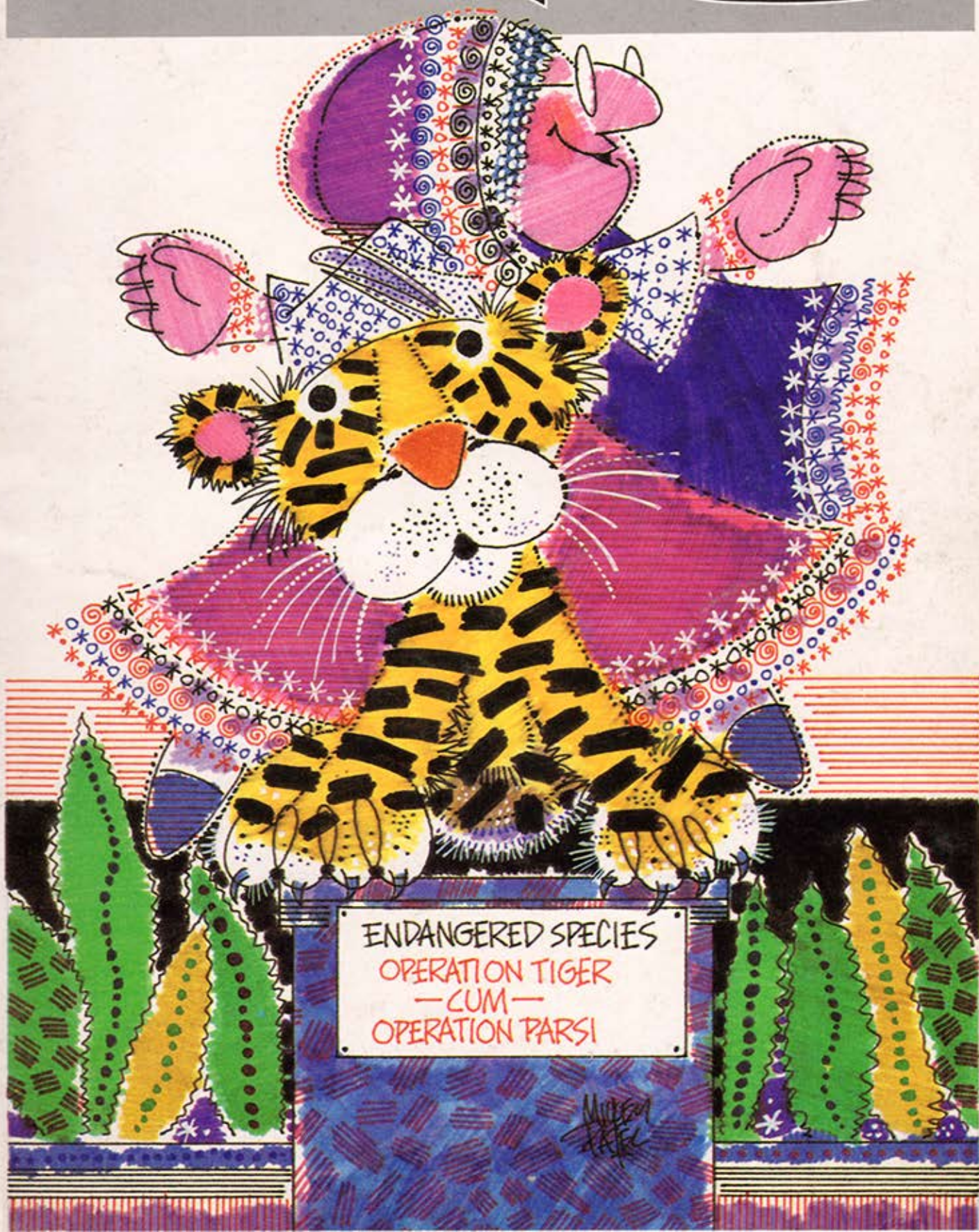
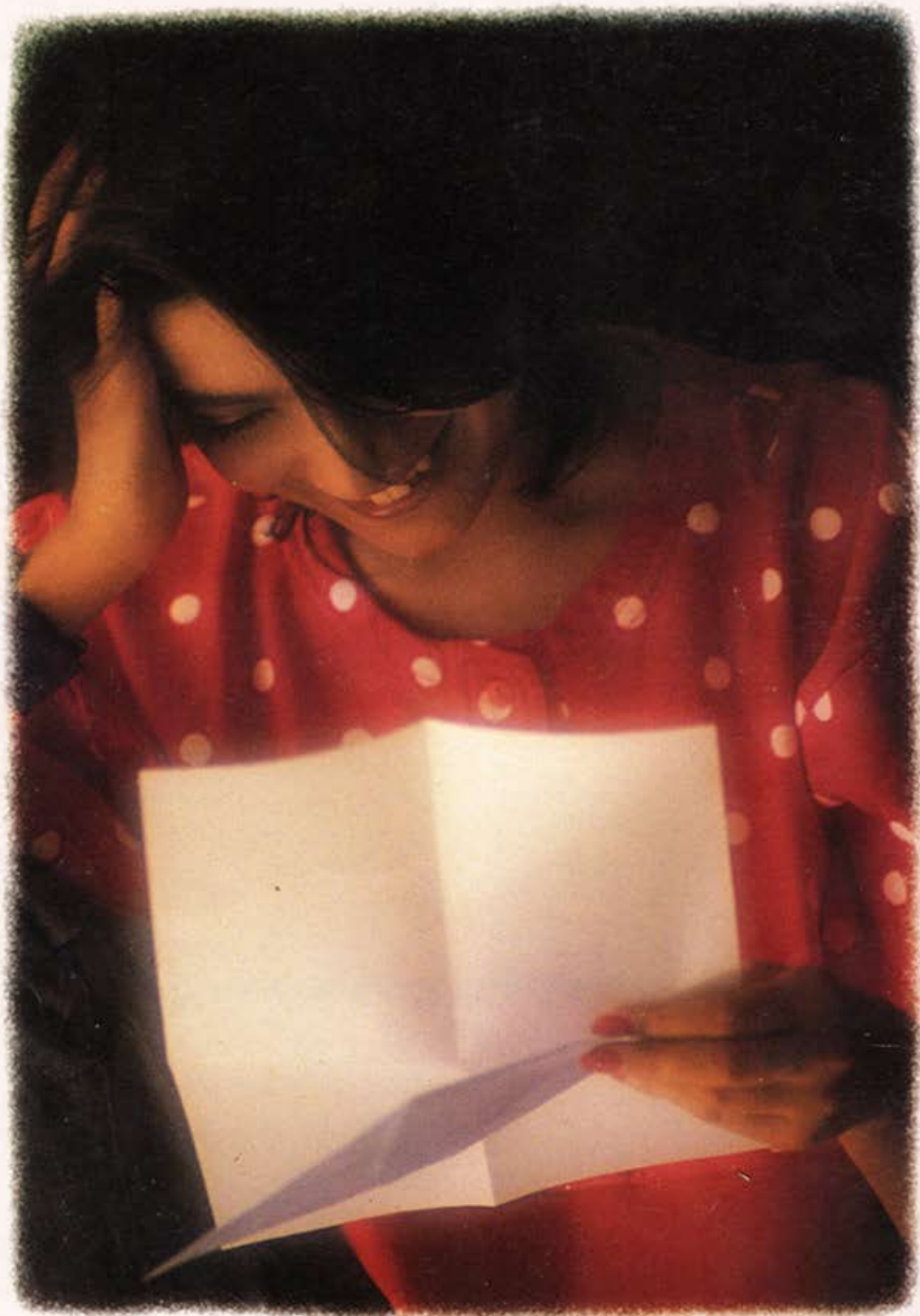


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Parsiana

April 1989
Volume 11 Number 10

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3 Readers' Forum

13 Events and Personalities

16 Zoroastrians Abroad

22 The Delhi Parsi Festival by Gustasp Irani

34 Girton's new plans by Joy Fernandes

39 Lessons in survival by Aspi Moddie

42 Chinoys' cheese culture

46 Milestones

48 In Memoriam

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"Don't dethrone..."

After reading Homi J. Rogers' report on the Council of Vigilant Parsis' (COVP) meeting, held last October, to oppose the shifting of the Banaji Atash Bahram padshah ("Don't dethrone the padshahs," *Parsiana*, January 1989), I thought that Homi must have nodded. But after scanning it, I was convinced that it was a nastily slanted, nay, biased, report. The least *Parsiana* can do when you send someone to cover a meeting is to arm him/her with a tape recorder, accompanied, if possible, by a photographer, so that there is no cause for later sifting facts from fiction, which I now have to do.

• Fiction: Mr B. K. Mistry "introduced himself as 'madcap.'" If that is a Rogers' joke, it certainly deserves a horse laugh!

Fact: (according to the taped version) Mistry - "There are people who ask me, 'Why are you holding this meeting?... After all, do you think that because B. K.

Mistry says something, the trustees are going to listen to him? After all, he is a madcap. Let him be.'" Any elaboration on what Mistry meant would be superfluous.

• Fiction: The report talks of "the lady in question," alluding to Mistry's reference to her, who was the "prime mover in collecting 18 lakh rupees for the repair work at the Atash Bahram."

Fact: At our meeting, it was specifically pointed out by me that the trustees of the fire-temple had themselves mentioned the total sum collected to have been in the vicinity of eight lakhs. The sources for this collection were: the Ladies' Committee appointed for the purpose, the clients of the various *boiwallas* and the frequent appeals made in the Press.

• Fiction: Rogers states, "It, however, remains a moot point whether the structure is really as sound as the COVP makes it out to be, for, even Doctor in his speech conceded that the two porticos did come crashing down (sic). The repair fund was used for the porticos, and will be needed for tiling the roof."

Fact: Had the porticos come crashing down, it would have made front-page story in the entire Bombay Press! It's obvious that Rogers is not able to translate from Gujarati correctly. I had said, "What was the main repair work to be carried out? The tiling of the roof, and the two porticos at the front and back which were in a state of total disrepair." In fact, I had even used the English word "disrepair." Further, I had stated that both the works have already been carried out. "Now, all that remains to be done is *rangrogan* (painting)." So the "moot point" is only a figment of Rogers' imagination.

• Fiction: The worst distortion in your correspondent's report is towards the end, where he writes, "Doctor similarly beseeched... the audience to pass a resolution, later reworded on observing a lukewarm response." And again, "The 'resolution' was carried by a show of hands which, far from being unanimous, barely scraped a majority."

Fact: From where did he get the fib that because of a "lukewarm response," the resolution was "reworded?" Resolutions to be passed at protest meetings are thoroughly discussed and prepared well in advance! Besides, if you were to listen to the tape recording, you too will wonder like me, if Rogers has a totally different meaning of the word "lukewarm" in his lexicon!

As for his other fancy, about the 'resolution' "barely scraping a majority" (the

Jivanji Modi Hall at the K. R. Cama Oriental Institute which has a seating capacity of about 300, of which nearly 250 seats were taken) let's see how the tape falsifies Mr Rogers' reporting. Mr K. N. Dastoor, who moved the resolution in Gujarati, began by explaining: You may call it a resolution or a representation (*nivedan patra*)... because at present we are only making a request to the trustees... I place that before you...and urge you to pass it not with a majority, but unanimously." Thereafter, Mr Mistry seconded it. And when those in favor were asked to raise their hands, except perhaps Mr Rogers, there was hardly any one who didn't. Mr Dastoor then said: "So I take it that you have passed this unanimously?" A thunderous applause greeted that remark. Yet, Mr Dastoor went on to say, "Those who do not wish to support it may also raise their hands." Not a single hand went up!

ADI DOCTOR

With reference to the report of the meeting for not shifting the atash padshah of the Sethi Cawasji Behramji Banaji Atash Bahram held on October 28, 1988 under the auspices of COVP ("Don't dethrone the padshahs," *Parsiana*, January 1989), I would like to make the following observations:

Ervad K. N. Dastoor, whilst reading out the resolution to be passed by those who were present at the meeting, did describe it as a "*nivedan patra*" and stated, for reasons explained by the other speakers and himself, that they were requesting the trustees not to shift the holy fire for mere cleaning and painting work. But at no stage was the resolution reworded nor did any member attending the meeting suggest any change therein.

Secondly, when Mr Dastoor requested the members present to raise their hands if they were in favor of the resolution, it received unanimous support as reported in the *Jamé Weekly* of November 6 and when Mr Dastoor requested the audience to raise their hands if they were not in favor, not a single hand was raised. Under the circumstances, the mention in the above report that "The resolution was carried by a show of hands which far from being unanimous, barely scraped a majority" is totally divorced from the truth. It is a calculated effort to misguide the members of the community and to belittle the efforts made by the COVP for an important, sound, religious cause without assigning any reasons or antecedents, if any, thereto. Such an act deserves condemnation of the highest order.

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When Mr Adi Doctor, whilst requesting the audience to support the resolution, said that God would bless them, he only meant that for supporting a just and good cause there is always a reward from God and he was not suggesting that they go out of their way and vote against their conscience.

The repair jobs to be carried out consisted of repairing the roof, and repair/rebuilding of the front and rear porticos, all of which have already been completed. In spite of opinions expressed that no other repairs are called for, particularly inside the building, if there are doubts, "whether the structure is really as sound as the COVP makes it out to be," the simplest course open to the trustees is to invite opinions of independent Parsi architects of repute; such an action would put to rest doubts about the soundness of the building.

The atash padshah is the priceless spiritual wealth of the community; the trustees are merely the custodians and managers of trust properties and funds, not the owners; *boiwallas* are the *khadims* (servants) of the atash padshah and as such they are supposed to be well-versed with customs and practices for preserving the sanctity of the holy fire and hence the trustees, in their letter to the *Jamé*, are being unfair and unjust in blaming the *boiwallas* for delaying the repairs.

The sacred fire was consecrated and enthroned on December 13, 1845. The holy fire was first shifted for major repairs in November 1959 i.e. 114 years after it was enthroned. This very fact vindicates the stand taken by the COVP. Surely and certainly, during this period of well over one century, Parsi workers must have carried out the work of cleaning and painting; why then should the trustees now hesitate to entrust the work to Parsis and obviate the shifting of the holy fire when no major repair inside the building is called for?

In the end we hope and pray that wiser counsel shall prevail and that the trustees will give up the idea of embellishing this place of worship when all it requires is to be kept neat and clean, providing a serene atmosphere befitting the status of a holy fire.

SOHRAB NAVALSHAW PATWA

Homi Rogers replies

At the outset, an apology for my errant finger which typed an extra digit ("1") before the figure of 8 lakhs. In the same context, may I reiterate that "the lady in question" was described as the "prime" mover in collecting the funds and not the sole

worker in that behalf?

The statement regarding the porticos was an unfortunate slip in the use of the language and is regretted.

An effective *nivedan patra* (application or request) bears the signatures of those who support it. If the resolution was – and was meant to be from the outset – a *nivedan patra*, it seemed hardly appropriate that it should have been put to the vote.

"Don't dethrone the padshahs" by Homi Rogers (*Parsiana*, January 1989) has prompted me to submit a few jottings. As I have observed in my article in *Jamé* (of December 12, 1988), some three or four persons have created this controversy. Sometime ago, they were speaking in terms of 'shifting' (and 'relocation'), now they have come out with an edict concerning 'dethronement!' As far as I know, no Parsi, be he a trustee or a mobed or a layman, is interested in dethroning a holy fire. Twisting of facts with an overdose of emotionalism will not help equate 'dethroning' with temporary shifting and reshifting of the holy fire carried out with requisite ritual precautions.

As indicated in the article mentioned above, two important points to be borne in mind are:

- the need for temporary shifting of the holy fire as envisaged by an experienced engineer/architect on the basis of his expertise; and
- the green signal given by scholar-priests of international repute after considering the pros and cons from the religious point of view.

It may be mentioned that after I had forwarded my article to the Press, I received a letter from one of the trustees of Banaji Atash Bahram. Along with the letter there was a photostat copy of a certificate dated October 10, 1988 from Sam P. Rao of Poonegar, Billimoria and Company, a reputed engineer who has been rendering his services to a number of Parsi trusts. Given below are excerpts from the certificate. Referring to his visit to the fire-temple in question, Rao says:

"During the inspection, it was also pointed out to the undersigned that the *chatri* (umbrella) over the sacred fire, which was suspended from the dome over the *kebla*, was not moving smoothly whenever it was required to be lowered at the time of sweeping the soot and that a severe jerk had to be given before it would become loose and lowered..."

"There is a likelihood that because of the jerk being given to lower the said *chatri*...some member (of) the dome, over



Banaji Atash Bahram: in need of repair?

which the chain of the *chatri* was passing, might be dislodged and might result in the whole *chatri* coming down over the sacred fire.

"It was also seen that the painting inside the main atash bahram building had considerably deteriorated due to age and gave an extremely shabby appearance not befitting the sacred atash bahram building and it was essential to have the building painted from inside and also to paint the woodwork of the roof members and to attend to such of the wooden members of the roof and the extensive wooden false ceiling which had deteriorated, due to age, aggravated by the leakage from the roof, which had...been stopped (since) 1986.

"It is essential that for full and proper inspection and for execution of the work in a proper and workmanlike manner, the sacred fire should be shifted and the building examined thoroughly, and the necessary repairs and the painting carried out."

The opinion of the expert clearly underlines the necessity to shift the holy fire and, in a word, it tells us that the device on which the *chatri* is hung is suspect. As against this, one of the obstructionists crying hoarse against temporary shifting of the padshah assures us that a problem of stability does not exist because a "priest swung on the hook!" The absurdity of such a contention is obvious. If stability of structures can be determined by a mobed swinging on a hook, and if graduates in arts, commerce and law can speak with authority on this issue, public and private bodies may as well dispense with the services of consulting engineers/architects. As I see it, the question of 'dethroning' would arise only if the trustees decide to succumb to the threats by the obstructionists and postpone implementing the suggestion of the expert, in which case, as the latter has pointed out, the *chatri* may fall on the holy fire and

extinguish it in the process.

