

Jasrotia inaugurates first-ever Faral-Chafadeyan road since independence

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: In a major step towards strengthening rural infrastructure and improving connectivity in far-flung areas, Rajiv Jasrotia Tuesday inaugurated the construction of a crucial link road from Faral to Chafadeyan via Bhourth in Jasrota constituency.

The 3-kilometre-long road project, being developed at an estimated cost of Rs 80 lakh, marks a historic milestone as it is the first road to be constructed in the area since Independence.

The project will be executed by the Public Works Department (R&B) Division Kathua under the UT Capex Budget 2025-26. Once completed, the road is expected to significantly enhance connectivity for several remote villages, reducing travel time, facilitating easier movement of goods and services, and providing better access to essential services such as healthcare and education.

Locals described the initiative as a long-awaited development, stating that the absence of proper road connectivity had posed serious challenges for decades, particularly during



medical emergencies and adverse weather conditions.

The new road is anticipated to not only ease daily commuting but also unlock economic opportunities by linking rural pockets with nearby markets.

On the same occasion, the MLA also inaugurated macadamization work on the PMGSY Link Road to Mohalla Shaheed Chaggar Link at Jakhole. The project, undertaken under the Cities and Towns (C&T) Sector Capex Budget 2025-26, has been sanctioned at a cost of Rs 15 lakh and aims to improve road surface quality, ensuring smoother and safer transportation for residents.

Addressing the gathering, Jasrotia reiterated the government's firm

commitment to holistic and inclusive development.

He emphasized that infrastructure development, particularly road connectivity, is the backbone of progress and plays a pivotal role in transforming the socio-economic landscape of rural areas.

He added that better roads not only ensure seamless mobility but also strengthen access to education, healthcare, and employment opportunities.

Highlighting the significance of the Faral-Chafadeyan road, he said that the project fulfills a long-pending demand of the people and reflects the administration's resolve to bridge developmental disparities in neglected regions. He assured that

similar initiatives will continue to be prioritized to uplift rural communities.

Later, the MLA held a Public Darbar at Faral, providing a platform for direct interaction between the administration and the people. Residents actively participated, raising issues related to basic amenities and local development. Officials from various departments, including PWD, PDD, PHE, REW, PMGSY, Revenue, Police, Food & Supplies, Flood Control, Irrigation, Agriculture, and Rural Development, were present to address grievances and ensure prompt redressal.

Jasrotia assured the public that all genuine demands would be addressed in a transparent and time-bound manner.

IIM-J inaugurates Trekking-Based Leadership Development Programme for NTPC Managers

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JAMMU: The Indian Institute of Management Jammu inaugurated the Leadership Skills for Managers—Trekking-Based Management Development Programme (MDP) for managers of NTPC, a Maharatna Central Public Sector Enterprise of India, in the picturesque Lower Himalayas on 17 March 2026.

The programme commenced at the IIM Jammu Classroom with a traditional lamp-lighting ceremony, marking the beginning of a unique experiential learning journey set against the serene Himalayan landscape.

Integrating trekking-based experiential learning with structured leadership training, the programme aims to enhance leadership capabilities, resilience, teamwork, and strategic thinking among participants. A total of 44 participants from across the country are part of this immersive programme.

The inaugural session was presided over by Prof. Rajesh Sikka, Co-Chairperson, Executive Education and Consultancy, IIM Jammu. Dr. Ashish



Kumar, Programme Director, was also present on the occasion.

Dr. Guanguanang Kahmei is also the Programme Director for this training program. Prof. Rajesh Sikka, Co-Chairperson, Executive Education and Consultancy, IIM Jammu, provided an overview of the Institute's Executive Education and Consultancy initiatives.

Heremarkered thatskilling is a continuous journey in a dynamic and volatile environment, underscoring the importance of industry-oriented skill development and expressing confidence that the programme would be enriching for all participants.

He further highlighted that such experiential programmes play a vital role in bridging the gap between

theoretical knowledge and practical application, enabling professionals to navigate complex real-world challenges with greater agility and insight.

He also encouraged participants to actively engage in the learning process, exchange ideas, and build meaningful professional networks.

Dr. Ashish Kumar, Programme Director, IIM Jammu, highlighted that in the course of professional responsibilities, individuals often tend to lose sight of broader leadership goals as they become absorbed in routine tasks and immediate targets.

He emphasized the importance of consciously realigning individual objectives with a larger leadership vision to ensure meaningful and impactful

outcomes.

Providing an overview of the three-day programme, he elaborated on its focus on experiential learning, self-reflection, and collaborative engagement. He encouraged participants to actively immerse themselves in the sessions with enthusiasm and an open mindset to derive maximum value from the programme.

The programme also featured participant introductions and sharing of expectations, fostering an interactive and engaging learning environment. The session concluded with a vote of thanks proposed by Pardeep Saini, Programme Officer, Business Development, IIM Jammu. Participants were also given a guided tour of the Institute's campus.

