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Where movement is a science

Parsiana

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Readers' views are welcome on any subject of interest to the community and should be sent to the Editor, Readers' Forum, Parsiana, G.P.O. Box 892, Bombay 400001. Letters are subject to editing for reasons of space and clarity. Unsigned letters or those without an address will not be published.

"In search of unity"

I suppose it is for the first time that an editorial has adorned an issue of *Parsiana* ("In search of unity," *Parsiana*, November 2001).

Let this be the beginning. *Parsiana* should come out with editorials in every issue focusing on problems confronting our community.

BHIKHAJI M. ADENWALLA

The Editor replies

Editorials have 'adorned' the pages of *Parsiana* in the past. The policy of the magazine is to let readers draw their own conclusions from the content instead of sermonizing, praising or criticizing individuals or institutions. It is only when the occasion demands an editorial that our point of view is put forth.

"The Nagpur incident"

I am a regular subscriber of *Parsiana*. The reason why my family and I read

your magazine is because it consists of articles imparting religious knowledge and history, and covers great Parsi personalities, their achievements, events around the world, etc.

I was disappointed to read "The Nagpur incident" in your November 2001 issue. We already have many controversies in our community. There are enough publications printing such controversial articles in their periodicals to fill space and gain mileage.

By washing dirty linen in public what good will this article do to our community? *Parsiana* has national and international circulation. I wish your publication would print more positive articles and highlight the global achievements in our community.

NAUZER PESIKAKA

"Disawalla's dismissal"

I was shocked and horrified to read what the Bangalore Parsi Zoroastrian Anjuman (BPZA) has done to Dr M. D. Disawalla ("Disawalla's dismissal," *Parsiana*, November 2001).

I have known Disawalla for now over 50 years; a better, cleaner Zoroastrian would be hard to find. Does the BPZA realize that by evicting a man of sterling character and eminence on a charge that he does not subscribe to an archaic and obsolete method of disposal of the dead they only wrong themselves; and by publicizing their action they will draw the ridicule of not only the enlightened members of this community but of people at large?

Strange that while some men in Bangalore are destroying Zoroastrianism by dividing the community on issues of petty dogma and rituals, in the West the Zoroastrian religion is being revived and rejuvenated by a study of its lofty ideals and principles. Respected scholars from reputed universities are writing papers on subjects like "The history of ethics and its Zoroastrian origins." They are glorifying this ancient religion by unfolding its beauties in its pristine state while we squabble about the disposal of the dead as if that is the acme of our ancient faith.

Disawalla would be well advised to refrain from rejoining the BPZA even if he is reinstated.

Dr H. S. ADENWALLA

Trichur

This has reference to "Disawalla's dismissal" (*Parsiana*, November 2001) regarding Dr M. D. Disawalla's membership being terminated by the Bangalore Parsi Zoroastrian Anjuman (BPZA).

I am a resident of Bangalore and have known Disawalla for more than 25 years. I felt ashamed as a Zoroastrian of Bangalore for the treatment meted out to him.

Disawalla is well respected and loved by all the members of BPZA for his ever willingness to assist any Zoroastrian of Bangalore for any medical need without any monetary professional consideration.

He has never influenced any member against dakhnashini although he is an uncompromising believer in the disposal of the dead by either burial or cremation in the light of his long experience as a doctor. He is also a fearless critic of shortcomings in the working of the BPZA and perhaps this might be the opportune reason utilized by the trustees to dismiss him as a member of the BPZA.

The Bangalore Zoroastrian community will be poorer without his presence in the BPZA and I feel that every effort must be made to restore his membership unconditionally.

DARA DARANSHAW ARIA

Bangalore

"Zoroastrianism enjoins..."

You deserve to be thanked for publishing a two-page write-up "Zoroastrianism enjoins conversion," (*Parsiana*, October 2001) by Kaikhosrov D. Irani and Farrokh Vajifdar.

This controversy is as old as the hills. In fact, there need not be any controversy because the scriptures are replete with references to conversion. *Haptan Yasht* has a specific reference to conversion: in that prayer, we wish the Zoroastrian missionaries success in converting the aliens to the Mazdayasni faith (see last paragraph of the *Yasht*).

Zarathushtra saw a lot of evil around him, and brought back to the Mazdayasni fold both the Mazdayasnis and the non-Mazdayasnis who had gone astray. He converted the infidels to our great religion, apart from the royal convert, King Vistaspa.

The *Gathas* are replete with references to weaning away the bad from the wrong path and bringing them to the

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straightest path in which He dwelleth.

In protohistoric times, no man or woman was born with a religious label. When we rely so much on our scriptures, why are we blind to those when it comes to conversion? This controversy is a controversy of convenience and even deception. BEHRAM T. DASTUR

"Options at Doongerwadi"

Whilst acknowledging that ozone is a hazardous and toxic gas, Mehernosh Behram-Kamdin has stated that it is nonetheless used in home air purifiers in the developed countries ("Options at Doongerwadi," Readers' Forum, *Parsiana*, October 2001).

Several questions remain to be answered: A recent article by Sanyal, Chakraborty and Sinha states that almost all vegetables and crops including tomato, barley, onion, potato, soyabean, tobacco, wheat, cotton, lettuce, rice, beet, cabbage, carrot, peas, etc., are deleteriously affected by ozone concentrations as low as 0.05 to 0.10 p.p.m. (parts per million of gas sample by volume) within a few hours (*Science Reporter*, August 2001).

We know that many medicines are scrapped after observing long-term deleterious side effects.

What are the long-term effects of exposure to ozone? Has the Bombay Parsi Punchayet made any study or enquiry about the long-term ill effects of exposure to ozone before falling headlong into ozone injection in dakhmas involving a capital expenditure of Rs 15 lakhs and daily operating costs of Rs 200 ("Prepare for improvement," *Parsiana*, August 2001) when effective and efficient time-tested electric crematoria could have been installed for similar costs? Dr P. D. SUNAVALA

Sterling scout

Jal Merwanji Khan who died on May 21, 2001 at the age of 84 was a scout leader in the Dadar Parsi Colony and a tireless promoter of charities and social causes, particularly for the education of Parsi children and youth.

Although he pursued his professional career as sales director of Associated Textiles with much enthusiasm, Khan's real love was scouting. In 1927 the late Ardeshir Homavazir had founded the 100th Bombay Scouts in Dadar which he joined as one of the first wolf cubs. Very soon he was a scout and later the cubmaster of the pack (with the late Minoo Mehta as the co-cubmaster).

They were the leaders of the pack when I joined the cubs in 1936 or 1937. My first vivid recollection is the camp that winter at Hubli. Having never left my home as a six-year-old I was unhappy for the first two days but was even more unhappy the last day of the camp when it was time to go home. This reversal was entirely due to Khan's talent for understanding young boys and I was not the only one to feel that way. It was for me the beginning of a truly valuable friendship for the rest of his life. Besides the Sunday cub and scout meetings, I looked forward to meeting Khan at his home or on long walks (often to Antop Hill) when he would talk to or instruct me on just on any topic one cares to think of.

In the early 1940s he met Perin Cawasji Mistry who was soon persuaded to join Jal as the cubmistress. The five years of this joint venture between 1942-47 could be considered a courting period before they were married in 1947. The couple pursued their cubbing and scouting activities with great vigor and enthusiasm for another 40 years. Not having children of their own it effectively filled a big gap in their life together. Upon Jal's retirement they were able to devote even more time to training and entertaining the youngsters. In his later years, with failing health and Perin's diminishing eyesight, it was most touching to see Jal and Perin having 20 or so boys "camping" in their Dadar flat with Jal doing most of the cooking as well. This was true love for the cubbing movement.

Retirement also meant that Jal could continue his social work activities of



Cub mates Perin and Jal Khan

helping and administering Parsi charities with even greater zeal. He was for several years until his death honorary treasurer of the Mancherji Joshi Memorial Education Fund, actively soliciting funds and being largely responsible for the Fund's present healthy financial position. Thanks to his efforts countless Parsi boys and girls from needy families were ensured proper schooling and some were even financially helped with higher education and professional training. He would personally get to know every recipient of

this aid and often invited them for a meal at his flat. Besides building up the Education Fund substantially, Jal was also an active member of management committees of The Parsi Central Association Cooperative Housing Society and The J. N. Petit Reading Room and Library in Dadar.

Jal and Perin were well known to many residents of the Dadar Parsi Colony. Partly because of Perin's poor eyesight, Jal would dutifully accompany her to the Wadala bazaar daily and for evening walks around the Five Gardens when so many of their acquaintances would stop to chat with them. Invariably, one would be infected with their cheerfulness and interest in the welfare of others but with never a complaint about their own health problems or any difficulties at home or elsewhere. What a wonderful way to set an example to us all! Around the time of their golden wedding anniversary in 1997 they were among the select four couples whose life was documented by a television station in Bombay.

Jal's sense of duty, responsibility, concern for others and ready willingness to help under any circumstances were exemplary.

Nothing very unusual is known about Jal's early childhood and teenage years, except that he attended the Sir J. J. Fort Boys' High School in Bombay as a free student and went to St Xavier's College after matriculation. He repaid his college fees and a loan from his earnings from a part-time job as a clerk. At college he was an active member of the University Training Corps and a keen sportsman, being the university champion for the 10,000 m walk. Following his BSc degree he obtained the qualification of BSc (Tech) in textile chemistry which enabled him to secure a job with I.C.I. India Ltd, a post he held for only a brief period before joining Associated Textile Engineers. After specialized training in Germany and the UK, Jal was appointed sales director which assured future financial stability.

Those of us who were privileged to have Jal as both a leader and a true friend feel enormously enriched.

Dr JAMSHED R. TATA
London, UK

In praise of his prayers

Ervad Noshirwan Bhikhaji Andhyarujina who died a year ago on January 28, 2001 enjoyed the distinction of having his sonorous voice recorded on a

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CD, *Once in a life-time*, covering the enthronement of the sacred fire at the S. F. Jokhi Agiary at Bombay's Godrej Baug. In the movie *Such A Long Journey* too he recites the prayers. He had taped his own cassettes and would generously give them to any one who was keen on learning our prayers. He trained many children before their navjotes.



Andhyarujina:
popular priest

His recital of prayers had won him popularity and praise. Following his retirement from Cadburys after 27 years of service he was invited by his friend Ervad Asphandiar Dadachanji to join

him to work as a priest at Vachaghandhy Agiary. He prayed with all his heart and his voice was loud and clear making him a favorite priest in the Agiary among the behdins. He had fantastic knowledge of our Zoroastrian religion and other religions as well.

Born in Udvada, Andhyarujina finished his schooling from Bombay's Byramjee Jeejeebhoy Parsi Charitable Institution and his training in priesthood from the Cama Athornan Madressa. He graduated from Siddharth College. His hobbies included reading, music, coin collection, stamp collection and good movies.

He used to enjoy going to the various Freemasonic lodges he was associated with and meeting different people. He had done a lot of charities for the poor and needy and was very kind towards animals.

SOONOO NOSHIRWAN ANDHYARUJINA

Legal watchdogs

There are many instances where a Parsi Zoroastrian has been the first and only person to raise an objection to a proposed amendment or law. It is remarkable that a member of the smallest community raises an objection and gets the law changed.

Rashid Irani of London raised an objection when the National Art Gallery started levying entrance fees. They immediately reacted and the entrance fees were discontinued. One Parsi objected to toll tax and got it removed. Another objected to demolition of hutments till proper alternate accommodation was provided.

A list should be compiled of all such

Parsis who have objected to what they perceive as injustice. ZEND ZEND

Don't degrade your roots

Our promise to integrate, we have solemnly kept
To the best of our abilities, we have honored the pact,
But I would not err, if I say with pride, about our integrity,
We Parsis have always led upfront, amongst the Indian community.

So in Maharashtra it is common to find a Pesibaba speaking Marathi, A Daraseth with acumen in business, a pucca Guju Amdabadi, A Babu Moshai Shahzad from Kolkata, fluent in Bengali Kerala Zubin's fluency in language can shame a Malayali.

But still we have retained our special traits, our Parsipanu, Honesty, joie de vivre, laughter and of course our kharu-pinu, Then there is also the Propah-Bombay-Angrez-Parsi enjoying his gin, Loves the piano, English theater, operas, and applauds apro Zubin, Silloo is Sil, Jamshed, Jim, though Roda retains her original Rodabeh, Gujarati is not spoken here, as it's only English all the way. This too my friend, we smile, and let it ride and rest, But how can one bear the pseudo from the West?

"It's hot, filthy, stinks, polluted, how can one live here?"
Their days of Khetwadi forgotten over lucrative dollars, my dear. Yes, you have a right to do better for yourself my friends, But don't degrade your roots for someday only India will welcome with open hands.

RODA HAKIM
Baroda

Drifting in the ocean

We are like a ship tossing in the middle of the ocean, a ship without a rudder as well as without a captain! If Zoroastrians think that they can just sit around and not do anything about the problems facing our community then I am sorry to say, we are a doomsday away!

Our religion will read something like this:

Once upon a time
Was a religion called Zoroastrianism
Followers of Asho Zarathushtra
Who preached that there is
Only one Ahura Mazda
And to follow the path
Of Humata Hukta Huvarashta
Injustice and inequality are rampant in our community so here is my verse on equality (Asho Zarathushtra's vision):
We Parsis have our egos
We think they know it all
Please! Try to swallow your pride
As it's said: 'Pride goes before a fall.'

Treat everyone equally
No matter who you be
Regardless of skin, color, religion,
Occupation or race
Before we fall from Ahura Mazda's Grace.

He must be really sad
To see his teachings
Twisted, turned, inside out
And being misunderstood
So, let's practice what he stood for
And fight for what is good.

He judges you not by the
Amount of wealth, degree or
Titles you hold
But by your good thoughts, good words,
good deeds
In your gareban you hold.

FARIDA BAMJI
Ottawa, Canada

What's in a name?

Parsis are a fun loving race and believe in *moj, masti, majja* and *koila ghela gaanda* (fun and frolic and ludicrous humor).

Every so called 'colony boy' often has a funny suffix to his name which gives him a sense of belonging to his 'gang,' baug and community.

A Soli would be a 'Soli *sali-boti* (popular dish of chips and meat).'

A Minoo is either a 'Minoo *machhar* (mosquito)' or a 'Minoo *makori* (ant).'

We knew a Minoo who actually kept a rooster (*margho*) as a pet and every evening he would take his *margho* on a leash for a walk around the lawns of Cusrow Baug. Such are the eccentricities of some of us! He was christened 'Minoo *marghee-chor*.' By the way, any guy who is usually seen with a group of girls is nicknamed a '*margho*.'

Percy would usually be 'Percy *papau* (papaya, with a stereotype wisecrack...

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'*Tané bè bairee apao* (I will get you two wives).' He may also be labeled 'Percy *popat* (parrot, never mind that the friends naming him have bigger and longer Parsi noses themselves). If our Percy happens to be chubby, cuddly and *goro goro* (fair), he earns the title '*doodh pao* (milk-bread)!'.

I knew a 'Percy toot.' How and why he got this epithet no one remembers. Maybe he was fond of playing '*Chook chook, gaadi* (train)' when he was a kid?

A Kersi is unfailingly a '*Kersi koilo* (rotten).' If he is always broke, he is crowned '*Kersi karko*.' If he tries to make money on the side, he would become '*Kersi karoodas*;' if he talks too much or has sad stories to tell, he is '*Kersi kaklaat*.' If he shows disapproval of these pseudonyms, he is admonished as '*Kersi kunjro*!' Poor guy has little choice but to accept this fair game with an amused expression.

An unhappy Dorab is '*Dorab dookhi*.'

Tehmul is always a '*Tehmul turioo* (snake gourd)' or '*Tehmul titori* (lentils),' unless he has some vocal defect — then he is elevated to '*Tehmul totro*.' If he is the colony pass time, he is either '*Tehmul time-pass*' or '*Tehmul tapori*.'

When the poor guy starts to lose his hair, he regresses to '*Tehmul takloo*!'

Bomi, if he is tall and skinny, is labeled '*Bomi boomlo* (Bombay duck).' If he doesn't measure up in height, he is dubbed '*Bomi batko*!' If he is a sucker for punishment, he is '*Bomi bakro*.'

Framroze becomes '*Fali faltoo* (idle),' or '*Fali fatkelo* (slapped) and Farokh becomes '*Farokh fekoo* (fiber).'

Poor Homi evolves into '*Homi haando* (baffoon),' or even '*Homa*' or '*Homo*' with love.

Similarly Mehrwan is transformed with affection to '*Mehli*,' '*Mehla*,' '*Mehlo*' or even '*Mailoo*.' The latter is usually the word for a stunning girl.

Adi is '*Adi andoos* (custard apple),' meaning dunce or '*Adeloo*' with affection. Affability does not forget Cyrus as '*Cyloo*' either. A lovable Percy is '*Palloo*!' Doesn't matter if the add-on reminds you of the 'loo,'... potty uh?

Nari is invariably '*Nari norio* (mon-goose),' Keki is '*Kanio* (one-eyed),' Nani is '*Nankhatai* (cheap).' Eruch would be '*Eruch elchi* (cardamom).'

Poor Noshir is routinely '*Noshir naachando*,' meaning a flirt — even if he nervously shies away from girls!

Behram, even if he has, as we say '*kasaari naa kaan* (sharp ears)' is invariably '*Behram behro* (deaf).'

I have a friend who is a delight to be with, but surprisingly due to the perpetual grin on his face he is labeled '*Hasti raan* (happy prostitute).' That is strange! But it's funny, and that's the whole idea!

Jehangir is '*Jangu*' with savor or '*Jingoo*' if he is small built.

Dara with a paunch who loves food (like every other Parsi) is fondly nicknamed '*Dara dukkar* (pig)!' In case he is dark in complexion, he may be called '*Dara doobro* (outcaste).'

A Mehernosh is a '*maaro* Mehernu,' to his doting wife.

Ratan with a problem is '*Ratan rarto*' and Rusi, if he takes offense, is '*Rusi rari paroo*.'

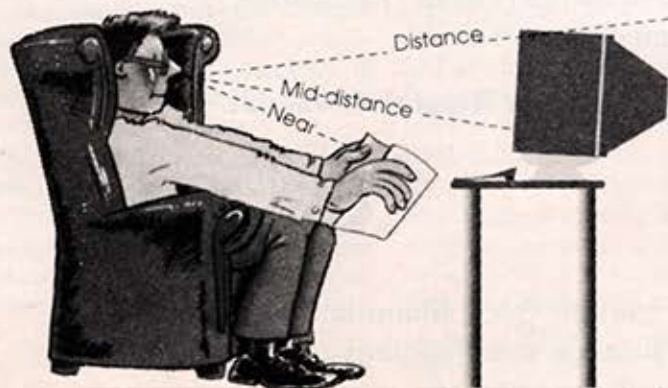
Anyone with a funny hair style has a '*tapeli* (utensil)' cut.

Names like '*Happy*,' '*Jolly*' and '*Lovely*' given to a baby remain a part of the baby's identity for life.

