

LETTERS

SLUM REHABILITATION SCAMS

The Maharashtra Government has given a written statement to the Mumbai High Court Stating its intent to change the Government Resolution (GR) and issue a corrigendum in the matter of appointment of investigative committees, promulgated to inquire into corruption and irregularities by various builders in Mumbai. The National Alliance of People's Movements (NAPM) expresses its determination to challenge this on legal and constitutional grounds. The Court has not adjudicated on the matter, as yet. It has neither accepted nor rejected the petition.

Meanwhile, the Additional Government Pleader Mr Matoos denies responsibility of the line of structures that were rebuilt after the demolitions in January, February and May, 2011. [The Government will take 2½ weeks to file the Affidavit. The status quo continues on the Committees. Since no written affidavit is filed, nor an official decision taken, the legal interpretation is that the GRs issued at the end of the 9-day long fast continue to be in place. The next hearing will take place after Government puts forth its decision and files its Affidavit.

Ghar Bachao Ghar Banao Andolan strongly feels the intention of the State tantamounts to betrayal of non-violent and democratic processes, since the decision to form the committees was made after long and meaningful dialogues from December 2010 onwards, as well as during the fast, with the government including the Chief Minister, Chief Secretary, District Collector, Minister of Housing and various other government officers. Such backtracking is unjustifiable. This betrayal is irrational and immoral and a fraud on the Constitution and *We The People*.

It is an obvious example where the State has succumbed to the power of the builders in nexus with politicians and bureaucrats. This cannot be taken lying down and the Movement of the urban poor and those affected by these schemes will battle on.

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NIGAMANAND DIED TO SAVE GANGA

After four months of fasting for saving river Ganga. Swami Nigamanand Saraswati died at around 2 pm on 13 June 2011 at the Jolly Grant Himalayan Institute Hospital, Dehradun. Swami Nigamanand, 34, had been fasting for 115 days in Haridwar.

The 34-year-old Swami, a member of Matri Sadan, was protesting against the illegal mining that is polluting the river Ganges. He had started his fasting on February 19 this year. On April 27, his health started deteriorating and forced the authorities to admit him at the district hospital.

The Swami went into coma and had to be admitted in a very critical condition to the Jolly Grant Hospital in Dehradun on April 27, 2011.

Swami Nigamanand Saraswati was a member of Matri Sadan.

It is known that Matri Sadan has been struggling to save Ganga from illegal mining by the 'Himalayan Stone Crusher' for the past 12 years. Mining is ruining the bed of Holy Ganga

and Kumbha area of Haridwar. Swami Nigmanand Saraswati had earlier done fast from Jan 20, 2008 till April 1, 2008 which resulted in success and stone mining was banned, but after some months it again started and then another activist Dayanand did 30 days fast in March 2009 to shun the illegal mining.

It was closed for some time and again restarted from Oct 2009.

Matri Sadan never gave up its struggle and this was shown when Dayanand started his Satyagrah from 15th October 2009 which lasted for 163 days.

A Reader, Uttarakhand