

## Baby born on Himachal's deadly Rohtang pass

A Nepalese woman gave birth to a baby girl in a cave along the snow-covered and inhospitable Rohtang Pass in Himachal Pradesh in what officials said Thursday was the first instance of its kind.

The 13,050 feet-Rohtang Pass, which in Tibetan means 'a heap of dead bodies', saw the unusual occurrence Wednesday - when the pass opened to traffic after six months. The pass is located 55 km from here.

Within hours of the opening of the pass, Vishnu Devi went into labour and had to disembark from the vehicle in which she was travelling with her husband. She gave birth to a healthy baby girl in a nearby cave.

The Nepalese couple were on their way to Lahaul valley in search of work. The child was born without the assistance of a doctor.

But the Border Roads Organisation (BRO), which looks after the high altitude 486-km Manali-Leh road, pitched in by providing blankets, food and water. The BRO staff later distributed sweets to celebrate the birth in the western Himalayas.

The Rohtang Pass is prone to sudden changes in weather round the year and is notorious for heavy snowfall, blizzards and avalanches, often causing deaths.

The pass remains cut off for traffic due to deep snow for half the year. When it opens, it is one of the most popular tourist destinations in the scenic Kullu Valley.

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