

THE DESECRATION OF A DADGAH!

- ADI F. DOCTOR

These days, in Mumbai, it seems, the trustees of some Agiaries are vying with one another in denigrating and even desecrating the holy fires handed to them in trust. How else to explain what will happen to the Lalbaug Wadia Adaran, after the monstrous sky-scraper comes up just a few feet away in the next year or so, and what has already happened to the second oldest Agiary of Mumbai, the Manekji Sett Agiary on Perin Nariman Street (Bazar Gate Street) in the Fort?

In the first case, the devoted litigants, all credit to them (they were shamefully dubbed "undesirable elements," "obstructionists" and "base elements" in the Jame weekly) went right up to the Supreme Court to save the sanctity of the **Aderan Saheb**, but could not succeed.

In the second case, however, not a dog barked when the trustees and the Panthaky took it upon themselves to demolish the **Urvis Gah** containing the **Dadgah** so as to convert the structure into a hall to be used for public/Parsee functions! The reason? The same as given year's ago by the Banaji Atash Behram trustees, when they bartared away the adjoining hall meant for Jashans, lectures and as occasional marraige, for weddings, navjots, birthday parties and what have you! All this to generate income to run the Atash Behram? Read ditto for the Manekji Sett Agiary. That both happen to have a common Trustee is not just a coincidence!

It all began on April, 2002. The 269 Salgreh of the Agiary was round the corner and the Satanic plan was put into action. While the front portion housing the **Adaran** was being 'renovated', the death knell for the **Dadgah** was sounded.

Neither the trustees of the Agiary nor its Panthaky bothered to know that :

- (a) the **Dadgah** (Avesta, **Daityo Gatie**, lit. "lawful place") is the very king pin, the foundation on which rests the spiritual strength and power of the **Atash Adaran**. It is the heart and conscience of the **Adaran**.
- (b) the **Dadgah**, placed in the **Yazashne Gah**, if lawfully consecrated and maintained, attracts the glory and splendour of **Vispe Ratu**, the 23 **Ratus** or Divine Chiefs overseeing the **Pav Mahal** and its currents.

- (c) the **Dadgah's** lawful place is in the **Urvisgah** where all the **Pav Mahal** ceremonies, like the **Baj, Yasna, Vendidad** and **Nirangdin** are performed. You knock out the **Urvisgah** and the whole unseen **Pav Mahal** structure collapses!

This is exactly what has happened in the **Manakji Sett Agiary**. The old **Dadgah** has gone. In its place fire burning in a small, latter day **afarganiya** has been placed in a corner of the front side of the building. So colossal is the ignorance in both **Athornans** and **Behdins**, that this travesty of a make-shift pseudo - **Dadgah** is worshipped as the real one! And where is the **Urvisgah**? What's that?

Gloss, glamour, shine and sheen! O, what a preety Agiary! Pix and write-up in **Jame Weekly**: "Don't talk of **Chahrum** and **Chinvat**. We will cross the Bridge when we come to it! Alexander and the Arabs would have hesitated to do it.

Today's Parsees have done it : demolished the **Yazashnegah** and desecrated the **Dadgah**! Not a dog barked!

With Best Compliments
From
KETAYUN & BOMI



**khambata
Caterers**

22/A, Wellington Terrace,
Wellington Street, 2nd Floor,
Bombay - 400 002.

☎ : 206 9636 / 205 7242