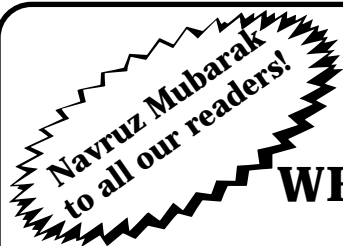


THE PARSEE VOICE

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3K, 6K OR 9K?

WHEN PARSEES ALLOW UNESCO TO CALL THE SHOTS!

How old is the Zoroastrian Civilisation? For the last one year or so, an organisation from Delhi, called, PARZOR, has set about holding programmes, exhibitions, talks, etc. telling us that the Zoroastrian Culture is 3000 years old!! And who gave them this fanciful idea? UNESCO, which officially declared the year 2003 as the 3000th anniversary of the Zoroastrian Culture and Religion. And where did UNESCO get this date from? Was it supplied by some of us? Frankly, we don't know!

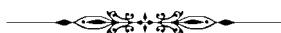
But, look at our mentality! The same, thoughtless, slavish one that some of our forefathers betrayed when Queen Victoria ruled a hundred years ago: any idea, concept, suggestion that comes from the West or from the white-skinned gentry, however hare-brained it may be, is gospel! Don't even think about it or question it, lest it would be a sacrilege!

So far, it has been next to impossible to even tentatively fix the millenium, let alone the century, in which the Prophet lived and preached! As one famous historian-scholar, Prof. Richard Frye, put it: "Zarathushtra or Zoroaster, as the Greeks called him, presents many problems, and it is discouraging that after so many years of research we do not know when or where he lived or even precisely his teachings."

So, there you are! The very fact that no one knows when our Prophet existed, is itself a clear indication that he must have lived in hoary antiquity! According to scientist-scholar, the late Ervad Dr. M.D. Karkhanawala, Carbon-14 dating tests suggested that the Prophet must have lived at least 6000 years ago! Many Greek historians and philosophers support this date. The date was further pushed back to about 9000 years ago, by the Master of the esoteric school, Behramshah Shroff, whose mathematical "calculations of the heavens" pointed to that figure.

In the last century, many Parsee philologists, blindly following Western writers, conveniently forgetting that these gentlemen from the West were either Jewish or Christian, who had a vested interest in ensuring that Zoroaster's era was pegged at just a few centuries before Moses and Christ, brought the Prophet ridiculously down to even 6th century B.C.

On the one hand, present-day Parsees legitimately take pride in stating that the Zoroastrian religion and culture are the most ancient, and on the other, organisations like PARZOR and other Zoroastrians blindly toe the UNESCO line by bringing the Prophet preposterously down to 1000 B.C.! That is just 200-300 years before the Medes ruled over parts of Iran!!



SASSANIAN KING SHAPUR II & GENERAL VARTAN THE MAMIGONIAN

Conversion topsyturveyed: The Pot Calling The Kettle Black!!

In the *Parsiiana* magazine of January, 2004, there is an atrocious article under the heading, "Conversion by the sword", with the sub-heading, "For a hundred years the Iranian monarchs warred unsuccessfully to convert Armenian Christians to Zoroastrianism." It is published in the "History" section, with the author's name not mentioned.

The article starts with a historical blunder, a complete travesty of facts, when it states: "Conversion by the sword was not the prerogative of the Christian crusaders or the followers of Islam. Zoroastrians also took to battle to ensure the spread of religion."

This is followed by an anecdote of an Armenian Christian girl, who married a Parsee some time back, and who wrote her autobiography, "Short Stories From A Long Life."

Then there are quotes from Encyclopaedia Britannica, from an article by Alan Williams and from certain Armenian websites, all of which try to portray King Shapur II, and even Dastur Aderbad Marespand, the last **Raenidar** (Saviour), in the blackest of black colours! They are shown as villains, who "hounded the Christians ruthlessly in the last 40 years of his reign."

Before we give the historic details, we cannot hide our anguish and pain that a Parsee magazine should publish such blatantly false propaganda of the Armenian Christians of yore, in this day and age!

