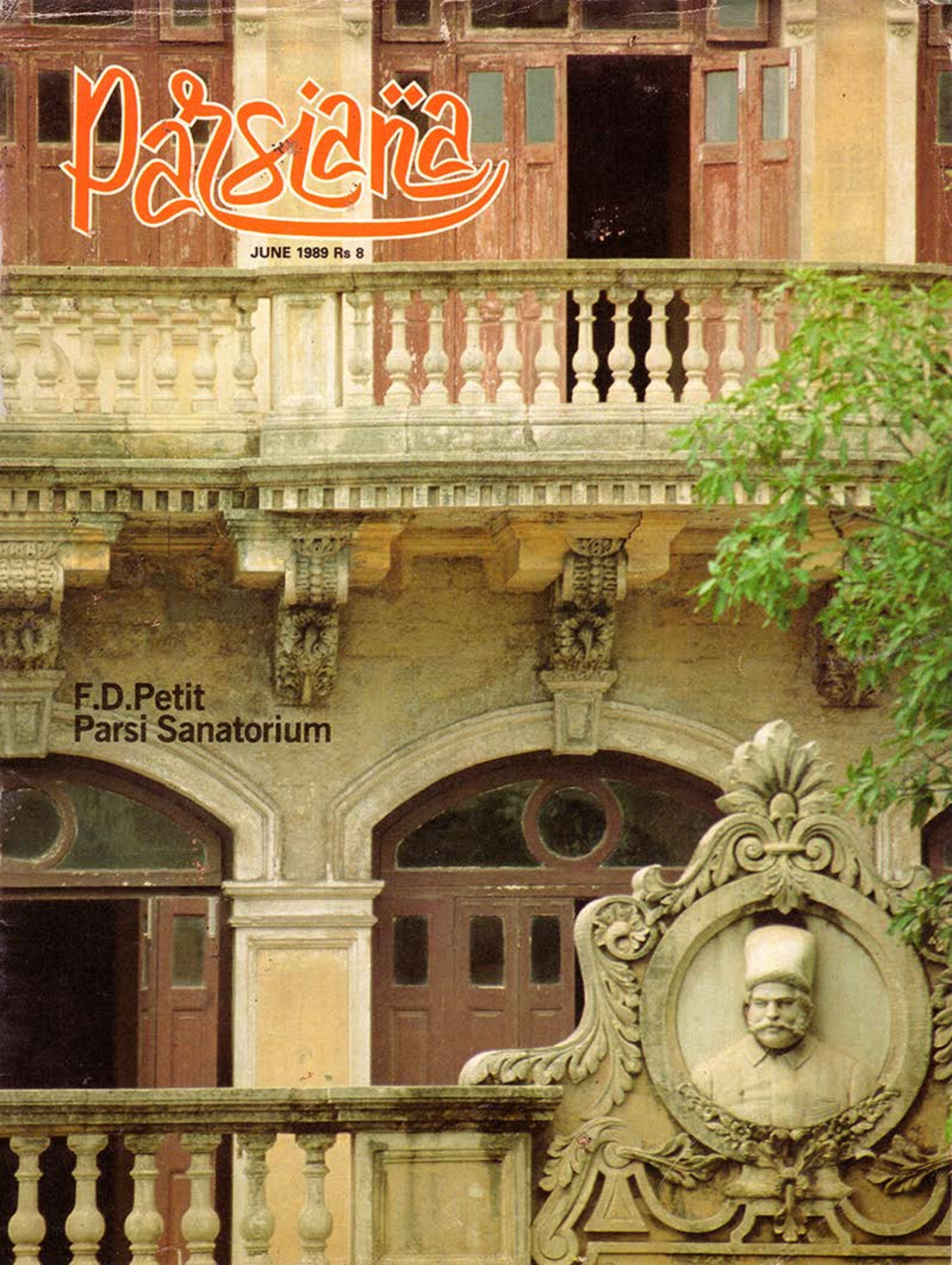


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June 1989
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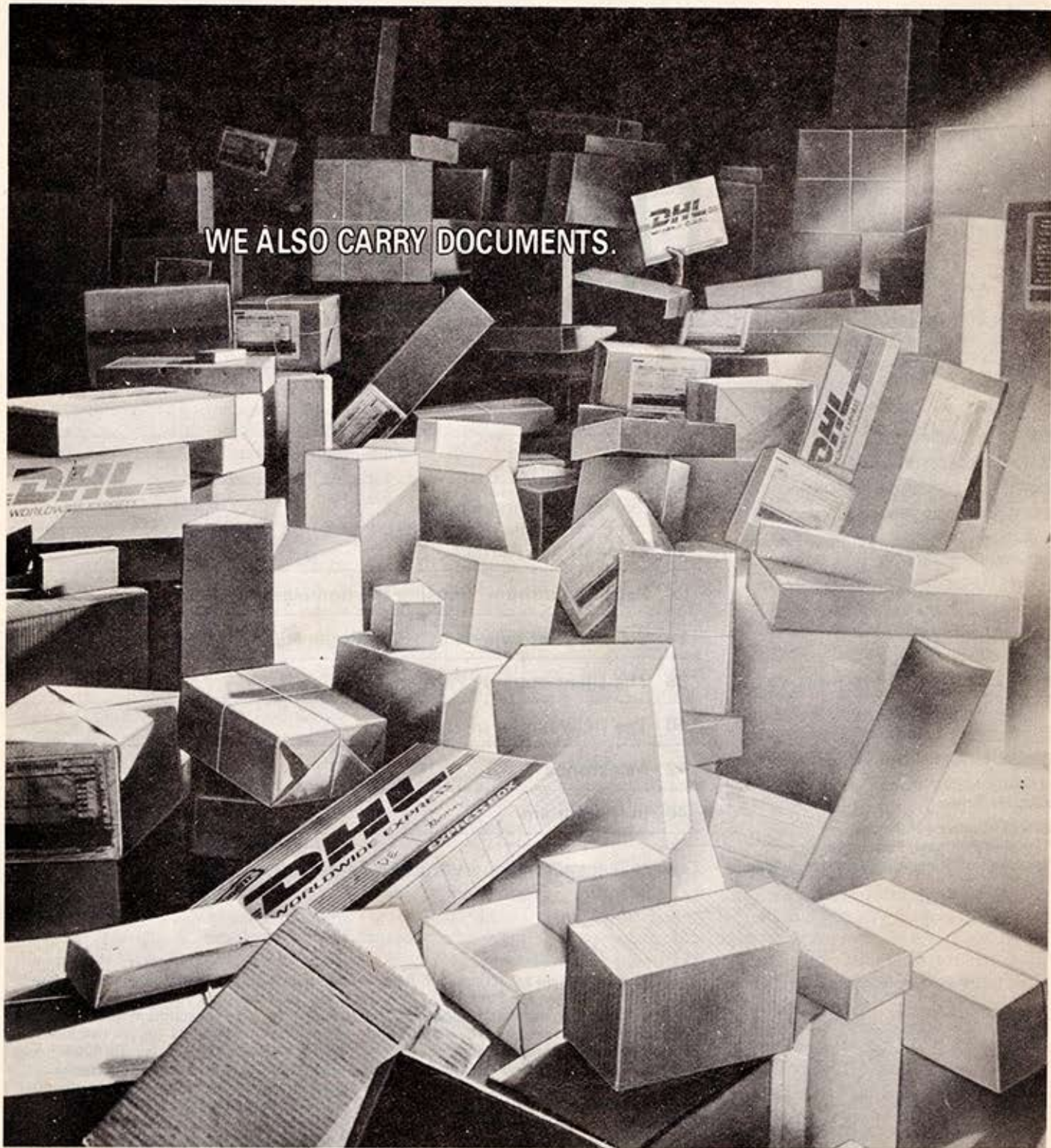
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Readers' views are welcome on any subject of interest to the community and should be sent to the Editor, Readers' Forum, Parsiana, G.P.O. Box 892, Bombay 400 001. Letters are subject to editing for reasons of space and clarity. Unsigned letters or those without a complete address will not be published.

"Women and marriage"

Two cheers for all who helped Prof Homai Billimoria's *Attitudes of Parsi Youth (Females) Towards Marriage* ("Women and marriage," *Parsiana*, March 1989), and Ms Cashmera Bhaya's survey of rural Parsis in south Gujarat ("The Deserted Villages," *ibid*). The more we know the less we "fêko (bluff)!" One cheer less for the omission of unmarried Parsi men, "partners of broken marriages and interreligious unions" due to "limitations of time and money." (I object to the purely biological male and female by demographers and sociologists as if they were reasearching in a stud farm!) The last of the three cheers to *Parsiana* for the three articles on researches and researchers in its March issue.

What comes through two of these three articles is the perplexing percep-

tions of the Parsi woman of this generation. It is striking that in the matter of attitudes to marriage, the contemporary Parsi woman suffers from a peculiar blend of over-righteousness, a patronizing tolerance, a confusing inconsistency, and an unreality not expected of those who hardheadedly postpone marriage till after 29. Let me illustrate from the evidence of these articles, before John Knox's "monstrous regiment" marches against me.

Look at this for over-righteousness at the end of the twentieth century (one would have thought it was the end of the Victorian era): "Premarital necking with her is fine, petting okay, but beyond that point the male would be ill-advised to try his luck with her." Even the Hindi films now are a lip ahead with kissing. But then the promise of propriety: "After marriage though, he can expect a fairly rewarding sex life." Another over-righteous demand: "He should have an equable temper, but he should not smoke, drink or gamble." No trace of drugs yet in that Victorian mind?

Now look at the inconsistency and unreality. Her first three ratings are for understanding, affection, and fidelity. (Fidelity ratios did not seem to figure in the research!) With these top virtues must come a postgraduate degree or technical line, an income of over Rs 3,000 per month, and a sense of humor. Yet in her rating, the things which go with these — industriousness, drive, ambition, etc — get a low rating. Without these, one has to be a gifted genius to make the grade. (As only 10 percent of Parsi men are postgraduates, if they are to go around as the qualified desirables, and no mixed marriages, perhaps polygamy is the only answer!) Now the juxtaposition of these desirable high achieving men, and the low rating in the young ladies' responses of "Economic aspects and ability to support a family," stretches credibility and borders on ambivalence, to put it mildly. A case of the Brahmin, ecstatic to hear the coin fall in his *kamandal* (collection box) but seeming to turn his face away from materialism?

Yet another hard one to swallow is the waiting Parsi bride-to-be, prepared

to adjust all along the line: eating and other habits, social life and entertainment, living standards — even religion and customs. And yet, there can be no compromise about friends and values. One had always thought that religion and values had a close relationship. One or the other seems to have changed.

Beyond such a wide range of flexible adjustments, she says "being a divorcee or a widower will not be held against him." Mercifully, nothing said about his track record: such sweet patronizing tolerance.

To the extent that "The ideal Parsi male" portrayed on page 53 is a true reflection of the research, he must be just below the angels, and all set for the House of Song. Poor chap, if only he was visualized as being more human.

So where do the 'governors' (Federation and trustees) go from here? The recommended bigger flats and family allowances? Its economics? The premarital reality counselling to get adjustable Armaity to peg her expectations to a gently falling, not a fallen angel; nor fear the consequences of early sex education beyond necking?

I wonder what *mamaiji* (maternal grandmother) would say to all this.

ASPI MODDIE

"Does Zoroastrianism..."

I was glad to see Ali Jafarey's "Does Zoroastrianism teach reincarnation?" (*Parsiana*, March 1989). After I had read your survey results under the same title in your August 1988 issue, I had a question in my mind regarding reincarnation and the Islamic tradition. When an Islamic scholar took up this issue, I thought I'd find the answer to my query; but no.

I am not a linguist, nor a scholar of religious beliefs. But I like to read the teachings of different religions and the messages of saints and seers. In your original questionnaire, question 11d reads: "Do you find the doctrine of reincarnation in Islamic tradition?" Not a single scholar in your inquiry has said 'yes.' A negative reply is given by 24 scholars and six scholars have said "can't say."

I think the following passage in the *Koran* can be taken as evidence of reincarnation. "How disbelieve ye in Allah

when ye were dead and He gave life to you! Then He will give you death, then life again, and then unto Him you will return (*Koran 2, 28*)." I think it would be interesting if Jafarey and some of our scholars who do not see reincarnation in Zoroastrianism and in Islamic tradition were to say something on this point.

D. K. BALSARA

"The highway rider"

In "The highway rider" (*Parsiana*, November 1988) you had written about my trip, on a moped, from Hyderabad to Pune. As a sequel, I am proposing to undertake a journey on the same machine from Kanyakumari to Kashmir, a distance of 3,584 km which I propose to cover in 25 days, starting November 1, 1989.

My journey will take me through Madurai, Salem, Bangalore, Anantapur, Kurnool, Hyderabad, Nirmal, Adilabad, Nagpur, Sager, Jhansi, Gwalior, Agra, Mathura, Delhi, Ambala, Jalandhar, Pathankot, Jammu, Batot and Banihal to Srinagar. If my machine is okay, if the manufacturers, TVS-Suzuki, can give me the green signal that their Champ moped

can tackle heights of 15,000 ft and if the roads are motorable in the sub-zero November weather, I will attempt a trip to Ladakh, Kargil and Leh. My return journey will be by train.

This entire odyssey will depend upon the help given by Parsi business houses and philanthropists to encourage me to venture all alone on such a trip at 66 years of age.

I visualize an expenditure of Rs 12,000 to 15,000 for the entire trip. Since I am a pensioner and my financial circumstances do not permit such an expenditure on my own, I seek sponsorship support to defray this expenditure. Rest assured that the sponsor will receive a meticulous account of the money together with any unspent balance as this is an adventure involving a man-and-his-machine and not a jaunt to make money.

The sponsor will bear no responsibility regarding my life as I am adequately insured and so is my machine and adequate precautions have been (taken) in the event of my death on the road or any accident en route.

DADY C. PATELL
Secunderabad

"Religion of charity"

I would like to second the proposal of the authors of the article "The religion of charity" (*Parsiana*, March 1989), to set up an organization which would be responsible for collecting funds and applying them to charities of the donors' choice.

However, I feel inclined to suggest that your magazine should take up this cause personally.

In the coming days, *Parsiana* will have to shoulder more responsibility towards the community's cultural and economic existence.

Instead of digging out past glories of our forefathers, the magazine should concentrate more on research into the various aspects of our community's problems. The inefficiency and corruption in the Parsi charitable organizations (if any) should be brought to light.

Parsiana was perhaps born when our community was too prosperous. Now it must view things from a different perspective.

DINYAR N. JALNAWALLA
Jalna

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I wish you, your entire family,
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of caste, creed or colour)
a very happy and prosperous
NAVROZE MUBARAK

and many more to come
with a very long, healthy and
successful life, full of joy and peace

With kind regards

Yours sincerely

Noshirwan F. Cowasjee



WITH BEST WISHES
TOWARDS THAT BEST LIGHT
ALL ZOROASTRIANS

&

ALL NON-ZOROASTRIANS
(married to Zoroastrians)
are cordially invited to
BROOKWOOD ZOROASTRIAN CEMETERY
on Sunday - 10th - September - 1989
at noon
to attend our
UNITED FARVARDIAN PRAYERS

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

21 Leonard Court, Edwardes Square, London W8 6NL
Tuesday, 21st March 1989

Dear ladies and gentlemen,

United Farvardian Prayers At Brookwood

With the blessings of the Almighty and the departed souls of our dear ones, our Farvardian Prayers will be held at the Zoroastrian Cemetery at Brookwood, in front of the grave of the late Jehangirji D. Moos, past president and trustee of the Zoroastrian Association of Europe (Inc) now known as the Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe (Inc) London.

Prayers

Prayers will be recited by ladies and gentlemen as in the past.

Sandalwood and Loban

Sufficient quantity of sandalwood and loban will be made available for the prayers.

Attendance

In 1987 and 1988, attendance at our United Farvardian Prayers at Brookwood was as under

	1987	1988
Zoroastrians	54	126
Non-Zoroastrians Spouses	5	23
Zoroastrians 5 - 18 years	Not recorded	29
	<u>59</u>	<u>178</u>

Non-Zoroastrians spouses included Christians, Hindus, Jews, Muslims, Sikhs, etc. The participants came from England, Scotland, Wales, USA, Canada, India, Pakistan and the Continent of Europe.

Facilities

Please bring as many chairs and umbrellas as possible for elderly and disabled persons.

Please offer space in your car(s) to those who are prevented from attending due to transport difficulties but are most eager to participate in our United Farvardian Prayers at Brookwood.

Toilet facilities have been arranged.

Snacks and tea/coffee will be provided to all participants without any charge or obligation.

Freedom of Thoughts - Freedom of Words - Freedom of Deeds - allow all Zoroastrians and Non-Zoroastrians married to Zoroastrians - **WORLDWIDE** - to attend our United Farvardian Prayers at the Zoroastrian Cemetery at Brookwood on Sunday the 10th September 1989 at noon.

With kind regards

Yours truly

Noshirwan F. Cowasjee
(Organiser)

Please inform all your relations/friends (both Zoroastrians and Non-Zoroastrians married to Zoroastrians) about our United Farvardian Prayers at Brookwood.

In aid of statistics

For statistical purposes, the Federation of Zoroastrian Associations of North America (FEZANA) would like to know of Zoroastrians living outside the large cities of the USA and Canada.

We would appreciate if their relatives in India send their names and addresses to the undersigned at 3765 Malo Street, Brossard, P.Q. JAY IB4, Canada.

Ms DOLLY P. DASTOOR
Secretary, FEZANA
Quebec, Canada

Learn a trade

The Bai Dinbai F. S. Patuck Memorial Scholarship Fund was established in 1967 under the auspices of Stri Zarhosti Mandal in memory of Bai Dinbai Patuck.

Through its scholarships, Zoroastrian women are helped to learn a trade or a profession (non-academic) where training is for a short period i.e. a year or less. After that the individual can earn a decent income and be self-supporting. We have in the past helped very many young women stand on their feet.

This scholarship covers the diploma course in montessori and kindergarten teachers training, and courses in handi-

craft, home science, nursing, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, nutrition, studies in computer science, typing-shorthand, telephone operating, beauty culture and hair dressing, and librarianship. This scholarship is not given for degree-oriented courses in arts, science or commerce.

The fund benefitted 26 girls in 1985-86 to an aggregate of Rs 21,221; 20 in 1986-87 (Rs 24,670); 22 in 1987-88 (Rs 32,775) and 19 in 1988-89 (Rs 20,650).

Young girls from lower and middle-class families from Bombay and out of Bombay can avail of this opportunity for help. For further information, contact or meet the undersigned personally at the Trust office C/o Stri Zarhosti Mandal, Sir Ratan Tata Institute, 35, Hughes Road, Bombay 400007.

Ms B. S. TARAPORE
Administrator

Patronize Parsi schools

I would like to draw attention to a certain trend in our community. During the nineteenth century, magnanimous Parsi charities were established to care for the health and educational needs of the Parsi community as well as other com-

munities. However, it is sad that Parsis are not taking full advantage of the educational facilities extended to them. Enrolment of Parsi children in Parsi established schools, which offer so much in terms of real value to the community, is very poor.

The Bai Dhunmai Cawasji High School was established in 1934 for the education of middle and lower-class Parsi girls. Later on, boys were admitted and with the passage of time, we are now a cosmopolitan, co-educational school where not even 50 Parsi children are studying, even when all possible financial help is extended to needy students.

