



The newly inaugurated Bailey bridge on Wednesday, which connects Mirik with Siliguri.

Picture by Passang Yolmo

Bailey bridge restores Mirik-Siliguri connect

BIRESWAR BANERJEE

Siliguri: Chief minister Suvendu Adhikari on Wednesday virtually inaugurated the newly built Bailey bridge over the Balason river at Dudhia in the Mirik subdivision of Darjeeling.

The temporary bridge, erected swiftly by the Indian army with support from the state PWD, has restored connectivity between Mirik and Siliguri after a temporary Hume pipe causeway was washed away by the swollen river on June 19.

The 58-metre-long and 3.75-metre-wide bridge,

located some 30km from Siliguri, has a load capacity of nine metric tonnes.

It allows one-way traffic.

Addressing the inauguration ceremony in virtual mode from Nabanna, Suvendu said that the old bridge in Dudhia over the Balason gave way during the October 2025 flash floods, while a temporary causeway also got washed away in June.

"Immediately afterwards, the Indian army began building the (Bailey) bridge, while the state PWD extended full support to the construction process. This bridge will help residents of

the hills to overcome transportation problems they have been facing for the past few weeks," Suvendu said, thanking the army.

The chief minister said that a permanent, all-weather bridge, estimated to cost ₹53 crore, would be completed by March 2027.

"I assure you that the permanent bridge will be completed by March 2027, and I will visit the site to inaugurate it," Suvendu said.

This apart, a 50-member civil defence team with modern equipment is being stationed in the hills to handle future emergencies.