

No end in sight to mudflows

Kinabalu villagers battered by debris from mountain every time it pours

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KOTA KINABALU: Heavy mudflows from Mount Kinabalu continue to torment villagers, two months after the earthquake that killed 18 people.

The mudflows, responsible for flash floods and mudslides, were also choking the rivers.

Days of continuous downpour earlier last week triggered flash floods in Kg Malangkap, Kota Belud, on the eastern foothill of the mountain on Friday.

Fresh mudflows into Sungai Liwagu clogged water intake points, forcing temporary shutdowns on Saturday.

The rains which continued to wash down debris from the mountain had affected the people, who are trying to get their life back to normal after the June 5 earthquake.

Flash floods, triggered by heavy rains since Tuesday, damaged road links, washed away three hanging bridges, a homestay and electricity poles as well as destroying crops.

Kota Belud district officer Abdul Gari Itam said yesterday that efforts were underway to get power supply restored to the village. The access road was now open to vehicles.

He said they were seeking funds to carry out repairs.

The mudflows from the eastern face of the mountain into Sungai



Ongoing effort: Officials trying to clear the silt after heavy mudflow into a water intake point in Ranau's Sungai Liwagu forced it to shut down (inset).

Liwagu had temporarily forced the shutdown of two water intake points that provided water supply to Ranau town and neighbouring villages.

Engineers have managed to restart the Bambagan intake point to resume water supply.

Work is being done to clear debris at the Kimolohing water intake

point which had been shut down following heavy rains last week.

Tonnes of boulders and uprooted trees which choked the intake points since the June 15 floods were only cleared up recently.

The latest mudflow is hampering efforts to restore stable water supply to districts in a valley of Mount Kinabalu's Crocker Range.

"There seems to be no end to our clearing efforts," Ranau district water engineer Anthony Jullah said.

"There are no more trees or logs washed down but we are getting heavy siltation from the mountain," he said, adding that they were proposing to build a water intake point in Sungai Kenipir to solve the recurring problem at Sungai Liwagu.