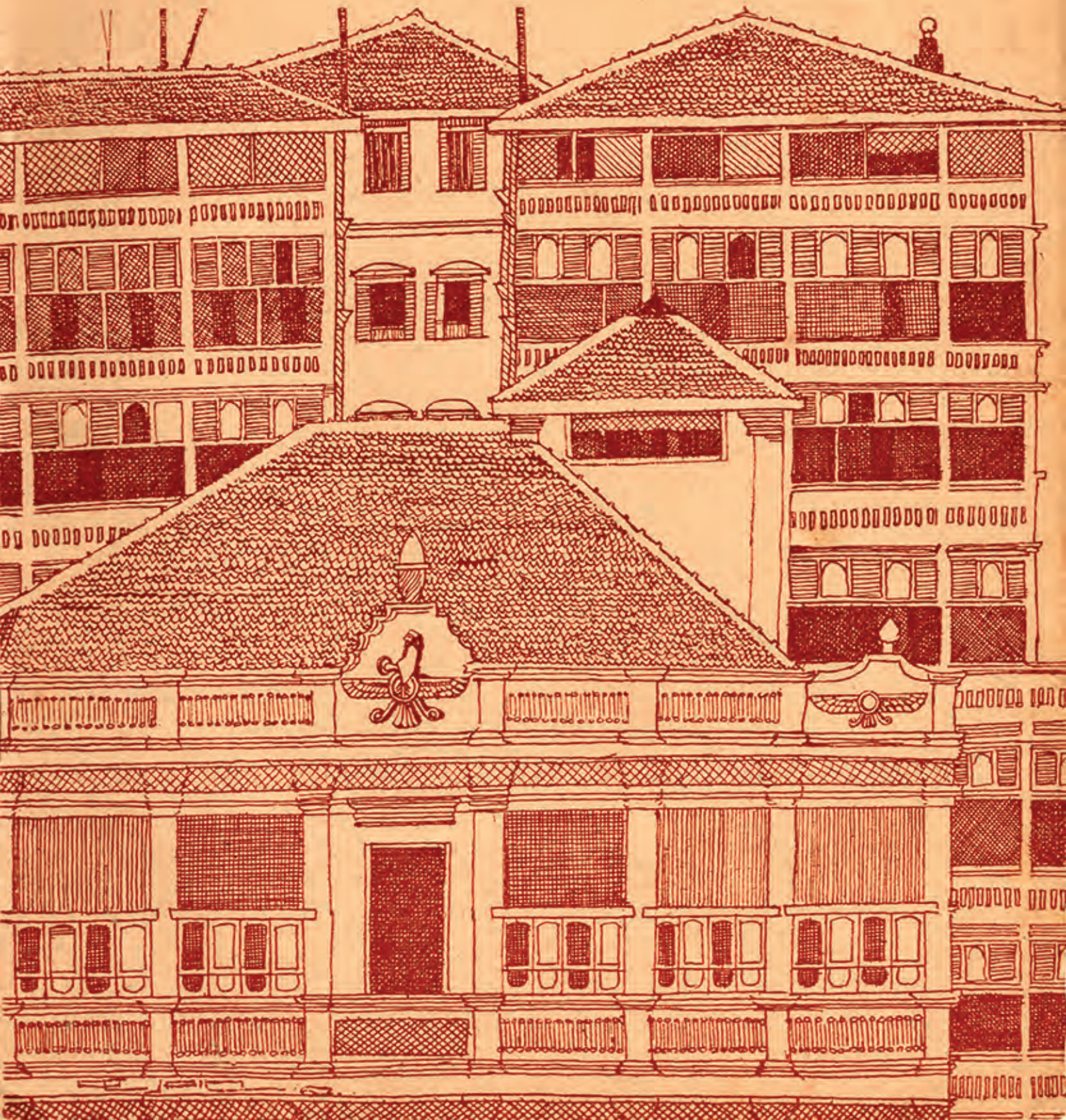
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Parsiana

May-June 1978 Vol. 2 No. 5

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Parsiana cover : Sketch of Bombay's Sodawaterwalla Agiary by Architect Uttam Jain.

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Editor's Column

The saga of the Federation of the Parsi Zoroastrian Anjumans of India is slowly assuming the proportions of a soap opera. The climax of the current chapter hinges on whether or not the disgruntled trustees of the Bombay Parsi Panchayat (BPP) will rejoin the Federation and find true happiness or whether the Federation will become just another affair to remember. Amidst the suspense, intrigue and anguish, the drama unfolds in Bombay, Delhi and the far corners of the country. Indeed so crucial has the question of the BPP resigning or rejoining become that people have lost sight of the larger issue, namely what is in the best interest of the community.

Assuming that the BPP trustees want to remain out of the Federation, should they be enticed back? So long as there is no unity of thought can a Federation comprising all the Anjumans in India serve a purpose? One found in the past that on a subject such as the uplift of the Zoroastrian priesthood, on which all delegates were in agreement, nothing was done. In meeting after meeting, the representatives were informed that time was required and a report would be ready for the next meeting, but to no avail.

At the Executive Council meeting in Delhi on July 15, the delegates passed a resolution to the effect that controversial religious questions would not be taken up by the council. The resolution which is a sop to the BPP trustees, has made a mockery of the Federation. Cannot the representatives of the various anjumans of India, people who control crores of rupees of trust funds and properties, be relied on to discuss religious matters? Is it that the community feels the funds are safe with these people but not our traditions and principles? And what constitutes a religious controversy? If a representative were to say that the sale of sandalwood should be subsidized and another representative differed as he felt it would mean subsidizing an individual's religious beliefs, the discussion would have to cease.

The Webster's Dictionary defines controversy as "a discussion marked especially by the expressing of opposing views;" the definition of religion in the same dictionary is "the service and worship of God or the supernatural". So it is clear that if any differences arise in any matter pertaining to religion, no discussion can take place. In short the community's apex body has negated its role as an apex body. Perhaps the next resolution should be that the council should not discuss matters pertaining to the Zoroastrian community. This will ensure that no controversial questions pertaining to the community arise. Shortly after that the council should pass a resolution saying that no discussion on any subjects should be permitted and the delegates should gather only for communal prayers, *jalooda* and *malido*. This would ensure the much desired unity, or what Mahatma Gandhi termed "the peace of the graveyard."

So long as the BPP trustees view the Federation as a threat to their hegemony, it is apparent they will sabotage its functioning from within or without. Thus we find that though the BPP severed its ties with the Federation, they still tried to pressure the other member anjumans to resign and sign a requisition demanding the Federation be wound up.

While the BPP left the Federation because they felt they were unloved and that the Federation served no purpose, the question arises as to why so many of the other anjumans followed suit? Why did they not exercise their individual judgement? Why did they forsake their leadership role? If they genuinely felt the Federation served no purpose, why did they not resign earlier? A few Anjumans such as Calcutta and Secunderabad & Hyderabad have not signed the requisition and have also made it clear that they will not kowtow to the BPP. With their cooperation and that of a few other anjumans, the Federation can and should continue. In due time the other anjumans will either come around or form a parallel body. If they form a second body, let them do so. Competition is often a spur to achievement. What the community needs today is leaders not peacemakers.

* * *

The Cama Baug incident in which the trustees of the hall initially refused to permit its use for Soonnu Enty's navjote as her mother was a non-Parsi (see "The Cama Baug Episode"), has its brighter side. In a community where too many Zoroastrians have been indifferent to the plight of their fellow community members, Rusi Enty took up the cudgels and fought for his children's rights. There was the possibility that through behind the scenes negotiations, Enty could have obtained permission to use the hall, but he preferred to take the matter to the public and thereby did the community a great service. By setting an example of what a determined individual can do, he has made others aware that they have a right to use the halls, even if they have married out of the community. Of course this right only extends to Parsi males because ours is a backward community in many respects, but perhaps now some women will come forward and fight as bravely as Enty did. If change will not come from above, it must come from below. The gratuitous assistance rendered to Enty by both Rusi Sethna and *The Bombay Samachar* is evidence that there are many in the community to help such people fight community causes.

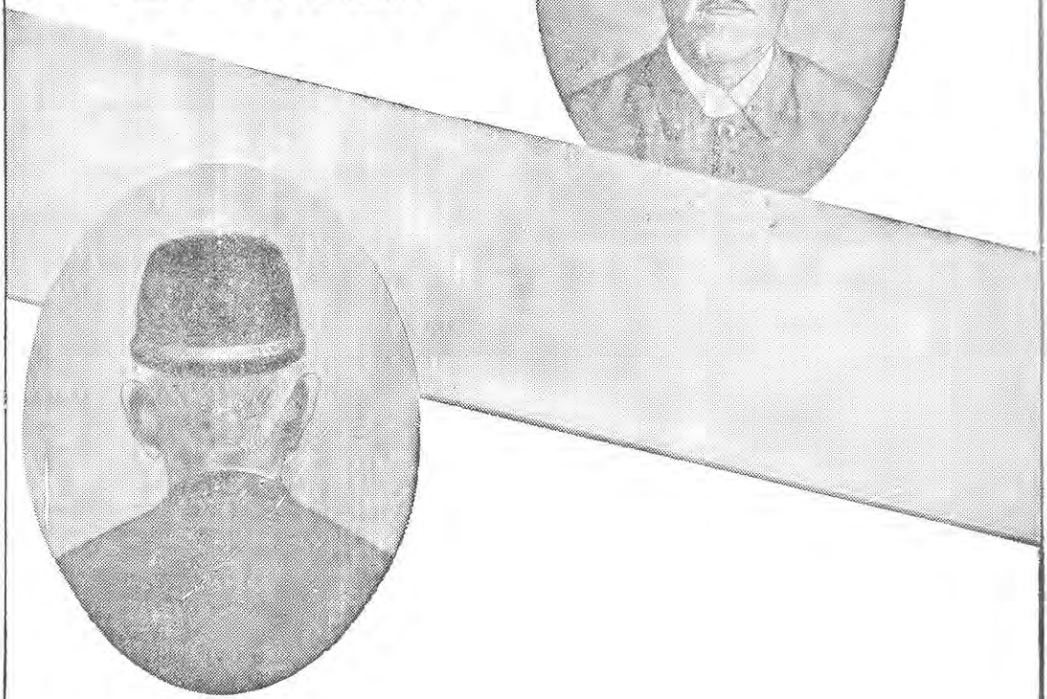
A HUNDRED YEARS AGO

In his speech at Nowsaree, Sir Richard Temple dwelt upon the fact that the Parsees, who were once an agricultural and military race, are now neither cultivators nor soldiers. They are merchants, shop-keepers, and clerks, most of them being anxious to live by their brains rather than by their hands. If they continue to increase in numbers, His Excellency said, this state of things cannot continue. Parsees must take to agriculture, to handicrafts, even to soldiering. To this statement we might take the preliminary objection that it is very doubtful whether the Parsees are "continuing to increase." They are said to have ceased to increase and multiply, and are now in some danger of experiencing a slow decline. For marriage is looked upon by many of the younger generation as a perilous venture not to be entered into until the future is made more or less certain. A certain standard of comfort, or, if the word is thought more applicable, of luxury, has been set up by the community, and habits of extravagance and display have been acquired which will possibly have the same effect in encouraging a proneness to celibacy amongst the Zoroastrian community that the progress of nineteenth century civilization has had upon our middle class at home.

From The Times of India, 7-3-78.

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Readers' views are welcome on any subject of interest to the community and should be sent to The Editor, Readers' Forum, Parsiana, G.P.O. Box 892, Bombay 400 001. Letters are subject to editing for reasons of space and clarity.

ZEST Services

Many Zarathushtrian mothers who are married to non-Zarathushtrians, find that though their husbands are willing to allow their children to become Zarathushtrians, they cannot do so as they lack adequate support and priests to perform the Navjote Ceremony. We are willing to arrange for and perform such navjotes. Interested persons may contact us at Zaruthushtrians for Emancipation & Socio - Religious - Transformation (ZEST), C/o Y. M. Khambatta, Uranwalla Mansion, Opposite Family Planning Hospital, Parel, Bombay 400 012.

Those priests who are willing to register themselves with us as part or full-time priests, may kindly contact us. All correspondence will be treated as strictly confidential.

We are organizing volunteers to impart Zarathushtrianism to children in selected age groups using modern methods and available aids. Those who wish to volunteer to teach may contact us.

Y. M. KHAMBATTA

Scapegoats

Parsis should refrain from making inter-marriage a scapegoat for the internal ills of the community. In a mixed marriage—if 'torn' children exist, the cause is not mixed marriages, but the immaturity of the parents who come to live together as one, yet refuse to compromise. Where there is unity of purpose in the minds of the parents, dualism in religion or culture can never exist.

As for mixed marriages leading to the extinction of the good qualities Parsis are noted for, are other races not endowed with a sense of charity, enterprise, tolerance, honesty etc?

It is asked that if all people belong to one family, why did God give them different physical characteristics. The answer is how can there be any type of "sameness" in a world family when even in a nuclear family the members are not the same? Even in a nuclear family one child may be dark, another may be fair; one upright, another a swindler—and all of the same parentage. Differences in pattern, colour and trait, are a result of genes, geographical and atmospheric location and surroundings, and not a result of "creation."

KASHMIRA B. BARIA

Directions, please

K. D. Chargeman inquires about cracking or whipping a kusti and the direction to be faced while doing so (Readers' Forum, *Parsiana* March 1978).

The kusti is neither cracked nor whipped, but is gently shaken with the right hand, toward the left hand side of the person. It matters little whether you face the Sun, east, south or west, so long as you do not face North in accordance with Zoroastrian scriptures. If one ties the kusti after sunset, one must face the light, be it a lamp or electricity. But if the light is on the North side of the wall, then what? Perhaps a scholar can help....

F. F. MULLAN
Udvada

Made in China?

I am interested in collecting any information on Chinese embroideries (*gharas, jhublas, borders*) made for the Parsis in western India around the turn of the century.

Bombay's Victoria and Albert Museum (in the Jeejamata Udyan compound) houses photographic colour exhibits of what appear to be such Chinese embroidered work. However, the plates have been generally bunched together in large picture frames along with Indian embroidery. The curator informs me that this information and the plates have been taken from a book on Indian embroidery written by a Frenchman at the turn of the century. I wonder if any one who knows whether these are of Indian or Chinese origin, could write to me at Jupiter Apts., Off Altamount Road, Bombay 400 026.

Ms S. N. NANPORIA

One Hundred Years Ago

For some time past the Guzerati papers have been full of complaints regarding the defectiveness of the law regulating marriage and divorce among Parsees. A recent issue of *the Sammachar* gives publicity to a communication from a Parsee at Surat who is so alarmed at the social abuses which have crept in through the laxity of the law now prevailing, that he loudly calls upon the heads of the community to set about amending it, lest scandals abound to the utter deterioration of domestic morals amongst his people. As matters stand now, the most flagrant breaches of conjugal duty are treated with a leniency quite disproportionate to the gravity of the offence, and thus it happens that the endurance of so light a penalty as a short period of incarceration, might suffice to release either party to a marriage from all obligation to behave to the other as his or her wife or husband.