Indian Army host special event for Ex-Servicemen, war widows at Batsiyala

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REASI: The Indian Army organized a special interaction programme with Ex-Servicemen (ESM) and War Widows at Batsiyala, District Reasi.

The event was aimed at recognizing the invaluable contribution of veterans and honoring the families of brave soldiers who sacrificed their lives for the nation. A large number of Ex-Servicemen and War Widows from the region participated in the event.

Indian Army representatives addressed various concerns, including welfare schemes,

pensions, medical facilities and resettlement opportunities for veterans and their families.

This initiative reaffirms the Indian Army's commitment to the welfare and well-being of its veterans and the families of bravehearts, particularly those in remote areas.

The event also served as a platform to strengthen the bond between serving soldiers and the veteran community.

The Indian Army remains dedicated to supporting its veterans and their families in every possible way.

Modi Govt's proactive policies protected Indians, ensured energy security: Khatana

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI/JAMMU: Senior BJP leader and MP Rajya Sabha (Nominated), Er. Gulam Ali Khatana, Tuesday lauded the proactive and decisive leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji during the ongoing geopolitical tensions in West Asia, stating that the government's preparedness in protecting both Indian citizens and national energy security has been "unimaginable and exemplary."

Raising the issue during Zero Hour in Parliament, Khatana drew attention to the evolving situation in West Asia, particularly the tensions involving Israel and Iran, and their wider impact on the Gulf region.

Highlighting the



IN THE CHAIR : HON'BLE CHAIRMAN, SHRI C.P. RADHAKRISHNA

importance of the region, he noted that nearly one crore Indians live and work across West Asia and the Gulf countries, making their safety and welfare a top priority for the Government of India. He also emphasized that the region accounts for

nearly 200 billion US dollars in annual trade with India and remains critical for the country's energy supplies.

Khatana appreciated the swift and coordinated response of the Government under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra

Modi. He stated that since the escalation of tensions, India has closely monitored developments and consistently advocated restraint, dialogue, and diplomacy.

He further informed that the government issued timely

travel advisories, activated 24x7 emergency helplines through Indian embassies, and established special control rooms in the Ministry of External Affairs.

Indian missions across the region have been actively assisting students, workers, pilgrims, and travellers, facilitating their relocation to safer areas and ensuring their return to India wherever necessary. Thousands of Indian nationals have already been assisted through these coordinated efforts.

On the energy front, Khatana highlighted that despite global uncertainty due to tensions involving major powers, India successfully avoided any major disruption.

He credited this to the Modi government's forward-looking policies,

including diversification of oil imports from 27 to nearly 40 countries, reducing dependence on any single region.

Khatana remarked that these achievements reflect the clear vision and decisive leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

He criticized the opposition, particularly the Congress party, for questioning the government's policies at a time when India's strategic planning was effectively safeguarding the nation.

He stated that the very policies once criticized by the opposition—energy diversification, strategic reserves, and multi-alignment diplomacy—are now proving to be the backbone of India's resilience.

ARMY organize general health, eye check-up camp at Ambaram

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AKHNOOR: Indian Army organized a general health and eye check-up camp at Ambaram village benefiting 150 local villagers.

A total of nine medical professionals, including general physicians, ENT specialists and military doctors were present during the event. The camp provided essential medical consultations and



eye examinations, along with free medicines for all

beneficiaries. This initiative aimed not

only to offer early detection of health issues but also to raise awareness about preventive healthcare. It highlighted the importance of maintaining good health and taking timely action to address health concerns.

In addition to basic medical services, the camp facilitated discussions on lifestyle changes and preventive practices, helping the villagers make informed decisions about their health.

Cleanliness drive at Chichi Mata Shrine, promotes hygiene awareness in Samba

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SAMBA: Demonstrating a strong commitment to wards community service and environmental responsibility, the NSS Unit 'MAITRI' of Pt. Prem Nath Dogra Government Degree College, Samba organised a comprehensive cleanliness drive at the Chichi Mata Temple, Samba as part of the ongoing NSS Winter Special Camp-2026.

The programme was conducted under the dynamic leadership of the Principal,

Dr. Nirlape Kour, whose constant encouragement continues to inspire student-led social initiatives.

The activity was organised under the capable guidance of NSS Programme Officer Prof. Babita Kumari and saw the active and enthusiastic participation of 52 NSS volunteers.

During the drive, volunteers carried out extensive cleanliness activities in and around the Chichi Mata Shrine, including nearby public spaces and the adjacent stretch of National

Highway-44.

The volunteers collected waste, cleaned the temple grounds, and ensured proper disposal of rubbish, thereby improving the overall hygiene and sanctity of the area.

Along with the physical cleaning efforts, the volunteers also ran an awareness campaign, sensitising devotees, shopkeepers, and the general public about the importance of keeping clean. They highlighted that hygiene should not be limited to religious places alone but

should also be practised at homes, marketplaces, and in neighbourhoods.

The volunteers engaged with the public, promoting behavioural change and responsible waste management practices.

