

THE PARSEE VOICE

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THE MAD, MAD RUSH TO CHAOS & CONFUSION

Blame It Entirely On One Man – Berjis Desai

**Why Are AFP Honchos, Who A Few Weeks Ago Were Roaring
Like Lions About Their 21st Century October Revolution,
Now Bleating Like Nanny-Goats?**

Will Nemesis Catch Up With The AFP Bosses?

The way he has started taking violent somersaults in his write-ups, now pleading, now begging for votes for his AFP, or swearing in the name of some Fire Temple or the other, or trying to demonstrate how *dahyo doro* he is, in short, the Devil quoting the scriptures, it obviously smacks of the man virtually chucking in his towel!!

The scene at the BPP office, confusion and chaos – duplication and even triplication of the certificates, incorrect spellings in names of voters, so that the computer doesn't show the proper registration, old General Register certificates minus the mug shots of the voters, etc. etc. **do not at all reflect on the administrative staff of the Bombay Parsi Punchayet. They have worked themselves to the bone, faced the ire of some voters quietly and tried their best to help and accommodate all those who came to them with umpteen queries.**

The fault lies entirely with Berjis Desai, who spearheaded the litigation for direct franchise, who saw to it that both the single judge order

on 5th April, 2007 and the subsequent Division Bench appeal, etc. were disposed of with alarming alacrity.

So much so, that Desai's own henchman/woman, styling himself/herself "Chanakya", wrote in his/her "Maha Jung" column in The Bombay Samachar of 20th September, 2008, that, "*Record samay maan manjoori malee gayi*" = the case was decided in record time.

Why was Berjis Desai in such an unholy hurry? Because he wanted to fulfil his wild "dream", his anti-Zoroastrian, anti-Parsee agenda, which he had been propagating for years! **His was a hate campaign against our community and against our sacred religious institutions, particularly the Dakhmas!**

Today, that unholy hurry of just one man has cost the community not only hundreds of thousands of rupees, but avoidable litigation against the BPP in the Bombay High Court.

What Desai failed to perceive was that, completely overturning a 100-year-old

electoral college scheme, virtually overnight, required that the BPP should be armed with adequate manpower, a foolproof mechanism, a proper code of conduct for the contesting candidates and an adequate infrastructure, which should have been in place **before** the election actually started. No one, except this one man and his minions, would have minded if the elections would have been scheduled for late November or even December, after all the requisite paraphernalia was put in its proper place.

Today's scenario: After nearly a month of canvassing, which saw mud-slinging and muck-raking, **as expected**, of the worst kind, when some candidates splurged crores of rupees, shamelessly indulging in conspicuous consumption, when the increasing number of poor, needy Parsees, do not get a square meal a day, no right-thinking Parsee / Irani can take the slightest pride in stating that the so-called Universal Adult Franchise, the much tom-tommed phrase of the AFP and their cohorts, has been in any way successful!

Will Nemesis Catch Up With Them? Many may have forgotten that when, on the 1st April, 2005, the Bombay High Court modified the Scheme of Election to elect the BPP trustees, whereby the elected members of the Anjuman Committee would be twice the number of Donor members, Berjis Desai wrote in his "A PTA Exclusive" column, among other things, "With 30,000 adult Parsis in Mumbai..., **it is almost universal adult franchise gradually creeping in**".

On the 31st December, 2005, the Bombay Parsi Punchayet had declared in a public notice that since the new Anjuman Committee that was formed had the exact numbers required for its formation, no election was necessary for electing the new Anjuman Committee members.

At that very time, mischief-maker Desai saw to it that all the 6 trustees of the BPP unanimously asked for direct franchise from the Bombay High Court.

Today, when Berjis Desai & Co. keep pushing the panic button, because they are unsure of their candidates winning, it is those very people who were accused of "packing" the Anjuman Committee with their members, **namely WAPIZ, Dinshaw Mehta and others, will be laughing their way to the BPP board room, as Berjis Desai, in a last-ditched, desperate effort, writes a sob story in the first person singular, to the voters, beseeching them that the utter bilge he wrote in his columns for years, should best be forgotten, and that he really is a devout Zoroastrian (!) as made out in his valedictory appeal!**

Each and every voter should tell him, "Go tell that to the Marines!"

