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Parsiana

August 1987
Volume 10 Number 2

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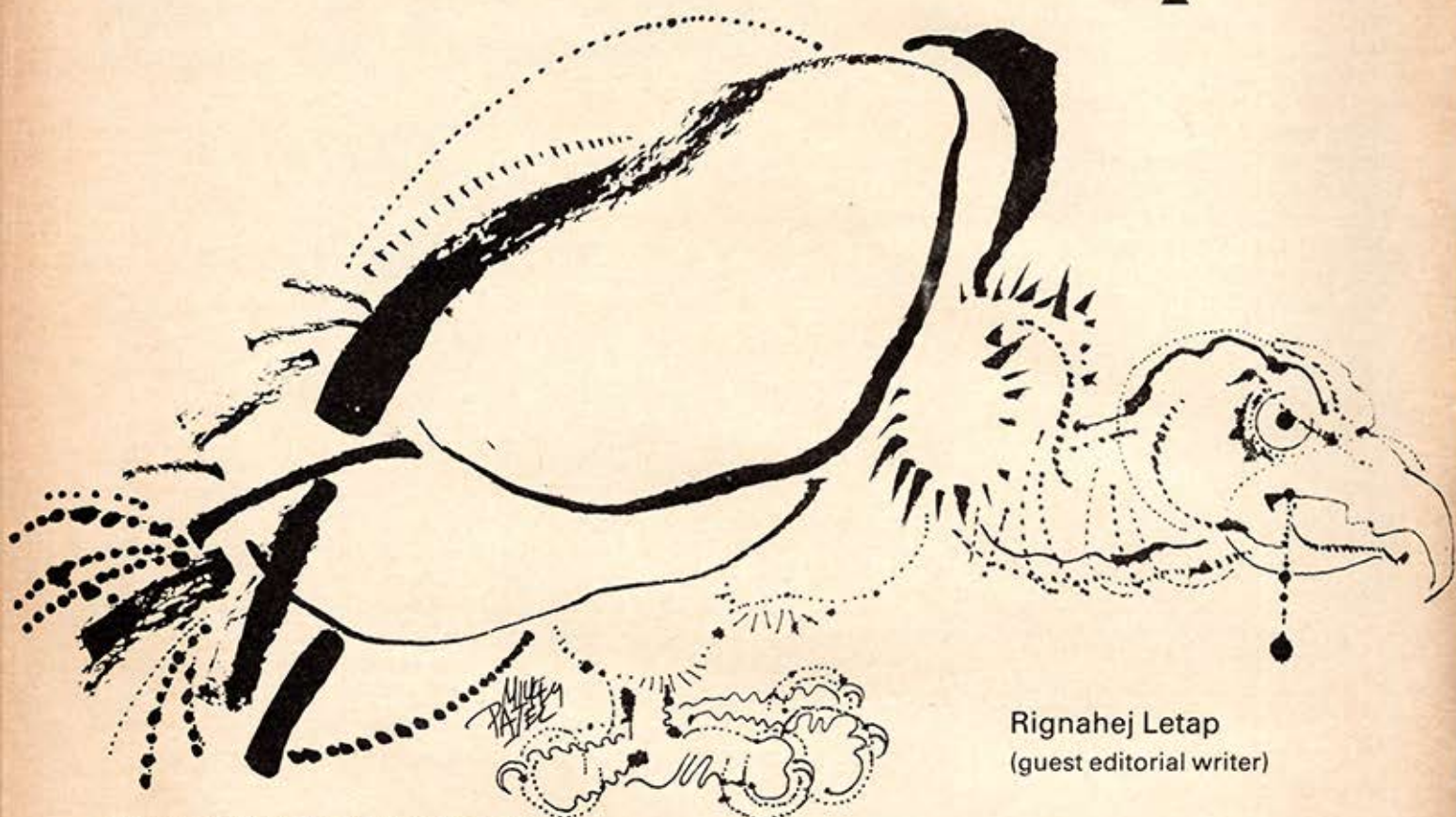
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Cover: Anupam Kher and Shabana Azmi in *Pestonjee*
Photographs: Homyar Mistry (Homz Prints)

Parsiana is published by Jehangir R. Patel for Parsiana Publications Pvt Ltd at C/o H.L. Rochat, Navsari Chambers, ground floor, 39 A.K. Nayak Marg, Fort, Bombay 400001 and printed by him at Parsiana Publications, 300 Perin Nariman Street, Bombay 400001 and phototypeset at Ace, Bombay 400001. All rights reserved. Phone: 2048730
Annual inland subscription: Rs 50 for one year (12 issues); Rs 90 for two years (24

issues). Foreign subscription rates: Seamail Rs 100 for one year, Rs 180 for two years; Air mail Rs 250 for one year, Rs 475 for two years. For US cheques add \$ 5 to cover bank charges. For Indian upcountry cheques add Rs 4 for bank charges. Cheques and drafts to be drawn in favor of Parsiana and posted to GPO Box 892, Bombay 400001 or C/o H.L. Rochat, Navsari Chambers, ground floor, 39 A.K. Nayak Marg, Fort Bombay 400001.

The Last Israp



Rignahej Letap
(guest editorial writer)

Once upon a time, in a distant land called Aidni there lived a small community known as Israps. They were industrious, upright, philanthropic people who were a great credit to their country.

Despite all their culture, wealth and wisdom, the Israps faced a great crisis: they were dying out. But though the various statistics and government census figures showed this, the Israps refused to accept it.

"God will never let our community die," said most Israps when confronted with the declining figures. Others dismissed the figures as baseless, misleading, inaccurate and so on. They blamed the decline on migration, claiming that Israps had settled abroad and multiplied, and therefore the total world Israp population had actually increased!

And so, this wise community of great men and women went on blindly plan-

ning more houses and schools and colleges and even places of religious worship.

Now, dear reader, you may well ask why such an enlightened community could not see its end coming. What happened was that as the community dwindled in various parts of the country, many Israps packed their bags and moved to the large urban areas where the majority of Israps resided. So the people in the cities found a great deal of pressure on their facilities. More schools, houses, jobs were in demand and so the city leaders believed they had "to cater to a growing need."

Another reason why the Israp leadership was misled was because many Israps in the cities wanted to shift from their localities to the Israp housing colonies so they could be together. Thus the demand for community housing was growing.

You see, the Israps liked to stick together as far as possible. While they were friendly with the other communities, they kept their distance. An Israp, for example, did not like his children to marry non-Israps and the Israp houses of worship were barred to non-Israps. It was feared that non-Israps would affect the special ambience created by, and for, Israps.

The majority communities in the country greatly respected the Israps so they let them be and forgave them their exclusivity. But because they were concerned about the future of the Israps, they would ask the Israps what they were planning to do about the declining numbers.

"We're going to build more houses," was the reply.

"But why," asked the non-Israps, "would you do that when your numbers are falling?"

"Very simple," replied the Israps, "if we have more houses, more Israps will marry earlier and have more children. Hence, more housing means more Israps and all our problems are solved."

But when some non-Israps, and even the Israps themselves, pointed out that the Israp population was also declining in the rural areas where there was no shortage of housing, the Israp leadership scoffed, and said, "Why worry, God looks after the Israps."

When the Israp leaders from all over the country met, they talked about Israp property lying unattended in many towns and cities in which Israps once lived. Much of the property had been taken over by squatters, and the places of religious worship had fallen into disuse and were vandalized as the population diminished and no priests were to be found.

But still the Israp leadership would not plan for a dying community. On all their public platforms they debated at great length on who was to develop what property, where, for whom, and at what price. Their main concern was how to keep non-Israps from acquiring Israp property. And the Israps fought amongst themselves over the property. At every public meeting and forum, people spoke about the properties and the scandals, and the charges and the countercharges. But no one asked about the declining population.

No one asked about the aged Israps who found no room in the crowded hospitals that the Israps ran. For, in truth, the Israps were an aging community. Their young were few. Israps married late, if at all, and had few children — that is, if they decided to have any at all. And many Israps did not marry. They preferred to remain single even if they had large houses.

Some Israps counselled, "Build the houses, but also plan for our decline." The houses were built but no plans were made for the dying stages of the community. For this the Israp leadership was not alone to blame. The average Israp also did not wish to know that his community was dying.

The Israps believed God would save their community as had been stated in the holy books. A new savior would come and the community would once again rise to its days of glory.

And so the decline continued, my friends, and today if you visit the cities once occupied by the Israps, you will find some of their housing colonies, apartments and religious places preserved by the Government under the Department of National Archives.

You will see how they lived, their decor and furnishings, their utensils and clothing (the one-piece dress with flowery prints and short sleeves being the most popular amongst the women). You will see their prayer books and the factories they once ran, but you won't see any Israps. The last one died about five years ago. She was a woman in her eighties, highly diabetic and a little overweight. A magazine had interviewed her a few months

prior to her death and asked how she felt about being the last Israp in the world.

"I miss the community," she said, "even though I never knew much of it. By the time I was born there were only 20 or so families left. We were given special accommodation by the Government so that the Department of Anthropology and Sociology could study and observe us."

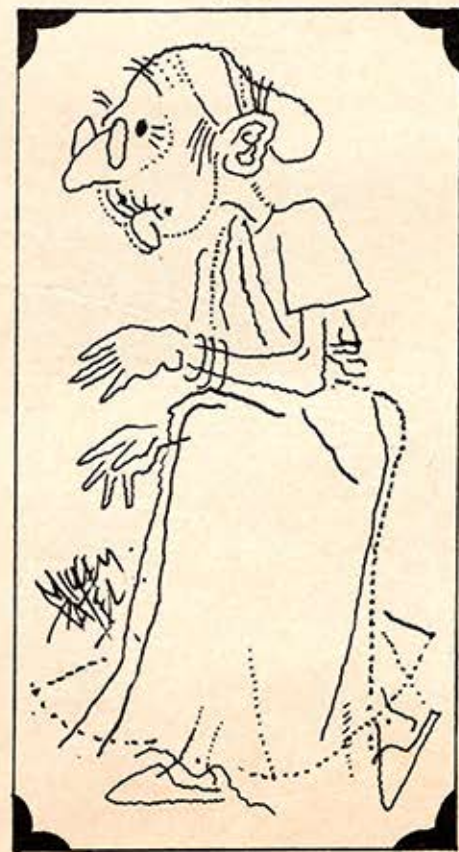
"In the evenings, the tourists would come in busloads to look around and see what Israp life once was. They would ask us to pose for pictures. I have my photographs with many of the film stars and leaders of the world. I would ask these great people why they came here to see these empty houses and us old people, and they would reply, 'We wanted to know and see an Israp personally since we had heard and read so much about you.' And I would laugh and tell them what my great-grandmother used to tell my grandmother, 'We can never die out; God looks after the Israps.'"

But, dear readers, the last Israp did die. And the Israps joined the millions of species that become extinct every year. Nature takes its toll and it does not distinguish between saber-toothed tigers and Israps, or dodos and dinosaurs.

Today, our children do not know who the Israps were. In school, their history books had only a footnote referring to the community's contribution to the country. Upon the complaint of several non-Israps, this was corrected and a short chapter was devoted to the Israps. And, in one of the city universities, a chair of Israp studies had been created.

The world still remembers the Israps, but I remember them in particular. One of my grand-uncles had lived next door to an Israp family and he used to tell me about the community and how unconcerned they were about dying: "Quality is what matters. It is better we don't exist than lose our identity and the Israp way of life."

And in this modern world of push-button warfare and starships that hurtle around the universe in days, one wonders if the Israps' refusal to face reality was such a bad thing after all.



Rignahej Letap is a free-lance writer, humorist and retired historian whose works include *The Diaries of the Israps* and *The Israp Way of Life*. Parsiana will carry extracts from Letap's works in future issues.

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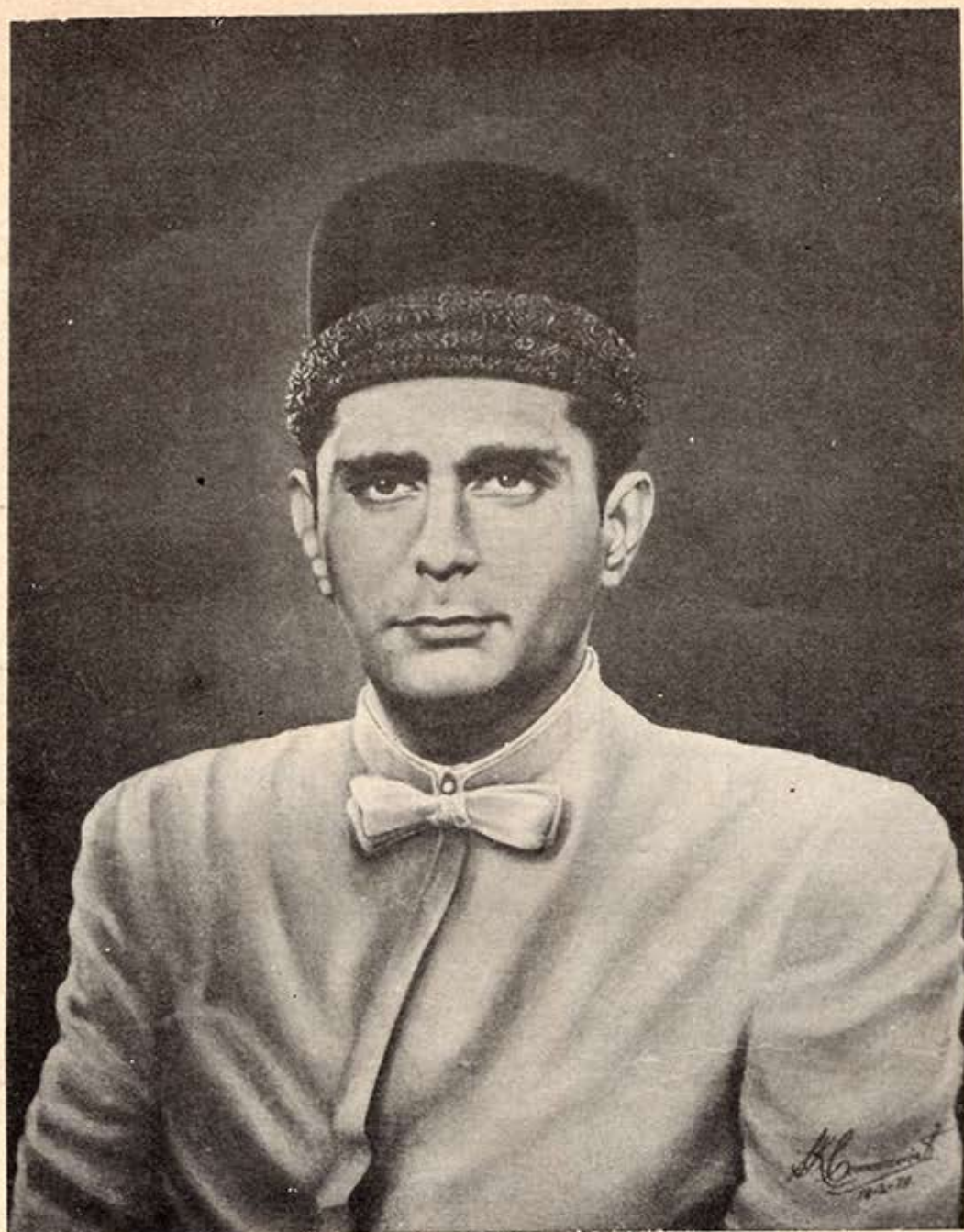
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Readers' views are welcome on any subject of interest to the community and should be sent to the Editor, Readers' Forum, Parsiana, G.P.O.Box 892, Bombay 400 001. Letters are subject to editing for reasons of space and clarity.

"Election scheme..."

Arnavaz Mama in her article "Election scheme challenged" (*Parsiana*, June 1987) writes: "The petition relied on an affidavit sworn on April 6 by Jehangir Bamji, who has twice officiated as scrutineer at the BPP (Bombay Parsi Punchayet) trusteeship elections, and is one of the trustees of the Tithal Sanatorium, currently in the news for having leased away the 13-acre property to non-Parsis at a throwaway price."

I have not officiated only twice as a scrutineer at the BPP trusteeship elections, but about a dozen times since July 31, 1957, the date of the first election of the late Mr Eruch A. Nadirshah, till the election of the last trustee Mr Minoo Shroff, as thereafter, Dr (Ms) Mehroo Bengalee got a walkover.

Secondly, she had no business to tie together the election scheme of the BPP and the lease of the property of the Tithal Sanatorium. The two are quite distinct and separate matters which have no bearing on one another.

Since the matter of the Tithal Sanatorium is at present sub judice, I cannot dwell on it at full length. But it will be sufficient to say that the property is not leased at a throwaway price but quite a substantial amount is to be received every year by way of lease rent. The increase in the lease amount recently offered by the intervenors in their new scheme is a pittance, as against all the benefits and facilities now attached to the property. Further, the intervenors want to enjoy these benefits and facilities free, throwing the burden of cost, charges, expenses and labor on the shoulders of the trustees.

The trustees tried their utmost to obtain the support and cooperation of the Parsi trusts, organizations and associations for over the last decade and a half, but no concrete proposal or cooperation was offered by any Parsi institution or individual. As such, they had no other alternative but to enter into this lease agreement on an "as is, where is" basis in return for a very substantial annual lease rent.

J.D. BAMJI

"Katrak's crusade"

Let me clarify that though I was present at the meeting called to pass a resolution against Dr Aspi Golwalla, the chairman of the Bombay Parsi Punchayet (BPP), I am not the same Amroliwalla who was allotted the Ness Baug flat which has figured in the article, "Katrak's Crusade" (*Parsiana*, April 1987).

I spoke neither in favor of nor against either of the concerned parties viz Dr Golwalla or Mr Ardeshir Katrak. Both gentlemen are highly respected in their own fields and I have no personal axe to grind with either of them. My attitude is solely dependant on the merits of an issue.

I chose to speak only to help provide a fair discussion on the subject, so that it should not be a one-sided, unilateral approach. Some others who wanted to

discuss the subject were branded as people deliberately planted to disturb the meeting. This gave an impression of personal vendetta against Dr Golwalla. Justice must not only be done but must also seem to be done, and Mr Katrak being a respected member of the Bar should not, in his zeal, lose sight of the same.

I strongly feel:

- Dr Aspi Golwalla, as chairman of the BPP, holds a responsible office and any attack on him not only reflects on the individual but on the institution and his co-trustees as well.

- If Dr Golwalla was singly responsible for all the allegations levelled against him, I feel the other trustees are competent enough to realize this and take the corrective step of passing a resolution of no-confidence in their chairman, and it did not need Mr Ardeshir Katrak and others to intervene.

- As the trustees have been elected through due process of law, it follows that the community has entrusted certain duties, rights and responsibilities to these gentlemen, in the execution of which certain decisions are likely to be favorable to some and naturally against the interests of others. Unless proved malafide one should consider all such decisions to be bonafide.

- One has to remember that at times there may be bonafide reasons for reaching settlements or compromises which are more practical, rather than going in for litigation, which Mr Katrak would agree is time-consuming and not always desirable, though sometimes unavoidable.

- In the allocation of the two premises under dispute, it was reported that the decisions were made by all members of the Wadia committee of management including the three senior trustees of the BPP. Why then single out Dr Golwalla?

- As regards the allegation of putting locks on premises on the death of the sole occupant, it is only fair that the landlord (in this case the BPP and the trustees jointly, under legal advice - not the chairman alone) endeavors to protect his premises from being usurped by trespassers. The encroachers have no hesitation in swear-

ing affidavits and even go to the extent of getting themselves adopted only to secure, illegally, residential premises at the cost of the suffering brethren who have been waiting in a queue to get a roof over their heads. Such usurpers are often people who can afford an ownership flat but prefer to pay a pittance to the elderly folks – the bonafide tenants. Advertisements in the *Jam-e-Jamshed* seeking accommodation with elders will bear me out on this fact.

•In view of what is stated earlier, I feel that the move by the BPP and its trustees to get an exemption for its properties from certain provisions of the Bombay Rent Act is a step in the right direction. Trespassers and usurpers are today protected, thanks to some of the provisions of the Bombay Rent Act and the time taken in court proceedings to evict them. This delay in eviction is to the detriment of the poor in the community who await allocation of accommodation.

•There seems to be nothing wrong with the supposed "slave bond" which, more than anything else, spells

out civic rights and responsibilities. Any lawyer practising in the Small Causes Court must realize that even if it should contain anything which may sound objectionable in law, such stipulations which are ultra vires the law are null and void. Again, by no stretch of imagination can the "slave bond" be attributed to Dr Golwalla alone, but in fact has been in existence for decades.

If Mr Katrak had a genuine grievance and evidence to impeach Dr Golwalla, as an advocate it would be far more easy and practical for him to have filed a suit against Dr Golwalla rather than resorting to rhetoric and calling a public meeting attended by around 100 people out of whom an even smaller number were in fact actual voters of the E and F Registers. Dr Golwalla would then be answerable to the competent court.

Cool deliberation, without fear or favor, would indicate that Dr Golwalla has not misused his office as chairman of the BPP in any manner whatsoever, either individually or jointly with the other members of the board.

Each of our trustees is well-placed in life, holding responsible positions and is financially very well off. To attribute motives of financial gain to any one of them is to deter good men and women from coming forward in future to devote their time to serve the community. Trusteeship of the BPP involves no monetary gain and it is wrong to presume that one seeks the office to make some money. The status and prestige the office offers both within and outside the community cannot be overlooked, and I feel our present trustees deserve the total backing of the community rather than the bickering and abuse they face.

This is a time when every single member of the community should make an effective contribution to find out ways and means to combat the three main problems of the community – the dwindling population, housing shortage in Bombay, and unemployment.

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in itself help solve the population problem besides helping provide employment to young Parsi talent in construction and other allied activities.

PHIROZE AMROLIWALLA

"The diamond of..."

The article "The diamond of Rustom Baug" (*Parsiana*, March 1987) giving coverage to the history of the Wadias and the Rustom Baug, was highly appreciated.

However, we feel that one other person who stood shoulder to shoulder with Ms Kumi J. Daroovala, was Ms Bapsy D. Chinoy (joint honorary secretary), who had also worked behind the scenes for many years and whose significant contribution deserved mention.

CYRUS BUGWADIA
Vice President, The Rustom Baug Association

"Fifth World Congress..."

In the report on the Federation meeting held at Devka ("Fifth World Congress in offing" *Parsiana*, May 1987), mention was made of Dr Sam Bhacca's reference to another Rane addressing the meeting after 1,300 years. An

editorial clarification stated, "1,000 years is closer." A few years ago, on the same subject, I had provided details of our landing which were carried in *Parsiana*.

Iranshah, the holy fire at Udvada was propitiated on Adar *roj*. Adar *mahino*, 90 YZ and the Iranshah is over 1,266 years old. How do you account for that? I think you are influenced by dates provided by Khojeste Mistree who was misled by Mary Boyce. Why not consult Dasturji Hormazdyar Mirza on this subject?

Capt RUSI J. KATILA

Cama's new booklet

Every generation produces its crop of iconoclasts and Dara Cama is one of them. They are the dissenters and the non-conformists. To them, tradition has no meaning. In his booklet *The inner light of Zoroastrianism*, Cama has branded the *Avesta* as Hindu scriptures, and our method of disposal of the dead as the culture of the vulture. He is particularly severe on the dasturs and the mobeds and has blasphemed them for babbling ritualistic prayers,

for making the behdins drink bull's urine, and for advocating segregation and apartheid.

It is well known that Avesta of the ancient Iranians, and Sanskrit of the ancient Hindus were related languages. Therefore, one should not be surprised if several of our rites and customs are in common.

A famous poet once wrote: "My words go up, my thoughts remain below, words without thoughts never heaven go." Very true, and I suggest that learned mobeds and dasturs give lectures once a month to explain the meaning of various recitations to members of our community. To accuse the andhyarus of fraud and deceit against the behdins on this account, is far-fetched.

Accusing the mobeds of forcing the behdins to drink bull's urine is a concoction. I remember that at my navjote, the dasturji clearly asked me just to touch the vessel with my lips. Possibly, it was believed generations ago, that urine therapy is good for cleansing the body and that's how the ritual started. In fact, there are many Indi-

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ans even today who believe in urine therapy.

All religions have their own beliefs. The Christians believe that by making confessions before the padre, they will be absolved of all their sins. The Muslims believe that by fasting for one month in the year, all their sins will be cleansed. We Parsis do not believe so. We believe that the judgment on our good and evil deeds in this world can only be given by the Almighty after our death.

The electric crematorium at Chandanwadi in Bombay was installed to wean the Hindus away from the wasteful and polluting method of cremation on wooden pyres. But the Hindus are so attached to their age-old custom that in spite of its greater costs, they still prefer wood cremation to electric cremation. Probably, Mr Cama does not know that electricity is the most expensive form of energy and if the Bombay Municipal Corporation were not to subsidize the costs of the electric crematorium, the cost of dying would be exorbitant.

The charge, that andhyarus have goaded behdins into practising segregation and apartheid in our ritualistic customs, is unwarranted. We are a religious group and we can have our own practices as long as they do not interfere with the interests of the country.

By such outbursts, damning all our traditions and customs, Mr Cama is indulging in destructive criticism and lowering the morale of the community.

Dr P.D. SUNAVALA

Mr Dara Cama, in his booklet *The inner light of Zoroastrianism*, states: "Our religious loyalty today stands divided between the prophet's ethical *Gathas* and the later priestly *Avesta*."

Some feel studies are absolutely essential for a spiritual life, some decry them. Many see them as optional, leaving the choice to the temperament of the individual.

Writes Sri Sankaracharya in *The Vedanta Kesari*, "The study of scriptures is useless so long as the highest Truth is unknown, and it is equally

useless when the highest Truth has already been known. The scriptures consisting of many words are a dense forest which merely cause the mind to ramble. Hence, men of wisdom should earnestly set about knowing the true nature of the self."

