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Parsiana

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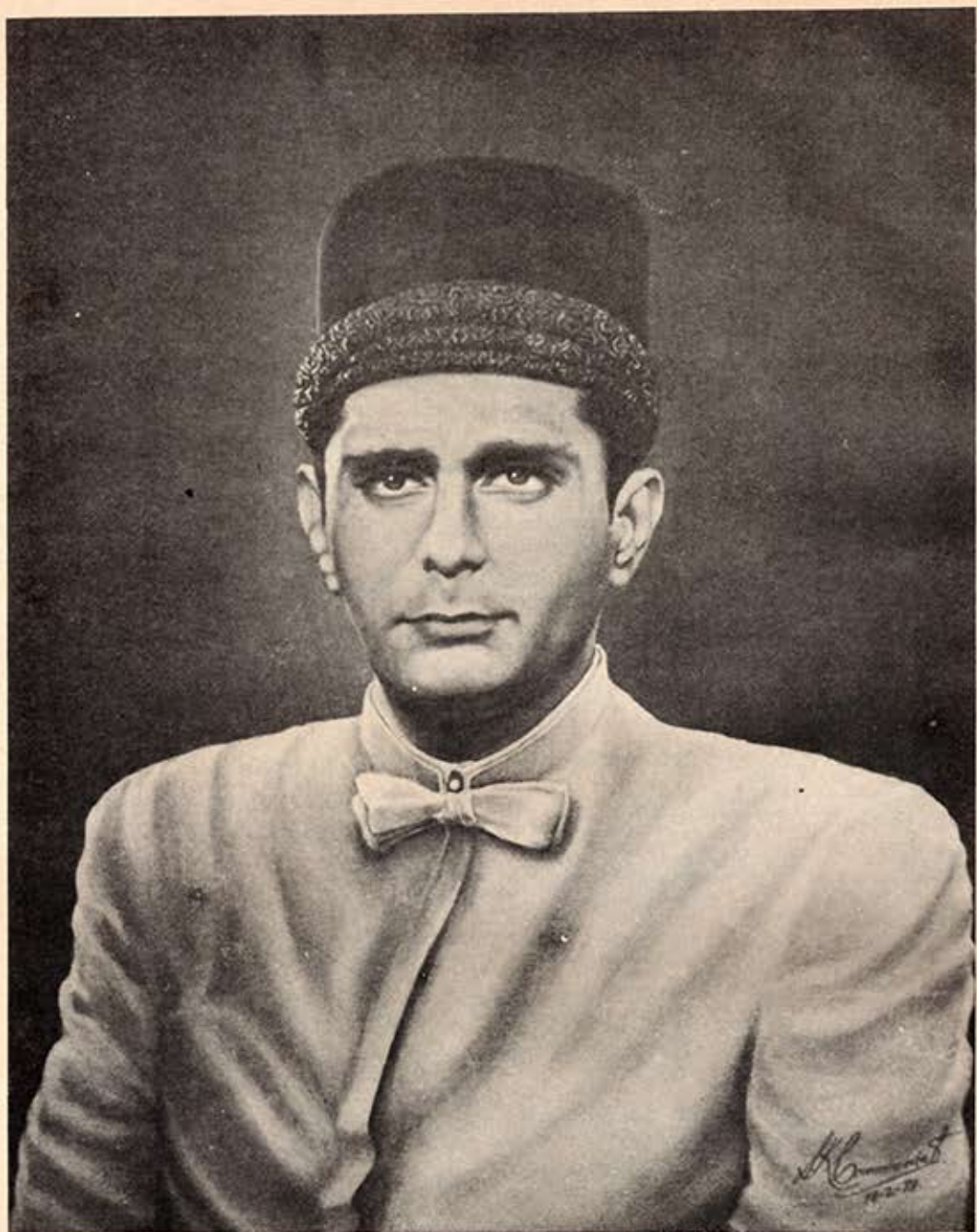
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In Memoriam

Mr Fali Meherji Variava

Director

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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.

On Wings of Fire

After seeing the film *On Wings of Fire*, the feelings with which I came out were of disappointment, disgust and sadness. That the Parsi producers, director and those who donated lakhs of rupees should have accepted the image projected of Prophet Zarathushtra is unbelievable. Zarathushtra was debased to the extent that shocked the conscience of the community, except perhaps for the upper crust of the community who know little about their religion and less about the stature and greatness of their Prophet.

Giants like Sir Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy, who worshipped their Prophet, no longer exist. Would anyone have dared to show such a film even 50 years ago? The well-meaning and well-off ladies of the Time and Talents Club fondly

believe that the film will be a money spinner from which houses would be constructed for poor Parsis and the priestly class, little realizing that the film has already flopped. The film has little interest or appeal to members of other communities.

The late president of the Time and Talents Club, Ms Gool Shavaksha had in 1969 put up a live show on the life of Zarathushtra. It was entitled *The Splendoured One* and was presented at the Tagore Hall. It was an inspiring performance. The present film cannot hold a candle to that show. It also bears no comparison to films like *The King of Kings* and *The Ten Commandments*. Followers of all religions saw with awe what unfolded on the screen.

In the film, *Wings*, the grandeur of our religion and our Prophet is lost in sermons including one in favor of the Athravan Educational Trust! No film can succeed where the action is made subservient to homilies. The director of the film actually wrote to the Advisory Committee members: "Films of any sort are personal works. No good film has ever come out of communities controlling the final product."

How one wishes Cyrus Bharucha had followed the guidance of scholars like Dr Ali Jafarey, Dastur Nowrooz Minochehr-Homji and Prof Kaikhosrov Irani. All the money invested in the film – over a crore of rupees – has gone down the drain. The alleged refusal of Zarathushtra to accept the sudreh and kusti on which the whole Mazdayasni Zarathusti religion is based, his head bare, except for a head-band, his body naked, barring a loin cloth in prison, are scenes which are most revolting and blasphemous.

The mock funeral scene should have been omitted. That a High Priest of our religion actually supervised that portion of the film, makes it all the more regrettable. The eloquent words used at the time cannot make up for the shooting of certain ceremonies which are intimate and sacred to Parsis.

One remembers the late Dastur Khurshed Daboo's words that as soon as the *sachkar* ceremony takes place, the bangli becomes a temple and nobody has the right to take photographs

of the ceremonies therein. By showing this scene (even if it is of a mock funeral), the High Priest concerned has done the greatest disservice to his religion. The film neither elevates nor inspires but leaves one disgusted. The film, *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (if I remember right) opened with the words, "For those who believe, no explanation is necessary. For those who don't, no explanation is possible." When one produces a film on a Prophet, one should approach the work with faith and dedication. JAL VAKIL

... All the hue and cry over the film, *On Wings of Fire*, has finally died down thus proving that the strong indignation of a small number of significant Parsis was merely much ado about nothing.

Some sanctimonious Parsis consider it their privilege to be vigilant – but for their alertness and presence, they believe, the death knell of Zoroastrianism would be sounded.

Among these, none have made any substantial mark on the national scene. They are not the Tatas, Godrej's, Shapoorji Pallonjis and Nani Palkhivalas of the community, and fortunately the Zoroastrian community has prospered more because of the latter rather than the former.

A vain attempt to wash dirty linen in public, fortunately did not get these self-appointed torchbearers of the Parsi community any results. If good thoughts, words and deeds are the bedrock of our religion, there was nothing good about the copious words and thoughts expressed by this small group. As for going to the High Court in Bombay and expecting to be heard when they had little to say, was not exactly a good deed. They were obsessed with saving Zoroastrianism and perhaps felt that the religion was in great peril, almost as if the matter was comparable to the Shah Banoo case that was making headlines recently.

It is good to see that the heavens did not fall after people had seen the scenes shot at Doongerwadi. One also fails to understand what was so revolting about seeing the Prophet in a loin cloth. As King Vishtasp had not yet accepted the teachings of Zoroaster,

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and since the King was led to believe that Zoroaster was a sorcerer, one cannot imagine the clothes an alleged sorcerer would wear in prison – would he wear royal robes?

The criticism of any piece of literature or art may be considered as done properly, when viewed in its total perspective. Those who see the film dispassionately would find that for a low budget film, made at an enormous expense of time and energy, the endeavor is a commendable one which no Zoroastrian to date has attempted. If such pioneering work is not applauded, then let it not be belittled.

While it took five years, if not more, for this pioneering "docu-drama" to bring on the screen the world's oldest revealed religion, it took a few hours, at the most, to condemn the film, whose script had already been scrutinized by a number of men, most conversant with the essentials of Zoroastrianism.

One must thank the wisdom of the High Court in Bombay, the censor board and other bodies which may have been involved in deeming the film as non objectionable. Some Parsis, so proud of "apro Zubin," behave as if Zubin Mehta was ignorant of the contents of a film in which he has had a lead role. Or why not blame him too? The community should be thankful that though Zubin is an international celebrity, he consented to act in the film, despite his busy schedule.

RASHID G. KHOSRAVI

"The elusive medals"

"The elusive medals" (*Parsiana*, May '86) really made sordid reading.

When there is an awakening amongst our youngsters to know more about our ancient religion, our Akabars' display of inertia is astounding. The Bombay Parsi Punchayet (BPP) should come forward to announce such awards each year and present them with great fanfare at a public gathering.

The ignorance displayed about the availability of funds to present two gold medals every year is astounding.

"Going to the Punchayet to collect the scholarships was one of the most degrading and disagreeable experiences of my life," says Chubb. I was amazed to read this. God help needy Parsis who are the victims of so-called charity. To me it is a dirty word and believe me, I made my presence felt in



Nigel Terry as Zoroaster in *Wings*

the Punchayet office in my early days. Will the attitude towards the needy never change?

I would like to know how much it costs to present gold medals to religious scholars every year and whether public contribution towards this award is accepted.

I am sure many like me will come forward to contribute their mite to keep the flame of Zarthosti *dharma* burning.

CAPT R.J. KATILA

"Capital round-up"

In the review by Homi Rogers of N.H. Dadrawala's booklet on the Delhi Parsi Anjuman (*Parsiana*, June 1986), the reviewer desired further information regarding the Delhi Anjuman. Hence this letter.

Rogers talks of the "triumphs and tribulations of the Anjuman." The former have been many, the latter none. The Agiary was constructed in the record time of six months and the Dhar-amshala has been expanded from time to time without having to cross any hurdles. Full cooperation was received from the Central Government authorities and the Delhi administration in these matters.

In the construction of the Agiary, the advice of Dastur Hormazdyar K. Mirza was invaluable and the plans for it were approved by him from the religious angle. Rogers has referred to the Pundole Adarian at Udwarda. He must be aware of the controversy raging around it, which is now pending in the Supreme Court. I therefore maintain that the Delhi Agiary is the one and only real Agiary established anywhere in India over the last 50 years.

As regards *sezdo*, Delhi is a cosmopolitan city and indeed it would be cruel to prevent non-Parsi relations and friends of the deceased from paying their last respects to the dead. There is nothing in our religion to prohibit this and in fact in many other anjumans this convention prevails. In the film *On Wings of Fire* a mock funeral ceremony at Doongerwadi has been shown to all and sundry with the approval of the BPP!

I can recall the funeral ceremony in Delhi of Mr Engineer, a pilot, (brother of Air Chief, Air Marshal Aspi Engineer), whose plane carrying the chief minister of Gujarat, was shot down by the Pakistanis in the Indo-Pakistan conflict many years ago. Many distinguished Air Force officers of all communities including the then Chief of Air Staff, Air Marshal Arjun Singh, attended the funeral and paid their last respects; even though the war was going on, and they were in charge of the Indian Air Force. This was a remarkable tribute to an ex-colleague. Could we deny them their final salute to the dead?

Similarly, when Piloo Mody died in Delhi, scores of his personal and political friends attended the funeral ceremony. Could we deny them their final salute to this distinguished, departed member of our community?

We have non-Parsi spouses of Parsi members as members from March 1978 onwards. This resolution was passed unanimously at the 1978 annual general meeting of the Anjuman. These non-Parsi spouses enjoy full membership of the Anjuman except that they are not entitled to use the Agiary, or to be buried in the Anjuman's aramgah, or to be elected as a trustee. This experiment has proved highly successful, and the contribution of the non-Parsi spouses to the activities of the Anjuman has been substantial.

Rogers is not correct when he talks

of the Delhi Parsi Anjuman "accepting within the fold, children of mixed blood whose navjote has been performed with the consent of both parents." A resolution was indeed moved in the annual general meeting of March 1978 to allow membership of the Anjuman to such persons. A majority of the members of the Anjuman voted in favor of this resolution, but it was not passed since a majority of not less than 75 percent of the members present in the meeting and entitled to vote was required. I do, however, hope that some time in the future such a resolution would receive the required majority support of our Anjuman.

In the meanwhile, the Board of Trustees following the decision of the Privy Council in *Saklat Vs Bella* (1926) unanimously decided to permit the use of the Delhi fire-temple by the child of a Parsi mother and a non-Parsi father, such child having been duly initiated into the Zoroastrian religion by the performance of the navjote ceremony. This was distinct from giving full Anjuman membership to such children, as that proposal did not get the requisite majority of the members.

I have been amused by the recent controversy in the Bombay Parsi Press regarding the election of a lady trustee on the board of the Bombay Parsi Panchayet. In my view, women trustees are absolutely essential. We have solved this problem in our own way. In our Anjuman, the elected trustees have the power to co-opt three additional trustees out of which one must be a member under the age of 35 representing the Parsi youth of Delhi. We have adopted the convention that out of these three co-opted trustees, at least two should be women. The contribution of our women trustees to the activities of the Anjuman over the last so many years has not been less than that of the male trustees.

Our Agiary is celebrating its silver jubilee on December 25, 1986, followed by a meeting of the executive council of the Federation of Parsi Zoroastrian Anjumans of India, to which we have invited our respected Prime Minister. For the Agiary celebrations, many Parsi High Priests of India have accepted our invitation to perform the religious ceremonies and to honor us with their presence. We are bringing out a brochure to

celebrate this occasion.

We have the highest respect for our priests and we look after them very well. We also send our priests to the neighboring anjumans, which have no priests, to perform navjote, marriage and funeral ceremonies. Through the Federation, of which the honorary secretary, Keki J. Gandhi, is a member of the Delhi Parsi Anjuman, we maintain the closest and most friendly contacts with all other member anjumans and we help them in all possible ways, for example in matters of obtaining tax exemption for them.

We have maintained the most friendly relations with the Press, particularly the Parsi Press. It was at my instance that a convention was established in the Federation to invite the Parsi Press at all the Federation meetings. We are particularly grateful to *Parsiana* for reporting the Federation proceedings in a very fair and detailed manner. Perhaps few persons know that when *Parsiana* was in its infancy and struggling to grow as the real voice of the Parsi community, the Delhi Parsi Anjuman helped it financially in a small way (Rs 500 donation) and morally in a big way.

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I may assure your readers that all our "reformist decisions" have the fullest support of the Parsi community in Delhi. Mr Dadrawala has not seen any "warts" because there are none to be seen!

S.D. NARGOLWALA
President
Delhi Parsi Anjuman

WZO membership

The contention of the Federation of Parsi Zoroastrian Anjumans of India that "their voice would be drowned if anjumans and individuals have one vote each" in the World Zoroastrian Organisation, is a self-admission that the thinking and needs of the anjumans and that of individuals are not the same.

This clearly shows that the anjumans are not representative of individuals. The voting patterns by which the anjuman's leaders are elected, also clearly show this.

The fact is, the anjumans are drowning the voice of individuals, to whose needs the anjumans are now just about reawakening. To be able to hear the voice of individual Zoroastrians, and to be responsive to their needs, the World Zoroastrian Organisation should keep itself free of the self-conceited anjumans' power blocs.

The World Zoroastrian Organisation should continue to have the voting pattern of one individual/one anjuman, one vote each. ADI TARAPORE

"An epic task"

This refers to your detailed critical review of the *Shah Namah*, volume I in English prose. It has come in time to give publicity to volume II which is expected to be ready by the end of July 1986.

I would like to clarify that the description in English, of Zaal's birth to which Mr Homi J. Rogers refers, is true to the style of Firdaosi's original Persian, and not intended to compete with Alexander Rogers or Reuben Levy who have moved away from the style of Firdaosi, and reshaped the *Shah Namah* in their own style.

My translation is a serious attempt at transplanting the original Persian into English so that any person with some knowledge of Persian may, by substituting the Persian words for the English ones, convert it back into the original Persian epic.

I propose to adhere to the same technique in the succeeding volumes,

and I regret I shall not be able to oblige Rogers. DR BAHMAN S. SURTI

Secunderabad

Dr Bahman S. Surti's translation of the *Shah Namah* of Firdaosi received such an enthusiastic response that all the copies of volume I were sold out within two months. Due to popular demand, volume I is being reprinted. It will comprise of 188 pages and 16 illustrations and will be priced at Rs 55.

Volume II containing 310 pages with illustrations is also presently under print and will be priced at Rs 75.

Copies can be ordered through local anjumans or directly from Marzban J. Giara, Dhunmai Building, 667, Lady Jehangir Road, Dadar, Bombay 400014. Account payee cheques or demand drafts in favor of "Central Bank of India - A/c Shah Namah Book." For outstation cheques please add Rs 10 per cheque for bank charges. Postage charges will be extra.

Both volume I and volume II will be available from the first week of August 1986. MARZBAN J. GIARA

Seeking scouts

Our 21/1st Scout Troop, attached to The Saklat Physical Culture Institute, completes 50 years on October 5, 1986.

At present, we are involved in compiling a list of all the former scouts of the Troop to whom we will be sending appeals and newsletters with regard to the jubilee activities.

But for a group of 27, whose whereabouts and addresses are not known to us, our list is nearly complete. We have lost contact with Minoo Bhoori, Rohinton Kerawala, Aspi Medhora, Minoo Medhora, Noshir Mullaphir-oz, Bobby S. Oonvala, Behram Paradiwala, Darius R. Antia, Noshir H. Bhathena, Phiroze H. Bhathena, Jehangir B. Bhathena, Dinshaw Burjorjee, Homi Burjorjee, Phiroze R. Desai, Maneck Fatakia, Homi Ichhaporia, Cyrus Master, Farrokh Mehta, Adi Mehta, Minoo J. Pestonji, Sam Udwardia, Sarosh Udwardia, Sarosh Medhora, Faredoon Najmi, Kaizad Najmi, Zubin Najmi and Jal K. Mehta.

We request the 27 former scouts to send their addresses to Noshir S. Wadia, Scoutmaster, 21/1st, 18, Waverly Mansions, 72/3 S.N. Banerjee Road, Calcutta 700014.

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School in shambles

Located in a rural village called Umersadi Kotlar in Bulsar District, the Bai Pirojbai Dhanjibhoy Umrigar Vernacular School was built by Sorabji Ukerji Umrigar and was handed over to the Pardi local board authorities on June 3, 1927. The school which has 274 students out of which 80 percent comprise adivasi children, is today on the verge of collapse.

On a visit, I was shocked to find that in one big room four classes were being held with students huddled in four corners facing their respective blackboards. The walls had huge cracks, the tiling was in a very deplorable state and worse, the main wooden beam on which the roof rests, had been ravaged by white ants.

On questioning, the lady principal Ms S. Desai replied, "Last year one room had to be closed down because the wall and roof may cave in any moment... The government is giving us money for free midday meals but not for any repairs."

One of the teachers who happens to be teaching there for the past 10 years replied, "Repeated verbal and written requests to the gram, taluka and zilla punchayets for building a toilet in the school premises for the benefit of lady teachers, has fallen on deaf ears... Here nobody seems interested."

Being located in a rural area, collection of funds has become a very difficult proposition. The Lions Club of Pardi has taken the responsibility of rebuilding the school to restore its past glory. I would like to appeal to all generous donors to help the Lions Club in its endeavor and efforts to reconstruct the school, so that its dedicated teachers could accommodate more adivasi tribal children in the future.

For further information contact: Neville Fulwadiwala, 38, Tata Blocks, Parel Tank Road, Bombay 400012 or The President, Lions Club of Pardi, Tal-Zilla Pardi, District Bulsar, Gujarat.

NEVILLE FULWADIWALA
Lions Club of Pardi

So much for so many

The Parsi Ambulance Division of the St John Ambulance Brigade has completed 82 years of humanitarian service. The Parsi Ambulance Division opened its doors "to succor those in need of help" on April 1, 1904, and the Parsi Nursing Division, which



*Above:
Dilapidated
school building at
Umersadi Kotlar in
Bulsar District.*



*Left:
Early model of the
ambulance used
by the Parsi
Ambulance
Division*

works shoulder to shoulder with the Ambulance Brigade, was formed on January 5, 1913, 73 years ago, both the first of their kind in India.

Back in 1901, the late Dr Cawasjee E. Dadachanji had started work on this project by training a group of 25 Parsi youths. He delivered lectures in first aid, home nursing and home hygiene. The knowledge gained by these youths stood them in good stead in the actual working of the division.

The members of both the Ambulance and the Nursing Divisions are volunteers in the strict sense of the word.

Until the year 1921, the Parsi Ambulance Division was the only institution which was equipped with a horse ambulance and a motor ambulance.

Since its inception, the Division has been offering free services to the general public without distinction of

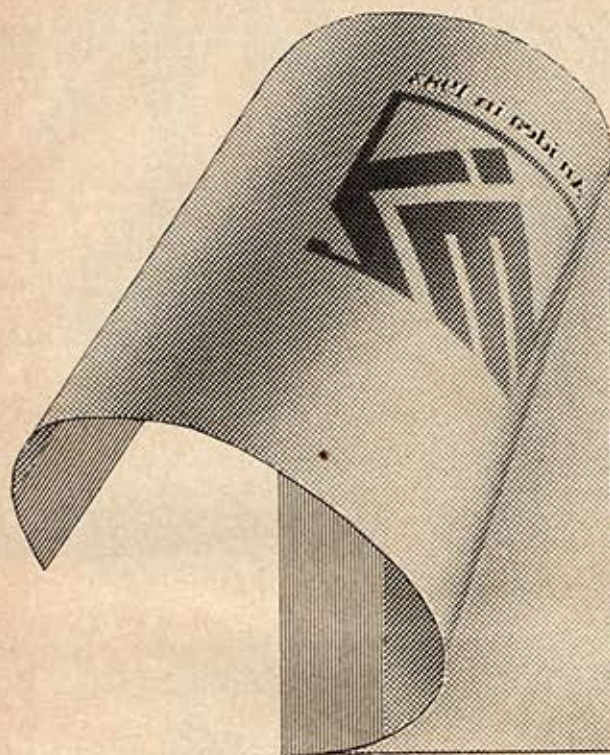
caste or creed. However, donations in whatever form are accepted with grateful thanks.

It is the Brigade's practice to meet every Sunday morning for an hour, when lectures in first aid and home nursing are delivered. Practical training in different activities of the organization is also imparted.

Very akin to the defence services, members are promoted from the rank of corporal, sergeant, officer to superintendent.

Outstanding examples of courage and dedication were the late Associate Officer Commanding Brother Gustadji Guzdar and Private Jamshed Navder who fell martyrs during the communal riots of 1946. These noble acts were posthumously recognized by the Government of Bombay and the London Headquarters of the St John Ambulance Brigade (Overseas).

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the members of the Ambulance and Nursing Divisions, they were aptly rewarded by the Government in 1928. The then Governor of Bombay, Lord Willingdon, donated a plot of land where presently the headquarters of this Division stands. This was built in 1933 from funds raised by the members.

At present the Division has three ambulance vans of which one was donated by the Lotus Trust in 1978 and the other two donated by the Time and Talents Club in 1985 and 1986 respectively.

Apart from the 24-hour regular ambulance service, the Division also arranges exhibitions, eye camps, blood donation drives, medical lectures, medical check-ups, sick bed requisites, etc, for the benefit of the public. *

We sincerely appeal to all Zoroastrian youths to enroll as members, and help serve humanity.

For further details, contact Parsi Ambulance Division (St John Ambulance Brigade), Lady Willingdon Building, No 1, M.G. Road, Opp Metro Cinema, Bombay 400 001.

C.B. PATEL

Superintendent, Parsi Nursing Division

M.R. MISTRY

Superintendent, Parsi Ambulance Division

Need for commitment

I am a cadet of the National Cadet Corps attached to the Second Maharashtra Girls Battalion, NCC, Poona. After a long training I was selected to represent our state at the Republic Day Camp held in Delhi and was awarded the Cherry Blossom Cup for the best turned out cadet of Maharashtra.

In this Camp, youth exchange was an open competition for which I was selected. This exchange is held between the NCC (India) and the Canada World Youth Organization which is a non-governmental organization. The Indo-Canadian Youth Exchange Program is a non-formal education program. The program is designed to enable the participant to develop a better understanding of the sociological, economic and cultural differences between developed and developing nations.

In order to give focus to the spirit of sharing and contribution, each prospective participant is asked to make a commitment to a number of community group organizations and individuals before the exchange be-

gins. Upon return, this can be carried out by various means including articles for publications, conferences, talks, slide show presentations or volunteer services, as needed in a given community.

You are, therefore, invited as a community, organization, individual to assist a participant by arranging a commitment and sponsoring them by a contribution of money which extends to a minimum of Rs 1,500. Donations may be sent to the undersigned at K.P. Tower 1, flat number 602, Fatimanager, Poona 411 013. SANOBAR D. SURTY

Poona

From fire to combustion

Some excerpts from an article on combustion research by Mark Zussman in the *Science Digest* (1982) might interest readers of *Parsiana*.

Under the pressure of diminishing fuel resources and skyrocketing bills, the scientific study of fire is enjoying a rebirth.

For well over 2,000 years, from Heraclitus, 200 years before Aristotle, through the eighteenth century, fire enjoyed perhaps the place of honor in the scientific world view. Heraclitus saw fire as the original and fundamental principle. Aristotle saw it as the noblest of the four elements — superior to earth, air and water.

In the eighteenth century, when scientists thought that fire could be explained by the release from burning matter of a hypothetical substance called phlogiston, fire was the leading item on the agenda of chemistry. And then, fire was kind of eclipsed.