The True Facts

The story of the Armenian Christians goes back to the days of the Roman Caesars, who, as the Christians called them, were still 'pagans'. They took it upon themselves to persecute the Christians ruthlessly! Things came to such a pass, that the Christians virtually had no place on this planet to live in. It was the Zoroastrian Parthian and early Sassanian kings, who gave the Christians shelter in Armenia. **Right since the Achaemenian times, the countries of Armenia and Asia Minor were under Iranian rule.**

Thus, Christianity came to Armenia as late as the beginning of the 3rd century A.D., many centuries after

the Iranian Mazdayasnis were settled there. In the beginning, the Christians by and large, lived peacefully, but soon, even before the Parthian dynasty ended, began to show their true "missionary" colours. The first casualty was Tiridates, the Armenian king himself, who along with other Armenians were converted to Christianity, so much so, that Armenia became the first country with Christianity as the state religion.

A shot in the arm for the Armenian Christians came, when, for the first time, in about 313 A.D., Roman Emperor Constantine adopted Christianity! As George Rawlinson, quoted by Dastur Dr. H.K. Mirza, stated: "Constantine... had assumed the character of a sort of general protector of the Christians throughout the world."

Towards the end of the 4th century, Christianity became the state religion of the Roman Empire. This was the signal for the Christians of Iran to create trouble. They betrayed their pro-Roman leanings in state affairs. They refused to pay any tax to Iran. Instead, they arrogantly told the Sassanian emperors to collect it from Rome, to whom they would pay!

Writes Dastur Dr. Maneckji Dhalla in his "History of Zoroastrianism": "Iran had long ceased to be a religious unit, and the vast number of Jews, Christians, and others of divergent faiths and creeds contributed towards disunion... **A fairly tolerable latitude was conceded to these adherents of the alien faiths...**" Two pages later, Dr. Dhalla wrote: "**Of all the alien faiths in Persia, Christianity was the most aggressive. The pertinacious attempt of the Christians to win over converts to their faith from the ruling nation, often caused shedding of human blood.**" (Emphasis ours).

Dastur Dr. Hormazdyar Dastur Kayoji Mirza very rightly states that: "Where there is an aggressive religion, making converts by persuasion, by inducement, by force, or by combination of all these, there is always trouble. During Sassanian times there were aggressive alien religions in Iran; and the Zoroastrian priests had to defend their own religion against the attacks of the heretical sects and also of the aggressive alien religions."

Ever since the death of the founder of the Sassanian Empire, Ardashir Papakan, and the ascension to the throne of his son, Shapur I, who ruled for 30 years, for nearly 7 decades, the Iranian kings were mainly engaged in wars with the Romans, particularly over Armenia and the land between the Euphrates and the Tigris.

Shapur II and General Vartan

Shapur-*bin*-Hormazd or Shapur II ascended the Iranian throne in 309 A.D. Roman Emperor Constantine had just accepted Christianity. He soon tried to interfere with the internal affairs of the Iranian Empire, via Armenia, on the pretext of protecting the interests of the Christians living there. He built a new capital Byzantium, later known as Constantinople, after the Roman Caesar.

One should always remember that for millenia, the Iranian kings were always tolerant towards the people of other faiths, including the Jews and the Christians. This, unfortunately, was construed as a weakness by the Romans and the Christians of Armenia, who, as stated above, were given refuge by the Iranian kings, when they had no one to turn to!

The long and short of it was that there were frequent strifes between the defending Iranians and the aggressive Christians. Any wonder then, that all the Christian writers of those days were invariably partial to the Christians and hostile to the Zoroastrians?

In the "Sacred Books of the East", Vol. 5, E.W. West remarks about the Greek and Armenian writers, thus: "This shows that how little reliance can be placed upon the assertions of foreigners regarding matters which they view with antipathy or prejudice." Prof. Henning wrote in his "Zoroaster": "But these foreign sources, chiefly Syrian and Armenian Christian writers, are undeniably hostile witnesses." Instead of relying on modern recognised scholars and historians, it's strange that the writer of the article in 'Parsiana' should take recourse to Armenian writers and websites!

Who was Vartan?

Vartan was the Commander-in-Chief of the Christian army fighting against the Zoroastrians in Armenia. It was he who was "the moving spirit in a general insurrection and in the struggle of Armenian Christianity against the Zoroastrian religion." He was later called the Saint of Armenia. He was killed in battle in 451 AD.