At one stage or another, doubts enter, the mind vacillates. In the words of the Editor of *The Vedanta Kesari*, "The aspirant seeks guidance and help. Spiritual directors may not always be readily available. At such times, guidance may be sought from proper books...One of the most important things in spiritual life is the ability to separate the essentials from the non-essentials. A systematic study of spiritual literature endows the aspirant with this ability." Kudos to Mr Dara Cama for the service he renders for the good of our community. He is justified in repeatedly reminding us that Zoroaster has granted us freedom of will, to ponder, reason, and learn to choose what we ought to do by matured thinking (*Vohu Mano*).

Thomas a Kempis, in his book *The*

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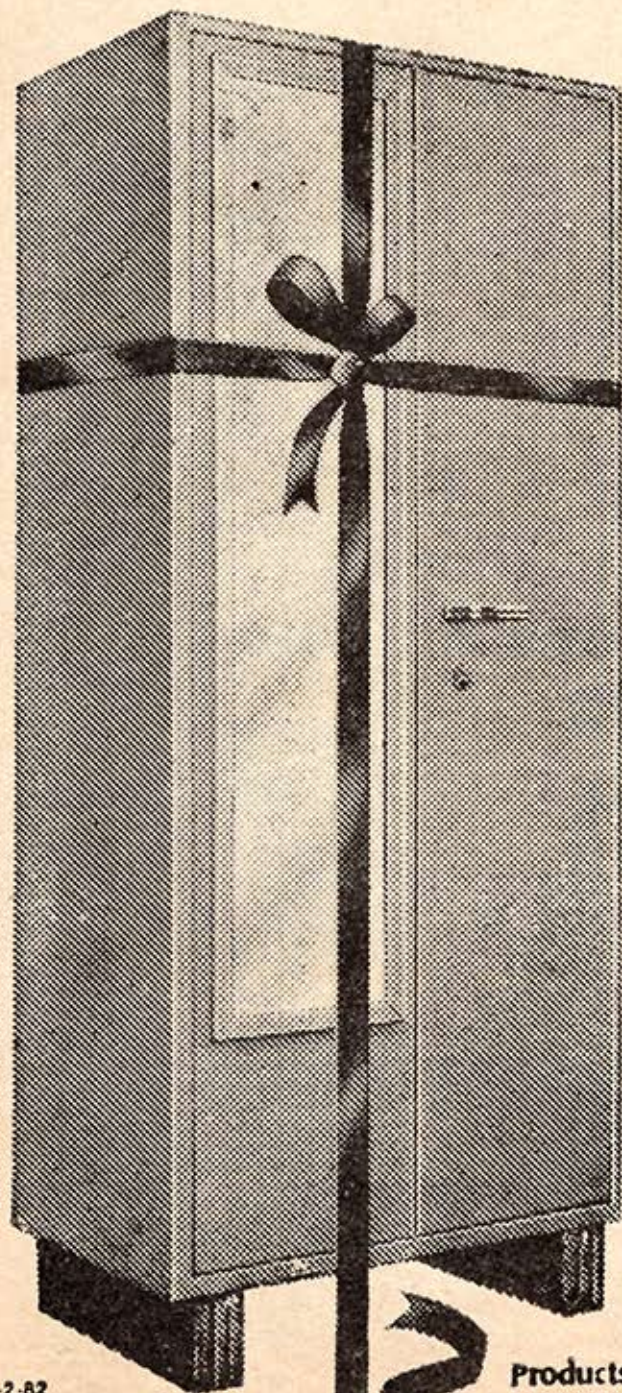
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Imitation of Christ, says, "Search not who spoke this or that, but mark what is spoken."

In the words of Swami Vivekananda, "The book from which to learn religion is your own heart."

RUSI B. PASTAKIA
Ahmedabad

Annexe awaits funds

Construction of the annexe of the Athornan Boarding Madressa, Dadar, is progressing quite well and we hope to have it duly completed during Yezdegirdi 1357 (by August 1988).

The total project cost is estimated at Rs 35 lakhs and there is still a long way to go to reach the target. We therefore earnestly appeal to all philanthropic individuals, associations and trusts to extend their helping hand, particularly during the holy days of muktad and on the auspicious occasion of the New Year. Any further information on the Madressa's activities will be gladly supplied to anybody at any time.

We also acknowledge our utmost gratitude to our valued donors for their contributions towards the Madressa annexe project.

Donations are exempt from tax under section 80G of the Income-Tax Act and may be sent in cash or by cheque, drawn in favor of 'Athornan Mandal' and addressed to the Principal, Athornan Boarding Madressa, 651-52, Firdausi Road, Parsi Colony, Dadar, Bombay 400014.

RUSTOMJI N. PANTHAKI
Principal
FARROKH J. SIDHWA
Trustee-in-Charge
Athornan Boarding Madressa

Holiday program

In April and May 1987, the Bombay Parsi Punchayet conducted a holiday program for youth. In pursuance thereof, one of the follow-up activities is to set up voluntary study-groups under supervision of senior persons in the educational field.

Members of the community, who are interested in helping the younger generation by way of supervision and coordination, are requested to write to Mr R.K. Anklesaria, chief executive, or the undersigned at Parsi Punchayet Office, 209, Dr D.N. Road, Fort, Bombay 400001, giving a background of their educational and other qualifications and attainments

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Matrimonial exchange

We, the members of the WZO (World Zoroastrian Organisation) Youth Wing, are organizing an exchange program to London in end September or early October with the basic idea of matrimony. The organizer of this program is Mr Homi Ranina.

For further information please contact Burzin Khan at 240610, or Khurshid or Havovi Dadabhoy at 314740 or 315983.

Ms HAVOVI B. DADABHOY
Member, WZO, Youth Wing

Engineers wanted

The employment bureau of the Bombay Parsi Punchayet has received an inquiry from Himalaya Machinery Pvt Ltd, Baroda, a medium-sized engineering company which is on the lookout for young Parsi engineers for their marketing and design departments as well as for the workshop. Adequate training, decent salary, and housing allowance are offered. There are vacancies for:

- Marketing executives: Should be BE (Bachelor of Engineering) with around three to five years of experience in marketing high value products. Age below 30 years.
- Quality assurance engineers: Should be BE with around two to three years experience on shop floor or in quality assurance department. Age below 27 years.
- Design engineers (electronics): Should be BE (electronics) with specialization in power electronics and micro processors. Should have three to four years experience in development of Servo drives and CNC controls for metal forming machines. Age around 30 years.
- Design and development engineers (mechanical): Should be BE (mechanical) with five years relevant experience.

Those interested may apply to Mr Michael B. Homawala, Himalaya Machinery Pvt Ltd, 608, GIDC Makarpura, Industrial Area, Baroda 390010.

RUSTOM ANKLESARIA
Chief Executive, Bombay Parsi Punchayet

Invitation to AIDS?

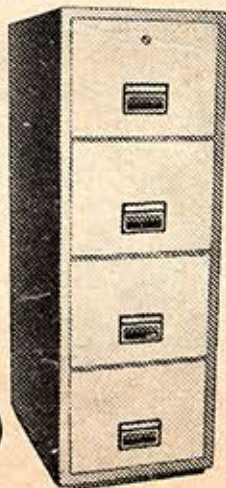
Half a dozen cases have come to light where young Indian brides of all communities have innocently fallen victim to the AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) virus harbored by their sometimes equally unsuspect-



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ing husbands (three from the United States, and one case each from the UK, Canada and Australia). The girls and their new-born infants have now to suffer untold misery due to the sheer negligence and callousness of their husbands.

One such bridegroom developed this virus through a blood transfusion received by him in the States after an accident. Others contracted it due to the promiscuous and permissive lifestyles of their student days. Parents anxious to send their daughters to 'white countries' must insist on an AIDS virus clearance test from the prospective sons-in-law. Though such a move will be resisted by them, the other alternative is too frightening to contemplate, for there is no cure for this dreaded disease.

Parents must also insist on a registered marriage in these countries, once their girls land there. Many of our girls are packed home when marriages fail to click, sometimes without their children, with little or no alimony to support them. Divorce laws in these countries entitle the wife to 50 percent of the husband's total assets, both moveable and immovable. However, the marriage has to be registered in the country of residence.

Unless such precautions are taken, parents may find that they have negotiated a green card to misery for their young daughters. Ms ZARIN MEHTA

Homaaji's miracle

Behdin Homaa Behdin Jamshed is revered by many Parsis. Wrongly victimized and sentenced to death, Homaaji had predicted that his enemy, who had given false evidence against him, would be found dead on the fourth day after Homaaji's own death at the gallows. Does it mean that the wish of a good soul was carried out by those concerned in the spiritual world, after verifying the correctness of the complaint lodged by Homaaji?

Does it not follow that the justice of God shows that He can cut short the life of Mr Evil at any time? It means that not only mobeds but behdins too can have an evolved soul.

It is also clear that good souls can reach Chinvat Bridge before Chaahar-am (fourth day after death), put their case before the tribunal up there, and get the tribunal's justice on the fourth day itself.

Ms P.M. MEHTA
New Delhi

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Events and Personalities

Divorce bill progresses

All the changes sought to be introduced in the Parsi Marriage and Divorce (Amendment) Bill, 1986 were approved by the Rajya Sabha on August 3, 1987, notes a report in *The Indian Post* of the following day. It took the Upper House more than eight months to clear the Bill which will now be discussed in the Lok Sabha before it is sent to the President of India for his approval.

The Bill was introduced in the Rajya Sabha on November 14, 1986 by Union Law Minister A.K. Sen. It is based on the recommendations made to the Government by the trustees of the Bombay Parsi Panchayet, who sought to update the Act which had not been modified for the last 10 years.

Divorce proceedings may now be instituted more easily. Mutual consent, cruelty of a partner, desertion for two years, conversion to another faith, and incurable unsoundness of mind or mental illness may now be cited as grounds for divorce.

The court hearing of a divorce case now enjoins privacy and reduces the number of Parsi delegates to the matrimonial court from seven to five, though the jury system continues. The right to seek alimony, initially restricted to the wives, can now be availed of by the husbands too.

The minimum age for marriage – which was previously fixed at 21 for both men and women, unless the sanction of the parents was obtained – has now been brought down to bring it on a par with the Child Marriage Restraint Act (1929) which is applicable to the rest of India. Though the sub clause providing for the consent of guardians is done away with, implying that no Parsi girl below the age of 18 and no Parsi boy below the age of 21 is

eligible for marriage, there is little likelihood of the future prospects of Parsis being affected considering that a Parsi's average age at marriage is 34.

Irano-Judaica conference

The Zoroastrian religion and its contemporary problems were among the topics discussed at the Irano-Judaica International Conference which was held in Jerusalem from June 22 to 25, according to a press release. The Conference was organized under the auspices of various educational and research institutions of Jerusalem.

Representing Zoroastrians at the Conference were Dastur Dr Firoz Kotwal of the H.B. Wadia Atash Bahram, Prof Kaikhosrov Irani of the department of philosophy, City College, New York, and Khojeste Mistree, founder of Zoroastrian Studies.

All the three read out papers which will be published in a commemorative volume. Dastur Kotwal's paper gave "A brief history of the Parsi priesthood," Irani's dealt with "The conceptual basis for interaction between the traditions of the Jews and the Ira-

nians," and Mistree's discussed "The breakdown of the Zoroastrian tradition as viewed from a contemporary perspective."

At the inaugural ceremony, Prof Shaul Shaked, from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, said it was a pleasure to have a Zoroastrian high priest attending a conference in Jerusalem after a lapse of 13 centuries. The last occasion, he recalled, was in 614 AD when the high priest of Iran was in Jerusalem with the Sasanian king Khusrau Perveez, who had conquered the city after a siege of 18 days.

Among the themes discussed at the

Clockwise from below: Irani, Mistree and Kotwal



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Conference were Persian-Jewish contacts, ancient Iran and Judaism, Sasanian-Jewish history, religious contacts, and Judeo-Persian language and literature. The Conference concluded with an Avestan prayer for peace by Dastur Kotwal, adds the release.

Blood donors directory

In order that "no fellow Zoroastrian, young or old, rich or poor, may succumb to a fatality for want of blood," the youth wing of the Committee for Economic Revival (CER) is compiling a second, revised edition of the Zoroastrian Voluntary Blood Donors Directory, according to the CER newsletter, *The Zoroastrian*, of May 1987.

Any Zoroastrian between the ages of 18 and 55 may register his or her name with Kersi P. Gazdar, 7/2, Rustom Baug, Victoria Road, Byculla, Bombay 400027, giving details of name, age, residential address, telephone numbers, and blood group.

The first edition of the directory was published in October 1983 and listed over 1,000 donors who pledged themselves to respond to an SOS call for blood. It has reportedly helped meet many emergency requests for blood.

Religious recitals

"To enable budding Zarhosti boys and girls...to know their ancient history and culture," the Iran League held the Third Shahnameh Recitation Competition at the Bai M.N. Gamadia High School for Girls on July 11, 1987, notes a press release. Participants under the age of five were the greatest attraction of the competition, added the release.

The best among girls, Havovi Sidhva, and the best among boys, Rumi Panthaki, were awarded the Late Homai Fali Master Running Trophy and a cash prize of Rs 101.

The winners in the girls' section for the five different age-groups were Yasmeen Bajan, Sherzad Khambata, Havovi Sidhva, Parizad Sidhwa and Pilo Batliwala. The winners in the boys' section for the three age-groups were Vistasp Sanjana, Paurusasp Karkaria, and Rumi Panthaki.

The first, second, and third winners were awarded cash prizes of Rs 51, 31, and 21 respectively.

Ervad (Dr) Peshotan Peer was the chief judge from a panel of 11 judges and presided over the function.

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(Clockwise from left): Bastawalas: Sarosh, Sam, Hilla, Aban, Parveen, and Armaity

As a future project, the Iran League proposes to organize a musical concert, notes Ervad Fali Master, honorary secretary of the Iran League.

Vogue in India?

"All our magazines were sold out in the metropolitan areas of India within a matter of a few days," says Ms Armaity Bastawala, Editor of *Vogue India*, a fashion magazine launched in June 1987. "We are looking forward to maximize the involvement of our readers...(and) to discover hitherto undiscovered talent and give a wide cross section of people a chance of being portrayed in our columns," further adds Armaity.

Vogue India is brought out by a totally Parsi-owned group - S.Z.B. Publications - having its main office in Hyderabad. The staff includes Aban Bastawala, production controller, Parveen Bastawala, features editor, Sarosh Bastawala, legal advisor, and "Sam Bastawala, my father, publisher of *Vogue India*, and the guiding force behind this magazine," notes Armaity in a letter of introduction.

The 106-page inaugural issue, priced at eight rupees, includes many color pages and announces different contests for models, cookery experts, fashion designers, etc. The magazine also carries a mini-mag, shop by mail, where one can order readymade garments by filling in a form attached to the magazine, and articles for the beauty conscious, aspiring poets, animal lovers, etc.

The first issue also has a quiz and information on jewelry - the topic of

the month being pearls.

Says Armaity "We believe in the excellence and originality of production and so all our materials...(are) produced by the most sophisticated means possible."

Educational recognition

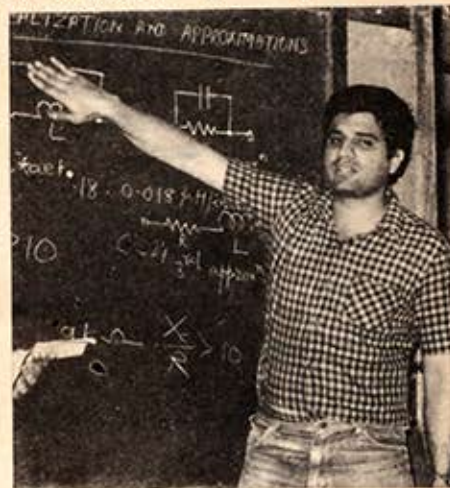
For "commendable achievements in the field of education," the T.A. Mathias Award for 1986-87 has been conferred on physicist Jehangir B. Mistry, vice-principal for academic improvement and professor in the physics department at St Xavier's College, Bombay, reports a press release.

The award, which carries a cash prize of Rs 1,000 along with the citation, is given by the All India Association of Christian Higher Education, and was instituted in honor of Fr T. A. Mathias, a prominent educationist and the founder of the Association. It is conferred on lecturers teaching in India's 200 Christian colleges to encourage them in professional growth and use of newer teaching methods.

One of six lecturers chosen nationwide for this recognition, 39-year-old Mistry was nominated because, in addition to being "a very good teacher," he was involved in the implementation of "innovative, new methods of teaching." He had also helped the management with the Educational Technology Cell (ETC) which is meant to help lecturers in professional growth, said Fr John Misquitta, principal of St Xavier's College.

A doctor in laser spectroscopy from the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre, Mistry is deeply involved in

promoting the use of audiovisuals and computers in education, notes the release. Working with the Xavier Institute of Communications, he produced an educational video program entitled *Laser - the wonder light* for Doordarshan's countrywide classroom broadcast. Besides giving lecture demonstrations (using lasers) to school and college students and teachers, Mistry has also conducted several seminars on creativity (at the Xavier Institute of Management where he is a visiting lecturer), teaching methods, examinations and question writing, teacher evaluation and computer literacy, according to the release. Mistry is also head of the advisory cell of the College's computer department which was inaugurated on July 25, 1987 and which is meant "primarily for the de-



Mistry: innovative teaching methods

velopment of educational software."

After studying at St Xavier's High School and graduating in Science from St Xavier's College, Mistry did his M.Sc in Physics from the Bombay University in 1970, and has been a lecturer in the physics department of St Xavier's since then.

A founder-member of the Amateur Astronomers' Association (Bombay), Mistry's other interests include photography, scouting (he is a scout master at St Xavier's School), sketching and painting, adds the release.

Trustee becomes president

Bombay Parsi Punchayet trustee and noted industrialist Jamshed N. Guzder has taken over from F.T. Khorakiwala the presidency of the Council for Fair Business Practices, notes *The Indian Post* of July 9, 1987.

Continued on page 100

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WZO seminar in Chicago

A seminar on Zoroastrian beliefs and traditions in ancient and modern times, is being planned in Chicago from November 26 to 28, 1987, notes an advance notice attached to the June newsletter of the Zoroastrian Association of Greater New York (ZAGNY).

The seminar, which is being arranged with the cooperation and financial assistance of the World Zoroastrian Organisation (WZO), will have discussions spread over three sessions. Aspects of Zoroastrian thought and tradition is the suggested topic for the first session which will include religious literature, sacred works, the Zoroastrian calendar, etc; the historical and mythological ages in Zoroastrian tradition; and the inner and outer rituals.

The second session - Zoroastrianism in the ancient Indo-European tradition - will include Zoroastrianism in Greek literature; the movement to monotheism; social structure, the way of life, and religious thought; and the concept of creation.

The third session on contemporary Zoroastrian life or Zoroastrian commitment in the North American environment will include a panel discussion.

"This may be an opportune time to also hold a meeting of the Federation of Zoroastrian Associations of North America (FEZANA). Such a meeting of FEZANA will be planned if the member associations so indicate," adds the notice.

Those interested in participating in the seminar may contact Kaikhosrov Irani, 410 Riverside Drive, New York, NY 10025 or Rohinton Rivetna, 626 West 56th Street, Hinsdale, IL 60521.

An exhibition of oils, watercolors and etchings by master engraver Kaiko Moti was slated to be held from June 17 to July 18, 1987, at The Lublin Collection, Greenwich, Connecticut, notes a report in the ZAGNY newsletter.

Moti's works are in the permanent collection at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, The Museum of Modern Art, and the Bibliotheque Nationale in Paris," notes the report. He was recently awarded the gold

medal for the Competition d'Art Impressionist (Competition of Impressionistic Art), Musee d'Argenteuil in France.

ZAGNY's marriage bureau, which was started in 1980, is to be reactivated. "The bureau will strictly be a contact point and all information will be kept confidential," states a write-up in ZAGNY's June newsletter. Those interested may contact chairperson Freny Dalal or the coordinators Roshan Hakim and Erach Munshi at ZAGNY, Arbab Rustam Guiv Darbe Mehr, 249, Weyman Avenue, New Rochelle, New York 10805.

Demography down under

"There are 155 children of our AZA members. The number is not enough to ensure even zero population growth...In order to ensure growth we would have to rely on increased numbers coming from overseas," read the results of the social and demographic survey of the members of the Australian Zoroastrian Association of New South Wales (AZA of NSW). In fact, 32 percent of AZA members have settled in Australia in the last five years, according to the survey report.

Attractively presented in colored computer graphic and tabular forms, the survey analysis, undertaken by AZA president Purviz Kolsawalla,

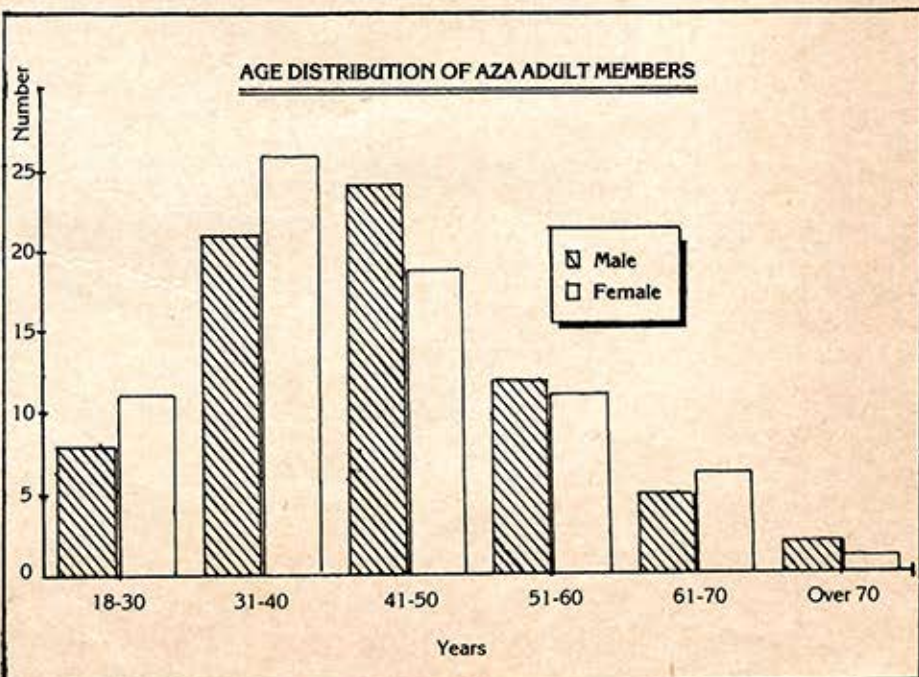
presents a break-up of the members according to sex, age, educational qualifications, occupation, marital status, religion professed, the calendar followed, length of stay in Australia, and place of residence. Only a small number responded to the question on priestly status.

Though the response rate to the individual questions is detailed, the overall response rate is not mentioned. Notes Kolsawalla, "The actual responses are confidential and are stored on an IBM-PC diskette for future use of the community historians."

The Association has 297 adult members of which 145 are male and 152 female. "Like the population of Australia, our community is slowly aging," notes the survey report. Forty-five percent of the population is above the age of 40 and 32 percent are aged between 31 and 40 years.

Though the rate of divorce among the general Australian population is high, 86.1 percent of adult AZA members are married. As for the level of education, 60.8 percent of those who answered the question are graduates which "compares very significantly with the Australian population average of under five percent." Nineteen percent of graduates have postgraduate qualifications.

The predominant profession of AZA members is that of housewife (21





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percent), followed by administrative and clerical (18 percent), accountancy and finance (eight percent), technical engineering (seven percent) and medical (six percent).

"As our Association's name suggests, 89.4 percent of our members (271 individuals) practice the Mazdayasnie Zarthosti faith; 10.6 percent of our spouses and children profess other faiths" - Christian (8.3 percent) Hindu (1.7 percent) and Muslim (0.7 percent).

Of the 73 members who responded to the question on priests, 70 percent are behdins, 26 percent are from priestly families (athornans), and only four percent are qualified priests (maratabs). A clear majority follow the Shahenshahi calendar, as per the survey.

"Subsequent to the survey, the Adult Discussion Group of AZA has decided to send all the AZA members a questionnaire, inquiring about several vital and burning issues facing the Zoroastrian community in Australia," notes Kolsawalla.

"Conducted to gather the impressions and wishes of the community members" on social, religious and cultural issues which affect the AZA community, the questionnaire is strictly confidential and voluntary, notes Kolsawalla. "The results would be compiled and circulated to all the members for further discussion. No action will be taken on the results of the survey, until the full compliance and authority is given by the community at large," assures the president.

Of the six questions listed in the four-page questionnaire, the first deals with the acceptance of the navjotes of children of inter-community marriages. Questions two and three deal with the desirability of reciting communal prayers (*hambandagi*) during the muktad and ghambar days as well as on Zarthost no diso (death anniversary of the prophet), and whether the members would be agreeable to take turns at saying the prayers as well as sanctifying the prayer room, etc.

Question four deals with the death ceremonies - whether members wish that prayers be said before the funeral, whether behdin females can also say these prayers, whether the *sagdid* (viewing of the dead body by a dog)

Continued on page 79

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Election revision plea dismissed

Justice H. Suresh of the Bombay High Court declines to revise his order on the BPP electoral scheme

Arnavaz S. Mama

"The old order must change, yielding place to (the) new in a society governed not by men, but by bylaws and regulations ... In the event, this motion stands dismissed."

The remarks of Justice H. Suresh of the Bombay High Court on August 13, set at naught the attempt by four donor (F register) members of the Anjuman Committee, which elects trustees, to seek a revision of his judgment of March 6. The Judge had earlier whittled down the voting power of the donors - those who had paid Rs 5,000 to the Bombay Parsi Punchayet (BPP) and its affiliated charities - by requiring the donors to elect 100 representatives from among their total number aggregating around 800. Among these, only donors of Rs 50,000 and above would be able to vote directly for a trustee.

