

From: **Jehangir Gai** <jehangir_gai@hotmail.com>
Date: Fri, Aug 28, 2020 at 10:08 PM
Subject: Re: Prayer Hall
To: Prayer Hall Trust <prayerhalltrust@gmail.com>, dinshawtamboly@gmail.com <dinshawtamboly@gmail.com>

Dear Mr. Dinshaw Tamboly,

Sorry for the delay in responding, as I was caught up in some personal issues.

You seem to be under the impression that my grievance about the Prayer Hall is restricted to the present Covid time. This is not correct. In fact, on 15th March 2019 when my mother-in-law expired and we contacted the Prayer Hall, we were very clearly told that the entire amount of Rs.36,000/- for the four days rituals (the rate prevailing then), would have to be paid regardless of whether number of ceremonies / rituals performed. In short, we would have to pay for the entire four days rituals whether the prayers were conducted or not. On inquiring about simple cremation without any ceremony whatsoever, we were curtly told that the Prayer Hall would not be made available, and we should contact the municipal authorities. Since at that point of time, the issue personally involved my immediate family, who were not in a frame of mind to take up the issue, I did not pursue the matter.

So, the exploitation of Parsees at the Prayer Hall is nothing new, and they have all along been forced to pay for the entire four days ceremonies. If this is incorrect, I would request you to substantiate whether anyone was ever charged merely for geh sarna and not for the other ceremonies?

I have placed these facts on record as I am now contemplating to take up the matter in public interest.

Best wishes and warm regards,

- *Jehangir Gai*

From: Prayer Hall Trust <prayerhalltrust@gmail.com>
Sent: 03 August 2020 15:52
To: jehangir_gai@hotmail.com <jehangir_gai@hotmail.com>
Subject: Prayer Hall

Dear Mr. Gai,

Further to the WA messages exchanged today in respect of charges levied by Mobeds performing obsequies at the Prayer Hall, please see the two attachments, the first being a mail received from a community member and the other the response from the Prayer Hall Service & Maintenance Trust.

I would like to clarify that charging for specific prayers has always been our normal practice but it is only during the Covid Pandemic that religious heads / Panthakies who earlier had not allowed the first four days ceremonies of those opting for alternate methods of disposal to be allowed at Doongerwadi or at Agiaries, have now taken the stand that those whose demise have been on account of the pandemic could have the geh sarna performed at the cremation or burial sites and have the subsequent ceremonies performed at the Agiaries.

This is why the Priests performing ceremonies at the Prayer Hall are insisting that till such time the pandemic does not abate and things go back to normal, they would perform all the four days ceremonies at the Prayer Hall or none at all.

Family members of those who have passed on due to covid are informed that if they wish to have only the Geh Sarna done at Prayer Hall and subsequent ceremonies elsewhere, they are free to have their Panthakies / Priests perform the same. So far, none of the Panthakies have agreed to do so.

The Priests performing obsequies at the Prayer Hall are all independent entities and not controlled by us. Whilst our coordinator Er. Framroze Mirza is paid a nominal stipend by the Prayer Hall Services & Maintenance Trust, his scope of duties are only to receive calls from families wishing to undertake cremation of the deceased, arrange for the obsequies to be carried out and by and large ensure that the Prayer Hall is maintained in pristine condition.

Whilst he is answerable to the Trustees for the scope of services as a coordinator, the services that he provides as a Priest are in his personal capacity and not within our purview.

Kind regards,
Dinshaw K. Tamboly