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For Private Circulation

An Earnest, Urgent Appeal To Parsee Members Of The WZO To Quit Right Away!

If You Don't, You Will Be Automatically Hijacked To That Wretched World Body of "Zoroastrians"!

We wish to draw the immediate attention of Parsee/Irani Zoroastrians, particularly in India, to the fact, that, if you are a member of the WZO (you get "Hamazor", you are taken on a picnic occasionally, even a trip to Panchgani as was very recently done, invitation to play Housie, with snacks provided, you receive a free Zoroastrian calendar every year in March, showing the Fasli, Shahenshai, Kadmi days and months with festivals, etc.) at present, your membership will automatically make you a member of the World Zoroastrian Organisation of Individuals (WZOI)!! How? Here is a tiny extract from the latest revised draft of the World Body's constitution. Talking about the "Council of Individuals" to be formed from different Regions it says that, "The members shall elect a person or persons (each of whom must be a Zarathushti in accordance with the commonly accepted practices of his/her region [read this as, 'all those fake, pseudo-Zoroastrians who masquerade as Zarathushtis'!] from among those living within its geographical jurisdiction on the Council of Individuals ("Individual

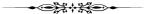
Regions and Number of Representatives:

India : 4 Australia & New Zealand : 1 Iran : 2 Pakistan/Middle East/Africa : 1 North America : 3 Far East & South Asia : 1 UK & Europe : 8 Represen- tative") in the numbers set out above: [Now read carefully Bye-Law 16 that follows:]

"16. A balance will be maintained within a total of 20 when the number of Individual Members in each Region changes in future PROVIDED THAT each region shall have at least 1 representative. [As WZO already has individual members in all the above countries, it has maintained a representative in those countries" (Emphasis theirs!)

To simplify the whole matter, all those who are members of the present WZO will be hitched to the WZO! In other words, Parsee/Irani Zarthoshtis, who have rightly protested against the World Body of "Zarathushtis", and yet continue to be members of the WZO today, will automatically become members of the same World Body they are so strongly protesting against!!

We, therefore, urge all right-thinking, faithful Parsee/Iranis, who are members of the WZO, to quit right away, as otherwise, unwittingly, they will become members of that monstrous World Body! (See also the letter, "WZO Continues To Dupe the Community", published on the next page).



WZO's Penchant For Hiding Facts!

{Editor's Note: In the last ten years or so, the World Zoroastrian Organisation (WZO) has made it its credo, never to come out with the truth. It has been an expert in subterfuge and concealing facts. On 22nd March 2005, the new Chairman of the WZO, Sammy H. Bhiwandiwalla, issued a Press Note purporting to reply to "the false allegations made by the detractors of the WZO." Anjumans were sent extra copies of the Press Note.

It is to this Press Note that four different organisations – Traditional Zarathushtri Mailing List (TZML), SDAC Foundation, Traditional Mazdayasni Zarathushti Anjuman of New Zealand (TMAZANZ), and Traditional Mazdayasni Zarathushti Anjuman (TMZA) of California – have given a fitting reply, which they have asked us to publish].

WZO Continues To Dupe The Community

This is with reference to a Press Note issued by the WZO in the community media, and circulated to all Anjumans, wherein it has accused those opposed to the WZO and the proposed World Body, of indulging in mischievous and false propaganda against it.

It is unfortunate that the WZO continues to dupe the community, with a clever play of words.

It is common knowledge that the WZO has kept its membership list a closely guarded secret. For the Chairman of the Organization, Mr. Sammy Bhiwandiwala to make a vague statement in the Press, like "out of a membership list running into a few thousand, there are six or so non-Zoroastrian spouses who are our members" is to publicly admit that he is ignorant of the exact position.

The crux of the matter is that the WZO Constitution clearly allows such membership. The Constitution also allows Converts to become members. Please note that WZO in its new avatar is WZO-Individuals Limited.

Page 1, Clause 1 and 2 of the WZO (Individuals) Constitution (Bye Laws) states,

- 1. The following can become individual members of the WZO, either as ordinary or Life Members or Grand Patrons and Patrons.
- 2. Persons born into OR professing the Zoroastrian Faith. (Emphasis ours).
- 3. Spouses married to Zoroastrians.