Times of India, 2/3/77

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Events and Personalities

"The Gathas"

The non-availability of scholarly books on Zoroastrianism is a major handicap to the study and understanding of the religion. Aside from a few second hand book shops and from a few Parsi households, there are hardly any other sources for acquiring the out of print books. Burjor Taraporewala, whose father was the renowned Zoroastrian scholar, Irach J. S. Taraporewala, has over the course of the years reprinted some of the books penned by his father. These include *The Gathas*, *Daily Prayers* and *The Religion of Zarathushtra*. But "during the last ten years," notes Burjor Taraporewala in a letter addressed to those interested in reprinting the books, "the cost of book publication...has risen steeply. I have been unable to republish the books for lack of finance". Taraporewala proposes to reprint the combined Gujerati-English edition of the *The Gathas* for which demand is considerable both in India and abroad. But as each copy will cost between Rs 25 to Rs 30 he adds the reprinting will only be possible if there are "sufficient" funds at his disposal. Those who can contribute or help raise the amount should contact Taraporewala at India House No. 2, Flat 14, 3rd floor, Kemp's Corner, August Kranti Marg, Bombay 400 036.

Respectfully Yours

The Poona Parsi Panchayat, one of the few anjumans in India to publish a newsletter, has suggested a simple, economic and effective way of uplifting the priesthood, namely, educating *behdins*. "It is incumbent upon every Zoroastrian that whenever he comes across an Athornan Saheb, he should wish him and show respect to him," notes the newsletter. "If all of us make an effort to extend courteous respect to every (priest) whenever we may encounter him, the collective effect of this small gesture would go a long way to build up his prestige not only (amongst) Zoroastrians but also in the eyes of people of other communities."

In other news, the newsletter notes that: Neville Homi Irani, president of the Young Zoroastrians Youth Association, stood first class in the B. E. (metallurgy) First Semester Examination. Neville is a National Government Merit Certificate holder; Ms Zarine Lam (Karani) stood first class first in the M.Ed. examination and earned the Lok Manya Tilak Prize. She has reportedly won a scholarship from the University of Denver in the U.S.A. for a master's degree in education; Ms Banoo Soli Irani and Hoshedar Feroz Tamboli were among the top 20 candidates in the Higher School Leaving Certificate examination, securing 85 percent and 84 percent respectively.

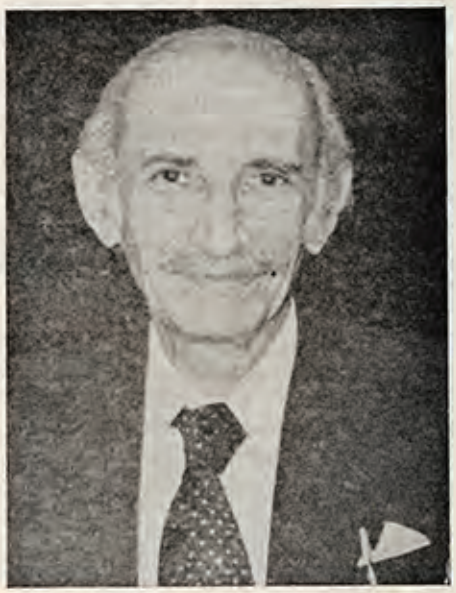
In the transition column are listed: Dr Jamshedji Byramshah Jagus, one of the Trustees of the Poona Parsee Panchayat for the last 20 years, was connected with the Lions Club, Blind Men's Association, Jaycees and many other organisations; Shapoorji Nusserwanji Anklesaria, well-known businessman who had brought the name of Poona and his concern on the transport map of India; and Mottu Darashah Mohtabhoy, who aided the community's Youth Wing, following an accident in his factory.

Homoeopathic Pioneer

Dr Sarosh Wadia the noted Bombay homoeopath has been made a Diplomate of the American Board of Homoeotherapeutics, (ABH) the first non-American to be so honoured since the last six or seven years. "We all know of your fine work" noted a letter from the ABH secretary, Dr Maesimund B. Panos, informing Wadia of the award for which he had to submit a thesis and appear for an examination.

The first Indian to be made a fellow of the Hahnemaan Medical Society of America, Wadia has held many prominent positions in national and international homoeopathic organizations. When homoeopathy was not recognised in the old state of Bombay, Wadia along with a committee of seven others impressed upon the state government the need for formal recognition. As a result the Homoeopathic Act of 1951 was passed in the Assembly and a tribunal was constituted with Wadia as one of its members and later chairman.

Wadia notes that Parsis have been pioneers in homoeopathy with the substantial contributions of doctors such as the late Burjo Behram, Edul Behram and Navroji Mehta. "All these three doctors were allopathic graduates like me but opted for homoeopathy," notes Wadia. "This class of allopa-



Wadia: "Fine Work"



Indian Ambassador to the U.S.A., Nani Palkhivala (right) being greeted by Princeton University President Willam C. Bowen after being awarded an honorary doctorate by Princeton University

thic graduates (who opt for homoeopathy) is now dying down. In Europe and America it is compulsory to be a medical graduate first and then a homoeopath."

An honorary lecturer at the Bombay Homoeopathic Medical College till he retired a few years back, the 68-year-old doctor attends two charitable dispensaries in Bombay, besides tending to his private practice. His son Rashid, is also a practicing homoeopath.

Helping Hands

Among the many services offered by The Time and Talents Club, one of Bombay's leading social service organizations, is the Helping Hand (HH) project which completed its second anniversary this July. Created with the objective of counselling women in the education, employment, marriage, children, divorce, the law, taxes, medical and other fields, the committee has banded together a group of professionals "specialized in various spheres to give the best possible help and guidance where necessary."

Over 70 cases had been registered till March; these included saving a marriage between an inter-caste couple, obtaining a divorce for a woman from an "unendurable marriage," admitting three children in hospitals, providing sewing machines at very nominal hire, and assisting children to gain admission into schools and night classes at reduced fees.

The HH workers can be contacted on any Tuesday, Wednesday or Friday, except bank holidays, between 10.30 and noon at St Sebastian's Goan High School, St Xavier Street, Girgaon, Bombay 400 002.

The Inner Eye

Bombay eye surgeon, **Keiki R. Mehta** has been honoured by the American Intra-Ocular Implant Society for his innovative work on a soft lens implant for cataract patients. Mehta picked up an "appreciation" award and certificate earlier this year in Los Angeles when he presented a paper along with a demonstration film, at the invitation of the Society, the largest of its kind in the world. The paper, based on 35 cases, was also read at the National Eye Research Foundation Conference in Chicago. Developed in conjunction with Doctors S. N. Sathe and S. D. Karyekar, the Mehta Soft Lens Implant is now being "routinely fitted and we haven't had any problems," says the 37-year-old doctor.

While a contact lens is fitted on the eye and is removable, an implant is inserted inside the eye, replacing the opaque lens of the cataract sufferer. The device has been in use for some 13 years but was previously fitted on with hard plastic clips which caused a reaction after a while, Mehta explains. The ophthalmologist replaced these with soft plastic clips—made of German material processed in Bombay—and this "second generation of implants is designed to overcome (the earlier) shortcomings," he says. "At present, the cost is high because the implants are made in very small quantities, but we hope to bring it down."

An M.B.B.S. from Christian Medical College in Ludhiana and holder of diplomas in ophthalmology from Chandigarh, London and Ireland, and an M.A. from Chandigarh, Mehta has also done research for the World Health Organisation. In token of his work in Punjab villages, he was given a Fellowship in the Royal Society of Health, London, last year.



Mehta: Soft Lens Implant

"India has a large cadre of skilled ophthalmic surgeons, only held back by the high price of imported instruments," Mehta says. "If we were allowed to purchase research instruments at cost, India could soon rank among the best in the world."

J. J. College Jubilee

Twenty-five years ago the Sir J. J. College of Commerce had its humble beginnings as a typewriter institute in the Sir J. J. Parsi Benevolent Institution building on Dadabhoy Naoroji Road. The funds came from the un-

utilized monies of a *madressa* fund. Today, the Sir J. J. College of Commerce is one of the leading institutions of its kind in Bombay and offers an array of courses in the secretarial, commercial and business fields. Occupying almost an entire building in the Fort area, the college which functions "under the overall umbrella" of the Bombay Parsi Panchayat trustees, is a self-sufficient body and a model for other trusts to emulate.

In an article written on the occasion of the College's silver jubilee, Homi D. Mehta, the institute's honorary director, noted the college "has a unique identity and its functioning is interwoven with sound management principles and practices." Jamshed N. Guzder, chairman of the college's managing committee and a noted businessman stated in his message released for the anniversary that "in the context of recent happenings in the educational system of our country, where because of constant changes students completing High School have been thoroughly demoralised and frustrated, institutions like the Sir J. J. College of Commerce, imparting much needed commercial education, have proved to be a great blessing."

The story of the Sir J. J. College of Commerce goes back to Sir Jamshetjee Jeejeebhoy, "a man of great foresight and vision," notes Mehta "who earmarked his personal estate to establish a chain of institutions which could be the temples of learning. In the area of office training and commerce education, an institution styled as Sir J. J. P. B. Institution Commercial Classes was constituted as early as in 1914, to be run under the auspices of the then Trustees of the Parsi Panchayat, Bombay. These classes covered the subjects of typewriting, shorthand and book-keeping. The classes were essentially on a part time basis and they served their utility for almost four decades.

"The then Trustees of the Parsee Panchayat, as a part of their programme for the amelioration of the Parsee youth through education, felt it opportune to convert the "Commerce Classes" into a "Commercial Institute". Hence, upon the recommendation of an expert committee set up by them for this purpose, they transformed the Commercial Classes into the "Sir J. J. Commercial Institute". This was done in June 1953. The Trustees also appointed an Advisory Committee to advise them on the academic operations and the administrative set up of the Institute.

"The first Advisory Committee consisted of Sir N. J. Wadia (as Chairman), Prof P. C. Hansotia, Mr R. P. Dalal, Dr R. C. Cooper, Mr R. Nanabhoy and Mr J. H. Cama. The enlarged educational operation also involved a larger financial aid, and the Trustees, with the permission of the High Court, were able to annually divert a part of the income accruing under the Sir J. J. Madressa Fund.

"There was a steady increase in enrolments and the Institute was fortunate in attracting good faculty members who considered the assignment more as a social service than a means of livelihood. There was also a need to have separate premises to run the institution on a full time basis.

"The year 1960 was essentially a turning point in the history of the institute. The Trustees of the Parsee Panchayat appointed Mr Maneck Pheroze Mistry as the Chairman of the then Advisory Committee and Prof P. C. Hansotia as the Hon. Principal. The Trustees were also able to spare some premises in the Dhun Building at 14 Nanabhoy Lane and the institute was housed there. It started to operate its shorthand and typewriting classes on a full time basis and its diploma classes on a morning part time basis. In the same year, with a view to complying with Government regulations, Sir J. J. Commercial Institute was retained to conduct only courses approved by the Government of Maharashtra for their commerce Diploma, and all other courses were transferred to another institution styled as Sir J. J. College of Commerce."

Some of the subsequent highlights in the history of the college include establishment of a full fledged secretarial division in 1966, affiliation with business colleges in the U.S.A. in 1968, launching of the executive secretarial course for graduate students—the first of its kind in India—and establishment of a foreign students division in 1969; in the succeeding years a publication division, and a computer wing for punch operating were started, the correspondence course division was established in 1972, and in 1975 the college started the business management division and received accredition from the Indian Merchants' Chamber for conducting the course leading to their diploma in business management.

As Bombay Parsi Panchayat Chairman Mr B. K. Boman-Behram noted in his congratulatory message, "I am sure the Silver Jubilee will mark a further milestone in the growth and progress of the college."

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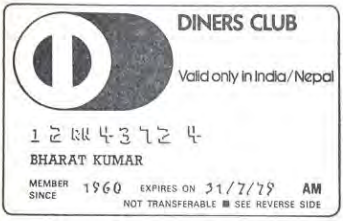
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TIMES ART

News from the Media

As it is not possible to personally contact the large number of Zoroastrians who feature in the news, *Parsiana* will carry items on Zoroastrians from the various newspapers and journals. Readers are welcome to send in clippings.

Lt.-Gen. Sethna is MGO at army headquarters

New Delhi, July 30: **Lt.-Gen. A. M. Sethna,** AVSM, has taken over as the master general of ordinance at the army headquarters, says an official release. He was the commandant of the defence services staff college at Wellington and has been promoted to the rank of lieutenant-general on assuming this appointment.

Gen. Sethna was closely connected with the planning and execution of the operations in support of the Mukti Bahini during the Indo-Pakistan conflict in 1971 and in recognition of his distinguished service of an exceptional order, he was awarded the ati vishisht seva medal in 1972. (*Times of India.*)

Award for JRD

Bombay, June 15: The former chairman of Air-India, **J. R. D. Tata,** has been selected for the Tony Jannus Award for 1979 in recognition of his outstanding contribution to the development of air transport.

Appropriately enough, the message informing him of the award was received by Tata as he was being felicitated by the Air-India staff in his office today. The message requested him to accept the award at a special ceremony in Tampa, Florida, in March.

At today's reception, K.G. Appusamy, Air-India's managing director, presented Mr. Tata with a silver model of the Puss Moth which he flew on India's first scheduled air mail flight from Karachi to Bombay on October 15, 1932. (*Indian Express* and *Times of India*).

President's Police Medal

Inspector **Minoo Irani** of the Jogeshwari Police Station who handled the communal riots in Bombay's Jogeshwari area in 1974 and 1975, has won the President's Police Medal for meritorious service for his several detections of housebreaking, thefts, busting of gangs of car thieves and bullies in the suburbs.

A former student of Bharda New High School and Ruia College, Irani joined the police force in 1950. He was posted at Nasik and later to the Baroda District. He is credited with detecting the Asaj Village quadruple murder at Baroda District and since his transfer to Bombay in 1957 has served at various Police Stations in the city and also in the Detection of Crime Branch and Foreigners Branch, C.I.D.



Irani: meritorious service

In 1972 he arrested Phiroze Daruwala who had murdered four persons at Bombay's Dhobi Talao area. Irani was promoted to Asstt. Inspector of Police in 1973 and as Police Inspector in 1977.

Professor J. J. Chinoy—Leading Botanist

Professor **Jamshedji Jijibhoy Chinoy** was born on 18th February, 1909 at



Chinoy: researcher and teacher

Kutch-Bhuj in Gujarat. He obtained his B.Sc. and M.Sc. degrees with distinction from Bombay University in 1929 and 1931 respectively. During that tenure, he was awarded the Dakshina Fellowship of the Royal Institute of Science and the Research Fellowship of Bombay University as well as the Foreign Research Fellowship for further studies in the United Kingdom. He joined the Imperial College, London University for his Ph.D. degree under the guidance of the world renowned botanist, Professor F. G. Gregory and obtained his Ph.D. in 1935. On his return to India, he joined the Indian Central Cotton Committee, Lyalpur as a Physiological Assistant. In 1941, he joined Indian Agricultural Research Institute as second Assistant Economic Botanist. In 1947, he was appointed Reader in Botany in Delhi University where he continued working upto 1959. Dr. Chinoy joined Gujerat University as Professor of Botany in 1959 and from 1962 to 1974 he was the Director of the University School of Sciences.

