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For Private Circulation

દસ્તુર ડો. પેશોતન ડો. મીરઝાનાં પ્રમુખપદ હેઠળ ઉદવાડા અંજુમન કમિટીએ
પસાર કરેલો અગત્યનો ઠરાવ.

FDU જેવી બહારની સંસ્થાઓની દખલગીરી ઉદવાડા ગામમાં ચલાવી લેવામાં આવશે નહિં!
“ધી પારસી વૉઈસ” ની ચળવળને આ ઠરાવમાં મળેલો સંપૂર્ણ ટેકો!

તા. ૧૦મી ઓક્ટોબર, ૨૦૦૪ ની ઉદવાડા અંજુમન કમિટીની સભામાં દસ્તુરજી ડો. પેશોતન દસ્તુર હોરમઝદયાર મીરઝાનાં પ્રમુખપદ હેઠળ, એક અતિ અગત્યનો ઠરાવ, જેને માટે “ધી પારસી વૉઈસ” છેલ્લા ૩-૪ મહિનાથી સતત પ્રચાર કરી રહ્યું છે, તે આખરે પસાર થયો છે.

આ નાનકડો પણ મહત્વપૂર્ણ ઠરાવ, જે “જામે જમશેદ વીકલી” નાં તા. ૧૭-૧૦-૨૦૦૪નાં અંકમાં પ્રગટ થયો છે, તે અમો અત્રે રજુ કર્યે છીએ :

“આજ રોજ ૨૨-૨-૧૩૭૪ ય.ઝ. ને તા. ૧૦-૧૦-૨૦૦૪ ની કમિટીની મીટિંગ ઠરાવે છે કે શ્રીજી ઈરાનશાહ આતશબહેરામ સાહેબની જાળવણી, ખીદમત, તરીકત અને ઉદવાડા અંજુમનનો વહીવટ ઉદવાડાના બન્ને દસ્તુરજીઓનાં વડપણ હેઠળ નિયમીત રીતે ચૂટાયેલી કમિટી સુદામતી રીવાજથી કરતી આવી છે અને એ વહીવટમાં ઉદવાડા અંજુમન સિવાયનાં બહારના કોઈ પણ ટોળાના સભ્યની દખલગીરી/દરમ્યાનગીરી ઉદવાડા અંજુમન ચલાવી લેશે નહીં.

ઉદવાડા સમસ્ત અંજુમન
ફ. કા. સીધવા - સેક્રેટરી

આવો ઠરાવ કે જેને માટે “પારસી વૉઈસ” ઉદવાડા અંજુમનને ગયા જુલાઈ મહિનાથી પસાર કરવા અરજ કરતું હતું તે આખરે પસાર થયો એ દરોબસ્ત છે અને ફાઉન્ડેશન ફોર ડીવેલપમેન્ટ ઓફ

ઉદવાડા (FDU)નાં મોંહ ઉપર એક સજ્જડ લપડાક તરીકે છે, જે બદલ ઉદવાડા સમસ્ત અંજુમનને અમારા અભિનંદન!

આ ઠરાવ FDUને માટેજ હતો, એટલેજ અમોને સેક્રેટરી સાહેબે તે મોકલ્યો નહિં, પણ તેને બદલે, કોઈની પાગ સહી વગર, ફક્ત “ઉદવાડા અંજુમન કમિટીના હુકમથી” એવા શબ્દો વાળો, હાથનો લખેલો એક કાગળ એમના (સેક્રેટરી)નાં ક્વરીંગ પત્ર સાથે મોકલ્યો છે, જે અમને ૧૦-૧૦-૦૪ ની મીટિંગ પછી, બરાબર ૮ દિવસે મળ્યો હતો!

**ઉદવાડા ગામનાં હમદીનોબી “પારસી વૉઈસ”ને
અરજ**

જ્યારથી આ FDUનાં કર્તુકોની બાબતો અમોએ અંગ્રેજીમાં પ્રગટ કરવા માંડી, ત્યારથી ઉદવાડાનાંજ કેટલાક સમસ્ત અંજુમનનાં સભ્યોએ અમને વિનંતી કરી હતી કે આવા લખાણો વધારે ગુજરાતીમાંજ આવ્યા જોઈએ, કે જેથી બધાને તે બરાબર સમજ પડે, કે FDU ઉદવાડામાં શું શું કરવા માંગે છે!

