

Thai Zoo Hopes Porn Will Get Sluggish Pandas to Mate

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March 26: Chuang Chuang checks out a video of his fellow pandas mating at the Chiang Mai zoo in Thailand.

CHIANG MAI, Thailand — Chuang

Chuang the panda has been spending his days in front of a big screen television watching panda porn.

Authorities at the **Chiang Mai Zoo** in northern Thailand hope the images will encourage him to mate with his partner, **Lin Hui**, and serve as an instructional lesson in how to do it right.

So far, it's been a tough sell, the zoo's chief veterinarian, Kanika Limtrakul, said Tuesday.

"Chuang Chuang seems indifferent to the videos; he has no reaction to what he's seeing on TV," Kanika said. "But we're continuing to show him videos and hoping they will leave an impression."

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Pandas are threatened by loss of habitat, poaching and a low reproduction rate. Females in the wild normally have a cub once every two to three years. There are as few as 1,600 giant pandas in the mountain forests of central China, according to the zoo. An additional 120 are in Chinese breeding facilities and zoos, and about 20 live in zoos outside China.

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Zoo officials say Chuang Chuang will be reunited with his partner in about another week. The two pandas have been kept separate since late last year as part of efforts to spark some romance between them.

Chuang Chuang recently was put on a strict diet because zoo officials said he was too heavy to mate. The diet trimmed him down from 331 pounds to 313 pounds.

Thailand rented 6-year-old Chuang Chuang and 5-year-old Lin Hui from China for \$250,000 in October 2003 for 10 years. They are expected to generate millions of dollars in revenue from Thai and foreign tourists.