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FEBRUARY 1988 Rs 7

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Ambercol 37

Parsiana

February 1988
Volume 10 Number 8

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ONCE THE FLAME OF FREEDOM IS EXTINGUISHED IT NEVER LIGHTS AGAIN

"RIGHT OF WORSHIP" – During Muktab and Farvardian Jashan – Summarised Result of the Eleven Questions

QUESTIONS	IN FAVOUR	AGAINST	IN FAVOUR	AGAINST
Should Non-Zoroastrians married to Zoroastrians attend Muktab held in the Common Hall at the Zoroastrian House, as they did for over 30 Years ?	222	14	91.3 %	5.7 %
Should Non-Zoroastrians married to Zoroastrians attend FARVARDIAN JASHAN at the Chapel at Brookwood Cemetery as they did for over 30 years ?	220	13	90.5 %	5.3%
Should Ervads and/or Dasturs engage in "POWER GAME" ?	18	197	7.4 %	81.0 %
Should Ervads and/or Dasturs engage in "Politics" ?	33	179	13.5 %	73.6 %
Should Ervads and/or Dasturs serve on any Committee other than those dealing exclusively with Religion ?	122	99	50.2 %	40.7 %
Should Ervads and/or Dasturs restrict Reforms and Progress of our Community ?	12	214	4.9 %	88.0 %
Should Ervads and/or Dasturs interfere in our "RIGHT OF WORSHIP"?	11	215	4.5 %	88.4 %
Should Ervads and/or Dasturs interfere in our Freedom – (Thoughts – Words – Deeds) ?	6	219	2.4 %	90.1 %
Do you desire me to treat your reply as "CONFIDENTIAL" ?	89	143	36.6 %	58.8 %
Can I produce your reply to anyone ?	160	69	65.8 %	28.3 %
Can I use your reply, as I deem fit in the interest of our Community ?	193	50	79.4 %	20.5 %

**MUKTAD
FARVARDIAN**

In Favour 91.3 %
In Favour 90.5 %

Against 5.7 %
Against 5.3 %

"FOOT NOTES"

- No. of Questionnaires forwarded to 907 Members
- Returned by Post Office 23 Members
- Total Replies received upto 17th Nov. '87 243 Members
(N.B:- Time was extended from 10th to 17th due to go-slow in various Post Offices)
- Authorised to declare their Names 109 Members
- Requested not to disclose their Names. 95 Members
- Without Remarks 39 Members
- Total Replies Received upto 17th Nov. '87 243 Members
- Mrs. Beroze Mody, Vice President; Mr. Meherwan Sepai; Mr. Filly Maravala, Hon. Secretary ; Mr. Noshir Avari; Mr. Fali Buhariwala, Hon. Treasurer ; Mr. Dariyush Chinoy; Mr. Kersey J. Jasavala, Hon. Social Secretary remarked in their unsigned Circular to the Members of Z.T.F.E. dated 23rd Nov. 1987:-
"The research Mr. Cowasjee carried out, bears no statistical significance as it was ignored by the majority of devout Zoroastrians".
- Majority of 95 members who requested their Names not be to disclosed are "devout Zoroastrians" same as 109 Members who have authorised their Names to be declared.
- A True Zoroastrian strongly believes in
"FREEDOM OF THOUGHTS" – "FREEDOM OF WORDS" – "FREEDOM OF DEEDS"



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.

Prof Kaikobad ill

Prof Noshir F. Kaikobad, who has been conceiving, formulating and supervising the implementation of the Federation of Parsi Zoroastrian Anjumans of India's counselling and research projects, had a heart attack on December 20, 1987 and was admitted to the Inlak Nursing Home in Chembur under the treatment of cardiologist Dr Kale. He was discharged from the Nursing Home on New Year's day to convalesce at home, but on the night of January 5, 1988 he suffered a stroke which has caused a paralysis of the entire left side of his body and loss of speech.

Under the treatment of Dr Katrak, an eminent neurophysician at Jaslok Hospital, there has been some improvement, but the road to complete recovery is difficult and slow.

Noshirwan has rendered yeoman service not only to our own community but also to the country and the United Nations.

Let us all pray to the Almighty for Noshirwan's complete and speedy recovery.

KEKIJ. GANDHI

Jt Hon Secretary

Federation of Parsi Zoroastrian Anjumans of India

"The Inner Light..."

Zoroastrianism is not the only religion which is iconoclastic and all persons are not iconoclasts. Fire is that dazzling, awe-inspiring but dangerous Zoroastrian icon which consumes itself to enlighten the world. The fire in our hearths and homes is a symbolic token of the fire within our hearts; that spark of life within us bestowed by Ahura Mazda. What the cross is to the Christians, the fire is to the Zoroastrians; yet we are not fire worshippers in as much as the Christians are not the worshippers of the cross. Hence, the holy fire should be treated with veneration. To denigrate fire and say that it has usurped the place of Ahura Mazda is blasphemy of the faith.

A certain quantum of rituals are an inseparable part and parcel of all religious faiths and Zoroastrianism is no exception. They are performed for invoking the spirits and the spiritual world, seeking the blessings of Ahura Mazda in times of joy and happiness and His help and mercy in times of peril and sorrow.

Our method of disposal of the dead at the Towers of Silence involves exposition and sacrifice to the birds of prey. Burial involving confining and sacrifice to earthly worms, or cremation involving consignment of the body to flames, are all matters of tradition. A Hindu friend of mine once asked me an annoying question. He queried, "Why don't the Parsis throw their dead bodies to the dogs instead of feeding the vultures?" I countered, "Why don't the Hindus cook their meals over their funeral pyres instead of burning fuel in their stoves?"

Mr Cama would have us believe that our method of disposal of the dead is not effective costwise ("The Inner Light..." Parsiana, November 1987). He quotes a figure of Rs 1,500 per dead body consigned as the cost incur-

red by the Bombay Parsi Punchayet, and the total funeral expenses in the range of Rs 5,000 to Rs 6,000. However, the actual charges payable at Doongerwadi are much less and more variable, and were listed in "Doongerwadi rates fixed" (Parsiana, June 1987).

My enquiries reveal that the actual charges payable by the poorest of Hindu families on the day of cremation is about Rs 900 inclusive of wood, kerosene, pundits' charges, etc. For affluent families and more elaborate ceremonies, the costs would of course be greater. These figures are only cited to place the relative costs in perspective.

Dr P.D. SUNAVALA

Navroze Mody

We received a very sad letter from Mr and Ms Jamshid R. Mody of New Jersey (USA) about the brutal murder of their son Navroze by some hooligans on flimsy and communal grounds. This incident should now unite Zarthustis all over the world, especially in North America and Europe.

It is time all Zarthusti associations, especially in the West, get together and make strenuous efforts to bring our community into the limelight by organizing public functions, seminars, and by distributing literature to educate the Westerners about our origin,



Mody: protect Zoroastrian identity

history and achievement in every field.

We also have to educate the Westerners that we are as good as the Mayflower pilgrims, being driven out of our motherland, Iran, by the marauding Arabs.

continued on page 14

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Events and Personalities

Seats reserved for Parsis

Seats in medical and engineering colleges from the chief minister's quota have been reserved for "deserving" Zoroastrian students in Gujarat and Karnataka who have secured a minimum 75 percent marks but are unlikely to get admission on their own merits, notes the December issue of *Fed Newsletter*. West Bengal will make provisions for reservations only in medical and dental colleges but not in engineering colleges.

In Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh, reservation of seats for Parsis is also under "active consideration," and "it is hoped that the sincere efforts made in this matter by Homi J.H. Taleyarkhan at the behest of the Federation of Parsi Zoroastrian Anjumans of India will meet with positive response from the chief ministers of these states also," states the report.

As soon as the results are declared, Zoroastrian students who have secured 75 percent or more marks in the qualifying examinations and are willing to join any college in a particular state must by registered post A/D address their application form along with their bio-data and mark sheets to Homi Taleyarkhan, and forward them to Keki Gandhi, honorary secretary, Federation of Parsi Zoroastrian Anjumans of India, C/o Machine Tools (India) Ltd, D-24, South Extension Part-II, New Delhi 110049. Taleyarkhan will then make the necessary recommendation to the chief minister.

"Through the good offices of Dr Farokh Master and Dr Sarosh Wadia," Parsi students will be able to secure admission in homeopathic medical colleges in the state of Maharashtra and Gujarat, the *Fed Newsletter* offered hope. On completion of their training, the students have been promised practical experience under senior homeopathic physicians.

For further information, write to Dr Sarosh Wadia, Alipur Building, Colaba, Bombay 400005.

Story of our Religion

A fully illustrated children's book titled *The Story of our Religion - Zoroastrianism*, was launched by Zoroastrian Studies (ZS) at a function held at the P.V.M. Gymkhana on January 7, 1988.

Sponsored by the Pirojsha Godrej Foundation and Minoo Mody of Tata Sons, the book written by Ms Ava Mehta, a school teacher, was released by Ms Soonu N. Godrej.

In a pamphlet distributed on the occasion, high priest of the H.B. Wadia Atash Bahram, Dastur Dr Firoze Kotwal noted, "The authoress, using modern skills of communication, has done an excellent job by portraying the doctrine and practices of our faith accurately, and in a novel way."

"Zoroastrian Studies, the publishers, also deserve to be congratulated for their sustained efforts and pioneering zeal in the field of popularizing religious education, both here in India and abroad."

Ms Shehnaz Munshi led the ZS children's choir in singing a medley of religious songs in English. An audiovisual, *Revelation - a light in darkness*, was shown on the occasion. Copies of the book bought on the same day were autographed by the authoress.

The book is on a special offer of Rs 125 (normal price Rs 150) until March 21, 1988 at Zoroastrian Studies, K.R. Cama Oriental Institute Building, 136 Bombay Samachar Marg, Bombay 400023.

Floodlit football

At the first All Parsis Floodlit Rink Football Festival on January 31, 1988 the Tata Housing Sports Club emerged victorious.

Rink football is "played with an absolutely new set of rules and ground specifications (30 meters by 20 meters) with hockey sized goalposts. The game is tremendously fast, fascinating and entertaining," notes a press release issued by Mahiyar G. Dastoor, outdoor games secretary of the Dadar Parsee Colony Gymkhana which organized the event.

Played on the gymkhana grounds at the Mancherji Joshi Colony at Dadar, the six participating teams - the Tata Housing Sports Club, the Sir Ness Wadia Club, the Wadia Sports Club, the Cusrow Baug United Sports and



Left: Godrej (center) releasing the book as Mehta and Khojeste Mistree look on

Below: Dastoor



Welfare League, the Navroze Baug Play Centre and the host team – were divided into sections, A and B. The games were refereed by Clarence Lobo of the Tata Sports Club.

In the semi-finals, the Wadia Sports Club beat the Dadar Parsee Colony Gymkhana (8-2), while the Tata Housing Sports Club beat Cusrow Baug (5-3). Winners of the two previous All Parsis Football Tournaments, the Wadia Sports Club were defeated by the Tata Housing Sports Club (3-5) in the finals with Burzin Pithawala, Rushad Cassad and Zubin Zarhosti-manesh playing well for the winners while R. Sidhwa and K. Vaid excelled for the losers, notes the release.

The winning team was presented with the Festival Trophy, a cash prize of Rs 251 and gold plated medals. The runners-up (Wadia Sports Club) were presented with silver plated medals and a cash prize of Rs 201.

Rushad Cassad of the Tata Housing Sports Club, adjudged the "Best Player of the Festival," was given Rs 51 and a brass Asho Farohar mounted on rosewood.

The entry fees of Rs 100 per team were utilized for the prizes and for providing fruits and lemonade to the players during the break. Sarosh Daruwala of Mazda Audio/Video Labs voluntarily provided the music to soothe "the tension-filled nerves."

For the future, the Dadar Parsee Colony Gymkhana would like to organize more such festivals "which shall be exciting, entertaining and different," adds the release.

Mazda Textile's issue

Mazda Textile Industries which would be offering its shares worth Rs 105 lakhs to the public in February will have "one of the most modern texturising and twisting plants at Pipodra village in Surat district." Promoted by Mazda Estates and Finance jointly with Vinubhai Patel and Surendra Patel of London, the new concern is part of the Mazda Group of Companies. Being in a notified backward area, "the Company enjoys various locational advantages, with cash subsidy and sales tax exemption up to 80 percent of capital investments for seven years," states a press release issued by the Mazda Textile director Farrokh Mehta. While announcing the public issue, chairman of the Company Dara Deboo has confidently predicted

"a good response from the investing public."

Since its inception, Vitta Mazda (a previous venture of the Mazda Group) has consistently paid a dividend of 20 percent, notes the press release, adding that the investors can expect a "good return on their investments" from the new Company.

The board of directors of this new Company includes the chairman of the Mazda Group Dara Deboo, chartered accountant Pradeep Shukla, solicitor and partner of Little and Company Farokh Sidhwa, advocate Farrokh Mehta, businessman Kersi Deboo, and company secretary Yezdi Master who will be the Company's managing director, adds the release.

"The shares of the Company will be listed on Ahmedabad and Bombay Stock Exchange offering easy liquidity." The public issue consists of 10,50,000 equity shares of Rs 10 each offered at par, of which 6,30,000 shares are for resident Indians and 4,20,000 for non-resident Indians, the release further notes.

A tryst with music

Ronnie Desai who has been described as the "Bob Dylan of India," has recorded his second album, *Bad Company*, which music critics feel will be a "healthy seller." Marketed by CBS,



Desai: getting away from jingles

the album's title song bemoans "the travails of a first class M.Sc. who is languishing in an office that exploits its workers. Hence the strike. The science graduate will soon be out on his ear," notes music critic, Jerry D'Souza in *The Afternoon Despatch and Courier*

of December 8, 1987, who labels the song "a winner."

Other songs on the album include *New Year's eve*, *When do we go out*, and *The long and the short of it*, which is about the romance between a sailor's son and a priest's daughter.

Bad Company has "literally given Ronnie a commercial break – a chance to get away from the jingles that he has been turning out for the last five years," writes Arun Katiyar in the *Bombay* of December 22-January 6.

The album's 'back-up band' features Zubin Balaporia on the keyboard, Babu Chaudhari and Jayesh Gandhi on the guitars, Mark Menezes on the drums, and Mark Selwyn and Shiv Mathur on the bass. The success of Desai's first album *Bedlam* prompted CBS to give him a second shot, says D'Souza.

A science graduate in geology and chemistry from the Jai Hind College, 34-year-old Desai started his career by forming a band, with his school mate Shiv Mathur, called Joint Collaboration ("The reason behind its name was because I used to smoke joints") noted *The Daily* of January 10, 1988.

"The Rolling Stones, Beatles and The Who were the major influences for the band. Ronnie was equally influenced by folk too – especially Bob Dylan. Little wonder that Ronnie who was...a lot more composed then, began composing songs based – like Dylan – on love and life."

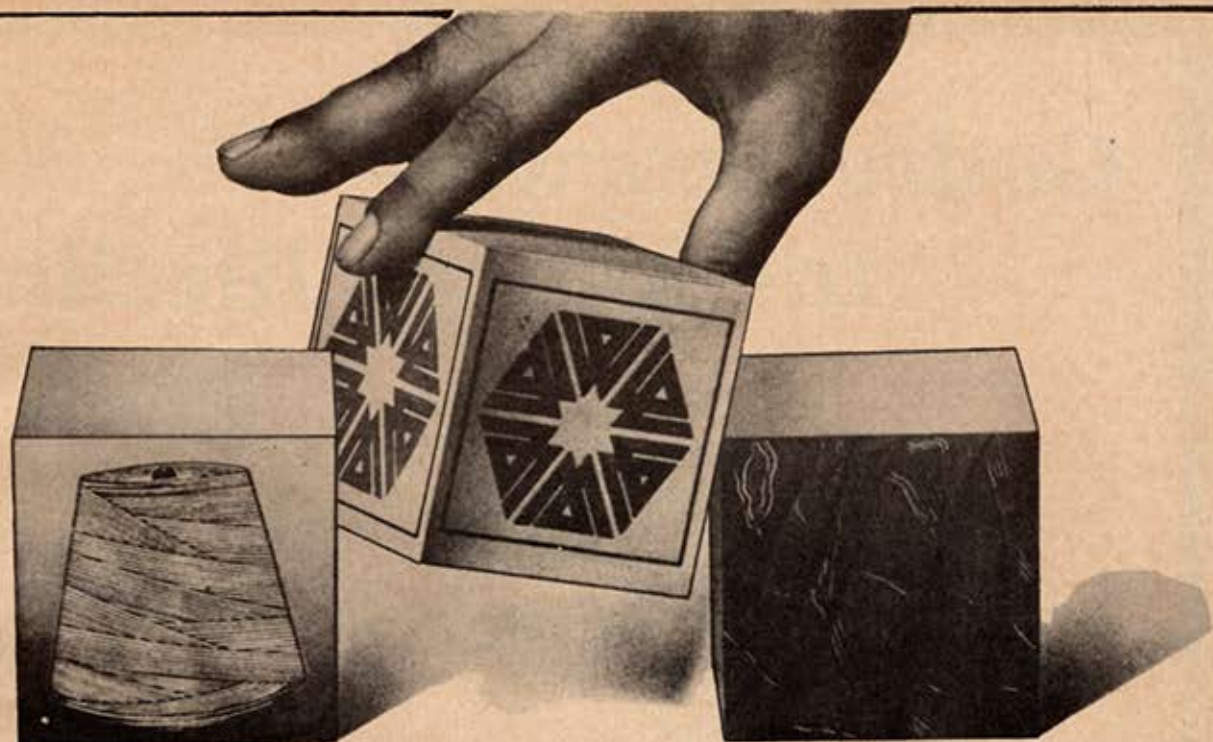
Desai worked as a copywriter for two years with leading advertising agencies like Lintas, Chaitra and Enterprise and with the contacts that he built up, started to compose jingles. His jingle on Eagle jugs won an Ad Club award while the one on Amul chocolates won him honors.

