

પ્રાચીન

MAY 2003 Rs 35



*A Zoroastrian
Tapestry*



Serum Institute of India Ltd.
Meets National and International Requirements of
Life saving Biological and Pharma Products

SERUM PRODUCTS

Sii RABIVAX (HDC Rabies Vaccine -Adsorbed)
 Sii GENEVAC-B (r-DNA, Hepatitis B Vaccine)
 Sii TRIPLE ANTIGEN (DPT Vaccine)
 Sii DUAL ANTIGEN (DT Vaccine)
 Sii TETANUS TOXOID (TT Vaccine)
 Sii M-VAC (Measles Vaccine)
 Sii TRESIVAC (MMR Vaccine)
 Sii R-VAC (Rubella Vaccine)
 Sii ANTI SNAKE VENOM SERUM
 Sii HISTAGLOBULIN
 Sii BCG Vaccine

SERUM INTERNATIONAL PRODUCTS

LIMARIN CAPSULES 70 mg, 140 mg, and SYRUP (SILYMARIN)
 CHUFER (IRON AND FOLIC TABLETS).
 LOGICAL TABLETS 250mg, 500 mg and SYRUP (CALCIUM CARBONATE).
 HEMSI CAPSULES and SYRUP (HAEMATINIC).
 MEPRATE TABLETS 2.5mg (MEDROXYPROGESTERONE ACETATE).
 SIMROSE CAPSULE 500mg (EVENING PRIMROSE OIL).
 ZENDOL CAPSULE 50mg, 100 mg, 200mg(DANAZOL).
 SERACCEL(PLASMA SUBSTITUTE)
 SIPHENE TABLETS 50mg, SIPHENE M 25 (CLOMIPHENE CITRATE).
 SICRIPTIN 2.5mg(BROMOCRIPTINE)
 DOXORUBICIN HYDROCHLORIDE INJECTION, 50 mg
 CISPLATIN INJECTION, 50 mg per 50 ml
 VINCRISTINE SULPHATE INJECTION, 1 mg.

INFERTILITY RANGE (SERONO PRODUCTS)

GONAL-F (RECOMBINANT FSH) 37.5 IU, 75 IU, 150 IU, 600 IU
 PERGONAL 75 (FSH 75 IU & LH 75 IU).
 PERGONAL 150 (FSH 150 IU & LH 150 IU)
 PROFASI 1000 IU, 2000 IU, 5000 IU, 10000 (HCG)
 METRODIN 75 (PURE FSH 75IU).
 METRODIN 150 (PURE FSH 150). METRODIN H.P. (HIGHLY PURIFIED FSH 75 IU)
 CETRORELIX ACETATE (250 mcg)

GROWTH HORMONE

SAIZEN (r- Hgh 4 IU, 10 IU & 24 IU).

G.I.RANGE

STILAMIN 250mcg, 750 mcg & 3mg (SOMATOSTATIN).



SERUM INSTITUTE OF INDIA LTD.

REGD. OFFICE AND LABORATORIES: 212/2 HADAPSAR, PUNE 411028, INDIA.
 TEL:++91-20-6993900 / 6993901 FAX: ++91-20-6993924 / 6993921 E-mail: Serumindia@vsnl.net

Protection from Birth Onwards



Parsiana

May 2003
Volume 25 Number 10

EDITOR Jehangir R. Patel
MANAGING EDITOR Arnavaz S. Mama
EXECUTIVE EDITOR Parinaz M. Gandhi
SENIOR EDITOR Hilla P. Guzder
ASSOCIATE EDITOR Roxana A. Driver
DESIGNER Nivedita A. Potdar
MARKETING DIRECTOR Veera J. Patel
ADVERTISING MANAGER Jasmine D. Driver
ADVERTISING EXECUTIVE Susan Hadvaid
FINANCE B. L. Arora
DTP Bakhtavar R. Batliwalla, K. P. Ravi
SUBSCRIPTION MANAGER
Khurshid Panthaki
ASSISTANT SUBSCRIPTION MANAGER
Selvan Mark
ACCOUNTANT Anagha Korde
ASSISTANT ACCOUNTANT
Sampada S. Patwardhan
ADMINISTRATION (ACCOUNTS)
Swarupa Bhagwat
ACCOUNTS ASSISTANT
Sreevidya Narayanan
OFFICE ASSISTANTS Umesh Poojary,
Sunil Sakhare, Govind Salgaonkar,
Mahipat Jadhav

2 Readers' Forum

8 Events and Personalities

16 Zoroastrians Abroad

22 Three High Priests resolve by Parinaz Gandhi

24 Business: Billimoria's Concrete contributions by Hilla Guzder

28 The impress of Zoroastrian Tapestry by Arnavaz Mama

38 Proposed aviary: Taking wings by Rashna Ardesher

40 Mickey Mehta: The exercise of equilibrium

43 Gujarati Journalism - II by Dr Ratan Marshall

46 The ground fires by Ardesher Damania

48 To the Waters of the World by Kersi Limathwalla

54 Milestones

58 In Memoriam: Khusro Rustamji

Cover: Portrait of Pherozebai Shapurjee Batliwala (née Jejeebhoy)
Artist: August Theodor Schoefft, Photo: Fram Petit, Courtesy: *A Zoroastrian Tapestry*

Parsiana is edited and published by Jehangir R. Patel for Parsiana Publications Pvt Ltd at K. K. (Navsari) Chambers, 39B, A. K. Nayak Road, Fort, Bombay 400001 and printed by him at Kaiser-E-Hind Pvt Ltd, A-191, Road No 16A, MIDC, Wagle Industrial Estate, Thana (W), 400604. All rights reserved. Processing Comart Lithographers.
Editorial enquiries: 22078183. Advertising: 22077543, 22072915. Subscription: 22074347, 22074335. General: 22078730, 22072624.
Fax: 22075572, 22074541. Press: 25804162.
E-mail: parsiana@vsnl.net
For subscription enquiries and payments: K. K. (Navsari) Chambers, 39B, A. K. Nayak Road, Ground floor, Fort, Bombay 400001.
ISSN: 0971-3786.

Annual inland subscription for one year (12 issues) Rs 400; for two years (24 issues) Rs 750; for three years (36 issues) Rs 1,100. Foreign subscription rates: Seemal for one year Rs 675/ US \$ 15/UK £ 10/Euro 15; for two years Rs 1,250/US \$ 28/UK £ 19/Euro 28; for three years Rs 1,900/US \$ 41/UK £ 29/ Euro 41 (please allow six months or more for seemal delivery from the time of publication). Airmail for one year Rs 950/US \$ 21/ UK £ 14/ Euro 21; for two years Rs 1,800/US \$ 40/ UK £ 27/Euro 40; for three years Rs 2,700/ US \$ 60/UK £ 40/Euro 60. For Indian upcountry cheques add Rs 20 for bank charges; for US cheques add \$ 5; for UK cheques add £ 3; for Euro cheques add Euro 5. Cheques and drafts are to be drawn in favor of Parsiana.



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.

Resolution refrain

We, the Zoroastrian priests of United Kingdom, pay tribute to the Vada Dasturs in India for their leadership and wisdom in giving the mobeds and the Zoroastrian community a clear message and direction in the performance of the ashirwad and the navjote ceremonies in accordance with the tenets of the Zoroastrian faith.

We give our wholehearted support to this resolution and thank them for their care and concern for our community.

Ervads Eruch Daruwalla, Farokh Daruwalla, Murzban Dastur, Rayomand Gazi, Keki Kanga, Murzban Karkaria, Sam Karkaria, Zarir Patel, Farhad Sethna, Murzban Sethna and Zal Sethna

The recent controversy as regards the *fatwa* of the Parsi High Priests could not have come at a worse time! How many centuries will it take us to learn that God has no religion? That He fulfils Himself

in many ways? That till the human race gives up its theories as regards conversions, inter-marriages, and allows us to follow our own paths there is only going to be chaos? This is the 21st century. Man has evolved (or so we thought) to realize that God is pure spirit. He can be worshipped by any devotee belonging to any caste or creed. Today, more than ever, we need to become good human beings, loving and caring towards our fellowmen; not losing our identity in fighting over conversions, cremations and such rubbish which does nothing for our spiritual progress, except to get caught in a *chakravayu* of useless controversies and futile discussions which lead nowhere.

I am proud to be a Zoroastrian. Let me progress in freedom and free will. Will I become small if I marry a good person outside my community? Can my children or my spouse not partake of the glorious tenets of our noble religion? Why does a high priest have to impose his will on the community when he himself has erred in the past? e.g. the navjotes of the Wadia family? Let us learn from our mistakes and not because some dastur, however vada, has told us to believe his version of right and wrong! It's time all these regulations are scrapped and our small community does not get bogged down in meaningless controversies. Soon there will be no Parsi community but only a tribe of disparate human beings who are getting smaller by the day because some dastur said, "No conversion. No inter-marriage. No this or that." Leave us in peace, please!

GOOLOO MEHTA

The Vada Dasturs' fatwa has suddenly shaken up the 'thinking Parsis.' Yes we are dwindling in numbers and this is a statistical fact, but signs of an upward trend would have been possible had we accepted children of interfaith marriages, where any one parent is a Parsi. But the resolution of the Vada Dasturs has with one stroke of their pen negated all the progressive views. If their diktat is to be followed then sad be the day for us. As Anil Thakraney writes in the *Sunday Mid Day*, April 6: "It would be such a tragedy if we lose these wonderful people: the damn milk will taste bitter all over again."

If the rich and powerful can get away with it all then one can only surmise that the Priests "*ubhro kaahri rayaaaj* (expression of pent-up feelings)" is because as they feel sidetracked and neglected. To end in the words of Thakraney "Bottomline: Better to have 'half Bawas,' than to have none at all."

RODA D. HAKIM

Vadodara

Our priestly surgeons have been dreaming, thinking/Planning, preparing an original prescription for us/Unique and curious, but certain to succeed. It is for our survival/A dying community; and in passing/For conserving our age-old prosperity.

We are the Parsi Zoroastrians/(In short now called Zeds)/Pure of blood, Persian Parsis, so fair, so good, so select.

A claim has been made/That if we decapitate (us)/— Metaphorically speaking, of course — /The Whole will survive and be saved.

The community for sure must accept/ The program to decapitate, (in pairs)/ Rejoice, celebrate; now we won't die./ So long as we Zeds/Of undiluted blue blood/Can keep ourselves alive into biteless old age — /Toothless, spineless, aimless, at last.

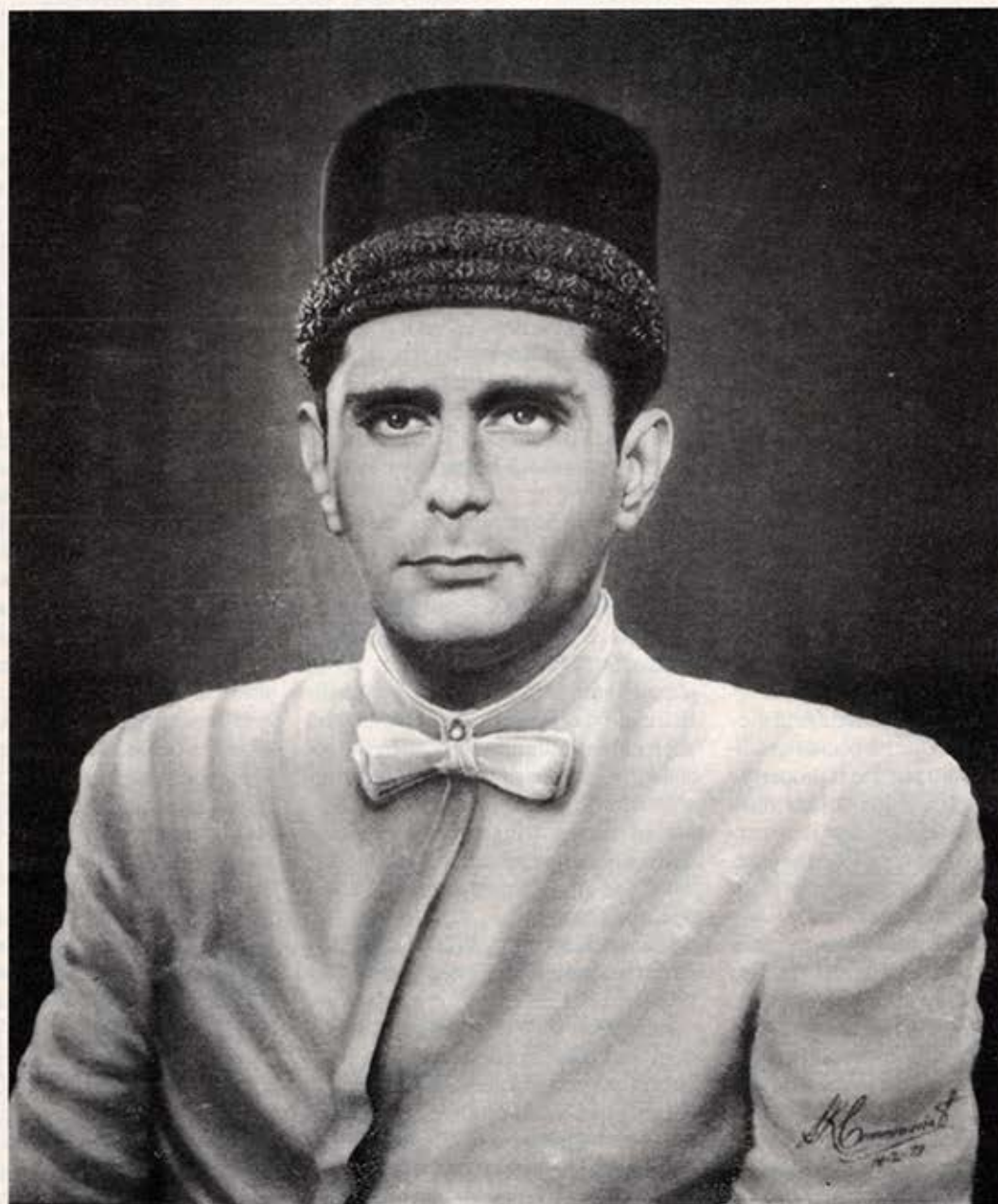
The surgical instruments/On offer from six great holy men/Are on world-wide display:/Opinions and views, requests/ Declarations; and some commandments/ To be intelligently deduced.

In their published letter/They have claimed that their views/Coincide with the community's./But I find no indicators of how/They arrived at the conclusion/That the community are sharing/ Their special brand of thinking./Especially ex-communicating.

Let us carefully examine their plan — / The Alice-in-Wonderland prescription./ With a tiny mathematical inversion/We come upon a quixotic solution:/Detect, reject, select for amputation/Limbs or parts that give offence/To the purveyors of dreams/And our Reverend High Priests;

The torso that is left/May be regarded, they suggest,/As a surviving, thriving/ Unevolving Whole, quite wholesome./ Surely the best in the world.

In the "requests" to the men/Holding the purse-strings — the custodians — /Can



**In Memoriam
Mr Fali Meherji Variava
(Late) Director**

BLAZE TOURS & TRAVELS PVT. LTD.

Indian Merchants' Chamber Bldg., Opp. Churchgate Station (W), Mumbai 400 020.
Tel. Nos.: (022) 22044439, 22020233, 22840026, 22843901. Fax: (022) 22048037

be detected the holy commandments
The holy men have declared that our
community/Is, and indeed can only be,
made up/Of folk living, breeding, dying
with their/Commandments in mind. Con-
sequently,/Great care must be taken/If
we intend to access/Our properties, our
ceremonies,/Our places of worship and
prayer,/and those beautiful gardens/
Where some of us go, when dead:/Al-
though numbers are steadily decreasing
In order that anyone may "enter."/He
will have, perforce, to be /A card-hold-
ing member of the Great Zoroastrian
Party (GZP)/Furthermore/He should be,
should have been,/Should confine him-
self to always being,/A parent/a child, as
the case may be,/Of pure Persian blood
to the last platelet/Besides being obedi-
ent to the holy decrees.

The most baffling of all is the matter,/Of
which six High Priests have rather/Un-
expectedly made a clean breast:/
Unhesitatingly, they have urged/Custo-
dians of the Parsi Punchayet/To follow
their lead in treating/As invalid, the mar-
riage of couples/Who may choose or
have chosen

To wed by the law of the land!/No matter
if the couple be/Dyed-in-the-wool Per-
sian, that is, Parsi Zoroastrian./And they
have "requested"/Our respected custo-
dians/To safeguard our Parsi property./
Consequently/Parsi Zoroastrians must
take it/That marriage by law is worse/
Than what globally prevails — the prac-
tice/Of partners living together in bliss/
Rather than tying the knot.

Oh tremble, good Zoroastrians, tremble/
Zoroastrian couples, pure and simple./
Married by law though they be/Are soon
to be disabled/From bringing forth "le-
gitimate" children/Who could qualify
for the Party's card/And the consequent
benefits

The law provides merely a contract/
Ashirwad makes marriage a sacrament/
And the self appointed Zoroastrian Court
provides/For the forfeiture of cards and
benefits/The couple's pure blood not-
withstanding./The edict has gone forth/
Do not marry by law —/You will lose
your Party cards./You pure and faithful
Zoroastrians

How graciously they propose/To de-
capitate and reduce/Our number, so our/
Whole may not be lost to us.

Vah !

In our Zoroastrian diaspora, some
Jejeebhoyas/Tatas, Bhabhas, Wadias/
Manekjis, Cursetjis, Godrejs/ Shall lose
their positions of nobility./The scions of

every distinguished family.

It makes us sad beyond measure./That
the abhorrence openly declared/To the
mixing of bloods in marriage/Extends,
Oh horrors!/To the mixing of logic with
thought.

Let us act with all speed./With our
proverbial grit/To stall the holy reme-
dies.

Holy men can afford/To scoff at the civil
law/Including the judgement in "Bela"/
They may disregard their Lordships/Who
sit in wigs at the Hague/To dispense an
equal justice/To the plaintiffs of every
State.

But

At the end of the day,/When it comes to
the test,/Our trustees must face the mu-
sic/Should they undertake to bell the
cat/'Tis they who must pay/(not from
our funds, I should say)/To compensate
in heavy damages/Ordered by courts to
set right/

Injuries done to people/Who are brave
and true and free. FEROZA H. SEERVAI

"Is nirang necessary?"

Dr M. D. Disawalla's letter ("Is nirang
necessary?" *Parsiana*, February 2003)
requests enlightenment from only "quali-
fied and experienced bacteriologist" and
not from any religious scholar, on the so-
called "vexatious ritual prevailing in our
community," that is, the "inconceivable"
use of nirang (ritualistically purified
bull's urine) during nahan (purification
bath) and other Zarathushtrian ceremo-
nies and rituals.

I am neither a "qualified and experi-
enced bacteriologist" nor a religious
scholar, but I do know for a fact that a
combination of Indian traditional wis-
dom and modern science has recently
led to a unique US patent that was granted
to Indian scientists on June 25, 2002 for
the use of cow urine distillate as a bio-
enhancer! The patent has been granted
for a pharmaceutical composition con-
taining an antibiotic and cow urine dis-
tillate in an amount effective to enhance
the anti-microbial effects of antibiotic
and anti-fungal agents. Moreover, using
cow urine distillate as a bio-enhancer
has direct implication in drastically re-
ducing the dosage of antibiotics, drugs,
and anti-cancer agents while increasing
the efficiency of absorption of bio-ac-
tive molecules, thereby reducing the cost
of treatment and also the side-effects due
to toxicity.

Indeed, modern science is making
rapid strides towards disproving Disa-

walla's perceptible inconceivability of
"imbibing an excretory product of a bull!"
But can any explanation really compen-
sate for one's lack of faith in religious
doctrines and rituals?

Coincidentally, the ritual use of con-
secrated varasio's (white bull) urine in
Zarathushtrian ceremonies is also well
known. And, although gomez and nirang
are in ritual use for several centuries
their benefits are relatively underesti-
mated as there is no perceivable scien-
tific explanation offered. Efforts were
made in the mid-60s by Dastur (Dr)
Sorab H. Kutar to get the nirang patho-
logically tested by Dr Saunders, consult-
ant bacteriologist, at the St. Nicholas
Hospital, London who confirmed that
the nirang was indeed free of all bacte-
ria!

The Zarathushtrian rituals incorpo-
rate the efficacy of sound energy
(mantra), light energy (fire) and the
energy or magnetism that exists in water,
humans (priests), metal, earth, etc. By
combining and harnessing all these col-
lectively, we can achieve spiritual re-
sults that are beyond the "scientific"
scope and can never be measured by any
physical equipment. With the help of
Zarathushtrian manthravani, nirang and
hom are transmuted during the rituals
of nirangdin and vendidad! Today, sci-
entists use water, metal, sound and light
as conductors! But, for several centuries
now, all these items are in fact being
used in all Zarathushtrian rituals per-
formed in the sacred confines of con-
secrated adarians and atash behrams
and with the help of kash or pavi whereby
a factual force-field is created.

According to a recent report pub-
lished in the US Press, a leading research
team comprising of Rustom Taleyarkhan,
a senior scientist at Oak Ridge National
Laboratory in Tennessee and Prof Rich-
ard Lahey, professor of engineering at
the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in
Troy have successfully diverted a very
high frequency sound wave in a body of
fluid to achieve the effect known as
"sono-Luminescence" wherein lumines-
cent bubbles are formed due to the ex-
tremely high frequency waves of energy
diverted in the fluid and this process
produces what is called fusion.

Hats off to our wise and sagacious
ancestors who actually knew of this sci-
ence and have used it in the ceremony of
nirangdin since centuries! This is the
power of the Zarathushtrian manthravani
based on "Staotacha Ahurai;" "staot"



Shaping the changing face of India, is a name called SHAPOORJI PALLONJI.



Truck Manufacturing Facility - Volvo



Mumbai - Pune Express Way



Technopolis Knowledge Park



Project Lotus - Smithkline Beecham



Sterling Heritage,
A Residential Landmark

Shapoorji Pallonji and Company Limited -

*An Innovator in Best Work Practices, that has been giving
Solutions to Clients in the Construction Industry for over
135 years.*

*Continuously endeavoring to improve upon its operating
parameters and to institute the best corporate practices,
based on technologies of total quality management, the
company has achieved the ISO 9002 certification from
the Bureau Veritas Quality Internal.*

*The Company has initiated Enterprise Resource Planing
implementation with success, with an aim to achieve
cost savings and ensure that business processes are in line
with corporate objectives.*

*The customer's needs have always been focussed upon, it
being a corporate objective to continuously provide and
add value to customer relationship.*

*The company has evolved Knowledge Management, which
will ensure that the existing innovative work practices will
carry it successfully to the next millennium and be capable
of providing effective solutions, thereafter.*



SHAPOORJI PALLONJI & CO. LTD

S.P. Centre, 41/44, Minoo Desai Marg,
Colaba, Bombay 400 005. India.

Tel: 91-22-2287 1040. Fax : 91-22-2233 8176.

E-mail : bd@shapoorji.com

Website : www.shapoorji.com



which is the first law of the Universe, the first law of creation! of what is today called nuclear physics!

The nirangdin ceremony is performed only after the pair of mobeds undergo the nine-night stringent baresnum (nahan) to ritualistically purify their inner and physical bodies. They then perform the yasna ceremony for six days and prepare for the final night when they bring down the nirang or the divine energy from the spiritual world and direct it into the container of taro! If only we realize how scientific our religion is, we will not ridicule or question its ritualistic intricacies. Purity through spiritual transmutation is achieved during the ceremony of nirangdin by interweaving staot manthravani from Yasna, Visperad and through the potent Vendidad: Vi+Daevo+Dad (laws to defeat the druj).

During the nirangdin ceremony, very high frequency manthravani staot are directed in a container filled with taro. Simultaneously, pebbles are also thrown in the container of taro, and while reciting specific manthravani words, the mobed opens the lid of the container of taro and directs staot energy in the container, thereby causing the same process that scientists like Taleyarkhan and Lahey have currently achieved through their experiment. It is because such high frequency sound waves are directed in the container of taro that the fluid gets transformed into "ab-e zar" or the golden water, remaining free of any contamination for months and years on end as proved by Saunders in London.

This is the bulandi (strength) of our great Mazdayasni Zarathushti din and those who question or ridicule such rituals like the nirang or hom, do so due to lack of understanding of the spiritual process of manthravani!

To each his own, I suppose!

ADIL J. GOVADIA
Bangalore

Dr M. D. Disawalla has given a very comprehensive description of the nirang ("Is nirang necessary?" Readers' Forum, Parsiana, February 2003), and the process and prayers it goes through before it is purified and considered fit for religious rituals. He however categorically concludes that pathological tests have time and again proved that the bacteria contents of the nirang remains the same when tested in its original form, or when tested after the nirangdin prayers.

The same applies to whether the urine was that of an ordinary bull or a varasio. Thus the purification prayers have not stood the test of scientific evaluation.

The nirang ritual, as quite rightly brought out by Disawalla, appears to be no different from the voodoo rituals of certain African tribes, who are made to drink a decoction of cattle blood and semen in their initiation into adulthood ceremonies, or the Hindu belief in the purity of the Ganga water, or the healing properties of cow's urine as mentioned in ancient Hindu texts.

To answer Disawalla's question, "Is nirang necessary?" — the answer is an emphatic "No." In the days before the advent of modern antiseptics, perhaps nirang served a purpose. However to perpetuate this ritual in an era of Listerine and Dettol by a so-called enlightened community like ours, is uncivilized and repugnant.

Brig NOSHIR B. GRANT

Poona

Third child guidelines

The third child assistance is given to parents whose third child is born on or after July 1, 1993.

To qualify for the scheme the beneficiaries should not have a total monthly income (of husband and wife) of more than Rs 30,000 per month. The assistance will, normally, be extended up to the child reaching the age of 18.

The final decision (for extending the assistance) will be at the discretion of the trustees.

SHEROO D. MASTER

Senior Executive, Bombay Parsi Punchayet

Iran League competitions

The Iran League has been organizing (for the last several years) educational competitions for Zarathushti children and elders to bring awareness of our religion in them.

In the year 2003, the following educational competitions will be held over five successive Saturdays at the Bai M. N. Gamadia Girls' High School, Shamaldas Gandhi Marg (Princess Street), Opp. Parsi Dairy Farm, Bombay 400002.

Essay Writing, (June 28, 2 to 3.30 p.m.), Rangoli (June 28, 3.45 to 5.15 p.m.), Drawing (July 5, 2 to 3.30 p.m.), Elocution (July 5, 3.45 p.m. onwards), Shahnameh (July 12, 2.30 p.m. onwards), Parsi Song/Monajat (July 12, 3.45 p.m. onwards), Religious Quiz (July 19, 2.30 p.m. onwards), Western Vocal (July 26, 2.30 p.m. onwards),

Western Instrumental (July 26, 3.45 p.m. onwards).

COWASJEE NUSSERWANJI DINSHAW

Vice President, Iran League

Scarce sandalwood

We are all aware of the rapidly depleting sandalwood stocks resulting in spiraling prices. At the last count, the purest form of sandalwood was quoted at around Rs 3,500 per kilo. The community is at the mercy of sandalwood merchants.

Many mobeds in several agaries and



A sandalwood retailer in Bombay

atah behrams admit that using the purest grade/quality of sandalwood for various ceremonies is beyond their means and they are forced to use second and even third-grade sandalwood. So much for a community whose religion enjoins its followers to maintain the highest standards of purity or Ashoi or Asha.

There is absolutely no transparency in the present mechanism of procuring sandalwood and it is not known if the concerned merchants dealing in sandalwood are entirely above-board in this. No one really knows whether the concerned merchant did actually procure a particular lot of sandalwood at a so-called government auction at some exorbitant rate quoted by the merchant. It is time the community evolved a mechanism/body that could subject these merchants to an audit of their business operations with a view to regulating the quality and price of sandalwood so as to keep it within the reach of an average

continued on page 49

With compliments of

THE WHITE CLOUD PAPER MILLS

Flat no 203, Bldg no 12
Mira Co-op Housing Society No 1
Salisbury Park, Pune 411037

Fax: 91-20-4267612 Tel: (020) 4267513
E-mail: whitecloud@vsnl.net

Events and Personalities

Faith and fervor

More than 1,600 Zoroastrians gathered at the Cama Baug complex on March 3, 2003 to participate in the 155th anniversary celebration of the P. N. Godiwalla Agiary (also known as the Seth Muncherji Khurshedji Langrana Agiary). While the hall was reportedly packed to capacity since 5 p.m. when the jashan started, the momentum started building up as the evening progressed — with devotional songs from the girls of Bai Avabai Petit School, religious discourses by Nayab Dastur Peshotan Mirza and Noshir Dadrawala on the significance and symbolization of fire and light, lively music by Marzban Mehta and his troupe which prompted the older ladies to spontaneously take to the floor to perform the garbas of yore, and finally the memorable dinner by Tanaz Godiwalla for Rs 70 per head.

On the occasion, the Langrana Agiary

A jashan at Cama Baug celebrating Langrana Agiary's (below) 155th anniversary



in Fort received nearly Rs 40,000 as donations towards its kathi fund, mentions Mehernosh Doctor, a regular devotee at the Agiary. "Till date we have no administrative overheads. Therefore we ensure that every rupee of the trust is utilized for the benefit of the Agiary," notes the appeal from the trustees Hoshang D. Katrak, Rustomjee D. Garda and Godrej A. Fanibanda. "Due to rising costs of maintenance of property and reducing returns on investments, it becomes more and more difficult to manage the Agiary with a limited income," adds the appeal.

From the inception of the Agiary on April 9, 1847 until 1983, there was only the Katrak family which tended the fire without any remuneration from the trustees. They sustained themselves on baj and rojgar prayers with ashodad serving as a fringe benefit, notes a press release.

