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Parsiana

November 1995
Volume 18 Number 4

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Cover: A painting by Sorab Pithawalla, possibly from an old master
Photograph: Varghese W. 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 Unsigned letters or those without an address will not be published.

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We have color prints of Zarathushtra backed by the 1996 calendar. These 10 cms by seven cm cards will be sent free on request: no obligation whatsoever. Please send a self addressed envelope, to the undersigned at 78, West Mada Str, Royapuram, Madras 600013, (phone 5954974).

SOLI DARUWALA

Madras

We are not dead — yet!

This letter is in response to several recent articles in *Parsiana* expressing dread at the dwindling numbers of the Parsi community in India. We are not dead, not yet, anyway!

My opinion is that the Zoroastrian community has declined in numbers to an extent which precludes revival on its own, even if each Zoroastrian couple were to have at least three children starting yesterday. But we should not give up. Let us fight, win or lose!

To increase our numbers on a war-footing the following may be resorted to:

- A solemn vow to be made by our youngsters to marry only within the community and that too at an early age. Retired parents can move to cheaper accommodation in places like Udvada, Sanjan, Nargol, Navsari, etc, where Parsi-owned property is lying vacant for years;
 - Loans to obtain accommodation and financial support to a deserving young couple to come from a new trust especially established for the purpose. Unmarried Zoroastrians and those having no children could leave their estates to this trust fund to which the Parsi Panchayet and other charities can also contribute. Each Parsi could donate a percentage of surplus income to this fund (tax-exempt);
 - Convert redundant fire-temples, towers of silence, and other Parsi buildings into accommodation for young couples. Case in point, the agiary at Cawasji Patel Street and Uran. Sure there will be litigation, but then are not the Parsis the best lawyers in town?
 - Setting up of a mechanism whereby those Zoroastrian youngsters living outside the main centers can meet prospective Zoroastrian life-partners;
 - Acceptance of those children of mixed marriages, whose navjotes have been performed, as Zoroastrians. Let such children attend fire-temples whose head-priests and trustees are liberal minded;
 - Subsidized availability of in vitro and in utero fertilization techniques for infertile Zoroastrian couples;
 - Donations of eggs by fertile Parsi women (including those married to non-Parsis) to infertile couples. Cloning may seem too farfetched to some today, but is the trend of the future whether you like it or not;
 - A movement to encourage Zoroastrians abroad to return to India;
 - A movement to encourage suitably inclined youngsters to take up the priestly profession, with a stint abroad if necessary (the late Dasturji Dhalla is a perfect example).
- Parsis love to criticize and argue, and as usual there will be some who will ridicule the above suggestions as unworkable and farfetched. But then shall we do nothing but wait for the day when all that remains, perhaps, will be a wing in the Prince of Wales Museum dedicated to the Parsis?

ARDESHIR B. DAMANIA

Learn a trade

Scholarships are available for Zoroastrians to pursue job-oriented courses such as teaching, nursing, tailoring, catering/hotel management, beauty culture/hair dressing, secretarial practice, computer data-feeding/programmer diploma or certificate course in software, arts and crafts, travel and tourism management and toy making.

These scholarships are awarded for studies in non-academic courses and not for degree courses. We help Zoroastrians to learn a trade and become self-supporting.

Application forms for Bai Dinbai F. S. Patuck Memorial Scholarships and further information are available at C/o Sir Ratan Tata Institute Office, 2nd Floor, 35, N. S. Patkar Marg, Bombay 400007.

Ms B. S. TARAPORE

Hon Secy, Bai D. F. S. Patuck Memorial Scholarship Comm

"Why did he die?"



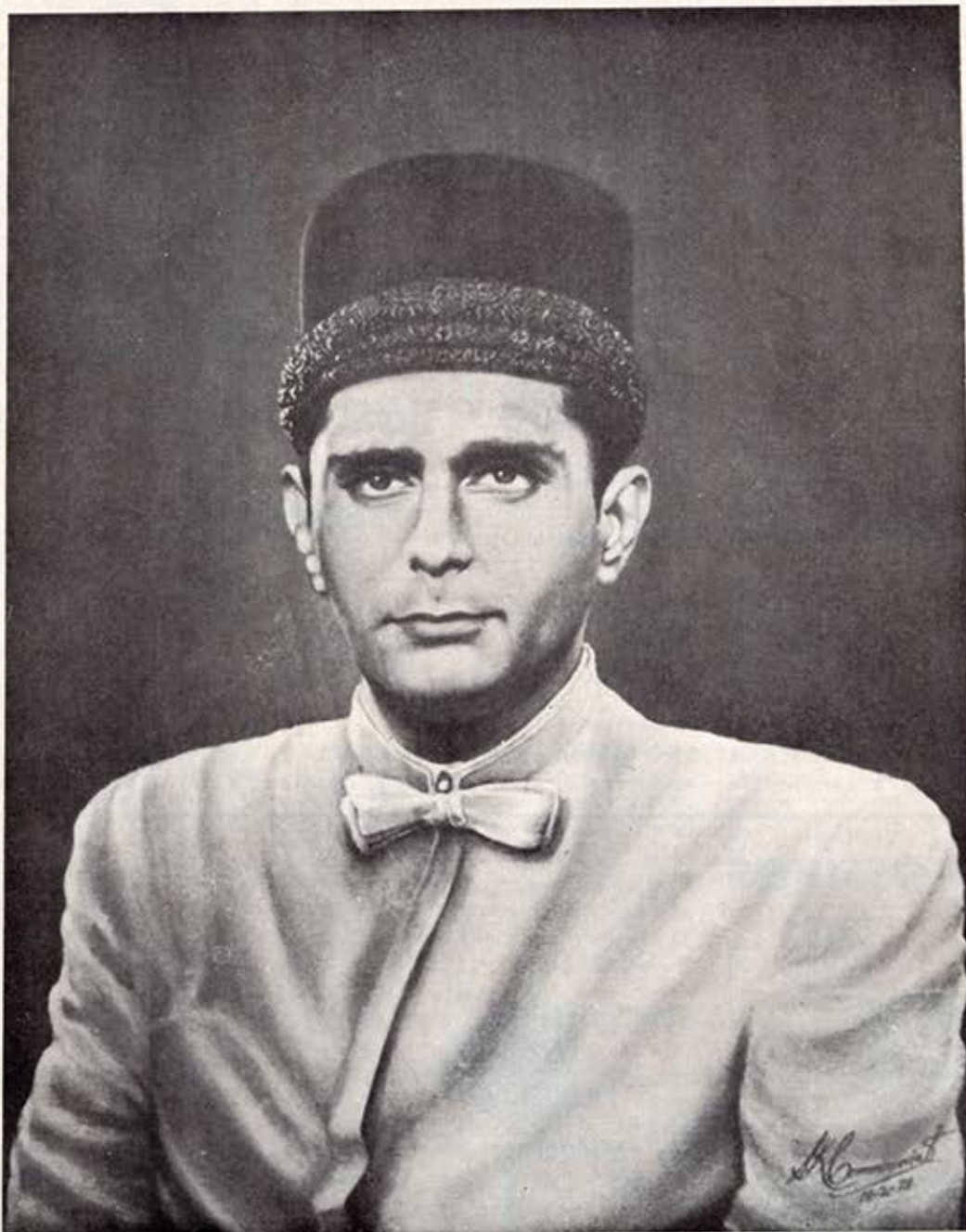
The late Capt Feroze Kanga fell prey to street violence in Karachi on September 17, 1995. The story by Ardeshir Cowasjee had appeared in *Parsiana*, September 1995.

The photograph was received too late for inclusion with the article.

Secunderabad youth camp

Last month, I attended an all-India Zoroastrian leadership camp in Secunderabad organized by the Zoroastrian Stree Mandal of Hyderabad-Secunderabad. The three-day camp, October 21-24, organized to teach us more about our religion, saw 120 children from all over India lodged at the dharamshala.

We started each day with breakfast at 8.00 and at 9.00 we had a teaching session. Ms Shernaz Munshi and Ms Firoza Punthakey-Mistree divided us into two groups and taught children from ages seven to 12 and 12 to 15 respectively. Through various songs, demonstrations and games, we learnt a lot about our religion: about our Prophet Zarathushtra, the seven Amesha Spentas, how and why Ahura Mazda created us, the correct way to say our prayers, what our prayers mean, and a lot more.



In Memoriam
Mr Fali Meherji Variava
Ex-Director

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The Zoroastrian Stree Mandal had invited various people to give us demonstrations. We were shown how a kusti is made and why, why the sudreh has nine parts, how a *dana-ni-toran* (garland of beads) is made, and how the Iranis set up a Navroze table. It was all very interesting and fascinating to watch.

To bring out our creativity, there were various drawing and painting competitions revolving around Zoroastrian themes. Everyone participated in these competitions with a lot of enthusiasm.

On the second-last night, we had a camp fire where the parents of the Hyderabad-Secunderabad children were invited. All of us put up short plays or sang songs related to Zoroastrianism. We enjoyed putting up the plays, and the parents loved watching us.

On the last night, there was a fashion show depicting typical Zoroastrian costumes. It made us realize how much we have changed and compromised our customs in today's world.

On the last day, we had a final teaching session and the prize distribution. None of us wanted to leave as yet; we were all having too much fun. But eventually, all the teachers managed to get everyone ready to leave. After saying 'bye' to all our new friends and promising to write, we were on our way back to Bombay and wishing we

could have stayed longer.

I want to say a big 'thank you' to the ladies of the Zoroastrian Stree Mandal of Hyderabad-Secunderabad who organized this camp, our teachers for teaching us so much about Zoroastrianism in such a short time, Dr (Ms) Jeanie Bharucha who always had time to bandage up our minor cuts and wounds, and all the other teachers and volunteers who took great care of us. I also want to thank the people at the dharamshala who took care of us and saw to our every need and putting up with us even when we were making a nuisance of ourselves. I also want to thank our helpers from Bombay, Farhad Munshi and Zubin Elavia, for looking after us in the train and helping us over there and also for organizing games for us to play when we were bored. And last but not the least, I want to thank Zoroastrian Studies for making us more aware of our wonderful religion and contributing to this camp and making it such a wonderful experience.

Ms PARINAZ E. KATRAK

"Ubha" Parsi

Those travelling to Byculla must have seen a statue of a Parsi gentleman near Byculla bridge, popularly known as "Ubha" or "Khada" Parsi. Who is this Parsi gentleman? What services did he render to the city of Bombay to merit a



statue being erected in his honor? When was it installed?

There is one peculiarity of this statue which escapes our eyes unless we travel on the upper deck of a BEST bus and observe minutely. A small kathli (used for drinking water), jutting out of his pugree. What is the significance

of this kathli in his pugree?

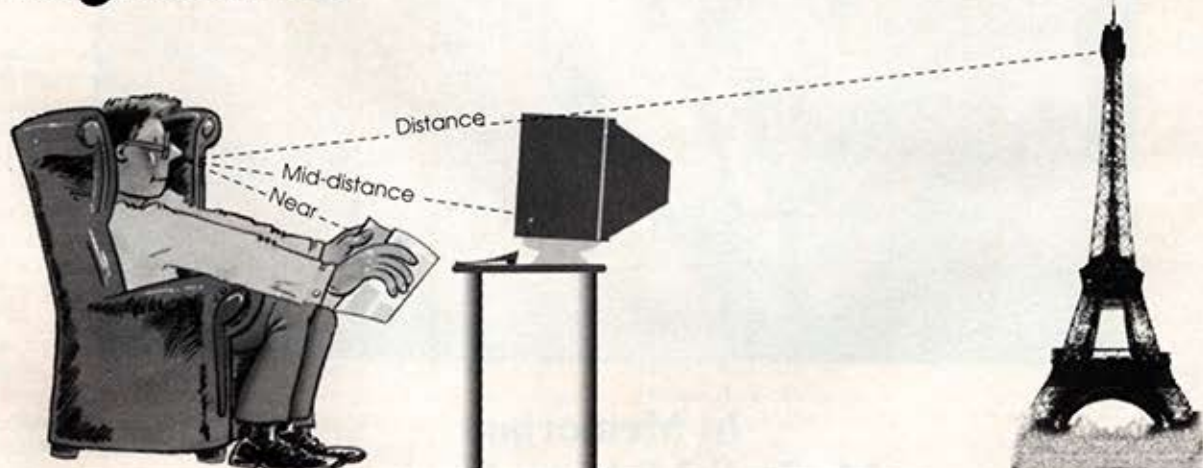
Would any reader throw light on the above?

BHIKHAJI M. ADENWALLA

The Editor replies

The "Ubha" or "Khada" Parsi was Manockjee Cursetjee (1808-1887), one of the foremost pioneers of English education for girls in India. He was the founder of the Alexandra Native Girls' English Institution, a Sheriff of Bombay and a courageous, upright and independent individual who had a reputation for integrity and unselfishness (Source: *Parsi Lustre on Indian Soil* by H. D. Darukhanawala).

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Reviving the priesthood

How many of us know the difference between a dastur and a mobed? Very few I guess. If we are not aware of something so fundamental then one can well imagine our knowledge about our religion. Shocking but true and both the priests and we are to blame.

The plight of our poor priests in far-flung places tending dilapidated agaries with almost zero funds and a meager income, is pathetic. They are at the mercy and whim of the trustees, an impoverished, frustrated and insecure lot.

Nor do we look to our clergy for clarifications on religious matters to suit the present times. They have not been able to think beyond their dogmatic age-old rules, are unable to socialize or give comfort and solace to any one who has lost a beloved person. Their interest I feel is only in the remuneration from the four-day prayers which are an ordeal to go through, rendered as they are in a humdrum manner, with no sanctity or emotion.

The number of dasturs and mobeds is fast declining. What we need to do is to make them financially secure with free housing, medical aid, education, attractive take-home income, pension, and the surety of a roof over their heads when they can no longer preside over their duties because of old age or ill health. They need self motivation to uplift their plight by regular interaction with members of the community on both social and religious levels. A special prayer for a sick Parsi, or a visit to the hospital would stand them in good stead with the community. Keeping in mind the changing times it is essential for them to upgrade their knowledge and religious beliefs to suit the present day.

If the dogmatic, insecure, frustrated priests can be turned into men of respect, dignity, rational views, then the survival of this simple and beautiful religion will not be at stake. **Ms RODA D. HAKIM**

Vadodara

November in Dehra Dun

Come November! In the Doon, people begin sunning, In the most aged couple's home, an array of celebrations begin most stunning!

On the 11th, "Aunt Sally" turns "85," / Looking spry!

On the 18th, "Aunt Tehmina" turns "84,"

Looking fine for many more!

On the 19th, at "90," "Uncle Noshir" / As sprightly as a hare,

And she, / Celebrate their wedding anniversary,

The 61st, / As fresh as their very first!

APPAN NAIR

Dehra Dun

What's in a Parsi name?

Name the Parsi Goddess of trees? Devi-tre.

Some Parsis love Dhan dar; some Parsis just Guzz-dar.

What do you call a Parsi born in Poland? Polish-wala.

Some Parsis never have to pull strings, because they are already Dori-walas.

Do Gorkhodoos really dig for jaggery?

Why did the Sardarji go to his Parsi neighbor's house to buy a railway ticket? Someone told him his neighbor was a Coachman.

When did Dimple Kapadia first get involved with a Parsi?

When she acted in Sagar.

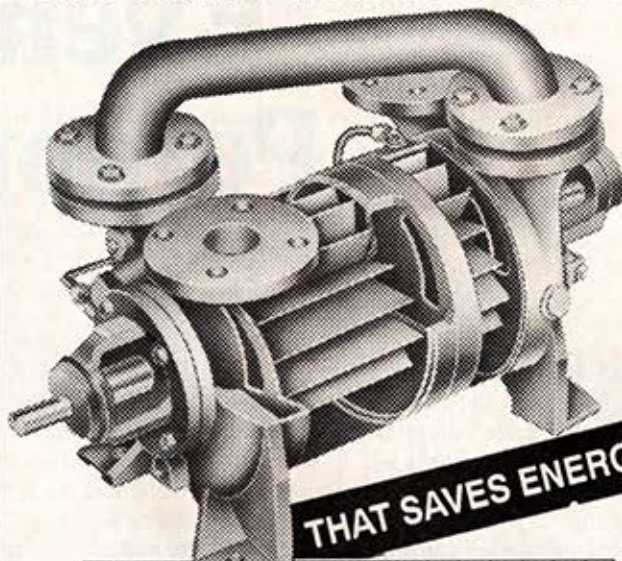
Why did the crazy Parsi put Marks on all hoarding boards? He wanted to be recognized as Marks and Spencers.

D.B. RUSTOMJI

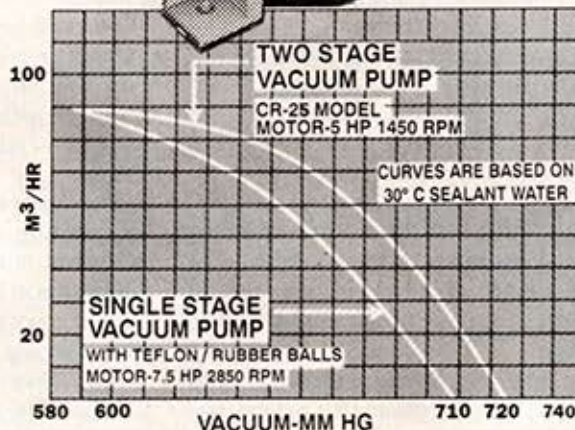
Calcutta

Edited by Arnavaz S. Mama

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Events and Personalities

Kids take an oath

"We found that the young children show good promise for future leadership of our community. Our religion will be safe with them," wrote Ms Gool Plumber, convener, Religious Education, Zoroastrian Stree Mandal under whose auspices was held the First Zoroastrian Children's Leadership Camp in Secunderabad. For the 121 children from Bombay, Pune, Nagpur, Surat, Sholapur, Ahmedabad, Madras and the twin cities of Secunderabad and Hyderabad, the four-day camp from October 21 to 24, 1995 was essentially geared to enhance their knowledge of the religion, the customs and traditions of the community as also to provide an outlet for their creative energies, according to the report sent to *Parsiana*.

