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Parsiana

April 1993
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2 Readers' Forum

10 Events and Personalities

16 Zoroastrians Abroad

23 Jamshed Guzder: "Here to serve" by Arnavaz Mama

29 Looking through stained glass by Parinaz Gandhi

33 Books

36 Milestones

40 In Memoriam

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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 400001. Letters are subject to editing for reasons of space and clarity. Unsigned letters or those without an address will not be published.

"The Crux of the..."

Further to "The Crux of the Community" (*Parsiana*, January 1993) the corpus of The Allahabad Parsee Zoroastrian Anjuman was Rs 1,44,900 as on March 31, 1991, Rs 1,58,601 as on March 31, 1992 and Rs 1,68,601 as on March 31, 1993.

Two new funds have been created: Bazme Behram Roj Jashne Fund, corpus Rs 13,701 in 1992 and Shenaz Homi Dandiwalla Fund, corpus Rs 10,000 in 1993.

We however have a general fund which on March 31, 1992 was Rs 1,87,983.12. This financial year expenditure exceeded income by Rs 2,592.55 and so the general fund on March 31, 1993 became Rs 1,85,391.57. (The interest from units of Rs 2,00,000 was not received.)

Capt HOMI DANDIWALLA
President trustee
The Allahabad Parsee Zoroastrian Anjuman

"The Uncommon in the..."

It was with sadness that we read your article, "The Uncommon in the House of Commons" (*Parsiana*, December 1992).

A charitable interpretation to allow for reasons which led you to publish Mr Farrokh Vajifdar's extremely biased version of the Dadabhai centenary celebrations at Zoroastrian House is perhaps that it is not often that a periodical reports the miraculous! Reference Mr Vajifdar's version of events... "Zarathushtra in all his framed glory kept his gaze firmly averted from the proceedings!"

May we suggest that Mr Vajifdar put his talents to better use by accurately reporting what was intended to be, and was indeed held by the community at large as being, a successful and fitting celebration of the life and times of a great man. Furthermore, the centenary celebrations in India were directly influenced by our initiative in London to celebrate this great and historical event.

Notwithstanding the personal agenda and vested interests of certain disruptive elements in the UK, it does not behove a publication of *Parsiana's* reputation to publish an inaccurate and totally biased article. There are several contradictions, inaccuracies and deliberate omissions in the published version of events. To point out a few:

- The price of the total function which included lunch was £10. The jashan was free — as all such religious occasions always are. Despite mischievous propaganda before the event, this was widely publicized.

- Dr Shirinbanoo Kutar had previously agreed verbally that she would gladly accept the medallion in memory of her husband, only to change her mind at the last minute on the day of the ceremony. One wonders what pressures were brought to bear on her, for such a last minute refusal of a gracious gesture meant to posthumously honor the memory of the late Dastur (Dr) Sohrabji Kutar. In addition Ervad Homi Dordi wrote to the committee requesting a medallion for services rendered only to refuse it on the day!

- The medallions are of relatively little monetary value and were meant as a token gesture of thanks to mobeds and members of the community who unselfishly give of their time and efforts. No favoritism was shown and anyone who

had given of their efforts — whether their ideology differed from that of the managing committee or not — was offered the same token of gratitude for services rendered to the community. In answer to the questions posed in Mr Vajifdar's article, can one contend that because no one has ever said "thank you" before, that it should never be said?

We could continue to refute the highly biased and inaccurate points made in Mr Vajifdar's account of the proceedings, but this committee has many new members who do not pander to past factions and enmities. We feel that the efforts of the committee are best directed in progressing the work that benefits the community at large, rather than scoring propaganda brownie points. We will leave that to the likes of Mr Vajifdar — if he so desires.

May we also point out that an accurate account of events together with photographs was submitted to you by our president, which seems to have been ignored.

Could we therefore submit that a publication of your standing does not subscribe to these antics and in future considers both sides of an issue before printing an obviously biased article?

No doubt, controversial and inflammatory copy makes for better reading. However, we offer you no spectacular statements or sarcastic humor at the expense of our fellow Zoroastrians.

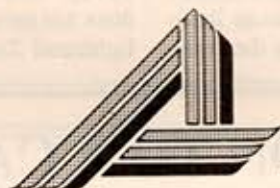
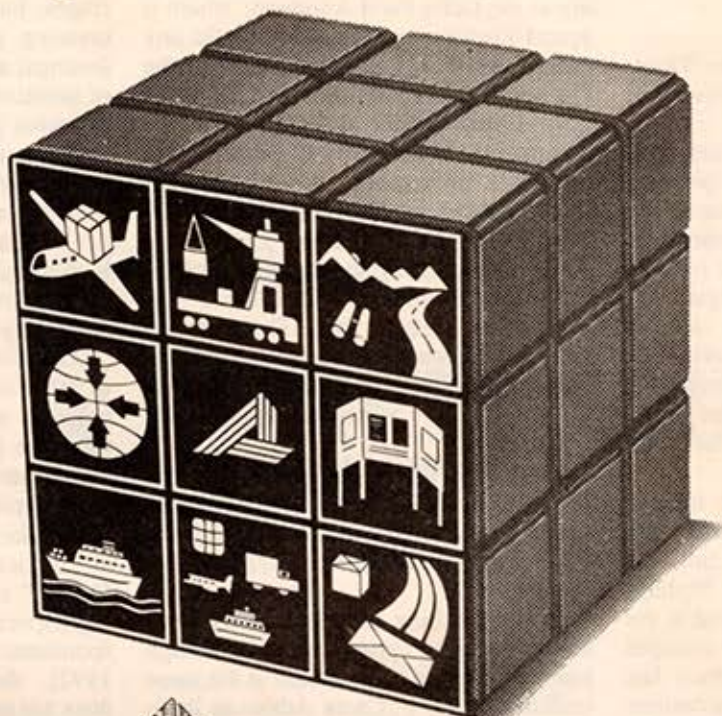
Ms NAVAZ BUHARIWALA
Joint honorary secretary
Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe

Arnavaz Mama replies

The *Parsiana* report on the various functions commemorating Dadabhai Naoroji in London was compiled by us on the basis of material received from diverse sources including your own and Mr Vajifdar's reports.

The ZTFE reports were used by us to double-check on facts and individual presence at the different functions. They, unfortunately, had little to offer by way of what was actually said by the principal participants nor did they cast any light on the flavor of the functions themselves. Apart from naming the various speakers, your reports did not elaborate on what they had to say about Dadabhai Naoroji. We have quoted extensively from Mr Nani Palkhivala's

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speech (acquired from an independent source) in order to highlight the personality of the Grand Old Man. Similarly, the quote from Sir David Steel had a separate source.

"Doors closed to..."

This refers to letters pertaining to "Doors closed to Darius" (*Parsiana*, November and December 1992).

It is sad to read how certain members of our community exhibit their personal likes and dislikes in the name of Asho Zarathushtra's profound teachings. Thereby, unknowingly, they not only do injustice but insult the noble religion.

Nowhere has the Prophet spoken about differences of caste, creed, etc. The only distinction he has spoken of between man and man is, one of Vohu Mano, good mind and of Ako Mano, not good mind.

In the November issue, the learned presidents of Athornan Mandal and Jarthosti Jashan Committee call the above navjote wholly illegal. Perhaps Justice Davar's famous judgement at the beginning of the 20th century escapes their minds. The learned justice has clearly pronounced that Zoroastrianism is the religion, Parsis, a community. Re-

ligion is open to all, not the community.

We have been Zoroastrians for thousands of years, Parsis only since we came to India about 1,300 years ago. Again in the same issue, Mr Disawalla states about the Delhi Parsi Anjuman "where it seems Zoroastrianism does not exist any more." As if this is not enough, in the December issue, Ms Behroze D. Patel goes a step further and calls upon the community to have Ervad Burjor Pavri criminally prosecuted. If we look at all this in light of our Asho Prophet's teachings, Burjor Pavri and the Delhi Parsi Anjuman are to be congratulated for having performed their religious duties with courage and without fear. These are the torchbearers who will keep our noble religion alive in its pure glory.

Ms HOMAI FRAMROZE BODE

"Moving with the times"

Kudos to Ervad N. S. Mobedji of Indore for his frank and illuminating letter ("Moving with the times," *Parsiana*, December 1992).

It is refreshing to note that we have amongst us a priest who, although trained for navar and maratab at the same institute viz M. F. Cama Athornan Institute like any of our priests, has the cour-

age of conviction to expound what real religious teachings and customs should be in the context of the fast changing world around us.

I do not advocate intercaste marriages, but these are occurring with increasing and alarming frequency, even amongst athornan families. This, in spite of punitive impediments enforced by our orthodox priests in excommunicating females married to aliens and not allowing their children into our Zoroastrian fold even when the mother has not renounced her Zoroastrian faith after marriage and both the parents, including the non-Parsi father, have no objection to the children being brought up as Zoroastrians.

Our minute community, in a vast sea of other communities which openly encourage and practice conversion, will thus lose the precious few hundreds who would have been added to our frighteningly depleted numbers.

Similarly, the controversy raging over an innocent child, "Doors closed to Darius," makes sad and sickening reading especially when one of your correspondents states (*Parsiana*, November 1992), that in Delhi "Zoroastrianism does not exist any more" just because enlightened Zoroastrians of Delhi practice

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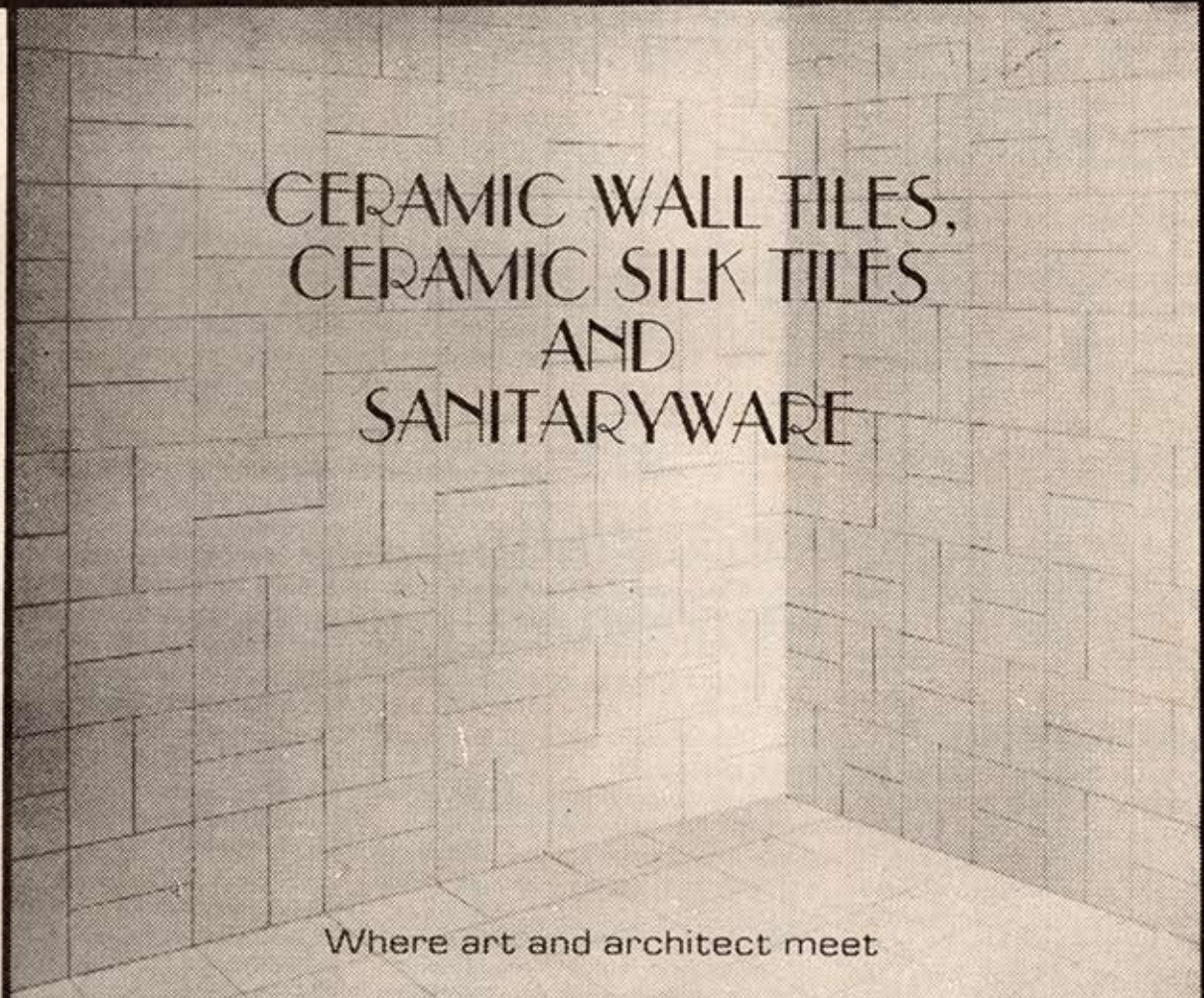
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what seems to be the rational and true spirit of the Zoroastrian religion.

In a few generations, our small community, riddled with genetic deficiencies and abnormalities, will realize its failure in not moving with the times and in muffling the voices of the enlightened minority who express their views without fear to save our community from the shackles of ultra-orthodox views.

Dr M.D. DISAWALLA
Bangalore

"CER comeback"

It is gratifying that the intelligentsia of our community woke up, though belatedly, and prevented the reins of the electoral college from passing by default into the hands of the group which was silently planning to seize and capture it ("CER comeback," *Parsiana*, November 1992). The CER first called itself Committee for Electoral Rights and awakened the community; later it called itself Committee for Economic Revival and now after its latest achievement, I would like to call it the Committee of Enlightened Rationalists.

As such enlightened rationalists, I exhort them to shed all inhibitions and to call a spade a spade. The trustees should be forced to appoint an advisory committee of stalwarts and professionals of our community whose recommendations they must implement. The panels should, among others, be on/for administration, education, accounts, economic policies, legal matters, medical aid, entrepreneurship, vocational guidance, housing, etc.