When the Agiary was built at Fort by Muncherji Langrana in memory of his son Kaikhusroo, the first panthaky was Ervad Meherwandaru Dadabhoy Katrak. The building then had two storeys. With no heir left in the Langrana family to look after the Agiary which was gradually be-

coming dilapidated, the then trustees requested Pestonji Nusserwanji Godiwalla, the owner of the Mazgaon Dock to rebuild the fire-temple building. Thus on April 25, 1895 was reconsecrated the fire in the reconstructed fire-temple built in memory of Godiwalla's daughter Pirojba.

The present trustees are seeking to raise Rs 5,00,000 towards the major repairs and renovation of the Agiary. Prior to the celebrations, the electrical wiring of the fire-temple which had not been changed in the last six decades was replaced and minimal plastering and white-washing work was undertaken. Next on their priorities is repairing the wooden roof as also the priest's room above the kebla. The trustees are looking forward to financial support from the community. Cheques/drafts favoring "P. N. Godiwalla Trust for Fire Temple" may be forwarded to the trustees at 21 Gola Lane, Behind Parsi Punchayet Office, Fort, Bombay 400001, tel: 23671757.

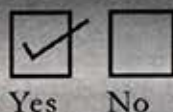
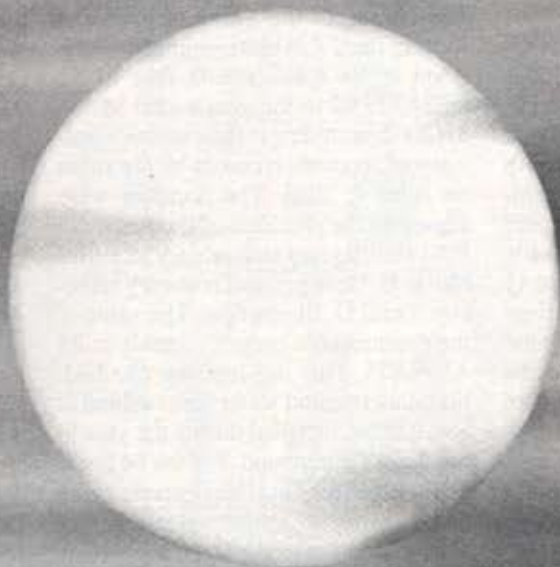
Pilgrims march to Udvada

Almost 1,500 Zoroastrians visited the Ervad Ratansha Katila Stopover Lodging Place in Udvada in the last six months,



(Above, from left): Fani-banda, Katrak, Garda, Mirza, Dadrawala and M. Mehta
Photos: C. C. Gandevia

SUN F&C. Chosen by those who know how to choose.



SUN F&C
Value Fund

Open-end growth scheme
investing in value-oriented
securities



The value of experience

For a copy of the Offer Document and KIM and for more details contact us at: SUN F&C Mutual Fund, Apeejay Chambers, 5 Wallace Street, Fort, Mumbai 400 001. Tel: 022-22036222, Fax: 022-22036333, email: help@sunfc.com, website: www.sunfc.com or our dedicated branches at • Ahmedabad: 079-6400782/83 • Bangalore: 080-2121482/83 • Chennai: 044-28113219/20/24 • Hyderabad: 040-55618681/82 • Kolkata: 033-22805350/22815441 • Mumbai: 022-22017273/74/75 • New Delhi: 011-23753656/57/58/59 • Pune: 020-6052895/3082, 6119378 or the area representative offices at: • Jaipur: 0141-2372400, 2377062 • Patna: 0612-2321503, 9835029094 or your broker.

STATUTORY DETAILS: • SUN F&C Mutual Fund is a trust settled by F&C Emerging Markets Ltd., of the U.K. (liability restricted to the corpus of Rs.5 lakh) • The Board of Trustees of the Mutual Fund have appointed SUN F&C Asset Management (India) Pvt. Ltd. as the Investment Manager. **RISK FACTORS:** • All investments in mutual funds and securities are subject to market risks and the NAV of the schemes may go up or down depending upon the factors and forces affecting the securities market. There can be no assurance that the objectives of the schemes will be achieved. • The past performance of SUN F&C Mutual Fund and the mutual funds managed by the sponsors and their affiliates is not necessarily indicative of the future performance of any of its schemes and may not necessarily provide a basis for comparison with other investments. SUN F&C Value Fund is only the name of the Scheme and does not in any manner indicate the quality of the Scheme, future prospects or returns. There is no assurance or guarantee as to the rate of dividend distribution nor that dividends will be regularly paid. The value of the scheme's investments may be impacted due to fluctuations in the equity and bond markets, fluctuations in interest rates, prevailing political and economic environment, changes in government policy, factors specific to the issuer of the securities, tax laws, liquidity of the underlying instruments, settlement periods, trading volumes, etc. The Scheme may invest in derivative instruments which carry market risk. Please read the Offer Document before investing. **INVESTMENT OBJECTIVE:** To provide long-term capital appreciation by investing in value oriented equity securities. **ASSET ALLOCATION:** Approx. upto 95% in equity and equity-related securities and upto 30% in debt and money market instruments. **TERMS OF ISSUE:** The units are available on all business days at NAV based prices subject to load (prevailing load: Entry Load - 2%, Exit Load - Nil).

with December showing a record high of 295 visitors, notes a write-up from Prof Khurshed Sheriar. "The facility has succeeded in creating a new stream of pilgrims to Udvada rather than eating into the hotel and dharamshala clientele" as those who avail of its lodging convenience order food from the hotels and dharamshalas of their choice, points out Sheriar. The Katila Place receives not only the hordes of usual weekenders but guests right through the week.

The overwhelming response has resulted in the creation of additional lodging space in the attic, mentioned Sheriar, happy that the ancestral house of Katila is being put to good use by the Youth Wing of the World Zoroastrian Organisation (WZO). Pesiba, Porus and Khurshed Sheriar, the nephews of Katila who had inherited the ancestral property when the priest was murdered on September 13, 1997, gifted the estate to the WZO Youth Wing "to perpetuate the fellow-feeling and ideals" the old man had stood for.

During his 78-year life span, Katila never missed a day of worship at the Iranshah, recalls the nephew. Ordained as a yozdathregar mobed at a young age, he performed the bareshnum ceremonies for 25 years at the Iranshah. His insistence on offering pure sandalwood to the holy fire led him to start a sandalwood business in 1946 which he continued to attend till the last day of his life. The orthodox, upright priest also served the local community as a member of the Udvada Samast Anjuman Committee, Seth M. C. Damanwala Dispensary Committee, Bhikhaji Unwalla Library Committee and the Bazme-Khadaman-Iranshah (a society for the welfare of Udvada's practising priests).

Since its inception on April 18, 2001, the Katila Stopover Lodging Place has been catering to the needs of pilgrims who find the Udvada hotel and dharamshala rates unaffordable. For a moderate fee of Rs 20 per head per day guests are allowed to stay here for a maximum of 48 hours. Hot water is provided free as also clean sheets in a bright and ventilated environment by the hospitable caretakers Noshir and Mani Sodawaterwalla. Optional breakfast can be availed of at an extra Rs 25 per head. "But while the Youth Wing is persevering with the nominal rates it has set, operating costs have been daunting. Incidental expenses too crop up all the time, straining resources," mentions

Sheriar noting that they would welcome donations. Cheques or drafts favoring "The WZO (India) Youth Wing" may be forwarded to the WZO executive board member (youth affairs) Sarosh Bana at 52 Bakhtawar (Main), 22 Narayan Dabholkar Road, Bombay 400006, tel (O): 22883948, (R): 23679717 or e-mail: sarosh_bana@hotmail.com

Nagpur's assets

The corpus of the Shree Nagpur and Kamthi Parsi Zarhosti Anjuman which stood at Rs 6,432,379.92 rose to Rs 6,574,379.92 in the year ended March 31, 2002, according to their audited statement of accounts received by Parsiana on April 4, 2003. The accounts were signed by the president of the Anjuman Edul F. Bhagwagar, honorary treasurer Shiraz K. Doongaji and honorary secretary Yezdi D. Bhagwagar. The value of their immovable property stands at Rs 4,938,875. This includes the one lakh liter underground water tank, valued at Rs 195,659, installed during the year in the Agiary compound. For the 84 families living in the Tata Baug complex who had been facing acute water shortage since a long time, "the water problem is now a thing of the past," mentions the annual report appreciating the services of Rusi Jamaji and Navroze Daver in this venture.

The Dar-e-Meher building with staff quarters, Kamdin Charity Chawl, Dharamshala building, Anjuman Memorial Blocks, A. H. Wadia Charity Building, Dr Dadi Balsara Apartments, Diwan Bahadur M. M. Mulla Memorial Blocks, Parsi Anjuman Apartments and Dadi Terrace are the other structures included in their fixed assets. In respect

of property, Rs 144,009.50 were incurred on maintenance and repairs during the year. Among their expenses, the single largest item was salaries on which the Anjuman expended Rs 152,532.

The Anjuman received Rs 1,42,000 as donations during the year. Donations were received for the water tank, the water cooler, for the agiary and kathi funds, for the installation of geysers in Dharamshala rooms, for medical relief and for other causes. A total of Rs 23,934 was disbursed as education aid and merit prizes, Rs 40,100 as medical aid, and Rs 72,500 as monthly aid to needy members.

The report also happily announced the induction of a new panthaky, Ervad Sohrab Bharucha, "after a year long search...with the help of our former panthaky Ervad Aspandiar Dadachanji... All members of the Anjumans are hereby requested to give full cooperation to him."

The rise and tide

An unprecedented congregation of more than 2,000 Zoroastrians gathered at the Radio Club on March 28, 2003 to observe the Avan Ardivisur Parav which is being annually celebrated for over 20 years, stated a press release. The Zoroastrian religion is an environment friendly religion and it is a sin to defile any element of nature, mentioned Kersi Limathwalla in his welcome address, requesting the audience not to drop their offerings in the water but to leave it at a distance, on the banks. One should be selfless and adopt an attitude of total surrender in prayers, reinforced Limathwalla who believed that if one's prayers are not answered the fault lies



The 13th anniversary of the Parvez Katrak Foundation was observed on March 11, 2003 at the Zoroastrian Colony when five unassuming community members were reportedly presented a rose and a medal for their "sincere and selfless" work. Seen in the photograph (from left) are: Farida Doctor, Nariman Daruwalla, chief guest Farrokh Antia, executive trustee of the Zoroastrian Colony, Katrak, noted advocate Feroze Andhyarujina who was the special guest, Nadersha Bhesania, Noshir Bulsara and Marzban Master. Photo: C. C. Gandevia

The Products That Your Process Needs...



The products you see here tell you only part of what **Forbes Marshall** does. That's because we do much more than sell products. We build **steam engineering and control instrumentation** solutions that work for you. If you're looking to optimise your process, we're the best choice to help you better harness steam, air and water. We'll help your process run at its best.

The quality of any product is only as good as the people behind it. Our people are among the best trained, well equipped and most experienced in the world today.

We have also embarked on **utilities management** activity, and our energy conservation package is one of the best ways for you to harness our expertise in this area. The result - lower energy consumption, improved product quality and better control of your process.



Forbes Marshall

Mumbai - Pune Road,

Kasarwadi, Pune 411 034, India.

Tel: 91(0)20 - 7145595,

Fax: 91(0)20 - 7147413

E - mail: bizdev@forbesmarshall.com

www.forbesmarshall.com



with the devotee and not with the prayers.

Chief guest Minoo Shroff, chairman of the Bombay Parsi Punchayet referred to the Zoroastrian ethos and how proud he was when Queen Elizabeth II seemed knowledgeable on the Zoroastrian community and its contribution to general society. "India without the Parsis was like an egg without its yolk and much of its salt," Shroff quoted the words of Beverly Nicholas.

The finale of the evening was the lucid speech of Dastur Khurshed Dastoor of Udvada who referred to the various trials and tribulations faced by the community in its efforts to preserve the religion and culture. He delineated the history, from the rule of the Sassanian dynasty to the escapade from Iran, the landing in India, and the consecration and safeguarding of the Iranshah. Maintain a dress code when visiting the Atash Behram in Udvada, he appealed to the devotees, reminding them that they were on a pilgrimage and not on a picnic. The evening ended with religious and devotional songs.

The tradition of celebrating Avan Yazad Parav was initiated by Rustomji Kukadaru and Dinshaw Merchant nearly 25 years ago, mentions the press release, noting how the baton came to be passed on to Limathwalla in 1997. At the Farvardian Parav at the Doongerwadi, Merchant intuitively announced his hope that Limathwalla would take over the mantle of organizing the Parav celebrations. The fourth day after the announcement Merchant suddenly passed away. The onus of organizing these religious meets has since fallen on Limathwalla and his able team of Nadir Modi, Cowasjee Dinshaw, Naval Unwalla, Bakhtavar Merchant, Zarir Bhathena, Kersi Commissariat and Rusi Bhungara. "One hopes that there are more such persons and more such events to bring the com-

munity together rather than raise issues that divide the community," adds the release.

Musical legacy

The first live symphony he heard was the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra when he was 18 years of age and by the time Zubin Mehta was 25, the legend had already conducted the Philharmonics in Vienna and Berlin. It was an easy rapport and respect that 67-year-old Mehta shared with the 90-member Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra which performed under his baton at Bombay's Jamshed Bhabha Theatre on March 28 and 29, 2003. This is the Vienna Orchestra's second tour to Bombay in the last 50 years but for the conductor "it is coming back home full circle," reported the *Afternoon Despatch and Courier* of March 28. Performing his first concert in India after the demise of his father Mehli, on October 19, 2002 at the age of 94, Zubin told the *Mumbai Newline* of March 28, "I feel all the more now, the need to carry his legacy forward."

For the shows presented by the Mehli Mehta Music Foundation, sponsored by the Taj Hotel in Bombay, Rabo India

Celebrating the Avan Yazad Parav (from left): Dinshaw, Limathwalla, Dastoor, Shroff and Bhathena

Photos: Homi Jal

and Sahara India, and supported by the Austrian Embassy, the Orchestra members reportedly waived their professional fees and television royalties and even conducted a free concert for children at the Tata Experimental Theatre, believing it's important to connect with them and let them have a feel of the instruments, noted the *Mumbai Newline*. For the evening shows the Orchestra performed the works of Beethoven, Schubert, Haydn, Mahler and Otto Nicolai, the founder of the Vienna Orchestra. For the juniors Zubin led 20 Orchestra members through Strauss' *Voices of Spring*, encouraging the kids to keep time, hum and even conduct. As the children identified each instrument, the musicians explained its distinguishing features, complete with little demonstrations, reported *The Indian Express* of March 31.

Currently music director of the Bavarian State Opera, music advisor and chief conductor of the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, the summer festival in Florence, Italy and music director for life of the Israel Philharmonic, Zubin divides his time between Israel and Florence. How does the conductor make an orchestral work, played countless times, sound fresh each time? As he explained to *The Times of India* of March 26, "Each time you come to a work after a gap of time you find details you hadn't noticed before... There's also your own growth and evolution.... That's because my outlook on life has changed. You also learn from the orchestra. Each musician will have his own emphasis in the way he plays his solos.... If I don't agree with his interpretation I will tell him but I may also see something new."



Z. Mehta: evolving as a conductor

In loving memory of

Jamshed Bomanji Irani

14th April 1921 to 20th May 2002

Chartered Architects
IRANI ARCHITECTS

Loved — Respected — Missed

For parents seeking residential school admission

- * Do you have young gentlemen/sons between the age of 3 and 16 years?
- * Are you looking for the perfect environment to educate them?
- * Would you like them to be all-rounders in all aspects of education — academics, sports, computers and many other co-curricular and extra curricular activities?
- * Would you like your son/s to grow in a healthy atmosphere as respectable, responsible and independent young men?
- * Most importantly, Boys' Town is one of the few public schools in India, which has professional computer training for students.
- * All academic staff have been professionally trained by Intel Corporation — U.S.A. — so as to enable them to teach any subject/topic through the use of computer presentations.
- * All teaching sessions have been additionally made interesting through extensive use of internet and multimedia encyclopaedia CD Roms.
- * If you feel that this is what you would like your son/s to be, then Boys' Town Public School is your ultimate answer!
- * Boys' Town is located in lush green surroundings with fully equipped residential educational facilities. Healthy nutritious food becomes a part of the students' rote and well qualified teachers as well as dormitory in-charge, to cater to each and every need of your little one.
- * Why not visit us personally to find out for yourself how right Boys' Town would be for your child?
- * Alternately, you could write to us and we would send you more details.

Bejon Desai
Principal Emeritus/Trustee
Boys' Town Public School
Trimbak Road, Nasik 422007
Tel: 2572108, 2579923
E-mail: boystownschool@eth.net

Priest prodigy

Barely 12 years old, Ervad Eric Zarir Dastoor has not only completed his navar and martab initiation at the Iranshah in Udvada, he has also appeared for his 'Saamel' examination which qualifies him to perform the *boi* at the holiest sanctum sactorum of the Atash Behram



From left: Ervads Eric Dastoor, Unwalla and Pallonji Dastoor

in Udvada, mentions Ervad (Dr) Ramiyar Karanjia, principal of the Dadar Athman Boarding Madressa where Dastoor trains.

On December 20, 2002 he performed his first *boi* ceremony at the Iranshah under the guidance and watchful eyes of his father Ervad Zarir Minocher Dastoor and uncle Ervad Pallonji P. Dastoor. Having performed the navar ceremony of Rustom Dadiba Unwalla, he may have created a record for being the youngest mobed to undertake this ceremony, writes Karanjia.

The seven-year Bhanter course of the Madressa, young Eric completed in four years. In his academic studies too he has consistently earned distinction and is presently a student of Std VII at the Dadar Parsee Youths Assembly High School. Shining out in extracurricular activities like the *Shahnameh*, essay, elocution and quiz competitions, Eric has won prizes and trophies not only at the Madressa but also at external competitions. Secular as well as religious education, boarding, lodging and allied facilities are provided absolutely free of cost to the children training to be full-fledged priests at the Dadar Madressa, mentions Karanjia.

Compiled by Parinaz M. Gandhi



Over one hundred years in global freight forwarding

Jeena
& COMPANY
Estd. 1900

GLOBAL LOGISTICS

Elphinstone Building, 1st Floor, 10, Veer Nariman Road, Mumbai 400 001, India. Tel.: (22) 2204 2032 Fax: (22) 2202 6853 E-mail: info@jeena.co.in

BANGALORE • CHENNAI • COCHIN • GOA • HYDERABAD • KANPUR • NEW DELHI • PUNE • TUTICORIN

www.jeena.com

Hong Kong directory

The Directory of Hong Kong Zoroastrians 2002-2003 has a leaf of interesting statistics. The total population of 194 souls comprises 53 families and 30 single individuals. Among them there are 145 adults and 49 children under the age of 21. In both groups the females outnumber the males. Unfortunately no age wise statistics are available.

The directory lists residence and office addresses, phones, fax and e-mail numbers of Zoroastrians and for their benefit the numbers of local arts and entertainment bodies, clubs, hospitals, police, government departments, et al.

A historical outline of the Incorporated Trustees of the Zoroastrian Charity Funds of Hong Kong, Canton and Macao traces the Zoroastrian connection with the colony where they are said to have been "deeply respected by both British and the Chinese as associates, and as rivals," since the early years of the China trade.

"The beginnings of the present day trust started quite humbly in the year 1822, when a piece of land was purchased on the slopes of Guia Hill in Macao (which, until 1844, was administered from Goa) for the establishment of a Parsi cemetery there," notes the essay. "The cemetery became operational in 1829. Canton (Guangzhou), however, was the hub of China trade in those days, with firms such as that of Cowasjee Pallanjee and Co. establishing 'factories' (which were warehouses/residences of 'factors' or agents) there as far back as 1794. The first Parsi association formed in this area was in Canton in 1834, and was known as the 'China Canton Anjuman.' Parsis had begun to settle in Macao in the 1820's, and started to settle in Hong Kong in the 1840's after the establishment of British administration, and in Shanghai in the 1850's after it was opened up to foreigners. On September 19, 1845, the Zoroastrian community living in the area met in Canton and created a wider anjuman body, covering Hong Kong, Canton, and Macao, for the purpose of establishing and maintaining burial grounds, having places of association, and rendering financial assistance to the needy. Zoroastrian cemeteries were established in Hong Kong in 1845, in Whampoa (near Guangzhou) in 1847, and in Shanghai in

1854. A bungalow was built in Whampoa in 1860, and a house purchased in Macao in 1874. The house in Macao was sold in 1939."

Though the community settlement rarely exceeded 200 Zoroastrians at any time, "in the first 25 years of Hong Kong's history as many as a quarter of all foreign firms (there) belonged to Parsis," states the write-up. "The latter day Parsis too, have not only made tremendous contributions to the growth of Hong Kong's trade and commerce, but have also helped in the formation and development of financial, educational, medical, social, and sports organizations here."

Seminar on rituals

"It was a historical first of its kind," a full-day seminar on April 19, 2003 at the Ramada Hotel, Toronto Airport co-sponsored by the North American Mobed Council (NAMC), the Federation of Zoroastrian Associations of North America (FEZANA) and the US Chapter of the World Zoroastrian Organisation, notes the report submitted by NAMC president Ervad (Dr) Jehan Bagli. Participating in the analysis of "Zarathushtrian Ritual: past, present and future," were Dr Almut Hintze of SOAS and Cambridge, UK, Mobed Kamran Jamshidi of Sweden, Ervad Parvez Bajan of Bombay and Bagli.

Profs Jamsheed Chok-

L to R (front row): Jamshidi and Bajan (2nd and 3rd) with NAMC executives and members Below: Bagli, interpreter Behram Parsi, Jamshidi, Hintze and Bajan

sy, Gernot Windfuhr and Pallan Ichaporia, all of the US and Ervad Godrej Sidhwa of Karachi withdrew from the program at the last minute because of the SARS outbreak in Toronto and Bagli had to step into the breach. A viewing of the Yasna ritual recorded on video by Dastur (Dr) Firoze Kotwal at the Colorado State University also helped to take in the slack.

FEZANA president Firdosh Mehta, Zoroastrian Society of Ontario president Sam Vesuna, Ontario Zoroastrian Community Foundation president Ervad Kobad Zarolia and Bagli on behalf of the NAMC welcomed the international scholars on the panel. All agreed on the imperative to keep minor differences in proper perspective and work in harmony to preserve Zoroastrian faith around the world.

Hintze's paper investigated "the dual role of Zarathushtra as a visionary on the one hand and as priest and initiator of a new type of worship on the other," writes Bagli. Arguing that the Prophet derived his spiritual authority from the revelations he received from Ahura Mazda, establishing a new devotional model, he established a new type of ritual worship preserved in the *Yasna Haptanhaiti*.

Jamshidi, a grandson of Dasturan Dastur Ardeshir Azargoshasp of Iran,



"DORABJEE ENCLAVE" GRACIOUS HOMES

In Pune



**Booking
Open**

A meticulously designed project of 1/2/3 Bedroom Flats & Shops
at Prime location on **Salunkhe Vihar Road** with

- ❖ Swimming Pool ❖ Community Hall ❖ Fire fighting equipments
- ❖ Generator back-up for lift and outside illumination
- ❖ 24 hours water supply ❖ Conforms to Vastu Shastra Principles
- ❖ Loans available from leading financial institutions

A Project by

Dorabjee Estates Pvt. Ltd.

DEVELOPERS & ESTATE CONSULTANTS

Prime Arcade, Office No 1, 1154 Saifee Street, Off M G Road Camp, Pune 411001

Tel (020) 6343366, 6348230 • E-mail dorabjee@vsnl.com • Website www.dorabjeeestates.com

**Contact
us**

**For Reliable efficient and quality services in:
Buying/Selling/Leasing/Renting Flats/Row Houses/Bungalows/Shops/Office
premises and Plots in and around Pune**

traced the history of Tajikistan along scriptural lines, notes Bagli. Sogdiana is the first among the 16 lands mentioned in the Avesta and later scriptures. From the Achemenians to the Sasanians the land was known as Soghd-e-Haftashyan — land of seven nests as seven glorious kings including Jam, Fereydoun, Manochehr, Keykhosrow, Lohrasp and Goshtasp had nestled there. After the Arab occupation those who converted to Islam came to be recognized as Tajik. Tracing the connection with Avestan culture, Jamshidi had noted that the river Daaiti and mount Hara-Berezaiti, mentioned in Zoroastrian religious texts, are located in the vicinity of Tajikistan. Like the Zarathushtis of Iran the Tajiks celebrate the Nowruz, Mehrgan and Sadeh festivals. They also respect and revere all the elements of Nature.

Bajan provided a historical perspective of Zarathushti ritual, its traditional values, spiritual significance and social relevance, writes Bagli. The Indian diaspora witnessed the development of five groups of priests — the Bhagarias, Godavaras, Bharuchas, Khambattas and Sanjanes — each catering to its own diocese. Bajan traced the odyssey of the Iranshah from Sanjan to Bahrot to Navsari to Udvada. He told the gathering that the oldest extant Zoroastrian manuscript, written by the Meherwan family, is housed in the Bodleian Library at Oxford while later manuscripts are preserved in India and in several European cities. He underscored the value of faith in religious practices because rituals are expressions of religious aspiration and the tranquility of these solemn acts appeal to mankind's spiritual yearnings. While changes in the mechanics of rituals are inevitable due to varying circumstances in time, Bajan held that such change should not be allowed to weaken the community's faith in their performance. He described a true athraivan as one who seeks wisdom, relieves distress and inspires the laity to the best existence.

Bagli's colloquy on the significance of some Zarathushti rituals traced their chronological development beginning with Gathic times when rituals and priesthood as we know them today were absent. They evolved gradually through the era of the Younger Avesta and culminated in "an explosive growth of rituals in the priest laden society of the Sasanian period." Maintaining that rituals depict a "precious treasure of doctrinal

information from the scriptures," Bagli elaborated the flower exchange ceremony of the Afringan recital: the two priests represent cosmic duality — the zaotar and raspi depicting celestial and terrestrial realities respectively — while the holy fire incarnates the wisdom of Ahura Mazda. The exchange of flowers between the priests symbolizes the transmission of souls from the spiritual to the physical world and back. Bagli also explained how the importance of purity in the Zoroastrian faith had led to the subsequent evolution of purificatory rites.

Bagli's talk ended with the delineation of the inner liturgy of the Yasna appropriately followed by Kotwal's video. A discussion with the panel speakers and an open forum for questions from the floor drew the event to a close.

Houston highlights

The Zarathushti Group (ZG) comprising 30 families who had the foresight to assess future community requirements and invest in land had initially donated 4.3 acres to the community 10 years ago — land on which their Zarathushti Heritage and Cultural Center (ZHCC) was built. ZG has now donated a further 2.5 acres whose market value is approximately \$ 125,000. The total land provided by the ZG, which amounts to 6.8 acres valued at more than \$ 300,000, has been given unconditionally, notes *Manashni* (February 2003). The ZG expects to sponsor a gahambar to celebrate the event and officially deed the property to the Zoroastrian Association of Houston (ZAH), notes the newsletter.

ZAH's Library project is proceeding apace with new books being contributed by members to add to their 4,000 volume collection. A list of relevant titles is announced in the ZAH newsletter *Manashni* for the benefit of would-be donors. Of the total project estimate of \$ 60,000, inclusive of furniture which accounts for 50 percent of the cost, fundraising by the library committee had netted marginally over 10 percent, as per a report by Aban Rustumji a year ago.

In tune with their intention to organize four events each year they had held a showing of the film *Earth* based on author Bapsi Sidhwa's *The Icecandy Man*. The movie had been followed by a discussion with the author.



Fracis: a book reading from *Ticket to Minto*

In April 2003 the ZAH Library Program Series, cosponsored by the Asia Society, scheduled a reading from Sohrab Fracis' *Ticket to Minto*. The collection of 12 short stories about India and America and the harsh realities of immigrant life had won Fracis the 2001 Iowa Short Fiction Award. Fracis is the first Indian author to win the prestigious award. The reading was followed by an interview of the author, a book sale, etc.

At the ZAH No Rouz (Navroz) dinner an elderly gentleman choked on his food and became unconscious. The emergency medical services were called but their vehicles were unable to come to the door because of all the double-parked vehicles in the driveway. Though the paramedics eventually took the patient to hospital, the event has left the ZAH committee seriously considering the need for creating more parking spaces, notes *Manashni* (April 2003).

Miscellanea

The World Zoroastrian Organisation (WZO) — US Region has been formally established with former president of the Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Chicago (ZAC), Keki Bhote as president. The WZO (US)'s first project is to support the Fali Chothia scholarship Fund, administered by ZAC, by supplementing scholarships up to 50 percent, notes the ZAC newsletter (February 2003).



Bhote: first president of WZO (US)

Scholars from Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Iran joined their peers from Europe and North America at the Sixth Avesta Conference which concluded in Paris, France in November



USA
Football



INDIA
Football



AUSTRALIA
Football

Never underestimate the importance of local knowledge.

To truly understand a country and its culture, you have to be part of it.

That's why, at HSBC, all our offices around the world are staffed by local people. In fact you'll find we've got local people in more countries than any other bank.

It's their insight that allows us to recognise financial opportunities invisible to outsiders.

But those opportunities don't just benefit our local customers.

Innovations and ideas are shared throughout the HSBC network, so that everyone who banks with us can benefit.

Think of it as local knowledge that just happens to span the globe.

For more information, visit us on www.hsbc.co.in

HSBC 
The world's local bank

2002 under the auspices of UNESCO. The annual event is jointly organized by the Rudaki Anjuman (Paris), Payvand Anjuman and the Ancient Cultural Anjuman (both of Tajikistan) along with the local organization of the host country, notes the ZAC newsletter (January 2003). On this occasion they were hosted by the Zarathushti Anjuman of France.

The 56 speakers covered a vast range of topics, from the *Gathas* to music in ancient Iran. "The five day event was very fruitful, for one could see and feel the unity of purpose among the participants... and their aim and hope for the revival of Greater Iran based on the teachings of Zarathushtra," notes the newsletter ascribing the report to Creatingawareness — the e-mail group that is seeking to make the world aware of the religion, history and culture of Zoroastrians.

