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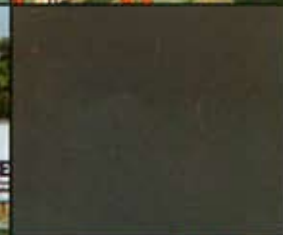
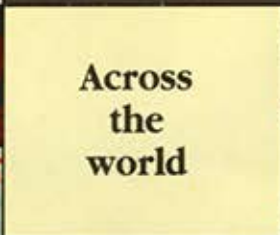
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Parsiana

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Readers' views are welcome on any subject of interest to the community and should be sent to the Editor, Readers' Forum, Parsiana, G.P.O. Box 892, Bombay 400001. Letters are subject to editing for reasons of space and clarity. Unsigned letters or those without an address will not be published.

"The Priests' Rebuttal"

This refers to the letter of Dastur Noshirwan Manchershah Dastur of Surat following the article "The Priests' Rebuttal," (*Parsiana*, November 1995). The article was originally published in the *Jam-e-Jamshed* and *The Bombay Samachar* of December 24, 1995 with the signatures of five High Priests (including his own).

We wish to state the bare facts in this matter. The said article was prepared in Bombay and sent by courier service to Dastur Noshirwan at Surat who signed and returned it to Bombay. The said article was in his possession for seven clear days to read, consider and approve it, or if he had any reservations, to reject it. After seven days of consideration and understanding, our colleague decided to approve, and signed the article.

During these seven clear days and any time thereafter, our colleague never raised any question nor demanded any explanation. Even after the publication of the

article, he never indicated his complaint or any objection to it.

In his letter Dastur Noshirwan vaguely objects to misunderstanding the implications of the article. But he does not point out or quote any paragraph, sentence or word in the article which he misunderstood or found objectionable.

Further, Dastur Noshirwan complains against 'observations and viewpoints' on 'conversion' without quoting any evidence. He does not state his own observations and views on conversion, and does not explain why what he thinks (but does not state in this matter) is correct.

In the article signed by all five Dasturs, scriptural evidences from the *Gathas*, *Avesta*, Pahlavi and Pazand texts have been quoted. These are simply ignored by Dastur Noshirwan. He does not state whether he agrees or not with the scriptural interpretations, and if he does not, offers no correct translation or interpretation.

Dastur Noshirwan writes about his 'realization' and 'further realization,' but these occurred to him evidently much after the article was published on December 24, 1995. In his 'realization,' Dastur Noshirwan adopts a negative attitude. He observes silence on important matters and does not explain what his views are in the matter.

Dastur (Dr) HORMAZDIYAR K. MIRZA
For self and on behalf of my colleagues

"New home for Mhow fire"

We are happy to state that the income-tax commissioner, Bhopal, M. P., has issued us a letter that donors to our anjuman from April 1, 1995 to March 31, 1998 would be entitled to relief under Section 80-G of the Income-tax Act, 1961.

We have posted certificates to this effect to our donors. In case, however, any donor has not received the same, we would request such donors to write to us.

We are confident that intending donors will now help us in our project of completing our Adran Saheb.

B. M. MASANI
Hon Secretary, Parsi Zoroastrian Anjuman, Mhow

Setting priorities right

To be patriotic Indians does not mean that we must cease to be Parsis. To be secular Indians, does not mean that we must surrender the immortal glories of our religion.

Remember what Sir Pherozeshah Mehta said: "I am an Indian first and an Indian last, but in between, I am a Parsi." Go ye, and be likewise.

Please, please, do not let this poison gas of pseudo-liberalism seduce and suffocate you; please do not let this tidal wave of modernization make you forget your race, your roots, and above all, your religion.

In one or two generations, do not wipe yourselves out and please, please do not wipe out the magnificent achievements and the innumerable sacrifices of our forefathers. What tortures they suffered to keep their race and religion alive — and to keep you alive. Will you throw away your entire history and your entire heritage, just because of your ignorance of, or indifference to, our religion?

We need reforms, but not such reforms as will result in the extermination of our community, and worse, in the extinction of our religion.

We need to get our priorities right. We need modern education such as will enable our young men and women to be in the forefront of economic progress and job opportunities. We need to launch financial institutions (mutual funds, banks, trusts) so as both to promote education and to foster entrepreneurship, for without these qualities, our future in a world of savage competition will be bleak, very bleak.

Let us prepare for this future, let us get our priorities and institutions right. Let us concentrate on priorities, not on trivialities.

But, above all, let us, in shaping our future, not forget our past. Let us, in promoting modern education, not forget to promote religious education, for, if the salt has lost its savor, wherewith shall it be salted?

Liberalization does not mean licence. Shaping the future does not mean burying the past. Secularism does not call for suicide.

Our greatest enemies are not non-Parsis — our greatest enemies lie within. At a time when almost every ethnic and religious group in the world is prepared to die to preserve its identity, we are the only community in the world dying to die.

Let a mass movement for conversion be started — the conversion of Parsis into Zoroastrians.

Reforms... yes, revolt... no, extermination... never! Ms KETI and Dr FREDIE A. MEHTA

Parsis and the 1991 census

The report that the Parsi population in India has registered an increase according to the 1991 census in spite of an excess of

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500 deaths over births per year (*Parsiana*, July-August 1995) is indeed intriguing. I believe there could be two reasons for this:

- Intermarried Parsi ladies may have shown their offspring as Parsis through clandestine 'navjotes.' These data would be reflected in the census but not in our communal figures.

- Decrease in emigration (i.e. those going abroad for studies and those coming back). Most of these boys and girls are unmarried and hence this effect is not reflected in our birth rates.

Over the last five years I have maintained in several letters in *Parsiana* as well as *Jam-e-Jamshed Weekly* that emigration is the root cause of our dwindling population in India because it has a cumulative effect on the decline, not only because of emigration per se but also by decreasing the number of families and also by leading to intermarriages due to the created shortage of educated boys earning good salaries. If this trend of decreasing emigration continues, the Parsi population in India will show further increase in the next census in 2001 AD.

Dr P. D. SUNAVALA

"Priestly tales"

I read Mr Kersee Kabraji's letter with great interest ("Priestly tales," *Parsiana*, September 1995). Though I lay no claims whatsoever to being a scholar, I have a smattering of knowledge about this subject which I humbly share not only with Mr Kabraji, but with readers who may find it informative.

The Din-E Ilahi (Divine Faith) was never an established religion for the masses, even during Akbar's lifetime, but at best, as Mr Kabraji quotes, was an "eclectic cult."

Akbar used to invite scholars to his court from among the Muslim, Hindu, Parsi, Christian and Jain communities of his empire, and encourage them to hold free and scholarly debates and discourses before him in the court, because at first he was genuinely interested in and curious about all the faiths in his empire. Soon, however, with his keen intellect he realized that most of the religious tenets were common, but if he could get them to have others imbibed into a common system, he could bring about a practical and social unification of all the religions. He, therefore, went about including various tenets from each religion, and loosely unified them into his ethical system of Din-E Ilahi:

- Thus from Islamic Sufi mysticism he enjoined constant yearning for God to purify the soul;

- From Christians (as represented by the Jesuits) celibacy which was extolled, and carnal sin condemned;

- Like Jainism, the slaughter of animals was forbidden;

- From Zoroastrianism (represented by Dasturji Meherji Rana and another dastur from Kerman) was borrowed the ritual of making light (Sun and Fire) the object of divine worship; and,

- From Hinduism he borrowed the recital of 1,000 Sanskrit names of the Sun.

Though the motive was lofty and noble, and the Din praiseworthy, the orthodoxy of each religion prevented the actual implementation. Each of the religions believed that their own faith was truly superior and worthy. This led to a lot of discord and the Din was never accepted. The Din was regarded by Akbar's contemporaries as "Muslim apostasy" or heresy, and Akbar himself had soon to abandon the idea, to prevent further deterioration.

One can therefore appreciate that at best the Din was a set of loosely put together ethical doctrines collected from various religions, which functioned to build up a personality cult, contrived by the superior intellect of Akbar, to attract full allegiance to himself rather than a religious system. Even during his lifetime there were just 19 followers actively professing and practising the Din.

To answer the query "How do the basic principles of the Din compare with our Lord Zarathushtra's teachings?" I would comment that I don't think they could be compared at all, for the simple reason that while accepting the ritual of the divine worship of light, he appeared not to have grasped the basic beauty of our religion viz., righteousness, purity and the immortality of the soul, nor even its practise in simplicity through humata, hukhta, hvarashta.

Though it is irrelevant to this topic, there is a traditional belief in my husband's family that a physician by the name of Meher Vaid accompanied Dasturji Meherji Rana to Akbar's court and was responsible for curing the Emperor's lame horse. As payment, he was given a grant of land at Navsari, which was passed on from eldest son to eldest son. The last holder of this "Tamrapatra" was the late Mr Bomanji Pestonji Master, who passed away a few years back.

Dr (Ms) ROSHEN S. MASTER

Pune

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The publication of the directory and compilation of census data is a 10th anniversary project of the Federation of Zoroastrian Associations of North America (FEZANA). We request you to support this grass-root volunteer community project by advertising in it. The directory will be available at a very nominal cost, so that no Zarthusti home will remain without it.

We invite you to advertise your business or your profession in the directory. Since virtually all Zarthustis are highly educated with successful professional and business careers, the users of this directory will represent a tremendous buying power for the goods and services that you are offering.

In addition to advertising your business, you could also support this project by inserting a commemorative or an "in memoriam" message. This would be an effective vehicle to honor people, events and your community with your financial support.

The success of this directory and of the Zarthusti community in North America will depend on the number of individuals and businesses that come forward with financial support. Your advertisement will not only make all Zarthustis aware of your services and products, but will also support present and future FEZANA efforts to promote Zarthusti enterprise. Our rates range from US \$ 40 for a business card to US \$250 for a full page. Half page and quarter page cost US \$125 and 70 respectively. The cover rates are US \$ 1,500 for the back page, US \$ 750 for the inside back page and US \$1,000 for the inside front page.

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Ms DOLLY P. DASTOOR

President, FEZANA

With
best wishes
from

**Farah
&
Tanya**



Iranshah's anniversary

As you know on Adar roj, Adar mah YZ Year 90 (i.e. November 24, 720), our greatest Atash Behram, Pak Iranshah Saheb was consecrated. The role and significance of atash is the basis of not only the Zoroastrian religion, but absolutely everything which exists in this mortal universe (nisti).

It therefore gives me great pleasure to inform you that for the first time in our history, we celebrated the consecration of Pak Iranshah Atash Behram at the Zoroastrian House in London. On the evening of November 24, 1995, approximately 40 adults and children attended a maachi ceremony performed by Ervad Keki Kanga.

We recited the prayer of *Atash Nyaish* and then Dr Tehmtan Sepai gave a short talk about atash. He quoted the following extract from Kshnaothra Ahurahe Mazda: "Dadar Ahura Mazda emanated Khoreh from within himself and said — 'Oh holy Atash, I designate you as the supreme authority over Behest. You will descend to the earth and bring joy and prosperity to all through your illuminating appearance. To those who will respect and worship you, you shall have the authority to bestow upon them the deserving degree of Behest and to those who disrespect you, you may give them any punishment that you may deem fit. You will be known to the world as Ardibehest and Adar and the key to the 'Behest' will always be entrusted to you. You will have supremacy over any form of light, because the existence of any light is due to you alone. A person who worships you, will acquire wisdom besides attaining all happiness. A person doing charity on this day, will derive its benefit a thousand fold and will have all his wishes granted."

"You will be worshipped even by the

The Motlibai Wadia edifice that houses the Iranshah

Sir Dhunjibhoy Bomanji: to the defence of the fire-temples (below)

kings and prophets, for they will attain their goals only through you, because you are my son (Aathro Ahurahe Mazda Puthra), and next to me, you alone will be omnipotent."

CYRUS R. R. COOPER
Essex, U.K.

"Late Dhunjisha Kalfati"

Mr Bhikhaji M. Adenwalla has queried about the late Dhunjisha Kalfati ("Late Dhunjisha Kalfati," *Parsiana*, September 1995).

Based on my research from the volumes of *Parsi Prakash* and other books, is some information for your readers.

Sir Dhunjibhoy Bomanji, the merchant prince of Bombay, was the son of Seth Bomanji Dhunjibhoy Mistry (Kalfati). A naval contractor and philanthropist, Dhunjibhoy is affectionately remembered by the Parsis for the decisive role he played in providing solid support and encouragement to the Parsis during the Bombay riots in November 1921.

In 1921, the Prince of Wales (later to become King Edward VIII) visited Bombay. Ignoring Mahatma Gandhi's call for a boycott of his visit, the Parsis welcomed the Prince. The non-cooperationists created a riot against the Parsis. Several Parsis lost their lives. Many Parsis were beaten up. Their shops were destroyed. Their houses

and fire-temples were stoned and attempts were made to desecrate them. At this fearful time when other sethias were silent or went out of Bombay, it was Dhunjibhoy Bomanji who came out in support of and stood by the community, giving courage and defending them in several ways. He used his influence with the Government to obtain small arms to defend our fire-temples. Because of this, anticipated attacks against our atash behrams and places of worship were prevented.

His baj is performed by grateful community members every year on roj Zam-yad, mah Meher. He passed away on April 1, 1937. His photo appears on the reverse of the title page of the book *Parsi Lustre on Indian Soil* (Vol. I) by H. D. Darukhanawalla. This volume has been dedicated to his memory.

Those interested in more details can read the dedicatory page in this book as also his obituary in *Parsi Prakash* (vol. VII part IV, pp. 359-360); also *Parsi Virlo* by N. H. Billimoria.

For the benefit of your readers you may like to give a feature article on this great son of our community. He was a legend during his lifetime. It is said that he had engaged a European driver for his car whom he paid a princely sum of Rs 900 in those days.

MARZBAN J. GIARA

Zoroastrian influences

It was heartening to read Kersee Kabraji's letter highlighting quotes from Dr Percival

Spear's *History of India* (Vol 2) which reveal how Zoroastrian influences made a lasting impression on the mind of Akbar the Great.

Although Shakuntala Rao Shastri is not so well-known (mainly due to the fact that the Bhararati Vidya Bhavan has thought it unfit to republish her excellent little book *Women in Vedic Times*), she has highlighted

how liberal Hinduism was before the advent of Manu, and how this liberalism in Atharva Vedic times, was partly due to Zoroastrian influences!

MS SHIRAZ N. NANPORIA



Looking forward

The article on the khandias "Remains of Their Day" appearing in *India Today* (November 30, 1995) makes sad and sickening reading. That a highly educated and westernized community like ours which re-

mains in the forefront for all human rights and scientific advances, treats a small group of its own members as social outcasts because their work involves transportation and deposition of Parsi corpses into the dokhmas, speaks of our double standards and hypocrisy.

Should not we Parsis consider it our proud privilege to ourselves carry the dead bodies of our dear ones to their last destination, be it a dokhma, burial ground or crematorium?

The 13 odd families of khandias are a rapidly dwindling group and in years to come will be irreplaceable as their children will take to better education and jobs with higher social acceptance. It is also likely that a majority of their children will marry outside the community as their social standing within their own community is so low.

In addition to the problem of non-availability of khandias, the community will have to face shortly or within the next generation, the problem of utilization of the Malabar Hill property. The 50 acres of prime real estate on top of the posh Malabar Hill in Bombay where five dokhmas and one chotra are located, is no longer a "nearly inaccessible and remote ridge, covered with jungle and inhabited by panthers, hyaenas, snakes and jackals," as described in *The Times of India* of September 5, 1896.

Dokhmenashini was advocated in ancient times when dokhmas were situated on top of remote hills far away from human habitation and not in the center of a bustling and expanding metropolis like Bombay city. Besides, vultures on whom the disposal of our dead bodies is entirely dependent, will no longer find nesting and breeding grounds favorable in a city environment of noise and pollution. It is also not true that vultures could "pick clean" a human carcass within a short period of one

or two hours. This can be ascertained by viewing any animal carcass devoured by the vultures on any roadside. It is also claimed that the bones get powder soft and



A khandia: facing an uncertain future

are washed away into the center well of the dokhma. This contention is also unlikely as bones are one of the hardest tissues of the body and the remains of the bones of dinosaurs which became extinct 65 million years ago are still found intact in the Wyoming Desert in the USA. As far as information is available, the bones left in the dokhma are periodically collected and buried in a nearby pit in a ritual called "Astodan." This ritual was even done for Cyrus the Great more than 2,000 years ago in Iran.

It is thus very likely that within a few decades, the community will have to face a situation when dokhmenashini will not be practicable, at least in Bombay, as a method of disposal of the dead due to the following reasons:

- Shortage or nonavailability of khandias.
- Migration of vultures to areas far away from Malabar Hill.
- Increased awareness from environmentalists against the method of disposal of the dead by exposure to carrion birds in the very heart of the city.

• The modern high speed jet planes after takeoff from Santacruz Airport are within minutes in the region of Malabar Hill at a comparatively lower altitude on the way to either southern or eastern destinations and are in great danger of bird-hit with vultures leading to catastrophic consequences.

Preposterous as it may sound, we will have to accept the following alternatives. With Bombay harboring more than 70 percent of the entire Parsi community and on an average three to five deaths a day, it is not advisable to convert the Malabar Hill property into a Parsi burial ground: in a short time the entire area will also be filled up with graves and it is very expensive to maintain such a big burial ground in an aesthetic condition.

The only solution left is to build a modern electric crematorium in one corner of the Malabar Hill property and utilize the remaining vast area to house poor and middle income Zoroastrians.

An electric crematorium does not defile fire as only the heat generated by very high wattage burns off the dead body. Besides, the modern crematorium does not cause any environmental pollution.

While remaining true Zoroastrians by following the teachings of our great Prophet Zoroaster and at the same time practising the moral virtues and spirit of adventure handed down to us by our elders, it is also now time to mend our fences to keep ourselves abreast of the changing times and conditions facing us.

A recent review of Arun Shourie's book *The World of Fatwas* brings out the fact that fundamentalism and fatwas are not rulings but opinions handed down by the clergy and should have no binding force against the introduction of needed change.

Dr M. D. DISAWALLA

Bangalore

Edited by Arnavaz S. Mama



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Events and Personalities

Rapport in Poona

"The trustees bring to you *Rapport* as they found the need to involve the entire community in the working of the Panchayat to achieve long pending goals," states the chairman of the Poona Parsee Panchayat (PPP) Dara K. Irani in the first issue of their quarterly newsletter. "The ideas, the objectives and the performance of the Parsee Panchayat will be portrayed to you. In turn you will have an opportunity to voice your opinions or put forth your queries through a column in the quarterly which will be duly responded to," assures the newsletter edited by Ms Nilufer Sirvala on behalf of the PPP trustees.

The first issue of the newsletter gives an introduction to the present board of seven trustees who will serve for a three-year tenure and estimates the present strength of the PPP to be 1,210. Inviting others from the community to become members (the fees being Rs 1,001 for donor member, Rs 501 for life member and Rs 12 for ordinary member), they clarify that women married to non-Parsis as also children whose either parent is a non-Parsi will not be granted membership.

Maximum space in the four-page newsletter conveys news on the properties controlled by the PPP, especially the 68 acres of land near the Tower of Silence which have yet to be developed. As per the donor's wish, eight and a half acres of land were to be commercially exploited and the profits arising to be ploughed back into the development of the remaining land where the trustees are proposing the construction of flats for the poor and needy, a dharamshala for Zoroastrians visiting Pune, a hostel for Zoroastrian girls and boys, and perhaps a home for the aged. Involvement from the community is sought on this project as also for the beautification of the doongerwadi estate.

Archeologist Dr (Ms) Roxana Irani's proposal to initiate a chair for Zoroastrian Archaeological Studies at the Deccan College which involves an annual expenditure of Rs 1.5 lakhs has been carried in *Rapport* as also news of the ghambar scheduled for Zoroastrian men where "all the men are requested to wear their sudreh-kustis and topis without which entry will not be permitted."

Names of the 45 Zoroastrians who died in Poona in the eight months ending August 1995 have been published in the newsletter dated September 1995 which reached the *Parsiana* office in December. For their next issue that was to be out in December the local community was asked to give information on births for inclusion in *Rapport*.

Surat's sound investment

Those in the community who complain of depleting resources and eroding assets should turn to the board of trustees of the Surat Parsi Panchayat (SPP) for lessons in

augmenting funds. As per the detailed financial statement sent by the SPP president Dr Sam Bhacca, all the institutions, trusts and funds under their control have registered an increase in their corpus over the course of the last 35 years. The nine trustees of the well-placed anjuman are entrusted with assets totally valued at Rs 82,634,569.27 of which Rs 13,373,003.45 constitute immovable property and Rs 69,809,364.38 are shown as investment.