The *coup de grace*, however, was given recently by a couple of ladies, who asked, "But, who IS Berjis Desai?" A wag pip-squeaked: "**Terminator 3**".

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Objectionable Chudasama Banner

The banner of Nana Chudasama at Marine Drive near "Jazz by the Bay" makes shocking reading. It reads "Enlightened Parsis - Vote for Adult Franchise for Progress".

This seems just another wicked attempt by the AFP to garner support for their entry into the BPP. That a man of Nana's stature should actually be influencing the voting process of an educated community like the Parsees is itself not acceptable. What does Mr. Chudasama know about the REAL agenda of the AFP and its promoters?!!!

From all accounts, the AFP's campaign has lost direction and support. No wonder, in its height of desperation, it had to get a complete outsider to canvas for their deformatist agenda, which we are sure he is completely unaware of.

Our Vote goes to WAPIZ

**WAPIZ best suited to take over reins
of the Parsee community's apex body!!!**

**Community's religious institutions and way of life
safe in WAPIZ' hands**

Come election time and the community is flooded with a multitude of manifestos, each containing a lot of politically correct statements and pious resolutions of what the 'hopefuls' intend to achieve in the next 7 years in office, if elected. Various dreams are sold to the community. Most of the candidates beat around the bush and words like 'transparency', 'accountability', 'compassion' etc. are used liberally to impress.

On various matters close to our hearts like Dokhmenashini, most candidates make cryptic and wishy washy statements like they will uphold/strengthen Dokhmenashini / protect Doongerwadi, abide by the decision of the High Priests in matters of religion etc. After getting elected, most candidates forget all this and try and impose their own views on ecclesiastical matters, which they are least qualified and authorised to do.

Unfortunately, the ball game for the BPP Elections 2008 seems to have drastically changed with the entry of the unholy trinity of Rusi Dhondy of Jame, Jehangir Patel of Parsiana and Berjis Desai of Bombay Samachar. Led by the infamous Berjis Desai, whose mission in life has been to break down and do away with all that the Parsees hold dear and keeps them together, they along with their political masters, have since long been planning a takeover of the BPP. **This is the first step towards pushing their radical agenda of :**

- 1. encouraging intermarriages with the so-called purpose of increasing numbers,**

- 2. inclusion of intermarrieds and their progeny as Parsees and subsequent availment by them of the benefits of Zarthoshti religious institutions and ceremonies,**
- 3. giving their fraternity a foothold at Doongerwadi by permitting the use of Bunglis for performance of the 4 day obsequies of those who are not opting for Dokhmenashini as a mode of disposal of their departed ones,**
- 4. subsequent breakdown of Dokhmenashini and finally, closure of the Dakhmas.**

What more can one expect from a person like Berjis Desai who has openly declared that it is time that the Parsee community dies so that Zoroastrianism flourishes. The game plan was put into action some time ago and culminated in the formation of the AFP. And if the promoters of this group have such a track record, can its constituents be far behind, some of whom have histories of Deen Dushmani which could warm the cockles of Satan's heart? Of course, all of them are tight-lipped about their final objective and are happily offering platitudes to the community in the guise of offering them candidates with a 'class', an improved housing policy, etc. etc. But the million dollar question is whether the community needs professionals **who do not have time for attending to the community's problems.**

In all this, the only shining light at the end of the tunnel is the WAPIZ team of 4, consisting of Khojeste Mistree,

Yazdi Desai, Bomi Kavina and Shirin Choksey.

Why we recommend the WAPIZ Team:

- * Has sincerity of purpose and maturity of character
- * A proven track record of performance
- * Not prone to making empty promises
- * Puts its money where its mouth is for preservation of traditions and of religious institutions
- * Was responsible for stalling attempts by the BPP to become part of the cosmopolitan World Body.
- * Committed to the preservation of Dokhmenashini and Doongerwadi.
- * Opposed the FDU and its proposal to turn Udvada into a tourist centre.
- * Opposed the unfair election scheme.
- * Prevented the desecration of Kapawalla Agiary
- * Only organization fighting against out-of-turn housing allotments which is akin to electoral malpractice.

Dear Humdeens, this is indeed a make or break election!! Just as a nation gets the Government it deserves, so also the community will be saddled with leaders who will undo everything that our forefathers have

done to ensure our survival. If we wish to survive these turbulent times, it is necessary to vote wisely and put men and women of mettle in the saddle.

