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Parsiana is edited and published by Jehangir R. Patel for Parsiana Publications Pvt Ltd at K. K. (Navsari) Chambers, 39B, A. K. Nayak Road, Fort, Bombay 400001 and printed by him at Kaiser-E-Hind Pvt Ltd, A-191, Road No 16A, MIDC, Wagle Industrial Estate, Thana (W), 400604. All rights reserved. Processing Comart Lithographers. Editorial enquiries: 22078183. Advertising: 22077543, 22072915. Subscription: 22074347, 22074335. General: 22078730, 22072624. Fax: 22075572, 22074541. Press: 25804162. E-mail: parsiana@vsnl.net
For subscription enquiries and payments: K. K. (Navsari) Chambers, 39B, A. K. Nayak Road, Ground floor, Fort, Bombay 400001. ISSN: 0971-3786.

Annual inland subscription for one year (12 issues) Rs 400; for two years (24 issues) Rs 750; for three years (36 issues) Rs 1,100. Foreign subscription rates: Seamail for one year Rs 675/ US \$ 15/UK £ 10/Euro 15; for two years Rs 1,250/ US \$ 28/UK £ 19/Euro 28; for three years Rs 1,900/US \$ 41/UK £ 29/Euro 41 (please allow six months or more for seamail delivery from the time of publication). Airmail for one year Rs 950/ US \$ 21/ UK £ 14/Euro 21; for two years Rs 1,800/ US \$ 40/UK £ 27/Euro 40; for three years Rs 2,700/ US \$ 60/UK £ 40/Euro 60. For Indian upcountry cheques add Rs 20 for bank charges; for US cheques add \$ 5; for UK cheques add £ 3; for Euro cheques add Euro 5. Cheques and drafts are to be drawn in favor of Parsiana.

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Resolution refrain

If one good thing has surfaced from the fatwa of the High Priests it is the sudden serious thinking by young and old Parsis about our religion and community. People like Rhea Dhanbhora and Kimi Dangor are the future of this community so when we hear or read what they say we better take note. There is hope that when this younger generation grows up they will be on the right track.

There is only one God Ahura Mazda. He is only called by different names. Period!

We Parsis have been pioneers in a million things. It's time we showed the world that religion is too personal. In fact it's up to us to show that we can still be a true Zoroastrian wearing the sudreh kusti, visiting the agiary and doing the diva-batti and loban daily and at the same time visiting a church or the Siddhi Vinayak temple or fasting on Thursday to venerate Sai Baba. This comes natu-

rally to folks like me and I personally feel I am a true Parsi who is expected to be tolerant, not dogmatic, religious, but not fanatic.

RODA D. HAKIM
Vadodara

It breaks my heart when I notice that some well-meaning folks take a controversial decision and force our small community into a tailspin. What irks me is the recent decision taken by some of the dasturs in India.

Why do we do these things and make a spectacle of ourselves or why do we let these things be done to us in the name of religion?

Are we Parsis a "pure" breed? Does a fair-skinned Parsi consider himself more of a Parsi than a dark-skinned one? If that be the case where did these dark-skinned folks come from? And what is this "genetic distinctness?" Only in India is this nonsense being perpetuated and tolerated.

Why do we continue to think on these terms rather than what should we be doing to change the course of current events and how should we welcome and accept our loved ones back into our faith? What should we be doing to spread this wonderful and simple religion? It seems that our egos have got a hold upon us and clear thinking has gone astray. Frustration has set in and the common folks are abdicating their responsibilities and authority to the dasturs who, in my humble opinion, are taking us backwards with not a care of the future. We're the smallest minority in the world (on the brink of extinction) and about to become a "tribe"... let history not record us as "a race of good and decent people that let go of a noble heritage."

Here are some suggestions to remedy the situation: The trustees should meet with the dasturs and find out what really caused them to take this decision. Meet with them once again after a "cooling off period" and suggest some "face-saving" alternatives. Convince them that it's in their interest to keep the community together rather than to create dissension. I would encourage the young folks to take command and force, if necessary, the changes. Push aside those who tend to stick to these "outdated" ideas and try to save what little is left... Remember this is your future.

Go forward and think how you want

the community to grow and prosper. Be creative and don't let the "nay-sayers" hold you back. Have some conviction in yourselves and "lead" this good community, without malice to anyone, and let our religion survive. We owe this to ourselves and to those who come after us.

On the other side of the globe, we are flourishing and multiplying. We welcome everyone and especially non-Parsi spouses and their children. We even have special get-togethers to determine how the community can help them feel more comfortable, etc. It's this type of thinking that will create the right atmosphere for survival.

KHUSHRU HAKIM
New Jersey, USA

As a child, I was taught that my religion was one that did not demand much from its followers. I was told that all it asked of its followers was that we lead a life of honesty and love. A life in which we were to speak good words, think good thoughts and carry out good deeds.

One aspect, however, that I could never understand was that our religion did not allow non-Parsis to enter our fire-temples, and did not allow non-Parsis to pray to our Lord. I always wondered how a religion that stressed on loving all beings as children of God, demanded that most of their children be kept out of the House of God.

I asked many older Parsis as to why our religion did so, one of whom was my late grandfather, Shiyavak Vakil, who was a navar himself, and trustee of the Bombay Parsi Punchayet. He told me that it was our Lord Zarathushtra who himself converted non-Zoroastrians into Zoroastrians. Then why is it that we do not allow conversions now?

As a young Parsi I am very sorry to hear about this news, as are most of my Parsi friends. I feel ashamed that we have to use bullying tactics to ensure that our faith goes on. We have reached a stage whereby we are forcing our own boys and girls to choose between true love and their religion, a religion that preaches just that, true love.

What kind of religion would this be, if I were to give up the girl I love, just because she was not born a Parsi? Would it make me less of a Parsi if I spent my life loving a girl, keeping her happy, being honest and faithful to her, even if



Air Marshal Aspy Engineer DFC
Chief of Air Staff (1960-1964)
No. 1 Squadron Royal Indian Air Force



15th December 1912 - 1st May 2002

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Those that flew for "No. 1 Squadron, Indian Air Force"
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Those who were cruelly snatched away
By fate in the prime of their youth.
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Their Heart and Soul but one
Fused together — A part of our Universe
Their shining inspiration
A star so bright — lighting
Our paths till eternity...
A beacon for our
children of tomorrow"!!



Inserted by grieving son Cyrus Aspy Engineer

she was a non-Parsi? No. By doing so, I have ensured that I have led a life of honesty and love. And that makes me a good Parsi.

What the Priests say is their opinion. Not mine. This new rule would not deter me from marrying outside my community. I would love my children to be Parsis and follow this lovely religion that till today was free of any fanatic rituals.

NEKZAAD N. VAKIL

"Priestly contradictions"

The very learned treatise in your April 2003 issue by Jamsheed Kanga has pulled the rug under the feet of the six Vada Dasturs who were the original signatories of the recent fatwas issued by them in connection with mixed marriages and the children of such marriages.

It is to the credit of the three of the original signatories Dasturs Kaikhusroo JamaspAsa, Firoze Kotwal and Noshirvan Dastur who were honest and pragmatic enough to reverse their original decisions and opted out of the seemingly unnecessarily created controversy.

The remaining three, Dasturs Hormazdyar Mirza, Meherji Meherji-Rana and Nadirshah Unvalla seem to be

oblivious to the mood of the community on such an important matter and the harm they can bring to the community by their intransigence. There being no canon laws or ecclesiastic power to excommunicate, they will be left to lick the wounds of their own making.

This is the opportune time for the Association of Inter-Married Zoroastrians to once and for all settle this vexatious dispute on the rights of intermarried Zoroastrians and their children to peruse the lifestyle and rituals of our pristine Zoroastrian religion. If the same cannot be achieved by an out-of-court permanent settlement, they should take recourse to legal actions.

This issue must be taken up immediately if in spite of having all the rich assets and human resources which are the envy of other communities, we do not wish to be classified as tribals.

Dr M. D. DISAWALLA

Bangalore

"Options to..."

There is no way the world can do without incinerators and crematoria. Noshir H. Dadrawala says London, Munich and Los Angeles use incinerators at their

peril ("Options to..." Readers' Forum, *Parsiana*, April 2003). What peril is Dadrawala talking about? The world's garbage is increasing by leaps and bounds and the USA leads the world with 2.1 kg household refuse per person per day. For urban centers like New York or San Francisco the daily refuse could be as high as five kilos per person per day. Land-filling and dumping sites are becoming scarcer and incinerators, besides generating power, cause a 90 percent reduction in volume of the garbage and a 40 percent reduction in weight. They are the only alternative, and there are scores of incinerators operating around the world today.

Years ago I had asked the then assistant municipal commissioner (AMC) in charge of waste disposal and management why incinerators were not installed in Bombay for disposal of over 3,000 tons of garbage per day. Today the figure may be even 5,000 tons/day. The AMC's reply was that for four months during the monsoons from June to September the incinerator would become totally inoperational due to the high moisture content of the garbage. This would hinder self-sustained combustion

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in the incinerator. The same problem is being faced at Doongerwadi where the solar reflectors become totally inoperational during the monsoon on account of rains and cloudy skies. It takes four to five days to dry the body even in dry weather.

According to the latest information, the Maharashtra Energy Development Agency (MEDA) has planned a dozen power generation plants based on biomass wastes in the drier regions of the state starting with Gondia. Such power plants based on biomass wastes are already operating in Andhra and Karnataka (*The Indian Express*, March 2, 2003).

On the question of crematoria, a 1991 survey in Britain had indicated that 70 percent of the dead preferred cremation as against 30 percent for burial in cemeteries, essentially because cremation is the most sanitary and efficient method for the disposal of the dead.

Coming now to the pollution aspect of incinerators, the effluents from incinerators and crematoria have to conform to the Environmental Protection Acts of the local bodies. It has been established experimentally that if the gases in the chamber are held for two seconds at 850°C, it is sufficient to destroy any hazardous and toxic gases in the effluents. Dadrawala talks about some initiatives taken by the American Lung Association to ban incinerators. How do the lungs come into the picture? The lungs are all at ground level whereas the chimneys from incinerators and crematoria dissipate the effluents high above the rooftops and the high velocity causes dispersion of the effluents into the atmosphere at a much higher altitude.

Whatever little dioxins that Dadrawala talks about comes from the exhaust of diesel vehicles, but with the enforcement of the Euro-I and the Euro-II norms essentially for the suppression of SPM (Suspended Particulate Matter), NO_x and SO_2 and the gradual change over of diesel cars to CNG and LPG, this aspect is also taken care of.

In one of his earlier articles, Dadrawala referred to crematoria causing the warming of the planet by the greenhouse effect due to accumulation of carbon dioxide (CO_2) in the atmosphere. Actual studies in the UK in 1991 had indicated that the contribution by crematoria to CO_2 was only 0.01 percent, the rest being contributed by thermal power stations, automobiles and from combustion of fuels in boilers for cen-

trally heated buildings and private domestic homes.

Dr P. D. SUNAVALA

"We need to improve..."

Apropos a reference to my "liberal opinions and reformist actions" vis-à-vis my brother, Burjor Antia's "traditional stance" and his opponents trying "hard to leverage this issue against him in the run up to the BPP (Bombay Parsi Punchayet) election — without success" (see "We need to improve our image," *Parsiana*, February 2003), it may surprise many to learn that there is really and truly the same spirit guiding us both — that of serving the community as best we can. A spirit that was deeply ingrained in us by our guru, the late Dastur Khurshed Dabu and the training that we both received at the M. F. Cama Athornan Institute, winning the Best Boy Medals and other honors.

In our stronghold of Bombay, Burjor was inclined by our own very traditional upbringing to adopt a "traditional stance" as the best way to ensure the survival of the community there and it has its own merits. Whereas I who have lived much more than half my life in the USA was awed and thunderstruck by the difficulty of adhering to traditionalism here in North America; trying to be a Zoroastrian and inspiring our children to be proud Zoroastrians. All my siblings and I had known the riches to rags experience when our father's stock broker company, perhaps one of the few Parsi companies outside of Bombay, folded and the only solace we found was in religion, which has been *facile princeps* in our life, no matter how great a height we may have achieved in our individual profession.

Being a well informed priest who had studied Avesta-Pahlavi and won essay prizes from the K. R. Cama Oriental Institute, etc., a rare commodity here, I faced the challenge of serving the community, almost always at the expense of my own professional work, family duties, leisure time and finances. Not only did I perform religious ceremonies but also set up the framework and foundations for religious organizations, wrote articles on religious subjects, lectured and bought scholarly books on Zoroastrianism, etc. I was often denounced by many at first but most of them have, with the passage of time, now realized that it is difficult to survive here by adopting a "traditional stance." We can only survive here by adapting to the circum-

stances as best as we can. Zoroastrianism is as relevant to our times and climes as to any other.

I found Dabu much more adaptable to our times. His advice was pragmatic and sympathetic to our milieu here when I wrote to him in the 1960s from here. As I have often stated before, I would prefer to live in the earlier times when we did not face the challenge of modernity, but having been faced by the challenge, I have done my best to keep the flame of Zoroastrianism alive on this continent. For anyone to exploit this situation for their own selfish ends and hold it against Burjor is as un-Zoroastrian as it could possibly be. About 20 percent of Parsis live in North America and my mission is to see we do not lose them in one generation or two. It is a very formidable task to which few in Bombay seem to have given serious attention and to make it a campaign issue instead of showing some consideration for our situation is thoroughly uncalled for. Many Parsis in India itself are regrettably marrying out of the community. Our children and grandchildren in North America too are most likely to marry out of the community. Would the BPP trustees prefer to see them lost to the community and, if so, is it really in consonance with the teachings of Asho Zarathushtra who aspired to spread his religion over all the seven continents known to mankind then? While BPP trustees could and should safeguard the interests and intent of the trusts assigned to them in India, their higher calling should inspire them to understand our situation, instead of exploiting it. My brother Burjor's mission and mine may vary, but we both try to deal with the challenges we face as best as we can. Let history be the judge.

ERVAD KERSEY H. ANTIA
Chicago, USA

Salsette Parsi Colony

The Salsette Parsi Colony (SPC), situated at Andheri (East) has nine buildings, having six to eight floors. There are a good number of Parsi families residing in SPC.

For those traveling by train, the trouble does not end after getting down at Andheri (West). Even if a rickshaw does come forward, neither the rickshaw driver nor the passenger knows exactly how to proceed to SPC. There is only one landmark known as the 'Old Pump House.' After reaching this spot, one has to ask for directions to the Colony many a time



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since such directions are not given correctly.

I thought that I would write to the society of the Colony requesting them to place indicators at suitable places for the convenience of visitors.

I was nonplussed for a moment when I was told that there was no single society to protect the interests of the entire Colony. Of the nine buildings, there are as many as five societies for five buildings whilst the remaining four buildings have no societies at all. Under the circumstances, one is at a loss as to which society to approach to place suitable boards at strategic points.

BIKHAJI M. ADENWALLA

Adi Patel, chairman, The Salsette Parsis Association replies

It is not possible to place directions on the road leading to the Salsette Colony. The Pump House is a well known area for the past many years and mostly all the rickshaw drivers know the place.

There are a total of six buildings in the Colony, along with the Seth Ardeshir Bhicajee Patel Dadgah and the Community Hall.

Prophet's martyrdom

Very recently, I came across a publication *Asho Zarathushtra and His Gathas Great*, by Silloo Mehta, which was sponsored by the Ilm-E-Khshnum Society.

I was surprised to read therein that Zarathushtra did not pass away, i.e. he did not die like a normal mortal and his body and soul went to the heavens and was received by Ahura Mazda. That is an utter distortion of historical records. Zarathushtra died at the age of 77, at the hands of the dastardly Turanian, Tur Bara Tur (Bratraresh).

There are specific references to the elements of nature having militated against Zarathushtra's killing, by sword, when he was in his prayers. Gloom descended on Airyana Vaeja (ancient Iran): trees shed the leaves, as if it was autumn; flowers faded and withered; birds stopped carolling in the air; and the elements unleashed, as if, a war against man... thunder and lightning shook Iran...

I would caution the readers against this misplaced adoration of Zarathushtra.

All Zoroastrians, unquestioningly, believe in his holiness. Till eternity, we will revere him, as our ancestors did, and his *Gathas* and other preachings will remain immortalized.

But that does not alter the fact that he

died at the hands of a crafty Turanian criminal whom we will hate till eternity.

The said Society has no right to distort history and mislead lay readers. It should, in fact, issue a correction.

BEHRAM T. DASTUR

Silloo Mehta of California, USA replies

The *Avesta*, including the *Gathas*, *Vendidad*, *Visperad*, *Yasnas*, *Yashts*, *Niyaeshs* and all prayers, as also the Pahlavi and Persian writings and commentaries all vibrate with one truth about Asho Zarathushtra: He is a divine personality, a yazata, who assumed a human form; a Prophet specially nominated by Ahura Mazda, to discharge certain divine and spiritual missions amongst the mankind of this earth and to guide them and show them the paths leading to Ahura Mazda.

Let us then examine the event of His passing away. The *Avesta* does not contain a single reference about his death, much less murder! Even the more authentic Pahlavi texts (sixth to ninth century CE) are silent as to the method of Asho Zarathushtra's passing away i.e. slaying by the sword. The only mention of the "killing" of Zarathushtra with a "sword" is found in the much later (17th century CE) Persian work *Dabestan-e-Madaheb* (School of Religious doctrines), which refers to secondhand sources and states that the Prophet was martyred at Balkh. This account is a secondhand source, with the writer referring to "books composed by Zartosht's followers and also in the ancient histories of Iran," without, however, naming a single such book. Today, we are not in possession of a single *Avesta* or Pahlavi source that corroborates this theory.

The *Dinkard*, to which we are indebted for many important matters on religion, contains a series of chapters on the life of the Prophet that provide the most reliable source for this subject. These chapters called the Pahlavi Zarathushtra-Nameh give an account of the events before his birth, at the time of birth, his infancy, childhood and his work and mission in a chronological narrative. In its introduction, the author emphatically states that his source is the *Avesta* and that the 10 chapters of the Nameh are on the illustriousness and glory (*gada*) and miracles (*afdi*) of the Prophet. It is very pertinent that the author chooses to call the narrative an account of the "glory and miracles" rather than the "life" of Zarathushtra, indicat-

ing thereby, that this is not the biography of an ordinary mortal.

The *Dinkard* refers to the the passing away of Zarathushtra as *vikhiz* and going to Pahlum Ahvan. The great Avesta-Pahlavi scholar, Dastur (Dr) Darab Peshotan Sanjana translates this as "the passing away of Zarathushtra of the revered Fravahar to the best abode..." Several other scholars unanimously uphold this rendition.

The Pahlavi term *vikhiz*, written in the modern style of Pahlavi orthography as *wihez*, is defined by Mackenzie, in his Pahlavi dictionary (pg 90) as "move, progress." Sanjana gives the root of *vikhiz* as "to rise" or "to ascend." The normal terms for death in Pahlavi would be "*margih* (hence *amargih* — immortality) *widerishnih mard*," etc.

The Pahlavi masters of the *Dinkard* specifically did not use these common terms to describe the alleged killing of Asho Zarathushtra, but preferred to use *wihez*, which perhaps has not been used to describe any other person's death. Hence the logical assumption that the "killing" has more than meets the eye.

How is it possible that the *Dinkard*, which treats in so expert a manner Asho Zarathushtra's life and the Zarathushti religion, keeps silent upon the slaying of Asho Zarathushtra by the sword of a Turk?

Again, the *Sadder Bundelesh*, to which we are also indebted for many important statements, also contradicts the *Dabestan* account by asserting that Zarathushtra at least did not die in Balkh, but returned to Aryanavajja (Airan Vaiz). The same book also raises the question why such a distinguished character as he should die at all.

Even the great scholar, K. R. Cama, in his *Paegambar Asho Zartoshtna Janmarano Ehwel, Avesta Uparthi* (pg 250) says that there is no mention in the *Avesta* as to how Zarathushtra passed away from this earth, or when or where.

Faced with contradictory statements from such authentic sources as the *Dinkard* and the *Sadder Bundelesh* and in the absence of any corroboratory accounts from other *Avesta* or Pahlavi sources, we are left with no choice but to examine the *Dabestan* account in a different light. Moreover, the language of the narrative itself suggests the presence of a deeper significance behind the outward surface meaning.

Max Mueller, the great Orientalist and editor of the *Sacred Books of the*

East, emphasizes, "Unless we learn to understand this metaphorical or hieroglyphic language of the ancient world, we shall look upon the *Upanishads* and on most of the *Sacred Books of the East* as mere childish twaddle."

When Asho Zarathushtra arrived on earth, evil was rampant. The evil thoughts, words and deeds of men had created a tremendous cloud of evil energy, which was poised menacingly over the earth, capable of untold destruction. This cloud is known as Turbaratur. But who could take upon himself the force and the impact of the rushing Tur? Asho Zarathushtra created a powerful magnetic force around his human form and attracted the rushing Tur. Zarathushtra's divine form was ready for the clash; there was a swift transmission of energies, powerful magnetic storms arose, and the evil Tur disintegrated. The coarse bodily energy in Zarathushtra's human form was spent in the process, the human form dissolved, and the Yazatic light flew away to Pahlum Ahwan (heavens) and further.

We know from the *Avesta* (Vd. 19, 1-3) that the demon Buiti, who was ordered by Angra Mainyu to strike Zarathushtra, could not do so and said: "I see no way to kill him, so great is the

glory of the holy Zarathushtra (S.B.E. Vol. IV)."

In the *Tir Yasht* (paragraph 44) it is distinctly stated: "...He (Ahura Mazda) has fixed Zarathushtra as the Lord and overseer of men, whom neither Ahriman, nor genii and (wicked) fairies, nor sorcerers, nor all demons collectively can vanquish and dare to kill."

Even the arch-foe Angra Mainyu is powerless against Asho Zarathushtra: "The ill-informed evil spirit... bawled out thus: 'All the Yazatas could not shatter me against my will, but only Zarathushtra has suppressed me against my will; he smites me... *Ashi Yasht* (paragraph 20).'"

The *Dinkard* mentions several instances when the daevas tried to kill the infant Zarathushtra, by fire, under the hooves of stampeding bulls and horses, by a vicious she-wolf. Each time the glorious infant was miraculously able to save himself. In one instance the evil demon Durasrub "wished to crush with hands the delicate head... And here a great miracle was manifested... the hands of that devil were turned backwards..."

We know that Asho Zarathushtra possessed the knowledge of the past and of the future, a gift which he bestowed on Jamasp via the darun-offering of fra-

grant flowers. So how could he have not foreseen his own death by a Turk? If Zarathushtra had indeed been killed by a human being as alleged, the narration of the events of his death, the place and method of disposal of his body, the attendance of King Vishtasp and the general public would surely have been recorded in Avesta-Pahlavi writings and such books would have been referred to with great reverence by the community. But, as we know, there were no such records. Even today, we have the ruins of the astodans of the Achaemenian kings at Naksh-e-Rostam; yet, there is no such dakhma or astodan with regard to the great Prophet of Prophets (*Vakshur-e-Vakshuran*) Asho Zarathushtra.

Asho Zarathushtra's passing away from this earth cannot be explained by taking the slaying incident literally. For, how could it be possible that one who is himself a channel of Ahura, a Yazata (Ys. 3.2, 21; 4.23; 7.21), one who has been described in the *Avesta* as the Lord of the entire temporal world (*Fravardin Yasht*, 24), one who is ranked amongst (*Khordad Yasht*, 1) and even above (Ys. 71.2) the seven Amesha Spentas, can be killed by an ordinary human being? How is it possible that one who could not be killed by even the most powerful of

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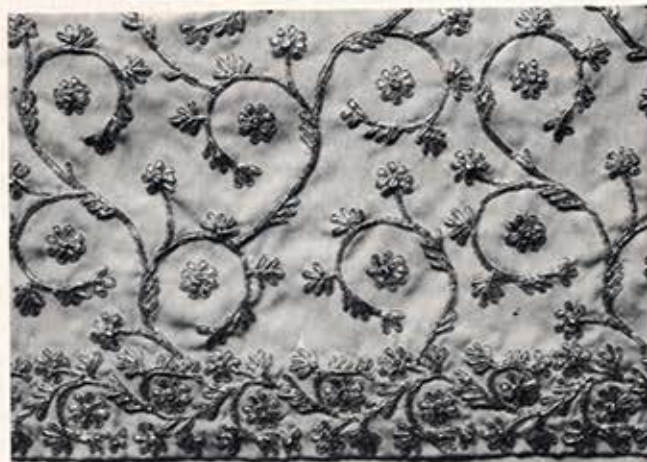
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demons with all their witchcraft, as stated in the Avesta and Pahlavi writings, be slain by the sword of an ordinary Turk? We cannot discard Avestan and Pahlavi passages given above in favor of the account in the much later *Dabestan*, because the *Avesta* is the most authentic.

Asho Zarathushtra and His Gathas Great is a publication of The Mazdayasni Connection of California, USA and not of the said Ilm-e-Khshnum Society.

A surgical for Surat

The Surat Parsi General Hospital, founded in 1920, has been rendering yeoman services to the ailing Parsis of the area. It was initially the only hospital in South Gujarat, with the exception of the Civil Hospital of Surat. All the subsequent hospitals in South Gujarat cater to the needs of the cosmopolitan society.

Medical people connected with the Hospital state that the most urgent need at this institution is for a mobile Image Intensifier C.Arm Microprocessor based IITV Unit which almost costs six lakh rupees. We can go in for such a purchase only if this entire amount or a major part of this is donated to our institution. We shall be pleased to supply further information to whosoever is interested in fulfilling this urgent need of this institution. The Hospital has been functioning with a heavy deficit since its inception. The income and expenditure figures (in rupees) for the last three years are:

1999-2000 — Income 12,01,951.61; Expenditure 16,23,904.77; Deficit 4,21,953.16

2000-2001 — Income 15,42,411.39; Expenditure 19,68,064.22; Deficit 4,25,653.83

2001-2002 — Income 37,73,596.77; Expenditure 24,84,918.74; Deficit 12,88,678.03.

We request affluent Zoroastrians and charitable trusts to sympathetically consider this appeal for aid. The Surat Panchayat trustees will be pleased to give any information a donor desires. If the donation is made in memory of somebody the Panchayat will be pleased to consider the donor's conditions.

DARAYAS NARIMAN MASTER
President, Parsi Panchayat Board, Surat

Self help

Jasmin Darrayas Mistry, a first class first MSc bio-chemist, married at 28, by a quirk of fate became a widow at 36. Her husband an executive engineer for Godrej



Mistry with Cherazade and Zarastyn

was run over by a tempo, on his way to work. All their major savings were exhausted in trying to save him at the Breach Candy Hospital. Mistry's pleasant family life was shattered. She has two young children to take care of — son Cherazade, under eight and daughter Zarastyn, under three. She was staying at Dadar and had to move to Godrej Baug to be near her sister Pervin Homavazir's premises. She had to give up her old bigger flat in exchange for a smaller one.

In consultation with Pervin, Jasmin had to decide on what to do next, to exist respectably on her own without resorting to charity. For her to resume her research career was out of the question. She had knowledge about stitching. So she and Pervin decided to go in for stitching of school uniforms. Easier said than done. Getting orders, procuring material of specific count and weave, dyeing, cutting, stitching, delivery of finished uniforms to various schools, accounting, licencing all had to be done. To canvass for orders they had to go up to Dahanu, to get a specific material of count and weave they had to travel to her brother-in-law Maneck's fabric manufacturing unit situated in Boiser; for a specific dye, to Badlapur; for industrial stitching they had to go to New Bombay. These two young ladies have to drive around and take deliveries of the goods in the middle of the night, to be on time for delivery at the schools the next morning.

Part of the finance was provided by her father Gustadji from his meagre provident fund which he got when he retired as a lighthouse keeper.

From a desperate and helpless situa-

tion Mistry has emerged to be a self sufficient lady.

She is in great need of a small shop in central Bombay from where they can operate and coordinate their business activities instead of driving to the suburbs. But that again needs finance. Those desirous of helping Mistry can contact her on 9821405673.

ZEND M. ZEND

Call to youth

To all born and unborn Zoroastrians in the world, presently living and yet to be born in the 21st century, the time has come to unite, arrive and awake.

If you are of Mazdayasni ancestry, if you would like to protect, advance and spread the growth of our religion universally, join the Zoroastrian Universal Movement.

The Zoroastrian youth should form a solid political base globally to protect our religion and community worldwide. We invite all of you who are interested to join us and become members of this movement that will create history for a new Zoroastrian world.

For further information on the aims and objectives and for membership applications please contact Sohrab Adi Luth, Adi Manor, Kavi Khabardar Road, Teen Bhati, Daman 396210, Union Territory, Tel: 0091 2602 2251948 (7-8 p.m.), e-mail: sohrabaluth@yahoo.co.in SOHRAB A. LUTH, DR MEHER MASTER-MOOS

Founders and promoters, Zoroastrian Universal Movement, Daman

Good sense

An eager Parsi lad asked me for a gist of the salient features of our Zarathushti deen that are practical for success in life. His grievance was that at present everything is instant and he hardly had time to study and digest the wisdom of our religion. He aspired to live the Zarathushtrian way of good life, if he could get guidance in brief.

I suggested a few salient principles to build a successful career, befitting a true Zarathushti, as under:

- Avoid controversies, keep an open mind to accept moral universal truths without bias and logic, with faith only;
- Refer to the extracts of the holy *Gathas* by the learned Dr Jimmy Sidhwa.
- Try to be in the good books of the public by having a spotless character;
- Get happiness by giving joy to others;
- Have faith in the justice of Ahura Mazda;
- Have courage. Cultivate self-confidence and positive thinking;

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- 'Simple living and high thinking,' can give satisfaction;
- Act according to the inner voice of conscience (Spenta Armaity);
- Service in His name is one way of prayer that gives joy to God;
- Think only of today, entrusting the future in the hands of Zarathushtra;
- Protect yourself against evil;
- Failures are the stepping stones to success;
- Never cry but try till the goal is achieved.

The lad was determined to follow the guidelines and try to be a true Zarathushtrian. These golden keys for a successful life may be useful to other youngsters as well.

NOSHIR DABOO

Ahmedabad

A tribute to Manekshaw

To serve society/As a Zoroastrian/You were keen/Humble and dedicated/You have always been/Here's to Field Marshal Manekshaw!/A toast to you/Just to say a/Big Thank You/We are indebted/By the work/Done by you/Following the path/of humata, hukta, huvarshta.

FARIDA BAMJI

Ontario, Canada

Remembering Shroff

Nariman Bejanji Shroff, aged 95, passed away peacefully on March 27, 2003 at a private nursing home in York, UK. He was the husband of the late (1997) Katy Shroff and father of Dini, Freni and Rusi Shroff.

Nariman was an architect and a Fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects. He lived and practised in India, Singapore and Zambia before retiring to York with his wife in 1980. In India he was the chief architect to the Indian Railways and was responsible for the design of several railway buildings including the New Delhi, Jaipur and Udaipur stations and the Churchgate terminus in Bombay. He was also responsible for the design of the Indian Railway Centenary Exhibition in New Delhi in 1953, which has since become a permanent exhibition ground. He went to Singapore in 1962 as head of the Department of Architecture and Building at the Polytechnic. He then moved on to Zambia and founded the Zambian Standards Institute before retiring at the age of 70.

While in New Delhi he was president of the Delhi Parsi Anjuman, 1959 to 1960. The greatness of the man is not in mere "Parsi activities" but the depth and breadth of his contribution in his pro-

fession — that of an architect — in India and abroad. Nariman and Katy were both active members of the Parsi community.

Lt Gen A. M. SETHNA

President, Delhi Parsi Anjuman

Unforgettable Freny

On Sunday, June 22, 2003 our mother Freny Bulsara, 63, died instantly in a motorcycle accident in Ottawa, Ontario. Our father, Keki Bulsara, 71, was seriously injured and was rushed to hospital. He has since had an operation on his pelvis, and is recovering well. He is expected to be able to start walking again in three to six months.

Theirs was a marriage of love. Dad used to pick mom up from high school on his motorcycle. He had been riding for over 50 years without incident when this tragic accident happened. All loving moms are extremely special to their children. However, Freny Bulsara was seen to be a very special person. She was a true and devout Zoroastrian to the core of her being. We chided Freny about it, but her favorite color was white. My sister, Havove, says that is because mom saw everything in black and white. There was no grey in between. There was no such thing as a white lie for her. No shades of grey in truth. No shades of grey in devotion to her religion and God, or in her thoughts, words and actions.

Married at a month shy of 16, she worked all her life for the betterment of family and friends — even friends of friends. For example, she spent two years running my roofing business given only one week's notice because I was going on an overseas assignment. She did so while she and dad were running their own campground business! She, along with dad, helped over two dozen new immigrants and visitors to Canada settle into their new environments, often letting them stay sheltered and fed in her own humble home without charge for months or years, until they could get settled. This applies to Zoroastrians, Hindus, Muslims, and Christians alike — some of whom she had never even met before they arrived at her doorstep unannounced. She gave birth to three children, whom she raised lovingly. If that wasn't enough, my parents adopted a fourth child, and raised him in his own Hindu religion according to the wishes of his natural parents. That is the measure of the Zarathushti that mom was. She, along with dad's help, acted as a caregiver for several people including

our grandmother, and later my father's uncle. She was waiting to get on with her retirement, but life kept throwing obstacles in her path. She stepped up to the challenge every time. This time, the obstacle in her path was one that took her away from us all.

JEHANGIR BULSARA

Toronto

Mind your language...

Ervad Sheriarji Dadabhoy Bharucha, the first student of K. R. Cama, and one who had a very distinguished career as a scholar — even sometimes differing with his mentor and guru, K. R. Cama, delivered in 1889 a lecture on prayers in which he said "the right way of praying to God was in the language that could be understood and not, as the orthodox would have it, only in the original words of the *Avesta*."

He showed that "many of our prayers now extant are in different languages beginning with Zend, then Pazend, then Pahlavi, Persian, etc and that there were even some prayers written by Dasturs in India in old Gujarati."