વળી આ “અંજુમન કમિટી” એ મોકલાવેલાં લખાણ, કે જેમાં “પારસી વૉઈસ” સામે બેહુદા, ગેરઈન્સાફી આક્ષેપો કર્યા છે, તે વાંચી પણ અમને લાગ્યું કે એક વેળા ગુજરાતીમાં મુદ્દાસર, સંક્ષેપ માં, FDU ઉદવાડામાં શું કરવા માંગે છે, એનું પોતાનું ટ્રસ્ટ ડીડ કેટલું નુકસાનકારક છે, વિ. તે રજુ કરવું જોઈએ.

“ફાઉન્ડેશન ફોર ડીવેલપમેન્ટ ઓફ ઉદવાડા”, યાને ઉદવાડા ગામનાં વિકાસ માટે સ્થપાયેલું આ ‘ફાઉન્ડેશન’, તે મુંબઈમાં મે ૨૦૦૩માં રેજીસ્ટર્ડ કરવામાં આવ્યું હતું. એનાં ટ્રસ્ટીઓ છે: (૧) દસ્તુર ખુશરોદ દસ્તુર કેકોબાદ દસ્તુર (પ્રમુખ); (૨) શ્રી. દી.કે. તંબોલી (મેનેજિંગ ટ્રસ્ટી); (૩) શ્રી. જેહાંગીર આર.જે. કામા (સહ-પ્રમુખ); (૪) શ્રી. પી.કે. લાહેરી; (૫) શ્રી. મીનુ આર. શ્રોફ; (૬) શ્રી.બરબેર એચ. આંટિયા; (૭) શ્રીમતી હોમાય એન. મોદી અને; (૮) ડો. હોમી બી. ધાલા.

લગભગ દોઢ વર્ષ અગાઉ આ ટ્રસ્ટ/ફાઉન્ડેશન ની સ્થાપના થઈ, તે વાત, અને ત્યાર પછી જે કાંઈ તેના સભ્યોની પ્રવૃત્તિઓ હતી તે વિષે કોઈને કાંઈજ ખબર ન હતી! જે કાંઈ થતું તે બધું છુપાછુપજ! તે એટલી હદ સુધી કે ખુદ એ ફાઉન્ડેશન ની સભા તેના પ્રમુખને ત્યાં, ઉદવાડા માં મળતી તે પાણ ત્યાંની અંજુમનનાં સભ્યોને માલમજ નહિં! જ્યારે આવી છેલ્લી મીટિંગ ૧ જુન, ૨૦૦૪, ને દીને ઉદવાડામાંજ મળી અને અમારી જાણમાં આવ્યું, ત્યારેજ “પારસી વૉઈસ” આ બાબતની છણાવટ કરવાની શરૂ કરી.

●સવાલ એ ઉઠ્યો હતો કે ઉદવાડા ગામને આધુનિક રીતે વિકસાવવું અને ત્યાં આગળ સાંસ્કૃતિક પ્રવૃત્તિઓ તેમજ ટૂરિસ્ટોને માટેનાં જાતજાતનાં આકર્ષણો રાખવા, વિ. આ એક અતિ અભિલાષી યોજના હતી, જે શ્રીજી ઈરાનશાહની આસપાસનાં ગામડિયા વાતાવરણને ખતરનાકજ પૂરવાર થાય.

●અગાઉનાં અંકોમાં ગુજરાતીમાં પણ આ વાતો અમોએ કહી હતી. પારસી કોમનાં એક મોટા ભાગે “ધી પારસી વૉઈસ”ની FDU વિરૂધ્ધની ઝુંબેશને પૂરો ટેકો આપ્યો હતો.

●ઉદવાડા અથોરનાન અંજુમનને પાણ આ બધી અનુચિત વિગતોની જાણ “પારસી વૉઈસ”મારફતેજ થઈ હતી!