Do not be carried away by big and known names, false promises, fancy write-ups in the already discredited Parsi Press, lavish parties and vulgar show of wealth. Vote for sincerity, vote for stability, vote for reliability, vote for those who will uphold our way of life and most importantly, those who will protect and nurture our Religious tenets and Institutions and our Traditions.

In my humble opinion, the community will be safe in the hands of the WAPIZ Team of four.

H.M. Mistry

OUR TEAM OF 7

- (1) 4 WAPIZ candidates - Nos. 3, 15, 24 and 30
- (2) Dinshaw R. Mehta - No. 8
- (3) From among the Independents, any two may be selected :
 Arnavaz J. Mistry - No. 2
 Dr. Viraf J. Kapadia - No. 29
 Urvax K. Dhanda - No. 28

More Introspection From Candidates Needed!

Sir, In the present BPP elections, most candidates are waxing eloquent about their past achievements and their future plans for the BPP, if they get elected. In the process, many voters are unable to distinguish between chalk and cheese.

To facilitate their thinking, I believe that candidates should do some introspection and come out with some honest answers, so that tall claims need not be made by them.

My posers to the candidates:

(a) you may be a specialist in your own field, but how much of Parsi matters are you aware of? **Surely, you cannot expect to learn things, after being elected, for it would be a very costly process of trial and error!**

(b) Do you have a track record of coming out in the open and taking a firm stand on basic religious tenets and traditions, when anti-Zoroastrian controversies have come up?

(c) You are contesting the Bombay PARSI Panchayet elections. Would you honestly describe yourself as a "Parsi" in the real sense of the term? For instance, do you always wear the Sudreh and the Kusti?

(d) A trustee is not merely a "caretaker" of the vast funds and properties, but he/she is also expected to be true to the trust and faith, the community reposes in him/her. He is a role model, a leader of sorts, and, therefore, should be ethical in his personal life, too!

contd. on page 8

DINSHAW R. MEHTA - THE MAN ON THE SPOT!

Through the years, BPP trustee, Dinshaw R. Mehta has been abused, brick-batted, and pilloried for diverse "reasons". It seems that his **panoti** (Saturn cycle's influence for 7½ years or 2½ years) has been extended for the last 14 years! But, he is unfazed and unruffled. He wants to finish off the tasks he had taken upon himself for the betterment of the community, this time, hopefully, uninterrupted.

Our impression of this BPP trustee is his being virtually "omni-present"! Whenever you want him, wherever you want him, he is there!

The 'Man on the Spot!'

In the last eight years, during the different Doongerwadi controversies, Dinshaw Mehta has been present at each and every venue, we had been to. From the BPP's Board Room to the different sites we had to visit. And his contribution and support have always been positive and encouraging.

Now, that he has decided to continue with his panoti for another seven years, our vote goes to him!

* * *

VRRROOOM... SWW...OOOSH...BANG.....CRASH!!

Jimmy Mistry - Man In A Hurry?

When One Is Short On Maturity & Long On Megalomania, it spells nothing but disaster. "Walk. Don't Run" should be the motto to follow. But, is J.R. Mistry listening? Like many of his age, Jimmy, likes to live life in the fast lane. And as all those in their late thirties know very well, they ultimately end up at the top but tied up in knots! We are not just referring to his craze for high fundas and fast bikes, etc. but also to his leap-frogging, instead of baby-stepping to becoming what he proudly calls an "entrepreneur". The result? Conspicuous Consumption of the worst kind.

Ever since he started his "Parsi Resource Group", in April, 2006, the one question on the lips of every second Parsi is, where did he get the crores of rupees, so suddenly, at this young age?

Since he never obliges with a convincing answer, tongues start wagging and they wag to this day that while rags to riches stories abound both in Bollywood and real life, Mistry is a real

mystery in this regard. For months, Mistry has been shouting from the house tops that he wants to be a trustee of the BPP. As early as last year, he kept telling the priests that as he wanted to stand for the BPP elections he wanted them to garner funds for payment of premia for their mediclaim policies, which he had started!

