

## SUBUR'S SISTER?

By Lord Medway

Subur, the Sumatran rhinoceros at Copenhagen Zoo, is at present the sole representative of her tragically endangered species alive in captivity. She was originally caught near Pekanbaru, in western Sumatra, in the lowland rain-forest of the Siak-Kampar drainage not far north of the equator. Also trapped on the same collecting expedition were two other females and a young male. One female died in the jungle, the male escaped, and the surviving female — perhaps Subur's close relative — was brought back to be kept in special quarters built in the grounds of the presidential palace at Bogor, in Java.

There I photographed her in late 1960. Her original compound, largely denuded of trees, had proved too exposed and she was living in a fenced-off section of a smaller, shadier enclosure. Most of the ground had been

trodden into mud. In one corner she had developed a wallow, where most of her time was spent. The photograph clearly shows the sort of wallow constructed, under near-natural conditions, and

also the rhinoceros's normal posture in the equatorial climate to which she was accustomed.

Her life was dull, and fruitless. Successive trappings failed to produce a mate from

the Sumatran jungle for either her or Subur. Subur still lives alone, in Copenhagen, but the Bogor female died and, with her death, optimistic plans for a rhino 'farm' in Java also collapsed.



Colour picture shows Subur's 'sister' — lower picture is of Subur herself in Copenhagen, where she still lives