Fire research has come back into fashion in the past decade — but through the back door, so to speak. Fire itself is hardly spoken of in the laboratory. It is no longer a scientific term. Science today prefers the word, combustion. Fire is the province of insurance agents and municipal safety officials and all those people who think of it as a hazard.

Fire, as our ancestors knew it — dazzling, awe inspiring, dangerous, omnipresent — has all but vanished from the modern world. Combustion — the workhorse of our energy production — is omnipresent but concealed in furnaces, boilers and internal-combustion automobile engines.

Combustion as a workhorse is no doubt destined someday to be as much

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a museum piece, as the candle flame today is a decoration, or as the wind-mill is an exotic power source.

P.D. SUNAVALA

Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay

"Argument for..."

On reading Kersey Antia's *Argument for Acceptance* and the rejoinder to it [Antia's 'Acceptance': a Zoroastrian 'Ahrmogih' (Heresy)] by the three doyens, Dasturjis Hormazdyar Mirza, Kaikhusroo JamaspAsa and Firoze Kotwal, I am prompted to quote hereunder the religion of *Farvardin Yasht* (93-94) and *Aiwisruthrem Gah* (paras 7 and 9) and also the hymns of universal brotherhood and caste equality sung by Zoroaster himself in his *Gathas* (43-1 and 49-7).

According to Zoroaster, the best gift we can make to another is that of religion. Zoroaster's emissaries used to go far and wide to preach his message and seek converts.

One of the five fundamentals of Zoroastrianism is caste equality, yet we Parsis practice apartheid, to maintain the purity of our blood. As a consequence, our community is dying of inanition on account of the extreme paucity of its numerical strength. Here, let us emulate the Hindus, who overcame this same obstacle by converting the Bhils and Santhals into a separate arm of Hinduism. We Parsis may similarly convert others to become Zoroastrians, not Parsis, and thus enable our church to flourish in numerical strength.

Zoroaster was not a sectarian saint but a world teacher, and casteism, sectism and groupism were not his teachings. In Zoroaster's church (place of congregation) everybody was welcome, whether he was an Aryan or a Turanian. To restrict Zoroastrianism to Parsis is to retard our Prophet's message and dwarf his stature as a world teacher.

DARA J.D. CAMA

Two Mazda Yasna groups

Our Parsi priests say that Mazda-Yasna as practiced in the form of rites and ceremonials today, was prevalent before Zoroaster's advent on the scene of religion. The world known Madda-Yasna was promulgated by Zarathushtra which is known as Mazda-Yasna-Zarathushtri. Will some knowledgeable readers of your columns distinguish between the two Mazda-Yasnas?

R.D. DASTOOR

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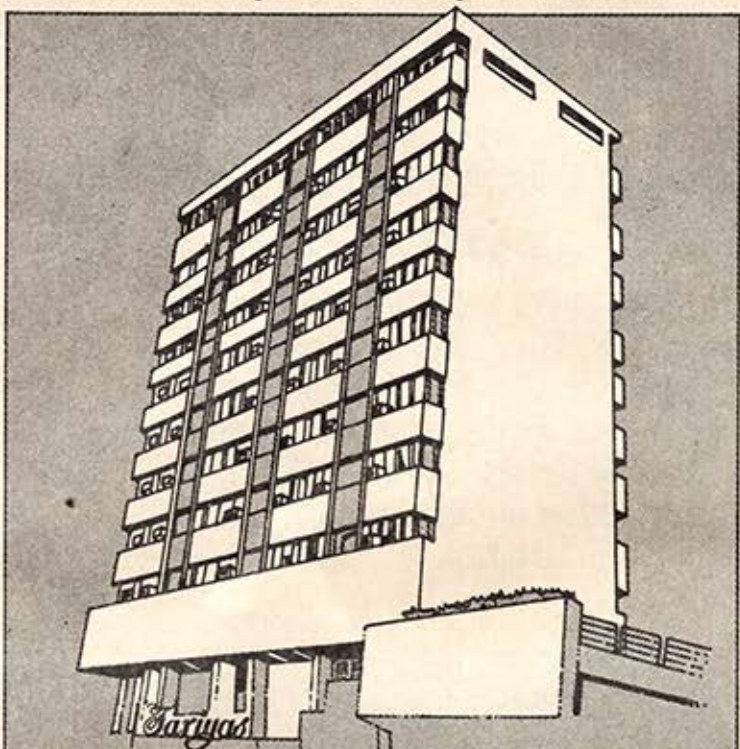


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Events and Personalities

New colony at Navsari

The first building of a "large and imposing" Parsi colony, being constructed at Navsari by Mazda Estates and Finance Private Limited, was inaugurated by noted industrialist and Bombay Parsi Punchayet trustee, Jamshed Guzder, on July 30, 1986, notes a press release.

The colony will comprise six, nine storeyed buildings (the tallest in Navsari) with 156 flats in all, of which 36 have already been sold on ownership to Zoroastrians.

Guzder in his inauguration speech "dwelt at length" on the acute housing problem facing the Parsi community and suggested that retired couples move to such places as Navsari so as to alleviate the problem of housing in Bombay by leaving their flats to their children of marriageable age. He was also gratified to note that whilst the Parsi population was on a decline elsewhere, it was steadily increasing in Navsari as a result of Avan Baug, built by Shapoorji Jokhi, the Hong Kong philanthropist, and the present ownership colony built by Mazda Estates, notes the write-up.

Furnished with all modern amenities, the planning of the colony has been entrusted to well-known architect Hafeez Contractor, and noted RCC specialist Behram Unwala of Bombay who has offered his services as structural consultant. Pervaz Bomanshaw Kakalia, managing director of Beck Engineering, building contractors, is providing personal supervision and guidance, adds the report.

Mazda Estates and Finance Private Limited is the first venture floated by the well-known Navsari industrialist Dara K. Deboo. This company has since floated Mazda Leasing (whose

chairman is Homi Ranina and managing director, Homi Mehta) and Vitta Mazda Limited, (whose chairmanship Deboo has retained and whose managing director is Yezdi Master). Having already made a name for itself as promoter in the corporate private sector, Mazda Estates is "now creating a reputation for itself as builders," states the press release.

BPP's school counselling

"It is significant to note that a number of students showed keen interest in paramedical professions" at a two-day program on career guidance held by the school counselling service of the Bombay Parsi Punchayet, notes a press release issued by the BPP chief executive, Rustom Anklesaria.

At the seminar, which was held for the ninth and tenth standard students of the Byramjee Jeebhoy High School, twelve specialists from different professions "acquainted the students with the scope of training and employment in their respective professions." The professions included computer programming, medicine, accountancy, paramedical professions, engineering and hotel industry. Students were also informed about the sources of financial assistance available for pursuit of these studies, notes the release.

Coordinated by Ms Homai Billimoria and Ms Diana Marfatia, the school counselling service intends to organize similar courses in other schools, notes the BPP release.

Dhalla at religious meets

The only Zoroastrian to attend the Third Assembly of the Asian Conference on Religion and Peace (ACRP) was Dr Homi Dhalla, notes a press release sent by Ms Piloo D. Khambatta.

The conference which was held in Seoul, South Korea in June, attracted 150 representatives, with 20 invitees from India.

Dhalla participated in the commission on "The promotion of human dignity and humanization" and also took part in the working group dealing with "Renewal and co-existence between followers of religion." He also recited Zoroastrian prayers at one session, notes the press release.

In the Seoul Declaration, drawn up by the delegates, a Center for Peace Education in Seoul was mooted.

The ACRP has many chapters in Asia which undertake concrete programs to promote peace and social justice. Among the many projects undertaken by the Association is the one to rehabilitate the refugees of Indochina (former name for Burma, Cambodia, Laos, Malay peninsula, Thailand and Vietnam) in 1977.

In the same month, Dhalla was once again the only Zoroastrian to participate at a conference held at Bangalore, the theme of which was "Religious harmony: problems and possibilities," sponsored by the Council for the World's Religions in New York, adds the release. Dhalla, who was invited to represent the Zoroastrian view, presented a paper on "Interreligious dialogue: the Zoroastrian perspective," states the report.

Chavda felicitated

Veteran painter Shiavax Chavda was presented the coveted fellowship of the Lalit Kala Academy, New Delhi, at a function held at the Jehangir Art Gallery in Bombay on June 18, 1986 where his latest works were displayed in a tribute show. The 72-year-old painter of modern Indian art was presented a copper inscription, a shawl

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(Above left) Kapadia: promoting martial arts (Center) Pastakia: for the conduct of judo (Right) Chavda with his recent work, Painting

and Rs 20,000, notes a report in the *Mid-Day* of June 20, 1986.

His tribute show of colored patterns, in semi-abstract forms, are very different from the early Chavdas, notes a report in the *Indian Express* of June 23. "He has in fact gradually left that phase of figurative drawings and concentrated on expressive designs like those on display," adds the report.

Born in Navsari on June 18, 1914, Chavda, after getting a diploma from the J.J. School of Art, Bombay in 1935, studied at the Slade School of Art, London and later at Paris. Notes art critic Dnyaneshwar Nadkarni of Chavda's early paintings, "One was carried away by the grace and pliancy of his line. He was especially adept at projecting dancers and musicians...His colors were always pleasant. Even when he later turned to abstraction, one sees him using some of the most attractive colors on the palette...The very fact that a vast number of young artists attended his investiture ceremony shows how widely respected he is among the art community."

Chhatrapati for Kapadia

Karate champion Shihan Vispy Kapadia has been awarded the Shiv Chhatrapati Award by the State of Maharashtra for promoting martial arts in the state. The award was presented by the wife of the Governor of Maharashtra Ms Shankar Dayal Sharma. Happy that the state government has at last recognized karate as a sport, Kapadia will donate his Rs 5,000 cash prize to any state-run charity, notes a report in *The Afternoon Despatch and Courier*

of June 2, 1986.

The award has inspired him to bring together under one roof the various disciplines of karate all over the country and to form an all-India karate federation, states the report. Kapadia adds, "This way, a unified body at the national, state and district level, for the promotion of karate, will ensure that Indian karatekas can compete in the Olympics and Asian Games in the years to come."

Judo report

"It has been my consistent opinion that Indian judo must not be allowed to become top-heavy...except after a very long time gap and after a long record of contribution," notes the secretary of the Judo Federation of India's (JFI) Technical Council, Khurshed N. Pastakia, who is to present a report on the norms for gradations higher than the third dan at the next executive committee meeting of the JFI.

A third dan black belt himself (which makes him the third highest judoka in India), Pastakia was appointed member of the four-man tournament committee of the Indian Olympic Association for the conduct of judo in the National Games of India, held in Delhi in 1985, and has organized the conduct of the National Judo Championships, and been the chief official thereat since 1976, notes his bio data.

A chartered accountant by profession, Pastakia is author of various technical publications of the JFI like *The National Grading Syllabus*, *The*



JFI Sporting Code and Rules, *The National Diploma in Officiating System and Syllabus*, and is instructor, trustee and member of a variety of judo associations.

Having started judo in 1963 at the Kampala Judo Club, Uganda, Pastakia became an instructor of the Club at the age of 16. He started the Sydenham Judo Society at Sydenham College in 1971 and in 1972 represented Maharashtra at the National Judo Championships where he created a national record for the fastest bout in the Nationals at six seconds, which was broken by one of his own students in 1977, notes his bio data.

Dentist's hat trick

For the third year in succession, Dr Aspi Surveyor emerged winner of the 1983-84 Correspondence Chess Championship (concluded in 1985) organized by the Correspondence Chess Association of India at Bikaner, notes the *Chess Bulletin* of April 1986. A dental surgeon, professor and head of the department of oral diagnosis and radiology at the Government Dental College and Hospital at Bombay, the 31-year-old Fulbright scholar has published 72 research papers and is the author of the book *Color Atlas - Oral Diseases*.

Surveyor is also a university examin-

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er at the bachelor and masters' level in dentistry, at the universities of Bombay, Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Nagpur, Hyderabad and Aurangabad, appointed dental college inspector of the Dental Council of India, and is advisor to the Gujarat and Maharashtra Public Service Commission, notes his bio data.

A keen social worker, dramatist and scout, Surveyor, is the author of 10 plays, and has produced, directed and acted in several, notes his bio data.

Bessemer medal for JRD

The British Institute of Metals' premier prize - the Bessemer gold medal - has been awarded to noted industrialist, J.R.D. Tata who received it from the Institute's president, Sir Hugh Ford, on May 21, notes *The Times of India* report dated May 22, 1986.

Presented to Tata for his prominent position on India's industrial scene, the 50-millimeter solid gold medal is awarded annually for a paper of special merit, an original practical invention in the mechanical or chemical process employed in the manufacture of iron and steel, or in recognition of major contributions to the iron and steel industry, notes the report.

Astavani's new look

Astavani, the newsletter of The Zoroastrian Community Development Institute (ZCDI), has been upgraded into a journal and will now carry articles pertaining to all aspects of Zoroastrian culture, especially the modern socioeconomic problems of the community, notes a foreword in the first issue of *Astavani* (as a journal) dated April-June 1986.

The 10-page issue consists of articles on religion, socioeconomic problems, people and commerce.

An important activity of the ZCDI is the Trust Advisory Service (TAS) set up in 1984, whose main objects are: "to disseminate useful information on laws, rulings and judgments pertaining to public trusts, to assist the trustees of interested trusts in improving the management of the trusts and augmentation of their resources, and to assist the trustees in solving any other problems regarding the trusts which may fall within the scope and capabilities of the service," notes the first issue of the *TAS Newsletter*, the leaflet of the Trust Advisory Service.

TAS has also compiled a compute-

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ized directory which contains data on the corpus, annual income and expenditure, names of trustees and the objects of various Zoroastrian trusts in Bombay, notes the newsletter.

To help TAS in its activities, an advisory panel of experts has been set up comprising Homi Ranina (taxation), H. N. Wania (accountancy), M.P. Bharucha (law) and M. Mistry (construction).

Tata scholars

Of the twelve Parsi students awarded the J.N. Tata Endowment scholarships this year to study abroad, seven have opted for engineering, notes a press release issued by the Endowment director, Dinshah K. Malegamvala.

The students are: Jimmy E. Antia (chemical engineering, University of Cincinnati), Vispi H. Bulsara (mechanical engineering, Cornell University), Mehernosh R. Choksy (mechanical engineering, George Washington University), Vistasp Karbhai (civil engineering, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute), Kaivan Munshi (civil engineering, Rice University), Adarbad J. Master (industrial engineering, State University of New York), Shahroukh Mistry (life sciences, University of Tennessee), Ms Niloufer Mody (psychology, State University of New York), Kaikhushru A. Parakh (molecular biology, USA), Kaizad P. Sunavala (chemical engineering, University of Idaho), Ms Pervin K. Shroff (business administration, Columbia University) and Ms Anahita R. Seth (food science and management, King's College, London), adds the release.

Sir J.J.'s statue

The students and staff of the Sir J.J. Girls' and Boys' High School currently supervise the weekly cleaning of Sir Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy's statue opposite the Bhikha Behram Kuva (towards Oval Maidan), Bombay.

This statue of the first baronet, who was the founder of many institutions and a man of "unusual foresight and vision," was shifted from its original site at Malabar Hill to its present position, notes a report in *The Daily of July 16*.

SPOTLIGHT

Eminent physician **Dr Rusi H. Dastur** was recently elected fellow of the US-based aerospace medical association. In 1982, he had been elected to the

International Academy of Aviation and Space Medicine. He is the first Indian to be elected to both these bodies.

Jamshed Lam of the Taj chain of hotels has been promoted to director, facilities, planning and coordination, and will now be in charge of customer and service facilities for the entire chain which spans 18 hotels. Before his new assignment, Lam was general manager of the Taj Mahal Hotel, Bombay.

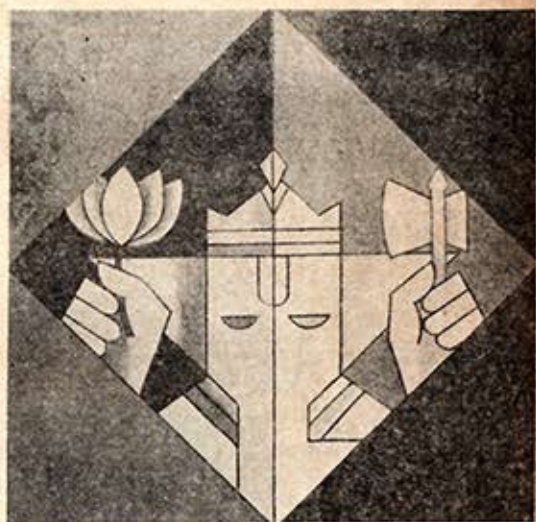
Stating that he was "struck by a very strong force of inspiration," painter **Behram R. Rana**, began to paint a canvas on Lord Ganesh and ended up painting 18 of them. "Based mainly on colors and designs," these paintings are to be exhibited from September 8 to 14 at the Kamalnayan Bajaj Art Gallery, Nariman Point, Bombay. This is Rana's third one-man show, notes a press release.

Khurshid Vajifdar won the ladies singles badminton finals at the Colgate Palmolive sponsored Bandra Gymkhana Open Badminton Championships, on July 5, 1986. She beat opponent Sushma Khandekar with a score of 11-7, 11-5, notes a *Mid-Day* report of July 13, 1986.

(Right)

Rana with his painting on Lord Ganesh: "force of inspiration"

Meher Heroyce Moos (far right) gave a slide-show-cum-talk on the North Eastern States of India at a meeting organized by the National Institute of Personal Secretaries (NIPS) and Cymroza Art Gallery. Others (from left): Firoza Godrej of Cymroza, Zarine Commissariat of NIPS and Jagdish Tytler, Union Minister of State for Civil Aviation.



Dar-e Mehr for Westminster

To the strains of *Also Sprach Zarathushtra* and the chanting of priests, the California Zoroastrian Center (CZC) inaugurated the Rustam Guiv Dar-e Mehr in Westminster, south California, on March 23, 1986.

"Two young girls and two young boys dressed in white, each with a lighted candle in hand, emerged from the four corners (of the prayer room) — east, west, north, south — approached four priests and handed them the candles. The priests went to the large, beautifully shining brass fire-vase (*afrikan*) and lit the fire, returned the candles and joined, the other chanting priests standing in a semi-circle behind the vase...With the fire blazing bright, the priests began with 'The Sacred Flame' and 'Health' liturgies." So described was the inauguration ceremony of the Dar-e-Mehr in the March issue of *The Zoroastrian*, the newsletter of the California Zoroastrian Center.

Seven-hundred guests took part in the celebrations when the Honorable Mayor of Westminster was the chief guest. The symbolic lighting of the flame was followed with talks by Ms Farangis Shahrokh, president of the CZC, Dr Rostam Sarfeh, president, Rustam Guiv Foundation and Trust and Dr Ardeshir Anoshiravani, representative of the Rustam Guiv Dar-e Mehr Trust. Eleven persons were then felicitated for their social and religious services to the community. A 20-minute film *Crossroads of Civilization — Iran* was followed by an Iranian folk dance directed by Fariba Pirghaibi and a "hearty" dinner, notes *The Zoroastrian* report.

In her speech Shahrokh noted, "The religion of freedom that lost its own freedom, has at last found a place in this land of freedom. There are over 5,000 Zoroastrians in North America, and southern California has the largest concentration."

She described, how "Six years ago a small community of some 50 people

had a dream of having a center for themselves. A few joined hands, formed an organization — California Zoroastrian Center — and began with their socio-religious activities in a small rented house in Westminster...The Rustam Guiv Foundation and Trust when approached...provided the Center with the funds to purchase the land. Other philanthropists came up with generous donations for the construction. These and many more hands have helped us to have our dream come true."

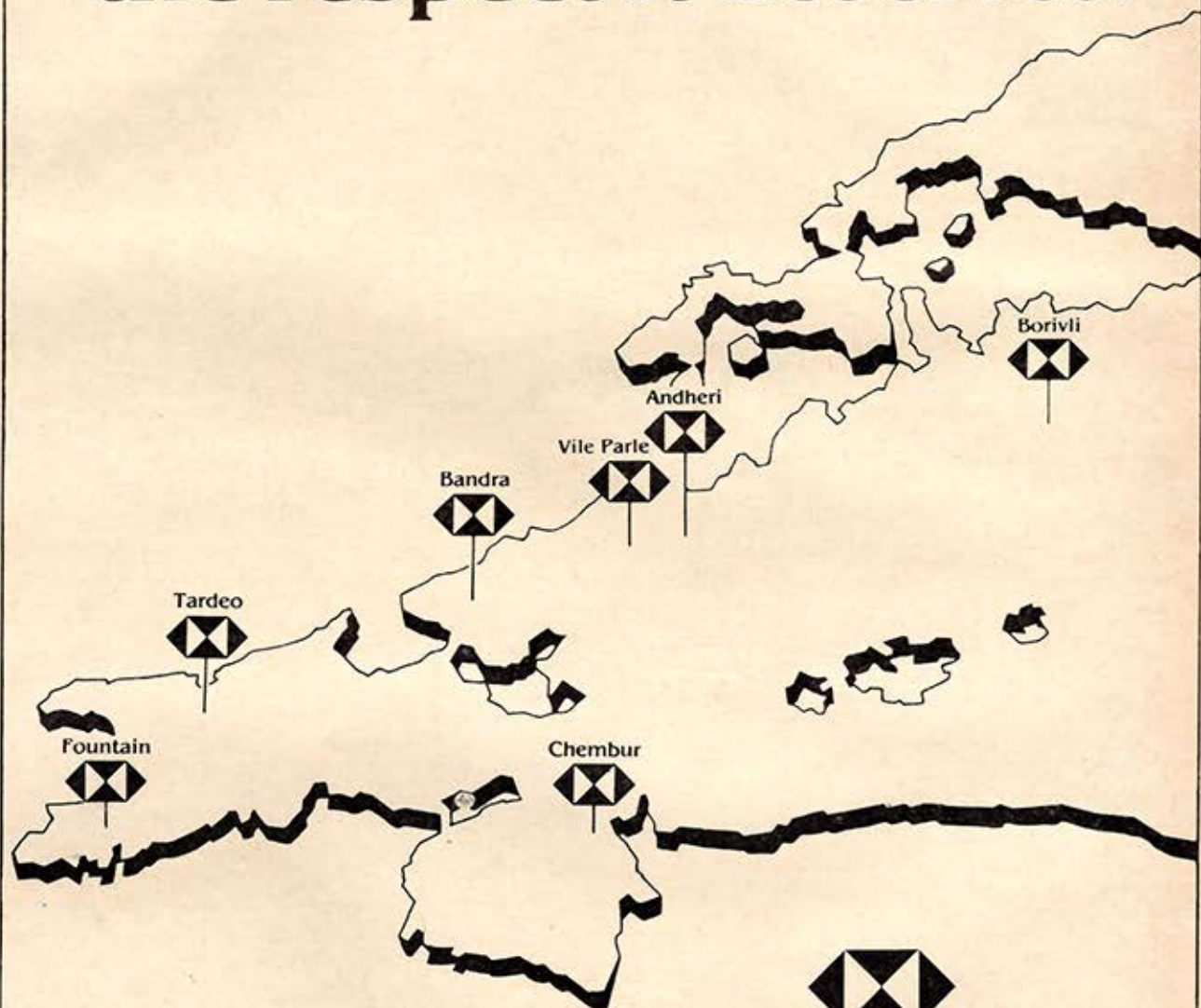
Sarfeh stated in his address, "With the cooperation and selfless efforts of a group of Zoroastrians in North America, particularly southern California, we have been able to fulfil another wish of that great philanthropist and true Zoroastrian, Arbab Rustam Guiv..." He went on to describe the ways of a true Zoroastrian and the life of the Arbab. He noted, "The story of Arbab's donations in USA started with the establishment of the New Rochelle Darbeh Mehr." The Arbab had then noted, "In this vast continent with communities and families thinly spread out, we need more than one Darbeh Mehr."

In his report on the construction of the Dar-e Mehr, Dr Ardeshir Anoshiravani, member of the Dar-e Mehr's construction committee said, "Today, by the symbolic lighting of the sacred flame, we proclaim our love, warmth, permanence and victory in adjusting to a new land...Keki Amaria was Dar-e Mehr's consultant architect, and Iraj

The jashan ceremony and the audience at the Westminster Dar-e Mehr's inauguration



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Mavandadi acted as a general contractor and supervised every step of the building...I have never witnessed such dedication, selflessness and enthusiasm for helping others and doing the work of God. He further added, "Zoroastrians call their places of worship and gathering Dar-e Mehr — the door to love and warmth."

Built as a religious, educational and social center for Zoroastrians of southern California, the 8,000-square-foot Dar-e Mehr complex, will house the California Zoroastrian Center and Kaikhosrow Shahrokh Library. It also houses a huge main hall called the Morvarid Hall (named after the wife of the late Arbab Guiv) with a capacity for 500 persons, a prayer room, three large classrooms, a kitchen, an office and living quarters, notes *The Zoroastrian* report.

North American federation

A convention to finalize the draft of the constitution of the proposed Federation of Zoroastrian Associations of North America (FEZANA), was held at Chicago from May 24 to 26, 1986. The constitution's first draft was written by Rohinton Rivetna, immediate past president of the Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Chicago, as directed at the Fifth North American Zoroastrian Congress in Los Angeles in 1985.

Of the 17 Zoroastrian associations in USA and Canada, nine were represented in person and each of the remaining eight sent in written comments, notes the report. The nine associations and their representatives were: Zoroastrian Association of Alberta represented by Firdosh Mehta, California Zoroastrian Center by Furrokh and Naju Dastur, Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Chicago by Rohinton Rivetna, Zoroastrian Association of Houston by Kaemarz Dotiwala, Zoroastrian Association of Manitoba by Hushtasp and Pervize Bhungara, Zoroastrian Association of Greater New York by Kaikhosrov and Peroja Irani, Zoroastrian Society of Ontario by Homi Minocher-Homji and Sam Vesuna, Zoroastrian Association of Pennsylvania by Dina McIntyre and Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Washington by Rohinton Tengra.

