

THE PARSEE VOICE

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“And Never The Twain Shall Meet”

“Dadagiri” & “Hāndagiri” In The Days Of Gandhigiri!

**Bullying & Blackmailing Tactics Used Against The
BPP Trustees By A Handful Of Cremation-Crazies!**

**Trustees Duty-Bound To Protect The Dakhmas &
The Doongerwadi Land**

**98% of the Parsees-Iranis of Mumbai
still opt for Dokhmenashini**

*“The East Is East & The West Is West
And Never The Twain Shall Meet”*

– Rudyard Kipling

Kipling was more than vindicated on the 12th October 2006 at the Banaji Atash Behram's Gahambar Hall, when we sat facing the east and they sat facing the west. The 'we' meant a few of us, this editor, some members of WAPIZ, Ervad Dr. Rooyintan Peer, Ervad Pervez M. Bajan, Ervad Dr. Ramiyar Karanjia, etc. The "they" comprised Jamsheed Kanga, Berjis Desai, Phiroz Amroliwalla, Dr. Rustom Sunavala, even Homi Dhalla(!), Phiroza Seervai, etc. In that row incidentally, also sat the CEO and the Deputy CEO of the BPP.

On our right, sat the five BPP trustees, who had summoned the meeting to discuss ways and means to solve the present Towers of Silence problem. The sixth, we were told, was busy in Europe, somewhere near the other Tower, Eiffel! Next to the quintet, sat the two Dasturs – of Udvada, all facing the North.

On the remaining side, sat the rest of the jingbang lot, including Homi Khusrookhan, Jehangir Patel of Parsiana, the Wadia Brothers of the ARZ, AZA chaps etc., most of them crematorium or Kabrastan-wadis!

What, however, was done on the sly, about which we, the Dakhma protagonists, were blissfully unaware of, was the unethical installation of a speaker outside the closed doors of the hall, for the benefit of (what we later found were) about a dozen rowdy elements put up by the wayward elements in the hall, holding banners with stupid lines like, “Good Thoughts, Good Words, Good Deeds”, etc. The utterances inside the Hall by the heterodox motley group were equally unintelligible and inane, at times bordering on the absurd!

None of these persons knew a jot or even cared for the religious prescriptions and injunctions in the Zoroastrian scriptures, particularly the Vendidad, about Dokhmenashini and Khurshed Nagirishni. They were not at all bothered or concerned about putting the Mumbai Dakhmas on the rails. Twice did this Editor suggest to them that he was ready to meet all of them to explain the religious doctrine.

But, all they were hollering about was that, they wanted their slice of the Doongerwadi pie for the so-called 'prayer hall' for those going for the furnace or the pit! Some of us did think like the character in Wilde's "A Woman of No Importance", that, "There are things that are right to say, but that may be said at the wrong time and to the wrong people."

Former BPP trustee, Jamsheed Kanga, who led the impertinent brigade, who, when he was a trustee had the audacity to suggest that Parsees should think of "donating" their cadavers to hospitals for research, tried his utmost, with the help of some of his colleagues, to browbeat and badger Minoo Shroff and his co-trustees into giving them space on Doongerwadi land! We do not wish to waste further space on what they said as it was a rehash of what was heard five years ago in the BPP board room, except that then, the doctors and lawyers were men of status and responsibility. The moment they realised that cadavers lying on the pavis in the **Dakhmas** did not constitute any "health hazard", they withdrew their protest. What's more, two of the top-notch lawyers who were in the vanguard of the DDD-AG, died some time later and both were consigned to the **Dakhmas** at Mumbai's Doongerwadi!!

An object lesson for the present odd lot – many of them, the flotsam and jetsam of the defunct DDD-AG,

who have simply jumped on to the readymade Baria band-wagon!

THE TRUSTEES OF THE BOMBAY PARSI PUNCHAYET SHOULD NOT BUCKLE UNDER ANY UNWARRANTED PRESSURE FROM BULLIES AND BROWBEATERS WHO ARE JUST NOT BOTHERED ABOUT THE CONSECRATED RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS!

The trustees should dismiss any litigation threats summarily, as they have 98% of the community members, who, in spite of all the illegal, shameful pictures and video cassettes, still opt for the religiously enjoined **Dokhmenashini**, with them!

THE PARSEE VOICE has offered to the BPP trustees suggestions regarding putting back the **Dakhmas** on line. In the interest of the 98% of the Parsee/Irani Zoroastrians, the trustees must pay heed to them.

Without any formal signature campaign, more than 2000 members of our community have supported **The Parsee Voice's** campaign to show all concerned that **Dakhmas** and **Khurshid Nagirishni** can solve the present problem, given the right will and inclination.

Doongerwadi Bunglis Are Only Extensions Of Old Parsee Homes For The Performance Of The 4-Day Rituals! They are Strictly Meant For Ceremonies For Bodies Taken To The Dakhmas

"Aa bungleo Parsee Zarthoshteeona Jey Ravaano Chhalta Aavela Rivajo Mujab Dokhmenashin Karvaamaan Aavnaar Hoi Teonaaj Upyog Maatey Raakhwaama Aavi Chhe Ané Fakat Tey Upyog Maatej Vaapadwa Aapwaamaan Aavshey".

– *Parsi Punchayetnaa Trustee Sahebo na Hukamthi*

This board in Gujarati on every Bungli of Mumbai's Doongerwadi has greeted the visitor for donkey's years. Until the second decade of the 20th century, all the 4-day rituals (till the **Chaharum** day) were performed in a certain segregated area of the house on the ground floor, called *chotra*.

The procedure was: the **Sachkar** and **Geh Sarna** were performed and the **Nassasalars** would then take the body and walk right upto the **Dakhma** at Doongerwadi. If the distance to be walked was a very long one, there were resting places – the one behind the **Parukh Dharamshala** that came up in 1898, being the more popular one.

Thus, the **Bunglis** at Doongerwadi that began coming up after 1915, were from donations from Parsee philanthropists, who realised that residential funerals were getting scarce. These bunglis are, therefore, mere extensions of the **chotras** in old Parsee houses and bungalows and can be used only for those Parsees who, after the **Geh Sarna**, take the bodies to the **Dakhmas**!

“Pragmatic” D.K. Tamboly Once Again Reveals Himself In His True Colours!

The “Smooth Operator” Is Back, Now Admitting That The Solar Panels Have Not Succeeded

Like the proverbial chameleon, if there is one BPP trustee, who stands thoroughly exposed in his strategems and pretentiousness, where changing colours regarding Dokhmenashini is concerned, Tamboly should take the cake!

In the last six years, this man, who continues to be a BPP trustee, has made statements that would make a veteran Indian politician blush!

Let's begin with an article he published in the **Jame Weekly of 2nd July, 2000**. Many will not believe that it was penned by him.

Excerpts: [2nd July, 2000]

The System of ‘Dokhmenashini’

The Answer Lies In Strengthening It, Not Changing It

By Dinshaw Kaiki Tamboly

“For some time now there has been a debate going on in some quarters of the community on the question of whether the system of ‘Dokhmenashini’ has outlived its utility and if it needs to be changed.

Jam-e-Jamshed recently conducted a poll within its readership posing the question, “In view of the shortage of birds at Doongerwadi, do you think an alternate system for disposal of dead should be introduced?”

The segment of Jam-e-Jamshed’s readership that responded to the poll have voted 63% in favour of change, 36% not in favour of change and 1% undecided.

Be that as it may, as one who has always believed in and followed the principles of transparency in public activities, and also being involved in all facets of the various operations at Doongerwadi and its attendant

issues, I would like to make my views known in this matter.

However, before doing so, an opening statement is necessary. In our community there are many of us who draw conclusions based on hearsay or after hearing only one side of a conversation. I am aware of the fact that some in the community have classified me as a ‘reformist’ whilst others as an ‘orthodox’. To all such individuals I would like to make it clear that I am neither a ‘reformist’ nor an ‘orthodox’. I rather perceive myself to be one who is pragmatic.

Having made this categorical comment I would also like to mention that as a community it is not only essential but also obligatory to preserve and protect our traditions, customs, heritage, doctrines, rites and rituals.

I would now like to share my views in this matter with those who are interested.

The system of ‘Dokhmenashini’ has been followed in Mumbai for well over 300 years now. A gentleman named Mody Heerjeebhoy Vacha-Gandhee, on a part of his estate at Malabar Hill in the year 1669 constructed the first tower of silence or ‘dokhma’ in Mumbai. This is a historically recorded fact.

The ‘dokhma’ came into existence even before the Bombay Parsi Punchayet (BPP) was formed. The forerunner of the present day Bombay Parsi Punchayet was established sometime between 1672 and 1675. If one were to peruse The General Trust Deed (of 1884) of the Immovable Property of the Parsi Punchayet, it becomes abundantly clear that the forerunner of the present day Bombay Parsi Punchayet was established primarily to manage “the ‘Tower of Silence’ or building for the exposure of dead bodies of Parsees.”

Legal opinions have borne out that the General Trust Deed (of 1884) of the Immovable Property of the Parsee

Punchayet, enjoins the Trustees of BPP to faithfully manage the 'Towers of Silence' which were established for the exposure of the dead bodies of Parsees or 'dokhmenashini' as we refer to it.

Due to reasons beyond the scope and control of the BPP, such as urbanisation of the area in the vicinity of Doongerwadi, natural depletion in the number of scavenger birds, and other such relevant factors, the system of 'dokhmenashini' began to feel the strain, necessitating corrective action to be undertaken by the BPP. After a review of the relevant factors, my colleagues and I on the board of BPP, decided just over two years ago that the system of 'dokhmenashini' needed to be strengthened.

To the credit of the BPP board it must be recorded that all 7 Trustees are unanimous in their view that the system of 'dokhmenashini' needs to be strengthened and not changed.

Having decided to strengthen the system of 'dokhmenashini' we have gone about the matter in an organised manner by involving various professionals in different areas of expertise.

Efforts are underway in several areas to strengthen the system, with the intent to preserve and continue with our time-tested and honoured traditions and customs. Members of the clergy as well as religious scholars have also been consulted and are involved in these efforts.

The answer lies in making genuine and sincere efforts to strengthen the system, not to change it. If we ever have to even consider change, let it be first realised that we shall be striking at the very foundations on which the edifice of our community has been built. For, after all, traditions and customs are an intrinsic part of the very soul of a community. In matters concerning preservation and continuity of traditions and customs, one should not and cannot consider change only for the sake of change.

Less than a year and a half later, end 2001, the same Tamboly was singing a totally different tune. That was when the DDD-AG had come up. At first, he was ready to give a Bungli for rituals to those who opted for a totally anti-Zoroastrian mode of disposal. This was later changed to giving a part of Ambawadi in the Doongerwadi complex for the ceremonies.