Last year the ZAC newsletter had reprinted some interesting statistics provided by the Persian Students Association of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), the Iranian Association of Boston, the ILEX Foundation and the Iranian American Medical Association.

"The Iranian-American community

is composed of approximately one million individuals. According to the 1990 census, 56 percent of Iranian-Americans hold Bachelor degrees or above and more than 26 percent hold graduate degrees, making them the highest educated minority group in the U.S. Iranian-Americans are the founders of some 280 major national firms, and the CEOs of more than 400 national companies, many of them among the *Fortune* 1,000 companies. The total contribution of our community to the U.S. economy is estimated at more than \$ 400 billion..."

Somewhere in Washington DC on the outskirts of the US capital, a ground breaking ceremony heralds the arrival of a Zoroastrian Center and Darb-e-Mehr, notes the ZAC newsletter (May 2003). Twenty years in the dreaming and planning, the 24-year-old Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Washington Incorporated (ZAMWI) will now have "something really big... This will be a national center, a world center," noted ZAMWI president Jamshid Goshtasbi as quoted by the Associated Press.

Compiled by Arnavaz S. Mama

MATRIMONIAL

Parsi parents invite matrimonial alliance for their daughter, 24 years, 5'4", fair, educated, working in Pune, having good family values, from Parsi boys who are cultured, educated and well settled. Please reply giving birth date and all details with recent full photograph — a must (returnable) to:

The Advertiser

Parsiana, Matrimonial (May/10-2003)*
GPO Box 892, Bombay 400001

*Please make sure the reply envelope bears the reference number cited here.

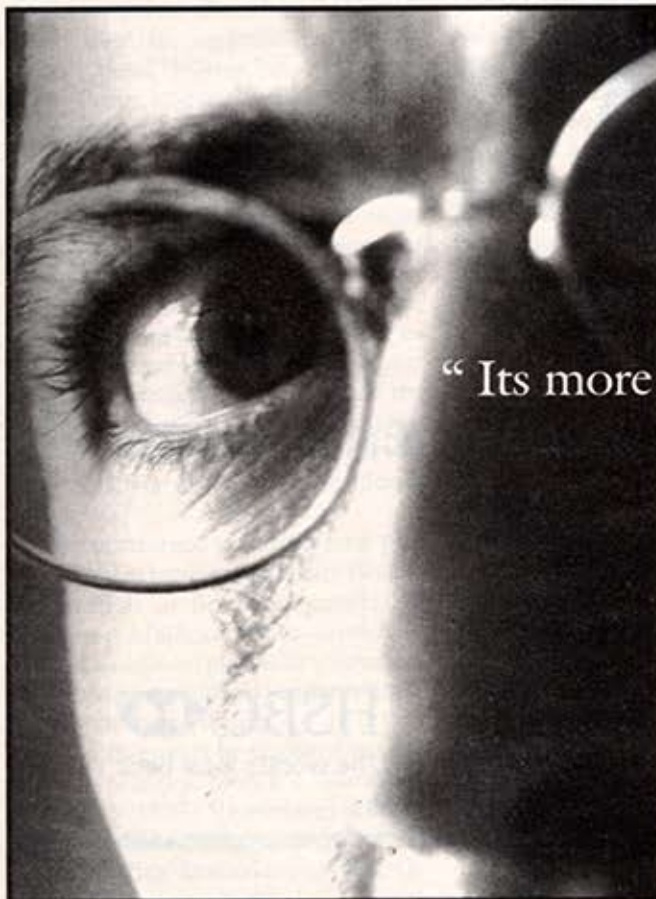
MATRIMONIAL

Alliance invited for a well-educated, fair and slim Parsi, manglik girl (5'2", aged 30) coming from a good family background and working in a foreign organisation, from a well-settled, professionally-qualified, open-minded Parsi boy (maximum around 35 years). Girl's hobbies include music, movies and travelling. Boy should be god-fearing and a non-smoker. Those interested may apply with details and a current photograph (returnable) to:

The Advertiser

Parsiana, Matrimonial (May/11-2003)*
GPO Box 892, Bombay 400001
or E-mail address: pisces6373@yahoo.com

*Please make sure the reply envelope bears the reference number cited here.



"Its more important how you see
than what you see..."

Baliwalla & Homi Private Limited

OPTOMETRISTS & CONTACT LENS CLINIC

365, D. N. Road, Fort, Mumbai - 400 001. Tel: 22874916/1762
614, J. S. Marg, Princess St, Mumbai - 400 002. Tel: 22014906/4923
J. Merwanji Street, Parel, Mumbai - 400 012. Tel: 24126051

In eye care for over 100 years!



INDIA'S LARGEST INTENSIVE & CORONARY CARE COMPLEX

RUBY HALL CLINIC'S ICU IS RECOGNISED FOR CERTIFICATE COURSE IN CRITICAL CARE MEDICINE

There is an increasing need of making latest life saving facilities available to needy patients in India. Ruby Hall Clinic of Grant Medical Foundation has always been at the frontiers of expanding scientific knowledge for last 35 years and making it reachable for the people. In the pursuit of this goal, Ruby Hall Clinic has now commissioned a complex of 118 beds of Acute Coronary Care and Intensive Care.

What is so special about this critical care unit? Minimum bed space requirement by international standards is about 120 sq. ft. per patient. Continuous supply of piped gases like oxygen, air suction from the central reservoir assures least chances of failure and no time wastage in manual labour of changing the gas cylinders. Very sophisticated 'monitors' have been developed which not only watch but record the trends and warn the attending staff about life threatening incidents in a patient. Latest generation Hewlett Packard monitors have also been installed for the same purpose along with central monitoring facility. To give best possible artificial respiratory support a large number of ventilators from Siemens have been installed. When, due to generalised unstable condition, the patient may not be able to be shifted to the kidney unit, facility for bedside hemodialysis is available in this modern ICU complex.

Ruby Hall ICU, CCU also specialises in shifting high risk patients within the departments for investigations & surgeries with accompanying equipment & personnel. With such facilities, it is no wonder that this unit is a "tertiary referral centre" for other ICUs and hospitals. For this purpose "emergency care ambulance" is available to shift the unstable patients to & from other hospitals.

The availability of equipment alone cannot make a unit successful, as the human face of "Intensive Care" is also very important for the panic stricken families. Towards this, the Clinic maintains a good nursing ratio (1:2) & the help of a social worker is also available for patients.



GRANT MEDICAL FOUNDATION
RUBY HALL CLINIC

40 Sassoon Road, Pune 411 001 • Tel : 6123391 • Fax : 6124529
• E-mail : pmrf@giaspn01.vsnl.net.in • www.rubyhall.com

"On further reflection..."

Bowing to public outrage three of the six High Priests rescinded sections of their resolution pertaining to interfaith marriages and their progeny

Parinaz M. Gandhi

"We have, on further reflection, reconsidered our position..." These much awaited words from Dasturs Kaikhushroo JamaspAsa, Firoze Kotwal and Noshirwan Dastur formed the content of their letter which was made public on May 4, 2003. It helped to temporarily set to rest the discontent simmering within certain sections of the community since March 2003 when six High Priests denounced interfaith marriages and debarred children of such marriages from entering the fold.

A spate of letters and editorials in the community and general media, much debate and considerable acrimony, persuasion and pressure tactics were deployed to get the High Priests to retract their original proclamation (see "To safeguard the survival..." *Parsiana*, April 2003). But while Dasturs Hormazdyar Mirza, Meherji MeherjiRana and Nadirshah Unvalla held on to their original edict the three others sought to clarify, "It is not our intention to create disharmony nor is it our desire to add to the misconceptions prevailing in the community (see box, "Clarification from three High Priests," for letter in its entirety)." The seventh High Priest Dastur Khurshed Dastoor who was not a signatory to the original resolutions did not therefore have to face the wrath of the community which was disappointed with the fundamentalist approach of the six others. Dastoor though continues to adhere to his Udva Anjuman's "clear-cut policy" of performing navjotes only if both the child's parents are Parsi Zoroastrians. "I have only stuck by my Anjuman's resolution," he clarified on May 14, 2003. He had kept away from the High Priests' resolutions because he did not agree with the wordings therein.

As per the "restated position" of JamaspAsa, Kotwal and Dastur, meant to "clear many a doubt and misconception raging presently in the commu-

nity... if a Parsi/Irani Zoroastrian man marries out, then his children are treated to be Parsi/Irani as of race and Zoroastrian as of religion if they have been duly admitted into the faith through a traditional navjote ceremony performed by an ordained priest. This is provided that the Zoroastrian father of such children has married as per the civil law of the land and has not undergone a marriage ceremony involving the rituals of another faith."

Former Bombay Parsi Punchayet (BPP) chairman Eruch Desai's article which appeared in the *Jam-e-Jamshed* of April 13, and their discussions with other Zoroastrians prompted them to revise their stand, acknowledge the three Dasturs. Desai had respectfully pointed out to the High Priests that their stand on intercommunity marriages was against the prevailing usage and law applicable in the country. Citing the history of the community and the views of scholars of yore to support his arguments, Desai's impartial analysis of the situation had concluded with: "It would therefore be an act of statesmanship on the part of the concerned High Priests if they were to rethink on this aspect and issue an appropriate clarification keeping in view the above legal position and the practical difficulties."

Viewing the three High Priests' clarification as "an act of high statesmanship," Desai's letter in *The Bombay Samachar* of May 11 noted, "These are remarkable leadership qualities which should be a shining example for posterity too. The three High Priests have indeed guided the community in the right direction and I trust that the three others will follow suit in their own way on further consideration."

"Let us all look at these three High Priests in a new light with respect. They have shown moral courage, character and rectitude in remaining flexible and

not turning this matter into a prestige issue," commended the front page editorial in the *Jam-e-Jamshed* of May 4. "By providing the necessary clarifications our High Priests have shown that they are men who respect the law and the sentiments of the community, that they not only have vision and knowledge but also good grace... the three High Priests have diffused a very volatile situation."

The Parsi *tari arsi* column, edited by Berjis Desai, in *The Bombay Samachar* of May 4 noted, "Needless to say that we all make mistakes but it requires courage to publicly accept that one's view was incorrect. With the publication of this letter this controversy should end. Of course, it is true that only three of the High Priests have addressed this letter thereby making it evident that the other three continue to stick to their stand. But the heartening news is that it is the three High Priests who really matter have addressed this letter... We think that all of us must, in a spirit of give and take and forgive and forget, treat this resolution to be history..."

Easier said than done for already a week later, in its issue of May 11, the Parsi *tari arsi* column refers to the Association of Inter-Married Zoroastrians contemplating legal action with a battery of eminent counsel as "they want that once and for all the courts must decide whether the children of non-Parsi fathers and Parsi mothers are Parsis or not." The ladies who have married out are, according to Desai, apparently not content that the three High Priests' clarification, as per the law of the land, restores the rights and privileges of males married out of the community. They would like similar courtesies extended to outmarried females too.

In the *Jamé* of May 11, former BPP trustee Jamsheed Kanga had raised certain relevant issues: "Since only three

continued on page 44



Corporate Office:

Prop of: Taj Printing Works, 46/A, Cawasji Patel Street, Fort, Mumbai 400 001.

Tel: 22042432 ♦ 22854218 ♦ 22853058 ♦ 22853080 Fax: 022-22855325

E-mail: mpgoc@bom3.vsnl.net.in Website: www.mpallonjigroup.com



M. PALLONJI & CO. PVT. LTD.

Leading Contractors for Industrial Painting and Coatings, Anti-Corrosion, Waterproofing, Construction, Diving, Dredging and Offshore Contractors
Members of S.S.P.C. (USA) & N.A.C.E. (USA)

PALLONJI INVESTMENT & FINANCE PVT. LTD

Manufacturers of Waterproofing material

AquaEpoxy

Manufacturers of Longlasting Exterior coating material

Kenitex



TRAVOTEL (INDIA) PVT. LTD.

Hotel Maya Balrampur

Member of International Hotel Association & FHRAI

Situated at: Balrampur, Dist. Gonda, Uttar Pradesh 271 201.

Tel. No. STD 05263-232208/232507 Fax No: STD 05263-232508



PALLONJI LEASING PVT. LTD.

Hire Purchase, Leasing & other Financial Services



PALLONJI COATINGS PVT. LTD.

Manufacturers of Industrial Paints, Primers & Sealants



STERLING MOTORS

Authorised **Telco** Dealers

For Nashik, Ahmednagar and Solapur

for **TATA** Passenger Cars and Commercial Vehicles
Sales, Service and Spare Parts

NASHIK (Main Dealer)

Old Agra Road, Nashik 422 001. (0253) 2598298/2591598/2594576 Fax: 2596598

E-mail: sterling_nsk@sanchar.net.in

Spare Parts Shop: Swastik Chambers, New Agra Road, Nashik 422001 Tel: 2591090

SOLAPUR (Dealer)

74/3, Bale, Solapur-Pune Road, Taluka North Solapur, Solapur 413006. Tele/Fax: (0217)

2350337 City Office: Super Mkt, Murarji Peth, Solapur 413001. Tel: (0217) 2720458

AHMEDNAGAR (Dealer)

Opp. S. T. Stand, Bableshwar 413737, Dist Ahmednagar. Tel: (02422) 253594

Apt. No. 202, Office No. 106, Raj Chambers, Kothala Road, Ahmednagar (0241) 2429333



Concrete contributions

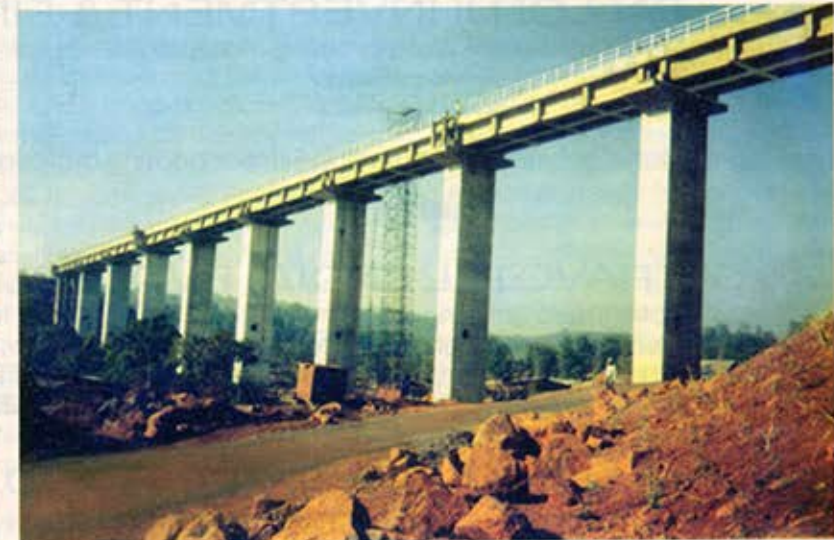


Builder
Beji Billimoria
is honored
for a
lifetime's
work and
innovation in
construction

Hilla P. Guzder



The concrete cut and chisel of B. E. Billimoria and Company Limited is spread across the Bombay landscape. Within a short time of its inception 43 years ago, the construction company secured a contract for the building of the aircraft maintenance hangar at Santa Cruz airport for Indian Airlines' new Boeing 737s. Said to be the largest suspended roof structure in the world at that time, the construction was considered an engineering feat due to the limited technology and machinery then available in India, explains the company's chairman and managing director Beji E. Billimoria who has been honored with Lifetime Achievement Awards from The Build-



ers Association of India (BAI) and the Indian Concrete Institute. The honors were presented to Billimoria on January 11 at a function during BuildIndia 2003, an international trade fair and conference in Bombay.

Receiving particular recognition from the Institute was Billimoria's contribution towards introducing lightweight aluminium formwork into India. "In this system, known as pre-engineered aluminium forms, a floor can go up every fourth day," elaborates Billimoria. The homogeneous in-situ casting of slabs, columns, walls, stair treads, parapets, etc brings assembly line efficiency and results in highly durable structures, according to company sources. "You can construct buildings up to 30 stories using this system," says Billimoria. Adds his son Kaiyoze, a chartered accountant

who is a director in the company: "Aluminium formwork brings very good quality, at a very fast speed and at low cost. You don't require skilled carpenters as the system dispenses with timber and plywood. The aluminium formwork bolts into position and can be done even by unskilled labor. But to use this, you need a large volume of repetitive work, as for hotels, hospitals or housing where the units are repeated again and again."

One of the B. E. Billimoria and Company's ongoing works is the mass housing project consisting of over 5,000 tenements (ground plus three and ground plus seven, including sanitary, plumbing and electrical work) for the Nagari Nivara

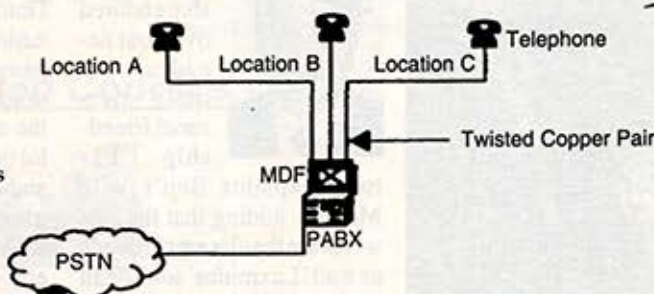
Clockwise from top: Imax Dome Theatre; Konkan Railway bridge; Jamshed Bhabha Opera House

Finally Available

"Cost Effective" Convergence over Copper

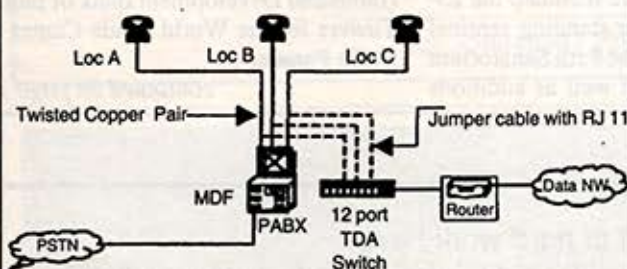
Bye Bye CAT-5

This Infrastructure for Voice exists
in
Most Organizations and places



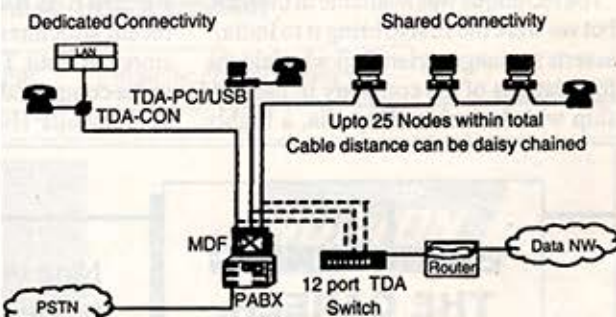
You can now send Data, at 1 Mbps in addition to Voice, over the same Copper infrastructure
in
Two Simple Steps - really, simple, steps

STEP-1 Install a 12 port TDA switch next to the PABX. Using Copper Jumper Cables with RJ11 Connectors, Connect various Ports of this 12 port TDA switch, to different Copper pairs at the MDF over which Data communications are required in addition to existing voice.



STEP-2 At the far end, connect standalone TDA equipment (CPE) to each Copper pair, for which three options exist:-

- LAN at far end - TDA-CON
- PC at far end - TDA-PCI, card installed inside PC
- PC or Laptop at far end - TDA-USB, at USB port of PC or Laptop



Switch on!

"Data Network is up and Running"

and so is the

Voice Network

-ready for simultaneous use

This Product is a Boon for IT & Telecom Managers. Imagine all that you can achieve using TDA in your establishments. All you need is a TDA USB or PCI with each PC & a TDA switch with each PABX.

Applications

- Internet Ready Hotels, Schools, Colleges, Residential Complexes, Apartments, etc.
- Intranet ready Organizations, Factories, Hospitals, Commercial Complex, etc.
- Cost effective Internet distribution in Rural & Semi Urban areas, e-Governance, etc.
- Internet Access Services by DID operators, STD/ISD Franchisees, cable operators, ISP's & BSO's.

Our other Access Products:-

- VDSL Extends Ethernet upto 2.5 Kms on Copper
- SHDSL Extends Ethernet, V.35 or G703 upto 15 Kms on Copper
- E1 Multiplexer Multiplexes & sends 4xE1 streams over Copper upto 1.8 Kms
- E1 Access Mux Multiplexes HDSL, V.35 & G703 into one E1 Stream
- 4/16 Ch E1 Mux Multiplexes & sends 4 or 16 E1 streams over Fibre
- Fibre Optic Converters Fibre to Ethernet & RS232/422/485 converters.
- VOIP Gateways/Phones
- CWDM Multiplexes & sends 20 Gbps Data over single fibre upto 80 Km's
- Micro SDH Mux Drop/inset repeater/optical regenerator.

Tropicana Telecom

C-37, Pamposh Enclave, New Delhi - 110048
Ph: 91-11-6452249, 6291931/32, Fax: 91-11-6292738
E-mail: tropicanatel@mantraonline.com

Represented By:



Beji Billimoria receiving Lifetime Achievement Award from Bombay municipal commissioner K. C. Srivastava and (right) Kaiyoze Billimoria

Parishad in Goregaon. "Right from the 1980s we had been looking for an appropriate system to meet the demands of low cost housing," explains Kaiyoze. "The technique was available in the East, but we were the first to bring it to India," asserts septuagenarian Beji who laid the foundations of his company in partnership with Laxmidas Kapadia, a highly

qualified and experienced civil engineer. "Not only has



their business partnership endured over four decades, but their personal friendship has too," explains Beji's wife Mehroo, adding that the two wives are the closest of friends as well! Laxmidas' son Digan is also on the board of directors of the company.

Beji's father Edulji was a director and general manager with Hindustan Construction Company and was one of the pioneering civil engineers of the country, responsible for many of the heavy engineering projects constructed in the early years after Independence, note company sources.

In a trade where timely completion, quality materials and workmanship spell success, B. E. Billimoria and Company's recent structures have included the 25-storeyed Petit Tower standing sentinel in the compound of the Petit Sanatorium at Cumballa Hill, as well as additions

and alterations to the existing Sanatorium and reconstruction of porches for the F. D. Petit Trust.

For the new five star Hyatt Regency Hotel on the Sahar Road near the international airport, Billimoria and Company has done not just the exteriors but much of the interior as well. "Except for the movable furniture, we have done a lot of the 'embedded' work in the rooms and bathrooms, as well as much of the glass and steel work," elaborates Kaiyoze. "We are also looking at property development ventures."

Wadala's Imaax Dome Theatre (the world's largest, 39 meters in diameter and tilted to 30°, according to the company fact file), Andheri's Super Speciality Heart Hospital and Medical Research Centre for the Mandke Foundation, the Infocomm Centre for the Dhirubhai Ambani Knowledge City at New Bombay are part of their portfolio. Earlier 'monumental' successes have been the Jamshed Bhabha Opera House, bridges for the Konkan Railway, the Nehru Planetarium, the Wankhede Stadium and the IDBI (Industrial Development Bank of India) Towers for the World Trade Center at Cuffe Parade.

continued on page 34

**FOR
BRIGHTENING
THE CAREER,
STUDY COMES
FIRST,**

**FOR
SCORING IN THE
EXAM,**



**PROF ANAHITA
IS A MUST.**

Nine years of hard work have borne her fruits making her class/individual tuitions a roaring success within the community and as well as outside too.

**ICSE, FYJC, HSC, FYBCOM, FYBA,
SYBCOM, SYBA, TYBCOM, TYBA,**

**Accounts, Economics, O.C., S.P., Tax, Exports,
HRD, Costing, Auditing, Advt, Law, M+F, F.C.,
B.C., History, Sociology, Political Science,
Psychology, Maths and Stats, French.**

TUITIONS AT YOUR DOORSTEP

Fort (Monday to Friday)

Andheri (W) (Saturday and Sunday)

Just dial 9821531366, 26232104

MASKA CHASKA.



LOWE Btl. 2810

NEW

BRITANNIA
Eat Healthy. Think Better

Maska Chaska



50-50

TASTY - TASTY BISCUITS

The impress of Zoroastrianism

Arnavaz S. Mama

A Zoroastrian Tapestry: Art, Religion and Culture edited by Pheroza J. Godrej and Firoza Punthakey Mistree. Published in 2002 by Mapin Publishing Private Limited, 31, Somnath Road, Usmanpura, Ahmedabad 380013 and Grantha Corporation, 80, Cliffedgeway, Middletown, NJ 07701, USA. Pp: 762. Price: Rs 7,500, UK £ 175, US \$ 195.

Religion and politics, food and fashion, creativity and commerce are some of the strands that two indomitable women — Pheroza J. Godrej and Firoza Punthakey Mistree — have woven together into *A Zoroastrian Tapestry, Art, Religion and Culture* in their 10-year-long project to answer the question "Who are the Zoroastrians?" In the process they have tapped leading names in Iranian studies from within the community as well as the international arena of scholarship — Prof Mary Boyce, the doyenne of Zoroastrian studies, has contributed four major articles — and sourced a wealth of pictures, maps and artifacts from around the world that breathe color and comprehension to perspectives that stretch 2,500 years into antiquity.

Designer Kirti Trivedi has orchestrated this cultural cornucopia into 762 art paper pages — a remarkable combination of eye-filling color and artistic detail to balance the 41 textual contributions.

Author, art historian and environmentalist, Godrej has pioneered the study and documentation of Parsi portraits in Bombay. Punthakey Mistree has behind her years of teaching Zoroastrianism to school children and researching the oral history of Yazdi Zoroastrians. *A Zoroastrian Tapestry* took them nine years to compile and was simultaneously launched in Bombay and London in June 2002 (see "This monumental work," *Parsiana*, August 2002).

Though the book has not been divided into sections, the initial articles

deal with the teachings of Zarathushtra and their implementation during the three Zoroastrian empires. The second sector articles examine the interconnections with Hinduism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Lay and priestly observance is in large part confined to the Parsi

through the sun it regulates the hours and seasons, while for the ancient Iranians it had a part in judicial ordeals, deciding the truthfulness or falsehood of an accused. It was present at almost all acts of worship, and was to be found on the hearth of every house, being essential for everyday life. Furthermore, it gave out not only warmth but light, visibly driving back the darkness which belongs to Angra Mainyu, and which is linked symbolically with ignorance and wrong. There was thus complex significance both in giving the guardianship of fire to Asha Vahishta and in making it the icon of the faith; for Zoroaster ordained that his followers should pray in its presence, turning towards sun or moon or earthly fire, so that it would help them to fix their thoughts on the justice and truth of Asha, and hence of Asha's great Creator, Ahura Mazda.

As each of the Amesha Spentas — collectively referred to as the Heptad — was a guardian of one of the seven creations, the Zoroastrians who venerated them were given "a sense of fellowship with the natural world, and of responsibility for it, and were provided with countless ways of serving God in the course of daily living."

Boyce speaks of the Zoroastrian ethic of joyousness and hope — qualities with which to "overwhelm the sad malignancy of Angra Mainyu, author of sorrow, despair and... the ultimate negation of life." She notes that "Cheerfulness... is an admirable form of courage and in this life-affirming religion both optimism and courage are prized virtues" as each votary strives for cosmic salvation as a co-worker of Ahura Mazda.

In his article "The Place and Time of Zarathushtra" Harvard University's Prof James Russell corroborates, "It is perhaps evidence of the imprint of the Prophet's own steadfast good cheer that Zoroastrianism seems never to have



Winged bulls with human heads guarded the eastern side of the Gate-House of Xerxes at Persepolis

Photo: Khojeste Mistree

heritage in India. Also, the flowering of Zoroastrian culture after the Arab conquest was restricted, almost by definition, to the relative freedom and harmony of the Parsi diaspora in India.

Referring to the injunction to pray in the presence of fire, Boyce writes, "There are multiple reasons why fire should have been identified as the creation of the Spirit of all-regulating Asha...the principle of what ought to be, in the cosmic, social and moral spheres..."

Parsiana Book Club

Parsiana and Giara Publishers provide the latest books of interest to Zoroastrians and all connected with them.

