

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT BOMBAY
O. O. C. J.

P. I. L. WRIT PETITION NO.904 OF 2005
WITH
P. I. L. NO.123 OF 2006

Ehsanul Haque A. Nadvi.

...Petitioner.

Vs.

Union of India & Ors.

...Respondents.

....

Mr.Akhilesh Upadhyay for the Petitioner.

Mr. Pradeep Jadhav, AGP for the State.

Mr. A.C. Singh with Ms. B.L. Mahant for Respondent Nos.1.

Mr. T.N. Subramaniam for Respondent No.7.

Mr. K.K. Singhvi with Ms. P.A. Purandare for BMC.

Mr. J.B. Chinoy with Mr. Sanjay Jain i/b. A. V. Jain Asso. for
Respondent No.8 in PIL 123 of 2006.

Ms. Dimple Mehta i/b. M/s. Jayakars for the Petitioner in PIL 123 of
2006.

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**CORAM : SWATANTER KUMAR, C.J. &
DR.D.Y.CHANDRACHUD, J.**

August 1, 2007.

P.C. :

Counsel appearing for the parties submit that in terms of
the affidavit already filed by the Corporation, the entire area is being
treated as incorporated in the Gilbert Hill. Counsel appearing for the
Corporation further states that he has been instructed to state before
the Court that the Corporation would not permit any development

activities except for recreation ground which shall be used for public purpose.

However, Counsel for the Petitioner has produced before the Court a notification dated 28th February 1979 to pray that the slums around have not been removed. Let a proper affidavit be filed annexing a copy of the notification, with a copy to all Counsel appearing in the matter. Stand over for two weeks.

Interim order passed earlier on 7th June 2007 shall continue till the next date.

