

Government committed to bolstering border infrastructure: Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh

Inaugurates Col Chewang Rinchen bridge connecting Durbuk and Daulat Beg Oldie in Eastern Ladakh

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Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh has reiterated the Government's unwavering commitment to bolster border infrastructure to effectively deal with any threats that undermine the peace and tranquillity in the country. He was inaugurating strategically important 'Col Chewang Rinchen Setu', a bridge built by Border Roads Organisation (BRO) over River Shyok, connecting Durbuk and Daulat Beg Oldie in Eastern Ladakh, today.



“Keeping in view the current security situation, strengthening our borders is the need of the hour. Border area development is an integral part of our Government's plan and this bridge is a part of that strategy”, Raksha Mantri said.

Shri Rajnath Singh said, “India shares cordial relations with China. There are perceptual differences between both the countries on the boundary issue but the issue has been handled with great maturity and responsibly. Both the countries have not allowed the situation to escalate or go out of hand.”



Raksha Mantri added, “Kashmir is India’s internal and integral matter. Even the Chinese President Mr Xi Jinping did not mention Kashmir in his meeting with Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi in Mahabalipuram. China’s recent statement for action against terror is also significant.”

Raksha Mantri said, with the decision to make Ladakh a separate Union Territory, the Government has fulfilled the long-pending demand of the people, which will open new doors of development in the region. “Like the rest of the country, Ladakh will now become a destination for investment. There will also be a boost in revenue generation and employment opportunities for local people”, he added.

Raksha Mantri said, abrogation of Article 370 will put an end to terrorism and separatism which, since independence, has led to the killing of thousands of innocent people. He said, the decision will strengthen human rights and help in empowering women of the area.

Shri Rajnath Singh described ‘Col Chewang Rinchen Setu’ as a symbol of the Government’s resolve of positive change and all-round development of the nation. He said, the bridge not only connects Durbuk with Daulat Beg Oldie but also links the people of Ladakh and all interior areas of Jammu and Kashmir with the rest of the country. “Through initiatives like these, the people of this region will have the opportunity to become part of India’s growth story”, Shri Rajnath Singh hoped.

Hailing BRO as an ‘inspirational and disciplined force’, Shri Rajnath Singh lauded it for playing a leading role in the infrastructure development in far-flung areas in extremely tough and inhospitable terrain. He also appreciated BRO for playing a pivotal role in helping the people living in these areas.

Raksha Mantri termed connectivity as one of the most important aspects of development adding that new avenues can be opened through people-to-people contact. Saying that BRO is utilising over Rs 900 crore for the development of Ladakh, Raksha Mantri expressed confidence that the region will soon become a hub for not only domestic but foreign tourists as well. He complimented BRO for constructing 1,200 kms of roads in financial year 2018-19.

Raksha Mantri paid rich tribute to Col Chewang Rinchen, saying that his courage and valour is a source of inspiration to one and all. He also felicitated Dr Phunsog Angmo, daughter of Col Rinchen, for the contribution made by her father in the service of the nation.

Chief of Army Staff General Bipin Rawat, General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Northern

Command Lt Gen Ranbir Singh, DG BRO Lt Gen Harpal Singh, Ladakh Member of Parliament Shri Jamyang Tsering Namgyal and other senior officers of Army, BRO and Ministry of Defence were present on the occasion.

Sandwiched between strategic Karakoram and Chang Chenmo ranges, the 'Col Chewang Rinchen Setu' is a 430-metre bridge built at an altitude of about 15,000 feet using Micro Piling Technology. The construction has been completed in record time within 15 months.

Col Chewang Rinchen, born on November 11, 1931 at Sumur, Nubra Valley in Ladakh region, is known as the "Lion of Ladakh" for his extraordinary acts of courage in defending Leh and Partapur sector. He is one of only six Armed Forces personnel to have been twice awarded the Maha Vir Chakra, the second highest Indian Gallantry Award.

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