

China clones castrated quake hero pig

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A heroic pig who survived more than a month buried under rubble after the 2008 earthquake in China's Sichuan province has been successfully cloned, according to a report Sunday.

Scientists in the southern city of Shenzhen performed the experiment on Zhu Jianqiang, or "Strong-Willed Pig", and produced six offspring with DNA identical to their dad, who was hailed as a national hero following his harrowing ordeal, the Sunday Morning Post reported.

The births over the past few weeks of six [piglets](#) happened even though Zhu had been castrated before the quake, suffered [severe trauma](#) from being buried for 36 days, and is five years old -- or about 60 in human terms.

"But the wonderful pig surprised us again," Du Yutao, the leader of the cloning project, told the Post.

The 330-pound (150 kilogram) hog reportedly survived in the ruins of its sty by chewing [charcoal](#) and drinking rainwater.

His [offspring](#) reportedly bear a striking resemblance to their dad, including a birthmark between their eyes, the Post reported.

The piglets will likely be paired off and sent to a museum and a genetic institute, it said.

An 8.0-magnitude quake rocked Sichuan and parts of neighbouring

Shaanxi and Gansu provinces on May 12, 2008, killing tens of thousands and flattening swathes of the province.

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