

Parsiānā

New Panday Dharamshala to open

A boon to outstation Zoroastrians visiting Bombay.

Parinaz Toddywalla

"With a view to giving maximum benefits to upcountry Parsis visiting Bombay for reasons of business, health, marriage or pleasure," a new three-storeyed dharamshala is likely to be inaugurated in the second week of March. Constructed on the site of the now partially demolished 110-year-old Panday Dharamshala at Thakurdwar, the project has been undertaken by the Seth Merwanjee Framjee Panday Charitable Funds. The same trust manages the Panday Sanatorium at Colaba and the Lakkar Bazar (timber merchants) property at Grant Road.

"The building will be able to accommodate almost 50 to 60 travellers, the same strength to which we catered previously," said Rustom Joshi, a trustee of the property. Each storey can accommodate approximately 20 occupants and there are rooms of varying sizes to suit the requirements of individuals and families.

Except for two self-contained rooms on each floor which have an attached bath, the other occupants are expected to share the four common bathrooms on each landing. "All bathrooms have geyser facilities," noted Joshi. While beds with mattresses and linen will be supplied, Joshi clarified, "we will not provide towels and napkins." In addition

to the manager, there will be an attendant on each of the three floors to look after the needs of the passengers.

After taking the cost of construction and maintenance into consideration, it has been decided to charge Rs 12 per day, per passenger, not including tea and breakfast and Rs 15 per head if occupying a self-contained room. The rate in the old building was two rupees per day, per passenger. Joshi specified that they have been forced to increase the rates as water tax and municipal assessment charges have become obligatory at the new building. One passenger, from the old dharamshala building, complained of the hike in rates, noting that "though justified in other cities, it should not be the case with this dharamshala which has large funds." Fellow passenger Piloo Patel, a handwriting psychologist from Poona, countered, "for the price we pay we cannot expect more."

Though the new dharamshala building has plans for a central kitchen on the first floor, initially only tea and breakfast will be provided. If a reasonable number of passengers make a request that meals should also be supplied, then the trustees may think of extending the kitchen facilities, says manager Rustom Siganporia.

It is planned to lease the ground floor and basement of the new building to a commercial establishment on a leave and licence basis. The income thus generated could be used for the upkeep of the dharamshala and for paying the various municipal taxes. There are ambitious plans "to convert the terrace into a roof garden like Hotel Heritage" but considering that there are two overhead tanks, the carpet area is restricted.

The panorama from the terrace of the dharamshala building includes a view of Bombay's high rise buildings like Kanchenjunga, Usha Kiran and Sterling Apartments against the north eastern sky; on the western horizon is the Arabian Sea in the distance as sighted from the Marine Drive end; to the north west, a train grinds to a halt at Charni Road Station; and in the southeast can be noticed the congestion and traffic of the Girgaum-Chira Bazar area.

A plaque affixed on the old dharamshala building lists the terms and conditions of stay. Barring a few changes, the same rules will hold good for the new dharamshala. Maximum length of stay permitted will be 14 days, though extension may be granted in certain cases if the trustees are convinced that



High roofed corridor at old dharamshala. (Photos: Homiyar Mistry)

there is a valid reason. There are the usual prohibitions like not drinking, gambling, cooking or playing loud music in the rooms, and other conditions like speaking courteously to the manager and debarring accommodation to lunatics.

"Even while the new construction was under progress and for six months thereafter" while they were awaiting the No Objection Certificate (NOC) from the Urban Land Ceiling Department and the clearance certificate from the municipality, the trustees "continued to provide services in the nine rooms at the old dharamshala building." As per the prevailing practice at the old dharamshala, only families and

ladies are allotted rooms, while unaccompanied males are expected to enjoy camp life on the verandah where almost a dozen beds are lined up. "Past experience has taught us that it is better to have some rooms lying vacant and making the men sleep out instead of later facing complications when they refuse to move out," narrated Siganporia who has been on the job for the past 12 years.

Once the new dharamshala becomes operative, the remaining portion of "the old structure will be demolished and on the site will be constructed a building of residential flats to be let to Parsis on a leave and licence basis," explained Joshi who continued, "Re-

construction permission was granted by the municipality on the understanding that the Panday Trust agrees to a set-back of land, in addition to reserving a small plot for a BEST sub-station."

But this arrangement has evoked resentment from two Parsis, Limji Panday, a stockbroker and Dr Homi Karapatel, a homeopath, who have levelled charges of misappropriation of funds against the trustees of the Seth Merwanjee Framjee Panday Charitable Funds, notes a news item in *The Daily* of August 20, 1985. Reportedly, the two plaintiffs had applied to the Charity Commissioner of Bombay for his consent to file a suit for the removal of three trustees — Rustom Joshi, Gool R. Joshi (who has been appointed managing trustee) and Dara D. Vania — for alleged mismanagement and breach of trust. The fourth trustee on the board is Dara R. Zaiwalla. The case is now pending with the Deputy Charity Commissioner and depending on the outcome, either party can file a petition with the High Court.

The other grievances listed by the plaintiffs according to *The Daily's* report, are "the proposal to let out the ground floor and basement in the dharamshala; not crediting to the accounts of the Trust the income of over one lakh of rupees earned from the sale of coconuts grown in Merwan Baug (where the Panday Sanatorium is situated); not maintaining the sanatorium under the Trust's care in a proper manner while showing vast amounts as having been spent on repairs; and allowing non-Parsis to occupy rooms in the sanatorium in flagrant breach of the trust deed."

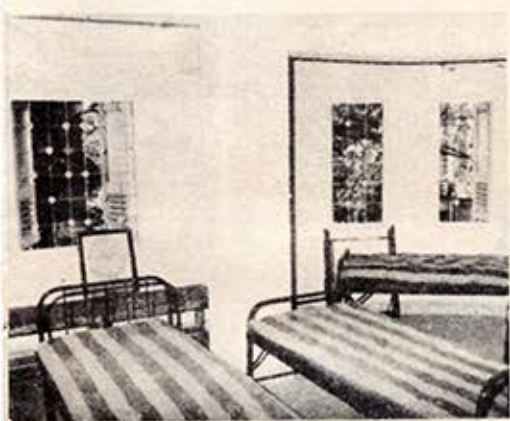
As per a report in *The Bombay Samachar* of February 9, 1986, Joshi has "denied each and every charge made by his detractors." Though peeved with the criticism levelled against the Trust management, Joshi was reluctant to reply on the basis of the matter being sub judice. However, during the course of the interview reference was made to "three development permissions which were obtained in 1982 with the cooperation of our architect

Facing page:

(Top) Frontage of new dharamshala.

(Center) Self-contained room at new building.

(Bottom) New structure standing adjacent to old dharamshala.



M.K. Kelkar for our sanatorium property at Colaba, the dharamshala at Thakurdwar and the Lakkur Bazar property at Grant Road where there are 80 tenants.