The opportunities available for the welfare of our young ones in all Parsi managed schools should be brought to light. This is not being communal, only community-minded; for the very same facilities are extended to non-Parsi children and will be continued hereafter.

Dr (Ms) KETAYUN R. A. J. MADON
Principal, Bai Dhunmai Cawasji High School
Khandala

Edited by Arnavaz S. Mama

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Events and Personalities

Tree guide

"To help (people) to appreciate nature and preserve the greenery in the city," the Homavazir's 11th Central Bombay Bharat Scout Group have published *A guide to the trees of Mancherji Joshi Dadar Parsi Colony*. Compiled by Bahadur Palkhiwalla for the Scout Group, the 44-page pocketbook is dedicated to the founder of the Colony, the late Mancherji Edalji Joshi.

As per the study done by the Scouts, there are about 600 roadside and garden trees in and around the Colony, and the municipal garden department has been planting new saplings every year on empty plots.

Formerly, only one variety of a tree was found on each road and the road labelled according to the tree that distinguished it. (e.g. Firdosi Road was known as the Indian Mahogany Avenue.) The guide carries a list indicating such equivalent names for different roads in the locality.

In the process of planting new trees, such a trend has not been maintained. As a result, there is a mix of trees on every road. For easy identification, some of the trees bear nameplates. To ascertain the identity of other trees, the 'tree-route' described in the booklet can be observed. The positioning of the trees on different roads is explained in the context of prominent landmarks.

The handy booklet also gives a brief description of some of the popular and common trees, stating their flowering seasons, the shape and size of their leaves, bark, etc. There is also a short note on tree care.

The front cover of the book displays a photograph of a rain tree by Ardeshir Khambatta. On the back cover there is an appeal to donate to the Mancherji Edalji Joshi Memorial Trust. The guide also shortlists organizations where nature lovers can enroll as members, learn more about trees and birds, and work towards the preservation of nature and a cleaner environment.



Priced at five rupees, the book can be purchased from B. A. Palkhiwalla, 785-A, Parsi Colony, Dadar, Bombay 400014 or from Homavazir's 11th CBDA Scout Group, C/o J. B. Vachha Girls High School, Dadar, Bombay 400014 on Sundays from 8 to 10 a.m.

Unique technique

Consultant Tehmuras Rustomji Sarkari's efforts in developing a technique to achieve substantial fuel economy in industries were recognized by conferring on him a research award instituted by the National Research Development Corporation, notes a press release. The award, conferred for "the novelty, technical feasibility and commercial viability" of his invention, includes a cash purse of Rs 15,000 and a certificate that was presented to him on January 26, 1989.

Using this novel technique, Sarkari was able to successfully achieve fuel economy in 25 industries. To monitor the properties of fuel and its performance level, he devised tools that could

easily gauge its productivity so that engineers could promptly set right the faults and optimize the fuel efficiency, notes a write-up forwarded to *Parsiana*.

Seventy-three-year-old Sarkari is a fellow of the Institute of Plant Engineers and a member of the Combustion Institute. For the last seven years he has been functioning independently as a consultant offering his services to companies like Reliance Textile Mills, Ahmedabad, Hindustan Antibiotics Limited, Poona, Morarji



*Far left:
providing
greenery to
Dadar Parsi
Colony
Sarkari:
optimizes fuel
efficiency*

Gokuldas Mills, Bombay, Bajaj Auto Limited, Poona, and many others.

Before branching out on his own, Sarkari was working with the Poona-based firm Thermax Private Limited for over 23 years. He had joined as a consultant where his nature of work included the design and operation of sterilizers, distillers, boilers, etc, and subsequently became technical director of the company, notes his bio data.

A BE (Mech) and (Elec) from the College of Engineering, Poona, he has taught at the Surat Polytechnic Institute, the Victoria Jubilee Technical Institute, Bombay and at the Indian Institute of Technology, Powai, his bio data further notes.

Honor to Wadia

Family planning expert Dr Boms Wadia is this year's recipient of the B. C. Roy National Award for his outstanding contribution to socio-medical work in India, notes *The Indian Post* of May 24, 1989.

Wadia was given this award in recog-

nition of his successfully carrying out nearly one lakh female ligations. His efforts in developing special instruments to make the operations quick, safe and effective have also been recognized. Some of his surgical instruments are patented and accepted by German-based companies like Stortz and Diener, and Down Brothers of England. From among his various innovations, the Wadia Skin Clamp and the Wadia Elevator are frequently used in family planning camps all over the world, it is reported in the *Jam-e-Jamshed* of May 25.

In 1987, Wadia earned international recognition from the Watumull Foundation of USA for his commitment to family planning. Many individuals have benefited from the 14 plus workshops conducted by him in subjects connected with family planning.

A postgraduate in obstetrics, gynecology and anesthesia from the Bombay University, the 54-year-old doctor has been practising surgery for over three decades at the Grant Medical College and the J. J. Hospital, the *Jamé* adds. He is a professor of obstetrics and gynecology at the Bombay University, and examiner in these subjects at various universities, notes his bio data. He is also consultant to government agencies like the Armed Forces, public sector organisations like Air India and private

companies like Tata Steel.

Apart from his achievements in the medical profession, Wadia excels in the field of sports too. On several occasions in the last 25 years he has been declared national champion in motor rallying and racing. In the first Himalayan Rally, he was adjudged the national winner. He has participated in the London/Sydney rallies and the Asian Rally. Proficient in playing bridge, he has represented India at international meets too. He was a fine marksman, had a private flying licence, knows yachting and is now into winter skiing. Wadia is also the vice president of the Indian Association of Sports Medicine, the *Jamé* further notes.

MBE for Engineer

For upgrading the standard of English language and literature in India, Dr (Ms) Willy Engineer was honored with an honorary MBE (Member, Order of the British Empire) by Queen Elizabeth II, on April 27, 1989, notes a press release from the British Deputy High Commission.

English studies officer of the British Council Division, Bombay, Engineer's nature of work includes liaising with the government, other recognized bodies and universities, and helping with programs aimed at the qualitative improvement of teachers responsible for teaching English.



Wadia (left): demonstrates the use of a laproscope

Engineer (center): high standards in English

Mehta (right): writing on social issues



In 1980 she was asked to take on the lead responsibility for the Council's work in the field of English studies throughout western and central India. "A large number of professional visitors from the UK have testified to her work and attributed the success of their assignments in India to the trouble she has...taken," adds the release.

Engineer's interests lie in the field of communicative strategies, evaluation and monitoring of performance, and materials production for a learner centered approach.

Before being seconded to the British Council in 1963 by the government of Maharashtra, Engineer worked as an English lecturer at Elphinstone College and Jogeshwari College of the Bombay University, notes her curriculum vitae. She joined the Council in 1965. A best teacher's award had been presented to her in 1987 by the Mayor of Bombay.

Her educational qualifications include a bachelor of arts degree in English, geography and philosophy from the Lucknow University. She had won a gold medal in philosophy and another for acquiring the highest marks among the women candidates. She subsequently did her masters in English and French from Bombay University. This time she won the Lady Modi prize for obtaining the highest marks in English and the French Government presented her with a bronze medal for securing the highest marks in French, the bio data notes. Engineer acquired a PhD in applied linguistics from Edinburgh University in 1977, and also holds a Manchester University diploma in the teaching of English overseas, her bio data further notes.

Film on Saklatwala

A documentary film on the life of Shapurji D. Saklatwala, the Communist Party representative on the British Parliament, is being produced for Channel 4 in London, notes *The Indian Post* of April 25, 1989. To be titled *Comrade Sak*, the film is directed by Chris Mitchell and stars Roshan Seth (who played Nehru in Attenborough's *Gandhi*) in the lead role of Saklatwala.

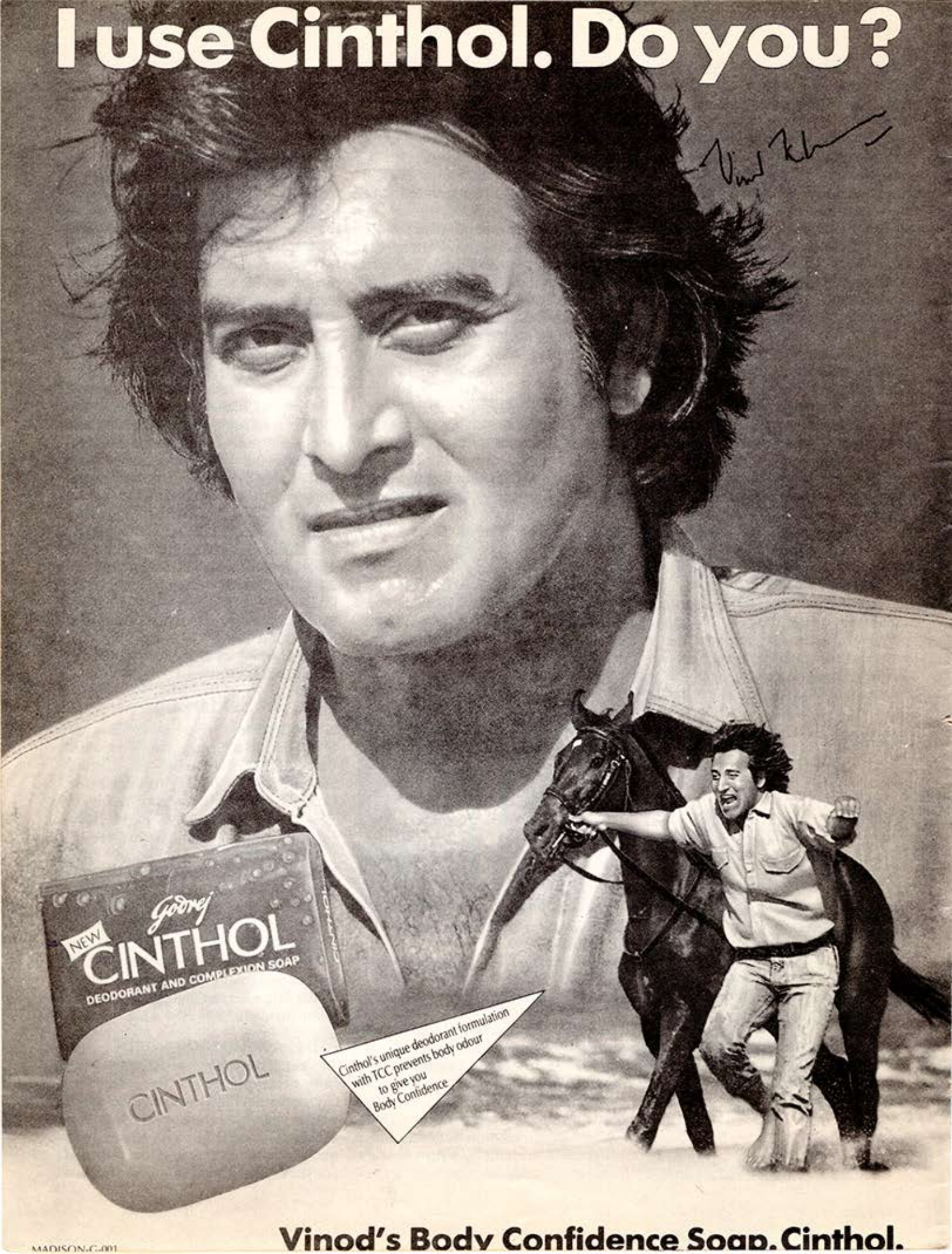
Born in 1874 in Bombay, Saklatwala married Sehri, an Englishwoman and reportedly had five children. He died in 1936 and was buried in the Parsi burial ground in Woking. His daughter serves as the film's adviser and appears in it as a commentator, *The Post* adds.

BBC commends script

At the BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation) World Service Play Competition 1989, well-known playwright and short story writer Ms Dina Mehta's *Getting Away With Murder* was one of the seven scripts to win special commendation. Nine hundred and two



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scripts on the theme of Pride and Prejudice had been submitted by writers from 95 countries; according to a notification from the BBC World Service.

Getting Away With Murder portrays three Indian women who have internalized the age-old conditioning of the notion of male superiority. It goes on "to depict how even the most independent and career-oriented women allow themselves to be exploited by society," writes Ms Sangita Advani in *The Times of India* of May 7, 1989.

Earlier, Mehta's play *Brides Are Not For Burning* had won her the first prize out of 500 entries in a competition of a similar nature sponsored by the BBC in 1979. The BBC had subsequently broadcasted the play from London, *The Times* notes.

The subject of most of Mehta's works revolve around social issues like what it means to be an Indian woman. "Her writing... is replete with startling lyricism and imagery," notes *The Times* write-up.

The time of Jamshed?

A research paper titled "Yima/Yama (Jamshed) and the Deluge" was presented by Sam N. Doctor, a scholar of Indo-Iranian studies, at the All India Oriental Conference in Visakhapatnam at a session in January, notes a press release. The Iranian section of this conference was presided over by Zoroastrian scholar Faribourz Nariman.

Over the past two decades, Doctor has studied and written on a wide range of subjects, including archaeology and Vedic astronomy. Besides knowing French and German, he is currently studying Sanskrit at the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, adds the release.

His paper at the Oriental Conference dealt with Jamshed, a king of the first or Peshdadian dynasty of Iran, who "is called Yima Vivanghana in the *Avesta* and may be equated with Yama (son of) Vaivasvat of the *Vedas*," notes a summary of the paper. The paper scrutinizes relevant passages of the *Vendidad* and examines Tilak's theory of the Polar home of the Aryans.

According to Iranian tradition, Jamshed resided in the North Polar region during the epoch of the great deluge or glaciation (variously placed at 10,000 or 15,000 BC). It appears from Tilak's theory that Jamshed was witness to a minor flood or a severe winter storm (dated about 3,000 to 3,500 BC), rather than the



(Above left) Doctor: describes the deluge
(Left) Khambatta: forte is town planning
(Right) Dhalla: view of peace

much earlier glaciation.

A teacher at the M. F. Cama Athornan Institute, Andheri since 1970, Doctor did his MA in Ancient and Middle Iranian languages after graduating in chemistry and physics from Ruia College in 1961, notes his bio data. He has also done one semester's course work for a PhD degree at the University of California at Berkeley, USA, where he studied Comparative Religion and Middle Persian Sogdian, in addition to Zoroastrianism.

Praying for world peace

At the fifth international meet of the World Conference on Religion and Peace (WCRP), scholar Dr Homi Dhalla was reportedly one of the few participants selected from different countries to become a member of the organization's international council, notes a press release.

The Conference, where all the major world religions were represented, was held in Melbourne, Australia from January 23 to 27, 1989. There were about 300 participants from 60 different countries. Of the 28 people representing the different religions of India, Dhalla was the only Zoroastrian, the release notes. The inaugural speech at the Conference was delivered by Australian Prime Minister

R. J. Hawke. Paul Reeves, Governor General of New Zealand, gave the keynote address.

The delegates were expected to participate in any of the four prescribed commissions on: disarmament and conflict resolution structures; human rights and responsibility in the family; economic and social development and ecological balance (where Dhalla explained the Zoroastrian view on ecology); and non-violence and education for peace. At the prayer service in Mornington on the last day of the Conference, Dhalla recited excerpts from the *Avesta* which were relevant to the theme of peace, the release further notes.

Architects' chairman

Architect and town planner Rusi Khambatta has been unanimously elected chairman of the Architects Regional Council, Asia (ARCASIA) for a two-year term from 1989 to 1991, notes the *Mid-Day* of January 31, 1989.

Past president of the Indian Institute of Architects (IIA), Khambatta, who is on the visiting faculty of many institutes, was also the former chairman of the Board of Architectural Education. Since his nomination in 1972, Khambatta continues to serve as member of the Western Regional Committee of the Government of India's

ministry of education and social welfare, notes his curriculum vitae.

Khambatta is a fellow of the IIA since 1973 and a member of the Royal Town Planning Institute since 1957. He has also been an associate of the Royal Institute of British Architects for nearly 33 years.

Partner in Bhonsule Khambatta since 1984, his noteworthy contributions include town planning, building of industrial complexes, fertilizer factories, high rise and low cost residential buildings, and interior decorating.

Some of the companies and government undertakings which constitute Khambatta's clientele are: Siemens India, Crompton Greaves, Godrej and Boyce, Bharat Heavy Electricals, Steel Authority of India and National Mineral Development Corporation, further notes his bio data.

Union Bank's GM

Appointed as general manager of the Union Bank of India in April 1989, Ms Jer Sethna is the first lady from the Bank to occupy this top executive post, notes a press release.

Joining the Bank as a clerk in 1951, during her tenure of service Sethna has held several portfolios like advances (credit), accounts and administration,



planning and development, and secretary to the board. She was made chief manager in 1978, assistant general manager in 1980 and deputy general manager in 1985.

Sethna's own field of specialization is accounts and auditing. She has, in addition, attended several training programs on banking and is now on the visiting faculty of the Bank's training programs, further notes the release.

Dentist in the chair

Bombay-based orthodontist Dr Keki Mistry was invited to chair a joint meeting of the Asian Pacific Dental Federation and the WHO (World Health Organisation) in Seoul, Korea, notes the *Mid-Day* of April 26, 1989.

Sixteen nations were expected to participate in the meet on April 27 to discuss topics like the new procedures to be adopted in the twenty-first century including the use of laser technology in dentistry, adds the *Mid-Day*.

Thermax's new partner

Thermax Private Limited, reportedly India's fifth largest exporter of engineering goods and the leading private sector boiler maker in India, has joined hands with Babcock and Wilcox of North America, a world leader in boiler knowhow, notes the *BusinessWorld* of March 29-April 11, 1989.

"The new joint venture has a great potential to change the entire face of the steam generation industry in India," says Thermax chairman and managing director, Rohinton Aga.

Under their prevailing technology, steam production was limited to 20 tonnes per hour, but now, with the aid of its new partner, Thermax will be able to produce 300 tonnes of steam per hour, the report notes.

The life-extension technology that Thermax is acquiring simultaneously, will increase the life-span of 30-year-old boiler plants by another 30 years.



Sethna (left): banking portfolio
Master (center): texture and yarn
Birdy (right): designs of her choice

With a potential of earning foreign exchange worth several hundred crores, Thermax Babcock and Wilcox Private Limited is aiming at a turnover of Rs 50 crores in the next three years, Aga is quoted in the *BusinessWorld*.

The equity capital of the company stands at five crore rupees of which 60 percent is Thermax's contribution and the rest by its foreign collaborator. At present there are no plans to go public as "we don't need the funds now," says Aga. The new venture will create employment opportunities for 250 peo-



ple, further notes *BusinessWorld*.

Mazda on the move

Mazda Textile Industries Ltd commenced commercial production of texturising yarn and weaving by end 1988, according to a press release from the company's managing director Yezdi J. Master. The commercial production of twisting is scheduled to begin in the second half of 1989. The project's total cost in the first phase is estimated at Rs 298 lakhs.

The company, notes the release, has been formed by the Mazda group of companies to take advantage of the "yawning gap" between India's demand for and production of texturized yarn.

The 20 percent growth rate of the industry and India's potential for increase in the per capita consumption of cloth provide great scope for development in texturising and twisting units, points out Master. While industry sources target a production of 4,50,000 tonnes of the required yarn by 1990-91, the present texturising capacity in India is only around 65,000 tonnes, states the release.

Discussing the marketing of fabrics and grey yarn, Master says that since the company already has "orders for more than three years for the grey fabrics and texturising yarn," and is situated in Surat, the largest textile processing center in India, the management does not envisage any problems in marketing the product.

