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Committed to Transparency and Accountability

DOKHMENASHINI FOR COVID PARSIS?

Due to Govt. guidelines, a few of our Parsis affected by Covid had to be cremated instead of being consigned to the Dokhmas. Naturally there was a deep sense of resentment among these family members for being denied Dokhmanashini to their late bereaved family members.

This led to the scholar priests Ervad Dr. Rooyinton Peer and Ervad Dr. Pervez Bajan by their letter dated 4th June who exhorted the BPP Trustees to arrange with the authorities to allow the covid Parsi body to be brought upto the final marble slab before the gates leading to the Dokhmas where two mobeds would recite the Geh-Sarna ceremony standing at a distance of about 30 feet. Then the body to be consigned to a designated Dokhma by the Khandias wearing masks, gloves, proper PPE Kits and the materials in which the body was brought be destroyed according to guidelines of BMC authorities.

In reply Noshir Dadrawala informed them by his mail of 5th June 2020 that the Trustees will shortly address the problem in consultation with our High Priests, Religious Scholars, Health Experts, etc.

Subsequently Vada Dasturji JamaspAsa Dastur by his mail of 5th June 2020 to other High Priests and BPP Trustees wrote that in theory we could continue to use our Dokhmenashini system for disposal of covid dead bodies if we take the requisite precautions and adhere to the guidance

drawn out by the WHO and the Govt. guidelines. He further stressed that there is NO RISK OF INFECTION FROM A DEAD BODY AND THERE IS NO EVIDENCE TO PROVE TRANSMISSION FROM A DEAD BODY TO THE LIVING. Vada Dasturji continued that it is imperative that all the four pillars of the Dokhmenashini system be followed—Sachkar and Sagdid, Geh Sarna, Dokhmenashini and the Sarosh ni Kriyas if the deceased is to be consigned to the Dokhma and all prayers performed at the Bunglis there.

In reply Trustee Viraf Mehta by his mail of 5th June agreed that Vada Dasturji JamaspAsa has made some valid points worth considering and assured to discuss with his colleague Trustees at their next conference call.

Noshir Dadrawala by his mail of 5th June informed the High Priests that BMC has issued communication to BPP that a Covid cadaver cannot be consigned to the Dokhma, but has to be cremated or buried. He also agreed with Viraf Mehta that the stumbling block of the Khandiyas reluctance to handle covid bodies even with PPE kits needs to be addressed.

Vada Dasturji Khurshed Dastur of Udvada by his mail of 7th June replied to Vada Dasturji JamaspAsa and other High Priests as well as BPP Trustees that the Doongerwadi staff is not in a position to follow the strict guidelines issued by BMC, Govt., and WHO

as they are neither trained nor experienced and therefore not willing to take up this enormous responsibility and left it to the Trustees to come to a consensus that will prove to be in the best interest of one and all concerned.

All the above exchange of mails between the High Priests, Scholar Priests and BPP Trustees were published by us in the Parsi Junction Issue No. 34 of 14th June 2020.

Subsequently the five High Priests and the two scholar priests—Vada Dasturji Dr. Firoz M. Kotwal, Vada Dasturji Dr. Jamasp K. JamaspAsa, Vada Dasturji Khurshed K. Dasoor, Vada Dasturji Kaikhushroo C. Ravji (MeherjiRana), Vada Dasturji Cyrus N. Dastur and scholar priests—Ervad Dr. Rooyintan P. Peer and Ervad Dr. Parvez M. Bajan along with two behdins addressed mail dated 26th June 2020 to the BPP Trustees **to approach the authorities and come up with a strong case before the BMC officials to allow Dokhmenashini to Parsi covid bodies, since the virus does not survive in dead bodies.** One of the behdins, without the knowledge or permission of the Trustees, even approached the Doongerwadi Manager and Head Nassesalar and offered gratuity of Rs. 5000/ to each Khandiya carrying each covid body to the Dokhma, without considering whether the family could afford to pay RS. 30,000/ in addition to all other funeral expenses and hoping that other Trusts and affluent members could pay if the family could not afford to pay.

The High Priests in their above mail recommended that a separate bungli and a separate Dokhma be demarcated for the specific use of the funeral rites and consignment to the Dokhma of these special corpses, until the pandemic is brought under control, after which the same could be sanitized and put to regular use as before. They further recommended that the maximum number of attendees for all the four-day ceremonies could be restricted to twenty only, as per BMC guidelines, so that social distancing is maintained.

However a disturbing mail has been sent to us that none of the Vada Dasturjis have voluntarily given their signature or consent to the above letter. We give below the disturbing mail:

- 1. Are the Vada Dasturji signatories to the above letter circulating under an sd/-?**
- 2. It appears to have been written and circulated by one Mr. Yezdi M. Hodiwala who is an "Ilm-e-Khushnoomists" and the names of the Dasturjis seem to have been added for "effect" and without their knowledge or consent.**

Pursuant to this, the Trustees in their conference call decided to have a meeting or at least a video conference call with all the High Priests and scholar priests. Trustee Viraf Mehta then called up each of them to ascertain the best time and day to have a Zoom video call with all concerned participants. **Accordingly a Zoom video call was organized for Saturday 4th July 2020 at 1pm between the five Trustees of BPP and the High Priests --Dasturji Firoz Kotwal at Cusrow Baug, Dasturji Khurshed Dastoor at Udvada, Dasturji Jamasp JamaspAsa at London Hospital, Meherjirana Keki Ravji at Navsari, Dasturji Cyrus Dastur at Surat and the three scholar priests-Ervad Rooyintan Peer, Ervad Parvez Bajan and Ervad Ramyar Karanjia at Mumbai.**

A very heart to heart discussion ensued which lasted for over an hour and ultimately what was agreed was that to first approach well known virologists and obtain credible proof and evidence with written reports that covid virus does not survive once the patient dies and a dead body cannot transmit covid to a living person.