In short there is no escaping the quip, the banter and the tease... but, all in good humor — no malice, no ill will ever intended.

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Events and Personalities

Molding musicians

In their efforts to create and foster an awareness of Western classical music in Bombay the Mehli Mehta Music Foundation will now have an enduring base with the inauguration of the new premises on October 13, 2001. Situated on the first floor of Banoo Mansions at Kemps Corner, the spacious, well designed premises are meant to accommodate the Foundation's office, records, music library, teaching and rehearsal studio, and accommodation for visiting teachers and artistes, explains trustee Mehroo Jeejeebhoy.

"My family is extremely honored. My father was tireless in promoting Western music in Bombay. He had so many pupils, he left a legacy that has led a force," world-famous music conductor Zubin Mehta who had specially come down to Bombay was quoted in *The Indian Express* of October 15, 2001. Wishing that his 92-year-old father Mehli could have been present, Mehta commented, "Of course, we know that Western music is not in everyone's heart, so we're not pretending as if this is going to open the doors to the world. But for those few who are interested in it, at least there will now be a place

where they can pursue their music. Hopefully it will grow. My involvement, of course, will be from a distance."

"Music director of the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra (IPO) since 1969, Zubin Mehta is amongst the most internationally acclaimed orchestral and operatic conductors of our age," notes a press release from the Foundation. Born in Bombay and trained in Vienna, he



The father and son duo: Mehli (left) and Zubin Mehta

began his career in London. He first appeared in Israel with the IPO when both he and the Orchestra were 25 years old. A wing of the musicology department of the Hebrew University is named after him and his father, according to a profile of the internationally distinguished maestro who has also directed the Montreal Symphony, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the New York Philhar-

monic, the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, and is since 1998 the general music director of the Bavarian State Opera.

Among the regular activities of the Foundation is the Sangat music festival held conjointly with The Time and Talents Club Music and Arts Committee which is "a unique platform that brings together a group of highly talented young musicians of Indian origin who work abroad with other invited foreign musicians, local music students and professionals," mentions a communiqué from the Foundation. At the last annual festival held in Bombay from December 17 to 21, two concerts and workshops were exclusively for children who Jeejeebhoy finds are so spontaneous and capable. But whilst so many in Bombay wanted to witness Zubin Mehta playing with the IPO in the grand Jamshed Bhabha Opera House in October, there is not the same enthusiasm throughout the year. Recently Jeejeebhoy started The American Friends of the Bombay Sangat Music Festival to get donations to support this annual meet. An accomplished pianist who has played solo as also accompanied many local and visiting artistes, Jeejeebhoy started her musical training in Poona and then proceeded to the Trinity College of Music, London where she was the recipient of scholarships from the Royal Overseas League and the Countess of Munster Musical Trust.

The Foundation's weekly meetings are held at the new premises but since funds are in short supply, managing the premises is a one-man job, she adds. Besides Jeejeebhoy, others associated with the Foundation are chairman Nani Palkhivala, Zubin and brother Zarin Mehta on the advisory council, and co-trustees Shyam Benegal, Zareen Bili-

The spacious premises of the Mehli Mehta Music Foundation





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Volunteers dutifully cleaning up the dakhma at the Salsette Parsi colony Photos: Zubin P. Wadia



morla, Iqbal Chagla, Mehli Mistri and Rashmi Poddar.

Simin J. Patel

Greening the dakhma

While the dakhma in Thana was cleaned up earlier this year with the intention of making it reoperational, the defunct dakhma at the Salsette Parsi colony at Andheri East was cleaned up later in the year as part of the beautification exercise planned by the builders of the new colony.

When the epidemic of 1896 had caused many Bombay citizens to flee to the Salsette island, then extending from Bandra to Thana, Ardeshir B. Patel and other donors contributed towards the construction of a dakhma in Salsette to serve Zoroastrians in the far-flung areas. Over the years it had been lying in disuse so when the 38,000 sq m Salsette complex was planned, it was envisaged that 8,000 sq m (including 3,000 sq m around the dakhma) of the land would be used for the garden (see "Concretizing dreams," *Parsiana*, June 1997).

Cyrus Siganporia, and his band of volunteers came all the way to Andheri by 7 a.m. on October 28, 2001 "and after undergoing the rituals as per the religious prescription...completed the...cleaning and purifying...by 3 p.m." according to a letter issued by the office bearers of The Salsette Parsis Association, chairman Adi Patel, honorary secretary-trustee Jer Moos and trustee Eruch Hodiwalla.

"Such services should be encouraged and appreciated by all our community members," note the office bearers, naming all Siganporia's co-work-

ers: Nozer Sutaria, Shirzad Bhathena, Kerman Mogrelia, Zubin Mistry, Zubin Jasoomani, Rumi Marawalla, Sharukh Govadia, Dinyar Ichaporia, Ardeshir Khushrowshahi, Hoshedar Tampal, Jimmy Siganporia and Kersi Mistry.

Cawasji made captain

Commander Aspi Cawasji was the only delegate from India to be invited by the Dalhousie University of Halifax, Canada to present a paper at the recently concluded seminar on Regional Maritime Security in the Indian Ocean, notes a press release. Scholars, specialists in strategic studies, defence analysts and select naval officers attended the seminar conducted by The Centre for Foreign Policy Studies as part of its maritime security and oceans policy program.

Following this participation, Cawasji was promoted to the rank of captain of the Indian Navy and was selected for the prestigious Naval Higher Command Course at Bombay, mentions his brother Brig P. Cawasji.

A postgraduate in defence and strategic studies from Chennai (Madras) University, Cawasji has been associated with the Submarine Service of the Indian Navy for nearly two decades during which time he commanded *Shankush*, *Shishumar*, *Karanj* and *Shalki* besides holding other important assignments. Presently he holds the

post of commander submarines, west coast region, according to the press release.

Bonanza of cassettes

Lilting songs on the religion and the community have been recorded for posterity by two artistes: Marazban Dara Mehta and Jamshed Dinshawji Kotwal. Mehta of Darling Orchestra fame has along with his co-singers Khursheed Patel, Marazban Wadia, Prakash Upadhyay, Pervez Mehta brought out an audio cassette titled *Chhaiye Hame Zarthosti* — Parsi religious traditional and comedy songs. The ever popular *Chhaiye Hame Zarthosti*, *Parsi Hame Chhaiye*, *Enu Naam Te Bawaji*, *Asho Zarthost Paigambar*, *Hamari Deen Zarthosti*, *Koi Puchhe Mane Kya Chhe* bring to life the A side. All the six songs on the B side have lyrics by Marazban Mehta's late father Dara H. Mehta to whose memory this cassette is dedicated. These include *Khushi Khushali No*, *Ghambhiri Ghotalo*, *Aavi Jaa*, *Avi Jaa*, *Mara Sum Mara Sum*, *O Dear Mumbai* and a Parsi qawali, *Mohobat Bhareli Aankhonye*.

Marazban Mehta who has appeared on television and radio as also at very many musicians' and dramatists' functions is the lead crooner in his own Darling Orchestra and has mastered different musical instruments like the keyboard, drums, percussion, rhythm congo, bongo, dholak, notes an introduction to the artiste.

Fearing the loss of the vast repertoire of Parsi songs, both amusing and traditional, Marazban Mehta pursued this project for which he received sup-



Cawasji: higher command



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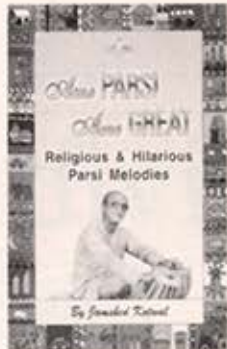
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port from The WZO Trust Funds and the Borivli and Suburban Zoroastrian Association. The music credits for this cassette go to Rajesh Mehta with Jayesh Mehta serving as technical advisor. Available at sandalwood shops near Aslaji and Cama Baug agiaries, the cassette is priced at Rs 60 and compact disc at Rs 160.

The WZO Trust has also supported Jamshed Kotwal's music venture titled *Ame Parsi, Ame Great*. Among the others to have assisted Kotwal who is the conductor of the band Medley Melodies are Zoroastrian Studies, Bombay Parsi Punchayet, Jamshed Guzder, and Gool and Dr Roshan Ghaswala, most of whom were present at the release of the cassette under the aegis of the Musicians and Dramatists Combine Society on November 2, 2001 at Bombay's New Bharda High School when some of the items were presented live on stage. The cassette includes songs in praise of Zarathushtra, the atash padshah and a few foot-tapping comic songs never heard before, notes the accompanying literature.

Songs composed by Ardeshtir Khabardar, Dosabhai Desai, Dara Printer, Adi Mirza, Phiroz Batliwala and other well-known poets have been enthusiastically rendered by Kotwal, Mani Mulla, Zarin Variava, Silloo Shroff, Bepsi Gyara, Viraf Daruwala and Shahrugh Sadri. Giving the musical accompaniment to the seven compositions each on the two sides of the cassette are Jimmy Sahiyar, Julius, Manuel, Romeo, Sudhir and Sunil. Side A of the cassette includes an Invocation, *Saras Saathi Khari Rehber, Jagna Dikhne Harnara Re, Jarthosti to Tene Kahiye, Mahtab Sam Madhuro, Insan Nazerne Samji Le, Aatashni Monajat*; with side B accommodating *Karo Manoranjan, O Mara Kakaji, Daddy Daddy — Ghoro Karao, Ame Parsi*

Ame Great, Mane Vahla Re Vahla, Pak Asho Jarthosti Hamaro and Chhaiye Ame Jarthosti.

An accountant by profession, for Kotwal who is also a qualified athornan from Navsari, music is a hobby which makes him regale inmates of certain hospitals and homes for the aged, notes a press release. Besides singing he is also familiar with the tabla. From the sale of each cassette priced at Rs 55 and the compact disc at Rs 150, five rupees will go to charity, states the accompanying leaflet announcing the release of the cassette. The cassette is available from Kotwal (Tel: 8813950; Mob: 9820239659); Zoroastrian Studies, K. R. Cama Oriental Institute Building, ground floor, 136 Bombay Samachar Marg, Bombay 400023; Faredun Burjor, Princess Street, Bombay 400002.

Educationist encouraged

Honored by the education department of the Panchayat Samiti Maval on October 8, 2001, Homai H. Wadia, principal of the Bai Dhun-



Wadia: for strong bonding

mai Cawasji High School in Khandala, perceived the Taluka Stiriya Aadarsh Puruskar that she was awarded as "a definite source of encouragement, not only to me as a person, but for the School..." "Ma'am," as her students and colleagues address her, has been in the field of education for the last 30 years as teacher, supervisor, head mistress and principal, notes a press release from A. Kadam, editor of the school newspaper, *Awakening*.

She has been associated with this School since 1997 during which time "she has put in her heart and soul for the School, the results of which can be

(From left) Rustom Tirandaz, Dinshaw Tamboly, Dr Roshan Ghaswala, Bachi Tamboly and Kotwal at the release of his cassette. Center: Kotwal (top) and Mehta with their audio jackets

seen," writes Kadam. Pursuing the School motto "Virtus et Labor," Wadia declared, "I hope we can make every child perform to (his/her) best. Let no child be happy at having to leave School. Let there be such a strong bonding that the child is pained at leaving School...I would also like to see all my ex-students returning to School each year to celebrate our Founder's Day on February 14 and I request them to send in their valuable contribution in the form of articles, old photographs and memoirs to enhance our School magazine."

The message the educationist sought to impress on others in the field was: "Unconditionally work for children believing that some day it will make a difference to them."

Law toppers

Consistent reading, says Yasmin Tavaria, helped her top the list of successful students who appeared for their second year LLB examination from the Bombay University in mid 2001. Effort and good fortune, according to Freddy Daruwala, were important in his standing second in the same examination. While Tavaria who scored 66 percent was conferred a gold medal, two scholarships and two prizes, Daruwala scoring 62 percent was



Tavaria (left) and Daruwala

awarded two prizes. Both these Government Law College students had resumed their formal education after many years.

Due to a fractured hand Tavaria had

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been unable to write both her first year and second year law papers and had to resort to the help of a writer, she mentions. Despite this handicap she stood first in both the examinations, she says. She was attracted to the legal profession following a series of litigation involving her ailing father, her landlord and even a tussle with the Bombay University, she narrates. Since most of the spade work for this litigation was required to be done by her personally, she decided she might as well qualify as a lawyer herself.

After studying at St Anne's High School, Tavaria proceeded to K. C. College to complete her science graduation. She then joined the Jamnalal Bajaj Institute for a course in management after which she worked as manager for Bharat Petroleum, she mentions. In 1997 she resigned from her job to look after her ailing mother. Tavaria plans to practice law, stressing that it is important for an individual to know his/her rights and duties.

Since January 2000 Daruwala has a private practice, specializing in income tax, company law matters, trust matters, audit and drafting of wills, partnership deeds, etc, mentions his bio data. A qualified chartered accountant who ranked 44th in his final CA examination, Daruwala had completed his articles with Ratan S. Mama and Company. For five years he worked in the financial field with Airfreight Limited and its sister concern N. S. Guzder and Company. Thereafter for two years he was commercial controller with Madison DMB and B Advertising and for the next two as commercial director of Rediffusion D. Y. and R. Advertising. Whilst his study of accountancy has improved his accuracy, law has taught him the importance of written work and presentation. An alumnus of the Scholar High School, Daruwala studied science at the Jai Hind College, specializing in physics. Daruwala ranked fifth in the Bombay University in his graduation examination in 1985, according to his resume.

S. J. P.

Systems specialists

At Prerana, the inter-collegiate summer project contest hosted by NITIE in end 2001, Aashish Daver and Mitul Shah representing the Narsee Monjee Institute of Management Studies (NMIMS) were declared winners in the supply chain module, mentions a press release. With entries to this contest



Daver: simplify procedures

invited from the world over, the event is divided into six modules to ensure that projects of common disciplines compete against each other. Both Daver and Shah are engineers specializing in systems, pursuing a postgraduate diploma in business administration at the NMIMS which has been recently declared as equivalent to an MBA degree from any Indian university. They completed their summer training at Eureka Forbes Limited, the largest direct marketing company in Asia. The project undertaken by the two students required them to study the functioning of the company's supply chain and thereby create a system that would simplify operating procedures, reduce cost of inventory and speed up information flow. Based on a presentation and a question-answer session with a panel of eight judges from reputed

companies, NMIMS was declared the winner, states the write-up.

Prior to this victory at Prerana, the duo had won the All India Best Summer Project Contest hosted by the Institute of Management Consultants of India in September 2001 to locate the finest upcoming management talent across the country, adds the release.

SPOTLIGHT

Securing 85 percent marks, **Sherezade Sharukh Irani** stood first from the Poona center at the recently held practical examination for grade 8 in pianoforte conducted by the Trinity College of Music, London, mentions a family source. A student of Veera Pooniwalla of the St Cecilia School of Music, Irani has been learning the piano since she was seven years old. Fond of singing and teaching music, 19-year-old Irani presently teaches music at a Poona school while concurrently pursuing her graduate studies in commerce.



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“At the right time...”

The new World Zoroastrian Organisation Sanatorium at Sanjan provides a new holiday venue for the community

Arnavaz S. Mama

The ornate gate swings open, revealing a well-kept one-storeyed bungalow at the end of the drive. Like a hospitable maharaja the WZO (World Zoroastrian Organisation) Sanatorium stands in the center of the 4.5 acre property, welcoming Zarathushtris to stay awhile to ponder on their life in India, in full view of the Stambh next door which commemorates their legendary landing at Sanjan.

The two-way drive, with a children's playground on one side and a sheltered car park on the other, circumscribes a garden, still amaking, of color-edged lawns and flowering shrubs. The portico-shaded front steps lead to a lounge simply furnished in vintage wooden furniture around an octagonal marble topped tile-encrusted table — a prototype that served the needs of innumerable Parsi households for generations.

To one side of the lounge opens the dining area with the kitchen further away; on the other are the manager's office area with passenger accommodation beyond. On the floor above are two three-bedded rooms on either side of the large room above the lounge. Each of these side rooms is equipped with a spacious, freshly-tiled bath and toilet with running water. Each bathroom is actually one half of the originally enormous common bath between two rooms in each wing. There being no provision for similar facility for the central room, it is therefore only given out when large groups can avail of bath and toilet facilities through the interconnected room on either side, explains Bachi Tamboly who has nursed this WZO project with single-minded concentration. Rear terraces on either end of the first floor corridor are provided with gas geysers for bucket baths and well-laid lines for guests to dry their towels and clothes in the open sunshine without cluttering their rooms and baths.

The only things new among the fur-

nishings are the mattresses, the linen, the curtains and plastic chairs as all the furniture has been donated by well-wishers, say WZO Trust managing trustee Dinshaw Tamboly and his wife Bachi. One Calcutta-based WZO sympathiser told them to avail of whatever they wished from his old bungalow in Saronda, so Bachi says she happily transported almost everything it contained to furnish the Sanatorium in a style befitting the period structure with a little help from the carpenter and finishing touches by the polishwalla. There is a cable connection in each room and three TV sets are available for hire at Rs 25 per day by the community's holidaymakers. Bombay's Taj Mahal Hotel has donated the crockery, cutlery and kitchen utensils.

Lodging at the WZO's Sanjan Sanatorium works out at Rs 50 per person per day. Linen (i.e. bedsheets, pillow cases and bed covers plus bath towels) costs an extra Rs 30 per head per week. The use of the car park costs Rs 20 per day per car. To ensure responsible behavior from its guests, the WZO charges Rs 750 as deposit per room, refundable in whole or part to cover breakages, etc, says Bachi. The cost of breakage is clearly delineated behind the receipt.

Manager Dadi Dordi and his wife Kuma look after the boarding aspects of the Sanatorium. Rs 125 per person per day covers the cost of three meals including a breakfast of two eggs made to specifications and bread — no butter, jam or cheese; lunch consisting of a single rice dish; and dinner comprising a lentil plus a vegetable dish with mutton or chicken. They also undertake catering jobs for short-term residents at the various Mazda apartments in the neighborhood.

Dordi's checkered career began with a six-month stint in the police in the latter half of the 1940s which he says he

gave up because his parents did not approve of the job. The son of a carding master, Dordi worked for three years with Bombay Dyeing's waste planning department and then as a clerk ere he quit to set up a business partnership which crumbled. As manager of the WZO Sanatorium he and Kuma may have found their own niche. Of their three children, Shernavaz is a receptionist with consultant physician Kekobad Mody, Dinaz Karbhari is settled with her family in Abu Dhabi and son Khurazand is employed in Dubai.

One of many Parsi properties for sale in the area being snapped up by sister communities, this Hornmasji Davierwalla bungalow saw a change of user thanks to the vigilance of solicitor Burjor Antia and scholar Dr Homi Dhalla. When Antia and Dhalla became aware of the overtures of other communities to acquire the dilapidated structure lost in the midst of a jungle of overgrowth, they approached the Bai Maneckbai P. B. Jeejeebhoy Trust (BMJT) in an effort to rouse them into acquiring the property instead.