●જ્યારે અમોએ FDU ની અતિશ્ય કાલ્પનિક યોજનાથી ઉદવાડા ગામ અને પાક ઈરાનશાહને કેટલું મોટું નુકસાન થશે, એ હકીકતરૂપે બતાવી આપ્યું, અને પારસી કોમમાં ઉલાપોહ મચી ગયો, ત્યારેજ FDU નાં કોઈક ટ્રસ્ટીઓ ‘ડેમેજ કન્ટ્રોલ’ કરવા જામે જમશેદ વીકલીમાં બહાર પડ્યા!

●આ FDU નાં ટ્રસ્ટીઓએ એક લેખમાં એવા “ખુલાસાઓ” કર્યા હતા કે પર્યટન અને સાંસ્કૃતિક બાબતો FDU નાં અજેન્ડામાં

હવે નહિં રહે! પરંતુ, FDU નું ટ્રસ્ટ ડીડ તો સાવ જુદીજ વાત કરે છે. જેમ ગયા અંકમાં અમોએ જાગાવ્યું હતું કે આ ટ્રસ્ટ ડીડનાં તમામ હેતુઓ અને ધ્યેયો સાર્વજનિક છે, અને પારસી-જરથોશ્તીઓ માટેનો એક શબ્દ પાણ આ ટ્રસ્ટ ડીડમાં છેજ નહિં! માટે FDU નાં ટ્રસ્ટીઓ ગમે તેટલા ખુલાસાઓ કરે, તો તેનો કંઈ અર્થજ નથી! આ ટ્રસ્ટ ડીડમાં જે હેતુઓ લખાયા હોય, તેજ પ્રમાણે ટ્રસ્ટીઓને વર્તવાની ફરજ રહે!

એટલેજ અમે ગયા અંકમાં લખી ગયા હતા કે, “જામે જમશેદ વીકલીમાં આ સંદર્ભમાં આવેલાં બધાંજ લખાણો જે દસ્તુરજની સહી સાથનાં છે, તે ભોળા પારસીઓની આંખમાં ધૂળ છોટે છે.” આમાં કોઈ અતિશ્યોક્તિ છેજ નહિં! જ્યાં સુધી આ FDU નાં ટ્રસ્ટ ડીડમાં જડમૂળથી ફેરફાર થાય નહિં, ત્યાં સુધી કોઈપાણ ખુલાસો માન્ય રખાયજ નહિં! સિવાય કે ખુદ ગુજરાત સરકારજ તેમાં પાયારૂપી પરિવર્તન કરે!

તાજી ખબર

અને આ સાથે, જ્યારે આ અંક મોડેથી પ્રગટ થવા જાય છે, તેટલાંજ સૂચક સંકેતો મળ્યા છે, કે ગુજરાત સરકારનાં મુખ્ય સચિવ, શ્રી. પી.કે. લાહેરીએ FDU ને એવી બરનું જાગાવ્યું છે કે હાલમાં બધી બાબતોને બાજુએ મૂકી, ફક્ત નીચલા વિષયો ઉપરજ લક્ષ લગાડવાનું છે:

(ક) દરિયાનાં પાણીથી જે ઉદવાડા ગામની અંદર વધુ અને વધુ આવતાં જાય છે, તેને રોકવા માટેનાં ખાસ પ્રયાસો કરાશે.

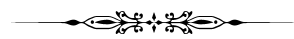
(ખ) પાણીની તેમજ વીજળીની સમસ્યાઓ દૂર કરવા નવેસરથી પ્રયત્નો થશે.

(ગ) રસ્તાઓને એવી રીતી સમારવામાં આવશે કે જેથી ગામવાસીઓ તેમજ સહેલાણીઓને ત્રાસ થશે નહિં.

(ઘ) ગંદકી દૂર કરવા પાણ બધા પ્રયાસો થશે.

સૌથી અગત્યની વાત એ છે કે આ બધા કાર્યોમાંથી FDU બહાર રહેશે. ફક્ત વલસાડ જીલ્લાનાં કલેક્ટર, શ્રીમતી વાસુદેવ ની સાથે, ઉદવાડા ગ્રામ પંચાયતનાં કર્મચારીઓ અને ઉદવાડા અંજુમનનાં કોઈક સભ્યો, ત્યાંનાં બે દસ્તુરજો સાથે મળી આ બધાં કામો કરશે અને કરાવશે!!

શ્રીજી ઈરાનશાહ પાયન્ટેલ બાદ!