At that time, he brought out a press note published again in Jame Weekly to which both, Dastur Dr. K.M. Jamaspasa and your editor gave a fitting reply, which were published in Jame of 13th January 2002. The following extracts from these replies will remind the readers of the mischief played by Tamboly in his note.

[Jame Weekly, Excerpts: 13th January, 2002]

Tamboly's Trapeze - A Rejoinder

"The juniormost trustee of the BPP, Dinshaw Kaiki Tamboly, has issued a press note giving the "rationale" behind his anti-Zoroastrian stand of openly supporting those opting for cremation!

In the first three pages, the burden of his argument is that the SDAC, and all those who support it, depend on emotions and sentiments and not on "hard facts", that the DDD-AG are worldly and practical and that the SDAC members are allergic to change.

It's a pity that Tamboly did not attend the public meeting on the 28th December, like his two colleagues, Dadi Engineer and Dinshah Mehta. It would have come as a revelation to him that every speaker had made extremely valid, cogent points, with pertinent quotes from the scriptures. But Tamboly does not - dare not - see the truth in the face. His agenda and programme originate from London, where his mentors are.

Tamboly talks of Dokhmenashini as a custom or tradition. This is where his abysmal ignorance of the religion he is born in, is so evident! For any person who claims to be a Zoroastrian, it is abundantly enjoined in the scriptures that his body has to be put in a Dakhma, after death. This is the mandate and commandment of Lord Ahura Mazda himself! There is no choice whatsoever for a Zoroastrian regarding the manner in which his body is to be "disposed of". Thus, if Tamboly and the DDD-AG members wish to plump for cremation or burial, they forfeit the right to call themselves Zoroastrians! No BPP trustee in his senses, therefore, can even dream of providing a so-called 'Prayer Hall' for those who brazenly flout the commandment of the Lord.

Where did Tamboly get the fib that the present "system of dokhmenashini" "is a dilution of the system as was practised in the days of yore?" It is exactly the same that has been in vogue for thousands of years. However, Truth has a way of erupting at the most unexpected of places: Tamboly spills the beans and contradicts

himself when he writes further that, "This is clear if one reads the injunctions in the Vendidad".

Tamboly pontifically states, repeatedly, that "some other religious injunctions have been compromised" through the years, why didn't anyone protest then? Tamboly is himself blissfully oblivious of two factors: (a) two wrongs do not make a right, or nine wrongs committed in the past cannot justify the tenth wrong; and (b) in Tamboly's mind, one of the Vendidad injunctions being compromised today is the strict segregation to be observed during menstruation. What this "sitting trustee" conveniently forgets is that the likes of Tamboly in the past, openly encouraged the Parsee girls to flout this religious discipline. Again, with many households shrinking to the size of 350 sq. ft., it is well nigh impossible for those ladies willing to practise this discipline. This injunction has been given as illustration here, as it is Tamboly's favourite one. It is reported that in a recent youth meet called by Tamboly, when two girls protested at Tamboly calling Dokhmenashini "barbaric", he chided them by asking if they followed the segregation during menses. Tamboly should be told once and for all that there is a world of a difference between what an individual Zoroastrian can or cannot do, and what a whole community is enjoined to do: between what, at times, is just not possible and what is possible and unavoidable.

Tamboly talks of a Pandora's box being opened if the matter goes to court. Or is it that he's scared that many skeletons will tumble out of BPP's cupboard?

- Adi Doctor

Vada Dasturji K.M. Jamaspasa's Response to Dinshaw K. Tamboly

"Dear Shri Tamboly Saheb,

I am in receipt of a copy of the Press Note sent by you. The following is my line of thoughts to the same.

One important aspect which arises out of your Press Note is that according to you, the entire exercise by the SDAC at the Patkar Hall as well as in general is based only on emotions, sentiments and rhetorics, whereas the members of the DDD-AG and the majority of the BPP trustees are people with rationale. This only reveals your contemptuous nature (which has now surfaced visibly) for the High-priests and other people of social standings who are not in accordance to your line of action. You may kindly watch the proceedings

of the Patkar Hall meeting which has been fully video-taped, for your kind knowledge on the matter, which you seem to have evaluated on the basis of oral reports.

I do not have to repeat here much, but it is very evident that the role of the CEO of the BPP along with you and some of the Trustees of the BPP in the matter and intention of keeping the system of Dokhmenashini is subject to scrutiny.

It is also very evident from the chain of events and circumstances since more than a year, that right from the foundation of the DDD-AG to the post-haste acceptance of their demands and the passing of the subsequent Resolutions thereof are a well-planned exercise, however much you may try to play upon the words in the name of pragmatism.

With particular reference to your point No.1, we have expressly stated in the Patkar Hall meeting also that the Bunglis were built later on for convenience only for the bodies to be consigned to the dakhmas, and not otherwise as is your contention. Any sensible person would understand this factor. No scriptural references nor legal jargon are required for that.

If your contentions were to be followed about the presumptions in the verdicts of the Courts, then all other Trust matters may also be given up for the same reason. In fact, if you are so sure about the outcome of the legal and municipal actions, one may have doubts in one's mind then whether there are plans for a fix-up in these matters already.

Kindly note that the members of the community have already included realities, hard facts and objectivity into their thinking that the decision of the majority of the Trustees is nothing but taking the first step towards the alternative methods of disposal of the lands of Doongerwadi.

Time and again, it has been pointed out that the members of the DDD-AG are themselves fully in a position to construct a prayer hall anywhere in Mumbai if they sincerely wish to, and are sincere enough not to cause a division among our small, peace-loving and law-abiding community.

In His Service.

Kaikhushroo M. JamaspAsa"

Thereafter, when the DDD-AG's "health hazard" balloon got deflated, Tamboly's right-hand man, Homi Dhalla thought he did an Archimedes and yelled

"Eureka" for the "Solar Panel/Concentrator." The Big Boss couldn't have imagined a better way out to save his face! Tamboly immediately announced that he had found the Holy Grail, that would "strengthen the system." The "Solar Panel" became the biggest find of the 21st century for the community!

At the time of Maneck Engineer's election, that notorious "Ed." in Jame which today hides half-a-dozen names behind it, came out with a full-page article in the Jame Weekly of 13th October, 2002, with glaring headlines, "Let Every Parsi Know - Rustom Tirandaz Is Not The Saviour of Doongerwadi and Dokhmenashini." No prizes will be given for correctly guessing who that "Ed.", was.

Almost a year later, came the time for Tamboly's own re-election. He was cock sure that no one would challenge him. But he had not reckoned with N.H. Dadrawalla. When the latter withdrew, because of a vicious vindictive campaign against him in Jame Weekly, Yazdi Desai picked up the gauntlet.

Well, at that time, Jame contrived an interview between Tamboly and Ruby Lilaowalla. Jame also went to town promoting Tamboly as if the saviour had arrived: the saviour of Doongerwadi!! At that time, he was at pains to explain that he had recommended that the DDD-AG be given a small plot at Ambawadi in the Doongerwadi complex, to avoid any litigation involving the Punchayet and the community. That was when the solar concentrators were extolled to the skies, as the best "solution for strengthening the system."

Between 2003 and 2006, there were other issues that occupied his mind: the World Body, that accursed F.D.U., the Federation meetings and, of course, the resignation drama of four BPP trustees, also perhaps stage-managed by Tamboly?

In the meanwhile, came on the scene, his greatest saviour - a woman, who herself had not dreamt that she would be pitchforked into prominence in a matter of months, simply because she made a hue and cry about the conditions in the Mumbai **Dakhmas**, and distributed illegal photos of bodies in the **Dakhmas**.

She got what she wanted: tremendous cheap publicity. But, she triggered a peculiar process: all those

disparate elements, who were licking their wounds after the DDD-AG collapse and those who were biding their time in a corner were suddenly galvanised into action! Wow! What's this? A miracle? they thought. Such an opportunity would be difficult to come by again! "Grab boys, grab!" shouted the unchivalrous males of the species, atop the shoulders of an old woman!

In their heart of hearts, they knew that they had an influential sympathiser in the Bombay Parsi Punchayet itself - D.K. Tamboly. He knew when and where to be present and when to perform the vanishing act. No wonder there were only five BPP trustees present at the crucial meeting on the 12th October, 2006.

On his return from Europe, one of the first things our "smooth operator" performed was, a somersault! Until yesterday, the very solar panels that saved his skin, when the DDD-AG were flexing their muscles or when he had to keep his BPP seat reserved for himself, became the villain of the piece! In the Jame Weekly of 22nd October, 2006, the CEO of the Punchayet wrote on behalf of the trustees that, "The Trustees always take decisions collectively as a Board and not individually particularly in such important matters (Doongerwadi)!" But neither the 5 trustees nor the CEO had reckoned with their own brand of "Judas". In a separate letter, Tamboly wrote, *inter alia*, "...I am of the view that Zoroastrians opting for alternative modes of disposal of the dead should not be denied the last rites... I personally see nothing incorrect in allowing the use of bunglis for recitation of the last rites and prayer ceremonies... As a trustee, it is my duty to uphold and protect without fear or favour, the reasonable sensitivities of all sections of the community as far as they are practicable."

O yeah? Firstly, as a trustee, who has resigned and unlawfully returned, it's your duty to act strictly as per the Trust Deed of 1884: to safeguard the Dakhmas. Secondly, what sections of the community are you blabbering about? The less than 2% who have jumped on a shaky bandwagon? Finally, quit right now as a trustee and then join the deen-dushman brigade!

To refresh Tamboly's memory, we reproduce here, the "Affidavit" sworn in a court of law by him and other trustees:

On Rs. 20 Stamp Paper

AFFIDAVIT

We, Mr. Jamshed Nusserwanji Guzder, Mr. Minoo Rustomji Shroff, Mrs. Silloo Kaikhushru Kavarana, Mr. Dinshaw Rusi Mehta, Mr. Dadi Bejonji Engineer, Mr. Rustom Sheriar Tirandaz and Mr. Dinshaw Kaiki Tamboly all of Mumbai inhabitants having their Office situate at 209, Dr. Dadabhai Naoroji Road, Fort, Mumbai 400 001 do make oath and jointly and each of us severally say as follows:

1. We are the present Trustees of the Funds and Properties of the Parsi Punchayet of Bombay (hereinafter referred to as the BPP). Among the several properties held by the BPP is the property at Doongerwadi in Mumbai popularly known as the "Parsi Towers of Silence."

2 We wish to make this Affidavit on oath to state that we firmly believe in the Dokhmenashini system of disposal of dead and consider it our solemn duty to maintain, support, uphold and strengthen the said age-old method of disposal of the dead prevalent among the Zoroastrian community in Mumbai. We also state that we are enjoined to do the above under the Trust Deeds under which we hold the said property at Doongerwadi.