The arguments spread over three hearings, on July 31, August 5 and August 12, before the court gave its verdict on August 13.

On behalf of the F Register applicants - Hormuzd Patel, Aspi Medhora, Perviz Katila and Jehangir Bamji - well-known counsel Nadir Modi submitted that this change of voting right for donors, from direct to indirect, had never been advertised. Modi argued, on August 5, that if notice was given about one thing and a completely different thing comes about, it was against the laws of natural justice. "Your order is affecting people who did not know your order would affect them. We were misled." Noted lawyer Keki Mehta of Payne and Company added, "At the time of

How it all began

When the Bombay Parsi Punchayet (BPP) was first formed, the trustees were elected directly by the entire community. However, at some stage, this practice was discontinued and the trustees themselves nominated candidates as and when vacancies arose. To rectify this, Sir Dinshaw Petit and others moved the Bombay High Court in 1906 (Petit vs Jejeebhoy). The Bombay High Court then framed an election scheme which has been in existence since 1910, with amendments occasionally added.

The High Court scheme envisaged two categories of voters - those who had donated Rs 5,000 or more to the BPP (F Register members) and 100 elected members of the community, known as the Sau-nu Mandal (or E Register) - together comprising the Anjuman Committee which elects trustees. These elections to the Anjuman Committee's E Register are held once in seven years.

As the number of donors increased beyond 100, the High Court amendment of 1970 permitted the number of E Register members, elected at the Anjuman Committee elections, to be increased to equal the number of donors. In 1981, when the last Anjuman Committee elections were held, there were 303 donor members and the community elected an equal number. Thus the Anjuman Committee consisted of 606 members.

On the eve of the 1984 trusteeship

election of Homi Ranina, the F Register membership had reached 619 while the number of elected members remained unchanged at 303. This is because the members on the E (elected) Register can only be increased once in seven years. When accusations of buying votes and demands to freeze the F Register went unheeded, the Committee for Electoral Rights' (since then renamed Committee for Economic Revival) Ms Mani Dalal and Minoo Shroff moved the High Court to stay the election. As part of the compromise arrived at in the court, the BPP trustees agreed to file their amendment to the election scheme in March '85.

As stipulated in the scheme, the BPP notified the community of the proposed changes by way of advertisements in *Jam-e-Jamshed* and *The Bombay Samachar* and, eventually, several individuals made submissions before the High Court.

After hearing them all, Justice H. Suresh limited the Anjuman Committee to a total of 200 members - 100 to be elected by the donors from among themselves and 100 to be elected by the rest of the community. However, anybody paying Rs 50,000 and above would have a direct right to vote for trustees. For every direct voter, one seat would be reduced from the elected donors' quota. Thereby the votes given to the donor members would not increase beyond 100 unless and until the number of people donating Rs 50,000 or more crossed 100.

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notice there was no suggestion that their direct right to vote would be taken away." Continued Modi, "Today the main and only question is, these people, whose rights are affected, should they or should they not have a hearing?"

The Judge countered, "Those who had interest had come forward. How can you say there was no notice?...Can you say that the judge isn't passing an order against us so we remain absent?" All the suggestions pivoted round the F register and everyone had notice of it, said Suresh (referring to the BPP's two advertisements each in

"Your order is affecting people who did not know your order would affect them"

the *Jam-e-Jamshed* and *The Bombay Samachar*), adding, "How the court decided was left to the court. I saw your affidavit yesterday. It came to this: 'We didn't have a notice of the judge's conclusions.'"

At the next hearing on August 12, Modi argued that the court's order was "not warranted," as changes and additions to the BPP's electoral scheme can be made only by the trustees or the Anjuman Committee. "The corollary is that they cannot be made in any other manner," he added.

"If that is right, I have only power to accept or reject!" noted the Judge dubiously.

Modi contended that while any change sanctioned by the court would be incorporated into the scheme, any additional alteration requires the consent of the community. "In that case, what a judge says is overruled by the majority. So why go to the judge?" his Lordship questioned.

But Modi insisted that this trust affects the entire community and therefore the community will decide on the changes it wants. The judge has veto power, according to Modi, but the right to amend lies elsewhere. "If your argument is accepted, the judge is only a stamping authority!" noted Suresh with some asperity.

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selves split on the issue. At the first hearing, when noted attorney Atul Setalvad identified his clients as three BPP trustees - Jamshed Guzder, Jamshed Kanga and Minoo Shroff - advocate S.K. Cooper of Mulla and Mulla and Cragie, Blunt and Caroe who has been representing the seven trustees since the Punchayet filed its petition for amendment of the election scheme in 1985, stated, "So far as I know, I am appearing for (all) the trustees."

Modi objected: "The same trust cannot have double representation. They must decide among themselves." Justice Suresh noted, "It is not proper that two counsels should appear..." but the rest of his message was lost in the prevailing pandemonium. Cooper was heard to say, "We've had no contrary instructions..." and Modi expostulated, "It's unseemly, strange, for trustees who come as a group to say we now want to file dissent."

But the Judge tided over the heat of the moment by noting, "Technicalities do not matter in matters like these." He called for some little adjustment in the vakalatnama and ordered Setalvad's clients to file their affidavit the next day. Though he decreed that the status quo would prevail until the next hearing, the fact that the BPP was in the process of distributing new donor

**"What is ultimately
sanctioned need not
be what was initially
submitted"**

registration certificates was a source of agitation to Modi. But Suresh did not deem it necessary to hold up the administration of the trust, recalling that "by November (the BPP has) got to take steps for the Anjuman Committee elections," and noted that certificates could be modified later if necessary.

Setalvad contended on August 12 that clause 94 of the electoral scheme (under which the trustees are required to advertise the proposed amendments in two Gujarati newspapers), entitles the community to receive notice of the details of the amendments proposed. But "what is ultimately sanctioned need not be what was initially submit-

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ted," he argued. Under the public trust law, the court has inherent power to alter a scheme even if the scheme does not provide such a right, Setalvad said. "The sanctity of this scheme is because of this court," he added.

Setalvad and the Judge relied on the prayer in the trustees' original petition which urged the court to accept their proposals "with such modifications as this Hon'ble Court may decide." They also argued that if the entire scheme is open to amendment, any right inscribed in it is also available to change.

Cooper submitted that the dissenting trustees had no right to file an affidavit, as according to the scheme the majority decision was binding on the entire board of trustees. Ms Jer Bady, treasurer of the Rayomand Committee of ladies, constituted by the BPP to gather funds to implement the Panchayet's housing projects, claimed, in a personal submission, that Jamshed Guzder, one of the dissenting trustees, had personally assured the Committee that the voting right of those who donate Rs 5,000 would endure for the

donors' lifetime. "Today I have become a liar!" said Bady angrily. But the Judge held, "If the donation is a bargain for a vote, then it is no charity."

The Judge heard all arguments in detail, "lest it be said that I'm guilty of legalising injustice while I am expected to remove injustice."

He then went on to note, "I do not have to justify my own order before the parties...I don't claim I'm infallible, but in my own court I'm unassailable. The remedy, if any, lies elsewhere..."

Announcement

A report on the meeting of the Anjuman Committee (the body that elects the trustees of the Bombay Parsi Panchayet) held by the BPP on July 2, 1987 will be carried in the September issue of *Parsiana*.

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Working wonders

Arnavaz S. Mama

Teenager Khursheed Khurody has demonstrated that social work can be satisfying and enjoyable

The teenager in denims and T-shirt helped the *malis* (gardeners) dig pits round the Doongerwadi car park, chatted convivially with the driver of the Bombay Parsi Punchayet (BPP) hearse, smiled brightly at the mourners in saris and daglis driving in for the funerals on a hot and sweaty June afternoon. "My friends and I are going to plant some trees here tomorrow," Khursheed Khurody explained her incongruous presence in the hallowed place which Parsi youngsters never frequent, unless bereaved.

Rustom Mehta, manager of the Doongerwadi, agreed to provide her with two *malis* to ready the pits for the 100 saplings due to be planted the next day, but she felt it would not work, so she says she "went and spoke to all the 12 *malis* and told them it would get done only if all 12 of them and I work together. They were very cooperative and said no one had spoken to them like this. But they said they did not have enough tools. So I went in the car to all the Parsi bungalows on Malabar Hill and asked for tools. Not one gave! The *mali* of the Infant Cathedral School gave us all his tools and we were able to get on with the work." As Khurody pitched in, the Doongerwadi *malis* protested, "It is not a lady's *kaam* (job)." "But I insisted on working, and seeing me work, there was no

way they could knock off."

On schedule the next day, 50 youngsters planted 100 saplings all over Doongerwadi, under the watchful eye of young horticulturist Parvez Cama. The plants had been supplied by "dad" Noshir Khurody to cover up the barren patches emerging around the dokhmas. The enthusiastic though tired band then went on to plant 50 more in the environs of Saher Agiary at Breach Candy.

The fast growing, strong, shady varieties of trees were carefully chosen, matched to the pits which were lined with white ant repellent powder to ensure their survival and thereby, hopefully, the nurturing of new generations of vultures. Just prior to this rigorous outdoor activity, the kids had entertained the patients of the four major wards of the B.D. Petit Parsee General Hospital with music and dancing for one and a half hour.

The kids are self-propelled. No one is more than 25 years old. Most of them are school children, generally middle-class, with an impressive list of 'things to do.'

A 19-year-old with a yen for organization, Khurody completed her schooling in the UK where, she says, she was taught to think. After six restless months in Bombay, disappointed "with the city and other children," the



Planting trees at Doongerwadi
(Top) Khurody

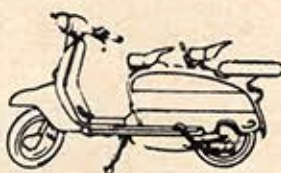
music, ballet, swimming and horse riding enthusiast says, "I'm very unsociable. I didn't find a single person I really liked at the Willingdon Club." She was "keen to collect musicians and have a concert," but gave up because of "apathy among the youth."

Khurody's inbuilt fondness for beautiful buildings is one reason for her involvement with the Parsee General Hospital. But it's such a "dull, dreary, sober place. There's no sense of humor anywhere except

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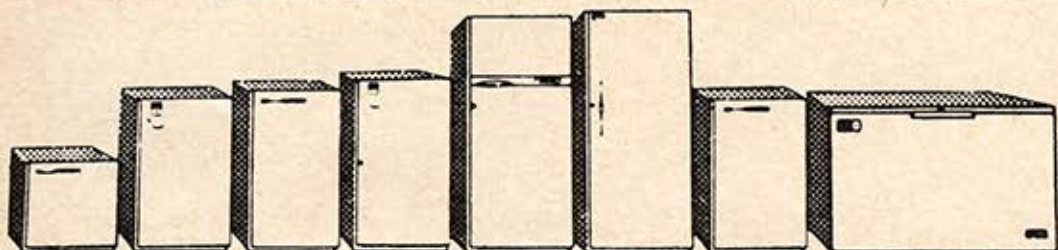
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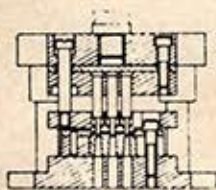
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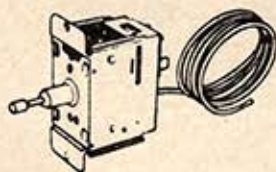
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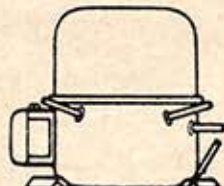
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among the doctors! Everyone walks around as though the world is coming to an end!" says Khurody, who believes that "the patients deteriorate mentally there, even if they get physically better."

Determined to liven up things for the patients in the general wards, Khurody and crew decided to put up an Easter concert. They went armed with posters, but found there was "such a rigmarole; no one was willing to take the responsibility" for permitting the posters to be put up. When at last they got around the authorities, permission was granted on condition that the posters would be removed the next day!

Guided by her experience with the patients and convinced of their need for entertainment, Khurody hit upon the idea of providing each ward with a television set. Initially the administration was averse to the idea believing that tape recorders were more suitable. So Khurody approached Dinshaw Petit, the president of the managing committee, who invited her to the next committee meeting. "I entered a little room filled with about 18

men sitting round a huge table, looking terribly important and all staring at me at once...I was made to sit at the head of the table with the president and asked if I'd had any legal experience..." Khurody described the encounter in an article in *The Bombay Samachar*. "Next I was asked whether I could manage to give a short speech and state my case. I was thrilled, for I was prepared for this...I talked non-stop for at least four minutes and explained my background, my work for the hospital, and why TV sets were essential in preference to tape recorders. I was amazed as to how attentive the committee (members) were and even more amazed that they gave me so much time and showed me so much warmth. The experience was quite a delight. As soon as I finished, a decision was taken. For the first time in the history of the Hospital, they agreed to accept TV sets..."

"The next few weeks weren't such a pleasure as, between the decision of the committee and the formal letter that had finally to be issued, I spent three weeks trying to understand the wheels of bureaucracy. I was forced to

be patient and tolerant towards systems that were hopelessly old-fashioned. I hope this will change in the near future as Parsis are a well educated and cultured race. We must modernize our working systems to ensure greater efficiency."

By the end of July, Khurody had been promised five TVs and four trolleys for the hospital. Her donors include Ms Zenobia Yezdi Daruwalla of Sterling Electricals, Ms Arnavaz Jehangir Dubash of Rogers, solicitor Ms Katie Freddie Mehta, building contractor Pallon Mistry and Sir Dorab Tata Trust, courtesy J.R.D. Tata. Architect Darius Batliwala donated the trolleys.

With work at the PGH thus organized, Khurody took her faithful band to the Parsi ward of the J.J. Hospital. The doctors - Adi Nazir, Farokh Udvadia and others - have assured her that those patients don't really need doctors. "They're old and abandoned...Physically they could be discharged tomorrow, but mentally they have deteriorated, rotted away." An exception is Marzban Ichhaporia with

continued on page 67

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Sweet Medicine

Khursheed Khurody's group has brought entertainment and cheer to the patients at the Parsee General Hospital

Havovi Dubash

At the B.D. Petit Parsee General Hospital in Bombay, on a Saturday morning in July, I followed a group of young people from ward to ward, as they sang to the patients to the accompaniment of three guitars and two tambourines. It wasn't the best selection of songs – *Brown girl in the ring, She'll be coming down the mountain, Sunday morning, Bombay meri hai, Oh Suzanna* and *Que sera sera*, among others – but they were songs which every patient knew, and even the youngest member of the group, nine-year-old Mahzeevar Dallas, could sing gustily. False starts, discordant chords, forgotten words, at times a virtual cacophony, could not diminish the enjoyment of the patients in the general wards who have begun to look forward to these Saturday morning sessions, as they sing along, clap, tap their feet and sway, legs in traction shaking dangerously!

In the female ward where the musicians receive an uproarious welcome, old Banoo Irani, flat on her back in traction, thumped a tambourine against her elbow, then forearm, then palm, then back to elbow. The nurses joined in, and the doctors waited indulgently until the concert concluded. Then, the four straw hats were rotated, the tambourines changed hands, the music-stand proclaiming 'Sweet Medicine' was picked up, a whistle blew, and a single file of 25 young people, mostly Zoroastrians, from different schools and colleges, marched out. "God bless you," the patients called, "Come again," "One more song." Sometimes little bits of chocolate are produced from under a pillow, sometimes a crate of soft drinks is presented to the minstrels.

Youngsters entertaining patients in the general ward (Photos: Havovi Dubash)





Khurody (behind the music stand) with her loyal supporters

As Sweet Medicine performed in the male ward on the first floor, an old woman in a *mathubanu* (white cotton scarf) sat swinging her legs to the music on one of the benches in the corridor where thousands of people have waited, and slept, and conferred in trepidation. Sombre, these corridors and these wards have been, where the vigil of one relative or friend ends with the arrival of another. No young voices have sung *Bridge over troubled water* in these corridors before, no young boys have played the unmistakable guitar riffs of Jethro Tull's *Locomotive breath* on these stairways.

As I trailed Sweet Medicine, Dolly Dhondi caught at my sleeve and said, "Will you play one song in a private room?" She led Sumit Kanabar and Maresh Shah into her father's room, and they played for him John Denver's *Annie's song*. Dolly clapped at the end of it, but the old man only lay there. Then Dolly asked for *Daisy, Daisy*, her father's favorite song, sung many times in the years past to his eldest daughter, Daisy. So the boys played *Daisy, Daisy* and four Girl Guides from the Alexandra Girls English Institution sang it, and Dolly joined in, and the old man raised himself on his bed at the end and smiled a thank-you.

Sweet Medicine started out this summer with just Sumit and his guitar, and Khursheed Khurody, fresh out of Stowe School in England, singing along. It was Khursheed's idea to cheer up the patients she saw in the wards when she was at the Parsee General herself for a tonsils operation.

They were joined later by some of Khursheed's friends, including Anahita Mody, who is the group's 'musical director,' Naresh Shah and Indrajit Sundaram on two more guitars, as well as students from the Byramjee Jeejeebhoy Parsi Charitable Institution. By the last weekend of July they were joined by students from the Girton School and Panday School.

Khursheed was at both these schools, enlisting support for her movement. At the Girton School, they gave her roses. The roses were, I suppose, in appreciation of all the little things that Khursheed has noticed, and having noticed, done something about. Besides entertaining the patients at the Parsee General, she attended a committee meeting at the Hospital and successfully made out a case for the installation of TV sets in every general ward. She went, with many of her supporters, to the office of J.R.D. Tata, to appeal, successfully, for the donation of a TV: Sir Dorabji Tata Trust contributed a color set. They ended up singing for Tata and his colleagues at Bombay House.

In an attempt to extend Sweet Medicine's repertoire, Khurody gives singing lessons at the Byramjee Jeejeebhoy School, teaching the boys a new song or two every week. She has lectured to the girls of Alexandra School on the virtues of singing songs at the Hospital instead of folding swabs and darning holes in the Parsee General's bedsheets during their social work sessions. She has been to the J.J. Hospital's Parsi Ward and is currently

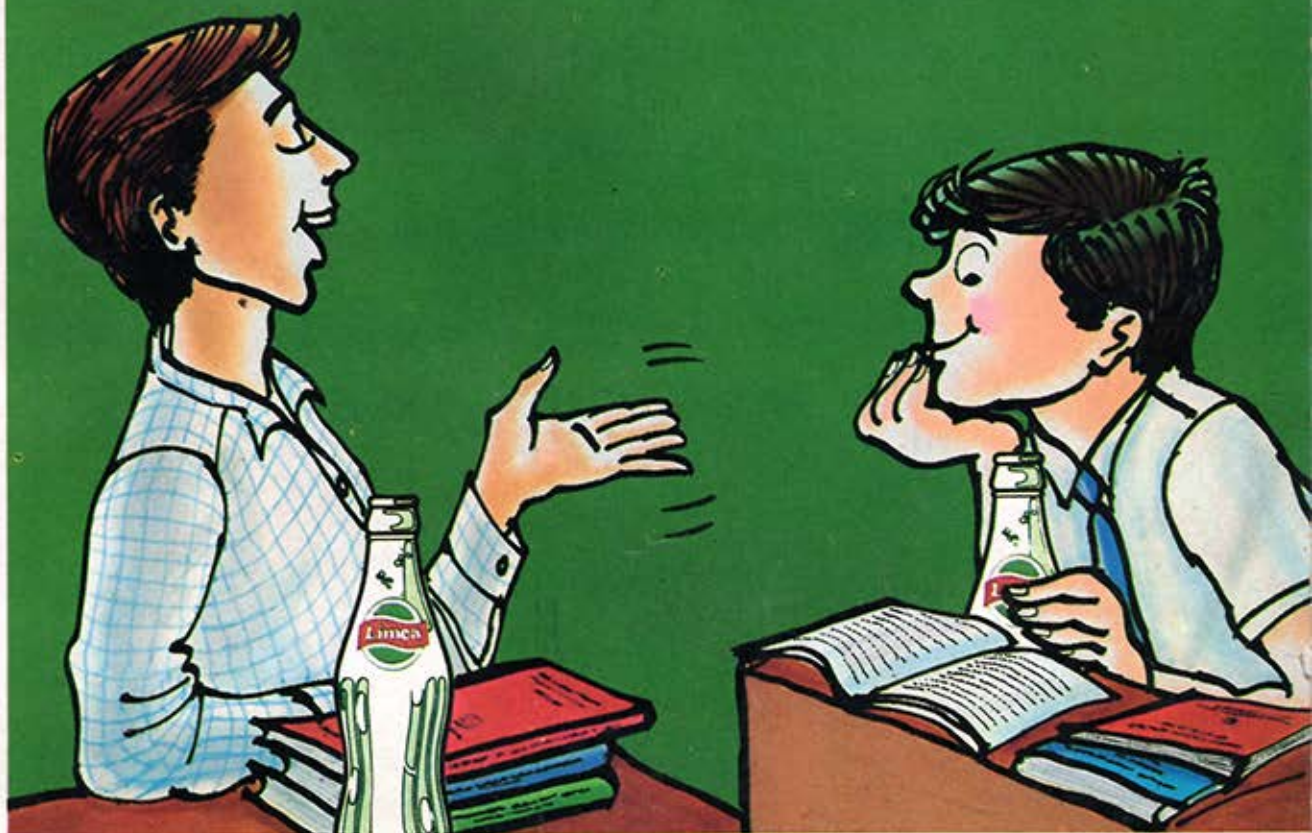
wondering how to brighten up that dismal place. She has planted 100 saplings in the premises of the Towers of Silence and she drives around in her white Ambassador every day, checking out the well-being of her saplings and working out their mortality rate. She has been soliciting funds for the painting of benches at the Towers of Silence. She has noticed the need for dustbins to collect the empty eau de cologne bottles that litter the place, discarded by the pallbearers after they have sprinkled the cologne on the bodies. She has noticed some agiaries that need new signboards...and, as she sees what is too familiar to most of us to see, requests trickle in. Like a request to do something about the empty flowerbeds outside the Vatcha Agiary in Fountain. To green a little flowerbed, probably not more than two feet square, is not a request that could have been made to the Bombay Parsi Punchayet - steeped as it is in problems of greater magnitude, like housing, and dwindling numbers, allocation of trust funds, electioneering and politicking, nor is it a request that would be entertained at a tea-meeting of the Time and Talents Club.

What we are witnessing is the awakening of a belief within these young people that there are many things within their sphere of influence, and that the services they are rendering are important to the tone of the community.

Of course, it might not last, it might not amount to anything more than a summer interlude. For Khursheed - pink of shoes and pink of socks, pink of shorts, pink of shirt and cheek, and pink with enthusiasm - leaves in August for the US, where she will study pre-medical sciences, and her little movement here might well collapse. The spirit she has generated amongst her friends might well dissipate. Though she plans to organize the volunteers into small groups that will individually be in charge of the Parsee General Hospital, the J.J. Hospital's Parsi Ward, the maintenance of the Doongerwadi, the maintenance of agiaries, the breeding of vultures in collaboration with the Bombay Natural History Society, and even the breeding of young Zoroastrians themselves, the future of her movement is still uncertain. So far, no one has volunteered to take on her self-imposed responsibilities.

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Above (left) Naseeruddin Shah
and Anupam Kher

Right: Shabana Azmi

Below (from left) Vijaya
Mehta, Azmi, Shah, Malati
Vaidya-Tambe and Karanjia

Bottom: Shah and Kalapesi



(Photos: Homiyar Mistry, Hornz Prints)



Shooting *Pestonjee*

Made for the television screen, the star-studded film, directed by Vijaya Mehta, features Shabana Azmi, Naseeruddin Shah, Anupam Kher and Kiran Thakur Singh

Homi J. Rogers

The Parsi has always been an important fixture of Hindi commercial cinema: most movies have a junior artiste (a polite term for an extra) dressed in a Parsi dagli cackling away "dikra..." or driving a ramshackle vintage car with an expression aimed at making the viewer laugh, or the now standard Piloo Wadia and her look-alikes pleading with the hero for a *pappi* (kiss on the cheek). Why, all extras in Bombay's Bollywood, as its scribes refer to it, have a wardrobe consisting of one doctor's coat, one suit, one inspector's uniform, one *goonda* (villain) outfit, and one Parsi outfit.

So, when word got around that Vijaya Mehta, fresh from her directorial successes of *Rao Saheb* (it won the best film award at the Mannheim Film Festival), and teleplays *Wada Chirebandi* and *Hamidabai Ki Kothi*, was planning to start shooting a movie on Parsis, with a talented star cast including Naseeruddin Shah, four times National Award winner Shabana Azmi, Anupam Kher, the actor who rose to meteoric heights with his maiden performance in *Saaranish*, and his equally-gifted and vivacious wife, Kiran Thakur Singh, ripples of interest were generated.

A certain image of the Parsis has persisted, says Vijaya Mehta, "and while Parsis are fun loving, and know how to laugh at themselves, their greater qualities have not been projected: their qualities of generosity, philanthropy, and the wish to do things right, being particular." *Pestonjee*, a Ran- gayatan production with Vijaya Mehta

wielding the megaphone, is an attempt to present the community for the first time "with all its endearing qualities, idiosyncracies, and foibles," quotes an apparently excited Burjor Karanjia, one-time editor of *Filmfare* and now editor of *Screen*, on whose short story, *The Cost of Dying*, the film is based.

Karanjia is visibly, and not without reason, thrilled that a short story written by him over 30 years ago (it was first published in *The Illustrated Weekly* in the issue dated September 8, 1957) is being made into a full-length feature film by Vijaya Mehta – the first on the Parsi community, if one discounts *Khatta Meetha*, which was an adaptation of a Turkish movie and the American *Yours, Mine and Ours*.