"Before redevelopment of any of our three properties could be dreamt of, the trustees gave notices to all occupants of the Panday Sanatorium. Some 35 illegal occupants joined hands under the leadership of Burjor Engineer, took the trustees to court and pleaded that the trustees could not deoccupy them without due process of law, and got an order to that effect. This has virtually brought about a halt in the development of the Colaba property.

"The trustees then thought of redeveloping the dharamshala property. After taking permission from the Charity Commissioner and passing of plans for the construction of a three-storeyed building, the work commenced. Construction work began in March '84 and by May '85 the structure was complete.

"Our reason for leasing the ground floor and basement to a commercial enterprise is because we want our projects to be self-financing. We don't want to be like other Parsi trusts,

exhausting their resources and then appealing to the public for funds. We have paid Rs 75,000 as deposit to the municipality against possible misuse of the basement. Naturally we want returns on our investment... To cite one example of how conservative we are with the Trust funds, we made special efforts whereby the cement controller gave us permission for 3,200 bags of levy cement and this has benefited our Trust by Rs 75,000.

"I am the son of Burjor Joshi, the Potato King of India, and am involved with the Panday properties because of my wife Gool who is the great granddaughter of Merwanjee N. Panday. I have been neglecting the maintenance of my own estates (being preoccupied with the Panday Trust). My father-in-law made me promise him on his deathbed, not once, but twice that I would never resign as trustee of Panday Charities... It is very easy to criticize, but difficult to provide accommodation for the community.

"'Parsi, thy name is charity.' The old saying can no longer be applied to present-day Parsis who seem to have substituted, for their motto, 'I must devour charity.'"

Freedom was won long before 1947. By people who could think for themselves and shed the shackles of dependence; by men of foresight and determination, like Ardeshir and Pirojsha Godrej, who had confidence in the country's capabilities and shared the same ideals with Tilak, Tagore, Gandhi, Nehru.

In Godrej, self-reliance has been considered indispensable to progress, the aim being not just self-sufficiency for the organisation but for the whole country. Progress can only be achieved in a *milieu* of progress.

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Self-reliance is both a means and an end. For Godrej it is the *essence* of independence.





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.

Federation opts for...

We are appalled to read the comments purported to have been made by Mr J.N. Guzder in "Federation opts for reservation" (*Parsiana*, August 1985, page 98). To call the World Zoroastrian Organization (WZO) "farcical" and "a hoax" is quite extraordinary and disgraceful, and in so saying Mr J.N. Guzder has demeaned himself. Isn't it strange that Mr Guzder should cable WZO, London and come all the way to London for a meeting on August 25, 1985 with such an organization? WZO is a reality and is functioning with dignity for the greater benefit of the community.

We would also like to point out that the proposition made by WZO is in line with the summing up by Dr Farhang

Mehr, who chaired the Fourth World Zoroastrian Congress when deliberations on the subject of WZO membership were conducted. From your report, we note with interest that whereas all the discussions at the Fourth World Zoroastrian Congress have been edited by Ms Homai Mody and Mr Aspie Moddie, strangely, Mr J.N. Guzder has taken on himself the special task of handling the discussions on the World Zoroastrian Organization. May we ask why?

The WZO will continue to function globally for the benefit of the community generally and Zoroastrians of goodwill and anjumans the world over should join happily in this unifying enterprise as many have done already.

S.F. CAPTAIN
Vice-President, WZO, London

Federation's new lease...

This is to clarify a report on the Bazam Fund of Allahabad in "The Federation's new lease of life" (*Parsiana*, December 1985).

According to a resolution passed at a general meeting of Bazme Jashne Roze Behram at Allahabad on February 14, 1952, the Bazam Fund — the amount of Rs 12,364 — was sent to the BPP with necessary requests for utilization of the interests accrued. This money was not meant for the benefit of the Ghandhi Daremeher.

In 1984-85 on specific instructions from the BPP for relieving the Bazme's Fund, the general body meeting was convened for an amicable settlement after proper rapprochement with the present heir, Mr Dossa Ghandhi. The affidavits of agreement signed by the president-trustee, Dr Ratan H. Sagar and Mr Dossa Ghandhi as managing proprietor of the Ghandhi Daremeher, were finally sent to the BPP for necessary action, after being duly certified by the notary at Allahabad. In response to this the BPP agreed to release the funds of Rs 71,657.64 vide their letter of May 16, 1985.

I am surprised to learn from your report that the BPP feels that it will not be prudent for the custodian to part with the money without a mandate. However I fully endorse the view expressed by Dr Golwalla in the Federa-

tion meeting that he feared it might be construed as interference when the president of the Allahabad Parsi Zoroastrian Anjuman (APZA) requested him to write to Mr Dossa Ghandhi.

RATAN H. SAGAR
Ex-President — Trustee, APZA

From Malthus to Mirza

Mr Homi J. Rogers' review of Dastur H.K. Mirza's book (*Parsiana*, August 1985) seems to have been penned in great anger as if he had an axe to grind with Dastur Dr Mirza.

As Parsis we must learn to reverentially address or speak and write about our Dasturs.

Dastur Dr Hormazdyar Mirza is not only a very highly educated and cultured person but also the highest Dastur of the Iranshah, the fire of which was kindled by Sant Neryosang Dhaval on the Sanjan Hill 1,265 years ago, five years after we landed on the Sanjan coast (716 AD or 85 YZ). Dastur Mirza is Dhaval's direct descendant.

Mr Rogers ought to know that he owes his existence as Parsi (for that matter all Parsis do) to Dastur Mirza's forefather, the great saint.

I am sure Mr Rogers did not mean to comment the way he did and for that matter a word of regret would be sufficient. This will inculcate a lot of respect for our Zoroastrian priests which is generally lacking and is the root cause of the exodus from this profession, besides the general poverty. Even today, most Parsis speak of our priests in jest or in contemptuous terms. This must change if we want to attract the progeny of mobeds to active priesthood and only persons like Mr Rogers can do it. Will Mr Rogers rise to the occasion?

CAPT R.J. KATHILA

Homi Rogers replies

Nothing malicious or vindictive was intended by me towards Dastur Mirza while reviewing the book authored by him. I am sorry to learn that Capt Katila feels that I have been irreverent to Dastur Mirza by the type of language used by me in my review. However, nowhere in his letter does he pinpoint any statement(s) that he finds abusive or vituperative.

Contrary to what Capt Katila feels, I

have the greatest personal respect for Dastur Mirza, and many other athravans. It is because of this that I started my review by mentioning Dastur Mirza's title (head priest of Udwada), and noted that if Mirza felt that the long-term existence of the community is in danger, it is "really disturbing." If I had scant regard for Dastur Mirza, I would not have taken his observation seriously, and proceeded to nail the coffin of what I consider a substandard work. I have similarly, in my concluding paragraph, commended the wide reading and personal experiences Dastur Mirza has to his credit.