The Vartan Symphony

It may be of interest to music lovers that modern composer, Alan Hovhaness has composed a Symphony,

Op. 40, called the "Saint Vartan Symphony" in 1951, to commemorate the 1500th anniversary of Vartan's death. The work, in 24 short movements, was conducted by Hovhaness himself thirty years ago. You've guessed right! Hovhaness was partly Armenian by descent!

Who Wrote Vartan's History?

It was Bishop Elisaeus, who was the secretary to Vartan Mamigonian, who wrote the book, "The History Of Vartan, and of the Battle of the Armenians: containing an Account of the Religious Wars between the Persians and Armenians", wherein, as expected, he described Zoroastrianism as 'heathenism', 'idol-worship', 'ungodly belief' etc. Sassanian Emperor, Yazdgerd II and the Zoroastrians were 'wicked tyrant', 'accomplices of Satan', 'wicked devil', 'apostate'! Prof. Henning ("Zoroaster") has rightly dubbed Elisaeus as one of the "undeniably hostile witnesses."

C.F. Neumann, who translated Elisaeus' 'History of Vartan', noted in his Preface that the Armenian Christians destroyed many Zoroastrian records! "The whole of the literature of the sons of Haik (ancient name of Armenia), which had grown out of the religion of the Parsi, and was intimately connected with the particular customs of the Armenian people, was annihilated: only what they thought themselves able to disprove was transmitted to posterity... and all other written monuments, relative to (what the Christians called) Paganism, were given to the flames."

Atash Behrams Destroyed

So bigoted were the Armenian Christians that they "massacred the Magi without mercy", as Vartan himself told his followers, and destroyed many, many *Atash Behrams*! As Elisaeus himself wrote: "They (the Armenian Christians) pulled down and laid waste their dwellings, and burned the houses of idolatry – the houses for the worship of fire... Taking the utensils (*aalaats*) away from the fire-temples, they placed them in the holy churches, where they were consecrated by the priests to be ornaments to the altar of the Lord. **[Strange and even funny! That our *aalaats* were taken away to be consecrated by the Armenian Christians!!]** Instead of idolatry which had been performed in all the heathenish places, they now set up the cross of Christ the Redeemer..." Elisaeus always boasts of the Christian Bishops destroying Fire Temples, harassing the Zoroastrians and persecuting the Magi in every possible manner!

Let today's Parsees know once and for all who was persecuting whom and who was destroying and plundering!!

Since the Achaemenian times, according to available historical records, Iranian Zoroastrian kings, right through the Parthian and Sassanian periods, were extremely tolerant and indulgent to people of other faiths! So much so, that Achaemenian kings would dismount from their steeds, whenever they passed by a place of worship of other faiths! In the Sassanian times, the Zoroastrian Emperors were forced to fight "defensive battles for self-preservation against the aggressive Armenian Christians."

Shapur II and Dastur Aderbad

"Parsiana's article quotes Alan Williams, who himself quotes from the Christian Syriac "Acts of the Martyrs", saying that Shapur II and "Mobad (*sic*) Adurbad hounded the Christians ruthlessly in the last 40 years of his reign".

Let it be said most emphatically that most of the Sassanian kings, as also their predecessors, were Defenders of the Zoroastrian Faith, first and last! Thus, when the Armenian Christians went on a rampage proselytising Zoroastrians of Armenia and other parts of Iran, so much so that they even converted Emperor Shapur II's brother to Christianity, Emperors like Shapur II decided to take action, as tolerance had reached its limit! **The converts, as always, were even more dangerous enemies of Zoroastrian Iran.** It is then

that Sassanian emperors and priests had to take suitable action. Harsh measures had to be adopted, particularly against the heretics and the Zoroastrian converts! **The Zoroastrians were forced to fight defensive battles for self-preservation against the aggressive Christians.**

It was when the Christians mocked and ridiculed the Zoroastrian religion and its Prophet, that Dastur Aturpat Mahraspand, who was the last *Saoshyant* or **Raenidar** or Saviour of the Zoroastrians, to prove the exaltedness and majesty of the Zoroastrian religion, allowed tons of molten lead to be poured on his bare chest, and came out of it unscathed. It was the same Dastur Dastur, who has given us our extant scriptures, particularly most of the Pazend ones!

