



THANK YOU  
Shri CH. Vidyasagar Rao and Smt CH. Vinodha



# MAHARASHTRA Raj Bhavans REDEFINING THE GLORY



MAHARASHTRA  
Raj Bhavans  
REDEFINING THE GLORY



The strategic location of Raj Bhavan exposes the estate to the strong onslaught of the elements from three sides. Over the years, therefore, many buildings in the heritage zone have suffered extensive wear. Buildings such as Jal Bhushan, Jal Kiran and Darbar Hall had outlived their lifespan. Until now, renovation work on these buildings had been done in patches and pieces – as and when the need arose.

However, of late, after taking stock of the condition of the buildings with officials of the Public Works Department and conservation architects, it was decided to strengthen and, in some cases, also reconstruct some buildings in the Raj Bhavan complex – albeit without disturbing their heritage elements to the extent possible.





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June 2019

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# Raj Bhavans

MAHARASHTRA  
REDEFINING THE GLORY



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The entire outer wall of the Raj Bhavan estate has been beautified with Warli-style paintings depicting famed city attractions.





### UNVEILING A NEW RAJ BHAVAN

The Raj Bhavan located at Malabar Point in a majestic setting is often regarded as the 'Queen of Raj Bhavans' in the country. The Raj Bhavan has served as the office and residence of Governors of Maharashtra from May 1, 1960, the date of the inception of the State. Prior to that, between 1947 – the year India attained Independence and 1960 – the Raj Bhavan served as the office and the residence of Governors of the erstwhile and bilingual State of Bombay.

### HISTORY

According to the book *Raj Bhavans of Maharashtra* authored by well-known historian Shri Sadashiv Gorakshkar, Government House, as Raj Bhavan was known in the pre-Independence period, shifted to its present address in Malabar Hill in the year 1885. Raj Bhavan thus served as the official residence of British Governors of Bombay from that year. Prior to 1885, the Raj Bhavan complex served as the occasional residence, i.e. Summer Time Residence, and prior to 1810, as Hunting Lodge of the Governors appointed by the British East India Company.

The present Raj Bhavan complex consists of seven bungalows situated almost in a circle around the southern tip of the central access road. These

buildings are Jal Sabhagriha or Darbar Hall, Jal Bhushan – the Governor's Residence, Jal Laxan – the Presidential Suite, Jal Kiran – the guest house adjacent to Jal Laxan, Jal Chintan also known as Point Bungalow, Jal Vihar or Banquet Hall and Jal Pujan or Bay Bungalow.

Some of these buildings had been standing even before 1885. The Banquet Hall or Jal Vihar, for instance, was expanded to the present size sometime between 1869 and 1875. The Jal Laxan and Jal Bhushan have a history of almost 200 years!

### RESTORATION, RENOVATION AND METAMORPHOSIS

Because of the strategic location of the Raj Bhavan, which exposes the complex to the strong onslaught of the elements from three sides, many buildings in the heritage zone had suffered extensive wear and needed urgent attention. Buildings like Jal Bhushan, Jal Kiran and Darbar Hall had outlived their lifespan. Until now, the renovation work of these buildings had been done in patches and pieces – as and when the need arose.

Having taken stock of all the buildings with conservation architects and officials of the Public Works Department, it was decided to strengthen, and in some cases, reconstruct some of the buildings in the Raj Bhavan complex without disturbing the heritage element to the extent possible. This required considerable planning and meticulous execution.

One of the oldest buildings, the Jal Chintan, popularly known as Point Bungalow was the first to undergo a complete makeover.

Jal Kiran, the non-heritage guest house which was in a shabby state, has now been upgraded and transformed into a VVIP guest house where the Hon'ble President and Hon'ble Prime Minister of India will be accommodated during their visits to Mumbai. A beautiful sea-facing gallery is the newest addition to the bungalow.

### DARBAR HALL

The most prominent building in the Raj Bhavan is the Jal Sabhagriha, known more popularly as Darbar Hall. The old Darbar Hall, built in 1911, served as the venue for swearing-in ceremonies, investitures, official events and cultural programmes. With a seating capacity of only 250, the hall was proving grossly inadequate for hosting programmes such as swearing-in ceremonies. Its structural framework had also deteriorated. A minor fire had also erupted some years ago. Finally, the hall was demolished in December 2018 and it was decided that a new Darbar Hall, with a seating capacity of 850, would be constructed at the same site. It would, additionally, also have a passage and a sea-facing balcony.

### BUNKER AND LAWN

One of the memorable events of my tenure as Governor has been the discovery of the underground British-era bunker in Raj Bhavan. The bunker, when discovered, had 13 rooms with an area of 15,000 sq ft. The process of restoring the bunker and creating a modern museum using 3-D holographic projection technology has already commenced. It is my fervent desire to open the bunker for citizens at the earliest.

### JAL BHUSHAN

According to history, Jal Bhushan, the Governor's residence and office, had developed around the original 'Pretty Cottage' built next to the ruins of a Shiva temple by Mountstuart Elphinstone sometime in 1820. Since then the building underwent several alterations, renovations and even reconstruction to suit the requirements of its occupants. It has been recorded that over the years, the bungalow had evolved with no claims to cohesive planning and standing as a non-engineering structure.



One and a half years ago, when I was in Chennai holding additional charge as Governor of Tamil Nadu, there were heavy rains in Mumbai. A short circuit sparked a fire on the first floor of Jal Bhushan. Within no time, the fire caused the destruction of furniture and fixtures in my residence. A structural audit was immediately conducted and a decision was taken to entirely rebuild Jal Bhushan.

The proposed new Jal Bhushan is being designed with the same footprint and height, maintaining the existing architectural character of the Raj Bhavan complex.

#### NEW SECRETARIAT BUILDING

The old Governor's Secretariat building, which housed the offices of the Secretary to the Governor and the Comptroller of the Governor's Household, was in an extremely bad condition. The Secretariat building, standing adjacent to Darbar Hall, was thus pulled down at the same time the old Darbar Hall was demolished in December 2018. A new Secretariat building with additional space is now being erected in the same place.

#### JAL SAGAR

During my stint as Governor, a new VIP guest house, Jal Sagar was built and opened in December 2017. The guest house, which has four VIP suites, was designed keeping in mind the heritage ambience of the Raj Bhavan precinct.

#### GREEN INITIATIVES

A series of green initiatives were undertaken in all the three Raj Bhavans of Maharashtra. These included the installation of a 1-megawatt solar power plant at the Pune Raj Bhavan, soil and water conservation initiatives in the

Pune and Nagpur Raj Bhavans, a rose garden in Pune, beekeeping projects in the Pune and Nagpur Raj Bhavans and tree plantation drives in all the three Raj Bhavans. There are also plans to restore the beach and landscape the hill slopes of the Mumbai Raj Bhavan to stabilise and control erosion.

#### HISTORIC SITE IDENTIFIED

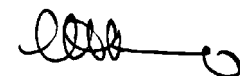
I can say with a sense of satisfaction that I have not only identified but also restored a site of great historic importance for Maharashtra to its rightful glory. At my instance, the site of the official ceremony of the formation of the State of Maharashtra in the Raj Bhavan complex has been developed into a memorial. Since coming to Maharashtra, I also started the practice of hosting a cultural programme on the occasion of Maharashtra Day.

#### CONNECTING WITH THE PEOPLE

My decision to open the gates of Raj Bhavan for the general public has received overwhelming response. In the last four years, since Raj Bhavan was opened for the people, more than 20,000 have visited the estate and admired its architecture, heritage, history and nature.

