

For Private Circulation Only



PARSI JUNCTION

Sunday, 19 July 2020

► Volume 1 ► Issue 39
► Year 1 ► Copy 39 ► Pages 12

Committed to Transparency and Accountability

ACTING CHAIRMAN CONTROVERSY



Armaity Tirandaz

There is a WhatsApp message floating around disparaging Armaity Tirandaz for being the Acting Chairman in the prolonged absence of Chairman Yazdi Desai.

As the community is aware, over the last few months Yazdi Desai has been indisposed for medical reasons (**we once again wish him a speedy recovery**). During his absence, most of the Trustees under the solid and able leadership of Mrs. Armaity Tirandaz have done a stellar job. Mrs. Tirandaz's leadership skills have been commended by one and all including some of her strongest critics.

The praise received by Mrs. Tirandaz seems to have pricked Kersi Randeria who has now sought to raise petty and futile objections on the validity of Mrs. Tirandaz's role as acting chairman.

Let us break down this new objection by Kersi Randeria and see whether it holds any moral or legal ground to stand on:

The Election Scheme

Under the Election Scheme, (whether one likes it or not), the Seniormost Trustee has to be mandatorily nominated as the Chairman as per the Election Scheme sanctioned by the High Court. Under the scheme, Yazdi Desai became Chairman as he was the senior most.

Role of the Chairman

The Chairman is one amongst equals. In consultation with his colleague Trustees he fixes the day and time of each board meeting, the agenda of the meeting and finalizes the Minutes of the meeting. In case of a tie, the Chairman of the BPP has a casting vote.

Absence of the Chairman

Since April 2020, Yazdi has been indisposed. **May he recover soon and take helm of his BPP Chairmanship.**

The Lockdown

"Due to pandemic restrictions there has been no board meeting at all since last four months and hence technically all Trustees are in breach of the Election Scheme which compulsorily mandates that they are required to meet at least twice a month minimum under the Scheme. But it is only a technical breach due to prevailing circumstances. Similarly in absence of the Chairman for a prolonged period there has to be an Acting Chairman in place of the indisposed Chairman. This is Elementary in the prevailing circumstances yet things have been blown out of all proportion by Kersi Randeria for his own selfish Agenda."

Since the lockdown in March 2020 there has been no officially convened board meeting, but the BPP work has not suffered as the Trustees are attending to all matters

on conference calls almost every second/third day.

BPP cannot be kept leaderless or rudderless over a prolonged period of time of almost four months now. Technically, Kersi Randeria is right that Yazdi has not missed a single board meeting but that has been because not a single board meeting has been held since lockdown in March 2020. But over 60 Conference /Video Calls have been held among the Trustees which Yazdi has not been able to attend.

Trustees propose Mrs. Tirandaz as 'Acting Chairman'

Over the last few months, Mrs. Tirandaz has been the defacto Acting Chairman of the BPP. There has been no opposition or question to the same, until now. In the prolonged absence of the Chairman, the next senior-most Trustee has to take over as Acting Chairman till Yazdi is fit and resumes office.

In fact, it was Kersi Randeria and Noshir Dadrawala who had initially proposed Armaity Tirandaz as Acting Chairman and she was supported by all the others. She was so humble as to frankly admit that she may not be able to take on this onerous responsibility. But when all of her other colleague Trustees displayed utmost confidence in her leadership, she accepted the post of Acting Chairman only during Yazdi's absence.

One may ask why does Armaity want the Acting Chairman's post - as she can contribute her skills without any post. It is important to note that she didn't ask to be nominated. She was requested to take over as Acting Chairman by all Trustees

unanimously which anyway she was doing in an unofficial capacity.

Acting Chairman Mrs. Tirandaz and her performance in the times of COVID
You will recall how badly the three Minority Trustees – Armaity Tirandaz, Muncherji Cama and Viraf Mehta were treated as 'untouchables' from October 2015 by Kersi Randeria and his Majority Trustees till they got justice from the High Court in 2017-18. During this dispute, Mehta, Tirandaz and Cama spent their own money to get justice, however Kersi Randeria passed on his bill to the BPP to pay – which cost the BPP charity funds of about Rs. 70 to 80 lakhs to deny them all rights as Trustees. In fact the High Court rapped the knuckles of the Majority Trustees and ordered them to stop behaving in a high-handed manner and to treat the three Minority Trustees as their equals.

Today, in stark contrast, Armaity Tirandaz as the Acting Chairman during the pandemic period has been doing a very commendable job - which no one can deny.

- In fact it is thanks to her efforts that Parakh Dharamshala, our old age home at Khareghat Colony, was not used as a central kitchen by Kersi Randeria.
- Under her Chairmanship, the BPP distributed over 5,000 meals for free to poor Parsi families from its Cama Baug kitchen.
- Mrs Tirandaz and her team stepped in to help our priestly class and due to their efforts the Mobeds, whose income was affected due to the lockdown, were given a sustenance allowance of Rs. 10,000/ to 20,000/ in spite of the cash crunch being faced by the Trustees (due to the

obstinacy of the Wadias who no Trustee has the guts to take on except the warrior Rathestar Noshir Dadrawala.)

- Mrs Tirandaz and her team set up a BPP Helpline which, over the last few months, made the BPP a one stop shop for the poor and needy. They provided help that ranged from monetary aid, food provisions, medical supplies etc. A big thank you to the volunteers who made this possible.
- **She is so humble and unassuming that though she is a continuing Trustee from 2009, she continues to function as a worker on the Ladies Committee of Parekh Dharamshala under the Chairmanship of Arnavaz Mistry though Arnavaz ceased to be a Trustee since October 2015.**

Futility on opposing Mrs. Tirandaz's appointment

Even assuming the Scheme did not provide for an Acting Chairman, then at every meeting the rest of the Board would have had to appoint a Chairman till the next Board Meeting. Rest assured the Trustees in their wisdom (except Kersi Randeria) would NOMINATE AND ELECT Mrs. Tirandaz as the Acting Chairman during Yazdi's absence at every meeting.

Hence, the question as to why raise this issue in the first place when there is no issue at all.

Bitter Sweet Truth

As long as the Acting Chairman post of Armaity Tirandaz was unofficial, Kersi Randeria had no Objection. However, the minute Viraf Mehta put the proposal to make her appointment of acting Charman in Yazdi's absence official, that Kersi Randeria started objecting on the pretext

that scheme of Elections does not provide for an Acting Chairman.

One would wonder if Kersi Randeria would have raised this same objection had this proposal come from Noshir Dadrewala Let us be clear that the Election Scheme cannot provide for all exigencies. The Election Scheme does not provide for Wadia Committee or Ladies Committee or other eventualities but yet the Trustees have appointed them and obey directions from them!

Is This The Time To Be Petty

Right now, the BPP is in uncharted territory where the Chairman is unable to perform his duties.

The Courts are hearing matters only of extreme urgency and our matter does not qualify for urgency.

Surely, moving court (which involves costs) for clarity on a situation such as this cannot be logical or sensible at a time like this.

We call upon Kersi Randeria to let go of his ego and accept that today the BPP cannot be leaderless. The Scheme provides for the senior most Trustee to lead the Board and at present Mrs. Tirandaz is the senior most and hence the leader of the Board.

She is the most diligent, hardworking and honest social worker unlike others. All the Trustees earlier appointed her unanimously as the Acting Chairman so now until Yazdi recovers and resumes his role as Chairman, Kersi Randeria is forced to live with his own creation.