The constitution is summarized thus: Only participating associations can be members of the Federation with

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voting rights. Others not qualifying for membership may become corresponding members, with no rights except to receive various literature from the Federation. The number of votes assigned to each member association will depend upon the membership size of each individual association.

The Federation will have five elected officers (president, vice-president, treasurer, secretary and assistant secretary) who will have no voting rights. Issues are to be voted by the delegates of the member associations themselves, who could comprise of any individual of the representing association. The elected officers of the Federation, can, for the purposes of the meeting, serve as delegates for their respective associations, notes the write-up.

The objectives of the Federation are to be realized through committees which will include, Zoroastrian unity and welfare; information, journal and newsletter; funds and finance; census and survey; youth; education, conference and scholarship; Zoroastrian congress; small groups of North American Zoroastrians; co-ordinating and planning, adds the report.

By November 15, 1986, the final draft of the constitution should be either accepted or rejected by the member associations. Those associations who approve the constitution become founder members and those who reject it will be considered as uninterested in joining at present. By January 1, 1987, the Federation will be registered as a not-for-profit corporation and by March 21, 1987, dues will be collected and a tax exempt status will be applied for. Later, at the Sixth North American Zoroastrian Congress to be held in the same year, officers will be elected and committee responsibilities assigned, concludes the report.

Chicago's new board

The new board of directors of the Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Chicago (ZAC) for the years 1986-1988 are: president, Kayomars Mehta, vice-president Bomi Damkevala, secretary Aspy Daboo, treasurer Minoo Press, assistant secretary Ervad Pesi Vazifdar, assistant treasurer Rumi Jamsetjee and directors Dilshad Antia, Ervad Behram Daboo, Ervad Neriosang Karanjia, Hosi Mehta, Keikhosrow Mobed, Farida Patel,

Roshan Patel, Dara Rivetna, Dinsoo Rivetna, Roshan Rivetna, Ervad Bahram Shahzadi and Behnaz Shahzadi.

Head priest, Ervad Dr Kersey Antia and immediate past president Rohinton Rivetna remain on the ZAC board, notes the July 1986 issue of the ZAC newsletter. Moreover, the president, vice-president and secretary have also been appointed as ZAC trustees for the Arbab Rustam Guiv Darbe Mehr, for the years 1986-88.

Twenty-one committees were also formed to look into various aspects of community life, for each of which were appointed chairpersons and co-chairpersons, adds the newsletter.

"A milestone in the history of the Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Chicago" was reached, when on June 23, ZAC purchased its religious education computer. "To our knowledge, ZAC is in the forefront amongst Zoroastrian associations in offering such service to the community," notes ZAC's July newsletter.

The system consists of an IBM PC-XT computer, with one diskette drive, one 20 megabyte hard disk, full

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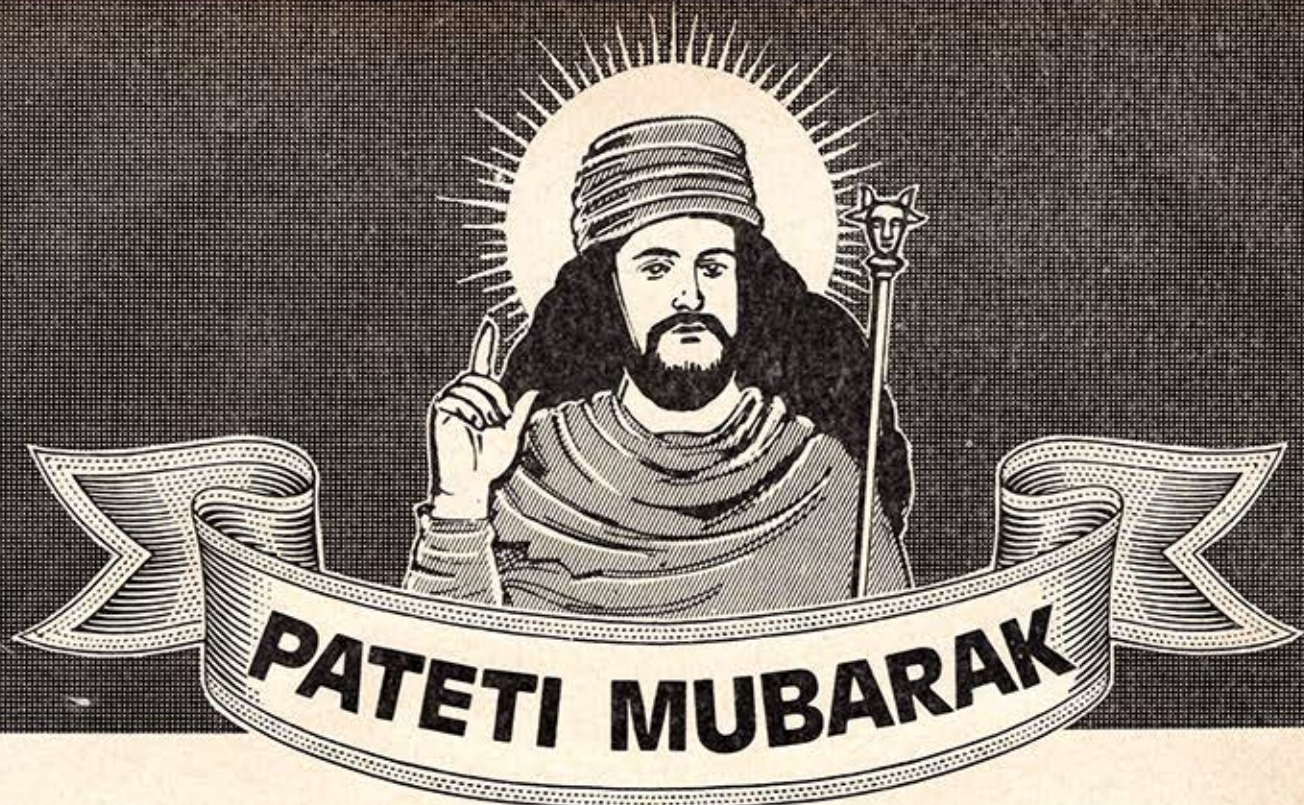
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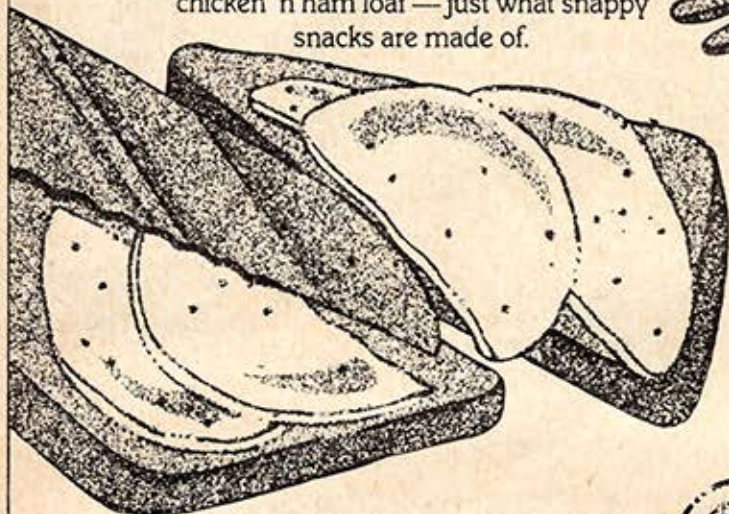
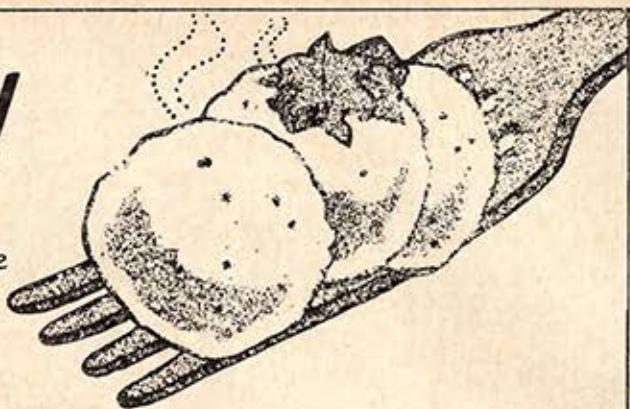
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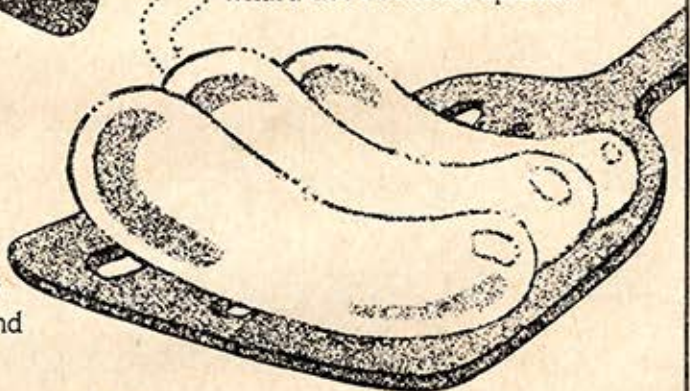
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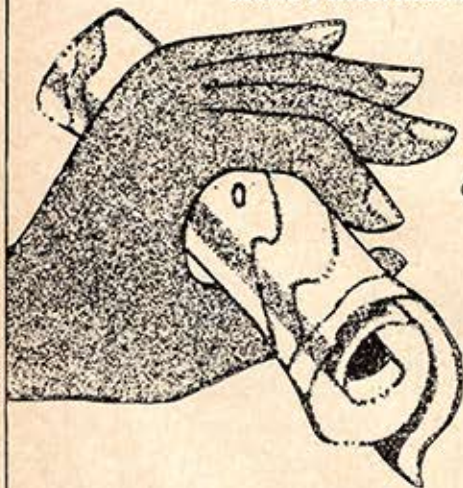
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graphics capability, an IBM monochrome monitor and a full-width printer, adds the newsletter.

The operating costs of the system, which is housed in the ZAC library, will be raised by offering computer classes to interested ZAC members. A special vote of thanks was given to the "Pre Teen Children Group who donated their entire receipts from the Halloween party organized by them."

Religion emblem for Canada

A Religion in Life emblem for Zoroastrians, will now be officially distributed by the Girl Guides and Boy Scouts movement in Canada, notes the May newsletter of the Zoroastrian Society of Ontario (ZSO).

The badge, consisting of the fravashi emblem, embroidered in gold on a white background, is awarded to any scout or guide completing the religious course on Zoroastrianism. "Our children will wear these badges with pride and keep their religion and their identity in this vast new land we now call home," notes Putli Mirza, in-charge of ZSO's religious instruction group, in the newsletter. This badge was already available in the USA in 1983, due to the efforts of the Zoroastrian Association of Greater New York.

The idea of conducting religious classes for the Zoroastrian children of Ontario, took root in July 1977, when the religious subcommittee, chaired by Minoo Treasurywala, drew up a draft outline "to conduct the religious classes." Based on the children's reactions and understanding of the course, the draft was revised several times, adds the report.

It was then sent to various Zoroastrian Associations, later to the Montreal Congress, and finally to Ottawa in October 1985 for approval. The acceptance came through in April 1986, "after years of dedicated work by the late Putli Byramjee," states the newsletter.

NOLZA's annual report

The North London Zoroastrian Association (NOLZA) has sent a strongly worded resolution to the University Grants Committee over its reported closure of the postgraduate course on Zoroastrianism at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, notes NOLZA's fourth annual report, 1985-86.



entirely on a voluntary basis through a democratically elected executive committee," NOLZA, among its other activities, has had bingo sessions, whistdrives, video films, three community dinners and picnics. Notes the report, the year's activities concluded with a well-attended "educational cum social function" on May 11, 1986, to celebrate the birth centenary of the late Jamshed Nusserwanji Mehta, said to be "the maker of modern Karachi."

"His real greatness was embodied in himself, his wonderful personality, his universal love and compassion, and above all his disarming simplicity and humility," notes a life sketch of Jamshed Nusserwanji Mehta "the maker of modern Karachi" issued by the North London Zoroastrian Association (NOLZA) when they celebrated Mehta's birth centenary on

(Left) The late Jamshed Mehta

(Below) Members of NOLZA. (Front row, second from left) Madon, Mehani and Cyrus Mehta



Dubbing the move as "intellectual suicide," it implored the University to "secure a reprieve" for this prestigious research study, "attracting world-wide scholarship."

In the field of education, NOLZA nominated member Tina Mehta to represent them at one of the working parties charged with preparing drafts for the multi-faith *Handbook for Teachers*. This working party is entrusted with revising the old syllabus on religious education under the 1944 Education Act, notes the report.

Describing itself as "a family oriented community organization, run

May 11, 1986. An exhibition of photographs recording different events in Mehta's life was also displayed.

Those who spoke on the occasion were Shehriyar Irani, president of NOLZA, Cyrus Mehta, a scion of the Mehta family of Karachi who spoke on the life of the great man, Professor Curshed Wadia, and Faridoon Madon, vice-president of NOLZA.

Mehta was born in a well-to-do family of Karachi on January 7, 1886. In 1918 he was elected a councillor of the Karachi Municipal Corporation in which capacity he served for 12 years, notes his life sketch. He turned



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Karachi into a well-planned, modern city for which he earned the name "maker of modern Karachi."

An ardent nationalist, known to both Gandhiji and Jinnah, Mehta preferred to work for the Home Rule League Movement of Dr Annie Besant with whom he was in close contact as member of the Theosophical Society, said Cyrus Mehta.

"Jamshed Nusserwanji - as he came to be called in his later life - gave others not only all the riches of his purse but all the wealth of his soul, living a life of self-denial, love and sacrifice," notes the write-up. He expired on August 1, 1952.

The late judge Christmas Humphreys in his book *Via Tokyo*, said of him, "If ever a man was Christ-like, it is he. He is, I gather a Parsi, but he is more than that. He is an example to all men, of what a man may be."

Zoroastrian seminary

"The Zoroastrian Association of Chicago, invites thoughts and suggestions for the establishment of a Zoroastrian seminary, where priests can pursue higher learning and train to be leaders and teachers of our community in reli-

gious matters. The seminary would be a natural corollary to a Darbe Mehr," notes the March issue of *Gavashni*, the newsletter of the Zoroastrian Association of Quebec.

Centenary parade

The Zoroastrian children of Vancouver, under the banner of the Zoroastrian Society of British Columbia, led the children's parade inaugurating the celebration of Vancouver city's first centenary on April 6, 1986, notes a press release.

At the end of the parade, ethnic groups presented folklore and songs on stage, with Roda Pavri's Zoroastrian Children's Choir leading all other communities, adds the release.

So popular were the Zoroastrian children that they were invited once again to open the Peace Week in Vancouver on April 19, 1986, concludes the press release.

Book on Parsi cricket

"The booklet is neither a Who's Who nor a history of Parsi cricket. It is just an interesting collection," notes Australia's Kersi Meher-Homji who has recently compiled *Parsee cricket*

centenary 1886 - 1986 (*Parsiana*, July 1986).

The 32-page xeroxed edition was privately printed for the members of the Australian Zoroastrian Association (AZA) of New South Wales, notes Meher-Homji in a press release.

Compiled from articles taken from various journals, including *Cricketer* and *Sydney Morning Herald* (Australia), *Wisden Cricket Monthly* and *The Cricket Statistician* (England), *Sportsweek*, *Times of India*, *The Illustrated Weekly of India* and *Kaiser-e-Hind* (India), the booklet gives profiles on famous Parsi cricketers like Nari Contractor, Farokh Engineer, Dr Kanga, Rusi Surti and Polly Umrigar, and reserves nine pages for Zoroastrian cricket in Australia.

Meher-Homji himself has written two "successful" books on cricket, edits two newsletters (including *Manashni* of the AZA) and writes columns in publications both in Australia and India, notes the release.

The book priced at \$ 2.50 (approximately Rs 22) plus postage, is available from Kersi Meher-Homji, 3, Dallas Place, St Ives, NSW 2075, Australia.

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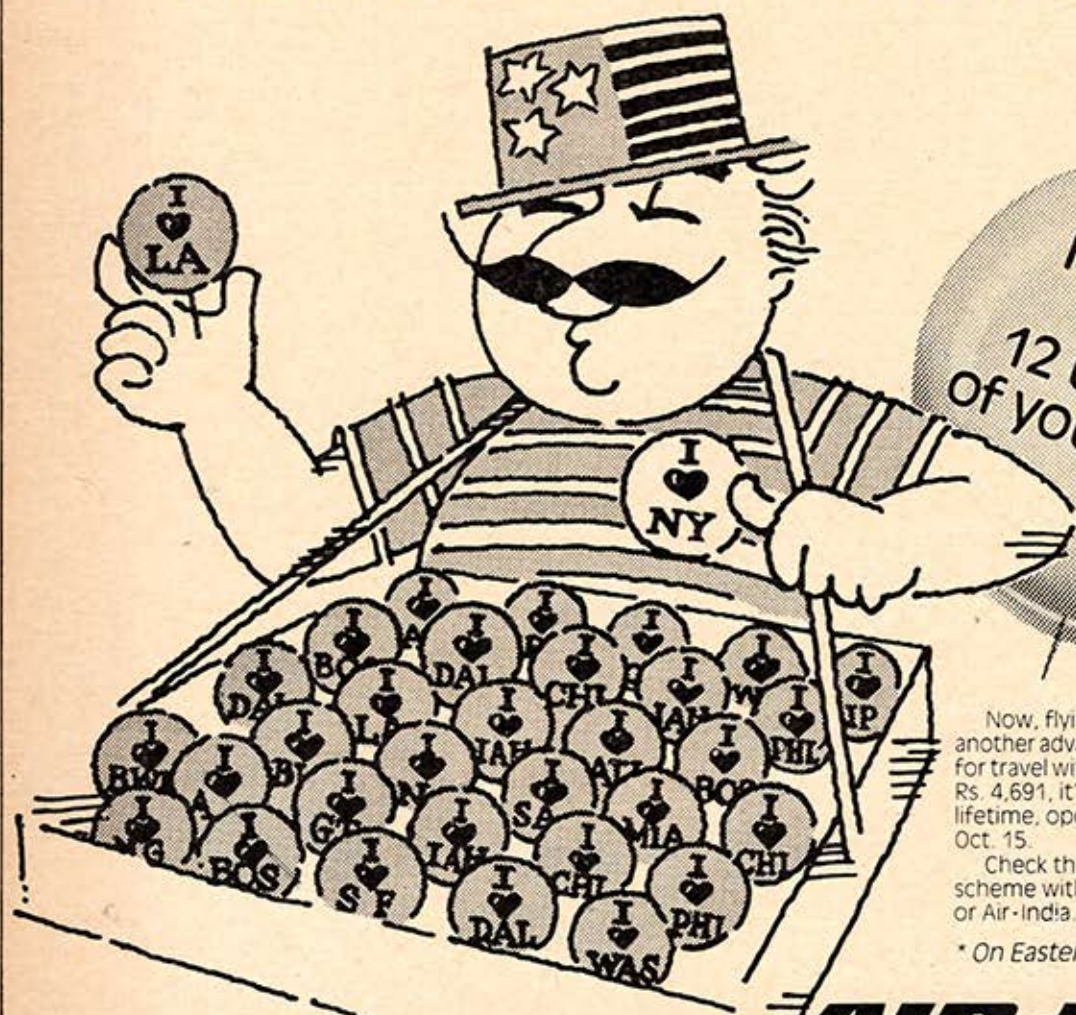
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Computing growth

Having carved a footnote in Bahrain's commercial history and revolutionized the computer market in the country, according to the *Khaleej Times*, a Bahrain publication, Paterasp Nirumvala is ready for another coup.

As vice-chairman of the Almoayyed International Group which he helped to launch, Nirumvala has established his product as the market leader in a country where computer technology was almost bursting at its seams, states the report. The market was ripe with a few popular computer companies having marked their presence. Nirumvala, along with his partner Farouk Almoayyed, launched Wang products which today claim 70 percent of the market share, reports the paper. *

"If Wang as a product assured quality, Almoayyed as a company extended an extensive range of support facilities," continues the article. In order to augment its services, subsidiary companies were established within the group, each functioning independently, yet fulfilling corporate goals.

A major factor that has contributed

to the growth of the Almoayyed International Group is customer satisfaction. The fact that the group inspires customer confidence is manifest in a series of contracts, one of which relates to a Bahrain-based international bank that had the company install Wang computers not only in its offices in Bahrain, but London and Singapore as well. "That is our hallmark: a complete and dedicated involvement. Our need based approach has kept us in good stead," says Nirumvala.

Dialling invention

People with sensory problems and spinal cord injuries had a great need for technology to help them live normal lives, noted Adil N. Dastur, a graduate in electrical engineering from the Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI), who has recently invented, along with colleague James A. McWeeney, a machine to answer, dial and hang up a telephone. The invention made front page news in the *Worcester Telegram* dated July 10, 1986.

The device, the size of a dictionary, was made especially for Ms Donna M.

Murphy, who is unable, from birth, to either walk or lift her arms. Perforce, Murphy had to live at a Worcester nursing home and confine her friends to visiting hours. Now with the new invention, wherein it is possible for her to dial a number in case of emergency, Murphy lives in a private home with friends, notes the write-up by Kimberly S. Newton.

The instrument needs little muscle use. To take the telephone off the hook electronically, a switch has to be hit with a pencil which could be held in the mouth. At once the device lights up and numbers from one to 10 come up on the screen, one at a time. When the necessary number wanted appears, a switch has to be pushed which will store it in memory. Numbers are repeated continuously till the full telephone number is stored. The person listens and talks through head phones. Even to take a ringing phone off the hook and to later disconnect it, one merely has to hit a switch, notes the report.

Dastur got the idea when a fall from a roof in 1983 put him in St Vincent's Hospital and Boston University

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Medical Center for four months and left him a paraplegic, says the write-up.

"He did an excellent job," notes Wilhelm H. Eggimann, associate professor of electrical engineering at WPI, of the invention for which Dastur received a distinction class.

Dastur is now looking out for a job in electrical engineering, but wishes to design and work on a voice-activated computer for the handicapped. For the immediate future, however, he has to get in touch with Murphy who now wants a desk speaker so she doesn't have to wear earphones, adds the newspaper.

A longer life

"Take a personal audit and resolve to eat and live a longer and healthier life," says Ms Karmeen Kulkarni, registered dietician with a masters degree in food and nutrition who was quoted recently in the US daily, *The Salt Lake Tribune*.

Kulkarni, who is a clinical dietician at the Diabetes Treatment Center at Holy Cross Hospital, participated in a program which incorporated practical

experience to help individuals with diabetes learn about their meal plan, states *The Tribune*. Diabetes is believed to be the third leading cause of death in the US and the leading cause of new cases of adult blindness. The buffet lunches, including foods from the diabetic food exchange list — milk, bread, meat, vegetables, fruit and fat — help accomplish this with assistance from Kulkarni and other specially trained staff members. Each patient may select a nutritious fun lunch based on the individual meal pattern.

According to Kulkarni, the Center recently teamed with the Hypertension Program at the Bureau of Chronic Disease, State Health Department, to present gourmet cooking tips for those with diabetes, the report stated.

With other fellow members of the American Diabetic Association, Kulkarni supported the designation of March '86 as the National Nutrition Month with the slogan: "Good Nutrition — Feel the Difference." The slogan focuses on the wisdom of eating properly and exercising moderately to maintain a healthful lifestyle throughout the year.

Suggested recipes for diabetic patients and "everyone interested in eating the healthy, delicious way:"

Waldorf salad

Apples chopped (2 small)
Celery chopped (2 stalks)
Raisins (1/4 cup)
Walnuts chopped (4)
Sour cream (or yogurt) (1/4 cup)
Low-calorie mayonnaise (2 tbsps)
Nutmeg (1/8 tsp)

Combine apples, celery, raisins and nuts. Mix sour cream, mayonnaise and nutmeg; toss dressing lightly with apple mixture. Chill. Makes four servings at 154 calories per serving.

Ratatouille

Onion sliced (1 large)
Zucchini sliced (4 medium) (Not available in India. May be substituted by vegetable marrow)
Green or red sweet pepper, seeded and sliced (1)
Eggplant, peeled and diced (1)
Tomatoes, chopped in large pieces (4)
Tomato paste (1/4 cup)
Fresh parsley chopped (1/4 cup)

continued on page 87



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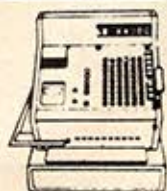


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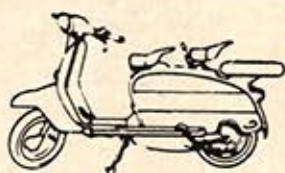
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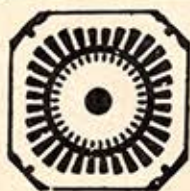
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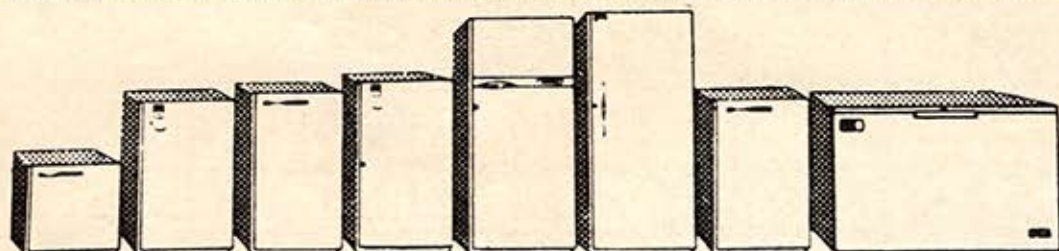
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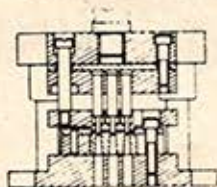
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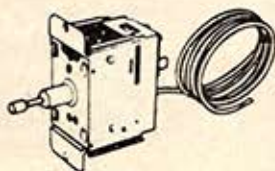
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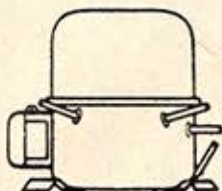
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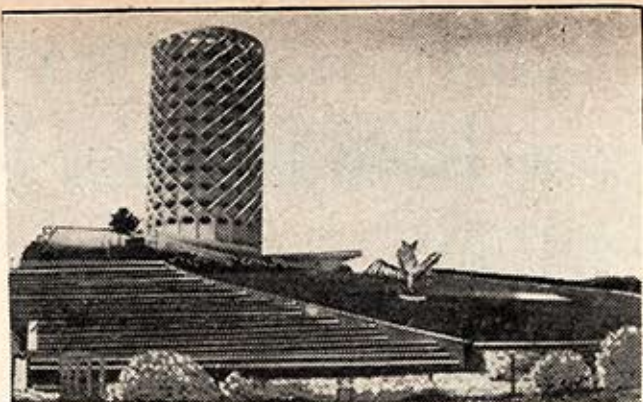


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After its disastrous decision to scrap the SSC course eight years ago, the Institute is trying to once again lure students.