Not willing to involve itself in the nitty-gritty of running an establishment, BMJT offered the funds to buy the property if the WZO (then in the throes of setting up the BMJT-funded Senior Citizens Centre in Navsari) was willing to set up and run an institution fulfilling the current needs of the community.

The Tambolys agreed to shoulder the burden and the property was acquired in 1997 with a grant of Rs 70 lakhs from the BMJT, of which Rs 66 lakhs went toward the purchase (including stamp duty) with the balance used for repair and maintenance.

When the Senior Citizens Centre in Navsari garnered so many plaudits, the WZO initially toyed with the idea of setting up a counterpart in Sanjan. However, the lack of medical facilities in the

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Clockwise from top: the frontage of the Sanatorium (Photo: Simin J. Patel); its ornate wrought iron gate (Photo: Homiyar J. Mistry, Homz Prints); Kuma and Dadi Dordi and fresh planting in the garden (Photos: Arnava S. Mama)

locality deterred them, says Dinshaw and for two years the property lay fallow until it was decided to establish a sanatorium with modern conveniences. The project did not evoke the spontaneous response of smaller donors.

"Only the outer shell of the bungalow remains," says Dinshaw. The flooring had sunk and had to be totally redone. The roots of the overgrown wild trees had undermined the foundation and the property required more than cosmetic repair, they indicated. The Tambolys also noted that they were

united in the intention to start on the project only after the necessary funds were available, which took between two to three years of fund-raising.

Much of the professional help they needed came voluntarily and without charge which the Tambolys note with much gratitude and the barest hint of pride. Agriculturist Farrokh Kassad and forest conservator Phiroze Panthaky advised the clearance of the old overgrown trees which were of no worth whatsoever. With the necessary official permission they have been replaced in

the rear grounds with 140 mango and coconut saplings whose revenue in time to come will help sustain the institution. The front garden planned by Dr Rohinton Avari was a later addition for which no funds had been allocated. Then, a Parsi lady passing through after the Sanatorium had been inaugurated in September 2001 chose to donate towards it, notes Dinshaw. The structural repairs and renovations were overseen by Navsari architect Jayant Mehta and builder Yezdi Kassad, also of Navsari,

continued on page 24



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The annual pilgrimage

The Sanjan Day meet saw community stalwarts review Parsi history in India

Arnavaz S. Mama

"It was here that our destiny started, where we gave a commitment to mingle with (the local) society and its mores but not try to convert or take to arms. (We are) proud of having enriched India," noted Bombay Parsi Punchayet (BPP) senior trustee and president of the Forum of Free Enterprise Minoo Shroff in his response to the scroll of honor and memento (a replica of the Sanjan Stambh) presented to him by Rohinton Daviervala, president of the Sanjan Memorial Column Local Committee (SMCLC) at the annual Sanjan Day gathering on November 20, 2001.

Shroff was being felicitated for the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays with Neck Ribbon — Japan's highest civilian award — conferred on him by the Japanese Emperor for his long years of service in the cause of Indo-Japanese commercial relations. The multi-

pronged star glittering on his chest, the economist and management expert had been interviewed by four TV channels ere the function began.

"We feel privileged to honor you on the sacred soil of Sanjan which gave shelter to our forefathers (1285) years back; and from where we gradually migrated to Surat and then (Bombay). This occasion is therefore most appropriate as you are a worthy son of the soil of Surat and (Bombay)," noted the citation read by Daviervala, which also commended the love and support of Shroff's wife Villoo. Unfortunately an eye infection had prevented Villoo from coming to Sanjan.

Referring to other communities' perception of Parsis as "more committed, more loyal," which Shroff dubbed "the sheet anchor of (our) community," the vice chairman of Raymond Limited

spoke of his own professional experiences, being given a blank cheque in negotiations and never questioned as to his decisions. "A lot of credit goes to the fact that being a Parsi rouses this level of comfort among other communities. It is the track record of the community," he acknowledged.

Shroff also referred to the approximately 20 Parsis left in Porbunder, who had assured him that they never felt isolated because more than 400 Gujarati friends come to meet and felicitate them on Navroz and Diwali.

Looking to the future, Shroff assessed the community's assets and liabilities in the context of persistent calls for reservation for higher education and jobs. Along with the aforementioned reputation he added the fluency in English and the aptitude for the professions on the credit side; the depletion of



Clockwise from far left: Homage at the Stambh (Photo: Arnavaz S. Mama); Chaiyé Hamé Zarathushti (L to R) Daviervala, Shroff, Tirandaz, Tamboly, Dastur and Marzban Wadia (Photo: Simin J. Patel); Shroff with the memento; (L to R) Bachi and Dinshaw Tamboly with Shroff (Photo: Arnavaz S. Mama); (L to R) Noshir Medhora, Mehli Colah, Pervin and Behram Dastur and Godrej Dotivala (Photo: Simin J. Patel)



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wealth and courage and "stagnant if not shrinking numbers" on the debit side. Noting that "95 percent of new enterprises have succeeded in small, knowledge-based industries," Shroff told the gathering that "the future seems promising if you have the courage, will and strength to work." He also referred to the new venture capital scheme of the BPP which aims at "minimizing risk with proper counselling."

Solicitor and community activist Burjor Antia described Sanjan Day as "the day to audit our accomplishments and remember the stalwarts of the past." We came with only "faith, religious guidance and spiritual resolve (and) created our wealth," he noted, adding in minor key what he considered the diminution of our strengths: the slow disavowal of the sudreh-kusti and manthravani, smoking and the visiting of alien shrines. "To protect and keep the community alive is the duty of the youths. They should marry early and produce more children ... give them knowledge of the religion and community history," he urged, adding, "Awaken, stand united, do something for the living, don't fight for the dis-

posal of the dead."

Welcoming the gathering Duke's Hotel patriarch and SMCLC member Dosabhai Oliaji had registered his concern against intermarriage. "Today we complain against it after attending the reception celebrating such events," he noted in dismay.

BPP trustee Rustom Tirandaz referred to the migration of Zoroastrians to India as one "to save the Saraswati of the Zarathushtris;" the later migrations to the West "to acquire wealth...to save Laxmi."

He was challenged by BPP chief executive Behram Dastur: "In our religion there is no dichotomy between Laxmi and Saraswati because in our religion there is no austerity, only that wealth should be garnered honestly. Let us have faith in our own religion!" Dastur also lambasted the controversy over the donation of eyes on death: "There is nothing in our scriptures (to say) whether eyes can or cannot be donated!"

Mazdayasnie Monasterie founder Meher Master Moos congratulated the Committee "for bringing the community together year after year" and told the

audience that 3.5 million Tajiks with *tokham kyani* (which Tirandaz referred to as "genes" and which Shroff dubbed "lineage or legacy") are in need of mobeds and agiaries. They have transliterated the *Gathas* and the *Avesta* and are looking to the BPP for help, she noted.

In his vote of thanks Daviervala acknowledged the cooperation of the Western Railway which not only ensured that the Gujarat Express to and from Bombay stopped at Sanjan that day to enable Parsis from the metropolis as well as the cities of Gujarat to attend, but put up billboards at all stations upto Vasai announcing the same over the week preceding the event.

The day, which had begun with two consecutive jashans performed by mobeds from Udvada and the reading of messages from the governor of Gujarat and other notables by Saronda's Homi Palsetia and SMCLC treasurer Gustasp Jussawala ended with the customary rendition of *Chhaiyé Hamé Zarathosti* and a scurry toward the lunch tables for the appetising vegetarian meal catered by Maneck Todiwalla.

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"AT THE RIGHT TIME..."

continued from page 20

supervised the construction free of cost. Similarly photographer Homyar Mistry refused to charge for the preinaugural assignment. When more than 50 truckloads of soil had to be brought in for the garden, it was the Muslim contractor, overseeing the construction of the compound wall, who arranged it, acknowledges Bachi.

The BMJT has contributed a further Rs 7,80,000 for a wall round the premises and two lakh rupees toward a new tubewell and pumps as Sanjan's local authority does not provide water to any residence in the area. Two large tanks have been acquired to provide the water needed for the garden and two full-time gardeners are at work. Electricity being expensive — and unreliable — the Tambolys are seeking to install a generator, funds permitting. The snag is that there is no petrol/diesel available in Sanjan. You need to go to Talasari or Umbergaon for it.

Not everything has been smooth sailing. The Tambolys have had their share of hassles. But the successful launch of the new venture — November and December 2001 registered nearly full occupancy — has strengthened their individual philosophies: "At the right time the right thing appears," says Bachi; "We never realized it'll take off so well," adds Dinshaw. "Keeping good relations with people is always very very helpful."

For reservation, readers may contact the WZO Trust office at Shanti, 5th floor, 6, Banaji Street, Fort, Bombay 400001 or the WZO Senior Citizens Centre, Pinjar Street, Malesar, Navsari 396445, preferably 15 days before the projected visit. Check out time is 9 a.m.

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Brain and brawn at Cusrow Baug

Hilla P. Guzder

A new Computer Center and a ladies gym is opened by the Cusrow Baug United Sports and Welfare League

The six spanking new Pentium III computers with full multimedia, color monitors and cable Internet connectivity await Zoroastrian users at the new Computer Center on the first floor of the Cusrow Baug pavilion. Installed in a fully renovated room and inaugurated on November 21, 2001, the Computer Center is designed not just for Baug residents, though Cusrow Baug is probably the first of the Parsi baugs to provide this facility, but for all members of the community.

"We have eliminated the use of phone lines and ISPs (Internet service providers)," explained web designer and Cusrow Baug resident Viraf B. Hansotia in his presentation at the inauguration. Set up with handsome donations from philanthropist NarYman Dubash and Cusrow Baug cum Dubai resident Russi Patel, managing partner of BDO Patel and Al Saleh, Chartered Accountants, the Center will conduct classes in the basic aspects of computers like MS Office packages, Internet, e-mail, etc. Scanning, print-out and surfing facilities will also be available to Zoroastrians at rates less than those charged by cyber cafes or other commercial establishments. Hansotia informed *Parsiana*. Tata Share Registry's Dinyar Marfatia, also a Baug resident, will lend his expertise, with

Hansotia running the classes in afternoon batches as well as on Sunday mornings as Parsis are "in another planet" on Sundays after dhansak, he jests.

Dr Dinyar Gamadia, long-time president of The Cusrow Baug United Sports and Welfare League, thanked Dubash and Patel for the generosity that has enabled the League, on its 55th anniversary, to set up not just the Computer Center, but a new ladies gymnasium, as well as a renovated medical center. "This is a magnificent colony and you have done a wonderful job," commented Bombay Parsi Punchayet (BPP) trustee Dadi Engineer. "But I have one request for the ladies — please do not build muscles! And don't let the boys be deprived of the company of ladies and the eye for beauty. This should not lead to a segregation of the sexes!"

Describing Dubash as a "thorough Zoroastrian, a philanthropist and a sportsman with interest in cycling, rifle and pistol shooting and karate," Gamadia informed the gathering on the green outside the pavilion that last year Dubash had given a donation for the existing gym situated over the main gate. A large number of Zoroastrians do utilize the facilities there, but a separate gym for the ladies of Cusrow Baug was



Clockwise from far left: Gamadia, Dubash and Guzder at the Computer Center (Photo: Studio Sudder); Marfatia and Patel (Photo: Hilla Guzder); Bomi and Viraf Hansotia with Guzder and Dubash (Photo: Rusi Davar); the ladies gym (Photo: Hilla Guzder)

suggested for those who prefer to train in the company of their own sex. Gamadia acknowledged the role played by Cusrow Baug resident Viraf Panthaki in setting up the gym. Panthaki, said Gamadia, is the only Parsi to be a national judge for weightlifting, power lifting and body building. He is also an international referee and has been coach of the Indian team in four world championships, returning that very day from



Renovated medical center (Photo: Hilla Guzder)

Finland, yet was present at the function.

The medical center had been running for a number of years on the ground floor, Bomi Hansotia, treasurer of the League, told *Parsiana*. But Dubash and Patel's benevolence facilitated its renovation and elevation into better premises. It is open to all residents of the "queen of colonies" at a nominal fee. The panel of doctors offering their free services for consultation are cardiologist Dinyar Gamadia, gynecologist Mehroo Hansotia, surgeon Rushad Udawadia, dentist Burzin Khan and homeopath Hutokshi Basta.

Briefly tracing the genesis of Cusrow Baug, BPP chairman Jamshed Guzder recalled with affection his association with Sir Ness Wadia. In the 1930s when

the BB&CI (Bombay, Baroda and Central India) Railway, the precursor of today's Western Railway, decided to terminate its services at Churchgate instead of at Colaba (where the present Badhwar Park is situated), Wadia with wisdom and foresight bought this piece of land at a good price, narrated Guzder. But he never wanted his statue to be placed in the open anywhere in the Baug as he said he would hate to see crows and pigeons sitting on his bald head!

Viraf Hansotia presented a brief audio-visual description of Dubash's two books, *The New World Encyclopedia of the Theory of Waves* and *The World of Waves* and *The New World Encyclopedia of the Theory of the Khoorshid Nigirishn*, compiled after 45 years of research and experience. The League also felicitated, among others, Dinaz Patrawala, the first lady from Cusrow Baug to become an MLA (member of the legislative assembly).

Cusrow Baug's website — www.cusrowbaug.org, designed and set up by Viraf's Online Systems — gives the latest updates about major events at the Baug and has been accessed by over 10,000 people since its inception in August '99. "The site is important not just for what it shows but for what it does,"

Viraf Hansotia said to *Parsiana*. The site can receive e-mails for residents of the Baug who do not have access to e-mail or a computer. The e-mail is then printed out and hand delivered to the concerned person. "This is our social obligation. I do not charge even for the printing," he says, adding that it gives him great satisfaction to forward, for example, a message to elderly parents from their son living abroad. "The site is popular with Cusrow Baug residents outside India. Very often they get to know the results of our volleyball matches even before our local residents do!"

Musical moments at the function were provided by Rustom's Keyboard Ensemble, conducted by Rusi Karkaria, while Marazban Mehta presented a medley of tunes to enliven the proceedings during the contributory dinner catered by Tanaz Godiwalla.

The 14-member managing committee of the League headed by Gamadia has Ratoo Dastur and Mani Vajifdar as vice presidents, Bomi Hansotia as treasurer, Behram Khajotia and Hoshi Mody as joint secretaries, Gool Kotwal, Maneck Engineer, Feroze Deboo, Viraf Panthaki, Jimmy Colabawalla, Tehmasp Munshi, Dinyar Marfatia and Viraf Hansotia as members.

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Funeral rites and rights

Prayers for those opting for alternate modes of disposal of the dead may be performed at Doongerwadi, say the Bombay Parsi Punchayet trustees in a six to one vote

After almost two years of deliberation, the trustees of the Bombay Parsi Punchayet (BPP) in a six to one decision have decided to permit the performance of the funeral ceremonies, barring the geh sarna (paidust) on the Doongerwadi grounds. The body of the deceased who has opted for burial/cremation or any form of disposal other than dakhmenashini will not be brought to Doongerwadi but the subsequent ceremonies may be performed there.

"A suitable place would be demarcated in the area known as Ambawadi (which is far removed from the dakhmas and the bunglis) for constructing a prayer hall for the aforesaid purpose," states a letter signed by BPP chairman, Jamshed N. Guzder and addressed to Hoshang Wania, the convener, Save Doongerwadi Action Committee (SDAC).

Parsiana reproduces Guzder's letter as well as extracts from dissenting trustee Rustom Tirandaz's note to his co-trustees (subsequently trustee Dinshaw Mehta has joined Tirandaz in opposing the Punchayet decision), excerpts from an article written by former BPP chairman and trustee Eruch Desai, all of which appeared in the *Jam-e-Jamshed Weekly* of December 9, 2001 and some lines from a rejoinder by Wania.

Guzder states:

At a board meeting held on November 6, 2001, the trustees of the BPP by a majority, after duly considering the opinion of senior counsel Rafiq Dada and all the facts and circumstance of the matter have taken the decisions set out herein below.

The DDD-AG (Disposal of the Dead with Dignity — Action Group) conveyed to the trustees their decision to the effect that the body of a deceased Zoroastrian which is to be disposed of by a method other than the method of dakhmenashini would not be brought within the premises of Doongerwadi. In

other words, the first day's ceremony up to the geh sarna would be performed at a place other than Doongerwadi. The remaining obsequial ceremonies, in such circumstances, were proposed by the DDD-AG to be performed at Doongerwadi, subject to the approval of the trustees.

In view of the above revised stand of the DDD-AG, the trustees at the aforesaid meeting arrived at the following decisions:

- The request of the DDD-AG to perform the religious ceremonies other than the first day's ceremony up to geh sarna appeared to the trustees to be reasonable and the trustees decided to accept the same, subject to what is stated below.

- Only the ceremonies permitted by the Zoroastrian religion would be permitted to be performed at Doongerwadi and no other form of ceremonies would be so permitted.

- No existing bungli would be provided to the followers and supporters of the DDD-AG for the aforesaid purpose. Furthermore, at no time or stage would the body of a deceased be brought within the premises of Doongerwadi.

- A suitable place would be demarcated in the area known as Ambawadi, (which is far removed from the dakhmas and the bunglis) for constructing a prayer hall for the aforesaid purpose.

- Such a prayer hall would be constructed at the entire cost of the DDD-AG after obtaining such permissions as are necessary for that purpose, the land at all times to belong to the BPP.

- The arrangements for the aforesaid ceremonies and prayers would be made by the supporters and followers of the DDD-AG directly with the mobeds.

For the sake of clarification, it may also be stated that the trustees reiterate their earlier decision that they would uphold, support, sustain and strengthen the system of dakhmenashini. The trust-

ees reiterate their earlier decision to support the construction of an aviary up to a total capital cost of one crore rupees. The trustees have already provided for four solar concentrators and additional solar concentrators will be installed in due course. All measures possible for strengthening the system of dakhmenashini would be taken by the BPP.

As soon as the above decisions regarding the permission to have the ceremonies performed by supporters of the DDD-AG as aforesaid were arrived at by the trustees, these were made known to our colleague trustee, R. S. Tirandaz (who was not present at the aforesaid meeting) and he was requested to communicate the same to your Committee and we trust this has already been done. However, for the sake of good order, we are addressing this letter to you so that the position in the matter is reiterated.

The trustees also decided that should any party which or any person who is not satisfied with the aforesaid decisions of the trustees, such party or person would be free to move an appropriate judicial forum or authority. If after expiry of a period of 30 days, no order of any competent judicial authority or forum is received by the trustees, the trustees would proceed to implement the above decisions.

The trustees earnestly request that in the wider interests of the community and for greater peace and harmony within the community, the aforesaid decisions may please be accepted by all sections of the community.

The trustees have seriously deliberated on this issue and have endeavored to arrive at decisions which they believe are in the larger interests of the community.

Should you so desire, the trustees would be happy if a few representatives of your group meet the trustees to dis-



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cuss at a mutually convenient date and time.