Sworn at Mumbai aforesaid this 7th day of July, 2000 by:

sd/- Mr. Jamshed Nusserwanji Guzder

sd/- Mr. Minoo Rustomji Shroff

sd/- Mrs. Silloo Kaikhushru Kavarana

sd/- Mr. Dinshaw Rusi Mehta

sd/- Mr. Dadi Bejonji Engineer

sd/- Mr. Rustom Sheriar Tirandaz

sd/- Mr. Dinshaw Kaiki Tamboly

Before me

B.H. Antia,
Notary,
Union of India

Published in Jame Weekly of 16th July, 2000

Eruch Desai Socks It To Them!

[Mr. Eruch B. Desai is the seniormost partner of the famous solicitors' firm, Mulla & Mulla & Craigie Blunt & Caroe, who, incidentally, have been the solicitors of the Bombay Parsi Punchayet, almost since their (the firm's) inception. Mr. Desai was a BPP trustee for two terms and also the Chairman of the BPP for some time.

In this letter, Desai demolishes all arguments of those who threaten litigation for their pet whims and fancies regarding Dokhmenashini. – Editor]

October 12, 2006

The Editor
Parsi Voice
Mumbai.

Dear Sir,

You should have read the letter of one Dr. P.D. Sunavala in Parsiana of 7th October 2006 as also a letter on the same subject in the Mumbai Samachar of Sunday, the 8th October 2006 under the head "Need for reforms at Doongerwadi".

With regard to the various observations therein, it is significant that the system of Dokhmenashini has been prevalent in the community for thousands of years, and in Mumbai for the last more than three hundred years, with no adverse consequences upto date. **Concerning the alleged foul smell in the vicinity, assuming that there is one, why should anybody visit the vicinity of the property to experience the same. Do the streets in Mumbai, even in the vicinity of the Doongerwadi, give out the sweet scent of the perfumes of Arabia? In any event, it is not a small price to pay to preserve our land and conserve our time tested tradition.** Referendum on the issue is not necessary when statistics show that a preponderantly large majority still prefers the existing system. That deals with his letter in Parsiana.

On the legal aspect of using a part of the Doongerwadi property for an alternative method of disposal appearing in Bombay Samachar. Dr. Sunavala has referred to the opinions of my friends, Mr. Soli Sorabji and Mr. Rafiq Dada (for whom I have great respect and admiration) as against my views on the subject.

For the information of the reading public, I have analysed shortly the different opinions as under:

This is what **Mr. Sorabji** has to say in his opinion.

Quote

"In my opinion, the trust property can be used for the purpose of

- (i) exposure of the dead bodies and
- (ii) also independently for religious rites and ceremonies of Zoroastrian Parsis (unconnected with exposure of the dead bodies).

It would not be open to the Trustees having regard to the provisions of the Trust Deed to deny the use of the Trust property for the purpose of religious rites and ceremonies which are not connected with or related with the exposure of the dead bodies in Towers of Silence."

Nobody, including me, has ever disputed the position that other religious rites and ceremonies can be performed at the Doongerwadi Bunglis. The ceremonies for the Farvardyan Parabh and similar ceremonies are instances on the point. It is only when these ceremonies relate to the usual Paidust, Uthamna and incidental ceremonies that the difficulty arises.

With regard to the opinion of **Mr. Rafiq Dada**, I quote the following extracts therefrom:

"1. It is however necessary to bear in mind that the performance of religious rites or ceremonies must be religious rites and ceremonies of the Zoroastrian religion. The whole object of the Trust Deed is to make a dedication for the benefit of persons professing the Zoroastrian religion and to enable them not only to use the Trust lands for the exposure of the dead but also for the performance of Zoroastrian religious rites and ceremonies. It necessarily follows that no rite or ceremony can be performed on the land which is not in consonance with or antithetical to the Zoroastrian faith.

2. As stated above, it has been proposed by the DDD-AG that after the first day's obsequial ceremony is performed at Doongerwadi, the body of the deceased Zoroastrian would be taken from Doongerwadi in a private hearse and arrangement would be made at a place outside the Doongerwadi for the cremation or burial as the case may be of

the dead body. At the conference held with me, it has been strongly urged on behalf of the Save Doongerwadi Committee that even the above method would not be permissible under the Zoroastrian Religion. If this is so and the Zoroastrian faith does not permit such an act, then the Querists cannot give the bunglis or a separate prayer hall for the aforesaid purpose at Doongerwadi."

As stated in one of my previous articles, our Priests and religious experts have categorically opined in no uncertain terms, that the above is not permissible in the Zoroastrian Religion, and no rites and ceremonies can be performed with reference to a method of the disposal of the dead through cremation or burial, where Dokhmenashini is available. Our courts have also held that rituals and ceremonies and modes of worship are integral part of religion.

As against the above, another Senior Council, **Mr. Bomi Zaiwalla** has given the opinion, of which the following is an important extract:

"Culled from the language of the Trust Deed, it is clear that the cemetary property of Doongerwadi is meant only to be used for the funeral ceremonies and religious rites directly connected with the exposure of the dead Parsi Zoroastrians consigned to the Tower of Silence and historically the Parsi Zoroastrian Community was frequenting the cemetary property for such religious rites only. In any case then, none did or were expected to conduct funeral or religious ceremonies, for those who opted for cremation of the dead as set out hereinafter being against the tenets of the Zoroastrian religion and destroying the very foundation of the faith."

In one of my Articles on the subject, as early as the year 2001, I had also observed as under:

"1. Chitty on Contract also says to the effect that a document ought to receive that construction which language will admit and which will best effectuate the intention of the parties to be collected from the whole of the document and that greater regard is to be had to the clear intention of the parties then to any particular words which they may have used in the expression of the intent.

2. As stated above, when the aforesaid Trust Deed of 1884 came into existence, there were no bunglis

for the prayers on the Doongerwadi precincts. The existing bunglis came to be constructed much later, and if I recall correctly, during the beginning of the 20th century, out of the funds donated by the philanthropic Parsis who certainly should have donated surely with the intention that they would be used only for the performance of ceremonies for those who opted for the system of the disposal of the dead through Dokhmenashini, which was the only system prevalent at Doongerwadi for the last hundreds of years. If that be the intention of the settlers, as is indeed seems to be, it is possible to contend that by allowing the use of these bunglis for religious ceremonies to those who do not desire the bodies being confined to Dokhmas may expose the Trustees to a risk of breach of trust.

I may also enlighten the author of the above letters who styles everyone opposed to his views as "fundamentalist" (including the author of this letter)

that though I cannot compare myself to any of them, it was Sir Dinshaw Mulla, who became the Judge of the Bombay High Court, and later on was elevated to Privy Council, who was a Solicitor. So was Sir Nusservanji Engineer before he became a High Court Judge. So was Justice Tulzapurkar before he became a Judge of the Supreme Court of India. Even the legal luminaries of the Country and the community, Fali Nariman and Soli Sorabji took their initial training in a Solicitor's Office, and the last but not the least important, Mr. Berjis Desai, who is also a Solicitor of repute.

I have deemed it necessary to draw attention to the above so that the reading public may have a clear picture.

Yours truly
Sd/-
Eruch B. Desai

[Emphases provided by 'The Parsee Voice']

No Benevolent Acts Can Be Performed For Those Dead Bodies That Are Buried Or Cremated

This topic has been dealt with in the *Riwâyat* of Kâmâ Vorâ. Besides, as you are aware that one goes alone on a journey... But, in our religion, it is not permitted to travel alone, because, if someone dies abroad, the *nasa* is either cremated or buried. In his

honour, no *ijashné* can be consecrated. And if any (ritual) is performed or recited, the soul does not get its benefit. So, the religion does not permit anyone to journey alone...

(From *The Rivayets of Dastur Darab Hamjiyar*)

Even 70 years ago, some Errant Parsees Didn't Want the Dakhmas! And Look What Stand The BPP Trustees Took!

This happened in Pune in 1936. The Collector granted permission to Lady Sylla D. Petit and Sorab N. Moos to use a piece of land as a burial ground. There were already two *dakhmas* for over a century!

"The Poona Zoroastrian Anjuman held a protest meeting and as per a resolution, the president of the meeting, Sardar Kaikhushroo B. Padamjee sent copies of resolutions, and requested the BPP trustees to lodge a strong protest with the Bombay Government.

"Zoroastrians from over 3 dozen cities and towns showed their sympathy with the cause of the Poona Anjuman and urged strong action."

The Collector refused to supply to the Poona Anjuman a copy of the application for the grant. The

Commissioner, Central Division to whom a complaint was made, declined to interfere with the Collector's decision.

This is when the BPP trustees of those days, perhaps led by Seth Muncherjee P. Khareghat, picked up the challenge. They sent a long memorial dated 3rd March, 1937 to the Secretary to the Government.

Among other things, the BPP trustees wrote: "In the written grant, the land is permitted to be used 'as a burial ground for the Parsi community and those connected with the community'. This has very greatly hurt the religious feelings of the Parsi community. Not only the Parsi community of Poona,

(continued on page 16)

**Report of the Public Meeting organised by The Parsee Voice
on Friday, 6th October 2006 at
Framjee Cawasjee Institute, Mumbai**

**DOKHMENASHINI, A PACKAGE DEAL GIFTED BY
DADAAR AHURA MAZDA!**

**NOT AMENABLE TO CHANGE AT THE WHIMS & FANCIES
OF MISGUIDED INDIVIDUALS!**

They had started coming by 5.15 p.m. The meeting was at 6.15 p.m. The trickle, however, soon became a wave, as the Framjee Cawasjee hall got packed to capacity. More than 600 Parsee-Irani Zoroastrians of Mumbai, came to vote unanimously for Dokhmenashini, the method, the system, they still believe in and still opt for without the slightest hesitation, when death occurs in the family!

The meeting commenced with A. F. Doctor, Editor of **The Parsee Voice**, welcoming those present. He likened the recent attacks on Dokhmenashini to a Bollywood remake. The DDD-AG had tried to do away with Dokhmenashini 5 years ago, but had failed. Two prominent lawyers who had spearheaded the attack during those troubled days had passed away. BUT BOTH HAD OPTED FOR DOKHMENASHINI.