To accuse such a saint and Saviour and to accuse Shapur II, who was a devout Zoroastrian, of perpetrating atrocities, is not only to insult the memory of these great Zoroastrian personages, but to fly brazenly in the face of historical facts!

No Zoroastrian Emperor in the entire history of Iran ever converted any one of the alien faith to his religion. The Sassanian emperors and priests tried their level best to **re-convert** those Zoroastrians, who had converted to Christianity, and who were proving a thorn in the flesh of the Sassanian Empire!

Chennai (Madras) Parsi Anjuman Upto Its Old Mischief Again?!

The Madras Parsi Zarthoshti Anjuman (MPZA) is at it again! After almost six years, it has decided to re-open the can of worms : "admission" of children of Parsee mothers and non-Parsee fathers into the Zoroastrian religion!!

In 1998, the MPZA had issued a questionnaire to its members, to the members of the Madras Parsi Association and to those of Jal Phiroj Clubwalla Daremeher asking them their "personal views" about such children. There were four questions to be answered, the first one being, "Do you think children of Parsi mothers and Non-Parsi fathers should be allowed to perform their Navjote?"

Look at the phraseology of the question! Apart from incorrect language, who are the Chennai Parsees, or for that matter, Mumbai Parsees, to "think" about a cardinal tradition of our religion? Whose 'property' is

the Zoroastrian religion? Latter-day Parsees, who don't know the basics of the religion, and who rely only on their fads and fancies? Are religious practices and precepts to be changed according to the whims of some office-bearers or trustees, who have to strictly abide by the letter and spirit of the trust deed?

Coming back to that Madras Anjuman's Questionnaire, "to the pleasant surprise" of the office-bearers, a "large majority of the members agreed to the admission" of such children. Yet, the MPZA did not implement this response, because it may have "hurt the sentiments of some members."

Now, in March 2004, it is learnt the President of the MPZA, Nariman F. Mogrelia (the good old "Nari" to us, who during his Lalbaug days in Mumbai, used to take up cudgels for Zoroastrian tradition with his bank colleagues! All this only goes to underline our theory

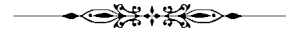
mentioned in a previous issue of the "The Parsee Voice", that once you go out of the "Sphere of Influence" of Paak Iranshah for good, your faith in the religion does get shaken!), has re-issued the Questionnaire sent out in 1998, simply because of the speech of the Registrar General of Census Commissioner of India, Mr. J.K. Banthia, at the Bardoli meeting of the FPZAI, that President Mogrelia heard. Writes Mogrelia: "He submitted a lot of statistics and datas (*sic*) to show that we are an aged and very fast dwindling community.." "Mr. Banthia observed, 'For several years now in Bombay city alone every year there are (app.) 1000 deaths and 300 births...' 'The writing is very clear on the wall. If you are unable to see, it is a real, real tragedy, unless Anjumans adopt corrective measures.'"

So, says Mogrelia, this made him rethink! "I felt it is time for our small community to face this problem

instead of shy away from the same, even if there is criticism from the orthodox lobby..."

Obviously, Nari Mogrelia, who has taken upon himself the mantle of the President of the MPZAI, has not done his homework at all! When Mr. Banthia talked about adopting "corrective measures", he never meant, as Mogrelia thinks, that you should chop your nose to spite your face! If Mogrelia wants hybrids and pariahs in his Anjuman, his is the easiest way of doing it!

Instead, Mogrelia and others should concentrate on:
(a) stemming the exodus of Parsees to foreign lands;
(b) creating ways and means to ensure that Parsee boys and girls find their life-partners early in life; and
(c) encourage such young couples to have two children, by providing them incentives and a shelter over their heads!



The Sad Saga Of Sandalwood Shortage

Meherjibhai used to visit different houses in the Parsee colony, about twenty years ago, selling **Sukhad**. The price per kilo was between Rs.70 and Rs.75. One day he announced that he would soon give up selling Malabari sandalwood. What had happened? "The price," said, "had gone up to Rs.85 a kilo"! Some families had found the price exorbitant! After some time, dear Meherjibhai passed away! The price of sandalwood, like that of gold and silver, continued to rise, and rise, and...

