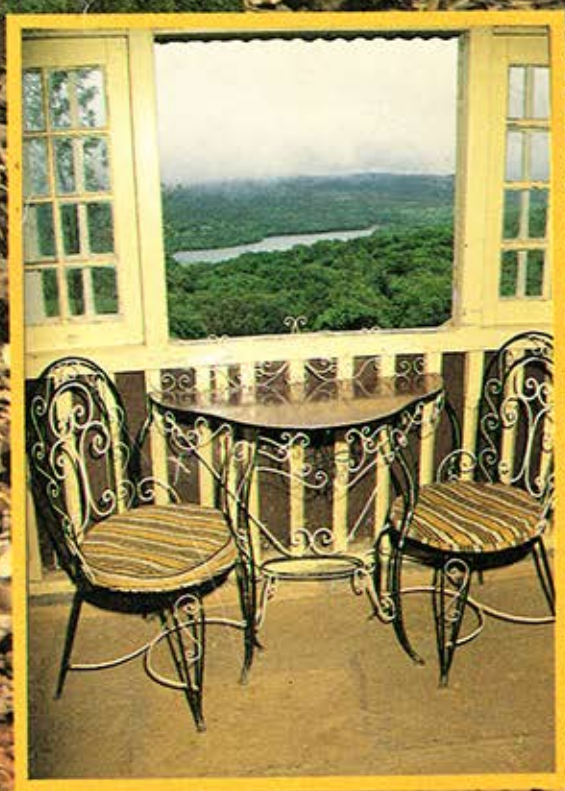
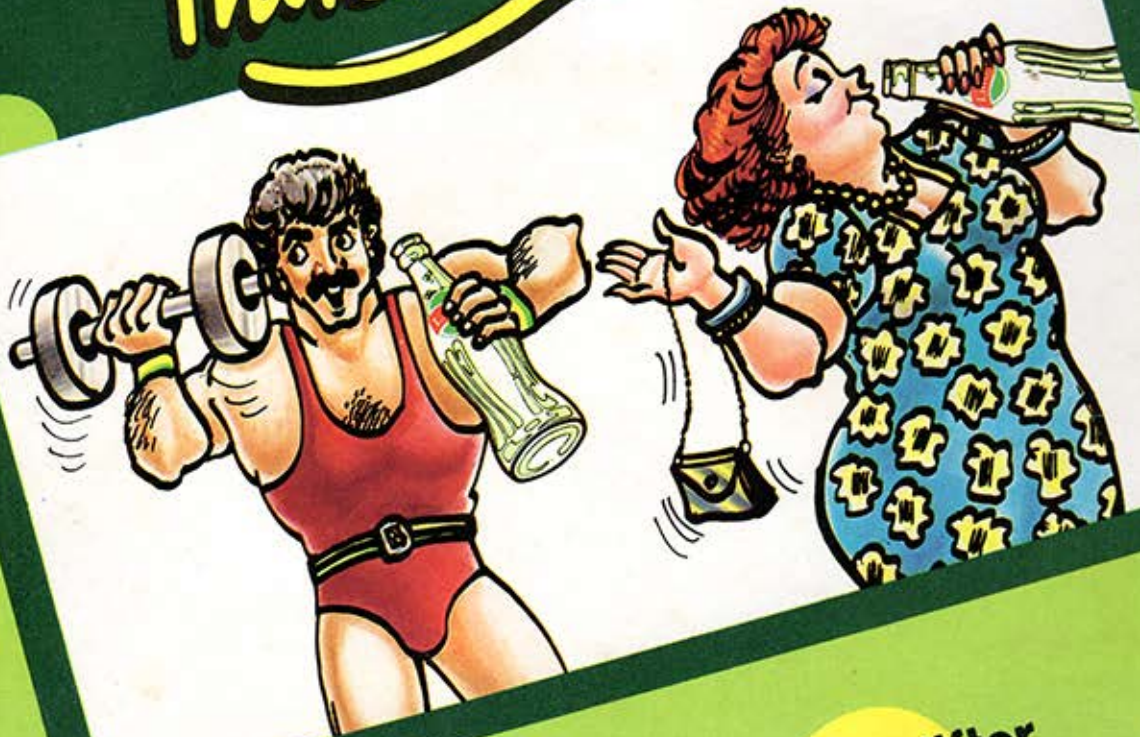


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Deborah Fernandes

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ADVERTISING EXECUTIVE Cheryl D'Penha

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 Unsigned letters or those without a complete address will not be published.

"Does Zoroastrianism..."

Mr D. K. Balsara claims to have come across an evidence of reincarnation in the *Koran* ("Does Zoroastrianism..." *Parsiana*, June 1989). But "life again" in his citation from *Koran* 2. 28 does not (rather cannot) have a reincarnation ring, that is to say, life again on this earth in human form. This citation when read along with *Koran* 71.17,18 ["And God has made you grow out of the earth as a growth. Then He returns you to it, then will He bring you forth a (new) bringing forth"] and *Koran* 56.57-61 ("We have created you, why do you not then accept the truth? Have you considered the life-germ? Is it you that create it, or are We the Creators? We have ordained death among you and We are not to be overcome, that We may change your attributes and make you grow into what you know not") clearly shows that "life again" means

something quite different from what some Parsi reincarnationists would have us believe.

Again, the principle that the dead do not return to life (in the reincarnationist sense) is enunciated in *Koran* 23.99,100: "Until when death overtakes one of them, he says: 'Send me back, my Lord, send me back. Haply I may do good in what I have left.' By no means! It is a (mere) word that he speaks; and before them is a barrier (*barzakh*) until the day (when) they are raised" (see Maulana Muhammad Ali, *Translation of the Holy Quran*, Lahore 1928). Further, there is a saying attributed to the Prophet of Islam according to which Abdulla's son Jabir "was informed by the Prophet that his father Abdulla, who was slain in a battle with the enemies of Islam, on being asked by the Almighty what he desired most, expressed a wish to go back into the world, and be slain again in the cause of truth, but received the reply that this could not be for 'the word has gone forth from Me that they shall not return.'" This episode is quoted by Muhammad Ali in his work cited above on page 334 fn 1.

Finally, it can be said that in Zoroastrian, Vedic, Judaic and Christian doctrines, we find no mention of reincarnation. However, when Islam was revealed, times were different in that some people had started talking about reincarnation and hence, in the Islamic tradition we find an unambiguous denial of this un-Zoroastrian, un-Vedic, un-Judaic and un-Christian doctrine. It is indeed intriguing that some Parsi scholars, who claim to be students of comparative religion, should seek refuge in "can't say" while answering question 11d of the *Parsiana* questionnaire referred to by your correspondent.

FARIBOURZ NARIMAN

"How the Parsi dead..."

I was surprised to read in "How the Parsi dead are disposed" (*Parsiana*, May 1989) that you have mentioned all the dokhmas in India except our dokhma of Lonavla. As the vice president of the Lonavla-Khandalla Parsi Anjuman I would also like to answer your questionnaire on behalf of our Anjuman.

In Lonavla there are about one or two deaths in a year. The mode of disposal of the dead is by the dokhma system. Our Anjuman prefers the dokhma system but we have no professional nassessalars or khandhias. We have volunteers. Also, we don't have a sufficient number of vultures.

The cleaning of the dokhma is done by us. Formerly, before my coming on to the

committee, we used to get nassessalars from Poona but after my coming to the committee we clean it by ourselves as we don't want to rely on others.

Till now no non-Parsis have requested to see the face of the dead. But if anybody makes such a request, then we will grant the request just outside the dokhma.

The cost of the funeral and for the first four days' ceremonies is Rs 650 but if anybody wants to pay more, he may do so. At the same time, if someone cannot afford it, the service is provided at the Anjuman's expense.

The duration of prayers after death depends upon the wishes of individual families, most people continuing them year after year.

MANECK J. SHROFF
Lonavla

Interreligious dialogue

Interreligious dialogue being the need of the hour in a pluri-religious nation like India, your readers may be interested in learning from the experience of the students of St Xavier's College who recently visited many religious institutions including the Athornan Boarding Madressa at Dadar. The new Department of Religious Studies at the College aims at promoting interreligious understanding through varied programs, two among them being "A Dialogue with World Religions" and "A Yatra of Religious Shrines."

Participating in our "Dialogue" series, Mr Ramiyar Karanjia, a research scholar closely associated with our department, had instructed our students on the Holy Scriptures as well as on the socioreligious significance of Zoroastrianism. However, as we went along our "Yatra of Religious Shrines" and profitably visited a Hindu temple, a Jain mandir, a Muslim masjid and dargah, a Christian church, a Buddhist vihara, a Sikh gurudwara and so on, and received a warm welcome at every shrine with a fruitful dialogue between the College students and the heads and holy persons of the respective shrines, the Parsi fire-temple remained the only religious shrine that denied us admission. That is, till Ervad Rustomji Panthaki, principal, Athornan Madressa, welcomed us to visit his model fire-temple where he trains his Parsi student-priests.

Fifty college students participated in the Yatra and their eagerness to witness the Zoroastrian religious ceremonies was well rewarded. Madressa students, attired in their traditional priestly dress, performed parts of the yasna, boi and jashan ceremonies, while Ervad Rustomji, Mr Ramiyar

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Karanjia and the teacher, Mr Berjor Panthaky, gave us a detailed commentary on the deep meaning, the rich symbolism and the spiritual significance of each ceremony.

This special demonstration naturally led to a fruitful dialogue and exchange of views on Zoroastrian beliefs and practices. It was gratifying to learn that the Athornan Madressa was a unique institution in Bombay, providing religious priestly training with regular academic education, all free of cost, thanks to the generous financial support of the Parsi community. Voluntary donations had also raised the new Madressa Annexe, to continue and expand the valuable services of this Institution. The Parsis have indeed contributed much to the city of Bombay both in the secular and spiritual fields, one shining example being the establishment and maintenance of such a Madressa which is now launching out into interreligious dialogue in keeping with the need for religious harmony and national integration.

Fr AUBREY A. MASCARENHAS, S. J.

Head, Dept of Religious Studies, St Xavier's College

Problems we can't ignore

Today's Parsis need to be pitied, especially those who live a scattered existence

all over the globe.

For those who stay in baugs and colonies, marriage is but a matter of time. But, the unfortunate percentage not in close proximity with the community are deprived of any social contact with their own kind and consequently suffer in more ways than one.

"What do they lose?" you ask. Well, for one thing, we Parsis have an endearing culture which we are fast losing out on. So many are not even aware that there is one and those who are in the know, feel it has no practical use in our busy modern lives. Culture belongs to the past and should stay there. That's the general trend.

Another important repercussion is that the young people of our community get no opportunity to mix with their own kind. So they are obliged to seek company elsewhere. Being young, it is natural that they should fall in love. Even old people do nowadays. So one can't fault those who end up marrying outside the community especially when they have not been exposed to any kind of healthy interaction with their own community and cultural heritage. They don't realize what they are losing out on because they have never known it.

What we need to do is borrow a few

points of social interaction from other communities. Take Muslims or Christians for instance. They have regular prayer meetings in their respective places of worship. These gatherings are not solely for the purpose of prayer. They meet regularly at their nearest and most convenient place of worship. Friendships are made and ties are strengthened. People get to know each other well. A kind of bond develops which sustains itself.

Now Parsis don't have this kind of regular interaction on a daily or even a weekly basis. This is because our religion does not believe in any kind of compulsion. But for other communities it is religion itself which has been responsible in bringing people closer.

Ms H. S. IRANI

Inbreeding: a clean chit

Many times it has been made out that our receding population may be due to inbreeding. *The Times of India*, September 2, 1989 sets our doubts at rest. (*The Times* reports that Dr N. Appaji Rao, professor in the department of biochemistry at the Indian Institute of Science in Bangalore, announced that a study by a team of scientists from the Institute has refuted the longheld notion that consanguineous marriages increase infant



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mortality or genetic disorders in children.

The study began in 1980 and so far 1,20,000 newborns have been tested. The study involved interviewing mothers who delivered in 50 hospitals and the collection of three drops of blood of the newborn which was analysed to determine the quantity of 20 different amino acids.

Thirty percent of the children examined were born to closely related couples of which 17 percent were born to uncle-niece marriages, 11 percent to first cousins and two percent to second cousins, notes the report. The six different genetic disorders in 40 newborn babies registered an incidence rate that varied between one out of 7,000 to one out of 32,000. "This rate is astonishingly close to that seen in an essentially outbred population like in western Europe and America where marriage among close relatives is less than one percent compared to 30 percent in South India," notes the report. The survival rate of the offspring was 95.6 percent in the case of consanguineous marriages and 96 percent where the parents were not related. "The observation highlighted that consanguinity has no marked effect on fer-

tility," *The Times* added.)

I am the fifty-fourth direct descendant of Saint Naryosang Dhaval. My sons are big, hale and hearty and also their children. Our entire clan, known as the "Sanjan Tola," comprising nine families of Udwarda, have always married their cousins for the last 1,280 years that we have been in this country and all our relations were big, larger than normal size and each family had more than 10 children. I am one of 12 issues of my parents. I went through a few wars, including World War II.

R. J. KATILA

"Parsi surnames"

I would like to add a little more to what Mr R. H. Kuka wrote on "Parsi surnames" (*Parsiana*, July 1989).

"English" surnames were acquired by Parsis working with Englishmen as in the case of Bolton, Bennett and Crawford. It would be interesting to read if a "surnameologist" could dig into the matter.

The surname "Lally" is not from "Lal;" in the north "Lali" is also a surname. In the UK telephone directory there are Englishmen with the surname "Lally,"

which was known to me in 1919 when my brother went there for his studies in forestry. Besides, "Lally" is a French surname. I have observed the same in Switzerland also and even seen a "Lally Villa" there. Hope more information will be forthcoming.

PHEROZE F. LALLY

To be an Indian citizen

Smuggle out silver,
Smuggle in gold,
Murder your enemy,
In a packed court-room,
Be a mafia,
To be a good Indian citizen.

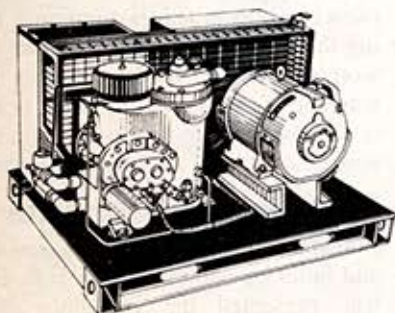
Your forefathers were shipbuilders,
They started textile industries,
7000 workers are employed in them,
Thousands in affiliated industries.

Your wealth is given in many charities,
For maternity and animal hospitals,
Then you have to beg for Indian

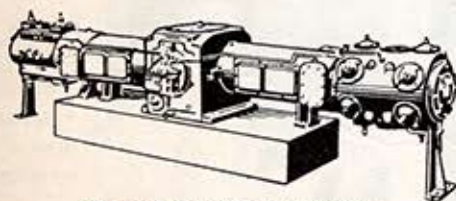
citizenship.

Ms R. BULSARA

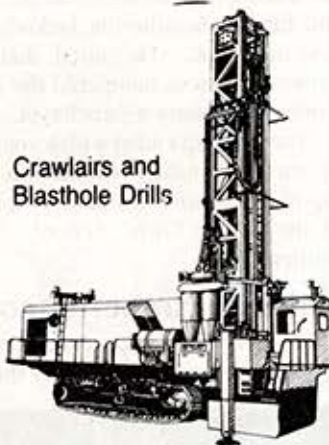
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Events and Personalities

Poona's prominent Parsis

Eight Poona Parsis from different walks of life were felicitated by the Poona Parsee Panchayat (PPP) at a function held on July 23, 1989, notes a press release signed by Meher M. Anklesaria, president of the PPP. Those honored were: Dr (Ms) Banoo J. Coyaji for being awarded the Padma Bhushan this year for her work in the field of family planning, Dr Jal M. Mehta for winning an international award for his selfless service in the field of leprosy eradication, Dr Zal S. Tarapore for his receiving the Central Board of Irrigation and Power's diamond jubilee award, Dr Tehmuras R. Sarkari for being recognized by the Government of India when he developed a technique to achieve substantial fuel economy, sports organizer Ms Arnavaz D. Damania on bagging the Government's Shiv Chhatrapati Award for 1986-87 for her contribution to hockey, Bejan R. Fisher also for receiving the Shiv Chhatrapati Award, Ms Kayanush G. Irani on getting an all-India ranking in the 1988 ICSE (Indian Certificate of Secondary Education) examination and Piroj M. Devierwala for standing fifth in Maharashtra in the 1988 HSC (Higher Secondary Certificate) examination.

At the felicitation function (from left): Minoo Irani, D. Anklesaria, Patrawala, M. Anklesaria, Noshirwan and Coyaji



At the onset of the program which was held at the Mazda Hall of the Dastur Primary School, a prayer was recited by the Poona High Priest Dastur Hormazdiar Dastur Noshirwan. Each award winner's citation was read out by trustee Marzban Kaikobad while chief guest of the evening Marzban Patrawala, minister of state for general administration (including protocol), law and judiciary and tourism, presented the commemoration plaque and floral tributes to the recipients, the release notes.