Parinaz Toddywalla

Two young boys, on benches sufficient to accommodate 20, were chanting aloud Avestan verses under the supervision of a teacher. In another classroom, at a considerable distance from the former, one student was the sole beneficiary of his teacher's undivided attention. The classroom adjoining that was vacant, but the blackboard bore evidence of a previously held class in ancient Iranian history, presumably for an advanced student judging from the language used. The chiming of the bell was an indication of end of period as a couple of staff members walked into the hitherto deserted staff room, where cupboards of undusted books were giving mute company to each other.

For the students of the Muncherji Framji Cama Athornan Institute (MFCAI), the bell provided a much sought for respite in their day's heavy routine which commences at 5.25 a.m. on weekdays and 6 a.m. on Sundays. In the mornings, the boys – the youngest being eight and the eldest, 17 – attend the Madhavdas Amarsey School, a 10-minute walk from the Madressa, for their SSC education. Fortunately, this school has facilities for instruction in two languages – English and Gujarati, enabling the two boys from Ahmedabad to study in the Gujarati medium. Each afternoon the boys have to imbibe religious training, and after an evening divided between playtime and homework, dinner and prayers, the boys turn in for the day at 9.30 p.m.

The portals of the grand edifice, built in the shape of the alphabetical letter M, still evoke feelings of grandeur and awe as they must have aroused in



Cama Madressa photo taken 10 years ago.

Permission to photograph the Institute was denied to Parsiana by the trustees.

1927 when the Institute was founded. The only difference being that now these sentiments are accompanied by a sense of helplessness at the thought of this educational institution being underutilized.

The progressive decline in the number of students at the Institute during the last five years, from 11 to eight to five to three and finally to two in the academic year 1985-86, caused an alarm within the community and prompted the raking up of many past unpleasant controversies connected with the Institute. Finally the trustees unanimously decided to appoint Ervad Nadirsha Aibara as joint principal of the MFCAI, at the suggestion of businessman Dinshaw Merchant and ex-student Hormuzdiar Turel, informed Muncherji Cama, presently on the MFCAI trust board. Advertisements in the *Jam-e-Jamshed* of April 4 and 9, carrying Aibara's photograph and summarizing the incentives offered by the Institute, received a spurt of enquiries from parents and the

subsequent enrolment of seven new boys, bringing up the total to nine.

Previously associated with the MFCAI as senior religious instructor from 1954 to 1969 when over 140 students trained under him, Aibara accepted joint principalship as he was anxious "to restore (the Madressa) to its former standards. In 1954, when I first joined on the staff of the MFCAI, there were 72 students. In 1969, when I resigned to take over as panthaky of the Sodawaterwala Agiary, there were 52 students and a staff of 12. While the optimum capacity in such a residential institution would be 80 to 90 students, the ideal strength would be 50 to 60." To accommodate his new responsibility within his present duty as panthaky of the Karani Agiary at Cusrow Baug, Aibara, whose daily schedule commences at 4 a.m., utilizes his four-hour rest period in the afternoons to pay a visit to the MFCAI.

The Cama Madressa's second joint principal Kaikhusroo Daruwalla has been teaching at the Institute for the

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last 47 years. Though a behdin, he was appointed principal in 1978 and has over the years witnessed the declining interest shown in the Institute. Referring to the few qualified navars produced by the Madressa, Daruwalla noted, "Shortage of priests is a problem faced by all communities."

Noncommittally accepting that the discontinuation of the SSC course at the Madressa in 1978 did contribute to a decline in the strength of the students there, Aibara feels that the student response did not pick up despite the SSC course being reintroduced in 1980-81 because of two chief factors: The Cama Madressa at Andheri being relatively isolated as compared to the Dadar Madressa which is situated in the heart of a Parsi locale, parents find Dadar more convenient; and since the functioning of the Dadar Madressa is dependent on community donations as compared to the Cama Institute which is managed from a corpus of Rs 25 to 28 lakhs donated by the Camas, there is a certain difference in the approach to these two institutes.

"Unutilized space - an invitation to encroachment, and ... surplus funds (attracting) various organizations with their tailor made schemes to utilize the (MFCAI) funds," are the two areas where the assets of the Institute could become problems, noted Peshotan Nargolwala who has been taking considerable interest in the problems of the priesthood, in his letter to the trustees of the MFCAI. Hormazdyar Dalal of the Zoroastrian Community Development Institute wrote in the *Jam-e-Jamshed* of June 14 of the need "to have a full-time experienced and dedicated husband and wife team to look after (the emotional needs of) these boys at this adolescent stage." There is not enough stress on physical and intellectual exercises to broaden the horizons of the boys, said Dalal. The Dadar Madressa which had 45 students on its rolls in December 1985, according to *Knowledge*, the Madressa's bi-annual publication, is functioning under the supervision of its principal Ervad Rustom Panthaki and his wife, Jalamai.

Muncherji Cama, representing the Cama family on the trust board of the Institute, was of the view, "Parents felt that the continuous changing of syllabus would be detrimental to their wards. We scrapped the SSC course, then reintroduced it...I believe the

same thing was done many years back also, though I'm not sure of that. When we assured the interested parents that the change would never occur, (and because of Aibara's association) we have seven new students this year."

Though not making any direct reference to the controversy regarding the Institute's 1978 educational policy which received much publicity in *The Bombay Samachar*, Cama reiterated, "It was the then managing committee (which is an advisory body to the trust board) which recommended the scrapping of the SSC course." In addition to the trustees, Cama listed the then managing committee members: Dastur Firoze Kotwal, Dastur Nowrooz Minochehr-Homji, Ervad Nader Turel, Dr Homi Dhalla, Dara Marshall, Prof Khurshed Sheriar, Prof Maneck Kanga and Dasturs Hormazdyar Mirza and Kaikhusroo JamaspAsa. (The last two resigned because they did not support the move to exclude secular education from the Institute.) JamaspAsa however states that Turel, Dhalla and Dr Peshotan Peer replaced himself and Mirza on the managing committee. While the founder Merwanji Cama had started with only the mobedi amelioration course and not secular education, it was the idea of his successor Jehangir H.Cama that a mobedi should also be well-educated. Therefore the SSC course was introduced.

In the appointment of trustees, preference is given to members of the Cama family, explained Muncherji Cama who is of Cama descent from both his maternal and paternal side. If the Camas don't wish to be appointed, then outsiders are taken, Cama continued. At the time of the scrapping of the SSC course, the acting president of the trust board was Kaikhusroo H.Cama, Muncherji Cama's maternal uncle. Not having any sons, he was succeeded by J.H.Cama's son-in-law, Sir Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy (seventh baronet), the present president. The other trustees of the Cama Athornan Institute are Khurshed Cama, Naoroji Gamadia, Rustom Jejeebhoy, Farrokh Cama and Rustom Lalkaka.

The condition of the MFCAI was brought to public attention early this year when a letter, written by Naoroji Gamadia and Ratan Lalkaka in their personal capacity, requested Dasturs Mirza and JamaspAsa to suggest a scheme to attract young boys to the priestly calling and turn them into full-time practicing mobeds who'll be "respected members of our community." Making oblique references to the Athravan Educational Trust (the newly formed association for the amelioration of priests, whose trust deed has come under heavy criticism), the two Dasturs implicated its chairman Dr Kotwal for being "instrumental" in formulating a new scheme for the Institute which was "a total failure...this

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scheme was revised three times during the course of one fateful morning in 1977." Mirza and JamaspAsa recommended that the Madressa be converted into a regular day school, where additionally the aspiring navars could be given training in the priestly profession. "Mixing together will provide the athornans and behdins with a realization of each other, leading to a mutual respect and better understanding - something that is best fostered from childhood," said the two Dasturs.

Denying that he was "the chief architect responsible for scrapping the SSC scheme," Kotwal referred to his letter of December 10, 1976 wherein he had warned that not a single good student may opt for the new course and that new enrolments could suffer. He further says that he had advised, "continue the present setup and prevent the Institute's utter collapse which I am afraid might come if we stop the SSC course."

Quoting relevant extracts from the managing committee meeting held on February 6, 1978 wherein it had been minuted that Kotwal had "framed" and later "amended" the Mobedi Oriented Course of Seven Years, Muncherji Cama wrote in *The Bombay Samachar* of March 23, "At no point of time during the deliberations of the managing committee did Dastur Kotwal voice his dissent." Jejeebhoy, however, in an interview with *Parsiiana* on July 9, supported Kotwal: "He was not very willing to implement the course. He had said 'try it, see if you succeed, otherwise you can go back to the old course.'" Jejeebhoy reasoned, "We spend two lakhs of rupees annually on this Institute. We thought that the Institute would not serve its purpose if we continue producing students who go in for banking and engineering and not mobedi. Though we were warned, we thought that even if we produce only one qualified student who would practice mobedi, it would be worth the change in syllabus...Nothing came of it." Despite reintroduction of the SSC course, student response did not pick up until 1986.

In the meanwhile, the trustees have given a part of the vacant plot surrounding the Madressa to the Tata Cooperative Housing Society who will develop the land, subject to the approval of the MFCIAI trust, under a short term lease, informed Muncherji

Dattaram-LT41/86

Cama. While five buildings are ready for occupation, the remaining seven to eight are under construction. Since 10 percent of the flats have to be reserved for scheduled castes, "we said we would build one separate building for them to take care of the reserved quota, leaving the rest for exclusive use by Parsis," said Jejeebhoy. When the Tatas applied for the No Objection Certificate three to four years back, permission was granted by the Bombay Municipal Corporation on the understanding that the Institute building be "reserved for education." This means that the trustees are under an obligation to accommodate a regular day school which will impart SSC education in one wing, while the Madressa will continue to operate in the second wing. "Though it is not our idea, we will be forced to do it. Within a couple of years we will have to start with renovation. For our own boys it will be ideal because instead of going to the Madhavdas Amarsey School, which they presently attend each morning, they will be full-time on the Cama premises. The school will be very convenient for the residents of the new housing colony, also."

They first plan to start with a primary school, and if it is a success, proceed further. When some of the trustees of the Athravan Educational Trust, Naoroji Godrej, Homi Ranina, Firoze Kotwal, Limji Nanabhoy and Khojeste Mistree, came forward to help in the formation of the school, there was a difference of opinion among the MFCAL trustees. "Some of our trustees who preferred the path of least resistance felt that we should hand over the project to the AET. A few of us, including myself, suggested that we should do everything possible by ourselves. We felt that the AET might cash in on this. Since we didn't want to have any voting on this proposal, it was finally settled that we could take the help of some of the AET trustees like (industrialist) Godrej who has considerable experience in the running of their schools at Vikhroli, and other educationists. Even on our own trust board, we have educationists like Jejeebhoy and Naoroji Gamadia," said Cama.

Opening of a regular school might necessitate admitting non Zoroastrians there, because only then can a school qualify for government grants. Though some advisors recom-

mend that on behalf of the new school an application for grants be made whilst keeping it exclusively for Parsis, Cama opines that the move may not be successful with the Parsi parents' penchant for admitting their children in convent schools and seeing the trend in other Parsi founded schools which had perforce to be made cosmopolitan. As yet, the trustees have not reached any final decision regarding the formation or functioning of the proposed school.

Though the conversion to a cosmopolitan school may require an amendment of the existing trust deed, so far no alteration has been made. A public notice in the *Jame* of June 11, signed by the Deputy Charity Commissioner of Bombay, announcing that reconstructed records had been filed as the earlier records of the MFCAL and the M.M.Cama Education Fund had been "damaged" and were "not available," raised doubts in the minds of the community. On behalf of the Athornan Mandal, its chairman Jehangir Shroff protested against any likely change of clause or deliberate amendment "for the benefit of the present trustees and its committee." The letter noted, "the trust deed was made with the object that it should only be beneficial to the athravans and that clause should not be changed or amended by inserting the words 'cosmopolitan' or 'sarvanjanik' or otherwise." This prompted Jejeebhoy to issue a clarification in the *Jame* of June 21, "no clause or clauses and no words are added, changed or amended, nor there is any change in the objects of the trust deed."

"Since we can't compel anyone to do mobedi, for the present we are offering financial incentives, in addition to free education," said Je-

jeebhoy. All students at the Madressa get free clothes and books. The cost of the navjote expenses and the navar-maratab training ceremonies are borne by the MFCAL. To entice students, a sum of Rs 150 per month is collected in the bank in the name of the student till he completes his navar-maratab and thereafter for 15 to 20 years while he practices mobedi. At the end of 30 to 35 years, he gets Rs 55,000 in hand. To the athravans (ordained priests) and ostas (born of priestly families) settled abroad and especially in Iran, an appeal has been made to enrol their children at the MFCAL. In Iran, many non-ordained priests from the athornan families perform religious ceremonies, observed Aibara. "It would be ideal if such interested persons could send their children for religious training here," he said.

Pleased with the student response which has picked up from two to nine, the administrators are confident that next year - their diamond jubilee - there will be a better response if they start advertising from January, which will give them suitable time to get their students admitted at the Madhavdas Amarsey School for their SSC training. "Because of Aibara's reputation and as ex students of the Institute would prefer to enrol their children (in their alma mater), the chances of there being better student response are higher," said Cama.

"Let's not stop with Merwanji's objective...of producing mobeds, of which there is a dearth in the community," advised Jejeebhoy. "We can teach them mobedi, but ultimately" says Cama, "their employment is in the hands of the community...how they remunerate them and how they treat them."



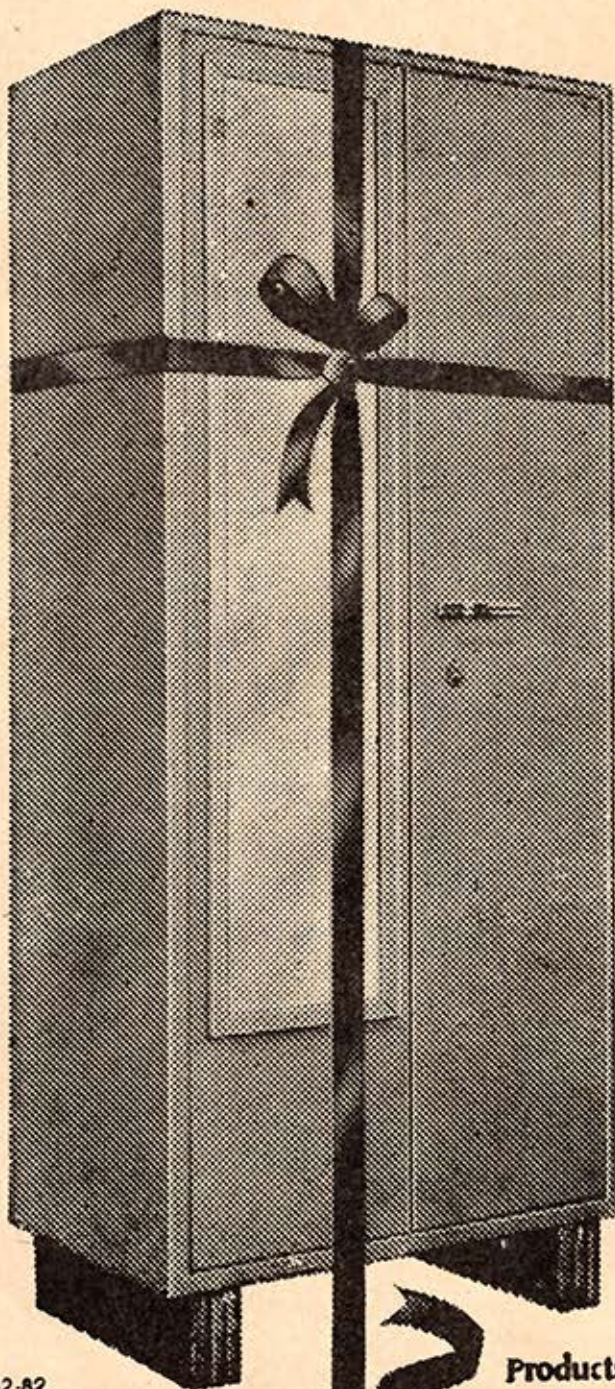
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The creative extension

Parinaz Toddywalla



Karishma, a new subsidiary of the ad agency Lintas, is gearing up under its general manager Noshir Desai to meet the current marketing boom.

With people on one hand and products on the other constantly vying for attention, advertising can be an unduly taxing career. But if "you find people fascinating and stimulating" as does Noshir Desai, general manager of Karishma, "advertising is the best field to be in."

Looking fatigued from his previous meeting with a client on July 2, 1986, Desai, with his dishevelled hair and steady look, relied on subtle humor to unravel the story of Karishma, a recent offshoot of the multinational advertising agency, Lintas.

Karishma, meaning 'miracle' in pure Hindi, was the name favored for the new Lintas subsidiary to connote an Indian flavor. "For certain strategic reasons and because we felt that there was no need for a subsidiary to follow the same name as the parent organization, it was a group decision to name the new agency Karishma," said Desai.

"We're trying to make the most of the current marketing boom and yet be very selective about our clients... We believe in producing highly visible and creative advertising. Karishma is geared to respond fast to its clients' needs. The emphasis is on sound strategy, not fancy looking pictures and nice sounding slogans. Whatever advertisement we make, will be based on a very specially

crafted marketing and advertising strategy. Before the actual campaign, a certain amount of 'think' input involving the study of market research and competitive trends is important to us, though it is the missing link in most of today's advertising." Presently Karishma's accounts include Kedia fans, EC TV, Diners World Travel, Graviera Suitings, Nelco and Bank of America.

Karishma's creative director Quentin Coelho elaborated on the creative aspect of advertising: "The creative product is most important in the agency business. Most of our clients are professionals. Before finalizing the art, copy, production and audiovisual components in an advertisement, we must get the client's consent to the recommended strategy, keeping in mind that each product will have its own primary and secondary target markets."

Currently, Karishma operates from its main office at Nirmal Building (Nariman Point) and a small branch office which they have opened at Hyderabad as they have "two fairly large accounts there."

At first glance, the mirrored tiles on the wall of Karishma's posh Bombay office caused uncertainty as to whether there were two departments working, or the reflection of the same group causing the illusion. Finally it

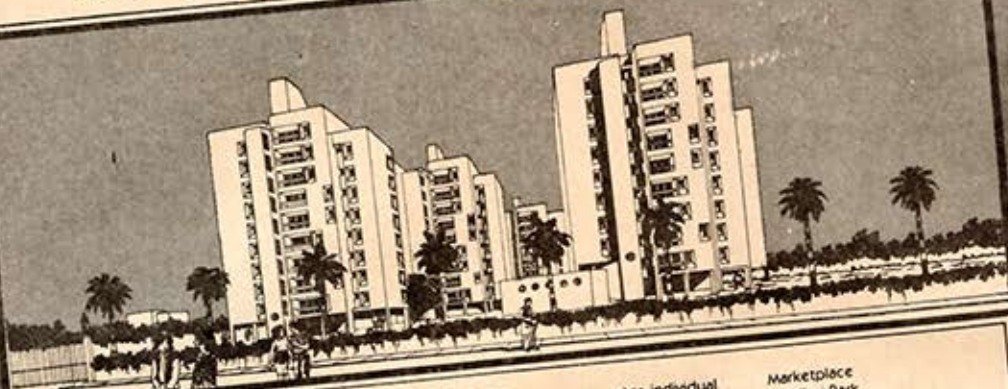
was sorted out that through effective use of partitions which serve the dual purpose of storage space, the center of the floor space is utilized by the Karishma staff while the cabins on the periphery are shared by two organizations - Karishma's executives and the editorial staff of *Business India*, the fortnightly business publication.

Not considering it prudent to have "preconceived ideas about opening branches unless there is a concrete business possibility," Desai emphasized, "We must be sure we are able to provide the highest quality of servicing and creative inputs for our existing clients. I can never dream of neglecting them. It's my current clients who'll become Karishma's advertising agents if they talk to others about our services."

"Overwhelming" was the term used by Desai to describe the response from the market since the inception of Karishma in January this year. "What we'd hoped to achieve by the end of the year, we've already achieved," said Desai, attributing their success (in order of importance as perceived by him) to "the grace of God, a lot of hardwork and thanks to the Lintas backing."

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there were, it would be short-lived. This is one profession for self-made people," noted Desai who is an ex-student of St Xavier's Boys Academy and a commerce graduate from Sydenham College. Desai's earlier experiences with advertising agencies like Mass Communication and Marketing, Everest Advertising and Lintas have made him view advertising as a "people's business."

Advertising has started playing the role of a catalyst in mass media, observed Desai. "In magazines, because of color advertisements, publications use better quality paper and there is also better editorial coverage. Similarly on TV, because of interesting and exciting commercials, the quality of the programs is also seen to be improving." Explaining the futility of comparing TV to the print medium as a means of communication, Desai said, "It's like saying Parsis versus Hindus. Both have to coexist and get their voices heard. One will not replace the other. While TV will be the medium of tomorrow which people will look to for entertainment, special interest journals will replace general interest magazines which people will refer to for information, knowledge and news... Most advertising agencies are gearing up technically and creatively to meet the challenge of the magic window. This will help clients to reach out to many more people in a more interesting way."

With his "basically very optimistic" nature, Desai preferred to see the tremendous opportunities available in the profession rather than the few constraints which every industry faces. However, he did point out the technical restraints arising out of paucity of TV hardware and production instruments but was sanguine that with the government's new policy of industrialization, this limitation would be only a temporary phase.

Lamenting over the fact that there are now few Parsis who can be said to have made their mark in their chosen field, Desai noted, "Advertising being a small field, there are not too many Parsis to talk about. Yet, there are some extremely successful Parsis in the advertising world. There is Rumi Mistry of Ulka Advertising, Roda Mehta of Ogilvy Benson and Mather, and Sam Balsara of Mudra Communications."

In the six months of Karishma's ex-

istence, Desai feels he has aged by five years. "In your own organization you can take risks; if there are money problems, you would say '*chalya karech*' (the usual ups and downs)." But when you are running the show on behalf of someone else, you feel extremely responsible," Desai explained.

Enjoying his involvement with his relatively small advertising agency, Desai maintains, "Professionally, the (quantum of) output is no different from a large agency. In fact, the productivity is higher as there are less layers to cut through, less red tapeism. We're all interacting instead of seeking appointments with each other.

We shoulder responsibility in many more departments other than our own field of specialization.

"Karishma will one day become a large agency but we hope to continue with our small agency profile," acknowledged Desai. Referring to their agency's advertisement, portraying Karishma as a tiny bird maintaining its own direction and speed above the hordes of other small agencies represented as a flock of birds, Desai added, "Since we are responsible for laying the foundation stone of this agency, we'll see that our culture won't change. To each of our clients we'll be small, but to the industry as a whole we'll be big..."



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"I just wish the community would act more like Zoroastrians and less like Parsis!"

Cyrus Bharucha's wistful comment summed up his four-year experience of making *On Wings of Fire* – a docu-drama styled as "a film odyssey across 3,500 years." Bharucha's evident exhaustion on July 14, 1986, three weeks after the film's premier, was proof enough that he had not expected the project to be quite the emotional roller coaster it became.

The tension of the court case (the Bombay High Court rejected the petition to prevent public screening of the movie until certain scenes were expunged) had been replaced by relief tinged with disillusion – "I think I've been through an awful lot, especially during the last two weeks before the film was released. (It was) such a long battle getting the film completed (and) a long battle with the censors." Nor did Bharucha anticipate "the anti sentiment" that befogged him and *Wings* until the court settled the issue: "People wavered a lot; a lot of people sat on the fence."

While the demand from the Council of Vigilant Parsis (COVP) for the deletion of certain scenes was dismissed by the High Court, the Film Censor Board (FCB) itself pressed three cuts upon the producer before the film was granted a certificate as an educational film. In one scene, maestro Zubin Mehta, around whom the film revolves, speaks of Zoroastrianism as "the oldest surviving revealed religion in the world." The Board demanded that the line be deleted. Says Bharucha, "Certain ladies on the FCB didn't understand the word 'revealed.' We read out the definition from the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (to them)" but the Board won.

The Board also demanded that a scene depicting Jadav Rana joking with and kissing a slave girl's hand be censored. But to Bharucha, the most agonising cut enforced by the Board dealt with Dadabhai Naoroji and Jamsetji Tata. "Never (having) worked in

continued on page 61



"A COMPROMISE FILM"

Arnavaz S. Mama

Producer-director Cyrus Bharucha reviews the controversies surrounding *On Wings of Fire*.



*Above: Bharucha
Left: Zarathushtra in the court of King Vishtaspa*

Below: Zarathushtra's first encounter with his prospective bride Havovi

Inset: Zoroastrians reaching the shores of Gujarat

Facing page: Praying for the recovery of Vishtaspa's horse

(Photos: Jamshed N. Marzbán, Photogenic)





Painting with a needle

The unknown and unsung Chinese embroiderers could not have guessed that their garas would become prized collector's items.

