

Parsiānā

Contestants evenly matched

With the November 23 elections fast approaching
both candidates exude confidence.

Arnavaz S. Mama

Will 106 new donors be allowed to vote, come November 23, 1985? The Bombay High Court holds the trump card in the current replay of the Bombay Parsi Punchayet (BPP) electoral drama, as businessman Hector Mehta challenges sitting trustee, solicitor Eruch Desai.

The Committee for Economic Revival (CER) has demanded a freeze on the voting rights of the donors whose names have been added to the list after February this year. Justice Pratap, granting a temporary freeze of the register from October 1 — the date the case first came up for hearing — set October 10 as the date for a full hearing. By end October, however, the case had not come up for hearing again.

As *Parsiānā* took an electoral survey on October 30, both candidates projected confidence. Desai said he expected "between 100 and 150 CER votes and good response from the F register." Mehta, looking beyond the immediate hurdle of the election and viewing the scene in the light of recent events, thought aloud, "never make

very tall claims before the election. The image gets boosted 10 times your capacity size — not even your normal size. When you can't accomplish, the problems begin..."

Most people consider the two candidates for trusteeship, a likeable pair — honest, straightforward and mature.

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Many voters are friendly with and have equal regard for both candidates. Faced with the unhappy task of choosing

between friends, several are known to be planning to go out of Bombay during the November 23 election weekend!

Both Desai (54) and Mehta (49) are traditional Zoroastrians with a pragmatic, middle-of-the-road approach to community problems; both are committed to working on the BPP board as members of a team, with no addiction to the spotlight.

In fact, admits Perviz Dotivala of the United Orthodox Graduates (which won control of the C register in the 1981 Anjuman Committee elections), when Desai first sought her (and the UOG's) support for reelection, she bluntly enquired, "*Ten sun kaum ni seva bajavich* (what have you done for the community)" to earn reelection? Some days later Dotivala says she received an answer in the shape of an 18-page letter that convinced her in Desai's favor. Much later, says Dotivala, the contents of that letter emerged in the shape of a series of two articles in the *Jam-e-Jamshed* — perhaps in response to questions similar to her own. Barring one or two persons, the

UOG's members who met Desai and Mehta have decided in favor of Desai, says Dotivala.

As Dotivala noted, "It takes two to three years to settle down in the trusteeship... and if a man is doing really well, just because he's finished 10 years (is no reason to) disqualify him. That Desai has publicly stated his intention to retire after four years if the court upholds a ceiling of two seven-year terms for trustees, is another reason why he has the UOG's support. Besides, says Dotivala, the BPP requires an in-house solicitor.

Like most others whom *Parsiana* questioned, Dotivala was indeed sorry to have to make the choice. She says she tried hard to persuade Mehta to differ his candidature by about six months when the next vacancy is expected, but Mehta was not amenable to the idea.

Another UOG member and molder of opinion, who didn't want his name to be published, assessed the two candidates as "six of one and half a dozen of the other," and hazarded the guess that though Mehta is comparatively unknown to voters, he has the support of BPP trustee Homi Ranina and therefore stands a strong chance of cornering the donor votes. He commented further that CER support to Desai may alienate Desai from some of the donor voters.

Having accused Mehta of opposing "the CER in its attempts to bring about a fair electoral scheme," the CER's managing committee announced in the *Jam-e-Jamshed* (October 27) that it had turned down Mehta's request for support in favor of Desai, although Desai "may have completed 10 years." As justification, the CER announcement noted that Desai "has spoken out against the packing of the F

register," has agreed to resign after four years if the court upholds a maximum of two terms of seven years for trustees, "is sincere in his dedication to the BPP... (and) has staunchly supported the Federation of (Parsi Zoroastrian) Anjumans of India."

The decision to support Desai for a second term was a volte face for the

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CER which refrained from endorsing former BPP trustee Jamshed Guzder's short lived candidacy for reelection against industrialist Naoroji Godrej even though Guzder had agreed to abide by the court's final decision on the length of a trustee's term.

If his espousal of the Federation has helped Desai with the CER, it has hurt him elsewhere. Stated Cowasjee Dinshaw, former leader of the erstwhile Committee of United Zoroastrians (CUZ), "We will support anyone (who is) against the Federation." Requested to explain the reason for the dislike towards the Federation, Dinshaw replied that "the idea of the Federation was mooted by my father, so I'd be the first person to support it," but not as long as Shiavax Nargolwala, the liberal, reformist-minded president of the Delhi Anjuman and vice-president of

the Federation, remained a prominent office-bearer. Dinshaw noted that CUZ affiliates tend to "get nervous hearing about Nargolwala (who may not be) a bad person... but what is to be done, that's his image."

Describing Desai as the BPP's "beast of burden for legal work," the outspoken, ascerbic Dinshaw Merchant, Parsi businessman and benefactor, described Desai and Mehta as personal friends and said his vote will be cast "in favor of the sitting trustee... If Hector stands next time, I'll vote for Hector." Merchant believes that the number of terms a trustee enjoys should depend upon his calibre and endorses Desai as being one of the most "scrupulously honest" on the present BPP board.

Other community watchers note that all things being equal, people prefer a new face — a peculiarity that may work to Mehta's advantage. And though Mehta is less known to the community, Desai's work has not been visible either, noted a prominent lawyer. Mehta's frank, open response to his questioners can be seen to sway them in his favor.

Even more than the CER's allegation against him of having bought votes and packed the F register, what might weigh in the community's mind is Mehta's closeness to Homi Ranina. Ranina's bonafides are being questioned in some quarters today because of his steadfast (some call it stubborn) allegiance to the controversial Athra-van Educational Trust (AET) — an idealistic scheme that has boomeranged because Ranina, an expert on investment and taxation, stumbled in his political calculations.

A staunch Mehta supporter however notes that far from Mehta toeing the Ranina line, as feared, Mehta will be invaluable in curbing, molding and mellowing Ranina, thus enhancing Ranina's valuable potential for community service.

A dignified restraint has pervaded the campaigning of both candidates as is reflected in an absence of nasty, personal references in letters to the Press. A couple of letters hectoring Mehta appeared in *The Bombay Samachar* (October 27): Burjor Mistry, in a series of six questions, castigated Mehta's connection with Ranina while D. Doomasia alleged, "A new practice has started in our community... dinner diplomacy." He was referring to a practice



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started by Ranina and continued by Mehta of inviting voters for discussions over dinner. Doomasia requested "a legal luminary to advise whether this dinner diplomacy can be called corruptive or... unethical."

The orthodox *Parsie Voice* edited by Adi Doctor, in its issue of August '85 took Desai to task for his article "Present day election scene," published in *Jam-e-Jamshed* (August 24, 1985). Desai had praised the electoral scene 10 years ago in contrast to the prevailing one and noted, "There were not then many aspirants for office, and the time was, when gentlemen of the community had to be coaxed to offer themselves as candidates for the post of a trustee, leave aside starting the election campaign nearly six months in advance of an election. Where was the din, and where was the noise?"

Commented *The Parsie Voice*, "Surely 10 years is not that long a period to be afflicted with *lapsus memoriae*, particularly for a dapper and trim 54-year-old, like you?" and quoted from an early 1976 issue of *Parsiana* describing Desai's own election: "With the scars of the last election still to heal, no one wanted another divisive battle for the trusteeship seat." *The*

Voice noted, "No, Mr Desai, the 'din and the noise' before a BPP trustee election in the 70s were infinitely worse than what they are today."