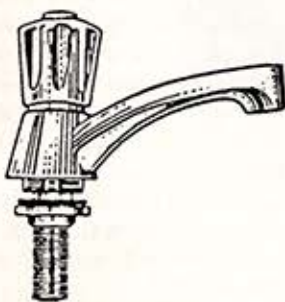
This was the hardest pill to swallow for Mansukh's party (Mansukh was the pen name for Mancherji Cowasji Langdana. It appears in 1895 he had given a talk on "We Mazdayasni people. In what language we are bound to offer our prayers"). They protested that the efficacy of our prayers lay in our adhering to the revealed words of the *Avesta* and its effect was not the less because the devotee understood not a word of what he muttered. The uproar caused by these prayer lectures resulted in an agitation against the Rahnoomai Sabha, but on the other side these lectures must have been instrumental in increasing the little band of intelligent reformers.

A definite plan was formed for organized advance on the lines laid down by Bharucha. The Ervad advocated not only that prayers should be understood but that they should be sung, Mansukh answered with vociferous accusations of heresy. "Why," replied Bharucha, "your very *Gathas* are all poetry and they are to be sung."

Your readers may be interested in going through the booklet — only 14 pages — on Bharucha written by his grandson Farrokh E. Bharucha.

Sheriarji appealed to Zoroastrians to go "back to the *Gathas*." He urged the community to remember that "the *Gathas* were the only part of the Parsi scriptures which retained the form given to them by

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the Prophet himself and were untainted by additions from his disciples."

Capt HORMAZDIAR J. M. DESAI

Aimai's Star

You strive to give us a good picture of the endeavors and success of members of our community staying in all parts of the world.

I have already congratulated the Atash paste manufacturers (see "Adding spice to life," *Parsiana*, February, 2003). I do hope in future more youngsters would try to do their own thing and not rely on bank jobs, etc for their livelihood.

Thinking of free enterprise brought to my mind the success story of my mother's aunt. I have tried to remember her guts, hard work and enterprise in an age when women hardly worked outside their homes. I believe she was mentioned in the book *Parsi Luminaries*. I regret I have not seen the book, nor do I have any photo of Aimai *kaki*. Your parents' generation must remember Star Bakery.

I remember her as the grand old lady of our family. We never hesitated when mummy asked if we would like to visit Aimai Ghamat. Though small in stature

she was mighty in deeds and to us children she was great as the sole owner of the famous Star Bakery.

Her interests were varied and not restricted to her very successful Bakery business. She always found time to ask us about what we were doing and what we would like to eat at tea-time.

She always welcomed visitors and would listen with great interest to all the gossip. Many times while others were chatting she would take a short nap. It was well known that she never slept at night, while the bread was being prepared. After it was put in the big oven she would take her 40 winks.

According to my mother, Aimai married my mother's *kaka* Jehangirji Commesariat late in life and became a widow soon. She always wanted to do things, so accompanied by her two brothers she went to England in the 1930s, to learn the basic details of preparing good quality bread, cakes and biscuits. She was an efficient and quick learner and on her return to Bombay, rented the ground and first floor of a chawl-like structure at Dadar belonging maybe to her family, as it was next to her family house and started her Bakery. She lived on the first floor and had the bakery, oven and shops on the ground floor.

Soon she started making pastries and other tasty items. I still remember the taste of her mince meat for the patties and rolls. It was cooked in the first floor kitchen and kept covered in the dining room. We as children loved to poke and taste it everytime we passed the room. In the vegetable patties rolls, she used to add boiled eggs, which had a special taste. Her mutton pies were delicious.

She later started making Indian sweetmeats. One lady would be sitting on the back verandah, cutting almonds and pistachios as decoration to the sweetmeats. They became other items to snack on whilst playing.

Aimai *kaki* was the daughter of Edulji Ghamat. She had six sisters and three brothers. She had several nieces and nephews and kept a close link with all. She even knew us by name along with our likes and dislikes.

Aimai *kaki* was a giver. She would send a small packet of biscuits to each niece and nephew's home for us children to nibble at after our return from school.

One Navroz she called her favorite jeweller to make pearl studs for all her nieces and grand nieces.

After completing school we used to go on camps and outings, sure enough she would send a big box full of cakes and biscuits in case we were kept hungry and not fed well!

I had never seen her wear any jewelry or fashionable clothes, yet she was always interested in clothes and jewelry.

Her staff, right from the bakers, shopkeepers, clerks, accountants loved and respected and admired her. She was afraid of no one and would not tolerate any shortcuts or disobedience. Though small in stature, she was tough, and would not hesitate to slap her employees if she found them not working efficiently. She was over 60 years old when I came to know her, yet she would go up and down the stairs several times to supervise the staff.

The biscuits, which I loved to eat from her bakery, were wine biscuits, *khari* biscuits and *khatai*. All time favorites with all of us were her Xmas cakes and jam tarts.

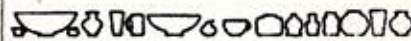
Unfortunately, in spite of having dozens of nieces and nephews, none of them continued her work and the Star Bakery passed away into oblivion. S. J. IRANI

Edited by Parinaz M. Gandhi

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Events and Personalities

Trusteeship tussle

With Dinshaw Tamboly's first term as trustee of the Bombay Parsi Punchayet (BPP) coming to a close on November 5, 2003, the next trusteeship election has been scheduled for September 27, 2003. Although the last date for filing of nominations was August 27, 2003, nearly five weeks prior to that community activist Noshir Dadrawala announced his decision to contest the election in *The Bombay Samachar* of July 20, 2003 which carried his manifesto.

A front page editorial in the *Jam-e-Jamshed* of July 27 clarified, "We are naturally distressed that our correspondent Noshir H. Dadrawala sent us his letter requesting support after it was printed in *Bombay Samachar* and he did not even think it necessary to inform us that he was contesting the election." The same editorial asserted that Tamboly "was definitely seeking a second term." Dadrawala is a regular columnist for the *Jamé* and was for a year the weekly's associate editor.

Assessing the strengths of the two candidates in his *Parsi tari arsi* (PTA) column in the *Samachar* of July 20, Berjis Desai wrote: "Both have an excellent reputation as honest and hardworking men. Both are well versed in managing charity...Tamboly has had a sobering, quiet influence. He is a man of few words. A bit of a diplomat, but sagacious and wise. Dadrawala is a one-man army. He writes very well and wields an acerbic pen...He is the spokesman for the orthodox...He is no diplomat. He calls a spade a spade."

The following week when the *Samachar's* PTA column predicted Dadrawala's odds as 100:1, prompt came Dadrawala's rejoinder in the *Samachar* of August 3: "All I can state at this stage is, there is many a slip between the cup and the lip...My worthy opponent has done quite some good work as an office bearer of the World Zoroastrian Organisation

(WZO). However his contribution as a trustee of the BPP for the last seven years requires to be objectively evaluated and reviewed...Also, on a number of occasions in the last seven years the Press had



Tamboly (left) and Dadrawala

reported that my worthy opponent wanted to resign. It would be in his interest to explain why he wanted to do so and what are the circumstances which have now made him enthusiastic to go in for a second term...I have announced my candidature out of a certain conviction. If the community (actually it is only a small, select, fraction of the community) votes for me I will be honored. But more than that I will consider it an opportunity to serve my community and become an instrument of social change. If the voters do not support me I will neither feel shamed nor humiliated..."

Tamboly had his own answer to that in a statement released in the run-up to the election: "I have decided to seek reelection for a second term as I am involved in many new ongoing projects that have been introduced (and)... are in an embryonic stage." He then referred to the Venture Capital Fund, the World Zarathushti Chamber of Commerce, the proposal to set up a management institute, liaising with a medical college for reservation of certain seats for Parsis... "At 58 years of age I can still continue to contribute effectively." As chair of the BPP's education committee Tamboly sought to focus on and further the cause of the youth. On housing, his thrust had been more towards catering to those in

genuine need rather than on the creation of a corpus.

"My contribution in promoting and encouraging the introduction of solar concentrators at Doongerwadi is and remains the most proactive...I am aware that the role played by me has been perceived by some as not to have been in the traditional mold...My role as a custodian of the community funds was to ensure that our assets were not compromised..."

"As far as my association with WZO is concerned, I take pride in being an integral part of this magnificent institution that has been able to do so much for the community in so short a time... detractors continue to defame WZO about its so assumed anti-religious stance... (based on) the decision taken by its worldwide membership during the early nineties to change their constitution and accept within their membership non Zoroastrian spouses of Zoroastrians. Many, including me, view this issue quite clearly, and that is, membership of an institution certainly does not mean conversion..."

"The community has experienced my performance in community welfare work for over 20 years and as BPP trustee during the last seven years...The policy that I adopt in my profession is also reflected in areas of community leadership, which is to think rationally, analyze objectively and execute decisively..."

"At my present age of 42 years," noted Dadrawala in his manifesto, "I have a vision and definite goals for the BPP. I also feel that I have the right combination of talent, experience, integrity and enthusiasm to serve the community as a trustee." Involved in the affairs of the Parsi community since almost a quarter of a century, Dadrawala had worked with the Zoroastrian Community Development Institute, as assistant secretary at the B. D. Petit Parsee General Hospital and is presently execu-

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tive secretary of the Centre for Advancement of Philanthropy, a company specializing in areas of charity law, finance, management, taxation, resource mobilization and human resource development.

On the professional front he has authored publications like the *Hand Book on Administration of Trusts*, *The Art of Fund-Raising*, *Investment Opportunities for Charitable Organizations*, *Management of Philanthropic Organizations* and *Laws Governing Voluntary Organizations in India*; and of interest to Zoroastrians would be *Iran — The Spiritual Motherland of Zoroastrians*, *Zarathushtrian Saints and Martyrs*, and *Dokhmenashini and its Sustainability*.

A regular lecturer at professional bodies and community organizations, Dadrawala rues: "Today the general image of the BPP is poor because it does not communicate effectively...The trustees have not called a single meeting of the Anjuman Committee in years nor even a press conference. With my expertise in areas of communication, I would consider giving this neglected area top priority. There is palpable lack of transparency and accountability...I can empathize with the aspirations of the youth of our community and devote maximum energy to the affairs of the Panchayet..."

Twin cities update

"There are about 454 Zoroastrian families and 1,230 Zoroastrian individuals in the twin cities...The Zoroastrians of Secunderabad and Hyderabad have for long felt the need to have an up-to-date directory... The Parsi Zoroastrian Anjuman of Secunderabad and Hyderabad (PZASH) took up this responsibility and have printed the *Directory* with the latest information available," notes an introduction to the 2003 *Directory* jointly

penned by PZASH president Gulbanoo Y. Chenoy and honorary secretary Noshir F. Nagarwala.

From the age listed against each entry we gather that 10 percent are below 14 years of age, 56 percent are in the 15-60 age-bracket, and around 33 percent are aged over 61. The sex ratio indicates that there are around 56 percent males versus 44 percent females. The families of 28 Zoroastrian males who have married out of the community are listed separately as are the families of nine outmarried Zoroastrians. The blood grouping of those in the 16-60 age-group indicates that the maximum number of Zoroastrians in the twin cities share the O positive blood group with B positive coming a close second. AB negative shows the fewest entries.

The *Directory* gives an insight into the working of several "Zoroastrian institutions of long standing repute" in the twin cities which have "stood the test of time in a vast cosmopolitan city." Created in 1941, PZASH manages the Khan Bahadur Seth Edulji Sohrabji Chenai Anjuman Dar-e-Meher consecrated in 1920, a bungli in the agiary compound for performing the obsequial ceremonies, a dakhma, residential property to house 44 families in the Dar-e-Meher compound and 31 families at Bapoo Baug and a well stocked library. The Anjuman provides free hospital equipment facilities when required by community members and publishes regular newsletters. In addition to the two office bearers, the managing committee includes three other trustees — Dr P. N. Chenoy, Khorshed Chenai and Jehangir Bisney, with seven other members Cyrus Irani, P. A. Nalladaru, Keki Colah, Omim Debara, Aspi Debara, Kerfegar Antia and Mehernosh

Chenoy.

There are two other agiaries in the twin cities — Seth Viccaji and Seth Pestonji Meherji Agiary at Secunderabad and the Bai Maneckbai Nusserwanji Chenoy Agiary at Hyderabad. The second dakhma is managed by the Old Parsi Fire Temple Trust.

A welfare organization providing free clothes, grain and groceries, medical aid and supplements to the needy members of the community is the Zoroastrian Stree Mandal. At the cosmopolitan Bai Ratanbai J. Chenoy Parsi High School which has a Zoroastrian headmistress and many Zoroastrian teachers, study 1,200 students some of whom are deserving Zoroastrians who are given free education. There are other private trusts too which assist underprivileged Zoroastrian families.

The Bai Pirojbai Chenai Parsi Dharamsala has nine well furnished rooms and provides excellent meals for the comfort of outstation Zoroastrians. Within this complex are the Bai Piroj Bai Chenai Hall and the Jamshed S. Chenai Hall which cater to the needs of the local Zoroastrians of the twin cities. The Edulji S. Chenai Pavilion is frequently the venue of Zoroastrian public meetings, navjotes, gambhars and weddings. The Parsi Zoroastrian Club too has a vast hall plus facilities for indoor games like billiards, snooker and table tennis on payment of nominal fees.

A tourist map of Hyderabad and Secunderabad as also glimpses into the history of the twin cities, its architectural highlights and other tourist attractions with relevant visuals fill six pages of the *Directory*. Important telephone numbers of the PZASH committee members along with contacts of general services and

Chenai Parsi Dharamshala (below) and Chenai Anjuman Dar-e-Meher in Secunderabad (right)



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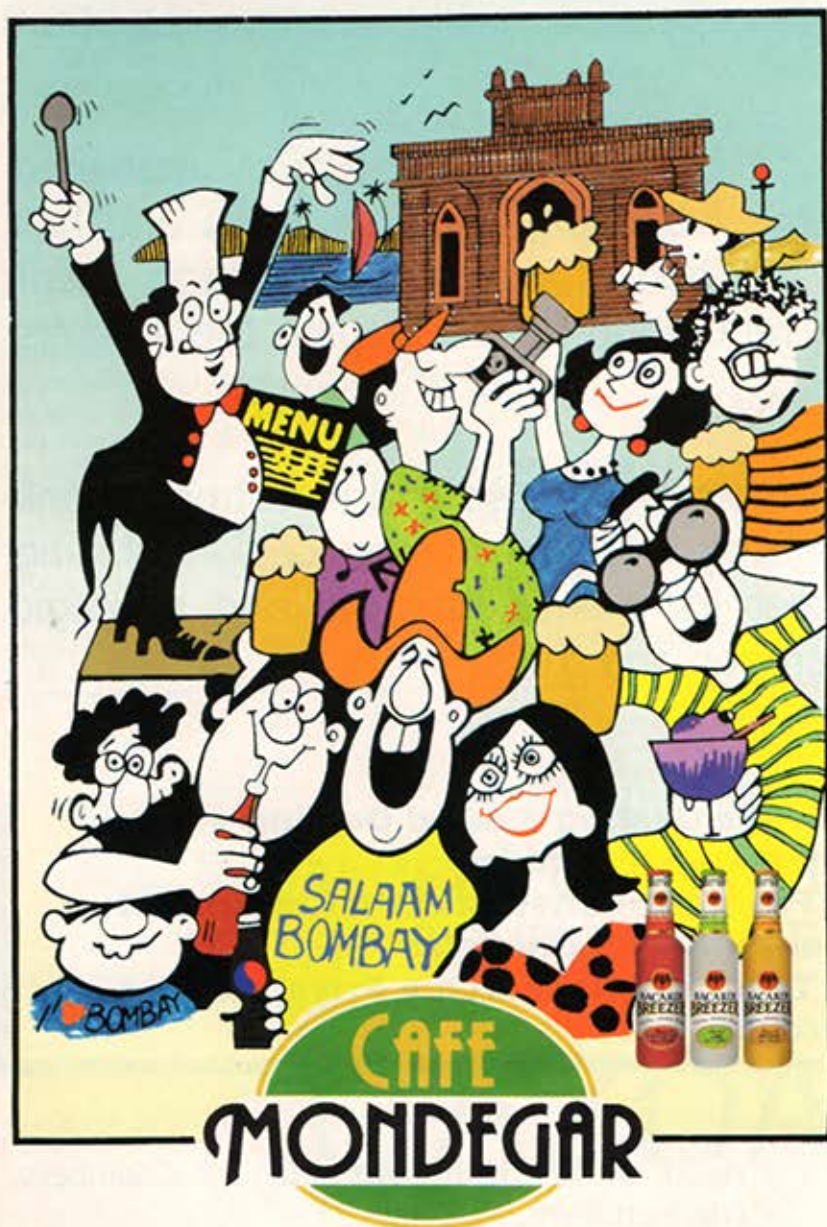


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facilities should assist the Anjuman members too. "The tremendous effort put in by all the volunteers in compiling and printing of this *Directory*," complete with residence and office addresses and contacts as also the profession of those listed, was acknowledged by PZASH as was the financial contribution of the Bank of India and M/s Mahavir Motors.

Young Collegians and old

The golden jubilee year of the Young Collegians' Zoroastrian Association (YCZA) came to an end with a function on May 24, 2003 where the YCZA Alumni Association was launched. Zarine Commissariat, the evening's emcee and an ex YCZAite outlined the objects of the Alumni Association stating that it would provide an excellent opportunity for networking. Inviting past members to join she assured at least two functions every year. An overnight trip to Udvada in September followed by a moonlight cruise later in the year were the events in offing, according to a report filed by Furuza J. Khan.

Outlining the activities of the YCZA, ex member Aspi Billimoria hoped that the Alumni Association would play a vital role in reviving and revitalizing the YCZA for the youngsters of today. Over the years the YCZA has been guided by its chairman Nadir Modi and vice chairman Prof Khurshed Sheriar to mobilize Parsi collegians into various productive activities.

Nearly 450 YCZA supporters gathered at the May 24 function at Allbless Baug which started with a jashan, followed by a talk by Ervad Aspiandiar Dadachanji wherein he explained and demonstrated the significance of the jashan ceremony with the help of his son Ervad Hormuzd, and later delineated on the different Iranian traditions practiced

then and now.

Entertainment for the evening came from TV artistes Roshan and Dinyar Tirandaz and their group of actors. Marazban Mehta's Darling Orchestra livened up the event with popular tunes and old-time favorites which had the audience tapping their feet and dancing. Ultimately everyone joined in the singing of *Chhaiyé hamé Zarathoshti* led by Adi Davar, one of the key volunteers. Tanaz Godiwalla's hearty repast was then enjoyed by all.

Assisting Alzheimer's

"It always helps to know that there are others around having the same kind of problems and how they are tackling them. We can also learn from the mistakes that others may have made," related Hufiz Wadia who has benefited from the Alzheimer's Support Group started by the Youth Wing of the World Zoroastrian Organisation (WZO) India. "A qualified consultant — who can be a neurologist/neurosurgeon, psychologist/psychiatrist, or even a social worker — is at hand to advise and help the carers (as the caregivers of Alzheimer's patients are called) understand their patients better and handle the situation more effectively," notes Aban Bana, in a write-up forwarded by Sarosh Bana, member (youth affairs) on the WZO executive board.

"The Youth Wing members knew of several people who have, or have had, a family member at home who suffered from Alzheimer's disease... which occurs mostly in old age, wasting away the patient's brain tissues and leading to a slow but sure death. Immediate symptoms are memory loss, spatial disorientation, waning control over bowel movements, increasing uninhibitedness and various other habits that can prove disturbing and even traumatizing for the patients and carers alike. Needless to say these patients require full-time attention



Three generations of Patels have served the Armed Forces (from left): the late Lt Col Burjor B. Patel, his sons Brig Naozer and Lt Col Firoz, and Nawazesh N. Patel who has just passed out from the National Defence Academy in May 2003.

and can be extremely trying and exhausting for the members of their family and household" who need a surplus of patience at such times, summed up Aban Bana.

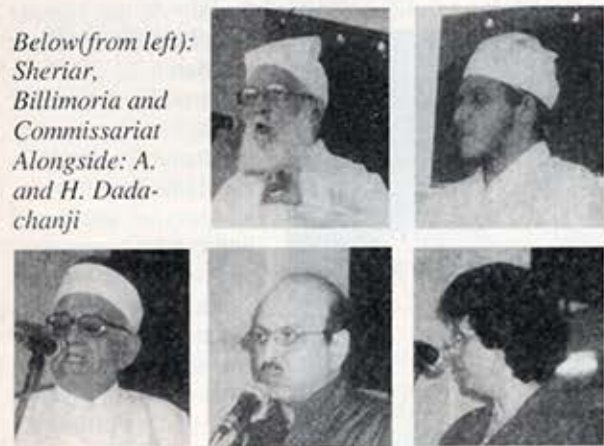
For an hour and a half, the participants meet on alternate Tuesday evenings at the Lady Hirabai Cawasji Clinic at Gamadia Colony, Tardeo. Dr Roop Gursahani, a consultant neurophysician who is attached to the Hinduja Hospital is available for consultations during these sessions. While the doctor's fees are financed by the Youth Wing and the premises of the Clinic are offered free thanks to the generosity of Arnavaaz Khan and Dr Nelie Noble, a nominal fee of Rs 15 per participant is levied.

In the entire city of Bombay, there is not a single home for Alzheimer's patients, reports Aban Bana, wondering if this is not the right time to start thinking of a place where they can be treated and well looked after. While the carers often do not have the heart to put the patients away in a hospital permanently, few may be able to afford the mounting expenses of engaging a full-time nurse or ward boy.

"We appeal to those amongst you who have an Alzheimer's case in your family to join us to help one another to cope with it. The WZO Youth Wing can lead the way but it needs help from other Parsis," writes Yasmin Davierwala who can be reached on 9821144794 or alzsupport@rediffmail.com. Sarosh Bana can be contacted on sarosh_bana@hotmail.com or Tel (O) 22883948 (R) 23679717.

Compiled by Parinaz M. Gandhi

Below (from left): Sheriar, Billimoria and Commissariat Alongside: A. and H. Dadachanji



"We are bigger than the Dadar community"

Ontario Zoroastrian Cultural Foundation President Ervad Kobad Zarolia argues for the provision of more community facilities in Ontario

Arnavaz S. Mama

"Four years ago we tried to convince people to have two locations under one umbrella. But people could not accept the idea. They collected proxies and voted us out." Former president of the Zoroastrian Society of Ontario (ZSO) and currently founder president of the Ontario Zoroastrian Cultural Foundation (OZCF) Ervad Kobad Zarolia recounts the genesis of OZCF. The ZSO is based in eastern Toronto while the OZCF is planning a base westward so that the growing Zarathushti community in Mississauga, Brampton, Oakville and the surrounding area has a facility closer to home, obviating the two-hour drive each way to the Mehraban Guiv Darbe Mehr.

Just as Dadar has two agiaries — "With an estimated three to four Zoroastrian families moving in each month we are bigger than the Dadar community" — there should be "three places, four places" for the over 5,000 Zoroastrians in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) to meet, to pray, to celebrate, he says. According to Zarolia the existing facility serves only 10 percent of the community noting that "the hall currently can't take more than 200. Our philosophy was to leave the place as a center in the east and build another in the west end."

Zarolia questions the ZSO's decision to build a new center costing C \$ 2.5 million at the old location. Of its 1.8 acre plot, one acre is in the

green belt, so it can't be used, he says. For a 900 capacity auditorium (600 in banquet style seating) one needs at least 100 spots for parking. Currently ZSO has 35 which will increase to 50, he notes.

The controversy led to the birth of OZCF in January 2002. By September it had been registered as a charity by Revenue Canada. Its vigorous fund-raising drive netted C \$ 630,000 (including pledges) by end 2002, according to Zarolia's report dated February 13, 2003.

"This new center in western GTA will complement and enhance the existing facility and services that we value and continue to enjoy within our community; serve to accommodate the geographic diversity of the Zoroastrian population; strengthen the Zoroastrian community, promote growth and provide a network of social presence and awareness of our community and religion within Canada," notes the report. Their plan is to buy between five-15 acres of land on which to build three institutions in easy stages: an agiary, a community hall and an old age home. Once the land is in hand, Zarolia hopes that donations from Indian charities will help them reach the target of an additional C \$ 1.9 million.

Of the C \$ 650,000 in the kitty so far, C \$ 150,000 have come from abroad, he says. The rest has been collected locally. "If we don't want to put our money out, how can we ask others to do so," says

Zarolia who now feels free to approach individuals and institutions and hoped that people like Scylla Vatcha of the Bai Maneckbai Jeejeebhoy Trust, Dinshaw Tamboly of the World Zoroastrian Organisation (WZO) and others would help their cause.

In the meanwhile Karachi hotelier and president of the Karachi Parsi Anjuman Trust Fund Byram Avari has permitted them to hold religious functions at his five-star hotel Toronto Airport Ramada Inn. The fund-raising activities began with an inaugural jashan on May 20, 2002 with 13 priests (including three youths) participating and 375 Zarathushtris in attendance when the 13 directors of OZCF sponsored the lunch and chasni; a lamb roast picnic in July with donated food items; the Khordadsaal jashan and dinner catered and contributed by some of the community ladies; a black tie gala dinner and dance in October attended by the consul general of India and the chief of police (on behalf of the mayor of Mississauga) entirely sponsored by a generous donor. Such volunteerism has enabled all monies raised to be channeled into fund collection.

An evening of favorite hits from past and present Hindi films titled *Saaz Awaaz aur Goonghru* in January 2003 had the audience clapping and toe tapping till 1.30 a.m., notes a report by OZCF volunteer Roshan Davar. At the Navroz jashan and dinner dance on March 22, 2003 the community felicitated nonagenarian Coomi Bhatena for her dedicated lifetime of volunteer service within and without the community, informs Davar's report. *Temulji noo Timetable*, a hilarious natak in the tradition of the Parsi farce on May 24, 2003 had the community working flat out. "Jal



Zarolia: promoting growth



Nine mobeds participated in the Navroze jashan led by the teenaged Bulsara brothers

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A scene (below) and the cast of Temulji... Jal and Meher Panthaky, Noshir and Katy Mulla, Kerman Katrak, Khurshid Engineer and Sam Gazdar

Panthaky, the director of the natak, also designed and built the stage props. He wrote the lyrics to match the theme of the natak with the music from popular movie songs. With his keen sense of casting and directing, mixed with his great sense of humor, he did an excellent job of encouraging the cast and other participants to give their best," writes Davar.

Not only was there a "sold out" house of 738 which included other Gujarati speaking communities but a natty program-souvenir, replete with advertisements, bespeaking the all out community effort. "The entire cast of performers dedicated over 3,000 hours of voluntary time," states Davar.

With 450 voting members (everybody over 18 years, as per Zarolia) the majority are Parsis though about 12 Ira-

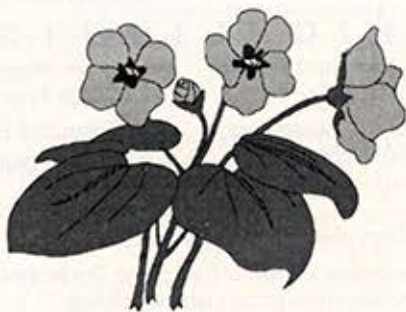


nian Zoroastrian families have made substantial donations. Prominent among them are Ardeshir and Gulchehr Dehmood who lead the Iranian organization Kanoun — a subcommittee of the ZSO. Zarolia says he challenges people to donate \$ 5,000 per year on an annual basis. "You get a good write-off in income tax," he adds. He says that OZCF has received donations from Hindus and Muslims towards

their building fund "because our forefathers (on the Indian subcontinent) earned their respect."

OZCF has accepted both the Shehen-shahi and the Fasli calendars so they have two sets of gahambars, muktads, Zarhost no diso, Zarolia informs us. He isn't sure if the agiary they aim to build will have a consecrated fire though he is sanguine that the four grades of fires required could be found locally. However he points out that the agiaries of India don't represent the agiaries of Iran and so the New World agiaries may well follow a different pattern.

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American Mobed Council (NAMC), Zarolia says, "People think that Parsis are the only Zoroastrians. They're wrong. If they change their attitude then (they will find a) completely different ball game." According to the NAMC resolution, "Zoroastrian is the religion; Parsi is a race. We follow that. There are Iranian Zoroastrians, Russian Zoroastrians, Tajik Zoroastrians. We want to accept everybody."

According to Zarolia, "most mobeds in Canada and the US feel we should start thinking independently from India... They have chosen what philosophy to follow. Family unification is the first step... We accept the children of (the intermarried) Zoroastrian husband or wife... There has been no occasion where the spouse has asked to be Zoroastrian." However each mobed is free to do what his conscience dictates, he notes. "At NAMC we are a think tank. We discuss, we argue... The discussion on who is a Zoroastrian took two years!" According to the NAMC, a Zoroastrian is a person who follows the Zoroastrian religion and whose navjote has been performed, Zarolia informs us. "The resolution was passed with one abstention," he adds.

"Our philosophy was to leave the place as a center in the east and build another in the west end"

Though a conclusion is reached, "it's up to everyone whether or not to follow. We have very conservative people as also very liberal. We learn from each other."

When Zarolia spoke to *Parsiana* on April 7, 2003 the community ferment resulting from the high priests' resolution was running high. The outspoken Zarolia noted that the stand of the "Indian priest hierarchy is not in line with Zoroastrian philosophy itself or with community thinking... Where's the Vohumano and the choice?... Who appoints the vada dasturjis? Since when have Zarathushtis got the right to excommunicate? Are they talking about Parsis or Zoroastrians?... Unless you can enforce something, why speak? Why create this distance between mobeds and people?... One of the very good Zoroastrians we have is (American engineer

Joseph) Peterson. He has done more for Zoroastrianism than 90 percent of our community, spent hours of time researching and putting (the material) on (his) website. (FEZANA assistant secretary) Farrokh Mistree is a good leader in the community. With the fatwa do we throw (the intermarried Mistree) out? Lose a good leader?"

Zarolia questions the increasing commercialization of prayers without personal commitment. He says our attitude is becoming like those who feed *laddoos* to *chobas* (overweight gourmand priests in certain Hindu temples in India): "*laddoo khavavas tau dooaa laagsé* (if I feed him sweetmeats, I'll be blessed)." The priest should interact with *behdins*, teach the family to do *satum no kardo* every month. Make them take charge of the prayers, he believes. "The biggest difference between the Iranian mobeds and us is that our prayers have lots of repetition which no one questions because they don't understand."

Zarolia says he was profoundly impressed by a little book titled *Let us pray to Ahura Mazda* by the late Noshir Vazifdar, the lay priest of the Ootacatum Parsis. So Zarolia makes sure that

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Crescent Heights

he believes in what he prays. "We have a special ceremony for blessing a house," he notes, distinguishing it from the ubiquitous jashan where with the difference of a sentence or two, the text recited is the same for housewarming, celebrating or remembering the dead. When summoned to perform a jashan Zarolia tells his host, "I'll do a prayer for you, not the jashan."

Citing another anomaly Zarolia questions the need for the recitation of the *Patet* at navjotes. "In Pakistan no one does *Patet* at a child's navjote (ever since the late) Dastur Maneck Dhalla pointed out its irrelevance to the occasion," he notes.

The Iranians are asking for specializing of the prayers for different needs, notes Zarolia, adding, "The high priests should be doing that (but) the change will come in North America!"

Zarolia emphasizes that mobedi is a service like medicine or dentistry or even plumbing. Hence a mobed should be considered as a professional and paid accordingly. "Only when Parsis look at mobeds as professionals will you get a good mobed. Open it (mobedi) up to those who want to serve. My brothers didn't practice. There are hundreds who

become navars (but) there's no meaning at that age. A boy should be 18 to 20. Then he'd know what profession he has chosen—not been thrown into. A navar at the age of 12 or 13 is a farce. At less than 18 years it's a waste of time, energy, money, emotions."

To counter the demographic decline Zarolia says, "We must tell children to marry Zoroastrians so that the religion survives." The North American way of life is (a family) of two children... If everyone had four children it is likely that the community would increase but our youths are not getting married." Noting that getting their adult children married is considered the parents' duty among Hindus, Zarolia accepts that Parsis think their duty is limited to providing for navjotes and education. But a lot of children don't meet other Zoroastrians. "We must make the extra effort. Once over 30, it's very difficult to find and accept someone else," he concedes.

Zarolia says there are more girls than boys in the Toronto community and only two families with four children. Citing the impact of numbers, he tells us that thanks to Church support French families in Montreal had five to nine children. Hence the majority of French speak-

ers there. Also, Muslim families with five, six or seven children are common. "We were six in my family (but) the cost of our education to our mom was zero because of the Petit schools. In Maharashtra we are lucky to have so many (community) institutions for our children if we choose to use them... It's an attitude problem."

Though Parsis are more worried about losing the culture than the religion, Zarolia points out that Parsi culture consists of its food habits and way of life. The language—Gujarati—is fading as 99 percent of children born there don't speak it. For that matter neither do children born in Bombay, he notes. "We Parsis accept everybody else's culture but don't keep our own... We gave up on our children not speaking Gujarati very fast," he admits. Hence he is very appreciative of the Iranian Zoroastrians' preservation of their culture for their children. "All their functions are in Farsi. Most of their children speak Farsi, some even speak Dari, maintain family ties, come back after university."

According to Zarolia, Iranian Zoroastrians in the West are worried that if they mix too much with Parsis they will become like the Parsis/Iranis of Bombay.

Saal Mubarak



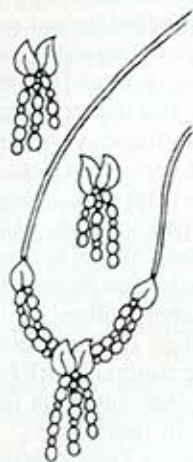
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Hence, though there is friendship and support, cultural reasons keep the two communities functioning at a distance.

As vice president of the World Zarathushti Chamber of Commerce, with its five chapters in the US and two in India, Zarolia is optimistic of success, despite the fact that the London chapter hasn't been formed yet. "Our philosophy is that if we do business among ourselves we will increase our worth." Also, there are very highly placed Zoroastrians in the corporate world who are willing to help Zarathushti businesses. He hopes that by the end of the current board's two-year term there will be a new team ready to take over.

A strong votary of a world body of Zoroastrians, Zarolia says it is "ridiculous" that it has taken more than 20 years to form "a simple organization to serve the world-wide community... FEZANA is flourishing... Why not duplicate it in the world body?" he asks.

An insurance man who has been involved with various public activities, the Mississauga Hospital and the India-Canada Chamber of Commerce among them, Zarolia lives in Mississauga with his wife Nergish who works for the Government of Ontario. They have three children — Zubin, 28, a practising lawyer, Sanobar, 26, who is learning fashion designing and Persis, 22, who works for Citibank.

