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Parsiana

May 1988
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3 Readers' Forum

9 Events and Personalities

17 Zoroastrians Abroad

18 The Federation and the farmers by Parinaz Toddywalla

30 Vachaghandhy Agiary: trustees vs panthaky by Arnavaz Mama

38 "Distinguished men of science" by Joy Fernandes

42 Orthodox comment on shifting of fires by Adi Doctor

46 Milestones

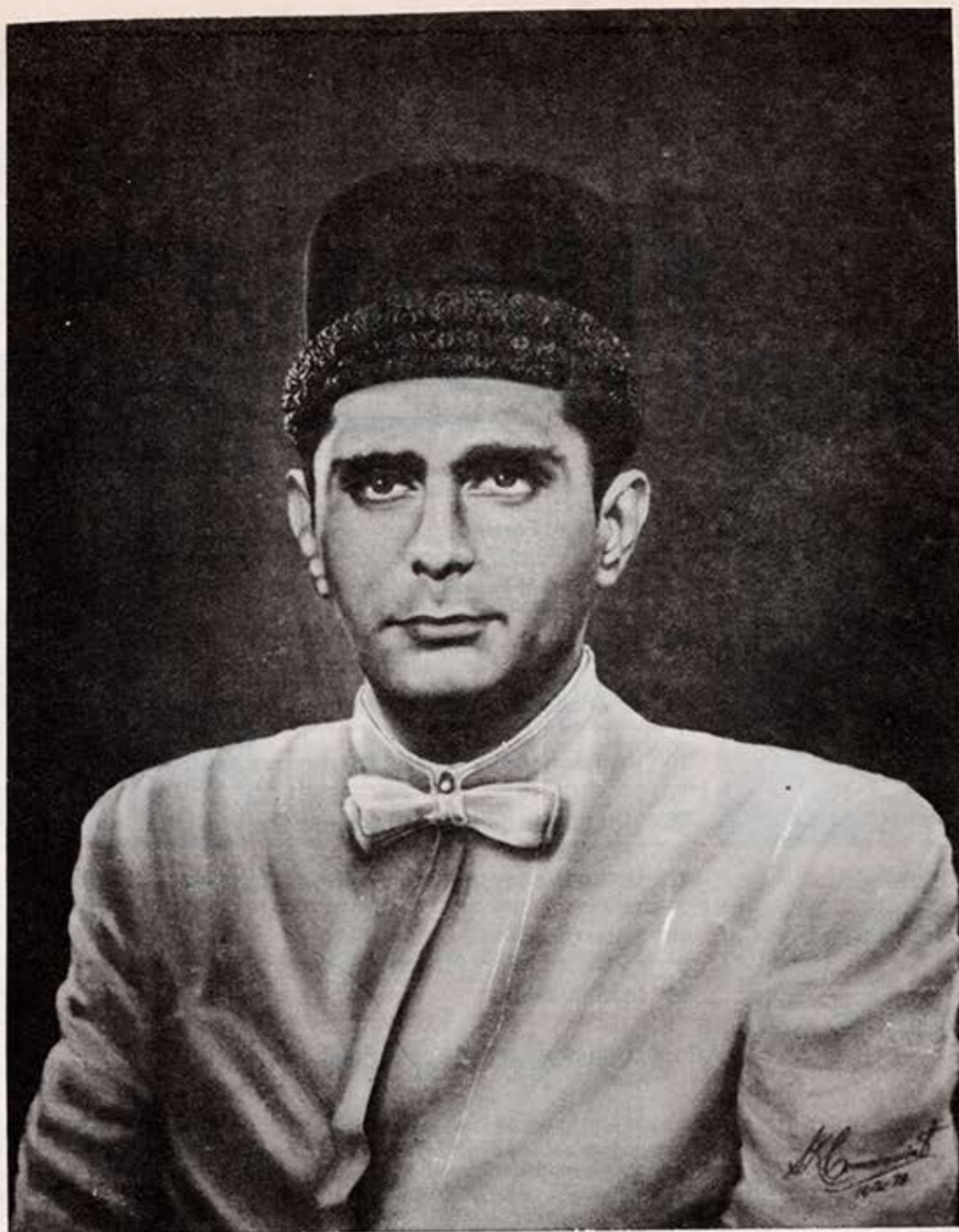
48 In Memoriam

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In Memoriam

Mr Fali Meherji Variava

Director

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

"Meeting of minds"

Some statements in the article "Meeting of minds" (*Parsiana*, January 1988) shocked me enough to jolt me out of my passivity and to write to you.

I am an avid reader of *Parsiana*. It keeps me abreast of things happening in our community and it amuses me to read about our learned elders fighting and slinging mud at each other. I read it, laugh it off and forget about it.

But it pained me greatly to read some very thoughtless statements made with regard to the Adoption Bill at the First All India Zoroastrian Youth Seminar at Delhi:

Keki Gandhi's reply to why adopted children could not be Zoroastrians was "Adopt a non-Parsi child and migrate to a society where it is accepted." Is this a solution to the problem? Does

he not know that having a family and sharing some of the good things of life is the primary need of humanity? Does he not know that children are the future of any community? Is this the answer of (I presume) a rational and responsible Zoroastrian?

Adil Master on the same topic: "Why don't Parsi couples have extra children and give them for adoption?" Can babies be produced, bought, sold, exchanged, gifted, leased, transferred? Are our children property? Is he going to pioneer a "World Zoroastrian Babies Market?"

"Educationist" Meher Nanavatty on countering the declining birth rate: "Why can't we allow selective admission into the community for children of Parsi women and non-Parsi fathers?" Selective admission? Who will select? On what basis? Color, caste, knowledge of the religion, parents' interview, child's interview, guarantee of future adherence, capitation fees, 30 coins of silver, first come first serve?

If this is the opinion of even a fraction of our youth, I can already see the fire flicker.

MS RASHNA ZAIWALLA

"The bitterness lingers"

According to the article "The bitterness lingers" (*Parsiana*, January 1988), it was reported that "(Shahpur) Captain stalled the issue (requesting non-Zoroastrians to refrain from attending the muktad and Farvardian jashan) for some months, (Zal) Sethna alleged, until Shahrokh Shahrokh, then ZTFE (Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe) vice-president, took the chair on October 13, 1985 when Captain had been surgically operated upon." Mr Shahrokh did not chair the meeting of October 13, 1985. I chaired that meeting when this question was raised by Mr Darius Sethna and was discussed for well nigh seven hours, at the end of which the committee members were well aware of the fact that if the Sethna brothers pursued their aim, with the assistance of some of the committee members, the community will be torn asunder. Secondly, I chaired a meeting thereafter but the Sethna brothers did not have the courage to raise this issue again when I was in the chair and did so behind my back be-

cause I was hospitalized, and that was on February 23, 1986.

It is well known to everybody in London, and should be well known to your readers as well, that the situation was knowingly created by the Sethna brothers a little over a year after the passing away of our revered Dasturji Sohrabji Kutar with the full knowledge that it will split the community.

Your article quotes a passage from the ZTFE report for the year April 1986 to March 1987. The ZTFE committee members who have written the report are themselves guilty of a "deeply wounding dissension" as it was created by their own actions. There is no point in their opining now!

Finally, Mr Zal Sethna has exposed the weakness of his case in the interview by his statement that "The ZTFE managing committee can only poll its members..." The fact is that the Zoroastrian Ayatollahs and the ZTFE committee members are scared stiff of taking a referendum of the community on this so-called religious issue, for fear of finding themselves in a minority. Darius and Zal Sethna were bold enough to divide the community by their bigotry. Let them now be bold enough to unite the community through a referendum.

S.F. CAPTAIN
London

"Need of the hour"

Dina Mehta's concern and anguish in "Need of the hour" (Readers' Forum, *Parsiana*, January 1988) in regard to discrimination against Parsi women by Parsis, is understandable. We must realize we still live in an age of male domination. Until and unless the dominated fight for justice, any type of domination will continue. This is human nature. The religion of Zarathushtra does not forbid conversion as per statements of our great scholars - Darab Dastur Peshotanji Sanjana, Jeevanji Jamshedji Modi, Ervad Sheriarji Dadabhoy Bharucha, K.R. Cama, Ervad Tehmuras D. Anklesaria and Ervad Nawshervanji Burjorji Desai - whose opinions were expressed in 1903.

Some have gone to the extent of saying that if a worthy person, dedicated to our religion, requests to be admitted into it, it is a *maha gunah*

(great sin) to refuse or hinder him. J.J. Modi, though not in favor, personally, of conversion on account of socio-economic implications, has written with sparkling honesty that the Zoroastrian religion does not object to conversion. Such are the scholars we respect, love and honor. They put aside their personal feelings rather than degrade our great religion.

The legal opinion, as per Justice Davar, is very clear: any one in the world can be a Zoroastrian but not a Parsi, the Parsis being a race. Navjote ceremonies of many children of Parsi women married to non-Parsi men have been performed openly in five star hotels in Bombay. Not long ago, one such navjote was performed in New Delhi where our late Prime Minister was present. No paper wrote against it nor did anyone raise the slogan, "dharam (religion) in danger," perhaps because the children's maternal grandmother is a member of parliament.

Our constitution says, there shall be no discrimination on grounds of sex. If a Parsi woman, affected by this situation, challenges the discrimination in court, I am sure our honorable courts

will uphold the constitution. This injustice to Parsi women will then stop.

Ms HOMAI BODE

"The Inner Light..."

The learned writer, Dr P.D. Sunavalla, states in his letter ("The Inner Light..." *Parsiana*, February 1988), "The holy fire should be treated with veneration."

Yes, the *atar* (fire in the temple) may burn, enthroned and crowned and venerated, in shrines that none but a born Parsi can enter (though that is not the case in Iran); but where it should kindle - in man's heart - it flickers and burns low. I firmly believe, that by following the outdated tradition, ceremonies and customs in the present nuclear age, the community is digging its own grave. Indeed, it is a great tragedy.

According to his wisdom, "Our method of disposal of the dead at the Towers of Silence (*dokhmenashini* system) 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."

We have been told that the word

dokhma is derived from the Avestan root *daz*, "to burn." Ervad M.F. Kang's dictionary calls *dokhma* "the burning place," and the great scholar K.R. Cama affirms that the original meaning and method of disposal of the dead was cremation. At different times, other methods were followed, but the same word, *dokhma*, was used.

To Parsis nowadays, *dokhma* means the open tower where the corpse is consumed by vultures. Believing in the ritual as *chasni* (charity), they cite their reverence for fire as their reason against cremation. They do not see that fire is so victoriously pure that it will not admit pollution, but destroy it.

The very word fire is derived from the Avestan and Sanskrit root *pu*, "to purify." Fire was never considered by the Indo-Iranian seers to be the physical fire or the fire of the ceremonial sacrifice. Zarathushtra said, "Fire purifies everything it touches but itself remains pure." Civilization began with the discovery of fire.

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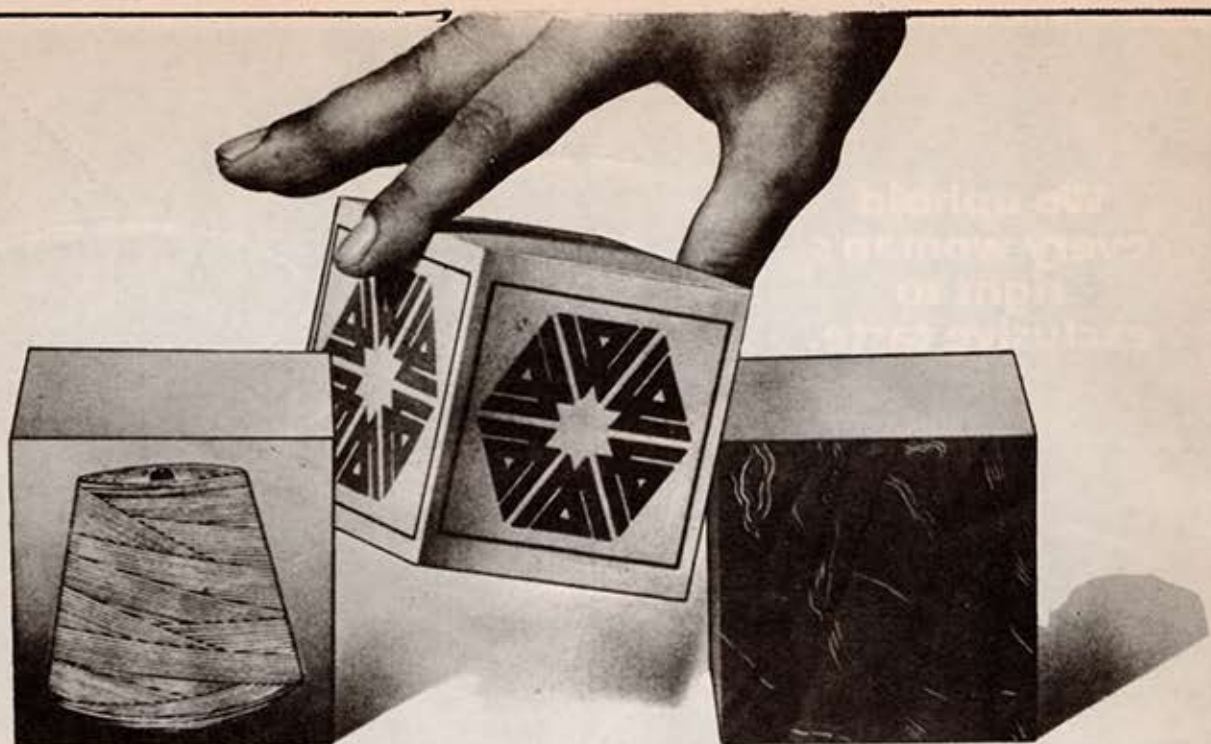
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Through the most progressive

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And felicity through good.

(Courtesy: *The Zoroastrian*, October-November, 1987)

RUSI B. PASTAKIA
Ahmedabad

Kookadaru and the AET

When the memory of Dasturji Kookadaru is being revived in a big way, 87 years after his death, by establishing an adarian in his name, it would be worthwhile to examine the training program of the Athraivan Educational Trust (AET) which aims at turning out mobeds well-versed in various aspects of our religion, especially as Mr Homi Ranina is the driving force behind both activities.

According to para six of Pargard 18 of the *Vendidad*, Ahura Mazda tells Zarathushtra to call such a one an athraivan, who enquires after holy wisdom in order to relieve distress, give joy, help people to attain asha, and guide the soul over Chinvat Bridge.

Dasturji Kookadaru, after undergoing navar and maratab ceremonies, used to undertake the bareshnum ceremony from time to time as required. He staunchly observed the prescribed rituals, chanted prayers regularly, performed the ijashne ceremony at least once in three days, performed the vendidad ceremony as and when required, guided the laity on religious matters, contributed his might in teaching and spreading the knowledge of the religion and, above all, led a very simple life. Leaving aside claims and counterclaims regarding miracles and other activities associated with his name, there do not seem to be two opinions about the fact that he was a holy man who attained that status by living like an athraivan in the true spirit of the *Vendidad*.

The training program of the AET as stated in the brochure issued at the inaugural function consists of three to five years of training, covering subjects like Zoroastrian theology, the role and nature of Zoroastrian rituals, world religions, Iranian history, social psychology, philosophy, plus short courses in public speaking, communications, English language, assertiveness training, interpersonal skills, etc. The first batch of some 10 selected practising

mobeds is in training since over a year.

It is understood that Ervad Aspanyar Dadachanji has been imparting training in recitation of prayers and in performance of rituals, and Dastur Dr Firoze Kotwal is teaching the role and nature of Zoroastrian rituals, Zoroastrian theology, etc.

If the practising mobeds under training are required to practise recitation of prayers and performance of rituals, it means that either they had not learnt them properly before being ordained as mobeds or that they are out of practise to perform ceremonies of the higher liturgical order.

Also, when the fundamental training imparted by the AET is not much different from that which exists at the madressas, how does the AET expect to inculcate in the trainees the much needed religious fervor for performing their duties as full-fledged athravans? This is probably proposed to be achieved with the assurance of better remuneration, other benefits, security, etc.

It is, however, not appreciated that faith is not a commodity available in the market place at a price, but has to be imbibed bit by bit from childhood in a suitable domestic environment. However, the students coming from the madressas are reluctant to lead the arduous and regimented life of an athraivan despite attractive benefits and security. The majority of those who enter this profession do so out of

sheer necessity since they do not find other avenues open to them. Even then, they do not strive to be full-fledged athravans and prefer to perform afringan, farokshi and stum ceremonies, which could be performed by behdins as well. They then complain of inadequate income. Today it is almost impossible to get the vendidad ceremony with *Kshnooman of Sraosh* performed on the third night after death for which the laity is willing to pay handsome remuneration.

Unless and until a mobed is well-versed in performing ceremonies of the higher liturgical order, he is not an athraivan in the true sense. The practice of religion is of prime importance – contrary to the AET's concept of building up faith on the basis of knowledge of the religion.

No one expects any training program to produce a Kookadaru, but the life led by Dasturji Kookadaru should serve as a model and source of inspiration for any meaningful training program for mobeds. The AET has failed to identify the true reasons for non-availability of the right type of mobeds as it has not fully appreciated the qualifications of an athraivan as stipulated in the scriptures. Hence the training program envisaged by them will not produce the desired results.