THE LALBAUG LEVIATHAN

How A Monstrosity Called Hilla Towers Has Systematically Destroyed The 170-Year-Old Wadia Adaran!

An old Parsee lady accosted us the other day near the Lalbaug bus stop. The poor thing looked thoroughly confused. "Bawa, *Ahinya Wadia nee Agiary ooti, te kyan gayi?*" she asked. "It's very much there", we replied, "*Fakkat, e bichara Adaran saheb ne permanent grahan lagunch!*" No heavenly body has cast its shadow, though. It's an earthly organisation called, Hilla Builders, which is thoroughly responsible for performing the veritable vanishing act!

Cut to January 2001. There was no "Parsee Voice" then. A phone-call from a Parsee gentleman from the USA, who was visiting Mumbai, whom we did not know, inquired if he and Zarir Bhathena could pay us a visit the next Sunday, as Mr. Bhathena wanted some advice regarding the construction of a building for Parsees near the Lalbaug Agiary.

The conversation ranged from Bhathena's defeat at the BPP hustings to certain happenings at the B.D. Petit Hospital, where Bhathena was (and is) a trustee. Mr. Bhathena was at pains to explain how orthodox he was and that he would never allow any harm to come to the Lalbaug Agiary, as he regularly performed his departed mother, Hilla's ceremonies there! It was just that the Mumbai Municipal Corporation wanted to widen the road, for which the old chawl at the periphery of the compound of the Agiary had to be removed. Besides, the chawl buildings were in a dilapidated condition. These old buildings also had shops whose owners lived there, who would have to be rehabilitated.

The long and short of our talk was that a bigger meeting be held, with more people, at the Lalbaug Agiary itself.

Thus, on a chilly Sunday evening, we discussed the entire gamut of issues that would crop up once the 20+ storeyed building came up. It was suggested then by an active Navroze Baug resident that a seven-storeyed building on the North side, many feet away from the Agiary could easily serve the purpose. But

Bhathena had everything mentally planned. How could he give Rs.3 crore to the trustees of the Agiary, and what would he get in return? That could only be done if his plan of a 20+ floor building were to be implemented.

At that time, ofcourse, one had not dreamt of the veritable draconian pact Bhathena would have with Ahriman himself in the months to come, to ensure that Lalbaug's Wadia Agiary was completely dwarfed and eclipsed by his fanciful, monstrous Hilla Towers!

The present trustees of the Wadia Fire Temple, who include Kersi J. Limathwalla, Shirin N. Wadia and Shyam A. Wadia, played no mean role in striking deeply at the very subject-matter of their trust.

A Litany Of Litigation :

What followed in the year 2001 itself was a lawsuit slapped by Bomi Mistry, Bahadur Sanjana and others. A thousand pities that many Nowroze Baug residents shied away from joining these vigilant Zoroastrians, also of Nowroze Baug!

But, even before that, Wadia Agiary trustees had to face a string of litigations, beginning with the last decade of the 20th century.

In 1993, some local residents and devotees sought to restrain the trustees as they were allegedly committing irregularities and intended to demolish the building and the temple complex. The Charity Commissioner in his order passed in January, 1997 disposed of the application stating that it was not bona fide.

A writ petition was then filed in the Mumbai High Court in 1998, which was subsequently allowed to be withdrawn, as the Wadia Agiary trustees assured the Court that there was no intention of demolishing the fire temple or shifting the Fire to some other place. All that they wanted to do was to develop(?) the property and renovate the existing structure.

As usual – the gimmick employed by most trustees of fire temples today – the Wadia Agiary trustees told the judicial authority that they were not in a position to undertake the repairs and reconstruction of the tenanted building (the two-storeyed chawl mentioned above). So, tenders were invited for "development" of the trust property!!

Out of the four offers received by the trustees, the highest was made by Hilla Builders, which offered Rs.3.75 crores to be paid in seven instalments. To top that, the trust would get Rs.30 lacs for repairs, renovation of the existing Agiary building. Hilla Builders' tender was accepted.

The builders, euphemistically called "developers", struck the first blow to the Adaran **Saheb**, by knocking down the portico of the Agiary building, under the pretext of it being in a dangerously dilapidated condition! This was done **before** Mr. Bhatena met us!