The children gathered at the Seth Edulji S. Chenai Dharamshala and the Bai Pirojbai Chenai Hall, in the two age-groups, eight to 11 and 12-15, were provided varied fare: teaching sessions on religious education based on notes provided by Zoroastrian

Studies; demonstrations on stitching a sudreh, weaving a kusti, threading a *dana-ni-toran* (bead ornamentation for the doorway), painting on fabric, laying a Navroze table, and readying a *ses* (tray) for auspicious occasions; competitions in fabric painting, drawing, rangoli, dramatics — all on religious themes; community programs by way of a camp fire and a fashion show of traditional Parsi costumes which were open to the Parsi residents of the twin cities; plus educational visits and sight-seeing.

The camp proceedings commenced with flag hoisting and the children taking an oath based on an inscription of King Darius at Behistun in Iran, added Plumber. Invariably the days ended late in the night with group singing and music.

At the Seth Vicajee and Pestonji Meherji Parsi Fire-Temple, the children learnt the significance of various forms of fire, how prayers are performed, how to behave when visiting a fire-temple etc. At the Salar Jung Museum they viewed western art.

Three resource persons from Zoroastrian Studies — Ms Shenaz Munshi, Ms Firoza Punthakey-Mistree and Dr (Ms) Jeanie Bharucha — have been credited with contributing to the success of the camp.

"Basically our children are sensitive and want to know and preserve our traditions, practices and rituals," is Plumber's observation. "They are proud of our illustrious forefathers and their benevolent munificence. At the same time we also see that the dogmas and superficialities of practices which have crept into our religion are rightly resisted by them. They want to practice our religion without going into unresolved issues which have hindered our religion in recent years... The camp leaders who accompanied the various teams had their own sessions. Here, they participated in discussions and many issues were raised and discussed. In their

The winning charts (left) and a local camper as Zarathushtra at Secunderbad



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hands now rests the onus of carrying on religious education in their anjumans."

Preserving traditions

Committed to inspire "the youth of the community and preserve the traditions of our great religion and people," the Bombay Parsee Association (BPA) observed its platinum jubilee in 1995 by holding a function at All-bless Baug, Bombay Parsi Punchayet (BPP) trustee Dadi Engineer was the chief guest who commended the Association for regularly holding prayer, kusti-weaving, essay and elocution competitions and encouraging the deserving in other ways, notes a press release.

Seven individuals were felicitated at the function for their remarkable achievements: Ervad Rustomji Panthaky, retired principal of the Dadar Athornan Boarding Madressa, Ms Dolly Desai, Ms Tina Pithawala and Ms Silloo Kotwal in the field of education; Ms Mani Nanji and Baizad Devadhwala for excelling in sports; and Dr (Ms) Roxana Irani, archeologist. An entertainment program and a contributory dinner were also included in the evening function which was graced by BPP trustees Ms Silloo Kavarana and Dinshaw Mehta as the guests of honor and other invitees from the BPP, Iranian Zoroastrian Anjuman and The Zoroastrian Co-



operative Bank.

"The BPA (has) always been optimistic about the future of the community," mentioned the Association's president Vispi Dastur. "To fulfil and expand its various activities," the BPA has initiated a Platinum Jubilee Fund and invites contributions which may be sent to Dastur at Jasavala and Company, UCO Bank Building, D. N. Road, Bombay 400001.

Over the years the Association has extended help for educational, medical and other causes like droughts, earthquakes and floods; conducted a marriage bureau, religious classes, kusti weaving classes, Avesta classes; published Dastur Khurshed Dabu's books; and encouraged sports within the community. Their annual activities include paying homage to Dadabhai

Panthaki Baug's happy treasure hunters

BPA celebrations: At the cenotaph at Bombay's Khareghat Colony (ext left); Jamshed Guzder and Eruch Desai (below) laying a wreath and Dastur garlanding Naoroji's statue at Flora Fountain (left)

Naoroji and commemorating the deceased servicemen who had sacrificed their lives during war time, mentions the release.

Wheels of Fortune

To mark its silver jubilee year, the Panthaki Baug Welfare Centre (PWC) organized Wheels of Fortune, a car and motorcycle treasure hunt on September 24, 1995. Altogether 101 participants from all over Bombay set off on the 15-clue hunt from Bandra to Borivli, informs Pervez Driver, secretary of PWC. (The acronym of their Centre stands for purity, workmanship and character.)

The fortune of Rs 2,000 was awarded to Cyrus Sarkari, Ms Yasmin Sarkari, Ms Navaz Marker and Persis Katrak who were first among the car entries. Rayomand Jeejeebhoy and Burges Luth were first among the two-wheelers, winning the prize amount of Rs 1,000. The awards were presented by Hoshedar Confectioner and his wife, representing Rotring, the sponsors of this contest, mentions the press release.

Marking Masani's 90th

The invitation was for 6.30 p.m. but most of the guests started arriving much earlier. At 6.30 on the dot as always, Minoo Masani entered the Royal Bombay Yacht Club hall on November 20, 1995 to celebrate his 90th birthday. As S. V. Raju, editor of *Freedom First*, a journal founded by



Masani, jokingly told the gathering of close friends and associates, Masani's insistence on always being on time was not lost on his well-wishers.

Eminent jurist Nani Palkhivala described Masani as "one of the noblest Indians who ever lived" and added that "the country has not recognized the services of a man like Minoo Masani." Palkhivala noted that Masani was probably "the only surviving member of India's constituent assembly." Releasing a volume of essays put together in Masani's honor by K. S. Venkateswaran, a former joint editor of *Freedom First*, titled *In the Vanguard of Freedom*, Palkhivala mentioned that contributors to the book like Bernard Levin, Sol Sanders, Soli Sorabjee and others had written "not for money but for Masani."

Palkhivala recalled that Masani joined the house of Tatas in his 40s as principal secretary to J. R. D. Tata. He said that if Masani had a high regard for a person he would go all out to assist him. While ending his talk Palkhivala recited a few oft quoted lines that he felt were appropriate for the occasion: "May you live as long as you want, may you not want as long as you live, and may the happiest days of your youth be the saddest years of your life."

Raju then introduced Sharad Joshi, founder of the Shetkari Sanghatana which has been fighting the cause of the farmers, as the man on whom devolved the political mantle of Indian liberalism after Masani.

Joshi told the gathering that Masani's book, *Our India* had "made me temporarily a socialist." He said he had been fighting for 15 years "for ideas that are basically those of the Swatantra Party." The Swatantra Party, of which Masani was one of the main architects and its leader in Parliament, advocated economic liberalism at a time when socialism was in favor. "Socialism has been replaced by something worse," lamented Joshi, "the madness of communalism."

Amongst members of the audience who spoke was retired High Court judge Bakhtavar Lentin who described Masani as a great gentleman and a great fighter who stood by his principles.

A special issue of *Freedom First* titled "Minoo Masani 90" was released by Joshi. The editorial promised "that *Freedom First* which you founded in June 1952 will as



Masani (center) — a survivor of the constituent assembly — flanked by wife Sheela and Palkhivala

long as we are in publication, uphold the liberal traditions and values you cherished and which you have sought to so tirelessly promote among the Indian people."

Masani thanked the gathering for wishing him on his birthday but said he did not intend to make a speech. And amidst singing of Happy Birthday by the assembly proceeded to cut the birthday cake flanked by his wife Sheela and Palkhivala.

Katgara bags Agastya

In recognition of his achievements and contributions to the tourism industry, Adi J. Katgara was conferred the Agastya Award last September. Union minister of tourism and civil aviation Ghulam Nabi Azad presented the award to Katgara at the 44th annual convention of the Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI) in Calcutta, notes a press release.

Director of Travel Corporation (India) Limited, Katgara has been credited with pioneering tourism to Sikkim, Bhutan, Ladakh, the Lakshadweep and

Andaman Islands, promoting Indian ocean cruises, incentive tourism and tourism air charters to India. "These projects contributed towards Travel Corporation's present position as India's premier travel and tour organization," mentions the release.

Among the other national and international travel and trade associations with which Katgara is involved, adds the write-up, are the Tour Operators Council of TAAI where he serves as chairman, the American Society of Travel Agents where he enjoys the distinction of being the only Indian to have served as chairman and director of its international division; and the Grand Order of European Travel Organisers of which there are just two Indian members, he being one of them.

The Pacific Asia Travel Association has honored Katgara with two awards — Pioneer of the Pacific and Award of Merit — the only Indian to receive both, according to

the release.

Made health his business

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It was while running the Beramji Clinic with surgical, gynecological, orthopedic and medical facilities, that Beramji got particularly involved with acupressure and its applications in orthopedics. As Beramji puts it, "The principles behind acupressure are centuries old, like using a rolling pin on the body for relieving pains." What started

Katgara (right) receiving the Agastya Award from tourism minister Azad



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*Rumi and Yasmin Beramji: in the business of health
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as a half hour acupressure slot in his busy practice as a general practitioner has now snowballed into full-time work.

Roller Magic consists of the foot model and the hand model. The foot roller costs Rs 300 and according to Beramji should be below every person's desk. Ancient Chinese belief has it that the foot is the mirror image of the body. When you move your foot over the roller, the to and fro systemic action gives a tingling feeling which is supposed to stimulate every organ of the body.

The hand roller priced at Rs 150 is meant for local and specific areas. Not only is it expected to relax the muscles and improve blood supply to the region, but should also drain off all the toxins from the body by stimulating the lymphatic system, explains Beramji.

Roller Magic's "application is so simple that anyone can obtain good results: a child coming home tired from school... sports persons... salesmen who are on the road for long hours... army personnel and the police force," claims Beramji.

To create public awareness for his brainchild which has been launched as a product of Satya Health Farm and Resorts Private Limited of which Beramji is one of the promoters, they took part in various exhibitions held in Bombay. January 1996 should see Roller Magic marketed on an all-India basis for which a distributor has been appointed. Once a strong foundation is built in India, they hope to reach the export market.

Another venture proposed by Satya Health Farm (of which the other promoters



are Beramji's wife Dr Yasmin, Ashok Ahuja and his wife Mamta, and C. Mirchandani) is a specialized health farm in Karjat named God's Gift Health Farm which Beramji estimates will be fully operational in another two and a half to three years. Set amidst lush green surroundings on 50 acres of land, the Health Farm will be based on alternative medicine like acupressure, homeopathy, mud therapy, flower therapy, diet therapy, hydrotherapy and music therapy. A Sai Baba temple is coming up at the site which will be open to all faiths, informs Beramji.

This unique health farm will have all five star facilities, at the same time maintaining the ambience of a village. A hundred cottages are planned in serene surroundings where one can stay with the family. Vegetables and fruits, as also me-

dicinal herbs will be grown on the farm. The daily requirements of milk and ghee will be met by cattle kept on the farm. Other birds and animals too will be allowed to roam free on the premises where no vehicles will be permitted. People will be carried to and fro by hand carts, horse and bullock carts in utmost comfort. Beramji details the salient features of the utopic farm. At a later stage, they also plan to start a College of Alternative Medicine with the help of like-minded people.

Villie Daruvala

Ten Tata scholars

Of the 10 Parsi students, five males and five females selected as J. N. Tata scholars for the year 1995-96, eight have a background in science and will pursue higher studies in fields like medicine, engineering, environment, geology and synthetic chemistry. Management studies and international relations/policy studies have interested the other students, according to a press release issued by the J.N. Tata Endowment, giving the particulars of these 10 scholars.

Dr Firdaus Hirji Adenwalla who did his MBBS and Doctorate of Medicine from the Kasturba Medical College, Mangalore University, will be pursuing his studies in the UK to qualify as a Member of the Royal



Tata scholars from left: (top row) K. Desai and Irani; (second row) Mehta, Adenwalla, S. Desai and Palsetia; (third row) Mulla, Bajana, Mulla-Feroze and Pardiwala

College of Physicians. Adenwalla had earlier worked as resident medical registrar at Bombay's Breach Candy Hospital.

The other student of medicine is Dr (Ms) Dilshad M. Irani who did her bachelors in dental surgery from the College of Dental Surgery, Manipal. She has chosen to do her master's studies in oral pathology at the University of Adelaide, South Australia.

Following her post graduation in life sciences from the University of Bombay, Ms Parynaz F. Mehta will be focussing on environment and law at the Tufts University where she will be doing a master's program in urban and environmental policy.

Another life sciences graduate interested in environmental studies is Ms Rashneh N. Pardiwala, a product of Bombay's St Xavier's College. She has secured admission to the University of Edinburgh, UK for a master's course in environmental science, resource protection and management.

After obtaining the first rank at the MSc geology examination from the University of Bombay, Ms Tinaz Furdoon Bajana has joined the Bowling Green State University where she has been offered a partial assis-

tantship to do a further master's following which she will do her doctorate in petroleum geology.

Organic chemistry and synthetic chemistry are the fields explored by Hormuzd Raiomand Mulla. After completing his MSc in organic chemistry from the University of Bombay, Mulla's interest in synthetic chemistry made him join the Organic Chemistry Laboratory of the Institute of Science, Bombay. Fascinated by his mentor Dr M. S. Chande's work on sulphur and nitrogen heterocycles, Mulla is keen to pursue this research. He will be doing his doctorate from the University of Kentucky where he has been offered a full teaching assistantship.

A graduate in electrical engineering from the University of Bombay, Jamshed Hoshang Palsetia is, according to his professor, "one of the very few students who can think and write fine algorithms and programs. He has a strong inclination towards the subject that demands sound mathematical and analytical skills." He had secured admission to the Case Western Reserve University but opted instead to go to the University of Massachusetts, Lowell, where the annual expenses are lower.

A background in chemical engineering notwithstanding, Kaiser R. Mulla-Feroze will be pursuing a master's degree in management at the prestigious Stanford University where he will be specializing in strategy and operations. After his bachelor's in chemical engineering from the University Department of Chemical Technology, Bombay, he worked as senior consultant with Anderson Consulting, Arthur Anderson and Company for three years.

Another student to opt for a master's in management is Shyarsh Xerxes Desai. A second generation Tata scholar, he has joined the Kellogg Graduate School of Management, Northwestern University. Earlier he did his master's in management studies from the University of Bombay after which he joined Tata Industries as manager-finance.

Ms Kaynaaz F. Desai has been admitted to the Monterey Institute of International Studies for an MA in international relations/policy studies. A postgraduate in English language and literature from Bombay University, Desai is proficient in French and has also done basic Japanese.

Compiled by Parinaz Gandhi

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The 1991 Census — A cause for rejoicing or reflection?

Only if the 0-14 age bracket shows an increase in numbers should the community be elated with the latest Indian census findings

Ava Khullar

The census report figures for 1991 have come as a surprise, and a very pleasant surprise it is for the Parsi community. That the figures show we are up by 4,752 persons is by itself a meagre increase, but if this number is added to the 20 percent decline that had been anticipated in view of progressively declining trends since 1951 (from 1971 to 1981 alone the census showed a drop from 96,735 to 71,630, a fall of well over 20 percent), then its significance is that the decline has been arrested, and there has been a decennial growth of 19,000. And, if we carry our sense of euphoria further to the next census, we can look forward to a healthier demographic situation in the 21st century.

But let us not get carried away. The reported figures require careful scrutiny. Some general comments regarding observed demographic trends in recent decades may help us to understand better this new phenomenon and place it in a proper perspective. Let us play the doubting Casandra first.

The figures belie the community's statistics regarding births and deaths published by *Parsiana*, showing deaths exceeding births by around 500 in a year! These figures give as accurate a picture as is possible for Bombay, but not so for other areas unless the concerned anjumans feed the necessary data to *Parsiana*.

One may assume that this trend is more acute in smaller groups outside Bombay where the communities represent old settlements and the structure is aging. Take, for example, the case of the once thriving Parsi community which had grown around the first textile mill of the Tata empire in Nagpur. Now, in 1995, in a group of around 700, there are over 10 percent deaths in a decade. The decline is further aggravated as difficulties in finding suitable partners within the group leads either to an unmarried state or a growing percentage marry-

ing out. At a rough guess, this could be 25 to 30 percent, but no exact estimate has been prepared. The community being mainly orthodox, the children of Parsi mothers married out are not accepted in the fold. We have cause to shudder when we look beyond to another 100 years for this and other similarly placed Parsi groups.

Such trends are observed in most places. Why else have community watchers been crying themselves hoarse about declining birth rates, increased death rates, escalating out marriages, late or no marriages and subsequent loss of childbearing capacity?

And now this census revelation. How does one explain it? Some observations by way of conjecture may be attempted:

- Could it be that the earlier censuses under-reported the number of Zoroastrians? Not many people in India are aware of the existence of our minuscule group or the Zoroastrian religion, especially outside Bombay and Gujarat, and the possibility that census enumerators did not record the religion correctly would be very understandable. Moreover, some may have written "Parsi" and others "Zoroastrian" on the census form, further confusing the census analysis. For the 1991 census, the Bombay Parsi Punchayet (BPP) and other anjumans had specifically asked Zoroastrians to state their religion clearly when the form was filled, and so more accurate reporting could have resulted.

This would mean that the number of Zoroastrians even in earlier years was higher by, say, a few thousand (who knows, it may be so even for 1991), but there was systematic under-reporting, a situation partly remedied in 1991. This could explain and reconcile the higher figures for 1991, with a declining trend over the decades: i.e. the figure of the total population in 1961, 1971 and 1981 would have been higher than reported by several thousands, not withstanding the declining demogra-

phic characteristics noted by community observers.

Under-reporting is definitely there. For example, Delhi has around 700 to 800 Zoroastrians, but the census records only 41 persons in 1991! This is because very few sister communities in North India know who a Zoroastrian is. The Delhi Parsi Anjuman is conscious of this lacuna and its efforts over the past few years have been to participate in inter-religious meetings and discussions. A few years ago it organized a four-day Parsi Festival, which perhaps inspired the Parasika festival in Bombay. But such efforts extend the exposure and awareness of Parsis to select groups of upper strata elite and leaders of other faiths, rather than the not so enlightened enumerators who come to collect census data. In my personal experience one enumerator wrote "Australian" against the religion column when a Parsi lady told him she was a Zoroastrian.

Observers of the census process have noted that the chances of coverage of all members of a family are better in the case of the larger joint family structure, where the enumerator is sure to find some older members at home who will provide details of all family members. This advantage is lost by nuclear families where both parents are probably working and the enumerator gives up after a couple of visits on finding a locked door. The former favorable situation is more possible in old settlements like Bombay and Gujarat. However, for Zoroastrian families in other towns, like for example Delhi, being mostly nuclear and dispersed all over the city, the latter scenario is more common.

After all, no figures collected under such a massive operation as the Census of India can be sacrosanct. A substantial margin of error has to be built in. Census results show trends and not exact figures. Often even the trends are misleading. Ex-

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perience in the United States, for example, showed that the rate of participation in the work force was reported highly inaccurately during the census, because the personnel undertaking the operation were ill-equipped for the task. Worried about the findings, further sample surveys were undertaken with professional expertise which resulted in a clearer picture, negating the earlier findings.