It will be a great pity if the wisdom, intelligence and experience of the great professionals of our community are not harnessed for the community's upliftment and progress.

S. TANTRA
Nasik

"To whom should they..."

At a time when many individuals and groups are trying hard to reverse the current trend in mixed marriages, we were dismayed to read the remarks made by the president of the Federation of Zoroastrian Associations of North America (FEZANA), Mr Rohinton Rivetna, at the Federation meeting held in Bombay ("To whom should they turn?" *Parsiana*, June 1992). He is reported as saying:

"We don't subscribe to the view that intermarriages are a loss to the community... irrespective of your personal choice (about mixed marriage) you are welcome and accepted by the Association."

Such remarks made by a person in authority do not encourage marriages within the fold by any stretch of imagination. On the one hand Mr Rivetna acknowledges that he represents all shades of Zoroastrians — conformists, traditionalists, free thinkers — whom he considers to be an asset, while on the other hand his remarks directly contradict the views and sentiments of many who are actively striving to discourage mixed marriages. May we remind Mr Rivetna that had our elders, in whom we had entrusted our destiny, made similar remarks soon after landing in India 13 centuries ago, we would not be here today?

Our concerns about outside conversions pale into insignificance when compared with the harm that is being caused to our community from within its ranks — by those who directly encourage mixed marriages and by those who are either complacent or afraid of discouraging them.

In the same *Parsiana* article Mr Rivetna expresses concern about the danger of us being unrecognizable in the next 40 years. We also note his enthusiasm to make Zoroastrianism and Zoroastrians better known to the American people. Let us caution him, however, that if this is going to mean departing from our long established practice of marrying within the fold (i.e. Parsi and original Irani Zarthoshtis only) or throwing open the doors of our community to any and everyone through mixed marriages, then 40 years seems too long a period for us to reach oblivion.

We acknowledge the effort that Mr Rivetna and others like him are expending in other fields of community work and we thank them. We wish they could find the time, energy and dedication to do what is necessary in this vital area also. For instance we wish they could devise measures to:

- Instill a sense of pride in our youth about our faith and identity
- Stem the steady drain and dilution of our faith and identity through mixed marriages
- Make it easier for our youth to find suitable mates from within the community
- Make them stop and think a dozen times before choosing a mate from outside.

Ervad JAL N. BIRDY
California, USA

"Dastur's Deliveries"

Your article regarding Padma Shri Dr B. C. Dastur ("Dastur's Deliveries," *Par-*

siana, June 1992) makes the Parsi community feel very proud.

However, his lament about the declining birth rate as in the Parsi Lying-in Hospital needs some clarification.

As a matter of fact Parsi women deliver at other hospitals in Bombay and bypass this hospital for obvious reasons. In my humble opinion the genesis of this is as follows:

Some years ago there were six honoraries at this hospital. Now with the passage of time there is only one honorary, Dr Dastur, left. Over the last many years no honorary has been appointed in this place to replace the old ones.

My humble suggestion is to appoint more honorary gynecologists and obstetricians who will automatically bring in work from their practice as also ideas for improving, expanding and running the place. Even non-Parsi doctors, so appointed, would admit their non-Parsi patients in the nursing home section.

The place is badly maintained so that patients would think twice before coming here for delivery or surgery. The community is aware that the tenets of the Zoroastrian religion require 40 days of seclusion for a woman after childbirth and this is the only hospital where the patients are allowed to stay for 40 days after childbirth as per the object of the founder of the trust.

Dr HOSHUNG R. MOBEDJI

Vacancies in Surat

The Surat Parsi Panchayat (SPP) shoulders vast responsibilities for the good of the community, managing several institutions working in different fields. These are: the main controlling body, the Parsi Panchayat Office; the Boys' Orphanage; the Girls' Orphanage; the General Hospital; the Maternity Hospital; the Industrial Institute for Women and Girls; the Nariman Home and Infirmary; and the Doongerwadi.

We find it increasingly difficult to get honest, hardworking, qualified people to serve these institutions. Vacancies are likely to arise for:

- A qualified young man to handle responsibility of the head office after getting proper training from the seniors. He will have good prospects and will be given service quarters and other facilities.
- A qualified young man to work as an assistant to office administrator above.
- A matron to manage affairs of our Central Kitchen which caters to 400 benefi-

ciaries, i.e. inmates of Nariman Home and boarders of Boys' and Girls' Orphanages.

- A lady assistant to the superintendent of the Girls' Orphanage. Service quarters, food, etc provided. (If there is a couple, we may also consider her husband for a suitable job befitting his qualifications and capacity.)

- Elderly lady or man to look after the day-to-day affairs of the Nariman Home and Infirmary. Suitable residential quarters and other facilities will be provided.

- A middle-aged male to look after the day-to-day affairs of Hangali at Farvardian. Furnished service quarters and other amenities provided.

- A male superintendent for the Boys' Orphanage. A person retired from the military or similar institution will be preferred.

- A male cook for our Central Kitchen.

In all the above cases, retirement benefits like provident fund, gratuity, leave, etc are available. Parsi employees receive medical treatment at our hospitals and free educational facilities if they have children studying either in Gujarati or English medium.

In the absence of the right type of people coming forward to serve the com-

munity, affairs are managed by giving extension to several old employees, but from the point of view of the future it is essential to employ persons who may get training under the present experienced employees and do useful work in the years to come.

We request charitable trusts, who may receive applications for doles from persons who are physically fit to work, to refer such applicants to us.

We also require khandhias, nasses-salars and a driver for our hearse. We know that there is a dearth of these types of people everywhere. However, in case you come across such persons you may keep the matter in mind.

Salary/emoluments will be commensurate with qualifications, age, experience and nature of duties and responsibilities.

Dr SAMS. BHACCA
President, SPP, Surat

Cooper Agiary celebrations

To celebrate the centenary of the Bai Avanbai A. Cooper Agiary, Lahore, Pakistan, the trustees cordially invite all Zoroastrians to partake in the celebrations to mark this very special occasion, to be held July 3-5, 1993.

In order to facilitate arrangements for

the functions, it is requested that those who wish to participate may kindly inform the managing trustee Ms Perin Boga at 18, Warris Road, Lahore, Pakistan [Tel: (00) 92-42-7581251].

Ms PERIN BOGA
Lahore, Pakistan

A whim of the mist

A tribute to the Marker family who were killed in a highway accident on January 16, 1993 ("The Marker family tragedy," *Parsiana*, March 1993):

My oldest son accosted me in the
kitchen

With a mirthless smile.

"You know the Markers?"

"Yeah"

"You know the Markers?"

"Yeah"

"They're dead."

"What?"

"They're all dead."

"How?"

"Car accident, I heard Daddy telling
Sahm."

I wanted to go back out the front door
And come in again.

Eric came into the kitchen

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With a shoe box full of crayons.
"The markers are dead?"
"The markers aren't dead."

I love markers.
Their true clear colors inspire me.
Sanobar, green, a Persian pine
her quiet dignity and love of poetry
Noshir, orange, a combination of heat
and light
Jokes, and question/exclamations
Tushna, yellow, slinky pointed nails
a rounded baby-still face
Rustom, red,
guileless grace

Erach, blue, an astringent color,
I can see him with my mind,
Walking down the light and shadow
striped path.

He wore a blue flap-eared hat,
thick glasses,
And a seraphic smile.
We walked single file down
Dhobi Falls,

Clambered up rocks
Poked sticks in puddles
Took each other's pictures
Warned each other, "Don't go
near the edge."

We hurled our echoes
Over the vast, green, deep and
silent valley.
"Hey, hey, hey."

He tried to pretend indifference
As we mooted a trip to the U.S.
To visit us.
Next year
1993
The year that didn't happen.

Now these clear true memories
Are grayed and sepiaed
And eaten around the edges
With the acid of sadness.

Like a tongue probing an empty
tooth socket
I go to the louvered door
And pick a Christmas card,
The one that says:

"Hope 1993 will bring us
a visit from you
and both families can spend a
holiday together.
With lots of love,
Tushna, Erach, Rustom,
Noshir and Sanobar"

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The Ex-Students' Association of the J. B. Vachha High School is celebrating its silver jubilee in 1993-94.

Since its inception in 1924, our school has rendered valuable service to thousands from all strata of society who have turned out of its hallowed portals as happy wives and mothers or smart and efficient career women in all spheres of life. We feel confident that all of you associated with the school will look upon it as your sacred duty to help in building up a fund for its further development and welfare. So please give as generously as you can and help as loyally as you have done in the past.

Donations by cash/money order/cheques drawn in favor of "Vachha and C. J. Schools Ex-Students' Association — Silver Jubilee A/c" may be sent to: Ms Amy R. Kavarana (treasurer), The J. B. Vachha High School, Mancherji Joshi Road, Dadar, Bombay 400014.

Z. J. ENGINEER
President

Vachha and C. J. School Ex-Students' Association

Suggestions for change

Our forefathers left a huge legacy of providing pious places like agiaries and atash bahrams (44 agiaries and 4 atash bahrams in Bombay alone) throughout India and side by side left behind funds for repair and maintenance of these holy places for which the community is ever grateful. Due to ever increasing cost of materials and labor charges, however, it is beyond the control of the trustees to carry out essential repairs and they are forced to approach the hamdins for funds. In fact, the trustees can find resources from the holy place itself.

We are grateful to the trustees of Nargol agiary for having set a very good example by the novel idea of painting names of departed souls and donors of Rs 1,000 and above on the wall of the Nargol agiary. Now after three years, they have raised the minimum donation amount to Rs 5,000.

Time marches on and we have to adjust ourselves by giving up old and outdated customs. About 40 to 50 years back the dinner at marriage and navjote functions was served with seven or eight dishes with liquor, ending with ice cream, nuts and pan supari. The cost at Rs 3.50 to Rs 4 per head included second helpings.

Now three dishes are served with ice cream at the end at Rs 70-75 per head,

but the old practice of serving the second time still continues. If a family of four or five persons attend such functions they have to dish out Rs 300-350 because if they give merely Rs 101, the host will be put to a great loss. If there are two or three functions in a month the amount becomes prohibitive. However, if the second helping is eliminated, the caterers would be able to bring down the rates to Rs 40-45 per head. RUSTOM A. KOTWAL

Edited by Amavaz S. Mama

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Events and Personalities

Surat youth join hands

"The Zoroastrian Youth League of Surat (ZYLS), within just two months, has registered 125 members," announced Ms Prochie Bhesania, secretary of the newly constituted body at its first general body meeting at Surat's Atee Dharamshala hall on February 14, 1993. To the youths who were looking forward to the dancing and refreshments scheduled for the evening's agenda, ZYLS president Nauzer Kasad reminded, "Besides having fun and enjoying ourselves we also have to prove that the future of our community, its culture, heritage and traditions are indeed safe in the able hands of the youth." Being small in numbers, interaction with each other should pose no problem, he believed.

It was soon after the Sixth All India Zoroastrian Youth Seminar in October 1992 that a few like-minded youngsters decided to constitute a youth league in Surat. The constitution of ZYLS was drawn up with the assistance of Porus Karanjawalla, vice president of the Federation of Zoroastrian Youth Associations, acknowledged Kasad.

"As a youth organization it is good to have picnics, parties and potlucks," noted Karanjawalla who was present at the general body meeting, adding, "but at the same time one should not turn a Nelson's eye towards social service for the benefit of our less fortunate Zoroastrian brethren." His final word of caution to the youth was not to pursue the same projects as those undertaken by other community organizations lest it be construed as trespassing on others' territory. "In fact, all should work together for the cause of our community and its welfare," he continued.

Following the first get-together at-

tended by nearly 160 youth, was another program organized on *Ava mah, Ava roj*. This function was held jointly with the Zoroastrian Women's Association, yet another body recently set up in Surat with membership restricted to females. The president of this group is Ms Mahrukh Chichgar. After the activities and objectives of the two new groups were made known, on the evening's agenda was a talk on the significance of praying to the water angel. The gathering was later treated to a free vegetarian meal sponsored by the Surat Parsi Panchayat, according to a news report that appeared in the *Jam-e-Jamshed*.

Power protectors

Environment friendly industrial equipment is the primary concern of the Ahmedabad based Mazda Controls Limited, a company promoted by technocrat Sorab Rattanshah Mody who runs his

Mody: energy conscious



own proprietary firm in the name of Mazda Power Engineers. In March this year when many other companies' public issues had failed, Mazda Controls' over-subscribed issue was closed on the earliest closing date, notes a press release issued by the company.

With its in-house research and development unit reportedly recognized by the department of scientific and industrial research, ministry of science and technology, Government of India, the company manufactures thermocompressors and fuel saving equipments as also air pollution control systems and refrigeration systems which protect the ozone layer. Some of the industries that are said to be employing Mazda's products are: chemicals, refineries, pharmaceuticals, fertilizers, pulp and paper, and nuclear power plants.

Their products that measure up to international standards have resulted in certain leading companies resorting to import substitution, states the handout: In addition to Gujarat Godrej purchasing vacuum systems from them and Bombay Dyeing and Manufacturing Company placing an order for their vacuum ejector scrubbing systems, several other blue chip companies constitute Mazda's clientele — Alfa Laval, Citurgia Bio-Chemicals, South India Viscose, Petrofils, Gujarat State Fertilizers etc.

Mazda's relationship with the internationally renowned Croll-Reynolds Company has given it an edge over its competitors. Further upgradation of technology is also intended, according to a company source, with collaborations being negotiated with German and British companies. A trial order for control valves from Russia has now oriented the company towards exports, adds the release.

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Sabavala's art beckons

"Observe that his lines float away from the grip of the real, and towards the curvatures of fantasy, prophecy and dream. Observe that his thresholds summon you to the mystery of human presence, of geographical presence; a fugitive in search of mirages, the artist stops suddenly, presents the fruit of his inwardness." Thus noted the catalog inviting the public to experience artist Jehangir Sabavala's "intuitive exploration" through his collection of nearly 30 paintings displayed at Bombay's Jehangir Art Gallery from February 17-24 and at Delhi's AIFACS Gallery from March 11-17 this year.

