



Image Source: Taipei zoo

Chapter 3

Modernized Muzha Zoo 1986-2014

The new Muzha Zoo opened in October of 1986, there were several times more in the number of staff, animal species, and area occupied. Also, the brand new hardware facilities, along with the presentation method all have taken a very different concept. The early Muzha period was a continuation and an expansion of the modern footsteps of the old Yuanshan Zoo, accelerating the speed of sending personnel abroad to study and becoming internationalized. After 1997, after Muzha Zoo has been opened for more than ten years, the education connotation expanded from conservation education to ecological education, while conservation work had also entered the stage of in situ conservation. At the same time, the technique and well-being of raising caged animals were enhanced, introducing topical animals, such as koalas, king penguins, and giant pandas, and as the second phase of the project was completed in succession, it had become the familiar Muzha Zoo that we know today.

Moving Plan to Muzha

On September 14th, 1986, 20 shuttle buses carrying animals marched forth departing from Yuanshan. With the warm welcome of 300,000 people lining in the streets, the buses traveled a total of 14.3 km to the new Zoo at Muzha. Along the way, at Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall, Main Campus of National Taiwan University, and the plaza of the new Muzha Zoo, there were on-the-spot fixed performances. The Animal Relocation Parade was not the only event celebrating the relocation of the Zoo, since July of 1986, "Taipei Animal Festival" series of events that were planned together by Taipei City Government and the community officially started, among which the album "Happy Heaven" planned by Rock Records Co., Ltd. is still sung today and has become signature song for the Taipei Zoo Volunteers.

The preparation of the building of the new Muzha Zoo took a long time. In November of 1972, Taipei City Government began to seek for a new site, and in July of 1974, the resolution was made to build the new Zoo at the present site in Muzha. In March of 1980, the detailed planning was completed, and it was roughly estimated that the project of the new zoo was broken into three phases; the Zoo would be opened in advance after the completion of "The First Phase of the Project." On October 31st, 1986, along with the centenary birthday of Chiang Kai-shek (national holiday), the opening ceremony was held, and it officially opened to the public on New Year's Day of 1987.

In addition to the preparation of building the new, main Muzha Zoo, the condition that comes with the new park relocation is that the traffic problem of over 3,000,000 visitors annually at every turn must be solved. The new Muzha Zoo is located at the outskirts of the mountainous area, the external transport needed to be improved. Taipei City Government saw opening up roads and bridges linking to the outside, widening existing roads, and methods of arranging buses, as well as opening up the Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) as its long term goals. In 1988, the work of MRT Muzha Line (now Wenhua Line) officially started, and opened in 1996, which became the first MRT route that opened up in Taipei.



Animal Relocation Parade, 300,000 people lining the streets giving the Zoo a housewarming welcome to its new home

Image Source: Written and edited by Jun-lan Lin et al, *The Torch of Taipei Zoo – Our Education Extended by Volunteers in 30 Years*