SOHRAB NAVALSHAW PATWA

Edited by Arnavaz S. Mama

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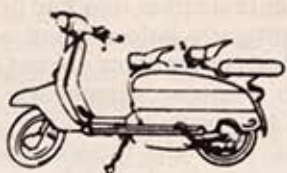
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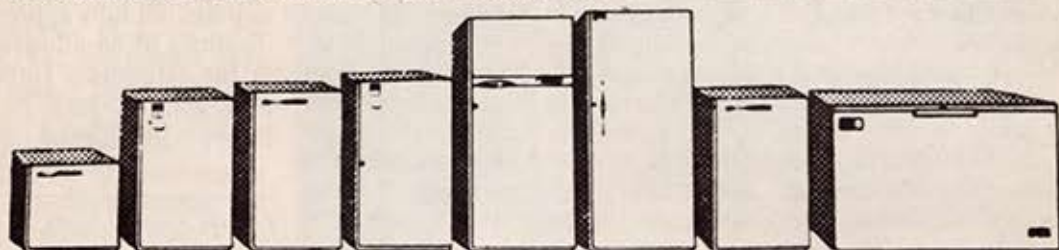
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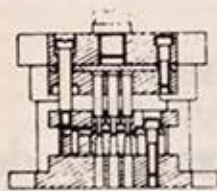
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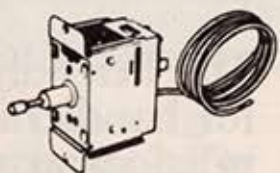
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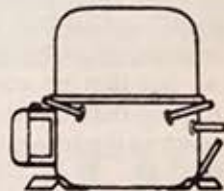
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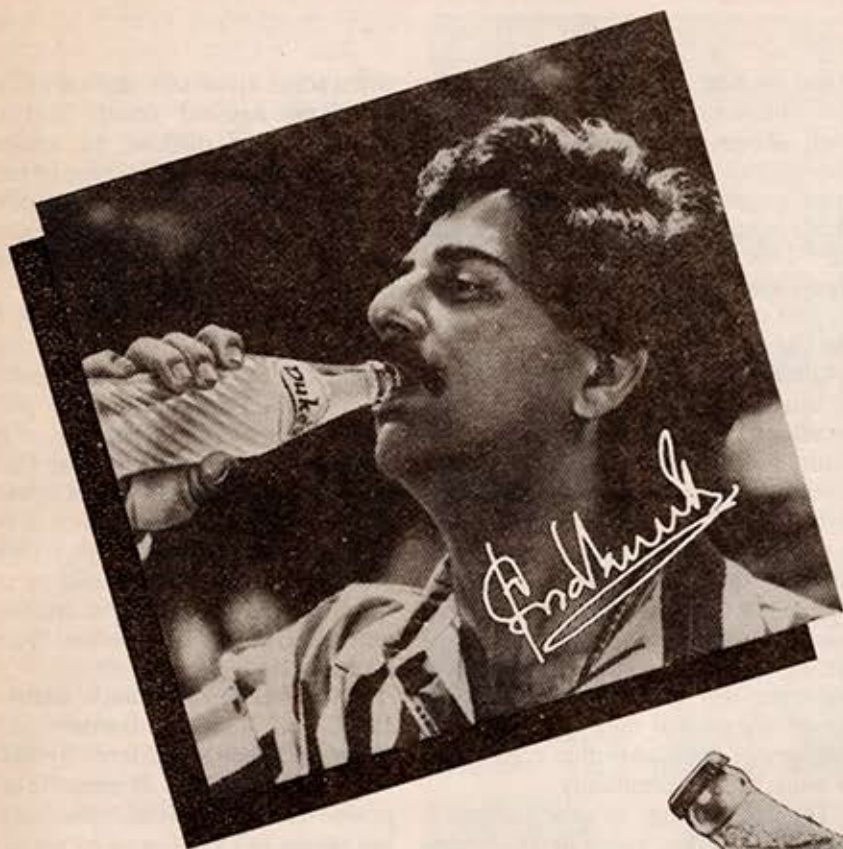


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Orthodontic consultant to the Indian Armed Forces Medical Services, Mistry is "very active in promoting the concept of oral health in developing countries," reads the *Jam-e-Jamshed* of March 6, 1988. Recipient of the Dr B.C. Roy National Award and a gold medal for his work in the field of primary oral health care, Mistry is also an active member of the Maharashtra State Government's oral health and cancer control programs, adds the *Jamé* report.

Sabavala's visual forms

The paintings of Jehangir Sabavala, at his recent one man shows in New Delhi and Madras "were received with enthusiastic appreciation," notes the *Sunday Mid-Day* of March 27, 1988, announcing his exhibition in Bombay from April 6 to 13, 1988.

The theme of his paintings was landscapes, "that are as ordered as his personality," notes *The Times of India* of January 31, 1988. "His landscapes are animated by predatory birds in flight or wraith-like figures which heighten the impact of mystery. He is fascinated by the span of flight that a bird symbolizes," notes *The Times of India* art critic.

According to Sabavala, painting is a visual thing which must stir interest and commune with the viewer.

The *Sunday Mid-Day* of April 10, 1988 says, "In a desert of eccentricity, Jehangir Sabavala is like an oasis of sanity. Discipline, subtlety, style, serenity, a touch of class seem to be the colors of his life canvas, stretching across 65 years, 40 years of painting, 25 major one man showings all over the globe."

Sabavala reportedly takes five to six weeks to complete a canvas, working eight hours a day, seven days a week. He draws around 10 sketches for each painting before transposing it in charcoal on canvas which serves as the skeletal frame for the painting to follow. Preparing around 40 colors with tonal variations, he applies paint gently in meticulously graded tones which give the composition its flesh and blood.



Sabavala with his recent painting Bird Forms - I : "fascinated by flight"

Having received his first training in art at the J.J. School of Arts, Bombay, he later went to study at the Heatherley School of Fine Arts, London. Proceeding to Paris, he attended the Academie Julian, the Academie Andre Lhote and the Academie de la Grande Chaumiere, notes *The Indian Post* of April 2, 1988.

Described by the media as reclusive, publicity-shy, small in build, Sabavala says of himself, "Mist, rain, shafts of sunlight, these attract me more than thunder and lightning. By temperament I keep away from the extremes of black and white. Only greys interest me. My paintings leave much to the imagination. You find a veil all over my canvases. You have to peep through it to know what they are all about...I prefer shade to sunlight, shadow to substance...Having completed (a painting), I need a long rest to recharge my batteries."

Krishna - a musical

"When he touches the piano, Param Vir turns into a man possessed. Nothing but the music matters," notes Simran Bhargava in *India Today* (January 31, 1988).

Vir's latest work is a children's musical, *Krishna*, which was staged recently in Delhi and will be produced as a full-scale opera in the U.K. *Krishna*



is described as Vir's most interesting work where "compassion and comedy have been woven into a simple adventure story for kids." In this production, Krishna is depicted as a mischievous child who doesn't yet know of his divine powers.

Born to a Parsi mother and a Sikh father, Param Vir came from a home which was "full of *tabalchis* (tabla players) and *ustads* (maestros)." His mother, Khursheed, was an Indian classical vocalist. Vir hit the piano keys at nine, and at 14, he knew he wanted to become a music composer, writes Bhargava.

After completing his masters in philosophy, Vir opted for a career in photography. Some years later, he joined his school, St Xavier's as a music teacher where he experimented with music theater and started a glee club. Vir started composing music in the '70s for *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *Tommy* and other operas in Delhi. His first production, *Kidstuff*, was followed by other musicals, each dealing with issues that concerned young lives. Vir's works have been performed in Geneva and Boston.

Availing of an Inlaks grant in 1984 to study music composition in the U.K., Vir, 35, has bagged some of the most prestigious international music awards like the Tippet, the Benjamin

Britten and the Kucyna International.

Back in India, Vir started a Music Theatre Workshop where a group of children would sit together every Sunday and pool in their ideas about politicians, schools, parents, films, etc. They would talk in rhythm, tapping on a drum. "Several brilliant – and original – musicals emerged from these sessions," adds Bhargava.

Sprinting at 82

At the seventh World Veterans' Athletics at Melbourne, genial 82-year-old Jehanbux Kapadia finished fourth in the 100 meter and the 200 meter races, notes Kersi Meher-Homji in *Manashni*, the newsletter of the Australian Zoroastrian Association of New South Wales.

Sponsored by the Zoroastrians of Calcutta, Kapadia bettered his own Indian national record by 0.6 seconds in the 200 meter even though the competition was intense. Participating in the games were 4,820 athletes from 52 countries between the ages of 35 and 97 years.

Hockey, tennis and cricket were games at which Kapadia had excelled in his younger days. For the next World Veterans' Athletics scheduled to be held in the USA in 1990, Kapadia "wants to add hurdles to his 100 meter and 200 meter races. He will then be only 85 and running faster than most of us, I bet!" writes Meher-Homji who attributes Kapadia's prowess to his Complan in milk diet and an active mind.

Cementing Indo-Iran ties

"Few peoples have been more closely related in origin and throughout history than the people of India and the people of Iran," Rusi Gimi, president of the Iran Society and former sheriff of Calcutta, quoted from Jawaharlal Nehru's *Discovery of India* in his presidential address at the annual general meeting of the Iran Society.

Established 44 years ago, the Iran Society aims to promote the study of the Persian language, literature and philosophy, as well as the creation of a cultural bridge between India and Iran.

Gimi referred to the presence of Dr Ibrahim Behnam Dehkordy, ambassador of the Islamic republic of Iran, who was the chief guest at a celebration to commemorate Hafiz, the great Persian lyric poet of the fourteenth

century who lies entombed in Shiraz: "The visit of Dr Dehkordy became a matter of special significance to me, a Zoroastrian, whose ancestors 1,300 years ago had left Iran to settle down in India, for he had brought with him, his government's message of goodwill and good wishes for the Parsis of India."

Gimi also suggested that further research be encouraged on the Zoroastrian religion and history.

Making a concerted plea for government aid, Gimi noted, "Our Society's voice reaches the universities of Germany and Great Britain, America and Australia, but not the chancelleries of Delhi or Calcutta. For how long will this great and glorious Society be deprived of substantial state patronage, which is needed and richly deserved?"

Creative campaign

Twenty-one-year-old Gulshan Dordi's campaign for I.C.S. computers for children won her the I.B.H. Gold Medal for the best advertising campaign of the year, notes a press release.

A final year student of the Sophia Polytechnic, Dordi has also won the Trikaya Advertising Trophy for the most promising student of the year, Shashi's Advertising Trophy for the most creative student of the year and the Lalita Frye Memorial Cash Award from Ulka Advertising. The prizes were given away by the State Revenue Minister, Shrikanth Jichkar, at a prize distribution ceremony held on February 25, 1988 at the Sophia Bhabha Hall.

For the future, Dordi would like to specialize in computer graphics, adds the release.

Dordi and her award winning campaign



Scouts celebrate 60

Homavazir's Eleventh Central Bombay Bharat Scout Group of the Mancherji Joshi Colony, Dadar, held the last function in its diamond jubilee year on January 10, 1988, at the Jehangir Memorial Hall of the J.B. Vachha and Cawasji Jehangir Girls' Schools, notes a press release by group scribe Bahadur Palkhiwalla. Assistant state commissioner (scouts) Minoo Damania, presiding over the function, gave "full credit for the existence of the group for the last 60 years to the founder, the late Ardeshir Byramji Homavazir and the young leaders who come forward from time to time to train the cubs and scouts," notes the write-up.

Special awards were presented to group leader Rusi Mothwalla, Ms Behros Desai, Cyrus Dalal, Marzban Giara, Hormuz Dastur, Hormuz Engineer and Daraius Zaiwalla in appreciation of their valuable services rendered to the group. Ms Roshan Billimoria, Ms Frenny Daruwala and Ms Mithoo Jesia were similarly honored in recognition of their continuous help and guidance.

The program included a violin solo by Cub Jehangir Adrianwalla, a Gujarati comedy, *Pavitra Perin*, a torch drill and a pageant, *Saga of Scouting*, written and directed by Jesia, states the release.

Zoo on stamps

As part of the golden jubilee celebration of the *India's Stamp Journal*, an exhibition "Zoo on Stamps" was held at the Bombay Natural History Society Hall on February 19, 1988, notes a press release sent by Vispi Dastur, honorary secretary of the Empire of India Philatelic Society (EIPS). The exhibition was inaugurated by Post



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Master General, Maharashtra, C.P. Thomas. The stamps on display were from the collection of Darabshaw Mistry, president of the EIPS, further adds the release.

The EIPS's Jal Cooper Award was presented to Phiroze Medhora "in appreciation of the meritorious services rendered by him as Editor of the *Journal*."

Another exhibition, "Wild Life on Stamps" was inaugurated at the Cama Hall on the same day by the acting Governor of Maharashtra Chittatosh Mookerjee.

Dunne's in new hands

Dunne's Institute, one of the well-known ICSE schools in south Bombay, is now being managed by the Behramgore Anklesaria Educational Trust. The public trust was formed in December 1987 after the death of the school's principal Ms Mah Sohrab Cooper, who, for over three decades, with the assistance of her two late sisters Dhun Engineer and Pearl Vevaina, was at the helm of the Institute.

Cooper was a music teacher at the Gamadia School for 12 years before she accepted, in 1956, the responsibility of principal and directress at Dunne's which has since been functioning as a family concern.

"At present the Institute is looked after by advocates Ms Armaity Engineer and Bejonji Engineer along with Pervez Bulsara, a director of Ogilvy Benson and Mather," notes Cooper's brother Khudy Anklesaria.

Judo referee's license

"The only person in the country (India) to now possess an international referee's license," was the distinction earned by Khurshed Noshir Pastakia, on passing the Asian Judo Union's (B-Licence) examination, notes a press release from the Judo Federation of India.

The examination was held in December 1987 at Fukuoka, Japan, during the Fukuoka International Women's Championships where he was a referee.

Holder of a third Dan black belt from Kodokan, Japan, and a fourth Dan from the Judo Federation of India and the International Judo Federation, Pastakia has been "guiding the sport technically since 1976 as secretary of the Federation's technical council," states the release.



Above (from left)
Cooper: directress at Dunne's
Pastakia: recognised referee
(Right) Lakdawala: keep fit package

Alleged swindling

"For allegedly duping (thousands of) investors off seven and a half crores of rupees," two of the four directors of Auditya Finance and Investment Company, Ms Gul Soli Moos (40) and Sanjay Kumar Jaggi (27), were arrested at Bombay's Santa Cruz airport while boarding a Delhi bound flight, notes *The Times of India* of January 19, 1988. One of the directors

Homi Patrawala - is said to have absconded.

The seniormost director, Shruvan Kumar Jaggi, was arrested at a hotel in the capital city and was brought to Bombay on January 19, notes *The Afternoon Despatch and Courier* of the same day.

Deputy director in the anti-corruption bureau, T. Singaravel, "spotted Moos at the airport's departure lounge making a beeline for a Delhi-bound flight. He immediately alerted the Santacruz police who requested the airline authorities to have her offloaded from the aircraft," adds the report. Sanjay Jaggi was also offloaded from the same aircraft.

According to a report in *The Indian Post* of January 22, Moos was running a dance school prior to joining the Jagdis in floating the company.

Beauty of aerobics

Energetic Ms Farida Lakdawala from Los Angeles, in Bombay for a three-month vacation, has not permitted her skills to idle. A trained beautician with Mary Kay Cosmetics, USA, Lakdawala advertised her aerobics classes and facials in *Mid-Day* and though her Oomer Park residence can accommodate only four participants at a time, Lakdawala has about 14 young women of all communities coming in batches - housewives in the morning, college



students in the afternoon and working women in the evening.

Lakdawala finds Parsi women "more outgoing and more attentive" to her aerobics instructions. Their problem is generally heavier hips and thighs, she says.

Eschewing steaming of the face which is the usual practice for facials in Bombay, Lakdawala says her half-hour technique includes the use of five products including a face pack. The response of Parsi women seems to be, "We've been using soap and water all these years. Why should we go in for a facial?" says Lakdawala. "Parsis feel, just because they have a fair skin, they have a better skin!" Non-Parsis, on the other hand, have other expectations: "They think, if they take a facial, they'll get a fair skin like the Parsis."

A vibrant mother of two little boys aged three years and one year, Lakdawala had worked for a fashion jewelry company for almost one and a half years, prior to qualifying as a beautician.

SPOTLIGHT

Ex vice-president of an advertising and marketing agency, Mudra Communications, Sam Balsara has joined Madison Advertising as managing partner. Balsara will share the responsibilities with the erstwhile proprietor of the 20-year-old agency, Firoze Elavia.

Compiled by Roxana H. Kaka

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Manchester Zoroastrians

A new Zoroastrian association based in Manchester, England, has been introduced to *Parsiana* by Professor John Hinnells of Manchester University. With Ms Tara Zomomody as chairperson and Burjor Avari as secretary, the 60-member North West Zoroastrian Community (NWZC), as the association is named, has been functioning since the summer of 1987. The members have come from Bombay, East Africa and Iran, with a good proportion of young Zoroastrians being UK born.

"The spirit of goodwill and harmony is evident," writes Hinnells. "Some individuals have met co-religionists and attended a jashan for the first time for two or more decades. For some children it is their first encounter with a Zoroastrian outside their own family. The social meetings, parties and talks have provided not just happiness and pleasure but also a spur to preserve the Zoroastrian heritage."

On February 21 the Community met to felicitate Nicola Katrak who retires this year as prima ballerina of the Sadlers Wells Royal Ballet. Nicola, whose father is a Karachi-born Zoroastrian, was on her last dance tour to north west England and took time off to talk to the community, inspiring everyone, and especially the young, notes Hinnells. After her final tour abroad to Thailand, Korea, China and Japan, Nicola is expected to teach children, a post specially created for her by the Sadlers Wells.

Celebrating Navroze on March 19, the NWZC honored its secretary Burjor Avari who was "decorated personally by the Queen at Buckingham Palace with the MBE (Member of the British Empire) for his work in multicultural education," informs Hinnells. Principal lecturer in multicultural education at the Manchester Polytechnic, Avari was born in India, brought up in Mombasa, graduated from Manchester University and taught in Kenya for four years before returning to Manchester to do his Masters. Avari's achievements are "matched by the warmth of his personality and the enthusiasm of his deep commitment to his Zoroastrian heritage," writes Hinnells.