The decision to make a film on Parsis was not conscious, avers Mehta, but came about as a result of her meetings with Karanjia, during one of which he presented her with a collection of his published works. "I read them, and found this particular one most endearing, since it reflected a set of values embedded in the community. I love to direct plays and films with different milieus, and on going through Karanjia's works, I felt that I should do a film on a community which I have known and loved (Vijaya is married to Farrokh, a Parsi, for over 20 years), and have a lot of respect for, presenting them in their true light." For Karanjia, like H.R.F. Keating (known for his detective stories revolving around Inspector Ghote), recognition from the film world has come in late – but in ample measure, as two of

his other short stories (*Two Mistakes* and *Man in Quest of Gold Mine*) are also being made into films.

Pestonjee is the story of two friends – Piroj (Naseeruddin Shah), an accountant in Nusserwanji and Company, and as true a Parsi as they come (the film opens with him looking angrily at a child, and a little later berating men for pasting a poster on a 'No Entry' board); and Pestonjee, better known as Pesi (Anupam Kher), a gentleman of leisure whose estate at Daman is under litigation, and who lives amidst statues and chandeliers on diminishing family wealth and by selling insurance for the Good Luck Insurance Company and stories (*Mehra-ni Musibat* and *Sasuji-no Santaap*) to the *Jam-e-Jamshed*.

Jeroo Badshah (Shabana Azmi) is the girl from Aden (30-plus, and yet unmarried, like several Parsis) who is shown to both the friends on separate occasions by Tehmina (Mehra Vakil) a *kajwali* (match-maker). She is engaged to Pestonjee, as he says 'Yes' first. He is not aware, at any stage, that his friend has also seen the same girl, and liked her. The dramatic confrontation between the two friends results from the silent love that Piroj continues to nurse for Jeroo who, as the story progresses, turns out to be quite a shrew. She drives her husband into the arms of Soona (Kiran Thakur Singh), his lawyer in the litigation case and mother of his child – a child denied to him by Jeroo. Piroj, however, continues to view Soona with scorn and derision – till he visits her after she

bears the cost of Pestonjee's funeral expenses, which Jeroo pleads off with a hysterical outburst: "Hearse bulane ke liye paise lagte hain...chotese choti bungli ke liye bhi paisa dena parta hain...ne dastur mobed kai mofat mein nai aate...ghar mein kuch bhi nahin hain... (The hearse costs money...you have to pay even for the smallest bungli...and dastur-mobeds don't give honorary service...there's no money in the house)."

Pestonjee is a point of view film. Piroj is the narrator; he analyses the events and passes judgment. Through his point of view, the Parsi ethos and the set of values held by the community are presented. Piroj reflects the general thinking of the community - its mores and its myriad moods. Naseeruddin Shah, who plays this pivotal role, strives to bring out the nuances by soaking himself in the Parsi ambience. He is present for the shootings hours before the shot, quietly studying the atmosphere of the Parsi home, the picture frames, and the pieces of furniture. "It's probably because I am a slow learner," he says unassumingly. Dressed in a white shirt and white pant, folded at the bottom, Shah has trimmed his hair to give himself a typical Parsi haircut, and walks with a slight stoop. The physical resemblance and gait are so striking that Shah could pass for a Parsi. "Probably my ancestors being from Afghanistan helps," Shah says with a smile when complimented.

Like him, Azmi and Kher (shooting of the scenes with Kiran Thakur Singh had not commenced at the time of writing this story) too have slipped into their roles, and physically resemble Parsis. Azmi, with an air of mock-despondency, moves around the sets introducing herself, with her bob haircut complete with a curl, and a rich lace-bordered sari. She has been watching and meeting many Parsis, at Mehta's instance, so as to bring out that "finer fiber" in her performance. Kher visited the Ripon Club where, incidentally, some scenes are also to be shot, to meet a character Mehta spotted, who might be like Pestonjee.

Though they have not modelled themselves on any particular characters, the cast has imbibed the *Parsipanu* from personal observation of the community ("I've always been interested in Parsis," says Shah), and by closely studying members of the com-



Dina Hakim (left) with Vijaya Mehta

munity at two of Mehta's parties where they mingled with her Parsi friends. But, of course, what must have helped most in giving "texture and color" to their performance is Mehta's practice, since her theater days, of working out detailed biographies of the characters for the actors to study. "The actors must know what they have been doing for the part of their life that is not being filmed, so that from the first second on screen, they appear as human beings."

Though Mehta's unusual technique calls for a lot of planning and study before the actual shooting starts, it not only ensures swift shooting [she expects to 'can' the movie (complete filming) within 40 days], but also permits her and the cast to remain relaxed on the sets. She seems to do little 'directing,' and yet, as a result of the rehearsals conducted where the shooting script is explained in great detail, the actual filming requires very few 'takes.'

Mehta started work on *Pestonjee* in earnest around late February/early March. She fleshed out Karanjia's story, "breathed soul into it," as she wanted to make it representative of how Parsis live. Yet, as Karanjia points out, she did not maim or maul his original concept, and all changes were made only with his approval. The screenplay was written jointly "over 13 to 14 long meetings," says Karanjia. "First, she wrote it in Hindi, then I said the same thing in Parsi Gujarati, as a Parsi would say it," and then it was synthesized. A sample: "Tees varaski hogi ne? Is umar mein Aden mein kon milne vala hai? Pun tau bee

Pesi kyoo? Paisa vaisa kai nai Pesi ke paas. Sab Homi leke baitha hai. (She must be thirty? At that age, who would she get in Aden? But why Pesi? He has no money. It's all with Homi.)"

The pronunciation is Parsi-ish, and the cast, with whom Mehta started work in mid-May, has had to work on intonation too. "They have all shown a tremendous amount of determination. Their involvement is total. They share my respect for the characters," beams Mehta. The admiration is mutual. For Kher, it is round two with Mehta, having starred in her earlier movie *Rao Saheb*. But for the others, it is the first time they are working with Mehta. Yet, like Kher, they have given block dates and even sacrificed their professional fee to have the privilege of being directed by *bai*, as they fondly call her.

While the lead quartet is non-Parsi ("I am not aware of any Parsi actor or actress who could give me as sensitive a performance," says Mehta, justifying her choice), Parsi actors are doing important character roles. Rusi Sethna, a stage veteran who has acted in many Adi Marzban plays way back in the '50s and '60s, plays Burjor, Pesi's neighbor; his nephew, Rooky Dadachandji, whose performance in *Biloxi Blues* is currently drawing rave reviews, plays his son Vispy, "Pesi's little friend," a cricket enthusiast who attends Cathedral and John Connon School. Rusi and his wife Mary (also in the cast), who teaches speech and drama at Queen Mary's, Azmi's alma mater, speak adoringly of their nephew Rooky. He had played, we learn, the boy Zarathushtra in Gool Savaksha's *Life of Zarathushtra*. Dady Sarkari, a thespian of the Parsi stage, plays Bomanji Badshah, Jeroo's (Azmi's) father, while Vera Sorabjee, yet another stage actress, transforms herself with ease from a smart, middle-aged Parsi lady to Jeroo's old *fui* (aunt) complete with a *kor-wali* sari, red sapats (slippers) and a tightly-wrapped mathubanu.

"We are elated to be on the project," enthuse the Sethnas who, like other Parsis, had sought a clarification from Mehta that the film would not portray the community as buffoons. They agreed to play the roles on being assured that what was envisaged was not a burlesque or a comedy, but a serious attempt to look at the Parsis as



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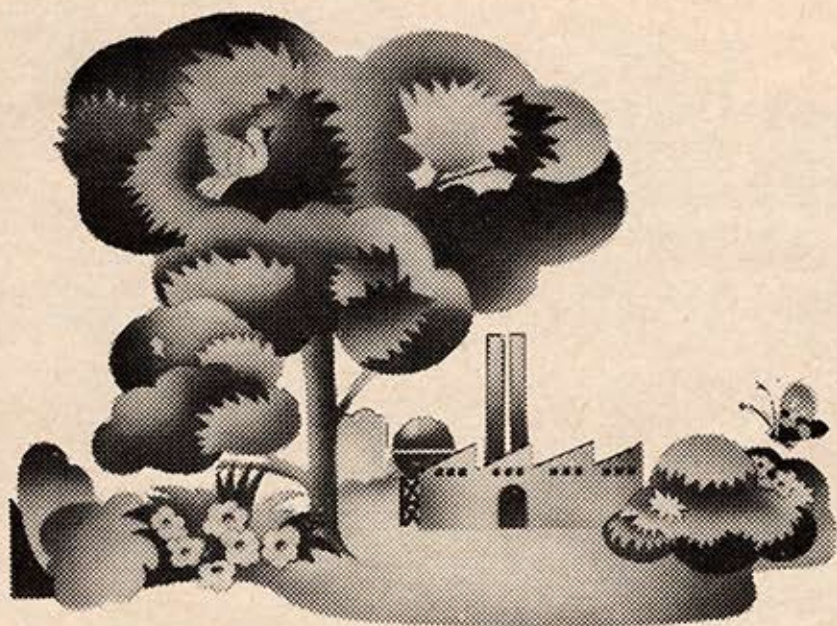
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has been done at Dina Hakim's house on Hornby Road (as Karanjia still prefers to call Dadabhai Naoroji Road), the main thoroughfare in downtown Bombay. Hakim, who was approached through a cousin of hers known to Farrokh Mehta, consented, extending the fullest cooperation. Hakim's long rectangular hall filled with ornate objets d'art, typical Parsi porcelain pieces and impressive statues, is an archetypal Parsi house. At one end is the ubiquitous piano, which Jeroo plays. Azmi has been taking piano lessons, though she confesses that her nephew picks up tunes faster than her. "But at least I will be able to simulate playing," she grins.

As shooting gets under way, the hall gets cluttered with modern cinematic equipment, lights and rolling cameras

On the sets of 'Pestonjee'

they are. After *On Wings of Fire*, the community has been wary of its projection on celluloid. Even now, Mary Sethna quietly expresses her inner fear that the Council of Vigilant Parsis ("who are they, anyway?") should not bear down upon poor Pestonjee for wearing a sudreh, which Kher, like Shah, dons with consummate ease, and freely moves about in on the sets.

Mehta, however, foresees no such problems. "I do not like to pry into people's private beliefs; what right do I have?" she counters, when asked whether *Pestonjee* could stir up a hornet's nest for its true-to-life portrayal of the community. "My film, hence, should not offend anyone. It is not a documentation of Parsi customs — which fascinate me with their close similarities to Hindu rituals — but a story of human relationships." Spurred by respect for a community's beliefs and practices, Mehta has purposely diluted the thrust of Karanjia's original story, which took a cynical view of the heavy cost of dying in the community. Instead, the screenplay brings out the conflicting relationships between the main characters, culminating in the enlightenment of Piroj, as he begins to understand the true natures of Jeroo and of Soona.

So as not to offend anyone's sensibilities, Mehta even dispensed with the *paidast* (funeral) ceremony mentioned in the story ["a chained dog was brought near the body, as is our custom, and its steady stare was taken as

the final sign that life was extinct. In a tiny procession we followed J.P. (Pestonjee in the film) to the Tower, where the birds took over."] Despite the stronger visual impact of the funeral, Mehta settled for the uthamna ceremony (performed on the third day after death). Here too, out of reverence for the beliefs of the community, Mehta has composed a long shot of the prayers being said, and no non-Parsi (barring herself) will be allowed within 25 feet of the 'mock uthamna.'

Aware that shooting at Doongerwadi itself would mean applying to the trustees of the property, whose wings have been singed by *Fire*, Mehta has shot the ceremony at an unusual location: the grounds of her old school, St Columba's at Gowalia Tank. The school compound, which is shaded by giant elms and has a solitary pea-hen strutting about, has a tranquil air. For over a week, Mehta has camped in the school's Omega wing which she has furnished with resplendent sofa sets from her own house. Mehta has transformed other parts of the school to resemble the Doongerwadi bungli and Piroj's house in Bombay (with her sofas, an antique clock and picture frames). On the other hand, the sets of the company guest house in Bhusaval — where Piroj gets himself transferred and stays with his Man Friday, (named what else, but Chagan) are totally depersonalized, bereft of all Parsi artifacts and trappings.

Another large chunk of the shooting



standing in juxtaposition with old-time chandeliers and large, well-padded sofas and chairs. Hakim's house is tailor-made to Mehta's requirements, showing an upper middle-class Parsi family in the late '50s and early '60s, the period in which Karanjia wrote his story, and which Mehta has retained for the setting of the film. "The decision to make it a period piece was intentional," Mehta confirms. "The attitudes reflected in Karanjia's work don't hold water today. The story could not fit into modern idiom: thinking has changed considerably during the past 30 years. Then, for example, it was not people who got married, but families," Mehta elucidates.

With a hawk's eye for detail Mehta, along with her art director Roshan

Kalapesi, has recreated the period. Kalapesi, the chairperson of the Crafts Council of India, was known to Mehta from her theater days, and brings to her new role her rich and varied experience in theater and her knowledge of the arts. Kalapesi professes little difficulty in striking the authentic note: "After all," she says with an air of quiet dignity, "we had lived through the times, and well remember how it was then." The Parsi actors have also helped, by sharing their experiences, and bringing in their own costumes and period jewelry. Azmi's engagement sari, for example, was the one Sorabjee (playing her *fui*) wore for her wedding. And the ladies attending Jeroo and Pestonjee's engagement ceremony, shot in Hakim's hall, had all decked up in their *garas* (embroidered Chinese silk saris) and *kasbi kor* (broad border embroidered with jari on net or Chinese satin) saris, selected from their own collections by Kalapesi. A week later, the same ladies are in their black saris (at that time, women wore black at funerals, and only a few younger ladies wore white) for shooting the *uthamna*. "No one sari is similar to the other," Kalapesi asserts as she points out to the ladies, seated draped in their

khyals (self-colored interwoven Chinese design saris), *kada-batatas* (big white dots on a black background) and *chini chirmis* (a kind of cloth from China, worn with Swiss *khakhars*, or borders embroidered in French knots). Kalapesi's standing instructions include "no nylons," and "dark shades of lipstick, or no lipstick," to ensure total authenticity, though Mehta claims to have taken some artistic licence, as "authenticity has to be seen."

While Kalapesi has the last word on puggies versus phetas, or Parsi pegs versus cold drinks ("remember, there was prohibition at this time"), Mehta freely consults the Parsis on the sets, and makes fervent pleas like "On which side of the groom does your bride stand?" and "*poorab disha kahan* (where's the East?)" when performing the *moorat* (inauguration) at Hakim's place on Sunday, July 19, 1987 (*roj* Marespand, *mah* Bahman). Breaking away from the tradition of film *moorats*, Mehta launched *Pestonjee* with a *Parsi sagan* (auspicious ceremony), presenting members of the unit with a *nariyal* (coconut) and *par-bidyu* (envelope containing money – probably the signing amount) as they stood on a *patla* (stool) facing the east.

And ever since then, it has been "silence – sound – camera – take" as the actors, who have stayed overnight at Hakim's place on many an occasion to "breathe in the Parsi atmosphere," start emoting, and Mehta cans in what could well be yet another classic on celluloid.

Karanjia, who is a staunch believer

Pestonjee attempts to present the community "with all its endearing qualities, idiosyncracies, and foibles"

in Zoroastrianism, "in its pristine form," as he stresses, has written a tale that has come a long way from the Rs 500 it fetched him for his labor of "over two months," to a film project budgeted at Rs 12 lakhs (of which the National Film Development Corporation has loaned eight lakhs of rupees), and slated for release as a telefilm. But the issue at stake – the cost of dying – has changed little over the past three decades. While Mehta ruefully concedes that experimental (or realist) cinema has yet to find takers, and that production costs can be offset and mass exposure achieved only if the film is screened on Doordarshan, *Pestonjee*, judging by the inputs, is a film that deserves to be widely seen. Not only by the non-Parsis, who, it is to be hoped will then better understand the community with all its idiosyncracies, but also by the community itself. Leading institutions could consider holding charity shows with a view to augmenting their funds and, in the process, providing the film with a regular commercial release. Mehta's uncanny observations on the community, and the sensitive portrayals by non-Parsi award-winning and trendsetting stars, could possibly provide an answer to Burns' prayer, "Would some power the giftie gie us/To see oursels as others see us," by holding up a mirror to the community.

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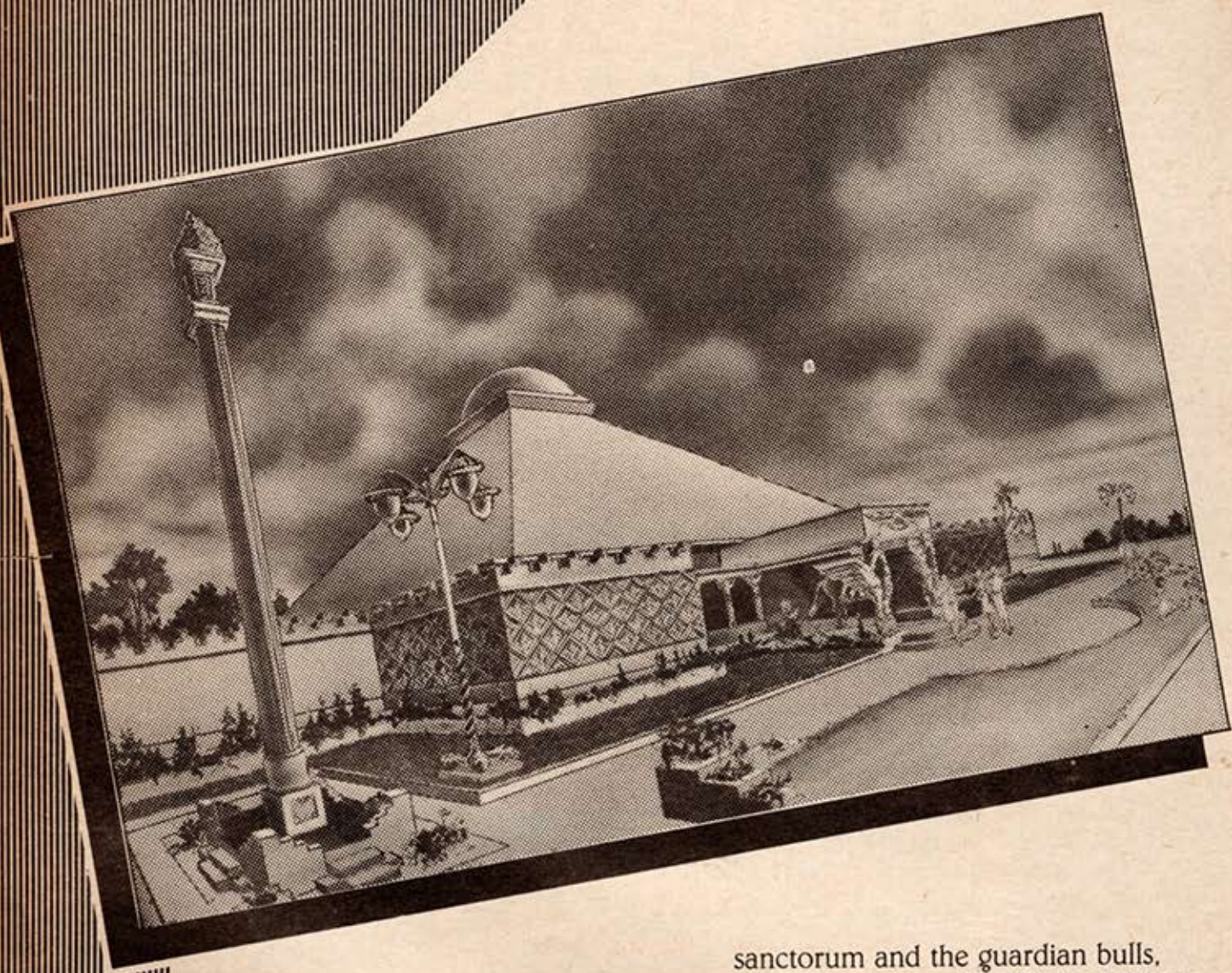
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Your most meaningful contribution would be — that you are present at Sanjan on November 22, when we lay the foundation stone of the Dar-e-Meher.

Indeed, your presence and your good wishes will mean the world to us.

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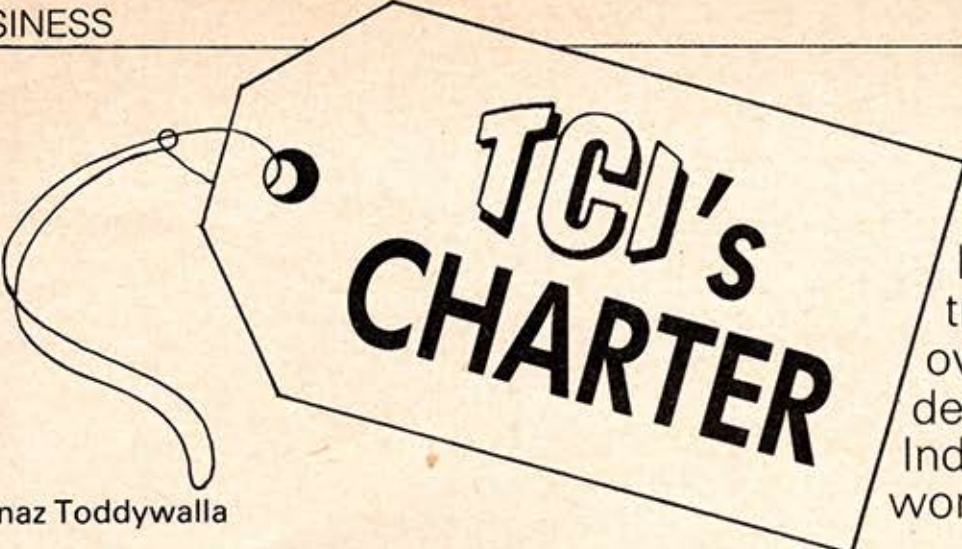
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TCI's CHARTER

Surmounting hurdles to travelling for over 25 years, TCI is determined that India remain on the world tourism map

Parinaz Toddywalla

The fool wanders, the wise man travels – goes an old saying. But no description is offered for the one who makes others travel: the experience and wisdom which go into the formation of a travel agency, and the adventure and grit needed to be ranked as the best travel agency in the country. The Travel Corporation (India) Pvt Ltd, (TCI) – formed 25 years ago by the merger of the tour departments of the Katgara-owned Jeena and Co, the Parikh-owned Lee and Muirhead (India) Pvt Ltd, and the Kotak-owned N. Jamnadas and Co – is all set to journey even further.

TCI's present average of organizing four tours a week has been compared by director Nari Katgara to four a year which was the case in the early days of Jeena and Co. The 45-crore turnover agency is currently laying emphasis on cruises in the Indian Ocean, exploring unknown tourist destinations in India, and catering to more inbound air charters from Europe, Japan and the USA. This year, TCI tours will entice Indian travellers to the USSR, Southeast Asia, Africa, USA, Europe and the UK, among other destinations. "A lot of people are under the misconception that TCI offers only package tours," clarified Ms Meher Bhandara who is in charge of media and publicity. Referring to the simultaneous release of TCI's different advertisements, Meher admitted, "Perhaps the public finds it confusing."

The sole agents in India for Greyhound, Eurail and Britrail among

outbound tours, TCI's closest competitors are Sind Oriental Travel Company (SOTC) and Raj Travels, informs Meher. Viewing competition as "good" since it "keeps everyone on their toes," Meher noted confidently, "We are national and accessible. We've got an edge over the others."

Just as reasons for going abroad could vary from business calls, attendance at trade fairs, holidays, visiting relatives, or medical treatment, so also would service requirements differ. "In a travel agency requiring personalized service, it is impossible to satisfy our clients 100 percent," pointed out Nari's younger brother Adi Katgara, also a director of TCI, adding, "though this is what we try to achieve, as an agency. But if a principal lets you down, there is nothing you can do in a monopolistic set-up." As reported in TCI's silver jubilee brochure, 25 offices in India and eight abroad, manned by over 900 staff members, assist travellers reach their destinations.

Echoing her father's sentiments, Meher says, "We have always got the interest of the passenger at heart. If a person is interested in visiting Singapore, we would advise him: 'You can also take a halt at Bangkok because it is en route and will not hike the air fare.'"

After each group tour, passengers are asked to fill in a service form to gauge their response to TCI's facilities like food, accommodation, sight-seeing, courtesy extended by the tour guide, etc. Over the years, the evaluation has served as positive reinforcement to TCI though Meher admits that there have been a few minor grouses like: 'We were not allowed inside the Louvre on a particular holiday,' or 'The hotel room was not ready (if they reached before time)' or that 'The handle of the airbags supplied by TCI broke.' With a laugh Meher added, "I am planning to attach a label on the bags stating: 'Will only hold one kilogram weight.'"



TCI directors Nari (left) and Adi Katgara



Tourists on Jeena's trip to Europe, Berlin 1937

Their tour leaders have to undergo a special orientation course before being deputed the responsibility of handling clients. "Since the cost of the air passage is borne by the travel agency, the idea of working as a tour escort sounds glamorous to many people. We prefer sending our own staff whom we can hold responsible. The leader is supposed to know what to do if one of the tour members is caught shoplifting green socks in Italy (the incident and the color green are still vivid in Meher's memory); what to do if a passport or ticket is lost; if a tour member falls ill or dies."

Viewing Parsis as "fun-loving tourists," Meher called them "adventurous and liberal. We enjoy having them because they are unique," Meher trailed off, the cleft in her chin deepening to accentuate her smile. Adi remarked, "They are great travellers - always looking for bargains." Nari, who has been longest on the travel scene, noted, "They are adaptable. They may not speak the language, yet you find them mixing with Italians, Swiss...always proud of their own religion when travelling. With whatever little knowledge I have, even I promote it. They are not exclusive, that is why the Zoroastrians abroad are faring well. But if they were to work closer, thinking of the community first and the personality next, organizations abroad would make a greater impact." While talking to *Parsiana*, Nari received a telephone call from a Parsi who, after years of travelling, had realized that the birthdate on the passport was wrongly recorded and sought Nari's advice. The counsel will perhaps not be

accepted, noted Nari with a sigh of resignation.