However, what is important is that no scholar should be relegated to an armchair status. Least of all, Dastur Mirza, whose ancestors, as put forth by Capt Katila, strove hard to keep the religion alive, at times which were even more hostile than the present clime. Is it, therefore, wrong of a reviewer to expect a person of Dastur Mirza's erudition and family background, not to adopt an ostrich-like approach to the religion's problems?

I would like to reiterate that no malice or disrespect was intended by me in the first place. However, if inadvertently the same has seeped its way in my review, and if an apology in print would serve to inculcate respect for our priests, and correct any damage done to Dastur Mirza and other priests of our community, this rejoinder may be treated so.

Depriving ladies?

Many Zoroastrian ladies married to non-Parsis would like to impart Zoroastrianism to their children and have their navjote performed. Unfortunately our priests are not willing to perform this sacred ceremony on the so-called "durvand" child.

Who gives the child religious instruction? Who takes the child to the agiary or the atash bahram? Who prepares the child for the navjote? Almost always the mother. Very seldom the father, who is busy working, earning a livelihood or is not interested in his own religion except for wearing the sudreh-kusti.

Why deprive a Zoroastrian lady from teaching Zoroastrianism to her own child whose non-Parsi father doesn't object to it but willingly consents to it?

The Bombay Parsi Punchayet may not agree to extend its charities to such

a child with a non-Parsi surname. That we can accept. But I warn you dear co-religionists, "the writing is on the wall." Read, think, digest and lastly do something about it.

Today there is only one Peterson whose navjote was performed in the USA by a bold Parsi priest, which I do not whole-heartedly support; but these Americanized Parsi priests will definitely perform navjotes of children of Parsi ladies married to non-Parsi American citizens who are broad-minded and willing to make their children Zoroastrians.

We are about to enter the twenty-first century. Let us think ahead. We claim that our Prime Minister is a Parsi who even resembles his father Firoze Gandhi in features and behavior. I am sure even now, if he so wishes, Parsi priests, will fall over each other to perform his navjote, just because his father was a Parsi.

I.R. BHATHENA

Best woman journalist

We all know that "no Parsi man will ever dream of using kerosene and a matchstick on his wife" (K.S. Pavri's letter in *Parsiana*, July 1985) and that Parsi husbands are more liberal with their wives than many husbands in the world (although this is debatable) and that a Parsi woman has social freedom. Does Pavri realize that whether the woman is a Parsi or not she is a human being and therefore must have the same rights as the man? There is no denying the fact that the Parsi law of inheritance is unjust to women as was explained in a write-up by Shahnaz Anklesaria which Pavri has apparently only glossed over.

According to Pavri, asking for basic rights "if stretched too far, would not be in the interest of any community!" Is this not stretching the M.C.P.'s (male chauvinist pig's) ego too far? According to Pavri then, a Parsi man should get two-third of his parents' inheritance (if they die without a will) and only one-third can go to his dearly beloved sister.

Men must realize that they will not get anywhere by trying to ridicule the intelligent Parsi woman. *Matida na matha per kai seenghra nathi oogia* (Men are not special — they have "no horns upon their heads"). Full marks to Shahnaz. Carry on your excellent work and all intelligent women are behind you.

We are a biased, narrow-minded community — if we were liberated we certainly would not need to change this unfair law. Our lawyers should take up this issue and help change this law.

BHICOO MANEKSHAW
New Delhi

CER seminar

A one-day seminar on youth and self-employment, a pilot project in the field of career guidance, was organized by the CER — Youth Wing. The proceedings were open to members of all communities and of all ages, so that the resulting 290 delegates comprised a varied lot of people.

The question that flows through everybody's mind is, "so what was it actually like?" The answer to that is mixed. The organization was effective. Despite an initial delay in starting, the seminar ended on time, and business proceedings were conducted in a formal, yet friendly manner. Frequent question-answer sessions provided for immediate clarifications of one's doubts and the questionnaires circulated at the seminar's completion gave each delegate a chance to air his/her views for improvements of future seminars.

Several non-Parsi delegates found the seminar far too communal in approach. According to Parmindar Singh Thappar, a student of St Xavier's College, Bombay, "The atmosphere was claustrophobic and most speakers too parochial." Unfortunately, this caused a number of people to leave midway.

Secondly, the ironic question that lurks in one's mind, is: in a seminar on youth employment, where was the youth? "Another thought," says Jamshed Deboo, a student delegate, "is that the life stories related were mainly of success. They did not provide a total picture of struggles against evils like corruption and bureaucracy. Some of the less successful entrepreneurs should be invited to provide a view of both sides of the coin."

All speakers provided useful practical tips on their respective careers. These should either have been tabulated (i.e. specific qualifications, courses available, financial requirements, etc.) by the organizers or each speaker's paper could have been circulated for handy future reference.

Lastly, most of the vocations chosen for discussion were socially accepted, established and with two exceptions,

largely commercial. But how about novel avenues awaiting exploration — like photography, catering, the social sciences or psychology, the arts or the research sciences? These had no place in the day's proceedings — yet, gauging from the response given to the computer presentation by Adi Cooper, it was obvious that youngsters are looking for occupation away from humdrum clerical work and are ready for new challenges.

A thought-provoking seminar would be meaningless without adequate follow-up machinery. As per several suggestions, the CER has consented to serve as an intermediary, introducing new entrepreneurs to established ones in varied fields, giving young people the first all-important push in life's initial flight.

Also, more such seminars should be organized for students just out of school and their parents, in order to open before them vistas of fresh occupations so that parents do not push their kids into the first "secure" vocation available.

MEHERZIN MISTRY

Is God all-powerful?

Dr J.R. Russell in his letter (*Parsiana*, July 1985) gives different happenings (death, physical impurity, lying, violence) which are a world phenomenon and affect all the religions of the world and not only Zoroastrianism. Thus all the religions of the world also have to admit that God is not omnipotent as per Russell's line of thinking. The whole world, therefore, should not believe in God, as God has not been able to control the "objective evil" for the last innumerable years of existence of this world. Also all religions state that at the Final Judgment, God takes into account a lifetime's thoughts, words and deeds — good and bad. It is therefore clear that the proposal of Russell to the effect that God is not all-powerful leads to absurdity and wrong conclusions.

It is not understood why Russell is following our religion, as stated by him in his other lectures. Weak-minded Parsis may even convert themselves to other religions as these religions clearly state that God is all-powerful. This is the sly way of getting Parsis converted to other religions.

NAJOO A. MEHTA
Coimbatore

With reference to J.R. Russell's letter 'Is God all-powerful?' (*Parsiana*, Ju-

ly 1985) it is clear that Ahura Mazda tests humans to the extent to which they are able to strive against demons by following the religious tenets. His omnipresence and omniscience are not disputed even by Russell. These "demons" and the like are allowed by Ahura Mazda as per his plan. He is also present at the time of death of every human. Therefore death can never be called temporary victory of the "demon." Reference to astrology, palmistry, numerology, clairvoyance, etc. have made it possible to predict the exact time of death.

