



KERATAN AKHBAR

AKHBAR	:	NEW STRAITS TIMES			
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FIRST-TIME ENCROACHMENT

WILD ELEPHANTS TERRORISE VILLAGE

5 elephants destroy banana trees, betel nut palms

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A HERD of five wild elephants were found roaming in Kampung Basung near Tasik Kenyir, destroying banana trees and betel nut palms since last week.

The pachyderms, led by a female matriarch, were now encroaching on agriculture plots near residents' homes at night.

A resident, Ismail Mamat, said the elephants' rampaging noises could be heard from the homes, causing fear among residents due to their proximity.

"The elephants have destroyed

my banana trees, which are about 10m away from my house.

"This is the first time the elephants have encroached on the village.

"It is not safe to go out at night and we dare not confront the elephants for fear of being attacked."

He said the elephants reached the village after crossing Sungai Telemong and the herd was believed to be foraging for food in the village by targeting banana trees, young betel nut palms and bamboo shoots.

"I believe the fruit season is one of the reasons why the elephants encroached on orchards in the village.

"Durian, duku and dokong are

in season and we have seen large numbers of short tail macaques.

"I am not sure if this was the same herd that destroyed palm trees in Pengkalan Gawi road a few months ago.

"They did not seem to fear people and that's why we are scared," said Ismail, who runs a restaurant near the house.

He said the villagers had reported the matter to the Wildlife and National Parks Department.

State Wildlife and National Parks Department director Dr Abdul Malek Yusof confirmed the incident and said Perhilitan's rangers were trying locate the elephants and drive them back into the jungle.