

Malekhu Khola Bridge

Malekhu bridge open to traffic, PM inspects site

By Our Correspondent

Malekhu, Aug. 8:

Three weeks after the monstrous floods and landslides washed away parts of highways and swept major bridges throwing out of gear the surface transportation to and from the capital, the Bailey bridge here has been opened for vehicular traffic today.

The army and the department of roads have now started moving their equipment to Belkhu, about 15 kilometres from here where a major damage has been inflicted to another bridge on the Prithvi Highway, officials and engineers said.

Trucks and passengers' buses arriving from Mugling roared over the bridge soon after Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala met this afternoon with the army officers and jawans and the engineers of a squadron of the British Queen's Gurkha Engineers to "thank you" for the job they had put up.

Before a thorough traffic is resumed on the Prithivi Highway between Kathmandu and Mugling another major bridge will have to be constructed over Agra Khola at Mahadev Bensi. Britain which has made the 22 metre long Bailey bridge available for Malekhu will also grant two similar bridges for

both these places. Each of the two will be 66 metres long. According to British officials these ready structures are due in Kathmandu in the "next few days".

The army engineers working in tandem with those from the department of roads joined parts of the bridge flown into Nepal last week from Hong Kong. "Although the work could take only up to five hours to complete it took us two days in view of the difficult conditions we have to work in," Brigadier General Pratap Malla who coordinated the work said.

Ram Gopal Barun, chief of the district office of the department of roads said the work at Belkhu and Mahadev Bensi will, however, take longer than here because foundation work of the bridge pier has to be constructed.

Malekhu river surged by heavy downpour last month washed the major span of the bridge while one portion of it was intact. The Bailey bridge which has now replaced the damaged span of the old bridge forms part of the joint assistance between Nepal and Britain.

It is 10 and a half feet wide, good for heavy traffic and can carry up to 40 tonnes, engineers working at the bridge side said. "It will, however, take one vehicle at a time which rule will be strictly

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Newly established Bailey Bridge over Malekhu Khola



Newly established Bailey Bridge.



Temporary suspended crossing over Malekhu Khola



Erection of Bailey Bridge over Malekhu Khola by British Army and Royal Nepal Army.