Ballerina Katrak as Lise in La Fille Mal Gardée (Photo: Leslie E. Spatt)

New diploma in religion

The Department of Comparative Religion, University of Manchester, is now offering a postgraduate diploma in Zoroastrian Religious Studies "set up with the needs of Zoroastrians themselves in mind," writes Hinnells who, together with Dr Alan Williams will be instructing the students through lectures, seminars and essay-related tutorials. The Department offers a well-equipped library which, apart from religious texts in Avesta and Pahlavi, and scholarly books on ancient and medieval periods, is stocked with nineteenth and twentieth century Indian newspapers, publications, microfilms and videos "charting the experience of the Zoroastrians in the modern world," as notes their press release.

The diploma involves four compulsory courses plus one optional course from among a choice which includes one of the Zoroastrian scriptural languages (Avesta or Pahlavi), sociology of religion, anthropology of religion, a Middle Eastern study like Modern

Persian, Near Eastern Archaeology, etc. The obligatory courses include the methods of the study of religion which introduces the student to the problems of dealing with textual material as well as helps him to interpret the tangible, visible evidence of religious art and archaeology; Zoroastrian history and theology from imperial times to the ninth century AD; the history of the Zoroastrian community since the Islamization of Iran to the present day; a dissertation on an approved topic.

The cost of the course is £1,730 for British residents and £3,950 for overseas students which does not include subsistence costs. "It is hoped that wealthy Zoroastrians will endow a scholarship to enable people from the old country to take part," writes Hinnells.

The Department has received one endowment in memory of the late Dastur Sohrab Kutar, the first high priest of the Zoroastrians in the U.K. The prize, which provides substantial assistance towards an air ticket to study Zoroastrianism in India, Iran, Pakistan or a Zoroastrian community in North America, is meant for the best student in Zoroastrian Studies in Manchester who is committed to pursuing the subject further, writes Hinnells.

Offers and enquiries may be addressed to Professor Hinnells or Dr Williams at the Department of Comparative Religion, The Victoria University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester 13 9PL, England.

The federal board

Rohinton Rivetna of Chicago is the first president of the Federation of Zoroastrian Associations of North America (FEZANA), announces the Zoroastrian Society of Ontario's (ZSO) April newsletter. The other elected office bearers are vice-president Homi Homji from Toronto, treasurer Freddy Patel from New York, secretary Ms Dolly Dastoor from Montreal and assistant secretary Ms Sabar Balsara from Toronto.

The newly elected executive board of the Zoroastrian Cricket Club (ZCC) – president Jamshed Hira, vice-

continued on page 36

The Federation and the farmers

The Federation meeting in Ukai focussed on the rural Parsis

Parinaz Toddywalla

With the venue of the executive council and annual general meeting of the Federation of Parsi Zoroastrian Anjumans of India being in the rural heartland of south Gujarat, it was only natural that the apex body focussed on the plight of the Parsi farmer and the need to grow forests to provide firewood for fire-temples throughout India.

A proposal was put forward to form a committee headed by Surat Parsi Punchayet (SPP) president Dr Sam Bhacca and Dara Deboo of Navsari to look into the needs of the Parsi tillers. The benefit of consultancy of two retired forest officers Firoj Panthaky and Homi Chothia has generated two schemes: to buy 250 acres of land, a tenth of which will be cultivated for kathi (firewood); and to utilize punchayet, agiary and trust lands to grow baval and other trees.

In keeping with the environment, the delegates were also informed that the *Fed Newsletter's* Gujarati translation, which had ceased publication, has been revived under the editorship of Bombay Parsi Punchayet (BPP) chief executive Rustom Anklesaria. The Ahmedabad Parsi Punchayet has indicated its willingness to rejoin the Federation, thanks to the efforts of Homi Taleyarkhan, member of the Minorities Commission.

Aside from a shortage of mobeds, there is also a dearth of nassessalars in Gujarat. When the BPP assured a minimum salary of Rs 1,000 to the nassessalars, Surat delegates feared this might entice pallbearers from Gujarat to go to Bombay, thus further aggravating their problems. The Surat trustees observed that in preparation of a possible emergency situation they had got themselves stitched the pallbearer's uniform and advised trustees of other anjumans to do likewise.

The first certified paramobed, Rustom Madon, trained under the guidance of the late Dastur Navrooz Minochehr-Homji, assumed responsibilities at the Daremaher at Allahabad and has started performing the permissible religious ceremonies for the Allahabad Anjuman which was unable to find a regular priest. Despite some opposition, the Federation intends to push ahead with its paramobed project as the anjumans of Mhow, Madras, Rajkot, Delhi, Agra and Vyara have indicated their need for a paramobed. A suggestion has also been put forward by some priests that they be permitted to tend the fire on a part-time basis, somewhat along the lines of a Christian priest officiating in a church who performs ceremonies and other religious duties at fixed hours on certain days. This would permit the priest to leave the premises of the agiary instead of being confined to its precincts for 24 hours.

The proposed amendments to the Parsi Marriage and Divorce Act have been made into a law thus sanctioning divorce by mutual consent, alimony to husbands, increasing the age at marriage and streamlining the jury, among several other changes.

In addition to the Gujarat, Karnataka and West Bengal chief ministers, commitments for reservation of seats for Parsi students in medical and engineering colleges have also been forthcoming from the chief ministers of Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh (MP) Uttar Pradesh (UP) and Andhra Pradesh (AP). But "students are not to be found," it was lamented.

A youth festival in Calcutta from November 5 to 9, 1988, promising a mix of sports and discussions on community affairs, will give the maximum opportunity to youngsters to socialize

and learn from Parsi youths of other anjumans.

To continue with the dedication of Dastur Navrooz Minochehr-Homji, "the pillar of strength of the paramobed project" and "a treasure of religious scholarship," the Federation is promoting the sale of religious cassettes and books brought out by the secular high priest. There were also recommendations to institute a chair in comparative religious studies at the Bombay University and to establish a fund to pay a pension to his widow, Nergish.

Since Dr Aspi Golwalla's term as chairman of the BPP and ex officio chairman of the Federation draws to an end in October 1988, the Federation recorded its appreciation by proposing to make him a permanent member of the executive council. According to Federation joint honorary secretary Keki Gandhi, it was during Golwalla's chairmanship that the Federation was able to implement many of its projects, that the BPP (which had walked out of the Federation in a huff 10 years ago) was brought back to the Federation fold, and that cordiality had been restored due to his patient and tactful conduct of Federation proceedings, giving everyone an opportunity to express their views.

The Federation body unanimously resolved to re-appoint its office bearers: Gandhi and BPP trustee Eruch Desai as joint honorary secretaries; BPP trustee Jamshed Guzder and Peshotan Nargolwala as joint honorary treasurers; and Ms Gool Tata as executive secretary.

The plight of the Zoroastrians in Iran was conveyed by invitee Mehraban Kushesh (see "The view in Iran," *Parsiana*, April 1988). Kushesh related the hardships faced by the com-

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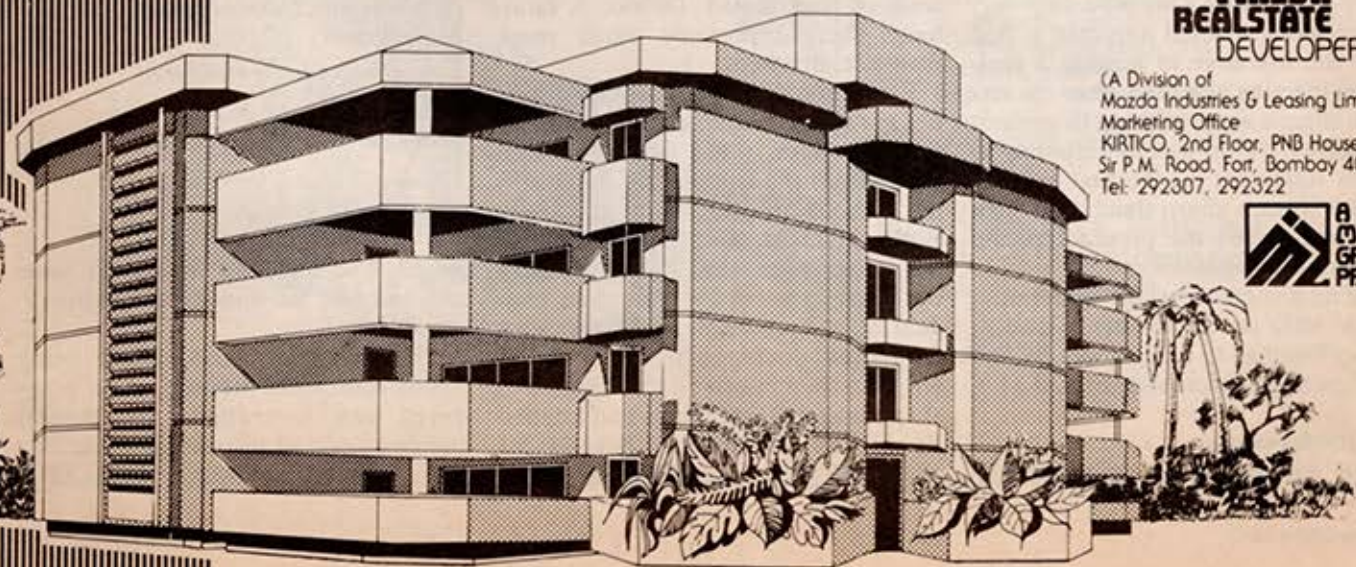
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munity in the war-torn country and how he and other fellow Zoroastrians lived in constant fear of bombing and missile attacks by Iraq. Kushesh, who estimated that there were roughly 60,000 Zoroastrians in Iran, offered to host the Fifth World Zoroastrian Congress in Tehran.

The chief minister of Andhra Pradesh N.T. Rama Rao has assured the Parsi Zoroastrian Anjuman of Secunderabad and Hyderabad (PZASH) that the Government will renew the lease for the land where now stands the Zoroastrian Club.

The much delayed selection of Federation awardees for outstanding performance in chosen fields was sought to be overcome by the formation of a five-member committee which could scrutinize the nominations. It was proposed that Golwalla, BPP trustee Jamsheed Kanga, Anklesaria, Taleyarkhan and Gandhi serve on this panel.

The Vyara-Songadh Anjuman which hosted the Federation meeting was praised lavishly by chairman Golwalla who had expected to be accommodated in rustic locales, very unlike Hotel Kell's - the venue of the meet. Golwalla, on a humorous note, stated that some delegate at the last meeting in Jamshedpur had urged him to attend the proceedings in Vyara - if not as chairman, at least as a medical practitioner, to look after the health requirements of outstation delegates! Dr Bahadur Jokhi, the president of the Anjuman, Rusi Parabha, the owner of Kell's, who offered free boarding, and others on the organizing committee who had arranged for the trip to the Vyara Agiary, and the brooch and bag souvenirs were thanked by Gandhi. He acknowledged that the Federation had been made "paawan (pure)" by Vyara's membership for, despite being a small anjuman it had taken the initiative in hosting a Federation meeting at a time when the larger anjumans were refusing to commit themselves. (This was in response to Jokhi's statement on the first evening that the "Vyara dharti (land) had been made paawan by the presence of the Federation delegates.")

The next meeting of the Federation will be held on September 3 and 4, 1988 in Bombay to be followed by one in Calcutta on December 10 and 11.

Food for farmers

"When we offered to contribute 75

percent to wipe off the debts of the Parsi farmers, we were told, 'Either pay the full amount or nothing,'" Bhacca tried to provide an insight into the attitude of some indolent agriculturists. He subsequently clarified, "They have now sunk in greater debt so that they can't even afford to pay 25 percent of the total. Their debt may be for a small amount of Rs 5,000 but with interest, the principal may have multiplied to 25,000."

When the farmers are on subsistence farming and barely able to eke out a living, should they be offered loans, doles, alternate modes of employment, irrigation facilities or know-how? This problem was deliberated upon for a considerable length of time at the Federation meeting realizing that members of such mofussil anjumans could ill-afford to send representatives or convey their views and problems. In Bulsar district, 80 percent are believed to be living below the poverty line and 90 percent of the Par-

(grave poverty). It is a difficult dilemma faced by the trustees to judge whether *haramkhori né uttējan malēch ké garib manas né gair insaaf thaach* (laziness is being encouraged or injustice done to the poor)."

"If a Kohli can make a lucrative earning on the same sized land why can't a Parsi? We are there to help them meet the challenges, we cannot take away the chal-



si farmers own between two to five acres of land, stated Deboo. A farmhand there reportedly earns more than a landowner.

Even though free educational facilities are offered to children as boarders at orphanages, some families cannot even afford the commuting charges to the school or the bare minimum clothes. Deboo indicated the plight of the poverty-stricken Parsis. Bhacca was then prompted to quote an incident of a poor farmer who sought a premature discharge from the Surat hospital when informed that his medical and hospitalization bills had totalled Rs 41, an expenditure beyond his reach. "There is *bhayankar garibi*

Above (from left): Taleyarkhan, Golwalla and Dastur Meherji Meherjirana

Top: Bhacca (left) and Jokhi

Facing page:

Federation meeting in progress

Alongside (from left): Gandhi and Kanga

lenges. Use successful farmers to guide and motivate the unsuccessful farmers," urged Kanga.

The ancestral Parsi calling being agriculture from whence they prospered and diversified, the general opinion favored discouraging the farmers from selling off their land. They

should be taught, advised Anklesaria, that even if "three crops cannot be cultivated in a year, at least two can," and the income supplemented by starting an ancillary business like forestry, dry farming, dairying, poultry breeding. This is to deter Parsis from migrating en masse to Bombay and making "their lives miserable," asserted Anklesaria. "Whose?" queried Gandhi in jest, "the BPP trustees' or the farmers?" "The farmers'," replied Anklesaria to dispel all doubts.

Under the leadership of Bhacca and Deboo a program is to be initiated to provide timely help to the farmers. Their most urgent requirements will be assessed after a meeting with the men on the field.

To convince farmers that tax exempted farming can be made into a lucrative profession provided the land is productive, Gandhi suggested that the Gujarati version of the *Fed Newsletter* be utilized to disseminate information of value to the local farmer.

Kathi culture

The daily kathi requirements of atash bahrams and agiaries in India would approximate 2,800 kgs in the estimate of Dara Deboo who has proposed a scheme to grow kathi at a cost of Rs 58 lakhs. Intending to buy 250 acres of land at a site near Navsari and utilize 25 acres for kathi cultivation, according to Deboo's logistics, the 32,500 baval trees grown thereon would yield annually 8,12,500 kgs of kathi as each tree yields 25 kgs of kathi after a maturity period of eight to 10 years. Within 10 years, 90 to 100 percent of the fire-temples' kathi requirements will be met under the new scheme, assured Deboo. The remaining site would be utilized, if funds are generated, for the cultivation of su-baval (which has a five-year maturity period), coconuts, sandalwood, teak, and the building of a dharamshala, sanatorium, play center and scouting camp.

The entire kathi scheme will be personally supervised by Firoj Panthaky,

former divisional forest officer of the Gujarat Government, announced Deboo. The necessary finance, they hope, will be forthcoming from community activists in the next two years.

The su-baval variety, considered an alternative to baval, is believed to be lighter and softer. The properties of the two varieties examined at an agiary in Bombay indicated that the burning time was the same for both, baval and su-baval, but that the attending priest was displeased with the unpleasant odor of the su-baval. Its fire-retention capacity, as also release of toxic gas and smoke will be reassessed so that

"You can start a business with zero capital so long as you have the intellectual capital"



even if su-baval cannot be utilized in atash bahrams and adarians, it can be used in dadgahs.

The price of kathi has reportedly escalated from Rs 30 per ton in 1943 to Rs 850 in 1984 and Rs 1,250 in 1988. Fearing an embargo on interstate transport of forest produce, member of the Baroda delegation, Homi Chothia, a retired forest officer, had a "permanent solution" for supplying baval kathi: Grow baval trees on the land available with the punchayets and members of the community. Four hundred trees of baval, casuarina and eucalyptus have been planted at the Udwarda Doongerwadi under the guidance of Chothia who has also offered his free consultancy to other anjuman.

Fed Newsletter in a second language

The Gujarati-speaking member anjuman of the Federation will once again be given an opportunity to read of developments on the Federation front. The revived Gujarati version of the *Fed Newsletter*, to be edited by Anklesaria, was distributed to the delegates present. Sponsorships for 13 issues have already been promised at the rate of Rs 600 per issue, and hereafter it will be a regular publication, assured Anklesaria.

When Gandhi solicited sponsorship for the English edition, after the first

assurance from Mazda Leasing managing director Homi Mehta, who promised to finance two issues, the rest came in the form of a trickle (with Baroda anjuman offering to sponsor one, and Secunderabad saying they would try) until "the BPP came to the rescue once again" in Gandhi's words, offering payment for two. Gandhi also noted with regret the absence of Jamshed Guzder who, with his promised donations, is usually the first to set the ball rolling for most of the Federation projects.

The Saronda anjuman, too, was invited to sponsor one issue at a cost of Rs 2,500 but Nariman Balsara was blunt. "*Hamé English vanchta nathi, manta nathi* (We neither read English nor believe in it)."

Potential priests

"We are not here to sabotage the religion or the fire-temples," clarified Gandhi, referring to the achievement of the paramobeds subcommittee under the chairmanship of Guzder which successfully trained the first paramobed and posted him at the Allahabad fire-temple. Managing without a priest for the last several months, the Allahabad Anjuman and the Gandhi Daremaher trustees are reportedly very satisfied with the services of paramobed Rustom Madon. As conveyed by the Anjuman president Capt Homi Dandiwalla, they will "not dispense with his services despite any opposition."

This statement served to reassure the Federation which had come under criticism by orthodox Zoroastrian scholar Ervad Dr Rooyinton Peer who felt that the use of the term "paramobed" was illegal and would adversely affect the sanctity of the agiary. He was also not in favor of a paramobed wearing a priest-like *jaamaa* (robe), and being entrusted with the responsibility of the fire. He opined that a paramobed's duty should be restricted to the supervision and maintenance of the agiary property. Federation treasurer Peshotan Nargolwala, who is most involved in this project, suggested the use of the terms "din-yaar (friend of the religion)" or "mobed-yaar (friend of the mobed)" if the term "paramobed" is offensive. The Gujarati synonym of the second alternative would be "mobed-mitra" in the view of Dr Ratan Marshall of Surat, an authority on the Gujarati language.

