

“My Time Is Yours...”



Urvax Kekhashru Dhanda
For BPP Trusteeship

I, Urvax Kekhashru Dhanda, hailing from a humble Parsi family from an illustrious town, Navsari, where from childhood to our formative prime youth, the faith in religion & customs, the discipline, love, care and respect to the elders were imbibed and engrained. On completion of my high school education in Navsari, I came to Mumbai.

The shelter being the crucial one came from the blessing and foresight of the Gamadia Parsi Boys Hostel from where I completed my Studies. After that I stayed in Sanatoria for six years. Even after marriage I continued to stay there till the BPP allotted a flat at Godrej Baug, by that time my son was 4 yrs old.

I choose my career path in Mumbai to be an Entrepreneur, and after trying various avenues including a travel agency, by dint of hard work now I am settled in Construction business in partnership. This in essence sums up the path encountered by me as a parsi student, as a parsi youth, as a parsi entrepreneur in building my career and establishing a parsi family of four. Hence I am genuinely aware of the hardships faced by those who have housing problems for settling in life.

A time has come for me to give back to the Parsi/ Irani Community at large, my emotions, experience and successes on a larger scale by devoting my maximum time, in a capacity of a Trustee at our

august institute “The Bombay Parsi Panchayet Funds & Properties”, in a big way by filling up a seat to represent the mass of COMMON PARSIS/ IRANIS, by way of empowering and helping them to sustain themselves. My initial humble contribution and services rendered passionately, over the years, are summarized below:

MY CONTRIBUTION TO THE COMMUNITY:

- To mitigate the hardship of periodical renewal of Leave & License Agreements and frequent paying of stamp duty, I spearheaded the movement towards exempting the Licensees from paying the stamp duty. In this regard I, along with two colleagues had also approached the then Honorable Chief Minister Mr. Sushil Kumar Shinde and the Revenue Department in the year 2004. The matter is still pending at that level. My colleagues and I had also approached BPP to do away with the Leave and License system.

- As the President of the Godrej Baug Residents Welfare Association for last three consecutive terms have: - (a) Solved the acute long standing water problems at Godrej Baug. The entire funds for which were raised through political contacts. (b) Godrej Baug did not have a proper motorable approach road to the baug and I initiated the relaying of road from Hyderabad Estate to Shimla House / Godrej Baug.
- At the time when Senior Citizens of above 60 years of age were not being covered under Mediclaim Policy, Godrej Baug Residents Welfare Association under my leadership as its President had set up a Cashless Group Mediclaim policy for all the members of the community may it be Athornan or Behdin. We have covered senior citizens up to the age of 85 years.
- Organized Camps for total health check up for the community which has helped many individuals to become aware of their health ailments.
- Helping & guiding students from small towns/cities as well as Mumbai for admission in schools /colleges in Mumbai and also to gather funds for their education.
- Looking at my social background I was approached by a Trustee of the Langrana Agiary to help in their fund raising drive.
- As a helpful and dedicated member of the Zoroastrian Children's Foundation, I have helped consistently to organize summer camps and swimming camps. I offer my time and service for all these activities, selflessly and without any hope and expectation of a reward, also making great efforts to incorporate children from other states in all such activities of Zoroastrian Children's Foundation.
- As a part of my social activities I have distributed grains and other food items (Anaajdaan) at Doongerwadi, widow's chawls and Earnest Bourjes Home for Cancer Patients.

This is my humble contribution to the community.

MY MISSION STATEMENT

I am sure my fellow Parsi/Irani Zoroastrians will consider me an appropriate candidate for Trusteeship, I assure you that I will continue to work diligently for the beneficiaries, as per the Trust Deed of BPP, and allocate most of my time during the seven year term. The Settlers have made the Trustees the caretakers of their properties to look after the welfare of the community, of which I have been a beneficiary, and now time has come to give back my service to further the cause of current parsi community building, and the aims of the Trust. Discussion and decision on religion by Vada Dasturji's and Eminent Religious Scholars shall be well honored and respected. A very strong Belief in Dokhmenashini would be fully supported, and our Dokhmas and its lands be used and safeguarded; its caretakers community of Poll bearers, Priests and working staff be well respected, and taken good care of to meet with the ever growing inflationary trend. As a Trustee I would pursue with my fellow Trustees on Board to give priority to the following:

HELP THE NEEDY SENIOR CITIZEN:

Be available to answer and provide needs of the Senior Citizens' by looking after the daily requirements, of the needy aged, not only residing in homes or widow's chawls, but also those residing in private buildings or colonies, who do not approach the trust for help out of their self respect. Such members should be helped in cash or kind by providing them with grains, healthy foods, medicines, clothes and to ensure their safety and security. To identify such persons, help from various local Associations should be taken. BPP should explore avenues to help such aged to earn their livelihood if they wish to engage themselves and remain active. To mentally occupy themselves, enable them to contribute their skills and experience, to the surrounding youth of our community.