The Voice also quoted Desai's statement in the *Jame*: "It is ridiculous for any man to criticize the work of another, till he has adorned himself by his own performance in that particular field," and countered, "This is quaint logic, at least as far as the office of a BPP trustee is concerned. Unless one is given a chance to become a trustee, how can he himself prove that he is a capable one?"

Campaigning styles

Earlier, *Parsiana* had observed the two candidates in action:

Desai at Malcolm Baug: Anjuman Committee member Homi Talati introduced Desai to the 22 voters gathered in his living room — the Talati home in Malcolm Baug (Jogeshwari) is the traditional meeting ground for aspiring trustees and Anjuman Committee members of Malcolm Baug, Panthaky Baug and the neighborhood. If Desai had any qualms, he was not showing them. The fair, chubby-cheeked, safari-clad lawyer looked younger than his 54 years as he set out "to clear any

cobwebs blotting the election scene." Before getting to the nitty-gritty of electioneering, however, Desai absolved himself of any future charge of courting publicity by noting that *Parsiana* was present at its own request. Then, advising the gathering that "no one trustee in isolation" can be praised or blamed for any developments, Desai noted, "The cooperation of the board and the community are essential for any (Punchayet) plan to succeed."

Scotching any likely criticism about not spending sufficient time on community affairs, Desai noted, "So long as the (BPP's) constitution is as at present, honorary trustees will have to devote such time as necessary," and added that he was in favor of one or two full-time trustees.

At the end of his brief speech (during which the voter guests were refreshed with dry fruit, lassi and beer) Desai invited suggestions, noting that it would be his endeavor to accept those best suited to the community. Among the rapid-fire questions, one wanted to know the cost of the election to the Punchayet (Rs 10,000 under normal conditions, said Desai); another sought his opinion regarding getting enough mobeds, to which Desai quoted the

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Federation's scheme for paramobeds, adding, "None of us on the board have a religious background or expertise... invite the dasturs for advice..." "Has such a committee of dasturs been formed?" persisted the questioner. It was an awkward moment for Desai who parried, "The BPP can only suggest as akabars... we have no agiary under our jurisdiction except Godavra."

The grilling spanned the BPP's mobed amelioration scheme, the disposal of excess agiaries, the buying of votes, the AET, the non-Parsi driver of the doongerwadi hearse, on all of which Desai was on slippery ground as the voters questioned the decisions arrived at by a board of seven members. But then somebody asked, "Are you in favor of adult franchise?" and Desai, no longer hemmed in by his commitment to collective responsibility, was off the hook. Defending the present scheme with modifications necessitated by the passage of time, Desai held hard to the indirect election system. Voicing a dearly held opinion, Desai told the voters, "Look at the fate of the other organizations where adult franchise prevails... there are second thoughts even on the national level..."

The reactivation of the tower of silence in Andheri was a subject close to this gathering of suburban voters and they urged Desai to examine the possibility in the light of more and more Zoroastrians settling in the suburbs; but Desai noted that the Andheri dokhma was managed by an independent trust.

The most bedevilled subject was the allotment of flats. Ms Jeroo Ichaporia, an F register voter from Andheri, set the ball rolling by stating flatly that "at election time everyone promises that only the needy will be given flats..." She alleged shady deals and charged that once on the board, the trustees were quick to forget such promises.

Desai began by noting, "I will not promise that everything that we do is 100 percent correct" and went on to describe how persistent rumors about undercover payments had led to the decision that the full board of the Panchayet must rule on flat allocations. This is now done along the CER's merit rating system which, said Desai, though "very good, is not foolproof" as there are applications which do not fit any of the categories.

Polite but businesslike, Desai bid a short, friendly farewell and was off as

soon as the questions petered off. Minoo Siodia who is said to be an old hand at organizing these meetings at Malcolm Baug, noted that this was the best turnout of voters he had witnessed, while Ms Perin Marker, a CER supporter on the F register, confided that the majority in Malcolm Baug favored Desai, noting colloquially, "*navi gilli, navo daav* (a new entrant

"If a man is doing
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means starting all over again)... we prefer older incumbents."

Desai noted frankly that were it not for the support of his wife Coomi (who was initially lukewarm to the idea), he would not have hazarded a second term at trusteeship. The statuesque Coomi, a one-time secretary in British Airways, provides efficient background support and has diligently taught herself the main concerns of each group of voters so that Desai is prepared to meet them with a fair guess at individual identity. Coomi's unfortunate fall that resulted in a broken kneecap on October 27, has deprived Desai of his most valuable aide.

Mehta at Bandra: The windy afternoon had settled into a still, humid evening as voters in the Bandra-Santa Cruz area gathered on the terrace of the Otters Club in Bandra to meet Hector and Daisy Mehta. The evening's hostess, principal Homai Mehta of the J.J. College of Commerce, introduced the Mehtas as "very close to the community... keen socialites... devout Zoroastrians" and described how many of those present inevitably recalled bumping into Mehta in an agiary.

Mehta referred to the independent community trusts with which he is associated like the Dhunmai Cawasji High School in Khandala, the Kooka Charities, the Mody Sanatorium in Lonavala, the Parsi Lying-in Hospital and the M.F. Cama Athornan Institute in Andheri and spoke of the work being undertaken. But Mehta was almost

equally particular to "make it clear, I'm not connected with the AET in any way." While admitting that "this Trust should have come into existence slightly differently... involved all the different institutions (and established) total dialogue with the dasturs and mobeds," Mehta was at pains to note that with "the type of people in command (he referred here to Ranina and Naoroji Godrej)," the powers "would not be misused... Our community reacts far more than others do. We react sharply... I'm told there are certain improvements on the way," assured Mehta. But Mehta stopped short of defending the AET's unfortunate stance vis-a-vis the K.R. Cama Oriental Institute (The AET used the Cama Institute as its registered address without the Institute's permission). "I entirely sympathize with the Cama Institute," he admitted frankly.

Although a few questions were put to Mehta on the Parsi Lying-in Hospital, plans for inculcating young boys into mobedi, etc, the formal speech was brief and questions from the house, limited. BPP trustee Homi Ranina who had been expected at the meeting could not make it and Mehta noted that voters may expect a letter from Ranina instead. As the gathering dissolved into small groups avidly discussing the issues of the moment — the Gibbs Road scheme, the CER accusation of packing the F register, the question of his opponent's second term — Mehta's humor, captivating frankness and honesty of purpose made visible inroads.

Mehta alleges that the CER has issued a whip, presumably barring CER support to him: "Can you understand a certain section not wanting to meet me?" he asked.

Wife Daisy, who is actively associated with the BPP's doongerwadi, Parukh Dharamshalla and matrimonial bureau subcommittees, maintained a low but friendly profile as the voters partook of the buffet dinner. Querried on the constitutionality of hosting dinners for the electorate, Mehta turned a disbelieving gaze upon *Parsiana*: "When people come all the way to meet you and you serve a few snacks, are you buying them? Did I buy the interview with *Parsiana* because I offered you a sandwich? Would I not be insulting these people by expecting them to vote for me because they have dined here?"



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Addressing the AET

A bitter dispute has arisen over the address of the beleaguered Athravan Educational Trust.

