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Parsiana

September 1994
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Cover: The statue of Sir Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy and the Motlibai Hospital (insets) against the interior of the Grant Medical College's original building.
Photos: Varghese Fernandez

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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 Unsigned letters or those without an address will not be published.

"Sarfeh: devotion to a cause"

We, the trustees of the Darbe Mehr Zoroastrian Temple located in New Rochelle, New York would like to bring to your attention factual errors in the article "Sarfeh: devotion to a cause" (In Memoriam, *Parsiana*, September-December 1993).

We refer to the paragraph which quotes Dr Daryoush Jahanian, chairman of the Guiv Foundation. "As events proved later (several years after Guiv's death), the Guiv Foundation lost the suit filed by ZAGNY against it in the Court of Justice in three stages due to lapse of time. In this situation nobody knows to whom the Darbe Mehr belongs or whether ZAGNY is going to sell it or not."

This statement is so blatantly incorrect that we can only presume that Dr Jahanian was merely repeating what he may have

been told, without actually studying the issue and without reading past correspondence and court documents. For the record we would like to present the actual facts which are well documented:

- May 1973: Zoroastrian Association of Greater New York (ZAGNY) was formed as a "not for profit" corporation.

- August 1975: Arbab Rustam Guiv wrote to ZAGNY, "It is with great pleasure that I, Rustam Guiv, president and acting manager of Sazemane Kheyria Rustam Guiv, of Shah Reza Ave, Kakh Jonubi No 4, Tehran, Iran, a philanthropic organization registered under No 388 of Iranian Law, inform you by this letter, of our commitment to purchase immediately, a plot of land approx 3½ acres inclusive of a church which has been built on it, and to transfer (the) same to the Zoroastrian Association of Greater New York Inc, to be used as a center for Zoroastrian religious, cultural and social activities in the New York area and also a contribution of yearly \$4,500 by us for its annual maintenance." Negotiations to buy this property fell through.

- June 1976: Dr Sarfeh received a letter from his attorney, Charles Seidenstein Esq, stating that he anticipated tax problems unless title to the property was in the name of a "religious corporation." He included instructions and procedures necessary for incorporation of a religious corporation.

- August 1976: Under Arbab's instructions the "Darbe Mehr Zoroastrian Temple" was incorporated as a religious corporation, for the purpose of holding title to the donated property. Arbab Guiv and Dr Sarfeh were two of the six original trustees.

- September 1976: Arbab wrote to Mr Erach Munshi, then president of ZAGNY as well as trustee of Darbe Mehr Zoroastrian Temple, instructing him to purchase the property in New Rochelle and that it "should be immediately renovated and redesigned to make it 'Darbe Mehr Zoroastrian Temple.'"

- May 1977: New Rochelle property was purchased by the religious corporation "Darbe Mehr Zoroastrian Temple." Dr Sarfeh and Mr Munshi were both present at

the closing.

- August 1979: Lease agreement signed whereby Darbe Mehr Zoroastrian Temple, the "owner" leased the property to ZAGNY, the "occupant," for the sum of \$ 1.00. Dr Sarfeh signed on behalf of the Temple.

- February 1980: Formation of Rustam Guiv Foundation of New York.

- August 1980: Prior to the formation of the Rustam Guiv Foundation of New York, Arbab Guiv himself sent a contribution of \$ 1,250 every quarter to ZAGNY to cover the costs of maintaining the Darbe Mehr. On August 23, 1980 Arbab wrote to the ZAGNY treasurer, "As you may have been informed by now, on August 7, 1980 I have deposited into the accounts of Rustam Guiv Foundation New York, the sum of \$ 60,000, the interest of which will be quarterly paid into Zoroastrian Association of Greater New York, for their operating cost by the trustees of the fund."

- October 1980: Arbab Rustam Guiv died on October 7, 1980.

- 1984: The trustees of the Guiv Foundation unilaterally stopped sending the interest from the \$ 60,000.

- January 1985: Trustees of the Rustam Guiv Foundation presented a Quitclaim Deed and demanded that the trustees of the Darbe Mehr Zoroastrian Temple sign it and hand over ownership of the property to the Foundation. The Temple trustees appropriately refused to do so.

- March 1987: Trustees of the Temple and ZAGNY were served a legal notice by the Foundation to transfer the ownership of the property to them.

- March 1987 to June 1991: Litigation continued in the courts. The Foundation filed a total of three separate law suits, including appeals, and in all cases the courts agreed with the Temple position and denied the Foundation's petition to have the ownership of the property transferred.

Hence, to correct Dr Jahanian's statements:

- ZAGNY did not file any law suits. It was the Foundation that filed all law suits against both the Temple and ZAGNY, who had no alternative but to defend the law suits.



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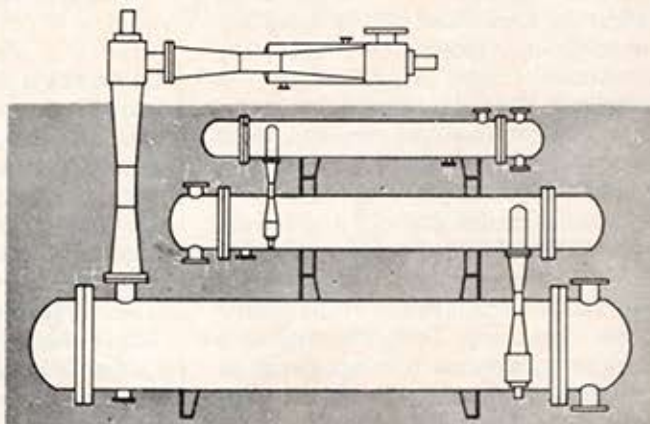
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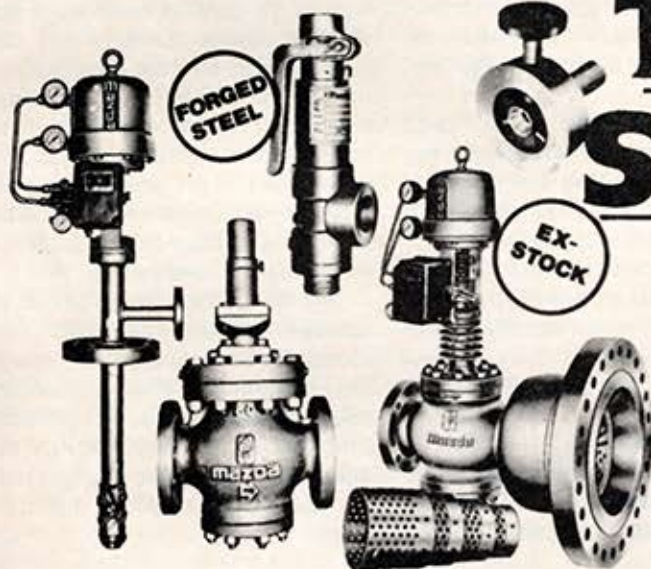
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The statement that "nobody knows to whom the Darbe Mehr belongs or whether ZAGNY is going to sell it or not" is extremely irresponsible particularly when stated by the chairman of the Guiv Foundation. The truth is that one merely has to look at the deed which clearly states that the religious corporation, "Darbe Mehr Zoroastrian Temple" is the owner. The Foundation has always known this as evidenced by the fact that they took legal action to try and have the ownership transferred from the Temple to the Foundation.

The concern that ZAGNY may sell the property is unfounded because ZAGNY has never owned the property to begin with. The property is owned by the "Darbe Mehr Zoroastrian Temple" which is a religious corporation that represents all Zoroastrians who live in the Tri-State Greater New York area.

We would also like to emphasize a few other points:

- While Arbab Rustam Guiv was alive there was never any doubt or dispute regarding ownership of the Darbe Mehr.

- Every Zoroastrian who lives in the Tri-state Greater New York area, whether Parsi or Irani, is automatically considered a member of the congregation of the "Darbe Mehr Zoroastrian Temple."

- Annual elections are held whereby the congregation elects the trustees of the Temple.

- Currently, two Zoroastrian associations share the use as well as the costs for maintaining the Darbe Mehr property — ZAGNY and the Iranian Zoroastrian Association (IZA).

- ZAGNY has recently contributed and spent about \$ 75,000 towards a major renovation of the Darbe Mehr.

The New York Zoroastrian community will be forever indebted to the late Arbab Rustam Guiv for his magnanimous donation of our Darbe Mehr, as well as to the late Dr Rostam Sarfeh for his pioneering efforts in establishing darbe mehrs all over the country. We may have had our differences, but this should not detract from the major contributions made by Dr Sarfeh towards Zoroastrian causes all over the world.

While we may correct Dr Jahanian's statements we have high regard for him and wish him well. We recognize that his misinformation is probably due to him becoming involved in the Foundation's affairs relatively recently and certainly after the events illustrated above.

Our community is too small to afford conflict among ourselves. Let us endeavor

to henceforth work together in preserving our faith.

Dr LOVJI CAMA, ASTAD J. CLUBWALLA, HOMI D. GANDHI, Dr (Ms) YASMIN J. GHADIALI, ARDESHIR KIAMANESH, Dr NOSHIR LANGRANA
Board of Trustees, Darbe Mehr Zoroastrian Temple,
New York

"In search of..."

I am pained to find that though I had mentioned publicly at the bi-annual Federation of India awards for excellence in Baroda, your article "In search of excellence" (*Parsiana*, May 1994) makes no mention of the fact that veteran sports-woman Ms Prochy Numazar Mehta is the second daughter of the late Rusi B. Gimi.

You will agree that it is an unusual event for a father and daughter to be honored simultaneously for their excellence in their chosen fields — social service and sports respectively.

I would like to mention here that the Governor of West Bengal awarded the "Rusi B. Gimi medal for excellence in social service" to the Spastics Society last year and to the R.C.F.C. (Rehabilitation Centre for Children) this year.

Ms FRENZY R. DAROGA
New Delhi

"Don't shut us out"

"Don't shut us out," (Zoroastrians Abroad, *Parsiana*, May 1994) gave an excellent coverage on the First World Zoroastrian Youth Congress — I suppose the best coverage.

Just for the record, the statement, "much of the second day was spent arguing, shouting and fighting over these issues" is misconstrued. There was no shouting or fighting, people behaved very professionally. Also, the arguing was for less than two hours in a nine-hour session day.

MEHER AMALSAD
California

"Zoroastrianism enjoins..."

Vis-a-vis "Zoroastrianism enjoins conversion" by Mr Jamsheed Kanga (*Parsiana*, May 1994), I would like to share certain thoughts with your readers.

All seem to agree that in the scriptures attributed to Zarathushtra there is no specific bar to conversion. In fact, like any good teacher, he has encouraged the spread of his teachings.

Hence, not converting, and going to the extent of debarring the spouses and children of mixed marriages is an inadvertent slight on Zarathushtra by his disciples who,

no doubt, revere his name.

Customs and practices which in time become tradition, along with religion are all vital in the making of a human being. That being so, the question that arises is, are all of those factors at par? I think all will agree, that is not so.

Whereas a religion (especially a revealed one such as ours) is a message from our Creator through the medium of His prophet, customs, practices and traditions have developed over a long period of time, to meet and adjust to prevailing circumstances, at times even for survival.

The divine revelation is an eternal reality and truth (even in this Zarathushtra has recommended the use of our mental faculty). It cannot be compared to mere adjustments made by man to his daily life for reasons of expediency.

This vital difference must not be lost sight of. At times it is necessary to make changes to practices and traditions if they are no longer relevant, if they are detrimental and/or are contrary to the master's teaching.

Differences in customs and practices are noticeable even in such basic ceremonies as navjote and wedding as conducted by the Zarhostis of Iran as against the Parsis from India. Both are correct in essence, yet differences do appear.

The significant point is that the teachings of the prophet must stand head and shoulder above practices and traditions (important as they may be). And once the difference is understood, one should not hesitate, or have a feeling of guilt, to break away from traditions which have lost their relevance. It is not possible for us to visualize the pangs our ancestors must have felt in making adjustments in practice to the teachings of Zarathushtra.

We should be grateful in fact to those ancestors of ours, who made the adjustments, for had they not done so we would not have inherited even the essence of our religion. Who knows, this perhaps is the time, and ours the responsibility, to differentiate and rectify the changes made earlier due to circumstances, due to compulsions.

E. S. BAMI
Bahrain

"Women's rights?"

Dr P. D. Sunavala's comment, "if Parsi girls find getting suitable male partners difficult, the community should think of permitting bigamy" ("Women's rights?" Readers' Forum, *Parsiana*, May 1994) not only sounds chauvinist but quite ridiculous. As Parsis we have been the most forward-

looking and modern community in India with our women absolutely on par with our men in every field. Yet Sunavala would have us retrogress to the middle ages because of his aversion to Parsi girls marrying outside the community. His male chauvinism shows up as he does not mention Parsi men married outside the fold.

Ms Sheroo Gupta's anguish ("Women's rights?" Readers' Forum, *Parsiana*, February-March 1994) is understandable, as I know of several girls who have for years been ready and willing to marry Parsi boys but still remain single into their thirties. Some of them know they will never get married. This is a real problem and people like Sunavala should realize that at this rate, in a few decades, there will be no community left. We are declining so rapidly.

Finally, when Dr Sunavala says "no priest will perform the navjote ceremony of a Gupta or a Mathur or a Fernandez," does he think that all the Parsi Modys, Mehtas, Gandhis, Desais, Raos, Shastris and scores of others with such Hindu surnames so common in our community came to this country from Iran? We have even adopted surnames from our British masters

like Warden, Wallace, Nicholson, Forbes, Marshall, etc. To my knowledge, no priest has refused to perform a navjote because of such surnames.

And not just surnames. Does Sunavala forget that the Parsi community is full of Kamals, Hiras, Manecks, Navals, even Jivan, etc. For God's sake what's in a name? Our community's names have been eclectic for generations and new ones through common usage would also become Parsi names with time.

Ms A. MEHTA

"The case for..."

When a man defines his god-s, he defines only himself. A Zoroastrian does not need lessons in polytheism, even though its reminiscence enters our reformed calendars. By all means let the crypto-polytheists multiply yazads and ameshaspands, and assign to them precise times of functioning through set numbers of incantations; thereafter let them proceed to fool the gullible. My letter of protest (*Parsiana*, September-December 1993) at Ms Mistry and the terrorist tactics of her strange cult (Zoroastrians Abroad and Readers' Forum, *Parsiana*, March 1993) seems to have unearthed primitivism in Bombay. Mr

Roni Khan has attempted his racism through the mangling of the Gathic *maga*—and the selective quotes from the Behistun rock without concerning himself about the circumstances of composition ("The case for..." Readers' Forum, *Parsiana*, May 1994). We should now worry over why Zarathushtra, after troubling to name himself 15 times in his *Gathas*, omitted to attach the all-important qualification of "Aryan," seeing that we are supposed to believe that the Renovation was meant only for the Aryan world. Will Mr Khan next try telling a brahmin just why he cannot possibly be Aryan?

The plea is out for the preservation of our religion; may it please be preserved from these polytheistic associates from the Aryan world? It would be an act of kindness to inform them that Zoroastrianism is safely out of their hands: they've hijacked the dross, not the gold.

FARROKH VAJIFDAR

London

Poona agiaries seek funds

The 150th anniversary of Sir Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy Agiary, Pune, will be celebrated on October 24, 1994 (*roj* Ardibehest, *mah* Khordad, 1364 YZ).



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Our Agiary and the areas surrounding the building are in urgent need of extensive repairs and renovation. The trust proposes to carry out this work, subject to availability of funds, prior to the 150th anniversary celebration.

Specifically, what is required is:

- electrical rewiring;
- removal of old, loose and damaged plaster from the Agiary building exterior, replastering and repainting the Agiary building from inside and outside;
- repairs to the damaged and partially collapsed Agiary wall and raising the wall height for security purposes;
- providing cement concrete/tarmac road-way from main entrance to passageway between dining halls;
- providing separate room for 'nahn' ceremony and renovation of the washing area.

The total cost of undertaking the work is estimated at approximately Rs 8,00,000.

The repair work is long overdue and needs to be carried out expeditiously. I, therefore, appeal to fellow Zoroastrians, in India and abroad, to help us in this worthy cause by donating generously for this purpose.

The Sir J. J. Agiary is managed by Sir Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy First Baronet's Poona Fire Temple Fund which is a public charitable trust registered with the Charity Commissioner at Bombay, under Regn. No. PTR C-204/Bby. The day-to-day management of this Agiary is supervised by a local managing committee headed by Mr Behram Phirozshaw Katrak.

On behalf of the trust, may I appeal to you to extend your financial help for this worthy cause?

You may also like to place your advertisement/message in the souvenir to be published for distribution during the 150th anniversary celebration, for which a form for booking the advertisement/message will be available at the Agiary.

We have applied to the Income Tax authorities for benefits under section 80g of the Income Tax Act. If such tax exemption is received, we shall issue copies of the certificate to the donors for claiming requisite tax benefits.

Donation/advertisement booking forms

and payment thereof may kindly be sent to either of the following addresses, for which official receipts will be issued. Cheques/demand drafts may kindly be drawn in favor of 'Sir J. J. Agiary, Pune, Local Managing Committee' and forwarded to Sir J. J. Charity Fund, Maneckji Wadia Building, 5th Floor, 127, Mahatma Gandhi Road, Bombay 400023, Tel 022-273843, or Local Managing Committee, Sir J. J. Agiary, 826, Dastoor Meher Road, Pune 411001, Tel 0212-645514.

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The Poona Kadmi and Shehanshehi Anjuman Dar-e-Meher will be 101 years old on September 24, 1994. It was founded by philanthropists to enable all three sects of Zoroastrians to meet together and pray to the Almighty as well as to perform religious ceremonies and hold religious discourses.

An addition was made later to facilitate our brethren by building a hall for weddings, navjotes, discourses, meetings, ghambars, feasts and for youth activities.

Today, the Zoroastrian population of Pune is the second largest in the world and more space is required to perform religious

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Correspondence invited for an Iranian Zoroastrian girl, aged 27, 5'3", fair, good-looking Chartered Accountant, from highly qualified professionals, from good families, settled either in India or abroad (America, Europe, Australia). Contact 2870530 between 7.30 a.m. to 9 a.m. or write to:

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Correspondence invited from parents of well-to-do, professionally settled, Parsi Zoroastrian boys, up to 28 years, by affluent parents of good-looking, fair, convent educated and professionally qualified daughter. Age 21 years, 5'3" tall. Reply with photograph (returnable) to:

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Parsi parents invite proposals for their 27-year-old, 5'4" tall, wheatish complexioned, intelligent, graduate daughter. The boy should be educated, a well-settled professional/businessman up to 32 years from a cultured, respectable family. Girl willing to settle in big cities of India, preferably Bombay. Please apply with full details and a photograph (returnable) to:

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Bombay based parents of a well-educated young man, 27 years, 5'11" tall, slim and good-looking, invite matrimonial correspondence from smart, educated young ladies settled in USA. The young man is a US graduate working in a multinational organisation in USA with excellent career prospects. Please reply with full details and photograph (returnable) to:

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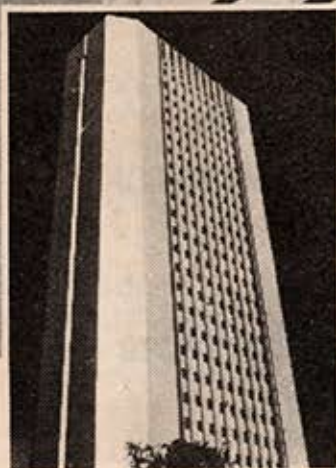
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ceremonies, especially during the muktads. Also, the funds left by our forebears for maintenance are insufficient. The present trustees are finding it difficult to maintain the Dar-e-Meher, the hall and their mobed sahebs.

