

Mini tornado rips off roof panels

Alor Setar folk rush to repair damage before rain

BY OH CHIN ENG
north@thestar.com.my

ALOR SETAR: Barely two days after the town was hit by a mini tornado, strong winds struck again and blew off the roof panels of 14 houses in Taman Wira Mergong here.

Among the affected residents were Kolej Universiti Insaniah (Kuin) students from Thailand, Sarinee Hama, Asmah Yusoh, Koriyoh Lodeng, all aged 20, and Yameelah Binmaad, 21, who have been staying in the house for four months.

"I was in the middle of revision with my room-mates when we heard a loud noise above us. I got up to check and suddenly several roof panels were carried away by the wind while the kitchen ceiling came crashing down.

"Luckily, none of us were hurt," she said after the 1.30pm incident yesterday.

Another resident Rashid Kassim, 60, said he was cooking when he heard a howling sound coming from his roof.

"I went out of the house to see what was happening and saw some of my roof panels being blown away."

Block E Taman Wira Mergong branch Umno deputy chairman Md Rejab Hashim, 59, said he had lodged a police report over the incident which had happened a few times in the area, adding that there was no rain at all, just the strong wind.

"Villagers are now rushing to repair their roofs before it starts to rain again."

On Friday, a mini tornado swept through a few villages in Alor Setar and damaged 72 houses. Two people were also injured.

On Oct 14, a twister lashed Kampung Alor Besar in Pendang and tore the roof panels of eight houses off. No injuries were reported.

State Information, Rural Development and Poverty Eradication Committee chairman Datuk Tajudin Abdullah said the Rural and Regional Development Ministry would repair and rebuild the 49 badly damaged houses in the Friday incident.

Of the 49 damaged houses, six in Kampung Batin and Kampung Sungai Baru will need to be fully rebuilt.

In Baling, several hours of rain yesterday caused several villages to be flooded and more than 150 people had to be evacuated from their homes.



The aftermath: Kuin students checking the extent of the damage caused by the strong winds on their rented house in Taman Wira Mergong in Alor Setar, Kedah.