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Press release

Tiger twins at the Tierpark

Female tiger Mayang gives birth to cubs

Sumatran tigers are one of the most endangered big cats in the world. Now, there is a new glimmer of hope for the preservation of the species at Tierpark Berlin. In early September, female tiger Mayang (11) gave birth to twins. The Tierpark team couldn't be more thrilled – especially following the devastating loss of all four tigers of Mayang's last litter, who were born with a genetic disorder and had to be put to sleep.

Sumatran tigers are in imminent danger of extinction, with only an estimated 400 of these majestic cats left roaming their habitat in the Indonesian rainforest. "The birth of new offspring is particularly crucial for critically endangered species like the Sumatran tiger," explains Christian Kern, Zoological Director of Zoo and Tierpark Berlin. "As a zoological institution, we see it as our duty to prevent the extinction of this and other species and to preserve fascinating animals like the Sumatran tiger for future generations." In 2019, Tierpark Berlin joined forces with the WWF to work to protect the tigers' natural habitat. All proceeds raised from membership fees of the "Team Tiger Berlin" project are being funnelled into improving in situ measures to combat poaching and habitat destruction.

"Here at Tierpark Berlin, we are fortunate to have a highly professional team of vets, biologists and experienced animal keepers taking care of the tigers every day, all year long," says Zoo and Tierpark Director Dr Andreas Knieriem. "But when it comes to raising tiger cubs, we have to take a step back. We must trust in the instincts of the mother, and we are confident that Mayang will do a good job." Keepers have been avoiding the area close to the birthing den in order to give Mayang and her babies plenty of peace and quiet. As a result, the Tierpark team has so far only observed the cubs via a camera installed inside the den. The cubs were born on 1 September. "That morning, Mayang withdrew to the den, where she gave birth to the first cub shortly after 3 p.m.," reports keeper Mario Hammerschmidt. "The second was born around two hours later. Their dad, Jae Jae, sniffed the babies curiously and later even lay down for a nap close to Mayang and the cubs." Jae Jae (13) came to Tierpark Berlin this January from French zoo Parc des Félines. He had already sired several healthy offspring, and he and Mayang hit it off so well that keepers suspected she might well be pregnant.



Over the next few weeks, no one will approach the den or the young tigers inside it. The parents are free to choose between the two areas of their habitat in the Alfred Brehm building and will therefore occasionally not be on view to Tierpark visitors.

Information about the health complications that affected Mayang's previous litter can be found here: <https://cloud.zoo-berlin.de/index.php/s/ibiX3WcNN6XPZ7m>