VIRAF CHINIWALA CLARIFIES HIS STAND ABOUT Dokhmenashini for Covid Parsis?

In response to above article published in last weeks Parsi Junction of 12th July 2020, we have received the below reply from one of the behdins quoted in the article as under. In keeping with our motto of Transparency and Accountability, unlike other weeklies who hide behind a façade of hypocrisy, we are publishing the same as under:

**“From: Viraf CHINIWALA
 To: sethnakg@gmail.com ,**

Date: Tue 14-07-2020 16:56

Dear Sir,
 My attention has been drawn to an article – "Dokhmenashini for Covid Parsis?" published in your esteemed publication - Parsee Junction dated 12th July, 2020.

In the said article it has been mentioned that - "One of the behdins, without the knowledge or permission of the Trustee even approach the Doongerwadi Manager and Head

Nassesalar ...". This is factually incorrect. The said Behdin is the undersigned, Mr. Viraf N Chiniwala and I had taken prior appointment of the Doongerwadi Manager and when we met, at the beginning of the said meeting it was mutually confirmed that the Manager had informed the Trustees about the meeting.

So far as the offer of Rs.5,000/- per Nassesalar as total emolument per such body consigned, is by way of special consideration for performing perceived hazardous duty.

This is a common service norm for those who undertake such perceived hazardous work in any field.

Also not to bring any additional financial burden to the families of the deceased, I had in my personal capacity informed that the additional difference between what is normally paid for normal body (which I was informed is Rs.500/-) and Rs.5,000/- will be borne by me personally. Therefore the question of additional burden does not arise.

It is also stated in the article that during my meeting with the Estate Manager and Head Nassesalar Mr. Wadia, no positive response was given by the Mr. Wadia. This is also not factually correct.

The fact is that at the start of the meeting, Mr. Wadia informed about total unwillingness of the Nassesalars. However during the course of the discussion when it was explained by me to him that our Vada Dasturji Saheb JamaspAsa who himself is a prominent Surgeon in UK has categorically informed about the correct position that if proper

precautions are taken like wearing PPE Suits, Sanitization etc. the risk of contamination is reduced substantially, Mr. Wadia informed the undersigned that he will talk with his other able bodied colleagues who are below 50 years and if they are willing and also if BPP Trustees also agree than he will come back with the answer.

This response is by any standard is a positive response and that is why I stand by what has been written in our letter.

There is also a mention of – "a disturbing mail ..." and doubts have been created that whether the Vada Dasturjis have voluntarily given their signature etc..

Please note that after detailed discussion either personally with (those who are available in Mumbai) or over telephone with (those who are situated out station) the joint draft was first prepared and approved by all and there after the same has been signed personally by those who are available in Mumbai and signed digitally by those who are situated out station. Each and every page

of the said letter has been initialled / signed by all concerned and so far as Vada Dasturji Saheb of Udwada is concerned, although he chose to send a separate letter on virtually the same line, by his personal email to me he has shown his appreciation to the same. So far as Dr. Peer is concerned, he also chose to send a separate letter on the same line for his own reasons, however he has also expressed his concurrence to the same.

In the end I would like to stress that our main aim is to find an amicable solution to this issue in the best interest of our community and more particularly for our unfortunate humdins who pass away due to Covid 19 infection and are compulsorily cremated without their will.

Therefore we all have to work in harmony and not create undue controversy which may divert attention from the main issue and prevent us from achieving our common goal.

With best regards to all,
Viraf N Chiniwala"

KERSI RANDERIA IS AN INHUMANE TRUSTEE COUNTERS PHIROZE AMROLIWALLA

Parsi Junction has received one more Instalment of the war of words between Phiroze Amroliwalla and Kersi Randeria regarding the illegal demand of Rs. 750/ pm as extra service charges from Tenants and the transfer of his kaka's flat to Kersi Randeria's mothers name as under:

**From: Phiroze Amroliwalla
To: Kersi Randeria, anahita@parsi-times.com, mailparsitimes@gmail.com, Yazdi Desai, Cc: armaity tirandaz, Noshir - CAP, Viraf Mehta, Xerxes V. Dastur, Editor Jame Jamshed, Parsiana, dinshaw dinshaw**

Date: Today 16-07-2020 19:02

Kersi Jamshedji Randeria, I am addressing this in an email to you as the director of Parsi Times Multimedia Pvt. Ltd. (the owners of "Parsi Times") for your cowardly act of not printing, even after three weeks, my true and correct statements emailed to you immediately after your false allegations that I spread "malicious and unfounded lies" and "twisted and dishonest stories" about you.

In the first instance, you and your paper discredit not only me but also my son who works and lives in Canada and who has nothing to do with our spat, by printing mischievous, misleading and completely distorted versions of the real and true facts which showcase your acts of commission and omission at the BPP, and terrorizing not only your own staff but several members of the community who did not support you or the candidate you put up in subsequent elections.

Merely because you own a community paper does not give you the right to humiliate me and my son before my community and others, and for this, I reserve the right to initiate any action as advised. I no longer acknowledge you as a Trustee of my community institution the Bombay Parsi Panchayat of which to me you are only an elected member for seven years. **You do not own the BPP trust and therefore cannot and should not administer it as if it is your personal fiefdom!**

I repeat you are a coward for you did not have the guts to print in your own paper

the Parsi Times of June 27, 2020, the very accusations that I levelled at you and instead hid behind a screen of fabricated "malicious and unfounded lies" and "twisted and dishonest stories". If the masthead of your paper declares "The Truth. Delivered Weekly", then why did you not spell out the facts that I accused you of not only in what you called a "Sunday-rag" but in an email addressed to you along with a copy to all your co-trustees and CEO, Dy. CEO, Jt. Dy. CEO and others?

I am a longstanding beneficiary and a donor voter of the BPP who has a right to question you as an elected trustee of the BPP and you are duty-bound to answer me and others too. I am also one whom you have not only known for nearly twenty years but **in whom you found a Trustee candidate and to whom you wished to extend support, on more than one occasion.**

The first time was in 2008 when you, along with others, ventured the AFP team and rejected my suggestions for including Jimmy Mistry, Arnavaz Mistry and the now late Zarir

Bhathena on the specious grounds and in your own words "that Jimmy is not fit to be a trustee as he is known to make his staff sit late for work and even assaults all those who he disagrees with", that "Social workers like Arnavaz do not make good Trustees"; and that Zarir was a builder, although in 2015 you chose to include him in your panel of "Terrific three" for reasons those in the know are aware of.

The next time you reached out to me was when you supported and the only successful candidate out of the AFP seven of 2008, Noshir Dadrawala of the AFP group resigned in 2011. In April 2011 when I had just arrived in Toronto, you called me to inform me that Yazdi Desai wanted to support his wife Anahita for the vacancy and you were opposed to a sitting trustee wanting his wife also on the BPP board. You, therefore, suggested that I should stand for this vacancy as "your candidate" and even accepted my condition of a return ticket to Toronto as collateral assurance in case things did not work out as planned by you (Randeria) because I did not want to be used by you as a Stepney or a rubber stamp. You then told me that you were starting a weekly paper which would be printed on Saturdays so as to pre-empt the only community weekly Jame- Jamshed and which (PT) would carry support for my candidature. Your inflated ego was hurt when in Mumbai you learned that Dinshaw Mehta was also supporting me for the same reason and thus you withdrew and fielded Muncherji Cama and conveniently accepted Dinshaw as your ally! You are unprincipled; you should join politics--well suited for that!