Arnavaz S. Mama

The newly formed Athravan Educational Trust (AET) has become the cause of contention between the K.R. Cama Oriental Institute and Zoroastrian Studies.

ZS, which functions from a small office on the ground floor of the Cama Institute building, has allowed its address to be used by the AET without the permission of the Cama Institute trustees. On being challenged by the Institute, ZS has pleaded the four common trustees on the boards of the AET and the ZS as an excuse, and has invoked the provisions of the Rent Act.

The three institutions — all purportedly involved in the study and propagation of Zoroastrian theology and ideals — seem headed for an ugly legal battle.

The long correspondence was published by *The Bombay Samachar* of October 13, and the *Jam-e-Jamshed* of October 16. The picture that emerges is that the Cama's trustees, being touched by an appeal from ZS founder (and later AET founder trustee) Khojeste Mistree to the Institute's president Adi Chinoy, decided to offer the budding preacher temporary accommodation from which to function. Mistree in his letter dated December 24, 1979 mentioned the disappointing result of his search "for a long while... for suitable office accommodation" and spelt out his "request to your august body... Our requirements are a quiet room around 200 sq ft for which we are willing to pay a reasonable rent. Furthermore," Mistree noted, "we are prepared to legally relinquish our tenancy rights, if any, in case you wish to repossess the premises."

The Cama replied on January 24, 1980, offering a room "on temporary basis... on certain terms and conditions." After a meeting with the Cama's president and secretaries, Mistree and Shernaz Panthaky (presently a trustee of the ZS and the AET) confirmed the deal, stating, "The

agreement is between the trustees of the K.R. Cama Oriental Institute and us, the undersigned until such time as Zoroastrian Studies is institutionalized... One key of our office will be left in the possession of your secretary."

When on March 23, 1984 Mistree again wrote to the Institute's trustees requesting more space and thanking them "for being such wonderful landlords," the Institute's reply of May 10, 1984 declining the request, observed

"There is no landlord/tenant relationship existing between our Institute and Zoroastrian Studies."

that "the ZS is not registered under the Society's Registration Act, 1860, the Bombay Public Trust Act, 1950, or under any other law" and added, "There is no landlord/tenant relationship existing between our Institute and Zoroastrian Studies."

May 11, 1985 marked the public launching of the AET as an institution dedicated to revitalizing the Zoroastrian priesthood. The brochures distributed on the occasion sought the community's financial support for its project to educate and nurture Parsi priests, and gave its address as the Cama Institute Building. The Cama's three joint secretaries protested in their letter of May 21 to Mistree and Panthaky: "Please see to it that the premises are used only by Zoroastrian Studies and by nobody else." A simultaneous letter to the AET trustees requested them to desist from using the

Institute building as the AET's office.

In their reply dated June 26, 1985 Mistree and Panthaky, stating themselves to be both ZS and AET trustees, pleaded the AET's goal as a mitigating factor and noted: "We see the religious education of the priesthood to be very much within the ambit of Zoroastrian Studies (ZS), as well as perhaps within the overall vision of the founding fathers of the K.R. Cama Institute."

Surprisingly, in the light of later developments, the ZS letter continued, "In fact, the original seed of this priests' project was sown from a discussion held between Dasturji Dr JamaspAsa and one of the signatories, in 1981. Our work with the priesthood represents, therefore, but the maturation of our shared concern." (On August 10, 1985 the AET trustees jolted the community by publicly maligning Dastur JamaspAsa as having hindered the betterment of mobeds.)

Refusing to buy this, the Cama trustees wrote a strong letter to the AET trustees "to please remove the impression created by your wrong statements" and demanded that the AET not only stop using the Cama Institute address but publish the rectification in the Gujarati dailies and noted that a copy of the letter was being forwarded to the Charity Commissioner.

Addressing themselves to Mistree and Panthaky, the Cama's joint secretaries noted that "the premises have been granted to you in your personal individual capacities" and reminded them that it was agreed in 1980 that "any office bearer of the Institute will be permitted access to your office at any time." The letter noted that if the AET continued to use the address, the Cama trustees would "revoke the permission given to you to use a portion... of the Institute building."

Challenging the Institute in their reply of September 10, 1985 Mistree and

continued on page 11

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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.

'Ranina's repeat...'

My attention has been drawn to the following extract in *Parsiana* (September 1985).

"In the context of the repeated amendments to the Gibbs Road scheme because of legal implications, someone referred to the lawyers on the BPP's board of trustees and enquired, 'Was Eruch Desai not doing any legal advising?' While refraining from comment on the specific question, Ranina noted, 'Justice Vimadlal has been of tremendous help to us in regard to rent control.'"

The innuendo is quite obvious. In the above connection, I can do no better than send to you the copies of the following correspondence exchanged between me and Mr Ranina.

Mr Ranina has specifically mentioned in his letter to me of October 7, 1985 that there is misreporting. Please now issue a clarification in the next issue of *Parsiana* in light of the above correspondence so that the members of our community may know the correct position.

E.B. DESAI

Desai's two letters

Dear Homi

I was surprised and saddened to learn from our colleagues at the last board meeting of the trustees held on thirteenth instant, after you left for the day at about 6.15 pm, that in answer to some queries raised from the audience at the public meeting which you addressed recently, with regard to the performance of the legal trustees on the board, you replied to the effect that "so far as the performance of my colleague Mr Eruch Desai is concerned, since he is my colleague, I do not want to make any comments, but so far as Mr Justice Vimadlal is concerned, he is making valuable contributions from the angle of the Bombay Rent Act."

The innuendo is quite obvious.

I am sure the above version is not correct and you will be pleased to agree with me, that such statement made by a trustee about his own colleague tarnishes the image of the dignified office of a trustee. If, however, any such statement to the above effect was made at the meeting, I shall thank you to let me know, on what basis such observations have been made by you, and on basis of which record of the Parsi Punchayet. I have no doubt in expecting that you do read carefully the files that are sent to you showing the respective contributions of Mr Vimadlal and myself inter alia to the legal matters of the Trust.

I shall be obliged for an early reply. With regards.

August 16, 1985

Dear Homi

I invite your attention to my letter to you of August 16, 1985 and the subsequent meeting on the same evening at the place of residence of Dr Aspi Gollwalla when besides other trustees and the chief executive, Mr Nani Palkhi-

vala was also present.

In the previous telephonic conversation subsequent to my letter and also at the above meeting you were pleased to confirm that you had been misquoted, the version given in my letter was not correct and it was arranged that you would also be sending over to me the tape containing the record in respect of the proceedings of the concerned meeting for me to verify the truth. However this has not been done to date.

My attention has now been drawn to the issue of *Parsiana* (September 1985, which refers to the incident).

(It is the) same-version as I indicated in my letter to you of August 16, 1985 and which you were pleased to mention, was not correct. Now that it has appeared in print, I think, in fairness to the truth and the principles that we espouse as trustees of this dignified institution, you should get the matter clarified at an early date with *Parsiana*. Please do extend to me the courtesy of a reply.

With regards.

September 28, 1985

Ranina's reply

Dear Eruch

I refer to your letter of September 28, 1985.