For the last 50 years he was closely associated with pure and applied research in agricultural botany and plant physiology and his work has received worldwide recognition. In 1959 he presided over a session of plant physiology section of the IXth International Botanical Congress held at Montreal, Canada. He was elected Chairman of the "Physiology of Flowering" Session at a conference held in 1960 at the Indian Council of Agricultural Research, New Delhi. In

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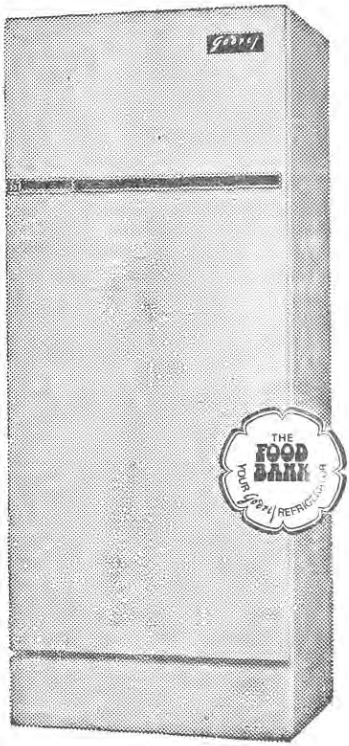
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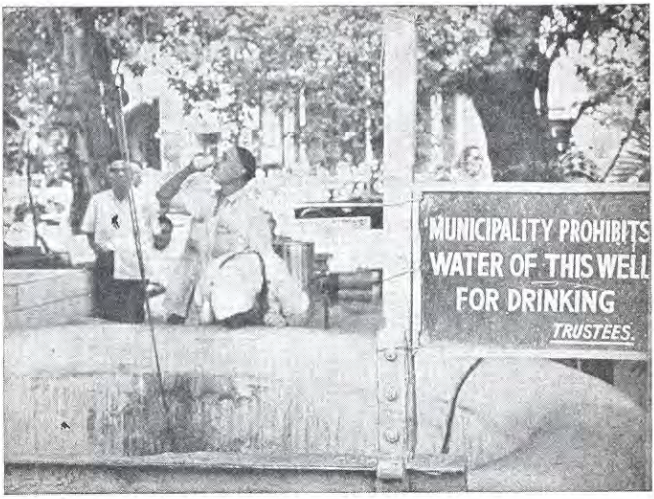


1961, Gujarat University awarded him the Dr K. G. Naik Gold Medal for his brilliant research. The Indian Council of Agricultural Research, New Delhi awarded him the coveted Rafi Ahmed Kidwai Memorial Prize for 1974-75 for his researches in the field of Agro-botany and Plant Physiology. On 12th September, 1976, Professor Chinoy was felicitated by The Ahmedabad Parsi Panchayat.

Professor Chinoy's researches on Physiology of seed germination, drought resistance, growth and development, energy requirements of plants, cellular and molecular aspects of floral induction and the role of ascorbic acid in plant metabolism are embodied in 251 research papers which are well-known and highly acclaimed in national and international circles. Most of the work has been reviewed in scientific monographs and is often quoted in books and reviews. In Gujarat University, he has established a strong and internationally recognized School of Plant Physiology, and more than 100 students have obtained their Ph.D. degree under his guidance. Chinoy passed away in Ahmedabad in May 1978.

Submitted by Ratan Marshall from Navyug Science College journal.

Give the picture a caption



The photo of a Parsi drinking water from the Bhikha Behram Well, despite a municipal notice, was taken by Farokh Reporter. Suggest a suitable caption for the picture. Prize for the best caption Rs. 50. Send your entries by November 15th to Parsiana, Caption Contest, G.P.O. Box 892, Bombay 400 001.

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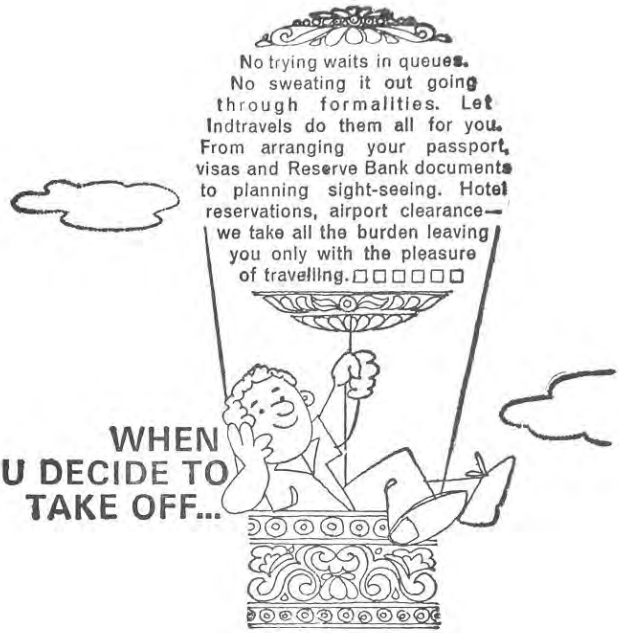
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The young ones

"A young lot starting out," is how Mahbanu Ostowari, secretary of the Australian Zoroastrian Association (AZA) in New South Wales, describes the Australian Zoroastrian community. There are approximately 300 to 400 Zoroastrians in Australia, all of whom are "well settled," most of them highly skilled professionals with a few in business, said Ostowari, who was recently on a visit to India. A mother of three who works in the public relations department of Bristol Meyers, Ostowari traces the New South Wales Zoroastrian community's genesis to 1967 when the population comprised of three or four families. "We started (an informal association) on a small scale around the end of 1969" when there were around seven or eight families. Since 1970 the numbers increased progressively to the present 200. "There was quite an influx from Calcutta," she recalled. The Whites Only Australian emigration policy restricted entry to larger numbers but Ostowari noted that once in the southern continent, there was "no discrimination."

About four years back, the Zoroastrians started "in more earnest" to form an association. A constitution was drawn up, office bearers elected and a newsletter published. The association has three main get-togethers namely at Jamshedi Navroz, Pateti and Christmas. "The Christmas gathering is invariably a *bhel puri* party," says Ostowari. In addition, an annual jashan at the commencement of the year, picnics, theatre parties, discussion and study groups are held; every second Sunday, religious classes are conducted for youngsters, mainly in the five to fifteen age group. Stories from the Shahnameh and other sources are related by Farrokh Mistree, AZA's treasurer and prayers are taught by Dr Peshotan Katrak, the association's vice-president. Three navjotes have been held in the last three years; "people prefer to come here" (to Bombay) for the navjotes, said Ostowari. Elections are held annually and members of the association are eligible to vote; Ms Gulu Billimoria was elected president last July. The AZA also had the distinction of having a non-Zoroastrian secretary a year ago, Ernani Giambuzzi who served three terms. "He was really good for the association," said Ostowari.

A "big factor" in the young association's existence was a visit by Farrokh's brother Khojaste Mistree, the charismatic, scholar-cum-preacher whose lectures attract large numbers of the community in India as well as overseas. Other visiting scholars included Framroz Rustomjee of Sri Lanka, author of *The Daily Prayers of the Zoroastrians* and other books who expired in Australia recently. The AZA so far "has not felt the necessity to look for guidance" in community matters to Bombay or anywhere else says Ostowari, the issues being resolved by the AZA as and when they arise. The association's plans for the future include a community center for which a building fund has been started. "We are still working out the feasibility," she replied when asked their target for collection.

The community Ostowari notes is "still very young" but she foresees for it a "flourishing" future.

Canadians of the Future

One of the primary objectives of Zoroastrians overseas is to enlighten the community at large as to who they are, what they contribute to their host country and what they expect in turn. In Canada, the Canadian Consultative Council on Multiculturalism held hearings earlier this year on the problems "confronting visible minorities in Canada." The Zoroastrian Society of Ontario (ZSO), presented a brief entitled "Canadians of the Future" which was prepared by Jamshed Mavalwala, a former president of ZSO, and presented by Sarosh Bharucha. We carry below extracts from the brief as published in the April Z.S.O. *Newsletter*:

"The Zoroastrian community of Ontario still upholds the values and morals preached by Zarathustra, our Prophet, six centuries before Christ. As the first monotheistic religion our basic tenets are Good Thoughts, Good Words, and Good Deeds. Our faith exhorts us to actively participate in society to further human good. Zoroastrian charities are well-known in Iran, India, Pakistan, and Great Britain, and we hope that the acts of our tiny community in Canada will be of benefit to all Canadians.

"We see ourselves as committed Canadians, committed to a multicultural Canada, and committed to a united Canada. We support and praise the Government of Canada for its multicultural policy and hope that all of us in Canada will learn to enjoy the diversity of peoples here, and the cosmopolitan excellence of our cities. We would urge the Government of Canada, through your Council, that in implementing its multicultural policies it go beyond grants for ethnic dances, and ethnic food. We, like thousands upon thousands of others, who have come here to make Canada our new home...seek with the many thousands of peoples in Canada like us, to live rich and full lives in this country. We seek to secure a proper recognition of our similarities, and an appreciation of our differences; to serve our country in meaningful ways.

"We are a community of doctors, lawyers, businessmen, university professors, school teachers, and accountants... We want to be treated as mainstream Canadians, not as 'ethnics'... We need encouragement to help us communicate with each other in Canada. We need encouragement to participate in Government at all levels, municipal, provincial and federal. We need to feel that you in your Council, and those who you advise in Ottawa, see us as we see ourselves, not as immigrants only, or as new Canadians only, but as Canadians of the Future, helping to build and strengthen a glorious new Canada..."

Plans for the "Mehraban Guiv Darbe Mehr Zoroastrian Temple," the fifty lakh rupee project financed by Iranian millionaire philantrophist Arbab Rustam Guiv, are progressing despite legal and technical hitches, notes the May-June *ZSO Newsletter*. The bulletin notes the general body voted in favour of acquiring the Mazo de la Roche property in Ontario. The society's consulting architect, Dinshaw Kanga, pointed out the major structural changes planned and "work on legal agreements, changes and incorporations to the existing constitution and bylaws etc. still continue to occupy the attention of the Trustees and the Executive Committee," says the newsletter.

"Meanwhile, inspite of strong representations made by the Trustees and friends like Dr Robert McClure and Dr Willard Oxtoby on our behalf, North York Council upheld the restricting bylaw to permit only single family uses in the area in which the

Mazo de la Roche property is located. The vendor has sued North York Council in the Ontario Supreme Court and as of today, the case is still under consideration. The *Newsletter* will keep the community apprised of the results of this action. But, this too, we hope, 'we shall overcome.'"

ZAGNY Chief

Dr Lovji Cama, who has served the Zoroastrian Association of Greater New York (ZAGNY) since its inception, heads the association's new board of directors. He takes over from Prof. Erach Munshi, another stalwart of the Greater New York community. Both Cama and Munshi helped build up the association into an influential body in the world Zoroastrian community. The other office bearers elected for the 1978-80 term are: Framroze Patel, vice president; Faroke Gandhi, secretary; Nariman Deboo, joint secretary; Sarosh Sukhia, treasurer; Prof. Kaikhosrov Irani, Dinshaw Mehta, Fred Morris, and Ms Navaz Bhavnagri, all members of the board at large.

Prof. Irani, who was on a visit to Bombay, noted that Ms Rustam Sarfeh, whose husband was instrumental in ZAGNY receiving a 15-lakh rupee donation from Arbab Rustam Guiv for the Darbe Mehr in New Rochelle, died recently following an illness. Both Dr and Ms Sarfeh have contributed considerable time and effort to ZAGNY and the Zoroastrian community in general.

New Quebec Board

A new executive committee of the Zoroastrian Association of Quebec (ZAQ) has been elected for the 1978-1980 term, notes the June issue of *Gavashni*. The committee members comprise Jimmy Bharucha, Dolly Dastoor, Jangoo Divecha, Gulnar Irani, Gev Karkaria, Fali Shroff, Rukhshan Surty and Jehan Bagli.

Those wishing to subscribe to *Gavashni* may send three dollars for an annual subscription (bank drafts can be sent from India) to ZAQ, P.O. Box 654, Station Tour de la Bourse, Montreal, PQ H4Z IJ9 Canada. Cheques should be made out to the "Zoroastrian Association of Quebec (*Gavashni*)."

Book Of Names

The Parsiana book of Iranian Names will shortly be on sale. Order your copy today. Only a limited number of books are to be printed. The names of boys and girls along with their meanings originally appeared in Parsiana. As those issues of the magazine are out of print, the lists are being reprinted in an attractively published 24-page booklet.

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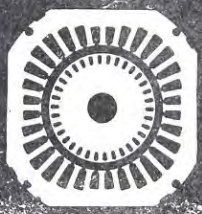
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The Cama Baug Episode

It started out simply enough. Rusi J. Enty, the principal of Unity High School, wanted to perform his daughter, Soonnu's navjote at Bombay's Cama Baug on May 2 this year. His family had an emotional and spiritual attachment to the place as he had been residing next door since his childhood and prayed regularly at the agiary in Cama Baug. But when he submitted his application for the loan of the hall he was pained and angered to find the trustees had refused him permission. The reason: Rusi Enty was married to a non-Parsi.

"I didn't sleep for four nights," said Enty. "I felt my children were paying for my actions ... I take them both to the agiary every day before we go anywhere. This is what I did as a boy. My wife, Harsha, speaks like a Parsi, cooks like one, looks like one. I waited nine years till the families gave their consent for me to marry her. Soonnu knew her prayers since she was three years old. My mother taught her. Other functions of mixed partners are held in the baug. Why did they pick on me?"

Fortunately for Enty, the law was on his side. A child of a Parsi Zoroastrian father is by definition a Parsi. The Cama Baug trustees, B. K. Boman-Behram, Jamshed N. Guzder, both trustees of the Bombay Parsi Panchayat, Dastur Kaikhushroo JamaspAsa, high priest of the Anjuman Atash Bahram and Munchersha Billimoria, the managing trustee acted in violation of the law of the land. Enty found two strong allies to help him in his fight, Rusi Sethna, a partner in the law firm of Romer Dadachanji Sethna & Co. and Jehan Daruwala, Editor of *The Bombay Samachar*, the prestigious Gujarati daily.

Sethna wrote a strongly worded letter dated March 1 (see "Dear Sirs") stating his clients right to use the hall, threatening legal action and offering to meet the trustees to "discuss this matter."

Despite Sethna's letter, when Enty went to Cama Baug on March 2 to participate in the draw for the halls, the secretary of the trust, E. M. Wellington, told him that under the rules and regulations of the trust "I regret you cannot be allowed the booking of the Cama Baug Halls."

Sethna dispatched another letter on March 8 to the trustees noting that "it is apparent that (the) conciliatory attitude which we are advising our client to take does not seem to evoke any favourable response... by excluding our client from the draw you have committed a totally illegal act, a breach of trust and have also denied and violated the rights of our client and his daughter as Parsi Zoroastrians."

After several meetings between Sethna, Burjor Antia, a partner of Mulla & Mulla and Craigie Blunt & Caroe, advocates for the Cama Baug trustees and the trustees themselves. Boman-Behram and Guzder reportedly agreed to permitting Enty the use of the halls, while JamaspAsa reportedly resigned from the trust.

On March 24, Antia replied, stating his clients "regret" that Enty was barred from participating in the draw and offering the use of the Cama Baug halls "on any day convenient to him ... even in the month of May, the Baug is available, on 7th May," or *amas*, the last day of the moon's cycle, considered to be a very inauspicious time.