There were originally 1001 names of Ahura Mazda and subsequently Adarbad Marespand reduced them to 101 names as he thought it fit for the changing times. The truncated number of God's names since the last 1800 years cannot be considered of recent origin as suggested by Khojeste Mistree.

In all *ijashni* ceremonies, the 101 names of Ahura Mazda have been recited from times immemorial. "Harves-pa-tavaan" is the third word meaning omnipotent.

RATUL MEHTA
Allahabad

Dokhmenashini unhygienic

Dara J.D. Cama has quoted, from a Parsi Punchayet correspondence No R 925 dated October 25, 1967, Dastur Dabu and S.R. Vakil in defence of his contention that the present method of disposal of dead Parsis is unhygienic (*Parsiana*, May 1985). The Dadar Jashan Committee has published a book *Dokhmenashini and Khurshed Nagirashni*, justifying this method of disposal of dead Parsis as ecologically sound with opinions of Western scholars (who have visited the dokhma sites) as well as local Parsi savants.

K.S. Pavri has written a lengthy article in *Jam-e-Jamshed* of September 21, 1985 describing his personal experience inside a dokhma. Bombay Parsi Punchayet chairman Dr Aspi F. Golwalla was also a signatory of a letter dated September 29, 1973 from six BPP trustees which opposed the views of S.R. Vakil who entered the dokhma. Dastur Khurshed S. Daboo's articles on Dokhmenashini printed in *Jam-e-Jamshed* of September 25, 1973, May 26, 1974 and June 29, 1974 have been extracted in the Jashan Committee book. They do not substantiate Dara Cama's viewpoint.

MANI K. PATEL

A hundred years ago

Indian students in England.

In the letter I wrote to you about five months ago, giving some account of the career of Pandit Shyamji Krishnavarma, of Balliol College at this University, I stated that he had recently passed an extremely creditable examination in Divinity (including the four Gospels in the original Greek). I added that this was the first instance on record of a non-Christian student successfully surmounting difficulties which to Asiatic minds, nurtured in a wholly different atmosphere, have hitherto appeared insuperable. Will you allow me to express my regret that in making this statement I unintentionally did some injustice to C.M. Cursetjee, who took his degree in 1867? That gentleman informs me that being a non-Christian he had the option of taking up two extra classical authors instead of the Divinity course, but that he selected the latter entirely from a wish to study and understand a system of religion that has obtained so vast a hold on the civilized world.

Without doubt all honour is due to Cursetjee for this largeness of mind. At the same time, without detracting from his merits, I venture to point out that his case is not quite parallel. He came to England at an earlier age than Shyamji and was to a much greater degree anglicized in his ideas and opinions. He was not profoundly versed in his own sacred language and sacred books, and being a Parsi, was not fenced around by iron barriers of caste, and prohibited under appalling penalties from leaving the land of the Aryans to seek interchange of thought and social contact with English Mlecchas in their own country...

Monier Williams

Balliol College, Oxford

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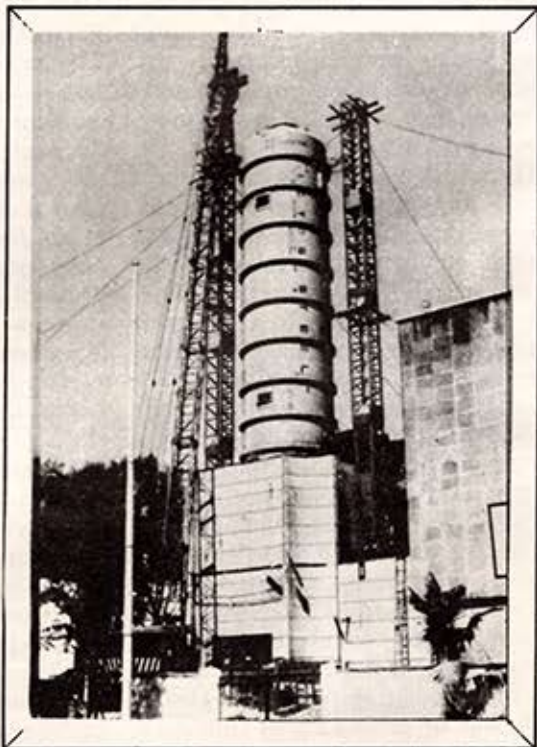


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Dastur Kutar award

"To encourage children of Zoroastrians permanently settled in the United Kingdom, to take up the profession of medicine," a fund has been established in the memory of Dastur Dr Sohrab Hormasji Kutar with a capital of £ 5,000, notes a special announcement in the June newsletter of The Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe (ZTFE) received in Bombay on December 28, 1985.

The Fund, instituted by Dr (Ms) Shirinbanoo S. Kutar, wife of the late Dastur and, like him a medical practitioner, is entrusted to the ZTFE committee which "is charged with the distribution of the income from the endowment for Zoroastrian students meeting the condition of the endowment, on their successfully passing the second and final M.B. examinations." Students are therefore requested to apply to the Fund if eligible, adds the announcement.

"To facilitate the dispersement of ashes after cremation, the Association has planned a rose garden at the Brookwood Cemetery grounds," notes the ZTFE newsletter of October 1985. A Commemorative Wall will surround the garden, where memoriams by the deceased family may be inscribed on a standard plaque, adds the write-up. Rates will be decided after the project is complete.

The School of Oriental Studies, London, holds post-graduate courses on Zoroastrianism at a cost of £700. However these are in danger of being terminated due to lack of students, notes the ZTFE newsletter. Those interested in joining the course may contact Ms Beroze M. Mody, honorary secretary, at Zoroastrian House, 88 Compayne Gardens, London NW6 3RU.

Zoroastrians in the United Kingdom are having difficulty in purchasing sandalwood due to export restrictions, notes the ZTFE newsletter. "The Association would be grateful if anyone arriving from India or Pakistan would bring sandalwood pieces, *tachho* and *loban*. Cost of goods will be reimbursed," adds the write-up.



(Left) County Councillor Jessavala with wife Anne. (Right) Bakhshay giving the best

The billiard table at Zoroastrian House was once again a vandal's victim, the felt being "rendered unserviceable by someone cutting it wilfully," notes a report in the ZTFE newsletter. The committee has therefore spent about £500 to repair the table once more. To prevent such misuse in future, access to the billiard room has been restricted to members of the Billiards Club, and a special sub-committee comprising Soli Master, Hoshang Khambatta and Darius Sethna instituted, adds the write-up.

Jessavala's political triumph

Independent candidate for the county of Fleet, UK, Keki Jessavala, won the County Council elections in July 1985 defeating his nearest rival by 2,600 votes. This was Britain's biggest majority for a four cornered fight which included the Labour, Liberal and Conservative parties, noted the *Fleet and District Courier*, a UK based daily newspaper.