I did not reply to you earlier as I wanted to speak to Ms Arnavaz Mama of *Parsiana*. I met her this morning and I informed her about the misreporting in *Parsiana* (September 1985). I showed her the questions which were put to me, specially the one pertaining to the legal work which a trustee is required to do and the contribution of Mr Vimadlal who was referred to in the question itself.

I have requested Ms Mama to clarify the matter in the next issue of *Parsiana*.

October 7, 1985

Ranina's letter to Parsiana

I enclose herewith my clarification to be published along with the letters of Mr Eruch B. Desai.

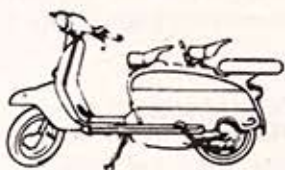
October 28, 1985

At the end of my speech on July 24, 1985, one of the questions raised was, "What is the type of legal work which a punchayet trustee is required to do and what is the contribution of Justice

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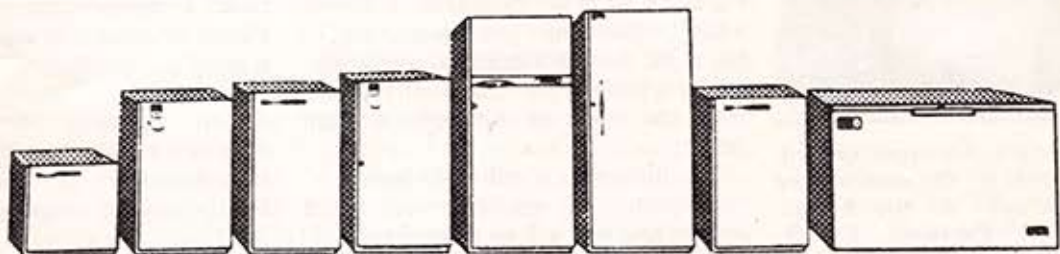
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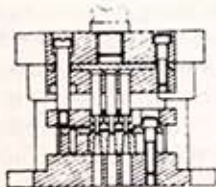
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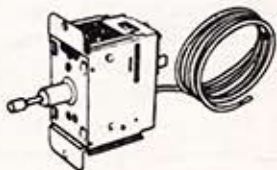
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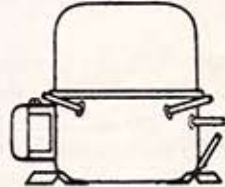
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Vimadala?" To this question, my answer was that the main type of legal work pertained to tenancy law matters, since most of the litigation of the Punchayet was under the rent control law. I further mentioned that Justice Vimadala was most helpful in these matters.

The answer, as given in the report, pertains to the aforesaid question and not to the Gibbs Road scheme.

Parsiana stands by its reportage of the meeting.

— Editor

In human terms

With reference to Mr V.M. Crishna's enquiry (*Parsiana*, October 1985), Prof Rooshikumar Pandya's report on the subject of drug addiction has been duly considered by the trustees of the Bombay Parsi Punchayet. Chairman Dr Aspi Golwalla has further discussed the matter with Mr Russell Pinto of Sevadhan (a residential home for treating drug addicts) and the subject is receiving active attention from the trustees.

Prof Rooshikumar Pandya's report does not contain any cost estimate. In the course of a month, the trustees will take a final decision after considering the proposals of Mr Pinto as well as those of Prof Rooshikumar Pandya.

We would like to clarify that Prof Rooshikumar Pandya was addressed a letter of thanks by the chairman on July 26, 1985.

R.K. ANKLESARIA
Chief Executive, Bombay Parsi Punchayet

Rayomand's get together

The Rayomand Committee, comprising ladies appointed by the Bombay Parsi Punchayet for collecting funds for housing, has been doing yeoman service to the community.

So far two buildings of 10 flats each have been constructed off Napean Sea Road and occupied.

In order to raise further funds for the next building, various fund raising drives are being organized.

The next project is a 'Fun and Food Get-Together' from November 29 to December 1, 1985 at Byramjee Jeejeebhoy School, opposite Charni Road Station, from 4 pm to 9 pm. There will be a children's fancy dress competition, Homi Tavadia's *Masti Tofan*, a fashion show and a musical evening along with games, food and other surprises.

HOMAI MODI

Sodawaterwalla strife...

A tussle between three trustees and the priests bedevils the functioning of the Sodawaterwalla Agiary (*Parsiana*, July 1985). It burned me to read the article. Another feature in the Readers' Forum of the same issue, 'Karanj fire extinguished,' really pained me. I thoroughly agree with the writer's views that if we are not able to look after our fires, we are not fit to call ourselves Zoroastrians.

Only two days back the noted ZS scholar Khojeste Mistree was in Karachi to lecture on the Fifth North American Zoroastrian Congress. During the course of his lecture he said we should be proud of ourselves because we have 100 percent literacy in our community. But then has modern education taken us so far away from our religion that we go to such lengths as extinguishing sacred fires and keeping the doors of agiaries closed to the public?

DARIUS SOLAN
Karachi

Export problem

Recently, with the help of my friends Mr Bejon Desai, Ms Roshan Guzder and Ervad Bapuji Desai, I had released two cassettes of Parsi Zoroastrian prayers with translated songs in English and Gujarati. These cassettes have become quite popular and I am still getting orders for the same.

Regarding orders from places within India, I have managed to fix a reasonable price, but orders from abroad cannot be entertained. Whereas the actual price of one cassette is Rs 20, the packing and postage alone would cost Rs 75, which means that a cassette of Rs 20 will cost Rs 95 to a buyer from abroad.

If someone could suggest a solution to this problem as to how these cassettes can be sent abroad at a reasonable price, they may write to the undersigned at: 16, Akrur Dutta Lane, Calcutta 700 012. The main aim behind this project is propagating Zoroastrian prayers without making any profit.

VISTASP BALSARA
Calcutta

Persian poetry

Persian poetry is very rich in its beauty and philosophy. *Parsiana* should publish two lines from Firdousi, Sadi or Hafiz in every issue. The lines will uplift the readers.

DR HOMI A. VARIAVA

continued from page 7

Panthaky asserted their rights as "monthly tenants," stated, "It was no part of our agreement with the trustees that the premises in our possession were to be occupied 'temporarily' as alleged by you," and observed, "As monthly tenants it would be our right to allow whomsoever we choose to use the premises with us so long as we do not offend the provision of the Rent

"We see the religious education of the priesthood to be very much within the ambit of ZS."

Act." With a defiant flourish the letter concludes, "We can only say that since we are monthly tenants, there is no question of your trustees withdrawing or revoking so-called permission given to us to use the portion of the floor of the Institute building."

In response to the Institute's honorary legal advisor Adi Daruwalla's letter to ZS and AET notifying the revocation of the leave and licence granted to Mistree and Panthaky, Mulla and Mulla solicitor Burjor Antia replied that caveats have been filed in the Bombay City Civil Court and the Small Causes Court and notices served. On October 4, 1985 Daruwalla noted, "My clients will in due course file an ejectment suit..."

Concluding the recital of what it called "this malodorous affair," *The Bombay Samachar* reminisced, "We Parsi Zoroastrians take pride that we always work for noble ends but our greater pride and glory are in the fact that we have always believed in using good and morally immaculate means to achieve these ends." Asked the *Jam-e-Jamshed*, "These days does it pay to be kind and sympathetic? ... What price the very basis of Zoroastrianism — good thoughts, good words, good deeds?"

