

JOHANNESBURG INDIAN SOCIAL WELFARE ASSOCIATION W.O. 103.

MEMORANDUM SUBMITTED BY THE SUB-
COMMITTEE ON LENASIA TO THE
JOHANNESBURG INDIAN SOCIAL WELFARE
ASSOCIATION.

MEMBERS OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE:

- I.R. Singh
- K.G. Moodley
- Mrs. I. Kavin
- Revd. B.L.E. Sigamoney
- S. Pather
- L. Sungaran (Convenor)

The sub-committee met on three occasions and the attendance was as follows:-

<u>Name</u>	<u>No. of meetings</u>	
	<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
I.R. Singh	2	1
K.G. Moodley	3	0
Mrs. I. Kavin	2	1
Revd. B.L.E. Sigamoney	0	3
S. Pather	2	1
L. Sungaran	3	0

The Sub-Committee reports as follows:

A AREA:

The Indian Group Area, popularly called Lenasia, consists of the following developed zones:

- a) The township of Lenasia, owned by the Lenasia Trust Company;
- b) Lenasia Extensions Nrs. 1 and 2 which comprises of the following divisions:
 - i Freehold area,
 - ii Rainbow Valley Economic Housing Scheme,
 - iii Greyville (Drybones) Economic Housing Scheme.

The area defined under (b) is owned by the Department of Community Development.

The whole of Lenasia as an Indian Group Area is administered by the Peri-Urban Health Board.

B REPRESENTATIVE ORGANISATIONS:

There are three important organisations representing the interests of the local residents in the respective areas:

- a) The Lenasia Ratepayers Association in Lenasia Township and Extension 1 (freehold area). This Association also keeps a watching brief over the whole of Lenasia.
- b) Rainbow Valley Residents' Association - in Rainbow Valley Economic Housing Scheme area.
- c) Greyville Tenants' Association in the Greyville or Drybones Valley Economic Housing Scheme area.

C THE GREYVILLE OR 'DRYBONES' AREA:

The Sub-Committee is of the opinion that the crux of the poverty of Indians living in Lenasia seems to be centralised in the area known as Greyville. It is in this area that the less privileged Indians, evicted by the application of the Group Areas Act in various parts of Johannesburg, have been given accommodation by the Department of Community Development. The factors prevalent in this area seems to be duplicated in the adjacent Transit Camp consisting of ex-army huts.

There are /.....

There are, generally speaking, two types of houses with three variations in design:

- a) Brick buildings,
- b) constructions of breeze block.

There are

- a) 3 - 4 roomed cottages with a bath
- b) 3 - 4 roomed cottages with a shower
- c) 3 - 4 roomed cottages with neither bath or shower.

The rentals vary from R13.40 to R16.00 a month depending on whether a tenant selects a cottage with or without a bath/shower.

The Sub-Committee established that the average income per household in this area is roughly R40.00 per month and the basic expenditure calculated as follows:

Rental	R14.00	per month
Train / busfare	6.00	" "
Water and light	5.00	" "

The Sub-Committee wishes to state that a considerable number of Indians in the area are not permanently occupied, being waiters, hawkers, etc. In many instances the monthly income is as low as R30.00

From the above analysis it seems quite clear that the average Indian household in this area is living on an economically unbalanced level with the resultant factors of poverty, malnutrition etc. clearly visible in many households.

The Sub-Committee recommends as follows:

- a) That various sources of employment i.e catering, commerce, industry etc. be approached to adopt measures whereby the basic wage levels of Indians be progressively increased.
- b) That in view of lower rentals being charged by the Johannesburg City Council for similar houses built in their Coloured and African areas, the Department of Community Development be requested to drastically reduce the rentals of the Greyville Economic Housing Scheme houses in commensurate with the income levels of Indians living in that area.
- c) That the South African Railways be requested to reduce the rail / busfare between Lenz and Johannesburg as many of the Indians find the present fares above their economic means.
- d) That the Department of Indian Affairs be requested to carry out a Socio-Economic survey of Lenasia and that the results of the survey be made known to the Johannesburg Indian Social Welfare Association.
- e) That the Johannesburg Indian Social Welfare Association either include Lenasia as an area falling within its jurisdiction or alternatively suggest to the Departments of Social Welfare and Indian Affairs to open offices in Lenasia with the idea of assisting the residents with social welfare and social problems.
- f) That the attention of the Department of Community Development be drawn to the fact that all future houses to be constructed on the Greyville Scheme have bathrooms included.

- g) That the present area charge for electricity be borne by the Department of Community Development, as the legal landlords of the houses, instead of passing the charge to the tenants.

D THE RAINBOW VALLEY HOUSING SCHEME:

This scheme consists of well-constructed brick buildings made available to Indians by the Department of Community Development on a Home-Ownership basis. The initial deposit is R200 with instalments varying between R26.00 and R32.00 a month. Some of the cottages have been hired at a rental conforming with the ordinary instalment of Home-Ownership cottages.

The Sub-Committee has noted that in some instances cottages which have been let to Indians have been re-allocated to prospective buyers with the result that tenants are served with thirty days' notice to vacate the premises. These tenants then experience great difficulty in re-adjusting themselves to alternative accommodation.

Many of the ratepayers experience difficulty in meeting their monthly instalments.