After the presentation ceremony, Coyaji, on behalf of all those felicitated, thanked the board of trustees for honoring "the past, the present and the future."

The achievements of the awardees should inspire the youth to rise to great heights, said Patrawala in his address. He promised the PPP all governmental help for their proposed housing scheme. The community, he thought, had enough talent and funds available but lacked a willingness to work. He noted that conflicts between trustees hampered the successful working of many a punchayet.

The evening ended with a vote of thanks by trustee Dinshaw Anklesaria and singing of the national anthem by the students of the Dastur Girls' School, the release further adds.

Calcutta runner honored

Calcutta's veteran sportswoman Ms Prochie Mehta was felicitated by the Calcutta

Parsee Club at a function held on August 19, 1989 for her outstanding performance at the Fifth Asian Veterans' Championships, notes a write-up by Ms Persees Antia from Calcutta. A silver salver and flowers were presented to the runner to convey the community's appreciation of her achievements at the Championships, held from December 3 to 5 last year in Taiwan, where Mehta won two silver medals (in the 200 and 400 meters) and a bronze (in the 100 meters). The relay team in which she participated also came in second.

Those speaking at the function lauded Mehta's contribution to various activities connected with sports. She has been instrumental in training young players in the field of basketball and athletics and has brought a sense of professionalism in conducting the annual sports day of the Club. Mehta is a familiar figure at the Club on weekends where she diligently exercises and practices running. Thanking the Club for honoring her, the sportswoman spoke of her experiences in Taiwan and at the World Olympics held later in Eugene in Oregon, the write-up further notes.

Naoroji award for Tata

Eminent head of the Tata industrial empire and India's aviation pioneer, J. R. D. Tata was presented the Dadabhoy Naoroji Memorial Fund Award for 1988 for his



*Mehta:
Calcutta's
veteran
sports-
woman*

outstanding contribution to the development of industry in the country, notes *The Times of India* of September 13, 1989. Tata was presented the award, constituting a plaque and a cash purse of Rs 10,000, by Dr M. S. Gore, chairman of the Dadabhoy Naoroji Memorial Fund, at a function held



in Bombay on September 12.

Every year awardees are selected from among those who have made a notable contribution to their chosen field of endeavor. The prize, instituted in 1917, however does not recognize efforts in the arena of politics. Tata now shares the distinction with former recipients of the award like Homi Seervai, Astad Gorwala, the late Vijay Merchant and the late Dr Salim Ali.

The award money, and added to that his own mite, Tata pledged to a charitable trust wedded to women's education, *The Times* noted. When receiving the honor, Tata commented on its "moral and intellectual values (that) surpassed all past honors." He emphasized the need for India to concentrate on its population, education, industrialization and power structure policies. The decision to increase privatization of industries, the industrialist appreciated but his greater concern was "population explosion, the factor that should concern the nation foremost," said the grey-haired octogenarian. Education of the masses alone will dispel the ignorance about population control, he added, citing the example of China. If India does not take adequate measures, its population which was about 350 million in the 1930s would touch one billion by the end of the century, Tata's estimate was quoted in *The Indian Post* of September 13, 1989.

The government policy of underpaying political servants, yet permitting them to wield excessive power, was also lamented by Tata.

Honor for Soonawalla

In the field of medicine it was Dr Fardoon P. Soonawalla who was selected to receive the 1988 National Citizens' Award for his pioneering work in urology and family planning, notes the *Jam-e-Jamshed* of August 20, 1989. The award was pre-

sented to Soonawalla by the Prime Minister of India Rajiv Gandhi at the PM's residence in New Delhi on August 1.

The National Citizens' Club, that confers this award on eminent Indians is committed to the cause of social welfare and strengthening national and cultural integration. Some of the other recipients selected for this award are: Baba Amte (social work), Justice Y. V. Chandrachud (jurisprudence), Sam Pitroda (scientific research), Raj Kapoor (posthumous - films) and Kapil Dev (sports).

Reportedly the first to develop microsurgery for urological operations in India, as also to make an artificial kidney machine, Soonawalla has to his credit one of the largest number of kidney transplants in India, notes his bio data.

Honorary urologist to the Governor of Maharashtra, he is presently professor emeritus of urology and transplantation at Nair Hospital and the T. N. Medical College. Medical institutions like the Breach Candy Hospital, Nanavati Hospital, Jaslok Hospital and B. D. Petit Parsee General Hospital have him on their board of honorary doctors. He has participated in many national and international conferences and has also contributed to several medical journals, the bio data states.

Realizing the importance of population control in the country, he joined the Family Planning Association of India as honorary surgeon in the mid '60s. The '70s saw him and his brother Rustom, an eminent Bombay-based gynecologist, conduct extensive training courses and establish family planning centers as well as treat infertility in India and other countries. The duo's original sterilization techniques and instruments developed by them have been adopted and used throughout the world.

A distinction student in his college days, winning three gold medals in the MS (Master of Surgery) exam, Soonawalla later passed

Rashid Bamanbehram (far right) receiving the Best Press Photographer Award for the year 1988-89 from Rotary president Adi Mulla at a function organized by the Rotary Club of Bombay on June 20, 1989

Left: Soonawalla (in suit) receiving award from Gandhi

two exams in FRCS in London in a record time of six weeks. He returned to India as a qualified surgeon and whilst building up his surgery practice he also undertook research on the treatment of kidney failure, further adds his bio data.

Machi trust still active

The Atash Behram Atash Adarian Machi Trust, that has since its inception over a year ago helped sustain the sacred fires in fire-temples, is in need of funds. With the steep escalation in the prices of sandalwood, it has become exceedingly difficult to keep the fires burning in the fire-temples. The Trust was hence formed in July last year, to supply maachis to the fire-temples where there are no patrons to offer sandalwood at the change of different *gahs* (periods of the day corresponding to the time cycle), notes the *Jam-e-Jamshed* of August 20, 1989.

Since the corpus of the trust is left intact and only the interest accruing thereon used for the sandalwood offerings in the name of hama anjuman (community at large), the funds available are limited. Those who would like to contribute to the corpus can send their donations to: Dr (Ms) Nelie R. Noble, 'D,' Khalakdina Terrace, August Kranti Marg, Bombay 400036; Dastur (Dr) Firoze M. Kotwal, High Priest, Wadia Atash Bahram, Princess St, Bombay 400002, or Burjor H. Antia, C/o Mulla and Mulla Solicitors, Jehangir Wadia Bldg, M. G. Rd, Fort, Bombay 400001, further adds the *Jamé*.

Scout group's platinum

The Sethna's 18th West Bombay Scout Group, that celebrated its platinum jubilee year, is the only scout group in the state of Maharashtra that has continuously run for 75 years, notes a souvenir released during the year.

The activities planned for the platinum jubilee year - August '88-August '89 - were a jashan ceremony, a trip to Kashmir, a fund raising film show and a valedictory function.

The troop that functions under the auspices of the Sethna's Scouting Society holds meetings on every weekend and has annual camps for enjoyment as also training of the boys. At camps, a nominal fee is charged and concession given to the poor and deserving boys. Sports, competitions and scouting activities constitute an integral part of the camps. Tours and hikes are a regular feature. In addition to outings, the young scouts are encouraged to attend courses in patrol leader's training and proficiency badge training courses, the brochure notes.

This troop is "amongst one of the best groups, not only in west Bombay but also in the city of Bombay and the state of Maharashtra," wrote district commissioner of The West Bombay Bharat Scouts and Guides District Association, L. N. Dubey, in the platinum jubilee souvenir. Many other dignitaries too have commended the Group's activities.

The credit for the inception of this Group goes to the late Rustomji Edulji Sethna, an officer in the Parsi division of the St John Ambulance Brigade in charge of Cadet Corps for youngsters. When found that the boys were not much interested in first-aid work alone, he sought to find some activity that would keep the boys busy and at the same time mold their character and subsequent careers. With the help of Sir Baden Powell's book *Scouting for Boys*, Sethna with the support of a few friends gave scouting a try. He realized that the boys like scouting and thus was founded the group in the name of the Parsee Scouting Society in 1914 with around 15 Parsi boys, informs a history of the Group compiled by its scribe Khurshed D. Mistry who also officiated as committee chairman for the platinum jubilee celebrations.

Since 1950, boys of all castes and faiths are being admitted. The practice of nominal fees continues to this day with cubs having to pay Rs 1.50p annually, and rovers and scouts Rs 3. Life membership is Rs 51 and ordinary membership Rs 3 per



Left: Teruo Chinen awards certificate to Dinshaw (right)
Naoroji: Maharashtra's ace karateka



annum. The Society also enrolls handicapped boys who are given equal opportunities to work and play with others, the brochure further notes.

Karateka wins award

Twenty-four-year-old Karl S. Naoroji was awarded a Gaurav Padak for excellence in the field of karate, notes a press release. The certificate was presented to him by Maharashtra's chief minister Sharad Pawar at a function held in Pune in July 1989 to felicitate sportsmen from different fields. Naoroji now reportedly becomes the first karateka from Maharashtra to be honored with this Padak.

Holder of a first degree black belt from the Japan Karate Association of India (JKAI) and a second degree black belt from the All India Karate Federation (AIKF), Naoroji has represented India in many international karate tournaments. In fact he was invited to Honjo in Japan to train for tournaments. Last year he represented the JKAI in Muscat, Oman, where demonstrations were organized to promote the art of karate, his bio data notes.

Among the tournaments in which he has participated are the Yokote Prefecture Karate Tournament in Japan in 1984 and the Eighth World Karate Championships in Sydney in '86. The karateka has also successfully captained the Bombay team which won the first place at the All India JKAI Tournament and the All Maharashtra All Styles Tournament in February and May '87 respectively. Bagging the first place in the AIKF Tournament in August '88, Naoroji won two silver medals in the open kata (a set of exercises put together in an orderly manner) and the 60-65 kg kumite (bout) categories, states his bio data.

When invited or selected to represent India at tournaments abroad, Naoroji says that sometimes he has to turn down the offer. However attractive the proposal, he has to forgo the experience for want of

sponsors who would bear his travel and accommodation expenses and thus supplement the costs borne by the association.

Thrice a week he runs classes at Shivaji Park and Parel. The other days see Naoroji practising his own skills, specializing in the Shotokan style of combat. In 1982 when he took to martial art, it was more as a pastime for he had "nothing much to do in the evenings." Even now, he does not plan to go professional in this field.

A trainee engineer at El-Digi Systems, the karateka has done a diploma course in microprocessors and peripherals. He is currently studying for a business management diploma from the Indian Merchants' Chamber, adds his bio data.

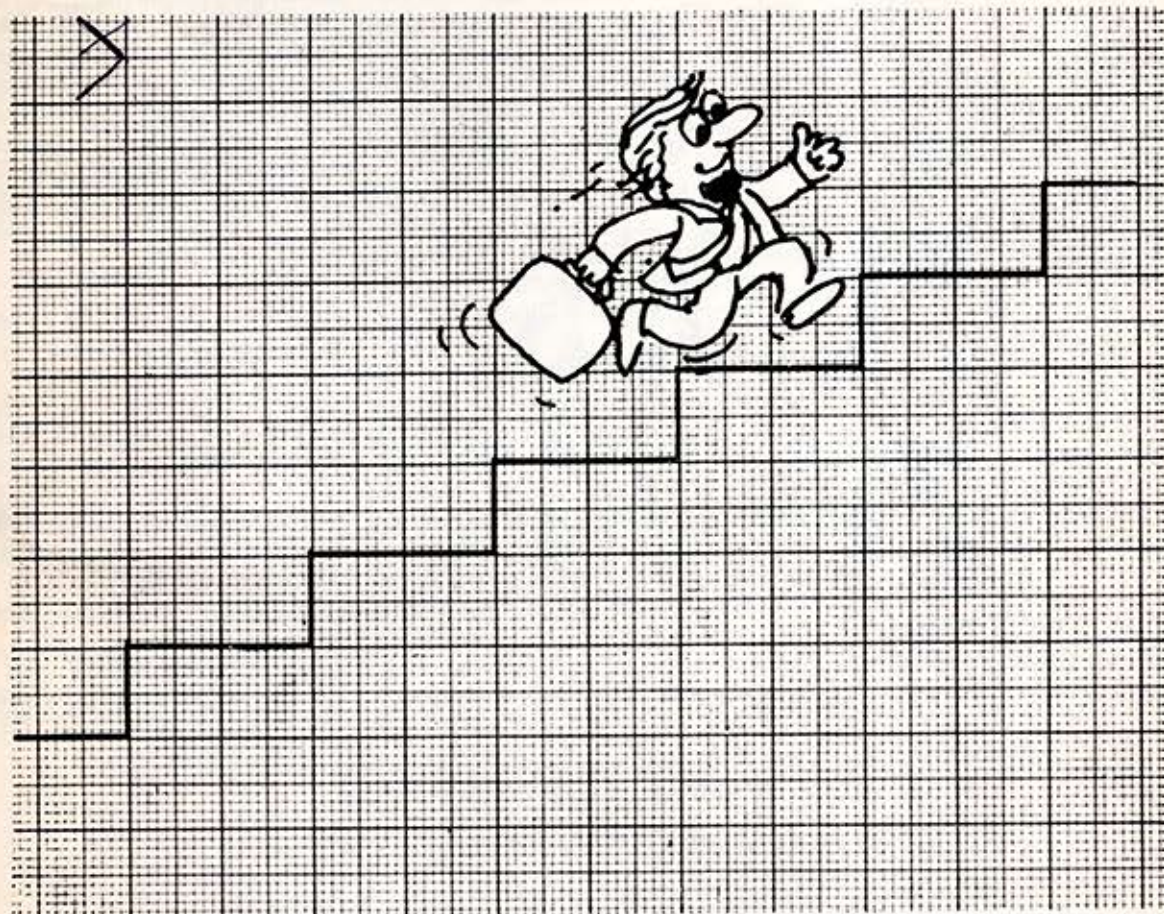
Besides karate, Naoroji's other interest is football. He has successfully represented the Wadia Sports Club in many tournaments, he adds.

Combat with karate

After undergoing training at an international karate camp in Spokane, Washington, Sensei Farokh Dinshaw returned to India in May this year, with a first degree black belt from Jundo Kan International, one of the reputed karate institutes in the world, noted the *Mid-Day* of May 27, 1989. At this camp he was reportedly the sole Indian representative.

Principal and chief instructor of Combat Techniques and Fitness Centre, earlier in March the Sensei was invited to conduct a camp at the National Defence Academy in Khadakvasla, Poona. Dinshaw also teaches this martial art to the students of the Indian Army School at Colaba and the Green Lawns School at Breach Candy, he notes. In addition he conducts classes: one at Bhulabhai Desai Road, two at Nepean Sea Road and one at Powai. At his dojos (practise halls of karate) around 200 students are given "personalized training." His classes demand and maintain a high degree of commitment to the art of karate,

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notes a press release.

Some of his students have been reportedly selected for national scholarships in sports by the Gopi Krishna Piramal Hospital in Bombay which entitles them to avail of free gym facilities, and to get international exposure through coaches, seminars and workshops, says Dinshaw.

The fact that there is not a single Parsi student in his classes, 29-year-old Dinshaw openly admits, yet he believes that "Parsis are genetically stronger."

Recalling his own interest, Dinshaw revealed, "Born weak, it became an obsession with me to be fit." Inspired by Bruce Lee, the legendary hero of martial arts, Dinshaw started karate in 1975 under Sensei Pervaz Mistry. But he had to discontinue for five years due to a serious back injury.

Training at several dojos in Japan, China and the USA has made Dinshaw travel a lot and he has put all his experiences together in a handbook for his students which he hopes to release next year, the paper notes. He is scheduled to conduct two camps for the officers of the Indian Army in December '89-January '90, he further notes.

A muscle 'n weight man

A gold medal at the Maharashtra State

Weight Lifting Championships at Satara. Another gold medal at the All-India University Weight Lifting Competition at Jalgaon. For Noshir Sherry Irani, winning medals in weight lifting and body building has become a routine affair during the last year, notes the *Jam-e-Jamshed* of September 17, 1989.

At the inter-collegiate and inter-university best physique contests Irani bagged the first prize. Poona-based Irani also came first at the Inter-Collegiate Powerlifting Championships at Vadgaon and Inter-University Powerlifting Championships held at Poona.

Besides being a good sportsman, the academically inclined Irani is currently doing a course in business management from the Symbiosis Institute of Business Management, the *Jamé* adds.

The high-risk lensman

"He gives a damn for anybody or anything and he always gets his picture," notes *The Afternoon Despatch and Courier* of August 5, 1989, of Adi Sadar, a 'five-foot nothing' freelance photographer who got beaten up by rioting taxi drivers on August 3. Sadar suffered a broken nose and ribs.

Sadar's camera too was not spared. The film was pulled out and the camera smashed to pieces by the unruly mob.

Unfazed by this happening, Sadar just picked up the broken pieces, and despite his injuries, went to a nearby studio, borrowed a friend's camera and returned to the job to shoot the required pictures.