"The trustees made no genuine attempt to help me. In fact they humiliated me, then gave me (a booking for) *amas*," said Enty. "I was in a panic. People had told me to be practical, to have the navjote performed and then fight it out. So I rushed to Allbless Baug." The Allbless Baug trustees agreed to renting Enty the hall. "They said they wouldn't back out."

Still the family was "in suspense. My wife who was one hundred percent

Chief guest Madhukarrao D. Chaudhari, Soonnu, Enty with Parvin and Ms Enty



for the navjote, and Soonnu, who also got stubborn about this along with me, were all tired and tense." Invitations were sent out on May 4, three days before the navjote as Enty wished to keep the Allbless Baug location a secret for fear of any last minute hitches or refusal. As a result, says Enty over 100 guests could not attend due to the short notice. He himself had no time to get clothes made for the occasion and wore his wedding clothes, buying only a new pair of shoes. "I wanted to get it over with. I also had my work to worry about, though fortunately they knew my case in the department and were sympathetic."

The navjote was performed by Enty's family priest, Ardeshir Jijina and his son Rusi, with Maharashtra minister of revenue, Madhukarrao D. Chaudhari as chief guest and the police band "for entertainment" and support in case of any unpleasantness. "We were careful all along," says Enty who took the children to Wadiaji's Atash Bahram after the ceremony.

"Of course, the way is now clear for my other daughter, Parvin's navjote!" the voluble schoolmaster laughs, but "I am not satisfied. I want to have a religious reception for the navjote there—not just a jashan which they can't refuse me—which all the people who couldn't come to the ceremony itself, can attend. This time I will invite all the Cama Baug trustees."

The family and friends have all supported Enty's struggle, he notes and total strangers who read about the case in *The Samachar* have written to congratulate him. A Maharashtrian gentlemen, one of whose family members has married a Parsi wrote asking for an invitation to the navjote and attended it; Enty says this is "the kind of reaction I have generally got." Other Parsi men married to non-Parsis have written for advice and Enty says that there are several other similiar cases up at Cama Baug though he has had "nothing whatsoever" to do with them.

"There should be equality," answers Enty when asked about the admission into the religion of the children of Parsi women married "out" and is willing to help anyone who wants to test such a case in the courts.

Enty, who also teaches at Unity High School which was founded by his parents, feels the community "will do better if we go ahead with modifications. One has to change with the times. Keep your orthodoxy at home," he advises. "A man must have a right to his own opinions."

Dear Sirs

We carry the correspondence pertaining to Rusi J. Enty's battle with the Cama Baug trustees. The letters were first published in *The Bombay Samachar's Parsi Tari Arsi* column of April 30 written by Editor Jehan Daruwala.

Sir, I beg to say that I would like to book Cama Baug (Motto Ottlo) Big Hall—facing Dreamland Cinema side for Adar Roj, Adar Maha i.e. Tuesday—May 2, 1978 to celebrate the Navjote Ceremony of my daughter Miss Soonnu Rusy Enty.

Further, I personally feel that it is our privilege to make the above mentioned request on the grounds mentioned below:—

(1) that since 1942, we have been staying in Pow-walla Bldg., just opposite Cama-Baug Agiyari.

(2) that we have regularly been attending Cama Baug Agiyari for our daily-prayers.

(3) that I and my sister have passed almost every evening of our childhood as well as of our school career playing in Cama baug.

(4) that my Navjote Ceremony, my sister's Navjote Ceremony, as well as my sister's marriage ceremony were celebrated at Cama Baug (big hall) only

(5) that we are good neighbours staying just in the opposite buildings.

God bless you and your, Amen.
Thanking you in anticipation,
Cordially yours,
RUSY ENTY

Sir, Please refer to my letter Ref. No. 780101 (per) dated January 12, 1978 a copy of which is attached herewith for your ready reference.

On Monday 23rd January as directed by Mr Bomansha Sanjana the panthaki of Cama Baug Agiary I saw Mr. Eruchsha Wellington who said *"Avane Naa Parrij, Bija Trustee E Wandho Lidho"* ('He said no, the other trustee took objection'.) I was taken aback to hear that the objection was based on the ground that my wife was non-Parsee—Gujarati Hindu Lady. I received such a great shock (rather the second one, the first being one on the sad demise of my beloved mother Smt. Piroja Jamshedjee Enty who happens to be a descendent of Sena Dastoor family of Surat) that, one might not believe that I was bedridden for a couple of days.

May I request you to enlighten me on the following points:

Is Civil Marriage an offence? If so, under which law?

2. Even taking for granted that in your eyes Civil Marriage is a sin even then no reasonable man in the world would ever punish an innocent child for the guilt—so called guilt, of his father.

3. When according to Parsee Law, the child is a Zoroastrian child, is it justifiable to deprive such a child of his right to have his Navjote Ceremony performed in Cama Baug Hall?

Navjote Ceremony is to be performed in Cama Baug Hall (Wadi) which is a public place in the sense that it is frequently visited by the invitees who happen to be members of all the communities including Ayahs, Ramas, dheras, bhangis and chamars (all sons—creations—of God). Even the stage on which the Navjote & Marriage & Birthday Ceremony is being performed is built by non-Parsees. Even at Doongarwadi, I have seen the banglis being sweeped and cleaned by non-Parsees.

4. I can cite you minimum 3 events a) where the birthday ceremony was performed of a child whose father is a Parsee Gentleman and the mother happens to be a Christian woman. b) Two Navjote ceremonies—one where the mother happens to be an European Lady and the other where the mother happens to be a Muslim Lady. Of course, I shall have to investigate the exact day and date of the performances.

5. Suppose, the beloved non-Parsee mother of the child passes away (God Forbid) after giving him birth, then the Navjote ceremony of such a child can be performed in Cama Baug.

6. Suppose, the non-Parsee mother is dead (God Forbid) and the Parsee husband takes the Parsee woman as his second wife then who happens to be the step-mother of the child of the first marriage then the Navjote as well as marriage ceremony of such a child is allowed in Cama Baug, isn't it?

7. Suppose, the Navjote ceremony of the child of a Non-Parsee mother



At eventide on a lonely road, returning after a hard day's work, a blind man met a stranger who laughingly asked: "Does a blind man need light?" "Yes," replied the blind man, "my lamp is lit so that others can see."

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TATA ENTERPRISES

TE. 9462

is already performed and the marriage ceremony of such a child with a Parsee gentleman or woman as the case may be is to be performed that I think no trustee of Cama Baug Charity Trust will have any objection to that?

8. Suppose a Parsee couple adopts a child from an orphanage without any knowledge of the religion of the adopted child who by law carries the name of his new adopting parents then the Navjote as well as marriage ceremony of such a child can be performed in Cama Baug or even in Agiary. Isn't it?

9. There are cases of so called High Society Parsees who smoke cigars and pipes and cigarettes and who do not even wear sudras and kustis at all and the Navjote and the marriage ceremony of the children of such parents is allowed.

10. God knows so many Navjote and marriage of such above mentioned children might have been nay must have been perfomed in Cama Baug Hall and Agiary.

If I had asked you to permit me to perform the Navjote Ceremony of my daughter Soonnu in Cama Baug Agiary where even present panthaki has no objection and even he cannot take any objection and the trustee would have taken any objection though it would have been invalid illegal, unlawful and bad in law and hence inoperative I would have not considered the said objection of the trustee absolutely unreasonable. In the circumstances may I request you as well as other trustees to reconsider the whole issue purely on Humanitarian grounds and permit me to perform the Navjote of my daughter in Cama Baug.

Now, looking the whole issue from the other angle, I would like to know

(1) Whether my letter was put before the board of trustees?

(2) If so, is the meeting recorded in the minute-book of the trust?

(3) The registration No. of the trust.

(4) Which trustee took the objection?

(5) The names and addresses of the trustees of the Executive Committee or of the managing Board as the case may be.

Further, I have to request you to supply me with a copy of the Trust Deed or the Memorandum of Association, of course, against cost. And if you fail to comply with this request then I shall have to obtain the same from the Charity Commissioner.

"By excluding our client from the draw you have committed a totally illegal act, a breach of trust."

It will not be out of place to mention here that I am also one of the managing trustees of a Public Trust holding the designation of the Vice-Chairman or the Vice-President.

Please do not take this query about the details of the Trust as any threat, I would just like to know who are the worthy trustees?

The third recourse, I think open for me, is to approach the Court of Law naturally after consulting my Senior Learned Friend Mr Soli Andhyarujina (a college-mate); Mr Phiroze Vakil and Mr. Piloo Irani my beloved Professors of Law; Mr. Seervai—Ex-Advocate General; Mr. Nani Palkhiwalla my idol and none but Mr. Boman-Behram—a friend, philosopher and guide.

The fourth course open for me is Controversy in News Papers.

I do understand that there is time limit as the month of May is approaching fast and to take recourse to courses no. 2, 3, 4 (the result of which may not come till December 1978) is not advisable at all as I being a petty school-master may be easily defeated or even if the decision comes in my favour my conscience will not permit me to enforce the same upon you people.

No doubt, there are rules and rules but at the same time there are exceptions to the rules too and I with folded hands once again request you to consider it as an exceptional case and not disappoint my daughter Soonnu who is bent upon getting her Navjote being performed at Cama Baug only.

To conclude, in spite of all the above arguments and the points of discussion the reply to this letter comes negative then I think I might have to come to the decision to give up the Zoroastrian Religion and not to follow any other religion at all and at the same time might not perform the Navjote of my daughter nor allow her to follow any other religion at all.

The delay in posting this letter is due to the fact that I had to think again and again whether this letter will serve any purpose or might be thrown in wastepaper basket considering it to be a bundle of nonsense.

But at the bottom of the heart I feel that I have performed my duty towards my child in the capacity of a beloved father making you request in this letter to reconsider the whole issue.

Now, I leave to Almighty (and here is the sound of nine strokes of bell of Cama Baug Agiary) to decide the whole issue through the trustees of the Cama Baug Trust who in my opinion are acting as His agents.

I do feel guilty that Mr Manchersa Billimoria has unfortunately become victim of this whole issue but I hope he will try to understand how the negative reply has hurt the feelings of a father.

God bless you and yours, amen.

May I request you to expedite the matter and oblige.

Cordially yours,

RUSY J. ENTY

To
Mr Rusy J. Enty,
Unity High School,
10th Khetwadi Back Road,
Bombay 400 004.

Dear Sir,

We have received your letter dated 24th January, 1978 personally delivered by you to our Office Manager on 11th February, 1978.

We have noted the contents and in reply have to inform you that the booking of Cama Baug Halls for Marriages, Navjotes, and other religious ceremonies is subject to the Rules and Regulations of the Trust.

These Rules and Regulations are printed on the reverse of our Permit forms, which can be perused by you in our Office. Your attention is particularly drawn to Rule-8 which is self-explanatory.

Yours faithfully,
Managing Trustee

The Trustees,
Cama Baug Charity Trust Fund,
Raja Ram Mohan Roy Road,
New Charni Road
Bombay 400 004.

Dear Sirs,

We write to you under instructions from our client Mr Rusi J. Enty.

Our client has placed in our hands the correspondence exchanged between him and your Managing Trustee Mr. M. R. Billimoria with instructions to state as under:—

By his letter dated 12th January, 1978 addressed to your Managing



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Trustee, our client requested that he should be allowed to hold the Navjote ceremony of his daughter Soonnu on the big "Otla" of Cama Baug on 2nd May, 1978 and mentioned in his letter the grounds on which he requested your Managing Trustee to allot the said Otla to him for that purpose. It is our client's belief that your Managing Trustee agreed and actually marked the booking on the Parsi Calendar at his residence where our client personally delivered his said letter to your Managing Trustee.

On 23rd January 1978, our client was requested by the Panthaky of Cama Baug Agiary Mr Bomanshah Sanjana to see the Secretary of your Trust one Mr. Erach Wellington and our client saw Mr Wellington. Mr. Wellington informed our client that your Managing Trustee had declined our client's request because the other Trustees had raised an objection. Our client inquired from Mr. Wellington as to the reasons why the other Trustees had raised an objection, but no reasons were given. Our client believes that an objection has been raised on the ground that our client's wife is a non-Parsi. Accordingly, our client addressed a letter dated 24th January 1978 to your Managing Trustee (which was delivered at your office on 11th February 1978) setting out his stand. The reason why our client waited for several days before delivering his said letter to your office was because he wanted to give deep thought to the matter.

By your reply dated 20th February 1978 you have informed our client that the booking of Cama Baug halls for marriages, Navjotes and other religious ceremonies is subject to the Rules and Regulations of the Trust and you drew our client's attention to Rule 8 which you stated was self explanatory.

Our client has perused Rule 8, a reasonable accurate translation whereof is as under:—

"If any Dastur, Mobed or Athornan performs the Navjote or Marriage ceremony of any Juddin in Bombay or elsewhere, either in public or privately, the Trustees will have the right to stop him from entering the Cama Baug Agiary or any part of the building or Otlas of Cama Baug, for any auspicious occasion concerning any Parsi Zoroastrian."

In the first instance, our client instructs us to point out that Rule 8 has no application whatsoever to our client's case because it deals with the right claimed by the Trustees to restrict the entry into Cama Baug Agiary or any part of the premises by a Dastur, Mobed or Athornan who performs a Navjote or marriage ceremony therein referred to. Our client is neither a Dastur nor a Mobed and although he is an Athornan he is not going to perform his daughter's Navjote.

However the larger question is whether in the face of the law, you can at all make a rule like Rule No. 8 and also whether any such Rule is valid and or in consonance with the terms of the Trust on which you hold the trust property.

Our client instructs us to make it clear that it is a settled law that a child of a Parsi Zoroastrian father and a non-Parsi or non-Zoroastrian mother is a Parsi-Zoroastrian. Our client believes that the object of your Trust is to hold the trust premises for the benefit of Parsi Zoroastrians and particularly to hold the halls for permitting Parsi Zoroastrians to get auspicious and inauspicious ceremonies performed thereat.

It is therefore clear that the apparent reason for the change of mind on the part of the Managing Trustee is totally invalid and deprives our client and his daughter of rights which they are entitled to enjoy as a Parsi Zoroastrian.

Our client has instructed us to take up this matter with the appropriate authorities and if necessary to approach a Court of Law to redress the wrong done to him. However, before he does so, we would like to know whether your Trustees would be willing to meet us and our client and d'scuss this matter.

We trust that you will let us have your reply by 9th instant and that in the meantime, you will not take any steps to prejudice the rights of our client and his daughter.

Yours faithfully,
RUSI N. SETHNA
Advocate and Solicitors,
High Court, Bombay.

Dear Sir,

Under the Rules and Regulations of the Trust I regret you cannot be allowed booking of the Cama Baug Halls.

Yours faithfully,
E. M. WELLINGTON

The Trustees,
Cama Baug Charity Trust Fund,
Raja Ram Mohan Roy Road,
New Charni Road,
Bombay-400 004.

"Other functions of mixed partners are held in the baug. Why did they pick on me?"

Dear Sirs,

1. We refer to our letter No. RS: 1257 of 1st instant addressed to you under instructions from our client Mr. Rusi J. Enty which was delivered to you on 2nd instant by our client personally.

2. In the last para of our said letter, we had expressed the hope that you would not take any steps to prejudice the rights of our client and his daughter pending a reply to our letter.