- Another possible explanation could be the more accurate reporting of mixed marriages in 1991, with the Zoroastrian women married out having consciously stressed their religious identity instead of referring to their households as Hindu, Muslim or Christian — the better known religions. The setting up of The Association of Inter-Married Zoroastrians is an indicator of the positive attitude of Zoroastrians married out staking their rightful claim to be recognized as such.

If similar data on the mixed marriages for the 1981 census were also available, the picture would show if this aspect was largely under-reported in earlier years and rectified in 1991. The reason for this is that Parsi women married out have non-Parsi surnames and are therefore largely left out when a counting of heads for the community is undertaken, a lacuna noticed in the

survey of Bombay in 1984. Such comparable data would also establish the magnitude or otherwise of this phenomenon in Bombay.

- There is also a growing number of instances where children of mixed couples are having their navjotes performed and these children come under the Zoroastrian

*One enumerator
wrote "Australian"
against the religion
column when a Parsi
lady said "Zoroastrian"*

fold, thus compensating to a certain extent the numerical loss to the community due to such out marriages. Could accurate reporting of this aspect have added to the numbers? If so, this could affect favorably the crucial 0-14 years age-group.

- As I had noted in my article in *Parsiana's* thirtieth anniversary issue, (November 1994), in smaller more open Zoroastrian groups, young Parsi couples are consciously going in for two and sometimes three children. Is this reflected in the increased

1991 figures? Is such a trend growing among the more community conscious young couples in Bombay and Gujarat also? Are couples who are unable to have children — we suspect there is a substantial percentage of couples who are involuntarily childless — seeking medical counselling and help of fertility clinics to benefit from the vast advances medical science has made in this field?

- There is also a possibility of a shift in migration patterns, with a lesser number moving out and some coming back. The general leveling down of skills among the average Parsi youth due to economic constraints, lack of aspiration, or lack of inclination to move out of Bombay, etc, is further likely to reduce the percentage migrating out. With the globalization and liberalization of the Indian economy in the 1990s, and newer and more lucrative avenues for gainful employment opening up, this trend may possibly increase.

But finally, on a positive note, let us assume the census figures are a true reflection of a growing trend in the community's population. How meaningful is this increase?

A well-known Swedish statistician, A. G. Sundbarg, has worked out a measure which, if applied to the age composition of



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a population, reveals whether it is a growing, stationary or a declining population. The following are the model proportions of the various age-groups in his three types of population:

Category of Population	Percentage of Population		
	Under 15 years	15-49 years	50 years and above
Progressive	40	50	10
Stationary	26.5	50.5	23
Regressive	20	50	30

Two earlier studies sponsored by the BPP in Bombay in 1961 and 1984, and a study carried out in Delhi in 1978, showed the following percentages in the three age-groups.

Place of Survey	Percentage of Parsi Population		
	Under 15 years	15-49 years	50 years and above
Bombay 1961	17.8	51.6	30.6
Bombay 1984	12.14	43.86	44.0
Delhi 1978	16.7	49.8	33.5

The conclusion: all three came under the regressive category.

While most populations, especially in developing countries, show a pyramidal structure, with a wide base of young people, tapering up to a lesser number in older age-groups, the Parsi population structure represents an inverted pyramid. Unless the pyramid is put back in its proper position, the ultimate survival of the population is threatened.

If therefore we are hoping that the census findings are bringing us glad tidings, it would be important to get more detailed information and statistics about certain crucial parameters, particularly the age structure and marital and fertility patterns. ■ If the increased figure, or a substantial portion thereof, falls within the 0-14 years age-group, thereby signalling a virtual re-birth of a dying community, we have cause for great rejoicing. It would imply that in spite of a large percentage of annual deaths reported by *Parsiana*, there is adequate replenishment by way of births to keep the community fires burning. In fact an increase of 19,000, as mentioned earlier would be more than a 25 percent increase over the 1981 figure of 71,630. But in order to gauge the change, it would be necessary to obtain the age breakup of the 1981 census to compare and see exactly where the increase has come. Since the major increase is noted for Greater Bombay (out of the additional 4,752, 3,741 are accounted in Bombay's population which has gone up from 50,053 in 1981 to 53,794 in 1991), figures for Greater Bombay alone would give a good indication.

■ If, however, there is more than a normal increase in the 15 to 45 age-group, this could reflect a lesser number migrating to seek greener pastures out of India, or alternatively that a growing number of women marrying out are consciously stressing their presence in the Zoroastrian fold and getting recorded as such in the census.

■ If, on the other hand, the increase falls mainly in the 50 years and over category, then we may safely poke a pin into our balloon of excitement as that would re-confirm the earlier trend of a progressively aging population. This would also confirm our speculation regarding under-reporting in earlier censuses.

In the final analysis then, the 1991 census figures raise more questions than give answers.

So where do we get our answers? Efforts need to be made to get available data from the census office, and persuade them as a special case to give access to important data which is collected but not tabulated for very small religious communities like ours. But ultimately we need to do our own homework. A comprehensive, penetrating and exhaustive survey of the community in Bombay and the rest of India is needed not only to get our numbers straight, but to inquire into our socioeconomic conditions, our needs and attitudes regarding the future of the community.

The call was given at the Fifth World Zoroastrian Congress in 1990 for the establishment of a Zoroastrian Global Data Centre where data would be collected, stored, updated periodically, and surveys carried out into relevant aspects from time to time. Unfortunately the project has not taken off in spite of persistent efforts over the last five years from some of us; and those demographers and social scientists excellently qualified to lead such a ven-

ture, have lost interest due to leadership apathy.

However, some specific action could be undertaken with smaller inquiries to test the validity of the census findings.

• Comparison of 1991 census with figures maintained by punchayets and anjumans in cities such as Nagpur, Pune and Bangalore may show if there are significant differences. If these are very glaring as in the case of Delhi, then a strong protest needs to be conveyed to the census authorities and the very basis of the census figures must raise serious doubts.

• A 10 percent sample survey in Bombay and Delhi may be carried out to ascertain changes between 1981 and 1991 on some key demographic indicators, such as birth and death rates, in and out migrations, marriages within and outside the community and navjotes performed of children of mixed married couples. The families falling within the sample may be asked about each of these aspects as it prevailed in 1981 and then 1991 in their household. This would act as a sample crosscheck and show if there has been a positive change in the population structure.

Until some further light can be thrown on the census findings, hopefully with our own efforts, we have to hold our excitement until the next census, or the next, to be sure that we are indeed seeing the light of survival at the end of a very dark tunnel.



Ms. Ava Khullar (née Kanga) has a master's degree in political science from UCLA. She has worked with the research officer at the Centre for Study in Developing Societies, Delhi, participating in the program for the study of minority communities, where she had undertaken the study of the Parsi community.



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BPP Elections:

Trusteeship and voter fatigue

While Rustom Tirandaz fought his way onto the BPP board, Jamshed Guzder's election was a walk-over

Arnavaz S. Mama

With the holding of three trusteeship elections of the Bombay Parsi Punchayet (BPP) in the course of six months it was understandable that there was a bit of voter fatigue. With 867 votes being cast in the close tussle between solicitor Dadi Engineer and municipal councillor Rustom Tirandaz in July to 822 being polled in the fray between Tirandaz and chartered accountant Kersi Limathwalla in October to only 646 voters out of a total of 1,534 voting in the lopsided contest between present chairman Jamshed Guzder and underdog Dr Syrus Irani in December, a trace of disinterest was evident.

An element of confusion had prevailed as Guzder's term came to an end. He had had an intention to retire and had mentioned it at the executive council meeting of the Federation of Parsi Zoroastrian Anjumans of India in Bombay in June 1995. There were also indications on the grapevine that the near octogenarian was not keeping very good health. Indeed, his fabled sprightliness seemed to suffer from the fatigue of his hectic schedule in recent months.

In light of these indicators Dinshaw Tamboly of Navsari and Bombay, the businessman who successfully spearheaded the World Zoroastrian Organization's amelioration program in rural Gujarat and established its medical and entrepreneurial help facilities, had filed his nomination for trusteeship. Tamboly had made it quite clear months ahead that he was interested in Punchayet trusteeship. He had also, simultaneously, indicated that he would never fight Guzder in an election. His words had been, "I respect the man too much to do that." Hence, when Guzder changed his mind, Tamboly withdrew: "Mr Jamshed Guzder, apart from being a sitting trustee, is a very illustrious and respected member of our community. In view of the esteem in which I hold Mr



The victors: Guzder (top) and Tirandaz

Jamshed Guzder, I do not feel it proper to stand for an elected office in which he too professes interest." Tamboly's letter had

been reproduced in *The Bombay Samachar* of December 3, 1995 with editorial plaudits for his sensitivity and restraint which have become rare commodities in recent Parsi politics.

Guzder's letter, explaining his decision to seek reelection, as reproduced in the *Parsi Press* on December 10, notes in part, "I was not actually planning to stand again for reelection. However, I was touched by the fact that so many people took the trouble of phoning me, meeting me, writing to me, urging me to stand for reelection. They said that by not standing I would be doing a disservice to the community. This was one of the factors which prompted me to change my mind and file my nomination."

"Another was that the affairs of the Parsi Punchayet are passing through a transition. One very important development is that within a short time — perhaps two months — the Parsi Punchayet will be earning about Rs 22 crore by sale of land."

"I therefore felt that in view of my experience as a trustee for many years and with my background as a businessman and industrialist for over 40 years, I should continue to place the benefit of my experience at the disposal of the Punchayet. It will be my responsibility to ensure that this large sum of Rs 22 crore is well invested and well utilized for the benefit of the community and the various projects of the Punchayet."

"In this connection I may mention that on the retirement of Mr Eruch Desai on December 4, 1995 I took over again as president and chairman of the Parsi Punchayet."

The reference to Desai's retirement adds a touch of realpolitik to the otherwise staid story. Guzder's 'election' as chairman of the BPP board by a majority of four to three on the retirement of Dr Aspi Golwalla in March 1993 deprived Desai of the position



until the Bombay High Court ruled that, according to the BPP constitution, seniority and not election is the legal mode of transmission of the office of chairman of the BPP board. Though the verbal ruling was received in April 1994, it was only in July 1995 that the High Court furnished the written order providing the logic behind it. Guzder and his supporters had sought a stay on the order until an appeal was heard. The High Court admitted the appeal but declined to grant a stay on the original order and the Supreme Court upheld its decision. Thus Desai became chairman during the last four months of his tenure. Desai informed *Parsiana* that the pending appeal, which had not come up until the end of his (Desai's) term, has since been withdrawn. Guzder, the second in seniority hitherto, now functions as chairman according to established usage and custom and the question of the board's right to

'elect' a chairman seems to have been dropped for want of the need to pursue it.

This was the second attempt for lone contender Dr Syrus Irani to seek BPP trusteeship. His earlier attempt to gain Anjuman Committee membership in 1992 as an elected member had also proved futile. What had propelled him to stand against an all-out favorite? The doctor who had pursued his electoral campaign singly from voter to voter said he was "confident of winning" though he was not sure of even carrying the medical fraternity with him: "In Parsi politics nobody can say exactly. Basically, I'm not a politician," he noted.

One of the late Darvish Irani's 11 children Syrus has perhaps imbibed some of his father's commitment to the community. A one-man institution at doongerwadi, Darvish was said to have been a source of support to many a family in its hour of



tragedy. Hence Syrus was justified in saying that he has been "looking at the affairs of the BPP and knowing it from my childhood." He has been one of those who feel that Parsis need reservation in educational and professional institutions. When he sought the help of the government of Maharashtra's minorities cell, he says he was told by its chairman, Zafar Saifullah, to come through the Punchayet. He believes that a community 'think tank' needs to be established. The scenario he has in mind for the coming years is of a minuscule community "sandwiched between two major warring communities." To avoid that he prescribes unity within the community and says that only those who truly work for the community should be trustees of the BPP. "Those who only want to warm chairs should leave the Punchayet. (Also,) the basic filament of religion can't change with time... Rites, customs, dokhmenashini

must continue."

A religious council is his answer to the current problems. He would like the Punchayet to help with loans to youth entrepreneurs so that they can stand on their own feet and not be dependent on the Punchayet. "I didn't depend on anyone for my election campaign. The battle should be fought alone; then you can talk to the voters freely."

The only suspense at this election came by way of a technical hitch after the voting was over. The earlier figure of 661 total votes had to be rectified after a retally of the voting registers to synchronize with the 646 votes in hand (four votes invalid), delaying the proceedings by almost an hour. Scrutineers Ms Homai Modi and Russey Bhungara, the BPP's chief executive Behram Lashkari, joint secretary Ms Gool Tata, additional joint secretary Ms Sheroo Master and other senior personnel

gathered around the table to sort out the votes under the eagle eye of Rustom Hormuzdiar, president of the election for the nth time.

Thereafter it was smooth sailing until the last votes were counted.

While 20 years ago Guzder's supporters had ritually hoisted him to their shoulders in his hour of triumph against Jimmy Shroff, this time, in deference to his age, the celebration was less boisterous with winner and loser feeding each other chocolate cake!

Tirandaz vs Limathwalla

From a total of 822 votes cast at the October 14 election to determine the successor to retiring trustee and BPP chairman Eruch Desai, Rustom Tirandaz (with 454 votes) trounced his rival Kersi Limathwalla (with 360 votes) by 94 votes (eight votes were invalid).



Top: The bell heralds the beginning and end of the voting

Center row (from left) BPP trustees witness the counting of the votes: Ms Silloo Kavarana and outgoing chairman Desai; Dadar stalwart Jesia; all hands at sorting the votes; candidate Limathwalla; Armaity and Rustom Tirandaz with Zarine and Kersi Limathwalla

Bottom row (from left) President of the election Hormuzdiar; Limathwalla's and Tirandaz's campaign supporters; scrutineer Bhungara (ext right) and voters; Tirandaz with wife and sons Darayus and Fareedoon





Despite the suspense, it had been a low key, gentlemanly contest. In his hour of victory Tirandaz couldn't but refer to his hero Sir Pherozeshah Mehta, the 'Lion of Bombay' and architect of the Bombay Municipality who was nonetheless rejected by his community when he stood for BPP trusteeship not once, but twice! Noting that his electoral victory was a "victory not of Rustom Tirandaz but (of) the collective effort of each and every human being who wears sudreh and kusti," Tirandaz thanked "each and everyone of those who canvassed for me and for my worthy opponent" ere the champagne popped to the chanting of *Chaiyé hamé Zarthosti*.

Tirandaz's electoral campaign had continued on the trend he had set in July when he lost the seat vacated by Jamsheed Kanga to solicitor Dadi Engineer. Fresh thinking had to be undertaken by Limathwalla, a vice president of the CER (Committee for Economic Revival) who had led its youth wing initially and was best known for the publication of the CER blood donors directory whose revised third edition is currently under print.

Not too surprisingly, considering that the community tends to look askance at the growing number of CER sympathisers on the BPP board, Limathwalla chose to stand as an independent, being proposed by Associated Cement Companies (ACC) director Pesi Jagus and seconded by foreign exchange dealer Pheroze



Top: security outside; careful scrutiny inside; Guzder & Irani with well-wishers

Left: election officials with scrutineer Modi in the foreground

Framroze Mehta.

Initially there had been some dissonance at the hustings: Tirandaz who had sought CER support in the earlier election against Engineer, had been told then that he would be the party's candidate at the next election if he allowed Engineer to come in unopposed. Tirandaz however chose

to fight the election and lost. When he now reminded the CER of its earlier offer, the party did not feel itself bound to honor

it unless he withdrew now and sought its support in December when Guzder's term was due to end. But, according to Limathwalla, Tirandaz said, "I am a politician. I may lose but I don't withdraw!" Limathwalla told his supporters at Nowroz Baug that he had even offered Tirandaz the luck of the draw but the latter had turned it down.

As it turned out, Tirandaz's instinct prevailed. That Ms Mithoo Jesia, the redoubtable social worker of Dadar's Mancherji Joshi Colony and a Tirandaz supporter was active in the organization of his campaign, helped to turn the tide, though she personally disclaimed any such compliments. During the earlier contest Jesia had been out of station almost until election day.

Tirandaz's main plank has been the institution of adult franchise in the election of trustees. Limathwalla had some

continued on page 34

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Prophetic paintings

Manchershaw Pithawalla and his son Sorab's portraits of Zarathushtra adorn many fire-temples

Homi J. Rogers

This may seem an exaggeration, but the one family of Parsi artists whose paintings most Zoroastrians have seen, are the Pithawallas. There is usually a signed Pithawalla portrait of the Prophet hanging in most houses and agiaries, or a representation based on how the father or fils Pithawalla separately conceived of the Prophet. Then there's the portrait of a Framji Patel painted by the senior Pithawalla, Manchershaw, that one sees between tasty morsels of dhanshak at The Ripon Club, Bombay. More recently, when India observed the 100th anniversary of her famous Zoroastrian son Dadabhai Naoroji wrestling a seat in the British Parliament a century ago, the publication released on the occasion had a Manchershaw Pithawalla painting of the Grand Old Man on the cover.

Manchershaw Pithawalla's paintings, and later those done by his son Sorab, have been acclaimed for their almost photographic faithfulness to the subject. A sharp eye for detail and a vivid delineation of physical features have been the hallmark of Pithawalla portraiture. Yet, oddly enough, painting was not the first vocation of either Manchershaw or Sorab. For the senior Pithawalla, the first source of livelihood was the writing of letters for illiterates for the fee of two pice (half an anna) each in Bombay, the city he migrated to at a tender age on the demise of his father Fakirjee. And Sorab, who inherited his father's penchant for art, was an architect by profession.

The Pithawalla story begins on October 26, 1872 when Manchershaw was born to Dinbai in a poor peasant family at Pitha, a small village 18 km from Valsad. The middle child in a family of four brothers and one sister, Manchershaw came to Bombay to help support his family and providentially stumbled upon his vocation. Then just 16 years old, he would stroll down to the Chowpatty beach after a day's letter-writing and relax by sketching there, according to his daughter-in-law, Hira, a social worker attached to the Ratan Tata Institute, among other bodies. On one such foray into the world of art, he was observed by John Griffiths, principal of Sir J. J. School of Art. Impressed by young Manchershaw's talent, Griffiths asked him to join the School. Much as he would have liked to, Manchershaw had to turn down the invitation for want of money. But a farsighted Griffiths persisted, offered Pithawalla a freeship for the first year and enrolled him. Pithawalla paid for his seven-year stint at the art School by winning scholarships year after year. His progress under his competent teacher, Mr Chiran-jilal, was quite marvellous, notes H. D. Darukhanawala in his book, *Parsi Lustre on Indian Soil*.