Jimmy Mistry's Take On "State of the World Zarthushti(?) Community"

In the fall of 2007 issue of FEZANA Journal, which is the mouthpiece of the Zoroastrian Associations of USA, opinions were taken of the likes of Fezana's President, BPP's Chairman, WZO's Chairman, etc. regarding the present/future state of what they called "the World Zarthushti Community". Among them, was Jimmy Mistry of the Parsi Resource Group. This is what he said, exactly a year ago:

"I have two answers for that. First a negative comment; **what community? The religion**

will be gone by 2040 maximum, we have 750 mobeds over the age of 65, when India is rocking and rolling in money, we pay Rs.100 – Rs.110 a day (sic)...” “And now the positive comment: **the community would have grown in numbers but we have to start making adjustments now, accepting children of interfaith marriages, there is no other way**”. (All emphasis ours). **This was Jimmy Mistry, a year ago, who, a year later besides spending almost a couple of crores of rupees, just to become a trustee of the Bombay Parsi Panchayet, an absolutely honorary post, has, to win votes, started singing a different tune: he now believes that there are no declining numbers!!**

Profanation of the two Mumbai Adarans:

In his manifesto issued a month ago, Jimmy Mistry, under the heading, “5 year Record of Innovative Community Service”, says: “2003: Refurbished the Dadar - Rustom Framna Agiary, and restored it to its pristine glory (sic). The Langrana Godivala Agiary at Fountain is, also being restored”.

In the same folder, in a signed letter, he wrote: “My association with community service began over five years ago when I restored (sic) the Rustom Framna Agiary at Parsi Colony, Dadar”.

Mistry talks of “restoration” or “refurbishing” the Dadar Agiary. He also boasts of restoring the said Agiary to its “pristine glory”. The Agiary will complete 80 years in 2009. At around 38, what does Mistry or those who fawn over him, know about its “pristine glory”? Instead, as pointed out in a couple of articles in the **Parsi Tari Arsi** column in “The Bombay Samachar” of March 2003, by this editor, for the nearly 3 months that Mistry’s 60-odd non-Parsee men of the newly formed Della Tecnica, virtually took over the entire agiary, both the **Dadgah** and the **Adaran** as well as the **Koh (gumbaz)** were ruthlessly denigrated. The craze for Italian marble destroyed the **pavis** that were originally there inside the **sanctum sanctorum**. One can go and check that even today!

How can Mistry brag about an award given by Mumbai’s “Indian Heritage Society”, which, as per the opinion of its own Chairperson, is a “toothless tiger”, when the only **recognised, official** heritage body in Maharashtra is the “Mumbai Heritage Conservation Committee”?

The Langrana Godiwalla Agiary

Mistry uses the present continuous tense in August 2008, to state that this Agiary “is being restored”! How far from the truth this statement is, can be ascertained from the fact that for the last two years (since 2006), the Adaran has been languishing in the area reserved for the Dadgah. **And the Dadgah? It’s placed in a small corner in the open in the front of the building.** The Adaran was shifted two years ago, because the **gumbaz** needed extensive repairs. It is reportedly learnt that Jimmy Mistry had agreed to carry out the repair and renovation work.

But instead of tackling the main part of the edifice, Mistry is said to have taken up changes on the first floor of the Agiary, where, it is learnt, he wanted to have a small office-cum-flat, bang above the Adaran! This was rightly resented by the trustees of the Langrana Agiary. Today, the priest tending the Holy Fire lives there with his old parents.

Since that day in 2006, Jimmy Mistry has not carried out any repair or, as he puts it, “restoration work”!! (See box for Trustee’s letter in page 7).

There are rumours, and one has reason to believe them, that this brash young man has an eye on the extra FSI that a builder can get elsewhere in Mumbai, if he constructs a semi-skyscraper on the Agiary land.

Again, if a couple of candidates of the notorious AFP group win the BPP elections, there is no doubt in our mind that Jimmy Mistry will gradually side with them on policy matters. We have a sneaking suspicion that he already has a subtle nexus with the AFP.

So, our’s is a No-No vote for Jimmy Mistry!

CLARIFICATION ON THE LANGRANA GODIWALLA AGIARY RENOVATION WORK

AGIARY TRUSTEE R.D. GARDA BLOWS THE LID ON WHY JIMMY MISTRY HAS STOPPED WORK

Time and again the Trustees of the Langrana Godiwalla Agiary have been asked by the donors/people as to why the renovation work of the Agiary has been stalled and not yet completed?