Jhabvala's tenth novel

Ruth Prawer Jhabvala's latest novel *Three Continents* has been termed "her most ambitious and impressive work," by *Newsweek* critic, Laura Shapiro (*Newsweek*, August 31, 1987).

A Polish-German Jew married to architect Cyrus Jhabvala, her tenth novel, *Three Continents*, deals with "wealthy young twins of impeccable Yankee lineage who take up with three mesmerizing charlatans and follow them first to England and then, disastrously, to India," states the write-up.

Jhabvala has settled in New York



Bridging the gap...

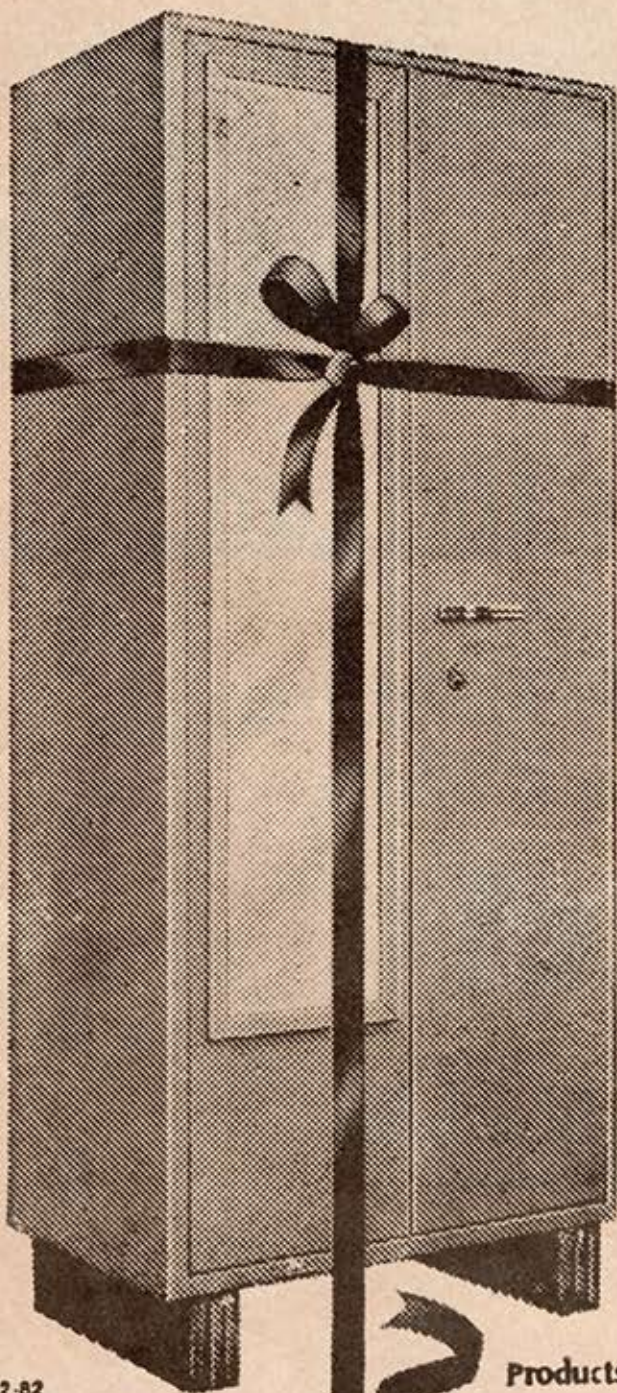
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since 1975 and is an American citizen, but still spends three months in a year at her home in Delhi. "Although English has long been her primary language, her prose has a delicate, pleasing air of translation about it, as if the meaning of the words hovered just above them on the page. Whether in Delhi or New York, she writes as a foreigner." "What can I do?" she asked the *Newsweek* critic with a smile and then added, "I am a foreigner."

Jhabvala has also written several short stories. With *Shakespearewalla* in the '60s she "began her long collaboration with the filmmaking team of Ismail Merchant and James Ivory." An Oscar award winner for her script of the film *A room with a view*, she has also written screenplays for *The Europeans*, *The Bostonians* and *Heat and Dust*.

For the future, Jhabvala would like to do Henry James' *Portrait of a Lady*, adds the report.

The dancer's debut

"The reason I wanted to learn dance was a strange one," wrote Jeroo Mulla in her introductory write-up on the occasion of her *arangetram* (maiden public) Bharata Natyam recital at the Sophia Bhabha Auditorium on November 3, 1987. "I was about five or six and used to see my cousin learning. I was envious because at dance class she could take off her sandals and dance barefoot. Pampered as I was, I was forbidden from removing my sandals in case I caught a cold! How I longed to feel the freedom of bare feet on a cool floor. And how I loved the sound of the *ghungroos* (bells)!"

A student of Acharya Parvatikumar, 34-year-old Jeroo's debut after 14 years of training "has shot her straight into the realm of the professional dancer," noted *The Afternoon Despatch and Courier* dance critic. An *arangetram* is an occasion to evaluate the dancer's proficiency in both pure dance and *abhinaya* (expression). While *abhinaya* is a hurdle for most dancers, "it happens to be Jeroo's forte," noted the *Mid-Day* dance critic, Sumitra Srinivasan. "Jeroo proved...she is a mature dancer," added the critic. "Her perseverance and innate gift as a dancer should take her a long way."

Acknowledging her debut to her parents, Mulla stated, "I grew up in a house surrounded by beautiful things - invaluable books, furniture, paintings,



Mulla: "sound of ghungroos"

objects - all collected with love, cared for with love and displayed with love. And so gradually I began to observe and understand the symbiotic relationship between love and beauty." She started her dancing under the noted danseuse Shirin Vajifdar, who later suggested that Jeroo learn under Acharya Parvatikumar, a renowned and highly respected choreographer who founded the Tanjavur Nrityashala Academy of Dance.

The head of the social communications media department at Sophia Polytechnic in Bombay, Jeroo, who holds a master's degree in the educational media from Fairfield University in USA, teaches film appreciation and audiovisual production.

Stamp research wins gold

For his research collection in postal history, "India Used Abroad in Aden-Victorian Era," Vispi Dastur, honorary secretary of the Empire of India Philatelic Society, was conferred the Vermel gold medal at HAFNIA-'87. The international stamp exhibition was held in Copenhagen from October 16-25, 1987 notes a press release.

Dastur was also awarded a silver medal for his book *India Used Abroad*.

Member of the Government of India's Philatelic Advisory Committee, Dastur attended the exhibition as the national commissioner for India. He also represented India at the fiftysixth International Federation of Philately World Congress held at Copenhagen from October 24 to 26, adds the release.

SPOTLIGHT

Minoo Masani released the fifth volume of Dr Bahman Surti's book *Shah Namah of Firdaosi in English Prose* on October 30, 1987 notes a press release.

An honorary cultural doctorate in education by the World University (Arizona) USA was awarded to Dr Hoshi Bhiwandiwalla of Narsee Monjee College of Commerce and Economics, Bombay, notes the *Sunday Mid-Day* of January 10, 1988.

At the State Athletics Championship in Nashik, Zenia Ayrton was adjudged the best athlete, notes the *Indian Express* of January 5. At an earlier athletic meet in Bombay, Ayrton clocked 12.2 seconds in the 100 meters run to better the national record.

Clarification

Lest "The success equation" (Events and Personalities, *Parsiiana*, November 1987) be misconstrued, we would like to clarify some of the statements reported therein.

When it was mentioned that maternal grandparents are excluded from receiving any share under the Parsi laws of intestate succession, it was meant that they would be debarred if any closer relatives (including paternal grandparents) are surviving.

Subsequently it was stated that the Indian Succession Act has never permitted a widower a share in the property of his deceased wife. The husband, till today, can claim a share in the property of his deceased wife in equal proportions with his children. But a share in the dead wife's parents' estate cannot at present be claimed by her widower. Under the 1865 Act the widower did have such a right but it was withdrawn by a subsequent amendment.

Whether this right should once again be bestowed upon the widower is what the Federation of Parsi Zoroastrian Anjumans of India is debating upon.

Compiled by Roxana H. Kaka

Congress for renaissance

"Prospects of Zoroastrian Renaissance in the New World" will be the theme of the Sixth North American Zoroastrian Congress to be held in Toronto from Friday April 1 to Sunday April 3, 1988, notes the Congress registration brochure.

Hosted by the Zoroastrian Society of Ontario (ZSO), the first evening of the Congress is devoted to special interest group discussions, followed by two full days of speeches by various scholars. There will be a banquet on the second evening followed by the presentation ceremony of the newly instated North American Achievement Awards, notes an invitation to the Congress by Kobad Zarolia, president of the ZSO and chairman of the Congress.

The six topics to be discussed at the meet are: Zoroastrian Studies in the New World by Dastur Dr Kaikhusroo JamaspAsa, High Priest of the Anjuman Atash Bahram; Role of non-Zoroastrians in the Zoroastrian community by Dr Jehan Bagli, Editor of *Gavashni*, the newsletter of the Zoroastrian Society of Quebec; Psychological profile of the North American Zoroastrians by Dolly Das-toor, psychologist, gerontologist and past-president of the Zoroastrian Society of Quebec; Contemporary Zoroastrian Activities - Specificity including the survey of communities in UK, USA and Canada by Dr John Hin-nells, professor of comparative religion, University of Manchester, England; Understanding the traditions of Zoroastrianism by Prof Kaikhosrov Irani, professor and chairman, department of philosophy, City College, New York; Adaptation of the Zoroastrian traditions by the North American Zoroastrians by Khojeste Mistree, founder of Zoroastrian Studies, Bombay.

The special interest group discussions will be geared to an exchange between youths, FEZANA members, teachers of Zoroastrian studies and practicing priests of North America.

Registration fees before the January 31, '88 deadline expressed in Canadian

dollars were 25 for adults and 15 for students, while those wishing to attend merely the banquet pay 35. Special interest meetings carry no fee. The room charges of the Constellation Hotel, where the Congress is to be held, are 77 for a single room and 89 for a double. Those wishing to stay with families should mention this to the organizers beforehand so that appropriate arrangements may be made.

For further information please contact Kobad Zarolia, The Zoroastrian Society of Ontario, 3590 Bayview Avenue, Willowdale, Ontario M2M 3S6, Canada.

Darbe Mehr lease

With its twentieth anniversary due February 22, 1988, The Zoroastrian Society of British Columbia is busy finalizing a lease agreement with the trustees of the Arbab Rustam Guiv Darbe Mehr, informs the Society's newsletter of November-December 1987. By the terms of the lease, the upkeep and maintenance of the Darbe Mehr and the grounds devolves upon the Society. The anticipated monthly expense of \$ 500 will cover water supply, telephone charges, insurance, etc.

The details were provided at a special general meeting jointly convened at the Darbe Mehr on November 8, 1987 by the Society's directors and the trustees of the Darbe Mehr, says the newsletter. The Society is working to establish a maintenance fund, interest on which will service the Darbe Mehr. Targetted for \$ 1,00,000, the Society has already got \$ 25,000 into the kitty thanks to Ms Roda Pavri who set the ball rolling with a pledge of \$ 5,000. A major fund raising campaign will be under way shortly, adds the write-up.

The Society's directors are concerned about the communication gap within the community because "there are those who feel very strongly about a subject but are handicapped by a lack of fluency in English." This requires a series of translations resulting in most meetings dragging on for almost four hours, despite an agenda which could be reasonably completed in one or two, as notes the newsletter. Acknow-

ledging the problem that pertinent details may be lost in the translations, the newsletter seeks "patience and honest cooperation...After all, we have managed to coexist in harmony despite our two distinct languages and heritages for almost 20 years."

Last year's British Columbia Coast skating champion, 15-year-old Tazeem Behramfaram, won the first prize in her club competition in 1987, says the newsletter. Beginning as a five-year-old, Behramfaram has collected several medals and trophies in the course of 10 years of skating, adds the write-up.

Washington vignettes

Groups are examining available sites in Maryland and Virginia whereon to locate a Zoroastrian Center, notes *Zoroastrian News*, the newsletter of the Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Washington (ZAMW), in its January 1988 issue.

Differing viewpoints emerged at an open meeting held on December 6, 1987. While some members felt that the project, with common facilities, should be set up in coordination with other organizations of Indians, Iranians, etc, others opined that the management board should proceed with examining possible sites for purchase with the funds in hand. Some people considered the scheme to be "good but ambitious," while others suggested a need to accelerate fund raising.

Seventy percent of those who responded to a questionnaire on the subject agreed that the community required such a place. Only 16 percent disagreed, notes the newsletter. While 57 percent are willing to contribute financially to the project, 36 percent want to be involved in planning the Center.

"Every other minority religious group has established a center to make its creed and culture known to the multitudes of tourists from all over the world who visit the capital (Washington), but there is none for Zoroastrians," notes a letter dated November 9, 1987 from Dr Rostam Sarfeh, trustee of the Arbab Guiv Trust Fund. The letter had been read out at the

conference jointly organized by the World Zoroastrian Organisation and the Zoroastrian Association of Chicago in November, 1987.

With the intention of acquiring a logo to represent the Association, the ZAMW has held a logo design competition. The winning entry, to be judged by the Board, will receive a cash award. February 15, 1988 was the last date for submissions, noted the newsletter. The design should include either the full name of the Association or its acronym ZAMW, noted the write-up. Stipulating that the size of the logo be appropriate for its use, the board permitted the use of religious or locational symbols or a combination of the two.

Seventy-five adults and several children participated in a ZAMW sponsored talent competition on November 7, 1987. Divided into two groups, the youngsters gave short recitals ranging from violin playing to poetry, song and storytelling, while the grownups displayed culinary skills, noted *Zoroastrian News*. In the first category Nazneen Irani walked away with the first prize with an electrifying rendition of the song *Greatest love of all*. Violinist Orang Dehmeri's medley scored second place while Jamshid Mistry stood third with "a rousing description of dinosaurian life," noted the newsletter. Nergish Kermani's presentation in the salad/appetiser section was adjudged best with Banoo Kamran's as runner-up; Tehmtan Mistry's entree won first prize with Iran Shahryary and Pari Guiv tying for the second; Parvin Salamat's and Kamal Tengra's desserts had 'em drooling - in that order!

The evening ended with competition quality pot-luck for the "100 odd hungry souls."

Zoroastrian cabby Shahpour Demehri was selected by the Westin Hotel as one of seven cabdrivers in the District of Columbia for his courteous and efficient service behind the wheel, notes *Zoroastrian News*, quoting the *Washington Post* of December 10, 1987. "The awards were made by the hotel to rebut the general impression of the public that all D.C. cabbies are rude and have no knowledge of the streets," added the newsletter.

The seven cabbies were entertained to a three-course lunch with wine and presented a brass plaque, informs the write-up.

"Zoroastrian experience"

A steering committee has been formed for a seminar program up to five years on the subject "Zoroastrianism and Iranian Religions," notes the December 1987 issue of *Gavashni*, the newsletter of the Zoroastrian Association of Quebec (ZAQ). James Boyd of Colorado State University, William Darrow of Williams College, Jorum Buckley of Belmont, Richard Frye of Harvard University and William Oxtoby of the University of Toronto constitute the committee under the chairmanship of Dr Michael Simmons, director of the Center for Zoroastrian Research.

Quoting a letter from the executive director of the American Academy of Religion to Simmons, *Gavashni* states that the Academy's program committee approved the initiation of the seminar project after the successful presentation - Zoroastrian Consultation - at its 1985 and 1986 annual meetings. The Academy was scheduled to meet in Boston in early December for a seminar on "Religion and state: the Zoroastrian experience," informs *Gavashni*.