In connection with the second point, it may be recalled that during the last few years, temporary shifting of the atash bahram fire was resorted to in the H. B. Wadia Atash Bahram, Bombay and in the Iranshah at Udwarda. Evidently, this could not have been done without the consent of Dastur Firoze Kotwal and Dastur Hormazdyar Mirza respectively. However, Adi Doctor brings his hogs to a fine market when, according to Rogers' report, he speaks disparagingly of the scholar-priests of the Atash Bahrams mentioned above. Thus we are constrained to put two and two together: K. N. Dastoor, A. F. Doctor and B. K. Mistry on one side and H. K. Mirza, F. M. Kotwal, and K. M. JamaspAsa on the other. This would be the same as sentimentality against sagacity, emotionalism against knowledge, and bravado against profound scholarship.

An important fact which emerges from the futile exercise of the obstructionists is that, in the absence of any scriptural evidence prohibiting temporary shifting of a holy fire, no amount of pseudo-mystical claptrap presented in highly emotive trappings can culminate in a victory of imprudence over prudence, ignorance

over knowledge and petulance over erudition. The sooner the holy fire is shifted and the repairs carried out under the aegis of the expert, the better for the community in general and the holy fire in particular.

FARIBOURZ NARIMAN

"The view in Iran"

Mr Yazdanyar A. Bonshahi under the heading "The view in Iran" (Readers' Forum, *Parsiana*, January 1989) writes that "Among the Iranian Zoroastrians it is a sin if a person does not marry and does not produce children." Here in India, especially in Bombay and Gujarat, it is the opposite. Our number is decreasing and the population of the elderly is more. What are our anjumans doing?

Previously in Gujarat, a family of seven and eight persons was common. Parsi schools were full of Parsi children with caps on their heads. Marriages and navjote ceremonies were performed in the baugs. Now the baugs have a deserted look. Why? Our trusts are full with money but the funds are not utilized in tune with the times. Trustees only want monetary donations and they favor closing and shifting agiaries. In Parsi baugs in Bombay, exchange of flats are advertised on notice boards and donations are sur-

reptitiously accepted. Why should exchange of charity flats not be encouraged openly? At each agiary, atash bahram, doongerwadi, slogans should be written: "It's a sin if you don't marry and produce eight children for your religion to survive and exist."

A few days back I was passing along Patel Agiary, Andheri, and saw a big crowd of Irani ladies. They were well-built and healthy, tall and of good Iranian stock. We still have that blood and genes present in us. We should wake up and encourage marriages and more children as in Iran.

P. A. BARIA

Congress 1990

At the recent meeting of the Federation of Parsi Zoroastrian Anjumans of India held in Bombay on April 8 and 9, 1989, the two topics which dominated the conference were: the involvement of youth in all activities of the anjuman; and the more important problem of the dwindling Zoroastrian population. The conference also discussed the agenda for the Fifth World Zoroastrian Congress to be held in Bombay in the first week of January 1990.

The theme of the World Congress as tabled is, the Zoroastrian community as seen in the twenty-first century. The items

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to be discussed include subjects like social change, future Zoroastrian institutes, attitudes to marriage, strengthening community organizations, problems of the poor and aged, religious education, traditions, etc.

All the above items would make the Congress very interesting, and even entertaining. However, the question to be asked is, for whom is the Congress planning these items? The specific question to be answered is, who is going to benefit from the results of these deliberations if there are very few Zoroastrians, and even fewer Parsis, left to enjoy them in the twenty-first century?

The central theme of the coming Congress therefore should be *growth*. By *growth*, I am not referring to economic growth, social growth and the various other items associated with growth. I am now referring to our main, mundane problem, namely population growth for our very survival. If we do not address ourselves to this issue, it is possible that the Congress will arrive at brilliant solutions, but to the wrong problems.

However, this problem of growth will automatically involve matters like conversion, mixed marriages, antiquated customs and rituals, etc - subjects which

so far have not been allowed to be discussed and have always been shoved under the carpet. At the next Congress, we must be prepared to bring all these issues to the surface and discuss them frankly, without reservations. Who will now bell the cat?

Brig N. B. GRANT (Retd)
Pune

Outcaste milestones

I am a regular reader of *Parsiana*, and when I come across the marriage and birth columns what hurts me most is that your magazine prints the names of Zoroastrians who are married to outcastes.

This will not create a good impression on young readers. What will they think? - That the community does not mind young Zoroastrians marrying outcastes as *Parsiana* proudly publishes their names.

So it is my advice to *Parsiana* to stop printing the names of Zoroastrians who are married to other castes, and to print the names of only those Zoroastrians who are married within the community. The same applies to the births column.

Ms B. M. IRANI
Pune

Scholarships available

Applications are invited from first class or high second class (minimum 55 per-

cent marks) Parsi graduates for award of gift and loan scholarships for postgraduate studies abroad and in India, preferably in engineering, technical, scientific, industrial, commercial and educational courses. Applicants *must*, as a rule, be less than 28 years of age at the time of applying. Final year degree students with brilliant academic records may apply without waiting for their results. Gift/loan scholarships for postgraduate studies abroad are subject to the Reserve Bank of India's foreign exchange regulations.

Application forms are available from Mr A. D. Sarkari, Secretary, Education Committees, Parsi Punchayet Office, 209 Dr D. Naoroji Road, Fort, Bombay 400001. The last date for submitting the application forms duly completed is May 31, 1989.

A. D. SARKARI

Helping hands

On March 10, 1989 early in the morning at 5 a.m. I left my dear husband Dr Ratan Doctor at the Bombay airport, on his way to Korea via Hong Kong, least realizing when I waved him good-bye that it was the last time I was to see him alive. Within 12 hours I got the sad news that he had collapsed and died at the Hong Kong airport.

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I feel confident that while this sort of attitude prevails, there is no need to worry about the future of the world we live in.

Ms MINI RATAN DOCTOR

Lest we forget...

When I read an article in *The Times of India* (March 12, 1989) on the subject of war-widows, I wondered as to how heartless the public are to those who have given their lives for their country. Their wives and children are left to suffer totally uncared for because a man made the mistake of his life in joining the services to defend his country.

As far as Parsis are concerned, can you enlighten us as to how ex-servicemen, widows, and children are taken care of? Is it possible for anjumans/punchayets to list

the names of officers and men who are retired, as also the surviving widows, and to describe their present condition and how they manage?

Does the Bombay Parsi Punchayet, which is so keen to see Parsis join the services, have any scheme to help them or their widows? Or for that matter, does any other Parsi anjuman or institution in India care for retired personnel or their widows and children?

Capt R. J. KATILA

Why cremate?

I really fail to understand why some members of our enlightened community want to cremate themselves.

What was good for our ancestors should be good enough for us too. When there are so many good things one can do in this world, why harp on cremation? Why think of our body? It becomes a residue after one's death. I really fail to think what is wrong with dokhmenashini.

Why this talk that our pallbearers look at the exposed body of our womenfolk? Are they not human? Have they not at one time or another lost their own mother, sister, wife or dear ones?

We cannot put our decomposed body in water, earth or our sacred fire as these are the very foundations of our existence. Why think of our dead body when the need of the hour is to preserve our community from falling apart? Why cannot we think of the noble future of going to Iran where we once belonged?

Ms SHIRIN MEHERWAN COOPER
Secunderabad

Edited by Arnavaz S. Mama

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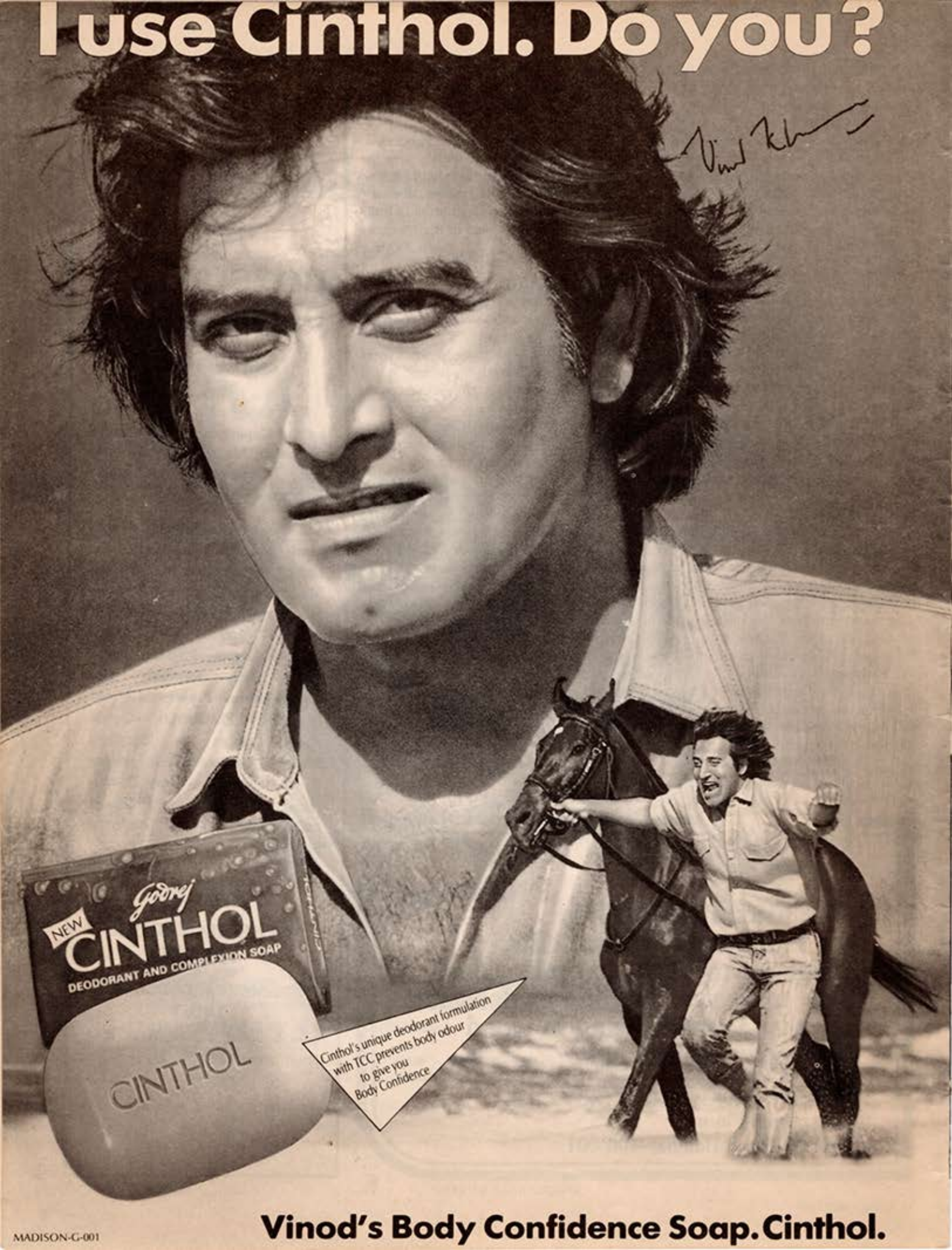
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Events and Personalities

Training future leaders

Effective communication, dramatics, visits to the Nehru Science Centre, the Haffkine Institute, the Prince of Wales Museum and the Mint, a demonstration in rock climbing and river crossing, were some of the highlights of the Holiday Programme for Youth (HPY) conducted by the Bombay Parsi Punchayet (BPP) through April 1989 for the benefit of the young Parsis who had just finished their ICSE (Indian Certificate of Secondary Education) and SSC (Secondary School Certificate) examinations.

With the objective of "molding the Parsi youth of today to become better Indians of tomorrow," as defined by BPP trustee Eruch Desai, they were exposed to different career options. The briefing by outstanding members of different professions, together with aptitude testing and career counselling, was intended to widen mental horizons as much as to give an opportunity to the community youth to become acquainted in informal yet constructive activity.

Of the 108 participants who registered, 90 attended regularly and 25 were selected for a special session in leadership training at the Leslie Sawhney Institute for Training in Democracy, Deolali, informed Ms Diana Marfatia who, as coordinator of the BPP's school counselling service, was also the coordinator of the HPY.

At the inaugural function on April 4, well-known economist Dr Freddie Mehta told the youthful audience, "Every day is a struggle... As members of the smallest community, condemned/blessed to be Parsis...if you work for less than 17 or 18 hours a day, you are a dud. You must be distinctive to the point of being unique..."

The day's second guest speaker, M. R. Pai, who has spearheaded the consumer movement in India, complimented the Parsi Punchayet in bridging a lacuna in national life—the lack of specialized training in leadership. He told the youth that one who seeks to be a leader must have enormous love for the people, accept them as they are and seek no appreciation—"Do the work required and

forget about it... Don't say things are going from bad to worse. If you have courage, stand up and change it," he challenged.

In a free ranging speech on the penultimate day of the program (April 28), jurist Nani Palkhivala extolled Zarathushtra's dictum that a man must think before he can believe and speculated whether dogmatism wasn't the real reason for the community's decline. "Tolerance is essential if the community is to recapture its past glory," asserted Palkhivala. "The community has the resources, and the skill to overcome its problems, but do the akabars have the will to make the right (and perhaps unpopular) decisions?" Palkhivala touched a raw spot.

Recalling that Parsis were the original "boat people" a thousand years before the Vietnamese, Palkhivala noted, "The more hardship you undergo, the greater is the incentive to go up," and informed the gathering that the Vietnamese account for the highest rate of admissions in US universities today. "Education begins after you have left school or college. It's a continuing process; it never ends. If it ends, it means you are not capable of growth," Palkhivala told his "fellow students," and

remembered the comment of his mentor Sir Jamshedji Kanga, when Palkhivala, then a raw apprentice, had wanted to know what his prospects as a lawyer would be: "The top shelves are always empty."

Emphasizing his view that India's future will be bright when a true leader emerges to guide the country, as one surely will, Palkhivala said, "Some of you may be here to see the day when this country becomes one of the great economic powers of the world."

Almost echoing Palkhivala, at the valedictory function the following day, chief guest Aspi Balsara noted, "Boys want to go to America to get a Green Card; but the real challenge and opportunity is here, in your own country."

Balsara, the small-scale entrepreneur whose Promise toothpaste and Odopic cleaning powder had dealt shin blows to the multinational Hindustan Lever's established products, recalled the time when his father could not resist scraping banana peels to assuage a hungry stomach. From small beginnings, Balsara Sr went on to create the sanitary fittings business at Bombay's Meadows Street that virtually led the market, recounted the son. Again,

On the penultimate day of the Holiday Programme for Youth (from left): Jamshed Guzder, Ms Coomi Desai, Palkhivala, Desai and Anklesaria



Managing committee members of the Parsee General Hospital: trying to provide the best that science can offer

when government stopped sanitary fittings imports in 1958, the Balsaras found themselves becoming obsolete. So Aspi Balsara branched into airfresheners and liquid soap — Odonil followed by Odomos and Odopic.

Balsara asked, "Why are (Parsis) afraid to start small?" He noted that people had started with small enterprises in catering and travel agency work. "In catering you can serve food to the lady next door. All you have to do is take the first step."

In his concluding remarks BPP chief executive Rustom Anklesaria urged the youth to develop positive attitudes, to decide for themselves what they want to do in life, unfettered by outmoded parental restrictions. He simultaneously urged parents, "Do not drive your children; let them grow" and, in the words of Mahatma Gandhi, suggested, "An ounce of practice is worth more than a ton of preaching."

The HPY began as a brainchild of BPP trustee and Bombay University vice-chancellor Dr (Ms) Mehroo Bengalee. The lady was slated to attend the valedictory function but sent her apologies. An interesting feature of the last two days of the HPY was the precision and celerity with which the functions adhered to the scheduled timings. As Anklesaria complimented Marfatia, her "capacity in handling the dais is worth mentioning."

Amavaz S. Mama

The Parsi Sena

Well-intentioned youths or goons? Self-seeking publicists or selfless workers? The Parsi Sena arouses different emotions amongst the community and outside it.

Formed by three political activists, Eric and Parvez Nariman Dhatigara and Farokh Gustad Patel, the Sena has been splattering the walls of many buildings in Bombay with the slogan "Join Parsi Sena." Their stated objective is to make the Bombay Parsi Punchayet (BPP) more responsive to the needs of the community. Alleging that "the administration and management of the trust properties of the BPP by its present trustees has become a byword amongst the present generation of Parsi Zoroastrians in Bombay for the corruption set in (sic), mismanagement, favoritism and last but not the least nepotism," the trio note, "it is for these reasons that there is an acute need for forming a 'Parsi Sena' of youth of the community to join and combine in a move to bring order, discipline, straightforward discharge of



duties in the Parsi Punchayet office right from the chairman of the trust to the peon."

The BPP views them as a small group of "disgruntled persons" whose main aim is to intimidate the Punchayet and to gain benefits from the trust. The BPP claims that Eric Dhatigara, who is also president of the city's Janata Dal student wing, wanted a Punchayet flat to be allocated to him as he was engaged to be married and that he is a recipient of financial aid from the Punchayet for his studies. In regard to Farokh Patel the trustees stated, "He is unemployed and was given financial help by one of the trustees of the Parsi Punchayet, Bombay from his own pocket as he said he was in dire need. He was also offered a job in the Parsi Punchayet organization but did not accept the conditions thereof."

According to a report in *The Bombay Samachar*, the editor Jehan Daruwalla was threatened with dire consequences when he refused to publish material handed to him by the Sena.

A *Jam-e-Jamshed* editorial stated that the Sena leaders are capable of "stooping low to achieve their purpose." Their purpose being "harassment of eminent members of our community who are presently serving as trustees of the Punchayet." The *Jamé* also stated that Farokh Patel, a life insurance agent, was employed as a proofreader at the *Jamé* and was "asked to leave for reasons we would not like to disclose." The *Jamé* editor Rusi Dhondy stated that he had "also been threatened with dire consequences by the Sena," but that he was "totally unafraid of such threats."

