



**UNIT KOMUNIKASI KORPORAT JABATAN
PERIKANAN MALAYSIA
BERITA PERIKANAN HARI INI**

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Dugong carcass a surprise find

Penang not a habitat for these mammals

By ARNOLD LOH
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GEORGE TOWN: The adult carcass of a rare dugong washed ashore on Penang Island under the marina of a seaside condominium block in Gelugor here.

It measured 2.8m long and was estimated to weigh about 500kg.

It was found partially decomposed with its snout, flipper-like forelimbs and tail rotting.

Its unique peg-like molars, used for grazing on sea grass, were also visible.

But rather than assuming that Penang's coastal waters suddenly have dugong, the Fisheries Department suspects this carcass was carried by sea currents from Thailand, which recently had recorded many dugong carcasses being found.

State Fisheries director Zarina Zainudin said dugongs have never been found here in recorded history.

"This was the first dugong carcass ever found in Penang, and the state is not a known dugong habitat. Based on research, Malaysia's dugong habitats are in the waters off Johor, Sabah and Sarawak," she said.

She added that three fishermen helped Fisheries Department's officials bury the carcass on a beach.

Zarina said those who find sea mammals washed ashore can contact the Penang Fisheries Department (04-657 2777) or the national 24/7 hotline, FishCom (03-8870 4058).

Knight Frank Penang safety and security executive Abdul Haidi Pillay said on Nov 14, a resident of The Light Collection condominiums reported a foul smell emanating from below the marina.

"We saw something huge and white and quickly took a boat to get under the marina at low tide.

"We recognised it was a dugong and quickly called the authorities," he said, adding that though the carcass was decomposing, they did not observe any sign of injury, a common affliction of sea mammals who are struck by boat propellers when they rise for air.

Thai news portal *The Nation* on Oct 25 reported that eight dead dugongs were found washed ashore that month alone in Satun, Trang, Phuket and Krabi.

These regions are between 150km and 300km from Penang

by sea.

Officials from Thailand's Department of Marine and Coastal Resources were quoted as saying that although the causes of death could not be determined, illness was suspected, and three were found to be starving with little to no food found in their digestive tracts.

Only one of the dead dugong was found with rope burns, indicating that it may have been trapped in a fishing net.

Bangkok Post on Nov 18 quoted marine experts pointing out that up to 72 carcasses of this highly endangered sea mammal were found dead in the last two years, and it could be due to depleting seagrass fields off Thailand's coastline.

Dugongs are the only sea mammals that are strictly vegetarian and feed almost exclusively on seagrass.

Until the 1960s, dugong herds of up to 500 individuals were recorded grazing in the coastal shallows in many parts of the world.

However, the animal was heavily hunted for its meat and oil and is now regarded as vulnerable to extinction.



Sad sight: A Fisheries Dept officer gives scale to a massive dugong found washed ashore in Penang.

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Simpanan keseluruhan bekalan termasuk ikan segar beku adalah sekitar 10,150 tan

Stok ikan mencukupi hadapi musim tengkujuh

Oleh HAZELAN LIANA KAMARUDIN TUMPAT

Stok ikan dijamin mencukupi dan mampu menampung keperluan dan permintaan penduduk sepanjang musim tengkujuh kali ini.

Timbalan Ketua Pengarah Lembaga Kemajuan Ikan Malaysia (LKIM) (Pembangunan), Rashima Baharuddin berkata, pihaknya dengan kerjasama persatuan nelayan tempatan sudah menyediakan 343 tan metrik stok simpanan ikan.

"Selain itu, hasil kerjasama dengan lima syarikat utama dalam kalangan pemain industri berjaya mengumpulkan keseluruhan 9,600 tan metrik stok simpanan

an bekalan ikan segar.

"Pada masa sama, LKIM tidak menggalakkan nelayan turun ke laut ketika ini berikutan gelombang kedua tengkujuh baru bermula tetapi tidak boleh menghalang sekiranya mereka masih berkeras mahu mencari rezeki," katanya ditemui ketika Program Skuad Ihsan Madani dan Penyampaian Bantuan Banjir Nelayan Daerah Tumpat di Kompleks LKIM Geting di sini pada Rabu.

Menurut Rashima, jumlah keseluruhan stok simpanan bekalan ikan termasuk segar beku adalah sekitar 10,150 tan metrik.

Dalam perkembangan lain, Rashima berkata, sektor perikanan negara mengalami kerugian lebih RM594,000 sepanjang bencana yang melanda beberapa negeri ketika ini.

Menurutnya, kerugian direkodkan melibatkan musibah banjir, ribut dan hakisan pantai.

"Daripada jumlah ini, Kelantan merekodkan kerugian tertinggi dianggarkan berjumlah RM252,900.



Rashima (tengah) menyampaikan sumbangan ketika Program Skuad Ihsan Madani dan Penyampaian Bantuan Banjir Nelayan Daerah Tumpat di Kompleks LKIM Geting, Tumpat pada Rabu.

"Sepanjang tempoh ini juga, seramai 829 nelayan dan 53 usahawan mengusahakan hasil laut terkesan.

"Di Kelantan seramai 633 nelayan ter-

jejas dan Tumpat merekodkan jumlah tertinggi iaitu 291 orang. Selebihnya melibatkan Semerak di Pasir Puteh, Kota Bharu dan Bachok," ujarnya.

