



## KERATAN AKHBAR

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### SAVING THE SUMATRAN RHINO

## Iman's egg successfully retrieved

**KOTA KINABALU:** An egg has been successfully retrieved from Malaysia's last female Sumatran rhino to be used for in vitro fertilisation (IVF) treatment to save the species from extinction.

The process of retrieving the egg from Iman was done by a team of experts from Leibniz Institute of Zoo and Wildlife Research in Berlin, Germany, led by Professor Thomas Hildebrandt, at Tabin Wildlife Reserve in Lahad Datu yesterday.

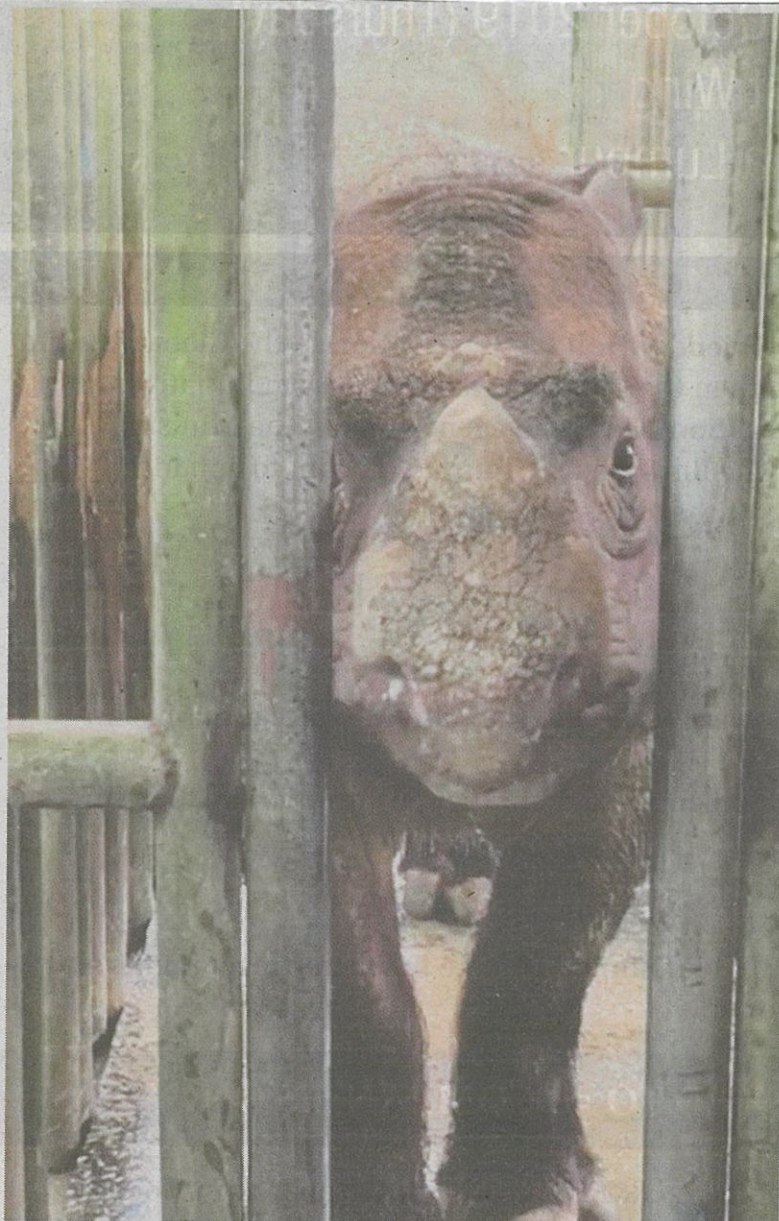
Sabah Wildlife Department director Augustine Tuuga said the egg was brought to the Centre for Wildlife and Livestock Innovation, Faculty of Sustainable Agriculture, University Malaysia Sabah in Sandakan.

He said the process to retrieve the egg was joined by Borneo Rhino Alliance, while the egg preparation and maturation were handled by Professor Arief Boediono, an expert from Universiti Pertanian Bogor, Indonesia.

"This is good news. The more eggs, the better. This will enable us to continue with the programme to produce an embryo through in vitro for this endangered species.

"Professor Arief will use the sperm from Tam, the male rhino that died in May due to kidney failure, for the IVF.

"We are ready to cooperate with Indonesia for further action," Au-



*Iman is the country's last surviving female Sumatran rhino.* PIC COURTESY OF SABAH WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT

gustine said yesterday.

Tam's sperm was retrieved before it died, and while Iman could produce eggs, she could no longer get pregnant due to her uterine tumour.

In August, Deputy Chief Minister Datuk Christina Liew led a delegation of state representa-

tives and the Sabah Wildlife Department to Indonesia to discuss conservation efforts for the Sumatran rhinoceros.

Iman's egg, which will be inseminated via IVF, will be put inside the uterus of another female rhino in Indonesia as surrogate.