HELPING THE YOUTH:

Education:

Guiding and supporting the Parsi/Irani youth in Education. Build them to stand on their feet, to be leading citizens of India and be self-sustaining. To encourage and help them join Government Services to become IAS, IRS officers, Entrepreneurs, Professionals, Artisans, Sport Stars and Researchers and be Leaders in their right field.

Besides giving funds for education, to explore the possibility of providing higher education at Junior/Degree College. BPP should move in this direction to request the other Trusts who are running schools where only handful Parsi/Irani students attend, to convert those school to Junior/Degree College, where priority to be given to Parsi/Irani Zoroastrians. If required assist those Trusts to convert such schools into Colleges. To setup Coaching classes where free/concessional Tuitions should be given to Parsi/Irani Students from Std VIII onwards.

EDUCATIONAL FINANCE:

Education finance should not be limited to particular fields i.e. Doctors, Chartered Accountants, and Lawyers, but also in other fields. For Scholarships,

youngsters are made to run from pillar to post. BPP should take steps to minimize this difficulty by approaching other Trusts giving Educational Finance for forming a centralized system. Education abroad is becoming terribly expensive and the Parsi/Irani Trusts with their limited funds are not able to raise the sufficient amount. To ensure that students get the necessary funds at minimum interest looking to the family financial status.

SPORTS:

BPP should encourage outstanding sportspersons for State, National and International Events, by arranging special coaching, providing equipments & gears and also provide required funds to them.

EMPLOYMENT:

Presently BPP is running an Employment Bureau on a small scale basis. Parsi/Irani Industrialists as well as those holding higher position in company be requested to give the list of opening in their organizations so that persons registered under the BPP bureau can be helped.

ACCOMODATION:

Tenancy;

The present system of allotting flats on leave and license basis has elevated level of annoyance. Legal heirs are also presently required to execute the Leave & License Agreements and the payment of the periodical registration fees adds to the additional expenditure being incurred apart from the rent increase. The Leave & License Policy should be reviewed to mitigate the registration fees as it is an additional expense being borne by the occupants and they be accepted as tenants. I would regard my endeavour to have this measure developed, as a leading example, which is now being followed by several others. A TOP PRIORITY WILL BE GIVEN FOR ALL THE LEAVE & LICENSE AGREEMENTS TO BE CONVERTED WITHIN A FRAMEWORK OF THREE MONTHS.

Maintenance & Repairs:

BPP should immediately look into the matters of maintenance and repairs of all the buildings.

HOUSING:

Pending Application:

Analyze reasons for very old applications pending on the housing list and such applications to be scrutinized, interview the applicants, and take decision within a framework of a year. Review and Revise the Merit Rating Scheme on more practical basis.

Create Further Housing Stock:

Construction of new Multistoried Buildings & redevelopment of old buildings, by taking advantage of the Government policy will enables us to clear the pending applications. If such projects are clean and transparent, BPP will surely get funds for the same. Further Housing projects should take into consideration the expanding of the family therefore minimum of 2 Room Kitchen flats should be provided. To explore innovations and plan in utilizing, community assets efficiently to realize a distant dream of wiping out community poverty, and having comfortable large homes for all.

Pending Litigation:

All suits filed to be reviewed in chronological order and settlement to be arrived at wherever feasible.

CRÈCHE:

The BPP is paying Rs. 300/-per month for their Day care of the child, which people are not aware. BPP could explore the possibility of having their own crèches.

MEDICAL:

The Cashless Group Mediciam Policy should be introduced, for the community irrespective of any age. A subsidized amount where low income groups (a particular income norm can be fixed) who cannot afford large yearly premium, can pay a part amount and feel secure for themselves and their family members to face the medical problems which may

arise. Subsequently, if need be, the premium for the poor can be borne by the BPP.

WELFARE OF THE COMMUNITY:

Welfare of the community to be taken care of far and wide, reaching out to every family in need, and in times of calamity. This includes Health and Education of the masses of our community, by helping them to generate their contribution, and become self-sustaining. To encourage and assist in building larger parsi / irani population. To involve youth in the expansion of Parsi / Irani community.

My dear fellow Parsi/Irani Zarthostis, in the conclusion of my manifesto I would only say that I am young, energetic, have love and zeal for my community, building on greater Brand Equity Value of Parsis / Iranis, which would safeguard and preserve our community from longer perspective point of view, hence have immense desire to serve my community which I was doing, am doing and will continue to do so.

*Dawn Of A
New Leadership*

**For The People,
Of The People,
By The People**

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