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## 74-yr-old wants divorce from husband of 40 years, asks for Rs 2 cr alimony

Byculla resident says she 'can no longer put up with physical and mental harassment'

HETAL VYAS

**A**fter spending 40-years together as man and wife, a Parsi couple is now fighting a bitter battle for divorce. The 74-year-old woman has dragged her 80-year-old husband to the Parsi Matrimonial Court, saying that she "can no longer put up with the physical and mental harassment" that she has faced over the years.

When she first filed for divorce in 2007, the Byculla-based woman had sought Rs 45 lakh as alimony, but this February, she revised the amount to Rs 2 crore. She claimed that her husband retired from his job in 1995, but he still earns a monthly pension of Rs 50,000 and has investments and property worth Rs 7 crore. Therefore, she has now revised her alimony claim.

The woman also says that her husband used to give her just Rs 500 a month to run the house and even expected her to save money from it. "Although we are man and wife at present, our relations were

severed years ago," she says in her divorce petition.

### HARASSED AT HOME

Her petition says that her husband was employed with a Denmark-based shipping company, and he used to be away from home for at least nine months in a year. "During that period, I faced great hardship, doing all the work in the household, following outdated customs and acting according to my mother-in-law's whims. I had no one to complain to. I had no privacy or any space for interaction," adds the petition.

It also says that after the couple got married in March, 1967, they lived in a joint family at Grant Road, with the man's mother and brothers, and the woman had to bathe her mother-in-law and clean utensils. She also had to leave her job. As the place was too small, her husband later bought the flat in Byculla, in which they now live.

The woman alleges that her husband suffers from the 'Jekyll and Hyde complex'. "With neighbours, relatives and friends, he would laugh and talk, but he lost no opportunity to show me and our children in

a bad light. He used to beat me up... he still beats me black and blue. He cursed and beat our children, and distanced himself from them. Death and disease were his daily curses for the children, particularly for our son," she states in the petition.

### THE FINAL WALL

The man, on the other hand, filed a separate application in February this year, alleging that when he was away from the city in November, 2008, his wife constructed a wall separating the two wings of their flat, which was actually two adjoining flats merged into one. The man also claims mental agony and financial loss through this act of his wife.

"When the man came home, he saw the wall constructed between the flats, but did not find his wife in the adjoining flat," said Vivek Kantawala, counsel for the man.

Last month, while hearing the man's plea, Justice S C Dharmadhikari directed a court officer to inspect both the flats. The court also directed the officer to make a list of articles in both the flats and hand them over to the man and his wife respectively, after they identified their belongings.

The case will be heard next week.