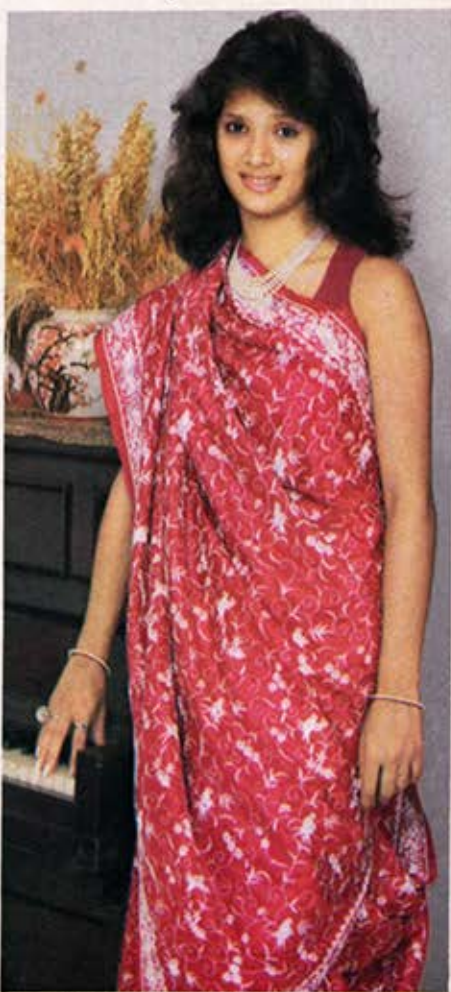
She had inherited from her grandmother a large palette of embroidered Chinese silk saris (garas). The 70 to 100-year-old heirlooms captured in their gossamer folds, the colors of the elements and nature – the sky, sea and fire. Against the glowing background flowed a perfection of embroidered natural forms – stemmed flowers where one could see the delicate

veining of the leaves, the arrangement of one stamen inside the other, birds in graceful flight, Chinese pagodas and figures.

The unknown and unsung Chinese embroiderers, who had lavished such devotion and skill on the six yards of pure Chinese silk, could not have guessed that their work would become a prized collector's item, over a

century-and-a-half later. As endangered as the community with which they have become closely identified, the gara in mint condition is commanding fabulous prices – as much as Rs 40,000 at the upper end and Rs 4,000 at the lower end – according to a spokesman of one of the select sari shops that stock garas.

The last 10 years have in fact seen a



Miss India Mehr Jesia modelling a gara in red and in black (facing page).



Text: Jeroo Irani
Photographs: Homyar Mistry



Top: At a family function the late Indira Gandhi wearing a gara (Courtesy Chandan Patel)

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resurgence of interest in this antique wraparound. So much so that new garas that seek to perpetuate the intricacy and beauty of the old designs cost just a little less than the antique ones.

Ms Piroja Narielwala who has been embroidering saris for the last 39 years, some of which have been devoted to salvaging old garas and embroidering new ones, feels that those in good condition will appreciate in value. She cites an example: "When I first started completing the corners (the corner of the sari that is tucked in at the back when worn Parsi style was not embroidered in some garas) for my clients, it cost Rs 75. Today it costs Rs 400 to Rs 500. For, in this business every stitch is money."

Narielwala relates another telling anecdote of a friend who wished to sell a gara. A potential buyer phoned and asked him to describe the gara and name the price. The deal was clinched on the phone (though the price was in five figures) and without the caller ever having set eyes on the sari!

Antiques

Having acquired an exclusive aura,

almost of haute couture. "Garas are classified as antiques because they are not being made anymore," says Ms Roshan Kalapesi, a designer for the theater, former president of the prestigious Crafts Council of India and founder patron of the Vishwa Karigar, who has behind her years of research in Indian crafts and embroidery. Kalapesi, who was the first person to compile *The Costumes of India* collection which was exhibited in the museums of Europe, Australia and the United States, says that when the exhibition was held at the Smithsonian Institute, the gara that she had worn, attracted as much attention as the exhibition.

Ms Naju Daver who has been duplicating traditional gara designs on pure and synthetic silks and other materials as a hobby, relates a similar story. At a recent city wedding a new gara that she had embroidered for the bride's mother was the focus of attention, rather than the bride's sari. Friends chided the mother for wearing an old gara rather than a new sari for the occasion. "It's a compliment to us that they couldn't tell that it was a new gara," adds Daver.

It all began 10 years ago for the ebullient Ms Daver when she could not salvage her grandmother's exquisite gara. "So I decided to make a new one with the same design." So fascinated were her non Parsi clients by the design that she proffered as a sample, that orders began to trickle in.

"However, till recently many in the Parsi community were unaware of the gara's value," she states. "I know of Parsis disposing off their garas to the *jaripuranawala* at throwaway prices - at Rs 40. Today the same people are coming to me to buy new garas... Some cut up their garas to make caps, blouses and even dressing gowns. I want to increase awareness of the fact that the gara is meant to be preserved! Towards this end, Daver had an exhibition of her collection in January last. "So great was the response, that people came forward with their own priceless saris so that I could copy the design." Another exhibition is slated for October, when garas can be bought off the rack.

Buying a new gara, Daver feels, is like purchasing jewellery which can be handed down to the next generation as an heirloom. It can last for another 300

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years, she says. Daver displays a nearly 100-year-old creation and juxtaposes it against a new one in which the design has been faithfully copied. She drapes another old gara next to a new one, talking rapidly of the color, texture and the sheen, as she gently caresses the age-old fabric.

The actual making of a new gara can take from two to six months, depending on the complexity and density of the design. It is speculated that the old Chinese method had one artisan specialize in embroidering a particular motif—a leaf or a flower, for instance. Therefore, all the artisan did in his lifetime was to embroider a leaf or a flower perfectly. The entire sari would be executed by a number of workmen—a method that the new gara makers feel is worth emulating.

Infinite variety

The choice of a good material is the first step to a good design. Today, the embroideress has at her disposal a fabulous and infinite variety of materials, undreamt of by her predecessors. While the old garas were executed on a variety of Chinese silks (called the

gaaj, paaj, crepe, ghat, etc) with a cream like texture, Daver uses a variety of synthetics (with fast colors) and pure silk. The existing threads are not as vibrant as the Chinese silk skeins of yore, but can be aged to look somewhat similar.

While the material and the thread used are important, what is most vital is the workmanship. "In the finest garas the embroidery is so closely done that the background color surfaces as an outline," enthuses Kalapesi. The entire sari then looks like a carpet, she says, "for the Chinese seemed to paint with their needle. The stroke was fluid."

Whilst elsewhere in the world, embroidery was used to record important events, tell a story, or depict characters from the Bible, the garas restricted themselves to dainty, flowing, floral and geometric motifs and Chinese scenes. Some were custom-made, informs Kalapesi, with the crest of reputed families being embroidered into the gara. One gara which was on sale recently, had round, bordered motifs with the figure of a Chinese man or woman inside. The beauty of

the piece was that each figure was different.

Love and care

Considering its value today, the gara is a thing that needs love and care. It breathes but has a limited life span. You can't wear it once and forget about it for months or years. Unused, the fibers could deteriorate. Wrap each gara separately in white muslin, never in plastic, and place it flat in the cupboard. Do not hang them, advises Narielwala. Put peppercorns in a muslin cloth bag along with the saris to keep insects away, especially the silver fish which love to feed on silk. Kalapesi suggests keeping the skin of a snake in a muslin cloth bag to deter insects.

Once or twice a year, give the sari a good airing. Worn traditionally at festive occasions, it's best not to don the gara at a baug wedding or any place where the border tends to get dirty. Laundering the gara frequently has proved lethal for the sari as the old dyes were not fast. It's best to dry-clean the gara at a reliable laundry

continued on page 64

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The reigning Miss India

Traipsing into the jetsetting league after a traditional Parsi upbringing was a heady climb for Mehr Jesia.

Jeroo Irani

The 16 contestants pirouetted and twirled, staging grand entries and exits. One of them was the five-foot-nine-inch lithe, sari clad Mehr Jesia whose perfectly shaped head finally bore the Miss India crown on June 7, this year. As she catwalked sinuously up and down the ramp, Mehr swept the applauding audience off its feet.

"I was thrilled about winning," says the 17-year-old Parsi beauty queen when we meet her at her quiet suburban home in Dadar on August 4. The prizes that went with the crown — color TV, cooking range, grill and other miscellaneous items, lie around unopened. It was Mehr's father Homi, an Air-India inflight supervisor, mother Vera and married sister Avan who suggested that she take part. "My family was most encouraging," she adds. On the insistence of commercial photographer, Farokh Jassawalla of Carnival who was in charge of the photography at the Miss India contest, Mehr finally decided to take the plunge.

Wearing a simple blue dress, her glowing face completely devoid of makeup, Mehr had just returned from Panama where the Miss Universe pageant had been held. She is riveting as she flows in and out of the room, her lustrous hair cascading to a little below her shoulders, forming a black aureole round her face. Mehr answers questions with remarkable savoir faire occasionally betraying her extreme youth by giggling spontaneously. Traipsing into the jetsetting league after a traditional Parsi upbringing can be quite a heady climb. But the experience has not transformed her into a temperamental prima donna. In fact she seems totally unaffected by the

past few highly charged months.

Two weeks after the Miss India contest, Mehr had to fly to Panama which left her little time for preparations. She luckily found a mentor in designer Xerxes Bhathena who designed her full wardrobe to match the razzmatazz world that she would be vaulting into in Panama. "I don't know what I would have done without his help," she admits.

The one-and-a-half month Panama experience she describes as "beautiful. I was lucky to have the opportunity at such a young age," she notes. In Panama most of the time was spent practicing the three dances that the contestants had to put up on the final day. "Wherever we went, we were being photographed," says Mehr. The photographs would then appear in the media the next day and would be closely monitored by the judges who could evaluate Miss Universe on the basis of personality, deportment, etc. rather than just appearance. One of the cardinal rules was that none could assist the contestants with their makeup or hair, barring the time they had to go on stage, says Mehr, whose gloss has acquired an added sheen as a result of the experience.

One of the youngest girls amongst the bevy of beauties, most of whom would have given Venus de Milo an inferiority complex, Mehr describes the camaraderie that developed amongst the 77 participants... "so much so that we wanted the other girl to win." The age limit being 17 to 25, there was general consternation when a tearful Miss Yugoslavia (a 16-and-a-half-year-old girl) was disqualified for being underage.

Despite the rarified atmosphere



Photos: (above) Homiyar Mistry
(top) courtesy Femina

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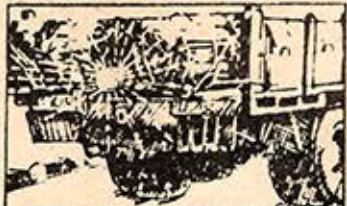
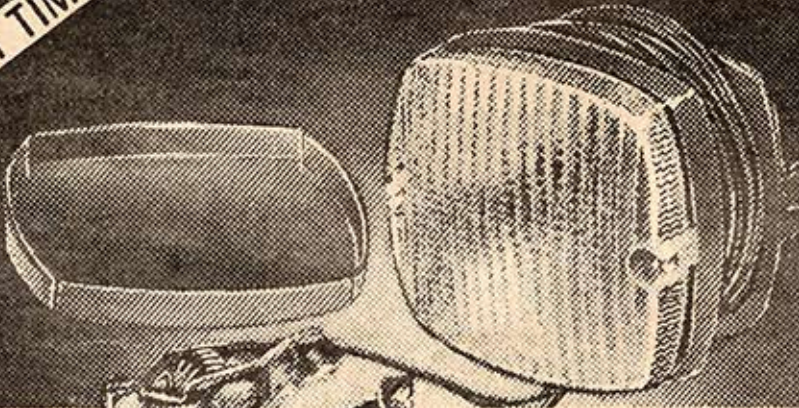
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where the girls were treated almost like movie stars, "There was no time to feel nervous," laughs Mehr whose favorite pastime is "collecting friends ... Everyone was so friendly and helpful," she adds.

Needless to say that the Miss India competition was nowhere in the megavoltage range of the Miss Universe spectacular. For the latter, the stakes are much higher. The winner Miss Venezuela not only walked away with a diamond choker but also a quarter million dollars, a car, a motorbike, a speedboat, clothes for one year, makeup for five years, amongst other things. To bag these, the girls had to exhibit their charms in an evening gown, their national costume and in a swimming suit. (The latter was given by the authorities who had identical ones in three different colors.) For the national costume, Mehr shied away from the traditional gagra choli, and wore the amrapalli on the advice of Bhathena. "It had never been worn before at the contest," says Mehr.

Similar to the one worn by Rekha in the film *Utsav*, the turquoise blue and gold outfit had a strapless bodice to be

worn over pants, with the lower half fanning out below the knees. In addition Mehr was weighed down with jewellery which snaked around her neck, arms, waist and glowed from her lovely head to her twinkling toes.

There is a story behind the costume, explains Mehr who says that the outfit dates back to Emperor Akbar's time. It was worn by a dancing girl whom Akbar fell in love with. Being the king, he could not marry her. Ever since, the dance that she danced has been called the Amrapalli, as also the style of her dress. Though the costume left the audience and the judges goggle-eyed, Miss Panama won the Best National Costume prize, followed by Miss Brazil and Miss Chile.

The youthful beauty queen refutes the old adage that beauty does not go with brains. Nurturing a long held ambition to be a Montessori school teacher, Mehr has quit Bombay's Sophia College in order to study privately, enabling her to accommodate her modelling contracts. "I do not enjoy modelling, but since I have the chance, I might as well," she notes. After a year, Mehr will go back to

Sophia where she hopes to major in psychology and thereafter train for two years to be a teacher.

Athletically inclined, Mehr has played snooker at the national level, reaching the semifinals this year. She also enjoys swimming, and playing badminton and throwball. However, snooker is her abiding love and she practices morning and evening at the Dadar Gymkhana.

As for her future plans, Mehr dismisses the idea of acting in Hindi films which she describes as "ekdum stupid." Getting rich quickly by acting in a TV serial is equally abhorrent to her. A religious girl, marriage is on the cards in the distant future, she admits shyly.

When asked to disclose the secret of her good looks, she looks nonplussed: "I guess I exercise a lot and I rarely wear any makeup." Aren't beauty contests, where women are evaluated in terms of their vital statistics, an anachronism in the twentieth century? "It's all a game for me," she laughs. "Even when I was in Panama, I didn't feel it was such a big thing I was taking part in."

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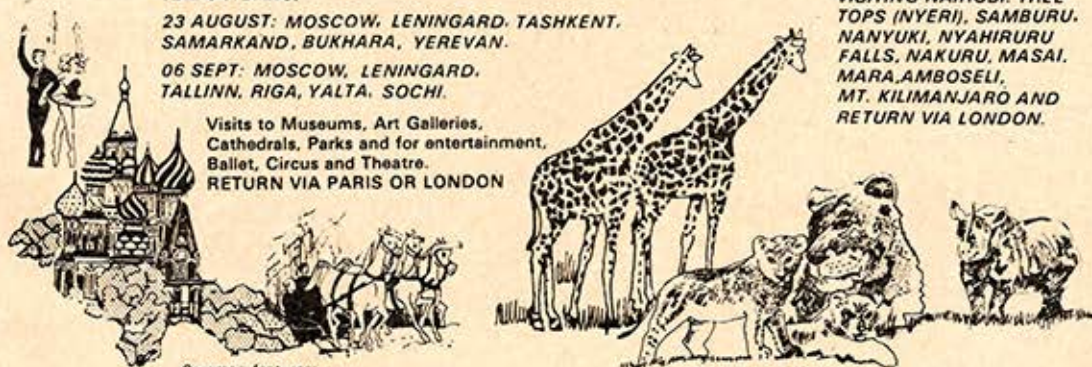
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India before (and) therefore not used to the rules and regulations here," the young producers had used the Indian national anthem with it, conceiving of the two as among the founding fathers of the Indian nation. In fact, not having the score, coproducer Meherji Madan "went through all the trouble to write out the notes for the players." The Censor Board took objection and though Bharucha says he could have fought for it – "the anthem can be used in documentaries, it seems" – in the interests of expediting the movie's release, he bowed to the Board: there was no time to go into case histories.

But Bharucha has more than a good word for the Censor Board. Considering the badgering it received from the community in the form of appeals, requests and demands, Bharucha feels the Board was "tremendous" in terms of the help and cooperation it offered to the film's producers and the community. There were two Parsis on the Board when it originally passed the film as predominantly educational – poet Adil Jussawalla and Ms Coomi Chinoy. In response to the COVP's appeals, a revisory committee was appointed to which, COVP member and Editor of *The Parsee Voice*, Adi Doctor was invited along with Ms Roshan Kalapesi. "They made about a dozen calls (to various other prominent Parsis) but people were too busy."

Wings' limited one-week engagement at Sterling theater drew substantial viewer response – especially from other communities – and, it is claimed, did "very well at the box office." Says Bharucha, the theater is contracted to Twentieth Century Fox and *Cocoon*, Fox's big money spinner, was scheduled to open there. Hence *Wings* was allowed just one week. Bharucha hoped to be able "to work it out soon and bring it back." Efforts were also afoot to release the movie in Delhi, Poona and Hyderabad, he said. Abroad, the screening of *Wings* was being handled by the On Wings of Fire Partnership which is basically trying to sell it to TV. Though Bharucha averred that there was a strong possibility of *Wings* being screened on Indian TV, he could offer no time schedule – the court case had deterred enthusiastic sales work in India. (*Wings* was televised as a late night show on August 25 as a New Year offering to the community from Doordarshan.)



Mehta: round whom the film revolves

The scenes he shot of J.R.D. Tata were among those that went through most easily, says Bharucha who found Tata involved with poetry, music and thoughts of death. The tons of spare footage on Tata is to be donated to them, says Bharucha, adding, "If Tatas can raise a couple of lakhs, I'd put it together for them."

Bharucha credits Singapore's Dadi Balsara with having bailed *Wings* out of financial doldrums when it had reached the editing and cutting stage: Balsara's "\$60,000 was the investment that spearheaded the others. I doubt if the others would have followed (without Balsara's lead)." As an apologia for the film space allotted to Balsara, Bharucha noted, "He did speak in a positive light about doing something for the priests. We could use him, being independent, not Khojeste Mistree because of his AET (Athravan Educational Trust) affiliation... He sponsored the premier and the dinner; he wrote to Delhi, to the ministers (to expedite the Film Censor Board's certificate); honestly, he did a lot... (in any case) it was something we had to do for that investment."

In the final analysis, the largest single investment (\$105,000) came from a German Jew – Leonard Garner – who contributed because he felt that Cyrus the Great had done so much for the Jews, it was time someone did something for the Zoroastrians.

Viewing the film detachedly, Bharucha acknowledged, "It lacked emotion... A compromise film is a compromise film – it's never going to satisfy."

Well aware of the dramatic inade-

quacy of "35 Parsis hanging around like thousands of Jews" as Cyrus, the Achaemenian King, freed the slaves after conquering Babylon, Bharucha attributes it to an acute constraint of resources. *Wings* cost its producers about \$750,000 to 800,000 including Rs 34,00,000 raised by the Oriental Heritage Trust (OHT) chaired by noted jurist Nanji Palkhivala. Says Bharucha of the OHT contribution, "It was a phenomenal amount raised in charity, but in terms of making a film, it's absolutely no money at all."

Originally conceived as a documentary, titled *A Quest for Zarathushtra*, to educate Zoroastrians in the basics of their religion and to propagate a knowledge of Zarathushtra's teachings in the western world, the project had begun with a 40-lakh-rupee budget to which Zoroastrian communities all over the world had responded with enthusiasm, especially since international celebrity Zubin Mehta agreed to star in the movie. A committee of scholars (Dr Kaikhosrov Irani, Dr Farhang Mehr, Dr Ali Jafarey, Dastur Nowrooz Minochehr-Homji and Dr Jehan Bagli) was set up to okay the script. Then began the series of controversies and financial shortfalls that dogged *Wings* and Bharucha to the end.

Looking at events in retrospect, Bharucha says he "got trapped with scholars for financial reasons," explaining that rich Iranis in the US had promised him substantial contribution if he accepted the scholars' suggestions and played up the glory of Iran. According to Bharucha, the use of fire, the death ceremony, the rituals and even the sudreh and kusti were repugnant to the Iranis who therefore reneged on the promised finance. Said Bharucha, "They never thought the day would come when we'd see it finished!"

The controversy regarding the script began with a reference to "Sir Jamsetji Tata to which the Bombay Parsi Panchayet (BPP) objected (Tata had surrendered the titular honor as a mark of solidarity with the national movement)," says Bharucha. A misreading of the script by a BPP trustee led to stoppage of shooting and according to Bharucha's reckoning, a loss of one lakh rupees to the producers, thus nullifying the BPP's one lakh donation from the cosmopolitan Daver Trust.

The scholars did not visualize

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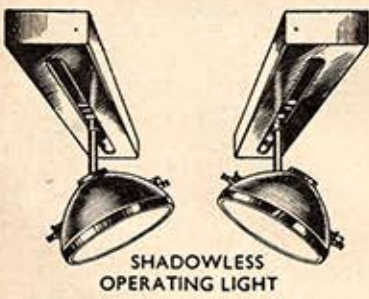
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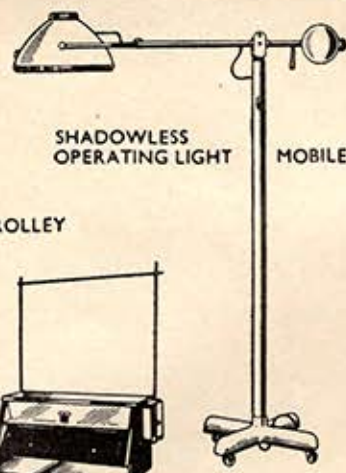
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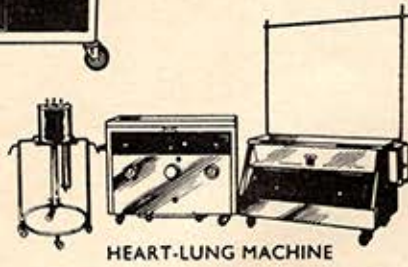


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Zarathushtra as a miracle man ("We don't want to show Zarathushtra as Svengali," said Bharucha quoting Dr Farhang Mehr). Besides, Zarathushtra's father's name, Pourushaspa, means keeper of horses and so he would know a lot about curing horses, it was believed. All this was brought into the second draft of the script, said Bharucha. Yet, "when they (the scholars) saw the second screening, they objected to it. (But) this was written for their satisfaction, not mine!"

The concept of evil, graphically conveyed in the film as the absence of light, for which Bharucha was faulted by the Vigilantes, was almost wholly worked out by Irani and Bagli from an argument by the noted Greek philosopher, Plato, says Bharucha. He noted that Dastur Minochehr-Homji had attended meetings of the scholars in the US and had held on to a copy of the script for a month before returning it without a single comment, and was therefore upset at Minochehr-Homji's and Farhang Mehr's subsequent criticism of the film because he felt he had gone out of his way to welcome them onto the panel of scholars and had spent \$ 50,000 on conveying, lodging and paying the scholars.

The original scriptwriter, William

Humble, eventually found no place in the credits. Says Bharucha, "Bill didn't walk out because of the money situation. He was paid at certain stages. Only the final amount remained to be paid." Humble, who was due to have finished the script in June '83, opted out when the uncertain financial situation prevented time-bound production schedules. It was "not until March '85 that we knew that the final money would come in," continued Bharucha. Adi Marzban was involved with Humble from the beginning of the venture. The only scene Marzban didn't have anything to do with was the one of Dr Wilson berating the Parsis. Much criticism has been levelled against it as being a totally farcical presentation. Counters Bharucha, "If (the critics) had been at the (Fifth) North American Zoroastrian Congress in Los Angeles in August '85 they would have seen (very similar scenes in real life)." Bharucha also alluded to a Vigilante supporter in the Bombay High Court who riled members of the opposition group while the case was in progress and threatened them with his umbrella when rebuffed. "This is no exaggeration - it's there, in the community!"

Bharucha's main grouse against the

Vigilantes was the "rubbish" uttered by their lawyer in court despite Adi Doctor having seen the film. What annoyed him most was their claim that telescopic lenses had been used to shoot scenes of the Towers of Silence. By way of defence against the accusation that *Wings* had used Doongerwadi as a locale despite notices there proscribing the use of cameras, Bharucha noted that the Indian Newsreel cameras had been allowed there in 1984 to cover the funeral of noted cine artiste, Sohrab Modi. "There is nothing in the doctrine that says no filming can be done," says Bharucha, referring to the BPP's handbook on Doongerwadi, Dom Moraes' *Bombay* published by Time and Life Publications and Sir Jivanji Modi's *Customs and Practices of the Parsis* for further support. "The doctrinal reason (why non-Parsis may not attend the funeral ceremony) is because the Parsis are armored against *nasu* (evil) by their sudreh, the non Parsis are not. It has nothing to do with secret ceremonies..."

But the so-called directorial flaws castigated in the Parsi Press (for example, the use of steel props in a delineation of the Bronze Age) left Bharucha cold: "They used stainless steel blades in *Ben Hur*. I never heard anyone criti-

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cizing *Ben Hur* for it!" As for historical flaws in the script, Bharucha claims, "If I brought my scholars in, I would make intellectual mincemeat out of them (the COVP members who sued Bharucha in court). I'd take them on anytime, if they allow us a chance to have a voice edgewise..." The Vigilantes relied heavily on Firdausi's famous epic, the *Shah Namah*, for historical authenticity while Bharucha brushed it aside as "only a piece of fiction!"

Bharucha says he was taken to task because Vishtaspa's soldiers were not wearing a sudreh. They weren't wearing a sudreh because they weren't Zoroastrians, he adds. According to Bharucha, the kusti antedates Zarathushtra, but the sudreh evolved somewhat later – and in any case, was "not the sudreh that we know... a lot of rituals came in the Sassanian period... Who knows what Zarathushtra looked like? He may have been a short, stocky man. Paintings of Zarathushtra in the agiaries is of Sassanian origin, not Achaemenian," he adds. Bharucha says, someone even asked him "Why didn't you make Zarathushtra look like Christ?"