The new 11-member executive committee of the ZAQ for 1987-89 includes president Nari Madon, vice-president Ness Lakdawalla, treasurer Dinyar Panthaky, joint secretaries Aloo Guzdar and Zerene Saklatvala, Iranian representative Kouroush Boustani-Buki, youth representatives Jasmine Bhedwar and Zubin Dastoor, and members at large Kelly Ghyera, Jamshed Irani and Zavahir Patel.

The Association is working towards a Zoroastrian House of Quebec, informs *Gavashni*. The Halloween Dance held on October 31 was a "terrific success" as a fund raiser. The hall was a-glitter with carved pumpkins, costumed Zoroastrians and their guests. The food and prizes for the evening had been donated, all proceeds being earmarked for the Zoroastrian House project. "We hope our dream becomes a reality quicker than we think," notes the newsletter.

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Pakistan's tribute

On the one hundred and second birth anniversary of Jamshed Nusserwanjee Mehta, municipal councillor and Karachi's first mayor, the Pakistan Post Office issued a three-rupee commemorative stamp together with a postal leaflet. He is the first non-Muslim to be so honored in Pakistan, writes lecturer and theologian Ervad Godrej Sidhwa from Karachi.

Referring to Mehta as "the father of modern Karachi," the official write-up noted, "He was a genius at planning."

A member of the Sind Legislative Assembly and founder, president, secretary or treasurer of countless organizations, "Mehta served every field of human activity, big and small," notes the citation. Eulogizing his "universal love and compassion...disarming simplicity and humility," the release recounts his work for the blind, the deaf, the lepers and the disabled.

Mehta was one of the founder members of the Boy Scout movement in undivided India and later in Pakistan; the Pakistani Sea Scout Land Ship is named after him.

Though born to wealth and comfort, Jamshed Nusserwanjee - as he came to be known in later life - lived a life of self-denial. Passing away on August 1, 1952 after a brief illness, Mehta has been reverently described by the late Judge Christmas Humphreys in his book *Via Tokyo*: "If ever a man was Christ-like, it is he," as quotes the citation.

Topical's prayer service

Those UK Zoroastrians who have no family or friends in India but would like to have prayers said for them, especially the ceremonies for the dead, now have a choice, thanks to the Bombay Prayer Service started by *The Topical*, the quarterly magazine for Zoroastrians published from UK.

"We believe prayer and ritual form an integral part of our faith," note the magazine editors, outlining the scheme in their third issue.

The Topical will essentially act as an intermediary between those who would like prayers said and the Boyce-Dhanapatel Agiary at Tardeo, Bombay. Thanksgiving ceremonies like *jashan* and *maachi*, and post-death ceremonies like *sarosh-no-kardo*, *baj*, *afrikan*, *farokshi*, and *satum* could be



Mehta: signal honor
Sethna (right): anesthesia research and the heart

commissioned. The fee, ranging from six pounds to £ 20 for each ceremony, includes the *ashodad* (tip) for the priests and other Zoroastrian helpers/servants and the cost of the *chaasni* (fruit etc that is consecrated.) "Annual accounts will be kept, and any surplus (due to exchange fluctuations) will be distributed to the priests/poor," adds the outline. For more information contact Jimmy Vapiwala at *The Topical*, 32 St Albans Road, Cheam, Surrey, SM1 2JN.

Anesthesia director

The new director of cardiac anesthesiology at Desert Hospital, Palm Springs, California, is Dr Dhun H. Sethna. A certified cardiologist and a cardiac anesthesiologist, Sethna "has done a great deal of research on the effects of anesthesia on the heart, and his findings have been published in over 60 peer review journals and books," notes a press release.

Sethna received his education at the University of Bombay, after which he undertook medical training at the Mount Sinai Hospital in New York and at the Cedars-Sinai Medical Center at Los Angeles. He later served as a staff cardiologist and/or staff cardiac anesthesiologist at The Cleveland Clinic Foundation in Ohio and at the Cedars-Sinai Medical Center. "At Cedars he was involved in pioneering work done with coronary sinus catheters, a technique used to examine the effects of anesthesia on the metabolism of the heart during open heart surgery," adds the write-up.

Californian Zoroastrians

An insight into the Northern Californian community was provided by Jimmy Makujina, the incoming president of the Zarthoshti Anjuman of Northern California (ZANC), while on a visit to Bombay recently. At a brief interview with *Par-*

siana, the stocky, bespectacled navar-maratab from the Dadar Athornan Madressa spoke of a people who have "started realizing that it's time to change on a broader basis." There have been three navjotes so far of children whose one parent is a Zoroastrian and "we gladly allow Zoroastrians and non-Zoroastrians at all



ceremonies...95 percent of the people observe absolute silence at the jashans. At the end of the ceremony, little toddlers join the priest in humbandagi, a practice appreciated by local Zoroastrians and visiting members," informed Makujina.

On an average American mobeds perform five or six jashans a year, estimates Makujina. "Most perform on a voluntary basis at anjuman functions and at private homes. Our mobeds are PhDs. They know when and how to pray."

In the last seven years Makujina says he has officiated at three *geh-sarnas*, the bodies being cremated or buried according to individual preference. So far there has been no need to arrange for a separate burial plot, he adds.

ZANC is considering membership of FEZANA (Federation of Zoroastrian Associations of North America) because the "normal consensus is that North American Zoroastrians must be allowed to decide on their own destiny without strings attached to Bombay," says Majukina who, in his individual capacity, believes that "religion should be followed according to time, place and circumstance. You have changed according to time and circumstance in Bombay and accordingly we have changed in US. But when we change,

Indian scholars – (though) not the dasturs – raise a hue and cry. 'Dharam dhasti ma ché (the religion is in danger).'" But the danger is greater in India, says Makujina, noting that the Dhana Patel Boyce Agiary in Bombay is the only one where yozdathregar mobeds still practice, maintaining the *bereshnum* (special nine-day purification ceremony traditionally required of those who tend the consecrated fire) and the required seclusion from mundane affairs.

Referring to the fire code in California which is an earthquake prone zone, Makujina informs that no open fire, not even a *diva* (lamp), can be kept unattended. Hence the little electric *afarganyus* (fire holder) have replaced *divas* in most homes.

As intermarried couples learn of ZANC activities, they come to take part, says Makujina. Hitherto the Association has been hosting four get-togethers a year. Next year Makujina expects to have eight such events.

Compiled by Arnavaz S. Mama

READERS' FORUM continued from page 3

At this juncture, I would sincerely advise propagators of free will, freedom of choice and (false) doctrines to switch to the right path and join hands with the mainstream to preserve and protect our long established Zarthusti identity.

PHIROZ DOTIWALA
Houston, USA

"The first lady bachelor"

Congratulations to Joy Fernandes for remembering and honoring the great lady Ms Cornelia Sorabji, "The first lady bachelor" of Western India (*Parsiana*, November 1987). Unfortunately, Kusoom Vadgama's book traces her brilliant career only up to 1904 and nothing is known after that. But, fortunately, I happen to have seen and met this great lady when I was a student in St Helena High School in Poona in about 1928 when she became our acting principal after the death of our principal, Ms Susie Sorabji, who was her eldest sister. The road passing by St Helena High School is now

named as Ms Susie Sorabji Road in her honor.

I still remember this unforgettable personality: she was tall, slim and extremely intelligent with a charming face and an all-pervading smile. She was one of the three brilliant daughters of Reverend Sorabji, the eldest being our principal, Ms Susie Sorabji. The next was Dr Penelop who ran a hospital in Kabul and had also come to Poona to become our acting principal for some time. Ms Cornelia Sorabji was the youngest, the most learned and the most famous of the three sisters and to the best of my knowledge she studied at Oxford (England), as she often used to talk to us of her happy days at Oxford. But, above all, she has the pride of place in our history being, if not the first Indian member of the Privy Council in London, definitely the first Indian lady member.

Dr MINOCHER K. CONTRACTOR
Surat

Edited by Arnavaz S. Mama

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The elusive elections

No date has been set for the next
Bombay Parsi Punchayet Anjuman Committee
elections slated for March this year

With the uncertainty over whether the Anjuman Committee elections will be held in March this year, few in the community are gearing up for the seven-yearly event.

According to the Bombay Parsi Punchayet (BPP), only 100 of the 19,000 General Register voters have collected their new certificates following the reforms handed down by Bombay High Court Judge H. Suresh in February 1987. The rest, it is hoped, will collect their certificates on the weekends of February and March when the BPP staff set up booths at different baugs for the convenience of the residents.

With four appeal judges refusing to review Suresh's far-reaching amendments and the matter still pending, four trustees of the BPP — Dr Aspi Golwalla, Eruch Desai, Homi Ranina and Dr Mehroo Bengalee — are expected to apply to the court seeking a postponement of the elections. The three remaining trustees — Jamsheed Kanga, Jamshed Guzder and Minoo Shroff — it is rumored, will oppose the plea to postpone the elections.

Suresh's reforms have resulted in a curtailment of the donor voting rights. While formerly each of the 749 members on the Donor Register could directly vote at a trusteeship election, henceforth only 100 representatives of the Donor Register will be so entitled. Similarly, the General Register members who would have needed to elect 749 members to the Anjuman Committee will now elect only 100. Thus the parity between the two registers will be maintained. The Anjuman Committee of 200 members, in turn, will vote for the trustees of the BPP as and when vacancies arise.

"Right now, no one is doing anything about the elections as such," said Fali Poncha, chairman of the Committee for Economic Revival (CER) "be-

cause we don't know whether we will be electing 100 or 1,000 members on the Anjuman Committee, whether voting will be constituency-wise (if 1,000 are to be elected) and how many of the 19,000 members on the Register collect their certificates...In 1981 many people got certificates for the first time in their lives and were ready to come and vote. This time I am not so sure whether they are interested in collecting their certificates or in coming to vote." The other discouraging factor, according to Poncha, is that if the CER wished to invite participation from the public, in light of the voter list being so unwieldy, it would have to incur phenomenal costs on a mail order of approximately 19,000.

The election scheme "does not envisage a Punchayet without an Anjuman Committee," asserted Poncha. "The scheme says Anjuman Committee elections must be held (not may be held) within 90 days of expiry of the old Committee." Since the last Committee ceased to exist on December 31, 1987, a notice should already have been served announcing the elections in March, he insisted. "I can take the Punchayet to court for not proceeding with the elections...it amounts to contempt of court."

Cowasji Dinshaw, leader of the erstwhile orthodox alliance, the Committee of United Zoroastrians (CUZ) which contested the 1981 elections against the CER and lost, reported that no steps have been planned for the ensuing elections.

While some members of the CUZ and the orthodox Council of Vigilant Parsis (COVP) have lost track of community developments, others are disgruntled with the politicking within the community and the rule of expediency which governs most decisions, noted *The Parsee Voice* Editor Adi Doctor.

Even Ms Perviz Dotivala who com-

manded a majority on the old graduates' register is not sure whether she will be contesting the elections. She would rather emphasize her priorities: maintaining the religious core of the community, creating employment opportunities, looking after the poor and the needy, and finally, electing the right individual as trustee.

A new group calling itself the Party for Protection of Community Rights is in the process of being formed by those who are opposed to the CER. But details as to its objectives and the people involved in promoting the group "will be announced shortly," according to Jal Contractor, retired assistant commissioner of police.

Though not a member of either register, one-time BPP trustee Dr Nelie Noble who is believed to have a hold over a considerable number of voters says that she is not part of any group. "And the few friends" who might seek her advice "are all busy with their respective commitments," none particularly interested in the elections.

Former BPP trustee Shiavax Vakil informed that he was not aware of any move among the donor members to form voter alliances. He was of the view that the new scheme which recommends a Rs 50,000 donation to be entitled to vote directly for a trustee is too high; an amount of Rs 20,000 would have been preferable as it would have fallen within the gift tax limit.

Fearing that a mere 200 strong Anjuman Committee can easily be bought over by a builder who is willing to invest a couple of crores, well-known advocate Ardeshir Katrak spoke of the need to forestall the possibility of all the trustees being manipulated by one moneyed man. He sounded a warning: "You may not realize the truth of what I am saying today, but after eight to 10 years you will."

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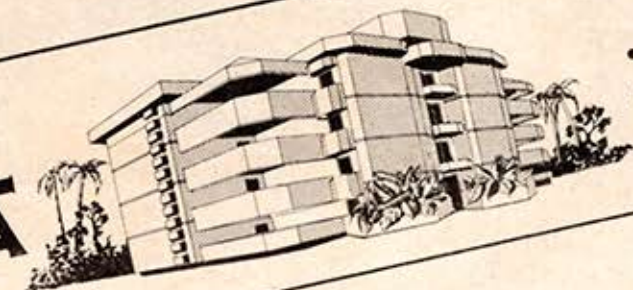
Soon, construction will start on an exclusive complex of row houses, Mazda Bahrot, (also going very fast) close to the heart of Sanjan. Another dream project on the anvil is the beautiful, sprawling condominium of villas — Mazda Varoli — on the Sanjan-Umbergaon road.

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A 'youthful' Federation

The Federation meeting at Jamshedpur provided a platform to youths of eight anjumans to voice their views on problems concerning the community

Parinaz Toddywalla

"A grand inaugural function with a personality like Russi Mody in our midst... the presence of young Parsis... only two trustees from Bombay (ensuring that) we won't dominate the discussions" are the three salient features that helped make the executive committee meeting of the Federation of Parsi Zoroastrian Anjumans of India "unique" in the words of chairman Dr Aspi Golwalla. Converging at the A. R. Dalal Hall at Jamshedpur on December 26 and 27, 1987 were the delegates from different parts of India.

For the first time, member anjumans were requested to include in their contingent a youth representative who could be familiarized with the working of the Federation. Calcutta, Madras, Nagpur, Delhi, Ahmednagar, Zai Bordi and Mhow had deputed their youth to the Federation meeting where, in conjunction with the local youngsters and on the advice of the seasoned representatives, it was decided to defer the formation of a Federation of Young Zoroastrians until the youth bodies at the anjuman level started functioning effectively.

The idea of a youth federation had taken root at the First All-India Zoroastrian Youth Seminar convened in Delhi in October last, which in turn received its inspiration from the Federation. The Seminar "helped create community awareness and youth involvement," with 105 youths coming together on a common platform, said Delhi Parsi Anjuman's (DPA) youth trustee Farrokh Rustomji. Supplemented DPA president Lt Gen Adi Sethna, "Encouragement, enthusiasm and education were the three 'E's' accomplished at the Seminar... The time has come when we must get down

to doing things and not be bogged down by the decision of doing things." Though Calcutta and Madras both offered to host the next youth get-together, Calcutta's invitation was accepted.

On the recommendation of Minorities Commission member Homi Taleyarkhan, the chief ministers of Gujarat, Karnataka and West Bengal will allot seats from their quota to deserving Zoroastrian students securing a minimum 75 percent marks and desirous of gaining admission in medical and engineering colleges.

The Bombay Parsi Punchayet (BPP) has made a representation to the Parsi Matrimonial Court seeking permission to engage a marriage counsellor who could either try to bring about a reconciliation or help the parties adjust to the trauma of divorce.

Two paramobeds who will be working for a stipend, and two on a volun-

"Thirty percent of a Parsi's property must go to charity, otherwise how will charities continue?"

tary basis are presently being tutored by Dastur Navrooz Minochehr-Homji of Bombay and Dastur Meherji Meherjirana of Navsari. The Allahabad Anjuman will be the first to employ a paramobed.

Most of the nominations for the Federation's awards for outstanding performance have come for the sports category. No names have been sug-

gested for many categories making Federation vice-president Homi Bodhanwalla enquire, "Are the anjumans napping or the individuals?" Instead of the Federation suggesting names in the different earmarked areas as per a suggestion, joint secretary of the Federation Keki Gandhi was willing to extend the nomination receiving deadline for the 1986 awards up to February since the presentations were scheduled for September 1988.

Work will soon commence on the publication of an encyclopaedia on each of the minority communities of India, including one on Zoroastrians. Names of publications which could provide the relevant background, and researchers and authors who could work on this manual are to be submitted.

An ancient 'ateshgyah' (place of fire) dating to the seventeenth or eighteenth century is a "temple of fire... where the oil gas comes to the surface," notes a booklet in Russian with its English translation sent by the Indian ambassador in Moscow to Dadi Mistry of DPA who, at the Federation's behest, was trying to ascertain the origin of the temple. The write-up further states, "The major religious belief was Zoroastrianism. The sacred fire burnt at the altars of temples and in the houses of the ordinary people who worshipped it, seeking protection, happiness and welfare. These fires gave Azerbaijan (in east Transcaucasia bordering on the Caspian Sea) its name of the "land of fires." Mistry has presently sought permission for a Zoroastrian delegation to visit this temple which is on the tourist circuit.

