

2. BACKGROUND & GOVERNANCE

2A. HISTORY

- In February and March and from September to December 1998, the Archives, Museum and Research Committee (indicated in this document as the AMRC) of the Avatar Meher Baba Perpetual Public Charitable Trust, Ahmednagar, MS, India (indicated in this document as the AMBPPCT) held a series of meetings to begin developing a Collection Management Policy.
- Those participating in the development of this policy were committee members V.S.Kalchuri (Bhau), Meheru R. Irani, Meherwan B. Jessawala, and Framroze J. Mistry (Falu); and the core group of Janet Judson, Meredith Klein, Shridhar Kelkar, Mehera Arjani, Kristin Crawford and Dot Lesnik. This Collection Management Policy defines the purpose, scope, objectives, activities, guidelines and procedures of the AMRC.
- During those meetings, it was decided that the letter from the Meherazad Mandali entitled: “The Wish of the Mandali now living at Meherazad” dated 5th October, 1993 (2D) and the 1993 Committee Deed (2E) be on record as the original governing documents of the Archives, Museum and Research Committee.
- When the original governing documents were written in 1993, it was intended by the Meherazad Mandali that the focus of the committee’s work would be at Meherazad.
- On 2nd January, 1995 the tabulation of Baba items began at Meherazad. On that day the bore-well supplying water to Meherazad ran dry, and the work was postponed in order to take care of this emergency. Some weeks later Mani discussed the following with the Mandali and members of the Archives, Museum and Research Committee: She said she had been puzzling over why such a severe water shortage had started at Meherazad on the day that tabulating began there. She felt Baba was indicating that Meherazad should not move in the direction of becoming a centre for activity as Meherabad is. She felt that Baba was pointing out that Meherazad should remain as it had always been, His home with its unique and intimate atmosphere. Those pilgrims who would savour sitting in the garden in which He had walked, perhaps drinking a glass of the same

well-water He had drunk, would always be drawn by His presence there. She proposed that the major buildings and focus of the work should move to Meherabad, and all concerned were in agreement with this.

- Therefore, the main facility for storing, preserving and safeguarding archival materials and collection items was designed for a site at Meherabad and is currently under construction there. A small storage facility is proposed for Meherazad, where work will be done on a smaller scale. Future facilities for display, research and study will be built at Meherabad.
- The historic buildings, structures, grounds and sites at Meherabad, Meherazad and Meher Nazar that were used by Baba and existed during His lifetime are now included in the Scope of Collection.
- Meherazad Trust for Avatar Meher Baba (as referenced in 2D and 2E) signed a Deed of Revocation and Meherazad property was transferred to Avatar Meher Baba Perpetual Public Charitable Trust, King's Road, Ahmednagar (M.S.) 414 001 on 15th March, 1999. Accordingly, any relevant references made to Meherazad Trust for Avatar Meher Baba in this document should be understood to mean Avatar Meher Baba Perpetual Public Charitable Trust.

2B. STRUCTURE OF THE AMRC

- Decisions of the AMRC are made by a majority vote of its members.
- In the event that members of the AMRC disagree amongst themselves regarding the implementation of policies and guidelines laid out in the Collection Management Policy, then the AMBPPCT has the responsibility of resolving issues and disputes.
- Financial decisions and any Amendments to the Collection Management Policy are approved and passed by a Board resolution of the AMBPPCT.
- The AMRC functions under the authority of the AMBPPCT with regards to the sharing of the Collection, as outlined in this Collection Management Policy.
- The AMRC holds regular meetings. There is also an annual general meeting to elect members and chairperson; to discuss and evaluate the ongoing care, maintenance and management of the collection; and to review and revise the Collection Management Policy, as needed.
- The Chairman of the AMBPPCT shall automatically be a member of the AMRC.
- One other Trustee of the AMBPPCT, suggested by the AMRC and approved by the Board of AMBPPCT, shall be a member of the AMRC.
- In addition to the Chairman and one Trustee of the AMBPPCT, the members of the AMRC shall be comprised of three other dedicated members. All members of the AMRC should be local residents, with at least one member residing at Meherabad and one member residing at Meherazad, in order to maintain a balanced representation of members from each place where the collection is kept.
- The AMRC selects new members by a majority vote. This selection of a new member by the AMRC must also be ratified by a majority vote in a resolution of a meeting of the Board of Trustees of the AMBPPCT.