In 1894, Pithawalla exhibited several portraits at the Bombay Fine Arts Exhibition for the first time, and won a silver medal and a cash award of Rs 70. From then on there was no looking back for the 22-year-old lad. Within the next 17 years, he exhibited his works at Simla, Darjeeling,





Manchershaw's portraits of Sir Jamsetji Jejeebhoy (left) and Philip IV of Spain (far left) from earlier paintings and Dadabhai Naoroji (below center)

Paintings photographed by Varghese Fernandez

Poona, Madras, Bombay, picking up plaudits and collecting 24 gold and silver medals. These included three gold medals from the Bombay Art Society. The Society's gold medal, instituted in 1894, was considered to be the highest honor for artists in India and, "of the Indian artists," to quote from the *Centenary Volume* of the Bombay Art Society authored by Dr Baburao Sadwalkar, "M. F. Pithawalla created history by winning the gold medal for three consecutive years — 1907, 1908 and 1909; an achievement which has never been equalled."

The record, expectedly, created quite a sensation amongst the artists, but not one grudged Pithawalla the honor. He had covered himself with glory on the canvas of life without family riches or influence to support him.

The best, though, was yet to come. A self-made man, Pithawalla remained the eternal student and set off in March 1911 to see the masterpieces of the Western world. After visiting Italy, he arrived in London in June 1911. By October, reported *The Graphic*, "he has painted no fewer than 25 pictures" in oil, water and pastels.

Though it had not been his intention to exhibit his works in England, with the support of friends, notably Sir Mancherjee Bhownagree, the second Parsi member of the British House of Commons, Pithawalla held an exhibition of his paintings at the Dore Galleries in London. Hira Pithawalla has carefully preserved a copy of the publication brought out on the occasion, and goes through the booklet brimming with justifiable pride. She draws our attention



Sorab Pithawalla (above) and his rendition of father Manchershaw (ext left)



to the press notices which selected for praise, from among the 25 exhibited works, portraits of K. R. Cama, a certain Mr Logan, and a self-portrait.

The Standard's review lauded Pithawalla for being a "good colorist ...and (having) a rare feeling for character." *The*



He would stroll down to the Chowpatty beach after a day's letter-writing and relax by sketching there

Manichshaw's self-portrait (top left) and as depicted in Parsi Lustre on Indian Soil (top right)

Below: Queen Elizabeth and the Mahakumari of Burdwan at Manichshaw's exhibition (Parsi Lustre on Indian Soil)

Globe declared that "the artist's best work is that accomplished at home, upon sitters of his own nationality, especially the late K. R. Cama, a grey-bearded old gentleman clad in a violet robe and turban." The souvenir reproduces the 25 paintings in black and white, including the self-portrait, and though we cannot see the colors, the expressions convey the artist's dexterity and keen powers of observation. And one tends to go along with the remark of art critic Sir George Birdwood that barring two Britons, "I would rather have my head painted by Mr Pithawalla than any other artist in the United Kingdom."

Though Pithawalla was comfortable with portraiture in the European style and could duplicate the works of the old masters, he depicted Indian figures with as much felicity. A collection of 14 water colors of Indian women done by him was presented to Queen Mary when she visited India as Princess of Wales in 1905. The collection showcased the different attire worn by women in various parts of the country. Pithawalla's versatility and talent are obvious in this set, which includes an interesting contrast of the old Iranian style of dress of a Parsi lady with the later



modifications introduced by subtle Western influences.

Equally outstanding are his portraits of the Prophet, depicted holding a ball of fire in one hand and a nine-notched stick in the other. An original Manichshaw painting hangs in the Navsari Atash Bahram; and a large painting of the Prophet by his son can be viewed, among other places, at Bombay's Boyce Agiary. "Sorab also painted half-Zoroasters," his widow Hira informs us, and one such painting of

Zoroaster half rising from fluffy clouds is framed at the entrance to the inner sanctum of Pune's Kadmi (Komra after the weathervane atop) Agiary.

Manichshaw's contribution to Zoroastrianism through his delineation of Zarathushtra with the features and dress that all of us recognize today, may have been prompted by his deep faith in the religion. "He was a true Zoroastrian by nature," recalls Hira, remembering her father-in-law's affable and humble per-

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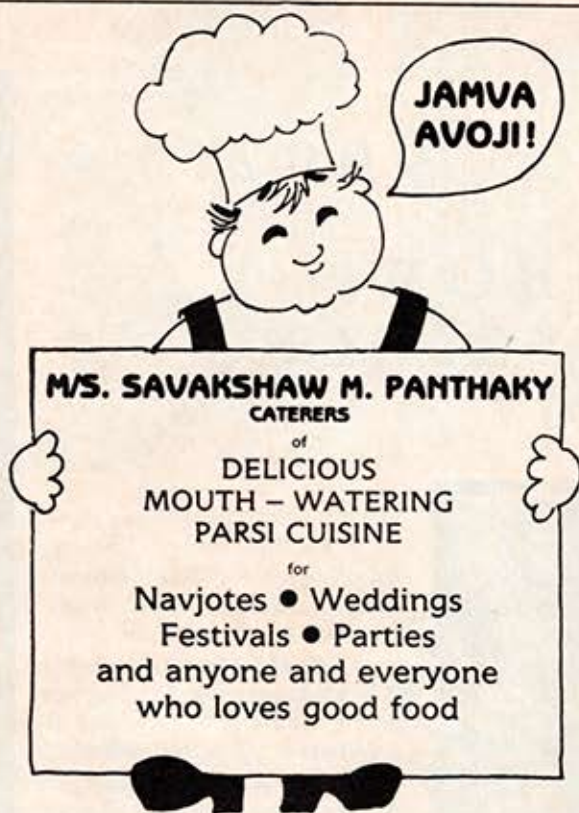
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sonality. "He was also very charitably inclined," she adds, bringing to fore another Zoroastrian trait.

His charity was not restricted to his pocket, but he generously gave of his time and energy to budding artists. Manchershaw had close connections with the Bombay Art Society, being a committee member for 30 years. He was also a member of the first executive committee of the Art Society of India, which was set up in 1918 to assert India's artistic identity, and served as its chairman from 1921 to 1933. His paintings still inspire a new generation of artists, and almost all J. J. School graduates are familiar with Pithawalla and hold him in high esteem. "You must visit our School, and see his work hanging in the library," enthuses a young artist we met at the Jehangir Art Gallery.

Unfortunately for the world of art, neither Manchershaw nor Sorab (his second son) were blessed with a particularly long life. Manchershaw died in 1937, when he was 65; and Sorab, in spite of "his athletic and muscular body," to quote Hira, succumbed to a massive heart attack in 1959, when he was only 48.

But the two Pithawallas succeeded in leaving behind a legacy. Manchershaw, whom Hira recalls as being a nationalist, got back from England the paintings he executed there during his 1911 visit. It is possible that some of them are with the National Museum of Modern Art which acquired many of his paintings only a few years ago from his ailing daughter Piroja (since deceased) residing in Pune. There is a chance, according to Sadwalkar, of many of Manchershaw's paintings returning to his city of adoption, Bombay, once the Gallery of Modern Art to be housed in the Cowasjee Jehangir Hall gets operational.

Sorab's works can be seen in the Bombay High Court and in the Freemason Hall. His portrait of Sir Sorabji Pochkhanawala graces the Central Bank of India's head office.

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The Priests' Rebuttal

Four High Priests defend their decision to permit the navjote of community doyen Neville Wadia

Dasturs (Dr) Hormazdyar K. Mirza, (Dr) Kaikhusroo M. JamaspAsa, (Dr) Firoze M. Kotwal and Hormazdiar N. Dastur

The issue of Neville and Nusli Wadia's initiation is being publicly discussed in our community with the usual accompaniment of ignorance, misunderstanding, irrelevant quotations, suppression of truth and feelings of enmity and animosity. We therefore feel obliged to make the following observations:

The principle works both ways

"Here raises voice — false-speaker or truth-speaker

Learned or unlearned — by his belief and mind:

So following Rightmindedness (Armaiti) — through Spirit inquires where the fault (lies)!" (Y.31.12)

These are prophetic words — prophetic allegorically and also in reality! These words tell the eternal truth of this worldly life. So long as man's understanding is incomplete, there will be controversy and difference of opinion in worldly life. In fact, controversy honestly entered into by knowledgeable persons without an ulterior motive is necessary, as it is conducive to advancement of knowledge and learning.

One striking point in this matter is that the above quoted prophetic words apply fittingly to the present Parsi community, particularly in Bombay. At present controversy is raised mainly by uninstructed persons with ulterior motives. This is distressful and harmful to the community, as such debates keep it afflicted and divided. But we have to bear and suffer in this life, as the prophetic words tell us. The only satisfaction is 'Rightmindedness through Spirit inquires where the fault (lies)!'!

The Principle

The principle is: Zoroastrianism does not accept conversion. According to this prin-



Left to right: Dasturs JamaspAsa and Mirza (top), Kotwal and Dastur

ciple, if a non-Zoroastrian is converted to Zoroastrianism, that conversion is illegal and invalid. This may be termed 'inward-conversion.' The same principle also lays down that if a Zoroastrian is converted to an alien religion, that conversion is also illegal and invalid. This can be termed 'outward-conversion.' Hence, the principle works both ways.

Zoroastrian groups

The present Zoroastrian community may broadly be divided into the following groups:

1. Those who lead a good life of virtue, observe religious rites and lead a benevolent life according to circumstances.
2. Those who lead a good life of virtue but neglect religious rites. Still they are considered Zoroastrians in every respect.

3. A Zoroastrian may be a thief, criminal or sinner, even a murderer, still he is regarded as a Zoroastrian enjoying all rights in the community. Such a person is free to attend religious ceremonies, visit places of worship, in some cases apparently for prayers but in reality to steal what is available there. After death, too, dokhmenashini is allowed and all ceremonies are performed without any criticism, objection and opposition, leaving everything to divine justice. He is still considered a Zoroastrian.

4. There might be Zoroastrians who are married to non-Zoroastrian ladies or who have kept non-Zoroastrian mistresses; such persons enjoy every right as Zoroastrians in the community.

5. There are some Zoroastrians who are attracted to alien rites, philosophy and even alien religion. Till only a decade ago non-Zoroastrian religious ceremonies were openly performed by some Zoroastrians in various places including Nargol, Udvada, Pardi, Valsad, Navsari and Surat. The Zoroastrians involved in these alien ceremonies were not regarded as non-Zoroastrians. They have not been debarred from any Zoroastrian institutions or ceremonies. Some Zoroastrians might have formally adopted an alien faith only a generation ago. Such Zoroastrians may be called Zoroastrians who have gone astray. If such Zoroastrians realise their mistake in later life, sincerely repent the past action and express their honest desire to revert to their ancestral religion, without any ulterior motive, then they are allowed to revert to the ancestral religion after ceremonial repentance.

Scriptural evidence

According to *Videwdad* (Vd) 3.38-39, if a Zoroastrian commits an unpardonable sin, normal repentance is not applicable to such a person. Then what is to be done? This is explained in Vd 3.40: 'If one has faith and instruction in the Mazdayasni religion, then if one has no faith and no instruction in the Mazdayasni religion, (then) it (ie the religion) wipes out (the sin) for them; for those who have faith in the Mazdayasni religion (and) those who are not committing thereafter the untimely (ie sinful) acts'. See also H. K. Mirza, *Conversion Caucus* (Bombay 1971, p.12). In this Avesta passage, the words 'one having no faith, no instruction' clearly refers to those Zoroastrians who have gone astray, and

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this Avesta precept should decide the present problem.

The above passage is further supported by Vd 3.42: 'The Mazdayasni Religion prescribes repentance for the full-aged.' This also appropriately applies to those Zoroastrians who have gone astray. Evidently the Pazand prayer of repentance, the *Patet*, is based on this Avesta precept. In the *Patet*, a Zoroastrian repents for all sins including heresy and sins in respect of Hormazd and the Amshaspands.

Dhup Nirang

In the Pazand prayer of Dhup Nirang, recited in the third day ceremony just before individual judgement at the dawn of the fourth day, there is a reference to 'those who have eaten food of bad offerings' (*dus-myazdan*). This is a reference to those Zoroastrians who have gone astray, even adopted an alien religion. This prayer expresses a wish that such Zoroastrians may revert to the Mazdayasni religion, but even if they do not, that prayer may reach 'quicker, nearer' to the Divine Judge (Mihir)!

In Pahlavi-Pazand writings the religion of the rulers of those days (9th century) in Iran is not mentioned by name. For obvious reasons it is referred to in guarded, veiled language. This prayer is offered with a hope that they may come back to the Zoroastrian religion, and even if they do not come back, it is prayed that 'the great hope' (the prayer) may reach 'faster, nearer' the divine judge: The prayer is offered at a very appropriate time in the ceremony, just before the time of individual divine judgement.

The Benefactors

So far as Zoroastrianism is concerned, we have to judge a person not by his individual actions (good or bad), but by the sum total of actions in his life, as laid down in the *Avesta*:

Thus by these which (are) the laws of the first life,

So shall the Judge act with most upright action

Towards the wicked and towards the holy,
And (also) towards one whose wrongful (deeds) mixes with the rightful!

— Yasna 33:1

Here 'mixes with' means 'is equal to'; the wrongful deed should be weighed against the rightful.

In similar strain in the *Arday Wiraz Namag* (Hoshang Jamasp, Bombay 6.8), Srosh Yazad and Adar Yazad instruct Arday Wiraz: 'Dost thou tell people of the world

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not to consider (even) a trifling meritorious deed as greed and trouble, because everyone whose meritorious deeds exceed (his) sins (even) by three scruples (least quantity), (goes) to heaven.' A benefactor by dint of his/her high spiritual merit and munificence occupies a special place in the community as also in heaven. To quote Arday Wiraz again in connection with his visit to Garothman (highest heaven, 12.1-6):

"And I came to a place (in highest heaven) and I saw the souls of charitable persons who walked emitting brilliance, and above other souls, with all light. And Ohrmazd always exalts souls of charitable persons, bright and exalted and courageous! I said: 'Bliss unto thee who art souls of charitable persons, so above other souls!' And to me it appeared exalted!"

The Pahlavi *Rivayat* of Adurfarnbag and Farnbag Sros, p 70-71, Q 52: "The acts and works of merit which he performs do become (his); the sin of walking without the sacred girdle has originated with him, (but) if he is absolved from sin (when) he dies, they turn him over to the wicked existence; and if they carry to water or bury his dead body... 'Penitence is the remedy'... if he spoke unto a person through a message: 'If they carry to water or bury my (dead body), do you offer penitence unto the Dasturs through his message on my behalf; and if he shall be penitent in this way... the penitence is appropriate, they are to perform his three nights ceremony...and are to perform other acts and works of merit (on his behalf) as much as they can.'"

For a detailed study of this vexed problem we refer readers to *Conversion Caucas* by Hormazdyar K. Mirza.

Navjote after 15

It is argued that navjote cannot be performed after 15 years of age; but this is a mistaken idea. The relevant Avesta text is quoted below from *Videwdad* 18.54:

"Question: Who impregnates evil?

Answer: When a man, a woman after 15 years (of age) moves about ungirded, without sacred shirt and (sacred) girdle.'

From this it is concluded that navjote should be performed before 15 years of age. This is correct; but from this conclusion it is popularly assumed and believed that navjote must not be performed after 15 years of age. This notion is incorrect. Not to perform navjote at the proper age is wrong, but to obviate that navjote should be performed even at a later age, if it is so required, as in the present circumstances.

Conclusion

We once again firmly affirm that the present case is not one of conversion but of reverting to the ancestral faith, which is permitted in our religion. Zoroastrianism does not approve or sanction conversion. Hence, if a member of a Parsi Zoroastrian family is converted to an alien religion, that conversion is invalid from the Zoroastrian viewpoint. The person concerned can revert to his ancestral faith if he wishes. Moreover, if a member of a Zoroastrian family goes astray, even practises an alien religion, and later in life realizes the mistake, sincerely repents and honestly wishes to revert to the ancestral religion, he can do so through ceremonial penitence (*nahan* and *patet*). Even if the navjote is not performed at the proper age, it can be performed after expressions of genuine wish and sincere repentance.

In this strictly religious matter all the high priests of India have been consulted and the majority decision has been democratically upheld.

The above article had initially also been endorsed by Dastur Noshirwan Mancher-shah Dastur of Surat. On January 9, 1996 Parsiana received a hand-delivered copy of a letter addressed to the Editor, Jam-e-Jamshed, stating that he had had a change of view. Parsiana publishes the letter:

With great regret I refer to the article 'Communal Controversy' which was published in your issue of Sunday December 24, 1995 and which unfortunately bears my signature alongwith the other four 'High Priests' of our community.

On reflection, I find that I have misunderstood the contents and the implications of this article and feel that I was not made fully aware of all the facts before obtaining my signature.

On further realization in this matter, I feel that the observations and the view-

points expressed by my colleagues on 'Conversion' are strictly against the Parsi Zoroastrian religion, its precepts, tenets, customs, traditions and usage. I also feel that these unprecedented views ex-



pressed by my four colleagues will greatly endanger our community by opening the floodgates to all sorts of illicit 'Conversion,' resulting in the end of our existence as 'Parsi Zoroastrians.'

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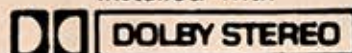
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Mr Neville and Nusli Wadia's (navjotes) is that of conversion and therefore not acceptable according to the fundamentals of the Parsi Zoroastrian religion. In this case, I am more in agreement with my two other colleagues Dasturji Kekobad Dastur, the High Priest of Udvarda and Dasturji Meherjirana, the High Priest of Navsari, who have both already expressed their dissent in this matter.

In my capacity as the High Priest of the Surat Parsi Zoroastrian Anjuman, I wish to make my above expressed views clear to all concerned and withdraw my support and my signature from the article published by you on December 24th, 1995.

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BPP ELECTIONS:

continued from page 22

new agenda on offer: "Housing projects increase the liability of the Punchayet," he says, appalled at what the institution will face by way of repair and renovation of Godrej Baug 15 to 20 years hence. He proposed instead a scheme to help people own their own homes by providing long-term loans where individuals can stake their own funds to begin with (supplanted by loans from the BPP and other trusts), come together and construct. "The residents would become owners in time and the Punchayet would have no future liabilities," he says.