The next meeting of the Federation

will be hosted by the Vyara-Sonegadh Anjuman on the first weekend of April. The subsequent Bombay meeting has been scheduled on the first weekend of September, and the last meeting of the year in Calcutta, on the second weekend of December.

Who will safeguard the fire's status?

The Ahmednagar Anjuman was keen to employ a paramobed to tend their adarian. On being informed by Dastur Minochehr-Homji that if a paramobed were to perform the *boi*, the status of the adarian would be denigrated to that of a dadgah, the anjuman has still not committed itself. "It's all a matter of interpretation," said Gandhi. "Ultimately would it be preferable for an adarian to be downgraded to a dadgah, or to close down the agiary?" In the meanwhile, Dasturs Minochehr-Homji and Meherjirana are grooming four prospective paramobeds at Bombay and Navsari, two of whom will work for a stipend and two on a voluntary basis. The Allahabad Anjuman was the first to commit itself to employ a trained paramobed, informed the Federation's joint treasurer Peshotan Nargolwala. There are sufficient funds to sponsor the training of one more paramobed but anjumans should employ them once their training is completed, was Nargolwala's main worry.

Seeing a recent advertisement where the Indore Anjuman had offered total emoluments worth Rs 3,000 for a priest's service, made Nargolwala suggest, "Affluent anjumans should employ regular athornans and leave the paramobeds for financially weaker anjumans. We won't force paramobeds on any anjuman." Gandhi had a still more altruistic submission, "Instead of asking 'What is the BPP doing about mobeds?' Why can't prosperous anjumans paying high salaries to mobeds tending their dadgah fire, employ paramobeds and utilize the saving to help less affluent anjumans to employ mobeds (to tend the adarian) thereby preventing the downgrading of the adarian into a dadgah? That is where will lie the magnanimity of the Zoroastrian community, of the Zoroastrian anjuman and the strength of the Federation."

A non-committal response from most anjumans was the answer Gandhi elicited. The grounds cited were: the sanction of co-trustees would need to be ascertained; the objectives of the



Alongside (from left):
Khullar, Adil
Govadia and
Medhora

Below: Bodhanwalla



Above (from left):
Golwalla,
Gandhi and Sethna

Facing page

Above (from left): Delhi
representatives Rustomji,
Nowsherwanji, Nergish Nargolwala
and Mistry

Below: Guzder (left) talking to
Russi Mody

anjuman would need to be comprehensive; and (as one member joked) the likelihood of the trustees' popularity diminishing, adversely affecting their prospects at the next elections would need to be considered. Advised Gandhi: "The Federation functions for the welfare of the community on an all-India and worldwide basis. The selfish notion of 'my anjuman' will have to be replaced by 'my community.'" The Delhi Anjuman which has presently got three mobeds tending its dadgah was the only one supporting Gandhi's view. Surat Parsi Punchayet (SPP) president Dr Sam Bhacca's tongue-in-cheek comment, "I'll part with my wife but not with my mobeds," helped to lighten the mood.

Said Nargolwala, "All problems can't be solved by behdins. Form a

council of senior priests and raise funds to sponsor priests to (preserve the) adarians where there is fear of the fire being downgraded. The athornans must help the weaker anjumans." Nargolwala, who was simultaneously trying to maintain friendly relations with the athornans, had noticed an awakening among the athornan boys who were worried about the new concept of paramobeds. But Dadi Mistry

felt that this awakening was the right outcome: "If they are alert and induce their progeny to take to priesthood," paramobeds won't be needed.

The economic betterment of the *chasniwalla*, the *paniwalla* and other staff of the agiary should also be the community's responsibility, stressed Gandhi.

Sethna wanted the Federation to suggest names of seven to eight priests to participate in an all-India religious faiths convention to be held in 1988 on the occasion of Sri Aurobindo's centenary. "These priests should be able to (expound) the tenets of our faith and its all-embracing nature," he said.

Seats secured for science students

Students of Gujarat, Karnataka and West Bengal who have secured over 75

percent marks but are doubtful of admission into medical and engineering colleges can now avail of a few seats from the chief minister's quota. Member of the Minorities Commission, Homi Taleyarkhan, had appealed to the chief ministers of different states on behalf of the Parsi community. His request was favorably heeded by the chief ministers of Gujarat and Karnataka. In West Bengal, the chief minister has specified that admissions in medical and dental colleges will be possible, but not in engineering colleges. The chief ministers of Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, it is hoped, will also permit a few seats for Parsis from their quota.

Specifying that the choice of the college does not rest with the students,

Gandhi noted, "So far there was a complaint that nothing was being done. Now that we have done something, let's get entrants. It would be most embarrassing if we don't have students opting for such seats. It is for the children and parents to see that they plan accordingly. It would be worthwhile to start special coaching from earlier standards for students who are planning to opt for the science stream."

Youth delegate Aban Medhora of Calcutta pointed out that laying down the minimum limit of marks at 75 percent defeats the purpose because "in Calcutta it is difficult to get such a high percentage. If you get 75 percent, you can get in on your own merit." Gandhi replied, "No one from Calcutta ever told us that your system is different. The general impression is that a maximum of 103 percent is also obtainable. The initiative must come from your side. I don't understand why we are being criticized. People must help themselves if they want us to help them."

Whether students from other states can benefit from the offer of the chief ministers of Gujarat, Karnataka and West Bengal will have to be seen because the problem of domicile may then arise. The alternatives open to students in other states are: availing of the BPP financed specialized coaching classes for intelligent students hoping that they will secure the necessary marks to gain admission on their own merit; or gaining admission in capitation colleges, if sponsors can be found.

Presently the Poona Parsi Ex-students Association has reserved an engineering seat at the Sangli College, and the Zoroastrian Dental Organisation, a seat at the Manipal College. According to Mehernosh Mehta of Ahmednagar, "Even in capitation colleges (in Ahmednagar) there are government seats which are in the hands of the Directorate of Education based in Bombay. They grant admission on separate criteria, not donations."

At the inauguration function Tata Steel chairman Russi Mody had spoken against the community seeking reservation of seats on the grounds that "we must learn to stand on our own feet." Gandhi, who was planning to convince Mody on viewing things differently, was supported by youth representatives Jennifer Wadia of Jamshedpur and Farrokh Rustomji



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who spoke up when the youths were encouraged to give their views on any subject which they considered important, after the Federation had completed deliberations on the items scheduled on the agenda. Said Rustomji, "While reservations at educational institutions is a very good idea, reservations for jobs is not a good idea. It would mean creating more clerical strata rather than inducing youth to strive higher." But Wadia insisted that there is "need for reservations for jobs also. To start as a fresher in a profession like medicine is not a joke. You first need to get general experience; only then can you start out on your own." Dadi Mistry of Delhi was against seeking "reservations for everything. We have enough stalwarts and industrialists (in the community) like (Federation's joint treasurer) Jamshed Guzder who have helped hundreds of youngsters to come up in life."

Ready reference on minorities

An encyclopaedia on every minority community of India has been mooted by the Minorities Commission. One will deal with the Parsi community and Gandhi appealed to Federation representatives to suggest names of people who could work on this project. In a subsequent circular sent to member anjumans, Gandhi wrote, "It seems that the Minorities Commission would bear the cost of publication of the encyclopaedia, but the expenses involved in data collection, research, and preparation and submission of write-ups would not be reimbursed by the Commission."

The views of the anjumans have been sought on the expenses to be permitted on this project and the mode of financing it. "The fields covered are very wide," informed Golwalla. Religion, history, culture and civilization, customs and manners, education, social conditions, occupational structure, contribution of Parsis, government and politics, literature, great men and women, personal laws and problems affecting the community are the topics included within the ambit of the proposed encyclopaedia. Anjumans were requested to submit names of publications from where the relevant background information could be gleaned, and the persons best suited to do the research and work on the editorial team.

A publication which is in the nature of an encyclopaedia and not a historical review may not give a comprehensive picture of the community, was the opinion of Dr Ratan Marshall, an academician and former secretary of the SPP. Bhacca then suggested that Marshall be assigned the responsibility of compiling a booklet concerning the little known facts of great men of yesteryear.

Court, counsellors, careers

At an attitudinal survey conducted at the recent youth seminar in Delhi, the responses indicated that if economic incentives in the form of education were offered to their offspring, the youths would be willing to rear a third child, reported sociologist Ava Khullar of Delhi. "This speaks well of the attitude of future parents," expressed Khullar even though she realized that the group sampled would be included in the category of "young achievers."

To gauge the performance of the BPP's school counselling programs which are trying to improve the educational performance of select Parsi students, Khullar wanted to know if there was any feedback available on the effectiveness of the different programs. She suggested that the counsellors be invited to future Federation meetings.

In the absence of the counselling programs' convener Prof Noshir Kaikobad who was recuperating from a heart attack in Bombay, a cyclostyled report on the latest developments on the school and family counselling front, was circulated. The teacher-oriented course imparting the methods of innovative instruction to 16 teachers from Byramjee Jejeebhoy, Cowasjee Jehangir and Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy Schools was well received as was indicated by some parents who felt that their children were grasping more knowledge at school. A questionnaire assessing the impact of this program will be administered to the parents at these schools. At the Avabai Petit School the reactions of 502 parents to school teachers giving private tuitions will be assessed, the report noted.

An attendance of barely 30 people at a meeting convened at the Mancherji Joshi Parsi Colony, Dadar, to introduce the students to the vista of opportunities in the civil and defence services, was disheartening, announced Golwalla. "Dr Ketayun Madon (co-

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ordinator of the BPP Holiday Program for Youth) suggested 'sandwich meetings' for stimulation and evoking audience participation," he added. Sethna offered to send attractive brochures and posters to the interested anjumans to counteract "the mass of ignorance about defence services." Rustomji suggested that instead of convening separate 'sandwich meetings,' these subjects should be discussed at social get-togethers which are well publicized.

To enlighten the community on the Parsi laws of marriage and succession, a series of talks were organized by the BPP at Khareghat Colony. Since these lectures could only have a limited impact, it was decided to hold problem-oriented workshops with a psychologist, a marriage counsellor and a legal adviser serving on the panel.

Response is still awaited from the Parsi Matrimonial Court to the BPP's offer to introduce a marriage counselling service. The counsellor could help bring about reconciliation between the partners, provide objective data to the Court, and also render assistance to the woman and her children in cases where a divorce is inevitable.

Encroachers prove expensive

Altogether, the Federation is trying to prevent the community property from being lost to encroachers in the case of 36 defunct or almost defunct anjumans, reported Sorab Katpitia, chief executive of the Surat Parsi Panchayet. Advising anjumans which are not registered or which have no trust deed to rectify their position, eminent advocate Behram Masani of Mhow explained, "The advantage of having a declaration of trust is to establish the rights of declarants, at least on paper." It is usually due to such lapses that the Federation is finding it difficult to assert the community's position in the erstwhile anjumans of Khambat, Nadiad, Junagadh, Surendranagar, etc.

"In areas where the population is dwindling, and there is insufficient liquidity of funds as is often the case with Parsis, it is usually the last surviving Parsi who makes himself the unauthorized occupant of the community land," clarified Katpitia who, on behalf of the Federation, has taken upon himself this thankless duty of protecting the community lands.

Negotiations regarding the en-

croachment at Diu have yet not yielded results despite the consistent efforts of Katpitia and Minocha of Bharucha of Bhavnagar. Harda in Uttar Pradesh faces a problem of a different magnitude. The land there has been "disposed of by some non-Parsi and the matter requires cautious handling."

The last three or four Parsi families are known to be staying in Nanded. Keety Mewawalla, despite her age, had come all the way to Jamshedpur to discuss the problem of her anjuman where she serves as trustee. Seeking the Federation's guidance on their problem of income-tax burden on trust property, Mewawalla also announced their intention to give out on ownership the anjuman's rental property. This would help them get the required liquidity. "There are hardly any Parsis left. Can we donate to other communities?" she enquired. If they were to donate to a blood bank and a disabled home, philanthropic causes to which she was committed, she assured that these charitable bodies would continue in the name of the Nanded Parsi Anjuman.

"However noble a cause, trustees

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don't have the power to change the object of the trust." In addition to facing community opposition it could also implicate her legally for personal liability. Katpitia's advice was seconded by Masani. Though "Parsis are known for cosmopolitan charities," Gandhi advised her to proceed with caution.

Statistics worth surveying

A socioeconomic survey of the community in Belgaum revealed to sociologist Ava Khullar that the presence of Iranis, who comprise 40 percent of the total Zoroastrian population, distinguishes the community settled in this area from those in other areas that she has surveyed. According to Khullar, "The Iranis symbolize the qualities which were present in our forefathers." Referring to their entrepreneurial spirit and their amalgamation with the Parsi populace, Khullar pointed out, "In this prosperous and forward-looking community, Jamshedi Navroze is the only day in the year when the men take a holiday. All girls are either BAs or BEs, boys have taken up engineering or pharmacy, and there is not a single girl over 20 who is not married...The views of the elders are respected. We have something to learn from the Iranis."

Enthused by Belgaum's findings, invitations on behalf of the Jamshedpur, Ahmednagar and Dahanu communities were issued to Khullar to conduct surveys in their regions too. "There are about 200 families in Jamshedpur," said Bodhanwalla, adding, "The inflow of Parsis has stopped." Since 200 families indicate a sizable sample whose data would need to be computerized, Khullar was assured help from the local youth in the collection and compilation of data.

Khullar was more keen that surveys be conducted in the smaller areas "where there are community assets but few Parsis so that we get to know their condition in time, before the anjuman is defunct."

Mehernosh Mehta of Ahmednagar explained to Khullar the need for an "outsider" like her to do the survey as the local people were not willing to part with information otherwise. Aspi Irani, on behalf of the Iranian Zoroastrian Anjuman, offered to sponsor the costs incurred in conducting a survey in Dahanu.

A survey of rural Parsis in South Gujarat was the subject of a disserta-

tion by a PhD student Kashmira Bharucha who was encouraged by the World Zoroastrian Organisation (WZO) and the BPP, informed Marshall. Now that she has completed her thesis, her findings will be made known. For Mhow and Lucknow the data has been collected and will soon be compiled by Khullar.

Spared from the Succession Act

The common belief that the Parsi laws of intestate succession would apply to all Parsis who die without leaving a will does not hold good for the property of a Parsi whose marriage is registered under the Special Marriage

"However noble a cause, trustees don't have the power to change the object of the trust"

Act. This insight was provided by Masani of Mhow when asked to give his views on the Federation's proposals to grant equal rights to women under the laws of intestate succession. Said Masani, "For most Parsis outside Bombay these sections relating to intestate succession are irrelevant. But wherever the proposed amendments do apply, they are fair."

Presently the woman is entitled to only half the share of a man. Similarly while the widowed daughter-in-law inherits with her children her dead husband's share in the property of his parents, the widowed son-in-law's corresponding rights are not recognized. Since death-bed bequests to charity are invalidated if certain formalities are not complied with, it was sought to amend that section since Parsis are not a priest-dominated community and are not subject to any undue pressures from the clergy to donate property to avoid the tortures of hell. At the last Federation meeting in Bombay, anjuman were asked to discuss this issue internally and inform the Federation secretariat of their decisions by November 15, 1987.

Referring to the few responses he had received, Gandhi joked, "Parsis believe in the theory of *zavarne akarne* (time immemorial)." Representatives of Secunderabad, Ahmednagar and

Allahabad indicated their support on the proposed amendments. The Bardoli Anjuman, it is believed, is opposed to the move for fear of the reforms leading to a fragmentation of land holdings. Gandhi tried to clarify: "The amendments are not guilty of what they are being accused of. Instead of a 66:33 division in favor of the men, we are saying let there be a 50:50 distribution."

Maneck Gheyara, a founding member of the Federation, who understood the reasoning of the Bardoli residents, explained in depth: "The village people consider it inauspicious to make a will. But they are very determined that the land should remain within the family...At (an earlier Federation meeting in) Delhi, one representative was even against the property being divided among the male heirs, saying, that only the eldest should inherit the property...It's for Bardoli to vote or not."

Gandhi had his doubts: "What happens if the eldest son marries outside the community or if he doesn't cultivate the land and sells it to another community?" Davar Kavasji Modi of Surat had a practical solution, "*Baap-dada ni jameen saachavvi hoi tau* (to protect ancestral property) the person will have to be responsible enough to make a will and forget superstition." Bodhanwalla too felt the need to educate the people to make a will. "In India you cannot have a law which discriminates against either sex."

Speaking on behalf of the Bhavnagar Anjuman, Bharucha noted, "Though we have not taken a separate decision, we are not against (the proposed amendments)." Countered Gheyara, "There are not even 10 people in Bhavnagar as against hundreds in Bardoli."