Through such impactful activities, the NSS Unit "MAITRI" continues to contribute meaningfully to nation-building and social development. The programme strongly echoes the vision of Mahatma Gandhi for a clean, green, and healthy India.

MMTTC-SMVDU conducts National Level Capacity Building Prog on IKS

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KATRA: Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University (SMVDU) successfully conducted six-day Residential Capacity Building Program on 'Indian Knowledge System (IKS) for Integration into the Curriculum' in offline mode at MMTTC-SMVDU.

The program witnessed enthusiastic participation from around 100 faculty members and scholars representing 15 universities across 12 states of India, reflecting the growing national interest in embedding Indian Knowledge System into mainstream higher education.

During the valedictory address, Prof. Pragati Kumar, Vice Chancellor, SMVDU emphasized the significance of different aspects of Indian Knowledge System and its implications in the modern world for the society, industry etc.

Prof. Pragati Kumar mentioned significance of

different treasures of Indian Philosophical systems for the overall growth of the society at large. He also mentioned that the now it's the time for all the faculty members to upgrade themselves with changing times for remaining significant.

Dr. Manish Joshi, Secretary, University Grants Commission (UGC) and Guest of Honour of the valedictory function during the function expressed the way IKS was started by UGC in the year 2023 and how gradually the participants are accepting it after initial scepticism of the program during its initial days.

Dr. Manish Joshi emphasized that we should not deride our knowledge system and should accept it by heart and also should impart this to our students. Dr. Joshi also maintains that the principles and knowledge given in our Indian Knowledge system is actually true and not some mythology.

Earlier, Prof. Supran Kumar Sharma, Director MMTTC-SMVDU, briefed the participants about different activities being organized by the Centre. Since January, 2024 this is the 40th Program being organized with the regular support of University Grants Commission.

Over the course of the program, participants engaged in intensive sessions covering diverse themes such as elements of IKS, Yoga, Astronomy, Astrology, Ayurveda, Arthashastra, Nitishastra, Traditional Indian Crafts and Arts, Agriculture, Water Management, Botany, and Applied Indian Knowledge System.

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'Make Chaitra Navratri memorable for pilgrims'

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JAMMU: Senior leader of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Raman Suri, has called upon the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board (SMVDSB) to make comprehensive and proactive arrangements to ensure a safe, smooth, and spiritually fulfilling pilgrimage for devotees during the auspicious occasion of Chaitra Navratri, scheduled from March 19 to March 27, 2026.

Highlighting the massive influx of pilgrims to the holy shrine of Mata Vaishno Devi during Navratri, Suri emphasized that effective crowd management must be the top priority.

He stated that every year, heavy rush often leads to chaos and inconvenience, which can be avoided with better planning, coordination, and on-ground execution.

Suri specifically called upon SMVDSB to ensure scientific crowd regulation systems so that pilgrims

can have a safe and orderly darshan without unnecessary delays or risks. He stressed that authorities must pay special attention to critical congestion points, particularly the final stretch near the cave shrine where steel grills have been installed.

According to him, this area remains highly vulnerable to mishaps due to bottlenecks and requires immediate review and improved crowd flow mechanisms.

He further appealed to SMVDU and shrine authorities to collaborate in minimizing overcrowding at such sensitive locations and deploy trained personnel to guide and regulate pilgrim movement effectively.

Addressing the issue of basic amenities, Suri underlined that adequate drinking water facilities must be ensured throughout the entire Yatra route, especially considering the rising temperatures during the summer season.

Mini Ayodhya spirit marks Hanumant Katha culmination at Resham Ghar Colony

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JAMMU: The fifth day of the Shri Hanumant Katha Gyan Yajna at Shri Shiv Durga Temple, Resham Ghar Colony, witnessed an extraordinary outpouring of devotion as hundreds of devotees from Jammu city and surrounding villages gathered to participate in the spiritually uplifting event, turning the entire premises into a vibrant centre of faith often likened to a "Mini Ayodhya".

The temple premises were beautifully decorated, with devotional music and continuous recitation of hymns creating an atmosphere of divine bliss.

The air resonated with chants of "Jai Shri Ram" and "Jai Hanuman," as devotees immersed themselves in prayer, bhajans, and katha, reflecting deep spiritual engagement and collective devotion.

Katha Vyas Swami Umeshanand Ji Maharaj enthralled the gathering



with his melodious rendering of bhajans and vivid narration of episodes from the life of Lord Hanuman. Through his discourse, he not only highlighted the virtues of devotion, courage, and selfless service embodied by Hanuman but also connected these teachings to modern-day life, making the message relevant for all sections of society.

Elaborating on the "triveni" of seva, sumiran, and satsang, Swami Ji explained that these three principles act as guiding

forces in overcoming worldly challenges and achieving spiritual balance. He stressed that engaging in selfless service, maintaining constant remembrance of the divine, and keeping the company of the wise are essential for leading a meaningful and disciplined life.

He also called upon devotees to cultivate compassion, forgiveness, and humility, stating that these virtues naturally emerge through participation in spiritual gatherings like katha.