Lest any priest feel threatened, Nar-



From left: Kushesh, Chothia and Dosabhai Oliaji

golwala drew an analogy between a degree holder and a diploma holder in engineering, stating that a paramobed, like a diploma holder, would serve as a supplementary force. Gandhi offered, "If Ervad Rooyinton Peer is willing to take up the responsibility of providing mobeds when anjumans are in need, the Federation will abandon the project." It was reiterated that the paramobeds were trained so that there does not arise the need of closing down even a single agiary in India. Certified paramobeds will be expected to serve anjumans where regular priests cannot be found. Kanga suggested that the training sessions of paramobeds be recorded on the video to facilitate Zoroastrian associations abroad.

Many practising priests reportedly say, "I am not a fool to make my son a mobed." While stressing on the athor-nan family's sacred duty to train the son as a navar even if he is not going to do full-time mobedi, Gandhi put forth the view of some priests who are pressing for a mandate by which they would not be tied down to an agiary for 24 hours, but engaged for fixed hours so that in the remaining time they are free to supplement their income. The Udwada Iranshah is also believed to be finding a problem of priest shortage because there the *tariqats* (discipline) observed are more stringent.

Seeing the preoccupation with improving the lot of the priests, Firoj Panthaky of Navsari questioned, "Has anyone ever bothered to think what is the monthly draw of our high priests? Anjumans offer to pay a salary of Rs

2,000 to priests but are our high priests earning that much? (One of the Bombay high priests is reportedly paid a monthly salary of around Rs 200.)

In need of nassessalars

Scarcity is experienced not only in the supply of mobeds but in the availability of nassessalars too. When Anklesaria appealed to the anjumans of Gujarat to send nassessalars to Bombay, Marshall felt that Bombay was enticing the Gujarat populace with higher salaries of over a thousand rupees when shortage was experienced in Gujarat itself. Maneck Gheyara, founder member of the Federation, and Bhacca (as SPP trustees) had also got themselves stitched nassessalar uniforms so that they could officiate as pallbearers in case of an emergency, reported Bhacca.

But it was pointed out that BPP trustees could not be expected to act as pallbearers because while Surat may have about five deaths in a month, Bombay may have about five a day. "It is in the overall interests of the community," opined Gandhi, "that BPP trustees utilize their time and energies in serving the cause of the living rather than in carrying dead bodies to the dokhma." He then suggested an alternative: If Gujarat is able to spare one nassessalar for Bombay, the BPP should reciprocate by contributing a sum (equal to the difference of salaries in the two regions) towards the stipend of a nassessalar retained by the SPP. This would ensure a parity of pay scales in Bombay and Surat. More grandiose suggestions included mechanizing the whole procedure by using trailers and conveyer belts.



once the examination season was over.

In AP, chief minister N.T. Rama Rao promised from his quota in medical and engineering colleges, one seat to Parsis when presiding over the Jamshedi Navroze function of PZASH which was also graced by legal luminary Nani Palkhivala. But, questioned Bezun Dittia, president of PZASH, "Will youths be available?" "You can't expect that you make an announcement today and you will get applications tomorrow," replied Kanga. "You have got to create an infrastructure, create social support so that the youngster is made to feel that he is representing the

Left: Panthaky

Below: Deboo (left) and Dittia



rents. "Where will you find a parent who will say 'I have saved Rs 3,00,000 and am giving you Rs 50,000 to start a venture. Never mind if you lose.'" If parents can't afford, the government institutions and banks will help out with the seed capital and margin money, Taleyarkhan informed. Kanga was of the view, "You can start with zero capital so long as you have the intellectual capital."

Enterprising youths who have settled abroad should be brought back to India by forming a body to look into their problems and needs, it was suggested. "I believe in souls, not bodies," joked Gandhi, stressing that an inquiry be conducted as to what remuneration, facilities and privileges they will demand as a precondition for returning to India.

Husbands and houses

Lack of housing and inadequate finance were the reasons cited by respondents who opted for a small family or late marriage norm, in a survey conducted by Prof Homai Billimoria at the behest of the Federation. The expectation of the female respondents from their marriage partners indicated that the majority wanted their spouses

"Anjumans offer to pay a salary of Rs 2,000 to priests but are our high priests earning that much?"

Youth-ful plans

A mix of sports and discussions will be offered at the Youth Festival to be hosted by the Calcutta Anjuman from November 5-9, 1988. Talks will give way to discussions, subject suggestions for which can be sent to Calcutta. The participating youths will be expected to come prepared to deliberate on topics, informed Gandhi on behalf of the Calcutta anjuman which was not represented at the meeting.

Youths from Delhi, Thana and Hyderabad reported on their progress towards forming local youth bodies and organizing activities - in the form of blood donation drives, trekking, cleaning agriary campaigns, fund raising programs and vocational guidance talks - promising to have more programs

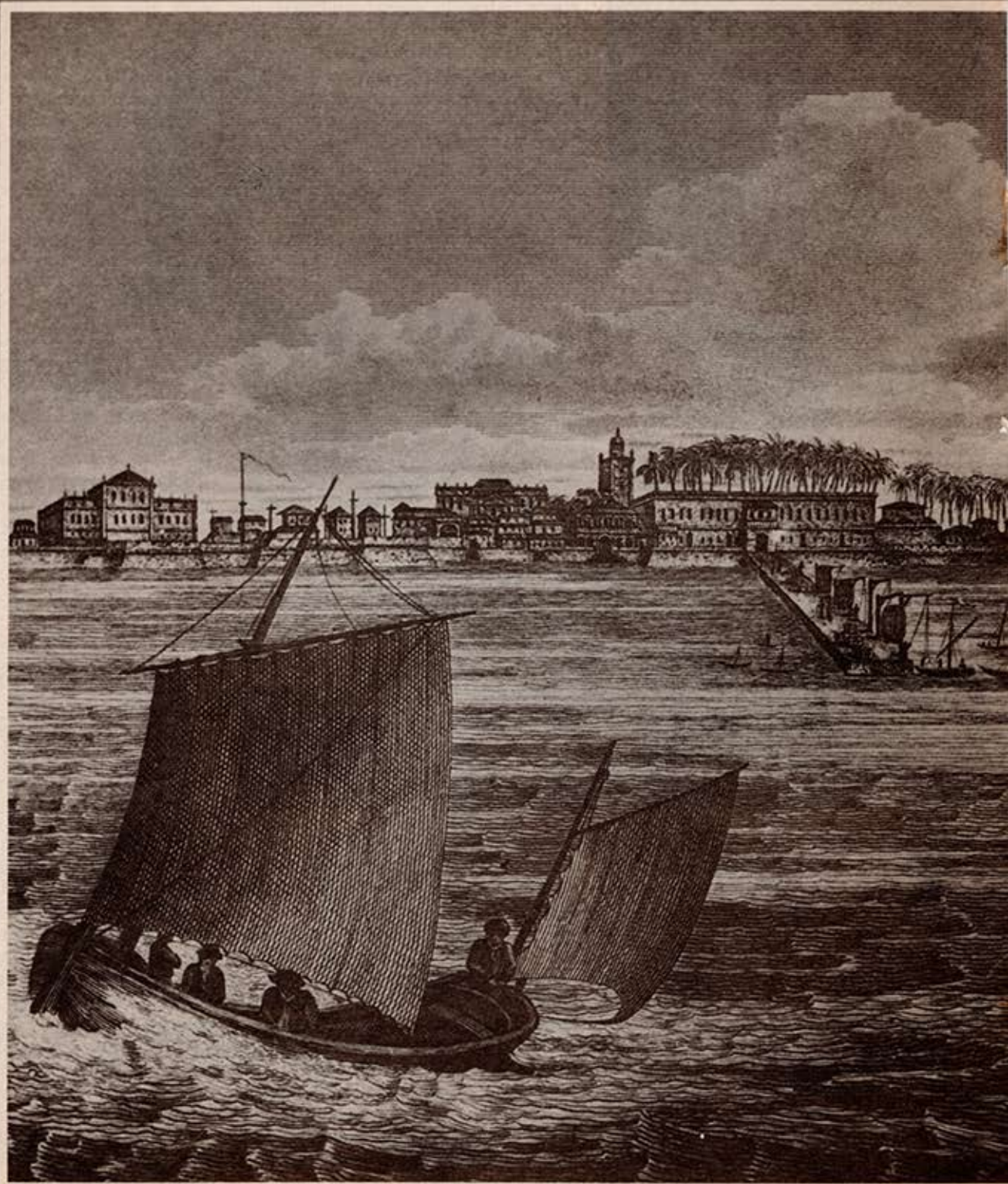
community." At the Secunderabad function, Palkhivala, had reportedly conveyed his misgivings on the reservation issue, saying that it is affluence which is making the community lose its competitive edge. The Secunderabad Anjuman explained to him that it was a question of numbers: "With 50 percent of the seats blocked, you can't expect 1,200 to compete against 70 million." Declared Taleyarkhan, "We have never asked for reservation, we never shall. It's only a request for seats from the personal quota of chief ministers for highly ranked students who cannot get admission on their own merit."

The complaint that Parsis were seeking jobs in low-risk service sectors rather than in business made Gandhi attribute the responsibility to the pa-

to be postgraduates and earning over Rs 3,000. Fifty-eight percent admitted that they had not found the husband of their choice; 66 percent of the unmarried respondents were working as against 44 percent of the married sample. Holding a job did not come in the way of a marriage nor did living with in-laws, going by the response.

"Let's not link availability of flats for young couples with an increase in birth rates," submitted Nargolwala who then went on to clarify, "The highest birth rate in Bombay is on the footpaths of Crawford Market." Young couples should be provided housing in the interest of "family welfare and happiness," reiterated Nargolwala and Taleyarkhan, and not as an incentive to procreate. Insisted

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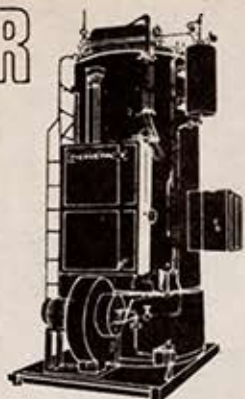
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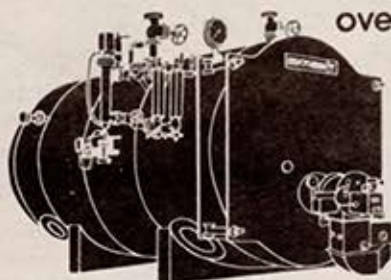
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Taleyarkhan, "Being the (past) housing minister I know the problem well. With the increase in prices and their fragile incomes, the young cannot be left entirely to their own resources."

Anklesaria clarified that as per the BPP's housing policy, 30 percent of allotment is reserved for engaged and newly wed couples. "It may be increased to 50 percent" seeing that nearly 700 of a total of 3,000 on the BPP's waiting list for housing are engaged couples.

"Stop giving the community false hope," advised Gandhi. "Close the waiting list. Stop construction activity. Encourage cooperative housing schemes and utilize the funds instead for loan facilities to finance about 50 percent of the housing costs. Is there any other community in India which waits for its charity trusts to provide housing? Marriage is a psychological and physical need. Other communities live in the type of accommodation they can afford. Why can't we?"

Land interest and impasse

Acres of land owned by the Iranian Zoroastrian Anjuman (IZA) in Palghar will lie fallow until the court decides in favor of either the government or the IZA. "Let us make a representation to the government, through the Minorities Commission, that until the court delivers its judgment, we be permitted to plant kathi trees on that land," suggested Kanga.

In Poona, private trusts are reportedly disposing of community property, reported Kersasp Irani, president of the Poona Parsi Panchayat (PPP). Since the Poona Panchayat's constitution does not permit the trustees' interference in the working of private trusts, Irani sought the Federation's help. When it was suggested that Poona members, in their individual capacity, could seek a stay order or approach the Minorities Commission, Irani challenged, "I know the avenues. I want you to show me whether the Federation is effective."

Since the Federation recognizes the autonomy of member panchayats, Gandhi voiced the Federation's inability to intervene until the PPP forwarded to the Federation a copy of its constitution and a resolution requesting the Federation's assistance or a statement confirming that it has no objection to the Federation looking into the matter.

News of an unused and unheard of aramgah in Daund (in Maharashtra) was brought to the Federation's attention by Kersasp Irani.

To get the maximum returns from the land donated by the Jalnawala family for community use in Nanded is the intention of the aging trustee Kerty Mewawalla. To sell the assets of the Anjuman where now stand 24 shops, would mean the Anjuman getting richer by Rs 31 lakhs. The shopkeepers, she said, have offered to buy over their premises on the proviso that she donate seven and a half lakh rupees towards the maintenance of three departments – eye, blood and pathology – in the proposed hospital complex in the same compound, plus two lakhs for the outlay of the hospital. While some of the delegates were trying to convince her to utilize the community funds for community charities, her rationale was that rather than be accused of "paise khai gayee (has usurped the money)," she would like to donate in the name of the Anjuman. "Baar anna kaum né malé né chaar anna biju kaum né malé téma khotu su ché (What is wrong if the community gets three-fourths of the benefits and shares the last quarter with non-Parsis)?"

As some members of the Federation who are acquainted with Nanded wished to verify the information given by Mewawalla, it was suggested that she meet with Katpitia, Anklesaria, Deboo and Gandhi. (However, attempts to speak to her at the Kell's Hotel or even at the Surat railway station at the time of departure, reportedly met with no success.)

Documenting Parsis

An encyclopaedia on the Zoroastrian community, one in a series featuring different religious communities in India, is expected to be printed by August, hoped Taleyarkhan. To be published by the Minorities Commission, contributions – on the role of Parsis, their problems and solutions for their betterment, their contribution to sports, food, government and politics, armed services, religious customs, women, antiquity and heritage, advent of Parsis, and the Federation – will be submitted in the next two months by experts in these fields. Authors will be asked to prepare a summary of their article before working on a detailed write-up. But in such fields as personal



Polly Chenoy (left) and Maneck Gheyara

law, changing environment, social development, biographies, growth of industries, and religion, authors have yet to be appointed.

"Originality (of text) is not essential," opined Kanga. Students who are researching Parsi subjects could also be encouraged to assist in the compilation of the manual, suggested Kanga. "Besides the contents, even the style is important," emphasized Kanga, for a comprehensive and authentic manual. Taleyarkhan assured him that all contributions are subject to the editorial board's approval, although further details on the composition of the board and the criteria for selection/rejection of articles were not outlined.

Succession stymied

In the interest of expediting the amendments to the Indian Succession Act as applicable to Parsis, Gandhi, who has been consistently pressing for treating the discriminated son-in-law on par with the favored daughter-in-law (a move not acceptable to Desai), was willing to make some sacrifices: "If Eruch's inhibitions are only on the son-in-law issue, then let's forget the son-in-law and get the Bill through."

The main thrust of the amendments is to grant the same equal rights to a Parsi female as allowed to a male, and to legalize deathbed bequests to charity even if certain formalities are not complied with. Once the BPP trustees arrive at a decision, the consensus or majority opinion of the other Federation members will be ascertained be-

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fore the next Federation meeting in September so that Taleyarkhan can pursue the matter with the government.

With the exception of the IZA which is not even in favor of granting equal rights to women, leave alone sons-in-law, as notified by IZA vice-president Aspi Irani, all the other anjumans seem to support the amendments. The IZA does not have lady members, confessed Irani which could account for their "biased view."

Bardoli anjuman's reservation is that if the rights of the women are recognized, it would lead to a fragmentation of land holdings, which as Gandhi explained was the outcome even under the existing legislation, and altering the ratio between the males and the females would not change the situation. If land is bequeathed to the sons or the eldest son, it does not follow that they will cultivate it themselves and not sell it to non-Zoroastrians. The land may even be lost in case of a second marriage to a non-Zoroastrian, he emphasized. One of the local youngsters clarified, "*Ek bahu nathi malti tau bè bahu kya thi lavyé* (When there is a difficulty in

finding one wife where is the likelihood of finding two)?" But Gandhi thought that this argument supported his statement that there was a greater possibility of intercommunity marriages, which the youngster insisted was not the case in "*dakshin* (south) Gujarat."

"If a Kohli can make a lucrative earning on the same sized land, why can't a Parsi?"

Those attending the meeting were Hosang Debara from Agra; Capt Homi Dandiwalla from Allahabad; Hoshang Baldawala, Edulji Dumasia and Erach Baldawala from Bardoli; Shavak Patel, Kersy Kavina and Homi Chothia from Baroda; Dara Mahudawala and Erach Kapadia from Bharuch; Minochaer Bharucha from Bhavnagar; Piroz Dandiwalla and Dorab Tata from Bilimora; Dr Aspi Golwalla, Jamsheed Kanga, Rustom Anklesaria, Gool Tata and Ramiyar Karanjia from Bombay; Dosabhai Oliaji from Daman; Zal Nowsherwanji, Keki

Gandhi, Homi Taleyarkhan, Nergish Nargolwala, Farokh Rustomji and Rusi Engineer from Delhi; Aspi Irani and Pervez Irani from Iranian Zoroastrian Anjuman; Eruch Surti from Jamshedpur; Mani Clubwala from Madras; Keki Amalsadiwala from Mandvi; Gp Capt Dhunjishaw Marker from Mhow; Keety Mewawalla from Nanded; Dastur Meherji Meherjirana, Dara Deboo, Firoj Panthaky, Aspi Mullan, Jimmy Jokhi and Noshir Sabawalla from Navsari; Kershasp Irani and Pervez Avari from Poona; Dali Ilavia and Sapal Tamboli from Rajkot; Homi Palsetia and Nariman Balsara from Saronda; Bezun Dittia, Gool Chenoy, Polly Chenoy and Jehangir Bisney from Secunderabad; Dr Sam Bhacca, Davar Kavasji Modi, Sorab Katpitia, Dr Minocher Contractor, Maneck Gheyara and Dr Ratan Marshall from Surat; Mehraban Kushesh from Tehran; Hoshang Chargemen and Pervez Dordi from Thana; Dr Bahadur Jokhi, Rusi Parabia, Persi Buhariwalla, Jal Kasad, F.M. Jokhi and Parvez Dumasia from Vyara-Songadh; Peshotan Nargolwala, co-opted from west zone A; and Homi Mehta and Hoshedar Mehta from Zai Bordi. The Press was represented by Rusi Besania from Surat, and *Parsiana*.