The general Bombay Press has given the Parsi Sena considerable coverage. In the meanwhile the BPP have served a legal notice on the Sena leaders for their defamatory statements and threatening behavior.

The cost of medical relief

If every member of the community were to avail of the 'Mediclaime' insurance scheme for hospitalization, rather than depend on concessions and free treatment, it would considerably lessen the burden on the B. D. Petit Parsee General Hospital (PGH), said Hospital president Dinshaw Petit. He was speaking at the seventy-fifth annual general meeting of the Hospital on December 24, 1988. Under this scheme, he noted, people up to the age of 70 years can pay a nominal yearly premium and receive a substantial insurance cover for room, board, nursing, surgical and non-surgical treatment.

While the average cost per patient per day at the PGH works out to Rs 181, the Hospital had reportedly treated 47 percent — of its 3,853 in-patients in 1987 — free or on a concessional basis. In terms of treatment days, free or concessional patients amounted to 60 percent of the total, said Petit. Approximately 234 in-patients and 362 out-patients were treated at the Hospital every day, and the average occupancy per day was 82 percent.

The Hospital, he said, was caught in a dilemma of wanting to provide the best that modern science has to offer and at the same time meeting the rising spiral of costs. To bridge the gap between income and expenditure, Petit called upon the community to donate generously, citing some telling statistics: Fees collected from patients account for only 57 percent of the total income of the institution; 95 percent of this collection is expended on staff emoluments.

Acknowledging the donations from trusts like the Khanbahadur Behramshaw Elavia Public Charity Trust, P. E. Polson Trust, Sorabji Byramji Bhabha Charity and the Nanabhoy Jeejeebhoy Charity Trust, the president also commended all those who work for the institution includ-

ing the honorary visiting medicos, the resident medical and nursing staff, the office personnel and other employees.

For the future, the institution has ambitious plans to develop its unused property after obtaining permission from the government, Petit added.

New building for school

The Sir Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy Primary School at Parel is, effective January 1989, functioning from its new premises and hopes to attract children from the neighboring residential localities. The building constructed by the Ahura Co-operative Housing Society was inaugurated by Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy on January 24, 1989, notes a press release signed by Khurshed Shroff, secretary of the Sir Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy Parsee Benevolent (JJPB) Institution, which runs the School.

A variety entertainment program by the students and a project presentation on Maharashtra and its people, under the guidance of School headmistress Ms Tehmi Patel and staff members, marked the inaugural occasion, adds the release.

The primary school enrolls pupils from nursery to standard four. Thereafter they are admitted to the J. J. Boys' and Girls' Secondary School at Fort where they continue until they pass their SSC (Secondary School Certificate) examination.

Reportedly one of the oldest educational foundations, the Sir JJPB Institution runs several schools in Bombay and Gujarat. At present it runs three primary and two secondary schools in Bombay, and three primary and three secondary ones in Surat, Valsad and Navsari, the write-up notes.

In his address, Jejeebhoy stated that the schools of the Institution were run on modern lines and had well-equipped audiovisual aids.

The primary school building, which was in a dilapidated condition, had been constructed by the N. M. Wadia Charities in February 1937. Tracing the School's history, Shroff recalled that initially this was one of the girls' schools started by the first baronet Sir Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy in October 1850.

National awards for two

Among the 12 men and three women chosen for the Padma Bhushan awards this year were Dr (Ms) Banoo Jehangir Coyaji from Pune and Russi Hormusji Mody from Jamshedpur, reads the *Indian Express* of January 26, 1989. The names of the awardees who were conferred with the nation's third-highest civilian honor were announced on India's fortieth Republic Day. The Padma Bhushan awards are presented annually to persons who have made a significant contribution to their field of endeavor.

Coyaji was awarded the Padma Bhushan for her work in the field of family planning and Mody for his contribution to private sector management.

Coyaji is professor emeritus at the B.J. Medical College, Pune and president of the Obstetrics and Gynaecological Society, also at Pune. Heading the K.E.M. Hospital for over 40 years, she is responsible for the Hospital's growth from 40 beds to 450 beds, and even chairs the Hospital's research center, notes her bio data. Coyaji's medical training was at Bombay. She graduated with a Doctor of Medicine (MD) degree in obstetrics and gynecology from the Grant Medical College.

The 71-year-old obstetrician is a member of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Group (STAG) of the World Health Organisation (WHO) in Geneva, a WHO consultant on other allied subjects, and her appointments include membership on the central council of health and family wel-

fare which falls within the purview of the Government of India's ministry of health. She has written papers on family planning, contraception, health services research in several national and international journals, and has been chosen to represent India at several international meets, the bio data further notes.

Chairman and managing director of Tata Iron and Steel Company Ltd (TISCO) since 1974, in the same year that Russi Mody was selected for the Padma Bhushan award, he also scored the highest among India's 12 best and most respected chief executive officers, notes the *Business-World* of March 29-April 11, 1989. This rating was on the basis of an opinion poll



commissioned by *BusinessWorld* and conducted by Marketing and Research Group.

Working with Tatas since 1939, the bon vivant reportedly featured among the six top industrial personalities of the world who were chosen by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) for a television serial, *Moneymakers*. It was subsequently published as a book, notes *Gavashni*, the newsletter of the Calcutta Zoroastrian Community's Religious and Charity Fund of December '88-January '89. Last year the Indian Chamber of Commerce, Calcutta, conferred him with an award for promoting the cause of national integration, *Gavashni* continues.

The 71-year-old industrial magnate, who is director of several companies, holds a bachelor of arts degree in ancient history from Oxford's Christchurch College.

Homage to Pochkhanawala

As a tribute to an artist who would have liked even "a stray spark from her welding (to) burn a hole into the almost blank chapter of contemporary Indian sculpture," the Cymroza Art Gallery held an exhibition of the works of sculptress Ms Pilloo Pochkhanawala. The exhibition was on view from October 25 to November 10, 1988.

Some of Pochkhanawala's celebrated works include the deceptively serene

continued on page 45



Jejeebhoy inspects a model building at the inauguration of the Sir Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy Primary School (Above) Padma Bhushan winners: Mody (left) and Coyaji



PHOTO: THE INDIAN POST/LEO

**“You
don’t
forget
your
country”**

Arnavaz S. Mama

A liberal Zoroastrian, maestro Zubin Mehta bemoans the tendency of some Parsis in North America to forget their Indian roots

“My father is a phenomenon any way you look at it. Today’s generation doesn’t know what he’s doing and has done.”

Filial pride added an extra dimension to international virtuoso Zubin Mehta as he responded to *Parsiana*’s questions at The Oberoi on April 27, 1989.

Mehta recounted with obvious pleasure how the active 80-year-old Mehli conducts his own orchestra, the American Youth Orchestra in Los Angeles, taking it on tours with programs more ambitious than those of his son. At a formal press conference a few days earlier, Mehta had answered a query — whether musical talent in India is born to blush unseen in the absence of a school for music — by citing the example of his father. A self-taught man with a certain amount of coaching from traveling musicians, Mehta senior (who had founded the erstwhile Bombay Symphony Orchestra) had been aided by Parsi charities, notably the Tata trusts, to study in New York, said Zubin.

In his eleventh year as music director of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra and, concurrently, music director for life of the Israel Philharmonic, Zubin Mehta was on a tour of Europe and India with the European Community Youth Orchestra (ECYO) and renowned sitarist Pandit Ravi Shankar. Their appearance in India comprised one program each in Delhi and Calcutta, and two in Bombay. The tour was part of the Jawaharlal Nehru centenary celebrations, cosponsored by the European Community, its member countries and Oberoi Hotels International, the chain providing hospitality to the musicians all along the way. “Nowhere in Europe or America can you get such service,” Mehta complimented his hosts, insisting, “A politician cannot judge a hotel; nor can the tourists. The real judges are the artists: we have so many demands, we are so fussy...”

Staunchly loyal to the country of his birth, Mehta is aghast at the stance some Parsis in North America have adopted: “They don’t think they’re Indians. They don’t belong to any Indian association.

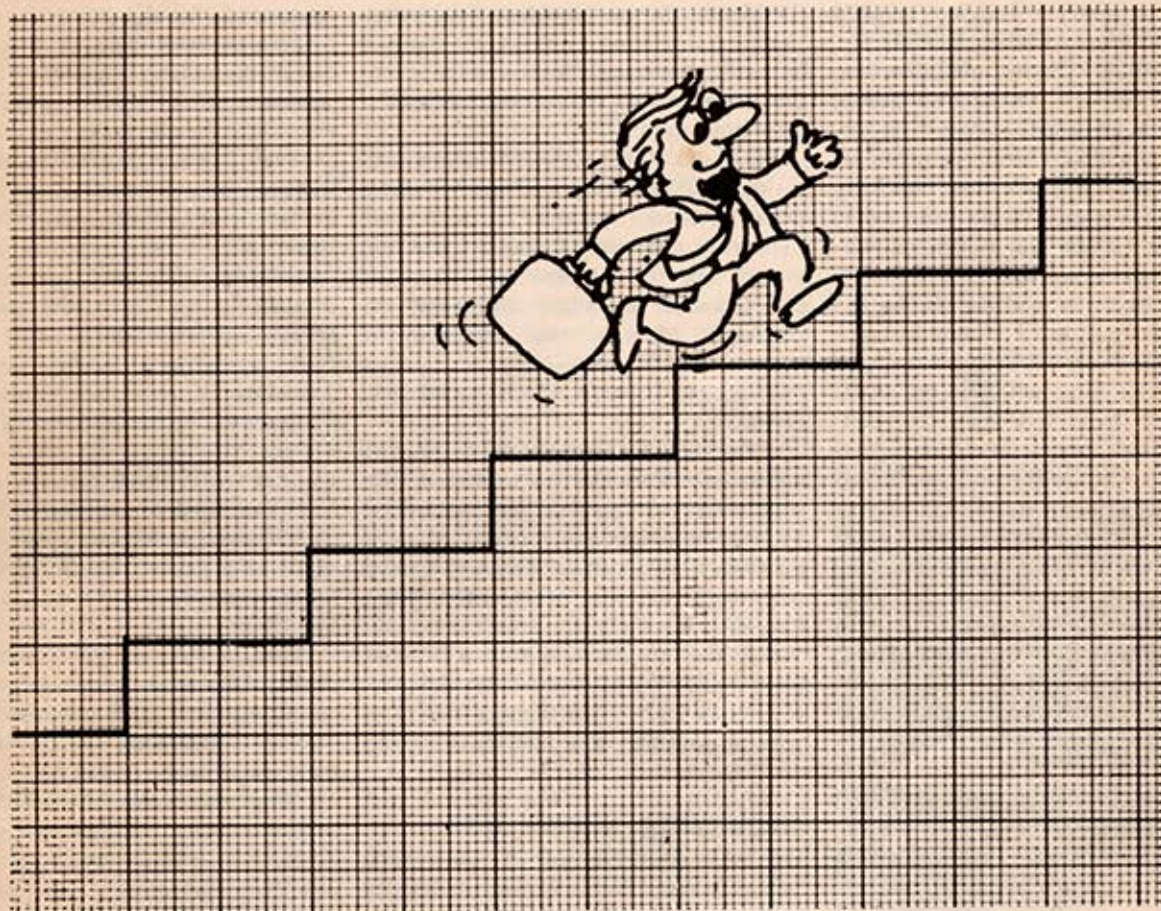
They call themselves Zoroastrians or Parsis, but not Indians... You don’t forget the country that has harbored you for a thousand years! Is India just a transit lounge? Are we just passing through? And mind you, these are the first generation settlers — not the children born there (who behave this way).”

Mehta says he used to wear the sudreh kusti in Vienna (where he studied music) but for practical reasons — they tore, the replacements took too long to reach, etc — the habit withered away and “on stage, it was impossible,” he adds. At the outset of their current tour, in Rome on April 13, Mehta tore his coat sleeve three times and finally jettisoned the tail coat on stage. At the grand finale at the Brabourne Stadium in Bombay, which coincided with his birthday, Mehta conducted wearing a dagli.

During the Bombay stays, he not only visits the agiary but makes it a point to feast the accompanying orchestra to a traditional Parsi repast at the Jeejeebhoy Dadabhoy Agiary in Colaba. This time his plans had included a classical Bharat Natyam recital for the benefit of the young musicians. An appeal to the trustees for permission netted a three-line reply declining the request. Mehta was indignant at the curtness of the response as much as at the message. “It’s not like I’m treating them to a striptease (or) doing a vulgar *natak* (play)! I want to show them the very best in Indian dancing!”

Referring to his involvement with the controversial film *Quest for Zarathushtra* (later renamed *On Wings of Fire*) Mehta wished the film was shown more outside India. “In Europe they’d be very interested... We didn’t make it as a movie. It was meant to be a semi documentary for colleges, educational TV... For me it was very educational talking to, arguing with (costar) Khojeste (Mistress of Zoroastrian Studies),” said Mehta as he reminisced about the Navsari *mohallas* which they had visited on location. “When (producer) Cyrus (Bharucha) came to me, I was going to do only the commentary.

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VITTA MAZDA
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It developed (from there)."

A confessed liberal, Mehta sees no harm in initiating a non-Parsi, who has taken the trouble to study Zoroastrianism, into the faith, though "my friend Khojeste won't agree with me!" He went on to relate how he had arranged the navjote of his daughter Zarina in Los Angeles because she chose to marry a religious-minded Parsi in Montreal (where, incidentally, Zubin's brother Zarin manages the Montreal Symphony Orchestra). Zarina had been brought up as a Roman Catholic.

Having abandoned study in medicine to pursue a career in music at the Academy of Music in Vienna, Mehta went on to conduct the Vienna and Berlin Philharmonic Orchestras and returns to them for a session every year, earning the Vienna Philharmonic's Ring of Honor to commemorate the twenty-fifth anniversary of his conducting debut with that orchestra. France, Italy, India and Israel have conferred national honors upon him. He is also credited with having built up the Los Angeles Philharmonic during his 14-year tenure as its music director. Innumerable recordings are already behind him and there are plans for at least 20 more recording projects in the next two years. Though Mehta's recent tour of the Soviet Union with the New York Philharmonic (NYP) was reportedly a triumph, he plans to gravitate towards Europe when his contract with the NYP ends in 1991: "I've done my bit...as music director. Now I want to conduct."

Keen to foster musical interest among the uninitiated Indian youth, Mehta had insisted on a substantial portion of the tickets being priced low (Rs 10). "I didn't want the usual group to come twice," he said. It was also at his request that four young Indian musicians had been included in the orchestra (the EGYO's 140 players, aged between 14 and 23 years, are selected from over 4,000 candidates each year), as noted the EGYO secretary-general Ms Joy Bryer at the press conference. Among them was violinist Navroj Mehta, the son of Zubin's first cousin Dadi Mehta who lives and works in the US (Dadi, a pianist of repute, is the one who arranged for Zubin to study music in Vienna, acknowledges the maestro), and violinist Zubin Behramkamin of Bombay. Navroj's brother Bejan was a very effective boy soprano, notes Zubin. Now an adult, Bejan is a very good cellist, one whom Zubin wished to include in the current tour, but "He's like a rocket — nobody knows where to find him!" Another outstand-

ing Parsi musician according to Zubin is pianist Fali Pavri. Will they make it to the top? Mehta has hopes for them provided they "work very hard, never feel satisfied, never feel the work's been enough..."

Another family member Mehta lists with pride is his uncle, the dentist. "Freddy (Dr Mehta, a former president of the Indian Dental Association) is 88 years old and he's still practicing! He may make it into the *Guinness Book of Records* as the oldest practicing dentist!"

How did Zubin's parents respond to his out-of-community marriage? "I did it twice!" remarks the whiz kid with glee. "The first time they thought I was too young. The second time they liked the girl (Nancy) so much, (they just accepted)!" Mehta's two children — Merwan and Zarina — are by his first marriage to Carmen which ended in a divorce.

After this tour, the Mehtas planned to vacation in Rwanda, (in central Africa, southwest of Uganda) climbing perhaps 14,000 feet in search of gorillas. "My wife plans such strenuous vacations, (it's only) when I go back that I feel rested. When I conduct my orchestra, I feel at peace!" Would they try and make it to Bombay for the Fifth World Zoroastrian Congress in January 1990? "We plan our lives three years in advance. Next January is like day after tomorrow..."

Legalizing status quo

The Australian Zoroastrian Association (AZA) of New South Wales has stopped holding Sunday school at AZA House in response to a solicitor's notice from the Baulkham Hills Shire Council. As of April, the new venue is Thornleigh West Primary Public School, notes AZA newsletter *Manashni* of April 1989.

The Association is withdrawing its earlier application to the Council for permission to develop the property. Instead, a new application — prepared by a professional town planning consultant and scheduled to be lodged ere now — seeks formal approval of AZA's current activities, notes president Noshir Irani.

Legal hassles notwithstanding, AZA accentuated Jamshedi Navroze bonhomie with a home-brewed production, *Lafango*, with Irani in the starring role. Brimming with satisfaction at the outcome of the *natak* (play), a critique in *Manashni* scored the production as "one of the best AZA shows in recent times."

Gesture that didn't gell

Former judge of the Supreme Court of Pakistan and currently chairman of its Human Rights Commission, Dorab Patel was his country's candidate for the vacant seat on the International Court of Justice at The Hague. India, Ceylon, the Philippines and Thailand had also fielded contestants for the post.

Though Patel lost out in the international diplomatic scramble to India's candidate, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court R.S. Pathak, in the election on April 18, 1989, *The Times of India* had predicted it would be a Pyrrhic victory for India, in its lead editorial the same day. Describing Patel as one who had "displayed exceptional legal courage and acumen during the martial law years in his country," the editorial noted that "New Delhi is missing a fine occasion to make a gesture of good neighborliness (and ignoring the Prime Minister of Pakistan) Ms Bhutto's emotional stake in getting the seat for Mr Patel, the only judge who had stood up for her father... New Delhi should, even at this late stage, rethink its stand as a gesture to Mr Patel and his human rights record if not to his sponsor, Ms Bhutto."