The 2001 suit filed first with the Charity Commissioner was decided in favour of the trustees and Hilla Builders. What one fails to understand is that if the 2-storeyed building was to be repaired or re-constructed, and if the Agiary building was to be repaired, there was absolutely no need to go for a fearful giant, like Hilla Towers which will generate more than Rs.3 crores for the trustees! **As regards the Agiary building, did the trustees ever appeal to the Parsee community for funds? The community in Mumbai has never flinched in opening its purse strings for such religious purposes! But trustees of many an Agiary or even Atash Behram have an eye on that extra FSI/TDR, which would fetch them lollies galore!**

Again, why is it that Agiary/Atash Behram trustees in Mumbai deliberately allow the trust buildings to go to seed, so that then they could rush to the authorities and say, "our coffers are empty"?

What is conveniently forgotten is that it's the Fire Temple building that is paramount and all other structures are subservient to it. **The Lalbaug Wadia Agiary trustees and Hilla Builders are guilty of reversing that prime principle by creating the dragon called Hilla Towers, which is about to swallow the little Wadia Agiary in its maw!!**

Another shocking matter cited before the Jt. Charity Commissioner by the trustees was the examples with photographs of some Mumbai Agiaries, like the Manekji Sett Agiary, Mithaiwala Agiary, Edawala Agiary, etc. and even the Anjuman Atash Behram, close to which there have been residential and commercial buildings, for many years... **One can well imagine the calibre and mind-set of some present-day Parsee trustees who themselves come out to give such examples, most of which are totally untenable and unjustified! And, whoever said that 10 wrongs will make the 11th right?**

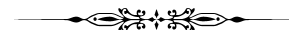
To cut the long, sordid episode short, the objectors, lost their case in August 2001 and went in appeal to the High Court, where, too, the Charity Commissioner's order was confirmed. The final appeal in the Supreme Court was also summarily dismissed.

But the litany of litigation did not end there, thanks to the indefatigable zeal and fervour of Parsee Zoroastrians like Bomi Mistry, Yazdi H. Desai and others. **The Parsee Voice** salutes them!

Hilla Towers at Lalbaug is a deplorable testimony to man's brazen display of arrogance. It is the 21st century's tribute to the temple of gross materialism, at the altar of which the consecrated Adaran has been woefully sacrificed! It is a complete betrayal of the trust reposed in present-day Parsees by our worthy ancestors!

May the ignominious havoc wrought on the sacred Adaran, which, literally does not have any breathing space, weigh on the conscience of all those responsible for the systematic and complete destruction of its sanctity, for incarnations to come!

As they say, "Pride precedes punishment!" And, what about those Parsees who will be living in this concrete giant? Won't they also be answerable in Nature, as those who aided and abetted the perpetrators of this blasphemy?!



7 HIGH PRIESTS OF INDIA CONDEMN THE PROPOSED WORLD BODY OF ZOROASTRIANS

The Trustees
Bombay Parsee Punchayet
Dr. D.N. Road, Mumbai 400 001.

Dear Sirs/Madam,

Sub.: Proposed World Body of Zoroastrians

In recent times, the community has been turning more and more to us, the High Priests, for guidance in matters that might be seen by some at being beyond the parameters of Religion per se; yet these matters are so intrinsically woven and inseparable – from issues that have a direct bearing on the Religion viz. the survival of our Race and the role that the Parsee-Zoroastrian community must play in the preservation of the true, classical form of the Zoroastrian religion, that it becomes imperative for us to guide the community in all such composite matters.

The present crisis faced by the community is in connection with the move by the Federation of Parsi Zoroastrian Anjumans of India (FPZAI) and/or Bombay Parsi Punchayet (BPP) to join the proposed World Body of Zoroastrians (WB).

When this matter of FPZAI and/or BPP joining the WB was brought to our notice earlier, we had, after considerable thought, opined that this WB was completely unacceptable for many reasons; **the most important being that the new WB would accept as members, directly or indirectly, self-proclaimed converts from around the world.**

Some of us immediately wrote to you expressing our concerns and requested you to refrain from joining such a WB. **All seven of us** whole-heartedly supported the Public Meeting organized by The Parsee Voice, in Mumbai in 2003, where the community passed a Resolution (**without a single dissenting vote**) strongly disapproving of any move by FPZAI and/or BPP joining or associating with any such WB. We are informed that a copy of the said Resolution was forwarded to you.