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OWITIA B TH NS

Vachaghandhy Agiary:

trustees VS panthaky

Arnavaz S. Mama

Nestling behind the large Amul hoarding on Hughes Road, Bombay, is the aging Sorabjee Vachaghandhy Agiary. Its black, seeping roof and dark, peeling walls stand in mute but sharp contrast to Amul's message of health and strength.

Here, once again, the immense financial problem of restoring and maintaining the decrepit building has erupted into an unseemly row between the trustees on the one hand and the Agiary's panthaky and beneficiaries on the other, that has boiled over into the Parsi Press.

The first public intimation of trouble at Hughes Road came in *The Bombay Samachar* of April 3, 1988. In the hope of augmenting the Agiary's trust funds, the trustees had sought to replace the panthaky with a manager. The proposed change was vehemently decried by the beneficiaries who favored Ervad Aspandiyar Dadachanji's continuance as panthaky. A notice in Gujarati in the *Jam-e-Jamshed* of April 17 from solicitors Hooseini Doctor and Company, on behalf of Dadachanji, warned any new incumbent against accepting any position that the trustees may offer (vide their advertisement of March 16 in *Jam-e-Jamshed*), counter to the rights of Dadachanji and the beneficiaries. The beneficiaries have further charged the trustees with undue delay in the use of funds generated from a housing scheme in the Agiary's compound primarily aimed at the repair of the fire-temple. The trustees countered with an in-depth response in the *Samachar* of May 8.

The simmering discontent erupted when the trustees — lawyers Bejonji Engineer and Ms Armaity Khushrooshahi and retired municipal officer Tehmuras Suntooke — wrote to Dadachanji on January 30, 1988 giving him notice to vacate the position and the flat in the Agiary compound which he has been occupying since November 1982 and May 1983 respec-

tively. Their intention, to substitute a manager at the Agiary in his place, raised the ire of the beneficiaries who value the service of the present priest. A signature campaign urging the trustees not to dislodge Dadachanji includes such supporters as Central Bank chairman Maneck Goiporia, Bombay Parsi Punchayet (BPP) trustee Eruch Desai, former BPP trustee Dr Nelie Noble, noted advocate Ardeshir Katrak and more than 150 others.

The trustees claim their decision, to replace the panthaky with a manager, hinges on their concern for the maintenance of the Agiary building which is 130 years old and requires extensive structural repairs. The trustees state that the corpus at their command, Rs 1,05,000, is too meager considering that the estimate for complete repairs hovers between 12 and 15 lakh rupees. Moreover the income from the corpus must meet municipal taxes, kathi requirements and includes the *baj rojgar* funds for ceremonies... Even the Rs 1,500 income per month from *divas* (lamps) is now taken by the panthaky, say the trustees. The only way is to replace the panthaky with a manager so that the earnings from rituals performed at the Agiary — estimated by them at more than one lakh rupees a year — can flow into the trust funds instead of enriching an individual. In support of their argument, the trustees quote Boman Sanjana, an ex-panthaky whose services were terminated under pressure from the beneficiaries, to the effect that income from the rituals at the Agiary approximate

Rs 10,000 per month. They also state that a mobed who officiated as manager just prior to Dadachanji's appointment, had sent them Rs 4,500 as net profit for 18 days' work.

The trustees claim that they had explained to Dadachanji when they appointed him in November 1982 — he was selected over other applicants, say the trustees, because he had been recommended by Dastur Firoze Kotwal, high priest of the H.B. Wadia Atash Bahram and Ervad Minoo Behram-Kamdin, panthaky at the Banaji Atash Bahram — that he will be required to pay towards the upkeep of the Agiary in proportion to his earnings, which he was given some time to consolidate.

It is the trustees' contention that Dadachanji has made no attempt to conform to that agreement. "On February 10, 1984 Dadachanji sent a cheque for Rs 5,250 for the Agiary supposedly for the period April to December 1983 without showing the income or expenses for the period," says Engineer. A second cheque of Rs 1,200 followed for the use of the residential quarters between June to December 1983 at the rate of Rs 200 per month. Subsequently cheques were returned by the trustees who say they repeatedly urged Dadachanji to give them a breakdown of the accounts. "If you send a cheque offhand without stating the period or submitting accounts, should I take it and call the day off?" asks Engineer. "The man committed himself by saying he doesn't keep any accounts! But what about the bills he must be preparing for his clients?"

There were 76 tables at the Shahenshahi and 25 tables at the Kadmi muktads in 1987, according to the trustees, for which clients were charged between Rs 1,400 and Rs 2,500 per table. "His function is to get mobeds for performance of ceremonies and pay them a daily wage. There are four regular priests, paid between Rs 10 and Rs 15 per day. Now

The trustees' attempt to terminate the panthaky's services leads to open confrontation



Vachaghandhy Agiary on Hughes Road

(Inset) Khurshedjee Sorabjee Vachaghandhy: founder of the Agiary

Photos: Homyar Mistry, Hornz Prints

we hear that he's increased their pay to Rs 30. Then there are additional ceremonies like uthamna, nirangdin, etc. There were six navars last year. He took Rs 6,000 per boy for 12 to 13 days' stay. Has he given a pie to the Agiary?"

An aspect of Dadachanji's functioning which irks the trustees is that he arranges functions like talks and nirangdin ceremonies without bothering to acquaint them with his plans or seek their permission. The trustees also claim that Agiary premises have been used to store or maintain items like motorcars and motorcycles on behalf of others, a practice they view with disfavor.

The trustees say they gave Dadachanji the occupation of a 700 square foot flat which cost them two and a half lakh rupees to construct, at Rs 100 per month, because he requested them for residential accommodation for his family which was in Navsari at that time. Dadachanji, they said, has agreed on stamped paper to

vacate the premises whenever he was discharged from his appointment as panthaky of the Agiary. Now he is claiming tenancy rights.

The Vachaghandhy Agiary serves the spiritual needs of the Zoroastrians of Khareghat Colony, as well as much of Hughes Road, Malabar Hill, Gowalia Tank and Gamdevi. Some of these devotees say that they have found in Dadachanji an efficient panthaky and a devoted mobed. An ad hoc committee comprising local residents and well-wishers - Paterasp Patel, Pat Vajifdar, Jal Rabadi, Jiju Nusserwanji, Persis Banaji, Jal Contractor and Ervad Godrej Panthaky - swung into action in Dadachanji's defence. The xerox copy of an appeal to the trustees, signed by more than 150 Zoroastrians, notes, "We can very sincerely say that we have always found 'Dastoorji' Aspandiarji to be very conscientious and courteous in the discharge of his work and duties as panthaky...The fruits and flowers used by him for the religious ceremonies are of excellent quality...We feel it will be very difficult for the Agiary to replace 'Dastoorji' Aspandiarji with an equally competent as well as popular panthaky."

A letter from the ad hoc committee dated March 28 notes, "For more than 50 years we are offering our prayers and performing religious ceremonies in this Agiary and therefore we feel that we have a right of say in the welfare of the fire-temple..."

"We have very strong objections to the manager system...You have already tried the manager system in your Agiary for several years, and you have adequate experience that the system had failed miserably. The members of the community and the beneficiaries of the trust were highly dissatisfied, the trust had suffered losses as admitted by you before several persons. It was because of such huge losses that you switched back to the panthaky system..."

Dadachanji says that no agreement has been drawn up between himself and the trustees regarding the amount he is expected to contribute to the trust's coffers despite a lapse of five years.

The Vachaghandhy Agiary compound contains a residential building housing 21 tenants plus an annexe originally meant to house the Agiary staff. Currently, the panthaky occupies the ground floor flat in the annexe. The dormitory on the first floor is shared by Ervad Kaikhushroo Panthaki who officiates as the night *boiwalla*, three *chasniwallas* and a general purpose servant. The rest of the small, ground plus two-storied annexe is occupied by two families unconnected with the Agiary and one office.

The ad hoc committee views the letter terminating Dadachanji's tenure at the Agiary as primarily aimed at recovery of the residential premises so that the trustees could sell it at a profit. Says Nusserwanji, "They want Dadachanji's flat because they will get five lakh rupees for it." "They have taken away the godown since the past six months and given it to Dr Farrokh Master on rent to open a dispensary."

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They have taken away the mobed's *mori* (bath) and given it to Farrokhs so the mobed now bathes in the compound," adds Behram-Kamdin. He further alleges that the trustees have "sold the *boiwalla's* toilet to Dr Master for Rs 30,000."

The committee members state – and the trustees corroborate – that the buildings were constructed from individual donations under the "scheme for construction of ancillary structure for the use of the Agiary and a residential building for maintenance and upkeep and benefit of the fire-temple." The donors earned the right to nominate the tenants who occupy the premises on a leave and licence agreement. "Our clients have reason to believe that a large amount to the tune of Rs 73,50,000 has been received by the trustees towards the donations under the said scheme," notes a letter to the trustees from solicitors Hooseini Doctor and Company, on behalf of the ad hoc committee, dated April 20. "This figure has been arrived at by putting together the amount of the donations as mentioned in the said scheme which the trustees must have received and the number of flats in the building ... On a liberal estimate, our clients are of the view that the cost of construction of the building could be Rs 33,60,000 arrived at by taking Rs 200 per square foot as the then (circa 1982) cost of construction, the total area being 16,800 square feet (21 flats of 800 square feet each). This should leave a balance of Rs 39,90,000 in the hands of the trustees. Assuming that the sum of Rs 10 lakhs has been spent towards the purported ancillary structure, the trustees would have in their hands the sum of Rs 29,90,000. There may be some difference between our clients' said calculation and the actual balance left. Such difference would not however be much... it is reasonable to infer that at least Rs 20,00,000 must be the balance available to the trustees for the renovation of the Agiary, not taking into account other donations the trustees might have received."

"Our clients maintain that as the beneficiaries of the Agiary they are entitled to ask the trustees for the accounts relating to the donations received, the expenses towards construction and the balance left. Our clients' reasonable estimate is that the trustees must have, by now, a large sum to the tune of Rs 50 lakhs left out of the donations, in-

cluding interest for a period of three years," wherewith to repair the Agiary.

Other sources of income for the trustees, according to the committee, include the strategically located Amul hoarding placed over the compound wall, the plant nursery run in its premises, and the well water which could be commercially utilized to the tune of one lakh rupees per annum – but isn't.

The letter alleges that the contents of the charity box in the Agiary are removed by only one person on behalf of the trustees without the formality of counting the receipts. Dadachanji says

(Right) Dadachanji: "competent and popular panthaky"

(Below) Devotees on the verandah of the Agiary



he offered to arrange for the annual kathi requirements but the trustees turned down his proposal. In a letter dated February 2, 1986, Dadachanji had informed the trustees of an offer by Ms Shirin Patuck to paint the Agiary (which was last painted in 1976) at her own cost but the trustees bypassed the offer. "If walls are not stable, but cracked, is painting to any purpose? Did the lady say anything about repairs?" counters Engineer adding that under the circumstances painting would be a waste of money.

A letter to the trustees from advocate Kaikhushroo Dastoor on behalf of Dadachanji states, "Our client further invites your attention to the position that the panthaky is not a ser-

vant or employee of the trustees and they have no unilateral or autonomous or feudal powers to appoint, continue or remove a panthaky.

"As is amply illustrated by the present case itself, no salary is paid to the panthaky; he is asked to get the ceremonies performed and also incur all the necessary expenses in that behalf, including the salaries of the mobeds and other workers like the cook, *chasni* bearers and others and of other perquisites and facilities to them. The panthaky is given the powers to deal with the mobeds and workers in whatever manner he desires; the cleanliness of the premises is maintained at his expense; he is empowered to charge such compensation for the ceremonies (as)

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he thinks fit. The present case has an additional feature that voluntary donations are asked for from him. There is, therefore, not the slightest semblance of a master-servant or employer-employee relationship between the panthaky and the trustees.

"In the circumstances, our client is not only not bound to carry out your alleged directions, but also has a religious and spiritual duty towards the beneficiaries of the Agiary to continue as the panthaky. The question of the alleged defiance therefore, is entirely irrelevant and arises out of the wrongful assumption of the autonomous and unilateral powers by the trustees in ignorance of the beneficiaries' rights...The trustees and the panthaky both are liable and accountable to the beneficiaries and your unilateral imposition of the alleged liability and accountability of our client to you, is out of place and discordant and inconsistent with the legal position herein elaborated."

However, according to another legal

"For more than 50 years we are offering our prayers in this agiary and therefore we have a right of say... in the welfare of the fire-temple"

expert who is a trustee of a different agiary, a panthaky is an independent contractor who establishes a seat in an agiary and pays the trustees a fixed sum by way of royalty for the privilege of performing the ceremonies of his own clients there and he appropriates to himself the charges for the ceremonies."

Engineer traces the imbroglio of the buildings to the advent of the Land Ceiling Act in 1976. There was ample land, shrouded by trees and some old structures. "If I did not utilize the land the government would be strict." Ms Maneckbai Taraporewalla, a co-trustee with Engineer at the Bhika Behram Kuva, offered Engineer 25 lakh rupees from the Bhabha Sanatorium Trust for constructing a building on the Agiary land, says Engineer. Engineer, a legal man who is also trustee

of Dadar's Rustom Framna Agiary, the Aslaji Agiary at Lamington Road, the Ashburner Agiary at Khetwadi and the Panthaki Agiary in Bandra, says the decision to build fell foul of noted lawyer Nadir Modi who felt the view from his own flat at Modi Lodge on Vacha Gandhi Road would be jeopardized and therefore contested Engineer's appeal to the charity commissioner for permission to build. By the end of the two-year period of legal battle, the Bhabhas had tired of waiting and wanted to use the money to construct in the compound of their Sanatorium, says Engineer.

When the trustees decided to collect funds from individuals with the charity commissioner's permission, "more people came with donations than expected," says Engineer. The construction was accomplished in four stages. First an old structure was demolished, then the smaller building constructed; then the larger building. "When we came to the third floor, a priest called Sohrab Balsara, using 800 square feet (in a remaining old bungalow) and paying Rs 18 per month, refused to move. His father-in-law had been the *boiwalla* and the trustees had given the man two rooms. Balsara came from Secunderabad and married the *boiwalla's* daughter. Instead of two rooms, he trespassed on the whole flat without the knowledge of the trustees. He then filed a case against (the late S.K.J.) Mody (then senior trustee) and me and took an injunction against

developing any part of the property. He argued that the trustees were taking money under the table and that they had obtained the charity commissioner's permission fraudulently. None of us knew that the officiating judge had been charity commissioner in 1981 when the permission was obtained. He gave a thumping judgement in my favor and Balsara's appeal was dismissed. But a year and a quarter were wasted and the halt in construction led to a loss of two and a quarter lakh rupees."

The Balsaras say that they were offered 400 square feet - in exchange for the 300 which they currently occupy - at a rent of Rs 300. An added proviso was that their children would not be able to stay with them! "Last May somebody set fire to our roof. A watchman from the adjoining Ratan Tata Industrial Institute (RTI) drew our attention at about 1.30 am," says Ms Balsara. "Dadachanji phoned the fire brigade which sent a notice to Engineer for stacking wood, etc" in such a way as to be a fire hazard, she added.

Watch repairer Meherji Wadia, who shares the old cottage with the Balsaras, says he's been in possession of his area since 1951. Wadia avers that the trustees have tried to open up the roof on the eve of the monsoon, during the court's summer vacation. When the foundation for the new building was

Dormitory at the annexe shared by the Agiary staff



dug, the ridge was made close to the old structure in the hope that it would collapse. Balsara adds that there is only 16 feet between the two structures and the trench that had been dug was 17 feet deep. The architect said that this 125-year-old structure will collapse if there is heavy rain. Getting an injunction the same day, Balsara recalls that the judge "ordered that the trench be filled up within 24 hours."

Apart from the hostility between the trustees on the one hand and the Balsaras and Wadia who together occupy the old cottage on the other, there is simmering discontent among the lessees of the new flats. The original three-year lease was due for renewal for another three years, according to Engineer, but some of the lessees are claiming tenancy rights and Engineer

"A panthaky is an independent contractor who pays the trustees a fixed sum by way of royalty"

says they have joined hands with the panthaky.

Having checked the facts with the trustees, committee member and former assistant police commissioner Jal Contractor attempted to call a public meeting between the beneficiaries and the trustees on March 29 which, the trustees allege, Dadachanji refused to attend. Dadachanji says Contractor brought him the trustees' offer to remain as manager at a flat Rs 3,000 per month which he turned down. Hence there was no point in attending the meeting, he says. In the upshot, no meeting was held and Contractor resigned from the ad hoc committee.

Engineer alleges that the panthaky has been instigating people to phone him at unlikely hours using foul language. Dadachanji denies the allegation.

"My conscience is clear and I have the backing of the sacred fire," says Engineer. "I will not budge an inch until I remove the panthaky." In the meanwhile, Dadachanji has filed a caveat in court against any change in the status quo by the trustees.

ZOROASTRIANS ABROAD

continued from page 17

president Eruch Surkari, captain Dinshaw Printer, secretary Noshir Mulla and treasurer Farokh Hira - is busy organizing for the ZCC's 18-day England tour in August this year which will afford the team "a once-in-a-lifetime experience," as notes Printer.

The gourmet night organized by them in February, to finance the tour, was a "roaring success," with the community in Ontario participating enthusiastically, notes the newsletter. Another gourmet night is scheduled for early June.

