

# FORUM FOR A BETTER HYDERABAD

(Private Circulation only)

Compiled by : R.K. Sinha

### URBAN PLANNING – GHMC Area

The FORUM in its letter dt. 3.9.2013 addressed to Shri N.Kiran Kumar Reddy, Chief Minister, has submitted detailed reasons against proposal to merge 15 Gram Panchayats with the current GHMC area. An extract from the letter is reproduced.

“We (i.e The Forum) hope that the government will reconsider the decision in light of the above arguments and pursue a policymaking path that will truly aim at creating a livable city and region for all economic and social groups. In this connection, we cannot help pointing out that the government has taken the decision to merge 15 GRAM PANCHAYATS without prior consultation with the Gram Panchayats, the political parties, not to speak of the NGOs concerned with urban planning. This is very arbitrary and undemocratic.”

The Forum’s views were widely published in the news papers of 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> Sept, 2013.

## Forum Opposes Merger of Panchayats With GHMC

### Express News Service

**Hyderabad:** Expressing reservations over the state government merging 15 panchayats of Ranga Reddy district with Greater Hyderabad, president of the Forum for Better Hyderabad M Vedakumar has said that the decision was undemocratic.

In a letter addressed to chief minister N Kiran Kumar Reddy on Tuesday, he also raised other objections.

Vedakumar said the merger of the panchayats with Greater Hyderabad is a step towards centralisation of power, which

is against the spirit of the 74th amendment of the Constitution that seeks to promote local participation in planning and development.

Concentration of administration and planning in the city over the last several years without a matching effort at regional planning and development has already created a serious imbalance. Adding a few more panchayats is another step in the same direction, he said.

In a press release, Vedakumar said decentralised governance involving the local community is a key to sustainable cities.

As o now, the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) is not able to address the basic problems of the city's residents, he said.

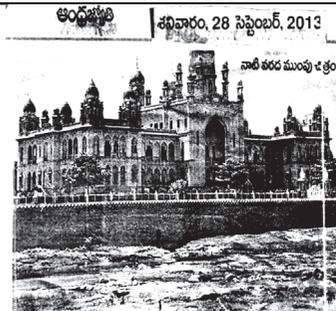
Proposing an alternative to the merger of surrounding village: with the GHMC, the Forum said that the Hyderabad Metropolitan Planning Committee (HMPC) can be the planning and regulatory body, while the municipalities and gram panchayats in the metropolitan area can have self-governance within the framework of the development plans prepared by HMPC.



ప్రాణ దాత చింతచెట్టు వద్ద ప్రసంగిస్తున్న వేదకుమార్

### నిజాం దార్శనికత నేడేదీ?

• ఉస్మానియా చింతచెట్టు వద్ద ప్రసంగిస్తున్న వేదకుమార్  
అప్పటిగంజ్, సెప్టెంబర్ 27 (టీ వీ డి యా): నిజాం కాలంనాటి ముందుమాపు నేటి పాలకుల్లో లోపించిందిని ఫోరం ఫర్ బెటర్ హైదరాబాద్ అధ్యక్షుడు వేదకుమార్ అన్నారు. ఒక ఉత్సాహం సంభవస్థి గుణపాఠంగా తీసుకుని కాళ్ళత పరిష్కారం చూపిన విధానాలు నేడు తరువయ్యాయున్నాయి. 1908 నాటి మానీ చందలో ఉస్మానియా ఆస్పత్రి అవరణలోని ఓ చింతచెట్టు 155 మందికి ఆసురా గానిలివి ప్రాణదానం చేసిన సంఘటనకు శుక్రవారం నాటితో 105 వూర్తయ్యాయి. ఈ సందర్భంగా ఫోరం ఫర్ బెటర్ హైదరాబాద్ ఆస్పత్రిలోని ఆ చింతచెట్టు వద్ద సభ నిర్వహించింది. సంస్థ అధ్యక్షుడు వేదకుమార్ నాటి పుట నను వదిలివేసి చరలను స్వయం నివసించి నిజాం వేదేశాల్లో ఉన్న ప్రభుత్వ పాజీ సిర్ మెకాన్లందం విశేషశ్రద్ధలను పిటిసింది ప్రణాళికలు రూపొందించి హైదరాబాద్లో నిర్మాణాలు చేపడితే నేటి పాలకులు సెజ్ల వేరిటన్లను సైవేట్లకు దాదాపులే చేస్తున్నారన్నారు. ప్రజల శ్రేయస్సుకు సరైన మాస్టర్ ప్లాన్ కావాలన్నారు. కార్పొరేషన్లో చట్ట సంస్థ ప్రతినిధి అభ్యుత్థాయి. హైదరాబాద్ హెరిటీజ్ ట్రస్ట్ నాయకులు సఫుల్లా అహ్మద్ వన్ సంస్థ ప్రతినిధి సంఘమిత్ర ముల్క్, టీఆర్ఎస్ ప్రతినిధి విద్యార్థి, ఆంధ్రీయా మైన్స్ డైరెక్టర్ అసోసియేట్ నాయకులు శంభుధర్, పూజారి సర్పంచ్ రావు, ఎన్ రాజలింగం, ఆర్ఎంఓ-1 ఆంజయ్య, టీజీఎం ఉస్మానియా అధ్యక్షుడు డాక్టర్ నోందర్ తక్, కాసింగ్, మెడికల్ జేపీ సైబల్, డాక్టర్ రాజశ్రీరావు, దంత వైద్యుడు వెంకటేశ్వర్లు, చందూర్, కాంత, పులులూ మాజీ కార్పొరేటర్ వై కృష్ణ పాల్గొన్నారు.