The task was allotted to Dasturji JamaspAsa to get a strong report from a London virologist and Dasturji Khurshed Dastoor to get a similar report from an Indian counterpart. It was decided that till this reports with irrefutable medical/scientific evidence comes, nothing should be done with the BMC officials and to await such reports only after which the BMC authorities be moved with this proof for allowing Dokhmenashini of covid infected bodies and failing their approval in spite of this proof to move the High Court by the Trustees for relief of the customary disposal of Parsi covid bodies by Dokhmenashini (sky burial).

Thus the first step is to obtain reports from credible doctors and specialists that the covid virus cannot be transmitted from dead bodies. Till this reports come nothing further can be done. The same day of Saturday 4th July, Vada Dasturji Khurshed Dastur wrote to Dr. Randeep Guleria, Director of All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), New Delhi seeking his view about transmission of covid virus from dead bodies.

After the Zoom meeting of Saturday 4th July, scholar priest Ramyar Karanjia sent some paper cuttings by his mail dated 5th July as under:

**"On 5 Jul 2020, at 06:30, Ramiyar Karanjia <ramiyark@gmail.com> wrote:
Respected Dasturjis and dear Sirs,
In continuation with yesterday's e-meeting, i am attaching 3 newspaper cuttings of recent times which may be of help to us in preparing our case.**

**I could not get Mr. Zerxes Dastur's and Dasturji Cyrus's emails, so Viraf, if you could please forward it to them.
Respects,
Ramiyar Karanjia"**

To this Noshir Dadrawala clarified what exactly was required for the Trustees to approach BMC to change their views and allow sky burial (Dokhmenashini) of Parsi covid infected bodies as under:

**"From: Noshir - CAP <noshir@capindia.in>
Sent: Sunday, July 5, 2020 8:01 PM
To: Jamasp Dastur <jamasp.dastur@doctors.org.uk>
Cc: Ramiyar Karanjia <ramiyark@gmail.com>;
Subject: Re: Newspaper cuttings**

Dear Ramiyar,

Thanks for sharing these clippings which all of us have read earlier too.

The references here are all to burial (in the ground) and not Sky Burial as practised by us.

We need evidence that exposing the body to the sky/sun will not pose any health concern.

Please see the letter from the BMC specific to this concern. Unless we address this concern with irrefutable medical/scientific evidence, our case is likely to be rejected.

When we approach the authorities let us go armed with scientific data that would be compelling enough for the BMC to change it's stand.

We need to argue from a position of Strength -- Scientific evidence and not just Sentiment (religious or otherwise).

We will surely achieve our goal once armed with the former.

Regards.
Noshir"

Vada Dasturji Khurshed Dastur, the Parsi member of the National Minority Commission, by his mail of 5th July 2020 to the Director of All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Dr. Randeep Guleria requested his learned views on how long the Covid virus lives in the corpse after his demise, and other queries related to the body to be consigned to the Dokhmas in keeping with our ritual of Dokhmenashini. We reproduce his mail as below:

**"From: Khurshed Dastoor <dasturjikhurshed@gmail.com>
Subject: Fwd: Survival of COVID virus in a corpse
Kind attn of Dr. Randeep Guleria:**

Dear Sir,
Greetings of the day!

Being one of the Head Priest of the Zoroastrian community worldwide, we have a burning issue at hand within our community at this time of COVID19 crises.

Please allow me to explain the situation to you. We, Zoroastrians, believe in sky burial and so

offer our corpses to the forces of nature at our Towers of Silence wherever available. In these current unusual times, as per the directives issued by official authorities like BMC in Mumbai, our community members are forced to cremate their loved ones who have tested positive for the COVID virus on their death. Due to cremation which is not recommended in our religion, our priests cannot perform the final rites and prayers for the dead in the much desired traditional manner at the Towers of Silence. This issue is creating much heartbreak for the bereaved of our community as this goes against our beliefs and customs.

Since I have to guide our community in the right direction and hearing your sound medical views on various media with your expertise on the current pandemic, I would be truly grateful if you could offer your expert medical advise on the following matters:

- How long does the COVID virus live in the corpse after death?
- Can we put the corpse in our dedicated mortuary at the Towers of Silence till the moment the virus dies out in the corpse if its for a few days?
- Can we, by any chance if its safe after a few days, offer the corpse its final journey in our traditional way of sky burial and avoid cremation?

I would much appreciate a response from your side as soon as possible so I can guide my community in the right direction in these difficult times.