Another aspect of community behavior which, he was emphatic, needed change is the tendency to drop out of the educational stream on graduation. "Today you can get a secure job after graduation but you can't become economically competitive." Institutions which had been locked over the years like the hunnarshala and the rural homes should be revitalized with programs and courses tailored to suit today's business needs and requirements," he urged. His agenda also included the provision of old age homes "not only for the poor, but to cater to those who can afford (it)."

A perennial cause of concern and interest remains housing and the BPP's allotment system. As CER managing committee chairman Fali Poncha had noted at Limathwalla's Nowroz Baug meet, "A system is as good as it is practised... The trustees are asking for ideas for a revision of the merit rating scheme. Not a single letter has been received despite the advertisement appearing a year ago."

Hitting on target Poncha added, "Tumé saat farésta né bi mooko taubi farak nuthi purvano [Even if you install seven angels (on the BPP board) it will make no difference] until the community changes, because the community does not discharge its obligations."

The voting at the trustee elections seemed to support Poncha's contention. Of the 1,534 extant members of the Anjuman Committee, 54 percent voted in October (290 donors, 532 elected members); and 42 percent in December (231 donors, 415 elected members). Despite this being the third BPP election in six months, 43 voters required duplicate certificates. In July and October the respective numbers had been 148 and 74. Punchayet personnel say that the cost of each election approximates Rs 70,000 at present. Is the community ready for adult franchise with its concomitant cost or is it just an expensive butterfly to chase?

*Status of Women: sacred and secular - 2***Born impure**

Dr Ketayun H. Gould

Women were governed
by a set of religious and societal
decrees under which they
were but passive subjects

The image of a liberated Zoroastrian female on par with the male is only an illusion, an ideal that has yet to be realized. There is no denying that in certain spheres she has been granted equal opportunities but she has had to suffer discrimination too. This article which will run into six instalments analyzes the relevant texts and traditions to study the status of women in the ancient, medieval and modern periods.

As it originally appears in Religion and Women (a publication of the State University of New York Press, 1994) the paper entitled "Outside the discipline, inside the experience: women in Zoroastrianism" is a researched, academic presentation. Since Parsiana will be carrying an abridged version of the text

to make it simpler for the lay reader, we will not be detailing the sources that the author painstakingly cites at each instance.

In the first instalment we learnt that certain divinities perceived as female entities were venerated, that the soul of a dead man was said to be met by a female figure on its upward journey. Yet within the stronghold of the aristocracy and priesthood in the pre-Zoroastrian era, paradise was denied to women.

With the advent of Zarathushtra, both men and women were deemed allies of Ahura Mazda to fight the evil forces. The domestic routine though was considered to be of prime concern to the females in the ancient period, as is elaborated in this second episode.

The revelations of the Prophet Zarathushtra or Zoroaster (lived 1500-1200 BCE) relating to the religious status of women contain some of the Indo-Iranian elements mentioned previously that became blended with the Prophet's own teachings. But it is safe to say that despite the fact that the religion retained the patriarchal characteristics that were part of its pagan past and its own male-dominated society, it also challenged the status quo by introducing a more gender-inclusive philosophy — even if it still reflected a male worldview. The most significant departure from the pagan tradition was that Zoroaster promised the hope of salvation to both women and men. Paradise was no longer the exclusive domain of men who had the means to achieve it. From the *Gathas* (hymns or songs believed to be composed by the Prophet himself), it is clear that Zoroaster's con-

ception of the morally good life went beyond a design for ethical human behavior; it implied an eschatology. Paradise was now attainable by all those who had chosen to live the righteous life — whose good thoughts, words and deeds outnumbered the bad. Thus, the Prophet proclaimed: "Man or woman... whomever I shall impel to your invocation, with all these shall I cross the bridge of the separator" (Yasna 46:10). In fact, the Prophet's handling of the belief in the maiden of the bridge illustrates how some pagan ideas were accepted and harmonized with his own teachings.

The stress on righteous living as the passport to paradise is emphasized by the fact that the maiden is now seen as personification of an individual's conscience (*daena*). If the person has led a good moral life, then the soul is guided over the bridge

to paradise by its own *daena* in the form of a lovely young damsel. But if the soul is that of a wicked person, it is met by its conscience, a hideous hag, who plunges with it off the bridge down into hell (Jal Dastur Cursetji Pavry). The break from past traditions is evident in the Prophet's attempt to provide an ethical connotation to a previously amoral figure of the welcoming maiden. The imagery, however, of a damsel and a hag to personify goodness and wickedness, seems to be an acceptable vehicle to introduce radical ideas in traditionally understood sex-linked stereotypes.

The Avestan texts provide further elaboration of the fact that on some counts the Prophet did provide a vision of equality between women and men in the religious experience. Even when the transcendent was imaged as a supreme male being (the wise lord — Ahura Mazda, often referred to in the texts as the "father"), his first creative act of bringing into being six lesser beneficent divinities (the Amesha Spentas) in the struggle against evil included three female yazatas. The scriptures (Yasna 39.3) talk about worshipping the "bounteous immortals" both females and males. Each of them protects one part of the total creation in the material world against the onslaught from the evil spirit (Angra Mainyu). The assignment of female yazatas to guard over earth, water and plants can be explained easily as a reference to the females' capacity for nurturance and growth.

What is more interesting, however, is that in the later, more conservative, era, the Pahlavi literature fully sets out the associations of Spendarmad — the Amesha Spenta who protects the "lowly submissive, and fecund" earth (Mary Boyce) — with that of protector of "virtuous woman." And Ohrmazd (wise lord) is said to preside over "just man," which seems to divide up the protection of women and men between female and male immortals. It is also worth noting that the sex-linked attributes — virtuous and just — might be the appropriate role models that the religious world considered worthy to be singled out for attention. Again, the degree of correspondence between the societal arrangements of the day and religious imagery gives us a chance to understand how far the Prophet went in presenting new ideas, to what extent these beliefs retained the patriarchal structure, and how the combination might have helped followers to accept his message.

The sacred liturgy reveals another area

where the Prophet included women in the religious tradition. Veneration is offered to the fravashis (the Indo-Iranian *fravartis* referred to earlier) of the just women as well as men (Yasna 37.3). The inclusion of the former seems to be a specifically Zoroastrian conception. *Fravardin Yasht* (Yasht 13), which preserves the names of those who upheld the faith at its inception, lists the names of a group of women whose fravashis are worthy of worship. In fact, Ahura Mazda is said to have created women who, through following the path of righteousness, aid him in the vanquishing of corporeal and spiritual evil. In this sense, Ahura Mazda needs women along with men to be his allies in seeking salvation for the world — to defeat Angra Mainyu — and restore the world to its pristine state. Thus, in the initial stages of the spread of Zoroastrianism, women and men were ideally considered to be equal partners in the struggle against evil.

These egalitarian ideals, however, were not completely translated into religious doctrine or everyday practice, since Iran was basically a male-dominated society. It is true that according to the Avestan texts, both women and men were entitled to be initiated into the religion by the investiture

of the sacred shirt and girdle (*Vendidad* 18.54, 58). Women as well as men were asked to fulfill their duty to proclaim and teach what is true and good (Yasna 35.6).

Her work in the home is so valuable that it may itself serve as prayer

In fact, there is some evidence that besides taking part in the holy ceremonies and solemn offerings, women were considered fit, under certain circumstances, to officiate for the minor priestly duties (Maneckji Nusserwanji Dhalla).

At the same time, it has to be recognized that the language of the sacred texts reflects a patriarchal worldview. For example, the conception of woman "advanced in her holy thoughts, and words and deeds," who is considered worthy of being invited to an offering ceremony, includes the requirement that she also be "well subordinated, whose ruler is her lord (*Visperad* 3.4)." The conception of the righteous man

in the same invocation is not qualified by his sex-role definition.

In this sense, the texts symbolize the sacralization of the social order. Throughout the scriptures, there is subtle differentiation between the sexes that seems to reinforce the traditional patriarchal system. And this is true despite the fact that there is enough evidence that the duty to marry and procreate is thought to be not only desirable, but a holy pursuit for both women and men. The Zoroastrian strong ethnic self-consciousness made the begetting of children for the propagation of the race and the spreading of the faith a religious function — to further the kingdom of Ahura Mazda and cripple the power of Angra Mainyu. Hence, the Avesta declares that a married man is far above him who is unmarried; he who has children is far above him who has no offspring (*Vendidad* 4.47). Thus, to be without children is the greatest calamity that can befall a family. Moreover, childlessness is perceived as being a curse visited upon the impious by the good spirits (Yasna 11.3). Undoubtedly, within a patriarchal framework, this "blaming the victim" philosophy must have weighed more heavily on the woman who must have wondered how she had sinned to

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deserve such a punishment.

A further pressure on the Zoroastrian wife in fulfilling her religious destiny was not only to bear children, but specifically bear "male children," "a troop of male children (Yasht 8.15)." Having a son is a blessing bestowed by the benevolent spirits upon the righteous (Yasht 10.65), and again, the gift is denied to a woman who does not follow the proper rituals (Yasna 10.15). Moreover, sons were necessary to have the proper ceremonies performed after death to aid the departed family members' souls on the upward journey to paradise. In fact, the importance of the cult of ancestral dead required that provision be made for the adoption of a son in case a man had none borne to him. Interestingly, although the texts are silent on the issue of praying for female children, or receiving the blessings of female children from the good spirits, some authors seem to display the defensive cultural attitude discussed earlier by interpreting the omission as a "lack of displeasure" at the birth of daughters (Darab Dastur Peshotan Sanjana). The ethnic self-consciousness of the Zoroastrian community about their past accomplishments, plus the protective tendencies of scholars who might be overidentified with their subjects, tend at times to present a somewhat idealized picture of the laudable manner in which women were treated in this religious tradition.

Perhaps, a more accurate description of the status of women in the religion and everyday life might be that the Zoroastrian religion represented a significant step up in the recognition and appreciation of the traditional roles of women — an improvement on patriarchy in the Indo-Iranian context. Furthermore, the religion emphasized the mutual responsibilities of husband and wife, albeit within a patriarchal structure. This is illustrated by the language used to denote the status of the wife (*nmano-pathni*, "the mistress of the house"), while the husband is addressed as *nmano-paiti* ("the master of the house"). Zoroaster's advice to the bride and bridegroom sets forth the injunction to "let each one cherish the other in righteousness, thus alone unto each shall the home life be happy" (Yasna 53.5). Thus, marriage and the family unit become part of the divine order of the world and the begetting of children contributes more hands to do battle against the evil spirit and achieve the renovation promised to humanity.

In this context, the traditional duties of woman as wife and mother become an

important instrument to achieve religious objectives. Moreover, her involvement in the family and the rituals plays a pivotal role in the cosmic battle against evil. The co-participation of husband and wife in the daily prayers to the wise lord and her co-presence in the domestic and public rituals lends credence to the importance of the housewife's role in the total religious experience. Besides, in certain aspects, the housewife's contribution must have been paramount in the preservation of the religion such as the religious instruction to children, and fulfilling the requirements of the performance of rituals. Because the religion, which catered to the well-being of the family, was centered in the home, it must have provided a degree of recognition plus sustenance for many women's faith that their home-centered work was part of the larger cosmic picture. In fact, the texts specifically mention the fact that although the housewife is encouraged to pray with her husband, her work in the home is so valuable that it may itself serve as prayer if her duties preclude her reciting the required *Nyaishes* (H. Michael Simmons). Furthermore, in the daily cleaning of the home, the housewife is thought to sweep away the dirt and decay that are part of the weapons the evil spirit uses to spoil Ahura Mazda's good creation (John R. Hinnells).

The reinforcement of women's traditional roles and the emphasis on the "cult of domesticity" is understandable in the historical context of a male-dominated society. What is surprising, however, is that even in today's academic environment where women's issues are part of scholarly consciousness, no one in the area of women in Zoroastrianism has commented on the negative impact of these belief systems in confining women's activity to the private sphere. Even in the home environment, there is enough evidence (Dhalla), illustrating that the woman might have been the "minor partner of man in the religious life of the family." For example, the domestic hearth was also the family altar around which the family gathered for its devotions. Although the woman had to tend to the fire as part of her household work (and see to it that it was never allowed to go out), it is said that the fire awoke the master of the house and not the mistress at night, when it sought fuel for its nourishment (*Vendidad*, 18.18-21). This is because as the head of the family the man was the "chief of all family worship (Dhalla)." Dhalla continues to make his point about the low status of women in the

hierarchy of the household by showing that the texts mention that a physician shall "heal the master of the house for the value of an ox of low value... he shall heal the wife of the master of the house for the value of a she-ass (*Vendidad* 7.41, 42)."

To be continued

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partner, along with her husband, in Independent Scholars Associated in Stafford, Virginia. She opted for early retirement to pursue her research and scholarship. Her writings have dealt with two main areas: feminist theory, models and practice

frameworks in the area of women and ethnic minority concerns, and historical and demographic studies of the Parsi Zoroastrian community in India. Currently she is authoring a book on the historical and demographic decline of the Parsi Zoroastrian community in the rural and urban areas of Gujarat.



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RUSTAM MANECK: THE BENEVOLENT BROKER - 4

The operations of the opportunist

Dr Homi Eduljee

By timing his moves Rustam Maneck ensured that his services were indispensable to the English

As broker to the Portuguese and the English, leader and benefactor of the Parsis of Surat, Rustam Maneck holds a prominent place in the early history of the Parsis of India. A diplomat and an influential man, many were the occasions when he was called upon to negotiate peace between warring factions. Even during his lifetime Rustam Maneck was celebrated in a Persian poem Kisseh-i Rustam Maneck. His sons founded the Seth family in Bombay and played a leading part in community affairs in that city.

The fame of the family was kept alive by several books on Rustam Maneck and the Seths viz Jalbhai Seth's in 1900; J. J. Modi's study in 1928; and S. K. Hodivala's book in 1931. Subsequently substantial reference has come to light on the family's commercial activities. We now have the English translation of P. S. S. Pissurlenkar's Portuguese Records on Rustam Maneck (1936); H. R. Das's accounts of the Norris embassy (1930, 1959); M. S. Commissariat's study (1953) of Nowroji Rustam's visit to England; and A. Das Gupta's Indian Merchants and the Decline of Surat (1979). A careful study of all these and many other sources has resulted in the compilation of an article by Dr Homi Eduljee on "Rustam Maneck and His Sons: Brokers of Surat" carried in the Journal of the K. R. Cama Oriental Institute (KRCOI), No 60.

To acquaint our readers with the vicissitudes in the lives of Rustam Maneck and his sons Parsiana has been permitted by the KRCOI trustees to reprint an edited and

abridged version of the text from their Journal. Along with this piece there is another dissertation in the same publication, "The Zoroastrian Calendar: an Overview" by Keki Shroff. Priced at Rs 50 the Journal is available at the KRCOI, 136 Bombay Samachar Marg, Bombay 400023.

We are serializing this feature over five instalments. The first episode related some personal details concerning Rustam Maneck's background and his efforts to assist the hapless victims when Shivaji raided Surat and Aurangzeb imposed the poll tax on all non-Muslims. The favored position Rustam Maneck enjoyed as agent, broker and administrator of the Portuguese was recounted in the second instalment. Sea trade brought him prosperity and occasionally anxiety too when he, as intermediary, was expected to secure the release of a captured ship. As official broker of the English East India Company Rustam Maneck was called upon to arrange a meeting between their English ambassador and Emperor Aurangzeb, a job that required great tact, diplomacy and patience, as seen in the third instalment. But greater manipulation was required of Rustam Maneck later when he had to secure the release of the ambassador who had offended the Mughals by refusing to accede to their demands.

Barring a temporary period when Rustam Maneck was dismissed from the employment of the English Company, he continued to be favored as a broker. This, fourth, instalment finds him negotiating new deals even at the age of 86 years.

Moves were now set afoot to act on the King's recommendation, and on July 22, 1702 a charter of union was entered into between Queen Anne and the two Companies. The charter laid down the procedure for merging the two Companies, and they were given seven years in which to complete the formalities, after which the merged Company was to be known as "The United Company of Merchants of England trading to the East Indies." Sir John Gayer, Governor of the old Company at Bombay, was appointed Governor-in-chief of the United Company with residence in Bombay. Sir Nicholas Waite of the new Company was appointed to act as Governor-in-Chief till Gayer was released from his imprisonment, and he was asked to try his best to get Gayer released. As Waite had been responsible for Gayer's predicament, it was hardly likely that he would make any effort to get him freed. Instead, he sent Rustam Maneck to the Governor of Surat with a bribe of Rs 27,000 to insinuate to him that Gayer had been displaced and that he, Waite, was the general of the United Company. Further, he suggested that the Governor should place a proper guard over the old Company's factory. The Deputy Governor of Bombay, Mr Burniston, wrote to the Governor of Surat that Waite's and Rustam's assertions were false and Gayer was in fact the general of the United Company. To complete the story of Gayer, he remained in confinement till William Aislaby was appointed Governor of Bombay in 1709 and secured his release in 1710. Gayer died in 1711 on his way home to England.

In November 1704 Waite went to Bombay to take up his post as acting Governor and wrote to England that he had appointed Rustam as broker to the United Company. In one of his early reports Waite

In 1699, when the charter to the new English East India Company was being granted, the King had recommended that the two Companies (the new and the old

London East India Company) should seriously consider uniting as, in his opinion, this would be in the best interest of the Indian trade.

wrote that "in future a factor or two and a few writers would be sufficient for the management of the United Trade at Surat, as Bombay must be made the center of their power and trade." This decision of Waite's, to make Bombay the chief center of English trade instead of Surat, led to a break between Rustam and Waite. Rustam feared that shifting the center of trade to Bombay would damage his interests in Surat. The rest of the story may be told in the words of John Bruce in his *Annals of the Honourable East India Company*: "While he (Waite) was president at Surat, Rustam, whom from his first arrival he had employed as broker, continued, from interested motives, attached to his (Waite's) views; but after he assumed the office of general at Bombay, this cautious native, discovering that his object was to make that island the center of trade, explained to Mr Bonnell and Mr Proby, the English Company's servants at Surat, that Sir Nicholas Waite had promised Rs 50,000 to use his influence with the Governor to keep Sir John Gayer confined, which sum was to be paid to him (Rustam), individually, by advances on the prices of the Company's goods to that amount. When Sir Nicholas Waite was informed of this conduct of Rustam, he dismissed him

from the English Company's employment."

