

Guv unveils Shivaji's statue in Tawang



TAWANG, June 03: Though geographically the Sahyadris are thousands of miles from the great Himalayas, emotionally it came closer today with the unveiling of the statue of great Maratha warrior and one of the greatest national heroes, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj at Tawang today, reports PRO to Governor.

Saluting the contributions made by the Maratha regiment in the state, especially in the picturesque district of Tawang, known for its 400-year-old monastery, Arunachal Pradesh Governor Gen (Retd) JJ Singh, who is an honorary colonel of the Maratha Light Infantry, dedicated the statue to the people.

The Maratha regiment, to which the governor himself belongs, has done commendable work in Arunachal. For years together, various Maratha units were posted in this area. During 1982-84, the governor himself commanded the 9 Maratha bat-

alion in Lohit valley.

The 22 Maratha under the command of Col SDK Patil constructed 22 kms of the Tawang-Bumla road during 1983-84. This road is also called Chhatrapati Shivaji Road, and it leads to the Indo-China border. Incidentally, in those years they received tremendous help from present Chief Minister Dorjee Khandu, who hails from Tawang.

The idea of putting up the statue was supported by the governor and the CM and is the joint venture between the Indian Army and the state government. Brigadier Ashok Ambre and the governor's secretary Prashant Lokhande meticulously worked on this project.

Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj and Col SDK Patil (Retd), who led the first spadework some decades back, along with the 5 Mtn Division GOC and officers and people of Tawang were present on the auspicious occasion. Incidentally, Nipun Vinayak, collector of

Raigad, where Shivaji built his capital, was also present.

Giving a Marathi touch and adding festivity to the special occasion, the Jnana Prabhodini team from Maharashtra presented a *Powada* recitation.

Speaking on the occasion, the governor urged the army personnel to have cordial relationship with the denizens of this strategically important state. He also recalled the magnificent contributions of the uniformed personnel towards all Arunachalees.

Taking part in the ceremony, Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj inaugurated a photo gallery displaying glimpses of forts of Shivaji – symbols of bravery and *swaraj*.

It may be mentioned here that Bumla Hut on the Indo-China border was constructed by the ranks of the 1 Maratha LI (Jangli Paltan) and inaugurated by Maj Gen ND Jetli on May 29, 2000, the report adds.