Tirandaz writes in a letter dated December 4, 2001 addressed to the trustees:

Ever since the opinion of our senior counsel Rafiq Dada has been received by us, I have been most intrigued by the happenings that have taken place in the board. The events of the last few weeks have badly shaken my faith in our collective wisdom to really take the right decisions without fear or favor and steer the course of the majority of the Parsi Irani Zoroastrian community out of the present murky and turbulent waters created by the controversy of dakhmenashini versus cremation.

I have failed to understand why, when our only legally qualified solicitor colleague Dadi Engineer initially and unequivocally declared that on strict interpretation Dada's opinion favors the SDAC's contentions, did we suddenly have to create a volte face, and double over backwards in favor of the DDD-AG.

First of all, I am at pains to understand, that whereas hitherto all the decisions of the BPP have been unanimous, why all of a sudden is it thought fit to send out unilaterally a letter to the DDD-AG without so much as informing the SDAC only because most of us were desirous of pleasing the doctors, lawyers and other professionals who were breathing down our necks.

Sadly have I noted that we talked of a samast anjuman meeting as desired by the clergy as well as the rank and file of the community and an originating summons to be moved by us in the Bombay High Court as considered by us, but we chickened out when the threats of the DDD-AG to drag us to the court and close down the dakhmenashini system were extended.

Eruch Desai, Bomi Zaiwalla, the eight High Priests of India, all the 44 presiding priests of (Bombay's) fire-temples, and over 10,000 Parsi Irani Zoroastrian signatories have been unanimously equivocal in their condemnation of the DDD-AG's demands. They have reinforced Dada's stand, no matter how much one might try to find fault with it...

If our affidavit on dakhmenashini does not have a ring of hypocrisy in it, then we have much to do, to get dakhmenashini on track again, and the lesser the interference, the better and faster and cheaper can we get the job

done.

If we are not men of straw and if we care for Zoroastrianism let us stymie the DDD-AG with a call for a samast anjuman meeting and also go to court with an originating summons, as that is the least we can do for the thousands of nameless and faceless devout Parsi Irani Zoroastrians, and the various anjumans of India, who look to the BPP as their savior, since we lack the courage to ask the minuscule DDD-AG to go their separate way as a new denomination of Zoroastrianism.

May saner counsel prevail and lift the burden of destroying the faith from our frail shoulders.

Eruch Desai writes:

In support of their decision, the trustees say that the request of DDD-AG to perform the religious ceremonies other than the first day's ceremony of geh sarna appears to the trustees "to be reasonable" and the trustees decided to accept the same. It is a sad chapter in the history of the BPP that they have ignored not only (the) views of the learned High Priests of the community who should know better on the subject than the trustees, but also the legal position as propounded in the counsel's opinion. Can "reasonableness" of a request prevail over these two paramount factors? If according to the opinion, and if according to the religious experts, such ceremonies cannot be performed, then no decision can be taken by any responsible body of men ignoring the pillars of the community and the legal position on which only the courts alone can pronounce an authoritative judgement...

The trustees have also laid down that no existing bunglis would be provided to the followers and supporters of the DDD-AG for the aforesaid purpose and a suitable place would be demarcated "in the area known as Ambawadi (which is far removed from the dakhmas and bunglis) for constructing a prayer hall for the aforesaid purpose." Whilst imposing this condition, the trustees seem to admit the position that the existing land and the bunglis thereon cannot be used for recitation of the prayers also, when the bodies are not consigned to the dakhmas. In the same breath, how can they say that a part of the same land, but some distance away, can be availed of for the purpose? The condition that at no stage should the body of a deceased opting for alternate system be brought

within the premises of Doongerwadi, does not alleviate the... situation.

A further condition imposed is that such prayer hall shall be constructed at the entire cost of the DDD-AG after obtaining such permissions as are necessary for that purpose and the land shall at all times belong to the BPP. Could not then a demand be, that if the new prayer hall to be constructed at Ambawadi does not form part of the Trust property the same can be made available to the other communities also for recitation of the prayers?...

The trustees have further stated in the letter that all measures possible for strengthening the system of dakhmenashini would be taken by the BPP including their support for the aviary system as also providing additional solar concentrators in due course. This does not cut much ice. It is blowing hot and cold at the same time. In one breath they say they are supporting the dakhmenashini system and in the other breath, how can they say that they can allow prayers in respect of a body which is not confined to the dakhma? It is also not consistent with their sworn affidavit to strengthen the dakhmenashini system...

The trustees have made no announcement of such an important decision in the Press or otherwise, immediately after it was reached on November 6, 2001 which was the normal practice in our days...

The trustees say that they have seriously debated on this issue and have endeavored to arrive at the decisions which they believe are in the larger interest of the community. By one stroke of the pen, the trustees have driven the death knell to the dakhmenashini system and possibly, to the Doongerwadi property, ignoring the opinion of the vast majority of the community as evidenced by nearly 8,000 signatures that SDAC have obtained as against nil from the other side on the so-called plea that "such wrong means cannot be used to justify the right ends..."

Wania's response dated December 3, 2001.

You have completely ignored the fact that you are the trustees of the Doongerwadi property and hence bound to administer the same in accordance with the trust deed. Your own counsel has opined that your actions have to be in consonance with the religion. It is amply clear that the facilities at

Doongerwadi are available only to those community members whose corpses are consigned to the dakhmas and not to those who wish to avail themselves (of) an alternate un-Zoroastrian method of disposal of the dead. The Zoroastrian religion firmly rejects all other methods of disposal of the dead except dakhmenashini, particularly where it is available and in use...

An issue as important as this cannot be decided by you, the trustees, who openly profess that you have no knowledge of the religion. Therefore, we believe, that it is imperative that a samast anjuman meeting be properly convened in the New Year. At this meeting, let both sides present their case so that the voice of the community may be heard and taken cognizance of, on this vexed issue.

We the members of the SDAC, speaking on behalf of the majority of the community, reject outright your decision to accede to the demands of the DDG-AG as well as we oppose your 30-day deadline communicated to us vide your letter dated November 28, 2001, and request you to rescind your wrong decision.

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While we were at the cash counter at the fast food outlet our companion was identified as Maya, the key actress in the teleserial *Hum Pardesi Ho Gaye* which has already seen 41 episodes. After we had settled down at the table, a college boy plucked up courage to confirm whether she is the star of the popular film *Bollywood Calling*. On receiving an affirmative reply he confides that he has won a bet of Rs 10. Shortly thereafter comes up a girl with a request for an autograph from our charming interviewee. She writes a short message and signs her name 'Perizaad Zorabian.'

"I don't want all this to end. It's such a high. It's like a dream. I am trying to be modest but I can't," frankly confesses Zorabian and flashes her heart-warming smile when referring to the success of her screen debut in *Bollywood Calling* which has been "a most unexpected hit." Running in seven theaters across Bombay and its suburbs, Zorabian can't disguise her happiness when she is told that tickets for the movie are not easily available in the fourth week since its release on November 23, 2001.

A spoof on Hindi cinema which with its trappings of songs, romance, violence and a lead star cast can guarantee success even devoid of an original story or a brilliant script, in *Bollywood Calling* we see Zorabian playing the role of Kajal who, according to the story line evolves from a sensuous bimchette to a sensitive actress. Her co-stars are the veteran Om Puri who enacts the role of a desperate South Indian producer turned

director Subramaniam who is willing to sacrifice many principles to complete his Hindi film, *Maur*; Navin Nischol who plays the versatile lead role of Manuji, an actor who is used to calling the shots in real and reel life; and Pat Cusick who is specially flown down to India to emote the part of Pat Stormare, Manuji's brother. The film has its moments of laughter when the Bollywood culture is seen through the eyes of a fallen Hollywood hero; when Manuji and Pat share their confessions and dreams in their stuporous state; when Kajal and Pat establish an enduring rapport.

During the month long shooting of this low budget film in Hyderabad in February 1999, Zorabian recalls they had long working days from seven in the morning to six in the evening. She had to do her own make-up and hairstyle for each shoot but she enjoyed her days. Working with stalwarts like Puri and Nischol was a rewarding experience for the newcomer who would watch them with fascination, see how they altered their facial expressions depending on the chosen frame — long shot, medium range or close-up. And yet they never once made her feel like a novice. "In fact they treated me like a daughter; were very supportive and protective." In her candid style, Zorabian confesses, "During the shooting there were times when I couldn't give

director Nagesh Kukunoor the performance he wanted. He would tell me to play the bimchette with sincerity, not as a spoof, which was difficult for me. It was very frustrating. I would break down." Kunal Vijayakar, her first real-life director for the stage who plays the reel director in the film, "was a huge moral support. He was amazing, like a guardian angel."

Every evening would see her send an e-mail to her family, summarizing the day's proceedings. "I think of them before taking any decision," declares Zorabian. Even before she could accept *Bollywood Calling* she needed her mother's consent, especially since there were some kissing scenes in the movie. Her mother Firoza's initial response was, the script is good enough for Bollywood, but not for Perizaad who then had to give her "one of my heartfelt emotional numbers" to convince her to the contrary. "If my mom says yes, my dad Khoram will also say yes," Perizaad has learnt along the way.

The family was concerned that the community's gossip mills would start talking, 'Irani ni chhokri film maa kaam karéch (An Irani girl is working in a film).' And this, at a time when the parents are hoping to find a nice Irani husband for their 28-



The belle of Bollywood

Parinaz M. Gandhi

The popularity of her maiden film *Bollywood Calling* enhances Perizaad Zorabian's star status



Perizaad Zorabian with her co-stars in *Bollywood Calling* Cusick (above) Puri (left) and Nischol

year-old eligible daughter! But Perizaad cannot conceal her glee that she actually got a matrimonial offer on behalf of an Irani boy whose family had seen her in the film and were willing to wait until she finished her tryst with stardom! Although the self-confessed "hard core romantic" has not accepted this offer she delights in reminding her staid, old-fashioned *bomas* (grandfather as he is addressed in Dari — Behramsha Irani is the owner of Rising Sun Bakery) that her value in the marriage market has actually gone up because of her following! He laughingly responds, "*Besharam* *thai gaeesh* (you have become shameless)," whilst conceding that she should be allowed to do what she wants so long as she does not bring dishonor to the family and the community. "In fact I have suddenly become hot and happening; I am invited to colony functions; to be the chief guest," the vivacious actress observes in her husky voice.

Just before our interview she was invited to hear another script and after the interview she was heading for the dubbing of her teleserial *Hum Pardesi Ho Gaye*, aired on Thursdays on Sony TV. Running into 52 episodes here she plays the role of a woman who honestly admits to the man she loves and trusts that the institution of marriage does not appeal to her, whilst unknown to her he goes and gets married to another girl to appease his family in India. Since the shooting of this film was abroad Perizaad was happy that her green card was put to good use. Whatever following she had

because of *Hum Pardesi* reinforced her star image with *Bollywood Calling* and she hopes will be further strengthened with *Namaste*, her next film scheduled for release in early 2002. "If *Bollywood Calling* has done good to any career, it's mine. It's made me," humbly acknowledges the actress. Perizaad has been forewarned by one of her senior stars: "Now that you've tasted blood (success) you'll want more." But although she has received offers she is very clear in her mind that she does not want to accept a small role in an A-grade movie nor a big role in a well-paying B-grade movie. "I can leave it at this stage and feel very proud of my performance."

She knows her father would gladly have her rejoin the family's poultry and catering business from



which she has taken a sabbatical to pursue her fascination with acting. As Khoram who owns a poultry farm in Khopoli, runs Gondola restaurant at Pali Market, Bandra and has helped son Sohrab establish himself in the catering world under the Cheron Caterers banner — was wont to telling his associates, "I have lost my daughter to the

Perizaad with her family (clockwise from left): Khoram, Firoza, Gauhar, Sohrab and Shazaad





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glamor world." She is also the "superstar sister" to youngest brother Shazaad who is studying computers abroad. Following her MBA in advertising and marketing from Baruch University (the business school at the City University of New York), USA, for a while Perizaad devoted herself to her father's business. She would be working from 7.30 in the morning to 8.30 in the evening with her life revolving around chickens! Her work ethics she had imbibed during her happy stint with the 695-room Lexington Hotel in New York which she had joined as assistant manager and which she had left as front office manager, her mentor being Sam Bhadha.

Her stage and screen presence she attributes to her love and aptitude for dancing since she was a schoolgirl at Bandra's Auxilium Convent and a commerce student at the Mithibai Motiram Kundani (MMK) College from where she graduated, topping the Bombay University in management accountancy, she relates. Whilst studying management in the States she also did a course at the Lee Strasberg College of Drama. For 12 years she had studied ballet with Tushna Dallas whom she held in awe in her younger days, but now considers her 'jaan (sweet-heart)' recollecting how a minute late for Dallas' Malabar Hill class, the sojourn from Bandra notwithstanding, left the student facing a closed door.

Since she was more comfortable wearing the ballet attire without her sudreh-kusti, Perizaad says this habit has continued. "We Parsis are very close-minded," notes Perizaad referring to the non-acceptance of non-Parsi spouses. "I'm very angry and irritated with this attitude. It's suffocating. It's ridiculous that children of intercommunity marriages are not welcome," she adds. Although she is happy that "as a community we are not mean and cunning," this rigidity she finds "very stupid." The concept of dakhmenashini she had always associated with a Zoroastrian's final act of charity, but in the absence of vultures she wonders whether this tradition should continue.

Support from family and friends does however mean a lot to Perizaad or Peezee

as she is known among those close to her. At the premiere of *Bollywood Calling*, she knows there were 55 tickets bought to cheer her up (never mind that they forgot to include her in the count), making one of her co-stars comment that she had filled half the theater with a Parsi crowd! When she went up to greet Puri, he reportedly told her,

"After the screening you will have become a star. Then will you come and say 'Hello?'"

Mom Firoza is viewed as her best critic and supporter. "She is quick to fault everything with me making me burst out with 'Do you like anything I do?'" Her mother always reminds her, "You have got away with a lot of

things which I couldn't as a child." The mother's love for ballet ultimately found an expression in Perizaad's dance. "But she gives me both ends," values Perizaad unlike her biased father to whom "my daughter's the best." She has a very good opinion of her father as a boss though. "He would treat me like an intelligent individual, respect my decisions, value my presentations for clients. I, in turn, put in my best efforts, never asked for privileges or favors or took the business for granted." In fact even when she was rehearsing for her maiden stage appearance in *Unfaithful* where she was cast alongside Cyrus Broacha in Kunal Vijayakar's play, she would be working whole day, taking time off only in the evenings for rehearsals.

The first commercial for which she modelled was Fair and Lovely after coordinator Monaz Irani who met her at a navjote asked her whether she would be interested. Since then she has modelled for Ponds, Ariel, BPL, Titan, Tanishq, Close-up, Perizaad's charming face breaks into a smile.

But more than a model, Perizaad wants "to make an identity as a person, an actress." Being an actress has "gone totally against my plans of life," and where destiny will next lead her Perizaad cannot predict. "I may not know where my life is going," says the star with a down-to-earth approach pointing out that although she may not be clear on what she wants to do, she at least knows what she does not want!



Perizaad with
Kukunoor (left) and Cusick

Lambent in Lonavla

The Aden fire's sanctuary in India completes 25 years

Hilla P. Guzder

Twenty-five years ago the fire had wended its way up the Bhor Ghat from Bombay to Lonavla in a cavalcade of cars, following its long flight from Aden. On the occasion of its silver jubilee on November 8, 2001, the window of the railway carriage trundling steadily up afforded *Parsiana* a glimpse of the Ghat road. It was clogged with bumper to bumper trucks, buses and cars, engines and tempers heating with the unexpected delay on the stretches-still-to-be-completed hill section, following the smooth drive to Khopoli along the ribbon of the new, multi lane expressway. While the lucky ones sneaked past the snarl of traffic, a number of devotees, anxious to arrive on time for the jashan, finally trooped into the tranquility of the Bai Jerbai Cowasjee Dinshaw Dar-e-meher (Adenwalla agiary) in Lonavla, over an hour-and-a-half later than scheduled, the incandescence of faith however undimmed.

The agiary houses two flames — a dadgah fire consecrated 102 years ago on June 3, 1899 and another of adarian grade consecrated in Aden in 1883 and flown in and installed in the agiary on November 14, 1976, *roz* Behram mah Khordad, AY 1346 (see "Lonavla's legacy" *Parsiana*, July-August 1999). To commemorate the Aden fire's silver jubilee in this picturesque hill retreat, the agiary wore a new look, with fresh paint, new tiles and a gumbaz (dome) constructed over the Aden fire.

High Priest (Dr) Firoze Kotwal's unexpectedly delayed arrival saw Ervad Asphandiar Dadachanji and other mobeds commence the jashan amidst a packed hall of faithfuls, who included the members of the Lonavla-Khandala Parsi Zarthosti Anjuman and their families. The felicitation function following

the jashan was held in the shady surroundings of the garden, beneath the verdure and spread of ancient foliage. Expressing his appreciation, Kotwal complimented Cowasjee Nusserwanji Dinshaw (Adenwalla), the chairman of the agiary trust, on the building of the gumbaz and other renovations. A jashan,



Arched portal of the agiary

Kotwal informed the gathering, is more than just a routine recitation of prayers. The Amesha Spentas are believed to be present at the place where the ceremony is performed. As long as the people's faith in the atash, the *Atash Nyaish*, the sudreh-kusti, the dakhma and other prerequisites of the religion is strong, the community will survive, he asserted.

Tracing the over 100-year history of the Aden fire, Dinshaw told the audience that the firm of Cowasjee Dinshaw and Brothers, into shipping and a variety of businesses, was founded in Aden (now renamed Yemen) in 1850. Aden was a port booming with business, situated on the vital sea route between the East and West in Southern Arabia. Though a fire-temple had been built earlier and consecrated on September 20, 1854 (see "The Flight of the Fire," *Parsiana*, December 1976-January 1977), in 1883 the Adenwalla family

consecrated an adarian grade fire in the township, and built a mosque known as Masjid-E-Cowasjee for the locals as well. Aden and the Parsis prospered till 1967 when South Yemen turned communist. The British trooped out, so did the Parsis who reportedly numbered over 1,000 at that time. The adarian faced the flak of

civil war, yet no bomb, exploding all around, or splinter touched the agiary, stated Dinshaw.

It was imperative that the fire be taken out of a country whose government did not believe in God. The dakhma, agiary and their funds became nationalized state properties. "We were not worried about the carpets or the silverware," asserted Dinshaw, but only about the mission of shifting the fire to a safe haven. But the Indian government did not wish

to antagonize the Arabs, the Queen of England gave no satisfactory reply to entreaties, neither the United Nations nor the World Bank extended help. Finally, it was Congress stalwart Y. B. Chavan, then the foreign minister, who prevailed upon the south Yemenese head at a non-aligned meet in Colombo to let the fire be moved out, with Prime Minister Indira Gandhi lending her support.

There followed a succession of quandaries — should the fire be taken west to London or east to Iran or India? London as an option was ruled out — an adarian fire had to be tended continuously and London did not have facilities for this. Iranian Zoroastrians followed the Fasli calendar — Aden's was a Shahenshahi agiary. India was considered the best option. Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw was approached for help, but the overland route meant traversing Mecca and Medina, out of bounds for non-Muslims. The final decision — the fire would be flown out in



a special container in a chartered Air India Boeing 707 with an all-Parsi crew.