సమగ్రమైన మాస్టర్ ప్లాన్ 'రూపొందించాలి' చింత చెట్టు వద్ద ప్రజలు  
అప్పటిగంజ్ : నూరలో కృష్ణా అవధానం లంగా మున్నెండు మాత్రాకామి రూపొందిం చింత చెట్టు వద్ద ముంబయి అసెంబ్లీ రియలండ్ ఫోరం ఫర్ బెటర్ హైదరాబాద్ కార్యకర్త వేదకుమార్ అన్నారు. మాజీ వరలండ్ మంత్రి (1908 సెప్టెంబర్ 27) సమయంలో 155 మంది కాచితే చింతచెట్టు వద్ద శుక్రవారం ప్రజల దర్శనం. ఫోరం ఫర్ బెటర్ హైదరాబాద్, మెడికల్ కాళి, టీజీఎం, కీజీ, ఇతర సంస్థల అధ్యక్షులు ఈ కార్యక్రమం నిర్వహించారు. ఈ సందర్భంగా వేదకుమార్ మాట్లాడుతూ నాటి వరలండ్ రాష్ట్రం 15 మేల మంది చింతచెట్టు వద్ద ప్రజల దర్శనం. మాజీ వరలండ్ మంత్రి (1908 సెప్టెంబర్ 27) సమయంలో 155 మంది కాచితే చింతచెట్టు వద్ద శుక్రవారం ప్రజల దర్శనం. ఫోరం ఫర్ బెటర్ హైదరాబాద్, మెడికల్ కాళి, టీజీఎం, కీజీ, ఇతర సంస్థల అధ్యక్షులు ఈ కార్యక్రమం నిర్వహించారు. ఈ సందర్భంగా వేదకుమార్ మాట్లాడుతూ నాటి వరలండ్ రాష్ట్రం 15 మేల మంది చింతచెట్టు వద్ద ప్రజల దర్శనం. మాజీ వరలండ్ మంత్రి (1908 సెప్టెంబర్ 27) సమయంలో 155 మంది కాచితే చింతచెట్టు వద్ద శుక్రవారం ప్రజల దర్శనం. ఫోరం ఫర్ బెటర్ హైదరాబాద్, మెడికల్ కాళి, టీజీఎం, కీజీ, ఇతర సంస్థల అధ్యక్షులు ఈ కార్యక్రమం నిర్వహించారు.