Now you can order books by mail or collect them from our showroom. The prices indicated are for collecting the books from our shop or by mail in India or abroad. You may xerox the form or write on a separate sheet of paper if you wish. The showroom is situated at Parsiana, 39B, Amrit Keshav Nayak Road, (Opp. Senior Cathedral School side entrance) ground floor, K K (Navsari) Chambers, Fort, Bombay 400001. Phone 22074335/22074347. Monday to Friday between 9.30 am to 1.00 pm and 2 pm to 5 pm. Fax 22075572. For further information contact us at Email parsiana@vsnl.net

Title, author and price	Quantity	Amount
☐ Shahnameh seven CD set, April 2003. Comprises 901 chapters, interactive with animation clips, etc. Rs 4,000.	_____	_____
☐ From the Iranian Plateau to the Shores of Gujarat by Mani Kamerkar and Soonu Dhunjisha, December 2002, 220 pp, hardbound, Rs 390. If mailed in India Rs 420, foreign Rs 650.	_____	_____
☐ My First Zoroastrian Prayer Book by Jamshed Rivetna, January 2003, 28 pp, color illustrated, hardbound, Rs 275. If mailed in India Rs 305; foreign Rs 495.	_____	_____
☐ Portrait of A Community , Oct 2002, Chemould Publication and Arts, 138 pp, color illus, Rs 750. In India Rs 785, foreign Rs 1,130.	_____	_____
☐ Global Directory of Zoroastrian Fire Temples by Marzban J. Giara, 2nd edition, Dec 2002. 240 pp., 198 colour illus; Rs 2,000. In India Rs 2,035, foreign Rs 2,398.	_____	_____
☐ A Zoroastrian Tapestry , June 2002, Pheroza J. Godrej and Firoza Punthakey Mistree, 761 pp, colour illus, hardbound, Rs 5,000. If couriered in Bombay Rs 5,200; in India Rs 5,800. ...	_____	_____
☐ Parsi Statues illustrated biography, hardbound, Marzban J. Giara, 336 pp, 240 colour pictures, Stamps, Rs 2,000. If mailed in India Rs 2,030; foreign Rs 2,280.	_____	_____
☐ Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw , 2002, Lieutenant General Depinder Singh, PVSM, VSM, hardbound, Rs 450. In India Rs 480, foreign Rs 670.	_____	_____
☐ The Gathas of Zarathushtra, Hymns In Praise of Wisdom , 1999, Pilo Nanavatty, 173 pp, (illus.) national award winner, Rs 650. If mailed in India Rs 680; foreign Rs 870.	_____	_____
☐ The Parsis (originally published as <i>Les Parsis</i> in 1898) by Delphine Menant, translated by Anthony Mango, 364 pp, illus, hardbound, Rs 600. Mailed in India Rs 632, foreign Rs 938. ...	_____	_____
☐ The Legacy of Zarathushtra , 2002, edited by Roshan Rivetna, 96 pp, illustrated paperback, Rs 500. If mailed in India Rs 525, foreign Rs 665.	_____	_____
☐ History of The Parsis , including their manners, customs, religion and present position, D F Karaka, 350 pp, illus, paper back, Rs 495. If mailed in India Rs 525, foreign Rs 755. ...	_____	_____
☐ The Religious Ceremonies and Customs of The Parsees , Dr. Sir Jivanji J. Modi 550 pp, hardbound, Rs 250. If mailed in India Rs 280; foreign Rs 470.	_____	_____
☐ Parsi Kitchen , Jeani Mohindra, paperback, 2002, Rs 95. In India Rs 120, foreign Rs 220.	_____	_____
☐ Parsi Food and Customs , Bhicoo Manekshaw, (7 chapters on Parsi Customs plus Parsi recipes), Rs 250. If mailed in India Rs 275; foreign Rs 415.	_____	_____
☐ Pulaos & Biryani , illustrated cook book, 2002, Katy Dalal, Rs 245. If mailed in India Rs 275; foreign Rs 415.	_____	_____
☐ Delicious Encounters (Innovative Recipes), Katy Dalal, 204 pp, 16 colour pages, Rs 230. Mailed in India Rs 255; foreign Rs 395.	_____	_____
☐ Jamva Chaloji (book of Parsi recipes in English), Katy Dalal, 139 pp, paperback, colour illustrations, Rs 195. If mailed in India Rs 225; foreign Rs 345.	_____	_____
☐ Enjoyable Parsi Cooking , by Jerro Mehta, 147 pp, illustrated, paperback, 1993, Rs 150. If mailed in India Rs 175, foreign Rs 292.	_____	_____
☐ History of Ancient Iran , (illustrated, paperback, period 700 B.C. to 700 A.D.), R. R. Motafaram, Rs 150. If mailed in India Rs 180; foreign Rs 350.	_____	_____
☐ Guide to Zarthoshtrian Historical Places in Iran compiled by Aspandiyar Sohrab Gotla, 250 pp, illustrated paperback, Rs 70. If mailed in India Rs 93, foreign Rs 192.	_____	_____
☐ Shams-Ui-Ulama , Dr. Sir Ervad Jivanji Jamshedji Modi, 2001, Marzban J. Giara, 88 pp, illustrated biography, hardbound, Rs 150. If mailed in India Rs 175; foreign Rs 315.	_____	_____
☐ An Overview of Zarathushtrianism , 2002, Adil F. Rangoonwalla, 101 pp, color illustrations, paperback, Rs 160. If mailed in India Rs 185, foreign Rs 285.	_____	_____

Please state name and address where you want the books delivered.

Bank charges to be added (if cheques drawn outside Bombay): Rs 20; outside India: US \$ 5/UK £ 3. Cheques to be drawn in favour of Parsiana.

Charge my ☐ Visa Card ☐ Mastercard ☐ American Express

☐ Payment enclosed ☐ Money Order sent
Please avoid sending cash by mail or courier.

Card expiry date _____ Signature of cardholder _____

Add handling charges Rs 100

Total due



1

1. Sasanian silver vase Collection and copyright: The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg, Russia. 2. Bronze head of Aredvi Sura Anahita Collection and copyright: British Museum, UK. 3. Sasanian jug Collection and copyright: The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg, Russia. 4. A stamped terracotta ossuary Collection: Samarkand Museum, Uzbekistan. Photo: Frantz Grenet. 5. Silver half-drachm coin and reverse (left) and gold dinar of Ardeshir I (right) Collection and copyright: British Museum, UK. 6. Mosaic of three Magi at San Vitale church, Ravenna, Italy Photo: Almut Hintze. 7. Dakhma in Yazd Photo: Kaveh Kazemi. 8. A water reservoir at Yazd Photo: Oshin Danili Zakarian. 9. Part of Sasanian fire temple, Isfahan Photo: Mohammed Husseinazadeh



2



3



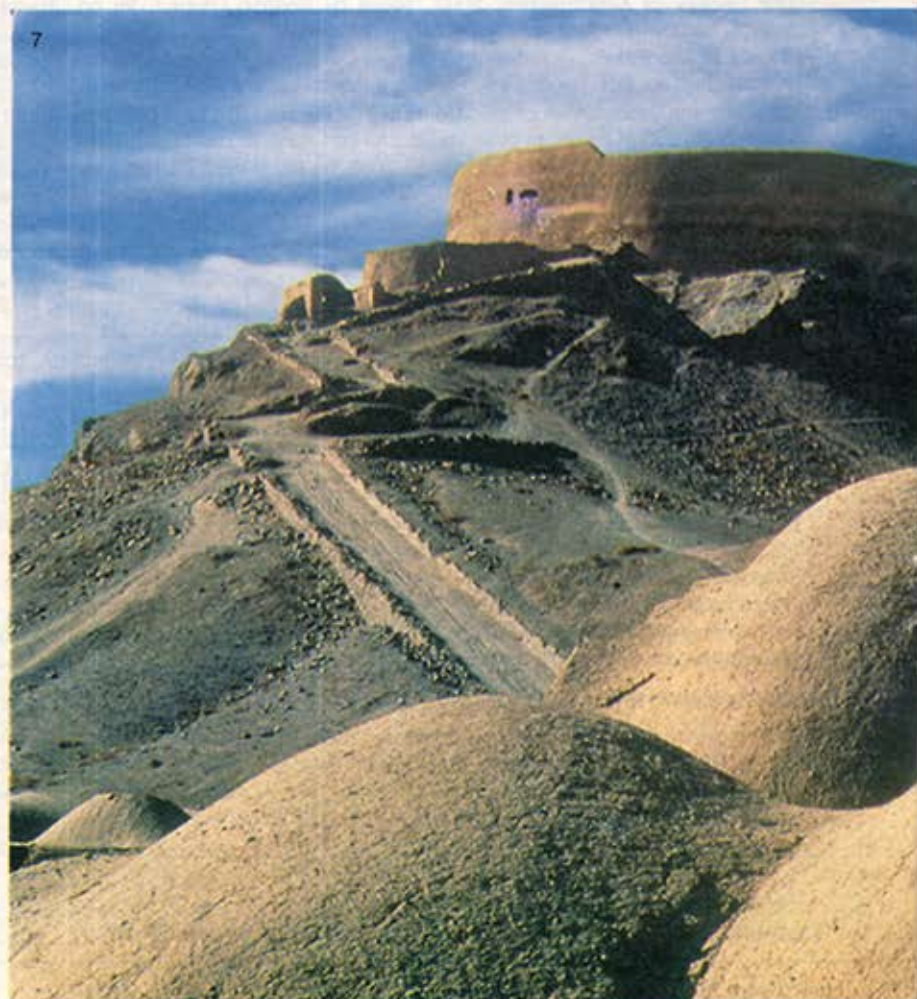
6



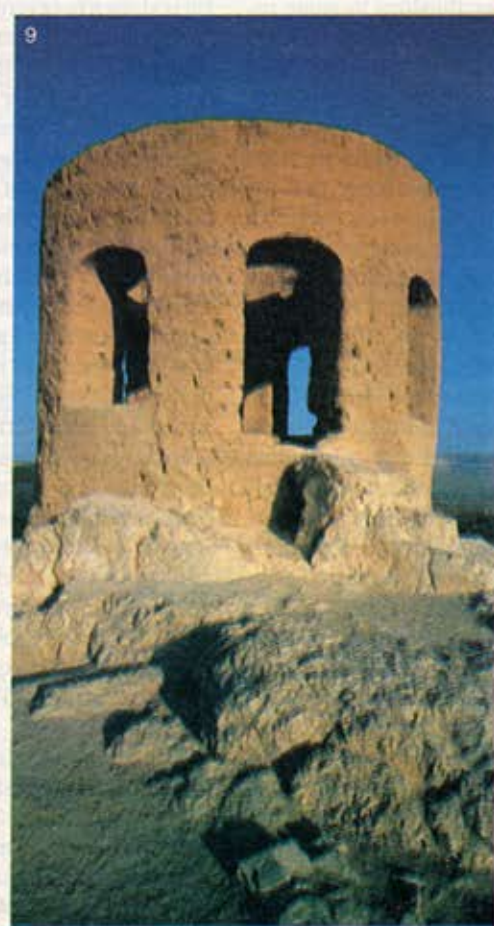
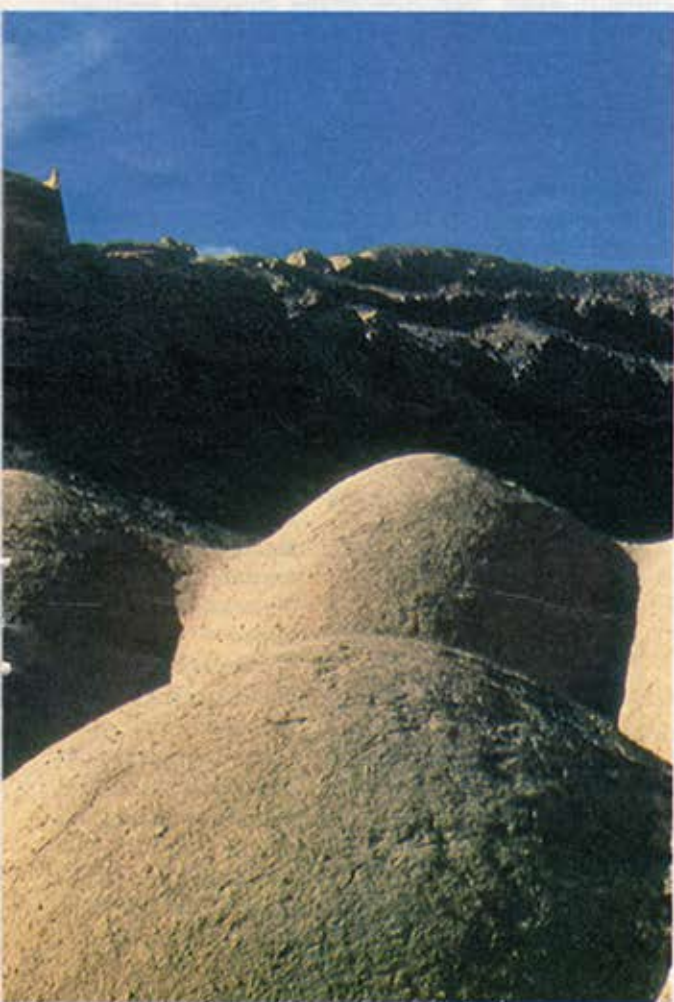
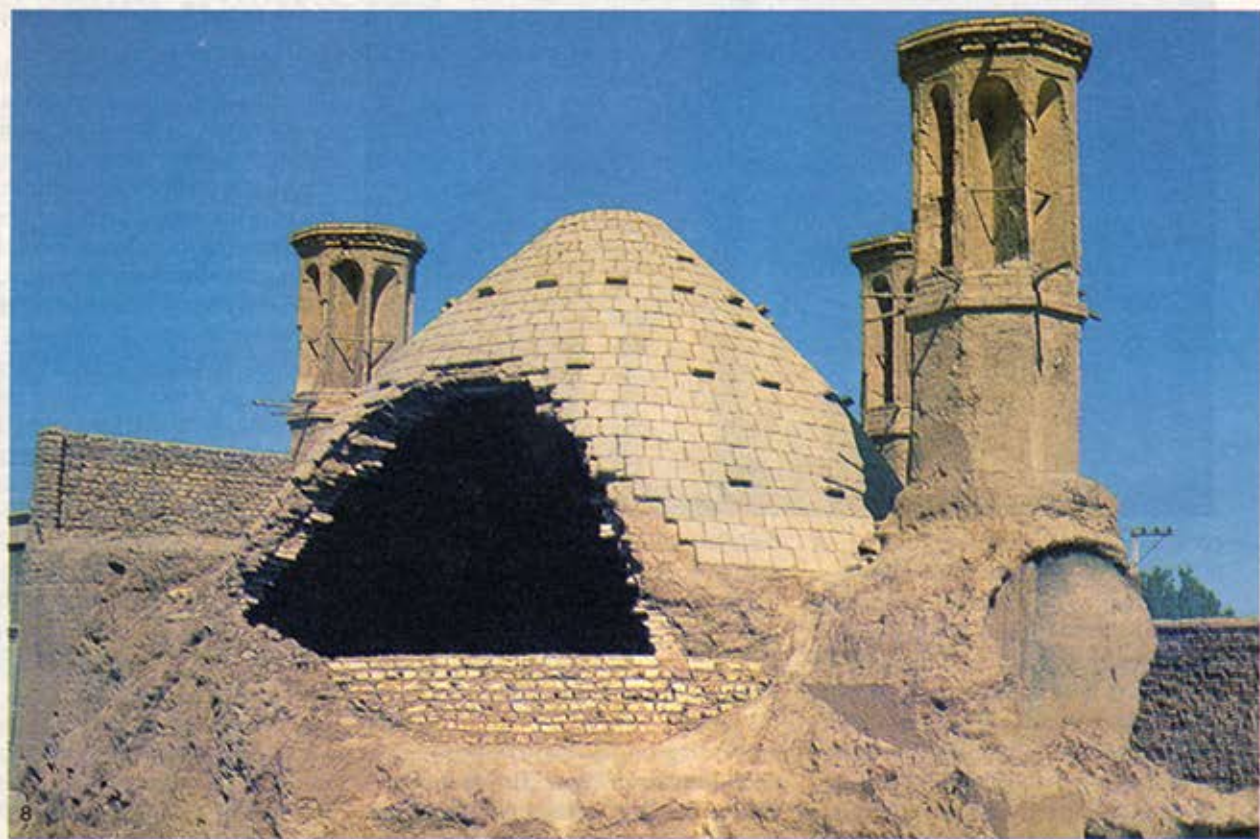
4



5



7





Tehran Dar-i Mihr built with community funds from India, Tehran, Yazd, Kerman and Kashan Photo: Farhang Mehr

where Darius recorded his victories in the name of Ahuramazda, notes Boyce.

An event of immense significance was the writing down of the sacred Avestan texts in Sasanian times. "Once the holy texts were set down, they were studied even more intensively, with resulting developments in prayers, rituals, and purity laws. A secondary religious literature was also developed in Middle Persian, in which were written down renderings of old oral works from both eastern and western Iran, as well as new compositions. One very important literary work was the compilation by royal scribes of the *Khwaday Namag*, 'Book of Kings,' based largely on Parthian heroic epic, culminating in a chronicle history of the Sasanians." *Khwaday Namag* was later to be the base on which Firdausi built his literary edifice of the *Shahnameh*.

While early Greek culture was marked by receptivity to Near Eastern ideas, traditions, customs, their crushing defeat of the invading Persians changed their identity from a loose collection of city states and small autonomous regions into an awareness of their shared culture based on language and customs, writes Albert de Jong of the University of Leiden. However "the image of Persian hating Greeks is contradicted by a wealth of evidence. There were, of course, large areas of the ancient world where the Persians and the Greeks cohabited for centuries in the cities and rural areas of Asia Minor." Cultural exchange was "easiest in those areas which did not require too much knowledge of foreign languages: art, architecture, cooking and music." Under the Seleucid Empire, which followed the invasion of Alexander of Macedonia, the subject people were allowed to pursue their religion undisturbed.

However a number of new cities were founded which were Greek in organization and spirit with theaters, gymnasias, games and city councils. These were peopled by Greek descendants and sym-

conceived any ritualized festival of mourning for its martyred founder."

Alluding to the various responses of practicing Zoroastrians to the issues of our times Boyce notes, "Zoroastrians are nevertheless united in worshipping Ahura Mazda and in honoring His Prophet; and all accept as a common bond the moral code which Zoroaster gave his community, to strive for good thoughts and words as well as actions."

Assigning Zarathushtra to some remote region of inner Asia between 1500 and 1200 BCE as per the "basis of Avestan evidence and comparative studies," Russell writes, "Given the gulfs of time and space that separate us from Zarathushtra, it is remarkable that the little we do know of him has survived, and not been lost by passing wholly into fanciful legend." Russell seeks to locate this homeland of the Prophet — Airyanem Vaejah — according to the *Vendidad* and the *Bundahishn* at 40°20' north latitude "where the longest night of winter was equal to the two shortest days, and the longest day of summer was equal to the two shortest nights." Noting that "In Zoroastrian tradition, Airyanem Vaejah, as the Prophet's homeland, had come in time to be regarded as the center of the world, a semi-mythical region where all great events of the past, mythical or legendary, had taken place," Russell wonders if Zarathushtra's people could have lived so far north. He then goes on to assess a variety of other speculations and sources. "Airyanem Vaejah is a harsh land and, even today, some of the religions of Siberia are dualistic in character, their attitudes reinforced, one would think, by the struggle for survival, light against

darkness and warmth against cold. Although northern Kazakhstan might seem a remote region to postulate as the location of Airyanem Vaejah, the Avestan and Pahlavi texts adhere firmly to the tradition of a northern land with a harsh climate."

Writing on "Zoroastrianism in Ancient Imperial Times," Boyce refers to Darius the Great's religious allegiance as declared in the carving over his tomb. He is shown in reverence before fire and "symbols of the heavenly fires of sun and moon... Since the Iranians had no tradition of their own of plastic representations of natural phenomena, the Persians borrowed from the religious iconography of their Near Eastern subjects." The symbol for the moon — a full disk with a crescent along its lower rim was borrowed from Mesopotamia. The winged disk with falcon tail which originated in Egypt as the symbol of the sun-god Horus was modified as symbol of the Assyrian sun god Shamash and of power and good fortune with the upper part of a man being set within what now became a winged circle.

The Iranians endowed it with the concept of Khvarenah, the divine glory attending great men, heroes, prophet Zarathushtra and righteous mortals. The symbol's "oldest attested (Zoroastrian) use" is at Mt Behistun

Bust of Manekji Limji Hataria in Yazd Atash Behram Photo: Rohinton Irani



With Best Wishes From

Mr Rusy M. Shroff, M.B.E.

and

Mrs Purviz R. Shroff

**THE MOST RELIABLE
TURBINE BYPASS AND
REHEATER SPRAY
WATER CONTROL
VALVES FOR STEAM
POWER GENERATION :**



**MAZDA - Financially and technically
affiliated with Croll-Reynolds Co. inc. NJ U.S.A.**

KAUER-MAZDA offers the widest and most complete range of hypercritical control valves for power plants including :

- High pressure heater bypass valve.
- Minimum flow water re-circulation valve.
- Feed water control valve.
- Superheater spray water valve.
- High pressure heater attemperator valve.
- Low pressure heater attemperator valve.
- Feed water tank attemperator valve.
- Spray water control valve.
- High pressure heater drain valve.
- Low pressure heater bypass valve.

The combined resources and experience of Kauer and Mazda offer you world class valves which gives high performance and dependability even in hypercritical conditions at realistic cost.

- Valves available in forged block body construction
- Ratings up to 2500# lbs.
- Sizes up to 24".
- Plasma nitrided trim for excellent performance and life.
- Unique, superior spray water injection designs.
- Precise designs to avoid thermal shocks & stresses during water injection.
- Faster deliveries.
- Assured, quick after sales services whenever needed.

"DESUPERHEATING IN POWER PLANTS" We wrote the book.
Please visit us at : <http://www.mazdalimited.com>



Mazda House,
Panchwati 2nd Lane,
Ambawadi,
Ahmedabad-380 006.
INDIA
Phone :
+ 91 (0) 79 6431014 (4lines)
+ 91 (0) 79 6442035 to 38
Fax :
+ 91 (0) 79 656550
E-Mail :
valve@mazdalimited.com



FREE

Steam
desuperheating
guide for
power plant
engineers

An Indo-American and German Joint Venture



CONCRETE CONTRIBUTIONS

continued from page 26

Adorning each of these Towers are 18-foot stained glass panels created and executed by Beji's artistic daughters Binaifer Yuzud Karanjia and Jasmine Jehangir Jehangir. Asserts Karanjia: "Our stained glass work over the last 15 years has brought us in contact with leading architects and the one thing that has come across is that Billimoria and Company is known in the market for its honesty and integrity, for conforming exactly to the given specifications and for being very particular about adhering to time schedules." Clients come back again and again to Billimoria and Company for their construction needs, remarks Mehroo.

With a wealth of experience in the Middle East and Africa, through their B. E. Billimoria and Company Private Limited which provides technical and management consultancy services abroad, the firm has in its construction photo album the Ramada Hotel and Emirates Bank building in Dubai, the Jumeira Textile Mills in Sudan and has been consultant for a \$ 40 million housing complex for the Armed Forces Development Authority in Nigeria.

Having recently entered into a joint venture with construction giant Gammon India Limited with the formation of Gammon and Billimoria Limited, the firm is exploring the possibilities of future contracts in Dubai and Qatar, particularly with regard to the construction



Petit Tower (left) and mass housing for the Nagari Nivara Parishad

of stadia and games villages for the forthcoming Asian Games to be held for the first time in the Middle East in 2006. "The competition in the construction field today is intense. The industry operates in a totally buyers' market," declares Beji. "Companies can meet the challenge only by economies of scale. For example, Gammon doesn't do buildings. We do. But Gammon has a larger pool of plant and machinery which can be used," adds his son.

Beji is known to be an authority on the laws relating to building engineering contracts and contract management. Past chairperson of the Bombay chapter of the BAI, he is a senior and active member of the Association. Founder member and trustee and presently on the board of governors of NICMAR (National Institute of Construction Management and Research) in Bombay, Beji is also on the board of directors of Hyderabad's National Academy of Construction.

Admitted in 1999 as an affiliate member of the Institution of Civil Engineers in the UK, Beji served as pro-secretary general of the International Federation of Asian and Western Pacific Contractors' Association at its 22nd convention at Sydney, Australia in 1986 and as secretary general at its 25th convention in Bombay five years later, according to a press release from the company.

Known to be a disciplinarian, Beji's daughters commend their parents for the strict but fine upbringing not only of their own children but of their grandchildren as well! "My 15-year-old daughter Freyaan has a 'mystical bond' with her grandfather," smiles Binaifer. "As a baby she would be howling with

clearly than many a mobed," she remarks. From an athornan family, as a boy Beji had learnt all the prayers required for his initiation into navarhood, but had not been ordained as a priest. Kaiyoze, however, is a navar and has performed the navjotes of his nieces and nephews, the last one a few months ago, say his sisters. The aroma of sukhadloban wafts daily through the Billimoria household.

The family prefers to keep a low profile and Beji declines to be drawn into discussion about the community of his birth and its current numerous controversies! Putting in a full day's work at the office even at the age of 76, Beji visualizes an overall improvement in the construction trade following higher client and customer expectations. The experienced builder predicts that smaller companies may find it difficult to survive and mergers or acquisitions may become more the order of the day on the Indian construction scene.

Honor for Godrej

Jamshyd N. Godrej, chairman and managing director of Godrej and Boyce Manufacturing Company Limited, was awarded a Padma Bhushan by the President of India A. P. J. Abdul Kalam at



Jamshyd Godrej (left) with President Abdul Kalam



Sir J. J. College of Commerce

14 Nanabhoy Lane, Flora Fountain, Mumbai 400 001.

Job-Oriented Courses



- Executive Secretarial (full time)
- Administrative Professional (part time)
- Computers
- Business Management (IMC)
- Shorthand & Typewriting
- Call Centre training

Short-term Courses



- ✓ Personality Development
- ✓ Public Speaking
- ✓ English – spoken & written
- ✓ Telemarketing

Job placement assistance assured

**For Corporates we offer Placements Service
& In-house Training Programmes**

Tel: 22844329 / 22871058

Email: jjcc@vsnl.com



NORTON

**Your
only full line
source of
all abrasive
products**

NORTON

• Ahmedabad • Bangalore • Baroda • Calcutta • Chennai • Coimbatore • Delhi • Faridabad • Indore
• Jaipur • Jamshedpur • Kanpur • Ludhiana • Mumbai • Nagpur • Pune • Rajkot • Ranchi • Secunderabad

**GRINDWELL
NORTON LTD.**



SINCE 1974

VELDONTM **COATS**

Guniting, Civil & Painting Contractors

Specialists in renovation of multi-storied buildings

1st Floor, 7, Cassinath Building, Cassinath Street, Tardeo, Mumbai 400034

Phones: 24923560/24938949 Fax: 24925601

E-mail: veldon@bol.net.in

Kermani Roadlines Pvt Ltd

HEAD OFFICE & ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

150, Kazi Syed Street, Khand Bazar, Mumbai 400003, Phone 23420271 - 23420272

BOOKING OFFICE

146, Kazi Syed Street, Khand Bazar, Mumbai 400003, Phone 23420271 - 23420272

BRANCHES

MUMBAI DELIVERY GODOWN

B Anjirwadi, Dr. Mascarenhas Road,
Mazgaon, Mumbai 400010
Phone 23725002 - 23724273

PURNA - BHIWANDI

Purna Village, Thane Bhiwandi Road,
Near Uttam Roadways, Purna
Phone 952522 - 271698, 271055

VAPI

Near R.T.O. Char Rasta, G.I.D.C., Vapi
Phone 0260 - 2432766, 2432767

VALSAD

Kamla Nehru Road, Valsad
Phone 02632 - 253294

BILIMORA

Gohar Baug Road, Bilimora
Phone 02634 - 283397, 255676

NAVSARI

Opp. Central Bank of India, Navsari
Phone 02637 - 259008, 259009

UNN

Near Unn Bus Stand, Unn
Phone 0261 - 2751807, 2750807

UDHNA

Road No. 2, Udhna Udyog Nagar, Udhna
Phone 0261 - 2278612

SURAT

Near Suraj Talkies, Falsa Wadi, Begum Pupa,
Surat. Phone 0261- 2435428, 2435712

Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi on April 3, 2003.

This is the third Padma Bhushan for the Godrej family — Jamshyd's father Naoroji (Naval) had received it in 1976 and uncle Sohrab in 1999. Godrej group products encompass a range of consumer and industrial products and services and office equipment.

A graduate from the Illinois Institute of Technology, USA, Jamshyd has been past president of the Confederation of Indian Industry and the Indian Machine Tool Manufacturers Association. An ardent yachtsman and environmentalist, Jamshyd is also president of the World Wide Fund for Nature-India.

Westside choice

Colorful columns bespeak heritage and modernity at Westside, Army and Navy Building at Kala Ghoda in Bombay. The swanky lifestyle store of the Tatas opened its doors to customers in April 2003 in the city's heritage precinct, in the same premises where a century ago the Army and Navy Stores had lured many a colonial customer, clad in the finery of the British Raj, strolling its interiors looking for the finest goods from the West.

With Westside's blue and green signage blending into the arcades in keeping with heritage norms, the store stands in august company, with the splendid edifice of Elphinstone College, cleaned of a century of grime and filth by the spirit of private enterprise, and the natty little David Sassoon Library on one side, and the unfortunately run-down old Watsons Hotel on the other, the Jehangir Art Gallery and the Prince of Wales



Westside at Kala Ghoda: trendy interior and elegant street front



Museum its across-the-street neighbors.

With the store's sibling at Hughes Road (see "Tata trends," Business, Parsiana, July-August 1999) situated beyond south Bombay, Westside at Kala Ghoda (though the magnificent black steed has long moved stable!) seeks to entice the officegoers of Fort and Nariman Point and residents of Churchgate/Colaba with invitingly displayed sartorial trends in men's, women's and children's wear and a bright household section. Cafe West offers shoppers culinary delights from the Tata's grand old Taj Mahal Hotel, currently celebrating its centenary.

New consul general

To felicitate Cyrus Jamshed Guzder on his appointment as the new honorary consul general of Ireland in Bombay, the ambassador of Ireland in India Philip McDonagh hosted a reception at the Regal Room, Oberoi Towers on March 15, 2003. The function also marked the celebration of St Patrick's Day (which falls

officially on March 17). Guzder had taken over on January 7 from the ailing and long-serving consul R. W. Leybourne Callaghan who passed away on March 9.

Cambridge-educated Guzder is the chairman and managing director of the well-established freight forwarding, logistics and express courier service company AFL Private Limited (formerly Airfreight Limited), with an international express business in joint venture with DHL International. Guzder is also chairman of leading corporate travel management company Carlson Wagonlit Travel India. With combined group sales of Rs 1,000 crore and 2,500 employees, the conglomerate has 100 offices across India, according to company sources.

On the board of directors of several corporates, Guzder is chairman of the CII (Confederation of Indian Industry) national committee on civil aviation and has held a wide range of posts in the fields of air cargo and travel since 1977. As trustee of the Prince of Wales Museum, the Bombay Environmental Action Group, Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage UK Trust and member of the Bombay Municipal Corporation's Heritage Conservation Committee, Guzder is an energetic crusader for the preservation of environment and heritage.

Visitors requiring visas for Ireland may contact the Honorary Consulate General of Ireland, Kannanwala Chambers, 2nd floor, Sir Pherozeshah Mehta Road, Fort, Bombay 400001. Tel: 56355635 Fax: 56391905 E-mail: irishcongen@vsnl.net



Cyrus Guzder (left) and wife Manek (right) with Irish ambassador Philip McDonagh, wife Dr Ana and daughter Tara

Taking wings

The aviary project for breeding vultures is once again on the anvil

Rashna Ardesher



Does the aviary come first or do the vultures? Do the government permissions come first or the funds? Do the vultures come first or the keepers? Even as these queries remain unanswered, concerted efforts are being made by Bombay Parsi Punchayet (BPP) trustee Maneck Engineer, executive committee member of the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) and member of the Doongerwadi Advisory Committee Rishad Naoroji and Zoroastrian Studies (ZS) founder Khojeste Mistree to strengthen the traditional dakhmenashini method of disposing the dead.