At that time, we felt that this very strong verdict against the WB from the community as well as from us, the High Priests of India, would suffice to close this unfortunate chapter, forever. **We are deeply pained that this has not happened, and matters in fact are moving ahead to form the WB.**

As you are aware, our migration from Iran to India was an intentional and planned one for the sole purpose of preserving our religion and race through our spiritual and religious institutions. Under no circumstances, should this over-1250 year old Anjuman of Parsees of India be equated and put on par with the pseudo-Zoroastrians, who now claim to profess the Zoroastrian faith, and whose increasing numbers abroad, will have the potential of marginalizing our community under the unfortunate auspices of a new World Body. By joining a

WB that condones and actively acknowledges conversion, by institutionalising it through the Constitution of the proposed World Body, you are making the entire community a party to condoning that which is against the practice of the religion in India for over 1250 years. As High Priests of the community, we cannot allow this to happen. **A WB with this kind of mixed membership, now or in the future, will not only threaten the religious identity of our community but will also endanger the survival of our race, religion, and its institutions, defeating the very purpose for which our ancestors first came to India.**

We have survived and progressed in India for over a millennium under the divine protection of our Holy Iranshah Atashbehram and the other Padshah Sahebs enthroned in India. We did not need a WB to protect our "interests" then, and we do not see the need to have one now. We see no benefit accruing to the Parsees of India by our joining this World Body. In fact, if the BPP/FPZAI were to join, it would be a dangerous and foolish move.

As High Priests of the community in India, it is our duty to provide guidance to the community in times of crisis. In performance of this duty, **we caution you that this WB is a threat to our survival as a community and to our religious denomination. We reiterate that the formation of the World Body does not have our sanction and that it would be in the interest of the community to drop any move by FPZAI and/or BPP of joining such a WB, now or in future. Let not future generations of Parsees be deprived of the rich heritage passed on to us by our worthy ancestors.**

Yours in His service,

Sd/-
Dastur Dr. Kaikhusroo
M. JamaspAsa
(Mumbai)

Sd/-
Dastur Dr. Firoze Meherji
Kotwal (Mumbai)

Sd/-
Dastur Khurshed Kaikobad
Dastoor
(Udvada)

Sd/-
Dastur Cyrus Noshirwan
Dastur
(Surat)

Sd/-
Dastur Meherji K. Meherjirana
(Navsari)

Sd/-
Dastur Dr. Peshotan Hormuzdyar
Mirza (Udvada)

Sd/-
Dastur Nadirshah P. Unvalla
(Bangalore)



MYSTERIOUS GOINGS-ON AT DOONGERWADI

Since 2001, things and events at Mumbai's Doongerwadi complex are getting curiouser and curiouser. Or so it seems! Those were the days when the DDD-AG, aided by certain vested interests in the BPP, tried their best to push in the alien, anti-Zoroastrian "prayer-hall" for those Parsees who were cremated. They did not succeed.

At that time, we had a sneaking suspicion that at least the vested interests in the BPP are not going to take it lying down. Some mischief or the other was bound to crop up sooner than later.

Unfortunately, in a year's time, another BPP trustee, who should have known better, got an Irani couple to donate a mortuary at Doongerwadi, as a "transit camp" for the Parsee corpse, whose relative/s 12,000 miles away, would rush to Mumbai to kiss the last goodbye to a frozen slab of what once was a warm human body! As a wit put it, no one thought of a micro oven, nearby, to bring it back to room temperature!

All along, another bug had bitten the BPP trustee and staff in charge of Doongerwadi, alongwith members of the fanciful "Doongerwadi Advisory Committee" (DAC): – a beautification campaign!!

We searched high and low in the Vendidad, both in Avesta and Pahlavi, if any reference was available for "beautifying" the Dakhmas and their environs. We drew a complete blank. Incidentally, Vendidad is the most ancient Zoroastrian text, which gives the entire low-down on the Dakhmas.

