

Minutes of the meeting held in M(UD)'s Chamber
at 1.30 p.m. on 31-12-1988 in connection with
demolition of Mosque, temple and deletion of
reservation from the BARC Campus

Following were present :

1. Shri Gurunath Kulkarni, Member, AICC(I)
2. Shri M.S. Rao, Director, DEM, DAE
3. Shri B.G. Bhabiwale, Land Records & Survey Officer, DAE
4. Shri A.C. Soman, Dy.Chief Security Officer, DEM, DAE
5. Shri V.S. Mahadevan, Senior Project Engineer
CIS Group, DAE
6. Shri D.C. Desai, Dy.Municipal Commissioner
7. Shri P.M. Kale, Director Engrg. (Services & Project)
8. Shri M.G. Vasta., Dy.D.E.(D.P.)
9. Shri A.B. Bhatnagar, J.D.V. (M/N)/E
10. Shri S.L. Patil, S.E.E.P. (Eastern-Suburb) (M/N)
11. Shri S.L. Patil, S.E.E.P. (Eastern Suburb)
12. Shri S.L. Patil, S.E.E.P. Zone IV
13. Shri V.P. Patil, Joint Secretary, UDD
14. Shri N.S. Patil, J.E. UDD
15. Shri B. Bhushan, S.I. CIS Group, DAE

M(UD) was in chair. Prof. Javed Khan MS(Edu.) was also present.

At the outset, M(UD) explained the purpose of calling the meeting which was to review the action initiated by BARC for demolition of un-occupied Mosques and temples in the area and to review the decision regarding deletion of Recreation Ground Play Ground reservations from the BARC Campus in Payalipada Village at Trombay.

3. Shri M.S. Rao, Director of Estate Management, Department of Atomic Energy drew attention of the Hon'ble Minister to the appointment in early sixties of a High Power Committee by Maharashtra Government to look into the security and public safety aspects arising from location of Atomic Energy Establishment at Trombay, consisting of the then Municipal Commissioner, then Secretary, Urban Development Department and a representative from the Department. The said Committee went in depth and breadth into public safety and security aspects and submitted its report sometime in 1963. Thereafter, the Maharashtra Government, which accepted the recommendations of the Committee, issued an order, notifying, inter-alia, the area to the south of Sion-Trombay Road (falling within the radius of 1.6 kms. from the research reactors at BARC) as Zone-I and earmarking the same for the exclusive use of the Department. In pursuance of this order, Maharashtra Government also notified and acquired, barring a few pockets, the areas falling in Zone-I for the Department. The attention of the Hon'ble Minister was also drawn to the proposal, which is pending with Government of Maharashtra for acquisition of the remaining pockets of land falling within Zone-I. The Bombay Municipal Corporation also agreed to exchange the Janata Colony area of 55 acres of land falling within Zone-I for another piece of land at Cheeta Camp, shifted Janata Colony in 1976 to Cheeta Camp and handed over vacant possession of the land after demolishing the various residential structures in the area. However, keeping in mind the religious feelings, an undertaking was reached between the Department and BMC on the one hand and between BMC and the Janata Colony residents on the other, to allow Janata Colony residents use of the various places of worship in erstwhile Janata Colony area until the alternative places of worship were developed. Between 1976 & 1983, the Janata Colony residents themselves had demolished a number of places of worship which included temples and mosques. At the

meeting held in January 1981 between the officials of the Department and the representatives of Muslim Seva Committee/ Sunnath Jamat, the representatives of Muslim Seva Committee/ Sunnath Jamat indicated that they were not in a position to demolish the various places of worship in the erstwhile Janata Colony area and that it was either for the Department or BMC to carry out the demolition. Subsequent to the above, the Minister was also informed of the demolition of at least five such structures and that four temples, one mosque and one church are still in use and yet to be demolished. Both Gamdevi Temple and Noor-E-Masjid in question were not in use and that the same were in the custody of the Department. In the case of Gamdevi Temple, the Temple belonged to the Deonar Villagers and the trustees were allotted an alternative site along the Sion-Trombay Road. The Trustees shifted the idol in March 1988 and reinstalled the same in the newly constructed structure at the alternative site. Further, in the case of the existing places of worship in Anushakti Nagar, BMC had written to the Department in 1983 that the Corporation had fulfilled its obligation, viz. allotment of alternative site to the original trustees and it was for the Department to decide whether to retain the old unauthorised structures or to demolish the same. The Department could not, however, demolish some of the places of worship as the same were handed over by the original trustees to the various organisations formed by DAE employees allotted accommodation in Anushakti Nagar belonging to different linguistic, caste and regional groups. Instances of some of the structures put up unauthorisedly by employees in the colony were also cited and of the official move by the Department with the concerned organisations to reduce the number of places of worship by amalgamation.

