

Kg Hailam folk plead for stronger barriers to save village from erosion

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MALACCA: Kampung Hailam requires a stronger breakwater or barriers to shield the traditional village from increasing erosion. Too May Ling, 50, a resident, urged the Malacca government to put up stronger defences before houses in the century-old Kampung Hailam village are destroyed.

"Previously the government only placed granite rocks as barriers to prevent coastal erosion but the waves are stronger, more roads and facilities are destroyed. "Residents here also no longer able to practise taichi in the mornings after a concrete platform by the beach was destroyed," she said. She added that there were six homes nearest to the sea out of the 50 houses in Kampung Hailam at risk of erosion. Too, who is also the Kampung Hailam village association secretary, was concerned that erosion could affect tourism in the village.

"Like Kampung Morten, our village also draws a lot of visitors with traditional activities, a famous wishing tree and beautiful scenery by the beach. "I fear that outsiders may stop visiting us out of for fear for their safety," she added. Another resident, Lim Taw Thong, 56, who was seen placing rocks underneath the tarred road, said more than 0.6 metres of the road was destroyed in just a day.

"This road used to be a two-way road but the sea is slowly eating up the road. "I am more concerned with outsiders using this road. They may not know the road is a fragile structure

unlike the residents here," he said, as he buried wooden sticks to temporarily fence the road. Meanwhile, state Drainage and Irrigation Department director Mohamad Radzi Abdul Talib said his department is aware of the situation and have applied for funding to repair the damage to the Kampung Hailam coast.

From observations made at the site during high tide this morning, the relentless waves looked to be chipping away further parts of the beach. A Malacca Club member who was present, who only wanted to be known as Chua, said he was present when the high tide whipped the beach and witnessed the club's guard post at its entrance collapse into the sea.

"The sea water was whipping the banks and coming into the club's compound. It was like a small hurricane. I think it is going to get worse with the monsoon season coming," he said. 169 reads Kampung Hailam requires a stronger breakwater or barriers to shield the traditional village from increasing erosion, pleads the residents of the area. Pix by Khairunisah Lokman

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