His canvases depicting landscapes, trapped lakes, dormant volcanoes are the result of his work over the last four years. While some of his paintings make an impact as a series, there are also the solitary works. A new vision is introduced in the form of *The Stranger*, depicted as alighting on the earth from elsewhere. "The music of Sabavala's paintings is a subdued play of whisper and wingbeat; of haunting cry and rustling wind," states the exhibition catalog. "His ancestors who fled persecution and settled in India have left him a nourishing legacy of mood, tone and imagery: the heritage of diaspora, the textures of memory that is at once remembrance and desire," to quote Ranjit Hoskote.

The Madras-based Gallery Arts Trust (GAT) that presented Sabavala's exhibitions is also sponsoring a 30-minute documentary film on him due to be re-



Sabavala (below) introduces *The Stranger*



leased this year. The film will be directed by Arun Khopkar, the award winning director of art films. The first such documentary on a lone painter, the 35 mm film made for national and international channels, will incorporate his work over the last 42 years, including his sketches, black and white drawings, water colors, old oil paintings and family photographs, informs Sabavala.

After 27 one-man shows and participation in innumerable group shows, Sabavala's works are in demand both in India and abroad. His paintings feature in the collection of the National Gallery of Modern Art and Parliament House, New Delhi, the Museum of Modern Art, Chandigarh, The National Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, in corporate houses and in private collections in dif-

ferent corners of the world. Only this year his painting was among the art pieces auctioned in Bombay by Aspreys of London for the cause of Helpage India.

For prime health care

"I have not done any bio-medical research. My laboratory has been the 300 odd villages in Pune district," announced Pune's eminent gynecologist and obstetrician Dr (Ms) Banoo Coyaji on receiving the 1993 Rameshwardas Birla National Award for excellence in medical research and related fields at the hands of the Governor of Maharashtra, Dr P. C. Alexander.

The first woman recipient of this award that carries a prize of Rs 1.5 lakhs, Coyaji has been investigating the reasons for underutilization of health care services in India. "In a country with a population of 85 million and substantial addition to the population every minute... the contribution of Dr Coyaji in the field of family planning, maternal and child care, the most neglected area, really deserves to be recognized," commended Alexander at the award presentation function on March 27.

Her association with Pune's K. E. M. Hospital spans nearly five decades during which time she has developed it from a 40-bedded hospital to a 550-bedded institution, recognized by the University of Pune as a teaching hospital for graduate and postgraduate education, notes the citation. She founded the K. E. M. Hospital Research Centre in 1973; and the Vadu Rural Health Project that she initiated in 1977 has attracted national and international attention as a model for operationalizing the primary health care approach.

A consultant to the World Health Or-



Blitz editor Russey Karanjia (left) with social workers Silloo Kavarana and Parvez Katrak at a function held by the Parvez Katrak Foundation on March 11, 1993 to felicitate senior Parsi journalists. Other journalists to be honored were: the late Jal Heerjibehdin, the late Adi Dhondy, Behram Contractor, Dorab Mehta, Kekobad Katki and Maneck Chena.

ganization, Ford Foundation, United Nations Development Programme and World Bank, Coyaji is constantly invited to international meets and institutions. In October last she was at Rio to attend the Earth Summit. On the national front the



Coyaji (left) and Karkaria

Padma Bhushan winner has served as a member of the Central Council of Health and Family Welfare for a number of years and participated in the formulation of the Seventh and Eighth Five-Year Plans by working as a member/chairman of the working group on population stabilization, maternal and child health and research, as mentions her curriculum vitae.

Human interest pen

Her amusing weekly middle in *The Times of India* and a perceptive monthly "Private I" column in the *Sunday Times of India* has brought Bombay-based journalist Bachi Karkaria due recognition as a famed journalist. But it is her human interest stories that qualified her for the Media India Award 1992, as notes a press release. A rolling trophy and a silver medal was presented to Karkaria who has been concentrating on public health, especially AIDS, and urban planning.

Having joined the Times group as a trainee in 1969, Karkaria is currently senior editor of *The Times of India* and also officiating as consulting editor of the *Metropolis on Saturday*, the latest paper from the Times group.

A third generation journalist (her paternal grandfather was the founder of eastern India's only Gujarati journal, *Navroz*, in 1917 which was subsequently edited by her mother), Karkaria opted to pursue a diploma in journalism from the Calcutta University after completing her graduation in English literature from Calcutta's Loreto College. Later the Times group sponsored her training in advanced journalism at the Thompson Foundation, Cardiff, UK.

Her writings have extended beyond the

newspaper sphere. When she returned to her hometown Calcutta in 1980, Karkaria joined *The Statesman*. She is reportedly the first woman to have been appointed by that publication to the senior post of assistant editor. Besides authoring books on M. S. Oberoi and Calcutta's Grand Hotel, she has also co-authored another on Mother Teresa. Additionally she has written the commentary for Shyam Benegal's documentary on AIDS and scripted a musical revue on 'Busybee' Behram Contractor. A collection of her early writings is to be brought out in 1993 by United Book Sellers and Publishers, Delhi, she informs.

In a gun chase

It could have been a game of forfeits with Sanjay Dutt passing on the treasure to Yusuf Nullwala who handed it over to Kersi Adajania who entrusted it to Rusi Mulla who in turn delivered it to Ajay Marwah who... But since this wasn't child's play but a deadly weapon in circulation, those involved ended in judicial remand under the Terrorist and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act (TADA), notes a report in *The Times of India* of April 21, 1993.

The police first detained matinee idol Sanjay Dutt on April 20, on grounds of "joining hands with anti-national elements" to smuggle and distribute explosives and firearms that triggered the bomb blasts in Bombay on March 12.

On further interrogations it surfaced that Dutt had acquired an AK-56 assault rifle, a 9 mm pistol and some ammunition supposedly to safeguard the interests of his family and Parliamentarian father Sunil Dutt. As per the news report Sanjay admitted that he had instructed Nullwala to destroy the firearms. Nullwala allegedly disclosed that he had taken the firearms to the Princess Street residence of Adajania who had a foundry. It is said that Adajania used a gas-welding apparatus to melt down the AK-56 and the residue was returned to Nullwala for disposal into the sea off Marine Drive. While the spring and the rod of the AK-56 were reportedly recovered from Adajania's residence, the 9 mm pistol and some ammunition had been routed via Mulla, a resident of Mon Repos at Bandra, to Marwah's residence where it was finally traced.

The Bombay High Court eventually granted bail on May 11 to Sanjay's accomplices on the condition that they furnish a bond of Rs 50,000 each and report to the CID office periodically as "we are prima facie of the view that TADA is not applicable in as much as no material of any kind is shown to us to show any connection between the possession/destruction of the weapon and any terrorist/disruptive activity." Thereafter Dutt too was released on bail.

Compiled by Parinaz Gandhi



The steps leading from the Marine Drive embankment into the sea were known as the "Parsi steps." This information, reported in *The Afternoon Despatch and Courier* of April 5, 1993, was conveyed by Tomoji Mutoh, the consul general for Japan in Bombay.

It is down these very steps opposite the Kaivalyadham Yogic Centre that Parsis are seen descending every year around April, coconuts, flowers and pori in hand, to offer obeisance to Avan Ardavisur, the angel guarding waters.

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The Lawyer and the Lords

In the esoteric world of international law and high finance Sarosh Zaiwalla has carved a special niche

Arnavaz S. Mama

"In the last 45 years India has been to the House of Lords 11 times. Its only two successes so far have been (through) my firm. In this period the action in which my firm represented India has led to savings of over £50 million..." noted the firm's founder Sarosh Zaiwalla who decided to sue the Government of India (GOI) for £3,10,000 in unpaid fees, reports *The Afternoon Despatch and Courier* of April 10, 1993.

In the last three years the London-based Zaiwalla and Company, Solicitors, has been continually in the news. The law firm first earned media attention in India when it won a damages claim against a Swedish newspaper *Dagens Nyheter* on behalf of businessman Ajitabh Bachchan (brother of famous cine actor Amitabh Bachchan) who was implicated in the Bofors scandal. It also happens to be the first legal firm of Asian origin to be accorded a reception in the House of Lords. The recent ruling in its favor against the Government of India has brought Zaiwalla further leverage.

At the end of a 10-day trial in the High Court Justice Gagehouse agreed with the plaintiff that the situation resulting from the non-payment of disputed bills was "scandalous," writes L. K. Sharma in *The Times of India* of April 10, 1993. The money judgement of the court is yet to come.

The disputed amount covers Zaiwalla's fees for the period 1982-1990 during which the law firm successfully represented the GOI and the Indian public sector undertakings in a number of litigations/arbitrations.

The dispute is based on the hourly rate charged by Zaiwalla and involved a discussion on what is a "run-of-the-mill case" and what is not and what is adequate remuneration for solicitors handling different types of cases.

According to Zaiwalla, the standard rate agreement, referred to as an umbrella agreement between the solicitor and the Indian High Commission, had ended with the company's letter dated January 19, 1988 although the standard rate continued to apply to costs regarding instructions received prior to this letter.

"I shudder to think what Mahatma Gandhi would have thought of the stand taken by the Indian government in the court"

It was Zaiwalla's contention, upheld by the court, that the standard rate applied only to instructions channelled through the Indian High Commission; it did not govern cases where Zaiwalla was instructed directly by the Indian government and he was free to charge commercial rates in such cases. The court also directed the GOI to pay Zaiwalla interest at the rate of 15 percent on unpaid bills, reports *The Times*.

Another item at issue was the daily rate charged by Zaiwalla. The defence counsel alleged that though Zaiwalla was an English solicitor he should be paid at

the rate paid to local Indian solicitors in India. The court rejected the contention and ruled that £1,200 a day charged by Zaiwalla as an English solicitor who never practiced in India and was travelling there for official purposes only, was reasonable.

The court also emphasized that barring a single exception, no complaint had been made regarding the handling of the shipping work entrusted to the law firm. On the last day of the trial the Indian government abandoned its counterclaim of £585,000 for negligence. The judge had earlier described it as "hopeless," notes *The Afternoon* report.

In a statement published by *The Afternoon* (April 12, 1993), Zaiwalla notes, "When I began my (law) firm I represented the Indian government in England at what was by British standards paltry rates; but once I was established I expected to be treated no better nor worse than any other law firm whether they be of Indian origin or not... To think that some of the great leaders of India made justice and fair play the hallmark of their fight against colonial rule, yet the representatives of their successor in London chose to fight this case on the ignoble principle that one man's legal talent is less than that of another on the basis that



he is of Indian origin. I shudder to think what Mahatma Gandhi would have thought of the stand taken by the Indian government in the court in the last two weeks in this case."

According to a profile on the lawyer in the *Legal Business Magazine* (LBM-May 1992) Zaiwalla, 45, completed his articles in the shipping department of Stocken and Company and went on to set up Gagrut and Company in London. When the firm was dissolved in 1982 Zaiwalla set up his present firm and though the Asian business community was not too responsive, he succeeded in



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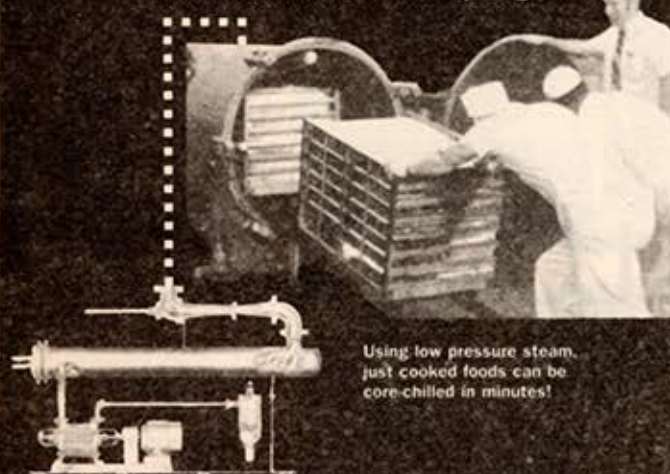


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becoming the Indian High Commission's principal lawyer in London until he had to sue it for unpaid back fees in 1991 — the first of two writs issued. Though this snapped the connection with the Indian High Commission, he continued to be instructed directly by the Indian Oil Corporation, the Reserve Bank of India and other public sector institutions.

Described by a peer as an aggressive, diligent and imaginative lawyer, Zaiwalla is said to have taken positions which seemed very difficult to succeed and come through. Notes Nick Gillies in *LBM*, "To hear Zaiwalla described as aggressive is interesting, because in manner he is mild and courteous. However...the killer kings of litigation often have this style." According to Gillies, Zaiwalla believes "that a new way must be found, probably alternative dispute resolution. 'Parties should be able to sit down and get a correct answer by a meeting of minds and consultation. If we can evolve a scheme by which lawyers are remunerated for bringing in a sensible and equitable solution, then lawyers would have an incentive.'"

At Zaiwalla and Company's 10th anniversary celebrations at the House of Lords last year, the guest list of 180 included members of parliament, political bigwigs, diplomats, law lords and successful businessmen. Earlier, in 1988, Zaiwalla and Company had hosted the Lord Chancellor at the firm's annual seasonal reception at its Chancery Lane office. "It is rare and the first occasion when a Lord Chancellor, who is head of the legal world and who presides over the House of Lords proceedings, has favored a firm of solicitors by his presence at the reception," had noted *The Marine Times* of February 20, 1988. That the Lord Chancellor spent nearly an hour at Zaiwalla's was considered "a recognition (and) appreciation of the satisfactory and able manner in which this firm has represented foreign interests in the United Kingdom."

Zaiwalla is an elected member of the prestigious Baltic Exchange, the world famous London based shipping institute whose membership is restricted to responsible members of the shipping trading community, informs *India Weekly*. It is rare for a professional person who is not a part of this community to be so accepted, and a first for a solicitor of Indian origin, the publication further notes.

Zaiwalla — scion of the Bombay-based family of lawyers — also sits on the International Court of Arbitration of the International Chamber of Commerce in Paris and is an advisor to the United Nations Committee on International Banking. His firm has been involved in several high profile cases and represents Chinese and Venezuelan public sector corporations and commercial clients from the Middle East, Greece and Singapore, informs a press release.