According to reliable sources, the AET has decided to shift its office from the K.R. Cama Institute. The *Bombay Samachar* of October 27 states that the new office is to be located at Noble Chambers in Bombay's Fort area.

— Editor

Events and Personalities

Bilimora's new trustees

Four new trustees were elected to the Bilimora Parsi Anjuman, under the direction of the Gujarat High Court, on September 29, 1985, notes a press release issued by Manek Medora, a newly elected trustee of the Anjuman.

Elected for a period of seven years, the new trustees are: Pesi Doctor, retired assistant commissioner of police, Piroj Dandivalla, retired assistant collector of customs and excise, Dorab S. Tata, businessman and Maneck Medora, senior executive of Godrej. Others on the board include Rustomji Billimoria, managing trustee and trustee on the board for over 20 years, Dadiba Sanjana and Furrokh Vasania, adds the release. Billimoria's term as managing trustee expired on September 30. A new managing trustee will be elected from those already on the board, notes the release.

"We hope not only to straighten out the affairs of the Anjuman but will work with all sincerity and dedication to revive the prosperity of the Parsis in Bilimora," adds Medora in the release.

Admission difficulties

"Of late getting admission in reputed schools in and around Borivli has become a herculean task... (A few families) had to ultimately retract their abode from Borivli, back into town and seek refuge in sanatoriums," notes the July newsletter of the Borivli and Suburban Zoroastrian Association. And this, inspite of the "assistance of our vice-president, Mr Mulla who, through his contacts with the Lions Club, managed to help a few."

Keeping this in mind, the association is thinking of making a joint effort to get their children admitted into good schools, under the leadership of Mulla, "an experienced educationist," notes the write-up.

People who wish to help, should write to: N.G. Paghdwalla, B/2

Madhav Apartments, Kastur Park, Shimpoli Road, Borivli (west), Bombay 400 092.

Nargolwala's twenty-fifth

Shiavax Dinshaw Nargolwala completed 25 years as president of the Delhi Parsi Anjuman (DPA) on May 22, 1985, "a record perhaps unequaled by any president of any Parsi anjuman in India," notes the July issue of *Dipanjali*, the half-yearly journal of the DPA, edited by Novy Kapadia.

At the felicitation function organized on the occasion, Nargolwala was welcomed with the traditional *achoo michoo* and a chorus song, followed by speakers "who had nothing but words of praise for the president," notes the *Dipanjali*. Momentos were then presented to the president, followed by a variety entertainment program.

Born on June 5, 1915, Nargolwala is a retired ICS officer, a qualified chartered accountant and a graduate from the London School of Economics, specializing in economics, industry, banking and international trade. Nargolwala has served in various government

departments for 34 years, retiring as financial advisor to the Ministry of External Affairs at the age of 58, notes the journal.

As president of the DPA, Nargolwala's achievements include "building a firm infrastructure for the community's well-being, which included an attractive agiary, a dharamshala, which is the pride of dharamshalas in India, a recreation center and an aramgah," notes sociologist Ava Khullar, in an article in *Dipanjali*, titled "Tribute to a Patriarch." She further adds, "A leader's success is measured by his capacity to think clearly, have the conviction of his beliefs and the persistence to transform these ideas into reality... Nargolwala has these in ample measure."

BPP financial assistance

The Bombay Parsi Punchayet is offering financial assistance to those persons appearing for the All-India Civil Services and Defence Services Examinations in 1986, notes a press release issued by the BPP chief executive, R.K. Anklesaria.

Nargolwala: built 'firm infrastructure'



Financial help will be offered to those who "have a first class or higher second class degree, including those with similar academic record (who) are appearing for the final graduation examinations in early 1986." The finance is to help coach candidates for the examinations. Only "candidates considered most suitable will be sponsored," notes the release.

Applications are also invited from those who wish to join the defence services and would like to undertake pre-examination training.

Those interested are requested to contact R.K. Anklesaria, chief executive, Parsi Punchayet, Bombay, along with an application and a copy of their mark sheet by November 15, 1985.

Similar funeral rites

"The mortal remains of virtually all Tibetans" are cut into pieces and fed to vultures in "a dawn funeral rite dating back centuries," notes London's *Daily Telegraph* of June, 1985.

Tibetans believe that this mode of burial will ensure the reincarnation of the soul. "Only criminals and victims of contagious diseases are interred so that their kind will become extinct," adds the report.

Bus loads of tourists who come to witness the event have led Tibetan undertakers to complain against the lack of privacy at their funerals. In fact at one point, "five undertakers became so angry at being gawked at as they dismembered two corpses, that they briefly abandoned their grisly task to hurl stones at a bus load of tourists from Hong Kong," notes the *Daily Telegraph* report.

"The problem with onlookers was that they tended to scare the vultures off... If the vultures, usually about 50, become too frightened to swoop, or if they leave any of the body, it is considered a bad omen and the remains must be disposed of instantly, 'to free the soul,'" adds the write-up.

However, reports on the outcome of the complaints lodged are contradictory. An *Associated Press* August report states, "The authorities in China's Tibet Autonomous Region have banned visitors from watching Tibetan sky burials... A public notice in Tibet's daily newspaper said, that the regional government, which comes under the control of the Chinese Communist Party, has banned visitors from



Ms Freny Pader, director of Veera Tanneries Pvt. Ltd. Bombay, which received the Best Export Performance Award for the Aurangabad region and the state of Maharashtra, is seen receiving a silver plaque from Sudhakar Rao Naik, Minister for Industry, Maharashtra. Her husband, Darab C. Pader, managing director of the company, also received a silver plaque at the ceremony.

the sites unless they get special permission. Picture-taking and vulture-hunting near the sites were also banned."

On the other hand, *The Times of India* report of July 3, 1985 sent by *Parsiana* reader Adi B. Dubash states, "The new Tibet tourism corporation sees traditional sky burials as a big attraction in its plans to bring in tens of thousands of visitors. It aims to build a special hillside platform so that the foreigners can watch the rites through telescopes."

Awards for Sethna

Dr Homi Sethna, eminent nuclear scientist and former chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, was awarded the Dadabhai Naoroji Memorial Prize for 1984, in September. The Bombay morning, *The Daily* (September 10, 1985), quoted M.S. Gore, chairman of the Dadabhai Naoroji Memorial Prize Fund who noted that Sethna was selected in recognition of his "distinguished contribution to the development of science and scientific institutions in India, especially in the field of atomic energy."

Recipient of many prestigious awards including the Padma Vibhushan in 1975, Sethna was also awarded, on August 31, 1985, the Vishva-Gujarati Award for distinguished services which consists of Rs 5,000, along with a copper plaque, an award citation, and a traditional memento from Guja-

rat, notes *The Daily* (September 1, 1985).

Responsible for the design and construction of the plutonium plant at the Bhabha Atomic Research Center at Trombay, and the uranium mill at Jaduguda in Bihar, Sethna, as chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, also carried out the peaceful nuclear underground explosion in 1974, "which established India as a world nuclear power," note newspaper reports.

Sethna is also associated with the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, the Tata Memorial Centre and the Indian Institute of Technology. At present he is chairman of the Tata Oil Mills (TOMCO), add the reports.

