

REPORT ON AVATAR MEHER BABA TRUST *** 1978by Heather Nadel, at the
request of the Chairman.

Beloved Baba's Tomb at Meherabad is the heart of the Avatar Meher Baba Trust. All developments at Meherabad (the Trust Estate) serve primarily the pilgrims who come to the Tomb for the Beloved's darshan, and the poor and needy who live within its radius. Each development is an object set down by Baba in 1959 in the Trust Deed and now being taken up by the Trustees; these objects not only meet the present needs of Meherabad, but are a firm foundation for future development and growth as envisaged in the light of Beloved Baba's words.

Major projects undertaken and maintained by the Trust at Meherabad in the last year are;

WATER SCHEME: Perpetually stricken by drought, Meherabad must have a guaranteed water supply to meet the demands of its ever increasing number of pilgrims; this is the first object for development in the Trust Deed. (1) Although the Estate has a number of wells, they are dependent on the bounty of rains; this year an additional well adjoining Upper Meherabad was purchased from the government and the Gov. Dept. of Irrigation given the job of installing a pump and pipeline from the well to the Hill. (2) An old, disused well nearby the pathway up to the Hill is being renovated; the bore-drilling in this well may provide a water supply (via pipeline) to the Meher Health Centre in nearby Arangaon. (3) In its desperate attempt to secure a more reliable and regular supply, the Trust is trying to obtain water from a nearby source 2 km. from Meherabad. This would have to be done by a pipeline covering the 2 km. distance and a large tank installed for storing the water. The project is not a certain one at present, and will entail much expense.

AFFORESTATION: Trees bring rain (hopefully), and so the Trust has begun a large-scale tree-planting project on Meherabad Hill. The land nearby the Tomb on the slopes of the hill is rocky and barren; pits have been dug and filled with good soil to receive the drought tolerant seedling trees in the rainy season of June, July, and August. To complement this project, contour bunds (small-sized earthen embankments have been constructed to catch the precious rain water for the wells, as also to stop soil erosion.

LANDS PURCHASED: Baba has said that Meherabad will become the center of world-pilgrimage. To project its future development, a rough Master Plan has been drawn up, the implementation of which requires an additional 97 acres of land at Upper and Lower Meherabad. Out of this requirement, 54 acres have been purchased this year, among these;

39.5 acres (adjoining Lower Meherabad on the east)
and 9.5 acres (by the new well near Upper Meherabad).

This 9.5 acres has an excellent view of Baba's Samadhi and so is earmarked as the site for semi-permanent structures that will eventually house pilgrims during Amartithi and other mass gatherings.

The pathway from the railway tracks up the Hill, trod countless times by Beloved Baba and now leading to His Tomb, is on land acquired by the Trust last year. While it is to remain permanently unpaved, this year it is proposed to renovate with rammed stones the parts of the path that have been eroded by rains. The vehicular road which branches off from the public road and goes across the railway tracks to meet the Hill path will also be renovated into a semi-permanent all-weather road. (This will later on be paved with asphalt).

MEHER PILGRIM CENTRE: The beautiful new building-complex visitors now see at Lower Meherabad is the MEHER PILGRIM CENTRE, constructed to accommodate pilgrims at Meherabad. The building contractor terminated his contract in March 1978, having completed most of the construction. What work remains to complete Phase I (structural construction) will be finished by the Trust. However, the building must remain an exquisite shell until Beloved Baba sees fit to provide the means (through large individual donations for this specific purpose) to accomplish Phase II (water supply, plumbing, electrification, and furnishing, etc.) and accommodate pilgrims at the Meher Pilgrim Centre.

Other construction: - a simple structure in the "old-Meherabad" style will be completed in June to house a few staff members at Lower Meherabad.

COMMUNITY SERVICES: At the Meher Health Centre on Trust land in nearby Arangaon village, Meher Free Dispensary (first established by Baba in 1925) continues to provide free allopathic medicine and treatment to the poor and needy. This year, with a staff often (including two doctors), the Dispensary served an average of 2000 villagers per month. The Meher Free Dispensary (Homoeopathic) running since 1936 at Meherabad continues to provide free-of-charge homoeopathic treatment to the public, pilgrims, and residents. The Trust also has given a donation and spectacles to eye camps conducted by Dr. Modi in Ahmednagar District for the free treatment of eye ailments among the poor.

Meherabad was also in the 1920's the site of Baba's most dramatic external work with education; the Hazarat Babajan High School and the Meher Ashram, which served even then all communities and castes without distinction. Today the Trust gives scholarships (for primary and higher education) on a basis of merit to students of the same village communities that attend these schools, along with books to them and to poor libraries, as well as a two-room gymnasium for the village, sports equipment and medical supplies.

All the above projects are part of the Avatar Meher Baba Perpetual Public Charitable Trust.

AVATAR MEHER BABA TRUST (FIRSTLY): provides for the beneficiaries, and Baba's mandali who are among them deeply appreciate His lovers' continuing concern for them. I might add for your interest that out of every donation received for the beneficiaries, about 17% (being the shares of beneficiaries deceased upto now) currently goes to the Charitable Trust.

As our severe summer draws to a close, and the pilgrim season begins again June 15th, news of Baba's pilgrims on their way to His Abode flows into the Trust Office. Every year, Beloved Baba draws His lovers in increasing numbers to pay homage at Meherabad to His Love for them, and to receive, in the stillness of their hearts, the ever-unfolding gift of His Advent in our midst.

JAI BABA

Ahmednagar.
June 7, 1978.

NOTICE

Since jaundice is now prevalent in Bombay, please advise all pilgrims from your area to take the precaution of a gamma globulin injection before coming to India. Jai Baba from all in Nagar,

MEHER PRASAD FILM LIBRARY

The Meher Prasad Film Library was formed to give the Lovers of Meher Baba an opportunity to see their Beloved in films more easily. Films can be checked out for short periods of time for special occasions or gatherings. For complete details write to:

MEHER PRASAD
Box 50481
Nashville, Tennessee 37205

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