"The nearest costume we could get to was Babylonian. So we had to make an educated guess. The chances were that the Persians wore similar styles because of the caravan trade," said Bharucha referring to some of the problems the producers faced. "Persepolis was recreated to scale. We were very accurate in what we did," maintains Bharucha, who was both "amused and offended" when a critic likened the set to the old Blue Nile restaurant that flourished at New Marine Lines, Bombay, some 15 to 20 years ago!

Foreseeing "a very sad future for the community," Bharucha says he can "see no leadership emerging, no young people coming up as entrepreneurs or captains of industry. The (mobeds) are dwindling away (while) constant quarreling goes on and on... it's very discouraging. Zoroastrianism is a wonderful religion, one of the great pieces of thinking of all time, a philosophy that should be accepted by everyone..."

While the screening of *Wings* had been hanging fire upon the verdict of the Bombay High Court, an irate Bharucha had mentioned his desire to

sue the Vigilantes for causing him mental anguish and wasting his time. Now that it was all over, Bharucha shrugged, "I would have (moved the court) had this been America. As it is, I've wasted too much time here already. I want to go home" – home to New York.

continued from page 55

once every wedding season, advise experts.

Though the Parsi community has not recaptured its trade links with China (which resulted in *garas* being embroidered for the women of the community), the craft is being revived in China, states Kalapesi. In some remote corner of that country, the artisans must have kept their skills alive, she adds, and the Chinese government now wishes to revive them on a commercial basis. In these days of mass production, the assertion of one's individuality and creativity can only result in a work of art "that never ages," in the words of Narielwala. "Like the *gara*, for example, even if you take it out after 10 years it will still be beautiful."

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A match for cricket

Arjuna awardee, cricketer Diana Edulji talks about women's cricket in India.

Niloofer J. Madon

"It was long overdue." Woman cricketer Diana Fram Edulji was referring to the Arjuna Award for 1983 which was presented to her in February 1986 by the President of India, Giani Zail Singh. (The Arjuna Award is presented to sports people who have given good performances during the preceding three years at national and international events, with excellence during the year for which the award is given. Qualities of leadership and discipline are essential requisites for the Arjuna awardee.) Edulji elaborated, "For four years, the Bombay Women's Cricket Association has been recommending my case for the Arjuna... I don't know whether it reached the ministry or not... So the instant joy wasn't there. I did feel great but not as great as I would have at the first attempt itself."

Dressed in a blue and white checked skirt and a white blouse with matching piping, a gold ashoka farohar hanging from her neck, ace bowler and captain of the Indian women's team, Edulji sat, legs stretched out, clutching a pillow, relaxed on the sofa at her residence at Cuffe Parade. The five-foot-five-inch left arm spin bowler has a strong face and penetrating eyes. Edulji constantly held a handkerchief in front of her mouth to hide her four missing front teeth. Playing for the first time with a season ball, Diana was hit by a fast delivery from a six-foot bowler resulting in a fractured jaw, wired for six weeks. Referring to the boy who was responsible, Diana says with a smile that now every time they meet, the "first thing he ever asks is, 'How are your teeth?' I now play with my dentures on" but at home she prefers to be without them.

Home abounds in the happy memories of an achiever. The hall - a

lived-in room - overflows with cricket trophies, photographs and mementoes, belying the small plaque hanging on the front door which states: "God bless this lousy apartment."

Representing India since 1975, Edulji was appointed captain for the Second World Cup, played in India in 1978. She has, along with the team, played in Australia, New Zealand, England, West Indies, USA and Holland, and has been adjudged the player of the series against Australia (1975), New Zealand (1976) and England (1981). Moreover, as she notes proudly, "I am the only player (representing India since 1978) who has not been dropped (from the national team) yet."

The first Indian woman test cricketer to take a catch and capture a wicket, and who has taken the highest number of wickets in test cricket (104 in 28 tests), Edulji made her debut in cricket when she started playing with a broken stick and ball along with the servants' children, and later with the older boys at Badwar Park (the staff quarters for senior railway officials at Cuffe Parade). "She was very naughty as a child - all the time outside (the house) and never used to pay attention to her studies. There were always complaints from school," notes Diana's mother, Dhun Edulji, who is visibly proud and happy for the youngest of her three daughters.

For Diana, the opportunity to translate her interest into constructive training came in 1979, when Ms Aloo Bamjee started conducting nets for girls at the Cricket Club of India, calling it the Albees Cricket Club. Both Diana and her sister Behroze (at one time also part of the Indian women's cricket team, but now residing in Karachi where she works as an execu-

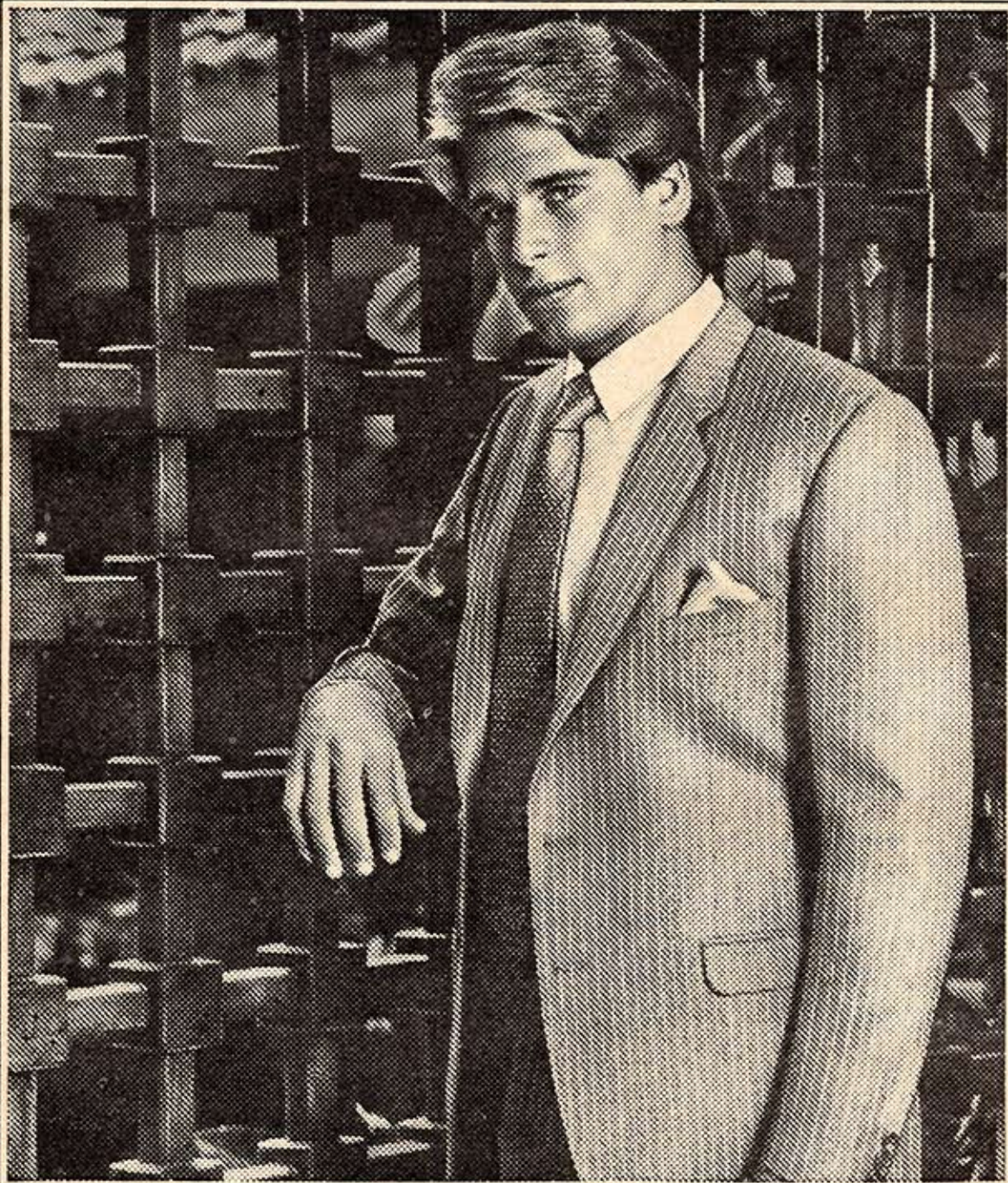
tive assistant at the Sheraton Hotel since 1981) joined the Club, which gave them the first real taste of training.

The Albees Club had members enough to form three teams which could play among themselves. Yet it was only in 1973, when the Women's Cricket Association was formed, that the first national women's cricket tournament was played with four teams competing. Today, 22 teams play in the national tournament, representing practically all the states, notes Edulji. The other tournament which is inter-zonal is played for the Rani Jhansi Trophy.

In 1976, Edulji gave up her studies after only a year in college to seriously take up a career in cricket. The decision received an added thrust when, in the same year, she got a job in the Western Railways as a junior clerk, and where she is presently as officer superintendent in the claims department.



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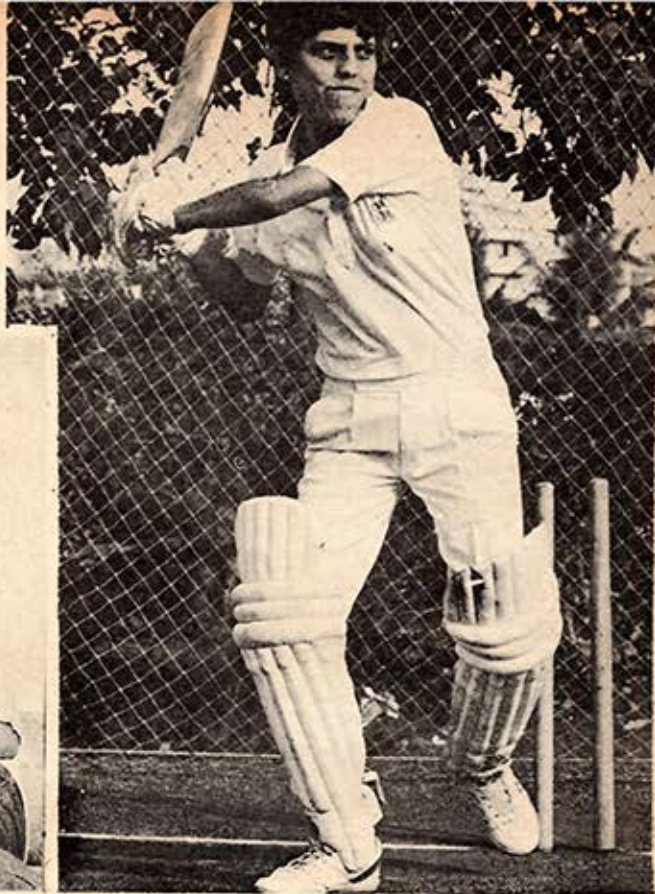
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Edulji made her debut in cricket when she started playing with a broken stick and ball along with the servants' children.



Edulji talks enthusiastically of her employers at the railways, especially the new railway minister, Madhavrao Scindia, who has, according to Diana, done a lot for sports people, in the short time he has been in office: They are offered jobs in the railways and are given free travel, pocket allowances and most important, free kits; leave for practice and for tournaments is no problem either. Edulji has been able to convince Scindia and has at last formed the Western Railway women's cricket team, which recently won the first Inter-Railway Women's Cricket Championship. "(That's) the only way we can say thank you (to Scindia)... by winning," she adds.

Edulji trains at the annual camps held at Delhi, under the supervision of coaches trained at the National Institute of Sports. The camp consists of three sessions a day: physical training from 6 to 8 am; batting and bowling at the nets from 9 to 11.30 am; and fielding practice from 4 to 6 pm, says Diana who adds, "practice sessions at the camps are real hard. They take everything you've got." Some girls come back from the camps and resume training but Edulji only trains a week or two before a tournament, and tries to avoid playing matches then, to eliminate the risk of injury.

Practice also involves bowling to the

under-15 or under-17 boys' team ("boys tend to have more physical strength... you have to play them with extra care," notes Diana) as also at the practice sessions of the men's Indian cricket team. "I practice a lot with them and get invited to bowl at their nets... at that level it is a very high honor." Learning at these sessions, and "going back then to women's cricket, I have the upper hand always," noted Edulji who thinks that now it is mainly her "natural talent and experience" which is helping her.

Identifying lack of publicity and of match practice as the two main problems facing women's cricket, Edulji notes pointedly that whereas a men's cricket match between Australia and New Zealand is reported in India, women's teams, playing each other in India itself, receive no publicity. Magazine write-ups and TV exposure would go a long way in making women's cricket more popular, she says.

Moreover, women cricketers need to play more tournaments annually to develop what is called the match temperament. Notes Edulji, "If in every season say we have three matches and three one-day games... it would raise the standard of cricket a lot, (because) you cannot, for one moment, relax as you are always facing the game," thus improving the team's fielding and

match temperament. Once that is achieved, Edulji is confident that "we are capable of beating any side in the world."

However, tournaments are few because funds are limited. Moreover, the Women's Cricket Association of India and the various state associations lack effective coordination, says Edulji. Players cannot fund their own games as pay scales are meager. (Women get Rs 200 per day for a test match and Rs 100 for a one-day game). But, notes Diana, "This figure may look small and is small, but it is a beginning. As long as a beginning is made, the future generation will benefit. The alternative is to offer good prize money which encourages a player to put in better work."

With the desire to smoothen out the administration of women's cricket in India, Edulji wants to join the Women's Cricket Association of India and help in pushing the game forward.

"If women's cricket is to become popular, you have to start at the school level," says Edulji who has offered her services free of charge to train students of any school, if interested. But, she noted ruefully, not a single school has responded. As the joint secretary of the Bombay Women's Cricket Association, Edulji has plans to make women's cricket a regular feature at

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the Bombay High Schools Sports Association.

Edulji did not know of any Parsi women cricketers but talked about Calcutta's Shirin Contractor (now Kiash), the only Indian woman who represented India in three games - hockey, basket ball and cricket.

Diana's long career in cricket has not been without its moments, both encouraging and embarrassing. Recalling the first test match which she played against West Indies in Patna in 1976 and which India won, Edulji notes: "I hit the winning shot. A crowd of 30,000 was watching in the stadium and the drive from the stadium to the hotel, which usually takes 15 minutes, took us one-and-a-half hours. The crowd refused to let us go! This was right in the beginning of my career and I'll always remember it."

An embarrassing memory pertains to a party given by the High Commission in New Zealand. Edulji and her team mates went shopping, and forgot that the sun in New Zealand sets late. When they finally landed at the party, some guests were already leaving. The moment did not pass without comment, much to the team's embarrassment, but it was "quickly forgotten," notes Diana.

Throughout her career, Diana's family has stood by her, giving her encouragement and support. Dad, Fram Edulji, who retired as a members, secretary in the Railway Service Commission, is now into the office accommodation business along with his son-in-law, Jackie Vaswani (husband of eldest daughter Farida). Notes Diana's mother, Dhun, "It gives us great happiness to see her rising and having a name of her own," and adds, probably expressing the wishes of many in the country, "I would like her to go higher and higher and break more records - and we feel she will do it."

Diana says she's not interested in marriage... "Somehow I feel I am happier this way." Her mother says, she is "just interested in cricket and her work, especially after forming the railway team."

Even though she is now 30 (born: January 26, 1956) Diana will continue in cricket as long as she can. "I will never get fed up. I will keep on playing as long as I am selected (on the Indian team). If not, I will play in domestic tournaments..."

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CARRYING WEIGHT

Arjuna Award winner

Vispy Daroga talks of the ups and downs of the strenuous sport of weight lifting.

Niloofer J. Madon

"Before I got the Arjuna, I was fed up and wanted to give up training, but after some months I went back...Sports is a sort of addiction...Some people give up, but soon come back." Weight lifter Vispy Keki Daroga, who was recently presented the Arjuna Award for 1983-84 by the President of India Giani Zail Singh at New Delhi in February, talks of his renewed enthusiasm for the sport he loves.

"I was due this award in 1981...but

nothing clicked till now," says Daroga and adds that to receive the award, one must have been on the national scene for at least three years, and win an international medal for the country. In 1981, when he represented India at the Commonwealth Weight Lifting Championships at Auckland, New Zealand, he won a bronze medal, and became eligible for the honor.

Contrary to the layman's concept of an overly muscular weight lifter, Daroga

is in fact a total surprise. A tall five-foot-eleven-and-a-half, Daroga has clean good looks and carries himself with confidence. A small face, with small eyes and a thin moustache, is crowned with military short hair, the body well-built but not fat.

"I was damn happy when I became the national champion for the first time," says 27-year-old Daroga, six times national champion since 1978. (In 1982, when the IX Asian Games were held in New Delhi there were two national sports events.) He has also been seven times inter-railway champion, at which time he represented the Western Railway, where he works as head clerk.

He recalled however, that luck has not always been on his side. At the Brisbane Mini Commonwealth Games in 1981, Vispy, much to his consternation, failed to lift the last weight, which would have won him a bronze.

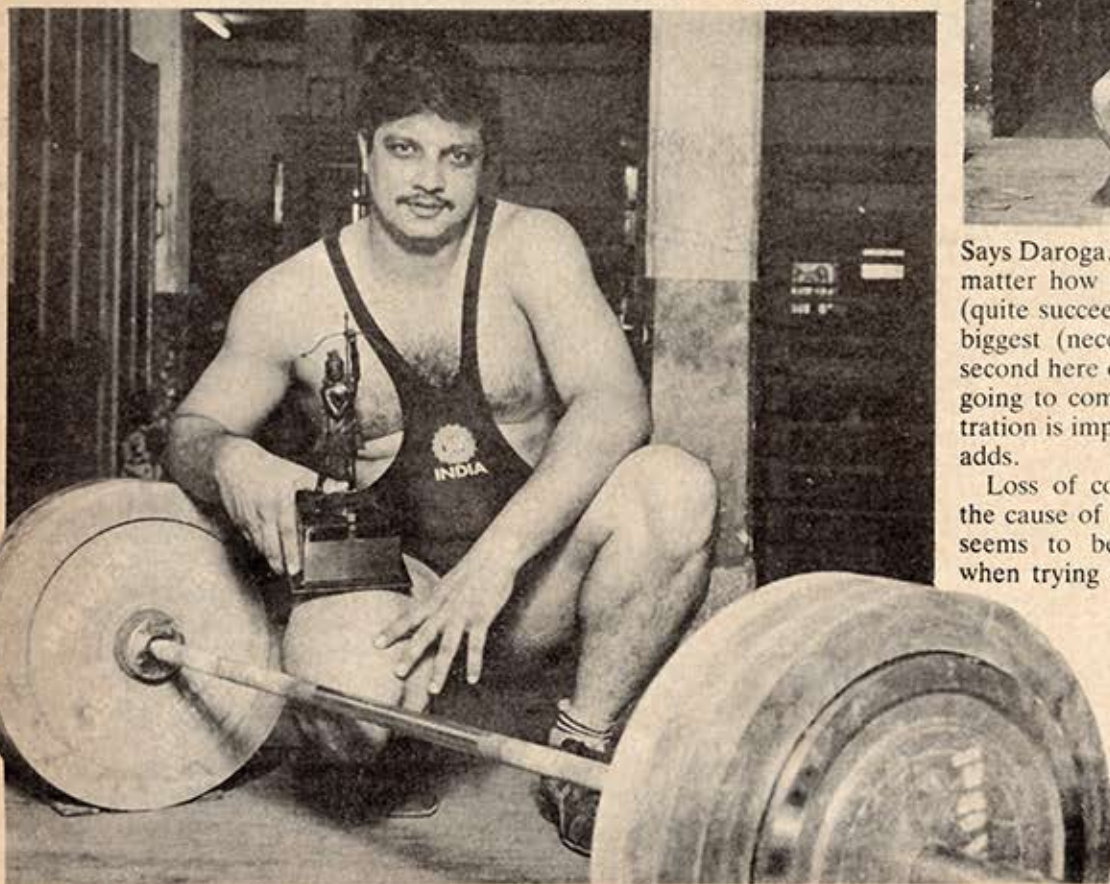


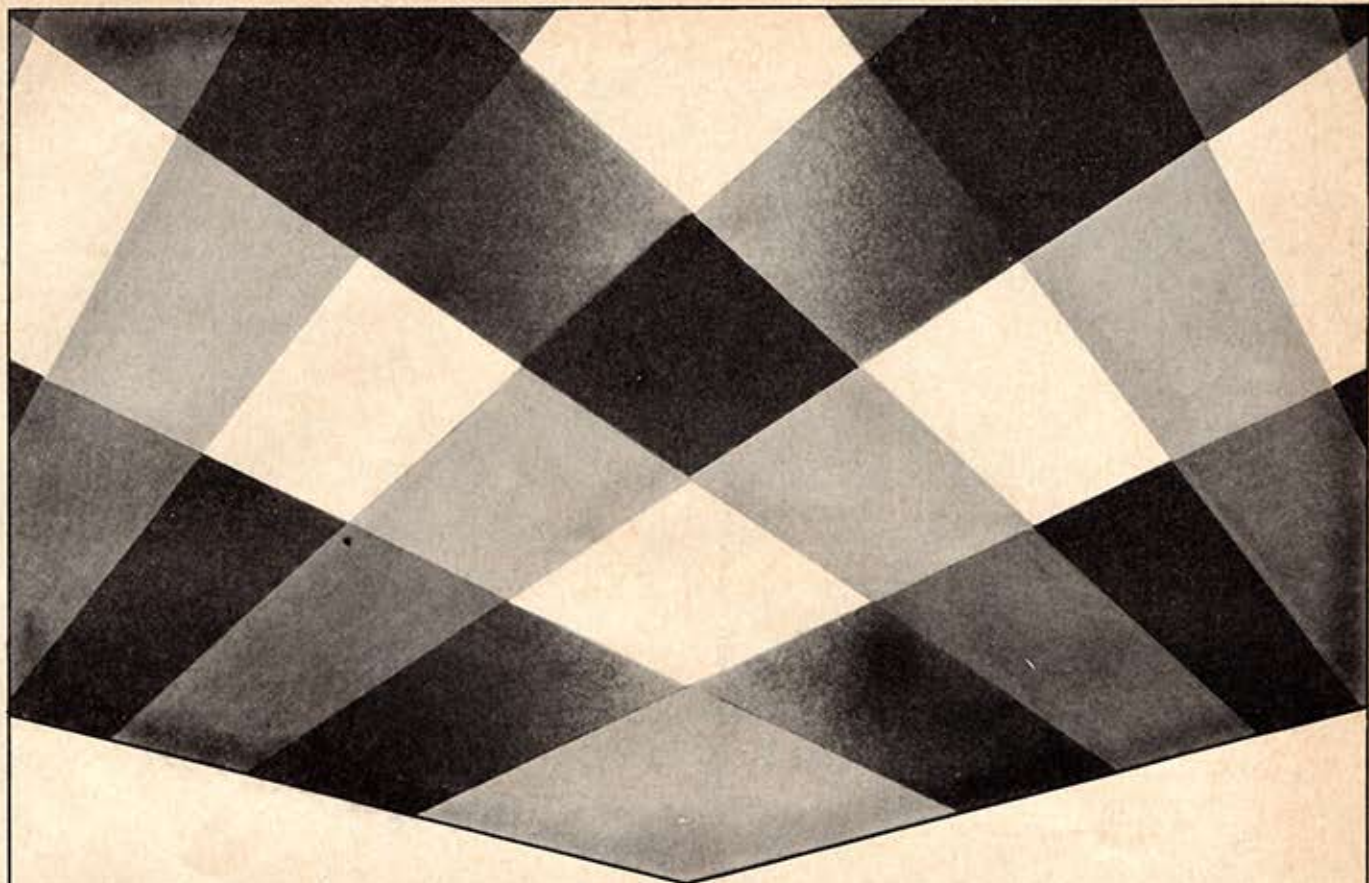
Says Daroga, "There is an off day...no matter how much you try, you can't (quite succeed)...Concentration is the biggest (necessity)... a fraction of a second here or there and the weight is going to come down. I think concentration is important in everything," he adds.

Loss of concentration can also be the cause of injury, and to Vispy that seems to be a familiar word. Once, when trying to improve his squat, he

Daroga (above) training at the gym and (left) with his award.

(Photos: Homyar Mistry)





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injured his knee, and his doctor advised him to take total rest. Though it still aches, says Daroga, "If you want to come up, you have to take it in your stride. I can't afford to take rest (from training)."

Daroga trains four times a week at the Bal Vyayam Mandir, the gymnasium at Nana Chowk, where during the off season, he concentrates on improving his "power," by exercising particular muscles. Training for competitions is given at the coaching camps at the National Institute of Sports, Patiala, where morning and evening sessions involve improving both, technique and power, and the lifts themselves.

Training must continue even after the weight lifter has given up competing, for lack of exercise can make the body flabby. One must give up training very slowly or else keep on exercising throughout one's life, advises Daroga, because, "It's a good thing. It will keep your health."

More interested in talking about the game rather than himself, Daroga explains enthusiastically its various technical aspects, patiently answering every question. Weight lifters participate

in events according to their body weight, he notes. Whereas Daroga himself participates in the 90 to 100 kg category, his brother Neville, (who is also the current national weight lifting champion) opts for the 110+ category: "If you put on weight, you can lift more. More muscle means more weights," says Daroga and adds with a laugh, "I don't intend to increase (my weight) now, it's too much!"

Though the weight lifting team as a whole should not exceed 10 participants plus three reserves, contestants of each weight category participate independently of each other and medals too are won in each.

There are two types of Olympic lifts, says Daroga, the snatch, which involves lifting the weight straight off the ground and above the head and the clean and jerk, which involves lifting the weight from the ground onto the collar and then above the head. Snatch, which is the more difficult of the two, is always done first because "then you are fresh," notes Daroga.

During the games, three judges flash their opinions on each individual lift via three lights (one for each judge), white light denoting a good lift

and red, the opposite. Depending on the average opinion of the three, the lift is either accepted or rejected, notes Daroga.