Any visitor to Raj Bhavan is bound to see a refreshingly new Raj Bhavan – one that takes pride in its heritage, upholds the Constitution and celebrates the spirit of democracy and freedom.

Sincerely



**CH. Vidyasagar Rao**  
Governor of Maharashtra



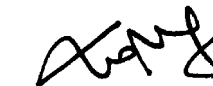
A structural audit of Jal Bhushan, the office-cum-residence of the Governor of Maharashtra in Raj Bhavan, was conducted in the year 2008. The audit report concluded that the building had outlived its lifespan and might not be safe anymore. However, in view of the serious constraint of a suitable alternative bungalow for the accommodation of the Governor, the short-term solution of retrofitting was exercised and the lifespan of the building enhanced by a few more years. The audit report of two other important buildings in the Raj Bhavan estate – the Secretariat and the Darbar Hall or Jal Sabhagriha, which served as the venue for important functions and ceremonies for almost a century – was similar. Both Jal Bhushan and Darbar Hall required demolition and reconstruction. However, considering the vital nature of the buildings, the challenge involved finding alternative spaces.

On being apprised of the situation, the Hon'ble Governor was most encouraging in favour of a reinvention of the Raj Bhavan. The consequential difficulty was that the Governor would need to shift his residence to the two-bedroom Jal Chintan and put up with the air and noise pollution on account of construction activity there. Yet another challenge was to ensure that construction work did not cause any disturbance to VVIPs visiting and staying in Raj Bhavan.

Buoyed by the Governor's 'do-it' spirit, Jal Chintan was converted into the Governor's temporary residence. Thereafter, Jal Kiran was also rebuilt and upgraded into the Presidential Suite. Jal Laxan, the bungalow which till date served as the Presidential Suite, is now being turned into the office of the Governor. The newly-built garage for cars has temporarily been converted into an office space to accommodate the Governor's Secretariat.

While carrying out all these operations, utmost care is being taken to conserve the heritage of the estate. During this period, under the guidance of the Governor, many other activities such as restoration of the war bunker belonging to the British era, installation of the 150 ft monumental flag post close to where the official ceremony of the State's formation had taken place, retrieval of cannons lying in an abandoned state, were also carried out.

The reconstruction of some heritage buildings in Raj Bhavan is, in a sense, preparation for the next two centuries, if not more. I would like to humbly state that this period will be marked as a significant one in the annals of the Raj Bhavan's history.



**B. Venugopal Reddy, IAS**  
Principal Secretary to the Governor





## JAL CHINTAN THE NEW OLD - WORLD CHARM

**A**top the cliff on the southern edge of the Mumbai Raj Bhavan estate, its plinth clawing into the escarpment, Jal Chintan is the heritage bungalow from where one can watch waves crash and foam against the dark rocks below.

The guest house of visiting dignitaries and popularly known as Point Bungalow, Jal Chintan is today the residence of the Governor of Maharashtra – until a new Jal Bhushan is constructed and furnished.

Strategically guarding the bay but buffeted by the harsh, salt-laden winds of the Arabian Sea from three sides, Jal Chintan would often need renovation. The bungalow was revamped in 1985 and then again in 1996.

The most recent one, completed in April 2018 under the aegis of Governor CH. Vidyasagar Rao, while strengthening its structural members, has methodically preserved its heritage features. With new flooring, picture windows, a tiled courtyard and a grass-paved walkway leading up to it, Jal Chintan makes a pretty picture.

Standing at the spot where a small guard house for sepoys existed as early as in 1710, it is close to the ancient and mystical Shri Gundi or magic rock formation, reputed to have powers to absolve the sins of those who passed through its fissure.

Years later, it came to be called the Hunting Lodge as it was the starting point of the Bombay Bobbery Hunt – an infamous European diversion associated with hunting dogs until 1810. Thereafter, in the last century it was identified as Signaller's House and then as Point Bungalow. Later, in consonance with the descriptive 'Jal' for all bungalows within the precincts of Raj Bhavan, it was rechristened Jal Chintan – a favoured place for contemplation.

Centuries ago, a solitary bungalow at Malabar Point – until Evan Nepean built his cottage, the Tiled Bungalow, next to it – Jal Chintan continues to be a sanctuary of calm, from where one can view the skyline of the bustling Marine Drive and the 1875-built Prongs Reef Lighthouse in the southernmost point of the city.



With picture windows, a tiled courtyard and a flower-enclosed waterbody in the front lawn, Jal Chintan makes a pretty picture.







Weathered by coastal erosive forces, the old facade of Jal Chintan (this page) required fortifications and a new look (facing page).





THE MODERN FACADE OF JAL KIRAN



## JAL KIRAN MAGNIFICENCE MAGNIFIED

**J**al Kiran, the guest house for VVIPs and their accompanying staff, stands in pride in its new avatar in the Raj Bhavan complex. A non-heritage bungalow, Jal Kiran has now been renovated to include all modern amenities and a grand décor befitting the stature of its distinguished guests.

The two-storey bungalow, which now covers a total carpet area of 10,825 square feet, had only two VVIP suites before its renovation. The number of VVIP suites have now been increased to four – including one each for the President and the Prime Minister. These suites comprise a meeting hall, a drawing room and a balcony.

The main objective behind the renovation of Jal Kiran has been to provide the best of comforts and a feeling of home away from home to VIP guests of the Governor of Maharashtra.

The renovation of Jal Kiran by well-known architectural firm Structwel has meticulously ensured that guests enjoy beautiful aesthetics as well as comfort and luxury.

Adorned with the finest of accents and furnishings, the bungalow has also been structured with Makrana marble flooring with inlay work by the best of skilled artisans from Agra.



New drawing room of Jal Kiran





The earlier facade of Jal Kiran (left and inset) has been reinvented and today wears a modern look.



The renovated Jal Kiran bungalow has been adorned with the finest of accents and furnishings to provide the best of comforts to VIP guests and has also been structured with Makrana marble flooring with inlay work by skilled artisans from Agra.





ARCHITECTURAL DRAWING OF THE  
PROPOSED JAL SABHAGRIHA / DARBAR HALL



# DARBAR HALL A NEW AVATAR

**W**itness to momentous events over the decades, the Darbar Hall of Mumbai Raj Bhavan is now set to acquire a larger and new avatar.

The decision to construct a new building was taken following a structural audit by the Public Works Department advising immediate reconstruction. A century of exposure to the strong and salty winds of the Arabian Sea had led to a loss in the structural load-bearing capacity of its reinforcement members – thereby necessitating a rebuild of the 1911 George Wittet design.

Formally known as Jal Sabhagriha, the rectangular-plan Darbar Hall had, over the years, been the venue of notable occasions such as swearing-in ceremonies of governors, chief ministers and other ministers of Maharashtra, chief justices of the Bombay High Court, sheriffs of Mumbai, constitutional functionaries such as Lokayukta and Chief Information Commissioner, felicitation of litterateurs

and artistes, police investiture ceremonies and cultural programmes in honour of members of the diplomatic corps.

The new building, to be reconstructed under the guidance of Consulting Conservation Architect Abha Narain Lambah, while retaining the historical features of the earlier Grade II heritage structure, will have more seating space, a first-floor balcony overlooking the interior hall, Edwardian style neo-classical interiors, Dormer windows, a mini-theatre to accommodate 25 guests and a sea-facing, sunset-viewing deck.

The hall, whose design focus is on ensuring a 'green' building, will be spread over an area of 2,150 square metres between Jal Bhushan and the Governor's Secretariat.