Formerly working for *The Free Press Journal*, Sadar is known for his enterprising spirit. He would jump into burning buildings to shoot pictures, coming out with his hair singed, clothes burnt and burn marks all over his body; or enter rioting areas only to return with his head split with a soda bottle, the paper further notes. Sadar's photographs are frequently seen in the *Jam-e-Jamshed* too.

SPOTLIGHT

Human Side of Tata Steel, authored by Dr S. N. Pandey, was released by J. R. D. Tata in Bombay on August 18, 1989, notes the *Jam-e-Jamshed* of August 20. The book is dedicated to **Russi Mody**, chairman and managing director of TISCO.

Motorcar rallyist **Ms Navaz Bhathena** emerged as the overall winner at the Sports Craft Car Rally on May 21, 1989, notes the *Free Press Journal* of May 23, 1989.

Compiled by Roxana H. Kaka

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To eschew controversy

As an antidote to factionalism among Zoroastrians in the UK, Noshirwan Cowasjee has revived "Social Evenings" in London. Two events were held under this banner at the Montague Hall in Hounslow on April 29 and July 22, 1989. In a letter to *Parsiana* dated May 2, Cowasjee mentioned an attendance of 199 at the first meet and described the second occasion as having passed off with "flying colors" in a subsequent letter dated July 24. The third "Evening" was scheduled for October 21, 1989.

The "Social Evenings" were originally instituted by the late Dadabhoy Naoroji for UK-based Parsis to meet socially among themselves as also the Zoroastrians passing through London on business or quartered there as students or on posting for restricted periods of time, writes Cowasjee. Divisive topics such as religion and politics were avoided so as not to inhibit the conviviality so essential to foster community harmony and growth, emphasizes Cowasjee.

Organizing the meets on similar lines, Cowasjee has provided vegetarian and non-vegetarian Zoroastrian cuisine, bar facilities and disco dancing from 7 p.m. to midnight, hoping to foster friendship — and perhaps marriage — among young Zoroastrians based in the UK, Europe and North America. Accordingly, the evenings were advertised substantially in advance. In fact, Cowasjee originally intended the program to be projected for three consecutive years.

Anticipating "financial strain" as the entry charges (£4; £2 for old age pensioners and free for children under 12) have been priced very low, Cowasjee himself donated £500 towards the project together with his organizational service, while other donors contributed a further £451 as notes his circular letter dated February 15, 1989.

A prelude to the inception of the project was the long drawn correspondence between Cowasjee and the ZTFE (Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe Inc) president between September 28, 1988 and February 22, 1989. Cowasjee had sought to hire the halls at Zoroastrian House for these "Evenings." While the ZTFE was amenable to hiring the halls to Cowasjee if he were to hold private functions there, it refused him permission to hold the functions under the banner of "Social Eve-

nings." In her letter dated December 5, 1988 ZTFE president Ms Behroze Mody notes, "The social functions are the prerogative of the Association only; hence it cannot be held by an individual."

Another pleasant event was the revival of the Zoroastrian House library as notes Farrokh Vajifdar in an account accompanying his letter to *Parsiana* dated July 27, 1989. Vajifdar writes:

"Until recently it had escaped the attention of many that there had for long existed a library slumbering in forgotten recesses in Zoroastrian House, Compayne Gardens, London, England. And now the dusty, musty volumes were awakened and spruced up for a formal reopening which took place with some ceremony on April 29, 1988.

"The housing for the many valuable volumes was made possible through a munificent donation of £4,200 by Ms Maki Rusi Edulji, the wife of a recently elected trustee of the Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe.

"The reborn (reference only) library consists of books and papers given to the Zoroastrian communities of the UK over the decades by well-wishers and generous patrons. Until a comprehensive index is completed, it will not be possible to disclose the treasures contained on its shelves. Suffice it to say at this stage that its contents are in English, Farsi, Gujarati, French and German—all of considerable intrinsic value.

"All the more reason to report yet another act of great generosity, this time on the part of the Corpus Inscriptionum Iranicarum (CII), a most prestigious research body whose UK committee chairman, Dr A. D. H. (David) Bivar personally presented the full set of its text-volumes and portfolios published to date (current count 26). The series consists of *Inscriptions of Ancient Iran*, *Inscriptions of the Seleucid and Parthian Periods and of Eastern Iran and Central Asia* (in Parthian, Soghdian, Khwarezmian, Saka, Bactrian), *Pahlavi Inscriptions*, *Persian Inscriptions*, all being inscriptions originally on metal, stone, pottery and parchment.

"At the presentation on October 30, 1988 Bivar read a specially prepared paper on the inscriptions before a small audience whose interest and curiosity was repaid manifold by the volume and content of these abstruse works. He then expressed

the hope that some day UK Zoroastrians would themselves be taking part in these projects. Hopefuls should be warned—they will find themselves lining up against the redoubtable scholarship of, amongst others, Sir Harold Bailey, D. N. Mackenzie, R. E. Emmerick, R. N. Frye and the genial A. D. H. Bivar himself. The CII's publications represent the output of the finest and most painstaking scholarship ever devoted to Iranian and Zoroastrian epigraphic studies.

"Now that the slumbering giant has awakened, its appetite is near unsatiable, and all gifts of books, articles and journals specific and part-pertaining to Zoroastrianism will be much appreciated. Students, researchers and visitors to the UK are welcome to avail themselves of the facility of the community library in its quietly cheerful setting in Zoroastrian House."

NOLZA: on its own steam

The London Boroughs Grants Unit (LBGU) has stopped funding the running costs of the North London Zoroastrian Association (NOLZA), notes the Association's annual report for 1988-89 forwarded to *Parsiana* by its vice president Faridoon Madon on September 8, 1989.

The Unit has objected to the accumulated donations kept aside to commemorate NOLZA's decade of operations in 1992 plus the contributions towards an office premises fund—reflected as surplus in NOLZA's audited accounts. The Unit has insisted that until all accumulated surpluses are exhausted, the approved grant of £1,338 would not be released.

An appeal to the director generated the explanation that "for a group of our size with no paid staff and a very small turnover, the purchase of property was inappropriate but he was prepared to consider releasing part of the grant-in-aid towards additional rental costs of a room," notes the report. However, when a property was identified for the purpose, the head of the community division in the LBGU replied that "he could not agree to the figure of £6,000 rental per year, although it may be the market price."

Frustrated by the attitude of the LBGU, the Association has decided to proceed "on its own steam."

The executive committee—comprising president Curset Wadia, vice president Faridoon Madon, treasurer Kevin Wankadia, secretary Bomi Jila, social secretary Yas-

Reaching for the Sky



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Adenwalla: academic accolade

min Sepai and members at large Meherwan Sepai, Katy Daruwala, Sheriar Mehani, Bomi Daruwala, Wilson Daruwala and Dolly Gotla—had only three meetings in the course of the year but they feel NOLZA "is placed in a unique position to bring about sanity by channelizing their modest resources towards harmonization of conflicting issues sapping the body politic of the community."

Picnics and dinners have been buttressed by intellectual fare. Members were apprised of various legislative changes affecting social and welfare benefits, racial equality and immigration through talks by professionals. NOLZA is an active participant on Brent's Standing Council for Religious Education through its representatives Cyrus Mehta, Tina Mehta and Dr Rashna Writer—the nominated school visitors in Brent and Harrow for work pertaining to the Zoroastrian faith—informs the report.

Academic distinction

An expert in political philosophy and South Asian and British politics, Dr Minoo Adenwalla was elevated to the Mary Mortimer chair of Liberal Studies, notes the June 1989 press release of Lawrence University in Appleton, Wisconsin, USA. Nomination to an endowed chair is said to be the most prestigious recognition in academia

and is awarded to those senior faculty members who are considered to have distinguished themselves in the university's service.

The Mary Mortimer chair is one of six newly endowed professorships established by gifts of over one million dollars each to the university. The endowment is invested with the rest of the College's corpus, a portion of the annual income being used to provide salary and benefits to the chair's holder, as well as support services necessary for teaching and scholarship.

Ingrained with the politics of the subcontinent, Adenwalla, a Bombay University graduate, had won his doctorate from the Northwestern University in Illinois with his dissertation, "From Ram Mohan Roy to Gandhi: A study of the role of political ideology in the Indian National movement." Adenwalla has been a frequent contributor to *Commerce*, the *Journal of Asian Studies* and *The Annals*, the publication of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, notes his curriculum vitae.

India, Afghanistan and the US political scene have been subjects of public lectures. One of the earlier papers he had read was "The Bhagavat Gita in Indian Nationalism," at the Midwest Conference on Asian Affairs in 1960. A copy of his paper on "The image in international relations: Indo-US perspectives on Diego Garcia" was requested by the Washington State Department's Foreign Affairs Research Documentation Center. In 1967 Adenwalla was required to brief the Peace Corps volunteers on the rise of Indian nationalism, on current Indian politics and the structure of Indian federalism.

Adenwalla, who began his career as a teaching fellow at Bombay's Wilson College, went on to Lawrence via Northwestern and the University of Missouri. In 1962 he was one of six awardees of the Howard Foundation to spend a year at London University's School of Oriental Studies and the Institute for Historical Research studying "British responses to Indian nationalism."

Later in the decade he won the ACM Non-Western Studies Research Fellowship funded by the Ford Foundation to research the Indian party system with special reference to the Swatantra Party. A further Lawrence University Summer Research Grant followed in 1969. In 1976 he was nominated by the University of Wisconsin to participate in the State Department's scholar diplomat seminar program on South Asia.

Compiled by Arnavaz S. Mama

THE PARSIANA BOOK OF IRANIAN NAMES

The Iranian names of boys and girls along with their meanings which originally appeared in Parsiana have now been reprinted in an attractive 24-page booklet. The book, which is priced at Rs 15, is available on sale at:

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(H)all in Vain

Plans for converting
Sir Cowasji Jehangir
Hall into
a national gallery
of modern
art remain in limbo

Meher Pestonji

The smell of pigeon droppings is strong as one enters the empty shell of the Cowasji Jehangir Hall (C.J. Hall) in south Bombay. But inside, two tiers of horse-shoe shaped balconies speak of a grand past.

Only the prison-like iron poles are new to this imposing structure that has recently been selected by the tourism department of the Government of Maharashtra for illumination as one of the most beautiful monuments in Bombay. Measurements of height, width and breadth have been taken and the flood-lit illumination is likely to be completed in three months.

But even while the exterior is being plumed to peacock perfection, the hall itself is in a terrible mess. Neglect, bureaucracy and mismanagement have contributed to its reduction to nothing more

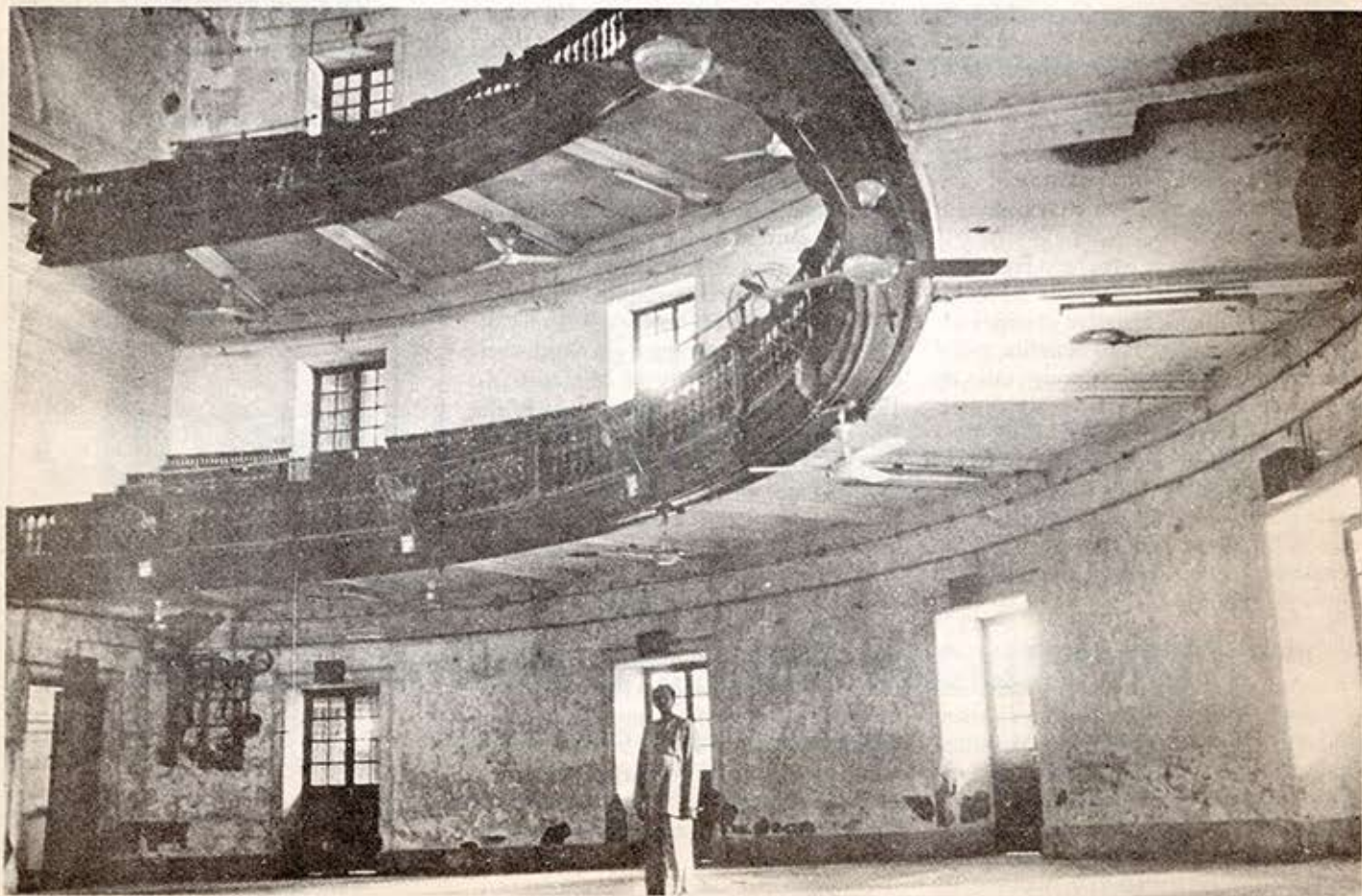
than a historical near-ruin.

Donated to the city of Bombay in 1911 by Sir Cowasji Jehangir, the hall was being managed by the state government till 1984 when it was decided to convert it into a contemporary arts museum in collaboration with the National Gallery of Modern Art, Delhi. A 30-year lease was signed and the hall handed over to the National Gallery which is managed by the central government.

Though five years, which is one-sixth of the lease period, have passed, little seems to have been done until now. Even the contract between the government and the architect appointed to renovate the

C. J. Hall: need to make it functional

Photo: Shailendra Yashwant/The Independent



place has not yet been signed. In fact, it is the central issue which has resulted in the long delay and the subsequent neglect of the hall.

Till the mid '50s C. J. Hall had played host to the cream of Bombay's cultural events — concerts of the Bombay Symphony Orchestra where maestro Zubin Mehta made his debut under the tutelage of his father Mehli Mehta, annual exhibitions of the Bombay Arts Society, political meetings addressed by Motilal and Jawaharlal Nehru, as well as annual meetings of the Parsi Punchayet for which a special provision had been made by Sir Jehangir.

It fell into disuse with the construction of the Jehangir Art Gallery in 1952 followed by auditoriums like the Tejpal, Birla and Patkar which were air-conditioned and had better facilities for lighting and acoustics. In the '60s and '70s the hall would be given on rent for wedding parties and for sales of an assortment of goods such as readymade garments and leather craft. Strong protests from the creative community, who resented this degeneration from culture to bazaar, were mainly responsible for the decision to convert it into a museum.

The conversion of a hall into an art gallery necessitates major architectural changes. It was decided to award the contract after an all-India design competition. Architect Charles Correa was retained as technical advisor on the advisory committee. The competition was won by Romi Khosla from Delhi. In addition to exhibition space, his design includes mezzanine floors with provision for seminar rooms, a library, a cafeteria, office and storage space for permanent exhibits as well as a travelling collection. While the outer shell of the building was not to be disturbed, the alterations involved strengthening the structure's foundation, which, being on reclaimed land, was found to have a sandy base. The estimated expenditure ran into crores.

"Renovating an old building is much more difficult than constructing a new one, but things were moving all right till two years ago," says artist Jehangir Sabavala who has been on the project's advisory panel since its inception. "The problem seems to have come up after the design competition. According to government policy, all government construction is to be undertaken by its Public Works Department (PWD). But does the PWD have the skill for this kind of a project? The advisory committee meetings are held

after six, eight months; there is constant coming and going of officials from the concerned ministries, both from the central and the state governments; and there's just no man on the spot to push the project along in Bombay."

The quality of PWD construction work is notoriously poor, particularly the finishing touches of plaster and painting. And, a museum has to be particular about such details; partly for aesthetic reasons and partly to preserve the valuable works of art especially in the humid climate of Bombay. Poor quality cement would result in bad plastering and the dampness that would seep in during the monsoon would damage precious paintings.