### ENVIRONMENT : FORESTS : Eco Tourism Project

The FORUM on 18.10.2013 has submitted a 20 point representation to the Chairman, State Level Environment Impact Assessment Authority, Hyderabad against the proposed eco-tourism project in Kothaguda Reserve Forest (Serilingampally Mandal). Two extracts from the letter are given below:

“Finally, we may state that the Hon’ble Supreme Court of India had clearly laid down the law on environmental matters and made it abundantly clear that natural resources are the public trust and they are meant for public use and enjoyment and the State is the trustee under legal duty to protect these natural resources. They also made it clear that Public Trust Doctrine is applicable to forests and the Government is obliged to protect them than to

### ENVIRONMENT- Musi River

On 27<sup>th</sup> September, 2013 at 11.30a.m. Centre for Deccan Studies, Telengana Resource Centre, and Forum For A Better Hyderabad had organized a Memorial & Solidarity Meet under the great Tamarind Tree that had saved 150 lives during Musi Floods of 1908. The purpose was to pay homage to the victims of the Musi Floods and to ensure protection of our city, Hyderabad and heritage for future generations.



NGOs...Prof.G.Haragopal, Sri.M.Vedakumar, Sri.Chukka Ramaiah, Sri.O.M.Debara and others are speaking to the press people after meeting the Chairman, SLEIAA,Hyderabad at APPCB, at Sanathnagar, Hyderabad

permit their use for private ownership or commercial purposes. We particularly invite attention to the Apex Court Judgment dated 26<sup>th</sup> September 2005 in T. N. Godavarman Thirumalpad V. Union of India in WP (C) No. 202/95 with IA No. 826 in IA No. 566.”

“It is therefore requested to consider the above position of facts & law and reject the request of the developers for grant of Environmental Clearance, treating the Eco-Tourism project as prejudicial to the basic principles of environment & ecology and public interest.”

Copies of the letter were endorsed to the Member Secy.- SLEIAA and Shri L.K.Bhoopal Rao, Member SLEIAA.

**HERITAGE - Naya Quila Fort & Talab**

Copy of Forum’s letter dt. 30.10.2013 to the Superintending Archaeologist, ASI, Sultan Bazar, Hyderabad is reproduced.

**“Fencing around Naya qila talab, and the farmers’ land in Naya Qila Fort.**

We refer to our fax message of yesterday, exhorting you to stop the work of fencing around Naya Qila talab, as its FTL area is now sub judice before the honorable A.P. High Court. Secondly, there is an unequivocal order dt 17.3.09 by the AP High Court viz., “not to take up ‘construction’ “, and the subsequent court order dt 8.6.2010 permitted relaxation from their order dt only allowing “the grassing of the area of course under the supervision of the authorities to ensure that the contours are not changed”. Definitely, fencing is not permissible under this order as it is not grassing by any stretch of imagination. Secondly, fencing is horizontal construction, and thirdly, digging beyond one foot for non- cultivation purposes, is expressly prohibited under AM & ASR (Amendment and validation ) Act 2010, and fencing would involve digging for non-cultivation purposes. The ban on



When HGA fenced access to private land inside Nayaqila, owners of the land protested and some of them collapsed for hot sun. Police & Forum people reached the spot and discussed with the police to give access to the land owners and not to obstruct the passage to cultivate their land.

construction in HC order dt 17.3.09 also was not lifted by AP High Court in their subsequent order. The action is, therefore, clearly violative of the above two Court orders and the ASI Act.

Please stop the work and restore the earlier status.”

**ENVIRONMENT- Lakes & Water Bodies**

Copy of FORUM’s letter dt. 30.10.2013 to the Chief Secretary Govt. of A.P., is reproduced. Copies were endorsed to the Spl.Chief Secy.- YAT&C- GoAP, MD-APTDCL, Commissioner- HMDA, Commissioner-GHMC, Secretary-APPCB, Police Commissioner- Hyderabad, Police Commissioner- Cyberabad, DGP- A.P.

**“Need for regulation of commercial, entertainment activities on the shores of lakes and water bodies.**

As of now, tourism projects near the shores of lakes / water bodies are planned and executed unilaterally by the Tourism department under the guise of promoting tourism. Projects are also sometimes promoted by some

other departments unilaterally. Such projects are often conceived from the single view point of a department and fails to take a holistic view of the promotion of a lake / water body.

In view of the very welcome emphasis on protection of lakes by the government and even by the Courts, we need to change the system of promotion of a project by any single department and there is need for creating a machinery of all interested departments, even other stakeholders in conceiving and promotion of any project near a foreshore of a lake/water body.