Dokhmenashini, the most eco-friendly system

The first speaker of the evening, Aramaity S. Dhalla, daughter of late Ervad Dr. Minocher D. Karkhanawala, asserted that death resulted in the creation of a certain disorder which gave rise to pollution. All human activities resulted in some form

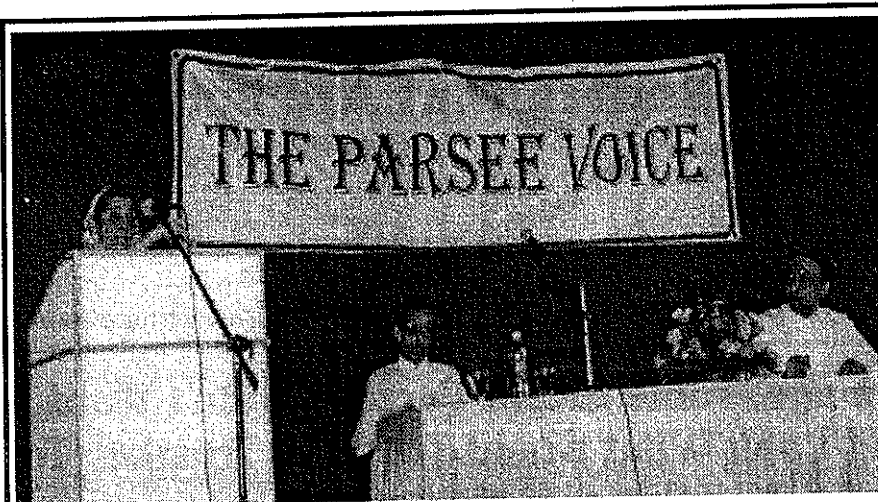
of pollution. This pollution had to be identified and then quarantined to prevent harm to others. Burial resulted in the release of certain gases and polluted the ground. Cremation of corpses resulted in defiling of fire and air by the release of gases. Even in the science of radioactivity, it was a recognized principle to identify the source of contamination and isolate it.

The Zoroastrian funerary practices were geared to do just that. Dokhmenashini was the most eco-friendly method of disposal of the dead as no harm was caused to any living being or creation of Dadaar Ahura Mazda.

She drew attention to the fact that while human defilement was

visible and recognizable, there existed certain forms of invisible defilement too. Pollution caused by radioactivity was invisible. It required certain specific equipment to measure such type of pollution. However, a Soul was invisible and no equipment existed to measure the harm caused to it. Man-made laws were liable to change. But 'Vidaevodat' (the law against the demons) was given by Dadaar Ahura Mazda Himself and not subject to change.

She explained that the human mind was such that it was the king of the physical body. Many a times it



"Our thoughts are hopelessly limited! Dokhmenashini, even today, is the only eco-friendly and God-given system for our dead!" asserts Aramaity S. Dhalla

defied the laws of Ahura Mazda as it considered itself superior. Unfortunately, the mind does not realize that it has limitations and cannot comprehend things beyond a certain point.

The Zoroastrian obsequies consisting of Sachkar and Sagdid, Geh Sarna, Dokhmenashini and Sraosh ni kriyas were a package and functioned as a whole, for dealing with a corpse. It was a very scientific structure and no individual had the freedom of choice to break this. The construction of a *Dakhma* was hygienic. There was in place a filtration process where sand-stone and charcoal were used. The Sun dried the 'leelo naso' and hence no harm was caused to any natural element. She stressed that it was the **ONLY ECO-FRIENDLY SYSTEM FOR THE DISPOSAL OF THE DEAD.**

Corpse Management

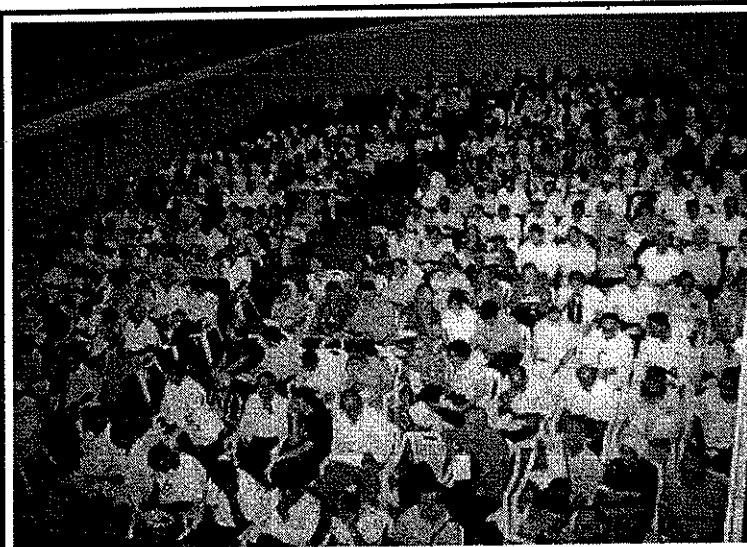
The next speaker of the evening, Adi F. Doctor, mentioned that, in these controversial times, it was our duty to preserve and protect what our ancestors had given us. It took three years to consecrate a *Dakhma*. The term 'disposal of a corpse' was erroneous. The right term was 'management of a corpse'. The *Dakhmas* were beyond compare in corpse management. The main reason for the confusion prevailing today was **IGNORANCE**. The demon of

ignorance was robbing certain people of their faith, leading to the spread of false propaganda.

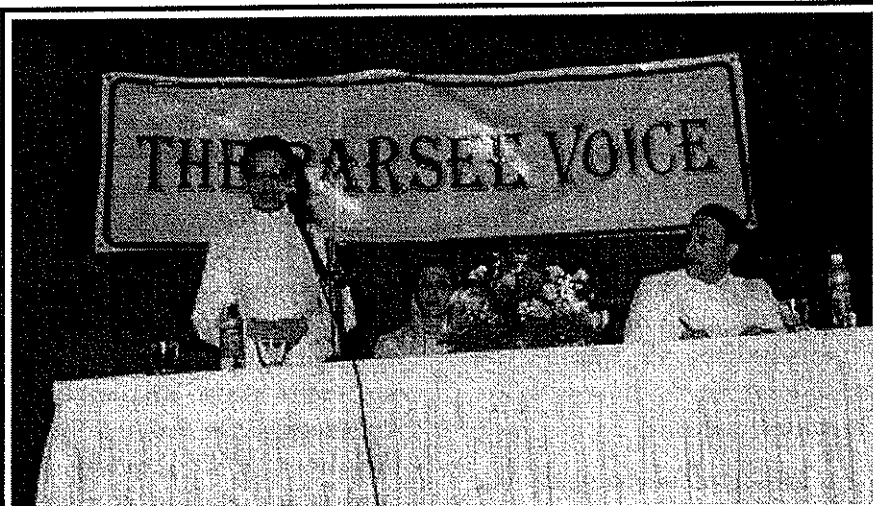
The word 'Aramgah' (place of rest) was a misnomer. Before the 19th century, there was no burial amongst the Parsees. It started with the advent of the British influence. It became a fashion for some high society Parsees to be 'laid to rest' in graves bearing fancy epitaphs. **The true Aramgah is the *Dakhma*. Burial grounds are basically 'Afatgahs' for the Soul of a Zoroastrian.**

Each Prophet brought with him his own method of management of the dead. The Hindus adopted cremation, the Jews, Christians and Muslims adopted burial. But the

Mazdayasnis, followers of the world's oldest religion, adopted Khurshed Nagirishni (exposure to the Sun). Dokhmenashini came later with Prophet Zarathushtra. **The foundation of Dokhmenashini is Khurshed Nagirishni.**



Jam-Packed! A 600-plus capacity audience looking at the handouts given, as Adi Doctor explains the intricacies of a Dakhma



"Dakhmas are the Atash Behrams for the departed Zoroastrians" - Adi F. Doctor makes a point

testified to the fact that burial and cremation were forbidden for a Zoroastrian.

Burial and Cremation

Doctor asserted that the Vendidad contained categorical injunctions against burial. Extracts from James Darmesteter's English translations of the Vendidad were provided to the attendees. Doctor gave a detailed insight into the various Chapters of the Vendidad which

He referred to Chapter 3 para 8 wherein Paigambar Zarathushtra inquires of Dadaar Ahura Mazda: "Which is the second place where the Earth feels sorest grief". Dadaar Ahura Mazda replies: "It is the place

wherein most corpses of dogs and of men lie buried".

In para 9 of the same chapter, Paigambar Zarathushtra asks Dadaar Ahura Mazda: "Which is the second place where the Earth feels sorest grief". Dadaar Ahura Mazda replies: "It is the place whereon stand

most of those Dakhmas on which the corpses of men are deposited." This statement was regularly used by the protagonists of burial and cremation. The speaker clarified that the Avesta translation of the Vendidad categorically mentioned 'Dakhma Uzdaez' meaning 'those Dakhmas which were closed' viz. graves, tombs and NOT OUR DAKHMAS, which were open. The Pyramids are an example of 'Uzdaez Dakhma'. In para 12 of the same Chapter, Paigambar Zarathushtra asked: "Who is the first that rejoices the Earth with greatest joy? Dadaar Ahura Mazda answered: "It is he who digs out of it most corpses of dogs and men." This was a clear reference against burial.

The word 'tomb' originated from the word 'taph' meaning 'to burn' (either by the Sun or Fire). Similarly, the word 'epitaph' has the word 'taph'. The word funeral also has its genesis in the word 'Fu' meaning 'a place which emits smoke'.

Doctor informed that if a Zoroastrian Soul gets the benefit of Dokhmenashini, the package ensures that the Soul reaches the threshold of Chinvat. The Keherp (astral body) acts as the vehicle for the Soul to take off for Chinvat. Whenever a person dies, his last thoughts and desires form an invisible shell referred to as 'Passion Body' or 'Phantom form'. With *Sachkar*, this Passion Body begins to crumble. With the *Geh*

Sarna, this Passion Body crumbles further and Dokhmenashini causes it to disintegrate completely. In burial and cremation, the Soul does not reach the threshold of Chinvat but lands up in a state



All Hands Up For Dokhmenashini! Here, a section of the audience seen unanimously passing the resolution for the BPP to note. (Pix by Rusi M. Davar & Fali Palkhivala)

of suspended animation. Also, because of the absence of Dokhmenashini, the Phantom form is not destroyed but hardens, causing the Soul, which is in suspended animation, to be constantly attracted to it instead of progressing towards Chinvat.

Burial and cremation have three

problems in common viz.

- a) Problems of toxins and poisonous gases being emitted by the corpses and inhaled by the living. The smoke and carcinogenous substances cause diseases and epidemics. Those who consign corpses to a fire or bury it commit Margzarzan Gunaah (sin for which there is no atonement).
- b) The Soul which requires salvation gets damnation instead of redemption.
- c) The 4-day Kriyas are of no use to the Soul of those buried/cremated.

As soon as *Sachkar* is done and the body placed in the *Kash*, the Soul of the deceased is seated in the Keherp (astral body). Once the corpse is laid on the Pavi in the *Dakhma*, an invisible silvery thread connects the corpse to the Soul. The Soul, which is in a semi-conscious state, anxiously keeps praying that the *Talesam* of the *Dakhma* helps it to reach Chinvat on the dawn of Chaharum. The moment the Soul realises that the corpse is not placed in the *Dakhmas*, but is cremated or buried, it begins to lament.