Unafraid to voice opinions disconcerting to the status-quoists, Zarolia had defied the implicit Bombay Parsi Panchayet ban on "controversial subjects" as far back as the Fourth World Zoroastrian Congress in Bombay in January 1985 by airing the issues which faced the North American priesthood viz Who could be a Zoroastrian? Who could have their navjotes performed? Why is the spring gahambar celebrated in the fall? What is the Zoroastrian stand on abortion? While the old guard in Bombay continues to dither, the NAMC and various North American associations have addressed these problems and more pragmatism is in store.

Zarolia is convinced that "Zoroastrianism will have to change. The (concept) of priests praying for you, must go. Take the onus for learning, for action," he advised. "When you hear good music, don't you feel good? Prayers are like that. They are good for the soul, for the psyche and, if you understand them, they're good intellectually!"

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Expanding ZSO facilities

The increasing Zoroastrian community in Ontario has made a bigger Darbe-Meher necessary, explain Moti and Dr Russi Balsara, past presidents of the Zoroastrian Society of Ontario

Arnavaz S. Mama

"Because of large numbers it is extremely difficult to use the present premises. There are too many cars, too many people. The facilities are strained," say Dr Russi Balsara and his wife Moti, each of whom has been a past president of the Zoroastrian Society of Ontario (ZSO).

An idea initially hatched by incumbent president Sam Vesuna and endorsed by 78 percent of those who voted on the issue, according to their newsletter (July 2002), there are plans to demolish the old mansion which houses the Mehraban Guiv Darbe-Meher and build a bigger, more functional structure appropriate for the needs of the Toronto community. During their visit to Bombay in February-March 2003 the Balsaras were also seeking funds to help meet the \$ 2.2 million target of the ZSO fundraising committee headed by Dr Dhun Noria. The community mandate is to begin the project only after the money is in hand, avoiding bank loans and mortgages. "We're not all rich there. We're on fixed pension incomes," Russi explains their thinking.

Before the community center was acquired, the Zoroastrians there used to meet at different church or university halls which were then provided free of charge, says Russi. It was during his two-year term as president of the ZSO in 1976-77 that Dr Rostam Sarfeh, Arbab Rustam Guiv's friend and confidante who eventually headed the Guiv Trust, phoned from New York to say that Arbab Rustam Guiv had heard of the Toronto community's

desire for a place of worship and wanted to meet them. Russi recalls Guiv, "a short man, very perceptive, with sharp eyes, who could gauge you in a short time."

Guiv offered the Zoroastrians of Ontario US \$ 600,000 to buy an appropriate property to be named after his demised nephew Mehraban. The unmarried young man had been a florist who was always ready to help people. When he died, "a lot of people whom he had helped came to Arbab with money (ostensibly returning loans from Mehraban) which eventually made it into what he gave us," recalled Russi. The ownership of the property, leased to the ZSO for 999 years at one cent a year, vests with the Rustam Guiv Foundation of Ontario, Russi informs us.

The area is full of churches. The local residents, had tried to stop the deal, recalls Moti. Hence the ZSO committees have tried to ensure that "nobody inconveniences the neighbors, have a policeman on duty when there are major functions," to avoid a backlash.

At the time when ZSO accepted the property, the converted prayer room and

community hall was adequate for their restricted numbers and few children—a pattern that endured for nearly 30 years. However, the last three to four years have seen a steady influx of young families from India, Africa, Pakistan, the Middle East and even New Zealand. And the increased Zoroastrian population has lured others as there is "some connection, somewhere," say the Balsaras. These young people want to attend a lot of functions, meet new people. The New Year jashan witnessed a turnout of 450. "People could get frustrated" with the restricted area, they admit.

A small nucleus has never favored this site, notes Russi. "They are frustrated with the ZSO, wanted us to sell and purchase land with larger parking space, etc. Things didn't go their way in the annual general meetings. Yes, they have (created) a split in the community," he adds.

Another advantage of the present community site has been easy access via public transport, they add.

"We don't have a mortgage, we don't pay tax because it's a church. There are no encumbrances — we owe nobody,"



A conceptual sketch of the exterior of the new Darbe-Meher

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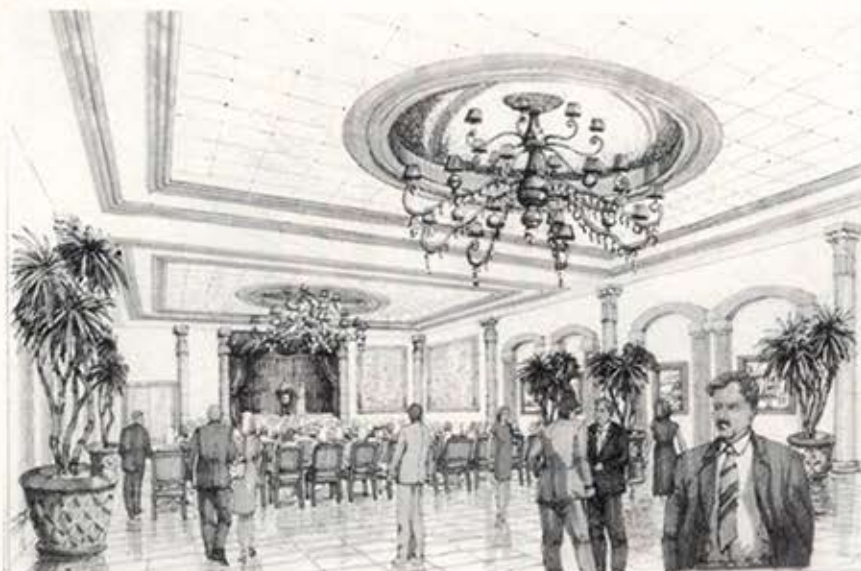
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Conceptual sketches of the new assembly hall and prayer room

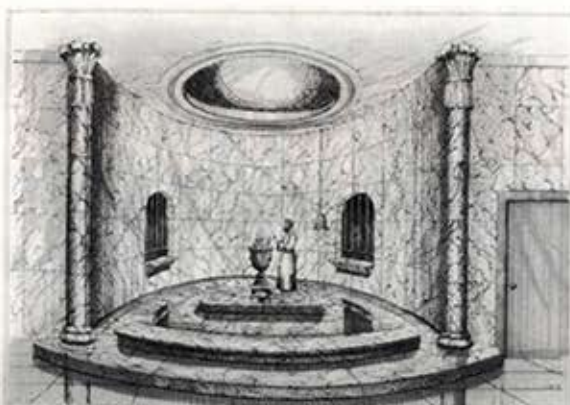
declares Russi. Until his health deteriorated — he has undergone open heart surgery and been operated for an abdominal aneurism — Russi himself climbed the roof of the Darbe-Meher to repair when required, added Moti.

Moti was chair of the committee set up by then president Homi Homji which helped receive and settle some 40 to 50 Iranian Zoroastrian refugees fleeing the Iran-Iraq war of the 1980s. In this task, as they worked with the Canadian government, they say they received substantial support from a nucleus of Iranian Zoroastrian families in Toronto who helped vet the applications.

The couple is particularly pleased with the success of their program to get the elderly of the community together twice a month. They prevailed on the younger members of the community to pair up with the seniors and bring them every second Friday to the Darbe-Meher. For four hours, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. the seniors enjoy cooking demonstrations, listen to lectures on health care, fire hazards, police help and personal safety, etc. "What they like best is to chit-chat," adds Moti.

"The seniors feel well looked after, make it a point to be there. And it gives others a purpose, a sense of service," notes Russi.

A long standing subcommittee that exists within the ZSO is the Iranian Zoroastrian Cultural Kanoun, ca-



tering to the needs and festivities of Iranian Zarathushtis and its activities are announced and reported in the monthly bilingual ZSO newsletter. The Kanoun also runs a program for elders which the present committee is hoping to integrate with its own program for seniors, the Balsaras inform us.

The annual Iranian New Year celebrations were boosted by greetings from Ernie Eves, premier of Ontario, to "everyone attending the Navroz celebrations hosted by the Zoroastrian Society of Ontario." Prayers, recitals from the *Gathas*, a short skit, Iranian food and live music with traditional instruments

marked the celebration of Jashn-e-Sadeh, the ancient Zoroastrian mid-winter festival at the University of Toronto. Spearheaded by Armita Azari and her team of dedicated helpers, the 2003 event on January 31 at the huge Science Auditorium, packed with students

and professors, will now be an annual event, states the newsletter. At the Darbe-Meher the Jashn-e-Sadeh was organized by the Kanoun when Parsis and Iranians celebrated the event together, notes the newsletter.

With growth in the population of Toronto there have been problems with housing. Earlier on the Balsaras say they were able to accommodate several Zoroastrian seniors in an apartment complex of two buildings with a nursing home in the neighborhood of the Darbe-Meher where they pay 30 percent of income as rent. "We had the contacts (then). But now the government has closed the doors to people like us," Russi notes the changing policies in local administration.

A practising dentist from Bombay, Russi took two years to requalify in Canada before he could start his own practice in Toronto in 1969. Till then he functioned as "short order cook, wardboy and supply officer," he laughs. He retired last year. Moti, who was dean of the College of Nursing at Bombay's J. J. Hospital with a master's degree in nursing from Columbia University found a job as a staff nurse within a few days of arrival in Ontario.

"It was an easier time, you could change jobs," they recall and Moti eventually retired as a staff nurse in a home for the aged.

Their daughter Khorshed Balsara Tooth is a veterinarian, their son Navroze, an audiologist, both of whom have settled in Toronto. Between them they have five girls for the grandparents to dote on.

ZSO expansion plans

According to the "Quick facts" published by the ZSO Building Capital Campaign Committee (BCCC) chaired by Dr Dhun Noria, their prayer room is expected to increase from 930 sq ft to 1,950 sq ft, the assembly hall will increase from the present 2,400 sq ft to 5,040 sq ft, if their plans proceed as envisaged. This would augment seating capacity from 350 to 916 persons accommodated theater style or from 220 to 672 persons banquet style without liquor or from 200 to 492 persons with liquor. The larger assembly hall will have the facility of subdivision by partitions to accommodate several simultaneous activities.



Russi and Moti Balsara: looking after the seniors

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The main bugbear, parking, will rise from 114 cars to 150 cars. It may be noted that both numbers include 66 cars parked on the street.

A series of fundraisers have livened the ZSO activity list for 2003, according to the BCCC update: A delicious buffet plus three decades of music tradition starting with Cliff Richards and ending with Freddie Mercury was billed as "The British Invasion" by organizer Soli Pestonji in February with more shows promised later in the year. A play, *Remember Me*, and buffet dinner was sold out in March and repeated in May and August. A Parsi *lagannoo bhoju* on banana leaves was a sold out event in April. The Building Capital Campaign was formally launched on May 9 with the unveiling of the conceptual drawing of the new Darbe-Meher plus a short *natak* (farce). June saw the organization of the ZSO Golf Classic. The community will be looking forward to an Indian Music Night, Seniors Food Fair, a Garas and Tiaras gala and a New Year's Eve Dinner Dance in the latter half of the year.

In addition to the sale of raffle tickets and 15-month tri-calendars

(Shahenshahi, Kadmi and Fasli) created by Adi Dastur and Edul Kanga and funded by the Noria family, ZSO has joined All Communications Inc (ACN), a provider of public utilities in North America which offers competitive long distance phone services. ZSO is to receive eight percent of the monthly long-distance phone bills of customers acquired by ACN through ZSO. The arrangement is expected to continue "long after our capital campaign is completed and the new Darbe-Meher a reality," notes Noria's message to the community.

A group of Zoroastrian realtors who have joined together as the Support Alliance Group have pledged 10 percent of their net earnings from Zoroastrian clients to the BCC. Their pledges run to December 31, 2005 or until the BCC reaches its target of raising \$2.2 million. The first to join the group include Sarosh Bharucha, Sam Vesuna, Pervez Daroga, Themton Irani, Nilufer Mama, Hosie Mancherjee, Shahnaz Polad and Nidhi Thaker but admission to the group is open. "It would be heartwarming to see other professionals set up similar support alliance groups," notes Noria hopefully.

Zartoshty Bros honored

Homi Italia heads the committee of the Zoroastrian Society of British Columbia (ZSBC) as it celebrates its 35th anniversary. Others on the team are treasurer Farrokh Namdaran, secretary Noshir Balsara, honorary auditor Kourosh Mehin and sub committee chairs Khushrav Dastur (maintenance and seniors liaison), Rostam Sasani (education), Khodabakhsh Shahbandari (youths liaison and sports) and Percy Bhagat (social and cultural affairs), as notes its newsletter *In Search of the Truth* (March-May 2003).

Last November the Zarathushtis of Vancouver congregated at the Darbe Mehr under the auspices of the Arbab Rostam Guiv Trust to honor the dedication and munificence of philanthropist Mehraban Zartoshty. The bilingual ceremony with a Farsi introduction by Dr Iradj Pourkarimi and an English one by Fariborz Rahnamoon was witnessed by 120 people, notes the newsletter (December 2002-February 2003). Zartoshty was presented a memento by the Trust; his wife Paridokht and daughter Vida received bouquets and good wishes.

Recounting the service rendered by the Zartoshty brothers — the late

Saal Mubarak



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Faridoon was remembered with a bouquet of flowers — Mobed Jehangir Panthaky and Manouchehr Iranpour noted that they reached out to all races and all countries. Iranpour noted that Arbab Mehraban's name featured among the top donors on the wall of the Vancouver General Hospital and the Lion's Gate Hospital in North Vancouver. Homi Italia and Dr Mehraban Shahrivini read messages on behalf of the ZSBC and the Guiv Trust of USA.

Acknowledging the ovation Zartoshty recalled the community service of Maneckji Limji Hataria, Rustam Guiv, ZSBC founder member the late Jamshed Pavri and his wife Roda and stressed on the importance of unity within the community, mentions the newsletter.



Mehraban and Paridokht Zartoshty cutting the ceremonial cake

had been earlier recognized by the Federal Government when she was awarded the Canada 125 Commemorative Medal in 1993. Malbari was recommended for the distinction by the executive director of the Youth Volunteer Corporation of Canada, notes the newsletter.

Another noteworthy Zoroastrian achiever

The achievers

On the occasion of the golden jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II's accession to the throne, the Canadian government recognized a few select individuals whose contributions to the community at large earned them the Golden Jubilee Commemorative Medal. Two Zoroastrians singled out for the distinction were former ZSBC president Bella Tata and chairperson of the ZSBC Youth Committee Marsha Malbari.

Tata's long innings with Industry Canada

is Sharookh Daroowala who has been elected Division Governor, BC Chapter of Toastmasters International, the world's leading organization dedicated to making effective oral communication a worldwide reality, states the newsletter. The Public Speaking Champion of British Columbia in 2000, Daroowala, who has chaired, judged and won a number of public speaking contests, was a semi-finalist at the World Championship in Reno, Nevada, adds the newsletter. He is said to be willing to aid community members learn the art of public speaking.

"It didn't matter to Rumi if a person was rich or poor, had disabilities or not; he treated everyone with good thoughts, good words, good deeds." Paul J. Piet, chairman of the board of directors of the Chicago Association for Retarded Citizens (CARC) was honoring the late Rumi Engineer with the Dr Robert McCluggage Award gifted to those who make outstanding contributions on behalf of individuals with development disabilities, it was reported in the April 2002 issue of the Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Chicago (ZAC) newsletter.

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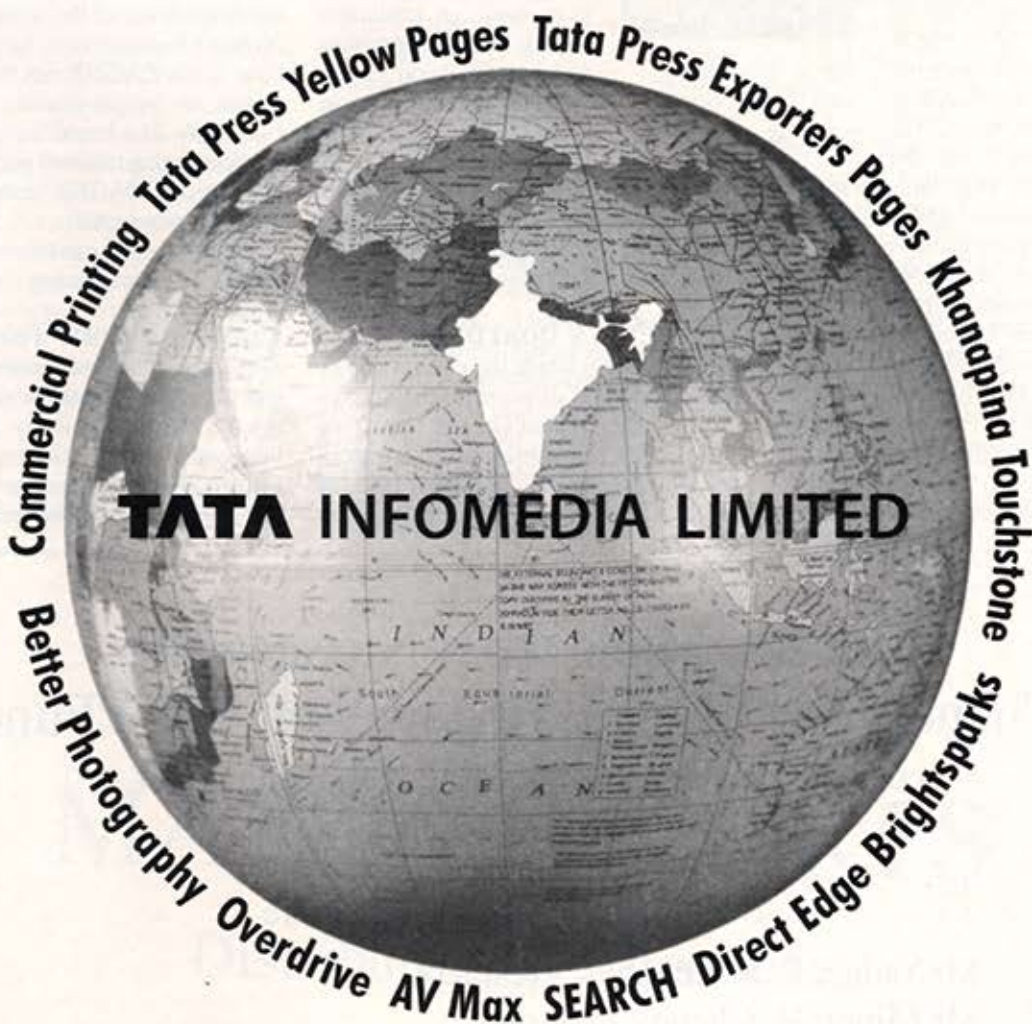
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As a longtime member of CARC's Board of Directors, he supported the agency in a variety of ways. Rumi lived his life with compassion, integrity and kindness and along the way he built a legacy that can never be forgotten. The memory of the man he was — and the way he chose to live his life — has given comfort to those fortunate to know him."

Nozer Buchia, vice president of Strategic Offshore Operations at Ciber, Inc in Oakbrook features as a top executive in the *National Who's Who in Executives and Professionals* for the year 2002-2003. The citation is an honor bestowed on individuals for excellence in service and contributions to industry, informs the ZAC July 2002 newsletter. Apart from being a member of Strategic's leadership team Buchia is a trustee on the Foundation Board of the Davenport University in Michigan and had been a recipient of its 2001 Alumni of the Year Award, states the newsletter.

Scoutmaster Maneck Sattha of the 100th

Toronto Scout Group was awarded the Medal of Merit for especially good service to Scouting from Scouts Canada.



Sattha: a medal of merit for service to scouting

He also received the Green Toronto Award from Mayor Mel Lastman and members of the Toronto City Council for outstanding achievement. "The dedication, support and participation of volunteers are essential to the success and vitality of our city. Your hard work and commitment have made an invaluable contribution to the greening and beautification of our Toronto," notes the citation.

Formerly a part of Homavazir's 11th Central Bombay Scout Group (former 100th Bombay Scout Group), Sattha helped found the Toronto group a decade ago, along with other expats from Bombay.

ZAGNY's board

Homi Gandhi heads the current (2002-2005) board of directors of the Zoroastrian Association of Greater New York (ZAGNY). His team includes vice president Fali Shroff, treasurer Jasmine Kotwal, secretary Arnava Patel and joint

secretary Diana Dinshaw.

Since a number of enthusiastic people wanted to be a part of the board, a resolution was passed to enable the board to have six members at large, notes the ZAGNY newsletter of April 2002. They are Goolu Baria, Kamal Davar, Usheen Davar, Toni Ghadially, Cyrus Hirjibehdin and Vispi Kanga.

The board's primary mandates are to create an awareness among the host community of who Zoroastrians are, while energizing ZAGNY members to participate and enrich the local community and the community of the tri-state area that includes Pennsylvania, New Jersey and New York. ZAGNY has been and continues to be an active member of FEZANA. The board is also interested in encouraging member participation on the various ZAGNY subcommittees, notes the newsletter.

ZAGNY news can be availed on their website www.zagny.org

Planning your funeral

The Zoroastrian Association of Houston has negotiated a special package with the Brookside Cemetery and Funeral Home that recognizes the community's sensitivities and particular needs, as per an e-mail from its former president Kersi

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Engineer to the community. The "Dignity Package" includes a basic coffin, preparation of the body for viewing, use of the chapel for the funeral service, a basic flower arrangement, use of the hearse to convey the body to the crematory located about 1,000 ft away (from the chapel) and the cremation itself.

The family can be with the body as long as they want and the cremation can take place immediately after the funeral ceremony. The attendees can have a short prayer recital there before the furnace is switched on, notes Engineer.

A normal funeral, arranged and paid for after death occurs, costs between \$ 8,000 and \$ 9,000 for a cremation and \$ 10,000 to \$ 11,000 for a burial, according to Engineer's note. However, if the same arrangement is made pre-need the cost is \$ 4,000. Apart from the financial benefit and the relief to the family from such pressure in their time of grief, Brookside being a part of the SCI group — the largest funeral home company in the world — the arrangement can be availed of at any of its 3,000 locations across US, Canada and several other countries if the family needs to relocate, writes Engineer. The company even provides a travel insurance for members who travel a lot "which means (that) if death should occur in any place in the world, Brookside would bring the body back to Houston at their own expense," adds Engineer. Also, if the member who has signed up with Brookside should be bereaved of a child or grandchild, the resulting funeral service would be at no cost to the member. An installment payment plan, starting at \$ 69 insures that if the member should die after paying even a single installment, the funeral service would be considered as fully paid for.

Compiled by Arnavaz S. Mama

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A world body by end 2003?

Fruitful talks with the World Zoroastrian Organisation may result in a charter being signed for the formation of a Zoroastrian world body before the next meeting of the Federation of Parsi Zoroastrian Anjumans of India

Arnavaz S. Mama

Incoming Bombay Parsi Panchayet (BPP) chairman and Federation of Parsi Zoroastrian Anjumans of India president Minoo Shroff's desire to make the meet "more proactive," and instructions to the anjumans to focus on current events in their reports, made for a slight change in the tempo of the proceedings of the Federation's executive council meet at the Banaji Atash Behram Hall in Bombay on June 7 and 8, 2003.

In camera discussions between the various anjumans, associations, federations and the World Zoroastrian Organisation (WZO) may result in a charter of the new proposed world Zoroastrian body being signed, announced Federation joint honorary secretary Keki Gandhi. While details are sketchy, the consensus appears to be on the creation of a two-tier body comprising individuals and associations with certain safeguards.

The expected launch of the Rs 5 Dadabhai Naoroji coin (subsequently scheduled for October 2, 2003) sat well with the international celebration coordinated by UNESCO, of the year as the 3000th year of Zoroastrian culture, both announced by Delhi Parsi Anjuman (DPA) president and Federation vice president Lt Gen (retd) Adi Sethna.

The idea of the coin, conceived by BPP chief executive Behram Dastur has been pursued by Sethna and BPP public relations officer Godrej Dotivala who have respectively liaised with the central government and the Government of India (GOI) mint.

Well-known solicitor and BPP trustee Ervad Burjor Antia who heads the Panchayet's newly formed religious committee made a strong plea for pragmatism and a catholicity of approach to-

wards Zoroastrians of all origins and persuasions and advocated the creation of a community tribunal to address internal disputes.

In light of the current national contro-

into Gujarati and the Karanjia brothers of Surat have undertaken its printing and distribution, noted Gandhi adding that the newsletter's position vide sponsorship and advertising was comfortable.



The executive council in session

versy over the presentation of history in school textbooks ex-Indian Administrative Service officer and president of the Indore Parsi Zoroastrian Anjuman Bomi Heerjee felt that references to Zarathushtra, his religion and his people should be critically assessed by the community.

Ahmedabad Parsi Panchayat president and Rasna honcho Areez Khambatta has succeeded Dr Sam Bhacca and Poona Parsi Panchayat (PPP) president Dara Irani has succeeded former PPP president Eruch Irani as zonal vice presidents of the Federation. The BPP's senior trustee Silloo Kavarana takes over as ex-officio joint honorary secretary of the Federation. All other office bearers were reelected and the Federation's accounts endorsed. Shovir Irani of Dahanu has been nominated by Federation of Zoroastrian Youth Associations (FOZYA) as its representative on the Federation's executive council.

Gujarati litterateur Dr Ratan Marshall of Surat is translating the *Fed Newsletter*

The Borivali and Suburban Zoroastrian Anjuman (BASZA) president and Zoroastrian Co-operative Bank executive Noshir Paghdiwalla announced the Bank's new "scheduled" status and full-fledged money changer's licence acquired over the past six months. In the same period the BPP's venture capital project has been grounded on the shoals of community perception of any help from the Panchayet as a dole or

easy money, indicated Shroff. The venture capital project is conceived on the basis of equity participation in viable projects which on maturity can be rolled over to aid newer enterprises.

The Foundation for the Development of Udvada has been established with Rs 1.25 crores contributed by the GOI and the Government of Gujarat (GOG). Its board of trustees comprising Dastur Khurshed Dastoor, High Priest of Udvada, hotelier Jehangir Cama of Ahmedabad, P. K. Laheri, chief secretary to the GOG, Shroff, Antia, social activist Homai Modi of the Save Udvada Committee and scholar Dr Homi Dhalla, founder of the World Zarathushti Cultural Foundation, will be chaired by BPP trustee Dinshaw Tamboly. Its three main planks according to Tamboly will be the establishment of a proper cultural museum, the organizing of an annual festival day for Zoroastrians from across the world and a tourist circuit based on the wanderings of the Iranshah.

Even as the BPP awaited a major dossier from Tata AIG who were said to be amenable to absorb the administra-

tive burden of a mediclaim scheme for the community, Dastur sketched in a few demographic details: Heart disease accounts for about 50 percent of deaths in Bombay, cancer a low three percent. In the past year only two children were lost under the age of one year indicating good child care though there were four stillbirths. On the emigration front, according to Dastur's figures a family of four leaves India every week from Bombay and every month from Calcutta. In reverse, Shroff maintained that youths of both sexes were opting to return in pursuit of job security.

BPP trustee Dadi Engineer advised the community to ensure that a proper death certificate is issued. The BPP aims to review procedures at Doongerwadi in light of the murder of Adi Cursetjee where police investigations began after the body had been consigned to the dakhma. The retrieved body, demanded by the police for a postmortem examination, had to be placed in the recently installed air-conditioned morgue at Doongerwadi, he noted.

The next meet of the Federation will be hosted by Bardoli on November 29 and 30, 2003. Sanctioning a full day discussion of controversial topics, Shroff abandoned the Federation's hitherto open-doors policy by decreeing that it would be an "in camera discussion, not for reportage in the media."

Anjumans

"Mhow is under the Federation's custodianship (but) the Federation has taken Mhow for granted," complained its president Dr Behram Masani. Though the average age of the community there is said to be over 65 years, recalcitrant tenant members are allegedly seeking to privatize the anjuman properties they occupy.

Masani had voiced his anguish to the

"Mhow is under the Federation's custodianship (but) the Federation has taken Mhow for granted"

Federation's executive council last November but the problem continues to simmer. He once again sought an active Federation involvement to support his stand against such a move: "(Let) the Federation make its presence felt, attend the (managing committee) meetings. If the BPP trustees come, they can make the community aware that other Zoroastrians are interested in Mhow."

"Get local Zoroastrians to ostracize such people," suggested Gandhi and requested Heerjee to act as Federation representative and attend Mhow anjuman meetings. "If the Mhow anjuman wants to divest its properties, the Federation can object. However, if 75 percent of the general body agrees (with the original proposition) the objection can be overruled," noted Gandhi who nonetheless appreciated Masani's need for the "Federation's presence when such knotty proposals come up."

Heerjee however was unwilling to be a party to "shift responsibility" from Mhow's managing committee to the Federation. "If there is litigation, the Federation can be one of the litigants. But be very clear about what assistance you are going to provide," he told the assembled delegates. "Mhow and Indore are very close. We don't want the relationship to tarnish." Seeking "circumspect, careful, precise parameters," Heerjee referred to allegations about Mhow anjuman funds

going to non-Parsis. "It is their property, but the Federation representative's presence (at their managing committee meetings) will make the Federation a party to every resolution." He endorsed a suggestion that Shroff and Tamboly "come once in a while and give words of advice."

Denying the allegation referred to by Heerjee, Masani explained that the money had been provided to a non-Parsi employee of the anjuman at the time of the Gujarat earthquake. Harking back to one of the terms of the Federation's custodianship — to take charge of the anjuman when only 15 individuals remain — Masani predicted, "No one then will call the Federation!"

Tacitly accepting the responsibility Shroff noted, "My experience of intervening is very awkward. Can we discuss informally rather than coming and getting garlanded?"

The Mhow anjuman has acquired a second mobed. "We should be able to spare him for neighboring anjumans when required," said Masani. They have begun water harvesting on the anjuman properties and planted bawal trees on the 12 acres of dakhma land. Masani was grateful to Cyrus Siganporia and his band of volunteers who not only cleaned the dakhma but "donated to the anjuman whatever we gifted them." One couple has been aided from the special trust managed by the Mhow anjuman to help young couples with bridal expenses. They are also "inundated" with appeals for educational aid. Masani said he and his co-trustees give preference to appeals from smaller anjumans rather than from areas like Bharuch or Surat where funds are available.

With about 15 Parsis left in Neemuch,

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eight or nine of whom live in Punchayet houses, as per Noshir Jal, the anjuman has invited the Federation to take over as custodian. Gandhi called upon Heerjee, Katpitia, Masani and Tehemton Anklesaria of Ratlam to take on the job of administrator, but no appointment was finalized.

The government wants to take over nine acres from the nearly 20 acres of doongerwadi land belonging to the Ahmednagar anjuman, Col K. G. Jalnawala told the assembled delegates. The less than 70-member anjuman has written to Sethna and Rajya Sabha member Fali Nariman but "if the land is not utilized by the community the government can take it over," he feared. He urged the gathering to develop a colony on their 15 acres along the Nagar-Aurangabad highway.

The Thana anjuman faces a problem similar to Mhow, according to its president Rustom Cursetji. The Zoroastrian occupants of community housing, who got their flats at cost price thanks to a protracted legal battle fought by the Thana trustees, the BPP and the Federation against the Divecha trust and the non-Zoroastrian developer who took over its land, are pressurizing the trustees to

With about 15 Parsis left in Neemuch the anjuman has invited the Federation to take over as custodian

adopt standard cooperative society by-laws so that they can resell their flats at a higher price in the open market. "I am afraid they might get the upper hand and we might get marginalized," noted Cursetji. "The problem is that donations are received as a birthright. Do we have the moral authority to combat that attitude?" he queried.

As for their 3,000 sq ft cottage in Thana, allegedly illegally occupied by the Shiv Sena, whose fate has been repeatedly debated at earlier Federation meetings, Cursetji noted that they were working on its legal and political angles: "We want the moral support and backing of the Federation, not (its) actual (involvement) in the battle."

Cursetji acquainted the delegates with his local community's desire to establish an air-conditioned hall at the Thana agiary similar to the venue of

the meet in the Banaji Atash Behram compound. The Thana community is also supporting the Jeejeebhoy trust and the alumni of the Byramji Jeejeebhoy School there to revive the moribund institution.

A clause in the settlement of the Iranian Zoroastrian Anjuman (IZA) — Maharashtra Government dispute over their Palghar land requires that 40 percent of the income from this land be spent in the Thana district. "Write to our president," IZA representative Behram Irani told Cursetji. "We might be able to help with funds for the Byramji Jeejeebhoy School."

Their over 20 lakh rupees annual income from the sale of grass from Palghar and interest on fixed deposits was used for the relief of poverty and educational and medical aid among more than 1,000 applicants, added Sohrab Dahmubed. He noted that due to the illness and retirement of IZA's long serving secretary Sohrab Elavia, Darayush Irani had taken over the work.

His application for an 80G exemption from the Income Tax (IT) department for the Indore anjuman has been



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turned down until he can furnish the original trust deed of the anjuman's properties for the IT commissioner's inspection, reported Heerjee. Considering that the Indore anjuman was founded more than 100 years ago when Indore was part of the Holkar State, Heerjee has not been successful in his search for the document. The only coeval item on the file, according to Heerjee, is a letter dated January 21, 1889 addressed to the BPP covering the transfer of money collected by Sir Jamsetji Jejeebhoy and requesting the BPP to look after the interests of the Indore anjuman. Ten years ago a Declaration of Trust had been registered with the Registrar of Public Trusts but when he asked them for a copy they found only an unsigned draft and no schedule of properties. "Is it possible to have another Declaration of Trust when an earlier one existed? How do we move legally in the matter?" asked Heerjee.

Terming it an "uphill task" Dadi Engineer suggested he apply with references and copies of old documents. BPP senior executive Sheroo Master referred to a letter of administration dating back to 1889 or thereabouts and Masani recommended that if Heerjee focuses on records of the dakhma property, the IT

authorities may accept his application.

Faced with financial stringency the Indore anjuman is looking forward to visiting Parsis donating towards its programs. On the agenda is the construction of a boundary wall and the renovation of the bungli at the dakhma. Water shortage during the summer was another obstacle to construction activity, according to Heerjee.

BASZA had its usual range of events in the preceding six months noted its secretary Khurshed Pastakia dwelling on their colloquium on intermarriage. "It was a live discussion to increase awareness (regarding) the survival of our ethnic community," he noted and the social and religious consequences of intermarriage were underlined at what he called "this unique learning experience." Pastakia said that "the overall consensus was that intermarriage is tearing our community apart."