Your third outreach to me was in 2015 when you came to my home and suggested that I join your group to make it into a "fantastic four". This too was turned down by me as I point blank told you that I will never be your rubber stamp. This irked you no end and this vindictive attitude continues to this day. This is why you are not ready to print my rejoinders to your mischievous, misleading, and completely distorted versions of the real and true facts. You continue to try and discredit me and my son before my community and others and for that, I reserve the right to initiate any and all action as advised.

Xerxes Dastur on his election promise of reducing or scrapping the illegally

enforced Steep increase in additional service charge did follow up on that promise and he, along with support from Armaity, Viraf and Noshir did move for a proposal (copy of which is attached in a box) in November 2018 for reduction of the service charges to Rs. 350/-. This was reported by Parsi Junction but the spoke in the wheel was none other than you Kersi Randeria, who with help

from those BPP staff 'Loyal' to you only, scuttled the proposal where it will now lie in limbo because it is a well-known fact that not even a leaf in the BPP moves without a push from the 'de-facto' chairman Randeria!

Randeria, if you had the courage and the guts then why did you NOT print the true facts which I repeat below that I accused

We the undersigned four trustees, which constitute the majority, would like to place before the board, that ample time has been given to raise resources for our cash crunch and find a solution to the controversial increase in service charges. Every time the matter was taken up for discussion, the Chairman brushed it aside on the grounds that the BPP did not have sufficient funds to run the administration and maintain the properties. This has been due to the lopsided policy of suddenly discontinuing/doing away with the allotments on security deposit basis scheme as well as allowing encashment on of tenancy value of a flat on its surrender without having an alternate scheme in place. Also we have not been able to prevail upon the Wadia committee on utilization of our monies lying with them on our behalf.

To add to the misery of our beneficiaries, we have further imposed another Rs. 200/ on them for collection of waste.

The community at large is now restless with the decision taken by the present board. Time and again we are being approached for doing away with the increase in service charges of Rs. 750/ as well as the additional Rs. 200/ pm. However what we have done is appeased a few by either subsidizing or exempting completely a selected few without proper laid down norms.

The allotment of flats on security deposit basis which had been going on for over 15 years, has been stalled for the last few months under a false presumption that charitable flats cannot be sold, or transferred or alienated. However it is observed that we are practically doing the same on selective basis, as and when it suits us to favour a few. Further the Courts have appreciated this mode of raising resources for the benefit of our Trust. Even the High Court has advised us to resume the same if we are in financial difficulties to maintain our vast properties including our holy Doongerwadi.

Now that we have recently taken a decision to resume the RDS and allow encashment of tenancy on , the cash crunch will be mitigated in a few months.

In view of above, we hereby propose with immediate effect in all fairness to reduce the service charges from the present Rs. 750/- to Rs. 350/. All those who have paid out of fear or good faith, suitable adjustments may or may not be made against their future dues as all Trustees may consider fit and proper. Once enough funds are generated, we can then consider withdrawal of this increase of Rs. 350/ pm also.

Please take this on record for Agenda of ^{next} ~~20-11-2018~~ to consider and implement the same.

Mrs. Armaity Tirandaz

x A.R. Tirandaz

Mr. Noshir Dadrawala

x Noshir Dadrawala

Mr. Viraf Mehta

x Viraf Mehta

Mr. Xerxes Dastur

x Xerxes Dastur

you of in The Parsi times of June 27, 2020 since your paper claims in the masthead "The Truth. Delivered Weekly":

A) a) that you surreptitiously facilitated the transfer of the large BPP flat in Contractor Building in Byculla that stood in the name of your kaka, your father's brother, after his demise, to the name of your mother (who you refuse to house with you in your huge Dadar Parsi Colony flat); this in spite of the fact that your mother presently lives with your sister in another charitable flat in Godrej Baug, instead of surrendering it back to BPP to house a needy Parsi.

You also arranged to add the name of your nephew as residing with her in Byculla though he resides at the Godrej Baug flat so that ultimately you and your family can profit by it. **You misused your position as a trustee and misled and misguided your fellow trustees to aid and abet you in this act. Thus your whole family has taken advantage of BPP charity flats though you reside in a huge flat at Dadar Parsi Colony.**

b) You practice double standards: In your own mothers case you not only transfer the rent receipt but conveniently add names and keep the flat locked; but hound and pressurize the unsuspecting and gullible members and beneficiaries of our community who elected you in the first place and over whom you now lord as if you own the BPP and wish that they meekly surrender their tenanted premises on flimsy and dubious grounds such as keeping the premises locked for unjustifiable reasons though the reasons for doing so are permissible under

the Maharashtra Rent Control act 1999. And you do this selectively and discriminate between friends and others.

c) Knowing fully well that my son is working in Toronto and we travel annually for less than six months to be with the family of our only son, you not only send legal notices which have been duly acknowledged, but you violate the law by thereafter arranging to paste such notices on the front door, not with a view to complying with a proper service, but with a deliberate intent to show us in poor light to our visitors and neighbours. For the record, though I first levelled this charge against you in my email dated June 17, 2020, a month ago, neither you nor the other trustees have DENIED this charge. What can one surmise from this lack of denial on your part other than you,

Randeria are a liar not fit to be a trustee.

B) a) I stand by the next accusation that you denied a free meal service, which was started by Mrs. Armaity Tirandaz, the Acting Chairman of BPP to alleviate the suffering of deserving, old and helpless senior citizens due to the pandemic by denying Mr. Bodhanwala of Maleghamwala Building in Mahim his entitlement to a free meal merely because of our differences and because I brought it to the attention of the Board and NOT just YOU.

b) This insensitive act of yours shows how mean, arrogant, vindictive, and inhuman you can get that you will deny even a meal in an hour of need to the poor and the deserving only to settle personal scores with those who question you.

And the reason for not providing the meal according to you was lack of funds! Even

your own inquiry officer, in his reply to your query, had nowhere referred to a lack of funds! Despite this, you had the temerity to cite that "the Amroliwallas do not pay rent" as the reason for the lack of funds! This was only an attempt to deflect from the real issue.

WHY DID YOU NOT ADMIT THAT THE BPP CUSTODIANS HAVE BEEN TOLD NOT TO ACCEPT RENTS AND OTHER LEGALLY PAYABLE DUES FROM AMROLIWALLAS AND OTHERS WHO ARE PROTESTING THE ILLEGAL LEVY AND STEEP INCREASE IN THE SERVICE CHARGES? FOR THIS INHUMAN ACT ALONE, IN MY VIEW, YOU ARE NOT FIT TO ACT AS A TRUSTEE AND HENCE I HAVE DISCONTINUED ADDRESSING ANY COMMUNICATION TO YOU AS A TRUSTEE OF THE BPP.

FOR THE TWO ACTS CITED ABOVE, IF YOU HAVE ANY REMAINING SELF RESPECT, YOU SHOULD STEP DOWN AS A TRUSTEE OF THE BPP

Even at this late hour I again insist that you print my entire earlier email replies to you in your paper along with the present one as that will inform members of our community of the true facts which is the Primary duty of your paper as claimed by your Masthead: "The Truth. Delivered weekly." If you fail to do so, I reserve the right to initiate action as and when I deem necessary and as advised.

The present pandemic is to your advantage as all Courts are closed but once the lockdown is over I will be free to take action as I may be so advised.

Phiroze Amroliwalla

OPEN LETTER TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE BPP FROM ARZAN GHADIALY

In the Parsi Junction issue of 28th June 2020, we had published the letter of Arzan J Ghadially seeking clarity from the Trustees of BPP on the levy of Additional Service Charges of Rs. 750/pm since 2017 and its non-payment by few Tenants.