3. Despite this, our client instructs us to state that when he attended your office on 2nd instant to participate in the draw for booking the big Otla of Cama Baug for 2nd May 1978 (being Maha Adar Roj Adar according to Shahenshai calendar), our client was not permitted to participate in the draw. When our client protested and requested your Secretary Mr E. N. Wellington to put it down in writing, Mr Wellington gave our client a letter on your letter-head stating that under the rules and regulations of the Trust, our client could not be allowed booking of the Cama Baug Hall.

4. It is apparent that a conciliatory attitude which, we are advising our client to take does not seem to evoke any favourable response from your end. The least that could have been done, was to permit our client to participate in the draw and if thereafter our client was successful, the matter could have been discussed across the table and a reasonable solution could have been reached. By excluding our client from the draw you have committed a totally illegal act, a breach of trust and have also denied and violated the rights of our client and his daughter as Parsi Zoroastrians.

5. Please note that unless we hear from you in reply to our letter of 1st instant and this letter forthwith, we will have no alternative but to advise our client to take further steps in the matter including but not limited to, filing a suit to restrain the holding of any function on 2nd May 1978 on the big Otla of Cama Baug. For this purpose we have to call upon you to furnish the full name and address of the person who has been suc-

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cessful in the draw which took place on 2nd instant for the big Otla of Cama Baug, although our client should not be deemed to have admitted the correctness or validity of such draw.

6. Our client will at the appropriate time and place disclose the entire conversation which took place at your office on 2nd instant when our client attended to participate in the draw.

7. We would also like to take this opportunity of correcting a statement made in para 7 of our letter of 1st instant. Our client informs us that he is not 'Athornan' but a Behdin'. Please therefore note that the said Rule 8 could never have any application to our client's case.

Yours faithfully,
RUSI N. SETHNA
M/s Romer Dadachanji
Sethna & Co.,
Advocates for Mr Rusi J. Enty.

Dear Sirs,

1. Our clients, the Trustees of Cama Baug Charity Trust Fund, have placed in our hands your letters to them Nos. RS: 1257 of 1st March 1978 and RS: 1406 of 8th March, with instructions to reply thereto as under:—

2. Our clients say that they could not reply to your letter under reference earlier, as the matter was under our clients' consideration and also under discussion between your Mr R. M. Sethna and the writer. Our clients regret that due to some misunderstanding your client was not allowed to participate in the draw on 2.5.78.

3. We are instructed to state that your client can utilise our clients Baug on any day convenient to him and may approach the Manager for the same. Even in the month of May the Baug is available on 7th May and if your client wants to utilise the Baug on the said day, he is requested to contact our clients' Manager immediately.

4. Our clients hope that your client will accept this letter in the spirit in which it is written and avoid any further publicity of the matter and close the matter.

yours faithfully
Mulla & Mulla and Craigie
Blunt & Caroe
Partner

M/s Mulla & Mulla and
Craigie Blunt & Caroe,
Advocates for the Trustees of Cama Baug Charity Trust.

"People had told me to be practical, to have the navjote performed and then fight it out."

Dear Sir,

1. We are in receipt of your letter No. BHA 10617 of 24th instant to hand yesterday in the afternoon and are instructed by our client to state as under:—

2. With reference to paras 1 and 2 our client expresses his great regret that your clients should have taken so long to reply to our letters of 1st and 8th March 1978. In fact, our client had already instructed us to file a Suit and the draft Plaint for the purpose was ready. It is only out of the respect which we have for some of your clients that we advised our client to wait.

3. With further reference to para 2, the "misunderstanding" could only be on your clients part, particularly in view of the fact that the legal position was quite clear. Our client was not allowed to participate in the draw on 2nd March 1978 and not 2nd May 1978 as mentioned by you. Apparently, the date 2nd May 1978 is a mistake in your letter because that date has not yet come.

4. With reference to para 3, your clients must no doubt be aware that 7th May 1978 is an Amvas and as such, our client is not in a position to accept your clients' offer. If and when our client hereafter requires the Cama Baug, he will avail of your clients' offer.

5. With reference to para 4, in view of the expression of regret by your clients and the offer made in para 3 thereof, our client has instructed us not to initiate any legal proceedings. Our client, however, regrets his inability to accede to your clients' request not to give this matter publicity, because as a public-minded Parsi Zoroastrian, our client feels that this important decision on the part of your clients deserves to be made known through the press for the benefit of the community as also trustees of other institutions who are in a similar position as your clients. Our client having proved his point that the child of a Parsi Zoroastrian father and an alien mother is entitled to get his or her Navjote ceremony performed and for that purpose to utilise baugs and other similar places dedicated for this purpose by charitably inclined and generous Parsi Zoroastrians, this correspondence may be treated as closed.

6. We are instructed by our client to express his grateful thanks to your clients Mr J. N. Guzdar, Mr B. K. Boman-Behram and Mr B. H. Antia for the creditable and honourable manner in which they have discharged their duties and we personally also add our thanks to these gentlemen.

Yours faithfully,
RUSI SETHNA

Subsequent to the above letter appearing in The Bombay Samachar, *Sethna sent another version of the letter to* the Samachar *which was termed the 'Correct Copy'. According to Sethna the above letter was only a 'draft'. In the second copy the criticism has been toned down and the reference to publicizing the episode, paragraph 5, has been deleted. The 'Correct Copy' appeared in the paper's May 7 issue.*

A Hundred Years Ago

New Tower of Silence

Great preparations are in progress, says the correspondent of the Jam-e-Jamshed at Nowsaree, to meet the convenience of Parsee visitors during the New Tower of Silence dedication ceremony, to take place early next month. It is expected that the temporary structures erected for their accomodation will hold nearly ten thousand people. The five hotels, opened in connection with these pavilions, together with a variety of stalls for the sale of fruits, ice, sodawater, and toddy, will also contribute to their gratification during the festive period. Three special trains for the conveyance of passengers to Nowsaree will start from Bombay, of which the first will leave at 8 p.m. on the 7th. proximo. His Excellency the Governor, who has been invited to visit Nowsaree by Mr. Nusserwanjee Tata, the builder of the Tower, will leave Bombay on the evening of the 3rd proximo, and stay as Mr Tata's guest for a whole day, tent accommodation being provided for himself and staff. His Excellency's presence at Nowsaree will draw thither, H. H. Sayyaji Rao, the Resident, and other distinguished members of the Baroda Government.

Times of India from *The Statesman* 27/2/78 submitted by Rustam Saklat.

Shiavax Nargolwala:

THE VOICE OF DISSENT

He is the President of the Delhi Parsi Anjuman but Shiavax Dinshaw Nargolwala's sphere of influence extends to the entire Zoroastrian community. More than any other individual or institution in present times, the 63-year-old former Indian Civil Service officer has affected the course of community affairs: he fought successfully to permit free and frank discussion at the Third World Zoroastrian Congress, was charged by the Bombay Parsi Panchayat (BPP) as being primarily responsible for their resigning from the Federation of Parsi Zoroastrian Anjumans of India (FPZAI), and under his guidance, the Delhi Parsi Anjuman (DPA) has emerged as the intellectual and spiritual catalyst of the Zoroastrian community in India.

Like Shiavax R. Vakil, the provocative, former BPP trustee who shook a lethargic community to its roots five years ago, Nargolwala is also the most controversial figure of recent times in the community. His statements from public platforms, including the World Congress, chastising the leadership of the BPP for their archaic election system to the shirking of their role as leaders of the Bombay community, earned him their enmity. BPP President, B. K. Boman-Behram refused to attend an informal, reconciliatory meeting of the Federation representatives if Nargolwala was present (see A Tale of Two Federations, Parsiana April 1978)

The Bombay leader was annoyed over the publication of one of Nargolwala's many statements in The Bombay Samachar, the prestigious Gujerati daily that has been espousing liberal causes.

And to add to the litany of orthodox woes, the DPA is the first anjuman to permit the child of a Parsi mother and non-Parsi father to enter a fire temple, namely the Kaikhushroo Pallonji Katrak Dar-e-Mehar in Delhi. At its last annual general meeting in March the DPA general body passed two resolutions, one conferring honorary Anjuman membership to non-Zoroastrians and the other permitting non-Zoroastrian spouses to become members of the Anjuman but with certain limitations; a third resolution, permitting children of Parsi mothers and non-Parsi fathers to become full-fledged members of the Anjuman was rejected because even though a majority favoured the proposal, it did not receive the mandatory 75 per cent.

A practising chartered accountant, Nargolwala has a distinguished academic record. A first class Bachelor of Commerce graduate of Bombay University, he received an economics degree from the London School of Economics in 1938, the year in which he also passed his I.C.S. qualifying examination. In government he held senior positions such as Commissioner of Income-tax, joint secretary defense and additional secretary, finance, before retiring in 1973.

He has been President of the DPA for the last 18 years and vice-president of the FPZAI since its inception. Parsiana interviewed the silver-haired, pipe-smoking dissident leader in Bombay on April 9 following the Federation's Executive Council meeting. The interview was given conditional to his being shown a copy of the transcript prior to publication.

PARSIANA: Why do you feel the Delhi Anjuman has an image amongst the other anjumans, especially Bombay, of being more radical?

NARGOLWALA: Because the Delhi Parsi Anjuman consists of highly educated, motivated people, holding very important positions in government as well as business, banking, industry, commerce and trade. They are, therefore, always actively thinking of progress. Of course, another reason for this image, right or wrong, is that we are a very cosmopolitan society in Delhi, practically every state and every union territory has its members living here. The concept of national integration is stronger in Delhi than in the State capitals because the State capitals reflect the society of the state but in the capital city of India the image is more cosmopolitan and in that sense more progressive.

PARSIANA: What are the major issues confronting the Delhi Parsis?

NARGOLWALA: There is no major issue because we have been the most harmonious anjuman. We have a system of adult franchise whereby trustees are elected for only a short period of three years. Then they have to stand for election again.

PARSIANA: Can anybody vote?

NARGOLWALA: Yes, any member of the Anjuman can vote.

PARSIANA: What is the qualification to be a member?

NARGOLWALA: To be a member the person has only to be a Parsi Zoroastrian over the age of 18. A non-Zoroastrian spouse can also become a member, subject to certain restrictions.

PARSIANA: Has he to pay any fees?

NARGOLWALA: There is a membership subscription; for an individual resident member it is 24 rupees and for a resident couple it is 36 rupees per annum. For non-resident members it is less. In return for the subscrip-

"Why should not at least 40,000 or 50,000 be involved in the process of electing the trustees?"

tion the members can attend all the functions, the Jamshedi Navroz get-together, the Pateti function, the dramas, picnics, sports and all the lectures which we arrange. We invite various scholars and people of repute to come and talk, not necessarily on religion but various other subjects. And all these services are provided without charge. Also the *Dipanjali* magazine which comes out twice a year is sent free to every member. And now there is a monthly newsletter as well.

PARSIANA: When issues arise in Delhi, does the leadership itself take a decision or do they look for guidance to Udwada, or Bombay or Iran?

NARGOLWALA: Well, you see no issue has arisen so far which requires an outside decision. And the leadership is provided by the trustees themselves. But once or twice in the past occasion has arisen for consulting high priests, for example when we constructed our new agiary we consulted Dastur Hormazdiar Mirza. Similarly a question was raised when one of our members died and the family wanted the body to be cremated; the question arose whether religious ceremonies should be performed of such a person and we took the advice of Dr Mirza and he said that if the family has decided on cremation then they must arrange for the funeral services, the anjuman should not make arrangements. So we followed his advice.

PARSIANA: The three resolutions that were taken by the Delhi Anjuman at the annual general meeting ... was this the first time any anjuman in India had taken up such resolutions?

NARGOLWALA: I am not aware whether any other anjuman has honorary membership but it was absolutely non-controversial. We felt that people who have rendered signal service to the community or reputable scholars of our religion and ancient Iranian culture of whatever nationality, such as Dr. Prof. Mary Boyce or Dr. Ali Jafarey were to be made an honorary member of the anjuman, then it would be a great honour to us.

PARSIANA: What privileges does the membership entitle them to?

NARGOLWALA: There is no privilege as such, because they don't pay any subscription. they don't vote at the meetings of the anjuman. It is just an honour. It is like the honorary degree of the university.

PARSIANA: They cannot avail of the trust funds or enter the agiary?

NARGOLWALA: No there is no question of availing of trust funds because they themselves are well-off. If they are Zoroastrians they will naturally be entitled, whenever they visit Delhi, to enter our agiary and all that. And as you know the agiary and aramgah in Delhi are not only for the Delhi Parsis.



PARSIANA: If an honorary member of the anjuman were to become a Zoroastrian, even though he were not a Parsi, would that entitle him to enter the fire temple?

NARGOLWALA: It depends on the law of the land. If a person comes from Iran and he has married a non-Zoroastrian, the lady, by the laws of the Tehran Anjuman and by the laws of Iran can become a Zoroastrian. Such a person would be admitted into an agiary. But not a person who say has simply converted himself to Zoroastrianism from Hinduism or Christianity. We have not reached that stage yet. But if according to the laws of his own country, his wife has legally become a Zoroastrian then we would accept that lady in our agiary.

PARSIANA: What about the second issue of Parsi girls marrying out, and their children being admitted in the fire temple; you say this issue has been debated in the community for about two years?

NARGOLWALA: Yes, actually the debate is because of what I said earlier, Delhi is a very cosmopolitan city. The Parsi population is scattered. The opportunity for young boys and girls of the community to know each other, and get married are not as great as in a place where the community is concentrated in an area. So mixed marriages are occurring in Delhi, though as I explained to you we have made every effort to promote friendship between our own boys and girls at these functions and various other gatherings. By and large our girls and boys have been marrying within the community in Delhi, but quite a few cases occur where either the boy or girl is a non-Parsi. And the second resolution which was put forward at the annual general meeting was that such children of Parsi mothers, whose navjot had been performed regardless of the fact that the father was a non-Parsi, with the consent of the parents, they should be allowed to become members of the anjuman. But the requisite majority of 75 per cent was not forthcoming and, therefore, this resolution has not come into effect. But the Trustees of the Delhi Parsi Anjuman following the decision of *Saklat versus Bella* of the privy council have decided that any child of a Parsi Zoroastrian mother who has been initiated into the Zoroastrian religion by the due performance of the navjot with the written consent of both parents, can worship at the agiary.