But problems persisted — the pilot scheduled to command the flight took ill, no replacement was to be found. Finally, it was Air India pilot Capt Sam Peddar, who had a license to fly the Boeing 747 and not the 707, who saved the situation. "My role was accidental

on this historic occasion," wrote Peddar in his letter of good wishes to the trustees, read out at the silver jubilee function. Learning of the heroic efforts to save the fire and the Yemen government's stringent conditions and deadline, Peddar put in extra flying hours to obtain his license for the 707. On the eve of the midnight hour of departure, a

From left (first row): The fountain and the flowers, Zarir Tata (center) with Jamas (left) and Cyrus (Photo: Hilla Guzder) and Guzder; (second row) Cowasjee Dinshaw, Kotwal and Gotla; (third row) embellished mirror and the agiary hall

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At the felicitation (from left): Tirandaz, Zarir Tata, Khodaparast Dinshaw, Kotwal, Cowasjee Dinshaw, Guzder, Dadrawala, Dadachanji, Maneck Shroff and Gotla; Khodaparast with son Sarosh



message was said to have arrived from the head of the Yemenese police that he wished to inspect the contents of the container. More torment and tension followed, but the final knock on the agiary door brought not the chief of police, but a messenger to say the chief had reportedly passed away! "There is a lot of power in this holy fire," stated Dinshaw, "and those who serve it will not go empty-handed."

Present at the function were Dinshaw's wife Khodaparast, also a trustee of the agiary, Bombay Parsi Punchayet (BPP) chairman Jamshed Guzder who was the chief guest, BPP trustees Dinshaw Mehta and Rustom Tirandaz, columnist Noshir Dadrawala, Lonavla-Khandala Anjuman vice president Maneck Shroff, secretary Darius Gotla and a host of others. Pledging a donation of a lakh of rupees, Guzder reiterated his oft-repeated message of teaching children the importance of prayer. "Fire is an animator, the symbol of light, the symbol of life," stressed Dadrawala. "We have fire energies in us. When we die we go cold — the fire energies have left us." Dadrawala exhorted his coreligionists to keep, if not a fire, at least a divo burning in their homes. Dadachanji informed the gathering that the two fires, which had been shifted due to the ongoing repairs, had been reinstalled the previous night in their respective keblas after due ritual purification. While Mehta did not speak, Tirandaz in his usual flamboyant style touched upon the "crystallized DNA of the Parsis" and the need to marry within the community, adding that the deci-

sion of the trustees of the Jeejeebhoy Dadabhoy Agiary at Colaba to allow the use of the baug for marriage receptions even where the groom is a non-Parsi had "greatly pained my heart."

With a table full of mementos glinting in the noon sun, the organizers acknowledged with shawls, flowers and silver cups the assistance and benefactions of numerous individuals — the priests, including the agiary's panthaky Zarir Tata, well-wishers like Maneck and Rashida Shroff, Jal Engineer, Adi Banajee, Khorshed Cooper, Sheramai Jussawalla, Sam Choksi, Capt Percy and Erene Master and a long line of others too numerous to name, as well as the Air India crew, some of whom had made it a point to be present. Fortifying energies after the felicitation was a lunch of Hyderabad delicacies, organized and supervised by Rashida Shroff.

"People say that if you build a gumbaz, you die. But if I die in *bhalai na kaam* (good deeds), I do not mind," stated Gotla who was the master of ceremonies. Elaborating, at Parsiana's request later, on the repairs, Gotla said the agiary now has a more spacious look, as the Aden fire which many devotees in the past did not even notice because of the wall separating it from the original (dadgah) fire, is now easily visible as the wall has been demolished. The large etched mirror donated by Dali Mistry of Mistry Motors enhances the space and light effect, a beautifully framed Persian carpet donated by Tehmtan Davar adds luster to the wall at the entrance of the kebla.

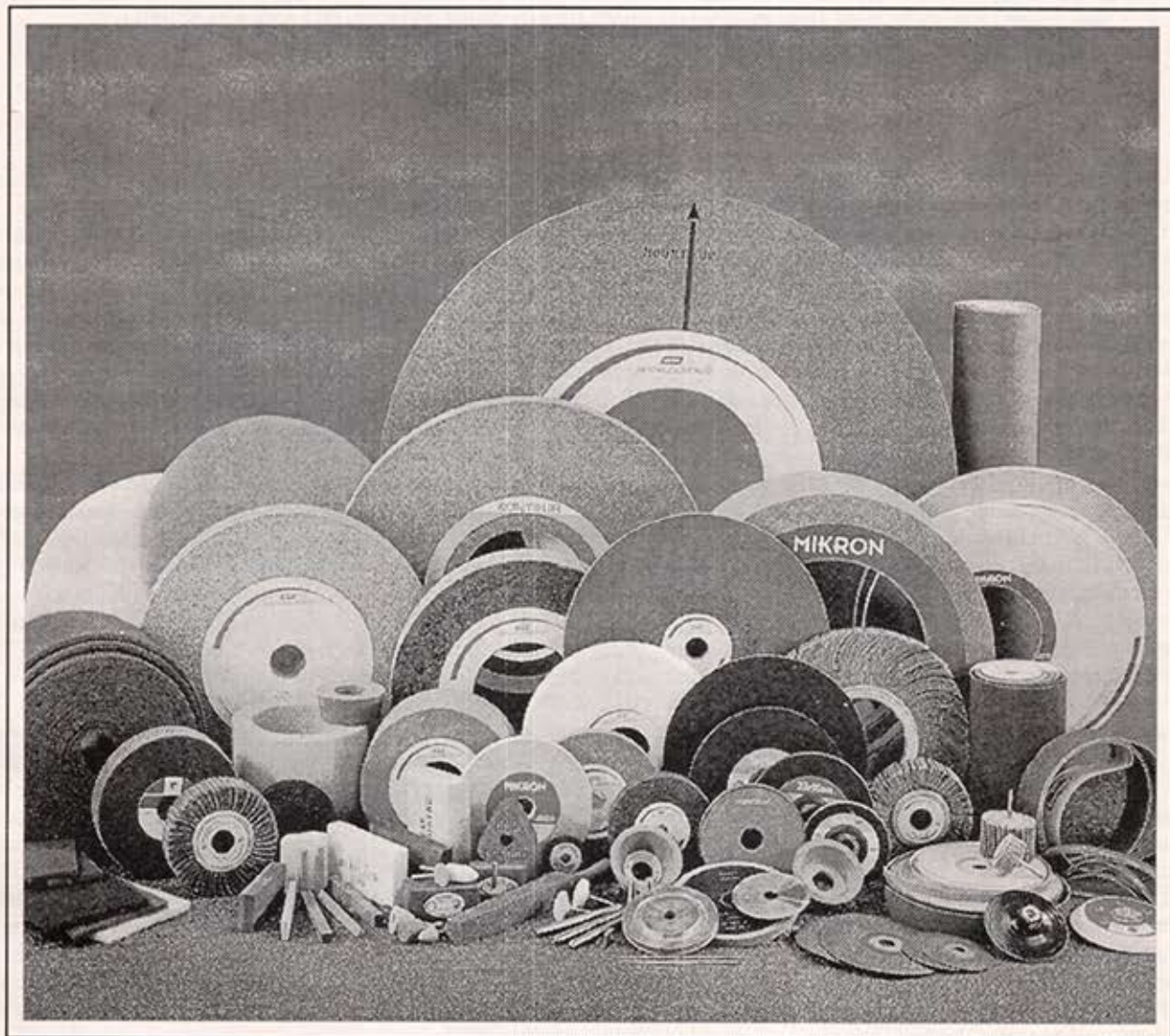
The renovations included the build-

ing of a new kathi room at the rear and a new archway at the entrance to the compound. With Rusi Khambatta the architect in charge of the project and contractor/coordinator Cyrus Unwalla carrying out the work at cost in deference to the sanctity of a fire-temple, the task was completed within six months.

Gotla expresses appreciation of the role played by Kotwal and Dadachanji and their guidance and visits to Lonavla regarding the shifting of the fires. The present panthaky's son Jamas is also a navar and plans are afoot to make younger son Cyrus a navar at the Lonavla agiary itself, once the facilities are put in place. He particularly commends the young boys and girls who came from Poona to help in readying the agiary for the reinstallation — scrubbing and cleaning, putting the shine back into the chandeliers with fine brushes, etc.

The 12-member Anjuman committee consists of Dinshaw as president, Maneck Shroff as vice president, Gotla as secretary, Soli Toddywalla as joint secretary, treasurer Keki Meherji, joint treasurer Jal Engineer and members Pesi Taraporewala, Adi Banajee, Behram Dhabhar, Nergish Balaporia, Dinshaw Irani and the agiary's panthaky inducted as member as well. "There is a lot of *samp* (togetherness) within our Anjuman, trustees support each other. That is the way it should be," asserted Gotla, adding that only with togetherness can the fire and the faith be cherished, taking the agiary (in Guzder's words) "from posterity to posterity."

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An avoidable divide

What are the issues that divide us and who can be labelled orthodox or reformist? asks the author

Armin Wandrewala

It's not only avoidable, but desperately needs to be avoided — this divide that's threatening to rip our minuscule community right down the middle. The irony is that this danger is fuelled by the very persons who most devotedly espouse the cause of Zoroastrianism; who have the well-being and succor of their co-religionists at heart, and who are vitally concerned about the perpetuation of the Zoroastrian religion and the Parsi way of life. It is passionate espousal that is causing so much sound and fury — indifference would have resulted in shrugs and silence.

In the battle royal now being waged between some Zarathushtis with one idea of Zoroastrianism, versus some other Zarathushtis with a rather different idea of Zoroastrianism, the faith itself is likely to be the casualty.

We, this *mutthi bhar tolo* (handful of people), are tearing each other apart because we care...and care deeply! Can't we care without causing schisms? Can we afford factions and sects and divisions within our small numbers? Should we risk physical fragmentation because we refuse to accommodate ideological differences within a demographic group which is almost 100 percent literate, mostly well educated, by and large reasonably well-to-do with many among us (let us admit) individualistic to the edge of eccentricity?

We are today in danger of perceiving our major strengths as weaknesses: our liberalism, our large-heartedness, our broadmindedness, our eschewing of fundamentalism of any kind. A questing, probing intelligence, a robust sense of humor, simple faith, basic integrity and a decorous code of conduct have ensured for us a certain cachet in this multicultural melting pot of the country of our refuge. Are we in danger of losing it all? Over issues that ought never to have exacerbated to this extent?

The two major issues of contention, not-so-gradually cleaving the community into two factions of the 'orthodox' and the 'reformist,' evidently are: intermarriage and its attendant ramifications, and the method of disposal of our dead. Another area of concern is our dwindling numbers which appears to be exercising the so-called orthodox and the so-called reformists almost equally.

I say 'so-called,' because these nomenclatures are apt to be misleading. Who really is an 'orthodox' person, and who can truly be categorized 'reformist'? It is not sufficient to say that anyone who believes in the traditional doctrines and *tarikats* of Zoroastrianism is 'orthodox,' and one who does not, should be labelled 'reformist.' The categorization is not so simple or clear cut. A person may have no objection to inter-caste marriages, but may be adamant about *dakhmenashini* being the only method of disposal of the dead, and the vice versa. Also, a person may have very rigid views against inter-caste marriages, and against any system but *dakhmenashini*, but may be resident abroad, and may be compelled to have himself/herself or his/her loved ones buried or cremated. Is such person 'un-Zoroastrian' and 'irreligious'? Or is he/she permitted to bend doctrinal precepts at the altar of practical convenience and expediency, which in fact has been the case for decades?

We are told that it is irreligious and un-Zoroastrian to follow any method other than *dakhmenashini* for the disposal of the dead in such places which have *dakhmas*. We are also told that *dakhmenashini* is the only system recognized in Zoroastrianism for the disposal of the dead. We cannot have a doctrinal absolute qualified by a temporal condition. If a method is irreligious or un-Zoroastrian, it is so for all, unconditionally. It then behoves all Parsi

Zoroastrians to reside only in areas which have *dakhmas*!

Dakhmenashini as a system has to be viewed holistically, with all its components in place. Apart from the well, duly consecrated, we are told the other main prerequisites of the system are: vultures or other scavengers which strip the flesh, and the strong rays of the sun which help the process of dehydration and decomposition.

It is an accepted fact that in Bombay, in the Doongerwadi grounds, there are no vultures left. The sun's rays are fine, but how much sun do the *dakhmas* get? What about the heavy monsoon season experienced by Bombay for four-five months in a year?

Yes, one can understand — the Doongerwadi lands are in question. Dare I suggest, however, that we are in greater danger of losing lands by quarrelling amongst ourselves and dragging matters to court, than we would be, were we to come to some consensus amicably and implement the decisions without any ado? After all, several good, devout Zoroastrians have been exercising the freedom of choice for years — merely by choosing their place of residence!

As far as the aviary project is concerned, how natural and ethical is it to cage huge wild birds (Ahura Mazda's creatures, surely!), force them to live and breed in captivity, deny to them forever their inborn right to soar the skies, slaughter other animals to feed them and then train them to feed off a diet of dead human carcasses so that our dead can be disposed of by them? The mind boggles at the thought — breed birds, not to perpetuate the species, but only so that our dead bodies can be eaten by them! Natural? Ethical? Religious? Zoroastrian? Is it?

As far as intermarriages are concerned, is it required that one should be false to one's heart, in order to be true

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to one's faith? Does an otherwise devout Zoroastrian become any less so, because he/she falls in love with and marries another human being who may not be born a Zoroastrian? A person may be the model of virtue; but he/she becomes anathema in the eyes of some, if he/she marries a non-Parsi — an 'outcaste!' What is of particularly grave concern is the way we treat the children of such 'mixed marriages,' an example being exposed by the November issue of *Parsiana* ("The Nagpur incident"). Whatever the learned priest may have meant, surely, he could have refrained from using a word which even a child knows is a pejorative! Surely no religion requires its innocent children to be so traumatized because of the perceived sins of their parents: that of marrying a human being of a different faith (surely another of God's creatures)! And this, when there is still some doubt as to whether or not Zoroastrianism ever permitted/encouraged proselytism!

Can't we, for God's sake, do away with dogmas and fatwas, and follow our most basic tenets: good thoughts, good words, good deeds?

Let us not forget the horrors of reli-

gious persecution in other faiths. And if it comes to that, study the *Vendidad* in its entirety. Are we sure we want it followed to the ultimate degree, including all the punishments prescribed?

Let us not fragment ourselves over what may or may not be the true religious diktat, the real spiritual truth, the essence of pure faith. Apart from problems of translation and interpretation, several of our holy books have been lost or destroyed. (Ironically, we have largely depended upon 'outcaste' scholars for interpretation of our holy books!)

As for the expressed danger that we may lose our identity, we are in far greater danger of that if we are constantly at each other's throats, snarling over our differences instead of sorting them out sensibly!

A practising lawyer in the Bombay High Court,



Armin Wandrewala has authored two books, *The Turning*, a crime novel which has also been translated into German, and *Alone...In The Valley Of*

The Gods, a true pictorial account of her treks and travels in the Himalayas.



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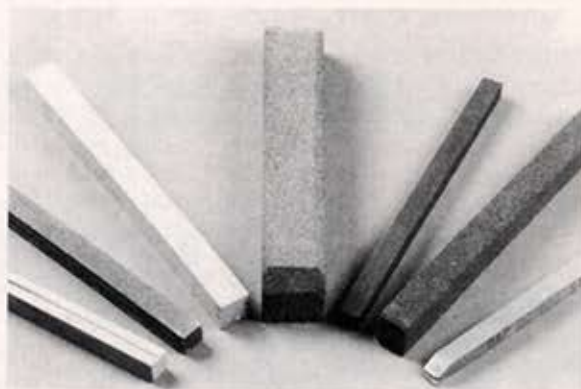
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Foreign focus

"Compared to the peak period of 1995-'97, advertising has decreased. At the moment it is manageable, and things are improving at every stage. Advertising will come round again," predicts Ronny Mistry, managing director (MD) of RMA (Ronny Mistry Associates)



Ronny Mistry (left) and Kuka

Private Limited. Compared to the earlier part of the year, the latter half of 2001 closed on a more optimistic note, he believes.

For almost 20 years, RMA has been the sole advertising representative in India for a strong stable of global publications — *Newsweek International*, *BusinessWeek*, *International Herald Tribune*, *The Daily Telegraph*, *Institutional Investor*, *Der Spiegel*, *Far Eastern Economic Review*, *Le Figaro*, *Nikkei Business*, *Textile World*, *Home and Decor* and many others (see "Selling foreign space," *Parsiana*, April '98). The dailies and periodicals span the spectrum of general interest, business, trade, finance, fashion...

Mistry believes that Indian industry and the services sector fully understand the importance of global advertising, citing the example of the Government of Karnataka which booked a supplement in a prestigious worldwide publication like *BusinessWeek* to tell its software story, enhancing its own and India's image. Special India sections on industry, tourism, banking, etc have provided concentrated coverage in *Institutional Investor*,

Newsweek, etc. "Advertisers may go in for product advertising, or generic. We guide regular campaigners like the Taj group, ITC (India Tobacco Company) and others as to which publication is best suited to their needs," he says. While advertising in US editions may be out of reach for some, the Atlantic and Pacific editions are affordable, maintains Mistry.

When *Newsweek International* launched its India edition in 1997, it brought international exposure within the affordable ambit of Indian clients. Indian companies pay in rupees, at a rate which is much lower than what they might otherwise have to spend to advertise in an international newsmagazine. Foreign companies pay in dollars, and with liberalization and the relaxation of foreign exchange rules and regulations the path has been considerably smoothened, he explains, adding that it is the business magazines that generate maximum revenue.

Adds RMA chief executive Fareed Kuka, Mistry's son-in-law who joined the firm 11 years ago: "We are not just advertising representatives. With the assistance of publishers, we put in research to ensure that clients get maximum reach within a specific budget." Kuka is the center point for liaising with publishers worldwide, as well as with other RMA offices and their clients all over India. "We expanded considerably after 1991," says

Kuka, bringing more publications into the portfolio and setting up new offices. RMA currently has establishments in Delhi, Calcutta, Madras, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Ahmedabad and Trivandrum.

RMA does not seek representation from the Indian media. "I have received several offers from Indian publications. But we have a unique identity which will be lost if we take on the task of selling space in Indian publications as well," Mistry reasons. "There will be no

difference between us and other advertising concerns."

Mistry's venture into advertising began a half century ago when he joined The Bharat Group of Newspapers as assistant advertising manager. Spending five years with The Blitz group and 11 summers with *Eve's Weekly*, Mistry worked as advertising manager for 17 years with "the old lady at Bori Bunder" — The Times of India Group, till the spirit of freedom spurred him to snap up, within a period of one hour, an offer of representation from the US-based *Newsweek*. Working out of a poky den in Flora Fountain, relying mainly on Air India advertising to help business take off, Mistry slowly expanded his portfolio, moving to Matunga and then to his present office at Bandra. His wife Dinaz is joint MD.