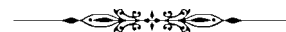
Yet, in the eighties and nineties, the price-rise was gradual. It increased by a few rupees every year or even every two years. Veerappan had by now started showing his mettle. However, as late as the year 2000, the price of **Periyas** was Rs.1350! By now, some of the Parsee sandalwood sellers had shut shop. The Brihanmumbai Mahapalika considered sandalwood a luxury item. It increased the octroi duty to 7%. Maharashtra Government's sales tax on sandalwood was 13% on which there was a surcharge of 10% + there was a 1% turnover tax, making a total of 22.30% taxes in Maharashtra.

Today, in less than four years, the price of Malabari sandalwood has skyrocketed to Rs.4000 a kilo in

Mumbai. And the manner in which it is galloping these days, it's bound to touch Rs.5000 per kilo before the year is out!

Our whole purpose in bringing up this subject is to draw the immediate attention, no, not of the BPP trustees – they are too busy looking beyond the horizon – but of some of our modern philanthropists like, **NarYman Dubash, Pallonji Mistry, etc.** who, with the help of NGOs of Mumbai, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu, including the Anjumans of these states can (a) take up the matter with the Governments of these states, and (b) more importantly, subsidise the cost of sandalwood. Besides, influential Parsees can also take up the matter and request the governments to set aside a certain quota for the exclusive use of the Parsee community, which has survived and prospered because of the **Atash Padshahs**, whose staple is good quality sandalwood.

If some of the Parsee worthies take up this meritorious work, many in the community will chip in and support them. There is nothing on this earth more benevolent than earning the blessings of our **Atash Padshahs!**



The World-Body – It's Ghost Has Not Been Laid...!

If some members of our community think that the ghost of the World Body, which has exercised the minds of different federations of the world, has now been exorcised, they are sadly mistaken! The ghost still stalks the corridors of 209, D.N. Road, that is, the Bombay Parsi Punchayet.

Three trustees of the BPP, who double up as WZO trustees, will not allow the matter to be set at rest. Both FEZANA of North America and WZO of London are trying to iron out certain differences that still exist.

Some other trustees of the BPP, who have asked if "office bearers" of the two World Organisations of Individuals and Federations could be "Parsi/Irani Zoroastrians," have been told, we learn, "Nothing Doing"!

"The Parsee Voice", which organised a very successful public meeting on the 21st November, 2003, in this regard, wishes to reiterate its stand that there is absolutely no need for any "World Body" for Parsee Zoroastrians.

Those with vested interests tell us that with the world becoming a "global village", there is a need to have some representation at the United Nations, for which we must speak in one voice! The United Nations has been in existence for the last nearly 50 years. Before

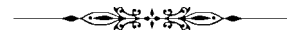
that, there was the League of Nations! The Parsee Zoroastrian community has survived and prospered for nearly 1300 years, without any World Body or United Nations, for that matter!

Till todate, no one bothers to answer a very simple question: where is the need for any World Body for our community?

We repeat our charge that everywhere, in the Federation of Parsi Zoroastrian Anjumans of India, in the Bombay Parsi Punchayet and in a few other Punchayets and Anjumans in India, there are persons, who for purely selfish reasons, want to hijack the whole community and put it on par with fakes and frauds around the world, who, by hook or by crook, style themselves 'Zarthushtis'!

These self-servers in our Anjumans should be given the boot by every faithful Parsee, Irani Zoroastrian!

We also once again appeal to all members of the Federation of Parsi Zoroastrian Anjumans of India – the various Anjumans and Punchayets – to raise their voice against the formation of the so-called World Body of Zoroastrians at the next Federation meeting in June 2004, and not to be cowed down by any bulldozing tactics of self-seekers!



Salwar-Kameez Originated In Zoroastrian Iran!