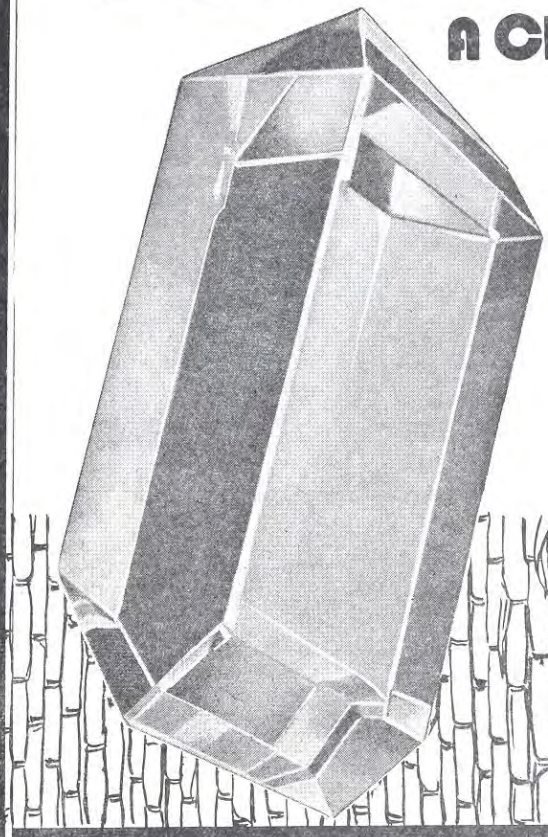
As far as the agiary is concerned, it was decided by the privy council in *Saklat versus Bella* that it is at the discretion of the trustees to decide who should be allowed and not be allowed. The privy council decided that if the trustees objected then Bella had no right, legal right, but on the other hand if the trustees allowed her then no other Parsi could object. The privy council made a distinction between an agiary and other kinds of trust property. The privy council said that if you have funds of a Parsi Zoroastrian trust and if you allow the use of the funds by such a person, then the other persons are deprived of it to that extent. But so far as the

"This idea of a clash of personalities, I do not subscribe to."

right of worship in the agiary is concerned, if one person worships, the other persons are not deprived of the right to worship, so no harm is caused to them. And there is no desecration of the temple or anything like that be-

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cause that child has become a Zoroastrian by the performance of the navjot. The decision of the privy council was that in such a case it is for the trustees to decide. If they allow admission, nobody can object.

PARSIANA: When did the trustees take this decision?

NARGOLWALA: Since the resolution did not get the requisite majority such a child could not become a full-fledged member. The action of the trustees was a separate decision to allow merely the use of the agiary to such persons.

PARSIANA: And the third resolution?

NARGOLWALA: The third resolution pertains to the non-Parsi spouse of a Parsi member who before could not become a member. It was a rather humiliating and embarrassing situation that the wife was a member and the husband came as a guest; or the husband was a member and the wife came as a guest. And there was no equality between the husband and wife so far as the membership was concerned. We felt that this embarrassement or humiliation was uncalled for, that both should be allowed to become members because we have joint membership in our anjuman. No non-Parsi married to a Parsi can become a member unless both of them become members. We don't recognize single membership if the person is married. We have only regularised the de facto position by this resolution by allowing the non-Parsi spouse to become a member of the anjuman with only three restrictions. One, that since he or she is a non-Zoroastrian, he or she cannot enter the agiary, he or she cannot claim to be buried in the aramgah and he or she cannot become a trustee. Subject to these three restrictions, the non-Parsi spouse will now become a full member of the anjuman with the right to vote and participate in the affairs of the anjuman.

PARSIANA: In Delhi, after the *geh sarna* ceremony is performed, are non-Parsis allowed to pay their respects?

NARGOLWALA: Yes, about 15 to 20 years ago when I took charge of the affairs of the anjuman as the president, we had to face this problem because in Delhi, Parsis have more non-Parsi friends than Parsi friends. Which is natural if you are only 500 and are living in a city of about 30 to 40 lakhs, naturally most of your friends will be non-Parsi. Therefore, when a death occurs in a Parsi family

"If the people want good leaders then their right to voice honest criticism of their leaders is very sacred."

most of the friends who are non-Parsis would like to pay their last respects. So, unfortunately 15 to 20 years ago we had the system of making these people sit outside on the verandah, not in the *bangli* itself and they were not allowed to see the face of the dead person after the ceremonies were performed. Then gradually non-Parsi relations were allowed; take for example Captain Engineer who died in the air crash when the Chief Minister of Gujarat was also killed during the Pakistan hostilities. His wife was not a Parsi, all his Air Force friends, Air Marshall Arjan Singh, they were all very prominent people, and they wanted to come and pay their last respects. In fact Air Marshall Arjan Singh even left the conduct of the war and came to the cemetary for two hours to pay his last respects. So gradually first the relations, and then non-Parsi friends were allowed to pay their respects. Mr Rusi Bhote of the Central Bank—he was the number one man in The Central Bank of India in New Delhi—passed away recently. His wife is a Parsi but many of The Central Bank staff had come to pay their last respects. Probably as many as 200 to 300 people. And they were all allowed to pay their last respects before the body was put in the coffin and buried in the ground. And this is good not only for the image of the community but for the family also. They get moral support when they see all these friends sharing in their grief and coming forward to respect the departed soul.

PARSIANA: How many trustees are there in the Delhi Parsi Anjuman?

NARGOLWALA: There are nine trustees who are elected by adult franchise for three years. The election always takes place in March at the annual general meeting. Suppose I am elected in 1975 then I will vacate in 1978. Somebody who is elected in 1976 will vacate in 1979; so there is continuity. We have also introduced a rule whereby the elected trustees co-opt two more trustees so now we have 11 trustees. Nine are elected, two are co-opted by the nine, and by convention these two are always ladies to give representation to the female members of the community.

PARSIANA: Would you say that these trustees are only the custodians of the funds and properties of the Delhi Anjuman or are they also the leaders of the community?

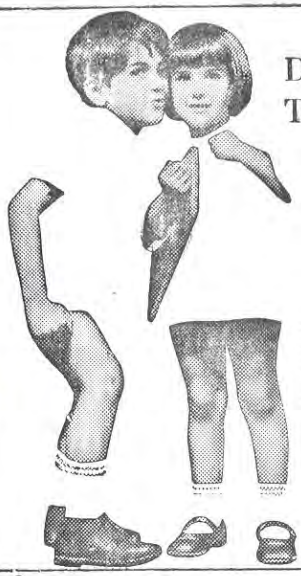
NARGOLWALA: We have a dual capacity as trustees. When we established the agiary, the dharamsala and our religious funds, we made separate trust deeds for these institutions. So the administration of these institutions is done by the trustees of the Delhi Parsi Anjuman. Nobody else can administer these institutions except the trustees of the Delhi Parsi Anjuman for the time being. But then we are also a registered society under the Societies Registration Act of 1860. As a registered society we have to elect a managing committee and frame our own rules and regulations describing the powers of the managing committee, who will be the office bearers, what will be their functions, who will incur what expenditure, and so on. So the elected trustees of the Delhi Parsi Anjuman are also in a dual capacity the trustees of the religious and charitable institutions. The society has other funds also, for example, we have a general fund—the membership subscription that we collect is put in the general fund—these are used for general purposes. We have a scholarships scheme.

PARSIANA: Would you say that most of the other anjumans in India have this system or are the trustees basically just custodians of the trusts and properties?

NARGOLWALA: Well, there is a wind of change now. You take the Parsi Panchayat, Bombay, or the Surat Panchayat, they are the trustees of the funds and properties entrusted in their care by the various charitable persons who founded those agiaries or dokhmas or other institutions. Even schools or colleges could be run by trustees. It depends on the individual anjuman, how it runs, whether it runs as a trust of the funds and properties or whether it runs as a registered society with a proper system for the election of office bearers and so on.

PARSIANA: Do you feel that the Bombay Panchayat and the Surat Panchayat have taken shelter behind the fact that they are only custodians of the funds and properties and have thereby avoided issues, or do you feel that this is their role?

NARGOLWALA: No, my position is that I would like them to be leaders of the community. I do not like this nebulous position where on the one



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hand they are only trustees functioning in their capacity as trustees and on the other hand also functioning as leaders of the community—but without the necessary legal sanction. If for example you take the case of Delhi or some other anjumans, there the people who are elected as trustees are in a sense not only the trustees of the properties of the anjuman but are also leaders of the community. They are elected by adult franchise for a short period of three years. They have to justify their existence. They have to go back to the electorate every

"Our people are prominent in medicine, in law, but in the government they are losing ground."

three years to be reelected. But the Bombay Parsi Panchayat's electoral system should be changed and their franchise broadened. It is argued that adult franchise is too wide, and perhaps undesirable people might create trouble. But nobody disputes, not even the trustees of the Parsi Panchayat, that their present system is very narrowly-based. There are about 5,000 to 6,000 people on the register. They elect a very small number of persons to form a committee, who in turn elect the trustees. And the trustees are elected for a long period. They themselves have now appointed a committee for electoral reform. People say there are 65,000 Parsis in Bombay. Why should not at least 40,000 or 50,000 be involved in the process of electing the trustees? The present indifference of the Bombay Parsis to the Bombay Parsi Panchayat is because the franchise is not broad-based. Then also there must be a system of annual accountability. You may be elected for 10 years but every year you must lay before the persons who have elected you a report of the workings of the institution, what the people who have been elected have done. You must invite suggestions, comments, resolutions and take some concrete action. Once you have this system of a broad franchise, annual accountability and communication between the community and the leaders of the community, then the Parsi Panchayat's image will improve, it will become better. People will bring their problems to them, look up to them as the leaders of the community, and they in turn would have greater confidence when taking action. At present because the franchise is narrow, any action which they take must satisfy the small portion of the community that elects them.

PARSIANA: Are you in favour of adult franchise for the election of trustees?

NARGOLWALA: Frankly, I am in favour of adult franchise for the simple reason that if it is used satisfactorily for election to state assemblies, parliament, and in various other forums, there is no reason why adult franchise should not be introduced here also. But I do realize the validity of the other argument also; that if we try it straightaway we might introduce politics into our community affairs, people will buy votes, or people will be influenced as most politicians are influenced. Mind you in our community literacy is 100 per cent—most of the boys and girls are matriculates if not graduates and there are also qualified doctors, lawyers, engineers, architects, etcetera, so adult franchise for our community is not as dangerous a proposition as it would be for a community where illiteracy is high or where education is low. But it does not follow that we should jump straight away into adult franchise. We can have some other system. But one thing I am sure about in my mind, that it should be a direct election. You may have on the Registers, graduates, professional people, or people who pay income tax, or wealth tax, or people who hold certain office, in government

"To inculcate the spirit of enterprise, no minority commission can help you in that."

and so on. That would keep the base narrower than adult franchise, but it would be a direct vote. It is not desirable that they should elect some small number of people and who in turn should elect the trustees, this I don't approve.

PARSIANA: You have been one of the founders of the Federation. Could you tell us how it was formed?

NARGOLWALA: The idea was mooted in 1962 and was reinforced at the Second World Zoroastrian Congress held in Bombay in 1964. It took many meetings and discussions between the leaders of the community from all over India, conflicting claims were advanced and finally by an amicable give-and-take, it was decided to form a Federation. The original idea was to form an association of Zoroastrians but finally the idea of forming a Federation of the member anjumans was accepted by all; and zonal representation was given, based on the population concentration and the importance of the community in that particular area. That is why the Bombay Parsi Panchayat was given the pride of place, both in the presidentship of the Federation as well as in the strength of its trustees in the executive council. The same with Surat. So also to a certain extent with Poona, Madras, Secunderabad and Hyderabad, Calcutta and so on.

PARSIANA: What was the main objective of starting the Federation? What did it hope to achieve?

NARGOLWALA: The main object of starting the Federation arose from the first World conference held in Tehran. It was felt there should be a national federation and this national federation would be further affiliated to a world federation. Now we had anjumans in India, big and small, and we had concentrations of Parsi populations in certain areas like Gujarat, Bombay, Calcutta, Nagpur and so on. We felt that all these anjumans should have a common organization where they could exchange views, take each other's advise, make a sort of sustained representation to Government whenever the occasion arose about changing the laws and so on about adoption, succession, marriage and divorce. The idea of a Federation materialized and its objectives have already been stated in its Memorandum, the objects are very wide but they can be summed up in one sentence—that whatever would do good to the community, would promote its welfare is the object of the Federation.

PARSIANA: What do you feel the major accomplishments of the Federation have been in the years of its existence?

NARGOLWALA: The most important accomplishment is the elimination of the communication gap. You must appreciate that a Federation is an apex body, it is not directly in control of any funds or properties of any anjuman. It is like a father or a grandfather in a family. Everybody respects the elderly person, everybody respects his advice and his guidance. So to my mind, and I think I can say this without hesitation, the communication gap has been eliminated for the first time in the history of the Parsis in India running over the last 1,300 years. We

"The freedom given to the press, the eminence given to the press, is reduced by its own action."

have now a body which can communicate from one part of the country to the other. And apart from the Federation the idea of zonal conferences was introduced; the south zone should have a conference, the north zone should have a conference, and so on. Because the east zone has very few Parsis therefore we had a combined conference of the north and east zones in Delhi in January 1977. And in Bangalore we had a south zone conference and a lot of exchange of views and so on. Then this question of the amelioration of the priestly class was taken up after many, many years. And then there is the question of representation to the government. We have made a representation on adoption, we are now going to make a representation in regard to the marriage and divorce laws, succession laws. Then we have the Minorities Commission. We have to put our problems before them. So the achievements of the Federation cannot just be counted in terms of something visible, like a housing scheme or the establishment of an agiary or a dokhma. These are matters for the individual anjumans. But this closing of the communication gap is bringing all Parsis together, and turning their attention to certain pressing problems; and even the Third World Zoroastrian Congress would never have been held but for the initiative taken by the Federation. I would not claim that the initiative came only from the Delhi Parsi Anjuman, but we started the discussions, we put the proposals.

PARSIANA: Why do you feel the Bombay Parsi Panchayat left the Federation?

NARGOLWALA: It is a delicate matter. One reason given is that the Federation has not served any useful purpose. The other reason is that unwarranted, unauthorized and unprovoked attacks have been made against the Parsi Panchayat. These are the reasons they have given and I have given my views, to the press.

PARSIANA: People say that one of the reasons for the Panchayat leaving the Federation was the clash of personalities?

NARGOLWALA: No, no.

PARSIANA: Between you and Boman-Behram.

NARGOLWALA: No, I would not say that. This idea of a clash of personalities I do not subcribe to. The criticism that I have voiced of the Parsi Panchayat is that it is not a truly representative body of the Parsis in Bombay, that its election system is very narrow, and because of this narrow base, the right type of leaders are not elected or even if they are elected their functioning is restricted. All these criticisms I have been making since 1962. I made the criticism when Mr. Nadirshah Mulla was the chairman of the Parsi Panchayat, when the Federation was formed, when Lady Hirabai Jehangir was the chairman, when Mr. Erach Nadirshah was the chairman and I made the criticism when Mr Boman-Behram is the president of the Parsi Panchayat. So it has nothing to do with a clash of personalities. What happened is that until very recently, there was a lot of free and frank discussion between us and the various anjumans, but unfortunately when the idea of this Third World Zoroastrian Congress was mooted there was an orthodox section in the community they did not want the congress to be held and naturally the trustees of the Parsi Panchayat living in Bombay and being in close contact with the various section ... they were a bit nervous or hesitant. It must be said to the credit of Lady Jehangir that she saw the strength of our argument that it was high time a world congress was held. And this was all done before Mr. Boman-Behram became the president

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"I may be wrong, no human being is perfect. But I am hurt when motives are ascribed to me."

of the Federation. Then because we once decided to hold the congress, and that was a unanimous decision, the orthodox section started first of all to try and prevent the congress from taking place and when that attempt failed, they tried to prevent discussion of any of the controversial problems. That also failed and when the congress was such a great success, and views were freely and frankly exchanged, the pressure of the orthodox section on the Parsi Panchayat increased because they felt they were losing ground. So propaganda was started and it is this that has been described as a clash of personalities. The president of the Panchayat is the president of the Federation. He is the supreme authority of the Federation. Who can challenge him? Who can have a clash with his personality? The four vice-presidents are four eminent personalities from the four zones. Why should there be a clash of personalities? And personalities keep on changing. We have had three or four presidents of the Federation in the last five or seven years so it is not a question of personalities; it is a question of this pressure from the orthodox section and pressure from people who are supported by some sections of the press and who are vocal, that has created the situation as we find it now.

