

Indian Express

19 July 2018

Ambalappara, Vazhachal-Malakkapara Road, Heavy Rain



The stretch at Ambalappara on Vazhachal-Malakkappara Road, which caved in following heavy rain on Wednesday

Vazhachal-Malakkappara Road caves in; traffic curbs in place

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THE Forest Department has regulated movement of vehicles along the Vazhachal - Malakkappara Road after a stretch of the Ghat Road caved in at Ambalappara near the Sholayar Dam. Even as a team of foresters is camping at the site to prevent untoward incidents, Vazhachal DFO Vinod S V has written to the District Collector seeking a ban on the traffic through the forest stretch.

According to Sholayar Range Officer P S Nithin, a 20 m-long stretch of the road at Ambalappara near Sholayar dam has caved in, posing a threat to motorists. This is the highest portion of the road which overlooks a deep gorge. A 15 m-long stretch near the penstock pipeline has also collapsed.

"The PWD officers inspected the spot and they put up barricades to prevent vehicles from approaching the dangerous stretch. Though we tried to stop tourist vehicles from entering the Ghat Road, they began to protest when we allowed people to cross the check-post. We are awaiting the District Collector's order to ban traffic through the stretch. The PWD authorities have promised immediate steps to construct a retaining wall," he said.

The road links Vazhachal with Malakkappara, a hamlet located on the Kerala-Tamil Nadu border. The stretch is a popular get away for travellers as the ride through the verdant forest offers an incredible experience. The KSRTC also operates a service through the narrow stretch which helps the people of Malakkappara to stay

connected with Angamaly, the nearest town in Kerala. The road leads to Valparai, a hill station in Tamil Nadu.

Baby Jumbo's carcass recovered

The foresters have recovered the carcass of an elephant calf which drowned in the dam on Wednesday. The incident occurred deep inside the forest at Kappaya which falls under Edamalayur range. The tribals had informed the forest officers about the elephant carcass on Tuesday. The carcass will be cremated on Thursday after postmortem. Edamalayur Range Officer Aravind Balakrishnan said the one-and-a-half year old calf might have been washed away in the torrent caused by the flash floods.