Greek Medal for Mirza

Dr Firoze Dara Mirza, the principal speaker at the Second International Hellenic Congress organized by the Hellenic Society of Dental Research at Athens, Greece, was awarded the 'coveted' Greek Medal and made honorary member of the Hellenic Society of Dental Research, notes a press release.

At the Congress, which was jointly organized by the Greek Ministry of Culture and Science and the Ministry of Health and Social Security, Dr Mirza read a paper on economics in the planning of implants. He also participated in the round table discussion in

Mirza: principal speaker
(Far right) Rustomji: dental centers

dental implantology and in the live dental implant operations done on several patients on September 17, adds the release.

Among the topics discussed was a newly discovered chemical substance called caridex which, when applied on the decaying part of the tooth, leaves behind a clean area for necessary fillings, and so does away with the much dreaded dental drill.

Also, decayed teeth can now be restored by the use of "acid etch bonding and light cured composite resins. However, crowning is still the ideal method for a durable restoration of a badly decayed and broken tooth." Furthermore, permanent dental implants surgically fixed in the jaw bones are an alternative to dentures for those persons who have lost some or all of their teeth. Proper use of antibiotics and drug therapy as well as the use of laser beams in dentistry, were also discussed.

A diplomate of the International College of Oral Implantology in New York, USA, Dr Mirza has been practising dental implantology for the past 25 years.

Surgeon commodore

Dentist Rusi J. Rustomji was promoted to the rank of surgeon commodore and reappointed dental advisor to the Indian Navy, and officer-in-charge, of the Naval Dental Centre on *INHS Asvini*, notes a July press release.

The 55-year-old surgeon commodore, who has specialized in dental prosthetics (the surgical and dental specialties concerned with the artificial replacement of missing components) from the Armed Forces Medical College, Pune, was commissioned in the armed forces in 1954 in the rank of lieutenant and has been the commanding officer of various dental centers in India. Rustomji was promoted to the rank of surgeon captain in October 1979.

Adajania on world jury

The first Indian to be selected to a jury panel for World Cup boxing is Aspi Adajania, honorary secretary of the Indian Amateur Boxing Federation, notes *The Times of India* report.

"What makes the appointment dis-



tinctive" says the report, "is the fact that only eight (persons) are chosen from all over the world."

Adajania's first stint in the jury will be at the Fourth World Cup slated to commence in Seoul, South Korea on November 1 this year.

Member of the Association Internationale de Boxe Amateur (the international controlling body for the sport) Adajania was also on the jury for the Asian Championships which recently concluded at Bangkok, adds the report.

Billimoria's black belt

Cawas Billimoria, national judo champion for the year 1984-85, has received the 'Shodan' (an internationally recognized black belt) and a licence to teach judo from the famed Kodokan Institute, Japan, the birthplace of judo, where he was training until recently, states a press release.

This training in Japan was made possible thanks to assistance from companies such as Hindustan Lever, Air India and other individuals and trusts.

An ex-student of Sensei Pervez Mistry and Sensei N. T. Bangera, Billimoria "plans to run judo classes in Bombay in conjunction with Pervez Mistry at the Byramjee Jeejeebhoy Parsee Charitable (BJPC) school... The police have already shown interest in the project... A few seats, will be reserved for poor and deserving students who will be taught free of charge," adds the release.

These "classes will go a long way towards raising the standard of judo in



India and hopefully towards winning international recognition (by the International Judo Federation) for our young judokas," notes the write-up.

Currently, the six-foot four-inch Billimoria is training for the National Games to be held in New Delhi, in November this year.

Junior cricketer '84-'85

Fifteen-year-old Zubin Bharucha of Bombay was adjudged the Junior Cricketer of the Year for 1984-85 by the Bombay Cricket Association, and was awarded the Shantibhai Sheth Trophy, notes the *Afternoon Despatch and Courier* of June 6, 1985.

Bharucha, who has represented Bombay and the West Zone in the under-15 cricket matches, "possesses in abundance (the) intrinsic qualities that are necessary in the making of a good opening batsman," notes sports critic Sudeep Sonawane, in *Mid-Day*.

The first year junior college student of Podar College is "an astute judge of the ball," has "marvelous" timing and has an "uncanny ability to pierce the field," adds Sonawane.

Bharucha, a self confessed traditional cricketer, "owes a lot to his coach Vasant Amladi" and, notes the write-up, "the followers of the game are going to hear and see a lot of Zubin Bharucha."

Sir P. Mehta endowment

In commemoration of the services of Sir Pherozeshah Mehta, who was four times president of the Bombay Municipal Corporation, the Mayor's Fund Committee has resolved to create a Rs 10 lakh endowment, to help victims of natural calamities, notes an appeal issued by members of the Mayor's Fund Committee, in *Jam-e-Jamshed* (April 16, 1985).

The appeal, signed by Salebhoy Abdul Kader, Jamsheed Kanga and Manmohansingh Bedi, notes that since its inception 28 years ago, the Mayor's



(Far left) Adajania: among the chosen eight

(Center) Dotivala: leadership and involvement

Dotivala: organizing youth projects



The Tata Iron and Steel Company's incoming chairman Rusi Mody receiving a bouquet at the Company's annual general meeting on August 13, 1985. (Photo: The Daily).

fund has disbursed over 56 lakhs for the victims, and to further increase their efforts, have appealed to the people to donate generously towards this endowment. Donations may be sent by cash or by cheque drawn in favor of Mayor's Fund Committee and earmarked for Sir Pheroze Shah Mehta Endowment.

As a beginning, the committee wishes to compile and publish a memorial volume on the life and work of Mehta, which will be released at a special function to mark the occasion, adds the write-up.

Dotivala's youth activities

To commemorate the International Year of the Youth (1985) Ms Perviz F. Dotivala, associated with youth activities all over the country, has organized a cycle trail cum youth rally to be held on November 14, 1985, where youths from all over India will cycle towards Delhi, meeting their counterparts on the way, notes a press release.

Founder and president of the 4000-member Youth Hostels Association of Maharashtra, Dotivala has also represented India, along with the then union communications minister, Ram Nivas Mirdha at the golden jubilee celebrations of the International Youth Hostels Federation in Holland in 1982, notes her bio-data.

Among the many youth projects undertaken by her, are the youth per-

sonality and leadership development programs, environmental projects, employment schemes, seminars, conferences, youth festivals, photographic exhibitions, fashion shows, hand gliding training courses, and trekking expeditions into the Himalayas, notes her bio-data.

Recently appointed director of the Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC), Dotivala has volunteered to personally look into the company's publications and publicity campaigns. She is also vice-president of the International Tourism Council which not only organizes conferences

Billimoria: licence to teach



and seminars but also takes tours abroad and within India, adds the write-up.

President of the United Orthodox Graduates which swept the graduates' electoral register in the last Bombay Parsi Punchayet Anjuman Committee elections, Dotivala is also associated with the community newsletter *The Parsee Voice* and is a member of the jury at the Parsi Chief Matrimonial Court in Bombay, notes the write-up.

Award for Zonta Club

In recognition of its outstanding achievements in furthering the goals of "growth and progress through personal involvement," the Zonta Club of Bombay III, "under the leadership of Ms Havovi G. Dotivala" won the Zonta International Founders Award for 1984-85, notes a press release issued by the club.

A branch of the international women's social work organization, the Zonta Club of Bombay III "is the only Zonta Club in district XVII Area I comprising India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, to receive this unique distinction," adds the release.