Hence on this auspicious occasion the trustees and members of the managing committee are approaching charitable trusts, organizations and philanthropic individuals to donate generously towards its corpus, major repairs to the priests' quarters, hall, kitchen and toilet blocks. The Dar-e-Meher itself is in dire need of a face-lift.

Donations in cash or account payee cheque/demand draft in the name of The Poona Kadmi and Shehanshehi Anjuman Dar-e-Meher Charity Fund may please be addressed to the Fund at 893, Synagogue Street, Pune 411001. N. K. PUDUMJEE

President, P. K. & S. Anjuman Dar-e-Meher Charity Fund

Excursion to Iran

Due to persistent requests from numerous Zoroastrians from all parts of the world, the World Zoroastrian Organisation has decided to arrange a cultural visit to Iran in April 1995.

The trip will be for a duration of 15 days at least and possibly for 18 days. It will cover places of Zoroastrian interest including the cities of Tehran, Hamadan, Ahwaz, Shiraz, Kerman, Yazd and Isfahan. Bookings will be in four star hotels except in a couple of cities.

Depending on the number of tourists, the costs in Iran will vary from about US \$ 900 to US \$ 780 per person, for couples. In the case of a single person, there will be a supplement of about US \$ 290. This cost is related to the 15-day trip. However, the trip may be extended by three days and hence, the costs stated above would be consequently increased.

The prices quoted above do not include the cost of air fare to and from Iran, but they do include:-

- breakfast, lunch and dinner at hotel restaurants (with local soft drinks);
- air-conditioned coaches with English speaking escorts for the whole duration of the trip;
- fresh fruits and local soft drinks on the coaches;
- all entrance fees, taxes and service charges.

The air flights to and from Iran will have to be arranged by the tourists themselves. In this respect, please note that Iran Air gives 40 percent discount to its passengers.

Those interested are advised to get in touch with Mr Shahpur F. Captain, 25, Willow Close, Bishops Stortford, Herts CM23 2RY, UK. JAL J. ENGINEER

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We welcome all Parsis coming to Jhansi. Our Jhansi Dharamsala provides lodging and boarding facilities at an economical Rs 85 per day, per head with catering by Ms Navaz Patel.

Please write to the undersigned at 1/A Wright Road, Jhansi, UP, for more information. R. J. DICK

President, Jhansi Parsi Anjuman, Jhansi

A tribute to two Parsis

August 1, 1994 marks the 42nd death anniversary of a great Parsi — Jamshed Nusserwanjee Mehta. B. F. Bharucha, in his article titled "A True Jewel," in the *Jamshed Mehta Memorial Volume*, compares the two Mehtas of undivided India in the following words: "The first and foremost was Sir Pherozshah Mehta of Bombay; and the other was Jamshed Mehta of Karachi."

"Pherozshah Mehta was the real maker of Bombay, so was Jamshed of Karachi."

Pherozshah was the uncrowned king of Bombay, so was Jamshed of Karachi. Pherozshah dominated the public life of Bombay for years, so did Jamshed of Karachi. Pherozshah sacrificed his vast practice in serving the country, so did Jamshed, his business. Pherozshah was regular, was punctual, straightforward and honorable all through his life, so was Jamshed. Pherozshah was respected both by the Government and the people, so was Jamshed. Pherozshah was first an Indian and a Parsi, so was Jamshed.



Jamshed Mehta (left) and Pherozshah Mehta

"Pherozshah was ferocious, Jamshed was gentle. Pherozshah was defiant, Jamshed was suppliant. Pherozshah thundered, Jamshed surrendered. Pherozshah was feared, Jamshed was loved. Pherozshah was a giant, Jamshed was a gentle leader. Pherozshah was a genius, Jamshed was a saint. Pherozshah had a towering personality, Jamshed was silently attractive. Pherozshah liked pomp and power, Jamshed did not. Pherozshah accepted honors, Jamshed did not."

"Both were noble sons of Hind, Pherozshah high on Everest, and Jamshed on smiling Simla."

Let us remember these makers of men.

BEHRAM RUSTOMJI

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At a typical Parsi wedding/navjote both "hot" and "cold" drinks are served, but if the guests were to ask for *pivanoo pani* (drinking water), neither the host nor his caterer would be able to offer any.

I earnestly appeal to the trustees of the Baug to provide drinking water at these gatherings by putting up a *matloo* (earthenware vessel) or a stainless steel vessel filled with drinking water. The manager of the Baug should ensure that there is no misuse of this facility.

BHIIKHAI M. ADENWALLA

Neville Wadia's navjote

Neville Wadia, the doyen of the Wadia family that has gifted several residential colonies to the community, had his navjote ceremony performed on September 24, 1994 (*roj Ardibehst*, *mah Ardibehst*) at his son Nusli's Beach House residence before a small gathering of family and friends. Shrivast R. Vakil, legal advisor to the house of Tatas and a former Bombay Parsi Punchayet trustee, notarized a certificate attesting that Wadia's "navjote ceremony was performed by a Zoroastrian priest in my presence."

Wadia who belonged to the Church of England had expressed a desire to return to his ancestral religious fold for some time. *Parsiana* was acquainted with this news at the time of going to press.

Miracle reading machine

An electronic reading machine, developed by Robotron Pvt Ltd of Australia, provides access to any book, magazine, newspaper, typed letter or computer printout to the visually handicapped. With a quality of speech output as good as a human reader, the text is then scanned and spoken automatically at a maximum speed of 1,000 words per minute. There are also additional devices to transfer data to a computer or to a braille printer.

Providing a whole new dimension in the world of

knowledge, information and self-reliance, the machine, priced at AS 5,450 (approximately Rs 1,20,000), has been received by the Indian Association for the Visually Handicapped and is available for demon-

stration at 132, Pradhan Building, S. V. P. Road, Dongri, Bombay 400009 (Telephone No 3759120) for all those who would like to personally witness its use and benefit.

RAM AGARWAL

President, Indian Association for the Visually Handicapped

To Kutar Sahib with love

The only reward for a good teacher is seeing students 'grow' and that is perhaps all that they ever want. While soldiers are decorated and heroes are venerated, a student's success and achievements are his teacher's only reward. My grandfather, Jamshedji Kutar, principal of the D. K. Tata High School, Navsari, for more than four decades would have been proud



of his students' achievements today with his usual solemnity and humility and I believe he would have said his customary "Well done, my boy!" His was a simple, straightforward and up-

right life. He had no formal educational degree and had done only his BA from St Xavier's College, Bombay. But he was a born teacher. He poured his intellect and foresight selflessly into the service of the School.

The School celebrated his birth centenary in 1992 and brought forth a brochure to commemorate the event. Essays and letters, filled with happy memories of students who had studied under him, adorned the brochure.

Most of his students referred to him as 'Kutar Sahib' and I am told a unique phenomenon occurred before School every morning when Grandpa arrived. On sighting his tall impressive *dagla* clad figure approaching the School, students from remote corners of the School and compound would interrupt their play to line up in two rows from the gate along the steps to his office and salute their well loved principal. He, in turn, acknowledged their salute with a raised hand. This was not a School diktat, but a spontaneous gesture on the part of students with a deep respect for their headmaster.

I remember Grandpa as being a quiet, reserved person of great piety. Though I was still quite young when he died I was old enough to notice that he had kind, soft eyes in an otherwise stern face. The latter belied his sense of humor.

Walking into his study in our Navsari house one can feel his imposing presence in the room, almost untouched to this day. It is sparsely furnished, befitting his humble personality; the large desk in the middle, the neatly arranged rows of books now dusty with disuse, the easy chair in the corner by the window and the hat stand still speak of their departed owner. Grandpa was deeply religious and religious literature fills the closets of the house in Navsari, lovingly looked after by my Grandma for many years until she passed away.

It is my hope that young Zoroastrian teachers will command respect and win the love and admiration of their students just as he did.

Ms ARMAITI CYRUS SHROFF

R. E. Kumana, R.I.P.

Among Mr Rustam Edulji Kumana's many distinctions he had served as chairman and managing director of the Scindia Steam Navigation Company, London, for over 20 years.

During this period Mr Kumana represented the Company at major liner conferences as well as the Indian National Shipowners Association (INSA) at International Chamber of Shipping conferences, International Shipping Federation conferences, Sea Transport Section of the International Chamber of Commerce congresses and the International Labour Organisation's maritime sessions. He was nominated by INSA as the Indian shipowners' representative on the Joint Maritime Commission of the International Labour Organisation.

Elected vice chairman of the International Chamber of Shipping and of the International Shipping Federation, Mr Kumana was president of the Indian Chamber of Commerce in Great Britain and served as a trustee of the Indian Gymkhana Club in London.

I might add that Rustam Uncle, as we called him, was of an extremely hospitable nature. So many Parsi young men and women in London, pursuing their education and other activities, would be invited by him, entertained to dinner, and any possible help they needed would be provided to them by virtue of his position in the Indian community in London.

Prof ASPY RANA



Edited by Amavaz S. Mama

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Events and Personalities

Promoting counselling

"Incidents of marital discord and divorces are on the increase because of a number of socioeconomic factors." This unhealthy development in the community has prompted the trustees of the Bombay Parsi Punchayet (BPP) to publicize the services of their family counselling project which has been in existence for the last several years. Couples contemplating divorce may, before approaching the matrimonial court, seek guidance from the marriage counsellors affiliated to the BPP.

Timely professional help of a counsellor, besides the services of a psychiatrist, and medical and legal specialists will be made available to those who need assistance. The main objective is to strengthen the family life and ties, notes a press release issued by the BPP chief executive Rustom Anklesaria.

The counsellor-in-charge, Ms Roda Pardiwalla, will look into family problems arising from discord between spouses, adjustment problems with in-laws, ill-treatment by the spouse or in-laws, desertion, non-support or other factors conducive to a divorce, extramarital affairs, problems with children, mental health or drug addiction problems, plus any other complications. The counsellors will even guide those eligible for marriage in choosing life partners wisely and preparing them for the responsibilities that marriage

involves to guard against possible tension in the future.

Confidentiality is assured, according to the press release. This service is available at the Dadar Parsi Colony, (Bldg 785, Khareghat Road, Bombay 400014, Tel: 4140317) on Fridays between 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. and at the Gamadia Colony (Lady Jehangir Health Unit, Tardeo, Tel: 4944047 or 4944015) on Mondays from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Pardiwalla can be contacted directly on 3882748 between 2 p.m. and 5 p.m. on working days, and on 4129658 at her residence in case of emergency.

Building future leaders

"If we limit our education to colleges and degrees, it might benefit individuals, but what about society? Everyone is not likely

to be a doctor or engineer or minister like me. Children must be guided at the (institutional) level of at the right time. Every human being is made for different things."

Salim Zakaria, Maharashtra's minister for education, complimented the Bombay Parsi Punchayet (BPP) on its Holiday Programme for Youth (HPY) where an important plank is career guidance. Inaugurating the eighth HPY, Zakaria informed the parents, teachers and youth gathered at the Khareghat Memorial Hall on April 9, 1994 that 17 percent of the Maharashtra Government's budget was earmarked for education in 1994-95. Referring to a state projection that envisaged total literacy in Maharashtra in six to seven years' time, Zakaria requested "the Parsi Punchayet to see if each Parsi student can teach an

(Below) Zakaria (at the mike) inaugurating the Holiday Programme for Youth. Others on the dais are (from left): Bharucha, Marfatia, Coomi Desai, Eruch Desai, Silloo Kavarana, Anklesaria, Ramiyar Karanjia and Master. (Right) At the valedictory function (from left): Damania, Guzder, Mehta, Taleyarkhan and Anklesaria



illiterate in his locality... It will add another feather to the Parsi community," adding, "It would help people to understand each other, make the country peaceful and (livable)."

The month long annual program, the star of the BPP's expanding social services, was attended by 172 participants from 51 schools in Ahmedabad, Baroda, Bombay, Dahanu, Delhi, Madras, Panchgani, Surat, etc, as informs a BPP press release. The youth who had just finished their SSC/ICSE exams, were exposed to the multifarious career options available today with specific vocational testing and guidance at the individual level.

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Emphasizing self-awareness, personality development, religion and sports, the program aims to impart knowledge, widen horizons and put young Zoroastrian contemporaries in touch with each other. With an accent on identifying the community's future leaders, a five-day leadership training camp at Lonavla followed the culmination of the program for the select few.

The walls of the hall had been festooned with posters, quotations, instructions and a promise: "There are two lasting things that HPY can give: One is roots, the other is wings."

Alumni of earlier batches shared with the audience the advantages they had gleaned from the program. Ms Urvashi Mistry spoke of how it had helped her "(emerge) from her cocoon, cast off negative ideas, (acquire) confidence to speak for myself and the group." Cyrus Vaid reported on the activities of the Youth Club whose membership is restricted to HPY alumni. He specifically underlined the introduction of social service as a parallel program, the successful mobilization of youth that enabled them to raise Rs 12,000 in door-to-door collections, undertake the navjote of three Parsi girls and start them towards some financial stability in the future by gathering their *pehramnis* (cash presents) and investing them in Units. Re-

fering to the discarded aged, surviving in the Parukh Dharamshala and the J. J. Hospital's Parsi ward, whom the youth have been visiting twice a week, providing light refreshment and taking to atash bahrams, Vaid noted with pride, "Who says they have no one? They have us!" The New Year's Eve dance they had organized in December 1993 had enabled them to collect Rs 1.8 lakhs for which Vaid credited the assistance of social worker Rusy Bhungara. A literacy drive is underway. ("Even if we can teach 15 persons to read and write, we'll be satisfied") and a blood collection drive was scheduled to follow on the heels of the valedictory function.

Presiding over the inaugural, senior BPP trustee Eruch Desai complimented the BPP's chief executive Rustom Anklesaria, joint secretary Ms Sheroo Master and HPY coordinators Ms Diana Marfatia and Ms Binaifer Bharucha who had "ensured that the education of the youth is as gradual as moonrise, not perceptible in its progress but certainly perceptible in its result, like the full moon. We want to ensure that each youth of the community is a full-blooded youth when he goes home at the end of the program."

A gubernatorial message from P. C. Alexander commending the BPP trustees

on the HPY was read at the valedictory function by BPP president Jamshed Guzder on May 7, 1994. Guzder reminded the youth of the need to aim for larger families and inculcate the entrepreneurial spirit. The latter objective was even more forcefully advocated by Parvez Damania, chairman of Damania Airways, the day's guest of honor. "If you believe in yourself, you can achieve whatever you intend to do," said Damania, recounting his own experience of starting out with a small hatchery which had developed into one of the largest poultry farms in Maharashtra and the hard work, courage and conviction which enabled him to diversify into the air taxi business. Guest speaker Homi Taleyarkhan suggested that the community seek reservation of a few seats in engineering and medical colleges against high donations.

But the day's tour de force was the discursive but punchy speech of noted economist Dr Freddie Mehta, the chief guest on the occasion (for the edited text of Mehta's speech see "We are getting wiped out," on page 31). Acknowledging the rich, diverse and well documented achievements of eminent Parsis, Mehta noted, "We can deliver an excellent speech about the past... All of us here must accept that the past nourishes us here, the past supplies us the inspiration, but at the same time the



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future beckons us." Addressing the community's foremost concern Mehta noted, "First...comes the harsh reality, the cruel reality that we are dying — and almost certainly going to be a dead community in another 150 years." Mehta advised the youth to cultivate the "killer instinct" which alone would enable them to produce the ceaseless toil required to remain at the top in the intensely competitive world of India today. He urged them too to reinforce their Zoroastrian identity.

A prize distribution and contributory dinner ended the day and the program on a happy note.

Amavaz Marna

Effective land use

By relocating two halls which were in a dilapidated condition, raising the necessary funds and erecting on that site a residential building, the trustees of The



Adjoining the Mithaiwala Agiary (left) is the newly constructed Shirin Apartments (above left).

Photos: Varghese Fernandez
Mobed Building on Doongerwadi grounds (above right)



Hall — formerly in a building adjoining the agiary, have now been accommodated atop the Dar-e-Meher and are in commission since July 1993, according to the press release.

Dorabjee Eduljee Mithaiwala Agiary Trust Fund were able to accommodate nine deserving Parsi Zoroastrian families in the centrally located Grant Road vicinity, notes a press release issued by the Trust.

At a function held on June 1, 1994 the apartments, admeasuring nearly 470 sq ft each, were formally allotted to the chosen occupants in the presence of the Agiary trustees Nariman Katgara, Jamshed Guzder, Burjor Antia and Dinshawjee Bharucha. Also in attendance was the congregation who had assembled to participate in the thanksgiving jashan performed by the priests of the Mithaiwala Agiary, mentions the press release.

The residential building has been named Shirin Apartments in memory of the late Shirinbai Jehangirji Katgara who had the welfare of the Dar-e-Meher at heart throughout her lifetime, acknowledges a plaque at the entrance of the building.

The two halls — Seth Dinshaw Dhanjibhoy Nasikwalla Hall and the Khan Bahadur Jamshedji Rustomji Bharucha

The trustees hope that a large number of community members will avail of the hall facilities for the performance of religious and allied ceremonies, as also other community functions.

Mobed Building

The newly built Mobed Building on Bombay's doongerwadi grounds became, for the first time, the venue for a Dae mah jashan. The ceremony on June 12, 1994 was led by the Vimadlal brothers, Ervads Viraf and Vistasp. Also in attendance were community stalwarts like Jamshed Guzder, chairman of the Bombay Parsi Punchayet (BPP) and Kersi Limathwalla, chairman of the CER-HOME (Committee for Economic Revival — House Our Mobeds Endeavour) committee.

Among the major donors whose contribution had helped complete the construction of the four-storeyed Mobed Building are Faridoon and Meherban Zartoshty, and the Kavarana Trust, acknowledges the handout.

Eighteen full-time practising priests and their respective families have been housed in two-room kitchen tenements admeasuring approximately 650 sq ft. Additionally, dormitory accommodation has been provided for single, full-time practising priests. "It is hoped that the shortage of mobeds at doongerwadi will be overcome by the availability of full-time practising mobeds residing in the complex," notes the press release. For the convenience of the residents a concretised pathway leading from the building to the upper bunglis at doongerwadi has been constructed. The building can also be accessed via the motorable road through Godrej Baug.

The flat allottees are those who have met the norms stipulated in the BPP's merit rating scheme. Depending on the financial condition of the family, subsidized rents ranging between Rs 350 and Rs 700 are being levied by the BPP. This special concession in rents was sanctioned following a request from the CER-HOME committee, according to the press release.