Following the absence of vultures at Bombay's Doongerwadi and the consequent putrefaction of corpses and pugnacious stench for those residing in the vicinity, the BPP installed solar concentrators which initially had teething problems. The proposed aviary where vultures will be bred in captivity could reestablish dakhmenashini as the most environment-friendly, economical and hygienic way of disposing the dead only if...

Their first priority is to find Parsi trainers and caretakers, says Engineer. They must be people with "a vision and love for birds of prey," adds Mistree. These keepers will be trained at Jemima Parry-Jones' Birds of Prey Sanctuary in Gloucestershire where they will have to undergo a six-month training program.

"The captive vultures would need to have some veterinary monitoring to ensure their health. Because of the severe drop in vulture numbers and because adult birds are difficult to train and habituate to captivity and management regimes, young birds are preferable for this project. They would also give the Parsis more time to understand the maintenance and

welfare of the vultures before having to learn about captive breeding techniques," Parry-Jones together with Todd Katzner had reported at the fourth Eurasian Congress on Raptors, Sevilla, Spain in September 2001.

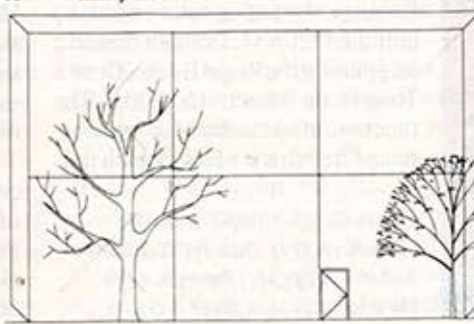
Recently elected trustee Engineer's role is to coordinate and design an aviary for the up-and-coming Vulture Project at the Doongerwadi complex. "The aviary netting around the dakhma will be approximately 120 m (394 ft) length, 80 m (262 ft) width and 25 m (82 ft) height from the center (i.e. approximately the height of a six-storied building), covering the crown of the existing trees in the area of about 2.5 acres," says Engineer. "The area is huge enough for the vultures to be able to fly comfortably and live a natural life. According to some experts, a pair of vultures when brought up in an aviary can easily stay in an area of 100 cubic meters."

It is important to use a strong wire mesh for aviaries: 50 mm (2 inch) diameter mesh with 2.3 mm (1 inch) wire thickness lasts a long time, say experts. The mesh, if embedded into concrete, rusts within a few years. Instead one can attach the bottom parts of the mesh to angle iron cross beams that can be connected to the uprights. Again, strong steel channels for the uprights (10 mm x 50 mm x 5 mm) and strong channel for the overhead beams (75 mm x 38 mm x 4 mm) need to be used. Perches within

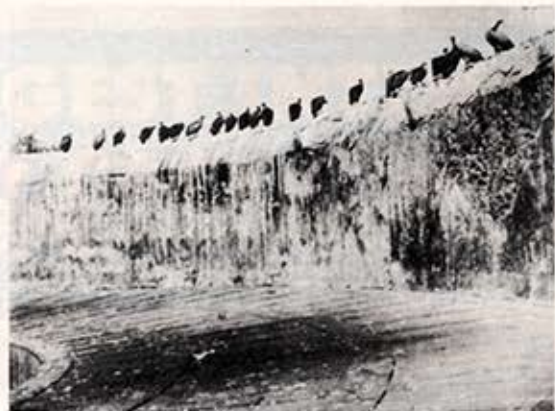
1.5 m of the mesh need to be avoided as vultures' faeces can destroy the mesh in a short period of time. Also, a shade cloth (50 percent green) can be draped over the roof of the aviary at three-meter intervals to provide shade.

Some are of the opinion that vultures would not be leading a completely natural life if they do not soar long distances. Also, some other infection may affect these scavengers whose natural urge to fly would be curtailed. With his expertise in birds of prey, Naoroji puts these apprehensions to rest: "Vultures travel large distances, but only for food. Not otherwise. They can go up to 250 km for foraging. That has no bearing on captivity because they will be getting food in the aviary. They can fly horizontally and hop around from one tree to another tree. They will expend more energy by flapping and hopping than soaring and gliding as they do in the wild. They will get their exercise this way in shorter time. Besides, vultures, just like other animals, have been kept in captivity in other parts of the world as well (Europe, USA, South Africa), and nothing has affected them. Although it may seem unnatural, they do have the capacity to adjust in large enclosures."

Although the original idea was to have 90 to 100 vultures, Engineer opines: "I feel that we should have a small aviary, of approximately 30 m in length, 30 m in breadth and 20 m in height, with only 10 or 15 pairs of juvenile vultures and get acquainted with the day-to-day maintenance." Vultures can be trained like pets. They can be released by the keepers to fly into the dakhma, have their fill and then fly back outside the dakhma, to their aviary, which is planned to be built near the Bisney dakhma. "After at least a year or so, once we are sure that we are doing



Sketch of proposed aviary



*Dakhma with Bombay city skyline in the background (circa 1973)
Vultures on mofussil dakhma (circa 1960s)*

The annual expenditure then may be approximately Rs 35

things the right way, we should take up the entire project." Mistree is said to be resigned to Engineer's idea though he thinks that this experimental route will take another three years or so.

Earlier, the Central Government "gave permission to the BPP to use foreign expertise in the breeding of vultures with the clause that the trustees of the BPP had to revert to the Centre after the aviary was built in order to seek permission to get vultures thereafter," noted Mistree. Some of the trustees of the BPP were not favorably disposed and so wanted guarantees that the vultures will be available once the aviary was built. Permission was granted to take 20 pairs of vultures from the wild.

Thereafter timely decisions were not taken and considerable amount of time lapsed. But this time Naoroji says, "We shall first build an aviary. Then we shall procure permissions and look for vultures. We would prefer the White-backed vulture, but this vulture has been affected the most in drastic numbers. The Indian Long-billed has also decreased sharply, but not as drastically as the White-backed. So we may take a few White-backed supplemented by a few Indian Long-billed depending on the vultures' status. I shall invite the top brass of the Maharashtra Forest Department and the Zoo Authority of India to come and have a look at the cages so that they are satisfied with the cages and the quality of the work done before I apply for permission. The Zoo Authority of India and the Environment Ministry in Delhi have been very helpful in the past and I am sure they will be again."

Human bodies are pumped with antibiotics and are full of chemicals. Will the vultures touch the dead bodies? Will they like to eat what they are dished out? In Bombay pollution levels (carbon monoxide) are so high! Pollution affects our skin, our faculties, our lungs, our

brain. How practical is this project going to be when vultures throughout south east Asia are known to be suffering from the Drooping Neck Syndrome believed to be caused by a virus which results in their early death? Besides, what will prevent the virus from attacking the vultures again? If scientists have not yet determined a cure for the virus, then how feasible is this project going to be? These are just a few questions that come to mind. Answers Naoroji: "Generally, there have been no observations where large scale deaths of vultures have occurred after feeding on carcasses. The mortality has been sporadic and widespread. Vultures are tough birds. They have the capacity to digest food pumped with antibiotics without any problems. They are quite capable of clearing up carcasses that are even in advanced stages of putrefaction. In fact vultures prevent proliferation of various harmful germs and flies that cause serious diseases and epidemics directly or indirectly. Any way, we have decided to quarantine the birds, for which there will be separate cages, and then release them in the aviary thereby ensuring that we release healthy birds. Even when we initially come up with a pilot project, a relatively small aviary, we will still have separate cages to quarantine the birds and monitor their health before releasing them. Indeed nobody knows much about the virus as yet. Therefore this project will be useful from the conservation point of view, as it will also contribute to scientific research. Keeping the vultures at Doongerwadi will be similar to keeping them in any holding capacity and observing them. Of course, I would definitely like to invite some foreign vets and experts to continue studies on our vultures also. Thus we will keep abreast with all latest developments."

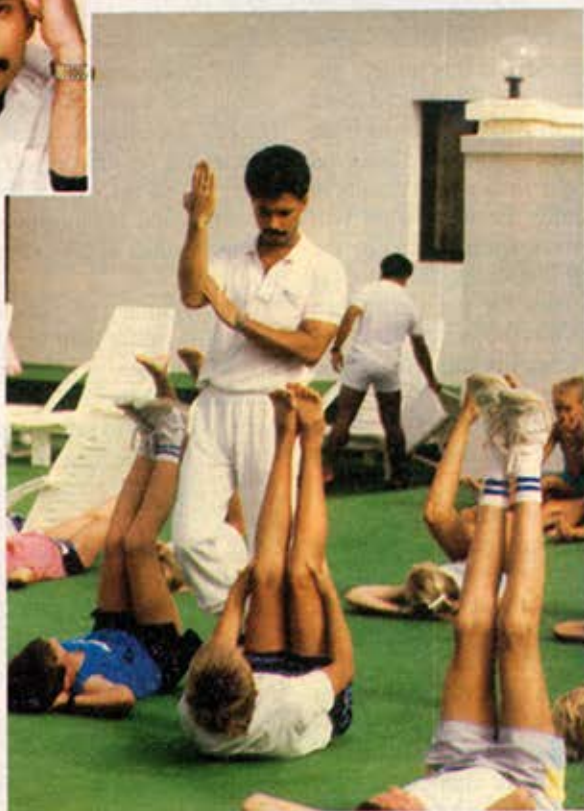
The initial investment, according to Engineer, would be "at least Rs 1.5 crores.

lakhs." Donations will have to come from within the Parsi community although Naoroji is confident about procuring financial aid for this project from various foreign agencies, especially foreign non-governmental organizations, for breeding these birds of prey from a conservation angle.

The argument of spending money for the living rather than the dead, according to Mistree, is a misnomer. "The Zoroastrian religion cannot be bargained with. We have to safeguard what is precious to us. The idea behind the vulture project also is to safeguard and strengthen the age-old mode of disposal of the dead, and not throw out the baby along with the bath water. The vulture project is not just any ordinary project. It is God's work. We have to be agents of Ahura Mazda and help make this project a success."

As Parry-Jones concluded in the report at the Eurasian Congress on Raptors, "The theological and religious needs of the Parsis often make approaching this project difficult. Nevertheless I have always ensured that they understand that our main interest is in the conservation of the vultures first and foremost. We believe that this project could play an important role in assisting the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, the Institute of Zoology, the BNHS and the National Birds of Prey Centre in their conservation efforts. In particular, we hope to allow monitoring and studies of the Parsi captive vulture population and the captive breeding program for research into the management of large captive vulture populations. This program will be most successful if all parties involved are able to work together, providing support and sharing information towards the greater goal of conserving vultures in India for the future."

The exercise of equilibrium



Holistic health trainer Mickey Mehta says he helps his clients develop an organically, mentally and spiritually balanced body

Rashna Ardesher

Trrring! Trrring! "Be in utmost passivity. Let quietude be your state. Let your mind dissolve into awareness. Let awareness progress into consciousness. Let consciousness take you beyond nothingness, hollowness, emptiness and wholeness. And may you be in blissful harmony." This is not a discourse by a religious scholar but the voice mail of Mickey Mehta, one of India's finest and highest paid holistic health therapists whose "blood is deep into spirituality, deep into faith, deep into prayers."

Fitness and spiritual trainer and advisor to Femina Miss India (Femina Elite

Model and Femina Look of the Year), Grasim Mr India and Mr International, Ford Super Model beauty and personality pageants, Mehta says, "Beauty is not just skin deep. The quality, characteristics, personality of a woman are far beyond beauty. This is what I inculcate in all the Miss India contestants. I tell them to be vibrant, have deep gravity, charisma and aura, be simple, humble human beings, ever supporting causes and becoming brand ambassadors against poverty, against abuse to ecology and other such issues." A perfect body, according to him, is that which is

"organically healthy, mentally in equilibrium, spiritually evolved and integrated." And a perfect woman is the one who is "absolutely deeply compassionate and loving, caring, who genuinely knows how to woo a man (not superficially), very warm, very patient, ever accommodating, ever forgiving, ever so sweet..." Mehta promptly admits how difficult it is to find such a woman.

Perfect woman or not, Mehta has certainly helped some great international winners for India such as Miss Universe Lara Dutta, Miss Worlds Diana Hayden, Yukta Mookhey and Priyanka Chopra, Miss Asia Pacific Diya Mirza, Ford Super Model Bipasha Basu, Miss International Shweta Jaishankar, Miss Universe 1st Runner-Up Manpreet Brar (his first student) and Grasim Mr International Aryan Vaid, by providing his expertise in fitness and spirituality.

"The idea is to understand what works best with each participant," explains Mehta. "Compassion, love, sincerity, integrity and devotion are the qualities I possess and look for in others as well. In the capacity of a guru, I should appeal to your heart. Only then would you respond. It's as natural as that."

Mehta is considered a crusader in reviving the ancient wealth of yogic and Vedic science in an entirely different way to bring forth the concept of spiritual health. His program, Health Beyond Fitness, which used to be aired on TV a few years ago, dealt with yoga, natural nutrition and cosmic nutrition, meditation and exposure to cosmic nature, the science of prayers and meditation, swimming (aqua dynamics and meditation in water), the finer nuances of martial arts with agility drills, calisthenics, isometrics, etc. All these eventually increase one's immune and defence mechanism to make the individual an embodiment of vibrance, radiance and an unlimited resource of energy. He likes to bring "a positive metamorphosis. And this involves mind over matter — awareness over mind — and consciousness over awareness."

The entire personality of the person stands to grow when he/she is in the right equilibrium, believes Mehta. "It all starts with your food intake, which re-

Mehta (inset and standing) training expatriate students at Holiday Inn, Oman



Mehta (right) chatting with Miss World Diana Hayden

reflects on your mind, which in turn reflects on the thought processes. Thought processes reflect on your attitude, attitude reflects on your behavioral science." The right food is *satvik* (righteous, ethical and genetically designed to be consumed by human beings) in nature, for example, raw fruits, vegetables, sprouts, seeds, nuts, condiments, herbs, roots, etc.

Laments Mehta who is a pure vegetarian, "When I see Parsis eating non-vegetarian food saying that it is not written anywhere in the scriptures not to eat animals, I say 'Which prophet ever espoused killing?'" Four years ago Mehta himself was a non-vegetarian but today he stresses the need of cosmic nutrition for a healthy body. "Cosmic nutrition means taking in a lot of sunshine in the early hours of the morning, breathing in a lot of fresh air, conscious breathing, looking at the expanse of the sea and absorbing the energy of the waves, hydrating yourself regularly... Restful awareness and meditation also nourishes a person, compassionate gestures exchanged as in making love can nourish and heal a person, positive emotions of cheer and joy, looking at the sky, stars and the moon and connecting to them... All these are cosmic nutrients. They stimulate and open your sleeping health fountains within your subtle body."

Mehta loves to take in all the cosmic nutrients. Appreciating nature's beauty in plants, flowers, fruits and vegetables, Mehta says, "I bring some of my clients to Priyadarshini Park at Napean Sea Road and use a lot of nature when I make them do certain exercises outdoors." Some of his elite clients are Kumar Mangalam Birla (chairman, Aditya Birla Group), Vindi Banga (chairman,

Hindustan Lever Limited), Anil Ambani (managing director, Reliance Industries), and certain members of the Godrej, Jain and Goenka families and top officials of Sahara and *The Times of India* group. Each of his clients is different in specifics of gender, constitution, lifestyle, attitude, behavioral patterns, professional pressures, nu-

tritional and cultural habits, community... Providing holistic health and spiritual therapies on a one-to-one basis, Mehta notes, "I give my life, blood and soul to my clients. I seek a lot of divine support in executing my job." For those who cannot afford Mehta, he has employed a handful of assistants as personal therapists, including massage therapists.

"Meditation integrates you and brings alive the supernatural sensing faculties within. It gives you compassion for life and an attitude of benevolence which in turn gives you integrity. It makes you philanthropic, ever sharing, ever loving. Then comes prayer, which is purely love-oriented. Usually people pray out of greed and fear. Most of them pray out of rituals and dogmatism and not from their heart with deep compassion. They are certainly not in a meditative frame of mind. In fact their minds are always wandering. They are not integrated psychologically, spiritually and physiologically. Meditation helps us integrate all these."

Observing that *hatha* yoga (asanas) form the basis of most exercises and dance regimes throughout the world, including ballet, kathak, gymnastics and others, Mehta is sad that when the West has learnt so much from the East, Indians instead of opting for yoga, join aerobics, use heavy equipment to tone their bodies, undergo crash courses in dieting, etc. Laments Mehta: "That's the western *kida* (worm), especially in Parsis."

The fitness expert lambasts those who claim to improve physique through exercises and dieting: "Weight loss means conning people. It's a bribe. Instead of building health from within, building the organic equilibrium, and bringing about organic unity and vibrance, today's fitness centers are becoming very superficial, chasing the body that is imperma-

nent in nature... There has to be a nutritional plan that gives you health and heals you from inside; exercises which don't damage your body through violent activity, but soothe, transform and sculpt your body over a normal period of time."

Mickey was born in a middle class family to Kaity and Keki Mehta on August 29, 1962. Kaity had a long innings with Indian Organic Chemicals Limited for over three decades and Keki, even longer with the Bank of Baroda for over four decades. Both are now retired. He has an elder sister, Jennifer Mistry, who, too, is spiritually inclined. Very mischievous as a child (more so now than ever before), Mickey was full of mimicry and jokes. His humble residence at Abbasi Building, Play House, Grant Road being surrounded by theaters, he could not resist the temptation of watching Hindi movies, sometimes the same movie more than 20 times. Not academically inclined, he was shunted from school to school starting with New Model Infant School belonging to his *fui* (paternal aunt), the late Jaloo Veerji, St Xavier's Boys Academy, Bhosale Military School and finally, Boys' Town Public School at Nasik. Remarks Mehta: "I still do not value pure academics. Academics needs to go hand-in-hand with cultivating a student's spiritual intelligence. Academics without spiritual intelligence makes you intellectual fools, egoistic braggarts and destructive, lopsided, split neurotic personalities!" All he enjoyed were physical training classes, playing chess, cycling and swimming. In fact he stood first at a district level swimming competition in Nasik.

After matriculation, family members realized the futility of sending him to any college for further studies. Odd vocations such as being a motor mechanic, being a waiter at Hotel Oberoi... came his way, but nothing worked well for him. The Bhosale Military School and Boys' Town Public School had given Mehta a perfect orientation in physical culture and a deep insight into spirituality. He remembers Bejon Desai, then principal of Boys' Town, who used to make students recite prayers of all religions every day. Thus religion became "less significant" and spirituality gained importance at an early stage in Mehta's life. Constantly watching his cousin practice karate Mehta got attracted to the field. He became a black belt in martial arts from Go Ju Ryu. From 1983 to 1984 he trained the staff and children of Godrej

employees at Pirojshanagar, Vikhroli, in this discipline when Aloo Movdawalla was in charge of welfare activities at Godrej. He also traveled to Dahanu to teach this art in St Mary's School and held early morning private classes for the affluent Irani ladies of Dahanu in the Dahanu Agiary Hall. Then came a big gap in Mehta's career. He calls it a "quest." He joined courses on nutrition and dietetics at the Bombay College of Health and Nutrition (a part of K. C. College) and on nature cure and drugless therapies at the Indian Institute of Nature Cure and Drugless Therapies. He also gained a lot of knowledge from Maharishi Mahesh Yogi ("the most respected, spiritual master in the world,") Deepak Chopra ("one of the finest health and spiritual therapists"), Osho Rajneesh ("the person who influenced me the most") and Dr Vijaya Venkat ("India's finest holistic health nutritionists and activists").

As his interest in spirituality increased, his zeal as a trainer in karate decreased. He joined Hotel Cidade-Goa as undercover security officer at Rs 1,200 a month. After three months he joined Bombay's Hotel Ramada Inn as health club manager on a monthly salary of Rs 1,250. Then came the golden opportunity. A long-time school friend of Boys' Town, an Arab, suggested he join his father's Hotel Holiday Inn, soon opening in Oman, as a health club manager. The job gave Mehta good exposure — mingling with foreign guests, handling the likes of chairmen and chief executive officers of foreign airlines, foreign banks, consul-generals of various countries, heads of Swedish and American schools — plus training in hospitality, service and recovery management: "This job has indirectly helped me in being the person I am today." In fact it was at the Holiday Inn that Mehta realized his ability to teach swimming in less than two days, which he later put into practice in India.

Mehta returned to India after a year and joined as manager of Oberoi Hotel's health club in Bombay, grateful to "Sanjeev Malhotra, vice-president, Oberoi Hotel who played an instrumental role in grooming and further enhancing my skills and talent."

After five years he ventured out and started Mickey Mehta's Marathon Works in 1993. Reminisces Mehta: "From 1995 to 1998, my endeavors in manufacturing fitness equipment, fitness fashion garments, developing health

foods and setting up health farms put me in a debt trap as I was not equipped and, unfortunately, did not have the right advisors. There was a lot of mismanagement and immaturity on my part as well, for which I'm paying the debts till date



Mickey Mehta with wife Samanaz and daughter Karishma

and am probably at the fag end of my liabilities generated then. It's nothing but the divine grace that has turned the tables around. The general perception was that I was a cheat, a thug, as I was unable to keep up with my commitments to people. This generated a lot of bad mouthing. And, yes, I've been to jail twice, in 1998 and in 1999, for not attending court for seven days and for not having repaid the cheque amount of an investor in time. But this was later resolved and I was eventually acquitted. My family and closest friends really stood by me and saw me through till the turnaround which are the good days today." Having taken all this in his stride, Mehta considers it a process of learning and becoming wise in the school of life.

A columnist on holistic health and spirituality in *The Times of India*, *Mid-Day*, *Afternoon Despatch and Courier* and other publications, Mehta had also anchored health programs on television in India. His music album on social awareness, health and fitness, safe sex and global love with Alisha Chinoy, Anaida and Bali Brahmabhat was released by B. M. G. Music Company. His ability to teach swimming in 24 hours earned him a mention in the *Limca Book*

of Records.

The therapist is advisor to Health Education Library for People (HELP) as well as to an international health institution, Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine (PCRM). He is an official supporter of the international movement, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) and is an activist for Crusade Against Tobacco (CAT). He is also official brand ambassador and spokesman for Evian International Mineral Water for the South East Asia region, and global ambassador and official spokesperson for Himalayan mineral water.

Married to Samanaz, executive assistant to Satish Pradhan, executive vice president, Tata Sons Limited, the couple's seven-year-old daughter Karishma, studying at Canossa Convent is the apple of their eyes. A good husband and father, Mehta's evenings are for the family. Weekend trips to Udva, Lonavla, and other nearby hill stations are great refreshers. Although Mehta found a life partner from his own community, his views on intercaste marriages denote his philosophy on life: "First of all there should be no caste, creed... Human beings should grow and evolve and be one community... And, the final evolution is when a human being identifies himself with cosmic energy of the entire universe and becomes one with nature without any definition, segregations, power politics, dogmatism and bigotry. Human beings need to be liberated from practices such as Vastushastra, Feng Shui... and lead as natural and simple lives as possible."

On the dakhmenashini controversy, Mehta comments, "If solutions other than the dakhma can be sought in the larger interest of the community, I see no harm. After the soul has departed, the body is meaningless. It has to be disposed of within the parameters of ecology."

The spiritual guru respects all prophets. He does not practice any religion in particular and believes that "all prophets and religions are born out of the same universal womb, the womb of Mother Nature. I'm beyond Zoroastrianism or any other religion. There is so much misinterpretation and power politics in the name of religion. There's no sincere spirituality even among the biggest scholars and priests of the world! I'm more inwardly religious than outwardly religious and that's the way every human being should be."

Gujarati Journalism - II

The orthodox and liberal voices

The *Jam-e-Jamshed* favored the orthodox point of view while the *Kaiser-E-Hind* advocated liberalism

Dr Ratan R. Marshall

The Parsi contribution to the Gujarati language, journalism and printing is legendary. The first Gujarati types were cut by a Parsi, the first Gujarati newspaper and the first Gujarati almanac were published by a Parsi.

Dr Ratan R. Marshall of Surat, a giant in the field of Gujarati literature, over 55 years ago submitted a dissertation on the "History of Gujarati Journalism." He notes that this was the first dissertation accepted for a PhD in the Gujarati department of Bombay University.

Two years ago Marshall prepared a paper on the contribution of Parsis to Gujarati journalism for a seminar on Irani-Parsi culture. The paper was translated into English by Prof Ashok N. Desai, head of the English department, Z. F. Wadia Women's College and N. K. Jhota College of Commerce.

An edited and abridged version of Marshall's paper is being serialized in five parts in *Parsiana*.

The first installment dealt with the founding of the first Gujarati printing press in India and the launch of the *Mumbai Samachar*, the oldest newspaper in Asia. The present section deals with the establishment of the *Jam-e-Jamshed* and the *Kaiser-E-Hind*.

...

Almost all newspapers published during the first era of Gujarati journalism (1822-1880), barring a few examples, were read chiefly by the Parsi community. The language used was laden with Persian words. The very names of the journals bespeak of the Persian influence — *Jam-e-Jamshed*, *Shamsher Bahadur*, *Rast Gofar*, *Navroz*, *Akhbare Saudagar*, *Yazadan Parsat*, etc.

When it comes to Gujarati journalism amongst Parsis a mention of the *Jam-e-Jamshed*, *Sanj Vartaman*, *Kaiser-E-Hind*, and *Rast Gofar* must inevitably be made. The *Mumbai Samachar*, established by Fardunji Marazban, was critical of the activities of the Bombay Parsi Punchayet (BPP). Sir Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy, then leader of the BPP felt it necessary to give a rejoinder to the charges leveled by the Press and he started the publication of the *Jamé*.

According to



Jamé issue of January 20, 1939 (Courtesy: Zoroastrian Tapestry) and Kaiser issue of February 18, 1883

legend, the emperor of Iran, Jamshed, had a mysterious bowl. It was believed that a look into it would divulge information regarding worldly events. Similarly, a reading of the *Jam-e-Jamshed* would give an insight into the activities of the BPP under the leadership of Jejeebhoy. Ironically enough *Jam-e-Jamshed*, which was initially started to counter Marazban's journal, ultimately came to be headed by Marazban himself who nurtured it with care and made it a true mouthpiece of the Parsis.

The *Jam-e-Jamshed* revolted against the reformatory zeal that was sweeping

the community. It fought several legal battles. The *Jamé* protested against the prohibition policy of the first Congress government of Bombay. According to some, it even crossed all boundaries of decency in doing so. As a result of communal riots in Bombay, *Jamé* was banned from releasing any news regarding prohibition or property tax without

prior permission of the government. The *Jamé* filed a petition in court to lift the ban. The court held that the decision of the Bombay government was illegal and undesirable. As such, it was a brilliant victory for the *Jam-e-Jamshed*. It also proved to be of great service to the realm of journalism.

In the bygone years, the *Jam-e-Jamshed* was popular among the Gujarati speaking Parsis. For many years, the

Gujarati used in it was crude. But a welcome change has been brought about over the years. The Parsi community of Bombay became apathetic to the Gujarati language. Gujarati was fast losing ground as a medium of educational instruction. English medium schools and colleges were established. As a result, English became dominant among Parsis, barring a few sections of society. Parsis opted for English as a medium of instruction, so much so that English came to be used even in their day-to-day conversations. A stage came when only the elderly members of the family read Gujarati newspapers whereas the younger generation read English papers. As a result the Gujarati newspapers read chiefly by the Parsis, had a hard time. The publication of the *Sanj*

continued on page 60

out of the six High Priests have reconsidered their resolution, what will be the effect on the priests? Which High Priests are the priests and laity to follow? Will that not mean further confusion in the community?"

The three High Priests declared that they have reconsidered their position "as stated in paragraphs 4 and 5 of the Resolution with respect to the children of Parsi/Irani Zoroastrian fathers married to non-Zoroastrian women; the status of these children should continue as per the established practice and legal convention." This prompted Kanga to further question, "Since only paras 4 and 5 of the resolution are cancelled while para 6 remains, it may be argued that any such marriages or navjotes done in the future would not be valid as this para 6 of the original proclamation forbids priests from carrying out such weddings and navjotes. This also needs to be withdrawn otherwise there will be more confusion and misconception. I request that a clarification be issued to remove all doubts and give a clear signal to the panthakis and priests." Hoping that an informed decision can be reached Kanga believes "it is necessary to have an open discussion on this important issue."

Following the proclamation of the six High Priests, the Borivli and Suburban Zoroastrian Association (BASZA) organized a three-hour colloquium on April 19 to ascertain the "views of the Parsi man in the street as opposed to the views of some high-profile, high-income individuals...The meeting overwhelmingly endorsed the Vada Dasturjis' resolution though no formal vote was taken." A write-up from the Association noted that the participants were divided into four groups which had to discuss for five-seven minutes the arguments for and against provided to them. The group spokesman then presented the summarized group opinion after which anybody from the house could have his/her say, the moderator, BASZA secretary Khurshed Pastakia passed further comments and the chair, BASZA president Noshir Paghdwalla summed up the discussion (see "The Borivli discussions").

Although willing to respect the law of the land, the three High Priests maintain in their letter, "We would like to reiterate clearly that in the long-term interests of the identity of our community, intermarriage should not be encour-

Clarification from three High Priests

We are sorry to state that our resolutions, which appeared in *Jam-e-Jamshed* newspaper have evoked acrimonious debate and controversy within the community. It is not our intention to create disharmony nor is it our desire to add to the misconceptions prevailing in the community.

The recommendations passed by us were purely to safeguard the survival of the community and to prevent any further erosion of the ethnicity and faith. The resolutions have not been passed with any other motive, save and except what has been stated above.