It will now have a seating capacity of 850, which is 600 more than the previous hall's capacity of 250 guests. With passages and balconies and graced with vintage chandeliers of the earlier hall, the new Jal Sabhagriha has been visualised as one with coastal architectural elements – in perfect tune with its setting.



Governor Ch. Vidyasagar Rao explains the architectural plan of the new Darbar Hall to Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis and Leader of Opposition Radhakrishna Vikhe Patil on December 20, 2018.





The proposed Darbar Hall (facing page) will retain features of the earlier structure (this page).



Side angle architectural design of the proposed Jal Sabhagriha / Darbar Hall



## JAL BHUSHAN JEWEL IN THE CROWN

Said to be the place where famous American writer and humorist Mark Twain lunched with British Governor Lord Sandhurst in 1896, Jal Bhushan has always been the jewel in the crown of the Mumbai Raj Bhavan estate. The official residence-cum-office of the Governor since 1885, the bungalow which evolved around a pretty cottage built around 1820, is now set to acquire a new incarnation.

Having completed its lifespan and pronounced as structurally unsafe, Jal Bhushan will soon be demolished for a new building that will nonetheless retain many distinctive features of the existing heritage structure. The first floor of the bungalow which houses the Governor's residence will not only be structurally reinforced with modern building technology but also boast of grandiose contemporary decor and an unhindered view of the ocean and horizon.



Architectural drawing of the proposed Jal Bhushan







The Governor's office-cum-residence Jal Bhushan (this page) will soon reincarnate in a new avatar proposed in the architectural drawings (facing page).





#### JAL SAGAR

Formally inaugurated by Smt. Ch. Vinodha in the presence of Governor Ch. Vidyasagar Rao on December 13, 2017, Jal Sagar, the newest guest house of the Raj Bhavan estate, offers stunning views of sunrises and sunsets. Comprising four VIP suites, its architecture not only blends with the other buildings of the heritage precincts, its portico has also been structured to resemble that of Jal Vihar or Banquet Hall.



# THE SECRETARIAT



The proposed Secretariat building (facing page) will sport a modern, reinvented look which includes a pitched roof while retaining features of the old Secretariat building (right). The Secretariat has temporarily been shifted to the garage building (top inset).



Architectural design of the proposed Secretariat building





REFURBISHED BUNKER



# RAJ BHAVAN BUNKER A VIRTUAL REALITY MUSEUM

The British-era bunker discovered below the Raj Bhavan complex in 2016 is all set to be reincarnated as a museum for public viewing. The thematic museum, a pet project of Governor CH. Vidyasagar Rao, will be spread over 15,000 square feet and comprise virtual reality booths in which visitors can time travel to the 19th century, when the bunker might have been used to fire cannons at approaching enemy ships.

Supervised by a committee comprising Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya Director General Dr Sabyasachi Mukherjee, Secretary to the Governor Venugopal Reddy, Officer on Special Duty Vasant Salunke, Sir J J School of Architecture Dean Rajeev Mishra, Graphic Designer Sunderrajan and Public Works Department Executive Engineer, the museum would transport the viewer to a bygone era. Visitors can witness Maharashtra's contribution to the freedom movement, crisscross the forts of Maharashtra and even get a feel of cannon-firing.

The new avatar of the coastal bunker which has an incredibly interesting history will expectedly be the jewel in the crown of Mumbai destinations. Its adaptive reuse as a museum will not only conserve an interesting piece of urban archaeology but also shed light on Mumbai's socio-economic significance as the seat of power of the Bombay Presidency and the political shifts that led to Indian independence. Structurally strengthened through waterproofing, electrification, air-conditioning and allied work, the modern museum will use 3-D holographic projection technology to tell its story.

It is the Governor's curiosity that was the spark behind the idea of a museum. Soon after taking up office, the Governor would learn about the probable existence of an underground bunker from retired Raj Bhavan

staff. Curiosity to ascertain the existence of the bunker led to an extensive exploration starting with the east end of the bunker, which was completely concealed by a wall. The wall was brought down, confirming the existence of the bunker. The Governor, accompanied by Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, visited it on August 16, 2016.

Closed for at least six decades, the bunker opens with a 20-ft tall gate resembling a fort and has a ramp on its west end, opposite the Darbar Hall. Long passages and 13 small- to medium-size rooms with names such as Shell Store, Gun Shell, Cartridge Store, Shell Lift, Pump, Central Artillery Store, Workshop and more were found. The gangway also had scores of lamp recesses, a conventional drainage system and inlets for fresh air and light.

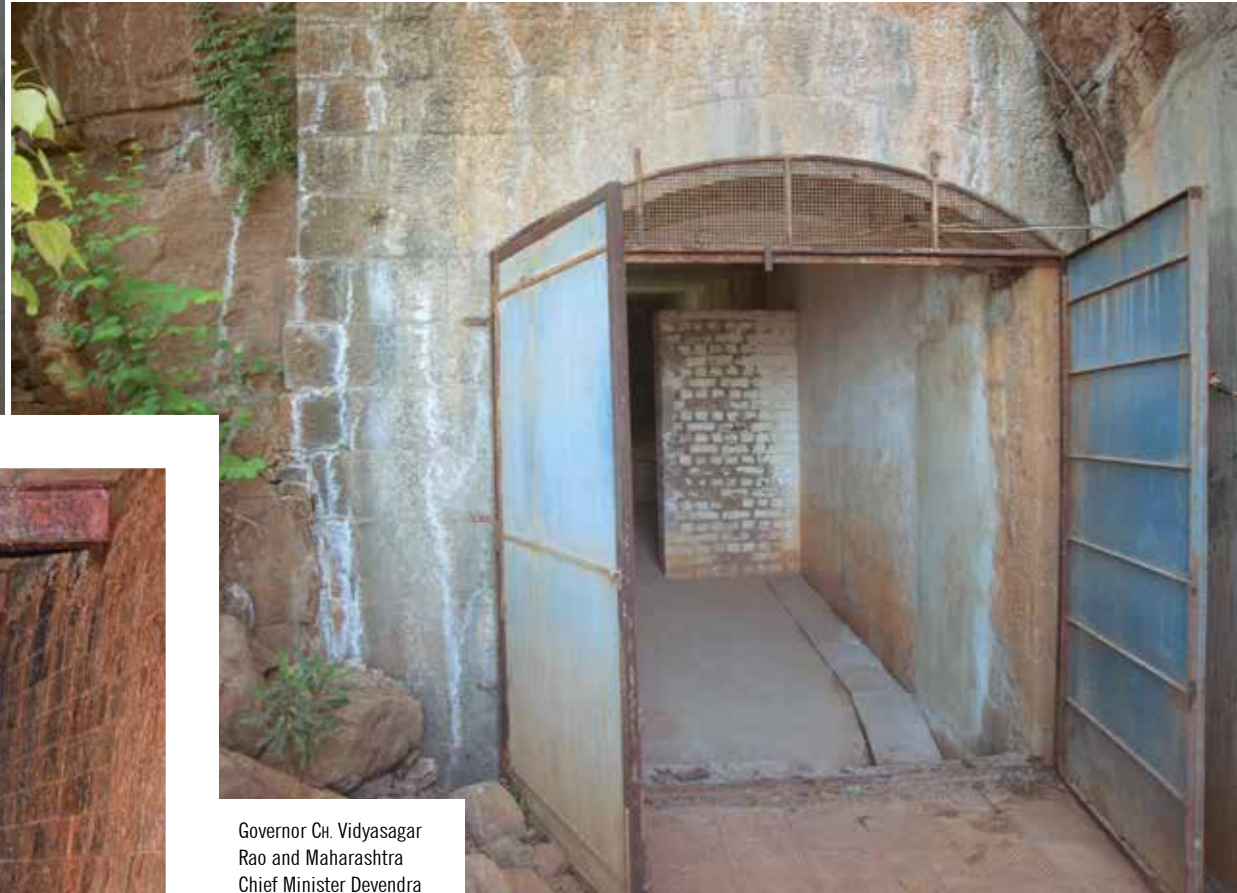
Assumptions and theories have been made as to why the British built such a complex underground system below the Raj Bhavan. According to the *History of Raj Bhavans in Maharashtra*, until 1885, it was the summer residence of British Governors when Lord Reay turned it into a permanent residence, and it came to be known as Government House.