Sixty children from the religious classes participated in the 1987 live-the-prayer project and collected \$ 740 by the sale of food and through conducting games of skill in a unique fund raising drive, informs S.J. Bharucha in the newsletter. The project, started in 1985 by Jaloo Cooper, is conducted annually to instil in the younger generation the *Yatha Ahu Vairyo's* message of charity and helps develop responsibility and commitment through personal involvement. "The project is a clear indicator that Zoroastrian charity is alive and well," writes Bharucha. Of the proceeds, \$ 400 (approximately Rs 4,160) are earmarked for the B.D. Petit Parsee General Hospital.

Zoroastrian refugees

"The Iran-Iraq war has caused the deaths of many people and has resulted in several homeless Zoroastrian refugees seeking shelter in Pakistan," notes the April newsletter of the Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Chicago (ZAC). While the Zoroastrians of Karachi have provided them with free temporary housing, food, money and schooling, paucity of funds has restricted their efforts.

The write-up urges donors to draw their cheques either in favor of ZAC marked 'Karachi Anjuman Trust' and mailed to 8615 Meadowbrook Drive, Hinsdale, IL 60521 or in favor of the 'Karachi Parsi Anjuman Trust Fund' and mailed to their official US contact, Farhad Sidhwa at PO Box 60764, Sunnydale, CA 94088 or directly to the Trust at Parsi Anjuman Bagh, Johair Street, Ranchore Lines, Karachi 1, Pakistan.

Ms Moti Balsara, chairperson of the Zoroastrian Society of Ontario's sub-committee on sponsorship of Zoroas-

trian refugees, informs that Ms Silloo Kavarana, managing committee member of the Committee for Economic Revival (CER) Bombay, and Shahpur Captain, secretary of the World Zoroastrian Organisation, London, have agreed to liaise for the committee in India and the UK respectively.

ZAC's public relations

In a major public relations undertaking to acquaint local Americans with Zoroastrianism, the Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Chicago (ZAC) is planning a Speakers Forum to give talks and presentations to members of various organizations like schools, colleges, YMCAs, Jaycees, Rotary, Lions, Kiwanis, churches, village clubs, etc. Write-ups and speeches on preselected topics of interest to non-Zoroastrians will be prepared, printed and distributed by the ZAC to relevant organizations, notes the ZAC's April newsletter.

Over 30 ladies made and sold 170 *daar-ni-poris* in the Darbe Mehr kitchen and netted over \$ 500 for the youth fund this year, notes the newsletter. The activity has become an annual tradition at the ZAC thanks to Ms Freny Mehta, informs the newsletter.

Maherji Billimoria was presented two awards by the General Electric Company's Chicago plant - one managerial, the other technical. The 1988 Managerial Award plaque was conferred on him "in recognition for his contribution to the development and introduction of his idea of up-front foam design and process for refrigerator for Chicago Energy Model." Billimoria successfully reduced heat loss and improved the refrigerator's operational efficiency and will receive a patent in due course. The innovation earned him the 1988 Invention Fulcrum of Progress, General Electric (GE) Award to Inventors which makes him a member of a prestigious club of GE inventors.

Though there is no Zoroastrian association in the Detroit area yet, Sam and Illo Motashaw of 464 Colonial Court, Grosse Pointe Farms, MI 48236 have generously written to the ZAC to say, "Our house is open for any members of the Zoroastrian community in America."

Compiled by Arnavaz S. Mama

***Beautiful, beautiful Fresca.
The beautiful fragrance of Fresca.***



Godrej introduce a luxury soap with a surprise.

Fresca. With the exciting fragrance of an expensive perfume.

And rich, creamy lather. In a soap that lasts and lasts.

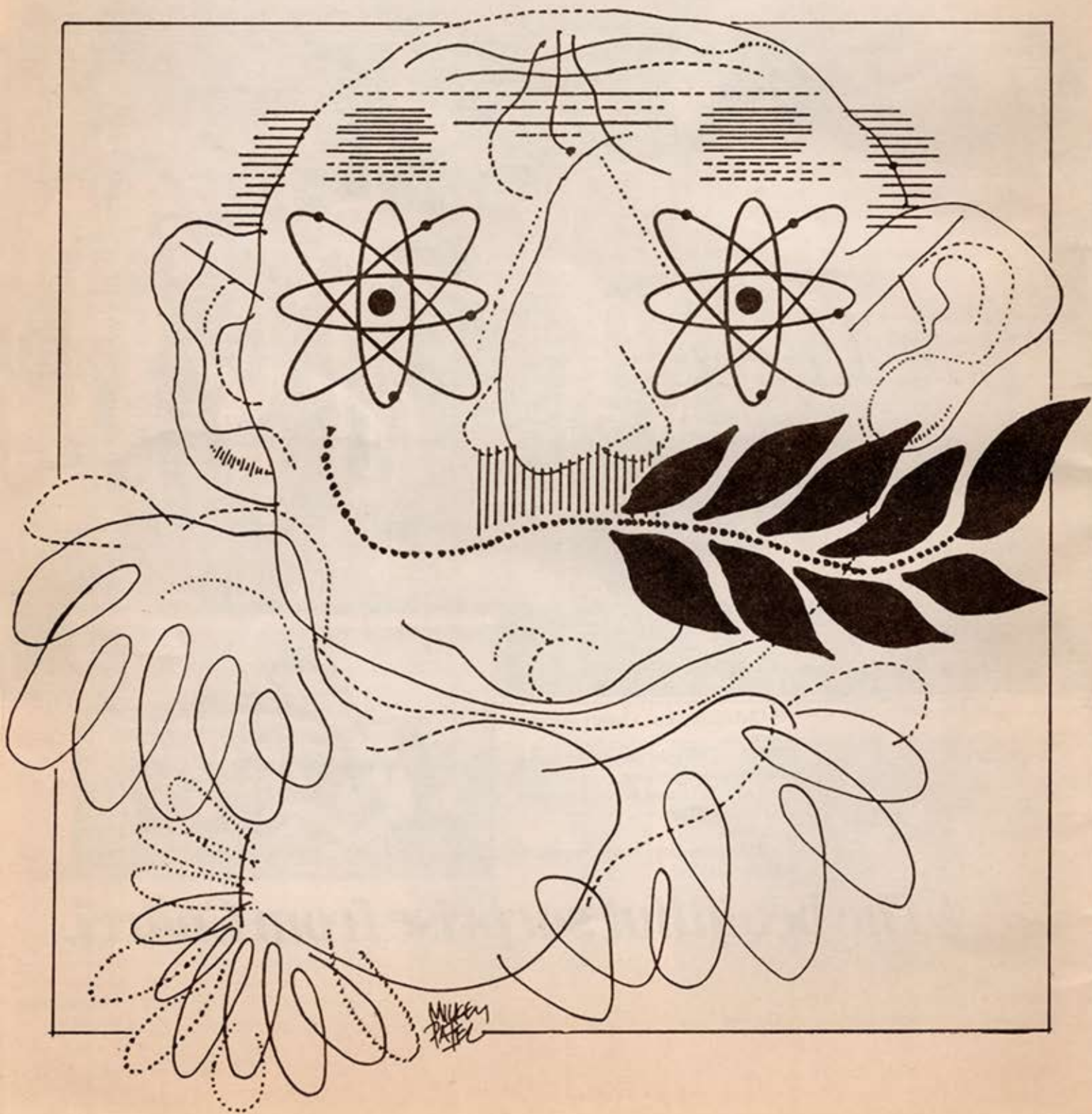
Fresca.

The luxury soap. At a price that will surprise you.



The beautiful surprise from Godrej.

“Distinguished men of science”



The contributions of 17 Parsi scientists feature in the digest brought out by the Indian National Science Academy

Joy Fernandes

Seventeen Parsi scientists have had the "unique honor and recognition" of being elected to the Indian National Science Academy (INSA), a "premier scientific society representing all branches of science in the country," between 1935 and 1984, according to information published in the Academy's *Golden Jubilee Compendium* (New Delhi, 1984). Calling itself an "authentic guide to India's distinguished men of science," the book is a collection of biographical sketches of 892 Fellows of the Academy.

While a few of these Parsis who have distinguished themselves in advancing the cause of science and technology are household names – such as atomic physicist Dr Homi Bhabha – most of them have received little publicity, and are unknown outside scientific circles.

Parsi involvement in the Academy was present right from its inception in January 1935. Then called the National Institute of Sciences of India (it received its present name in 1970), it had 125 Foundation Fellows, of whom three were Parsis. They came from different fields of study: Rustom Hormusji Dastur from botany, Farookh Nigam Mowdawalla from engineering, and Darashaw Noshervan Wadia from geology.

Darashaw Noshervan Wadia, whose research career had helped solve complex problems of Himalayan geology, was elected president of the INSA for the year 1945-1946. His efforts had also helped to increase the knowledge of the mineral wealth of India.

Armed with an MSc degree from Bombay, Wadia had started his career as a professor of geology at a Jammu college. From there, he worked his way through several posts which provided more opportunity for field work. He became an assistant superintendent with the Geological Survey of In-

dia, a government minerologist (in Ceylon), and mineral adviser to the government of India. He was eventually appointed the first director of the Bureau of Mines, and head of the Raw Mineral Division of the Atomic Energy Commission. In 1962 his efforts received official recognition when he was awarded the Padma Bhushan by the government of India.

In the case of Foundation Fellow **Farookh Nigam Mowdawalla**, scarcely any information is listed. We know only that he was professor of electrical engineering at the University College of Engineering, Bangalore, where he was also the principal.

Botany, with special studies in cotton, was the field in which **Rustom Hormusji Dastur** (1896-1961) worked. As professor and head of the botany department at the Institute of Science, Bombay, and an investigator for the Indian Central Cotton Committee for the government of Punjab, Dastur did extensive research on the physiology of different varieties of cotton.

In addition to R.H. Dastur, four other Fellows come from the field of botany, making it the subject that has sent the most Parsis into the Fellowship of the Academy. **Fareedon Rustomjee Bharucha** (1904-1981) worked in the field of plant sociology, stressing environmental influences, especially that of soil, on plants. It was he who emphasized the role of trace elements in the soil. His research work also included the eco-physiology of mangroves, and the vegetation of rocks, coastal sands, islets and wastelands. Formerly a professor at the University of Syria and the University of Baghdad, Bharucha was a guest lecturer at the University of Poona between 1961 and 1969. He was awarded the diploma and gold medal of the Brazilian Academy of Sciences and Humanities.

From the field of mycology (the study of fungi) came **Jehangir Fardunji Dastur** (1886-1971). A member and Fellow of the Indian Society for Mycology and Plant Pathology, and the Indian Science Congress Association, he was also head of the division of mycology at the Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI), New Delhi. Dastur had an impressive list of research work to his credit. It includes a study of a new mode of sexual reproduction in fungi, a critical study of cotton wilt and diseases affecting cotton bolls, sugarcane, plantains, papayas, chillies and cucumbers.

The winner of the Rafi Ahmed Kidwai Award from the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) in 1975, **Jameshedji Jijibhoy Chinoy** (1909-1978) had won international fame for his findings on the role of ascorbic acid in plant growth. Holding a doctorate from London, he became a reader in the department of botany at the Delhi University, professor and head of the botany department at the University School of Sciences, and later the director of the School. From 1975 to 1978 he held the post of Professor Emeritus at the Gujarat University in Ahmedabad where he helped to establish a strong school of plant physiology.

Another plant physiologist who won the Rafi Ahmed Kidwai Memorial Prize from the ICAR, in 1973, is **Dr Rustom Darasha Asana** (born 1908). Like Chinoy, he too earned his doctorate in London. Asana became head of the division of plant physiology at the IARI, and was appointed Emeritus Scientist of the ICAR. Some significant findings from Asana's early researches were that plane-polarized light (light consisting of vibrations in one plane only) did not influence photosynthesis, and that the sugarcane yield in north Bihar depended on nit-

rogen uptake and rainfall.

In the field of atomic physics and atomic energy there are two Parsi Fellows of the Academy. Atomic physicist **Dr Homi Jehangir Bhabha** (1909-1966) was, notes the compendium, "the brain behind the growth of the atomic energy establishments in India." A brilliant scientist, he earned his doctorate from Cambridge in 1935, and became famous for his work in theoretical high energy physics. He was appointed professor of physics at the Indian Institute of Science in Bangalore, director of the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission's Scientific Advisory Committee to the Cabinet, and secretary to the government of India's Department of Atomic Energy. In addition to honorary doctoral degrees in science from various universities, both in India and abroad, Bhabha was awarded the Padma Bhushan in 1954. A permanent memorial to him stands at Trombay, Bombay - the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre, which was named after him.

Dr Homi Nusserwanji Sethna (born 1923) was former principal secretary of the Department of Atomic Energy, and chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission of the government of India. A Fellow of the Indian Academy of Sciences, and a foreign member of the Royal Swedish Academy of Engineering Sciences, he is the recipient of numerous awards and honors. It was Sethna who was responsible for the design, construction and commissioning of several national projects like the rare earths plant at Alwaye which marked the beginning of the exploitation of nuclear material in India, the thorium and plutonium plants at Trombay, and the uranium mill at Jaduguda, Bihar.

INSA Fellows from the medical sciences are cardiologist **Dr Rustom Jal Vakil**, oncologist **Dr Darab Jehangir Jussawalla**, and neuropathologist **Dr Darab Kersasp Dastur**. **Dr Rustom Jal Vakil** (1911-1974) is often called the father of Indian cardiology. He was the first to carry out large scale statis-

Clockwise from top left: Wadia, K. Antia, D. Antia, Sukheswala, D. Dastur, Jussawalla, Vakil, Sethna, Bhabha, Asana, Chinoy, J. Dastur, Bharucha, and R. Dastur

(Photos: Golden Jubilee Compendium on Fellows Of The Indian National Science Academy)

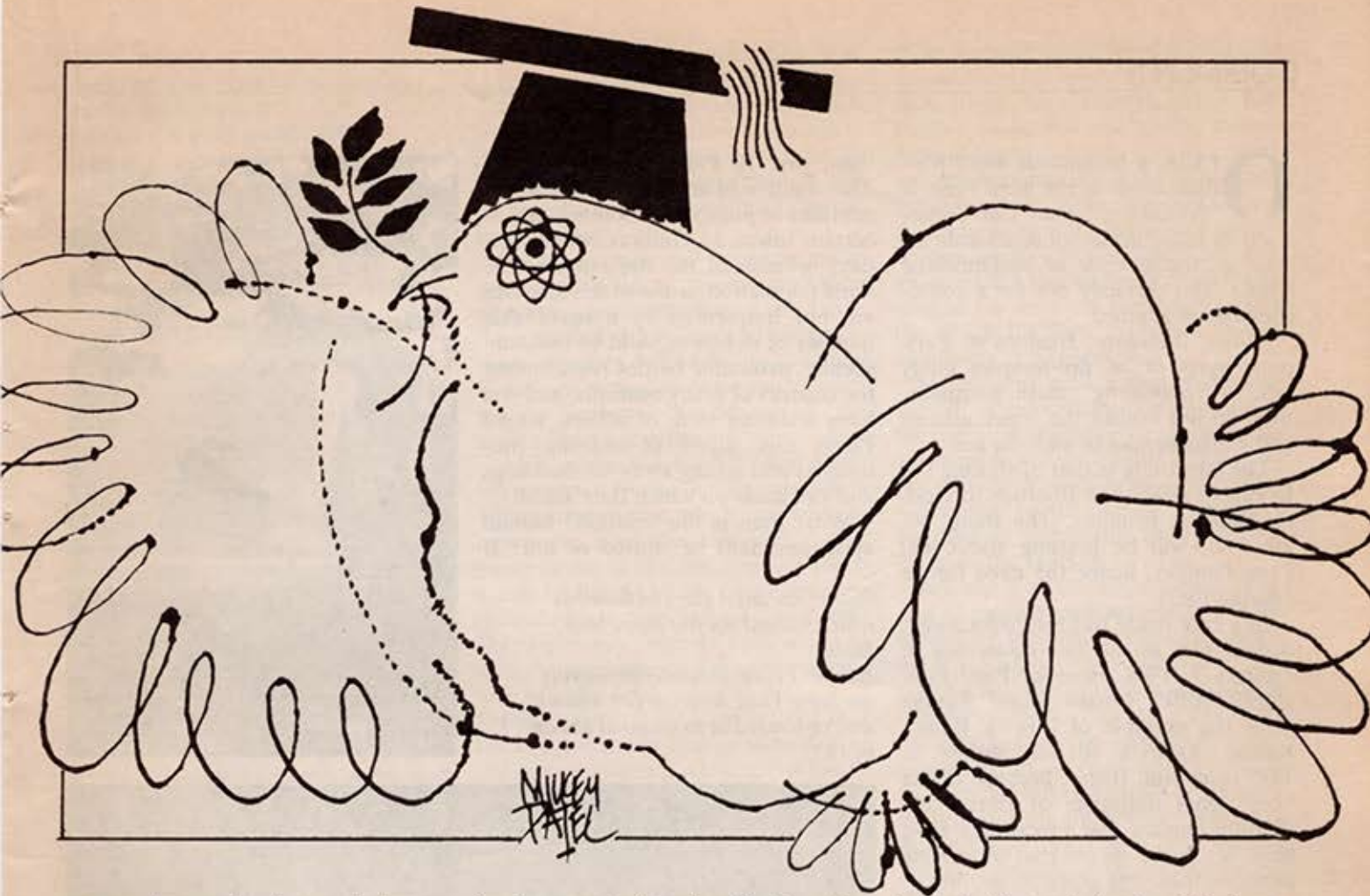


tical studies on the incidence of various types of heart disease, and the first to use the term 'preinfarction syndrome.' He also suggested several new classifications of abnormal heart rhythms, anterior thoracic pain and congenital heart disease, besides introducing some entirely new clinical titles in medical science. Vakil won the Award of the Lasker Foundation for focussing the attention of western medical researchers on rauwolfia serpentina, a drug that has been used in ancient Ayurvedic medicine in India for hundreds of years. An assistant honorary physician at several hospitals and medical colleges in Bombay, he was also the author of several books.

