

## Mumbai Diary: Wednesday Whispers

By Joseph Zuzarte, Fiona Fernandez | Posted 4 hours

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The city — sliced, diced and served with a dash of sauce

### Albert Sassoon would smile

As we heard about an initiative to give Sassoon Dock a facelift, we couldn't help but imagine how the Jewish entrepreneur and visionary would have reacted to the news. He built the dock, Mumbai's and all of western India's first wet dock. It was opened on June 8, 1875. The dock's size was estimated at 645 ft and its width was 292 ft.



### *The unmistakable entrance leading to Sassoon Dock*

Such was the foresight of its builders, Messers D Sassoon & Co that to help with transportation of goods that reached and left the port, iron rails were laid out by the Bombay and Baroda Railway Company and by the Central India Railway Company whose railway tracks reached the dock's quays and warehouses. Talk about engineering vision!

### **Word-happy**

We always applaud when schools take extra initiative as far as literary initiatives go, more so, in a world where the habit of reading is on the endangered list.



### **Natasha Sharma with students from Somaiya School**

Vidyavihar's Somaiya School kicked off the literary week yesterday that included fun filled activities, such as book reading sessions by renowned authors for the tiny tots from pre-primary and primary, learning to create a blog, bookmark making and book cover designing competitions. The celebrations will continue till August 7.

One such activity meant for primary children was a book reading session with Natasha Sharma, author of the children's book, 'Squiggle takes a Walk'. We'd love to see more schools adopt such kid-friendly events in their school calendar.

### **Boatin' and all that floatin'**

All ye who yearn for the romance of travelling by sea from Mumbai to Goa; well, the wait just got longer. There have been periodic announcements that a passenger boat service from Mumbai to Goa would be restarted, two decades after it was stopped.



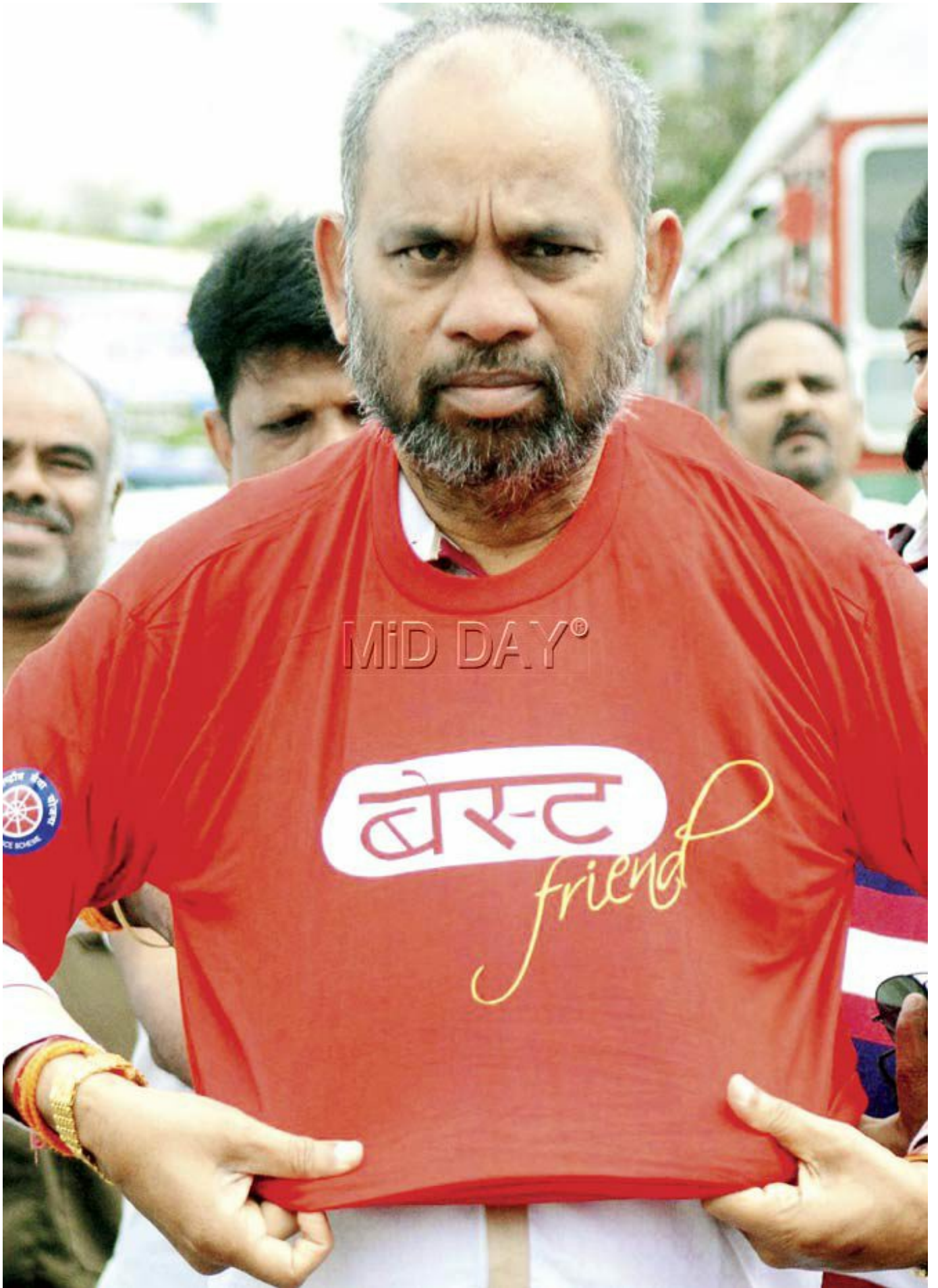
Last year, the Mumbai-based Maharashtra Maritime Board (MMB) had even invited 'expressions of interest' to resume the passenger service. We heard that discussions were at an, "advanced stage." In April this year, C George, chairman of the Mormugao Port Trust, where the boats were to dock on arrival, announced that the passenger service would start in a few months.

Now, though, we hear that plans have hit a snag. Cost per passenger and other factors were not feasible. Currently, you can travel by a luxury cruise liner from Mumbai to Goa. The cost is over Rs 15,000 (per passenger), which makes it the costliest way to reach Goa.

In comparison, travelling on the 'Konkan Shakti' and 'Konkan Sevak' boats, from the mid-1960s to the mid-1980s, was cheap, with a lower deck ticket costing around Rs 50 in the mid-1980s, though they also had luxury cabins or the upper deck. Looks like the wait to sail along the scenic Konkan coast just got a little longer.

### **My BEST friend**

BEST chairman Arvind Dudhvadkar sports a customised T-shirt at the inauguration of a dedicated bus lane at NSCI, Worli. We believe these tees might make for cool Mumbai memorabilia; what say?



Arvind Dudhavadkar. Pic/Bipin Kokate

