

NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF PEOPLE'S MOVEMENTS

C/o CHEMICAL MAZDOOR SABHA, FIRST FLOOR, HAJI HABIB BUILDING,
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Press Release

2 May, 2007

- **Fire at SRA, a conspiracy to destroy the evidence.**
- **We demand high-level judicial investigation.**

They have done it again!. The news that fire has gutted the office of Slum Rehabilitation Authority last night should not be a shock to anyone, who is aware of the tactics and malpractices of those, who are engaged in corruption. This fire that, according to the statements of SRA's own officials, has destroyed the documents and records, is an attempt to destroy and bury the truth, which could have exposed the nexus of SRA officials with the builders-politicians and the underworld. Since Anti Corruption Bureau was to investigate into all the complaints by the aggrieved slum dwellers, as ordered by the Mumbai High Court, the officials thought of destroying the evidence itself.. Earlier they had tried to scuttle the investigation by giving flimsy reasons like shortage of staff with ACB and appointing a Committee to look into select few cases, which was rejected by the High Court.

In addition to this, they have been probably successful in destroying the information related to the biggest ever scandal, involving hundreds of crore rupees, of constructing 60 storied twin towers at Tardeo that are illegally encroaching upon a 12 mt wide road. SRA had been delaying in providing us with information demanded by us under RTI Act since November 2006. Even after submitting the required amount, they have been dodging and delaying in providing information for the past five months. It is worth mentioning that the corruption is challenged through a legal notice to the mightiest of the builders, Shapoorji Palanji and SRA officials, as the cost of one single flat is in the range of 10-45 crores.

Prima facie, in the given circumstances, the breaking of fire is a clear case of destroying evidence and thus a high level, independent investigation be immediately ordered through a sitting High Court judge and criminal action be taken against those held responsible. Also the case files and documents of the cases, which were under investigation, should be immediately reconstructed. We will wait and watch the move by the state government and if it does not act with due urgency, we will proceed with our own strategy.

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