In his report on Raj Bhavan Bunker (February 2017), Conservation Architect Vikas Dilawari observes: "Amongst all the British Governors who stayed in the Raj Bhavan, Colonel G. S. Clarke was the only Governor with a military background. He served as Governor during the period of 1907-1913 i.e. during the start of World War I." He further notes that in the year 1892, while serving as secretary of the Colonial Defence Committee, Clarke had published *Fortification: Its Past Achievement, Recent Development and Future Progress*. According to Dilawari, the book was influential in shaping the British view of military fortification.

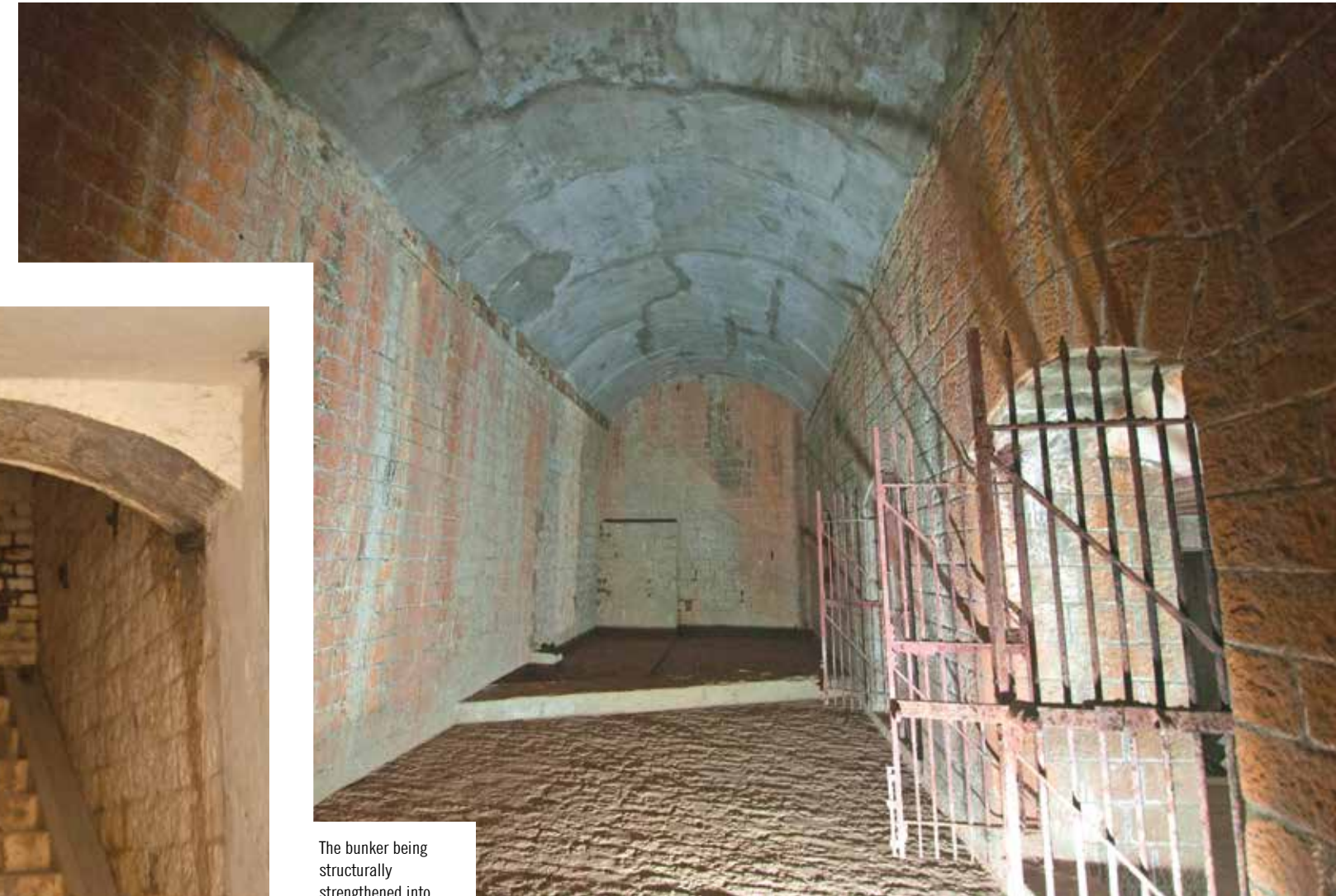


Currently under fabrication, the patriotic-themed Bunker Museum will showcase India's freedom struggle through 3D holography virtual reality technology.





Governor Ch. Vidyasagar Rao and Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis (left) inspect the many areas of the underground bunker soon after it was discovered in 2016.



The bunker being structurally strengthened into a museum through waterproofing, electrification, air-conditioning and allied work.

Site of the official ceremony of the formation of  
the State of Maharashtra

The official ceremony to mark the formation of the  
State of Maharashtra was held at this site in Raj Bhavan  
at the stroke of midnight connecting April 30th and  
May 1st, 1960. Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru  
unveiled the map of Maharashtra in the presence of  
Governor Shri. Sri Prakasa and  
Chief Minister-designate Shri. Yashwantrao Chavan.

This plaque was unveiled on May 1, 2016 in the  
presence of Governor Shri. C.H. Vidyasagar Rao and  
Chief Minister Shri. Devendra Fadnavis.



महाराष्ट्र राज्य निर्मितीच्या शासकीय समारंभाचे स्थळ

राजभवन परिसरातील याच ठिकाणी दिनांक ३० एप्रिल व १ मे १९६० यांना  
जोडणाऱ्या मध्यारात्री ठीक १२ वाजता भारताचे पंतप्रधान पं. जवाहरलाल नेहरू  
यांनी राज्यपाल श्री. श्रीप्रकाश व यदुनिर्देशित मुख्यमंत्री श्री. यशवंतराव चव्हाण  
यांच्या उपस्थितीत महाराष्ट्र राज्याच्या नकाशाचे अनावरण केले.

दिनांक १ मे २०१६ रोजी राज्यपाल श्री. चैत्रमनेनी विद्यासागर राव तसेच  
मुख्यमंत्री श्री. देवेंद्र फडणवीस यांच्या उपस्थितीत ही कौनशिल्ला बसविण्यात आली.



## MONUMENTAL FLAG POST IN COMMEMORATION

**F**lush against the left periphery of the inner complex of Mumbai's Raj Bhavan is the much-esteemed plaque and national flag post park. Erected at the exact place where the formation of the State of Maharashtra was declared on May 1, 1960, both the constituents are the brainchild of Governor CH. Vidyasagar Rao.