A good friend of ours sent us a copy of a letter written by a Karachi reader, F. Ali, to the Dawn newspaper of Karachi, which makes an interesting revelation about the origin of Salwar-Kameez. Enjoy the excerpts :

Anyone with the least sense of history knows that the shalwar (shawol) and kameez (qamis) are essentially non-Arab, non-islamic dress forms, that originated in Parthian Iran (248 B.C.E. - 224 A.D.)

The words shalwar and kameez are both from the Pahlavi language, a Middle Iranian language that developed from Old Persian, the language of the Zoroastrians of Iran. The use of the shalwar and kameez as a national Iranian costume can be seen from Parthian times and the best known examples are the large bronze statues from Shami in south-western Iran dated late 1st century B.C.E. and found

in the Tehran Museum, and the statue of the worshipper from Hatra in Iraq, depicting a shalwar and a belted kameez.

Similarly, the statue from Bard-i-Nishandeh from south-western Iran, 3rd century A.D., depicts a royal Parthian personage wearing the shalwar and kameez. In fact, this early Zoroastrian Iranian dress became so popular that it was later widely adopted by non-Arab countries from Central Asia to the subcontinent.

If anything, the shalwar-kameez is a Zoroastrian Iranian national costume, and despite the Arab invasion of Iran in the 7th century the Parthian shalwar-kameez prevailed as a dress code in most of these countries. This can also be seen by its continuous usage for over 2000 years in the villages of Kurdistan, Azerbaijan, Yazd and Luristan in Iran.

Scrap This Monstrous Mortuary At Doongerwadi!

Parsees recently got very much worked up when stained glass panels of the structure enclosing the Bhikha Behram well were stolen and or destroyed! That's as it should be! Heritage sites have to be preserved and protected.

But how come no one bats an eyelid when vandalism of the worst kind is perpetrated on a Zoroastrian soul, when the corpse is placed in that most anti-Zoroastrian structure, called the "mortuary", just behind the Albless Bungli? When it was first built about three years ago, our High Priests did write a letter of protest to the BPP trustees, asking them to shut it down!

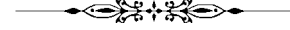
But, a couple of years down the line, quite a few Zoroastrian souls have suffered the mortification of going without the basic 'Sachkar' ceremony for some hours, or even for one whole day!! The reason? Some near relative, son, daughter, brother, sister, who, for years had settled abroad, want to meet their parent or sibling for the last time and kiss him or her goodbye before the last journey!

So, the parent or the relative, is shoved inside the ice-box for hours on end, till the **dikro** or **dikri** arrives from Dubai or Timbaktu! Pronto! The corpse, which is now virtually a slab of ice, is brought out for the

melodramatic finale! Ever tried kissing such a slab of ice? You may feel like asking the BPP trustees, to instal a big electric oven by the side of that thoroughly irreligious ice box!

A lady asked us, "Isn't it better than keeping the corpse kept 'pending' in a general morgue? **The lady's thinking is exactly like that of the BPP trustees, who have to be told again and again that, the most basic rule in Zoroastrian eschatology is that, "Sachkar" must and should be performed as soon as possible after death, preferably in the same 'Geh' in which death takes place. Postponing the 'Sachkar' even by a few minutes, aggravates the "druj-e-nasu" (ultra-physical putridity), which tortures and torments the soul and the astral body immensely!** Why, on earth, do the BPP trustees allow mere worldly emotions/sentiments to rule over this fundamental religious principle?

This anti-Zarhoshti structure is thoroughly incongruous at Doongerwadi. **We earnestly appeal to the Chairman, Mr. Minoo Shroff, to shut it down for good, as it is against the basic doctrines of our religion!**



પારસી જરથોસ્તી અંજુમનો અને પંચાયતોએ ફેડરેશન ઓફ પારસી જરથોસ્તી અંજુમનઝ ઓફ ઈન્ડિયાનાં સેક્રેટરી, શ્રી કેકી ગાંધીનાં વાહિયાત વિચારો સામે સખત વિરોધ કરવાની જરૂર!