- The removal of any AMRC member from the committee will require all of the following :
 - conduct of the member is determined to be detrimental to the purpose and functions of the AMRC
 - a vote to remove the member by 3 of the 4 other AMRC members
 - a vote to remove the member by majority of the Trustees of AMBPPCT
- The AMRC sets up subcommittees and appoints associates, assistants and volunteers, as it finds necessary.
- The AMRC is required to submit a biannual Status Report to the AMBPPCT.

2C. HISTORIC BUILDINGS, STRUCTURES AND THEIR CONTENTS HISTORIC GROUNDS AND SITES

- The committees concerned with systems and grounds maintenance of historic buildings, structures, grounds and sites (Electric Committee, Maintenance Committee, Gardening Committee, etc.) at Meherabad, Meherazad and Meher Nazar will meet regularly with the AMRC or their representatives for the purposes of consultation and the exchange of information, and for discussion of proposed work during the coming year.
- Committees or persons who are concerned with the maintenance and care of interiors, contents and furnishings of historic buildings at Meherabad, Meherazad and Meher Nazar will also meet regularly with the AMRC or their representatives to share information and discuss any proposed changes, new work or procedures.
- The committees concerned with systems and grounds maintenance at Meherabad, Meherazad and Meher Nazar will discuss and decide with the AMRC any proposed renovations or improvements to historic buildings and structures (including interiors), grounds and sites.
- The AMRC will recommend that one or more AMRC members or their representatives be placed on the Maintenance Committees of Meherabad, Meherazad and Meher Nazar as a consultant for the preservation of historic buildings and structures (and their contents), grounds and sites when it deems necessary.

**2D. THE WISH OF THE MANDALI NOW
LIVING AT MEHERAZAD**

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" Meherazad "
P.O. Pimpalgaon-Malvi
Tal. & Dist. Ahmednagar
(M.S.)

5th October, 1993

To:
Mrs. A.N. Dadachanji
" Meherazad "
P.O. Pimpalgaon-Malvi
Ahmednagar (M.S.)

THE WISH OF THE MANDALI NOW LIVING AT MEHERAZAD

We have been asked by you as the Settlor of "Meherazad Trust for Avatar Meher Baba" to express our wish concerning the Property now under the said Trust and concerning the articles used by Beloved Avatar Meher Baba during His physical lifetime. It is clear to all who know us that we have been following Beloved Avatar Meher Baba's Wish since the time we joined Him and started living with Him, and therefore His Wish has become our very life. Meherazad Property and the articles He has used have become the part of our life in Him. We observe that every particle of Meherazad Property is sanctified by His Presence and every leaf of the plants and trees and every flower give the fragrance of His Loving Presence. In the birds that sing here we find the melody of His Divine Song, and His Seclusion Hill gives us the message that He alone exists and therefore false existence must be relinquished. We have witnessed our Beloved Baba in Seclusion here from time to time. Here we have also observed Him serving the Lepers and in Poor Programmes arranged at His direction, and doing very important work with the Masts and also giving darshan to His lovers from India and abroad. Here we observed His Infinite suffering for the Universe and also have observed His Infinitely sweet smile imparted great assurance and solace to His lovers in particular and to the world in general.

We lived with Him when He was physically present and now although He is eternally present in our hearts, His followers and lovers cannot avail of His incomparable physical Presence. They can however avail of the history of His day to day life here, the buildings in which He resided, and the articles He used during His physical life-time for His Universal Work. These Relics are so Divine that the people visiting Meherazad feel His physical Presence as well as His eternal Presence.

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Therefore we feel that the buildings and structures and the precious articles worn or used by Him personally and especially the infinitely precious strands of hair or nail trimmings from His actual Person should be preserved with utmost care for posterity as well as for contemporary humanity.

