



KERATAN AKHBAR

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'Jumbo ingested toxic substance'

No external wounds but pygmy elephant was bleeding from ears, nostrils and mouth

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KOTA KINABALU: An adult female Borneo pygmy elephant, which was found dead in an oil palm small-holding in Lahad Datu, is believed to have died from blood poisoning, Deputy Chief Minister Datuk Christina Liew said.

The elephant, discovered in the Kampung Perpaduan Selm Bagalak area on Monday morning, was about 20 to 25 years old.

Liew said the latest case was similar to the death of a satellite-collared Borneo pygmy elephant named Girang, which died of toxemia (toxins in the bloodstream) on Nov 16.

There have been about 20 cases of elephants deaths this year due to natural causes, poaching and poisoning.

Liew said she was informed by Sabah Wildlife Department director Augustine Tuuga that the animal died two days before it was found.

"A post-mortem showed that it had multiple organ congestion in the heart, lung, liver, spleen and kidney, coupled with myocardial infarction (blood clot in the heart) and intestinal lesions," she said.

Based on this, she said the probable cause of death was ingestion of toxic substance (food poisoning). Sample issues had been sent to the Chemistry Department for analysis, she added.

"There was no external wound and neither was there any bullet wounds found on its body, although there was bleeding from the ears, nostrils and mouth," said Liew.

The post-mortem was conducted by veterinarian Dr Bong Ai Yin from the Wildlife Rescue Unit, assisted by two rangers.

"Generally, Malaysians are a caring lot but there are some in our midst who are apparently uncivilised, to say the least," she said.

She said the 10-Year Sabah Elephant Management Action Plan (2020-2030) stated that plantation workers and owners would be held accountable for any elephants injured and killed on their land.

The death comes just a week after the 10th Asian Elephant Specialist Group meeting in Kota Kinabalu where experts discussed plans for the conservation of the elephants which numbered between 1,500 and 2,200 in Sabah's wild.