

Rail link work begins



By Special Correspondent

GUMTO, Oct 20: The work on the ambitious railway line project to put Arunachal Pradesh in the railway map of the country as announced by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on January 31 last began here this morning with the *bhumi poojan* (in pic-R).

Describing the occasion as historic, Papum Pare deputy commissioner Bidol Tayeng exhorted NF Railways' deputy chief engineer (construction) S Kanujia and contractor Ananta Charan Nayak, present on the occasion, to expedite the work.

Quoting the prime minister, who had told in his address - "The new rail link between

Itanagar and Harmuti will reduce the travel time to destinations outside the state and provide more economical access" - PWD&UD Minister Nabam Tuki said the railways will herald a new era of socio-economic development for the state, especially for Papum Pare.

The 20 to 22 km Harmuti-Itanagar railway line with 18 major bridges and 20 minor bridges with an estimated cost of Rs 91.8 crore will be completed by 2010, Kanujia informed.

As the chanting of hymns reverberated in the natural surrounding over looking Daria hills on one side and ferocious Dikrong flowing gently on the other side,

the men and machines swung into action. Gumto is located around 28 km from state capital Itanagar.

The villagers, including ZPM Tana Bado, *gaon bura* Lokeswar Tana and land owner Nabam Tulon, asked the contractor to win the confidence of the tribal villages, who have sacrificed their properties and cultivable lands, to make the work process smooth.

Tayeng, who has been instrumental in paving the way for the project by convincing the villagers with the help of leaders, particularly Tuki and local MLA Ngurang Pinch, said 2.6 km length of land has already been handed over to the *Contd. P.3*

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From P.1... railway authority while 3.5 km till Dikrong river will be handed over within few days after assessing the value of properties and land and payment of com-

pensation.

The railway line will cross Dikrong near the present bridge point, he said, adding the main railway station at Itanagar will be located at Jullang.

A coordination meeting of the railway officials, contractor, local administration and villagers under the chairmanship of the DC will be conducted on October 22 to facilitate

flawless work progress, Tayeng added.

A number of NFR, government officials including CO J Bomjen and villagers were present on the occasion.