Langrana Godiwalla Agiary was in a bad shape and in order to improve the condition of the Agiary, funds were collected to carry out the repair work. **Funds were generously donated by the Parsi Community**

The work was entrusted to Jimmy Mistry, since at the juncture he was adopting agiaries and helping with the restoration work.

The understanding was that the Langrana Godiwalla Agiary was to spend **13 lacs** and Jimmy Mistry would shell out the balance. That was a very kind gesture on Jimmy Mistry's part. The estimate of the entire renovation work was approx **20 lacs** as per Jimmy Mistry. The renovation work started in the last quarter of 2005 and the Atash Padshah was shifted in 2006 for the renovation of the keblah. **Till date Langrana Godiwalla Agiary has spent 10.5 Lacs for the renovation work.**

Since 2006 the main renovation work has stopped due to reasons best known to Jimmy Mistry. As per the co-ordinating Trustee, when enquired, the reason given

was his hands are full and he is busy and the work has been stalled since **1 Flat** has not yet been allotted.

As per Jimmy Mistry's **Election Manifesto**, in 2006 he has **created 2 residential flats** for the mobeds.

The Trustees would like to state that the Boywalla's accommodation has been **FALSELY** termed as **residential FLATS for the Mobeds**. There **CANNOT** be any **residential FLATS** in an Agiary.

ONLY the Trustees HAVE THE RIGHT to decide whom to allot the accommodation of the boywalla.

In the whole bargain the main purpose of Restoration / Renovation of the Langrana Godiwalla Agiary has been delayed /defeated and till now the **Atash Padshah Saheb** has been **NEGLECTED / DISPLACED**.

We **have made a WRONG CHOICE** and we apologize to our donors for the delay caused in the repairs of the Langrana Godiwalla Agiary.

Sincerely,

Sd/- (R.D. Garda)

Trustees

(Langrana Godiwalla Agiary)

Udvada Nine Families Athornan Anjuman Takes Umbrage

[In Jame Weekly of 28th September 2008, the above Anjuman thought it fit, as it has done in the past, to publish the letter of the Secretary of the Anjuman exclusively written to the Editor and Associate Editor of **The Parsee Voice!** Since the said letter was **unethically** published in Jame, we wish to let readers everywhere have a glimpse of our reply of the Udvada Anjuman. **-Editor.]**

The Secretary

Shri Udwada Nine Families Athornan Anjuman
Anjuman Office, Mirza Street, Udvada 396 180.

Dear Sir,

This has reference to your letter dated 18th September 2008 to us and to the supposed English translation published in the Jam-e-Jamshed Weekly of 28th September 2008.

At the outset, we wish to make it abundantly clear that all our write-ups so far on holy Iranshah and the Pav Mahal connected with Him have been written with only one purpose: that of preserving and protecting the divine stature and sanctity of Iranshah and the holy atmosphere prevailing in Udvada Gaam, because we firmly believe that if the Talesams of the Pav Mahal are weakened, which have through the years, due to a variety of reasons, the very existence of our religion and community is in danger. If you will care to observe the current religious and community scenario, you will realize the truth and gravity of our concerns. It is our faith in Iranshah and our desire to protect Him which makes us voice our concerns in His favour.

As is very obvious, there are no other considerations involved here **except the sanctity of Iranshah and His Pav Mahal.** However, instead of attempting to allay our fears with hard facts, you have regrettably attributed motives like 'cooking our own khichdi' and having *ulterior motives*. You have also accused us of being 'opportunists to further their own ends' etc. without substantiating these statements. We refute these wild allegations **as there is not a jot of truth in them!**

In view of the intransigent position taken by you, and as informed to you on the phone by the Editor, we see no point in attending your Anjuman meeting on 5th October, 2008.

May saner counsel prevail!

Yours faithfully,

Sd/-

(A.F. Doctor) (H.M. Mistry)

contd. from page 4 - More Introspection From Candidates Needed!

(e) Has the wealth accumulated by you so far, been achieved through honest, hard work?

(f) Is your spouse a Parsi Zoroastrian? How many of your close family members are married outside the fold? After all, as a trustee, you are supposed set an example to the community members.

(g) Are there any skeletons in your cupboard, which may tumble out later and tar your image, so as to put the community to shame?

Voters should remember that no candidate should be allowed to take the community for a ride, by giving false assurances and tall promises!

Zenobia K. Sethna