



The RM200,000 memorial at Pantai Sabak built to mark the place the Japanese landed is now prone to erosion.

Sea poses danger to memorial

N.S.T 22/01/09 M/S 15

By Alina Simon
news@nst.com.my

A JUST completed World War 2 memorial at Pantai Sabak, where the Japanese invading forces landed in Dec 8, 1941, is in danger of being swallowed by the sea.

The RM200,000 memorial built by the Kelantan Tourism Action Centre has an observation tower, a monument and a rest area.

It is now feared that it may not survive the onslaught of severe coastal erosion and the monsoon.

When the memorial was being built, the sea was some distance away but with the monsoon season still under way now, the rising tide frequently engulfs the whole beach, including the memorial.

Nawi Mahmood, 75, who lived nearby in 1941, witnessed the invasion. He was then only 13 years old.

"My father was away selling *budu* in Ketereh and there was fighting and killing.

"My mother was desperately trying to save us from harm. My sister was among the few villagers killed by the Japanese soldiers. The Japanese swarmed the beaches.

"There was fighting and many died. I was so scared for our lives."

Nawi said he had seen many tourists coming to Pantai Sabak.



The 'Batu Bersurat' at SMK Hamzah was placed by the Japanese to mark the defeat of the British in Machang.

"The sea used to be a mile away but over the years, it has pushed us inland."

His modest kampung home is located a few metres from the monument and is also in danger of being swallowed by the sea.

Nawi, who lives with his wife and three of his seven children in the village, said he is not moving because of lack of money.

Kelantan Tourism Action centre event manager Ismail Awang said

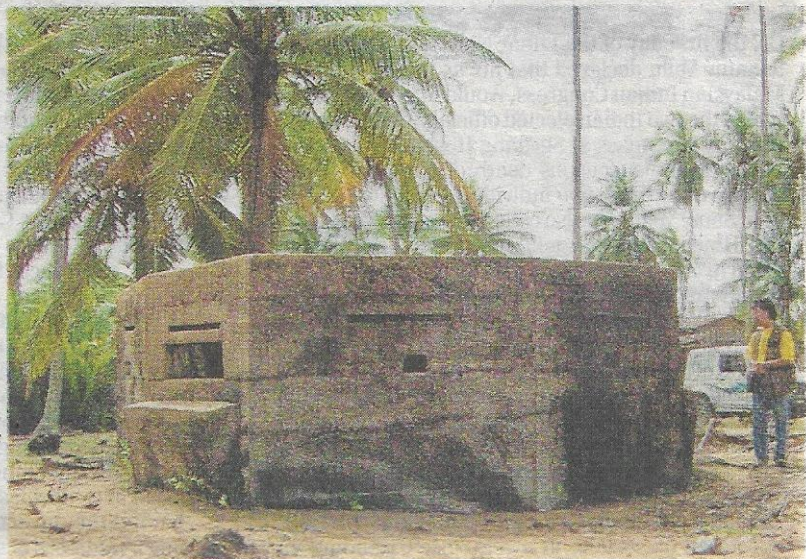
after the monsoon season, they would dig up the sand and repair the memorial. "It is our tribute to those involved in the war and a reminder to our future generations."

Getting to the memorial is tricky as the lane leading to it is narrow and winds through many villages.

Ismail said another item of interest is the *Batu Bersurat* at SMK Hamzah which was placed by the Japanese to mark the defeat of the British in Machang.



Kuala Pa'Amat was where the Japanese invasion took place on the night of Dec 8, 1941.



The pillbox at Pantai Badang.



A Japanese landing boat found in Sungai Kelantan in 1988.



Dog tags and old coins dating to 1920 were found at Kuala Pa' Amat.

Facts and legends

- After the Japanese had captured the beach, fishermen at Kuala Pa'Amat reported that they could not go out to fish for three days as their boats were hampered by floating bodies.

- When the order was given for the British forces to retreat, they cut

telephone lines and destroyed provisions as they moved south.

- The villagers of Kuala Pa'Amat noticed a group of Japanese soldiers, said to be Muslims, performing the morning prayer on the beach before sunrise.

- A big tree at Labuk in Machang,

about 30 minutes' drive from Kota Baru, is said to be indestructible, and that chainsaws and bulldozers break down when attempts are made to cut it. Pak Su Ali, a resident, said the Japanese used to execute people against this tree. A metal detector indicates the presence of metal in the tree trunk, possibly from bullets.