The Allahabad Parsee Zoroastrian Anjuman (APZA) celebrated the wedding of Khushnum Rohinton Framjee with Vikas Saxena on January 15 and three days later laid their 82-year-old paramobed Nariman Framroze Marshall to rest in

their aramgah, the anjuman's president Capt Homi Dandiwalla informed the gathering. There being no priest available, Dandiwalla said he recited the preliminary prayer followed by the playing of an audio cassette of geh sarna prayers recorded by Ervad Kersi Bhada of Bombay's Cama Baug Agiary. The mourners were greatly aided by the Christian community whose members lifted the coffin, transported it to the cemetery and lowered it into the grave as the 22 Parsis in Allahabad are all quite aged, noted Dandiwalla.

At the APZA's AGM on April 19, the focus of attention was on the community seven years hence. The exercise was called by Dandiwalla where he urged a change in the three-member managing committee. The trustees — himself (77), his wife Shireen (71) and vice president Dossabhai Gandhi (79) — all suffer from physical handicaps and ill health. However, no change was reported in the membership of the board. A source of concern is the declining income of the anjuman as interest rates decline. If they could get two lakh rupees, they could renovate the Bazam Hall in the Jalejar S. Gandhi Dare Meher compound and generate income by renting it out for

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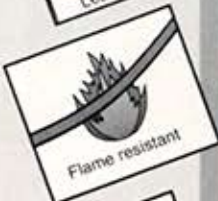
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(4th row): Master, Mullan, Crawford, Dotivala, Daviervala



(5th row): Katpitia, B. Irani, Dahmubed, Dadi Mistry, Rustomji



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wedding functions, Dandiwalla noted.

After the repair of the Davier agiary the contiguous dharamshala has also been repaired from donated funds, noted Marazban Wadia, acknowledging a gift of 100 copies of the *Khordeh Avesta* from the WZO and nine cupboards from Godrej and Boyce. They are now looking for nine beds, he added.

Speaking on behalf of Sanjan, Wadia said that half the estimated cost of four lakh rupees to maintain the wall surrounding the Stambh was in the kitty. For the rest "the BPP has no objection to receiving donations," he noted.

The Jhansi dharamshala has been renovated thanks to a two lakh rupee donation from the late Baji Mirza and may be contacted on 0517-2361364 for reservations, noted the anjuman president Ronny Dick. A lady in the vicinity supplies food to dharamshala residents, he added.

More than 25 young people visited Agra during the 16th All-India Youth Seminar, noted Dolat Debara. The dharamshala and the aramgah are maintained



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from the Rs 7,000 monthly rent of the prayer hall and one room, she added.

DPA secretary Farrokh Rustomji spoke of the launch of the film *In War and Peace* on Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw's 89th birthday on April 3 by UNESCO Parzor (see "A hero for heroic times," page 74).

Sethna offered "comfortable, affordable" accommodation in the Mengusi Dharamshala to any couple who wants to live and work in Delhi for a reasonable time. A couple of self-contained flats within the dharamshala can even be booked by institutions as a guest house for their Parsi employees/clients, he noted.

In Ahmedabad they celebrate no less than 20 jashans and three gahambars, noted Khambatta. A pukka road and a borewell at the Doongerwadi and the renovation of the city-based bungli has been effected and a solar concentrator has been installed. They hope to expand the dharamshala and provide hostel accommodation depending on the donations they receive. Talks on subjects as varied as entrepreneurship, fashion designing and management benefit the local community. Vocational guidance, a

There were 27 births and 76 deaths in Poona in 2002

matrimonial meet which yielded two unions, computer classes for housewives and a medical camp have been other recent activities.

The 26-member Bhopal anjuman is awaiting the appointment of a custodian trustee by the Federation, noted Gev Dhunjibhoy. Though their vast aramgah land dates back to 1914, they have no mobed and the 36 graves are dilapidated. Repairs have been estimated at seven to eight lakh rupees of which Rs 1.2 lakhs have been collected. Though their nine families each contribute Rs 50 per month, the anjuman's income is low.

Of the 223 families in Nagpur (comprising a total population of 615) 60 are housed in Tata Baug, the complex adjoining the agiary and dharamshala, noted Dinshaw Mistry, a trustee of the Nagpur and Kamptee Parsi Zarhosti Anjuman. The annual water problem at the colony has been solved by creating an under-

ground tank with a capacity of 100,000 litres. The rest of the community is well settled in other parts of this city, 2,000 ft above sea level, that won an award as one of the most beautiful cities of India, he added.

With two mobeds officiating at its floodlit agiary a concretized road at the aramgah where architect Percy Nazir oversees working and beautification funded by Rooshad Patel, the community is "by and large like a united family," noted Mistry.

About 31 percent of the 1,244 Zoroastrians in Secunderabad and Hyderabad are aged 60 and over, 16.5 percent of them being unmarried. Those under 20 make up 18 percent of the total and the median group (21-59 yrs) account for marginally over 50 percent with 30.5 percent of them being unmarried. The demographic data was presented by Omim Debara. The relative figures of births and deaths in the years 2000 to 2003 were respectively eight and 26, one and 10, three and 16, two and eight (14 births and 60 deaths). There have been no interfaith marriages in this period.

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mas, and a nine-room dharamshala with catering available, the anjuman's finances were reported as "satisfactory."

There has been no progress on their case pending with the deputy commissioner of the Endowment Department, noted Debara.

The renovation and extension of the Baroda agiary is expected to be completed by the end of November this year, noted Baroda Parsi Panchayet president Jal Patel. A residential building for mobeds and low income families is planned in the agiary compound and a directory with detailed demographic profile is under preparation. When their young scholars were presented merit awards on Jamshedi Navroz, the anjuman hosted ICICI Bank's erstwhile joint managing director Hosang Sinor and Ervad Peshotan Mirza as guests of honor.

There were 27 births and 76 deaths in Poona in 2002, Dara Irani informed the council. The corresponding figures for the first five months of 2003 were nine and 29 respectively plus three deaths where the bodies were not consigned to the dakhma. Irani noted that five divorce

suits had been filed in 2002 and two, to date, in 2003 among the reported 8,500 Poona community.

PPP flats have been available for use as shared hostel accommodation for individuals working in Poona. Now that Phase II of their housing complex has been completed, 175 allotments have been made. Irani said that the PPP give preference to those whose applications had been recommended by their local anjuman. He was happy to announce that four marriages are expected to result in the new colony.

Eight medical students received Rs 2.38 lakhs and 26 engineering students Rs 6.67 lakhs from the BPP for their coaching classes for the academic year 2002-03, mentioned the report presented by Master. This was in addition to Rs 10,72,900 for college education sanctioned to 366 students comprising all streams. Gift scholarships totalling Rs 7,14,600 were also awarded to 117 vocational and technical students by the BPP in cooperation with five other Parsi charities. The higher education committee comprising the BPP and seven other trusts provided gift scholarships totalling Rs

16.55 lakh and loans totalling Rs 10 lakh to 54 students going abroad. Another eight students received Rs 2.60 lakh as a gift for postgraduate study in India.

During the same period Rs 2,89,629 were provided to cover school tuition, term and lunch fees, transport charges and the cost of uniforms.

Rs 79,500 helped 18 parties defray the cost of day care centers while three applicants shared Rs 10,000 provided for marriage expenses.

There are currently 21 mobeds receiving monetary help every month from the Panchayet. Between November 2002 to April 2003 this amounted to Rs 12,800. Doles to widows and aged males in the same period added up to Rs 6,95,497.

Noting that Nargol and Saronda had shared a dakhma since 1767 Saronda's Ervad Yezdi Panthaky denounced Nargol for claiming sole ownership and asked the Federation to mediate. On his part Nargol's Farroak Govadia spoke of 26 acres of land belonging to Nargol, adding, "We allow Saronda to consign their dead in our dakhma." Gandhi advised them to get the BPP to broker the dispute.



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L to R (1st row): Cursetji, Dandiwalla, Noshir Jal, Paghdiwalla, K. Pastakia



(2nd row): O. Debara, P. Irani, P. Ginwalla, S. Ginwalla, Dinshaw Mistry



(3rd row): Wadia, Wania, Govadia, Panthaky, Dhunjibhoy



(4th row): Jalnawala, Dick, D. Patel, M. Irani, Niloufer Jal



(5th row): Billimoria, Palkhiwala, Gazder, Vajifdar, Talati



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Youth

FOZYA president Sarosh Palkhiwala reported on the 16th All-India Youth Seminar organized by the DPA under FOZYA aegis in Delhi over the Republic Day weekend in January 2003. The seminar had been inaugurated by Sethna and the high point of the meet was the delegates' visit to Rashtrapati Bhavan and their meeting with the President of India Dr A P J Kalam.

Delhi youth trustee Adil Nargolwala, who had been one of the prime organizers, registered his disappointment that less than 40 youths from the rest of India attended the meet. He also noted that the President "was shocked to see over 50-year-olds in the group. He was expecting youths about the age of my son (about 12 years)."

"Disappointed" at the absence of youths at this Federation meet Shroff requested anjuman presidents from across India to help the youths participate at the Congress and at the Federation events.

Behafrid Patel of Poona, secretary of the Third World Zoroastrian Youth Congress (3WZYC) acknowledged BPP support in their "huge task (which) started pretty late." Appeals for funds for the

We came to this figure (Rs 3,500) after asking around as to what (youth) delegates would be willing to pay

Congress had been circulated to various agencies, she said, and urged the assembled anjuman delegates to sponsor youths from their cities.

The ensuing discussion between Dara Irani and other delegates with a few inputs from Palkhiwala revealed that preparations for the Congress were in low gear. The PPP had provided only "moral support" according to Palkhiwala. Irani however explained that the Panchayat had "given them assurance and all kinds of support except financial support." The PPP had even agreed to place "a few flats" at the organizers' convenience during the Congress, he noted. The PPP's financial stringency apart, Irani noted that there were several very wealthy businessmen in Poona and it was up to the youth to approach them.

Gandhi suggested the staging of events such as plays and the publishing of souvenirs to raise funds.

In the context of the poor turnout at the youth seminar at Delhi ("Previously at youth seminars we used to get anywhere between 150 and 300 delegates") Rustomji sought to know what marketing FOZYA had done overseas to generate interest in the 3WZYC. Palkhiwala noted that they expected about 100 to 150 overseas delegates.

Former FOZYA president Porus Karanjawalla and Nargolwala found the Congress registration fees, pegged at Rs 3,500, "fairly steep" and urged the organizers to reconsider the amount. When Palkhiwala remonstrated that the cost of food alone (meals are included in the package) amounts to Rs 4,500, Karanjawalla suggested that the required funds be collected from the public. "Don't burden the delegates or anjumans," he advised.

Noting that delegate fees at the First WZYC in Los Angeles and the second in London had been about £ 350, Patel said, "We came to this figure (Rs 3,500) after asking around as to what delegates would be willing to pay."

Recalling that even Bombay delegates



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had refused dormitory accommodation in Poona at the Third All-India Youth Seminar in 1990 Gandhi opined that delegates from abroad would expect a certain standard in meals and living conditions. A certain level of expenditure would be necessary, he said, but "instead of depending on charity, try to earn for yourselves." He suggested advertisement banners, sponsored meals, etc to raise 50 percent of the money.

"We will make the Congress a success," Tamboly smilingly braced the crestfallen organizers. Noting that venues in Poona are hard to find over the Xmas week Tamboly opined that the Indian rates quoted were low by US and UK standards. "There is no question now of reviewing pricing or venue," he stated adding that the BPP has sanctioned five lakh rupees for the Congress including Rs 1,500 as individual subsidy to student delegates facing economic stringency.

"We are slow on economic calculations," Dastur pinpointed the organizational lacuna. He referred to the "sound economic performance" of the Seventh World Zoroastrian Congress at Houston because they started their preparations "two years ahead — not six months in

advance like us!"

Porus Debara, one of two youth trustees on the board of the Agra Parsi Anjuman, noted that the total number of Zarathushtis there was down to 13. The earlier count had been 20 but the families belonging to the hospitality industry had since been transferred out. Debara corrected a mistake in the Federation's minutes (and in "A Gesture for Guzder," *Parsiana*, March 2003) where Hosang Debara's recount of floods and a death in Mathura were reported as having occurred in Agra.

Zenia Vajifdar of Poona spoke of their Navroz fashion show and function to honor heart specialist Dr Keki Grant. Their annual 15-day summer camp had the usual combination of trips to various establishments, learning crafts and listening to scholars from different streams.

Raika Gazder and Pearl Mistry of the BPP's Holiday Programme for Youth referred to highlights of its 17th edition in April 2003 when 99 girls and 129 boys participated. Noted photographer and theater personality Boman Irani's theater workshop had led to the full-

fledged presentation of four house-full shows of *Black Comedy*. A fashion show staged by the participants was witnessed by a 250-strong audience. Their social service program, which included a navjote and a blood collection drive, also embraced the participation of all senior citizens at the Parukh Dharamshala in an antakshari.

PYLA — the Parsi Youth League of Ahmedabad, where the population according to Karanjawalla is between 1900 and 2000, has published a directory titled *Kaleidoscope of Careers*. The book, priced at Rs 40, provides information on careers, universities, trusts, funds, etc. Other activities organized under the PYLA banner included volleyball and cricket matches, icecream making, elocution competitions, etc.

While Bomi Talati of the Baroda United Zoroastrian Youth (BUZY) spoke of the maintenance and cleaning of the Contractor Agiary by the youth, Patel referred to the 14.5 lakh rupee donation by BUZY towards a talent search project. A committee has

continued on page 186

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A hero for heroic times

A film on Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw recaptures the legend of a victor

Arnavaz S. Mama

"The safety, honor and welfare of your country come first, always and every time. The honor, welfare and comfort of the men you command come next. Your own ease, comfort and safety come last, always and every time."

This memorable injunction delivered by Sir Philip Chetwode in his address to the first batch of cadets at the Indian Military Academy at Dehra Dun in 1932 had been internalized by at least one Gentleman Cadet there. Seventy years later Field Marshal (FM) Sam H. J. F. Manekshaw, taking the salute of the graduating cadets in 2002, reminded them of the respect they owed to the professional Indian army.

It is at this juncture that filmmaker Jessica Gupta begins *In War and Peace, the life of Field Marshal Manekshaw, MC* — her beautiful paean on a personality of legendary *joie de vivre*, created at the behest of UNESCO-Parzor as part of their project aimed at documenting and preserving the vulnerable heritage of humanity.

Criss-crossing past and present, Gupta has succeeded in conveying Manekshaw's lifelong concern for the Army's morale, dignity and pride. Weaving his own memories with archival records and attestations from others who also played their part, center stage, in securing the integrity of India, Gupta's 40-minute tribute recreates the post-Independence history of India — "terra incognita to the vast majority of today's Indian youth," as Lt Gen (retd) Adi Sethna noted sadly. In the process she recalls to life a commander's flamboyance and charisma of iconic proportions for the troops he led.

The film was premiered at the Air Force Auditorium at New Delhi's Subroto Park on April 3, 2003, the onset of Manekshaw's 90th year, in the pres-

ence of defence minister George Fernandes, tourism and culture minister Jagmohan, Governor of Punjab Lt General (retd) Jack Jacob, the chiefs of the Army, Navy and Air Force and former president of India K. R. Narayanan.

Speaking of Manekshaw's "courage, character, integrity... a man who has created history — in fact you created a new nation, Bangladesh" Fernandes said he had told the media that Manekshaw's life "provided the kind of inspiration that today's youth needs." According to Jagmohan the Field Marshal "personalizes qualities of a great leader and commander."

In her welcome address Parzor director Dr Shernaz Cama explained the birth of the Parzor project as a product of UNESCO's concern for the demographic decline of Parsi Zoroastrians and recalled her life as 'Army daughter': "It was during our childhood in the Army that we learnt about the value of traditions. We also learnt that you do not have to be the same to be one. We started and still start our day with the regimental greeting 'Ram-Ram.' We prayed at gurdwaras, temples, dargahs and churches and of course — when one could be near them — at agiaries. We celebrated every festival, enjoyed every food of our country."

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"Perhaps the greatest soldier India has produced is Field Marshal Sam

Manekshaw. It is because of Sam's pride in the dignity of the Army and his total professionalism that we can be so proud of the Indian Army today."

Cama spoke of how Sam and his wife Silloo "motivated us all." As school girls in Calcutta during the Bangladesh War (their father Adi, then Brigadier General, was a part of the general staff of the Eastern Army commanded by Lt Gen Jagjit Singh Arora) they had helped pack food parcels, visited the wounded every evening at the Command Hospital and "in a fit of patriotism even donated every comic we possessed to the officers' ward because the young officers wanted to read them!"

"War and peace are closely linked. They begin in the mind," remarked UNESCO's R. P. Perera, praising the Field Marshal's role in preserving the integrity of India. Noting that "cultural diversity is as important to humankind as bio diversity is to the environment," Perera, who has been supporting Parzor since its inception, referred to the Parsis' uniqueness and contribution to the development of modern India. The Parzor project on the concept of Asha aims to preserve "one of the masterpieces of humanity," and was supported by several members of the UNESCO family of nations, he maintained. But the highpoint of Perera's speech was his public announcement of the decision of UNESCO's executive board and 190 member states who voted in favor of Tajikistan's request to celebrate 3,000 years of Zoroastrian culture in 2003.

"The communication of man and man, woman and woman, culture and culture is the most abiding bond of this globe we call our world," noted historian and cultural activist Dr Kapila Vatsyayan who is a leading member of the Parzor project team. Alluding to current environmental depredations in the context of the ancient Zoroastrian injunctions Vatsyayan said, "The Yasna reminds man that he is one (factor) in an interconnected uni-



Manekshaw: he fought to win



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Top (L to R): Cama, Vatsyayan, Navy Chief Admiral Madhvendra Singh, Fernandes, Manekshaw, Army Chief General N. C. Vij, Jagmohan, Air Force Chief Air Chief Marshal Krishnaswamy, Perera and Sethna
Centre panel (from left): Jagmohan with Sethna (R); Sherry and father; Gupta and Cama. Below (left): Sethna with an army officer and 'Vision of Unity'; (right) Exhibition in the foyer



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Parzor exhibition in the foyer

verse... From the basic five elements of this world if you take away water, fire or earth, will we survive?" Commending Cama's dedication to the Parzor project she spoke of its work in trying to "inter-connect the world, not only the Parsi community," through research on the impact of Iran and other civilizations to show that "every little community has played a part in plural societies" as they integrated into multicultural modern states.

work on the Parsis as well as the wider, intercommunal heritage, had been painstakingly mounted into an exhibition in the foyer of the auditorium which was inaugurated by Jagmohan lighting up the model 'Vision of Unity.' "May it be transformed into the reality of a building where the seven major faiths of India are housed under one roof with the wonderful jewel-hued stained glass of Katayun Saklat acting as a strong magnet to bring together scholars and tourists to Delhi, a

revival in modern form of the ancient Nalanda University," noted Sethna fervently, thanking the dedication and administrative skill of his colleague Tirlochan Singh (comember with Sethna of the National Minorities Commission) for having already applied to Government for land where "we can translate our dream into reality."

The unspooling of the film was preceded by two young Farohars from the Delhi Parsi Anjuman auspiciously dabbing vermilion on Manekshaw's forehead and popping sakar into his mouth. Gupta and Brig Adi Sahukar, who had done much of the research, presented the eldest member of the defence community with a 90-rose basket. For the ceremonial cutting of a massive birthday cake the first Indian officer to command the Gorkhas and the Colonel of the Eighth Gorkha Rifles used a cherished silver khukri as the audience joined in to sing *Happy Birthday to Sam*.

How did you get this very private man to come on camera?" was a question put to him by industrialist Keshab Mahindra, said Sethna who was largely responsible for masterminding the movie documentation of Manekshaw's unique contri-

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tribution to the winning of the Bangladesh War in 1971. The FM's reticence, at what would amount to beating his own drum, can be discerned on screen in his short, dismissive phrases and self-deprecatory humor. For the kudos, filmmaker Gupta had to find other tongues — and there are several.

Gupta, who had heard of the Parzor desire to create Manekshaw's film biography from a friend, had happily embraced the project. The team sent Manekshaw a couple of ideas which met with initial hesitation on his part, Gupta mentioned to *Parsiana*. When the project began to roll it took her 10 days to shoot 11 hours worth of film. Five of these days were spent with the FM, she notes. She found that the FM "remembers the time, place, date, day" of certain events and speaks willingly on particular topics which he knows. And he doesn't speak about what he doesn't remember.

Gupta takes the viewer to Stavka, the verdant Manekshaw residence in Coonoor where his artist wife Silloo, left alone on Sam's sudden transfer to NEFA (North East Frontier Agency) to



With wife Silloo, daughters Maja and Sherry in earlier days

head the demoralized Indian army after the Chinese aggression, had bought up 3 acres of a rolling hillside for all of Rs 18,500 in 1962. The bungalow she designed was built as their family abode after he relinquished active service in 1973. "Why did you call it Stavka?" asks his grandson Jehan. That was the name of the headquarters of the commander-in-chief of the Russian forces in Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, he is told. "Have you read the book?" asks Jehan. "No," replies the doughty grandfather but the glint in his eye should dissuade a

viewer from accepting the statement at face value. Indeed, Sam's sense of humor, his tongue-in-cheek remarks and irrepressible wit added an extra dimension to his multihued personality — one that in the humorless official Indian context led to the derailment of his career.

As Manekshaw speaks to Jehan in a series of little tête-à-têtes we see the elegance as well as the human warmth that percolates through the life of the family as well as its Gorkha dependents. The

topics they discuss in various scenes are amplified by interviews with some of the key personnel who had been involved with Manekshaw through his life. Glimpses of Sherwood College where he schooled in Nainital, the many military institutions he passed through as student, instructor, commandant, film footage of World War II in Burma, and the Indo-Pak engagements from 1949 onward. It was in Burma that he nearly died in 1945 from an overdose of Japanese bullets leading the commanding major general to whip off his own Military Cross and pin it on the wounded major. For the Military Cross — Britain's

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top award for exceptional gallantry in battle — is given only to the living.

Sam was already a brigadier by the time he went to Kashmir at the Indian Government's bidding to receive the deed of accession to India signed by its Maharaja in 1949. As he notes in the film, he had an excellent rapport with Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel who used him as a troubleshooter in Baroda and Calcutta during the post Independence riots.

But his steady rise had its detractors. Among these was India's Defence Minister Krishna Menon and Lt Gen B. M. Kaul. While he was commandant of the Defence Services Staff College in Wellington Manekshaw faced a court of inquiry. The trumped up charges alleged that Manekshaw was pro-British, wouldn't appoint instructors at the College whose wives did not meet with his approval and such like trivia. As Jacob, Manekshaw's general staff officer, notes, "He (Sam) came out with outrageous remarks but there was nothing in it."

Before his official exoneration could come, however, fate intervened in the



Seated centre with regimental sportsmen

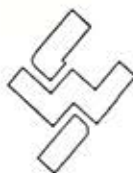
shape of the Chinese invasion. The unprepared Indian army, which had been victorious in battlefields across the world under British command, was shamefully routed. Manekshaw tells Jehan in the film, "Nehru called me and asked would I go to NEFA? I told him I had been waiting for that order for 18 months!" When Sam got there he studied the maps and gave his first order

("We start advancing") though he wasn't sure if it was correct or not. But the very fact that there was at last a commander who was willing to command became a source of jubilation.

He recalls the stormy onset of the Bangladesh War. Summoned by the Prime Minister to a cabinet meeting in April 1971 he found Indira Gandhi in "an awful temper." She read out messages from the chief ministers of West Bengal, Assam, Tripura anguished by an estimated 10 million refugees pouring in from East Pakistan. "What are you doing about it?" she demanded. When he asked in return "What can I do about it?" she said "I want you to march into East Pakistan!"

In reply she got a lesson in geography. Summer was approaching: the Himalayan passes would be open to Chinese interference. The approaching monsoon would turn the rivers of Bengal into oceans: lines of communication and supply would be difficult to maintain. Also, the heavy downpours would affect visibility and hence there would be little support from the air force. He urged

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that war must be deferred until December to enable the services to be fully prepared.

The cabinet meeting was adjourned until 4 p.m. While the others exited Indira told Sam to stay. He asked her, "Prime Minister, shall I send in my resignation on grounds of health — mental or physical?" She brushed his offer aside, trying to assimilate all that he had said. He convinced her, "My job is to fight to win, not to lose," and estimated 15 days from the start of operations for the fall of Dacca. As it happened, War began on December 3, 1971 with the strafing of Indian airfields by Pakistani aircraft in the western sector. On December 16, 1971 Lt Gen Niazi, commander of the Pak forces in East Pakistan surrendered to Arora, commander of India's Eastern Army. India's political leadership did not accept the services' advice to continue the war in the west and settle the Kashmir issue once and for all. Instead Indira chose to meet Pakistan Prime Minister Zulfikar Bhutto in Shimla. Bhutto "promised to settle everything in six months. I told her he's made a monkey out of you!" Sam relates to Jehan.

An ensuing problem was to move the hated West Pakistani prisoners of war (POWs), now under Indian protection, out of Bangladesh almost overnight and they were moved into the vacant army peace time cantonments (hurriedly turned into POW camps) which they continued to occupy for one-and-a-half years while the Indian troops returning from the front had to live in tents. A poignant reward for Sam's concern for all men in his care was a line-up of the governor's staff when he went to Lahore two months after the conflict. They wanted to shake his hand and one man took off his turban, placed it at Sam's feet noting he had five sons among the POWs in India who kept him informed how well they were being looked after. He would never again believe any nasty descriptions of Hindus. Such statements from the 'enemy' contrasted oddly with the complaints which began to be aired against Sam by members of Indira's cabinet and it hurt him that she did



In Coonoor in 1993, awaiting the building of Stavka

nothing to squelch them.

At the peak of his popularity Manekshaw couldn't go anywhere without people asking him, "General when are you taking over (the country)?" Summoned to meet the Prime Minister he found an upset Indira sitting at her kidney-shaped table. When he asked if she had a problem, she looked him "straight in the face and said 'You are my problem. Everybody says you are going to take over from me.'" Though he assured her that he had "no intention or thought of getting involved in politics," it appears that Indira never quite overcame her sense of insecurity. Apart from conferring the Vishist Seva Medal and promoting Sam to be India's first Field Marshal, the Government made no use of Sam's immense abilities after he relinquished office as Chief of Army Staff in January 1973.

The slack was filled by the corporate world who saw in him an excellent organizer and man manager. On the board of 14 companies and chairman of six he jets his way to and fro spending time en route with his daughters Sherry and Maja in Madras and Delhi respectively.

At one stage he had taken to the pastoral set up, keeping milch cattle, growing tea. Artifacts, presents, professional and personal papers are already in the Manekshaw museum in Shillong, the regimental home of the Gorkhas. Much else will follow there in the fullness of time he had told *Parsiana* 10 years ago.

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wife a year ago has deprived him of his anchor and solace, complaints form no part of his psyche. He is "quite happy" with the way things went in his professional life and "very happy" with his children his grandchildren and his Gorkhas.

[A VCD (video compact disc) copy of *In War and Peace: the life of Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw, MC* is available from the Parzor Foundation, F-17 Hauz Khas Enclave, New Delhi 110016 against a donation of Rs 350. E-mail: sethnaadi@hotmail.com or shernazcama@unescomparzor.com]

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A soldier called Sam

Sam Manekshaw's term as Chief of Army Staff as seen through the eyes of an admirer

Arnavaz S. Mama

Manekshaw lore got a kickstart last year with the publication of *Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw, MC: Soldiering with Dignity* by Lt Gen (ret'd) Depinder Singh. The erstwhile Military Assistant to the Chief Of Army Staff was witness from the wings (and occasionally prompter) to the high drama of 1969-73.

In an amalgam of description, narration and anecdotal highlights Singh sets out to document the General's "prodigious capacity for work...an irreverence

towards red tape, an iron determination, an eye for detail (as well as grand strategy)... a shrewd, sympathetic and sincere ability in management that came naturally."

"The Chief" as Singh refers to him most of the time, functioned from a simple, austere office: "Wood panelled walls with a simple pencil sketch of Gandhi on the wall, and the remainder bare. Behind his chair were two bronze statues of Victoria Cross winners,

Havildars Lachhman Gurung of the 4th Battalion of his Regiment, the 8th Gorkha Rifles, and Agan Singh Rai of 2nd Battalion, the 5th Gorkha Rifles. After the Pakistani surrender in East Bengal (now Bangladesh) one of the original copies of the surrender document also adorned the wall. There was a maroon wall-to-wall carpet and simple brown curtains. In one corner was his table with an impressive array of telephones towards his right and behind these, trays, for the various papers that went in towards his left and, no matter how high the bundle, went out very quickly indeed to his right."

The Government of India's Pay Commission had once asked the fastidious Manekshaw, for whom 'informal' dress meant no less than a lounge suit, why the Army needed its kit maintenance allowance. In reply the General requested one of the Commission's bureaucrat members to step out and stand beside him. He then addressed the Commission, "Gentlemen, behold my dress: See my shirt, see my trousers, see the starch, the perfect ironing, the shine on my belt and shoes, see my haircut, and feel my chin. Now look at this gentleman. See his crumpled bush shirt, the creases in his trousers, look at his shoes: I beg your pardon, he hasn't any shoes, he has chappals and no socks!

"At lunch time, I will go home, take off my uniform for my batman to straighten out, have a wash and then, after lunch relax by reading a book or listening to music; after this I will put on my uniform, brush my hair and come here for the afternoon session. Now take this gentleman: he will sit on one of these sofas, eat from a tiffin box he is carrying. After we finish for the day, I will go home, have a bath, have a whiskey, put on a lounge suit and go to a party. This gentleman will also probably be at the same party, having gone to it straight from here, and wearing the same clothes as now." The kit maintenance allowance continues, notes Singh.

When Manekshaw assumed office as Army Chief in 1969 his first preoccupation was to "better the lot of all ranks by constructing new and more comfortable accommodation, improving existing amenities and introducing new ones and, to quote his words, 'to instill in the officer cadre that quality so lacking now — dignity.' Second: reorganization, re-

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equipping and regrouping of the Army to make it more responsive to the threats the country faced."

Singh reports two instances of Sam's obsession with being "polite and correct." Leaving his residence, Army House, one morning Sam's driver, "used to the flag and stars giving him right of way," charged headlong into the traffic causing the car of the scientific adviser to the defence minister to swerve and stop. An angry Manekshaw "rocketed" his assistant for providing such a poor driver. But first he dictated a note of apology to the scientific adviser. On another occasion at a defence ministry conference on a hot day, the defence secretary peremptorily called to one of the attending colonels: "You there, open that window." "Before the officer could get up came a sharp 'sit down' from the Chief who had entered through another door at almost the same time. Then, in the silence following his bellow, he turned to the Secretary and said "Mr Secretary don't you ever again address one of my officers in



that tone of voice. You may say, 'Sam, would you please open that window?' and I will open the window for you. That officer is a colonel and not, 'you there.' Harish Sarin, a very powerful civil servant, mumbled some explanation on the lines that he had meant no offence to which the reply was, 'I don't care what you meant, I heard what you said and did not like it.'"

It seems to have been the custom in the Army to save on its construction budget and return a fair portion of the allocation at the end of the year. The junior officers jested that the more money a senior commander surrendered, the better became his chances for promotion, recounts Singh. Manekshaw pursued the contrary path, ensuring new constructions, better amenities and proper maintenance. When he noticed signs of water seepage on the walls of the newly constructed officers' quarters in Delhi, he sent the quartermaster general and the engineer-in-chief, neither of whom were even aware of the seepage,

to inspect it and report within the hour. "Some may question the propriety of sending two general officers on a job such as this, but the Chief was quite clear in his mind that, unless such lapses were checked and someone came down with a heavy hand, officers and men would continue to suffer in silence."

In tune with the requirements of modern warfare, Manekshaw advocated a series of changes in the tradition-bound army, demanding more sophisticated equipment and better education among the officers and the jawans. He urged government to affiliate the Defence Services' educational institutions with the Jawaharlal Nehru University. The idea was to equate graduation from the National Defence Academy to a bachelor's degree, from the Defence Services Staff College to a master's degree and successful completion of the course at the National Defence College with a PhD. Lower examinations could be equated with the corresponding school certificates. This, he believed, would enable a retired serviceman to hold a civil degree, so necessary for a civilian job. The proposal had not yet been accepted by the end of Sam's term in office but has since been implemented. He had also envis-

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L to R: author Depinder Singh, Pakistan's General Tikka Khan and Sam at Lahore Airport

aged giving selected officers study leave for higher education for the benefit of the service and the individual.

Another change, on a mundane level, has been documented by Singh: "Over the years the standard of cooks in officers' messes had deteriorated sharply. This could be attributed to a variety of reasons the principal one possibly being the rising cost of living and inability of an underpaid officer to afford good, rich and varied fare. Consequently, when one was invited to a party in an officers' mess one could forcast the cuisine with a reasonable degree of accuracy. It would usually consist of roast chicken, vegetables in some form, and caramel custard. And not well cooked

either," the Chief used to remark. So orders went out to the quartermaster general to organize special training for mess cooks under highly qualified instructors ('Get them from the Oberoi Intercontinental if need be,' he was told) to teach the cooks the finer points of the culinary art. The requirement was for variety which should be well cooked. Rich food was not required and, therefore, need not be taught. So the training started and there was a noticeable improvement within a year; at least it became difficult to forecast what one was likely to get."

The concern for the officers and jawans ran concurrently with concern for the operational efficiency of the army as a whole. Additional battalions were raised; the role of some of the older ones transformed; firing ranges were electrified saving time and manpower as manu-

ally moved targets became electronically operated; light regiments of the artillery with lighter caliber and longer range guns and smaller manpower "increased the Army's hitting power without undue burden on the exchequer," notes Singh.

He carried his Army Commanders and Principal Staff Officers (PSOs) with him, soliciting and carefully considering their views before executing changes. "(So that) when I leave, the next Chief will not start changing everything we have done. This will happen if he is not consulted; if he is consulted then he will spend his time and energy on improving things, not in lesser matters," Sam explained the reasoning behind it. As for defence procurement — the lucrative business of "gun-running" with its astronomical figures that has dogged and blurred the reputation and integrity of many a man, the Chief had declared that "he could not care less which country a particular item belonged to or whose pockets were lined in the process, 'the principle is and always will be, that the Army will get the best equipment'" — along with the requisite spares, an innovation. However some weapons systems were failures and the Chief confessed his



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mistakes to the Prime Minister and accepted full responsibility.

