The Fetish for Statues

On February 24, Mahashivratri, the Prime Minister unveiled a 112-foot bust of Adiyogi Shiva in Coimbatore. The colossal statue was privately funded, but Narendra Modi’s presence has bestowed upon it the national seal of approval, questions about the environmental impact notwithstanding. There is a national mood for building towering statues. There are six projects either underway or being planned that are expected to dwarf the current national record, including the statues of Shivaji and Vallabhbhai Patel, which will be the tallest in the world and cost the taxpayer many thousands of crores.

112 FEET
Height of the bust built by Jaggi Vasudev Sadhguru’s foundation, the first of four planned

135 FEET
Height of India’s tallest statue, the Vjayawada Hanuman in Andhra Pradesh

420 FEET
Height of the world’s tallest statue, Spring Temple Buddha in China. The Statue of Liberty is 305ft

620 FEET
Height of the planned statue in Mumbai. The Serder Vallabhbhai Patel statue will be 590ft tall

3,600 RUPEES CRORE
Budget for the Shivaji statue. Would pay running costs for 1,250 municipal schools, for 400,000 students for one entire year

55 MILLION DOLLARS
Cost of the Spring Temple Buddha in China. At Rs 366 crore, that’s roughly 10% of the estimated cost of the Shivaji statue