To Zal Nowsherwanji of Delhi, the parity clause was not the bone of contention. He was wondering whether the 'bequests to charity' clause "should be retained on the principle that charity begins at home." Masani too was not certain whether a person who has not shown any munificence during his lifetime would be after his death "extending liberality at the expense of his heirs." Gandhi was firm, "A Parsi gets so much out of the community during his lifetime. Thirty percent of a Parsi's property must go to charity otherwise how will charities continue?"

The opinion of the BPP is yet not known as it is in the process of ascertaining the views of collateral associations and bodies in Bombay. "It is not feasible to convene a general body meeting in Bombay," it was reported. In the meanwhile Gandhi tried to induce other anjumans to seek Taleyarkhan's help in persuading their respective state governments to provide machinery for registration of marriages under the Parsi Marriage and Divorce Act. He also proposed that a representation be made to the central government to amend the Special Marriage Act such that the relevant provisions of the Indian Succession Act could apply to all Parsi Zoroastrians irrespective of the Act under which their marriage is registered.

Contacting, confederating and costing
With a change in the office-bearers of the World Zoroastrian Organisation (WZO), Dadi Mistry was hopeful that there might be a breakthrough in the deadlock between the Federation and the WZO. Until now the Federation has been insisting on weightage being given to anjumans and the WZO is stressing that parity be maintained between individuals and associations. Said Gandhi to Mistry, "We have great faith in your persuasive powers."

Mistry then sought to allay Bodhanwalla's apprehensions, noting that the split in the Zoroastrian Trust Funds of

Europe did not concern the WZO.

A misconception that hosting a Federation meeting does not cost a lot of money was corrected by Gandhi. "Housing 50 to 60 delegates, providing their transport, arranging for the Federation meeting venue is quite a job and would cost a minimum of Rs 20,000." Turning down the alternative suggestion that the membership fees be increased and the interest from the corpus be utilized by the Federation to finance its meetings, Gandhi felt that the "Federation will be accused of spending community money on wining and dining. Federation members come here because they have the interest of the community at heart. The offer by even those who can afford to provide only *masoor ne pav* (lentils and bread) for three days will be accepted, and we will come there for a Federation meeting." Bodhanwalla then issued a standing invitation to host a Federation meeting in Jamshedpur every year. However, "next time we will make no reservations unless you come for four days, not for only one and a half days (referring to the duration of the present Federation meet)," which earned him a standing ovation, especially since the stay of delegates had been made so comfortable at the Tata guest houses.

Awaiting permission for the printing

of the Gujarati version of the *Fed Newsletter*, Gandhi expected to get the issue out in a month or two.

Those present at the meeting were: Mehernosh Mehta, Nozar Ichhaporia and Meherwan Gai of Ahmednagar; Capt Homi Dandiwalla of Allahabad; Edulji Dumasia of Bardoli; Minochaher Bharucha of Bhavnagar; Rustom Bilpodiwalla of Bhopal; Dr Sarosh Wadia of Bhuj; Dr Aspi Golwalla and

"The village people consider it inauspicious to make a will. But they are very determined that the land remain within the family"

Jamshed Guzder of Bombay; Adil Master and Aban Medhora of Calcutta; Lt Gen Adi Sethna, Zal Nowsherwanji, Keki Gandhi, Dadi Mistry, Noshir Captain, Ava Khullar, Farida Variava, Nergish Nargolwala and Farrokh Rustomji of Delhi, Aspi Irani of Iranian Zoroastrian Anjuman; Homi Bodhanwalla, K.P. Bhesania, Firdose Vandrevalla, Eruch Surti, Pesi Tarapore, Sarosh Burjorjee, Navzar Dotiwala, Jennifer Wadia and Dinaz Patel of Jamshedpur; Pheroze Karanjia of Karanj; Rusi Ginwalla and Zubin Engineer of Madras; Behram Masani and Rashna Kamdin of Mhow; Adil Govadia and Cyrus Aibara of Nagpur; Keety Mewawalla of Nanded; Rustom Daroga co-opted from north zone; Homi Palsetia of Saronda; Noshir Nagarwala of Secunderabad; Dr Sam Bhacca, Davar Kavasji Modi, Sorab Katpitia, Maneck Gheyara Dr Ratan Marshall and Savak Hilloowala of Surat; Peshotan Nargolwala co-opted from west zone A; Homi Mehta and Niloufer Mehta of Zai Bordi. The Press was represented by *Parsiana*.

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Addendum

Davar Kavasji Modi's name was inadvertently left out from the list of those present at the executive committee meeting of the Federation in Bombay on September 5 and 6, 1987. The error is regretted.

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Jamshedpur: the secular outlook

Arnavaz S. Mama.

A welcoming committee of a dozen little cherubim lined the entrance lobby of Jamshedpur's Parsee Hostel on December 26, 1987. Enthusiastically the two to six-year-olds showered confetti on the traditionally attired throng that gathered in the Hostel's inner courtyard — Christian padre, Buddhist monk and several other communities among them — to celebrate the Jamshedpur Parsee Association's (JPA) golden jubilee and welcome the delegates to the executive council meeting of the Federation of Parsi Zoroastrian Anjumans of India.

In particular, they awaited the best known Jamshedpuri of all and he did not keep them waiting. At nine o'clock that crisp morning, Tata Steel chairman and JPA president Russi Mody drove himself in, reversed and parked, sprang casually up the steps, ruffled a couple of little mops and was ready to inaugurate the proceedings.

The podium in the inner courtyard, reminiscent of Persepolis, had received its final touches the previous evening from Dara and Katy Narielwala, Silloo Dotivala, Jeroo Mody, Nerges Madon, Amy Billimoria, Banoo Dhamodiwala and Bapsy Mody: all matter-of-factly working by torchlight while the town experienced one of its familiar power cutbacks.

After a round of ceremonial garlanding, Association vice-president and TISCO president Jamshed Irani briefly traced the community's history in Jamshedpur.

Bombay Parsi Punchayet chairman and Federation president Dr Aspi Golwalla congratulated the community on its 50 years of fruitful existence and 27 years of the Cursetjee Manockjee Shroff Agiary. To celebrate the

The Parsis of
Jamshedpur strike
a peaceful balance
with themselves and
other communities



Agiary's silver jubilee in 1985 Federation vice-president Homi Bodhanwalla who is chairman of the Agiary's board of trustees, had invited the Federation to hold its executive council meeting in Jamshedpur. Due to a misunderstanding, however, the Federation delegates met in Poona instead, to the disappointment of Bodhanwalla.

Golwalla apologized publicly for the gaffe and, "knowing how erratic though intelligent a Parsi can be," thanked Bodhanwalla and the anju-

man "for being patient and not resigning." Acquainting the Parsis of Jamshedpur with a brief outline of the Federation's activities, Golwalla noted, "We are divided on certain issues," adding tongue-in-cheek, "We can't help it. It's an instinct we can't resist!"

Recalling that Russi's father Sir Homi Mody had categorically said that the Parsi community can stand on its own feet, Golwalla now asked Mody's opinion whether the community



C. Manockjee Shroff Agiary

Right: Russi Mody escorted by Pesi Tarapore (left)

Facing page: Jamsetji Tata with inset of Padshah

should seek minority rights or reservation of seats in educational institutions.

In a freewheeling speech Mody recalled the flavor and flair of TISCO'S pioneers: Burjorji Padshah, Jamsetji Tata's right-hand man, who "never drew a salary, never took more than his bazaaring expenses of 15 to 20 rupees per month;" Jamshed Dastur and Khurshed Bharucha who "drank, played poker - wonderful people" who made Mody feel "proud to be a Parsi...not because of achievements but the seldom recognized integration of our community with the rest of the people of India; Gandhiji spoke of us being Indians first and Parsis later. Today, priorities have changed," he noted. "Apart from filial loyalty to my father's concept, I would think that's the right policy," Mody answered Gollwalla. "Apart from the dubious thought that the Prime Minister may or may not be a Parsi (Rajiv Gandhi's father, Firoze, was a Parsi), even today the community is in the forefront of activity," added Mody. Noting that youth is different in each generation, Mody deplored the reason for the present change in the Parsi community - the reluctance to work in mud or filth or put the shoulder to the wheel. "Today a young Parsi thinks he'll miss discotheques and cinemas...I don't think reservation is required for the next few years," Mody opined.



To Ervad Gustad Nasirabadwalla, panthaky of the Agiary, Bodhanwalla presented a shawl in token of the anjuman's gratitude for 27 years of devoted service. Acknowledging the honor, the frail septuagenarian advised, "*Mobedo ne laagni thi juau, laagni thi saachvau* (view the mobeds with fellow feeling, look after them)."

Association vice-president Eruch Surti called the roster of surviving founder members of the anjuman or the spouses of the deceased, each of whom were presented mementos. Among them: Soli Devetri at 78 still serving the community at the aramgah and other places; Belli Patel, "the JPA's official photographer," who visits the aramgah twice daily and takes part in *The Statesman's* vintage car rally in Calcutta; Soli Patel, one of the foremost cricketers among Parsis in Jamshedpur - "believed only in sixers;" Burjor Vania, "83 and still going strong," who during the War ran a relay station in the plant. "Even today, if

you have electric equipment that doesn't work, irrespective of where it's from, Vania can make it work," Surti noted.

Hoping that "the next meeting of the Federation here won't be 50 years hence," TELCO resident director and JPA vice-president Sarosh Ghandy, son of the late Sir Jehangir (Jo) Ghandy, the technocrat-administrator who spent his lifetime with TISCO and 29 years as JPA chairman, identified Bodhanwalla, chairman K. P. Bhesania, secretary Dara Mody and assistant secretary Pesi Tarapore as "the main

architects among a large number of volunteers who worked day and night to make the function a success."

The entertainment for the delegates and the anjuman included a *diva* (lamp) dance by five nubile teenagers decked in jari-embroidered saris and a tableau, *Zarathushtra, the golden star*, based on the life of the prophet. Informed Ms Silloo Surti, a Tata Administrative Service officer who looks after the TELCO Educational Society, that the anjuman members prefer to create their own entertainment. Generally, the youngsters put up a show on Jamshedi Navroze, the mothers devising the costumes; the older people do the entertaining on Pateti. The kids had bargained for hamburgers and chips and a thank-you picnic after this show. "at least to Jubilee Park (the TISCO-landscaped public garden with fountains and lights that is a Jamshedpur landmark)," smiled Ms Surti.

Hosting the Federation presented

no problems to the anjuman whose members, as Rotarians or Company staff, have been frequently exposed to the requirements of organizing large scale events. Crediting the younger generation with all the work involved, Bhesania observed that everyone was looking forward to the Federation meeting. "The only entertainment in Jamshedpur is club life, and now, with TV, even that is gone," he added.

The positions of president and chairman of the Association are always arranged by consensus and according to the revised constitution (effective 1966), the chairman, vice-chairman, secretary and assistant secretary are not permitted to seek reelection to the same post after the three-year term is over, informs Bhesania. Testifying to the community's commitment to unity, Bhesania notes that in his tenure of 32 years in the steel city, he could not recall anyone challenging the way accounts, investments or housing have been handled by the officebearers.

The community was "not very liberal until 27 years ago," recalls Bodhanwalla who was the Association's honorary secretary when Fakir Mehta, superintendent in the coke ovens department, lost his father and a large number of non-Parsis arrived to pay their final respects. The event led the community to shed its conservatism on the issue. "Now, whether it's a jashan or a death, everyone comes in," says Bodhanwalla.

The JPA accepts non-Parsi spouses as members, informs Bhesania who feels there is no option to intermarriage for a miniscule community like this one. "For any problem in life, when there is no option, what do you do?" he asks. Surti on the other hand says he will accept intermarriage within his family only if it is forced upon him - he will not encourage it. He says he has so brought up his daughter that it is "unlikely she will marry out of the community." Bodhanwalla notes that intermarriages are increasing, the Parsi population in the factories dwindling; "soon, there will be no Parsis left."

JPA treasurer Firdose Vandrevalla referred to cases of children of Parsi mothers who take part in all Association functions and quoted one to have

said, "In my blood I feel a Zoroastrian; I know I am a Zoroastrian whether or not you do my navjote." Vandrevalla describes JPA members as very progressive: "As far as social traditions are concerned, people are

"Among crores,
we are one lakh. Why
don't we concentrate
on maintaining
and deserving
the respect
we still enjoy?"

willing to stretch the line, but not religious sanctity," he qualifies.

Fearing an excess of liberalism, former secretary Navzar Dotivala is worried lest rites and customs become too easily amended. But the feeling for the religion persists as when visiting lecturer Khojeste Mistree of Zoroastrian Studies found a captive audience cramming the A.R. Dalal Hall, listening avidly by the light of a petromax as the area was afflicted by one of its chronic power cuts, recalled Dotivala.

One of the founder members, Nariman Unwalla, had come to Jamshedpur in 1937 after an unsuccessful post-graduation search for jobs in Bombay, working in the technical departments until his retirement as assistant foreman in the steel melting shop in 1975.

There were very few Parsis when he first arrived and everyone knew each other very well, recalls Unwalla. Sir Jehangir Ghandy, TISCO's joint controller of accounts Jamshed Dastur, businessman Minoo Patel and others met and talked with everyone. Status consciousness has increased since those days, feels Unwalla.

Dara Jungalwalla could recall "nothing spectacular" but was concerned that despite the Company's policy of employing the sons of employees, there are more retirements among Parsis than admissions to the Company's roster.

Ms Hilla Mirza, a grandmother, who came from Rustom Baug, Bombay, after her marriage, notes that the town has developed a lot. One of eight families that live in Jamshedpur's Parsee Colony, Mirza, whose son is now in the accounts department, recalls that she went to Bombay for her first delivery only. The rest of her children were all born in Jamshedpur, which boasts excellent medical facilities, she says.

The Agiary is well patronized, according to Nasirabadwalla of Vyara who came via Allahabad and Nagpur in 1961. "*Lok ni paas paiso, né laagni bi tétich* (the community has the resources and the inclination)." At muk-tads there are 12 to 14 tables, apart from the common anjuman table. Though his son helps part-time, being employed at TISCO, Nasirabadwalla is rich in his appreciation of the volunteer mobeds, especially Behram Zarolia who is an officer in New India Assurance and Soli Mody of TELCO.



The aramgah with Jehangir Ghandy's tomb in the foreground

"*E loko vagar hun taki nahi shakte* (I could not have borne the strain without their help)," he says.

The mobed is often prey to conflicting forces, feels Nasirabadwalla who sees his most important job as maintaining community harmony in a small industrial town where Parsis are in a minority, with tact as his most essential attribute. There can be no place for personal ego or obstinacy, notes the gentle priest. "Among crores we are one lakh. Why don't we (concentrate on) maintaining and deserving the respect we still enjoy?" he queries. "*Saari jindagi jeevo tej majehnu chhe* (live a good life, that's the essential thing)," he advises.

History

Despite the fact that Jamsetji Tata was the fountainhead of the steel city, he personally never visited the village of Sakchi which his lieutenants and heirs identified as the ideal setting for Tata's dream because it had iron ore, coking coal, limestone and water – the basic raw materials of a steel plant. Incorporated in 1907, three years after Jamsetji's death, the Tata Iron and Steel Company provided the British armies effective ordnance support during World War I. In acknowledgement, Lord Chelmsford, then viceroy of India, re-named Sakchi as Jamshedpur – "the only city in the world named after a Parsi Zoroastrian," as notes Bodhanwalla. Simultaneously the railway station, originally known as Kalimati, was rechristened Tatanagar.

A lot of Parsis were sent to Jamshedpur by Dorab Tata and Jamshed Dastur, says Bodhanwalla, tracing the history of the community. They came in groups, without families, to an area which was largely a jungle. Circumstance decreed that the first wholly Parsi institution in the area was the aramgah on a plot of land released by the company in 1925 on the banks of the Subernarekha river. Prior to that Zoroastrians were interred in the Christian cemetery and those graves are still looked after by the community as notes the illustrated, informative booklet, *The Parsees of Jamshedpur*, a publication compiled by Bodhanwalla to celebrate the anjuman's golden jubilee. The first general meeting of the Parsi community was held in 1927 to establish the Parsee Aramgah Committee when Rs 4,000 were collected

towards the maintenance fund and it was accepted that every earning member of the community would contribute one percent of his salary towards it.

The success of the Aramgah Committee enthused the community to form an association to promote the community's interests and in 1937 a



Clockwise from left: Dotivala, Surti, Irani, Nasirabadwalla, Bodhanwalla, Ghandy and Bhesania

general meeting of Jamshedpur Parsis unanimously accepted the resolution of the late Phiroz Kutar, TISCO's general manager. The first elected managing committee included such illustrious members as Sir Ardeshir Dalal, a member of the Indian Civil Service who joined as director-in-charge of TISCO, and Sir Jehangir Ghandy.