Visiting formations/units regularly, Singh describes how Manekshaw "would invite problems by persisting: 'Look, sweetheart, you must have problems. Even I have problems, so how can I believe you do not have any?' Finally the officer concerned would open up and tell him his problems and those of his command. These points were then condensed on return to Delhi and raised at the next PSOs conference. Then, knowing that from the following day he would start checking, a veritable commotion would occur at Army Headquarters. As far as the formation or unit visited was concerned, its problems were resolved and deficiencies made up, leaving the officers there in a happy daze." Even his PSOs were made to undertake such visits "not to enjoy their hospitality, but to ask them what their problems are and then to sort them out. I don't want any witch hunts: the aim is quite simple — help the troops!"

This attitude was exhibited by



Talking to troops in the Chhamb Sector

Manekshaw even when he was Army Commander in the West, writes Singh, recalling his experience as a brigade major in the winter of 1964 at Palampur. A hill station in the Kangra Valley popular enough in summer with commanders and staff officers, it was shunned in the winter. Visiting the unit just then, Manekshaw went about on his inspection rounds, and asked when the chief engineer had visited to be told about six to seven months ago. Coming upon a barrack whose roof had blown off during

a storm three months earlier, he wanted to know and was told that some married other ranks (junior commissioned officers) who used to live there are now housed in tents. "He turned to me and said, 'You are going to get such a rush of visitors that you will be sick of them. But don't let them browbeat you as they are all coming to help, even if their tempers, ruffled after I have had a word with them, indicate otherwise.' So it transpired that, in the next few weeks of the middle of winter, Palampur was the silent and startled witness to a constant stream of high-ranking visitors, each vying with the other to be helpful," writes Singh.

On one such visit to the 6th Battalion of the 8th Gorkha Rifles Sam asked the Commanding Officer's stick orderly if he knew who he was. "Sam Bahadur" came the response and Sam Bahadur it has always remained among the troops. Even a marching tune was composed in his honor and so named by a bandmaster of the 8th Gorkha Rifles.

Between April and November 1971,

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during the feverish preparations for war, he visited all formations. Addressing the officers and men he would say, "There will be no scavenging. My Army has soldiers in it, not thieves. Secondly, no womanizing. I have been all over the world," he would remark with a naughty smile, "and I can say with authority that we have the most beautiful women in the world. Why go to lesser women? Furthermore, our fight is not with their women, it is with their Army. Therefore, when you feel tempted, put your hands in your pockets and think of Sam Manekshaw." This invariably brought the house down. The third point was an exhortation to all ranks to display valor and aggressiveness. With this, he would also tell the troops about what other preparations were afoot, what equipment was being procured, and when they would get it to meet their requirements and to make up for their deficiencies. Here his fantastic memory used to have free rein as he reeled off facts and figures of imports, of dates when ships carrying our requirements left various ports, when these were expected in home ports, and so on.

"When he addressed officers separately, a little more bluntness would creep

in. He would tell them of the crisis of confidence that was creeping in between subordinates and superiors at practically all levels. He would emphasize the need for developing mutual trust, of telling the truth, irrespective of what the consequence may be, of inculcating the quality of 'sharam' by which he implied the facing up to one's obligations and discharging them to the best of one's ability. He would tell them of the incorrect, untruthful and often exaggerated reports he was continuously getting from areas where troops were actively engaged, and how these reports stretched his incredulity and tested his patience, how wrong assessments could be made if one relied on them and the great harm that would inevitably follow if this was done."

The Indo-Pak War of 1965 had seen a large number of senior officers sacked, some undeservedly. This time, Manekshaw told his more senior officers, "There will be no sacking. We are all doing the present job for the first time and people are bound to make mistakes. It is the senior's job to correct and to teach and, most important, to tolerate. So, don't come to me asking for a subordinate to be sacked, because, if you do, I shall ask what part you played in helping him, and

heaven help you if you cannot give me a satisfactory reply."

As presiding officer of the Chiefs of Staff Committee, Manekshaw welcomed the Navy's role in the ensuing war. By November 30, 1971 all preparations were complete. It had been decided to commence operations on December 4, 1971. As it happened, Pakistani aircraft attacked Indian airfields in the western sector on the evening of December 3, 1971. The news was personally delivered by the defence secretary K. B. Lal at 5 p.m. to the top brass assembled in the Operations Room (OR) which didn't have a telephone! The Western Army Commander, was thus unable to contact the services directly. Before leaving the OR Manekshaw instructed the director of military operations to get the OR a telephone. This was done within the hour, states Singh.

Personal security was never high on Manekshaw's agenda. "My Gorkhas and my dogs are more than adequate to look after me," he said. "A day or so later, L. N. Mishra, then minister of foreign trade and a very close personal friend of the Chief, drove into Army House at about 11 p.m. The guard, recognizing the familiar car, saluted and waved it on with-



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out bothering to check who was inside. Arriving in the porch the minister dismounted and walked into the master bedroom through the open doors, stepping over six peaceful sleeping dogs. The Chief was asleep, so the horrified minister woke him up and told him how secure he was. I learnt about this the following day; thereafter an additional military policemen guard was added to the 'Gorkhas and dogs.'"

Singh attributes the victory of 1971 to the "great rapport that existed at all levels: between the politicians and the services, among the three services, and finally, in each service itself... What would have happened if hostilities had commenced in April-May 1971?... It took a very brave man indeed to stand up to Indira Gandhi and get her to see his point of view despite the enormous political pressure she was subjected to. Fortunately for the country, such a man was there. We were equally fortunate in having a Prime Minister who took the advice of the professional and, unlike latter day politicians, subordinated political exigencies to national interests."

Though the Prime Minister wished that Manekshaw receive the surrender, he refused, stating, "it was Jagjit (Singh) Arora's show and he must bask in the limelight." He was busy ensuring the safety of the POWs, the settlement of war widows and the medals and awards earned by his officers and men. He also helped the Indian government with diplomatically ironing out the glitches on the Indo-Pak frontier. He was awarded the Vishist Seva Medal and promoted to Field Marshal and relegated to history.

This is no attempt at an objective biography. Sloshed by Manekshaw's ability and charm Singh admits, "The respect, affection and admiration I had for him has risen to a degree where I came to regard him as nothing short of infallible."

Because of this and the plethora of anecdotes at Singh's command there are occasions when he tends to digress. For the lay reader it nonetheless provides gleanings of information on how the Army functions (or functioned) in a light, readable style. And a racy pen picture of a commander of vitality, verve and a twinkle in his eye — a man with whom all of India identified in the heady days of the birth of Bangladesh, now a distant memory to the few who knew, unknown and unsung for the rest.

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HPY's sweet seventeen

This year the Holiday Programme for Youth witnesses its highest enrolment

Hilla P. Guzder

"Who says Parsis are a dying race — look over here!" remarked guest of honor and eminent orthopedic surgeon Dr Kekoo Kavarana, sweeping his gaze from his vantage point on stage over a hall full of Zoroastrians in the springtide of life. "It may be quite a while before we become Jurassic Baug!" he quipped.

Confessing at the inaugural function on April 26, 2003 that he was "totally unaware that such a program existed," Kavarana said "his eyes popped" when he saw the Holiday Programme for Youth (HPY) booklet with its mosaic of activities — from the academic to the athletic, educative to entertaining, pleasurable to philanthropic. Under the auspices of the Bombay Parsi Punchayet (BPP), the mettle detector HPY assembles Parsi lads and lasses fresh out from school from all over India. Conducted in the month of April — in Bombay's dog days of summer — the challenge for chief co-ordinator Diana Marfatia and her dedicated band of young organizers is not only to stimulate brain and brawn, turn the dawdler into front-runner, but also to prevent the 27-day program from descending into the lap of Morpheus (the god of dreams) and to reignite the spark in teenagers suffering from post-standard X languor and enervation!

"There is no program in the community which is parallel to ours in volume, magnitude, scope and quality," Marfatia told the parents, students and invitees in the high-raftered BJPC (Byramjee Jeejeebhoy Parsee Charitable) Institution hall. Marfatia is also the principal of the BJPC school. "This year HPY's 220 participants (121 boys and 99 girls) have come from 91 schools (71 schools of Bombay and 20 from other parts of India). In a dwindling community our numbers are swelling!" she smiled.

The 26 outstation participants this year traveled from places as distant as Jammu, Ajmer, Mhow, Nagpur, Baroda, Surat, Ahmedabad, Ankleshwar, Navsari

and Poona with the BPP providing accommodation at the F. S. Parukh Dharamshalla for those who needed it. Like its predecessors, HPY's 17th edition this year charged but a token registration fee and included workshops and talks on a gamut of careers — from media to medicine to new millennium callings like jobs in a call center, or the introduced-this-year skill-based hobbies like fabric painting, candle and chocolate making. Sundays were put to good use with a blood donation drive through St George Hospital's Blood Bank and the navjote of a Parsi child. Visits to the Braille Press, the cleaning of agiaries and the staging of the play *Black Comedy* by previous years' HPYites (the proceeds being donated to charity) contributed towards the goal of transforming callow youth to mature individuals. Tough and fiercely competed events like talent and personality contests, debates and JAM (Just-a-Minute) encourage quick-wittedness and thinking on one's feet. Keeping the ball rolling with their days in the sun are the football, cricket, basketball matches, swimming competitions, etc.

"HPY is your life insurance," last year's HPYite Kaiyan Mistree told his fellow students. "You are trained and counter trained to handle any encounter! Omniscient Diana is the super glue, the cementing factor holding us together. But... if she offers to give you a lift in her zippy, turbo-charged Santro, *kusti-busti karene bèsjo* (say your prayers before you get in)!" From the expansion of the mind, the exposure to new ideas, the exaltation of achievement to the joy of watching the "*fatakari* (good looking) Parsi girls" walking the ramp, HPY provides an "enduring, learning experience and sheer fun with Zoroastrian youth from all over India," eulogized Mistree.

Chairing the inaugural function, BPP trustee Dadi Engineer's piquant humor surfaced on many an occasion. Introducing the guest of honor (Kavarana), Engi-

neer quipped: "The seller of bananas and the orthopedic surgeon are the best of friends!" Eminent author and lawyer Armin Wandrewala's presence as chief guest brought forth the following story from Engineer: "If you make a mistake, your client hangs seven feet above the ground," says the doctor to the lawyer. Retorts the latter: "And if you make a mistake, the man goes seven feet below and no one even knows about it!"

"I knew I was running a major risk being introduced by Dadi Engineer," smiled Wandrewala. Recalling that she was among the first batch of students over 20 years ago at what was known at that time as the leadership training program (which blossomed later into the full-fledged HPY), Wandrewala traced her progressive association with HPY — from young achiever, to eminent Parsi to chief guest!

Stating that taking risks is very much a part of life, Wandrewala briefly mentioned the love of adventure which saw her trekking the Indo-Tibetan border completely alone — without planning or bookings, encountering high ridges, valleys and streams and she did not even know how to swim! Wandrewala encapsulated her experiences in the Himalayas in a book *Alone in the Valley of the Gods*. Her crime fiction *The Turning* has been translated into German and Engineer announced that her third book will be published soon. "But happiness does not necessarily come with money, success or fame," Wandrewala told the assembled youngsters. "If there are two roads which seem equally attractive, you have to take the right one — what you are comfortable with and what God will be happy with... When your career goes for a toss, when you lose your partner or your company closes down, you have to overcome obstacles and grow as a person. The slapped cheek can also smile," she said.

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(From left) Top row: Marfatia; Vajifdar, Azmin Mistry, Sinor, Anahita Mehta, Gazder; Siodia and Kekoo Kavarana
2nd row: Billimoria with Sinor; Danesh Irani and Mody
3rd row: Arshish Dastur, Polishwala, Hoorzan Irani, Ayesha Mistry
4th row: Ramiyar Karanjia, Godrej Dotivala, Silloo Kavarana, Wandrewala, Engineer, Kekoo Kavarana, Dinshaw Mehta, Master at the inaugural; Bhujwalla felicitates Wandrewala
5th row: Mistree and Patel; Shroff (at the mike) and dignitaries at the valedictory function

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cated Engineer, quoting Oliver Goldsmith: "If I am a cobbler the best cobbler, I will be, if I am a tinker, no tinker can mend a kettle like me."

"The BPP has been blamed, chastised, criticized for many things. But for HPY there is no flak — just universal appreciation," stated BPP chairman Minoo Shroff, conducting the proceedings at the valedictory function on May 22. Getting on with people is a vital ingredient in life, he told the youngsters. "So either convince or be convinced — else you'll be just a disruptionist," he remarked. Commending the value of time Shroff stated: "We ourselves hate to wait but we don't bat an eyelid if we keep other people waiting." The Japanese as a nation exhibit this exemplary quality. "They are very irritated if you are even a second late," said the chairman, who was honored by the Japanese in December 2000 with The Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays with Neck Ribbon for promoting Indo-Japanese trade and friendship.

The prize distribution witnessed an effervescence of energy, with many a

small town lad or lass giving the city guys and gals a run for their prizes! "As I was distributing the awards, it was pleasant to notice the dominance of girl prize winners!" remarked guest of honor



Khorshed Daboo (left) receives felicitations from Bhujwala as organizers look on

Dr Nawaz Mody, Sir Pherozeshah Mehta Professor of Civics and Politics, University of Mumbai.

"The community is not dying," she observed. "It is active, but where are the Parsis in the revenue and administrative services, police and defense services (save

in small numbers), or in decision-making bodies of the government?" Hitherto Parsis were in the forefront of education; today established Parsi schools have but few Parsi students. "Other communities are providing for their own kind, but our community is lagging behind," she noted, exhorting the BPP as well as Parsi philanthropists to "invest a little bit more in setting up colleges or sponsoring brighter students in specialized courses." The BPP can help the BJPC Institution, for example, to introduce first the bachelor's then the master's degree in management studies. For youngsters, more and more avenues are opening, particularly in new fields, she asserted.

"Standing here, I feel I am back in my office," smiled chief guest Hoshang Sinor, (then) joint managing director, ICICI Bank. "ICICI Bank is a very young organization. Youngsters surround me all the time and my last six years with this Bank have changed me completely! Today 34-38-year-olds hold senior executive positions. I have learnt a lot from them!"

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on a postcard," narrated the banker who started his career with that bastion of Parsis — the Central Bank of India! When the call for an interview came, the fatherly interviewer ushered him in: "Aav, dikra, bess (come in and sit down, son)." A few questions later came the appointment: "Dikra, will you start from tomorrow?" Today, cutthroat competition compels students to face the rigors of written tests, a series of interviews, group discussions, etc. The environment has so changed that presently parents and grandparents rely on their five-year-old to set right the TV, video or mobile that is foxing their technological abilities! "Expose your children to the advances in the world. If you have to choose between a new fridge, washing machine or computer for your child, the computer should be your first choice," counseled Sinor. "Encourage your children to travel. Even if you cannot afford to go far, go to Karad, go to Kerala, meet people and understand different cultures."

Honoring the HPY this year with her presence as invitee was Basanti Roy, the education inspectress of Bombay's south zone with almost 500 schools in her jurisdiction, who was described by Marfatia as "a perfect role model for all of us principals." Also present was the

principal of the Anjuman-Islam Girls High School and Junior College Najma Kazi who had just a week earlier been honored with a national award for best teacher and administrator.

Commending HPY's talented team of 12 co-organizers and groups-in-charge, master of ceremonies at the valedictory function Dilber De Vitre touched upon the "understanding, dedication and patience" required to control 220 noisy 15-year-olds for four weeks and implement the day-to-day activities of the Programme. "They (the organizers) are at my house every single Tuesday evening for the last six months," announced Marfatia. Receiving lusty applause was sports-in-charge and seniormost HPY alumnus Khorram Siodia who has been on the organizing team for eight years, Fabian Panthaki, the literary events-in-charge, Shirzad Khory, performing arts-in-charge, organizer Priya Bhujwala who compered the inaugural function though she is Poona-based, as well as group heads Kaynaz Dadinath, Raika Gazder (back with HPY despite being in the Intensive Care Unit during the pendency of the Programme), Pearl Mistry, Khursheed Mistry, De Vitre, Scherezade Palkhiwalla, visually impaired Shireen Mowdawalla and the youngest at 17

years Hoshaang Gotla. For the production of *Black Comedy*, the cast would rehearse from 9 p.m. to midnight, stated Marfatia, eulogizing the commitment of on-stage and off-stage HPYites.

Marfatia completes an amazing 17 years with HPY, the first two as facilitator and 15 years as chief coordinator and bedrock of the Programme. With BPP chief executive Behram Dastur and senior executive Sheroo Master on the organizing team, BPP office assistants Bakhtawar Dastur and Persi Mistry shoulder much of the administrative burden.

Wearing the crown this year as Mr HPY and Ms HPY were Arshish Dastur and Zenia Vajifdar, with Taronish Bharucha and Anahita Mehta the respective runners up. Picking up the trophy for best participant in each group were Mehta, Vajifdar, Azmin Mistry and Delaviz Gazder. At the popular and packed-to-capacity fashion show competition, Zahan Batliwala and Zenia Tafti were adjudged the best male and female models, with Arzaan Polishwala and Ayesha Billimoria the best male and female catwalker. Displaying prowess on the playfield was Danesh Irani who lifted the Best Sportsman trophy.

"I came (for HPY) from Lourdes Convent, Surat, and staying away from

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family and friends for a long span of four weeks seemed to be very tedious initially," participant Shahenaz Kapadia told *Parsiana*. "However the support and encouragement of the HPY team indeed helped me greatly to unravel my talents. I am returning with lots of information, a few certificates and memories of friends." Added Dilshad Contractor of St Mary's Convent, Ajmer, with its tiny pocket of Parsis: "It was absolutely fantastic meeting so many youths of my own age and forging friendships."

"In a sense, this is not the end but only the end of the beginning, because these participants have now become members of the BPP Youth Club and we will continue to mail them our newsletter and will be planning and organizing activities for them right through the year. We will continue to monitor their progress and guide and assist them as and when they need our assistance," stated Marfatia. "Make perseverance your bosom friend and hope your guardian angel," Abban Patel, principal of Sir C. J. High School told the students. "Absorb this enriching and enlightening program known as HPY for you will not pass this way again, except as organizers!"

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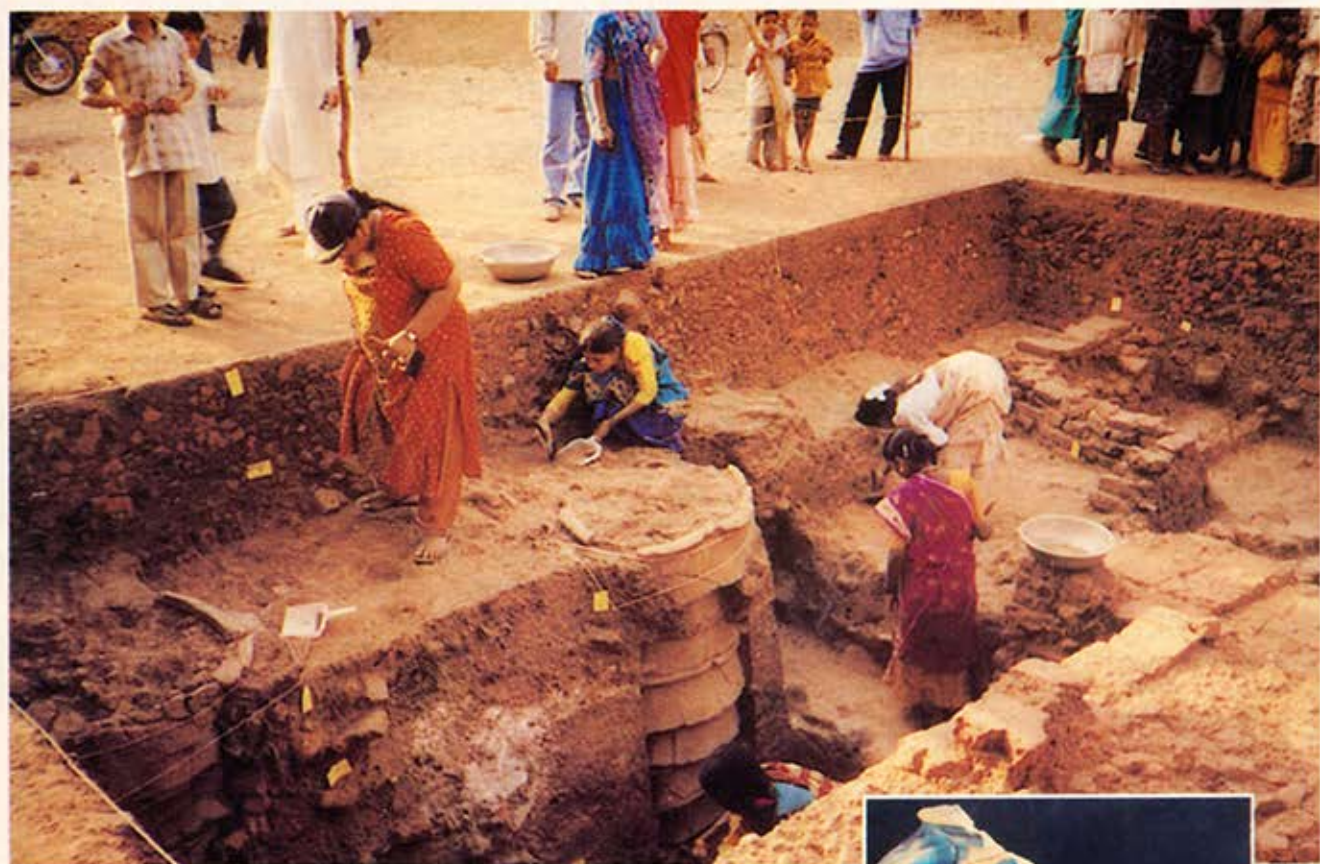
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Digging into our past



The World Zarathushti Cultural Foundation excavation in Sanjan has unearthed some interesting artifacts and information

Dr Homi Dhalla

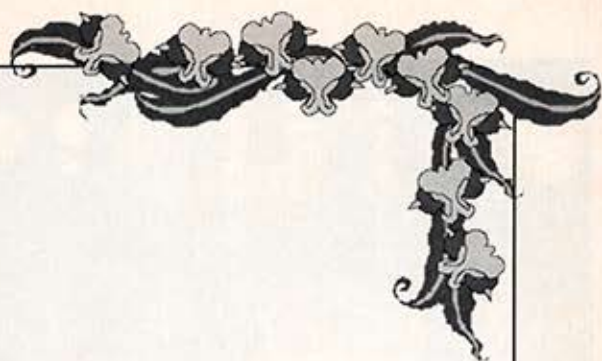
It was with the express aim of proving the veracity of the *Qissa-i-Sanjan* and to unearth details about the early history of the Parsi community that the World Zarathushti Cultural Foundation (WZCF) undertook an archeological project to excavate the ancient site of Sanjan and to conserve the Bahrot caves. Spearheaded by Dr Homi Dhalla (founder-president of the WZCF), Dr Mani Kamerkar, historian, and under the guidance of Dr S. P. Gupta, chairman of the Indian Archeological Society, New Delhi, this project has completed two

seasons of archeological excavations at Sanjan (2002 and 2003). The team working on the excavations comprises of archeologists Dr Kurush Dalal (field director), Dr Abhijit Dandekar, Rukshana Nanji, Rhea Mitra and site supervisors Rohini Pandey, P. Aravazhi and Suresh Bhonde.

The five main objectives of the excavations are: to establish the existence and location of the ancient settlement of Sanjan, to determine the date of its founding, to unearth the nature of its occupation, to ascertain the date of its desertion, to explore the role of Sanjan in the maritime trade of the Indian Ocean.

The exploration and excavations have brought to light the fact that the ancient settlement of Sanjan was situated about 2.5 km away from the Sanjan railway station, on the northern bank of the Varoli river creek. It extends over a vast area, indicating that when occupied, Sanjan would have been a thriving large city. Today, the ancient site is greatly disturbed due to human occupation, commercial and agricultural activities and construction work.

A view of the excavation of the ringwell (top) and a turquoise glazed ware three handled vessel



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Excavation findings: glass, carnelian and terracotta beads (far left) and a silver coin bearing an Arabic legend

Prior to the commencement of the actual excavation work in January 2002, explorations were undertaken and a suitable area was demarcated for the laying of trenches. This area is on what is locally known as the 'Bandar.' While the horizontal area of this excavation covered 5 m x 7.5 m, the vertical depth of the trenches went to 5.35 m. From these trenches emerged the tangible evidence of a history, which so far had remained oral.

The excavations revealed two structural phases with numerous features, large quantities of diverse ceramics and various artifacts. These finds have generated much interest and excitement since a lot of this material is being reported for the first time in India. The first phase of occupation rests upon layer seven and is represented by a large structure of burnt bricks. Parts of walls — some with up to 15 courses of bricks still extant, and a ringwell are the constituents of this structural complex. The ringwell has nine terracotta rings, each fitting into the other and going down vertically to a depth of 3.2 m. This is an extremely important feature since ringwells or soak-pits denote a sophisticated drainage system and are indicative of urbanization. Moreover, the practice of building and using ringwells was current during the early historical period in India and was abandoned in the medieval times. Finding ringwells at a

supposed early medieval site like Sanjan is, therefore, unusual.

The second phase, overlying the first, consisted of fragmentary walls of burnt bricks, floors made of rammed brickbat and cobbles and two more ringwells. A large number of glass fragments, glass vessels, beads, bangle pieces, metal artifacts, coins, animal bones and pottery were found. Prominent amongst these finds were two complete glass bottles, an iron ladle, antimony rods, eye beads, nails and even a small coil of gold wire. Several copper and silver coins were retrieved. Dr Shobhana Gokhale, the well-known numismatist has studied these and identifies one coin as a probable Satavahana issue, one as a coin of the Sultan of Sind, one as an Indo-Sassanian Gadhiya coin and another fragment as a Sassanian issue. One small silver issue with an elephant on the obverse and a Brahmi legend on the reverse may in her opinion, belong to the Rashtrakuta period.

Undoubtedly, it is the ceramics at

Sanjan that have proved to be a big discovery, causing quite a stir in the archeological world. While West Asian ceramics have been reported from the Far East by archeologists like Glover, Ho and Carswell and Chinese wares have been found in excavations in West Asia, it is for the first time in India that West Asian pottery, Chinese celadon and porcelain and indigenous slipped and coarse wares have all been found at a single site within a stratified context. From large storage and transportational vessels to small cups and bowls, from the elaborately decorated to the starkly plain, the range of vessel types and wares indicate a complex social structure and a sophisticated lifestyle. Some of the wares of particular note are Chinese celadon, porcelain, glazed grey/stone ware, glazed buff ware, glazed pink ware, pink ware, Sassanian-Islamic turquoise glazed ware, slipped glazed ware, slipped red ware, coarse red ware, etc. Apparently trade contacts existed with West Asia on the one hand and the Far East on the other. As there is no precedent to such a find in India, there is a serious paucity of material for cross-reference or study. However, the material is being painstakingly analyzed.

Some diagnostic turquoise glazed ware sherds from Sanjan find an identical match with pottery found in the excavations at Susa and Nishapur in Iran (seventh-10th century AD). Of the large quantities of glass fragments and vessels, mention must be made of two particular bottles which are identical to those found in the Al Sabah collection (Kuwait) and which have their



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origin in the Mesopotamian region.

After a year of post excavation work, the team returned to Sanjan in January 2003 to continue the work of the previous season. Due to circumstances beyond the control of the team, it was not possible to work on the Bandar. Hence another relatively undisturbed site was selected for excavation. This site is located on a hillock-like high mound on the western bank of the Koli-Khadi creek, about half a km away from the trenches of the first season. The mound showed no signs of recent human activity, other than a few fruit trees and shrubs. Excavations at this site turned up some very unusual and dramatic finds, although the habitation deposit was not very thick. Unlike the excavations at the Bandar the excavations here covered a far longer area horizontally and less depth vertically.

Structural remains and features started to emerge almost immediately as the digging commenced. Brick platform and floors extended in most of the trenches that were opened. Antiquities much like those of the previous season were retrieved. A coin of Allaudin Khilji and a small elephant shaped zoomorphic bottle made of terracotta are of significance. A surprising difference in the distribution of pottery was noticed at this site. There appeared to be predominance of slipped and coarse wares and a low representation of the glazed wares found so profusely on the Bandar. On the other hand, a significant amount of porcelain was also found and unlike the porcelain found on the Bandar, some of these sherds have painted designs on them. Three large storage jars/water troughs were found sunk into and fixed in a brick floor.

However, the singularly most important and dramatic discovery of this season was the uncovering of six human skeletons. These were found to be lying in an extended position, due north south, with the head in the north. The faces are all turned to the right and the arms appear to have been crossed over the chest midriff section. They are all adult individuals. No discernable burial pits can be seen. Five out of the six skeletons were carefully exhumed and exposed. They are currently under the study of Dr Walimbe and Dr Veena Tripathi of Deccan College, Poona who will also subject them to DNA analysis and other tests. The results of these tests are eagerly awaited.

The excavations of the second season came to a close at the end of March. Post excavation analysis of the material and reference work is now underway. Study of the artifacts, pottery, animal and human remains, etc and tests such as carbon dating and DNA analysis will help us put together the jigsaw pieces of our history in the near future.

From the evidence that has so far emerged, it is clear that Sanjan was a thriving large urban center with distinct West Asian contacts and possible trade with China. The population had an apparently complex and urban life style. The numismatics, ceramics and structural evidence point to a prosperous culture that can be tentatively dated from the seventh century AD to the 13th century AD. The hypothesis that the Parsis settled at Sanjan and set up an elaborate trade network with the Persian Gulf bears out very well when we look at the physical evidence.

Plans for the excavations of the third season are already being finalized. The archeologists hope to concentrate on the excavation of the dakhma mound at Sanjan and the conservation of any structural remains that may be found. The WZCF is also planning an exhibition to enable the public and particularly the Parsi community to see the tangible, physical remains of our rich historical past.

(For a long while, it had been my intention to embark on an excavation project at Sanjan with a view to obtain fresh insights about our early history. Fortunately, this opportunity arose after some renowned archeologists and other experts came to study the Bahrot caves. These excavations were made possible due to grants received from the Archaeological Survey of India and the Indian Council of Historical Research, New Delhi.)

Founder president of the World Zarathushti Cultural Foundation and a scholar of Zoroastrianism, Dr Homi Dhalia



has represented the community at various international conferences and interfaith meets. Among the community projects he is involved in are the conservation of Bahrot caves, the

Sanjan excavation, documentation of Parsi history and the introduction of solar concentrators at Bombay's Doongerwadi.

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Gujarati Journalism - IV

The tryst with truth

Dadabhai Naoroji's *Rast Gofar* was the voice of social reform within the community

Dr Ratan R. Marshall

The Parsi contribution to the Gujarati language, journalism and printing is legendary. The first Gujarati types were cut by a Parsi, the first Gujarati newspaper and the first Gujarati almanac were published by a Parsi.

Dr Ratan R. Marshall of Surat, a giant in the field of Gujarati literature, over 56 years ago submitted a dissertation on the "History of Gujarati Journalism." He notes this was the first dissertation accepted for a PhD in the Gujarati department of Bombay University.

Two years ago Marshall prepared a paper on the contribution of Parsis to Gujarati journalism for a seminar on Irani-Parsi culture. The paper was translated into English by Prof Ashok N. Desai, head of the English department, Z. F. Wadia Women's College and N. K. Jhota College of Commerce.

An edited and abridged version of Marshall's paper is being serialized in five parts in *Parsiana*.

The first three sections dealt with the establishment of the *Mumbai Samachar*, *Jam-e-Jamshed*, *Kaiser-E-Hind* and *Saanj Vartaman*.

The Parsis started a number of journals that disappeared, after a short or long life. The journals inspiring the otherwise progressive Parsis to adopt reforms died out relatively earlier. A journal that adopted a reformist policy was *Rast Gofar*, meaning 'truth speaking.'

The Parsis owned all the five Gujarati newspapers that were published from Bombay in 1850. Their owners or editors were crushed under the heels of one

or the other party. They were not in a position to follow their conscience freely. By and large, all those journals favored the old ideologies. There was no scope for reformist ideas. This situation was

baffling to the reformists. Rustam Nasarwanji Wachha Gandhi had long been thinking of starting an independent journal. He did have the efficiency and qualifications needed to manage such a journal, but he did not have sufficient finance. He narrated his problem to Kharshedji Nasarwanji, the devout worshipper of knowledge, and pleaded for assistance. Dadabhai Naoroji, the grand old

man of India, was the chief in pursuing this request. Kharshedji Kama agreed to help. Kama would render financial assistance and Naoroji would run the journal as a mission and circulate it free of charge.

The first issue of *Rast Gofar* was published on November 15, 1851. It was naturally questioned why the new journal should start on such an odd date. There is a story behind it. In those days a magazine titled *Chitra Gyan Darpan* under the editorship of Beramji Jamshedji Gandhi was published. As the title suggested, the readers were given details of different subjects with the help of pictures. Printing pictures was not that feasible then. Gandhi published pictorial biographies of leading personalities. He published the life sketch of Hazarat Mohamad Paygambar Saheb, with perhaps an imaginative photograph of the revered religious head of the Muslims. This gesture infuriated the Muslims and

made the entire Parsi community a target of their anger. A riot ensued between the Parsis and the Muslims. The editor's apology did not have the intended effect. The minority Parsi community had to suffer considerably in the riot. They were denied justice. With a view to voice the genuine cause of the Parsis, Naoroji immediately started the publication of the *Rast Gofar*. The initial three issues were filled with the effects of the riot.

In the beginning, *Rast Gofar* was a fortnightly, published on the 1st and 15th of every month. Naoroji went to England in 1855 but continued writing for the journal. For the purpose of managing the publication, a syndicate was formed of pre-eminent social workers. Three years later, the popular social reformer, Karsandas Moolji, was nominated on the committee. The journal advocated the cause of female education, fought against undesirable religious rituals and promoted the spread of knowledge. As the journal entered its seventh year, the editor stated that the fortnightly would not be confined to the Parsis but all the native people. An English section, too, was introduced from its issue dated January 3, 1858. The principal objective of the section was to give the British exposure to the ideology of the native people. Kawasji Edaljee Khambatta used to write inspiring articles for it. Kekhusar Navroji Kabraji rendered invaluable service to the journal as an editor after Naoroji. For 40 continuous years he managed and developed the publication.