Promise to globalize

Announcing the advent of Balsara Hygiene into the global economy, managing director Aspi Balsara introduced the newly formed, Belgorod (Russia) based, Balsara Europa Company to the Indian press on June 27, 1994. The Russian Pult Factory and Balsaras each have a 40 percent stake in the new venture while UK's Microtape Limited holds the remaining 20 percent. The total equity of \$ 187,000 was scheduled to be invested in three phases with a breakup of \$ 75,000 each in the first two

phases, expected to be three months apart. The third instalment of \$ 37,500 was due three or four months later. At the third phase Balsara expects to produce 4,000 million tonnes of Promise toothpaste annually.

The Russian partner is an ex defence plant close to the Ukraine border, now converted to produce consumer items, while the contribution from the UK mainly comprises of machinery for the production of collapsible tubes, Balsara said. Day-to-

Claiming "the Press (as) our supporters," Balsara also noted that the "State Bank of India (SBI) has been our major pillar from day one as a small scale industry. We'd have been nowhere without the patience of SBI officials." He similarly thanked the Exim Bank for its "monetary support for training our people."

A. M.

Dalal's circuit

The newly elected president of the Electrical Contractors' Association of Maha-

ber of Commerce, Maratha Chamber of Commerce — Pune, Indian Standards Institution — New Delhi, the licensing department of the Maharashtra government and the malpractices committee of the state PWD electric department.

Dalal was a project consultant with M/s Best and Crompton Engineering Ltd, an electric and contracting firm for 22 years and has been in the business since 1958. He is currently a consultant for the Municipal Corporation of Greater Bombay (MCGB) for the 10 electrical crematoriums to be set up by them. Dalal also estimates the number of these crematoriums to increase by another five next year, located at Worli, Kandivli, Borivli, Vikhroli and Bhoiwada. The MCGB are hoping to have 22 crematoriums in Bombay totally, but the location of the new ones have not yet been decided as they are in their planning stages, said Dalal. He also explained that in the 40 minutes that it takes a body to burn, due to the scrubber system, no smoke is emitted from these crematoriums. The 27-meter-high chimney is also a factor that contributes to the non-smoke environment of the crematoriums.



Collaborating on a joint venture (from left): Dina Remizova, Yuri Pochakaev, Aspi Balsara and Zal Balsara (Right) Dalal: electrical projects consultant



day management is expected to be under staff to be recruited by Balsara.

The initial marketing of Promise was expected to be in 125g packs priced at \$ 0.25, said Balsara, who noted that the multinational corporations (MNCs) override the Russian market, Crest toothpaste having a substantially larger share there than Colgate which rules supreme in India.

Although Balsara exports to 27 countries — their export earnings in 1993 amounted to Rs 12 crore, according to Balsara — the USSR has been Promise's best customer. Its largest single order of eight million dollars had been supplied in a record 11 months, maintained Balsara.

Currently Balsaras say they export Promise to 27 countries including Eastern Europe, the Middle East, Malaysia and China, and herbal toothpaste to the USA, Canada, Germany and the UK. With a separate formulation to suit UK requirements, Promise has won the recognition of the British Dental Health Foundation, he noted.

Promise enjoys a nine percent share in the Indian toothpaste market which, according to Balsara, is overwhelmingly dominated by the MNCs and is growing at 10 percent in volume terms. Balsara is aiming at a two to three percent annual growth in India and is considering the possibility of similar ventures in the Middle East, Far East and one or two African countries.

rastra (ECAM), Minoo B. Dalal will be liaising, during his three-year term of office, with the BEST (Bombay Electric Supply and Transport Undertaking), BSES (Bombay Suburban Electric Supply) and the MSEB (Maharashtra State Electricity Board) supply companies to sort out the problems faced by the contractors and the consumers. He will thereby be promoting the objectives of the nearly 70-year-old Association which aims to mitigate the problems and better the conditions of practising electrical contractors in Maharashtra, according to a press release issued by ECAM.

Dalal, who was elected president of ECAM on January 1, 1994, is the second Parsi to hold this position (the first being S. M. Jasawalla in 1941). He heads a body of 1,500 members including regular members who are licensed electrical contractors and associate members who are manufacturers of wiring and other electrical products. Since its inception in 1925 when it started out with a membership of 20, ECAM has been steadily expanding with chapters now in major cities like Pune and Nasik.

The Association also has a representation on major trade bodies like the Indian Merchants' Chamber, Maharashtra Cham-

Interpub in new hands

"When you create something like this you want it to blossom even after you," Ms Nargis Wadia gave her reasons for selling off Inter Publicity Pvt Ltd (Interpub), the 30-year-old multicore advertising agency she had conceived and nurtured. Since Roy, her elder son, is a journalist with CNN, and the younger son Riyad is a documentary filmmaker, she felt neither of them was geared to take over the agency after her, Wadia conveyed to *Business India* (May 9-22, 1994).

The agency, which within the first six years of its existence hit the top 10 rankings in India, is supposed to have enjoyed the confidence of clients like Aristocrat, Binny, Godrej, Goodlass Nerolac and Duke's. In the mid-'80s it lost many of its major accounts to other agencies but was able to make a comeback in the '90s with its foray into financial advertising attracting clients like the Unit Trust of India, State Bank of India and different mutual funds, notes the *Business India* write-up. Its success with financial advertising and its record of clean and non-aggressive advertising reportedly attracted the new buyers — Bombay based bullion merchant S. G. Gonti, a New Delhi based financier R. C. Chaudhari, and a Calcutta based financial services group.

Reputed to be the first lady to establish an advertising agency in India, "Wadia's notable career spanned the crucial years

when Indian advertising grew from the status of a craft into a sophisticated marketing instrument," notes a tribute to Wadia in the *AdWorld* of June 15, 1994. After completing a four-year commercial art course from the J. J. School of Arts in Bombay, Wadia worked for a while with Shilpi Advertising and later in the art department of Air India before proceeding to the UK for a stint with a London advertising agency. Interpublicity was the next step in her career which was started in the garage of the Wadia family residence. Among the prestigious assignments she has handled are as president of the Advertising Agencies Association of India and as chairperson of the delegate promotion committee for the Asian Advertising Congress, New Delhi.

Though not interested in running an ad agency, Riyad enjoys making ad films which he feels "are a good training ground. It challenges one to capture the essence of things in just 10 to 20 seconds... (Besides they) are a source of good money," he explained to the *Metropolis* on Saturday (October 23-29, 1993) how he was able to arrange the finance for his documentary, *Fearless — the Hunterwali Story* which cost Rs 8.5 lakh. This effort won him a lot of accolades including an invitation to feature the film at the London Film Festival. Grandson of the legendary filmmaker J.B.H. Wadia of Wadia Brothers fame, this film captures the daredevilry of Nadia who is married to JBH's brother, Homi. A course in TV and filmmaking at the Charles Sturt University in Australia gave Riyad the confidence to make short films like *Dance fools Dance*, *Story about Human Hearts*, *Whatever Happened to Mommie Dearest*, *Mirror to Hollywood* and a documentary favoring the construction of the Narmada dam.

Riyad presently serves as director of Wadia Films. He remembers though his grandfather's advice not to have any major involvement in the film industry which the

doyen perceived as "unpredictable." For the future Riyad plans to stage a musical, hold an exhibition of his paintings, work on a talkshow called *Funkar Ka Fan* and on assignments for foreign TV channels, notes the *Metropolis* write-up.



Wadia: record of clean, non-aggressive advertising

Lives wrecked

Their holiday in Devka over, the Patel family was heading for Bombay in their Maruti van on the afternoon of March 14, 1994, that fateful Ramzan Idd day, when a headlong collision with a truck coming from the opposite direction resulted in the Patel children being orphaned. The accident near Charoti on the Western Express Highway left their parents, 40-year-old Rashna and 42-year-old Purvez, dead though the

lives of the five other occupants of the vehicle were saved. Eldest daughter Rukshana was the only victim who was conscious. Her father's maternal aunt Ratoo Dastoor gives the 10-year-old girl full credit for having the presence of mind to call her friend's mother Aban Pardiwalla for assistance. Rukshana had not then realized that her parents were dead, believing them to be

accident victims had been shifted, Dastoor was intimated that Purvez and Rashna "are no more," that their two younger children, eight-year-old Tanaz, two-and-a-half-year-old Dariyus, their maid servant and their driver were all unconscious. Being at a considerable distance from the site of the accident, Dastoor requested family associates Kaikhushroo Chinoy, owner of the Meher Distillery at Dahanu, to arrange for the victims' return to Bombay. Fortunately Kaikhushroo's son Viraf was also within reach and the Patel relatives are ever grateful to him for arranging for the children to be sent to the Breach Candy Hospital, for the maid and the driver to be sent to another hospital in the suburbs of Bombay, and for Purvez and Rashna's bodies to be carried to the Dahanu Hospital for a postmortem examination.

In the meanwhile, Chandan had intimated Sonia Gandhi of the disaster. (It may be recalled that it was at the wedding of Rashna and Purvez which the then prime minister Ms Indira Gandhi had attended along with other members of her family that it came to be known that Indira maintained ties with the relatives of her late husband Feroze. Chandan and Ratoo are the daughters of Feroze's sister.) According to Dastoor, Sonia arranged for Chandan and Rustom's post haste return to Bombay, and called MP Murli Deora in Bombay to ensure all assistance was rendered.

Despite all these arrangements, when the bodies were finally brought to Bombay at 10.15 p.m. the khandhias at the doongerwadi reportedly refused to touch the bodies until the family had obtained a clearance from the Gamdevi Police Station and the Bombay coroner.

While Purvez's profession as partner of Ethical Pharmaceutical and Rashna's career as professor at Nirmala Niketan College came to an abrupt end, the children are back at school — Rukshana and Tanaz in the 5th and 4th standard at Villa Teresa School and little

Dariyus at nursery in the New Activity School. Barely three months after this tragedy, there was another death in the family. Chandan's husband Rustom, who was suffering from Parkinson's disease, had to be hospitalized with the activation of this disease following the shock of the accident, and he finally succumbed to the ailment on June 23, 1994 at the age of 77.

Compiled by Parinaz Gandhi



Accident victims Purvez and Rashna Patel

unconscious like the rest. Since her paternal grandparents Chandan and Rustom Patel were then away in Delhi, and her maternal grandparents Zarin and Homi Chothia are based in Baroda, it was almost an hour later before anyone from the family got news of the accident.

From the Kasha Hospital where the

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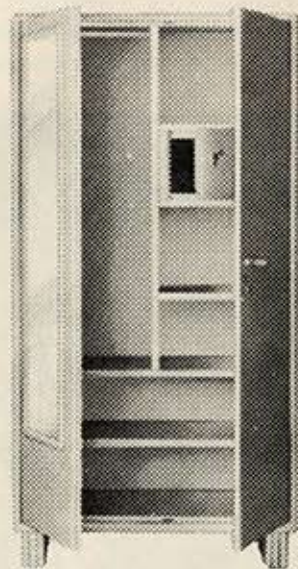


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Dawn of a new era Down Under

Amavaz S. Mama

*The Australian Zoroastrian Association
overcame a series of hurdles to crown their dream
of a Darbe Meher in Sydney*

For Australian Zoroastrians all roads led to 196 Annangrove Road, Sydney on July 24, 1994 as the Australian Zoroastrian Association (AZA) of New South Wales' (NSW) Arbab Rostam and Morvarid Guiv Darbe Meher was inaugurated with a jashan by Ervads Tim Desai, Jal Pavri, Meherzish Kerkeria and 11-year-old Beghzad Bana led by 'vada dastur' Peshotan Katrak, informs Kersi Meher-Homji from Sydney.

Constructed within six months, the new Darbe Meher — which incorporates a 240-seater hall, a tastefully constructed 'keblo,' a library named after philanthropists Meherban and Faridoon Zarhosty, a spacious kitchen, storerooms and washrooms — epitomizes "16 years of toil, tears and singleminded devotion" of AZA members, writes Meher-Homji.

Member of Parliament from New South Wales and speaker of the house Kevin Rozzoli, chairman of the Ethnic Affairs Commission of NSW Stephan Kerk-yasharian, Ms Freida Whitlam, sister of former Prime Minister Gough Whitlam

along with Press and TV crews were present to witness the community's exhilaration and praise its vision and effort "to retain the heritage and culture of the oldest religion, at the same time assimilating so well in the Australian lifestyle," reports Meher-Homji.

Also present to witness the fulfilment of the dream that began as "a place of our own" idea in 1978 were some who have since settled elsewhere: Farokh Mistree had flown back from the US; Maggie Irani represented husband Noshir, now settled in the UAE, whose deposition before the Land and Environment Court as president of the AZA in 1990 had been signally responsible for winning the AZA appeal against the Baulkham Hills Shire Council. The local authority had originally refused the Association permission to redevelop their property because of complaints from neighbors regarding noise, insufficient sanitation facilities and traffic jams caused by parked cars as much as uninformed fears about Zoroastrianism. Some neigh-

bors as well as members of the Interfaith group in Sydney now joined in the inaugural celebrations.

The speeches, a welcome song for the Darbe Meher specially written by Ms Phirooza Battiwalla and sung by the Sunday School children were followed by the crooning of 10 tenors comprising the Sydney Zoro Amateur Group, lunch, informal entertainment by the Zealous Zoros and socializing. A chorus of almost 500 (i.e. all present including the dignitaries reading the words from the inaugural souvenir) vocalized *Chhaiyé Hamé Zarhosti* and *Advance Australia Fair*, the Australian national anthem.

The total cost of the Darbe Meher has been A \$ 601,472; the total funds generated A \$ 624,307, to which the Guiv Trust

*Below left: Seven of the 10 AZA tenors
Right: Former president Boman and
Vahbeez Kalapesi, Adi Davar,
Kerkyasharian, Freyni Davar, Rozzoli
and Bilimoria*





(Top) Irani: convinced the court

(Above) Chief architect Lauri Glendenning

(Top right) Arbab Rostam and Morvarid Guiv Darbe Meher (Right) The inaugural jashan and (from left) Ervads Desai, Bana, Kerkeria, Pavri and Katrak

(Below) An aesthetic keblo dominates one corner of the Darbe Meher

Photos: Nauzer Bana



has contributed \$ 103,000; Meherban and Faridoon Zarhosty \$ 91,424, the Ostowari family \$ 78,927, the Incorporated Trustees of the Zoroastrian Charity Funds of Hong Kong, Canton and Macao \$ 20,000, all gratefully acknowledged in the AZA souvenir. Australian donors had contributed \$ 120,577. AZA funds amounted to \$ 40,000 plus \$ 8,743 raised through fund raising activities including raffles and \$158,766 from growth of investments.

The Zoroastrians migrated to Sydney in the 1960s and decided to establish the AZA in 1970. The place-of-our-own idea was replaced by the concept of a darbe meher in 1984. A pledge of \$ 100,000 by the Guiv Trust, for construction of the edifice, was

contingent on the AZA acquiring a suitable property. Accordingly, five acres of land in Annangrove were acquired for the purpose in 1985. However "the Guiv funds were transferred to Australia but not released," writes Nawzar Ostowari in the inaugural souvenir, alluding to the AZA's long dispute with the Guiv trust. "A portion of the amount is still withheld," he adds.

An even more serious impediment was the refusal of permission by the local authorities for the development of the property. It cost the AZA \$ 48,300 — donated entirely by the community — much fears and heartache before the Land and Environment Court, on appeal, reversed the deci-

continued on page 27

When the foundation stone of the Sir Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy (J. J.) Hospital was laid on January 3, 1843 with full masonic honors, the then Governor of Bombay, Sir George Arthur, Baronet, went all the way from Government House, Parel, to Sir Jamsetjee's Fort House in south Bombay, and brought him in his carriage to the scene of the ceremony. However, when Sir Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy, seventh Baronet, inaugurated the 150th year celebration of the same institution on May 15, 1994, neither the Governor nor the Chief Minister of Maharashtra graced the occasion.

Invitations were extended, according to a report appearing in *The Times of India (TOI)* of May 16, 1994, to "the Chief Minister Mr Sharad Pawar, the minister for finance and planning Mr Ramrao Adik, the minister for public health Ms Pushpatai Hiray and minister of state for public health (and medical education) Mr Marazban Patrawala." None of them turned up and made do, instead, with messages of good wishes. The only political dignitaries present were Mohan Rawale (MP) and Bashir Patel (MLA).

Call it disrespect or just apathy on the part of the government, the soul of the founder Sir Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy, first Baronet, would not have cared less, for his name is lovingly invoked, day in and day out (for the past 150 years) by the poor and downtrodden who worship and garland his bronze statue standing within the main building. According to the present Sir Jamsetjee, "Mothers place their newborn babies at the feet of the statue and seek his blessings."

According to Dr D. A. Palande, a neurosurgeon at the Hospital, "The founder's statue represents an incarnation of God to the poor who are treated and cared for at this Hospital. Even the workers here bow before the statue, first thing in the morning." Such is the respect his memory commands even after a century and a half.

"Today, the Hospital has a capacity of 1,339 beds," notes the Dean, Dr S. P. Shirolkar. "However, at a time, there are usually 1,700-1,800 patients," adds Dr (Ms) Bharti Kondvilkar of the anaesthetics department of neurosurgery. "They are either accommodated on the floor or wherever space is available in the wards." The

Past Ideals... Future Hopes

Text: Noshir H. Dadrawala
Photographs: Varghese W. Fernandez



Sir J. J. Hospital's main building today •

The 150-year-old Sir J. J. Hospital, like Bombay itself, is struggling against odds to preserve the ideals of its founder

Out Patients Department (OPD) handles as many as 2,000 patients per day, with special clinics for skin, ENT, ophthalmology, etc. The Hospital has 18 operation theaters; and as many as 33,000 routine operations are performed every year. The 82 buildings of the Hospital complex are spread over 44 acres of land. One may enter or leave the Hospital complex by one of 14 gates and, if directions are not followed properly, be lost in its 43 departments and 39 divisions.

Among the list of honoraries who visit the OPD, we could identify at least three Zoroastrian names: general surgeons Dr Adi Nazir and Dr Gustad Davar and gynecologist Dr Bomsie Wadia. That Parsis have played a leading role in the development of the Hospital is recorded in the souvenir *Grand Medical College and Sir*

J. J. Group of Hospitals (1845-1991): Dr MullaFeroz established the department of physiotherapy in 1949 (and later laid the foundation stone of the Children's Orthopedic Hospital at Haji Ali); Dr Noshir Wadia started the department of neurology in 1957; Dr Noshir Antia, the department of plastic surgery in 1958; Dr Meherji Mehta the department of cardiothoracic surgery in 1959; Dr Farokh Udawadia was involved in upgrading, modernizing and equipping the tetanus/rabies unit in the 1960s so that the mortality rate fell from over 90 percent to less than 20 percent; Dr Rustom Irani founded the department of pediatric surgery in 1967. Among orthopedic super specialists were Dr K. S. Masalawala whose work on TB spine and surgery of the atlanto-axial region is well known; and Dr Jamsheed Taraporvala

whose specialized hand clinic was established in 1978. Dr (Ms) Mehroo Hansotia [with Dr (Ms) Sadhna Desai] was associated in pioneering infertility technology in the 1980s. The division of neuropathology was shifted to the J. J. under Dr Darab Dastoor from the Tata Memorial Hospital. The blood bank was established in 1964 with a generous grant from the Sir Dorabji Tata Trust. The building for the eye bank was donated by Lady Duggan in 1990 in memory of her husband, Col Sir Jamshedji Duggan.

