

Shipwreck exposed as river water recedes

PEKAN: The remains of a steam-engine ship, which used to ferry miners in the old days, were uncovered in Sungai Pahang at Kampung Tanjung, Paloh Hinai here, after the water level receded due to the current hot spell.

The submerged wreck emerged after the sand covering it dropped away.

The sudden discovery has set the quiet village abuzz with hundreds of visitors arriving at the riverbank to see the rusty shipwreck.

Paloh Hinai village headman Abdul Rashid Abdul Rahman, 60, said the shipwreck could be spotted, especially during the drought every year.

"The hot weather has resulted in the river drying up and the entire shipwreck is more visible now. Villagers searching for *etak* (a type of clam) along the river were the first to notice the shipwreck," he said yesterday.

Villager Ahmad Abdullah, 84, said the shipwreck was nothing new to them as the ship's funnel could be seen when the water level dropped.

"Every year, during the dry season, the shipwreck can be easily spotted. Due to the extremely hot weather recently, the river water is



Villager **Mohd Razlan Jaafar, 52**, showing the shipwreck in Sungai Pahang near Kampung Tanjung in Pekan yesterday.
Pic by Luqman Hakim Zubir

now waist-deep. People can just walk to the shipwreck and explore it.

"When I was a child, my father warned me not to swim near the shipwreck as the water there is very deep. The ship was about 100m long and was travelling from Kuala Pahang to Kuala Lipis when it sank," he said, adding that some claimed the wreck was a British merchant ship.

Former Pahang museum director Datuk Mohd Mokhtar Abu Bakar said the ship was believed to have sunk in Kampung Tanjung in the 1940s while ferrying a group of miners.

He said villagers saved the crew members but were helpless to prevent the ship from sinking.

"The ship was travelling upstream in Sungai Pahang to send workers to

gold and tin mines in Maran, Jerantut and Lipis. The ship could have hit something before it sank," he said, refuting claims that the ship was sunk by the Japanese.

"I hope the authorities can raise the ship and display it. This shipwreck is part of history," he said.

It is learnt that the ship's propeller, anchor rope and some parts of the engine were intact.