Two months before every camp, Daroga's daily diet would consist of six eggs, 300 gms of meat and a liter of milk. "Diet helps increase the performance. When you train you waste energy (so you) should have a sufficient diet," says Vispy. Otherwise his normal diet reads: three to four eggs, a glass of milk, and the usual food prepared at home.

Not being "a spectator sport," weight lifting is not popular in India, he says. "It can get boring since the stage remains empty for a long time between competitors." Moreover, he explains, "Due to lack of publicity, people are quite ignorant about it." He adds, however, that in the south, people have a greater knowledge of weight lifting. In fact, at the 1982 National Games at Ernakulam (Cochin) the weight lifting events drew a crowd of 10,000 people, notes Daroga.

According to him, only the Indian Railways and the Defence Services encourage weight lifters. Recalling an in-

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terview he gave for a job at a leading national company. Daroga says the interviewer advised him: "Why don't you start playing cricket? You have a good height; you can become a fast bowler." That too when I was the national (weight lifting) champion!" adds Daroga indignantly.

In the Railways, sportsmen have such perks as a half day off for training, 20 to 30 days leave for competitions, first class rail passes for travelling to and from the competition site, and out of turn promotion facilities. In fact, notes Daroga happily, "After winning the Arjuna they have sent my case to the Railway board for promotion as chief clerk."

Vispy's considerable achievements should not come as much of a surprise. His elder brother, Rusi Daroga, who was also a weight lifter has been the Maharashtra State Champion 13 times and was runner-up at the national level. (Rusi, who is 10 years older than Vispy, has now given up weight lifting and works at the Central Bank of India.) Vispy's younger brother Neville is also the current national weight lifting champion and represents India at

the World Railways Meet. Neville works as a guard in the Central Railway.

No doubt the brothers were encouraged to take up sport by their father Keki, who was sports instructor at the Marwadi Vidyalaya school and their mother Dolly, of whom Vispy notes: "My mummy was a bit scared (due to the constant injuries) but she also encouraged us." Vispy's elder sister Ketayun (who is second in line and now settled in Calcutta) was never much interested in weight lifting but "never objected," he adds.

Accompanying his elder brother Rusi to the gymnasium at Nana Chowk, Vispy started by lifting small weights himself. Soon his mentor, L. B. Salyan, entered him for the Novices Championships and at the age of 16, Vispy won his first weight lifting competition, at the state level. Notes Daroga of that win, "Once you win a competition, your interest (in the event) will definitely increase. Slowly, slowly, I went on improving, improving..." until he became the national junior champion in 1976 and the national senior champion in 1978.

Talking about Parsis in weight lifting, Daroga notes proudly, that in 1981 during the Commonwealth Games "We were five Parsis (Vispy, brother Neville, Jazeel Mehta, Gev Katrak and Dara Akolawalla) and all five of us got positions." In the 1981 National Games, Vispy, Neville and Jazeel Mehta became national champions in their respective categories. According to Daroga, "Parsis can become very good weight lifters because...we are a strong race and its in our blood."

Daroga notes that once he gives up competitive weight lifting he could take up coaching or official duties in the administration of the sport. But because he feels there is a lot of politics in administration he would by far prefer coaching. Another option is to venture into gent's tailoring. "It all depends on how it clicks," he adds, not sure of what he will do in future.

However, in no hurry to quit the game as yet, Daroga says, "I was interested in winning and getting fame. It is incredible, lifting weights above your head," and adds with satisfaction, "Not everyone can do that!"

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Peddalling up, and away

Niloofer J. Madon

"You have to attend a certain amount of (training) camps. I'm not prepared to go outside for one month, two months, any more." Twice national champion, cyclist Armin Palkhivala (better known by her maiden name Armin Arethna) who was recently presented the Arjuna Award for the year 1982-83 spoke of her reasons for giving up competitive cycling after her marriage in 1984 to Rohinton Palkhivala, a free-lance commercial photographer. "I do cycle off and on, but not competitive. I do these little things" as participate in the Maharashtra Cycling Association organized circuit races every Sunday in Bombay.

Tall and slim with shoulder length hair, Armin seemed to be ever smiling.

Dressed in jeans and a grey and white T-shirt, and a *kara* round her hand, she talked enthusiastically of her six years (1977 to 1983) as a cyclist, lapsing from English into Gujarati whenever her explanation deemed it fit, making extensive use of her hands to emphasize a point.

Armin was amongst the first batch of women cyclists to participate in the Asian Cycling Championships. "Nobody had any idea of what standard to expect. We all went with the idea of doing our best. Just the thrill of participating in the event was enough...it was an experience, just watching the other cyclists." After that Palkhivala participated in the 1983 Asian Cycling Championships where she won a bronze and at the World Cycling

Championships at UK. For her considerable achievements she was presented the Shri Chhatrapati Shivaji Award for 1981 - 82 by the then Governor of Maharashtra, I.H. Latif.

Training was hard for Armin, but she was much encouraged by her father, Rohinton Arethna, an inflight supervisor with Air-India. He would accompany Armin on her early morning training sessions, keeping pace with her on a scooter. "My dad was a great help," notes Armin gratefully.

After training, she would rush off to school and later to college. College was more difficult for the cyclist as having taken up science, she had to attend practicals at seven every morning. Recalling those days, Armin notes, "I could scarcely stand. It was



Recalling her fruitful career as cyclist, Arjuna Award winner Armin Palkhivala outlines her future plans.



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horrible. I wanted to become a vet, but it became so difficult, I gave up science."

Actually her HSC examinations (twelfth standard) kept being postponed due to the compulsory cycling training camps and she even failed once, with the result that "by the time I finished (the HSC) it was 1984." Moreover, she confessed, her HSC marks were not good enough for admission into a veterinary college, anyway; but she adds gratefully, "I was in Mithibai (College) and they were extremely cooperative." Having given up science, Armin is currently doing her Third Year BA at St Xavier's College, Bombay, majoring in psychology. "It's very interesting," she adds.

Palkhivala is also interested in physiological psychology, the biological aspect of the social science. "I'd like to do some research and study further if I get a subject I like. I'm not interested otherwise," she adds.

Armin also assists her free-lance photographer husband with his various assignments and wishes to continue to do so in future. (Armin lives with her in-laws at Goregaon where they have converted a bathroom to form a photography dark room for convenience.) Having been taught photography by her husband, Armin says that now she is "very into this photography thing!"

Like all other sports persons, Armin received her training at the National Institute of Sports, Patiala, which is equipped with two cycling tracks and where, according to Armin, you only "eat, sleep and cycle... Now everything has become more organized. There are even coaches from abroad, and the Indian coaches are given a nine-month training course to become certified coaches."

"I have beautiful memories of Patiala," notes Armin nostalgically, and talks at length of the lush spacious grounds and the easy camaraderie that exists between players of all disciplines.

Not all her cycling experiences have been as good. "I remember once I was disqualified for something I didn't do. On the inside of the track there is a line below which you can't go. I had come first but was disqualified, because they (the officials) thought I had. It was horrible," says Armin, shaking her head at the memory.

"Coming first is great fun, so I decided to go further. I went for the state championships."

It was her paternal uncle Yezdi, who introduced Armin to cycling. A cyclist himself, the Arethna household would go to cheer him every Sunday saying, "Yezdi *kaka ne jova javanu che* (We have to see Yezdi uncle)...As a spectator sport, cycling is great fun," notes Armin. Soon her uncle entered her for the Malabar Hill Jaycees Race in 1977 and so Armin had perforce to practice cycling, helped of course by her Yezdi *kaka*. At the event, says Armin, "I came first. It was a shock to me and to everyone else!" and adds with a grin, "Coming first is great fun, so I decided I'd like to go further. So I went for the state championships."

The year after that, Armin entered the national championships where she won a gold and after that there was no turning back.

Armin's achievements in the sport have triggered a sibling interest in cycling. Her younger sister Jasmin, recently won four gold medals at the National Games, earning the award for Best Sportswoman. "She's doing really well," notes Armin of her sister. "She's broken both my records and she can do a whole lot more. She has got a lot of potential." However, now when the sisters go out cycling together, Armin says, "I cannot keep up with her any more (due to) all the practice she gets. She's always at the camps!...We constantly talk of what she does in camps; what I used to do. Constantly talking shop!" notes Armin.

Shazneen, their youngest sister who is only eight, is very much interested in the sport too, much to her mother Hutoxi's chagrin who would have liked her youngest daughter to take up any other sport except cycling. But, notes Armin, "If you ask Shazneen '*soon karse* (what will you do)?, she'll say, '*cycling vari* (cycling ofcourse)!' " much to the delight of her two elder sisters.

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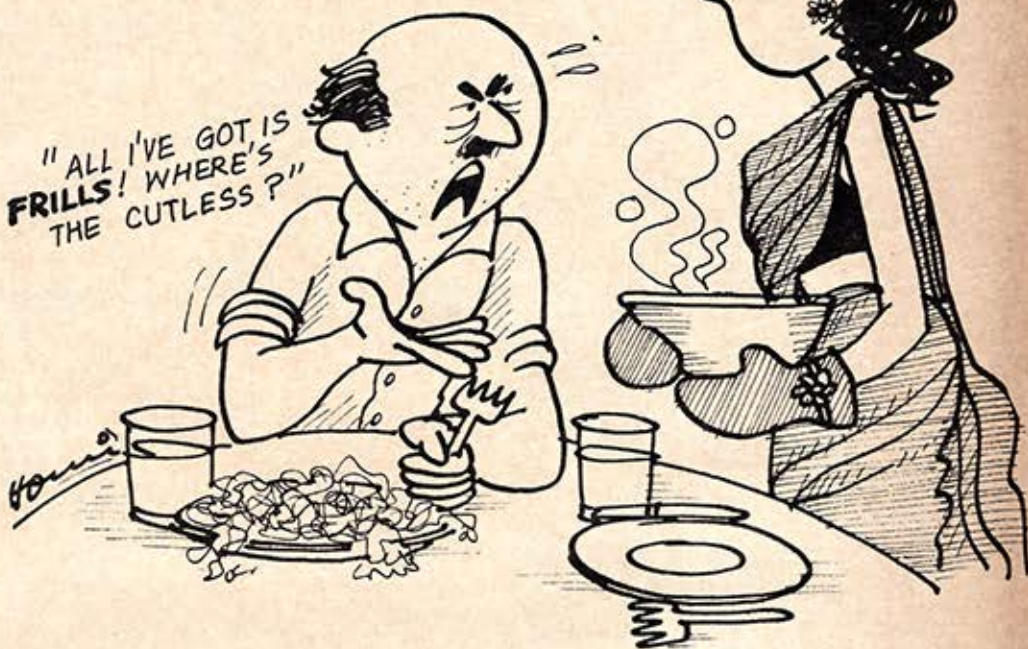
On the occasion of the Parsi New Year, Bhicoo Manekshaw, noted culinary expert, gives some traditional Parsi recipes and some unusual ones to inspire the enthusiastic Parsi chef.

TOMATO NEE GRAVY MA CUTLETS

Cutlets
Mince (600 g)
Onion chopped finely (1 large)
Garlic chopped finely (6 large cloves)
Ginger chopped finely (2-inch piece)
Green chillies chopped finely (2)
Coriander leaves chopped (2 tbsp)
Turmeric powder (1 tsp)
Chilli powder (1 tsp)
Cumin powder (½ tsp)
Salt to taste
Bread (2 slices, crust removed and squeezed out in water)
Potato boiled and mashed (1)
Eggs beaten (2)
Oil for deep frying
Bread crumbs as required
Eggs for 'frills' (6 to 8)
Mix all ingredients except oil and bread crumbs. Shape into 10 to 12 small balls.

Sprinkle bread crumbs on a board. Beat two eggs so that the yolks and whites are mixed well. Heat oil in a small *karai*. Shape the balls into thin but firm cutlets on the bread crumbs. Dip into eggs and press into bread crumbs again. Then dip again into eggs

"ALL I'VE GOT IS FRILLS! WHERE'S THE CUTLESS?"



Some old time favorites and unusual recipes

Bhicoo J. Manekshaw



"NEXT TIME, LET'S HAVE 'GLUCOSE BISCUIT PER BHARUCHI AKURI',..."

and deep fry. Pour a little of the eggs onto the cutlet and sprinkle hot oil onto the cutlet with a spoon. This will form 'frills.' Flip over the cutlet and pour a little egg on top, and again sprinkle hot oil on top and fry till a golden brown. (The heat should be adjusted to keep the cutlets golden brown yet cooked through.) Repeat until all cutlets are cooked.

Note: The secret of making 'frills' according to my mother-in-law's instructions is to use freshly beaten eggs (so you do not break the eggs all together), and to use fresh oil. It is therefore suggested that you use a small *karai*, make two cutlets at a time and change the oil after making about four cutlets. One can strain the oil and reuse it in making curries, etc.

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Rendezvous of the Elite

Tomato gravy
 Tomatoes (2 kg)
 Garlic (5 cloves)
 Ginger (1½-inch piece)
 Chilli powder (1 tsp)
 Green chillies (2)
 Onions chopped (2)
 Oil (75 g)
 Sugar to taste
 Lime juice
 Salt to taste
 Green peas boiled (¼ kg)
 Potato wafers as garnish (200 g)
 Chop tomatoes. Grind garlic and ginger with green chillies. Heat oil and saute onions till light brown. Add ground masala with chilli powder. Saute for about two minutes, then add tomatoes and reduce heat till the gravy is thick. Cool and liquidize. Sieve. Add sugar, salt and lime juice to taste. Add green peas. Make the gravy well in advance and gently heat it while the last of the cutlets are being fried.

Put the cutlets on a platter. Spoon over the gravy and garnish with potato wafers round the edge of platter.

KHARI 'BISCOT' PER ENDA

It sounds quite mad, does it not? My

father threw up his hands in exasperation when my poor Keki *fooa* said that it was one of the best ways of eating eggs! And it is certain that if a French chef were to create a dish like this, the world would have gone gaga over it! Try it at your next party.

Eggs (12)
 Khari biscuits fresh and crisp (½ kg)
 Oil (3 tbsp)
 Onions sliced and lightly browned (2 large)
 Coriander leaves chopped (2 tbsp)
 Green chillies seeded and chopped (4)
 Salt to taste
 Chilli powder as needed

Use one large or two medium sized frying pans, preferably Teflon coated (non stick). Slightly break up the biscuits (do not completely crush them). Mix with browned onions, coriander leaves and green chillies. Heat oil and spread biscuit mixture on top. Make 12 depressions and break an egg in each. Lower heat, sprinkle salt and chilli powder on eggs. Cover with a lid and cook until the eggs have just set. Place carefully on a platter. Makes eight servings.

TAJA KHARA BOOMLAS

You must have eaten *taja tarela boomlas*, but have you ever tried making them *khara* served with *vagharela chaval*?

Boomlas large and fresh (1 dozen, cleaned and cut into two)
 Onions finely sliced (2 large)
 Tomatoes chopped (2)
 Til oil (2 tbsp)
 Salt to taste
 Coriander leaves chopped (2 tbsp)
 Potato sali, fine (as garnish)
 For ground masala:
 Cloves (2)
 Cinnamon (¼-inch piece)
 Ginger (1½-inch piece)
 Garlic (6 cloves)
 Coriander seeds (1 dsp)
 Cumin seeds (1 tsp)
 Green chillies (3)
 Black peppercorns (4)
 Turmeric powder (1 tsp)
 Heat oil well. Lower heat, add onions and lightly brown. Add ¼ cup water and cook till onions are mushy. Add ground masala and saute for two to three minutes. Add tomatoes and the boomlas with ½ cup water. Cook gently till the boomlas are done. Sprinkle



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with coriander leaves. Serve with vagharela chaval covered with fine potato sali.

Note: Just shake the pan by holding it in both your hands; do not use a spoon as the boomlas may break.

VALSARI KUDHI

Sour curds (500 g)
Fine rice flour (1 dsp)
Ghee (75 g)
Onion finely sliced (1)
Green chillies chopped (4 to 5)
Green garlic chopped (4 to 5)
Coriander leaves chopped (1 tbsp)
Fenugreek (methi) seeds (1 tsp)
For finely ground masala:
Cardamoms (4)
Cinnamon (1-inch piece)
Cloves (3)
Black peppercorns (4)
Ginger (2-inch piece)
Garlic (6 to 8 cloves)
Poppy seeds (1 dsp)
Coriander seeds (1 tbsp)
Cumin seeds (2 tsp)
Turmeric powder (1 tsp)
Red chillies (6)

Beat curds well with rice flour and a cup of water. Heat ghee in a pan. Brown onion and add fenugreek seeds. Saute till brown. Add ground masala and saute for 1 to 2 minutes only. Add curd mixture and slowly

bring to the boil. Simmer for about five minutes, stirring all the time. Add green garlic, coriander and green chillies and serve with white rice or val nee dar nee kheechri.

VAL NEE DAR NEE KHEECHRI

Sprouted val (200 g)
Old basmati rice (300 g)
Pure ghee (4 tbsp)
Cloves (8)
Cinnamon (1½-inch piece)
White cardamoms (4 to 6)
Red chillies (3 to 4)
Sultanas (60 g)
Spring onions sliced (4 to 6)
Turmeric powder (1½ tsp)
Onions sliced (2)
Buy readymade sprouted val, or sprout it yourself and remove skin. Wash rice and remove all starch and soak for 20 minutes. Remove rice from water and drain for 20 minutes.

Heat ghee in a pan, add garam masala, red chillies and onions. Brown. Add sultanas and cook till they swell. Add val and rice and fry for a minute. Add salt, turmeric powder and boiling water till it reaches 1½ inch above the rice. Bring to the boil and cook till the water is practically absorbed. Cover and finish on *dum* or put in a preheated oven (350°F) for 20 minutes. Serve with kudhi.

CUSTARD NA CUTLETS

Custard

Full cream milk (½ ltr)
Eggs (3)
Salt to taste
Butter (50 g)
Reduce milk by ⅓. Cool. Beat eggs well and mix with milk. Add salt to taste. Grease baking tin (8 inch × 8 inch × 1 inch) with butter and pour custard into it. Bake in a medium oven (300°F) till well set (about 20 to 25 minutes). Cool completely. With a sharp knife cut custard into 2-inch squares.

Coating

Bread crumbs as needed
Eggs (2)
Green chillies (2)
Garlic (2 cloves)
Ginger (½-inch piece)
Coriander leaves (2 tbsp)
Cumin seeds (¼ tsp)
Flour (1 tsp)
Salt

Grind chillies, ginger, garlic, coriander leaves and cumin seeds. Mix with flour and a pinch of salt, and coat the custard pieces with it. Beat eggs. Coat cutlets first with bread crumbs and then dip in eggs and deep fry in hot oil. Drain and serve.

Note: This dish needs careful handling but it is worth the effort.



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The term dharamshala has its roots in Sanskrit: *dharam*, meaning religion, and *sala*, meaning house, building, hall, large room or portico. Almost all Parsi dharamshalas were funded by private donations rather than by public subscription. After the first known Parsi dharamshala was built in Surat (M.K. Sethna Dharamshala) in 1761, the greatest period of construction activity was from 1840 onwards. The Petits erected four dharamshalas, the Jejeebhoy's, three, and the Wadias, two.

The amenities offered by the dharamshalas in the nineteenth century were very commendable as indicated by a news report in *The Times of India* quoting Mr Reid's speech at the inauguration of the Nowrosji Pestonji Vakil Dharamshala in Ahmedabad in December 1893: "Even to European

travellers, quarters half as good here, would be highly acceptable and though this institution was meant for the donor's own community only, which too was an excellent thing in itself, it might afford a good example for other communities to follow."

For the benefit of our readers who may be interested in availing of dharamshala facilities in different parts of India, we are reproducing below a list

of Parsi dharamshalas. This list has been compiled from information given in the July '85 newsletter of the Borivli and Suburban Zoroastrian Association and supplemented by Ms Tehmi Grant of Poona and Dr Sam Bhacca of Surat. As some of the dharamshalas may offer restricted services, it is advisable to write to the managers in advance to verify the status of the dharamshalas.



"Even to European travellers, quarters half as good, would be highly acceptable." Parsi dharamshalas at Allahabad (above), Bombay and Gujarat (right) and Madras (facing page).





AGRA

Parsi Dharamshala, Pratap Pura, Agra.

AHMEDABAD

Parsi Dharamshala, Behind Relief Cinema, Ahmedabad.

AKOLA

Parsi Agiary, Opp Municipal Veterinary Dispensary, Akola.

ALLAHABAD

Allahabad Dharamshala, 7, Canning Road (M.G. Road), Allahabad.

BADNERA

Parsi Agiary, Station Road, Badnera.

BANGALORE

Entee Dharamshala, Benson Cross Road, Bangalore.

BARODA

1. Parsee Seervai Dharamshala, Post Office Road, Fategunj, Baroda 390002.

2. Parsee Dharamshala, Shahi Gunj, Baroda.

BELGAUM

Parsi Dharamshala, Parsi Agiary Compound, Lodge Road, Belgaum 590001.

BHAVNAGAR

Parsi Agiary, Navapura, Bhavnagar.

BHUSAVAL

Parsi Dharamshala, Maharashtra Electricity Board Office Building, Bhusaval.

BILIMORA

Tata Bagh, Bazar Street, Bilimora 396321 Dist Bulsar.

BOMBAY

Panday Dharamshala, Opp Banaji Atash Bahram, Thakurdwar, Bombay 400002.

BULSAR

Bejon Bagh, Bunder Road, Bulsar.

CALCUTTA

Parsee Dharamshala, 9 Bow Street, Near Bow Bazar Street, Calcutta 700012.

DELHI

Mengusi Dharamshala, Near Delhi Gate, Bahadur Jaffar Marg, New Delhi 110002.

DEOLALI

1. Daruwalla Sanatorium, Bhagu Road, Deolali.

2. Bahadurji Sanatorium, Lam Road, Deolali.

3. Neturwala Rest House, Parsi Agiary Compound, Lam Road, Deolali.

DHULLA

Parsi Dharamshala, Jail Road, Dhulla.

IGATPURI

Parsee Agiary, Station Road, Igatpuri.

INDORE

Parsi Dharamshala, Behind Chhavni Police Station, Chhavni, Indore.

JABALPUR

Parsi Rest House, 321 Napier Town, Jabalpur.

JALNA

Parsi Agiary, Main Road, Jalna.

JAMNAGAR

Parsi Agiary, Town Hall, Jamnagar.

KANPUR

Parsi Dharamshala, 63/6 Mall Road, Kanpur.

KHANDALA

1. Jehangir Marazban Sanatorium, Khandala.

2. Sir Jamsetji Jejeebhoy Sanatorium, Khandala.

MADRAS

Parsi Anjuman Baug, 76 West Mada Church Street, Royapuram, Madras 600013.

NAGPUR

Parsi Dharamshala, Opp Gandhi Sagar, Nagpur.

NAVSARI

1. Sorab Baug, Mota Falia, Navsari.

2. Jamshed Baug, Malesar, Navsari.

PANCHGANI

Batha Sanatorium, C/o The Principal, Batha High School, Panchgani.

POONA

Pudamjee Dharamshala, Bhavani Peth, (Near Bus Stop), Poona 411002.

RAJKOT

Parsi Agiary, Opp Fulchap Press, Rajkot.

SECUNDERABAD

Chinoy Parsi Dharamshala, Opp Parsi Fire Temple, Secunderabad 500003.

SHOLAPUR

Parsi Dharamshala, Camp Sholapur.

SURAT

Pestonji Ookadji Dharamshala, Next to Parsi Library, Muglisara, Surat.

UDVADA

1. Wadia's Dharamshala, Opp Railway Station, Udvada 396170.

2. Sodawaterwalla Dharamshala, Station Road, Udvada 396180.

3. Sir J.J. Dharamshala, Udvada 396180.

URAN

Umrigar Fire Temple, Mora Bunder, Uran, Post Dist Kolaba 400702.

continued from page 36

Garlic minced (1/2 tsp)

Sweet basil (2 tsp) (Not available in India)

Oregano (*ajmo*) (1 tsp)

Black pepper (1/4 tsp)

Fresh Parmesan cheese (optional)

In a large saucepan, combine onion, zucchini, green or red pepper, eggplant, tomatoes, tomato paste, parsley, garlic, basil, oregano and pepper. If desired, sprinkle with fresh grated Parmesan cheese. Cook, stirring frequently, until vegetables are crisp-tender. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 10 minutes. Remove cover and simmer until liquid has evaporated and mixture has thickened. Makes six servings at 79 calories per serving.

Baked sole with shrimp and asparagus

Shrimp uncooked (4 large)

Sole fillets (3 ounces each) (4)

Asparagus tips, steamed to crisp tender (4)

Fresh dill sprigs (*suva ni bhaji*)

Fresh lemon juice

Paprika

Preheat oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit. Shell, clean and remove sand vein in shrimp; butterfly. Place a shrimp in center of each sole fillet. Put an asparagus tip on top of the shrimp; roll sole, jelly-roll style. Secure with a wooden pick, if needed.

Place fish rolls in baking dish; sprinkle with fresh dill and paprika. Bake at 350 degrees for 20 minutes or until fish flakes. Makes four servings at 170 calories a serving.

Rum custard

Eggs (2)

Egg whites (2)

Milk, evaporated and skimmed (1 cup)

Nonfat milk (1 cup)

Fructose (1 tbsp) (May be substituted by glucose)

Rum flavoring (1 1/4 tsp)

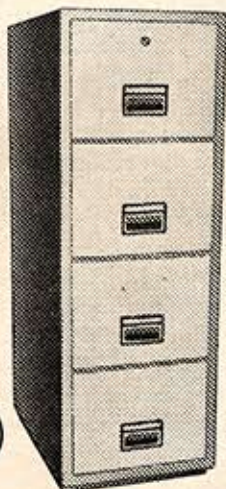
Preheat oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit. Beat eggs and egg whites slightly in a bowl; add evaporated skimmed milk, nonfat milk, fructose and rum flavoring; mix well. Pour into four custard cups. Place in a baking dish and fill with water halfway up custard cups. Bake at 350 degrees for 50 minutes, or until a knife inserted in center of custard, comes out clean. Makes four servings at 132 calories per serving.