Non-applicability of Kriyas

All the four day ceremonies are dedicated to Sraosh Yazad. The last ceremony at the dawn of Chaharum day is the Afringan dedicated to Daham Yazad, who

then takes custody of the anasars. In cremation or burial, custody of the anasars does not go to Daham Yazad because the Talesam of the *Dakhmas* has not been given a chance to play its role. Also, due to the ill-effects of cremation/burial the anasars are scattered/disintegrated and Nature has to make extra efforts to retrieve them. This is a very time consuming process and the poor Soul get stranded in limbo for many many years till the process is completed. Thus, Kriyas are not mandated for a corpse which is buried/cremated as they are of no use. In 1961, a resolution was passed by the then 14 High Priests of India, categorically instructing priests not to perform ceremonies of those who were cremated/buried in places where *Dakhmas* existed. Doctor also drew attention to the reference made in the Rivayat of Kâmâ Vora, wherein was mentioned that no Kriyas could be performed for those Zoroastrians who did not opt for Dokhmenashini.

3 fundamental parts of Dokhmenashini

- *Khurshed Nagirishni* - Rays of the Sun
- The *Dakhma* itself, which is consecrated and in which the Talesam is vibrant
- Vultures, birds of prey

The current scenario

Coming to the current scenario, Doctor stated that only the vultures are missing. He referred to the deliberately false and misleading propaganda being conducted by Vispi Wadia of Association for Revival (?) of Zoroastrianism (ARZ). Week after week, Wadia had been quoting references from the Holy Vendidad, conveniently misinterpreting the injunctions given therein and, consequently, misleading the readers. Jame Jamshed Weekly had, ofcourse, been an all too willing player in this game. They had also been joined by a certain lady. Phrases like 'bodies are rotting and piling up in the *Dakhmas*' were being frequently thrown at an unsuspecting public. The name of the game was BRAIN-WASHING - influencing people's thinking by repeatedly publishing falsehood. Sentences of James Darmesteter's translation of the Vendidad were shown in bold as if he had emphasized those lines, which he had not. Wadia had also conveniently not published certain relevant paras from the Vendidad which categorically mentioned that when a Zoroastrian died, those living should make an

attempt to locate a *Dakhma* and, if there was no *Dakhma*, a makeshift one was to be created.

Doctor queried whether it was not Wadia's duty to join hands in bringing the system on line if he thought it was not functioning optimally. Just because of the absence of vultures, was it wise to throw away the whole package of Dokhmenashini, he queried. Incidentally, there was no specific mention of vultures in these chapters in the Vendidad. The Vendidad just referred to wild birds and animals.

He further explained that Dadaar Ahura Mazda's commandment to place corpses on mountain tops presupposed the existence of the Sun's rays. Sighting was by the Sun and not by other humans as was happily being done today. He deplored the levels to which certain people were stooping by surreptitiously photographing the insides of a sacred *Dakhma* and then giving the photos to all and sundry. He stressed that birds were not the cornerstone of Dokhmenashini, Khurshed Nagirishni was! Even if no vultures were there, other ecological agents of Nature like crows and kites abounded in plenty.

A *Dakhma* is an Atash Behram for the deceased. After death, the corpse did not belong to us or even to this earth. It belonged to Khurshed Nagirishni and the Talesam of the *Dakhma*.

Doctor lamented that today, even the so-called intelligent people were being misled by the continuous propaganda in the media. It was clear that the pictures shown on TV channels were doctored. He lamented the fact that none of the trustees of the Bombay Parsi Punchayet cared for the *Dakhmas*. The trustees, who were the custodians and administrators of the *Dakhmas*, were actually trying to buy peace with those who were denigrating the system, by offering them alternate solutions like places for performing Kriyas for those using alternate modes of disposal. Rotten things were happening in BPP's office and not in the *Dakhmas*, he lamented.

TPV's request to the BPP

Doctor informed those present that The Parsee Voice (TPV) had written to the BPP, offering to show how to optimally run the system. TPV had requested that the Framji Cawasji Banaji *Dakhma* be run as per the advice given by a committee to be formed by TPV, under the overall supervision of the BPP. Unfortunately,

Homi Dhalla had also sent a paper to the BPP, suggesting installation of a Dome over the same *Dakhma*, resulting in it being converted into a tomb viz. an Uzdaez Dakhma. Doctor drew attention to the fact that the Vendidad contained categorical instructions to break down such Uzdaez Dakhmas. The same person was also responsible for installing solar concentrators over another *Dakhma*. Solar Concentrators resulted in converging the rays of the Sun on a particular spot. But the Sun's rays always had to be parallel to do their required job, he informed. He requested the community members to call upon the trustees and persuade them to see reason and let the Dakhmas function naturally, without artificial props. The need of the hour was to use as many Pavis as available, in all the *Dakhmas*. It was also necessary to trim the trees abounding next to the *Dakhmas* to allow sunlight to enter the *Dakhmas* freely.

He also drew attention of those present to the Affidavit signed by 7 BPP trustees on 7th July 2000, wherein they had sworn on oath that they firmly believed in Dokhmenashini and that it was their duty to maintain, support, uphold and strengthen the system. He wondered what had happened to this tall claim in the light of their present conduct!

Doctor then requested those present to vote on the Resolution proposed by The Parsee Voice, as given below.

This Resolution was passed UNANIMOUSLY by all the community members present, WITHOUT A SINGLE DISSENTING VOTE.

Finally, the speaker offered thanks to all those who helped make this important meeting a success.

- H.M. Mistry

RESOLUTION :

"RESOLVED THAT the community reaffirms its complete faith in the system of Dokhmenashini which is revealed in the Holy Vendidad as the one and only system for dealing with our Zoroastrian dead and rejects as un-Zoroastrian and irreligious any other method of disposal of its dead.

FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Parsee Zoroastrian community, which is the beneficiary of the Doongerwadi property, firmly rejects as irreligious and illegal any proposal being considered, now or in future, by the Trustees of the Bombay Parsi Punchayet (BPP) to acquiesce to the demands of a small minority of heterodox community members to permit the use of Doongerwadi Bunglis or any other premises in the Doongerwadi complex or any other premises under the control of the BPP for the performance of four day after-death ceremonies of those unfortunate deceased Parsee Zoroastrians who are not consigned to the Dakhmas.

FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the community strongly urges the Trustees of the Bombay Parsi Punchayet, present and future, to permit the system of Dokhmenashini to function naturally and not to tamper with the Dakhmas by using any extraneous methods and/or artificial props and/or any other equipment like domes etc. anywhere in or on or near the Dakhmas for disposal of the dead.

FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the community deplores and condemns in the strongest possible terms the sacrilegious actions of those responsible for taking illegal photographs of the insides of the sacred Dakhmas and circulating them to the media with a view to promoting their irreligious interests.

FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the community hereby appeals to all devout and faithful Parsee Zoroastrians to unite and take all possible steps to prevent the use of Doongerwadi Bunglis for performance of the four day obsequies of those failing to use the system of Dokhmenashini and also take all necessary action to prevent the construction and use of a crematorium and/or burial ground at Doongerwadi complex, now or at any time in the future.

FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the community hereby advises the Trustees of the Bombay Parsi Punchayet not to encourage anti-Zoroastrian modes of disposal of the dead, failing which the community shall be constrained to take such steps as it considers necessary to safeguard and defend its spiritual institutions."

Our Mailbox

What's Going On In Wadiaji's Atash Behram?

The Editor,
The Parsee Voice

Sir, It has been an essential practice and tradition in all our Agiaries and Atash Behrams that non-Parsees are not allowed entry therein. This has been acknowledged and accepted, and even respected, by all those who have ruled our country, ever since our advent into India more than 1200 years ago!

I note with extreme regret that one of our most sacred fire-temples, the Wadiaji Atash Behram at Princess Street, seems of late, to be the prime target of some non-Parsees to seek entry.

Such unwarranted, illegal attempts are invariably made in the afternoon, between say, 2.00 and 3.00 p.m. when the buiwalla has left to take rest and there's hardly any Zarthoshti around.

Some days back, two men with their heads uncovered were almost walking upto the hall of the Adaran Saheb, when I happened to be there. With the help of a couple of other devotees, I challenged them to show their Sudreh and Kusti. The replied they didn't have them! When they

refused to move out, we threatened to call the police. This is when they started to move out!

A non-Parsee Indian, standing just outside the portico in the compound, brazenly told us that they should be allowed inside the Atash Behram. Again, when told that if they didn't leave, a police complaint will be lodged, the three left the compound.

But, the climax came when we saw a young Parsee woman at the gate, who seemed to be organising this intrusion!!

A few months earlier, we stopped two other non-Zoroastrians just before the *sanctum sanctorum*, as they walked in with their shoes on!!

You will appreciate that it is the duty of the Atash Behram trustees to appoint a proper Parsee security officer, who will prevent such an outrageous desecration of our **Padshah Saheb**.

We urge the two senior trustees, Mrs. Katie Mehta and Mr. Nadir Modi, both well-known legal luminaries, to protect the sacred premises of the Atash Behram.

- Mrs. Mehru Zaiwala

Community Capers

(1) Udvada - Sign of the Times: From Damaji Gaekwad and Raja Durjansinhji To Narendra Modi

Udvada as a "Tourist Centre" To Be Connected to 66 other such Tourist spots in Gujarat!!

Mobedan Mobed Nairyosangh Dhaval's Spiritual Legacy About To Receive a Body-Blow!

When Holy Iranshah was brought from Valsad to Udvada in October 1742, the Rajput Raja of Mandvi, Durjansinhji had rendered great help to the Parsee priests. Before that, it was Damaji Gaekwad, who in 1740, granted a permit to let Holy Iranshah remain within the territorial jurisdiction of the Sanjana mobeds.

In the last 264 years that Shreeji Iranshah has been in Udvada, not much water has flowed down the placid Paar river in the vicinity.

But the present "Vibrant Gujarat" of Narendra Modi will see all that changed, thanks mainly to the dubious resourcefulness of Parsees like Jehangir Cama of Ahmedabad and D.K. Tamboly and other trustees of the F.D.U., who, after giving totally false promises to the Parsee community in the last two years, will put Udvada on the tourist map of the world on 24th November, 2006!! The present Athornan Anjuman of Udvada and the two High Priests cannot absolve themselves of their responsibility to prevent this sad turn of events.

24th November is Fasli Adar Parab and the historical birth anniversary of Holy Iranshah. This year, however, that day will be a red-letter day for some mercenary materialistic Parsees. For the faithful however, it'll be a day for penitence, regret and remorse!

(2) Calling the Attention of the Indore Parsi Zoroastrian Anjuman

The Indore Parsi Zoroastrian Anjuman has a newly reconstructed Parsee Dharamshala adjoining the Bhungara Daremeher. There is a Kawas Hall thereat, which is to be used naturally for Parsee functions.

However, **The Parsee Voice** has received shocking reports that, some months ago, the Hall was given out for a Muslim function, even while an Uthamna ceremony was going on inside the Dar-e-Meher!! Not only that. Even the Dharamshala rooms are occasionally given for stay by non-Parsees! If this be true, it calls for an immediate explanation from the President of the Anjuman, Bomi Kavina.