Clause 2 clearly allows any persons professing the Zoroastrian Faith, (in other words, Converts), to become members. This is in addition to non-Zoroastrian spouses who are convered by Clause 3.

In addition, WZO (Individuals) Bye-Laws, Page 3 Clause 15. allow a Convert to even become a member of The Council of Individuals of WZO, (an office bearer) by stating, "The members shall elect a person (each of whom must be a Zarathushti in accordance with the commonly accepted practices of his/her region)..."

Since the commonly accepted practice of several associations in North America is to accept Converts, it follows that these Converts can be elected to the Council of Individuals.

It would be in the fitness of things if the WZO explains to the community, the presence of these Clauses in their Constitution, instead of duping the community in this matter and accusing others of spreading misinformation.

According to the World Christian Encyclopaedia: A comparative survey of Churches and Religions in the world. 2nd Ed. Oxford: New York: Oxford University Press 2001, there are 2.2 million Converts to Zoroastrianism, in Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Iran!!

By virtue of its very Constitution, the WZOI makes provision for their entry into the World Body.

WZO Chairman Bhiwandiwala has, in the Press Note also written – "Much is being made of pictures showing Navjote ceremonies of some non-Zoroastrians being performed that were published in our news magazine Hamazor as a news item... The pictures received were published only by way of information. It certainly doesn't mean that WZO has had any role to play in any of such Navjotes."

As usual, WZO has fallen short of telling the whole truth; which is that the person performing the

Navjotes of the non-Zoroastrians is Mobed Kamran Jamshidi who is an International Board member of the WZO. WZO's Press Note is evasively silent about their Board Member himself performing Navjotes of the non-Zoroastrians.

Bhiwandiwala has asked for specific examples of WZO's anti-religious activities, which are detrimental to the community.

- 1) It is common knowledge that if there is one single factor that can wipe out our small community from the face of the earth, it is intermarriage and conversion. WZO endorses and encourages both, under the guise of holding the family together.
- 2) The community in Bombay can never forget the anti-Dokhmenashini role played by Dinshaw Tamboly, another International Board member of the WZO then, whose mantra for "change" could have cost us our religious system of disposal of the dead.

Bhiwandiwala also writes: "It is a known fact that WZO has no funds of its own. All our activities are supported through donations raised."

In view of the above statement, it is necessary for the WZO to inform the community when and which donors have donated monies for the WZO Office premises in Bombay, situated at Shanti, Fort, Mumbai, valued at approx. Rs.Sixty lacs (Rs.60,00,000).

Let the WZO show some transparency and accountability for once, instead of loosely using those words time and again.

The above facts are not "wild sweeping unsustainable criticism" as WZO would have the community believe. This is the reality that WZO is desperately seeking to sweep under the carpet, so as to not alienate their unsuspecting donors.

It is necessary for the community to be made aware that the WZO, by virtue of its membership does not remain a Parsi/Irani Zoroastrian organization any more. To give the WZO access to our community Institutions and community Funds that are meant solely for Parsi/Iranis, not only goes against the wishes of the settlors of those Institutions and Trust Funds but also works against the long-term interest of the Parsi/Irani Zoroastrian community.

We hope the community will see through WZO's clever play of words and hidden agenda.

Firdosh K. Sukhia – TZML Hoshang Wania – SDAC Farokh Kolah – TMZANZ Jal Birdy – TMZA

Community Capers

We Goofed!

In our last issue, it was inadvertently mentioned under the heading, "Direct Franchise Opposed by the BPP", that, "At present, the fee for a General Register candidate is Rs.500/-. In fell sweep, this has been hiked to Rs.5000/-". This fee is **not** for the General Register candidate but for the candidate standing for the trusteeship of the BPP. We stand corrected.

Minoo Shroff and the 21-year-Deadline:

This is Mr. Shroff's third term as a trustee of the BPP. So far, the tenure for one term was seven years, with no upper limit. But, according to the latest judgement, a trustee cannot exceed 21 years in office, which we feel is still on the higher side. 14-15 years should be the maximum period required to serve the community. Serve the community?