In social issues, Kabraji favored reforms, but on the political front he was loyal to the British. Hence, the demand for Home Rule was not approved of by the journal. Kabraji's political ideology was radically different from Naoroji's. He had expressed his agony over it in a letter to Wachha Gandhi. Although Kabraji was a supporter of the British, he was not blind to its blemishes. He had bitterly criticized the malpractice and autocracy of the bureaucrats. The government did not appreciate this criticism. During Lord Lytton's tenure the Vernacular Press Act came into force.

Rast Gofar was essentially attuned to the Parsi community. The owner as well as the editor were Parsi, but later on, on account of the relations of Moolji and



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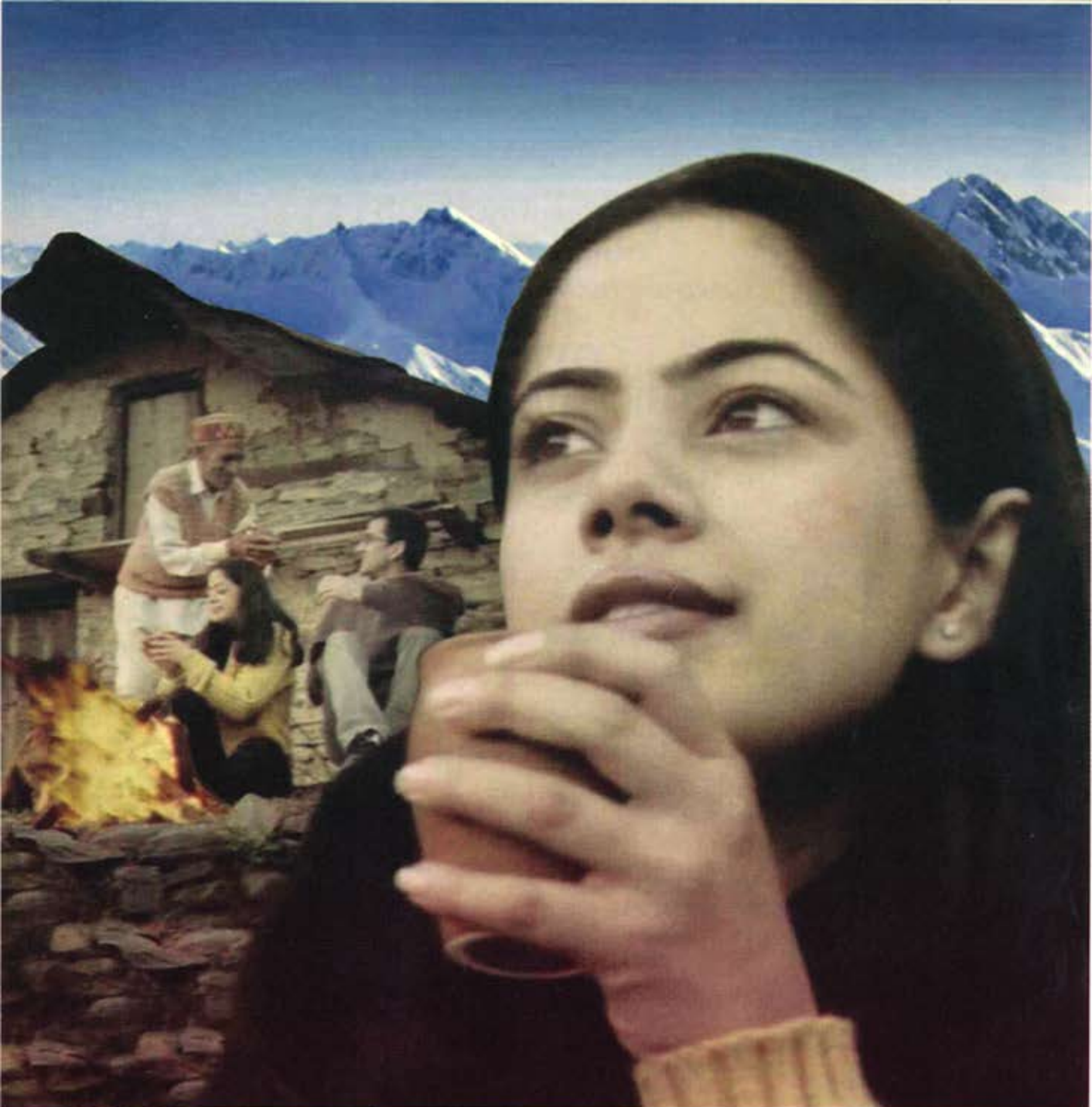
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Rast Goftar stalwarts (clockwise from top left): Naoroji, Khambatta and Kabraji

the merger of *Satya Prakash* with the *Rast Goftar*, the problems relating to the Hindu community also came to be elaborated in it. The journal gave a call to the Hindu community to embrace progressive ideologies. The Kapole community fussed about Moolji going abroad and his crossing the seas became a controversial issue. He and his family had to

wife. All three of them were excommunicated. They faced the tyranny of the people of their caste for quite some time, but after the death of Barbhaya's wife, Vora and Barbhaya expressed regret and after performing certain rites were accepted into the fold. Their retraction was bitterly criticized in Gujarati by *Rast* under the heading: 'Kapole Reformers at the Shrine of

the Idols of Caste.'

Kabraji passed away in 1904. Paalanji Bahdurji Desai succeeded him as editor of the journal. Since he joined *Rast* in 1874 he dedicated his life to the service of the journal. In 1918, the journal disappeared after its merger with *Prajamitra and Parsi*.

In *Rast Goftar* Naoroji championed social reform and his successors followed in his footsteps. They had to undergo a number of hardships in doing so. In spite of such odds, *Rast* never gave up its reformist policy, but there was no harmony between its progressive social ideology and its narrow political outlook. Senior journalists who had been the torch bearers of society, failed to remain neutral in political issues and frowned upon the struggle for freedom while vehemently advocating British rule in India. As a result, the importance of *Rast* was diminished.

Yet, it opened new horizons in journalistic history. It was a conspicuous milestone in the development of journalism and the Gujarati language. It remained meticulous in its policy of social service and contributed to social reformation. *To be continued*

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Bombay's business basics

The launch of the World Zarathushti Chamber of Commerce — Mumbai chapter marks a new beginning in the community's commercial activities

Parinaz M. Gandhi

"We pride being Zarathushti for our charitable disposition. We pride being Zarathushti for our impeccable integrity. We pride being Zarathushti for our enterprising spirit... We need to resurge as trail blazers and chart a course matching a bygone era which prosperity can emulate. Unfortunately we seem to be replacing this with complacency and self-centeredness," declared Kersi Limathwalla, chairman of the Mumbai chapter of the World Zarathushti Chamber of Commerce (WZCC) which was launched on June 8, 2003 in the newly renovated airconditioned hall of the Banaji Atash Behram.

"The object of the Chamber is the economic well being of its members by providing them information and opportunities to do business on a global level, in an environment more conducive than ever before... There is no ownership, the members are the owners" of this business Chamber which will be strictly maintained "without the leanings and politics of some community bodies," Limathwalla told the 200 plus gathering which included prospective and enrolled members as also many outstation Zoroastrians who were in Bombay that weekend to attend the executive council meeting of the Federation of Parsi Zoroastrian Anjumans of India. The WZCC which was set up during the World Zoroastrian Congress in Houston in 2000 already has four functional chapters in the USA, one each in London and Dubai, one in Delhi and the newly inaugurated Mumbai chapter which will operate from the Gamadia Polyclinic in Tardeo's Gamadia Colony, on office space provided by the Bombay Parsi Punchayet (BPP).

"It is necessary that one should feel a

sense of indebtedness to perform well in life...to pay back to one's community, to the society, to the nation, to humanity in general and to Ahura Mazda for all the bounties showered," concluded Limathwalla, after declaring, "Contentment can never be a virtue if it impedes your progress in life, if it hinders your pursuit of excellence, if it makes you selfish and uncaring for others around you."

Following the jashan BPP chairman and eminent business economist Minoo Shroff lit the inaugural lamp to rekindle the entrepreneurial spirit in the Bombay community. Referring to the "social obligations of business and good governance"

Shroff expected the new body to serve as an interconnection between business and business, an interface between business and government, to lobby with the government, to encourage, guide and show the road to success to upcoming entrepreneurs. "Don't ask what you are going to get out of it but what you can contribute to it," he advised the members. "We want entrepreneurial activity to be taken over by youngsters. The BPP will only be the guiding star in terms of logistics," he declared, urging the community to show enthusiasm which is "like the baking powder of life. Otherwise the cake falls flat."

Two keynote speakers were selected for the inaugural function: Cyrus Guzder, chairman and managing director of AFL Private Limited who gave a focussed discourse on "Why Parsis must become entrepreneurs again — turning your passion into a profitable business" and Areez Khambatta, founder chairman of Pioma Industries, the makers of Rasna soft drink concentrates, who gave a comprehensive speech on "Entrepreneurship."

Calling to mind the typical attributes of an entrepreneur — hardworking, industrious, energetic; driven by a desire to make money; clever in his/her chosen field; neglectful of his/her family; prone to take risks — Guzder maintained, "Societies and nations owe a lot to entrepreneurs — they are the largest creators of wealth and employment." Reminding the assembly that virtually all business activity and industry (except for core infrastructure) commences from a niche or small beginnings, Guzder noted, "Entrepreneurialism actually starts with an idea and it converts the idea into a commercial opportunity" by spotting a niche where you can make an entry into an activity, gaining a small toe-hold, thence building and growing.

He then cited innumerable examples of very successful businesses which were started by individuals on a very small scale: Air India, The Taj chain of hotels, DHL, Hotmail. "Entrepreneurs take the ideas of thinking communities (scientists, engineers, artists, designers) and convert these into products or services for people to consume," mentioned Guzder pointing how people have minted money with catering, chocolate making, karate or dance classes, car hire services, housekeeping services, document management, warehouse management, event management, computer care... "Adding value through knowledge and better skills can then push the entrepreneur up the value chain," reminded Guzder who viewed exhibitions and seminars as "a good starting point... (to) bring people and ideas together."

With industrialists today choosing to reduce their head count and depend on outsourcing, the service sector is growing, giving individuals an opportunity to be self-employed. The insurance, pharma and health care, education and training sector are the other avenues with potential, as identified by Guzder. The social-



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Top row (from left): Tamboly, C. Guzder, Limathwalla, Shroff, Khambatta, Mistry and Commissariat. Center row (from left): Limathwalla presenting a bouquet to Shroff as Jamshed Guzder looks on; C. Guzder and Khambatta Photos: Sarosh Daruwalla



istic model adopted for post-independent India with misplaced emphasis on state entrepreneurship which gave the word "profit" a dirty connotation resulted in many lost opportunities. In the '50s, '60s and '70s, it was the professionals who were respected, in the '80s and '90s, it was the managers and administrators, and following liberalization and globalization in the '90s, the middle class have sought to graduate from managing to owning, observed Guzder who foresaw, "In the next few decades India will see a new set of entrepreneurs who are global in their vision and style."

Quoting Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Every accomplishment starts with the decision to try," Guzder reinforced, "So starting as a one-man enterprise you can develop and achieve global ambitions."

Having "smelt the opportunity," the creator of Rasna, Khambatta announced, "An entrepreneur creates opportunities not only for himself but for others and for society as a whole. These entrepreneurs were really creative persons driven

by some restlessness and the ability to dare to take risks, to be the first and to be different from others, to create something and to be innovative... Whenever any innovative product is successful you will find a host of 'me-too' products by the 'me-too' entrepreneurs... Since the game of business is becoming more and more complex, one has not only to excel as an individual but to have excellent organizational support..."

An entrepreneur is required to surmount many challenges and obstacles, revealed Khambatta who insisted, "An entrepreneur is more than a businessman. He performs a very important and necessary function in a country's economic development."

Considering that advertising constitutes a major part of the product costs, an entrepreneur is required to acquire a thorough knowledge of marketing as also law and taxation, noted Khambatta who too like Guzder referred to the varied sectors where entrepreneurs can make a beginning and included plastics and elec-

(Left) Bhathena (center) and family with a section of the audience

tronics in his exhaustive list. "Sometimes an entrepreneur may select a business opportunity either through a chance event or through natural extension of his present occupation," observed Khambatta who considered it his "bounden duty to see that the youths (are given) the necessary motivation and guidance at the right time to enable them to get a proper start in life." A regular lecturer at the Entrepreneurship Development Institute in Ahmedabad, Khambatta offered to organize a special full-time program of two or three weeks for about 15-20 interested participants.

"We look to India playing a leadership role," noted WZCC president Rohinton Rivetna in his message on the occasion of the launch of the Mumbai chapter. Delhi entrepreneur Dadi Mistry who is on the international board of the WZCC referred to the headquarters of this body being in

continued on page 158



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Augmenting Ahmedabad's assets

Ahmedabad Parsee Panchayat president
Areez Khambatta has increased the anjuman's coffers

Parinaz M. Gandhi

"Our annual fees are six rupees a year per member. If we mail just three letters a year the cost works out to Rs 15 a year," the president of The Ahmedabad Parsee Panchayat (APP) Areez Khambatta referred to the financial constraints within which the trustees have to operate. "Unfortunately with the interest rates falling, our income has halved," he pointed out the difficulty facing trusts. Steering the affairs of the community at such financially difficult times requires all the expertise of Khambatta which he has acquired over years of building up Rasna as a brand name. In June 2003 he was elected vice president (west zone) of the Federation of Parsi Zoroastrian Anjuman of India.

With nearly one-sixth of the 2,000-strong Zoroastrian population in Ahmedabad residing in the Panchayat owned charitable blocks paying monthly rents of Rs 25, nearly the same sum they had been contributing 25 years ago, the Panchayat has to bear an annual loss of two to three lakh rupees. Of their 100 tenants, 30 are at Khamasa, 25 at the Farvardian, 22 at the Sanatorium and eight at Khanpur. "A fabulous sum of Rs 81 lakhs" was earned from the sale of their property at Khanpur. The 300 sq m tract of land donated by S. Paymaster fetched them an additional Rs 20 lakhs.

Another one crore rupees were generated from the sale of a piece of land at the Farvardian and Rs 10 lakhs from the sale of Ava Khurshid Lodge, a disputed property. In all these land transactions trustee Farrokh Kavina has been of great help, acknowledged Khambatta.

"We have a sizable corpus but because of the declining interest rates and increase in expenses for maintaining the agiary, Farvardian and our various blocks, we are contemplating to construct some shops and offices on our Farvardian and Dharamshala land. The APP board is now seriously considering building, for the first time, houses on ownership basis...on 6,000 yards of the Sanatorium land which has not been used for the last 30-40 years..." revealed Khambatta. Located on prime property on Ahmedabad's Ashram Road, they plan to develop it as a large colony: "We'd like to make it like Cusrow Baug," the president was optimistic.

The Panchayat is increasing the ca-

capacity of their four-room plus dormitory Dharamshala with the construction of an annexe for which they have received Rs

12 lakhs as donations, noted Khambatta. Their well patronized Dharamshala charges just Rs 40 per day per person for those staying in rooms and Rs 30 per day per person

for those staying in dormitories. Food is made available by the manager at a nominal extra cost. Their Anklesharia Hall and its adjacent compound at Khamasa can accommodate about 300 people for functions. Their Rustam baug premises are made available to Parsis at concessional rates for weddings and navjotes. Other communities too can hire these premises.

Optimal utilization of their property is not the sole concern of Khambatta who has taken over as president since December 2000. "I am interested in vocational



Khambatta (above) overseeing Ahmedabad properties; Vakil Adarian (below), Dharamshala (along-side) and Sanatorium (below right)





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and career guidance for our youth...and then helping them get admission in the institutes of their choice," said Khambatta who is frequently invited to lecture at the Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India. Among India's best flavorists, Khambatta had done a course in food flavor creation and manufacture at the University of Minnesota after graduating in chemistry. With the intention of offering a cheap thirst quencher the entrepreneur launched Rasna in 1978.

This year the APP held a seminar for the youth, "Excel in Excellence" to give them a boost in their careers. Khambatta gave credit to his co-trustee Porus Karanjawalla for organizing this function. Loans and financial aid are given

for medical, engineering and other specialized courses by sending them to coaching classes. A Personality Development Seminar for the youth and a computer class for housewives will soon materialize.

In addition the Panchayat donated four lakh rupees for Hunner Udyog, Rs 5.25 lakhs for medical aid, and Rs 1.20 lakhs as doles to the needy. A medical camp for the humdins of Ahmedabad will check the health of the community members at concessional rates and for the deserving, for free. In fact the Panchayat has an arrangement with the Civil Hospital whereby special treatment facilities are made available to Parsis, reported Khambatta.

The results of their matrimonial meets organized every year or two years "have been encouraging," the president noted. Eighty to 90 participants from all over India attend. He appreciated the efforts of Katy Daruvalla on this project.

Their "orthodox" anjuman which holds jashans on all paravs is served by four full-time mobeds as also four nassessalars plus voluntary mobeds who willingly come forward when required. On an average 1,100-1,200 Zoroastrians attend the three or four gahambars held annually. Pilgrimage trips at concessional rates are regularly conducted on the salgirah of the Iranshah. In addition to the Panchayat managed Vakil Adarian which is 70 years old, there is the 78-year-old Kankaria Adarian in Ahmedabad. Describing himself as "religious," Khambatta told the gathering at the launch of the Bombay chapter of the World Zarathushti Chamber of Commerce in June this year that he never leaves his home until he has recited the different *Nyaishes* from the *Avesta*.

The Farvardian property in Ahmedabad has been beautifully landscaped with a garden and lawns in front of the Roovan-ni-Bungli. The Taraporewala Bungli at Khanpur, also used for funeral ceremonies, was repaired for the convenience of the relatives who have to use

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the facility. Since the tube well in the Farvardian compound was damaged during the earthquake of 2001, a second bore to a depth of almost 100 ft was installed to ensure free flow of water. Another long felt need, especially during monsoon, for a road from the entrance of the Farvardian and a parking lot materialized with a generous donation of five lakh rupees from Khambatta.

The APP board is considering building, for the first time, houses on ownership basis

A solar concentrator has already been installed at the Doongerwadi thanks to a donation of Rs 2.5 lakhs from Freny Karanjawala. On an average there are two bodies consigned to the dakhma every year, says Khambatta.

A generous donation of five lakh rupees was given by the Panchayat to the Ushta-te Foundation which is devoted to the cause of religious welfare and Zoroastrian studies. The Ushta-te Foundation and the Parsi Youth League of Ahmedabad (PYLA) are "of great help to us and (are) doing splendid work in their field," appreciated Khambatta.

In addition to Khambatta, the four trustees working conjointly with him on Panchayat matters are: Tehmas Commissariat, Rashid Medora, Kavina and Karanjawala. Actively assisting them is joint honorary secretary Firoz Davar.

As per the APP constitution the five trustees elected every five years are to be assisted by a 10-member advisory committee, two of whom have to be ladies and two of whom are appointed as joint honorary secretaries. Their system of election is by adult franchise where around 1,300 (of their total strength of around 2,000) members being over 18 years of age are assigned the responsibility of exercising their voting right.

If the trustees do not perform according to the electorate's expectations, they can expect a spate of circulars to vilify them. But there can be honors too as when Khambatta was felicitated by his Panchayat and was chosen by the PYLA as the first "Outstanding Parsi of Ahmedabad."



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Seventeen achievers were presented the Federation of Parsi Zoroastrian Anjumans of India awards for excellence

Arnavaz S. Mama

"It is heartening to note that the pioneering spirit and yearning for excellence is still alive in our community," noted Air Vice Marshal Adi Gandhi surveying the 17 awardees lined up to receive the Federation of Parsi Zoroastrian Anjumans of India awards for excellence. Military service, community service, education, professional competence, academic studies, the performing and fine arts, outstanding youth activity and sports were the fields in which they had shone as recognized by the gathering at Bombay's Banaji Atash Behram Hall on the evening of June 7, 2003.

Commodore Aspi Dhunjishaw Marker, currently commanding officer of *INS Angre* and Commodore of the Naval Barracks in Bombay had shown exemplary leadership as Naval Officer-in-Charge of Gujarat when that state was devastated by a major earthquake on January 26, 2001. Moving from his base in Porbunder to Kandla he masterminded the conversion of two survey ships into hospitals complete with sterile operation theaters within 12 hours. "Kandla port became operational in a record time of 72 hours, naval establishments in Gujarat became premier frontline forward operating bases and successfully carried out assigned tasks with the utmost operational efficiency despite numerous constraints," reads the citation. As member of the Gujarat Maritime Board, trustee of the Kandla Port Trust and director of the Gujarat State Shipyard — Alcock Ashdown Limited,

Marker is said to have acquitted himself with remarkable credit. For his excellent performance, dedication and devotion to duty Marker was awarded the Nao Sena Medal on Republic Day 2003.

A masters degree holder in defence and management, Bombay born Marker had schooled at Delhi, Poona and Agra as his Air Force officer father, Group Capt Dhunjishaw Marker, subsequently president of the Mhow anjuman, was posted in various locations. Commodore Marker was commissioned in the Indian Navy in 1971 and took part in the Indo-Pak War that year which led to the independence of Bangladesh. He has commanded several Indian naval ships, *INS Agnibahu*, a shore based naval establishment and the 22nd Missile Vessel squadron. He has served as chairman of the Naval Public School in Bombay, and on the faculty of the National Defence Academy at Khadakvasla, the Defence Services Staff College at Wellington and the College of Defence Management at Secunderabad, further notes the citation.

Marker received the Federation's Lt

Col Adi B. Tarapore Memorial Award for 2002 at the hands of Gandhi who hailed the "dedicated mariner (as a) good friend and entertaining companion."

Himself a former Federation laureate, who had been awarded the Mahavir Chakra by the Government of India, Gandhi recalled the legendary heroism of the late Tarapore whose "pure selflessness, disregard of personal safety (and) indomitable fighting spirit" won the ultimate accolade — the grudging respect of the enemy (who referred to him as) Fakr-Hind, a title now adopted by (Tarapore's regiment) the Poona Horse as a proud prefix to its regimental name.

Gandhi was sad that "our community that had provided the country with outstanding achievers in all fields was now unable to live up to our history." He blamed lack of parental and community encouragement for the "static inertia that has engulfed the community" and called for "attitudinal changes in ourselves." He urged his co-religionists "to open up to the challenges awaiting us." The *raison d'être* of the Federation awards he said, should be the "single-minded purpose to spur (the community) to greater effort."

A mechanical engineer from Baroda's MS University with a penchant for research, Ronnie Rumi Sabawalla's pioneering work at harnessing solar energy to quickly dehydrate corpses in vultureless dakhmas won him the Shrivastav D. Nargolwala Memorial Award for social and community service in 2002. Prior to Sabawalla's reflectors the stench of bod-



The awardees pose with Federation president Minoo Shroff

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L to R (1st row): Marker, Ms Gandhi, AVM Gandhi, Ms Marker, Sabawalla and Godiwalla (2nd row) Kapadia, F. Patel*, Palamkote* and Shethna*

* Photos by Sarosh Daruwalla Mazda Audio and Video Labs



(3rd row) Marfatia, A. Patel*, Debara*, Mehta* and Rana (4th row) Billimoria*, Bhadha*, Dastur, Suratia and Cooper*

ies rotting over several months had been a source of grave anxiety to the community and its leaders.

Deep and diverse was the knowledge gained from 25 years' experience in machine designing and manufacturing of heavy-duty metal forming machinery under the corporate name of Himalaya Machinery Private Limited. Then Sabawalla and his partner essayed the manufacture of eco friendly products like solar heaters, solar cooker, pedal power generators, etc under the name Rashron Energy and Auto Private Limited. Their products included electric bicycles and tricycles for the use of the invalids and the physically challenged, notes the citation.

Though their solar cookers reached

boiling point, they were incapable of frying and other uses which require higher temperatures until they met the German scientist Wolfgang Schettler. Thereafter they succeeded in creating a solar crematorium reaching 700°C to save wood used for cremation. With the aid of Schettler, a solar concentrator was created where, despite the long distance from the reflector to the body in the dakhma, the right temperature was achieved at the focal point ensuring the required dehydration, the citation traces Sabawalla's product development.

The Mazda Education Foundation Award for education in 2002 was conferred on Dr Gahver Godrej Kapadia.

A PhD in education from Baroda's

Maharaja Shivajirao University, she has worked as a research fellow of the University Grants Commission at its Centre for Advanced Study in Education, then gone on to Hyderabad's Princess Esin Women's Educational Centre, working there for the next 20 years as lecturer, deputy director and director, notes the citation. Thereafter she returned to Gujarat to work as director, resource mobilization and public affairs, of the Consumer Education and Research Center and as consultant to the Child Resource Centre and Women's Health



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and Development Resource Centre of the Centre for Health and Education Training and Nutrition Awareness (CHETNA). During these years Kapadia lectured and published papers and research articles on the education of pre-schoolers, underprivileged children, adolescent girls and minority community females.

Kapadia's "contributions in the sphere of education and research related to ageing has received international recognition. She was sponsored by the United Nations Population Fund to participate in the Expert Group Meeting on Population Ageing and Development held at Malta in October 2001... The Valencia Forum Spain (invited her) in April 2002 to present a paper on Ageing Women in Rural India," states the citation. She also attended the United Nations' Second World Assembly on Ageing in Madrid in April 2002 at the invitation of the Spanish NGO World Forum.

Receiving the award Kapadia acknowledged her debt to former teachers, colleagues and well wishers and promised professional assistance to the community.

Principal of Bombay's Sir Cowasjee Jehangir High School Abban Minoo Patel received the Gharda Chemicals Award for Education for 2002. Five eventful years on the job were recognized when she and the School were respectively conferred the Jewel of India Award and the Vidya Rattan Award by the International Institute of Education and Management, and the National Mahila Excellence Award and the National Gold Star Award by the International Business Council in December 2002, states the citation. "Under her stewardship 92.6 percent of the students were declared successful in the Secondary School Certificate examination held in March 2001. In March 2002, the school bettered its performance with the success ratio being 95.5 percent." The citation further notes the appreciation of parents in the all-round development of the children and their participation in social service activities.

The Ajmer-born Patel had worked in a bank in Jaipur before realizing her true vocation. Getting her BEd degree she taught at St Joseph's High School, Vikhroli, for 17 years before taking on

her present assignment.

Delnaz Behram Shethna of Ahmedabad who secured the second rank at Gujarat University in her first and third LLB examinations was presented the Jamshed and Shirin Guzder Award for best youth in 1999, notes the citation. That was the



The Federation Awards conceived by Bodhanwalla, designed by Rustomji

year she graduated in commerce earning a merit certificate from the National Scholarships Scheme. Trophies in elocution, debating and moot court competitions also came her way from 1999 through 2002, mentions the citation. Editor of her college magazine *H. L. Times* for three successive years, essay writing, creative writing and dramatics are listed among other activities in which Shethna has excelled.

The Jamshed and Shirin Guzder Award for best youth in 2002 went to Ervad Eric Zarir Dastur, a seventh grader at the Athornan Boarding Madressa. Securing 79 percent marks in standard VI earned Dastur merit certificates for proficiency in mathematics, English and the social sciences and the first prize in school studies, computers and *bhantar* (prayers). Having completed his *navar* and *maratab* initiations and the "samel examination" at Udvarda, Dastur qualified as *sampurna* mobed at the age of 11, performed the *boi* ceremony at the Iranshah on December 20, 2002, and initiated another young candidate into the priesthood before the end of the year, notes the citation.

Also declared best youth for 2002 was entrepreneur Porushesp Hosang Debara of Agra. He received the Aloo Noshirwan Cama Award.

A graduate in commerce and law, Debara holds a diploma in animal by-product utilization from the Central Leather Research Institute at Madras. In

charge of production and purchasing in his father's business of manufacturing animal based organic fertilizers and other animal by-products, after an initial period as apprentice trainee, Debara has chalked an annual growth rate of 63.6 percent for the 20 years he has been with the business, notes the citation.

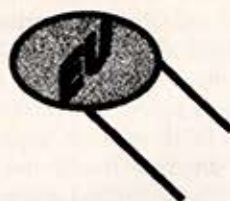
Managing committee member of the National Chamber of Industries and Commerce, Uttar Pradesh, Debara is vice chairman of its development, telecom and law and order subcommittees. He was appointed Honorary Special Police Officer in September 2002. Debara is vice president of the Federation of Zoroastrian Youth Associations (FOZYA) which he helped to found.

Ranked fifth on the merit list of the Company Secretaries Examination 2002, Bakhtavar Aspi Bhadha was presented the Saraswati Dhanuka Memorial Award by the Institute of Company Secretaries of India for securing the highest aggregate percentage among women candidates, passing all eight papers at one go in her first attempt. She also received the WIRC cash prize and past president Chinubhai R. Shah Award from the Institute, notes the citation. Bhadha had received the ZOSTA Awards in 1996 and 2001 as the highest Zoroastrian scorer at the SSC and TYBCom examinations respectively.

A student who has passed her elementary and intermediate grade drawing examinations and won the first prize in the All India Camel Colour Contests in 1993 and 1994, Bhadha has won prizes in quiz, essay writing and Gujarati language organized by the Iran League.

Bhadha, who is also said to be proficient in Marathi, received the Dhunjishaw R. Gheyara Memorial Award for academic studies in 2002.

The Jamshed and Shirin Guzder Award for performing and the fine arts in 2002 was bagged by documentary filmmaker Heeraz Noshir Marfatia. His directorial debut with *Birju*, a 16-minute color film in 35 mm made it to the final round of six nominees for the Students' Academy Award (Oscar) 2002 and was also selected from among 4,500 short films entered at the Sun Dance Film Festival 2002 — the biggest film festival in the US, notes the citation. Other awards



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Birju won in his category in 2002 include the Jury Award at the New York Film Expo, the Academy Award at the Big Bear Film Festival and Best Short Film at Tellurede Indifest. The film was also the recipient of the Special Jury Award 2003 at the Berlin International Film Festival. Marfatia received the Outstanding Achievement Award 2002 from the Alumni Association of the San Francisco State University where he has been working for his masters degree in Fine Arts in Cinema and taught a film production class.

Currently Marfatia is in the process of completing his thesis for the MFA program. *Birju*, the film he was required to make as part of his course, recounts a four-year-old boy's search for his mother in the village and the distractions that come his way.

Marfatia acknowledged that the Bombay Parsi Punchayet (BPP) had helped him go abroad three years ago and that several other trusts provided the finance to create the film that won these awards.

Twelve-year-old Azhaan Pervez Cooper features in talk shows, and music video, has lent his voice for various

Godiwalla's has many a times successfully managed simultaneously three lagan/navjote functions at different locations

commercials and modelled since the age of three for press, poster and TV advertisements with the likes of Sachin Tendulkar, Saurav Ganguly and others.

Despite these distractions Cooper has been a topper in his class at Bombay's St Xavier's High School and has been awarded the School's certificates for general proficiency. He sings and plays the piano. He also participates in quizzes, elocution and extempore speech competitions.

Cooper received the Jamshed and Shirin Guzder Award for the performing and fine arts for 1999.

Four youths and two veterans laid claim to six awards in the sports category. Zerwan Phiroze Suratia, an alumnus of Poona's St Vincent High School has

participated in national level equestrian meets since the age of 14 and won four medals in the First All India Sainik Public Schools and Open Equestrian Championship held in Poona in 2002. At the second edition of this event in 2003 Suratia "took part in 11 events and won a position in all of them bagging two gold, four silver and five bronze medals. His tally was the highest among all the competitors in the meet including the cadets from National Defence Academy, Poona," states the citation. Suratia owes the development of his riding skills initially to the BEG Centre's Army Riding School and their fine-tuning to Arjuna Awardee Col G. M. Khan, VSM (Retd) of the Equestrian Academy of Poona.

With a scoring average of 70 to 75 percent marks throughout his school career, Suratia has a blue belt in karate, has passed his A certificate National Cadet Corps exam and was the second platoon leader attached to the Third Maharashtra Armed Squadron Unit.

Felicitated by the Mancherji Joshi Trust on Jamshedi Navroz earlier this year, Suratia received the Federation's Jiji D. Irani Memorial Award for 2003.

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2002 was conferred on Yazneen Sarosh Rana, the 18-year-old archer from Jamshedpur. In January this year Rana "won the gold at the Junior National and silver in the Junior Asian Archery Championship," states the citation. But she has been participating in state and national level meets since 1994. Up to 1996 Rana was "runner-up at state level in the sub-junior category in the 10 m Indian round. In 1997, she helped her team with the championship in the sub-junior category at the state level and in 1999 at the national level. In the 24th Junior National Archery Championship held in Delhi in April 2002, she bagged six medals, two gold, one silver and three bronze and helped her team to win the Team Championship Trophy. Sixty women archers participated in this National and Rana was placed second in the All India ranking," the citation records her achievements. The archer's skills have been honed by Arjuna awardee Sanjeeva Singh.

Apart from this overriding passion, Rana has an outstanding academic record and has bagged prizes in English and Hindi elocution, dramatics, sports and games including badminton, basketball, swimming, para-sailing and river rafting

and won the Best All Rounder Award in middle school and Outstanding Extra-curricular Award in high school from Loyola School. In 2001 she won the Duke of Edinburgh silver medal for adventure, sports and social service, notes the citation.

Long distance running and participation in marathons and mini marathons earned Peshotan Jehanbux Mehta the Aloo Noshirwan Cama Award for 2002. In that year he had won the 1,500 m men's event in the Fifth Ryan Maharashtra state level annual Open Athletic Meet on November 15 clocking 4.31 mins. In July 2002 Mehta also participated in the Thana Mayor's Monsoon Marathon covering a distance of 42.2 km in three hours, five minutes. In November 2002 he ran the Indira Gandhi Marathon in Allahabad in two hours, 53 minutes. At the 18th All India Prize Money Indira Marathon, also in Allahabad that month, Mehta ranked 19th having covered 42.2 km in two hours, 48 minutes and 55 seconds.

Mehta, a master of commerce from Bombay University has been coached by Dr Rohinton Mehta, a veteran of state and national championships, notes the

citation.

The Dr Dadi Balsara Award for 2002 was conferred on young athlete Ayesha Neville Billimora who had won the individual championship for senior girls at the 108th Annual Inter School Athletic championship 2001-2002 held in Bombay. Thereafter she broke two meet records at the Inter School (ICSE) athletic meet in Bombay in January 2003 when she clocked 100 m in 13.1 seconds and 400 m in 65.9 secs. Her tally at the meet included three golds (in 100 m, 200 m and 400 m run) and a silver in shot put. She also takes part in high jump events.

