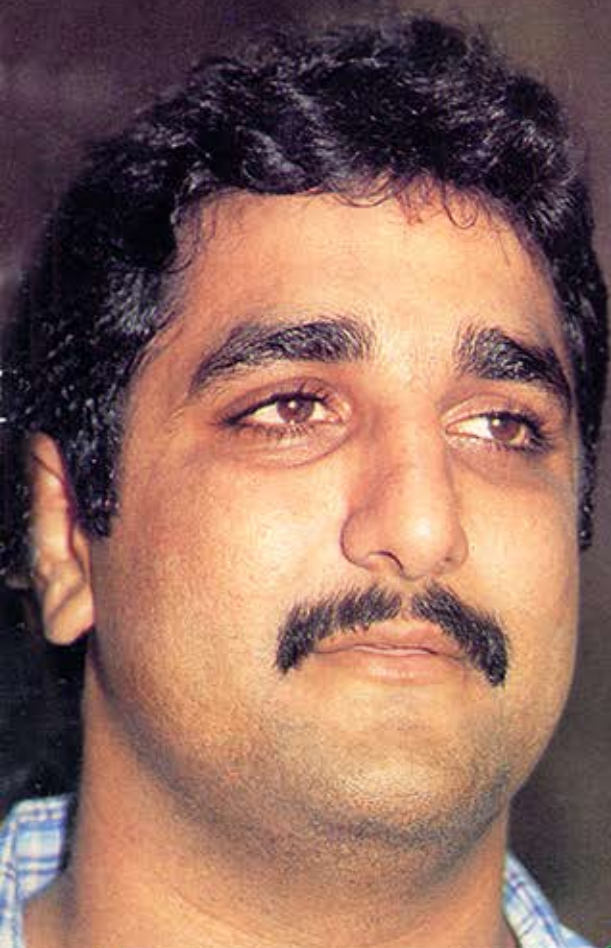


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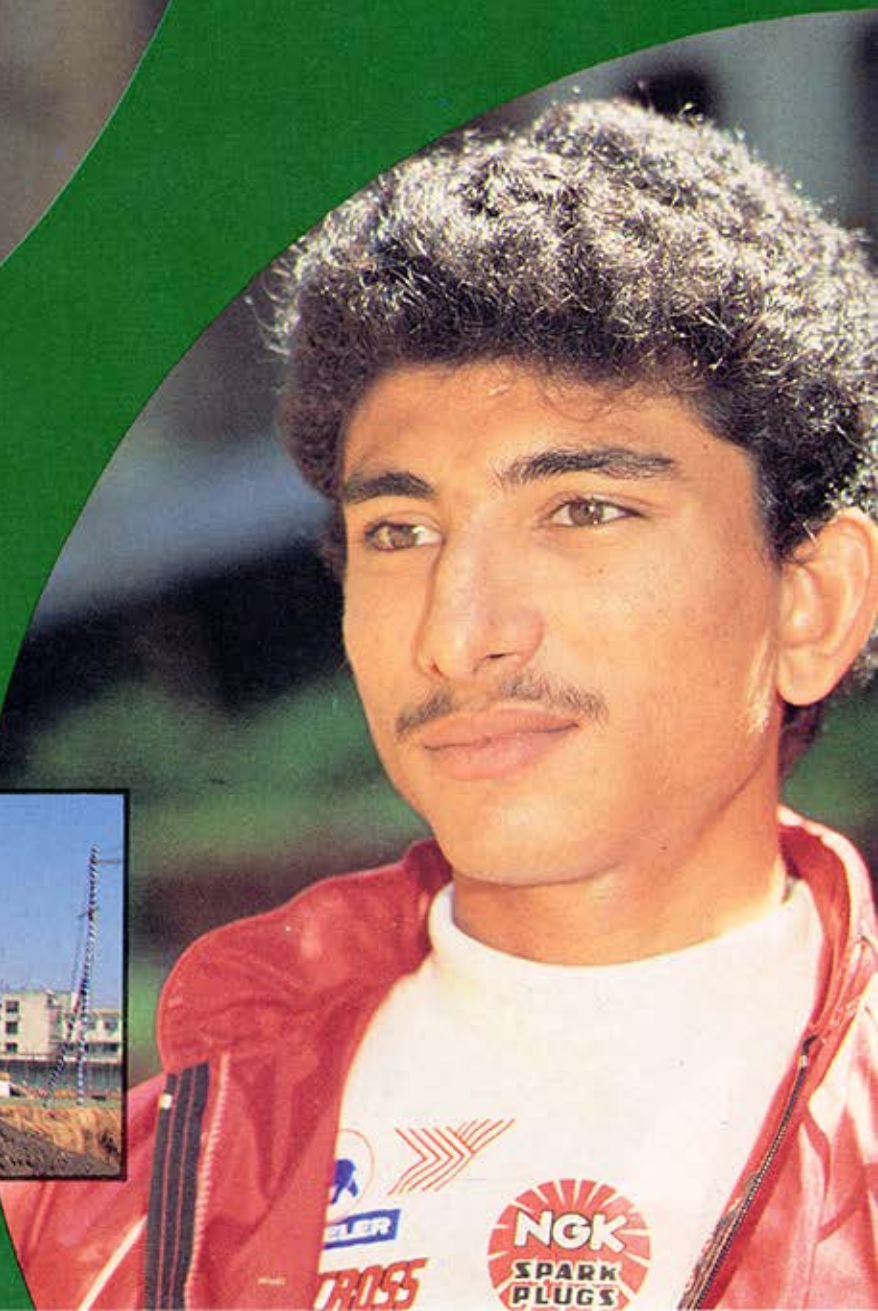
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Parsiana

November 1988
Volume 11 Number 5

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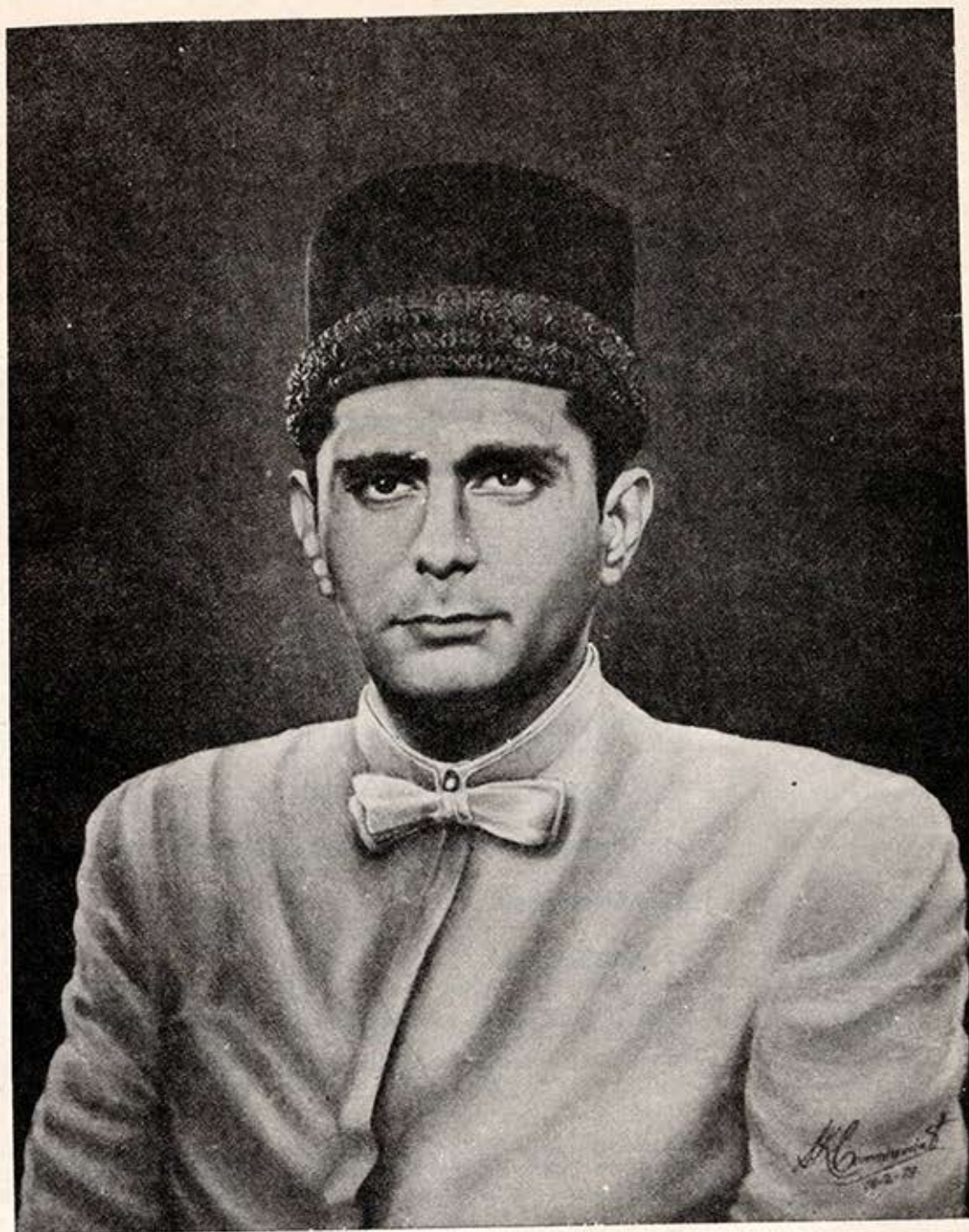
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Transparencies of the rally by Hormazd Sorabjee

Parsiana is published by Jehangir R. Patel for Parsiana Publications Pvt Ltd at C/o H.L. Rochat, Navsari Chambers, ground floor, 39 A.K. Nayak Marg, Fort, Bombay 400001 and printed by him at Parsiana Publications, 300 Perin Nariman Street, Bombay 400001. Phototypesetting, Ace; color processing, Comart Lithographers; and black and white processing, Shilpart. All rights reserved. Phone: 2048730

Annual inland subscription: Rs 60 for one

year (12 issues); Rs 100 for two years (24 issues). Foreign subscription rates: Seamail Rs 130 for one year, Rs 245 for two years; Air mail Rs 275 for one year, Rs 525 for two years. For US cheques add \$5 to cover bank charges. For Indian upcountry cheques add Rs 4 for bank charges. Cheques and drafts is to be drawn in favor of Parsiana and posted to GPO Box 892, Bombay 400001 or C/o H.L. Rochat, Navsari Chambers, ground floor, 39 A.K. Nayak Marg, Fort Bombay 400001.



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. Unsigned letters or those without a complete address will not be published.

"The rift at Masina..."

In the article "The rift at Masina Hospital" (*Parsiana*, August 1988) I was surprised to read the reference to myself.

The author, Mr Homi Rogers, had phoned me one afternoon to say that he wanted to interview me on behalf of *Parsiana* in connection with the Masina Hospital controversy. I told him I did not give any interviews as far as that Hospital was concerned. And that is all.

There was no question asked about the trustees' meeting on December 17, 1987; hence his reporting of my "maintaining a stony silence" is a fabrication.

The fact of the matter is that I had written to the managing trustee expressing the need for an early meeting since the renewal of honorary appointments was to be made by the end of

the month and no final decision had been taken regarding the retiring age. We also had to consider the letter of resignation of Dr Sam Batlivala since a retired dean of a hospital was interested in a full-time appointment. All the trustees except Mr Keki Alpaiwalla attended the meeting in Mr Burjor Antia's office.

My stand in the matter has all along been based on two principles: primarily, that the superintendent's post is a full-time one, and secondly, to have a controversial figure as a superintendent would not be in the interest of the institution.

Dr ASPI F. GOLWALLA

"Does Zoroastrianism..."

The inquiry regarding evidence of reincarnation in Zoroastrianism ("Does Zoroastrianism teach reincarnation?" *Parsiana*, August 1988) is considered by some of my friends as an eyewash and by others as stage-managed. Let me explain.

That Mahamahopadhyay Faribourz Nariman was the scholar who drew up the questionnaire is clearly mentioned in the introduction and also that it was he who selected the scholars to be polled. It is known that Nariman is averse to all who see reincarnation as a part of the Zoroastrian doctrine. It is also known that being a scholar who has lectured in Iran, Europe, Australia and the United States, he is in close and constant touch with several foreign professors and scholars. Isn't it possible that he might have asked his foreign friends and colleagues to give a particular type of reply?

I have often enjoyed Nariman's mellifluous voice (as a speaker) and invigorating language (as a writer). Still, I feel this inquiry is the effort of one man standing against the belief not only of his community, but of the entire country. His is an attempt to enforce a new (non-reincarnation) creed on the community by ascendancy of his genius. This is not fair. When 52 scholars were asked by *Parsiana* to give their opinions, why was it that only 29 responded? Was it because the remaining 23 were not ready to be a part of the conspiracy?

The inquiry seems to have been made to lower the image of khshnoomists and theosophists who

are the only true Zoroastrians; the others are Zoroastrians only in name.

It is a matter of great satisfaction that the minority of four have come out with flying colors by affirming reincarnation with documentary evidence.

FARHAD K. MANJRA

Faribourz Nariman replies

Apropos Mr Manjra's letter, some relevant facts may be stated. Among the scholars who responded as well as those who did not respond, there are quite a few who are not known to me personally or by correspondence. Even assuming that I know all of them, it would be the height of absurdity to suggest, as Manjra does, that the views of 25 distinguished scholars were doctored by me and that 23 others did not respond because they were not inclined to be conspirers. Some Parsis need to be informed that for dedicated scholars, personal relationships are one thing and matters pertaining to scholarship, another. Single-minded scholars of Iran, Europe and the USA will not hesitate to differ from their closest colleagues. And what is more, their differences would have the backing of years of intensive study. Thus, the insinuation that the inquiry was meant "to lower the image of the khshnoomists and the theosophists" is ridiculous.

Manjra does not seem to realize that almost till the last quarter of the last century, there were no Parsi theosophists and till the early present century, there were no khshnoomists. Hence, his assertion that "the khshnoomists and the theosophists are the only true Zoroastrians" and that "the others are Zoroastrians only in name" is preposterous, for surely, one cannot aver that only the nineteenth and twentieth centuries gave birth to some "true Zoroastrians." Also, it may be recalled that till the beginning of this century not a single scholar tried to graft this un-Zoroastrian doctrine either on the *Gathas* or on some Pahlavi or Pazand texts.

"Four (reincarnationists) have come out with flying colors by affirming reincarnation with documentary evidence," asserts Manjra. Three of them have studied in the madressa under two or three of the following scholars:



ONCE THE FLAME OF FREEDOM IS EXTINGUISHED, IT NEVER LIGHTS AGAIN



Dear Ladies & Gentlemen
"Right of Worship"
United Farvardian Prayers
At Brookwood Zoroastrian Cemetery
On Sunday, September 11, 1988 at noon

By the grace of the Almighty and the blessings of the departed souls, our united Farvardian prayers on Sunday, September 11, 1988 were attended by Zoroastrians and non-Zoroastrian spouses (Christians, Jews, Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs) from England, Scotland, Wales, India, Pakistan, USA, Canada and Europe.

All present believed that "All religions come from one and the only God who makes himself known by many a name" (Dastur Dr Dhalla); "There is only one religion, though there are a hundred versions of it" (G.B. Shaw).

Our attendance this year was about three times that of 1987:

	All Worshippers		Zoroastrian Worshippers	
	1987	1988	1987	1988
Zoroastrians	54	126	80	153
Non- Zoroastrian Spouses	5	23	-	-
Zoroastrians 5-18 Years	Not Rec- orded	29	Not Rec- orded	Not Rec- orded
Total	59	178	80	153

It is just possible that more than 23 non-Zoroastrian spouses attended our united Farvardian prayers. The number is based on those who came to thank me for organising the prayers, thereby giving them an opportunity to remember their departed souls in a happy and reverential atmosphere, remembering that, "We have

just enough religion to make us hate, but not enough to make us love one another" (Swift).

I have never made any statement that can be challenged by anyone. If by chance I have made a mistake, I have always corrected it immediately.

All the figures given under the heading "All Worshippers" are 100 percent correct. Figures of the "Zoroastrian Worshippers" were given by a reliable and honest Zoroastrian.

Last as well as this year, the managing committee of the ZTFE would not lend us the *afarganya* for our united prayers. They also did not supply us with sandalwood, *loban*, etc. As such we arranged our own.

We had extended an invitation to all *ervads* to join our united prayers. Except for *Ervad Homi Dordi*, the majority declined because of opposition and restrictions imposed upon them by the managing committee of the ZTFE.

We would like to thank *Ervad Dordi* for his courage in joining our united prayers which were recited by six Zoroastrian ladies and gentlemen.

Names of our revered *Dasturji Dr Sohrab Kutar*, the High Priest of Zoroastrians in Europe, and *Mr Jehangir Dhanjishah Moos*, a past president and a trustee of the Zoroastrian Association of Europe (now ZTFE) were included in our prayers. The congregation remembered their dear ones silently in their own hearts.

As an organiser, I had promised to all who attended our united Farvardian prayers in 1987, that similar prayers will be held in the following year at noon on September 11, 1988. I am happy to have been able to fulfill that promise.

After the prayers were over, I was once again requested to hold similar prayers next year.

Yours truly
 Noshirwan F. Cowasjee

21 Leonard Court, Edwardes Square, London W8 6NL

United Farvardian Prayers at Brookwood Zoroastrian Cemetery
on Sunday, September 10, 1989 at noon.

H.F. Chacha, J.M. Unvala, H.K. Mirza and K.M. JamaspAsa. I know for certain that these teachers used to emphasize, time and again, the lack of evidence in Zoroastrian texts to support the doctrine of reincarnation. Some reincarnationists may be Dabuites and, therefore, committed to 'theosophism'; others may be Dastoorites (followers of K.N. Dastoor, for whom reincarnation is "central to Zoroastrianism"); and yet others may be syncretists, though all of them may preach and write as if they are specialists with all the answers.

Contrary to Manjra's contention, reincarnation is neither the belief of our community nor is it upheld by the entire country. Leaving aside the Buddhists, crores of Christians and Moslems have nothing to do with it. Many eminent Hindus (including the doyen of scholars, Ananda Coomaraswamy) are not prepared to accept this idea. At any rate, the question of enforcing a "new creed" is a part of Manjra's fertile imagination.

The "documentary evidence" cited by the reincarnationists in support of their hypothesis, when translated and interpreted by unimpeachable author-

ities, turns out to be something quite different from what the reincarnationists would have us believe. The arguments which some reincarnationists repeat, have been refuted decades ago by titans like B.N. Dhabhar, J.M. Unvala and H.K. Mirza. Even the invented Sanskrit 'evidence' - *bhava chhedam* - has been recently refuted by Mirza and yet it has been cited once again. In short, if Dabuites and Dastoorites can be called "the only true Zoroastrians," and being unfaithful to one's mentors can mean "coming out with flying colors," then, and only then, Manjra's assertion of falsehood can be justified.

"Feeding the fires"

Although the logic of the various schemes suggested to help meet our fire-temples' requirements of kathi ("Feeding the fires," *Parsiana*, August 1988) appears to be sound, I cannot help wondering whether all this effort is really worth it.

The basic question to be asked is, what purpose does fire play in our prayers? Zoroaster had enjoined upon us to keep the light in our hearts burning eternally, and when we pray, to do

so before an earthly light (in those days, fire was the only source of light) in order to remind us of this light within. Thus, the fire or light serves only as an emblem of the light within us. The specific question to be answered is, why cannot a modern light - the electric or gas fire - serve the same purpose? I hope it is realized that even in Iran, the land of Zoroaster and our ancestors, there is today no perpetual fire burning in the fire-temples. Each devotee lights his own fire in the temple, thereby kindling the fire within.