As noted *The Financial Times* last year, Zaiwalla's "latest venture, putting together Europe's first Hindi language satellite TV station, is a reminder of how easily he flits between the worlds of international big business, showbiz and politics... (He) has been hovering around the fringes of the Conservative Party for several years but first came to national attention when he organized a pre-election 'power dinner' for Asian businessmen at Number 10.

"Now he is giving the same sort of attention to TV Asia, a £7 million project... Like many lawyers, he finds no difficulty juggling a sometimes controversial client list which includes (Ajitabh) Bachchan, Greek shipowners and some of the more wealthy BCCI (Bank of Credit and Commerce International, currently in liquidation) depositors... And could there be a starring role for him on TV Asia? Hosting a show on legal problems would seem a fitting choice."

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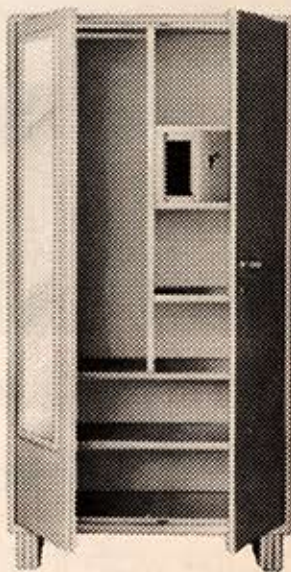


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The new chairman's priority is to better communication between the Punchayet and the community



Jamshed Guzder: "Here to serve"

Arnavaz S. Mama

"People flatter us as akabars. That age is gone. We're here to serve the community, not be served by them. Therefore, our priorities are those which must correct faults, omissions and unfulfilled desires of the community."

Prominent businessman and veteran trustee of the Bombay Parsi Punchayet Jamshed Guzder was outlining his aims as chairman of the Bombay Parsi Punchayet (BPP) to *Parsiana* at an interview on April 22, 1993. His ascent to chairmanship of the BPP's board of trustees has been suffused with acrimony. Guzder, however, has projected his main concern as harmony and well-being of the community under a reinvigorated Punchayet. To that end he planned to establish a grievance cell at the BPP, summon samast anjuman meetings, reinstate quarterly press conferences and invite greater professional participation from the community on the Punchayet's sub-committees.

Guzder, at 76, displays the same energetic, gregarious, impatient, philanthropic persona as during his first term in the Punchayet (which ended in 1985 when he withdrew his nomination for reelection in the contest with Naoroji

Godrej) and in 1986 when he returned to the Punchayet unopposed in the vacancy created by the resignation of Justice Jal Vimadlal. It was this break in his tenure on the board that has made co-trustees Homi Ranina and Dr (Ms) Mehroo Bengalee challenge his election as chairman. According to their plaint, filed in the Bombay High Court, the trustee with the longest continuous tenure of service (in this case Eruch Desai) should, per custom, officiate as chairman. Presently the matter is pending in court.

The curtains, carpet, old prints on the wall of Guzder's Neville House office at Ballard Estate, the umpteen awards from business and social service organizations jostling for space, mutely testify to the owner's changed preoccupations: reference books on corporate law line the upper shelves; *The Bombay Public Trusts Act* is in the foreground. The celebrated black box of Punchayet files rests within reach on the carpet.

To assess the community's needs and concerns Guzder has planned to meet each of the various community groups and associations reflecting the myriad points of view, "to get their feedback on what things are missing, what they're al-

ways accusing the Punchayet of not doing or neglecting." Accordingly Guzder also planned to visit each and every Parsi residential colony beginning with Panthaki Baug that evening. "If they tender any advice I wish to hear it and thereby be able to get a better perspective on what needs to be done. Assuming that 50 percent of grievances are not really worthwhile and 50 percent of the advice is impractical, the balance, if heeded after making necessary corrections and practiced, would enable us to create a new awakening in the community."

"My intention is that having acquainted myself with all these requirements I should issue a white paper, outlining priorities to be put into practice on a crash basis, with other items to be done later... set ourselves a target on what trustees should do and achieve... make a beginning."

Guzder's schedule envisaged the publication of a white paper in two to three months. He also spoke of summoning a samast anjuman meeting shortly. Guzder says he intends to "summon a samast anjuman meeting once a year, if not twice, to counter the criticism that people have no access to the trustees."

The second priority on Guzder's agenda relates to the Punchayet administration. "By and large the Punchayet administration headed by the chief executive is trying to function in the best way (it) can. But no administration is perfect, whether of a trust or a company or an institution and therefore, irrespective of everything, there is room for improvement. (This is) another aspect I want to devote my attention to and not wait."

To attain this objective Guzder proposes to set up a grievance cell in the Punchayet. As past president of the Council for Fair Business Practices, Guzder feels it is incumbent upon him to start a cell in the Punchayet akin to those set up by various large Indian and foreign companies in India as required under the Consumer Protection Act. "The BPP administration today is fully occupied and therefore this principle of listening to grievances and redressing them (requires) a new cell." Going a step further, Guzder expects to institute a monitoring system to ascertain "what steps are taken by the Punchayet to redress grievances... especially if the complaint is genuine and in the interests of the community."

As instances of valid criticism Guzder notes the want of a playground at Pathaki Baug where children account for 200 of its total population of 700 residents. The Baug being situated in a strife torn area, the residents had requested the trustees for lamps on the grounds during the January riots to enable them to recognize and safeguard each other. The request was instantly granted but not implemented for several days. Guzder attributes this "to lack of coordination and supervision." This, Guzder feels, endorses his argument that "it is therefore important that the person at the head of the Punchayet, guiding its destiny, should be a person who has had considerable administrative, executive and managerial experience, especially in dealing with the affairs of large corporations."

Guzder highlights two of his achieve-

ments, while reviewing his 18 years on the Punchayet, as significant. He is particularly happy that "in the first month of becoming trustee [In 1975 when BPP trustee Shiavax Vakil resigned in the wake of the dokhma controversy, he proposed the name of Guzder who incidentally resides in the same building as Vakil. Guzder won the subsequent elec-

Congress (the first of three congresses over the organization of which he has presided) "I felt that in order to get better ideas an independent committee should be set up with members who were leaders in different activities and that there should be only one trustee on that committee. Here again my co-trustees agreed and such a committee was set up and it

was this committee which suggested that we build ownership flats on top of Khareghat Colony and from the sales proceeds of these flats we develop and build flats on the vacant plots which are now Godrej Baug. That's how the scheme of Spenta ownership flats was born. And as can be seen now we were able to make enough money to take care of more than 400 flats on the three plots now known as Godrej Baug and, in addition, build 180 flats at Bharucha Baug."

Guzder recalls his father's habit of doling out monies to people in distress who approached him. As he grew older Guzder found himself "following the same pattern but not happy with it." In his years as direc-

tor of Bombay Dyeing in the 1960s (the Wadia connection was severed in the 1980s, allegedly over the handling of labor problems) he remembers suggesting to Neville Wadia to create a trust fund, known as Sir Ness Wadia Foundation, funded from the profits of Bombay Dyeing and Nowrojee Wadia and Sons. Neville Wadia "readily agreed to the suggestion," says Guzder. "The cosmopolitan trust was created and is still in existence doing, I'm sure, good work." Thereafter Guzder said he thought of setting up a charitable trust funded from the profits of N. S. Guzder and Company, and Airfreight. Named after his wife and himself, the Shirin and Jamshed Guzder Trust was established in 1985. "I made arrangements with my three sons (Cyrus, Jehangir and Farokh) that each year we should try and contribute a reasonable sum of money from the profits of the company and the family business. My intention was that after I die this tra-



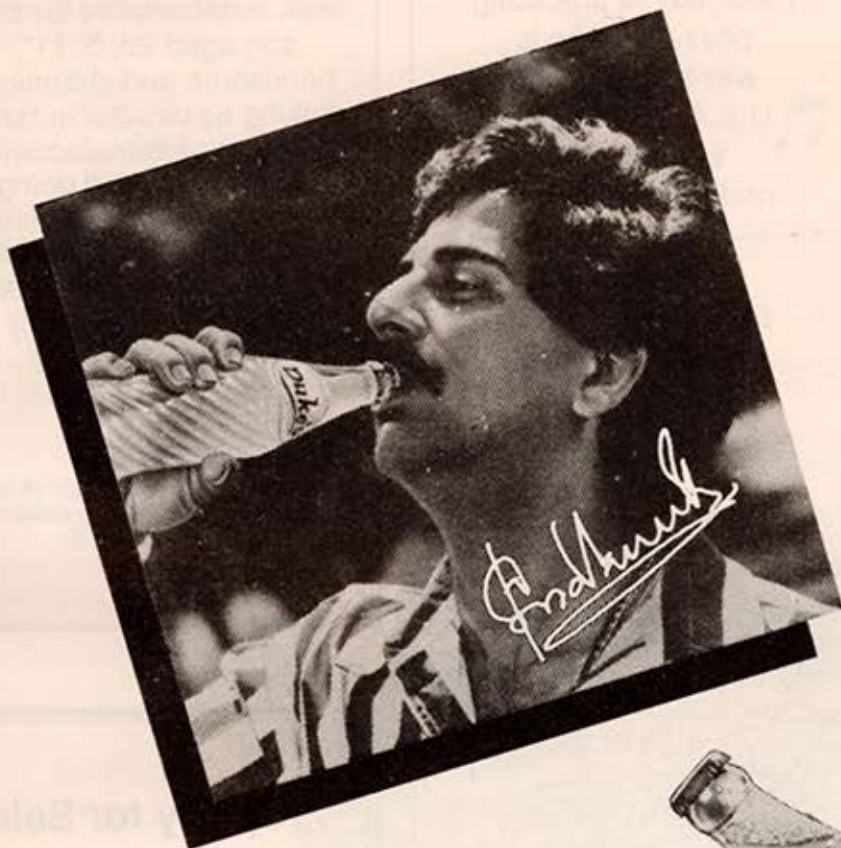
At the 4th World Zoroastrian Congress (top, from left): Desai, Dr Aspi Golwalla, Guzder and Jamsheed Kanga. At the 1993 Bombay meeting of the Federation of Parsi Zoroastrian Anjumans of India (below, from left): Lt Gen Adi Sethna, Guzder, Rustom Anklesaria and Keki Gandhi

tion against Jimmy Shroff (see "A Tale of Two Jimmys," *Parsiana*, December-January 1975)] I made my co-trustees conscious of the fact that the land which is now Godrej Baug, and which was lying vacant and about to be requisitioned by the government under the Land Ceiling Act, should be developed. To this the trustees happily agreed. Subsequently I worked with Mr (B. K.) Boman-Behram to get an access road from the BMC (Bombay Municipal Corporation) to the land, that is plots O, P and M."

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dition of helping the poor and needy would continue in the family (which includes Guzder's daughter Statira Wadia)."

The Trust with a corpus of over a crore of rupees is totally cosmopolitan and has received 80 G exemption under the Income Tax Act, says Guzder. Though the objects of the Trust are wide, Guzder notes that special emphasis is laid on educational activities, medical relief and contributions to public institutions like hospitals and organizations concerned with cancer relief, care of the blind, etc.

Guzder is trustee/director in 50 organizations including public limited companies and charitable trusts. He has been president, among others, of the Indian Merchants' Chamber, the Indo-German Chamber of Commerce and the Maharashtra Economic Development Council. Guzder is happy to note that he is the only Parsi on the managing committee of the Maharashtra Chamber of Commerce and Industry where he is currently vice president. He is co-chairman of the western India chapter of the Institute of Management, UK and vice president of the National Society for Equal Opportunities for the Handicapped.

"As member of a minority commu-

nity I have had the satisfaction that I've been instrumental in being associated with and responsible for establishing international organizations," notes Guzder. He relates how the Universal Organization of Travel Agents' Association was set up in 1963-64 with headquarters in Montreal, Canada, aimed at increasing tourism around the world and inviting various countries to become members. Guzder, its first president, was the only Indian on the board. He narrates how differences of opinion between the Latin countries of Europe and America and their Anglo Saxon counterparts prevented the former from joining the organization. This led to Guzder being appointed mediator between them: "I'm happy to say my negotiations were successful and I was instrumental in bringing them together and we formed a second, more representative world body known as the United Federation of Travel Agents Associations (UFTAA) with headquarters in Monaco." Guzder became its first vice president but subsequently declined to become president "because it would mean that I'd be away from India for eight to nine months." Now 27 years old, the organization has 84 countries as members. Two years ago,

on its 25th anniversary meeting in Portugal, Guzder was suitably honored. Today Guzder's son Cyrus has been elected vice president of UFTAA, "the only son who's succeeded his father in the past 27 years in holding this top position," notes Guzder happily.

The chairman is not concerned that the program he is enunciating will increase his workload and impinge upon his business commitments. "If even when I was not chairman I was able to see more than 100 persons a month — I see everyone who comes to my office to meet me — and in addition go to the Panchayet office twice a week; if I've been doing all this since the last four to five years how will becoming president add to the burden? The only additional activity will be visiting the baugs," he clarifies and adds, "my sons are all in favor of my continuing with Panchayet work."

Queried about what he thought the future holds for the community 25 years hence, Guzder changed the operative verb from "think" to "hope": "First we hope we shall reverse the process of de-

Guzder (center) with his family at the navjote of his grandson



creasing population to increasing population. Secondly, the effort we are going to make to encourage our young men and women to be entrepreneurs, we feel in some measure shall regain the part we played earlier in the industrial sector of the country."

Guzder acknowledges the educated Parsi wife's desire to work and earn, leading to postponement of childbearing or restricting the number of births as depicted in Dr P. M. Sandhya Rani's report titled "Study of the effect of housing on fertility behavior among the Parsis." Voicing his concern for the dwindling numbers which he states "should be dealt with as the highest priority," Guzder says he intends to "take the advice of senior people (in) our community. (We) must educate young people, tell them they must have children. (We must) create creches, etc."

Guzder advises the youth to think ahead: "You must try, in your own mind devise a plan, even a dream, that you will not be satisfied by working in a bank as a

clerk or even a senior officer. But that you will launch forth into constructive activities which will not only give you financial benefits but also the opportunity to help your fellowman."

