

# U.S.-born Sumatran rhino formally handed over to Indonesia

By **Tatan Syuflana**  
The Associated Press

**W**AY KAMBAS, Indonesia — A U.S.-born Sumatran rhino ate leaves and wallowed in mud at an Indonesian sanctuary as the U.S. formally handed over the animal in hopes he will have offspring and help save his critically endangered species from extinction.

The eight-year-old rhino is now in quarantine at Way Kambas National Park after travelling more than 10,000 miles from a zoo in Cincinnati, Ohio, to the Indonesian capital of Jakarta.

U.S. consular official Robert Ewing delivered the 1,800-pound rhino to Tachrir Fathoni, director general for Conservation of Natural Resources and Ecosystem at Indonesia's Ministry of Environment and Forestry, in a ceremony at the Sumatran Rhino Sanctuary in the park in Lampung province.

"Thank you so much for the warm kindness (of the American people) for allowing the return of the one and only (Sumatran) rhino in the U.S.," Fathoni said.

Ewing noted the importance of Indonesia's biodiversity and the environment not just to Indonesians but to the world.

An estimated 100 Sumatran rhinos, also known as the "hairy rhino," remain in the world and nine are in captivity.

The 250-acre sanctuary has five rhinos in an intensive research and breeding program aimed at increasing the wild rhino population



**HOMECOMING FOR HARAPAN.** An eight-year-old male Sumatran rhino named Harapan, or "hope" in Indonesia, wallows in mud at Way Kambas National Park on Sumatra island in Indonesia. Harapan was formally handed over in the hope he will have offspring and help save his critically endangered species from extinction. (AP Photo/Tatan Syuflana)

on Sumatra island.

Harapan, or "hope" in Indonesia, lived at the Cincinnati Zoo and for nearly two years was the last Sumatran rhino in the Western Hemisphere.

It is hoped that Harapan can mate with one or more of the three females at Way Kambas.

One of them, Ratu, a 12-year-old born in the wild, is pregnant with a calf expected in May. Her first calf, a male named Andatu born in 2012, was the first Sumatran rhino born in an Asian breeding facility in more than 140 years.

The father of both of Ratu's calves is Harapan's brother, Andalas, who

was returned to Indonesia in 2007. Their sister, Suci, died from illness last year at the Cincinnati Zoo.

Indonesia said it does not want to be dependent on other countries in conservation efforts by sending rhinos to be bred abroad. However, it says it welcomes any technological or scientific assistance for the Sumatran rhino breeding program.

The Sumatran rhino is seriously threatened, with the species' numbers in Indonesia over the past 50 years decimated by rampant poaching for horns used in traditional Chinese medicines and the destruction of forests by farmers, illegal loggers, and palm-oil plantation companies.



**RONALD'S REFUGEES.** A man, right, rests at a downtown McDonald's in Hong Kong in this file photo. McDonald's in Hong Kong is no longer just a restaurant for people to munch a burger, it has recently become a shelter for "McRefugees" to crash. People who cannot afford high rent or want to save a few bucks from overnight transportation have opted to sleep in some of the fast-food restaurants that operate around the clock. (AP Photo/Vincent Yu)

## Lonely McDonald's death highlights 'McRefugees'

By **Kelvin Chan**  
The Associated Press

**H**ONG KONG — As other diners in the McDonald's enjoyed their Big Macs past midnight in October, no one noticed the middle-aged woman who appeared to be sleeping at a table.

The woman, wearing a grey coat and slippers, abruptly slumped over at about 1:20am, according to surveillance camera footage.

It wasn't until the next morning that a customer found the woman was cold and unresponsive. The police were called at 8:30am, about 24 hours after the woman first entered the restaurant, according to a report in the *South China Morning Post*.

The death of the woman, identified by police as a 56-year-old surnamed Lai, has focused attention on the growing number of working poor and homeless people spending their nights in McDonald's.

Dubbed "McRefugees," they sleep in 24-hour branches of the fast-food chain, which offer a clean, safe, and free refuge found in few other places in the southern Chinese business hub. More than 120 of the company's 253 Hong Kong outlets operate around the clock.

In a statement, McDonald's Hong Kong said "we welcome all walks of life to visit our restaurants any time."

It added that it tries to be "accommodating and caring" to customers who stay a long time in restaurants "for their own respective reasons."

The phenomenon dates back to at least 2007 and has also been documented in Japan and mainland China. It appears to be particularly popular in Hong Kong, notorious for being one of the world's most expensive places to live because of sky-high rents.

At the same time, homelessness is a growing problem, with the number of street sleepers tracked by the government rising to 806 this year, more than double the amount since 2007, though social-welfare groups say the actual number is likely higher.

One such person, Mary Seow, began sleeping in a McDonald's in the working-class Jordan district about two weeks ago after she noticed others doing it. Seow, who was preparing to doze off in a corner of the basement level restaurant, said she previously had been spending her nights in a park.

"Sometimes I'm quite sleepy and I don't feel shy about sleeping here," she said. "But sometimes I'm not sleepy and I feel quite shy. And I also ask myself why I have to end up in this way."

The 60-year-old widow, who arrived in Hong Kong two months ago, said she was swindled by mainland Chinese "friends" she met at a church in Singapore. They persuaded her to sell her house and go with them to invest the money in the mainland, where she spent five years depleting her funds, she said.

Now, she lives off her meager savings and some money from working as what is known as a "parallel trader," a person who carries diapers, baby formula, chocolate, and other branded goods across the border to the mainland. She said she's not ready to go back to Singapore because she doesn't want to lose face with friends wondering where she's been.

As she prepared to nod off, three men across the room lay covered by blankets on padded vinyl benches. A staff member used tables to block the entrance to the restaurant section where Seow and the others were sleeping, before turning off its lights for the night.

  
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