I religiously pray for an hour or more every day, and have been doing so for over half a century, but I have never felt the need for a kathi fire to remind me of the light within me. May I, as a 94-year-old Zoroastrian, suggest that we, an enlightened community, keep with the times and gradually change over to electric or gas fires in our temples? The advantage of this, both in terms of economy and logistics, will be enormous. The money saved thereby can be donated to our charities.

I realize that I am disturbing a hornet's nest, but this has already been disturbed. The very logic of economy,

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and lack of raw material and personnel, will ultimately force us to change. Why not start thinking about this from now on?

Ms FREANY B. GRANT
Pune

Source of discussion

The articles, "The Unworthy Israps" and "Plans for survival" (*Parsiana*, March 1988), provided very thought-provoking matter.

Parsiana does much more, but if it were to just provide a source of intelligent discussion on the crucial problem facing the Parsis - extinction - it will have fulfilled the need of the times and more than justified its existence.

ASPI R. BALSARA

"A cohesive calendar"

We Parsis pride ourselves on being an enlightened community and yet we doggedly refuse to give up our old incorrect calendar which, though based on the solar year, admits inaccuracies every year. The Earth takes exactly 365 days, five hours, 48 minutes and 46 seconds to revolve around the Sun. For the sake of the calendar, the odd hours are rounded off to six hours, thus making one full day every four years. In the Julian calendar, one day

was added to the year every four years, thus making the year of 366 days a leap year. This system was also followed in ancient Iran. But later, instead of adding one day every four years, one month of 30 days was added after every 120 years. It came to the same thing. However, after coming to India, our forefathers, it seems, added one month to our calendar once or twice, and then either completely forgot about it or became negligent. As a result, today we are about 210 days ahead in our calculations and our New Year, which in ancient Iran was on the day the Sun entered Aries, that is on March 21, is now celebrated by the Shenhshahis as early as on August 24!

By adding six hours a year instead of the correct five hours and odd minutes, the Julian calendar became slightly inaccurate and each year became longer by 11 minutes and 14 seconds, making a cumulative error of about one day in 128 years or roughly about three days every 400 years. This negligible error was corrected by Pope Gregory XIII in 1582 AD by adding 10 days to the old calendar and also by leaving three out of every four centennial years as normal years of 365 days, with only the fourth being considered

a leap year. Any centennial year that is divisible by 400 is a leap year, the others are not. The year 1600 AD was a leap year but 1700, 1800 and 1900 were not. The year 2000 AD will again be a leap year.

Now when the universal Gregorian calendar has been made so meticulously accurate, we Parsis are least bothered about shortening our years, not only by days but by months! The solar year which should run concurrently with the four seasons can never do so if all our years are of 365 days only, as at present. Seasonal ceremonies, like the ghambars for instance, are observed in the wrong seasons. The Parsi calendar is of little use to us in our daily lives except for religious purposes. Of what use then is a calendar if it is not accurate according to the seasons? Will the prayers and ceremonies performed in the wrong seasons bring any benefit to the community?

It is to the credit of the small group of Faslis that they have adopted the *Dini Sal* and brought back our New Year to its original rightful place in spring, the time of the vernal equinox, March 21. All seasons then fall in place. It is time the majority groups of

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the Shehenshahis and the Kadmis make the change as early as possible. The most propitious date for this has been suggested by Dr (Ms) S.S. Sopariwala of Surat ("A cohesive calendar," *Parsiana*, April 1988): March 21 beginning with the next leap year 1992, when all the three *sals* (Fasli, Kadmi and Shehenshahi) have their Hormazd *roj* on the same day. The change will be only in the months, and inconvenience caused, if any, will be minimal.

The British and the Americans adopted the Gregorian calendar as late as in 1752 AD when the difference between the two calendars was 11 days. George Washington, who was born on February 11 as per the old calendar, celebrated his birthday on February 22 after the changeover. And, to date, it is remembered as February 22. What harm has that done? Let us too adopt a common calendar which is correct with reference to the seasons. Will the Bombay Parsi Punchayet, the Federation of Parsi Zoroastrian Anjumans of India, the next Zoroastrian Congress to be held in 1990, the Zoroastrian Studies, our revered dasturjis and the Parsi Press get together to settle this question and rectify the mistake committed by our ancestors?

M.J. PRESSWALA

There can be no two opinions that our Parsi calendar needs reform. By not allowing for an additional day once every four years, our festivals have drifted out of step with the seasons.

In "A cohesive calendar" (*Parsiana*, April 1988) Dr (Ms) Sopariwala has pointed out that 1992 presents a suitable opportunity for bringing our calendars in line. March 21, 1992 will be Hormazd *roj* in all the three calendars - Fasli, Kadmi and Shehenshahi. As suggested, one extra sixth Gatha, suitably named, should be introduced then, and every subsequent leap year.

Even if 1992 is missed, this can still be done in 1993, 1994 or 1995 when the same happy coincidence will prevail. The next such opportunity will only come 120 years later.

R.H. KOOKA

Survey of associations

I propose to make a survey and publicize the welfare activities of associations working for the Zoroastrian community concentrated in Parsi colonies and baugs in Bombay.

These associations organize a varie-

ty of welfare activities - social, cultural, educational and religious - for the benefit of the residents in their respective localities. Then there are other associations (with a wide range of activities especially for the youth) covering the entire Parsi population in the city of Bombay. All these associations are doing a commendable job in the service of the community without publicity or public applause, so much so that the good work done by one organization is hardly known by the community members, even in the neighboring localities.

I appeal to the office bearers of the concerned associations to furnish information specifically, the full name of the association and the year of its establishment; its aims and objects; the total membership - individuals and/or families; the locality covered; the names of the current office bearers; and a brief account of the association's welfare activities.

The material should be addressed to the undersigned, at 6, Summer Breeze, 15th Road, Bandra, Bombay 400050.

Prof KHURSHED C. SHERIAR

Igatpuri Agiary appeal

Our agiary and dokhma at Igatpuri, in Nasik district, are over 101 years old.

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My cotrustees and I request all Zoroastrian friends and trusts to consider donating towards the abovementioned expenses.

Kindly draw your cheque in favor of "The Igatpuri Zarhosty Anjuman," Igatpuri.

H.P. ECHAPORIA

Honorary secretary and trustee
Igatpuri Zarhosty Anjuman

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with its limited funds. To raise funds, the Association appeals to all donors to help us meet the target of Rs 15,000 and thereby enlarge the scope of our activities.

Donations by cash or account payee cheques drawn in favor of the "Amateur Artistes Association" may be sent to the joint honorary treasurer, Ms N.S. Postwala, 5/3, Rustom Baug, Victoria Road, Bombay 400027.

N.R. DARUVALA

President, Amateur Artistes Association

"Meeting of minds"

The article, "Meeting of minds" (*Parsiana*, January 1988), was quite interesting and I would like to make a couple of observations.

The statement by Shernaz Italia who chaired the session on "Zoroastrian Ethics and Identity" that the religion is not being handed down to the youth and that the navjote is a social farce is not only apt and true but frank, forthright and sincere. Our forefathers had planned migration to the west coast of India for the sole purpose of maintaining the independent identity of our religion and the race. The prosperity enjoyed, the pride it took till some decades back that there was neither a beggar nor a woman of easy virtue in the community, our color and appearance, were all due to the fact that except for the last one century or so we staunchly adhered to the above dictum. Today we are Zoroastrians only in name.

Imitation of Western culture has taken its toll. To remedy the menace of drug addiction, decline in values, etc plaguing the community, there is no other alternative but to resurrect some sort of religious atmosphere in Parsi Zoroastrian homes. Each one of us should at least take care to wear a proper ritualistic sudreh and kusti, and not a symbolic one, and to recite the kusti prayers as and when necessary or at least as and when possible. It is also important to practice simple rituals if not all, recite other prayers, visit fire-temples on *hamkaras* and other important days, attend religious ceremonies performed for our departed ones, etc.

Classes for recitation of prayers as well as religious instruction classes should be conducted not only for young children but also for young parents at baugs, agiaries and community halls. Finance should not be a problem

continued on page 48

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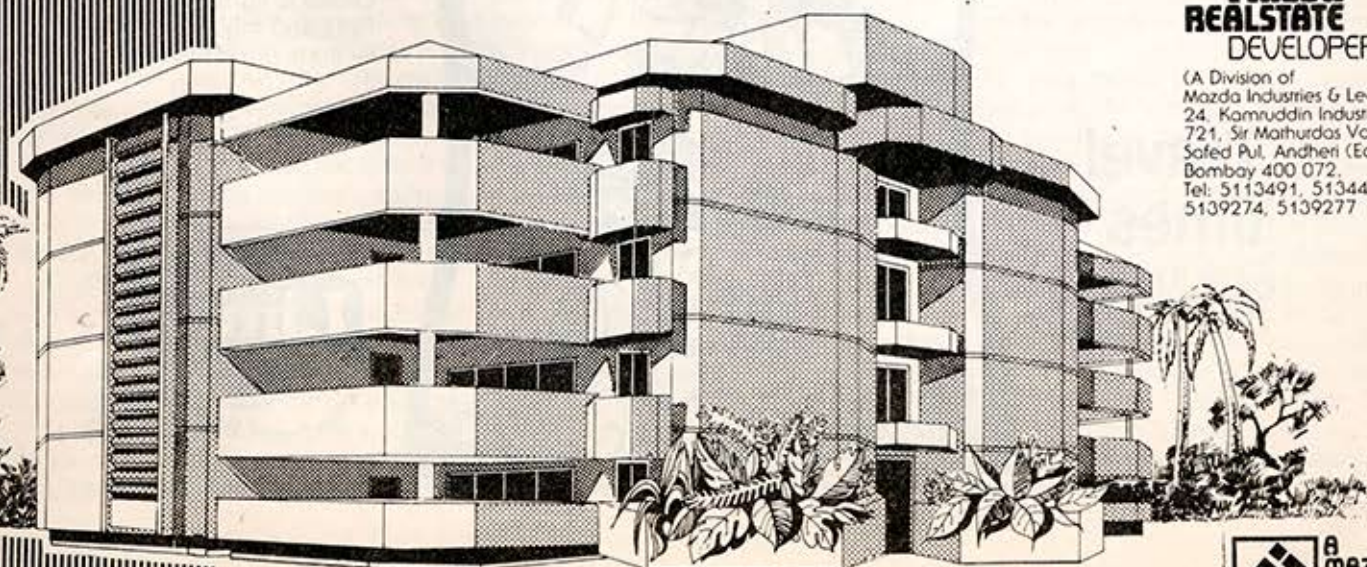
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Events and Personalities

Consensus on BPP scheme

Constituency-wise polling for the next Anjuman Committee elections of the Bombay Parsi Punchayet (BPP) has been agreed to by all the contesting factions in the election scheme suit pending before the revisional bench of the Bombay High Court. The donors (those who had paid Rs 5,000 and above) will continue to have a direct vote in the trusteeship elections, but in future, only those who pay Rs 15,000 and above will have the right, and that too, only after a five-year waiting period. The constituency-wise elections became necessary in light of the large number of representatives (749) to be elected to the Anjuman Committee by the community.

But before these amendments to the election scheme can be finalized, the two-judge bench – comprising Justices Sujata Manohar and Bakhtawar Lentin – directed the BPP on October 31, 1988, to advertise the gist of the proposed changes in the *Jam-e-Jamshed* and *The Bombay Samachar* so that the community is kept informed of the developments.

The next hearing of the case has been scheduled for December 2, 1988 when fresh submissions, if any, will be considered before finalizing the scheme. Until the next Anjuman Committee elections take place, Dr Aspi Golwalla, whose term expired this October, has been asked to continue as chairman.

Justice Lentin, substituting for Justice Sawant, inquired half in jest at the start of the hearing, "Out of curiosity may I know what my community is fighting about this time?" While some advocates sought to assure him that there seemed to be an almost consensual agreement regarding the election scheme, counsel Rusi Sethna, representing one of the parties, replied with a rhetorical question, "Does it need a cause to fight?"

Parinaz Toddywalla

Tithal stay upheld

The stay on the lease of the Tithal Sanatorium Trust property to builder Vipin Shah has been upheld by a two-judge bench of the Bombay High Court. Justices Sawant and Sujata Manohar agreed with the verdict delivered by Justice Dawd of the Bombay High Court, accepting the appeal of beneficiaries Merwan and Benafshay Irani against the ruling of the assistant charity commissioner M.M. Tule. Earlier the trustees had been given permission to lease the 14-acre plot at Tithal, the seaside resort near Valsad, in Gujarat.

The land was sought to be leased for 99 years at an allegedly nominal amount (Rs 1,70,000 per annum, to begin a year after finalization of the sale deed, for an area reportedly valued at around five crore rupees). The Iranis' counsel Aspy Chinoy contended that the trustees (Ms Shirinbai Narielwala, Dr Rustom Patel and Jehangir Bamji) should have filed a cy pres petition and given prior intimation to the community of the proposed change of usage. Moreover, the lawyer argued, the trust deed emphasizes that the name of the place must remain the 'Tithal Parsi Sanatorium.'

When Shah had pleaded in the court of Justice Dawd that the plots of land had already been subleased, the opponents had asked for the names and addresses of those to whom the plots had been sold or leased. The list has not been forthcoming so far according to Irani who says, "We are pursuing with a chamber summons."

Arnavaz S. Mama

MP anjumans get together

"Spirited speeches were made and there was optimism all around, leaving no doubt in anyone's mind that we will ever survive as staunch Zoroastrians and true Indians. What wonders can such meetings of small and neighbor-

ing anjumans achieve! Let this be a pointer for the Parsis all over to act likewise," writes Gp Capt Dhunjishaw Marker, vice president of the Mhow Parsi Zoroastrian Anjuman in his report on the get-together, in Ratlam, of the small anjumans of Madhya Pradesh (MP) on August 27, 1988.

Nearly two hundred Parsis from Mhow, Indore, Ujjain, Neemuch and Dahod in Gujarat enjoyed the "fellowship, discussions, and free and frank airing of views" organized by the Ratlam Parsee Anjuman, writes Marker.

Tehmtan Anklesaria, president of the Ratlam Anjuman, noted in his speech that many of the anjumans which had once boasted of a number of members and material prosperity had now dwindled in their membership and were almost defunct. Frank discussions and timely action between neighboring anjumans would go a long way to help, he emphasized. The president of the Indore Anjuman Dr Jamshed Pohwala's suggestion that the Parsis of Madhya Pradesh form a mini-federation, on the lines of the All-India Federation, to discuss their problems was reportedly accepted by the assembly. Marker felt that the youth should be encouraged "to follow and uphold the values for which our community is known."

The next gathering of the MP anjumans, slated for November, was to be hosted by the Ujjain Anjuman which, according to the report, consists of four members: Jangoo Doongaji, his wife and their two children.

"Airing good manuscripts"

Praxis, a new publishing project headed by Adil Jussawalla, released its second book *Women in Dutch Painting* by Eunice de Souza on September 14, 1988, according to an article in *The Indian Post* of the same day. The first publication released in the previous month was a play by Dr Gieve Patel, *Mister Behram*.

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Hoping "to bring out a selection of creative writing – poetry, drama, fiction – by Indian writers who are writing in English, as well as translations of work from Indian languages," Praxis has "been conceived as a professional and commercially viable project even if it does not make profits," says the article. The Praxis Foundation for Psychoanalysis and the Plastic Arts, which is behind the project, "has initiated the publishing project with the intention of airing some good manuscripts which have been gathering dust for want of a publisher," says *The Post*. "We are not looking for manuscripts (at the moment) but we are looking for a good distributor. And, of course, for sponsors," Jussawalla told *The Post*.

The next book expected to be released at the end of the year, according to the article, is Manohar Shetty's *Borrowed Time*, "to be followed by Cyrus Mistry's much-neglected play *Doongaji House* which received the Sultan Padamsee award way back in the 70s but has neither been produced nor published so far." "Praxis would be interested in bringing out first books by authors if we can get a sponsor to underwrite a series," Jussawalla told the paper. The publishing house is expected to give a 10 percent royalty to authors whose works are published.

Jussawalla, who was the editor of Penguin's first anthology of Indian writing in English and later with the Clearing House poetry publishing project, was the "obvious choice" to head Praxis because of his experience, notes the article. When he was earlier approached in 1986, the project did

not materialize. Finding "a new set of sponsors ... we decided to go ahead ... on a much smaller budget," he said. Pointing out that book publishing has no "cushioning" in terms of cost reduction by advertising revenue, Jussawalla admitted to the paper that it "may be months, even years before the books sell out."

League for competitions

An awareness of the Zoroastrian culture is what the Iran League hopes to achieve by organizing its annual music talent, elocution and *Shah Namah* recital competition. Organized in June and July, 1988, the venue of the three events was the Bai M.N. Gamadia Girls' High School, notes a press release.

The participants were divided into five different age-groups: Juniors (below six years), Group I (seven to 11 years), Group II (12 to 16 years), Group III (17 to 20 years) and Seniors (21 years and above).

Out of the 61 participants at the music competition held on July 23, Naushad Buchia won the Late Ms Alama Kaikhushru Sahukar Rolling Trophy. The first prize winners in the Gujarati vocal section were: Armin Turel (Juniors), Teenaz Bamji (Group I), Benaifer Mehta (Group II) and Homai Bulsara (Seniors). The winners in the English vocal section were: Gulnar Mistry (Juniors), Shernaz Mulla (Group I), Anahita Shapurji (Group II), Zarin Adajania (Group III) and Roshan Patel (Seniors). In the Gujarati instrumental section, Kaneeza Bhagat (Group I) was the lone winner. Sharmin Kapadia (Group I), Jasmin Kasad (Group II) and Anahita Dadachanji (Group III) were the winners in the English instrumental section.

Benaifer Wykes (Group II) won the late Ms Ratanbai Chothia Rolling Trophy in the Gujarati section at the elocution competition held on July 16. Anahita Shapurji (Group II) was adjudged the overall winner in the English section, thus winning the late Ms Roda Sohrab Panthaki Rolling Trophy. From a total of 33, the others who were declared winners were: Jarjadeity Homavazir (Gujarati – Juniors), Gulnar Mistry (English – Juniors), Sherezade Khambatta (Gujarati – Group I), Teenaz Bamji (English – Group I) and Parizad Sidhwa (English – Group III).

At the *Shah Namah* recital competition held on June 18, Veera Doongriwalla from Group II was awarded the late Ms Homai Fali Master Rolling Trophy for the best performance at the meet. Yasmin Bajan (Juniors), Sherezade Khambatta (Group I), Parizad Sidhwa (Group III) and Khushru Pavri (Seniors) were adjudged the winners from amongst the 40 participants in the different categories.

The prize distribution ceremony which was held on September 17 at Albless Baug, coincided with the annual day function of the Iran League. A jashan ceremony, led by Ervad Hormazdyar Turel, was followed by speeches from the League's vice president Cowasjee Dinshaw, treasurer Vispi Dastur, secretary Fali Master, Ervad Pervez Bajan and the

Sydenhamite D.N. Daruwala, one of the students of the 1919 batch, was the first to gift a cheque of Rs 500 to principal Dr S.K. Modak on the occasion of the Sydenham College's platinum jubilee celebrations. Twelve days after he made the contribution, Daruwala passed away.

(Left) Jussawalla: supporting creativity
(Center) Participants at the
Iran League's music competition





(Left) Patell with his 'trusted mount'
(Center) Kapadia: flair for music
(Right) Kothavala receiving the Ness Wadia Gold Medal from College principal N.B. Sapre



chief guest Dr Sam Bhacca, president of the Surat Parsi Punchayet.