For a long time, it had been assumed that the official ceremony of the State's formation – in the presence of first Indian Prime Minister Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru, Maharashtra's first Governor Sri Prakasa and first Chief Minister Yashwantrao Chavan – had taken place either in Jal Sabhagriha or Jal Vihar.

However, when Governor CH. Vidyasagar Rao learnt from retired Raj Bhavan officials that the historic unveiling of the map of Samyukta Maharashtra had been held in an open area in the estate, archival records were examined, and the accurate location identified.

In a happy coincidence, the spot was found to be the same place that the Governor had pinpointed for clearing

of undergrowth a few days earlier. Surrounded by a wild growth of vegetation, the place then lay undefined, sans any sign distinguishing its significance.

A memorial with a plaque depicting the map of Samyukta Maharashtra and a 150-foot-high flag post for the Indian Tricolour, was thereafter constructed and unveiled on May 1, 2016, on the 56th anniversary of the formation of Maharashtra. Lokadhara, as the momentous occasion was named, celebrated the culture of the State and was attended by a host of dignitaries – Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, Union Minister for Railways Suresh Prabhu, Union Minister of State for Clean Energy and Coal Piyush Goyal, State Cabinet Ministers Sudhir Mungantiwar, Vinod Tawde and Ramdas Kadam, Chairman of the Maharashtra Legislative Council Ramraje Naik Nimbalkar, Maharashtra Assembly Speaker Haribhau Bagade, President of the Nationalist Congress Party Sharad Pawar, Chief Justice of Bombay High Court Justice D H Waghela, Mumbai Mayor Snehal Ambekar, filmstar Aamir Khan and members of the diplomatic community.



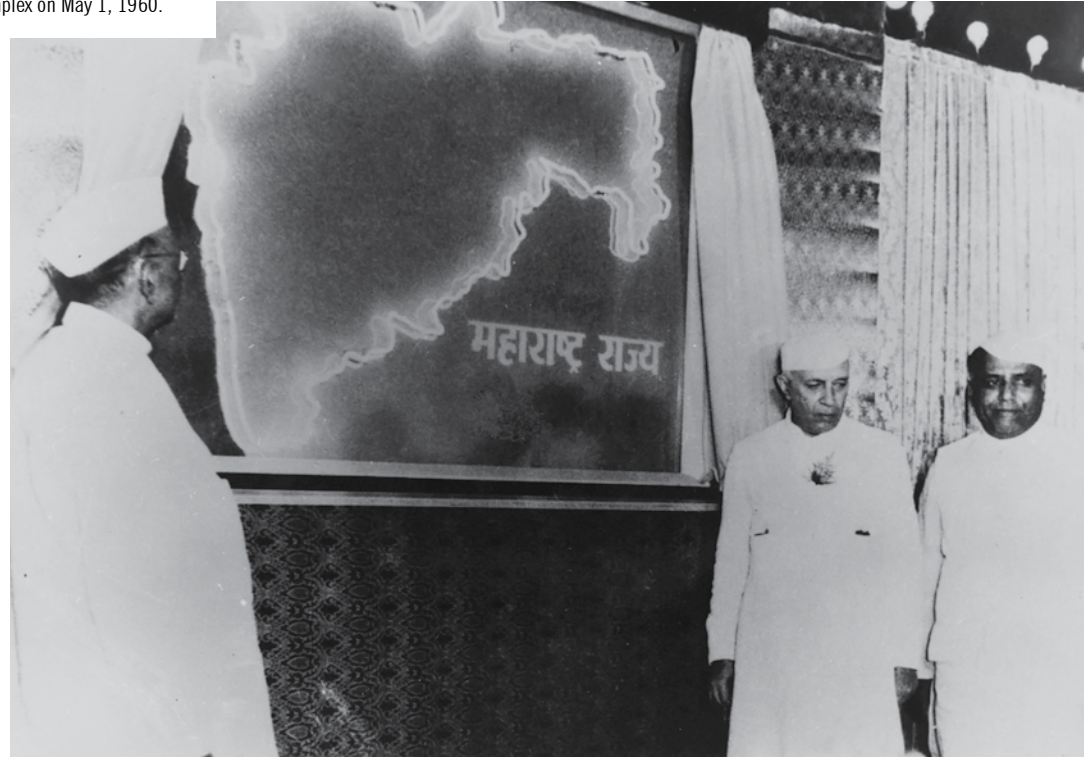
The plaque and flag post park enjoy pride of place at the entrance to the inner precincts of Mumbai Raj Bhavan.







Prime Minister Pt Jawaharlal Nehru unveils the map of Samyukta Maharashtra in the presence of Maharashtra Governor Sri Prakasa and Chief Minister Yashwantrao Chavan during the official ceremony at the Raj Bhavan complex on May 1, 1960.