The architect, Romi Khosla, is reported to have written to the prime minister's office expressing his doubts about the feasibility of the CPWD executing his plans and has asked to be relieved of the responsibility should the government decide to go ahead with the CPWD as contractors. His stand has irked the bureaucrats in the ministry who accuse Khosla of walking away with the prestige and the prize money from the competition and walking out on his responsibility for the construction.

Manmohan Singh, joint secretary in the department of culture, is reportedly considering legal action against Khosla. Should this happen the project will only get delayed further.

The present director of the National Gallery, Dr Anis Farooqi, who heads the

"Renovating an old building is much more difficult than constructing a new one"

project from Delhi is reported to be "nice, but too soft to deal with the government. Instead of taking policy decisions and pushing for their implementation, he ends up sticking to regulations and taking instructions from the department of culture," says Kekoo Gandhi, of Bombay's Chemould Art Gallery, who was on the original advisory panel but was dropped later because he belongs to the private sector.

"You can't run a museum like a government department," he adds. "There is need for decentralization...the gallery (should) run as a semi-autonomous institution like the Prince of Wales Museum which receives funding from both central and state governments as well as private donations. It is independent in its day-to-day functioning."

Both the director and the architect are based in Delhi. At least three government officials — Ram Pradhan and Shankar Menon from the state government and Sarla Grewal from the center, each of whom is said to have been extremely helpful while they were on the project — have been transferred to other departments. Members of the Bombay-based advisory committee have been replaced.

There is unanimous agreement on the need for a local director who would have a finger on the city's pulse rather than operate by remote control from Delhi. He should be empowered to take decisions and report directly to the committee. Ten lakh rupees have already been spent on creating residential accommodation for the incumbent on the premises but no appointment has yet been made.

Senior artist K. K. Hebbar who has been on the panel from the beginning is "disgusted with all these grandiose plans and no one to take a decision." Sabavala is not in favor of piecemeal solutions and would like the city to have a small but full-fledged museum of contemporary art. Artist Akbar Padamsee feels that major alterations are not imperative and favors a more modest but time-bound plan that involves repairs, painting and air-conditioning the hall, and getting the gallery functional before the year ends.

Even with minimum renovation, air-conditioning is high on the list of priorities. It is recalled that the French museum authorities did not permit their painting exhibition to be brought down from Delhi to Bombay during the Festival of France as they were not satisfied with facilities in the existing galleries. Bombay should no longer be left without even one exhibition center that meets international standards.

Meanwhile paintings worth lakhs of rupees have been bought and stored by the art selection committee since 1985. Whether and when the public will gain access to view them remains a one crore rupee question.

Edited, abridged and reprinted with permission from The Independent, October 3, 1989

The Virtue of Truth

Stanley Insler

From the *Gathas*,
old Achaemenid
inscriptions,
the writings of
historians
and travellers,
Prof Stanley Insler
has culled
a social order
where truth prevailed



Herodotus, the Greek historian who was a contemporary of the great King Darius of ancient Iran, wrote in his remarkable history that the Persians esteemed the truth above all things. He went on to say, speaking with great respect, that the Persians hold it unlawful to speak of anything which is unlawful to do, and according to their thinking, the most disgraceful thing in the world is to tell a lie. This veneration of the truth among the ancient Iranians was indeed their most noteworthy feature, and throughout the history of the land, there was not a single foreigner who came to visit or to live among them who was not strikingly impressed by the love and respect for truth in that country. Through the passage of centuries, in the works of Greeks, Chinese, Indians and Arabs, this love and respect for the truth is mentioned endless times as perhaps the most remarkable trait of all Iranians.

What these foreign visitors wrote was no myth, no embroidery upon hearsay, or rumor, no pipe dream of their own arising from the lack of ethic or moral principles in their own countries. Recent evidence has shown us that truth was indeed associated with the spirit and life of the ancient Persians in such an intimate fashion that we ourselves today must take serious note of the honored and important role it played in their world. I am referring to the archaeological records unearthed during the past few decades in the excavations at Persepolis in Iran.

These records are naturally of great interest to the economic and political scholar because they represent the accounts of the different wares and products stored at the treasury and fortress of the Achaemenid kings, those royal rulers who founded and maintained a vast and powerful empire throughout the Near East that endured

from the sixth through the fourth century BC. But, to cultural and religious scholars, these records from Persepolis offer equal fascination, chiefly because the tablets containing these economic records are also accompanied by the names of the officials who were in charge of these inventories and their distribution. There are some 1,500 such names contained in the tablets—names not of kings or princes, nor priests and judges; simply names of minor officials and clerks who oversaw the wares in the storehouses. Herein lies their importance: they gave us a glimpse into the social constituency of the common people, much as the names contained in the old records of towns and villages allow us to see the composition and character of the society of early communities.

Remarkably, more than 75 of these names contain the word, truth. We encounter men called protector of truth (*artapana*), lover of truth (*artakama*), truth-minded (*artamanah*), possessing the splendor of truth (*artafarnah*), delighting in truth (*artazusta*), pillar of truth (*artastuna*), prospering the truth (*artafra*), having the nobility of truth (*artahunara*), in addition to a variety of others of similar composition. When we look further and find other fellows are named strong as a horse (*aspaugra*), sweet smelling (*hubaodi*), little hero (*viraka*), having good fame (*usavah*), winning a good prize (*humizda*), and the like, we realize at once how singular are the names containing the word truth.

By this I intend the following. If the majority of other names are built with elements signifying horses, heroes, fame, wealth, prizes, good fortune and all those other desirable things which parents wish for their children when they are born, then the great many truth-names show us that there were many parents who believed it

was more important for their children to love the truth, uphold the truth, prosper the truth, delight in the truth, and so forth, rather than to simply seek after material benefits in this world. The name chosen by parents for their children often expresses a wish, and the predominance of truth-names among the Old Persian officials reveals how deep-seated was the wish and respect for truth over all things even among families of humble origin.

But it was not only the common man who so dearly esteemed the truth among the ancient Persians. It was also the great Achaemenid kings who expressed their love and admiration for the truth and their thorough despicement of lies and deceit, exactly as Herodotus informs us. On the great inscription of Bisotun, the magnificent King Darius incised the following words with imposing solemnity: "The lie made these provinces rebellious, so that they deceived the people. But afterwards Ahura Mazda placed them into my hand... Thou who shalt be king hereafter, protect thyself vigorously from deceit. Punish well the man who shall lie and deceive, if thou shalt hope to keep the country secure... Know that I did this by the favor of Ahura Mazda, who bore me assistance because I was not aggressive, because I was not a follower of deceit, because I was not a doer of wrong — neither I nor my family. I conducted myself as befits the truth. Neither to the weak nor to the powerful did I do wrong..." Similarly, on another of his inscriptions stand these noble words: "I do not delight in what is false. It is not my desire that the weak should be

mistreated by the mighty, nor that the mighty be treated wrongly by the weak. What is right and truthful is my desire." Lastly, let us quote the following statement in an inscription of King Xerxes: "If you wish to be happy when living and blessed when dead, have respect for the law established by Ahura Mazda and worship Him and truth reverently."

These solemn words of the Old Persian kings are but an echo of the teachings of the more ancient Prophet Zarathushtra. In the *Gathas*, we find the important thought that whether a man be rich or poor, he should be a friend to the truthful person but an enemy to the follower of deceit and lies. There too we learn that heavenliness and immortality shall be the future possession of those who support the truthful in this world, but that a lifetime of darkness and a woeful existence shall be the final reward of the deceitful person. Further, Zarathushtra tells us, that a man who is good to the truthful person and serves the laws of Ahura Mazda shall himself reach the pastures of truth and good thinking, and save his family, his village and his country from destruction. In fact, when we read through the great words of the Prophet, we realize that truth lies at the center of his whole moral and ethical system.

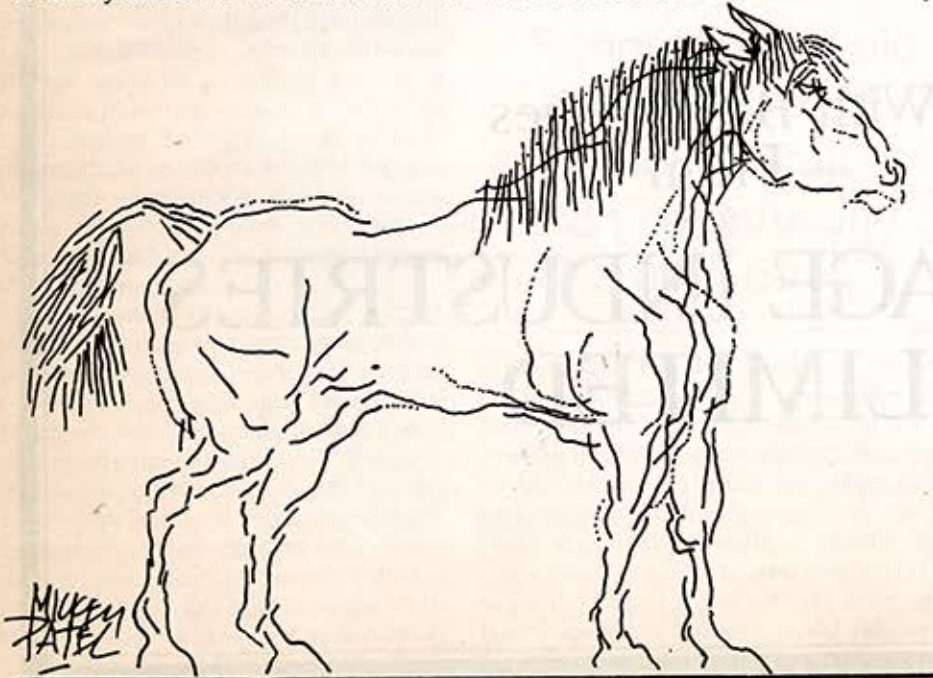
First and foremost we see in the Prophet's work that there is an intimate relationship between God and truth. Not only does Ahura Mazda dwell in the heights of truth, and in the paths which follow the straight ways of truth, but He is also of the same temperament as truth, sharing the same likes and dislikes. But the relationship

between God and truth is deeper — so Zarathushtra informs us — because Ahura Mazda is both the creator and companion of truth. Further, we are told, that the spirit of God himself, the *spenta mainyu*, became beneficent and virtuous through the effects of truth, and that Ahura Mazda learned to distinguish between what is just and unjust through the help of truth. Truth, then, according to the Prophet's view, is the most essential component in the world of God because it motivated him to create what is salutary and good, and it taught him to discern between right and wrong. It is through truth, therefore, that God achieved his nobility and his higher wisdom which characterize his very name, Ahura Mazda, the Wise Lord.

Similarly, truth plays a dominant role in the life of man. It is truth which prospers the creatures and makes the plants and waters increase. It is through the quest for truth that good understanding arises in the spirit of man, an understanding that teaches him to further the principles of God in good thoughts, in good words and in good actions. It is truth which also teaches man to discern between what is right and wrong. It is man's adherence to truth which gives full meaning to the existence of God and grants strength and enduring life to Him as well. Can the ethical principles God created have any life of their own if they find no support in the world of mankind?

Herein lies one of the great contributions of the Prophet Zarathushtra. By placing truth at the center of existence of both God and man, he taught us that a meaningful life is not possible without truth, because truth is the ultimate source of all good insight, all good action, all good discernment and all good achievement. It is essential to know in order to act correctly and justly, and the origin of all correct knowledge derives from the grasp of truth. This is an astonishing doctrine in terms of the early intellectual history of the world, but it is a doctrine that is so powerful and persuasive, so vigorous and positive, that it became the central idea of all early Iranian thought. It is not possible to think of the history of old Iran without thinking of the veneration of truth among its people, and it is Zarathushtra who first conceived and formulated the central role which truth holds in all of existence.

Why was Zarathushtra so preoccupied with the position of truth in the life of both God and man? He lived in a very remote age, long before there was a settled society in any modern sense of the term, and certainly long before the development of rich



and powerful kingdoms where priests or philosophers could gather in peace and quiet in order to discuss the questions of existence, and the nature of both God and man. To find an answer to this question we must once again look into the works of the Prophet and search his own words for clues to the problems he faced, problems which caused him to meditate upon the nature of human behavior and its results upon the human condition. Once we do this, we find certain disturbing facts about the times in which he lived.

First, Zarathushtra informs us that some of the nobles have been stealing the possessions of the true inheritors, and that in their greed, some of the priests have assisted them in this deceitful and dishonest activity. He informs us as well that even the old gods have ordained and hence permitted their followers to perform actions that result in dismal consequences for the rest of mankind. They have been destroying the pasture lands of the truthful persons, they have threatened them as well, and there has arisen a rift among the peoples, one which has caused strife and destruction in families, clans and provinces. In short, the world seems to be torn in two by conflicting forces, and deceit

and destruction seems rampant.

It is exactly under such troubled circumstances, when the world seems to be caught in the upheaval of contrary forces, when the past seems unfortunate and the future ever so dim, that a man of great insight like Zarathushtra wonders about what is right and wrong, what is just and unjust, and how the way to salvation might occur. It is exactly under such vexing conditions that he saw that the way for mankind to survive and create a good kingdom here on earth was to follow the principles which Ahura Mazda, in His higher wisdom, had created in harmony with truth.

Although millennia separate us today from the time of the prophet Zarathushtra, the problems of existence still persist. We are torn each day by conflict, sometimes in our family, sometimes in our profession, sometimes in our country and sometimes in the world at large. We see deception, theft and pointless destruction present all over the face of the globe. "Which way should we act?" we often ask, looking for the way to resolve the problem, to end the anguish. "What should we believe?" we also ask, looking for guidance in the face of trouble and woes. Sometimes the an-

swer lies within our power; most often there is no solution available to us on an individual basis. Nonetheless, we should follow the teachings of Zarathushtra and strive after the truth, giving life to it through our good thoughts, our good words and our good actions. Even though immediate solutions may elude us, the force of truth must persist. For, one day, the truth shall certainly prevail.

What the Prophet stated some 3,000 years ago is equally appropriate for all of us today: "Do persevere, for He shall grant to you the firm foundation of good thinking and the alliance of truth and wisdom. Come to terms with your reason, and bring to realization the most virtuous and blessed acts. If you are truthful to the truthful, the Wise Lord shall grant to you the sun-like gain of good thinking for your whole lifetime. I tell these words to you: bear them in mind. Through the correct conception acquire for yourselves and your people an existence of good thinking. Let each of you try to win the other with truth, for this shall be of good gain for each of you."

Dr Stanley Insler is professor of Sanskrit and Comparative Philology at Yale University, USA. His translation of the Gathas was published in 1975.

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Good AND Evil twin co-workers

Roni K. Khan

**A monotheistic, all-powerful God
has fabricated a dualistic universe based on
balance between opposing forces**

William H. Brawner's article, "Why I became a Zoroastrian"-2 (*Parsiana*, January 1989), perceives monotheism and dualism in the Good Religion as mutually exclusive concepts. Advocating dualism as the only truth, monotheism is denounced as a gross heresy and condemned as a perversion and distortion of the religion of Zarathushtra.

Brawner claims that believers in a single, Supreme Creator cannot explain the existence of evil without denying that their monotheistic God is good, all-powerful or the creator of all things. Thus, in his view, monotheists are locked in a hopeless, self-defeating contradiction, embarrassed by an unsolvable enigma of evil and forced to

admit that their God, who created everything, is also the culpable father of evil, allied to Ahriman and tainted by evil. His solution, therefore, would lie in demoting Ahura Mazda from single to dual status, placing Him on a level of equal but counteractive footing with Ahriman.

In the Zarathushtrian daena, it is not open to debate whether Ahura Mazda is monotheistic - Asho Zarathushtra himself tells us explicitly and unambiguously that He is. The Prophet's categorical statements, "the Two Spirits Mazda did create" (Y30.1: This and all subsequent quotes from *The Gathas of Zarathushtra* by Dr I. J. S. Taraporewala, 1947 edition) and "O Lord Supreme, Thou wast the First, I know,

when Life began" (Y43.5), leave nothing unsaid to authenticate that there is one and only one Supreme Being who created both Spenta and Angra Mainyu, the good and evil spirits, at the dawn of Creation. At the same time, it is also not open to debate whether duality exists - Asho Zarathushtra himself tells us explicitly and unambiguously that it does. His categorical statement, "the Spirits Twain...are ne'er agreed; one's Good, the other Bad" (Y30.3), could not be clearer.

Monotheism and dualism coexist in the Good Religion; they are not mutually exclusive. Therefore, all that remains open to us is to strive for a proper understanding of the existence of duality within the context of a monotheistic Supreme God, and to try to fathom the whys and wherefores of evil within the ambit of the framework revealed to us by Asho Zarathushtra.

Evil is the proverbial red herring that sidetracks monotheists and dualists alike. As dualists point out, it can embarrass those championing an exclusive monotheism. It is no less an embarrassment to the champions of an exclusive dualism, for they readily style Ahura Mazda as the "Lord of Creation" but then try to have their cake and eat it too by applying a convenient double standard to deny him any role whatsoever concerning the phenomenon of evil, even though it is nakedly visible everywhere as part and parcel of that selfsame Creation.