This sprinter, who completed her ICSE from Bombay's Activity High School, participated in 12 athletic meets in 2001 and 2002, winning 11 in the 100 m run and being second in the 12th, informs the citation.

Veteran sportsman Farokh Phirozsha Patel, who struck gold in the National Veteran Championship in Thana in 1998 and in Goa in 1999 when he threw his javelin 31 m away in the 60+ age group, won the Federation's Dr Dadi Balsara Award for 1991.

A sportsman who captained his col-

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lege cricket team as well as that of Tata Chemicals 1980-82, Patel had won the Javelin Throw Championship in the Gujarat Rajya Kuda Mahotsav for four consecutive years 1964-67. After the age of 50, Patel continuously participated in the veteran category. His longest throw was 34.92 m in the National Veterans Athletic Championship in 1991 where he earned a silver.

The only living Parsi Pehelvan — Edul Pirojshaw Palamkote, now aged 83 — was conferred the Dr Dadi Balsara Award for 1989 because the *Limca Book of World Records* recognized on November 22, 1989 that Palamkote's record of pulling a fully manned fire engine by his teeth for 100 yards remains unbroken, notes the citation.

For three consecutive years, 1938-40, Palamkote held the Mr Bombay title, but by the age of nine he was already one of Bombay's strongest boys. Palamkote's feats of strength include lifting 200 lbs of weight with his teeth, tearing two telephone directories to shreds, breaking thick buffalo chains and a thick iron bar into two while lying on a bed of nails, says the citation.

This phenomenal strength was cre-

Palamkote's feats of strength include lifting 200 lbs of weight with his teeth (and) tearing two telephone directories to shreds

ated by an act of will when his father slapped him for taking a beating from another boy, recounts the citation.

During World War II Palamkote served as Fire Chief of the Armed Forces — the first and youngest Indian ever to be so appointed. His collection of trophies include certificates of merit and war service medals as well as 25 gold and silver medals and 15 silver cups for his performances, notes the citation. After the war he served a number of industrial houses as a fire security and safety officer. He still functions as the badge examiner for West and Central District Bharat Scouts and Guides aiming to secure fire and safety badges.

Well known solicitor and BPP trustee

Dadi Engineer, the evening's compere, had added a touch of sparkle to the awards function with humor and quotes. In a story all his own he recounted an occasion when Palamkote had performed all kinds of feats, bending bars, breaking coconuts, etc. Engineer said he capped these activities by squeezing a lemon and challenging the audience to squeeze another drop out of it. "One man took up the challenge. A new lemon was brought and the 90 pounder squeezed every drop of juice from the lemon with his first two fingers. 'Who are you?' Palamkote demanded to know. 'I'm the Commissioner of Income Tax' answered the man." Engineer's clincher had the audience in stitches!

Having revelled in Tannaz Rohinton Godiwalla's cuisine like all true Parsis, Engineer had a special word of thanks and a kiss for her as he presented her the Federation's G. K. Panthaki Award for professional competence in 2002.

Godiwalla "inherited her passion for catering from her parents Rohinton and Frenny who were the first to turn around the mundane profession of catering into an art and a science and made Godiwallas a name to be reckoned with in quality catering specializing not only in first rate

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food but also in excellent service at lagans and navjotes," notes the citation.

An economics graduate from Bombay's St Xavier's College, Godiwalla's "professional competence has enabled her many a times to successfully undertake and manage simultaneously three lagan/navjote functions at different locations," states the citation. "I'm truly honored," said Godiwalla in a brief acknowledgment.

Recalling how then Jamshedpur president Homi Bodhanwalla had conceived the awards and framed the guidelines and how Delhi Parsi Anjuman secretary Farrokh Rustomji had designed the shields, Engineer went on to thank the BPP staff for their annual exercise of organizing the event and scripting the ceremony. Quoting from Lord Alfred Tennyson's *Ulysses* — "To strive, to seek, to find and not to yield" — Engineer hoped "we have more awardees and many more men and women who strive for excellence."

The solar energizer

"It will be another 10 years before the solar reflectors become reliable. They are like the new automobiles in the early 20th century. There was no sports engine right from the start!" Ronnie Sabawalla reminded us in the course of a brief chat after the ceremony.

Nonetheless his solar concentrators, even in their present juvenile avatar, have taken the heat off the trustees of the various anjumans (especially the BPP) and focused it on the cadavers that earlier took up to five months to dispose in the absence of vultures, while emanating the foul odor that haunted Bombay's Doongerwadi locality.

The reflector consists of several flat mirrors, individually mounted, and is equipped with sensors, a timer and a small electric motor to help change the angle of reflection with the declination of the sun, explains Sabawalla. "Each (mirror) has to be reoriented every day," his statement emphasizes the complexity of the contraption which looks simple but is extremely technical. It has to be designed individually to suit the geographical location, height and diameter of each dakhma and takes up to two months to manufacture, he tells us. If the dakhma is too small the reflector does not work because of the shadow of the wall, he notes. The large Bombay dakhmas, need six to seven reflectors each because each reflector fo-

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cuses on a single body.

Baman Cama, trustee of the Baroda anjuman, was aware of Sabawalla's production of a solar crematorium for the Hindu community. It was Zoroastrian scholar Dr Homi Dhallia however who suggested to Cama the idea of modifying the service for Zoroastrian use, says Sabawalla recalling the germination of the idea that led to months of experimentation to regulate the temperatures produced so that the body may dehydrate rapidly but not burn. This "became a sort of challenge," especially to his German mentor, nuclear physicist Wolfgang Schettler, notes Sabawalla.

It was Schettler who had helped Sabawalla and his partner Rashmi Shah and their enterprise Rashron Energy and Auto Private Limited overcome technical problems in their effort initially to create solar driven energy systems for the domestic sector and then in the creation of the crematorium.

In their efforts to find a way out for Zoroastrians who sought to use the traditional method of disposal of the body in the absence of vultures, Sabawalla and his company spent months experimenting on goat carcasses. The research work was completely financed by the BPP and other

Despite the long distance from the solar reflector to the body in the dakhma, the right temperature was achieved

donors, he notes. Refusing to take personal credit Sabawalla says, "it was team work." He thanks his partner, the scion of a "Gandhian freedom fighter family," for encouraging him to spend so much company time and energy in developing the reflectors as well as his Muslim coworkers who helped cut and clean goats for their many experiments.

Sabawalla believes that Schettler who has his own financiers in Germany and Switzerland, must have trained more than 500 solar engineers. He describes the man as "more a saint than a scientist," who wears khadi, reads the *Bhagwad Gita*, comes to India every year for four to five months and teaches others.

While his father was a lawyer, Sabawalla has inherited engineering skills from his maternal uncles who worked in

the railway workshop. Work has led him to travel a lot, preferably by car even to faraway Calcutta or Agra where the Taj Mahal has lured him seven times by now. Eschewing hobbies and a social life Sabawalla prefers to concentrate on his experiments. His wife Jabiz helps with technical drawings in the factory. His daughter Jehanaz, 17, has just passed her higher secondary examination and opted for home science. Ratan, his 15-year-old son who has just finished his SSC, "plays cricket all day long!"

The community and its many controversies leave Sabawalla cold. "We are becoming lazy, we will lose our gloss," he notes tersely. He views marriage pragmatically — the closer the cultural levels, the better the chance of the union succeeding. While such cultural closeness may be difficult in an intercommunal marriage, "Parsis also can be from very different cultures," he comments.

As for the long-drawn battles regarding the disposal of the dead, Sabawalla says, "My common sense tells me that it (the mode used) should be inexpensive and ecofriendly. Disposing of the body is not a religious issue. If we are thinking of how to educate children, it is important. This is not important..."

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Conservation at the Cama

Ancient manuscripts and books at the K. R. Cama Oriental Institute are undergoing restoration and preservative treatment

Parinaz M. Gandhi

"Important originals. Please do not touch." Not even the trustees of the K. R. Cama Oriental Institute (KRCOI) who are responsible for the preservation of the priceless books and heritage nor the scholars who visit the hallowed precincts are permitted to touch the documents while they are being specially tended by the team of conservation experts. The professionals are working under Anupam Sah of the INTACH (Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage) Indian Council of Conservation Institutes.

Pending conservation work at the KRCOI, the reading room facilities have temporarily been suspended although members can continue to borrow books from the library. Research scholars requiring access to reference materials on an urgent basis "will be given cooperation as far as possible," assures trustee cum joint honorary secretary of the Institute Homai Modi.

While some of the nearly 310 members of the Institute may view this as an inconvenience, most will appreciate that the precious literature at the KRCOI, several centuries old, needed differential treatment. Among their heritage documents, rated among the best on Zoroastrian religion and customs, are nearly 2,000 handwritten manuscripts plus books which are several centuries old. The condition of this wondrous collection may vary depending on the state in which they were originally presented to the KRCOI, say the trustees. A copy of the *Webster's International Dictionary*, which had been gifted to

Rustomji Manekji Kalapesi of Grant Medical College in 1896 and was handed over to the Cama Institute on July 25, 2003, was shown to *Parsiana*. The hardbound edition had pages, some of which had come asunder. Depending on the value of the publication or the owner of the book or the number of copies of that same title which the library may already have, the Institute decides whether to retain the books presented to it or to pass them on to someone else. This particular edition of the *Webster's Dictionary* was of consequence to the Institute—for its antiquity value as also because its owner Kalapesi finds a mention in *Parsi Lustre on Indian Soil*.

To restore, or to give a new lease of

life to the books in their care "we had to identify an organization which would do so with sincerity of purpose and without an ulterior objective," declares Muncherji N. Cama who took over as president of the Institute following the resignation of Sir Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy. Their board is now left with only three trustees—Cama, Modi and Dastur (Dr) Kaikhusroo JamaspAsa, after Justice Dinshaw Mehta passed away on July 6, 2003. Appreciating the guidance they received from Cyrus Guzder, chairman of AFL Private Limited, Modi recalls, "It took us months to establish contact with INTACH. Then they came and looked through the library." Impressed with the upkeep of the library Sah had

commented in the Visitor's book in mid-April 2003: "The collection is of immense value and is and will be a source of knowledge for years to come especially due to the sincere care and maintenance (and strict controls) that the administrators and staff take to keep the original documents in good health, thus ensuring their longevity. It is a privilege for us to be associated with the Institute's visionary and pragmatic step to establish an effective curative and preventive conservation unit to conserve this priceless collection."

These words served to heal the wounds inflicted 10 months earlier when eight community scholars, in their letter of June 26, 2002, seemed to imply that the trustees needed to wake up to the state of the heritage in their possession. "...a number of old and rare books...are in a very poor condition. In some cases the paper has become so brittle that the page breaks when it is turned. These books need your urgent attention if



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The library at the Cama Institute

Bajan, Faribourz Nariman and Dr Mani Kamerkar.

Actually conservation had become the bone of contention between scholar Dhalla and the KRCOI trustees since 1998 when he impressed upon them the "urgency

of preserving the precious manuscripts. I was informed that the Institute did not have the necessary funds for such a project...I therefore (suggested) that a joint project be undertaken in collaboration with the World Zarathushti Cultural Foundation (WZCF, of which Dhalla is founder president) to put these manuscripts on the CD-ROM. I offered that the necessary equipment would be kept in the library premises and be donated to the Institute when the project was completed," relates Dhalla in his written missive to *Parsiana*. Dhalla had also penned a lengthy article in the *Jam-e-Jamshed* of May 9, 2003 criticizing the

trustees for their management of the Institute.

Dhalla's offer was reportedly turned down by the KRCOI on the rationale that "other offers from prestigious and well established Institutes have also been received..." Cama notes that Dhalla's letter makes no mention of donating the equipment after the project is completed. Dhalla had stated in his letter of September 2, 1998: "All the expenses for the project, which will amount to a few lakhs, shall be borne by the WZCF. After the project is over, the WZCF would like to keep the computer and other equipment at your Institute. This shall enable scholars to study the manuscripts, with great ease, without handling them physically." After three and a half years, Dhalla again wrote to them on April 19, 2002 to enquire what progress had been made in preserving the manuscripts, alleging that books like the *Parsi Prakash* (Vol I) had already crumbled. Barely a month later Dhalla wrote another letter enclosing a cheque of Rs 40,000 from Narayan Dubash to purchase the CD-ROM equipment. The trustees also showed a letter from noted solicitor and presently Bombay Parsi Punchayet trustee Burjor Antia stating

they are to be saved for posterity. We are also deeply concerned about the condition of the large number of manuscripts housed in the library. Since some of them are rare and few hundred years old, immediate steps should be taken to preserve them. We fully endorse the views expressed by Dr Homi Dhalla in his letters to you. We suggest that the Institute initiate a project to preserve our valuable manuscripts and literature at the earliest..." noted a letter signed jointly by Dastur (Dr) Firoze Kotwal, JamaspAsa, Dastur (Dr) Hormazdiar Mirza, Ervad (Dr) Rooyintan Peer, Ervad (Dr) Ramiyar Karanjia, Ervad Parvez



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Reading room facilities at the Institute in abeyance

the donation was being sent by Dubash. The trustees however sought Dubash's permission to use the funds "for the general preservation of books and material in our library" stating that since "various methods of preservation (are) available, the library books should not be put on CD-ROM at this stage." Dhalla thus decided to involve the other scholars, hoping a collectively signed letter would carry more weight.

On behalf of the trustees, joint honorary secretaries Modi and Navaz Mody responded: "...with due respect, your suggestion comes long after the process of preserving the K. R. Cama Oriental Institute library collections has been set

in motion as the trustees of the KRCOI have also been very concerned about the condition of all the library books (and) manuscripts. We may inform you that the K. R. Cama library collection is in a far better state of preservation than the collections in a lot of other libraries...Dr Homi Dhalla's letters refer to reproducing the contents of the manuscripts and rare books and not in their preservation and therefore the trustees had indicated their decision a long while ago expressing their inability to accept Dr Dhalla's proposal..."

A subsequent letter from the scholars (to which JamaspAsa and Peer were not signatories but Dhalla was) dated October 10, 2002 reiterated to the trustees "that the CD-ROM method is most useful for the preservation of important documents and manuscripts, although it may be used also for reproducing material. In this context we would like to point out that if you are concerned that by adopt-

ing the CD-ROM project, the manuscripts/rare books would be reproduced surreptitiously and passed on to others, we may assure you that this cannot happen. The Cama Institute would undertake the project in its premises, using its own equipment, manned by its own staff and under its supervision. Moreover the other advantage is that once the data is preserved, it would not be necessary to refer to the original manuscript/rare book at all as one would have access to it on the CD..."

"They have a phobia that 'our manuscripts should not be duplicated,'" related Dhalla in a subsequent discussion with *Parsiana*. "How many Parsi scholars must be studying the manuscripts? Maybe one or two. If it can be accessible to scholars all over the world and more light on the religion can be thrown" what's the harm? Dhalla points out.

"We have a finite source of funds at our disposal and at this point of time our priority is to preserve the heritage and literature here," asserts Cama as Modi adds, "We don't know the life span of a CD. As technology changes, will a CD-ROM be in use after some years?" Associated with the KRCOI for the last 22 years when she was brought in as joint

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honorary secretary Modi reveals how different methods of preservation have been used over the decades to ensure that no insects damage the contents of their library. Initially they were recommended to spray DDT on all the books until its harmful effects were realized when Modi and her staff, at the cost of their health, wiped out all traces of the pesticide from the tomes. Later they tried butter paper, after that silica gel. Then lamination was believed to be the answer. At another time it was recommended that the volumes be exposed to the sun while piercing a needle through the holes in the pages to eliminate all chances of the insects' survival. "Everyone has had a go at conservation to the best of their knowledge," says Modi with Cama pointing out, "Who knows, 100 years later we may be castigated for adopting this new system of preservation." "It could be 20 years down the line!" admits Modi.

Presently the conservation team will take in hand one book at a time, at their discretion. "For one year the accent will be not only on preservation and conservation, but preventive conservation," explains Modi. After identifying the components of each sheet of paper — a single manuscript may have used differ-

ent types of paper — they will set about restoring it. Paper and ink being made of minerals and vegetable dyes, it is prone to acidification, explains Cama. The use of deacidifiers and deoxidants is hence an integral process of preserving paper. The library which is temporarily converted into a conservation laboratory has the apparatus laid out on different tables. On one, there is a special magnifier to help study the flaws in the paper. It shares table space with a special instrument which emits cool vapor after it is fed with mineral water. While the restoration work is in progress there is special tissue paper used to support the original brittle sheet which could have tears or holes in it. There is no blood or nerves involved but the delicacy of the job bears a semblance to the task facing a surgeon at the operation table!

Scholars would be heartened to hear that these manuscripts here are being treated with such care and respect for barely some months ago they were in doubts as to what was happening to the originals. During the months of November-December 2002, there was an exchange of correspondence between Dhalla who wanted access to page 7 of Mss No 8 (containing *Visperad Sade*

and other texts), page 14 of Mss No 16 (*Yasna with Nirang* and other texts) and page 16 of Mss No 19 (containing *Yasna* — Avesta and Pahlavi) and the joint honorary secretaries of the Institute. Questions were asked — why he wanted to see them, the theme of the paper — before he was permitted access to two of the manuscripts, the third being under preservation. "Does anyone in the world ask (a scholar) 'Why do you need a manuscript? What is the subject of your paper, etc?'" This is sheer harassment. At that time there was no sign of conservation," claims Dhalla who perceives the main problem at KRCOI is "they don't have scholars as trustees. Objectively speaking, the only trustee who is a scholar of international repute and is academically qualified to appreciate the value of these precious books and manuscripts is JamaspAsa."

"Libraries and books are meant to be read," insists JamaspAsa who maintains that when he was joint honorary secretary of the Institute he has never denied access to books for fear of pages crumbling or books getting spoilt. Frequenting the Institute four or five times a week, JamaspAsa must be among the handful of Zoroastrian scholars who

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avails of the library facilities regularly, rating the collection as among the best in the world. While the secretaries who are in charge of the day-to-day running of the Institute may have the right to say 'no,' "the rules and regulations should be in consonance with the aims of the Institute," he believes.

With this attitude prevailing at the KRCCI "scholarship *mari parvaani* (is going to die down)," declares Kotwal who alleges that there is no encouragement, facilities and open-door policy for budding scholars which could bring to light many new works. Having opted to discontinue using the library there for the last many years Kotwal says he has now built up his own personal library with over 2,000 books on religion which he is in the process of cataloging. He compares the treatment meted here with the cooperation extended by the Meherjirana Library at Navsari which has even permitted him to carry to Bombay a manuscript required by him and the libraries abroad which offer xeroxed documents on payment to facilitate researchers.

The KRCCI trustees though have a different tale to relate: "Scholars are supposed to respect books but they frequently make notations or fold the pages. Indiscriminate xeroxing and exposure to the light and heat damages the pages and also affects the spine. When dealing with scholars it is a tightrope walk...the prima donnas have this notion '*tahmé soo jano* (what do you know)!' As per the KRCCI library rule 11a: "No rare books, manuscripts, periodicals, encyclopedia or reference book, etc shall be issued or sent outside the premises of the library." There are however some genuine scholars whose association they value, like the "humble, Christian gentleman" who with his knowledge of 20 languages is ever ready to come to the Institute's assistance.

All the 250 manuscripts at the Meherjirana Library have been microfilmed at the instance of Parzor (a UNESCO sponsored project endeavoring to preserve the ethos of the community), reports Dhalla, the major financier for the project being scholar Pilo Jungalwalla of Delhi. But when the KRCCI has 10 times as many manuscripts would microfilming be the answer considering that microfilming is not the solution for conservation? From where would they procure the necessary funds? Earlier the microfilm reader installed at the KRCCI library ceased to

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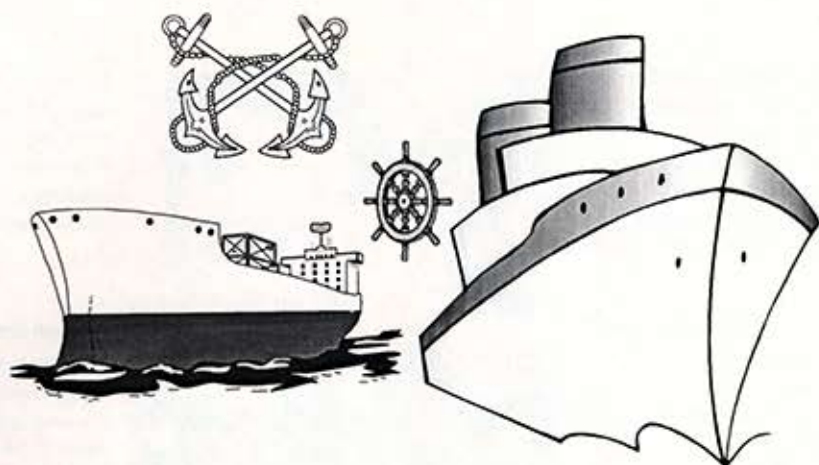


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Swami Vivekananda

Swami Vivekananda was Jamssetji Tata's companion aboard the ship 'Empress of India' on their voyage to America in 1893. Mr. Tata was deeply influenced by Swamiji's ideal of self-reliance. Later Swamiji helped the Founder to set up the Indian Institute of Science in Bangalore.



J. N. Tata

Convinced that 'the Nation that has the steel, will have the gold', Tata's Founder laid the bedrock for India's economic emancipation. Tata Steel soon became the largest Steel Plant in the British Empire and remained so in the early decades.

Mahatma Gandhi

Johannesburg - Gandhiji publicly acknowledged Tata's support towards the Satyagrahis in South Africa in 1909 and remained a close friend of Sir Ratan Tata. In 1925 he visited Jamshedpur at the invitation of C.F. Andrews, and successfully took up the issue of recognition of the Tata Labour Association with the Management in 1934, on his second visit.



Subhash Chandra Bose

Subhash Chandra Bose took charge of the Jamshedpur Labour Association in 1928 and provided leadership to the Steel Company's labour till 1937. He took up successfully with the Steel Company's Management the need to infuse qualified Indian engineers into covenanted positions.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru continued the patronage of his father, Pandit Motilal Nehru towards the Indian Steel Industry. He first visited Jamshedpur in 1925, with Mahatma Gandhi, and remained a friend of the Tatas and, on becoming India's first Prime Minister, paid a visit to Jamshedpur in 1958, the Golden Jubilee Year of Tata Steel.



J. R. D. Tata

India's pioneer aviator became Chairman of Tata Steel at the age of 34 and steered the Steel Company's fortunes through the difficult war years. As Chairman of Tata Steel, he remained a doyen of Indian Industry for well over five decades and was instrumental in pioneering, moulding Indian Aviation, Industrial Development, Scientific Research and Family Planning.

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function due to non usage and absence of airconditioning facilities, Modi clarifies.

There is no dearth of funding possibilities: individuals, trusts, government organizations, corporates and multinationals, would assist, says Dhalla referring to organizations like the National Archives which provides funds for microfilming, Delnet under the ministry of culture which places old books on the Delnet, The Indira Gandhi Institute for Art and Culture which offers free microfilming of manuscripts on the premises on the proviso that one negative will be retained by them... The WZCF has in the recent past helped set up libraries for institutes/anjumans in Poona, Bangalore and Baroda. They have also transferred to CD certain ancient books like *Our Own Religion in Ancient Persia* (1913) by Lawrence Mills, *The Treasures of the Magi* (1917) by James H. Moulton and the works of Kavi Khabardar to see that literature is not concentrated in one place. "Diffusion of knowledge and preservation of our literature" has been the aim of the WZCF, states Dhalla. Commending the Asiatic library's successful conservation endeavors, Dhalla suggested that their "Adopt a book scheme," where on payment of Rs 1,000 the maintenance of

a particular book is ensured, could be implemented at the KRCOI too.

In fact the Asiatic has an independent conservation laboratory, microfilming laboratory and binding department, mentions Kamekar, vice president of The Asiatic Society of Bombay and on the governing board of the KRCOI. As one of the 26 governing body members her role is confined to organizing programs, seminars and conferences. The governing body members serve on different committees — books, events, funds and finance, competitions, research — appointed by the trustees. Conceding that "they were not systematically conserving books at the Institute," Kamekar felt that probably the trustees "did not have the necessary expertise... (They) somehow did not accept the help offered to them." Happy that they were now taking up conservation seriously, she feels that Dhalla perhaps "has worked as a catalyst."

This year the Institute could not even afford a coat of tar for its building which houses six occupants with the result that there is rampant leakage through the open terrace during the monsoon, laid as it is with China mosaic tiles, explain the trustees. The money raised at the time of interna-

tional congresses which they host has been drying up. Very few are willing to give donations for the general maintenance or day-to-day running of the Institute with 10 staff members being on its payroll, points out Modi. "People don't realize that if you don't have a building, you don't have anything..." From the income of the corpus donation they have received from the Zartoshty Brothers Fund they have been annually reprinting extant books as recommended by their committee and vetted by the Zartoshtys. Due to shortage of storage space they reprint 300 copies of a book if it has a scholastic content, and 500 copies if it is of general interest. Presently they have financed research on Ravi Verma's Parsi portraits and a translation of the Gujarati treatise *Mumbai no bahaar*.

"The library is a labor of love, not a means to a livelihood or occupation," declares Modi with Cama clarifying, "The trustees are the custodians and legally liable for everything..." The contents and developments there are of consequence to the entire community for, as notes Dhalla, housed at the KRCOI is "not just a collection. They have a treasure of our heritage."

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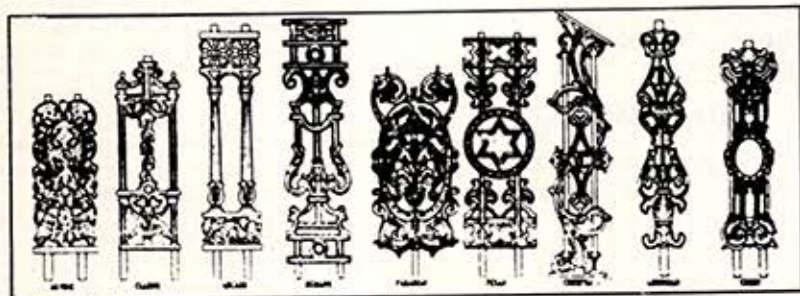
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BOMBAY'S BUSINESS BASICS

continued from page 120

Chicago and the Delhi chapter functioning under president Farrokh Rustomji. He was hopeful that WZCC-India will start a chapter in Gujarat with Khambatta of Ahmedabad providing the lead.

The dynamic emcee Zarine Commissariat, member of the core working group, announced that the next meeting of the Mumbai chapter on July 18 had been planned as an interactive workshop. With industry and integrity engraved on its logo, the WZCC hopes to form a cyber-

**"Every
accomplishment
starts with the
decision to try"**

community with an extensive network of business and industries, professionals and students. By sharing information about achievements, aspirations and funding options, providing business counselling services, developing educational programs it seeks to build upon the Zarathushti brand equity and create an impact on society the world over.

Along with Limathwalla, the others serving on the managing committee of the Mumbai chapter are Kersi Commissariat, Zarir Bhatena, Minoo Mody and Merzy Chinoy.

Describing the evening's keynote speakers as "examples of Zoroastrian entrepreneurial spirit at its very best," an active member of the core working group of the Mumbai chapter, Dinshaw Tamboly noted in his vote of thanks, "A long overdue dream has become a reality. Looking at the commitment and dedication with which the Mumbai chapter has been steered" Tamboly was sanguine it "would provide an ideal platform for the Zoroastrian entrepreneurial spirit to flourish." Expressing his gratitude to the day's sponsors Hilla Builders, the budding entrepreneurs Tanaz Godiwalla and Sarosh Daruwalla, Homi Mullan, honorary secretarial coordinator of the WZCC-India and the BPP administration in the creation of this chapter, Tamboly added, "The WZCC is destined to succeed." Calling upon the audience "to support this win-win project of our community," he declared, "The future of any community or country depends on how it plans for the same."

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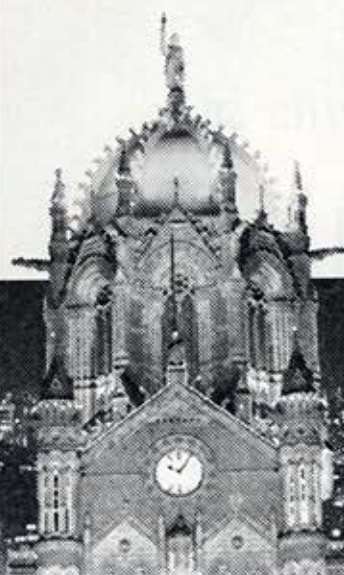
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Mark of a manager

Anu Aga's profile in courage won her the first Management Woman Achiever of the Year award from the Bombay Management Association

Hilla P. Guzder

The setting was five-star — the Crystal Room of the Taj Mahal Hotel — for the presentation of awards considered benchmarks in entrepreneurial and managerial excellence. In its golden jubilee year, the Bombay Management Association (BMA) instituted a new award — Management Woman Achiever of the Year — and receiving this honor on June 21, 2003 was Anu (Arnavaz) Aga, chairperson of the Thermax group of companies, a leading player in energy and environment management.

Aga has "courageously led and facilitated a major turnaround in the group. This included reconstitution of the board, shedding of non-core activities, rightsizing of operations, increased focus on the customer and driving a high performance culture," notes the award citation. "She has the rare courage of her convictions and is passionately committed to the cause of ethics and fair play... (She) is a role model in many ways for the business community at large and particularly for women in management..." The citation particularly commends Aga's "courageous leadership qualities, espousal of ethical practices and ability to stand up for worthwhile causes."

What stood Aga apart from the rest of

the crowd was her profile in courage. The years 1996-2000 saw terrible tragedies. Husband Rohinton, founder and head of Thermax, passed away suddenly in 1996, followed by the death just a year



Anu Aga: role model for the business community at large and women in particular

later of their 25-year-old son Kurush in a car accident. Thermax was floundering, tough decisions needed to be taken. The company has, from the time she assumed chairmanship in 1996, turned from the red to the black. (Thermax

posted a net profit of Rs 7.2 crore in the quarter ended June 30, 2003, despite a fall in turnover. This was attributed to better treasury management, according to *The Economic Times* of August 1, 2003).

Immediate past president of the Confederation of Indian Industry, Western Region, Anu's outspoken anguish at Gujarat chief minister Narendra Modi's handling of the communal riots last year raised many a political hackle. She was among the sprinkling of industry leaders (Rahul Bajaj, Deepak Parekh, Jamshyd Godrej) who chose to take a stand, in an environment which

saw most captains of industry more concerned about the loss of property and man-hours than the slaughter of innocent villagers and townspeople.

Accepting the BMA award on behalf of her mother who was away in the US was Anu's daughter Meher Pudumjee who is group vice chairperson. "My mother would have loved to be present. I am very proud of her," Meher told the gathering of man-



From left: Pudumjee accepting award on Anu's behalf; Agarwal, Simone Tata and Mahindra; Gopalakrishnan; Wadia

agement professionals in the audience and seated on stage — chief guest Keshub Mahindra, chairman of Mahindra and Mahindra Limited, BMA president S. P. Agarwal, vice president Devender Nath, Dr Ram Tarneja, Nasser Munjee, R. K. Chopra and others.

Receiving the Management Man of the Year Award 2002-2003 was R. Gopalakrishnan, executive director of Tata Sons and a member of the Group Executive Office, headed by Tata group chairman Ratan Tata. Simone Tata, chairperson of Trent Limited, who has been the driving force behind Westside, a chain of stores with an innovative approach to retailing in India, was honored with the Special Award for Innovation. Among the several other awards presented was Best Chairperson of BMA committees, won by BMA stalwart Nargis Wadia, director of New World Strategies Private Limited.

Living up to her reputation for forthrightness, in an acceptance speech read out by her daughter, Anu stated: "In the recent past we saw several corporate reputations take a beating for what is euphemistically called creative accounting. Transparency and accountability in business are no longer just seminar subjects, they form the bedrock on which stakeholder trust is established. As my late husband Rohinton Aga used to correctly say: 'Profits are not just a set of figures, but of values.'"

Urging industry leaders to be aware of their social responsibilities and not to shy away from taking a stand, especially where the rule of law is violated, Anu urged: "The business community, with its intellectual strength, financial muscle, persuasive power and leadership needs to support sustainable projects which can make a qualitative difference in the lives of people. Hence, I strongly believe that unless leaders take an active part in what is going on around we will have successful businesses, but an environment with which we are not happy and which, in the long run, threatens business stability itself. I believe that corporate business responsibility means getting involved in creating a better tomorrow for India."

(At the Thermax annual general meeting on July 31, Anu announced her decision to retire as chairperson in September 2004 in favor of Pudumjee, who is 37. Anu will continue as director on the board, focussing on social work, reports *The Economic Times* of August 1, add-

ing that the Thermax board has decided to allocate one percent of net profit every year towards social causes.)

Coincidentally, it was exactly 10 years ago that the BMA had honored Rohinton Aga with The Management Man of the Year Award. Aditya and Kumaramangalam Birla, Parekh, Keki Dadiseth and Godrej are among the august winners of this Award.

"Her vision has been to provide high quality fashion at affordable prices with an international shopping experience. In a short span, 10 retail stores (Westside) have been set up in major cities. She has been able to achieve all this by extensive use of IT (Information Technology) in inventory management of over 20,000 different products, maintaining stringent quality standards and providing superior service..." stated the citation for Simone Tata. "This is a delightful surprise and rather unexpected. What good fortune has provoked this award!" smiled Simone, accepting the honor from Mahindra. "In business, innovation is the only way to survive and prosper. I have had a long innings full of excitement and challenges. I surround myself with young and capable managers and receive great advice, great ideas. We will continue to accelerate (the business)..."

Leavening the Saturday morning with his humor was Gopalakrishnan. "By now, after so many speeches, it must be pretty predictable what I'm going to say, so I won't say it... The BMA in a moment of impetuosity and aberration gave me the award! The big danger of awards is that one gets carried away and begins to believe that everything that is said is true!"