As prelates it is our duty to guide members of our community, especially the youth, who need guidance in matters religious and direct them onto the path of Righteousness. Our declaration was neither a "fatwa" nor a "diktat", in fact our intentions were to set out some guidelines for the community members, both for the laity and for the priests. Our exhortations are purely to safeguard the survival of our community and to urge our youth to marry within the fold in order to preserve our ethnicity and to prevent any further religious erosion of the community. Despite our personal opinion, in view of Mr Eruch Desai's article published in the *Jam-e-Jamshed* newspaper dated 13th April, 2003, and the interactions we have had with other Zoroastrians, we have, on further reflection, reconsidered our position as stated in paragraphs 4 and 5 of the Resolution, with respect to the children of Parsi/Irani Zoroastrian fathers married to non-Zoroastrian women; the status of these

aged for the survival of our community and for the preservation of our religion."

The Borivli discussions

According to the report submitted by BASZA, 18 issues were raised with the participants:

- whether Parsis have had a history of intermarriage since their coming to India — It was held that for almost 1,200-1,300 years intermarriage was never an issue, the few cases of cohabitation with locals and the navjote of their illegitimate progeny were stray exceptions to the rule. In the last century patrilineality found acceptance following the Daver-Beaman judgment and the ensuing silence from the then Dasturs who failed

children should continue as per the established practice and legal convention.

Therefore, if a Parsi/Irani Zoroastrian man marries out, then his children are treated to be Parsi/Irani as of race and Zoroastrian as of religion, if they have been duly admitted into the faith through a traditional navjote ceremony performed by an ordained priest. This is provided that the Zoroastrian father of such children has married as per the civil law of the land and has not undergone a marriage ceremony involving the rituals of another faith.

As High Priests we have to take a long term view of what is right and proper for the survival of the majority of our community. While we realize that our position will not be well-received amongst those who are inter-married and their supporters, we urge such persons to consider the long term effects that their actions may cause in weakening the ethno-religious identity of the community.

We trust that our restated position will clear many a doubt and misconception raging presently in the community. However, we would like to reiterate clearly that in the long term interests of the identity of our community, intermarriage should not be encouraged for the survival of our community and for the preservation of our religion.

May the Lord of Wisdom bestow peace and happiness upon our community.

Yours, In His Service,

Kaikhushroo M. Jamaspa, Firoze M. Kotwal, Noshirwan M. Dastur

to provide clear guidance and leadership. It is the intermarrieds who eventually lose out and not the rest of us. The fact that intermarrieds want to stay within the Zarathushti fold is evidence that they realize their mistake.

- whether the prohibition on intermarriage had scriptural backing — It was held that the gathering was not competent to judge the merits or demerits of scriptural interpretations and hence would accept what the High Priests say as they are best placed to be our spiritual guides.

- whether the resolution is timely — It was held that ideally such a resolution should have come a hundred years ago to prevent the present imbroglio. This

resolution attempts a cure, better late than never, to return to the right path. This controversy should not negatively affect our interpersonal relationships with those who have married out. We should not disrespect or shun them; just ask them not to interfere in our religious practices or thrust themselves on our institutions.

- whether the resolution would have adverse consequences on males married out and their children who after their navjotes had been practising Zoroastrians — It was held that the Vada Dasturs should provide suitable guidance on this ambiguity.

- whether the increasing clamor for permitting intermarriages was an indicator of the community's vote — It was held that no religion has ever functioned based on adult franchise or democracy.

- whether there were valid reasons that provoked people into intermarrying — It was decided to organize separate workshops in the future to address the problems raised by the youth: complaints of Parsi boys being unenterprising, girls being over ambitious and seeking material comforts, deterioration in morals and ethics among the Parsi youth as against the non-Parsis who being equally westernized sometimes show more 'class,' aversion to the system of *kaaj-wallas* (matchmakers), preference to live in nuclear families so that adjustment with a different life-style becomes easier, non-availability of good prospects who are already hooked.

- whether it is only religious injunction that mandates the prohibition against intermarriage — It was held that more than religious injunction is the need for self preservation. It is anthropologically proved that small tribes that have chosen to intermarry have invariably lost their ethnic identity. Unlike our forefathers who made sacrifices for communal benefit, we blatantly disobey the Zarathushti religion for personal convenience.

- whether the Wadia navjotes were justified — It was held that although the authorization was fundamentally wrong, this one-off act that has harmed nobody cannot be held as a reason to say that the Dasturs lack the moral authority to pass this resolution.

- whether intermarried households impart religions of both the parents to the children — It was held that if either parent had any respect for his/her religion, an intermarriage would never have

occurred. Children of such marriages are culturally and ethnically rootless.

- whether the community should interfere in the individual's choice of a life partner — It was held that freedom cannot be in conflict with established laws and procedures which have to be obeyed, whether one likes them or not.

- if Iranian kings could marry women of countries they conquered, so could present-day men intermarry — Such marriages occurred without the approval of wise men or the priesthood as gleaned from the sixth century text *Gangesayigan*. In fact intermarriages with the resulting treason, corruption, internal dissensions and religious rivalry finally weakened the Sassanian empire.

- whether the resolution would affect the mobeds' bread and butter — It was held that mobeds as spiritual guides must possess morals of the highest order and set an example for the rest to follow. They should be learned, willing to perform the higher liturgical ceremonies, and earn the respect of the laity.

- whether accepting children of intercommunity marriages would lead to an increase in our numbers — It was held that by merging with others we might increase numbers but the resulting race will surely not be Parsi with its distinguishable physical and ethical characteristics.

- whether anyone can prevent the religion of Zarathushtra from being practised universally — It was held that religion is different from race and community.

- whether the Vada Dasturs have the right to issue 'fatwas' — It was held that the resolution is recommendatory and not mandatory where an offender against the religion could be ordered killed.

- whether patrilineality should be accepted — It was held that sexual discrimination has never been part of our religion and the resolution rectifies that anomaly.

- whether intermarriage is a sin which Almighty alone has the right to judge — It was held that since intermarriage is an evil which could destroy the society, the community has every right to safeguard its collective interest.

- whether the resolution is blatantly racist — The adaptable Parsis have blended socially and professionally with other communities but they do not have to sacrifice their individuality and unique identity.



With
best wishes
from

Farah
&
Tanya

The ground fires

Near Baku in Azerbaijan, the home of possibly the oldest fire-temple, eternal flames are fuelled by underground gases

Dr Ardeshir B. Damania

One of the earliest fire-temples is to be found at a place called Surakhani near Baku on the shores of the Caspian Sea in Azerbaijan. Worship of eternal fires at Surakhani predates most known religions; the area was considered sacred grounds by Zoroastrians, and later by Parsis who fled Persia to avoid conversion to Islam after the Arab conquests. The temple is situated about 10 miles from Baku and is considered by many scholars as one of the oldest altars in the world, still standing erect with flames that are burning there to this day. The gas which is generated by the subterranean store of oil, escaped from the fissures in the limestone crag and may have inspired the prayers of generations of Magi (or Zoroastrian priests).

Veneration of fire in Persia, of which, until the 18th century, Baku formed a part, is older than history. It may be that the fire in this temple at Surakhani has been un-extinguished for a period extending from before the time of Cyrus the Great (about 2600 BC).

On the site of the modern town of Baku once stood a city celebrated in the Sassanian times as the place where a mighty fire-temple stood, on the altars of which blazed perpetual flames of fire produced by ignited naphtha. To this place thousands of pilgrims paid their annual visits, till the second expedition of Heraclius (Christian emperor of Rome) against the Persians in 624 AD, when he wintered in these plains and destroyed the temples of the Zoroastrians.

For 2,500 years Baku has been famous for its petroleum springs. Historical evidence shows that for nearly 1,000

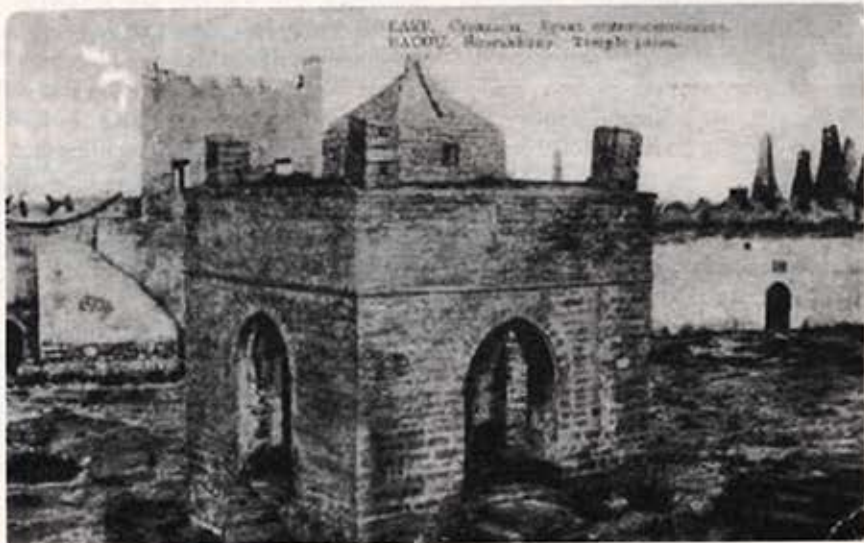
years, its oil has been exported in trade with surrounding nations. It has always been thought of as a bottomless well, inexhaustible supply. It is also the best harbor on the Caspian Sea — the only good natural harbor on the Caucasus side of the Caspian, and placed opposite what was once (probably) the outlet of the combined Oxus and Jaxartes (ancient name for the Syr Darya River in Central Asia) rivers; into the Balkan bay, which ran inland far further than at present, while the Oxus and Jaxartes joined and ran west, entering the Caspian rather than the Aral Sea. Indian trade in Pliny's time (Plinius Secundus, a Roman nobleman who died in 79 AD during the Vesuvius volcanic eruption) made its way to Europe by this route. Caravans laden with goods from India could see at night the lurid glare of the fire-fountains of Apsheron heights jutting out into the sea in the bay.

The Caspian Sea could be set on fire! Reports have been made of fires at dusk on the sea surface, ignited for the sake of visitors. One took a boat out of the harbor, sailing around a promontory until about half a mile from the shore, to a spot

where gas wells bubbling to the surface made the sea appear to be boiling. The water's depth would be about 3.5 fathoms and there would be a strong stench of naphtha; oil coating the surface painted the ripples in sunlight with a thin iridescent color. Then a piece of flaming tow was tossed over the ship's rail. It might take one or two tries, but soon enough the surface of the waves could be lit, and wrapped in flames for several yards around, an eerie and beautiful sight could be observed of a cold fire dancing upon the sea's breast. This fire would burn until a wind extinguished it; rowing away, one could glance back and still see it at a distance of a mile. There were several spots in the Caspian where naphtha gas bubbling up through the sea could be observed.

In the 1870s, Parsis from India were still making pilgrimages to Baku to witness the eternal flames which they believed burned there ever since the great flood described in the *Bible*. The Parsis believed that the fires will continue to burn spontaneously at Surakhani till the end of time itself.

John Hanway, in his book *An Ac-*



The fire-temple at Baku. The postcard's caption reads "Baku. Surakhani. Temple of Fire Worshippers." It was sent to Belgium by mail from Baku in 1913

count of British Trade over the Caspian Sea published in 1754, describes the temple in the following words: "The everlasting fire lies about 10 miles north-east by east off the city of Baku, on a dry rocky land; there are several ancient stone temples there, including one small temple at which 40 or 50 Indian pilgrims may usually be seen. Near the temple is a low cleft of rock, in which is a horizontal gap — two feet from the ground, six feet long, and three feet broad — from which issues a constant flame, in color and gentleness like that of a spirit lamp, only more pure; and when the wind blows, this torch rises sometimes eight feet high. On a calm day, the fire burns lower. It leaves no soot or impression on the rock. The Indians (Parsis) worship it, saying that it cannot be resisted (put out), and if extinguished will only spring up in another place.

"All around this fire-temple, for a distance of two miles, if one digs a mere two or three inches into the ground and applies a live coal, the uncovered soil instantly takes fire — almost before the coal touches the earth. This flame heats the soil but neither consumes nor marks it, and it is not terribly hot. This soil, if carried away, does not light or burn. The ground is dry and stoney, and the stonier it is, the stronger and clearer is the flame kindled there. There is a sulphurous smell, like that of naphtha, but this is not too offensive.

"If a trench of soil is uncovered and lit at one end, the flame runs right down the trench, burning wherever the soil is turned. In the 1750s, eight horses perished in an accident when the soil of the shed which was their stable was accidentally set afire.

"If a cane or tube, even one of paper, is thrust into the ground here, and blown upon while a live coal is touched to the top — a fire issues forth. Merely coating the rim of the tube with clay will protect this tube from harm. In this way, the local people light their houses; three or four such tubes, lighted, will boil water in a pot, and thus they cook their food.

"Some of the younger springs had mouths eight or 10 feet across. The workers drain off the naphtha by troughs into pit reservoirs, purifying it by drawing it from reservoir to reservoir; during this process all water and heavier oil is left behind. The result smells bad, and only Zoroastrian people burn it to heat their houses, to

light their lamps or boil their food. To solidify it for burning, they mix the naphtha with dirt or ashes. It must be stored in jars underground, at a distance from any building. Keeping it indoors is too dangerous as it can ignite by itself. Finally, something like a natural kerosene was to be found; it is a thinner fluid than black naphtha. The Russians drank it as a cordial and also as a medicine. It did not intoxicate. Applied externally, it was a cure for pains, gout, cramps — with the caution that it must be painted on the afflicted part only, for it penetrated instantly into the blood and caused a short-lived but violent pain! If drunk, it was said to be good for kidney stones, for disorders of the breast, for venereal diseases and sore heads. It was shipped into India as a rarity."

Description of Baku area in 1813 by Kinneir: "The quantity of naphtha produced in the plain to the south-east of the city is enormous. The oil is drawn from wells, some of which have been found to yield from 1,000 to 1,500 lbs a day. These wells are, to a certain degree, inexhaustible, as they are no sooner emptied than they again begin to fill, and the naphtha continues gradually to increase until it has attained its former level. It is used by the natives as a substitute for lamp-oil, and when ignited emits a clear light, with much smoke and a disagreeable smell. The whole country around Baku has at times the appearance of being enveloped in flames. It often seems as if the fire rolled down from the mountains in large masses with incredible velocity; and during the clear moonshine nights of November and December, a bright blue light is observed at times to cover the whole western range. This fire does not consume, and if a person finds himself in the middle of it, no warmth is felt."

Associate research geneticist at the University of California, Dr Ardeshtir B. Damania's



area of interest includes biodiversity conservation issues, early agriculture, crop domestication and plants of economic and medicinal values. His early career was with the Food and Agriculture Organization

of the United Nations and he subsequently worked with the International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas.

Avail of our Attractive Off Season Packages from 20th June onwards

Palazzo Hotel
The Heritage Resort

PANCHGANI

Room amenities and facilities

- Luxurious well furnished rooms/suites (A/C & Non A/C)
- Direct-Dial Telephones with STD/ISD
- 30 Channel Cable TV
- Swimming Pool
- Well equipped Gymnasium/Pool-Table
- Beautifully Landscaped Gardens
- The "Summer-House" for relaxed open-air dining
- Table-Tennis, Badminton, Darts, Carrom & Chess
- Children's Skating Rink and Basketball Court
- Veg/Non-Veg. Indian/Continental/Chinese & Parsi Cuisine with the true "Home-Cooked" taste
- Laundry/Travel Desk
- Generator Back-up

Special rates for groups/school tours

Shirinbai Davierwalla Marg, Panchgani 412805 Dist Satara
Phone: 952168-241300/01/02

Fax: 241303

E-mail: kobad@vsnl.com
www.ilpalazzohotel.com

Book early to avoid disappointment

'To the Waters of the World'

The *Avan roz nu parav* is a time to appreciate the life-giving liquid and also a time for spiritual and moral retrospective

Kersi J. Limathwalla

"This evening, we were surprised to see, as we strolled along the beach, more Parsis than ever before, and more Parsi ladies, richly dressed, all wending their way towards the sea... Here on the shore of the ocean, as the sun was sinking in the sea, and the slender silver thread of the crescent moon was faintly shining on the horizon, they congregated to perform their religious rites. Fire was there in its grandest form, the setting sun, and water in the vast expanse of the (Arabian Sea) outstretched before them. I could not but participate with these worshippers in what was so grandly beautiful. There was no music save the solemn moan of the waves as they broke into foam on the beach. But where shall we find so mighty an organ, or so grand an anthem? How inexpressibly sublime the scene appeared to me and how insignificant and unworthy of the unknown seemed even our cathedrals 'made with human hands,' when compared with this looking up through nature unto nature's God! I never expect in all my life to witness a religious ceremony which will so powerfully affect me as that of the Parsis on the beach of Bombay," wrote Andrew Carnegie, one of the greatest industrialists of USA, on his visit to Bombay on *Avan roz nu parav* over a century ago.

Zoroastrians the world over celebrate *Avan roz nu parav*, a day dedicated to the Waters of the World. It falls on *Avan roz* (the 10th day) of *Avan mah* (the 8th month) of the year of the Parsi calendar. To us mortals, it has two great properties, a wondrous cleansing element and a life-giving and sustaining element so vital for plant, animal and human existence. Interpreting it philosophically and ethically, it represents purity and God's creative energy.

The purity of *Avan Ardisura* should cleanse us not just physically but deep within us. Our minds should not harbor any adverse thoughts; through words of wisdom and peace we should spread the

message of Zarathushtra and dedicate our lives to the service of mankind. This is the only way of expressing our gratitude to Ahura Mazda. Rituals and prayers are necessary, but they need to be backed



Devotees outside the Gateway of India on *Avan roz nu parav*

by a clean mind, a kind word and a good deed.

Ardisura is the female divinity of the waters of the world and a manifestation of Ahura Mazda. In the 65th chapter of *Yasna*, she is described as courageous, strong, beneficent and of noble origin. It is said that Ahura Mazda has entrusted to her the work of guarding His holy creations like a shepherd guarding his flock. She is defined as one possessing great beauty, glamor and purity. She is adorned with a studded golden crown, heavy jewelry and rich garments. Her majesty is unmatched and she rides a chariot of four white stallions representing wind, cloud, rain and sleet. She was revered and worshipped in ancient Persia. There were temples and statues dedicated to her name and she received recognition from Achaemenian kings. Her boon was in-

voked for a variety of purposes, with sacrifices made in her name for sovereignty, victory on battlefields and to ward off sorcerers and fiends.

As one symbolizing purity, prosperity and plenty, she is also worshipped for a compatible life partner, successful marriage and fertility as she is known to bless the seeds of men and wombs of women for easy childbirth and nutritious milk. She blesses the progeny with good health and strength to combat evil and bestows countless boons for a happy married life. Procreation and family life as opposed to celibacy and ascetic life is not just recommended but enjoined as a duty; a *puthrane* (one with children) is praised as against *aputhrai* (one without children) in the *Vendidad*.

In our scriptures, *Ardisura* is referred to as the flowing waters, which are supposed to be clean and clear as distinct from stagnant water. In the *Ardisura Nyaish*, Ahura Mazda enjoins Zarathushtra to worship flowing waters, which are pure, crystal clear and undefiled as they spread health, plenty and prosperity.

According to the *Ardisura Nyaish*, *Ardisura* is the name of a mythical river, a river larger than all rivers of the world put together, having its source in the mythical mountain *Hakairya* and flowing into the sea of *Vouru Kash*. On its banks are trees and medicinal plants. When the leaves and branches from this foliage fall into its waters the river derives its healing properties.

It is also said that *Vouru Kash* is the Avestan name for the Caspian Sea. The Pahlavi name is *Frakand*. In the *pav* ceremony, as the mobed pours water over the utensils, he recites in *baj*, "*Yaozdathra Zareh Frakand, Yaozdathra Zareh Varkash, Yaozdathra Zareh Puiti*" (*Puiti*, referred to as the Sea of Aral). He thus invokes *Ardisura* and allows the water to overflow over the utensils for the highest level of purity. It needs to be ap-

preciated that purity cannot perpetuate in isolation unless and until we synergise physical purity with mental and spiritual purity.

Physical purity is not supposed to be superficial or cosmetic; the underlined reason for making it part of religious customs is that it also ensures good health. The Zoroastrian religion enforced such practices long before science recognized them. There are several purification ceremonies like *padayap kusti*, *nahan*, *riman* and *bare-shnum*. The simplest of them, which we perform daily, *padayap kusti* has an inert hygienic, philosophical and ethical significance.

Stress — the scourge of modern day urban living is a product of the mind. Purity therefore has to begin in the mind before it percolates into the body and soul. Unfortunately our religious customs and rituals which have a strong time-tested scientific base have over years been reduced to monotonous mechanical rites. This is the community's loss. We for the better part are so embroiled in controversial issues that we miss the essence and consider our religion mundane.

Reciting *Avan Yasht* and/or *Ardvi-*

sura Nyaish is recommended at least on *Spandarmad*, *Avan*, *Din*, *Ashishvagh* and *Mahraspand rozs*. *Ahunavar* (*Yatha Ahu Vairyo*) can be recited 65 times, if unable to recite *Ardvisura Nyaish* as it is considered its equivalent. *Avan Ardvisur* has great powers and strength and we all seek her favors. Even *Ahura Mazda* seeks her assistance that *Zarathushtra* may spread the *Mazdayasni* religion and *Zarathushtra* seeks her boon that *King Vistaspa* may embrace his faith. Such is the might of the divinity that we revere. But we need to be worthy and selfless to invoke such divinity and adopt an attitude of total surrender. It is the righteous amongst us whose prayers are answered.

Having founded the firm *Kersi Jamshedji and Company* 25 years ago, *Kersi Limathwalla* is



a practising chartered accountant and tax advisor. He is actively associated with community organizations like the Committee for Economic Revival as also the World Zoroastrian Orga-

nisation and is presently chairman of the *M. J. Wadia Fire Temple Trust* and the *Lowjee Wadia Dispensary Trust*.

representations to and prevail over the government at both the state and central level to extend certain concessions to us in the pricing and availability of sandalwood for use in religious ceremonies. We must form distribution depots of pure sandalwood from where the average Parsi can buy his requirement on a periodical basis. If we do not do anything in this regard now, won't it be a case of compromising on our religious requirements? **KAYOMARZ PATEL**

Jamshed Noshir Sukhadwalla of the sandalwood shop Dadabhoy Motabhoy Sukhadwalla replies

The price of any commodity would depend upon its supply and demand. Sandalwood trees are becoming less day-by-day while there is an ever increasing demand from perfumers abroad. The price of the pure form of sandalwood at present is around Rs 3,000 per kg.

I do not think that *Ashoi* can be practiced by offering only sandalwood to the *Atash*. In all the *agiaris* and *Atash Behrams* all over India, including the *Iranshah* at *Udvada*, *kathis* of *baval* are being used.

Most of the Parsi sandalwood merchants are retailers and they cannot afford to participate in the government

**HAVE U PLANNED A PICNIC
FOR THIS YEAR YET??
IF NOT, VISIT 'SAI FARM' AT
KOLADI!!**

**EXPERIENCE
THE JOY OF LIVING
IN AN IGLOO!**

In an unusual double-domed farmhouse fishing, swimming, rafting, and diving in the smooth waters of the river *Kundalikaenjoy* barbeque, lunch/dinner in a sit out, or laze in the play pools or freakout in the waterfalls after taking a hike to *Hanuman temple* lookout post of *Shivaji's era* a wonderful view from a breezy terracy 3 hours drive from Mumbai

For further details contact-
Gabby/ Nikhil Gonsalves,
#23801796 # 9869208251 # 31016849
or **Gourang Kundapur # 28218029**
Visit us at:
www.salfarm.netfirms.com

READERS' FORUM

continued from page 6
Zoroastrian.

Some time ago, the *Nav-Kutumbi Mandal* of *Udvada*, the body in charge of managing the affairs of the *Iranshah Atash Behram* in *Udvada* had, in an open letter to the community, insisted on using only the purest form of sandalwood for ceremonies conducted at the *Iranshah*. Would it not be a good idea if such bodies or even others like the various *anjumans* or the *Parsi punchayets* could draft a system which envisages bulk procurement of the purest grade of sandalwood for the exclusive use of religious ceremonies of our community at concessional rates?

If this is not done, soon a time will come where offering of pure sandalwood at Zoroastrian religious ceremonies will be perceived as an elitist gesture for the simple reason that few among our community will be able to afford offering sandalwood costing about Rs 5,000 per kilo which is where the price of the best quality of sandalwood is headed in the next six-12 months from now.

The community must act now and act decisively. We must immediately make

an auction where a minimum of one to two tonnes of logs have to be bid for. The retailers procure their requirements from larger merchants who obtain their stocks from the auction.

If a body like the *Parsi Punchayet* could make arrangements for procuring sandalwood and distributing it to the community at a reasonable rate, it would be good.

New community anthem

I hear many of us singing with pride *Chhaiyé Hamé Zarathushti*. The melody belongs to the *Blue Bells* of Scotland, note for note. It is alright when we sing in India where it is not noticed by the Scots. But now that we are spreading out (*diaspora*) in English-speaking countries this will be noticed and make us look foolish.

Don't you think it's about time we came up with our own melody? We have plenty of our own musical experts who can do a good job. Besides the words will have to be in English as we speak more English than Gujarati.

JEHANGIR MEDORA
Toronto, Canada

Edited by *Parinaz M. Gandhi*

THE IMPRESS OF...

continued from page 32

pathizers. When the Parthians established themselves over the Seleucids they retained the Greek administrative model and used the Greek language and religious iconography on their coins. When Christianity had become the state religion of the Eastern Roman Empire by the end of the fourth century CE, dissident theologians persecuted there had found asylum in Sasanian Iran. When Emperor Justinian closed the Academy of Athens, pagan philosophers arrived at the Sasanian court, notes de Jong.

Greek literature reflected the steady flow of Greco-Persian contacts. Because these texts — from Greek historian Herodotus to Byzantine times — are datable, information on Persian culture is of particular interest to scholars. "The majority of authors describe observable facts and some names: rituals, gestures, divinities, Zoroaster, the priesthood, the magi, temples, as well as funerary practices... A more exciting factor in this area is the possibility that the Greek texts describe Zoroastrianism as lived and understood by the majority of its followers: the laity. Characteristic in this respect is the almost total absence of the Amesha Spentas in descriptions of the religion of the Persians. Many interpretations of Zoroastrianism consider this doctrine of the Heptad to be the backbone of Zoroastrian theology, but the evidence from Greek literature suggests that it may not have been as prominent for lay Zoroastrians as Zoroastrian literature indicates... Many descriptions contain elements that are not easily recognizable as Zoroastrian traditions; these include a carnivalesque festival called the *Sacaia*, a god of silence, and the idea that Ahura Mazda tripled in size at an early stage of creation. It is frequently very difficult to interpret such descriptions but they must be taken seriously if we want to understand the history of Zoroastrianism prior to the Sasanian period."

Mountains, deserts, oases and settlements along river banks characterize the geography of Iran, Afghanistan and Central Asia, writes Harvard's Prof Emeritus Richard Frye. Forms of

Zoroastrianism distinct from the Sasanian state religion, existed in Central Asia. Manichaeism, Nestorian Christianity and Buddhism were widespread. "One of the most characteristic features of Central Asian Zoroastrianism are the ossuaries, in which the bones of the departed are preserved in a stone or ceramic astodan. In Sogdiana and in Khwarazm, ossuaries are found in every archaeological excavation. A remarkable sixth or seventh century ossuary from Mulla Kurgan (a site in Uzbekistan near Samarkand) shows two figures, presumably priests, wearing the *padan*, cloth covering the nose and mouth. Between the two figures, one kneeling and the other standing, is a fire-holder with flames." Since the Central Asians borrowed motifs from India, Iran, China and the northern nomads, Frye emphasizes the problem of interpreting representations found on excavated artifacts — whether the users were aware of their religious connotations or simply copied the motifs for aesthetic pleasure.



Dastur Tirandaz of Yazd (left) and Yazdi benefactor Rashid Mehr

Photo: Parviz Varjavand

"Sogdian merchants travelled far into China and northern India, becoming entrepreneurs on the 'Silk Route' through Asia. The extensive commercial activities of the Sogdians may have been one reason for the secular emphasis in their society and for their evident disregard for religious matters." Like the Kushans whose coins portray a wide variety of deities including Mithra, Shahrevar and others from Iran, the

Sogdians too adopted many religions, avers Frye.

Sorbonne Prof Frantz Grenet writing on "Zoroastrian Themes on Early Medieval Sogdian Ossuaries" describes a fragment of an ossuary discovered in the Samarkand area which "depicts precisely what occurs in heaven, while the *chaharom* is performed on earth. The soul is being judged at the Chinvat Bridge (the allegorical bridge of the Separator, mentioned in Zoroastrian eschatology). Sitting on the left, Rashn holds the scales with which he is going to weigh the merits and demerits of the individual. The soul itself, the figure of which is not depicted in this fragment of the composition, is led to the place of judgement by another divine being, most probably Srosh, who presents an incense-burner to Rashn as a testimony of the soul's piety. Apart from this detail, the scene closely corresponds to the descriptions given in the later Pahlavi literature.

"This example shows that Sogdian funerary art sometimes depicts Zoroastrian *yazatas* (divine beings) taking part in that which befalls the soul in the hereafter. In the scene just examined, the divine beings wear long, plain robes after the fashion of the priests, but they are crowned like kings."

Trade with China, India and the Roman Empire contributed to the wealth of Parthian Iran, writes Boyce in "The Parthians — Defenders of the Land and Faith." Excavations at Mithradatkird near Nisa have revealed nine cellars so far which have yielded "thousands of ostraca," i.e. bits of broken pots with records in ink noting when the wine was brought,

by whom and from which estate. The earliest of these, dating back to Mithradates I (13/12 BCE), include a wealth of personal names, many of them characteristically Zoroastrian. Some which are fully dated bear the Arsacid era in combination with the Zoroastrian calendar — its first recorded use in everyday life, according to Boyce. These ostraca provide the earliest example of Aramaic written phonetically as an Iranian language with a local script. The Parthian language was called Pahlavi and so this form of writing came to be known as Pahlavi. "The fact that this

way of writing Pahlavi thus evolved directly from Achaemenian Chancellery Aramaic, still in use nearly 200 years after the downfall of the Persian empire, is one of the clearest pieces of evidence for cultural continuity in Parthav from Achaemenian to Arsacid times," notes Boyce.