Advocate Shri Kulkarni pointed out that, earlier in a similar situation, after demolition of a mosque, the BARC

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officials had held a meeting in 1981 with Muslim Seva Committee/ Sunnath Jamaat when a specific assurance was given by the Chairman, SARC that henceforth no religious structures would be demolished. He contended that this assurance should be honoured and no such structures should be demolished in future.

Shri Desai, Dy. Municipal Commissioner, BMC, pointed out that apart from the unauthorised religious places in Anushakti Nagar, there are a number of unauthorised religious structures all over Chembur area, which can any time create communal tensions.

M(UD) observed that in demolishing a religious structures, utmost care need be taken and it must be ensured that before taking any such action the local representatives of the people, the BMC officials and the police officials are taken into confidence, he also observed that one reason for unauthorisedly putting up of religious places is, their comparative shortage in view of growing population and the difficulties in getting permission for development for religious purposes. Minister suggested that the remaining structures housing various places of worship could be shifted to another site outside Anushakti Nagar. Minister, therefore, desired that a proper survey of area to assess the real need of the religious places need be carried out. He directed the BMC officials to undertake site visits and identify the required number of religious places for each community. The Minister also nominated a Committee with representatives from BMC, State Govt. and directed that Shri M.S. Rao should be associated in the deliberations of the Committee for possession of alternative sites on State Govt. land outside Anushakti Nagar. Minister himself would take a round and would pursue the matter with Home Department for getting early permission for such identified sites.

The other item for discussion was removal of P.G. Reservation near Payalipada Gaathan. Payalipada residents' demand was P.G. Reservation should not be deleted. Shri M.S. Rao stated that if additional FSI for Homi Bhabha Centre for Science Education is

given, the Department could consider retaining some land in P.G. Reservation. The Minister also agreed to consider grant of extra FSI for the land to be kept as open for use as playground for Payalipada villagers and suggested to send a concrete proposal for the consideration of the Government. Till that time Government's earlier decision communicated to BMC issued by vide letter No. TPB/2640/RDP/M-Ward/Sr.No.115/UD-11 dated 7-12-1988 deleting the P.G. (Re.Nos.170, 179) be stayed.

Shri M.S. Rao further informed that the Department has been allowing the use of the burial ground used by Muslims/Hindus/Christians of Janata Colony residents though the burial ground in question is on DAE land and though the Janata Colony was shifted in 1976 and that the State Government had granted about 7 acres of land at Cheeta Camp Colony residents and requested to expedite development of the burial ground at Cheeta Camp so that the residents of the Cheeta Camp who are presently put to lot of inconvenience could start using the burial/cremation ground at Cheeta Camp.

M(UD) also desired that the work of reclamation of cemetery at Cheeta Camp area should be expedited and BMC may undertake the work of developing burial ground and cemetery in the portion already reclaimed and suggested that the facility of burial may be afforded to Cheeta Camp Colony residents in places wherever the development work is completed and remaining area is developed simultaneously.

Shri M.S. Rao also drew Minister's attention to some of the matters pending with State Government, viz. grant of additional land for shifting of Chikkuwadi, acquisition of remaining pockets of land in Anushakti Nagar area, acquisition of land for NPC, acquisition of land for various Co-Op. Housing Societies formed by employees, etc. and that he would be calling on the Minister with prior appointment so that some

of these pending issues could be resolved with the help of the Minister. The Minister agreed that he could call on him with the pending matters.

Meeting ended with a thanks to the Chair.