Meher recounted an anecdote of an old Parsi lady who had booked her plane ticket to London and would repeatedly keep reminding TCI officials to ensure that she got a window seat. When it was explained that she would need to make this request at the airport, she was not placated. Finally, she revealed the reason for wanting a window seat: "*Ghabrat thai tau kaach nichche kari sakai* (If I feel airsick I can lower the glass)!"

On another occasion, a Parsi gentleman who had spent many hours planning his itinerary to best utilize his Eurail pass was handed his tickets and bid farewell. Absent-mindedly he returned to the TCI counter and enquired: "At which station do I board the train, VT or Bombay Central?"

Describing these customers as *Bhandara*: recounting tourist tales



"cute," Meher indirectly acknowledges philosopher Seneca's words: "He that would make his travels delightful must first make himself delightful." Such delightful Parsis have accompanied TCI on many enterprising ventures. In fact Jehangir Katgara, father of Adi and Nari, organized his first inland tour in 1925 at the behest of family and friends who urged him to take them along to all the new and exciting places he visited. Jehangir was then the proprietor of Jeena and Co, a clearing, warehousing and freight forwarding agency which had been established as an indenting office in 1900 by his father Pallonji and his partner Jamshedji Dastoor.

The first tour conducted by Jehangir marked the entry of Indians into a domain which was the exclusive prerogative of the foreigners. The success of the internal tours gave him the confidence to organize tours to Europe, Japan, Ceylon, and the Far East. A preserved copy of a 50-year-old pamphlet announced "Jeena's conducted 1937 tour to see the coronation and the Paris exhibition - two greatest events of the year" at a cost of Rs 2,400 to 3,000 for a 55-day cruise and Rs 3,700 to 4,300 for a 97-day cruise.

Also popular in the 1930s was another of Jeena's ventures - Exhibition Trains, better known as Shops on Wheels, which plied from October through March, and carried indigenous goods from all over the country for exhibition and sale. During the Second World War the frequency of the tours abated for a while. In 1950 Jeena handled its first group of tourists to India, and today TCI is recognized as the largest inbound tour operator, notes the silver jubilee brochure.

Also helping the senior Katgaras on TCI are Nari's son Jehangir and Adi's son Pallan. More involved with Jeena are Nari's sons Sam and Cyrus, and Adi's son Homi. Says Meher, "There is enough work to keep all the family members occupied."

Originally, cruises were organized on the old Peninsular and Oriental (P&O) Liners. After the formation of TCI, ships like the M.V. Akbar were chartered to accommodate around 500 Indian tourists to the Far East - Singapore, Colombo, Penang and Kuala

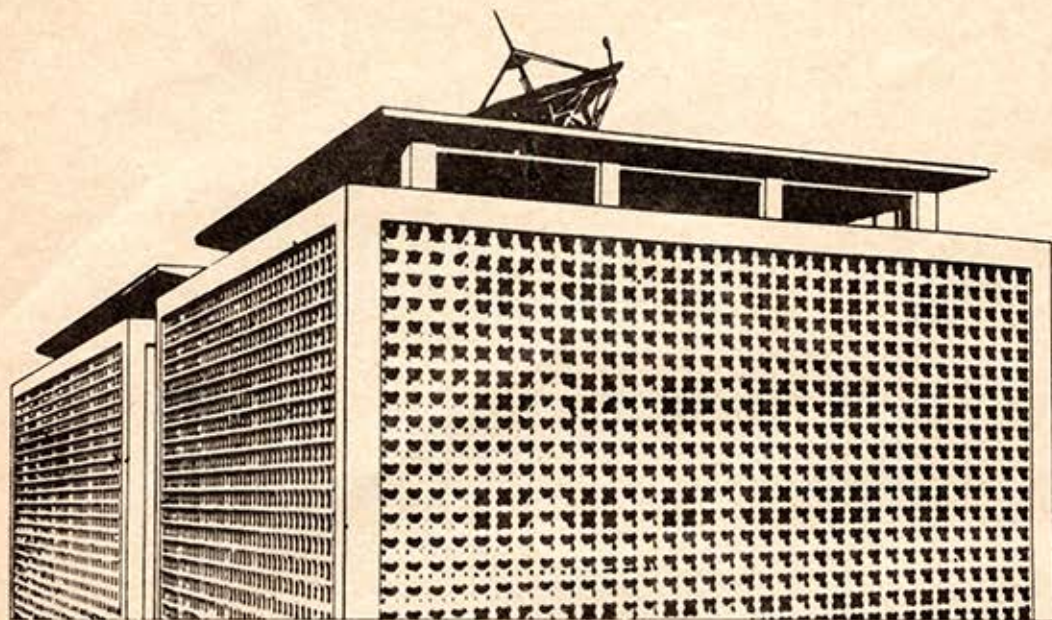
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-

The Soya Strategy

After introducing Great Shake as a fun drink, Noble Soya now plans to promote it as a health food

Parinaz Toddywalla

The tiny taste buds lining the tongue enjoy a veto power in all matters of food purchases, overruling the cost factor, the body's metabolic needs, the presentation of the food item or its acceptability among friends. A relatively new experience for these taste cells were the flavored soya drinks, Great Shake, introduced early this year to the Indian consumer market by Noble Soya House Limited.

This new concept in instant soya foods is marketed by Godrej Soaps which, for the first time, joined hands with the Bhiwandiwallas and the Sheths of Great Eastern Shipping to enter the public market. Adi Godrej, chairman of Noble Soya and director of Godrej Soaps remarked, "Indians seem to have a preference for sweet things. Our test surveys indicated that people would like the soya drink to be sweeter. Even with tea, they like lots of sugar, so we had to enhance the sweetness (of the soya drinks)." Nadir Godrej, director on the boards of Noble Soya and Godrej Soaps, who is

more involved with the technical production of the foods, unlike his brother Adi who is concerned with the marketing aspect, was convinced that "It is never possible to agree on 'the right taste' for any food product."

Before the advent of the strawberry and the mango seasons, the drink, in its three flavors — strawberry, mango, and chocolate — was introduced first to the Hyderabad market in end February. Within two months the tetrapacks, priced at three rupees each, were on the shelves at Poona, Delhi, Bhopal and Indore, and eventually in Bombay. After the monsoon lull, the rest of India will be included on the sales map of Great Shake.

Soya drinks manufactured by cottage industries are unable to control the chalky appearance and flavor which are the natural residue of the conversion process when milk is extracted from the beans. One such soya drink, marketed cheaply in bottles and pouches, was already being sold in De-

li when Great Shake was launched there. The technology for eliminating this chalky flavor was imparted to Noble Soya by their collaborators, Kibun Co Ltd of Japan, who control 40 percent of the world's soya beverage market. But the Noble product, priced higher than the earlier soya drink, was not accepted in Delhi. "Once the image is down for a product (as was created by the previously introduced soya milk) it continues that way," explained Adi. Experimentation on the formulae for different flavors remains an ongoing process for Noble Soya's research team because Kibun cannot help with formulae for typically Indian flavors.



Nadir Godrej



Adi Godrej



Reluctant to give a regional break-up of the feedback received, Nadir asserted, "The response was very good in Hyderabad, good in Bombay and not so good in Delhi," yet in Chandigarh, which is close to Delhi, the product was well received, he added.

Judging from the per capita consumption, Great Shake is believed to have made a three to four percent dent in the total soft drink market, estimates Adi. Among tetrapacks, after Frooti which holds the largest share, Great Shake is the second choice, according to the chairman of Noble Soya. The entry of Great Shake and Amul's chocolate and elaichi flavored milk shakes into the consumer market being almost simultaneous, competition was rife. Claiming to be ahead of Amul, Great Shake followed up its fun drink marketing strategy by publicizing literature which promoted soya as "This brown little, round little bean

soya milk is considered an ideal substitute. "You often hear parents complaining 'bachha ne dudh sadtu' nathi (milk does not agree with the child's metabolism)" — a lactose intolerance problem that plagues 40 to 50 percent of the Indian population — yet they don't want to discontinue the milk feeds," regretted Adi. While 90 percent of the Mongoloid population suffers from lactose intolerance, the Europeans' intolerance is only to the extent of 10 percent. "Spray dried soya milk powder could be economically competitive with cow's milk," Adi gave a comparative analysis.

"We perhaps need to stress more on the health angle," acknowledged Adi. "Our product gives nutrition without negatives. The drink is very filling. A couple of Great Shakes is almost like a meal. A Great Shake and a light snack would be quite the concept for an afternoon meal. By and large, the Indian population is getting increasingly health conscious — Parsis perhaps a little more than average. We are on the learning slope as to how to present new health products to the Indian community."

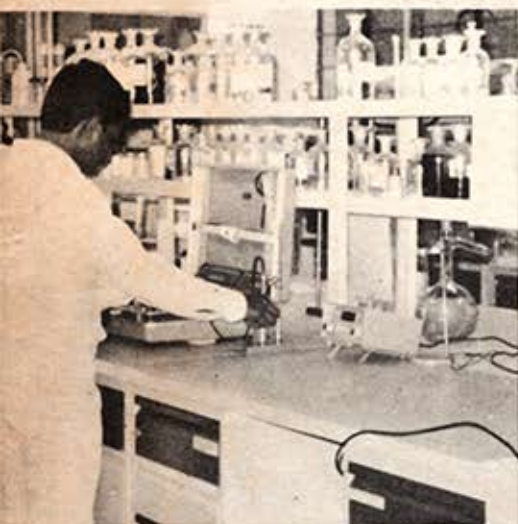
With a fourth flavor — American ice-cream — already out in the market, experimentation with others, like coffee, will soon offer a wider choice to the selective consumer. But the research team feels a certain amount of confinement. Nadir, in a forthright manner, pointed out, "The food laws in India are quite restrictive." Then, correcting his adjective he said, "Quite archaic...emulsifiers and things like that which the Japanese would use, we are not permitted to; India for

example has still not allowed flavored, colored margarine."

For those looking for a thirst quencher in the soya drinks instead of a meal substitute, a new drink with greater juice content and fewer soya nutrients may soon be available. Those consuming it solely for its nutritional quality may look forward to a plain, unflavored soya drink, perhaps under a different brand name, which will highlight the health aspect of a soya beverage.

"Getting products out on time is very important," pointed out Nadir. "Not many new companies succeed in doing that. But bigger companies can more easily overcome the problems and hence are able to work on schedule." Initially playing down the Godrej involvement, Nadir said, "The market response always depends on the product itself," and added as an afterthought, "but you certainly get more people to try it if the Godrej name is there."

Initial TV announcements of Great Shake coincided with the concluding episodes of the Godrej sponsored popular TV serial, *Buniyaad*, thereby tapping a vast viewership. "Though Godrej doesn't manage the work on a day-to-day basis, the marketing and distribution is looked after by Godrej Soaps. Technically, I am a non-executive chairman," explained Adi. "The soya project was not initiated by us. Since we had never been involved in a public limited company and in the production of readily consumable food products, we thought it would be interesting." The corporate office of Noble Soya is housed in the administra-



Experimenting with flavors for soya foods
(Right) Noble Soya plant at Mandideep

with protein." Indicating that soya has 43 percent protein content (as compared to 30 percent in cheese, 25 percent in dals, 18 percent in meat, and 13 percent in eggs), a good amount of fats, and yet "its oil contains no cholesterol," the legume is projected as an ideal food.

Healthwise, soya consumption is believed to be ideal for those complaining of heart problems and diabetes. As explained by Adi, non-vegetarian protein foods are usually at a disadvantage when compared to soya because they have a high fat content. For growing children who have an aversion to the saturated fats found in milk,





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tive office building of Godrej Soaps at their complex at Vikhroli.

When Noble Soya functions at full capacity in 1988, they hope to achieve their targetted turnover of Rs 20 crores. By then they should be marketing the new soya drinks, soup mixes, and perhaps soya ice-cream, soya paneer and bean curd (an analogue of cheese but of a softer variety) which feature in their long-term plans. Soya granules and soya dog foods may also materialize. Presently, a staff of around 80 coordinates the production activities of Noble Soya at their mechanized plant at Mandideep in Madhya Pradesh. (Eighty percent of India's soya crop is reportedly cultivated in Madhya Pradesh.) Alfa-Laval Food and Dairy International, Sweden, Tetra Pak Development Ltd, Switzerland, and Vulcan-Laval Ltd, Pune assisted Noble Soya in the erection and commissioning of the plant at Mandideep from where the aseptically packaged soya drinks are loaded on to trucks to be carried to the different distribution centers.

"India is a high problems-high opportunities market. You have to live with one to benefit from the other," Nadir's cheerful countenance reflected his optimism. Regarding arrival of Parsis on the Indian business scene today, Nadir opined, "Even today there are Parsi entrepreneurs who have started out. But most are on the lookout for a low risk environment and feel happy there...Parsis have always been more of professionals than businessmen. The nineteenth century saw more businessmen because there weren't many other communities (venturing out). There is a lot of reward but some people think it's not desirable to launch small-scale industries. In England and America it is the small companies which create more jobs...In whatever field, Parsis have always

been successful." Nadir, who has been a director of Godrej for the past nine years after finishing his master's degree in chemical engineering from Stanford University and his MBA (master of business administration) from Harvard University, admits that, had he not been born into the Godrej household, he would have "probably been a scientist though I wouldn't be surprised if my brother (Adi) had been an entrepreneur."

Giving a wider perspective, Adi noted, "Among Parsis, the percentage of entrepreneurs would be very high. There is an even distribution in the different professions, yet you still see a lot of successful Parsi entrepreneurs. The old large Parsi firms are doing well. Even the small firms are healthy, growing, and vibrant," observed Adi who has completed his master's in engineering and industrial management from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

As viewed by Adi, "The Indian economy is not in very good health. Though the long-term outlook is still good, the economy was much better a year and a half ago. There is a demand recession; the stock market is depressed." He was not overly concerned about the fall in the share prices of Noble Soya from Rs 42 to Rs 25 for a scrip bearing the face value of Rs 10: "This is not unusual because the value had gone up to exaggerated amounts even before production had started." Noble Soya's first public issue of Rs 26.4 million had been oversubscribed by 20 times, notes their first annual report.

The prosperity once enjoyed by the soya industry is under threat. Drought conditions have led to a marginal decline in the year's soya crop as compared to last year's, noted a report in *India Today* of June 30. But the repercussions were felt more adversely because the soya processing units in-

creased by 75 percent in '85-'86, creating a processing capacity of 21 lakh tonnes as against the 1990 target of 14.4 lakh tonnes. The turbulence has not yet engulfed Noble Soya because, as explained by M.P. Mansinghka, former president of Soyabean Processors Association: "The soya companies which manufacture value-added extruded soya products and food products will be able to keep their heads above water as they have to buy in tonnes and sell in kilos."

Elaborating on the subject, Adi stated that Noble Soya's annual requirements of raw materials have already been met and theirs being a value-added product whose cost factor goes up not because of the raw material but because of extraneous factors like packaging technology, depreciation, labor and interest, the Noble House is not unduly affected. Adi drew an analogy between *chappatis* (unleavened bread) and noodles to explain that while the former was a low value-added wheat product, the latter was considered a high value-added product. The drought would have greater repercussions on low value-added products like soya oil, soya meal, etc.

While the prospects of the soya crop are dependent on natural conditions, the success of Noble Soya's value-added soya products would be correlated to their marketing strategy and the consumers' receptivity. Noticing the regular joggers and keep-fit exercisers mostly in the 20 to 30 age-group, and sometimes in the older group when afflicted by problems, Adi is quite positive that after a decade or two the "present food and drink habits of Indians will change considerably." This belief gives the Noble Soya promoters the confidence that their nutritious soya foods will appeal to weight and health-conscious buyers.

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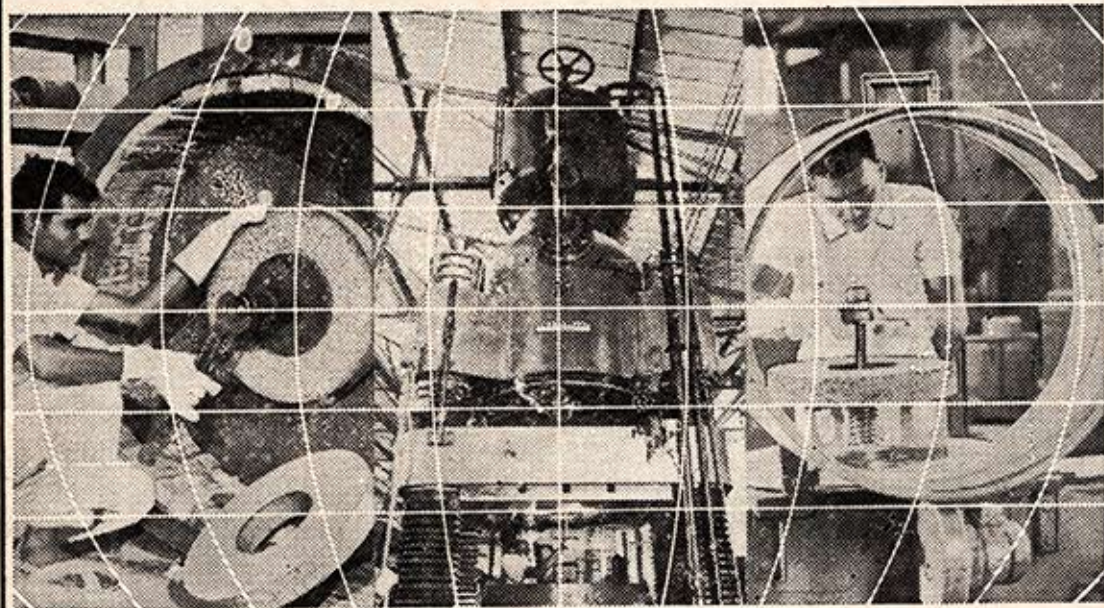
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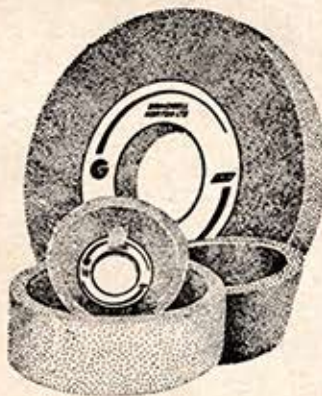


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continued from page 54

Lumpur. TCI's chartered cruises have now been discontinued.

Besides handling normal tourist traffic, TCI has different departments looking after special interest tours, adventure tours, incentive tours, educational travel, and international congresses and conventions. Earning around 12 crores of rupees in foreign exchange in 1985-86 (as notes their silver jubilee brochure), TCI and its closest competitor in inbound travel, SITA World Travel, are the only two organizations in India permitted membership of the International Congress and Convention Association. Bids to host a convention have to be made years in advance, especially when there is arduous lobbying among the prospective host countries. If the bid is accepted, a minimum of three years of prior planning is essential: to issue invitations, to make travel and hotel reservations, and to help the foreigners "to see India through Indian eyes." As Meher put it, "Many people don't realize that India is among the most beautiful countries of the world."

To tap India's unknown scenic spots where tourism had hitherto not been

encouraged, TCI, in the early '60s, operated a hotel in Gangtok, Sikkim. A new division of the company, TCI Hotels and Resorts Pvt Ltd, later managed one resort at the Lakshadweep islands and another at Balrampur. Their Andaman Beach Resort, built in 1978, helped increase the number of tourists to the Andamans from 200 to 5,000. Recalls Adi, "We were in the red for several years before it started paying off." They had even planned a hotel in Sri Lanka, "but fortunately withdrew just before the (ethnic) troubles started." By the turn of the decade, TCI plans to operate 14 more hotels and resorts throughout India.

The Government's claims that around one and a half million tourists visit India annually sound dubious to Adi, who estimates the number of genuine tourists to be hardly half a million. In the Government calculations, there is a lot of duplication because even people returning home to their families for holidays are included in the tally.

Both Adi and Nari continue to serve on various Government advisory committees. Disappointed with the Government's way of functioning, Adi said,

"Whenever a decision is to be put off, a committee is formed." The summoning of meetings without planning an agenda seems to irk Adi. "Apune kai kam dhandho che ke nahi (Do we not have other work to attend to)?" Every minor decision affecting tourism needs the prior sanction of the health, home and finance ministries, which means that action can be postponed indefinitely, explained Adi. Showing a way out, he advised, "There should be a National Tourism Council as the apex body entrusted with the responsibility of taking travel and trading decisions..."

"Though tourism is the largest foreign exchange earner, it is not recognized as an industry." This means that concessions and benefits cannot be availed of. Giving a concrete example, Nari, who was the founder president of the Travel Agents Association of India, went on at length about the difficulties encountered by TCI whilst importing coaches to India. Said Nari, "We were granted a license only after a very long time. Next, the coaches didn't seem to meet the Regional Transport Office's specifications. We were not permitted to operate (them)

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for one year." But the last straw for TCI was having to seek the sanction of the Government and the trade commission when a broken windowpane needed to be substituted with an imported component.

Infrastructure to promote tourism in India is sadly lacking, opine the two brothers whose over 25 years of experience in the travel line has been recognized with membership of the Grand Order of European Travel Organisers. They are the only Indians to be so honored. "We need better resorts, better entertainment, better beaches, better hotels; not all kinds of restrictions," Nari emphasized. "Hotels are good, but compared to the facilities the rates are not comparable with international standards. Hoteliers say, 'the land price is high.' This is where the Government should come in."

Questioning the Government's policy of not permitting certain bridges and waterfalls to be photographed, Adi felt it was "one of the stupidest things. Does the Government realize that with satellites, the advanced countries could have easy access to all these landmarks?"

Though acknowledging that safety

of life and property is top priority for tourists, Nari says the authorities are overdoing it in India. There are "25 jokers hanging around at the airport for security. A handbag which has been cleared by the metallic detector is not considered safe enough. On personal inspection they will lift up a toilet article, a handkerchief, and ask, 'What is this?' It is laughable, but sad." At the airports Nari sees everyone allowed in, except the people who should be. "There are touts, hotel agents, taxiwallas, houseboatwallas; and there are complaints galore."

Nari, the first Indian to be conferred the honorary life membership of the Pacific Asia Travel Association, in Osaka this year, stressed the need for India to work on a "consistent, long-term tourism plan." Brother Adi is more involved with the activities of the American Society of Travel Agents. Irrespective of the Government's attitude, to keep pace with the services offered by travel agencies overseas, TCI plans to computerize all its transactions in the next two years. The opening of a training institute, probably in Bombay, to coach students in the finer aspects of tourism and the op-

eration of travel clubs are among TCI's future projects.

When the directors of TCI were asked to assess the career prospects of aspirants with a wanderlust, Adi replied, "I would not advise my enemy to join the travel profession," but to avoid misunderstanding, added with a smile, "not because I don't want any competition." He later amended his version: "There's tremendous scope if you are willing to stand on your own feet and not depend on Government subsidy."

Sitting at the Jeena office, Nari regretted, "In our small outfit we've tried to bring up Parsis but they are not willing to shoulder responsibility. Very happy with the bonus they receive, Parsis don't feel bad about supercession. They are willing to remain clerks for the rest of their lives. They like to leave office on the stroke of 5, and are reluctant to leave Bombay."

"Actually, any intelligent, growing man would have a future in tourism, because as world tourism increases, India will automatically get its share." For the present, Nari only knows that "India is not ready for tourism. We just talk about it."

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Graphic A-181

continued from page 37

both legs amputated – one lost in an accident while working for the Mukund Iron and Steel Company, the second sacrificed to gangrene. Having received one artificial leg and with a second one on the way, Ichhaporia, who holds a diploma in mechanical and electrical engineering, is ready to take on any desk work. Khurody is anxious to help Ichhaporia reestablish himself in a job and persistently brings up the question with whosoever could help.

For the rest of the J.J.'s Parsi patients, Khurody is looking for an occupational therapist who would spend time with them once or twice a week. Sister Alice, who is in charge of the ward, is "a wonder," and social worker Ms Mani Siganporia has organized help and weekly culinary delights over the years for those forgotten ones; but the impact of the youngsters singing and dancing (for their own pleasure and the patients' entertainment), had to be seen to be believed. As Sister Alice observed, "When were they visited by children before? The few visi-

tors who come are all old people."

Khurody asks why the ward is so bedraggled. "With permission from the dean, we could paint and repair the ward. Schools can visit them once a week." Appalled by the lethargy, apathy and bureaucracy in the community, Khurody says, "nothing gets done because no one is willing to take responsibility..."

"Everything about Parsis is so old and slow. There's need to encourage young people. They have lots of bright ideas. We could have variety programs with just two rupee tickets, organize projects and practical activities..."

It is Khurody's contention that "Parsis are just not willing to give way to the young. They treat us like babies! Everything is an instruction...When youngsters aren't taken seriously, they think their ideas are not valid, so why bother!"

As her horizon widened, Khurody went to meet Ms Roshan Driver, principal of the Byramjee Jeejeebhoy School, armed with an introduction from BPP chairman Dr Aspi Golwala, and was enraptured – by the beautiful

building and the lady, "so delightful, so sparkly-eyed and bright." Driver introduced her to the BPP's two school counsellors – Diana Marfatia and Kamal Shroff – and gave her an opportunity to address the boys, many of whom opted for the Doongerwadi and PGH projects.