When it comes to parting with facts in the form of a newsletter, the SPP may be hesitant; but with figures they are more than willing. One hundred and twenty sheets of paper sought to convey through figures the picture of the SPP and its manifold activities in the field of education through the Surat Parsi Boys Orphanage, Nariman Girls Orphanage, the Patel School and the Polytechnic Institute; in the area of health and welfare through the Parsi General Hospital, Parsi Maternity Hospital and the Nariman Home; in the management of other bodies like the Alpaiwala Institute, Dastur Meherji Rana Trust, Dastur Darab Phalana Trust and the Sorabji Burjorji Dastur Darab Pahalana Trust. The funds of the SPP which were Rs 4,185,822.91 on December 31, 1961 have increased by Rs 29,327,164.51 to give a total of Rs 33,512,987.42 on March 31, 1995. The other institution to record a substantial improvement in financial position over the same period was the Nariman Home which registered an increase of Rs 18,627,965.29 to bring its total to Rs 19,757,978.58. Even the least affluent of their trusts (Alpaiwala Institute) showed an increase from Rs 160,615.12 to Rs 224,653.96.

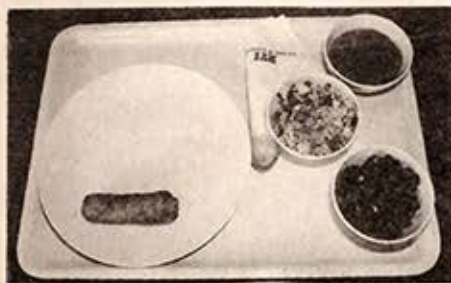
The immovable properties under the in



The headquarters of the Surat Parsi Panchayat Photo: Ashvin Mehta



Hector Mehta, Dr Dina Hakim, Jasmine and Zarir Bhathena, Homa and Aban Petit and Balsara outside the cafeteria. Right: The self-service counter and (below) an economical mini meal



Panchayat banner inclusive of the SPP are the Surat Parsi Boys Orphanage, Nariman Girls Orphanage, Patel School, Parsi General Hospital, Parsi Maternity Hospital and Nariman Home. Their consolidated financial position indicates a rise from Rs 2,115,528.83 in end 1961 to Rs 13,373,003.45 in end March 1995.

When it comes to comparing the Reserve, Development and Sinking Funds of these different trusts, the Surat Parsi Boys Orphanage appears to be the most comfortably placed showing Rs 1,255,391.04 as on March 31, 1995. At the other end is the Patel School which shows Rs 70,332.23.

Among the immovable properties which have been able to record a substantial increase in the 35-year period under the head of "rent and income from land received" are the SPP, the Boys Orphanage and the Patel School. In the case of SPP there was an increase from Rs 16,243.93 to

Rs 764,573.16; for the Boys Orphanage from Rs 5,169.16 to Rs 170,300; and for the Patel School from Rs 2,059.06 to Rs 127,536.

Not only the totals but the audited statement of accounts and balance sheet for each of the institutions and trusts have been sent by the SPP.

On analyzing the donations received by different bodies, it is apparent that the SPP is the largest beneficiary having earned Rs 52,444.02 from public trusts and Rs 158,676 from individuals during the last financial year. The highest expenditure incurred in the same period was on account of secular education towards which the SPP spent Rs 5,146,676.07. The next largest beneficiary of donations was the Surat Parsi Boys Orphanage which received Rs 210,987 from public trusts and Rs 37,691 from individuals. The Girls Orphanage received Rs 35,750 from public trusts and Rs 13,191 from individuals.

The PGH's cafeteria

Cafeteria facilities are now available to relatives and friends tending their patients at the B. D. Petit Parsi General Hospital (PGH). Up to 50 persons can avail of the self-service and eat in comfort. Those who prefer to take away are also in a position to do so. While the honoraries and Hospital

staff would be able to grab a quick bite (in addition to their normal hospital meals), the patients' own meals would continue to be provided by the Hospital, as also for those relatives who choose to order their trays in advance, informed PGH vice president Ms Aban Petit.

Joining the Hospital in the attempt to provide nutritious, hygienic food to the economically weaker section of the community is the Ratan Tata Institute (RTI). Full meals and snacks as well as economy lunches and dinners will be available to these caretakers to obviate the need to cart everything from home or settle for unhygienic fare from streetside stalls.

The cafeteria has metamorphosed from an old godown adjacent to the RMO's office, sprightly in white and green with granite table tops and assorted old furniture like redundant bedside tables and laundry bins painted and refurbished to match the new decor. Plants and old china on the walls add color and ambience.

Under the arrangement, the equipment is supplied by the PGH, food and service by the RTI. A percentage of all items sold will accrue to the PGH. The food will come in fresh twice a day. Mini meals consisting of one dry item, two chappatis, rice, vegetable and dal — both vegetarian and non-vegetarian — are available at Rs 15 to Rs 16, according to Bomi Balsara, a PGH committee member who has been deeply involved with the project. The Hospital's expenses in the venture have been defrayed from a specific donation from Ms Manijeh Pleader, he added.

The cafeteria was inaugurated on November 26, 1995 with a jashan led by Ervad Aspi Dadachanji, largely attended by the committee members of the PGH and the RTI. The latter have been credited with having done much of the spadework of getting the necessary permission from the authorities for the project.

While the facility answers a long-felt need, its limited hours of work (11 a.m. to 8 p.m.) does reduce its effectiveness. For example, relatives who have attended through the night on a patient undergoing emergency treatment are still unable to find a much needed cup of tea or coffee when they most need it.

Arnavaz S. Mama

Press Trust chairman

Elected chairman of the Press Trust of India for 1995-96, this is the third time that Cushrow Irani, editor-in-chief and managing director of *The Statesman*, has been chosen to head India's leading English news agency. He had earlier held that post



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Irani: news
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his last on August 12, 1995 at the age of 70.

With his fingers and toes deformed, and wounds on the sole of his feet because of which he always wore socks, walking was difficult for Sidhwa. In addition, a depression in the bridge of his nose had contorted his facial features too.

When social workers Ms Freny Unwalla, Ms Arnawaz Mistry and Aspi Parekh came to know of his case, they regularly started visiting him and on persistent queries came to realize that he missed Parsi *bhonu* at the Hospital. So, with the finance organized by Ms Silloo Kavarana, they arranged for tiffins to be delivered to him in plastic bags. In the last two months of his life when he was not able to eat food, Mistry, visiting him every alternate day, would carry soup or other semi-solids that were comfortable for him.

On one occasion the social workers organized an outing for him, taking Sidhwa to the Bandra Bandstand. They were also contemplating shifting him to a hospice in Gujarat where he could be in the midst of Parsis, but Sidhwa was not inclined, fearing rejection by the community.

The cost of his last rites and consignment at the Towers of Silence was borne by Sidhwa's brother who is a priest at the Sethna Agiary. According to the press release, in between, Sidhwa had discontinued wearing the kusti since he could not tie it on himself. However, on the advice of Ervad Rustomji Panthaky of Dadar's Athornan Boarding Madressa the social workers tied the kusti for him which he was asked to leave on even at bath time.

Earlier he used to walk up to the Rustomfaramna Agiary at Dadar and stand outside the premises to pay his silent homage. When the social workers consulted Panthaky, Sidhwa was granted permission to enter within, but he preferred not to, lest he displease other coreligionists. Born in Gujarat, Sidhwa had studied at Bombay's Cama Athornan Boarding Madressa and was ordained a navar. To help his widowed mother, he first worked for a travelling agency and later at the Beach Luxury Hotel in Karachi. As he confided to the social workers, since he was 17 years of age he had noticed some skin irritation and spots. But want of medicine made him neglect the symptoms until the germs had taken deep root, necessitating hospitalization, first at the Miraj Hospital and subsequently at Ackworth.

The services that he rendered at the Hospital were acknowledged with an honorarium of Rs 35 that was given to him each month. From his savings totalling nearly

1973-74 and 1974-75. Irani has also served as president of the Indian Newspaper Society and the Audit Bureau of Circulation, according to a press release.

On the international scene Irani is vice-chairman of the World Press Freedom Committee headquartered in Washington and a member of the advisory board of the Center for Foreign Journalists, USA. The first Indian to be elected chairman of the International Press Institute (IPI), he is presently its vice-chairman. His "outstanding services" as chairman in 1982 had earned Irani honorary life membership of IPI, mentions his biographical sketch.

Known for his relentless fight for the freedom of the Press when emergency was declared in India in the mid 1970s, Irani was conferred the Freedom Award by the Freedom House, New York, and the Astor Award by the Commonwealth Press Union for "distinguished service in the cause of Press freedom." For "highest loyalty to democracy," Irani was made Knight Commander of the Order of Isabella Catholica by the King of Spain as per the list of distinctions conferred on the journalist.

Born in Bombay, 65-year-old Irani was educated at the city's St Xavier's College and the Government Law College. Presently based in Calcutta, the journalist has authored two books: *Bengal — The Communist Challenge* and *In Pursuit of Freedom*.

Learning from adversity

His fellow inmates at the Ackworth Leprosy Hospital at Wadala loved and respected him. The doctors and staff at the institute remembered his helpful and co-operative attitude, referring in particular to the assistance he rendered to two patients who happened to be mentally retarded. The social workers who visited him found him to be contented, never lamenting or asking for favors. The "Parsi Bawaji," as Gustad Dinshaw Sidhwa was popularly addressed at the Hospital, finally breathed

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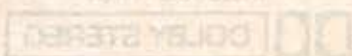
The Boyce Dhana Patel Agiary

at Tardeo -- the only Fire-temple after the Iranshah Atash Behram without electricity, thereby maintaining the purity of the atmosphere within -- is undergoing extensive repairs, at an estimated cost of Rs 40 lakhs.

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Priests and trustees affiliated to the Patel Agiary, with Dalal on extreme left

Rs 1,800 a special bed in Sidhwa's memory has been donated for use by the oldest inmate of the Hospital, informs Mistry.

Covenants of faith

The revised edition of the *Ahd-Namaha* researched by the well-known social worker Ms Mithoo Coorlawala was released by former member of the Minorities Commission Homi J. H. Taleyarkhan at a function in the Library Hall of the K. R. Cama Oriental Institute on October 30, 1995.

Giving a gist of the function and the book, Capt Hormazdiar J. M. Desai, honorary secretary of the Institute, recounted Taleyarkhan's message that the world today needed welfare, not warfare. According to Taleyarkhan, when India is emphasizing the imperative need of national integration and the unity of all religions, Coorlawala's contribution should promote brotherhood and peace.

Ahd-Namaha, which are essentially pledges or covenants, were charters granted by Prophet Muhammad and by his son-in-law Imam Ali to the Ahel-e-Kitab, which means the people of the book (i.e. those like the Christians, Jews, Zoroastrians whose religious teachings are contained in their sacred book). All these covenants of faith enjoin on the followers of Islam to grant protection of person, property, freedom of worship, exemption from payment of the jazia tax and from compulsory military service. "The spirit of tolerance, understanding, generous outlook and healthy respect for the religions... runs through every sentence of these firmans," notes Desai.

As stated at the function by Dr (Ms)

Zeenat Shaukat Ali, professor of Islamic Studies at St Xavier's College, "Though the authenticity of these firmans has been questioned, this research provides unusual insights, disclosing a freshly perceived composite understanding. Clearly her reading is unusually extensive. Her research sources have been meticulously investigated and the text reveals a positive and uniformly mature underlying structure. An interesting feature of this book are the information footnotes used, where necessary, to supplement the text."

This monograph published by the K. R. Cama Oriental Institute is printed on Zanders Art Paper and priced at Rs 150.

Patel Agiary marks 151

The 151st anniversary of the Framji Nasserwanji Patel Agiary at Mazagaon on October 2, 1995 was observed with two jashans (one in the morning on behalf of the trustees, and another in the evening on behalf of other coreligionists).

Almost 450 members of the community participated in a contributory dinner on the same day when thanks to the largesse of certain philanthropists, poor mobeds, students of the Athornan Boarding Madressa at Dadar and the pall-bearers with their families were given a free meal, according to a press release sent by the panthaky of the Agiary Ervad Nariman Dalal. The generosity of the owners of Wibs Bread, Godiwalla Caterers, Khambatta Caterers, Saron Caterers and Ms Dhunmai Master, as also the cooperation extended by the trustees, the priests and other committed individuals was gratefully acknowledged.

Compiled by Parinaz Gandhi

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The Gathas on computer

"The days when simple devotion was the driving force, are long over. It is essential that we all, in our own mind, comprehend the message of the *Gathas* and live our lives by its precepts," notes Purviz Kolsawalla, former president of the Australian Zoroastrian Association (AZA) of New



South Wales who has completed his compilation of nearly 19 translations of the *Gathas* of Zarathushtra on four 3.5" HD diskettes. This marks the end of phase one of his four-part project to similarly put together the *Yas-*

na, *Vendidad* and the *Yashts*, each on four diskettes. The idea is to put them all together on one CD-ROM which he expects will cost approximately US \$ 10,000 to produce. Kolsawalla hopes that every western university offering a syllabus on Zoroastrianism will opt for a copy which he says he is planning to produce with total "hyper-texting" (cross-referencing) facility.

Each verse of the transliterated *Gathas* (the original text in Roman script) is followed by translations arranged in alphabetic order of the translators. Thus B. T. Anklesaria heads the list and is followed by Mobed Firouz Azargoshahb, Dastur Framroze Bode and Ms Pilloo Nanavutty. Ms Mary Boyce, J. M. Chatterjea, Dr F. S. Chiniwalla, Stanley Insler, A. V. W. Jackson, Ali Jafarey, Ervad K. E. Kanga, Kavi A. F. Khabardar, L. H. Mills (including his retranslation from Neryosangh Dhaval's Sanskrit text), Khodabax Punegar, Framroze Rustomji, T. R. Sethna, Arthur Bleek (retranslation from Spiegel's German translation) and I. J. S. Taraporewalla. After faithfully entering all these translations Kolsawalla has given an interpretation of the verse in Khshnoomist terms.

While Gujarati works have been translated by Kolsawalla into English, linguistic barriers and/or unavailability of the text in Australia has precluded others.

The selected translators fall into four separate schools. Mills, Dhaval, Kanga together with many other western and Zoroastrian scholars have relied on extant Pahlavi translations of the *Gathas*. Taraporewalla, Khabardar, Chatterjea and others have relied on Vedic Sanskrit, a

sister tongue to Zarathushtra's Gathic (also known as old Avestan).

The advantage of the Pahlavi based texts, says Kolsawalla, is that these translations are believed to have been effected by very learned and spiritually evolved Zoroastrian priests in the Sasanian and post-Sasanian times. Also "Pahlavi grammar and language are reasonably well understood," Kolsawalla notes in a printout of the introduction given to *Parsiana*. On the other hand, he says, that by Sasanian times Gathic grammar and language were not only "imperfectly understood," their interpretations may have been "tinged by other philosophies prevalent in Iran."

The Vedic Sanskrit based translations "are probably the closest to Zarathushtra's actual thinking. Unfortunately, the *Gathas* are full of deeply esoteric and allegorical references which could not be easily explained by simple philology. Another potential problem is that the translations are tinged with Vedic Hindu ideas which are later reflected in Theosophy."

The third school propounded by Khabardar, took the aid of Sanskrit as well as an astrological explanation. Considered unorthodox by many scholars, Kolsawalla notes that it "provides a very deep challenge to traditionally held beliefs."

The fourth school is that of the Khshnoomists with their esoteric emphasis. "Using the divine esoteric knowledge of the abed Maghavans, (Chiniwalla) has given detailed explanations of these highly complex and esoteric terms." However, Kolsawalla is foxed by Chiniwalla's "highly Persianized Gujarati and extremely long sentences, replete with extensive footnotes... A full coverage of his text is impossible for a layman like me," he admits.

The diskettes represent five years of work for Kolsawalla who dedicated two and a half hours to it every night, entering it all on his computer. "My background in science, engineering and analytical research has reinforced the fact that truth has many facets and knowledge has to be searched in any quarter where it could be found," he notes. "The *Gathas* provide us with a very high moral code to live (by) without any complicated ritual. As Jafarey has so aptly said, 'Forward with the *Gathas*.' After all, that is what Asho Zarathushtra meant when he has asked (us) to think with our own mind and make the right choice." The diskettes (priced at Australian \$ 15 locally and US \$ 15 elsewhere -- postage

extra), are available from the author, 16 Tenison Avenue, Cambridge Park, NSW 2747, Australia.

Kolsawalla estimates about 1,600 Zoroastrians in Australia, more than half of them being in Sydney. With their dar-e-meher being well established and three young navars of the second generation joining the pioneers like Ervad Peshotan Katrak whose unceasing priestly help has enabled the community to weather its inevitable crises, Zoroastrians in New South Wales seem better settled, with religion, history and Gujarati classes as part of the AZA's established schedule.

Zoroastrians in Bahrain

The 1995-96 directory of the Bahrain Zoroastrian Association lists 58 households, 17 of them comprising singles. The 41 married couples have as many children among them. The grand total of about 140 Zoroastrians includes nine non-Zoroastrian spouses.

The xeroxed compilation, sent to *Parsiana* by Neville Choksi, indicates that service in the airways and at the air terminals, in trading companies, petrochemical establishments, bank and investment organizations, hotels, hospitals and the university is what attracts and keeps Indian Zoroastrians in the Gulf states.

Flood tide for Bagli

The Wyeth-Ayerst Research Laboratories in Princeton, USA, recently promoted Dr Jehan Bagli to the position of Distinguished Research Fellow. A press release from Wyeth-Ayerst's assistant vice president of chemical sciences Dr Majid Abou-Gharbia details Bagli's numerous contributions and their "profound impact on the business objectives of the corporation."



Having "promoted discovery research of new drug candidates in various areas of medicinal chemistry," Bagli's creativity in the field of synthetics coupled with his intuition for biological activity

have earned him an international reputation, notes Abou-Gharbia. Author and co-author of over 100 publications and

continued on page 22

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THE PARSI FLAG

A Tribute to the Parsi Vexillographer Dr Jehangir R. Medora

by Meher Master-Moos, MA (Oxon),
LLM (Michigan)



The Flag decorates many Parsi homes around the World as the symbol of "Earth Friendliness and Universal Brotherhood." Its three colours have beautiful primary shades for three countries with the Asho Farohar giving it a Zoroastrian touch. We Parsis never had our own flag (since we arrived at Sanjan in India on about November 22, 745 A.D.) but now we have taken an instant liking to the flag designed by Dr Jehangir Medora. It was flown at the convocation ceremony of the Zoroastrian College (January 30, 1995) in Bombay and also at the Zoroastrian College Building at Sanjan. It was unfurled every morning and saluted at the Zoroastrian children's Leadership Camp organised by the Zoroastrian Stree Mandal of Hyderabad on October 21-24, 1995 where 121 Zoroastrian children from all over India participated. On November 22, 1995 the 1,250th year anniversary of our landing at Sanjan, the flag was exhibited on the speakers platform, at the Sanjan Stambh Anniversary Function. The Parsi children at Zoroastrian Studies take an oath using the same words inscribed on the walls of Persepolis by the greatest Zoroastrian Persian King of all times, Darius — the Achaemenian Emperor (circa 521 BC-486 BC)

"A great God is Ahura Mazda
Who created this Earth
Who created Yonder Sky
Who created Man
Who created Welfare and Happiness for Man
Who made us all Zoroastrians."

But what really impresses me is the inscription which Darius has left about Zoroastrianism. In his book *Religions of the World* Gerald L. Berry said "Zoroastrianism led to a government in Persia more just than anywhere else in the ancient world. The Emperors were given a sense of obligation

as witness the quotation from Darius.

'Ahura Mazda brought me help because
I was not wicked (Good thoughts)
Nor was I a liar (Good words)
Nor was I a tyrant (Good deeds)
I have ruled according to Righteousness."