The highway rider

To prove to himself that "anyone who has the guts and courage ... can achieve (anything)," 65-year-old Dady Cowasjee Patell covered a distance of 600 km on a moped from Secunderabad to Pune, notes the *Maharashtra Herald* of March 24, 1988. The journey was completed in 27 hours.

Riding a TVS Champ moped, "fidle-fit" Patell, a retired engineer of the Government of Andhra Pradesh, started off from Secunderabad on March 5 and reached Solapur the same day. He left the city early next morning, reaching Pune at dusk. "He kept at a steady 40 km per hour and after every two hours' run took brief halts before commencing the journey once again on his trusted mount," the paper adds.

Toying with the idea of undertaking this journey for the last two years, "just for the heck of it," Patell approached some Parsi youngsters, but they declined as "they zoom at 80 to 100 kmph on (the) highways on their speedsters like Ind Suzukis, Kawasakis and Yamahas," notes a letter from Patell, forwarded to *Parsiana*. Subsequently he advertised for a companion but got no favorable reply. Undaunted, he undertook the journey alone.

In a subsequent letter to *Parsiana*, Patell enumerated his dangerous encounters. On one occasion, when trying to give way to madly speeding trucks, he reached a corner of the

road, beyond which "there was no place to go." Another time, a gang of men and women reportedly tried to block his road about 40 km from Omerga (near Solapur). But on noticing a small gap, Patell rushed past them at a speed of 55 kmph. "Had I stopped, I would have been looted and perhaps lost my life," he writes.

Patell's next ambition is to travel from Kanyakumari to Delhi, if he can find sponsors.

Gujarat's 'golden voice'

An approved radio artiste whose programs have been broadcast under *Yuva-vani* by All India Radio, Ahmedabad, ghazal singer Soli Kapadia is eager to take further training in classical vocal music, notes a letter from the artiste. Twenty-one-year-old Kapadia, who was interested in music since his early childhood, is being tutored in classical vocal music for the last three years. But for more intensive music coaching with teachers of repute who charge higher fees, Kapadia would appreciate receiving sponsorship assistance.

Singing bhajans and ghazals in Gujarati as well as in Urdu, some of which are his own compositions, Kapadia has given around 25 public performances in cities like Surat, Ahmedabad, Navsari and Bilimora. The Surat-based vocalist is studying in his final year for a BSc Tech degree from Mantra, Surat, notes the letter.

For three consecutive years - '85, '86, '87 - Kapadia bagged the first prize in the District Youth Festival. In 1986 he was declared the winner in the competition 'Golden Voice of Gujarat' and in the same year, participated in the All-India University Youth Festival held in Jaipur. He stood second in the Gujarat State Youth Festival '86-'87, adds the letter.

Award for brilliance

For her "commendable performance" at the Nowrosjee Wadia College, Pune, Sarvar Firdaus Kothavala was awarded the Ness Wadia Gold Medal in August 1988, notes a press release. She is presently studying for a dual degree in international economics and computer science at Mount Holyoke College, Massachusetts, USA, which is reportedly "one of America's largest and well-known colleges of liberal arts for women."

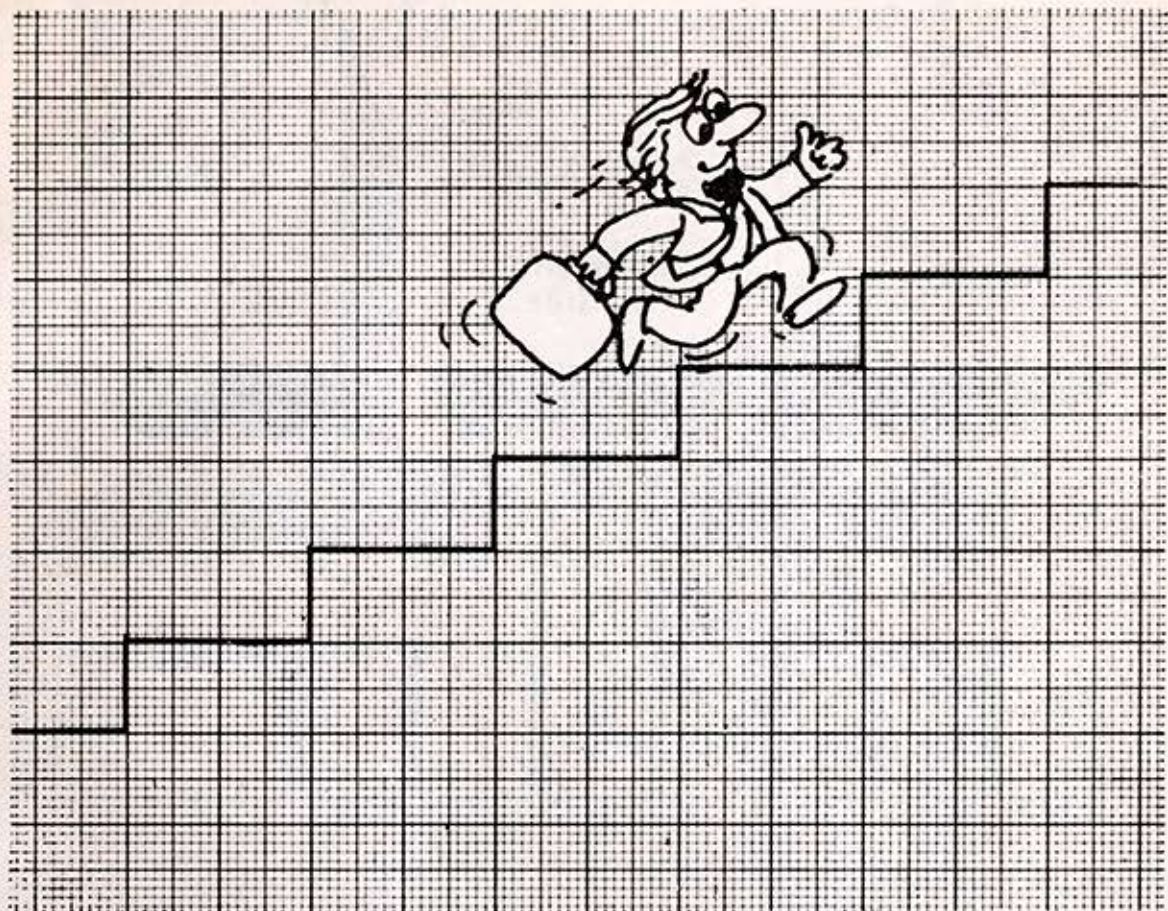
A first class student throughout her school career, Kothavala joined the Nowrosjee Wadia College in 1985 and won a scholarship for securing the highest marks [85 percent at the ICSE (Indian Certificate of Secondary Education) examination] among the entering Arts faculty students. Scholarships were also awarded to her during her subsequent years in college. Of approximately 3,00,000 students who appeared for their Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) examinations in the Arts stream in the state of Maharashtra, Kothavala secured the fifth rank and with her 80.17 percent, stood first among the Arts students of her college, notes the release.

A keen swimming enthusiast, Kothavala has won several prizes at the Poona Club swimming championships held every year. Her other hobbies include taking part in debates and essay competitions. She also secured a first class in a certificate course in Japanese conducted by the Poona University, further notes the release.

Ford Foundation program

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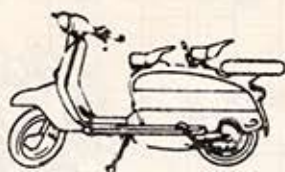
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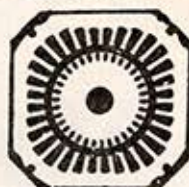
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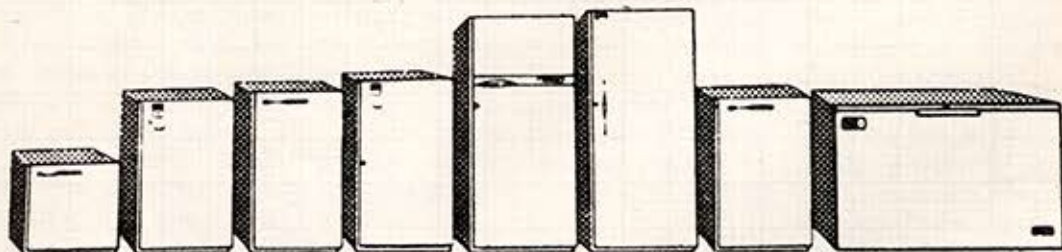
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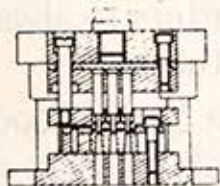
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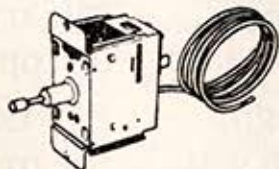
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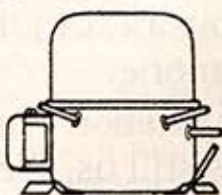
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Rana (left): on panel of political scientists
Edulee: tangible assistance

been promised aid by the Ford Foundation, informed Prof Aspy Phiroze Rana, the director of the program.

The first instalment of a grant of Rs 13 lakhs was released to the department, Rana was quoted in a report in *The Times of India* datelined March 17, 1988. It is perhaps the first time that a university department in the country has been recognized by the Ford Foundation, the paper notes.

The growing importance of Gujarat as a frontline state with international land and maritime frontiers, together with the striking advances made by its people in international business, trade and finance were some of the considerations which had attracted an international grant from the Ford Foundation, Rana is quoted as saying.

Rana, a former head of the department of political science, is also director of two other national-level programs financed by the University Grants Commission (UGC).

In a letter from Rana, forwarded to *Parsiana*, the professor mentions that he has been appointed on a UGC national lectureship and is serving his fourth term on the UGC national panel on political science.

A former senior Fullbrighter at the University of Chicago, Rana is presently co-chairman of the Indian chapter of a transnational project of the International Studies Association of North America, according to the letter. In this connection, he was due to visit Washington DC in August this year to attend a 40-nation meeting of the World Assembly of International Studies and to also present a paper at the XIV World Congress of the Inter-Political Science Association, to be held immediately thereafter. He was also scheduled to visit several American and British universities and insti-

tutes of international studies in the South East Asia region, the letter adds.

Serving Rotary at 80

Edulee C. Edulee from Nagpur serves as the governor of Rotary International (RI) district 314 which reportedly covers 70 Rotary clubs in the region between Bombay and Nagpur, according to a letter from Keki R. Bala, honorary secretary of Shree Nagpur and Kamthi Parsi Zarthosti Anjuman. Edulee who celebrated his eightieth birthday on September 21 this year, has a "record" of making 55 trips to the United States for Rotary purposes, observes an article in the *Nagpur Times* of June 30, 1988. A founder member of the Rotary Club of Nagpur, he has held several positions for RI, including that of treasurer on the international body, and vice chairman of the world community service committee. He became a Paul Harris Fellow (an accolade instituted in memory of the RI founder) in 1970 "in appreciation of tangible and significant assistance given for furtherance of better understanding and friendly relations between the people of the world," says the *Nagpur Times*.

A retired officer of the Indian Territorial Army, Edulee then pursued a

career in business for 34 years, according to the article. The octogenarian was also an enthusiastic pilot until his eye was operated upon this year. Reportedly associated with several social organizations, Edulee was a managing committee member of the Nagpur and Kamthi Parsi Zarthosti Anjuman and was also a member of the Indian Red Cross Society's Maharashtra state branch committee, says the article.

Contact for articles

Restarted in July 1988 after a gap of a couple of years, the poor response the magazine *Contact* got prompted its editor Thrity Bharucha to confess, "It was a bit of a damper." Financed by the Malcolm Baug Zoroastrian Association and distributed free to the residents of the Baug, *Contact* carried original and reprinted feature articles, poems and news on events taking place in the colony.

Bharucha, who single-handedly produces the publication in her spare time, says, "Everybody wants to read the magazine but very few people come forward with articles."

First brought out in 1978 as an English quarterly, *Contact* became bilingual when it started receiving Gujarati articles. Bharucha's mother used to

continued on page 46

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Not afraid to say "I am a Zoroastrian"

Young Zoroastrians reaffirm the relevance of their faith at the
Second North American Youth Congress

Jim Arjani

About 250 enthusiastic young Zoroastrians from all over North America and at least one from faraway Pune, India, attended the Second North American Zoroastrian Youth Congress in Chicago from September 3 to 5, 1988.

Views were exchanged, as were names, addresses and telephone numbers. For many of the participants and organizers, the social events – dances, dinners and variety entertainment programs – were just as important a means of fostering a feeling of community as the speeches, workshops and discussions on preserving the Zoroastrian way of life.

The event, held over the Labor Day weekend (a yearly holiday honoring workers in the United States), was sponsored by the Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Chicago (ZAC) and held at its Darbe Mehr.

Under an overarching theme, "The Relevance of Zoroastrianism in the New World," participants in the Congress investigated several topics: Everyday challenges to Zoroastrian youth in North America, Youth participation in the community, Significance of prayers in daily life and even a look at Zoroastrianism in the twenty-first century.

Present-day concerns inevitably dominated, though speakers addressing the religion's future in the next

century tended to look back at its long and glorious history. The significant track record that our ancestors established in India and Iran will continue to give young Zoroastrians many reasons to feel proud of their heritage, said 14-year-old Ervad Mazda Antia of Chicago. He exhorted his peers to work together as a team without grudges or hard feelings among themselves. Taking his own advice to heart, Antia fielded questions in a mature and calm manner, even on the controversial issue of conversion.

And befitting his status as ervad, he stressed the importance of daily prayers. "Prayers will work for you only if you recite them regularly, properly and understand their meaning," he said.

Later that first day of the Congress – Saturday, September 3 – Ms Shernaz B. Ghandhi of Grosse Pointe Woods, Michigan, gave an enthusiastic speech on the everyday challenges facing young Zoroastrians in North America. It dealt mainly with a crucial part of the daily lives of young Zoroastrians – their time in school. She tackled the problem of having to explain their religion to non-Zoroastrian schoolmates, to whom Zoroastrianism is quite obscure. In the opinion of many, it turned out to be the most practical speech of the three-day session.

We should never be afraid to say, "I

am a Zoroastrian," Ghandhi counseled. As for the sudreh and kusti, she advised Zoroastrian youngsters to answer the questions of their non-Zoroastrian peers openly and honestly instead of with embarrassment. "We wear our sudreh and kusti to remind us of good thoughts, good words and good deeds, to protect us from evil forces, to let the holy spirit inside us know that we need his guidance, and to remind ourselves to be thankful to God for all that he has given us," she suggested as an answer.

Her remarks were greeted by the audience with enthusiasm, with many remarking on the sincerity and directness of her approach.

On Saturday evening, there was a variety of entertainment. First the audience was treated to a "rap" by ZAC youths. The rap – a method of conveying a political or social message through a sing-song dialogue – was followed by an Iranian dance choreographed by Ms Mahnaz Farhadien and Ms Gita Kamdar, two of the coordinators of the Youth Congress.

Ms Diana Damkevala and Sohrab Engineer of Chicago then presented a modern dance. Not to be outdone in rap by Chicago, youths from Detroit presented their own version, celebrating the accomplishments of their group.

Finally, there was dinner and danc-

ing until nearly midnight. During this time it was very easy to make friends.

Perhaps the most provocative comments came on September 5, the final day of the Congress, during a panel discussion that actively involved members of the audience. The topic was "Expectations of Zoroastrian youth." It became apparent that there was a general feeling among the young delegates that they should be free to openly discuss controversial topics such as conversion and intermarriage. As one said, no longer should such topics be "swept under the carpet." Some, who had attended the first Youth Congress held last year in Los Angeles, had come away with the impression that discussion of such topics was discouraged by the organizers.

However, at the Chicago Congress, youngsters began expressing their opinions freely on these hot topics. Their desire, clearly, was not to provoke arguments or to stake out extremist positions, but to seek information and guidance.

So there was little furor even when a

The desire among
the young was not
to provoke
arguments or stake
out extremist
positions, but to
seek information and
guidance

Zoroastrian woman married to a non-Zoroastrian urged each Zoroastrian individual to consider the prevailing circumstances, as well as the quality of the potential spouse before making a decision. Those who wished to chide her, did so gently, picking upon her description of her spouse as "good-looking." There's no shortage of good-looking Parsi and Irani Zoroastrians, a couple of people said.

And there was no tumult when a

youngster, a budding priest, suggested that he would not be averse to accepting a non-Zoroastrian into the religious fold if he was persuaded that the potential convert was someone who exemplified the tenets of the religion or was qualified by virtue of kinship, such as adoption by Zoroastrian parents.

Some changes were recommended for the next congress – the community in Houston is considering hosting it – including a more informal setting for the discussions. That, it was decided, could be accomplished by breaking up the sessions into smaller groups, perhaps not exceeding 15 participants.

In the end, the calm and mature deliberation was probably the most memorable aspect of the Congress, and the most encouraging one for the community's future in its newly adopted land.

Jim Arjani is a 20-year-old undergraduate studying business administration at the California State University at Northridge, California.



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Congress chronicle

The Second North American Zoroastrian Youth Congress is expected to have netted a surplus of between 3,000 and 5,000 US dollars, jubilantly announced the October newsletter of the Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Chicago (ZAC). The 250 registrants included representatives from 22 US states and various Canadian provinces, with a couple of representatives from India and West Germany.

Beginning with the *Jashame Havange Mazda* pledge recited by the ZAC mobeds led by head priest Dr Kersey Antia, the three-day program drew overwhelming participation from the youth members with speakers ranging in age upwards from 14 years, notes the newsletter. Youths chaired the sessions and workshops.

A jashan ceremony performed by ZAC and visiting priests prefaced the gala banquet on September 3, attended by 450 Zoroastrians. Compered by vice-president Bomi Damkevala, the function celebrated the fifth anniversary of the Chicago Darbe Mehr.

Ervad Jehangir Turel of Surat, whose performance of more than 100 nirangdin ceremonies has earned him the title "mobedaan mobed" from the anjumans of Surat, Navsari and Bombay, as notes the newsletter, was presented an award "in recognition of his exemplary contribution and dedication to our religion." Ms Turel received the honor on behalf of her husband. Another awardee that night was Sohrab Engineer whose cover design for the Congress brochure was selected for the occasion.

The following night, the entertainment was organised by Ms Parvin Mobed, Afshin Sadhegi and their group of volunteers, with a live Iranian band in attendance, states the newsletter.

On the last day, the "point-counterpoint" session saw Ms Shara Godiwalla, Ms Dilnavaz Gazder and Aaron Rustam of Houston in the forefront, while panelists Darius Captain of California, Ms Jerroo Chinoy of Michigan, Bozorgmehr of California, Zubin Panthaki of Montreal, Ervad Behram Daboo and Ms Bachi Damkevala of ZAC discussed the "Expectations of Zoroastrian youth."

The work of 50 adults plus all the

youth members of the ZAC, "the Congress was the best example of community participation the Chicago Zoroastrians have ever seen," commented the newsletter.

The Seventh North American Zoroastrian Congress, due to be held in 1990, will be hosted by the Zoroastrian Association of Houston, notes the newsletter.

ZAC's October newsletter acknowledges Yezdi Engineer's handiwork at the Darbe Mehr. Two podiums - one full-length, another a tabletop model - have been refurbished and donated to the ZAC. Engineer has also restained and refinished the main sign at the Darbe Mehr entrance, states the newsletter.

Parsi cookery

Dr Ms Mehroo Patel and Ms Jaloo Captain have coauthored *Parsee culinary artist - the American way*. A collection of 62 well-trying dishes, as cooked in Parsi Zoroastrian homes in North America, the book is recommended as an all-occasion gift, particularly for bridal showers and housewarmings. "What better way to win the hearts of American friends than by introducing them to our foods which they can cook themselves?" asks the ZAC newsletter.

