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ಇಲಾಖೆ / ವಿಷಯ : DEPARTMENT / SUBJECT: *12*
prime minister

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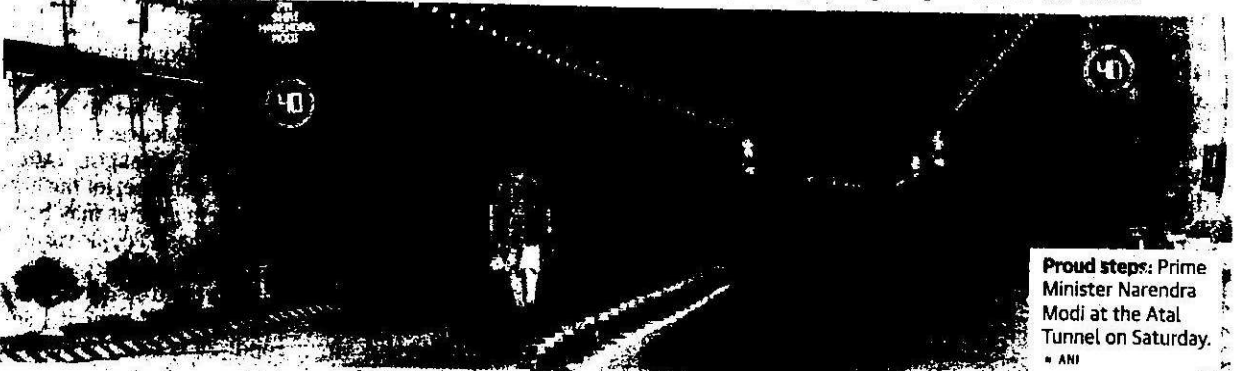
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World's longest highway tunnel opened in Himachal Pradesh

PM says Atal Tunnel will strengthen border infrastructure, slams Cong. for delay

Engineering marvel

A look at some of the features of the longest highway tunnel in the world



Proud steps: Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the Atal Tunnel on Saturday.
* ANI

- Length: 9.02 km
- Shape: Horse shoe

Located below the Rohtang Pass, it connects Manali to Lahaul-Spiti Valley

- Distance reduced: 46 km
- Time saved: 5 hours
- Altitude: 3,000 m above mean sea level
- Single-tube, double lane tunnel
- Maximum vehicle speed: 80 km/hr

- Telephone facility: Every 150 m
- Fire hydrant: Every 60 m
- Emergency exits: Every 500 m

- Turning cavern: Every 2.2 km
- Air quality monitor: Every 1 km
- Automatic incident detection system with CCTV cameras: Every 250 m

2002
Atal Bihari Vajpayee laid the foundation stone for the approach road to the tunnel

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHANDIGARH

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday inaugurated the Atal Tunnel at Rohtang at an altitude of above 3,000 metre in Himachal Pradesh. After the inauguration, he said the tunnel would provide new strength to the country's border infrastructure.

The 9.02 km-long-tunnel, built by the Border Roads Organisation (BRO), is the world's longest highway tunnel and connects Manali to

the Lahaul-Spiti Valley. It provides all-weather connectivity to the landlocked valley, which remains cut-off for nearly six months in a year as the Rohtang Pass is snow-bound between November and April.

Thanks to the tunnel, the people of the valley will have round-the-year road connectivity. The tunnel reduces the distance between Manali and Leh by 46 km and the travel time by about 4 to 5 hours. It is expected to boost tourism and winter sports in

the region. The tunnel, also significant from the military logistics viewpoint, will provide better connectivity to the armed forces in reaching Ladakh.

'Case of neglect'

Mr. Modi accused the previous Congress-led governments of not paying heed to border development projects, thereby compromising the nation's security interests. "Projects related to improved border connectivity either never came out of the

planning stage or those which did, got delayed or stuck. The same happened with Atal Tunnel," he said.

"It was after 2014 that the project picked up pace. Every problem faced by the BRO was resolved. The result was that while earlier 300-metre tunnel work was being accomplished every year, it reached 1,400 metre a year. In six years, we completed the work of 26 years," Mr. Modi said.

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