That the Pakistan government made a concerted attempt to recognize Patel on an international level is attested to by Ms Tavleen Singh in her column "Notes from the Capital" in the *Indian Express* of April 16. Singh writes that Bhutto had sent "her brilliant young minister of the interior, Aitzaz Ahsan to discuss bilateral matters and the possibilities of our Chief Justice withdrawing his application to the International Court of Justice in favor of Pakistan's candidate Dorab Patel."

Apart from his celebrated dissent to the hanging of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, Patel is reported to have refused to comply with the late General Zia-ul-Haq's requirement of an oath of personal allegiance from each of the judges of the Pakistan Supreme Court and had resigned forthwith, as noted editorial correspondent Ashok Easwaran in the course of a detailed article on the Parsis (*Island*, March 15, 1989).

Dotbuster judgement

Jamshed Mody has appealed to New Jersey governor Tom Kean to review the proceedings against the four teenagers who fatally mugged his son Navroze on September 27, 1987, notes a report in *The Times of India* of April 22, 1989.

The jury, comprising eight women and seven men, decided that Luis Acevedo

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(16), Ralph Gonzalez (18), and Luis Padilla (17) were not guilty of murder or manslaughter but of aggravated assault. Accordingly judge Kevin Callaghan awarded them 10 years in prison (the maximum punishment under the charge) on April 14, 1989. The sentences are "indeterminate" so that a parole officer can, after some years, reduce the length of the imprisonment, notes the report. The fourth offender, William Acevedo (18) was found guilty of simple assault and his sentence, which could be probation or six months in jail depending on the judge, will be meted out on May 26, according to *The Times of India* of April 12.

"A slap on the wrist" is Jamshed Mody's description of the verdict which has roused the anger and concern of the 10,000 strong Indian community in Jersey City and the neighboring areas on the waterfront west of New York. The Indians consider Navroze's tragic fate a part of the rising, racially motivated violence they have faced in recent years and had organized protests and marches to bring the trouble into focus. The prosecution, however, failed to see any link between the incident and the Dotbusters. It maintained that the fatal fight had begun with taunts about the victim being bald. The defence had argued that the death was the result of a street fight and that the defendants had never intended to kill Navroze Mody.

In his petition to the governor, Mody has charged that the case was heard by a "tainted" jury. The presence of five Hispanics on the jury had earlier been defended by Hudson county prosecutor Paul de Pascale.

While there is no response yet from the governor's office, Mody has already filed "a civil lawsuit against Hoboken city and its police officers for failing to protect his son against wrongful death," notes the report.

Nargolwala's UN niche

"Hira in Hindi means 'diamond,' and those of us in the United Nations who have had the privilege of knowing and working with him, for nearly a quarter of a century, would be hard pressed to think of a better name for him." The accolade to Hira Nargolwala in *Habitat News* (April 1988), the newsletter of the UN Centre for Human Settlements, published when he retired at the end of March 1988, was forwarded to *Parsiana* by Delhi Parsi Anjuman trustee Ms

Nergish Nargolwala earlier this year.

The international civil servant had begun his UN career as inter-regional adviser with the UN Centre for Housing, Building and Planning, after many dedicated years serving the Indian government as housing adviser to the ministry of works and housing. As special technical adviser, Nargolwala had been responsible for a large number of the UN's complex technical cooperation projects in various developing countries, recalls *Habitat News*. For the



Nargolwala:
human
settlements
adviser

past nine years, he had voluntarily worked as full-time technical adviser to the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) on a token remuneration of one US dollar a year.

Remarking on Nargolwala's competence, total commitment and dedication to UN ideals, the write-up refers to his meticulous attention to detail and the thoroughly conscientious discharge of duty.

A quiet, pious, noninterfering bachelor and a vegetarian, as Ms Nargolwala portrays her brother-in-law, Nargolwala is said to have contributed more than US \$ 82,000 from his personal earnings to the UN's humanitarian causes.

Funeral procedures

The Zoroastrian Society of Ontario (ZSO) has published a handy, six-page mimeograph booklet, *Funeral Procedures*, distributed along with the newsletter of January 1989 to help bereft families cope with a death in their midst. Compiled by the Society's religious subcommittee, the publication lists the officials who must be contacted — like the doctor, mobed and director of the funeral home in the neighborhood. For legal or economic information readers are referred to appropriate professional advisers. There is a list of traditional Zoroastrian customs and requirements and directions on how the body should be handled and readied.

The arrangements and cost of the funeral and the final disposal are also listed. A traditional Christian service with casket is said to cost \$ 1,855 and more and includes the cost of the casket, one day visiting and services at the funeral home, cars which include a limousine,

hearse, clergy and flower car, cards and books, cremation fee, coroner's fee and embalming charges. The ZSO booklet notes that it is more in line with Zoroastrian practice to have the *geh sarna* within 24 hours which eliminates the cost (\$ 969) of visiting and service at the funeral home. The minimal cars and casket amounting to \$725 plus cremation (\$160) and coroner's fee (\$23) thus reduces the cost of the funeral to \$908. Embalming the body (\$95) depends on the requirements of "time, health and whether you wish to keep the casket open," notes the booklet.

Ownership of a burial plot (three feet by nine feet) costs \$550 and some cemeteries permit single or double burial, informs the book. If double burial is the choice, the first body is laid at a depth of nine feet and the second at a depth of six feet, the cost of preparing the plot being \$ 315 and 260 respectively.

Though the ZSO has a plot in Glen Oaks Memorial Gardens, Mississauga, for scattering ashes, the Society encourages individual families to purchase adjacent plots. While the service charge for "scattering" is \$35, it would cost \$80 each time ashes are buried in an urn, approximately two or three feet deep, and would require the family to purchase a plot.

The booklet also provides the names and telephone numbers of mobeds available for the funeral service and of volunteers to help bereaved families. Other guidance includes information about the Toronto Memorial Society, a non-profit organization dedicated to maintaining dignity at low cost at funeral ceremonies as also the availability of death benefits under the Canada Pension Plan, the procedure for obtaining a death certificate and tips on dealing with government agencies for the legal formalities that follow a demise.

The Baimai Surti Foundation has been established by Dhunjishaw Surti of Toronto in memory of his late mother, notes the ZSO newsletter of January 1989. The fund aims to provide "skills, equipment and machinery to enable the less fortunate men and women in our community to make themselves self-sufficient," notes the newsletter and assures donors that "every cent of your donation will go to the poor as all services are voluntary and there are no overheads. Contributions, which would qualify for tax exemption in Canada, may be sent to the Foundation in care of Surti at 65

continued on page 32

The easy chair, whose extended armrest could be used as a footrest, was typical of those found in Parsi homes. The empty chair, but for a Sunday *Jamé* tossed across the cane seat, was one of the exhibits at the recent Parsi Festival in Delhi. The four-day Parsi Festival from March 18 to 21, 1989, organized by the Delhi Parsi Anjuman (DPA) and hosted by the India International Centre (IIC), sought to sketch the missing Parsi. Like an abstract portrait done by a modern artist, the image was, intentionally or otherwise, sharp and blurred in patches. In focus was the contribution of Parsis to the emergence of modern India and their integration into the national mainstream while retaining their distinctive characteristics. Painfully etched was the fact that they are probably the most aged community in the world and on the brink of extinction. There was little on the community's origins and history in Iran, or their stay for a thousand years in rural Gujarat, or their Irani Zoroastrian cousins, or the controversies that plague them, or...

For four days the Parsis were on parade at the Festival – the second in a series on minority communities – promoted and hosted by the IIC in its program to foster national integration through understanding. In the words of Lt

Gen Adi Sethna, president of the DPA, the Festival was to provide "a glimpse of our (Parsi) community's traditions and the role we have played in the making of modern India – not only for the people of India, but for our Parsi brethren in Delhi and outside." The organizers sought to achieve this end with panel discussions, cultural programs, an art exhibition, an exhibition on Parsi costumes, lifestyle and books, food counters, a dhansak lunch and Navroz dinner, and video shows. "It was a short and quick expose of Parsis," said Eric Gonzalvas, director, IIC in his address at the concluding day's function.

In all, the picture was bright. The Parsis have done well both as Parsis and as Indians. Historic evidence bore this out as speaker after speaker referred to the community's achievements. Politics, industry, science, law, medicine, the armed forces, music, sport, in almost every field Parsis have played both important and pioneering roles. Naoroji, Tata, Bhabha, Mehta, Gilder, Manekshaw – the list of names of eminent Parsis is endless. "In most fields they have made contributions much larger than their number... E. Kulke views the Parsis in India as catalysts of social change and not merely as a pinch of sugar in milk," said Dr L. M. Singhvi, president, IIC, in his address at the inaugural function.

Dark clouds of uncertainty, however, blur the future of the community. The question is not one of matching up to past glory but one even more crucial – survival. Repeatedly the problem of depleting numbers cropped up throughout the Festival. Speaker after speaker invariably referred to the situation. Vasant Sathe, Minister of Energy, and chief guest at the cultural programs on March 20 and 21 compared the Parsis to tigers. "We have an Operation Tiger, but what about these tigers?" he asked. "We cannot allow this goldmine to be depleted in the interest of this country." He promised to plead with the Chief Minister of Maharashtra Sharad Pawar to build a colony of 10,000 houses for the Parsis – a suggestion that was greeted with a cheer from the crowd.

"The problem is not of spouses, but one of houses," said Homi Taleyarkhan, member, Minorities Commission, at the inaugural function. When the question of the Parsi attitude to dowry was being discussed on the floor of the house, Jamshed Guzder, trustee of the Bombay Parsi Punchayet (BPP), declared that it is the

The Delhi Parsi Festival: The Swan Song

Gustasp Irani

The depleting size of the community was the recurring theme at the Parsi Festival organized in Delhi





Parsi girl who calls the tune: "Give me a flat first." He added that the BPP is doing the best within its resources to meet the problem. Sethna got up to add that the policy determining flat allotment should be: "I give you a flat, you give me two children."

"I am the voice of doom," was how sociologist Ms Ava Khullar referred to herself in the introduction to her paper "The Demographic Pattern of the Parsis." Her statistics on the population trends of the community were distressing. Over the two decades, between 1951 and 1971, the population declined by an average of 10 percent per decade; but in the subsequent 10 years, the fall was a full 20 percent. "Reproductive rates in all minority communities all over the world are higher than the majority community because they find security in numbers. Parsis, as usual, go against accepted trends." According to her, statistics verify that Parsis have the dubious distinction of being probably the most aged community in the world. "An alarming situation pointed out by the 1981 census was that out of a total 71,630 Parsis in India, 14,300 were over 65 years and only 9,000 under 14 years. So the decline, once it takes momentum, may strike the community harshly and severely; I may also add suddenly."

Quoting Dr Malini Karkal, Khullar adds: "It may be possible to reduce the fertility of rapidly growing populations, but once members of a community have enjoyed the advantage of non-marriage and low fertility, the process is almost irreversible." One factor that contributes to the depleting number of Parsis is the growing trend of mixed marriages. Khullar points out that in Delhi, in the 1960s, 33 percent of all Parsi marriages were mixed, but in the 1970s, the percentage rose to 66.



"Now the time has come when you Parsi should be acting like the milk," said Sathé. "You have done enough sugaring. Do some milking." The laughter subsided when the speaker urged, on a more serious note, for a "slow relaxing" and a "breaking of barriers" and the acceptance of others into the fold. "So many Indians will be happy to become Parsis. Probably you are afraid of that," said Sathé. "*Bahu dahi karéch* (colloquial denigration implying that the suggestion was "corny")," hissed one member of the audience.

When the chief guest at the inauguration, Romesh Bhandari, Lt Governor of Delhi, sought kinship with the Parsis by declaring that one of his daughters-in-law was of a Parsi mother and non-Parsi father and that a niece had married a Parsi, the response was muted. Likewise, when a non-Parsi member of the audience having a Parsi wife asked why their children were not accepted in the faith, the hall was still, but for a lone cheer from the back of the auditorium: "Yea." The issue was brushed aside when a Parsi spectator claimed that non-conversion was one of the conditions that the king of Sanjan had

imposed on the Iranian Zoroastrian refugees when they first set foot on the land over a thousand years ago. Yet, in the tableau presented on that very same episode, non-conversion was not among the five conditions laid down by the king. No one raised the issue. Apparently, the organizers and the audience felt that this was not the forum to discuss such matters.

Dr Karan Singh, former central minister, who chaired the panel discussion on

Some of the spirited organizers

(Below left): Sethna (with book) holding Sathé's attention

Karan Singh leafing through a book as amused ladies look on



"Religion, rituals and customs" ventured to suggest cremation as an alternative form of disposal of the dead. But even as he voiced the opinion one could sense his hesitancy, "Perhaps it is a matter Parsis have to discuss and decide upon." They did discuss it, but briefly, referring to the pollution of the elements and the origins of the dokhmas. Time was short and it seemed that the DPA had decided to steer clear of major controversies.

What the organizers did care to explain were the Zoroastrian rituals. The navjote, marriage and jashan ceremonies were first explained by Ms Piloo Jungalwalla, Dr (Ms) Sabar Havewalla and young Ervad Ramiyar Karanjia respectively and then demonstrated by the two enterprising priests of Delhi, Cawas Bagli and Dinyar Sidhwa. It was revealed that in the Parsi wedding ceremony, the final blessings to the married couple are in Sanskrit.

Jungalwalla briefly sketched the origins of man according to Zoroastrian mythology and the choice before him. When Ahura Mazda asked man, "Are you ready to go down to earth and fight for good?" He received an affirmative



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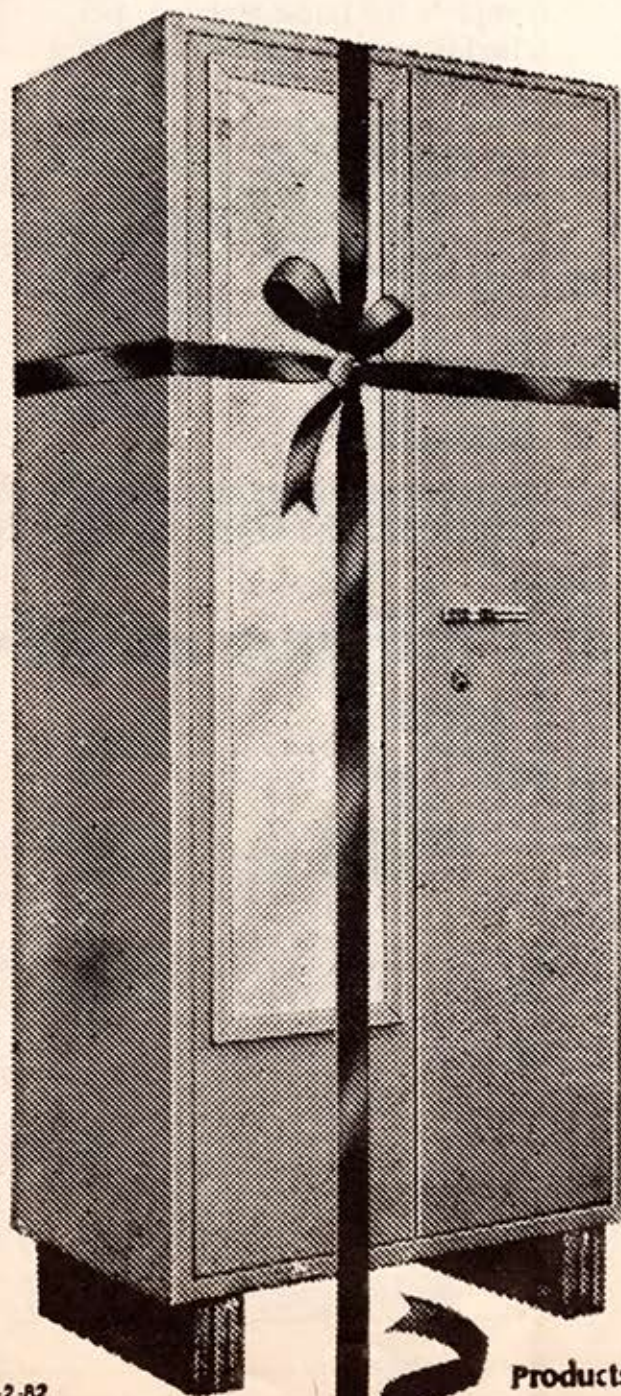
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answer. In ancient Iran the navjote ceremony was performed at the age of 15 after the youth had passed a test before an assembly of elders who could quiz him or her on any aspect of the religion.

Havewalla, a spinster, pleaded guilty for not performing a religious duty. "Our religion does not advocate *sanyas* (renunciation)," she explained. Marriage, she stated, is of religious significance, a divine bond between two people. The bond in certain cases is so strong, she said, that when a partner dies, male or female, *jora ni kriya* is performed, that is the prayers are also said, on behalf of the spouse, whether living or dead.

Karanjia explained that there are primarily three kinds of jashans: historic, to celebrate important occasions; thanksgiving, for happy occasions; and solemn, to pay respect to the dead. The prayers and ceremonies in all the three forms of jashans are basically the same. Later he explained the significance of the death ceremonies.

The session also dwelt briefly on lady priests. Jungalwalla noted that Zoroastrianism advocated total equality between the sexes and that in ancient Iran, lady priests were the rule rather than the exception. Karanjia explained that priests in Iran performed the higher ceremonies and laymen, including ladies, could perform ceremonies like navjotes, jashans, etc. "There is nothing to stop them. I know of a lady who performs the muktad ceremonies of her family at home," he added.

Karan Singh pointed out the similarities between Hinduism and Zoroastrianism. He also made a distinction between rituals and ritualism. "The

word ritual has acquired an unpleasant connotation – but that really is ritualism." He explained that rituals are important to man as they reunite him with the nebulous divine and the solid earth.