Anyway, the person to be directly affected by this order who will complete two decades+ in the near future, will be Minoo Shroff. Will he retire in grace before his present seven-year term expires, when he will have completed 21 years? We would have given an answer in the affirmative. But the disturbing news is that Mr. Shroff's colleague on the Board and a partner in Mulla & Mulla, Burjor H. Antia is alleged to have opined that they will move the Court against this 21 years deadline! Mr. Shroff has not yet come out with a categorical rebuttal of what appeared in The Bombay Samachar, in this regard.

The question that bugs all of us is that, why should the BPP trustees who are supposed to administer and manage the trust funds and properties, hanker for the spoils of office? But then, whoever becomes the trustee of the BPP does not think that BPP is just one public trust! Ever heard of a "Chairman Emeritus" in a public trust?



Criminal Complaint Filed Against The Managing Trustee, Kersi Limathwala, Of The M.J. Wadia Agiary, Lal Baug.

So disgusting and revolting have become the blasphemous happenings around Lalbaug's Wadia Agiary, that not a day passes before someone or the other lodges a complaint against the builders of Hilla Towers and the trustees of the Agiary.

The latest are two police complaints filed by Mr. Firoz J. Kotwal of the famous Kotwal Bros. at Grant Road and a senior member of the National Congress Party of Sharad Pawar.

In his first complaint against the Managing Trustee, Kersi Limathwala, to the Senior Inspector Kalachowky Police Station, the 57-year-old Mr. Kotwal has stated that the well, from which water was used for performing all kinds of liturgical ceremonies, "has lost permanently its underground sources of pure water by the digging up of a very large area of about 20 feet depth of land adjacent to the well by the Builders, with the permission of the Managing Trustee Shri Kersi Limathwala". This "has

aroused a deep resentment and extreme sorrow in the hearts and minds of the law abiding respected Parsi Zoroastrian community members in general and... residents of Navroze Baug, Lalbaug ... in particular..."

Towards the end, he has requested the police "to urgently file FIR" against both the Managing Trustee and the builders.

Later, Mr. Kotwal filed a second complaint at the Kalachowky Police Station against Zarir Bhathena of Hilla Builders for "depriving me and stopping me access to the well water for my Kusti prayers..." and for constructing "a huge 25-storey building by the name of Hilla Towers right at the entrance of the holy Shri M.J. Wadia Lalbaug Agiary depriving the Agiary and its devotees natural access to air and light..."

Mr. Kotwal urges the police to file an FIR against the evil doers and charge sheet them under different sections of the Indian Penal Code.

Tamboly's Tantrums!

After his re-election to the Bombay Parsi Punchayet less than two years ago, by a slender margin of 354 votes against his rival, Yazdi Desai, D.K. Tamboly operated in a low key for quite some time. Among other things, he knew that the total number of votes he had got was a measly 490.

Today, however, things have changed. Forgotten is the basic fact that out of a total Anjuman Committee + Donor-voter-strength of about 1300, he got only 490, when the voter turn-out for the August 2003 elections was 636. Once again Tamboly has started strutting front-stage, particularly after the debacle at the Ahmedabad Federation meeting.

In fact, his coming into his own began at Ahmedabad itself where the sessions were held on the 18th and 19th December, 2004. **The Parsee Voice** got a phone

call from one of the participants in the evening of 19th December, that the Bardoli Zarthosti Anjuman's President, Mr. Jamshed Mohta, had confided to a few friends that during the lunch break that day, D.K. Tamboly had told him that the opposition against the World Body was uncalled for. Mr. Mohta then replied that the Federation should drop the idea of joining the World Body, as a majority of the Anjumans are against it. It was then that Tamboly was said to have come out with the shocker that preceded the Tsunami by a week! He is believed to have made a remark that the majority Anjumans, with a small number of members cannot be compared to the BPP, which is supported by more than 40,000 Parsees of Mumbai, and that, if the majority Anjumans do not join the World Body, he would ensure that BPP withdrew from the Federation, and joined a handful of other break-away Anjumans to form a new Federation to join the World Body!!