Following this "overwhelming triumph" Jessavala, was invited to join the Queen at a Buckingham Palace garden party, which was "undoubtedly the highlight of my political career," notes Jessavala in the report.

"Already I have had people asking me when I am going to stand for Parliament. When I have learned enough from my experiences on local councils, I will hopefully become an MP" notes Jessavala in the report.

Forty-nine-year-old Jessavala "is no stranger to the corridors of power," notes the newspaper, adding that he has served on both Hampshire and Hart District Councils, for 14 years. At



present he is the deputy vice chairman of the county's education committee and the chairman of Hart's road safety committee and has been appointed deputy traffic commissioner for the southeast by the department of transport, adds the write-up.

A keen cricket and table tennis player, Jessavala also organized youth exchange trips during 1985 to coincide with the International Youth Year.

Jessavala, who was born and educated in India, left for the UK nearly 30 years ago, and "went into engineering," notes a press release issued by his cousin Jer Jussavala. He is married to Anne, an Englishwoman, and has two children.

"Mending hearts"

Dr Shahroukh Bakhshay has been named director of the new cardiovascular department at the Dameron Hospital, Stockton, California, notes an article in the October issue of *Dameron Digest*, a publication of Dameron Hospital.

"When you have a cardiovascular surgery program in a hospital, you have a support system that is indispensable to patients. If the heart should stop during even the most routine admittance or surgery, a team is on hand that is trained to deal with the situation right on the spot. There is no need to move the patient to another hospital for specialized care," says Dr Bakhshay in the article, noting the need for such a department.

Bakhshay, who has his own private practice in Stockton since 1978, studied at St Xavier's College, Bombay and later did his internship at Grant Medi-

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Graphic A-181

cal College. He then "began 10 years of intensive surgical study and practice in the United States under a series of internationally known and acclaimed pioneers in the field of heart surgery," adds the write-up.

In 1968, he started his surgical residency at Providence Medical Center in Seattle, receiving a fellowship in cardiovascular surgery under the tutelage of Dr Lester Sauvage, a leading heart surgeon in northwest USA, says the *Digest*. Of his time with Sauvage, Bakhshay says, "I always wanted to be a cardiovascular specialist, but after working so closely with Dr Sauvage, I knew I would be committed to mending hearts for the rest of my life."

Bakhshay then started a two-year formal training in cardiovascular surgery in 1973, under another international authority and pioneer, Frances Robiscek, and later took a fellowship at Rush Medical School in Chicago and worked with Dr Ormond Julian, another pioneer, Dr Hassan Najafy, who is chairman of the American Board of Thoracic Surgery, and Dr Hooshang Javid, who invented the Javid Shunt (a mechanism which maintains circulation to the brain while carotid or artery surgery is being performed).

However, the culmination of Bakhshay's dreams, came when he worked with the famed heart surgeon Dr Denton Cooley, at the Texas Heart Institute. "Cooley," says Bakhshay in the article, "is the man who made heart surgery acceptable, the man who trained the majority of heart surgeons in the world."

Bakhshay says he has no regrets in spending the extra years in refining his speciality, because, "I didn't want to come out of medical school with just one viewpoint. I wanted to learn from all the masters and retain the best from their collective minds... All the doctors I studied with were the best in their fields, but each had a different viewpoint, a different technique... My patients are getting the best of the best."

Married to Dymna, a master ice skater and teacher, Bakhshay has two daughters, Perrine and Shirin, adds the article.

Zoroastrian consultation

For the first time, the American Academy of Religion held a consultation (presentation with discussion) on contemporary Zoroastrianism, at its annual convention at Anaheim, Califor-

nia, last November. The session was initiated, organized and chaired by H. Michael Simmons, director of the Center for Zoroastrian Research, Bloomington, Indiana, notes a press release issued by Prof Kaikhosrov D. Irani of City College, New York.

Four papers were presented at the convention. A report and analysis by Prof John Hinnells of Manchester University, was based on the preliminary findings of the survey he had conducted recently on Zoroastrian communities outside India. "Although it was a preliminary exposition, it disclosed several interesting connections between social variables and socio-religious attitudes," notes Irani in the release.

A detailed commentary by Dr Farhang Mehr of Boston University followed Hinnells' presentation, "raising important questions regarding inferences from the survey and their implications for the various communities." Mehr suggested some correlations among the dispersed communities, so as to better define critical attitudes within them, adds Irani.

Irani himself presented a paper on "Strands of belief and practice in contemporary Zoroastrianism" discussing

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the "theological conception of the Gathas, the Bundahishn, the Yashts, and the Vendidad, which coexist in the scheme of the religious life of the community," states the write-up.

As Columbia University's Prof James Russell could not attend the consultation, his paper describing the ritual of Muskel-Asan (Behram Yazad as trouble-shooter) was read in his absence. Russell described the circumstances under which he had observed the performance of the ritual which consists of relating and enacting a story.

The Academy, which has an international membership of about 5,000, holds consultations on various religions of the world, and on various theological and historical aspects of the more prevalent religions. More consultations on Zoroastrianism may be expected, says Irani.

Houston elections

The Zoroastrian Association of Houston has unanimously reelected Khurshed Naval Wadia as its chairman for a two-year term. The election was held in December, 1985.

The committee includes treasurer Bomi Gazder, recorder Adil Mavalwalla and members Homee Davierwalla, Kaemerz Dotiwalla, Sarosh Collector and Nargesh Sethna, notes the 1985 directory of the Association. The 15-page directory lists 115 members giving the name, address, telephone number and profession of each.

Started in 1975, the Association is looking out for five acres of land on which to build their own community center which, according to Wadia, may cost anything between \$5,000 to \$6,000. Wadia is "pretty sure" of collecting the amount because "several people give donations on a monthly basis." Towards this aim, the Association organized a dinner/dance on Christmas eve, where tickets were \$50 a couple, says Wadia.

The Association, apart from organizing sports events and picnics, also runs a Sunday school. The school which is conducted by professor Farrok P. Mistree, is held at the residence of Arnavaz H. Sethna, notes Wadia.

ZANC elections

Along with its annual ghambar function, the Zarthoshti Anjuman of Northern California (ZANC) held its elections for a new board of directors and

RAKA:627:85

(Left) Erani:
developing good
study skills

(Right) Khambatta:
first Parsi in 100
years



trustees on November 16, 1985, notes the December issue of *ZANC News*, the official newsletter of the Association, edited by Darius Captain.

The new president of ZANC is uncontested candidate Darius Captain. Vice-president Erach Tarapore, trustees Farokh Cooper, Dhun Engineer and Espi Sanjana and secretary Firoze Doctor also came uncontested to the board, notes the newsletter.

Treasurer Mahiyar Irani, and directors Dinyar Lashkari, Jimmy Makujina and Bejan Malbari were elected by a substantial majority as per the newsletter's breakdown of votes.

