

PRESS RELEASE

Inauguration of the First Bailey Bridge under Indian Assistance package for post-Ditwah Reconstruction

A 100-foot Bailey Bridge was jointly inaugurated by High Commissioner of India H.E. Santosh Jha, the Deputy Minister of Transport and Highways, Hon. (Dr.) Prasanna Gunasena, and the Deputy Minister of Education and Higher Education Hon. (Dr.) Madhura Senevirathna on January 10, 2026. The event was also attended by Hon. MP Ranjith Wijeyrathna. The bridge was installed by the 19 Engineer Regiment, Indian Army on the B-492 Highway along the Kandy–Ragala Road, restoring a vital land link between Sri Lanka's Central Province and Uva Province. This marks the beginning of implementation of projects under India's USD 450 mn assistance package for reconstruction post-Ditwah. The implementation has begun within less than three weeks of announcement of the package during the visit of Indian External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar on 22-23 December 2025. Projects in other areas will also be launched in the coming days.

2. The bridge has re-established an essential transport corridor crucial for passenger movement, supply of essential goods, and local economic activity in the region. The newly commissioned Bailey Bridge has significantly improved access and mobility for communities in this affected area, particularly in the difficult hilly terrain. These restoration efforts are being undertaken in close coordination with the Sri Lankan Army and the Road Development Authority (RDA).

3. As part of this mission, four Bailey Bridge sets, with a combined weight of approximately 228 tonnes, were airlifted to Sri Lanka aboard four C-17 Globemaster aircraft, along with an engineering task force of 48 personnel from the Indian Army. This rapid mobilisation enabled the swift commencement of engineering operations despite challenging terrain and adverse weather conditions.

4. It may be recalled that during the visit of the External Affairs Minister of India, Dr. S. Jaishankar, to Sri Lanka on 23 December 2025, a Bailey Bridge located on the A-35 road in the Kilinochchi District of the Northern Province was inaugurated. This bridge was the first Bailey Bridge which was installed under India's post-cyclone assistance.

5. In addition to the bridge inaugurated yesterday (10), another Bailey Bridge located very close to this site at KM 15 on the Kandy–Ragala Road is scheduled to be installed soon. In the next phase, over 15 additional Bailey Bridges will be constructed over the coming weeks, ensuring comprehensive restoration of connectivity across all affected areas.

6. India's continued support for the restoration of critical infrastructure underscores its steadfast commitment to Sri Lanka's recovery and rehabilitation efforts and reflects the close partnership and enduring friendship between the two countries.