Thanks to its publication in the Parsi Junction, Arzan's letter has gone viral on social media, prompting Kersi Randeria to **egg the other Trustees to take action against Phiroze Amroliwalla and others to recover the arrears of**

rent including the 'illegal' demand of Rs.750/pm from 2017.

Let us be clear that the Parsi Junction has since its inception fought for the cause of stoppage of its collection or

at the least reduction of the exorbitant service charges that has been plaguing the community.

As the community is aware, in November 2018, four Trustees (Armaity Tirandaz, Noshir Dadrawala, Viraf Mehta and Xerxes Dastur) had written to the Board demanding that the additional service charges be withdrawn or at least reduced from Rs. 750/ pm to the Rs. 350/- per household.

THE MOVE TO REDUCE THE SERVICE CHARGES WAS OPPOSED BY KERSI RANDERIA!

Arzan J Ghadially's open letter was based on the vitriolic war of words and email exchanges going on between Phiroze Amroliwalla rightly accusing Trustee Kersi Randeria for not supplying free food to a poor resident of Khan Estate.

The exposure of Kersi Randeria transferring his kaka's Contractor Building flat to his mother's name and adding his sisters son's name as a person residing with his mother there led to Randeria making a malicious personal attack on Amroliwalla and threatening to take legal action against Amroliwalla for exposing Randeria.

Amroliwalla had in January 2020 sent a cheque for lawful payment of rent and other dues but refused to pay the illegal demand of service charges of Rs. 750/ pm from January 2017 and claimed that Kersi Randeria had illegally instructed the Managers of the BPP Baugs not to accept even the lawful rent from Tenants unless this illegal service charge of Rs. 750/ was also paid.

As readers will recall, that as Randeria was de facto Chairman since 2015 till April 2020, Randeria used his seat as Trustee to blackmail and threaten beneficiaries to pay the extra service charges or face legal action of being evicted from their homes. Randeria knows full well that no court would have ever upheld the threat to evict a tenant - protected under the Rent Act for not paying this 'illegal' service charges. Today, Randeria is trying to goad the other Trustees into taking action against Amroliwalla on the basis of Arzan's letter

to recover the arrears of rent and extra service charges.

We had in our issue of Parsi Junction of 28th June also informed the community that *"We would also like to clarify here that Armaity Tirandaz, Noshir Dadrawala, Viraf Mehta and Xerxes Dastur have placed an item on the Agenda since more than a year to waive the collection of the additional service charges of Rs. 750/pm or at least reduce it to Rs. 350/ pm. But for some strange reason the item was not or not allowed to be taken up and is carried forward every week on instructions of Kersi Randeria"*.

We had in our issue of 28th June 2020, also informed that ***"there is no reason why the service charges should not at least be reduced to Rs. 350/pm. Of course the cash crunch faced by the BPP is an impediment at present but at least the reduction has to be done if not the full waiver. Those who have paid can get no refund as their funds have already been used up by BPP but those who have refused will get the advantage as law is on their side"*.**

UNFORTUNATELY, THE LIKES OF KERSI RANDERIA WOULD RATHER SPEND LAKHS/CRORES ON LITIGATION AGAINST ITS OWN COMMUNITY RESIDENTS THAN REDUCE SERVICE CHARGES.

WE AGAIN HOPE THAT THE VERY TRUSTEES WHO MOVED THE ITEM OF REDUCTION OF ADDITIONAL SERVICE CHARGES TO RS. 350/- PM WILL NOW APPROVE THE SAID ITEM.

In our previous issues we had stated (and emphatically state again) that

***"We would also like to clarify that this levy of additional service charges is an illegal levy and cannot be enforced in law and that is why the Trustees are unable to take legal action against those tenants who refuse to pay. That is why Kersi Randeria instructed the Baug Manager not to accept rent unless it was accompanied with payment of this illegal demand of Rs. 750/pm as a coercive method to seek compliance from most Tenants"*.**

Most Parsis being god fearing and law abiding, when they were told that their rent will not be accepted unless they pay this illegal service charge of Rs. 750/ also, preferred to pay it rather than have litigation by a vindictive Kersi Randeria thrust on them. After all, the BPP's legal costs are not paid by Randeria but comes from the community charity funds whilst the Tenant would have to bear the full legal cost from his own pocket. Further Kersi Randeria has the BPP's full legal Department to attend Courts whilst the inconvenience to the Tenant to attend Court on every date is pure harassment which he would like to avoid by succumbing to this illegal demand.

The rent computed by Arzan Ghadially of old Tenants at Rs. 2500/ to Rs 5000/pm is erroneous as the rent of most old Tenants is only around Rs. 100/ to 300/pm. Yes, License fees are around the figure computed by Arzan but Licensees have no respite but to pay with the fear of being evicted by the likes of Randeria. Today more than 50% of occupants of BPP Baugs are Licensees who have to submit to this demand of the Trustees, as per the clauses in their Leave License Agreement.

Hence the back of envelope calculation would reveal that about only Rs. 20 to Rs. 30 lakhs would be the lawful rent still receivable from Tenants which have not been accepted by the Manager on instructions of Kersi Randeria to frighten most Tenants to comply to his illegal demand.

However Licensees are not protected by the Rent Act and hence they have no option but to comply with this demand as the License agreement incorporates this clause of paying any additional levy at the discretion of the Trustees.

WE AT PARSJUNCTION WOULD LIKE TO ASSURE OUR FULL SUPPORT TO ANY TENANT WHO FACES ANY SORT OF LEGAL ACTION BY A DISGRUNTLED TRUSTEE SUCH AS RANDERIA FOR THE NON-PAYMENT OF THE ILLEGAL SERVICE CHARGES. THIS PAPER WILL SUPPORT THE BATTLE AGAINST SUCH TRUSTEES WHO USE CHARITY FUNDS TO FIGHT MEMBERS OF OUR COMMUNITY COMPELLING THEM TO PAY ILLEGAL SERVICE CHARGES!

ALLEGED TORTURE TO THE SOUL OF CREMATED OR BURIED SOULS

An interesting exchange of mail between Trustee Noshir Dadrawala and Hanoz Mistry of Parsi Voice about the effects of cremation/burial on their souls has recently been aired on social media. For those who are interested in such esoteric nuances especially where our erudite scholar Noshir Dadrawala is concerned, we give below their arguments for and against the concept of torture of souls if not consigned to the Towers of Silence for our well defined mode of disposal by Dokhmenashini:

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

Sent: 07 July 2020 12:00

To: Z-Newz <z-newz@googlegroups.com>; Parsiana <info@parsiana.com>; ParsiT <editor@parisi-times.com>; Anahita Subedar <anahita@parisi-times.com>