Dr Darab Jehangir Jussawalla (born 1915) is a senior surgeon and professor of oncology (the study of tumors), and chairman, Planning and Development, at the Tata Memorial Hospital, Bombay. He has, notes the book, made outstanding contributions in the diagnosis and treatment of a variety of cancers. He developed a modified technique of radical hysterectomy, established the value of cytology (that part of biology that deals with cells) in the early diagnosis of a variety of cancers - which led to the setting up of the first cancer cytology laboratory in India in 1953 - and was responsible for proving the value of cancer detection in high risk groups.

Jussawalla's establishment of the need for, and value of, rehabilitation of cancer patients resulted in the founding, in Bombay, of Asia's largest cancer rehabilitation center. A recipient of the Padma Bhushan in 1978, Jussawalla also cited "inversion of cancer incidence in the Parsi community in comparison with the rest of the population of Bombay."

Neuropathologist **Dr Darab Kersasp Dastur** (born 1924) has been, at different times, a Fellow of the Rockefeller Foundation, a visiting scientist of the National Institute of Mental Health, Bethesda, a research officer of the neuropathology unit at the Tata Memorial Hospital, a professor of neuropathology, and the director of the Neuropathology and Applied Biology Department at the Bombay Hospital. Dastur has researched the pathology and functioning of the nervous system in human aging, different types and stages of leprosy, tuberculosis, meningitis, muscle disorders, and nutritional disorders of the nervous



system. Among the honors he has received are the K.T. Dholania Prize Lectureship from the Indian Orthopaedic Society, the Graeme Robertson Memorial Lectureship of the Australian Association of Neurologists, Brisbane, and the K.S.K. Vaidya Memorial Prize Lectureship of the Bombay Medical Council.

From the field of agriculture and dairying came **Dr Zal R. Kothavala** (born 1896-date of death unknown). Winner of the International Dairy Federation of the World's silver medal and the Bombay University's gold Moose Medal, Kothavala was one of the first Indians to specialize in the science of dairying, genetics and cattle nutrition. A member of the Indian Dairy Association, he made outstanding contributions to the science and practice of dairying in tropical countries, reports the book.

Dr Sam Bomansha Setna (1895-1969) was Fisheries Officer and Director of Fisheries, Bombay, and "one of the stalwarts in fisheries development in India." It was he who established and nurtured the Fisheries Department and persuaded fishermen and

businessmen to introduce fast launches to bring mackerel and sardines from the north Canara coast to the markets of Bombay. It was also Setna, a PhD from Cambridge, who established the Taraporevala Aquarium and Marine Biological Research Station in Bombay.

Geologist **Dr Ratan Nadirshaw Sukheswala** (born 1910), formerly professor and head of the geology department at St Xavier's College, Bombay, worked on the Deccan Trap rocks of India, and was the first to discover carbonatite alkaline rocks in India. A Fellow of the Geological Society of India, the Indian Society of Earth Sciences, vice-president of the Mining and Allurgical Society of India, and president of the Earth Science Society of India and of the Maharashtra Academy of Sciences (1978), he was awarded the Pramatha Nath Bose Memorial Medal by the Asiatic Society of Calcutta in 1978.

The only Parsi Fellow from the field of metallurgy is **Dr Dara Pirojshaw Antia** (born 1914). President of the Indian Copper Information Centre, and an industrial and management consul-

tant, Antia carried out original research work on solid state transformation in high carbon and nickel carbon steels, leading to new concepts in heat treatment. Some of the awards he has received are the Henry Marion Howe Medal from the American Society for Metals, and the Platinum Medal from the Indian Institute of Metals.

And finally, from the field of civil engineering came **Khurshed F. Antia** (1904-1968). After obtaining his MSc (Engg) degree from London, Antia became deputy chief engineer and principal bridge engineer at the Kharagpur Workshop; director of the Research, Designs and Standards Organisation, Ministry of Railways; technical controller of the Cement Marketing Company Limited, Bombay; and chief engineer and consultant with M.N. Dastur and Company Pvt Ltd. The winner of the Railway Board First Prize (1943-1944) and the Gold Medal (1946-1947), Antia was responsible for the construction of major railway bridges and military depots, and their reconstruction without diversions of traffic. He was also the author of two books on railway engineering.

Of late, a fashionable word bandied about in the Parsi Press is "relocation." One can understand its usage in case of small-scale industries, textile mills or prefabricated houses. But certainly not for a consecrated atash adarian!

When, therefore, trustees of Parsi punchayets or of fire-temples glibly talk of "relocating" atash padshahs, they do not realize the repercussions and consequences of such an act.

The latest talk is that of shifting the Doongaji adarian in Bharuch to Godrej Baug in Bombay. The Baug, we are told, will be housing about 480 Parsi families, hence the need for an adarian there.

In a case made out for "relocating" fire-temples in the *Jam-e-Jamshed* of January 3, 1988, Bombay Parsi Punchayet (BPP) trustee Homi Ranina gives the example of Cusrow Baug's Karani Agiary's adarian shifted in 1935 from Null Bazar because of the "occasional outbursts of riots." He thereby implies that precedents have been set in the recent past of shifting adarians from one place to another.

While the ostensible purpose of providing the community spiritual solace and sustenance is understandable, the real materialistic motives behind the move, as shown in Ranina's above-mentioned letter, are not. He writes: "In fact, the shifting of agiaries fulfils two objectives: A new dar-e-meher is constructed out of the funds obtained from the sale of the land on which the old dar-e-meher stands, such sale proceeds being adequate not only to cover the cost of constructing the new dar-e-meher but also adding to the corpus of the original trust for future repairs and maintenance of the new dar-e-meher. (Besides), the holy fire (is brought) to a place where there are several hundred Parsi families, thereby providing a house of worship to Zoroastrian residents." (Ranina had written the above letter in the context of his proposal to set up an adarian in Sanjan, under the auspices of the Mazda Adarian Trust.)

Let us concede right at the outset that our enthusiastic forefathers took the advice in the Persian Revayats (directions sought and received from the Zoroastrian mobeds of Iran) literally, and built adarians where more

than, say, 10 Parsi families resided. The result was an over-abundance of adarians in places like Bombay and in certain towns of Gujarat, where, today, because of the depletion of the Parsi population, some of the adarians are not frequented by a reasonable number of devotees. Add to that, unseemly, avoidable battles royal among the trustees of many adarians, and you have a dismal state of affairs, where Parsis talk glibly of shifting fire-temples and selling away the buildings and the lands on which they stand!

What then is the solution? Should atash padshahs be shifted or not? If

Right: Karani Agiary in Bombay which lodged the fire from Null Bazar

Below: Procession accompanying the Surat Goti Adarian fire when it was re-housed in its original abode in 1985



Atash adarians: not for shifting

Adi F. Doctor

*If the consecrated fire, housed in its abode,
is disturbed, it will evoke evil forces*

not, why not? The answers lie in the consideration of the following points:

Significance

Why do Zoroastrians have consecrated fire altars? Every atom or particle in nature is made up of the four basic elements – earth, water, air and fire. These elements, and particularly the element of fire, are afflicted by the grossness of the material world. The fire energy latent in every atom bears the weight of this grossness. Of the 16 fire energies existing in the universe, a tiny representative of one of them is trapped inside, say, a log of wood, in the physical world, which could be put to a myriad uses. This trapped latent fire energy is to be freed of its materialistic load.

Zoroastrians are therefore enjoined to remove the dross from the fires used directly or indirectly in different professions and vocations, and release the

latent fire energy therein. The three Avestic terms given for such dross or pollution are, *akhti* (pollution created by mankind, like human excreta, spit, etc), *aahiti* (putridity of humans, who come into contact with the object in which the fire energy is trapped) and *paviti* (any natural pollution afflicting the object).

In consecrating an atash bahram, fires used in 15 professions are purified; in the case of an adarian, fires of four professions are used. There are six stages in the creation of an atash adarian: The selection of four kinds of fires; purification of these fires; consecration of these fires separately; consecration of the fires mixed together; consecration of the *gumbaj* or dome and the sanctum sanctorum; and enthronement of the adarian.

Fire from Aden en route to Lonavla in 1976



Composition

Once the adarian is enthroned, the six magnetic circuits (*karsh*) are established round the censer containing the fire as well as inside the *urvisgaah* (place where higher liturgical ceremonies are performed) and around the walls of the building housing the atash padshah. The atash padshah is now automatically bestowed by nature with *dahyupati* – sovereignty. He wields *hukshathra* or righteous power and authority. So, he also becomes a *rathaeshtar* – spiritual warrior, ceaselessly fighting evil forces around him. Moreover, he becomes the earthly embodiment of some of the fire energies of nature, a spiritual battery perpetually receiving the divine blessings and benevolent currents and transmitting them to all living beings within a certain radius. The atash adarian thus is a functionary agent attuning with the fire energies operating in space. He is a living, pulsating entity whose head is the visible fire we see on the censer, whose conscience (*daena*) is the atash dadgah in the *urvisgaah*, whose limbs are the six magnetic circuits and whose *khoreh* or halo is the radiating glow emanating from the atmosphere surrounding the padshah.

The entire building of the adarian becomes a consecrated talismanic fortress wherein the deified fire is enthroned. Now the afflicted fires taken from the four professions (*athornan* – priest class, *rathaeshtar* – warrior class, *vastriosh* – farmer or agriculturist and *hutokhsh* – the serving class) are free of all pollution and putridity and the latent fire energies therein are in direct contact with their counterparts in the universe.

Consecration

The hallowed ground on which the fire-temple stands is important. In chapter 3, paragraph 1 of the *Vendidad*, the supreme importance of the ground on which a fire-temple or a dokhma stands is graphically brought out. In answer to a question by Zarathushtra, as to which lands are joyous, the omnipotent Lord replies that there are five such grounds, one of which is that where consecration takes place. Where there are atash padshahs, there's a constant rendez-

vous of yazatic and other divine forces.

What happens when an adarian is removed and the consecrated building housing it is disposed of? In no circumstances should the six *karsh* or magnetic circuits, which operate inside the agiary and interact with one another, be disturbed. The short-circuiting of even one of these *karsh* – one of the ways being the dethroning of the padshah by lifting or shifting him – has a chain reaction: all the other circuits snap or are disrupted. The padshah is then deprived of his spiritual power and authority; he then does not have the strength required of a *ratheshtar*; he is subjected to the incessant attacks of *gana min* – the evil force operating in nature – and finds it impossible to act as a receiving and transmitting center vis-a-vis the spiritual world. In short, instead of the *hukhshathra* (benevolent power) prevailing there, the *dukhshathra* or wicked rule of Ahri-man is virtually clamped thereon!

Above all, if the building and land on which the padshah stood is disposed of, it is obvious that the sanc-

tified ground is displeased and a violent disorder in nature is created, the adverse reaction of which has to be borne by the entire Zoroastrian community.

In this writer's mind, there is no doubt that no adarian anywhere need be removed and relocated if the trus-

*If the building and
land on which the
padshah stood is
disposed of, the
sanctified ground is
displeased*

tees and the priests perform their duties of preserving and maintaining the padshahs adequately. That the Parsi population in different places has been reduced, or that very few rituals are performed in some agiaries, is no reason for the shifting of the adarian. The latest case in point where the ada-

rian was saved from disposal is the Langrana Agiary in Bombay.

Removal of an atash padshah tantamounts to a breach of trust in nature and a hurdle in the progress of the departed souls of their founders! In very rare instances should an adarian be moved to a new location. The remedy will be worse than the disease if, as the BPP trustees want to do, and as Ranina suggests, adarians are located in Parsi baugs, with the kind of living – so distant from the Zoroastrian tenets and canons – that is found in an average Parsi home. The Karani Agiary inside the Cusrow Baug is a classic instance! Let the trustees of all adarians remember that if the atash adarians are well taken care of, if the trustees stop mammon-worshipping and prevent internecine squabbles, the padshahs can take care of themselves!

About the author: Adi Doctor is one of the main spokespersons for the orthodoxy. Editor of the now defunct The Parsee Voice, Doctor, a former publicity officer in a bank, is an Avesta-Pahlavi scholar and a frequent lecturer on Kshnumist themes.

Scholarship for Dentistry

Applications are invited from deserving Zoroastrian students who have passed the Std XII Examination – H.S.C. or equivalent – with minimum 75 percent marks in physics, chemistry, biology.

The scholarship is towards securing admission to a recognized Dental College in South India for the degree of Bachelor

of Dental Surgery.

Applications giving details of name, age, sex, nationality and religion, attempts, parents' occupation and income should reach Dr Ratan H. Doctor, 3, Warden Court, A. Kranti Marg, Bombay 400036 not later than June 20, 1988.

BPP scholarships

Attention of first class or high second class Parsi graduates is invited to the gift and loan scholarships offered by the Bombay Parsi Punchayet for the year 1988 for postgraduate studies abroad as well as in India, preferably in engineering, technical, scientific, industrial, commercial and educational courses.

Applicants must, as a rule, be less than 28 years of age at the time of applying. Final year degree students, with brilliant academic records, may also apply without

waiting for their results. Gift/loan scholarships for postgraduate studies abroad are subject to the Reserve Bank of India's Foreign Exchange Regulations.

Application forms are available from Mr A.D. Sarkari, Secretary, Higher Education Committee, C/o Parsi Punchayet Office, 209 D.N. Road, Fort, Bombay 400001. The last date for submitting the application forms duly completed is June 10, 1988.

A.D. SARKARI
Secretary, Higher Education Committee
Bombay Parsi Punchayet

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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 news provided differs from place to place, depending on the source.

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.

Out of the 85 Parsis who died in Bombay, 31 succumbed to heart disease. Ailments of the lung claimed 24 lives. The next most important killers were old age (nine), brain disease (five) and blood disease (four). Diabetes and kidney failure each claimed three victims, while accidents and cancer each claimed two. There were also isolated cases of gastroenteritis and shock. Two infants were lost to the community.

BOMBAY

Born

A boy to *Aban and Zareer Karbhari* on March 3, 1988
A boy to *Yasmine and Mancher Palkhiwala*; April 10
A girl to *Navaz and Eric Dastur*; April 13
A girl to *Dhun and Yezdi Master*; April 13
A boy to *Fizzat and Nadirshah Barbhairwala*; April 14
A girl to *Zarin and Kobad Mevawalla*; April 16
A girl to *Rajkumari and Firdosh Bhiwandiwala*; April 17
A girl to *Dolly and Dhun Boatwalla*; April 20
A boy to *Arnavaz and Kaiyoz Mirza*; April 23
A boy to *Sunu and Homi Aibara*; April 24
A boy to *Simin and Meherza Shokrehkuda*; April 27
A boy to *Rati and Pranab Datta*; April 28
A boy to *Jeroo and Prakash Ramkrishna*; April 29

Married

Kashmira Framroze Billimoria and *Viraf Adi Patva*; March 14
Bapsy Framroze Darukhanawala and *Faroukh Dhunjishaw Dastur*; March 19
Persis Hoshang Chhapkhanawala and *Kersi Soli Daruwala*; April 2
Rashna Dadi Mandiwalla of *Navsari* and *Zubin Keki Bharucha*; April 5
Kerman Khushro Wadia and *Darius Jehangir Khambata*; April 10
Pervin Pesi Baliwala and *Keiky Minoo Press*; April 10
Vira Minoo Khasusa and *Pervesh Hoshang Mody*; April 15
Benaifer Hoshang Bhoot and *Daraius Maneck Bharucha*; April 19
Benaifer Kersy Driver and *Rustom Shapoor Kharegat*; April 21
Shahnaz Rustom Irani and *Farsheed Fareedoon Irani*; April 24
Diana Kersasp Shroff and *Zubin Dinshaw Mehta*; April 24
Bachoo Firoze Khansaheb of *Bangalore* and *Mehernosh Nariman Kapadia*; April 26

Died

Ardeshtir Bomanshaw Balsara (96), residing at 21 Transval Ter, Grant Rd, 400007; March 31
Jamshedji Rustomji Contractor (79), 106 Mansarovar, Mt Pleasant Rd, 400006; April 1
Najoo Ratan Doctor (64), G-7, Captain Clny, Tardeo, 400034; April 1
Rupina Sorabji Nicholson (72), 201/202 Atmaj, 94/C, Cumballa Hill, 400036; April 1
Bacha Jamshed Bachana (63), 407 Anand Sagar, Sector 17, Vashi, 400703; April 2
Jalamai Jalbhoy Bamboat (80), Divecha Bldg, Malcolm Baug, Jogeshwari, 400102; April 2
Jal Nusserwanji Bharucha (82), Gool Villa, 802 B, Dr Ambedkar Rd, Dadar, 400014; April 2

Rustam Behram Kaovasa (76), C-2 Mangal Prabhat, 5th Rd, Vile Parle, 400049; April 2
Shirin Kharshed Pavri (78), Swastic Court, 132, M. Karve Rd, 400020; April 2
Pallon Dinshawji Doctor (57), 4/16, A.H. Wadia Baug, Parel Tank Rd, 400033; April 3
Navajbai Jehangirji Jilla (99), J.D. Alves Premises, 60-B/21-22, Hill Rd, Bandra, 400050; April 3
Najamai Savakshaw Shroff (93), B-204 Ketayun Mans, Vile Parle (E), 400057; April 3
Dorabji Burjorji Baman Behram (88), 6 Wadia Block, Khareghat Clny, Hughes Rd, 400007; April 4
Silloo Godrej Joshi (63), 40/A, Ridge Rd, Malabar Hill, 400006; April 4
Gaimai Navroji Vandriwala (85), Abbas Bldg, 148, Falkland Rd, 400008; April 4
Piroja Faramroze Irani (65), Zaveri Bldg, Grant Rd, 400007; April 5
Sheran Dhanjishaw Kasad (78), C/12 Contractor Baug, Mori Rd, Mahim, 400016; April 5
B/o Yutaz Zubin Mandiwala (1 day), 5/33 A.H. Wadia Baug, Parel Tank Rd, 400033; April 5
Goolbanoo Minocher Mehta (78), Old Petit Mans, 85, Sleater Rd, 400007; April 5
Piroja Hormusji Mehta (87), Baimai Bldg, Jerbai Wadia Rd, Parel, 400012; April 5
Rusi Minocher Patel (53), Goolrukh, 83 Worli Seaface, 400025; April 5
Shermai Bamanshaw Pardiwalla (75), 5 Devidas Mans, Balaram St, Grant Rd, 400007; April 6
Phiroz Edulji Wadia (70), 101 Mazagaon Apts, Narial Wadi, 400010; April 6
Fardoon Mervan Irani (60), Hill Ruff, St Andrews Rd, Bandra, 400050; April 7
Amy Minoo Panthaky (82), 101-B Atlas Apts, J. Mehta Rd, 400006; April 7
Dhanjishaw Cawasji Billimoria (74), B, Shapur