Warm regards,

**Dasturji Khurshed Dastoor
High Priest, 'Iranshah'
Udvada''''**

In reply, Trustee Noshir Dadrawala by his mail of same date thanked the Vada Dasturji and was hopeful that once we compile irrefutable evidence based on the latest authentic scientific data and information to prove that consigning a covid cadaver will not harm our pall bearers and those living in the vicinity of the towers of silence, we can move the BMC for amendment of the Death Certificate to allow covid bodies to be taken to Doongerwadi and not for cremation.

""From: Noshir - CAP <noshir@capindia.in>

Sent: Saturday, July 4, 2020 5:19 PM

To:KhurshedDastoor<dasturjikhurshed@gmail.com>

Subject: Re: Survival of COVID virus in a corpse

Thank you Dasturjisaheb Khurshedji for sharing this email.

Dr. Randeep Guleria is a well known Indian pulmonologist and the Director of the equally well known All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS). His opinion should carry quite some weight when arguing our case with government authorities.

It was also a great pleasure listening to the views expressed by Dasturjisaheb Dr. Jamasp K. JamaspAsa.

Thanks are also due to all our other High Priests and Scholar Priests for taking time out to express their view.

We trustees are most grateful to all of you.

We can approach the BMC authorities once we compile irrefutable evidence based on the latest authentic scientific data and information to prove that consigning a covid cadaver will not harm our pall bearers and those living in the vicinity of the towers of silence.

We also need irrefutable evidence to convince the authorities that in the absence of vultures who used to effectively dispose of the body swiftly, crows, kites, rodents and flies do not become vectors of this highly infectious disease.

Nothing would make me and all my colleagues more happy than to see every Parsi Zoroastrian covid cadaver consigned to the dokhma. However, we must ensure beyond reasonable doubt that our actions will not harm the living nor the very system and institution of dokhmenashini.

Thank you all and May Ahura Mazda in His Infinite Wisdom and Omniscience lead us all to the best solution

Noshir H. Dadrawala''''

However even before evidence can be obtained with which to go before the BMC to amend their dictat to cremate/bury covid affected Parsis, a new controversy

has erupted stoked by the personal visit of Mr. Chiniwalla to Doongerwadi to convince the khandiyas to carry the covid affected Parsi into the Dokhma by offering them gratuity of Rs. 5000/ to each Khandiya per body as per the below clarificatory mail of Doongerwadi Manager of 9th July2020 to the Trustees and senior staff:

""From: managerdoongerwadi@bpitrust.com <managerdoongerwadi@bpitrust.com>

Sent: Thursday, July 9, 2020 12:33 PM

Subject: PALL BEARERS CLARIFICATION ON THE MISQUOTING OF THEIR MUKADAM BY MR. VIRAF CHINIWALLA IN HIS WHATS APP. MESSAGE.

Respected Trustees,

There's a Whats App message under circulation which states that Mr. Viraf Chiniwalla in his personal capacity had met with Mr. Parvez Gustadji Wadia and he has shown a positive approach of the Pall Bearers to do the Sachkar and Khand work for Covid19 related deaths **which is a wrong Statement as the talk had happened in the presence of Mr. Arzan Noshir Patel and myself and where he had flatly refused.**

The Pall Bearers have informed Parvez that they would want to make their stand very clear with Mr. Viraf Chiniwalla that they are not willing to do the Sachkar and Khand work for Covid19 related deaths as it is a health hazard for them and their families.

Accordingly, a meeting has been called with Mr. Viraf Chiniwalla at 16:30 Hrs today at Doongerwadi and would request the presence of the Trustees and the CEOs.

Thanks & Best Regards,

Vistaspar Cavas Mehta
Manager DOONGERWADI''''

Thereafter on 10th July 2020, Hanoz Mistry of Team Parsi Voice forwarded a communication received from one Dr. Zubin Vaid to the Trustees of BPP as support required to approach authorities to allow Dokhmenashini to Parsi Covid victims. We give below the said report of Dr. Zubin Vaid in favour of the hypothesis that dead bodies cannot transmit Covid to living bodies.

Dr Zubin M. Vaid

M.D.(Med), FIDM (Diabetes)

Reg No: 082601

Consulting Physician (Internal Medicine) & Diabetologist
Specialist in Cardiology, Diabetes, Infectious Diseases
& HIV Medicine

Medical Director: Unique Hospital & Polyclinic

Honorary Physician :

- *Nanavati Hospital
- *KLS Memorial Hospital
- *BSES MG Global Hospital
- *Criticare Hospital (E + W)
- *Sujay Hospital
- *Advanced Multispeciality Hospital
- *Bhartiya Arogya Nidhi Hospital

09/07/2020

To,

Miss Rita Doctor and Mr. Hanoz Mistry The Parsee Voice

I am a Consultant Physician in Andheri attached to many hospitals in this area like Nanavati and BSES MG Global Hospital and have been regularly treating patients with COVID-19 on out-patient basis, as well as critically ill patients in hospitals afflicted by the disease, since the past 3 months.