Cc: Farzana Cooper <farzanacooper@gmail.com>; Khurshed Dastoor <dasturjikhurshed@gmail.com>; Dasturji Dr. JamaspAsa <jamasp.dastur@doctors.org.uk>; Parvez Bajan <pmbajan@gmail.com>; Rohinton Peer <rohinton.peer@gmail.com>; Ervad Dr. Ramiyar Parvez Karanjia - Principal of Dadar Athornan Institute, India <ramiyark@gmail.com>; Vada Dasturji Saheb Dr. Firoze M. Kotwal <FMKOTWAL@hotmail.com>; Piroja Jokhi <piroja.jokhi@gmail.com>; Dinshaw Tamboly <dinshawtamboly@gmail.com>; Dinshaw Mehta <dinshaw@dinshawmehta.com>; Kersi - Ahura <kersi@ahuramazdagroup.com>; Armaity R. Tirandaz <artirandaz@gmail.com>; Viraf Mehta, CLSA <viraf.mehta@clsa.com>; Xerxes V. Dastur <dasturxerxes@gmail.com>; Shehnaaz Khambatta <bppjtdyceo@gmail.com>; Mistry Hanoz <hmm@tatapower.com>; Mr Zoru Bhathena <zoru@hotmail.com>; Arzan Sam Wadia <arzan@wadias.in>; MEHER AMALSAD <babameher@prodigy.net>; Godi Aresh <godintam@yahoo.com>; Malcolm Deboo - President, Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe, United Kingdom <malcolm_deboo@yahoo.co.uk>; Dolly Dastoor <dollydastoor@sympatico.ca>; DORAB MISTRY <dorabmistry@hotmail.co.uk>; Homi Gandhi <homidgandhi@gmail.com>; Fa B <faridabam@gmail.com>; Karishma <dr.kokakavitakarishma@cantab.net>

Subject: Alleged "Torture" to the soul of cremated or buried souls

Since early morning today messages from

a group of Religious Activists are flying fast and furious on various WA and email groups.

These activists state:

"We firmly believe that "dokhmenashini" is the only permissible and doctrinally right method of disposal of our dead, and that **any other mode of disposal for a Zarthosti "ravān" only leads to its severe torture and tormentation on the fourth morning after death, when it embarks on its sojourn into the Spiritual Realm.**"

With great respect, which authentic Avesta, Pahlavi or Pazand scripture states: that any other mode of disposal for a Zarthosti "ravān" only leads to its *severe torture and tormentation on the fourth morning after death,* when it embarks on its sojourn into the Spiritual Realm."

The Vendidad states that Ahura Mazda and Spenta Armaiti (earth) grieve when dead bodies of humans or dogs are buried.

Vendidad was written in the Tenth Century AD or Three centuries after the fall of the Zoroastrian empire.

There are many other "farman" in Vendidad that even the most orthodox do not observe regarding how to cut nails and hair and how to properly dispose of them.

Menstrual customs are also found in Vendidad which most Parsis do not follow one hundred per cent.

All the Achaemenid Kings were entombed from Cyrus the Great to Darius III. Did their souls suffer?

In Iran the community has been burying since the 1960s.

Parsis are buried in Delhi, Chennai, London, USA, Australia, New Zealand etc. etc.

To repeat:

Please quote one authentic religious scripture Avestan Pahlavi or Pazand which says the soul suffers if buried We don't bury or cremate from an environmental point of view. The dokhma is not a space station to launch souls

towards heaven.

Before I am branded a reformist or Deen Dushman or anti-dokhmenashini let me state that I too would like to be consigned to the towers when I pass away. But, if that is not possible, I certainly would not worry about the fate of my soul. My soul will either be in a happy state of consciousness (heaven) or a reflective state (hell) depending on the Balance Sheet of my thoughts, words and deeds when alive.

Achaemenid Kings were entombed. From Herodotus to Strabo one finds accounts of how the kings were embalmed and placed in gold or stone sarcophagus. No historical record shows they were first exposed to the sky and then the bones placed in an astodan. Yes Ast (Ost) means bones and Dan means receptacle. Place where bones were laid to rest... "laying bones to rest" is a figure of speech.

Where in the Vendidad, which chapter, which verse says the soul will suffer

Vendidad talks about the earth suffering when bodies are buried (due to putrefaction) not the soul.

We glibly talk about the bulk of our scriptures being lost. The question is if Vendidad speaks of earth suffering why was suffering to soul missed out?

In Iran the community knows this and so they create concrete sarcophagus so that body fluids do not seep in the earth ... almost like the Achaemenian did.

If BMC permits, let's consign covid cadavers to the towers. However, if that does not happen let's not scare the credulous about "torture" to the soul if cremated or buried.

These activists talk as if they have a hotline with Chinvat where according to our scriptures the soul is judged as per it's sum total of thoughts, words and deeds. There is no mention about torture if the body is cremated or buried.

If there is "torture" that the soul goes through please provide authentic scriptural

references. If not, stop misleading credulous Parsis and adding to the torment of the living relatives.

Stop obsessing about the afterlife. Focus on life and on living it well.

Regards.

Noshir H Dadrawala”

After this scathing attack on the ultra orthodox spouting torture of the cremated/buried soul by our learned and well read scholar Noshir Dadrawala challenging the ultras to come up with one proof or religious statement or authentic religious scripture to justify this claim, we had Hanoz Mistry as the disciple of late Doctor's Parsi Voice come out in defense of the same. However for lack of space we are publishing Hanoz's say in black and Noshir Dadrawala's response in red below each statement of Hanoz Patel's as under:

“On Tue, Jul 7, 2020, 7:13 PM Noshir - CAP <noshir@capindia.in> wrote:

Dear Hanoz,

On Tue, 7 Jul 2020 at 17:35, H M Mistry <hmm1964@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear Noshir,

I am not surprised at your diatribe against the write up of Mr. Yezdi Hodiwalla. However, in your eagerness to counter him, you seem to have overlooked a few facts.

I have simply raised questions. The Diatribe is by your fellow "ilm-e-Khusnoomist". But, let's set that aside for now. Let's focus on the subject.

You state: *Vendidad was written in the Tenth Century AD or Three centuries after the fall of the Zoroastrian empire.*

In short, you place it almost two centuries after the arrival of the Parsees in India. But the Vendidad is one of the 21 Nasks (and the only one currently extant in public) formulated by Paigambarasheb Himself and which were put in written form by his disciples. It is common knowledge that the advent of Paigambarasheb was during the time of Kayanian Padshah Gustasp and the Kayanian dynasty was surely not in the 10th century but thousands of years before the Sassanian dynasty. So logically, the Vendidad is of hoary antiquity and not

written in the 10th century as you would like to believe.

If you would care to read scholarly works of Scholars like S. H. Hodivala and others the arrival of the Parsis in India is indeed the tenth Century A.D.

Most scholars consider the ninth and early Tenth Century the renaissance period in Persian Zoroastrian History.

Many compilations and re-compilations happened in that period.

If you will care to read beyond the writings of twentieth century Ilm-e-Khshnoom exponents, you will find many myths busted.

One of the ceremonies performed during the consecration of an Atash Behram or a Dakhma is the Vendidad. If indeed the Vendidad was written only in the 10th century A.D. i.e. after our arrival in India, how were the Atash Behrams and Dakhmas in Iran consecrated?

Read history. Read beyond Ilm-e-Khshnoom and you will find the answers.

The Achaeminians worshipped at open and unconsecrated fire in the open. You can see that at Naqsh-e-Rustam

Socrates was asked by his disciples how he would like his mortal remains to be disposed of and he is believed to have said, leave my remains on a mountain top like the Persians do and Nature will take care of the rest.

Originally Zoroastrians simply left bodies on mountain tops.

You give examples of farmans given in the Vendidad but not followed today. Very true! But does that make those farmans wrong and outdated or is it a reflection of the evil times we live in and our inability to cope? Besides, has anybody denied the negative repercussions of not following even the general commands in the Vendidad?

So am I to understand that if other Farman's are not observed the soul is not tormented or is tormented only minimally?

The torment happens only if the mortal remains are buried or cremated?

Interesting!