We also request the Federation of Parsi Zoroastrian Anjumans of India (FPZAI) to investigate in the matter.

(3) Boyce Agiary, Tardeo, Shows The Way!

The mobile madness among the Parsees is by now well known! So much so, that, like most women of all ages cannot do without their favourite doll or teddy bear, community members cannot do without their Nokia or Samsung!

This mobile madness is rampant even inside our sacred fire temples. Even the mobeds shamefully cock a snook at the boards put up: "Please switch off your mobiles before entering the Agiary"!

The Boyce-Dhanapatel Agiary also experienced similar hassles for years. As always, there were arguments and spats between the worshippers and the mobeds or the manager.

(continued from page 9)

but also those of many other places like Bombay, Surat, Ahmedabad, Karachi, Baroda, etc., have strongly protested against the grant. My trustees as the chief body representing Parsi communal interests have received many such protests... The reason for such feeling is that the burial of dead bodies is entirely opposed to the tenets of the Parsi religion, which regards it as defilement of the earth. Such burial is condemned as a grave sin in one of the oldest Parsi religious books, the Vendidad. The same condemnation is to be found in other more recent religious books... and the large number of protests made at present

A few months ago, all this changed. The trustees hit upon a simple but splendid idea. On the wall, near the entrance, they put up a wooden board with small lockers, their keys dangling from them. "Please leave your mobiles, cameras, etc. here", it says. The worshipper opens the locker, deposits his switched-off mobile inside, locks the cabinet and carries the key with him. When leaving he opens the locker, retrieves his cell-phone and leaves the key inside the locker!

Why didn't someone think of this simple remedy long ago? **Other Fire Temples! Please emulate!**

(4) Zerick H. Dastur wins laurels in Law!

Zerick H. Dastur knows no limits where his academic studies are concerned. A merit student right through his school and college, winning prizes and medals, he excelled himself recently, when he set an all time record by scoring a whopping 86% in Civil Procedure Code and Limitation Act! Not content with that, he scored a record 81% in Law of Evidence.



Handsome Zerick is a keen sportsman and a student of martial arts, yoga and weight training. If you still have some breath left, Ervad Zerick, whose father Hosi is in the travel and tourism business and a managing trustee of the Boyce-Dhanapatel Daremeher and whose mother Dinaz, is a splendid artist and very fond of spiritualism, works for J. Sagar Associates. We wish Zerick further prosperity and many more laurels in the years to come! *(Please note that The Parsee Voice has not yet started a matrimonial bureau!)*

show how tenaciously this doctrine is held even now by the community... The opening of a burial ground for the community close to the City of Poona where there are two Towers of Silence, is naturally and rightly regarded as an insult to their religion by the vast majority of the community."

Needless to say that the Government wrote to state that it was "satisfied that the use to which the land is to be put is one that is not required by or acceptable to the whole community and that therefore the grant has not been made for a public purpose."

SUCH WERE THE PARSEES AND THE BPP TRUSTEES OF YORE!!

૪૦ વર્ષ અગાઉ હિંદુસ્તાનનાં ૧૪ દસ્તુર સાહેબોએ મોબેદ સાહેબોને આપેલી સૂચના:

જ્યાં દોખ્ખા હોય ત્યાં ક્રિમેટોરિયમ કે દાટવાની રૂઢી અપનાવાય, તો તેવાં રવાનની ચાહરમની બામદાદ સુધીની કોઈ પણ ધર્મ-ક્રિયા કરવી નહીં!

(તા. ૧૧મી નવેમ્બર ૧૯૬૧ના જામે જમશેદ માં ઉપલાં મથાલાં હેથળ હિંદુસ્તાનના સર્વે દસ્તુરજી સાહેબોનો, અથોરનાન સાહેબોને માર્ગદર્શન આપતો પત્ર પ્રગટ થયો હતો, જેનો સંક્ષેપ ઉતારો અત્રે રજુ કર્યે છીએ).

જરથોસ્તી દીને ફરમાવેલા અને પારસી કોમે સદીઓથી જાળવેલી, ગુજરના લાશની નિકાળની એક પૂરી પદ્ધતિ તે દોખ્ખેનશીનીજ છે. જ્યાં તેની જોગવાઈ ન હોય, ત્યાં મજબુરીના સંજોગોમાં બીજી રૂઢી અપ્ત્યાર કરવી પડે... પણ જ્યાં દોખ્ખાઓ મોજુદ હોવા છતાં, બીજી પદ્ધતિ નો આશરો લેવાય, તેવાં પગલાંમાં મોબેદ સાહેબોએ કેવી કાર્યનિતી ધારણ કરવી તે બાબે... અમે નીચે મુજબ સૂચના આપવાનું દરૂસ્ત સમજ્યે છીએ.

(૧) અથોરનાન સાહેબો દીન આઈનના રક્ષક હોવે એવી ગેરરીતીમાં ભાગ લઈ તને આડકતરું ઉત્તેજન આપી શકે નહીં, બલ્કે તેના તરફ પોતાની નાપસંદગી જાહેર કરવા ખાતર પોતાનો સહકાર આપવા ના પાડે, તો તેમાં તેઓ ધાર્મિક દ્રષ્ટિએ વાજબી ગણાય, કારણ કે તેવી અજરથોસ્તી પદ્ધતિ નો વધુ ફેલાવો થવે કોમને અનેક રીતે ભારે નુકશાન થાય તેમ છે.

(૨) અગાઉ તેવા દાખલામાં જે સાહેબોએ વગર સમજે ભાગ લીધો હતો તેઓ તરફથી જાહેરમાં દિલગીરી

બતાવવામાં આવેલી છે. એ બાબે મોબેદ વર્ગનું ધ્યાન ફરીથી ખેંચવામાં આવે છે.

(૩) જ્યાં દોખ્ખાઓની સગવડ હોવા છતાં જુદીન રેવાજ ધારણ કરી જરથોસ્તી દીનના ફરમાનની ખુદી અવગણનાં કરાય, ત્યાં તે શહેરમાં મોબેદ સાહેબોએ પહેલાં ત્રણ દિવસની જે જે ક્રિયા લાશના નિકાળ અને રવાનની તરફ સાથ સંબંધ ધરાવે છે, તેમાં ભાગ લેવા ના પાડી પોતાની ટેકભરી ફરજ બજાવવી. યાને પાચદસ્ત, ગેહસારણું, કરદો તથા બન્ને ઉઠમણાં જેવી ક્રિયાઓમાં સામેલ થાય નહી.

લી. મેહેરજીરાણા કેકોબાદ દસ્તુર મેહેરજીરાણા (નવસારી), કેખશરૂ માહીયાર કુતાર (મુંબઈ), ફીરોઝ દસ્તુર ખુરશેદજી (ઉદવાડા), નોશીરવાન દસ્તુરજી મંચેરશાહ દસ્તુર (સુરત), ફરામરોજ પેશુતન ભેસાન્યા (મુંબઈ), કેખશરૂ દસ્તુર મીનોચેહર જામાસ્પઆશા (મુંબઈ), હોરમઝદચાર દસ્તુર કયોજી મીરઝા (ઉદવાડા), મરઝબાન મેહેરવાનજી નાલ્લાદાઝ (સુરત), નવરૂઝ દી. મીનોચેહરહોમજી (મુંબઈ), ખુરશેદ શા. દાબુ (મુંબઈ), હોરમઝદીયાર દસ્તુર નોશીરવાન (પૂના), સોરાબજી દસ્તુર પેસ્તનજી આદરીઆનવાલા (પૂના).

ઉદવાડામાં આવું કાંઈક ભવિષ્યમાં બની શકશે!

(એક અગત્યનો લેખ સવા બે વર્ષ અગાઉ તા. ૭ ઓગસ્ટ, ૨૦૦૪ નાં “સંદેશ” અખ્બારમાં પ્રગટ થયો હતો. એના લેખકનું નામ નથી આપ્યું, પરંતુ એની અંદર એક યાત્રાધામ ટુરિસ્ટ સેન્ટર તરીકે જાહેર થાય, ત્યારે તેની ઉપર શું શું આપત્તિઓ આવી શકે છે, તેનો સચોટ ખ્યાલ આપેલો છે. અમો આ લેખનો મૂખ્ય ભાગ અત્રે પ્રગટ કર્યે

છીએ, કે જેથી વાંચકોને ખ્યાલ આવે કે પર્યટન મથક સ્થપાયા પછી, એક ધાર્મિક સ્થળની કાયા કેટલી બેહુદી રીતે બદલાઈ જાય છે! મૂળ લેખમાં જ્યાં ભારતની ચા કેનદ્ર સરકાર શબ્દો આવે છે, ત્યાં વાંચકો “ગુજરાત સરકાર” તરીકે વાંચી શકશે!)

- તંત્રી

તીર્થધામનો વિકાસ ટુરિસ્ટ સેન્ટર તરીકે થાય તો તેની પવિત્રતા નષ્ટ થઈ જાય છે

અરવલ્લીની ગિરિમાળામાં આવેલું માઉન્ટ આબુ આજથી ૫૦ વર્ષ અગાઉ એક પવિત્ર યાત્રાધામ હતું. જેન અને વૈદિક ધર્મનાં અનેક મંદિરો અને આશ્રમોથી આ નિસર્ગરમ્ય ગિરિમથક શોભતું હતું. જેઓ વસિષ્ઠ આશ્રમ કે અચલગઢ કે ગુરુશિખર ઉપર આવેલાં મંદિરોમાં દર્શન કરવા ઇચ્છતા હોય તેઓ પગપાળા પહાડ ચડતા અને યાત્રાનો સાત્વિક આનંદ માણતા. આજે આ માઉન્ટ આબુ યાત્રાધામ મટીને એક ટુરિસ્ટ સેન્ટર બની ગયું છે. અર્બુદ ગિરિરાજ ઉપર અનેક આલિશાન હોટેલો ખુલી ગઈ છે, જ્યાં દારુ અને માંસાહારની મિજબાનીઓ યોજાય છે. દેવતાઓ દ્વારા ખોદવામાં આવેલા પવિત્ર નખી તળાવના કિનારે આવેલા બગીચામાં પ્રેમી યુગલો એકબીજાના ગળામાં હાથ નાંખીને બેઠા હોય છે અને અશિષ્ટ ચેનચાળા કરતા હોય છે. આબુની અનેક હોટેલોમાં શ્રીમંતોના નબીરાઓ અમદાવાદ અને મુંબઈની કોલગર્લ્સને લઈને આવે છે અને બેફામ વ્યભિચાર આચરે છે. ટુરિઝમ ઉદ્યોગને કારણે માઉન્ટ આબુમાં ખૂબ જ સમૃદ્ધિ આવી છે, પણ તેની પવિત્રતા ખતમ થઈ ગઈ છે. જેઓ માત્ર ભોગસુખો ભોગવવા કે મનોરંજન મેળવવા માટે જ આ ગિરિમથક ઉપર આવ્યા હોય, તેવા ટુરિસ્ટો યાત્રાધામની પવિત્રતાને ખતમ કરે છે અને પર્યાવરણનો કચરચદાણા કાઢે છે. ભારત સરકારની ટુરિઝમ ઉદ્યોગને પ્રોત્સાહન આપવાની નીતિને કારણે અર્બુદગિરિ જેવાં અનેક યાત્રાધામો ઉપર સંકટ પેદા થયું છે.