The Parsi community is greatly anguished over the refusal by the concerned authorities to hand over the bodies of their dear departed who have passed away due to COVID-19, for the mandatory Dokhmenashini last rites. Perhaps the following write up may help project a less hysterical, more balanced picture from a doctor's point of view:

At the very outset, let us examine the exact words used by the WHO and the CDC (Centre of Disease Control, the apex body of Infectious Diseases in the US) as regards the spread of the Corona virus:

1. It can primarily spread between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet) through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes, talks or even breathes. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.
2. It MAY be possible that a person can get COVID-19 **by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it** (fomite spread) and **then touching their own mouth, nose**, or possibly their eyes. However, **this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.**

It is thus very evident from the above statements, as also from the tons of data and literature available worldwide that the virus spreads when respiratory droplets are released from a person by coughing (maximum), sneezing, talking or even breathing. And so, it follows, that when we are talking about a dead body/corpse we have already eliminated this primary route of spread since the corpse can neither cough, sneeze, talk nor breathe.

So far as the fomite spread is concerned, (point no.2), innumerable controversies prevail, and the exact magnitude of fomite spread is supposed to be miniscule when compared to the primary mode. Even then, for a moment let us suppose that the dead body could have virus particles over some of the body surfaces. These surfaces need to be touched and then the same hands need to touch one's mouth, nose, face etc. to contract/spread the disease. Without touching the corpse, the disease would anyway not spread since the primary route of spread through respiratory droplets has ceased to exist. Hence, if a PPE is donned by a healthcare worker or a person handling the dead body, surely the chance of the virus entering the mask or face shield is miniscule if proper precautions are taken.

Little wonder then, that there is perhaps only one documented case in world literature where a transmission has been thought to be because of a corpse.

It is, therefore, not surprising that all the world bodies have expressed serious doubts as to whether dead bodies pose a risk in the transmission of the virus especially if proper precautions like wearing PPE and masks are duly taken by the people handling the body.

Somewhat, the human mind tends to perceive the risk arising from a corpse as greater than from a COVID infected living being (examples can be found in bodies lying unclaimed in hospitals by families). Scientific evidence, however, does not endorse such unfounded fears.

An article appeared in the HINDU, "Why Dead Bodies do not Spread the Novel Coronavirus".

In fact, in an affidavit filed by the BMC itself in the Bombay High Court, Deepak Chavan, Assistant Medical Officer, had stated, "Cadavers do not transmit COVID-19 disease."

Dr. Randeep Guleria, Medical Director of AIIMS, states, "Coronavirus cannot spread through dead bodies. It spreads from respiratory secretion. Coughing is necessary for the spread of this virus."

Though the burial grounds are close to human habitation, the Bombay High Court dismissed all pleas and allowed such cadavers to be buried as there is no scientific evidence to support such baseless fears.

The Dokhmas are in secluded green areas, much distanced from human habitation. Clearly, the belief that the Dokhmas may prove to be a cause for the spread of this virus, seems unreasonable and a bit far-fetched.

If there is no dependable evidence and logically, there being minimal risk to the handlers of contracting COVID with the use of proper PPE and N 95 masks, why not put up a strong case demanding rightful, time tested, Dokhmenashini rites for our unfortunate Zoroastrian COVID victims?



Dr. Zubin M. Vaid

However Noshir Dadrawala was not convinced of the credibility of the Report and in reply to Hanoz Mistry reaffirmed as under:

**“From: noshir <noshir@capindia.in>
Date: 10/07/2020 11:10 am (GMT+05:30)
To: The Parsee Voice <theparseevoice@gmail.com>
Subject: Dokhmenashini for the Zoroastrians deceased due to COVID**

Yes read it. Its going viral (sic) since morning today.

It does not address a fundamental issue. For how long the virus remains in the body including internal organs? Once we know this authentically we can argue from a position of strength.

To repeat, there are no vultures. By the third or fourth day the decomposing body bursts open and fluids including from infected organs begin to seep out.

Crows and kites try to peck on internal organs and then fly off to sit on residential windows and roofs at Spenta Apartments, Godrej Baug, Simla House etc. Again we need to convince BMC that these birds would not be vectors. Let's go to the BMC or the CM if required. But with compelling facts, figures and scientific proof that there will be no health hazard to the living.

Once we have authentic proof we can argue our case from a position of strength and with conviction.

As trustees we cannot take any hasty decision and put anyone's health and life at risk.

Thanks for your patience and understanding.
Noshir H Dadrawala”

Hence what is now awaited are the reports of specialists from India and London and once that is received then the next step will be to convince the Khandiyas on the basis of the reports that covid virus cannot be transmitted from dead bodies and once they are convinced and agree then to move the BMC with the irrefutable evidence to allow Sky Burial/Dokhmenashini. Till then status quo will have to be maintained.

PARSI GATE RELOCATION

MORE UPDATES

In the Parsi Junction issue of 5th July 2020, we had published the details of the meeting arranged by Maneck Dastur of Godrej Baug on Tuesday 30th June 2020 at 4.30 pm between the BPP Trustees and BMC as well as Coastal Road officials when Zoru Bhatena was also present. We had also published Khushru Zaiwalla's objection that the shifting should not be southwards but done between the present location opposite Taraporewalla Aquarium and Bandstand at Walkeshwar along Chowpatty sea face.