Therefore in order to please our Beloved Avatar Meher Baba and in order to please His lovers and posterity, by keeping the entire Meherazad Property intact with the history of His Life and Works, we the Mandali express the following wish in this matter:

1. (A) A committee should be formed with not less than 3 nor more than 5 persons, under the guidance of the Mandali and the present caretakers who have also renounced the world leading a dedicated life to serve His Cause and who are living at Meherazad for this purpose only.
- (B) We wish that the initial Committee Members shall consist of the following persons: i. Mr. Bhau Kalchuri, ii. Miss Meheroo Irani, iii. Mr. Meherwan Jessawala and iv. Mr. Framroze Mistry.
- (C) The Committee should prepare a complete Inventory of all the Relics including Beloved Baba's hair, nails, teeth, as well as furniture and fixtures and utensils used by Him with the following in view-point: e.g. His chair in Meherazad Mandali Hall is the seat which He used ordinarily and also while in deep Seclusion for His most important Universal Work should therefore be preserved with the utmost care. So also His bed and indeed everything else used by Him. Since every breath He was taking was for His Universal Work, everything which is here at Meherazad is purely connected with His Universal Work. Hence the whole universe is connected with these Relics at Meherazad.
- (D) How to preserve these Relics poses a big problem and therefore advice and service of experts should be sought for this work of utmost importance.
- (E) Necessary buildings for housing and display of the Relics should be constructed at Meherazad including buildings for Records and Library .
- (F) The Committee should note that the Relics are housed at Meherazad and also stored at Meherabad. Also, record of Baba's Life and Works and correspondance is kept in

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Meher Nazar Building, which previously belonged to late Shri Adi K. Irani who was conducting the office work for Beloved Baba as His Secretary. Therefore the Record at Meher Nazar and the Relics at Meherabad should not be ignored and the Committee should take care how all these should be preserved for posterity at Meherazad and Meherabad.

Archives should be so arranged that those who are entrusted with it should have scope for research and there should be a research section in the building of archives. There should also be a film section in this building so that Pilgrims who visit Meherazad may be able to see different films of Beloved Baba and His Work with Masts, Poor, Leper, and Public etc.

2. As Meherazad is for all of mankind and we observe that Pilgrims from all over the world have started visiting it since quite some time to be in Baba's Home and be in physical proximity with the Relics, this area should remain as a Peaceful Zone and the Pilgrims should not be disturbed in any way.
3. The Meher Free Dispensary (Meherazad) Trust is running a Free Dispensary at Meherazad. The dispensary building does not belong to Meher Free Dispensary (Meherazad) Trust. It belongs to "Meherazad Trust for Avatar Meher Baba." Hence the Dispensary should be shifted in the near future to a nearby location to continue to serve the surrounding villages. Mrs. Arnavaz Dadachanji has already made provision of land nearby the side of Meherazad Private Road for the purpose.
4. It is our wish that Meherazad Property at present under "Meherazad Trust for Avatar Meher Baba" should be merged with Avatar Meher Baba Perpetual Public Charitable Trust, Ahmednagar - a Trust created by Beloved Avatar Meher Baba Himself.
5. For the present, Mandali members and the dedicated care-takers who are staying at Meherazad have been taking all the care of Meherazad Property as well as of all the Relics which Beloved Baba has left as divine Gifts for mankind. After the demise of the Mandali, it is necessary to have care-takers at Meherazad to continue to take

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proper care of the Property as well as the Relics housed in the (new) buildings of archives and library. Therefore quarters should be constructed for the new care-takers so that no one can live in the original buildings and structures used by Beloved Baba and which were existing during His life-time.

We the Mandali now living at Meherazad invoke the blessings of Beloved Avatar Meher Baba on us all and on Mrs. Arnavaz N. Dadachanji and on all concerned to carry out His wishes to the utmost of our ability in order to please Him at all times.

Avatar Meher Baba Ki Jai!

E. B. Jethwani

W. Zaman

V. S. Kalchuri

C. V. Natu

M. S. Irani

G. R. Irani

M. R. Irani

R. Irani

2E. COMMITTEE DEED

~ *COPY* ~

(*Written with and attached to 'The Wish of the Mandali now Living at Meherazad' dated 5th October 1993*)

DEED

COMMITTEE FOR ARCHIVAL WORK OF BELOVED AVATAR MEHER BABA'S RELICS

THE SCOPE OF ARCHIVAL WORK UNDER THIS COMMITTEE:

1. Buildings, Structures, Articles that were personally used by Him, as also Records of His Life and Work at Meherazad.
2. Records of His Life and work kept at Meher Nazar.
3. Relics kept in the East Room at Meherabad.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Mr. Bhau Kalchuri
Miss Meheru Irani
Mr. Meherwan Jessawala
Mr. Framroze Mistry

FUNCTION, SELECTION AND GUIDELINES FOR COMMITTEE MEMBERS :

1. The Committee Members shall work under the guidance of the Mandali.

After the Mandali's demise the Committee Members shall work under the control and direction of Avatar Meher Baba Perpetual Public

Charitable Trust keeping in mind the Mandali's wishes as expressed by them in their letter dated 5th October, 1993.