છેલ્લાં બે “ફેડ ન્યુઝલેટરો” માં શ્રી કેકી ગાંધી, જેઓ વર્ષોથી એફ.પી.એડ.એ.આઈ. નાં સેક્રેટરી છે, તેઓએ દાવર-બીમનનાં ચૂકાદામાંથી પોતાનાં મન-પસંદનાં અને ઢંગડા વગરનાં ટાંચણો પ્રગટ કર્યાં છે. આ એમનાં પોતાનાં અંગત મતો હોય તો આવા ન્યુઝલેટરમાં પ્રગટ થઈ શકેજ નહિં!

આજ શ્રી કેકી ગાંધીએ બારડોલીની મીટિંગમાં અને તેની અગાઉની ફેડરેશની સભામાં ખુલ્લું કહ્યું હતું કે જો પરકોમમાં પરણેલી પારસી છોકરીઓનાં ફરજંદોને જેરથોસ્તી દીનમાં નહિં

લેવાય અને જુદીને આપણાં ધર્મમાં નહિં લેવાય, તો “હું જરથોસ્તી કહેવડાવતાં શરમાઉં છું”!

આવી બેહુદી વાત એઓએ કરી, તે છતાં જે પારસી પંચાયતો અને અંજુમનોનાં પ્રમુખો અને સભ્યો ત્યાં હાજર હતા, તેઓએ કોઈ પણ જાતનો વિરોધ કર્યોજ નહિં!

પરિણામ એ આયું કે આજે શ્રી કેકી ગાંધી પોતાનાં ઓધ્ધાનો દૂરઉપ્યોગ કરી સરાસર ખોટી વાતો ફેડરેશનનાં ન્યુઝલેટર માં લખે છે!

માટે અમો ફરીથી જુદી જુદી પંચાયતો/અંબુમનોનાં ઓધ્ધેદારોને ખાસ આપીલ કર્યે છીએ કે પોતાનો આવાઝ આવા દીન દુશ્મનોની સામે હિંમત થી ઉઠાવે, અને તેઓને રોકડું પરખાવી દેકે સેક્ટરીનો જવાબદારીભર્યો ઓધ્ધો તેની જોખમદારી સમજીને અખત્યાર કરવાનો છે. બાકી આવી બેજવાબદારી વર્તાણુંક

ચલાવી લેવામાં આવશે નહિ! અમો આ સાથે ફેડરેશનનાં સભ્યોને ફરીથી એ પણ ચેતવણી આપીએ છીએ કે પેલી “વિશ્વ જરથોશતી સંસ્થા” (World Body) કોઈ બીજી રીતે પોતાનું માથું ઊંચકવાની વેતરણ કરી રહી છે. So, Please! Stand up and be counted!

સુરતમાં હમદીનો માટે સારા રેસ્ટ હાઉસની તાતી જરૂર

સુરત મધે શેઠ પેસ્તનજી કાલાભાઈ વકીલનું કદીમ આતશ બહેરામ સાહેબ પારસી મહોદ્દાઓની વસાહટ થી ૧૮૨૩ નાં સાલથી સ્થપાયું છે. આ આતશ બહેરામની દીવાલને લગોલગ “તચકરા હાઉસ” પારસી વસાહટ થી વપરાસમાં હતું. તે તેમના અસલ માલીકો પાસેથી ૧૯૮૭ નાં સાલમાં તદ્દન નજીવી કિંમતે સોરાબજી કાટપીટીયા અને કેટીમાય મેવાવાલાએ ખરીદિલું. ત્યાર બાદ બન્ને વચ્ચે કાંઈક ભારે મતભેદ ઉભો થયો. કેટી મેવાવાલા ખસતાં થઈ ગયલાં. ત્યાર પછી સોરાબજી કાટપીટીયા એ પોતાની હકુમત દરમ્યાન રૂ. પિસ્તાલીસ લાખે આ મીલકત સુરત પારસી પંચાયતને વેચાણ આપેલી. ઉપરનું આગળું પાછળું અલગ.

