

Smoking Indonesian orangutan gives birth

September 28 2012



Tori, a 15-year-old orangutan famed for smoking since she was five, holds her days-old baby at the zoo in Solo-Central Java, on September 28. The birth was a rare event giving a boon to the critically endangered species.

An orangutan famous for puffing on cigarettes gave birth this week at an Indonesian zoo, an official said on Friday, in a rare event giving a boon to the critically endangered species.

Tori, 15, gave birth on Wednesday in the central Javanese city of Solo, Taru Jurug Zoo director Lilik Kristanto told AFP.

"The delivery took place naturally without [human intervention](#)," he said.

Visitors had for 10 years tossed cigarettes to the famous smoking [orangutan](#), who was moved in July to a 200-metre island at the zoo to force her to quit cold turkey.

Kristanto said Tori gave birth on the island, where she is being kept with her mate and baby.

"We're very happy. The baby is healthy and Tori is a good mother," he said, adding that the orangutan smoked through most of her pregnancy.

Tori mated with a 20-year-old orangutan in November 2011 and the birth is the first at the zoo since Tori was born.

"Orangutans are critically endangered, so this is good news for conservation. We have another young orangutan pair here, so I hope there will be more orangutan babies here in the future," he said.

Indonesian zoos have drawn international criticism for poor treatment of animals. In March, a [giraffe](#) at an eastern Java zoo was found dead with a 20-kilogram (44-pound) beachball-size lump of plastic in its stomach from visitors' [food wrappers](#) thrown into its pen.

Experts believe that between 50,000 and 60,000 of the two [orangutan](#) species are left in the wild, 80 percent of them in Indonesia and the rest in Malaysia.

Orangutans are faced with extinction from poaching and the rapid destruction of their [forest habitat](#), driven largely by [palm oil](#) and paper plantations.

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