2. The Committee Members shall abide and function by a majority vote on all policy matters.

3. Committee Members to be not more than 5 and not less than 3.

4. Selection of Committee Members in case of death, disability or resignation of a member to be decided by a majority vote of existing Committee Members with advice from the Mandali, and after Mandali's demise, proposal to be put forward to the Board of Trustees of Avatar Meher Baba Perpetual Public Charitable Trust for final approval and selection of the new Committee Member. If Avatar Meher Baba Perpetual Public Charitable Trust's Trustees do not approve the selection of the proposed new member, alternate names should be suggested by the Committee Members to the Trustees of Avatar Meher Baba Perpetual Public Charitable Trust.

5. Six Monthly Progress Reports to be maintained and submitted to Avatar Meher Baba Perpetual Public Charitable Trust after "Meherazad Trust for Avatar Meher Baba" merges with Avatar Meher Baba Perpetual Public Charitable Trust.

6. Committee Members to appoint a team or teams of Assistants and Volunteers when necessary for projects undertaken by Committee Members.

OBJECTIVES OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS

1. TABULATION:

Includes Inventory of Relics, Indexing of Records - the objective being to keep a count of the Relics and Records.

2. PRESERVATION AND MAINTENANCE:

Includes treatment, restoration, storage and display of Relics and Records.

3. (A) STRUCTURES FOR STORAGE AND SAFEKEEPING:

To construct suitable structures to store Relics and Archival Records, specifically to safeguard them and to scientifically preserve them in the best possible condition and environment.

(B) STRUCTURES FOR DISPLAY:

To construct suitable structures to display the Relics and Records to enable pilgrims to avail the opportunity of viewing the Relics and Records.

(C) STRUCTURES FOR ARCHIVAL RECORDS AND LIBRARY:

To construct suitable structures to maintain Archival Records, Tapes and Films with the express objective to provide facility for study, contemplation and research.

4. ALLOTMENT AND RESERVATION OF LOCATION FOR POINTS 3. (A), (B) AND (C):

To decide and reserve strategic areas at Meherazad and at Meherabad in consultation with the Board of Trustees of Avatar Meher Baba Perpetual Public Charitable Trust with sufficient acreage to provide for construction of structures in 3. (A), (B) and (C). Also to ensure enough acreage is reserved for future needs and expansion. Also to provide enough acreage to create a tranquil suitable setting around these proposed structures - like quiet, beautiful, peaceful gardens around these structures.

5. DISTRIBUTION:

After due deliberation to apportion or loan a Relic to any country or key Baba Centre to share and preserve it.

6. SECURITY:

To provide adequate security measures to safeguard the relics and records.

TIME FRAME FOR OBJECTIVES

1. TABULATION:

Top priority to be given to tabulate and simultaneously note the history of Relics from the Mandali. With the Mandali getting on in years the immediacy of this objective is evident.

2. PRESERVATION AND MAINTENANCE:

To be decided with the help of experts in the field of archival preservation. This follows immediately after Tabulation Work is complete, and will be a continual process of preservation and maintenance.

3. (A) STRUCTURES FOR STORAGE AND SAFEKEEPING: (B) STRUCTURES FOR DISPLAY: (C) STRUCTURES FOR ARCHIVAL RECORDS AND LIBRARY:

To be decided with the help of experts in the field of archival works. This must follow after completion of point 1. and concurrently with point 2.

4. ALLOTMENT AND RESERVATION OF LOCATION FOR POINTS 3. (A), (B) AND (C):

To decide in the very near future before key plots are utilized for other lesser purposes at Meherabad and Meherazad. After deciding the acreage of land and the site for points 3. (A), (B) and (C) at Meherabad and Meherazad, the Committee must inform the Trustees of Avatar Meher Baba Perpetual Public Charitable Trust and the Trustees of "Meherazad Trust for Avatar Meher Baba" of their decision and get them to demarcate and reserve these strategic areas by incorporating the same in the Master Plan for Meherabad and Meherazad.