The Arsacids' "practical approach to governing" is proved by three documents on local land sales in Dura (which had a strong Greco-Semitic culture) being in Greek though the parties to the transaction are Iranian. Greek remained by custom the written language of the law courts in the area until the practice eroded with time.

In a footnote Boyce states, "Throughout history the religion of a king with absolute power has been the religion also of the state he ruled; and, with all the evidence by now available, there can be no reasonable doubt that the Arsacids were faithful Zoroastrians."

In "The Contribution of the Sasanians to Zoroastrian Iran" scholar Faribourz Nariman credits their establishment of fire-temples, "the fusion of religion and kingship," the confiscation of the property of the Manichaeans and the persecution of Christians who were both perceived as threats to the church and the state. However, admitting the demoralization of both these institutions, Nariman quotes G. K. Nariman, "Not only was there the young and powerful Christianity politically opposed to and morally combating with fatal firmness, the decadent State and Church of the Sasanians, but there were mutually hostile schisms and sects among Zoroastrians... about which we authoritatively learn from Arabic writers like Shahastani and Ibn Hazm. Each sect was actuated by a spirit of pious intolerance and breathed sanctimonious odium against others."

As "temples and images were alien to the Iranian religion," foreign models were used as prototypes under later Achaemenian kings, notes Russian archaeologist Boris Marshak. Greek statuary personalized the worship of individual yazads. For example, the Parthians identified Verethraghna (Behram in later tradition), the Zoroastrian yazata of victory with the Greek hero god Heracles,

he states. The Sasanians however mounted "an official iconoclastic campaign which resulted in the removal of cult images from those temples which were dedicated to the yazads." However, beautiful silver artifacts of these epochs — jugs, bowls, plates depicting hunting scenes, flora and fauna — are prized possessions in the museums of



Outer facade of old Navsari Atash Behram adhered to old Iranian design Collection: Firoza Punthakey Mistree Photo: Madhur Shroff

the world. An outstanding collection of pieces in The State Hermitage Museum at St Petersburg, exquisitely reproduced, accompany its curator Marshak's article "Zoroastrian Art in Iran under the Parthians and the Sasanians."

Tracing "The Theme of Truth in Mythology" Jamsheed Choksy, assistant professor at Indiana University, observes how "Mithra served as a mythic overseer of social order and harmony, a friend and guardian of virtuous Iranians," for, social order according to Zoroastrian belief has "cosmic and eschatological consequences." Choksy quotes a passage from the *Bundahishn*: "Ahura Mazda suggested to...humanity's immortal souls, 'Should I create you in corporeal form to battle evil, vanquish it, and then be resurrected perfect and immortal...or should you always be safeguarded from the vile enemy. Which option appears more ad-

vantageous to you?' The immortal souls of humans knew, through perfect wisdom...of the adversary's final defeat and so agreed to enter the material world." "The notion of humans contesting evil found manifestation repeatedly in many other forms of Iranian writing and imagery" including the integration of Rustam into the Kayanian legend cycle, states Choksy.

Dastur (Dr) Hormazdyar Mirza of Ududa and Bombay discusses where, when and who transcribed the manuscripts that are prized collections in libraries all over the world. He also discusses the processes of dating, providing an explanation of the Parsi Era or Zoroastrian Era found on some manuscripts as against the more familiar AY — after Yazdegird.

Comparing the *Rig Veda* with the *Avesta*, Sanskrit scholar Sindhu Dange traces commonalities between "Zoroastrianism and Hinduism." The common Indo-Iranian heritage of the tribes "upheld a belief in a god who fixed the unfailing law of nature and on whom this law rested forever." The Iranians identified him as Ahura Mazda; the Indians venerated him as Varuna.

Archeologist Arvind Jamkhedkar dwells on the commonalities between "Parsi and Hindu Sacraments." A prosperous married life with children and grandchildren was an ideal cherished by both traditions, he notes.

Exploring the historical associations of "Zoroastrianism and Judaism" which date back to the freedom Cyrus the Great granted to the Jews held captive in Babylon, linguist and professor of comparative religion at the Hebrew University Shaul Shaked examines the changes in the Jewish concepts that resulted from their long association with Zoroastrians. "The meeting of the two peoples, the great and dominant Iranian people, and the small but historically significant Jewish people, had overriding consequences for the history of western civilization to which few other cultural encounters between two peoples can be compared."

Relationship between "Zoroastrianism and Christianity" range from shared national identity and a hospitable nurturing of the new faith by the more liberal Parthians to the oppression and persecution of Christian citizens of the Sasanian

Empire once the Eastern Roman Empire began to be perceived as an enemy state. With much objectivity Alan Williams, lecturer in Comparative Religion at Manchester, traces the political tension of living in that theocratic state for a community dedicated to proselytization.

"Zoroastrianism in Iran after the Arab Conquest" was one long descent into misery for the faithful who resisted the conquerors' effort to convert them to Islam, recounts Boyce. Nevertheless they retained their dignity and self-respect despite centuries of insult and poverty. The more pragmatic eventually gave up the unequal fight and the most zealous among the converts became the old religion's bitterest enemies.

Sounding "Mazdaean Echoes in Shi'ite Iran" A. Sh. Shahbazi of the Eastern Oregon University notes how the poetry of Rudaki and Firdausi, the works of historian Biruni and scientist Ibn Sina (Avicenna) buttressed Iranian nationalism when other Islamic nations had "melted into a single universal 'people.'" Shi'ite Iran has maintained its social structure and its festivals, notably the national celebration of No Roz, (Navroz) to current times.

The impress of Zoroastrianism on peripheral peoples who once came under Iranian rule or absorbed its influence persists among the Yezidis and Ahl-e Haqq of Kurdistan, notes Prof Philip Kreyenbroek of Gottingen University in "Modern Sects with Ancient Roots." Noting that "the Zoroastrian religion was transmitted orally until well into the Sasanian period," Kreyenbroek states, "While it seems likely that the ancestors of the Ahl-e Haqq and Yezidis were at one time influenced by Zoroastrianism, and may indeed have regarded themselves as Zoroastrians, the roots of their beliefs may... go back to an even earlier stage in the history of Iranian religion."

Former president of Pahlavi University Farhang Mehr writes about "Zoroastrians in 20th Century Iran," recounting the slow emergence of the community from the privations of poverty and deprivation after the Jizya Tax was rescinded by Nasser al-Din Shah Qajar in 1882 thanks to the unrelenting effort of Manekji Limji Hataria. The constitutional reforms of 1906 when Arbab Jams-hid became the first non-Muslim member of the Iranian Parliament, the Majles, enhanced the process of amelioration. Though Zoroastrians eventually entered

public service, few rose to positions of authority and they continued to be barred from the judiciary, he notes.

Architect Faroukh Dastur and Punthakey Mistree trace the architectural evolution of "Fire Temples and other Sacred Precincts in Iran and India." The article ascribes the later mushrooming of adaran fires in India to the introduction of non-Zoroastrian domestic help. "Their presence did not permit the priests to keep their house fire in a state of ritual purity. Therefore, it became desirable to have a separate place of worship where the sacred fires could be kept."

Architect Azmi Wadia writes on the "Evolution of the Towers of Silence and their Significance," from the primitive mud plastered buildings of rural Iran to the sophisticated structures on Bombay's Malabar Hill with their elevation, sloping platform, central pit, purifying filters, etc.

The function of Zoroastrian rituals in "Protecting the Physical World" are explained by Dastur (Dr) Firoze Kotwal and Zoroastrian Studies' Khojeste Mistree. They enumerate the five components of a ritual which lead to the triumph of good over evil as order and truth (Asha), purity, fire, water and the holy word (Manthra Spenta). The higher liturgies of the faith — the Yasna, Visperad, Vendidad, Nirangdin, etc — are explained by the two authors in "The Court of the Lord of Ritual." Daily observances in Parsi and Iranian Zoroastrian homes are described by scholar-researcher Shehnaz Munshi and Sarah Stewart of the School of Oriental and African Studies, London.

Dastur (Dr) Kaikhusroo Jamaspa provides "A General Account of Iranian Studies." Though earlier Zarathushti texts were vandalized by the Arab and later invaders, Pahlavi and Middle Persian writings like the *Dadestan-i Denig*, *Skand Gumanig Wizar* and the *Denkard* preserved the Zoroastrian religious and intellectual heritage. The *Rivayats* enlightened the Parsis; the initial faltering steps of Thomas Hyde and Anquetil du Perron whetted Western interest. Eventually philology led Frederick Max Mueller to the study of comparative religion; Martin Haug translated the *Gathas*; E. W. West made English translations of the Pahlavi works accessible to English speaking Parsis even as Ibrahim Pouré Davoud's translations of Zoroastrian scriptures into modern Per-

sian made them accessible to the people of Iran.

In "Parsi Arrival and Early Settlements in India" Mistree follows the fortunes of the boat community of Diu and Sanjan through their low profile years in Gujarat to their establishment in Navsari, Surat and Bombay. Scholar Rusheed Wadia recalls the exchange of Chinese tea, silk and porcelain for Indian opium in "Colonial Trade and Parsi Entrepreneurs." Though the community acquired a significant quantum of wealth in the process, Wadia enumerates the restrictive trade practices of the East India Company which laid the Parsis open to greater risk and unfair competition.

Distinguishing between the more permanent Zoroastrian settlements in Karachi, Aden and London with their initially transient counterparts in Canton and East Africa, in "Bombay Parsis and the Diaspora in the 18th and 19th Centuries" research professor John Hinnells of Derby University writes that wherever they went they enriched the local environment and society. But they also ensured that their wealth and political influence was deployed for the benefit of the community in India.

Ventilating public grievances, pressing the cause of social reform, supporting the Indian National Congress were some of the reasons that drove "Parsi Pioneers of the Press (1822 — 1915)" to establish newspapers and journals. Noted journalist B. K. Karanjia scouts the field from the establishment of *The Bombay Samachar* by Fardoonji Marzban in 1822 — the oldest newspaper in Asia today — to Byramji Malbari's *Indian Spectator*, K. R. Cama and Dadabhai Naoroji's *Rast Gofar*, Sir Pherozshah Mehta and B. G. Horniman's partnership on *The Bombay Chronicle* and a wealth of other publications.

While Parsi theater dominated the Indian cultural scene for a century, its heyday stretched for two decades 1870-90, notes Saryu Doshi's assessment "Of Costumes and Sets." The honorary director of the National Gallery of Modern Art notes that knowledge of English literature and exposure to enactments staged by itinerant British companies led to the establishment of the Parsi Natak Mandali and the Victoria Natak Mandali. The Alfred Natak Mandali's penchant for special effects made them an integral part of Parsi theatrical presentations. Outstanding actor/entrepre-

neurs in theater were Kaikhusru Kabrajee (who "recognized the usefulness of theater as an instrument for social change and worked untiringly towards making it an integral part of people's lives") and Dadi Patel who introduced Urdu to the theater as well as women actresses.

They recognized the virtues of local self-government and constitutional means to freedom, notes former professor of political science Adi Doctor in "Parsis and the Spirit of Indian Nationalism." He traces the careers of Dinshaw Wacha and Pherozshah Mehta, Dadabhai Naoroji, Muncherjee Bhowanagree and Shapurji Saklatvala, the trio who got themselves elected to the British Parliament from English constituencies, as well as extremists like Bhikaiji Cama and Veer Khurshed Nariman. He also acclaims the wisdom of Jamsetji Tata and of Ardeshir and Pirojsha Godrej who realized that political freedom needed economic underpinning.

"Entertaining the Zoroastrian Way" by gourmet cook and author Shirin Simmons describes the cuisine and festivals of Iran, "Jamva Chalo" by writers Shalini Devi Holkar and Sharada Dwivedi lingers on the eating habits of the Parsis. "Parsi Cuisine in the Villages

of Gujarat" is archeologist-caterer Katy Dalal's nostalgic evocation of the good life in earlier, more leisurely times.

Undaunted by lack of pictures, Vesta Sarkhosh Curtis, curator of Iranian coins in the British Museum, examines the statuary and friezes that time has spared to describe the "Dress of the Imperial Court." Punthakey Mistree finds "Hues of Madder, Pomegranate and Saffron" in the "Traditional Costumes of Yazd." "The Tanchoi and the Garo" have pride of place amid "Parsi Textiles and Embroidery" with Kalpana Desai, director of the Prince of Wales Museum recounting the evolution of these fabrics as a by-product of the Parsis' lucrative China trade and their own enhanced social standing. "Style and Elegance — Parsi Costumes in the 18th and 19th Century" by Punthakey Mistree and Godrej embraces the integrated Indo-Iranian sartorial style.

Godrej discusses painting techniques and the art of portraiture in "Faces from the Mists of Time," showcasing "Parsi Portraits of Western India (1750-1900)." The relative strengths of Indian, European and Chinese artists come under her microscope as much as the personalities the paintings commemorate. Two picto-

rial essays — "Zoroastrians of Iran — A Panorama" and the "Parsis of Western India" — compiled by the editors round off their herculean task. But not quite. Also included is a Chronology of Kings and a Glossary, a Select Bibliography and a 25-page index.

With an eye for detail the end of each article is marked by a display of both sides of a different ancient coin, its caption recording and explaining its main features. The continuity of each article is depicted by a miniature from one of its outstanding illustrations repeated on the upper outer corner of the pages — a reference point by itself.

Dispersed among the articles are five double spread maps, beautiful to behold but not quite answering questions that arise in a lay reader's mind while perusing articles that refer to relatively little known places with ancient names that vary with time.

Apart from its daunting 13.5" x 10" x 2.75" format weighing seven kilograms and a few minor errors of proof-reading, *A Zoroastrian Tapestry* is well worth reading — and keeping — and gifting — for an understanding of our past and its bearing upon our present and our future.

- Ready hand and machine made Parsi garas available as well as made to order

- We transfer old jari sarees/garas onto new materials and also polish original jari borders and sarees

- Ready original jari borders and zardosi net borders available as well as made to order

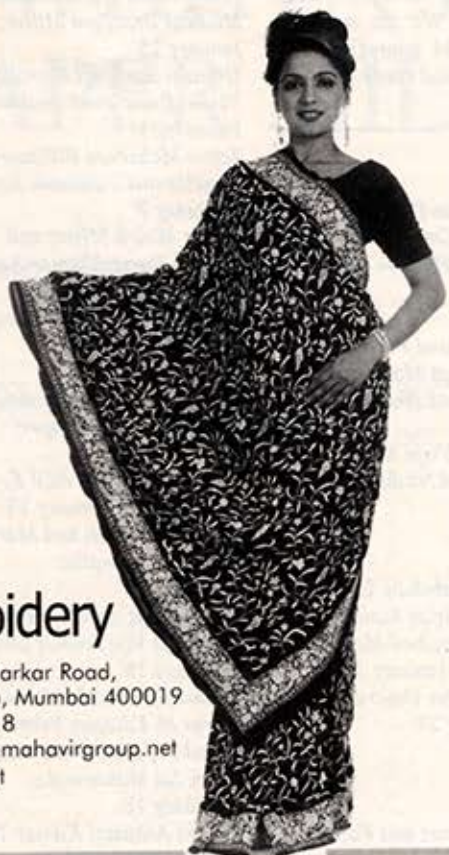
- Japanese crepe, butter crepe, Italian crepe, Georgette and plain materials available

- We undertake international quality embroidery on a variety of plain sarees and churidar sets

Mahavir's Embroidery

Mahavir Building Compound, Bhandarkar Road,
Opp Kabutar Khana, Matunga (C.R.), Mumbai 400019
Tel No. 24025070, C/o 24021818
Telefax: 24313328 Website: www.mahavirgroup.net
E-mail: contactus@mahavirgroup.net

We accept all major credit cards
Sunday Closed



London Parsi lady
has double bedroom,
in a centrally located
flat, on rent on a daily
basis for tourists.

Terms:- £ 25 per night for
couple, £ 16 single lady.
Inclusive of continental
breakfast. Tea/coffee on
the house whole day, use
of kitchen and lounge.

Call/write:

Miss S. Bharucha

Flat 282 Latymer Court
Hammersmith Road
London W6 7LB
(020 - 8748 3234)

Intercommunity marriages registered both at the Old Customs House and at the MHADA office in Bandra (East) in 2002 (January to December) are published herein. However, names that could not be confirmed as Zoroastrian have been omitted from the list.

Fifty-six intercommunity plus seven civil marriages were registered at the Old Customs House whereas the MHADA office registered 39 interfaith unions and three civil nuptials.

Twenty-six Zoroastrians chose to be cremated in 2002 as the Chandanwadi crematorium register revealed.

The age of Zoroastrian brides (as listed in this issue) ranged between 20 and 34 years, the arithmetic mean—the total number of individual ages divided by the total number of brides—being 26 years. The corresponding figures for the grooms were 26 and 36 years, averaging at 30 years.

Births in April numbered six (as per the data from two hospitals) versus 79 deaths. Sixteen of the 29 victims who fell prey to the major killer (heart disease) were octogenarians and nonagenarians. Pneumonia/lung disease claimed nine lives, whereas six Zoroastrians each succumbed to cancer and old age/general debility. Brain disease took a toll of five patients, diabetes and hypertension, three patients each and liver disease and septicemia, two each. The isolated cases were: gastro-intestinal bleed, fracture, atherosclerosis (deposition of fatty substances in the arteries), sepsis, hydrocephalus (an excessive of cerebrospinal fluid inside the skull), multi-organ failure, embolism (obstruction of a blood vessel by the impaction of a solid body), thyroid and pyrexia (elevation of the body temperature above normal). A 37-year-old female, who died in childbirth after delivering a stillborn baby boy and a 38-year-old crippled and bedridden invalid male were also lost to the community. The coroner's report was still awaited in the case of a 25-year-old youth, the youngest to breathe his last in April. Ninety-five was the el-

dest age at death. The Zoroastrian life expectancy at birth for April, in Bombay, was 75 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 breakup 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

BORN

A girl, *Aria*, to *Phiroza* and *Rushad Cama* on March 31, 2003

MARRIED

Maharukh Homi Patel of *Bhavnagar* and *Manekshaw Burjor Patel* of *Ahmedabad*; February 14
Khushnuma Vispi Kitpitia and *Khorshed Noshir Choksy*; February 23

DIED

Phiroze Darabshaw Elavia (77), of *Rajpipla*; January 8
Khorshed Jamshed Modi (75), of *Khambat*; January 17
Vira Darabsha Contractor (73); January 23

BOMBAY

BORN

A girl to *Monaz* and *Farokh Kapadia*; April 1
A girl to *Thrity* and *Eric*

Mistry; April 12
Twins (boys) to *Tanaz* and *Abadaan Viccaji*; April 15
A boy to *Dinaz* and *Yazad Saher*; April 18
A girl to *Behroze* and *Neville Pithawalla*; April 27

MARRIED

Anitha Sorab Rao and *Joseph George*; January 7, 2002
Cooma Phiroze Mehta and *Vivek John Mathai*; January 7
Dina Stepanova and *Mehernosh Bomi Patel*; January 7
Shireen Noshir Kotwal and *Husani Adamji Jasdawalla*; January 9
Ayesha N. Surty and *Vijay Vinayak*; January 14
Sonali Das and *Mahaiyar Aspi Jijina*; January 15
Yasmeen Abdul Rahman Shaikh and *Sarosh Savack Dholoo*; January 18
Ruma Chakrabarty and *Sohrab Jal Pooniwalla*; January 18
Nirmala Arjun Gangawane and *Kersi Burjor Daruwalla*; January 22
Tenaz Homi Manekshana and *Michael Bradford Miller*; January 25
Urvashi Jamshed Marolia and *Vineet Balkrishna Prabhu*; February 1
Jeroo Mehervan Billimoria and *Engelbertus Johannes Jansen*; February 2
Delna Minoo Mistry and *Akshay Rameshkumar Anand*; February 3
Anaita K. Dadyburjor and *Manoj B. Thakkar*; February 11
Persis Rohinton Bhesania and *Zubin Sam Cooper*; February 14
Sharon Shah and *Adil F. Hodywalla*; February 14
Ami Robin Shah and *Marzban Jimmy Pardiwalla*; February 14
Meherangiz Aspi Acharia and *Parikshit Vijaykumar Dev*; February 15
Yasmin M. Natalwala and *Porus N. Eduljee*; February 15
Brinda Akshay Sonawala and *Vispi Jal Mahimwala*; February 18
Deepa Ashwani Kumar Tangri and *Percy K. Madan*; February 21

Meherangiz Palia and *Trevor Saldanha*; February 21
Khurshed Minoo Mistry and *Zubin Feroze Mistry*; February 22
Sunaina Suresh Surarna and *Zubin Pesi Guzder*; February 27
Ritu Sharma and *Mehraz K. Balaporia*; February 28
Naaznin Furrokh Godrej and *Jishnu Dutta*; February 28
Tanaz Tehmul Mistry and *Minat Devesh Sadh*; February 28
Lamiya Soeb Baharinwala and *Ericshaw Pervaz Antia*; March 4
Tanaz Yezdi Mistry and *Vikram Bhushan Mehta*; March 6
Zeenat F. Patanwala and *Pervaz B. Mistry*; March 7
Haseena H. Khan and *Zubin J. Dubash*; March 8
Jennifer Mistry and *Sandeep Gaur*; March 8
Rukhshana Rusi Patel and *Shakil Shamim Shaikh*; March 11
Karen Brian Vaz and *Khushrav Farokh Patel*; March 21
Farzana Plumber and *Naim Kurbanhusein Lahorewalla*; March 27
Nisha Bankimchandra Upadhyaya and *Soli Dosabhai Kapadia*; April 9
Farah Rustom Meher-homji and *Satish Sunil Mehta*; April 10
Naheed D. Pestonji and *Abdul Kalam Choudhury*; April 14
Khushnaz Dinyar Farhadi and *Suhail Karim Shariar Karim*; April 23
Manek Behram Dastur and *Adil Burjor Driver*; April 29
Sujata Narendra Nikam and *Ardeshir Hormasjee Mulla*; May 2
Anahita B. Soonawalla and *N. Harendrakumar*; May 3
Shazia Parveen Rahuja and *Zal Tehmtan Andhyarujina*; May 4
Amanda Aisha Padamsee and *Roomy Minoo Shroff*; May 4
Friya Freddy Balsara and *Isa Mohammed Ansari*; May 7
Shaneen Dastur and *Kaushal Parikh*; May 9
Rekha R. Rathod and *Rohinton Minocher Patel*; May 9
Nike Noshir Bharucha and

Amit Surinder Seru; May 15
 Rukhzana Godrej Pestonji and Mayur Mohan Sawant; May 17
 Hutoxi Ratansha Saher and Kaizad Minoo Master; May 18
 Gulshan R. Jijicawna and Anand S. Mane; May 20
 Mehjabeen Mukadam and Richard Manoj Winfred Samuel; May 20
 Navaz Keki Batliwala and Abraham Yohan George; May 21
 Archana Yeshwant Bhabal and Shalmon Francis Wadia; May 22
 Jennifer Noshir Sanjana and Nicholas Christy Nightingale; May 23
 Aarti Roshanlal Vasandi and Cyrus Keki Elavia; May 24
 Karishma Dali Mistry and Zubin Percy Mistry; June 3
 Delna Bhikhu Billimoria and Bhautik Navinchandra Mithani; June 4
 Vidushi V. Kamani and Kaizad J. Sethna; June 6
 Nazreen H. Meherhomji and Abizer A. Petiwala; June 7
 Tenaz Phiroze Amaria and Sunil S. Hegde; June 26
 Fidashi Soli Irani and Rayomand Parvez Billimoria; July 4
 Bhavani Sundaram and Jamshed R. Billimoria; July 6
 Femina Samuel and Vispi Mistry; July 8
 Dinaz Dadi Printer and Homi Framroz Patel; July 12
 Nilofer H. Mandviwalla and Nilesh B. Bohra; July 16
 Kashmira Pardiwala and Swapnil Vaishampayan; July 16
 Rashna Palsetia and Stephen J. Hindes; July 22
 Aban Noshir Bottlewala and Puneet Mahindrao; July 29
 Phiroza Soli Choksi and Kaushik Dilip Luhar; August 2
 Banita Hamal and Neville Dinshaw Bhicaji; August 5
 Benafier Jimmy Dadabhoy and Nevil Noshir Billimoria; August 16
 Kainaz Kersi Kadodwalla and Burgess Viraf Ghyara; September 9
 Rohini D'Lima and Cyrus Dara Pagdiwala; September 21
 Mafrin Fali Commissariat and Imran Farooq Shaikh; September 21
 Saroja Seena Kunder and Marzban Godrej Master; September 30

Uttara Deb and Sohrab R. Framjee; October 10
 Roshan Mulla and Allen Arvind Master; October 22
 Victoria Reena D'Souza and Khushroo Hoshang Bagwadia; October 31
 Sushila R. Singh and Khushru H. Baxter; November 1
 Ann Francisca Mendonca and Dinyar Dinshawji Karany; November 8
 Daisy Fali Gotla and Alwyn Philip Rebello; November 8
 Dinaz Elavia and Sagar Gandhi; November 14
 Delna P. Zaveri and Rahul V. Agarwal; November 17
 Genevieve Venessa D'Souza and Framroze Bhamgara; November 20
 Jennifer Jamshed Kotwal and Shashank Shashikant Dhuri; November 21
 Alejandra Del Carmen Garza and Erik Rusi Kelawala; November 21
 Shaheen Kapadia and Nadir Noorani; November 25
 Mansi Minawala and Nekzad Engineer; November 28
 Poorvi C. Mehta and Marzban S. Kotwal; November 29
 Kuntal Bharat Mehta and Zarayus Kersi Langrana; November 29
 Maithilee Pathare and Kaizad Mistry; November 29
 Mahnaz Rohinton Tarapore and Aaresh Jimi Chanduwadia; December 5
 Geetika Tarun Guha and Jamsheed Aspi Dinshaw; December 6
 Zinia Mehli Gandevia and Karl Savio Fernandes; December 10
 Yasmin Jal Mistry and Masood Mirza Abbas; December 14
 Zenobia Yusuf Petiwala and Firdosh Aspi Balliwala; December 15
 Gayatri R. Khanna and Shiraz C. Vesavevala; December 15
 Sonali V. Salvi and Rohinton P. Billimoria; December 16
 Tihunaz Keki Mehta and Rohit Ravi Malhotra; December 19
 Zenobia Sam Ayem and Parag Allhad Kabadi; December 20
 Kareena Sami Gadioli and Ashraf Yusuf Hussain; December 21
 Jasmin Sajjan and Firoz Khan; December 21
 Jaya Janet D'Sa and Hoozan Pheeroze Jal; December 23
 Amy Beth Erpenbeck and Rishad Naval Pandole;

December 26
 Roshni Tehmurasp Kotwal and Rayomund Noshir Engineer; April 3, 2003
 Khushnuma Kobad Dehnugara and Hoshang Jehangir Unwalla; April 12
 Arnavaz Shavak Kheshwala and Cyrus Noshir Pardiwala of Post Vankal, Dist Surat; April 14
 DIED
 Keki S. Chesun (75), residing at 90, Balsara Hse, January 7, 2002 (cremated)
 Molly R. Vakharia (81), Vellard View, Peddar Rd, 400026; January 28 (cremated)
 Mehroo Burjor Colabawalla (79), A/3, Ben Nevis, B. Desai Rd, 400026; February 9 (cremated)
 Perin Merwanjee Jeejeebhoy (82), Permeline, 67, B. Desai Rd, 400026; February 13 (cremated)
 Goolkhurshid S. Irani (82), 12, Parel Hse, Opp K. E. M. Hosp, Parel, 400012; February 14 (cremated)
 Bomanji Jalbhaj Guzdar (98), 9/7, Rustom Baug, Victoria Rd, Byculla, 400027; February 16 (cremated)
 Banoo Fazal Madon (40), 9, Prince Court, Mereweather Rd, Colaba, 400039; March 1 (cremated)
 Homi Ardeshir Shroff (71), Eddie Hse, Peddar Rd, 400026; March 14 (cremated)
 Parvin Fardoon Mehta (54), Windsor Villa, N-1, Westside Est, B. Desai Rd, 400026; April 4 (cremated)
 Rustamji Ardeshir Gagrati (101), Buena Vista, Pochkhanawalla Rd, Worli, 400025; April 8 (cremated)
 Freney Sharad Gothaskar (79), 211, Major Vetri Nathan Marg, Colaba, 400039; May 7 (cremated)
 Piloo Frederick Richardson (82), 9, Sorrento, Mount Pleasant Rd, 400006; May 29 (cremated)
 Phiroza Kaikhushroo Mistry (90), Rukiya Manzil, Sophia College Lane, Off B. Desai Rd, 400026; June 6 (cremated)
 Ruty Beji Shroff (75), Allana Chmbs, B. Desai Rd, 400036; June 27 (cremated)
 Navaz Byram Javeri (65), Ivorine, 154, M. Karve Rd, 400020; July 2 (cremated)
 Minoo Avasia (85), 71, Sunita,