The J. J. Group of Hospitals and the Grant Medical College (GMC) are wholly run by the government of Maharashtra. Recently, however, there has been a move for autonomy. This sentiment was also voiced by surgeon Dr Tehemton Udawadia, on the occasion of inaugurating the 150 years' celebration, as reported in *The TOI*. He also said, "This is the best teaching hospital, east of the Suez, and the people of Bombay should be made to feel that this is their Hospital."

Doctors at the Hospital are almost unanimous in their view that autonomy will lead to greater accountability and less red tapism. "Paper work takes months to move and the long procedures defeat so many dreams that motivated doctors and philanthropists may have," says a doctor from the OPD who does not wish to be named.

While the Hospital has kept pace with the latest advances in medical science and is equipped with the latest surgical tools and medical equipment, the level of motivation among the staff is low. Coronary bypass, kidney transplant and neuro endoscopic surgery is performed routinely at the Hospital, but the human touch and sensitivity is lacking in the wards. There is reportedly a general sense of frustration and discontent accompanied by indiscipline and arrogance among sections of the staff.

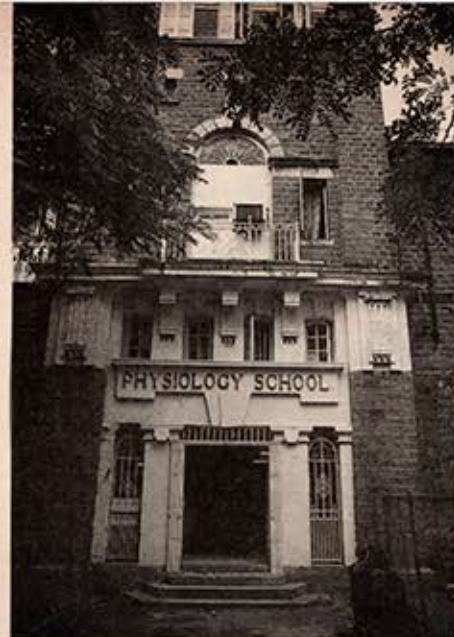
The Hospital runs an AIDS care center recognized by the World Health Organization (WHO) which provides advance diagnostic facilities like radio imaging and CT scan, but "running from pillar to post for everything" is a common complaint.



Above left: Male ward, medical
Right and below left: The Motilal Bhabha Hospital now serves as College of Nursing

The Dean proudly says that the Hospital is "a global village of science, technology, education and health." But it also hits the headlines with underworld shoot-outs in its precincts and tragedies like the glycerol deaths that were the end result of greed and callousness as unearthed by the Lentin Commission.

"What is the reason for the negative image of the Hospital?" we asked Palande, the first to detect the glycerol tragedy and a prime witness in the case before Justice Bakhtawar Lentin, the single-judge Commission instituted to investigate the grim episode. "It is you people from the Press who create this negative image," responds Palande. "The Press is always out for a juicy scoop. They will not write about the pioneering research work being done here. They will not write about the work we are doing on AIDS. But, yes, a controversy they will gulp down immediately," he laments. According to Palande the Hospital offers every possible facility: specialized OPD clinics for epilepsy, diabetes,



etc, CT scans, fluorescent microscopy, ultra sonography and treatment for tetanus and rabies. The Hospital treats criminals and undertrials alike. For example, Palande successfully treated Ashwin Naik, the underworld don who was shot in the



The GMC's Physiology School
Right: The boys' common room was once the communicable diseases ward

head and almost given up for dead.

"The poor are quite satisfied with our facilities. They keep coming back to us since they do not read your newspapers," continues Palande with a grin. "The treatment offered here is absolutely free, though we charge a very nominal fee for CT scans and major surgical operations. There are times when we even have to give money (to the patients) to go back home to their villages."

The Hospital, operates on an annual budget of 16-17 crore rupees, which Palande terms "inadequate." According to him, the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) managed by the central government in New Delhi, operates on a budget of Rs 60-80 crores and "the difference is for all to see." He agrees that the general level of motivation among the staff is low. "But what do you expect from a resident doctor who earns a (starting) basic salary of Rs 2,500 per month (with 24-hour call duty), or a nurse with a basic salary (starting) of Rs 1,335 per month?" He is, nonetheless, satisfied with the staff in his department.

Palande is all for charging at least a token fee to patients. "According to our rules, if a patient earns more than Rs 150 per month, he is charged at the rate of Rs 2 per day," he informs. "However, 99 percent of the patients who fill the form declare their income to be under Rs 150 and we have no machinery to verify this. But, honestly, can anyone survive today on a monthly income of Rs 150? Why are we fooling ourselves?"

Palande, who joined the Hospital in 1968, and Kondvilkar, who joined in 1972, both agree that if the staff is given proper recognition and handled with care, the level of motivation could improve. "My

The Grant Medical College

In the early 1840s, British India could boast of only two medical schools — one at Calcutta and the other at Madras. The schools were not established to produce independent medical practitioners. At these institutions, Indians wanting to study Western medicine were admitted primarily to be trained as assistants to the English doctors in India. However, Sir Robert Grant, the Governor of Bombay, was particularly keen to have a teaching institute for medicine in his presidency.

The foundation stone of the Grant Medical College was laid by the Bishop of Calcutta, a few weeks after the foundation of the J. J. Hospital was laid. It was opened on November 1, 1845, and founded with the object of "imparting, through a scientific system, the benefit of medical instructions to the natives of Western India." There were special arrangements for the students to bathe after dissection.

Unlike today's serpentine queues, not many students were forthcoming to seek admission in the early years. In fact, Framjee Cawasjee, a prominent leader of the community, had to go around persuading parents to send their children to study at the College. After a lot of persuasion, three Hindu and eight Parsi students enrolled. Some students were even paid for seeking admission to the College! The course was for five years.

Among the successful students in the first batch were two Parsis — Dr Barjorjee Dorabjee and Dr Merwanjee Sorabji.

Among the hundreds of eminent medicos the College has groomed are the likes of Dr Shirodkar (credited with the Shirodkar's stitch), and Dr (Ms) Banoo Coyaji, recipient of the Magsaysay Award. It also has a glorious tradition of medical research: Robert Koch, the Nobel Laureate in medicine (1905) whose research covered tuberculosis, cholera and anthrax; and Waldemar Haffkine who worked on the preparation of the cholera and plague vaccines in the College's F. D. Petit Laboratory — innovations which changed the course of civilization.

Today, 200 students are admitted for the undergraduate course, 200 for the postgraduate course and 22 for the super specialities. The College's pathology museum, the largest in Asia, houses around 6,000 specimens, many predating antibiotics and hence rare, says Dr (Ms) K. G. Ghorpade who heads the department of pathology. The campus has its own post office and police station.

To commemorate the 150th year of the Grant Medical College, efforts are being made to organize an international medical conference and bring together as many ex-students as possible from all over the world.



of medicines, even for the troops, were meager in quantity and poor in quality.

Writes Jehangir R. P. Mody in his biography of Sir Jamsetjee, "Before J. J. Hospital came into existence, there was not a single hospital in Bombay for civilian patients. In 1834, the Bombay Native Dispensary was opened near the Esplanade in pursuance of a resolution adopted at a public meeting. It was started by the then famous Dr Makie, with the help of subscriptions from generous donors in a house given rent-free by the government.

"After four years, a meeting of the subscribers was called by the doctor and he read before them a report of the proceedings of the dispensary. Among those who were present was Jamsetjee; he was deeply gratified by this report. In his *Kholaseh-i-*



Early history

Merchant prince Sir Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy, born in 1783, traded with China and amassed a fortune which he shared liberally, not only with his coreligionists but with the city of Bombay, the country and the world. He is

believed to have disbursed a sum of Rs 24,59,736 in his lifetime, in various charities. In today's rupee value, the amount would run into several crores.

In Jamsetjee's time, the scourge of cholera, small-pox and never-ending liver complaints due to sewage-polluted well water claimed a heavy toll of human life. Measures necessary for public medical relief were almost unknown and consignments

Top left: The Coroner's Court -- the only one in south Bombay

Right: The Dinshaw Maneckji Petit Gynaecological Hospital is now part of the College of Nursing

Below left: The old structure of the Grant Medical College now holds the public works department, a police chowky, etc

Right: File photograph of watercolor painting of J. J. Hospital (courtesy The Prince of Wales Museum)

duty is from 8.30 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. But I am invariably here till 6 or sometimes even 10 p.m., without overtime (compensation)... During the riots, we were on duty almost 24 hours. However, if one day I report late for duty, it becomes a major issue," notes Kondvilkar. "It's like the case of your maid. If you look after her well, she will look after your child just as well," interjects Palande.

Panchayat, Jamsetjee observes that the place was too small to keep very sick patients for treatment. (So) long as they could walk they would get treatment, but in case of a serious illness, they could not walk to the dispensary; hence, that would hasten their end. This reflection led Jamsetjee to ask the chairman, Sir Herbert Compton, to correspond in his name with the government and to convey to them his desire to build a large

hospital where 300 beds could be accommodated with ease. He also expressed his wish to donate a sum of Rs 1,00,000 for this purpose, provided the government would give an equal amount, and to transfer the

sum of Rs 300 being given to the dispensary, to the new hospital."

The East India Company readily accepted Jamsetjee's offer and accordingly Jamsetjee forwarded a cheque for Rs

1,00,000 under cover of his letter of October 23, 1839 to the Treasury.

A large plot of land, belonging to Dadabhai and Muncherji Pestonji Wadia, near Babula Talao, was bought by Jamsetjee

A relic no more?

A part of the older structure, the J. J. Hospital's Parsi ward epitomizes the worst -- and the best -- of the Zoroastrian community in Bombay today. Its 24 "patients" (12 males, 12 females) have ages that range upwards from 40. And they have one thing in common: they have been deserted by their families. Nor are they, strictly speaking, "patients." What ails most of them is loneliness, lack of interest in life, the isolation of the unwanted...

Until a decade ago the Parsi ward was one of the J. J. Hospital's most neglected areas. But thanks to the awareness created by the Parsi press and the response of the community's social workers, it is not only in fairly good shape today, but the J. J. Trust, with the cooperation of the Hospital authorities, is working on an expansion that may enable at least 12 more geriatric cases to be accommodated, informs Aspi Parakh. A lawyer by training, it is said that Parakh has been devoting four to five hours a day to the ward's hapless inmates since the past three years. And he alludes to a roster of Zoroastrian ladies who take turns in devoting time and energy in providing various services to the old people who are confined here:

"Amy Paymaster and Dolly Sarbanwalla help with the breakfast; Goolu Lala and Viloo Bharucha are frequent visitors; Roshni Damania of Damania Airways comes every Tuesday and gives whatever is required; powder, linen, ghee, etc are provided by the Lions Club of Cuffe Parade through Sunu Dadyburjor; Arnavaz Mistry comes and gives the old people haircuts, trims their nails; Yezdi and Zarine Daruwalla send dinner most nights; Farida Khanna comes often to talk to the old people, gives time to befriend them; but the seniormost is (BPP trustee) Silloo Kavarana; she's the kingpin of all!" says Parakh who adds that he is compensated for his own time and effort by Kavarana and Fali Poncha (chairman of the CER's managing committee).

There was a time however when the walls had not received a coat of paint in 25 years and the staple food provided by the Hospital 365 days of the year was dal, rice, chapatti and vegetables.

"All this has changed now," asserts Sir Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy, seventh Baronet, with a sense of satisfaction. Sir Jamsetjee who is the chairman of the Sir J. J. Charities, said that his trust spends a sum of Rs 5,500 per month for providing wholesome food to the patients, five days a week, under a special arrangement with the Sir Ratan Tata Institute (RTI).

"Now the patients are being overfed. The last thing they need is food!" states Parakh. But lying in bed all the time has led to atrophied muscles and joints as in the case of Dara Marfatia who pulls himself along on the well-tiled, surprisingly clean floor. (Marfatia's brother and sister had been urged to come and meet him on many occasions but they have refused to do so, says Kavarana.) A physiotherapist now comes twice a week to attend to those who can benefit from her help and do the stretching exercises she teaches them. (Marfatia will shortly acquire a trolley on which he can move himself around.) Her bill of Rs 70 per turn is defrayed by Dr (Ms) Deboo and Mistry who each pay for one turn every week, informs Parakh.

Kavarana mentions that she and her associates request would-be benefactors to donate in kind rather than cash. Thus, a fridge, an Aquaguard to purify drinking water, additional dhobi service, etc have been provided for the benefit of the inmates.

"The whole ward is being taken care of, medically, by Dr Adi Nazir and his entire unit (from the J. J. Hospital and the Grant Medical College where Nazir teaches surgery). Nazir himself pays a visit every week and 17 to 18 cases of the 24 are handled by him," informs Parakh. "The additional space (a floor above plus an adjoining room) that the J. J. Trust sought were arranged for by Nazir who came with Dr S. P. Shirolkar, Dean of the J. J. Hospital and Mr Rustom Jejeebhoy to inspect the place," Parakh notes, adding "Already 50 plus applications are pending with the J. J. Trust for admission to the Parsi ward... Every year on March 21 there is a jashan (in the ward) on a large scale. Dr Nazir also comes..."

The first generation of social workers to respond to the call of the neglected ward were Ms Mani Siganporia, Ms Banoo Irani and Kavarana. The wards's present good shape is thanks to the renovation financed by a munificent donation from Faridoon and Meherban Zarhosty of Canada. Dr (Ms) Roshan Ratan Balsara, the welfare officer appointed by the Trust since 1986, visits the ward thrice a week (Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays) in the afternoon to supervise food distribution and look into the various problems of the patients. A consulting gynecologist, Balsara says, "I enjoy working for the old and infirm. It gives me so much satisfaction."

According to Balsara, the patients in the Parsi ward usually come from homes where they have become a burden to themselves and their families. "You may call this place an infirmary, though it is more like a dumping place where ungrateful children and family members leave the old and infirm to die."

We met Homi Engineer who has been in the ward for the past six months, for a back problem. "*Sari jévi kalji lévaich. Khavanu pan saru maléch. Bus, ek saga-wahlao no pato nathi* (Good care is being taken. Food is also good. Only, not a single relative shows up.)" He said this with a deadpan face. "*Ghér karta saru* (better than home)," opined Eruchsha Patel, 82, who has been in the ward for the past three years.

For the entertainment of the patients, a philanthropist has donated a television set; and Mistry plays music and brings cheer when she visits the ward on Fridays.

A particularly poignant problem surfaces when an inmate dies. Kavarana and the other social workers try to inform the families but it is rare that any one responds, says she. The doongerwadi expenses are borne by the BPP and Parakh, Kavarana or one of the other social workers may be the only mourners.

Speaking for all those who have cared to respond to the call of the Parsi ward, Parakh notes with a measure of satisfaction, "There is much cooperation between the Hospital and the social workers. There is unison in working..."

for a sum of Rs 28,125; in addition to this, he offered a sum of Rs 10,000 as his contribution for the erection of the hospital building. However, it was soon discovered that the estimate fell far short of the cost, so Jamsetjee increased his donation from Rs 10,000 to Rs 50,000. The building was erected within two years and on May 15, 1845, the opening ceremony of the Hospital was performed by Sir George Arthur in the presence of a distinguished gathering and patients admitted for treatment.

As time went by, demands on the Hospital grew and other buildings were added. The Motlibai Hospital for obstetrics came up in 1891 donated by N. M. Wadia in memory of his mother; Sir Dinshaw Manekji Petit Hospital for gynecology followed in 1892. (Both structures now house the Government of Maharashtra's College of Nursing.) The Sir Cowasji Jehangir Ophthalmic Hospital was built in 1866 (the present eye hospital was constructed in 1930 at the same site as the original one); the Balaram and Sassoon blocks were added in the early 1920s and the Byramjee Jejeebhoy Hospital for Children in 1928. The foundation stone of the new eight-storied J. J. building was laid on June 13, 1958, by Y. B. Chavan, then Chief Minister of Bombay, in the presence of a distinguished gathering which included Sir Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy, sixth Baronet and Lady Jejeebhoy.

First Indian FRCS gold medalist Dr Shantilal J. Mehta, then superintendent of the Hospital, noted in *The Grant Medical College Magazine* of 1958, "The new building will add 460 beds to its present bed strength. It will be then the largest hospital in the country."

Plans for the future include a disaster management unit to swing into action in case of riots, earthquakes, floods, etc, the establishment of a national AIDS institute with facilities for research and rehabilitation and a cancer therapy unit.

As Mody had noted in his biography of the philanthropist, "The age-old Hospital will continue its noble mission of alleviating the sufferings of the poor for decades and decades yet to come. The past lives on with its proud record of achievements; the present, with its rejuvenated confidence and aspiration for better things, will draw inspiration from the past; and the future, like a star of hope, will guide its destiny; and the soul of the noble benefactor will merge the past, the present and the future into one vast deathless edifice of human achievement."

THE DAWN OF A NEW ERA...

continued from page 21

sion in favor of the AZA in September 1990 (see "AZA victorious," *Zoroastrians Abroad*, Parsiana, November 1990). A flurry of fund raising followed. Planning and design commenced in 1992 and construction in January 1994, the work being completed barely a fortnight before the inauguration.

During the prolonged legal battle the AZA was exiled from its own property between 1989 and 1994. Their Sunday School, begun in 1977 in a Unitarian Hall in downtown Sydney, had to be conducted at the Thornleigh West Public School. The Association's annual and extraordinary general meetings, as also other functions, had to be held in rented halls.

Although these problems are now largely a thing of the past, the AZA is constrained to use the Annangrove premises for day-time functions only. (For the Pateti function slated for August 20, 1994 the Roselea Community Centre had been booked.) They are also bound to ensure that no car parking is done on the road. Accordingly, 80 parking spaces have been provided in the compound and the entrance pleasantly landscaped. Of these, 20 had been reserved for VIPs invited to the inauguration and the community was requested to pool its conveyance with a minimum of five persons per car as emphasized in the AZA newsletter, *Manashni*, of June 1994.

Manashni also requested AZA members to bring with them "finger food which does not require heating," according to an appended list of suggested items, along with disposable plates, cups, etc for the family's use. The managing committee had undertaken to organize the "sagan" items like mithai, ravo, chasni and fried fish. Hence the community members were required to fill in an acceptance form, specifying the number of adults and children from each family likely to attend, whether they required car space or could offer lifts to others, the food items they were likely to contribute, etc.

Despite all the effort entailed so far, "over three acres of land in the Annangrove property is still a bush area," writes Meher-Homji. On the anvil are a rose garden, playground for kids, tennis, volleyball and basketball courts, barbecue and picnic areas, a handicraft training workshop cum storage shed... The total estimated cost is

A \$ 120,000. The AZA currently has \$ 23,800 in the kitty. "Call it the end of one dream... the beginning of another," notes Meher-Homji.

AZA members have come from different parts of the world: India, Pakistan, Iran. They originally came together through sports and they "get on as well as anywhere else in the world, if not better," Meher-Homji had noted in an interview with *Parsiana* in September 1993. The membership comprises about 200 families and between 50 to 80 singles who, despite the recession, fared well because of their high level of education, said Meher-

Homji. In the Australian population at large, only five to seven percent are graduates, he had noted.

Nonetheless, the older generation worries. They have worked so hard for this Darbe Meher. Will the coming generations maintain it?

