

Police Have Yet To Take Statements From Two Surviving Orang Asli Children – Mazlan Bernama
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KOTA BAHARU, Oct 10 (Bernama) -- Police have yet to record statements from the two Orang Asli pupils who were found safe after being missing for 48 days in the jungle in Pos Tohoi in Gua Musang as they were still weak due to dehydration.

Kelantan police chief Datuk Mazlan Lazim said the two survivors, Miksudiar Alui, 11, and Norieen Yaakob, 10, who are currently receiving treatment at the Raja Perempuan Zainab II Hospital (HRPZII), were also suffering from emotional instability.

"We have to wait for the medical expert to give the green light before we can ask the girls about what really happened from the day they went missing to the day they were found by the search and rescue team.

"We have to give ample time for them to fully recover before we can get the real story," he told reporters when met at the state-level National Sports Day celebration at the Panji Youth and Sports Complex here today.

Mazlan also repeated his statement yesterday that initial police investigation found that there was no foul play and that the children were strongly believed to have moved in a group and hid under the roots of a big tree hanging on the riverbank of Sungai Perias for fear of being found by the SAR team, to the extent of dying from dehydration.

Miksudiar and Norieen were found safe about 3.3 km from the Search and Rescue Operation Centre at around noon today, together with a body of another girl in the group, who was later identified as the nine-year-old Ika Ayel.

They were among the seven Orang Asli pupils, comprising six girls and a boy, aged seven to 11 years, who escaped from the school's hostel on Aug 23 for fear of punishment after going for a swim in a river without permission.

On Wednesday, the SAR team had also found a decomposed body of a girl in the river, who was later identified as eight-year-old Sasa Sobrie, one of the missing children.

Yesterday, a part of a child skull and rib bones were found about 500 metres from the site where Sasa's body was found. The identity, however, has yet to be ascertained.

Earlier today, the skeletal remains of another child, believed to be one of the Orang Asli pupils, were also found in Sungai Perias.

The other three missing pupils who were still unaccounted for were Jovina David, seven; Linda Rosli, eight; and Haikal Yaakob, eight.

Meanwhile, Minister of International Trade and Industry Datuk Seri Mustapa Mohamed,

who is also Kelantan UMNO Liaison Committee chairman, said an investigation should be carried out to identify problems that had caused the SAR operations to take too long find the children and to ensure that such an incident would not recur.

"Detailed investigation must be done as there have been too many speculations and theories, but we are not blaming anyone," he said.

Mustapa and Mazlan also spent time to visit the girls at the hospital today.

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