Commitment is a family watchword for Khurody. Granddaughter of Dara Khurody, Bombay's dairy commissioner to whom the city owes the world renowned Aarey Dairy, Khurody's community consciousness is perhaps inherited from her mother Roshan, née Kharegat. Her maternal grandfather Dr Rustom Kharegat was a BPP trustee in charge of Doongerwadi and his father, Merwanji Kharegat, was involved in building the PGH. A nas-sessalar's remembrance of how Dr Rustom Kharegat used to invite them to tea touched her deeply.

Khurody has proved that youngsters can be very effective at social work, if the motivator is "someone who is young, one of them and not an older person. They must have fun together. That's the only way to yield results."

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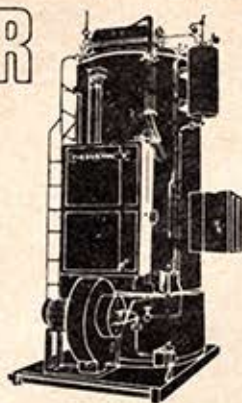
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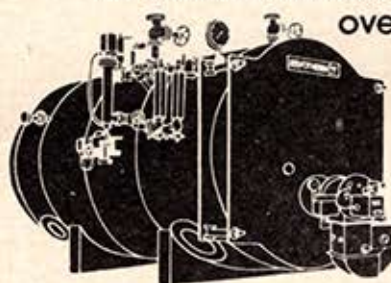
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As the body of a Parsi officer of the Indian Air Force is lowered into the ground, an IAF squadron flying overhead dips in salute and high-ranking officers of all communities pay silent tribute beside the grave. The scenario belongs to the Navroze Baug aramgah, New Delhi, circa 1958.

The event marked the Delhi Parsi Anjuman's (DPA) initial step on the pragmatic path it has chosen to tread. And it succeeded because of strong men at the helm and loyal support from the community's grass roots.

A depressed Nozer Kalyaniwalla returned from Jodhpur where he had failed in an IAF course. Receiving his

call, his wife hurried to meet him at the airport. He rushed home impatiently, crossing her on the way, saw his child and shot himself. Ex DPA president Khushroo Rustomji recalled the tragic happenings: "At the funeral a large number of Kalyaniwalla's IAF comrades wanted to be present. (Delhi Dar-e-Meher's panthaky, the late Daraius) Bagli said, 'We can't allow it.' I took the stand that the boy's friends should not be kept out and the IAF paid this remarkable tribute..."

While Kalyaniwalla was laid to rest, coincidentally, next to his brother who had died several years before, Rustomji was faced with numerous debates and objections. "But the entire

community supported me and from that day non-Parsis have been admitted to the aramgah during funeral services."

Navroze Baug, near Khan Market (about 20 minutes' drive from the dharamshala-agiary complex at Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg), now comprises two and a half acres of trees and flowers — an expansion arranged by the late Shiavax Nargolwala, who succeeded Rustomji as president of the DPA. At one stage the anjuman was worried about burial space and had wondered if future burials would need to be arranged at the Parsi cemetery in Agra. But now there is no such fear thanks to another adjoining plot hav-

Tombs that tell a tale

The Delhi Parsi Anjuman has converted personal tragedies into community milestones

Arnavaz S. Mama



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ing been promised to the anjuman due to Nargolwala's perseverance shortly before his tragic death last year.

Explaining the DPA's stand, Rustomji says, "Problems of Parsis outside Bombay are different. They live among people who are not coreligionists. They have friends, even relations, who are non-Parsis and we cannot say they can't be part and parcel of the community. I would go a little further in the interests of Parsi cohesion and that is, there should be no restriction on the children of mixed marriages coming into the fold...We will be broadening the base of the community if we do that."

Despite Rustomji's views and those of Nargolwala who continued Delhi's liberal tradition, even today, non-Parsi spouses do not have the right of burial at Navroze Baug.

The aramgah is financed by 25 percent of the earnings of Delhi's Mengusji Dharamshala, says its manageress Ms Dhun Bagli, widow of the late Ervad Daraius Bagli. The *geh sarna* is normally conducted at the *bungli* at Navroze Baug. Only on exceptional occasions is it held at the Bhiwandiwala Hall adjoining the dharamshala. Bagli recalls only two such occasions — the funerals of her husband Daraius and of Shiavax Nargolwala, both of whom were held in very high esteem by the community which turned out en

masse to bid them adieu.

Normally, a private Matador van driven by a Parsi conveys the deceased to the cemetery, courtesy Travel Corporation of India's Behram Dumasia. There the body is prepared for the *sachkar* by members of the community — Keki Dick is always one of those officiating, says Dhun, though the agiary's Phiroze Balsara normally performs the job, assisted by boys from the bereaved family. Dhun herself helps with bathing and preparing a female body. The corpse is confined by the boys of the community under Dick's supervision after the *geh sarna* is over.

After the coffin is lowered into the grave, the mourners sprinkle handfuls of mud. The earth is then piled in and for a week, the grave remains like a mound and the *mali* (gardener) waters it every day, notes Bagli, who gets seedlings ready at the dharamshala for transplanting at the new grave.

After three years, the foundation is done all over again. About four feet of earth are dug out and a base of bricks and cement laid, over which the marble tombstone is set, informs Bagli. Any hastier attempt at capping the grave would result in its sinking, she adds.

The graves are laid in a row, the dead taking their place in chronological order. Sometimes, however, some people believe there should be an exception. "When Daraius died, his brother wanted a special place for him. (Then DPA president) Shiavax Nargolwala was amenable but I said 'no.' Daraius was a strict disciplinarian. He would have turned down such a request from anyone and I felt he wouldn't like (being made an exception)," recalls Dhun. A similar plea was made when Shiavax died, and Dhun is glad that the trustees' majority vote decided in favor of abiding by the democratic tradition.

The *geh sarna* ceremony is conducted at Navroze Baug even for those opting for cremation, the body being subsequently taken to the electric crematorium. The question arose when Minoo Kapadia died in 1985, expressing a strong desire for cremation. The mobeds at the DPA's Kaikhushru Palloji Katrak Dar-e-Meher were chary of performing the ceremony, so "Nargolwala said, 'I'll not force the mobeds. I will do it,'" recalls Bagli. Her son Cawas, now the panthaky at

the agiary, out of regard for Nargolwala and the deceased, decided to seek, long distance, the advice of Rustomji Panthaki, principal of the Athornan Boarding Madressa at Dadar, Bombay. Panthaki reportedly gave a positive response and Cawas and Kersi Amroliwala performed the *geh sarna* the next morning, notes Dhun. The Kapadia family having disposed of the ashes on its own, the question of burying the ashes at the aramgah hasn't risen yet for formal consideration of the DPA, says Dhun.

Visiting the aramgah once a week, Bagli is in close touch with problems as they arise there. One that requires extreme tact on the part of the DPA trustees is the frequent intrusions by the *juggi* (hutment) dwellers of the vicinity, who steal bricks from the wall, etc. The community prefers to deal with



Bagli: in touch with aramgah problems

Grave of ex DPA president Nargolwala



them directly, avoiding any reference to the police.

Navroze Baug is a far cry from the kerchief-sized cemetery that adjoins the dharamshala, and whose 40 graves reflect the movements of the community in the area between 1879 and 1928. They came from Panipat, Ghaziabad and Hodal as well as Delhi to lay their beloved, many of them babies, to rest. Since then, the rising community death rate has caught up with the DPA too. In contrast to less than one death a year as can be discerned at the old site, DPA secretary Rustom Daroga notes that the Delhi community now records an annual average of 10 deaths. Even so, thanks to the foresight of its leaders, it has been provided with a beautiful, quiet, tree-laden resting place in India's historic capital.

BPP challenges tenant ownership act

Faced with an order for land acquisition, the Punchayet questions the rationale of the Maharashtra Housing and Area Development Act of 1986

Arnavaz S. Mama

Faced with the prospect of losing seven buildings and a cottage from Contractor Baug, Mahim, to a tenants' cooperative housing society under the Maharashtra Housing and Area Development (second amendment) Act of 1986, the trustees of the Bombay Parsi Punchayet have challenged the validity of the Act in the Bombay High Court. Admitting the Punchayet's petition on February 25, 1987, Mr Justice S.P. Bharucha stayed the proposed acquisition until the final disposal of the petition. The five respondents cited by the BPP are the State of Maharashtra, the Maharashtra Housing and Area Development Authority, the executive engineer, Repairs and Reconstruction Cell for Cooperative Housing Societies of the Bombay Housing and Area Development Board, and Harjit Singh and Maurice Machado, residents of Contractor Baug.

The Maharashtra Housing and Area Development Act (MHADA) as amended in 1986, empowers the government body constituted under the Act to acquire buildings built before September 1, 1940 if 70 percent of the occupants are willing to form a cooperative society and buy it off the owner. The stipulated rate of compensation is 100 times the rent.

The first intimation that the BPP received, of the proposed move by some of its tenants at Contractor Baug, was by way of a letter dated October 13, 1986 from K.V. Kanade, executive engineer, Repairs and Reconstruction

Cell for Cooperative Housing Societies of the Bombay Housing and Area Development Board. Informing the BPP that the occupants of 'Palm-lands' (the prior name of the older section of Contractor Baug), had submitted a proposal to form a cooperative housing society with the intention of acquiring the concerned land, the executive engineer asked for a list of occupants as on October 1, 1986, along with the gross rent paid by each of them and the area in occupation of the building. A copy of the letter was endorsed to Harjit Singh and Maurice Machado, "chief promoters of Palm-lands Co-operative Housing Society." However, even when the petition was filed on February 6, 1987, the BPP had

not received a copy of Singh and Machado's application to the Bombay Housing and Area Development Board.

Despite two letters from Mulla and Mulla Craigie Blunt and Caroe, on behalf of the BPP, requesting time to consider their position, and without any further reference to the Punchayet, an order was passed by the executive engineer on January 8, 1987 and a copy endorsed to the BPP. Addressed to Singh and Machado, the executive engineer's letter approved, "after due verification and scrutiny," their proposal "to move the state government to acquire the land together with the existing building thereon No 37 E-F-G-H etc known as Contractor





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Some of the disputed 'Palmlands' buildings at Contractor Baug: Two-storeyed structures on top and at right, round building just within the gate (above) and the ground floor cottage on facing page



Baug in Ward C/N for the cooperative housing society proposed to be formed by occupants thereof in the interest of better preservation of the building or for reconstruction of a new building in lieu of the old one." The executive engineer further asked the addressees to deposit a pay order for Rs 66,126 (being approximately 30 percent of the amount required to be paid to the owner if the land is acquired). The BPP's solicitors notified the executive engineer, on January 30, of the Punchayet's decision to file a writ petition in the High Court challenging the proposed acquisition. Forwarded along with the notice was a copy of the

list of tenants with an indication against the names of "five persons who are trespassers against whom suits are pending in the Bombay courts."

Admeasuring about 1,133.07 square meters, the Contractor Baug property consists of 17 buildings apart from pump rooms, suction tanks, a Bombay Electric Supply and Transport (BEST) substation etc. The seven buildings under question consisting of ground and two upper storeys were built prior to 1940 and were previously known as Palmlands A to G. Also under dispute is a ground floor cottage. These old tenanted structures were bequeathed to the BPP by Navajbai Contractor in

1958, says Rustom Anklesaria, chief executive of the BPP. Of the remaining, six are three-storeyed buildings and three four-storeyed, three having been constructed in the last three or four years.

Buildings A, B, C and D are in one row at one end of the Baug; E, F and G in a cluster at another end; the rents range between Rs 39 and Rs 155. The cottage lies in the heart of the property, in the middle of the common recreation ground. The petition notes that the cottage was earmarked for demolition, with plans for an additional floor on Palmlands C, to accommodate its occupants, approved by the



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Municipality on November 8, 1983, "but no work has been started because of the uncooperative and obstructionist attitude of the occupants of the cottage."

Repair cess on the seven buildings (payable under the Maharashtra Housing and Area Development Act of 1976) totalled Rs 72,223 between April 1, 1977 and September 30, 1986, the BPP contribution to which amounted to Rs 20,889. "With this, it was solely the responsibility of (the Maharashtra Housing and Area Development Authority and of the executive engineer, Repairs and Reconstruction Cell) to arrange for the repairs of the said buildings and the tenants could have even made an application for obtaining a No Objection Certificate (NOC) for the purpose of repairs. They did not take any such steps," notes the petition.

The BPP petition consists of two parts. On the one hand it seeks to demonstrate that the order of the executive engineer is illegal and contrary to the provisions of MHADA, and on the other, that MHADA itself is ultra

vires the Constitution of India.

To prove that the authorities have failed to "apply their mind" before signing the order of January 8, the BPP argues that the eight structures do not constitute a unit, and that to allow the occupants to form a cooperative society would destroy the integrity of Contractor Baug. Nor, according to the BPP brief, does the disputed Act contemplate a housing society of more than one building. Moreover, the Act requires that the acquisition be made either for the better preservation of the building or for its reconstruction, which are mutually exclusive propositions. In the order of January 8, "there is no indication which factor is applicable to the facts of the case." The Panchayet further contends that an order passed without due verification and without giving both sides a hearing is contrary to the demands of natural justice.

The petition placed MHADA (second amendment of 1986) in the context of legislation regarding housing in Bombay since 1939. For example, the aim of the Bombay Building

Repair and Reconstruction Act of 1969 and the Maharashtra Housing and Area Development Act of 1976 was to repair the dilapidated buildings or to reconstruct them simply because the landlords were unable to repair their buildings due to freezing of rents as on September 1, 1940 under the Bombay Rent Act.

The petition notes that by levying cess under MHADA (1976), "the government undertook the responsibility of repairing buildings. However, the administration of the Act in the city of Bombay has been a dismal failure... Though the Government was unable to discharge its obligations under the 1976 Act, in the 1985 elections to the State Assembly and the Lok Sabha, the Congress (I) candidate Mr Murli Deora contested the election on a populist issue that, on his being elected, the properties of the landlords would be taken and handed over to the tenants at a compensation of 100 months rent. It is in this background that the bill of 1985 was introduced on the last day of the monsoon session of the assembly and subsequently the

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Maharashtra Ordinance 1986 (replaced by the Maharashtra Act of 1986) has been passed, introducing chapter VIIIA to the 1976 Act which is entitled "Acquisition of cessed properties by cooperative societies of occupiers."

The recital to the Act declares that its provisions to transfer ownership and control to occupiers is "to subserve the common good" - words of Article 39, clauses B and C of the Constitution of India. Although by the inclusion of these words the Act claims the protection of Article 39 of the Constitution, the petition faults MHA-DA (second amendment) as discriminatory because it does not apply to the total area covered by the Bombay Municipal Corporation, let alone the whole of Maharashtra. It treats unequals equally by covering all buildings constructed prior to September 1, 1940 without reference to their condition, whether they are well repaired or in a state of dilapidation, while 3,042 dilapidated buildings constructed after that date are not covered under the Act.

It allows trespassers the same rights as legitimate tenants under the label of "occupiers," thereby placing "a premium on dishonesty." Moreover, the

The Act allows trespassers the same rights as legitimate tenants under the label of "occupiers," thereby placing "a premium on dishonesty"

Act makes no distinction between owners: "There are several institutions which charge nominal rents such as Re 1 per month...Depriving charitable institutions of their properties and handing it over to the occupiers who themselves are in a position to pay, cannot at all be said to be a provision for bringing about equitable distribution

or subserving the common good. On the contrary, such charitable institutions are sought to be deprived of their income and paid a penalty amount by way of compensation which will result in their being unable to achieve their objectives and which will be contrary to the common good."

The petition further accuses the Act of being violative of the Constitution of India, as "the method of calculating the market value in...areas covered by the island of Bombay is based on the returns of 1940 and not 1986 with 3,000 percent erosion of the rupee value, and hence the compensation payable to the owner is illusory." Moreover, unutilized FSI (floor space index) would be taken over by the society without paying any compensation.

The petition therefore seeks that the High Court declare the Act as being violative of the provisions of the Constitution of India, and that, pending its hearing and final disposal, the Court stay the enforcement of the order of January 8, and decide on the costs of the suit.

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continued from page 27

should be performed, whether the body should be anointed with nirang, and whether members would be willing to recite prayers before the funeral ceremony if called to do so.

Question five deals with the method of disposal of the body — cremation, burial, flying the body to India or Pakistan for dokhmenashini, or some other method to be specified. Accordingly, question six asks members whether they would like the AZA to purchase burial plots for its members or have a rose garden wherein to disperse the ashes after cremation.

Tailing the questionnaire Kolsawalla, in his appeal, notes, "Do not be inhibited by what has happened in the past or what happens in other countries. Our circumstances are different and call for a fresh approach."

Nonetheless, Kolsawalla has himself added a personal disclaimer to the first question, stating: "I, as an individual am against any form of conversion into our community."

Voicing his objection to this disclaimer, Eruch Nanavati, in a letter to Kersi Meher-Homji, Editor of *Manashni*, writes, "The questionnaire is supposed to be strictly confidential and is meant to obtain independent views from all those to whom it has been sent...He has caused serious damage to the impartiality attached to the questionnaire, not to mention the confidentiality of the document."

Kolsawalla, in his reply, explains: "Our newsletter is sent to Zoroastrians throughout the world and is reprinted in several Zoroastrian publications...While the members in Australia are mature and understanding, there is a large and vocal section of our community in India and overseas who are staunchly orthodox and the opinion inquired (about) in question one would be considered heretical. In the past, unfortunately, such members of our community have personally attacked and vilified individuals who have raised such issues, including attacks on their family... I consider conducting questionnaires for the community (at a considerable cost of my time) a pleasant duty, but my primary responsibility is to my family."

The AZA has been granted tax exemption on the income earned by it, and therefore the tax paid earlier will be refunded. However, since the AZA

is not a secular charity, the donations it receives from its members and well-wishers are not tax exempt, notes the president in the June issue of *Manashni*.

"To give new dimensions to the static energies in the Zoroastrian youth of Sydney," a Youth Group was formed on May 2, when the youth planned to go on a picnic to Bobbin Head on May 17, followed by a "Big Ball," on May 19, notes Havovi in the Youth Page of the June *Manashni*. "Entrance (to the party) is three dollars per head. Put your money in an envelope and write on it the name you want our youth group to have," she adds.

An appeal for books for the AZA library in the June '87 *Manashni* reads: "We are short of literature on Zoroastrianism over here. If members or their friends want to donate such books to our library, we will be grateful to receive them. Or when you go overseas and meet people who wish to donate such books, please accept those for our library; we will pay the postage."

Scarce burial plots

"Unless we make discreet use of available (burial) lots, using each and every lot in proper order as the need arises, we will have nothing left for our children's children of whom we speak all the time," reads a study report on Zoroastrian burial grounds in British Columbia (BC), undertaken by Jamshed Pavri of Vancouver, Canada.

Between the years 1971 and 1987 there have been 26 deaths in British Columbia, for which 15 burial lots were used (the lots can be reused after a sufficient number of years elapse after the burial). Taking into consideration the annual two percent increase in population growth (there are about 500 Zoroastrians in BC) and approximately four deaths a year, Pavri estimates that in the next 60 years British Columbia will use up all its existing 179 burial lots. Adds Pavri, "Chances are that Zoroastrians dying (elsewhere) in Canada, where burial lots or facilities are not available, might wish to be buried in Vancouver, BC. So far, one (body) has come from Vienna, and (another) from Winnipeg, Manitoba."

In Canada, as far as Zoroastrian burial lots are concerned, there are 179 in

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Vancouver, two in Calgary, two in Edmonton and 12 in Montreal, known to Pavri. Space being limited, Pavri notes that lots may be available from the 32 burial grounds in the Valley View cemeteries throughout Canada, "which permit transfer of lots of equal value, if the need arises."

Youth Congress update

"Unity among Zoroastrian Youth thru humata, good thoughts; hukhta, good words; havarashta, good deeds;" is to be the central theme of the First North American Zoroastrian Youth Congress to be held from September 5 through September 7, 1987.

The Congress, sponsored by the Zoroastrian Association of California, is organized in cooperation with the youth committee of the California Zoroastrian Center and is to be held at the Center's Rustam Guiv Dar-e Mehr, Westminster.

"The age limit for scheduled speakers is restricted between 18 to 40 years, but general participation is encouraged. There will be a special workshop for teenagers," notes chairperson Meher Amalsad in the invitation.

The late registration fees which include two lunches, one dinner, refreshments and a barbecue, are \$40 per adult and \$15 for those between the ages of seven and 12 years. Those below the age of seven can attend free of charge.

The program for the three days is: registration at 8 am followed by the benediction, opening address speeches and discussions which will last from 9 am to 5.30 pm. On Sunday, apart from the discussions, there will be a youth workshop. Furthermore, there is to be a cultural show on Saturday evening and a dance party on Sunday evening. "Sightseeing, and a barbecue beach party will follow the Congress on September 7, 1987," notes the invitation.

London activities

By amending its constitution the North London Zoroastrian Association (NOLZA) has extended its area of operation and established a London-wide associate membership, notes the fifth annual report (1986-87) of the Association.

"Various educational, cultural and

social activities were organized during the year, in addition to the regular Zoroastrian Fellowship Sunday - an open forum for informal exchange of viewpoints on matters of topical interest to the community (and) formal lectures by distinguished speakers invited by the Association (resulting in) a reservoir of new ideas for the forward planning of activities according to the needs of the community," notes the report sent by Faridoon Madon, vice-president of NOLZA.

Celebrations of important Zoroastrian religious days, and social activities like whist drives, bingo sessions and an annual outing were all part of NOLZA's activities, adds the report.

Due to efforts by NOLZA members, "for the first time in the history of school education in the UK," the Zoroastrian religion has been included in the religious education curriculum under the 1944 Education Act. NOLZA also sponsored Dr C.N. Wadia as a governor of the Haringey College for a period of three years.

NOLZA's advisory and information service helped a lady, long settled in the UK, to register as a British citizen.

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Information on immigration matters was also circulated, states the report.

Parsis in Indian parade

The Federation of India Associations (FIA), Chicago was to sponsor an India Day Parade on August 15, notes a press release issued by FIA president, Porus Dadabhoy. Parsis were invited to participate with a float or in traditional daglis and saris, adds the write-up.

History of Macau Parsis

"The colony of Parsis (settled in Bombay, Thana and Surat) gave their services to the Portuguese, who appreciated their civilization and employed them as intermediaries in different capacities," notes an article which appeared in Portuguese in one of the Macau newspapers. The English translation of *The Parsees - Recognised as Portuguese Intermediaries* was sent to *Parsiana* by Jim Master of Hong Kong.

The article includes the history of the Parsis in Macau (recapitulated since their time in Iran), makes references to the *Avesta*, the importance of

fire in the religion, and the different religious rites and, in its list of illustrious Parsis, includes Rajiv Gandhi.

According to the article by Diogo Fernandes, when trade declined between Persia and Bombay, the Parsis of Bombay transferred their business to China and settled in Canton and Macau. In 1779 a 16-year-old Parsi called Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy ventured to Canton after successfully founding a firm in Bombay for which reason he was conferred with the title of baronet by the British.

In 1822, Jejeebhoy nominated William Jardine as his agent in Canton, his firm being known as Jardine, Matheson and Company which still exists in Hong Kong today, notes the article. Another ship Chandler of repute in Macau was Pestonjee Cowasjee Darabsha Sethna whose ships made regular trips between Macau and India, notes the author.

With "the foundation of Hong Kong in 1841, most of the Parsis gradually went over to the British colony," Dorabjee Nowrojee, who began as a merchant in Macau, migrated to Hong Kong where he started a transport

company. His ships, plying from Hong Kong to Kowloon, were peculiar in that each incorporated the word 'star' in its name. "This company still exists in Hong Kong and is popularly known (as the) Star Ferry Company," notes the write-up.

A noted Parsi personality in Hong Kong was Hormusjee Navrojee Mody, who made possible the foundation of the University of Hong Kong, for which he was knighted.

The Parsi cemetery, begun in 1829, still remains in Macau. Notes the article, "One interesting aspect of the sepulchres in the cemetery is that the dates were in conformity with the Gregorian calendar, and also according to the old calendar of Persia."

The article further quotes from a letter dated November 4, 1843, written by an American lady, Rebecca Chase Kinsman residing in Macau, in which she said; "Of all the people, those I admire most are the Parsis. There are many here and some are very rich. Their national costume is strange but gracious - and many of them are beautiful and have an athletic appearance."

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As the Sehensai Navroze Yazdegirdi 1357 approaches I am asked by *Parsiana* for an article on food to whet the Parsi appetite.

Well this time the ambrosia is going to be different, and I hope that you will enjoy the menu. Bon appétit!

MENU

Yoghurt cocktail
Cold tomato soup
Potted crab
Rolled chicken with Pesto mayonnaise
Vegetable millesfeuilles
Chick pea salad
Tomato and onion salad
Black fruit fool with almond short-bread
Brandy snaps with ginger ice cream and poached peaches
(All recipes serve six persons)

YOGHURT COCKTAIL

Yoghurt and curd are made from different bacilli. We can use curd instead of yoghurt.

Firm curd (½ kg - well drained)
Fresh peaches (3 - peeled and diced and kept in a little lime juice to prevent discoloration)

Grapes (200 gms - seedless or seeded, peeled)

Oranges (3 - peeled, with pips and pith removed)

Sweet limes (3 - cleaned the same way as the oranges)

Bananas (3 - peeled and diced)

Papaya (100 gms - peeled and diced)

Salt

Sugar

Lime juice

Tabasco (all to taste)

Cream (2 tbs - optional)

Garnish: Cherries and fresh mint leaves

Peel all fruit and keep in a little lime juice. Beat curd till smooth - it should have no lumps. Add cream. Mix in all fruit. Add seasoning to taste. Serve in chilled cocktail glasses, garnished with a tinned cherry and a mint leaf.

Note: The curd with fruit should be well chilled before being put into chilled glasses.