So great became the craze for beautification with some members of the DAC that soon they got all mixed up with words like afforestation, deforestation and reforestation! In other words, they didn't know whether they were going or coming!

That's how the present crisis began to brew in the Doongerwadi precincts. Some staff members blinked in utter surprise to see trucks making sorties, carrying rubble, debris and chopped trees inside the Doongerwadi precincts!

Things came to a head when Dr. Viraf J. Kapadia residing at Godrej Baug, was stunned, one Saturday afternoon, recently to see trees which were "felled illegally" and debris of old buildings, broken toilet

seats, basins and sinks dumped near the car park! He sent SMSs to all the BPP trustees immediately. Only one of them responded from Kiwiland – Maneck Engineer, who said he didn't know anything about it! **No one else bothered!** Exactly a week later, The Times of India broke the news with a picture of a few trunks of felled trees lying around. **That's when BPP's "smooth operator", in charge of Doongerwadi and Chairman Minoos Shroff rushed to the site in the morning.** Also present were Dr. Kapadia, Khojeste and Firoza Punthakey-Mistree, Dr. Anahita Pundole and video-cameraman, Sarosh Daruwalla.

We quote relevant and very pertinent extracts from Dr. Viraf Kapadia's letter written to the BPP trustees, the same day :

1) This has reference to the article appearing in The Times of India Mumbai dated Saturday 25th September, 2004 on the subject noted above and the visit by President of B.P.P. Mr. Minoos Shroff and the trustee in charge of Doongerwadi, Mr. Dinshaw Tamboli at 11.30 a.m. on the same day.

2) During their visit, myself and other social workers of the Parsi community took them round to show extensive damage wilfully done to the greenery of the premises of Doongerwadi. The two honourable trustees saw the trunks of dozens of trees which were lying there after they were felled illegally. At the same spot the trustees also saw the open space which is being used as a dumping ground where debris of the old buildings, broken toilet seats, and basins were dumped, which were not from the Doongerwadi premises but brought and dumped there by the person who is supposed to look after the entire Doongerwadi complex.

*3) With a view to meet any exigency which may arise since the photograph of the trunks illegally felled has appeared in today's Times of India, the trustees had brought with them Mr. Sarosh Daruwalla for video shooting. **In the video shooting, illegal felled trees, debris, broken toilet seats and basins have also been covered.***

4) Here it is worthwhile to suggest that whenever any project at Doongerwadi is undertaken, the procedure adopted by the contractor carrying out work or public road must be also implemented. In that, the contractor must display a board stating the nature of the project, scope of the project, at who's instance being done, date of commencement of the project and expected date of completion. In this way, the members of the Parsi community will be able to distinguish between legal and illegal activities on the BPP estate.

5) Under the Maharashtra conservation of trees (Act), it is compulsory to number every tree which has got big trunk and branches to update the census. May I therefore request you to number each and ever tree at Doongerwadi because the provisions of the law are applicable both in the public place and private premises. Kindly plant the following trees: Arjun, Peepul, Banyan, Putranjeeva, Karanj as they are strong and suitable for the city of Bombay. Kindly give a report to the Tree Officer once in six months. You can take advice and technical assistance in any matter connected with planting, protection and preservation of trees from the tree authority.

6) As promised by the two visiting trustees it is hoped that all the debris brought from outside and

dumped at Doongerwadi will be cleared by Wednesday 29th September 2004. Not only that, but the trustees will see that henceforth no part of Doongerwadi is misused as a dumping ground, and to that end the persons who are liable for these dirty activities be taken to task as it hurts the religious feelings and sentiments of the Parsi Community.

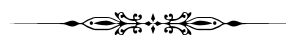
As Dr.Kapadia states, the debris was to be cleared after a few days. You can't expect anything but a smooth cover-up from a smooth operator! BPP's PRO made a vain attempt in this regard, as his lies were exposed by Dr. Pundole and Mrs. Punthakey-Mistree.

The following questions remain unanswered:

(1) Where did the rubble come from? Surely not from Godrej Baug, as the BPP alleged! Was it that interested parties were using our Doongerwadi precincts as a dumping ground for contractors of new high-rise buildings in the vicinity?

(2) Who is responsible for the illegal felling of trees? Why isn't there an inquiry in the matter and the guilty punished?