ભારતની સરકાર એક પ્રવાસ અને પર્યટન મંત્રાલય ચલાવે છે. આ મંત્રાલયનું કાર્ય જ ધાર્મિક સાંસ્કૃતિક અને પ્રાકૃતિક દ્રષ્ટિએ મહત્વનાં સ્થળો શોધી કાઢવાનું અને ત્યાં ટુરિસ્ટો માટે હોટેલ વગેરેની સગવડો ઊભી કરવાનું છે. જે તીર્થધામનો વિકાસ ટુરિસ્ટ સેન્ટર તરીકે થાય તેની પરિત્રતા નષ્ટ થઈ જાય છે અને જે પ્રાકૃતિક સૌંદર્યધામમાં આધુનિક ટુરિસ્ટો માટે સગવડો ઊભી કરવામાં આવે તેના પર્યાવરણનો સત્યાનાશ થઈ જાય છે.

એક સમયે પ્રાકૃતિક સૌંદર્યથી ઓપતા ગોવાની ટુરિઝમના ઉદ્યોગ જે અવદશા કરી છે તે ઉપરથી કોઈ પણ સંવેદનશીલ માણસ કેન્દ્ર સરકારની પર્યટન ઉદ્યોગને પ્રોત્સાહન આપવાની નીતિ બાબતમાં વિચાર કરતો થઈ જાય તેમ છે. આજે ગોવામાં એટલી બધી ફાઈવ સ્ટાર હોટેલો ઊભી થઈ ગઈ છે કે, સ્થાનિક રહેવાસીઓ પીવાના પાણી માટે ટળવળી રહ્યા છે. પણ જીની આજુબાજુ બે કિલોમિટરના જ વિસ્તારમાં આશરે ૫૦ સ્વિમિંગ પુલો હોટેલોમાં બાંધવામાં આવ્યાં છે.

આ હોટેલો પોતાની જરૂરિયાતનું બધું જ પાણી જમીનમાંથી ખેંચે છે, જેને કારણે સ્થાનિક પ્રજા પાણીની ભારે તંગીનો અનુભવ કરી રહી છે.

ગોવામાં જ્યારથી ટુરિઝમનો વિકાસ થયો ત્યારથી વિદેશીઓ નગ્ન કે અર્ધનગ્ન હાલતમાં બીચ ઉપર રખડે છે અને ખુલ્લેઆમ ડ્રગ્સનું સેવન કરે છે. વિદેશીઓના સંસર્ગને કારણે ગોવાની નવી પીઢીમાં પણ ડ્રગ્સનું દૂષણ ઘર કરી ગયું છે. વિદેશીઓના મનોરંજન માટે ગોવાની અનેક યુવતીઓ વેશ્યા વ્યવસાયમાં ઘડેલાઈ ગઈ છે. હવે ગોવાના રહેવાસીઓ જ પર્યટકોનો વિરોધ કરી રહ્યા છે.

ભારતના મુગટ કહેવાતા હિમાલય પર્વત ઉપર પણ ટુરિસ્ટોનું ભારે આક્રમણ થયું છે. પવિત્ર ગણાતી ગંગા નદીનો જ્યાંથી ઉદ્ભવ થાય છે તે ગંગોત્રી ગ્લેશિયરની જ વાત કરીએ. દર વર્ષે આશરે અઢી લાખ યાત્રિકો અને ૨૫,૦૦૦ પર્વતારોહકો આ ગંગોત્રી ગ્લેશિયરની મુલાકાતે આવે છે. અહીં આવી તેઓ તાપણું કરવા અને ખોરાકરાંધવા માટે વૃક્ષો કાપે છે. બરફથી આરછાદિત આ પ્રદેશોમાં તેઓ કોકાકોલાના ખાલી ટીન, બિસ્લેરીની નકામી બોટલો, વેફરના ખાલી પાઉચ, પ્લાસ્ટિકની થેલીઓ અને અન્ય કચરો ફેંકતા જાય છે. માઉન્ટ એવરેસ્ટ જેવા દુનિયાના સર્વોચ્ચ ગણાતા શિખર ઉપર પણ કચરાના એટલા ઢગલા ખડકાયા છે કે, જેને સાફ કરતાં વર્ષોનાં વર્ષો લાગે. ટુરિસ્ટોએ અનેક પવિત્ર સ્થળોની દશા બગાડી કાઢી છે.

ટુરિઝમ ઉદ્યોગ એ આધુનિક યુગની અને પશ્ચિમી સંસ્કૃતિની પેદાયશ છે. જૂના જમાનામાં લોકો પર્યટન કરવા નહોતા જતા, પણ તીર્થયાત્રિક તરીકે જતા હતા. પર્યટકોમાં અને તીર્થયાત્રીઓમાં બહુ ફરક છે. પર્યટકનો ઉદ્યોગ મોજમજા કરવાનો અને જલસા કરવાનો હોય છે. તીર્થયાત્રિક પરમાત્માની ભક્તિના પવિત્ર ભાવો સાથે જતો હોય છે. પર્યટકોના વસ્ત્રો ઉદ્ભટ હોય છે, તેઓ દારુ, સિગરેટ, ડ્રગ્સ આદિનું સેવન કરનારા હોય છે, તેઓ પર્યાવરણને નુકસાન પહોંચાડે છે અને જ્યાં જાય ત્યાં પોતાના અસભ્ય અને ક્યારેક બિભત્સ વર્તનથી સાંસ્કૃતિક પ્રદૂષણ ફેલાવે છે. તીર્થયાત્રી સાત્વિક હોય છે, તે વ્યસનોનો ત્યાગ કરીને આવ્યો છે અને પોતાની અલ્પ જરૂરિયાતોને કારણે તે પર્યાવરણને નુકસાન નથી પહોંચાડતો.

ટુરિસ્ટો દ્વારા પર્યાવરણ અને ઊર્જાના સ્ત્રોતોનો ભારે વેડફાટ થાય છે. ઈજિપ્તમાં આવેલી એક ફાઈવ સ્ટાર હોટેલ એટલી બધી વીજળી વાપરે છે કે, તે ૩,૫૦૦ પરિવારોની જરૂરિયાતો સંતોષી શકે. એક ટુરિસ્ટ માત્ર ૩.૬ ટિપ્સમાં જ એટલું બધું પાણી વેડફી નાંખે છે કે, તેમાંથી જો ચોખા ઉગાડવામાં આવે તો તે એક માણસને આખું વર્ષ ચાલે. ફિલિપાઈન્સમાં કરેલો એક અભ્યાસ એમ સૂચવે છે કે, ફાઈવ

સ્ટાર હોટેલોમાં રહેનારો માણસ ૧૮ દિવસમાં જેટલું પાણી વાપરી કાઢે છે તે પાણી ગામડાંના એક પરિવારને આખું વર્ષ ચાલી શકે છે. ફાઈવ સ્ટાર હોટેલમાં ઊતરનાર ટુરિસ્ટ સ્નાન કરવામાં, શાવર લેવામાં, સ્વિમિંગ પુલમાં તરવામાં, તેના માટે સ્સોઈ પકાવવા માટે, તેનાં કપડાં લોન્ડ્રીમાં ધોવામાં, તેના માટે ઉગાડેલી લોનને પાણી પાવામાં પ્રતિદિન આશરે ૨,૭૨૦ લિટર પાણી વ્યક્તિદીઠ વપરાઈ જાય છે, જ્યારે ગામડાંમાં રહેતા એક માણસને રોજનું ૪૦ લિટર પાણી જ પર્યાપ્ત થઈ રહે છે. ભારતમાં પાણીની કાયમી અછતથી પીડાતા રાજસ્થાનમાં અનેક ફાઈવ સ્ટાર હોટેલો આવેલી છે. આ રાજસ્થાનના નાગરિકો અને ખાસ કરીને મહિલાઓ એક બેડું પાણી લેવા માટે ૮-૧૦ કિલોમિટર ભટકે છે, જ્યારે વિદેશી ટુરિસ્ટો માટેના સ્વિમિંગ પુલમાં લાખો લિટર પાણી નકામું વેડફી નાખવામાં આવે છે. જે દેશ પીવાના પાણીની અભૂતપૂર્વ અછતમાંથી પસાર થતો હોય ત્યાં વિદેશી ટુરિસ્ટો માટે આટલી બધી ફાઈવ સ્ટાર હોટેલો ઊભી કરવી એ ગુનાઈત કૃત્ય ન ગણાવું જોઈએ?

ભારતમાં આવતા ટુરિસ્ટો ગોલ્ડ પાણ રમી શકે તે માટે હવે ફાઈવ સ્ટારને બદલે સેવન સ્ટાર હોટેલો ઊભી કરવાનો ટ્રેન્ડ ચાલી રહ્યો છે. આ ગોલ્ડના મેદાન દ્વારા પર્યાવરણને ભારે નુકસાન થાય છે. વિશ્વમી આશરે પાંચ કરોડ લોકો ગોલ્ડની રમત રમે છે. આ રમત માત્ર શ્રીમંતોને જ પરવડે તેવી હોય છે. દર વર્ષે નવા ગોલ્ડનાં મેદાનો બનાવવા માટે ૫,૦૦૦ હેક્ટર જમીન ઉપર વૃક્ષો કાપવામાં આવે છે અને જંગલ સાફ કરવામાં આવે છે. એક ૧૮ હોલનું ગોલ્ડ કોર્સ ૨૩ લાખ લિટર પાણીનો વચય કરે છે. ગોલ્ડના મેદાન ઉપર હરિયાણું ઘાસ પાથરવા આ પાણીનો ઉપયોગ થાય છે. ફિલિપાઈન્સનો એક અભ્યાસ કહે છે કે, ત્યાંના ૧૮ ગોલ્ડ કોર્સમાં જેટલું પાણી વપરાય છે તેમાંથી ૩.૩૦ લાખ લોકોને પાણી આપી શકાય.