Amongst his other achievements Mistry has been the honorary secretary and the vice president of the Advertising Club of Bombay, founder member and charter president of the Lions Club of Matunga, as well as a founder member of YOU (Youths Own Union).

Insights into oil

"Only brands that conform to all our chemical tests are considered for 'best buy.' Godrej (refined sunflower oil) is our 'best buy' with a high score and reasonable price," states *Insight*, The Consumer Magazine, in its issue of November-December 2001. In its "test report" on different varieties (groundnut, coconut, mustard, sesame, etc) of cooking oil, *Insight* placed Godrej and Sweekar (manufactured by Marico Industries who also manufacture Saffola and Parachute oil) in joint first place in the sunflower oil segment. Other heavyweights of the cooking oil industry like Hindustan Lever (Flora), ITC Agro Tech Limited (Sundrop and Crystal) and National Dairy Development Board (Dhara Health) featured in the analysis.

"Although Sundrop scored 74 (against Godrej's 72), we did not consider it for the best buy because it did not conform to the test for flash point," said the magazine. Of the 11 sunflower brands tested, all but two "weighed less than the weight printed on their labels. But not a single pack of Godrej..."

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The Iranian Odyssey

In the Footsteps of our Forefathers documents the journey of 34 young Zarathushtris in Iran

Arnavaz S. Mama

Four standing ovations at the Seventh World Zoroastrian Congress in Houston in December 2000 and two delighted housefuls in Bombay in November 2001. A heady start for a debutante filmmaker? Not quite. Tenaz Dubash is exhilarated and energized but she has her feet on the ground.

The hour-long *In the Footsteps of our Forefathers*, culled from 18 hours of footage shot on location as 34 North American Zoroastrian youths made their odyssey to Iran, involved nail biting suspense and back-breaking labor not to speak of a lost job and financial costs, recalls its producer-director-initiator Dubash.

The documentary traces the group's travels through the mountains and deserts of Iran in search of their Zoroastrian roots. Despite much reading of Iran's ancient history before the trip, Dubash found "Persepolis amazing... nothing had prepared us for it!" The group traversed the land from the Caspian coast to the Zoroastrian desert strongholds of Yazd and Kerman, from the epic grandeur of Mount Demavand to the subterranean wonders of the Ali Sadr Caves.

But the film is more than an eye-filling touristic record. Ever and anon the group pauses to visualize the links between the great monuments and themselves, to survey the Iranian Zoroastrian community that has maintained a quiet vigil over its heritage, especially the oases of the Pirs in the desert around Yazd. Many of these people are old, gnarled and poor, but their devotion to their land is palpable, which the group noticed, returning with a "deep sense of respect for those who stuck it out there," as noted Dubash. The happy commingling that ensued as the youths partici-

pated in a navjote ceremony is an essay in the happiness that the young and the old can share, given the will, even when language is a barrier rather than a bond.

The trip by the western youths was the brainchild of Laila Contractor of Pittsburg and Cyrus Fatah of Los Angeles, informs Dubash. After Dubash had decided to join the group she felt that since she was going she could "bring back something to show for it." She began her background research, "planning the content and formulating the structure of the film." Other requirements involved a detailed budget for equipment, camera people and editing costs. Here, with hindsight, she says she floundered, relying on complimentary professional help from friends which slowed down the post-shooting progress of the film and led her to forego her full-time job as news writer with FOX TV network (without ever having budgeted a salary for herself) in order to complete the film in time for release at the Congress.

As Dubash was quick to point out at the World Zoroastrian Organisation (WZO) sponsored viewing of *Footsteps* at Bombay's Homi J. H. Taleyarkhan Memorial Hall, the film records "just opinions — none of us are scholars." Yet, the University of California at Berkeley is using the film for its Middle East Program, she noted in passing.

Fund-raising for *Footsteps* was not a problem. "Zarathushtris openly and gen-

erously supported the film," noted Dubash, singling out the Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Chicago as "the most supportive association." Funds and finance committee chair of the Federation of Zoroastrian Associations of North America (FEZANA) Dr Jerry Kheradi personally contributed \$ 5,000 to her \$20,000 budget, she recalls warmly.

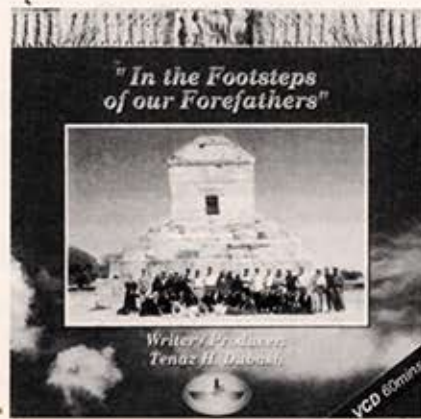
What was more daunting was the prospect of dealing with officialdom in a country at loggerheads with the US. "I had never attempted to film a documentary in a foreign country where Americans had no political rights and where I did not speak the native language," notes Dubash. The Iranian visas were acquired barely a fortnight before the scheduled departure. Only two members of the group spoke Farsi and the government permission to shoot film had to be applied for in the native language and was eventually obtained thanks to the Zoroastrian representative in the Iranian Majlis Dr Keikhosrow Dabestani, recalls Dubash. To cap it all, "the subject matter was religion and, as we all know, human beings can become fiercely dogmatic in their interpretation of religion. This affected the film, at all stages, in both positive and negative ways."

The search for local technical assistance was equally difficult. With no qualified Zoroastrian media persons available, Dubash ended up with two cameramen, the primary one being Muslim, the secondary Zarathushtri, but both coincidentally named Shahriar. The driver of their bus and the guide were both Zoroastrians.

Dubash found that the 34 members of her group represented an array of religious opinions. She says she restricted herself to five or six of the more articulate co-travelers "to avoid a mishmash of too many opinions." But there were other challenges in store. In both Yazd and Kerman the more conservative members of the group were critical of the Muslim cameraman accompanying them. That is when Dubash says, "I separated myself



Dubash: in search of her roots Photo: Arnavaz S. Mama



and the two camera people from the group for two days, hired a taxi with a Zarathushti taxi driver, and explored Yazd, Kerman and the dakhmas myself. It was very challenging to be in front of the camera but was also extremely liberating to be away from the large group for two days. This was one of the few, and very rare, times in Iran that I had a true sense of ownership over the material I was working on."

Eventually *Footsteps* notched a profit of \$ 6,000 which was donated to FEZANA. Half of it was disbursed in India and half in Iran, says Dubash.

Dubash has been traveling since an early age. Born in Calcutta to Aloo (née Vania) and the late Hoshang Dubash, a marine engineer, she is the second of three siblings who shuttled between home and grandparents, completed her schooling in Delhi where her dad joined Kelvinator following a stint with Gammon India in Bombay after leaving the sea, informs a family source. The family migrated to the USA in 1982 and settled in Syracuse when Tenaz was 18. She proceeded to Cornell University where she had to accelerate her degree (BS in human development and family studies) as she was required to help support the family when Hoshang succumbed to a heart attack in 1985. But five years later she secured an MS in TV, radio and film from Syracuse University and began her climb up the media ladder starting from desk assistant, amassing experience as assistant to production manager, as coordinating producer/writer, as associate producer and news associate in stints with ABC, CNBC and FOX, among other broadcasting agencies.

Dubash says her elder sister Farida, married to Neville Divecha, is "a full-time mom" to two boys; her brother Jamshed with a masters in electronic engineering has worked with Compaq and Intel before starting his own business. Dubash "ever the nonconformist, thinks and does things for herself," notes a family member.

Without a job in a recessionary economy Dubash has been coping with freelance work including medical writing. *Footsteps* has given her a yen for making documentaries independently, she says and she is toying with the idea of one on contemporary Zoroastrians like Zubin Mehta, Bapsi Sidhwa and the like. There is material aplenty. The feisty Dubash will surely find a way to record it on celluloid.

BUSINESS

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weighed below (the) labelled weight. In fact, Godrej gave an average of 23.2 grams more in each pack tested and scored the highest in weight."

Godrej, however, with 0.1 ppm (parts per million) of lead, barely cleared the Codex (international) level of measurement of this heavy metal which accumulates in the body. Some brands, including Cooklite also made by Godrej Foods, showed even higher levels of lead, others did not show lead above the detectable levels or sailed through this test.

"The only oils which did not make any cholesterol claims were Godrej (refined sunflower oil) and Sweekar. According to the amendment to the PFA (Prevention of Food Adulteration) Act, manufacturers should not make such claims about their oils," said the magazine. Terms like micro-refined, super refined, double refined, etc are meaningless as oil can be 'refined' and nothing more, it added.

"With increasing health conscious-



Profiling different brands

ness, more and more families are moving from the traditional saturated and MUFA (monounsaturated fatty acids) oils to the safer PUFA (polyunsaturated fatty acids) oils like sunflower oil," which is now believed to be almost 58 percent of the refined oil market, the periodical said. "But do not use PUFA oils like sunflower for deep frying your food. They tend to oxidize faster... we found that rancidity was a problem with sunflower oils... The high PUFA content of sunflower oil reduces bad cholesterol (low-density lipoprotein). But since it reduces good cholesterol (high-density lipoprotein) too, alternate it with a higher MUFA oil like groundnut or mustard," advised the consumer magazine and check the 'best before' date (now made compulsory by the PFA Act) before you buy.

While some manufacturers have disputed certain results of the test report, *Insight* states that it stands by its test findings.

Compiled by Hilla P. Guzder

READERS' FORUM

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However, when these young 'bawas' grow into mature, successful and respected citizens, their second names take on a much more decorous and worthy character. Noshir or Nasli is moved up to Nassarwanji or Noshirwan or even Noshirwan E Adil. Rusi rises to Rustomjee or 'Mota Rustom.' Nadir elevates to Nadirshaw and Homi becomes Hormuzdjee, Aspi, an Aspiandiar. Soli is promoted to Soli Seth or Sohrabjee. Dara may have doubled his size with age but he is now Darashaw and not 'Dara dukkar' any more.

Nari becomes Nariman, Pesi is Pestonjee and Keki, Kaikhushroo. Dhun with fondness generally is 'Dhunjoo,' and with age becomes Dhunjeeshaw. Minoo is now risen to Minocher.

Fortuitously, with due respect, Parsi girls almost never ever have a second name in jest. That I think is truly admirable!

We Parsis believe there is humor in everything around us. It depends on how we look at life! If someone calls us

'Bawaji,' we don't get mad, we enjoy it. So, with a Parsi peg — *Chalo salaamati laiye* (let's toast) — *Parsi taru naam amar rahé* (may the Parsi name be immortalized).

NOSHIR SANJANA

Edited by Parinaz M. Gandhi

ERRATA

In the item "Mody and HK University" (*Zoroastrians Abroad*, June 2001) *Parsiana* implied that the Incorporated Trustees of the Zoroastrian Charity Funds of Hong Kong, Canton and Macau have let the memory of Sir Hormusjee Navrojee Mody, the philanthropic founder-donor of Hong Kong University, recede with time. The information, based on a private e-mail from Jimmy Master, though correct when he wrote it last year, was no longer valid by the time of publication as the Trustees had, by then, reached an agreement with the HK University for a new bust of Mody, cast at their expense, to be placed in the foyer of the new building.

Parsiana regrets the faux pas.

MILESTONES

This issue of *Parsiana* carries data for the two month period of October and November 2001.

The age of Zoroastrian brides (as listed in this issue) ranged between 19 and 36 years, the arithmetic mean (the total number of individual ages divided by the total number of brides) being 27 years. The corresponding figures for the grooms were 23 and 49 years, averaging at 30 years.

There were 35 births versus 152 deaths for the two month period. The usual major killer (heart disease) claimed 52 Zoroastrians of whom 18 were in the 80+ age group. Other major killers were pneumonia/lung disease (27), cancer (14) and septicemia

(10). Seven victims succumbed to diseases of the brain, six to old age/general debility and five to anemia. Kidney failure took the lives of four patients whereas three fell prey to diabetes and two each to hypertension, liver disease and gastro-intestinal bleeding. The isolated cases registered for October and November were sepsis (infected with pus producing organisms), fecal peritonitis, thyroid, paraplegia (paralysis of the lower limbs), oesophageal fistula, Alzheimer's disease, respiratory tract infection, perforated peptic ulcer, septic shock, accident, obesity, convulsions, Parkinson's disease and malnutrition. The coroner's report was still pending in the

case of two deaths. Two still-born babies were also lost to the community. The eldest to breathe his last was a centenarian at 102 years as compared to the youngest — a 45-year-old lady. The Zoroastrian life expectancy at birth for the two months, in Bombay, was 76 years.

The data on births, marriages and deaths has been compiled from information supplied by various newsletters and anjuman in India and abroad, courts and hospitals. This information is not always complete or consistent: we are unable to carry data from areas where the anjuman do not furnish the particulars; the birth figures for Bombay are supplied by two hospitals —

births in suburban hospitals and private nursing homes are not included unless individuals send us information together with a copy of the birth certificate. There may be an inadvertent repetition of names in the marriage list when a civil marriage precedes a religious ceremony. In the break-up of deaths according to illnesses, especially of the elderly, death is often due to a combination of several diseases.

If readers have any births/marriages/deaths they would like published, some proof to ensure the veracity of the report would be required. We are sure our readers would appreciate this requirement and cooperate with us.

BARODA

MARRIED

Havovi Sarosh Katpitia and *Adil Phiroze Wadia* on November 25, 2001

DIED

Jaloo Phiroze Surti (77); September 4
Alamai Phirozsha Dastur (Khambat) (75); October 10

BOMBAY

BORN

A boy, Kyle, to *Zerophie* and *Hoshang Deboo*; October 1
A boy, Zal, to *Niloufer* and *Daraius Zaiwala*; October 2
A boy to *Farida* and *Kaiyomard Kerawala*; October 5
A boy to *Mahjabeen* and *Jehangir Wadia*; October 5
A girl to *Shiraz* and *Sarosh Cooper*; October 6
A boy, *Kaihan*, to *Ferzana* and *Zubin Behramkamin*; October 8
A girl to *Shanavaz* and *Farokh Ghadially*; October 8
A boy to *Rashna* and *Fahrad Mistry*; October 8
A boy to *Hufiz* and *Navil Patel*; October 8
A girl to *Shehnaz* and *Byram Dhalla*; October 9
A girl to *Parizad* and *Mahreshn Bhagat*; October 12
A girl to *Tarana* and *Zubin Karkaria*; October 17
A girl to *Roxana* and *Viraf Mody*; October 20
Twins (boys), *Farshaz* and *Fareez*, to *Zeena* and *Ronnie Mirza*; October 21

A girl to *Anahita* and *Farhad Dalal*; October 22

A boy, *Zohr*, to *Smriti* and *Zubin Irani*; October 24

A girl to *Freanahita* and *Hanosh Dubash*; October 25

A boy to *Jasmine* and *Kurush Gandhi*; October 25

A girl to *Amy* and *Kali Master*; October 25

A boy to *Jarin* and *Mehernosh Tangri*; October 25

A boy to *Farzana* and *Porus Dalal*; October 30

A boy to *Rukhsana* and *Baheram Guard*; November 5

A girl to *Khursheed* and *Cyrus Marfatia*; November 8

A boy to *Dilshad* and *Hoshi Tavadia*; November 8

A girl to *Dilber* and *Mereban Katrak*; November 11

A boy to *Yasmin* and *Urvax Dhanda*; November 13

Twins (boy and girl) to *Arnavaz* and *Adi Aboowalla*; November 14

A girl to *Diana* and *Homyar Sanjana*; November 14

A boy to *Shiraz* and *Zubin Mehta*; November 18

A boy, *Johan*, to *Kashmira* and *Neville Patel*; November 21

A girl to *Shernaz* and *Jamshed Mistry*; November 22

A boy to *Nilufer* and *Riyaz Chagla*; November 23

A boy to *Parizad* and *Hoshang Randelia*; November 26

MARRIED

Pervin Pervez Mistry and *Malcolm Percy Tatary*; September 30

Nahid Jamshid Esfandiari and *Nowzar Nariman Attiae* (Irani); October 4

Afreed Maneck Mody and *Khushroo Dara Mehta*; October 5

Shernaz Jamshed Baria and *Adil Keki Chinoy*; October 7

Shahnaaz Navroze Bharucha and *Zubin Adi Balsara*; October 13

Roshni Pheroze Wankadia and *Neville Dali Gai*; October 21

Shrintaz Homi Mullan and *Kaiyosh Farrokh Keravala*; October 21

Dilnaz Farokh Kanga and *Malcolm Keki Shroff*; October 25

Gulestan Homi Malesaria and *Farroukh Kersasp Kolah*; October 26

Shaheen Ratan Doctor of *Poona* and *Yezdi Cyrus Mody*; October 27

Zenia Boman Cooper and *Hemu Rustom Karbhari*; October 28

Jinaz Homi Divecha and *Adil Kersi Mistry*; October 29

Aybeza Darayus Irani and *Dariush Homi Irani*; November 4

Ferzin Pesi Siganporia and *Vispi Fali Parakh*; November 5

Delna Noshir Engineer of *Virar* and *Cyrus Behram Irani*; November 16

Franac Pilloo Pastakia and *Rustom Rohinton Irani*; November 16

Nazneen Parvez Mullanfiroze and *Vispi Maneckshaw Karbhari*; November 17

Kainaz Pesi Sakhidas and *Arzan Eruch Singpurwalla*; November 18

Anjalee Savak Tarapore and *Ferzad Pervez Variyava*; November 18

Shernaz Soli Zaveri and *Viraf Phiroze Sirvala*; November 19

Benaifer Bomi Kavina and *Nawzer Sam Kerawala*; November 20

Vinifer Jal Tata and *Daraius Hosie Cooper*; November 22

Havovi Cawas Bhathena of *Secunderabad* and *Kaizad Minoo Billimoria* of *Thana*; November 23

Persis Cawasji Guzder and *Hoshang Kawasji Dangor* of *Vasai*; November 23

Shirin Fali Desai and *Zarir Murzban Umrigar*; November 23

Kainaz Kersi Mehta and *Arzan Jal Dadiburjor*; November 24

Khushnama Vispi Bardoliwala and *Mehernosh Khurshed Kamode* of *Poona*; November 25

Delnaz Soli Mistry and *Berzin Behram Master*; November 25

Kashmira Noshir Parlewalla of *Nerul*, *New Bombay* and *Burzin Phiroze Vachha*; November 25

Reenaz Mehernosh Hathiram and *Yezdi Fali Patel*; November 26

Behroze Maneck Parakh of *Indore* and *Hanoz Minoo Billimoria*; November 27

Nilufer Sohrab Mullan and *Porus Mancher Mehta*; November 27

Dianne Noshir Cooper and Burzin Adi Patel; November 28
Navaaz Eric Patel and Farhad Russi Kharadi; November 29
Meher Dhunjishaw Karkaria and Zubin Dara Mistry; November 29
Mahnaz Bomi Patel and Navzer Rustom Hormazdi of Poona; November 30
Phiroza Hoshi Buhariwalla and Raiyomand Hoshang Vachha; November 30

