KEMENTERIAN TENAGA DAN SUMBER ASLI

KERATAN SURAT KHABAR

SURAT KHABAR	:	STAR METRO			
TARIKH	:	11.02.22	MUKA SURAT	:	4
JABATAN	:	PERHILITAN			

'No wildlife poaching cases in 2021'

ONE of the few positives that came out of the Covid-19 pandemic was that it helped cut down wildlife poaching cases in Malaysia to zero last year, thanks to tighter movement and border control.

According to the Wildlife and National Parks Department (Perhilitan), wildlife smuggling also dropped by 60% in 2021 – from 10 cases in 2020 to four last year.

As for poaching cases, the department recorded 10 last year as well as in 2020.

However, its enforcement director Noor Alif Wira Osman credited the decrease to the establishment of a National Task Force (NTF).

"Wildlife smuggling cases dropped since the government formed the NTF, which comprises 19 enforcement agencies.

"Their task is to manage illegal entry into the country," he said.

Noor Alif added that most wildlife smuggling activities took place in Johor.

"Such activities are concentrated in Johor because of the number of possible wildlife trafficking routes there.

"These are where traffickers gather, transport and distribute animals and their derivatives to Indonesia," he said.

The NTF was established in May 2020 to strengthen the country's border control in a bid to curb illegal entry and the spread of Covid-19, as well as crack down on poachers.

Meanwhile, Wildlife Conservation Society Malaysia (WCS-Malaysia) believes Khazanah Integrated Operation (OBK) also made a significant impact in reducing all forms of poaching and wildlife smuggling activities.

Its country director Dr Mark Rayan Darmaraj said OBK, which started in September 2019, was one of the government's best efforts in getting multi-agencies to work together to clamp down on illegal wildlife trading and poaching activities.

The operation called for the police, Customs Department and state forestry and wildlife enforcement authorities to work together and as at December 2021, they arrested some 350 individuals and seized wildlife worth about RM36.1mil in the black market.

They have also destroyed 1,425 animal traps in the process.

WCS-Malaysia is a non-profit organisation with a mission of saving wildlife and wild places worldwide through science, conservation and education. — Bernama