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Press release

Lucky number seven for Betty!

Tierpark Berlin's Indian rhino Betty has given birth to her seventh calf

Following a gestation period of 482 days, Indian rhinoceros Betty gave birth in the Pachyderm House of Tierpark Berlin at 8:42 a.m. on 5 September – just before the park opened for the day. The experienced mother had no complications delivering her new male calf, who weighs around 55 kilograms. By around 10 o'clock, the little bull was already on his feet and quickly found his mother's teat. The young rhino needs to drink about 20 to 25 litres of milk a day. His interest in solid food will begin at about two weeks of age, but he will continue to drink his mother's milk for roughly 18 months.

The father of this little Indian rhino is 28-year-old Belur. As is usual with rhinos, Belur will not be involved in the rearing of the calf. He and Betty were only put together for the mating season. Young rhinoceroses are born without their horn, to avoid injuring the mother.

"We are delighted about the birth of this little rhino," says Zoo and Tierpark Director Dr Andreas Knieriem, who is also a qualified veterinarian. "As with most animals at the Zoo and the Tierpark, Betty had no need of a midwife. She gave birth to her calf in the Pachyderm House in just 20 minutes and without our assistance."

Today, Indian rhinoceroses are only found in northeastern India and parts of Nepal. The keratin horn of the rhino is a highly sought-after ingredient in traditional Asian medicine. As a result of habitat loss and hunting, the Indian rhinoceros found itself on the brink of extinction at the beginning of the 20th century with fewer than 200 animals remaining. Thanks to intensive and strict conservation measures, the population is slowly recovering and there are now approximately 3,500 Indian rhinoceroses living in India and Nepal. The IUCN currently classifies the Indian rhino as "Vulnerable". Tierpark Berlin participates in the European Endangered Species Programme (EEP) for Indian rhinoceroses and is actively contributing to the conservation of this species.

The Tierpark is now home to three Indian rhinos: father Belur, mother Betty, and their as-yet-unnamed male calf. In 2019 – after the reopening of the Alfred Brehm building – renovation work will begin on the Pachyderm House. It has not yet been determined where the inhabitants of the building will be housed during this time. This will be decided in consultation with the relevant EEPs.