This Parsi New Year, banish mealtime monotony with some of these exotic recipes

A COLD BUFFET

Bhicoo Manekshaw



ICED TOMATO SOUP

Ripe tomatoes (1 kg - chopped)

Sugar (1 tbsp)

Salt (2 tsps)

Onion (1 medium - chopped)

Carrot (1 medium - grated)

Celery (2 sticks - chopped)

Juice of 1 large lime

Garlic (3 cloves - crushed)

Cream (200 gms)

Garnish: Thinly sliced cucumber

Liquidize all ingredients till smooth.

Strain, and chill very thoroughly.

Serve in chilled soup bowls with cream

swirled into each bowl with a teaspoon

to give a marbled effect. Garnish with

cucumber slices.

POTTED CRAB

Crabs (2 kg)

Melted butter (as required)

Clarified butter (ghee - as required)

Seasoning

Salt

Pepper

Mace

Nutmeg

Dash of chilli powder

Lime juice

Wash the crabs thoroughly and boil for

15 minutes. Cool in the same water.

Crack shell and extract all meat. Keep

the claw meat separately from the

body meat. Season well. Pack body

and claw meat in layers in individual

ramekin pots. Smooth and press

down. Pour melted butter to just cover

the meat. Stand pots in a *bain mari*

(double boiler). Cook in a slow oven

(gas mark 2, 310°F) for 30 minutes.

Chill and serve. If not to be eaten im-

mediately, seal with clarified butter

and store in refrigerator.

ROLLED CHICKEN WITH PESTO MAYONNAISE

Chicken (1 large - about 1¼ kg - make sure that there is no tear in the skin of the chicken)

Salt

Pepper

Fresh bread crumbs (1 cup)

Parsley and rosemary (2 tsps - chopped)

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Cream (3 tbsps)
 Juice of 1 lime
 Garlic (2 cloves - crushed)
 Onion (1 tbsp - finely chopped)
 Ham (4 thin slices)
 Red capsicum (2 - thinly shredded and blanched)
 Salami (6 to 8 thin slices)
 Eggs (3 or 4 - hard-boiled)
 Butter (60 gms)
 Chicken stock made from chicken bones (¾ cup)

To bone chicken, place the washed and wiped bird on a wooden board, chest side down. The first cut is made with a short sharp knife from the back of the neck down the center of backbone. Start boning from the left side of the wing joint. The knife should be kept firmly against the bone the whole time and the flesh worked away in short clean cuts, keeping the fingers of the left hand well under the flap of the meat, lifting and peeling it gently back from the blade of the knife and dis-jointing bones as they come. This is continued till the thigh bone is reached and the bone is removed, with the knife pushing back the flesh. Remove this bone and carry on to the drumstick, pushing back the flesh until the bone is separated from it. Carry on till you reach the breastbone, then stop and start at the back, this time from the right side, and keep deboning as you did the left side. When you reach the breastbone take great care not to cut the flesh - cut a bit of the soft breastbone with the flesh, rather than cut open the skin.

Lay the boned chicken skin side down on the board. Push legs back into the body. Beat the flesh with a wet mallet or the back of a knife. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Mix together the breadcrumbs, parsley, rosemary and onion. Moisten with cream and lime juice. Spread smoothly over the chicken. Then put a layer of ham on top, a layer of shredded capsicum and a layer of salami. Trim the ends of the hard boiled eggs so that they set firmly together, and place them down the center of the bird. Roll up the chicken, tucking in the ends to form a smooth roll. Tie with string at ½ inch intervals. Rub with butter and place in a roasting tin.

Roast for one hour or more in an oven preheated to 350° F. After the first 15 minutes, pour half cup chicken stock over the rolled chicken. Baste every 15 minutes, adding more stock if

necessary. Remove from tin and place on a plate, put another plate on top with a heavy weight and keep in the fridge overnight. Slice chicken when thoroughly chilled and serve with Pesto Mayonnaise.

Pesto mayonnaise

Thick mayonnaise (1½ cup)

Pesto

Basil leaves (20 - *tulsi* will do)

Garlic (4 large cloves - crushed)

Pinenuts (*chilgosa* - 75 gms, toasted)

Parmesan cheese (¾ cup - grated)

Can also use a strong cheddar)

Olive oil (45 to 60 gms)

Salt

Put the basil leaves, salt, garlic and pinenuts into a mortar and crush gently with the pestle. Add cheese, and the oil drop by drop, mixing with the pestle all the while. The sauce should be a thick smooth pulp. Add to mayonnaise, mix well, chill and serve with the chicken.

VEGETABLE MILLESFEUILLES

Puff pastry (½ kg)

Cornflakes (crushed)

Vegetable filling

Mixed steamed vegetables (300 gms - cauliflower, carrot, green peas, turnip)

Cabbage (50 gms - chopped)

Celery (2 sticks - chopped)

Pickled onions (2 tbsps - chopped)

Pickled gherkins (1 tbsp)

Olives (2 tbsps - chopped)

Mayonnaise (1 cup)

Purée steamed vegetables and mix with rest of the ingredients. Chill. Roll out pastry 12 inches by 12 inches and cut three long strips of 4 inches each. Place on wet baking sheet and prick with pastry. Brush with egg and bake in hot preheated oven (400°F) for 10 to 15 minutes. Turn pastry over and bake

for another 5 minutes till crisp. Cool. To make the millesfeuilles, place a strip of pastry on a serving platter, spread with a layer of filling. Place another strip of pastry on top and a second layer of filling. Cover with the third strip of pastry. Put a thin layer of filling on the sides of the millesfeuilles and press on crushed cornflakes. Serve at room temperature.

CHICK PEA SALAD

Chick peas (*Kabuli channa* - ½ kg)

Flour (2 tbsps)

Soda bicarbonate (½ tsp)

Olive oil (as required)

Onions (2 medium - thinly sliced)

Garlic (3 to 4 cloves - crushed)

Parsley (chopped)

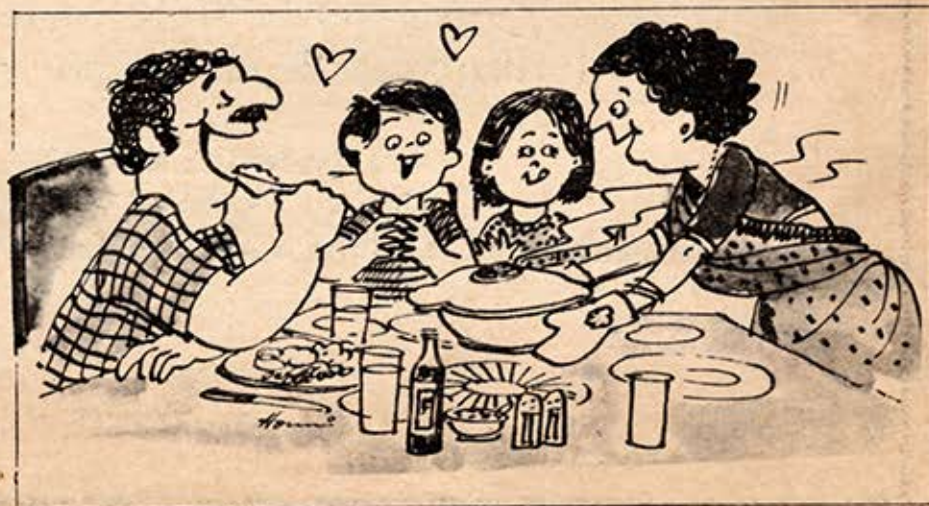
Juice of 2 limes, or vinegar

Soak chick peas overnight with flour and water. Next day put in a pan, add bicarbonate of soda, bring to the boil and skim well. Strain. Put chick peas in a pan with fresh water and cook till they are soft and the skin begins to break, or pressure cook. Strain and while still hot, stir in enough olive oil to coat. Add onions, garlic, parsley, lime juice, salt and freshly ground black pepper.

Note: To keep the authenticity of this dish, olive oil is a must. Use the water in which the peas were soaked and boiled as a base for vegetable soup.

TOMATO AND ONION SALAD

Elizabeth David is an outstanding cookery writer of our time. Her contribution to the gastronomic arts in Britain was recognized with the award of the first ever Andre Simon Memorial Prize, the OBE, Chevalier of the Order Du Merite Agricole and the Glenfiddich Writer of the Year



Award, honorary doctorate of the University of Essex and Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature. Her books make excellent reading and have superb regional recipes of France, Spain, Italy, and the Mediterranean. She says in her latest book *Omelette and a glass of wine*, that one of the freshest simple salads that she has had was in Spain, made with the "large ridged tomatoes cored with a little sharp knife, cut round roughly into sections, thrown into a shallow bowl, mixed with thickly sliced raw onions, with salt, olive oil and wine vinegar as the only seasoning." (We could use lime juice instead of wine vinegar, with a dash of red wine.) All along the coast of Spain it was called just *ensalada*, sometimes with olives, cucumber slices, and cos lettuce well arranged.

I feel there is a great need for us to savor simple dishes and to serve them at parties, keeping just one or two heavy dishes.

BLACK FRUIT FOOL

This recipe, which was popular 300 years ago in the days of the Stuarts, is also from Elizabeth David's book.

Also called 'Black Tart Stuff', it was a purée of dried prunes, raisins and currants cooked in wine and used as a filling for tarts and pies.

Large prunes (½ kg)

Raisins (250 gms)

Currants (100 gms)

Red wine (½ pint) or Port (¼ pint)

Put washed prunes in an earthenware oven dish with wine or port and enough water to cover. Cover the dish and put in a preheated very slow oven (gas mark ½, 290°F) for 2 to 3 hours until the prunes are well swollen, completely soft, and have absorbed most of the liquid. During the last hour of the cooking of the prunes, put in the oven the washed and seeded raisins and currants with just enough water to cover. Stone prunes and liquidize them with the raisins and currants with any remaining liquid left in the dishes. The texture should be like smooth, slightly liquid mashed potato. You may need to add a little wine. Add a dash of salt to bring out the flavor. The flavor of this dish depends on the quality of the ingredients, so get the best. You may need to add a little sugar and lime juice along with the wine. Chill

very thoroughly and serve in chilled champagne glasses with almond shortbread.

Almond Shortbread

Plain flour (100 gms)

Butter (100 gms)

Castor sugar (60 gms)

Almonds (40 gms, ground)

Rice flour (fine - 20 gms)

Salt (a pinch)

Line a baking sheet with two thicknesses of greaseproof paper. Sift flour, salt and rice flour together. Work butter and sugar together until blended, but not oily. Add ground almonds to the flour and gradually add to butter mixture, working till the dough is of the consistency of short crust pastry. Pat out with hand or roll into a round, ¼ inch thick. Place on a butter paper-lined tray. Crimp round the edge with two fingers and a thumb, prick center with a fork. With a sharp knife, mark the pastry half way down, then into quarters, and then into eighths. Bake in a preheated oven (gas mark 4, 350°F) for 15 minutes. Do not allow the shortbread to turn brown. It should be a pale brown. Cover with greaseproof paper towards the end to

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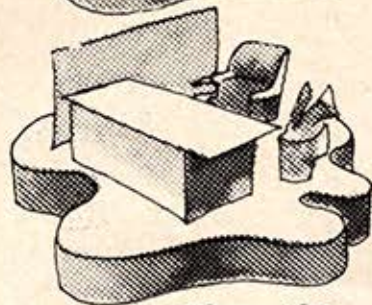
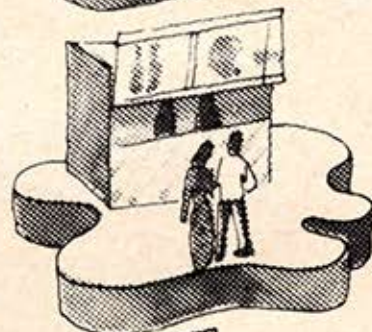
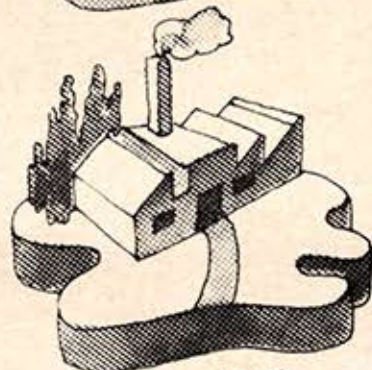
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prevent excessive browning. Allow to cool in the tin, then cut into sections.

BRANDY SNAPS WITH GINGER ICE CREAM AND POACHED PEACHES

Brandy Snaps

Butter (100 gms)
Demerara (brown sugar - 100 gms)
Golden syrup (100 gms)
Salt (a pinch)
Flour (100 gms)
Dried ginger powder (1 level tsp)
Lime juice (1 tsp)
Vanilla essence (a few drops)

Place butter, sugar and syrup in a pan, heat gently until butter and sugar are melted. Cook slightly. Add sifted flour, salt and ginger into the mixture. Stir well, add lime and essence. Put a teaspoon at a time, 4 inches apart, on a well greased baking sheet. Bake in a preheated oven (gas mark 3 to 4, 325 to 340°F) for 8 minutes. Leave biscuits on tin for a few minutes to stiffen slightly. Now, working fast, remove the biscuits with a sharp knife and quickly roll them on the handle of a wooden spoon or on cornet molds. When hard, gently ease them off, and store in an airtight tin.

Ginger Ice Cream

Egg yolks (4 large)
Brown sugar (¾ cup)
Ground glacé ginger (2 tbsp)
Ground dried ginger (1 tsp)
Milk (1 cup)
Cream (1½ cup)

Beat egg yolks and sugar together in a bowl. When thick, add powdered and pureed ginger. Heat milk and add to egg mixture, beating all the while. Cook custard on low heat till it coats the back of a wooden spoon. Cool and refrigerate. When chilled, add semi-whipped cream and churn in an ice-cream churning, or freeze.

Poached Peaches

Sugar (1 cup)
Water (2 cups)
Juice of 1 lime
Fresh ginger (1 tbsp - slivered)
Peaches or pears (6)

Put sugar and water in a pan and cook over low heat until sugar has melted. Add rind of lime and bring to the boil, allow to simmer. Peel peaches or pears and lower gently in syrup and poach gently for 20 minutes, turning frequently. Cool and refrigerate.

To assemble

Fill cornets with ice cream. Place a peach or pear on a plate with the cornet of ice cream. Serve immediately.

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Landscape artist

In his sixth collection of verse, Daruwalla's themes range from Indian landscapes to Oxford and poet Ted Roethke
Geeta Doctor

Landscapes by Keki N. Daruwalla. Published by Oxford University Press 1987; Pp 72; Price Rs 30.

It's unfair I know, but when I started reading Keki Daruwalla's sixth collection of verse entitled *Landscapes*, I thought of Policeman Plod from Enid Blyton's Noddy books.

Is this the usual knee-jerk resistance that Daruwalla has had to face on account of his being a policeman who also writes poetry, I wondered? Or plain envy at the persistence of the poet, a trade where the survival rate is spare? Or a feeling of disquiet at the solemnity with which Daruwalla stamps out his verse? In the early parts of the volume, at any rate, Daruwalla appears to have got himself an image processor which methodically chews up and spews out strips of poetry.

He goes to the seaside and discovers:
*The sea pants,
the islands smoulder,
the sun is an egg yolk
frying in the sky.*

This is sturdy undergraduate stuff or the conceit of a hungry copywriter, not the controlled art of one of our most serious poets. This might be part of the problem: he has become a self-conscious artist in love with the syllables of his own words. Describing his experience of flying from Santa Cruz to Heathrow he begins, "The flight is smooth..." and a little later, "The pilot interrupts; his voice smooth as molasse over the public address." Too smooth by half, one feels with irritation. These were the sort of insights that went into the memoirs of Indians who visited England in the forties, breathlessly retailed in chapters that begin, "I visit London," "I make a trip

to Oxford" and so forth. In *Skopje: The Earthquake City* he tells us (please don't miss the alliteration),

*got lost in Turk-town, in the kebab
smells
and taped tambour music, till we
came across
a skinned goat that stank to Struga -
ah well!*

Ah well indeed, these little bits of touristic angst and microchip biography we can very well do without.

Yet to judge Daruwalla in this manner only is to be deeply unkind. I realize this when I begin to read the book backwards: the four poems that are dedicated to Ted Roethke, the American poet, have a quiet authority. Even though Daruwalla feels obliged to pump his would-be readers with a page full of biographical detail that will enable them to better appreciate the references he makes to the compulsions that drove Roethke, each of his poems encapsulates a particular watershed in the poet's life with charm and feeling. It is as though, turned away from himself, Daruwalla's imagination, free of its scab-picking tendencies, rises and takes wing in communion with another like-minded spirit. The poems work as a form of meditation on Roethke, an impressionistic re-working of another artist's soul. There is an ease and richness of allusive detail that brings the poet to life for us in just a few stanzas. In the first one he describes Roethke's father who, the note tells us, owned one of the largest green-houses in America:

*The Father-florist holds the key;
he makes the rose and orchid pulse,
he brings a flush to canna's cheek,
quicken mildew, moss and scum.*

*He turns the heat on when he wants
makes steam-pipes and the
greenhouse hum.*

— *The Father-florist*

From this cloistered greenhouse atmosphere of his childhood, Roethke is portrayed as moving out in search of something, until one day he breaks down mentally and physically, but is it a collapse or an escape?

*All pasts are full of losses
so was his. He recalled father's face
through glass-window coffin. Hare-
guilts, shames,
moles scurried as he moved in. That
night
he walked into the woods
alone, where he encountered light
for a firefly-moment, or so
he thought.*

Is Daruwalla recalling his own relations with his father, one wonders, or does he talk about his methods also when he ends this segment with the stanza:

*A poem like a river moves
from dark to light, a flow
his river was to find.
The ice-filmed waters in him
cracked.
He came out shivering wet but
whole;
he needed love, he needed time.*

— *Breakdown*

The last poem dedicated to Roethke, *The Season of Light*, both defines the poet's journey and celebrates his fulfillment in the love of a woman. Daruwalla uses the imagery of a ship, lost at sea, finding its course again, and all his love of the sea, and the beating of the sails, and the wind whipping the senses can be felt in this poem:

*He ran his passions up the mast.
A breeze that came to Dante once
and left him stricken, came to him.
It found him vulnerable, bare.
Her hair took on the blaze of light,
wind took the colour of her hair.*

Reading these poems leads me to re-discover the Daruwalla of the wide open spaces who can write:

*I want things on a large scale:
amplitudes, a sense of space and
light,
the great yellow eye of the train*

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lighting up the distances of the night.

— A take-off on a passing remark

This is the poet who takes on nature in the raw, who seeks to hunt with the wolf and hawk, scouring the bleak countryside with words, engraving a meaning. It is a familiar landscape, but one which cannot but fascinate.

A humata almanac

Homi J. Rogers

One a Day and you've won a day! Compiled and published by Homi Kharas, 140 Cumballa Hill, Bombay 400026. Price Rs 9.

Vitamin pills now come as quotes, courtesy Homi Kharas, adman, trekker and shutterbug.

One a Day is a collection of quotations picked up by Kharas over a period of 21 years, in the course of "diverse reading and listening." It is not, however, an anthology compiled from anthologies of good thoughts and quotations; it is a carefully planned course-book laid out by Kharas, of practical and useful thoughts to help people avoid, and probably even overcome, their everyday difficulties.

Three hundred and sixty-six good thoughts have been assembled in this little pocket-sized handbook — one for every day of the year. Many of the quotes are action-oriented (Emerson: "You cannot do a kindness too soon, for you never know how soon it will be too late") and, as Kharas says in his introduction, "lend themselves to adoption by your subconscious mind." Many seek to build your self-confidence which, with the vicissitudes of life, could be occasionally at a low ("Human beings are at their best when the challenge of life encourages the use of their physical and mental faculties"). Yet others provide assistance in dealing with subordinates (Goethe: "Encouragement after censure is as the sun after a shower"), family members and friends ("Real hearty, healthy smiles bring down blood pressure and make for long life").

Kharas himself contributes some precious nuggets ("Having learnt the

lesson from a past mistake, simply forget the mistake and you will forge ahead smoothly") in a collection that encompasses Chinese proverbs ("If you have two pennies left, spend one on a loaf and one on a flower. The bread will give life; the flower a reason for living"), a quote from the Zoroastrian Yasna ("Blessed is the hand that works and blessed is the mind that wills it. Life is elevated when vigorous and honest work is associated with it"), and wisdom from the minds of L.A. Seneca, philosopher-statesman of ancient Rome, to contemporaries like business magnate J.R.D. Tata and naturopath Dr J.M. Jussawala.

Well-bound, and complete with a built-in bookmark and a plastic jacket, the handbook is heartily recommended. An index of first lines, alphabetically arranged, further accentuates its value.

Cama's inner(p)light

The Inner Light of Zoroastrianism by Dara Cama. Pp: 35.

Zoroastrian priesthood has been enmeshed in controversy for over the last two summers in Bombay, with the protagonists themselves being silent witnesses. Last year, the priests were besmirched by the decision of a group of Parsis to set up a Trust for their betterment: noble motives that lay shrouded in not-so-noble words, and even more questionable results. This year, tilting the scales against the white pugrees, and nullifying the sympathy wave created by the formation of the Athravan Educational Trust (AET), comes a controversial little booklet, *The Inner Light of Zoroastrianism* by the enfant terrible, Dara Cama.

Cama has always been a priest-basher. Twenty years ago in his booklet *We Parsis, Our Prophet and Our Priests* he put forth the view that "our present day priests do not seem to have any knowledge and experience of God...they are pregnant with paganism, and what they produce is perversion." Two decades later, he avers his earlier claim with an even greater vehemence, soundly berating the clan for subverting the true religion of

Zoroaster. "In fact," writes Cama, "there is no religion because of the mobeds, for they are so steeped in the misuse of religion that they have seriously abused all our secular religious ideals."

Cama's vituperation, however, is not based as soundly on facts as he wants the reader to believe. His primary assertion, that "there can be only one scripture for us Parsis, and that is the Prophet's *Gatha*," is riddled. While it is true that the *Gathas* show us the way to develop internally through the purification and perfection of the ethical side of our nature, the *Avesta*, imbued more with "penance, prayers and ceremonies," is an equally necessary scripture, to help ordinary (that is, the not so spiritually endowed) mortals to combat evil. It is the "physical" guide-book, complementing the "spiritual" one, and the two cannot be separated in understanding our religion.

Similarly, while Cama quoted the invocation "*Namo ve gathao ashoi nish* (salutations to the *Gathas* which teach us to live righteously) in the *Avesta*, to buttress his claim that the latter is a later publication to the *Gathas*, and hence one 'manufactured' by our priests, he omits to mention that in Yasna 71.18, the prophet says, "He praises and adores not only the *Gathas*, but the whole *Avesta*." The language of the *Gathas* and that of the other parts of the *Avesta* show such remarkable similarity in the structure of their words, syntax and grammar, that there is little evidence to prove the antiquity of one set of writings over the other.

Equally flawed is the argument that the *Avesta* is a book written in India, strengthened by the illustration of some 12 similar sounding and similar meaning Avesta and Sanskrit words (*Yasna* — *Yagna*, *Soama* — *Hoama*). The *Vedas* have been written over a long period of time, and while some are pre-Gathic (though our staunch orthodoxes would not like to agree to that), others are of the same period as Zoroaster, while yet others are post-Zoroaster. Does the profusion of similar sounding words hence justify the claim? Each text may have been influenced by the other, belonging to the large Aryan race; but a "made in India" *Avesta* ...? And how would Cama like to explain the antonyms (*Ahura* — *Asura*, *Dasyu* — *Dakhyu*, to

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cite just two)? And for the record, "their very name *andhyarus* is adopted from their Hindu counterparts called *adhyarus*" is a misrepresentation of fact. The Avestan/Persian word for priests is *athravan* ("one who tends the fire"), and appears in *Hormazd Yasht*, where Ahura Mazda is depicted as saying, "I am of the name of the best *athravan*," and in the *Farvardin Yasht*, where reference is made to the prophet being an *athravan*.

Yet another stumbling block in Cama's blueprint for 'Operation Andhyaru' is his deduction that the

Priests can be
faulted not because
they support the
Avesta, but because
they are proponents
of offering *chaptā*
chapat and *meva*
malida

varacyo (albino bull) is venerated and *nirang* (its urine) drunk because the Hindus worship its cousin, the cow, and drink its *mutra*. While Cama's statement sequentially appears in the booklet in such a manner as to convince any reader of its veracity, the fact is that the bull (quite distinct from the cow), known as *gawyodad*, was considered the prototype of human beings in ancient Iran, even in pre-Zoroastrian times, and continued to be venerated by religions in the Middle East, as can be seen from the sculptures of the Assyrians, Chaldeans, Babylonians and Persians.

Priests can be faulted not because they support the *Avesta*, but because they are proponents of offering *chaptā chapat* and *meva malida* (traditional sweets offered in rituals). The religion is not Hindu because priests enjoin us to have *muktad* like the Hindu *shrad-dha* (annual remembrance of the dead), but because a few unscrupulous clergymen are to be found in both religions. The practice of venerating a *varacyo* and drinking its urine (believed to possess disinfectant properties) is not to be denigrated, but a kind thought need be spared for the

condition in which the holy beast is kept.

Cama's work also suffers due to certain statements being made without any proper substantiation. "Many years ago," Cama states, "in our *atash bahram* at Navsari, Hindu brahmins performed the functions of *boiwallas* (tenders of the sacred fire)." The statement, unaccompanied by any dates, suspends credibility. Cama similarly waters down his case by references to esoteric ceremonies like *geti kharid* (wherein mobeds reserve a seat for their *behdins* in heaven), or the insistence of mobeds that priestly obsequies for the dead must be undertaken for 57 years from their demise, rather than focus on more realistic ways in which some priests exploit the *behdins*, like recommending a *Vendidad* on the night after *uthamna*, or organizing a *bhujaylo siroja* (where four *daraans* — dry, unleavened bread — are placed, instead of one.) I haven't heard of any family where prayers for their dead are recited for 57 years at the instance of their mobeds. On the contrary, during the last *muktad*, the common complaint in Bombay was that the *panthakis* had started to return the *karasias* (metal flower vases) after five years had elapsed, since they had no mobeds to continue the prayers any longer — a fact negating Cama's stand.