Delusion and Hallucination!

When we first heard this four months ago, we didn't disbelieve it, because, knowing the man's hauteur and tendency for vendetta, what he said could come true. After all, throughout his tenure of 9 years in the BPP, he has had no compunction in deluding himself that he calls the shots!

But the man surely suffered from acute hallucinations if he thought that the BPP represents and has the support of the 40,000+ Parsees of Mumbai! A simple test for anyone is to call a public meeting, which has on its agenda BPP-baiting, and you won't find a single seat vacant in a 1000 capacity hall, with an average Mumbai Parsee showering the trustees with the choicest expletives!

Anyway, on the 16th January, 2005, both Jame and the Bombay Samachar carried a "Statement (ahem!) by Dinshaw Tamboly", wherein, he talked of a "canard" floating around "that I have threatened/challenged that I would ensure that the World Body would be formed irrespective of the opposition towards the same." He added that, "Over the years I have witnessed a medley of egos, politics, stubbornness, misunderstandings/misinformation and so on, taking place". (Our self-styled not-so sweet little 'angel' didn't realise that he was only parading and enumerating his own faults and weakneses in these very words!)

He then chided all his critics by saying, "It is only an immature person who would assume and conclude that any one individual on his own would be successful in such matters (not even if he is a 'smooth operator'?) If this was possible, the World Body would have been formed many years ago."

How very naive, he thought his readers were! The main reason why the World Body couldn't be formed for a long time was constant bickerings between Tamboly's own WZO and FEZANA of North America, with both sides remaining adamant and wanting their pound of flesh!!

Enter, Jamshed Mohta, officially:

By a strange coincidence, on the 17th January, 2005, the Bardoli President, on his own, blissfully unaware of the "Statement" that had appeared in the Parsee press a day earlier, wrote a letter to the Chairman of the BPP, Minoo Shroff, narrating among other things, what had transpired at Ahmedabad on the 19th December, 2004 between him and Tamboly. [We cross-checked with Mr. Mohta (as late as 26th April, 2005) about what Tamboly had exactly stated, and he repeated what he had told his friends that very day, i.e. 19th December, 2004 and what he had written to Mr. Shroff on 17th January, 2005].

Power Point Presentation and Tamboly's Tantrums:

It was only after the Power Point Presentation (PPP) prepared by Khojeste Mistree, Tannaz Parakh and Anahita and Yazdi Desai, was presented to the BPP and other Anjumans in February, later revised in March, after the revised draft of the constitution of the World Body was received that Tamboly pushed the panic button. In the amended PPP, a detailed reference has been made to Tamboly's threat about BPP joining the World Body on its own.

That did it! In a stinker to Khojeste, Tamboly wrote that "the statement attributed to me is totally inaccurate and not at all true. It is nothing but a blatant lie." He then quotes his clarification of the 16th January. But, it's in the last two paragraphs, littered with his favourite prefix, (misinformation, misrepresentation, misleading, misunderstanding, etc.) and accusing Mistree of "sacrificing basic values at the altar of malicious and devious politics", that Tamboly gives himself up! Any erring man, when cornered, will fly off the handle and betray that inner weakness which he has been successfully camouflaging so far! Instead of proving that what he has been saying all along was true, Tamboly, covertly admits that truth, as always, hopelessly was at a discount with him!

Of course, Mistree, in his inimitable style has given a fitting rejoinder, to which again Tamboly has replied, wherein, once again, he flies at a tangent and betrays some more gaffes! He continues to aver that what Jamshed Mohta has said, is a "blatant lie".

But from the hard facts given above, it's as clear as daylight that Mr. Mohta stands fully vindicated. The likes of Tamboly can wish for better luck in the next incarnation if he wants to come anywhere near the truth!



Our Mailbox

FALSE PROPAGANDA ABOUT THE WORLD BODY BY JAME & THE BPP

Sir,

I congratulate you and your team for the bold and honest exposés given in your newsletter.