The new *Tchissta*

A monthly publication *Tchissta* (an Avestan word meaning knowledge or wisdom, *Tchissta* is the name of the angel presiding over religious knowledge) has been revived by the Soran Soroushian Foundation of Tehran, notes a press release.

Revived in October 1985, the Persian language journal is being published by Parviz Malakpour, the only Zoroastrian member of the Irani Majlis (parliament). The journal contains general articles and information, together with studies in ancient Iranian history and Zoroastrian civilization and can be subscribed to at the rate of Irani Rials 4000 (Rs 520) for 10 issues, notes the write-up.

The Soran Soroushian Foundation, set up in memory of Soran Soroushian, a student of aerospace engineering at the Arizona State University, USA who passed away in October 1984 in an accident, was formed "to fulfil his thirst for learning and zest for life," informs the release issued by Soran's father Hormazd Soroushian, founder of the Trust.

"The Foundation also aims at funding the publication of one or two books per annum and is willing to fund research in Iranology," notes Hormazd Soroushian, who adds, "we shall wel-

come your relevant articles and suggestions for books on Iranian studies."

For subscription and information contact Hormozd Soroushian at No. 5, St. Delafrooz, Vali Asr Ave, Farther from three way of Dr. Beheshti, Tehran, Iran.

Educationist Erani

Now a US citizen, Aban Homi Erani was selected from among 35 applicants, for appointment as principal of the Simmons Elementary School, in Aberdeen, USA, informs Ms Nerges Erani of Steelage.

In an interview with American news writer Mike Gast, Erani is quoted as wanting to "push up the reading and writing skills of the students here... I've found that there is a lack of those skills in the whole school district. Children here just do not have the desire to write... The discipline needed to develop good study skills and work habits is not as good as it could be," notes Erani.

Born in India, Erani graduated in philosophy, with psychology and education as subsidiary subjects. A two-year teacher's training course followed, after which she taught in India for a few years, notes the report.

Six years ago, Aban, her husband Homi and children Khuzana, Zarir and Delna migrated to the USA, and settled in Pierre, South Dakota where she

served for three years as department head at the Indian Learning Center after taking a masters degree in special education from the Northern State College, notes the report.

However, after moving to Aberdeen, Erani applied for a job with the assistant superintendent in the Aberdeen Public School District. After two years of teaching gifted students there, Erani received her masters degree in administration and applied for the job of principal.

Karachi Gym president

Karachi Gymkhana's newly elected president for the year 1985-86, Bomi P. Khambatta, is considered to be "the first Parsi president of the Karachi Gymkhana in the last 100 years," notes the Karachi-based newspaper *Parsi Sansar* *ane Lok Sevak* of October 26, 1985.

Of a total 1,111 votes cast (the gymkhana's permanent membership numbers 2,206), Khambatta secured a record 676 votes — more than double that of his nearest rival, Murtaza Siddiqui, adds the report.

USA fellowship for Wania

"In recognition of his yeoman services in the field of ophthalmology and his constant pursuit in its advancement," Dr Jamshed H. Wania of Pakistan was awarded the Fellowship of the American College of Surgeons (FACS), notes *Parsi Sansar*, a Karachi newspaper. Wania is the only Pakistani ophthalmologist among almost 1,500 recipients to win this honor, and is "the only Pakistani to have an operation named after him, known as Wania's Operation," notes the report.

Holding important positions in various capacities in 10 institutions, Wania is also president elect of the Ophthalmological Society of Pakistan, adds the write-up.



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Filling community's cavities

The Zoroastrian Dentists Organization is holding dental camps to raise health awareness.

Arnavaz S. Mama

The Mahim Association's little pavilion at one end of the field off Chotani Road, Mahim was ahum with activity. A banner on the compound gate welcomed local Zoroastrians to a dental camp. In the only room, hastily converted into an auditorium, young parents and their children were packed on folding chairs, tables and a cot. The dusty windows were closed for clearer viewing of the slides projected on a makeshift screen as the Zoroastrian Dentists Organization's (ZDO) secretary Dr Porus Turner explained the pitfalls of unhealthy dental practices, using the slides to appropriately underline the grim consequences of inadequate dental care.

ZDO president Dr Cyrus Daruwala contrasted the trend towards healthier teeth and gums in the advanced countries with the conditions prevailing in the community. Aiming at "better teeth for the community by the end of the century," Daruwala says the ZDO has begun taking preventive dentistry to the people in the form of Sunday morning programs featuring an audio-visual on oral health, a free dental checkup for children who are rewarded with hygiene kits (a toothbrush and toothpaste) and a dental health competition for children under 10 years, featuring prizes for the top four sets of teeth. The kits and prizes are by courtesy of Hindustan Ciba Geigy Ltd.

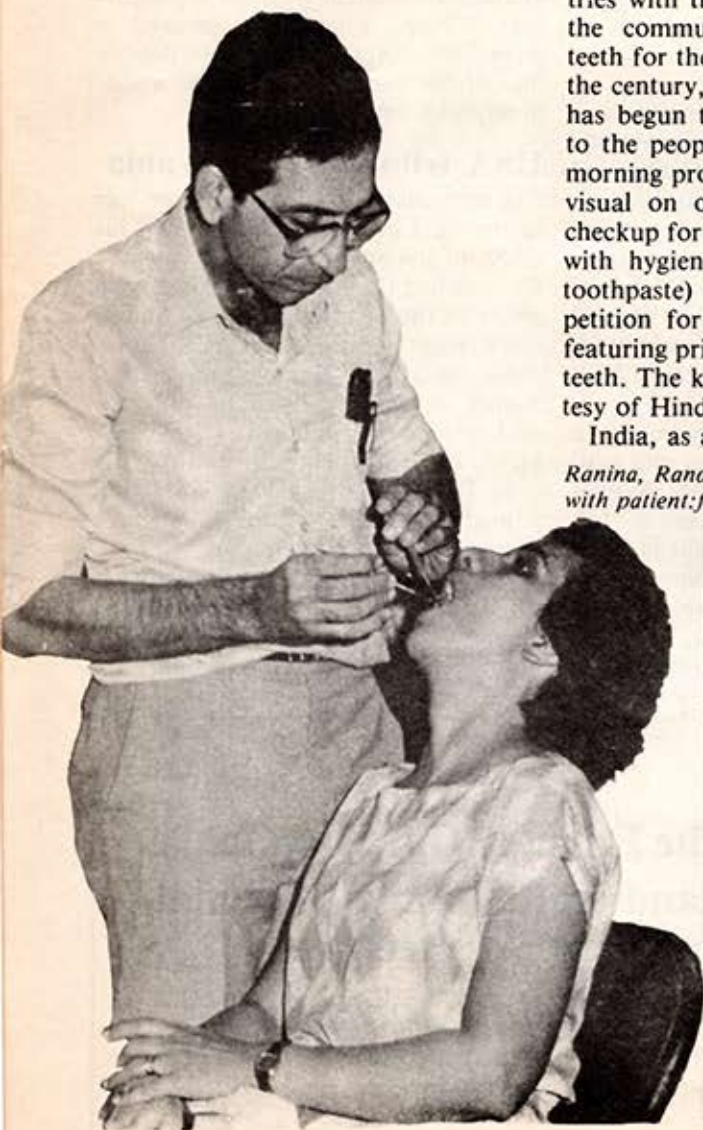
India, as a country, leads the world

in gum diseases, says Turner. "However the incidence of tooth decay (cavities) which was once low in our country, has been going up while elsewhere in the world the rate has been declining. Sad to say, there are too many cavities among Parsi children," he adds.