You will ask what went on in the year 1995, that had brought Parsis together to salute this flag and make them all excited about it. It has to do with a Zoroastrian Parsi from Canada. JEHANGIR R. MEDORA, LLB (Bombay University), PhD (Zoroastrian College), was born in Deolali, India. Now 75 years old, the vexillographer has been living in Canada for the last 35 years. The six-footer felt a bit odd as a Zoroastrian, because he had no Parsi flag to fly at the INTER FAITH PEACE Meetings of the different ethnic groups in Canada. Wherever he goes in Canada he sees flags. Canada has a maple leaf red flag. Its ten provinces have their individual flags. Canadian cities have their own flags. The companies (Esso, Shell) and clubs (Rotary, Lions) each have their own flags. The religious groups, each have their own flags: Christians (Cross); Jews (Six-pointed Star of David); Hindus (Triangular Safron Pennant); Mohamadans (Green background); but we Parsi Zoroastrians have NO FLAG.

It made him sad and made him think. He read books on flags: "Too many pictures and pages; too confusing." He went to flag manufacturers: "Keep it simple," they advised him, "and don't steal designs from others." He met Parsi friends (Canadians), but they were still thinking like backwoods country bumpkins: "Who needs a Flag?" they said. "Better give money to the poor."

After retirement he had one thing in plenty — time. He turned himself into an instant vexillographer — a flag designer.

He saw flags in his sleep; dreamt of flags; all day and all night he saw nothing but flags. Being a bit of a pompous pioneering man himself, he jumped into the art and science of flag designing for a proper Zoroastrian Flag. "The ladies like blue; the men like red and the white in the middle." His vexillographer friends stopped him, "Hey! that is Netherlands' flag! Careful! Queen Juliana or is it Queen Beatrix! She will shoot you on sight for stealing the colors plus the design," they warned him.

So gold (yellow) was inserted in place of white and the Asho Farohar's image was superimposed in blue on the golden yellow. All primary colors. That's good! They will not fade so easily. A design, took shape, in his mind.

After many trips to the manufacturers of flags he found out that it cost too much. Then he ran into a lady banner-maker and painter who suggested "make a banner first as a model." He got a paper Asho Farohar from a Parsi home and got it enlarged. When the banner-maker/painter saw it, she recognized it immediately, as that "Hollywood spaceman from California." She traced the Asho Farohar on a 4 feet wide and 14 feet long strip of gold colored heavy plastic (cost \$ 250) and then they went to a store and bought blue and red coloured plastic strips to fit equally and to make it into a banner of about 14 feet by 12 feet (which cost \$ 650). The lady did a good job of stitching (another \$ 700) the whole thing together. At last a banner was formed — one from which flags can be made in any size. The banner cost a whopping \$ 1,600. It has red on top for Canada, saffron gold in the middle for India and beautiful Persian blue indicating Iran. These three colours indicate the countries in which we Zoroastrians are largely concentrated.

It was flown from Toronto to Bombay (at his expense) in time to be displayed at Zoroastrian College World Congress held at the Russian Cultural Centre (Bombay) in January 1995 and the Parsi Fiesta in October 1994. It now adorns the Zoroastrian College building at Sanjan.

And it was used to model a flag. Again the same flag manufacturers were approached. These were the months of November-December 1993 and all of them were busy with X'mas orders in tens of thousands and it appeared that the flag would stay unmade. At last one manufacturer took pity on Jehangir (but kept calling it the Assyrian Flag — perhaps he had also never heard of Zoroastrians) and charged \$ 1,000.

In January 1994 the first run of the nylon flag (54" x 33") came down the assembly line to the strains of *Thus Spake Zarathushtra* by Richard Strauss. All six of them. That's all. The next 25 would cost another \$ 1,000. No more money to spare! Even today (January 1996) the number has stayed at six.

The Flag brought unity and identity and a little pride too to us Parsis. But somehow Jehangir had a feeling that something was missing in the Flag. Nice colours and Asho Farohar did not indicate any Zoroastrian doctrines. Then suddenly, after reading about the seven earthly gifts of Ahura Mazda and His Archangels and the seven spiritual aspects, he thought of putting two seven-pointed stars on both sides of the Asho Farohar. Australia and New Zealand are the only countries with seven-pointed stars on their flags. All these appeared in his mind, just in time before the laminated paper flags were about to be printed in November 1995. The seven-pointed stars also symbolise Meher Yazad and Behman Yazad (Mithra and Varuna). Now he felt the flag was complete.

In November 1995 the very attractive laminated and the beautifully crafted printed flag (11" x 9") was made out with two

seven-pointed blue stars astride the Asho Farohar. Ten thousand flags were printed at the Union Press in Bombay, at a cost of Rs 65,000 (all his own money) and were distributed free. He is happy that they are admired and exhibited in Parsi homes. Some are even framed and put up on the agiary walls. He calls it "The Zoroastrian Flag of Friendliness and Brotherhood."

A full color page advertising the flag with his comments, was inserted in *Parsiana* (July-August 1995) which was mailed in early December 1995. His comments were that the Friendliness — stands for a "Friend of Earth." Use Ahura Mazda's earthly gifts but preserve them for milleniums to come and do not abuse or pollute His environment.

Brotherhood stands for "Brother to Mankind." That means be of righteous behaviour towards our fellowmen based on Good Thoughts, Good Words, and Good Deeds. These are the main doctrines of our noble faith. Be proud! You are Zoroastrian!

And finally (here's a big plus) the flag has been well thought of and recognized as a good one — as flags go — by the most prestigious flag organization in the world — The Flag Institute of England. Jehangir sent a Zoroastrian Flag (printed and laminated) to England to seek their opinion. In reply Mr Michael A. Faul, Honorary Secretary and Flag Consultant of the Flag Institute, gave high praise for Jehangir's vexillographical skills: "The Design is very good and is a model of a Flag Designer's art... It is distinctive and conveys the symbolism it has sought to embody... The colours are bold and clear and not easily subject to fading... You have managed to employ most of the principles of good flag design... A copy of the flag will be lodged in the archives of the Flag Institute in England."

And furthermore the Flag Institute has called him a "Vexillographer" — the professional title of a flag designer. All these compliments have gone to Jehangir's head and he is so puffed up that he finds himself elevated to the seventh heaven and since then he has refused to come down to planet earth. That's Jehangir for you!

Besides printing the laminated flags which are quite attractive, his plan is to bring out nylon flags just like the ones he made in Canada. They are made of a single nylon cloth which cannot be made in India. The costs, in Canadian dollars (C\$ 1 = Rs 26 approx) vary with the size of the flag: \$ 4 for per flag of 3" x 10" (\$8,000 for a minimum order of 2,000); \$ 20 per flag of 16" x 24" (\$6,000 for minimum 300); and \$ 50 per flag of 36" x 54" (\$5,000 for minimum 100).

He has already spent more than Rs 1,00,000 and a few thousand Canadian dollars of his own money and now has become short of funds. He said he would very much like some capable party to handle the production of such quality flags and its distribution in an equitable manner to the members of our community.

An application for a registered copyright (patent) has already been made in Canada in 1994 under the Industrial Design Act of Canada for world rights. A similar application has also been made here in India.

There is a sequel to all this — an appropriate salutation for Parsis: Be Good (to the Planet Earth) and Behave Yourself (be a brother to men), shortened to BGBYE. Now don't forget to say "Beejee bye" to our fellow Parsis instead of goodbye or bye bye. And here's Beejee bye to you all!



Tehran Beckons World Zoroastrians

The Iranian government has assured all assistance to make the Sixth World Zoroastrian Congress a success

The Iranian Government has given its "blessings" for the hosting of the Sixth World Zoroastrian Congress (WZC) in Tehran in June this year, said Federation of Parsi Zoroastrian Anjumans of India and Bombay Parsi Punchayet (BPP) chairman Jamshed N. Guzder. Addressing a press conference at the BPP office on February 12, 1996 Guzder said that the Iranian foreign minister Ali Akbar Velayati had met with representatives of the BPP in Bombay and assured them that the Tehran Congress had the full backing of the Iranian government.

The dates for the Congress, which was originally to be held from June 20 to June 23, have been changed to June 19 to June 22. According to Ms Homai Modi, the Congress representative for India, the reason for the change was a "miscalculation in date." When questioned by the press as to how this miscalculation had taken place both Guzder and Modi said there were some errors in calculation.

The venue for the Congress had not been fixed and will depend on the number of delegates attending. An air-conditioned venue will be booked. Guzder said that the foreign delegates had voiced concern about getting visas. But the Iranian authorities told him "Forget about it. We will help you to get visas." The deputy foreign minister Abbas Maleki and the new counsel general in Bombay Seyed Kamal Yasini promised the organizers "whatever you want." Even visas for Zoroastrians in North America would be "no problem," said Modi as long as the application forms were routed through the local punchayet, anjuman or association. Homi Talyerkhan reiterated that the Iranian government was "very keen to hold the Congress" and that the meet would

"open up vast areas of cooperation."

Delegate fees have been fixed at US \$ 300 except for participants from India and Pakistan. "They have been kind enough to bring the prices down to Rs 4,000 for India and Pakistan," said Modi as versus almost Rs 11,000 for all others.

The delegate fees for students from India and Pakistan is Rs 2,000. The age limit for students has not been specified but it is assumed to be between 17 to 30 years.

Delegates must send their registration forms by March 31, 1996 after which date the registration fees will double, said Modi. After the application has been received the Iranian Congress authorities will vet it and issue invitations to those who they wish to enroll. The basis for selection of the delegates has not been disclosed.

Guzder said a committee had been formed in Bombay to assist with the Congress enrollment and formalities. The committee consists of himself, Modi, BPP chief executive Behram Laskari, former BPP chief executive Rustom Anklesaria and BPP joint secretary Ms Gool Tata.

Four Indian Zoroastrians had been invited by the Iranian government and the Tehran Anjuman last year to help initiate the organizing of the Sixth WZC under the chairmanship of Dr Mahyar Ardeshiri. The quartet included Modi, who had helped organize the fourth and fifth congresses in Bombay as joint honorary secretary, noted industrialist Sohrab Godrej, Delhi Parsi Anjuman's president Lt Gen Adi Sethna (ret'd) and his wife Khorshed.

"In the past Zoroastrians in Iran were not at liberty to do what they liked," said Guzder, "That has all changed. Zoroastrians are given full freedom." Except for some restriction on what clothes women

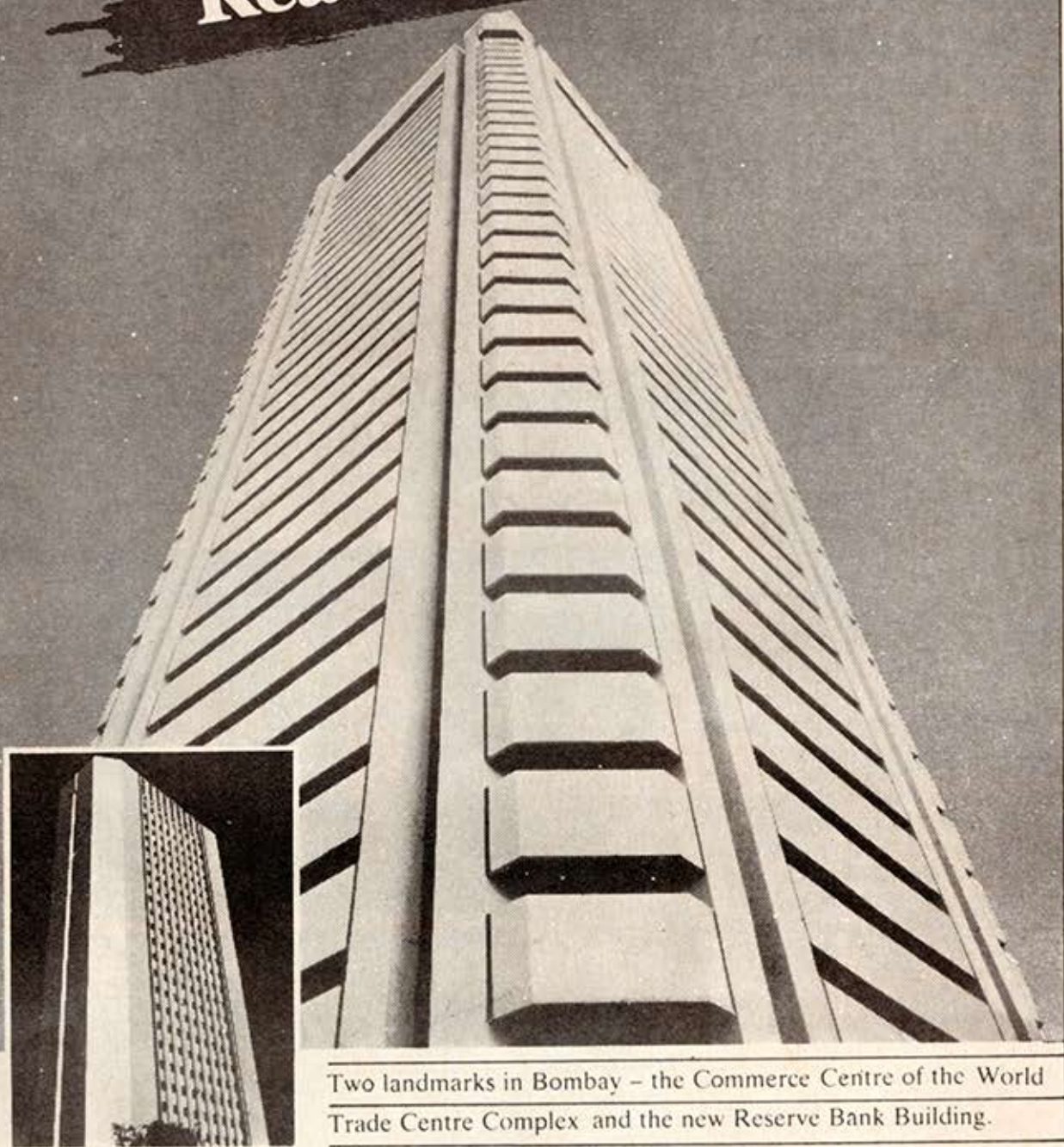
may wear, the delegates "can go anywhere they like." Permission has been given to organize tours.

"Iran is changing a little from what we have known it to be in the recent past," said Modi. There is no discrimination against women speaking and participating in the Congress. Explaining the dress code for women, Modi said that "nobody knows exactly what the attire should be." Women must wear a large scarf but it need not cover all the hair. She suggested that a loose coat or smock be worn over their clothes. The salwar kameez is preferable to saris. Fitting or figure hugging clothes should not be worn. Women will have to wear socks and shoes. Men should preferably wear long sleeved shirts.

Iran Air would be offering "a special concession" to those attending the Congress said Guzder. Modi estimated the cost of attending the congress and staying in Iran for two weeks to be around Rs 50,000 per person. This includes the air fare, delegate fees to the Congress of Rs 4,000, touring Iran and accommodation in Tehran during the Congress. The two weeks stay is necessitated by the fact that Iran Air flies from Bombay to Tehran and back only on Fridays. As the Congress will be held from Wednesday to Saturday delegates would have to arrive in Tehran the Friday before the Congress and depart the Friday after. Emirates airlines flies thrice a week to Tehran but may not offer any discount. Group booking on the Emirates to Tehran costs approximately Rs 16,000, according to Modi.

Friendly Tours have been authorised to make tour arrangements for groups of 25 each to Iran. Those participating in the tours will be accommodated in two and three star hotels during their stay. The tour

Reaching for the Sky



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organisers will also provide loose coats for the women to wear. There is no limit on the number of delegates from India, said Guzder. Guzder and Modi expect "hope-

Visas for Zoroastrians in North America would be "no problem"

fully a hundred" delegates will attend from India.

Four topics have been selected for the congress. These are:

- Increase cooperation among the world associations in order to preserve our cultural and religious heritage, promote progress and improve the living conditions of Zoroastrians (especially our youth).
- Reinforcement of the schools for educating the priests (mobeds), and allocation of special funds to send outstanding priests to well-known universities.
- Promote religious education to the Zoroastrian youth.
- Make decisions on the future of Zoroastrians (especially our youth), including investments and the use of assets for future generations.

Those wishing to present a paper on any of the above topics for not more than 20 minutes should send their papers or abstract by March 31, 1996 to Dr Khoshrow Dabestani, general secretary, 6th World Zoroastrian Congress, No. 8 Zarthoshtian Street, Mirza Koochak Khan St, Jamhuri Ave, Tehran 11316, Iran.

Speakers should be researchers in their respective topics, said Modi. If too many papers are received on the same topic, the executive council will evaluate the same and decide upon the speaker and whether other papers received should be printed in the proceedings. Participants who speak at the Congress will not be charged any registration fee.

The principle language at the Congress will be Farsi (Persian) but there will be a simultaneous translation facility into English and vice-versa.

The other trustees present at the press conference were Ms Silloo Kavarana, Dinshaw Mehta, Dadi Engineer and Rustom Tirandaz.

Those wishing to attend the Congress may contact Modi or Tata, c/o The Bombay Parsi Punchayet, 209, Dr D. N. Road, Fort, Bombay 400001, tel nos. 2617421/22/23, 2620028 or their respective anjumans, punchayets or associations.

ZOROASTRIANS ABROAD

continued from page 16

patents, the scientist is currently pursuing discovery research in cardiovascular areas, of particular interest to his organization.

This is the first time in the history of the company that anyone in the chemical sciences was promoted to this highest scientific level, notes the press release. S. Hanessian, McConnell professor of chemistry and NSERCC chair in medicinal chemistry at the University of Montreal, who is rated as Canada's number one scientist in this field, described Bagli's research as "characterized by its practicality and elegance. Jehan is an outstanding synthetic medicinal chemist and a true scholar. His contributions to the discipline

Sarosh Zaiwalla (extreme right), senior partner of Zaiwalla and Company, solicitors, with British Prime Minister John Major and Ms Norma Major at the Prime Minister's Huntingdon Constituency's Annual Christmas Ball and with Dame Barbara Cartland (below, right) who unveiled the sculpted head of Rabindranath Tagore as created by Shenda Amery

have been significant and his dedication to the profession exemplary."

After graduating in chemistry and pharmaceuticals from Bombay University, Bagli obtained his PhD in medicinal chemistry from the University of London en route to postdoctoral studies at the Johns Hopkins University in Maryland, USA. Joining Wyeth-Ayerst in Montreal in 1960, Bagli's sustained work benefitted his company and his community who elected him their founder president when the Zoroastrian Association of Quebec was formed in 1967, was the founder-editor of its newsletter, *Gavashni*, for many years before agreeing to take on the FEZANA newsletter in a similar capacity. Though he has withdrawn from these positions in the past few years, he continues to contribute to Zoroastrian scholarship through lectures and articles, particular zeal being reserved for the reformation and unification of the Zoroastrian calendar and its restoration to seasonal accuracy.

Bagli was invited to move to Princeton in 1983 with his wife Freny, when Wyeth-Ayerst closed their Montreal laboratory for political reasons. In his new professional position Bagli will continue as a major contributor "in expanding the boundaries of knowledge in his specialty," providing the drive and innovativeness to steer research projects to corporate success while functioning as an "eminently regarded advisor and consultant of senior management," notes the press release.



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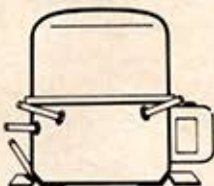
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It's their Blooming business

Their pioneering efforts in the field of cut-flower exports have earned the Masanis international and national recognition, the latest being the Krishi Bhushan award

Parinaz Gandhi

Look behind... and there are blooms. Look beyond... and there are buds. Look all around and there are flowers, mainly export quality flowers grown by floriculturists Feroze Masani and his wife Hema on their farm at Nasik. When visitors to the farm remark on the impressive scenery and the Masanis' good fortune to reside there, Feroze invariably responds, "If you worked here, you would know." By way of explanation for *Parsiana*, Feroze elaborates, "You are within nature but not able to enjoy nature... You are always on call." Have the fields been watered? Have the men reported to work? Did the cow give birth to a calf? These are only some of the tensions that nag the couple. "As you grow older, you discipline and condition yourself not to get too involved. I may want to have a lie-in on a Sunday but I can't," he is now reconciled to a long-drawn way of existence.

Life may not have been a bed of roses for Feroze — the rose people — as their enterprise has come to be recognized internationally. (The same name — Feroze — may refer to the organization, their quality flowers, or the man behind the venture.) But this does not mean they have not had their share of bouquets. Only a couple of months ago, Feroze was presented the Krishi Bhushan by the Government of Maharashtra for his pioneering work in the field of floriculture. The award carried a gold medal, a citation and a cash gift of Rs 25,000. Three years ago, the Government of India's ministry of commerce that controls the Agricultural and Processed Food

Products Export Development Authority, conferred on the Masanis their Export Award for pioneering work in the field of cut-flower exports from India. That same year, the Netherlands Government invited them to display their flowers at the Professional Flower Exhibition at Aalsmeer when for the first time Indian cut-flowers were displayed at the world's premier flower show, we are informed.