The post-dhansakh lunch session on "the role of Parsis in the making of Modern India" was chaired by noted industrialist Sorab Godrej. To Prof K. N. Singh who spoke on Parsi management, the distinguishing characteristics of the community are its enterprise in starting new industry, its human approach to worker management dealings and its honesty. "Parsis are less dishonest than other communities," he observed. The crowd cheered.

"It is a characteristic of our community that it has eccentrics and geniuses. We laugh at ourselves. We don't take ourselves too damned seriously," Soli Sorabji, noted lawyer, informed his spirited audience. It is this eccentricity and genius that has thrown up both colorful and leading personalities in almost every profession. Sorabji confined himself to the fields of music (the great jazz musician Rudy Citti was none other than the Parsi Kavus Katilia), politics, law and medicine. A common trait found among the Parsis who distinguished themselves in these fields was that "they did not enter these professions as fortune seekers, but as healers. Not to amass fortunes but to give cheerfully their services." He is optimistic about the future of the community: "From what I see of boys and girls in these fields today, I have no reason to despair."

Dr Raja Ramanna, former chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, who flew in from Bangalore specifically for

the Festival, spoke about his colleague and friend Dr Homi Bhabha. He portrayed a humane, eccentric genius fired by a vision of the future. The Bhabha he knew came in tail coats and bow ties to hear Mozart on a gramophone. His moods were savage and only his mother could tame him in his rougher moments. "He was very European in his outlook, but hidden somewhere was a deep love for his country." It was Bhabha's drive and vision that made India's first reactor Apsara, a reality in the 1950s and set the country on the path of self-reliance in the field of nuclear energy.

Godrej, in his summation, pointed out the importance of holding such Parsi festivals for non-Parsis so that they understand the community better. "Apart from Bombay, Delhi and other major cities, we are not known in the rest of the country." He recalled a conversation he had overheard: "'The Tatas are not Hindus,' said one man. His companion replied: 'They must be Muslims then.'"

The identity of the Parsis has now been acknowledged at the national level. "Thanks to the efforts of the BPP and the Delhi Parsi Anjuman, the government has agreed to make the Parsi New Year a national holiday," Taleyarkhan announced. Characteristic of the fissiparous tendency of a small community that shares a distinctive religious heritage, a voice from the back of the auditorium enquired, "Which New Year? Fasli, Kadmi or Shehenshahi?"

(Below left)

Sethna: impact of the Festival.
Presence of three priests (from left)
Bagli, Sidhwa and Dastur (Dr)
Hormazdyar Mirza





Projecting The Parsis

Gustasp Irani

The four-day Parsi Festival, held in Delhi, gave a glimpse into the life-style of a disappearing community

Tucked into a corner of the small exhibition room were two elderly ladies spinning a *kusti*. Roda Deboo, in a printed sari, explained that she was brought up in Navsari but had now settled in Bombay. Jer Kutar, in a white sari, traced her childhood to Jamshedpur, but now resides in Delhi. "Between us we are quite representative of the Parsis in India," said Deboo. The two ladies laughed. We tried to get the interview along but they were exchanging notes. Deboo complained that just the other day she was accused of blackmarketing *kustis*. The two laughed again. We butted in. "What is the price of *kustis*?" "Rs 30."

We are surprised, but only briefly as the ladies clarified: "Rs 30 per *gaj* (a *gaj* equals 27 inches)." We are asked to move on, the hall is filling up. We leave the two behind with their contraption of wooden strips and wheels – testimonies to the fact that Parsi traditions are still alive, but barely so.

The exhibition of textiles, utensils, furniture, photographs, and books at the Parsi Festival was a reflection of the community's culture. A girl in an exquisitely embroidered *gara* listens to a story sociologist Ms Ava Khullar has to tell of an equally exquisite one on display. It was ordered specially by a Parsi in China to be presented to his bride on their wedding day. But he was in for a surprise. The in-laws switched sisters; the unattractive one was to be his bride. The Parsi endured the ceremony and left for China the very next day. The *gara*? No, the bride did not get it. His mother did and she passed it down to her children and grandchildren, little aware that one day it would feature as an exhibit. "There was a time," Khullar explained, "when Parsis considered the *gara* to be old fashioned. They would cut them up to make blouses or just throw them away." "Oh my God," sighed a non-Parsi, "these are heirlooms."

The *tanchoi* fabric is said to have got its name from *tan* (three), and *choi* (Chinese). The three, in fact, happened to be Parsi brothers from China – the Joshis. Their descendant Kaikhushrau Joshi so impressed Mahatma Gandhi and Ms Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay with his weaving skills that he was invited to join the All India Handicrafts Board as a sen-

ior officer in 1948 and thereafter the fabric became known to the rest of the country.

The exhibits included a number of other traditional saris, a lace sudreh, *eejar* pyjama, *badyan* jacket and *jari*-work caps. Ms Nergish Nargolwala, trustee of the Delhi Parsi Anjuman (DPA) and coordinator of the exhibition committee, pointed out one purple velvet cap with a photograph of the father on the crown and a photograph of the son on the forehead. "The families were so large then, that this was one way of keeping track of the children," laughed puppeteer Dadi Pudumjee who arranged the layout of the exhibits. The cap in question belonged to his great grandfather who did indeed have 10 other brothers and sisters.

"What about the modern Parsi?" we ask. Pudumjee plucks at his beard and considers the question. "All of us," he answers gesturing to the Parsi men in *daglis*, suits and shirts, the women in *garas*, jeans and skirts milling around the exhibits – pots and pans, old furniture, a jashan and Navroz table, old photographs. Only the puppeteer Pudumjee could manipulate the layout of so much into such little space without offending good taste.

The other collection of treasure was the book exhibition. The prized displays

where, however, remains a mystery. There is no record of the origins of the *Jamaspi*, but Ms Piloo Jungalwalla, who put the exhibits together, speculates that it was probably done in the mid-nineteenth century. She also tells us the story of the original work. According to legend, when the Prophet Zarathushtra was dying he granted five gifts to those around him. King Vishtaspa's minister De Jamaspi asked for the gift of prophecy and the *Jamaspi* is the record of his forevision.

Both the *Vendidad* and the *Jamaspi* were kept in a padlocked showcase and with them was a small half-inch *Avesta* in Gujarati along with a magnifying glass that was used to read it.

Locked showcases protected a number of other books too. The first *Avesta-English Dictionary* by K. E. Kanga, printed in 1900 and the *History of Parsis* in two volumes by D. F. Karaka, amongst many. There were books in English, French, Gujarati, Hindi and the Avesta language. "Almost every damned book is out of print," grumbled Jungalwalla. "I dare not let anyone touch them. You put a pencil on paper and it goes right through." There were also religious books for children, Bombay Parsi Punchayet publications, social and demographic studies of the Parsis, publications and periodicals (a large collection of old *Parsianas* were on display), and of course

a collection of books on Parsi cuisine.

lunch on Sunday 19; and then outdid themselves at the Navroz dinner on 21 – *taréli machhi*, *papéta ma murgee*, *pulao dal*, *cauliflower né paparee*, *taréla bheeda* and *kulfi*. The India International Centre (IIC) had never hosted a bigger crowd. Six hundred people feasted on the spread. Manekshaw, a cordon bleu chef from London and consultant to the IIC

"There was a time when Parsis would cut the *garas* to make blouses or just throw them away"

kitchen, says the Parsi dishes will now become a regular feature on the Centre's menu – the only place in Delhi where one will get Parsi cuisine, that is apart from private Parsi homes.

They had originally intended calling a Parsi wedding caterer from Bombay but, Manekshaw explained, it proved to be too expensive. The distinctive characteristics of Parsi food, according to Manekshaw, are that it does not use too much chilli and that it is a subtle blending of Iranian, Indian and European cuisine. "Parsi food is a tribute to the ingenuity of the Parsi women," she added.

The catering committee also ran a food counter where Parsi specialties were on sale: *murambo*, pickles, *bhakras*, *patré*, *dal ni pori*, *batasas*, *nankhatai* and more – all contributions from Parsi ladies including Delhi-based artist Ms Frenny Billimoria.

Billimoria's contribution to the Festival, however, went beyond the *bhakras*. An exhibition of a collection of her paintings on Parsi themes spanned the four days of the celebrations. The paintings, she explained were the result of three years of work, though some were done specifically for the show. This she admits did impose some restraint. "If I had my way, the heads would be floating," she says with reference to the painting titled *Hamazor*, the traditional handshake



were handwritten manuscripts of the *Vendidad* in the Avesta script and a Gujarati translation of the *Jamaspi*. The opening sentences of the *Vendidad* are in modern Farsi and record that the manuscript was written in 1778. Who and

Food. *Patra ni machhi*, *dhansakh*, *khattu mitthu estew* and *ravo*: Ms Bhicoo Manekshaw along with DPA trustee Rusi Engineer and the Dharamshala manageress Dhun Bagli coordinated the catering committee and whipped up a feast for the

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The Parsis: known and unknown

"I know about the Parsis. I know who the Parsis are. But he doesn't. Who does?" Lt Gen Adi Sethna, president of the Delhi Parsi Anjuman (DPA), recalls the sentiments the late Ms Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay of the India International Centre voiced about a year ago when the idea of a Parsi Festival was first mooted. "Okay. We'll be the animals in the zoo," Sethna agreed.

The Festival of Parsis was the second in a series that Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay and the IIC envisaged for the different minority communities of the country. "It is a festival (symbolizing) India's quest for and its commitment to the fundamental principle of unity in diversity," said Dr L. M. Singhvi, president of IIC, in his speech at the inaugural function. "It is not to be seen as a Festival of Parsis, by Parsis and for Parsis."

It was in view of this wider Indian context that the Parsi Festival which was held over four days leading up to March 21, 1989 encouraged non-Parsi participation. "Let there be non-Parsis who can talk about us with authority," Sethna explained. Prof N. K. Singh spoke on Parsi management, Dr Raja Ramanna on the Homi Bhabha Effect and Dr Karan Singh chaired the panel

discussion on "Religion, Rituals and Customs."

"What we are doing here in terms of national integration, will have to be done in terms of international integration in the twenty-first century," said Romesh Bhandari, Lt Governor of Delhi, in his inaugural address. Referring to the atomic age and the threat of total destruction, he said that the global community will have to ask the question: "Are we going to take the path of destruction or the path of peace?"

Sethna confirmed that the Festival had the total support of the Federation of Parsi Zoroastrian Anjumans of India; the Bombay Parsi Punchayet, two of whose trustees - Jamshed Guzder and Eruch Desai - were present for the function; and numerous other anjumans of India. The DPA hosted 35 members and youth representatives of various anjumans.

Also part of the audience was Marazban Patrawala, Maharashtra state minister of general administration, law and judiciary, and tourism. And the other famous Parsi? The Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, sent his greetings and best wishes through Homi Taleyarkhan, member of the Minorities Commission.

of the priests praying in *baj*. But the painting, nevertheless, burns with energy as also does *The Creation* which took Ahura Mazda 40 years and materialized from a one-stemmed plant which grew 15 leaves before the first man and woman, Mashya and Mashyanag emerged. The same energy is also evident in *Humata-hukta-huvarshata* in which good thoughts, good words and good deeds smoke out of a crater. Other paintings were more direct, like *Fravashi I* or *The Bridal Couple*. But there was a certain buoyancy in the collection, like the *Lagan Feast* held in the clouds or the *Jashan* floating on sunbeams. "Why Parsi themes?" we ask. "Why not?" replies Billimoria.

Also part of the Festival were the cul-

tural programs organized by the cultural program committee headed by DPA trustee Ms Farida Variawa and youth trustee Ms Sanaya Nariman who were ably assisted by numerous enthusiastic volunteers. "We did not want to reduce the Festival to only discussion and talk. It was important that there be a visual impact too," states DPA president Lt Gen Adi Sethna.

Part of this visual impact was the presentation of a tableau on the Sanjan landing, and the milk and sugar episode - symbolic of the community's integration into the national mainstream. Manifestations of this integration were the *garba* and *dandia* (folk dances of Gujarat) put up by members of the DPA.

"Except for Dhun (Bagli) no one knew anything about these dances," says Ms Daulat Patel who put the boys and girls through the paces. But what they lacked in knowledge and technique, they more than compensated with enthusiasm. For four weeks, late into the night, sometimes past midnight, the practice sessions would continue on the premises of the Dharamshala and at the IIC hall.

Amongst those stomping feet and clanging sticks were the two enterprising priests of Delhi, Cawas Bagli and Dinyar Sidhwa. Their enterprise did not stop here. They featured in the Sanjan tableau too.

The Parsis' involvement in Indian clas-



Demonstration of kusti spinning (top) and performance of the navjote ritual

sical art was witnessed at the tabla recital by Dr (Ms) Aban Mistry, accompanied by her guru Pundit Keki Jijina. Before the recital, in chaste Hindi, Mistry explained the essence of what the performance was

about. The predominantly Parsi audience, she admitted, was probably less knowledgeable than the audience at her other recitals. But, she clarified, she is talking of the Parsi in general.

After Mistry's performance, young Shanayya Marfatia of Delhi treated the audience to a Kathak dance recital. At one point, the *ghungroos* (bells) on her legs replicated the sound rhythms her guru beat upon his tabla.

In contrast, the next day featured Astad Deboo in modern Western dance form. His first dance *Duel*, the clash of the two forces, good and evil, was pure electricity. The evil made a baby in the audience cry and the father spent the rest of the performance consoling the child. But the child bounced back during the post Navroz dinner dance. She and her little friends shook their little bottoms and stomped their little feet as they tried to match their steps with grown-up couples gyrating on the dance floor to the rhythm of the beat belted out by a modern beat band.

Who put it all together? The DPA trustees – Sethna, Zal Nowsherwanji, Rustom Daroga, Noshir Captain, Engineer, Behram Dumasia, Dadi Mistry, Farokh Rustomji, Variawa, Nariman and

Nargolwala – “and others.” “And others” – the two words cropped up repeatedly. They were a tribute to the comradeship and involvement of the entire Delhi Parsi community. It was left to trustee Dadi Mistry to thank all the supporters of the Festival.

Trustee Farokh Rustomji, coordinator of the Festival activities, states that the various committees were appointed four months earlier. In addition to the exhibition, cultural and catering committees there was also the all-important committee of finance headed by trustee Hoshedar Press. Rustomji also points out that an offshoot of the Festival is that in September, the Delhi Ashok Hotel plans to host a festival of Parsi food.

But festivals do not survive on food alone, they need the video to record them for posterity. The DPA recorded the four days of celebrations on video tape and plans to lend this recording to various anjumans in India and also to pockets of Parsis settled abroad.

“*Sahebji*” we greet one of the ladies who was weaving a kusti at the exhibition. “How did you like Astad Deboo?” she asks. “Very good,” we reply. “I am his mother.” Indeed. Kusti weaving and modern Western dance – both very Parsi.

ZOROASTRIANS ABROAD

continued from page 21

Gamble Avenue, Suite 501, Toronto, Ontario M4K 2H4.

Jamsheed Choksy, currently engaged in working for his doctorate at the Harvard University's Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilization, has authored *Triumph Over Evil: Purity and Pollution in Zoroastrianism*, notes the newsletter. Acclaimed winner of the scholar-excellence award at the Sixth North American Zoroastrian Congress in Toronto, April 1988, the newsletter quotes the Aga Khan Professor of Iranian Studies at Harvard University, Richard Frye, who has described Choksy as the “most promising and most capable of all Zoroastrian students” in North American universities. *Triumph* will soon be released by the University of Texas Press, informs the newsletter.

The Zoroastrian Society of British Columbia-Rogers TV coproduction of a videotape on Zarathushtra's teachings has been aired on community channels, informs the newsletter.

Compiled by Arnavaz S. Mama

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GIRTON'S NEW PLANS

The Girton High School is eager to introduce computer courses and a polytechnic for girls

Joy Fernandes

"We want to go into the modern world very fast," said Ms Shera Wadia, ex-headmistress ('57-'80) and present administrator of the Girton High School at Sleater Road, Bombay. "For that we're going to start a computer training center, and a polytechnic for girls. This will be held outside school hours so if they wish they can get a training while they study. It will teach typing, shorthand, beauty culture, hairdressing, cooking and baking, needlework, and other things that girls can do at home even after they get married."

Girton's new plans will be made concrete with the help of the funds collected during the school's centenary celebrations in 1988. "For the centenary fund we grossed rupees eight lakhs, and after expenses we have roughly rupees six and half lakhs," explains principal Ms Navaz Sanjana. "Computer courses are part of our centenary effort for we believe in computer literacy, and from June '89 computers will be a part of the school syllabus for the ninth and tenth standards. The total expenses for the airconditioning and equipment required will be Rs 1.30 lakhs." The computer room will be located on the third floor, with an adjacent classroom for theory, and neighboring schools such as the Cowasjee Jehangir School, the Panday Girls' School, the Princess Girls' High School, and the Lady Engineer High

School, among others, will be invited to make use of the facilities for a nominal fee.

The centenary year began in January '88 with a jashan, and included an exhibition of the pupils' projects, five evenings of Housie, and five fund-raising functions (at three of which the school brought out souvenirs). These were an Anand Mela, a ghazal and bhajan night by Anup Jalota, a disco dandia night on the eve of Dassera, an Indian dance ballet by the students, and the annual prize distribution at which the girls staged a musical, 'Hundred Glorious Years of Girton History.'

The 100-year-old history of Girton High School – from its foundation in 1888 by Ms Bachoobai Moos to the efforts that helped raise a new building for the school – was dramatized in 'Hundred Glorious Years,' in which students presented scenes that had radically influenced the school.

Though Girton is a private, non-aided school, and fees are about Rs 60 per month, some students receive a fee remission. "We have about 825 students, and most of the standards have no divisions," reports Sanjana. "We try to restrict classes to about 40 or 50 students, so that they can get more attention. The management believes that small is beautiful, and that quality is preferable to quantity."