"When I step down, conditions regarding community concerns should be very different"

On the subject of housing and the resignation of Justice Bakhtawar Lentin as ombudsman, Guzder explained, "Lentin's role was that of an appeal judge when an individual did not accept the decision of trustees" regarding the allotment of housing. Guzder surmised that

"Lentin, a very busy person, did not realize that people would take advantage of his kindness and swamp his office even for little things and individual grievances... (There was) no dissatisfaction with the Punchayet."

Reiterates Guzder, "My intention is that when I step down conditions regarding community concerns should be very different. Instead of criticism from community members against the Punchayet there will be cooperation and enthusiasm among the general public that their views are being heard (and) complaints corrected and therefore (they will be ready) to meet the challenge of existence which may be very difficult in the next three, four, five years, especially for minority communities. There will be a certain sense of comfort that our interests are being protected. This is my goal."

"Getting elected and occupying the chair of president is only the beginning. It is like opening a door and there's a fairly long road ahead which one has to travel to see what's at the end."

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Looking through STAINED GLASS

Binaifer Karanjia and Jasmine Jehangir demonstrated through their recent exhibition that stained glass can tastefully transform interiors

Parinaz Gandhi

Many a visitor who came to the Jehangir Art Gallery to glimpse the stained glass exhibits stayed back for a better appreciation of the creations. While some gaped, the others gazed. And a few returned again to take yet another look at the handiwork of Jasmine Jehangir and her elder sister Binaifer Karanjia, the owners of The Design Studio, reputed for their original stained glass compositions.

More than the sales, the sisters were thrilled with the "unexpected" response they evoked. And with Jamshed Bhabha inaugurating the exhibition and personalities like J. R. D. Tata gracing the show made the duo feel even more elated. "No one knew we did it, and of this caliber," says Jasmine, giving credit to her sister for insisting on holding the exhibition much to Jasmine's initial chagrin. Being already overloaded with assignments, why did they need further publicity, queried Jasmine to which Binaifer's response was: To give interior decorators and architects an idea of the varied uses to which this beautiful art can be put.

That stained glass windows are the medium for entry of sunlight into many cathedrals and palatial houses is known, but that stained glass can also be tastefully transformed into doors, entrance panels, screens, pedestals, mirror frames,



Jasmine Jehangir (left) and Binaifer Karanjia with their stained glass creations

skylights, coffee tables and a lot more was a cause of wonder for many spectators. Horses readying for a gallop, birds in flight, an impish Cupid, floral and geometric designs were some of the motifs of the 130 pieces on display, sturdily framed in wrought iron, teak, cane and bamboo. Of contrasting shades and hues, of varying sizes and prices, it wasn't the same effort that went into each art piece. The choicest works were further embellished with beveled, etched and faceted glass, or adorned with semi-precious stones, thereby enhancing their value.

Those not fortunate to make it to the

exhibition but interested in ascertaining the talent of these artists could make a trip to the World Trade Centre, or Copper Chimney, or Embassy Apartments or Jaipur Jewels or... The sisters have left their imprint at several places. To gauge the authenticity of a stained glass art piece let sunlight pour through it, they advise. When you see the same pattern in the same hues reflected on the facing wall or floor tiles, you can be sure of its quality.

"Rather expensive" is the common refrain voiced by most of the customers on reading the price tags ranging in thousands, mentions Jasmine. Nevertheless, 65 of their items were sold during the six days of the exhibition in February last, several of the remaining pieces being sought subsequently, she adds. Three to four patrons made sure of their bookings on the first morning of the exhibition. Others, finding the items costly but unable to resist the temptation of a purchase settled for a smaller piece within their budget. Since The Design Studio uses only the genuine stained glass, of the imported variety, the cost of their handicrafts works out approximately 200 times higher than if indigenous glass were used, Binaifer justifies their rates.

Further, each of their creations comes

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INTERFAITH PEACE STUDIES DEPT

Above: Prof. Dr. MEHER MASTER-MOOS presenting the lamp to His Holiness POPE JOHN PAUL II at Madras in February 1986.

Below: Felicitation of SIMON CARDINAL PIMENTA by (late) Ms. PILOO M. KATRAK, at Peoples for Peace Foundation Function with Rtn. Nari Gursahani, Prof. A.R.K. Pillai, Dr. Meher Master - Moos and Rtn. Manoj Gursahani present.

India is the home of 12 Major World Religions. Respect for all faiths is guaranteed by the Constitution and ingrained in the tradition of the people. In this spiritual soil, the Mazdayasnie Zoroastrian faith could survive, and its followers the Parsi/Irani Zoroastrian could flourish. Yet, in many "Single Religion" countries such as Italy, Spain, Portugal, Latin America, where Christian (Catholic) faith, or Korea, Burma, Thailand, where Buddhism, or Saudi Arabia where Islam are the "Official Religion",



this concept of religious tolerance and pluralism is something unusual. In fact, the bulk of the World population has not even heard the name of the Zoroastrian Religion; and among those who have heard of it, many think it is extinct and have no knowledge of its followers the Parsis. To rectify this situation, the ZOROASTRIAN COLLEGE opened this Department, to provide, for the first time in India and the World the possibility for people from many foreign countries to come to India to study the living concept of a multi religious, pluralistic faith, Nation, with people of many faiths co-existing harmoniously; and to study at first hand to realise that Zoroastrianism is still flourishing as a living faith. To achieve this, through this Department, Zoroastrian College has:

1. Arranged attendance at major International Conferences in various countries.
2. Established Collaboration with many organisations world wide, that are concerned with Inter-Faith and Peace Dialogue Studies.
3. Opened the facility of promoting studies by Ph.D. degree research thesis.
4. Established the Inter Faith Department International Advisory Board

CONFERENCES

1. Since its inception in 1986, the Zoroastrian College has

sent its Representatives and Delegations to attend major International Inter Faith Conferences in India and abroad. In 1986, Prof. Dr. MEHER MASTER-MOOS (Dr. M. M. M.) was invited to meet His Holiness Pope John Paul II as Zoroastrian faith representative at a select gathering of 100 Scholars & Priests of different religions in India, at Madras; and again in 1986 at the Vatican in Rome (see Photo). In 1987, the New York based COUNCIL FOR THE WORLD'S RELIGIONS, held a major Inter Faith Dialogue Conference in Harrison BC, Canada, where she presented a paper as Zoroastrian faith representative. In 1988 September the C.B.C.I. held a DIALOGUE AT ST. PIUS' College Bombay, where the Zoroastrian College Delegation included: Dr. SHIVAVUX and Mrs. GRACE KHAMBATA. Mrs. PERINK. ANKLESARIA, Mrs. AMY K. MASTER and Prof. Dr. M.M.M. who presented papers and speeches. In 1989 February at the BRAHMA KUMARI'S INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE at Mt. Abu with over 3000 persons from many countries present, Prof. Dr. M.M.M. and Mrs. GRACE S. KHAMBATA represented Zoroastrian College/fait, presenting speeches and papers. In May 1989 through Prof. Dr. SIEGFRIED HERMERDING and ARS REGA Dr. M.M.M. visited the ancient Aryan Caves in Germany to give lectures to the MASDANSNANS. In September 1989, at the AURANGABAD PEACE DIALOGUE Conference, Dr. M.M.M. gave the valedictory speech for the Zoroastrians. In September 1990, the VATICAN through the ST. EGIDIO COMMUNITY, invited Zoroastrian College President Prof. Dr. Meher Master

Moos to represent the Zoroastrian faith at its major Inter Faith Peace Dialogue International Conference held in BARI, Italy. In November 1990 at the AURANGABAD PEACE DIALOGUE Conference, Prof. MEHER L. PAVRI, Mr. JAL OLIA, Miss KHURSHID COOPER represented Zoroastrian College and presented speeches/papers. In December 1990, at the BAHAI CONFERENCE AT PANCHGANI, Ms. COOMI MISTRY, Miss ARMAITI DANDIWALLA represented Zoroastrian College. In October 1991 at the World Inter Faith Conference at COCHIN, the Zoroastrian College Delegation included Prof. Dr. MEHER MASTER-MOOS, Miss KHURSHID COOPER represented Zoroastrian College and presented speeches/papers. In December 1990, at the BAHAI CONFERENCE AT PANCHGANI, Ms. COOMI MISTRY, Miss ARMAITI DANDIWALLA represented Zoroastrian College. In October 1991 at the World Inter Faith Conference at COCHIN, Zoroastrian College Delegation included Prof. Dr. MEHER MASTER-MOOS, Mrs. AMY K. MASTER, Mr. RUSTOM DEGAMWALLA of Karachi, Miss ARMAITI DANDIWALLA, Ms. KHURSHID COOPER, Mr. S.N. MISTRY. In September 1992, the VATICAN-ST. EGIDIO COMMUNITY held its major World Conference in BRUSSELS where Z.C. President Prof. Dr. Meher Master - Moos was invited to represent the Zoroastrian faith. In October 1992 the FIRST WORLD CONGRESS OF SPIRITUAL CONCORD was held in ALMA ATA KHAZAKHISTAN where the Z. C. Delegation headed by Dr. MEHER MASTER - MOOS included Mrs. SHIRIN FARMAZI, Mrs. HOMI BILIMORIA, Mrs. JERRY KUMANA, Mr. HOMI SETHNA and Mr. RUSTOM DEGAMWALLA. On Republic Day January 1993, Z. C. organised, with Padmashri HOMI J.H. TALEYARKHAN, a Peace Prayer meeting in Bombay that was led by HIS EMINENCE CARDINAL SIMON PIMENTA with ERVAD NOSHIRWANKANGA reciting Zoroastrian Prayers. In January 1993 at MADURAI PEACE CONFERENCE, ERVAD BURZIN ATASHBAND represented Z.C. Through these Conferences, and International T.V. coverage and Radio Press, thousands of persons who had never heard of Parsis were made aware that Zoroastrianism still flourishes as a living faith.

2. COLLABORATIONS In order to strengthen its international work, the Z.C. has established collaboration with major organisations in many countries, concerned with Inter Faith and Peace Dialogue. These include the Masdansnans of Germany, the Pax Mundi (Belgium), Brahma Kumar's World Spiritual University (India), International Federation of Religion (Thailand), Global Forum of Spiritual & Parliamentary Leaders (U.S.A.), Academy of Religion & Psychical Research (U.S.A.) Council for the Worlds Religions (U.S.A.), Edgar Cayce Foundation (U.S.A.), Peoples for Peace Foundation (Bombay), World Conference of Religions for Peace (Switzerland), World Inter Faith Colleges Association (Canada), The Vatican Pontifical Commission for Inter Religious Dialogue (Italy), C.B.C.I. (India), The Aurobindo Ashram (India), The Theosophical Society (India), The Temple of Understanding (U.S.A.), Rudolf Steiner Organisation (Switzerland) Centre for the Study of World Religions (India), World Fellowship of Inter Religious Councils (India), St. Xavier's College & St. Pius College Inter Faith Dialogue Depts. (Bombay), Islam Culture Foundation, (Bombay.) and others.

3. Ph. D. DEGREES BY RESEARCH: This facility has enabled outstanding persons in various countries to pursue research on Peace and Living Faiths Dialogue. Since 1986, Dr. AHMAD ABDULLAH of JORDAN presented a thesis on PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST - a solution to the Jewish - Christian - Islamic Conflicts in Palestine; Dr. FRANCIS DESSART of BELGIUM presented thesis on EDUCATIONAL DIALOGUE. Several persons from Italy, Canada and other countries are presently doing their research studies through this Department.

4. The ZOROASTRIAN COLLEGE INTERNATIONAL INTER FAITH ADVISORY BOARD draws together the outstanding leaders of the Inter Faith Dialogue movement in India and other countries. The Doyen of the Dialogue movement in India is Fr. ALBERT NAMBIARPAMBI, Sec. C.B.C.I. Other distinguished personalities on the Board past and present include the Secretaries, Pro. Non Christians Representative at the VATICAN, Prof. KLOSTERMEIR, Canada, Prof. MARK MC AVITY, Canada Prof. FRANCIS DESSART (Belgium); Mrs. BOJLEN HARTMAN (Denmark); Dr. BEHRAND PITHAVALA, India, Dr. VICTOR INYUSHIN (USSR), Rev. ARY ROEST CROLLIUS (Italy), Mrs. ANNE MARGRETHE SONDRESEN (Norway), Ervad RUSTOMJI PAVRI, Ervad GODEJ SIDHWA (Pakistan), Ms. MANIZE SAIT (Singapore), Dr. IQBAL DESHMUKH (India), Ervad BEJON DESAI (India), Fr. GEORGE KOOVECKAL (India), Dr. SHIVAVUX R. KHAMBATA (India) Dr. BURJOR KOLAH (U.S.A.), Shri. SURESH SHUKLA (India).

In 1986, the UNITED NATIONS DAG HAMMARSKJOLD PEACE AWARD Committee of the PAX MUNDI (Belgium), conferred the great honour of the PAX MUNDI INTERNATIONAL PEACE AWARD on two ladies in India for outstanding work done for Inter Faith Peace and the Cause of Humanity - these were MOTHER THERESA and Zoroastrian College President, Dr. MEHER MASTER MOOS.

If you are interested to support the work of the Zoroastrian College Inter Faith Peace Dept; donations are welcomed. Cash or cheques in favour of SHAH BEHRAM BAUG SOCIETY may be sent to the Mustafa Bldg address, Bombay given above, with your covering letter.

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The holding of this maiden exhibition at the Jehangir Art Gallery was of considerable significance to the Jehangir family for it was the first time that someone from the family was using the halls built in memory of Jehangir C. Jehangir. (Jasmine's husband, Jehangir, is the lineal descendent of Sir Cowasjee Jehangir.) "My mother-in-law was thrilled," mentions Jasmine, "and even though she rarely goes out, she made it a point to attend the exhibition." And yet, permission for the use of the hall was not obtained by using any family pressures, Jasmine clarifies. They had to do their bookings in advance and just as in the case of any other artist, their exhibits had to be approved by the panel.

Likewise, when alerting the Press about the proposed exhibition, they could have invoked the assistance of Binaifer's father-in-law Burjor Karanjia or his brother Russey Karanjia, both well-known journalists. They chose instead to earn publicity on merit, reveals Binaifer.