Reportedly the largest exporters of gladioli from India and the first Indian company to grow carnations to international standards, the Masanis have reason to feel proud. Their first experience of exports was in 1990 when they sent four boxes of carnations, each having 1,000 blooms, to Europe, recalls Feroze. They were also the first Indian company to be accepted at the Dutch auction VBA (the English equivalent of which is United Flowering Auction), a place where Indians were considered to be "untouchables." Feroze gives an insight into this gargantuan set-up where countries like Columbia and Israel may participate with a cargo load of one jumbo jet. "You learn that when you want to make money, the last place you should be in is an auction. You realize though the importance of quality, the commitment to dates, working with airlines... You look around, create niches and build for yourself," Feroze shares his experience.

Their flowers have now found a market in Hungary, Poland, Sweden, Spain, Milan, Tokyo thanks to their collaboration with Florimex which Feroze describes as "the largest trading company with a daily turn-

over of a million dollars, having their central purchasing department in Frankfurt." The tremendous Florimex network enables them to know each buyer in each country — their packaging preferences, their color preferences, their peak periods... Any direct enquiries and Feroze invariably consults them before making a commitment. "Since we deal with perishables, faith is important in this business," points out Feroze.

Besides they have to encounter "an extremely volatile market," elaborates Feroze. Natural or man-made calamities like earthquakes, plague, riots, and their market is down. The turmoil surrounding the Babri-Masjid issue in 1993 meant "bad six months for us. It shakes customer confidence." The plague scare in 1994, and the airlines refused to accept their consignments.

With 60 percent of their business being export-oriented, the saving grace in such situations is the domestic market. But here too there may be depressed low prices. "That is why we do not want to go public (when many others in agriculture are raising funds this way). We don't want to work with anyone else's money. We do not want to spoil our name," maintains Feroze. What are the other options? "Do extra kustis on such days," he jokes before specifying the practical course which is "to use the flowers as compost for the next crop; laugh; have another beer and say 'tomorrow is another day.'"

The Masanis own 84 acres of land in one area and 30 in another of which around



six and a half acres are under green house or poly house and 32 acres used for outdoor cultivation of flowers. Some of these plants have a fairly long pay back period. An investment of Rs 1.5 crores is needed for 2½ acres of carnations, the costs of which could be recovered after seven to eight years. In addition to carnations and gladioli and gerbera they also experimented with gypsophilla and statice but found that there were not many takers in the Indian market. This year they did not export any carnations (they reportedly have the largest area under poly house in India for the production of carnations) for the simple reason that prices have slumped in the international market. Presently they are experimenting with some other flowers. A surprise to look forward to?

Ask Feroze to name his favorite flower and he confesses that he is not fascinated by any particular variety. "For me the joy does not lie in the individual flower but to see the fields, to satisfy the nutritional needs of every plant, to see that the packaging shed looks neat; to see that the labor is contented." This year their workforce number 35; half the strength of last year. This Feroze attributes to the men getting more efficient, and also to the owners' ability to get more work out of them!

"I do not come from a scientific or agricultural background," states Feroze matter-of-factly, professing no great love

Working among the flowers: Feroze and Hema Masani (above) and their sons (L to R) Hormuz, Ruzbeh and Zubin. Facing page: sorting and packing the blooms for export

for the land. A chartered accountant by training, "I look at things in a more mercenary way." The keyword for Feroze is profits. "I am here by accident of marriage. I happened to marry the only child from a large farming family," he adds. Hema's parents used to cultivate roses. That is how the Masanis originally got interested in standardizing high density rose plantations for Indian conditions before diversifying into other flower crops. That is probably why Hema's favorite flower continues to be the rose.

In 1983 when they took over the rose business their turnover was in the vicinity of eight lakh rupees. Today their turnover is in the region of two crores, says Feroze, with their exports averaging 300 boxes a week. With his accounts background what Feroze finds particularly fascinating is the advance planning they have to do for 52 weeks in the year. "You have to plan for



the domestic and international market. The color mix...since each flower market has a different preference for each flower. These exercises in numerology are like a jigsaw puzzle," he reveals. "I like to do the thinking and let the other people do the work," he adds, elaborating how his need to constantly feel involved made him design their own green houses, tailor-make their own refrigerated van. "There is no sense in having a unit that cannot be serviced," is his logic.

With the paperwork and decision-making, 40-year-old Hema invariably helps Feroze who is a year older. When it is time for a business trip, either one or the other goes. And yet Feroze likes to maintain, "Hema has a career as a housewife; to keep the home fires burning...We are not management-oriented, we are not industrialized. We are farmers," he asserts.

There are many agriculturists with neg-



ligible cultivations but good growing skills. Such poor farmers are exposed to new materials through the Floriculture Foundation launched by the couple in 1988. Adopting the philosophy, 'you share my labor and my profits,' this year they have covered many such growers with additional land under cultivation admeasuring almost 10 acres. Under the auspices of the Foundation the Masanis have initiated a scholarship in floriculture at the Mahatma Phule Krishi Vidyapeeth (near Ahmednagar) where a student's good performance would earn him Rs 25,000 a year.

Parsis of yore were basically agriculturists, reminds Feroze. After the British it was the Parsis who were known to have a love for nature. But it stopped there. Barring Poncha's seeds and his book on gardening which was considered a Bible, there was no new development. In fact, when Feroze wanted to hire a Parsi hand, none was available for "no one is willing to leave Bombay and come to the interiors." For those who want to remain stationed in the city and venture into farming, long distance, Feroze advises, "This business is more owner-managed. ...no push button remote controls." In their own case, in addition to Feroze's and Hema's involvement, their three sons invariably help out when they are on vacation: Zubin who has completed his eighth grade and Ruzbeh his seventh grade at the Doon School; even the youngest, Hormuz, who is in the third standard at St Xavier's School in Nasik and can only join his brothers at the Doon on completion of 12 years of age, is assigned chores like noting down colors of the flowers during packaging time.

Another ingredient for contentment is the appreciation of their solitude and isolation: "Life has a different pace. No dashing between social events and tearing yourself apart." They have no TV and they are happy that way. "It is nice to be able to communicate, to talk, to think things through rather than have someone influence your thinking," believes Feroze. "It is not that we don't enjoy a good laugh," he continues, admitting that both Hema and he miss out on good theater in Nasik. Travelling, mostly abroad, is an activity enjoyed by the whole family.

"I would never fit into city life," realizes Feroze who was born and brought up in Dehra Dun where his father Noshir taught at the Forest Research Institute after serving the army as a captain. His early education was at The Doon School after which he left for Poona to study at the Ness Wadia College of Commerce. That is where

he got to know his fellow student Hema. He then proceeded to the UK where he obtained a diploma in accountancy from the Oxford Polytechnic and pursued a career as a chartered accountant before opting to return to India.

Did his choice of a non-Parsi spouse upset his family? He was waiting for a long time for *Parsiana* to broach this subject, he confides. It is an issue on which he apparently feels very strongly. He was brought up in "an extremely secular household," although his father, an ordained navar, was called upon to perform all priestly duties for the Zoroastrians of Dehra Dun and "must have despatched all who died there... My great, great grandfather had a panthak in Navsari," Feroze counts the generations to make sure he is accurate. "My father stressed that being a good human being was more important than just a Zarthosti. He would go to the mosque on Id, wear a turban and go to a gurudwar... But I think it is wrong," emphasizes Feroze. "As a community we are not doing enough to preserve the Zoroastrian ethos," says Feroze who as a matter of principle even refuses *prasad* when offered by a Hindu. Feroze, his brother Jamshed, and sister Zareen have all married non-Parsis but Feroze notes, "Hema and I would be very disappointed if our children were to marry non-Parsis."

Having been brought up in a Parsi household in Poona (by Ms Gool Mehta, wife of the late Dr Dinshaw Mehta who being Gandhiji's physician was influenced by his ascetic ways) "Hema is so much at home among our ways — from *khichri saas* to *kor ni saris*. What is wrong if our community accepts her? Other than wearing a sudreh-kusti which is denied to her, she is more a Parsi than a Hindu. Is it important to maintain purity of race or purity of thought?" he questions.

"I don't think we are going to increase from 70,000 to 7,000,000 (if we accept such persons). Call them 'dubras,' 'half-breeds,' what you may (if you don't want to regard them as equals to those born Parsi)... One thing lacking in our marriage is that there is no place where all five of us can go and pray together... After our death will our children have separate muktad prayers for the father and shraddha-bhog prayers for the mother?" he wonders. Until a synthesis comes about, let there be certain prayer halls open to these people. There are so many dilapidated fire-temples in Bombay and Gujarat where such people can be permitted, he feels.

He happily recounts the incident fol-

lowing the navjote of his two elder sons. After the ceremony they proceeded to the Deolali fire-temple to bow before the fire. On reaching there they found the masons giving the final touches to the renovated fire-temple just before the fire could be reinstalled. In the absence of the fire, even Hema got an opportunity to enter the precincts and now knows exactly what the inside of a fire-temple is. "There is nothing left to her imagination." Feroze feels it was the hand of providence that enabled the family to pray together on an auspicious occasion.

"My respect for the community is greater than my individual views on religion," states Feroze. While he advocates that Hema be admitted into the fold, he realizes that his brother's wife who is a Pakistani

"You are within nature but not able to enjoy nature"

Muslim would not feel comfortable within the community at all. For that matter he has even stopped including his sister Zareen's name in the prayers at the fire-temple because after her marriage to a Scotsman he feels she is more akin to their ways. He would be loathe to see Parsis taken over by another culture if there is indiscriminate admission for all and in fact refuses to consider taking Hema in surreptitiously. Conversion is not just a matter of "change of religion but of sharing thought processes and values," he would like to remind the fundamentalists who keep harping on purity "but are doing nothing to see what religion is all about."

Although he has not become a navar, all his three sons shall be ordained as priests, Feroze is determined. "Certain things a child has to do by tradition," he insists. Today there are about 20 Zoroastrians in Dehra Dun but not a single priest. "Would it be better for the community to have a *khushali nu jashan* performed by a half Parsi or not have one performed at all?" he asks rhetorically. Change will occur, Feroze is sanguine, but "it may take longer, after there is a greater awakening in the community."

Feroze has the patience to wait. That was the same policy he adopted when dealing with the government. In 1985 when no one else talked about floriculture, the highly capital intensive, non-traditional technology, Feroze sought to create an

awareness within the country by presenting a paper to the late Rajiv Gandhi, laying out a blueprint for floriculture development in India. Manmohan Atavar, popular for his hybrid seeds, was then the only other name in this field. That was the time when only 20 gm of seeds could be imported, when import duties were exorbitant, when the Indian laws were working against the country's development. Feroze kept hammering for change and was in fact quoted twice in *Time* magazine for trying to revolutionize agriculture in India.

"But bureaucracy does not relent easily," has been Feroze's experience. The harbinger of change was Rajiv who on a trip to Turkey learnt that it was only when the government permitted both imports and exports could Turkey, once an importing nation, become an exporting nation. Thus came into being the new seed policy in 1988 which, according to Feroze, was the first policy of liberalization by the Government of India. "It did wonders. The import duty was slashed (it is now zero percent). It gave Indian farmers the right to have access to the finest plant material anywhere in the world. It was formulated to the advantage of the entire industry," sums up Feroze.

In the course of his interactions with the government Feroze has learnt, "It is not that the government is unwilling to act, but it is not aware of what needs to be done." To provide data at ground level Feroze has been invited to several government committees: expert committee on floriculture development, subgroup on floriculture to the Planning Commission, Government of Maharashtra's Khole Committee, floriculture group set up by the ministry of commerce for extreme focus segment. In addition he is executive counsellor at the Indian Society of Ornamental Horticulture. What continues to amaze Feroze is the "tremendously efficient system of file retrieval by the Government of India." They may sit on certain papers and files for months or years but let anything related to the subject be taken up for discussion at a high level meeting, and presto, all the correspondence on the subject finds a place on the table. That is how Feroze's documents were given serious attention.

"I know a lot about flowers," declares Feroze. "I may not be able to give a lecture on genetic engineering or photosynthesis (for) I came to farming by accident." But his success, he insists, is because he did not have a mindset: "If you want to do something, do the opposite. Come with a vision which is different."

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Members of the executive council of the Federation of Parsi Zoroastrian Anjumans of India strongly advocated that financial help from the community should be available to couples having their first child instead of their third child as postulated by the Bombay Parsi Punchayet (BPP). Agitated by the ebb in Parsi births and the lack of concerted attempts to turn the tide, some speakers at the June 3, 1995 meet at Bombay's Muncherji Khareghat Hall demanded that such a policy, spearheaded by the BPP, be undertaken on an all-India basis.

A parallel concern was the Government of India's refusal to part with data gleaned in the course of the 1991 census. That the community's own socioeconomic survey — an objective set at the fifth World Zoroastrian Congress (WZC) — has made scant headway, especially in the community bastion of Bombay, has also been a source of anxiety.

While the Federation agreed to implede itself in the long-running legal battle between the trustees of the Mistry Adarian Trust in Boisar depending on its solicitor's approval, the orthodox-reformist divide flashed into focus as Dahanu's Zarthost Mubarakhi took exception to the Jamshedpur and Delhi delegates' report on recent events in their areas and Baroda president Shavak Patel took Federation honorary secretary Keki Gandhi to task for publishing material based on the Daver-Beaman Judgment of 1908 in the *Fed Newsletter*.

Also, the Federation's bonafides in inviting certain individuals as "special invitees" was questioned by the Parsi Zo-

roastrian Anjuman of Secunderabad and Hyderabad (PZASH) in a letter to Gandhi. Their contention concerned the presence of Bezon Dittia, a special invitee at Federation meetings who is currently persona non grata with PZASH in the light of events enumerated in their letter.

Bedevelled by demography

That the census authorities have regretted their inability to provide detailed information on Zoroastrians has been a major disappointment. The former member of the Minorities Commission Homi Taleyarkhan had requested the breakup of the number of married and unmarried males and females and age at marriage.

Simultaneously the socioeconomic survey, to be undertaken under consultation with Parsi demographers and social scientists, has stalled for want of funds, informed the fifth WZC joint secretary Ms Homai Modi. "Unless we collect Rs 20 lakhs they are not going ahead with the survey."

The envisaged survey, to include a complete census of the community, would also collect data on when and why Parsis marry or prefer to remain single, their attitudes to child bearing, number of children desired, economic, social, educational goals vs achievements, etc. The high cost of the survey would be entailed by the need to hire experienced field staff to collect the sensitive data correctly which would then

be subjected to extensive cross-coordination and analyses in an attempt to isolate and redress the attitudes that are responsible for the community's declining numbers. Though the attitudinal part of the questionnaire is still not ready as per Modi, she noted that the survey was supposed to be a worldwide exercise with Bombay as the receiving center. "You need percentages," she said. "If non-marrieds are the highest percentage, then that (sector becomes the priority sector)" for corrective action.

The project seems to have stalled because of the hiatus between the concept of the experts and the common belief that a number reckoning on the lines of a community directory would be adequate. The



An all-India fund to aid Zoroastrian families rear their first child is being considered

Arnavaz S. Mama

The Federation an

latter school project the community youths as manpower adequate to the task.

In an effort to resolve what Gandhi called the "conflict of interest" between the narrow objectives of the anjumans and the wider interests of the Federation, BPP's then chief executive Rustom Anklesaria noted that the problem that the committee of demographers — Dr (Ms) Armaity Desai, Ms Ava Khullar, Ms Shirin Jejeebhoy and Ms Malini Karkal — confronts is that there is "no uniform data on attitudes." When Karkal had completed her report in 1984, it was based on 17,000 respondents from among the 20,000 she had contacted. "In any sociological survey some people are reluctant to disclose, (but) therefore we can't say that the effort was wasted." In

between the committee came to know that the GOI census had collected detailed information which is not being disclosed. If these data become available, then the demographers' questionnaire will be minimal. He suggested that members see the information contained in Karkal's report. They would then realize that "directories and detailed socio-economic data serve separate purposes."

While Taleyarkhan announced that there were 13 couples who had accepted the BPP's third child scheme, Federation vice president and Madras Parsi Anjuman president Nariman Mogrelia has been anxious that the population boost, to be effective, needed to be offered at the first child stage of building a family.

As all the seven trustees of the Poona Parsee Panchayat (PPP) were attending, Gandhi asked them if their anjuman "would accept the first child formula" where 50 percent of the funding could be provided by the PPP and 50 percent from external sources. Noting that their first priority was the construction of housing for the lower middle class at Lullanagar, PPP trustee secretary Eruch Irani seemed uneasy at the prospect of diverting funds as the "corpus of the PPP is not very big." But Gandhi persisted: "How many couples will come forward? (Its) only for those with income lower than Rs 10,000. If four couples come forward, the expense would be less than Rs 50,000 p.a. the project will go off the ground." PPP president Dara Irani admit-



*From left (1st row)
Sethna, Guzder,
Gandhi, Mogrelia, A.
Irani and Taleyarkhan
(2nd row) Modi,
Bhacca, Shroff, Dittia,
Bodhanwalla,
R. Anklesaria and
Laskari*

d future fears

ted that they'd never thought of it and asked for directions. Mogrelia found a parallel in the Ahmedabad Parsi Panchayat (APP) which had called a meeting to endorse the policy and seemed prepared to launch out on their own. He however was concerned that the project be launched only under Federation/BPP aegis with a separate body to administer it headed by a BPP trustee and all anjumans contributing to the funds.

Gandhi urged Mogrelia to prepare an appeal and background paper with the advice of PR experts as individuals will want to know what it is all about before they contribute. He suggested that each anjuman/zone give BPP chairman and Federation president Jamshed Guzder lists of likely benefactors and beneficiaries.

Individual anjumans

In Pune, the trustees who took over in January 1995 have begun religious classes with lecturers from Zoroastrian Studies. They have fenced off some part of the land for a road at Lullanagar and are planning to build housing and a dharamshala. Though a lot of obstacles are being created, D. Irani noted that they have received the permission they required under the Urban Land Ceiling (ULC) Act.

Baroda is forging ahead with a new compound wall for the dokhma which is surrounded by a sprawling urban development and a pavilion for young Zoroastrians in the city, informed Patel.

The Iranian Zoroastrian Anjuman (IZA) is finding the Palghar land very difficult to maintain as the returns on the grass there is lower by 50 percent, according to vice president Aspi Irani. They want to sell the land when it is released by the Government.

Reporting on Navsari Dara Deboo noted that 80 percent of its infirmary's inmates hailed from Bombay. The Daboo Hospital which is to construct a Parsi ward is the only institution in the country to offer totally free service to Parsis including surgery, CT scan and medicines, even to out patients, he noted.

The Surat Parsi Panchayat (SPP) was the beneficiary of the Dorrabji property in Pune. According to the deed of settlement, if the property is sold, the proceeds were to go to the SPP for the benefit of its educational institutions, informed SPP president Dr Sam Bhacca. The property was ostensibly sold for Rs 9 lakhs. According to

Bhacca a clandestine deal netted over one crore rupees to the people involved. The SPP pursued the case through the courts and were ultimately awarded Rs 81 lakhs by the Supreme Court, noted Bhacca, adding that the money is vested with the original trust in Pune. The SPP is planning to celebrate Dastur MeherjiRana's 450th anniversary by putting up a statue. Of the 100 bhigas of land originally gifted by



PPP trustees (L to R) Farokh Irani, Firdous Kayani, E. Irani, D. Irani and S. Anklesaria

Emperor Akbar, only four or five bhigas remain with the MeherjiRana family, he added.

About 50 persons attend the Hormazd and Behram *roj maachis* organized by the Youth Association of Thane each month, informed Rustom Cursetji. A jashan for 12 residences on leave-and-licence was recently solemnized. The flats were constructed against interest-free deposits on the agiary land in Thane, added Cursetji.

Federation vice president Homi Bodhanwalla of Jamshedpur reported how the late Ms Sheroo Piroshaw's funeral in Jamshedpur was held at her residence on an upper floor because she had requested it and was attended by a very large crowd, most of them, naturally, non-Parsis. "Some non-Zoroastrians wanted to lift the body and we said, 'Go ahead,'" he noted. "We have always been an enlightened group of Zoroastrians," with friends from all communities. "How can we suddenly make them look like Mr Nobody when a person is dead?"

The Jamshedpur Anjuman has also practised "equality between men and women. My mother is as precious as my father. Therefore we feel there is nothing wrong in performing the navjote of a child of a

Zoroastrian mother so long as both parents give an undertaking in writing that (their) child will perform all necessary ceremonies and continue to pray."