DIED

Baby of Laila Behram Bajan (stillborn), residing at 51/A, Maimoon Apts, Off Veer Savarkar Marg, 400025; October 1
Kershasp Meherji Kotwal (72), C/36, Samadhan Soc, Sahar Rd, Chakala, Andheri (E), 400099; October 1
Minoo Sorabjee Sethna (57), 28/3, Khareghat Clny, Hughes Rd, 400007; October 1
Mackie Soli Contractor (75), 22, Gautam Nivas, Seven Bglws, Andheri (W), 400058; October 2
Shernaz Yazdi Ghista (45), 15/10, Rustom Baug, Victoria Rd, Byculla, 400027; October 2
Dosan Nawroji Kelawalla (87), 14/E, Ginwala Bldg, Captain Clny, Tardeo, 400034; October 2
Daulat Darabsha Batliwala (82), Patel Chmbs, 9, Rustom Sidhwa Marg, Fort, 400001; October 3
Pervez Kaikhushroo Mazgaonwala (79), 1/A, Ambawadi Bglw, Matarpakhady Cross Lane, Mazgaon, 400010; October 3
Dina Cavas Mistry (73), A/10, Ness Baug, Nana Chowk, 400007; October 3
Keti Peshotan Sanjana (77), B/3, New Khareghat Clny, Babulnath Rd, 400007; October 3
Jamshed Burjorji Talati (91), 5, King of Suburb, 7th Rd, S. V. Rd, Khar, 400052; October 3
Maneckbai Burjorji Balsara (87), 3/12, Tata Clny, Tardeo, 400034; October 4
Homai Fardoonji Bhagat (88), Avanbai Mans, 788, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; October 4
Dina Sohrab Khambata (77), 7, Sea Belle, Nepean Sea Rd, 400006; October 4
Dhanjishaw Sorabji Balsara

(67), 1, Gamadia Clny, Tardeo, 400007; October 5
Maharukh Darabsha Balsara (45), 6, P. C. Shroff Bldg, Gamadia Clny, Tardeo, 400007; October 5
Kety Pirojsha Wadia (80), J/29, 7, Old Wadia Chawl, Chandanwadi, 400002; October 5
Phiroz Dinshawji Hiloo (74), 20, Navjeevan Clny, Mori Rd, Mahim, 400016; October 6
Tehmina Navroji Jokhi (82), F/25, Contractor Baug, Mori Rd, Mahim, 400016; October 6
Dhunmai Gustadi Marolia (65), 2, Parsi Punchayet Cottage, Ambavadi, Gibbs Rd, Malabar Hill, 400006; October 6
Darabsha Rustomji Mistry (78), 49, Mistry Bldg, 3rd Marine St, Dhobitalao, 400002; October 6
Homi Jehangir Engineer (63), 11, Old Khareghat Clny, Hughes Rd, 400007; October 7
Rustom Maneckshaw Ghadialy (74), 103, Blue Pearl, Ram Bhag Lane 2, Kalyan (W), 421301; October 7
Banoo Sorab Parelwala (77), C/24, Meherzin, 109/A, Wodehouse Rd, Colaba, 400005; October 9
Noshir Minocher Patel (57), 16, Dubash Bldg, Gamadia Clny, Tardeo, 400007; October 9
Jer Maneckji Vajifdar (74), P/26, Cusrow Baug, S. B. Rd, 400039; October 9
Aloo Savak Vazifdar (79), 2, Dr Daji Bldg, M. M. C. Cross Rd, Mahim, 400016; October 9
Aloomai (Aloo) Rustom Dastoor (81), C/9, Cusrow Baug, S. B. Rd, 400039; October 10
Dina Jal Patel (85), 24, Glamour, Malcolm Baug, Jogeshwari (W), 400102; October 10
Minocher Jamshedji Amaria (93), F. S. Parukh Dharamshalla, Hughes Rd, 400007; October 11
Nariman Hormusji Bharucha (82), C/o Sorab Hse, 607/B, Khareghat Rd, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; October 11
Behram Eruchshaw Daruwala (85), C/1, S. B. Bharucha Baug, S. V. Rd, Andheri (W), 400058; October 11
Maneck Sorab Irani (80), C/208, Sheetal, Seven Bglws, Andheri (W), 400053;

October 11
Cawas Munchershaw Mistry (79), A, Bakhtavar, Off Colaba Post Office, 400005; October 11
Dolly (Dolat) Faram Parakh (87), 1, Readymoney Bldg, Sir Ratan Tata Rd, Tardeo, 400034; October 11
Comi Noshirwan Bode (84), R/13, S. B. Bharucha Baug, S. V. Rd, Andheri (W), 400058; October 12
Jer Meherabad Boywalla (67), 51/9, New Contractor Bldg, Victoria Garden, Byculla, 400027; October 12
Khorshed Pheroze Dadachanji (93), Ganesh Bhavan, August Kranti Marg, 400036; October 12
Freny Sorabji Irani (82), 5, Damodar Niwas, Rd no 4, Natwar Ngr, Jogeshwari (E), 400060; October 12
Khushroo Manekshaw Wacha (84), 602, Green Gates, Perry Rd, Bandra (W), 400050; October 12
Jer Jehangirji Jilla (88), J. D. Alvis (Bldg) Soc, Hill Rd, Bandra, 400050; October 13
Sherie Khurshed Lalkaka (84), Dharm Jyot, 43, Pali Mala Rd, Bandra (W), 400050; October 14
Dhunmai Dhunjishaw Amaria (88), 1/5, A. H. Wadia Baug, Parel Tank Rd, 400033; October 15
Rustom Kaikhushru Bharucha (81), 4/6, Mehta Bldg, Khan Est, M. M. C. Rd, Mahim, 400016; October 15
Daulat Nariman Balsara (84), 3/9, Sir Ratan Tata Clny, Tardeo, 400034; October 16
Homai Homi Sarkari (72), Karani Widows' Chawl, Marazban Clny, Gilder Lane, 400008; October 16
Coomi Noshir Panthaki (73), A, Aidoon Bldg, Dhobitalao, 400002; October 17
Bepsy Kaikhushroo Todiwalla (69), Cama Bldg, 22, Gilder Lane, 400008; October 17
Keki Eruchshaw Daroga (78), Niamat Manzil, N. Petit St, Grant Rd, 400007; October 18
Dhun Hormazd Dotiwala (81), 3/38, Tata Mills Co-op Hsg Soc, Elphinstone Rd, Parel, 400012; October 18
Jal Burjorji Bhathena (63), P/5, Nowroz Baug, Lalbaug, 400012; October 19
Naval Framroze Damania (78), 6/3, Rustom Baug,

Victoria Rd, Byculla, 400027; October 19
Coover Dady Hodiwalla (88), Coover Villa, 56, Malcolm Baug, Jogeshwari (W), 400102; October 19
Dina Jamshedji Bharucha (81), 319, Mitha Mans, Frere Rd, Fort, 400001; October 20
Nariman Khurshedji (88), 724, Dr Dinshaw Master Rd, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; October 20
Phiroze Navroji Patel (74), 1/8, S. M. Banaji Bldg, Jamshed Hall, Forjett St, 400036; October 20
Keki Meherwanji Sumariwalla (74), Sidhwa Bldg, Grant Rd, 400007; October 21
Aloomai Noshirwan Bhagwagar (89), 6/8, Panthaki Baug, S. V. Rd, Andheri (E), 400059; October 22
Soona Dhunjishaw Bharucha (89), 10/16, Tata Clny, Tardeo, 400034; October 22
Meherwanji Cursetji Captain (102), 602, Captain Villa, Mount Mary Rd, Bandra, 400050; October 22
Maneck Pirojshah Bhathena (70), 72/A, Sheridan Hse, August Kranti Marg, 400036; October 23
Ghaver Kaikhushru Tantra (65), 10/1, Parsi Mohalla, G. P. O., Indore, 452001; October 23
Naval Cooverji Bhathena (92), Motlibai Wadia Bldg, Zoroastrian Blocks, Chikalwadi, Tardeo, 400007; October 25
Kety Jal Tantra (68), B, Daruwala Bldg, South Frere Bridge, Grant Rd, 400007; October 25
Mehru Eruch Batliwala (53), 10, Ruby Light, 16th Rd, T. P. S. III, Bandra (W), 400050; October 27
Tehmi Jal Batliwala (85), Vevai Villa, 686, Khareghat Rd, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; October 27
Mithoo Hoshang Daruwala (66), C, Sitaram Sadan, 280, S. Gandhi Marg, 400002; October 27
Ardesir Jiwanji Hormasji (78), 30, Naoroji Seth St, Behind S. K. Patil Garden, 400002; October 27
Eruch Kaikhushroo Madon (75), Shroff Pandey Bldg, 663, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; October 27
Themi Sorabji Irani (61), 402, Pushpa Bhavan, Opp Tele-

- phone Bhavan, Colaba, 400005; October 28
Furdoon Sorabjee Engineer (82), 19, Purshotam Bldg, Corner of Grant Rd, 400004; October 30
Pestonji Meharwanji Gotla (87), 696/A, Dr Dinshaw Master Rd, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; October 30
Noshir Khurshedji Panthaky (75), 4, Sea Queen, 16, Juhu Tara Rd, 400049; October 30
Aspi Byramjee Pastakia (68), 8/3, Tata Bldg, C. J. Clny, Tardeo Rd, 400034; October 30
Jamshed Pirojshaw Bacha (70), Habib Court, S. B. Rd, 400039; October 31
Bapai Hosedar Baxter (91), 602, Hill Queen, Pali Mala Rd, Bandra (W), 400050; October 31
Khorshed Dara Sethna (78), C/15, Rustom Baug, Victoria Rd, Byculla, 400027; October 31
Perin Khushru Irani (70), 19, Fakri Manzil, Sleater Rd, 400007; November 1
Kersi Kekobad Karkaria (72), Karani Hse, 12, Fish Market Lane, Dhobitalao, 400002; November 1
Boman Jehangir Mistry (83), 12, Buona Casa, Homji St, Off Sir P. Mehta Rd, 400001; November 1
Dara Tehmurasp Anklesaria (57), 71, Venus, Altamont Rd, Cumballa Hill, 400026; November 2
Dinamai Jalejar Dhabhar (67), 4-B/207, Salsette Parsi Clny, Jijamata Rd, Andheri (E), 400093; November 2
Sohrab Rustom Shahparast (63), 17, Bai Ratanbai Tata Bldg, 38th Rd, Bandra (W), 400050; November 2
Mani Gustadji Tata (84), Sunbeam, Malcolm Baug, S. V. Rd, Jogeshwari (W), 400102; November 2
Soli Minoo Lala (76), Rajesh Mans, M. Karve Rd, 400020; November 3
Rutty Rustom Pavri (82), Alexandra Hse, Kashibai Navrange Marg, New Gamdevi, 400007; November 3
Keki Jehangirji Damania (68), Patel Bldg, Forjett St Cross Lane, 400036; November 4
Farrokh Jamshedji Dastur (71), A/9, Raghavji Bldg, Gowalia Tank, 400026; November 4
Minocher Kaikashru Majra (80), 3/3, Sir Ratan Tata Bldg, S. V. Rd, Bandra (W), 400050; November 4
Dina Nadirshaw Driver (91), B-9, Rosary Hse, Gunpowder Rd, Mazgaon, 400010; November 6
Ardeshir Manekshaw Italia (78), B/13, Nowroz Baug, Lalbaug, 400012; November 7
Lovji Nariman Pagdiwalla (69), Mohmadi Minar, Khetwadi 14th Lane, 400004; November 7
Shera Keki Patel (86), E, Karai Est, 248, Tardeo Rd, 400007; November 7
Pesi (Pestonji) Pirojshaw Captain (84), 18, Nawab Manzil, Wadia St, Tardeo, 400034; November 8
Hirabai Kawasji Khambata (84), H/2, Nowroz Baug, Lalbaug, 400012; November 8
Mehra Burjorji Mistry (86), B/20, Jer Baug, Dr Ambedkar Rd, Byculla, 400027; November 8
Freni Dinshaw Irani (79), 6, Colaba Court, S. B. Rd, 400005; November 9
Aloo Bomanshaw Meherji (87), 4, Padamji Bldg, Stn Rd, Mahim, 400016; November 9
Khushroo Framroz Chinoy (84), B, Motiwala Mans, Gowalia Tank, 400036; November 11
Daraius Faredoon Irani (Juyia) (71), 8/A, Laxmi Narayan Bhavan, Kasturba Cross Rd no 1, Borivli (E), 400066; November 11
Dolat Edalji Gandevia (78), B/101, Ahuna, Divecha Complex, B. Edulji Rd, Charai, Thana, 400601; November 12
Jaloo Keki Kotwal (81), Percy Manor, 791, Jame Jamshed Rd, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; November 12
Mehru Jehangir Mistry (79), B/604, Hiburus Chel, Seven Bglws, Andheri (W), 400058; November 12
Kitty Hoshi Billimoria (57), C/4, Cusrow Baug, S. B. Rd, 400039; November 13
Jala Eruch Meherji (70), J. J. Parsee Ward, J. J. Hospital, Byculla, 400027; November 13
Minoo Pirozshaw Pavri (90), Bachan Manor, 600, Jame Jamshed Rd, Matunga, 400019; November 13
Perin Manichershaw Shethna (75), B/16, Ginwalla Bldg, Captain Clny, Tardeo, 400034; November 13
Zarin Nowrozji Bhandari (67), 2/A, Sonawalla Bldg, Tardeo, 400007; November 14
Banoo Phiroze Balsara (73), 201, Helen Haven, 33, St Cyril Rd, Bandra, 400050; November 15
Zomi Shahpoor Faroodi (58), Meher Manzil, Masoli, Near Power Hse, Dahanu, 401602; November 15
Zaver Homi Kerawalla (63), 5/7, Rustom Baug, Victoria Rd, Byculla, 400027; November 15
Banoo Aspi Kermani (76), 29, Panday Sanatorium, Wodehouse Rd, 400005; November 15
Dhun Noshir Mobedjina (86), 2/5, A. H. Wadia Baug, Parel Tank Rd, 400033; November 15
Eruch Jehenbux Mody (84), Boyce Malegamwalla Bldg, 669, Katrak Rd, Wadala, 400031; November 15
Rutty Pirojshaw Dastur (81), 9, Godrej Bldg, Contractor Baug, Mori Rd, Mahim, 400016; November 16
Piroja Darabshaw Master (91), 695, Dinshaw Master Rd, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; November 16
Putli Jehangir Jasoomoney (82), P. A. Hormusjee Bldg, 688, Dr Dinshaw Master Rd, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; November 17
Ratamai Rustomji Mogal (78), 2/6, Sir Ratan Tata Clny, Tardeo Rd, 400034; November 17
Khodadad Hormaz Irani (82), P/36, Cusrow Baug, S. B. Rd, 400039; November 18
Goolcher Nadir Mehta (69), 6-D/005-006, Salsette Parsi Clny, Jijamata Rd, Andheri (E), 400093; November 18
Boman Dossabhoy Umrigar (72), 22/2, Petit Sanatorium, Kemp's Corner, 400036; November 18
Firoze Khursetjee Antia (85), Danesh Mans, Gamdevi, 400007; November 19
Roshan Sam Boyce (78), Villa Hormazd, 8A, Carmichael Rd, 400026; November 19
Dhunjishaw Nusserwanji Fitter (78), 22/304, Shanti Park, Mira Rd, 401104; November 19
Khorshed Rustomji Ichhaporia (75), 286/C, Irani Bldg, Supari Baug Rd, Parel, 400012; November 19
Vira Rustam Mehta (65), M/20, Nowroz Baug, Lalbaug, 400012; November 19
Manijeh Munchershaw Mistry (94), E/12, Rustom Baug, Victoria Rd, Byculla, 400027; November 19
Dara Bahmansha Sidhwa (87), Dina Bldg, 53, M. Karve Rd, 400002; November 19
Rusi Ratanshaw Balaporia (87), 609, Jame Jamshed Rd, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; November 20
Behram Rashid Irani (76), 12/8, Sir Ratan Tata Clny, Tardeo, 400034; November 20
Ketty Soli Contractor (69), 1004, Mount, J. P. Rd, Versova, Andheri (W), 400061; November 21
Hilla Jijibhoy Divecha (96), 122, St Cyril Rd, Bandra, 400050; November 21
Khorshed Fardoonji Taraporewala (56), Engineer Bldg, 815, Jame Jamshed Rd, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; November 21
Homi Sorabsha Beramfram (68), 403, Rukhmani Parshotam Co-op Hsg Soc, 21, J. P. Rd, Andheri (W), 400058; November 22
Baby of Vahista Marespand Dadachanji (stillborn), Vachha-ghandhy Fire-temple, Hughes Rd, 400007; November 22
Noshir Pestonji Dalal (61), Wadia Bglw, Four Bglws, Versova, Andheri (W), 400058; November 22
Khorshed Eruchsha Bulsara (73), 19/6, Old Khareghat Clny, Hughes Rd, 400007; November 23
Mahrugh Burjor Karai (54), 1203, Mount, J. P. Rd, Versova, Andheri (W), 400061; November 23
Phiroze Dosabhai Mukadam (76), B/23, Hill View, J. P. Rd, Andheri (W), 400058; November 23
Minocher Pirojsha Patel (80), 49, Hirabai Petit Bldg, Opp Grant Rd Stn, 400007; November 23
Nariman Tehmurasp Ranji (85), 7, Daulat Bldg, Next to Colaba Post Office, 400005; November 23
Behram Vicaji (83), The Dawn, Turner Rd, Bandra, 400050; November 23
Dosamai Pirojsha Daruwalla (85), 275/U, Umrigar Bldg, Zoroastrian Clny, Chikalwadi, Tardeo Rd, 400007; November 24
Kersi Jamshedji Makhania

(72), A/8, Umesh Kiran, Bhagat Singh Rd, Vile Parle (W), 400056; November 24
Jehangir Minocher Sethna (60), Sethna Hse, 251, Tardeo Rd, 400007; November 24
Nargish Jal Soonavala (94), 16/A, Belle-View Co-op Soc, 85, B. Desai Rd, 400036; November 24
Homai Navroji Bhesania (78), C/598, A. H. Wadia Bldg, J. S. S. Rd, 400002; November 26
Jehangir Rashid Irani (81), Piroja Mans, Sir Ratan Tata Rd, 400034; November 26
Nadirshaw Navroji Mistry (88), Shiraz Ter, 127/A, Tardeo Rd, 400034; November 27
Sheroo Nariman Pavri (78), 6, Meherbai Tata Bldg, Tata Blocks, S. V. Rd, Bandra (W), 400050; November 27
Sorabji Darabshaw Mehta (87), Danawalla Bldg, Opp Nowroz Baug, Lalbaug, 400012; November 29
Gai Minocher Khambatta (76), D1/81, S. B. Bharucha Baug, S. V. Rd, Andheri (W), 400058; November 30

CALCUTTA

BORN

A boy, *Varun*, to *Indrani* and *Xerxes Anklesaria*; July 18

DIED

Aloo Balsara, wife of *Vistasp* and mother of late *Hormuzdyar* and late *Sarosh*; October 13

JABALPUR

DIED

Jamshed Dinshaw Mehta, husband of *Linda* and father of *Natasha*; October 1

NAGPUR

DIED

Jal Pheroze Gimi (87), husband of *Jerroo* and father of *Shiraz*, *Farhad* and *Feroze*; September 15

SECUNDERABAD

BORN

A girl, *Cheerisa*, to *Yasmin* and *Zarir Jilla*; October 4

MARRIED

Armin Patel, daughter of *Kashmira* and *Dara*, and *Godrej Daruwala*, son of *Nargis* and late *Keki*; October 14

DIED

Sabar Hoshang Amin (74);

FIGURES AT A GLANCE*

	Bombay		India		World	
	This issue	2001*	This issue	2001*	This issue	2001*
BIRTHS						
Boys	21	88	1	6	2	26
Girls	14	91	1	7	—	17
MARRIAGES						
Parsi	37	203	2	15	4	11
INTERCOMMUNAL						
Males married out	—	18	—	—	—	1
Females married out	—	14	—	1	—	1
DEATHS						
CONSIGNED						
Males	69	392	12	62	3	38
Females	83	429	6	39	3	22
CREMATED						
Males	—	8	—	—	—	—
Females	—	9	1	1	—	—

*Running totals for 2001 (January 2001-January 2002 issues)

Overseas deaths are listed in the consigned column as *Parsiana* does not have a breakup of those cremated.