(3) Is the Department of Dirty Tricks (D.D.T.) in the BPP working overtime? Parsees! Be vigilant.



TRUSTEES OF WADIA AGIARY SHOULD BE TAUGHT A LESSON!

Sir, There was an old beautiful Agiary – Wadiaji's Agiary – at Lalbaug which has been around maybe for more than a hundred years and which has been catering to the needs of the Zoroastrians residing in Nowroze Baug, Wadia Baug, Tata Colony and for other Zoroastrians around the Lalbaug-Parel area.

I am not a regular Agiary-goer but visit it when an Uthamna ceremony of a dead friend or relation occurs. I knew that Hilla Builders were constructing a twenty-five storied high-rise Tower, but I only realised the havoc it had already caused to the once holy and popular Agiary amongst the Zoroastrians, when I went there this evening. Previously it had a serene and peaceful atmosphere, which is so absolutely essential for prayers. For the first time it struck me what damage the Tower had done to this simple yet sacred place.

The Tower is built blocking the old familiar aesthetic view of the Agiary. And when the full occupancy is achieved, there will be almost over a hundred vehicles and an army of security and

other staff. One can only imagine the confusion and chaos that will take place where once there was serenity and tranquility – which is necessary for a devotee – that calmness will be totally lost.

Could not the trustees, who are supposed to be pious, devout and religious, think of the adverse consequences which would be created by this monstrosity called Hilla Towers? The trustees and the builders seem to have disregarded the sentiments of the community and for what? For money?

The Zoroastrians who matter are requested to visit the site and see for themselves what a mess the trustees and builders have done and castigate them – verbally and publicly – to ensure that such trustees, who have acted blatantly in total disregard to the sentiments of the community are taught a lesson which they will never forget.

May I ask who is going to benefit by the building of this tower?

Yours truly,
Dali J. Gundevia

FDU TO BE KEPT OUT OF UDVADA AFFAIRS

Gujarat's Chief Secretary Upholds The Sentiments Of The Parsee Community

Just on the eve of going to the press, we reliably learn that Gujarat Government's Chief Secretary, Mr. P.K. Laheri, has issued instructions to the District Collector of Valsad, that under her supervision and with the assistance of the Gram Panchayet of Udvada, alongwith the co-operation of the Udvada Anjuman and the two High Priests of Udvada, the immediate needs of the Udvada village and the Parsee pilgrims be met, in the first instance.

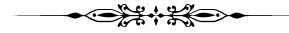
They include, preventing the sea water from eroding the land, improving and repairing the roads, ensuring adequate supply of water and electricity, etc.

By issuing these instructions, Mr. Laheri has bowed to the wishes of thousands of Parsee

Zoroastrians, who had appealed to him not to allow the FDU to carry out its agenda in Udvada and to desist from hurting the religious sentiments of the community.

The timely resolution by the Udvada Samast Anjuman, to keep out any organisation from interfering in the Anjuman matters, must have strengthened Mr. Laheri's decision to keep FDU out!

The Parsee Voice stands thoroughly vindicated! A hosanna for Shreeji Iranshah! May His Glory and Lustre shine resplendently for years to come!



UDVADA ANJUMAN, WATCH OUT! Non-Zoroastrians Have Already Started Arriving At Iranshah!

Sir

On Monday, 11th October 2004 I had been to Udvada with my husband and a friend to pay our respects to Iranshah Atashbehrum.

Being a weekday, it was quiet and peaceful and there were few Parsis in the Atashbehrum. **After finishing our prayers at around 2 p.m., just as we were getting into our car, we saw 2 foreigners in an autorickshaw heading towards the entrance of Iranshah.**

Both the foreigners had cameras and were making inquiries, when we approached them. They mentioned they were Germans and were interested in the fire which was burning for "700 years" in the Atashbehrum! We

explained that this was a holy place of pilgrimage and admission to the Atashbehrum was only for Parsi Zoroastrians. On hearing this, one of the Germans walked away. The other German said they had come to India for work at Daman and Boisar and were with an N.G.O. He would not give the name of the N.G.O.

While there was one watchman, can we not be more vigilant?

Maybe, we can have a more effective security system.

Kerman D. Sarkari