I have been keenly following your reports on various community developments, especially those concerning the proposed World Body of Zoroastrians. I was one of the gullible few taken in earlier by the various write-ups periodically appearing in Jame-Jamshed Weekly that the proposed World Body was beneficial to the community and would have only Parsi/Irani Zoroastrians as members. The so-called interview of Mr. M.R. Shroff, Chairman of the BPP, to one Mr. Sarosh Daruwalla, which was published in Jame a couple of months ago, was also misleading!

The BPP Chairman has also now started to sing a different tune. First he said that members would be only Parsi/Irani Zoroastrians. Now he says that office bearers of IZO will be Parsi Zoroastrians. This is an obvious climb down from his earlier held position and reveals a lot about the pathetic state of affairs. Unfortunately, no official communication is yet forthcoming from the BPP on its intentions in this matter. As community leaders, they definitely owe the community an explanation, and fast!

After having read your various articles and after having an opportunity to see a certain Power Point Presentation on this matter, my family and I are convinced that this proposed World Body will have non-Parsis as members. This is akin to conversion by the back-door and against our religious tenets. I firmly state that all right-thinking Parsis should strongly oppose any move to join such a dubious body.

Yours sincerely, Ms. F.A. Mehta

DANGEROUS COMBINATION OF CALLOUS TRUSTEES AND GREEDY BUILDERS! Sir,

The maelstrom of controversy arising from the systematic destruction of the sacred environment of the Parsi Fire Temple in Lalbaug, reported in The Times of India of 10th April 2005, mirrors what is happening today, to the mangroves of Mumbai.

An apathetic Parsi community and a powerful combination of callous trustees and rich builders, limited only by their endless greed, is leading to the destruction of the sanctity of Fire Temples across Bombay. Builders are also being inducted as trustees in order to further their building activities. The concept of conflict of interest does not exist in the community. The once famed Parsi honesty is on a severe declining graph. These Parsi temples are the sign posts of Mumbai's heritage and history. I request the Bombay Environmental Action Committee and the eminent Mr. Seervai to visit the catastrophic site and take cognisance of the unscrupulous actions of the builders in the Parsi community.

I also make an impassioned appeal, to the Charity Commissioner and the Heritage Committee, who appear to be largely siding with big builders, to save the rampant abuse of Fire Temple lands in Mumbai. The Thoothi Fire Temple in Walkeshwar, the LalBaug Fire Temple in Parel and the Dadyseth Atash Behram in Fanaswadi are already under attack and the Heritage Committee must come to the rescue of those who have no choice and little power.

The builder is expected to look after only his own commercial interests but when Trustees of the Fire Temple sit back and do nothing and in fact sanction the destruction of the Fire Temple facade and allow the sacred well to be systematically damaged, thereby depriving the Temple of the ritual use of well-water, then surely the apex body of the Parsis The BOMBAY PARSI PUNCHAYET should take action instead of encouraging such activities! Whatever be the reason, it is the religious responsibility of the Trustees to immediately repair the Well before the Fire Temple suffers any more.

Only one Trustee has been named in your article, Mr. Kersi Limathwalla, but surely all the Trustees should take equal responsibility for this sacrilege and resign if they cannot deal with the situation. The Temple can well do without such indifferent Trustees, but it cannot do without well-water, which is needed for all the rituals and ceremonies.

Forget the population decline, if the ethos of the Parsi community is eroded it will hardly matter if the community will exist in the future or not.

Firoza Punthankey Mistree

DISGRACEFUL POACHING ON OUR PLACES OF WORSHIP

Sir.

Any community, the world over, takes all necessary steps to protect and preserve its holy places of worship. But I feel we must be the only unfortunate community whose own members do not hesitate to poach upon and destroy its own places of worship. The episode of desecration of the Wadia Agiary at Lalbaug has driven home this point even further.

In their relentless drive for power and pelf, some Zarathushtis have completely overlooked certain points; that we have thrived and flourished in this sea of humanity is solely on account of the spiritual munificence of our revered Atash Padshah Sahebs. Unfortunately, some of our own are now striking at the very

roots of our survival and existence. It is a classic case of 'killing the goose that lays the golden eggs'.