By and large the youngsters — about two children per family — are not as geared to the community, maintained Meher-Homji. Up to a certain age they go to Sunday School — held religiously every second Sunday of the month — when the parents insist. After the age of 15 or 16 they begin to drop out. "(There are) so many diversions — going to the beach, sports activities... There is no real danger from other religions. Australians don't really believe in religion," explained Meher-Homji.

The contribution of non-Zoroastrian spouses to the community welfare has been substantial, acknowledged Meher-Homji. The AZA's seniormost priest, Peshotan Katrak, is married to a non-Zoroastrian who has encouraged him and their two sons to be good Zoroastrians. Ms Shirley Mahabeshwarwalla, erstwhile editor of *Manashni*, is a non-Zoroastrian wife who is more active in AZA affairs than her husband. The newsletter was started in the 1970s and sustained until the early 1980s by Ernani Giambuzzi...

AZA president Ms Gulu Bilimoria summed up the community's hopes and fears that memorable day: "I hope you all have a wonderful day — one that the Zoroastrian community will remember for many years. May Ahura Mazda bless our Darbe Meher and may this be a step towards unity within our community and peace and harmony for us all in our new homeland... God bless Australia."

**"AZA members
get on as well as
anywhere else
in the world,
if not better"**

"What makes Zoroastrians Zoroastrian?"



Zoroastrianism preaches that man's moral choices are of major importance to the universe, says Dr Philip Kreyenbroek

Arnavaz S. Mama

"When one looks at the character of the community one has the feeling that there's no bogeyman round the corner. Zoroastrians are allowed to look things in the face because Zoroastrianism is not contrary to reason," says Dr Philip Kreyenbroek, honorary secretary of the Royal Asiatic Society of London and an integral part of the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) of the University of London. In Bombay to give the Athravan Educational Trust's (AET) third annual Naoroji Godrej Memorial Lecture, the tall, bespectacled Dutchman had chosen "Zoroastrian Spirituality — Harkening to the voice of God" as his theme.

"Mystical systems usually develop in order to bridge the gap between man and God, which is considered unbridgeable by rational means... In Zoroastrianism it is man's conscious mind and his reason that is believed to be capable of bridging the gap between the divinity up there and the divine spark inside (the heart of man). In Zoroastrianism, man's conscious mind is valued as the key to a spiritual life," Kreyenbroek had concluded.

A collaborator with Dastur (Dr) Firoze Kotwal on the translation of the *Herberastan* and the *Nirangistan*, Kreyenbroek is steeped in the symbolism of Zoroastrian rituals. The *Herberastan* published a year ago, records what priests should be taught, while Kreyenbroek's own work, *Yezidism*, which deals with the Kurds, is due for publication shortly.

"According to Zoroastrian teachings and particularly in the *Gathas*, one can be

in touch with the divine by opening up one's heart to the quality represented by a divine being or angel, e.g. Vohu Mana (good thought)," says Kreyenbroek. When man thinks his own good thoughts, in his own life, he draws nearer to the essence of Vohu Mana enabling the divine being to work in the world by means of the mind and body of the believer."

A linguist to begin with, Kreyenbroek chafed against the "lack of freedom of conscience" of his native Protestant Church. While his parents wanted him to study law, he got interested in Islam. However, he says, he realized that, as a Westerner, his perception of Islam would be different from that of a practising Muslim. Arabic was the first language to prove difficult. Kreyenbroek found Persian more interesting and got interested in the Sufi texts. The interest in Persian language and literature took him to Iran in 1970 where he noticed this "totally different community where women were equal to men." He observed their strong personality; their easy acceptance of the fact that he was a vegetarian. It seemed "typical of the Zoroastrian oneness of spirit." Was this "a clue to what religion did to people?" Kreyenbroek asked himself, wondering "What made Zoroastrians Zoroastrian?"

Unhappy with the way Avesta-Pahlavi was taught in Holland, Kreyenbroek enrolled for study under Prof (Ms) Mary Boyce. As he got closer to the realities of the tradition, Kreyenbroek says he realized that it is a largely oral one with not much writing in the religious sphere. He ascribes

the diversity of beliefs among Zoroastrians to the lack of a theological tradition. There is need for theology, he says.

The loss of the academic tradition between 900 and the mid 1800s "wasn't a problem because the Zoroastrians lived simple lives." But in the aftermath of the strong Western confrontation, the uprooting of rural traditions caused great confusion in the community because "the West wanted to know in Western terms" what Zoroastrianism was all about.

Full of praise for Kotwal's knowledge and understanding of the rituals, Kreyenbroek says, "For us in the West he is absolutely fantastic for he is trained in India and the West." Kotwal, with his living knowledge of the tradition, is able to explain passages that the Western scholars are unable to resolve, says Kreyenbroek.

"Rituals are a part of life. People who think of Pahlavi texts as rigid, ritualistic, must look at it in the context; only the difficult and not too common was probably jotted down... The ritual part was meant to lead to the spiritual part... Rituals give focus," says Kreyenbroek citing as an example the respect for water which is symbolized in the *Avan Parab jashan*.

The rituals "helped to preserve the community, especially up to the 19th century... What people do mirrors their feelings towards nature, towards God, which they inculcate in their children."

Kreyenbroek is adept at describing the changing meaning behind the rituals: The *ijashne* began as a ceremony to entertain

divine beings with songs of praise, darun, fruit, etc. Later it was believed to have been performed by divine beings at the birth of the world. Also, among premigration Aryans, it was the aim of the ritual to preserve the world as it was, to ensure stability. The remote, premigrant Aryan pastoralists remained on good terms with creation by obeying the laws of Asha. In turn Asha helped to maintain the equilibrium between births and deaths, abundance and drought; Mithra presided over the sanctity of the social contract and Varuna ensured the power of the oath. As any misbehavior on any of these fronts could leave society open to upheaval, obedience was necessary, he explained.

The fire burning in each house or tent became the religious and spiritual focus of the family at this early stage. "Fire illustrates the way in which the supernatural forces played a role in the lives of men and had to be sustained, in turn, by men... It can be seen, but it has no substance. It helps man, like cooking his food, but it can turn against him and burn him if used the wrong way... It was realized by the ancient Iranians that fire does not exist just here, on earth. It also had a heavenly counterpart,

namely the sun. It represented the essence of movement. Just as we say that energy allows us to move, the ancient Iranians said that it was the fire in the bodies of men and

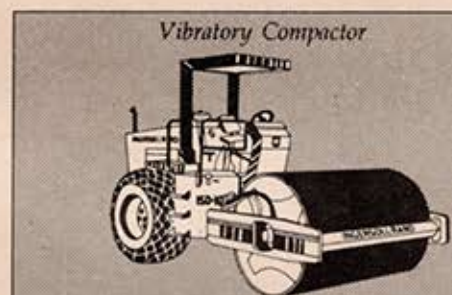
"The Prophet himself had to act before Sraosha could come to him"

animals that allowed them to move, and fire in the bodies of all living beings that helped them to grow and procreate," said Kreyenbroek. Men prayed facing the fire because they believed it carried these prayers to the gods and thus it became a link between this world and the next. However, the fire needed to be fed by man to survive.

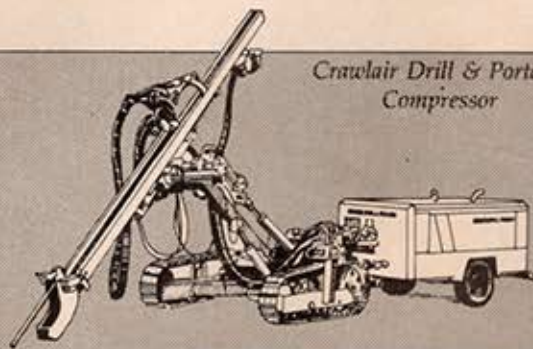
The domestication of the horse and the discovery of metals combined to send men in their search much further afield. The resulting migrations — one of the first examples of the social consequences of technology — changed Aryan lifestyles

and religion, says Kreyenbroek. "Instead of the subtle interplay of spiritual forces which were bound by the Laws of Asha and which maintained the world in its proper place, in its proper way, there now emerged gods... who somewhat resembled military leaders or capitalists." Indra — the divinity of the new age — "was not bound by the Laws of Asha. He is in fact, more like a great maharaja, than a priest. So a view of the gods, as beings who were as intelligible and predictable as the rest of the world, gave way among some Indian and probably Iranian tribes, to a sense that man's lot was in the hands of mighty gods who demanded worship and veneration in much the same way as the new warlords and who were as unpredictable."

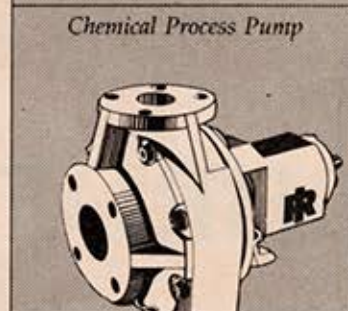
It was probably against the background of this amoral, might-is-right cult that Zarathushtra raged against such evil thought and disobedience. Kreyenbroek says that Zarathushtra realized that the opposition between goodness and evil, conflict and harmony were central to this world at this stage in its evolution and therefore, it was man's task to defeat evil and further the cause of righteousness "by allowing the forces of goodness to work through their lives."



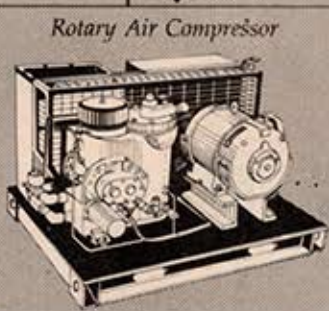
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To Kreyenbroek, Sraosha, translated as hearkening, the readiness to listen, depicts the dual connection between Zarathushtra and his disciples and between Zarathushtra and Ahura Mazda and therefore between man and God. But, says Kreyenbroek, Sraosha cannot be summoned by prayer alone: "Zoroastrianism from the start, was not just a religion of good thoughts but also of good words and good deeds and the Prophet himself had to act before hearkening (Sraosha) could come to him." Apart from ritual purity there had to be moral and physical purity: "There is no question of the angels coming to a priest who is evil in his daily life... man must act and prepare himself to receive the message from on high. Whereas in most mystical systems one must deny ordinary life in order to be in direct contact with the divine, in Zoroastrianism one has to play an active role in it. Sraosha can only be expected to come when man has taken active steps to make him welcome by overcoming the powers of evil that block his path."

In the Zoroastrian tradition Sraosha is also a discriminator between right and wrong and hence a judge of the deeds of men on Chinvat Pool and in life, generally,

says Kreyenbroek. But he also represents man's mind — the conscious mind. Kreyenbroek quotes the *Denkard* to describe the man who has welcomed Sraosha into his life: "You can speak to him at any time and he will always listen. When he is

**"In Zoroastrianism,
man's conscious
mind is the
key to a
spiritual life"**

told that he has a fault, he will accept it and correct the fault. He never tells lies to people; he never punishes the innocent; and the sinner, he punishes with moderation...

"Man is therefore not a mere plaything of fate, the slave of an unpredictable god, but a powerful member of creation, whose moral choices are of major importance for the universe and whose conscious mind can bring him in contact with the divine sphere," emphasizes Kreyenbroek. This

spirit of Zoroastrianism, when confronted with Sunni Islam, helped to inspire Sufism, says Kreyenbroek who teaches Sufi literature at London University.

"I don't think it is my function to tell people what to do," says Kreyenbroek, referring to the tensions between the community's liberal and orthodox sections. He considers "both positions as legitimate," and seeing no compromise in sight, says it is best that they agree to disagree, always emphasizing the fact that he was "not trying to impose (his) view" and that he "can't see Zoroastrianism as a Zoroastrian." For the quibbling orthodox/liberal wings of the community whom he describes as partners in a bad marriage, each one thinking itself right, Kreyenbroek prescribes an amicable divorce with the liberals establishing separate places of worship.

Kreyenbroek's interest in Zoroastrianism has led him to propose a project to the British Academy, namely a collaboration for preserving Parsi oral traditions. The Academy's agreement to finance the project will bring the scholar again to Indian shores and perhaps, greater community involvement.

Best Wishes From

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"We are getting wiped out"

Dr Fredie Mehta

A change in attitudes have created our problems. A change in attitudes could overcome them, says the author

Way back when I was at the Government School of Economics I had surveyed the statistics and come to the conclusion that the Parsi community was doomed to disaster. In my own life, my great grandfather had 21 children out of whom I believe seven died before the age of five. My grandfather had 11. My father had seven and I have two. I am the guilty party. If [Bombay Parsi Punchayet (BPP) president] Jamshed (Guzder) was around I would have had three (a reference to the BPP's new policy on the maintenance of the third child)! But the point is now very clear. What do we do now, concretely, to reverse this stand? We are a dead and dying community.

God knows that is bad enough but it is now made 10 times worse by two other phenomena and here we are entering the terrain of controversy... (One) is large scale intermarriage. We are getting wiped out and we are told by the reformists that we should convert. Convert whom? Convert with what? In our own community, as a study in *Parsiana* showed ("Parsi Collegians: Low grades on religion," *Parsiana*, March 1991), 62 percent of the boys and girls in colleges did not know one thing about our religion other than that Zarathushtra was there and he was a very great prophet. Are you prepared to go (through) life with this knowledge of Zarathushtra and perhaps of the great immortal Cyrus the Great whose (2500th) anniversary was celebrated in 1967?

What are we doing about ourselves today? We are proud to proclaim that we are totally ignorant about our religion. We are proud to proclaim that we have reduced our priests to destitutes, that as many as 25

percent of our women and I may say as many as 18 percent of our boys every year marry outside — while proclaiming that they love Zoroastrianism but they cannot practise Zoroastrianism. The trick is a very simple trick and...a very clever one...and it ought to be exposed. So many boys who marry non-Parsi girls do not register themselves in the census as Parsis. These Parsi boys have forgotten what it is to be a Zoroastrian, they have forgotten what it is to be a Parsi. And they do not register themselves because they are now Indians. They are no longer Parsis, they are no longer Zoroastrians.

When you come to the women it is a worse phenomenon. "Oh, we would bring up our children as Zoroastrians if only we were allowed." So I said, "As a manager I don't want words, I want action. Come on, let's get 300 of our Parsi women who have married outside to get their husbands to give an affidavit that they are prepared to bring up their children as Zoroastrians." Let me tell you that till today my wife and I have not got one single Parsi girl to get her husband to say that their children will be brought up as Parsis or Zoroastrians. They keep on knocking at the gates. The reformists beat the drums, "If only, if only we were allowed to convert!" But when the time comes, "Oh, my husband is a Sikh! He is a fanatical Sikh! He can't...bear the thought of it!" or "Oh, he is a liberal but his parents are not, they are very fanatical." "Muslim? of course. We must bless him! He has not converted me to Islam!"

What is all this humbug going on? Let us expose it, let us say bluntly that this is a fraud. But, at the same time, after seeing all this, we must admit that the orthodox

within our community are not in a position to teach our children and that is where we come in. That is (where) we have been the greatest failures.

In 1973 my wife and I (took) courage in our hands: We got 49 young children belonging to the whole clan of the Mehtas, the Mistris, the Daruwalas, etc and we had a meeting. It was addressed by (Zoroastrian Studies founder) Khojeste Mistree. At the end of it one young girl got up. Very fine, to the point, she (uttered) a sentence which remains in my mind and I would like you to take it to your parents today. She said, "Have our parents spent even half an hour teaching us? The Catholics take their children to the church every Sunday. The Muslims do so religiously on a Friday. Where are the Parsi boys and girls?"

So much has been talked about seed capital, so much can be talked about seed knowledge, but I say let us talk about seed religion. Unless and until you (plant) the knowledge about our religion (into our boys and girls), do not expect them to feel proud about their community or to feel knowledgeable about their religion... You get a person like Freddy Mercury who was absolutely brilliant, who left Rs 72 crores as a legacy, (but) not one rupee to the Parsi community. Why? Because Freddy Mercury had never been taught by his parents what is Zoroastrianism. What is the use of having a brilliant curriculum, brilliant people who don't feel they are Zoroastrians? Let us be honest about it. These people are now the upcoming people.

There is no transmission. The priests have been reduced to poverty and ignorance...to a joke; and therefore, all this tall talk about conversion is nonsense.

Who is going to convert whom? I'll lay a bet with all of you here. Go to your parents and tell them to name five great non-Parsi authorities on our Zoroastrian religion living in India, or who have lived in India in the 20th century. Ask your parents to give the names of five eminent non-Parsis who have written books, who have delivered lectures on Zoroastrianism and ask them whether they know any one of the five names. If they can't, then come to me, I will supply you.

You can produce a brilliant chemical technologist. You can produce a brilliant orchestral conductor. But if they don't feel that they are Parsis, what the hell are we? They are great as individuals. We salute them as individuals and that is why I don't mind saying this: My respect for Parvez Damania (chairman of Damania Airways) has always been very great but today it has tripled. He said, "If you want employment, even if you are slightly below (par)... Even if you are eight to 10 percentage points below... come to us." It is a wonderful offer that he has made. Poor man he is committed to it. He is not a man, he is a superman.

Now the point is this: you must not be below par. Why should you be? You are a member of the smallest minority in India and by the law of minorities you are bound

to lose out on numbers. When a Parsi girl applies to be a secretary, there are 300 other competitors. She has got to be absolutely superb; there is no question of being inferior. By the very logic of the fact that he belongs to the smallest minority, my friend Homi Taleyarkhan seldom commits a mistake. But in this case he has committed a mistake. He said that we constitute 0.75 percent of the Indian people. No sir, if so, we would (number) 750,000. But we are barely 70,000. We are 0.075 percent. Even in the city of Bombay we are so.

The answer therefore is, what we lack in numbers we have to make up in quality. There is no escape from it. When we were in college, we had Fali Nariman, Soli Sorabjee, Rusi Taraporewalla, Homai Shroff, if I can throw in my name, I will throw in my name, etc. We fought against each other; we had fights, debates, etc. But on one point we were resolved: At the University examination of Inter Arts, Inter Commerce and Inter Science, whatever it was, nobody other than a Parsi would stand first class first.

Remember one thing. You have no political base. The politician does not come to Parsis. Parsis have no votes. One cabinet minister told me three weeks ago: "You know, we can't pass the Industrial Legisla-

tion Bill... If we have to do so much for the Muslims who have 60 million votes, then we can't neglect this constituency of organized workers which has 55 million votes." He was a Congress party chief, but the same could be said by the communist party.

This is democracy in action. And if this is democracy in action, then you are not going to have any political power. You may have a Homi Taleyarkhan here, you may have a J.R.D. Tata there and you may have a Nusli Wadia or a Parvez Damania. (But) you have no political power. You are therefore all the more compelled to be excellent.

Secondly, the Birlas are not going to employ you, the Ambanis are not going to employ you. Do you think Dhirubhai Ambani is going to employ Parsis with an advertisement, "Parsis please apply?" Do you think the Birlas are going to do this? Do you think the Singhanias are going to do this? Do you think the Central Government is going to do this? The Tatas would perhaps — and I will repeat the word perhaps twice — perhaps employ you. The Wadias have retrenched over 70 Parsis in the last four years. The Parsis of today — the top people — feel modernized. They do not claim that they have anything to do



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with their religion. One family, Godrej, is an exception but that is a separate issue. Then where the hell are you?