Talking about the school's admis-

sion policy, Ms Silla Ardeshir – honorary principal (retired) from '46 to '86, trustee of the Old Girtonians' Association (O.G.A.) Property Fund which owns the school building, and grandniece of the foundress – points out that they never take donations for admissions, nor do they interview the parents to see if they pass the school's standards. "We even take *malis*' (gardeners') children," she remarks, adding: "And I must say that our *malis*' daughter did very well – she went on to do her teachers' training course." Under school rules, teachers are not permitted to tutor children in subjects which they teach in that class, and tuitions that are permissible cannot be conducted on the school premises.

Students are offered a choice of optional classes in karate, swimming, Indian dancing, elocution, and jazz ballet outside school hours, according to teachers Ms Viloo Dhabar and Ms Minnie Kapadia. In addition, the school offers extra-curricular activities like Girl Guides, Bulbuls, Young Adventurers' Club, throwball, badminton and carrom. Girton also participates in several inter-school competitions, and has had a particularly good track record in competitive choral singing, notes the staff.

The lunch break at Girton is cheerfully noisy, with the playground and ground floor bustling with the goings and comings of the girls. In front of the

school office, a group of little girls, in the uniform blue and white gingham pinafores and white blouses and colored ties, are playing with a skipping rope. On the playground, the slide, parallel bars and jungle gym are in great demand, and girls from the marchpast squads, who had been practising for sports day, are now strolling round the badminton court. Dressed in the PT uniform of white shorts and shirts, they are a far cry from Girton's early days, when pupils came to school in *jublas*, *eejars* and *topis* (loose tops, knickerbockers and embroidered caps), with the older girls in saris with *soars* (part of the sari draped from the forehead). "We were supposed to be ladylike, so we couldn't run and jump," explains Dhabar, who is an old Girtonian. "All the teachers wore *mathubanus* (white cotton head scarves) and long sleeves. Miss Moos insisted on it." A product of her orthodox society, Moos also decreed that bloomers be worn long, reaching below the knee, recalls 'Hundred Glorious Years,' which contains one scene where she awards extra marks to a child whose bloomers are of a praiseworthy length!

Born in 1850, Moos was the daughter of educationist Ardeshir Moos (a lecturer at Elphinstone College), and was educated at the Frere Fletcher School (now the J.B. Petit High School for Girls). Convinced of the need for a girls' school in the Tardeo area, she started Girton School in 1888 with about 10 pupils. In this venture she had been encouraged and assisted

by her father and by her friend and teacher, Ms Prescott, principal of the Frere Fletcher School. "Ms Prescott was very impressed by Ms Moos' abilities," notes Ardeshir. "In those days girls were not given much education. There were a few girls' schools in Bombay, but since there were no proper roads for the horse carriages, girls were not educated if there was no school in the locality. Therefore, in the Grant Road, and Malabar and Cumballa Hill areas, girls were not sent to school." In honor of her principal, Moos named her school after Girton College, Cambridge, from where Prescott had graduated.

Since it filled a very real need, the school grew, and by 1910 it was the largest girls' school in Bombay. The Bombay Gazette of that year reported that Girton had 241 pupils – more than any of the other 11 girls' schools in the city had. In 1938, Moos' contribution to the cause of female education was recognized when she was awarded the Kaiser-I-Hind gold medal by the British monarch.

A fine musician, Moos had once been invited to give a piano recital for the Governor. "For the people of those days it was like being a film star," laughs Ardeshir. "She was such a nice woman, but the only conversation she had was about her school. If we asked her her news, she would tell us how many students were doing their matriculation that year." A diminutive woman, Moos also had great determi-



(Above) Girton's fountress
Bahooobai Moos

(Below) The school's new premises

nation; after a fall when she fractured her hip, she learnt to walk again without a stick although she was old and the doctors had said she would never walk again. Dhabar, her old pupil, remembers her as "strict, but very loving. When she made her rounds, there would be absolute silence." Moos died in 1946 at the age of 96, having worked at the school even on the last day of her life. "She saw to it that the school was cleaned and swept, went home, and died seated in her rocking chair," recalls her grand-niece.

After her death, her nephew Sorab Moos – he was Director of Public Instruction, Bombay Presidency – and his daughter Silla worked for the



In Girton's early days, pupils came to school in *jublas*, *eejars* and *topis*, with the older girls in saris with *soars*

school as managing trustee and honorary principal respectively. Since she had a few years' teaching experience in Pune behind her, Silla Moos (she was then unmarried) taught English, French and History. "The school had no money except for what was in the bank, and that was not much," she explains. "We couldn't manage, and it looked as if we were on the verge of closing. We had to go round trying to

collect money." They applied to the government for a grant-in-aid, and some Parsi trusts also allotted them some money each year. "But what really saved us was when the government said, after Independence, 'You must not teach children, whose mother tongue is not English, in the English medium.' The other schools toed the line - we didn't, and so we were over-run by students. We said, 'If their parents want them to learn English, why shouldn't they?'"

"By then we'd begun looking around for new premises because Alpawalla House (a residential building on the eastern side of Grant Road Station, where Moos had started the school) had become very dilapidated and was inadequate for the increasing number of students," notes Ardeshir. The management and ex-students (who formed the Old Girtonians' Association) spent years collecting funds to buy land, and eventually the OGA Property Fund was allotted a plot on Sleater Road on which stood a burnt-out factory.

"The government acquired it on our behalf, but you know how slowly a government office works," she says. "By the time we got it the process of acquisition had gone over the time limit, so in addition to the eight lakh rupees for the land we had to pay two lakh rupees as compensation to the owners." Since the Fund did not have the extra money required, they took a bank loan, and were left without any money with which to start construction.

Gradually, however, by dint of much hard work and tenacity, the ground and first floors were raised, and the primary sections shifted to the new building. "It was a difficult time for all of us," remembers Wadia. "We had to come here and supervise the primary, go back and teach the secondary, come back here...We got to know the railway bridge very well!"

By 1984, however, the new building was completed with the help of donations from charity trusts and individuals, as well as the proceeds of various fund-raising activities. (The secondary section had been shifted into the new building in 1976). "But we never took donations for admis-



sions," says Wadia emphatically. "Never, never, never!"

Today Girton High School is housed in an airy, four-storeyed building that contains classrooms, offices, a staff-room, dining-room, laboratory, library, arts, history and geography rooms, and two large halls. But due to the paucity of funds, the building took 10 years to complete - from '74 to '84. The school is run by a managing committee which consists, "as far as possible, of old Girtonians who are educationists," explains Ardeshir. The school rents the building from the OGA Property Fund, which is administered by the board of trustees - Ms Ardeshir, Ms Nargesh Nani Palkhiva-



to me," she says. "I even have my lunch here everyday, because my clinic is close by." At present, Dr Amin conducts the height, weight, eyesight, and hearing checkups, as well as a general examination every two years. Ms Gool Bharucha, who has been the office clerk for the past 28 years, reiterates the same sentiments. "This building has taken our lives; to build (it), brick by brick," she sighs. "Before, in the old building, it was even more like a home. We knew each and every one, even the parents. But of course this building is more airy and roomy, and the girls have the (place) to play. There they were all cramped up."

Other changes, which are not as

"We were supposed to be ladylike, so we couldn't run and jump"

la, Ms Banoo Cama, Rusi Sethna, Adi Mulla and Ms Katie F. Mehta.

Girton has always had the gift of inspiring its students with great love and loyalty. Many ex-students return as teachers, and a large number are dedicated members of the OGA. Dr (Ms) Armaity Amin, whose grandmother and grand-aunts were pupils of Ms Moos, is one such person. Deeply attached to her old school, she is today its honorary medical officer. "The school has been a part of my life throughout - it is like a second home





welcome, she feels, are in the area of discipline: "The children are okay, but nowadays... Maybe I'm old-fashioned, I like more discipline. These days they aren't even bothered if they lose their fee card; they forget to collect them from the office..." Wadia agrees with this. "In the beginning we were like a small family, knowing each other very well. Discipline was perfect, and the

"If their parents want them to learn English, why shouldn't they?"

children learnt manners quickly. Today we are larger, and supervision is more difficult."

Another change is the drop in the percentage of Parsi students. In the beginning, of course, Girton had an all-Parsi student body. Then, a few decades ago, the percentage of Parsis stood at 50 or 60. Today it is down to about 30 percent, and the majority of the pupils are Gujaratis, with a handful of Sindhis and Muslims. "The Parsis want to go to Christian schools, and the Gujaratis want to go to Parsi schools," smiles Ardeshir.

Of the students who pass the SSC exam each year from Girton – they reportedly have cent percent results

almost every year – the majority opt for secure bank jobs or do secretarial courses, points out Sanjana. "Currently, we are concentrating on vocational guidance. At the start of the ninth or tenth standard, we send them to seminars, and invite old Girtonians to speak about their professions. Though a sprinkling of them do opt for specialized courses, the majority of them choose either what will help them in their married lives, or will help them to earn quickly."

But apart from fostering their pupils' scholastic development, Girton tries to inculcate deeper moral values in the girls. "We make it a point to give them a lot of spiritual knowledge," Wadia says firmly. "We also teach them what's going to happen in the outside world and how to get along with others, even in later life. Sometimes our students come back and tell us, 'Miss, you've taught us all this, but it isn't going to pay us.' But that is what we expect of them – that they live up to our school motto: 'Courage, Simplicity and Honor.'"

Above: The site at Sleater Road prior to the new construction

Left: The youngest pupil with the oldest at the bhoomi poojan of the new building

Below (left): Girtonians pose with the late Indira Gandhi in Delhi

Below: Scene from a school play



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COMMENT

Zoroastrians should learn from the Jews' sustained battle against overwhelming odds



Over 2500 years ago Cyrus the Great, the liberal ruler of the first great Mazdayasnan empire, liberated the Jews from Babylonian captivity and helped them rebuild their temple in Jerusalem. Now the Jews, after centuries of exile, suppression and extermination, are liberated as never before. But the Zoroastrian world, left to its last 1,00,000, fears extinction within the next century. For Zoroastrians this is a time of multiple crises: a crisis of faith and of a meaningful worldview in a secular age (outside Iran); a crisis of identity (Who are we? What do we stand for?) consequent to dispersal in new environments beyond the old homelands in Asia; a crisis of values as body and soul decline, even in the homelands of Iran, India and Pakistan. In a recent report, the Tehran Anjuman has reminded us: "We must know that the culture of the majority has a strong attraction and dominates the culture of the minority." Where will we be by 2100 AC?

Perhaps this is a time to look at the unprecedented revival, after unprecedented suffering, of the global Jewish communities. What relevance does its present liberated and prosperous state have for Zoroastrians today?

The strong core of religious education, based on the *Bible* and the *Talmud*, and sustained by educated rabbis, has supported 300 generations of Jews hailing from old Jerusalem and now dispersed in the far corners of the modern world. Jewish scholars and teachers were the community's heroes and torchbearers. The Jews were sustained by high quality minds. From the sorrows of exile in old Babylon through Roman tyranny, both pagan and Catholic, through the killings of the Crusades to Nazi genocide, that core of the spirit and the mind saw them through a long and terrible history. How far do contemporary Zoroastrians lack such a sustaining core? What needs to be done?

Like all faiths, Judaism had its orthodox

and its reformers. One tendency was to regard Judaism "as a living, organic tradition, continually growing, continually changing, yet in essence always the same, and represented in every age by its rabbis and teachers;" the other regarded the religion as "fixed and immutable, with its final expression in a specific code of laws," as noted Cecil Roth in *A History of the Jews*.

But these differences did not lead to the marked splits evident between Shias and Sunnis or Catholics and Protestants. Perhaps Judaism was fortunate in not having Jewish states, in which religious differences could emerge as power struggles. Despite the conflicts between the two schools of thought, a basic unity prevailed through the centuries.

The *Talmud* and its commentaries are

a remarkable record of fresh minds, fresh interpretations. In the Middle Ages a great Jewish Egyptian scholar produced his *Guide to the Perplexed*, a philosophy of Judaism with a completely rational basis. Another made a *Prepared Table* of the whole field of Jewish practices and law in home, synagogue, business and law courts. Do Zoroastrians today need similar approaches for the perplexed?

Though debarred on religious grounds from most occupations and offices for long spells of time, the Jews always believed in high intellectual standards and skills in whatever they did. One of the first decisions during Home Rule for the Jews in Palestine after 1918 was to establish the University of Jerusalem. In the old world, they had concentrated on astronomy, astrology, medicine, languages, diplomacy and financial affairs. As a result, when there were periods of tolerance, Jews rose to high office and influence in Christian and Islamic societies. Emperor Charlemagne, some popes, Spain under the Moors, even the Grand Caliph of the Ottoman empire knew their worth and their talents and patronized them. At less exalted levels, the Jews were skilled carpenters, metal workers, jewellers and experts in making astronomical instruments. Even tailoring and shoemaking were crafts at which the community excelled.

In our times, many Jews have been world leaders in every walk of life from science to statecraft, epitomized by the Rothschilds (the family of international bankers), Albert Einstein, (recognized as one of the greatest physicists of all time) and Leon Trotsky (co-founder of the USSR with Vladimir Lenin and Josef Stalin). And this, despite the massive repressions and genocides by the Nazis and Russians (both Czarist and Communist) which wiped out no less than six million Jews and forced more into exile, the most recent of many cruel diasporas over the centuries.

The fourth lesson of interest to us is the indefatigable adaptability of the Jews

LESSONS IN SURVIVAL

Aspi Moddie

in all ages, in all places. In the early years they learnt Greek and moved into the Greek world. Later they learnt Arabic and became viziers, philosophers, astronomers and traders, flowing westwards to Spain with the Islamic conquests. In Germany they learnt German and were among its leading scholars and scientists. They moved to America, and became its leaders in politics, the sciences, the arts, in industry and trade. Their great instinctive secret was to move with the center of gravity of human societies. Over the last 1000 years, this has led them from the Orient to the Occident, from the ghettos to a wider world. Though Jews were relatively small in number, Judaism became a world religion. Despite the differences in mother tongues and cultures, with no Jewish homeland, wherever there were Jews, a community grew around synagogue, school, *Bible*, *Talmud*, rabbi, and academies of learning. Despite the worst ever sufferings of the past century, Zionism is a world force today.

Knowing only brief periods of tolerance and long ages of persecution, the

Jews tended to move from despotic to freer states. When Czar and Kaiser, Nazi and Commissar suppressed them, they moved to the freer countries of Holland,

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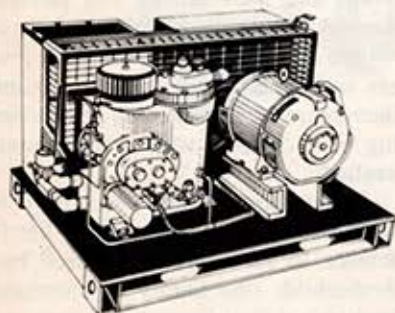
Denmark, Italy, England and America; apart from Israel. The Zoroastrian experience of the early move to India, and now to other free countries of the world from Australia to the USA, indicates a similar choice. Ultimately, freedom is

the first and last condition of survival and prosperity for minorities.

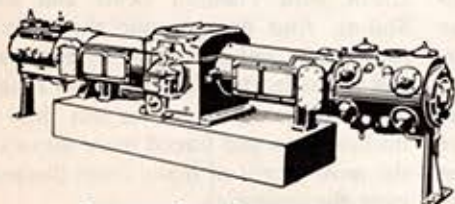
Jewish population figures illustrate the two aspects of the move towards the centers of gravity of human societies and to freedom. In 1918 Palestine had 60,000 Jews; by 1960 Israel had two million. Within 25 years the London figures grew from 47,000 to 1,50,000. In the US, in 1870, there were about 2,50,000 Jews; a century later they were about 5.5 million. The trend is clear. These have been the two roads to survival, growth and prosperity.

Are world Zoroastrians following suit, though in much smaller numbers? And what about the other lessons of survival — a core of sustained religious education, unity with diverse interpretations; high educational standards, skills, and enterprise; and adaptability? Would these be the answer to current Zoroastrian problems, apart from the biological need to multiply?

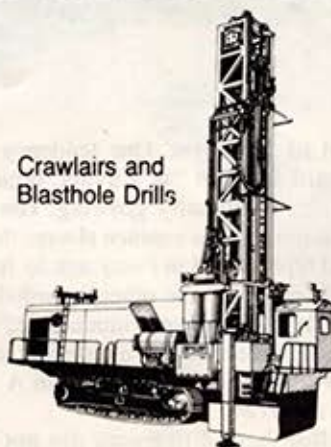
Aspi Moddie, who belonged to the first batch of the Indian Administrative Service, is a scholar of history and economics with publications in both fields.



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Chinoys' Cheese Culture

Good cheese, like wine and tea, is difficult to define, yet an expert will know when he tastes one. "As a tea-taster knows what should not be in a tea, an expert knows what should not be in a cheese," says Sohrab E. Chinoy, the man behind A.B.C. Farms Private Limited, Pune. "What you don't want are certain fungal infections and superfluous bacterial flavorings. The typical flavor might be there, but..." a bearded, casually dressed Chinoy smiles. A good cheese has got to stand up to scrutiny and the cheese produced by A.B.C. Farms is up to international standards, according to him. Chinoy, who studied dairy technology in Germany and worked on farms there, does not believe in false modesty. "I know how to make cheese," he says, "and I make a bloody good cheese."

Chinoy claims that his is one of the very few Indian cheeses that can compete in quality with what is available in Western markets. Production levels are low at present, an average of about 750 liters of milk are converted into cheese each day, but judging from the reputation the cheese has won for itself in Pune alone, the potential for growth is enormous. Though A.B.C. Farms also produce a range of dairy products like lemon lassi, butter, ghee, whipping cream, flavored yoghurt, and has even diversified into the production of mineral water, its fame is rooted largely in blocks and balls of cheese.