We had pointed out that the sea at Chowpatty at low tide goes hundreds of feet away and hence access to the sea waters for our seniors would pose a big problem. Further as explained by the officials, three lanes each of coastal road on either side would take the sea further away and as accepted by those who attended the 30th June 2020 meeting, the new location opposite Kishco Cutlery seems the most suitable under the circumstances and it would be in the fitness of development that Zaiwalla too accepted the new location instead of creating hurdles which in the long run would adversely affect the credibility of our community due to such non-cooperation by a few perhaps misinformed Parsis.

MID-DAY of 6th July also carried the dispute of a few disgruntled members of the community:

“Proposed Shifting Of Parsi Gates Lead To A Lot Of Shouting

Updated: Jul 06, 2020, 09:39 IST | Hemal Ashar | Mumbai

Dissent cleaves community after meet to move Parsi Gates at Marine Drive; social media the battleground

On June 30, a small group of people, including some Bombay Parsi Panchayat (BPP) trustees and others from the community met with BMC officials, with reference to shifting the Parsi Gate on Marine Drive. These Gates, currently opposite the Taraporewalla Aquarium, are to be moved further down south from the present location, as the Coastal Road design has necessitated the shift, civic authorities stated.



The Parsi Gates at Marine Drive

The Gates lead to stairs from which the community can access the beach and pay obeisance to the water. This recent meeting where an alternate location was discussed has irked some members of the community. One section is fired up that the invitees did not raise any objection to the proposed shifting. There are others that say those who had raised objections in writing in the first place with the BMC, had not been called for the meet at all.

Social media has become the battleground with messages flying through community chats about the Parsi Gates shifting.

Prominent community member Jamshed Sukhadwalla said, "I did not want to participate in the Coastal Road issue, as I had been backstabbed earlier during a community-centric issue. Yet one must be open and transparent when it comes to decisions. The people who have done the original teamwork and legwork must be involved. What we need now is a proper discussion with technical persons, about the suitability of the shift and new site, we need a proper technical meeting."

Objections to the shift

In his media messages, Sukhadwalla said that what ails the community is "Bypassing

those who are concerned (by which he means the father-son duo of Khushru and Rayomand Zaiwalla), who had logged their objections/suggestions within permissible time with authorities with reference to the Parsi Gates, and they were not informed about the meeting."

Sukhadwalla added that, "History will chronicle this event as a thunder stealer by perspiring and aspiring BPP trustees."

Khushru (Rayomand Zaiwalla's father) in his July 3 communication to the BPP trustees, outlined the primary objections as, "The proposed alternate site towards Churchgate is in the direct line of the monsoon winds and the gale, which every year claims without fail, a number of lives...With eyes wide

open the Trustees have agreed to so-called relocation without any application of mind, much less the safety of the worshippers," it said.

One of those invited but who could not make it to the on-site meeting on June 30, was former BPP chairman Dinshaw Mehta. He learnt of what transpired at the meeting and said, "The alternate proposed site is good, there is no problem. There are only some people who are making a noise. In fact, the civic team explained to us very well, how the new spot will give people access to the water. If the Gates stay at the present location there will be three lines of traffic on either side and the sea will water will move much further inside, it will be very difficult to access. The officials have been clear and this seems very feasible. The land and the Gates belongs to the BMC, so we need a little give and take. Only a few of us were invited. These are all ego problems."

War games

Zoru Bhatena, another invitee from the community has claimed that the "WhatsApp warriors are making a hue and cry only after things are over." Bhatena, who is a well-known environmentalist claimed on social media that many WhatsApp warriors, who ignored the proposed demolition and

shifting have now, after "Some kind person (not me) found a solution and got BMC to agree to move the gate to another location (instead of destroying it) have started their Whatsapp war games."

Jamshed Sukhadwalla of Wadiaji Atashbehran fame attacked Zoru Bhatena for keeping the Zaiwalla duo out of BMC deliberations as under:

"Hi Zoru,

Even, at this late hour I am not sleeping!

- Consciously, I had not participated in the Coastal Road issue, as I would not appreciate being back stabbed again, in a manner, in which the vadapavs did in the case of Our Atashbehrans.
- Zaiwalla duo, had lodged their objections/suggestions (o/s) within permissible time limits, with the concerned authorities, and had made it known.
- Even, as late as, in the first half of June 2020, (when the matter started brewing), by email to all the concerned, who-is-who of the Community, including you, they had reiterated their stand - maybe right or wrong.
- The like minded members of the Community, including you, met the officials of MCGM, and may be some more officials, of concerned departments *on Tuesday the 30th June 2020* as reported in TOI Mumbai edition.
- Though, all the members of the Community who attend, were aware of the o/s filed by Zaiwalla duo, they were not informed.
- This is what *AILS OUR COMMUNITY*
- Bypass those who are concerned, and thus *benefit and encourage the concerned authorities to divide and rule* - *THIS IS WHAT PAINS.*
- Presenting snapshots to justify yourself, does not create history.
- *HISTORY WILL CHRONICLE THIS EVENT AS A THUNDER STEALER BY "PERSPIRING AND ASPIRING" BPP TRUSTEES.*

Zoru, ask your conscience, which please do, if you have justified yourself by penning your following message.