Others on the directorial board, along with Master, are Erach Sadry, Farrokh Mehta, Pradeep Shukla, Subhashbhai Patel and Vinubhai Patel, further adds the release.

A cut above the rest

At her very first exhibition at The Oberoi, Ms Rutty Birdy's designer items made from a rare mix of leather and silk, were well received in the market. Now less than eight months later, plans are afoot to open a new shop, Christina, in the New Oberoi Shopping Arcade, which will have the backing of Ajay Verma of Park Exports Private Limited, notes a write-up forwarded to *Parsiana*.

Birdy's foray into designing started in 1986 at the age of 40 when she felt a need to constructively utilize the free time on her hands and joined Park Exports. The company dealt solely in

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the fabrication of PVC products like files, folders, shopping bags, etc. It was while offering to help out a client who required exclusive conference folders that Birdy came in close contact with leather.

Using only the very best sheep napa leather from Indore and Madras, and crepe silk (which is more expensive than pure silk), Birdy has since created pieces like handbags (Rs 450-600), wallets (Rs 175-250), key chains (Rs 30), scarves, office items and stationery, notes the *Mid-Day* of October 25, 1988.

For the future, the businesswoman plans to print her own materials and go into exports where her creations can tap the market in the various high fashion houses of the world, the *Mid-Day* further notes.

Philatelic gold

At the recently concluded India-89 World Philatelic Exhibition in New Delhi, Vispi S. Dastur was awarded a gold medal and special prize, notes a press release. Organized by the Department of Posts and the Philatelic Congress of India, under the patronage of the Federation of International Philatelists, the Exhibition was reportedly the largest such meet ever held in India. It comprised 775 entries covering 3,800 frames (one frame consists of 16 single album pages, explains Dastur). The exhibits from all over the world included a portion of the royal collection of Queen Elizabeth II.

Dastur's prize winning exhibit, consisting of six frames, was from his research collection of India used Abroad - Aden: Victorian Era. Dr Jamshed Madan who received a vermeil - a gold plated medal - was among the five other winners from Bombay, states the release.

Dastur, who is honorary editor of *India's Stamp Journal* and honorary secretary of the Empire of India Philatelic Society, was recently felicitated at a function jointly organized by the Navsari Parsee Association, the Bombay Parsee Association, the Youths Own Union and the Progressive Group, adds the release.

Act of rare courage

For displaying rare courage and presence of mind in fighting an armed robber who had broken into her flat at Beach View on Warden Road, Ms Kamal N. Panthaki was awarded a certificate of appreciation and a cash award of Rs 1,000 by Bombay Police Commissioner Vasant Saraf, notes *The Times of India* of April 15, 1989.

On the afternoon of February 8, 1989,

Panthaki receives award from Saraf Dastur (below): stamps singled out



when it was time for her domestic help to arrive, Panthaki answered the doorbell to face a short and stocky man with a "hideous mask, wig and tote bag, pointing a .12 bore country-made revolver at me." The thief, later identified as Homi Framroze Patrawala, had reportedly visited the house a few days earlier in the guise of a broker asking for Panthaki's father-in-law who was out of Bombay.

Pushing his way into the house, the brigand stabbed Panthaki on her right thigh and threatened to kill her two-and-a-half-year-old son Kaizad. Her shouts for help resulted in her third floor neighbor coming down and enquiring after her welfare. On being informed that there was a robber in the house, the neighbor locked the door from outside, recalled Panthaki.

Holding Kaizad in her arms, when the robber demanded her valuables, Panthaki surrendered whatever she was wearing. The burglar then hit her on the head with the butt of his gun. Bleeding profusely, the 33-year-old housewife backed into the passage where a dinner wagon was stacked with crockery, and started throwing plates and glasses at her assailant. "I must have thrown about 60 pieces of crockery at him," she says.

Panthaki tried to lock her son and herself in the kitchen, but Patrawala forced open the door and from the window which faces the passage in the building, threatened to shoot at the neighbors if they did not unlock the main door. Seeing nobody oblige, he tried to escape from the bathroom window. But noticing the large crowd gathered below, he must have had second thoughts, Panthaki surmises. By this time, the police who were summoned came and nabbed the culprit. Jewelry



items worth Rs 3,000 were found among the 14-inch gupti, revolver and two knives, *The Times* notes.

Besides her head and thigh injuries, Panthaki had been hurt on her left palm, and had gashes on her right cheek, near the right eye and lips. She was taken to Nair Hospital where she was given two bottles of glucose on account of excessive bleeding. The open wound on the head had to be treated with 10 stitches. Panthaki was subsequently shifted to the Breach Candy Hospital where she was kept in the intensive care unit for two days and discharged 15 to 20 days later.

Billimoria's sixth gold

Judo champion Cawas Billimoria of Maharashtra defeated arch rival Shyam Singh Gujar of the Corps of Military Police, Bangalore, at the Twelfth Men's Senior National Judo Championships, winning the coveted gold medal and the

Billimoria: six times national champion



national title for the sixth time in succession, notes the *Jam-e-Jamshed* of February 12, 1989. The Championships were held at Indore from February 1 to 4, 1989, in which 26 teams took part.

Billimoria, who beat Gujar in the finals of the open weight division, is reportedly the only judoka from Maharashtra to win the gold medal at Indore.

Billimoria had in 1984 defeated Gujar to win his first national title and since then these two Asian Games medalists have met at several training camps and bouts.

Weightlifting champion

Representing Maharashtra at the forty-first National Weightlifting Championships, Neville Daroga won the inter-state title, thus becoming the national champion for the sixth time, notes the *Jam-e-Jamshed* of March 26, 1989. Daroga is reportedly the only Parsi weightlifter to have achieved this distinction, adds the *Jamé*.

Besides winning the inter-state title at the meet in Jamshedpur held from February 16 to 21, 1989, the 28-year-old weightlifter also won three additional gold medals in the 110 kg plus category – in snatch (132.5 kg), in clean and jerk (170 kg) and for the total aggregate of 302.5 kg, notes the *Jamé*.

Seabird champs

At the Seventh National Seabird Championship, Sheri Bamboat and his crew Zarthus Karai and J. Chowdhary were declared the winners and carried away the sailing season's prestigious Godrej Trophy, notes *The Times of India* of April 18, 1989.

The closest challenger was Asiad gold medalist Farokh Tarapore and his team of Cyrus Cama and M. Sharma who lost by a narrow margin, the paper notes. Jamshyd Godrej and his teammates Nadina Naoroji and Daraius Shroff came third in the seven-serial races conducted by the National Seabird Association, under the aegis of the Royal Bombay Yacht Club.

First on the handicap side were Cyrus Heerjee and his team of Jehangir Jehangir and Framroze Lilauwala, followed by Adi Unwalla with Jimmy Unwalla and Fali Unwalla. K. Mariwalla with H. Sabir and J. Bhandorwalla came third, the paper adds.

Young wrestler honored

Under the new scheme introduced by

the Central Government "to unearth hidden talent," junior wrestler Abul Pithawalla of Navsari was awarded a scholarship of Rs 6,000 per annum plus a monthly stipend of Rs 150 by the Sports Authority of India (SAI), notes the *Jam-e-Jamshed* of December 4, 1988. Pithawalla is the first Parsi and the first ever wrestler from Gujarat to be so honored, the *Jamé* adds.

At a National Sports Talent Wrestling Competition for Sub-Juniors held in Delhi last year, Pithawalla emerged as a promising wrestler. Coached by Phiroz Jokhi of the Kanga Gymnasium in Navsari, the young wrestler also excels in athletics, the paper further notes.

Scholastic achievement

For securing the highest marks (91 percent) among the Parsi students at the first year MBBS (Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery) examination held in October last year, Ms Nina Dara Zaiwalla was awarded The Nusservanji Jehangirji Wadia Scholarship for the year 1988. The scholarship is of the value of Rs 175 per annum, notes a letter from the University of Bombay dated January 27, 1989.

Twenty-year-old Zaiwalla passed her ICSE (Indian Certificate of Secondary Education) examination from the J. B.

Zaiwalla (left): medicine mettle
Vaid: notable student



Petit High School for Girls in '85 scoring 83 percent. She is presently studying for her second year MBBS at the Grant Medical College, notes her bio data.

A keen badminton player, she has won many championship titles at the inter-school and state level. Her other interests as listed in the bio data include swimming, reading and doing social work.

Commendable character

Head boy of the Hindi Vidya Bhavan High School, Bombay, Zubin Mehernosh Vaid won the Rotary Best Character Student and the Best Student awards for 1988-'89, notes a press release. The trophies were presented to him by Dr Sorab



Javeri, director of Youth Services, Rotary Club of Bombay, at a function held on February 13, 1989 in the School's auditorium.

The best character student award is given by the Rotary Club to one boy and one girl from Bombay every year, whereas the best student award is annually given to one student from each of 15 different local schools. Vaid had thrice before been selected as the School's best boy student. He has a brilliant scholastic record to his credit as stated in the write-up.

He is very talented on the harmonica too, and has performed on radio and television. He had stood first in the open age group at a competition held to celebrate the Hohner Harmonica Club's golden jubilee in 1987. Besides, Vaid was the former leader of the junior orchestra of the Bombay School of Music and has performed on the mouth organ and violin in several public concerts, adds his bio data.

The 16-year-old is also a keen public speaker and has won several prizes in inter-school elocution competitions, adds the release. In his enthusiasm to preserve wildlife, he has been regularly contributing to *The Cub*, the magazine of the Sanctuary Group, his bio data further notes.

SPOTLIGHT

Jamshyd N. Godrej, director of Godrej and Boyce Manufacturing Company Limited, has been elected chairman of the Confederation of Engineering Industry (western region) for the current year, notes *The Daily* of April 9, 1989. He has also accepted the patronship of ELECRAMA-90, the first ever massive exhibition on electrical, electronics and allied equipment, to be held in Vikhroli in January 1990, notes *The Economic Times* of March 18, 1989.

Director of Travel Corporation of India and partner of Jeena and Company, **Nari Katgara** has been nominated as director of the International Airports Authority of India (IAAI), for a three-year term, notes *The Times of India* of April 28, 1989.

Motorcar rallyist **Farad Bhathena** has been adjudged Rally Driver of the Year 1988 by the Federation of Motor Sports Clubs of India, notes the *Mid-Day* of April 9, 1989.

Compiled by Roxana H. Kaka

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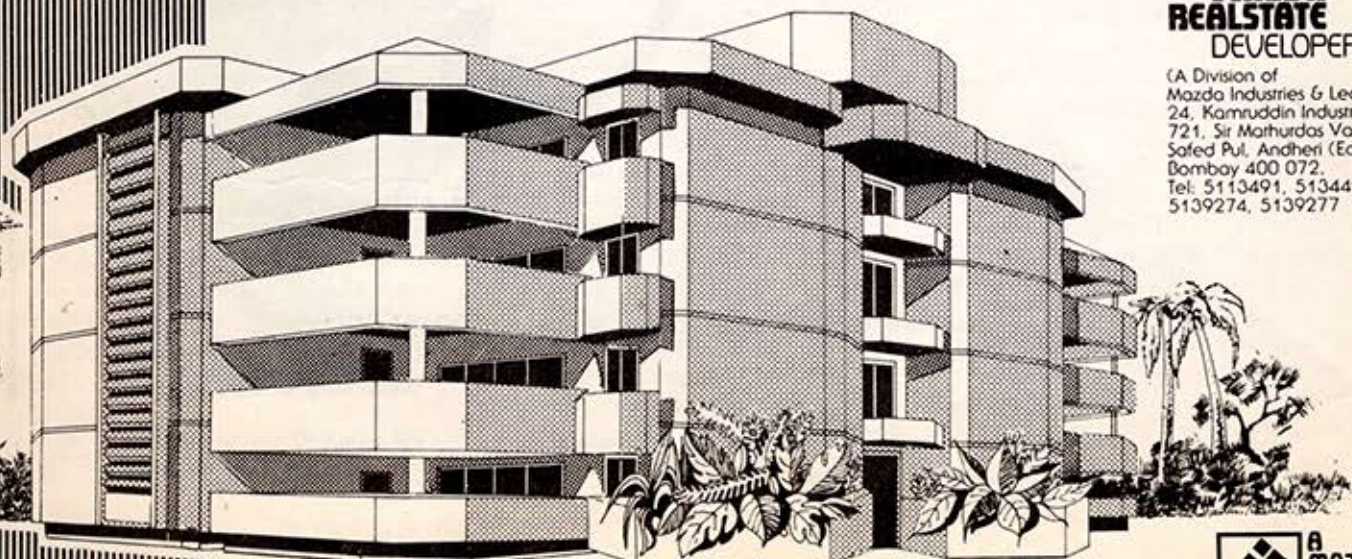
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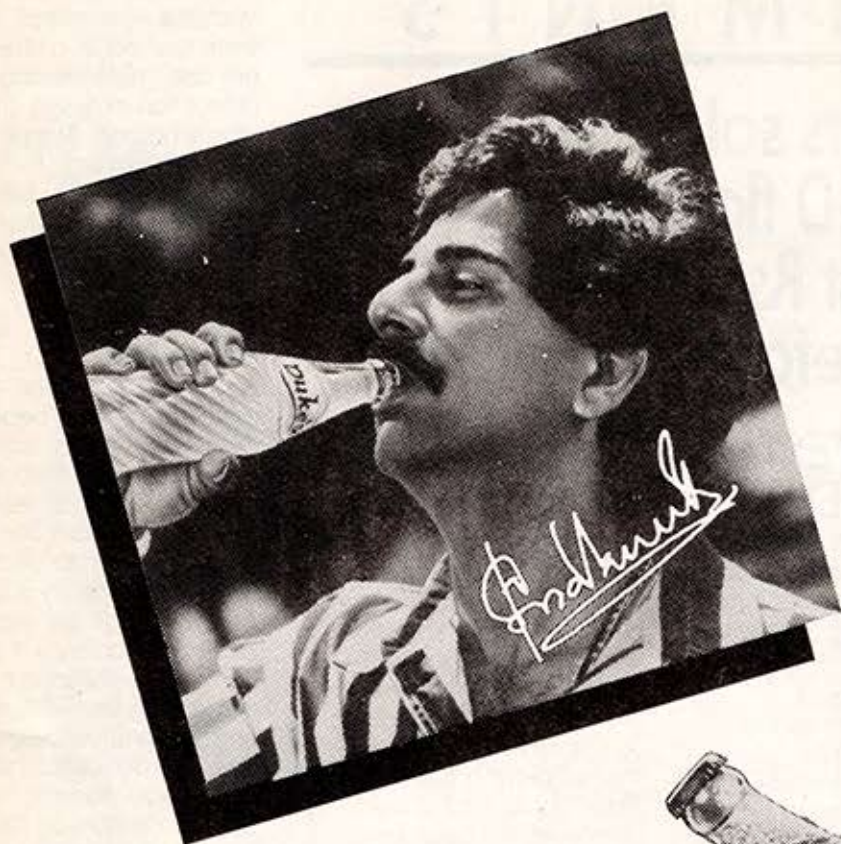


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Esfahan Darbe-Mehr

A new Darbe-Mehr has been established in Iran. A joint project of the Tehran and Esfahan Zoroastrian Anjumans, the Mehraban and Gohar Darbe-Mehr in Esfahan was inaugurated on November 8, 1988, informs Mehraban Kushesh of the Anjuman Zartostian Tehran.

The venture was largely funded by the descendants of the late Mehraban Rostam Mehrabani and Gohar Bahram Goshtasebpour. Mobed Fareidoon Shahzadi, who has already devoted much labor to the new Darbe-Mehr, is its officiating priest, informs Kushesh.

A large audience attended the inauguration when the *Atash Nyaish* was recited and the *afringan* ceremony was performed by six mobeds, writes Kushesh quoting a translation of an article that appeared in the *Fravahr* Persian magazine. The ceremonies were followed by religious lectures and refreshments.

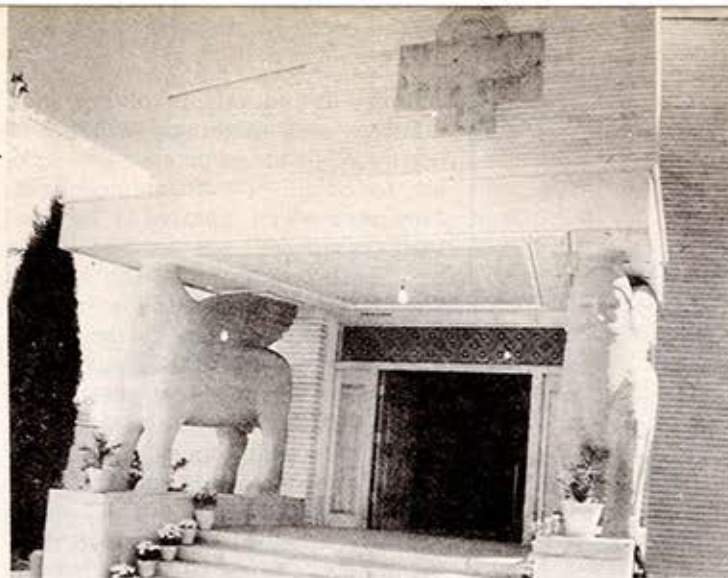
Iranian mobed council

Iranian priests and priestly families in North America have elected and officially formed the Council of Iranian Mobeds of North America, notes a press release dated May 1, 1989. The non-political, non-profit organization was registered in California on March 15, informs the release.

Aimed at providing religious guidance and direction to North America's Iranian Zoroastrians, the Council seeks the cooperation and support of the Zoroastrian community to create a spirit of social unity in which individual Zoroastrians can survive and succeed, notes the write-up.

A background to the event is provided by the June 1989 issue of *Gavashni*, the newsletter of the Zoroastrian Association of Quebec. According to *Gavashni*, the seven-member Council was formed by 13 mobeds and 60 Iranian mobedzadeh families who felt that questions from teenagers (like "Why are our prayers not in a language all Zoroastrians can understand?" "Can a non-ordained mobed perform the navjote ceremony?") needed to be answered by the community.

The Council is based upon and blessed by the Kankash-e-Mobedan, the



Entrance to the Mehraban and Gohar Darbe-Mehr in Esfahan, Iran

parent organization in Iran, whose bylaws, rules and regulations have been adapted to fit the needs of North America, informs *Gavashni*. The newsletter notes that the Council "is at the service of not only the Iranian community, but the entire Zoroastrian community. It is incorporated to provide the community with an official body to be approached on questions pertaining to the Zoroastrian religion; a body to which mobeds of today and tomorrow will be proud to belong."

Prime mover behind the formation of the Council, according to *Gavashni*, is Mobed Faribourz Shahzadi whose father Mobed Sorab Shahzadi had served the Dadyseth Agiary in Bombay. Ordained navar at the Iranshah at Udwarda and maratab at the Dadyseth Atash Bahram in Bombay, Faribourz Shahzadi moved to Iran after his MBA from Wisconsin, USA. He was managing director of Searle Pharmaceuticals in Iran until the revolution of 1978 when he migrated to California.

Shahzadi - who says "Zoroastrians come from all four corners of the earth. We are not Iranians, Indians, Australians or Americans... We are all Zoroastrians" - was the only Iranian mobed to participate in the Mobed Council meeting in Montreal, notes *Gavashni*.

Mobeds' conference

"Although some pretty controversial topics were discussed, sometimes with great emotion, the conference was handled well by the chairman, Ervad Kobad Zarolia (president of the Zoroastrian Society of Ontario), and the atmosphere was friendly and cordial," writes Ervad Jal Birdy of the Traditional Mazdayasni Zoroastrian Anjuman of California in his report on the March 1989 confer-

ence of the North American Mobed Council. Though only 18 of the approximately 70 practicing mobeds of North America attended the meet, the jashan by the participants was "probably one of the first of its kind in North America," adds Birdy.

