

Winds blow away picnic plans

KUALA TERENGGANU: Monsoon winds triggered strong waves at the Tok Jembal beach here, uprooting several casuarina trees and sweeping them into the sea.

The winds also blew away beach-side gazebos at the popular picnic spot over the weekend.

This happened as a construction crew was putting up a rock embankment on one section of the beach, about 100m away.

Regular visitor Mohd Sebri Enduk, 51, from a nearby housing area, had to cancel his family picnic at the beach as all but two of the six gazebos were destroyed.

"I am saddened at what happened. This is a good place for recreational activities," he said as he surveyed the damage.

Sebri said the remaining casuarina trees could pose a hazard to visitors.

"The roots have been exposed and strong winds could topple them easily."

The laboratory assistant said the beach was frequented by students and staff of Universiti Malaysia Terengganu and Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin, which are located nearby.

Efforts to protect the beach from erosion are under way. About 100m away, a construction crew with three huge earthmovers were constructing a 2m high wall of boulders.

State Drainage and Irrigation Department director Mat Hussin Ghani said it would complete the



One of the four gazebos at the Tok Jembal beach in Kuala Terengganu that was destroyed by strong waves yesterday. Pic by Satiman Jamin

reclamation work of the beach soon.

He said the reclamation and strengthening work of the beach, which involves a 450m stretch costing RM2.5 million, began two

months ago and was expected to be completed next year.

"The beach that stretches from Sultan Mahmud Airport to Universiti Malaysia Terengganu is about 4.5km, with a 1.5km critical erosion

area. We have reclaimed a 400m stretch using grants from the Federal Government. We hope the state government will provide an allocation to continue the reclamation work for another 200m."