Therefore, right now when the Government has taken liberalization as the cue word, you are going to say, "Now the struggle belongs not to those who have political power in Delhi; the struggle belongs to those who can come up with success." And therefore I say, you must have the killer instinct in you. Don't expect your parents to tell you to work 12 or 13 hours a day. You have got to be —

you just have to be — first class first. There is no question (of saying) "I'll put in my best." No! There is no such thing. It is not good enough for a minority member.

Why is it that 60 percent of the Nobel Prizes won in America have been won by the small community of 4½ million people called the Jews? Out of the 258 million Americans, these 4½ million bagged 60 percent of the Nobel Prizes won by (all) Americans. If they can do it, we can do it. That's the motto.

Go today and change yourself. Do not depend on the Parsi Punchayet to carry you on its shoulders. Do not depend on somebody's shoulders to give you a supply or to cry on. Life is tough. A Parsi life is hard. You are not a minority, you are a minority of a minority. And therefore I still say very strongly that the killer instinct should be in you. Mr Parvez Damania has already shown that it doesn't require a brilliant academic career to have the killer instinct. He has said that today. If I have got the statistics, 95 percent of the institutional market is yours and that's the killer instinct you have got to have in you... Make it a real attitudinal change — a change in your attitudes...

Again and again I get Parsis who proclaim to me that they are no longer Parsis. O.K. Fine. Now you don't argue with them. I can only tell you before I conclude, ...think about the person who created modern Karachi... Jamshed Mehta. When Gandhiji came for the 1932 Karachi Congress Committee, he said, "Jamshedji, I am not capable of touching your feet." Imagine Gandhiji saying this to Jamshedji! Jamshedji Mehta was one of the five greatest Parsis produced by undivided India... In

Bombay there was another person — Pheroze Shah Mehta. He was the creator of modern Bombay...

I am an Indian first and an Indian last, but I am a Parsi in-between, and don't let any fellow claiming the garb of a reformist come and tell you, "You know we Parsis are now finished and we are a bunch of idiots. Because we are not intermarried, we are condemned to disaster." All this is a load of humbug. Don't let that humbug spread. You are Indians first, you are Indians last. You have to make your contribution to

India (but) you are also to remain a Parsi and you do not have to be integrated out of existence by intermarriage. If everyone starts intermarrying, then this is what is going to happen. But (like) Pheroze Shah Mehta you will have to say, "We are not going to be integrated out of existence. We are going to remain and maintain our identity."

Finally (let me) tell you what Mr Govalkar, one of the greatest founder members — and for close to 32 years the president — of the Rashtriya Sevak Sangh (RSS) said in 1973: "I do not understand why the Parsis want to modernize. I do not understand why they want to integrate themselves out of existence. I do not understand why Parsis are ashamed of their sudreh and kusti... Why do they want to do that? Why don't they want to keep their identity? We Hindus don't want to convert the Parsis, as we don't want Parsis to convert us."

Why do you want to modernize yourself? Foreign technology, yes. Foreign capital, yes. Foreign education, yes. But not at the cost of extinguishing our community. No! We are going to be as Govalkar said, "Long after the Hindus have ceased to be Hindus, I hope the Parsis remain the last Hindus of India."

(Edited text of Dr Mehta's speech delivered at the Bombay Parsi Punchayet's Holiday Programme for Youth, May 9, 1994).

Noted economist Dr Freddie Mehta is chairman of the Forbes group of companies, Tata Finance, Siemens, SKF and Goodlass Nerolac besides being a director of several other Tata companies.

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The body in balance

Parinaz Gandhi

Knowledge of yoga can improve one's perspective on living, says Ms Armaiti Desai

The Parsi life-style is characterized by excess — "excess food leading to excess weight, excess ambition leading to indifference to relaxation, excess emotions and anger leading to a critical attitude." This has been the observation of Ms Armaiti Desai, formerly a student and presently an instructor at The Yoga Institute at Santa Cruz which has, during its 76 years of existence, guided innumerable aspirants from different corners of



the globe. Desai is sanguine that the lessons she has learnt from yoga can benefit other community members too. Fortunately "I had no physical problems but the knowledge of yoga and its philosophy of a balanced, equipoised mind appealed to me and have helped me in retaining correct perspectives on life and living," conveys Desai in her smooth, gentle tone that matches her serene demeanor.

Coronary problems and diabetes, the two ailments common among Parsis, can be corrected if one leads a sensible life-style, points out Desai, adding, "The complete package of food, thoughts, attitudes, routine, work relationships, recreation, contributes to a person's health. In yoga, the emphasis is on leading a dutiful life and doing one's task with a positive, happy, relaxed attitude. But many Parsis do not realize this and they have misapprehensions that yoga implies running away from society and leading the life of a sanyasi. Basically, the traits of hard work, simplicity, compassion, purity, generosity, non-violence, friendliness, contentment that

are inherent in the Parsi psyche, are the ones extolled by yoga also."

Pioneering research work in the fields of heart care, asthma and diabetes has been undertaken at The Yoga Institute founded by Shri Yogendra who is regarded as the pioneer of yoga renaissance. The findings of some of these studies have been incorporated in the extensive literature published by the Institute. Involved substantially in the Institute's publication

department, Desai has helped edit their magazine, *Yoga and Total Health* and co-authored some of their popular works. *Yoga Daily Planner — Heart Care*, jointly authored by Hansa Jayadeva Yogendra, the daughter-in-law of the founder, and Desai, has been printed in four languages. "Bypass the bypass and burst the balloon of angioplasty," recommends the book which "helps you to reflect, to evaluate your strengths and weaknesses, to set new goals and to plan a new life-style." The well illustrated 36-page book explains the various cardiac complications, their causes and concomitant effects, and how they can be resolved by changing one's perspective, adopting a healthy routine and following the asanas that are recommended in the book.

Yogic Life — A Cure for Asthma and Bronchitis, also by the same authors, provides an insight into these respiratory ailments and their effective management by pursuing certain breathing techniques and tips on how to forestall the onset of these attacks. The 64-page book includes a chap-

ter on the effects of yoga on asthma that gives objective evidence of the benefits accrued to different patients following yoga practice.

Pregnancy, Parenthood and Yoga is another popular work by these two ladies. The foreword in this book is by well-known gynecologist Dr Rustom Soonawala who recommends "this book to all... The suggestions offered and the yogic techniques mentioned here are quite simple, scientific and useful. Yoga is our national heritage and it offers wonderful advice on life and living." Some of the most instructive chapters in this 74-page book are Prenatal Asanas, The Way to Breathe, Labour of Love and Postnatal Asanas. The other chapters are devoted to preparing the mother and the father for the advent of the baby into this world. This book is distributed to all the expectant mothers who enrol for the two-day yoga course on pregnancy that is conducted almost every month at the Institute. And playing the role of instructors at this course as also several others regularly conducted at the Institute are Hansaben, and Desai who is a registered midwife nurse.

Some of the other two-day camps at the Institute are specifically geared to handle subjects like cardiac care, asthma, arthritis and other orthopedic diseases, abdominal disorders, stress, diabetes, etc where the cost for the two days inclusive of breakfast, lunch and tea is Rs 250. At the seven-day residential camp, on payment of Rs 800 for boarding, lodging and tuitions, the student is exposed to the yogic life. Another option is their special courses on an hourly basis. The special courses for teachers and students focus on concentration, relaxation, memory training and self development and the charge is Rs 100 for the two days. Recently the central government has offered to sponsor a one-month and three months' teachers training program at The Yoga Institute, informs Desai. Altogether there must be about 100 Parsis enrolling for the different courses in a given year. And more often it is the females than the males who are seen on the Institute's premises which abound with natural flora, spacious lecture rooms, dormitories, a library, a mini museum and a dining hall that serves only wholesome 'satvic' food (a simple vegetarian diet that is meant to

generate calmness, non excitability and peace).

To disillusion some misinformed people who equate yoga with body contortions or heights of meditation, Desai explains yoga, in the words of the founder, "as a way of life... Yoga is not a dogma or a religion... Yoga cannot interfere with any one's religion. In fact, it can make one practise one's own religion, whatever it may be, more effectively."

Most of the Parsis who have been associated with the Institute "come in the capacity of seekers and stay on as seekers," reveals Desai. There are a few though who get involved in the actual workings of the Institute. "My husband Neriosang who introduced me to yoga has been associated for the last 31 years. He has created some unique teaching aids in the form of games to impart certain concepts of yoga," she adds. However, in the case of most Parsis, participation in the Institute's welfare involves extending philanthropic aid, clarifies the founder's son Dr Jayadeva Yogendra.

The present premises at Santa Cruz were possible thanks to a mortgage agreement with one Rustom Irani. Before it took up its permanent abode at Santa Cruz, the

Institute had functioned from 14 other premises, one of which was at the Parsi Club at Navsari. Actually the birth of The Yoga Institute was in a Parsi home, The Sands, the residence of Dadabhoi Naoroji, with the first registered patient — Homi Dadina, the son-in-law of Naoroji — also a Parsi. Such nuggets of information are reported in the book, *The Householder Yogi — Life of Shri Yogendra* by Santan Rodrigues.

"Many Parsis have misapprehensions that yoga implies leading the life of a sanyasi"

When Dadina and a few others first started learning yoga on the Versova Beach it is said that they had to face ridicule from passersby who would deprecatingly remark, "Joke karta (acting funny)" instead of "Yoga karta (performing yoga)!"

Disregarding such criticism and convinced that yoga had caused an improvement in his health Dadina had written to Shri Yogendra, "I shall be grateful if you

will kindly take my two sons under your care who wish to come of their own free will after seeing the perceptible change in my health, and as a proof of my devotion to your cause, I am prepared to place my residence at the seashore (at Versova) at your disposal, and maintain necessary expense, if you are prepared to take up more cases..." Subsequently Dadina is said to have been instrumental in raising resources to finance the young yogi's trip to the USA so that his message could reach beyond the shores of India.

In the case of Desai, interest in the subject was ignited prior to marriage when she was in Karachi and her husband-to-be in Bombay. She learnt through their correspondence that there was "this vibrant man, sitting ramrod straight, with a bubbling sense of humor, who was very humane and would talk to each person at his own level." Curious to know more about the man and his message, soon after marriage Desai came to The Yoga Institute and attended a course conducted by the founder's wife Sita Devi who still takes classes in the ladies' wing. After Desai completed the seven-month teachers training course, she was privileged to work with

continued on page 41

(From left) Desai; Dadina with Shri Yogendra in America (1919); Yogendra family outside The Yoga Institute premises at Santa Cruz



Republishing an epic

Dina G. McIntyre

The Divine Songs of Zarathushtra by Dr Irach J. S. Taraporewala. Published in 1993 by the Hukhta Foundation, C/o B. I. Taraporewala, India House No. 2, Flat 14, August Kranti Marg, Bombay 400036. Pp: xxxiv+1,166. Price: Rs 600 plus postage (in India) and US \$ 60 plus postage (abroad).

Dr Irach J. S. Taraporewala was a rare phenomenon — a practising Zoroastrian with all the love of a devotee towards Zarathushtra's teachings, and also a linguist whose knowledge was state of the art for the period in which he lived. He was born in 1884, entered Cambridge University to study Sanskrit in 1911, took his tripos there, and later earned a doctorate degree "summa cum laude" in Sanskrit from Wurzburg University, Germany, where he also studied Avesta under the foremost Iranist of that time — Prof. C. Bartholomae. This book was first published in 1951 during a time of great personal difficulty for the author. We are lucky indeed that this second edition was republished in 1993, largely through the efforts of his son, whose touching "Son's Tribute" says of his father: "He brought light to others and so became illumined himself."

This book is divided into several parts. An Introduction which gives an overview, followed by a very interesting section in which the author translates and interprets the *Ahuna Vairya* (*Yatha Ahu Vairyo*), the *Ashem Vohu*, and the *Yenghe Haataam* prayers. The main part of this book is a verse by verse translation and interpretation of the *Gathas* themselves. It is interesting that Taraporewala believes that the correct order of the *Gathas* got confused in the centuries after Zarathushtra, and that the *Gathas* should rightly start with Yasna 29 (instead of Yasna 28), and end with the *Airyaema Ishyo* (Yasna 54), which is pre-

cisely how he sets out the *Gathas*. For each verse, Taraporewala gives a literal translation and a free translation, followed by a detailed discussion of almost every word in that verse.

This work is invaluable to any serious student of the *Gathas* because, regardless of whether we may agree or disagree with the author on any given point, he not only gives us his own translation and interpretation, but also mentions some opinions from many of the leading scholars of antiquity and of his day whose works are not readily available to most of us

— Andreas, Bartholomae, Carnoy, Neriosangh Dhaval, Geldner, Jackson, Kanga, Mills, Moulton, the Pahlavi translations, and many others. Appendix 1 discusses the meter of the *Gathas*, Appendix 2 has some interesting and unusual views on Zarathushtra's family, Appendices 3 and 4 describe the manuscripts cited and variant readings. A valuable glossary follows, in which he lists every word found in the *Gathas*, and where it is located. There is an interesting section called References "direct or indirect" to the *Ahuna Vairya*, and of course, a general index and bibliography.

In both translating and interpreting the *Gathas*, Taraporewala believes that the Vedic literature of India is nearest to Zarathushtra's songs in both language and spirit. He deplores the lack of insight in many Western scholars of his day, and their failure to understand the metaphoric and spiritual nature of the *Gathas*. He

chastises them for interpreting these verses with the preconceived notions of Christianity. Yet an objective reader might well feel that Taraporewala himself reads the *Gathas* with preconceived notions derived from the Vedic literature on which he relies so heavily for his interpretations. But surely, no one can quarrel with his view that: "It is the thought of the *Gathas* which is really profound." And he concludes with the humbleness of a great soul: "No one can...assert that he has grasped fully the true spirit of the *Gathas*. My own experience has been that as I advance in years and in knowledge of life, I find deeper and deeper meanings in each verse." A truly spoken thought, and one which, I am sure,

has been the experience of all serious students of Zarathushtra's songs.

It is interesting to read the author's views on the many topics in the *Gathas* about which opinions differ. Without expressing my own views on these matters, here are a few examples: On the ques-

tion of *geush urva*, Taraporewala takes a metaphoric view. He says: "Like the 'sheep' of Jesus, and the 'cows' of Krishna, and the 'cattle' of Shiva, the 'cow' (*gav*) of the *Gathas* represents creation and more especially humanity." He believes that the narrative of Yasna 29 bears a close resemblance to that given in the *Srimad-Bhagavata* about mother-earth going up to the creator "wearing the form of cow" to seek protection when oppressed. He translates *spenta mainyu* as "Holy Spirit." He states that hell and heaven, as conceived by Zarathushtra are not places, but states of mind. And he translates the famous verse, Yasna 31.3 as follows: "What Thou bestowest through-(Thy)-spiritual Fire... unto-us, O Mazda, declare for-(our)-enlightenment... so that I-may-ever-convert all the living (into the Right Path)." In discussing this verse, he quotes from both Mills' and Jackson's views of this verse respectively: "'Observe that the religious system contemplated universal proselytism'" and "'Zoroaster's religion was active and vigorous, seeking and gaining converts, as we see from many passages in the *Gathas*.'"

There are a few instances of translation or interpretation which I find quite diffi-

We are still far from one authoritative translation of the *Gathas*



Taraporewala: illumined all



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Vidya viheenah pashuh.

So said our forefathers.

Thus ashrams were born, where the knowledge and principles needed to live an honest and fruitful life were inculcated in the child. The foundation of a man's character was laid within these homes. The style of education has changed considerably today. But the motive behind it is much the same. To prepare you for a tomorrow.

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We use our knowledge and skills in the field of steam engineering and control instrumentation. We work to optimize manufacturing processes and to lower manufacturing costs. To increase efficiency. To do all this with a minimum effect on the environment.

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cult: For example, he translates Ahura Mazda as follows: "This is a double name, and it means 'the Lord of life (Ahura) and the Creator of matter (Mazda).'" His interpretation of Yasna 30.1 and 30.3, leads him to conclude that both good and evil have been created by Mazda. His interpretation of *vohu mano* is "all embracing love."

A study of this work makes it clear that if we value truth, we are still far from the day when we could have one authoritative translation of the *Gathas*. There are still too many differences of opinion both in translation and interpretation. There are those who conclude, from such differences, that we cannot truly know what Zarathushtra meant to say in the *Gathas*, and that any attempt to ascertain his thought from these songs is a waste of time. But no field of knowledge is complete. Whether we study medicine, or physics, or astronomy, we have wide differences of opinion, both as to fact and theory. Yet no one would suggest that such differences make the study of these subjects a waste of time. To me it is a source of continuing wonder to see how differently various scholars translate and interpret certain passages, and yet how similar are the ultimate conclusions they arrive at regarding Zarathushtra's message. Perhaps the reason is that Zarathushtra said things many times, in many different ways. So although we may disagree here and there, taken as a whole, the message comes through.

Although we live in the age of the mini sound-byte, as exemplified in television news, it is not possible to compress Zarathushtra's message, as described in the author's book of over 1,000 pages, within a sentence or two. Perhaps the reader will forgive me for oversimplifying if I say that in terms of implementing Zarathushtra's message Taraporewala concludes that its essence is Asha, the law of truth and right, and that: "After having gained knowledge and after having filled the heart with love, the fulfilment and the crown of human life should take the form of service of brother-man... His life-giving blessings shall lead us onwards to perfection only if they flow from us in turn towards others." And the author concludes: "His was the message meant for all humanity and for all ages. For Zarathushtra was not merely the Prophet of Iran, but he was the world-teacher, and his message is the eternal teaching of truth, love and service. His Message has a very special value for humanity today." For all our differences, who would disagree with that?

Of fundamental interest

Nitin G. Raut

Personal Liberty Under The Constitution Of India by Dr Thrity Dinshaw Patel. Published in 1993 by B. Jain Publishers (P) Ltd, 1921, Chuna Mandi, Street 10th, Paharganj, New Delhi 110055. (Also available from Jamshed Patel, A-16, Sidhwa Bldg, 14 Balaram Street, Grant Road, Bombay 400007.) Pp: 307. Price: Rs 250.

In any nation the guarantee of personal liberty and other fundamental rights are the hallmark of a vibrant, free and democratic society. Notwithstanding the felicity

the intricacies of a subject buried under a mountain of laws, case law and judicial interpretations, with refreshing clarity and comprehension.

The author has analysed Article 21 of the Constitution of India which guarantees that no person shall be deprived of life or personal liberty except according to procedures established by law. While tracing the genesis of the Article, Patel presents an in-depth study of its historical background with reference to the constitutions of the United States and England. The debates between the members of the drafting committee underscore the importance attached

to fundamental rights in our constitution.

The law of preventive detention which militates against the spirit of liberty has been incorporated as a necessary evil because unfettered freedom can at times degenerate into a licence that imperils the freedom of society

as a whole. The author evaluates this law and gives the historical reason for incorporating it in our statute, not unmindful of its pitfalls. Important judicial decisions of Preventive Detention laws like the Maintenance of Internal Security Act and National Security Act are dealt with at length and correlated to the provisions of fundamental rights in our constitution.

It is obvious that the author is in command of her subject and at her narrative best when analyzing an array of case laws and simplifying the legal propositions, to guide even a layman into a proper perspective on the subject. This same systematic approach is reaffirmed in subsequent chapters.

