



Berlin, 10 July 2018

Press release

Happy birthday, dear Meng Meng!

Meng Meng turns five on 10 July

Zoo Berlin celebrated its female panda's fifth birthday in style, presenting Meng Meng with an impressive three-tiered birthday cake.

The tasty treat was made of beetroot and sweet potato, held together with ice and decorated with apple hearts. The cake was even topped with bamboo and carrot "candles" that had been lovingly carved by keepers and trainees. Meng Meng started with the decorations, devouring the carrot and apple pieces before carefully examining and deconstructing the rest of the three-tiered cake. Finally, she started licking the ice with evident delight.

At the Panda Awards held in February, Meng Meng was chosen by panda fans as the world's favourite panda outside of China. This award is proof that our adorable panda, with her round face and cute, stubby snout, has truly become a global star – and not just because of her tendency to walk backwards. The lively bear was born on 10 July 2013 in Chengdu to mother Yatou and father Yong Yong.

"Our little Meng Meng knows exactly what she wants," says division head Norbert Zahmel. "With this strong character, she has conquered not only our hearts but also those of panda fans around the world in a very short space of time. We are now looking forward to Sunday, when our chilled-out male panda Jiao Qing celebrates his birthday. Jiao Qing turns eight on **15 July** and, naturally, we have prepared another ice cake especially for him."

For Zoo and Tierpark Director Dr Andreas Knieriem, this special birthday has even greater significance: "At five years old, Meng Meng is now a mature young lady in panda terms – which means that we have reason to hope the pair will produce their first offspring next spring. It would be a sensation for us to have the first ever German-born panda cub. Next year we will confer with our colleagues in China to decide whether, when and how the two bears will be introduced."

Zoo Berlin posts all the latest panda news on its panda blog: www.zoo-berlin.de/panda-blog.

More images are available at: <https://cloud.zoo-berlin.de/index.php/s/5tWnel8PwTYvC0v>.