Baug, V.P. Rd, 400004; April 9
Dorab Khurshedji Kapadia (69), 4/4 Tata Hsg Soc, Parel, 400012; April 9
Mithibai Dadabhoy Mistry (89), 83/A Jal Darshan, Napean Sea Rd, 400036; April 9
Savakshaw Dossabhai Readymoney (77), 190 Harun Bldg, Princess St, 400002; April 9
Bapai Dorabji Cooper (55), Piroja Mans, Sir Ratan Tata Rd, Tardeo, 400034; April 10
Dorabji Dinshawji Birdy (96), 8, Khareghat Clny, Hughes Rd, 400007; April 11
Sorab Sheavakshaw Contractor (89), 12 Sonarica, 33-A, Pedder Rd, 400026; April 11
Navroji Nariman Dadabhoy (84), Maskati Court, M. Karve Rd, 400020; April 11
Manek M.L. Maneksha (87), Sunshine, 156, M. Karve Rd, 400020; April 11
Jehanbakhsh Hormasjee Vijifdar (83), V-7, Dalal Est, Lamington Rd, 400008; April 11
Perin Rustom Contractor (78), J-11, Cusrow Baug, Colaba, 400039; April 12
Sheramai J. Mansukh (60), Shukhia Bldg, Cawasji Patel St, Fort, 400001; April 12
Phiroze Jamshedji Mistry (85), F.S. Parukh Dharamshala, 34, Hughes Rd, 400007; April 12
Goolbai Kawasji Sethna (74), Adenwalla Bldg, 626, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; April 12
Minoo Sorabji Bharucha (62), 17 Bandstand Apts, Bandra, 400050; April 13
Eruichshaw Dhanjishaw Billimoria (65), E-15, Nowroz Baug, Lalbaug, 400012; April 13
Tehmina Ratanji Chhoy (89), 10/8 Rustom Baug, Byculla, 400027; April 13
Bhikhaji C. Karwa (84), B/53, Maghdoot, Koldongari, Andheri (E), 400069; April 14
Nergish Behram Vakharia (70), G-7, Shapur Baug, V.P. Rd, 400004; April 14
Noshirwan Cawasji

Lakdawalla (82), 347-C United Chmbs, Grant Rd, 400007; April 16
Manijeh Dinshaw Gandevia (75), Ness Baug, Annex 3, Nana Chowk, 400007; April 17
Dhunmai Pestonji Shah (98), 70, Trinity St, Dhobi Talao, 400002; April 17
Maneckbai Hormuzdiar Bhavnagri (82), 12 Jer Mans, Off Turner Rd, Bandra, 400050; April 18
Jamshed Byramji Jijibhoy (85), Rubans Apts, L. Jagmohandas Rd, 400036; April 18
Firoz Pestonji Sudry (50), Karmakar Hse, 112/1, Tilak Nagar, Goregaon (W), 400062; April 18
Manchershaw Manekshaw Bharucha (85), Tara Mans, Khetwadi Main Rd, 400004; April 19
Dolly Phirozshaw Driver (70), Engineer Bldg, 11, Sleater Rd, 400007; April 20
Sorab Dadabhoy Parekh (80), Zoroastrian Bldg, Golanji Hill, Parel Tank Rd, 400012; April 20
Meher Manekjee Tarachand (90), 5, Firuz-ara, Churchgate, Recl, 400021; April 20
Mehran Dhanjishaw Gazdar (67), 16/2, Rustom Baug, Byculla, 400027; April 21
Dolly Behram Irani (58), Soonawalla Bldg, Proctor St, Grant Rd, 400007; April 21
Dorab Jehangir Mehta (84), F. S. Parukh Dharamshala, 34, Hughes Rd, 400007; April 21
B/o Alice Hoshang Vazifdar (4 days), X-106/11, Godrej Staff Qrs, Vikhroli (E), 400079; April 21
Shiavax Munchershaw Wadia (83), Gover Mans, 91 Mint Rd, Fort, 400001; April 21
Tehmina Faredun Antia (82), Madhav Bhuvan, Queens Rd, 400004; April 22
Jal Framroze Muncherjee (77), C-2 Fariyas, 143, Cumballa Hill, 400026; April 22
Keki Darabsha Vesuna (60), L. Dalal Est, Bombay Centrai, 400008; April 22
Najamai Sorabji Masalawalla (78), C/o Ms Chadan R. Patel, 704 Cumballa Crest, Pedder Rd, 400026; April 23
Motibai Edulji Patel (92), M.I.G. Clny, 551 Bandra, 400051; April 23

Rustom Jamsedjee (84), 286-A, S. Gandhi Marg, 400002; April 24
Jerbai Rustomji Panthaki (81), B/39-105, Yogi Sant Co-op Hsg Soc, Borivli (W), 400092; April 24
Tehemton P. Pithavala (59), 53, Rewa Apts, B. Desai Rd, 400026; April 24
Mehera Faredoon Pavri (82), 401, Vacha-Gandhy Bldg, Gamdevi, 400007; April 25
Phiroze Sheriarji Daruwalla (78), Satya Bhama Nivas, Kasinath Rd, Tardeo, 400034; April 26
Pesi Hormasji Dubash (75), 137, Old Modi St, Jesia Bldg, Fort, 400001; April 26
Dara Syavax Havewala (49), New Petit Mans, Nana Chowk, 400007; April 26
Dinbai Nariman Maloo (84), Sethna Bldg, Golanji Hill, Parel, 400012; April 26
Katy Burjor Mehta (81), Bharucha Bldg, Khetwadi 12th Lane, 400004; April 26
Alamai (Perin) Manekji Nagporwalla (77), A/3 Subodh Guru Soc, Santacruz (W), 400054; April 26
Alamai Dhunjishaw Shroff (86), Gandhi Mans, 16, Wadia St, Tardeo Rd, 400034; April 26
Mehra Rustum Lakdawala (70), G-1 Cuffe Castle, Cuffe Parade, 400005; April 27
Coomi Kersasp Wadia (58), 10, Zaveri Bldg, Opp Albless Baug, 400004; April 27
Coomi Darabshah Antia (65), F-8, N. Contractor Baug, Mori Rd, Mahim 400016; April 28
Pesi Jamshedji Aspar (61), 3/20, Himanshu Co-op Hsg Soc, Vile Parle (W), 400056; April 28
Framroze Byramji Cooper (71), 39, Sonapur St, Chira Bazar, 400002; April 28
Jal Nadirsha Pardiwalla (75), Saidunisa Bldg, Sleater Rd, 400007; April 28
Rustomji Jamshedji Pardiwalla (71), Roshni, Pali Hill, Bandra, 400050; April 28
Nargis Ardeshtir Avari (77), 238 Cawasji Hormusji St, Dhobi Talao, 400002; April 29
Perin Phiroze Mahwa (63), 12, Wadia Bldg, Malcolm Baug, Jogeshwari, 400102; April 29
Minoo Adershtir Ghadiali (79), B-1, Shapurji Bharucha Baug,

S.V. Rd, Andheri (W), 400058; April 30

CALCUTTA

Born

A girl, **Farah**, to Navaz and Sarosh Gherda; March 11

Died

Adi Dorabji Jilla, husband of Alla and father of Katy Soli Sabawalla; March 22

DELHI

Died

Nevaz Desai, wife of Jamshed, mother of Freyan, Nitash and Rustom; April 17

KARACHI

Died

Bomi Pirojsha Khambata (68), husband of Kaity and father of Homi; November 8, 1987
Banubai Rustomji Degamwala (69); March 19, 1988
Meherwanji Mancherji Umrigar (83); March 27
Behman Rustomji Feniwala (86); March 28

LUCKNOW

Married

Daizy Patel of Bulsar and **Shapur Minoo Homavazir**; November 3, 1987
Zarin Daady Manekshaw of Delhi and **Mehernosh Jahangirji Poonawala**; November 23

Died

Mani Minoo Sooi (76); December 8
Mani Cursetji Mehta (92); January 16, 1988
Dhunjishaw Cawasji Navalwala (83), husband of Najamai; January 26
Amy Dhunjibhoy Engineer (72); April 10

MADRAS

Died

Arnawaz Vasudev (42), wife of Vasudev and mother of Barani; February 24 (cremated)
Minoo J. Irani, husband of Silloo, father of Rukshana Adil Mehta, Tenaz Navzer Langrana and Ketayoun Manmohan Sahani; April 22

ONTARIO

Died

Jamshed Byramjee; February 28

SURAT

Died

Nadarshah Behramshah Sethna (83); December 10, 1987
Pervin Parvez Daruwalla (39); December 13
Sorabji Dinshahji Kapadia (85); December 18
Khorshed Jalejar Kelawalla (60); December 23
Dinbai Jamshedji Patel (82); December 27
Goolbai Nasserwanji Pehelwan (94); January 4, 1988
Pilamai P. Gandhi (72); January 5
Rattanbai Dadabhai Doomasia (78); January 20
Maneckshaw Mancherji Unwalla (82); January 27
Ratamai Jalejar Nalookedar (84); January 28
Freny Burjorji Wadia (63), February 1
Meherbai Manchershaw Sherdiwalla (82); February 2
Roshanbanoo Sorabji Kapadia (80); February 8
Naval Faramroze Ambapardiwalla (39); February 19
Manijeh Bomanshaw Khodaiji (75); February 24
Bejonji Burjorji Wadia (78); February 24
Pestonji Gustadji Vesuna (78); March 3
Minochehr Maneckji Ichhaporia (82); March 5
Nerges Faramroze Jogi (67); March 8
Perinbanoo Eruchshaw Bengalee (82); March 9
Zarin Ratanshaw Battiwalla (33); March 16
Jamshedji Sohrabji Kasad (83); March 19
Homi Dorabji Nalawalla (75); March 22
Sheriarji Ruttonjee Bhagwagar (80); March 26
Pirojshah Burjorji Engineer (80); April 5
Savakshah Bomanshaw Parekh (75); April 11
Kaikhushroo Faramji Dookandar (73); April 12
Banoomai Adarji Mistry (83); April 21
Maneckbai Eruchshaw Turel (81); April 28
Mehramai Gustadji Vesuna (65); April 29

Compiled by Roxana H. Kaka

Advisor on family planning



Died: Dr Amy Dhunjibhoy Engineer, 72, former president of the Federation of Obstetric and Gynaecological Societies of India who had often served as expert advisor to the Union Public Service Commission in New Delhi, on April 10, 1988 in Lucknow.

Engineer was appointed on several national advisory committees to look into the technical and scientific aspects of India's family planning program, and maternal and child health schemes, notes her bio data.

Her commitment to the family welfare program won her the Government of India's Padma Shri award and she was conferred the Dr B.C. Roy Award for her outstanding contribution to medical science and research, recalled a condolence resolution passed by the Lucknow Parsi Anjuman on April 15. The resolution in Gujarati also commends her expert medical advice which was sought by several individuals when there was an illness in the family.

Deputed by the Ministry of Health and Family Planning to attend the Fourth Asian Congress of Obstetrics

and Gynaecology at Singapore, Engineer was also invited to participate in workshops conducted by the World Health Organization on the subject of social obstetrics, notes a press release sent by Boman Khodaiji of Lucknow.

A graduate in medicine and surgery from Bombay's Grant Medical College, she subsequently passed her MD (doctor of medicine), MRCOG (Member of the Royal College of Gynaecologists) and FRCS (Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons) examinations. She was also elected Fellow of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists in London.

Considered an "exceptionally intelligent and experienced professor," Engineer had started her career as reader in obstetrics and gynaecology at the K.G. Medical College in Lucknow. For 23 years she worked as professor and head of the department. She also served as professor and head of the department of obstetrics and gynaecology at the S.N. Medical College in Agra for a period of three years. The Medical Council of India had selected her to officiate as inspector at the undergraduate and postgraduate examinations throughout India, states the write-up. After her retirement, the unmarried professor emeritus was preoccupied with teaching and conducting research in Lucknow.

...

Karachi Gymkhana's sporting president

Died: Bomi Pirojsha Khambata, 68, president of the prestigious Karachi Gymkhana and former senior vice-president of the Habib Bank, on November 8, 1987 in Bombay, following cancer.

The first Parsi president in the 100-year history of the Karachi Gymkhana, Khambata was considered the "man behind the real Gymkhana image," wrote one admirer in the condolence register. A non-controversial figure, Khambata will be remembered for being "a gentleman with very mild manners, most appropriate for the president of a prestigious club," wrote another friend.

In recognition of Khambata's con-

tribution to the Gymkhana, serving on its managing committee for over a decade and later officiating as president for three years since 1985, including the centenary year of the 6,000-strong body, the cricket pavilion will be named after him. "This memorial is the first of its kind in the history of the Gymkhana," noted a write-up in the *Parsi Sansar* ané *Lok Sevak* of March 12, 1988. Playing cricket since his col-



lege days, Khambata's other passion was bridge. In this card game, he had represented Pakistan in the gold cup tournament, notes a family source.

Khambata had served as district treasurer of Lions international and was also a member of the Karachi Parsi Institute and the Karachi Club.

After completing his schooling from Boys' Town, Nasik, Khambata proceeded to Pune for further education at the Wadia College. He went to Karachi to study civil engineering but due to circumstances in the family had to reportedly sacrifice his education and take up employment.

His qualities of "straightforwardness, honesty and helpfulness" helped him rise in his banking career which spanned 43 years. Beginning with the Central Bank of India in 1941, Khambata retired as vice-president of the Habib Bank in Karachi, says Dr Ratan Marshall in an article in the *Parsi Sansar* of December 12.

Khambata is survived by his wife Kaity and son Homi.

Compiled by Parinaz Toddywalla

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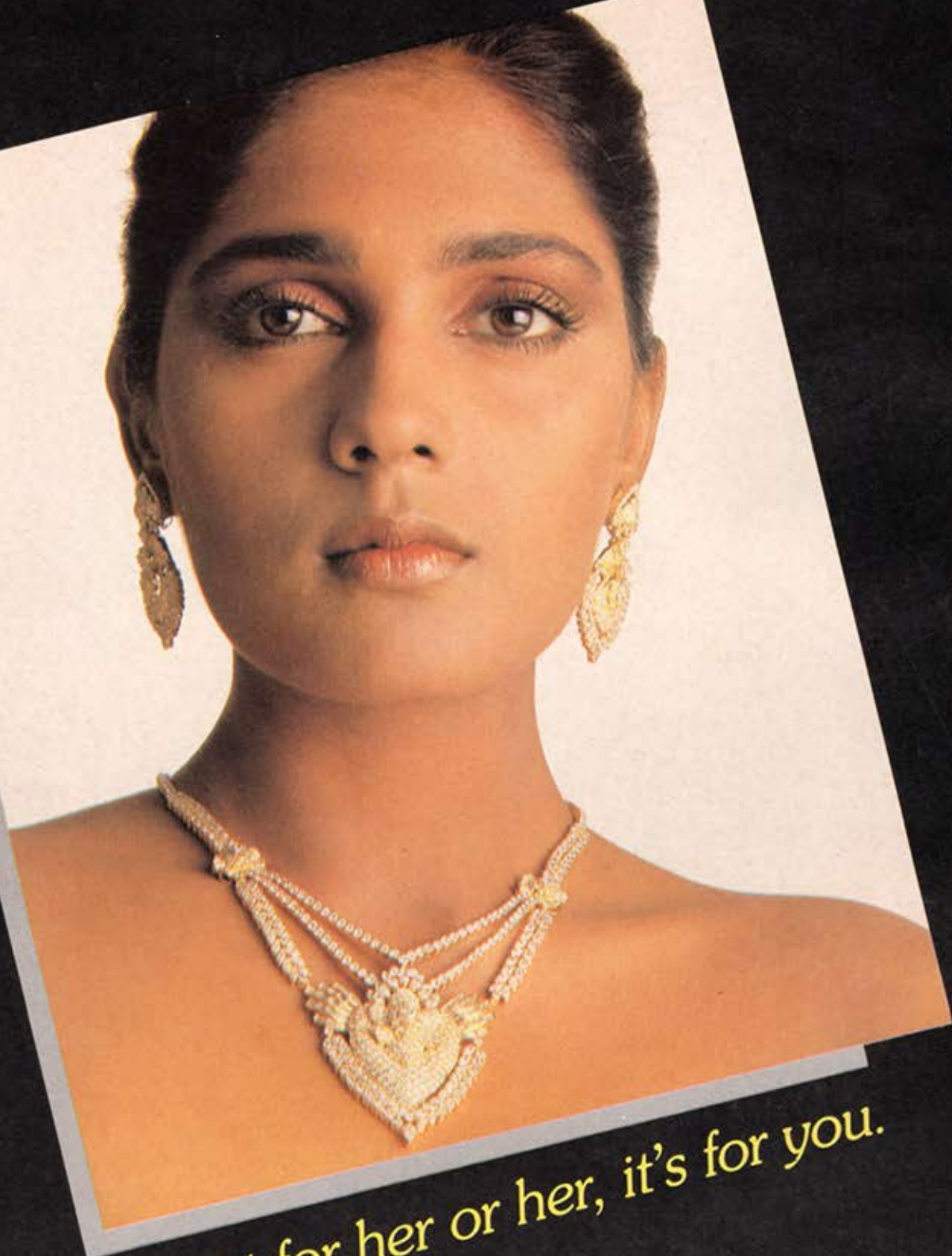
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