

Bones may be those of more than one animal

TS 09.04.2006 P. 14

BY RUBEN SARIO

KOTA KINABALU: The bones that some fishermen found on a beach at the Survivor island of Pulau Tiga are more likely to belong to a number of sea creatures rather than one animal.

Universiti Malaysia Sabah School of Science and Technology associate professor Dr Felix Tongkul said the area where the fishermen found the bones was

a small bay at the northern part of island where debris from many sources was washed ashore.

"What the fishermen found could likely be the bones or carcasses of one, two or even three marine creatures", he said yesterday.

Dr Tongkul, who combed the Tanjung Pogong Pogong beach at Pulau Tiga on Friday, said he could not find any more bones

that could connect a small skull to a number of large bones found by the fishermen on March 30.

Dr Tongkul, a geologist, said he had passed on the information he had about the find to the UMS' Borneo Marine Research Institute and the university's marine biologist Dr Ridwan Ahmad said a researcher would be sent to check out the bones now being kept at Kam-

pung Binsuluk, some 80km from here.

The discovery of the bones had caused a stir among the villagers as one of the fishermen who found the remains said the skull that was washed up on the Pulau Tiga beach resembled the picture of a skull of the prehistoric Plesiosaur marine reptile dating back to over 200 million years ago when he was shown a picture of the creature.

Fisherman Helmi Hassan said the skull they found was about the size of a *sepak takraw* ball with a beak-like mouth measuring about 0.3m.

Among the other 30 pieces of bones they found over a 10m stretch were two pieces each measuring more than 2m while another 12 pieces each measuring about 1m appeared to be rib bones.