Where family support does play a crucial role for Jasmine is the freedom granted to convert the residential premises into a workplace. It is from their

mansion on Nepean Sea Road that Jasmine, who has done her bachelors in fine arts from the Sophia Polytechnic and the J. J. School of Art, does the sketching, decides on the color scheme and thereafter actually proceeds with the cutting of glass. The house is also used as a storehouse of stained glass works both complete and incomplete. Barely two minutes down the road is located The Design Studio where the cut glass receives systematic treatment: grinding (where the rough edges are smoothened), copper foiling of the edges, laying out the pieces as they appear on the design, soldering with lead, and finally antiquing (the black line that is seen over the leading). Of course, they have assistants helping out at different stages, but the ultimate responsibility of meeting deadlines and satisfying customers vests with the sisters.

The Design Studio was started in 1986 as a partnership firm by Binaifer and Jasmine. Prior to that both of them were working for advertising agencies — Binaifer as a clients supervisor, and Jasmine as a visualizer — but were dissatisfied with the work pressures and timings. Their interest in stained glass had been ignited earlier. For Binaifer, it started when she was studying for her business management degree in

Clairmont. She opted for a short night course in the art of stained glass. Jasmine, with her background in art followed by a short course in interior decoration, was briefly working with an architect, designing 'fake' stained glass (where the quality of the glass used is substandard and therefore cannot assure the same results).

Having seen genuine stained glass, Binaifer was not happy with her sister's output and insisted they go abroad to study this art intensively. For six months they worked with master craftsmen in the US and UK, and were apprenticed to prominent studios in southern California. Even now, whenever Jasmine is abroad on holiday, she makes it a point to gain experience at some studio and learn the latest technique and developments in this field.

To maintain international standards, premium quality imported glass is a must at The Design Studio. However not as fortunate are they with other sophisticated gadgets available to craftsmen overseas where the tedious task of cutting glass is no longer done manually. The artists in India are therefore exposed to several health hazards. Binaifer has an abscess on her finger (a result of cutting glass) to prove her point. That however is a rare occurrence, she concedes. The



Exhibits created at The Design Studio



more regular risks are inhalation of lead fumes and glass particles because of which they have devised a face mask. When it is restoration work they undertake, they have to guard against tetanus. And especially when the ladies are pregnant they have to be even more wary. "We are making it sound as though we are constantly pregnant," laughs Binaifer, adding, "though it would be a good thing for the community's statistics."

Binaifer, at 34, is a mother of two while Jasmine, at 30, has one child. In fact one of the factors that made them launch their own business was the flexibility of work hours they would be allowed to maintain. Often though it means they have to work on Sundays too when deadlines have to be met. They try to adhere to schedules as far as possible unless a commissioned work involves beveling or etching on smoked glass in which case they are dependent on other artisans who may have their own priorities.

Since the holding of their exhibition several interior decorators and architects have shown an interest in their work. Their father Beji Billimoria, a building contractor who runs B. E. Billimoria and Sons is only indirectly concerned with

To gauge the authenticity of a stained glass art piece let sunlight pour through it

promoting their art. He is building houses while the daughters concentrate on beautifying homes. Their mother Mehroo is their biggest and best critic, they acknowledge.

Liaising with the carpenters during exhibition time has taught the sisters several lessons, one of which is not to promise any new work that involves being accountable for the carpenters too. So no more off-the-shelf furniture inset with stained glass motifs. The client will have to arrange for the framework of the item after which The Design Studio will be happy to produce a suitable stained glass creation of the required dimensions.

Who are their competitors? "There are no competitors," maintain the artists explaining that barring them no one in

Bombay uses this technique with imported glass to create such a beautiful impact. Binaifer has scant respect for those taking shortcuts in this stained glass process, referring to their activity as one "bastardizing this art," a remark that earns a prompt reprimand from her younger sister for using such language. Would they be willing to share their knowledge with others? Jasmine has no reservations though she does hasten to clarify that those interested in learning would need to make their own arrangements for imported sheets of stained glass. And the wastage is tremendous initially, she warns, relating her own trying days when a slight error in tapping while detaching a piece of the required dimensions would end up in spoiling the surrounding glass sheet.

Costs notwithstanding, with their love for challenging assignments one job that the sisters offer to undertake is a stained glass creation, "on a complimentary basis, for a nice fire-temple."

Already they know that their art has made select inroads into places of consequence. Their main wish is to see their creativity reach "those discerning few who go beyond occasionally admiring art, to living with it everyday."



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The building of the Oberoi empire

Burjor Karanjia

Dare to Dream — A life of Rai Bahadur Mohan Singh Oberoi by Bachi J. Karkaria. Published in 1992 by Viking, Penguin Books India (P) Ltd, B4/246, Safdarjung Enclave, New Delhi 110029. Pp: 260. Price: Rs 295.

The Oberoi hotels today are indeed a far cry from the picturesque taverns and inns described by James Douglas in his *Glimpses of Old Bombay and Western India*. The facilities they provide and the level of sophistication achieved by them mark a dramatic advance even over the Taj, the first hotel to be built in Bombay in 1903 with the aim of carrying forward the splendid tradition of Raffles in Singapore and Shepheard's in Cairo — hotels which boasted of comforts then considered modern like "through ventilation, a Turkish bath and carbon dioxide ice-making plant."

Beginning with the acquisition of Clarke's Hotel in 1934, the Oberoi group today comprises 30 hotels, 15 in India and 15 spread over four continents; and two more are to be commissioned, one each in India and abroad.

"I often wonder how I did it," Rai Bahadur Mohan Singh Oberoi reminisces at 91. Bachi J. Karkaria's painstakingly researched and sensitively interpreted story of his life provides the answer. *Dare to Dream* is the stuff that dreams are made of — when they are realized. Like any study in greatness, whatever the field of endeavor, the book makes for engrossing and, with the many delightful little human touches interspersed, endearing reading, even though the author cannot always repress the punster in her: "They were all delectations one couldn't Escoffier at!" and "Bombay's relationship with the Arabs had, till 1976, been

no great sheikhs" — to give only two samples.

The innovations Mohan Singh Oberoi introduced in his hotels, many for the first time in India, show how scrupulously he realized the imperative of constant growth and change. He pioneered room service, doing away once and for all with room bearers getting into one another's way in the kitchen. He provided his hotels with health clubs following the lead given by the famed Shamrock in Texas. His introduction of the shopping arcade was to become a feature of every large hotel.

Most revolutionary for a country

Voices were raised in outrage. Visions were conjured up of hotel guests threatening some helpless, cowering young thing with, "As you make my bed, so shall you lie on it." Occupational hazards were dreaded as in the case of the unfortunate housemaid who came upon the Pakistani cricketer walking about stark naked in his room. "House rules, in the case of such an eventuality," writes Karkaria, "state that the maid must not bat an eyelid, nor keep an eye on the ball, but return to pavilion at the earliest."

But seriously, how did Oberoi do it?

Patience and perseverance were virtues which he converted into a sound investment policy. Discipline, the importance of detail and the correct way of dealing with seniors and subordinates alike, he picked up from his British bosses when he began life as a clerk at the Cecil. He had the knack of picking the right people and, equally important, the humility of learning from them. He knew the importance of cutting costs —

like when he observed, at one of his hotels, that butter left over from breakfast went down the drain and issued the order that it should be collected and sent to the pastry shop: "Better cakes, better custom." He also knew the vast difference between cutting costs and cutting corners. He never cut corners.

Oberoi quantified perfection into a system and insisted on rigid adherence to it. Everything had to be just so — the way a bed should be made, a tray arranged, crockery stacked to minimize delays. No detail was too small — the method of cooking scrambled eggs, the number of sugar lumps in a bowl, the exact positioning of the toilet paper stand in the bathroom. He worked out and established an unwavering standard and totally eliminated individual

judgement. "Rai Bahadur knew that discretion very easily deteriorates into whim. And then everything deteriorates. Period."

Oberoi's essential humanity comes out strongly in these pages. When during



The Oberoi at Bombay: constant change

where sex is taboo, women are given second place and private morals don't measure up to public pretensions, Oberoi dared to introduce housemaids in India.

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renovation work on the Oberoi in Cairo, a marble slab slipped and crushed an engineer to death, he supported the victim's family and gave his brother a job in the hotel. Equally apparent is his deep and genuine concern for his customers. Once in the Delhi hotel coffee shop, he observed a girl who made a face on sipping the orange juice, did not touch any more, paid and left. He caught up with her and on hearing that the juice wasn't fresh, he said to her: "You must never accept anything that's second best, in life or in a hotel." He escorted her back to her table, gallantly pulled out a chair for her and asked the steward to get her another drink. Always, in the true tradition of Indian hospitality, he looked upon his customers not as customers but as honored guests.

Throughout his life, even after he retired, Oberoi had his finger on a hotel's three pulse points — occupancy rates, restaurant business statements and guest comments — all submitted for his scrutiny every day. The single-mindedness with which he pursued his calling and his outstanding success both in the country and abroad, almost made it appear as if the hotel industry in India is a one-man industry.

Of course he received help and counsel from many: From his mother, the redoubtable Bhagwanti whom he recalls getting him ready for school when he was six, dropping him, taking his lunch and picking him up again, making the three km journey three times each day. From his wife Ishran Devi, companion and helpmate with a heart big enough to forgive him his trespasses, who spent her later years in prayer and meditation, providing her man-of-the-world husband a brush with eternity. From his sons Tikki (who died an untimely death) and Bikki, his daughters and their children. From managers, picked men who gave him unquestioning loyalty. And from his workers, the lowliest of whom could proudly say that he had direct access to the chairman.

Curiously, in contrast to her perceptive analysis of the qualities of head and heart that made Oberoi what he is, Karkaria adopts an ambivalent attitude when writing about his "women friends." It seems audacious, or just unfair, she writes, to raise doubts at this stage in his life about what his wife thought about his women friends. But earlier in the book Karkaria speaks of Ishran Devi's forbearance in this regard. She also quotes

Oberoi: "When we got married and she came to live in Simla, those were the happiest years of my life. I never loved her any the less till the end." There is of course no contradiction involved in these remarks. The women friends remain shadows, they fail to acquire substance. One would have thought that if a man is not ashamed of what he has done, there is never any shame in writing about it.

Nothing perhaps is so characteristic of this fabulous man than the manner of his planning to leave this world. It always rankled that his mother's death had been robbed of its dignity by the squalor of the Calcutta burning ghat. He would not have that repeated in his case or that of any of his family members. So, like everything else about his life, the place of his leaving was planned to the last detail — a monument, bearing the name of his beloved mother, in red stone, set in manicured grounds adjacent to his farm. "Death too should have a room with a view," comments Karkaria.

Fate decreed that his life's companion Ishran Devi, who had stood by him even on those occasions when he had no time for her, preceded him there, leaving him forlorn. But with true wifely devotion she would have preferred it this way, to be there at the appointed place to receive him when his time comes.

The Kopenhagen Connection

Faribourz Nariman

The Kopenhagen Manuscript K27 by Hormazdyar Dastur Kayoji Mirza. Published by the Bombay Parsi Punchayet, 209, Dr D. N. Road, Bombay 400001. Pp: XIII+105. Price not stated.

Up to about 150 or 200 years ago, the art of manuscript writing was practised by a number of scribes belonging to various communities living in different parts of the world. These practitioners have preserved for future generations a wealth of information pertaining to diverse disciplines, while simultaneously (though at times unconsciously) enriching the calligraphic treasures of the world. Of course, in the modern world only paleo-

graphers and/or lovers of calligraphy consult old manuscripts.

As far as our scriptural heritage is concerned, our priests of yesteryears ministered to the needs of the Zoroastrian tradition in two ways. They kept the oral tradition alive by learning the holy words by rote and, in turn, by teaching the young aspirants to do the same. Again, they would devote a considerable part of their spare time to writing manuscripts (in Avesta, Pahlavi, Pazand and Persian), formerly on parchments and later on paper. Those on paper are our priceless treasure today.

The book under review is about one such manuscript written in the 14th century — *The Kopenhagen Manuscript K27* — now in the Danish Royal Library. It consists of an unbound collection of 34 folios of which five are missing. Thus, really speaking, it is a fragment of a manuscript of mainly miscellaneous Pahlavi texts.

As Hormazdyar Mirza mentions in his preface, he got an opportunity to visit Copenhagen in 1990 and he utilized it to examine some of the oldest Avesta and Pahlavi writings collected by Professors Rasmus Rusk and N. L. Westergaard during the first half of the last century. The age of the manuscript in question, the unique style in which it is written and its interesting orthographic peculiarities were some of the factors which enthused the author to select it for publication.

The first 66 pages of the book contain the Pahlavi text and the rest are devoted to collation and explanatory notes divided prayerwise into 12 sections. Primarily the work is meant for Iranists and hence diacritical marks and Greek letters are used while transcribing Avesta, Pahlavi and Pazand words. However, there are a few pages which may be of interest to lay Zoroastrians. For instance, the notes on the nirang for curing stomach ache (literal and not the idiomatic *petman dukhvan*, a psychological problem wilfully created by our self-styled leaders); and the nirang-amulet, a remedy for fever and other ailments.

The author, now in his late eighties, has, as usual, taken considerable pains to bring out this work — a fact which deserves to be appreciated by all scholars regardless of their agreeing or disagreeing with some of the author's conclusions. The trustees of the Parsi Punchayet, Bombay should be congratulated for publishing this work in the Pahlavi Texts Series.

MILESTONES

The age of Zoroastrian brides (as listed in this issue) ranged between 22 and 47 years, the arithmetic mean (the total number of individual ages divided by the total number of brides) being 28 years. The corresponding figures for the grooms were 25 and 53 years, averaging at 32 years.

As compared to 14 births in March there were 90 Zoroastrians who died in Bombay. Thirty-two fell prey to heart disease of whom seven were above the age of 80. The other major killer was lung disease and pneumonia, claiming 12 victims. Ten patients succumbed to cancer compared to six who died of old age/general debility, five to hypertension and four to septicemia. Intestinal bleeding, Parkinson's disease, brain disease, blood clot in the brain, diabetes and bronchitis claimed two each. Isolated cases registered last month were: nervous disorder, dysentery, meningitis, kidney failure, paralysis, circulatory failure, rabies and urinary tract infection. The coroner's report was pending in one case.