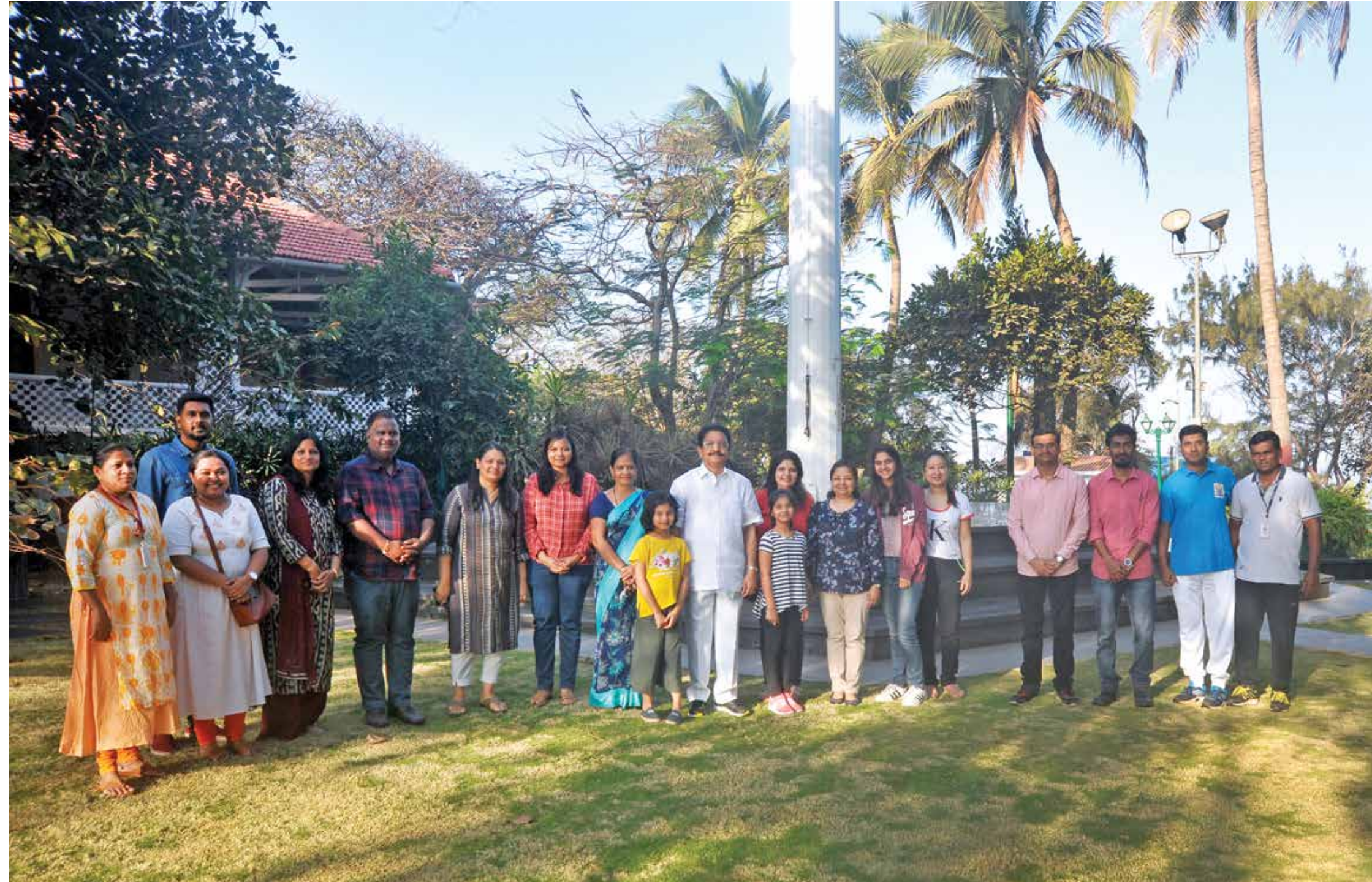


A plaque commemorating the formation of Maharashtra was unveiled in the presence of dignitaries on May 1, 2016 – at the exact spot where the map of Samyukta Maharashtra was first unveiled on May 1, 1960.





The memorial plaque and flag post park is much favoured by Governor Ch. Vidyasagar Rao for interacting with visitors to the Mumbai Raj Bhavan (facing page and this page).







## SUNRISE GALLERY A DECK FOR SUNRISES

For long decades, sunrise in the south of Mumbai would be best enjoyed from a few select points on the Chowpatty Beach. Until, on the International Day of Yoga in 2015, Governor CH. Vidyasagar Rao put the spotlight on what is undoubtedly the finest spot from where to enjoy the sun rising over the horizon of this lively and energetic alpha city.

Located on the Raj Bhavan promontory, overlooking the majestic Arabian Sea and the iconic Marine Drive, Sunrise Gallery – as it came to be named – was opened for the public to enjoy sunrise and practise yoga in the serene and verdant environs of the heritage premises.

While the quiet, except for the rare call of seagulls and the chirping of birds, can lead one to doubt if it is the heart of Mumbai city, the stunning view of the sunrise and its beautiful palette defining the skyline of Queen’s Necklace is enough to write off all doubts.

With flowering shrubs and a thick foliage of trees serving as the backdrop, the sunrise deck not only accentuates the beauty of Mumbai but also celebrates Mumbai’s Raj Bhavan

as a Lok Bhavan. Much like how the rising sun devours darkness by spreading light, Governor CH. Vidyasagar Rao’s vision has also transformed the inaccessible ‘Queen of Raj Bhavans’ into a much-favoured tourist attraction – a place to witness glory and a magnificent heritage. Every day, except on public holidays, twenty visitors accompanied by Raj Bhavan staff, enjoy the sun rise from the deck.

Sunrise Gallery, built over a maintenance room that houses a transformer, is today a must-visit destination not only for the people of Mumbai but also for those who visit the city from India and abroad.

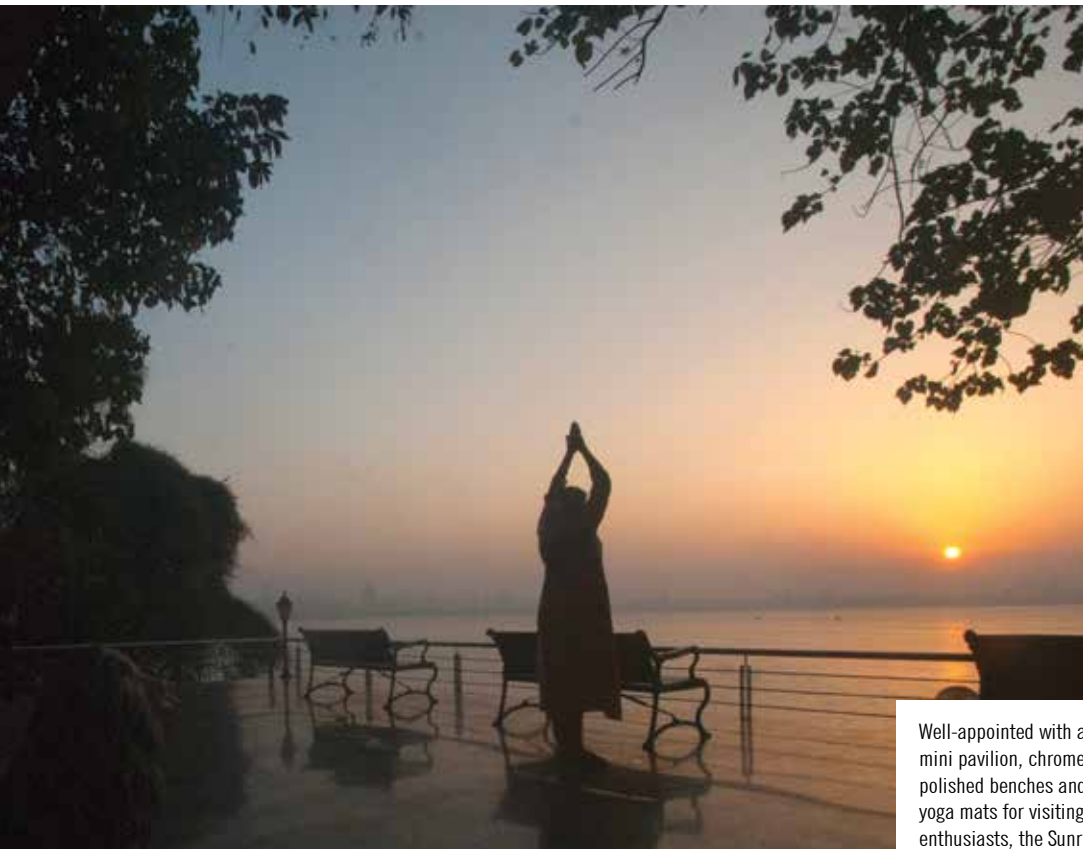
Well-appointed with benches to sit and soak in the serenity, while being soothed by the salty breeze of the Arabian Sea, the Gallery also boasts of a mini pavilion flanked by figures of two seated lions and adorned with intricate carvings.

Tribal art on the walls of the maintenance room also adds to the overall ambience. The prospect of spotting peacocks on the lower drive also adds to the experience.



Governor Ch. Vidyasagar Rao and Vice-President of India Venkaiah Naidu enjoy the sunrise from the mini pavilion of Sunrise Gallery.





Well-appointed with a mini pavilion, chrome-polished benches and yoga mats for visiting enthusiasts, the Sunrise Gallery is one of the finest spots in Mumbai to watch the sun rise over the Arabian Sea and admire the Hand Sculpture (top right) installed in the rocky seashore below.





TWIN CANNONS ON THE HELIPAD  
LAWN OF RAJ BHAVAN



# TWIN CANNONS RESTORATION OF RELICS

The discovery of two identical cannons in the Mumbai Raj Bhavan estate has further added to its historicity. Dating to the pre-World War I era, the cannons – 4.7 metre in length and 1.15 metre in diameter – were found under mud, 25 metres apart, in the foothills of the Raj Bhavan promontory.

The cannons, believed to have belonged to the battery near the coast as part of the defence of Bombay Castle from naval attacks, were first spotted by Raj Bhavan staff members during a tree plantation drive.