The sale of the book is by donation [five dollars (approximately Rs 75) and above], the proceeds accruing to the ZAC.

Religious perquisites

Gold-tone fravashi tie-jacket-dress pins are on sale for six dollars (approximately Rs 90) apiece, informs the October newsletter of the Traditional Mazdayasni Zoroastrian Anjuman (TMZA) of Huntington Beach, California. Sudrehs in three sizes (small-medium-large) for men and women are priced at three dollars (approximately Rs 45) each.

TMZA vice-president Noshir Jesung is probably the first to put the Avestan script on computer, informs the newsletter. The facility of including Avestan letters in compositions on word processors will be available to those who desire it.

Their August newsletter urges all Zoroastrians traveling from India to the US to help transport comfortable quantities of sandalwood and incense which TMZA president Tahamton Aresh has purchased and stored in India. The collection is for the use of the TMZA's projected agiary and other religious functions.

Compiled by Arnavaz S. Mama

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The Federation offers to intervene

If there is any indication that trust matters are being mismanaged, the Federation will intercept in the interest of the community

Parinaz Toddywalla

For the first time, the Federation of Parsi Zoroastrian Anjumans of India has decided to use its powers to intercede in the affairs of local anjumans and private trusts where the trustees have acted against the interests of the beneficiaries or violated the provisions of the trust deeds. In three cases brought to the Federation's notice – the Divecha Trust property in Thana, the Tithal Sanatorium land in Gujarat and the property of an anjuman in Maharashtra – the apex body will examine documents to determine if the trustees have bypassed community interests.

The Federation may join hands with the Thana Anjuman in its legal battle to prevent the Divecha Trust from disposing of property in Thana for Rs 1,32,00,000 to a non-Parsi developer. The Thana Anjuman states that the land should be used for community housing. To this effect, the Godrej Foundation has offered to construct, at cost, houses for the community on that land. The Federation may also support a young couple – Benafshay and Merwan Irani – whose efforts to thwart the lease of 14 acres of the Tithal Sanatorium Trust land in the Gujarat seaside resort met with success when the Bombay High Court stayed execution of the lease.

After a lapse of five years, the Ahmedabad Parsee Panchayat was once again represented by its president Keki Pavri at the executive council

meeting of the Federation at the Muncherji Khareghat Hall in Bombay on September 3 and 4, 1988. The other major anjuman to still hold out is Bangalore where the panthaky of the Dar-e-Meher, Nadirshah Unvalla, has reportedly threatened to resign if the issue of rejoining the Federation is raised by the Bangalore Anjuman.

The awards for excellence, instituted by the Federation at the behest of its east zone vice-president Homi Bodhanwalla, were presented at a well-organized function at the Jivanji Modi Hall of the K.R. Cama Oriental Institute on the evening of September 3, following the first day deliberations of the council. Awardees from distant cities like Calcutta, Madras, Jammu and Secunderabad, besides many from Bombay, came to acknowledge the recognition conferred on them by the community. The maximum number of awardees were in the field of sports.

A Parsi Festival is to be organized by the Delhi Parsi Anjuman (DPA) from March 18 to 21, 1989 announced DPA president and Federation vice-president Lt Gen Adi Sethna. This project has been undertaken at the request of the India International Centre which, supported by the Indian Council of Cultural Relations, wished to depict the culture of the Parsi community. The Festival, to be held nearly four centuries after Dastur Meherjirana's historic visit to the court of King Akbar, will convey the story of the

Parsis through presentations, designs, displays, live concerts and exhibitions of their traditional arts.

Most of the articles commissioned for the encyclopedia on Parsis, to be published by the Minorities Commission, have been written, according to Minorities Commission member Homi Taleyarkhan. The encyclopedia will focus on the Parsi contribution to various fields of endeavor.

The Cama family, owners of the prestigious daily, *The Bombay Samachar*, have offered to print, free of charge, the Gujarati edition of the *Fed Newsletter*, conveyed Sethna at the meeting. The four-page monthly which is published in English, as also in Gujarati, is financed by various sponsors and anjumans, and subsidized by the Federation.

Focussing on youth, the Federation recommended that every anjuman should amend its constitution to provide a seat on its board for a representative of the youth, and in the meantime, to invite such a representative to attend the board meetings. The need to involve the youth in national politics was emphasized by the delegates. A proposal was also mooted to involve Parsi politicians like Gev Avari, Marazban Patrawala, Rustom Tirandaz, Noshir Mehta and others in the workings of the Federation.

A standing ovation was given by the council members to the Federation president Dr Aspi Golwalla for his ser-

vices to the apex body. [The chairman of the Bombay Parsi Punchayet (BPP) is the ex officio president of the Federation.] Golwalla's term as chairman of the BPP was due to expire this October and it was presumed that he would not be there as president at the next council meeting in Calcutta on December 9 and 10, 1988. But as the scheme for electing a new Anjuman Committee (which in turn elects a trustee) is pending before the court, Golwalla has been asked to continue until the new Anjuman Committee is formed. Several delegates showered praise on his tactful and levelheaded handling of matters, causing Golwalla to comment that his cool temperament was due to the training he had received as a doctor: "Never to lose your temper if you want to be successful."

Proper views of properties

Over 9,000 sq m of land in Junagadh

and 1,600 sq m in Surendranagar have been saved from falling into the hands of usurpers. The charity commissioner has accepted the plea that legal rights and title to these properties vest in the Federation, announced Sorab Katpitia, chief executive of the Surat Parsi Punchayet (SPP). He has been trying to ward off encroachment and neglect of land in the case of several anjumans which are now defunct or likely to be defunct in a short while. The subcommittee on defunct anjumans will soon consider how best to utilize the land, in keeping with the objectives laid down by the trust and the present needs of the community.

While the Federation feels obliged to intervene in issues concerning defunct anjumans, it would hesitate to interfere in the internal affairs of active anjumans. But what happens when there is evidence of misappropriation and mismanagement of com-

munity assets by the trustees of an anjuman, or when the trustees disregard the trust deed and violate the objectives? The executive council unanimously resolved that in such circumstances the Federation would be justified in protecting the property and undertaking the necessary preventive action rather than seeking redress after the damage was done.

In the case of charitable trusts where the trustees are purportedly selling off the land to non-Parsi builders, contrary to the provisions in the trust deed (where for example it is laid down that the beneficiaries of the trust will be Zoroastrians), the Federation may consider becoming a party in the legal proceedings though it would not be able to share any of the financial burden. As announced by Rustom Cursetji, president of the Thana Anjuman, the Divecha Trust which owns 80,000 sq ft of land in Thana has supposedly entered into an agreement with a non-Parsi builder to sell off the land for a sum of Rs 1,32,00,000. In the interest of the community, the Thana trustees approached the Godrej Foundation which has offered to construct 120 to 150 flats at cost price if buyers can be found.

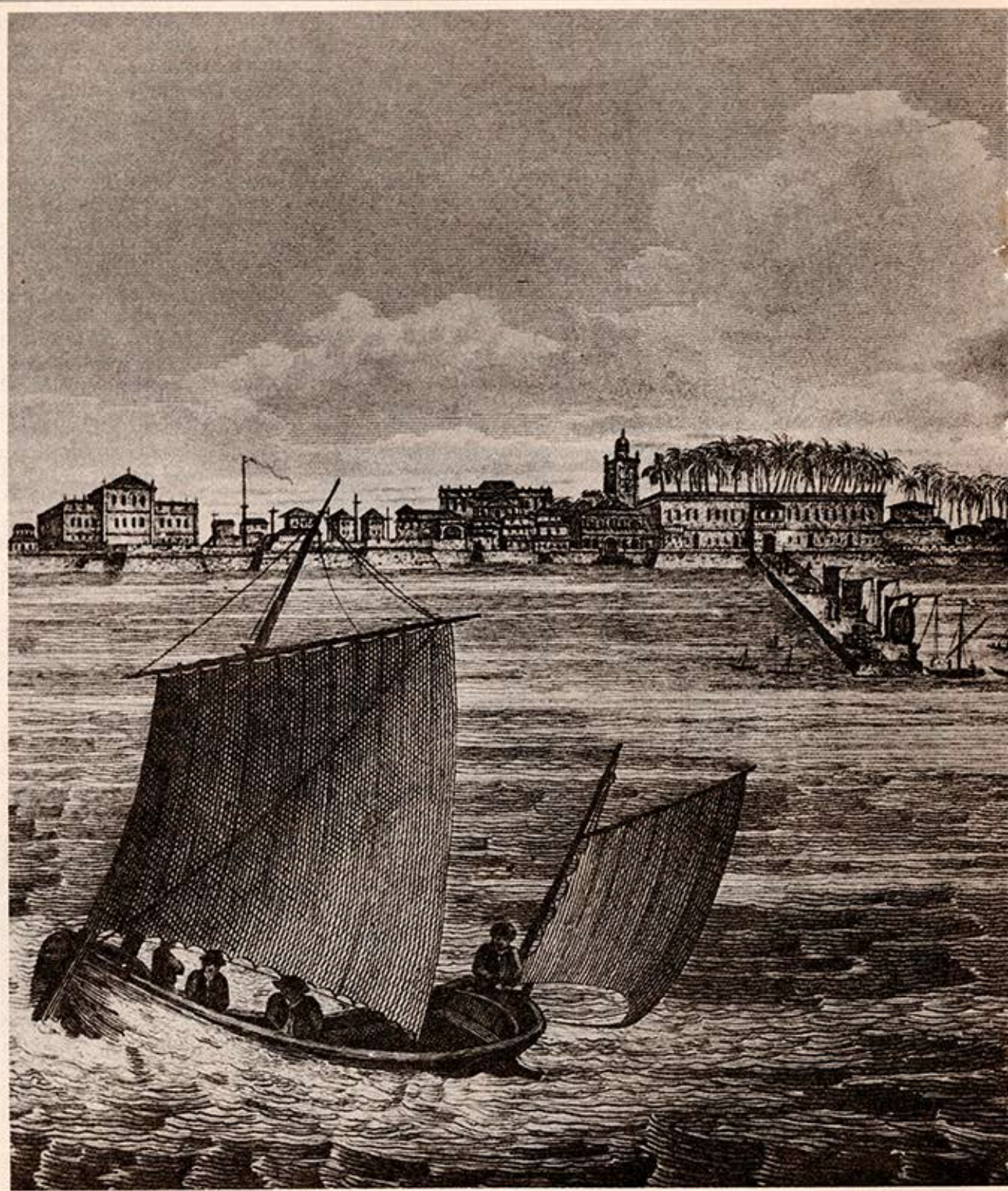
As in the case of the Thana Anjuman which has challenged the sale of the Divecha Trust, the Federation has supported the efforts of Merwan and Benafshay Irani who are challenging the sale of the Tithal Sanatorium land. As conveyed by Merwan at the Federation meeting, the Bombay High Court has granted them a stay order, thus preventing the trustees from leasing 14 acres of land to a non-Parsi and leaving the community with only one acre. This deal had earlier received the charity commissioner's clearance.

But a strong anjuman should not seek to involve the Federation "in fighting the deeds and deals of a local individual, organization or trust, (though these may be) detrimental to the interests of the community," urged the Federation's joint honorary secretary Keki Gandhi. Offering to lend the Federation's support and involvement in any just cause, he cautioned that the avenues for raising funds for litigation will have to be explored by the anju-



*Clockwise from top left:
Rustom Cursetji, Merwan Irani, Pavri
and Golwalla*

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man concerned as "it would be unfair to expect the Federation to stretch its thin resources."

The disused towers of silence and the *bungli* at Diu will be preserved as national monuments as per a government notification. But restoration work on the agiary, which has since been converted into an old women's home, is proving difficult as the nuns in charge of the home are reportedly reluctant to permit government workers on the premises fearing that the privacy of the inmates would be infringed and the functioning of the institution, disturbed.

The aramgah in Jabalpur is facing encroachment problems; the walls are broken, the marble slabs have been removed. The cost of rebuilding the boundary is estimated to be Rs 65,000, reported the Jabalpur representative Ms Rubyna Tarapore. As conveyed by Golwalla, "Ajmer needs Rs 12,000 to build a wall around its aramgah." The Bhavnagar aramgah is being protected by just a wire fencing, informed its representative Minochaheer Bharucha. Speaking from the experience of the Ahmedabad Panchayat, Pavri advised, "Hold on to the land... There is no sense in going to the police (after it has been encroached upon)."

In store for the farmers

Foodgrains worth two lakh rupees were distributed to the poor farmers of Gujarat whose sustenance had been a

problem due to the severe droughts, announced SPP president and Federation vice-president Dr Sam Bhacca who heads the subcommittee that looks into the problems faced by the rural Parsis. Long-term measures will be taken only after coordinating the information received from questionnaires circulated to the agriculturists. But the responses indicate that "a lot remains to be done" was Bhacca's impression.

The findings of Ms Cashmera Bhaya's (née Bharucha) survey of the Parsis in south Gujarat, the assembly was informed, would be made public after the World Zoroastrian Organisation (WZO) - one of the financiers - had studied it. (But apparently, the report was released to *The Bombay Samachar* the same week.)

Considering a Parsi's "indolent ways," his inability "to put his shoulders to the plough," and his declining "contribution to the GNP in terms of agriculture," some delegates questioned the Federation's priorities in encouraging the farmers. Even if wells are provided or dry farming is propagated, "we'll be encouraging only a subsistence level of living," they felt.

A successful farmer from Sanjan, Rohintan Davierwala countered, "I don't agree that Parsis and farmers are poles apart. For many years, the occupation of Parsis has been agriculture." Citing the example of the Dahanu and Gholvad farmers who "are most prosperous" as horticulturists, he recommended that the Federation or the BPP should give loans for peren-

nial farming rather than dry farming.

The horticulturists of Dahanu, as conveyed by the Dahanu Anjuman president Zarhost Mobarakai, have, for over a year, been trying to create public awareness and are protesting against the proposed thermal plant in their vicinity which is meant to generate electricity for the Bombay Suburban Electric Supply (BSES). Sympathising with "the legitimate problem" of the farmers, Taleyarkhan sought to reassure them that they have (got) the support of the different political parties which are pushing for a gas-run plant instead of one operating on coal. The BSES has been told to shift the plant to the Bassein area, reported WZO vice-president Dadi Mistry from Delhi who is involved in the project because his firm will be supplying some of the necessary equipment. So far, they have not been given a clearance to operate from Dahanu reiterated Mistry.

The Iranian Zoroastrian Anjuman came to the help of one poor farmer and financed the cost of deepening a well, informed Davar Kavasji Modi of Surat. That farmer is now said to be progressing and even permits other *adivasis* (tribals) to draw water from his well.

Sethna recommended that Parsis should enter and become leaders in the field of food processing. When BPP trustee Homi Ranina opined that food processing is a fairly capital intensive industry requiring an investment of 15 to 20 crores of rupees, BPP trustee Minoo Shroff pointed out that it

From left: Bodhanwalla, Guzder, Desai and Sethna





*Top row (from left):
Rustom Anklesaria, Kanga and Katpitia*

*Second row (from left):
Gandhi, Taleyarkhan and Ranina*

There was a strong sentiment that youths should be sponsored to enter the country's political scene

could be undertaken locally and not necessarily at an all-India level. Just as a cooperative scheme for the cultivation of kathi had been proposed by Navsari representative Dara Deboo, Gandhi felt that a multi-layered scheme involving farmers and distributors could be introduced for collective farming and marketing by a cooperative society. While agroforestry, where the government encourages cultivation of trees for firewood purposes, was one alternative suggested for the farmers by Firoj Panthaky of Navsari, Taleyarkhan referred to the agricultural ministry's recommendation that farmers be provided avenues to shift to small-scale or medium-scale industries.

Upgrading priests, degrading fires?

Despite offering attractive terms like a monthly salary of Rs 3,000, perquisites like housing, medical facilities and educational benefits for the children, plus annual work worth Rs 10,000, the Mhow Anjuman with a strength of 125 members has not been able to find itself a panthaky. Fearing that their adarian fire would be degraded to the status of a dadgah in the absence of a priest, the Mhow Anjuman youth delegate Ms Pervin Jehangir was anxiously soliciting the Federation's assistance to find them a panthaky, assistant panthaky and a *chasniwalla*.

A new priest has been deputed to the Jamshedpur Anjuman to take over from its aging panthaky. The contacts

of the Federation's joint honorary treasurer Peshotan Nargolwala, described by Bodhanwalla as "the focal point," succeeded in finding them a priest.

The Allahabad Anjuman once again finds itself without a priest as the paramobed deputed there gave up service despite being offered better returns than the ones advertised by the paramobed subcommittee. While efforts are on to find another suitable candidate for Allahabad, Nargolwala explained the practical difficulties of finding prospective paramobeds from Bombay possessing the requisite knowledge of Gujarati. Some candidates have shown an interest in training but only to serve their family requirements and not the mofussil anjumans which are faced with an acute shortage. Gandhi reiterated the need for anjumans to depute their own volunteers for paramobed training.

It was then suggested that the Athornan Mandal, as a representative body of the clergy, conduct a survey of priests, and convince the athornan families to get their eligible sons trained as navars. These qualified priests could then choose to perform religious ceremonies on an honorary or professional basis while pursuing other full-time vocations. Those who had missed out on their navar training due to reasons of age, could avail of the paramobed coaching and serve the community, it was urged.

As a mark of gratitude and respect to the late Dastur Navrooz Minochehr-Homji, High Priest of the Fasli Atash Kadeh, who had assisted the Federation in training its first paramobed, further donations were promised to his widow Nergish. In addition to the Rs 7,000 corpus and Rs 750 monthly pension assured at the last meeting, further commitments of Rs 10,511 towards the corpus and a monthly pension of Rs 100 were promised by individuals, trusts and anjumans. Additionally, the BPP, through the Rayomand Committee, has offered her a flat at Godrej Baug when the next allotments are made in 1989. Since she found the flats shown to her at Tardeo and Dadar inconvenient,



*BPP counselors (from left)
Billimoria, Marfatia and Kamal Shroff*

she is willing to wait for an allocation of a flat with a two-bedroom kitchen area at Godrej Baug, informed BPP chief executive Rustom Anklesaria. Regarding the suggestion for instituting a chair in Zoroastrian studies at the Bombay University in Minochehr-Homji's memory, Taleyarkhan reported that the University's vice-chancellor and BPP trustee Dr Mehroo Bengalee was in favor of this proposal.

While the priests are in short supply, there is no dearth of fire-temples throughout Bombay and Gujarat. It has reached a situation where the fires are many, and worshippers few. If the fire from an agiary is relodged in another building can the disused premises be sold off? As there are no guidelines on this subject, Davar Modi wanted to ascertain the views of the High Priest of Navsari, Dastur Meherji Meherjirana. Quoting a precedent in Bombay, the Dastur felt that there is no religious bar on such a sale. He did however recommend that the building be sold to a Parsi, if possible.

A house for a baby

The proposal to start a day-care center at the Mancherji Joshi Colony at Dadar where reside the largest concentration of Parsis will not be pursued as, according to the Ladies Welfare Committee, there appears to be no need for this service, reported Anklesaria. (This facility for the school-going children of working parents had earlier been deferred for want of suitable accommodation.) The suggestion "could, however, be considered for other areas subject to a demand for the facility and availability of suitable

ground floor accommodation," he added. Devoting a flat at Godrej Baug for use as a day-care center will be considered later, as also reserving some FSI (floor space index) in lieu of one flat for the building of a pavilion there. Golwalla was convinced that the prime need was to provide housing. Following the debate on this issue, Golwalla however asked Anklesaria to place this matter for discussion at the BPP board meeting.