At the time of opening the Central Bank's Jamshedpur branch in 1936, the bank's founder chairman Sorabji Pochkhanawala had suggested to Dalal that the Tatas bring in Parsi boys as apprentices. The resulting 'C' class apprenticeship scheme attracted youth from orphanages and baugs but there was no place for them to stay. On the

company-allotted plot on Straight Mile Road with Rs 60,000 raised by the Association from the Tata trusts and Wadia charities, the Parsee Hostel, later named the A.R. Dalal Hall, was built and dedicated on January 10, 1941. At the same time Ghandy contributed Rs 5,000 for a club building in honor of his father.

The history of self-help which has characterized Jamshedpur Parsis was repeated in 1950 when, faced with an acute housing shortage in the city, a sum of Rs 1,30,001 was raised from various trusts and charities to finance the construction of 10 flats on a plot of land allotted by the steel company. Again in 1973, construction of additional flats was undertaken for the growing Parsi community on an advance-rent scheme, notes the brochure.

But the anjuman's most ambitious project was the founding of the Agiary. The beautiful round structure designed by architect Jehangir Gora of Calcutta cost two and a half lakh rupees raised by the community in Bombay and Calcutta, notes the anjuman publication. By 1957 the building was ready and a dadgah established. It was named the Cursetjee Manockjee Shroff Agiary after its Bombay prototype whose 170-year-old sacred adarian fire was gifted to the Jamshedpur community, flown there in a special chartered plane and enthroned in 1960. Two members of the original family trust were initially a part of the new board, of whom Ms Behroze Cursetjee, onetime secretary of Jamsetji Tata, had been the moving spirit, reminisced Bodhanwalla, the present chairman.

Currently advisor to the chairman of Tata Steel, Bodhanwalla says he came to Jamshedpur as a young engineer at Rs 150 per month. Early grinding years at the Petit Orphanage in Bombay had ensured that Bodhanwalla appreciated all that he found in Jamshedpur: "A meaningful life that made me work for the people here." At the end of a long and fulfilling professional career, Bodhanwalla – along with his wife Homai – heads numerous social welfare organizations for the deaf, the blind, for cancer, tuberculosis and leprosy patients, among a host of others. The credit, according to Bodhanwalla, goes to "the town (that) has given the opportunity to work in this manner."



A record high of ghazals

Parinaaz Toddywalla

With over a dozen records to her credit, Penaaz Masani is the first Indian ghazal songbird to win a gold disc

"To see you on the screen we walked all those miles to reach the neighboring town which is covered by the television network. But at the last moment you deserted us. How could you do that?" Recalling the anguish poured out to her by one of her fans, India's acclaimed ghazal singer, Penaaz Masani, who has sung her way through the hearts of notables like the former President of India Giani Zail Singh as also simple villagers, was at a loss for words. "These simple people do not realize that the last minute cancellation was not my doing," but a change of program from the Doordarshan end, she continues.

It is such audience eagerness that prompts Masani to work on two fresh releases each year, one in the ghazal category and one in the bhajan field. The first woman ghazal singer to have earned the distinction of winning a gold disc, her bhajan recording of *Pooja ke phool* will be released next month, said Masani on the night of February 10, talking to *Parsiana* at the tastefully decorated drawing room at her Mancherji Joshi Dadar Parsi Colony residence. A picture of composure and charm, her twinkling mischievous eyes matching her mop of unruly hair, a nose stud accentuating her Indian heritage, a face that is always ready to break into a smile, it is Masani's voice, mellifluous and soothing, that en-

velops you as she talks of her involvement in the field of music and the rise up the ladder of fame.

Of the almost dozen records and cassettes which stand to her credit, her favorite ones are *Dhadkan* and the latest two-cassette set *Dil ke qareeb*. "I put in my best each time. I feel I am improving, so psychologically it is better. The more you learn, the more you feel you know nothing. It's like getting into the sea. You are supposed to drown. It is a sort of intoxication. The best part of it is that it is difficult to come out of it," the 25-year-old melodist refers to the euphoric nature of music.

The release of *Dil ke qareeb* in Bombay and the almost simultaneous releases in Bangalore, Madras, Delhi, Calcutta, Jodhpur, Hyderabad required Masani to make a quick tour of all these places singing alive the music on the cassette. "The first order of 20,000 sets has been sold out and the demand for reprints indicates that it is very well received," informs the songstress.

Nearly 20 days in a month see Masani on tour, performing on an average five to six shows. She may sing to a crowd of 50,000 as in Kota, or to a group of 8,000 university students in an open-air stadium. Irrespective of the nature of her listeners, "I first sing what I want to sing and then cater to

the audience's tastes," she admits. "We are supposed to be bringing the audience to our level rather than stepping down to cater to all tastes." And she has her ways of gauging the audience reaction: "By their faces I would know whether they are enjoying the show. If there is noise or distraction in the auditorium, if they have a smiling face when I am singing a sad song ... You should be quick to judge." While the stage for ghazals has become very professional, "it is also very commercial," she points out.

Entitled to an escort, it is usually her mother Pillu who accompanies her on her tours, though sometimes it could be her father Doli. It is her parents and her mentor Madhurani whom she considers her most severe critics. "They are terribly critical. But who likes people saying 'you sing very well' all the time. It is with criticism that an artist develops."

She views each of her performances as a sort of "responsibility to the audience. You may have given exams for 10 years, but yet you are nervous each time. It is the apprehension: What kind of an audience will it be? What kind of music will they enjoy? So, on the day of the concert, in the afternoons there are always butterflies in my stomach." The programs are usually in the evenings, though it could start at night, or like the one at Muzaffar-

pur, at 12.30 a.m. Regardless of the time of the show, her last meal is at 1 p.m. after which she is only allowed to take tea or milk. "So prior to a performance you have to force yourself to sleep, though you may not be in a mood to, because there is the evening ahead of you. On stage I am very cool. I love to sing. It is a wonderful feeling," she recapitulates the mood while twirling the strands of her hair on her index finger. Musical accompanists on the harmonium, tabla, sarangi/guitar usually form her entourage. "After the performance *tau maza hi maza* (it's fun). People throng you for autographs and then you look forward to a hearty meal. Singing makes you very hungry," her dimpled smile punctuates the sentence.

"I love (to see) our Parsis take an interest in music," she states. Recently she was invited by the Parsi anjumans of Delhi, Calcutta and Navsari. Seeing the Parsis bedecked in their garas, jewelry, finery made her think that they were almost aristocratic. "They enjoyed this kind of music. I knew

they would but wasn't sure whether they could be induced to come to the auditorium." Though she did not wish to make any generalizations, she felt that the Poona Parsis are more anglicized and the Delhi Parsis understand more Urdu. When asked whether she charged her regular fees for performing in aid of community institutions she sounded offended and out came a convincing "of course not. Otherwise where is the charity of the Parsis?" Like in the case of other philanthropic causes - drought relief, blind, polio

**"The more you learn
in music, the more
you feel you know
nothing. It is a sort of
intoxication"**

victims, Red Cross, rehabilitation of women - the organizers are only expected to pay for the musicians' fees and the group's conveyance.

Invitations for performances come in at least three months in advance. Through word-of-mouth publicity, sponsors approach her. After she accepts an invitation, an official letter is sent signifying that the deal is struck. As Masani excused herself to answer a telephone call, there emerged a professional side to her character. Extending the same courteousness yet taking precautionary measures and making enquiries - about the audience, the public address system, the accommodation - to ensure that her performance in Allahabad would not be hindered due to any last minute lapse.

Barely 36 hours after the interview, she was to leave for Muscat to enthral the audiences there for the second year in succession. As she proceeded to elaborate on the positive feedback she received from Muscat, she broke off mid-sentence to add, "touch wood." She has also performed in Dubai, Bahrain and the United States. It is in July, August and September - the slack period for public performances - that she is involved with her recording sessions. She says that she devotes almost 10 months to perfect herself for one recording session. Her first record from Music India was *Aap*

ki bazm mein in 1981 and then followed others like *A team come true* (a duet with Talat Aziz), *Khazana*, *Dilruba*, *Nasha*, etc. She has also sung for about 25 Hindi films like *Anand aur anand*, *Hum naujawan*, *Jumbish*, *Salma*, *Bhai akhir bhai hota hai*, and even one Tamil film; she does not miss an opportunity of reporting on this fact with a certain amount of satisfaction.

Along with her live and recorded performances, the vocalist also continues to receive training under her "idol, Madhurani...What I am in the ghazal field is because of her. Right from the word 'g' of ghazals, she has taught me the art, mannerisms, everything. She had molded my perspective towards music." Earlier Masani had received her training in classical music under Ustad Amanat Khan. Each day she practices for about two hours in the mornings and one hour in the afternoons. "But we are constantly in that atmosphere where we are talking music, exchanging views, listening to *ustads* (maestros); it kind of grows on you. I try to learn as much as I can." She also learns Urdu to better understand the language she sings in.

Not very keen to go into the antecedents of her much publicized musical background, Masani just put it simply, "My father used to sing as far back as I can remember. He was a pupil of Ustad Faiyaz Khan of the *Agra gharana* (school of music). So it was very natural for me. Singing is almost inborn. The sadder the music, the better I feel."

Trouncing opposition in all local music contests, the break for the songbird came when she was conferred the national Sur Singar Samsad award at the young age of 15. Then followed invitations to perform on the *Aarohi* program on television, and thereafter being signed by Music India as "their artiste." A commerce graduate from the Sydenham College, Masani says that she had decided not to go in for chartered accountancy or management, and "when offers started falling in my lap, a career almost seemed made out for me without my having to make any conscious decision."

Though in her school days she was good at Bharat Natyam dancing, drawing and excelled in academics, she has had to sacrifice everything for her all-consuming involvement in music. She

continued on page 34

Masani: "a career made out for me"



The 'Principal' of Drama

Inspired by principal Shirin Darasha, the J.B. Petit School's annual Festival of Plays features among the city's important theatrical events

Jeroo Irani

With the soft glow of the footlights upon the undrawn curtain and the mysterious gloom of the darkened theater, the spectator begins his journey from drab reality into the realm of believable fantasy. Time and space suffer a sea change and some mysterious force converts minutes into months or years and the constricted area behind the curtain into all imaginable space.

For the past 13 years, the same magic has been spun by the J.B. Petit High School for Girls' annual Festival of Plays. Brainchild of the School's dynamic principal Ms Shirin Darasha, the annual pageant has become one of the important theatrical events of the city. Here, the sets, lighting and sparkling performances by the School's zesty students have been welded into a near professional whole by the deft touch of director Ms Pearl Padamsee.

"I am passionately fond of the theater and I see it as one of the great creative activities of the School," elaborates Darasha who declines to be photographed but chats willingly on a wide range of subjects. Being an ex-student, memories of the past engulf me. I mentally compare her with her predecessors who exuded a starchy dignity whereas Darasha's laid-back air is in keeping with the reputation of the School, said to be progressive in the best sense of the term.

Equally "progressive" are the plays put up this year. *Sangharsh*, a collaborative writing effort by the staff, is a Hindi musical about the discrimination against a young Harijan girl in a village. The play questions the existence of a social order that places certain people at the bottom so as to conveniently crush them underfoot. *Pantry Girls*, written by Darasha, is set in

a boarding school in Goa and deals with changing relationships among three levels: the first class boarders, privileged children of affluent families; the pantry girls, poor children who in return for cleaning, scrubbing and serving are educated free; and the staff, a spectrum of tyrants who never allow the pantry girls to forget that they are in the school on charity. "The common theme running through the two plays is women, the objective being to make the Indian woman aware of her rights and all that is oppressing her," explains Darasha.

We watched as the 106 students (only a quarter of whom had acted before) successfully got under the skin of the assumed characters and conveyed by gesture, movement and evocative silence the message of the plays: the existing order must be questioned and perhaps changed where necessary. The spectators were stirred to momen-

"The objective of the plays is to make the Indian woman aware of her rights and all that is oppressing her"

tary vision and insight; unsuspected emotions were roused as plays and players, sets, costume and lighting were inextricably linked in a web of cause and effect. Occasionally, the message would come through with the ferocity of a sledge-hammer when the approach of the dramatist verged on that of a social reformer.



"Children cannot project subtleties and the play should be within the child's ken and understanding," explains Darasha when asked if the message could have been conveyed in a less hard-hitting way. "Children cannot digest the finer shades of grey. Subtlety is an adult feeling. The oldest actress is probably 16 years old. Anyway, what is subtle about the repression of women in India today? It is very clear, very well etched. I am not talking about rich women, subtly repressed. But about ordinary women whose suffering is not subtle."

For the dramatist, his raw material is life: living men and women from whom he draws inspiration, and his task is to find expression for impulses and emotions which millions experience in everyday human situations. So

also with Darasha, who was inspired to write *Pantry Girls* when a friend related the story of discrimination in boarding schools in Goa. The School does not put up plays which are about elves and fairies but those which draw breath and life from the soil, and preferably deal with contemporary Indian issues. "Another essential ingredient is that there should not be too many male characters. After all, it is difficult for a 15-year-old girl to project a dominant male of 34 years," explains the principal.

In order to field plays which could be put up by the School, J.B. Petit ran an all-India competition for original one-act plays in 1985. The contest yielded the prize winning plays *Playtime at the Bagh* by Erna Vatchagandhy and *Friday Father* by Dina Mehta, both staged in 1986. While the first dealt with the Jallianwalla Bagh massacre, the second looked at what happens in an urban Indian family when the man of the house asks for a divorce. "Divorce is a reality for some of our children," says Darasha, "and a play like *Friday Father* helps us all to accept it. It also makes the others realize how lucky they are if they come from well-knit families." Plays from overseas like *The Miracle Worker*, which focus on Hellen Keller as a child and on her teacher, also strike a sympathetic chord amongst today's youngsters, according to the principal.

"What goes into producing a play successfully?" we ask Darasha. "We fortunately have Pearl Padamsee who

is an inspired director. Plus the commitment of my staff and the students," she adds. "We work for one and a half to two months prior to the production and on weekends and during the short break in August. Certain teachers function as assistant directors, having garnered some knowledge about the technicalities, how to rehearse, cast and set up a *kacha* (makeshift) stage," states Darasha. "Pearl is like a chef. She does all the ordering, getting things to move and ultimately mixes all the ingredients that we have chopped, to give the play shape and cohesion." In the process, the young actresses learn how to evoke a character and stir the imagination of the audience.

It is important for the audience to identify with the characters. Hence commercial English theater too should be relevant to the Indian ethos, feels the principal. "Copying *Cats* for instance, is sacrilege. For to do something like that here when we don't have the resources..." she trails off. "Though some of the more serious plays like *Agnes of God* have been pretty successful, unfortunately, Indian directors feel people don't enjoy serious theater. But serious theater should be developed and sustained."

Convinced that drama is a powerful tool in the development of young minds, Darasha also believes that one of the aims of education is to help a child develop his or her potential. "It may be any kind of ability, talent; her capacity to think for herself and take responsibility for her actions; and her

sensitivity to others. This can only be achieved by freedom of thought and action, and exposure to different types of activities."

When running a girls' school, the temptation to rule through fear and intimidation might be almost irresistible. But Darasha prides herself on being accessible to her students. Despite the democratic functioning, she and her staff have not lost sight of the realities of the present-day education system where learning by rote is the norm. "Children have to face exams and we have not forgotten that."

This is where her vast teaching ex-

The School does not put up plays which are about elves and fairies but ones which deal with contemporary Indian issues

perience in India and abroad is beneficial; for to successfully head a school, it is essential to be an effective teacher as well: "I love children and it gives me great pleasure and joy to educate them." Single and devoid of family encumbrances, Darasha spends her spare time going to the theater, attending Indian classical dance recitals, reading and listening to music. She is not religious and thinks of herself as a human being rather than a Parsi.

She prefers not to comment on community issues. But her desire to make Madame Bhikhaiji Cama, the Parsi freedom fighter, the heroine of her next play, perhaps reflects her subconscious identification with the community. "Madame Cama led a stormy life and as far back as 1907, she wanted to throw the British out of India. The children could project her life quite easily and it would also bring the freedom movement alive for them."

The idea sounds promising but Darasha is hamstrung by dearth of research material on the Parsi revolutionary. So she is still pondering on the right subject for her next play. The possibilities can be endless, emerging as they do from the chaos of human experience which after all is the blood and sinew of drama.

Students enacting scenes from *Sangharsh* (facing page) and *Pantry Girls* (below)



laments, "I would have loved to have been a good reader but unfortunately I left books at the Enid Blyton stage." Now in her spare time she answers her fan mail (which may include poems composed to her or sketches done of her or a complaint like that of one admirer who caught pneumonia trying to trace her on a rainy day). She also listens to music, her favorites being Mehdi Hassan, Noorjehan, Ghulam Ali and Madhurani. In western music, it is waltzes that captivate her. Both English and Hindi comedies and thrillers interest her though "I vibe better with Hindi films..."