PARSIANA: What part do you think the press has played in the break up of the Federation?

NARGOLWALA: Well I have great respect for the press and I am a believer in its freedom. I am also a great believer in the proposition that the press, which has so much freedom and so much eminence, should exercise restraint over itself. Now if a paper constantly goes on publishing one side of a discussion or a debate and indulges in encouraging personal attacks and so on, then I personally feel that it is not playing the proper role which the press should play. I accept the position that each newspaper has its own policy. It may support 'x' or 'y' policy and it is fully entitled to do so. Its proprietors, its shareholders, its editors lay down the policy and it should do its best to promote that policy. It may support one version of a problem but it should not shut out a fair hearing of the other side. And this is particularly so if any personal attack is made. If the person attacked sends a reply, then that reply should also be published. The right to comment is absolute. The press can comment. The press can pursue policy 'x' or policy 'y'. But if in the pursuit of that policy a fair hearing is not given to the other side then it is self-defeating. The freedom given to the press, the eminence given to the press, is reduced by its own action. So I am hopeful. The history of all institutions has ups and downs. There are sometimes differences, they lead to a break and then there is a reconciliation. And time itself is a great healer. We cannot stand aside when the whole country is moving forward.

PARSIANA: If the Bombay Panchayat does not rejoin, do you feel the Federation could continue?

NARGOLWALA: Well, it is not a question only of the Bombay Parsi Panchayat. It is a question of what will happen if the Bombay Parsi Panchayat does not rejoin so far as the other Panchayats are concerned. As I have noted there are certain intangible objectives and certain tangible objectives. Whether the Parsi Panchayat joins the Federation or does not join, does it not have to tackle the housing problem in Bombay? Does it not have to tackle the problem of the priestly class? That has nothing to do with whether it joins or does not, even if it does not join and if it carries out the objectives of the Federation, the Fede-

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"If they rejoin then the unity of the community is restored. The Federation can speak for the community as a whole."

ration will be happy. There is no conflict of interests. But if they rejoin, then the *unity* of the community is restored. The Federation can speak for the community as a whole. If they don't rejoin then the position becomes nebulous. Each party may claim that it is speaking for the community. That situation is unfortunate and it should not have taken place, it would have only been fair to the community if these objections of the Parsi Panchayat had been discussed at the executive council meeting and then the Parsi Panchayat could have taken a decision to remain or not to remain. But unilaterally withdrawing without the slightest discussion in the proper forum which is there for discussion, this was unfortunate.

PARSIANA: Suppose the Bombay Panchayat, Surat and some of the other panchavats do not rejoin and some more pull out, would you still continue with the Federation if you felt there were a few people willing to stay on?

NARGOLWALA: This is a question which only time can answer. I don't have any authority to answer because I am only one member of the Executive Council and of the Federation. It would then depend on all the remaining members to decide on the future course of action.

PARSIANA: Assuming that 50 per cent of the members wanted to stay on and continue with the Federation would you feel that it were possible to do so, financially and in every other way?

NARGOLWALA: Finance is no problem. The finance for running the Federation is very, very minor. A few thousand rupees a year is sufficient. But if the remaining members decide to carry on we will carry on and the door will always be open for the people who have left to rejoin.

PARSIANA: What prompted you to say at the world congress that should a world body be formed, it should not be headquartered in Bombay?

NARGOLWALA: Well, the point is that I was not so much against it being headquartered in Bombay. But the first question was in which country it should be headquartered, not in which city. There, conflicting views were expressed, some said London, some said Geneva, some said Tehran, and so on. Now I said that if it is in India it would be preferable to site it outside Bombay so that it should not be dominated by any Federation as such or even by any constituent member of the Federation. This idea of having a common secretariat, you have seen what has happened with the withdrawal of the Parsi Panchayat and the Surat Panchayat from the Federation. We have to think of reorganizing the entire works. This causes disruption. And it permits one component of a constituent body to have an excessive grip or influence over a world body. That is why I had suggested that if it is to be headquartered in India, then it should be outside Bombay, preferably in the capital city of the country. Suppose it is in Iran, it has to be in Tehran and so on. The idea was to have a sort of truly independent, autonomous, world body. Because you must appreciate that the problems facing the Parsi Zoroastrians differ from place to place. Even in



"Whatever would do good to the community, would promote its welfare, is the object of the Federation."

India they differ from place to place. Today for example you hear about the villages losing all their Parsi population. It is the same in Iran, the villages have all been denuded and people are now concentrating in Tehran, Shiraz and so on. In Canada and America the problem is to preserve this great religion, to have knowledge of it so that it can be passed on to the children. So I meant no disrespect to the Bombay Parsi Panchayat. I felt that a world body headquartered in any country should at least be in the centre of power of that country, and its organization should be delinked from any of its constituencies. It should have its own building, its own secretariat, its own managing committee and so on.

PARSIANA: Your critics charge that you are trying to build a following of like-minded people?

NARGOLWALA: There is no personal axe to grind so far as I am concerned. I work for the good of the community in what I feel is the best interests of the community. I may be wrong, no human being is perfect. But I am hurt when motives are ascribed to me. When people think I am doing this to collect a following, or I am doing this to go against some person in the Parsi Panchayat or Surat Panchayat ...it is absolutely incorrect. What interest have I in doing such a thing? I have been the president of the Delhi Parsi Anjuman for the last 18 years. Never once has there been a contested election of any trustee although we have adult franchise. What interest would I have in disunity or going against anybody for my personal interest. There is not the slightest reason on earth why I should be motivated except for the good of the community. I have not stood for any political office. I have not canvassed any vote from any section of the community so that I would go their way and oppose somebody else. I have been absolutely non-political throughout my life and also absolutely cosmopolitian and non-communal in my outlook. When I say non-communal, I use the word communal in its 'bad' sense. So this is what hurts me most. And I hope a proper understanding will be reached of the view that I hold, and the motives of those views, that it is for the good of the community and not because I want to oppose some other panchayat or some other anjuman.

PARSIANA: Is there any possibility of a parallel body coming up in Bombay?

NARGOLWALA: I would rather wish the other thing would happen. That the Parsi Panchayat would assume its true and rightful place as leaders of the community and based on a wide franchise, not necessarily adult franchise; but if they don't move with the times, if people are dissatisfied with their leadership, then the chances of a parallel body coming up are quite frightening. Because people are not now prepared to just blindly follow their so-called leaders as we have seen in Indian politics. Today the leaders are more criticized than leaders have been criticized ever in the past. So I do hope that the Parsi Panchayat would itself assume a proper role and a proper leadership position.

Even 100 years ago—150 years ago the Surat Panchayat and the Parsi Panchayat passed through this very phase, they began to lose their leadership role; they began to lose the respect of the community. Then people came up and made them conscious of their responsibilities and they assumed their proper role. And now once again this thing has happened. Again it may change.

The price of liberty or the price of progress is eternal vigilance. If the people want good leaders then their right to voice honest criticism of their leaders is very sacred. But I sincerely hope that there will be unity in the Federation and that it will continue to play its useful role. Otherwise we will lose valuable time in tackling our problems.

PARSIANA: How will the Minorities Commission stand to benefit the Parsi community?

"So gradually first the relations, and then non-Parsi friends were allowed to pay their respects (to the dead)."

NARGOLWALA: Well, the terms of reference are very wide and in our case the benefits will differ from say, for the Muslims or the Christians. The Muslims feel that they are the disadvantaged, that they don't get enough jobs in government service, that their personal laws are very different. The Christians have their own problems. We have never made any claims as a minority. We have never asked for a seat in parliament, we have never asked for anything to be done specially for the Parsis. We have always taken a national outlook and viewpoint. But our laws are now antiquated. The Parsi Marriage and Divorce Act when it was passed in 1936 was ahead of the legislation governing other communities. Now it is at the bottom. The Hindu Marriage Act has been enacted, revised, made into a modern law, and a special marriage act has made marriage laws for all communities more rational, logical. Now take the succession act, there also we are far behind. Now what happened in this Air India crash (on 1st January 1978)? Most of the people who died in the cabin crew were Parsis. And they were young people, most of them 18, 20, 24, 30 and 35, many of them would not have left wills and instead of the compensation money going to the wife or the children, it would go to the parents, the brothers, the sisters, and the poor widow is left with hardly anything. Now if our succession law had been attended to earlier, this sort of tragedy would not have arisen. So the Minorities Commission is very important for us too. In the legal and the socio-economic sense, it is not important to us for having seats in the municipal council, or legislative assembly, or parliament; it is not important, because far more than by our numbers, we on merit achieve distinction in all walks of life. Our real problem is the motivation of our younger generation. Our youth is not willing to go out of Bombay. They prefer clerical jobs. They must have their cinemas and clubs or dances. They are not enterprising enough to start new businesses. In the old days in Bombay we had small shops run by Parsis, we had small businesses run by Parsis. Take for example a business like aerated waters, the name of Rogers and Dukes are famous. In Calcutta Byron was famous for aerated waters. They were all Parsi businesses. Now to inculcate the spirit of enterprise, no minority commission can help you in that. You have to help yourself. One important thing which we must drill into our younger generation is that unless they join government service, join the armed forces, and other civil services in the country, we will not be able to have our voice heard in the seat of power. The bureaucracy is very strong.

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In the old days many Parsis joined the civil services of the states. You remember even in native states, a Parsi divan was preferred. Entering the civil services is something which the Federation could encourage. It should select some boys and girls who are brilliant and give them the necessary financial help. Tatas do that for their concerns, send people abroad for training in various professions and so on. They have the Tata Administrative Service. Our people are prominent in medicine, in law, but in the government they are losing ground. When I say government, I mean bureaucracy, the actual, executive limb of the government. In the armed forces there are very few Parsis joining. This is a very serious problem. Now here also the Minorities Commission cannot help. You have to help yourself.

Nevertheless the future of the community, taking the world as a whole, is very bright. But I am worried about the future of the community in Bombay. I am not worried about the future of the community in places like Bangalore, Madras. Take for example Dolly Madon. He left Calcutta as a young boy and single-handed he established one of the biggest businesses in Madras of stevedoring and supplying of stores to ships and so on. There are many instances like that of Parsis out of Bombay who have built up a reputation which any community can be proud of. But what will happen in Bombay, if remedial action is not taken, is that after 25 or 30 years the community will consist of two categories, one clerks and the other professionals such as doctors, lawyers. I

"We have now a body which can communicate from one part of the country to the other."

don't want to name any names, but I am an advisor to many big business houses. They have great faith in Parsis, they still have that respect for Parsis which they had in their father's time or grandfather's time. One company had a job of Rs 4,000 to offer, with all perquisites. There was a young Parsi in Bombay who was interviewed, who was willing to go and he had accepted the appointment. He was on the point of going and his parents said if you go we will commit suicide. We can't live without you. His wife said no, I am not prepared to go. Mind you, he was not going to a small village but

"The Third World Zoroastrian Congress would never have been held but for the initiative taken by the Federation."

going to a big town in Uttar Pradesh. Ultimately because of the pressures of his parents and his family, he gave up that job. He did not take it. He would have become the finance director of one of the biggest companies after five or ten years.

PARSIANA: After you retired from government service what have you been doing?

NARGOLWALA: Apart from having been in the Indian Civil Service for 35 years, I am a qualified chartered accountant. I did my C. A. from England and Wales. So after I retired I started my tax practice as a C. A. and also financial consultancy, company management and things like that. And with God's grace I am quite happy.



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The Gift of Wings

Jeroo Gorimar

The one-engine plane with its small cargo of mail taxies down the grass strip at Juhu, to stop next to half a dozen of its tiny, winged brethren. A bullock cart trundles up with fuel for the Puss Moth as its 28-year-old pilot, Jehangir R. Tata, alights after a historic flight from Karachi to Bombay.

While inaugurating India's first air-mail service 46 years ago, Tata who had yet to assume control of the 900-crore Tata empire, gave the gift of wings to the country. Without radar, runways or airports, with only one Leopard Moth and a Puss Moth, a handful of employees and a palm-thatched hut for an office, Tata Airlines with Tata in the cockpit and at the controls, grew to be the country's international flag carrier, spanning five continents, which reaped an estimated profit of Rs 25 crores last year. As Tata himself said on the occasion of the thirtieth anniversary of the airline, "If Tata Airlines had been a failure it would never have become Air-India ... it (Air-India) would not be what it is today." On 4 February 1978, after a long innings, the 73-year-old chairman of Air-India was summarily relieved of his responsibilities by the government. Air Chief Marshal P. C. Lal, chairman of a Calcutta-based Tata firm, was appointed joint chairman of both nationalised corporations, Air-India and Indian Airlines.

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"Air-India has survived despite the fact that the airline business is most vulnerable to political, social and economic changes everywhere in the world; Tata is largely responsible for its survival," notes K. G. Appusamy, Air-India's managing director and joint vice-chairman of Air-India and Indian Airlines. His deputy, N. H. Dastur who retired a year before he was due to do so, says, "Tata was largely responsible for the high standards of service. He would rather give good service than make a profit, though he did like both. He was a finer socialist than many others who pretend to be socialists."

Dastur ascribes the former chairman's success to his "instinctive feel about the airline business and his judgement which was always right. He was a fine administrator; he trusted his officers, delegated responsibility and never interfered. He took decisions only after a consensus had been reached." No matter how busy he was running the Tata empire, "he was always available for advice. He somehow managed to give you an appointment on the same day you asked for one. This made for smooth functioning," says Dastur.

There was not a single aspect of the airline business in which Tata had not shown a keen personal interest, according to his colleagues. "His comprehension was remarkable," says an associate. From the intricacies of aviation to flight schedules and aircraft interiors; from passenger comfort to crew uniforms and the length of a hostess' hair, Tata was reportedly a stylist and gave meticulous attention to every detail. He had a tidy mind and a tie set awry on a steward's shirtfront irked him as much as a hostess with chipped nails or fat around her waist.

"From time to time we seem to be getting lax about the weight of our hostesses ... any fat around the waist



Arrival at Juhu of the inaugural mail flight from Karachi. Second from left, Capt. Homi Bharucha, Tata, and Neville Vintcent.

becomes clearly visible and is exaggerated into an unsightly roll when the hostess bends down while attending to passengers," Tata would caution time and again. According to Dastur, "After every flight he would return with several pages of notes on how to improve service," having observed everything from ground handling, the state of the aircraft, crockery and cutlery, down to a broken tin opener which might need replacement.

At Tata's insistence, aircraft cabin lights had to be on during meal service so that when tables were laid in first class, "the cutlery would sparkle." He didn't want Air-India to switch to plastic glasses even when other airlines had done so as a measure of economy because Air-India had to be better than the others. At one regional heads meeting he reportedly wanted to know why no action had been taken on his suggestion that blue fluid should be used in aircraft lavatories. "It looks better," he explained. For years, Tata hammered at his colleagues, "Always aim at perfection and be satisfied only with excellence."