In this context, it is pertinent to mention the recent attempt by some authority, most probably the tourism department, to post a Ganesh idol on the shores and even into , of Durgam Cheruvu lake, without approval of HMDA, Lake Authority, Police, etc. Even a structure was being created for housing the idol. The concerned authority did not realize the consequences, such as soon, the puja materials for the idol will pollute the lake, images will be dumped into the lake, and so and so forth. With great effort, this project was stopped. Recently, we came across a report in the Hindu of a plan by Tourism Department of creating tourism facilities at Shamirpet lake, by creating resorts, restaurants, etc., etc. We are afraid such plan will make Shamirpet lake shore like another polluted Hussainsagar lake area, infested with traffic pollution, eateries, melas, structures in the foreshore and even in the water body itself, destruction of natural abode of birds, etc., etc. We are afraid the model followed by tourism department is not of sustainable tourism, but tourism that kills the core quality of a lake / a site , thus kills the goose that lays golden eggs. In fact, there is an advisory against one's breathing the air on the shores of Hussainsagar lake for long as it is harmful – such is the effect of tourism projects around Hussainsagar.

We suggest :

1. A body consisting of all stakeholder government departments be formed to approve any projects on / near the foreshores of a lake / water body, consisting of : HMDA, Lake Protection Authority, AP Pollution Control Board, GHMC, Police ( for traffic planning and assessing its effect on pollution), and any other department that may be affected by a project, such as water works, forest, etc., etc. The convener will be the concerned department which moots the project, and will be presided over by HMDA. The superseding consideration will be conservation of the lake / water body and its core quality. Some conservation groups may also be associated in the process of a decision-making.

2. There must be environmental clearance for every project before it is allowed to take off.

3. As of now, we are insisting on maintaining FTL and buffer zone for a lake/water body. We may also have a “protected area” concept in addition to, or as part of a buffer zone which should then be extended, as in the case of a protected monument.

We request you to examine the matter, and meanwhile stop all projects which are not approved in the above manner”

#### **HERITAGE: Golconda Fort – Naya Quila**

Text of Forum's representation dt. 14.11.2013 to the Chief Minister, Govt of A.P., is given below. Same letter was also addressed to the Chief Secretary, Collector, Spl.Chief Secretary-YAT & C, SA-ASI.

#### **“Denial of entry into Naya Qila through the main entrance – a violation of law.**

It has come to our notice that the main entrance into the Naya Qila Fort has been closed for the public. Thereby, the public, visitors to the fort and tourists are debarred from entry into the NQ Fort , preventing them from visiting the various sites of interest, including the two mosques, Hathan ki jhar, the burges, the topes, the terrain of the area, the rock formations, the Naya Qila talab, and many other places of interest. This violates clause 2 of the MOU dated September 2009, which is appended. This further denies access to a public road, public spaces outside the ASI-approved lay out of the Hyderabad golf course. The action in closing the entrance is clearly illegal, unilateral; smacks of extreme arbitrariness and abuse of authority. The action displays arrogant arbitrariness, violating norms for a democratic system of governance and the rule of law.

We request you to immediately order the lifting of the embargo on entry through the main entrance, and take strong action against the officials and the police who have arranged this illegal closure of gate. Your immediate intervention is solicited.”

[MOU dated 23.9.2009 provides in Art 2 : “The GOAP shall ensure that public access to the monuments within NayaQila including the mosque viz., Mullah Khayali and Mustafa Khan Mosques will continue through all passages including the main entrance. While general public access to the Golf Course area is not permitted, ..... shall be ensured by the HGA that none of the members of public is prohibited from entering the NayaQila and its monuments. The security at the main entry point of the Naya Qila area would be provided by the ASI.]

#### **HERITAGE: Golconda Fort – Naya Quila**

Copy of letter dt. 16.11.2013 written by the Forum, under RTI Act, to the Public Information Officers in the offices of Spl.Chief Secretary- YAT&C, M.D- APTDC, DCP-Hyderabad, City Police, Collector & Dist. Magistrate-Hyderabad, SA- ASI Hyderabad Circle.