AHMEDABAD

DIED

Rustomji Behramji Pastakia (77), husband of Amy and father of Astad and Behram on February 15, 1993
Jeroo Jehangirji Karanjawalla (62), 6, Udayan Flats, Near St Xavier's School, Navrangpura, 380001; March 14
Bapuji Naoroji Kanga (92), A-6, Anal Apts, Gulbai Tekda, 380001; March 15

BOMBAY

BORN

A girl to *Behnaz and Behram Pashutanizadeh*; March 1
A boy to *Shahnaz and Hormuz Irani*; March 3
A girl to *Gulshan and Keki Kotwal*; March 8
A boy to *Dianaz and Deenar Jehani*; March 9
A girl to *Nelly and Parvez Kanga*; March 12
A boy to *Amy and Kali Master*; March 14
A girl to *Shiraz and Vispy Kapadia*; March 15

The youngest to die was a 23-year-old youth as compared to a male centenarian. A woman aged 31 was also lost to the community.

The data on births, marriages and deaths has been compiled from information supplied by various newsletters and anjuman in India and abroad, courts and hospitals. This information is not always complete or consistent. For example, the birth figures for Bombay are supplied by four hospitals; births in suburban hospitals and private nursing homes are not included unless individuals send us information together with a copy of the birth certificate. In the breakup of deaths according to illnesses, especially of the elderly, death is often due to a combination of several diseases.

If readers have any births/marriages/deaths they would like published, some proof to ensure the veracity of the report would be required. We are sure our readers would appreciate this requirement and cooperate with us.

A boy to *Dilshad and Dinyar Vajifdar*; March 15
A boy to *Zarin and Feroze Sukhia*; March 17
A boy to *Shehnaz and Byram Dhalla*; March 19
A boy to *Hutoxshi and Rohinton Wadia*; March 20
A boy to *Tanaz and Rajeev Das*; March 28
A girl to *Ketayun and Rustom Damania*; March 30
A boy to *Shireen and Vivek Mathur*; March 31

MARRIED

Mahatab Jehangirji Panthaki of Surat and *Percy Homi Bilimoria*; November 29, 1992
Rashna Hoshang Palsetia and *Godrej Baji Mistry*; February 4, 1993
Yasmin Kersi Bilimoria and *Pirojshaw Aspi Sarkari*; February 16
Denaifer Godrej Dadina and *Aspi Phirozshaw Billimoria*; February 21
Khurshid Burjor Doriawalla and *Yezdi Noshir Todiwalla*;

February 23
Nilufer Tehmurasp Shroff and *Gev Bahadur Bulsara*;

February 27

Gulshan Homi Dordi and *Ardeshir Dadi Contractor*; March 4
Khushcher Minoo Master and *Kermaan Boman Mehta*;

March 5

Gulrukh Fali Mehta and *Behram Rustam Sabawala*; March 5

Firuz Savak Merchant and *Khoshred Keki Doctor*; March 11

Navaz Sorab Chothia and *Jamshed Gustad*

Taraporewalla; March 11
Delna Jehangir Boga and *Daravus Phiroze Bhadha*;

March 13

Perviz Noshir Irani and *Pervez Boman Dubash*; March 14
Hutoxi Jal Irani of Thane and *Mervan Adi Irani*; March 14

Hutoxi Phiroz Madan and *Khushro Eruch Sethna*; March 14

Ketty Sam Shekary and *Kersi Keki Bhathena*; March 15
Roshni Darabshaw Ghadiali and *Berzin Noshir Sethna*;

March 16

Roshni Soli Dastur and *Firdosh Pestonji Bhathena*; March 18
Benaifer Faramroze Desai and *Dinyar Nariman Gandhi*;

March 18

Arnavaz Farokh Bhathena and *Astori Homi Ghandhy*; March 19
Maharukh Feroz Haradhvala and *Homi Keki Haevae*;

March 19

Maharukh Ardeshir Patel and *Yezdi Eruch Wadia*; March 19
Yazmeen Rustom Jasoomoney and *Cyrus Darab Contractor*;

March 20

Roxana Hoshang Patel and *Behram Dorab Cooper*;

March 20

Tanaz Keki Mogrelia and *Neville Jal Daruwalla*; March 21

Sarvar Faredoon Parvaresh and *Sarosh Faramroze Konkrawalla*; March 21

Anahita Erach Mehta and *Sorab Hirji Parekh*; March 25
Khurshed Naval Khambatta and *Dinyar Pesi Olpadwala*;

March 26

Nazneen Nariosang Desai and *Nozer Rusi Kutar*; March 28

Goolshan Dara Bhiwandiwalla and *Temurasp Neriosang Panthaki*; March 28

DIED

Soli Rustomji Jokhi (72), residing at Gazdar Mans, Princess St, 400002; February 28

Khoshred Dorabji Rao (81), 16/7, Rustom Baug, Victoria Rd, Byculla, 400027;

February 28

Shireen Rustomjee Bhagwagar (87), 18, Ashiana, T.P.S. III, 31st Rd, Bandra, 400050;

March 1

Aloo Eruch Daruwalla (73), 7, Bharucha Bldg, Gilder Lane, Lamington Rd, 400008;

March 1

Banoobai Nariman Panthaki (80), Chandrabala Est, 30th Rd, T.P.S. III, Bandra, 400050;

March 1

Firoze Nowroji Sidhwa (45), Kala Niketan Bldg, M. Karve Rd, 400020; March 1

Maneckbai Bapuji Cardmaster (99), Motiwala Mans, Gowalia Tank Rd, 400036; March 2

Baji Dadabhoy Lal (62), 781, Mancherji Joshi Rd, Parsi Colony, Dadar, 400014;

March 2

Mani Dorabjee Aria (81), L-2/62, Cama Park, Andheri (W), 400058; March 3

Jal Framji Seervai (74), Perviz Mans, Cumballa Hill Rd, 400036; March 3

Cavasji Faramroze Shroff (85), Moonlight, 158, M. Karve Rd, 400020; March 4

Bejonji Burjorji Chinoy (92), G-38, Cusrow Baug, S. B. Rd, 400039; March 5

Rustom Nadirsha Vankadia (78), Wagle Cooper Bldg, Khetwadi, 12th Lane, 400004;

March 5

Dolly Burjorji Daver (60), E/1, Dalal Est, Lamington Rd, 400008; March 6

Freny Jal Kharas (67), D/25, Nowroz Baug, Lalbaug, 400012; March 6

Noshir Nanabhoy Patel (77), 808, Aimeya Manzil, Khodadad Circle, Dadar, 400014; March 6

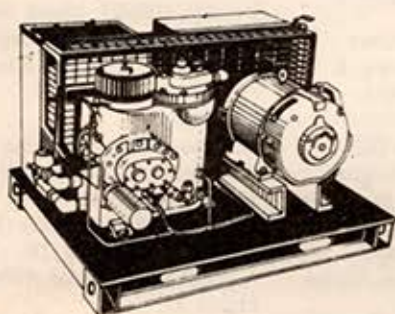
Farokh Hirjibhai Banker (86), 12/A, Colaba Chmbs, Wodehouse Rd, 400005;

March 7

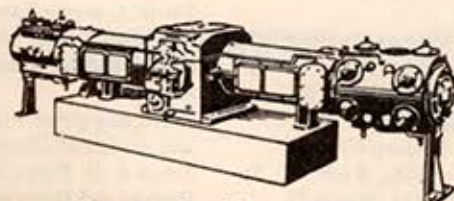
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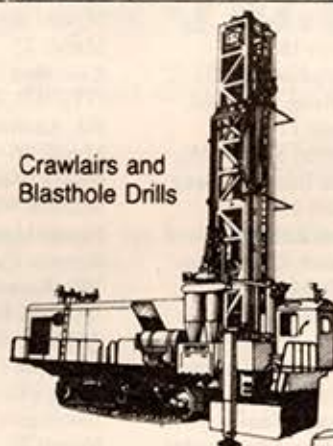
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- Ghadiali* (87), A, Khalakdina Ter, Gowalia Tank Rd, 400036; March 7
- Rattanshaw Dinshaw* (95), C/o Jal N. Driver, 7, Phalguni, Sarojini Rd, Santacruz (W), 400054; March 8
- Perin Phiroze Hathidaroo* (82), 31, Sion Mans, Sion Rd, Sion, 400022; March 8
- Gool Noshirwan Mistry* (80), 28, Daruwala Hse, 1st Dhobitalao Lane, Dhobitalao, 400002; March 8
- Shernaz (Sheroo) Jehangir Pathan* (78), 727-A, Dr Vimadalal Rd, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; March 8
- Nowroji Pestonji Sidhwa* (86), 3, Chandanwadi Native Dispensary Bldg, 400002; March 8
- Keti Minoo Bhathena* (65), M/14, Nowroz Baug, Lalbaug, 400012; March 9
- Khurshed Phiroze Kanga* (82), Shiv Shanti Bhuvan, 146, M. Karve Rd, 400020; March 9
- Kunversha Kersaspi Lala* (71), 10, Meherali Mans, Dr B. A. Rd, Byculla, 400027; March 9
- Minoo Darabsha Contractor* (58), B, Alla Shaporji Mistry Bldg, Near Gandhi Hosp, 400012; March 10
- Kekushroo Edulji Noble* (82), Noble Bldg, 151, Nanubhai Desai Rd, 400004; March 10
- Jehangir Sorabji Talati* (64), 17, Malcolm Baug, Jogeshwari, 400102; March 10
- Baimai Pirojshaw Bharucha* (96), 14, Badat Manzil, Balaram St, Grant Rd, 400007; March 11
- Dinoo Kaikhushroo Doriawala* (55), A, York Hse, Dr Allana Rd, Electric Hse, 400039; March 11
- Villoo Minocher Dotiwala* (83), F. S. Parukh Dharamshalla, 34, Hughes Rd, 400007; March 11
- Arnavaz Sohrab Ghista* (52), 4/7, Tata Mills Co-op Hsg Soc, Elphinstone Rd, Parel, 400012; March 11
- Bamanshaw Behramji Palkhiwala* (65), 101, Avon Apts, Shivaji Rd, Kandivali (W), 400067; March 11
- Mani Jal Ruttonsha* (68), Q-1-2, Eden Hall, Worli, 400018; March 11
- Perin Pesi Suntoke* (62), 17/B/19, Rustom Baug, Victoria Rd, Byculla, 400027; March 11
- Daulatbai Nusserwanji Todiwala* (80), Ramesh Bldg, Powalla St, Grant Rd, 400007; March 11
- Phiroze Fakirji Dordi* (61), Lam Bldg, Delile Rd, Parel, 400013; March 12
- Jalamai Munchershaw Elavia* (89), 25, United Chmbs, 347-C, Maulana Shaukatali Rd, 400007; March 12
- Jer Homi Elchidana* (92), Pudumjee Bldg, M. M. Chotani Rd, Mahim, 400016; March 12
- Perin Kersi Mistry* (59), Mohamadi Minar, Khetwadi 14th Lane, 400004; March 12
- Banoobai Rustomji Dalal* (86), 73/4, Jehangir Mans, Hughes Rd, 400007; March 13
- Frenny Ratansha Guard* (67), 18, Himanshu Mandar, Lallubhai Park Rd, Vile Parle (W), 400056; March 13
- Coomi Ratanshaw Munshi* (79), 7, Cuffe Parade, Colaba, 400005; March 13
- Manek Jal Daruwala* (62), D/15, Shapur Baug, V. P. Rd, 400004; March 15
- Roshan Sohrab Daruwala* (69), 759, Gulab-Simmo Vihar, Rd 7, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; March 15
- Bhikhan Fali Pochkhanawalla* (94), 2, Ocean Crest, 85, B. Desai Rd, 400026; March 15
- Mehroo Minoo Arjani* (70), 16/3, Tata Clny, Tardeo, 400034; March 16
- Armaity Adeel Patel* (31), H/24, Cusrow Baug, S. B. Rd, 400039; March 16
- Piroja Rustom Kanga* (93), C/23, Cusrow Baug, S. B. Rd, 400039; March 17
- Nariman Sorabji Saher* (74), E/19, Nowroz Baug, Lalbaug, 400012; March 17
- Mehroo Maneck Dhanbhooora* (78), Lily Court, Churchgate Recl, 400020; March 18
- Najamai Jehangir Billimoria* (82), Hirjibhoy Sethna Bldg, Chikalwadi, 275/A, Tardeo, 400007; March 19
- Rustom Cawasji Dhalla* (79), A/7, Rosary Hse, Gunpowder Rd, Mazgaon, 400010; March 19
- Rodabanu Khudamurad Irani* (66), B/13, Daruwala Bldg, Nana Chowk, 400007; March 19
- Keki Ardeshtir Jesung* (73), 275/M, Damaniya Bldg, Chikalwadi, 400007; March 19
- Tehmina Bahdurji Mehta* (84), C, Harganga Mhl, Khodadad Circle, Dadar T. T., 400014; March 19
- Bapai Palonji Taraporewala* (79), 13, Jaiji Ter, N. Bharucha Marg, 400007; March 19
- Naju M. Ania* (72), 402, Panini, TIFR Hsg Soc, Colaba, 400005; March 20
- Freny Minoo Dalal* (65), 16/6, Rustom Baug, Victoria Rd, Byculla, 400027; March 20
- Goolbai Pestonji Dhanbhura* (76), F. S. Parukh Dharamshalla, 34, Hughes Rd, 400007; March 20
- Burjorji Dadabhai Ghadiyal* (78), Opp Nariman Home and Infirmary, Shahpore, Surat, 395003; March 20
- Adi Noshir Malegamwala* (48), Marine Chmbs, New Marine Lines, 400020; March 21
- Russi Dadabhoy Pastakia* (77), 611, Pateti Block, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; March 21
- Khurshed Dinshawji Shroff* (82), Pundole Bldg, Sleater Rd, Grant Rd, 400007; March 21
- Rustom Ruttonshaw Wadia* (78), Saher Hse, Saher Agiary Lane, B. Desai Rd, 400026; March 21
- Dolly Dorabji Gorakhpurwala* (65), Sharda Sadan, Kohinoor Rd, Dadar T. T., 400014; March 23
- Rustom Munchershaw Makoojina* (62), 789, Kerawala Bldg, Jame Jamshed Rd, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; March 23
- Farokh Kanjibhai Patel* (84), 515C, Meher Mans, R. P. Masani Rd, Matunga, 400019; March 23
- Khurshed Shavak Damania* (73), N/3, Bharucha Baug, S. V. Rd, Andheri (W), 400058; March 26
- Mehru Maneck Mistry* (62), Maneck Villa, 153B, August Kranti Marg, 400036; March 26
- Behram Rustom Tirandaz* (23), 780, Karani Mans, Jame Jamshed Rd, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; March 26
- Dhunmai Darabshaw Engineer* (Kelawala) (85), O/7, Dalal Est, Lamington Road, 400008; March 27
- Rusi Phirozeshaw Anklesaria* (65), 44-F, Dhun Bldg, Batlivala Villa, Sleater Rd, 400007; March 28
- Jerbanoo Burjorji Choksey* (86), Cama Bldg, Kashinath St, Tardeo, 400034; March 28
- Gaemae Rustomji Mistry* (84), Navyug Chmbs, Grant Rd, 400007; March 28
- Kershasp Kaikhushru Peer* (63), Jaiphal Ter, Forjett St, 400036; March 28
- Alamai Keki Randelia* (79), Motibai Bhuvan, Proctor St, Grant Rd, 400007; March 28
- Rati Jal Sahiar* (73), A/11, Nowroz Baug, Lalbaug, 400012; March 28
- Minocher Jehangirji Sethna* (82), Sethna Hse, 251, Tardeo Rd, 400007; March 28
- Mehroo Boman Kerawala* (61), E/17, Cusrow Baug, S. B. Rd, 400039; March 29
- Manek Byramsha Pardiwalla* (80), Boyce Bldg, Opp Bank of India, Katrak Rd, Wadala, 400031; March 29
- Minoo Sorabji Patel* (80), F. S. Parukh Dharamshalla, 34, Hughes Rd, 400007; March 29
- Rustomji Pestonji Umrigar* (88), G/33, Cusrow Baug, S. B. Rd, 400039; March 29
- Freny Rustomji Andhyarujina* (79), Panchsheel, 53, C Rd, Churchgate, 400020; March 30
- Jamshed Burjorji Banaji* (76), 275/C, Chothia Bldg, Zoroastrian Comp, Grant Rd, 400007; March 30
- Tehmurasp Nadarsha Billimoria* (76), F. S. Parukh Dharamshalla, 34, Hughes Rd, 400007; March 30
- Kaikhushroo Jamshedji Mistry* (100), Mancherjee Sheth Bldg, 262, Tardeo Rd, 400007; March 30
- Burjor Rustomji Pochkhanawalla* (75), 2/9, Rustom Baug, Victoria Rd, Byculla, 400027; March 30
- Najamai Fredoon Behramfram* (78), 5/9, A. H. Wadia Baug, Parel Tank Rd, 400033; March 31
- Behram Jehangir Divecha* (60), Neelakanth, 2, Ambemath (E), 421501; March 31
- Shehroo Tehmu Marolia* (54), 16/224, Kanga Bldg, Dr Ambedkar Rd, Dadar, 400014; March 31
- CALCUTTA**
- DIED**
- Shirin Ardeshtir Tamboli*, sister of Najoo, Veroo, late Tehmi Ayrton and late Banoo Bhagat; March 3
- Veera Bhesania*, wife of Hiroo and mother of Daulat; March 7
- Savak B. D. Burge*, husband of Roshan and father of Darius; March 16
- DHARVAR, Karnataka**
- DIED**
- Rohinton Kaikhushroo Vatcha* (52), husband of Shernaz and father of Homiyar, Kayomarz and Arnaz; March 18