Rustam must have been dismissed in 1705. At the time of his dismissal, the United Company owed Rustam Rs 1,40,000 and the separate Companies Rs 5,50,000

At the age of 86 years, he entered into a new contract

and, Bruce adds, "if the Surat Council had not prevailed on the merchants to take their bills, the whole property of the English would have been seized."

Although Proby and Bonnell of the English East India company in Surat were urging that Rustam be reinstated as broker, Gayer supported his dismissal. Writing on April 25, 1706 to the Court of the old, the London East India Company, Gayer reports: "Tho' the Union affairs be at such a full stop, yet by means of Rustam's bribery and one of his assistants... there hath been more goods stript off, of late for account of private shipping, who undoubtedly must bear the charge one way or other, but by such bribery he keeps all the officers fast to his interest, and perhaps is master of so

much vanity as to think that he shall at last by such means bring the Company to truckle to him; he sticks at no cost, and whatsoever the Governor (of Surat) bids him do he frankly doth it, however prejudicial to the public, which recures him from his creditors; but certainly it can never be for the Company's interest to constitute such a broker, tho' he be a useful tool at present for the private interest."

As Gayer was aware of Rustam's part in his confinement, his sentiments are understandable. Rustam's dismissal did not last very long and he was perhaps reinstated as broker in late 1706 or early 1707. He was back in his old position as broker to the United Company in Surat but with his position greatly strengthened as Waite had obviously been either ignored or overruled. Waite's days were now numbered; his arrogance and extravagance in Bombay were becoming intolerable and the Bombay Council demanded his resignation and on November 19, 1708 arrested him and sent him off to England and the United Company dismissed him from their service.

With Gayer dead, Waite dismissed and sent off from India, Rustam's position as broker of the United Company would appear secure and unassailable. However, this was not to be; his rivalry with the

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Parekhs, which had been simmering for many years, now came out into the open.

The Parekhs were a Visha Shrimali Jain family and the hereditary nagarsheeths of Surat. The foundation of the family fortune was laid by Bhimji Parekh who was broker to the old Company in the 1660s. On the death of Bhimji in 1686, his brothers Vithaldas and Keshavdas took over the business and associated with them Bhimji's eldest son Banwalidas and his brother Shankardas. Banwalidas, a dynamic and ruthless operator, soon ousted his uncles and brother and became sole broker of the old Company.

Samuel Annesley, who was president of the old Company in Surat at that time, has left us his opinion of the Parekhs: "The Parekhs (with whom chiefly we have to do) are the head of the Gentoos (Hindus) in this place, and the whole body of them moves at their back in any dispute with the oppressive officers. They are wealthy, subtle and malicious, as well as powerful; can bribe, divide, menace and by ill acts remove those that oppose them, being above shame and uncontrolled by conscience. They will suppress or forge accounts and back it with witness or stifle evidence, and know how to time any such artifices as their occasion serves; and when hardly pressed, will fling a part overboard to save the remainder. And what can't such persons do, so qualified, with an arbitrary government where money answers all things."

Banwalidas now started a feud with Rustam which was carried on by their sons and grandsons into the middle of the 18th century. In 1707 Rustam was appointed broker to the United East India Company together with, ironically, Banwalidas Parekh. Rustam was now reaching the peak of his influence with the English. The piracy issue still bedeviled relations between the Moghuls and the European trading companies; Aurangzeb's death in February 1707 had plunged the country into turmoil and trade was suffering badly. Rustam and Banwalidas were helping the United Company with their investments, and Banwalidas considered the Company to be greatly in his debt. In 1712 Aislabie, the Governor in Bombay, came to Surat to settle the question of this debt and to restart the English trade. He went through Banwalidas's accounts ruthlessly cutting it down; a claim for Rs 13 lakhs was cut down to Rs 4.5 lakhs, and that too was to be paid in woolen goods; also, he dismissed Banwalidas as broker to the Company. This proved too cruel a blow for Banwalidas and he died "in

April 1715 in straitened circumstances.

Rustam was now the sole broker to the English and his star reached its zenith. In February 1711 Rustam Maneck was given "a place in Surat Factory of the United East India Company as he had when under the denomination of broker for the new Company." In September 1712 the Council at Bombay decided that as Banwalidas had "proved himself a notorious villain," and

Rustam feared that shifting the center of trade to Bombay would damage his interests in Surat

as Rustam was "a person much in vogue with the Government of Surat by wh. (=which) means consequently the more capable to serve the Company in this grand affair (i.e. the quarrel with the Moghuls over the issue of piracy)," Rustam should be appointed sole broker and Banwalidas dismissed.

Rustam must have justified the Council's encomiums for he played a decisive part in settling the piracy problem, and the Company was duly grateful to him. Rustam claimed that he had to pay large sums to Moghul officials. This 'laskari' account had not been settled as long as Waite was in India, but now with Waite dismissed and Rustam clearly in favor with the Council, the matter was quickly resolved; most of these claims were settled in Rustam's favor although again the payment was in bales of English woolen goods. Perhaps it was from this payment in kind that in 1713 Rustam sent 100 bales of broadcloth to Bengal and sold them there at a profit. In 1715 the Company settled another set of claims for Rs 3.5 lakhs. Rustam Maneck was clearly becoming a wealthy man now. However, the 'laskari' account was not settled fully to Rustam's and his sons' satisfaction, and the matter dragged on for some years after Rustam's death.

Another sign of Rustam's high standing with the Bombay Council came in 1715 when an Arab trader, Ali bin Sultan, revived an old complaint against Rustam and went to the Moghul Court to get an injunction against his property. The Company intervened on his behalf to save him.

While the majority of members of the

Bombay Council favored Rustam, there were some who did not approve of this. One of them was Stephen Strutt who wrote to the secretary of the Court of Directors in London: "Lately was passed Rustam's Lascarees account, the principal almost two lakh with interest to the 31st December 1713 upwards of 5½ lakh. It has been formerly under examination before the General went to Surat and then I objected against several articles but particularly yt (=that) of Rs 60,000, for obtaining a pardon for Sir William etc coming from camp without leave for I am sure that such a sum was never paid on yt account but it coming on the stage where we were obliged to be passive, it was passed as above."

Rustam Maneck's position in the Surat factory was now completely secure. With friends in the Bombay Council and the Parekhs defeated, there was no one to gainsay him. There was no change in this when Aislabie retired as Governor in 1716 and was succeeded by Charles Boone; in fact Boone became a close friend of Rustam and his family. The Parekhs' claims on the Company had not been completely settled by Aislabie in 1712. Vithaldas, brother of Bhimji, still had unsettled claims, but he had not pursued them as vigorously as Banwalidas had done. In early 1718 Boone came to Surat to settle these claims. Vithaldas was dead by now and his son, Laldas, Banwalidas's cousin, argued his case before the English. The Parekhs' total claim amounted to nearly Rs 7.37 lakhs, but Boone conceded only Rs 50,000; Laldas was in no condition to put up a fight and was forced to accept it. However, Laldas personally had made a very good impression on the English and in 1718-19 he was offered a chance to participate in the English trade; but any investment was now beyond his means and he had to refuse, thus giving Rustam the opportunity to step in and take up the offer. The blow to the Parekhs was severe and for some years they disappeared from the scene.

We know very little of Rustam Maneck's trading activities outside the English Company but we do know that his activities were not confined to Gujarat but extended to the coastal trade and even across India to Bengal. On March 9, 1715 the Bombay Council passed the following resolution:

"Being in want of a good boat for unlashng our shipping and other necessary uses having at present no more than two for that purpose and other times obliged to hire boats for that purpose and Rustamji having a very strong Surat built boat which

his son Nowros by his order makes us a tender of, for Rs 15,000 about 20 tonnes completely furnished with mast, yard, sails, oars, etc, agreed to purchase the same at that price on the purser marine's and ship carpenter's survey thereof."

Rustam apparently enjoyed robust health for, in 1719, at the age of 86 years, he entered into a new contract with the Surat factory to supply goods in the next trading season. The Bombay Council approved the agreement on July 16 and their letter reached Surat on July 29, but before the formalities could be completed, Rustam died on July 31. The Surat Factory Diary for August 3, 1719 records: "According to the directions given us by the Hon'ble Charles Boone, esquire, president and Governor of Bombay in Council, in their letter of July 16 last, and received in Surat on the 29th, for Rustamjee Maneckjee, our chief broker, to enter into articles necessary for his performing the investment lately concluded with his son Bomanji on his behalf at Bombay, we have drawn out and fairly wrote the articles to be interchangeably executed between the Right Hon'ble Company and our said broker, but his decease happening on the 31 ultimo, his sons Framji and Nowroji are by the custom of their caste obliged to spend at home

some days in mourning, so that the agreement cannot be signed now."

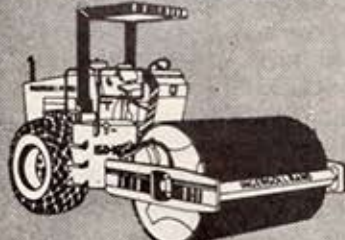
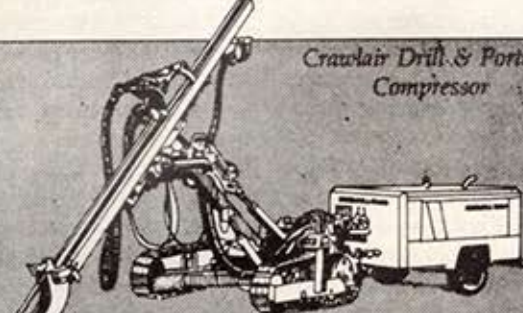
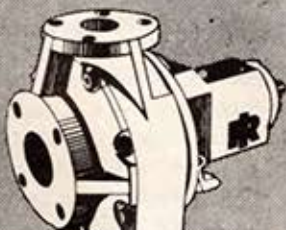
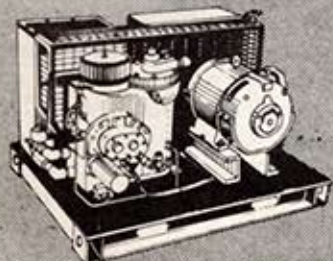
A postscript to the agreement adds: "Whereas Rustomjee Maneckjee departed this life on the 31st of July, yet it being the custom and superstition with these people to continue the name of their father on the Right Hon'ble Company's Books, his sons Framjee (Bomanjee being at Bombay) and Nowrojee Sign and Seal this contract — Surat, August 8, 1719."

The Surat Factory Diary for August 4, 1719 gives us an interesting account of how the Rustamjee brothers, Framjee and Nowrojee, were appointed brokers in place of their father. The four days of mourning having expired, the brothers informed the Factory that they wished to pay their respects to the Factory and, as was the custom, they expected to be given some presents in token of their appointment. Now, in the agreement that Rustam had negotiated with the Company he had agreed to reduce his brokerage fees by 10 percent compared with his fees for the previous year. In appreciation of this, the Bombay Council had instructed Surat that they should present Rustam with a horse and *sarpaw*. The brothers now hinted to the Factory that these gifts should be presented to them as this would help to maintain their

standing in the Moghul court and with the merchants of the city. The Factory therefore agreed to meet their request "thereby to encourage them in a faithful provision of the investment and the discharge of the great trust that is now devolved on them." Accordingly, a coach accompanied by two senior English officials was sent to their residence and the brothers were ceremoniously brought to the factory and, in the presence of many of the principal merchants of Surat, presented with the horse and *sarpaw*.

Rustam died a rich man and highly respected as the leader of the Surat Parsis. He was succeeded in the English Factory by his three sons — Framji, Bomanji and Nowrojee — talented men but unpopular. Bomanji was described as "a sad fellow," obstinate and perverse. Although, at that time united in their hostility to the Parekhs, they were not the best of friends and this spilt between the brothers later played a part in the feud between the Rustamjees and the Parekhs.

Dr Homi Eduljee was associated with the K. R. Cama Oriental Institute both as a joint honorary secretary and as a trustee for a number of years. A chemical engineer by profession he is also well read on Indo-Iranian topics and the Zoroastrian religion.

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Nuggets in a nutshell

Aspi Moddie

The Zoroastrian Faith: Tradition & Modern Research by S. A. Nigosian. Published in 1993 by McGill Queen's University Press, Montreal and Kingston, London. Pp: 154. Price: Not mentioned.

At a meeting of the Federation of Zoroastrian Associations of North America (FEZANA) in June '95 at Washington, under the chairmanship of the new president Ms Dolly Dastoor, it was felt that in the greater part of the Zoroastrian world, parents and teachers together performed a reasonable job in educating Zoroastrian children up to the navjote age, though perhaps limited in reach. Admittedly, more can be done, especially by way of elementary Zoroastrian history and religious significance. The old cry was for the meaningful essence, a significant guide to the Zoroastrian religion in the contemporary world. Most individuals were mere inheritors of the navjote 'primary,' and a few rituals and customs picked up later. In the last 20 years however from India/Iran at the old hub, to Australia and North America, the new global periphery, there was a growing cry, and far greater need, for meaningful Zoroastrian education for adolescents and adults.

If one book fulfils that need in a researched, readable, modern idiom, it is S. A. Nigosian's *The Zoroastrian Faith*. Mark, the grant for such a work did not come from any Zoroastrian source, but from the Canadian Federation for the Humanities. The writer is a research associate at the University of Toronto's Victoria College.

One reality we must honestly recognize at the start, is that Zoroastrians have lacked the rich intellectual tradition of the Jews, the Christians and the Muslims. Admittedly, much of the reason rests with the burning of Persepolis by Alexander in the fourth century BC and the destruction of empire, records and believers by the Arabs in the seventh century AD. Nevertheless, to this day, even after more than a century of relative affluence, the urge for a strong intellectual tradition, with a scholarly commitment to research, is weak. It is ironical, that for past research we are largely dependent on Jewish, Greek, Christian and Islamic sources. Zoroastrian history seemed

to have been ignored by the early Zoroastrians. We know of no Zoroastrian equivalents of the Greek historians Herodotus and Thucydides or the Roman historian Tacitus. And for contemporary research, again we are largely dependent on non-Zoroastrian scholars e.g. Helmut Humbach, Dr (Ms) Mary Boyce, Shaul Shaked, Stanley Insler, et al, apart from Hawg and West earlier. No Zoroastrian in the last century has ever dreamed of being a Henry Rawlinson (British orientalist), dangling precariously from a sheer cliff face in Iran, copying the trilingual Behistun inscriptions which glorified Darius.

So let contemporary Zoroastrians turn to this one-book education for a range of needs, from a groping for the historical placement of Zoroaster to the checkered history of Zoroastrianism, to an informative review of Zoroastrian scriptures, teachings and observances — all compactly in 118 pages. A good bedside book for Zoroastrians who wish to know more about their religion and their past, before sleep, but do not have the stomach to read a shelf of books over time.

Nigosian records various sources objectively to know when Zoroaster lived. We are left with a guessing game over about five centuries prior to the seventh century BC. Why did no Achaemenian Herodotus delve into this basic? Has the absence of an intellectual tradition made us an unhistorical people?

In the controversy between an "apparent dualism" and an imperfect monotheism, Nigosian has a unique response. He concludes in "Zoroastrian Faith," that Zoroaster "perceived two distinct ages: this present "dualistic age (between Ahura Mazda and Ahriman)" to be followed by an eternal "monotheistic age," thanks to the responsive choice of human beings. I cannot understand Nigosian's two major omissions in his interpretations of the faith

and teachings of Zoroaster, which are so important to Zoroastrians. They are the role of God's *hamkar* or co-worker in the creation; and the very relevant principle of *frashokerati* or renewal in a changing and challenging world.

As to the historical question, how far the Achaemenid period was Zoroastrian, Nigosian suggests the co-existence of three religious cults, Zoroastrian, Magian and Persian, each inheriting the legacy of the Indo-Aryan group. Zoroaster, he avers, brought "the new Zoroastrian movement to the forefront," which was welcomed by

the Achaemenid Persians. It is a reminder of the pluralist beliefs of people in many societies, even today.

Nigosian reminds us that we owe the gathering of such remnants of the Zoroastrian scriptures as we have to King Valaksh (51-79 CE) of the Parthian period; and to Ardashir I (224-240) and Shapur I (240-272 CE) of the Sassanian period. Tradition names a high priest Tosar (or Tansar)

"as the artisan of reform and the principal agent for establishing Mazdayasnian orthodoxy as the state religion." But again, no history of what he did.

In the midst of the growth of Judaism, Christianity, Manichaeism, Hinduism and Buddhism in the early centuries after Christ, after 200 AD, Kartir, the chief organizer of Zoroastrian orthodoxy and Shapur II curtailed the earlier Zoroastrian tolerance of other faiths and cults, with a more assertive state Zoroastrianism. The political wars of religion in what is now called West Asia had begun, rising to a crescendo with the Arabs after the seventh century AD, and the crusades half a millennium later. In those wars, the Zoroastrian empire was extinguished, and the Zoroastrian faith barely survived in remote Iranian communities. We however lack a historical analysis of the collapse of the early Persian/Zoroastrian empires in the seventh century AD after an almost continuous existence of about a millennium. Ever since, Zoroastrians have had to reconcile themselves as minorities in stronger host communities.

There is a general assumption that all

We lack a historical analysis of the collapse of the Zoroastrian empire in the seventh century AD after almost a millennium

the *Gathas* were the work of Zoroaster himself. Nigosian reminds us that only the first five *Gathas* (Y 28-34, 43-51, 53) "are generally considered to be the work of Zoroaster himself. The *Yasna Haptaghai*, sometimes referred to as the sixth *Gatha* is not ascribed to him," because its content differs theologically from the rest even though it is written in the same dialect as the other *Gathas*." The author tells us of various Pahlavi versions of the *Avesta* (Gathic and Avestan) from the third to the 11th century. In the 13th century, a Zoroastrian priest, Naryosangh, son of Dhaval, translated a large section of the Pahlavi version into Sanskrit. In addition, there are three later translations, a modern Persian translation between 1600 and 1800 AD, and two Gujarati translations in 1818 AD. These are the few threads by which the ancient texts came down to us in the last seven centuries.

It is interesting to see the list of similarities between Zoroastrianism and Judaism, Christianity and Islam, ideas which the author believes it is "hardly conceivable" that they could have come into being without Zoroastrian influence. These cover the aspects of God and Satan, angels and demons, heaven and hell (Christianity added purgatory), resurrection of the body and life everlasting, arrival of the Messiah, cosmic events during the end of the world and the Armageddon battles. I wish he could have gone into these in more depth.