*These figures pertain to information provided to or collected by *Parsiana*. They do not represent the total number of births, marriages and deaths in the Zoroastrian community in India and abroad.

October 7 (cremated)
Adi Mody (85), husband of *Amy*; November 2

SURAT

DIED

Dolly Rustomji Anklesaria (72), *Parsiwad*, *Gopipura*, 395001; October 11
Eruch Dosabhai Khajotiya (91), *Hitesh Apt*, *Bhimkachhi* St, *Nanpura*, 395001; October 12
Darabshah Rustamji Variyava (77), *Nariman Home* and *Infirmary*, *Shahpore*, 395003; October 22
Zarir Diniyar Debu (48), *Nariman Home* and *Infirmary*, *Shahpore*, 395003; October 27
Rustamji Kavasji Patel (85), *Parsiwad*, *Ichhapore*; October 27
Perinbanoo Jehangirji Kapadia (77), 101, *Zoroastrian Bldg*, *Behind Umra Police Stn*, *Athwa Lines*, 395001; November 2
Dhanjishaw Jamaspji Siganporia (75), *Vakil St*, *Shahpore*, 395003; November 11
Banoobai Dosabhai Sarkari (84), *Nariman Home* and *Infirmary*, *Shahpore*, 395003; November 20
Shapurji Maneckji Variava (99), *Nariman Home* and *Infirmary*, *Shahpore*, 395003;

November 21
Rattanshaw Minocheer Sorabkhan (65), *Machhlipith*, 395003; November 24
Adi Dinshaji Vedchhawala (60), *Singapuri Mans*, *Station Rd*, 395003; November 26
Kersi Kaikhushroo Roowala (78), 2/3829, *Putli Market*, 30, *Sagrampura*, 395002; November 30

CANADA

British Columbia

BORN

A boy, *Arman Rohinton*, to *Farah* and *Roozbeh Mehra-badi*; April 27

MARRIED

Nooshin Kiani and *Kourosh Edalati* in *North Vancouver*; September 2
Meherbanoo Poulad Noshiravan and *Babak Meher-Rostamian* in *Vancouver*; November 3

DIED

Homi Driver (90), husband of *Banoo* and father of *Cyrus*, *Shiraz* and *Darius* in *Vancouver*; August 18
Lal Dinshaw Jehanian (80), mother of *Bahram* in *North Vancouver*; October 22

Ontario

MARRIED

Firoozi Dastur, daughter of *Aban* and *Dinshaw*, and *Neville Patel*, son of *Dolly* and late *Homi* in *Toronto*; August 12
Shiraz Suntok and *Darius Bharucha* in *Richmond Hill*; October 14

IRAN

DIED

Morvarid Faroodi (70), wife of *Mehraban Sasani* and mother of *Rostam* in *Yazd*; July 14
Doulat Bastanizadeh (72), mother of *Mahnaz Iraj* in *Yazd*; September 1

MAURITIUS

DIED

Jehangir Kaikushroo Nicholson; October 31

NEW ZEALAND

BORN

A boy, *Fravash*, to *Faranak* and *Sohrab Irani*, brother to *Pakhzin* and *Pashan* in *Auckland*, October 23

TAJIKISTAN

DIED

Rudaki Behdin (Samadov) (37), in *Dushanbe*; July 4

Compiled by *Roxana A. Driver*

Well with Wadia

Parinaz M. Gandhi

Died: Dr Sarosh Ratanji Wadia, 91, senior homeopath who was instrumental in founding the Bombay Homoeopathic Medical College, on June 15, 2001 at Bombay's Northcote Nursing Home following cardiac arrest.

A qualified allopathic doctor, Wadia's chronic asthma hindered his professional performance until Dr Burjorebehram's sustained homeopathic treatment cured him of his illness. His faith in homeopathy established, Wadia devoted the rest of his life to healing patients with homeopathic medicine, a change his patients reportedly did not welcome initially.

Since there was no college in Bombay teaching homeopathy until the middle of the last century, Wadia had to tutor himself in this branch of alternative medicine. Impressed with this science, he opted to pursue the subject overseas, earning a fellowship of the British Homoeopathic Faculty and a diplomate in homoeo therapeutics from the American Institute of Homoeopathy, according to his bio data. On his return to Bombay he started his independent practice whilst simultaneously working towards his goal of setting up the Bombay Homoeopathic Medical College which was then housed in the Sion Hospital until it was shifted to Vile Parle several years later. Initially the students were offered a diploma course until Wadia convinced the government to convert it into a degree course.

"His passing away is an irreparable loss to our institution," noted Dr Asmita Parikh, honorary secretary of The Homoeopathic Education Society (HES) which runs the College. Referring to him as the "seniormost homeopath of the HES," she added that he was "a public figure in many ways." The "great loss to the homeopathic community" was also expressed by Dr Pankaj



Wadia: faith in homeopathy

Dave, principal of the Dr V. H. Dave Homoeopathic Medical College and Smt S. I. Patel (I) Homoeopathic Hospital in Anand, Gujarat.

A respected lecturer, he was professor emeritus at the homeopathic colleges in Bombay, Surat and Anand and was also examiner in various board examinations. His own education was at the Alfred High School in Bhuj after which he joined Bombay's Wilson College. Past president of the Indian Institute of Homeopathic Physicians, Wadia had served on the Government of India's homeopathic advisory committee as also on the first pharmacopia committee. He was the first homeopath to be nominated as president of the Bombay Homoeopathic Board and then twice to the Maharashtra Homoeopathic Board, mentions his curriculum vitae.

Having presented several papers at international homeopathic conferences, Wadia had been honored with a bronze medal at the International Homoeopathic Medical Congress at Brussels in 1972. He had been appointed as vice president for India of the International Homoeopathic Medical League, Geneva and was invited to Iran to organize a homeopathy department at the Tabriz University.

"He has been the vital force for many homeopaths," wrote Dr Farida Talati who having worked with him at different dispensaries acknowledged that she had been "inspired by him to do more for the poor and at the same time for homeopathy." She mentioned how he was "very humble, understanding and patient towards his patients...He started many charitable dispensaries in different Parsi colonies and saw that even non-Parsis came there and got the benefit of his free services...He published many booklets in simple language for his patients and lay people..."

Besides homeopathy, he also authored booklets on the poet Firdausi and parliamentarian Dadabhai Naoroji. "Both these booklets are now my prized possessions," stated Rati Wadia, erstwhile principal of Queen Mary School,

who was also his patient. "Every time I had a migraine attack I used to run to him and the miraculous relief after a few doses had to be experienced to be believed," she noted in her tribute in the *Jam-e-Jamshed*. "He treated thousands of patients from his clinic at Colaba and later from his home...I shall miss him deeply — his gentleness, soft caring voice and smile, his positive approach to life and the confidence he (instilled) in us that nothing was wrong and we would be perfectly fine."

"From this unassuming and dignified gentleman we learnt a lot about the world, and he would put us totally at ease if anyone in the family...had any kind of physical ailment. In his own matured way he always wanted great leaders to be a model for the Indian youth and...the younger generation would benefit by reading such books which in his philanthropic way he would distribute free. Not only a noble thought but a real Zoroastrian in the true sense of the word," noted Pesi Muncherji, editor of the Baroda Parsi Panchayat's *Zend* newsletter.

"Dr Wadia was a constant at the K. R. Cama Oriental Institute in the past and we have been missing his presence for quite sometime now but he has always been fondly remembered," conveyed Homai Modi, trustee and honorary secretary of The K. R. Cama Oriental Institute. Referring to his "good interest in community affairs," Dr Meher Master-Moos, president of Zoroastrian College, mentioned, "He was a great help on the Rahnumae Sabha and the Ratheshtar Mandal of which he was president..."

The socially committed and politically conscious Wadia had served as member of the Bombay Municipal Corporation (BMC) from 1952-61 when he would regularly go round his ward, ensure that it was kept clean and listen to the grievances of the public, it was reported by Talati. In 1953 he was the chairman of the BMC Medical Relief and Public Health Committee, she wrote. Also active on the community political scene, in 1954 he was elected to the Bombay Parsi Panchayat (BPP) Anjuman Committee as a member of Sau Nu Mandal. He was one of the committee members appointed by the Parsi Federal Council in 1956 to suggest

reforms in the BPP's electoral scheme.

It was during this decade that he had struck a rapport with eminent solicitor Nadir Modi who referred to his "cherished friend" as "a dedicated and humane doctor and a very fine human being." The Federation of Parsi Zoroastrian Anjumans of India had conferred on him its excellence award and as noted Lt Gen Adi Sethna, president of The Delhi Parsi Anjuman, of the renowned homeopath, "He was a great social worker and had a burning zeal for remembering and honoring our ancient heroes."

The dedicated doctor is survived by his wife Daulat, sons Dinyar and Dr Rashid, and brother Dara.

Godiwalla, the gourmand

Died: Neville Rohinton Godiwalla, 41, popular, large-hearted caterer, on May 18, 2001 in Bombay following cardiac arrest.

Although intimation of Godiwalla's death could not be carried in the next day's morning newspapers, there was such a large turnout of mourners at his paidust at Doongerwadi that it took nearly an hour for *sezdo* (filing in procession to pay one's last respects to the dead) before his face could be covered, recall his associates. The uthamna prayers for the deceased were conducted in two places: in Bombay as also at Udvada where Godiwalla had spent many days towards the end of his life while he was in charge of the Globe Hotel initially and the Majestic Hotel latterly.

As business expanded so did his physical proportions but his genial smile and childlike innocence remained ever the same. "Despite the huge challenge obesity posed to him, he never allowed his creativity, wit or the passion to take on new challenges, dim," acknowledged his friend and neighbor Noshir Dadrawala in the *Jam-e-Jamshed* of June 3, 2001. "Neville was also very generous. Perhaps generous to a fault. Whatever he gave and to whosoever he gave, it was always with humility, grace and silence. God had blessed him with considerable wealth and he had the wisdom to use it for the weal of others," added Dadrawala. Helping students with their school or college fees, financially supporting some khandhias at Bombay's Doongerwadi, performing navjotes for children from poor Zoroastrian families, innumerable are the instances cited of aid extended by Godiwalla. Known to be "affable, loyal, loving and trusting," Dadrawala wrote, "God alone

knows how many people took advantage of that last trait."

When Zoroastrian institutions were celebrating their jubilees or annual days, it was often Neville Godiwalla who was



Gregarious
Godiwalla

entrusted the catering. When the World Zoroastrian Organisation was organizing its different functions, the highlight of the evening was often Godiwalla's repast. For gahambars and jashans frequently it was Godiwalla who was expected to tickle the diner's palate. For those who could afford he would charge his full rates but many were the beneficiaries of his subsidized catering.

His values in life he had imbibed from his late parents, Freny and Rohinton, who had handed over the reins of the catering business to the children hoping they would be able to garnish it with fresh spices. After his schooling at Antonio D'Silva High School, Neville involved himself in his parents' catering business. "To serve *saas ni machhi* and *pulao dal* you don't need professional training," Neville had maintained when *Parsiana* had spoken to him for information on his late mother (see "The queen of caterers," *Parsiana*, June 1998). Following their mother's demise, Neville and sister Tanaz (other sister Roxanne had opted to settle in France) worked together to promote the Godiwalla banner. But their different styles of functioning soon forced them to operate independently.

Beginning 1999 Neville tried to infuse a fresh lease of life at the Globe Hotel in Udvada. The ambitious Neville then concurrently took on the management of Hotel Majestic as well. Until his demise he continued with the Majestic although he had severed his ties with Globe by then.

"Gregarious and fun loving, his zest for life was infectious...He was happiest when surrounded by his vast circle of friends," observed Meher Heroyce Moos in the *Afternoon Despatch and Courier* of May 19, 2001. Since it became impossible to accommodate his large frame in auditoriums and cinema houses, his entertainment was restricted to socializing, inviting his friends over to his house for meals before which he would be happily preoccupied in the kitchen ex-

perimenting with new delicacies. "He loved to eat and to make others eat," reveals a family member. His passion for the theater saw him enact the occasional role in the late thespian Pearl Padamsee's plays in his younger days. For a while he also taught drama to children, mentions a family source. His artistic aptitude found an expression in some beautiful glass bead creations.

Small dogs were always a favorite with the Godiwalla family. In fact, Neville's constant companion, pet dog Fifi, who would accompany him on all his sojourns whether to Udvada or to the bays when he was supervising the catering assignments, predeceased him barely two months earlier.

The generous caterer is survived by his sisters Roxanne Francis Ledru and Tanaz.

P. M. G.

Tajik Zoroastrian killed

Well-known playwright and filmmaker of Tajikistan Rudaki Behdin (Samadov), 37, was gunned down by two unidentified assassins who appeared at his door as he was leaving for work on July 4, informs a write-up in *Humata* (Fall 2001). Leader of the Zoroastrian community of Tajikistan, Rudaki had been busy adding the final touches to his latest play *The Message of Zarathushtra*, scheduled to open in early September 2001 in the largest playhouse in Dushanbe when he fell prey to the bullets. "The assassination appears to be a hate crime motivated by religious fanaticism," notes *Humata*.

An acclaimed literary figure, Rudaki had won the national literary prize for the year 1996. Resourceful and innovative, he used to organize popular theatrical group performances of patriotic plays dealing with the rich Tajik culture and identity in national parks. At the end of each play, he would conduct group discussions for the public's enlightenment. Charismatic, loved and admired by the populace, he had also organized classes in Avesta and Pahlavi, and was instrumental in transcribing the *Gathas* in the Cyrillic alphabets.

The World Zoroastrian Organisation (WZO) has requested President Rahmonov of Tajikistan to order a thorough and speedy investigation to identify the culprits, ascertain the real motive for the assassination, and to take effective measures to prevent the recurrence of such terrorist activities in future, adds the *Humata* report.

Arnavaz S. Mama

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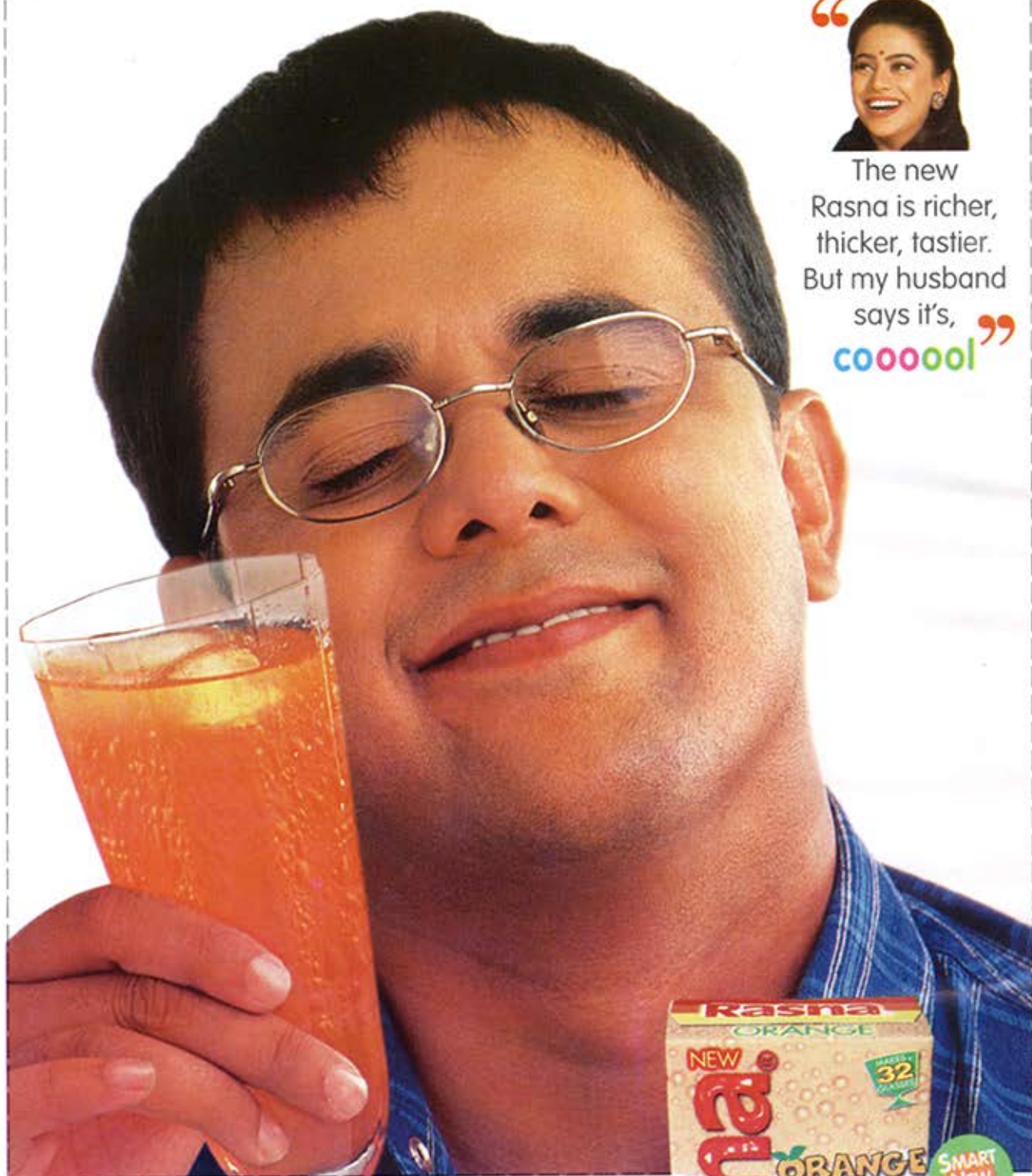


CAFE

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