Of the ZDO's total strength of 70 members, a panel of 17 doctors have opted for work in the community camps. Eight were ready with expertise and advice on December 8, 1985 at the Mahim pavilion. Dr Sorab Javeri, a practicing orthodontist who also serves the community every Wednesday morning at the Lady Jehangir Health Unit at Gamadia Colony spoke about the orthodontic treatment provided there at very nominal rates. "Most of the material required is imported and provided by the Bombay Parsi Punchayet (BPP). A token charge is levied depending upon the family income, so that people are aware and conscious of the value of what they receive. If everything is done free, no one gives a damn."

Referring to the needs of different types of dental malformations requiring orthodontic care, Javeri noted that all cases cannot be treated by removable appliances (braces), though they are cheaper. The fixed appliances (semi permanent contraptions fixed by the dentist for specified periods of time) result in a better finish, as the coopera-

Ranina, Randeria, Turner and Javeri: inculcating proper dental hygiene. (Left) Turner with patient; free checkups (Photos: Homiyar Mistry)



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tion of the child is ensured. The fixed appliances are not manufactured locally, according to Javeri and though they involve more work on the part of the dentist, the end result is often more gratifying.

The ZDO is about 30 years old, informs Dr Dinshaw Sohrabjee, chairman of the preventive dentistry program. "In between it had almost died off, but it has now come up again (since about 1981)." According to Sohrabjee, the organization's first aim has been to help Parsi dental students. The second aim is to help the community in general and the poorer baugs in particular. To that end the ZDO is basically practicing preventive dentistry at various Parsi colonies, the idea being to come back after a year to see what follow-up is required. It's not all smooth sailing. "There are a lot of prohibitions," says Sohrabjee. You have to "convince the baug people of the need (for the camps) before you can get them to agree. They all think you're

"The incidence of tooth decay has been going up. There are too many cavities among Parsi children."

trying to get something out of them! Once they know, they cooperate (but) waking them up is difficult."

The ZDO is desirous of keeping itself in the professional forefront. To maintain continuous education for its members, the organization holds scientific symposia twice a year "so that Zoroastrian dentists will remain knowledgeable and responsible." There are plans to hold a World Zoroastrian Dental Congress in Bombay in January, 1988. "We are trying to get Zoroastrian dentists from all over the world to come and share their knowledge with us." Also on the anvil are plans to collect enough money to undertake therapeutic dentistry for the community, perhaps set up a proper treatment center at the B.D. Petit Parsi General Hospital. An ideal, if the resources are available, is to shepherd

ORAL HEALTH

India has recently reached the stage where the population is able to satisfy its high desire for sugary consumables, says Homi Randeria, advertising and marketing manager, of Hindustan Ciba Geigy, one of the main sponsors helping the Indian Dental Association (IDA) in achieving its goal of total oral hygiene by 2000 AD. The ZDO's drive towards community betterment is an offshoot of the nationwide drive of the IDA, says Randeria.

The awareness of the detrimental effect of frequent sugar consumption needs to be inculcated. It's not consumption of sugar which causes dental problems but the style of consumption, for example sucking sweets over long periods of time. According to Turner, giving a child a packet of glucose biscuits to munch on intermittently, is asking for trouble. Residual sugar in the mouth is consumed by bacteria, resulting in acids which dissolve tooth enamel and lead to cavities.

The dentists were at pains to decry the tendency to substitute the toothbrush with a finger, which fails to remove the plaque — sticky colonies of bacteria which form on teeth as a matter of course. Plaque if not removed in time by regular brushing (with a soft brush with rounded bristles — a hard brush can damage gums and teeth) and flossing (lengths of a special, tough nylon thread are held tightly to scrape plaque off sides of teeth) hardens into tartar which in turn leads to swelling and bleeding of the gums.

When plaque is not regularly removed, the bacteria attack the gums, causing them to swell and bleed — a condition known as gingivitis in dental jargon. "Bleeding gums is the first sign of gum disease," says Turner. "Go to your dentist immediately. Don't wait for the gums to hurt — by that time it is too late." For the second stage of periodontitis (pyorrhea) is then reached, when the bones encircling the teeth are affected and the gums are full of pus, he notes.

The present dental technology emphasizes the virtues of "fluoride which has been known to reinforce tooth enamel, naturally mend damaged enamel and even reverse the process of tooth

decay. "Fluoride," says Turner, "helps the body to recreate new enamel. The importance of fluoride toothpaste in reducing the incidence of dental decay has been well documented the world over."

The fluoridization of water supply has led to a dramatic improvement in dental health abroad. But even metropolitan India cannot hope for this facility for a long time to come as it involves heavy investment in specialized plants — unthinkable in a country where the very distribution of drinking water is well below par. One way round the problem is the use of fluoride tablets by children, but Searle India, who introduced them some time ago, discontinued production when demand failed to measure up, informed Randeria. Hence, the only fluoride product readily available to the consumer, is fluoride toothpaste.

New techniques also help to preserve teeth normally lost in accidents. Says Turner, "Just wash the fallen tooth and report to the dentist at the earliest with the tooth held under the tongue or preserved in a bowl of water — a liquid environment is essential for the preservation of the tooth." Turner noted that though silver fillings are the time honored thing, composite resins (tooth colored filling materials) are being increasingly used. Apart from being less expensive, the resins eliminate possible hazards of mercury which is used along with silver. Though they are not as long lasting as silver, the resins are aesthetically superior as they are not obvious as are the silver fillings which show as black patches among the teeth.

Turner was particularly keen to correct the mistaken belief that the dentist's functions ended with the preservation or extraction of teeth. Any oral abnormality, like an ulcer that does not heal in 15 days, must be shown to the dentist who, "knowing the normal, can detect the abnormal" easily. Thus oral cancer, which may result from tobacco chewing or beedi smoking, alcohol consumption, nutritional deficiency or chronic irritation, would be recognized and treated early, with greater probability of complete recovery.

continued on page 18

PZASH's pilot

Died: Jamshid Dinsha Italia, 78, vice-president of the Federation of Parsi Zoroastrian Anjumans of India and president of the Parsi Zoroastrian Anjuman of Secunderabad and Hyderabad (PZASH) on September 20, 1985 after being confined to bed for almost a month, in Hyderabad.

