

Injured dolphin getting care at varsity institute

NSTS 28.12.2012 8

KOTA KINABALU: An injured dolphin rescued from Tuaran near here is in a critical condition at a research facility.

A marine life expert said yesterday the mammal, which was at the Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) Borneo Marine Research Institute (BMRI), appeared to be stressed and disoriented.

The adult male pantropical spotted dolphin (*Stenella attenuata*) was found in a mangrove area in Pulau Gandang, Teluk Selamat, Tuaran, about 34km from here on Wednesday.

A team from the state Wildlife Department, Fisheries Department and UMS were deployed to rescue the mammal, which is 2m long and weighed about 70kg. It was later sent to BMRI and placed in a large tank under close supervision by the team.

BMRI director Professor Saleem Mustafa

said the dolphin would be kept at the facility to monitor its health and would only be returned to the sea only if it was strong enough.

Saleem said the dolphin seemed restless and did not appear to be sleeping, which were signs of stress.

"There are no visible signs of dehydration, no extreme dryness of skin or skin peeling and cracking. But certainly, there must be some degree of dehydration that we do not know.

"It was not in an emaciated condition, so if the animal is sick, the illness could be recent."

He said BMRI would continue working with other agencies in taking care of the animal and reducing its stress as much as possible.

"We will monitor its health according to quarantine requirements. If there are signs of an infectious disease, the next treatment will be decided."