In seeking to "protect" Ahura Mazda from any supposed "taint" of evil, dualists have perpetuated the confusion of some ancient Greek writers by hopelessly mixing up their concepts and rendering Ahura Mazda identical to Spenta Mainyu, His good spirit. Ahura Mazda is thereby demoted to a status of combative equality with Ahriman or the evil spirit Angra Mainyu, with the ludicrous result that two rival creators are set up instead of one. Dualists thus believe that they have solved the "problem" of evil once and for all, by ensuring that Ahura Mazda is hermetically insulated from and hence "untainted" by any reference to the origin of sin. Unfortunately for them, the holy *Gathas* demolish their basic premise by acknowledging a filial relationship but refusing to grant an equivalence of identity between Ahura Mazda and Spenta Mainyu. Yasna 43.6 refers to Spenta as "Spenta Thva Mainyu" i.e. Ahura Mazda's good spirit. Yasna 47.1 carefully enumerates Spenta Mainyu, each of the Ameshaspends and Ahura Mazda as distinct and separate enti-

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ties. Not to mention that Yasna 47.3 declares, with nothing left to the imagination, that "this Holy Spirit's Father true art Thou." Thus, the eternal conflict between good and evil is squarely between Angra and Spenta as the direct antagonists. It cannot be recast as one between Angra and

tual interaction governs the mechanics of Creation. In cosmological terms, Spenta can be viewed as the positively-charged, centripetal force in nature, and Angra as the negatively-charged, centrifugal force. Look no further than the atom, that minutest buildingblock of all matter that exists in the universe. Its structure is composed of positively-charged protons that oppose negatively-charged electrons. These are nothing but the dualistic forces of Spenta and Angra at work deep within the atom, upon which the entire material universe is constructed.

The purpose of Creation is the reunification of all creations with Ahura Mazda, by consciously choosing to tread the path of Asha through the correct exercise of free will. In the field of human behavior, righteous conduct in thought, word and deed is the highest virtue. That would be a sheer impossibility without the instrument of Spenta and Angra. Is it conceivable that you would ever be in a position to recognize "good" if "bad" wasn't around to define "good" by providing the contrary example? Only through the one does the other stand defined for us. Our God-given gift of free will ("Thou gav'st to all that live the choice of Paths:" Y31.9) becomes a hollow mockery if there are no moral alternatives from which to choose. It is only due to the presence of the path of evil that the path of righteousness be-

comes a viable alternative placed before the scrutiny of our free will, and "Of the: Two the Wise do choose aright/The Unwise choose not thus, and go astray" (Y30.3). Creation's majestic scheme is consummated when "with Asha's Truth we tread the narrow Path and reach where Lord Ahura reigns supreme" (Y33.5). The pivotal role of Spenta and Angra in this grand design cannot be better expressed than in the words of Yasna 30.4: "And when together did these Spirits Twain/Foregather at Creation's early dawn/Life did One make, the Other made Not-Life/And thus Creation's purpose is achieved;" and Yasna 44.5: "What Architect did fashion Realms of Light, as also Realms of Dark...To teach the Wise the purpose of all Life?"

The blueprint of the Master-Architect reveals an inner logic and pristine harmony that leaves one breathless with awe. Evil can only be understood as an inexorable, indispensable ingredient of a dualistic Creation fashioned by a monotheistic Creator; but if it serves as a springboard for extreme views and dissension, it is only Ahriman who would be laughing up his sleeve! The letter and spirit of the holy *Gathas* yield only one balanced conclusion: that the revelation of Zarathushtra is so profound in its depth and so majestic in its sweep that it provides room enough for both monotheism and dualism to coexist.

Would you ever be in a position to recognize "good" if "bad" wasn't around to define "good" by providing the contrary example?

Ahura Mazda to accommodate preconceived notions.

All acrimonious controversy and unnecessary confusion is levelled at one stroke when it is realized that while the Creator is monotheistic, His Creation is dualistic. That is the crux of the matter.

When the one, all-powerful Ahura Mazda initiated the momentous act of Creation, He created Spenta Mainyu as the active representation in the manifested universe of His own perfectly good nature. Similarly, He also enacted the first and foremost edict of the universe, the immutable Law of Asha or Righteousness, as the only path to salvation. In the milli-second that Spenta manifested as a distinct entity, the opposing pole Angra Mainyu instantaneously sprang into being in automatic conformity with Ahura Mazda's masterconcept of Creation, as an inexorable response to the birth of Spenta. Why? Simply because Creation axiomatically demands the interaction of opposing, dualistic forces as the sine qua non for both its existence and purpose.

Interactive pairs of opposites, dualities, relativities or polarities are the very stuff of which the manifested universe is made. Without them, it simply could not and would not exist. Birth and death, action and reaction (the basis of the Law of Keshash or Karma), light and dark, male and female; the list is endless. At the center of them all, and at the cornerstone of Creation, stand the primal twin spirits, Spenta and Angra. Though diametrically opposed to one another, Asho Zarathushtra pointedly labels them as "twin co-workers" (Y30.3). "Co-workers," because their mu-

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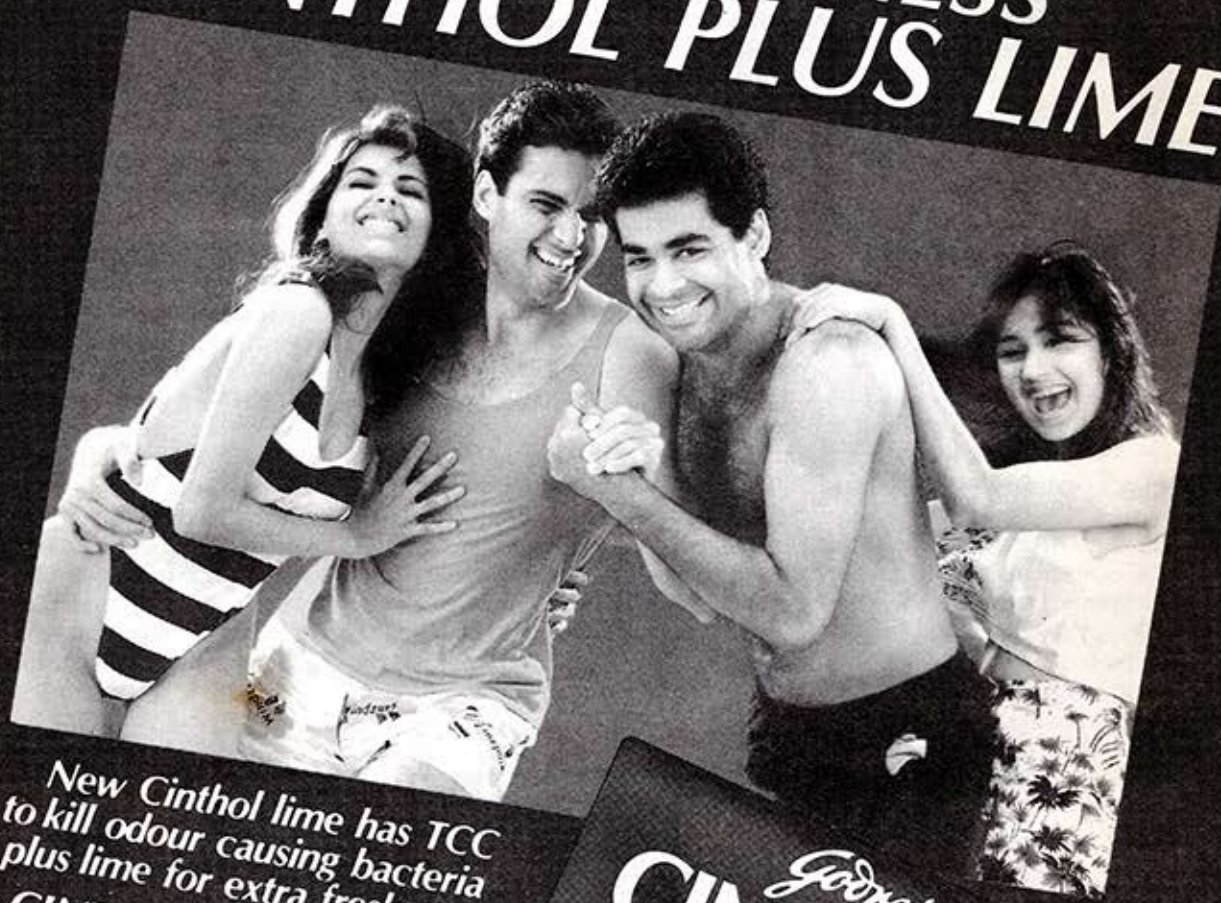
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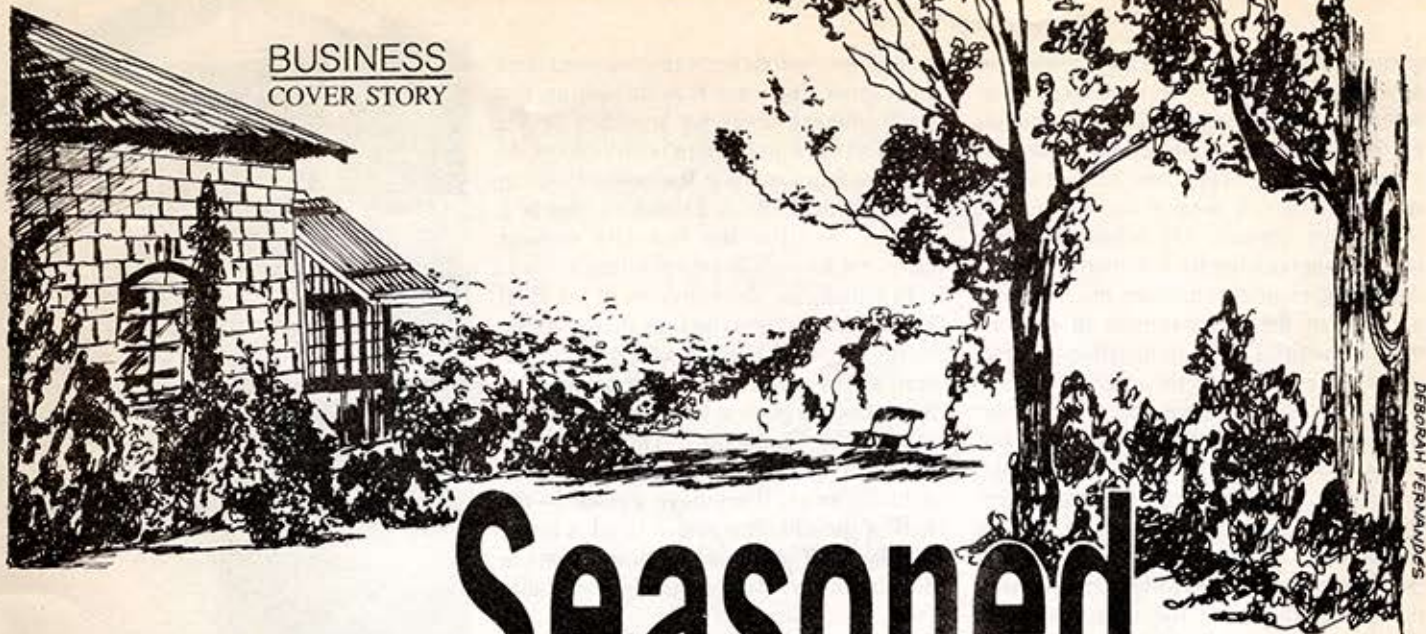
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Gustasp Irani

Seasoned hoteliers

The well-established Parsi hoteliers in the Mahableshwar-Panchgani area are now offering different fare as their clientele changes and so also customer expectations

By the second day the calories of your breakfast spread are weighing you down with guilt. A liver dish, two fried eggs, a plate of fresh cream, fresh bread, butter, jam... The diet be damned. You are on a holiday. You tuck in. At lunch you are tucking in again — *tamota par edu* (eggs spread over a base of spiced tomatoes), *sali gosh* (lamb served with crisp shoe-string potatoes), *dhandal patio* (traditional three-tier dish of white rice, tur dal and spicy gravy), custard. And after a dinner of soup, cutlet gravy, chicken *farcha* (fried chicken), *bhinda ma gosh* (combination of lamb and okra) and a sweet dish, you are stuffed. Take comfort in the observation of Ms Mani Khambatta, mother of Noshir Khambatta who runs Mount View Hotel, Panchgani, and who personally prepares the meals: "Panchgani, Mahableshwar *ni hava patli che*: You don't get fat here." A trait common to the eight Parsi-run hotels in the twin hill stations of Mahableshwar and Panchgani in the Satara district of Maharashtra is that they feed you; and feed you well.

But a holiday in the two hill stations, located 12 km apart, is more than pampering the palate; it's time out from the grind and routine of daily urban life, an opportunity to flush your lungs out with pure unpolluted air, a chance for your feet to rediscover the joys of walking. "There are such beautiful walking trails through these forests," says Afrid Bhiwandiwalla, manager of Hotel Mayfair in Mahableshwar, "but the only walking visitors seem to do here is in the bazaar." Nature is wasted on most, is the consensus. With a few exceptions, the average tourist, according to the Parsi hoteliers, whizzes around in private cars and taxis to the various scenic points and then spends the rest of the time at the Boat Club — often referred to as the Chowpatty of Mahableshwar. Back in the hotel, the demand is for the TV and video.

The profile of the tourist visiting Mahableshwar and Panchgani is changing. To survive, the Parsi hoteliers must necessarily adapt to the times. During the British raj their clientele was predominantly Eu-

ropean and in the better establishments, exclusively so, says Ms Alamai Mahableshwarwalla whose father-in-law built Dina Hotel. There is a story, often told, of a Parsi-run hotel which had room for the European chauffeur of a rich Parsi gentleman but none for the Parsi himself. If the rich Parsi had visited the hill station a few decades later he would have found that members of his community were treated as the elite guests; non-Parsis turned away with a gentle, "no room."

But times have changed and now, except for Jerroz, Mount View and Virjee Guest House, all in Panchgani, the Parsi guests in all the other hotels are in the minority. "If I wooed only Parsi clients I would have to close down," says Naval Jal, manager and grandson of the founder of Dina Hotel. "It is a reflection of the economic status of the community. Parsis don't have the financial clout they once had," says Bomi Davierwalla of Il Palazzo Hotel in Panchgani.

Another marked change is in the duration of stay of the tourists visiting the hill

stations. Mahableshwar and Panchgani have now become places to visit over long weekends. Referring to this as a reflection of the 'fast food' culture, Jal observes: "Earlier no one ever came for overnight stops or weekend breaks; they stayed for seven days or more. My father refused to take season booking for less than 45 days." According to another hotelier, this is largely a result of the improvement in modern travel amenities. The rich, affluent Parsis included, now spend their long holidays abroad — Europe, America — or in the distant reaches of India like Kashmir and Goa which have become more accessible.

As the rich holiday at other pastures, the middle class has moved in and in recent times its numbers have swelled as package tour operators ferry them in. And, of course, there are the honeymooners. The hotel industry in Mahableshwar and Panchgani has boomed but the growth can largely be attributed to the efforts of non-Parsi entrepreneurs. But for Jerroz (established 1955), Mayfair (established 1972) and Belmont Park Hill Resort in Mahableshwar (established 1981) the others trace their origins to the pre-Independence era when Parsi-run hotels were a majority in the fledgling industry.

Presently there are 27 hotels in Panchgani, according to Dorabji Kalyaniwalla of Jerroz Hotel. Bhiwandiwalla places the number in Mahableshwar at around 100. Many of these are large by the hill station standards — Dreamland Hotel in Mahableshwar has 130 rooms and the Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation's (MTDC) Five Hills Hotel in Panchgani has 64 rooms. In addition there are innumerable lodges; almost every house in the bazaar has a room or two to let out.

Marketing the hill stations is an exercise in extremes. "During season time there is such an overflow, we have to say no to those without reservations," says Ms Sheila Ghandy, proprietress of Belmont Park Hill Resort. "One must book in advance during the season or he might find he has no place to go," says Davierwalla. Season time means the summer holidays, the Diwali vacation and the Christmas week. The rest of the year is discount time — when hotels offer 10 percent to 40 percent off on the season tariff — which, paradoxically, is in-season for the Parsis who, according to Bhiwandiwalla, "can't afford the season tariff."

The Parsi hotelier, as also others of his trade, must do a balancing act of sorts because of the seasonal nature of the business. Take labor, for instance. One cannot keep too many for during the off-season

there is not enough work to go around, and one cannot keep too few for during the season the resources are stretched to the limit. Jerroz, a four-room outfit makes do with two helpers while Raceview Hotel in Mahableshwar, with 23 rooms, needs a staff of 30. (For the last few seasons Raceview has not been operating.)

In Panchgani, the extremes of seasonal fluctuations are less obvious thanks to the constant flow of parents visiting their children in the numerous boarding schools there. But the grass is greener on the other side of the mountain. The Panchgani hoteliers observe that business is better in Mahableshwar. They have a point — the tariff of their highest priced hotel is lower than the tariff of the lowest priced hotel in Mahableshwar. But the hoteliers of Maha-

Hotel Mount View (right) and Il Palazzo in Panchgani

Photos: Yasmin Poonegar



bleswar are quick to assert that in addition to the year-round flow of customers who come to meet their wards, the Panchgani hotels do not down their shutters during the three monsoon months. For during these months, Mahableshwar is lashed with over 250 inches of rain, making it one of the wettest spots in the country, while Panchgani lies protected in its rain shadow. And the monsoons add to the costs; as the buildings take a battering from the incessant rains, they require careful preservation and maintenance.