The Nirangdin ceremony is one which forms the base of the whole gamut of other Zarthoshti kriyas. In this ceremony of 18 days, the Vendidad is prayed on the 17th day. In light of your averment that the Vendidad came into existence only in the 10th century A.D., are you suggesting that Nirangdin ceremonies were never performed

in Iran during Zarthoshti rule and that they commenced only after we came to India?

You emphatically state: *We don't bury or cremate from an environmental point of view. The dokhma is not a space station to launch souls towards heaven.*

Oh dear! Then can you please explain the rationale behind the following elaborate ceremony for consecration of a Dakhma?

- (1) Preparing the ground for the Dakhma.
- (2) Purification of the ground.
- (3) Consecration of the Dakhma ground by the performance of 10 Baaj, Afringaam and Farokhshi.

In the "Shahnameh", Firdausi says that when Prophet Zarthosht came, the Dakhmas were "lit up". That is, it was the Prophet who, for the first time, taught how to consecrate a Dakhma and endow it with magnetic circuits. (4) Finally comes the most important and final part of the consecration ceremony of a Dakhma: the Tâna ceremony, in which 101 fine cotton threads are woven into one strong thread. This thread goes round the circumference and the inner parts of the Dakhma, three times. This thread is held by and passed through 301 nails of different sizes and weights, which will be pegged in the ground.

Surely all this procedure must lead up to some spiritual benefit for those using it as their last resting place and why it has been mandated to be the only method for Zoroastrians.

Yes. All these ceremonies are directed towards ritually containing the spread of Druj or Pollution.

This is not for launching the soul towards Chinvat.

History is witness to the mass destruction of Zoroastrian religious and other literature, first by Alexander the Accursed, by burning the libraries in Persepolis and then by the Arab hordes. Is it not possible that a lot of this information and more that you question and doubt, was present in those records but unavailable today.

Convenient excuse. Point is a matter as important as "torture to the soul" if cremated or buried should have found some mention in the Dinkard or Vendidad or somewhere!

For that matter, where is the proof in any scripture that we all migrated from Iran? The only record is the Kisseh Sanjan written by

Dastur Bahman Kekobad and tales carried down by word of mouth through generations. Do you want to question that too?

I agree there. Parsis came to India long before the Arab Invasion (read history my dear) and long after it too.
Iran and India traded since 500 BC

Correct me if I am wrong but there is no direct reference in any 'authentic' scripture to the performance of a formal Navjote ceremony. Do you suggest we stop performing the same altogether?

Man loves rituals and rituals evolve and even vastly differ.
Even today the Kusti ritual performed by Kadmi is different from Shahenshahi.

We all live in a tech savvy world where news is available at the flick of a TV channel remote. But have newspapers become antiquated? Virtually everyone uses a computer today but has writing on a paper become outdated and to be discarded?

Most of us would never have seen or interacted with our great grandparents leave along seen their birth certificates. But does that mean we question or challenge their existence, thereby challenging our own?

Incidentally, today is the 93rd death anniversary of Ustadsaheb Baheramshah Shroff, who spent more than 3 years with the Abed Sahebs of Demavand and who brought back a lot of lost knowledge with him for the benefit of the community. While you clearly don't have faith in the knowledge that he brought with him, may I request you not to edge on the normal Parsee to do the same.

MY QUESTION REMAINS UNANSWERED.

Which authentic Avesta, Pahlavi or Pazand scripture states: that any other mode of disposal for a Zarthosti "rav n" only leads to its severe torture and tormentation on the fourth morning after death, when it embarks on its sojourn into the Spiritual Realm.

When you have something authentic and convincing please revert. Else consider this as my first and final response and good bye to you.

Noshir H. Dadrawala

Hanoz M. Mistry""

""From: H M Mistry <hmm1964@gmail.com>

Date: 07/07/2020 8:42 pm (GMT+05:30)

To: Noshir - CAP <noshir@capindia.in>

Subject: Alleged "Torture" to the soul of cremated or buried souls

A quick query. If indeed we landed in India with Dasturan Dastur Neriosang Dhaval in the 10th century, why is Holy Iranshah Padshah around 1300 years old?"

On Tue, Jul 7, 2020, 10:17 PM noshir <noshir@capindia.in> wrote:

""Most certainly dear Hanoz.

According to the Qissa-e Sanjan (written in 1599 A.C. and which means six centuries after the Parsis came to India), when oppression under Arab rule became intolerable in Iran, some of our ancestors left their home in the mountains of Khorasan and migrated to the port city of Hormazd (in Iran), where they ostensibly stayed for fifteen years. From there, they set sail for India and arrived at Div on the Saurashtra coast.

Indo-Iranian trade had flourished since the time of Darius the Great (522 BC) and it's likely that our ancestors were familiar with this trade route and did not just sail away randomly from Iran.

Our ancestors stayed at Div in peace, without any oppression. But, the harsh climate made them set sail once again towards South Gujarat.

Sanjan was then governed by Vajjadevrai, who permitted the Parsis to install an Atash Behram – the very first on Indian soil.

According to Qissa-e Sanjan, the Atash Behram was installed on day nine of the ninth month, Samvat 777 or 721 AC.

However, historians debate that it was more likely 941 AC. Please read works of great scholars like S H Hodivala and others for more details.

Kind regards.

Noshir""

From: H M Mistry

To: noshir

Date: Tue 07-07-2020 22:28

Hi Noshir,

But since we celebrated the 1290 anniversary of Shreeji Iranshah in 2011, then the earlier

date has been accepted as authentic. So then Dastur Neriosang Dhaval and his group did arrive in the 8th century and not in the 10th century.

Maybe Dasturji Khurshed can throw more light in case we are both erring.

Regards

Hanoz ""

From: noshir

To: H M Mistry

Date: Tue 07-07-2020 22:37

As a community we have not documented our history properly.

In many matters we go by oral tradition which is not always authentic.

Do read "Studies in Parsi History" by S H Hodivala.

His depth of research is amazing.

Noshir""

On Tue, Jul 7, 2020 at 2:32 PM Farzana <farzanacooper@gmail.com> wrote:

Noshir, I totally agree with you.

Btw, who are these 'religious activist'? Who gives them permission to impose their regressive ideas on rest of us?

What Vendidad says is not important. Importantly if they want to impose what it says on us, I would like to know whether they follow Vendidad themselves? Do they go to the fields to relive themselves daily in the morning or whenever, and clean their butts with sand and stones? I would love to see them do that.

Do they trim their nails/hair and dig a pit on outskirts of the city to bury it? Let's see where they do that?

How many snakes, lizards, frogs and scorpions have these punks killed in their lifetime? That's the only way to enter heaven as per Vendidad and Arda Viraf. lol. Remember Arda Viraf went to see whose there in Hell and he found people hung upside down for not killing enough reptiles.

Also, I would like to know from these self appointed 'Religious experts' who wrote Vendidad?

Why should we follow diktats from the book that even the authors don't put their names on?

And if this 'Religious Activist' is from Ilm e Chakadas, then he is anyway a lost case.

Dokhma system was devised to cater to geographic areas in central Asia that are arid and mountainous with large number of scavenger animals and birds. It saved the limited resources like wood for fuel. That was a rationale idea back then. Everything else is mumbo jumbo.

On Tue, 7 Jul 2020 at 20:32, 2DaraS Acidwalla <2darasacidwalla@gmail.com> wrote:

Thanks ever so much Dear Noshir, Rohinton, Maneck and Farzana for airing your views. Just read it all only a few minutes ago.