The original aim of the conference was to establish guidelines for mobeds practicing in North America but the conference could not pursue it because of the small representation. Instead, the occasion was used for a "free interchange of views." Among the topics discussed was a change to the Fasli calendar, the shortening of religious ceremonies, issues relating to non-Zoroastrian spouses, navjote ceremonies performed by non-mobeds, etc.

Opposition to the change of calendar was based on the argument that though the seasonal Fasli calendar was appropriate to the northern hemisphere, it did not carry the same logic in the southern hemisphere. It was also felt that the intercalation of a day every four years departs from the traditional intercalation of a month every 120 years which was accompanied by certain ceremonies "which would be difficult if not impossible to undertake in this country," writes Birdy. The mobeds felt that the change would not be acceptable to those observing either the Shahenshahi or Kadmi calendars, notes Birdy and the mobeds were loath to take a unilateral decision that would distance them from the practitioners of the religion in India to whom they look for guidance and help when the need arises.

The mobeds similarly felt illequipped to abridge ceremonies like the jashan and geh sarna and unanimously agreed to perform them the traditional way.

The issue of mixed marriages, the initiation of their children and the pro-

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cedures at funerals involving such families, was seemingly debated at length. While the conference was seeking to establish uniform guidelines, "any move which appeared to 'legalize' such ceremonies" was opposed by the traditionalists who urged the mobeds "to refrain from putting a 'rubber stamp' on such practices" on the ground that they would lead to the community's destruction within a few generations. Noting that "the pressures which we face in this country today are probably even greater than what our forefathers must have faced centuries ago," Birdy, who espouses the conservative viewpoint, notes, "It is a fallacy to think we will increase our numbers by intermarriages and conversions." The conference, according to Birdy, urged mobeds not to buckle under the environmental pressure and "do everything in their power to check the gradual slide that is presently taking place among the Parsis through intermarriage."

The Council also "overwhelmingly agreed" that it will consider initiation into the faith valid only when performed by properly ordained mobeds, writes Birdy. The majority also agreed to denounce any publication of Avestan texts where the scriptures have been edited or changed.

ZSO publications

There are 24 Zoroastrian associations in the USA and six in Canada according to the *Zoroastrian Directory of Canada and USA 1988* published by the Zoroastrian Society of Ontario (ZSO). The publication lists the addresses and telephone numbers of 627 Zoroastrian families in Canada and 1,168 in the USA. The largest congregation belongs to Ontario (418) followed by California (397 — including the northern and southern associations of the state) and the Greater New York area (297).

In its herculean task of binding the community together in North America, ZSO president Ervad Kobad Zarolia acknowledges the aid of the Zoroastrian Society of British Columbia and the Zarthoshti Anjuman of Northern California as also the associations of Alberta, California, Chicago, Houston, Metropolitan Washington, Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania and New Jersey and of Quebec. There are now six dar-e-mehers in North America — two in Canada (in Ontario and British Columbia) and four in the US (one each in New York and Chicago and two in California).

"Over the years, faithful Zoroastrians have made a significant contribution to the quality of our life in Ontario and have preserved their traditions and beliefs for future generations," Ontario premier David Peterson had noted in his message to the Sixth North American Zoroastrian Congress in April 1988.

The kudos from Peterson and the Lt Governor of Ontario as also messages, from Canada's Governor General, its Secretary of State and Commissioner of its Public Service Commission, acknowledging the community's work and encouraging it to future endeavors, have been published along with the speeches of the six main speakers in a 112-page, illustrated souvenir, recording the event. The ZSO publication also includes reports on the first annual general meeting of the Federation of Zoroastrian Associations of North America (FEZANA), the meeting of the teachers of religious instruction and of the practicing mobeds of North America which were hosted by the ZSO along with the Congress.

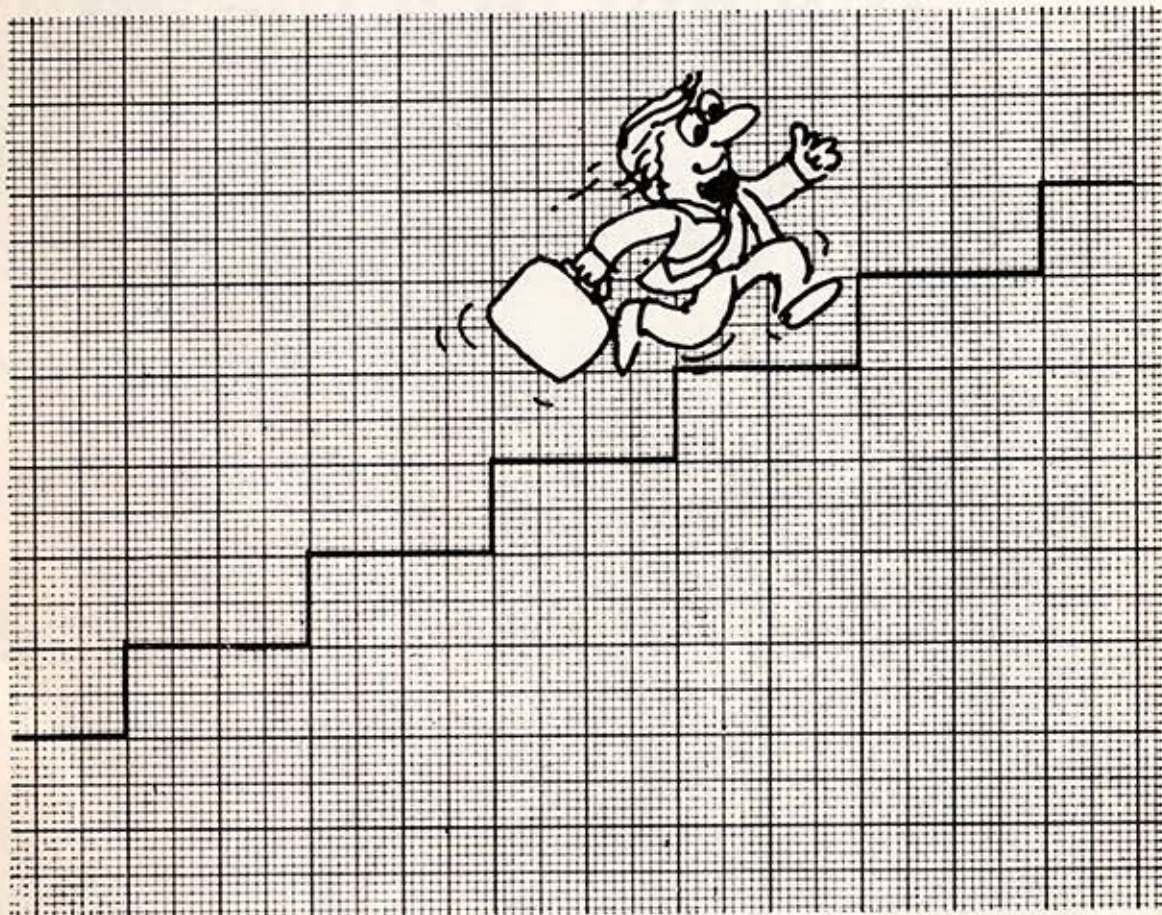
"At the present time most mobeds fulfilled the role of performing ceremonies but were ill-qualified to explain the religion to Zoroastrians or project a Zoroastrian image to non-Zoroastrians," the mobeds had noted. It was also pointed out that at their last meeting in November 1983 the priests had decided to perform the navjotes of children of mixed marriages where either spouse was a Zoroastrian. The report further states that everybody agreed that "there was a very urgent need for a full-time travelling priest who would be capable of revitalizing the religion." Viewed as one who would be well-versed in comparative religion apart from a thorough grounding in Zoroastrianism, such a mobed would travel from community to community educating the priests and arousing the interest of the lay people in the religion.

The conclusion of the report on the meeting of lay religious instructors notes that the representatives would "try and improve ways and means of greater parental involvement (as also the) professional training of teachers so as to provide the best possible education in Zoroastrianism to our youngsters."

FEZANA flashes

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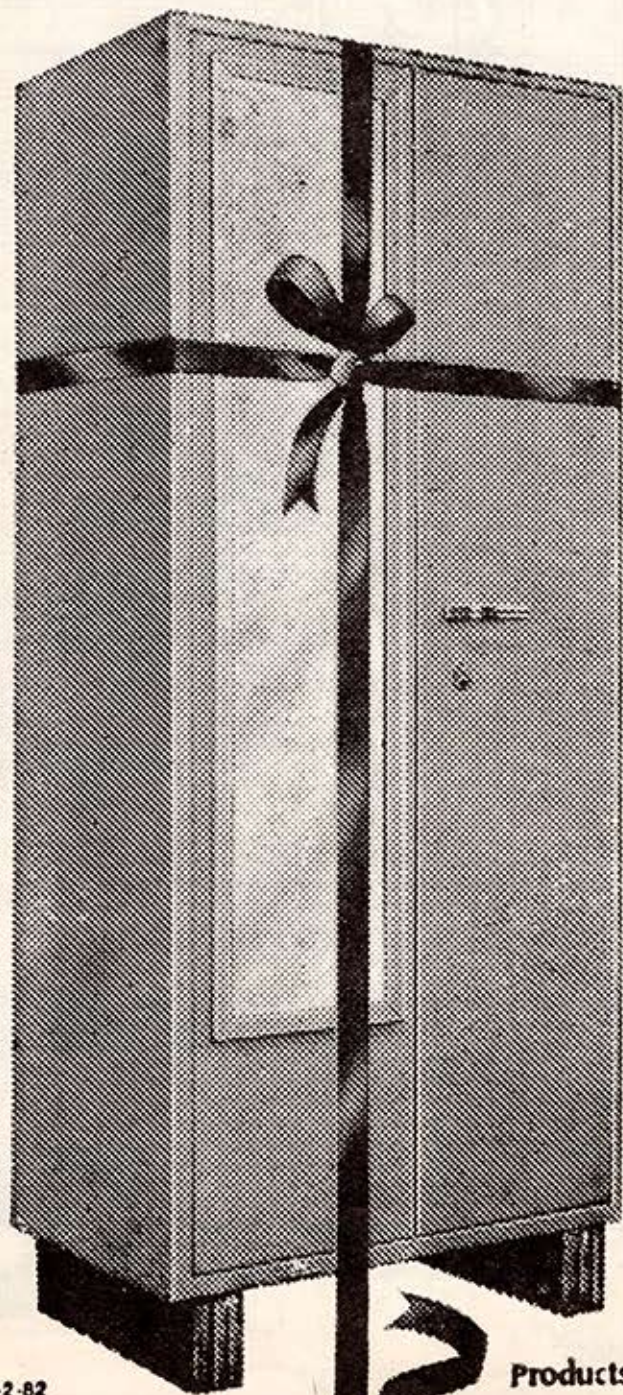
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of North America (FEZANA), informs the ZAC newsletter (June 1989). The formation of ZSSNA was discussed at FEZANA's second annual general meeting in March 1989. The Society - visualized as a small group of about six to 10 distinguished North American Zoroastrians - will represent Zoroastrian interests in religious academic institutions such as the American Academy of Religion, notes the newsletter.

Member associations of FEZANA have been invited to submit the names of one or two individuals of demonstrated and acclaimed scholarship in the Zoroastrian religion to serve on the Society. The nominations were expected to reach FEZANA secretary Ms Dolly Dastoor by June 15. The Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Chicago (ZAC) has unanimously nominated its president Kayomars Mehta and head priest, Ervad (Dr) Kersey Antia.

With the resignation of Ms Kamal Tengra as chairperson of FEZANA's funds and finance committee, long-standing ZAC activist Jehangir Mobed has been invited by FEZANA president Rohinton Rivetna to take on the responsibility. Mobed, an accountant with health institutions for several years, will be appointed chairperson if Dastoor does not receive any objection from member associations by June 30, notes

the ZAC newsletter.

FEZANA has protested the verdict of the Jersey city supreme court which has acquitted the four teenaged assailants of the late Navroze Mody of the charges of murder and manslaughter. Navroze was fatally mugged in October 1987.

Honoring the plea of bereaved father Jamshed Mody, all associations and individuals in the US and Canada, whether Zoroastrian or not, have been urged to petition New Jersey Governor Thomas Kean for a retrial. "If each North American Zoroastrian wrote a letter, the Governor would receive 10,000 letters," estimates the ZAC newsletter.

ZAC's interfaith service

An interfaith remembrance service was scheduled to be held at the Arbab Rustom Guiv Darbe Mehr on May 28. Organized in collaboration with the worship committee of The Council for a Parliament of the World's Religions and hosted by the Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Chicago (ZAC), the two-hour program included the services of seven different faiths, notes ZAC's May newsletter. Specifically, the representations included a Zoroastrian prayer ceremony, readings from the Christian and Jewish traditions, a Hindu puja, Zen Buddhist meditation with a flutist, the African drum service and Islamic readings and chantings.

More than 30 Zoroastrians, many traditionally clad, marched behind a beautiful banner prepared by Yezdi Engineer as they participated in the Ninth Ethnic Festival on May 13, notes the June newsletter. "ZACites spilled all over the venue, manning the display stand, the ZBoutique, ZTasting Parsee Pit Stop and the storytelling hour." ZAC collected over \$ 200 from the sale of food, Irani tea and cookbooks on the occasion.

continued on page 48

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PETIT SANATORIUM: HOUSING THE HOMELESS

He is a retired engine driver and the railways have served him a notice to vacate his quarters. The family, including his 87-year-old mother, is literally on the streets... Another family – husband, wife and teenaged daughter – has been squeezed out of the home. Having lived hitherto with the wife's family, there is no room for them now that her brothers are married... Fortunately for Parsi families stranded in Bombay, there is a place they can go to, even though it might just be a temporary respite – The Framji Dinshaw Petit Parsi Sanatorium at Kemp's Corner.

Over the years the old-world structure, shrouded in a thicket of greenery, a relief from the arid concrete structures that surround it, has served the community in more ways than just a sanatorium. The stately two-storeyed building is marked by arched corridors lined with large-armed easy chairs, spiral staircases, and high ceilinged rooms that have been temporary homes for families transiting through the city. The first halt for Parsis pouring into Bombay from all over the country, in the last two decades it has also served as a scheduled annual four-month stopover for the growing tribe of the city's sanatorium hoppers.

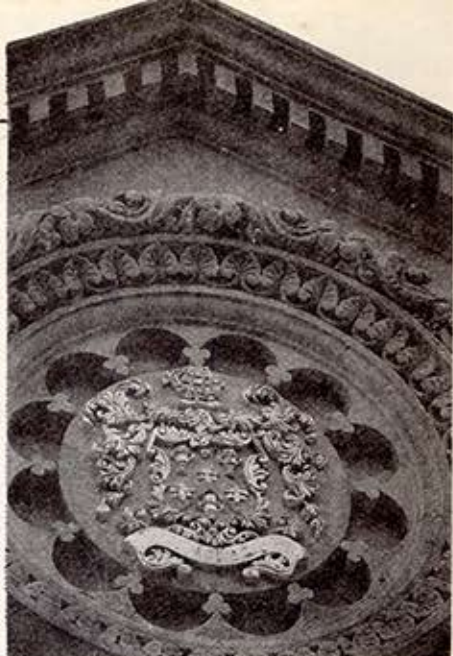
"The meaning of a sanatorium," says Ms Nergish N. Palkhivala, trustee of the Sanatorium, "is that it is meant for those recuperating from illness or for those who need a change of air for health or other similar reasons. But because of the present housing problem (that the community is facing) we help out when we can." She takes pains to point out that first preference is still given to convalescents. Commenting on

the housing problem she states, "It's chronic. At present there are about 40 Parsi families in Bombay with no permanent address who are drifting from sanatorium to sanatorium. Something has got to be done. What we need are more rental houses, not ownership flats. Those who really need houses can't afford to buy flats."

As we sit in on an allotment committee meeting that is convened every Wednesday, we see applications for

accommodation for wedding parties from Gujarat, for refugee families and students from Iran, and for young boys who have come to the city to appear for professional examinations. These constitute the 'variable' segment. But the ladies on the allotment committee are more concerned about the 'constant' group – those caught in the hapless situation of having no permanent address in the city they reside in.

As the number of city nomads grows



Gustasp Irani

Built over 88 years ago, the Petit Sanatorium's facilities are in greater demand now than ever before

so also does the pressure on the facilities. The Sanatorium has room to house 72 families in addition to a room that is specifically kept aside for bachelors on a sharing basis: four to the room. Originally there were 36 rooms but as the demand for accommodation grew, each room was divided into two half blocks. As a result of the division, two families share a toilet and kitchen. Recently the empty godowns attached to 30 rooms were opened and offered to

tenants who would rather have separate kitchens.

Despite the pressures, the Petit Sanatorium has refused to provide a degree of permanency to its occupants. A roof can be had here for only four months in a year after which a new shelter has to be sought. They may return again only after a lapse of eight months. In the past, the floating population generally spent these months at the S. B. Bhabha Sanatorium in Bandra which has room for about 100 families. Recently, however, the rhythm of the nomadic circuit has been upset as the Bhabha Sanatorium has reportedly reduced the period of stay at its premises to four months. "It is a problem," says Ms Khorshed Karanjia, a member of the allotment committee of the Petit Sanatorium since 1964. To see through the balance four months in the year, families turn to the Jussawala Sanatorium at Juhu (capacity about 10 rooms) or the Panday Sanatorium in Colaba (room for about five to six families) or the Iranian Anjuman run dharamshala at Tardeo. The not-so-lucky have to rely on the charity of friends and relatives for shelter before

the circuit begins again.

The Petit Sanatorium too has cut occupancy time from four to two months. Each case is reviewed after this period before extension is granted for the third and fourth month. "The idea is not to harass people. We have done this only as a security measure (so that) undesirable and troublesome (applicants) can be weeded out before they create a real problem," says Ms Silloo Kavarana, a member of the allotment committee. She points out that once there was a case when an occupant roamed about the premises in the nude.

However, some of the residents allege high-handedness on the part of the management and the Bombay evening, *Mid-Day*, highlighted some of these charges in their publication. The complainers claim that either their grievances are overlooked or they are victimized for stating them.

The management is wary of the troublesome residents who are often the quarrelsome and noisy ones, capable of making life difficult both for their co-residents and the authorities. "We keep records. Once a person gets a black mark against his name, it's unlikely that we will okay his application the next time around," says Kavarana.

To protect themselves from possible trouble, the trustees of the Sanatorium insist on a guarantor for each application. The guarantor must produce a legal and valid rent receipt in his or her name and must give a personal assurance that he or she will take the occupants under his or her roof and away from the Sanatorium if and when the need arises.