POONA

DIED

Boman Sheriyar Parva (75), 255, Nagar Gaon, Dutta Soc, Lonavla, 410401; March 1
Minoo Khudabux Irani (68), 593, Sachapir St, 411001; March 8
Ratansha Tehmuras Cooper (72), 395, Old Bazaar, Khadki, 411003; March 11
Manijeh Rustomji Ghadially (75), 12, Geeta Soc, Synagogue St, 411001; March 20

SECUNDERABAD

BORN

Jahan Yanus Wadia; October 6, 1992
Paymon Aspi Irani; October 25
Asher Gusti Noria; November 20
Mehershad Parve Rahnemoond; December 16
Hujriya Dinyar Baria; March 3, 1993
Khordad Viraf Edulji; March 17

DIED

Rustom B. Aibara (85); October 23, 1992
Shera J. Parakh (84); October 26
Minoo S. Kasad (76); November 16
Banoobai Hirji Contractor (92); November 29
Alamai B. Daruwala (93); January 7, 1993

Piroja J. Edulji (93); January 7
Faridoon Bajan (78), of Bombay; February 11
Khorshed Minocher Contractor (78); February 26
Addie K. Patell (87); March 28

SURAT

DIED

Manijeh Peshotan Chichgar (73), Padsha St, Maachlipith, 395003; March 2
Kekobad Cawasji Elavia (75), Gam Illav, Via Kim, 394810; March 14
Aloo Cawasji Singpurwala (47), Nariman Home and Infirmary, Shahpore, 395003; March 17

...

AUSTRALIA

New South Wales

BORN

A boy, *Armand*, to *Adil* and *Anaheet Nariman*; December 17, 1992
A boy, *Darius*, to *Pervin* and *Thamton Kapadia*; December 29
A boy, *Aresh*, to *Vera* and *Farrokh Ostowari*, brother to *Danesh*; February 18, 1993
A girl, *Arwen*, to *Pearl* and *Caevan Sachinwala*; March 24

CANADA

Hamilton, Ontario

DIED

Kaikhushru Punthakee, husband

of *Dina* and father of *Jerroo Russell* and *Dinshaw*; February 11

Toronto, Ontario

BORN

A girl, *Camelia*, to *Mina* and *Shahrukh Dinyarian*; December 2, 1992

MARRIED

Shahla Mobarakeh, daughter of *Hovedoukht* and *Bakhtiar* and *Farhad Noush*, son of *Shireen* and *Anowshirawan*; January 9, 1993

IRAN

Yazd

DIED

Morvarid Khodadad Mandagarian, mother of *Daryoush Rustom Ejbari*; January 12

PAKISTAN

Karachi

BORN

A girl, *Ruxshin*, to *Roshni* and *Cyrus Dinshaw*; December 28, 1992
A girl, *Nurelle*, to *Rashna* and *Ratan Mehta*; January 18, 1993

MARRIED

Roshni Savak Menti and *Hormazd Rustom Irani*; January 24

DIED

Pesi Rustamji Dhalla (74); February 3
Kaikhushru Navroji Sethna (78); February 8
Khorshed Jehangir Kotwall (82); February 14
Dina Nariman Bhiladwala (75); February 27
Dinamai Darabshaw Khan (87); March 4
Farokh Darabshaw Patel (54); March 8
Meherwanji Maneckji Minwalla (83); March 18
Homai Pestanji Randeria (73); March 28

USA

Boston, Massachusetts

BORN

A girl, *Ava*, to *Roxane* and *Yezdi Dordi*; March 26

Chino Hills, California

MARRIED

Benaifer Irani and *Hanoz Mehta*; January 9

Del Mar, California

BORN

A girl, *Megan*, to *Mahrukh* and *Mehrnosh Mubarak*; January 26

Falls Church, Virginia

DIED

Perin Jehangir Davar (81), mother of *Adi* and *Sheroo Mistry*; February 19

Germantown, Maryland

DIED

Minoo Ranji (50), husband of *Zarine* and father of *Cyra* and *Zavera*; March 20

Laguna Hills, California

BORN

A girl, *Tania*, to *Gulnawaz* and *Jamshed Khodayar*; January 23

Los Angeles, California

DIED

Paul Vadoli (61), brother of *Noshir* and *Adil*; January 17

New York, New York

BORN

A girl, *Ava*, to *Meher* and *Khushroo Mehta*; January 15

DIED

Rustomji Wadia (92), husband of *Gladys*; December 19, 1992

Compiled by Roxana A. Mirza

TOTALS FOR 1992 AND 1993

	Bombay			India			World		
	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C
BORN									
Boys	9	169	32	5	11	1	3	30	3
Girls	5	147	27	1	6	1	8	34	8
MARRIED									
Parsi	30	261	143	1	5	4	3	16	4
Intercommunal	—	67	14	—	6	—	—	10	—
DIED									
INTERRED									
Male	42	444	137	12	79	29	8	47	10*
Female	50	506	119	11	94	18	6	30	7*
CREMATED									
Male	—	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Female	—	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

A: Total numbers in this issue

B: Running totals for 1992 (February 1992-April 1993 issues)

C: Running totals for 1993 (February-April 1993 issues)

* Overseas deaths are listed in the interred column as *Parsiana* does not have a breakup of those cremated.

These figures pertain to information provided to or collected by *Parsiana*. They do not represent the total number of births, marriages and deaths in the Zoroastrian community in India and abroad.

Penchant for puppets

Died: Ms Meher Rustom Contractor, 74, celebrated puppeteer who was a committed ambassador of Indian culture and art, on September 26, 1992 in Ahmedabad following cardiac arrest.

"Puppets of great expressive force. A ray of light in the shadows of Indian theater," was the review earned by Contractor's Puppet Group in Spain's *Barcelona Daily*. "Traditional theme performed with vigor, dexterity and melodious voices," acknowledged a Denmark publication, *Demokraten, Tyl-landes Poster*. "A brilliant show by a troupe of such a high standard for the first time in the city," credited *The Times of India*, Ahmedabad. Such approbation for the puppeteer, in the home and foreign milieux, encouraged Contractor to create 'puppet consciousness.' To the innumerable individuals whom she initiated into this art, she epitomized the mother of puppetry.

Ever since she participated in the First International Puppet Festival in Bucharest in 1958 where she was also a member of the international jury, her performances, lecture demonstrations and workshops have taken her all over the globe, notes the prospectus of the Darpana Academy of Performing Arts where she served as head of the puppetry department. Vice president of Union Internationale de la Marionnette and founder of its Indian wing, she is believed to have been responsible for broadening the horizon of the Indian puppeteers.

Neighboring Pakistan was one more country she was looking forward to visiting in end September last year when she was geared to lead her Puppet Group to the International Puppet Festival in Lahore. But just two days before their scheduled departure she breathed her last. Her troupe however proceeded to Pakistan, as planned, and dedicated their show to her memory.

The versatility and dynamism of the artiste never flagged. An account of the last day of her life is provided by her son Darius: "A visit to the agiary in the morning, offering prayers for her elder son's birthday, a full day's work and practice at Darpana, baking a cake for her friend's birthday, a puppet show organized to raise money for the fares of the underprivileged members of the puppet troupe and a dinner invitation in the evening. That night she watched her favorite TV program and retired to bed.



The doctor said that she must have passed away in her sleep within a few minutes of resting her head on the pillow..."

Associated with puppets for several decades, Contractor has been particularly credited with reviving Andhra shadows (colored yet transparent, these puppets are manipulated with cane or bamboo sticks), introducing creative puppetry for children and experimenting with rod puppets (these dancing dolls of Bengal are approximately 1½ meters high and have a bamboo base). She was instrumental in establishing the puppeteers' village training center at Mehrauli under the auspices of the Central Handicrafts Board, and worked for some years as director of the Bharatiya Natya Sangh, as researcher for the National Centre for Educational Research and Training and for the Centre for Cultural Research and Training, notes a press release.

Said to have trained over 5,000 teachers, 25 social workers and 25 professionals, Contractor specialized in using puppetry as a medium of education for backward children. She would often undertake arduous journeys to remote areas. In collaboration with the Space Application Centre of Ahmedabad she had made a TV film as also historical plays. Leg-

ends like *Rustom and Sohrab*, *Ramayana* as also socially relevant issues like exploitation, dowry, violence, education, environment, health... were effectively portrayed using the medium of puppets.

The publications that she has authored are *Creative Drama and Puppetry in Education*, *Creative Drama and Puppetry for Pre-Primary Children*, *Shadows of India Monogram* and an issue of *Marg* exclusively concerning puppets.

Government bodies like the Sangeet Natak Akademi and the Gujarat Sangeet, Nritya Natya Akademi had conferred her with awards as did community associations like the Federation of Parsi Zoroastrian Anjumans of India and the Parsee Youth League of Ahmedabad (PYLA). (It was the PYLA vice president Porus Karanjawalla who procured the necessary details on Contractor for *Parsiiana*.)

Born in Panchgani to a family of architects and artists, after her schooling she went to London where she obtained a teacher's diploma in art from the Royal Drawing Society. Portrait painting, book illustrations and fashion designing were the subjects she was to further pursue at the Royal Academy of Arts when the outbreak of World War II necessitated her return to India. Her marriage took her to Ahmedabad where her husband's family was managing a pottery business.

She had worked for a short while as art teacher at Panchgani's Kimmins School and for 15 years as arts and crafts teacher at the Shreyas Experimental School in Ahmedabad. It was here that she started experimenting with puppets, her shows drawing the attention of national and international dignitaries.

In her hectic schedule she also made time to conduct cooking classes, serve the Ahmedabad Museum Committee, and assist welfare organizations like the police clinic, Gujarat Sarwar Mandal, Vadej Nari Kendra (a refugee women's camp), the Zoroastrian Stri Mandal and the Zoroastrian Ladies Industrial Cooperative Society. She was also instrumental in opening the Baroda Chanchilika Club. Contractor did not believe in compartmentalizing her puppetry and social work. Invariably, on her foreign missions, she would include in her puppet troupe two underprivileged students who would not otherwise have been able to afford an overseas trip.

The philanthropic puppeteer is survived by her sons Darius and Navroze.

Pernaz Gandhi

Reaching for the Sky



Two landmarks in Bombay – the Commerce Centre of the World Trade Centre Complex and the new Reserve Bank Building.

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