Bodhanwalla was appalled at the controversy surrounding the navjote of philanthropist Neville Wadia. "All the baugs are from the benevolent Wadia family. The person happened to be Christian because of birth. He wanted to reembrace Zoroastrianism. Who could be a better person?... We are chasing good leaders away from our fold. Why is it that some of our most eminent leaders are not a part of the Federation, are not Anjuman trustees? Do they feel we're talking about irrelevant things — irrelevant to time and the constitution?"

Taking Bodhanwalla's cue Delhi Parsi Anjuman (DPA) president retired Lt Gen Adi Sethna spoke of DPA participation in interfaith discussions. Alluding to a navjote earlier in the year of a Parsi mother's child performed by a DPA member, Sethna noted "Our dar-e-meher is a Zoroastrian dar-e-meher." He urged the gathered anjumans to produce a navjote certificate to indicate the name, parentage, priest and witnesses which would "make it clear to anyone that the child has been initiated," the way visiting Iranians produce an identity card. Recalling that the DPA has been welcoming everyone who comes to the funeral to respect the departed, the ex General noted, "Parsis have been warriors. What greater respect can there be than to carry your fallen comrade on your shield?"

All this proved too much for Zarhost Mubarakai of Dahanu: "Aapru Federation Zarhoshti dharam né varé nathi. Bhel sel community né ubhi karvani vat ché (Our Federation does not defend the religion. It is trying to create a hotch potch community.)" Accusing the liberals of lack of religious knowledge Mubarakai espoused the familiar orthodox line, "Jo Zarhoshti ne dokhmenashini nahi thai tau eno fero fokat jai ché... Ravan par parjat ni najar nai; parvi joiye — Ravan ne maaté kharab, né dekhna né maaté kharab... Apra dharam maa ké ché ké jé manas parjat ni sath suyé ek raat tenu Zarhoshtipanu amook time né vaasté jatuh rahé ché... (If a Zoroastrian does not receive the rites of dokhmenashini at death, his entire life is said to be wasted... It is necessary to prevent an alien from viewing

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the consecrated dead body of a Zoroastrian because it is detrimental to both... Whosoever sleeps with a non-Zoroastrian for one night, his Zoroastrianpanu goes away for some time.)"

Gandhi interceded to prevent reformist responses and the floor was open to Mubarakai supporters.

Patel noted that the APP's Kersi Sethna had phoned to say his cotrustees and members had been alarmed on reading an article on interfaith marriages in the *Fed Newsletter* (the April 1995 issue of the newsletter had published extracts of the Daver-Beaman judgement of 1908 regarding who is a Parsi Zoroastrian which includes the children of Zoroastrian men married to aliens). Advising his fellow members to "leave this matter to religious scholars," Patel added, "It is my duty to inform you that there is a move in the offing of having a separate body of those anjumans and punchayets where they can safeguard their religion." It was Patel's contention that by the publication of such material "our youths took the cue that the road is now clear to marry outside the community." He was also worried that Parsi trusts were unable to cope with the increasing poverty in the community. "What about the influx of converts? First the child of Parsi fathers. Now children of Parsi mothers. Then conversion. When other communities come to know that this community gives money to produce children... think about it." Patel concluded by espousing "great faith in this Federation and the capacity of our honorary secretary Mr Keki Gandhi. Please continue with the good work you are doing, leave aside (these) controversial matters."

APP's Porus Karanjawalla, president of

the Federation of Zoroastrian Youth Associations (FOZYA), clarified that Patel's statement did not reflect the view of the APP — only a section was perturbed by the said newsletter article, he said. However, Sarosh Palkhiwalla of Pune, vice president of FOZYA made a blanket "youth supports Mubarakai" statement.

While R. Anklesaria, in his personal capacity appreciated the efforts of his Hindu daughter-in-law to bring up her children as Zoroastrians, he questioned, "Certain changes have to come. Is there a policy of let live? If Bangalore wants to do things in the orthodox style, fine, if DPA wants to be reformist, fine. Why force anjumans? Are we doing enough on socioeconomic issues?... Let things evolve..." he advised.

This led the focus of the open forum to shift towards an assessment of the need for change and the community's intellectual discretion. In point, Bhacca related an incident in Surat when a 16-year-old girl had sought admission in their orphanage. The late Maneck Gheyara's experienced eye told him that the girl was probably not a Parsi. The then president told her to bring her father and mother with her and it transpired that the mother was Hindu, the parents were unmarried and no navjote had been performed. Gheyara made them undergo a civil marriage, had the navjote of the girl performed and then admitted her to the orphanage. Bhacca further noted that a few months ago a 32-year-old man who came to Surat from Iran, said his navjote was not performed though he wore the sudreh-kusti. "Some fine priest in Surat performed his navjote. We knew nothing about it." At the other end of the spectrum, a Zoroastrian lawyer, an ordained priest who was the executor of a will whereby a bungalow had been bequeathed to the SPP,

sold it instead. "We have filed a suit," informed Bhacca. "Is there need to accelerate reforms? I don't know... Institute a panel of dasturs? But dasturs don't agree among themselves, say different things at different times. (These are) the visissitudes of time." He continued tongue-in-cheek, "By 2005 there will be two crore Parsis according to the Pundolites. Someone will come and look into your eyes and heart and if he sees Mino Kardo (that at heart you are a Parsi) he'll convert you to Zoroastrianism... If that is not conversion what is?"

DPA vice president Dadi Mistry and the Federation's co-opted member Farokh Rustomji supported Gandhi in his publication of the Daver-Beaman article for "putting the subject in its right perspective;" "for people who have not read the judgement this issue should be preserved." "It is to enlighten the citizens." "The Federation is not trying to hide anything from our youth. They are intelligent enough to distinguish between right and wrong," added Calicut's Darius Marshall.

Gandhi felt impelled to defend his article: "People have said 'Who are you to talk about religion. Ask priests and high priests.' To answer the point, go back to the High Court judgement. It speaks of a committee of experts report which noted that the Zoroastrian religion enjoins conversion. Even in 1908 the BPP trustees had admitted that Ms (Sooni) Tata was a Zoroastrian and her navjote was valid. How can they say the opposite now?... Are we saying that we should suppress facts from our youngsters?" Gandhi read out the objects of the Federation from its constitution to prove that "it is the duty of the Federation to promote true knowledge of Zoroastrianism. We are giving everyone a chance to speak, to express every point of view... Do not shut out intelligent debate. The objec-

From left: Pardiwalla, Guzder, Marfatia and HPY club members





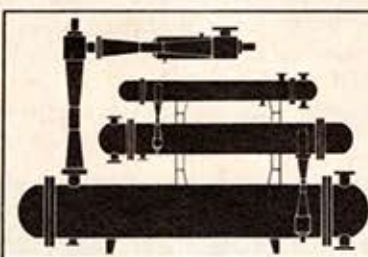
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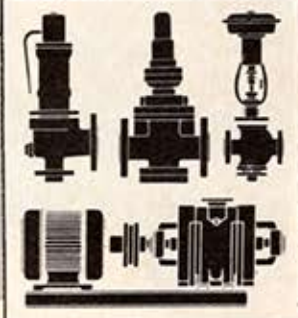
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tions are raised because this article undermines what has been preached wrongly by priests and the orthodox."

Defunct anjumans

Some homes and agiaries in the Udva/Surat region have been burgled, informed Bhacca and another Surat representative Davar Cawasji Modi. Their tales underlined the problems of aging and progressively impoverished communities. One case pertained to the adarian in Surat's

Uran Anjuman, had made contact with the BPP. It is understood that if certain properties are taken over by the Defence Ministry (as the Uran dokhma is, for the defence for the Bombay harbour), one can ask for equivalent land elsewhere, he noted. Mistry volunteered help and urged the BPP to respond quickly. Anklesaria agreed to pass on the relevant papers to him and Sethna.

In the matter of the Mistry Adarian's trust property in Boisar where an

Parsi Marriage and Divorce Act. Premarital counselling was on the cards and Pardiwalla said they were writing to engaged couples inviting them for a session.

The impact of a divorce on the children is evidenced by the severe behavioral problems they encounter. Twice the counsellors filed for custody of the child as both parents seemed to manipulate and misuse the child, but "the court considers the natural guardian as the best," reported Pardiwalla. On other occasions the inter-

vention of the counsellors has helped children. However, when they meet in-laws, the first question they are asked is "Will you give another house?" Pardiwalla felt that the provision of housing does not seem to have increased the number of children per family. The one child norm prevails. "It's a personal option," she adds.

Ms Diana Marfatia who has been involved with school counselling says the program currently deals with about 120 to 180 children a

year with a success rate of about 60 percent. Though there are currently six counsellors to deal with the six schools under the program, dedicated community individuals are hard to find. Non-Parsis need to speak Gujarati. They find it difficult to understand Parsi ways and empathise with them, Marfatia noted. These problems prevented the inclusion of children in need of counselling from the further suburbs as requested by Borivli's Khurshed Pastakia.

An off-shoot of the Holiday Programme for Youth (HPY) and the Youth Club formed under BPP auspices by the HPY ex students, is four or five likely marriages, informed Anklesaria.

This was R. Anklesaria's last executive council meet attended as the chief executive of the BPP. Also attending was Behram Laskari, his successor designate. R. Anklesaria has, however agreed to continue to work on the BPP-Federation social service programs, announced Gandhi.

AGM

With the election of office-bearers on the anvil, Gandhi clarified that the general presumption was that the president of the major anjuman in the zone would automatically become the zonal vice president but according to the Federation's constitution, the anjumans in a zone were free to elect any individual from any location as

internecine conflict has been fought in the courts, its trustees Homi Mehta and Maneckshaw Mistry complained that managing trustee Darabshaw Mistry was falsely claiming it to be a private trust when it is a registered trust. Their major complaints are that Darabshaw had allowed a Sai Baba temple to be constructed on the land without informing his fellow trustees or the charity commissioner and that the brokerage on the trust's UTI investments had been given to a Hindu clerk. Gandhi informed the gathering that the Federation's mandate had already been given. "If the solicitors agree the Federation will implede itself. Mr Taleyarkhan will take it up at the political level and we'll take it up at the legal level." On his part Anklesaria noted, on the basis of the solicitor's letter, that the papers are incomplete. "We are unable to understand the scope and nature of the appeal," he added and requested the complainants to prepare a short resume from the many appeals and counter appeals.

Counselling programs

Reporting on the family counselling program operated by the BPP under Federal aegis, counsellor Ms Roda Pardiwalla noted that cases had been dwindling in the past few years perhaps because of the provision of divorce by mutual consent under the



From left: Dittia, R. Irani and Pervaz Irani

Vakil Atash Behram compound. Also a Surat lady who keeps open house in Udva "was disagreeably surprised when two priests came, used the house and pilfered from it," informed Bhacca. Behind the occurrences in Surat and the Iranshah is "the hand of Parsis. Someone is out to harass the management... In Bombay two Parsis were arrested but no one came to give evidence," informed Modi.

The report on defunct anjumans lacked SPP chief executive Sorab Katpitia's presence and authority. While Dharwar and Hubli, Badnera and Amravati had expressed a desire to opt for the Federation's custodianship, there had been no further progress. The memorandum of understanding (MOU) drafted for a similar arrangement with the Mhow Anjuman was yet to reach them.

At Raipur where 10 to 12 Zoroastrians reside there is a community property of about 20,000 sq feet according to Palkhiwalla. Thrity and Rusi Wadia of Raipur are said to be looking after the property which lacks proper light and water connections and the well has run dry. The place is said to be maintained on interest from fixed deposit of a donation from Dali Chinoy.

Anklesaria reported that Grindwell Norton's Noshir Sidhwa, a trustee of the

vice president of their zone. "The idea is to have five enlightened individuals as vice presidents." In the event Sethna, Mogrelia, Bodhanwalla and Bhacca were elected vice presidents from the north, south, east and west B zones. The vice president of west zone A comprising Bombay and Pune was E. Irani as proposed by his fellow trustee Ms Shiraz Anklesaria and president D. Irani -- a development that led Gandhi to comment appreciatively on the latter's lack of ego that permitted him to step aside in favor of his junior colleague. The chairman of the BPP is the ex officio president of the Federation.

At the executive council meeting which continued after the AGM, Ms Mani Clubwalla, R. Anklesaria, Peshotan Nargol-walla, Eruch Surti and Rustomji were co-opted on the executive council.

Eruch Desai and Gandhi continued as joint honorary secretaries and R. Anklesaria as Federation treasurer.

With all paper prices having almost doubled in the past year and likely to go up substantially more, Bodhanwalla called for more discretion in the distribution of the *Fed Newsletter*. Gandhi now sought an increase in the sponsorship advertisement rate from Rs 3,500 to Rs 4,000 and the next 14 issues have been sponsored by the BPP (four), Guzder in his individual capacity (two) and one each by the DPA, Madras, SPP, WZO, PPP and Jamshedpur anjumans, Taleyarkhan and BPP trustee Silloo Kavarana in their individual capacities.

PZASH vs Dittia

In Secunderabad, the trustees of PZASH have been suspended and an administrator appointed by the Andhra Pradesh Endowment Board (APEB) which covers all charitable trusts and Hindu religious trusts, Gandhi reported to the Federation. The Board is said to have received complaints of financial and other mismanagement at PZASH and the anjuman was asked to produce its books of accounts. An agreement to sell regarding one of its properties is now being held up by the Board authorities as violatory because its permission was not taken and a show cause notice has been issued why an administrator should not be appointed. Since PZASH was advised that the Andhra Pradesh Endowment Act ruling did not apply to them, they did not answer the summons. Now the PZASH trustees face an ex parte order of suspension because they failed to

answer the call and Prof Farokh Vakil, head of the department of science at AP University has been appointed administrator. The High Court has granted a stay until the PZASH case is heard.

The crux of the matter is that PZASH officials suspect the hand of Dittia behind their problems. Gandhi recapitulated the feud between the Anjuman and Dittia going back nearly 13 years when Dittia's supporters substituted the nomination of the late Dr Bahman Surti for trusteeship, with his own. The ensuing legal battle was going in Surti's favor but he passed away and the matter died with him. When Dittia's trusteeship term expired in 1991, the governing body blocked his renomination and Dittia, then PZASH president, could not continue to be president when he was no longer trustee. The matter again went to court and strictures were passed against Dittia. The PZASH had notified the Federation that Dittia would not represent them and at the executive council meet in Calicut in September 1991 Dittia had stood down as vice president in favor of Marshall. As he could not be a co-opted member because each of the five zones had their own nominees it was decided that Dittia attend Federation meetings as a special invitee like Taleyarkhan.

Gandhi now updated the history of the conflict to PZASH's current poser to the Federation: How can you invite a person who has gone against the anjuman in court? "Should we take cognizance of what the anjuman says or not?" Gandhi asked the delegates.

Dittia argued that according to the Federation constitution every anjuman is completely autonomous and the Federation has

no right to interfere in its internal affairs. "Conversely, an anjuman has no right to interfere in matters of the Federation." Dittia, who said it was "not very important for me to be invited," noted that he had "attended almost every Federation meeting for 14 years or more." He reminded the delegates of the constitutional position that any anjuman can invite any person even from another zone to be a vice president of its zone. "Are you going to curb its authority? Look at it from a long range point of view."

Reverting to the genesis of his conflict with Surti, Dittia maintained that the managing committee "cannot constrict the right of the general body, cannot arrogate the rights of the general body... the judge has misunderstood... If the General Body has voted in someone as president for six years, he should continue there for six years provided he was a trustee at the time of his election."

Opinion on the issue was divided. E. Irani noted that the Federation's constitution says that the anjuman must propose the individual who will attend the executive council meet. "Since the anjuman is not seconding him, Dittia should stay away."

Former BPP and Federation chairman Dr Aspi Golwalla, Sethna, Dadi Mistry, Rustomji, and Baroda's Baman Cama saw it as the Federation's right to invite individuals. Mogrelia and Bodhanwalla counselled a compromise. "As the concerned anjuman has put it in writing that he shouldn't be invited, sitting in judgment can be interpreted as taking sides," noted Mogrelia adding, "I understand Vakil is also a relation of Dittia..."



BPP's Gool Kias and Sheroo Master with Modi (mike in hand)

"I am ashamed to think that a man of my caliber is going to stoop down because of some distant relationship," said Dittia rejecting Mogrelia's compromise that he should get the APEB to withdraw its action and should himself withdraw his suits against PZASH in return for the vice presidency of the Federation and insisted that he be given a copy of the PZASH letter to enable him to give a written reply as the matters were in court.

The council seemed to concur on the need for compromise.

Ajmalgad revisited

Archeologist Dr (Ms) Roxana Irani who had been researching at Ajmalgad recently gave a brief talk illustrated with slides. The Zoroastrians moved the Iranshah from Sanjan to Bahrot in the 15th century to preserve the sacred fire from the defilements of war. After about 15-20 years in Barot they moved to the old fort at Ajmalgad where they spent 15 more years before moving to Navsari and thence to Udvada related R. Irani adding, "Archeology is the only way to find history in the absence of written records... The *Kisseh-e-Sanjan* is the only document we have."

A tunnel is said to have linked Bahrot to Ajmalgad and R. Irani is anxious to un-

earth it. She has found a stone afarganyu and bits of pottery but no metal of any kind. Carbon dating of these, together with bricks and other items from the area has revealed them to be between 300 and 1,200 years old. Of Ajmalgad's three lookouts, only one remains. A cemented watertank which was excavated now needs to be closed to preserve it from erosion.

R. Irani urged the community to contribute to found a chair in Zoroastrian study at the Deccan College which will provide a salary of Rs 30,000 p.a. to enable her to continue her work. Asked what the excavation itself would cost, Irani noted that the Archeological Survey of India will not permit her to excavate unless she is affiliated to a college. She told the gathering that she would like to pursue these excavations together with explorations in Sanjan and Diu as a lifelong task.

Those attending the executive council meet were: Ms Dolat Debara from Agra; Porus Karanjawalla from Ahmedabad; Shavak Patel, Baman Cama and Homi Chothia from Baroda; Zubin Jambusarwala from Bharuch; Jamshed Guzder, Minoo Shroff, Ms Silloo Kavarana, Dinshaw Mehta, Rustom Anklesaria, Behram Laskari, Peshotan Nargolwalla, Ms Gool Tata, Ms

Sheroo Master, Ms Homai Modi, Ms Diana Marfatia, Ms Roda Pardiwalla, Ms Khushnooma Deboo, Ms Urvakshi Mistry, Burzin Mehta, Delzad Captain and Dick Readymoney from Bombay; Khurshed Pastakia from Borivli; Darius Marshall from Calicut; Zarthosht Mubarakai and Pervez Irani from Dahanu; Lt Gen Adi Sethna, Dadi Mistry, Noshir Captain, Farokh Rustomji, Keki and Homi Gandhi from Delhi; Edulji Dumasia from Dumas; Aspi Irani from the Iranian Zoroastrian Anjuman; Homi Bodhanwalla and Eruch Surti from Jamshedpur; Ronnie Dick from Jhansi; Nariman Mogrelia from Madras; Pervez Mandviwalla from Mandvi; Dara Deboo from Navsari; Dara Irani, Eruch Irani, Firdous Kayani, Kersi Daruwala, Boman Irani, Farokh Irani, Ms Shiraz Anklesaria, Sarosh and Navaz Palkhiwalla and Ms Farzana Taraporewalla from Poona; Homi Palsetia and Ms Ruby Balsara from Saronda; Dr Sam Bhacca, Davar Kavasji Modi, Homi R. Mehta and Manekshaw Mistry from Surat; Rustom Cursetji and Pervez Bhesania from Thana and Homi and Hoshedar Mehta from Zai Bordi. Homi Taleyarkhan, Dr Aspi Golwalla and Bezon Dittia were the special invitees. The press was represented by *The Bombay Samachar* and *Parsiana*.

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*Status of Women: sacred and secular - 3***Created
to procreate**

Dr Ketayun H. Gould

**A Zoroastrian woman's destiny
lay in bearing a troop of male children**

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 two instalments 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 Zarathustra, 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.

While marriage and the begetting of children is advocated in Zoroastrianism, the third instalment dwells on the prevalent belief that menstruation causes a woman to lose her ritual purity and spread impurity if she comes in contact with others. Even though religious equality was denied to females in ancient times, within the confines of a patriarchal society women were ceded certain economic and legal rights.