Behind these hard and fast rules are sympathetic and concerned women. Most of the cases they know personally (having dealt with them for years), and the extension from two to four months in these cases is automatic. Kavarana has a list of the floating families since 1979; some like Dhanjisha Faramroze Dhanidaduna have been drifting from sanatorium to sanatorium for the last seven years. On an average the list grows by five families every year. For

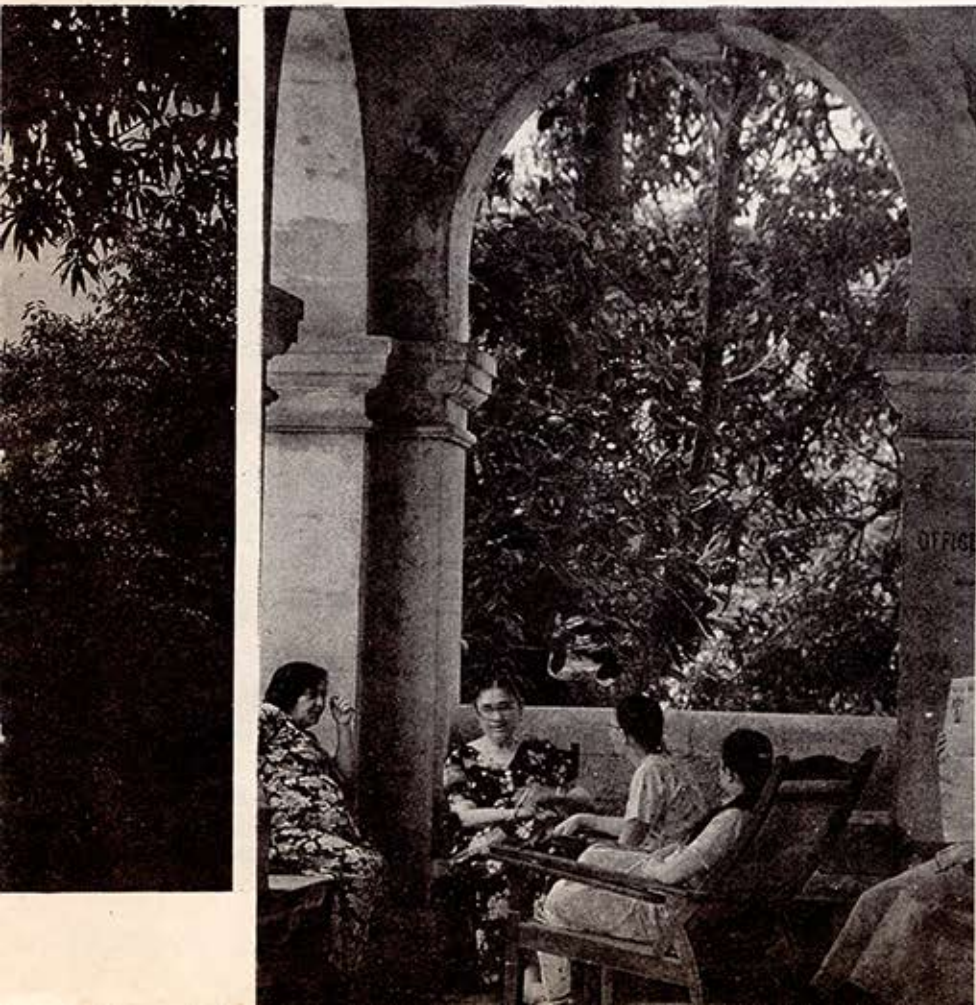
Above: The Petit coat of arms

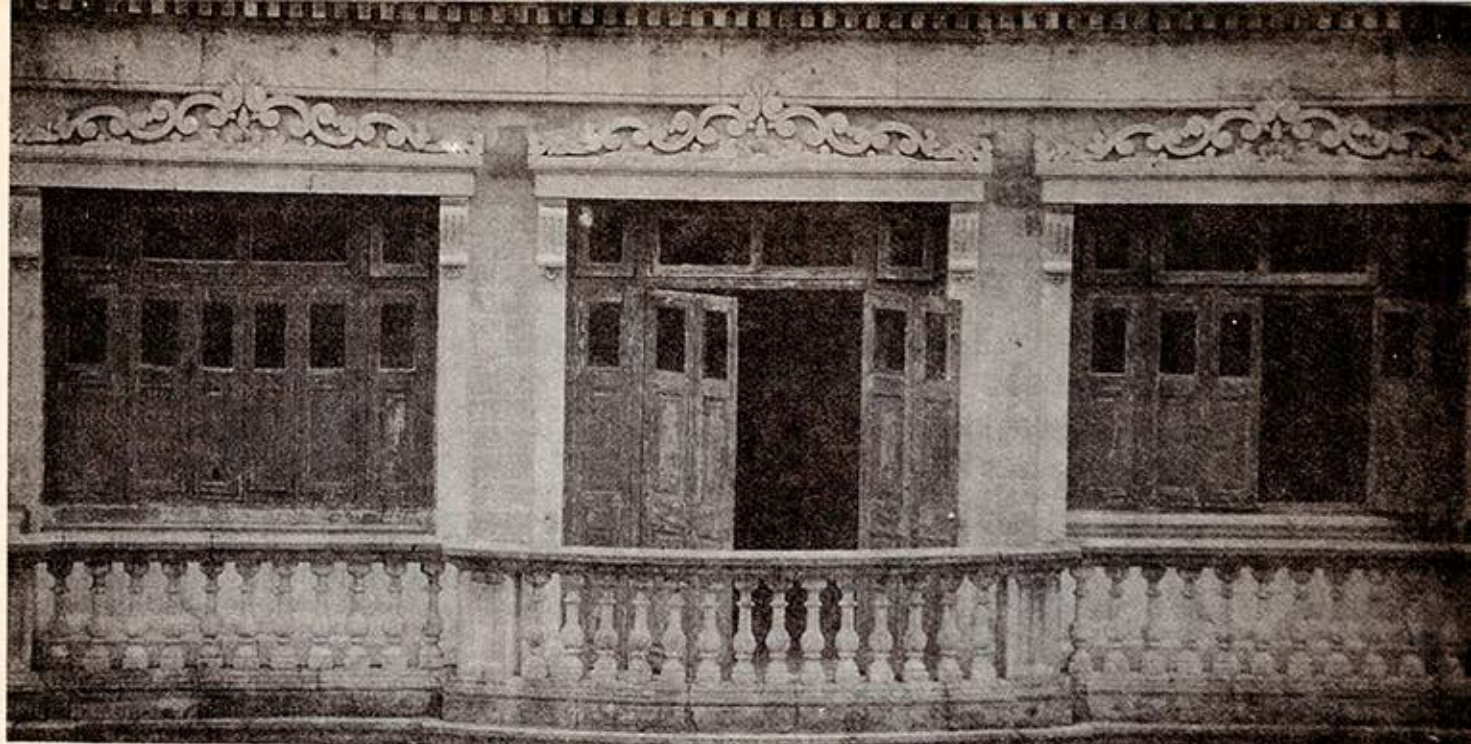
Left: Occupants relax on the ground

floor verandah Photographs: Varghese Fernandez

Extreme left: Facade of the Sanatorium viewed from the driveway

Photograph: Sheena Parikh





Frontal view of the second floor balcony

Photograph: Varghese Fernandez

new applicants there is a word of encouragement and advice. If the allotment committee members inquire after the families' future plans it's not to pry but to help. Not too infrequently a deserving case may find that the rent is paid personally by one of the ladies. More often there is useful guidance. "You had better apply soon at the Bhabha Sanatorium at Bandra." "Have you spoken to the Iranian Anjuman about the dharamshala?" "Have you applied to the Bombay Parsi Punchayet (BPP) for housing? Get your case revaluated." They give gentle tips on how to learn the ropes of being a resident of Bombay with no permanent address.

"There are three conditions when we have to say 'No' to an applicant," says Palkhivala. "First, when there is no room. Second, when we get adverse reports on an applicant and there is definite proof and reason to believe that the reports are not unfounded, and third, if the applicant is capable of staying outside the Sanatorium." "We hate to say 'No,' but there are times we must, even if the case is genuine," says Karanjia.

Occupancy charges for the 24 ground floor half blocks are Rs 50 per month and available only to those whose total family income is below Rs 1,000 per month. The 24 first floor half blocks are for those families whose income is between Rs 1,000 and Rs 2,000 at a monthly compensation of Rs 170. Families earning over Rs 2,000 are

offered the top floor rooms on payment of Rs 300 per month. If for some reason, old age or infirmity, a family in the higher income bracket should opt for a half block on a lower floor, they will still have to pay the higher rent applicable to their income bracket.

Only up to four persons are allowed in each half block and single occupancy is banned. Additional mattresses (not all the rooms have two large beds) are provided on a monthly charge of Rs 20 each and minimal amounts are charged for parking of cycles, scooters and cars. The occupant is allowed to use his fan and/or TV on payment of an extra charge but bringing in one's personal furniture is strictly taboo.

The demand for accommodation is greatest during the monsoons. "You never know when a house is going to collapse and Parsis will be thrown on the road in the middle of the night," says Kavarana. "We always keep a few rooms free during the monsoons for such emergency cases."

House collapse, according to the ladies, is probably the largest single factor contributing to the growth in the tribe of city nomads. Retirement and loss of company flats is another factor. "Over the years there has been an increasing number of broken families in the community," says Karanjia. "The situation now is more chronic than 25 years ago..."

"The class of people using the Sanatorium is better now than before," feels Karanjia. "Often there are young couples, some with little babies, who

are part of the floating population," says Kavarana. "In fact, I encourage young married couples to use the Sanatorium; it improves their score on the BPP housing scheme."

Presently the Petit Sanatorium is looking at avenues to improve its facilities, maximize utilization of its resources and help ease the housing problem facing the community as best it can. The task, however, is not simple. The 12,500 square yards of land on which it stands falls under the Urban Land Ceiling Act. The trustees have applied for exemption from the Act to the relevant authorities. "We will have to wait and see what conditions are stipulated for the release of the land and only then can the trustees think in terms of development. Anything before that is premature," says Fali Poncha of Tata Housing who is helping the trustees in an advisory capacity.

The other problem is the land encroachment dispute. When the rear wall of the Sanatorium collapsed, the neighbor on the other side, builders Tulsidas V. Patel Pvt Ltd, rebuilt the dividing structure - only in doing so they allegedly encroached on the Sanatorium land. The trustees of the Sanatorium moved the courts and obtained a stay order against the builders on their construction work on the building known as Bella Vista III. "We are very concerned, but the matter is sub judice now," says Palkhivala, and being a lawyer herself she would like to say no more on the matter.

Also a matter of concern are the



The first floor corridor

Photograph: Sheena Parikh

Governor of Bombay and opened to the public on January 24, 1902 by Lord Northcote, Governor of Bombay.

Ten years later in 1912 Framji's younger brother, Bomanji Dinshaw Petit, built and dedicated the B. D. Petit Parsi General Hospital to the community. Even though the two institutions have distinct identities, the Sanatorium has been largely linked to the Hospital, housing those convalescing after hospitalization or relatives of patients from outside Bombay admitted to the Hospital. Later as Parsis poured into Bombay from Gujarat, many used the Sanatorium as the first stop till they found a more permanent accommodation in the city. Dr N. Hormasji, currently the secretary of the Sanatorium, recalls how in the early 1930s he had stayed at the Sanatorium during his first visit to the city from his native Surat. Another remembers the grand arches and imposing pillars of the Sanatorium when, as a child, he stayed there briefly with his parents who were transferring residence from Aden to Singapore.

As the longest serving trustee Nanabhoy B. Jeejeebhoy observes, "The Petit Sanatorium is by far the best in terms of location, building and administration." Legal tangles, the problem of dealing with the Urban Land Ceiling Act authorities and more are all part of the trustees' tasks. In addition to Sir Dinshaw M. Petit, Fourth Bart, president, the other trustees are Rustom S. Vatcha, K. N. Suntook, A. B. K. Dubash and J. H. C. Jehangir. Assisting them in unraveling the tangles are the secretary Dr N. Hormasji, assistant secretary E. Sahiar and manager of the Sanatorium B. E. Mehta.

The ladies on the allotment committee also include Siloo Nariwalla, Phiroza Kanga, Soona Panday and S. Pawwalla.

They sit down to consider the next case. He is living as a paying guest and his landlady has made it clear that she is not going to welcome his wife. She lives with her uncle who is in no position to house her husband. They would like to move in a week after their marriage, that is after they return from their honeymoon. There is something naive about their optimism; one hopes it will survive the harsh realities of Sanatorium hopping.

garage blocks that face the Bomanji Petit Street and belong to the Sanatorium. Of the 12, the Sanatorium has got re-possession of one, and only one of the others, according to their office, is being used for the purpose for which it was rented out - parking a car. All the others have been converted into auto-mechanic workshops and soon notices will be served on the offenders. Already the Sanatorium has stopped collecting rent from two of these garages.

Maintenance of the building is another pressing issue facing the trustees.

"The place hardly generates enough revenue to keep itself. The outgoings are enormous. It's a pity. This is such a beautiful old building, almost a city monument and we don't have the funds to maintain it as we should," says Palkhivala.

The Sanatorium was built in 1902 in memory of Framji Dinshaw Petit, second son of Sir Dinshaw Manockjee Petit. Framji was to succeed to the baronetcy conferred on his father in 1890 by the Queen-Empress. In his book *Memoir of Sir Dinshaw Manockjee Petit*, S. M. Edwardes writes how Parsi and Hindu stockbrokers and merchants gathered in front of the seashore near the Churchgate Railway Station to offer prayers for Framji's recovery from a serious illness. There were simultaneous prayers being said at the H. B. Wadia Atash Bahram. A similar benediction had been sought for the Prince of Wales, in 1871. Though the Prince had recovered, Framji did not. He died four days later on August 9, 1895 during his father's lifetime. In his will Framji bequeathed one-fifth of "the clear residue" of his estate to Parsi charity. His wife Avabai and eldest son, Jeejeebhoy - later known as Sir Dinshaw Manockjee Petit, Second Baronet - used this amount to build the Sanatorium in his memory. The foundation stone was laid on February 24, 1899 by William Barron Sanders,

Busts of Avabai and Framji Petit flank the entrance to the Sanatorium

Photograph: Gustasp Irani



At the International Congress on Indo-Iranian studies convened by the K. R. Cama Oriental Institute in Bombay in early January, *Parsiana* interviewed some of the foreign scholars as and when the opportunity arose. Their area of research, the reason for their interest in the subject and their views on community issues are conveyed in this series featuring Dr Ehsan Yarshater, Dr Helmut Humbach and Dr Shaul Shaked.

SCHOLARS' INTERVIEWS



“Religion is a matter of faith, not argument”

Homi J. Rogers

The director of the Center for Iranian Studies at Columbia University, New York, USA since 1961, Professor Ehsan Yarshater edits the University's authoritative reference work, the *Encyclopaedia Iranica* (EI), which has been described as “a treasure house of information on every aspect of the life and history of the Iranian peoples, their lands and culture.” Concurrently, the multilingual Yarshater is general editor of the *Persian Texts Series*, *Persian Studies Series*, *Modern Persian Literature Series*, *al-Tabari Translation Project* and the *Persian Heritage Series*. Co-sponsored by UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), the *Persian Heritage Series* has published 37 volumes so far in English, French, German, Italian and Japanese. The books include Levi's translation of the *Shah Namah* and the two books of the *Denkart*.

Born in Hamadan (old Ecbatana, capital of the Medes) in Western Iran, to a businessman-cum-teacher father (“He learnt Esperanto, and promoted it”) and an artistically, and intellectually endowed mother, Yarshater lost both his parents at a young age.

In an hour-long interview with *Parsiana*, he spoke of his life and works.

Q: Could you tell us about your quest to

learn about Zoroastrianism, the ancient religion of the land in which you were born?

A: I did my doctorate from Tehran University in Persian language and literature. I then went to England, and met the late Professor W. B. Henning, a leading Iranologist. I studied Old and Middle Iranian languages and literature under Henning and Professor Mary Boyce, and got my second doctorate in these subjects from the University of London. This was followed by my lecturing on Avestan and Ancient Iranian studies at the Tehran University. My professor was Ebrahim Pour-daund, a well-known scholar and a great admirer of the Zoroastrian religion. Most Parsis in India would recall him: he received many honors from the Zoroastrian community here (in India). When he died, I succeeded him in his chair.

Q: So when did you leave for the USA?

A: First I was a visiting professor at the University of Columbia from 1958-60. In 1961 they started to develop Iranian studies and an endowed chair was established. I was invited to occupy it and develop Iranian studies at the University. Since 1966, I have been director of the Center for Iranian Studies, and since 1981, under my editorship, the Center has been bringing out the *Encyclopaedia Iranica* (EI).

While strict adherence to rituals may not help the religion to keep pace with the changing times, self-advocated reforms could weaken the fabric, says Dr Ehsan Yarshater

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Q: What is Elr all about? And how much planning and reference goes into each issue?

A: Each volume of Elr appears in eight soft-bound parts called fascicles. Each fascicle is of 112 double-column pages in large format, and is brought out every two months by Routledge of London. The first fascicle *Encyclopaedia* came out in 1981. Planning for the same was started in 1972... Since 1985 we have doubled the pace and bring out six (fascicles) in a year.

Q: So, the Elr is an ongoing task?

A: Yes, and a very meticulous one. For instance, 13 scholars wrote on separate aspects of the life and works of philosopher and scientist Avicenna. The material published in Elr is often first-hand research. Sometimes, it takes as much as five to six years for a subject to be researched and published. The Elr deals with various aspects of the life and history of the Iranian people, their arts, monuments, Zoroastrian scriptures, Islamic rituals, Persian classics and modern novels... There are 33 editors on the project, each taking care of a specific field. I have the largest private collection of books on Iranian studies (over 6,000 titles) in the USA. The library has been placed at the disposal of the *Encyclopaedia's* editorial office.

Q: Is it possible to see a copy of Elr in India?

A: Yes, Dasturji (Kaikhusroo) JamaspAsa (High Priest of the Anjuman Atash Bahram) should have it. He had contributed to Elr, and we always send out a contributor's copy.

Q: Besides the Elr, are you working on any other project?

A: I am the general editor of a complete annotated translation in 40 volumes of Tabari's *History*. Tabari is the most important historian of the Islamic world, and his work includes the narration of the history of Iran from the time of creation to 915 AD. The original was published in Holland in 16 volumes. Of the translation, nine volumes have already been printed, three should be out soon, and 15 volumes are with the printers.

Q: When, according to Tabari, was Prophet Zarathushtra born?

A: Like most Islamic historians, Tabari follows a Zoroastrian tradition which places him 258 years prior to Alexander's invasion of Persia, i.e. around 590 BC. But recently a great many scholars have challenged this date, placing Zoroaster at a much earlier period.

Q: Tabari's date would make our Prophet a contemporary of Cyrus the Great?

A: That's what many believe him to be.

Q: But, would you agree that Zarathushtra was born much earlier, say around 6000 BC, as many Parsis, especially in India, believe?

A: Except for a quotation in Greek sources, there is no evidence to place Zarathushtra as far back as 6000 BC. The date would place him practically in the Stone Age. The greatness of Zarathushtra does not depend on his date, but on his message...

Q: Is there any consensus?

A: There is no complete consensus. But the leading scholars in the field place him around 1500 BC to 1200 BC. (This date indicates that he was alive prior to Moses.)

Q: Besides Tabari's translation, any other projects?

A: I am bringing out a series of monographs called *Collected Lectures on Iranian Studies*. These are elaborations into books (from) a group of five lectures delivered each year by eminent scholars (who accept) our invitation. The project has been on since 1980.

Q: You have written books on Persian legends and ancient stories of Iran. Do you believe that the miracles stated therein actually occurred?

A: Prophets who become heroes, and spiritual leaders who lead their people and excite their imagination, would naturally become focus of legends. People want to express their admiration, display their faith and affection in such leaders. They find ordinary words and common events inadequate. Therefore they express it in the guise of legends, myths, allegories and metaphors. To take these literally, would miss the point. I should pay attention to their intention. Their intended meaning is true; their literal interpretation often is not.