The late marriages among Parsis and the spacing between two deliveries which accounted for a low birth rate were, according to Shroff, even more alarming than the decline faced by the Japanese and the Germans. Shroff had also arrived at figures which seemed to indicate that Parsi couples usually waited for a family income of Rs 6,000 to 10,000 per month before planning a second child "as the community is very particular about maintaining its standard of living." Golwalla regretted that the community made very little use of the fertility clinic at the B.D. Petit Parsee General Hospital. His prescription for the low birth rate was: The next 200 flats be allotted exclusively to the engaged-to-be-married category. This led to a merry exchange of problems and solutions: "What if the couples do not deliver?" "Allot flats only to those who undertake to produce at least four children." "Take away the flat if within two years they do not deliver." This prompted Sethna to announce, "Only a military approach will succeed. Tell them, 'We will give you a house if you give us a baby.'"

Quoting demographer Ketayun Gould's intensive study of the urban

and rural Parsis in Gujarat, Kanga delinked the growth of population from housing, and insisted that there were psychological reasons responsible for the declining birth rate since the last century. Supporting Kanga, Anklesaria questioned, "Was there a rise in population when flats were going abegging (in the early part of this century)?" He further substantiated, "The breakup of the joint family system and the limited time at the disposal of employed couples to look after children" are responsible for the declining numbers in the community.

After discussing the problem of late marriages and the low birth rate, the focus shifted to the issue peculiar to the areas around Navsari and Vansda. As conveyed by Piroz Dandiwalla of Bilimora, many children of Zoroastrian fathers and their non-Zoroastrian mistresses are claiming recognition and rights as Parsis. They are also said to be demanding privileges from community funds and assets and have threatened the trustees with a legal suit. As per the rules of their anjuman, only a Zoroastrian born of both Parsi parents is permitted entry into the fire-temple, it was clarified. Federation's joint honorary secretary and BPP trustee Eruch Desai volunteered to look into the details to establish the anjuman's legal standing.

Infuse fresh spirit

The Calcutta Parsee Youth League, on the occasion of its golden jubilee, is setting the stage to host about 60 outstation delegates to its All-India Parsee Youth Festival from November 5-8, 1988, announced Gandhi. In response to their letter inviting participation from youths of different anjumans, Bombay has promised to sponsor a six-member contingent, and Secunderabad will send four. Since some interested youths may decline to attend because of the high cost of the conveyance, Gandhi urged the anjumans to finance or subsidize the fares of youngsters to encourage them to participate in youth conferences and Federation meetings. (In a subsequent letter to *Parsiana*, convenor Ms Aban Medhora wrote that they were expecting participation from 135 delegates.)

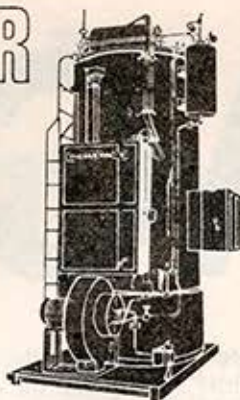
In addition to Delhi and Calcutta, the hosts of the '87 and '88 youth meets, which have established youth wings, youth bodies have also been

continued on page 39

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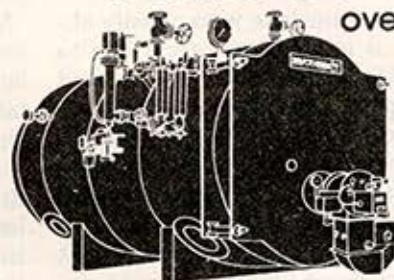
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THE COLOR OF BLACK

At first glance it passed for a black square on white paper. A closer look confirmed that the square was unhinged at the bottom right corner where the margin showed. Also apparent was the sharp angular line that slashed through the square, leaving the right segment about twice as large as the left one. And then from the blackness, colors and patterns emerged: a subtle brick-red across the bottom fading into a hint of green; a glow of light seeping in from behind the panel on the right. The blackness grew in depth and dimension; it started to move as it teased the optic nerve with illusions. Like an organism under the scrutiny of a microscope, the painting came alive, more alive than the sketches of human forms frozen in action.

"What's all this *geloo gandoo* (madness)?" Mehli Gobhai, a painter who returned to settle in India after 25 years abroad, has heard people complain about abstract art. "They must realize that there must be something in this '*geloo gandoo*' for paintings to sell at three hundred thousand dollars apiece." He is referring to the prices the reputed contemporary abstract painters of the West command; his own works are more modestly priced.

Gobhai, formerly an adman who has also written and illustrated children's books, studied art in London and New York. His works have been on view at four shows in America (between 1980 and 1984) and one exhibition in Bombay (after he took up residence here).

Gobhai asks that abstract artists be given a fair chance before their works are dismissed. "Spend some time before a painting. Try to understand what the artist is attempting to say." Fifty-seven-year-old Gobhai leaps up

to illustrate a point and digs out catalogs piled high on a shelf behind his easel that is strategically placed by a large window in his bedroom-cum-studio; the spring in his step belies the gray that has crept into his hair.

A common mistake is to classify abstract art as modern art, according to Gobhai. Modern art refers to a period – the present, the now – and also includes the current work done in the style of the great masters of yore. The proper distinction is figurative and nonfigurative (or abstract) art. "If a person reaches a point where he feels figurative images limit his expression, he crosses over to the abstract," Gobhai explains. The word 'abstract,' the painter points out, means to summarize, to draw from: "It's a distillation of life's experiences."

Abstract art had to happen, according to Gobhai. In the present-day world – the nuclear age, the profusion of social and religious movements and constant technological change – everything has become very complex. Art, "the barometer of what is happening in society," got complex as well – and often superficial too. It reached a point when many artists turned their back on the confusion and looked the other way – towards simplicity. They reduced life, as they saw and experienced it, to its bare essentials, and expressed it on canvas that way. Minimal art was born; very highly personalized – a thin white line on a black background, for example – but very profound nevertheless. "Take the lingam for instance," Gobhai states. "Simple form, elementary lines; yet it represents bloody creation itself!"

A New York critic had eulogized Gobhai as a "post minimal reductiv-

ist." Modestly, Gobhai takes pains to clarify that the critic was probably joking. But his works do have a minimal quality about them: dark colors, simple lines, subtle play of light and geometric designs that spring to life. "My work is very personalized. I paint for myself," Gobhai confesses. He believes that only by being honest with himself can an artist be honest with his viewing public.

Gobhai's work will be on view again in the near future at Gallery 7 in Bombay's Fort area. His earlier show in Bombay in 1985 was held at the same Gallery. "You've got to be loyal to a gallery that has adopted you," says Gobhai. "Sponsoring galleries take 33 percent of the sales, but no way could I have got in touch with the clients they introduced me to."

Who are these clients today? The corporate buyer is the new patron of art. Unlike the patrons of old, however, who dictated what subject they wanted painted, modern buyers or corporate houses allow the painter freedom of expression. Gobhai sees nothing wrong in his works beautifying office walls, company premises or private homes. But there is a catch: though the artist today has more freedom than he had before, he may choose to clip his own wings and cater to the tastes of his client. Gobhai recalls an instance when a visitor to one of his shows liked a particular painting but asked if it could be redone in blue to match the color of his wallpaper. Needless to say, Gobhai did not comply. But the commercialization of art is very real, at least in the United States, says Gobhai. Commercial viability dictates trends which are not unlike the fickleness of changing fashions.



Abstract art is an attempt to simplify life, says artist Mehlii Gobhai

Gustasp Irani

are a crazy Parsi).” He does not wear a sudreh and kusti but is strongly tempted to relearn his prayers and start the practice again. “Traditions and rituals are an important part of our lives,” Gobhai comments. But, he points out, there is also the vibrant and living Indian tradition from which Parsis are alienating themselves. He talks about Indian classical music and about his regret when he is told at recitals, “You are one of the very few Parsis who ever come here.” No, he is not damning the Parsis, he only regrets that the community is insulating itself from what are rewarding experiences. Most young Parsis he meets are obsessed with getting out of the country – “like I (was),” Gobhai concedes.

Before he did make the move West, Gobhai graduated in economics and political science from St Xavier’s College, Bombay in 1950. He then studied law for two years, the aim being to join a family law firm, which (luckily, in retrospect) never happened. Instead, he joined an advertising firm, J. Walter Thompson, and won “notoriety” with an Air-India campaign for Time Life publications. When Gobhai opted for a transfer to the company’s London branch in 1959, he was the creative coordinator of the Bombay operations. In London he took time out and joined the Royal College of Art, but could not come to terms with being a student again and rejoined the company for another three years.

Thereafter, Gobhai applied for a transfer again, this time to the company’s New York branch. “New York is fascinating,” Gobhai recalls. “It has an agitated, seething quality that is not unlike Bombay.” If advertising in London was fun – “like working on

Gobhai has steered clear of the transient trends in the West. “Being Indian and Parsi is of primary importance. It’s inevitable that my roots filter through my work and I am proud of it,” he declares. He has reservations, however, about the general attitude of Parsis to the country they live in – India. “How much are we a part of the culture we live in? Our Iranian heritage is uncertain and if we don’t get involved and assimilate Indian culture, what do we have?” he asks. “We are depriving ourselves by our cultural and social isolation.” He points out that the West is struggling to keep its traditions and folklore alive, even if it is through highly synthetic cultural programs. In India, tradition is still raw and unadulterated, still a part of the fabric of people’s lives, even in cities like Bombay.

Gobhai describes a stroll along Chowpatty beach after sunset. Small groups of people from the various villages across the land have assembled, the sweat and toil of the day behind them. They dance the dances of their villages; they sing the *bhajans* (devotional songs) and folk songs that they learnt back home; or listen in an enchanted trance to stories they have heard a hundred times before. And as he speaks, Gobhai smooths the goose bumps on his arms.

Gobhai is proud of being a Parsi: proud of the community’s wonderful features, like its cleanliness; proud when non-Parsis comment that one can eat off the floor in a Parsi household. “I love the fact that there is an element of eccentricity in the community. I love it when people say, ‘*Tu bee tadan mad cap Parsi chë* (You too

campaigns in a pub" – in New York it was treated with dead seriousness. "There was no middle way. One either got totally involved with selling trifling consumer products or quit," and quit Gobhai did. "New York never lets things fester, it brings issues to a head."

Gobhai then buckled down to the task of writing and illustrating children's books based on the *Panchatantra* tales of India, doing six books in all. Concurrently, he joined the Pratt Graphic Center, New York, where he learned etching and lithography for two years. Next he enrolled in the Art Students League, New York and came under the influence of Robert Beverly Hale, an old academician on human anatomy. Gobhai recalls: "He would start with a drawing of a bone, then over it the first layer of muscle, and then the successive layers, till each and every part of the body was minutely studied." This, the human anatomy, was to be the solid foundation of Gobhai's work. His so-called "inert geometrical patterns" are reductions from the human form. "Art partici-

pates in nature's creative process," Gobhai explains, "echoes it, but does not imitate it."

While in the US, Gobhai participated in a group show titled "Marking black" at the Bronx Museum of Art in 1980. The same year he was invited by the Consul General of India to hold a one-man show at the New India House. Two years later, in 1982, the Giles Gallery, Eastern Kentucky University, held an exhibition titled "Identity and conflict" and Gobhai was one of the six Asian printmakers whose works were on display. In the spring of 1984 the Islip Museum of Art, New York, hosted his exhibition titled "Drawing as the primary medium."

Gobhai, though based in New York, maintained contact with India by spending three to four months of each year in this country. Since 1984, however, the pattern reversed: he spent more time in India and about a month in New York each year. Does he regret his decision? "No," says Gobhai, "I missed more things from

here than I miss from the West. In New York things were dispensable, could be bought. In India the attachments are deeper; traditions here are alive and eternal." This tradition Gobhai hopes to distill into his art; that is when he is not shopping for his vegetables – a ritual he loves – or attending to the nagging details of life, like building a house in the beautiful setting of the Kangra valley in the Himalayas, or being disturbed by the piercing wail of music from reversing vehicles.

Where did it all start? At Goregaon, Versova, Chembur and the outer limits of Bombay. Here his father, a businessman and Sunday painter, would take his son, set up easel and capture the landscape, then still unspoiled, in water colors. His mother chipped in with collections of books on the paintings of the great masters.

Where will it go from here? Time will prove the litmus test. For, as Gobhai points out, the old masters survived history's weeding-out process which only retains the best.

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Its bright lime-green stands out against the scorched brown of earth and grass as the impressive Kawasaki KX 125 cc motorcycle blasts through the 1.45 km dirt track course to post the meet's fastest timing of 1 minute 57.08 seconds. The rider: 19-year-old Kaizad Patel. The event: the Open class for motorcycles at Bombay's first autocross run where 112 contesting vehicles whizz singly round two laps of a dusty, bumpy, twisting course. Ranking amongst the top three in four different races, Kaizad proved himself the best rider of the meet.

Earlier that day, 24-year-old Farad Bhathena had drawn even dedicated refreshment-seekers away from the food stalls as he roared round the course in a Formula Indian racing car to take the *Car and Bike* Trophy in the Open class. Emerging as the best driver of the day, he was also first in two other events.

Two-wheeler ace

In his three years on the Indian motocross and dirt track racing circuits, Kaizad has won 22 firsts, 14 seconds and six thirds, according to his bio data. And on July 30, his one-year contract with TVS-Suzuki to ride with the Suzuki team was announced in Bombay. "They give you the bike (a Supra), mechanics, spare parts, the full team backing," says Kaizad's father Fali. But he is unwilling to disclose how much his son will be paid because he does not want the competitors to know. Riders have necessarily to depend on their own resources or

find sponsors – a notoriously difficult task. "People say to my father, 'He's not earning, just losing money,'" says Kaizad. "But they don't see you're making a big name..."

A slim, quiet boy, Kaizad appears content to let his father answer questions on his behalf when we interview him at Fali's wooden barrel factory in Mazagaon. "He's saying what I would say," he assures us when we protest; but later, when he and his cousin bring us a videotape of his races, he is more talkative.

On the screen, the images race past, motorcycles roaring out of a haze of dust and exhaust. Starkly functional, their mudguards high above slim 'buttoned' tyres, they race up ramps of beaten earth and take suicidal-looking jumps as they negotiate the plain, camel and reverse camel jumps, positive and negative berms, bridges and tabletops that constitute a motocross course. (To date, India has only stadium motocross where the course is landscaped within the confines of a stadium.) "You can break your head, neck, anything," says Kaizad casually. "It may be due to overconfidence and trying to show off – taking jumps in crowded sections – or you may not have a good bike. When I broke my wrist in a practice session at Poona, it happened so fast, I didn't know I was falling."

But serious accidents aren't common, he says, and tells us about a rider who finished third after falling off and being ridden over by another competitor. "And the one who rode over him

didn't stand anywhere!" Protective garb for riders consists of a light plastic guard for the rib cage, worn over the riding suit, a helmet with a mouth guard, calf-length boots and gloves. And how does his mother Gulrukh react to these dangers? "She just sits there and keeps praying when we race," he smiles.

For Kaizad is not the only motorcyclist in the family. His father, who raced regularly when he was younger, still participates as Kaizad's supporting rider when Fali's brother Kersi doesn't; and Kaizad's 15-year-old brother Yezdi rides in the Demonstration class. Kaizad was six when his father taught him to ride, and as he grew up, he rode in their compound and in the lane near the factory. "There was no police van there," he grins.

Though the family regularly attended the races, Kaizad had no particular ambition to participate. Then came the '83-'84 international at Poona in which "an 11 or 12-year-old boy called William" rode as a demonstrator. Inspired by him, Fali wanted to "bring Kaizad into the picture." Permissions were applied for, and at the first Bombay Motocross on May 5, '85, the seven sons of Fali, Kersi, and their sister Godafrin Billiardmaker – (from oldest to youngest) Kaizad, Neville, Yezdi, Zubin, Percy and Firdaus Billiardmaker, and Rustom – were among the 13 riders in a special Demonstration class.

"I taught all these other six to ride," says Kaizad, and his cousin Zubin puts in, "He's our coach." Kaizad com-



pleted a one-year diploma course in automobile engineering at the Fr Agnel Technical Institute, Bandra after his ICSE (Indian Certificate of Secondary Education) from St Peter's High School, Mazagaon. This has equipped him to prepare the bikes for the races. With the whole family involved (even his sister Havovi Irani learnt to ride after her marriage, he says), Kaizad feels his riding requires no sacrifice of family life. "They all come here (to the factory) when I'm working on the bikes," he points out.

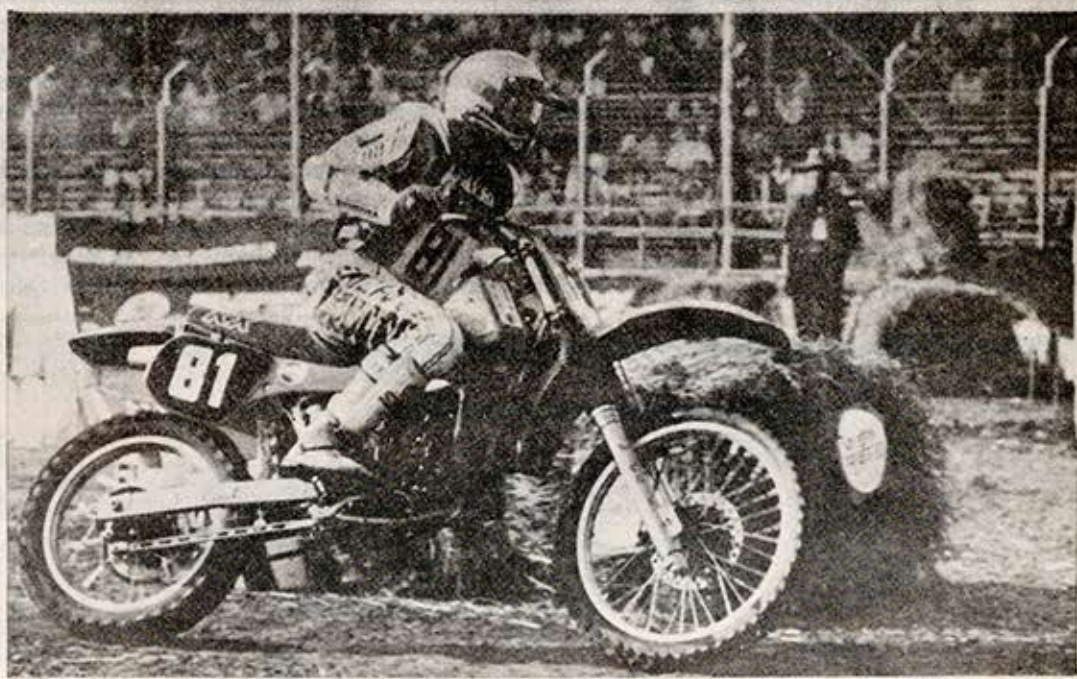
Though his initial victories in the Demonstration class (while a minor)

The thrills of the track for Bhathena in his Premier Padmini (above left) and for Patel on his Kawasaki KX 125 cc (below)

All action shots of race meets by Hormazd S. Sorabjee (The Indian Auto Journal)

Far left: Close-ups of Bhathena (above) and Patel

Photos: Varghese Fernandez



At Bombay's first autocross meet, Farad Bhathena was declared the best driver, while Kaizad Patel emerged as the best rider

made him interested in racing. Kaizad's determination to win crystallized only after narrowly losing a race at Baroda.

Since mid-'87, an intensive two or three weeks of preparation precedes each race. "I go to Dahanu-Gholvad to practise. There is a bare paddy field of my brother-in-law's relative where I've made a slope and about 10 jumps," similar to what he had seen on a video cassette. There, his daily regimen includes an hour's running, exercise, swimming, and two riding sessions on his Open class motocross machine, a Kawasaki KX 125 cc. (For the Indian classes he rides borrowed bikes.) "To gain that stamina you have to keep riding," he emphasizes. "For motocross, if the body is not absolutely fit, you won't win. But even if you've not kept up with physical fitness, practice is very essential."