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Argument against acceptance

Three high priests reply to Dr Kersey Antia's treatise on conversion, labelling it a heresy.

Homi J. Rogers

Antia's 'Acceptance': A Zoroastrian 'Ahrmogih' (Heresy) by Hormazdyar K. Mirza, Kaikhusroo M. JamaspAsa, Firoze M. Kotwal. Pp 18.

With the publication of *Ahrmogih* (*Heresy*), the conversion controversy has come around full circle. Antia's *Argument for Acceptance*, drafted as a reply to the stand held by the three high priests of Bombay that conversion is not allowed by the faith, has been counter-challenged by the same three Dasturs, in this tightly-worded, succinct, 18-page monograph denouncing Antia's argument as a heresy.

Ahrmogih attempts to "expose the specious reasoning of Antia" and "show the fallacy and illusiveness of the 'arguments' used" by him in his work, which was reviewed in these columns in August 1985. To the credit of Mirza-JamaspAsa-Kotwal, it must be mentioned at the very outset, that the three venerable Dasturs have put forth a logical, well-balanced argument (though not necessarily a counter-argument) that on many occasions steals the carpet away from under Antia's feet, without being dramatic or passionate. *Ahrmogih's* strength lies in the fact, that unlike the Zoroastrian Studies (ZS) reply (reviewed later), it does not strive at any point of time to be more loyal than the king, but constantly endeavors to discover – and help the reader to discover – the truth in a rational and logical manner.

Take, for example, the simple demolition of the case of King Vishtasp's 'conversion' – a favorite of the pro-conversion lobby – which, incidentally was skimmed over by the ZS reply. The Dasturs argue that Vishtasp was never 'converted' (in the strictest sense of the word), as before the advent of Zoroaster on the Iranian scene, the religion practised by the Iranians was a corrupted form of Mazda worship,

which the Prophet only purified. The fact that Zoroastrians of today have not ceased to be Mazda worshippers is amply borne out in the *Jasa-me-Avenghe Mazda* prayer, where we pledge ourselves to be Mazdayasnians, Mazdayasnian Zoroastrians ("mazdayasno ahmi, mazdayasno zarathush-trish").

In a similarly telling style, the authors correct the generally held impression that the non-conversion policy of Parsis in India is an influence of the Hindu milieu, and a part of the promise given, when seeking refuge on the hospitable shores of Gujarat. The Dasturs contend that if conversion was allowed by the faith, then the Persian kings would have proselytized their subjects, rather than free them from captivity, and allow them to rebuild their temple, as Cyrus did.

Read independently, *Ahrmogih* seems to take the wind off Antia's sails, as in the above cases. But, if read as a reply to Antia's argument – which it is meant to be – one finds that the triad have very cleverly skirted the issues raised by Antia, and have only reasserted their earlier stand, without replying to many of Antia's arguments, whose work they have passed off as a "superfluous study" to which "no scholarly credibility can be attached." If this is the case, the reader would have appreciated a more comprehensive reply to Antia's nine-page dissertation on "Does one have to be a Mazdayasni in order to become a Zoroastrian?" in which, for one, he had pre-empted the Dasturs' argument of the *Jasa-me-Avenghe* prayer. Similarly, in their zeal to vindicate the Achaemenians, the triad have left a lot of evidence, mustered up by Antia in his study, unanswered, basing their own reply on massive quotes from Mary Boyce alone.

Antia's study, however, seems to have indulged in too many liberties of misquoting texts, and, as proved by both the reply monographs, misrepresenting certain quotes in letter and spirit by presenting only a part of it, or interpolating it in a manner to suit his contention. It is to the credit of the Dasturs that while correcting the distortions and misrepresentations they have not indulged in similar piffle. But, an over-reliance on Boyce (approximately four of the 18 pages comprise of quotes from her) seems to wean off the strength from the reply, being like a substitute for their own personal knowledge of the religion, and studies of like-minded priests or conservatives down the times.

Ahrmogih is a reasonably well-constructed, well-thought out reply. It presents a very clear picture of the anti-conversion lobby's thinking. It points out some fallacies in Antia's interpretation in a lucid style, which, surprisingly, is lacking in the ZS booklet. Dispassionately, the triad have put forth their case once again. If read by itself, that is, without reading Antia's work, it would well establish the fact that Zoroastrianism does not preach or practice proselytization. Read as a reply, it could re-convert some reformists, and definitely motivate the more discerning readers to drink deep at the Pierian spring.

It is a welcome step that three head priests of Bombay have come out openly once again to explain to the community the religious stand on a controversial issue. But, the thought as manifested in the book's title itself, is forbidding. For, is it right, at a time when the community has been cruelly reduced in numbers, and faces a further onslaught with mixed marriages and a low birth rate, to equate advocacy of conversion with heresy?

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Graphic A-181

Flinders flounders?

The Facts, published by Zoroastrian Studies, sets out to refute some of the scholarly statements and translations quoted by Kersey Antia in *The Argument for Acceptance*.

The Facts as versus Dr Kersey Antia's "Argument for Acceptance." Zoroastrian Studies publication. August 1985. Pp. 41. Price Rs 30 for xerox copy (available from Zoroastrian Studies, K.R. Cama Institute Building, Bombay 400023).

*Little Polly Flinders
Sat among the cinders
Warming her pretty little toes;
Her mother came and caught her,
And whipped her little daughter,
For spoiling her nice new clothes.*

Three years ago when Dr Kersey Antia officiated at the navjote of one Joseph Peterson in New Rochelle, New York, there could have been little doubt in his mind that he was playing with fire. A community steeped in tradition, bound by its own ethical code and fixed virtues, proud of being born Zoroastrian and hence considering themselves superior to other races, could not be expected to take the initiation ceremony lying down, or even with just a few whimpers of protest. Especially not the Parsis (or should we say Zoroastrians?) settled in Bombay, the main stronghold of the community, and the citadel of its orthodox members.

The retribution, as expected, was quick. And — rather unexpectedly — united. Three high priests (Dasturs Hormazdyar Mirza, Kaikhusroo JamaspAsa and Firoze Kotwal) chastised Polly 'Antia' Flinders for spoiling the community's spotless *sudreh* by investing one not born in the faith with it. Salvos continued to be fired... at Antia, at American Parsis, at reformists within the community, at home and abroad.

Till Antia, a la Rambo (shades of American culture) silenced his critics with a well-documented and heavily researched reply, putting forth *The Argument for Acceptance* (reviewed in these columns in August 1985).

Now, the controversy continues. An unsigned book, where the author(s) seek anonymity behind the by-line of

Zoroastrian Studies Publication, aims to put forth *The Facts* as versus *The Argument*. The book is essentially to be read as a corollary to Antia's work. It is, as its publishers claim, "a detailed response to Antia's essay disproving point by point his main contentions and presenting the bare facts of the texts, of history, and of tradition, following up his references (where he gives them) and analyzing critically the content of the primary sources."

In dissecting Antia's "half-truths" and presenting "the authentic voice of Zoroastrianism," *The Facts* are weakened, because of the all too apparent axe that is ground by the publishers on members of the community who are not kind to them, or their staunch defence of those treated by them as sacred cows. Nani A. Palkhivala's opinions on the universality of the religion do not merit an inclusion in Antia's work, since Palkhivala, it is argued, is no specialist in the field of Iranian culture. John Hinnells, the

Why did Antia, who
considers rituals
unimportant,
perform the navjote
rites of Peterson?

mentor of many at Zoroastrian Studies (ZS), is not an "Anglian monk," and to refer to him as such is a reckless statement. And any views of Dastur Firooz Azargoshasb are suspect, because his interpretation of *Geush Urvan* was not in conformity with yet another ZS savant, Dr James Russell.

In a similar vein, *The Facts* glosses over the conversion of King Vishtasp to the faith — the first act of proselytization — even though the three Dasturs lambasted Antia for showing

"gross ignorance" when referring to this incident. Is the silence due to the fact that the founder of Zoroastrian Studies plays a vital role in the film *On Wings of Fire* (previously called *A Quest for Zarathushtra*), which derives some of its dramatic moments from the picturization of this event?

The Facts has the laudable aim of presenting to the community the true picture on the position of conversion, in our scriptures and in our history. But after reading *The Facts*, one is not too sure whether the religion did really flourish in Hungary. Similarly, the views expounded by Gibbon, Zafji and Balsara as quoted by Antia are challenged with fresh light and new evidence. Much of the historical evidence shown by Antia seems to be inaccurate. And if *The Facts* are to be believed, particular Yasnas are totally mistranslated, having no bearing whatsoever on the point being made. It is observations like these (and the book quotes quite a few) which lead to uneasy qualms on the veracity of other translations and scholarly statements made by Antia.

The Facts also puts forth cases (the most notable being of Prof Whitehurst) where quotes have been cited at length, expressing an opinion which is either quite irrelevant to the issue, or on careful reading, even contrary to Antia's argument. Such 'padding' as brought to attention by *The Facts* lends credence to the ZS argument that Antia has sought to impress his audience more through length than depth.

Where *The Facts* stumbles is that in attempting to provide a page-to-page critical analysis of Antia's 'arguments,' it devotes considerable verbiage to attack Antia's analysis on his acknowledged Achilles' heel of Balsara ("a rather out-dated source") or quotes from the *Vaetha Nask*, which ZS claims is a "forgery," though Antia has pre-empted the argument by his statement that "Dastur JamaspAsa (incidentally, one of the cosignatories against Antia) along with Helmut Humbach has established its validity." Yet it refutes very little in the crucial chapter of "Does one have to be a Mazdayasnan to be a Zoroastrian?"

For a 41-page analysis, observe the cavalier manner in which this topic is dismissed with the statement "a number of quotations have been cited, but upon closer scrutiny, there is more

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padding and less content," appended with a few minor quibbles. The reply even includes a piece of misinformation when it states that "we do not have the name of a single Babylonian converted to Zoroastrianism" (since when were names of converts published?) when according to Mary Boyce, the Jews and Christians here were "victims of Sassanian persecution."

Incidentally, though *The Facts* takes Antia to task for citing Boyce on Zoroastrianism being "the oldest of the dogmatic, proselytizing world religions" without quoting the latter part of the sentence, that "Zoroastrianism became virtually an ethnic faith" (how that alters Antia's contention is not known to the reviewer, though!), it seems to have fallen — perhaps, deliberately — into the same trap by omitting Boyce's remarks about the Sassanian persecution in Babylonia, presenting the history only up to the Achaemenians.

Inadvertently though, *The Facts* does seem to have conceded that Zoroastrianism permitted conversion, and even indulged in it. Otherwise, how does one explain the sentence: "In fact, when the Zoroastrians came into contact with highly sophisticated civilizations such as Babylonia, the conversion process halted" (emphasis mine). Or, do the authors know much more than they are willing to tell for fear of tarnishing their image as defenders of the faith?

One very relevant point, however, raised by the book is why Antia, who considers rituals unimportant, performed the navjote rites of Peterson. Both Peterson and Antia were aware of the community's feelings on this matter (Antia by upbringing, and Peterson by virtue of having "read and known everything possible on Zoroastrianism," to quote from Antia). If ritual meant so little to them, why parody something which is of real importance to others?

Probably, *The Facts* will prompt Antia to strike again, in the process, raising more dust... and heat! The feeling of déjà vu, however, has already started creeping in. Caught between the Scylla and Charybdis of proselytization, one is reminded of William Penn's statement some 300 years ago: "It were better to be of no church, than to be bitter of any."

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TATA ENTERPRISES

'Criticism rife, understanding rare'

Propagandists of conversion are distorting facts to suit their own convenience, says the reviewer.

Faribourz Nariman

In this world, it is not uncommon "to see one person lacking an eye, another a ear, and a third a leg," and others who have lost "the tongue, or the nose, or the head." But "men who lack everything except that they have too much of one thing — men who are nothing more than a big eye, or a big mouth, or a big belly, or something else big" constitute, perhaps, a phenomenon as amazing as it is despicable. The quotes are from Nietzsche (*Thus Spake Zarathustra*, ch. XLII) who, in his inimitable style, calls such men "reversed cripples." Reversed cripples are to be found in all communities including the Parsis. *The Argument for Acceptance — a reply to the three high priests* by Dr Kersey Antia with a foreword by S.R. Vakil is a case in point.

It may be recalled that the heterodox have always been clamoring for conversion and, as if to appear as their savior, Kersey Antia performed the "navjote" of a Christian called Joseph Peterson! Dasturs Hormazdyar Mirza, Kaikhusroo JamaspAsa and Firoze Kotwal performed their duty and condemned this in *Conversion: a myth exploded* (Parsiana, August 1983), later published in the form of a booklet. But Antia came out with his pamphlet and (Shiavax) Vakil speaks about "the inevitable conclusion that Zoroastrianism ordained conversion" in the foreword. In Addenda 1, Antia testifies, as it were, that the pamphlet is published mainly with a view to satisfy or pacify the frustrated Zoroastrian youth (evidently of North America) who want their alien spouses to be recognized as Zoroastrians; and it follows, that once this is achieved, the offspring of such marriages can also be regarded as Zoroastrians.

Conversion is basically a religious issue but, to disprove what the high priests maintain, Antia points out the contrasting opinions of politicians,

lawyers, economists and newspaper columnists. And yet Vakil depicts Antia so as to make him stand tall, particularly when compared with the Dasturs who are qualified to speak with authority. In other words, the learned solicitor opts for comparison though comparability does not exist. True, Antia has also "quoted" a number of illustrious Iranists, but no useful purpose is served by these "quotations" except that some gullible ones may mistake the same as a mark of scholarship.

Zoroastrian Studies (ZS), guided by the indefatigable Khojeste Mistree, decided to come out with an appropriate rejoinder. The booklet examines the hackneyed pro-conversion arguments (eg 'universal religion' which is meant for 'all mankind' etc) and clearly indicates how certain things are wilfully distorted to suit the propagandists of conversion. On page 5, a typical example of Antia's "method" of quoting is mentioned. According to this "method," that part of the quoted sentence which goes against one's contentions may be omitted without giving any indication of the omission! On page 7 examples are given to show how Antia refers to the opinions of some "illustrious Parsis" who, incidentally, "are not specialists in the field of Iranian studies."

On pages 13 and 14 we read about Antia's outbursts against rituals and ZS's counter to the same: "If rituals are so unimportant, why all the vast hoopla about Peterson having to undergo a proper navjote/vohujote ceremony, as it were? Why the fuss about allowing others into fire-temples?"

On page 30, Antia's denigrating remarks about Sassanian mobeds are succinctly rebutted. It has been shown that such "reforms must be a capitulation to foreign ways or alien pressures, outside the precedent and tradition of

the Zoroastrian faith."

Criticism of ZS is rife; understanding rare. When rationalism, humanism, theosophism, etc are trying to tear Zoroastrianism apart, better champions of our tradition than the Dasturs cannot be found. And when the Dasturs were attacked by someone more concerned with the stylistic peculiarities of the Parsis of North America rather than with doctrinal truths and communal necessity, ZS, and only ZS, with its limited resources, came out to place Antia before the community with all his contradictions, inaccuracies, instabilities, irrelevance and inanities.

Many truths have been boldly stated in the booklet, truths to which the reversed cripples (mostly specialists in one secular field or the other) have long been strangers. In general, the Dasturs' critics are adequately exposed. Some of the dangers underlying the catastrophic pro-conversion movement have been frankly and powerfully pointed out and the conclusion arrived at is that Antia's *Argument for Acceptance* is no argument at all. The author regrets that not a word is mentioned about Vakil's foreword wherein, with malicious relish, Antia's "singular moral courage" is applauded while the invaluable guidance of the Dasturs is brushed aside with the help of sophistry.

It would be in the fitness of things if the Bombay Parsi Punchayet or some other institution or individual having the interest of Zoroastrianism and the Parsis at heart, would arrange to publish hundreds of copies of this ZS publication for free distribution and thus show the reversed cripples their proper place.

Abridged and edited from a review by Faribourz Nariman, a scholar from the orthodox school of thought and an ex-member of the Council of Vigilant Parsis.

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Her art as a mission



"Her sharp intellect blended with keen sensitivity matured her talent in a distinctive direction. It helped her fashion many a sculpture of conspicuous artistic merit – which stood out for their striking aesthetic content, technical dexterity and originality. Pilloo Ratan Pochkhanawala will live through her work which occupy a place of honor in the current phase of our sculptural tradition." So noted a resolution passed at a condolence meeting convened for Pilloo Pochkhanawala on June 29, 1986, under the joint auspices of 14 Indian organizations connected with art. At the function arranged at the Nehru Centre at Bombay where her last major public commission *Stone Age to Space* lay uninaugurated, a wreath was placed on her 30-foot high monumental creation.

Though an official inauguration was denied to her during her lifetime, Pochkhanawala, who died of cancer on June 7, 1986 at the age of 63, accepted the indifference shown to her sculptures. She noted in an interview with *Bombay* magazine (June 7-21, 1986), "There are too many monumental sculptures in Bombay and not enough of creative pieces. Unlike Delhi, Bombay unfortunately neglects its sculpture. All my sculptures too have met with a bad fate – the one at Haji Ali has clothes drying on it, while my sculpture at Doordarshan and CEAT



Pochkhanawala with her creations (Above) *Stone Age to Space* (Photo: Dev Benegal)

(Tyres) too, have not been maintained properly. I hope the Nehru Centre will at least give the sculpture the care it deserves."

In 1984, Gallery Chemould organized a retrospective of her sculptures which enabled viewers to see how her work had evolved over 32 years through different and changing themes, using varied techniques and embracing a wide range of material – wood and stone, cement and steel, dripped lead and terracotta, aluminium alloy and bronze, copper and ceramic.

"My choice of material has often been determined by the particular experience I wished to project. *The Sud-*

den Death series exemplified man's last struggle before death, a theme which preoccupied me during a certain period of time. Similarly, I feel that my present series, *The Monsoon*, is a logical continuation of the *Time Cycle* series, since the monsoon is the life-cycle of India," said Pochkhanawala in April 1984 in an interview with *Namaskar* magazine.

"An early association which was to manifest itself in her work was fire – 'the only source of artistic expression' in Zoroastrianism, she said. She attributed the energy in her pieces and the 32-foot high metal *Flame* to this focal point of the religion forced upon her," notes Ayesha Kagal in the Sunday Review of *The Times of India* of June 15, 1986. She was equally fascinated and inspired by the sea, sky and space.

Bored with the teaching and curriculum at the J.J. School of Art, in her early youth, Pochkhanawala, a commerce graduate, got a job as a show window designer with Air-India. This gave her her first opportunity to go to Europe where she visited all the famous museums, cathedrals and collections of art and was more impressed by the historic sculptures than the painting and frescoes. On her return to India, she tried her hand at sculpture. After being preoccupied with carving for a short while, under the advice of Pansare, a senior sculptor, Pochkhanawala started working with metal. Encouraged by the Gokuldas family, she started working in their factory and became one with their average workers, cutting and welding with them without inhibitions, stated a report in *The Times of India* of July 11.

Once while sculpting a large welded figure, the factory workers asked her to loan them the piece and she found that they had garlanded it and used it in their *pooja*. Another steel and stone sculpture, *Atomic Couple*, placed in a private garden was deified by the gardener as a modern day Shiva and Parvati. One of the most moving responses to her work was from a deaf boy who gazed raptly at her *Kathakali dancer* and began spontaneously dancing around the exhibition hall, noted *The Times* write-up.

"The strongest aspect of her work is that she evolved on her own. Unlike most Indian sculptors, her work is truly self-discovered and personal," notes

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Bhabha: On important government posts



Tarapur: contribution to cricket

her mentor, Pansare. Unlike her contemporaries, she is also respected for not suffering "from the trauma of exposure to the West."

Theater was one of Pochkhanawala's special loves and using thermocol she worked on a number of sets including *The Book of Job* and *The Splendored One* based on Zarathushtra's life.

"Pilloo did indeed treat her art as a mission – but without making a noise about it. In fact what distinguished her behavior throughout her life was a sense of dignity. And it was her sense of humor that made this quality unpretentious and human," wrote art critic Dnyaneshwar Nadkarni in *The Sunday Observer* of June 15.

Known for her integrity, Pochkhanawala had once said, "I haven't received any recognition only because I am too independent and I don't buzz around the right people's noses...I am too blunt and hot tempered and by the time I have cooled down it is too late...I would be very satisfied if even a stray spark from my welding could burn a hole into the almost blank chapter of contemporary Indian sculpture..."

Pochkhanawala is survived by her daughter Meher and brother Dorab Framroze Adenwalla.

Of many distinctions

Died: Cooverji Hormusji Bhabha, 76, union commerce minister in the Interim Government of India in 1946 and chairman of Spencer and Co Ltd since 1952, of a heart attack while on a private visit to London on June 29, 1986.

In a condolence message, Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi expressed grief and said that Bhabha served the nation

with "distinction through various fields of the economy and as commerce minister."

Bhabha, who did his postgraduation in commerce from Sydenham College, and was also fellow of St Xavier's College, held several important posts, both in the government and the private sector. He was the union minister of works, mines and power in 1946, and led the Indian trade delegation to the World Trade Conference at Havana in 1947. In addition, he was chairman, Indian Banks Association from 1955 to 1961, chairman National Shipping Board and vice-chairman, Central Bank of India. This apart from promoting several large sized companies such as Kelvinator of India Ltd, Parke Davis (India Ltd), Warner Hindustan Ltd and E. Merck India Ltd, amongst others.

Bhabha is survived by his wife Dr Amy, son Homi and daughter Rati F. Forbes

"Godfather of artists"

Died: Soli Batliwala, 81, patron of Indian art and culture and freedom fighter, on June 11, 1986 at Breach Candy Hospital, Bombay, following a prolonged illness.

"Batliwala is always considered with affection and gratitude by hundreds of artists all over the country whom he has encouraged and given platforms to, and thus brought to the forefront," noted a resolution passed at a condolence meeting on June 22, under the joint auspices of The Federation of Cultural Organizations of Bombay, The Bhulabhai Memorial Institute and the Bombay Tamil Sangham.

Managing trustee of Bombay's Bhulabhai Memorial Institute – "the hub of cultural activities" – Soli mama, as

he was popularly known, was "a kindhearted godfather of artists and musicians and dancers," wrote noted art critic Dnyaneshwar Nadkarni in the *Financial Express* of June 22, 1986. When the former residence of Bhulabhai Desai was donated by his wife for use in cultural activities, upcoming artists would approach Batliwala, who was in charge of the cultural center, to rent them a studio at a nominal fee of rupee one per day and the artists would be fined a similar fee on the day they remained absent, notes the *Financial Express* write-up. Sitarist



Batliwala: "lent dignity" to Indian culture

Ravi Shankar started his Kinnar School of Music from these premises and painters like Gaitonde, Prafulla Dahanukar and Sadwelkar got their inspiration in art from the same venue.

A close associate of Bhulabhai Desai, Batliwala, who was a divorcee, believed: "Life is like music. It must be composed by ear, feeling and instinct and not by rule."

A practicing communist who became disillusioned with the movement during the Indian independence struggle, Batliwala was sentenced to nearly eight years of rigorous imprisonment in about 17 prisons in the country, recalled the *Indian Express* of June 12. From 1948 to 1951 he served in the Indian Diplomatic Corps at Switzerland, Austria and Italy.

"As a student of Elphinstone College, he was known for his fiery speeches and students' union activities. He also took part in dramas and in those years, took female roles also,"

mentioned dance critic Sunil Kothari in his reminiscences of the man.

Sturdy and always clad in immaculate white, Batliwala "became an institution and lent the metropolis of Bombay a certain dignity and pride in matters of culture," summarized Kothari.

Managed cricket affairs

Died: Keki K. Tarapor, 76, former secretary of the Cricket Club of India (CCI), following serious injuries in a road accident at Poona, on June 15, 1986.

"He was one of those hearty...type of Parsis, I for one, always fancy as being more at home on the veranda of a maidan club than in the closer and more stifling confines of an air-conditioned office," wrote popular sports columnist, A.F.S. Talyarkhan in the *Blitz* of June 28.

"His passing away has been a tremendous loss to Indian cricket in general and Bombay cricket in particular," wrote famous cricketer Polly Umrigar in a condolence letter to Tarapor's family.

His friend, Ratilal Khushaldas describes Tarapor's contribution to the game as "tremendous and honest...He loved and worked for the Cricket Club of India as if it was his second child."

Tarapor's life was interwoven with cricket. A slow left arm spinner and with a straight bat that strengthened the batting tail, he first emerged into the limelight when he captained the Elphinstone College cricket team for three years, noted Talyarkhan. In 1939, he was awarded the Dr M.Pavri's Cricket Silver Jubilee gold medal for best bowling performance, a trophy that the family still treasures. His only test appearance was in a single game against the West Indian team in 1948. Tarapor also captained for some years the Bombay team in the Ranji Trophy tournaments.

However, if Tarapor failed to represent his country again as a player, he served her well as an administrator and manager. He was the first paid secretary of the Cricket Club of India, which he served for 27 years, from where he retired in 1982. He was also manager of the Indian cricket teams

to England, West Indies and Australia. In 1984, he served on the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) as executive secretary for a year.

In April 1985 he moved with his wife Bridget to Poona. "Every morning found him in the Poona Club library or on the veranda watching a cricket match," writes his wife in a letter to *Parsiana*. "He swam every evening at the Poona Club swimming pool and spent the rest of the evening on the lawns of the Club. This was his routine till the last days of his life."

Tarapor is survived by his wife Bridget and son Kurush.

Shiavax Nargolwala

An obituary on Shiavax Nargolwala, president of the Delhi Parsi Anjuman and vice-president of the Federation of Parsi Zoroastrian Anjumans of India, who died in a car accident on August 6, 1986, will be carried in the September issue of *Parsiana*.

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