Off Colaba P.O., Colaba, 400005; July 6 (cremated)
 Aloo Hoshang Tata (85), Laburnum Hse, 15, Laburnum Rd, Gamdevi, 400007; July 8 (cremated)
 Behroze Dossabhoy Minwalla (77), 607/A, Dolat Manzil, Dr Ambedkar Rd, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; July 21 (cremated)
 Mehllie Sorabji Engineer (86), A/1, Empire Ter, Lamington Cross Rd, 400007; August 17 (cremated)
 Behnaz Dinyar Dotiwala (29), 7, Swastik Court, 132, M. Karve Rd, 400020; September 7 (cremated)
 Jal Faramroz Jalnawalla (73), Firoz-Ara, 160, M. Karve Rd, 400021; September 24 (cremated)
 Burjor Nassarwanji Colabawalla (80), A/3, Ben Nevis, B. Desai Rd, 400026; September 25 (cremated)
 Mary C. P. Wadia (86), The Mount, 14, Little Gibbs Rd, Malabar Hill, 400006; November 11 (cremated)
 Behram Sohrab Rustomji (90), C/o N. P. Desai, Mino Meher, 22, Union Park, Khar, 400052; December 14 (cremated)
 Thrity Phiroze Rao (94), New Petit Mans, 95, Sleater Rd, 400007; December 16 (cremated)
 Rutty C. P. Wadia (83), The Mount, 14, Little Gibbs Rd, Malabar Hill, 400006; December 21 (cremated)
 Shiavax Darasha Hodiwalla (80), Sethna Bldg, 87, Mathar Pakhadi Cross Rd, Mazgaon, 400010; March 31, 2003
 Pesi Manchershaw Chaina (78), 13/28, Old Khareghat Clny, N. S. Patkar Marg, 400007; April 1
 Jehangir Berhamji Dubash (86), 5/C, Industrial Assurance Bldg, Veer Nariman Rd, Churchgate, 400020; April 1
 Maneck Pestonji Golvalla (74), Hormuzd Bldg, N. Bharucha Marg, 400007; April 1
 Framroze Mervanji Kathawalla (90), 93, Mama Chmbs, A. K. Marg, 400036; April 1
 Jamshed Rustamji Bhagwagar (69), A/2, Sai Darshan Co-op Hsg Soc, S. V. Rd, Andheri (W), 400058; April 2
 Mini Ratan Doctor (72), 759, Rd no 7, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; April 2
 Minoo Kaikhushroo Gadioli

(69), Reporter Bglw, 120, S. V. Rd, Andheri (W), 400058; April 2

Maneck Framroze Sethna (69), A, Wassiamal Bldg, Grant Rd, 400007; April 2

Jer Homi Bhabha (85), 604/A, Nagardas Nivas, Dr B. A. Ambedkar Rd, Dadar, 400014; April 3

Dhunjisha Kaikhshru Fanibanda (70), 4, Windsor Chmbs, Cawasji Patel St, Fort, 400001; April 3

Themina Navroji Mody (88), C/4, Nilgiri, Plot no 25, Sector 16/A, Vashi, New Bombay, 400703; April 3

Frenie Loveji Cooper (80), 3, Mirador, 67/H, Breach Candy, 400026; April 4

Najoo Rustom Makoojina (66), 789, Keraula Bldg, Jame Jamshed Rd, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; April 4

Daulat Homi Irani (86), 12-8/C, I. T. Apts, Siababa Ngr, Borivali (W), 400092; April 5

Putla Minocher Aibara (78), Native Dispensary, 3, Chandanwadi, Chira Bazar, 400002; April 6

Rashid Hirjibhoy Gorimar (77), 11, Jamasp Tata Bldg, Tata Clny, Off 38th Rd, Bandra (W), 400050; April 6

Dinshaw Merwanji Bengali (80), Albless Widows' Chawl, Marzban Clny, Gilder Lane, 400008; April 7

Murzbani Eruchshaw Bharucha (80), 201/3, Behram Baug, Parsi Clny, Jogeshwari (W), 400102; April 7

Rustom Framroze Motiwala (83), E/29, Cusrow Baug, S. B. Rd, 400039; April 7

Faramroze Dorabji Patel (92), C/o B. D. Pavri, B/29, Raghavji Bldg, Raghavji Rd, A. K. Marg, 400026; April 7

Homi Sorabji Balsara (80), G/51, Cusrow Baug, S. B. Rd, 400039; April 8

Bomy Shavaksha Major (61), Mehta Bldg, M. Pasta Rd, Dadar, 400014; April 8

Eruchsha Mancherji Vakil (91), Hira Manzil, 21, Gilder Lane, Off Lamington Rd, 400008; April 8

Jehangir Maneckji Billimoria (84), Kalpataru Apts, 39, Peddar Rd, 400026; April 9

Rutty Rustom Bhaya (82), 2/1, United Mans, Parsiwad, Sahar Rd, Andheri (E), 400099; April 10

FIGURES AT A GLANCE*									
	Bombay			India			World		
	This issue	2002*	2003 ^o	This issue	2002*	2003 ^o	This issue	2002*	2003 ^o
BIRTHS									
Boys	3	77	18	—	5	1	1	42	2
Girls	3	103	16	1	6	2	1	23	3
MARRIAGES									
Parsi	13	210	72	2	17	4	1	20	2
INTERCOMMUNAL									
Males married out	46	46	—	—	1	—	—	4	—
Females married out	49	49	—	—	2	—	1	7	1
DEATHS									
CONSIGNED									
Males	42	451	142	3	79	21	2	33	12
Females	38	441	129	6	80	19	1	32	5
CREMATED									
Males	9	9	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Females	17	17	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

*Running totals for 2002 (January 2002-May 2003 issues)

^oRunning totals for 2003 (March 2003-May 2003 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.

Manek Sorabji Chena (80), E/6, Nowroz Baug, Lalbaug, Dr Ambedkar Rd, 400012; April 10

Eruch Hormusji Engineer (88), 24, Mehta Mhl, 89, Dadasaheb Phalke Rd, Dadar, 400014; April 10

Tehmi Ardeshtir Engineer (95), 2, Jahangir Mans, 1st Marine St, 400020; April 10

Nariman Maneckshaw Kharas (74), 5/1, Sir Ratan Tata Clny, Ratan Tata Rd, Tardeo, 400034; April 10

Koomi Homi Mehta (82), M/19, Nowroz Baug, Lalbaug, 400012; April 10

Piroja Jehangirji Merchant (95), 626, Adenwalla Bldg, Rd no 8, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; April 10

Tehmina Behramji Jijina (85), Gandhi Mans, Wadia St, Tardeo, 400034; April 11

Tehmi Fali (Framroj) Palkhivala (69), Marker Hse, 534, Opp Chira Bazar, 400002; April 11

Sarosh Jamshedji Todiwalla (69), 3/1, A. F. Petit Bldg, Jamshedji Petit St, Grant Rd, 400007; April 11

Behroze Dara Khan (41), B/1, Tirupati Apts, Anand Bldg, Warden Rd, 400026; April 12

Firoze Kaikhshru Sholapurwala (82), 808, Boman Lodge, Dr Ambedkar Rd, Dadar T. T., 400014; April 12

Darabshaw Jehangirji Kapadia (80), 15, Contractor Bldg, Veju Kotak Marg, Ballard Est, 400001; April 14

Nari Bomanshaw (Bomanji) Marfatia (53), 22-K/3, Cama Park, Andheri (W), 400058; April 14

Amy Feroze Cama (84), 3, C. C. I. Chmbs, D. Vachha Rd, 400020; April 15

Jerbai Kekhasru Kavarana (95), 17, Old Khareghat Clny, Hughes Rd, 400007; April 15

Minoo Jamshedji Damania (74), A/1-17, Dubash Bldg, Kashinath St, Tardeo, 400034; April 16

Minoo Khodamorad Khosravi (61), E, Wadia Bldg, Princess St, 400002; April 16

Dina Noshirwan Subedar (86), 20, Modi Bldg, Murzban Clny, Dr Nair Rd, 400011; April 16

Jeroo Nariman Balsara (86), 9/11, Rustom Baug, Victoria Rd, Byculia, 400027; April 17

Nergis Sarosh Kothawalla (78), Jer Mans, Gunder St, Chira Bazar, 400002; April 17

Sorabji Jehangirji Billimoria

(92), Noman Manzil, 141, Tardeo Rd, 400034; April 18

Noshir Minocher Italia (63), 3/1, Kashinath Bldg, Kashinath St, Tardeo, 400034; April 18

Putli Ardeshtir Nazir (83), 5/123, Unique Apts, Custom Rd, Trombay, 400088; April 18

Aloo Bomanshaw Pagdiwala (78), 688, P. A. Hormarjee Bldg, Dr. Dinshaw Master Rd, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; April 19

Jerbai Jamshedji Vajifdar (92), 19, Sneha Sadan, Opp Colaba P.O., 163, Colaba Rd, 400005; April 19

Dhun Minoo Wadia (75), 404/5-A, Salsette Parsi Clny, Old Pump Hse, Andheri (E), 400093; April 19

Dhun Maneckshaw Driver (63), Trinity Bldg, 115/117, Bora Bazar St, Fort, 400001; April 20

Rustom Kaikhasroo Desai (92), Patel Chmbs, Rustom Sidhwa Marg, Fort, 400001; April 21

Tehmi Rustom Dubash (75), 3, Batliwala Bldg, 24, Hughes Rd, 400007; April 21

Ketayun Behram Irani (Goveshni) (88), 5/20, Garda Bldg, Panthaki Clny, Andheri

Bombay: The Telling Figures

The number of Parsi (210) and intercommunity (95) marriages in Bombay have both declined in 2002. While the Parsi marriages dropped by 48 from the preceding year's total of 258, the number of intercommunity marriages dropped by 18 from the 2001 count of 113.

The percentage of intercommunity marriages continued to rise higher, from 30 in 2001 to 31 in 2002 if calculated as a ratio of intercommunity marriages to the total number of marriages (95:305). If calculated as a ratio of intercommunity to community marriages (95:210) the percentage increased to 45 as compared to 44 in the previous year.

As compared to 49 females, there were 46 males who opted

for non-Parsi spouses in 2002, indicating that of those married out, 48 percent were males and 52 percent were females. Among the outmarrieds in 2001, 56 percent were males and 44 percent were females.

The number of births too, 180, showed a decline of 15 over the preceding year's count of 195. While the males born in the community reduced by 20 over last year's count of 97, the number of females born rose by 5 over the preceding year's count of 98.

Although our birth count includes children of outmarried males and females, we are principally dependent on the data made available to us from two hospitals in central Bombay.

The death count increased by eight to give a total of 918 in 2002 as compared to 910 in 2001. While those consigned to the dakhma increased by six over last year's count of 886, those cremated increased by two over last year's count of 24. As compared to 432 males and 454 females who were consigned to the dakhma in 2001, there were 451 males and 441 females consigned in 2002. Among those cremated, the count showed 9 males and 17 females in 2002 as compared to 12 males and 12 females in 2001. Of the five crematoria in Bombay, *Parsiana* accesses data only from the Chandanwadi crematorium in south Bombay.

From the data available to us

by the Bombay Parsi Punchayet, the Life Expectancy at Birth calculated for those consigned to the Doongerwadi was 76 in 2002 as compared to 75 in 2001. It was highest, at 79 years, in the months of March and April 2002, and lowest, at 74 years in May.

Given below are the 2002 figures pertaining to the Bombay Zoroastrian community based on records available with *Parsiana*.

Born: 180
Males 77, **Females** 103
Married: 305
Parsi 210
Intercommunal 95
Died: 918
Consigned: 892
Males 451, **Females** 441
Cremated: 26
Males 9, **Females** 17

(E), 400069; April 21
Sooni Jal Mulla (77), Piroja Hse, Forjett St, 400036; April 21
Dadi Ruttonji Screwvala (80), A/5, Sunita Apts, 62, Peddar Rd, 400036; April 21
Burjor Cawasji Dhalla (79), 19/291, Sidharth Ngr IV, Old Police Stn, Goregaon (W), 400062; April 22
Kume Pirojshaw Driver (62), Vindiyachal Soc, Mount Mary, Bandra, 400050; April 22
Noshir Nadirshah Nadirshaw (70), 4/20, Tata Mills Co-op Hsg Soc, Elphinstone Rd, Parel, 400012; April 22
Minoo Shapurji Udwadia (73), B-33, Meherzin, 109/A, Wodehse Rd, Colaba, 400005; April 22
Banoo Jal Chothia (88), Windsor Chmbs, Cowasji Patel St, Fort, 400001; April 23
Baby boy of Simonil Hormazd Madan (stillborn), 725, Khurshed Mhl, Dr Dinshaw Master Rd, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; April 23
Perin Rusi Mistri (75), 562, Rustom Mans, Adenwalla Rd, Matunga, 400019; April 23
Bomi Adi Balsara (52), 4-A/4, New Dubash Bldg, Gamadia Clny, Tardeo, 400007; April 24
Merwan Soli Bhabha (25), Bana Bldg, Khetwadi 11th

Lane, 400004; April 24
Simonil Hormuzd Madan (37), 117/A, Dariya Mhl, 80, Nepean Sea Rd, 400006; April 24
Rustom Pherozeshah Mody (80), Kavarana Mans, Opp Kohinoor Mills, Dadar, 400014; April 24
Shavaksha Nusserwanji Wadiwalla (83), 813, Jame Jamshed Bldg, Jame Jamshed Rd, Dadar, 400014; April 24
Tehmi Dorab Dadachani (93), P-33, Cusrow Baug, S. B. Rd, 400039; April 25
Piroja Hormuzji Turel (84), 692, Chinoy Bldg, Dinshaw Master Rd, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; April 25
Bapai Shavakshaw Taskar (75), 2, Contractor Chawl, Sussex Rd, Byculla, 400027; April 27
Jala Bobby Wadia (88), A-21, Nowroz Baug, Dr S. S. Rao Rd, Lalbaug, 400012; April 27
Shahbehrum Turk Demeri (68), 19, Khudabux Bldg, Opp Sales Tax Office, Mazgaon, 400010; April 28
Nerges Minoo Homiar (72), New Khan Bldg, Chikalwadi, Tardeo, 400007; April 28
Meharaboon Khodadad Irani (38), Irani Bldg, Irani Dharamshala, Gamdevi, 400007; April 28
Darayus Burjorji Mullanfiroze (66), Adajania Hse, 19, New

Charni Rd, 400004; April 28
Shirin Behram Irani (70), 2/5, Hanjer Villa, Prabhat Clny, Santacruz (E), 400055; April 29
Chandan Adi Cooper (70), 630, Gemfrina Co-op Soc, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; April 30

CALCUTTA

DIED
Roshan Kalapesi, sister of Kitty Khushroo Madan; February 24

POONA

DIED
Tehmi Grant (75), wife of Keki; February 2

SURAT

Nargesh Padamshah Wadia (83), 11/1731, Main Rd, Machhlipith, 395003; April 2
Nadirsha Beharmji Ichhaporia (80), Hodiwala Hse, Bibini Wadi, 395003; April 5
Baby of Bomi Jal Elavia (miscarriage), Timaliawad, Nanpura, 395001; April 10
Dina Minochahe Contractor (83), 1/9921, Main Rd, Nanpura, 395001; April 13

CANADA

BORN
A boy, Poras, to Niloufer and

Fredy Bhesania; March 18

IRAN

DIED
Parichehr Parsi, mother of Freydoon Parsinejad; March 23
Rostam Jehan Bakhshi (100), husband of Sharvar and father of Mahin, Parvine, Kaikhosrow Mobed, Mahroz, Fereghish and Sohrab; April 2

USA

California
DIED
Cyrus Suraliwalla, husband of Kashmira and father of Havovi in Richmond; April 2

Illinois

BORN
A girl, Ariana Paige, to Binaifer and Bruce Bedford, sister to Shanaya in Chicago; March 28

Indiana

MARRIED
Delnaz Parabia of Bakersfield, California and Arzan Lali in South Bend; January 4

Nevada

MARRIED
Jasmin Chavda and Phillip Letourneau in Las Vegas; March 22

Compiled by Roxana A. Driver

Paeans to the Policeman

Parinaz M. Gandhi

He saw India defeat Pakistan on the television screen from his room at the Jaslok Hospital and retired to bed. This World Cup series cricket match was the last encounter between the neighboring countries that Khusro Faramroze Rustamji witnessed before he passed away in his sleep on March 2, 2003. Three decades earlier Rustamji was on the field himself, the battlefield, when as the founder director general of the Border Security Force (BSF) he had played a key role in the nation's victory at the Indo-Pakistan War of 1971.

Then defence secretary K. B. Lall had written in his letter dated January 6, 1972, "A special word of thanks to the director general of the BSF and to the men and officers under his command is overdue. It is their initial initiatives, their boldness, courage and... imagination which provided eventually an opportunity to the Defence Services to do their part..."

When then Prime Minister of India Lal Bahadur Shastri selected Rustamji to create a force that would patrol the borders of West Pakistan, East Pakistan (now Bangladesh), Burma, Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab, Gujarat, Rajasthan, West Bengal, Assam, Nagaland and Tripura, Rustamji reportedly convinced the Prime Minister that this police culture could not do. Nor the army culture. The BSF needed "a culture of its own with officers and men from the police, the army, the navy and air force..." He wanted a totally impartial force.

As recalled Birbal Nath, retired director general of the BSF, in his condolence letter, "Literally we sat at his feet when we joined the BSF. He not only taught us the profession but human values of integrity and togetherness. He was a leader who transmitted to us all what is the best in our civilization."

The day he took over as director general of the BSF there was nobody but himself in this force. The day he left nine years later there were about 60,000 officers and men, each officer hand picked

by him and a special team, each constable enlisted by a trusted deputy and tested for education, fitness and courage, noted a brief biography of Rustamji readied for a compendium. After a decade with the BSF he served a three-year



Rustamji (left) being conferred the Padma Vibhushan in 1991

term as secretary in the ministry of home affairs. "Rustamji left a deep impression of his caliber and professional competence which has rightly earned him the title of 'doyen of Indian police,'" noted N. Gopalaswami, home secretary to the Government of India.

The 86-year-old veteran policeman was accorded a state funeral with full police honors on March 2, 2003. A special emissary from Delhi represented the BSF at the funeral. The air outside Chandanwadi Crematorium resonated with the gunshots as the lone bugle hauntingly sounded the *Last Post*. "This honor was a tribute to his years and years of service to the police force of which he was a proud member and to which he was committed way beyond his retirement. The reverence which the police

had for Rustamji was eminently felt by the presence of the seniormost officers, both past and present," wrote Farzana Contractor in the *Afternoon Despatch and Courier* of March 3. Former police commissioner Julio Ribeiro said at the Crematorium, "We always turned to him for guidance and the police force not only in Bombay, but in the state and in India has suffered a great loss." Many police officers rang up his residence to convey that they felt as if they had lost their own father.

At a condolence meeting held at the headquarters of the Maharashtra director general of police, senior police officers, past and present, spoke glowingly of Rustamji, as reported in the *Afternoon* of March 20. "Apart from being a father figure to the force, he was the one whom we often sought advice from," said Shreekant Bapat, Bombay's police commissioner during the 1992 riots, describing Rustamji as "a visionary and an officer far ahead of his time." Former police commissioner Satish Sahney noted, "His presence was reassuring and only with time will we realize the kind of loss we have suffered," while another former commissioner Ronald Mendonca talked of the support Rustamji always gave junior IPS (Indian Police Service) officers. Outgoing joint commissioner of police (crime) Shreedhar Wagal recalled being impressed by his amazing physical fitness and mental alertness: "He used to keep himself abreast of situations and there were certainly new things to learn from him." As commented former commissioner M. N. Singh, "He was an intellectual and a thorough professional, but what struck me most was his nobility and humility."

Nagpur born Rustamji was selected for the Indian Police in 1938 after he did his postgraduation in zoology from the Nagpur University. "An officer with an incisive mind, he was in charge of the security of India's first Prime Minister Pandit Nehru," recalled Keki Dadabhoy of Secunderabad adding, "He will al-

ways be remembered for his remarkable contribution in the management of men." In 1949 he was deputed to Hyderabad state as the deputy inspector general and a decade afterwards he was promoted as inspector general of police, Madhya Pradesh.

"The basis of good police work is knowledge of the area and public support which means a good relationship with the Press... details of crime and criminals, relations, informers, receivers, supporters, all properly recorded and brought up-to-date from time to time," he had learnt early. "The police make the best scapegoats and police become the worst sufferers," realized Rustamji. "The one lesson which nobody is prepared to learn is that the police must not trust politicians who say that the law can be ignored," Rustamji was quoted in the biography.

He had served a five-year term as member of the National Police Commission and was in 1990 appointed member of the National Integration Council. The proposals of the Police Commission which were kept in cold storage for years thereafter had recommended "a method of reducing, if not eliminating, the grip of the party in power on the police which is exercised by the use of unabashed transfers, promotions or protection of those who help them in corruption and transfer to oblivion posts those who show an inclination to be subservient to the law and not to them," mentioned Rustamji's biography. Over the years he was conferred medals for distinguished conduct and distinguished service, he was honored with the Padma Bhushan in 1971 and with the Padma Vibhushan in 1991, according to his bio data. The Padma Bhushan recognized his exemplary contribution to the police force while the Padma Vibhushan was in honor of his commitment to social and humanitarian causes.

After his retirement from the police force he served as director of different companies controlled by Nusli Wadia of Bombay Dyeing, was chairman of Goodricke Tea in Assam and was regular with his articles and columns, writing for newspapers on socially relevant issues like the plight of the undertrials languishing in the Tihar jail for want of a court hearing, mentioned his daughter Kerman. "We will greatly miss his brilliant contributions to our feature ser-



vice," noted a condolence letter from the India News and Feature Alliance adding that "the readers... admired him for his candid comments on topical issues and the courage of his convictions."

"He always believed in taking the path least travelled," remembers Kerman, describing her father as "a maverick who taught us to lead and not to follow... He just could not get enough of life. He wanted to go to Nepal, to Tibet, to the Himalayas." When he visited Kerman in Hyderabad he regretted not being taken to see the Film City. A trip to any state invariably meant a meeting with the director general of police there. And yet the national figure was equally comfortable having discussions with the rickshaw driver or cabbie to ascertain their views on different issues. In 1997 he inaugurated the Rustamji Institute of Information Technology at the All India BSF Training Centre at Tekanpur near Gwalior. In his will he has bequeathed a

Rustamji with Naju and Cyrus witnessing the Republic Day parade. The 1966 photo by Henri Cartier-Bresson was reproduced in the media 30 years later

corpus of four lakh rupees to the Institute to be used to annually finance the education of a female student.

To Kerman her father was always "kind, gentle, caring... He would never be shocked about anything. He would let you work out your own problems; look at things neutrally; never be judgmental... He was diplomatic and yet frank. His actions were totally from the heart. Very spontaneous, he was full of laughter and jokes. He would always like to start his speech with a funny anecdote..."

Having enjoyed the Rustamjis' hospitality on innumerable occasions when she and her family visited them at different postings Freney Dalal-Pagdiwala remembered the awe and respect the considerate and generous Rustamji commanded from them as juniors. Everybody in the house had to be at the table at the appointed hour for every meal when nutritious food (that would include some rare variety of home grown raw spinach) would be served. In the evenings though the youngsters would be taken out for a treat! For personal outings with the family, it was always his private car that was used and never the state allocated Impala that was reserved for official trips.

Routine and regular exercise dominated his lifestyle until a couple of months prior to his demise. The physical illhealth of his wife Naju who required biweekly dialysis was very stressful for him, observed Kerman. "There was great



Rustamji with granddaughter Zenobia

love between him and Naju," it was reported on the Diary page of the *Afternoon* of March 4, "He looked forward to rushing home to her. All through her recent illness, on days when she was not undergoing dialysis, Khusro would often take her for a drive to Worli Seaface in the evening. We used to think that for anybody in their late 80s, one sunset was as good as the next one. But not for this couple. They loved life, they loved each other." In fact, he had developed a crack in his spine when trying to rush to Naju's aid (to lift her off the floor where she had fallen) he had slipped. Rather than have others worry about his condition he continued with his normal chores until the pain became unbearable and he had to be hospitalized.

A daily walk was a must with the tall, 6'2" policeman and until the age of 75 when he had fallen off a horse and fractured his ribs, Rustamji would regularly go riding too. When he was posted in Bhopal the family had different pets that included dogs, a panther, a deer and a horse! After he had settled in Bombay, bazaaring at Bhaji galli (at Grant Road) was a part of his routine too and the fishmongers there knew that he came shopping not only for his family's needs but also those of his servants!

He may not have visited a fire-temple on a regular basis but he followed the path of good thoughts, words and deeds, observed Kerman who considered him "a little short of agnostic. He did not believe in rites and rituals. In the absence of vultures he felt dakhmenashini was archaic. He had a Hindustani approach to life, believing that caste and creed would pull us down and not help us as a nation."

"We in India have not yet comprehended that in today's world the community has to adapt, accept, even compromise in the interest of maintaining harmony, and helping each other in joy and sorrow," Rustamji, a former president of the Delhi Parsi Anjuman, had conveyed in an article, "A difference of approach" (*Parsiiana*, October 1996).

As summed up P. R. Parthasarathy of the IPS, "The more we tried the more we realized what a big and unbridgeable gap there was between him and us. His thinking was so pure and devoid of an evil thought. Even in his criticism he was soft to the extent of ending up being 'generous.'"

The upright police officer is survived by his wife Naju, daughter Kerman and son Cyrus.

THE ORTHODOX AND LIBERAL... continued from page 43

Vartaman and *Kaiser-E-Hind* were discontinued. Even *Jam-e-Jamshed* was adversely affected. Once a voluminous daily it is now being published as a weekly tabloid with almost (half) of it in English. Whatever Gujarati is used pertains to miscellaneous news such as Parsi deaths, donations to Parsi religious funds, etc. The journal is wedded to English to such an extent that the recent controversy as regards the disposal rites of the dead was discussed at length in English.

The owners of the *Jam-e-Jamshed* previously claimed that they adopt the middle line. It cannot be said that the approach adapted by the *Jamé* to the problems arising in the Parsi community has always been neutral. It has been advocating the age-old beliefs, customs and traditions of the Parsis. The Parsis, by and large, are known to be progressive, but in certain areas they have remained static. Its role as a sociopolitical defender has come to be criticized by the reformists. It seems that the impact of that criticism and the change in the milieu has presently come to be felt.

Another journal that followed a trend different from that of the *Jam-e-Jamshed* was *Kaiser-E-Hind*. The *Jamé* was a daily, while *Kaiser-E-Hind* was a weekly with a wide circulation in the community. Faramji Kavasji Mehta established it on January 1, 1882. His views gained respect for its owner. 'Always speak the truth, think of the public welfare, side the truth, be a champion of truth and freedom, sacrifice (one's) self for others,' was its ideology. The editor advised people to resort to reason in religious matters. His words are worth noting: "We will prove to be the enemy of superstition and fanaticism; we will strike a balance between the head and the heart."

Mehta had a soft corner for the Hindi Rashtriya Mahasabha, viz the Congress. The English columns that supported the Congress party were entrusted to people like Dinsha Edaljee Wacha. The English articles penned by that diplomat and economist drew attention not only of the average readers but also of scholars. Because of the English articles, the

circulation of the journal widened beyond Bombay. Later on, Sir Rustom Masani succeeded Wacha in editing the English section.

In the year 1914, Erachshaw Rustamji Heerjibehedin took over *Kaiser-E-Hind*. He made it a lively, community weekly. In social, religious and political fronts, Heerjibehedin exhibited progressive zeal and used the weekly as a vehicle for

spreading his ideology. He bitterly criticized orthodoxy but crossed all boundaries of decency. In his column "Chalani Rupiyoy" he mocked the leaders and workers of the orthodox school. This resulted in bitterness in the community.

Among the Gujarati periodicals, *Kai-*

ser-E-Hind had the maximum number of pages. Miscellaneous columns, appealing chiefly to the Parsi readers, were published besides news. In the year 1937, Heerjibehedin started the *Kaiser-E-Hind Weekly* as an independent English periodical. Its publication came to a stop shortly after his demise. However, an English section of the same name came to be published in the Gujarati edition and it was often found superior to the Gujarati section. Heerjibehedin introduced novel sections in the journal, published attractive pictures and even caricatures, presented supplements on trade and commerce. He sent a special correspondent to England at the *Weekly's* expense to cover the Round Table Conference. Never before had any local journal ventured to do so.

Following Heerjibehedin's death in 1940, his son Jal succeeded him. He retained the policy of the journal but added more seriousness and maturity. Shallowness of thought was no longer seen in the journal. Occasionally, he even seemed to be favoring old doctrines. The reading public that had been fed with sensational news and controversies obviously rejected such a sober and mild weekly. The daily *Jam-e-Jamshed*, which echoed the voice of the orthodoxy, was transformed into a weekly and the publication of the weekly *Kaiser-E-Hind* was stopped. It was a tremendous blow to Parsi journalism but it still had to withstand one more similar blow.

To be continued



MASTER GROUP



**MASTER
MARINE** *Services*
PVT. LTD.

Certified Marine Surveyor (Govt. Licensed) and Loss Assessors



**Prudential Shipping Agencies
Private Limited**

*Shipping Agents, Cargo Brokers and
Multi Transport Operators*



MEHER CONTAINER TERMINALS P. LTD.

(A division of MMSPL) Yard and CFS management



Kalson Power Tech
PVT. LTD.

*Hydro-Power—3MW NUGU Hydro-Power Project near Mysore in
Karnataka Commissioned-Dec2002*

www.mastergroups.com

Corporate Office:

22/D S. A. Brelvi Road, Fort, Bombay 400001 • Tel: 22873567-22886642-22886643 Fax: 91-22-22870139
Cable: "MOORINGS" Telex: 118-2119 MMSB Email: mmsplb@mastergroups.com

Administrative Office:

55A/63A, Walchand Hirachand Marg, Opp G.P.O., Bombay 400001 Tel: 22692787 (10 Lines)
Fax: 91-22-22652841 Cable: "SHIPMENT" Email: prudential@mastergroups.com

*** Where Growth Is A Way Of Life ***



ab **Rozana** *ek* **Utsav!**

rasna rozana and rasna utsav
a celebration of good health and great taste.



R.N. 9474/64 Tech/47-540/MBI/2003-05
Licence no 198, Licensed to
Post without prepayment

Mudra-Rasna-01/421 NF