Q: What are your views on Parsis in India?

A: Though this is not my first visit to the country (I had come once earlier, but purely as a tourist), I am very happy about this trip. Being an Iranian by birth, I feel a natural affinity with the Parsis. It is an extraordinary community. Where can you find a minority so small in number and so great in terms of intellectual achievements, academic skills, and commitment to philanthropic work?

Q: But the community is growing smaller. Could conversion be the solution to prevent further dwindling of numbers within the community?

A: Religion is a matter of faith, not argument. I respect people's feelings, even if they should believe that Zoroastrian *mantras* (chants) cannot have the same potency if recited by those not born as Zoroastrians. Although personally I do not subscribe to hard and fast views on religion, I appreciate the fact that it is the persistence of those followers of a religion who consider rituals sacrosanct, and would not allow any modification of them, that has helped preserve the minority religions in the face of adverse fortunes. Naturally, times change and, sometimes, a new vision is required to deal with exigencies of the period. But if every individual should consider himself judge of what is needed and what is not, the fabric of the religion would soon weaken.

Q: What do you feel about debarring of non-Zoroastrians at fire-temples?

A: A matter of faith once again that has to be honored. In Varanasi, where I went during my first trip to India, I was not permitted to enter certain temples which were open only to Hindus. Even the Catholics do not admit non-Catholics to holy Communion. I would, though, like to visit a Parsi fire-temple. They seem so well preserved here, as compared to the fire-temple at Yazd in Iran. The unfavorable religious climate has done much to reduce their prosperity there.

Q: You have been inside the Yazd fire-temple. Are non-Parsis allowed inside fire-temples in Iran?

A: Very rarely; but essentially it is prohibited.

German scholar Dr Helmut Humbach believes that knowledge of one's religion in its pristine form would help revive the faith

"People are going away from piety"



Highly respected for his thesis on the *Gathas*, Dr Helmut Humbach has been a familiar face at the K. R. Cama Oriental Institute. On his sixth visit to Bombay, the tall, unmistakable German, recalls his first trip 24-and-a-half years ago. For him, the current visit was like a homecoming, being amidst friends like Dastur Kaikhusroo JamaspAsa, High Priest of the Anjuman Atash Bahram, whose friendship and support Humbach "holds in high esteem." A professor of Indo-European comparative linguistics, Humbach continues to live and work in Mainz, having declined the chair of Iranology offered to him at Hamburg University.

Fighting a fever which forced him to cancel a dinner appointment with JamaspAsa, Humbach spoke to *Parsiana* from his hotel room in south Bombay.

Q: Was your decision to pursue Iranian studies a predetermined one?

A: Yes. I had decided to do so even before my graduation. I was interested in many things about ancient Asia, and felt that a lot of work can be done in this field. The Sanskritists had left out this particular field of study, and I stepped in. My personal contacts with Dasturjis JamaspAsa and Hormazdyar Mirza (of Udwada) promoted my studies.

Q: Your version of the *Gathas* has been much appreciated. Can you reckon why?

A: The *Gathas* are for addressing Ahura Mazda and as apostrophes by man. My method was to compare single verbs and grammatical forms with Vedic and younger Avesta texts. I reckon that made me understand the nuances of language better. It also made me reject the contention of some scholars that Ahura Mazda is the same as Varuna.

Q: The above book is now 35 years old. In light of the continuous research, do you feel the need to update it?

A: Yes. I am working on a second edi-

tion. It is a new interpretation – sometimes only of details, elsewhere of things more important. I am also working on a translation of the priestly treatise, *Herbedestan*.

Q: What do you feel is the cause of the dwindling number of Zoroastrians in India?

A: This is because of industrialization. Human ties are being destroyed by it. People are no longer interested in begetting progeny. The credo is to enjoy life. This has resulted in a low birth rate in Europe. And, I feel the same is happening here.

Q: Would conversion be the answer?

A: No comment. It is for a central organization like the World Zoroastrian Organisation (WZO) to help keep the faith alive by initiating and funding schemes.

Q: Do you feel that rather than having more Zoroastrians, it is better to have more Zoroastrianism in one?

A: Yes. People are going away from piety. They have started believing more in metaphysical powers. Knowledge of one's religion in its pristine form would help in reviving the faith.

Q: What opportunities does Europe, particularly Germany, offer our youngsters for study in Zoroastrianism?

A: Well, I am now too old to help, and (candidly) have little influence to help in getting fellowships, so necessary for education abroad. Also, education in German universities is quite different from that imparted here, and the students may get frustrated. It would be more advisable for the community to consider inviting a scholar here, for say a month, and expose the students interested in Zoroastrian studies, to him. Then they would know what to expect. I would be pleased to offer my services to the community.

Homi J. Rogers

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"Conversion may create new problems"



Dr Shaul Shaked marvels at the ability of the migrant Parsis to respect tradition and yet adapt to the New World conditions

Being a member of the Jewish community which is fast vanishing all over the world, and has, like the Parsis, experienced a diaspora (rather, diasporas), Dr Shaul Shaked has a rare empathy for Parsis and their problems. The 66-year-old professor of Ancient Iranian Studies at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel was born in a Jewish family in Hungary, left the country within a year of Hitler's coming to power, and grew up in Haifa, in north Israel.

Q: How did you get interested in Zoroastrianism?

A: I studied Arabic and Semetic languages, and was attracted to the study of Iranian language after my postgraduation degree. The Hebrew University was then expanding, in particular, their Asian Studies program, and I was financially assisted to go to London, where I did my PhD in Iranian studies, (he researched the wisdom of Pahlavi literature) under the late Prof W. B. Henning and Prof Mary Boyce.

Q: You are known for your translation of the *Denkart*. Any other notable publications by you?

A: I have edited a volume of *Irano-Judaica* (1981-82). It traces links between the religions and heritage of Iran and Judaism. Before long, the second volume should be out too. I propose to hold a second conference on Irano-

Judaism studies in December 1990. I have also written a book in Aramaic on amulets and magic bows.

Q: As an authority on the Sassanian period, do you think there was conversion to Zoroastrianism in those times?

A: The Sassanians did convert. Proselytization in Zoroastrianism stopped only in India, for historical reasons.

Q: Do you think conversion would help in solving the community's problem of shrinking population?

A: Conversion would solve many problems. In orthodox Judaism, we do it with great care. There is a long period of training for the incumbent before he or she is accepted. Conversion only for the purpose of marriage, or with any ulterior motive is not accepted. The person's behavior is checked. In America, however, Jews make converts easily. I do not want to pontificate, though. I take a very chary attitude; conversion may create new problems.

Q: Is this your first contact with Parsis?

A: No. I have met Zoroastrians in England, New York, and have had them visiting me in Israel. I have also met some of your scholars earlier when they attended the Irano-Judaica conference in Jerusalem.

Q: And what are your views on the

Parsis abroad with whom you are more familiar?

A: I have been witness to the Parsi diaspora in the West. It is remarkable how this group has managed to balance ritual with survival. They have lots of problems — their struggles with tradition on one hand, and their adaptation to the New World on the other. It is truly fascinating that they have managed to find the solution and exist as a community. The Jews have faced a series of diasporas (yet) have failed to find the proper solutions. Despite being a community in exile, the Zoroastrians have managed to retain their ethnicity.

Q: Our religious leaders, however, do not seem to take kindly to the migrant community.

A: There is unfortunately an absence of good models in the community. There is a lack of priests capable of leading in the spiritual sense.

Q: Talking of spirituality, do you believe Zoroastrianism is a dualistic religion?

A: The *Gathas* are not very dualistic in nature. Yet, every monotheistic religion has a dualistic element in it. Judaism is a monotheistic religion, but dualism is present in it. Evil is regarded as a prominent aspect of religion. Hence dualism in Zoroastrianism is a futile debate.

Homi J. Rogers



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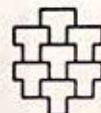
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The Silent Stars

Parinaz Gandhi

Coordinating the talents of deaf and voicing actors, Zarin Chaudhuri has won international recognition for promoting the theater of the deaf in India

The theater lovers assembled in the backyard had come to witness drama, but of a different kind. There was no stage, no elaborate backdrops, no fancy costumes. Nature's scenario was unfolding: as the sun set in the distant Calcutta horizon, there emerged from within the performing group the histrionic talents of its star cast. Never mind that almost all the performers were deaf; their innate rhythm and aptitude for mime, the deft use of sign language and the vocal assistance by voicing actors had all contributed to the production — signalling the arrival of the theater for the deaf in India. And, their smiling faces at curtain call indicated that each could perceive the thunderous applause depending on his/her degree of hearing impairment.

The driving force behind this select band of deaf actors who call themselves The Action Players (TAP) is Ms Zarin Chaudhuri. It is the silent effort of these pioneers under the stewardship of

Chaudhuri that has brought them recognition as the founders of deaf theater in India. Directing this group since its inception 15 years ago, Chaudhuri realizes that in a country where it is difficult for professional dramatists to make a living from stage shows, a lucrative deal is out of the question for the part-time amateur artistes who constitute her troupe. What they miss out on finance, she tries to compensate through exposure to the best talent on the international circuit. "It's an impetus to

Chaudhuri: breaking the sound barrier



have new people come to them, especially when they've not had a chance to work under different teachers and directors," says Chaudhuri.

Convincing sponsors and using the contacts developed by her during her early days in the theater, Chaudhuri has been able to invite some star performers from the United States to tour India. A few of her students had the benefit of participating in summer programs there. And one of her most talented students was selected to perform at the international theater festival for the deaf in Japan last year. Accompanying the Indian delegation on such trips as artistic director, Chaudhuri serves the purpose of a buffer for her trainees cast in an alien environment. In their sound-proof world, cut off from their fellow deaf due to differing languages and education styles, Chaudhuri's familiar presence is reassuring while preparing for new roles.

"Since deafness is an invisible hand-



Chaudhuri (sitting far right) and her troupe: bound by a common sign

icap, we tend to minimize it. But it can be awful, this complete isolation from language, emotions, people," Chaudhuri reiterates. Her own perceptions of the deaf were heightened by her interaction with Ms Dhun Adenwalla, the founder of The Oral School for Deaf Children in Calcutta, whose "raw knowledge of deaf needs" Chaudhuri respects. In a bid to provide a near-normal education to her deaf daughter Dinaz, Adenwalla started the school for the deaf. And, by inviting Chaudhuri to conduct lessons in mime for her school students, Adenwalla's motive was to prove that the deaf can be integrated in society; can be employed; and can be helped to lead fulfilling lives with encouragement and the right support from family, school and friends.

Addressing the delegates at the executive council meeting of the Federation of Parsi Zoroastrian Anjumans of India in Calcutta on December 11, 1988, Chaudhuri urged those present to be conscious of the loose usage of the term 'deaf and dumb.' "It is antiquated and unnecessary," she insists, as it seems to signify that these people are stupid and cannot be communicated with. In a separate interview with *Parsiana* that same day, Chaudhuri admitted how she herself was surprised to find that she could easily 'converse' with the deaf students despite her earlier reservations.

With her flair for teaching mime and the deaf students' natural talent for enacting scenes, within eight months

she brought the children on stage in *An Evening of Mime*.

Originally it was the deaf who sought to learn mime from her. But after the successful enactment of *An Evening of Mime*, some of her associates with normal hearing ability insisted that she teach them mime too. So, "the world of hearing was opened up" for the hitherto isolated deaf children at the time of her first experimental show in 1974, when she had a mix of voicing and deaf actors. This presentation was under the auspices of the British Council where Chaudhuri works as cultural activities officer. In 1977 she combined the talents of the two groups to produce *Sense and Nonsense*. Then came *You Light Up My Life*, followed by *Prime Time Mime* and *Funny Folk*.

When talking of her own involvement in theater, the serene look on Chaudhuri's comely features seems to suggest that personal achievements are of little importance. But the remotest reference to her dramatis personae, and there is no restraining her now. The sparkle in her eyes, her expressions and gesticulations convey that the success of her students matters most to her.

In the present company of TAP there are 11 deaf actors, two of whom are studying at the Oral School preparing for their ICSE (Indian Certificate of Secondary Education) examination, two voicing actors and Chaudhuri. The senior members have, or are proposing, to branch into careers like fashion design-

ing, computers, electricals and teaching.

Like its artistes, TAP too has evolved. Initially it was just into miming. But after coming in contact with the American National Theater of the Deaf (NTD) which extensively uses the idiomatic American Sign Language (very advanced among the sign languages of the world), in India too they have started combining the use of mime and sign language on stage. This modification, Chaudhuri felt was essential after being convinced by David Hays, the founder of the American NTD, that miming "tends to get associated with the deaf" accentuating their handicap and differentiating them from the hearing populace. The emphasis at the Oral School had been on lip reading to prepare them for interaction with the hearing society. Along the way, some of the students learnt to speak, albeit with some defect, and most picked up sign language.

"Actually it is a combination of lip reading, mime, finger spelling and sign language that lends for more comprehensive communication," believes Chaudhuri. In America where sign language is so well-developed that it can be opted for as a second language in schools, it may be practical to rely exclusively on one medium when communicating with the deaf. But in India where there are so many languages spoken, a separate sign language would be needed for each vernacular language and hence difficult to coordinate and systematize. For the present, students at the Oral School and their respective families realize that knowledge of English is a prerequisite for those using sign language. But even that does not suffice. Most of them have difficulty in understanding the weekly news bulletin telecast by Doordarshan on Sunday afternoons.

To give an example of how even the most profound messages can be conveyed by the deaf, Chaudhuri takes the phrase 'I love you.' With the fist facing the opposite person, the pointing upward of the little finger would indicate 'I,' the index finger and the thumb in perpendicular position would indicate 'L' for 'love' and the stretching of the thumb and the little finger in opposite direction would stand for 'U' -

'You.' Thus the simultaneous raising of the little finger, the index finger and the thumb would convey 'I love you.'

Many prefer to keep their distance from the deaf, not knowing how to break the sound-silence barrier. Zarin however insists that even if one is not familiar with the sign language, communication is still possible with them. She cites the example of her little daughter Ujaala who refuses to learn the sign language and yet is at total ease in the company of the deaf students, often accompanying the troupe on tours and in the process almost having the entire script by heart.

Zarin's significant contribution to the creation of the deaf theater in India was not pre-planned, she admits. "Things just fell into place." Ever since she can remember she was interested in drama. During her school days in Bombay's Queen Mary's, the love for speech and drama was given to her by her elocution teacher Ms Mary Sethna, she remembers. As a teenager, it was the story of Joan of Arc that had a lasting impression on the young mind. On completing her schooling, she joined Ebrahim Al-kazi's Theatre Unit as an apprentice, helping out backstage, and remembers

"the biggest compliment" of being appointed prompter!

During her college days at St Xavier's, she was active with the drama group and simultaneously enjoying the taste of being a popular model on

Even if one is not familiar with the sign language, communication is still possible with the deaf

demand by industrial houses like J. K. Wools, Khatau, Bombay Dyeing, etc doing stills and live shows, travelling extensively and being featured on the cover of several women's magazines. But while fascinated by the attention conferred on her, Zarin Engineer - as she was known in her maiden days - was also wary of the publicity. She particularly remembers the Khatau hoarding at Marine Lines which featured her for years. Every time she passed by, she would consciously lower

her head hoping people wouldn't identify her with the picture, Zarin now recalls with amusement.

Though Zarin's parents were as enthusiastic about her career in the theater as she was, they did not have a theatrical background themselves. Her mother Mehru taught at different times at Hill Grange, New Activity and Green Lawns, being among the first lot to be trained by the well-known educationist Mme Maria Montessori at Adyar in Madras. Her father Minoo, to whom impromptu entertainment came effortlessly, was employed at the India United Mills.

With their support and the scholarships received from several trusts (including the rare distinction of being among the first fellows of the J. D. Rockefeller III Fund), for four years she studied theater in the United States "coming under the umbrella of some very powerful theater minds" like Paul Baker. First she was at the Brandeis University, then at New York at the H. P. Studio and later at the Dallas Theater Center from where she worked on her thesis which was recognized by the Trinity University.

On returning to India, there was a

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period of disillusionment when she didn't know how to use her talents, theater being in its infancy and cinema being purely escapist. She got her first break when she was invited to conduct weekly classes in mime at the Film and Television Institute of India in Pune. Gradually she started involving herself with theater movement in her country, being popular among Bombay, Delhi and Calcutta theatergoers. It was at one such play that she met Krishna Kumar Chaudhuri (Puncce) who seven years later was to become her husband. Puncce was also into theater, but the last time he went on stage was the first time he was cast against Zarin, remembers the wife. She worked on radio productions as well as TV presentations. When for a year she had come "under the spell of the creative genius" Adi Marzban, Zarin says, "I learnt from Adi what I hadn't learnt anywhere. His ability for creative writing was extraordinary. His actors would be rehearsing Act I when no one, including Adi, knew what Act II was going to be. He had tremendous courage, I wouldn't say cheek..."

Her association with the deaf had begun some years prior in the late '60s, when doing mime shows with noted

dramatist Irshad Panjatan. Invariably the audience would include many deaf who would later go backstage and seek out the performers. Chaudhuri got an opportunity to understand the psyche of a deaf person when preparing for the role of Rosa, a deaf girl, in *Goa*. She was then a member of the theatrical group, Yatrik, in Delhi. She would make frequent trips to the government school for the deaf till she got to understand their views and approach. Besides being a landmark in her personal life, the play was important for it was "the first ever to be staged at the New Sri Ram Centre in Delhi" which was later to be the hub of cultural activities in the capital city. Chaudhuri can still vividly recall the goose pimples on stage from the chilly winter wind which found its way into the yet-to-be-completed auditorium.

After their move to Calcutta in 1971, and a subsequent invitation to work for the deaf, Zarin immersed herself in the deaf theater movement. TAP was conceived in Calcutta in 1973 when the performers were all students at The Oral School for Deaf Children. Learning from her different encounters with dramatists of world ranking,

Chaudhuri's drama is richer by it. Ever since she has taken to directing, Zarin has stopped performing on stage herself for she is of the view that if she were to do both, "you can't do justice to either." Irrespective of whether she is acting or directing, Zarin feels she is happiest "as long as I am doing anything for the theater." And, in the case of the deaf theater, seeing the performers accepted as an equally creative segment of society and being shown due respect has brought meaning to her life too.

The seasoned Players are now ready with their next drama *Patol Babu, Film Star* (based on a short story by Satyajit Ray). Unfortunately it hasn't been staged so far for, on its opening night last year, Puncce died, succumbing to kidney failure. The composed Zarin realizes that the show must go on.

The commitment from her side matches the enthusiasm of the rest of the troupe. Even on a Sunday afternoon she was in a rush to keep her appointment with the drama aspirants. They would be looking out for signs... for cues of her arrival, in the midst of their animated conversation, exchanging notes on the experiences of the bygone week.

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There was a time when it was every little boy's dream to be an engine driver. For most it remained a dream; for some the dream became a reality. In the heart of India where rail lines, the arteries of the country's communication network, converge, reside a community of railwaymen - the Parsis of Jhansi.

Only three of the 26 families here are not connected with the railways, says Ronny Dick, president of the Jhansi Parsi Anjuman (JPA). The present strength of the community, according to Dick, is 82, "from the age of two to 97." Twenty Parsis, including eight engine drivers, hold jobs with the railways and many more are retired railwaymen. The retired group will swell. "Within the next five to 10 years, 15 to 18 of us will have retired," says Dick.