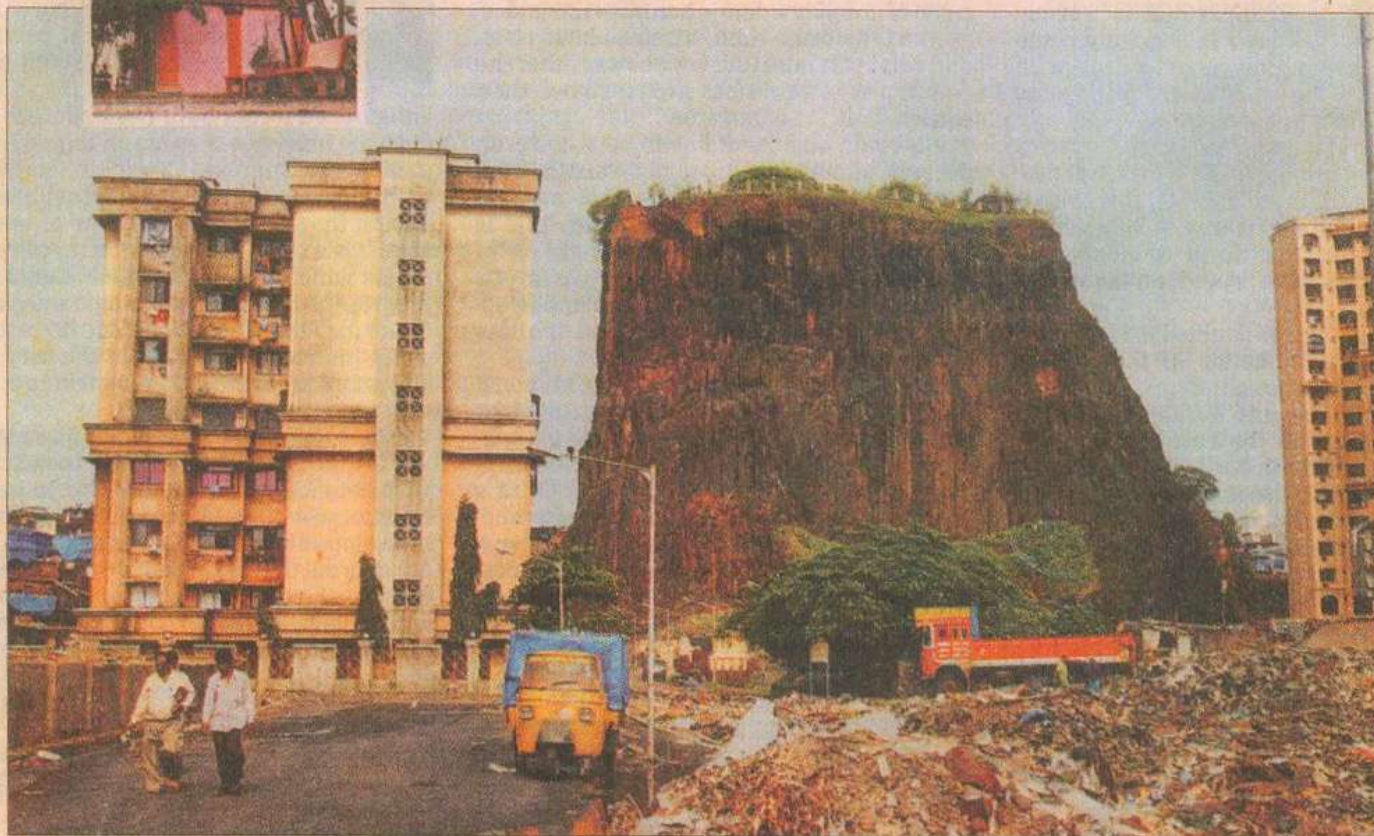
CHIEF JUSTICE

Dr.D.Y. CHANDRACHUD, J.

Wadala, Dadar, Girgaon, Worli, Sion, Kurla ■ WESTEND: Bandra, Khar, Santacruz, Vile Parle, Andheri, Jogeshwari, Gorega



The Gaondevi Temple (left) on top of Gilbert Hill (below) in Andheri — BL Soni/DNA



Gilbert Hill on tourism map?

Geologist's plan will preserve the hill and yield revenue for the government

Shahkar Abidi. Andheri

For those who think that the 65-million-year-old Gilbert Hill in Andheri west is dying a premature death due to extensive quarrying and construction activity, there is some good news around the corner.

Well-known geologist V Subramanyan has proposed to develop the hill into a tourist attraction to prevent further environmental degradation. As a tourist spot, residents will be able to

enjoy panoramic views of the city as well as visit the hill's two temples — Swaimbu Temple (people say it has been part of landscape since the hill's inception) and Durgamata Temple also known as Gaondevi Temple (rumoured to be about 500 years old).

Subramanyan is in the process of forwarding his plan to the Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC). "One day, we will be able to offer a 'Volcanic Tour' by clubbing Gilbert Hill with other hills in the city," he says.

Subramanyan, who has been studying the hill for the past 30 years, adds, "If we make it into a tourist spot, people will be able to enjoy its beauty and learn about its uniqueness. We will also be

protecting the hill from environmental degradation from quarrying and construction activity."

He says that the hill which was declared as a national park by the Centre in 1952 can become a revenue earner for the government. According to his plan, the tour can be designed to begin with the Elephanta Caves. The caves' unique selling proposition (USP) are its extensive sculptures. The second halt will be Gilbert Hill. According to experts, Gilbert Hill is not a hill in the conventional sense of the word but vertical, hexagonal columns of black basalt rock joined together. It is the only one of its kind in the country. The other two in the world are Devil's Tower in Wyoming and Devil's Post Pile (made of three hills) in

Eastern California in the US. The three hills were borne out of volcanic eruptions that took place during the Mesozoic era — same period that the dinosaurs became extinct. The tour will end with a visit to the Kaneri Caves in the Sanjay Gandhi National Park in Borivali which has huge chunks of broken rocks called "volcano bombs".

"The tour will revolve around the hills, each with their different characteristics," Subramanyan says.

Harish Nevrekar, a trustee of Shree Gaondevi Durga Deosthan Trust (SGDDT) which looks after the Gilbert Hill, is enthusiastic about the proposal. "It will be best thing that can happen to Gilbert hill," he says. "We are eagerly waiting for it to be implemented."

PORTION OF GILBERT HILL COLLAPSES

By N. S. Nair



LANDSLIDE: A 60-70 feet high portion of the endangered Gilbert Hill in Andheri (west) collapsed around 11.30 am on Tuesday during a torrential spell of rain. It was a portion on the west side which fell near a building at the base of the hill. Gilbert Hill is a 200-feet-high monolith column of black basalt rock estimated to date back 65 million years.



