For those who are unaware, our Atash Padshahs work ceaselessly as receiving stations for the beneficient currents of Spenta Mainyu, which they can pass on to us for our spiritual and material advancement. But acts of depradation on their personal atmosphere and ambience, result in diminishing their capacity to act as such receiving stations. At the end of the day, the whole humanity suffers because a good and powerful beneficient force i.e. the Atash Padshah's spiritual strength, has been diminished.

I am aware that Yazdi and Anahita Desai are pursuing this matter in court. In spite of vilification by a biased press, they are doing yeoman service by seeking to redress this wrong committed on the Atash Padshah's holy personage. I call upon all community members to rise to the occasion and extend full support to this brave and committed couple in their fight to protect and preserve our holy place of worship.

Yours sincerely, **P.S. Fitter**

A POPE PASSES ON!

The starting of April witnessed the passing away of Pope John Paul II. The Roman Catholic world reacted with a spontaneous outpouring of grief on the passing away of their religious head, whose pontificate lasted for more than 26 years. A much-respected religious reader, the Late Pontiff left an indelible mark on the world stage with his message of peace and brotherhood amongst mankind. Having grown in a country which was suppressed first by the Nazis and then the communists, he realized the value of freedom for the human spirit and did all in his power to liberate his people from enslavement from the atheists. His main weapon was the message of God.

While we disagree with the Church's philosophy of conversion, as we know it to be religiously unacceptable, we cannot but praise the Late Pontiff for his tough stand on various other issues like abortion, gay marriages, contraception, ordainment of women as priests etc. In spite of protests from liberal groups, he stood firm and refused to compromise on the Church's doctrine on these issues. This is the stuff that real leaders are made of! No compromises on religious wrongs

just because of pressure from the liberals! This quality endeared him to a majority of his flock.

But what a strange paradox! While he was going all over the world, trying his best to attract people to the Church and Christianity, certain black sheep in his own flock in Latin America and elsewhere are being misled into getting "converted" to Zoroastrianism, in spite of our clear religious injunction against conversion, and happily subverting our scriptures and rituals to suit their vested interests. We hope that the new Pope, Benedict XVI, who seems all set to tread the same orthodox doctrinal path as his much-celebrated predecessor, will take note of these unfortunate happenings and prevail upon his misled flock to return to their fold.

H.M. Mistry

[Pope Benedict XVI is already on record having described other religious traditions as "deficient"!

-Ed.





If, at Ahmedabad in December, last year, the notorious World Body of "Zarathushtis" was delivered the first lethal blow, end-February, this year, a get-together of Gujarat Anjumans, organised by the Bardoli Anjuman, where nearly a thousand people had gathered, virtually drove the last nail in the coffin of the World Body of pseudo-Zoroastrians. So spontaneous and overwhelming was the response, that in spite of Jame Jamshed Weekly's grapes-are-sour-innuendos, Parsee/Irani Zarthoshtis came spontaneously to give a resounding 'No'! to the World Body.

In the picture on the left (above), Jamshed Mohta, the President of the Bardoli Anjuman, addresses the audience. Sitting on his right are, Khojeste Mistree, Dastur Cyrus Dastur Noshirwan Dastur of Surat, Areez Khambatta, President, Ahmedabad Parsi Punchayet and Yazdi Desai.

The picture on the right shows a section of the vast audience with Dastur Cyrus Dastur, Areez Khambatta, Yazdi Desai and Hushang Vakil in the foreground. Notice the large number of members of the White-turbaned gentry.

Federation Meeting Put Off?

While this issue was in the press, word has come in that the 6-monthly FPZAI meeting, scheduled for 3rd and 4th June, 2005, has been postponed by a couple of months!! Why? Your guess is as good as ours. Pick any one that suits you. (1) Both the BPP trustees and the FPZAI Secretary are still licking their wounds! (2) Once bitten twice shy is their motto! So, they don't want to tackle

another group of "hooligans" (sic) and "louts" (sic) (3) The FPZAI Secretary and BPP trustees do not want a bloody nose just before they attend the World Zoroastrian Congress, June-end and July in England. (4) Led by D.K. Tamboly, the BPP will form a rump of a Federation of $3\frac{1}{2}$ Anjumans to ride their old hobby-horse of the World Body! Keep guessing!

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