"I owe a lot to my understanding parents," she acknowledges. "We are a close-knit family with all its principles and orthodoxy." Though not in any particular hurry to get married, she lists the prerequisites necessary in a marriage partner: "understanding, broadminded, tall, fair, handsome

Parsi. The interest in music can be developed later."

Music being the only imminent plan on her horizon, she would be content

"Who likes people saying 'you sing very well' all the time. It is with criticism that an artist develops"

to believe, "Life is a song, sing it." Among her ambitious projects, she "looks forward to doing an artistic cassette catering to those classically oriented." This would of course be in addition to her commercial releases. Her popularity she credits to the TV,

the Press and her fans. "To be a commercial success, fans are required, though that is not the case with artistic success," she differentiates the two fields.

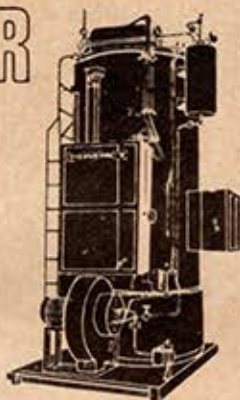
At social functions like weddings and navjotes, Masani enjoys being singled out by Parsis who approach her, saying they enjoy her music, and how happy it makes them to see a Parsi in this field. Conversely Masani gets irritated when non-Parsis ask her how she manages to sing despite being a Parsi. "There are other Parsis in the field of music like (vocalist) Firoz Dastur, (instrumentalists) Zarin Daroowala, Aban Mistry, Vistasp Balsara, Kersi Lord, but here because the language is different people find it strange. After all, Persia is the seat of ghazals. We should be proud of it. Parsis have excelled in every field, why should it not then be in ghazals too?" she asks, adding, "Ultimately whatever you want to do in life, you will. Religion is no bar."

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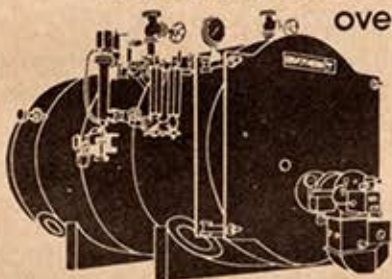
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The data on births, marriages and deaths has been compiled from information provided by various anjumans in India and abroad, courts and hospitals. The list of Parsi marriages was made available to us by the Bombay High Court. The list of intercommunity marriages will be made available to us from the Registrar of Marriages only in February, courtesy Ms Silloo Kavarana.

The information gathered is not always uniform. For example, the list of Bombay deaths pertains overwhelmingly to 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 case of outstation anjumans we have incorporated news of happenings which may be considered dated.

Marriages of intercommunity couples as well as children born of such unions are listed.

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

BOMBAY

Born

A boy, *Kaiwan*, to *Bakhtavar* and *Rohinton Batliwalla* on October 15, 1987
A girl to *Roshni* and *Noshir Doctor*; January 2, 1988
A girl to *Violet* and *Kersi Sukhadwala*; January 5
A boy to *Shirin* and *Bomi Engineer*; January 7
A boy to *Feroza* and *Maneck Patel*; January 9
A girl to *Thrity* and *Farokh Sidhva*; January 12
A girl to *Roberta* and *Nadir Bharucha*; January 14
A boy to *Anjali* and *Pheroze Bharucha*; January 16
A boy to *Saranga* and *Eruch Khambatta*; January 16
A girl to *Armati* and *Yezdi*

Heart disease claimed 34 of the 107 Parsis who died in Bombay in the month of January. The next most important killers were pneumonia and lung disease (24), old age and debility (12), diabetes (8), septicemia (5), kidney failure and cancer (4 each) and brain damage (3). Other causes of death included rheumatoid arthritis, ulcer, blood disease and hernia. Three youths, 22, 24 and 28 years 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.

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.

When a deceased is cremated, *Parsiana* would appreciate if the family members could approach us directly with the information.

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.

Bhagwanger; January 18
A boy to *Shaheen* and *Jehangir Irani*; January 20
A girl to *Dilshad* and *Nariman Doctor*; January 21
A boy to *Manek* and *Burjor Cooper*; January 22
A boy to *Viloo* and *Mehernosh Kapadia*; January 23
A boy to *Rodabe* and *Darey Dinshaw*; January 25
A girl to *Khatoon* (*Khorshed*) and *Abbas Fatakdawala*; January 28
A girl to *Homai* and *Farokh Doctor*; January 29
A girl to *Ketayun* and *Behram Khambatta*; January 31

Married

Kashmira Keki Daruwala and *Adil Eddie Bharucha*;

November 12, 1987
Phiroza Phiroze Patel and *Percy Hormusji Siganporia* of Siganporia; November 13
Kashmira Burjor Bhesania and *Bejan Minoo Kalyaniwalla*; November 26
Anshera Jal Doctor and *Aspi Tehmul Contractor*; December 1
Shernaz Ratan Kapadia and *Mehernosh Dara Turel*; December 17
Mehera Nariman Contractor and *Kurush Nozer Kolah*; December 18
Hutoxi Kekobad Randelia and *Yezdi Phiroze Siganporia*; December 18
Ruby Sam Vasan and *Farhad Phiroze Hotelwala*; December 20
Rukshana Earuch Zabwalla of Surat and *Rohinton Shiavax Doctor*; December 21
Kerman Adi Bharucha and *Neville Rustomji Buhariwala* of Leicester (U.K.); December 24
Bakhtaver Aspi Daruwala and *Firoze Kharshedji Driver*; December 24
Dinaz Tehmul Wadia of Surat and *Adil Ratan Merchant*; December 24
Shenaz Kobad Sabawala and *Viraf Jal Dalal*; December 25
Firza Dalli Patel and *Firdosh Dhunjisha Mogralia*; December 25
Afreen Sohrab Farzadi and *Zersis Meherji Daruwala*; December 27
Yasmin Pesi Dhanbhora and *Firdaus Behram Laskari*; December 27
Shiraz Ratan Patel and *Dinyar Nariman Hansotia*; December 28
Farida Jamshed Taraporewala and *Burzin Phiroze Bharucha*; December 29
Firoza Bahadur Bharucha and *Percy Ratansha Bhatena*; December 31
Arnava Minoo Sopariwalla and *Hoshang Bamanshaw Bhesania*; December 31
Shirin Behram Irani and *Cyrus Faredoon Karbhari*; December 31
Keshmira Ukadji and *Amalsadiwala* of Amalsad and

Farrokh Navroji Kharas; December 31
Farah Firoze Shroff and *Rohinton Minoo Surty*; December 31
Daulat Aspandiar Irani and *Goshtash Jamshed Jamasbi*; January 1, 1988
Khushnuma Eruch Fanibanda and *Jal Kekhasru Waghchhipawalla*; January 2
Maharukh Shavakshaw Mistry and *Adil Fali Tarapore*; January 3
Dilnawaz Fali Sethna of Surat and *Khushroo Ratan Patel*; January 4
Rashna Eruch Kakalia and *Hoshang Homi Udwadia*; January 4
Pearl Nariman Khambata and *Kerssie Noshir Wadia*; January 4
Shiraz Dali Sukheswala and *Hormuz Pestonji Engineer*; January 5
Dilnavaz Kersi Irani and *Sheriar Rustom Irani*; January 5
Binaifer Jal Astin and *Neville Rustomji Taraporewala*; January 5
Zeenobia Jalejar Unwalla and *Jasper Sorabjee Tavaria*; January 5
Rukshana Darayus Makati and *Kersi Dinshaw Baria*; January 7
Derina Darayus Makati and *Kersi Minoo Dalal*; January 7
Rashna Noshir Sethna and *Porosp Ratan Baria*; January 8
Nazneen Tirandaz Irani and *Jamsheed Bejanjee Dumasia*; January 8
Hoofrish Homi Billimoria and *Sarosh Burjor Dastur*; January 9
Amy Sarosh Daruwala of Bulsar and *Rusi Nariman Mowdawalla*; January 9
Khushie Savak Balsara and *Farrokh Dadi Mistry*; January 10
Tanaz Homi Vakil and *Neville Noshir Shroff*; January 11
Michiko Dara Bhagwagar and *Khershed Pessie Cooper* of Annandale (USA); January 14
Veera Kersi Mukadam and *Jimmy Jal Tarapore*; January 14
Kashmira Dinyar Bhatena

and Jamshid Phiroze Contractor; January 15
 Shirin Namdar Irani and Aspi Noshir Patel; January 15
 Cashmeera Cowas Sadri of Baroda and Minoo Khurshed Sanjana; January 15
 Roshni Dady Karbhary and Marzban Minoo Daruwalla; January 16
 Zinobia Rusi Sukhia and Rohinton Sohrab Driver; January 16
 Rashna Dhunjishaw Palsetia and Hosang Jehangir Engineer; January 16
 Gulshan Dinsha Engineer and Zaheer Noshir Kavarana; January 16
 Niloufer Dady Colah and Jamshid Dinyar Ravari of Port Marly (France); January 16
 Samannaaz Darasha Lall and Firdaus Keki Irani; January 17
 Behnaz Sohrab Driver and Mahiyar Pirojshah Bhopti; January 18
 Gulshan Dali Daruwalla and Jamshed Dinshaw Kutar; January 18
 Mahtab Ardeshir Pour-Ardeshiri and Fariborz Asfandiar Yazdani; January 18
 Maharukh Merwan Soparivala and Percy Navroze Panthaki; January 19
 Manreez Noshir Grant and Zaraius Dinshaw Dastur; January 21
 Thrity Erach Avari and Aspi Maneck Thanavala; January 21
 Parivaz Khodadad Irani and Manchi Homi Balaporia; January 22
 Khushnum Faredoon Aga and Malcolm Yezdi Darukhanawalla; January 22
 Lily Soli Pochkhanawala and Xercsis Keki Marker; January 22
 Navaz Dosabhai Mistry and Rayomand Adi Mehta; January 22
 Viloo Ratansha Elavia and Tehmurasp Dhunjishaw Patel; January 22
 Aneeta Minoo Ghasvala and Dallas Tehmul Todywalla; January 22
 Zarin Aspandyr Irani and Noshir Framroz Charna;

January 23
 Yasmin Rusi Bharucha and Farokh Minocher Engineer; January 23
 Zarine Noshir Behramkamdin and Hoshedar Dinshaw Panthaki; January 23
 Zubina Naushir Kapadia of Poona and Adil Jiji Malia; January 24
 Roshni Fali Shroff and Vispi Kershasp Dadachanji; January 25
 Gulshan Shapurji Hansotia and Adil Dinshaw Irani; January 25
 Niloufer Fali Arestani and Khushroo Homi Udawadia; January 25
 Shirin Boman Irani and Rohinton Phiroze Mistry; January 26
 Maharukh Jalejar Unwalla and Mehernosh Keki Bharucha; January 28
 Nina Pesi Tata and Sharookh Firoz Mehta; January 28
 Aernevaaz Peshoton Kakalia and Viraf Ardeshir Randeria; January 28
 Prochi Behram Avari and Mehli Minocher Bhada; January 29
 Kamal Jamshedji Mehta and Darius Boman Kerawalla; January 31

Died

Cawas Fardoonji Gara (62), residing at Jehangir Mans, 1/75 Hughes Rd, 400007; December 31, 1987
 Banubai Barjorjee Pastakia (84), 2/B, Tata Mills Co-op Hsg Soc, Parel, 400012; December 31
 Cawasjee Sorabji Bhesania (83), Kokil Kunj, 21 Ambedkar Rd, Bandra, 400050; January 1, 1988
 Bhikaji Cawasji Panthaky (70), Desai Bldg, 668 Katrak Rd, 400031; January 1
 Framji Kaikhasroo Saklatwalla (73), Mackwee Mans, Fort, 400001; January 1
 Mehroo Savak Bhaka (73), 51 Chanchal Smruti, 25 Katrak Rd, 400031; January 2
 Tehmina Adi Desai (59), 2/8 Lady Dorab Tata Bldg, Bandra, 400050; January 2
 Fredoon Kaikhushroo Mody

(75), 4/56 Wadia Baug, Parel Tank Rd, 400033; January 2
 Manijeh Ardeshir Sooi (96), Crawford Bldg, Sleater Rd, 400007; January 2
 Dolat Pervez Rabadi (57), 85/8 Dev Chaaya, Tardeo Rd, 400034; January 3
 Pestonji Hormusji Cama (70), 3/22 Tata Mills Co-op Hsg Soc, Parel, 400012; January 4
 Jehangir Sorabji Satarawala (52), 5 Parsi Anjuman Bldg, Agiary Compd, Kalyan, Dist Thana; January 4
 Khushru Boman Dinyariyan (Irani) (65), Fakri Manzil, Sleater Rd, 400007; January 5
 Pirojshah Hormuzdji Divecha (76), 6 Contractor Bldg, Byculla, 400027; January 5
 Dorab Sorabji Khambatta (71), Ivorine, 1st Floor, 400023; January 5
 Bomansha Jehangirji Madan (80), Nariawalla Agiary, Dadar, 400014; January 5
 Adi Behramsha Medhora (75), 101 Jupiter Apts, Cuffe Parade, 400005; January 5
 Hoshang Maneckshaw Mehta (55), Parukh Dharamshalla, 34 Hughes Rd, 400007; January 5
 Jaiji Maneckshaw Mhow (86), 2/B Damoder Park, Ghatkopar, 400086; January 5
 Dady Nusserwanji Dady (74), 141/E Monte Rosa, August Kranti Marg, 400036; January 6
 Faredoon Behram Irani (80), Bana Bldg, Khetwadi 11th Lane, 400004; January 7
 Dadi Hormusji Patell (58), 33 Peacock Palace, 69 B. Desai Rd, 400026; January 7
 Perin Sorab Damania (81), Siddick Ebrahim Mans, 180 Lamington Rd, 400007; January 8
 Homi Kaikhushroo Firozi (50), B-1 Shivsagar Co-op Hsg Soc, Mahim, 400016; January 8
 Farokh Marazban Laly (22), 9/12 Patel Bldg, Gamadia Colony, Tardeo, 400007; January 8
 Alamai Dinshaw Parekh (80), 35-1/A Tata Mills Co-op Hsg Soc, Parel, 400012; January 8
 Homai Sorab Kapadia (80), Avabai Bldg, 18 Sleater Rd,

400007; January 11
 Farokh Rustomji Antia (40), 301 Cawasji Hormusji St, Dhobi Talao, 400002; January 12
 Homai Rustomjee Dinshaw (88), 10-A Mazdock Apts, 7 Bungalows, Versova, 400061; January 12
 Homai Firoze Karai (80), 607-C Samarth, Khareghat Rd, Dadar, 400014; January 12
 Merwan Boman Irani (24), 605 Karim Manzil, Dhobi Talao, 400002; January 12
 Jehanbux (Johnny) Behranshaw Contractor (58), G/I Cama Bldg, Cama Rd, Andheri (W), 400058; January 13
 Mena Jamshed Dudha (70), 50-C Sonbai Sadan, Bazar Rd, Bandra, 400050; January 13
 Mani Kaikhushroo Engineer (85), Crown Bldg, Uranwalla St, Grant Rd, 400007; January 13
 Keki Minocher Umrigar (60), A/26 United Chmbs, Grant Rd, 400007; January 13
 Jer Jehangir Wadia (67), Contractor Bldg, Kasinath St, Tardeo, 400034; January 13
 Ratanbai Cawasji Bhathena (58), 275 Batliwala Bldg, Zoroastrian Colony, Chikalwadi, 400007; January 14
 Dina Kaikhushroo Sanjana (80), Aziz Bldg, Tardeo, 400034; January 14
 Khorshed Ardeshir Sethna (80), Roshan Mans, 664 Parsi Colony, Dadar, 400014; January 14
 Noshir Jal Kanga (61), 23/K Maker Towers, Cuffe Parade, 400005; January 15
 Aloo Nariman Bhandara (77), Petit Widows' Chawl, Mody St, Fort, 400001; January 16
 Adi Meherwanji Daruvala (78), 1/11 Rustom Baug, Victoria Rd, Byculla, 400027; January 16
 Goolbai Kaikeshroo Dubash (75), 10 Nagin Mhl, Churchgate, 400020; January 16
 Homai Homi Master (75), Coover Villa, 801 Parsi Colony, Dadar, 400014; January 16

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[illegible]

"You will also be pleased to know we have started in earnest a drive aimed at farmers. If you remember I had referred to them last year and as I'll be of the soil but as farmers of the old England. They were found using fertilisers for the crop when the quota had been sanctioned for milk. This is not something we view lightly. Five year plans can be upset by this casual approach to government policies. Also in many cases farmers were produc-

ing more than their licensed capacity, which as you are aware is a non-sustainable.