His other aids are video cassettes of races abroad – to polish his riding technique – and books on bike modification and preparation. "In India we don't have research and development for racing bikes as yet, but the companies are just getting interested. Engineers from the research and development department come to study the bike's performance under racing conditions; for them this is like a test laboratory," explains Kaizad. And, though no one has competed abroad so far, "talk is in the air. The highest Indian body, the Federation of Motor

Bhathena enjoys the excitement of racing and rallying in his Formula Indian racing car (left) and Maruti Gypsy

"If the rally is outside Bombay, the car is flown there. Otherwise you may reach there and your car may turn up four days later!"

Sports Clubs in India (FMSCI) may pick riders from the clubs and send them abroad as a national team," says Fali.

And who are the best riders? Kaizad enumerates Shyam Kothari, Pratap Bhagwat, Ashok Raja, Ashok Bhairavkar, Arif Shaikh, Rajiv Aggarwal. "But who wins, depends on the track and on how you ride that day," he adds. Other Parsis in the field are Firdaus Chindhi, Neville Darukhanawalla and Porus Irani in motocross, and Aspi Bhathena and Nozer Kyani in circuit racing (on a tarred or concrete track). But not many of their families are involved in the sport. "Actually, most of the parents are against it," confides Fali.

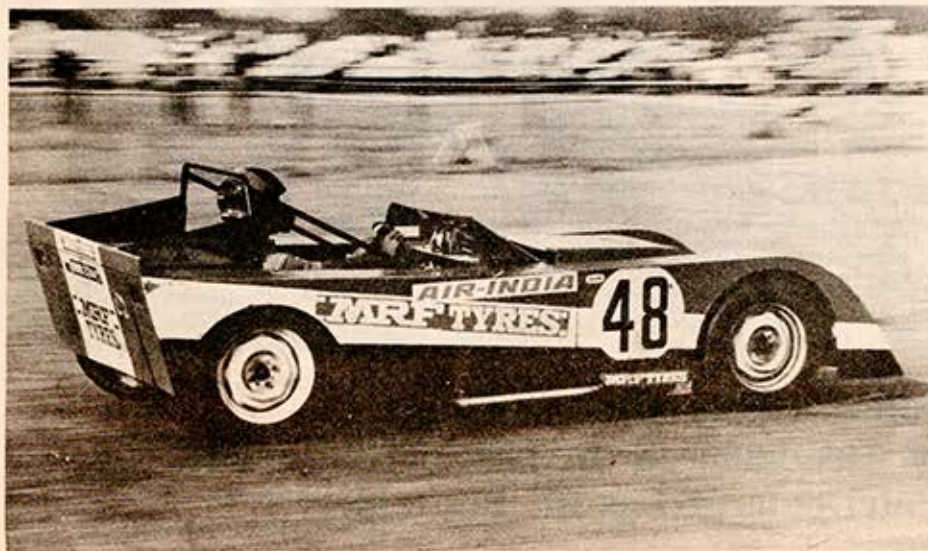
When not involved in racing, practising, or overhauling the bikes, Kaizad works at his father's factory, New Fily Cooper and Company. "I don't do much, just supervising and outdoor work. I'm still learning (the intricacies of) accounting," he grumbles. Kaizad's hobbies include car rallying, cycling, athletics and table

tennis, dating back to his school days. He enjoys music too: "All I need when I'm working on my bike is music, any music with a beat."

Talking about his long-term plans, Kaizad is very matter-of-fact: "I'll ride for as long as I can, (until I am) 25 or 26, for a good position. That depends on how hard I work. You can repair a bike, but you can't make your body young again. Yezdi told me, 'I'll beat you (when I turn 18).' I have challenged him." He turns to grin at Zubin: "And the same goes for all of you..."

Uphill driver

Overheard at the flag-off of the MASA (Maharashtra Automotive Sports Association) Monsoon Rally on July 15, 1988: "You can't say that any of these guys is the top favorite, except for Farad who has an excellent record." Two-and-a-half days later, that anonymous bystander was proved right. Farad Bhathena and navigator Raj Bagri in their Maruti Gypsy were the first to reach the finish line at Bandra's Hotel Searock Sheraton (sponsors of the event) with the lowest number of penalty points. They had driven to Roha and back through torrential rains and slushy roads, obstructed by landslides, flooded nullahs and irate villagers. "Our concept of fun is subjecting ourselves to dirt and rain and filth, and we come back and say, 'Never again,' but six months later we are back," said one MASA official at the prize distribution where an exuberant Bhathena and Bagri sprayed the crowd with champagne after being declared the overall winners.



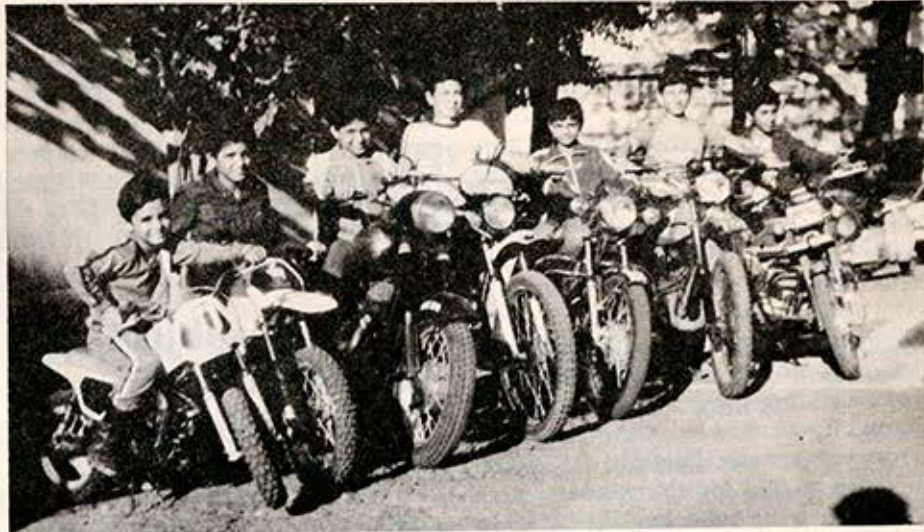


Left: Patel takes a suicidal-looking jump

The family's seven young riders: (from left) Rustom, Zubin, Percy, Yezdi, Firdaus, Kaizad and Neville

A week earlier, we had interviewed Farad, stocky, mustachioed, and very much at ease, in his garden overlooking Juhu beach. "Everyone's involved in my house: my mum, dad, myself and my sister," he explains. "My dad still rallies - he navigated for me for the first two years - but my mum stopped competing when I started." Parents Darayus and Katie had been competing ever since rallying first came to India in 1967. Darayus had also been involved in Formula Indian racing. Katie now officiates as a marshall. Last year, his sister Navaz, a 19-year-old arts student at St Xavier's College, also started rallying. At the autocross, she won the Ladies' class, and along with Neeta Chopra, she made up the only all-women team in the MASA Rally. And though still too young to participate, his 13-year-old brother Zoru attends all the events he can, and looks forward to the time when, "hopefully," he too will rally.

"It was exciting and great fun," recalls Farad, talking about his first Himalayan Rally when he was 18. "I knew a lot about it so I wasn't expecting it to be cushy. We got all sorts of temperatures, ranging from 45°C to -2°C, and for the first time, we got snow that year. I had no practice - just driving around in the streets, fooling around. My dad and I came first in the Jeep class, second in the Indian class, and thirteenth overall." He goes on to explain the basics of rallying. "Say you



have distance A to B, and you have to do it in 10 minutes. If you come into the time control post a minute early, you'll get 10 penalty points, if you're one minute late, one penalty point. It's very difficult to go in early, almost impossible, 90 percent can't. The winner is the team with the least penalty points." A rally is conducted over varying terrain - bumpy roads, dirt roads, smooth and broken tarmac, slush, climbs, and stream or river crossings. "The speed will vary according to the road condition and the climate," points out Farad. "It could range between 90 and 140 kmph, and you

"You can repair a bike, but you can't make your body young again"

might have to cover between 700 and 1,000 km per day." It is under such conditions that endurance becomes important. As MASA official Nitin Dossa put it, "You need a hell of a lot of stamina to survive the three days. In racing you need to be at your peak for only three hours."

The Monsoon Rally was Farad's ninth, and the fifth meet in which he ranked among the top four according to his bio data. He has also won class placings (e.g. for the Mahindra and Mahindra Jeep category) four times. And in track racing, hill climbs, autocross and gymkhana events, he has won 11 firsts and six seconds. "My racing has been slightly better," acknow-

ledges Farad. "I've had a few breakdowns in rallying." Racing is also his favorite: "It's more exciting, more fun. For the Grand Prix races, we do 25 laps of a two to three-km circuit. That takes about one hour and it's taxing the engine because you're using your gearbox and brakes to the limit all the time." The most famous races are those held on the Sholavaram airstrip in Madras every January.

Preparing the car for a rally begins a month before the event. "We should start it two months ahead, but we normally rush it," admits an unrepentant Farad. The car is stripped down, the mechanical and electrical parts rebuilt, and certain modifications carried out.

Rallying is not "professional enough here in India (to warrant taking) a month off" before the event, remarks Farad. "We normally give (the car) out to a garage or mechanic, and instruct them for an hour or two a day... We do a lot of experiments, try new things to make it (faster), more reliable, better to handle. Then 10 days before the event, we test it on the dirt roads around Bombay." These would most closely approximate the competitive sectors which are tougher and more challenging than the transport sectors where the pace is easy and competitors can stop to carry out minor repairs.

Major defects are corrected by the service team during the halts. All this inflates the expenses incurred. According to Farad, the minimum cost of taking part in a national event is "Rs 40,000 if you're doing it cheaply, with a minimum of everything, including service and preparation." And if the race or rally is outside Bombay,

the car is flown there. "Actually it's relatively cheap and it's far safer," he points out. "Otherwise, you may reach there (on time) and your car may turn up four days later!"

To cover these costs, competitors have to find sponsors. "They are very difficult to get," says Farad, obviously unhappy about it. "For rallies I try for MRF Tyres - they give us free tyres and money - and for track racing it is McDowells. We paint the car with their colors and logos. Maruti only sponsors us for the Himalayan Rally for which they give us the car." For the national events, he says, the prize money can range between Rs 25,000 and Rs 65,000 for the winners, with the runners-up collecting Rs 10,000 to Rs 15,000 less. In addition to the first five overall winners, the first three in each vehicular class are also awarded prizes.

Admitting to having been a reluctant student at St Stanislaus' High School, Bandra, Farad today works for his father's company, Nat Steel, which manufactures laundry and hospital equipment. And his hobbies? "Motorcycling, swimming and fooling around," he grins.

On August 28, Farad and Raj embarked on something far more arduous - the National Great Desert Himalayan 'Raid' where, in nine days, they would cover 5,000 punishing kilometers to emerge the overall winners. Flagged off from New Delhi's National Stadium on August 28, only 14 of the 27 four-wheeler teams who traveled

Serchu and Leh, where the rarefied air of mountain passes gave the crews nausea and headaches. But Farad and Raj stayed in the lead nearly all the time, reaching Srinagar first, an hour ahead of the other Mahindra Jeep team of Hormazd Sorabjee and Farokh Commissariat.

Assessing the competition, Farad indicates, "There is nothing like the best, but you have a lot of people winning rallies. People like Kamlesh Patel from Madras, Vickey Chandhok, Nikhil Taneja... Most of the *bawas* are from Bombay - Sam Katgara, Farokh Commissariat and Jehangir Nicholson." The last continues to rally and race though he is in his seventies.

Currently, Farad and his navigator - either Bagri or Pares Dattani - participate in four or five of the 10 major Indian rallies. "But now," he says, "they (FMSCI) are going to start the Indian Championships, where they'll take the best results from five or six races and give you a points rating. Then we may have to compete in one or two more rallies."

Gearing himself for the next event, Farad refuses to think of brakes; he would prefer to accelerate...

**"After subjecting
ourselves to dirt and
rain we come back
and say, 'Never
again,' but soon we
are back at the rally"**

through the ruggedly beautiful desert stretches and Himalayan mountain passes reached the finish line at Srinagar. The route led them through Bikaner, Jodhpur, the meandering sand dunes around Jaisalmer, Jaipur, and the rocky tracks, choking dust, and sheer gorges of Simla, Manali,

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THE FEDERATION OFFERS...

continued from page 28

formed in Secunderabad, Thana, Nagpur, Poona, Ahmedabad, Jamshedpur and Mhow.

Kanga recommended that circulars concerning the youth should be addressed to the youth and not the elderly office bearers of the anjumans. He further indicated the desirability of the Federation agenda including an item on youth affairs when reports of their activities in different areas could be exchanged, thereby providing an incentive to each other. Pavri felt that a policy of directly corresponding with the youth would inadvertently introduce politics within an anjuman. He was specific, "The youth in Ahmedabad have got so mixed up with politics that it is almost undesirable to continue with things as they now stand."

The youth being the future leaders, their involvement in community affairs was a must, felt Sethna. He also stated the need for anjumans to make a constitutional provision such that at least one youth trustee would serve on the board of trustees. This request is being repeated at every meeting, clarified Gandhi, further qualifying that it was only a recommendation from the Federation, and the anjumans were at liberty to accept or refuse the suggestion depending on their own circumstances. As opined by Federation's south zone vice-president Bezun Dittia, "The time has come to infuse life into Zoroastrian associations, some of which have become fossilized."

While some were not keen that youths dabble in community politics, there was a strong sentiment that youths should be sponsored to enter the country's political scene. Even BPP's Anklesaria, who had hitherto been concentrating his energies in inducing the youths to opt for careers in the civil and administrative services by availing of the specialized coaching facilities provided by the BPP, was of the view that "Parsis cannot afford to stay aloof" from the country's political activities. Those with the potential should be given the community's encouragement and support, he stressed. It was then urged that the Federation should maintain a close rapport and recognize the contributions of those Zoroastrians who had joined politics.

Students aspiring to pursue degree courses in medicine and engineering but lacking the requisite percentage

for entry into such colleges are being guided by Taleyarkhan. He was successful in getting an assurance from the chief ministers of some states that they would reserve one seat for Parsis from their quota. But as informed by Taleyarkhan, "In Karnataka and Gujarat, there were no applicants." In Calcutta, Minoo and his sister Meher Batiwala stood first and seventieth in the joint state entrance examination for medical and engineering courses and thus got admission on their own merit and did not need to avail of the seat reserved for Parsis from the chief minister's quota. Among the applications received from Maharashtra, the highest percentage scored was 93 and

Parsi couples usually wait for a family income of Rs 6,000 to 10,000 per month before planning a second child

Taleyarkhan was trying to get the student admission despite the cut-off percentage for medical and engineering courses announced at 95.

The team of lady counselors appointed by the BPP - Homai Billimoria, Diana Marfatia, Kamal Shroff and Jasmine Debara - were invited to brief the delegates on the progress of the BPP's family and school counseling projects. Based on the findings of the marital survey conducted by Billimoria, corrective action would be suggested (for attitudes among Parsi females which do not contribute to marital happiness) before undertaking a survey of the males.

To ensure that the intelligent students maintain their standards even after completing school and that the academically brilliant students are not demotivated, Gandhi felt that a counselor should be appointed to monitor their progress. He also lamented that when funds were sought for challenging courses like that of a commercial pilot, grants were not available. Though he acknowledged that such courses were primarily for the economic betterment of the family, he mentioned that similar was the case of those going abroad for further studies, many of whom never return.

Golwalla further qualified, "Every year, the cream of our students - about 25 - go abroad. Seventy-five percent don't return, and out of those, 50 percent marry outside. What is the community gaining?" He also referred to a similar situation in Karachi where, with the increasing emigration of the youths, the Parsi population has dropped from 5,200 to 3,500, with 60 percent of them over 65 years old.

This led to a suggestion that aid for overseas education should be stopped and given only to those who study in India or return to India after completing their studies abroad. But this proposal may not find many supporters and the trustees concerned may not be empowered to take such a decision.

In the reader interest

"I wouldn't like to introduce a subscription fee for the *Fed Newsletter*. I would like everybody to read it," was Gandhi's preference when it was suggested that the *Newsletter* that he edits be made available at a price to subsidize the monthly expenditure of Rs 5,000-6,000 borne by the Federation.

"Advertisers who pay Rs 2,500 towards the sponsorship cost of one issue and the few voluntary contributions do help, but more than 50 percent of the expense has to come from the Federation's meager resources," Gandhi pointed out. He was also appreciative of the ad hoc donations in kind - the largest contribution being for 50 reams of paper and the smallest, but equally appreciated, being postage stamps worth Rs 15.

On a rotational basis, the financial responsibility for each month's *Newsletter* should be distributed among the different anjumans, suggested Jehangir of Mhow, though she also specified that the anjuman should be informed in advance when their turn is due so that they could make the necessary arrangements. Another recommendation mooted an increase in the sponsorship advertisement rates from Rs 2,500 to Rs 3,000. Dittia was of the view that the *Fed Newsletter* and *Parsiana* should be merged, making Gandhi enquire in jest, "Are you trying to kill two birds with one stone?" to which Dittia said, "No, save them." Gandhi was quick to acknowledge the sponsorship contribution of Rs 3,750 from the Parsi Zoroastrian Anjuman of Secunderabad and Hyderabad over which Dittia presides.

Finally, one by one, provisional or confirmed sponsorship commitments came forth from Dadi Mistry, the Delhi Anjuman, the Madras Anjuman, Rusi Engineer, Bodhanwalla, the Ahmedabad Panchayat, the Firdaus Memorial Trust and the Surat Panchayat. Desai offered to find joint sponsors for one issue.

The Gujarati counterpart of the *Fed Newsletter* seems to be assured of a more permanent support. As conveyed by Sethna, "My *vewai-vewan* (son-in-law's parents) in Bombay (the Camas of *The Bombay Samachar*) had heard of the *Fed Newsletter* and they've offered to print the Gujarati version." But whether this includes the cost of the paper and whether they would consider extending the offer to the English newsletter too, was to be determined by "the doctor (Golwalla happens to be the Camas' physician) and the *vewai*."

Meritorious achievements

"We welcome Mr Bodhanwalla, and we welcome the shields he has brought all the way from Jamshedpur," said Golwalla. Bodhanwalla's presence was deemed

essential at this meeting for the idea of instituting the Federation awards for excellence, had originated from him. Bodhanwalla noted that he had got the shields made within a restricted time span, and rather than risk any schedules being upset, he opted to undertake the

**"The time has come
to infuse life into
Zoroastrian
associations, some
of which have
become fossilized"**

long and arduous train journey from Jamshedpur to ensure that the awards reached safely.

The awards and special mentions were conferred on 35 recipients in the fields of sports, fine arts, community service, religion, adventure, education, science, research and technology, and small-scale entrepreneurship for the years 1986 and 1987. In the words

of Sethna, "A new resurgence appears to be creeping into the community."

While Golwalla was keen that excellence in literature be recognized, Nargolwala insisted that a category be introduced for a "large, happy family." Gandhi felt that such decisions should be left to "the managing committee which had not met in two years."

Recognizing excellence within the community settled abroad, it was decided, would not be feasible as evaluating the performance on a comparative basis could prove difficult, and besides, the excellence achieved by those abroad could disqualify many in India.

The award winners were presented shields costing Rs 600 plus a cash gift of Rs 1,000, while those who won a special mention were presented a shield costing Rs 200. Since some of the awardees returned the cash gift – the same amount, doubled or multiplied five times – Gandhi lamented in jest that the awardees were robbing Peter (Federation) to pay Paul (BPP). But Anklesaria tried to console him saying, "We are a body of poor relatives."

