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Bigfoot 'can boost eco-tourism'

IF BIGFOOT really exists in Johor, the find may turn out to be a major crowd puller for the country's eco-tourism sector.

Johor National Parks Corporation (JNPC) director Hashim Yusof in an interview with a Malay daily said any physical and scientific evidence of Bigfoot's existence would turn the state's forest into an attraction for researchers and tourists alike.

However, Hashim said that JNPC was unable to track down Bigfoot due to a shortage of manpower to comb the national park.

"But we are willing to work together with relevant authorities conducting researches on Bigfoot," he said.

Johor Malaysian Nature Society (MNS) adviser Vincent Chow was earlier quoted as saying that three Bigfoots were sighted last month by workers in Kampung Mawai, Kota Tinggi.

They were believed to be between 2.4m and 3m tall.

The daily also quoted Kota Tinggi Historical Association committee member Zakaria Abdul Hadi, who had proposed that independent researchers be brought in to conduct a study.

"Without a proper study, Bigfoot remains a myth. There have been many tales about it.

"According to the tales, Bigfoot was sighted in Kampung Mawai Lama back in the 1940s," he said.

But one man who claimed to have seen the elusive creature is Bentong deputy OCPD Deputy Supt Mohd Fakri Che Sulaiman, who told *Utusan Malaysia* about his encounter with Bigfoot.

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“It was like a big gorilla about four storeys tall standing about 10m away.

“Although it was foggy, we could see it was staring at us with its hands on its hips,” said DSP Fakri, adding that it shouted after 10 minutes while pounding its chest.

He said although the incident happened 26 years ago at the Malaysia-Thailand border, he could remember it clearly.

DSP Fakri said he was then with the Forest Police Force in Pengakalan Chepa, Kelantan, now called the General Operations Force.

“It was about 8.30pm when 10 of us from Platoon 15 heard loud footsteps in the forest.

“We were ready to fire at it but were advised otherwise as we were worried it might become violent,” he said, adding that Bigfoot walked off soon after.

The next day, DSP Fakri said they found two left footprints measuring 0.9m long.

“Many trees were broken and uprooted as Bigfoot had trampled on them,” he said.

Bigfoot Field Research Organisation, a group which conducts scientific research to ascertain Bigfoot’s existence, claimed that Bigfoot could be found in most continents including the Americas and Asia.

It was claimed that Bigfoot had been sighted in 49 states in the United States with California recording the most with 326 sightings.

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