Shahnamah competition

"With a view to revive our ancient Iranian history (and) to bring about an awareness of the lofty teachings of our ancient Zoroastrian religion," the Dadar Zoroastrian Committee held its first open Shahnamah and fourth open elocution competitions on June 30 and July 7, 1985 respectively, notes a press release.

Thirty-nine students who took part in the Shahnamah competition recited episodes from the *Shahnamah* while the 63 participants of the elocution competition chose their piece from a range of religious subjects, adds the release.

The prize distribution held on July 15, 1985 at the Rustom Framna Agiary, Dadar, was presided over by Feroze Sholapurwalla and his wife, and started with a jashan ceremony in memory of the late Ardeshir B. Homavazir, founder president of the Dadar Jashan Committee. Prizes were given out by Ms Sholapurwalla to Ms Naaznin Hodiwalla and Ms Havovi Sidhwa, winners of the Shahnamah and elocution competitions respectively, adds the release.

"Everyone
is a potential winner.

Some people
are disguised
as losers.

Don't let
their appearances
fool you"

- Kenneth Blanchard
Spencer Johnson

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'Quest' premiere

The gala premiere of the much awaited, controversial film *On Wings of Fire* (originally named *A Quest for Zarathushtra*) was slated to be held on October 2, 1985 at the Ziegfeld Theatre, New York.

Starring the famed music conductor Zubin Mehta, and actors Nigel Terry and Paul Shelley, the film has been narrated by 1985 Tony Award winner for Best Actor, Derek Jacobi. The proceeds of the premiere were to benefit the organization, United Way of New York City, notes the invitation to the premiere.

The film was supposed to be preceded by a reception and followed by a dinner at New York's Raga Restaurant. Tickets were priced at \$50 for the reception and film and at \$100 for the reception, film and dinner, according to the invitation.

Not wanted

A special request was made to non-Zoroastrian spouses and their children "to refrain from attending the prayers in the prayer room for the five holy days (of muktad) for the sake of maintaining harmony and unity in the community," notes the Zoroastrian Society of Ontario's July newsletter.

A decision to this effect was made at the last annual general meeting of the ZSO, which has further decided that a request be made to the trustees of the Rustam Guiv Foundation (Ontario) to accordingly change, for these five days, the clause of the lease agreement whereby non-Zoroastrian spouses and their children are entitled to enter the precincts of the Atash Dadgah, adds the write-up.

A small plot of land near a ravine and stream is to be marked off "for the scattering of the ashes or the burial of urns of our dear departed ones," notes the August issue of the ZSO newsletter. The decision was taken at the annual general meeting of the Zoroastrian Society of Ontario held on June 23, 1985.

"The executive committee would follow this matter up and begin in-

vestigations with the authorities concerned for allowing the ZSO to use the river and the land for this purpose," adds the report.

"All 74 members present at the annual general meeting of June 23, stampeded me back into office," writes Sabar Balsara, editor of the newsletter of the Zoroastrian Society of Ontario, who was to retire this year after a 10-year stint as editor.

Ten years ago, Dr Jamshed Mavalwalla invited Balsara to join as secretary and editor on the executive committee of the ZSO. Writes Balsara in the June issue, "I had never done any writing before (but)...the editorship grew on me and to this day I have brought out a newsletter regularly, and have enjoyed it too! The newsletter has now become a household name not only among our ZSO community...but among various centers of Zoroastrianism all over the world."

Editor of one of the most regularly published and amongst the best edited Zoroastrian newsletters, Balsara notes in the July issue, "I had looked forward to slipping away quietly into the annals and archives of the ZSO, but instead it was a resurrection, overwhelming and a trifle emotional...So, for better or for worse I am back, and shall, as I have for the past 10 years, do my best as long as I can."

Incorporation delay

"Due to government cutbacks on staff," the incorporation of the Australian Zoroastrian Association of New South Wales has been delayed by six to eight months, notes Boman Kalapesi, president of the Association, in the July issue of *Manashni*.

After incorporation, the president will summon an extraordinary general body meeting, to nominate and elect the new committee members for the Incorporated Australian Zoroastrian Association of New South Wales, adds the report.

The deal for the purchase of a five-acre plot of land, on which a community hall was to be built for the convenience of the members of the Austra-

lian Zoroastrian Association of New South Wales, fell through due to the consuming task of presenting development plans to the city council for approval, states the July *Manashni*.

The purchasing committee has therefore decided that "at the following annual general meeting, we would like to obtain the general body's views on whether we should proceed in purchasing the land...without waiting for general approval from the council," says the report.

Be that as it may, "community involvement is needed now in developing a brief for the architects," notes a report in the June *Manashni*. Roughly the building will have a main hall, capable of expansion, car parking for 80 cars, a prayer room, a library, two meeting rooms and a small office, amenities of a kitchen, toilets, changing rooms, storage and a stage, an outdoor area for recreation and a children's playground, a facade to incorporate "some Zoroastrian symbolism," and landscaped gardens, "bearing in mind the surrounding area and low maintenance needs," adds the report.

YMZA's platinum

"The records of the last 75 years prove, that in spite of problems and difficulties, the objectives of the (Young Men's) Zoroastrian Association of Karachi, Pakistan...have been fulfilled and till date the traditions have been maintained," notes a press release issued by Godrej D. Sidhwa and Homi D. Ghadially, joint honorary secretaries of the Association, on the occasion of its platinum jubilee.

The platinum jubilee celebrations were inaugurated on July 3, 1985 at the Hormusjee Katrak Hall, Karachi, with Dinshaw B. Avari, the president of the Association, in the chair. A platinum jubilee memorial plaque was unveiled on the occasion and dedicated "to the memory of the founders, the builders and the workers" of the Association, notes the release.

The variety entertainment that followed included a fancy-dress item presented by the children, and an inter-Parsi colony competition of Zoroastrian and/or patriotic songs.

Future programs lined up for the celebrations include conferences, concerts, competitions and exhibitions, adds the release.

The YMZA, founded by Dinshaw Nadirshaw Kabraji was formed on July 3, 1910 under the chairmanship of Dastur Dr Dhalla to "diffuse secular, ethical and religious knowledge and cultivate elocutionary and debating powers by means of lectures, debates and readings on literary subjects." The Association also aims at promoting goodwill in the Parsi community by means of social gatherings, entertainment and other such functions, notes the write-up.

Seventh ZAGNY directory

The seventh edition of the Zoroastrian Association of Greater New York (ZAGNY) directory for 1985 lists 307 members/non-members of the Association.

Aside from listing the names, addresses, telephone numbers, family members, countries of origin and profession, the 90-page directory also includes the names of non-Zoroastrian scholars and Zoroastrian associations throughout the world.

Edited and published by Faroke Gandhi and Dinaz Langrana, the directory "continues to be a very useful source of information to our readers," states ZAGNY president Ivy Gandhi.

"ZAGNY's first youth camp was a tremendous success," notes the August newsletter of the Zoroastrian Association of Greater New York.

Fourteen participants, between the ages of 16-23, spent two days and nights at ZAGNY's Darbe-Mehr. Among the highlights were a lecture by Professor Kaikhosrov Irani, and a video presentation on Zoroastrianism, adds the newsletter.