On November 3, 2018, in a 12-hour operation witnessed by Governor CH. Vidyasagar Rao, cranes extricated the

ancient weaponry that lay buried underground over the passage of time. The twins, each weighing 22 tonnes, were then lifted on to the Helipad Lawn. Currently undergoing restoration measures, they will soon be installed in front of Jal Vihar, the monumental banquet hall.

Given the Governor’s fondness for restoring and preserving historical relics, the Indian Navy has been assigned with the task of enumerating technical details and retrieving archival records relating to the cannons.

The cannons are the second major find – after the discovery of a British-era bunker – since renovation and restoration work was initiated by the Governor in the Raj Bhavan estate.



Governor CH. Vidyasagar Rao and Vice President Venkaiah Naidu examine the two identical 22-tonne cannons that were lifted to the Helipad Lawn from the foothills of the Raj Bhavan estate.





TREE PLANTATION IN  
MUMBAI RAJ BHAVAN





# GREEN RAJ BHAVANS SUSTAINABLE INITIATIVES

From tree plantation drives in the Mumbai and Nagpur Raj Bhavan estates to recycling of water, solar power, bird restaurants and more, a series of green initiatives taken up by Governor CH. Vidyasagar Rao in all the three Raj Bhavans of Maharashtra are today contributing their bit to the creation of a sustainable earth.

The 1-megawatt solar power plant at the Pune Raj Bhavan, for example, not only meets the energy requirements of all three Raj Bhavans, but also generates 8.50 lakh surplus units of power that is contributed to the common grid.

Home to a wide variety of flora, both the Mumbai and Nagpur Raj Bhavan estates also thrive under the care of the Governor.

According to data from the first GPS-based tree census, the tree count in Mumbai's Raj Bhavan had increased from 2,994 in 2008 to 5,590 in February 2015. A tree plantation drive organised by Dr Nanasaheb Dharmadhikari Pratishthan and launched by the Governor on July 8, 2015 with a mango sapling, has nurtured thousands of trees in the Raj Bhavan till date – with the estate now boasting of 130 species of trees, five of which are also rare.

Following the eradication of an invasive vine and planting of 3,500 new trees by volunteers of the National Service Scheme, even the Nagpur Raj Bhavan today is a verdant paradise – home to a record 1.50 lakh trees.

To ensure optimal use of available water and prevent soil erosion, drip irrigation has been adopted to water plants in the Nagpur, Mumbai and Pune estates. Going a step further, in Mumbai Raj Bhavan, recycled water from the Banganga Sewage Treatment plant is being used to water the lawns and gardens.

In the magnificent Biodiversity Park in the Nagpur Raj Bhavan, the Governor has initiated farm ponds and water harvesting structures. The farm ponds not only cater to water requirements for the Biodiversity Park but also nurture various species of fingerlings and lotus plants.

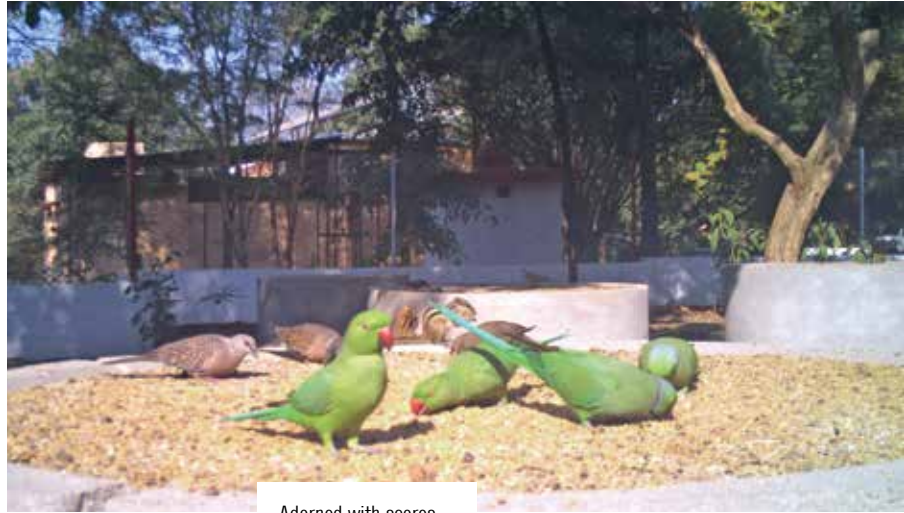
Other initiatives taken up in the Nagpur Raj Bhavan include an open air platform for feeding birds, a beautiful butterfly garden and a beekeeping project – with 15 boxes for honeybees in the vicinity of the farm ponds.

Efforts are also underway to make the Biodiversity Park organic. In this regard, foliage and grass is being used for making vermicompost in all the three Raj Bhavans of the State.



Tree plantation drive being launched at the Mumbai Raj Bhavan by Governor Ch. Vidyasagar Rao (top left) as a part of which famed Bollywood actress Rekha plants a jasmine sapling (bottom left). The Governor, Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, Maharashtra Finance, Planning and Forest Minister Sudhir Mungantiwar and Founder of Isha Foundation Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev plant saplings on World Environment Day on June 5, 2019 at the Mumbai Raj Bhavan (top right). Volunteers of Dr Nanasaheb Dharmadhikari Pratishthan also planted 300 saplings on the occasion. A similar tree plantation drive at the Nagpur Raj Bhavan has turned the estate into a green paradise (bottom right).





Adorned with scores of flowering plants, Nagpur Raj Bhavan is not only a treat for the senses but also a unique biodiversity area with a bird restaurant and a beautiful garden.



A rose garden project initiated in the Pune Raj Bhavan in 2018 boasts of more than 1,600 varieties of rose blooms (above and right). The Biodiversity Park at Nagpur Raj Bhavan (top) provides a magnificent opportunity for students and teachers to experience nature in its purest form and gain knowledge about flora and fauna.





Farm ponds at the Nagpur Raj Bhavan (left) cater to water requirements for its Biodiversity Park while boxes for honeybees in the vicinity of the ponds comprise a flourishing beekeeping project.



Two pet projects of Governor Ch. Vidyasagar Rao at the Pune Raj Bhavan are a water conservation project and a solar power plant that meets the energy requirements of all three Raj Bhavan estates in Maharashtra.





#### SUNSET POINT

Sunset Point, situated in the western sea front of the Raj Bhavan promontory, is a beautiful setting for witnessing magnificent sunsets on the Arabian Sea. Built in the early 1970s, in the lawn behind Jal Bhushan, Sunset Point has now been given a whole new look at the initiative of Governor Ch. Vidyasagar Rao. With an extended, non-skid deck, chrome-polished benches and a green lawn as the backdrop, it is the perfect composition for relaxation for the Governor and distinguished guests on balmy evenings and the annual Republic Day At Home receptions.



## SUNSET LAWN A GREEN COURTYARD

**A** thoughtful initiative by Governor CH. Vidyasagar Rao has today turned the lawn in front of Jal Bhushan into a large, green paradise. Spread over 5,260 square metres – 2,118 square metres more than the earlier 3,142 square metres – the lawn has been uniformly levelled with Korean carpet grass and enhanced with an attractive waterbody.

The lawn has also been equipped with water-saving sprinklers for easy and cost-effective maintenance.

The earlier lawn which sloped towards the seaside has been levelled with 8-9 feet of soil and fortified with a retaining wall.

Provisionally, the lawn could be renovated by using soil from a construction site in nearby Napean Sea Road. The deal was mutually advantageous, since the real estate could dispose the soil and the Raj Bhavan could reclaim an additional area with very little expenditure.



The courtyard of Jal Bhushan has been extended and levelled into Sunset Lawn, a green spread measuring 5,260 square metres.