In the chapter on 'Selected Dimensions of Personal Liberty' the author has stressed the social and cultural dimensions that influence different areas of liberty like the right to privacy which, though not a statutory provision, is yet a right that is read into the law through various interpretations and by virtue of custom, value and usage. This right is an evolution of "...ethical, intellec-



Patel offers a bird's eye view on the concept of personal liberty



of language in which these basic rights are enshrined in a constitution, they would be meaningless but for their enforceability in courts of law. In the ultimate analysis the flame of freedom is kept burning not by the sacrifice of those who inspired it, but by the awareness of citizens that personal liberty is not a largesse conferred on them by an indulgent state but their birthright, which the state is bound to safeguard.

It is in this context that Dr (Ms) Thrity Patel's book *Personal Liberty Under The Constitution of India* gives not only historical and political insights into the concept of personal liberty, but has unravelled

tual and aesthetic need..." Social habits and customs are discussed while ferreting out old case laws on this subject.

In fact the right to privacy was judicially recognized here long before it was accepted in the US in 1890. The repercussions of the right to privacy on statutory provisions like Section 9 (restitution of conjugal rights) of the Hindu Marriage Act, and Section 309 (suicide as a penal offence) of the Indian Penal Code, and the conflict between law and customs and judicial activism in reconciling such conflicts are the highlights of this chapter.

'New Dynamics of Processual Justice' is a detailed scrutiny on a generally unknown subject like the laws relating to prisons, prisoners and undertrials. New trends in public interest litigation that has spurred judicial activism to alleviate the misery of undertrials are discussed. Such judicial activism has in fact given the right to legal aid, right to bail and right to speedy trial a constitutional status by expanding the scope and interpretation of Article 21.

'Courts and Liberty' chronicles the history of the law of writs — its origin, scope and development as citizens' safeguard against violation of their rights. The history of Habeas Corpus (a direction by the court to the state to produce the person under detention) is traced to its origin in Darnel's case in England in 1627, in which the Crown's command to detain a subject was held to be absolute, but was nullified by the Petition of Right the next year, 1628, and followed by the Habeas Corpus Act of 1640. Though the discussion in the chapter is overshadowed by precedents in English law, the author has given a studied comparison of the law of writs in India and England.

The author is scathing in her criticism of the Supreme Court's abject surrender of its prerogative to the Executive during the Emergency in *A.D. M. Jabalpur vs Shivkant Shukla*. The Supreme Court had held "that in view of the presidential order dated June 27, 1975 no person had any locus standi to move any writ petition under Article 226 before a High Court for Habeas Corpus or any other writ or order or direction on the ground that the order was not under or in compliance with the Act (MISA), or was illegal or was vitiated by malafides factual or legal or was based on extraneous considerations." The judgement is a blot on the judicial history of India, otherwise renowned for its impeccable record.

This book, undoubtedly a scholarly piece

of research, is invaluable to both the legal fraternity and the common man alike. It underlines the citizen's need to be aware of his personal liberties which are a critical and sustaining force in a free and democratic society. Not only must he understand the concept of personal liberty, but also the meaningful implementation of

this right and prevention of its abuse and misuse.

In his foreword, noted jurist Nani Palkhivala has succinctly summed up the work: "This is a comprehensive book written by a comprehending mind. It gives a bird's eye view of a complicated subject, but the eye is that of an eagle."

772 or 992?

Hormazdyar S. Dalal

Parsiana Hindman agmanni twarekhi shahadato (Historical facts about the arrival of the Parsis in India) by Framroze Firoze Mirza. Published in 1993 by the Parsi Vegetarian and Temperance Society and Jarthosti Radi Society, Bombay. Pp: 34. Price: Rs 5.

Much research into the history of Parsis in India remains to be done. It is not that scholars in the last 100 years or so have not applied their minds to it but their work, based largely on conjecture, needs to be authenticated.

Mobed Framroze Firoze Mirza of Udvada has, to some degree, set at rest some of the more controversial issues in his small booklet on the historical facts about the arrival of the Parsis in India. The booklet is a compilation of 13 articles in Gujarati written by the author from time to time, in various periodicals.

The first question agitating the minds of Zarathushtis is: In which year did their forefathers land on the soil of Sanjan?

In 1599, Dastur Bahman Kaikobad Hormazdyar Sanjana published a book of verses in Persian, *Kisseh Sanjan*. With the Parsi *roj* and *mah* added later, it ascribed the arrival of the Parsis to the Hindu date and year Shravan Shood 9, Shukravar, Samvant 772, *roj* Bahman, *mah* Tir, Yazdezardi 85. The first work of its kind, it traced the history of the Parsis after their settlement in Sanjan. But its source was oral history and Sanjana had no records to fall back on. However, *Kisseh* continued to be accepted as documentary evidence for the next 300 years or so.

These three centuries saw the growth of Western educational institutions in India. Among a number of brilliant Parsi students to pass out of the Bombay University was Khurshedji Rustomji Cama. In his book *Yazdezardi Tarikh* (date), Cama questioned the authenticity of the *Kisseh* (1870), spe-

cifically the date and year.

Dasturji Aspandiyarji Framji Rabadi had also mentioned the same date, day and year, in his book, *Kadim Tarikh Kasar* (1826). But Cama said that the given Samvant year 772 was wrong, because according to him the Hindu *tihi* (date) and *var* (day) did not coincide with the Parsi *roj* and *mah*. Further, he added that if the Vikram Samvant was read as 992, instead of 772, other details matched well and fell into place.

Thus Cama raised the controversy and other thinking minds joined him.

The controversy continued until Dr Hariprasad Shastri, an eminent scholar from Gujarat, ended it in his paper read before the 10th Gujarat Historical Congress, which met in Pardi in 1989-90. Shastri questioned the concerned scholars' propriety in reading 9 in place of 7, thereby changing the year Samvant 772 to 992 while retaining the same numerical for the *tihi*. Again, following their surmise, he asked why did they not add 220 years to the Yazdezardi year 85, to match with Samvant 992.

Shastri also threw new light on and brought into focus more evidence:

It is said in the *Kisseh* that when the Parsis came to Sanjan, and settled there with the permission of the Rana, it was an underdeveloped place. It was they who developed it, and also named it Sanjan. But existing documentary evidence showed that Sanjan existed much before Samvant 992 and has been mentioned as Sanjan Chovishi and Sanjan Mandal, that is a jilla consisting of 24 villages, in the *Dan Sashans* (letters of gift) dated Samvant 926 (AD 870). Similarly, in the Tamra Patra (copper plate) inscription dated AD 926, Sanjan is mentioned as Sanyan and Sanyan Mandal. These two bits of historical evi-

dence prove that Sanjan existed as a well-developed city before Samvant 992 (AD 936).

Again, historian Ahmed Al Biladuri had stated in his book written before AD 892, that a number of Iranis had escaped by sea from Hormuz and Kerman. The reference obviously is to the Parsis who had left Iran to save their lives and religion.

A very pertinent question has been asked in the *Cultural and Political History of Gujarat*, Vol III: "If by AD 926, Sanjan was a well-developed city, how could it be believed that the Parsis landed there in AD 936?"

Besides being an organized city, Sanjan was the headquarters of the city, taluka and land revenue departments. And in this set up the Parsi Anjuman of Sanjan was officially included, which proves that it played an important role in the administration of Sanjan, and was politically, as well as socially, a leading organization.

Again, Arab traveller Misra bin Mukhahil had also noted in his book (AD 922) that he had seen Zarathushti families observing their faith at Navsari. This proves that the contention put forward by Cama was not correct. The Parsis had made Sanjan their home much before Vikram Samvant 992.

Thus, the facts brought out by recent research lead one to believe that: the Parsis had not settled in Sanjan when it was a godforsaken place; they had not developed it after settling there; and it was not they who had so named the place.

Two questions concern the migration of the holy fire after its sojourn in Bahrot: Was it preserved at Vansda or on a hilly place at Ajmalgadh? And, in which year was it taken to Navsari from Vansda?

After the Muslim incursion into Sanjan, devoted athornans had tended the atash for 12 years in the caves of Bahrot. Once peace returned, it was decided to bring it down to the plains again. But where was the fire enthroned?

According to Mirza, the fire was unlikely to be taken again to some unknown hills 12 years after it was brought down from the caves of Bahrot for the good of the devotees.

The next question deals with the year in which the atash was taken to Navsari. Was it brought to Navsari between 1414 and 1419 AD or in 1477 AD, or even later? Mirza prefers to agree with the first premise and is supported in this by two ancient jottings.

One of them is to be found in the genealogy of the Sanjana athornans. The

jotting states that "the Atash Behram was brought to Navsari from Vansda in Samvant 1472 (1416 AD). Mirza is inclined to believe it, because the same notation has been found in all subsequent copies of the genealogy. Moreover, it was made by the people who were directly concerned with the process of shifting the Atash Behram to Navsari.

Mirza has also relied upon Dastur Hormazdyar Ram Sanjana, a learned descendant of the Sanjana clan, according to whom "Shri Atash Behram was brought to Navsari (Nusari) on mah Shehrevat, roj

Mahrespand, Akhad (Ashadh) Shud 5, Budh (var), Samvant 1475 (1419 AD)."

In the remaining articles Mirza has sought to find answers to a few more questions: Who was Jadi Rana? Who was the Sultan who had invaded Sanjan? When did the Muslims conquer Champaner?

By contributing these articles and putting them between the covers of a book, Mirza and his publishers have done a valuable service to the community. But one wishes that these 13 articles had been edited for the present publication to avoid the repetition, and the mistakes.

Worth flipping for

Homi J. Rogers



Your Flip is Showing by Bachi J. Karkaria. Published in 1994 by UBS Publishers' Distributors Ltd, 5, Ansari Road, New Delhi 110002. Pp: 169. Price: Rs 65.

The world, according to Ms Bachi Karkaria, is divided into people who make money, and people who make more money. In Goa, the year is divided into the season, and The season.

Bombay consumerism is also in two categories: the Made in Japan and the Made as in Japan. And, of course, there are two kinds of Parsis: those who work in Central Bank, and those who don't.

By inference, then, there are two kinds of Karkaria readers: those who read Karkaria, and those who re-read Karkaria. *Your Flip is Showing* is a must on the bookshelf of the latter, though for the first-time reader, too, it makes an excellent introduction to one of the finest English language pens amidst us.

The book under review is a collection of 20 articles which have been published previously, mostly in the now-defunct *The Illustrated Weekly of India*, where apri Bachi was groomed under the irrepressible Khushwant Singh (see "Bachi Karkaria: A-way with words," *Parsiana*, July-August 1994). Acknowledges Karkaria in her preface, which reads like a paean to him, "(Singh) helped knock off the pomposity with which I may have been obliged to enter... the 'noble profession' of journalism." So, if today Karkaria revels in the

irreverent, though never in the irrelevant, as all her work shows, the kudos should go to the turbaned troubador; and to her grandparents who started *Navroze*, a magazine in Calcutta way back in 1917.

With a double head start like this, Karkaria carved a place for herself as an incisive humorist. With a pen dipped in wit and vitriol she

deflates people, places, pomposities, Paris, Parsis,...

Karkaria: rib-tickling and thought provoking collection of articles



Your Flip... flip-flops between Karkaria's frothy light pieces, which are a delight to read, and her serious articles which, devoid of the puns and pizzazz, nevertheless retain the Karkaria panache. Her 'Death Trapped' on the rites and obsequies performed after death, is a dead serious piece. Karkaria studies the different religious ideologies and methods of disposal of the dead, seething with despair that leads her to conclude that "however miserable a man's life may have been, it cannot be worse than the leaving of it." Karkaria dwells in fair detail over Doongerwadi and the electric crematorium, though her squeamish observations on the latter lead one to believe she is more Bacha-mai than Bachi-baby. The electric crematorium, she concludes, "has become the refuge only of the atheist, or one who wants his body disposed of with the minimum of fuss."

Another interesting essay, though not as controversial, is her piece on the *dabbawallas* (tiffin carriers) of Bombay. In it she not only studies the logistics of this seemingly complex yet simple system of delivering afternoon tiffins in Bombay, but also interviews the families involved in this trade. The essay reminds one of a docudrama made by the BBC a few years ago.

Of perennial interest are Karkaria's travel pieces. She takes the reader casino-cruising in Kathmandu, gorging in Mauritius, and driving down to Goa. She has her digs at the Gujarati *behenjis* (sisters) who prefer their *khaman-dhoklas* and *sev-ganthias* (Gujarati snacks) to local delicacies when in Goa; at the Prime Minister of Mauritius who generates a controversy by imprinting his wife's portrait on a currency note; and at the 'surahi-stomached' merchant who wraps up his takings at the casinos in Kathmandu in his multi-colored handkerchief. Nor does she think it infra dig to recall the time when she was propositioned by swarthy Frenchmen, causing her as much concern about her fringes as her honor!

The best pieces in the book, however, are focussed on social mores in India. They bristle with one-liners and trendy catch-phrases. Samples: "dirty weekends only mean polluted beaches" and "housewives watch(ing) pot-boilers instead of boiling pots." Karkaria takes on today's "effluent society," the PoP, PiP and Puppies who have moved from "Kuchipudi to Guccipudi," as well as the Brown Sahebs who cling to their "snobbery, chhoti hazri, old school tie and a yellowing souvenir of

Swan Lake at Covent Garden."

After her romp with the Punjabi yuppies (puppies, she calls them), and the Bengali male seeking the bari-gari-sari (house-car-wife), it is natural that Karkaria should cock a snook at the Parsis. Karkaria here is on home ground. Of the three Parsi pieces reproduced in the book, the first must reckon as the most rib-tickling and thought-provoking one. It is interesting to see oneself through the eyes and ears of someone as perceptive as Karkaria, and though the essay is over two decades old, it has lost none of its charm — or sting. It is mercifully free of Pesu Paowala and the other residents of Dadar Parsi Colony who came to frequent Karkaria's writings, as also of her penchant for an excessive sprinkling of puns. Here the characters are caricatured, but never reduced to being cartoons.

The second essay in the Karkaria trilogy on Parsis is a historic reflection on the community's deepening twilight, her views peppered with interviews and incisive comments. The dwindling population is of concern to the community, though its members are divided on the reasons and remedies for the same. *Parsiana* editor Jehangir Patel is convinced, according to Karkaria's piece, that the numbers have sunk too low for any hope of reversal in the trend. On the other hand, tongue-firmly-in-English-language-check, Sohrab, a Gymkhana member quoted by Karkaria, feels "that even if the community dies out in India, from its ashes a regenerated one will arise perhaps in Phoenix, Arizona." Since she first wrote this piece (and sadly, the publishers nowhere indicate the first publishing date of the article used), many Parsi souls have crossed the Chinvat Bridge and, as Karkaria remarks, "the vultures are twice as busy as the obstetricians."

The third piece is a glossary of Parsi surnames, and alternates between a helpful guide and a punster's launching pad. If one has any regrets about this Parsi gallery, it is that Mario Miranda and R. K. Laxman (the book's illustrators) have not contributed a single sketch to this essay. Perhaps the publishers feel that Karkaria is funny/punny enough when commenting on her own community and needs no further backup.

But for all her humor, *Your Flip...* is not a read-at-one-sit book. You have to read the pieces slowly, savoring the lines, to enjoy the sudden twist each sentence provides. For once, then, one must argue with Karkaria's division of the world: when it comes to her book, there are simply no two views about it. It is just delightful!

THE BODY IN BALANCE

continued from page 35

Shri Yogendra, helping him in his publication work and various other tasks related to the Institute until his demise.

The daughter of Gool and Behram Rustomji (Armaiti's mother, who died in 1987, was a montessori teacher, and her father the principal of the B. V. S. Parsi Boys High School in Karachi for four decades), who were both students of theosophy and related subjects, Armaiti's formative years were substantially influenced by the works they studied. She feels privileged to have had role models like Dastur (Dr) Maneckji Dhallal and Jamshed Mehta when she was in Karachi, and Shri Yogendra in Bombay.

"One of the most important things to learn in yoga is to become more egoless," says Desai, warning "but there is also something called the 'ego of egolessness.'" On a modest note she pleads that we talk less about her and more of the Institute and its work. As she writes in the Institute's periodical *Yoga and Total Health*, "We are aware that it is against the spirit of yogic humility to talk of one's own achievements but at times, a point of achievement of one could be a point of inspiration to many for greater achievements and the world has a right to know."

MATRIMONIAL

Parents of a beautiful, domestically trained, 22-year-old Parsi girl, ht 4'11" owning/running a successful ladies' beauty parlour invite alliance from well-educated, well-settled Parsi boys up to 30 years of age. Please send your photograph (returnable) and details to:

The Advertiser

**Parsiana, Matrimonial (Sept/58-94)*
GPO Box 892, Bombay 400001**

*Please make sure the reply envelope bears the reference number cited here

MATRIMONIAL

Parents of a slim, beautiful, graduate Parsi girl, aged 22, 5'3" tall, working in a reputed advertising agency invite proposals from educated Parsi boys, up to 30 years, well-settled in a job based in Bombay. Kindly apply with necessary details and photograph (returnable) to:

The Advertiser

**Parsiana, Matrimonial (Sept/59-94)*
GPO Box 892, Bombay 400001**

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MILESTONES

This month *Parsiana* has not published the outstation data due to lack of space. The inconvenience is regretted.

The age of Zoroastrian brides (as listed in this issue) ranged between 20 and 47 years, the arithmetic mean (the total number of individual ages divided by the total number of brides) being 33 years. The corresponding figures for the grooms were 24 and 57 years, averaging at 39 years.

According to data available to *Parsiana* from four hospitals, there were 15 births in Bombay in July as compared to 93 deaths. Heart disease, the major killer, claimed 22 lives of whom 10 were 80 plus. Sixteen deaths were attributed to lung disease and pneumonia while cancer took the lives of 10 Zoroastrians. Five patients each

succumbed to old age and general debility and hypertension and four each to kidney failure, brain disease and diabetes. The other killers were septicemia and anemia (three each) and hypoproteinemia (two). There were 15 isolated cases registered in July: jaundice, cerebral malaria, asthma, death due to strangulation, fracture, accident, malaria, intestinal perforation, gastro-enteritis, pneumothorax (air or gas in the pleural cavity), cerebral atrophy (decrease in size or wasting away of a body part or tissue), tetanus (disease caused by an anaerobe which may be present in road dust or manure), liver disease, bronchitis and thrombocytopenia (reduction in the number of platelets in the blood). The eldest and youngest to die last month were both females: a 96-year-old and a 16-year-old.