Zoru, you maybe half my age, and can achieve a lot on your own.

I respected you for being an environmentalist, but now

DO HAVE AN UPRIGHT SPINE, and then let others appreciate you by saying - WELL SAID ZORU

jamshed sukhadwalla

P.S. I would not like to further correspond on this issue

Zoru replies as under:

"Ah!

The Parsi Whatsapp Warriors are back again

The very warriors who make a hue & cry only after things are over.

The very warriors who ignored all the messages about the proposed demolition of the Parsi Gate at Marine Drive (screen shots 1 to 4 dated 06.05.2019, 15.05.2019 & 15.05.2019).

An entire group, with hundreds of warriors keeping silent

But, after some kind person (not me) finds a solution and gets BMC to agree to move the gate to a 3rd location (instead of destroying it), these same whatsapp warriors get up and start their whatsapp war games!!

The same ones who were sleeping from atleast May 2019!!!

But, screen shot 5 (also dt 15.05.2019 on same group) helps to serve as a reminder about how all these whatsapp warriors work. i.e. close their eyes & ignore the issues when it needs to be looked into & wake up and fire away after the deed is done.

To all my WhatsApp Warrior friends; ask yourself what you did from May 2019 & atleast be honest enough to say Thank You to some other good soul who took the trouble to save the structure from being demolished.

With Best Wishes to my WhatsApp Warrior friends,
Zoru"

On Monday 6th July, Khushru Zaiwalla wrote to the BPP Trustees as under:

""From: Rayomand cursetjee <cursetjee72@hotmail.com> Date: 06/07/2020 4:00 am (GMT+05:30)

The unfortunate saga of BPP Trustees,

joining hands in the destruction of place of worship being the Parsi Gate, reminds us of the immortal Epic Mahabharata, where the Kurus walked into Kurukshetra, without realising that they will be facing Lord Krishna. In this case the Trustees have failed to realise that they will facing Ava Ardevishur Banu. We trust that BPP will be well advised in the matter and wiser counsel will prevail.
Khushru Zaiwala"

Of course as expected the scholar Noshir Dadrawala took the bait and replied to him as under:

""From: noshir <noshir@capindia.in> Sent: Monday, 6 July, 2020, 07:45 To: Rayomand cursetjee;

Neither are the trustees Kuruvanshi not Ava Ardivisur Anahita (the pure and immaculate) Krishna. The comparison is odious. Besides, Krishna in Mahabharata, always talked about dharma and adharma, but during the Kurukshetra war, he used deceit to kill most of the great warriors, such as Bhishma and Dronacharya and the battle was won using Chal or deceit.

We are Parsi Zoroastrians and we are worshippers of Wisdom and followers of Zarathushtra and his path of Asha.

Keep your garbled parables for the unthinking ones. Do you even know who built this gate and when and for what purpose?

You call it a place of worship. Who consecrated this place of worship and when? Who funded this gate? Who owns this piece of land? Why is there no record of this gate in Parsi history? Who are the trustees or owners of this Parsi place of worship?

Instead of stories from the Mahabharata, please devote some time to research the history of this monument.

Best wishes.

Noshir H Dadrawala"

Since Zoru Bhatena was directly in line of fire in the social media, he gave his say about his Objection to the whole coastal road project on various WhatsApp groups as under:

""Good to see the healthy discussion on how to Save Parsi Gate.

Perhaps people forget that we have fought all the way up to the Supreme Court to fight this disastrous plan to reclaim Mumbai's Coast..., but sadly the SC permitted it.

Perhaps people forget we still fight to save 600 trees along the entire route of this Coastal Rd, since it is simply ridiculous to cut 600 trees on land, to build a road in the sea.

But, like the Parsi Gate, these trees too are in the way of the proposed road, which is designed to take over Marine Drive, Tata Garden, Haji Ali & Worli Sea Face.

A road which SC has permitted, despite a valiant fight.

Perhaps people forget that many have tried to find a way to save Parsi Gate too, from the clutches of this environmentally disastrous Coastal Rd project.

Now, to all the well meaning people on whatsapp- its still not too late.

If anyone has an idea, a solution, simply any way to retain Parsi Gate..., then nows the time to speak up & provide workable solutions & suggestions.

Looking forward to the whatsapp community putting their heads together on this issue.

All plans & all drawings are available and liberally circulated all over.

Yet, if any further info is needed- just pl ask.

Looking forward to our communities' brightest minds giving this their best shot to find a solution.

In anticipation,
Zoru””

Thus after Arzan J. Ghadially in his WhatsApp message published in Parsi Junction of 5th July called upon community members to inform him if they had valid objections and he would forward all the objections to the concerned authorities so that the community voice is heard, we now have another activist Zoru Bhathena calling upon community members that if anyone has an idea, a solution, simply any way to retain Parsi Gate..., then nows the time to speak up & provide workable solutions & suggestions.

ON 8TH July, BMC sent the Minutes of the meeting of 30th June 2020 which is reproduced below:

It is ironic that Parsi Gate Structure/monument and the land below it belongs to BMC and yet when the BMC is offering to re-locate it in a better place at its full cost, so that coastal road work is not hampered which has been allowed by the Supreme Court of India, and further agrees to remove the tetrapods and create steps leading into the sea so that worshippers can perform their rituals before the sea and all present accept the new location as

being better, yet we have some members taking objections to the new location without offering any other viable solution.