A cause for resentment seems to be the area charge on the consumption of electricity levied on all ratepayers. The implication of this levy is that whether electricity is consumed or not, the ratepayer is still liable to pay a minimum of R3.00 as an area charge; depending on the size of the building and the plot occupied.

The Sub-Committee recommends:

- a) That representations be made to the Peri-Urban Areas Health Board that the area charge for electricity be either abolished or drastically reduced.
- b) That the Department of Community Development be requested to erect more of the Rainbow Valley type of houses to be made available to Indians either on the Home-Ownership basis or for rental purposes on a reduced level as that applying to the present Housing Scheme. And that security be given to Indians who wish to hire houses under the scheme.

E LENASIA TOWNSHIP AND FREEHOLD AREA OF EXTENSION NO. 1:

In these areas, Indians have been allowed to purchase plots and by means of private income or building society loans have built their own homes.

The Sub-Committee notes that many Indians of the middle income group are taking residence in this area and many homes that would be the envy of many better class areas in Johannesburg are now making their appearance in this area.

It would appear, however, that not many building societies are keen to grant loans for building purposes in Lenasia and some building societies are granting loans at interest above the normal rates.

The Sub-Committee recommends:

- a) That the Association of Building Societies be approached with the view to getting more building societies to grant building loans in Lenasia at the normal rate of interest.
- b) That in view of many ratepayers finding the deposit of R60.00 for the lead-in of electricity above the means of many ratepayers, the Peri-Urban Health authorities be requested to reduce the deposit to a more economic level.

F GENERAL:

- i Roads: Except for two, the streets in Lenasia are not graded or tarred. Taking into consideration that Lenasia has been established as an Indian Group Area some seven years ago, it is regretted that scant attention has been paid to its roads.

The Sub-Committee recommends:

That the Peri-Urban Areas Board in collaboration with the Department of Community Development, take the necessary steps to tar the streets in Lenasia and in the interim to grade the streets to allow easy access to vehicles and pedestrians.

- ii Street Lights: A highly regretted fact is that the whole of Lenasia is without street lights. This fact has encouraged vandalism, burglaries and thefts.

The Sub-Committee recommends:

That the Peri-Urban Areas Board take the necessary steps for the installation of street lights throughout the area and that this be done as soon as possible.

- iii Sanitation: The residents are not in favour of the present system of sanitation. Their objections are based on grounds of health and hygiene.

The Sub-Committee is aware that the town planners gave the Indian community the assurance that waterborne sewerage would be introduced as soon as the area starts to develop.

The Sub-Committee recommends:

That the Peri-Urban Areas Board take the necessary practical steps to introduce waterborne sewerage in the area.

- iv Postal Service: The Sub-Committee notes with pleasure the establishment of a Post Office and Telephone Exchange in Lenasia, but notes with regret that a door-to-door delivery of mail has not been inaugurated. There appears to be countless unclaimed letters and parcels at the Lenasia Post Office.

The Sub-Committee recommends:

That the Department of Posts and Telegraphs be requested to introduce a door-to-door delivery of mail and also that the Post Office increase its telephone allocations to private persons in Lenasia.

- v Police Protection: The Sub-Committee notes with regret the lack of adequate police protection in the light of increasing burglaries, assaults and petty thefts. The residents experience great difficulty in establishing contact with the Kliptown Police Station in times of emergency.

The Sub-Committee recommends:

That the Minister of Justice and the Commissioner of Police be approached with the view to establishing a Police Station in Lenasia.

- vi Schooling: The Sub-Committee finds that the number of Primary Schools are not able to accommodate the number of school-going children who either travel into or are resident in Lenasia. High School facilities appear to be adequate. It is regretted that a double session school has been established at the Lenasia Primary School, despite the Department of Community Development having allocated various sites for educational purposes in Lenasia.

The Sub-Committee recommends:

- a) That the Administrator of the Transvaal and the Director of Education be requested to terminate the afternoon session at the said school as soon as possible;
- b) that the present schools be replaced by brick buildings as soon as possible and
- c) that all future buildings in Lenasia be of modern brick construction;
- d) that the Provincial Administration be requested to establish

a creche
a kindergarten
a junior school.

- vii Hospital Facilities: The Sub-Committee notes with regret that many Indians are not allowed to attend the Baragwanath Hospital either as out-patients or in-patients and the majority of Indians are referred to Coronation Hospital.

The Sub-Committee recommends:

- a) That the Director of Hospital Services be requested to make arrangements for the admission of Indians as both out-patients and in-patients at the Baragwanath Hospital and that an ambulance service be introduced between Lenasia and Baragwanath Hospital;
- b) that the Johannesburg Indian Social Welfare Association make arrangements for Indians to be represented on the Coronation Hospital Board (an advisory board that acts as liaison between the local community and the Hospital authorities).

The Sub-Committee strongly recommends that copies of this memorandum be submitted to

- a) The Secretary, Group Areas Board
- b) The Chairman, Department of Community Development
- c) The Chairman, Peri-Urban Areas Health Board
- d) The Minister of the Interior
- e) The Minister of Posts and Telegraphs
- f) The Minister of Justice
- g) The Administrator of the Transvaal
- h) The Director, Transvaal Education Department
- i) The Commissioner of Police
- j) The Minister of Transport
- k) The General Manager, South African Railways
- l) The Secretary, Lenasia Ratepayers Association
- m) The Secretary, Greyville Tenants' Association
- n) The Secretary, Rainbow Valley Residents' Association.

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