Like the reality of the monsoons and the seasonal tourism, the Parsi hoteliers in the twin hill stations have to be sensitive to the changing needs and demands of their clients. Hoteliers have to add to their culinary repertoire and pamper their guests'

palates with a large variety of vegetarian and non-vegetarian dishes: Chinese, Mughlai, Continental and yes, Parsi too. "During the off-season it's easier to cater to individual tastes. We ask our guests what they would like," Davierwalla might have been speaking on behalf of all the Parsi hoteliers. "I get a lot of Gujarati guests and, often enough, the men want non-veg and women veg," says Ghandy.

"The meals we serve are very large — six to seven courses. Since we don't serve a la carte, we offer our guests a large choice and variety. I don't expect everyone to eat everything I serve," says Jal. Expressing the same sentiment is Noshir Khambatta of Mount View: "We don't mind if you waste, but we have a problem if you complain that the food is not enough."

At Mount View and Jerroz the fare is still home-cooked Parsi food. Khambatta's mother Mani, assisted by her family and three staff members, prepares the food personally as also Kalyaniwalla's wife Coomi, assisted by her two daughters and two staff members.

Then, of course, there is the demand for entertainment — the TV and video. Most of the newer hotels pander to this need with small auditorium-like video rooms but the Parsi-run establishments frown upon the idiot box. Belmont Park, Hotel Mayfair and Mount View however, have provided video facilities. "Why do people come all the way to Mahabeshwar and want to sit in a room and watch a stupid movie?" asks Jal. No, he does not plan to keep a video at Dina Hotel. Rather than see his guests glued to a screen Jal would prefer that they savor the "grandeur of nature" in Mahabeshwar. "Go for a walk, go boating, be by yourself, play a round

annas, a kilo (seer) of meat was two and a half annas. She was a driving force at the Dina Hotel with a reputation for remembering the idiosyncracies of her regular customers. To celebrate Alamai's 70-year stay at Mahabeshwar, the family organized a memorable reunion function in October '89. "The grand old lady of Mahabeshwar," as she is popularly known, Alamai was one of the first women councillors of the Mahabeshwar municipality. Of late, her days are spent in prayer, embroidery, cooking, socializing and television viewing. To this day the supervision of some of the Hotel chores falls under her domain. Presently the rates at Dina Hotel are Rs 300 per head per day (children under the age of 10 get 40 percent off) and off-season charges are Rs 200 per head per day. Assisting Jal in the running of the hotel are his charming young nephew Hormazd and niece Eerine.

The most expensive Parsi-run hotel is

bungalow belonging to the Mazda family before Sharook Mazda converted it into a hotel in 1972. Initially the establishment was run by non-Parsis till in 1986 Bhiwandiwala, formerly assistant manager of Sea Rock Hotel, Bombay and with 18 years of hotel experience behind him, took over as manager. Located a short distance from the market, it has 13 rooms with a capacity for 38 beds. Season rates are Rs 250 per head per day with off-season discount of 30 to 35 percent. Children between the ages of three and nine get a 50 percent discount.

Belmont Park Hill Resort, established in 1981, is run by Ghandy, wife of the late Farookh of Friendly and Kentucky Ice-cream fame. Tucked into the hillside near Wilson Point, its 14 rooms can hold 50 beds. The charges are Rs 250 per head per day during the season and Rs 160 per head per day during off-season. Discounts for children are also available.

There was a time in Mahabeshwar when Ripon Hotel, Mahabeshwar Club, Grand Villa and a hotel run by the Adajania brothers were part of the family of Parsi hotels. The community, like elsewhere in India, has been unable to hold onto its assets in an era of fast foods and TV entertainment. The TV again?

"I'm quite browned off with the TV," says Pesi Virjee of the Virjee Guest House in Panchgani. "It's killing after-dinner conversation. Guests don't interact with each other anymore." We sample a flavor of the post-meal conversation as also Virjee's homemade wine of apples, currants and oranges. Virjee tells us about the time when Mahatma Gandhi visited their place in 1944 to recuperate from one of his many



of golf; there is so much to do here." Dina Hotel also has children's playgrounds and indoor games facilities — features common to other hotels too, but in varying degrees.

Dina Hotel, which has 20 rooms and can accommodate up to 75 beds, is situated on a hill overlooking the golf course and the lake. Jal's grandfather who earlier ran Fountain Hotel, reportedly the oldest hotel in Mahabeshwar, established Dina Hotel (named after his wife Dina) around 80 years ago. Jal's mother Alamai Mahabeshwarwalla, a charming lady of 87, recalls the early days when she had come to Mahabeshwar in 1919 as a young bride of 17. The charges then were three rupees per head per day; when eggs were three annas a dozen, a full chicken was four

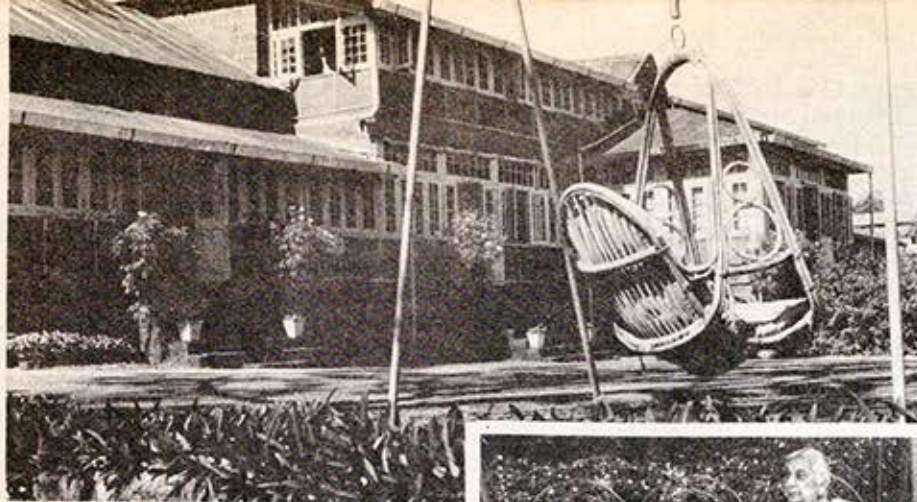
Race View, established in 1904 by Cooverji Dosabhai and now run by his granddaughter Nevaz and her husband Capt Sam Engineer. Situated just below Wilson Point it has a view of the lake nestling in the valley of forested hills. The rates are Rs 375 per head per day during the season with an off-season discount of about Rs 100. The hotel aims to provide their guests with good food, cleanliness and good service — not much to ask for, but which takes a lot of effort to deliver. The 23 rooms are furnished with four-poster beds, reclining easy chairs and old-world furniture, a feature that is common to all the older Parsi-run hotels. However, due to some reported differences in the family, the hotel has been closed for some time.

Hotel Mayfair was originally a private

Virjee Guest House (left) and Bhata Sanatorium in Panchgani

Photos: Gustasp Irani





Dina Hotel in Mahableshwar and Alamai Mahableshwarwalla

Photos: Yasmin Poonegar

fasts. Disregarding his doctor's protests ("I'll have to answer to the nation if something should happen to you," the poor man of medicine pleaded) Gandhi planted a tree in the Virjees' compound. It still stands, one of the two known trees planted by the Father of the Nation — the other is reported to stand at Kensington Gardens in the UK. There is local history too. The cottage Maidstone, that houses the Virjee Guest House, was one of the very first to be built in Panchgani — in all probability by John Chessan who discovered the hill station in 1842.

The distinction of being the oldest hotel in Panchgani, however, goes to Prospect Hotel, established by the Satarawalla family in 1914 but sold to non-Parsis about 10 years ago. Kalyaniwalla also informs us that for a brief period of five years from 1960 to 1965 there was another Parsi-run hotel, Royal Hotel, which for reasons unknown did not survive.

The oldest existing Parsi-run hotel in Panchgani is Mount View, first established



in 1923 at Sunny Banks near the octroi naka (post) leading to Mahableshwar. The establishment moved premises in 1927 to where Il Palazzo now stands before finding a permanent home for itself at its present location. The tariff for the season is Rs 150 per head per day; off-season Rs 130 per head per day with discounts for children. Thrown into the price is a spectacular view of the valley below. The hotel has 12 rooms in all.

The largest of the Parsi-run hotels in Panchgani is Il Palazzo, established in 1933 by Sorabji Davierwalla and now run by his son Bomi. It was only after the death of his older brother Hoshang about 10 years ago that Bomi took charge. Hoshang's widow Perin recalls how her husband toiled to make it the premier establishment in Panchgani. (The third brother

Dorabji has built and runs Tex Palazzo in Surat — the hotel with India's first revolving restaurant.) Tucked behind the fire-temple, it has a large well-maintained garden in the foreground and the towering tableland as the backdrop. Season rates are Rs 200 plus 10 percent service charges and off-season rates are Rs 180. Special discounts are offered to children.

Just across the road is the smallest in the family of Parsi-run hotels — Jerroz with four rooms and a capacity for 20 beds. Established in 1955 by Faramroz Deboo, it was taken over by his nephew Kalyaniwalla in 1957. Charges are: season Rs 185 per head per day; off-season Rs 165 per head per day with special discounts for children. The place is small, simple, clean and unpolluted, like Panchgani itself.

Finally there is the Bhata Sanatorium run by the Bhata School in Panchgani. For nearly nine months in a year, the row of cottages lie deserted and empty. Its 14 cottages can each accommodate four adults and two children below the age of 12 years, and are available on a monthly charge of Rs 210 each. For the three summer months, April through June, the booking at Rs 710 is for the entire season and must be done well in advance.

The mist rolls down the mountains, hastening the onset of dusk. We are pleasantly exhausted with a day of boating, a walk in the bazaar, our palate pampered, our stomach bursting. It is time to relax in front of the video. The film on view is *On Wings of Fire* which projects the historical development of the Zoroastrian religion. There comes a scene when philosophical issues are being discussed. The hills in the background look familiar. That must be Parsi Point and, of course, that is the tableland. Yes, it is Panchgani — preserved on celluloid along with Parsi history.



Hotel Jerroz in Panchgani (left) Photo: Gustasp Irani

Hotel Mayfair in Mahableshwar Photo: Yasmin Poonegar

With over three decades of experience in five-star hotels, Homi Wadia observes that chefs in India are hesitant to experiment with new dishes



For almost three decades, Homi Wadia has been purveying to the palate and gastronomical needs of diners in five-star hotels. Vice president in charge of food and beverage operations in the Oberoi Hotel chain, Wadia is one of the most accomplished food and beverage experts in the country, feel hoteliers.

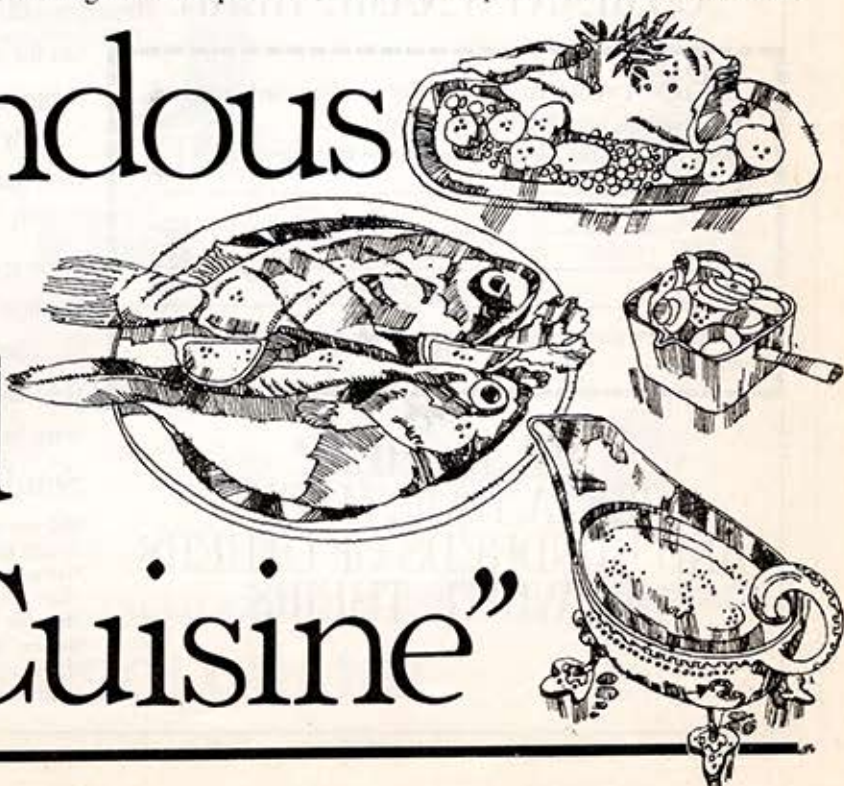
An epicure ready to "try new selections from a culinary list anywhere in the world," Wadia says, "I have savored most food." Recognizing the human trait of eating first with the eyes, then through the nose and lastly through the mouth, Wadia says, "Very often a gourmet will fault or reject a dish at first glance or after taking just a whiff." For example, one look at a piece of grilled meat exposes its quality to an expert. Smelling and eating it is just a confirmatory test, he elaborates.

Having moved around in many departments of large hotels, Wadia is as familiar with the entire gamut of hotel operations as he is with the kitchen. And it is this acquaintance with the kitchen which enabled him to answer our queries on 'la nouvelle cuisine,' a form of food formulation tried out by a few master chefs in Europe, in the 1970s and early 1980s. Since it calls for exceptional skills, creativity and a willingness to experiment,

Wadia is of the opinion that it is ideally suited to an independent restaurant owned by an enterprising chef or where the chef is an active partner in the business. In India, Wadia doubts whether there are many chefs who could meet the challenge of producing a cuisine of their own without any ground rules to go by, or whether their employers would encourage any unconventional practices.

He hastens to point out that there are a few restaurants in India where the healthier practices in 'la nouvelle cuisine' have been adopted such as smaller portions, less fat and heavy sauces, use of only the best and in-season ingredients and attractive presentation openly displaying the main ingredients rather than concealing them under heavy sauces or masking them with spices. He would rather call this 'contemporary cuisine' and feels there is some possibility of making a success of it in India, given time. What he notices is the limited market for European food in India and the reluctance by and large of the local clientele to try anything other than Indian cuisine or the few European dishes they are already familiar with. The constraints in getting the right quality of raw materials for the new cuisine also causes many a chef to despair and revert to traditional

"Tremendous market for good Indian Cuisine"



concepts of European food, points out Wadia.

Regarding the ingredients available in India, Wadia feels that though there has been an improvement in the quality of chicken and beef over the last three decades, much still remains to be done for other poultry, lamb, goat, vegetables and fruit. The variety as also the quality fall far short of international standards, he observes.

The Indian cuisine offered in our hotels and restaurants is boring in Wadia's opinion. There is a tremendous market for good Indian cuisine and we should make an effort to research the various cuisines of India and adapt them to the catering trade. Regrettably, the Indian kitchen in hotels and restaurants does not always attract the kind of chef who can be motivated to research and experiment. By and large they reproduce what they have learnt from their fathers or gurus and there the matter ends.

His view of the future in the catering field in India is optimistic: It will grow but not necessarily in hotels. As the restaurants outside the hotels improve their standards more and more, local business will

move away from the star hotels to the neighborhood restaurants. The taxes the government levies on diners in our better hotels also dissuades local clientele from visiting them. Hoteliers will treat the in-house guest as the key to their fortunes, pampering them further. All food and beverage activity will be aimed at this clientele rather than the local market. A decrease or a change in use of the in-house restaurants is very likely in most of our major hotels in the foreseeable future, says Wadia.

On the beverage scene, Wadia is overjoyed by quality products like the Marquis de Pompadour sparkling wine, now produced in Narayangaon in Maharashtra, and feels it will not be long before reasonably good table wines, comparable with those available abroad, will be produced in India.

Despite gaining some knowledge of wines during his sojourns abroad, he feels his expertise would improve considerably if imported wines were more freely available at reasonable prices in India. Regrettably, for the same reasons, most of our restaurateurs and hoteliers have only a passing acquaintance with wine, he says.

Besides spending time at the Oberoi group's major properties in India, Wadia has also been active at the group's hotels in Egypt and Iraq. He had joined them after a seven-year stint in the kitchens and restaurants of various leading hotels in Austria, France, Switzerland and Italy. In fact he had dropped out of his graduation course at a Darjeeling college to join a hotel school in Austria.

Wadia assesses career prospects in the hotel industry in India as "excellent." In the 1950s and 1960s most middle-class parents dissuaded their children from entering the hotel and catering trade or considered it a last resort. Today there are many more bright youngsters entering the profession and competition for the top jobs is fiercer. Correspondingly, hotels have mushroomed and many more openings are available.