When good thoughts, words and deeds emanate from eminent people they are sure to spread swiftly even as the penny drops to the sound of bells and whistles. This is a sign that change, which is inevitable, is imminent... and those people (and things) who cannot or will not change direction are inexorable, pigheaded people who will be left by the wayside to fade out into oblivion.

Thank you for the serious thoughts and eye-openers delightfully peppered with jollity. God bless us all good souls in our Bagh-e Parsa.
dara

Subsequently Porus Wadia came out in support of Noshir Dadrawala by his below mail:

"Torture" to the soul of cremated or buried souls

From: mbhujwala@socal.rr.com
To: Porus Wadia , Noshir - CAP
Cc:
Date: Today 10-07-2020 00:37
PriorityNormal

Thank you Porus for expressing your opinion in support of Noshir Dadrawala. If more community members get the facts, think for themselves, and speak up, it will benefit our community and avoid waste of crores of rupees on mostly unnecessary court cases that only benefit lawyers and judges. I feel sorry for our future generations who will lose the needed resources that would otherwise be obtained from the money saved. Our appointed/elected community leaders must do their fiduciary duty to the community, and stand firm on principles taught by Asho

Zarathushtra, instead of being scared of losing votes due to loud noises from a few.

Any democratic system of governance, can only work properly if those who are governed become vigilant, knowledgeable about facts (instead of fake news in the media or from self-appointed Ratheshtars), ask questions from qualified authorities, and make rational judgments (not influenced by self-righteous and loud voices from those few who speak and act like the Jihadis in the middle east, in the misused name of God and religion).

I do hope to visit Porbandar with my daughter after this Covid virus threat is gone with availability of a vaccine, and would be honored to perform a Jashan. In Bhuj, Kutch also they do not have availability of Ervads and the Daremeher built by my great grandfather Pestonji was being maintained by non-Zarathushtris when I last visited my ancestral home many years back. That is why we have to welcome and encourage Behdins who volunteer to get trained and as serve as priests, instead of treating them as lower caste. Behdin Pasbaans/ Mobedyars should be invited to participate in community prayers side by side with practicing Ervads, (like they do at Iranian Prayer buildings) so they remain in practice after the training (and not excluded like they are at the Parsi Prayer Buildings in Southern California, Sacramento area, Houston, Texas area, etc.) by pressure from some ultra-orthodox Parsis and compliant Ervads who are afraid of losing business to newcomers.

Stay safe !
Mobedyar Maneck Bhujwala""

Since Maneck Bhujwala had expressed shortage of Mobeds in moffusil areas, Dinshaw Tamboly sent the below mail expressing availability of tapes for funeral prayers as under:

From: dinshawtamboly@gmail.com
To: mbhujwala@socal.rr.com
Cc:
Date: Today 10-07-2020 07:23

The WZO Trusts have available for gratis distribution, a few sets of Discs containing the first four day obsequies. These can be used where facilities of Mobeds are not available to carry out the obsequies.

In the obsequies where names have to be recited, there is a 20 seconds gap to enable family members to recite their names.

Those who feel the discs may be of use in their towns, cities, may please write to admin@wzotrust.com. The discs will be sent once postal services resume.

**Dinshaw K. Tamboly;
WZO Trust's""**

After this we have Medioma Bhada of Godrej Baug trying to put into perspective the differing views of the common man and the ultra orthodox in a very common aense point of view as under:

From: Medioma Bhada
To: 2DaraS Acidwalla
Cc: Farzana, Rohinton Commissariat, Noshir - CAP, Z-Newz, Parsiana, ParsiT, Anahita Subedar, Khurshed Dastoor, Dasturji Dr. JamaspAsa, Parvez Bajan, Rohinton Peer, Ervad Dr. Ramiyar Parvez Karanjia - Principal of Dadar Athornan Institute,India, Vada Dasturji Saheb Dr. Firoze M. Kotwal, Piroja Jokhi, Dinshaw Tamboly, Dinshaw Mehta, Kersi - Ahura, Armaity R. Tirandaz, Viraf Mehta, CLSA, Xerxes V. Dastur 12 more...
Date: Today 13-07-2020 13:08

Dara,

I was as much disturbed as any other Humdeen by the denial of a simple prayer recitation for the recent victims of COVID-19, at the Doongerwadi. Apparently, this decision was based on the ground that the body had been cremated and also so as not to create grounds for a wrong precedent. This was irrespective of the fact that it had to be so as per the Government regulations in force and not by choice. It seems apparent, that some Trustees of the BPP who are custodians of the Doongerwadi, have succumbed to pressure in spite of the fact that the recitation of a simple Ahunavaiti Gatha had the approval of one of our very learned Vada Dasturji Saheb.

I expressed my view to Mr Hanoz Mistry of Parsee Voice, articulating my angst about the situation arising from his statement in the social media.

I summarise below, the gist of my correspondence:

I wrote to Hanoz suggesting that while I accept his right to follow a certain religious philosophy and admire his zeal in pursuing it, based on his personal interpretation of our scriptures, I totally disagree with his thought

process. I also advised him that he could follow whatever philosophy he chooses but that he should allow those who want to follow the advice of the Vada Dasturji, to do so. I also told him in no uncertain terms that no one has the authority to state that what the Vada Dasturji says is wrong and that we should not be countermanding a learned Vada Dastur who is speaking from knowledge and a deep understanding of the faith.

I promptly received a response from Hanoz stating that:

He was disappointed by my response. That an uncalled-for situation has arisen, and that he and his team, have reached out to the BPP authorities, explaining the rationale for their stand. He also stated that no one has the authority to dispute his right to put forth his views just because his views do not conform with that of the others.

His question which I felt was inappropriate was "Can any priest worth his salt conduct a genuine marriage ceremony in the absence of the bride and groom? Can a surgeon operate on a patient who is not there in the operation theatre? How many priests conduct funerals in the absence of a corpse? If not, then how can a Geh Sarna be recited in the absence of a corpse?" However, Hanoz has misunderstood the issue. This is not the case of doing the Gah Sarna ritual but merely one of the priests, reciting the Ahunavaiti Gatha, which forms part of the Gah Sarna, as a regular prayer.

Subsequently, I had the honour of telephonically discussing this issue with the Vada Dasturji concerned. He was very receptive to my call and after giving me a patient hearing, explained to me in great detail his interpretation of the case-in-point.

He informed me that in our Parsi history, we have a precedence to this effect. He informed me that the first High Priest of the Wadia Atash Bahram, Dastur Edalji Darabji Sanjana, who was a very learned priest had opined that if a body cannot be found or is lost then the Ahunavaiti Gatha can be recited as a prayer and not as a ritual, by any priest and for that matter, even by a family member, to give solace to the family of the deceased. It is from this that he extrapolated that it was his belief that anybody can go up to the Sagdi (Agiary) at the Doongerwadi and recite whatever prayer they chose, facing in any direction. In this case it would have been the Dokhma.

He emphasized that it is simply the recitation of the Ahunavaiti Gatha prayer and not a ritual being conducted and that it cannot be seen to be part of any ritual and as there is no corpse (nasa), no ritual like the sachkar or sagdid are required or needed and the prayer is merely recited near the dakhma, for the solace, comfort and satisfaction of the living and the dead.

He further went on to recommend that, the trustees should consult the learned High Priests of the community in all religious matters.