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Trusts attract tax

The entire income of the trust, including donations to the corpus which were hitherto exempt from tax, is liable to be taxed if the amount donated is not spent or invested in the prescribed manner during the accounting year, informed Ranina.

The proposed amendments to the income-tax laws (sought to be implemented beginning 1989) have also introduced a provision whereby trusts will be permitted to carry on business (after amending their trust deed) and utilize the profits accrued towards the charitable objectives, without being liable to tax. However it is still not known how the profit is to be computed, or whether depreciation will be allowed. Also, the government is yet to spell out the recommended modes of investment, Ranina added, referring to the government's inability to implement the changes. But, already, several bodies are opposing the moves. Bodhanwalla sounded a caution: "In this case I don't think we should go into business. After two years, the government may withdraw their provisions."

But that could not curb Gandhi's en-

thusiasm. He urged the different punchayets to start their own business utilizing the services of their trustees, most of whom are "astute businessmen." Kanga pointed out that in case of a loss, the trustees would be further censured by the public. As Nargolwala recalled, the Godrej Memorial Press, run by the BPP, was not successful as a business venture.

When a delegate lightheartedly asked Ranina whether trust income, invested on horses, could classify as business, there was a prompt clarification, "Winning money on betting, crosswords, puzzles, lotteries, etc would not be considered as business," and would therefore continue to attract tax as before. Ranina further helped to distinguish that while renting furniture on hire would not classify as business, but merely letting out of an asset, renting a hall with services like chairs, air-conditioners, food, etc would amount to a business. Income from running a dharamshala can also be equated with a business activity, he said. Funds earmarked for repair and renovation of the trust property, if not invested in prescribed securities, would attract tax unless the money is

kept in a separate bank account with the permission of the income-tax authorities, and withdrawals made only for the purpose of repairs and renovation, it was explained.

The 50 percent tax relief to donors under section 80-G continues to apply to cosmopolitan trusts, or a community trust for the exclusive benefit of women and children. Gifts up to Rs 20,000, as also amounts bequeathed to charitable trusts are tax free.

It was suggested that a note on the amendments, as applicable to Parsi trusts, be circulated among the member anjumans. On behalf of the Centre for Advancement of Philanthropy which looks after the interests of charitable trusts, its executive secretary Noshir Dadrawala offered to send a copy of their newsletter, *Philanthropy*, to anjumans interested in the detailed application of the proposed amendments.

The choicest chair

The last half hour of the two-day meet was spent in acknowledging Golwala's contribution to community causes. His co-trustees on the BPP board commended him: Guzder spoke of his "harmony and constructive work;"

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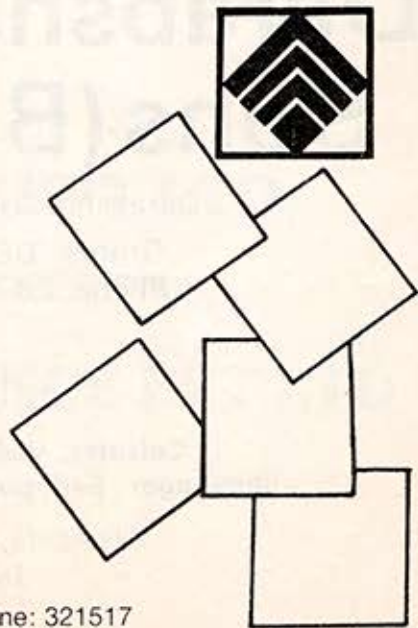
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Desai appreciated his "able stewardship, capable and tactful handling;" and Kanga lauded "his sagacity and sorting of differences in the most amicable manner." Taleyarkhan praised him for his "integration, integrity and intrepidity," while Mistry acknowledged his overall success in the Federation projects even though the reconciliation of the WZO and the Federation was not possible during his tenure. With the Punchayet rejoining the Federation under Golwalla's chairmanship, Gandhi said, "It was under his unassuming and unobtrusive leadership that the Federation came to full strength, grew in stature, and functioned harmoniously and effectively."

Golwalla will officiate as Federation and BPP chairman for another six months or so, following the Bombay High Court order that he continue till the next Anjuman Committee elections are held. The elections are pending the preparation of constituency-wise voters' lists.

Those present at the Federation meeting were: Ms Dolat Debara and Porus Debara from Agra; Keki Pavri from Ahmedabad; Nozar Ichhaporia,

Meherwan Gai, B.F. Shroff and Ms Maharukh Shroff from Ahmednagar; Capt Homi Dandiwalla from Allahabad; Edulji Dumasia from Bardoli; Baman Cama, Shavak Patel and Homi Chothia from Baroda; Minochaheer Bharucha from Bhavnagar; Piroz Dandiwalla from Bilimora; Dr Aspi Gol-

Parsis should enter and become leaders in the field of food processing

walla, Eruch Desai, Jamsheed Kanga, Jamshed Guzder, Minoo Shroff, Homi Ranina, Rustom Anklesaria, Ms Gool Tata, Peshotan Nargolwala and Dr (Ms) Ketayun Madon from Bombay; Zarhost Mobarakai from Dahanu; Dosabhai Oliaji from Daman-Vapi; Lt Gen Adi Sethna, Zal Nowsherwanji, Keki Gandhi, Farokh Rustomji, Dadi Mistry, Rusi Engineer, Ms Nergish Nargolwala and Homi Taleyarkhan from Delhi; Aspi Irani and Pervez Irani from Iranian Zoroastrian Anjuman; Nariman Elavia from Indore; Ms

Rubyna Tarapore from Jabalpur; Dinyar Pesuna and Adi Mistry from Jalgaon; Homi Bodhanwalla from Jamshedpur; Ronny Dick, Pesi Pestonji and Adil Govadia from Jhansi; Pheroze Karanjia from Karanj; Dr Sarosh Wadia from Kutch; Rustom Taraporvala from Lucknow; Nariman Mogrelia from Madras; Ms Katy Masani and Ms Pervin Jehangir from Mhow; Dastur Meherji Meherjirana, Dara Deboo and Firoj Panthaky from Navsari; Dinshaw Anklesaria from Poona; Rohintan Daviwalla from Sanjan; Homi Palsetia and Nariman Balsara from Saronda; Bezun Dittia, Noshir Nagarwala, Ms Mithra Atashband and Burzin Atashband from Secunderabad; Dr Sam Bhacca, Davar Kavasji Modi and Sorab Katpitia from Surat; Rustom Cursetji, Ms Nargis Cursetji, Pervez Bhesania, Zarsis Udhawala, D.P. Vevaina and K.R. Daruwalla from Thana; Ruzbeh Patell from Vesu; Dr Bahadur Jokhi, Rusi Parabia, Parvez Amaria and Persi Buhariwala from Vyara-Songadh; and Homi Mehta and Navel Mulla from Zai Bordi. The Press was represented by *Jam-e-Jamshed*, *The Bombay Samachar* and *Parsiana*.

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MILESTONES

Parsiana publishes the first listing of civil marriages between Parsis and intercommunity marriages in Bombay. It has been compiled courtesy the Registrar of Marriages. This first series includes marriages registered with the Registrar between October 1987 and October 1988. Hereafter, intercommunity marriages will be published on a three-monthly basis.

A scanning of the Chandanwadi electric crematorium register revealed two Parsi cremations in the 12 months ending October 1988. These names are, however, in addition to the three cremations *Parsiana* had notified earlier. We have not been able to ascertain where the earlier-mentioned cremations took place. In case we have omitted any names, the lapse is regretted.

The data on births, marriages and deaths has been compiled from information provided by various newsletters and anjuman in India and abroad, courts and hospitals. However, this information is not always

complete or consistent.

Of the 82 Parsis who died in the city of Bombay in October, 25 succumbed to heart disease, while cancer and old age claimed nine victims each. The other killers were kidney failure (six), lung and brain diseases (five each) and hypertension (three). Diabetes, bronchitis, pneumonia, blood disease, Parkinson's disease and liver disorder claimed two each. There were isolated cases of gastroenteritis, nervous disorder, shock, ulcer, septicemia, gastric hemorrhage and chronic enteritis. In one case, the cause of death has not been revealed.

In the breakup of deaths according to illnesses, it must be noted that in some cases, especially in those of the very old, death is often due to a combination of several diseases.

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 would appreciate this requirement and cooperate with us.

A girl to *Farida* and *Behram Mullan*; October 16
A girl to *Shahnaz* and *Hormuz Kermanian*; October 17
A girl to *Firoza* and *Percy Dubash*; October 18
A boy to *Shirin* and *Rohinton Mistry*; October 18
A girl to *Shahnaz* and *Aspi Irani*; October 20
A boy to *Mahnaz* and *Khushroo Sooi*; October 21
A girl to *Armin* and *Farokh Bhathena*; October 22
A boy to *Veera* and *Jimmy Tarapore*; October 23
A boy to *Dilruba* and *Firoze Kermanian*; October 24
A girl to *Pervin* and *Mehernosh Dubash*; October 25
A boy to *Dilnavaz* and *Khushroo Kerawalla*; October 25
A girl to *Feroza* and *Jehangir Major*; October 28
A girl to *Kermin* and *Geive Nanavati*; October 28
A boy to *Jasmine* and *Sorab Billimoria*; October 30

Married

Dinaz Fali Batliwalla and *Arvind R. Rotiwar*; October 2, 1987
Dinaz Sam Patel and *Ravi Parkash*; October 5
Maneck Sorab Aibara and *Manoj K. Bhatia*; October 11
Jyoti Laxman Khadtale and *Percy Keki Billimoria*; October 19
Taina Phiroze Motiwalla and *Themtan Dorab Pavri (Timmy)*; October 29
Harjit Khara Nikki and *Rohinton Baji Maloo*; November 6
Daisy Neville Patel and *Deepak K. Purohit*; November 6
Yasmin Dhunjishaw Patel and *Ivan Glen Fernandes*; November 9
Jenny Aron and *Bohman R. Shahmardan*; November 12
Anahita Firoze Gandhi and *Cyrus Jehangir Asundaria*; November 18
Marietta D'Silva and *Adil D. Dastoor*; November 23
Shenaz D. Baria and *Milan Virendra Golatkar*; December 11
Havovi Cushroo Elavia and

Joseph K.E. Mathew; December 11
Hufrish Dinshaw Oomrigar and *Rajiv Sunderlal Bahl*; December 15
Simi Rameshchandra Shah and *Vispi Fardoon Dadachanji*; December 15
Sandra Edwin Pais and *Darius Fali Kavarana*; December 17
Kinnari Kanubhai Zaveri and *Zubin Faramroze Khambatta*; December 17
Uttara Narayan Paranjape and *Malcolm Darayas Pestonji*; December 24
Pervin Phiroze Meherji and *David Ling*; December 28
Arlene A. Paul and *Cyrus F. Wankadia*; December 29
Roshni Keki Bhagwagar and *Hoshang Burjorji Panthaky*; January 1, 1988
Jeeny M. Pavri and *Dhiren Joel Desai*; January 9
Honey J. Kaka and *Ganesh Prabhakar Naik*; January 13
Sheila Sarla Parekh and *Adi P. Pestonjamas*; January 17
Nina Eruch Master and *Harinder Bhalla*; January 24
Manju Yadavrao Khedkar and *Percy Savakshaw Jilla*; January 24
Shirin Dinshaw Bajan and *Glenn Paul Conway*; January 31
Anne Carmel Vaz and *Jamshed Rustom Narielwala*; February 14
Armaity Phiroz Antia and *Deepak Devraj Tulwar*; February 18
Havovee Minoo Patel and *Ramesh Karsanbhai Patel*; February 26
Khushnuma Soli Fatakia and *Bomi Dinshawji Kerawalla*; March 1
Jyotsna Bhimbhai Surti and *Cawas Dhunjishaw Saher*; March 1
Armaity A. Shekari and *Kersi Dhunjishaw Marolia*; March 12
Brinda Mohandas and *Yazad Kersi Darasha*; March 16
Prabhavati Madhavrao Godke and *Erach Darabshaw Cooper*; April 12
Benaifer Driver and *Rustom Kharegat*; April 12
Geeta Lalit Makwana and *Dara Jamshed Mazkoory*; April 15

BOMBAY

Born

A boy to *Meher* and *Percy Edibam* on September 30, 1988
A boy to *Zarina* and *Aresh Gutta*; October 1
Twins (boys) to *Rani* and *Percy Kerawalla*; October 1
A boy to *Yasmin* and *Rumi Bhada*; October 2
A boy to *Pervin* and *Noshir Daruwalla*; October 2
A boy to *Dolly* and *Sarosh Khambatta*; October 2
A boy to *Dinaz* and *Jemi Siganporia*; October 2
A girl to *Katty* and *Homi Wadia*; October 2
A boy to *Kety* and *Minoo Bhagat*; October 3
A girl to *Maharukh* and *Vispi Patel*; October 3
A boy to *Homai* and *Khurshed Shroff*; October 3
A boy to *Mahrukh* and *Gustasp Forbes*; October 5
A girl to *Hutoxi* and *Yazdi Siganporia*; October 5
A boy to *Hutoxi* and *Hoshedar Antia*; October 6

A boy to *Rashna* and *Porasp Baria*; October 7
A girl to *Pervin* and *Kairus Dadachanji*; October 7
A boy to *Benaifer* and *Phiroze Karanjia*; October 7
A boy to *Shernaz* and *Mehernosh Turel*; October 8
A boy to *Benaifer* and *Tehmtan Engineer*; October 10
A boy to *Seema* and *Behruz Kavion*; October 10
A girl to *Priti* and *Avinash Kothare*; October 11
A girl to *Pervin* and *Pheroze Wadia*; October 11
A girl to *Zarine* and *Soli Damania*; October 12
Twins (boys) to *Zarin* and *Behram Mehta*; October 12
A boy to *Parizad* and *Firoze Mistry*; October 12
A girl to *Persis* and *Cyrus Panthaki*; October 12
A boy to *Perviz* and *Hormuz Parbhoo*; October 12
A boy to *Farida* and *Kerman Bodhanwala*; October 14
A boy to *Arnavaz* and *Nozer Udawadia*; October 15

Daulat Jehangir and Anand Kumar; April 17
 Euphasina J. Anthony and Jal Sohrab Karwa; April 21
 Sharda Mathurdaj Damani and Sorab Aspi Wadia; April 27
 Samina Abrar Alvi and Jehangir Shavak Bharucha; May 1
 Shiraz Homi Meherjina and Sohrab Framji Jussawalla; May 3
 Rashna Dinshaw Irani and Padam M. Bahal; May 9
 Binaifer Rattan Pardiwalla and Sarosh Behram Behdin; May 20
 Manda Sawant and Faredoon (Freddie) Najmi; May 23
 Nishmin Pervez Balsara and Rajiv Krishan Kashyap; May 27
 Nilima Vijay Palekar and Pallon Noshir Daruwala; June 6
 Armin Adi Pohocha and Zareer Peshoton Wadia; June 23
 Farida (Anushree) Jehanbux Katrak and Nirmal Kejriwal; June 24
 Ruby Feroze Ichhaporia and Prithviraj Bapusaheb Pol; June 24
 Lata Mahadeo Valanju and Shavak Sorabji Vakharia; June 30
 Scheherazade Kali Kapadia

and Aasim Noorali Merchant; July 3
 Neelamara Ishuque Ahmed (Khan) and Farzin Behram Behdin; July 26
 Elizabeth (Vilot) Ruban John and Rustom Jehanbux Daruwalla; August 5
 Nergis B. Kalwachia and Gaurav A. Parikh; September 2
 Nasrin J. Irani and Deepak Jhanjee; September 23
 Mani Dosabhoy Engineer and Homi Ratanshaw Wadia; October 3
 Tanaz Soli Patel and Boorzeen Jahanbux Kootar; October 6
 Kashmiri Rustom Fuladi and Zal Homi Irani; October 7
 Farideh Lashkary and John Douglas Robinson; October 7
 Navaz Tehmuras Bodhanwalla and Porus Rustom Disawalla; October 10
 Hutokshi Faramroze Patell and Hoshi Tehmuras Rao; October 14
 Kashmiri Nariman Patel and Uday Shanker Gurjar; October 16
 Shu Een Chen and Mehernosh Homi Noble; October 16
 Maharukh Kaiyos Marfatia and Bhicaji Dorabji Davierwalla; October 17
 Swapna Hiraji Boatwala of Dubai and Noshir

Behramshah Photographer of UAE; October 17
 Mehernaaz Soli Irani and Yazdi Dhunjishaw Arethna; October 18
 Kashmiri Jamshed Merchant and Yezdi Minu Daver; October 21
 Persis Minoo Rana and Pervez Soli Mohta; October 21
 Severina Albertina Vaz and Yazad F. Sorabji; October 22

Died

Jahangir Hormusji Dhunjibhoy (65), residing at Soonaiji Mans, Gowalia Tank, 400036; September 15 (cremated)
 Zal Fardunji Taleyarkhan (82), Navroze Apts, B. Desai Rd, 400026; September 27 (cremated)
 Dara Perozshaw Choksey (82), Golf Links, 7, Pali Hill Est, Khar, 400052; October 1
 Perviz Hormazd Irani (60), Irani Hse, 204, Perin Nariman St, Fort, 400001; October 1
 Rusi Jehangir Patel (71), Marker Mans, 623, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; October 1
 Kharshed Fardoonji Desai (73), 'C', Imperial Mhl, Khodadad Circle, Dadar, 400014; October 2
 Homi Rustomji Mistry (64), Hill View, Ragavji Rd, Gowalia Tank, 400036; October 2
 Perin Nariman Mistry (75), Wagla Cooper Bldg, 12th Khetwadi Lane, 400004; October 2
 Zarin Rusi Oonwalla (70), Aziz Bldg, 135, Tardeo Rd, 400034; October 2
 Chadan Minocher Sethna (82), Sharma Niwas, 599, J.J. Rd, Matunga, 400019; October 2
 Rohinton Nadirshaw Sethna (56), 275-B, Captain Bldg, Chikalwadi, Grant Rd, 400007; October 2
 Manek Burjorji Talati (61), Wadia Bldg, 726, M. Joshi Rd, Dadar, 400014; October 2
 Jehangir Rustomji Contractor (87), K-1, Cusrow Baug, S.B. Rd, 400039; October 3
 Meherbai Jehangirji Khambatta (83), 22, Essup Bldg, Balaram St, Grant Rd, 400007; October 3
 Mani Bejonjee Choksey (68), Khareghat Bldg No 2, Gamadia Clny, Tardeo,

400007; October 4
 Banoobai Nariman Lawyer (77), 23, Dadabhai Rd, Andheri (W), 400058; October 4
 Darabshaw Maneckji Pithawalla (83), C-1, Avabai Petit Chawl, Balaram St, 400007; October 4
 Jamshed Nariman Popat (72), Motibai Bhavan, 3, Proctor Rd, Grant Rd, 400007; October 4
 Furdoonji Ruttonji Suderwalla (86), 15/6, Rustom Baug, Victoria Rd, Byculia, 400027; October 4
 Manijeh Dadabhoy Karkhanawala (85), Botawala Bldg, 239, Tardeo Rd, 400007; October 5
 Piroja Munchershaw Rana (80), 1/7, Bredy's Flats, Colaba, 400005; October 5
 Dhun Jimmy Unwala (52), Ready Money Hse, 785-A, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; October 5
 Mehroo Noshir Bharucha (60), Room 5, Hormusji Baug Bldg, Kasinath St, 400034; October 6
 Burjor Pestonji Dastur (72), 16, Abbas Bldg, Jalbhoy St, Charni Rd, 400004; October 6
 Soonie Firoz Digaria (58), 706, Poonam Apts, Dr A.B. Rd, Worli, 400018; October 7
 Savaksha Dorabjee Kapadia (92), Hongkongwalla Cooper Bldg, 9th Khetwadi Back Rd, 400004; October 7
 Rohinton Shavakshaw Ghandhi (51), Dubash Bldg, Novelty Cinema Lane, Grant Rd, 400007; October 8
 Mucca Gave Mehta (91), G-4, Palacimo, Silver Oak Est, Warden Rd, 400026; October 8
 Sheran Jehangir Chinoy (92), 604, Silver Cascade, Mt Mary Rd, Bandra, 400050; October 9
 Khodabux Jehangir Irani (61), 17, Prem Milan Bldg, 87-B, Nepean Sea Rd, 400006; October 9
 Minoo Gustadjee Patel (81), Old Chinoy Bldg, Chikalwadi, Tardeo, 400007; October 9
 Tehmi Homi Sethna (65), Wilson Bldg, Dr Ambedkar Rd, Dadar, 400014; October 9
 Cooverbai Aspadar

Bombay intercommunity marriages – 14 percent

Of a total of 384 marriages contracted by Parsis in Bombay for the 12-month period – October 1987 to September 1988 – around 14 percent were to non-Parsis.