Other activities organized by the participants themselves included games, swimming, a trip to New York, cooking, eating together, socializing — all of which "often went on until the early morning hours," adds the report.

"Contemporary Zoroastrianism around the world" was the theme of a conference slated to be held with Professor John Hinnells on September 15, at ZAGNY's Darbe-Mehr, noted its August newsletter.

Preliminary findings of a recent sur-



Erani (extreme right) with son Zarir, wife Aban and daughters Delna and Huzana.

vey conducted on this subject were expected from Hinnells in the morning session, followed by an open forum to discuss problems of the Zoroastrian community, added the announcement.

1986 Katrak lectures

"An ancient religion in modern exile: contemporary Zoroastrianism" is the theme of the 1986 Katrak lectures to be delivered by Professor John R. Hinnells of the University of Manchester, at the Oriental Institute, Oxford. The lectures will be held every Monday from January 27 to March 10, 1986, at 5 pm, notes Hinnells in a letter dated October 15, 1985.

The lectures, in order of delivery, will be:

Introduction: Zoroastrianism enters the twentieth century;
Zoroastrians in independent 'Hindu' India: the Parsis of Bombay;
Zoroastrians under Muslim rule: Karachi Parsis since Partition;
Zoroastrians in the Chinese setting: Hong Kong Parsis since the Pacific War;
Zoroastrians in post-war 'Christian' Britain;
Zoroastrians in the 'New World': communities in Canada and the USA;
Conclusion: the experience of exile.

Zoroastrian consultation

A consultation on Zoroastrianism will be held at the annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion from November 23 to 26, 1985 at the Ana-

heim Hilton, Anaheim, California, notes a press release issued by the Center for Zoroastrian Research, Indiana, USA.

H. Michael Simmons of the Center for Zoroastrian Research will preside over the consultation, the theme of which will be "Boundaries of community: contemporary Zoroastrianism in diaspora."

Talks scheduled for the consultation include: "An ancient religion in modern exile: contemporary Zoroastrianism outside Iran" by John R. Hinnells of the University of Manchester; "Strands of belief in contemporary Zoroastrianism" by Dr K.D. Irani of City College, New York and "Verethragna the trouble-shooter: Muskil Asan Bahram Yazad amongst the Parsis," by James R. Russell of Columbia University. Farhang Mehr of the Center for International Relations, Boston University, will take part in the discussions.

For further information please contact the Center for Zoroastrian Research, 801 East Tenth Street, Bloomington, Indiana 47401, USA.

Erani's Rolling Rider

A bicycle seat called the Rolling Rider, "providing additional support and balance for the cyclist" has been invented by Homi Erani, design engineer, states a report in *Newsweek* magazine (July 25, 1983).

The three-piece seat comprises "a hollow vinyl horn that protrudes from the seat pads horizontally between the

rider's legs... (and) two spring-mounted cylindrical parts, each of which rotates independently to help prevent chafing on the inside of the rider's thighs," adds the report.

However, though the "Rolling Rider seat is suitable for casual riding or touring, at 27 ounces it is probably too heavy for serious racers. The designer (therefore) is developing a lightweight competition version," states *Newsweek*.

Apart from the Rolling Rider, Erani, also holds an Indian patent for a "revolutionary diesel type engine," says a press release.

Settled in USA for the past five years, Erani is a graduate engineer from the Golverhampton College, UK. His past experiences include twelve years at Steelage Industries, Bombay (founded by his parents Keki and Nerges K. Erani) and a five year stint at the Carlton Hotel, Kodaikanal. At present he is design engineer for the K.O. Lee Co. in Aberdeen, adds the release. Erani's wife Aban, is currently studying for her double-masters in special education and elementary school administration at the Northern College, USA, and works as a teacher in the Gifted Students Program, notes the release.

The Eranis have three children, Huzana, who is studying for her B.S. degree in hotel-motel-restaurant management; Zarir who is in the tenth grade; and Delna who is in the seventh, concludes the release.

Computer for ZAC

"ZAC wishes to purchase a personal computer for the purpose of storing and imparting religious literature," notes the August newsletter of the Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Chicago. "Programs stored in the computer could be used for one-to-one instruction or be copied and transmitted on diskettes to various organizations. In future, with modern provisions, such information can be exchanged electronically," adds the newsletter. Rare books and other precious material can also be stored. "In so doing, ZAC would become the first organization of its kind to offer such service for the Zoroastrian community," notes the write-up.

The total cost of a suitable IBM-XT computer would be \$5,000, including the cost of the computer itself, a color



Shroff: producing documentaries.

monitor, printer, software and other miscellaneous equipment, notes the newsletter.

"It is our sincere hope that benevolent Zoroastrians and organizations all over, would have the vision to foresee the tremendous impact of such a system and would come forward to support it," adds the write-up. Donations should be made payable to ZAC, earmarked for the 'Religious education computer' and addressed to ZAC treasurer Minoo Press, 1495 Caldwell, Hoffman Estates, Illinois 60195.

'Uncle Nowruz'

The influence of Christian tradition on Zoroastrianism manifests itself in quaint ways. Notes the March 1985 issue of *The Zoroastrian*, the newsletter of the Zoroastrian Center of California: during the Navroze celebrations, 'Uncle Nowruz' (the Iranian counterpart of Santa Claus) distributed gifts among the children!

Shroff's 'ethnic' films

Filmmaker Beheroze Shroff's documentary titled *Sweet Jail: Sikhs of Yuba City*, was shown at the London Festival of Third World Cinema: Third Eye, last year, notes poet Eunice de Souza, in *The Economic Times* dated December 30, 1984.

This documentary film, made on a shoestring budget of \$10,000, traces the history of the Sikhs of Utah who

came to the USA as farm labor in 1899, to the present times when the new generation is completely Americanized and "cannot relate to the older Indians who hang out together and don't want to mix with Americans," notes the article.

Shroff initially worked on a doctoral degree in English literature at the University of California (UCLA) but later switched to critical theory in film. Her first project was an eight-minute film titled *Expectations*, "which showed the stereotypes with which an Indian girl arrives in the US and the stereotypes through which she is initially viewed," adds the write-up. She sold this film to the International Students Orientation Center, UCLA, which encouraged her to take up production. She then began her second project *Sweet Jail: Sikhs of Yuba City*, notes the write-up. Though finances proved to be a problem, Shroff was able to save \$1,000 by working as a consultant on the KPFR radio (a non-commercial station) for programs on minorities and literature.

Shroff notes that the financial problems of filmmaking for most students are daunting. Students often have to leave midway to work and collect enough money for their films, thereby delaying their graduation, notes the article.

Apart from films, Shroff has won three poetry prizes at the UCLA and the Kurnitz Award for creative writing, open only to foreign students at the University, adds the write-up.

Dubash receives fellowship

One of the nine music critics in the USA and Canada to receive a fellowship to the Summer Institute of the Music Critics Association of the United States, was Ms Feroza Dubash Labonne, notes *The Times of India*, July 21, 1985.

A recipient of the Cleveland Music School Settlement's Hinds Fellowship in piano accompaniment, Dubash, a former western music critic of *The Times of India*, was also awarded a faculty pedagogy grant from the Cleveland Women's Council, notes the report.

Born in Bombay, Dubash studied the piano from the Trinity College of Music, London, and completed her M.A. from the Cleveland Institute of Music, concludes the report.

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