



Villagers making their way across the collapsed bridge over Sungai Ulu Telom in Cameron Highlands yesterday. Pic courtesy of Fire and Rescue Department

Cameron's bridge collapses

STRANDED: Four villages cut off from main road

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MORE than 1,000 Orang Asli from four villages near Pos Terisu here were cut off from the main road when a bridge over Sungai Ulu Telom collapsed during a downpour yesterday.

District police chief deputy Superintendent Zainal Abidin Othman said the 12m-long and 7.5m-wide bridge collapsed as

it could not handle the strong river current.

"The heavy rain, which occurred about 2am yesterday, lasted about an hour, causing damage to six vehicles (three cars and three motorcycles) in Jalan Kolam Air, Brinchang, here."

He said the rivers in the area were unable to accommodate the overflow of water during the downpour.

Zainal also said they received five reports on flash floods during the downpour.

Palanivel chided over land exploitation issue

LANGKAWI: Natural Resources and Environment Minister Datuk Seri Dr Wan Junaidi Tuanku Jaafar yesterday slammed Datuk Seri G. Palanivel for not doing anything about illegal land exploitation in Cameron Highlands when he was the minister in charge.

He said the Cameron Highlands member of parliament had held the portfolio longer than him and should not make allegations about the illegal activity.

"I am disappointed because Palanivel was natural resources and environment minister for two years. It has only been eight months since I succeeded him. Why didn't he do anything (when he was the minister)? Only now he is trying to act smart," he said here yesterday.

Junaidi said this when commenting on remarks by Palanivel on Friday that illegal land

exploitation in Cameron Highlands was difficult to curb because it was masterminded by "influential individuals or groups".

"If he (Palanivel) has detailed information on them (the masterminds), write to me. Let me know," Junaidi added.

He said amendments to the National Land Code were passed by the Dewan Rakyat relating to the matter, whereby offenders (who exploited land illegally) could be fined up to RM500,000.

Junaidi said the tabling of the amendments was an initiative by his ministry to tackle illegal land encroachment, like what was happening in Cameron Highlands.

He said there was a need for enforcement operations to be stepped up to go after the culprits. **Bernama**