

## PRESS RELEASE

### Governor General called upon the Civil Society to respect Veterans

**Itanagar, May 22:** The Governor of Arunachal Pradesh, General (Retd) J.J.Singh, has called upon the civil society to come forward to respect the veterans (ex-servicemen) and integrate them in the inclusive growth of the Society. He said this at Raj Bhavan, here today, while presiding over the 12<sup>th</sup> State Managing Committee meeting for reconstruction and rehabilitation of Ex-Servicemen of Arunachal Pradesh.

Asserting that ‘once a soldier, always a soldier’, the former chief of the Indian Army and a third generation soldier himself said, our role and contribution towards the civil society continues even after our retirement.

Down the ages, soldiers have earned the respect of the society as defenders of the Nation and its populace. A warrior is looked upon as the last bastion of hope. Our Armed forces are the Nation’s pride, a symbol of our values of sacrifice, valour and the spirit of National Integration.

The armed forces have successfully achieved all their objectives through three pillars of soldiering- secularism, an apolitical outlook and professionalism. These are the values which we hold very dear to us. The Olive Green is a family and the bonds of regimentation, camaraderie and its value system still binds us as veterans, he added.

Praising the role of Arunachalees in the Indian Army, the General said, our Arunachalee soldiers have in the true and gallant traditions of Indian Army been awarded One Kirti Chakra, one Sena Medal Bar and nine Sena Medal awardees amongst our illustrious serving soldiers and veterans.

The spirit of patriotism historically runs very deep in the veins of all Arunachalees and now their participation in the mainstream

of national defence is growing. With the raising and deployment of the First Battalion of Arunachal Scouts and raising of the second battalion having been announced by the Defence Minister, a new chapter has been added which will go a long way in instilling pride in the youth, in harnessing their energy and capability for protecting their motherland.

Our veterans are a very committed, trustworthy, capable and valuable national resource. Owing to their early retirement which is done to keep the profile of the fighting Army young they have to seek a second career, he added.

While drawing the attention of the state Government and the people of the state towards the plight of the ex-servicemen in the state, he said, the welfare of veterans and their dependants is the joint responsibility of the central Government, state Government and also the fellow citizens. There is a need for special attention by the Government and care by the local administration. More energetic efforts are required towards re-employment and placement of ex-servicemen in different sectors. The needs of widows and war disabled require more focus and urgent attention. Their welfare should be given a very high priority. Our civilians and more particularly the authorities should give a patient hearing to these veterans as they have given the prime of their youth for our tomorrow.

Informing that there are some special welfare schemes of the State, the Central Government and the Army for the veterans and the ‘*Veer Naris*’, he suggested the Rajya Sainik Board to do its best to help them to get maximum benefit from these schemes.

Expressing his happiness over the state cabinet’s approval for establishment of Directorate of Rajya Sainik Board in the state to look after the grievances of ex-servicemen of the state, he suggested taking the help of other states which have well organized Rajya Sainik Boards like Punjab, Maharashtra and Meghalaya. Necessary laws should be framed to regulate the smooth establishment and functioning of Rajya Sainik Board and Zilla Sainik Boards in the state. The Directorate should be made functional with experienced staff within six months, he advised.

The Concerned departments including Land Revenue and Urban Development should be approached for identification and allotment of land for construction of Rajya Sainik Board office and Sainik Aram ghar in the state.

On the establishment of a Sainik School in the state, he informed that it has been his priority to establish one in the state and so far he had already met and discussed with the Defence Minister and the Minister of State for Defence on the modalities and funding patterns.

Besides, agreeing to the proposal for organizing of ex-servicemen Rally at Tawang during October next, to invite the MPs and MLAs to the Rajya Sainik Board and Zilla Sainik Board meetings also asked the department of Disaster Management, the Nodal department, to progress all pending individual cases of compensation, ex-gratia, land allotment etc, to the ex-servicemen. Wherever necessary, help of the Army should be sought to get the dues from the units concerned.

The meeting was attended among others by the Principal Secretary Disaster management cum in-charge Chief Secretary Yeshi Tsering, Commissioner Home Hage Khoda, GOC, 5<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division, Major General Vinod Pillai, Director Disaster Management Y.W. Ringu, Tirap DC, W. Lowang, Col. Sanjeev Prashar, Representative of DC, East Kameng Circle Officer Takam Nicholas and President of Ex-Serviceman Association of Arunachal Pradesh Hony.Capt. Lobsang Monpa.

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