5. DISTRIBUTION:

After completion of Tabulation Work, the Mandali could then decide (with the help of inventory) the guidelines for Distribution or loan of Relics to countries and key Baba Centres throughout the world for preservation and

proper display.

6. SECURITY:

On going and a continual process.

TABULATION

1. a. Formation of two groups with a Committee Member, Meherwan and Falu heading each group plus Assistants and Volunteers as need be.
 - b. Mani, Goher, Meheru in vicinity to give relevant information/history of all articles to enable tabulation and history to be recorded simultaneously.
 - c. To appoint a Co-ordinator - to organise meetings of Committee Members, Assistants and Volunteers, to take notes of discussions in the meetings, to follow up on decisions, co-ordinate work and attendance, maintaining records and files, typing work, computer programming and setting up a time table, etc.
 - d. To appoint a Computer Man - to enlist the help of a Computer Man to feed all collected tabulation into Computer (i) to maintain a record of the tabulated Relics, e.g. the number of coats, the colours, their history, preservation treatments given and due, what kind of restoration work was done on them and by whom etc. (ii) to facilitate Speedier Memory Recall, e.g. one could find out a particular coloured coat which has been stored in such a place, the room and the trunk from the Computer disk without having to go through files of records to trace the coat.
2. Mani, Goher, Meheru, Meherwan and Falu to select the Assistants, Volunteers and Computer Man.
3. Meherwan and Falu with Co-ordinator, Assistants, Volunteers and Computer Man to decide on the Format, Time frame, Distribution of Work, and all modalities of Tabulation Work. Hold successive meetings with Co-ordinator, Assistants, and Volunteers to determine all modalities before commencing Tabulation work.

4. If any distribution of tabulated material is done by the Mandali, they should inform Committee Members of the same to enable them to subtract the same from the records.

DISTRIBUTION

1. If any distribution of tabulated material is done by the Mandali, they should inform Committee Members of the same to enable them to subtract the same from the records.

2. To maintain a Record of Distribution of any and all Tabulated Relics - the name, address of the person, body or organisation, the article was given to.

3. To lay down a policy for distribution of Relics.

4. The Committee Members shall abide and function by a majority vote on all policy matters.

5. a. The sanction for "distribution" should be taken up in a Meeting of the Committee Members.

b. The sanction is effective after each Committee Member signs their consent for distribution in the Records Book of "Distribution of Relics."

c. Only then the process of handing over of the Relic shall be initiated.

6. a. The Committee Members must make sure of obtaining from the person, body or organization a guarantee or undertaking for perpetuating the care, preservation and display of relic entrusted to them. The person, body or organization must give in writing their willingness and assent to abide by the rules and regulations laid down by the Committee to ensure the (a) safety, (b) protection and preservation and (c) display of the Relic for the benefit of His lovers.

b. The option of calling back of the said Relic should be reserved by the Committee, if later the Committee has reason to doubt the continued capacity, validity, sincerity, or stability of the person, body or organization to keep and safeguard the Relic.

c. The Committee should reserve the right to call back the Relic for any valid reason that warrants a recall in their united opinion.

SECURITY

1. a. Once Tabulation Work of cupboard and trunks etc. is done, no further independent handling, except by the Mandali is allowed of the same.

b. The location of the tabulated trunk/cupboard and the contents thereof shall not be changed, not even by the Mandali. If the Mandali are independently handling tabulated material they should take special care to place articles exactly where they were taken from.

c. Procedure of handling tabulated material should be laid down by Committee Members: Once tabulated, the trunk/cupboard must be numbered and locked and the key to remain in custody of Committee Members.

d. Access to present rooms having archival matter for upkeep and maintenance of the room needs to be regulated (e.g. cleaning of the room where archival matter is stored must be attended by a Committee Member or deputy.)

(This document was written directly under Mani S.Irani's direction and guidance and read and approved by all the Mandali)

In entering the original text of the Deed into this policy it was discovered that the section on Security had been typed in two places in the original document. The error was rectified in this policy.