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"Tata's high standards of perfection and taste were responsible for the Air-India Boeing 747 decor, considered to be one of the most beautiful in the world," says Jal Cowasji, Air-India's publicity consultant and one-time head of the publicity department. Cowasji recalled that it was the chairman's farsighted policy of beautifying Air-India offices all over the world with paintings and murals by Indian artists and Indian artifacts which "any other conservative chairman would have felt was a waste of time and money." During their 23-year working relationship, the consultant received many midnight telephone calls at home from Tata, suggesting "how a message on an Air-India hoarding might be improved by the deletion or addition of a word. We had to give so much of ourselves because he gave so much of himself," he says.

Though a stickler for perfection, Tata would make generous allowance for human error. When a terrified Air-India hostess spilt coffee on his immaculate suit, he laughed it off with, "Next time make it whisky." "He rarely lost his temper with his staff," according to Dastur "and tried to maintain the personal touch," even after Air-India had become an established and running concern nationalized and somewhat impersonalised. "He was dear to his staff because he was genuinely interested in their welfare," says Appusamy. After the recent New Year's day airplane crash, Tata reportedly visited the bereaved families of the 23-member crew to personally offer his condolences.

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"If he was occasionally strict with his senior executives he was kind and humane with the 'lower' cadres," informed Cowasji. The consultant's long association with Tata has given him an insight into the man who despite the numerous claims on his time, thinks nothing of taking his gardener's children for a drive or regularly visiting his old and ailing *Khansama* (cook) at the hospital. According to a story circulating in aviation circles, the chairman was once discovered sitting on a fence at the airport, nattering away with the loaders while waiting to take a flight to Delhi. In fact, he never missed the opportunity of chatting with the pilots "as an old pilot," or visiting the engineering base to know all about the latest developments in engine technology, avionics and air-frames.

At high tide during the monsoon, the strip would be flooded and the airline would have to transfer operations to a small strip at Poona.

For all the time and attention he lavished on Air-India, Tata's friends jokingly accused him of ulterior motives. The chairman would reportedly reply to the charge with characteristic good humour: "My friends say that my great interest in Air-India is due to the pretty air hostesses. This is only a slight exaggeration." On a more serious note he admitted, "The international airline business is still the love of my life," and that he had been "nuts about flying from childhood," much of which he spent in France where he was born. And on the occasion of the thirtieth anniversary of the airline, Tata recalled how Air-India had been nurtured from the smallest beginnings "with little more to sustain it at first than the love, the sweat and the devotion of those who worked for it."

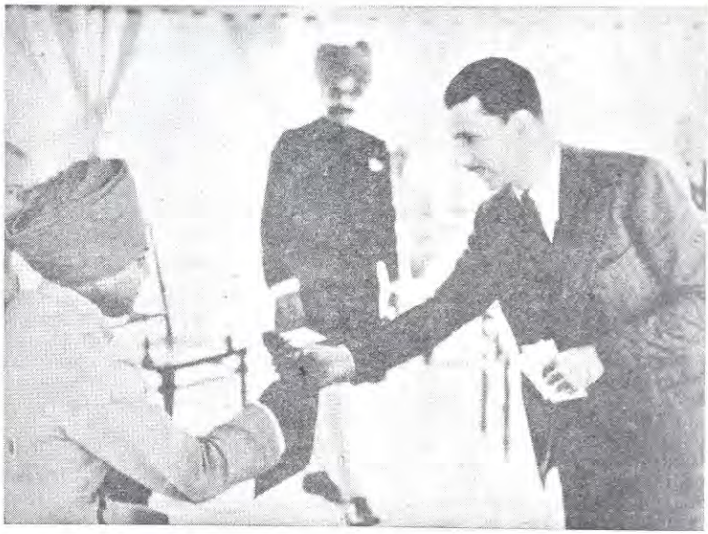
Between the wood and fabric of the Puss Moth to the gleaming metal, thrust and deep-throated roar of an Air-India jet are Tata's years of struggle. After acquiring a pilot's licence, he started the airline in 1932 along with a former Royal Air Force officer Neville Vintcent. "He was indeed the founder of Indian air transport", said Tata in an interview with Air-India's house journal, *Magic Carpet*. "It was he who visualized the possibilities at the right time, worked up the scheme with great care and having joined Tatas as a partner in the venture, he organised the service, small as it was in every detail."

Bombay, the principal base of Tata Airlines did not have an all-weather airstrip; "the airport" was a dried grass strip near the sea, usable for only eight months of the year. At high tide during the monsoon, the strip would be flooded and the airline would have to transfer operations to a small strip at Poona, next to the Yeravada Jail. No facilities in the way of navigational aids were available to guide the primitive little planes in bad weather and as there were no lighting facilities at any of the airfields on the route, night flying was impossible. The route crossed 5,000 ft-high hills, vast deserts, swamps and the planes had often to contend with dust storms, torrential rains and clouds of locusts. Despite the formidable odds, Tata airlines flew 160,000 miles during the first year of operations with unbroken regularity.

Soon the Puss Moth bowed out to the Leopard Moth, the Fox Moth, the Miles Merlin, the Waco and the De

Tata handing over a mail bag to Maharaja Scindia of Gwalior during a stopover on the inaugural flight.

Tata and his wife, Thelma, after the reenactment of the inaugural flight on the thirtieth anniversary of Air-India.





Havilland Rapide; with new aircraft, new routes were opened but the second world war brought about a temporary lull. Tata who had by then become the chairman of the entire Tata Group, established a training centre for pilots and an aircraft factory near Poona.

Until the end of the second world war it was neither practical nor economical to carry both passengers and mail. By 1946, however, Tata was satisfied that he could operate a first class service to England and so the airline's name was changed to Air-India. To preempt a government decision to have a state-owned airline, Tata sent a memorandum to the government in late 1947, in which Air-India offered to create Air-India International as a joint project in which the government would take 49 per cent of the shares and Tata's would undertake to hand over to the state two per cent of their holding anytime they asked for it. To Tata's surprise, the government agreed to the proposal in its entirety. Air-India International was born and its service to London via Cairo inaugurated on 8 June 1948, at least two years earlier than could otherwise have been possible.

Within the next four years, the airline had doubled its operations, making a profit till 1952. By July 1953, 10 more airlines had emerged on the national scene and the government nationalised them all in the same year. Air-India Limited was merged in the Indian Airlines Corporation and Air-India International Limited was taken over by Air-India International. At the request of the Government of India, Tata agreed to become chairman of Air-India International.

His farewell message at the time he handed over his airlines to the nation read: "And now the time has come to say goodbye. As we turn the last page and put away the book, regret or bitterness has no place in our hearts. Instead we may find content in the thought that what we did was worth doing, that we set our standards high and would not lower them, that we never need part with our memories..."

How did Tata feel when he was relieved of the chairmanship of the airline he had conceived and nurtured? According to Dastur, what he had once ruefully admitted a few years ago perhaps still holds true: "Because I was present at the birth of Air-India I feel a little like a mother who can't realise her baby has grown up."

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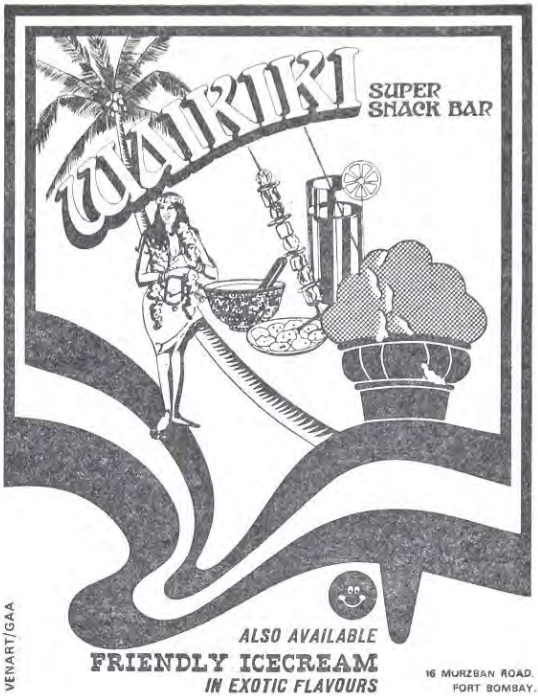
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BOOK REVIEW

Lend them your ears

Listening for Managers
by J. B. Madan, 92 pages, Modern Marketing Consultants, Rs. 12.50.

Madan's book reminds one of an old-world Pelman course (a popular correspondence course for the development of the mind); it takes you through several lessons in listening, each with a brief presentation of salient points, "a wrapping up" of the lesson, a pondering point for stress, suggestions for "the conscientious manager"—presumably the chap who wants to listen—and finally some Pelman-style home-work in the shape of a "quiz" or questions at the end. He is certainly a "conscientious" author, laying a careful net for the reader or pupil to ensure he does not escape the lesson through casual reading or lack of purpose.

Apart from the fact that the concept of "Executive Listening" is derived from a Harvard Business School advanced management programme, this is really a homespun work in a brief 92 pages (a reflection of managerial intake capacity?). Madan's collaborators are his daughter and son, "the inspiration, devotion and attention" are from his wife, the anecdotes are largely drawn from eastern India and the publishers are his own consultancy firm. There are, of course, acknowledgements to others for their help. A manager could conveniently read it on a single Indian Airlines flight, if he does not have another talkative Indian beside him! In which case, this inexpensive book could be gifted to his neighbour.

There are many worthwhile passages. For example, the chapter on "Upward Communications" is especially relevant in a hierarchical society where belief lies in one-way communications—downward, no matter if the senior is "clever" or not. In India, communication is like water, the natural flow is downward. Like water, it is regarded as unnatural—sometimes even impertinent—when it flows upward, unasked for. The chapter on "Barriers" to good listening, complements the earlier one.

In a society which is both hierarchical and functional, the point made about the consequences of distrust and dislike at the top is of major importance, as much as in a ministry or department as in the public and private sectors. More than just communications go awry when there is distrust and dislike between two or more top men in an organization. Their communications sometimes have seismic effects on the rest of the organization, with reverberations on many a graph.

The reviewer finds fault with two areas of *Listening for Managers*. The first is that it seems to be written on the assumption that managers are a leisured class, and that even those with the best of intentions are not bedevilled by the pace of events, the pressures of work and lack of time. Good listening has to go with the planning of scarce time, and that is an important precondition. So are previously agreed objectives for any group activity, so that the limited time is used to the best purpose. Without it there is waffling, impatience and not enough time for all the desirables the author rightly recommends.

The second criticism is that the person-to-person situation, which Madan has chosen, is too limited in managerial experience. The interview situation is relatively easy. But what about a more problematic communications session between manager and unionised workers and their officials? What about interdepartmental meetings on really knotty problems? The author has provided an example of this in the appendix in a rather exemplary, cut, dried and correct way. Such situations require more discussion. The good example may be good as far as it goes, but most people learn better from a bad example, even a caricature. Beyond the person-to-person situation, an experienced man like the author would himself recognise the added dimensions of the problem. Here, a very useful learning experience, that of listening to and interacting with more than one person in situations of inherent conflict, has been omitted.

And, finally, who is the ideal listener? The author provides a page and a half of unexceptional desirables, but no "wrapping up" this time. Perhaps a good listener is one with whom it is a pleasure and a profit to talk, one who also makes you feel that two heads are better than one; and that you are then an augmented individual. Result? Added value.

Indian managers are Indians first, and hence a talkative lot. In such a tribe of many tongues and a few pens, Madan lays claim to being the first and only "ear" in book form. Most of us could make a better beginning with good listening, as executive or spouse, parent or friend.

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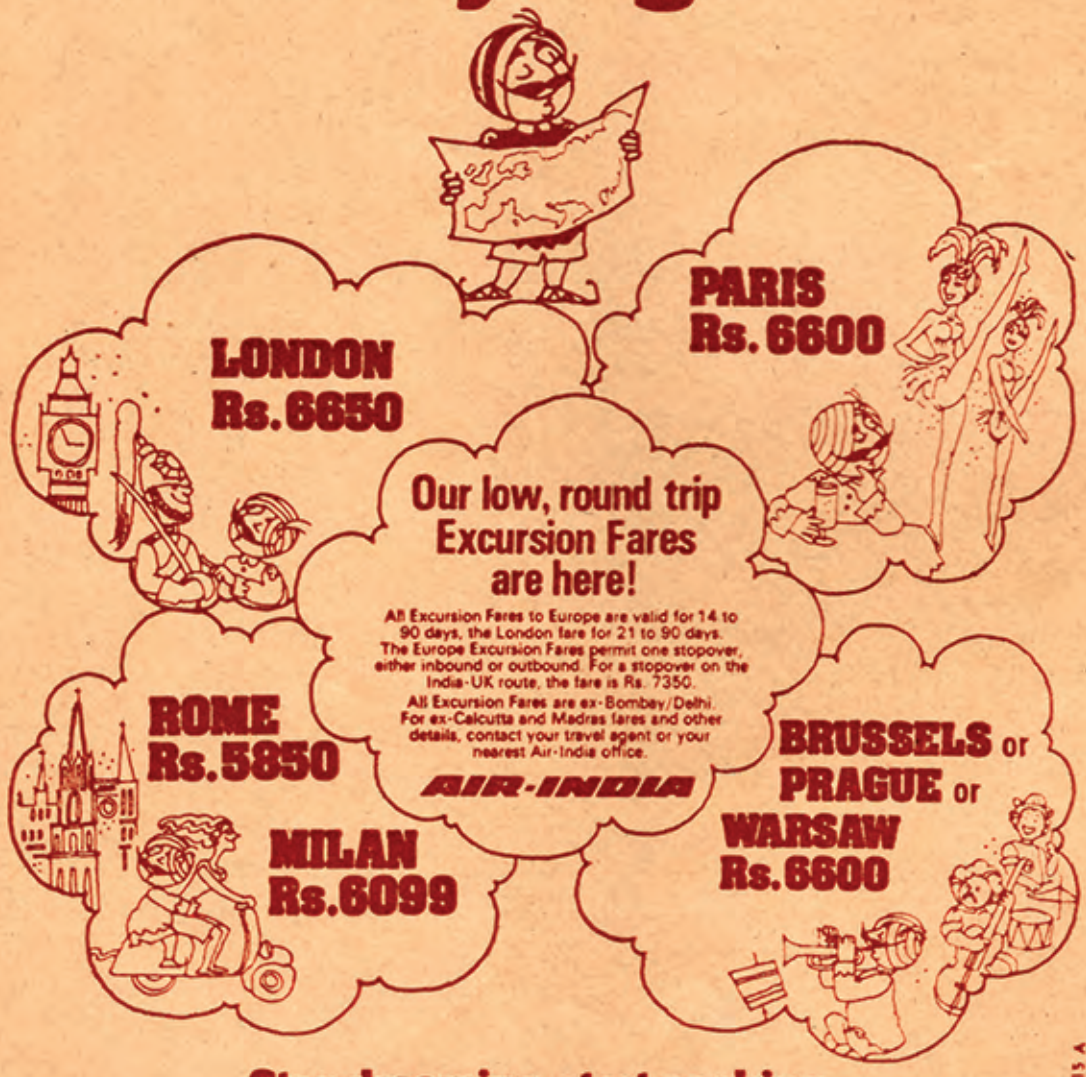
Published and edited by Jehangir R. Patel at 285 J. Dadaji Marg, Bombay-400 007 and printed by him at G. Claridge & Co. Ltd., Shahid Bhagat Singh Road, Bombay-400 001. Parsiana Ph. 262624.

Interpub/GSC/2/74



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