Of striking interest to Zoroastrians is that one of the Dead Sea Scrolls is known as "War of the Sons of Light against the Sons of Darkness." Does it have a Zoroastrian origin?

In contrast, Nigosian says that ideas of fatalism, of original sin, of asceticism, of mysticism, of contemplation in God or Nirvana, and of rebirth, "are all foreign to Zoroastrian teachings."

As the book is for Zoroastrian education, may I suggest it be framed in a wider contemporary dimension: First, that of science. Second, of the host Christian, Hindu and Islamic communities in which Zoroastrians live. Third, in the context of over-secularization and excess materialism. Fourth, the inertia and lack of an intellectual tradition in the community. Fifth, the situation of 'apathy' in Zoroastrian homes. Sixth, the past and future roles of Zoroastrian priests.

Thinking, busy, modern Zoroastrians are likely to find Nigosian's book a good handy education in one book. It obviates the need to hang from the Behistun cliffs of historical research!

Prayer as pathway

Noshir Vajifdar

Ahura Mazda Unto Thee I Pray compiled by Shernaz D. Talati. Published and printed in March 1995 (first edition) and August 1995 (first reprint) by Jenaz Printers, #10, Sethi Mansion, Ballard Estate, Bombay 400038. It is also available from Marzban J. Giara, Dhunmai Bldg, 667, Lady Jehangir Road, Dadar, Bombay 400014. Pp: 180 + xxi. Price: Rs 120 (for reprint).



The price of Rs 120 for this interesting little compilation by Ms Shernaz D. Talati of Bombay may seem a bit high, but it includes important prayers from the simplest *Ashem Vohu* and *Ahunavar* to *Setayash-i-Shaherevar*, transcribed in the Roman script and followed by brief summaries in English.

The author apparently has been unable to get away from prescribing the repetition of *Ashem Vohu* and *Ahunavar* innumerable times, as for instance in the "prayer after a meal" on page nine, which calls for five *Ashem Vohus*, two *Yatha Vairyo*s and, to crown it all, the full range of *Ahmai Raescha*, *Hazangarem*, *Jasa me Avangahi Mazda* and *Kerfe Mezd*. One wonders if there is anyone who follows this routine!

Similarly, the reason for the second *Havan gah* being substituted for *Rapithvan*

from *roj Hormuzd mah* Ava to the end of the year has been explained as: "during this period Ardibehesht Amashaspand, who is the presiding deity, goes underground to give warmth to God's creation there." This is nothing but religious fanaticism and one wonders if Ahura Mazda is impressed by such gimmicks. Religion should be simple and come from the heart. The same remarks apply to the recitation of the five *gahs*.

The story about Nairyosang Dhaval and the gold ring which he is said to have dropped into the milk pot does not bear out with the story of sugar being put in the milk pot to sweeten the milk. Further, Nairyosang Dhaval was perhaps not even there at the time, as he is said to have much later translated the entire *Avesta* into Sanskrit for the benefit of Hindu scholars of his time. These translations are still extant. Who the "frail old priest" was who bargained with Jadhav Rana is not known. It will be interesting to learn where this author got her references from, and why they have not been mentioned in the book.

The book ends with a reference to early saints and martyrs, to Dastur Kookadaru and the jashan ceremony, the full significance of which might have been explained. It also contains a pictorial depiction of the days of the month, a glossary of commonly used words and short notes on religious subjects. Gilt-edged art paper, sturdy binding and clear plastic packaging attest to the book's production values.

A welcome message comes from the author to respect all religions, including our own; and the book ends with wishes for our happiness, peace, contentment and good health for ever.

Above: author Talati and (below) symbolic explanations of the Zoroastrian calendar featured in her book

1. Hormazd Lord of the World	6. Khordad Perfection	11. Khooshed Sun
2. Behman Good Mind	7. Amardad Oneness with God	12. Mohor Moon
3. Ardibehisht Truth / order	8. Dae-pa-Adar Dedicated to God	13. Tir Star
4. Shaherevar Spiritual Strength	9. Adar Fire	14. Gosh Soul of the Earth
5. Spandarmad Devotion	10. Avan Water	15. Dae-pa-Meher Dedicated to God

16. Meher Friendship	21. Ram Peace, Joy	26. Ashtad Justice
17. Sarosh Obedience	22. Govad Wind	27. Asman Sky
18. Rashne Judge	23. Dae-pa-Din Dedicated to God	28. Zamtyad Earth
19. Farvardin Guardian Spirit	24. Din Religion	29. Marespand Holy words
20. Behram Victory	25. Ashishvagh Wealth	30. Aneran Endless Light

Trusts with treasure?

Dr Jamshed A. Modi

Parsi Public Trusts Directory (1990-93). Printed and published by P. A. Bana (author) and Kainaaz, Post Box No 9350, Bombay 400026. Pp: 134. Price: Not mentioned.

There seems to exist for our community an aura of splendor and mystery surrounding the subject of our community trusts. Our people talk as though fabulous wealth is locked up in these trusts, and at the same time they accept that nobody really knows which trusts have how much, and what is being done with it. The situation is similar to that in a tale of a prince's treasure of bygone days, which is thought to be buried "out there," nobody knows exactly where or how much, which if unearthed would enable the finders (in our case, the community) to live happily ever after. I suppose this is what motivates community-lovers from time to time to go after this mystery, and the result is another directory of Parsi trusts, *Parsi Public Trusts Directory (1990-93)* hereafter referred to as PPTD.

The PPTD is a soft-cover book of 134 pages, 18 cm x 24 cm. I first attempted to see how the *Directory* is organized. Is there organization by size (of corpus)? Is it by the objects of the trust — educational, medical, housing, etc? Is it alphabetical by name of the trust? I couldn't discover any order, and the author (the cover of the book emphasizes P. A. Bana as the author, it does not say who Kainaaz is) has not announced any order in his "A Word from The Author" on page five. There is an "Information" section on page 20, which seems to suggest that the PPTD is organized by "Total Assets." That may be, but the only evident organization, if such it can be called, seems to be according to the PPTD's own serial numbering system which, strangely enough, starts with "PPTD (5)," which is the Avabai Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy Navsari Agiary Fund. The listing proceeds numberwise up to PPTD (905) on the last page.

Along with this ordering by its own serial number, there is the grouping by family name. The first group comprises the trusts of the Jejeebhoy families, followed by those of the Petits, Vatcha and Vatcha

Gandhi, Patel, Dubash, Mody, Bhabha, Bhiwandiwalla, Mehta, Gamadia, Banajee — and then Tata! Then Sethna, Dadabhoy and several others.

The data in these listings is just the name, address, and objects of the trust. That's all. No mention of who the trustees are, what is the corpus, what is the last reported income or expenditure, or any other data which might be useful to a reader to ascertain the status or performance of the trust, or what it is currently doing, or even whether it is alive or defunct.

One wishes the author had aimed at creating a database. If he had done that he would have been forced to answer questions such as, "What purpose should my database serve?" "What sort of queries should it answer?" "How will the data be retrieved and accessed?" This would have inevitably led him to think in terms of well-defined "records" and "fields," and in terms of computerization of the database, which would have made its storage, retrieval, analysis and dissemination so much easier.

Sages have taught that "virtue lies in the struggle, not the prize." Bana deserves to be commended for his struggle, which he has single-handedly undertaken, as he himself declares, "with one foot in my grave..." But the task which he has attempted requires a small taskforce of young co-religionists, with both feet on the ground, well funded, with backgrounds in data-gathering, accounts, law, computers, etc. Unless we do this soon, our trust funds may not even enjoy the fate of the prince's treasure, and remain "out there" intact. For whatever else we may or may not know about our trust funds, one thing we do know: they are being eroded at an unconscionable rate.

To the nines

Homi J. Rogers

The Nervous Nineties by Kersi Meher-Homji. Published in 1994 by Kangaroo Press Pty Ltd, 3 Whitehall Road, Kenthurst, NSW 2156, Australia. Pp: 128. Price: Not mentioned.

A popular and award-winning advertisement on Indian television shows a cricketer skying a ball, while the figure 99 trembles against his score. The selectors shake their heads in disapproval, the crowd looks tense and disappointed, and a young girl nibbles nervously on her Cadbury



Surti: the 99 butterfly syndrome
Courtesy Rusi Surti, *The Nervous Nineties*

chocolate bar. The fielder misjudges the catch, and the girl runs onto the field. 'Kuch khas hai, zindagi mein...' (For those special moments in life) sings the soundtrack, capturing those nervous, naughty moments.

In his new compendium of records, Kersi Meher-Homji leads the reader through a similar tightrope walk as he details the stories of batsmen who have got out, or remained unbeaten, when their scores were in the nineties. There is something special about this figure, something which makes its almost-there quality just as tragic as being out for a 'duck,' the subject of Meher-Homji's previous work (see "Heroes famed for Zeros," Books, *Parsiana*, January 1995). And *aapro* Kersi, who seems to have made a success of recounting tales of 'failures,' comes up with a winner once again as he crystallizes the anguish, the drama and the heartbreak inherent in such situations. He has delved into statistics to produce a work on a seldom recorded phenomenon of cricket, bypassed even by the all-knowing Wisden.

According to Meher-Homji's study, 276 batsmen have recorded 485 nineties in 1,260 test matches as on June 1, 1994. Forty-six of them have scored 99 runs on 50 occasions, the doubly unfortunate four in the 99 list being Mike Smith of England, West Indian Richie Richardson, New Zealand's John Wright and Geoff Boycott of England who was dismissed for 99 in one test, and remained not out on that figure in another. Our own Rusi Surti figures in the 'Gang of 99,' and Meher-Homji recounts this particular sordid saga with just the right touch of pathos. Surti, it

seems, suffered the 99 butterfly syndrome, and was let off twice at this score in the Auckland test against New Zealand in 1968. "Still not chastened, he nicked again and was snapped up... for 99! Nervous 99 in excelsis." Surti failed to ever score a century in test cricket.

Meher-Homji's work records not just the nineties, but the 'super-nineties' as well. These are records and feats of batsmen who have got out on scores of 190s, 290s, 390s, missing the next century milestone. The most interesting case of a batsman being out in this bracket is Pakistan's Hanif Mohammad, who was out for 499 — the highest score in first class cricket till West Indies' Brian Lara slammed his 501 some 35 years later in June 1994.

To find out why Mohammad got out when he seemed all set for his fifth century, Meher-Homji had his colleague Qamar Ahmed, Pakistan's cricket correspondent, talk to the cricketer on his behalf. The tale of the strange dismissal is now recorded for posterity right from the horse's mouth, thanks to Meher-Homji's perseverance. It seems that the scorekeepers had got the score wrong, and so showed 496 instead of 498. With just two balls left to end the day's play, Mohammad intended to take two runs off each of the two balls. He played into the covers, took a single, and while going for the second run was run out. Had he known the right score, he would have adopted different tactics, and averted this 'cri-gedy' (cricketing tragedy).

Not that all the nineties recorded in the book are of the nervous or enervating kind. Some are gallant, others philosophical, some even weird. Boycott, probably the only batsman to score 99 and a century in the same test, had reason to feel pleased with his 99, but unhappy with his century which was responsible for England winning the test, and the series, but in the process probably denying him the captaincy, which may have gone to him had England lost.

It is insights such as these that give Meher-Homji's books the cutting edge over other cricketing compilations. Meher-Homji proves that he is not content just reporting the event, but must record its possible repercussions as well, by either

talking to the cricketer(s) or checking through published material for references to the '90s' in their career.

Another interesting tale cricket aficionados will enjoy is from the 1970-71 England vs Australia series when the Australian captain Bill Lawry declared the innings when his wicket keeper Rodney Marsh was batting on 92. "Even his own

partisan Melbourne crowd couldn't remain faithful to him" for this act, for Marsh, who did score a century later in his career, could have reached the landmark during his maiden test series.

Meher-Homji has other mortifying tales to narrate. Gerald Crutchley had to retire with his score at

99, because he contracted measles. Allan Knott was denied his century by four runs because rioting in Pakistan compelled the abandonment of the final test in Karachi in March 1969. "Surely, the rioters could have waited for 10 minutes," muses Meher-Homji, tongue-in-cheek.

Significantly, despite the fine collection of anecdotes and photographs to match them, Meher-Homji's book itself misses making it to the nineties mark. It comes to a natural end on page 87. This is not to suggest that the remaining 41 pages are worthless, but they are more a statistician's delight than a lay reader's or, for that matter, anyone with even a mild interest in the game.

In these appendices, Meher-Homji gives break-ups of batsmen scoring 90, country by country (England tops with 122 batsmen), modes of dismissals (over 55 percent were caught), and other permutations and combinations that would make the book an ideal quick reference manual for cricket buffs every time a batsman gets into the nineties but fails to get out of them. All the 485 nineties scored in test cricket are recorded, giving details of how the batsman was out, at what score, the venue and year, and while playing against which country.

The index of five pages at the end is complete and competently cross-checked. We even found Udwarda in it and on hastily opening the page discovered that no test century or 99 was scored here. The genesis of this book begins here, as it was from Udwarda that 11-year-old Meher-Homji had

cycled to a nearby village to hear the radio commentary of a game in Calcutta. Indian captain Vijay Hazare was stuck at 97 runs for 20 minutes before he galloped to 175. Those 20 minutes of suspense initiated Meher-Homji into cricket addiction!

The Nervous Nineties is a fitting tribute to that bunch of cricketers and fans of the game whose hearts skip a beat when the plundering bat is stilled for what seems an eternity when in the nineties. As one gathers from the book, the tradition of 'out-in-the-nineties' is itself now in its nineties. Clem Hill of Australia pioneered the '99 Club' in 1902 (93 years ago), when he scored 99, 98 and 97 in consecutive test innings.

Almost reflecting most cricketers' feelings on being dismissed for a duck (zero) or in their nineties, the English language has a common root to define legal infancy (nonage) and a person in his nineties (nonagenarian). But unlike triskaidekaphobia, which is used to describe the fear of the number 13, there is still no word in the dictionary to define this phenomenon in cricket. And it may be remembered that before the curvaceous Nordic actress Bo Derek immortalized 10 on the scales of judgement, it was the phrase 'to the nines' that signified 'to perfection.'

Twenty minutes of suspense initiated Meher-Homji into cricket addiction!

Always remember



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MILESTONES

The age of Zoroastrian brides (as listed in this issue) ranged between 21 and 38 years, the arithmetic mean (the total number of individual ages divided by the total number of brides) being 26 years. The corresponding figures for the grooms were 24 and 58 years, averaging at 30 years.

As compared to 77 Zoroastrians who died in Bombay in November, there were 15 babies born. The major killer, heart disease, took a toll of 30 lives of whom 15 were above the age of 80. While nine deaths were attributed to pneumonia and lung related diseases, cancer and old age/general debility claimed five victims each. Hypertension was the cause of four deaths. Three Zoroastrians succumbed to malaria; two each to septicemia and brain diseases. There were 14 isolated cases registered last month: Parkinson's disease, kidney fail-

ure, diabetic coma, arthritis, liver disease, paraplegia (paralysis of the lower limbs usually including the bladder and rectum), hemiplegia, haemoptysis (the coughing up of blood), urinary tract infection, anemia, gastro-intestinal bleeding, dementia, uremia and bronchitis. "Osteogenesis imperfecta" and "asphyxia due to gagging and smothering" were mentioned as causes of deaths of two individuals. A still-born baby was lost to the community. The youngest to breathe his last was a 22-year-old man as compared to the oldest: a 96-year-old lady. The Zoroastrian life expectancy at birth, in Bombay in November, was 74 years.

The data on births, marriages and deaths has been compiled from information supplied by various newsletters and anjumans in India and abroad, courts and hospitals. We are unable to carry

data from areas where the anjumans do not furnish the particulars. This information is not always complete or consistent. For example, the birth figures for Bombay are supplied by four hospitals; births in suburban hospitals and private nursing homes are not included unless individuals send us information together with a copy of the birth certificate. There may be an inadvertent repetition of names in the marriage list when a civil marriage precedes a religious ceremony. In the breakup of deaths according to illnesses, especially of the elderly, death is often due to a combination of several diseases.