Despite its shortcomings, Cama's booklet, which is neatly laid out in clean types, is worth a read. Cama has an engaging style. Quaintly archaic ("for priestly *bhanter-ghanter* around fire, in each *agiary* ten thousand rupees we monthly burn... in our citadel at *Udvada*, thousands everyday we burn") at times, it is devastatingly blunt at others. And merged with the vitriol are large dollops of earthy humor: "I would prefer to travel across the *Chinvad* Pool relying on my own three-wheeler built upon my *humata*, *hukhata*, *huvrashta*, rather than get into the public carriers of our priests."

And finally, the carrot at the end of Cama's stick (though Cama, in all fairness, waves it at the very beginning): "If however our clergy can prove me wrong...I am prepared to offer the *Parsi Punchayet* Rs 50,000 towards their proposed *Amelioration Fund* for *Mobeds*" (note, not the *AET*). Any takers?

Homi J. Rogers

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The data on births, marriages and deaths has been compiled from information provided by various anjumans in India and abroad, courts and hospitals. The list of marriages from the Bombay High Court may only be received in September.

The information gathered is not always uniform. For example, the list of Bombay deaths includes only those who were consigned to the dokhmas, and there too, though the addresses were known, the names of the family members were not. From other anjumans we have gathered names of family members but no addresses. The information largely pertains to the preceding month, yet in the case of outstation anjumans we have incorporated news of happenings which may be considered dated.

Marriages of inter-community couples as well as children born of such unions, are listed.

Heart disease claimed 20 of the 106 Parsis who died in Bombay. The next most important killers were debility and old age (claiming 18), pneumonia (10), cancer (six),

kidney failure (four), diabetes (three) and tuberculosis (three). There were three Parsi men who succumbed to accidents and one to murder. Bronchitis, encephalitis, Parkinson's disease, jaundice, etc claimed isolated victims. Two newborns, one toddler and an 11-year-old were also lost to the community.

This breakdown of the causes of death is limited to Bombay as *Parsiana* has received no information on the subject from other anjumans.

The data is being presented city-wise, the events being listed in the city where they occurred in chronological and alphabetical order.

In order to ensure the authenticity of the data, *Parsiana* only accepts information for publication if it is received from an anjuman, renowned Parsi institution, court or government authority.

If readers have any information they would like published, some proof to ensure the veracity of the report would be required. We are sure our readers will appreciate this requirement and cooperate with us.

ADEN Died

Rusi Pirojshaw Jesia (61), of 11, Shapurji Bharucha Baug, Andheri, (W) Bombay; July 11

BOMBAY Born

A girl to *Seema* and *Mahiar Irani*; July 1

A boy to *Phiroza* and *Mehernosh Irani*; July 2

A girl to *Zarin* and *Noshir Lala*; July 4

A boy to *Hufrish* and *Rohinton Barucha*; July 10

A girl to *Pervin* and *Noshir Gotla*; July 20

A boy to *Zarin* and *Irshad Moolobhai*; July 25

A boy to *Zenobia* and *Farokh Unwala*; July 29

Died

Dosabhai Jamshedji Jussawala (75), residing at Gamadia Bldg, 226 Gamadia Colony,

Tardeo, 400007, on June 30
Nozer Ardeshir Lentin (73), 11/298, Bakul Highway Co-op Hsg Soc Ltd, New MTC

Colony, Bandra, 400051; June 30
Jehangir Pirojshaw Pavri (88), 811/60, Jam-e-Jamshed Bldg, Parsi Colony, Dadar, 400014; June 30

Phiroze Dorabji Cooper (71), A/8, Godrej Baug, Off Napean Sea Rd, 400026; July 1
Jalbhair Boman Patel (75), 162-A, Batliwala Agiary Compound, Tardeo, 400034; July 1

Bomanji Edulji Wadia (79), 15 Lakdawala Bldg, Khetwadi 5th Lane, 400004; July 1

Homai Ardeshir Bomanji (72), 16/A, Sagar Sangeet, Colaba, 400005; July 2

Dadi Burjor Bharucha (35), Wilson Bldg, Pasta Road, Dadar, 400014; July 3

Jamshed Ratanshah Davar

(71), Patel Bldg, Room 14, Forjett St, 400036, July 3
Nargish Soli Wadia (75), Malegamwala Bldg, 23 Station Rd, Mahim, 400016; July 3
Doshanbanoo Minocheher Mhow (87), B/4, Rustom Baug, Byculla, 400027; July 4
Homai Edulji Bisney (78), D-2, Shapur Baug, V.P. Rd, 400004; July 5

Mehroo Padumji Palia (62), Mazda Salt Works,

Dhangadhra, 363310; July 5
Nariman Dinshahji Dordi

(74), D/14, Panchal Nagar, Navdhar Vasai Rd, Dist

Thane; July 6
Burjor Faramji (91), Daruwala

House, 145 Lamington Rd, 400007; July 6

Homi Pirojshaw Variava (66), Old Khan Bldg, Chikalwadi,

Tardeo, 400007; July 6
Nariman Pirojshaw Daruwala

(68), 6, Jam-e-Jamshed Charity Bldg, Dadar 400014; July 7

Phili Hormuzji Kavarana (78), 11 Khareghat Colony, Hughes

Rd, 400007; July 7
Jal Jehangir Mistry (52),

Bhatia Society Bldg, C Block, Princess St, 400002, July 7

Minocheher Faramji Buhariwala (74), 3/7, Dhunbai

Wadi, Dadabhai Rd, Vile Parle (W), 400056; July 8

Noshir Pirojshaw Ghista (85), Ashley Hse, Opp Colaba Post

Office, 400005; July 8
Jer Rustomji Govadia (75), Dr

Freny Cama Hostel, Gamadia Colony, Tardeo, 400007; July 8

Jehangirji Burjorji Wadia (80), Motlibai Wadia Bldg,

Chikalwadi, 400007; July 8
Pesi Darabshaw Dhabar (62),

Dhun Bldg, 1st Floor, Dadar Cross Rd, 400014; July 9

Darabshaw Jamshedji Bamboat (83), 98, Crawford

Bldg, Sleater Rd, 400007; July 10

Freny Ardeshir Dalal (84), B-51, Twin Towers, Veer

Savarkar Marg, Prabhadevi, 400025; July 10

Roshan Faredoon Desai (70), Malegamwala Bldg, No 2,

Station Rd, Mahim, 400016; July 10

Goolcheher Kaikhushroo

Kotwal (84), Hongkongwala Cooper Bldg, Room 13, 9th

Lane, Khetwadi; July 10
Rusi Bomanji Mistry (68), 315/

A, Grant Rd, 400007; July 10
Freny Adi Shroff (72),

Nusserwanji Tata Bldg No 1, Tata Colony, Bandra, 400050;

July 10
Mino Shapurji Bhathela (72),

95, Eruch Villa, Prof Almeida Rd, Bandra, 400050; July 11

Dino (Dinaz) Manekshah Pavri (74), Happy Home,

Forjett Cross St, Gowalia Tank, 400036; July 11

Ratanshah Hormusji Engineer (76), C-33, Dulabh Bhavan,

Jalbhair St, Charni Rd Junction, 400004; July 12

Gool Naval Kotwal (82), Soona Mansion, 301 Tardeo

Rd, 400007; July 12
Mehroo Darabshaw

Machliwala (65), A/6, Jer Baug, Byculla, 400027; July 12

Shirin Nariman Master (83), B-18, Shapur Baug, V.P. Rd,

400004; July 12
Behramji Kavasji Sadri (82),

Unwala Bldg, Marazban Colony, Gilder Lane, 400008;

July 12
Ardeshir Edulji Shroff (79),

46, Dinabai Sethna Bldg, Sleater Rd, 400007; July 12

Kaikhushroo Hormusji Chikhliwala (83), 12, Windsor

Chambers, Cawasji Patel St, Fort, 400001; July 13

Pesi Jehangir Owner (56), Mohamadi Minar, Khetwadi,

14th Lane, 400004; July 14
Piroja Sorabji Billimoria (80),

46, Vijay Wadi, Girgaum Rd, 400002; July 16

Behram Zend Irani (83), 76/83, Prabhawadi, Bhiwandi,

Dist Thane; July 16
Keki Hormusji Parbhu (57),

Dhun Villa, Malcolm Baug, Jogeshwari, 400102; July 16

Mehramai Rustomji Santok (84), Paul and Wadia Bldg, 7/

C Wadia St, Tardeo, 400034; July 16

Hoshang Burjor Busla (50), D-16, Jer Baug, Byculla,

400027; July 17
Dhunmai Minocher Katrak

(81), 645, Najoo Villa, Parsi Colony, Dadar, 400014; July 17

Shera Limji Batliboi (86), 21,

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Dr Rustom Faramroz Hakim (54), Sleater House, Sleater Rd. 400007; July 18
Banoo Faramji Karai (69), B-5, Popular Apts. 4 Bungalows, Andheri (W), 400058; July 18
Hilla Jehangir Master (97), 576, J. Shankarsheth Rd. 400002; July 18
Rata Manek Shikari (67), Gool Mahal, 'B' Block, Sleater Rd. 400007; July 18
Ardeshir Edulji Naniya (88), A-10, Cusrow Baug, Colaba, 400039; July 19
Hoshang Bejonji Damri (82), Engineer Bldg, Sleater Rd. 400007; July 20
Khushrow Rustomji Dhalla (48), Vakil House, Khareghat Rd, Parsi Colony Dadar, 400014; July 20
Najamai Manchershah Katki (74), C/o J.N. Bharucha, U-7/5 Cusrow Baug, Colaba, 400039; July 20
Rashid Gustad Masdayasna (72), Tata Hsg Soc, 2-B/4, Parel, 400012; July 20
Freny Kaikhushroo Modi (87), Abbas Bldg, Jalbhai St, Grant Rd. 400004; July 20
Adil Ratanshan Randelia (23), 300, Mistry Bldg, Frere Rd, Fort, 400001; July 20
Burjor Ardeshir Chehna (73), 3/5, Malcolm Baug, Jogeshwari, 400102; July 21
Banoo Phiroze Dhondy (69), J-6, Cusrow Baug, Colaba, 400039; July 21
Piroja Bhimjibhai Jussawala (76), N/24, Nowroze Baug, Lalbaug, 400012; July 21
Freny Phiroze Mehta (56), Desire, Prof Almeida Rd, Bandra, 400050; July 21
Freny Rusi Pavri (74), 11-B Gnat Vikrant Hsg Soc, Santa Cruz, 400054; July 21
Keki (Kaikhushroo) Dhanjisha Shroff (75), N.M. Wadia Charity Block No 5, Malcolm Baug, Jogeshwari, 400102; July 26
Coomi Cawasji Trombaywala (74), Dosibai Home, Masina Hospital Cmpd, Byculla, 400027; July 21
Manijeh Jamshedji Vesuna (92), Vijay Niwas, Plot No 5, Sleater Rd, 400007; July 21
 Unnamed baby, daughter of Soli Keki Damania, Mistry Bldg, Captain Colony, Tardeo; July 22
Meherbai Hormusji

Poonawala (98), 803/A, Dr Ambedkar Rd, Dadar, 400014; July 22
Dhannai Jehangirji Baria (85), Wadia Bldg, Room No 3, Dr Ambedkar Rd, Dadar, 400014; July 23
Bhikhoo Noshir Hiranmanek (75), Yusuf Manzil, Byculla Bridge, 400008; July 23
Hilla Sohrabji Karbhari (65), Kashikunj, Waterfield Rd, Bandra, 400050; July 23
Dinbai Bahmanshah Sidhwa (95), Golf Links No 1, Union Park, Pali Rd, Khar (W), 400052; July 23
Burjor Cawasji Tangra (51), U-5/5, Cusrow Baug, Colaba, 400039; July 23
Eruchshaw Behramji Bhesania (84), 794, Family House, Jam-e-Jamshed Rd, Parsi Colony, Dadar, 400014; July 24
Dara Minocher Madon (63), Captain House, Nana Chowk, 400007; July 24
Ava Kaikhushroo Mody (75), 620, Jam-e-Jamshed Rd, Parsi Colony, Dadar, 400014; July 24
Bomanji Naoroji Vakil (94), Adenwala Mansion, Chowpatty Sea Face, 400007; July 24
Hormusji Ratanji Gandhi (88), 595, J. Shankarsheth Road, 4th Fl, 400002; July 25
Meheri Pestonji Kapadia (81), M/55, Cusrow Baug, Colaba, 400039; July 25
Banoobai Sohrabji Pardiwala (81), 4/50, Wadia Baug, Parel Tank Rd, 400033; July 25
Phiruzi Dinyar Dinshah Avasia (1), 51, Wadia Hse, 22 Hughes Rd, Khareghat Colony, 400007; July 26
Banoobai Meherjibhai Batliwala (87), Godhan Bldg, Procter St, Grant Rd, 400007; July 26
Pirojsha Dinshaji Chiniwala (76), 17/C, Rustom Baug, Victoria Rd, 400027; July 26
Jerbanoo Hormusji Dalal (83), E/13, 3rd Fl, Central Bank Co-op Soc, Vile Parle (W), 400056; July 26
Eruchshaw Pestonji Kapadia (87), Jawalkar Mans, 1st Fl, 280 Sopariwala Rd, Parel, 400012; July 26
 Unnamed baby, son of Homi Nariman Mobed, Chandrakani Mans, Uranwala St, Grant Rd, 400007; July 26
Pilton Nusserwanji Khurshigara (77), 31, Ragi Bungalow, Malcolm Baug, Jogeshwari, 400102; July 27

Savakshah Cawasji Mirza (87), 14, Hill Range Apts, Pali Malla Rd, Bandra, 400050; July 27
Faramroze Naoroji Unwala (69), Gold Coin, 12/A, Haji Ali, Tardeo, 400034; July 27
Mohta Jamshedji Batliwala (76), 3/4, Rustom Baug, Byculla, 400027; July 28
Manekbai Ardeshir Chargeman (87), 31/23, Swadeshi Mill Chawl, Sion-Chunabhati, Kurla, 400022; July 28
Dinbai Hormusji Daruwala (79), 27, Old Khareghat Colony, Hughes Road, 400007; July 28
Dinoo Dadiba Munshi (53), 18/C, Gilder Lane, Marazban Colony, 400008; July 28
Alu Kaikhushroo Toddywala (72), 3, Readymoney Bldg, 2nd Fl, Sir Ratan Tata Colony, Tardeo, 400034; July 28
Hira Eruchshah Udwadia (83), 12/A, Shapur Baug, V.P. Rd, 400004; July 28
Nicole Homi Rabadi (11), 12, Jal Darshan Apts, Napean Sea Road, 400006; July 29
Mohta Ardeshir Amroliwala (87), 2/8, A.H. Wadia Baug, Parel Tank Rd, 400033; July 30
Behram Edulji Dadachanji (97), Alexandra Hse, Alexandra Rd, New Gamdevi, 400007; July 30
Khorshed Pirojshah Davierwala (79), I-202, Vishal Apts, S.V. Rd, Andheri (E), 400069; July 30
Mani Sohrabji Fatakia (68), 95/A, Jiten Co-op Soc, Flat 210, J.P. Rd, Andheri, 400058; July 30
Tehmina Edulji Godiwala (80), H-20, Nowroze Baug, Lalbaug, 400012; July 30
Hirabai Darabshaw Guzder (79), C/o N.T. Bamji, Lady Meherbai Tata Bldg, Flat 12, Tata Blocks, Bandra, 400050; July 30
Rustom Naoroji Mistry (86), 785-C, Khareghat Rd, Parsi Colony, Dadar, 400014, July 31
Ratanbai Hormusji Bharucha (83), No 18, Santa Apt 'A', Bandra, 400050; July 31
Rustomji Cawasji Katrak (70), 15 Khareghat Colony, Hughes Rd, 400007; July 31

CALCUTTA

Died
Dhunmai Medhora (67), widow of Ardeshir, daughter

of Shirinbai and Rustomji Bhesania, and sister of Bomi; July 3
Ardeshir Rustomji Kaka (85), husband of Dolat, and father of Sam, Freny and Aban; July 28

DELHI

Died
Niloufer Billimoria (26), daughter of Frenny and Russi Billimoria and sister of Raiomond; July 19

KARACHI

Died
Aloomai Kavasji Sopariwala (89); May 6
Hilla (Bhikhai) Burjorji Colebewala (82); May 18
Rusi Edulji Mana (68); May 18
Parviz Dinshaw Patel (89); May 28
Minocher Behram Torkay (5); May 30
Minocher Pestanji Dastur (86); June 5
Rustam Jamshed Irani (91); June 8
Eruchshaw Bejonji Vakharia (95); June 11
Dolly Nariman Dastur (59); June 12
Lowji P. Golwala (80); June 29
Soonamai D. Khursigara (87); June 29

ONTARIO

Married
Pheerozah Boyce and Pheeroze Vania; May 23
Died
Jerbai Sorabji Kotwal, mother of Darius, Homai, Nozer and Pervin; July 6
Khorshed Dinshaw Balsara, mother of Dr Russi, Sabar and the late Homai Janmahomed; mother-in-law of Moti Russi Balsara, and grandmother of Khorshed and Navroze; July 15

POONA

Died
Maneck Hormuzji Agha (60); July 3
Dinshaw Bejonji Chandabhoj (47); July 9
Dhan Ardeshir Hathikhanavala (85); July 10
Dogdo Dorabji Naegaunwala (92); July 10
Ratanbai Cursetji Kaikobad (98); July 26

WASHINGTON

Born
A boy, Zubin, to Farida and Tehmtón Mistry; June 1987

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Above (from left)
Guzder :
fair business
Grant :
woman's status
Bativala :
fixing teeth
(Right) Moos :
tempts tourists



Continued from page 22

Past president of the Indian National Committee of the International Chamber of Commerce, Guzder is the president of the Maharashtra Economic Development Council. A director of 20 large companies and chairman of Boots Co (India) Ltd, Guzder is a trustee of 17 public charitable trusts, states a *Jam-e-Jamshed* report.

Painless substitute

A painless and convenient substitute for dentures – implantology – has been brought to India by Dr Firdaus P. Bativala, notes *The Bombay Samachar* of July 12, 1987. The method entails "fixing single or multiple artificial teeth right into the bone structure," says Bativala.

Having obtained a distinction in the 1986 North-East Regional Dental Boards exams, USA, Bativala is qualified to practise in 14 states of that country. After his return to India, he has done about 20 to 30 implants.

A graduate in dental surgery from the Nair Hospital, Bativala went on to attain a specialist degree in fixed and removable prosthodontics, and studied periodontal prosthesis and root canal treatment at Columbia University. He has also contributed to the *Journal of Prosthetic Dentistry* in the USA.

Son of Bombay-based dental surgeons Phiroz and Dhun Bativala, Firdaus' other interests include playing

squash and flying, for which he holds a private pilot's licence.

Grant's new position

Past president and trustee of the Poona Parsee Panchayat Ms Tehmi Grant has been elected president of the National Council of Women in India for the next term (1987 to 1990), notes a press release.

The Council, with its 17 branches and five affiliate societies, "is dedicated to the upliftment of women and children all over India."

As president of the Council, Grant recently attended the World Congress of Women in Moscow. Inaugurated by the Soviet Party Secretary, Mikhail Gorbachov, the Congress was attended by over 2,300 women from 156 countries representing 350 organizations.

Grant has also been active in the Poona Women's Council for over two decades. She is at present its managing trustee. Grant is also the president of the Poona Parsi Dramateurs and a trustee of the University Women's Association, adds the release.

New hope for the deaf

"Give me a ear and I will give you a voice" appeals a deaf child to its hearing brethren, in a souvenir brought out by the Roshni Memorial Society for the Deaf (RMSD). The souvenir was released at the presentation ceremony in March this year, when the Roshni Memorial Trophy and the Dr (Miss) Mani Gamat's Memorial Trophy were presented to the two best deaf students.

"We are working towards an ultimate goal – to establish a business-aid center and a polytechnic institute for the deaf," says Ms Rutty Pavri, honorary secretary of the society, and mother of the late Roshni Pavri.

A week's training in rock-climbing, trekking, nature history and camping

was also given to 22 deaf boys and girls at Kanheri Caves in collaboration with the Explorer and Adventure Society.

"To upgrade educational, social and vocational opportunities for the deaf and to make them self-supportive, productive and well-balanced individuals," the RMSD organizes courses like computer programming, accountancy, book-keeping, first-aid, etc for deaf students, notes a press release.

Launched in March 1985, the Society is a tax-exempt voluntary organization. The Society got its first break when Maegaware Computers helped it to start a computer training program for deaf students because "this field involves very little talking and hearing and the students, being quite intelligent, can cope with it," explains Pavri.

It is estimated that there are 35 million deaf in India, out of which 15 to 20 million are deaf school-going children, for whom there are only 400 to 500 schools. According to a survey, it is found that only four to five percent receive education, notes the Society's annual report.

Dhansak in Italy

The traditional Parsi *dhansak* has been "successfully" introduced, along with other culinary delights of India, to the Italians by Ms Meher Moos, manager, Government of India Tourist Office for Mediterranean countries, notes the *Mid-Day* of July 21, 1987. The all-time Parsi favorite has been taken to "with much relish by the Italians," adds the report.

Moos, who is stationed in Milan, was visiting India in July to hold official discussions with the department of tourism. Her work entails the responsibility of arranging tours, maintaining contact with the travel agents, tour operators, the Press, large business houses, and educational institutions, and promoting India through various photo exhibitions, travel fairs, food festivals, films, and audiovisuals.

SPOTLIGHT

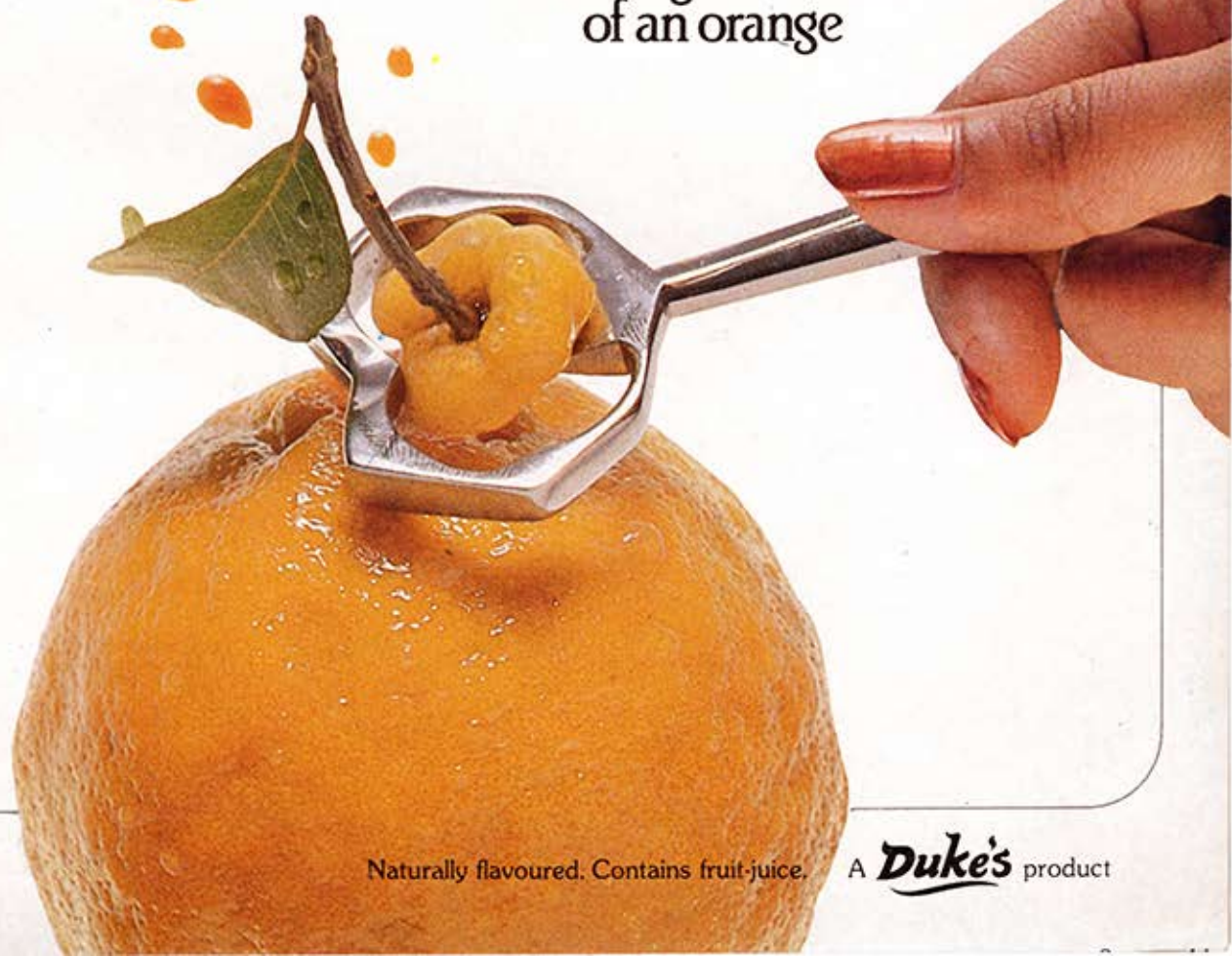
Rustom P. Bharucha has been appointed senior vice-president of Glindia in charge of the personnel and legal division and Homi R. Khusrookhan is the newly appointed senior vice-president in charge of the finance and secretarial division, notes the Glindia publication *Business Review* of April-June '87.

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