## DEVI TEMPLE SHRINE FOR THE SEA GODDESS

Until late 2015, the loveliness of the 47-acre Grade I heritage precinct of Raj Bhavan was the city's best-kept secret. Its wide sun-kissed pathways, acres of foliage and beautifully-designed structures lay tranquil beyond tall, strictly-guarded gates.

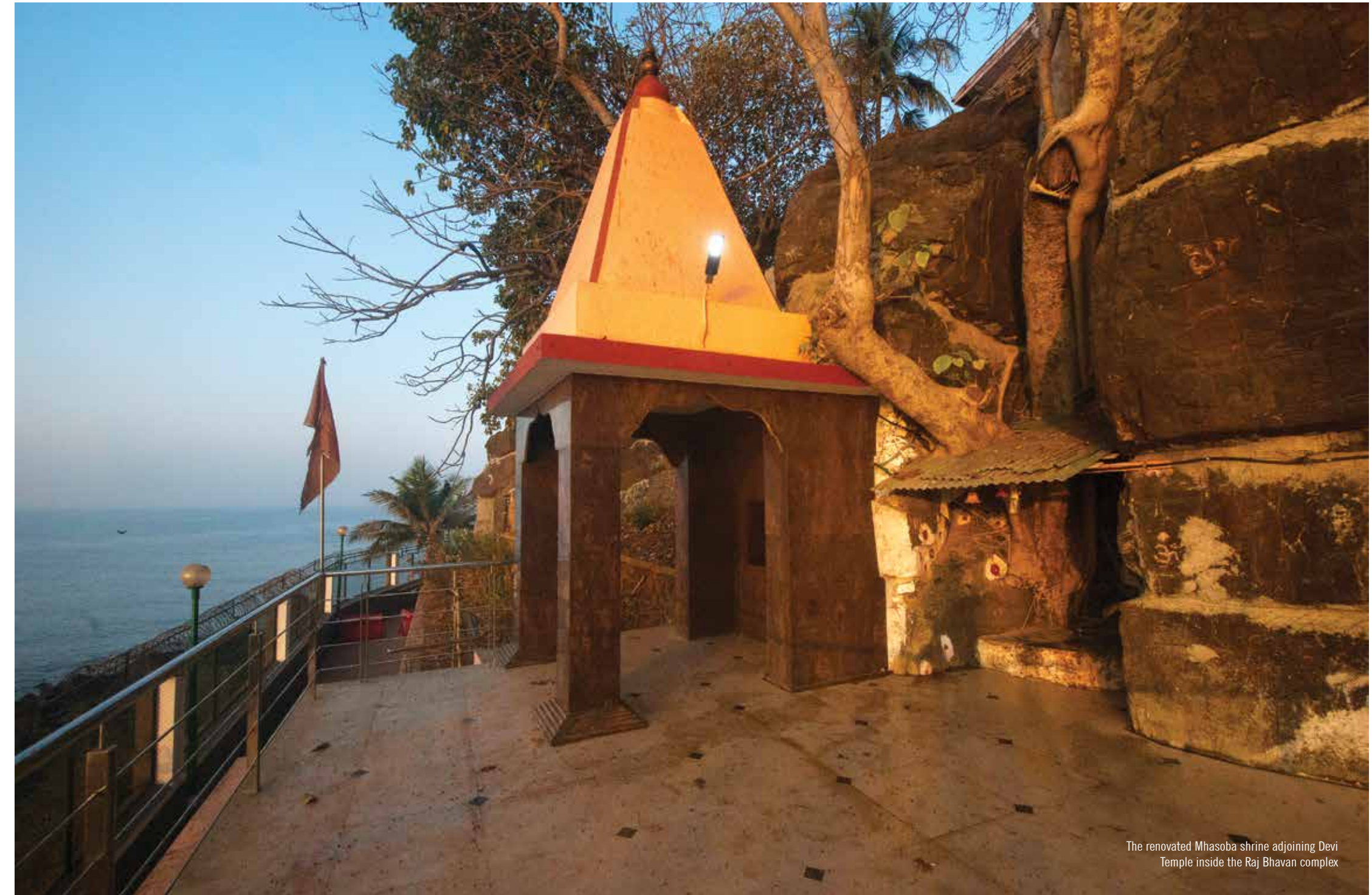
The tranquillity of the place would be broken only once a year, in the month of July – when the gates would open for thousands of devotees wishing to visit the Devi Temple inside the estate for the long-honoured annual *jatra*. On that day, the noise of religious festivities would merge with the noise of the monsoon in full force.

Since 2015, however, at the initiative of Governor CH. Vidyasagar Rao, the Devi Temple and its adjoining Mhasoba shrine have undergone extensive renovation. The only temple in Mumbai dedicated to a nameless goddess, the

faithful have nonetheless composed various names for Devi Temple's deity – Jal Devi, Sagar Mata, Sri Gundi, Sakalai Devi and more, all pointing to its location right beside the sea.

Situated in a cleft of the Malabar Hill promontory, behind the cluster of buildings that comprise the Raj Bhavan complex, and a minute away from the now-famed Sunrise Gallery, the simple functional temple enshrines a deity that has been worshipped by Mumbai's fisherfolk through the centuries – even before the arrival of the Portuguese.

Today, as one walks downhill to the shrine, flanked on one side by the gently dancing waters of the sea and on the other by a cliff face with vines, creepers, flowering shrubs and trees, including rocks that are millions of years old, one can clearly fathom why, over the centuries, it has commanded deep piety.



The renovated Mhasoba shrine adjoining Devi Temple inside the Raj Bhavan complex





## RAJ BHAVAN OUTER WALL A WALL OF ART

**G**overnor CH. Vidyasagar Rao's many efforts to enhance the magnificence of the Mumbai Raj Bhavan got a boost when the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) came up with a proposal to beautify the entire outer wall of the estate with Warli style paintings. The Governor quickly endorsed the idea to draw paintings on the entire stretch of the wall that runs from its Lower Gate to Teen Batti junction.

Portraying life and the landmarks of Mumbai city, the paintings – drawn by students and artists under the guidance of Artdesh Foundation – not only draw attention to the impressive and historic premises but also offer colour and art to life that is played out along the street every day.

Today, the longest single wall painting in Mumbai, the canvas of Walkeswar Wall is a superlative accent that has enlivened the ambience of the thoroughfare that leads to the Governor's bungalow. The art that occupies the six-foot-tall and 1,092-foot-long wall is composed of 69 panels that is spread over an area of 6,000 square feet.

Albeit depicting 60 different themes along with famed

city attractions such as Ban Ganga, Gateway of India, Taj Mahal Hotel, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus, Kala Ghoda, Colaba Causeway, Fashion Street, Sassoon Dock, Sanjay Gandhi National Park, Bandra-Worli Sea Link and more, the panels nonetheless make up a composite story.

The painting begins with a typical village scene in which crops are grown, harvested and then loaded for sale in the city.

Thereafter, the story, told in the simple pictorial language of the Warli tribe, against the archetypal red ochre background, explores Mumbai – from Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus to South Mumbai, the suburbs and Navi Mumbai and back again to Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus – before returning to the village.

A style of tribal art that uses a set of geometric shapes to symbolise humans and other elements, Warli was chosen to beautify the estate's outer wall because it originated in Maharashtra and also best exemplifies the fusion of tradition and contemporary – which is emblematic of the present-day Raj Bhavan.



Warli paintings on Raj Bhavan's Walkeswar Wall is the longest single wall painting in Mumbai.





SUNSET LAWN