Other evidence about the ideal role of a woman can be gleaned from the developmental highlights that are singled out for attention in the sacred liturgy. The *Avesta* contains direct allusions to the status of a maiden in the "father's" house (the patrilineal and patrilocal family). She was given training in the religious schools after the age of seven so she could be initiated into her faith. Other than that, education consisted of preparation for the housewifely role:

"General training in moral and religious precepts, the elementary rules of sanitation, the art of tending domestic animals, of spinning and weaving the sacred girdle as well as garments, of superintending the laborers in the field and the milking of the cows... in short she aspired to be the

delight of her husband in the future (Darab Dastur Peshotan Sanjana)."

This concern for building a stable family life and begetting children led to the early marriage of girls at about the age of 15 — "at the age of puberty, with earrings in her ears... whom no man has known (*Vendidad* 14.15)." Obviously, chastity is considered to be the most essential quality in a bride, although no mention is made about the value of the same quality in a groom. Another characteristic that is praised besides a "mind absorbed in piety (*Yasht* 11.4)" is "receiving her instruction well, having her husband as her lord (*Ga* 4.9)."

The texts also provide an instructive view of the ideal images of the maiden and her fantasies of the prospective bridegroom.

These passages display not only an interest in physical beauty, but a connection between youthfulness and virility, and the child-bearing capacity of the maiden. In her daily prayers, the maiden is said to ask for a boon of "a husband, young and beautiful of body, who will treat us well, all life long, and give us offspring; a wise, learned, ready-tongued husband (*Yasht* 15.40)." And what is the ideal of female beauty? The ideal is personified in the description of the maiden of the bridge discussed in the first two instalments: "beautiful maiden, brilliant, white-armed, strong, well-grown, erect, tall, high-bosomed, graceful, noble, with a dazzling fall, of 15 years (Martin Haug)."

The parents or guardians generally arranged the marriage, although the girl was consulted in the choice of the husband. The ideal union was considered to be based on mutual affection. There is some evidence, however, that under certain circumstances, there was some room for love marriages. Moreover, in this context, women were described as being capable of stepping outside the societal constraints of role definition and display the "force of character" to "go straight to (their) objective without hesitation (P. B. Vacha)." Thus, we read in the *Shah Namah*, that women like Manijeh, Rudabeh and Tahmina were "transported by love into making active advances," while at the same time protecting themselves and soothing their beloved's male ego by disclaimers about their "immodesty": "No one has ever seen me outside the purdah nor has any man ever heard my voice (Vacha)."

The fact that there were at least a few Zoroastrian women who gave themselves permission to act in an unconventional manner though using conventional excuses (transported by love) cannot be seriously doubted. Nor can it be denied that the stories display a certain amount of grudging respect for women who are the responsible parties in consummating the union. There is no reason, however, to believe as some authors have done (Sanjana), that these scattered instances of alliances between aristocratic lovers can be generalized as proof of the "high" status of women in the Zoroastrian tradition.

The general Zoroastrian view of sexual love is that within marriage, sex and procreation are virtuous acts, since the begetting of children brings more people into the world to do battle against the evil spirit. Every new birth is seen as sending a thrill through the whole creation of Ahura Mazda

and casting a shadow of gloom over the wicked world of Angra Mainyu. In this sense, sexuality is viewed in the context of a religious duty, and as such, it is a pious act only within the confines of marriage. However, within this narrow definition, there is no downgrading of the physical needs of the human body compared to the higher status of the spiritual sphere. Hence, the celibate state is discouraged. In fact, the *Avesta* recognizes the joy that the sexual encounter can bring to both husband and wife, although the language and imagery reflect a male world-view: "The men whom thou dost attend...have their ladies that sit on their beds, waiting for them: they lie on the cushions, adorning themselves... 'When will our lord come? When shall we enjoy in our bodies the joys of love?' (Yasht 17.10)"

The patriarchal nature of the family and society during the ancient period is evident from the fact that conjugal infidelity as a sin and an offense is spelt out very carefully in the case of a woman, but the texts are silent on how adultery is perceived among men. The infringement of chastity on the part of a woman grieves Asi (feminine personification of piety), who is pictured as fleeing to the heavens or sinking into the earth at the sight of an unchaste

female: "the courtesan who destroys her fruit" and the "courtesan who brings forth a child conceived of a stranger and presents it to her husband (Yasht 17.54)." Such a woman is unfit to offer any prayers (Yasht

All Zoroastrians are thought to be polluted by impurities associated with the birth process

17.54). The yazata Haoma is entreated to hurl her mace "against the body of the harlot, with her magic minds o'erthrowing with (intoxicating) pleasures" (Yasna 9.32)." Whether she gives her body to the faithful or unfaithful, there is no difference (*Vendidad* 18.62). Furthermore, the male control of the family especially the "ownership" of the female, is demonstrated by the fact that once the woman has borne children, she cannot be divorced for any other reason except adultery (Jamsheed K. Choksy).

Other taboos on sexual intercourse are

centered on the Zoroastrian belief that menstruation results in a woman losing her ritual purity and becoming capable of spreading the impurity to all those who have contact with her. Thus, husband and wife were strictly forbidden to have intercourse during this period, and for three days after she had performed her post-menstrual ablutions. Ignoring this taboo is listed as the fourth of the five sins that render one a *Peshotanu* (a high level of sin requiring a punishment of up to 90 lashes — *Vendidad* 15.7, 13-16). The *Vendidad* goes even further by declaring that such a man does not act better than "if he should burn the corpse of his own son, born of his own body... and drop its fat into the fire (16.17)."

Obviously, the Zoroastrian conception of menstruation and its relationship with the status of women is a far broader subject than the taboos associated with marital relations. The notion that menstrual blood is dangerous is widespread among many cultures and religions (Denise L. Carmody and H. R. Hays). In Zoroastrianism, all substances leaving the body are considered ritually impure and polluting. Such substances include hair, nails, skin, feces, saliva, breath, blood, semen and menstrual blood.



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These substances are open to grave pollution by the corpse demoness, since any flow of blood out of the body is a breach of the ideal physical state of human beings. Mary Boyce attributes this phenomenon to the fact that these substances are "associated with change and mortality rather than with the static state of perfection." Mary Douglas, in analyzing the concept of pollution, states that any matter that traverses the boundaries of the body tends to be considered "marginal stuff." Thus, it is understandable that the Zoroastrian doctrine linked the origin of menstruation to a blight caused by the evil spirit — a "counter-creation" of Angra Mainyu who "by his witchcraft" produced "abnormal issues in women (*Vendidad* 16.18-19)." Therefore, the flow of blood from the body is perceived as an attack by the demons on the perfect creation of Ahura Mazda. As Choksy has noted, this conception allowed the primitive beliefs and fears surrounding blood and its power to be reinforced by demonology, and elaborate rules then had to be evolved to combat the ritual impurity resulting from this dreaded pollution.

Thus, at the onset of menstruation, very rigid precautions were called for to prevent

contamination of the good creation of Ahura Mazda. The texts specify that a menstruant should withdraw 15 paces from fire, water and barsom twigs, and three paces from other Zoroastrians (*Vendidad* 16.4). During menstruation, the woman is supposed to withdraw from the family, sitting apart in a designated place. Boyce describes the original practice of having the woman pass these days in a tiny windowless hut that had only one entrance. She had to wear old clothes that were set apart for this purpose. Any Zoroastrian who had physical contact with her was required to purify himself or herself with unconsecrated bull's urine and water. The menstruant was supposed to abstain from performing any household duties, since everything she touched became polluted. She was required to eat sparingly, and food had to be served to her at a distance on a metal plate to stop the spread of impurity. The detailed nature of these precautions betray the need to control this powerful source of energy "lest she should gather strength" because "the fiend is in her, any strength she may gain accrues to Ahriman (*Vendidad* 16.7)."

After the end of menstruation, a woman had to purify her entire body three times

with unconsecrated bull's urine and water while saying the required prayers. Other prayers that specifically ask for expiation from sins were also recited. At menopause a woman was required to have priests perform a solemn purification ceremony, which marked her rejoicing in "being wholly and perpetually clean at last, and able thus to prepare herself for eternity (Boyce)."

Although pregnancy gave a woman respite from the restrictions attendant on menstruation, the texts specify that childbirth also results in ritual impurity to both the mother and the child. All taboos that apply to the menstruant are to be enforced during this period. It would seem logical to assume that childbirth might have been conceived as an act of purity, since it increased the ranks of the faithful who could do battle against the evil spirit and his pandemonium. In fact, all Zoroastrians are thought to be polluted by impurities associated with the birth process and their mother's milk, which is believed to be derived from blood (Choksy). Moreover birth had no place in the perfect world created by Ahura Mazda, and will have no place in the universe after the final renovation. Birth belongs, therefore, only to this

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world of mixture — to fight the evil spirit — and so can logically be considered as partly a result of demonic forces (Boyce).

Zoroastrians considered miscarriages and stillbirths as even greater sources of contamination, since it meant that the woman had borne carrion within her womb. The rituals of purification enjoined for this extensive impurity were prolonged and rigorous. In addition to the period of seclusion, a woman was not permitted to drink the pure creation of water during the first three days of seclusion unless lack of it threatened her life. Instead, she had to consume "gomez (unconsecrated bull's urine) mixed with ashes... to wash over the grave within her womb (*Vendidad* 5.51)." Abortion was prohibited since the Zoroastrians regarded it as murder and prosecuted people for this crime (Sanjana). The *Vendidad* admonishes the woman not to "produce in herself the menses against the course of nature (15.9)." If the woman receives help in getting an abortion from the "man" or another person in the form of drugs, all three are considered equally guilty (*Vendidad* 15.14). The man is exhorted to take care of the woman and child, and bring up the child until the age of seven.

The Zoroastrian beliefs regarding menstruation, childbirth and miscarriage probably represent elaborations of ancient restrictions inherited from the Indo-Iranian period. Most authors seem to view the phenomenon within the general context of the Zoroastrian emphasis on fighting the spread of impurity (the creation of the evil spirit), and prescribing the required purification rituals in order to reintegrate the person into ordinary life (Boyce, Choksy). There are disagreements, however, regarding the elaborations of the legend on the origin of menstruation. It is worth noting though, that the literature on women in Zoroastrianism is remarkably lacking in presenting a feminist-cultural perspective, which recognizes that cosmic claims — however logical they may seem within the confines of the faith — reflect the views of the dominant class and religious institutions.

The texts present indirect evidence on some other subjects that are very relevant in terms of their impact on women. No literature (sacred or secular), however, is available that deals with these important topics — monogamy/polygyny and consanguineous marriages — in terms of recording the effects on women. After all, women had no voice in establishing the religious or societal decrees that gov-

erned the most intimate aspects of their lives.

Regarding the question whether polygyny prevailed in Iran during the ancient period, there is no passage in the texts that provides direct evidence on this subject. Maganlal A. Buch points to a stanza in the *Vendidad* (3.3) — "in the house of the righteous, women and children are present in rich abundance" — as the one that has given rise to speculation that polygyny prevailed in Zoroastrian Iran. Sanjana and Jamshid Cowasji Katrak concur with Buch on this point and agree with his interpretation that the stanza might not imply the practices of polygyny. All three authors seem to believe that in a joint family situation that prevailed in ancient Iran, the plural "women" may also refer to sons' wives.

However, there is contradictory evidence on this subject, which seems to stress the testimony of Greek writers that "every Persian marries many lawful wives" (Choksy). The disagreement on this subject seems to hinge on the point whether some kings or noblemen flaunted custom and practiced polygyny, or whether the sacred texts endorsed the practice and it was the customary marriage pattern in ancient Iran. Both Sanjana and Katrak take great pains to go through the *Avesta* and point out every passage that refers to the wife in the singular form, which leads them to conclude that monogamy was the preferred system of marital union.

Similarly, there is even more of a debate whether the original meaning of the Avestan word *xvaetvadatha* referred to consanguineous marriage as defined by incestuous (within the close family circle) relationships or as marriage between first cousins — a practice that is still very prevalent among Zoroastrians in Iran (Michael M. J. Fischer) and in India (Malini Karkal, Ketayun H. Gould). Choksy cites the work of Richard N. Frye on Zoroastrian incest to demonstrate that there is no evidence for the widespread practice of incestuous marriages among Zoroastrians in the ancient period. Boyce is a little more tentative. She does refer to the testimony of Greek writers to raise the possibility that the practice might have prevailed among certain Achaemenian kings and their subjects. Again, Sanjana and Katrak question the credibility of the evidence presented by Greek writers. They claim that the foreign writers misunderstood the cultural practices; that among many traditional communities, the designation "sister," "daughter," or "mother" is a honorific term that is applied to other close

relatives. Therefore, the marriages that were assumed to be incestuous were in fact unions between first cousins.

Both Boyce and Choksy have analyzed one passage in the ancient texts that refers to consanguineous marriages: "I pledge myself to the Mazdean religion... which upholds consanguineous marriage (*Yasna* 12.9)." Both, however, seem to lean in the direction of believing that the original meaning of the word *xvaetvadatha* is unclear. Moreover, Boyce also thinks that the passage in question is "oddly placed... appearing towards the end in a section otherwise concerned with noble generalities, and so may well be interpolated."

Before concluding the section on the ancient period, it is important to note that although Zoroastrian women were far from equal to men in the sphere of religious activities, they did enjoy some independence. Dhalla provides evidence to demonstrate that Zoroastrian women did not veil themselves, and attended social and religious gatherings in the company of men. They owned and managed property. They could act as the guardian of a son who was disinherited by his father. They could legally conduct a plea on the husband's behalf, and manage his affairs in his name. If they were being mistreated, they could seek redress in a court of law against a cruel husband and secure his punishment. They could give evidence in cases involving litigation and they could serve as judges. Therefore, when it was a question of social, economic and legal rights, women seemed to enjoy some degree of benefits, even though it might have occurred within the boundaries of a patriarchal society.

To be continued

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sociated 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.

RUSTAM MANECK: THE BENEVOLENT BROKER — 5

A family in decline

Dr Homi Eduljee

The respect and reputation earned by
Rustam Maneck was dissipated by his three sons

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. Pissurlencar's Portuguese Records on Rustam Manock (1936); H. R. Das' 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 Parsianah 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 Over-

view" 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. The fourth instalment found him negotiating new deals even at the age of 86 years.

Preoccupied with fighting among themselves and waging a feud with their rival brokers, the Parekhs, Rustam Maneck's sons fell out of favor with the English. The supremacy that the family once enjoyed in Surat was no more and one after another the sons opted to settle in Bombay as is recounted in this fifth, and last, instalment.

When Rustam Maneck had been dismissed from the brokerage of the United Company by Sir Nicholas Waite in 1705, the Surat factory had pointed out that the United Company owed Rs 5.5 lakhs. Some of these debts had been paid off by William Aislabe and Charles Boone (during their respective terms as Governor of Bombay), but a substantial amount still remained unpaid. Also, in May and October 1716 the Company had executed two bonds in favor of Rustam which totalled Rs 1.43 lakhs. The members of the Bombay Council traded privately using Rustam or the Parekhs as their brokers, and the treatment meted out to the brokers in the matter of their debts depended upon which party was in the ascendant in the Council. Aislabe and Boone were friends of Rustam and so the Parekhs suffered when they were Governors. In 1722 Boone was succeeded by William Phipps who was no friend of the Rustamjees and it was now their turn to suffer.

The attitude of the Bombay Council towards the Rustamjees began to change in 1722. It had been customary to give presents to the Rustamjees on the marriage of their children; in January of that year the Council decided to stop these gifts. By now Laldas Parekh's fortunes had revived and in April 1722 he told the Company that the Rustamjees had committed fraud in the accounts of their investments and in the 'laskari' account of Rustam. He also offered to provide the annual investment for the next season on cheaper terms than that offered by the Rustamjees in the previous year. Laldas' offer was accepted and Phipps set up a committee to look into the allegations of fraud. The committee consisted of Robert Newlin who was neutral between

the two parties; Robert Cowan, a staunch friend of the Parekhs, and John Hope, a friend of the Rustamjees. The committee was to meet in Surat and use Laldas to uncover the facts.

The Rustamjees raised the obvious objection that their accounts had been thoroughly examined by Aislabie and Boone and nothing wrong had been found; moreover, the old accounts books had been burnt and were no longer available. Laldas was not to be deterred. He found two Banias who had supplied cloths to the English (through the Rustamjees) who said they had supplied the cloths at a much lower price than what the Rustamjees had charged the Company. The committee also found that the brokers had gained almost complete control of the private trade of the English at Surat and had charged one percent commission on all such trade which did not pass through their hands. At about this time the Company became suspicious that Framjee and Bomanjee were in correspondence with the Mughal Governor of Surat to get the Company's trading privileges revoked.

The Council overruled the Rustamjees' objections and as punishment suspended them from the service of the Company and rescinded the award that had been made in favor of Rustam's 'laskari' account. In their report the committee wrote: "The family of Rustam, in their prosperity, had carry'd very haughtily and made use of the credit devolved upon them, from being employ'd in the Company's service, to enrich themselves and depress all others."

Troubles now heaped upon the Rustamjees. In January 1723 Bomanjee went to Bombay to plead his family's case before the Council. The Council, instead of hearing him, first placed him under house arrest and then confined him to the fort. In August Framjee was arrested by the Governor of Surat, Momim Khan Dehlami, at the instigation of Cowan and Phipps, and was forced to pay Rs 50,000 to the Governor besides Rs 200 per day for the supply of food and water to himself and his family. Nowrosjee seems to have escaped arrest. He now decided to go to London and personally place the family's case before the Court of Directors and seek redress from them.

Nowrosjee may have been fortified in his resolve to go to London by the fact that the Rustamjees had friends in Bombay who supplied him with valuable inside information about the Company. When he appeared before the Directors he surprised them by producing a duplicate set of the

Bombay account books clearly showing the credit balance standing in the Rustamjees' name. Armed with such information, Nowrosjee may have felt that he had a good case to plead. There was, however, one problem: how was he to get to London? He could hardly expect the Company to provide him with passage on one of their ships.

The problem was solved by Thomas Matthews. The European Companies were still plagued by pirates and in 1719 the United Company prevailed upon their government to send a squadron of the Royal Navy, under Commodore Thomas Matt-

***"If any dispute
happens among
you then you will ruin
your business"***

hews, to India to suppress piracy. Matthews reached Bombay in September 1721; he does not seem to have been very active against the pirates, but he did notice that trade was very lucrative. He quarrelled with both Charles Boone and William Phipps and let it be known that he would aid all those with whom the Company had a quarrel. Bomanjee (or his brothers in Surat) must have appealed to Matthews for help, for he demanded of the Bombay Council that they release Bomanjee, telling them that they were only traders and had no powers to punish anyone. The Council obviously ignored him. In appealing to Matthews, Framjee and Nowrosjee wrote: "...when gentlemen here were in very great distress, (Rustam Maneck) was first taken into the Company's service merely for his abilities, his continual application to their affairs and his good success therein, continued him in their service to his last day... We have the glory to say we are sons of a father, who at least deserved well of the English nation."

They then explained their case to Matthews and asked him if he would give passage to one of the brothers to enable him to go to England. Matthews agreed. The Rustamjees' letter was sent by Matthews to Bombay in early January 1723, and it was probably this that prompted the Bombay Council to have Framjee placed under house arrest in Surat.

Nowrosjee sailed for England after the monsoon in the *Salisbury*, commanded by Captain Braithwaite. Nowrosjee took with

him to England his nephew Bhikaji Khurshedji Wacha, 12 servants and, ever the merchant, a large quantity of merchandise to sell in England. He reached England at the end of April 1724.

In the meantime Framjee appealed to Delhi against his arrest by the Nawab and he eventually obtained an imperial order which secured his release in early 1724.

We have seen that the Bombay Council knew by January 1723 that the Rustamjees were in discussion with Matthews about getting a passage for one of them to go to England. They must have immediately informed London about this, for in a letter dated September 7, 1723 Robert Cowan wrote to John Hope, president at Surat, about London's reactions to Phipps's punishment of the Rustamjees and their attempt to go to London: "The letter from London is pretty tart according to Custom but more relating to former management than the present Governor Phipps. His measures are generally approved and particularly the prosecution of the late brokers strenuously recommended. They are prepared to give Nowros a proper reception when he arrives... I laid before the Board Fram's petition which you sent me. It will behove you to be well assured of his sincerity in designing to come to a fair account before you demand to have him released for should he persist in his obstinacy and the Surat Government prove cold hereafter when applied to for obtaining justice to the Company it may give room for reproach."

