

Indonesia to help smoking orangutan kick the habit

July 6 2012



Tori, a 15-year-old orangutan, smokes a cigarette inside her cage at Satwa Taru Jurug zoo in Solo, Central Java, Indonesia, Friday, July 6, 2012. Zookeepers said they plan to move Tori, who learned to smoke about a decade ago by imitating people, away from visitors who regularly throw lit cigarettes into her cage so they can watch and photograph her puffing away and exhaling smoke. (AP Photo)

(AP) — Tori is a teenager with a bad habit. The 15-year-old orangutan has been smoking cigarettes at an Indonesian zoo for a decade, but she's about to go cold turkey.

Zookeepers said Friday that they plan to move Tori away from visitors who regularly throw lit cigarettes into her cage so they can watch and photograph her puffing away and flicking ashes on the ground.

The primate mimics human behavior, holding cigarettes casually between her fingers while taking long drags and blowing bursts of smoke out her nostrils to the delight of visitors.



Tori, a 15-year-old orangutan, holds a cigarette stub between her fingers inside her cage at Satwa Taru Jurug zoo in Solo, Central Java, Indonesia, Friday, July 6, 2012. Zookeepers said they plan to move Tori, who learned to smoke about a decade ago by imitating people, away from visitors who regularly throw lit cigarettes into her cage so they can watch and photograph her puffing away and exhaling smoke. (AP Photo)

Taru Jurug Zoo director Lili Krisdianto said the move was aimed to protect four endangered orangutans at the 14-hectare (35-acre) zoo in the Central Java town of Solo.

Results of a medical test are expected Saturday to determine how much Tori's smoking has affected her health, said Hardi Baktiantoro of the Borneo-based Center for [Orangutan](#) Protection, which is helping to

coordinate the intervention. A mesh cover will initially be placed over Tori's cage, and later she will be moved to a small island away from the public, he said.

Several Indonesian zoos have come under scrutiny following animal deaths, including a giraffe that died in the long-troubled Surabaya [Zoo](#) in March with an 18-kilogram (40-pound) ball of plastic in its stomach after years of ingesting trash thrown into its enclosure by visitors.

Indonesia is also one of the last remaining countries where tobacco companies face few restrictions on selling, advertising and promoting products long banned elsewhere.

More than 60 percent of all men light up and a third of the country's entire population smokes.

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Citation: Indonesia to help smoking orangutan kick the habit (2012, July 6) retrieved 27 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2012-07-indonesia-orangutan-habit.html>

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