"A five-star hotel offers a good career but you must be equal to the demands placed on you," he points out. "Those who desire free evenings for pleasure would be better advised to stay away."

Extracted, edited and abridged from an article by Rangan published in The Daily of September 29, 1989.

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MILESTONES

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

Of the 93 Parsis who died in Bombay, 28 fell prey to heart disease while old age claimed 18. Six victims died due to pneumonia and five people succumbed to different types of accidents including electrocution and head injuries. Other killer diseases were kidney failure (four), diabetes, hypertension and cancer (three each). Lung, brain and liver diseases, asthma, bronchitis and gastroenteritis claimed two victims each. Isolated cases of anemia, tuberculosis, viral fever, gastrointestinal hemorrhage, osteoporosis, shock and nervous disorder were registered. Still-born twins (girls), an eight-month-old baby boy and a 27-year-old youth were lost to the community.

In the break-up 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 boy to *Rashna and Firoze Wadia* on July 29, 1989
A boy to *Kamal and Jehangir Motivala*; July 30
A girl to *Farah and Rohinton Surty*; August 1
A girl to *Zenobia and Cyrus Bhadha*; August 3
A girl to *Prochi and Rumi Masalawala*; August 6
A girl to *Parvin and Parvez Balsara*; August 12
A girl to *Munira and Jamshed Banaji*; August 12
A boy to *Jiloo and Kaiyoz Billimoria*; August 12

A boy to *Tenaz and Navzer Tara*; August 15
A boy to *Aloo and Keki Vacha*; August 16
A boy to *Shernaz and Gev Daji*; August 17
A boy to *Diaz and Hoshang Jhaveri*; August 23
A boy to *Shanaz and Dinsha Cooper*; August 24
A girl to *Lily and Xercsis Marker*; August 26
A boy to *Freny and Gev Jabulee*; August 27
A girl to *Ketayun and Aspi Sarkari*; August 27

Married

Armaity Dadabhai Mirza and Mahiar Hoshang Gandhi of Poona; May 22
Mahzabeen Jamshed Irani of Poona and *Jimmy Eady Eduljee*; June 29
Shenaaz Palanji Palkhiwalla and *Homi Faredoon Mistry*; August 27
Homa Sohrab Biyuki of Poona and *Khodadad Faredoon Moghani* of Poona; August 31

Died

Naja Jal Kapadia (72), residing at Irani Bldg, 36, Balaram St, Grant Rd, 400007; July 31
Firoz A. Wadia (65), Asha Daan, Sangli St, Byculla, 400008; July 31
Pestonji Dossabhoy Karani (63), 8, Arbuda Darshan, Sunder Ngr, Kalina, Santacruz (E), 400055; August 1
Mani Maneksha Boatwala (72), 664, Roshan Mans, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; August 2
Twin girls of *Ava Peshotan Irani* (stillborn), Irani Wadi, Shivdas Chapsi Marg, Mazagaon, 400010; August 2
Jal Framroze Mehta (78), Meher Mans, 515/C, R. P. Masani Rd, Matunga, 400019; August 2
Phiroz Jehangir Choksi (79), F-10, Contractor Baug, Mori Rd, Mahim, 400016; August 3
Sherbanoo Dhunjisha Lilamwala (75), 12/1, Kashinath Bldg, Tardeo, 400034; August 3
Neiserwanji Shapurji Mahuvawalla (80), 21/C, Laxmi Ngr Soc, Four Bglws, Andheri (W), 400058; August 3

Banoobai Dhunjishaw Javeri (90), Meherabad, B. Desai Rd, 400026; August 4
Rashid Noshirwan Irani (76), 13, A. H. Wadia Baug, Parel Tank Rd, 400033; August 5
Godrej Pallonji Joshi (75), 40-A, Ridge Rd, Malabar Hill, 400006; August 5
Mehra Maneksha Meher (80), C/o K. M. Meher, 8, Breach Candy Hse, 68, B. Desai Rd, 400026; August 5
Banoobai Dosabhai Patel (74), 'E,' Adam Mhl, Wadia St, Tardeo, 400034; August 5
Piroja Phiroze Pavri (84), 77, Rajat Apt, Mt Pleasant Rd, 400006; August 5
Eruch Cawasji Tavarja (78), Haji Adam Mans, Store Lane, Fort, 400001; August 5
Khorshedbanoo Pallonji Bharucha (86), 'A,' Ness Baug, Nana Chowk, 400007; August 6
Pirojbaai Edulji Daruwala (90), 'F,' Adam Mhl, Wadia St, Tardeo, 400034; August 6
Dolly Nadar Karva (58), 610, Jame Jamshed Rd, Dadar, 400014; August 6
Manekshaw Pestonji Nanji (92), 36, Jame Jamshed Bldg, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; August 6
Sheroo Rustomji Vajifdar (69), 275/B, Captain Bldg, Zoroastrian Clny, Tardeo, 400007; August 6
Najoo Jamshed Daruwala (62), 23, Jame Jamshed Bldg, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; August 7
Perin Kaikhushroo Irani (Farshed) (55), 314, Kaiser Bldg, Chandanwadi, Marine Lines, 400002; August 7
Banoo Kaikhushroo Engineer (82), 'B,' Gowalia Tank Bldg, August Kranti Marg, 400036; August 8
Shirin Manekji Gowadia (79), Nargol, Stn Sanjan, 396135; August 8
Shirin Navroji Dadabhoy (72), Maskati Court, M. Karve Rd, 400020; August 9
Dhunjisha Jehengirji Daruwala (74), A/29, Navyug Mans, N. Bharucha Rd, 400007; August 9
Rusi Hormasji Mowdawalla (54), Sudersan Apt, Jivdani Rd, Virar (E), 401303; August 9
Soona Sorabji Hakim (95),

11-A, Khurshah-Naz, Dadar, 400014; August 10
Hormuzdyar Limjeebhai Soparivala (93), 502, Happy Hse, Hatiskar Marg, Prabhadevi, 400025; August 10
Sam Khurshedji Cooper (62), C/10, Banoo Villa, Theosophical Soc, Juhu, 400049; August 11
Nargis Khaikhushroo Darukhanawalla (85), Kashinath Bldg, Kashinath Rd, Tardeo, 400034; August 11
Phiroze Hormasji Narsang (65), 804/C, Rati Lodge, Dr Ambedkar Rd, Dadar, 400014; August 11
Meherbanoo Jamshed Behroozji (74), 7, Tarachand Bldg, Old Khareghat Clny, 400007; August 12
Dorabji Framroze Poonawalla (81), B/20, Mahesh Apt, Off S. V. Rd, Santacruz (W), 400054; August 13
Russi Manekji Bhomishaw (60), 73, Queens Rd, 400002; August 13
Dina Nadershaw Patel (73), 17/D, Rustom Baug, Victoria Rd, 400027; August 13
Darabshaw Jijibhoy Patel (67), Bode Bldg, Marazban Clny, Gilder Lane, 400008; August 14
Darabshaw Cawasji Umrigar (86), A-1, Shapur Baug, V. P. Rd, 400004; August 14
Khurshed Cawasji Avasia (73), C/o Gazdar Pvt Ltd, Jony Castle, Wodehouse Rd, Colaba, 400005; August 15
Rustomji Sorabji Bhiwandiwalla (90), 'B,' Bhiwandiwalla Ter, Dhobitalao, 400002; August 15
Kaikhushroo Sorabjee Commisariat (89), 35, Homi Hse, Police Court Lane, Fort, 400001; August 15
Villi Darabshaw Dalal (47), Shirin Mans, 228-A, Tardeo Rd, 400007; August 15
Rusi Edulji Mulla (64), Dhaneish Mans, 12, Laburnum Rd, 400007; August 15
Nariman Kekobad Dordy (81), Lam Bldg, Delisle Rd, Lower Parel, 400013; August 16
Najamai Cawasji Engineer (71), 785, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; August 16
Themurasp Maneksha Gandhi (91), 401/C, Blue Bird, Sherley Rd, Bandra, 400050;

August 16

Frani Framroze Irani (60), Gool Mans, Dinbai Petit St, Grant Rd, 400007; August 16
Kharmen Aspandiyar Irani (75), Fakruddin Manzil, Grant Rd, 400007; August 17
Jamshed Phirojshah Taraporewalla (53), Sanjay Apt, Hansraj Lane, Byculla 400027; August 17
Eruchsha Edulji Khasimay (77), Hormuzd Bldg, 33, Sleater Rd, 400007; August 18
Aloo Rustomji Dordi (75), Nusserwanji Tata Bldg No 1, S. V. Rd, Bandra, 400050; August 19
Mahyar Kerman Katrak (8 months), 45/A, Silver Oaks Est, Bhulabhai Desai Rd, 400026; August 19
Freny Minoo Udwadia (63), Railway View, Uranwala St, Grant Rd, 400007; August 19
Framroze Kaikhushroo Warden (74), Hormuzd Baug Bldg, Tardeo, 400034; August 20
Kolan Firoz Cooper (67), 410, Jiten Soc, D. P. Rd, Andheri (W), 400058; August 21
Rati Darabsha Nariman (62), Mackavee Mans, Rustom Sidhwa Rd, 400001; August 21
Commai Minocher Pundole (92), B-9, Surbazan Co-op Hsg Soc, Shivshirishti, 400024; August 21
Framroze Rustomji Bhandara (69), Wadia Bldg, Dr Nair Rd, 400011; August 22
Soli Minocher Dubash (62), Buena Vista, Pochkhanawala Rd, New Worli, 400025; August 22
Pestonji Sorabji Merchant (83), Hendre Mans, 8, Sleater Rd, 400007; August 22
Dina Jehangir Parakh (71), 602, Rajni Mhl, 89/95, Tardeo Rd, 400034; August 22
Goolbanu Dossabhai Patel (84), P/3, Dalal Est, Lamington Rd, 400008; August 22
Mehroo Nusserwanji Pochee (75), Daruwala Hse, 779, Joshi Rd, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; August 22
Sharukh Keki Shroff (27), Jassawala Wadi, Juhu, 400049; August 22
Bomi Rustomjee Bisney (70), 21, Nanabhoy Chmbs, Fort, 400001; August 23

Naju Dinshaji Korwal (78), 461/463, Kerawalla Bldg, Chirabazar, 400002; August 23
Backhtavar Manek Daruwala (55), D/15, Shapur Baug, V. P. Rd, 400004; August 24
Sorabji Navroji Deboo (94), 19, Moti Mhl, Sir D. Wachha Rd, 400020; August 24
Minoo Munchershaw Nanavaty (74), Palacimo, Silver Oaks Est, Bhulabhai Desai Rd, 400026; August 24
Noshir Fardoonji Todiwalla (45), B/13, Captain Clny, 27-A, Tardeo, 400034; August 24
Savaksha Khurshedji Bhatena (69), 'B,' Bhiwandiwalla Ter, Dhobitalao, 400002; August 25
Jer Framroze Ghadiali (65), Transvel Ter, Grant Rd, 400004; August 25
Manijeh Ratanshaw Tolat (88), Mahalaxmiwala Bldg, 19, Sleater Rd, 400007; August 25
Meherji Dinshawji Avari (65), 'K,' Indira Dock, Walchand Hirachand Marg; 400001; August 26
Khorshed Rustomji Baria (79), Panna Bhavan, Gopchardada, Virar (E), 401303; August 26
Rustom Seriar Irani (60), Satnam Hse, Sahar Rd, Vile Parle (E), 400099; August 26
Jalamai Phirojshah Langrana (90), Godiwala Widows Chawl, Mazagaon, 400010; August 26
Burjor Dinshawji Bharucha (55), 77, Rajat Apt, Mount Pleasant Rd, 400006; August 27
Perin Sorabji Havewalla (91), 15, Petit Widows Chawl, Fort, 400001; August 27
Jamshedji Burjorji Bajina (77), 20, Wadia St, Tardeo, 400034; August 28
Kety Jal Daruwala (60), 11, Cooper Bldg, Marazban Clny, Gilder Lane, 400008; August 28
Meherbai Fardoonji Motafarm (89), 9/3, Patel Bldg, Gamadia Clny, 400007; August 28
Sorabji Cawasji Patel (91), 5, Merwan Bldg, Uranwala St, 400007; August 28
Manekji Navroji Putel (88), 10, Old Khareghat Clny, Hughes Rd, 400007; August 28
Jehangir Hirjibhai Dadiseth (82), Banu Mans, Forjett St, 400036; August 29
Shirinbai Jalejar Dick (85), F/618, Bhiwandiwalla Ter,

400002; August 29
Jal Cawasji Gilder (83), C/o R. K. Banajee, Crown Mans, 6/13, Forjett St, 400036; August 29
Kersi (Kersasp) Meherjibhai Patel (84), Dolat Manzil, 607, Dr Ambedkar Rd, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; August 29
Kitty K. Vachha (83), 22, Hampton Court, 125, Wodehouse Rd, 400005; August 29
Bobby Jehangir Dalal (69), 10/A, Woodlands, Pedder Rd, 400026; August 31
Gaimai Aderji Kapadia (90), B/3, Ness Baug, Nana Chowk, 400007; August 31

BURNPUR, WEST BENGAL Died

Dhunmai Mehta (84), wife of Firoz and mother of Marzaban, Meher, Hosi and Nergis Master; August 5

CALCUTTA Died

Sarosh Bhesania (44), son of Dina and Dali, and brother of Zarin; August 19
Homi R. Devitre, father of Ricky, Diana and Laila; August 25

DELHI

Died

Dhunjishaw Sorabjee Mehta (80), husband of Dhun and father of Daly, Kamal Wadia and Shenaz Patel; August 10

KARACHI

Died

Daulat Kaikobad Bharucha (67); July 3
Meher Jamshed Patel (68); July 10
Pesi Darabsha Vania (74); July 10
Amy Jamshedji Sethna (62); July 21
Shavax Nassarvanji Mistry (85); July 31

LONDON

Died

Noshir J. Masani (76); July 24

NANDED, MAHARASHTRA Died

Banoo M. Shroff (80); May 18

POONA Died

Manek Sheriyar Elavia (68), 5/67, Poona Pared Apts, East St, 411001; August 10
Merwan Nasarvanji Katrak (82), 49, Banoo Apts, 411001; August 11
Daulat Boman Irani (81), 3, Mody Clny, Synagogue St, 411001; August 13
Faramroz Burjorji Patel (78), 4, Samadhi Rd, Yerwada, 411014; August 14
Lovji Cawasji Hansotia (82), 6/B, Harmesh Apts, College Rd; August 19
Hillabai Sorabji Balaporia (88), 707, Taboot St, 411001; August 25
Baby of Jamshed Mody (still-born), 303, Nalini Apts, Sholapur Rd; August 25
Piroja Cawasji Hormazdiar (83), 4, Mody Clny, Synagogue St, 411001; August 28
Burjorji Dhanjisha Vesuna (82), Bara Bungla Rd, Lonavla, 410401; August 30
Manibai Dadiba Dalal (90), 1153/A, Saify St, 411001; August 31

SECUNDERABAD Born

Twin girls, *Ruksana* and *Armita*, to *Mahnaz* and *Bomi Karaka*; April 24
A boy, *Zahan*, to *Parvina* and *Dara Patel*; June 26
A girl, *Sanayah*, to *Goolcher* and *Yanush Wadia*; July 22
A girl to *Behroz* and *Astad Bokdawala*; July 31
A boy to *Shiraz* and *Ronnie Behramsha*; August 11

Married

Geetanjali Hoshang Thacker and *Feroze Rustomji Bhote*; March 5
Shadbanoo Irani and *Gaive A. Irani*; August 6

Died

Jamshedji C. Desai (85); April 14
Sohrab K. Jalnawalla (63); May 18
Dinamai N. Lakdawalla (86); June 3
Shirin R. Chinoy (82); July 6

Compiled by Roxana H. Kaka

"If I have been able to do something in my long association with Tatas it is simply because God gave me an opportunity - a rare one. And from that day, somehow or other, it became a mission in my life." That important 'day' was his day of adoption when an unassuming 11-year-old Naval Tata, used to poverty and hardship, was promised a rewarding future. He was chosen to be the heir to his uncle Sir Ratan Tata. Thereafter, until his death of cancer on May 5, 1989 at the age of 84, a beholden Naval Hormusji Tata, chairman of the Tata electric companies and deputy chairman of the parent body, Tata Sons, strove to promote the Tata image in the industrial sphere.

His influence extended beyond the House of Tatas to The Employers' Federation of India where for over three decades he served as president, to the labor commissions constituted by the government, to the governing body of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) whereat he had represented the employers for over 30 years. Particularly it was the fields of textiles, power generation, banking and industrial relations where he served as the industry's spokesman. The President of India R. Venkataraman described Tata as "a leading captain of industry who broke new ground in labor-management relations." Nana Chudasama mooted the erection of a monument in the city in honor of the versatile man at the condolence meeting convened by him as the sheriff of Bombay, on May 23.

