

Rare elephant found dead in Indonesia: official

March 28 2011



A herd of endangered Sumatran elephants roam in forested area of East Aceh district in Aceh province in 2010. A rare Sumatran elephant has died in Indonesia after blocking a village street for a week, an official said Sunday.

A rare Sumatran elephant has died in Indonesia after blocking a village street for a week, an official said Sunday.

The female elephant was in a "weak condition" after becoming separated from its herd about a week ago in Bengkalis district, Riau province, conservation agency official Adit Gunawan told AFP.

"It was hungry. We gave it food, water and medical attention. We tried our best to nurse it back to health but it wasn't getting better and died on Saturday evening," he said.

An autopsy to determine the cause of death is being carried out, he said.

Antara state news agency reported that the elephant, along with her two calves, had been blocking a tarred road near a housing complex since last Monday. The elephant could have been poisoned, the report added.

However Gunawan said there was only one calf, which would be taken to the agency's elephant training centre and "may be released to the wild again if conditions allow".

"I don't want to speculate the cause of death until we get the formal autopsy report. It might have died from stress, lack of food or poisoning," he said.

There are at most 3,350 Sumatran [elephants](#) remaining in the wild, according to the environmental group WWF.

Conflicts between humans and animals are increasing as people encroach on wildlife habitats in Indonesia, an archipelago with some of the world's largest remaining [tropical forests](#).

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