Zaiwalla's suggestion to shift it to Chowpatty beach is certainly not viable due to water receding hundreds of feet in low tide.

Are we as a community going to be thankful for the gracious way the BMC has sought to shift the Parsi Gate without hurting the religious sentiment of our community or are we going to be the epitome of ungratefulness which is the new norm of the Parsi community.

MUNICIPAL CORPORATION OF GREATER MUMBAI

No.: DIR/ES&P/ 44 / III dtd. 08/07/2020

MINUTES OF SITE VISIT HELD ON 30.06.2020 AT 4:30 PM AT MARINE DRIVE OPP.AL-SABAH COURT BUILDING WITH TRUSTEES OF BOMBAY PARSI PANCHAYAT

Ref :-Meeting held with representative of Bombay Parsi Panchayat by Director(E. S. & P) via Video Conference on 08.06.2020

The site visit was arranged with reference to the meeting held on 08.06.2020.The following officers /members were present during site visit on 30.06.2020, regarding the proposed re-location of existing Parsi Gate.

1. Smt. Archana Acharekar	: Director(E.S.& P)
2. Shri Vijay Nighot	: Ch.E. (Coastal Road) & his office staff
3. Shri Sanjay Sawant	: E.E.(H.Q.) & his staff
4. Shri Sandeep Singh	: Project Manager , M/s L&T
5. Shri Kim Jang Yong	: Project Manager , M/s Yooshin Engg. Co.
6. Shri G.H. Reddy	: Highway Engineer , M/s AECOM Consultant
7. Shri Maneck Dastur	: Representative of Bombay Parsi Panchayat (BPP)
8. Shri Viraf D Mehta	: Trustee of Bombay Parsi Panchayat (BPP)
9. Shri XerxesV. Dastur	: Trustee of Bombay Parsi Panchayat (BPP)
10. Shri Zoru Bhathena	: Representative of Bombay Parsi Panchayat(BPP)

Sr. No.	Point of discussion	Direction	Compliance
1.	At the outset, Ch.E.(Coastal Road) explained the starting chainage of Mumbai Coastal Road Project (South) which is nearer to Somani Chowk & also explained the extent of proposed cantilever promenade at the existing Parsi Gate. After deliberation, the proposed permanent relocation of Parsi gate abutting Marine drive promenade opposite to Al-Sabah court building was shown to attendees. It was explained that the Parsi gate can be relocated anywhere in the southward direction from it.	-	Nil
2.	As explained by Ch.E. (Coastal Road), the proposed relocation of Parsi gate shown on the said site will not be obstructed due to construction activities of Coastal Road Project .	-	Nil
3.	Trustee and representatives of BPP enquired about shifting programme of existing Parsi Gate, when it was explained that the actual removal and relocation of Parsi Gate will not be taken in hand before December -2020 & it will take about 2 years to complete the construction work along the stretch of existing Parsi gate. Therefore, it was discussed and decided that Parsi Gate will not be shifted back to the original location after completion of work.	Info.	Nil
4.	The Trustees& Representatives of Bombay Parsi Panchayat (BPP) agreed in principle to the proposed relocation of Parsi Gate opposite Al-Sabah Court Building abutting Marine Drive promenade.	The Trustee & Representatives of Bombay Parsi Panchayat to give their consent letter to the proposed relocation of Parsi Gate within 15 days	Trustee of Bombay Parsi Panchayat

The site visit then concluded with vote of thanks to Parsi Panchayat trustees and representatives.

(Signature)
Director (E.S. & P.)

Copy to :Ch.E.(Coastal Road)/Ch.E. (B.M.)/Dy.Ch.E.(D.P.)-I /Asst.Comm. 'C' ward/ EE (HQ) / Trustee of Bombay ParsiPanchayat/Sr. Inspector, Marine Lines, Police Station

PRACTISE WHAT YOU PREACH, KERSI RANDERIA

The community is aware of the vituperative exchange of mails between Kersi Randeria and Phiroze Amroliwala and caught with his pants down, Kersi Randeria in desperation and frustration due to the disclosure of how multi millionaire Kersi Randeria transferred his late Kaka's flat to his mothers name instead of surrendering it back to BPP and how his own sister was staying in a charity flat at Godrej Baug, stooped low to use his personally owned weekly, Parsi Times issue of Saturday 27th June 2020 published on its first two pages an article comprising falsehoods just to defame Phiroze Amroliwala with lies and false and fabricated statements.

Naturally Phiroze Amroliwala issued Notice on 2nd July 2020 to 1) Kersi Randeria and his son, 2) Zubeen Murad, as Owners of Parsi Times Multimedia Pvt. Ltd., to 3) Anahita Subedar as Editor of Parsi Times, 4) Cyrus Firoz Printer as Printer and Publisher of Parsi Times calling upon all of them to publish his reply and factual rebuttal on the front page of the next issue of Parsi Times of 4th July 2020.