પૂર્વ એશિયાની વાત કરીએ તો આજે થાઈલેન્ડ જેવા દેશની ૮૦ ટકા કરતા વધુ હૂંડિયામણની આવક ટુરિઝમના વ્યવસાયમાંથી મળે છે. તેની સામે થાઈલેન્ડનું બેંગકોક સેક્સ ટ્રેડની રાજધાની જેવું બન્યું છે. થાઈલેન્ડે ડોલર કમાવા માટે પોતાની સ્ત્રીઓને બજારમાં વેચવા કાઢી છે. ટુરિસ્ટો એક સ્થળેથી બીજા સ્થળે ઝડપથી પહોંચી શકે તે માટે વિમાનો, રસ્તાઓ અને રેલવેનું માળખું પણ વિકસાવવું પડે. આ બધાંને કારણે પર્યાવરણને ભારે નુકસાન પહોંચે છે. એક અંદાજ મુજબ ૪૩ ટકા ટુરિસ્ટો હવાઈ જહાજનો ઉપયોગ કરે છે, ૪૨ ટકા રસ્તાઓ અને ૧૫ ટકા સ્ટિમર કે રેલવેનો ઉપયોગ કરે છે. આ બધામાં બળતણ તરીકે પેટ્રોલ કે ડીઝલ વપરાય છે અને વાયુ પ્રદૂષણ પેદા થાય છે.

વર્લ્ડ ટ્રેડ ઓર્ગનાઈઝેશનનો એક હેવાલ કહે છે કે, ટુરિઝમ ઉદ્યોગ આજે વિશ્વનો સૌથી મોટો ઉદ્યોગ બની ગયો છે. ઈ.સ. ૨૦૦૨ની સાલમાં આશરે ૭૦ કરોડ વિદેશી ટુરિસ્ટો જોવા મળ્યા હતા.

ટુરિઝમના ઉદ્યોગને કારણે વિશ્વના વિવિધ દેશોના અર્થતંત્રને ૩,૦૦૦ અબજ ડોલરનો લાભ થયો હતો. આધોગિક દેશોના લોકો તો ખોરાક અને રહેઠાણ પછી સૌથી વધુ ખર્ચ પર્યટન પાછળ કરે છે. ભારતના શહેરીઓમાં પણ હવે ટુરિઝમનો કેન્દ્ર વધી રહ્યો છે. વિદેશી સહેલાણીઓ આપણા પર્યાવરણને જેટલું નુકસાન નથી કરતાં તેના કરતા વધુ નુકસાન ઘણી વખત શ્રીમંત અને શહેરી ટુરિસ્ટો કરે છે. ગિરિમથકોમાં તેઓ વ્હિસ્કીની બોટલો, લઈને પહોંચી જાય છે અને ત્યાંના શાંત વાતાવરણને કલુષિત બનાવી કાઢે છે.

આજકાલ પર્યાવરણ પ્રત્યે જાગૃતિ વધી ગઈ છે, એટલે કેટલાક લોકો ઈકોટુરિઝમની વાતો કરવા લાગ્યા છે. આ વાતોમાં પર્યાવરણની ચિંતા ઓછી હોય છે અને ટુરિસ્ટોની મજા વધુ હોય છે. ઈકોટુરિઝમના નામે તેઓ અત્યાર સુધી માનવ અતિક્રમણથી મુક્ત રહેલા નેસર્ગિક સૌંદર્યધામો સુધી વિદેશી સહેલાણીઓને લઈ જવા લાગ્યા છે. મલેશિયામાં ઈકોટુરિસ્ટો માટે વીજળી ઉત્પન્ન કરવા એક વિરાટ બંધ બાંધવામાં આવ્યો છે, જે બાંધવા માટે હજારો ગરીબ લોકોને બેઘર બનાવવામાં આવ્યા હતા. ટુરિઝમ દ્વારા દેશને વિદેશી હૂંડિયામણના રૂપમાં ફાયદો થાય છે, એપણ એક ઉપજાવી કાઢેલી વાત છે. ટુરિસ્ટો દ્વારા ડોલરના રૂપમાં સ્થાનિક પ્રજાને જે કંઈ કમાણી થાય છે, તેમાંથી મોટા ભાગની રકમ તો ટુરિસ્ટો માટે હોટેલો, રસ્તાઓ, રેલવે વગેરે સગવડો ઊભી કરવા પાછળ જ વપરાઈ જતી હોય છે.

કેનયાની વાત કરીએ તો એક વર્ષમાં તેને ટુરિઝમના ઉદ્યોગ દ્વારા કુલ ૩૦ કરોડ ડોલરની આવક થઈ હતી, પણ તેમાંના ૭૦ લાખ ડોલર જ તેમના દેશમાં રહ્યા હતા. બાકીની બધી રકમ ટુરિસ્ટો માટે વિવિધ ચીજવસ્તુઓની આયાત કરવા પાછળ ખર્ચાઈ ગઈ હતી. વળી આજકાલ ટુરિસ્ટો દ્વારા જે કોઈ ચીજવસ્તુઓની ખરીદી કરવામાં આવે છે, તેનો વધુ લાભ તો મલ્ટીનેશનલ કંપનીઓને જ થયો હોય છે. સ્વદેશી કંપનીઓને ટુરિઝમના વિકાસમાંથી બહુ જ ઓછો લાભ થતો હોય છે. અમેરિકાનો કોઈ ટુરિસ્ટ અમેરિકન એરલાઈન્સના વિમાનમાં ભારત આવી, અમેરિકનોની માલિકીની હોટેલમાં ઊતરે અને અમેરિકન કંપનીઓનો માલ વાપરે તેમાં ભારતને શું લાભ થાય?

આપણા દેશમાં ટુરિસ્ટોનાં ઘાડા આવે છે, તેને કારણે બીજું પણ મોટું નુકસાન થાય છે. આપણા મંદિરો, મૂર્તિઓ વગેરેનું શિલ્પ સ્થાપત્ય જોઈ તેમના મનમાં આ બધી અલભ્ય ચીજો પોતાના દેશભેગી કરવાની લાલસા પેદા થાય છે. આ કાર્ય કરવા માટે એન્ટિકના દલાલો અને દાણચોરો તૈયાર જ હોય છે. આ રીતે ટુરિઝમ ઉદ્યોગના વિકાસ સાથે પ્રાચીન કલાકૃતિઓની દાણચોરી પણ વધી રહી છે. થોડાક ડોલર કમાવાના મોહમાં આપણી સંસ્કૃતિ, આપણું પર્યાવરણ અને આપણા કલાવારસાનું લીલામ કરવું તેનું નામ જ ટુરિઝમ ઈન્ડસ્ટ્રી ને?

ઉદવાડા ગામને અમારી છેલ્લી સલામ!

હવે ત્યાંનો વર્ષો જુનો માહોલ અને ત્યાંનું શાંત, પવિત્ર વાતાવરણ નહીં રહે, કારણ ઉદવાડા એક આધુનિક, જડવાદી ટુરિસ્ટ સેન્ટર ચંદ અઠવાડિયામાં બનશે!

શ્રીજી પાક ઈરાનશાહનું ઈરાને નવમાં જવાની તડાકેમાર તૈયારી શું કુદરતમાં શરૂ થઈ ગઈ છે?

પરંતુ, જ્યાં સુધી તેઓશ્રી ઉદવાડામાં રહેશે, ત્યાં સુધી તેઓની ખાસ દેખભાલ અને સુરક્ષા માટે સંપૂર્ણ જવાબદારી, ત્યાંના ૨ દસ્તુરો અને અથોરનાન અંજુમન ને શીરેજ રહેશે!

અમને લખતાં અતિ દુઃખ થાય છે કે છેલ્લા અઢી વર્ષમાં અમોએ ધી પારસી વૉઈસ નાં લગભગ સાત જુદા જુદા અંકોમાં ભરપૂર ચેતવણીઓ પારસી કોમને આપી હતી કે પેલાં નાપાક એફ.ડી.યુ. ટ્રસ્ટ સામે પ્રબળ પોકાર નહીં ઊઠાવવામાં આવે, અને ગુજરાત સરકારને તેની (એફ.ડી.યુ.)ની ચાલબાઝી અને ગંદી, પ્રવૃત્તિઓથી માહિતગાર નહિં કરવામાં આવે, તો એક દિવસ, આ દેશનાંજ નહિં, પણ દુનિયાનાં ખૂણે ખૂણાંમાંથી આલ્તુફાલ્તુઓ અને ભામટાઓ ત્યાં આગળ અડ્ડો જમાવશે!

એટલુંજ નહિં, પારસી જરથોશ્તીઓનું સૌથી પવિત્ર ધર્મસ્થળ કે જ્યાં તેમના પાક ઈરાનશાહ બીરાજે છે, કે જેમનાં કેન્દ્રની ઉપર હિંદુસ્તાનનો એકલો પાવમહેલ ઊભેલો છે, તેની તલેસમ અને તેની આસ્પાસનો પવિત્ર માહોલ, આ બધુ નષ્ટ થશે, વિ. પરંતુ હાલની પારસી કોમ અને ખાસ કરીને તેમાંનાં સંકેદ પાઘડી પહેરનારાઓની શુદ્ધબુદ્ધ એટલી બધી સુષુપ્ત થઈ ગયેલી છે, કે અમદાવાદનાં જહાંગીર કામા કે મુંબઈનાં ટી.કે. તંબોલી જેવાઓ પોતાની નાસ્તિક જોહુકમી મનોવૃત્તિ

લઈને ગુજરાત સરકાર સાથે મળી જઈ, મેદાન મારી ગયા છે!!

તે ઉપરાંત, ઉદવાડા અથોરનાન અંજુમન અને તેની સાથે સંકળાએલા બે દસ્તુરોને પણ ખાબોખ્યાલ છેજ નહિંકે તેઓ પાક ઈરાનશાહ અને તેના પાવમહેલની ઘણી નજદીકમાંજ અહરીમનનું નાનું રાજ્ય સ્થાપિત થઈ રહ્યું છે, તેની સામે વાંઘો ઊઠાવવાને બદલે, આ અપવિત્ર એફ.ડી.યુ.ને પોતાનું ગુંદુ કાર્ય કરવામાં આંખઆડા કાન કરી રહ્યા છે! ફીરદૌસીએ તો “ઝેશ્ત કેરદારે ઈરાનિયાન” નો બળાપો કર્યો હતો. આજે અમો ઝેશ્ત કેરદારે પારસીઆન ની વાત કરીએ, તો તે યોગ્ય ગણાશે. જ્યાં જુઓ ત્યાં જરથોશ્તી ધર્મની તબાહી આપણાંજ હાથે થઈ રહી છે. ઘેરનાં ગોઘાઓજ જ્યારે આંખ ફોડવા નીકળ્યા છે, ત્યારે કુદરત પણ ડચકાં ખાય છે! અમને તો લાગે છે કે શ્રીજી ઈરાનશાહની સરજત, જે, શાહ બહેરામ વરઝાવંદ આવે, ત્યારે ઈરાને નવમાં ઠરીઠામ થવાની છે, તે શુભ દિવસ હવે ઘણો લાંબે નથી! ખુદા પાક તેટલાં દીનદાર હમદીનોને દીન દુશ્મનોથી બચાવે!