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"But as you are aware, a government that works better has to go slow in some places. Because the courts are in such a sorry state, businessmen, they have to register other petty, non-financial criminals such as murderers, amorphous, robbers, etc. and so on. Also because the jails are filled to capacity with business people, we have had to release prematurely all other types of criminals. This, of course, is a small price to pay for progressing into the

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ADDRESS

CITY

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STATE

Khudayar Mehraban Seyavashi (69), 5 Nanda Deep, Matunga, 400019; January 16
Alamai Minocher Shroff (81), 4-A Memorial Block, Marzban Colony, Gilder Lane, 400008; January 16
Ratanshaw Ardeshir Bulsara (80), 19/5 Malcolm Baug, Jogeshwari, 400102; January 17
Ardeshar Bomanji Gilder (64), 24 Dar-ul-Mulk, 26 Hughes Rd, 400007; January 17
Meherwanshaw Rustomji Humranwala (79), 422-A Dubash Bldg, Grant Rd, 400007; January 17
Naval Jehanbux Lakdawalla (81), 3-A Mariam Manzil, Leela Melville Rd, 400008; January 17
Meherji Dhanjishaw Sethna (92), Somerset Palace, Warden Rd, 400026; January 17
Bacha Burjorji Bhadha (76), Burjor Bldg, Wadia St, Tardeo, 400034; January 18
Villoo Shavaxshaw Bhesania (73), 24/A Takshila, Andheri (E), 400093; January 18
Goolbai Sorabji Billimoria

(75), Piroja Mans, Sir Ratan Tata Rd, Tardeo, 400034; January 19
Rustomji Furdoonji Billimoria (73), Jehangir Mans, Near Metro Cinema, 400020; January 19
Rustom Dinshaw Irani (58), Shirin Manzil, Balaram St, Grant Rd, 400007; January 19
Morvarid Sarosh Jamshedi Kalantari (83), Ave Jaihoon Sq, Toos Lane, Saadi Plot No 58, Tehran, Iran; January 19
Burjor Kavarana (74), Banaji Bldg, Forjett St, 400036; January 19
Minoo Rustomji Pavri (70), Puran Nivas, Arthur Bunder Rd, Coiba, 400005; January 19
Najamai Cawasji Tengra (85), 21 Dubash Bldg, Khareghat Colony, Hughes Rd, 400007; January 19
Goolan Navroji Aibara (68), C/o Mody Hostel, 83-A Dr A, Besant Rd, Worli Naka, 400018; January 20
Kaikhushroo Phiroza Karwa (90), 803/D Ghatlia Mans, Dr Ambedkar Rd, Dadar, 400014; January 20

Dhunmai Navrojee (70), Meherabad, B. Desai Rd, 400026; January 20
Meherbanu Sorabjee Captain (89), 1 Central Bldg, Bomanji Master Rd, Dhobi Talao, 400002; January 21
Phiroze Dinshaw Digaria (58), B-706 Poonam Apts, A. Besant Rd, Worli, 400018; January 21
Hirabai Jamsetjee Dorabjee Jamsetjee (87), Norman Manzil, Wadia St, Tardeo, 400034; January 21
Freny Pesi Vakil (48), Hormuzd Bldg, Sleater Rd, 400007; January 21
Minoo Pirojshaw Contractor (65), Jiten Co-op Hsg Soc, Andheri (W), 400058; January 22
Piroja Dosabhai Driver (83), Room No 1, Panday Sanatorium, Wodehouse Rd, Colaba, 400005; January 22
Shirinbai B. Mistry (87), Victoria Bar Bldg, Subhash Chowk, Moorbad Rd, Kalyan; January 22
Rustom Phirozshaw Billimoria (85), E-Bhiwandiwalla Ter, Sankerseth Rd, 400002;

January 23
Khodamorad Khodabux Irani (60), 3/8 Tata Mills Co-op Hsg Soc, Parel, 400012; January 23
Baimai Sorabjee Kotwal (80), 384/A Kapadia Mans, Grant Rd, 400007; January 23
Maneck Bumanshaw Fulwadiwalla (56), 6-A Kaka Bldg, Marzban Colony, Gilder St, 400008; January 24
Khushroo Khudabux Irani (65), Khudabux Bldg, Mazagaon, 400010; January 24
Homai Edulji Panthaki (81), E Block, Dalal Est, Bombay Central, 400008; January 24
Nauzar Burjor Panthaki (28), 12 Wadia Agiary Chawl, Lalbaug, 400012; January 24
Sorabji Burjorji Pastakia (83), 30 United Chmbs, 347-A Grant Rd, 400007; January 24
Rustomji Dinshawji Ragina (92), 35-C Jerajbhai Lane, Mancher Manzil, 400008; January 24
Hilla Sohrab Tamboli (77), Daruwalla Hse, Parsi Colony, Dadar 400014; January 24
Darabsha Bamanji Colabawalla (92), Dubhash Bldg, 627 A. Homavazir Rd,

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Dadar 400014; January 25
Darabsha Cooverji
Darowalla (80), Standard
Hse, 83 Karve Rd, 400002;
January 25
Mani Kakashru Dastur (75),
Kaka Bldg, 649, Firdosi Rd,
Dadar, 400014; January 25
Khorshed Burjorji Hansotia
(84), Soona Bldg, Chikalwadi,
400007; January 25
Noshir Burjorji Kadwa (87),
3/2 Dhanbai Wadi, D.N. Rd,
Vile Parle (W), 400056;
January 25
Freny Pheroze Patel (58),
Patel Bldg, Forjett St,
Gowalia Tank, 400036;
January 25
Tehmina Phirozshah
Darowalla (82), Parijat, 45
S.V. Rd, Andheri (W),
400058; January 26
Piroji Behramji Jilla (83), R-
14, Cusrow Baug, S. B. Rd,
Colaba, 400039; January 26
Dinshawji Rustomji Mistry
(74), 10 Sir Ratan Tata
Colony, Tardeo, 400034;
January 26
Soli Naoraji Pajnigara (50), 35
Panday Sanatorium,
Wodehouse Rd, Colaba,
400005; January 26
Piroja Rushi Patel (76), 41/47
Copper Smith Rd, Dockyard
Rd, 400010; January 26
Jal Ratanji Wadia (75), Alipur
Bldg, Colaba, 400005;
January 26
Ardeshtir Jehangir Bhagalia
(83), G-28 Munsif Bldg,
Captain Colony, Tardeo,
400034; January 27
Gulbai Eruchshah Bhesadia
(80), C/o J.N. Medhora,
Engineer Bldg, Khetwadi,
400004; January 27
Shirinbai Dhanjibhoy
Daruvala (92), Sheri Hse,
Cawasji Patel St, Fort, 400001;
January 27
Goolbai Cowasji Daruwalla
(72), E-40, Cusrow Baug, S.B.
Rd, 400039; January 27
Sheriar Baman Irani (83),
Salsette Parsi Assn, Parsi
Punchayet Rd, Andheri (E),
400093; January 27
Khorshed Homi Contractor
(75), A Block, Gowalia Tank
Bldg, Gowalia Tank, 400036;
January 28
Soonamai Ratanshaw
Daruwalla (76), 422-A
Dubash Bldg, Grant Rd,
400007; January 28
Mehra Dinshaw Deboo (88),

B-20, Shapur Baug, V.P. Rd,
400004; January 28
Dhanmai Ardeshtir Bhesania
(85), 5 Dubash Bldg, Kasinath
Rd, Tardeo Rd, 400034;
January 29
Jamshed Nusserwanji Sidhva
(65), Karanjia Bldg, Grant
Rd, 400007; January 29
Pallonji Ardeshtir Talati (73),
A/4, Rustom Baug, Byculla,
400027; January 29
Piroja Ferozeshah Kapadia
(80), Chothia Bldg,
Zoroastrian Blocks,
Chikalwadi, Tardeo, 400007;
January 30
Tehmi Dinyar Mistry (68), 10
Wadia Blocks, Malcolm Baug,
Jogeshwari, 400102;
January 30
Soona Hormusji Gazdar (91),
31 Wodehouse Rd, 400005;
January 31
Ratanshaw Ardeshtir Tolat
(97), Pirojbai Bldg, 19 Sleater
Rd, 400007; January 31

BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA

Born

A boy Johngr, to Mitra and
Fariborze Kianipour; August
17, 1987

Died

Bahmanji Irani, of Calgary,
Alberta, October 4

CALCUTTA

Born

A boy, *Rahul*, to *Soona and*
Dilip Dhankani, November 16

Married

Purveen Patel, daughter of
Dolly and Faram, and *Khusro*
Poonevala, son of Perin and
Keki; January 11, 1988
Pervin Narielvala, daughter of
Khorshed and Pesi, and
Phiroze Taraporewala, son of
Perviz and Behram;
January 24
Kamal Mehta, daughter of
Dhun and Dhunjishaw, and
Noshir Wadia, son of Mehroo
and Shapurji; January 25

Died

Dr Jal Kaikhushroo Wadia
(80), son of late Dinbai and
Kaikhushroo, brother of late
Behramsha and Tehmina
Writer and Kershasp and
Nergish; November 24, 1987
Minoo Dhunjishah Avari (66),
husband of Banoo and father

of Roshan and Aspi; January
2, 1988
Gool Darabshah Captain (92),
daughter of late Hirabai and
Dinshaji Mehta and sister of
Sarosh; January 16

DELHI

Died

Sheriyar Sethna (62), husband
of Kety; December 5, 1987
Dhun Tarapore (54), wife of
Nari, mother of Yasmin and
Shernaz; January 1, 1988

JAMSHEDPUR

Married

Bakhtawar Behram Shroff and
Aspi Jamshed Engineer;
October 25, 1987

Died

Pesi Minoo Patel (55),
husband of Homai, father of
Mehernosh, late Yazdi and
Behroze; October 15
Fareedon Khurshed Bharucha
(62), brother of late Meher
Guzdar, Nargish, Perin
Hodiwalla and Khorshed
Bilimoria; December 12
Manigeh Shayavax Gardin
(70), mother of late Dara,
Jehangir, Perin and Dinoo;
December 14

PENNSYLVANIA

Born

A girl, *Manaz*, to *Navaz and*
Rusi Talyerkhan; November
16, 1987

TEHRAN

Married

Mojdha Sohrab Kavosi and
Kiavan Hormazdiyar
Kashmiri; November 8
Shirin Mehraban Sephari and
Armin Bahaman Shariyari;
November 9
Mahnava Hormazdiyar
Bostani and *Mahran Khosrow*
Bastani; November 12
Mino Sharoukh Shahdfar and
Babak Hormazdiyar
Khosrowpour; November 12
Sima Rashied Hormozdi and
Shariyar Kaikhosrow
Namiranian; November 15
Mahnaz Mehraban Verabi and
Sirous Ardeshtir Pashotani;
November 18
Sima Shariyar Shariyari and
Khosrow Mehraban Yazdoni;
November 19
Afsana Khosrow Vafadari and
Hoshang Khodadad
Khoramdin; November 20

Sima Jamshied Koma and
Mahyar Ardeshtir Zartoshti;
November 20
Maheen Baharam Banoo and
Bahrooz Feradoun Mehraboni
zad; November 25
Mahnaz Kaikhosro Loraspi
and *Parviz Ardeshtir*
Lorkalantari; November 28
Nasrin Feradoun Pashotani
zedha and *Kamran Khodayar*
Bahdiniyan; December 3
Mojgan Iraj Bakhtiyar
Mubarka and *Kamran*
Kaikhosrow Foroozesh;
December 9
Maheen Roustam Fourozesh
and *Jamshied Sohrab Nikjoo*;
December 10
Nargis Ardeshtir Jomasp Najad
and *Rohintan Adi Agha*;
December 18
Shahin Shah Mardon
Farahi Fard and *Ardeshtir*
Kaikhosro Bakhtiyar;
December 18
Simin Dinyar Faridani and
Manoucher Khodayar
Khorshidiyan; December 18
Naz Afsarin Mondagar
Zarapoosh and *Parviz*
Ardeshtir Dehmari;
December 30

Died

Banoo Movandi; November 10
Farkhondha Baharm
Bahzadiyan; November 10
Shariyar Noushirawan
Badardin; November 14
Rostam Vafadar Haghnagi;
November 16
Soultan Abadah Heshmati;
November 17
Manoucher Roustam Ostavari;
November 23
Bahman Hormazdiyar
Pourshasp; November 23
Shouroukh Jamshied Zendha
Noush; November 28
Rohat Ardeshtir Vali;
November 30
Shariyar Hormozdiyar
Bostani; December 1
Haji Keshvar Khodadad
Khosrow pour; December 7
Baharam Alavardi Behmardi;
December 11
Khorshied Phirozshah Sethna;
December 16
Ezat Banoo Karam Ala
Rehani; December 23
Doulal Mehraban Poulad
chemi; December 26
Tooti Khodayar Golaniyan;
December 27

Compiled by Roxana H. Kaka

Add something special
to an ordinary day!



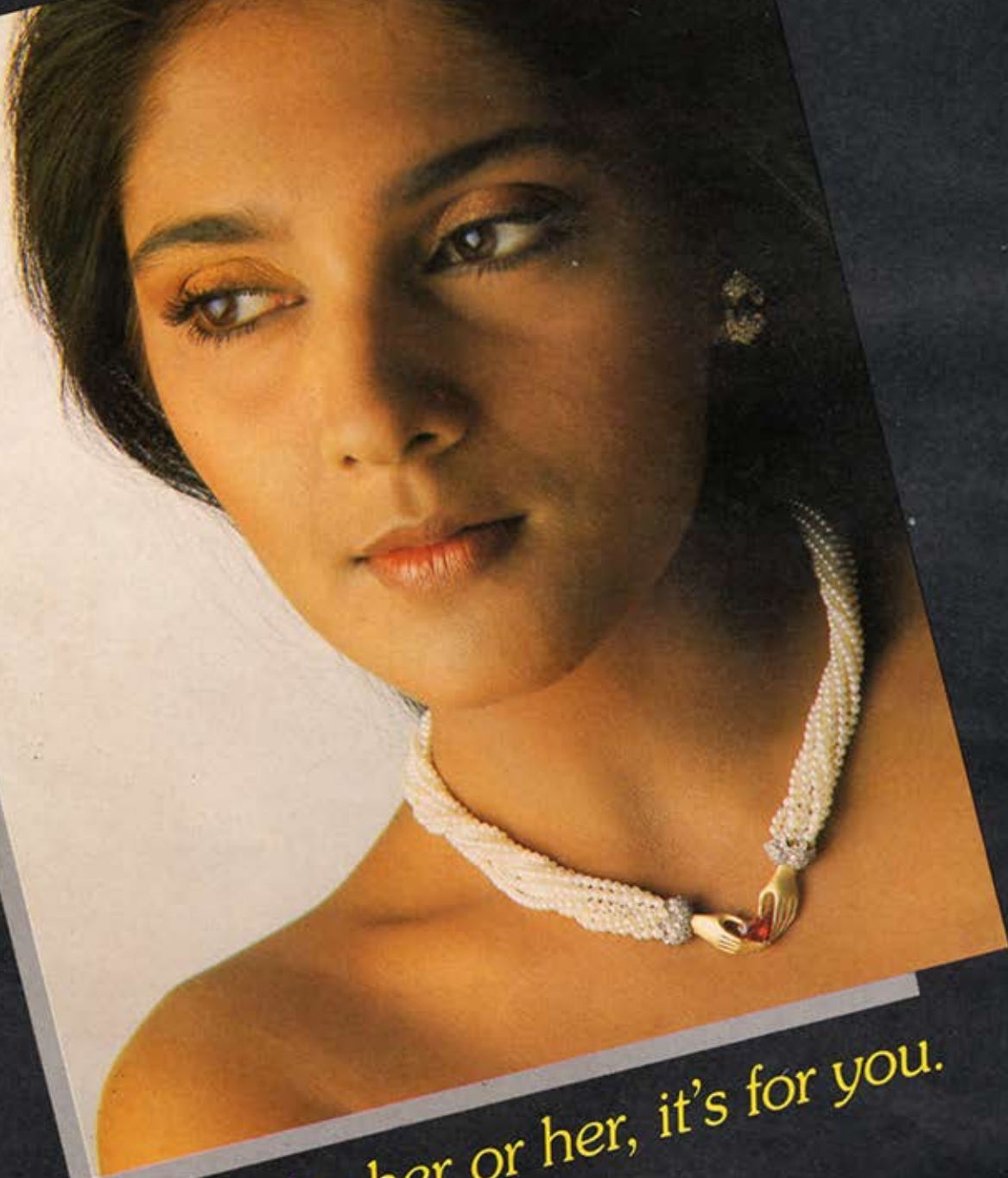
Tango

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