Statistics collected from the Registrar of Marriages show approximately 47 intercommunity marriages during this period. This figure is arrived at on the basis of one name in the Registrar's records being that of a Parsi. Parsiana has not accounted for those marriages where it has not been possible to ascertain whether a name applies to a member of the Parsi or another community. Again, going by the assumption of names, it

appears that of the 47 marriages, 32 were to Hindus, 12 to Christians and three to Muslims. According to the Registrar's files, around nine were civil marriages between Parsis.

Parsi marriages registered during the same period with the Bombay High Court, as per the requirements of the Parsi Marriage and Divorce Act, numbered 328. If to these are added the nine civil marriages, the total comes to 337.

Thus an estimate of 47 intercommunity marriages as versus 337 marriages within the Parsi community works out to a percentage of around 14.

Anklesaria (89), Halima Manzil, 13, Forjett St Cross Lane, 400036; October 10
Dinbai Khurshedji Ghadiali (95), 147, Lentin Hse, Lamington Cross Rd, 400007; October 10
Farida Farokh Irani (30), 3/1, Tata Blocks, S.V. Rd, Bandra, 400050; October 10
Manek Hormusji Kamod (75), H-23, Cusrow Baug, S.B. Rd, 400039; October 10
Shirin Pirojsha Karva (86), Ghatalia Mans, 803-D, Dr Ambedkar Rd, Dadar, 400014; October 10
Tehmina Dhunjishah Mistry (60), 4/9, A.H. Wadia Baug, Parel Tank Rd, 400033; October 10
Piloo Sorabji Buhariwala (65), M-26, Cusrow Baug, S.B. Rd, 400039; October 11
Banu Burjorji Daruwala (82), B-2/4, Tehmi Ter, 805, Dr Ambedkar Rd, Dadar, 400014; October 11
Dara Nariman Doctor (81), Hill View, Gowalia Tank, 400036; October 11
Najamai Bomanshah Karadia (85), 282, Yasmin Villa, Dr Ambedkar Rd, Parel, 400012; October 11
Banoo Dara Mirza (84), Wadia Bldg No 5, Parel Tank Rd, 400033; October 11
Sheriar Behram Irani (69), 12-A, Park Heaven, Malcolm Baug, Jogeshwari, 400060; October 12
Jerbai Ardeshtir Jijina (78), Rusi Hse, 12, Police Court Lane, Fort, 400001; October 12
Godrej Keki Appoo (78), Ramesh Bldg, Powalla St, Grant Rd, 400004; October 13
Vabiz Sam Bhagwagar (60), Room 6, Aarsiwala Mans, Sassoon Dock, Colaba, 400005; October 13
Pestonji Bhikhaji Daruwala (78), Lady Navajbai Tata Bldg, Tata Blocks, S.V. Rd, Bandra, 400050; October 13
Najamai Ruttanshaw Todywalla (73), Nusserwanji Bldg, 157, Alibhai Premji Marg, 400007; October 13
Roshan Rohinton Capadia (57), B-9, Rustom Baug, Victoria Rd, Byculla, 400027; October 14
Goolbai Rustom Irani (82), C/2, Bharucha Parsi Clny, S.V. Rd, Andheri (W), 400058; October 14

Dolat Kuverji Sethna (84), 302/A, Seagull, Carter Rd, Bandra, 400050; October 14
Cawas S. Wadia (59), G-003, Vishal Apts, M.V. Rd, Andheri (E), 400069; October 15
Dina Savakshaw Bhagat (82), Wilson Bldg, 194, Dr Ambedkar Rd, Dadar, 400014; October 16
Dara Framji Daroga (79), 7/3, Gulshan Bldg, Colaba, 400005; October 16
Hilla Dara Billimoria (78), Engineer Bldg, 11, Sleater Rd, 400007; October 17
Maneck Fardunji Kanga (80), D-10, Cusrow Baug, S.B. Rd, 400039; October 17
Pillo Dinshaw Katrak (59), Room 59, Petit Bldg, Grant Rd, 400007; October 17
Nusserwanji Hormusji Dadyburjor (74), Banoo Manor, 12-13, Dadysheh Rd, Chowpatty, 400007; October 18
Maneck Dinshaw Mistry (54), Sethna Bldg, Nawroji Seth St, 400002; October 18
Soona Noshir Secretary (70), 71, Jehangir Mans, Hughes Rd, 400007; October 18
Meheraboon Murzban Irani (35), Wagla Cooper Bldg, Grant Rd, 400007; October 19
Noshir Temorus Pavri (58), Mulla Bldg, Dr Cawasji Hormusji St, 400002; October 19
Nargish Rustomji Engineer (73), 223, Reward, Tardeo, 400007; October 20
Burjor Cawasji Khambatta (86), Botawalla Bldg, Opp Boyce Fire Temple, Tardeo, 400007; October 21
Homai Tehmurasp Suntoke (78), Gulshan, Cawasji Jehangir Rd, Colaba, 400005; October 21
Coomi Boman Anklesaria (82), Dhunbad, Sleater Rd, 400007; October 23
Rattanbai Cawasji Antia (86), 15/4, Nowroz Baug, Lalbaug, 400012; October 23
Aloo Dadabhai Bharucha (70), F.S. Parukh Dharamshalla, 34, Hughes Rd, 400007; October 23
Sam Darab Daruwala (44), Karanjia Bldg, Grant Rd, 400007; October 23
Shera N. Gheewalla (80), 17-B, Shapur Baug, Lamington Rd, 400004; October 24
Daulatbanu Gustad Aga (93),

Queen's Chmbs, Queen's Rd, Marine Lines, 400020; October 25
Piroja Nadirsha Bharucha (85), 19, Bella-Vista, 28/1, Bandra, 400050; October 25
Pestonji Dorabjee Bharucha (79), Hormazd Mans, Opp Bhatia Hosp, Tardeo, 400007; October 26
Ratanshaw Jivanji Mithaiwalla (85), Society Bldg, 672, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; October 27
Aloo Dinsha Appu (76), 12/10, Rustom Baug, Victoria Rd, Byculla, 400027; October 28
Don (Dadi) J. Mody (65), 70-B, Jer Mans, Gowalia Tank, 400036; October 28
Cooverbai Hosang Writer (85), Railway View, Uranwala St, Grant Rd, 400007; October 28
Khorshed Kawas Billimoria (63), 310/C, Bldg 43, Manish Nagar, Andheri (W), 400058; October 29
Narges Dadabhai Kurlawalla (85), 'V', Dalal Est, Bombay Central, 400008; October 29
Jalejar Ruttonji Merchant (78), Makavi Mans, Gunbow St, Fort, 400001; October 29
Nariman E. Sher (72), G-22, Nowroz Baug, Lalbaug, 400012; October 29

Meherji Jamshedji Behramkamdin (75), Room 10, Hirabai Petit Bldg, Grant Rd, 400007; October 30
Homai Dinyar Bhathena (45), 10, Mistry Bldg, Gamadia Clny, Tardeo, 400007; October 30

CALCUTTA Born

A boy to *Kumkum* and *Adi Balsara*; August 11
 A girl to *Meher* and *Ribhu Chatterji*; October 13
 A boy to *Pervin* and *Phiroze Tarapore*; October 27
 A boy to *Roshni* and *Urvax Wadia*; October 31

Died
Maneck Framji Khan (60), husband of Lily, father of Viraf, brother of Behram, Jal and Dolly Irani; October 19

ILFORD, UK Born

A girl, *Katy*, to *Hutoxi* and *Filli Maravala*; August 2

NEW SOUTH WALES Born

A girl, *Anahita*, to *Ketayun* and *Farokh Keeka*; September 2

Compiled by Roxana H. Kaka

THE PARSIANA BOOK OF IRANIAN NAMES

The Iranian names of boys and girls along with their meanings which originally appeared in *Parsiana* have now been reprinted in an attractive 24-page booklet.

The book, which is priced at Rs 15, is available on sale at:

Kaiser-E-Hind
 300 Perin Nariman Street
 Behind Reserve Bank of India
 Fort, Bombay 400001

Fareedoon and Burjor
 Sandalwood Shop
 Princess Street
 Bombay 400002

Union Press,
 13, Homji Street
 Bombay 400001

EVENTS AND PERSONALITIES

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help in the editing of the Gujarati section, she adds. Until the mid-'80s the magazine was published regularly, but with the drop in the number of articles, it used to come out once in six months and finally, had to wind up.

Bharucha sees a conditional future: If she receives articles, she will bring out another issue. But, "I don't want to reprint from other publications," she stresses.

Rippling the pool

"Shattering records has become a habit for Gujarat's new mermaid but a more startling fact emerged - she is performing better than the boys..." said *The Times of India* of August 1, 1988, referring to Farnaz Engineer's performance in the Gujarat State Aquatic Championships in Gandhinagar on July 31, 1988. Taking part in the Seniors age-group, Engineer won eight swimming events, seven in record time. Of these, her timings in

four races were better than the boys', notes the paper.

In the shorter 100 meters, the boys recorded a faster time but for the 200, 400, 800 and 200-meter individual medley events, Engineer was faster. In the 800 meters, her timing surpassed the boys' by over a minute, and in the 400 meters, by nearly 30 seconds.

"Farnaz's feat is all the more creditable as she had to blaze her own pace with no obvious competitor to egg her on to greater efforts," notes *The Times*.

In 1987, Engineer had gone to Fort Lauderdale in Florida, USA for training for a period of three months, notes a letter from Brig A.R. Irani of Ahmedabad. This was due to the financial support from many Parsis and non-Zoroastrians, writes Irani. The main Zoroastrian donors were - Dinshaw A. Merchant (Rs 11,500), Pirojsha Godrej Foundation (Rs 7,500), Sir Ratan Tata Trust (Rs 5,000), J.R.D. Tata Trust (Rs 5,000), Dorab Tata Trust (Rs 3,000), Noshir Combatta of

Ahmedabad (Rs 2,000), Baroda Parsi Panchayat (Rs 1,001) and Zoroastrian Ladies Industrial Mandal, Ahmedabad (Rs 1,000).

Engineer, who has been selected by the sports officials of India to participate in the national swim camps, is reportedly preparing for the national aquatic meet to be held in December this year.

SPOTLIGHT

Minoo Irani's term as assistant commissioner of police has been extended for a six-month period, notes *The Indian Post* of September 30, 1988. Irani heads the vigilance branch of the Criminal Investigation Department.

Winning a gold medal after clocking 12.2 seconds at the twenty-seventh National Championships at Kanpur, Ms Zenia Ayrton was described as the "nation's fastest lady" by the *Free Press Journal* of August 21, 1988.

Compiled by Ramgopal Balakrishnan

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Rustomji: reaching his readers

Parinaz Toddywalla

Died: Minoo K. Rustomji, 72, well-known author and management consultant, on September 3, 1988 at Bombay's Northcote Nursing Home, following cardiac arrest.

Coauthoring 20 books with the British management authority C. Northcote Parkinson, Rustomji had written several books on management and finance for the layperson. His publications were popular not only in India but abroad as well, and were translated into German and Hebrew among other languages.

Rustomji had thrice won the first prize of the prestigious Escort Book Award for the best management book of the year and had also been privileged to have one of his books on management made into a prize-winning film by the Indian government. There was even a demand for video tapes of his books, informs his brother Nari.

Usually, it was an expert from the relevant field who would coauthor his works, like did Dr Christian Barnard on the management of health. Deriving the technical information from the savants, Rustomji would simplify the concepts and present the knowledge with attractive visuals that could be easily understood by the readers – whether executives or laymen.

Every book was conceived from his

readers' point of view. Rustomji would never hesitate to revise the text even six times after the manuscript was submitted. "We knew that every time he touched it, it became better. He was a perfectionist," concedes Prem Manaktala, executive director of India Book House (IBH) which published 14 of Rustomji's works. While normally it would take 10 to 14 months to bring out a book, IBH would market his books in a shorter time span "for the simple reason that his books were awaited by all," notes Manaktala. Presently, IBH is finalizing the text of yet another book, *Management consultants – A user's guide*, while striving to maintain the standards that Rustomji would have liked.

He was by training a chartered accountant "but his forte lay in selling – whatever was necessary at any point of time – an idea, a book or himself... he was a one-man publicity department for his books," was the impression of Ms Khorshed Javeri, his coauthor for the book *Law and Tax for the Layman*.

One of his first books *Getting Along Better with People* has seen 10 reprints and a print order exceeding 54,000, according to a stock statement of IBH. *Excellence in Management* also had a print order crossing the 50,000 mark. He was believed to have been so meti-

culous and painstaking that he would personally go to bookshops like the Nalanda to ensure that his paperbacks were prominently displayed.

"Minoo had an insatiable appetite to understand human relationships," summarizes Nari. "Whether he was on a bus, tram or taxi, within seconds you would find him talking to people, offering his help..." His advice in the book *Understanding Management* was, "Never promise anything you can't deliver and make sure no one can possibly think you promised it."

His consultancy work coexisted with his writing phase. His last prestigious management consultancy assignment was from Andhra Pradesh for which he suggested "the reorganization and streamlining (of) the entire administration of the state," wrote Ramu Pandit in a eulogy to Rustomji in *The Bombay Samachar* of September 18. Other organizations which benefitted from his consultations, according to his son Jehangir, were International Airports Authority of India, Hindustan Shipyard, Madras Refineries, etc.

It was during his retirement years after he left the Tata Engineering and Locomotive Company (TELCO) that his writing and consultancy career gained momentum. In Rustomji's own words, as notes his text on the subject, retirement means "a change from the

MSR (money, status, reputation) to the CIA (creativity, integrity, autonomy) value system..."

In his three decades of service with TELCO, Rustomji worked first as financial controller and later as public affairs adviser. He gained his first experience in writing when he took the initiative to launch a TELCO house magazine to inspire "an esprit de corps among his team members," recalls Nari who credits him with being a staunch believer in cooperation and teamwork.

Before joining TELCO, Rustomji was working as auditor for a company in England manufacturing bombs, informs Jehangir. From the time he completed his junior schooling in Lahore, Rustomji's family has settled in Bedford in England, from where he graduated in arts and accountancy.

They did not get many opportunities to be with the Parsi community in their formative years, Nari reports, adding that this could be one of the reasons why Rustomji had more of a cosmopolitan and world outlook rather than a parochial view. But Jehangir recalls his father joking about how the Parsis "were of the heaven born!"

An amateur boxing champion during his early days in England, Rustomji's other hobbies encompassed yoga, swimming, jogging, hiking and traveling. In his later years, "he was a fitness fiend," say many of his close associates.

"He was a shrewd judge of men and practised human psychology instinctively and effortlessly," Javeri remembers, dismissing the mistaken impression people had of him as "a man with his head in the clouds, a little woolly and very garrulous."

The guiding principle in his life, that helped him come to terms with his own and others' faults, matched a statement in a book of his: "You simply have to overlook the weaknesses of your men, but make the most use of their strong points. All the well-known leaders and executives of the present and the past had great failings and weaknesses but the important thing is that these people produce results. People without any weaknesses generally produce very little." Coming from a man who has striven for and achieved results, this philosophy becomes meaningful.

Rustomji is survived by his wife Peggy and sons Jehangir and Rishad.

READERS' FORUM

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for this kind of work, because in addition to the resources of the Bombay Parsi Punchayet and other mandals, money will simply pour in for the asking by well-wishers of the community. The most common excuse of non-availability of time due to pressure of studies, normally put forth by the laity, is utter nonsense; let them spare some time for this all-important duty from the hours spent in front of a video or an 'idiot box.' The Bombay Parsi Punchayet trustees who take pride in calling themselves akabars, supported by the educated youth of the community, should give a lead in this direction.

Each one of us has his or her share of problems in life but regular practice of religion alone provides the much needed spiritual strength to face them and to counter the ills of the modern age.

SOHRAB NAVALSHAW PATWA

BPP strike implications

Had the threatened strike by the Class IV staff of the Bombay Parsi Punchayet (BPP) materialized, three distinct groups would have been affected: the staff themselves, the trustees of the BPP and the residents of the various colonies. In addition, the community at large would have felt the repercussions as the strike was going to affect the doongerwadi.

In these days of rising costs one cannot help sympathizing with the Class IV employees, but these employees too should realize that the BPP is not a profit-making commercial organization but, being a charitable trust, has its own limitations. In the past, the trustees had made an earnest effort to meet all reasonable demands and even at present, they are willing to consider a further, reasonable increase in pay scales. The employees, instead of resorting to agitational means, which perhaps are instigated by outside unions, should nominate their own representatives to continue negotiations and arrive at an amicable settlement.

One cannot blame the trustees for every ill that besets the community. Should they agree to the demands of the employees, they will no doubt be accused of frittering away funds carelessly. There is however scope for their being a bit more liberal when it comes to certain policies like barring the nassessalar who is married to a

non-Parsi from getting residential quarters at the doongerwadi.

The approximately 70,000 strong community in Bombay finds scapegoats from among the seven trustees for the varied ills of the community. But may I ask what is the positive contribution of the majority of these 70,000 towards the betterment of the community and the Punchayet, especially from those who are living in Punchayet-owned properties? A sizable number of us are lucky enough to have reasonably comfortable residences and in some cases even have luxurious flats for a paltry rent. In a few cases, the families spend more money on washing their cars than the actual rent they pay to the BPP.

Unfortunately the BPP is also covered by the Bombay Rent Act and is therefore not in a position to revise rents. Unlike other landlords, the BPP at least takes reasonable cognizance of the complaints and attends to these (no doubt with financial participation to a certain extent from the concerned tenants).

The present situation of a strike by the Class IV employees would not come up if tenants occupants and their associations and societies voluntarily come forward and make a financial contribution for the services rendered to them.

I offer to be the first to contribute for the use of these services if the trustees should set up a machinery whereby revenue could be generated.

PHIROZE AMROLIWALLA

Edited by Arnavaz S. Mama

Correction

In the article "Does Zoroastrianism teach reincarnation?" (*Parsiana*, August 1988), Dr Paul du Breuil's designation was stated as professor at Sorbonne University, Paris. He is a regent to the board and a professor at the California-based Columbia Pacific University's School of Arts and Sciences.

In the response to question 11 a (From the viewpoint of comparative religion, do you find the doctrine of reincarnation in Vedic tradition?) we inadvertently left out the names of Dasturs Navrooz Minochehr-Homji and Hormazdyar Mirza, Khojeste Mistree and Fari-bourz Nariman who had also responded in the negative.

The errors are regretted.

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