A week later Cowan again warned Hope not to be too solicitous about the Rustamjees: "Your solicitations on behalf of that family are not acceptable to the president, while they continue obstinate without showing the least inclination or design of coming to an account. The hardships they undergo from the Surat Government under the pretense of obliging them to do the Company justice tho' probably the real intent is something else, they can only blame themselves for, but I sincerely think that after the insolent behavior they have shown to the President in the sundry steps they have taken, they have no reason to expect his patronage or protection, until they expiate for their sauciness by a sincere repentance."

Nowrosjee reached London in April 1724 and lost no time in arranging a meeting with the Court of Directors. The Court Book records that at the Court of Directors held on May 13, 1724 "Nowrosjee Rustamjee presenting himself to the Court delivered in a petition in behalf of himself and his brothers late brokers at Surat praying

that justice may be done them in relation to the demands which he alleges they have on the Company. Ordered that it be referred to the Committee of Correspondence to examine into the allegations of the said petition and to report from time to time to this Court how they find the same. He was called in and acquainted therewith."

Having placed his case before the Directors, Nowrosjee now turned his mind to business. On June 19 he petitioned the Directors that the goods he had brought from Surat be allowed to be sold with the Company's goods. This was agreed to. He then presented a petition "relating to his brothers Framjee's confinement at Surat and Bomanjee's at Bombay." The Committee of Correspondence prepared a draft of a letter to the President and Council of Bombay, and this was read and approved and it was decided to give Nowrosjee six copies of the letter as he desired to send them to Bombay overland by different routes.

The letters must have been delivered to Nowrosjee immediately for the Court Book records that on June 24 Nowrosjee delivered a petition "desiring to have alterations made in the six letters the Company gave him... about the releasing his brothers

He would aid all those with whom the Company had a quarrel

Bomanjee and Framjee which being read and debated. Resolved that this Court don't think fit to make any alterations therein but that he may have them as they are or else they shall be cancelled. And he being called in was acquainted therewith. To which he replied he could not take them for they would do him no good. Whereupon another motion being made resolved that the said letters be cancelled and they were cancelled accordingly."

Nowrosjee also presented a second petition asking the Company to advance him "five thousand pounds for the reasons therein mentioned." In reply to his second petition, the Court on July 8 granted him "two thousand pounds to be advanced him for his present subsistence and on account."

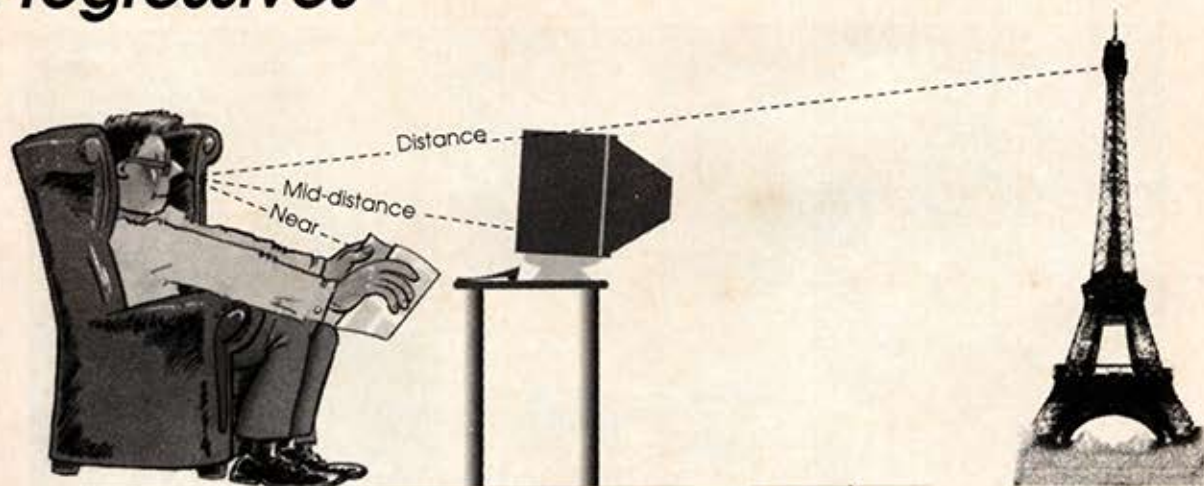
The refusal of the Court's letter to

Bombay seems strange as the letter gave instructions for Nowrosjee's brothers to be freed. Eventually on August 12 "Nowrosjee Rustamjee desiring to speak with the Court, was called in, and requested that he might have six letters to the President and Council of Bombay relating to his brothers' confinement at Surat and Bombay of the same tenor as those sometime since prepared, and the same being considered, resolved that this Court do agree thereto, and that the letters be prepared accordingly. And Nowrosjee was called in and acquainted therewith."

The letter was given to Nowrosjee on August 19 and is dated that day. The letter mentions: "But however the case be, we have at Nowrosjee's request consented and agreed and do hereby direct and order that you do give leave to Bomanjee, if he do yet remain at Bombay, to go to Surat whenever he pleases without delay and that you do your endeavor by proper application to the Governor of Surat to get Framjee released from confinement, and the guards taken off from his late father's house. Our desire to bring to end all differences amicably for we would not have him oppress."

The letter was signed by seventeen di-

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rectors amongst them William Aislabie. It showed that the Bombay Council had given London a version that differed from the truth. The letter suggests that the Bombay Council had tried to get the Rustamjees to agree to the reasonable request to get the matter of their accounts settled by arbitration, and they had the support of the merchant community of Surat, but that the Rustamjees were obdurate. Also, the letter suggests that the harsh treatment meted out to Framjee by the Surat Governor could have been avoided if Framjee had behaved civilly and "according to the Costume of the country." Nowrosjee, with his papers and copies of the Bombay account books, must have presented the Court with a different picture and influenced them to order the release of his brothers.

But why did Nowrosjee first refuse to accept the letter and then, a few weeks later, change his mind? Probably the tone of the letter suggested that the brothers were not entirely blameless and that they had brought the trouble on themselves by their behavior while he wanted the Court to completely exonerate them. Perhaps his friends in the Company — Aislabie was one such — may have advised him that he could not expect anything better, and that

The Rustamjees had friends in Bombay who supplied valuable inside information

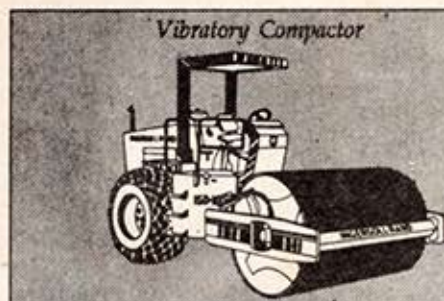
he should accept the letter, specially as it served his main purpose, which was to secure the release of his brothers.

On September 18, 1724 Nowrosjee was informed that the claims and counter-claims made by the Rustamjees and the Company regarding the debts had been sent to the Committee of Correspondence. The Court minutes for November 18 record that the Committee had recommended that the matter be left to arbitration and Nowrosjee, on being so informed, agreed. Four arbitrators, two from each side, were appointed and instructed to determine the issue in two months.

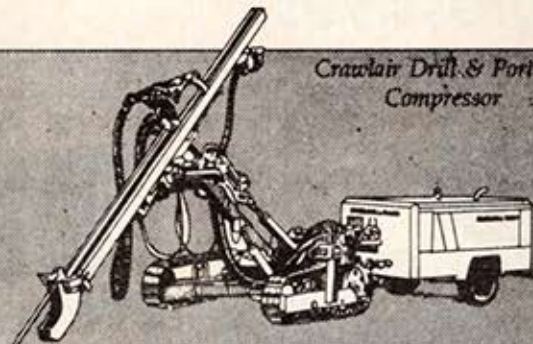
The arbitrators did their work well, for the Court Book records under January 12, 1725: "Award given by the arbitrators

between Nowrosjee Rustamjee (in behalf of himself and Framjee and Bomanjee his brothers) as also Rustamjee Maneckjee their father deceased and the Company dated this day was now read and published, whereby it appears that there was due from the Company to the said brothers either in their own right or as representatives of their said father Rs 5,46,390 which the Company are to pay." The payment was to be made in installments; £ 19,125 on February 1, 1725 in repayment of two bonds taken out in 1716; payment to be made in England; Rs 1,88,195 to be paid 'at Bombay in the East Indies' on or before February 1, 1726 and Rs 1,88,195 to be paid in Bombay on or before February 1, 1727. It is interesting to note that as far as the records go, the Company made no claims on their brokers.

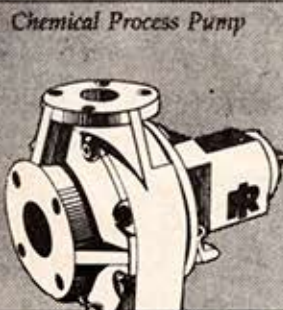
Nowrosjee asked for, and was paid, £ 15,000 out of the £ 19,125 that was to be paid to him in London; the balance he wanted in Surat. His business over, his thoughts turned to home. On February 5, 1725 he asked the Court to let him and his retinue travel by the *Windham* under Captain Lyell. He also requested that the Company should not charge him any fares and should allow free passage for 10 brass



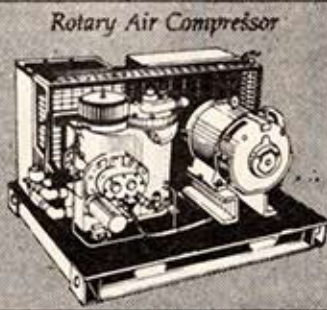
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guns, some copper pots, sheet lead and provisions for himself and his servants. All this was agreed to by the Company.

But now another hitch arose. On March 12, 1725 Nowrosjee wrote to the Company that he was afraid that Mr Proby was going to have him arrested "on an old but unreasonable pretense of an accompt between him and his late father." Also Commodore Matthews was threatening to stop him from leaving England. Nowrosjee sought the Company's intervention on his behalf and requested it to stand security for him. The problem seems to have been speedily solved for, on March 17 the Court Book records that "the Company have settled his affairs very honorably and much to his satisfaction."

Nowrosjee left England in early April 1725 and the *Windham* probably carried a letter that Charles Boone wrote to Framjee and Bomanjee at Surat; the letter is dated March 25, 1725. In this letter Boone tells of the help he gave Nowrosjee; he also advised the three brothers should live and work amicably because "in a very short time it's to be hoped the Hon Company will employ you all jointly as their broker... but if any dispute happens among you then you will ruin your business." From the

***"They did constantly
behave to their
superiors with all the
arrogance and
insolence imaginable"***

letter we see that Nowrosjee fell seriously ill during his stay in England; also, because of the great pains he took to settle the business of the Company's debts, "everybody here hath great value and esteem for him because he has managed this affair to the satisfaction of the Hon'ble Company, and for the good and interest of his brothers and his family."

It is a pity we have no record of Nowrosjee's social life in London. With his 12 servants he must have lived in some style. We get one small glimpse in a letter Cowan wrote to Phipps from Mocha on May 7, 1725: "Your Honour perceives that Nowros has not lost his impudence by his travelling. He keeps his coach and a fine house in... (illegible) Square with whores in abun-

dance. I am told that he has bilked Matthews of the mighty sum he promised him."

Rustamjees, Parekhs and the United Co
The *Windham* reached Bombay in the last days of September 1725 bringing home Nowrosjee, triumphant with the arbitration order, instructions to the Bombay Council from the Court of Directors, and a bombshell for the Parekhs.

It is obvious that the Governor and his Council in India were dismayed by the decision of the Company to accept the Rustamjees' case in toto; however, they had no option but to obey orders and to take back the Rustamjees as brokers and to pay them the sums according to the arbitration award. Even then, they tried to show their displeasure by banning Bomanjee from the factory.

On January 25, 1726 the Bombay Council informed London how the Rustamjees were taken back into favor:

"On receipt of your orders we directed the admitting (of) Framjee to the factory at Surat, and to present him with pamorines (= an article of dress), rosewater and beetle for to give him countenance as one taken again into grace, and when the whole is paid and a general release is given us, the

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brothers shall be presented with a sarpaw (= robe of honor) besides a horse to the elder brother, which as we take it is the time you intended it should be made..."

Bomanjee returned to Surat at the end of 1726 and the three brothers were again reunited. They were now riding the crest of the wave; not only were they reinstated in the factory but became wealthy as the Company paid them the amounts under the award. However, the last years of the 1720s were not tranquil ones for the Rustamjees; they quarrelled among themselves and by the end of 1727 they divided their father's estate and lived separately. Also, at about this time Sorab Ali, the Governor of Surat, had the three brothers arrested and put in jail on a false charge and released them only when they paid him Rs 70,000.

The Governor was not the only one to cast covetous eyes on the Rustamjees' newly-found wealth. Others turned up claiming that they had lent large sums of money to Rustam Maneck, and they now wanted their money back. Surat was becoming uncomfortable for the Rustamjees and in 1727 Nowrosjee shifted his base to Bombay, and by early 1728 Framjee and Bomanjee also settled there. The Rustamjees concentrated their activities in Bombay

where they played a prominent part in Parsi community affairs. Thus ended the family's residential ties with Surat although as brokers of the Company, their business ties remained.

The Court of Directors in London had ordered the Bombay Council to recover Rs 1,50,000 from the Parekhs (in connection with the claim made by Sir John Child's family), and the Council had settled the matter by recovering only Rs 28,571 from Laldas. This did not satisfy the Directors and in early 1728 they ordered the Council to recover the full amount, and if Laldas refused to pay, then the position of the broker was to be offered to Nowrosjee on condition that he bought over the Child claim. Laldas was unwilling to pay and the offer was made to Nowrosjee who wanted time to think over the matter.

At the end of 20 days Nowrosjee put forward certain conditions for taking over the Child claim. They were:

- Nowrosjee would try to recover the money from Laldas; if Laldas refused then the Company's navy must blockade the port of Surat to force him to pay;
- the Governor and merchants of Surat must be informed of the Parekhs' debts and that if Laldas refused to pay then Surat and all

its shipping would suffer by the blockade;

- Laldas and all other Parekhs were to be turned out of the factory and debarred from all English factories;

- the factory must seal all the godowns belonging to the Parekhs;

- while Nowrosjee was discussing with the Governor of Surat as to how the money was to be extorted from Laldas, if the Parekhs offered any terms they were not to be accepted;

- his brothers were to be associated with Nowrosjee in the brokerage, and removed from it, at his pleasure;

- Nowrosjee must nominate the brokers at Cambay and all other English factories in Gujarat;

- he would not pay any interest on money claimed by the Company and would deduct the amount already paid by Laldas.

The conditions are extraordinary by any standard. It seems that his success in London had gone to Nowrosjee's head. As one would expect, the Bombay Council flatly turned them down, describing them as "exorbitant, insulting and certain to embroil them with the Governor and merchants of Surat." Governor Phipps' comments on the Parekhs and Rustamjees are revealing in showing the relative standing

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of the two parties in the Council:

"Loldass... in general has shown a disposition to acquit himself in his office with credit and reputation so as not to risque that for the sake of lucre and gain, behaving always modestly and with the best manners to his superiors, Whereas the sons of Rustam have never been to our knowledge been known to forego any advantage they could make of either the Company's necessities or any others they have had dealings with; and the very reverse to the other, they did constantly behave to their superiors with all the arrogance and insolence imaginable... Besides the reputation of the different persons in the eyes of these country people with respect to their caste exclusive of being the Hon'ble Company's brokers, the Banian being Sheet or Principal (i.e. *nagar seth* of Surat) of about 400,000 people and the others only in common with their caste distinguished by a name of infamy as that of Cawkry, which signifies carrion crow. Further, Loldass in his private character is looked and adhered to by all the substantial merchants in Surat as an honest man, which none of them esteem either of the sons of Rustam to be."

Laldas was continued as broker but pressure was brought on him to accept the Company's claim, which he very reluctantly did signing an obligation for Rs 1,60,206 (inclusive of interest) and pleaded that the matter be kept secret.

We get an interesting glimpse of the last days of the Rustamjees in Surat in the history of the Desai family. When Desai Khurshedji Temulji's father died heavily in debt, Khurshedji lived as a tenant in two houses owned by his *mama* (mother's brother) Ratanji Maneckji. But later his fortune turned and he broke down the two houses and built a new one there. In this work he was helped by two brothers who were prominent citizens of Surat: Framjee Rustamjee and Bomanjee Rustamjee. Because of the intrigues of Laldas Parekh and the fear of the Nawab, the brothers had to flee secretly to Bombay. They came to Khurshedji for help and he arranged to see them safely on their way accompanying them up to Balda Pardi. On parting, the brothers gave him some gold coins and a gold necklace worth Rs 250 for his mother.

The Rustamjee brothers must have left Surat in the middle of 1728. They appear to have contacted the Portuguese to find out whether they would be allowed to trade in their territory, and the General of the North informed Goa of the Rustamjees' request in a letter dated April 30, 1728. In reply, the Viceroy of Goa Joao de Saldanha da Gama,

wrote to the General on May 10, 1728:

"On my behalf you will extend all help and kind treatment to the sons of Rustam in case they should desire to pass through with their ships and transact business in any part of the State whatsoever; whence I will permit them to sail freely to any other part convenient to their business."

Obviously the Portuguese had not forgotten the good service that Rustam Maneck and his father had rendered them over so many decades. The Rustamjees obviously did not accept the Portuguese offer, and although they no longer held a dominant position in Surat, they made Bombay their main base and operated from there. Framjee and Bomanjee now drop out of the Bombay Council's records. Framjee's son Cowasjee looked after his father's interest in Surat and, the three brothers now being at odds with each other, Nowrosjee's son Maneckjee went to Surat to put spokes in Cowasjee's wheels. Nowrosjee himself seems to have maintained good relationship with the Bombay Council. Robert Cowan, the Governor and President at Bombay, had been accused of receiving a bribe from Nowrosjee.

Towards the end of 1733 a false rumour had been floated in Surat that Nowrosjee had lost Rs 1,00,000 in various ventures in Bombay and the Company had forced him to pay Rs 40,000. This led to a rush from his creditors on his son Maneckjee in Surat, and Maneckjee was able to pay them only with the help of some influential merchants of Surat or — as the Bombay Diary for December 1733 notes — "Nowrosjee's credit would have been utterly ruined." This is the last entry in the Bombay records referring to Nowrosjee.

Bomanjee and his family drop out of our story after they finally settled in Bombay. The date of his death is not known. Framjee kept a low profile as far as

Company affairs were concerned. He and Nowrosjee had now become bitter enemies and their quarrels were conducted through their sons. This enmity led Framjee and his son to bury their rivalry with the Parekhs and to become their allies against Nowrosjee. The date of Framjee's death is also not known. Nowrosjee, as we have seen, was actively involved in Company affairs, and, through his friends on the Bombay Council intriguing against the Parekhs.

According to *Parsi Prakash*, Nowrosjee died on April 13, 1732. The day and month may well be correct for the corresponding day and month according to the Parsi Calendar would have been recorded by the family for carrying out the anniversary ceremonies. The year is obviously wrong for, Nowrosjee was taking a loan from the Bombay Council in September 1733 and the Bombay Diary for December 1733 mentions the problems he was facing in Surat; also, Cowan in February 1734 (NS) was writing disapprovingly of Nowrosjee's behavior. He must have died in 1734; he was then 69 years old.

With the death of Nowrosjee, the connection of Rustam Maneck and his sons with Surat effectively came to an end. The 1730s were turbulent years for Surat and marked the decline of Surat as a great commercial center and the importance of Bombay grew. Rustam Maneck had been addressed by the honorific title of *Seth*, and the title became the surname of his three sons and their families. The services that the Seths and their descendants rendered to the Parsi community is another story.

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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MILESTONES

The age of Zoroastrian brides (as listed in this issue) ranged between 16 and 34 years, the arithmetic mean (the total number of individual ages divided by the total number of brides) being 25 years. The corresponding figures for the grooms were 24 and 42 years, averaging at 29 years.

Twenty-eight Zoroastrian births were registered at four hospitals in Bombay in December compared to 66 deaths. Twenty-three of the deaths were attributed to diseases related to the heart, 11 of them being above the age of 80. While pneumonia and lung related diseases claimed the lives of 13 victims, eight succumbed to old age and general debility. Cancer was the cause of four deaths and tuberculosis, hypertension, brain diseases, kidney failure and bronchitis of two deaths each. Intestinal obstruction, hypertension, atherosclerosis (deposition of fatty substances in the arteries), liver disease, septicemia, diabetes and malaria were the isolated cases registered last month. A stillborn baby girl was lost to the community. The oldest to die was a 99-year-old man as compared to the youngest: a 43-year-old lady. The

Zoroastrian life expectancy at birth, in Bombay in December, was 76 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.