Except for R. Rustomji, track inspector and F. Pestonji, engaged in the railway workshop, both 24 years old, young Parsis are no longer keen to follow in their father's 'tracks,' professionally at least. "We are third generation drivers," says Dick's elder brother Jamshed (see box, The Parsi of Jhansi), reflecting the pride the older generation took in the railways. But "our children are not interested in joining the railways," says Ronny. The enchantment of the iron horse on rails is a thing of the past.

At the end of the line, however, there are harsh realities. "Financially we are not well off. After retirement we will have no other source of income but our pension," says Ronny. "We will have to stay on in Jhansi," he adds. "Who's got the money to buy a flat in Bombay? You can't even get a scooter garage for two lakhs there... In Jhansi, where the value of land is less, we can afford to buy a plot of land and build on it with our retirement compensation." Therein lies the paradox that faces the community - the old trapped in a city from which the young want to escape.

"The future is bleak - for our children." Yes, Dick clarifies, for the children. The standard of education in Jhansi is poor and children from here do not get the required percentage in all-India board examinations to get admission into medical, engineering and other professional colleges. Dick points out that even to send children to Bombay and Delhi for special courses like computer programming and hotel

management is a problem. In addition to the tuition fees they have to meet the day-to-day living expenses. "They've got to stay somewhere. Maintenance itself costs a fortune. If you are living on a salary or pension you can't afford it; more so if you have two or more children," says Dick.

Dick illustrates the predicament with the example of a young girl, a science graduate, whose sole hope of getting admission into a medical college is by raising two lakh rupees for her capitation fees. But since her father died recently, the only avenue open to her is to apply to charitable institutions to provide her with interest-free, easy repayment loans.

Migration of Parsis from Jhansi is inevitable, according to Dick and it is a question of time before all Parsis leave the city. If anything, financial con-

from Jhansi helped them out by providing them with meals. "Parsis come to visit Khajuraho and Shiv Puri, but they prefer to stay in hotels," says Dick. "Even though the dharamshala charges Rs 5 per bed per day, no one uses it."

As a result, the eight-room and one hall guest house has fallen on lean times. The premises were donated in 1930 to the Parsis of Jhansi by Hormasji J. Lala of Kanpur in memory of his father Jehangir S. Lala of Surat. The only time the place witnesses activity is when jashans are performed or at times of death in the community. The dead body, Dick states, is kept at the dharamshala before it is carried to the community aramgah or cemetery which was donated in 1894 by Merwanji Edulji Boyce. "We want to build a boundary wall around the land adjacent to the aramgah..." says Dick. But lack of funds

THE RAILWAYMEN OF JHANSI

Gustasp Irani

A community predominated by railwaymen, the Parsis of Jhansi are contemplating raising resources to maintain community assets and interests

straints have slowed down the process.

Already the community has no priest. Since 1969 they have had to rely on Lucknow and Delhi to loan them the services of their men of God, though for the brief period 1973 to 1975 Ervad J. Dastoor served the community before moving on to Nagpur.

One scheme under consideration to lure a priest to Jhansi, according to Dick, is to build a shopping center on the dharamshala land and use the rent generated to pay for his maintenance. In addition, the revenue from the proposed shopping center will also be used to repair and maintain the dharamshala, Jehangir Baag, which has fallen into disuse. Dick points out that the last time the dharamshala was used was in October 1988. There was a couple who had come from Bombay. Since there were no catering facilities, a Parsi lady



THE PARSI OF JHANSI



When the prestigious Shatabdi Express set out on its inaugural run on July 10, 1988, a soft-spoken, bearded Parsi, Jamshed (more popularly known as Jimmy) Dick, was one of the two engine drivers who piloted the train. Hurtling at speeds of up to 140 kmph (double that of other express trains) down the track between Delhi and Jhansi, the Shatabdi is supposed to be the fastest train in India. "I love a good run. You feel as though you are the strongest person on the track," says Dick when describing the sensation of power and speed characteristic of the 4,000 horse power engine at his command.

"Senior drivers refused to drive the train. They were afraid... the track conditions... the speed. I accepted the challenge and volunteered," says Dick while explaining how he was selected over his more senior colleagues. After a 15-day special training program at

Ghaziabad and a complete physical and medical check-up, Dick and his colleague Lala Ram were allowed one trial run with the empty train before its inaugural run.

"Driving a superfast or any diesel involves a lot of concentration. You've got to concentrate on the foot plate, on the electric gadgets, the speeds (to be maintained along) different portions of the (route). You've got to know the track conditions like a map in your mind," says Dick. Steam engines, by contrast, involve hard labor and, according to Dick, "a little more art. You've got to get the maximum production from the locomotive with the minimum input of effort."

Driving, be it diesel or steam engines, is an art form Dick has mastered and takes pride in. Numerous certificates and awards for fuel economy and punctuality are testimony to his skill. The financial rewards that came with these awards were paltry - Rs 20 to Rs 100 - but to Dick, "The awards are important, not the amount." He also shows you letters of appreciation he received for avoiding derailment of the 22Up Express and for repairing the failed locomotive of the 6Up Express in 14 minutes and bringing the train in on time. There is also a commendation for pointing out the defect in the layout of the Jhansi rail yard which was

later corrected as per his suggestions.

"Drivers are the eyes of the railways," says Dick. "Our feedback on the track and other conditions is most important." Dick has been serving the nation's communication network since 1955 when he joined as a fireman. In 1958 he graduated to a shunting driver and two years later to a goods train driver. It was a long wait till 1977 before Dick was entrusted with passenger trains. In 1980 he moved from steam engines to diesel engines and by 1983 was plying the Delhi-bound superfast trains.

"I am a third generation Grade I driver," says Dick. "My grandfather and my father were also Grade I drivers." He clarifies that his two brothers Godrej and Ronny are Grade I drivers too. Godrej, the eldest, is a mail train driver on the Northern Railways and Ronny, the youngest, is with the Central Railways, Jhansi based.

The 'tribe' of Parsi drivers from Jhansi includes K. Maneckji, also qualified to drive the Shatabdi Express, D. Billimoria, P. S. Bhagalia, D.K. Mistry, J.K. Bhagat and R. Kaikey. Then there are the Parsi guards, inspectors and workshop hands, 20 in all, including the drivers. They constitute Jhansi's Parsi knights of the iron horse on rails.



(Far left) Outside the dharamshala: Members of Jhansi Anjuman with children who attended Sunday School in 1982
(Left) Ronny Dick

stands between desire and execution of objectives.

Funds available with the JPA are those it collects as membership subscriptions. All the families of the city are members of the Anjuman, says Dick, and they pay Rs 10 per month per family to the central body. "When a male member starts to work, he is automatically eligible to become a full member of the Anjuman," even though his own nuclear family may yet not have materialized, says Dick. Additionally,

working women and housewives are enrolled as honorary lady members on payment of Rs 2 per month each.

The last general body meeting of the JPA was held in July 1988 at which Ms G. N. Dinshaw-Phiroze was re-elected president. However, on her death in August that year, the community elected Dick as the new president in September for a term of three years which may be extended to five. The other office bearers are: secretary Ms M. Anklesaria; committee members K. B. Pestonji, P. B. Pestonji, M. Maneckji, Ms P. Maneckji, R. P. Ichchaporia and G. Rustomji. The seventh seat on the committee is vacant at present.

The task ahead of the JPA is grim. It will have to see that the community train does not derail as it chugs forward to an uncertain future of dark tunnels and unstable bridges.

MILESTONES

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

Of the 81 persons who died in Bombay, 29 fell prey to heart disease, while 12 died of old age. Brain and lung disease claimed seven victims each. Five succumbed to pneumonia and three to hypertension. Other killers like blood disease, high blood pressure, kidney failure, cancer, septicemia and diabetes claimed two persons each. Isolated cases of bed sores, accident, tuberculosis, malaria and liver disease were registered, together with one case of stillbirth.

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.

BOMBAY

Born

A girl to *Dinaz and Ravi Parkash*; May 1, 1989
A girl to *Meher and Cyrus Rupa*; May 5
A girl to *Khurshed and Vistas Patel*; May 6
A boy to *Pervin and Homi Irani*; May 9
A girl to *Meher and Khushroo Damania*; May 11
A boy, *Malcolm*, to *Mehernaz and Daraius Rustom*; May 13
A boy, *Maazyar*, to *Anahita and Hormuzdyar Engineer*; May 15
A boy to *Dhun and Rayomand Kolah*; May 15
A boy to *Lyla and Homi Dhunjibhoy*; May 19
A girl to *Aban and Hoshedar Contractor*; May 21
A girl to *Daisy and Aspi Medhora*; May 21

A boy to *Yasmine and Percy Kelawala*; May 22
A girl to *Arnavaz and Eruch Irani*; May 24
A boy, *Zaal*, to *Roshni and Percy Lakdaval*; May 29
A boy to *Navaz and Bohman Irani*; May 31

Married

Shehnaz Rohinton Taraporewala of Vangam and *Mervan Kekhasroo Irani* of Gholvad; April 25
Niloufer Jehangir Khambatta and *Hormazdiar Pirosha Rustomjee* of Victoria, Australia; April 30
Benaifer Burjor Daruwala and *Sarosh Dinshaw Printer*; May 1
Shernaz Pallonji Mehta and *Firdosh Maneck Bhangara*; May 4
Farishta Ardesher Irani of Panvel and *Farokh Khodayar Meherbani*; May 5
Havovi Marzban Irani of Dahanu Rd and *Hormuz Aspy Sarfabi* of Dahanu Rd; May 5
Maharukh Noshir Gazdar and *Adil Phiroz Daruwala*; May 7
Taubon Behram Irani and *Fareedoo Minoo Irani*; May 7
Pervina Sohrab Daruvalla and *Yazdi Homi Khambatta*; May 7
Bakhtawar Jehangirji Pithawalla and *Kaivan Mehervan Bodhanwalla* of Pune; May 11
Kashmira Tehmuras Baria and *Rumi Aspi Irani*; May 11
Shernaz Jimmy Elavia and *Dinyar Minocher Kodia* of Surat; May 11
Mehernaz Nariman Adajania and *Paurushp Baji Patel*; May 11
Ketayun Furdoon Mehta and *Shahrugh Adi Bamanbehram*; May 12
Farzana Khodabux Shahriari and *Abadan Fareedoo Irani* of Gulbarga; May 14
Kashmira Ardesher Irani and *Farokh Bomanji Irani*; May 14
Manize Barjor Maloo and *Tirandaz Darab Irani*; May 14
Veera Kaikobad Dastur and *Jamshed Rusie Rustomjee* of Sydney; May 14
Jasmine Aspiandiar Shahparast and *Behram Keki Siganporia*; May 14

Havovi Dinshaw Lalla and *Rohinton Noshir Viccajee*; May 14
Thrity Sorab Merchant and *Vispi Homi Bhathena*; May 15
Roxana Fali Colabawala and *Behram Sam Mistry*; May 15
Persis Eruch Kaka and *Hormuzd Behram Irani*; May 16
Yasmin Sheryar Vajifdar and *Hoshedar Eruch Carnac*; May 18
Parizad Rasid Gorimar and *Bomi Ardesher Karkaria*; May 19
Firuzi Rumi Dandiwalla and *Hormaz Minoo Master*; May 19
Shernaz Keki Pervez and *Nitash Eruch Lala*; May 20
Shernaz Furrokh Hataria and *Jehangir Eruchsha Dalal*; May 21
Dinaz Dara Dastoor and *Hoshi Keki Siganporia*; May 21
Arnavaz Pirojsha Badhniwala of Balsar and *Percy Baji Buhariwala*; May 22
Pearl Cawas Todiwalla and *Poras Tehmurasp Balsara*; May 25
Yasmin Barjor Kelawala and *Homi Sorabjee Sopariwalla*; May 28
Shanaz Viraf Contractor and *Hormazd Dhanjisha Mehta*; May 29

Died

Najoo Nariman Katrak (62), residing at D-5, Kakad Est, Opp Podar Hosp, 400018; April 30
Dhunmai Ardesher Khan (84), 7-A, Tata Blocks, Sir Ratan Tata Rd, Tardeo, 400034; April 30
Banoo Jal Irani (62), Sea View Ter, 67, Wodehouse Rd, Colaba, 400005; May 1
Baby of Keki Nariman Cooper (stillborn), 15/5, Rustom Baug, Victoria Rd, 400027; May 2
Jal Jehangirji Daruwala (79), 604-A, Nagardas Nivas, Dr Ambedkar Rd, Dadar, 400014; May 2
Marzban Rustomji Khan (75), 506, St Anne's Apt, Pali Mala Rd, Bandra, 400050; May 2
Freny Muncherji Vajifdar (72), King's Bldg, Dr Ambedkar Rd, Parel, 400012; May 3
Zarine Pallonji Contractor

(51), E-12, Cusrow Baug, S. B. Rd, 400039; May 4
Rustom Jehangirji Heeramanek (86), Ratan Mans, 35, Forjett St, 400036; May 4
Jehangir Bomanji Irani (70), 43, Sangeeta, Arther Bunder Rd, Colaba, 400005; May 4
Putlibai Dinshawji Nargolwalla (90), Hirjibai Sethna Bldg, Chikalwadi, 400007; May 4
Keki Jehangir Ayem (85), Jer Mans, 19, Gunder St, Girgaum Rd, 400002; May 5
Pheroze Ardesher Gimi (76), 12, Jer Mans, 70-B, Gowalia Tank Rd, 400036; May 5
Bejonji Nawroji Kanga (72), 618, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; May 5
Naval Hormusji Tata (85), Tata Hse, Waudby Rd, 400001; May 5 (cremated)
Shirinbai Sorabji Vesuna (72), Giriraj Bhavan (Yazdan Bldg), Stn Rd, Kalyan, Dist Thane, 421301; May 5
Noshir Pestonji Wesmawalla (78), Band View, 665, Lady Jehangir Rd, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; May 6
Bachamai Savekshaw Desai (87), Nana Parsi Wad, Bulsar, C/o P. S. Desai, Bldg 3, Kasinath St, Tardeo, 400034; May 7
Noshir Bapuji Sarkari (62), 19, Laxmi Niwas, Khetwadi, 12th Lane, 400004; May 7
Soonima Kaikhashru Sethna (85), 13, Wodehouse Rd, 400039; May 7
Tehmina Framroz Hiloo (80), Mohomedi Minar, Khetwadi, 14th Lane, 400004; May 8
Amy Mehernosh Kajanwalla (58), Pundole Bldg, Grant Rd, 400007; May 8
Goolbai Rustomji Katrak (77), C/35, Meherzin, Wodehouse Rd, Colaba, 400005; May 8
Jal Cawasji Engineer (78), Dreamland, Opera Hse, 400004; May 10 (cremated)
Mehrwanji Framroz Desai (85), Roshan Deep, 1st Rd, Khar, 400052; May 11
Nariman Meherjibhai Sethna (87), 24, Swashraya Soc, 47, Juhu Cross Lane, Andheri (W), 400058; May 11
Goola Nuvroji Bharucha (87), Tarachand Bldg, Gamadia Clny, Tardeo, 400007; May 12

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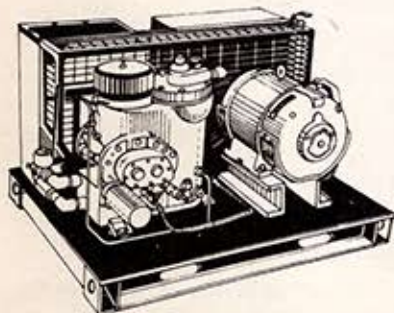
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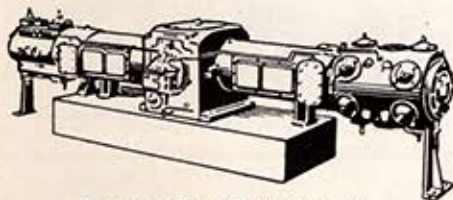
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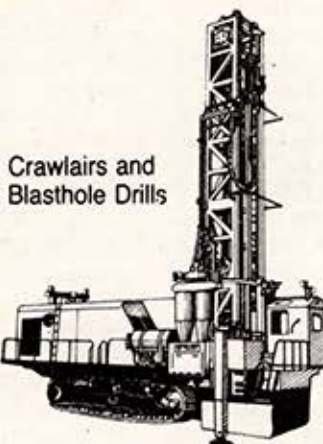
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Dhunjisha Sorabji Bhathena (78), 'C,' Tapia Bldg, Jalbhai St, Opp Railway Hotel, 400004; May 12

Dara Dinshawji Chinoy (82), 11/7, Rustom Baug, Victoria Rd, 400027; May 12

Rustom Eruchshaw Irani (73), Block 4, Shapur Baug, V. P. Rd, 400004; May 12

Adi Sorabji Latta (80), F/15, Shapur Baug, V. P. Rd, 400004; May 12

Minoo Homji Panthekay (86), 72-A, Sheridan Hse, August Kranti Marg, 400036; May 12

Ketty Sorabji Anklesharia (80), 2, Moola Rd, Kirkee, Pune, 411003; May 13

Roshan Aspi Driver (43), Nicholson Bldg, Wadia St, 400034; May 13

Hirabai Rustomji Hira (88), C/16, Vatcha Bldg, Captain Clny, Tardeo Rd, 400034; May 13

Kakashru Jamshed Mehta (77), Captain Bldg, Chikalwadi, 400007; May 13

Roshan Behram Desai (54), 4, Meher Villa, Malcolm Baug, Jogeshwari (W), 400102; May 14

Bapsy Parvez Ginwalla (70), 555, Kanaya, T. P. S. III, Khar, 400052; May 14

Shernaz Adi Irani (32), Happy Home, Forjett Cross St, Gowalia Tank, 400036; May 14

Keki Nussarwanji Kharas (57), 6, Tata Clny, Ratan Tata Rd, 400034; May 15

Bahadur Khurshedji Mistry (76), 4/A, Gab Villa, IKLA Lane, Vile Parle (W), 400056; May 15

Bejon Dinshaw Birdy (92), Chaman Chmbs, Barrack Rd, 400020; May 16

Bapaimai Rustomji Cooper (75), Satyabhama Niwas, Kasinath St, Tardeo, 400034; May 16

Rusi Phiroze Gandhi (52), 2/2, Swadeshi Mills Qrs, 4 Bglws, Chunabhatti, Sion, 400022; May 16

Phiroze Sorabji Mehta (77), 'B,' Petit Bldg, Dinbai Petit St, Balaram St, 400007; May 16

Mellasha Eduljee Saher (78), 3, Banajee Hse, Contractor Baug, Mori Rd, Mahim, 400016; May 16

Meherbai Burjorji Vajifdar (87), 36/A, Peer Manzil, Amrut Ngr, M. V. Rd, Chakala, Andheri (E), 400069; May 16

Homi Sorabji Magra (84), 722, Dinshaw Master Rd, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; May 18

Shavak Framroz Vajifdar (83), A-3, Ness Baug, Nana Chowk, 400007; May 18

Marazban Merwanji Driver (71), Perin Villa, Malcolm Baug, Jogeshwari, 400102; May 19

Tehmina Bejonji Karanjia (87), 'B,' Gool Mhl, Sleater Rd, 400007; May 19

Villoo Meherjee Lelinwalla (83), 'A,' Yasmin Apt, Perry Rd, Bandra, 400050; May 20

Hirabai Jehangirji Minbatiwalla (80), 632, Samarth Wadi, Hanuman Ngr, Kandivali (E), 400101; May 20

Putla Dara Press (67), 599, Sharma Niwas, Jame Jamshed Rd, Matunga, 400019; May 20

