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