"Squadron Leader Italia (retired) served our Anjuman for a total number of 23 years, joining as a member of the Anjuman managing committee and later became trustee/president of our Anjuman. He rendered yeoman service to the community in general and the Anjuman in particular by his dynamic interest in the welfare of our community," noted a write-up in the Anjuman's newsletter of November 4, 1985.

The executive council of the Federation of Parsi Zoroastrian Anjumans of India honored Italia's memory at the Bombay meeting on November 9. Federation vice-president Shavax Nargolwala described Italia as "a staunch supporter of the Federation. When the Federation was in danger of breaking up, Italia stood like the Rock of Gibraltar and prevented the break-up of the Federation. In him, we have lost an honest, upright man, a man sincerely devoted to the cause of the community."

At a special general body meeting convened on September 26, 1985 to condole the death of its president, the Anjuman members recalled Italia's dedication and help to the community at all times, especially while he was president of the Anjuman for eight years. He was also the president of the Bai Maneckbai Nusserwanji Chinoy Fire Temple Endowment Trust Fund at Hyderabad.

After completing his schooling in India, Italia proceeded to Birmingham, England, to complete his BCom. While in England "he developed a passion for flying and joined the Royal Indian Airforce as a pilot during the Second World War. He was mentioned in despatches during the war and rose to the rank of squadron leader," notes a write-up on Italia sent by PZASH. At the instance of his father, it is reported, Italia left the Air Force and joined Deccan Airways as its financial controller. When the airlines were nationalized, he joined his father in business

and has since been the director and chairman of many companies.

He was instrumental in introducing the Rotary Club to Hyderabad and gradually spreading its activities throughout Andhra Pradesh. He took an active interest in education and was on the board of governors of Madapati Hanumanth Rao Girls' High School.

Italia is survived by his wife Aimai, son Dr Farid, and daughters Yasmin, Sehnaz and Femida.

Serving trusts and charities

Died: Dr Jal Feeroze Bulsara, 86, former secretary of the Bombay Parsi Punchayet Funds and Properties and Bombay's onetime deputy municipal commissioner on November 13, 1985 at Bombay.

During his tenure in the Parsi Punchayet office, Bulsara brought about "many administrative changes in the set-up of the welfare department," noted a resolution passed by the BPP trustees at a board meeting on November 19, 1985.

Bulsara joined the office of the BPP as joint secretary and worked in that capacity for 10 years after which he took over as secretary to the Trust on August 1, 1940. The Industrial Institute for Men at Tardeo was started in 1934 on Bulsara's recommendation, stated the resolution. On being appointed as deputy municipal commissioner of Bombay, Bulsara resigned from the BPP in early 1941.

"Dr Bulsara was an eminent urban sociologist, a recognized authority on local self government and visiting professor at various British universities," noted a resolution passed at a condolence meeting organized by the Maharashtra State Branch of the Indian Council of Social Welfare, Bombay Civic Trust and the Nirmala Niketan College of Social Work.

Bulsara acquired his MA, LLB degrees before proceeding to London for his doctorate. For several years he served the United Nations Organization as an officer on special duty with headquarters at Bangkok. He was also a founder member of the Civic Trust in Bombay and in the latter part of his life was associated with several social welfare institutions and charitable trusts.

Bulsara's experience with charitable organizations enabled him to author two books: *Parsi Charity Relief and Communal Amelioration* and *Laa-chaareeno atkav athva oonnatti ne maarge* (Prevention of helplessness or on the path to progress).

He is survived by his son Dr Soli and daughter Silloo Albless.

continued from page 17

FILLING COMMUNITY'S...
one student at a time through dentistry by ensuring his capitation fee.

The ZDO's program, which began with its first camp at Navroze Baug in 1984, has a committed champion in BPP trustee Homi Ranina. Ranina was requested to inaugurate the Navroze Baug camp on the basis that "the youngest trustee would be the most energetic." The dentists are enthused by "his very keen interest," and regular flow of suggestions. Ranina himself believes that more camps are necessary to raise the level of consciousness of Parsi parents on this subject.

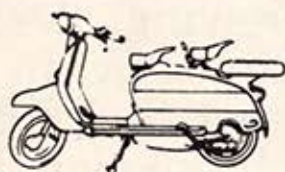
Ranina, who considered it the "moral obligation and duty of the parents" to inculcate proper dental hygiene among the young, lauded the dentists' endeavors for community betterment and hoped their example would be followed by other medical specialists. He specifically appealed to community ophthalmologists to undertake "regular eye camps in the colonies as there are many children with eye problems. Even general practitioners could give free service to the community. Cardiac failures could start with hypertension. Routine blood pressure and blood sugar checkups could avoid complications... They are simple things, but important. If done, a lot of ailments could be avoided."

The next camp is due to be held at the Bai A.F. Petit Girls' High School in Bandra, on February 23, 1986. The 17 dental surgeons subscribing to the preventive dentistry program include: Dinshaw Sohrabjee, Cyrus Daruwala, Keki Mistry, Ratan Doctor, Sam Sahu-kar, Framroze Antia, S.B. Master, Dinshaw Boga, Porus Turner, Sorab Javeri, Xerxes Umrigar, Fali Driver, Daisy Marolia, Behroze Hiranmanek, Zenobia Bhathena, Farokh Bharucha and Aspy Surveyor.

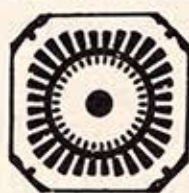
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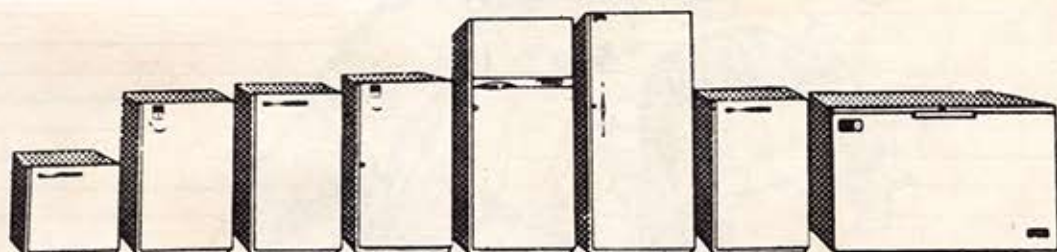
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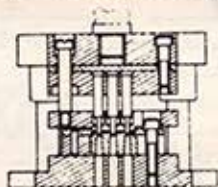
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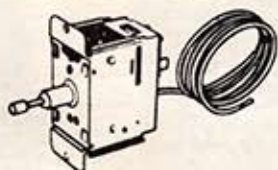
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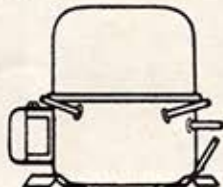
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