BOMBAY

BORN

A girl, *Ayesha*, to *Kashmira* and *Kaikhushroo Dastoor* on July 2, 1994
A boy to *Hutoxi* and *Lokesh Shrivastava*; July 2
A boy to *Niloufer* and *Hormazdiyaar Vakil*; July 3
A girl to *Firuzee* and *Parvez Pooniwalla*; July 7
A boy to *Pheroza* and *Faroakh Garda*; July 9
A boy to *Anahita* and *Khurshed Fitter*; July 10
A girl to *Jasmine* and *Farokh Tatary*; July 11
A boy to *Shernaz* and *Chirag Khambatta*; July 14
A girl to *Kamal* and *Firoz Mehta*; July 15
A girl to *Jasmine* and *Jehangir Jehangir*; July 19
A boy to *Veera* and *Ashish Sawkar*; July 19
A boy to *Behzad* and *Histas Randeria*; July 20
A girl, *Shereena*, to *Navaz* and *Adarbad Master*; July 25
A boy to *Firuz* and *Khoorshed Doctor*; July 30
A girl to *Shernaz* and *Cyrus Sarkari*; July 31

MARRIED

Daisy Noshir Guzder of Baroda and *Behram Naval Pestonjamas*; June 3
Arnavaz Kersasp Wadia and

Rohinton Tehmuras Daruwalla; July 3
Meher Adi Laher and *Homi Kersi Press*; July 7
Niloufer Jal Daruwalla and *Adi Pervaz Engineer*; July 9
Lia Farouk Irani of Madras and *Rustam Jehangir Gagrati*; July 10
Armaity Ardesher Ravji and *Hoshang Fardoonji Mehta*; July 10
Piloo Dinshawji Toddywalla and *Pervaz Mehernosh Kajanwalla*; July 29
Avan Framroze Mehta and *Sorab Rustom Mehta*; July 29
Parizad Adi Sadri and *Neville Rohinton Patel*; July 29

DIED

Bapsy Rusy Dordi (58), residing at 58, Petit Sanatorium, Cumballa Hill, 400036; June 30
Bachamai Fakirji Todiwalla (92), Gadiwalla Hse, Gilder Lane, Lamington Rd, 400008; June 30
Piroja Kekobad Mody (80), 8/A, Sea View, Carter Rd, Bandra, 400050; July 1
Kaikhushroo Sheriar Irani (85), 1505/06, Lokhandwalla Complex, Andheri (W), 400058; July 2
Ratan Faredoon Mehta (45), 6, Rustom Baug, Victoria Rd, Byculla, 400027; July 2
Jar Dhanjisha Mistry (80),

Cama Bldg, Kashinath Rd, Tardeo, 400034; July 2
Behramji Rustomji Pagdiwalla (81), 3, Sorabji R. Contractor Bldg, Victoria Garden, Byculla, 400027; July 2
Jalejar Jamshedji Siganporia (84), 3, New Petit Block No 4, Mehela Patel Agiary Lane, Off Balaram St, Grant Rd, 400007; July 2
Coomi Rustomji Bhagwager (63), 18, Ashiyana, Opp Bandra Talkies, 31st Rd, Bandra, 400050; July 3
Edujee Sorabjee Katrak (84), F. S. Parukh Dharamshalla, 34, Hughes Rd, 400007; July 3
Homai Jal Mehta (80), 671, Boyce Bldg, Rd No 13, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; July 3
Naval Nariman Cooper (72), Roxana, M. Karve Rd, 400020; July 4
Mehra Manekshaw Marolia (80), Ripon Bldg, Balaram St, Grant Rd, 400007; July 4
Freny Aspandier Dashti (65), 502, Shri Ganesh Apts, Matharpakhadi Rd, Mazgaon, 400010; July 5
Aloo Naval Kateli (76), 804/B, Sai Niketan, Dr Ambedkar Rd, Dadar, 400014; July 5
Keiki Dadiba Kerawalla (70), 6/A, Panday Sanatorium, Wodehouse Rd, Colaba, 400005; July 5
Soonamai Ardesher Kapadia (75), 84, Dastoor Block, Naigam Rd, Dadar, 400014; July 6
Najamai Jehangirji Master (96), C. M. Banaji Bldg, Forjett St Cross Lane, Gowalia Tank, 400036; July 6
Homi Merwanji Panthaky (89), 668, Desai Bldg, Katrak Rd, Wadala, 400031; July 6
Jehangir Cawasji Sheriar (71), 20, Railway Hotel, 71, Raja Ram Mohan Roy Rd, 400004; July 6
Hilla Rustamji Billimoria (90), Daruwalla Hse, 145, Alibhai Premji Marg, Grant Rd, 400007; July 7
Rustom Framroze Daboo (72), F/14, Nowroz Baug, Lalbaug, 400012; July 7
Rohinton Jamshed Irani (58), 21, Gilder Lane, Off D. B. Marg, 400008; July 7
Aloo Jal Lam (73), 511-C/4, Amrut, Adenwalla Rd, Matunga, 400019; July 7
Paridokht Ardesher Bakhshay (Irani) (75), Makawi Mans,

Gunbow St, Fort, 400001; July 8
Mani Minoo Boyce (65), 62, Patanwala Mhl, Patanwala Rd, Near Victoria Garden, Byculla, 400027; July 8
Seheroo Kaikhushroo Capadia (78), 203, Sugan, Cumballa Hill Lane, 400036; July 8
Rashid Sam Irani (75), Kashinath Bldg No 2, Kashinath Rd, Tardeo, 400034; July 8
Jal Rustomji Mulla (78), Piroja Hse, Forjett St, 400036; July 78
Jaiji Dinshawji Sumariwalla (92), C/20, Rustom Baug, Victoria Rd, Byculla, 400027; July 8
Rusi Hormusji Sutaria (75), 3, Tata Hsg Clny, Parel, 400012; July 8
Tehmina Framroze Irani (65), B/2, Petit Chawl, Avabai Petit St, Grant Rd, 400007; July 9
Dolly Jamshed Dumasia (62), C. M. Banaji Bldg, Forjett St Cross Lane, Gowalia Tank, 400036; July 10
Alamai Rustomji Hansotia (76), Jessie Bldg, 137 Fort, 400001; July 10
Khorshed Muncherji Kateli (66), Wadia Block No 2, Malcolm Baug, Jogeshwari (W), 400102; July 10
Bachoo Phiroze Chaina (63), 5, Harbour View, Matharpakhadi Cross Lane, Mazgaon, 400010; July 11
Shirin Jal Cooper (92), 3, Motabhoy Mans, 130, M. Karve Rd, 400020; July 11
Fardoon Jal Daruwalla (40), Malcolm Baug, Jogeshwari (W), 400102; July 11
Sarah Nasvan Kavasmanek (96), 790, Jame Jamshed Rd, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; July 11
Khorshed Jehangir Dadiburjor (67), 72, Lavina Apts, Tagore Rd, Santacruz (W), 400054; July 12
Jehangir Sorabji Engineer (80), 66/D, Soonaji Ter, Gowalia Tank, 400036; July 12
Neville Behram Tarapore (45), 3/79, Kailash Apts, S. V. Rd, Opp Shastri Ngr, Borivali (W), 400092; July 12
Zarine Tehmuras Irani (82), Batliwalla Bldg, Khan Est, Mahim, 400016; July 13
Ruby Dadi Mody (50), P/27, Cusrow Baug, S. B. Rd,

400039; July 13
Kuverji Sorabji Nagporewalla (76), 208, Waterfield Rd, Bandra (W), 400050; July 13
Jamshed Dinshaw Bharucha (88), 3/A, Tardeo Chmbs, Kashinath St, Tardeo, 400034; July 14
Pesi Rustomji Bharucha (75), 44/46, Karani Bldg, Raja Ram Mohan Roy Rd, 400004; July 15
Bhikhoo Dinshaw Gandeia (79), 5, Ness Baug Annexe 3, Nana Chowk, 400007; July 15
Jeroo Soli Gandhi (53), X-81/2, Pirojsha Ngr, Station Rd, Vikhroli (E), 400079; July 15
Jal Darabshaw Jijina (65), F. S. Parukh Dharamshalla, 34, Hughes Rd, 400007; July 15
Jamshed Eruchshaw Limathwalla (71), B/18, Rustom Baug, Victoria Rd, Byculla, 400027; July 15
Jina Pestonjee Udawadia (73), Contractor Bldg, Kashinath St, 400034; July 15
Minocher Jehangirji Daruwalla (86), 11, Godrej Bldg, Contractor Baug, Mori Rd, Mahim, 400016; July 16
Jal Khodabux Baliwala (75), 28/C/111, Manish Ngr, Four Bglws, J. P. Rd, Andheri, 400058; July 17
Gool Eruchshaw Belgamwala (77), 107, S. V. Rd, Khar (W), 400052; July 17
Banubai Dara Dastoor (86), F/55, Cusrow Baug, S. B. Rd, 400039; July 17
Homai Kaikobad Irani (88), Beach Croft, Juhu Rd, 400049; July 17
Jal Rustomji Jassawalla (85), 29, Pali Rd, Bandra, 400050; July 17
Banoo Manekshaw Khambata (74), 16/ix, Dubash Bldg, Gamadia Clny, Tardeo, 400007; July 17
Najoo Dinshawji Konkravala (77), 224, Gustad Mans, Tardeo Rd, 400007; July 17
Keki Faredoon Sadarwala (68), F/10, Bharucha Baug, S. V. Rd, Andheri (W), 400058; July 17
Daughdoh Coovershaw Zaigar (65), 12/A, Chandra Niwas, M. Vasanji Rd, Marol, Andheri, 400059; July 17
Boman Dinshawji Bharucha (86), J/23, Cusrow Baug, S. B. Rd, 400039; July 19
Behram Pallonji Dastoor (56), 8, 123/B, Chamarbaugwala Bldg, Ambedkar Rd, Parcel,

400012; July 19
Mehru Burjorji Rana (60), 191, Bhabha Hse, Bora Bazar St, Fort, 400001; July 19
Jal Manecksa Daruwalla (74), 7/A, Tata Bldg, Dhanbai Wadi, Dadabai Rd, Vile Parle (W), 400056; July 20
Nariman Edulji Daruwalla (87), B/2, Shapurji Bharucha Baug, S. V. Rd, Andheri (W), 400058; July 20
Khodabux Sheriar Irani (72), B/1, Petit Block, Avabai Petit Lane, Grant Rd, 400007; July 20
Soona Naval Sethna (83), 17, South Frere Bridge, Grant Rd, 400007; July 20
Rustomji Bapuji Joshi (85), 13, Mehta Bldg, Panthaky Baug, Andheri (W), 400069; July 21
Banoo Jehangirji Khambatta (81), 3, Daruwalla Bldg, Tata Blocks, Turner Rd, Bandra (W), 400050; July 21
Coomi Munchershaw Madon (83), 34, Union Bldg, Sleater Rd, Opp Grant Rd Stn, 400007; July 21
Burjorji Dinshawji Cooper (82), 7/1, Sir Ratan Tata Bldg, S. V. Rd, Bandra (W), 400050; July 22
Dossan Pestonji Hasotia (94),

A, Mehta Bldg, Captain Clny, Tardeo, 400034; July 23
Darabsha Edulji Jokhi (94), 203, Sinchan Apts, Off Veera Desai Rd, Andheri (W), 400058; July 23
Bapai Ardeshir Shroff (94), Putla Mans, Darabsha Lane, Off Nepean Sea Rd, 400036; July 23
Ardeshar Kaikushru Solan (65), Wadia Block No 2, Malcolm Baug, Jogeshwari (W), 400102; July 23
Mehroo Nariman Chinwalla (67), 29/G, Captain Clny, Tardeo Rd, 400034; July 24
Jamshedji Faramroze Nargolia (94), F. S. Parukh Dharamshalla, 34, Hughes Rd, 400007; July 24
Rustomji Sorabji Baria (89), 10, Ava Mans, 230, Tardeo Rd, 400007; July 25
Dhanjisha Sorabji Buhariwala (82), 25, Matharpakhadi, Mazgaon, 400010; July 25
Dinyar Manekshaw Daruwalla (62), M/8, Nowroz Baug, Lalbaug, 400012; July 25
Amy Sapal Katrak (86), F. S. Parukh Dharamshalla, Hughes Rd, 400007; July 25
Behroze Adi Balsara (16), B/17, Deepanjali, Shahji Raje

Marg, Vile Parle (E), 400057; July 26
Nergish Burjorji Doodhmal (78), 7/1, Malegaumwala Bldg, Station Rd, Mahim, 400016; July 26
Jal Behramshaw Panthaky (83), 4/59, A. H. Wadia Baug, Parcel Tank Rd, 400033; July 26
Rustom Shavakshaw Patell (76), 6, Kala Niketan Bldg, 95, M. Karve Rd, 400020; July 27
Tehmina Jehangirji Billimoria (87), Arya Samaj Bhavan, 232, Perin Nariman St, Fort, 400001; July 28
Eruch Dossabhai Daboo (78), Windsor Chmbs, Cawasji Patel St, Fort, 400001; July 28
Naju Tehmuras Engineer (80), 6/10, Khan Est, Mahim, 400016; July 28
Fali Kaikhashru Irani (63), Daruwalla Bldg, South Frere Bridge, Grant Rd, 400007; July 28
Navroji Dorabji Dastur (72), 253, Cawasji Hormusji St, Dhobitalao, 400002; July 30
Homi Jehangir Seervai (72), 114, Mehr-Naz, Cuffe Parade, 400005; July 30

Compiled by Roxana A. Driver

TOTALS FOR 1994

	Bombay		India		World	
	A	B	A	B	A	B
BORN						
Boys	8	64	--	5	--	11
Girls	7	64	--	3	--	6
MARRIED						
Parsi	9	185	--	7	--	2
Intercommunal	--	24^	--	2	--	2
DIED						
CONSIGNED						
Male	45	286	--	30	--	25*
Female	48	277	--	31	--	14*
CREMATED						
Male	--	5	--	--	--	--
Female	--	1	--	--	--	--

A: Total numbers in this issue

B: Running totals for 1994 (February-March 1994-September 1994 issues)

^ Males married out -- 13
 Females married out -- 11

* Overseas deaths are listed in the consigned 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.

L. K. Panday TAKING STOCK

Parinaz Gandhi

Died: Limjee Kaikhushroo Panday, 78, respected finance broker who had served as the president of the Bombay Exchange Brokers' Association and the founder president of The Stockbroker Underwriters' Association, on April 16, 1994 in Bombay following cancer of the liver.

"To a layman, the Stock Exchange is usually a place to buy and sell shares. It is not generally realized that the functions of the Stock Exchange are varied and the part it plays in raising funds...is colossal." Panday, who had founded in his own name the firm of share and stock brokers that was deemed a pioneer in the field of financial services, had been quoted in the *Industrial Times* of November 15, 1962.

In the public issue of shares by reputed companies, Panday's firm often officiated as managing broker. Besides functioning as approved brokers to financial institutions like the Industrial Development Bank of India, the Industrial Credit and Investment Corporation of India, the Unit Trust of India, the Life Insurance Corporation of India and the General Insurance Corporation of India, this concern also worked as broker for banks and well-known limited companies like the Tatas. Additionally the firm operated as prominent underwriters of shares of public companies.

In honor of Panday, The Stockbroker Underwriters' Association convened a condolence meeting at the Indian Merchants' Chamber on April 25 when chairperson Dr Freddie Mehta remarked on Panday's rare ability to understand an individual as also a situation. President of the Bombay Stock Exchange Bhagirath Merchant, who had attended the function as a special invitee, referred to Panday's wit and humor, recollecting his statement that the city of Bombay had become so cosmopolitan in its culture, that if he were to now enter the ring, he would be hard pressed to find a colleague whose dhoti he could tug at! Fellow broker

Bhupendra Dalal appreciated Panday's kindness particularly when others in the trade were "shredding him like a cabbage" following the linking of his name with Harshad Mehta's during the infamous scam. Happy that his work had never caused



him any sleepless nights, Panday had conveyed to *Island* magazine in 1988, "As a stockbroker I have never really suffered from tension. Tension is contained if you are not a speculator; you are purely an investment broker."

"Even when he was nearing 80, he continued to be very lively and young at heart," acknowledges Mahendra Doshi who bought over the firm L. K. Panday (LKP) in 1986 after which Panday ceased to be partner but continued as advisor, visiting the firm daily almost till the very end. As compared to the company's original staff strength of three persons, today there are 200 people working with LKP. Panday's "name and connections, the integrity, his useful contacts" have all contributed to the expansion of LKP, mentions Doshi.

Panday also served as director on the board of nearly a dozen companies like United Breweries, Herbertsons, Bombay Ceramic Agencies. Some private and public companies particularly retained him as finance director so that he could negotiate with banks and other financial institutions for loans for their industries. The condolence resolution of the board of Gannon Dunkerley and Co Ltd recalled "with high

appreciation his meritorious services as a director and his invaluable guidance and advice from time to time which have helped the Company in widening its spheres of activity and reaching its present eminence."

"All of us on the board of East India Hotels will miss his wisdom and advice," wrote the company's managing director Biki Oberoi in a condolence letter to Panday's wife Sosan. He further noted, "Limji was associated with our family for over 40 years and his passing away is not only a personal loss to us but also to the Company."

It was not only the well-established companies that Panday chose to associate with. Young entrepreneurs should be encouraged, he believed, consenting to serve on the board of a fledgling company Mercator Lines Ltd when requested by the managing director of this shipping concern Harish Mittal, mentions Sosan.

Panday's own career had started as an apprentice with the Central Bank of India following his graduation in commerce from Sydenham College. After two years with the Central Bank, he put in a three-year stint with M/s Batlivala and Karani, Share, Stock and Exchange Brokers as senior executive. From there he moved on to another brokers' firm of M/s Merwanjee Bomanjee Dalal where he served as senior executive for seven years and thereafter as partner for 11 years. In 1959 he launched out on his own and started operating on the Bombay Stock Exchange in his own name.

Limji hailed from the illustrious family of Panday who donated several community institutions that have become landmarks in Bombay. In fact, it was one of his forebears with the same name, Limji, who is supposed to have dug the Bhikha Behram Kuvoat Hutatma Chowk in memory of his father Bhikhaji, informs Sosan.

Reading western and eastern philosophy as also detective novels, Panday listed among his hobbies. Having learnt the violin he enjoyed western classical music. A game of billiards and snooker stimulated him. His other passions were: travelling abroad, foreign cars, good clothes, good food and good drinks. As he himself was wont to say, "I am free with my money," for the broker who knew how to make money also knew how to spend money.

Panday is survived by his wife Sosan, son Kaikhushroo and daughters Scherezade Khursigara and Dilshad.



WOMEN DO THE SHOPPING, THE COOKING AND THE STORING.

IS THAT WHY INDIA'S LARGEST FRIDGE IS DESIGNED BY A WOMAN?

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And you'll find the 310 lt. Sterling simply brimming with helpful features like removable egg trays, adjustable bottle racks and SAN boxes.

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A WORLD CLASS POWER SAVER
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EVERYTHING FROM ICE CREAM
TO FISH RAPIDLY.



EXTERNAL AUTO DEFROST
AND TEMPERATURE CONTROLS
MEAN YOU NEEDN'T OPEN
THE DOOR UNNECESSARILY.
SO EVEN SENSITIVE FOODS
STAY FRESH



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WOMAN MAKES A VERY
SENSIBLE FRIDGE DESIGNER.
THE 310 STERLING IS PROOF
ENOUGH.

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In various stages of implementation are some key residential projects at Prabhadevi, Matunga, Mahim and a multi-storeyed residential tower at Cumballa Hill in Bombay and a large residential complex in Pune. Under consideration is a bungalow scheme in the scenic hills at Lonavla near Bombay.

Also underway is a luxurious villa scheme at Nagaon, near Alibag, Bombay.



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'The Peregrine' - highrise residential building at Prabhadevi, Bombay.