The nation had conferred upon Tata the Padma Bhushan award for his contribution to the field of industrial growth, and the Sir Jehangir Ghandy Medal was in recognition of his endeavors to improve industrial peace. Barely a month prior to his death,

the ILO honored him on its seventieth anniversary. Ratan, his eldest son by his first wife Soona Commissariat, and named successor to the Tata empire, received the scroll of honor on behalf of his ailing father. "Your advocacy of the problems of unorganized workers, employment and poverty has significantly influenced the approach and policies we see today in the activities of the ILO... The benefits accruing to India as a result of your long and close association with the work of the ILO are your lasting tribute," read the scroll.

Among the illustrious public figures who had known Naval intimately was J.R.D. Tata, chairman of Tata Sons, who also happened to be Naval's second cousin, their grandparents being siblings. Frequently Naval would be referred to as "the other Tata" to differentiate him from the senior JRD. For 59 years was Naval associated with the House of Tatas during which time JRD had evaluated his performance as "a hard worker... a fighter. When he had a belief in something, he strongly defended it and he strongly fought for it. That he was a man of courage which he demonstrated in an extraordinary way left me awed... He was a man who liked people, who liked to deal with people, to argue with people, if possible to get them to his view or ultimately to agree with theirs..."

"Mr Tata had a knack of winning over

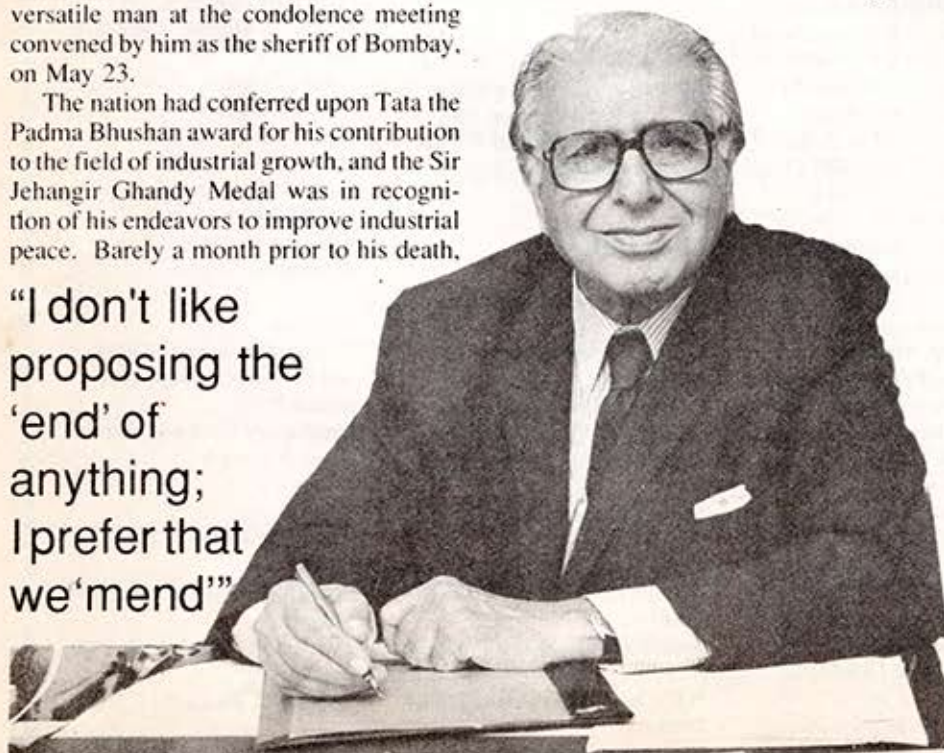
opponents which in his own words was more through 'conviction rather than coercion' or more through 'vision than venom.'" remembers his personal assistant K. D. Skandan. Tata would often tell D. R. Pendse, economic advisor to the Tata group, "I don't like proposing the 'end' of anything; I prefer that we 'mend'."

Some of his fights with the trade union leaders were known to last for two and a half to three hours. "These would be savage fights; calling each other names; using abusive language." At the end of the session the trade union leaders would come and embrace Tata, but not because they had been bribed, remembered Freddie Mehta, chairman of Forbes Forbes and Campbell, at the condolence meeting convened by the Bombay Parsi Punchayet on June 15, 1989 when community stalwarts and Tata's associates in the industrial sector shared their reminiscences of his human touch.

He was in favor of both employers and workers setting up their own apex bodies, framing their respective codes of conduct and censuring members on either side who violated them. Recognizing the rights to work, to strike, to lockout, he was firm in his belief that labor laws should be respected and violence eschewed at all costs, said Dr Ram Tarneja of Bennett Coleman and Company. Yet, even when tackling the delicate issue of labor, Tata's inherent humor often surfaced. Some years earlier he had joked, "I am praying every day that in my next life the Almighty may make me a trade union leader so that I have less work and no worry about money." He always took pains to point out that "the prospects for higher productivity are relatively dim so long as our wage structure is almost totally independent of productivity."

His rational views were constantly sought whether by the National Labour Institute, the Central Employment and Evaluation Committee, the Committee on Automation or the National Safety Council. He was vice president of the International Organisation of Employers for more than two decades and also had connections with the International Chamber of Commerce, chairing one of its committees.

"I don't like proposing the 'end' of anything; I prefer that we 'mend'"



THE TOUCH



Tata (in jeep): reaching out to electorate

Tata's involvement with national bodies and his connections with the top brass of the government notwithstanding, he chose to contest a Lok Sabha seat as an independent candidate in 1971. He lost to his opponent Dr N. N. Kailash, a Congress nominee. Yet, as industrialist Ramkrishna Bajaj observed, "For an industrialist to contest against a candidate of the ruling party...showed that he was made of sterner stuff."

Even in business affairs he advised a firm approach. When industrialist Jamshed Guzder had been elected chairman of the Indian Merchants' Chamber, he sought the advice of Tata who had held the same post years ago. Guzder recalled Tata's words, "Remember there will be people who will want to bully, but you confront them and say what you want to say. Keep the name of the community. Carry the message of Parsis to other regions of India. People have faith in Parsi business; that is not to be lost."

Neither did he fear the government's

"I am grateful to God for giving me an opportunity to experience the pangs of poverty"

disapproval nor the community's alienation once he had decided on a course of action. His preference for cremation over dokhmenashini created adversaries, but Tata did not relent. "A fully ordained Zoroastrian priest, (serving as trustee of the Tata and the Karani agiaries), he was unorthodox, yet laid emphasis on the spirit of the religion rather than its rituals," read the May-June issue of *Transmission Lines*, the house journal of the Tata Electric Companies. "He was puzzled and at times deeply hurt when he encountered bigotry and fanaticism of some religious zealots," noted an editorial in *The Bombay Samachar* of May 7. The uncompromising stance by the orthodox refusing to allow non-Parsis to pay their last respects to the dead at the Towers of Silence is believed

to be an important reason for Tata, whose wife Simone is a Christian, to have opted for cremation. (Unfortunately, both Simone and Ratan who could have provided an insight into Tata's faith and beliefs, had a tight schedule and hence excused themselves from replying to *Parsiana's* queries.) While the funeral ceremonies are supposed to have been performed according to Zoroastrian rites, the cremation was marked by its quiet restraint.

Poverty molds his character

Naval never forgot his travails and strict upbringing at the J. N. Petit Parsi Orphanage. He had lost his father when he was barely four years old. Faced with the prospect of bringing up four sons, his mother enrolled them at the Petit Orphanage. Naval, in fact, had been admitted as a free boarder on an extremely slender budget for food, clothing and shelter. He lost no opportunity to relate stories of his humble roots, remember his friends. As he himself admitted, "I am grateful to God for giving me an opportunity to experience the pangs of poverty which more than anything (else) molded my character in later years of my life."

His "fairy godmother" came in the form of Lady Navajbai Tata who adopted Naval as heir on the death of her husband Ratan in 1915. Since neither Sir Ratan nor his brother Dorab (sons of Jamsetji N. Tata) had any descendants, and Naval's mother Ratanbai being a favorite cousin of Ratan's, Lady Navajbai selected one of Ratanbai's sons as successor to her husband. Yet, Naval was not permitted to change schools till his matriculation. Thereafter he graduated in economics from the Bombay University and proceeded to London for a short course in accountancy.

And in 1930 he stepped on the first rung of the ladder of the Tata organization. He joined as a despatch clerk cum assistant secretary on a monthly salary of Rs 150. Soon he was made assistant secretary of Tata Sons and within years he had already been appointed secretary to the Aviation Department. Five years later he joined as an executive in the textiles department and shortly thereafter was made joint managing director of the textile mills run by Tatas. In 1941 he accepted directorship of Tata Sons and then followed in succession his other designations like managing director of Tata Oil Mills, chairman of Tata

H OF TATA

Mills, chairman of the three electric companies - Tata Hydro Electric, Andhra Valley and Tata Power - and eventually deputy chairman of Tata Sons. His motto has always been "Indian capital, Indian labor and Indian management" which was the essence of the Swadeshi movement during our struggle for freedom," according to the condolence resolution passed at the sheriff's meeting.

As dedicated as he was to his industrial empire, Tata was equally committed to the different charitable trusts with which he was affiliated. Said Minoo Mody, then director of Tata Sons, "He did not consider charities as peripheral activities." On more than a dozen Tata trusts he served as trustee, whether these were promoting the cause of education, housing, religion, health or poverty. He believed, it was "his bounden duty to ensure that... the institutions established by his ancestors... were preserved and well-maintained," noted *Transmission Lines*.

Many an apprentice scheme did he launch, many a vocational training center did he start, especially to benefit those with a rural background. One such establishment which he was very anxious to develop was the Sir Ratan Tata Industrial Institute (RTI) in the hope of bettering the lot of Parsi women who had come to the city from mofussil areas, informs S. R. Vakil, legal advisor of Tata Sons who had known Tata since the latter's electioneering days. In the case of Parsis, the work output does not match the constant demand for a revision in pay scales, Tata always regretted. RTI's new restaurant, Landmark, was Tata's brainchild but manpower problems once again frustrated his efforts.

"Earn, earn a lot of money and use it in diverse ways. But use a little at least for the good of the community," had been Tata's advice as remembered by Dr Sam Bhacca, president of the Surat Parsi Punchayet who was present at the function when Tata inaugurated a Parsi business venture in Surat. Philanthropy he encouraged, yet he was not wont to spend funds on useless schemes like the erection of a statue. When a delegation from Navsari approached him for funds to raise a statue of Jamsetji Tata, Naval convinced them to construct instead a cultural center with a community hall and a library. He made substantial contribution and today this monument is regarded as an important landmark in Navsari.

While Navsari got a cultural center, hockey fans in Bombay were able to wit-

ness the first floodlit hockey tournament thanks to Tata's largesse. He donated the floodlights to the Bombay Hockey Association. He also made it a practice to set aside some amount from the Sir Ratan Tata Trust to help clubs and smaller sports institutions. For 15 years he was the president of the Indian Hockey Federation during which time India won three Olympic gold medals. His appointment as the first president of the Indian Council of Sports was a nationwide recognition for Tata who in his young days was known to be an ardent squash and badminton player.

Pursuit of intellectual activities was as dear to him as promotion of sports. His associates remember him as being a voracious reader whose fare was not confined to industrial relations but encompassed world affairs in general. Astrology too fascinated Tata, revealed Vakil who added that ultimately astrology belied his faith because he died at the age of 84 and not four years later as predicted.

Tata is survived by his wife Simone, and sons Ratan, Jimmy and Noel.

Seervai's sweet relief

Died: Amy Pestonji Seervai, 76, well-known social worker in Poona on June 1, 1989 after years of suffering from Alzheimer's disease.

Be they the physically disabled, the mentally handicapped or the neglected animals, Seervai would selflessly rush to the aid of the suffering whenever there was a distress signal.



She was secretary for many years of the Poona Mental and Hygiene Society, notes a write-up carried in the July periodical of the Poona Women's Council. There was a time when every week she would visit the sick people at the mental asylum and personally feed them. Seervai was equally committed to the Physically Handicapped Association where she served as chairman.

The ailing she helped through her connections with the Poona Red Cross Society where she was an active member. During World War II, Seervai worked for St John's Ambulance. Whenever she was summoned, irrespective of the hour of the day, she would drive the ambulance to the spot where medical aid was urgently required, adds the write-up. Her contribution to the Women's Voluntary Service was recognized by the British who conferred her with a medal, informs her longtime associate Ms Ratai Patell.

A founder member and secretary for many years of the Poona Women's Council, she played a prominent role in the social service activities of this organization. Whether at their dispensary, creche, school, rural welfare program or other charitable projects, Seervai was a guiding force.

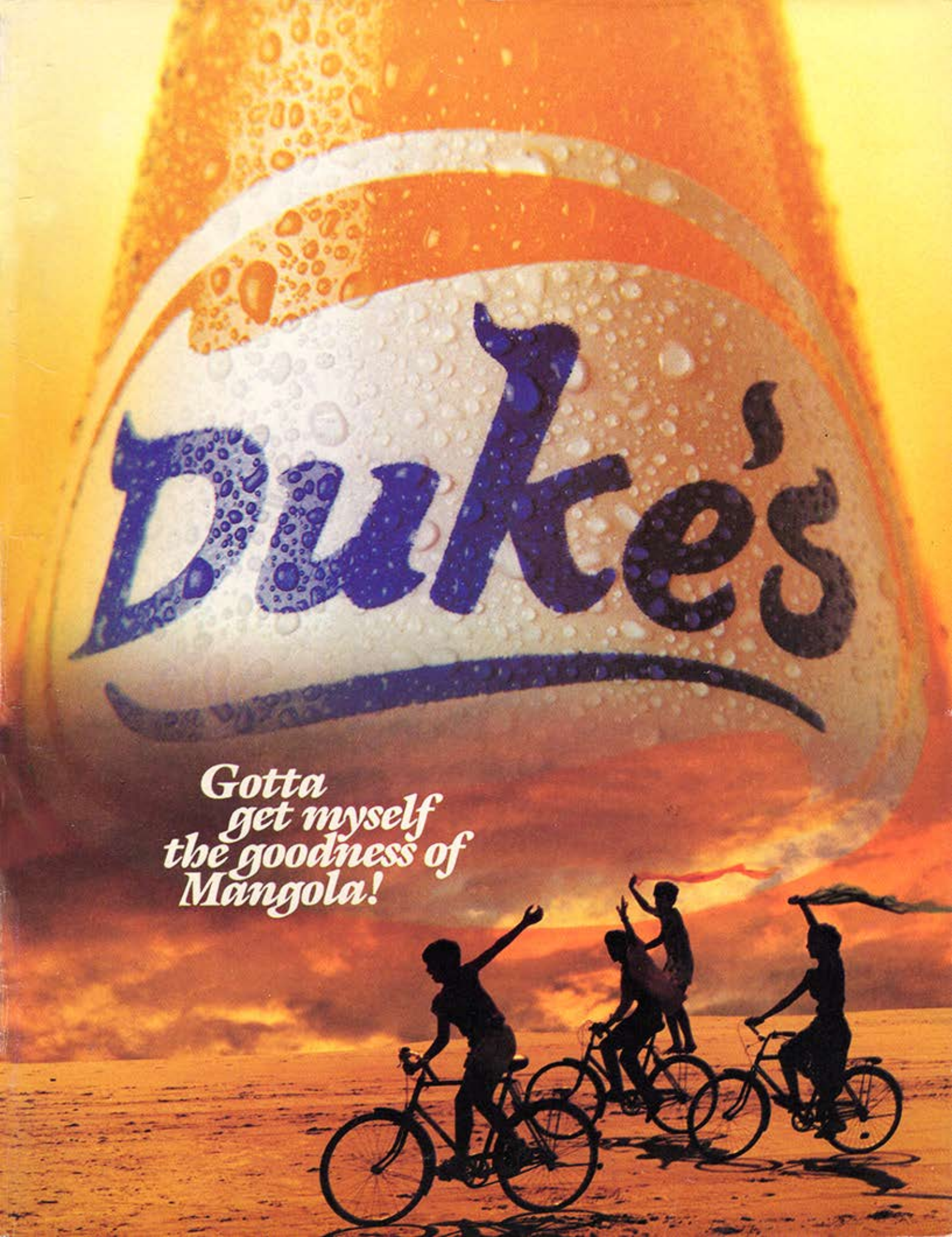
The amiable spinster who enjoyed relaxing with a game of cards as also mah-jongg, always found time for her dogs, specially the dachshund that kept her company in the absence of any immediate family members. She also shouldered the responsibilities as honorary secretary of the Kennel Club.

Born to wealth in a family that had established itself in the business world with its popular Wimbridge Furniture, Seervai enjoyed making frequent trips abroad, being fond of travelling by herself.

After her early education at the Ooty Convent, she proceeded to the UK to study at the Bristol College of Domestic Arts. She was reportedly an expert in making pastry and confectionery and would, without hesitation, impart her art free of cost to those interested. She was also a life member of the UK-based National Confectionery Industry which entitled her to certain rare privileges from this distinguished organization.

Combining her talent for making 'sweet' dishes with her natural flair for social 'relief,' Seervai's life seemed to be governed by the spirit of 'sweet relief' until she was incapacitated by Alzheimer's disease.

Written by Parinaz Gandhi



Duke's

*Gotta
get myself
the goodness of
Mangola!*



Bring back the romance...



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