“Please furnish me with the following information under the Right to Information Act 2005:-

1. Whether the main public entrance to the Naya Qila Fort has been closed for entry. If so, since when ?
2. Whether the police has been provided to prevent entry through the main entrance gate ?
3. Whether only the members of the Hyderabad golf club, and those others connected with the club, are being allowed entry through the main entrance.
4. If yes to Question no 2, under which order has such action been taken. If yes to Question no 3, under which order has such action been taken. Please enclose a copy of the order(s) / a statement of the instructions if received verbally.
5. Whether you are aware that this closure of entry to the Naya Qila Fort violates article 2 of the MOU dt 23.9.2009 & certain provisions of the AM & ASR (Amendment & Revalidation) Act 2010, thereby rendering the action illegal, and the police independently liable for providing support to an illegal order. These provisions are appended.
6. Whether you will now lift immediately the police protection to the closure of public entrance, and instead, prevent any one from preventing the entry of the public through the public entrance.

A pay order for Rs 10/- is enclosed.”

The Collector & Dist. Magistrate Hyderabad was reminded on 27.11.2013 that illegal closure of public entrance continues and was requested to lift the closure.

**Extracts from the reply dt. 30.11.2013 received from the PIO, APTDC on the subject are given below:**

- Entry has never denied to every visitor and there is no exclusive preference to either Golf Club Members or to the workers working Golf Club arrangements, through main gate of Naya Quilla Fort entrance.
- On convening the Three Officers Committee meeting on Hyderabad Golf Association held on 17.10.2013 it was decided to fence, the APTDC land at (11) points with the help of Revenue Officials and Police personnel to prevent grass cutters into the APTDC land near the Naya Quila for grass cutting.
- Accordingly all the above (11) points are fenced by the APTDC and issued instructions to the Police authorities/security guards who are on duty not to allow grass cutters in APTDC Land at Naya Quila.
- The SA-ASI authorities have informed that they have also given instructions to the ASI Security guards to allow the tourists to the Naya Quila only between 8 a.m to 5 p.m.

### **HERITAGE: Golconda Fort – Naya Quila**

Copy of FORUM’s dt. 19.12.2013 to the SA, Archeological Survey of India, Sultan Bazar, Hyderabad is given below. Copies were endorsed to the District Collector & Magistrate, Spl.CS-YAT&C, MD-APTDC.

#### **Sub: Violations in NQ Fort, Nov-Dec, 2013.**

Further to our correspondence, we observe, supported by photos, that following violations of MOU of Sept, 2009 and AM & ASR 1958 & 2010 have taken place.

1. Truck loads of mud being carried through the NQ public entrance (which was and has been closed to the public) for dumping inside NQ Fort, threatening change of contour. – Photo 1
  2. Stones and boulders being carried near Hathian-ki-Jhar in farmers’ land-possible change of contour-Photo 2
  3. Sand dumped near Hathian-ki-Jhar-Change of contour-Photos – 3 & 4
  4. Dumping near Tad Burj – Change of contour – photo 5
  5. Dumping near Tad Burj – Change of contour – photo 6
- Please rectify and take suitable other preventive and punitive actions against delinquents.

### **Naya Quila- Golf Course: Massive felling of trees**

Details about illegal felling of 82 trees were provided in Forum’s News Letter 28 of May-June’ 13. Forest Department, GoAP, have imposed a penalty of Rs. 2.46 lacs on SA, ASI, which is yet to be realized. Spl. Chief Secretary & CMD-APTDC in letter dt. 13.09.2013 to the Divisional Forest Officer has stated inter-alia that SA-ASI had given permission to Hyd.Golf Association “to remove bushes and shrubs .....without causing any damages to the fort wall or any part of the monument ..... SA-ASI is neither responsible nor involved in any illegal felling of trees and requested **to** withdraw the notice (of penalty).....in the interest of Govt. work.....”

In a detailed reply dt. 26.10.2013, Divl.Forest Officer, Hyderabad has informed the Spl.CS & CMD-APTDC that keeping in view the rules and regulations and the past incidents of tree felling, it is not possible to withdraw notice issued by the Forest Range Officer.

DFO in his letter dt. 29.10.2013 (under RTI Act) has informed the Forum that on realization of the penalty amount, the ASI will be insisted to take up planting of 2 plants for 1 tree felled in the same area.

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