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

BANGALORE

DIED

Piroja Jal Lentin, mother of *Hirji* on October 10, 1995

BOMBAY

BORN

A boy, *Jahan*, to *Soon* and *Firdaus Bativala*; June 28

A girl, *Kaynashnin*, to *Jeroo* and *Kaizad Bhaya*, brother to *Mehrab*; September 19

A boy, *Shahzad*, to *Shahnaz* and *Shiamak Soonawalla*; October 18

A boy, *Farzan*, to *Parizad* and *Neville Gandhi*, October 28

A girl to *Tanaz* and *Khushru Mirza*; November 2

A girl to *Veera* and *Navroze (Joy) Patel*; November 6

A girl to *Kashmira* and *Adil Kakalia*; November 8

A boy to *Shirin* and *Dara Mogal*; November 10

A girl to *Hutoxi* and *Farokh Wadia*; November 12

A boy to *Homai* and *Cyrus Irani*; November 15

A boy, *Mihran*, to *Sanobar* and *Jimmy Umrigar*, brother to *Kerafrid*; November 15

A boy to *Farida* and *Rohinton Daruwalla*; November 16

A boy to *Nikki* and *Rohinton Maloo*, brother to *Nairika*; November 16

A girl to *Sherry* and *Sarosh*

Doodhmal; November 17

A boy to *Niloufer* and *Gev Katgara*; November 18

A girl to *Persis* and *Surendra Sharma*; November 18

A boy, *Rishad*, to *Zenobia* and *Farhad Unwalla*; November 20

A boy to *Faranak* and *Mario Braganza*; November 22

A girl to *Nilufer* and *Kersasp Sidhwa*; November 30

MARRIED

Benaifer Eruch Bhoja of *Surat* and *Behzad Adi Bhola*; November 3

Shahin Firoz Irani of *Bordi* and *Jimmy Nozar Amroli*; November 5

Mithra Ardeshtir Bakhtiari and *Mahyar Dorab Engineer*; November 5

Mahatab Noshir Patel and *Zubin Rusi Mistry*; November 6

Dilnaz Phiroze Katrak of *Secunderabad* and *Kersi Keikhushru Machhi*; November 7

Kamal Bomi Sethna and *Percy Rusi Harver*; November 9

Armaity Behram Gowadia and *Mahyar Peshotan Antia*; November 10

Rukhshana Noshir Khan and *Baheram Homi Guard*; November 11

Firuza Dhunji Daruwalla and *Homiar Jimmy Kateli*; November 11

November 11

Mahrugh Jehangirji Panthaki and *Farukh Jamshed Bhuri*; November 12

Shehnaz Hoshang Balsara and *Zubin Dinshaw Bilimoria*; November 12

Monaz Kersi Master and *Zubin Kersi Dalal*; November 12

Tanaz Pheroze Daver and *Zubin Peshotan Wadia*; November 12

Shiraz Rohinton Tengra of *Mhow* and *Adil Adi Sukhia*; November 13

Bakhtaver Viraf Parekh and *Khushroo Framroze Engineer*; November 14

Khurshid Jahengir Daruwalla and *Kaiyomarz Homi Irani*; November 14

Pouruchisti Jehangir Sattha and *Shahrugh Eruch Meherhomji* of *Thane*; November 14

Dilzaar Homi Bhathena of *Secunderabad* and *Kerman Dara Deboo*; November 16

Shehnaz Pallon Doctor and *Karl Feroze Mistry*; November 16

Vahabiz Noshir Engineer and *Zubin Phiroze Bhathena*; November 17

Roshni Keki Tavadia and *Marazban Mehernosh Pithawalla*; November 17

Jeroo Adi Daver and *Percy Rusi Gyara*; November 19

Ryna Bomi Zaiwalla and

Dinyaar Dinshaw Karani; November 19

Roshni Adi Gowadia and *Percy Bahadur Master*; November 19

Rashna Jal Seervai and *Khushroo Pheroze Munshi* of *Thane*; November 19

Tanaz Kersi Karkaria and *Rohinton Faramroz Patrawala*; November 19

Zarin Cawas Cooper and *Berzin Fali Irani*; November 20

Homai Jamasp Pagdhiwala of *Damoh*, *Madhya Pradesh* and *Jehanbux Rustom Irani*; November 20

Shernaz Bomansha Dubash and *Viraf Minocher Dhalla*; November 21

Aban Adi Cooper and *Manek Kharsedji Patel* of *Thane*; November 23

Zarina Jimmy Anklesaria and *Jal Eruch Bulsara*; November 24

Rati Vicaji Taraporwalla of *Poon* and *Cyrus Dali Mehta*; November 24

Khurshid Phiroze Makujina and *Jamshed Khurshed Darukhanawalla*; November 26

Tannaz Farrokh Lawyer and *Cyrus Dhunjishaw Doomasia*; November 26

Dilnaz Boman Irani and *Hormuzd Dhunjishaw Mogrelia*; November 26

Daisy Jamshed Dady Burjor and *Farrokh Dinyar Wadia*; November 27

Shahnaz Siroos Najmi of *Dahanu* and *Yezdi Khodaram Irani*; November 28

Bakhtavar Hormusji Santoke and *Dinshaw Burjor Jamshedji* of *Hyderabad*; November 30

Maharukh Murzban Umrigar and *Percy Dara Rana*; November 30

Nainaz Maneck Shroff and *Viraf Dinshaw Tengra*; November 30

DIED

Minocher Rustomji Damania (81), residing at 22, Sea Breeze Apts, Bullock Rd, Bandstand, Bandra, 400050; November 1

Sarosh Vistasp Balsara (47), *Sidhwa Bldg*, *Princess St*, *Dhobitalao*, 400002; November 2

Sorabji Hormosji Gagrati (89), C 15/3, *Pirojsha Ngr*, *Godrej Clny*, *Vikhroli (W)*, 400079; November 2

- Behram Jehangir Irani** (79), 25/3, Old Khareghat Clny, Hughes Rd, 400007; November 2
- Keki Framroze Engineer** (70), Soona Mans, Opp Shakersheth Temple, Nana Chowk, 400007; November 3
- Mehroo Jimmie Engineer** (74), Noorie Castle, 14, Nepean Sea Rd, 400036; November 3
- Shireen Rustom Unvala** (86), 179, Prince Chmbs, S. B. Rd, Colaba, 400005; November 3
- Keikhasroo Faramji Vania** (86), Jalbhoy Seth Bldg, Tardeo, 400007; November 3
- Villamai Phirozshaw Billimoria** (93), 3/21, A. H. Wadia Bldg, Parel Tank Rd, Parel, 400033; November 4
- Dara Rustomji Hakim** (91), 183, Dial Mhl, Dalamal Park, Cuffe Parade, 400005; November 4
- Aloo Ardeshir Irani** (61), D, Petit Bldg, Dinbai Petit St, Grant Rd, 400007; November 4
- Kaikhushroo Ratanshaw Khambatta** (75), F. S. Parukh Dharamshalla, Hughes Rd, 400007; November 4
- Dinshaw Jal Kharas** (70), 50, Piroja Mans, Alibhai Premji Marg, Grant Rd, 400007; November 4
- Firoze Maneckshaw Bharucha** (75), D/6, Dinshaw Bldg, Dadabhai Rd, Dhunbhaiwadi, Vile Parle (W), 400056; November 6
- Siloo Homee Mistry** (73), Britto Villa, St Pauls Rd, Bandra, 400050; November 6
- Erach Rustomji Patel** (81), B/8, Ben Nevis, B. Desai Rd, 400036; November 6
- Hoshang Jal Daji** (50), G/48, Cusrow Bldg, S. B. Rd, 400039; November 7
- Aloo Dinshaw Panday** (96), C/o R. M. Driver, 25, Sai Ashish, Dr Peter Dias Rd, Bandra, 400050; November 7
- Jehangir Ardesar Nikorawala** (82), R/18, S. B. Bharucha Bldg, S. V. Rd, Andheri (W), 400058; November 8
- Kaizad Keki Sukhadwalla** (22), 30, Vaibhav, Union Bank of India Staff Co-op Hsg Soc, Barkatali Darga Marg, Wadala (E), 400037; November 8
- Soona Eruchshaw Mamlatdar** (75), B/25, Nowroz Bldg, Lalbaug, 400012; November 9
- Amy Soli Mehta** (65), 705, Cumballa Crest, 42/A, Peddar Rd, 400026; November 9
- Banoo Nariman Mistry** (80), 23/1, Bethi Chawl, Pirojsha Ngr, Vikhroli, 400079; November 10
- Goolcher Rustomji Sirvala** (77), Maravoo Chmbs, 30, H. Bomanji Lane, Fort, 400001; November 10
- Khorshed Sorabji Bagwalla** (81), Damania Bldg, Chikalwadi, Tardeo Rd, 400007; November 11
- Najamai Sheriar Govadia** (68), 19, Godrej Bldg, Contractor Bldg, Mori Rd, Mahim, 400016; November 11
- Dina Keki Miller** (84), 3, Shroff Villa, Malcolm Bldg, S. V. Rd, Jogeshwari (W), 400102; November 11
- Khurshed Dhunjisha Mistry** (89), Readymoney Bldg No 2, 17, Ratan Tata Rd, Tardeo, 400034; November 12
- Rohinton Maneckshaw Munshi** (57), 12-A/5, Panthaki Bldg, Sir M. V. Rd, Andheri (E), 400069; November 12
- Dinoo Rustom Mistry** (82), 54, Deepak, Peddar Rd, 400026; November 13
- Jimmy Kaikhushroo Commissariat** (84), Rajesh Mans, 140, M. Karve Rd, 400026; November 13
- Goolbai Kaikhushroo Engineer** (92), D/6, Captain Clny, Haji Ali, 400034; November 14
- Mehera Jalbhay Fatakia** (83), 611, Pateti Blocks, Jame Jamshed Rd, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; November 14
- Banoo Keki Engineer** (79), D/8, Nowroz Bldg, Lalbaug, 400012; November 15
- Khudabux Rustom Irani** (66), 2/30, Khareghat Clny, Hughes Rd, 400007; November 15
- Dinabai Dinshawji Fanibanda** (75), 3/9, Shayadrinagar Bldg, Charkop, Kandivli (W), 400067; November 16
- Gustad Dhunjishaw Patel** (88), J/15, Cusrow Bldg, S. B. Rd, 400039; November 16
- Munchershaw Burjorjee Damania** (93), 65, Amin Villa, Malcolm Bldg, Jogeshwari (W), 400102; November 19
- Cawasjee Jehangirji Kanga** (88), G/1, Nowroz Bldg, Lalbaug, 400012; November 19
- Naval Jahangir Meherji** (66), A, Shirin Mans, Tardeo, 400007; November 19
- Hoshang Maneckshaw Havewala** (70), 103, Highland Park, C.T.S: 410, Near Charkop Village, Kandivli (W), 400067; November 20
- Hillamai Nadirshaw Italia** (80), 13, Sidhwa Bldg, Balaram St, 400007; November 20
- Jalamai Phirozsha Mehta** (85), West View, Uranwalla St, Grant Rd (E), 400007; November 20
- Phiroze Kersasp Daruwalla** (65), 6/14, Sir Ratan Tata Clny, Tardeo, 400034; November 21
- Tehmina Sohrab Desai** (85), 53, Sunita, 165, Colaba Rd, Opp Colaba Post Office, 400005; November 21
- Ratan Rustom Mistry** (86), Queens Chmbs, M. Karve Rd, 400020; November 21
- Sillamai Framroze Daruwalla** (75), Second Kashinath Bldg, Kashinath St, Tardeo, 400034; November 22
- Shavaksha Navroji Marolia** (79), F. S. Parukh Dharamshalla, Hughes Rd, 400007; November 22
- Tehmina Faramroze Munshi** (84), A/15, Mehta Bldg, Captain Clny, Tardeo, 400034; November 22
- Faramroz Eruchshaw Tarapore** (52), 766, Minoo Mans, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; November 22
- Shera Beheramsha Tavaria** (72), F/5, Cusrow Bldg, S. B. Rd, 400039; November 22
- Piroja Sorab Doctor** (74), 201, Oceanside, 16, Chimbai Rd, Bandra (W), 400050; November 23
- Ratamai Nusserwanji Pithawalla** (84), 1/23, Contractor Chawl, Sussex Rd, Byculia, 400027; November 23
- Percy Jehangir Khatow** (61), Station Ter, 54, Sleater Rd, Grant Rd, 400007; November 24
- Eruch Hormusji Kodla** (66), B/4, Shirin Manzil, Dinbai Petit St, 400007; November 24
- Alan Sorabji Parelwala** (95), B/26, Jer Bldg, Dr Ambedkar Rd, Byculia, 400027; November 24
- Freny Sam Rabady** (67), Jaiphal Ter, 31, Forjett St, 400036; November 24
- Dinoo Jamshedji Vaghaiwalla** (80), Gamadia Clny Ladies Hostel, Gamadia Clny, Tardeo Rd, 400007; November 24
- Mani Cooverji Avari** (69), A/2-2, Soonawalla Bldg, Tardeo, 400007; November 25
- Silloo Khurshed Contractor** (76), 23/25, Captain Hse, Shakersheth St, Nana Chowk, 400007; November 25
- Freny Jehangir Balaporia** (75), 301/A, Cosmos-III Cross Rd, Lokhandwala Complex, Andheri (W), 400058; November 26
- Freny Eruch Engineer** (73), Engineer Hse, 85, Tardeo Rd, 400034; November 26
- Mehera Dorab Tarapore** (84), Chinoy Mans, August Kranti Marg, 400036; November 26
- Eruch Darabsha Umrigar** (55), Multani Bldg, Khambatta Lane, Khetwadi, 400004; November 26
- Dali Nariman Bhesania** (73), 20, Bennett Bldg, Old Khareghat Clny, Hughes Rd, 400007; November 27
- Ratanbai Dorabji Daruwalla** (83), 15/3, Contractor Bldg, Gamadia Clny, Tardeo, 400007; November 27
- Darabsha Pirojshah Dordi** (74), 12-A/3, Kashinath Bldg, Kashinath St, Tardeo, 400034; November 27
- Dinbai Hiraji Hansotia** (90), C. D. Bldg, Opp Jawhar Ngr Bldg, Goregaon (W), 400062; November 27
- Jerbai Kersasp Bhicaji** (80), Dhanabad, B. Desai Rd, 400026; November 28
- Pillu Sorabji Choksey** (65), 4, Vimala, Niwas, Ganesh Ngr, Near Navjeevan Vidya Mandir, Bhandup (W), 400078; November 28
- Minocher Sorabji Engineer** (63), B2/504, Unique Plaza, Shanti Park, Mira Rd (E), Dist Thana, 401104; November 28
- Meherbai Shapoor Irani** (80), 18/94/4, Madhav Bhavan, Delisle Rd, 400013; November 28
- Perin Jimmy Khodaiji** (77), C/3, Shivsagar, Amboli Naka, S. V. Rd, Andheri (W), 400058; November 29
- Baby boy of Pinaz and Rohinton Mahuvawalla** (stillborn), 2/6, Divecha Block, Charai, Thana (W), 400601; November 29
- Meherbai Dossabhai Mukadam** (91), Saraswati Coop Hsg Soc, 15th Rd, T. P. S. III, Khar, 400052; November 29
- Rustom Bomanshaw Karkaria** (78), 32/41/43, Police Court Lane, Fort, 400001; November 30
- Shirin Dinshaw Talati** (72), 628, Turel Ter, A. Homavazir Rd, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; November 30

CALCUTTA**MARRIED**

Feroza Vatcha and Pervez Masani; November 5

DIED

Sakerbai Framjee Rustomjee, mother of Jeroo and Shirin Hodiwalla; September 20

Homi Mancherji (Khursigara), husband of Hilla and father of Bomy, Shernaz and Manchi; November 7

Homi Keki Balaporia, husband of Roshan, father of Yazed and brother of Nelu, Minoo, Mehroo Masani and Maneck; November 17

POONA**BORN**

A boy to *Tehnaz and Shahvir Chothia*; October 9

MARRIED

Sherine Poonawalla and Sam Mehta; October 16

DIED

Jeerbai Hormasji Daruwalla (85), 303/A-5, Neelkanth Ngr, 384/A, Bhavani Peth, 411042; November 5

Kaizad Shahrugh Irani (19), 111/B-3, Amar Preet, Veduwadi, Hadapsar, 411013; November 6

Homai Noshir Baliwalla (58), 155, Old Bazar, Kirkee, 411003; November 26

SURAT**DIED**

Jamshedji Faramroz Bhesania (73), Village Olpad, Dist Surat, 394540; November 4

Manackbai Jahangirji Munshi (75), Village Akhakhhol, Dist Surat; November 5

Rustamji Ardesher Harwar (90), Village Amroli, Dist Surat; November 9

Keikhushroo Coonverji Amalsadiwala (79), Village Amalsad, Via-Kim, 396310; November 13

Pervez Bapuji Amaria (58), Village Champawadi, Songadh, 396425; November 14

Jerbanu Eruchshaw Gandhi (75), 403, Sterling Apt, Athwa Lines, 395001; November 16

Dinu Dadi Shroff (70), Shahpore, 395003; November 26

AUSTRALIA**New South Wales****BORN**

A boy, *Justin*, to *Carol and Jamie Daver*; May 11

A girl, *Soriah*, to *Farah and John Maclean*; July 8

A boy, *Aaresh Hormuz*, to *Jasmine and Farrokh Madon*; September 28

CANADA**Toronto****BORN**

A girl, *Emma*, to *Khorshed and Darrin Tooth*, sister to *Zara*; September 2

Vancouver**MARRIED**

Maryam Osanloo and Ardesher Shahpour Darabi; August 26

Mehrbano Kadhoda, daughter of *Parvin* and *Rostam* and *Ardesher Mayan*; September 2

White Rock, British Columbia**BORN**

A girl, *Kayla*, to *Behin and Shafique Dhanani*; November 12

IRAN**Tehran****DIED**

Manouchehr Mauwandad (69), husband of late *Shirinbai* and father of *Mehrdad* and *Farhad*; October 31

PAKISTAN**Karachi****DIED**

Pestanji Maneckji Magol; November 20

USA**Alexandria, Virginia****BORN**

A girl, *Sydney Fiona*, to *Sandra and Rustam Dalal*, sister to *Margo*; August 8

Boston**BORN**

A girl, *Eyra*, to *Roxane and Yezdi Dordi*, sister to *Zal* and *Ava*; October 31

Chicago**BORN**

A boy, *Farhad*, to *Selena and Vispi Jijina*; November 25

A boy, *Raiomand*, to *Shiraz and Spitaman Tata*; November 30

MARRIED

Kamalrukh Kotwal and Minoo Gandhi; October 28

Columbia, South Carolina**MARRIED**

Allison Taylor and Zubin Bamji, son of *Roshan* and *Esadvaster* of Maryland; November 25

Northern California**MARRIED**

Rushna Kerawalla, daughter of *Ruby* and *Godrej* and *Ardesher (Ardi) Sidhwa*, son of late *Ruby* and *Jehangir*; September 10

North Potomac, Maryland**BORN**

A girl, *Anahita*, to *Shehernaz and Farhad Verahrami*; November 20

Parlin, New Jersey**DIED**

Ivy Faroke Gandhi (51), mother of *Natasha* and *Nozer*; October 16

Woodland Hills, California**BORN**

A boy, *Behram Gustasp*, to *Mr and Ms Gustasb Ostad*; July 28

Compiled by Roxana A. Driver

TOTALS FOR 1995

	Bombay		India		World	
	A	B	A	B	A	B
BORN						
Boys	10	98	1	6	6	27
Girls	8	91	—	3	7	20
MARRIED						
Parsi	40	225	2	5	3	13
Intercommunal	—	61 [^]	—	1	2	10
DIED						
CONSIGNED						
Male	35	440	7	82	2	25*
Female	42	430	7	81	1	31
CREMATED						
Male	—	3	—	—	—	—
Female	—	1	—	—	—	—

A: Total numbers in this issue

B: Running totals for 1995 (February-March 1995-November 1995 issues)

[^] Males married out -- 27

Females married out -- 34

* 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.

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NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION

Nutrient	Essential for	Nutrient added (approx.) per pack
Vitamin A	Good vision, healthy skin	7680 I.U.
Vitamin C	Helps protect against infections/cold	42.6 mg
Vitamin B1	Release of energy from food	4480 µg
Vitamin B2	Growth, proper functioning	5120 µg
Vitamin B6	of heart and nervous system	6400 µg
Niacin		57.6 mg
Vitamin B12	Growth, healthy blood and nervous system	3.2 µg
Folic Acid	Healthy blood and body tissues	640 µg

(Appropriate overages of vitamins added)