Daulat Murzban Writer (78), R/37, Nowroz Baug, Lalbaug, 400012; May 20

Adi Dadabhoy Mehta (53), Room 23, Bldg 10, Tata Clny, Tardeo, 400034; May 21

Shavak Ruttonji Mistry (76), 74-A, West Minister, N. S. Manikar Marg, Chunabhatti, Sion, 400022; May 21

Meherwanji Rustomji Divecha (78), Baimai Bldg, Jerbai Wadia Rd, Parel, 400012; May 22

Minoo Navroji Ichhaporia (65), Mulund Sidivinayak Bldg, Mithagar Cross Rd, Mulund (E), 400081; May 22

Khoshru Rustom Irani (69), Poonawala Cottage, Lawrence Rd, Deolali, Dist Nasik, 422401; May 22

Moti Gustad Irani (70), 303, Beach View Apts, 77, Chinbai Rd, Bandra, 400050; May 22

Dinbai Ratanshaw Book-Binder (87), 73, Prabhav, T. P. S. III, Rd 2, Santacruz (E), 400055; May 23

Cawasshah Kaikhushru Bharucha (81), 9, Toddy Ter, Dhuswadi, Dhobitalao, 400002; May 24

Ratanbai Navroji Masani (97), 9-A, Fish Market Lane, Adamji Peerbhoy Market, Dhobitalao, 400002; May 24

Amy Burjor Mody (80), Seaface Park, 50, Bhulabhai Desai Rd, 400026; May 24

Alloo Darab Bhesania (79), B-7, White Rose, 4, Perry Rd, Bandra, 400050; May 25

Shirinbai Manekshaw Mistry (89), Makwal Mans, Gunbow St, Fort, 400001; May 25

Sarah Rustom Mugaseth (93), B-11, Queens Apt, 59, Pali Hill Rd, Bandra, 400050; May 25

Dadabhoy Jehangirji Nazer (66), B-3, Contractor Baug, Mori Rd, Mahim, 400016; May 25

Jal Dadabhoy Patel (81), Haji Habib Bldg, Cumballa Hill, 400026; May 25

Dhun Phiroze Mogrelia (69), 12, Habib Hse, 293, Grant Rd, 400007; May 26

Jerbai Manekshaw Nanji (82), Jame Jamshed Bldg, 811, Jame Jamshed Rd, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; May 26

Firoze Darasha Damania (54), D-12/A, Shapur Baug, V. P. Rd, 400004; May 27

Rustomji Bejonji Deboo (75), H-20, Cusrow Baug, S. B. Rd, 400039; May 27

Mehroo Sohrabji Kapadia (71), Albless Bldg, Chikalwadi, 400007; May 27

Firoze Ardeshir Khambatta (68), F-17, Cusrow Baug, S. B. Rd, 400039; May 27

Adi Bejonji Sadrawalla (67), 764-F, Sarosh Court, Tilak Rd, Dadar, 400014; May 28

Keki Eruchsa Sethna (80), Band View, 665, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; May 28

Khurshed Dhunjishaw Daruwala (72), 275-B, Captain Bldg, Chikalwadi, 400007; May 29

Ratan Ardeshir Karanjia (85), 3/20, Tata Mills Co-op Hsg Soc, Elphinstone Rd, Parel, 400012; May 29

Mehra Ratansha Dhalla (87), Rusi Villa, 55, Peddar Rd, 400026; May 30

Fredoon Bapuji Kerawalla (76), C-14, Rustom Baug, Victoria Rd, 400027; May 30

Jal Sheriyar (89), 184, Baria Bldg, Mody Cross Lane, 400001; May 30

CALCUTTA
Died
Ardeshir Kaikobad Batlivala (85), husband of Najoo and father of Marzban; May 21

Jehangir Shapurji Gazder (80), brother of Veera, Banoo and late Hilla and Roshan Nazir; May 26

KARACHI
Died
Khurshed Siavax Gandhi (60); April 4

Hilla Sohrabji Mehta (87); April 5

Hoshang E. Gorana (78); April 10

Jamshed Navroji Sethna (78); April 10

Meheryad Pirojsha Dubash (51); April 13

Jamshed Navroji Hazari (78); April 14

Ardeshir Meherban Sanami (90); April 15

Kaity Homi Mehta (88); April 30

MHOW
Died
Dhun Jehangirji Cooper (54), Plowden Rd, 453441; April 7

POONA
Died
Mehroo Jal Mistry (84), 5, Parvati Villa Rd, Camp, 411001; May 11

Meherwan Kaikhushru Irani (52), 889, Bootti St, Gawli wad, 411001; May 17

Behramshaw Mancherji Bhathena (91), 2407, East St, 411001; May 25

Dinoo Rustomji Bhesania (Fisher) (72), 10, Coyaji Rd, 411001; May 29

Compiled by Roxana H. Kaka

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After the *geh sarna* on January 13, 1989 they filed past the body, three abreast. Even so, it took the assembled mourners – who had overflowed the Hodiwalla Bungli, the Albless Bungli and the gents' pavilions onto the hastily laid out chairs in the open, with many continuing to stand – over 40 minutes to complete the *sezdo*. Countless others had paid their respects during the 27 hours that elapsed between the fatal heart attack and the funeral.

In death as in life, Ervad Nadirsha Aibara, 56, panthaky of the Karani Agiary at Cusrow Baug and joint principal of the M. F. Cama Athornan Madressa (CAM) at Andheri, attracted Parsis of all age-groups. Their overwhelming presence at the funeral attested to the special affection this charismatic mobed had won by stoically listening to tales of woe for the last 17 years and delving into Zoroastrian spiritual literature to provide *nirangs* (incantations) to sustain the suffering souls.

Aibara drew his inspiration from the late Dastur Jamshed Kookadar who he always referred to as "Saheb." He had claimed that the response he made to those who sought his advice were the words and instructions communicated by the Saheb; Aibara disclaimed any personal understanding of each case. Every votary received a photograph of the Dastur along with King Jamshid, Shah Afsune Faredoon and/or prophet Zarathushtra (which he called "taaviz") and meticulous instructions on how to recite the cyclostyled prayer formula. Aibara was particular about ritual purity and did not approve of any infringement of the traditional rule in his agiary – the votary was required to wash, say the *kusti* and worship the holy fire before joining the queue of people waiting to consult him. The sessions often lasted from 10 in the morning to 1 pm, depending on the length of the queue. Each supplicant's name was noted on a sheet of paper, Aibara's parting words



THE AIBARA CHARISMA

Arnavaz S. Mama

almost always being, "*Hun dooa karas* (I shall pray for you)."

The condolence meetings held by the trustees of the Karani Agiary and the Cusrow Baug United Sports and Welfare League recorded the meritorious services Aibara had "rendered...to the Zoroastrian community at large and to the Karani Agiary and the residents of Cusrow Baug in particular." At the meeting at the Cusrow Baug pavilion, Karani Agiary and Dasturji Jamshedji

Sorabji Kookadar Memorial Agiary Trust (DJSKMAT) trustee Homi Ranina said, "Many preach, few practice what they preach. Aibara did, and therefore inspired confidence... he inculcated discipline and religiosity."

Aibara was the founder teacher of the prayer classes conducted by the League and had always praised the League for its religious activities, said Dr Dinyar Gamadia, the League's president.

Questioned about their assessment of Aibara as a priest, Udwada High Priest Dastur (Dr) Hormazdyar Mirza referred to him briefly as "a good soul," while Dastur (Dr) Kaikhusroo JamaspAsa, High Priest of the Anjuman Atash Bahram, refused to comment. Seemingly disdaining the popular upsurge, Dastur (Dr) Firoze Kotwal of the H. B. Wadia Atash Bahram countered, "God does not see how many people attended the funeral... the question is, was the work acceptable to God?" While dismissing condolence meetings generally as "a hoax (and) false praise," Kotwal says, "Two minutes' silence is all that's required." Nonetheless, Kotwal described Aibara as a "*yakin wala manas* – one with devotion and faith in the religion."

Analysing Aibara's contribution, Kotwal continued, "Hitherto *nirangs* were not used as there was no one to guide the people. He had the time and the enthusiasm to do this. Moreover, his intention was *paak* (pure). Such a man, if he does *bhalai* (tries to help), gets success. He taught prayers (at the CAM where Kotwal too was principal); he was very good at it... I had told him to take up a *panthak* (parish), get to meet people. At my suggestion he went to the Sodawaterwalla Agiary. At Cusrow Baug he reached higher acclaim... There was no fight or argument between us but a divergence of approach."

"What work he was doing (was) good work. People have different temperaments, different beliefs. If we do not satisfy them, they go elsewhere... hence

Ervad Nadirsha Aibara was praised by those who benefitted by his spiritual help and criticized by others for creating a Kookadaru cult

he rendered yeoman service," attests Ervad (Dr) Peshotan Peer, president of the Parsee Vegetarian and Temperance Society and panthaky of the Tata Agiary in Bandra. Peer was referring to Aibara's faith-healing within the ambit of Zarathushtrian prayers.

"Dr Gamadia had accepted Aibara's

**"God does not see
how many people
attended the
funeral...the
question is, was the
work acceptable to
God?"**

contribution to the welfare of patients," asserts Ervad Fali Master, secretary of the Athornan Mandal and the Karani Agiary. "No one else was willing to listen to people's *kuthlas* (tales of woe). Moreover, Aibara was a very hot-tempered man... Ultimately people accepted (the value of his work)," added Master who attributed the Karani Agiary's current high level of patronage from the community to Aibara personally contributing 10 to 15 thousand rupees annually to its maintenance, apart from the largesse of richer benefactors.

Mazdayasnie Monasterie and Zoroastrian College founder Dr (Ms) Meher Master-Moos at the condolence meet and businessman-philanthropist Dinshaw Merchant in a letter to *Jam-e-Jamshed* (January 22) have spearheaded a move to confer the title of dastur posthumously upon Aibara, and to include his name in the Parsi prayers along with those of other illustrious dead. The call has been seconded by Gulrukh Chinoy and 13 others in a paid advertisement in the *Jamé* of February 11. Though according to Kotwal a dastur requires to be a man of learning, Master-Moos notes that Kookadar too was "only an ervad in his lifetime. He never received a shawl. It was only after his death that the honor was conferred upon him. Before his demise he had moved to the Anjuman Atash Bahram. His portrait hangs in the main hall..."

On April 18, *roj* Jamyad mah Avan, the birth anniversary of Kookadar,

Aibara's portrait was unveiled in the Karani Agiary Hall at a function attended by the Agiary trustees.

"Nadirsha got his knowledge and his (early) inspiration from his uncle Marazban Aibara" who was a scholar priest in Surat with a cupboard full of handwritten books on religious matters, including eight copies of the *Vendidad*, informs Homi Turel, scion of the Goti Adarian's Turel family at Surat and currently a managing committee member of CAM. Marazban had severed ties with his family and, in the interests of ritual purity, did most of his own housework. Extremely straightforward like his mentor Marazban, Aibara became a *humkalam* (totally qualified) mobed at a very early age (he reportedly performed his first *nimngdin* at the age of 13), said Turel. So young was he when he came to Bombay as an instructor at the Cama Madressa, in answer to an advertisement, that the trustees wondered if he would be able to fulfil his assignments, says Turel, adding that he was probably the youngest teacher at the CAM. He taught rituals and *bhantar* (*Avesta* prayers) and the subjects were Aibara's forte. As notes Ervad (Dr) Rooyintan Peer who has succeeded Aibara as joint principal of the CAM, "(I am) known as being well conversant with rituals. This I owe to him. We were 45 students then," recalls Peer. "He made us *yozdathregar* mobeds... Everyone remembers him with respect."

"Except for his *gusso* (anger) he was a righteous, pious person (who) prayed for hours together with great *chokkhkhai* (ritual purity). He always carried a small mat on which he stood to pray," says Turel. Very particular about pronunciation and pauses, Turel remembers Aibara lashing out physically if he felt convinced that the students were deliberately ignoring instructions. The trouble erupted because several of the boys (including Turel) came already proficient in *navar-maratab* prayers from the Dadar Madressa (which at that time offered no secular education), and could not adjust to Aibara's demands. The case finally went to the principal for adjudication, recalls Turel with a laugh.

Acute monetary restraints alone caused Aibara to quit the CAM where he came every morning from Grant Road, says Turel. When the Cama trustees built their first residential building

on the Madressa campus in 1968-69, Aibara approached them for a flat for his young family, recounts Turel. He was asked if he would be able to afford the rent which was then over Rs 300. Aibara, who then earned between Rs 300 and Rs 350 from the same organization, "was a very sentimental man. He was very disappointed and made up his mind to go to Sodawaterwalla (Agiary) to better his prospects," remembers Turel. "He had been made to run from pillar to post," attests Peer.

Unlike other Zoroastrian scholar priests, Aibara had no formal education beyond the Gujarati texts, had made no original study of the *Avesta* texts, notes Kotwal. Ranina described him however as an "intensely perceptive thinker (who) made many a scholar feel ashamed." Kotwal credits him with intuition and a desire to learn.

In 1986 with the strength of the CAM reduced to two students and the cavernous building resounding with silence, it seemed only a matter of weeks before the institution's final closure. Turel says he fought a war on two fronts to keep the institution going - getting Aibara, by then a heart patient, to agree to the proposition of taking up the joint principalship of the Madressa ("*Mahne tahmaru naam joiyéch*. On the strength of your name I'll get the boys," he reportedly told Aibara) and getting

**"Mahne tahmaru
naam joiyéch. On
the strength of your
name I'll get the
boys"**

the trustees to agree to his appointment. In two years the strength of the student body rose to 11, says Turel.

Before secular studies had been discontinued, leading to the institution's unhappy decline, the boys used to attend the neighboring Madhavdas Amarsey School for their normal school education. Now the school declined to admit the Madressa's boys once more. When Aibara and Turel went in person to plead the Madressa's case, Aibara chanced upon a Parsi teacher whom he had helped with *nirangs* at some earlier time. The lady

reportedly undertook to present the Madressa's case to the school's management and the boys' normal, secular education was reestablished. While at the Madressa, Aibara saw to it that the students and their instructors were served the same fare and that the children had everything provided for their benefit.

Fifteen days before his death Aibara resigned from the Madressa. Though he travelled twice a week by taxi, the strain on his health had begun to tell. Since the muktads in August, Aibara speculated every now and then that his end may be near, says his wife Nergish. He instructed her and their son, Ervad Yezdi (now the panthaky at the Karani Agiary), to keep the Saheb's work going, continue with giving the prayers to those who seek, maintain the DJSKMAT, etc. On Behram roj (two days before the end) he wondered, "Hun bè divas ma mari to nahi jaun (will I die within two days)?" recalls the family. On the fateful day he was particularly joyous and kept saying, "Mané hawa badalvich (I want a change of air)" by which the family inferred that he wanted to get away for a holiday, least expecting the fatal end at 12.45 pm. Somewhere along these last few weeks, Aibara even instructed his family to schedule his funeral 24 hours after his demise!

In an interview with *Parsiana* in 1987 Aibara had recounted how he had taken up the work of helping people with *nirangs* in 1972. Visions of

Kookadar, and a voice within, citing page, verse and line from different scriptures, enabled him to help not only Zoroastrians but people of other faiths, using their own literature which was not familiar to him. The correlation of vision, voice and message: "Maru baaki rahelu kaam tamuné chalavanuch (you have to continue with my unfinished work)," which Aibara strove so hard to discharge for 17 years, is now the heritage of Nergish and Yezdi and as of Ardibehst mah, Nergish has been making herself available to anyone seeking spiritual help.

"He had a lot of detractors. (But) he had his convictions (and) stood up for what is right. He took bouquets and brickbats with equanimity," attested Ranina at the condolence meeting.

Aibara had related to *Parsiana* how some people returned the photographs and prayers (which he provided absolutely free in an endeavor to help) with a reprimand to stop his "dhong (farce)." Others had told *Parsiana* that "there are several spirits and existences in the unknown world which could easily impersonate saints." One high priest had questioned, "Do you want to start a new cult?" Another had suggested, "There shouldn't be any agent between you and Ahura Mazda." (Nonetheless, among those who requested a *taaviz* was the late Indira Gandhi, then prime minister of India, said Master. The family confirmed that Indira had written to thank Aibara for his help.) There had been other allegations – that the *nirangs*

were Muslim prayers; that Aibara was hungry for power and pelf.

A particularly disappointing episode for Aibara had been the Cusrow Baug residents' veto of his planned expansion of the Karani Agiary ("A 'milestone' round our necks," *Parsiana*, March 1985). A continuing source of unhappiness was that few young people attended the religious lectures at the Agiary on every Hormuzd and Behram roj which he conducted alternately with Master-Moos.

Yet, such was the impact of Aibara's successful tour of the US and Canada in 1984 (where he had distributed *nirangs* and lectured on the religion just as he did at Cusrow Baug) that a New York resident reportedly flew into Bombay just to attend the uthamna ceremony. The Zoroastrian Society of Ontario paid tribute to Aibara's memory two days after his demise with a *sarosh-no-kardo* performed by the mobeds, as its newsletter informs.

Some time before he died, Aibara had assured his pregnant daughter-in-law Amy (Yezdi's wife) that she would bear a son on March 28. The date did not coincide with the calculations of the doctor who had scheduled the delivery more than a week later. That Amy went into labor on March 28 and Farhad was born the following day, has done much to assuage the family's grief at Aibara's sudden death. It was almost as he had predicted...

Aibara is survived by his wife Nergish and sons Yezdi and Homyar.

ZOROASTRIANS ABROAD

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At its May meeting ZAC commemorated Mother's Day with its head priest Ervad (Dr) Kersey Antia dedicating the trandurasti prayer to all mothers, informs the newsletter. President Kayomars Mehta followed with a talk on the meaning of the *Atash Nyaish*. Based upon the series of talks given by the late Dastur Navrooz Minochehr-Homji during his Chicago stay, Mehta's speech riveted audience attention of the old and young alike.

"Our repeated attempts to get sandalwood shipped from India have failed and our estimates show that our present stock will be consumed by the end of the year," informs the newsletter. It urges community members to help resolve the logistical problem of a continuing supply for the darbe mehr by purchasing and ferrying *sukhad* in the

event of personal trips to India. The appeal promises reimbursement in advance of the purchase if the prayer room committee chairman Ervad Pes Vazifdar is informed of an impending trip.

Engineering student Afshin Sadeghi of Northwestern University has been nominated to the National Deans' list by Dr Jerome Fleming, dean of the College of Arts and Science, notes ZAC's June newsletter. He will now be eligible to compete for a \$ 25,000 scholarship award. He has already earned a scholarship towards tuition, room and board from his university.

Afshin and his brother Armin, both of whom are working their way through college, entered the US two and a half years ago and have achieved academic excellence despite various difficulties, notes the newsletter.

Another Zoroastrian to make it to the Northwestern University's dean's list for the winter quarter of the 1988-89 academic year was Neville Bilimoria, informs ZAC. Bilimoria is in his second year at the College of Arts and Science.

In the fifth and final year of his undergraduate degree course in architecture at the Virginia Tech University – reportedly one of the finest architectural schools in the US – Naval Rustomjee is finding it difficult to meet the year's cost of \$ 10,000, notes the June newsletter. In response to Rustomjee's appeal for assistance, ZAC president Kayomars Mehta has contacted the dean at Virginia Tech and is exploring various possibilities of helping the talented honors student. The community's help has been solicited on Rustomjee's behalf.

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