એવું સમજાય છે કે આ મીલકત ઉતારી પાડ્યા પછી આ વિશાળ જગ્યા ૭૦૦ સમ ચોરસ વાર ઉપર સ્કુલનું આયોજન કરવાનો ઈરાદો હોય એવી હવા રતન માર્શલ તરફથી ફૂંકાય છે. જો આવું કાંઈક થાય તો તે આતશ બહેરામગ ની પવિત્રતા માટે ઘણુંજ જોખમ કારક છે. આગલા દરવાજે સ્કુલની ધમાચકડી થાય તો મોહદ્દાનો મહોલ બગડશે. સ્કુલની રીક્ષા સ્કુટર, સાઈકલ વગેરેથી મહોલ્લાના રસ્તા ઉપર તથા આજુબાજુની ગલીમાં ટ્રાફિક જામ થશે! બહારગામવાસી પારસી જરથોસ્તીઓને ગાડી ઊભી કરવાને વિટંબણા થશે

આજની તારીખમાં આતશ બહેરામના પાછલા દરવાજે આ કોસ્મોપોલીટન સ્કુલમાં (૨૮૦૦ વિદ્યાર્થીઓની સંખ્યા વરસે પારસીઓ ૧૦૦ થી કમી) ના આધારે ટ્રાફિક દુષણ ઉભું થઈજ ગયું છે. આજે બાગે પારસી આદરીયાન સાહેબના મોહલ્લામાં કોસ્મોપોલીટન પટેલ ગર્લસ સ્કુલ આવેલી છે. તેમાં ૨૩૦૦ વિદ્યાર્થીઓની સંખ્યામાં ફક્ત ૨૮ પારસી છોકરીઓની હાજરી છે! તે અંગેની ત્યાંની ટ્રાફિક હાડમારીનો અંદાજો ટ્રસ્ટી સાહેબોએ

અનુભવ્યો નથી. તેનું પૂર્નાવતન આ કદમી આતશ બહેરામ સાહેબની મીલકત આગળ ન થાય તેની સાવચેતી રાખવી જરૂરી છે. ધાર્મિક મકાનો આગળ આવા ડંગલો ઊભા કરવાનો ઈરાદો સારો નથી.

સુરત પારસી પંચાયતનાં ટ્રસ્ટીઓ ફક્ત પારસીઓથી લાભ લેવાની સંસ્થાઓ કરતાં કોસ્મોપોલીટન સ્કુલો પ્રત્યે પોતાની પબ્લીસીટી મેલવવાના હેતુથી વધુ પડતી રહેમની લાગણી ધરાવે છે. સુ. પા. પ. કોસ્મોપોલીટન સ્કુલો ઉભી કરી કમાણી કરવાનું સાધન ઉપસ્થિત કરનારી વેપારી પેઢી નથી. પહેલાં હમદીન કોમ પછી પરકોમ. **નવું ટ્રસ્ટી મંડળ આવ્યાને બે વર્ષ થવા છતાં સુરતની પારસી જનરલ હોસ્પિટલની હાલતમાં કાંઈ સુધારો નથી. કોઈ ટ્રસ્ટી વિઝિટ મારવા ત્યાં ફરકતા નથી.**

આપણી હમદીન કોમના લાભ માટે તમો શું કરી શકો છો તે વિચારો: **આજે સુરતમાં બન્ને આતશબહેરામ સાહેબોની વચ્ચે એક પણ સારા ઉતારાના મકાનની હસ્તી નથી.** જો આ જગ્યા ઉપર મુંબઈની ઠાકોરદ્વાર આગળની પાંડે ધર્મશાળા અને ઓનરશીપ રહેઠાણ જેવી રચનાનું આયોજન થાય તો પારસી કોમના હમદીનોને સારી જેવી રાહત થાય. ટ્રસ્ટી સાહેબ અને નાટચકાર યજ્ઞદીભાઈ કરંજયા અને માર્શલ સાહેબ સજોડે અવારનવર નાટકના પ્રોગામે આ મુંબઈની પાંડે ધર્મશાળાનો લાભ લઈ ચુક્યા છે. તેવોજ લાભ આ યોજનાથી હમદીનોને મળતો થાય એ ઈચ્છવા જોગ છે. કદમી આતશ બહેરામના મુતવક્ત્રીઓ અને આજુ બાજુ રહેતા પારસી હમદીનો આ બાબદમાં તમો શું કરી શકો છો?

કેરસારૂપ મર્જબાન નલ્લાદાડ
સુરત

Readers are requested to note that our Post Bag at Delisle Road postoffice has been closed.

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