BARODA

MARRIED

Hutoxi Amrolia of Bombay, daughter of Mani and Dinshaw and *Jarsis Bonesetter*, son of Villoo and Pharokhsa on December 3, 1995
Monaz Bonesetter, daughter of Villoo and Pharokhsa and *Adil Randeria* of Surat, son of Nergis and Parvez; December 3

BOMBAY

BORN

A boy, *Jehan*, to *Zenobia* and *Kersi Engineer*; September 7
A girl, *Afreed*, to *Shirin* and *Behzad Mehta*; September 13
A girl, *Zenia*, to *Nilofer* and *Jamaspi Irani*; December 1
A boy, *Demavand*, to *Armin* and *Nosherwan Sethna*, brother to Farhan; December 1
A girl to *Silloo* and *Aspi Dubash*; December 2
A girl to *Benaifer* and *Noshir Surveyor*; December 2

A boy, *Darran*, to *Roshni* and *Hoshang Contractor*; December 5

A boy to *Avan* and *Homyar Kasad*; December 5

A boy to *Keshmira* and *Sharookh Colabawalla*; December 6

Twins (girls) to *Persis* and *Dick Jasoomoney*; December 9
A boy to *Benaifer* and *Aspi Bilia*; December 12

A boy to *Kashmira* and *Sarosh Engineer*; December 13

A girl to *Nilofer* and *Rayomand Karkaria*; December 14

A boy to *Kamal* and *Bomy Damania*; December 15

A girl to *Delna* and *Jimmy Mistry*; December 15

A girl to *Gulshan* and *Abad Wadia*; December 15

A girl to *Pearl* and *Farokh Keravala*; December 17

A girl to *Khursheed* and *Jimmy Patel*; December 17

A boy, *Yavishi*, to *Daisy*

and *Bomi Fitter*, brother to *Jenaisha*; December 19

A boy to *Auzita* and *Naresh Asrani*; December 20

A girl to *Farida* and *Nirmal Kejriwal*; December 20

A girl to *Kamal* and *Yezdi Mistry*; December 20

A girl to *Sanobar* and *Yazdi Dastur*; December 21

A girl to *Havovi* and *Behram Kermani*; December 21

A boy to *Roxana* and *Massion Pascal*; December 23

A boy to *Shernavaz* and *Cherezad Bharucha*; December 24

A girl to *Rushna* and *Khushroo Forbes*; December 25

A boy to *Betty* and *Murzban Narsang*; December 27

A boy to *Khurshid* and *Khurshed Bharucha*; December 29

MARRIED

Rukhsana Phiroze Chowna of Ahmedabad and *Zubin Dosabhai Sahukar*; December 1

Daisy Navroz Wadia and *Adil Rusi Jesia*; December 2

Rukhsana Namdar Irani and *Kaikhosro Rustom Behji* of Ontario, Canada; December 3

Beniefer Daraius Patel and *Nevil Dady Kavarana*; December 3

Zenia Dhunjeshaw Pajniger of Poona and *Sarosh Homi Mody*; December 3

Gulshan Aspi Bhatena and *Khurshid Keki Pithawala*; December 4

Binaifer Baji Bharucha and *Karl Kersi Sahukar*; December 4

Mahtab Ratan Bharucha and *Darayus Hoshang Chhaphkanawala*; December 7

Persis Rusi Bharucha and *Sharukh Khudamurad Kohinoor*; December 7

Roxana Homi Ghandhy and *Viraf Homi Mody*; December 7

Dilnavaz Phiroz Patel and *Vispi Jimmy Pardiwalla*; December 8

Havovi Jal Chothia and *Khushroo Aspi Pastakia*; December 8

Persis Navroz Dalal and *Sam Dhanjishaw Cooper*; December 9

Hufrih Tehmasp Munshi and *Jal Dinshaw Mehta*; December 9

Veera Khushru Delkha and *Meherwan Dinshaw Pollard*; December 9

Tanaz Farrokh Tata of Vasai and *Rohinton Kariman Patel*; December 10

Khushnum Phiroze Damania and *Riyaz Homi Buhariwala*; December 11

Shiraz Burjorji Elavia and *Minoo Nariman Tarapore*; December 12

Khursheed Sohrab Gimi and *Rayomand Bahadur Ichhaporia*; December 14

Dilshad Rustom Irani and *Kuresh Rustom Manoocheri*; December 14

Anahita Manchi Bomanbehram and *Cherag Minocher Daruwalla*; December 15

Natasha Dinshaw Nanavati and *Rishad Sammy Lalla*; December 15

Pearl Jehangir Irani and *Khushru Rustom Chothia*; December 16

Jasmine Pesi Goiporia and *Hormaz Cawsi Daruwalla*; December 16

Kashmira Nariman Kasad and *Dinshaw Adi Dastoor*; December 17

Firoza Beji Bajan of Katni, Madhya Pradesh and *Zarir Vispi Dalal*; December 18

Rukhseda Darayus Pagdiwalla and *Vispi Jamshed Irani*; December 18

Tanaz Pesi Bhatena and *Khushroo Hoshi Mody*; December 19

Farida Eruch Bhote and *Adil Gustadji Nasirabadwala*; December 24

Tenaz Pesi Turner and *Farhad Soli Sahiar*; December 24

Binaifer Kersi Dubash and *Aspi Rumi Daruwalla*; December 25

Shriji Hse, 75, Mint Rd, Fort, 400001; December 2

Parinbanu Sham Irani (72), Post Gholwad, Tal Dahanu, Dist Thana, 401702; December 2

Minoo Sorabji Bilimoria (84), 583/2, Girgaum Rd, 400002; December 3

Jimmy Khurshed Irani (68), B/62, Rajkamal, Parel, 400012; December 3

Bhickaiji Sorabji Khambatta (90), F. S. Parukh Dharamshala, Hughes Rd, 400007; December 3
Dhunmai Pestonji Parakh (88), 5/4, India Hse, Kemps Corner, 400036; December 3

Minoo Jehangir Bilimoria (78), Readymoney Bldg No 1, Ratan Tata Rd, Tardeo, 400034; December 4

Jehangir Bomanji Bilimoria (84), 202, Udham Hse, Santosh Ngr, Hill Rd, Bandra (W), 400050; December 5

Ratty Phirozeshaw Chinoy (78), 5/36, A. H. Wadia Baug, Parel Tank Rd, 400033; December 5
Kersasp Hirjibhai Soonawalla (74), 13/15, Soonawalla Apts, Arab St, Corner of Grant Rd, 400008; December 6

Meherbai Rustomji Tata (86), Shraddha, Om Ngr, G. F. Dhuri Complex, Ambadi Rd, Vasai (W), 401201; December 6

Shavaksha Nariman Ilavia (72), C/o Ms Khorshed B. Bharucha, 18, Contractor Chawl, Sussex Rd, Byculla, 400027; December 7

Gover Jamshed Irani (69), 16/3, Tata Mills Co-op Hsg Soc, Elphinstone Rd, Parel, 400012; December 7

Jasmine Kersi Mistry (72), 11/10, Tata Clny, Tardeo, 400034; December 7

Sorabji Behramji Pastakia (91), 658, Firdoshi Rd, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; December 7
Minoo Nariman Ruwala (61), 12, Star Bldg, Uranwala St, Off Alibhai Premji Rd, Grant Rd, 400007; December 7

Fareedoonji Kavasji Avari (69), 302, Madhuvan, Shrikrishna Complex, Vartak Rd, Virar (W), 401303; December 9

Dinabai Phirozsha Bhiwandiwalla (94), 80 Quarters gate, Bhiwandi, Dist Thane; December 9

Aloo (Avaz) Phiroze Dastur (76), Empress Court, 142, Maharshi

Karve Rd, 400020; December 9
Nargish Dorab Doctor (68), J/7, S. Bharucha Baug, S. V. Rd, Andheri (W), 400058; December 9

Roda Bomanshaw Mughaseth (83), Cama Bldg, Kashinath Rd, Tardeo, 400034; December 9

Russi Faramroze Taraporewalla (71), 2, Sir Dorab Tata Bldg No 1, S. V. Rd, Bandra, 400050; December 10

Perin Nowrojee Hormusjee (84), 6, Band-View, 665, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; December 12

Freny Homi Kabir (88), Kabir Hse, Khambatta Lane, Byculla (E), 400027; December 13

Jehangir Darabsha Masalawalla (85), Bhiwandi Hse, 92, Cumballa Hill, 400036; December 13

Baby girl of Shirin Cyrus Parestani (stillborn), B/7, Contractor Baug, Mori Rd, Mahim, 400016; December 13
Goolbano Jamshed Sahyar (95), 31, Forjett St, 400036; December 13

Rustomjee Limjibhai Sopariwala (91), 502, Happy Hse, Hastikar St, Prabhadevi, 400025; December 13

Homai Rusi Dadachanji (60), B/1, Motta Mans, Bai Motibai St, Opp Bhatia Hosp, Tardeo, 400007; December 14

Zarine (Aloo) Navroze Vatcha (89), F/2, Cusrow Baug, S. B. Rd, 400039; December 14

Keki Pestonji Cassad (77), 196, Lotus Court, Jamshedjee Tata Rd, Churchgate, 400020; December 16

Sherry (Scheherazade) Dinyar Patel (47), A/3, Satyabhama Nivas, Kashinath St, Tardeo Rd, 400034; December 16

Nozer Fardoonji Dastoor (99), Mohamed Bldg, 56, Wodehouse Rd, Colaba, 400005; December 17

Tehmina Eruchshaw Karanjia (85), Muncherji Seth Bldg, 2 62, Tardeo Rd, 400007; December 17

Jalejar Edulji Mohta (83), 6/A, 26/B, Beristan Bldg, Opp Rly Stn, Vikhroli (W), 400083; December 17

Hillamai Munchershaw Bhathena (81), Dhenu Bldg, Dr Ambedkar Rd, Parel, 400012; December 20

Piroja Eruchshaw Mistry (91), 9, Widow's Chawl, Modi St,

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TOTALS FOR 1995

	Bombay		India		World	
	A	B	A	B	A	B
BORN						
Boys	13	111	3	9	3	30
Girls	16	107	2	5	2	22
MARRIED						
Parsi	31	256	5	10	--	13
Intercommunal	--	61 [^]	--	1	--	10
DIED						
CONSIGNED						
Male	32	472	5	87	3	28*
Female	34	464	9	90	3	34*
CREMATED						
Male	--	3	--	--	--	--
Female	--	1	--	--	--	--

A: Total numbers in this issue

B: Running totals for 1995 (February-March 1995-December 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.

Fort, 400001; December 20
Nargis Minocher Daruwala (68),
 275/J, New Cama Bldg, Tardeo
 Rd, 400007; December 21
Burjor Cawasji Kalyaniwala
 (84), B, Rustam Palace, Tardeo,
 400007; December 22
Gayomard Cawasji Mehta (82),
 F. S. Parukh Dharamshalla,
 Hughes Rd, 400007;
 December 22
Tehmi Behramji Mistry (72),
 275/D, Soona Bldg, Chikalwadi,
 Tardeo, 400007; December 22
Shirin Framroze Rabadi (82),
 401, Royal Gate Co-op Hsg Soc,
 Yari Rd, Versova, Andheri (W),
 400061; December 22
Murzbani Jamshedji Mistry (65),
 784/B, Readymoney Bldg,
 Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014;
 December 23
Macca Naoraji Bhagat (78),
 Kaka Block, Marazban Clny,
 Gilder Lane, 400008;
 December 25
Behram Sohrabji Dubhash (93),
 5, Nariyalwala Bldg, M. M. C.
 Rd, Mahim, 400016;
 December 25
Eruch Rustomji Bhathena (84),
 693, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014;
 December 26
Dhunmai Hormusji Hansotia
 (77), 7, Lam Bldg, Delisle Rd,
 Lower Parel, 400013;
 December 28

Khodabux Behram Hormazdi
 (83), Behram-Abad, Rd No 4,
 T.P.S. IV, Opp Bhabha Hosp,
 Bandra (W), 400050;
 December 28
Mani Minoo Katrak (58), Forjett
 Hse, Forjett St, Gowalia Tank,
 400036; December 28
Najoo Hormuzshah Chibber
 (75), Boman Hse, Homji St,
 400001; December 29
Mehernosh Nariman Kajanwalla
 (74), Pundole Bldg, Opp
 Mithaiwala Fire-temple, Sleater
 Rd, 400007; December 29
Eddie Hirji Nagarwalla (83),
 645, Khareghat Rd, Parsi Clny,
 Dadar, 400014; December 29
Dali Nusserwanji Sethna (64),
 15, Ardeshir Dady Cross
 Lane, Khetwadi, 400004;
 December 29
Katy Dinshaw Talaty (72),
 307, Keravala Bldg, Nana
 Chowk, Tardeo Rd, 400007;
 December 29
Kersi Kaiki Tata (53), Ashoka
 Apts, Off Arthur Bunder
 Rd, Colaba, 400005;
 December 29
Naval Sorabjee Achadwala (80),
 B/16, Godrej Baug, Nepean Sea
 Rd, 400036; December 30
Edi Savaksha Contractor (80),
 71, Dinath Court, Sir
 Pochkhanawala Rd, Worli,
 400018; December 30

Perin Pirojshaw Karbhari (76),
 C/o Nargish F. Dumasia, Taher
 Manzil, Mahella Patel Agiary
 Lane, Grant Rd, 400007;
 December 30
Cyrus Shapur Mody (55), 8, St
 Anthony Rd, Bandra (W),
 400050; December 30
Ratansha Edulji Daruwala (88),
 F, Adam Mhl, Wadia St, Tardeo,
 400034; December 31
Piloo Keki Satta (83), Kala
 Niketan Bldg, Queens Rd,
 400020; December 31
Behramshaw Bomanji Sethna
 (78), Hirji Sethna Bldg,
 Zoroastrian Clny, Tardeo Rd,
 400007; December 31

CALCUTTA

BORN
 A girl, *Tara*, to *Nilufer* and
Sanjay Prakash; December 14

MARRIED
Kay Jehangir Master of
 Bombay and *Khushrav*
Hiramanek; December 23
Rashna Godrej Dandiwalla of
 Bombay and *Phiroz Savak Sadri*;
 December 28

DIED
Khorshed Nariman, wife of
 Dorab and mother of *Burjor*,
Perin, *Lily* and *Homai*;
 December 30

JALGAON

BORN
 A girl, *Dinaj*, to *Fernaj* and
Rustom Adajania; May 28
 A boy, *Viraf*, to *Roshan* and
Firoj Darbari; September 16

NAGPUR

BORN
 A boy to *Zubina* and *Percy*
Sidhwa; December 14

POONA

DIED
Minoo Nadershah Daruwala
 (57), 1152, Saifee St, 411001;
 December 7
Jamshed Kayas (75), 9, Mody
 Clny, Synagogue St, 411001;
 December 23
Feradun Bakhtiyar Irani (62),
 Bakhtiyar Garden, Shahabad,
 Dist Gulbarga, 585101;
 December 26
Ardeshir Framroze Pardiwalla
 (82), 17, Abdul Coure
 Suryavanshi Marg, Bombay,
 400028, December 31

SECUNDERABAD

MARRIED
Diana Feroz Mistri and *Yezdi*
Phiroze Bhagwagar of Bombay;
 December 14

SURAT

BORN
 A boy, *Zarath*, to *Prochie* and
Sairas Bhesania; October 29

DIED
Dolatbanu Tehmursap Dastur
 (78), Dasturbag, Nanpura,
 395001; December 6
Jamshedji Rustomji Dastur (84),
 Adajan, Dist Surat; December 6
Mani Gustadji Vesuna (85),
 Por St, Nanpura, 395001;
 December 12
Coomibai Pirojshaw Engineer
 (85), Darani Chmbs, Sayedwada;
 December 13
Gulbanu Jahangirji Vaghchhi-
pwala (87), Nariman Home and
 Infirmary, Shahpore, 395003;
 December 15
Ziniben Bamansha Dapotawala
 (65), Ranitalao, 395003;
 December 16
Banubai Pirojshaw Vajifdar (79),
 Lalgate, 395003; December 22
Khorshed Dhanjisha Katpitia
 (67), Bhavnagri St, 395003;
 December 25
Pirojbai Eruchshaw Gandhi
 (91), Dehala St, Rustampura,
 395002; December 26

Compiled by Roxana A. Driver

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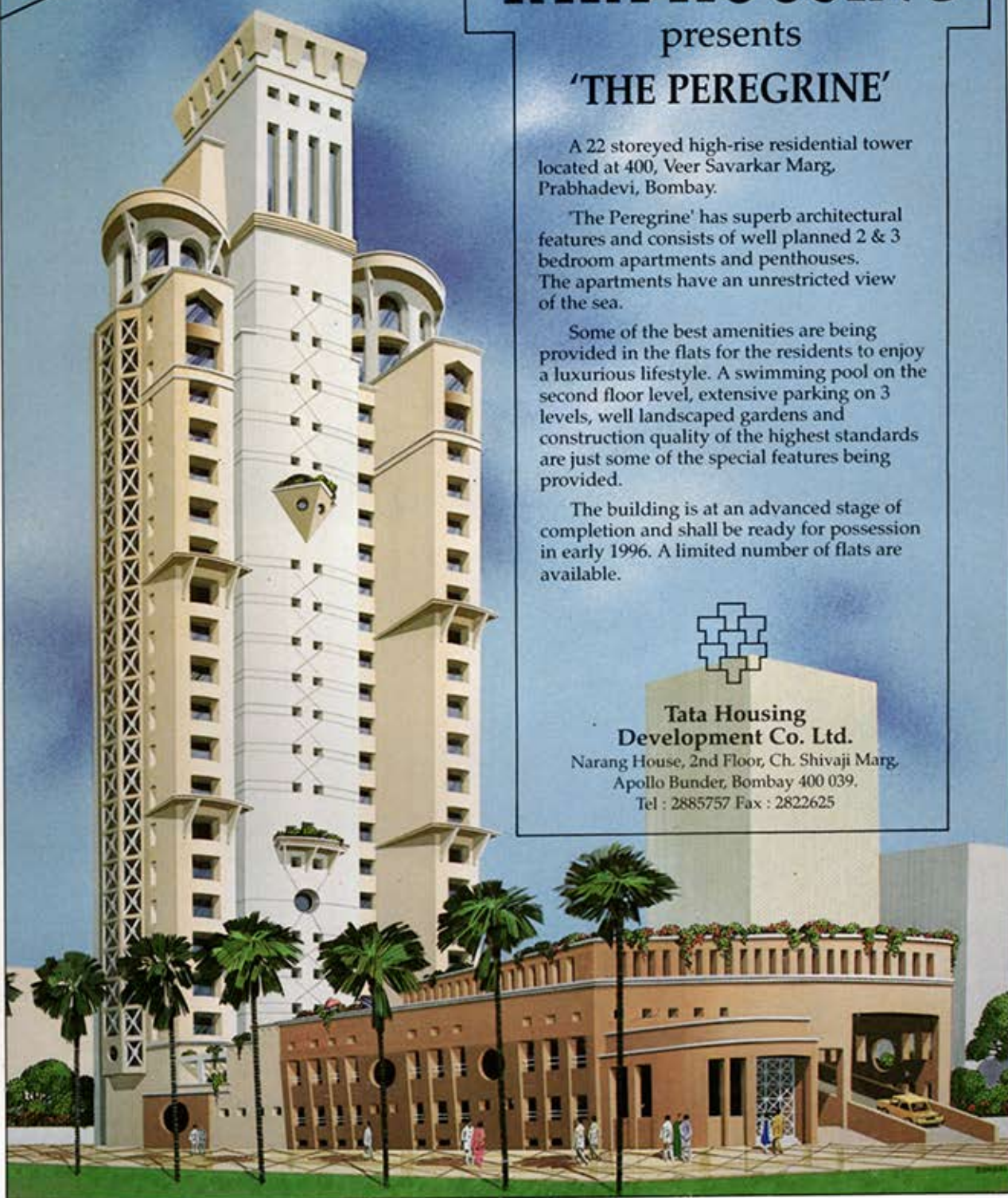
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Nutrient	Essential for	Nutrient added (approx.) per pack
Vitamin A	Good vision, healthy skin	7680 I.U.
Vitamin C	Helps protect against infections/cold	42.6 mg
Vitamin B1	Release of energy from food	4480 µg
Vitamin B2	Growth, proper functioning	5120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

