



## KERATAN AKHBAR

SURAT KHABAR	:	THE STAR			
TARIKH	:	19/10/2019	MUKA SURAT	:	3
JABATAN	:	PERHILITAN			
KLASIFIKASI	:	<b>PERHATIAN</b>			

## Dept close to ending probe into killing of elephant

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**KOTA KINABALU:** Wildlife officials are reaching the end of their investigation into the brutal killing of an adult male pygmy elephant in Tawau last month.

Sabah Wildlife Department director Augustine Tuuga said their forensic team was establishing some matters before they could proceed to charge any of the suspects under the Wildlife Conservation Enactment.

He said there were important matters to be confirmed first, which could help make their case stronger.

He, however, did not elaborate on it for fear of causing "disruption in investigations".

"We will inform the press when we are ready to charge anyone," Tuuga said yesterday.

Of the six suspects detained over the killing of the animal, one has been charged under the Immigration Act.

Tawau police chief Asst Comm Peter Umbuas said the remaining five have been released on police bail pending investigations.

On Sept 25, anglers at Sungai Udin, Tawau discovered the carcass of the bull elephant which was initially thought to be a young female due to the state it was in.

Investigators later found that it was an adult, believed to be 30 years old, riddled with over 70 bullet wounds and with its two tusks sawn off.

The suspects, including an officer and two Felda settlers, were arrested on Oct 2 in Felda Umas and Ladang Dumpas.

The arrests also led to the seizure of five guns, including three homemade shotguns, 53 bullet shell casings, 59 live ammunition and two elephant tusks hidden in Felda Umas cooperative's farm.

In a statement later, Felda said it would not compromise on the act of brutality against wildlife.

Meanwhile, it is learnt that the informer who led authorities to the arrest of the suspects had gotten a portion of his RM30,000 reward, which was promised to anyone who could provide credible information on the case.