

**SUMATRAN RHINO CONSERVATION CENTRE
DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE AND NATIONAL PARKS
SUNGAI DUSUN, SELANGOR
MALAYSIA**

WEEKLY REPORT

MAY 2000

BY

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&

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Introduction

Two major things were done this week including the conditioning of the females in the chute for blood collection from the ear and breeding introduction of Shah and Panjang. Apart from that, it was decided that one of the paddocks should be fixed and used only for breeding. At the moment, the cost of the modification is still unknown and Dr. Zainal will find the suitable contractors for the quotation.

Blood Collection Conditioning Period.

The conditioning period was started on 21/4/00 for all females. Every morning, the rhinos were put into the chute and their ears were handled while feeding them with fruits. This was done about ten to fifteen minutes for the rhinos to get used of handling their ears. All females responded positively to the procedure especially Seputeh, Rima and Panjang. Mas Merah was good when handling her left ear but a bit uncooperative for her right ear. This could be due to her blind right eye. As for Minah, she tends to put her head down throughout the procedure.

Tourniquet was used next and the respond was good. Blood collection was tried on all rhinos except for Minah after five days of conditioning and the result was encouraging. Blood samples were collected from Panjang (about 2 ml) and Seputeh (about 5 ml). As for Mas Merah and Rima, they responded positively to the needle stick but there was no blood flow. May be the size of the needle used was small (25G) compared to 23G used in Cincinnati Zoo. The 23G will be used next for blood collection when they are available.

Breeding Introduction

Shah was mixed with Panjang on the 24/4/00 around 8.30 a.m., a day before her expected estrus. However, there was a fight and both rhinos were separated. The next day (25/4/00), they were mixed again but Panjang was observed blowing and stayed in the wallow upon seeing Shah. Based on this, Shah was baited with fruits out of her paddock. In the afternoon around 5.00 p.m., they were mixed again. Both rhinos were given fruits prior of mixing. However, Panjang started blowing as she saw Shah. She was observed very disturbed on Shah appearance. She was then baited out from the breeding yard to avoid fighting.

Modification

The chute

The chute was modified to facilitate the blood collection procedure. The modified chute can squeeze the rhino from the side as well as from the back. This will restrict the movements of rhinos and the procedure can be done much easier. For example, the modified chute unable Minah to put her head down when handling her ears.

Breeding yard

One paddock has been selected to be fixed for breeding yard. Some modifications are needed including a partition of the yard, two sliding doors, drainage system and some obstacles. The cost of the modification is still unavailable and this should be discussed further. Once the breeding yard is fixed, daily introduction will be started for Shah and the two females; Panjang and Mas Merah. The same program will be conducted for the other females with Ara in the 10 acres enclosure. Meanwhile, Seputeh and Rima will be tested to confirm pregnancy before mixing with Ara.

Miscellaneous

Maintenance

Some doors and gates are rotten and needed to be fixed. This should be done to avoid any injury or incident either to the rhinos or personal involved.

Fecal collection and Blood collection

Samples were collected from all females except Seputeh. Her samples will be collected later. Blood collection is expected to begin from May to June 2000. Dr. Wahid and Mr. Yap have been informed and they will be ready to analyze the samples when needed. As for the fecal, they are still waiting some information from Dr. Keith Hodges. They will proceed as soon as they gathered all the information.

DISCUSSION WITH DR. EPINAL

THINGS TO BE DISCUSSED (MAY 2000)

- 1) Daily introduction : Shah & Panjang or Mas Merah
 - Everyday except Sunday / Public Holiday
 - Time: 8.00 to 8.30 a.m.
 - Personnel involved: everyone (time table will be made if necessary)
 - Female involved: Panjang first then Mas Merah after the breeding yard ready
 - The female must go into the chute first in the morning prior to introduction for blood collection conditioning procedure
 - Starting date: Monday (8/5/00) onwards
 - Food should be enough for both conditioning & introduction
 - Night stall should be ready prior to introduction, check for any default

- 2) Blood Collection Conditioning Program
 - Involving all females (other than Mas & Panjang) and probably Shah
 - Everyday except Sunday / Public Holiday
 - Time: after daily introduction
 - Personnel involved: at least two people for conditioning (Dr. Aidi & Steve Romo for the moment**); 3 person for blood collection later
 - Food should be enough & cut prior to condition
 - The 23G needle should be used for blood collection when available (possibly on Tuesday, 9/5/00). At the moment, the 25G with wrapping tape around the needle for conditioning purposes as suggested by Dr. Terri Roth (refer attached email from Dr. Terri)**

- 3) Fecal collection
 - Conduct on all females (Mas Merah & Panjang starts on 1/3/00, Rima & Minah starts on 1/4/00, Seputeh starts on 1/5/00)
 - Samples should be collected the first in the morning
 - Samples should be sent straight to the lab after collection. If not possible, used the ice container for gathering all samples before put them in the fridge

- 4) Rhino Introduction in 10 acres
 - Decide introduction method: either 24 hours or a few hours introduction
 - Prepare the observation method based on introduction method
 - Minah was used first followed by Rima or Seputeh depending on the pregnancy test result

- 5) Others
 - Breeding yards should be fixed as soon as possible after getting the quotation and approval
 - Chute should be touched up and ready for full utilization
 - All the doors in the...