Accordingly on the same day, Phiroze Amroliwala sent his detailed factual reply to Kersi Randeria's allegations published in Parsi Times of 27th June for publication in the next issue on 4th July 2020. But the Owners, Editor and Printer/Publisher just ignored his request and did not carry his side of the story so that the community can judge for itself when both sides of a story are brought before the community.

Being denied natural justice to publish his reply in the same paper, Phiroze Amroliwala by his mail of Monday 6th July complained to the Press Council of India that his reply to the defamatory article published by the Owner in Parsi Times of 27th June was not published and called upon them to ensure its publication in Parsi Times of 11th July so that the whole community becomes aware of the allegations of both sides and not judge him by reading only one side story. We publish below his mail to Press Council of India as under:

SUBJECT: NON PUBLICATION OF MY REPLY TO DEFAMATORY ALLEGATIONS BY PARSİ TIMES

From: Phiroze Amroliwala
To: pcibppcomplaints@gmail.com
Date: Mon 06-07-2020 15:03

Attachments: Parsi Times June 27.doc
The Secretary,
Press Council of India,
Soochna Bhavan, 8-C.G.O. Complex,
Lodhi Road, New Delhi-110003

Dear Sir/Madam,
Complaint against Owners/Editor, Printers/ Publishers of Weekly "Parsi Times".

Parsi Times is a weekly community newspaper printed and published in Mumbai and which is mostly read by Parsis in Mumbai. Besides, it is also available on social media for wider circulation and read by out-of-towners and those living abroad as well.

The owners are Parsi Times Multimedia Pvt. Ltd. and one of its Directors is Mr. Kersi Randeria.

Director Mr. Kersi Randeria is also elected as a trustee of the BOMBAY PARSİ PUNCHAYET in October 2015 for a term of seven years. **This complaint essentially pertains to his malicious lies and false allegations against me by printing in the June 27, 2020 issue of his paper on the front page derogatory and defamatory words about me to tarnish my image as a community and social activist and to bring me into disrepute before society in general and my community in particular.**

He is misusing his own paper by denigrating those who criticize his acts of commission and omission as a trustee of the BPP, for his personal promotion as a trustee who will likely seek re-election to our 350 years old institution, by stifling any dissent or criticism of his actions and promoting himself as the sole savior of the Parsi community at the cost of the reputation of others.

Attached is the soft copy edition of the relevant issue of the Parsi Times and my email replies to his defamatory article are reproduced below. The attachment and my replies are self-explanatory and for the sake of brevity, I do not wish to repeat the contents.

I had expected that in the interest of fair-play and justice to me, the newspaper would publish my reply with the same importance as the allegations by the owner/trustee. Being a weekly which comes out only on Saturdays, my reply should have appeared in their subsequent issue of July 4, 2020. As they have not published my letter clarifying

my stand, I am apprehensive that the paper will ignore it completely.

Time being of the essence, and if you too feel that injustice has been done to me, I appeal to you to issue a directive to the Editor/Owner of Parsi Times to print as prominently as the accusation by the owner, my replies in their issue which will be printed on the coming Saturday, July 11, 2020.

For this act of yours I shall always be thankful.
Phiroze Amroliwala Cell: 9820062323

For brevity, ease of accessibility and your convenience, I reproduce below my emails of notice and detailed reply sent to Parsi Times on July 2, 2020, in rebuttal of the allegations published in Parsi Times of 27th June which are self-explanatory:

MY REPLY TO THE FALSE ALLEGATIONS: Phiroze Amroliwala

WE HAVE ALREADY PUBLISHED HIS NOTICE TO THE OWNERS, EDITOR AND PRINTER/PUBLISHER OF PARSİ TIMES AS WELL AS HIS DETAILED REPLY IN PARSİ JUNCTION ISSUE NO 37 OF 5TH JULY 2020, HENCE WE ARE NOT REPEATING THE SAME HERE.

SHAMELESSLY THE OWNERS AND EDITOR DID NOT PUBLISH PHEROZE AMROLIWALLA'S DETAILED REPLY TO EACH ALLEGATION OF KERSİ RANDERIA EVEN ON THIS SATURDAY 11TH July 2020 PARSİ TIMES ISSUE.

NOW WILL PHIROZE AMROLIWALLA BE FORCED TO FILE CRIMINAL AS WELL AS CIVIL DEFAMATION CHARGES WITH DAMAGES IN THE METROPOLITAN CRIMINAL COURTS TO GET JUSTICE. LUCKILY THE COVID PANDEMIC HAS COME TO HIS AID AT PRESENT AS ALL COURTS ARE CLOSED EXCEPT FOR VERY URGENT MATTERS. BUT TIME LIMITATION FOR DEFAMATORY SUITS IS TWO YEARS AND HENCE THERE IS PLENTY OF TIME FOR PHIROZE AMROLIWALLA TO FILE CRIMINAL DEFAMATION CHARGES AGAINST KERSİ RANDERIA, HIS SON MURAD, EDITOR ANAHİTA SUBEDAR AND PRINTER/PUBLISHER CYRUS PRINTER.

TIME WILL DISCLOSE THE NEXT COURSE OF ACTION ADOPTED BY PHIROZE AMROLIWALLA TO RESTORE HIS REPUTATION WITH HONOUR AND HEAD HELD HIGH.