The last recommendation by the Vada Dasturji brings into focus the urgent need to put in place a structured platform for an interaction with the higher echelons of our clergy. This platform could be used by our community members to seek advice on matters of religion as well as to keep our members informed on such matters. In the absence of any such organisation maybe we could consider having the Athornan Mandal, which comprises of all the Vada Dasturjis, play a more active role. This Mandal could

be adequately structured to meet these requirements.

I believe a beginning towards this was, unwittingly made on Saturday, 4th July 2020, when the Vada Dasturjis along with other scholar priests got together on Zoom, to discuss the way-ahead in respect of Dokhmenishini for the victims of COVID-19, from our community.

I take this opportunity to appeal to our Vada Dasturjis & scholar Priests to play a proactive role and put in place a system from which they can guide our community on matters of religion.

**Regards,
Medioma Bhada**

Accolades for Kainaz Sharookh Dinshaw

Ms. Kainaz Sharookh Dinshaw (Secunderabad based) has Secured 85% (A grade) in CBSE X standard, without taking tuitions. Kainaz has scored more than 90 marks upon 100 in three out of total five subjects.

This achievement is due to her strong will power and rock solid backing of her parents Mrs. Sanober and Mr. Sharookh Dinshaw.

Further, Kainaz Dinshaw is grand child of Late Mr. Kersi Dinshaw, who was a gold medalist in X standard at Surat in 1958.

Kainaz now studies BIPC (Science) in her junior college.

MYSTICAL CONNECTION OF PARSI GATE

A very interesting and mystical connection is linked to the Structure at Marine Drive which we informally call Parsi Gate. A kind friend recently told of its spiritual history and what better time than this to share it with all the indignation regarding its shifting raging up and down the corridors of WhatsApp!!

We all know that Dr. Framroze Sohrabji Chiniwala, fondly called Dr Saheb and Ace Disciple of Ustad Saheb Behramshah

Navroji Shroff was given a Maanthric Amal by the Holy Abed Sahebs of Paak Demavand. This Message was brought to him through Bamanshah Dossabhoy Hakim. But how it happened and its *Link with Parsi Gate* makes for fascinating reading.....

Bamanshah Hakim lived in Surat and practised Hakimi. As a schoolboy in the Mission School there he had the abundant good fortune to hear UstadSaheb's very First lecture on 'Atash' during the informal class held by Manchasa Master in Baug-

e-Parsa Agyari. Dr. Edulji Hormusji Coyaji, Poona's best-loved Doctor was also present in the class at that time.

Bamanshah Hakim developed a very keen relationship with UstadSaheb and expressed a desire to have 'darshan' of Ustad saheb's Guru in Paak Demavand-- the Most Venerable Sraoshavarez Marzbanji Saheb. Easier said than done!!

UstadSaheb guided Bamanshah on the Spiritual Path and thus Bamanshah

could achieve a viable personal link with Sraoshavarez Marzbanji.

As Hakimi was his family profession, practising it came easily to Bamanshah. But as all young men do, he wanted to take it to the next level!

On consulting with Sraoshavarez he was instructed to go to Bombay and learn Anatomy or human physiology from Dr. Sohrab Desai. (Dr Desai was also a 'Gavaah' to UstadSaheb.)

Dr. Desai being very busy at the time directed Bamanshah to go to Dr Saheb Framroze Chiniwala to learn. Thus it was that Bamanshah Hakim and Dr Saheb would go to Grant Medical College to study Dissection.

Now comes the fascinating part.....

Bamanshah Hakim was in Bombay during the Fasli Muktaad time and he received a Message from Sraoshavarez to be given to Dr Saheb:

a particular Naam from our 101 Naam Prayer with specific instructions :

1. Start the Amal of the Naam on Hormazd Roj Fravardin Month (right after the Fasli Muktaad)
2. Continue for 40 days
3. Offer this Amal in front of the Waters ...*'Paani noh Keblo karjo'*

Dr Saheb did not easily accept this Instruction from Bamanshah Hakim!

He felt that his own Ustad would be the Source of any Instruction for Amals!

As a consequence, Dr Saheb did not heed the Message to start the Amal on Hormazd Roj Fravardin Month.

On Bahman Roj Naib Sraoshavarez Rashidji Saheb (Deputy Sraoshavarez) sends a Message to Bahmanshah Hakim: "Tell him to start, Rashidji has instructed that he should start on Ardibehst Roj." (This 40 day Amal brought Dr Saheb *the desired Result of Blessings only after four and a half years*. It helped Dr Saheb tremendously in his Understanding, Interpretations and Writing of the Scriptures. The Books he wrote during these *four and a half years* are very difficult to understand.)

Feeling hesitant to pray Something not given him by his direct guru UstadSaheb, nevertheless in recognition of the fact that This Message came from his Guru's Guru the Venerable Sraoshavarez Marzbanji, Dr Saheb commenced the Amal as directed but without informing UstadSaheb about it.

UstadSaheb was well in the know of all these happenings, but he still enquired of Dr Saheb : 'You are praying Something, is it not?!'

A point to note here is that there is always a deputed Agency or Maarefat for the spreading of Religious Knowledge and for Its Practice or Amal. In this particularly interesting instance, Bamanshah Hakim was the Chosen Maarefat to take this Message of Amal to DrSaheb.

Overcoming his initial reluctance to accept Bamanshah Hakim as the Maarefat (instead of his Ustad) and honouring the Word of Sraoshavarez Marezbanji DrSaheb began the Amal on Ardibehst Roj Fravardin Month.

The place was Parsi Gate on Marine Drive! In accordance with 'Paani noh Keblo karjo'.

Dr Saheb received very specific Instructions as to the Performance of this Amal: how to and where to offer the Prayers. *He was also given a spiritual Warning*: During the 40 Days there should be No occasion for a slip up either mentally or morally (*pag lapsi Nahi pare*)!

So, everyday DrSaheb would go from his residence at Dadysett Lane near Chowpatty to the Sacred Parsi Gate where he practised the Amal for forty days.

From this sacred spot we can see the *holy 'Karshnijagya'* around Governor's Bungalow where reside our Holy Abed/Sahiar Sahebs who guard our Places of Worship and guide us to be good Zarthushtrians.

As for us, the safest Path is to pray the Avesta Manthra Khani given by Rainidaar Adarbad Mahrespand. (Discussion with *Kaikhushro Navroji Dastoor Meherji Rana (Navsari) and Roshni Jehan Godiwala*)

ARMaity

AHURA MAZDA THAT HUMANITY FORGOT!

He sent Asho Zarathushtra
With a simple message
For Humanity
What have we
Gone & done
Twisted it
And turned it
Inside out

It seems this Virus
Has got us trembling
Shaking with fear
Its too nice to read
As well as hear
That Zoroastrians
Across the spectrum
Are bonding
Out of fear
Conducting Hum Bandagis
As well various religious ceremonies
To eradicate this deadly disease

Though there is one big flaw
Throughout the years
We disregarded His
Pristine message of Equality
Treat people with
Tolerance understanding
As well dignity
But continued on
The path of Racism
Discrimination Bigotry

All of a sudden
A Plea for help!!!?
What He is
Supposed to do?
Run over to the rescue?
If one disregard His Message
He can disregard your pleas too!!

I can almost hear him say:
"Go Fish not until I
Hear improvement in
Your behaviour"

This is the ultimate truth
A Bitter pill to swallow
So please make sure
First and foremost
Soothe Asho Zarathushtra's Soul!!!
Prayers may get answered or not

Choicest Happiness

Farida

PS I am no seer but making see people reason
: Unto to others as You would like others to do
unto you