The secret of A.B.C. Farms' success is the blending of traditional methods of



Marlene and Sohrab Chinoy: making cheese is a challenge PHOTO: SOCIETY MAGAZINE

Starting with milk, cheese and gradually marketing other dairy products, the A.B.C. Farms in Pune blend traditional methods with modern dairy technology

Gustasp Irani



cheese production with modern dairy technology. Tucked away, beyond the bustling building activity of Koregaon Park, in a factory that once served as a poultry run, traditional wooden molds from Holland lie alongside modern-day vacuum packing machines. While the foreman stirs a batch of fermenting cheese in large cheese tanks by hand, there is the hum of an electric slicer at the other end of the room. Inside the factory shed, in his cabin sits the lean and wiry Chinoy who exudes energy and enthusiasm.

We witness the current of his energy in the factory's small storeroom. The place is freezing. The shelves that line the walls are laden with cheese in different molds and sizes, from large 50 kilogram blocks to small 250 gram balls. Chinoy runs a finger over a fresh mold of cheese. He is all concentration as he feels the texture between his fingertips. He tastes it. He checks with the storekeeper the production batch number and turns to consult his amicable quality control manager, Jehangir Batiwala, who is also in charge of general supervision of the works. Consultation over, he explains the importance of storage: "Cheese has to be stored at temperatures below 15 degrees centigrade, otherwise it starts to sweat and spoils." Freshly processed cheese is stored in the cold room for a minimum of three weeks (till it develops a hard outer rind) before it can be consumed or used to make other cheese-based products.

"The bloody good cheese" that Chinoy particularly refers to is his Gouda cheese. This is raw cheese. At A.B.C. Farms it is used as a base for manufacturing processed cheese, both hard and soft and in a range of 18 flavors – garlic, jeera, capsicum, pineapple, wine, cognac and almonds to name a few.

Gouda gets its name from the province in Holland where it first originated. Almost all cheese names, Chinoy points out, are derived from their place of origin: Cheddar, Edam, Roquefort are all names of villages too. "Wherever there has been a milk culture, people have dehydrated milk and made cheese," says Chinoy. A good Gouda, or for that matter any good cheese, has



"People would come for the milk and sample our cheese"

to match up to certain specifications. The specification for Gouda, according to Chinoy, is that in a cross section of three inches by four inches there should be a minimum of three to a maximum of five small round holes.

Chinoy calls for samples which are presented on a large cheese knife that has a handle at both ends. We examine the holes and try a piece. It has a rich mellow flavor. Chinoy explains that the longer the cheese is stored, the stronger the flavor. Yes, he confirms, all good raw cheese will have holes. They are formed by bacteria which are one of the two necessary ingredients in making cheese. The other is rennet, an enzyme extracted from the fourth stomach of a newborn calf or distilled from fungus that is cultured on wheat in controlled conditions. A.B.C. Farms uses only the rennet obtained from wheat, which makes its cheese a purely vegetarian product (see box).

A misconception in India is to classify raw cheese as cooking cheese and processed cheese as table cheese. People eat only raw cheese in Europe, according to Chinoy. Raw cheese, he concedes, calls for an acquired taste, but once a person develops it, he will never eat processed cheese. "From processed cheese you can move up to raw cheese, but never the other way around." Marlene, Chinoy's wife who studied dairy bacteriology in her native Germany and now helps out at A.B.C. Farms, side-steps the query. Do you like processed cheese? "I prefer raw cheese," she answers with a discreet laugh and tosses her blond locks.

Pure milk

One factor that contributes to A.B.C.

Farms' quality cheese is its supply of pure, wholesome milk – from its own 27-acre dairy farm at Dehu Road where they have 100 cows. The farm started in 1976, with 25 heads of cattle, was the result of a dream to get away from the bustle of city life to the welcoming embrace of unspoiled nature. In reality, however, "the dream turned into a nightmare," according to Chinoy. "Every morning you got up to face innumerable problems. You did not know what would go wrong... it was a fight to survive, not to back out." Now as he looks back, he feels the effort was worth it: "Things eventually worked out for the better – but 10 years is a lot of time."

His father Eruch, a dairy man and the moving spirit behind the establishment of the Dehu Road farm, comments, "Dairy work is hard labor. There is no time for leisure, no time for the family or for anything else; it is all consuming." He recalls the 1930s when his uncle Nusserwanji Govewala of Byculla Dairy Farm was known as the milk king of Bombay. At that time cows were brought from the rich pasture lands of Punjab to Bombay and once they ran dry they were slaughtered and sold for their meat. Eruch's uncle was appalled by this wanton slaughter and sought to change it. He bought land in Sanjan where the cows were sent to conceive, foal calves and return to Bombay with their udders full of milk once again. Chinoy senior was initiated into the family dairy business at around this time, when land in Sanjan was Rs 20 an acre (and Rs 50 an acre was considered an exorbitant price): a time of primitive dairy techniques, a time scarred by a world war.

The transition of the dairy tradition from father to son was not without its hiccups. Chinoy junior recalls that he wanted to be a doctor but the blood, gore and death he witnessed during his visits to hospitals during the six months between Senior Cambridge (from St Mary's in Bombay) and college (K. C. College, Bombay, up to inter-science) put that aspiration to rest. He turned his sights on family tradition and obtained an Indian Dairy Diploma from Bangalore. His quest for knowledge took him to Germany, from the dairy pastures of Itzehoe, north of Hamburg, to Berlin where he met Marlene who was studying dairy bacteriology while he was acquainting himself with the latest in dairy technology. He finally obtained his masters in dairy technology from Glenhausen.

On returning to India, Chinoy started



The cheese combination

Cheese, according to Sohrab Chinoy of A.B.C. Farms, Pune is either vegetarian or non-vegetarian. "Ninety-five percent of all cheese produced in the West is non-vegetarian," he states. The cheese his company produces falls into the vegetarian category.

The classification of cheese into vegetarian and non-vegetarian may be traced to the first stage in the process of manufacture - starters. All cheese in the West, including cottage cheese, uses rennet as starter. Rennet is either the enzyme or digestive juices found in the fourth stomach of a baby calf, or enzyme distilled from fungus that is cultured on wheat in controlled conditions.

To obtain good quality rennet of the non-vegetarian variety, or animal enzyme, the calf must be slaughtered before it is ten days old.

Vegetarian cheese uses only rennet extracted from wheat. "You have to be very careful when extracting plant rennet or else you get a very bitter taste in the cheese," says Chinoy. At A.B.C. Farms this job is done by Chinoy's wife Marlene who studied dairy bacteriology in Berlin, Germany. "To be truly vegetarian it is not good enough to say that plant rennet is used; the manufacturer must also be able to say that animal rennet is not used," says Chinoy. The cheese he produces is purely vegetarian and does not use animal rennet, he claims.

When Ms Diana Ratnagar of the Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) came to plead with him not to use animal rennet, she did not have to be particularly persuasive to get Chinoy to agree - the large vegetarian population in India is a reality very hard to ignore. "It's the logical thing to do, to use plant rennet in India," says Chinoy.

Rennet, he informs us, is what justifies a cheese. Paneer does not use it, while in

cottage cheese "it is a necessary requirement." Cottage cheese is referred to as a fresh cheese. When it is further treated with bacteria it becomes a raw or hard cheese. "Bacteria is what lends flavor to cheese," says Chinoy. According to him there are millions of permutations and combinations. However, to be classified as a specific kind of cheese, Gouda or Cheddar for instance, a cheese must have a specified set of bacteria. "The proportions may vary, some in higher concentration and other lower, but all must be there." This difference in concentration of bacteria, Chinoy points out, accounts for the different flavors of the same kind of cheese. Cheese has got to be stored for sufficient time for the bacteria to act upon it and lend it flavor.

In the West, cheese is normally consumed in its raw form. It is only in developing countries like India that the preference is for processed cheese which is primarily cheese that has been cooked, and as the name suggests, processed before it is marketed. The origins of this product are dubious: the utilization of waste and trimmings from raw cheese. According to Chinoy, processed cheese manufacturers in the developed countries collect the by-products from various factories, de-stench them, add an equal proportion of raw cheese and process it into a cheap product which eventually finds its way into the markets of the developing world.

But not all processed cheese is made from waste and trimmings, Chinoy clarifies. He points out that he too makes the product. "Indians have developed a taste for processed cheese," he explains, almost apologetic that he has to compromise his raw Gouda to cater to the taste. He maintains, however, that processed cheese will always be second best because, after all, raw cheese is the real thing.

was in end 1984. As Chinoy sees it, his greatest loss was the loss of time. He was determined to lose no more of this precious commodity and buckled down to making a success of his local operations.

His efforts were rewarded. Slowly, as his reputation in the market grew, so did

A misconception in India is to classify raw cheese as cooking cheese and processed cheese as table cheese

his product range. Today, in addition to his raw Gouda and processed cheese, Chinoy produces paneer, cottage cheese, Quarf, a fresh cheese used in confectionery, Mozzarella, which is ideal for pizzas, vegetarian starters for yoghurt and paneer, and chakka, which is used in the making of shrikhand which is another of his products. There is also mineral water that comes in light and heavy varieties and even processed, high quality cow manure. Then there is just plain milk. All the goods are marketed through A.B.C. Farms' retail outlet at M.G. Road, Pune and at Farmer Brothers, Dadar, Bombay which is run by Chinoy's brother Kersi.

A matter of choice

Though Chinoy lived abroad for many years he did not forget his Zoroastrian roots. Recently the family celebrated the navjote of their nine-year-old son Zubin at a private ceremony at their residence in Pune. They also plan to initiate their twin daughters, Tina and Diana, aged seven into the religion. "I know that there are certain priests who would object," says Marlene who is a Protestant Christian, "and others who might have not liked me to be present during the ceremony. But we found one who allowed me to be present," she says by way of explanation. About the ceremony itself, she has no reservations: "It makes no difference to me. They (the children) will have to choose (which religion they wish to follow)."

Chinoy concurs. "There is nothing to stop them from being Christians if they want to; but if they do not have their navjote done today it will certainly stop them from being Zoroastrians tomorrow."

Chinoy takes pride in being a Parsi. In

to process the milk from the Dehu Road farm at their retail outlet which was originally located on East Street, Pune. "People would come for the milk and sample our cheese." The process then was "highly improvised." In 1983 Chinoy channeled his efforts into establishing a

dairy processing unit in Oman, Muscat. Under a joint venture project, Chinoy was to provide the knowhow; he also provided the personnel who are still there. "We did a damned good job," Chinoy states. The only problem was that, after the job was done, his contract was terminated. That

fact, he points out that at A.B.C. Farms he has been able to provide meaningful employment to a number of fellow community members. He takes pains to stress that in addition to his family, many have contributed to the success of the company. In addition to Batiwala, the quality control manager, there is A.S. Bhathena, the partner at the Dehu Road farm, Parvez Mundroina, the production manager, Marazban Billimoria, the finance manager, Homi Dumasia, the shop manager, Minoo Sarkari, the administrative officer, and Behram Amalsadiwalla whom Chinoy describes as "a son of a farmer, with the gift of common sense ... We got a great amalgam here," says Chinoy.

The family spirit, however, is not allowed to cloud the vision that business is a serious matter. It's not all cheesy smiles and a happy family portrait. "No bull shit," says a sign outside Chinoy's cabin. It's more than a joke. Chinoy exudes efficiency and a pride in his work which does not permit him to compromise on his products, be they cheese, butter, mineral water or just plain milk. One customer comments: "He even supplies you with an agrometer to test the purity of his milk."

**Lord's
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Matheran**
410102

**Mountain Resort
Hotel**

**For bookings
write or phone
Bombay 318008/367776
or Matheran 28**

EVENTS AND PERSONALITIES

continued from page 15

Buddha, the fiercely vibrant *Storm Swept*, the exuberant *Kathakali*, and *Spark*, a familiar landmark at Haji Ali in Bombay.

Three basic emotions — boredom, exasperation and exhilaration — reportedly spurred her towards sculpture. "Art," the late sculptress had noted in an interview with Bharati Kapadia, "is created because the artist has a voracious appetite for self-expression."

Sheriar surpasses

For having stood first in the FCPS (Fellow of the College of Physicians and Surgeons — obstetrics and gynecology) examination, held in September 1988, Dr Nozer Khurshed Sheriar has been awarded the Dr Dina Patel Prize and gold medal, notes the *Jam-e-Jamshed* of January 29, 1989. Sheriar had also topped the MD (Doctor of Medicine — obstetrics and gynecology) examination conducted in January 1988.

The 26-year-old gynecologist is currently a lecturer at the Nowrosji Wadia Maternity Hospital and Seth G. S. Medical College. He is also known to have presented various research papers at conferences, for which he has been awarded prizes, the paper notes.

Besides his scholastic excellence, Sheriar has also served as director of International and Community Service, and as president of the Rotaract Club of Bombay West. He was a founder member of the Youth Wing of the Bandra Parsi Association, adds the *Jamé*.

Veteran sportswoman

Winner of five silver medals at the International Veterans Meet held at Hong Kong in October 1988, 55-year-old Ms Mani Eruch Nanji competed in the National Level Veterans Meet early this year in Haryana, notes a write-up forwarded to *Parsiana*.

Nanji, who ranked fourth at the national meet, says, "I did try for a second place in discus, javelin throw and shot put, but was very disappointed when I didn't win." Undergoing tough selection trials at the state level, "It is only the first place winners who are qualified to enter the national level meets," Nanji explains.

While Nanji's forte is javelin, discus throw and shot put, she occasionally takes part in long jumps and sprint events. At the National Championships held in June last year at Srinagar, the veteran sports-

woman bagged the second place in the long jump and discus throw events, acquiring her national level best record of 12.5 meters in the discus throw, notes the write-up.

About two months before the selections, Bombay-based Nanji takes her training seriously, going either to Khalsa College, Matunga, or to University Stadium at Marine Lines to practise her



*Sheriar (left): obstetrical excellence
Nanji: sporting spirit*



throws, depending upon the availability of the javelin and the put ball.

It was after she joined Pzifers in 1957 that she started taking part in sports activities organized for the staff of companies and industries. Though she does not receive any financial sponsorship, she competes because of an interest which she had harbored since her school days but had been unable to pursue due to financial constraints then. She comes from a sports inclined family (her father was a cricketer and brother, a national athletic champion).

Her ambition is to win a gold at the national level: "So far I have only won the silver, but after I win a gold, I'll retire."

SPOTLIGHT

The Bombay University has conferred a doctorate degree on Prof Dolly Mistry of the Bombay Teachers' Training College, for her thesis on "A study of educational contributions of Parsis in India," notes the *Jam-e-Jamshed* of December 18, 1988.

Dara D. Avari was appointed as general manager of the Bank of India on January 19, 1989, notes the *Indian Express* of January 22, 1989.

Clocking 24.4 seconds in the 200 m run, **Zenia Ayrton** broke P. T. Usha's nine-year-old national record at the Junior National Athletics Championships held at Bangalore in February 1989, notes *The Daily* of February 25, 1989.

Compiled by Roxana H. Kaka

MILESTONES

The data on births, marriages and deaths has been compiled from information supplied by anjumans in India and abroad, courts and hospitals. It must be pointed out that this information is not always complete or consistent.

According to information available to *Parsiana* from four hospitals, there were 13 births in Bombay in the month of March as against 78 deaths. Of those who died, 29 succumbed to heart disease. The other killers were old age and lung disease (eight each), pneumonia (six), brain disease and hypertension (five each) and cancer (four). Three victims each fell prey to diabetes and blood disease while two victims each succumbed to septicemia and asthma. Isolated cases of kidney failure, bronchitis, gastroenteritis, shock and accident were also registered.

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.

AHMEDABAD

Died

Phiroze Hoshangji Vakil, father of Khorshed and Firoza and father-in-law of Adi Sethna and Navroz Vakil on March 31, 1989

BALASORE, ORISSA

Died

Fali Cursetji Chandaru (66), of Calcutta, husband of Lily; March 2

BANGALORE

Died

Cowski Gustadji Kharas, husband of Jini and father of Meher and Pheroza; March 12

BOMBAY

Born

A girl to *Maharukh and Darayas Pajnigar*; February 24

A girl to *Ruby and Rajesh Salvi*;

March 1

A boy to *Zarin and Hoshang Patel*; March 2

A boy to *Meher and Pheroze Dhanbhoora*; March 8

A boy to *Yasmin and Farrokh Chesan*; March 10

A boy to *Persis and Sarosh Mistry*; March 10

A girl to *Pervin and Phiroze Jamula*; March 11

A boy to *Mani and Kersi Bengali*; March 13

A girl to *Daulat and Goshtash Jamasbi*; March 13

A girl to *Kate and Kaikhusroo Dinshaw*; March 18

A boy to *Parizad and Darayus Bajan*; March 22

A girl to *Tanaz and Rehan Karanjia*; March 22

A girl to *Veera and Yezdi Engineer*; March 25

A girl to *Roshni and Kersasp Aibara*; March 28

Married

Pearl Soli Mewawalla and Rohinton Bejon Panthaky;

February 18

Pearl Nadar Shroff and Homyar Jessie Mistry; February 28

Sanobar Firoze Langdana of Surat and Nozer Homi Doctor;

March 1

Dinaz Framroze Katrak and Aspi Minu Avari; March 2

Ketayun Eruchshaw Desai and Rustom Minoo Damania;

March 3

Anaheeta Rusi Kharas and Vispi Jamshedji Engineer; March 3

Firoza Phiroze Baria and Parvez Framroz Kalwachwalla;

March 4

Kashmira Dara Karkaria and Sarosh Minocher Dalal;

March 5

Kashmira Jimmy Master and Rohinton Hirji Mewawala;

March 5

Maher Homi Wadia and Malcolm Pesi Turner; March 5

Hutokhshi Noshir Patel and Pauruosaspa (Porus) Pessi Cooper; March 12

Pervin Tehmud Karanjia and Zubin Vispi Dalal; March 12

Nilufer Darab Pochkhanawala and Farokh Jehangir Mistry;

March 12

Farida Firoze Bhesania and Cherag Eruch Tarapore;

March 14

Armity Tahmuras Ariyanfar and

Shahzad Rustom Amuyan; March 15

Khurshid Sam Nagarwalla and Phiroze Jal Kotwal; March 16

Roxana Kersi Pithawala and Neville Phiroze Tantra;

March 16

Roxanne Rustum Shavaksha and Percy Phiroze Madon; March 18

Benifer Minoo Writer and Farokh Tehmuresh Daruwalla;

March 19

Shireen Farokh Udawadia and Jehangir Homi Sethna;

March 19

Shehnaz Rusi Mullan and Rohinton Soli Shroff; March 24

Mahrook Framroz Irani and Firoz Khurshed Jamshedji of Thane; March 26

Anaita Navroze Vakil and Daraius Eruchsha Katila;

March 26

Khurshid Dali Dastoor and Phiroze Pestonji Katrak;

March 26

Khurshid Adi Irani and Xerxes Bomi Pithawalla; March 26

Shehnaz Bejan Bharucha and Minoo Rustomji Patel; March 30

Zinobia Pervaz Bharucha and Godrej Cawasji Guzder;

March 31

Died

Cawas Sorabji Billimoria (62), residing at 1, Harbour View, Matharpakhadi, Mazagaon,

400010; February 27

Dhunmai Framroze Bharucha (88), 52, Union Bldg, Sleater Rd,

400007; February 28

Shapoor Sorab Irani (59), Harbour View, Matharpakhadi Rd, Mazagaon, 400010; March 1

Dhun Pesi Nariman (74), 1, Sleater Hse, Sleater Rd, 400007;

March 1

Maneksha Dhanjibhai Nava (65), Village Rani Rajpura, Dist

Bardoli, 394601; March 1

Dhunjishaw Pallonji Mandroina (62), B/11, Jer Baug, Victoria Rd, Byculla, 400027; March 2

Navajbai H. Dadiburjor (85), 3, Sir Ratan Tata Bldg, S. V. Rd,

Bandra, 400050; March 3

Maneck J. Gheyara (76), C/o R. Limboowala, Rusi Hse,

Darabsha Rd, 400026;

March 3

Dhun K. Irani (63), 42/A, 404, Manish Nagar, Four Bglws,

Andheri (W), 400058; March 3

Nargishbanoo Nusserwanji

Panthaky (80), H-106,

Yashodhan, Irla Bridge, Andheri (W), 400058; March 3

Minocher H. Sethna (88), 599, Sharma Nivas, J. S. Rd,

Matunga, 400019; March 3

Ardeshir Hormasji Bulsara (82), 4/4, Mehta Bldg, Khan Est,

Mahim, 400016; March 4

Aloo Jehangir Driver (72), 609, Singapori Bldg, J. S. S. Rd,

400002; March 4

Allan Aderji Elavia (80), D-29, Nowroz Baug, Lalbaug, 400012;

March 4

Pirozsha R. Elavia (81), Sanjana Bldg, Forjett Hill Rd, 400036;

March 4

Villoo Jal Bamji (80), Bhandari Bldg, Wadia St, Tardeo, 400034;

March 5

Zarin Homi Daruvala (48), 92, Hassa Mhl, Cuffe Parade,

400005; March 5

Meherwan R. Irani (62), Mubarak Manzil, Irani Rd,

Dahanu Rd, Dist Thane, 400601;

March 5

Darabshaw Aderji Bala (84), 5, Golf Links, Pali Hill Est, Khar,

400052; March 6

Ratanbai Bhicaji Elavia (74), 6/4, Wadia Block, Malcolm Baug, Jogeshwari (W), 400102;

March 6

Putlibai Minocher Lakdawalla (80), 5/14, C. J. Clny, Tardeo,

400034; March 6

Jaloo Dinshaw Paymaster (81), 24, Patkar Marg, Batliwalla Block, Hughes Rd, 400007;

March 6

Homai F. Shroff (78), F. S. Parukh Dharamshalla, 34,

Hughes Rd, 400007; March 6

Amy Jehanbux Antia (64), Bakhtawar, 129, B. Nagar Rd,

Yerawada, Pune, 411006;

March 7

Gover Hooshang Bakht (Falamarzi) (57), C/2, Ness Baug, Nana Chowk, 400007;

March 7

Manijeh Nadirshah Daruwalla (84), 7-B/8, Tata Clny Bldg,

Tardeo, 400034; March 7

Freny Bomanshaw Patel (74), Goa Hindu Association Bldg,

358, Lamington Rd, 400007;

March 7

Daras Dhunjishaw Sethna (84), 908, Cumballa Crest, 42, Pedder Rd, 400026; March 7

Nina Eddie Nicholson (38),

Avabai Mans, 15, Henry Rd,

400039; March 8
Phiroza Rustom Irani (75), Irani Wadi, Opp Savakasi, Old Bawadi Marve Rd, Malad, 400064; March 9
Ardeshtir Bhicaji Sarkari (79), 32, Mahimwalla Bldg, Khetwadi, 12th Lane, 400004; March 9
Sheroo Dara Bhabha (69), Khushnum, 808, Dr Ambedkar Rd, Dadar, 400014; March 10
Darasha Minocher Lal (55), 1/B-30, Tata Mills Co-op Hsg Soc, Elphinstone Rd, Parel, 400012; March 10
Dilnavaz Dara Bapuna (60), 11, Batliwalla Bldg, Khan Est, Mahim, 400016; March 11
Temuras Cowasji Elavia (89), 51, Pandey Sanatorium, Wodehouse Rd, Colaba, 400005; March 11
Eruchshaw Hormusji Mistry (81), 721, Bhavnagri Bldg, Nanubhai Desai Rd, 400004; March 11
Cowasji Muncherji MullaFeroze (90), 'A,' Taj Bldg, A. G. Marg, 400036; March 11
Tehmina Jal Patel (72), B-14, Mistry Bldg, Opp M. D. College, Parel, 400012; March 11
Perin Kersi Irani (57), Room 16, 382, Pavulla Bldg, Grant Rd, 400007; March 12
Keki Burjorji Khapoliwala (83), 'A,' Empire Ter, Lamington Rd, 400007; March 12
Dali Manchershaw Dangore (64), 22-D, Sakarwadi, Nawab Tank Rd, Mazagaon, 400010; March 13
Amy Rustom Saher (81), 8, Hari Nivas, 19, Mathew Rd, 400004; March 13
Pirojshah J. Vaccha (91), O/3, Shapurji Bharucha Bldg, Andheri (W), 400058; March 13
Villo Hoshang Marshall (51), 1/11, Old Khareghat Clny, Hughes Rd, 400007; March 14
Dina Ratanshah Anklesharia (74), Diwan Bhavan, Manekpur, Vasai (W), Dist Thane, 400601; March 15
Jal Rustom Bengali (74), Damania Bldg, Chikalwadi, 400007; March 15
Khodayar B. Afghan Irani (43), Room 14, 37, Calicut St, 400001; March 15
Dinamai Hormusha Sahiwalla (86), O/5, Bharucha Clny, Lalubhai Park Rd, Andheri (W), 400058; March 16
Banubai Sorabji Kavarana (75),

Room 24, Petit Widows' Chawl, Fort, 400001; March 17
Khorshedbanu Minocher Pandey (81), 202, Madhuvan Apt, Medona Clny, Borivli (W), 400092; March 17
Perin Darabshaw Udwadia (78), Moghul St, Udwarda, 398160; March 17
Sheroo Rustomji Mullaphiroz (76), Pehalvi Bldg, Opp Lamington Police Stn, 400007; March 18
Sorabji Bomanji Colabewalla (91), Dubash Bldg, 627, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; March 19
Jaloo Ratan Dalal (77), 5, N. Bharucha Marg, 400007; March 19
Jehangir Rustomji Daruwalla (65), 12-B, Cawasji Petit Bldg, Block No 4, Nagpada; March 19
Hormazd Dadabhai Dotiwalla (77), 3/38, Tata Mills Co-op Hsg Soc, Elphinstone Rd, Parel, 400012; March 19
Dady Pestonji Shroff (57), 51, Goolistan, 34, B. Desai Rd, 400026; March 19
Dady Hormusji Printer (53), 5/10, Khareghat Clny, Hughes Rd, 400007; March 20
Rashidbanu Hirjibhai Daruwalla (80), 5, Mistry Bldg, Jame Jamshed Rd, Dadar, 400014; March 21
Rustomji Merwanji Driver (85), Lovely Home, Cuffe Parade, Colaba, 400005; March 21
Dinamai Navroji Bilimoria (76), 19/1, Panthaki Bldg, M. V. Rd, Andheri (E), 400069; March 22
Nariman Jamshed Hasotia (84), E-11/10, Godrej Staff Qrs, Hill Side, Vikhroli, 400079; March 22
Pirojhai Ardeshtir Patel (78), 101, Bhimadiwalla Ter, Dhobitalao, 400002; March 22
Fareedoon Edulji Sopariwalla (78), 17, Hill Rd, Bandra (W), 400050; March 22
Shirin Framroze Cooper (85), C/o Mr Soli Karanjia, 4, Bueno Vista No 9, Winoy Hall Lane, Colaba, 400005; March 23
Shavaksha Jivanji Mistry (86), 2/16, India Hse, Kemps Corner, Cumballa Hill, 400036; March 23
Aimai Jehangirji Bhavnagri (80), 72, Bhavnagri Hse, Khetwadi, Main Rd, 400004; March 24
Gool Adi Gandhi (55), Room 9, Modi Hse, Near Dreamland

Cinema, 400004; March 24
Mehroo Dorab Guzdar (75), C/12, Khalgdina Ter, A.K. Marg, 400036; March 24
Dhunjishaw Darabsha Karanjia (63), A/14, Sorabji Bhabha Sanatorium, Opp Bandstand, Bandra (W), 400050; March 24
Jerbanoo Framroze Mistry (79), E/12, Shapur Baug, V. P. Rd, 400004; March 24
Roshan Manekji Vania (72), 'B,' Reward Mans, Tardeo Rd, 400007; March 24
Eruchsha Framji Daruwalla (85), 7, Bharucha Bldg, Gilder Lane, Lamington Rd, 400008; March 25
Mehrbai Naserwanji Mehta (83), Jame Jamshed Bldg, 811/54, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; March 25
Fareedoon Maneksha Bhabha (82), 36/A, Jer Baug, Victoria Rd, Byculla, 400027; March 26
Dhunjisha Framroze Nasikwala (67), Ullas, 17, Laburnum Rd, New Gamdevi Rd, Next to Mani Bhavan, 400007; March 27
Dhunjai Behramsha Italia (70), 5, Kapadia Bldg, Panthaki Baug, Andheri (E), 400068; March 28
Bachubai Jehangirji Bharucha (90), P-31, Cusrow Baug, S. B. Rd, 400039; March 30
Darabsha Dhunjishaw Khambata (75), Jer Bldg, Khetwadi, 6th Lane, 400004; March 30
Sorabji Kaikhusro Shroff (89), 1-A-20, Tata Mills Co-op Hsg Soc, Parel, 400012; March 31

CALCUTTA

Born

A girl, Sanaya, to Gool and Jehangir Ardeshtir; March 27

DELHI

Married

Karen J. O. Mc Donagh and Homi Keki Debara of Allahabad; December 22, 1988

HONG KONG

Died

Ratan Hormuzdiar Doctor, husband of Mini, father of Pervina and Viraf; March 10, 1989

JAMSHEDPUR

Born

A boy, Afsaan, to Molly and Rustom Kermani; February 21

KARACHI

Born

A girl to Farida and Rummy Khambatta; February 4
 A boy to Meher and Zarir Doctor; February 14
 A boy to Meher and Firoze Cowasjee; February 26
 A girl to Diana and Cyrus Magol; February 26
 A boy to Nina and Rony Dubash; March 1

Married

Shenaz D. Gamwalla and Daraius R. Dubash; February 23

Died

Freddy Bomanji Golwalla (74); February 5
 Minoo Hormusji Canteenwala (74); February 6
 Dinshaw Minocher Gamwalla (60); February 10
 Fereshte Sharukh Petigara (26 days); February 13
 Najoo Feroze Sethna (62); February 13
 Minoo Framroze Nanavati (74); February 15
 Gaimai Maneckji Sethna (89); February 24

LONDON

Died

Pheroze Engineer, husband of Freny, father of Mayerlene and Carl; March 10

MASHOBRA, SIMLA

Died

Kersasp Shapurjee Karai (72), December 19, 1988

POONA

Died

Khursheed Kaikhushroo Irani (72), 1119, Juna Modikhana, Camp, 411001; March 1
 Manijeh Keki Feniwalla (69), 920, Synagogue St, 411001; March 17
 Mehera Phiroze Naagamwala (88), 2/4, Canopus Apts, Boat Club Rd, 411001; March 20
 Rustom Nadirsha Vakil (82), 3, Napier Rd, 411001; March 21
 Shiavax Ratanshaw Balaporia (79), 8, Gulati Mans, Padamji Park, 411002; March 30
 Roshan Lovji Malegam (61), 7, East St, Camp, 411001; March 30

Compiled by Roxana H. Kaka



Tavadia's drama

Died: Homi Pallonji Tavadia, 65, well-known playwright and dramatist, and former deputy legal adviser of the Bombay Port Trust on January 15, 1989 at the B. D. Petit Parsee General Hospital in Bombay following cerebral hemorrhage.

Come festival time, and Tavadia was invariably found involved in stage presentations that promised to regale the audiences. Known to have directed over 300 plays in different languages including the 80 odd one-act and three-act plays written by him in English, Gujarati, Hindustani and Marathi, Tavadia was constantly striving to balance creativity and excellence, noted a resolution passed at the condolence meeting on January 23, under the joint auspices of the Youths Own Union, the Parsi Medical Amateurs Association, the Lions and Lioness Club of Byculla, and the Bombay Port Trust Officers' Association.

He took special interest in generating resources for the B.D. Petit Parsee General Hospital "when funds were acutely needed, through dramatic performances and gatherings organized in a masterly manner," it was recorded in a resolution signed by chairman Dinshaw Petit. Since 1970 he had been officiating as honorary director of plays which are annually staged by the Parsi Medical Amateurs Association. These plays were very popular with the community which enjoyed seeing outstanding Parsi physicians and surgeons without their masks.

His involvement with the Youths Own Union spanned three decades, and by staging plays for this organization he was able to net nearly four lakh rupees, it is mentioned in his detailed bio data.

"Whether on stage or behind it, (Tavadia) did a lot for the furtherance of the art of staging Parsi Gujarati plays

which were not only full of mirth, fun and frolic but also made us look at ourselves with ridicule and humor." The Cusrow Baug United Sports and Welfare League summarized his contribution at the condolence meeting convened on January 21 to remember the services rendered by its managing committee member Tavadia and the Karani Agiary panthaky Nadirsha Aibara.

"One remarkable thing about Homi was he did not work merely for his prestige and glory. He tried to train, encourage and bring up many a young person who had latent talents," noted a write-up in *The Bombay Samachar* of January 22. Several educational institutions would invite him to coach their students for drama events which he did willingly, being keen to promote the children's theater movement in Bombay.

Tavadia wrote his first three-act Gujarati play *Pyar-ke-paiso* in 1941 and his latest work was a serious drama *Pankheru pyasu premnu* enacted for the first time last Diwali. Whether a comedy or a satire, his plays sought to impart a message for a good, purposeful life. His plays have been staged in different corners of India and even in London, Chicago and Canada. While *Moogi Mehra* and *Behrano bafat* have been produced over a hundred times, what his wife Katy views as his most unusual play is *Gulab ek kanta panch* which mirrors the hypocrisy prevalent in society. He had even been appointed examiner by the Baroda University to evaluate a doctoral thesis in drama.

Besides acting in almost all his own plays, Tavadia also accepted roles in plays directed by other theatrical concerns like the Indian National Theatre, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Hilla Nariman Theatre

Group and Adi Marzban's unit. "Marzban was his main source of inspiration - his guru. But perhaps, Homi lived too long under the shadow of Adi..." speculated *The Samachar*. Tavadia was given his first break on All India Radio and Bombay Doordarshan in Marzban's programs. Thereafter he successfully directed his own shows and children's programs for radio and television.

Producing plays and shows was confined to Tavadia's leisure time, after he had put in his regular hours of service as an advocate. For 38 years, Tavadia was with the Bombay Port Trust. He had joined as a special grade clerk, was soon promoted to the officer's cadre, and when he retired, he was serving as deputy legal adviser. Thereafter he joined Mulla and Mulla and Craigie Blunt and Caroe as advocate assistant attending to court suits besides legal documentation work. His early education was at St Xavier's School after which he pursued his studies for his BA, LLB, and OS degrees from the University of Bombay and the Bombay Bar Council.

In addition to his creative and legal writing, Tavadia also found time for journalistic writing. He used to assist in the editing of *Gup-sup*, a humor magazine of *Jam-e-Jamshed*, *Hun Bava ané Mangaldas*, another humor magazine, and the house journal of the Society of Indian Magicians.

Performing magic feats with ease ever since he learnt the knowhow in 1940, his tricks, as also his study of Indian classical music and Western dancing enabled him to enliven his stage shows.

Tavadia was a trustee of the Seth Framjee Nusserwanji Parel Agiary Trust, an active freemason, and a managing committee member of the J.N. Petit Institute library.

"With all his talents, accomplishments and achievements, Homi was an affable, modest person. He exuded good humor, self confidence and friendliness... (His thoughts) were always with the underprivileged, the sick and the suffering," *The Samachar* paid him tribute. His end came all too suddenly. Remembers a family member: When his friends would caution him to reduce the pace of his activities, Tavadia would jocularly dismiss the topic recalling that a fortune-teller had told him that he would live for 80 years and accomplish many more tasks!

Tavadia is survived by his wife Katy and son Behram.

Written by Parinaz Gandhi

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