"I usually shy away from such functions," Mahindra declared, "but one look at the list of recipients and I felt I could not deny myself the pleasure and privilege of giving awards to persons like these." In a hard-hitting address, the doyen of industry commended the changing mindset of the people in political power through the 1990s and the dawn of the new millennium. "It is no longer considered a sin to make money. Industry, however, has to become a part and parcel of framing national policy. We must not shy away from public policy... As we increase our economic activity (in a globalized arena), we will face a hostile environment (as is happening, for example, in IT)... The irony is the developed world seeks our markets but keeps

their own markets shut... We must not fall for bullying tactics."

Recalling the dreadful era of the 1950s-80s in India, Mahindra queried: "The misguided policies of that time — how did they not destroy us as in the Soviet Union? The draconian laws, misguided planning killed all enterprise. It often seemed like a conspiracy; was it a conspiracy to keep people in poverty and ignorance? Indira Gandhi (Prime Minister at that time) threw me out (when he commented on this)." No one is against transparency in corporate governance, Mahindra declared, but "everything is blamed on us poor businessmen. The most important element are the parliamentarians. They legislate change, frame policies. The time has come to seek our democratic rights. If we do not, we will get change we do not deserve."

Running the advertising agency Inter Publicity for 30 years till it was sold, Wadia is now into consultancy in advertising, marketing and event management. Associated with the BMA for 10 years, she is the chairperson, for the third time, of the Women in Management Committee, which focuses on the empowering of women and giving them recognition for their achievements. "We support and encourage women who dare to make a difference e.g. Anahita Pundole in her campaign against illegal hoardings, or Nandini Sardesai who spearheaded the cause of voting rights for women at the Bombay Gymkhana. This year we are going to focus on NGOs (non governmental organizations) run by women, as well as women bureaucrats," asserts Wadia.

Founded in 1954 by N. Dandekar, Minoo Masani and a few stalwarts of Indian industry, the BMA is an independent non-profit making entity and is considered one of India's foremost management associations. It conducts, according to their fact file, a seven-day residential Executive Development Program and over 100 management development programs of one or two days duration, in addition to four-five major conventions in IT, HRD (Human Resources Development), marketing, financial services, etc. Minoo Shroff (currently Bombay Parsi Punchayet chairman), Nanabhoy Davar, Dr Rustom Davar, Dr Minoo Davar, Soli Doctor, R. J. Khambatta and Kersi M. Gherda are among its roster of presidents.

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Showcasing excellence

The Russi Mody Centre for Excellence in Jamshedpur stands testimony to the far reaching vision of the Tatas

Dilnavaz E. Bhagwagar

Heads of State, government officials, collaborators, customers and guests of Tata Steel begin their voyage of discovery with a visit to The Russi Mody Centre for Excellence (more commonly referred to as the CFE). And they leave deeply impressed. The CFE has the distinction of being the first center in the country to provide a common platform to organizations of varied management disciplines, working together for the promotion of professional excellence.

Set on a sprawling 5.5 acres of land in the township of Jamshedpur, the Centre owes its genesis to the vision of J. R. D. Tata (JRD) who conceptualized it. Ratan

Tata, Dr Jamshed Irani and S. Sabavala gave shape to the vision of JRD. Ten years ago when it opened its portals to the public it was named after Mody to commemorate his 50 years of working for The Tata Iron and Steel Company Limited (TISCO). Today the Centre showcases the ethos of Tata Steel.

A visit to the CFE is an aesthetically appealing, mentally stimulating and emotionally moving experience. The environs and architecture that house the CFE are as inspiring as the treasures and ongoing activity within. There is an arresting blend of modern, low-lying, planed and angled buildings juxtaposed

against pyramidal structures and Greco-Roman pillars. There are undulating green mounds and valleys and serene water bodies in which can be seen the reflections of the buildings and gardens. The entire campus is designed by eminent Bombay architect Hafeez Contractor. Of the two main entrances, one has a gigantic pyramid through which one descends into a circular courtyard, edged with cobblestones. Contractor has used the pyramid to symbolize balance, peace and perfect geometry. The other entrance leads through a series of 10 huge columns, symbolic of ancient wisdom and philosophy. The total effect created is

Sylvan settings (alongside) and one of the approaches to the CFE (below); bust of J. N. Tata in the Founder's Gallery

Photos: Dilnavaz E. Bhagwagar



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Archival treasures: Sooni Tata with her children; J. R. D. Tata as a conscript in the French army; (below) the house in Parsis where J. R. D. was born and J. R. D. as a young boy

Labour Relations Institute) show me around the galleries and archives.

The Founder's Gallery has archival treasures on the life of Jamsetji Tata and his vision of a free India. He was one of the few people who foresaw what many others of his time did not—that liberation from poverty and economic independence were as important as political freedom. The freedom that Tata envisaged rested on the economic cornerstones of science, power and steel. One can browse the Founder's Gallery for hours, reveling in photographs of a gracious era, reading in Jamsetji's own

rounded hand his letters to Swami Vivekananda and other leaders and marvel at the commitment of spirit and courtesy of tone in his letters.

Another, among the very interesting documents on display is the prospecting license given by the British to the Tatas on an eight-anna stamp paper. Dated June 14, 1904, it is hand written on a single sheet of paper, eight and a half feet long!

The Jamshedpur Gallery has photo montages to illustrate the company's social commitment and the efforts being made in areas of community welfare, education, rural development and family initiatives. AIDS awareness, de-addiction, Well Baby Clinics and Sas-Bahu programs are just a few of the dozens of community welfare activities highlighted in this Gallery. The well-being of the workers was of foremost concern to Jamsetji and his successors.

The Technology Gallery has a detailed model of Tata Steel works with illuminated panels that take visitors on a visual tour of Tata Steel's modernization journey to emerge as India's foremost world-class steel maker.

One floor is given over to very interesting material on JRD and all that he accomplished in 53 years as chairman of the Tata group of companies. There are rare records and endearing pictures of JRD's mother Sooni, with her five young children, Sylla, Jehangir, Rodabeh, Dorab and Jamshed; JRD's house in Paris where he was born, JRD as a young

one of timelessness.

A laudable aspect of the CFE is that it is not just a passive museum for a slice of history or a monument that stands mute testimony to a bygone era of excellence.

There are three permanent Exhibition Galleries and the Tata Steel Archives on one side of the beautifully landscaped valley. Opposite this is the office block of the Society for Promotion of Professional Excellence (SPPE).

The SPPE is a non-profit organization with B. Muthuraman, managing director of TISCO as its president. Leading professional bodies like the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), Indian Institute of Metals, Computer Society of India, are among the 17 institutional members of the SPPE. Major Tata companies are corporate members.

Offices for institutional members are accommodated on two levels of the main office block. In addition there is a well-equipped business centre, a reference library, a meeting room and an auditorium for the use of member organizations. Built to seat 80 people, the auditorium is fitted with state-of-the-art equipment and projectors. The acoustic system is so sophisticated that it needs no microphones or sound-projection aids.

If the office block of the SPPE is the cerebral center of the CFE, the three galleries and the archives are the heart and the soul of this unique complex.

They have the power to move visitors to wonder and awe at how the vision of one man could affect the destiny of a country, a community and a culture.

The three interlinked galleries have effectively displayed photographs, letters, manuscripts, documents, artifacts and information. They were built with the objective of providing visitors with an understanding of the steel company's ethos and values from the founder's vision to the present day advance in the steel plant and the township. Bringing it all alive for visitors are the very well informed and courteous staff of the Centre. I was fortunate to have Behroze Gazder, the program manager and an articulate MBA from XLRI (Xavier

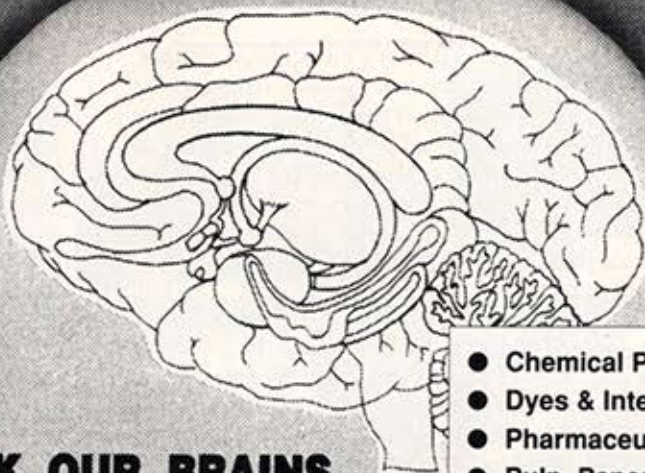


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boy, JRD as a conscript in the French Army, JRD's pilot license (the first pilot license issued in India) and other fascinating memorabilia.

There is a well-preserved diary, written by Axel Shalin who was one of the partners of an engineering company in Pittsburgh engaged by Tatas as construction engineers. Shalin actually sighted the location for the steel company. His diary, written sometime in 1901 when he was returning to USA on a ship, carries an interesting impression of the Parsis as he saw them. To quote, "The race now numbers about 80,000. There is no poverty amongst them. They have hospitals, schools, old-age homes and a close corporation enforcing its own laws. They do not recognize marriage outside the race and this keeps their numbers about constant and the strain pure. Many Parsis are enormously rich and well educated. Their homes are palatial. Such jewels as I have seen the Parsi ladies wear, I never saw nor dreamt of. Even on board this ship, we have one Parsi lady who every day appears with different sets of jewelry. She carries with her a very huge fortune in stones alone." The diary goes on to say, "In the afternoon, Queens Road in Bombay is filled with their elegant carriages and automobiles. Malabar Hill is lined with their palaces and on top is seen their Pit Of Oblivion; the Towers of Silence where vultures devour their dead. Many Parsis are my friends and I think highly of them and admire them."

As interesting as the letters, books, maps, charts and photographs of historic importance that one can see at CFE, is how these are documented and stored in the central repository of the archives.

The archival process is a long and arduous one. "When the material is first received it is fumigated and de-acidified," explained Gazder. "Trained restorers then mend, laminate and encapsulate it. Thereafter it is stored in specially made, chemically treated, termite-proof boxes with naphthalene bricks separating the boxes." In order to avoid frequent physical handling of the material by researchers and scholars, it is all put on microfilm. To retrieve documents accurately and speedily, over 1,00,000 of the documents and 45,000 photographs have been digitalized and put on a 'Search Engine' which is a specially

designed software, with each document having a heading, nomenclature and number. Being aware of this long process and the dedication of those who handle it makes one more appreciative of the wealth of material that has been stored for posterity.



J. R. D. Tata's pilot license Number One, the first in India, issued by the Federation Aeronautique Internationale, signed by Sir Victor Sassoon, on behalf of the Aero Club of India and Burma, February 10, 1929

While most of the material for the archives is sourced from the Tata family and Tata offices across the country, they are not the only source. Individuals and organizations have come up with valuable material. Eighty-year-old Richard Harthorne, grandson of Shalin visited the CFE in 2000, along with his wife. It was a pilgrimage of sorts, to trace the beginnings and career growth of his grandfather in the steel plant. Harthorne was greatly impressed by the way in which the archival material was preserved and presented. He went back and sent a trunk full of memorabilia — personal jottings by Shalin, dhobi bills, hotel bills, railway tickets and picture albums of Kalimati camp site, hunting expeditions, social life and more!

"An educational tour through a slice of history. Splendidly resourced and presented," commented N. Ram, editor, *The Hindu*, in the Visitors' Book. "I salute the great heroes of Indian industry, the Tatas. Leaders in industry and leaders in humanity," remarked Vice Admiral John de Silva, naval headquarters. "I have never felt more motivated or moved in my entire life as I have after visiting CFE!" noted Adil Vesuwala of Bombay. "As always, one leaves here inspired and rejuvenated. We are all heirs to the legacy of Jamsetji and JRD and each of us has to

make our own contribution to the Tata tradition of excellence!" reinforced Farrokh Kavarana, director, Tata Sons. "I thank (the Tatas) for providing me the funds to study abroad. Tatas are also the motivation for me to come back to India. I believe that if I make it big, it will be the

best tribute to Tatas and to the spirit of excellence!" declared Tata Scholar Swaminathan Iyer. And so it goes on, line after line, page after page, book after book. Through all spectra of society and cutting across communal and geographic divide, the homage to Jamsetji and the House of Tata and the pride in being associated with them, as countrymen, customer, staff, stakeholder or scholar, is as moving as it is sincere.

The Centre has chosen to utilize its vast infrastructure, facilities and resources to enrich the life of the community it stands in. It does this through the most potent "agents of change" — the school children of Jamshedpur. A variety of programs and projects have received the Centre's attention over a period of years. The current thrust is on environmental awareness through essay, drawing and photography competitions, lectures by eminent speakers, and question and answer sessions. One prestigious program was an interactive meeting between Bharat Ratna, Prof A. P. J. Abdul Kalam (before he became the President of India) and a 1,500 strong gathering of school children.

Artistic pursuits receive equal attention. Renowned painters and sculptors are invited for workshops at the Centre where they paint and sculpt and interact with local talent. Sculptors are encouraged to walk through the steel plant and pick up any scrap as raw material to work with. A lot of paintings and sculpture from such workshops adorn the corridors and gardens of the CFE.

A visit to the CFE is a holistic experience that encompasses a preserved heritage and a projected future: it ennobles both industry and art; it inspires every visitor to greater heights of achievement. Above all it pays fitting homage to a great man — Jamsetji. Towards the end of his life, Jamsetji urged his close family and associates to carry forward the work he had started: "Go on doing my work and increasing it, but if you cannot, do not lose what we have already done. Preserve it."

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Making up with Mickey

From Hema Malini to Aishwarya Rai, Mehernosh 'Mickey' Contractor is one of Bollywood's most sought after make-up artist

Rashna Ardesher

Put a woman's face in his hands and he will transform it. As soon as a star walks into the room, make-up artist and hair stylist Mehernosh Contractor (popularly known as Mickey) sees her face, her nails, her height, keeps her character in mind and, within the character, tries to make her look as pretty as possible: "When working on a film, I'm working on the same face for a hundred days. But every time I get a new face, I pray that I hope I get this face right, that I hope I'll be able to live up to everybody's expectations. I don't want to let anybody down. I want to be perfect." Contractor has worked on the faces of most Hindi film heroines, his favorite being Hema Malini.



Contractor: the man behind make-ups

He has also worked with producer-director Karan Johar, Yash Chopra, Rahul Rawail, Mahesh Bhatt on films such as *Saath Saath*, *Rangeela*, *Kuch Kuch Hota Hai*, *Duplicate*, *Dil To Pagal Hai*, *Mohabbatein*, etc. As Best Make-Up Artist for the film *Kabhi Khushi Kabhi Gham*, he won the 2002 IIFA (International Indian Film Academy) Award.

The latest path-breaking trend — the no make-up look — has changed the perception of make-up in the Hindi film industry. "I started this trend. In reality you are wearing all possible make-up on your face, but on screen it looks as if you haven't worn anything! Kajol's first film, *Bekhudi*, Aishwarya Rai's first film, *Aur Pyaar Ho Gaya*, most of the Lux commercials starring actresses right from Juhi Chawla to Amisha Patel have carried off this look very well. They just love it," says Contractor looking cool in his shorts, T-shirt, a diamond studded in his left ear and not to forget his bald pate. The challenge is to make actresses look

less made-up, believable and yet beautiful unlike the caked-up look of actresses in old Hindi films.

After every single shot, he has to touch-up the heroine's make-up: "Maintaining make-up throughout the day, patching it up and making it look even on the face is far difficult than doing make-up from scratch." This comes by experience. When there is an outdoor shoot, the whole unit wakes up at 3 a.m. Work starts at 5 a.m. and carries on till 11 p.m.: "Once on location, we have to face the heat, the rain, anything that comes our way. Our bodies take a lot of beating. Often the toilets are unclean, the air conditioner does not function,

the exhaust is no good, dust flies all around. We are constantly breathing the same air. The glamor arrives only when the premier takes place."

"The contract with a producer can be either per film or per actress or per shift. My contracts change from producer to producer. This field is very lucrative, once you've made a name for yourself," says Contractor. However, collecting dues also depends from production to production. It can take Contractor a week or even two months to get his money. He has also come across producers who have defaulted on payment.

There are quite a few make-up artists joining the profession. But Contractor doesn't consider them his competitors. He's probably the seniormost and has "very cordial relations" with all other artists since he knows them "at a personal level."

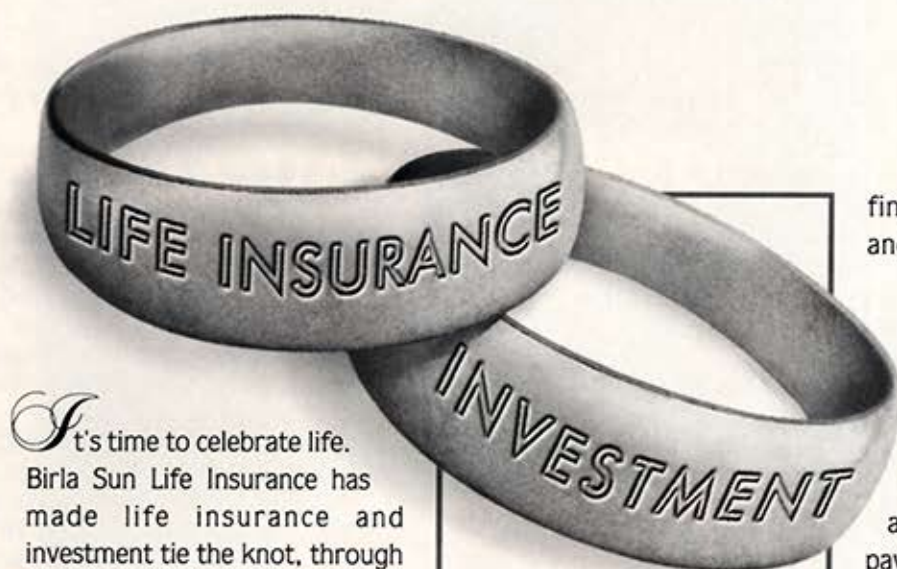
The make-up artist was recently seen in the *Jeena Isi Ka Naam Hai* show on StarPlus. The host was Farooque Sheikh, the personality being invited and re-

viewed was Rai and Contractor was one of the guests. What was revealed was that a model and actress of the stature of Rai, was most comfortable leaving her face in Contractor's capable hands. He explains, "That's because I was Mickey Contractor (a reputed name among make-up artists) at the time I started working on Aishwarya's face, but Aishwarya had not made a name for herself. I've not only worked on most of her campaigns, but have also done her make-up, hair and clothes for her first film. She and some other actresses find me more of a father figure as I tend to evoke feelings of faith and trust in them."

Contractor is highly respected in the film industry: "Parsis are honest, dress well, eat well, speak well, have good table manners, which is very hard to find in Bollywood. I'm known for my punctuality and commitment to my job. I hate people who are not punctual and who tell lies." According to Contractor, he goes to work with "blinkers on" and has a "one-track mind." But that is his dedication to the job and honesty to his profession. Small wonder he is recipient of the Kingfisher Award 2000 awarded to him by business tycoon and Rajya Sabha MP, Vijay Mallya.

The face that gave him instant fame was that of actor Anupam Kher. Contractor laughs: "I dressed him (put make-up and made Kher wear a turban with three strands of hair falling on his forehead) as heroine Sridevi's sister, Prabhadevi, for a *Cine Blitz* cover. It was an April Fool joke, saying Sridevi's sister Prabhadevi was found. In reality, Sridevi has only one sister, Sreelatha!"

Well-known photographer Gautam Rajadhyaksha, writes in his book, *Faces*: "I must mention Mickey Contractor, the stylist and make-up artist who has worked with me on several assignments, particularly those involving film stars. Each of us is the catalyst for the other and some of our best work has been the result of



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Bollywood stars Contractor has worked on (clockwise from top): Rai, Prabadevi aka Kher and Madhu Sapre. Bottom (left) with Kajol and her sister Tanisha during Kuch Kuch Hota Hai and (right) with Rani Mukherjee on the sets of Chalte Chalte



our collaboration."

Getting bored of working as personal make-up artist and making up the same face everyday, he gave up movies for a long time and made a name for himself in the field of advertising. In 1985, he worked on his first ad — Close Up. The face he had to work on was Bhavna Munim's, sister of actress, Tina Munim (Ambani). The stylist worked round the clock and got due recognition.

Contractor's first passion was to become a hairdresser rather than a make-up artist in Bollywood: "I was always inclined to do something with hair. I adored Helen's big hairstyles...associated with glamor... I went to college only to make my mom (Soonoo) happy. After six months I clearly told her that I wanted to take up hairstyling as a profession. She

was willing to give me the money to do a course with aesthetician Dinyar Workingboxwalla on the condition that I return the amount to her in a year's time. If not, I would've had to revert to studies." Workingboxwalla taught Contractor some basic hairstyles, apart from waxing and bleaching. All he earned was tips from clients, amounting approximately Rs 400 per month. However, he managed to return the money to his mother within a few months. Had he

failed, would Contractor have reverted to studies? More importantly, would he have made a name for himself? "No way," says the artist emphatically. "I would have done dress designing or tailoring or catering but would have never reverted to studies."

Born on October 6, 1961, Contractor comes from a separated family. Soonoo, now retired, worked for Geoffrey Manners in the Quality Control Department and father Minoo, who died in May 1993, was employed with the Indian Western Railways. Since the time he was two, Contractor was brought up by his maternal grandmother Shirin Talati in Bombay. As a child, he was very docile and calm. An average student, he was not interested in studies. After passing his SSC from the Dadar Parsee Youths Assembly High School in 1976, he was forced to take up science in Bhavan's College.

In 1978 Contractor joined the Tokyo Beauty Parlour at Warden Road to learn advanced hairstyling. He reminisces: "Helen used to be a regular customer there. One day she inquired about my hobbies and asked me what I'd like to become in life. I said that I loved travelling and that I'd like to be associated with movies doing different hairstyles for actresses. She encouraged me to join the film industry."

No sooner did Contractor feel a little confident of joining the industry, he lost all interest in getting a certificate in hairdressing from the Tokyo Beauty Parlour. In fact till date he doesn't have one. He realized that, according to the rules of the Cine Costume and Make-up Artists Association, only female hairdressers and male make-up artists are allowed in Bollywood. Since he wanted



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to join the industry, he had to learn make-up. He learnt the technique on the job itself.

He approached Pandhari Juker, a popular make-up artist in those days, who took him on as one of his approximately 50 assistants who worked in groups of threes for different films. On his first day of shooting for the film *Kranti*, Contractor had to simply pay attention to Juker's assistants at work. The first few faces he worked on were those of B-Grade extras for a historical film, *Raajmata*, his first outdoor shoot in Rajasthan. The make-up to be done was very garish and heavy. Clarifies Contractor: "It's a misconception that extras are easy. They come from very good homes."

In 1981, a film, *Formula Z*, was being made in Hyderabad. The producer had appointed Juker as make-up artist. Since the outdoor shooting was decided in a hurry, Juker was not free and requested Contractor to do the job. During the course of the shoot, he met Preity Ganguly (daughter of the late actor Ashok Kumar), Dilip Dhawan (producer) and Alpana Chaudhry (dancer-cum-character actress). Later, he became personal make-up artist to Chaudhry, Sheikh, Kiran Vairale, Akbar Khan, and others. But Contractor enjoyed doing make-up for women rather than for men: "On a man's face there's nothing to do. You just put foundation on their face. Besides, I dislike men wearing make-up." Contractor has worked on his own and as helper to various make-up artists in Gujarati, Marathi, Punjabi, Bhojpuri, Malayalam and Telugu films. His work was well appreciated by producers and film stars alike.

He feels comfortable using his own make-up. Preferring foreign brands to Indian ones, the artist says: "Unfortunately, most of the Indian brands are not waterproof. They are neither durable nor hypoallergenic (allergy-tested). Besides, I don't like the texture of Indian products." For foundation, he uses the brand Kryolan, for loose powder, Clinique, blusher Bourjois, eye pencil Chambor, eyeliner Channel or Bobby Brown, eye shadow Channel or Mac or any other

foreign brand, mascara Lancome, and Mac is his favorite brand of lipstick. He's not keen on any particular brand of lip pencil and never uses a compact. Most foreign

brands are available at Beauty Centre, Crawford Market. But what would he recommend for ordinary mortals? Contractor clarifies: "Any Indian brand is good for day-to-day use, but not for the screen. It's too hot to wear foundation in this country, especially during the day. Just wear a compact, blusher, mascara and lipstick."



The family is a priority: with wife Meher and children Yohan (right) and Bianca

Mixing his personal life with his professional life is not Contractor's credo. In spite of working on so many faces, he does not like to see make-up on his wife, Meher, to the extent that he did not allow her to wear make-up even on their wedding day: "She looks beautiful the way she is. I'm so fed up of seeing made-up faces that when I come home, I want to see a well-scrubbed, natural face. This is my home, that's my profession."

Mickey and Meher are first cousins who fell in love and got married in 1994. Formerly working in the accounts department of BPCL, Meher is now a housewife who keeps track of her husband's appointments, takes care of his finances and other paper work. The couple have two children, elder son Yohan and younger daughter, Bianca, both studying in Bombay International School. When in Bombay, Contractor's first priority is his family. He makes it a point to spend at least 10 days in a month with his family. He has learnt Indian classical vocal music, does painting and enjoys watching late night English movies.

A religious-minded person he prays every day without fail. The dakhmashini controversy does hound him, occasionally: "I wouldn't be surprised if I myself go in for electric cremation. If there would be vultures, then it would be a fabulous way to go."

Sadly, smoking is a vice, which he knows he has to stop. Just as he is able to accept his own shortcoming he feels that those plagued with skin trouble should seek treatment. He advises them not "to conceal skin flaws by wearing make-up." No, he would not like to gloss over!



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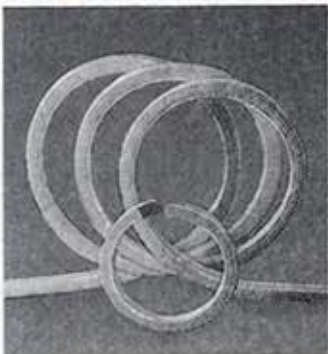
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Yachtsman Farokh Tarapore is the only Indian to have won a world championship twice in different classes of boat

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Big seas, small seas, riding his yacht over white horses raising their heads majestically, caught in the eye of a squall or becalmed in a windless sea, world champion Farokh Tarapore knows through 30 years of competitive sailing, that time and tide wait for no man.

"Yachting is as much a sport of the mind as of the body. You can't control the wind, but you can trim your sails. Your mental toughness is as important as your physical fitness," says the wiry, sun-bronzed helmsman who has won many a medal at international and national events (see "The winning formula," *Parsiana*, October 1995).

Tarapore is the only Indian so far to have won two world championships in two different classes of boat — at the 1991 Worlds in Bombay in the Enterprise Class with Kelly Rao as crew, and at the 2002 Worlds at Tavira in Portugal in the 420 class, with Vikas Kapila crewing. "A world championship is a gruelling competition. You have to sail 15 races, including qualifiers. In Tavira, there were competitors from 24 countries who had come with coaches, costly equipment and tremendous support," narrates Tarapore who is convinced that it was not just the desire but the belief that they could and would win that saw them in cruise control right up to the trophy.

"At the post-win press conference, the Press asked whether we expected to win and they were astounded when we said 'yes!'" he smiles. "We did not even have a coach. The 420 boat, which is half a meter shorter than the 470, is a new class in India and was introduced just a year before the world championships. The hull of the boat is Indian-made, everything else is imported. The two of

us believed we could win this championship — it did not matter what other people believed," he says. The conditions in Portugal were "nice and hot," favorable to the Indians. "I like warmer

coming from the department of sports (Government of India) and also no sponsors willing to help, we have been pushed into a tight corner... I'm mostly doing administrative work when my job is to just sail," Tarapore told Sunil Warrier of the Times News Network just before he left for the Kiel Week in June this year.

"World championships are held annually but the Olympics are special — they come but once in four years, countries' pride and prestige are involved, people put in huge amounts of money. The Olympic Games are a high-pressure competition. Very few Indians even succeed in qualifying for them," Tarapore said to *Parsiana*. With three Olympian experiences (Los Angeles in 1984, Busan in 1988 and Barcelona in 1992) already tucked firmly under his sail, Tarapore is not daunted by the fact that the Olympics are a very, very tough test. You can't go into a major competition if you are afraid of losing. There is only one reason to go and that is to win, he believes.

Risks inherent in yachting do not daunt him. Well aware of the power of wind and waves or a possible May Day situation, Tarapore admits he has had "a few close calls" and though rescue boats are present, rescuers are sometimes caught in trying to extricate themselves from a storm.

Tarapore's boat-handling skills have seen his trophy cupboard fill with medals of every hue, won at national and international regattas in Europe, South Africa, Middle East and Far East since 1974 in several classes of boat — Cadet, Enterprise, Fireball, Seabird, J24, 420 and 470, with the 470 having fetched him maximum medals. At the 1982 Asian Games, with the yachting events being held in his own backyard, Bombay,



Tarapore (left) and Rao in cruise control

places. In chilly conditions so much of your energy goes in fighting the cold," he remarks. Fuelling their self-belief was a poster they made which had the Indian tricolor and the word GOLD in bold letters on it. Pasted on the outside of their apartment door, the poster, says Tarapore, carried a message not just for themselves but for others to imbibe as well!

With the 2004 Athens Olympics already on the horizon preparations have begun. Sailing in the Kiel Week (where they were placed in the gold fleet) in Germany in June this year, then the pre-Olympics at Athens in August and the world championships in Spain in September (which are one of the qualifying events) will serve to clear the deck for the country's participation. "The overall expenditure until the Olympics is around Rs 75 lakhs. This year I'll require at least Rs 30 lakhs and so far we have received not a penny. With the promised money not



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Tarapore (right): doing the Navy proud

Tarapore struck gold with Zarir Karanjia as crew. Four years later came silver in South Korea at the X Asian Games with Dhruv Bhandari; in 1990 in Beijing it was a bronze at the XI Asian Games with Cyrus Cama crewing, followed by another bronze in Japan at the XII Asian Games with Kelly Rao. The Pusan Asian Games in 2002 were a disappointment, with Tarapore and Kapila finishing just a point behind the bronze medallists. "I like to have different crew for different classes. Factors like height, body weight, etc vary for the type of boat," he observes. Currently, he has paired with Lt Amit Arvind to sail for India in the 470 class.

The Yachting Association of India's

"Yachtsman of the Year" in 1986, 1991 and 1994, Tarapore was honored with the Arjuna Award (the highest sports award in India) in 1982 and the Shiv Chhatrapati Award (the highest in Maharashtra state), in 1985. His employers, the Indian Navy (IN), presented him the Vishist Seva Medal in 1983.

Seduced by the sea even as a schoolboy (St Sebastian and Don Bosco in Bombay), Tarapore joined the National Defence Academy (NDA) at Khadakvasla, graduating (through the Academy) with a BSc degree from New Delhi's Jawaharlal Nehru University. "I learnt a lot from those fantastic years. At the NDA they push the physical limits to the utmost," he declares. He then joined the IN. "My passion was to compete (in yachting) and I could see me living my dream through the avenue of the Navy. They played a huge role in support. I had a great time," recollections animate the mariner's face. Tarapore retired in 1996 as Commander from the IN.

Tarapore acknowledges the role of the department of sports which has enabled him to set sail at many a competition. "It's easy to sit around and complain, but I'm no complainer. They (the sports ministry) too have their own chal-

lenges. There are different sports disciplines which require support. Everything has to work on a budget. If issues are not resolved to your satisfaction all the time, you have to live with it." Private or corporate sponsors can do much to build a bridge over troubled waters as far as finance is concerned, he believes, bemoaning the fact that in India sailing hardly attracts any sponsors despite Indian yachtsmen having done exceptionally well in recent years. Often putting in money from his pocket, Tarapore anxiously awaits sponsors in the run-up to the Olympics.

"In the lives of sports persons who have carried their sport to the extreme, there are often imbalances. You need to balance the three legs of the tripod — family, finances and your sport. Take one leg away and the tripod falls. I certainly would not like to suffer the fate that has befallen some veteran sportsmen in India — don't want to be sitting on the roadside with a vegetable cart, the Arjuna Award and contents of the trophy case!" Tarapore's dry humor surfaces. While money is important, there should be no compromise, asserts the seasoned campaigner who strongly supports drug testing to keep the sport clean and pre-

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Smooth sailing in the J24 (far left); Tarapore and Kapila (above) with world championship trophies in Portugal; Anahita and Farokh

The Shroff family (below), from left: Gulshan, Maya, Kyra, Firdaus, Porus; Kyra on court (center) and with tennis ace Mahesh Bhupathi



vent what he terms "blatant cheating."

Farokh and his wife Anahita teach people the principles of success and its application to life and work. "In order to succeed you have to decide you want to succeed. My passion is winning, yachting is just a vehicle. I would have found a way to excel in Formula I, if I were in it!" he declares, admitting however that people's perceptions change with the

passage of time. Anahita touches upon Farokh's even keel: "Win some, lose some, Farokh takes everything in his stride. I get more happy about his victories and unhappy about his losses than he does!" Accompanying him to competitions whenever possible, Anahita smiles: "When I married him I didn't know the front of a boat from the back." Now, spinnakers, luffing, tacking, hiking are

everyday acquaintances! Farokh's parents Faramroze and Coomi have emigrated to New Zealand and live in Auckland where his brother Porus also resides. Sister Silloo lives in Sydney.

Steering clear of community controversies, the seafarer remarks that he is "nobody to comment on" issues like inter-marriage, dokhmenashini, etc which he terms "personal matters." He believes there

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are few Parsi boys today who join the IN; the numbers in the merchant navy may be slightly higher. His philosophy for youth is: "If you want to win you have to get out of the comfort zone. You win at your inconvenience, not convenience. Winners are not born, they are made."

Pursuing her passion

The training at The Nike-Bhupathi Tennis Village in Bangalore is tough, but 10-year-old Kyra Shroff says she thoroughly enjoys it. Kyra "is a very talented young girl and is very hard working in her daily routine... if she is nurtured for a longer time and remains under our care for at least another year up to end 2004... she will have progressed to a higher level," writes Krishna Bhupathi, father of India's tennis ace Mahesh, commending his young student who moved to his Academy from Bombay in January 2003.

"Kyra is very friendly and has adapted to this new life of hers in Bangalore, away from her home and family very well and this itself is an indication of the determination and goal the little girl has focussed towards in her life," continues Krishna. "We are proud to inform you that she has improved drastically and this has enabled her to win three con-



*Kyra:
building her
credentials*

potential..."

Providing Kyra a timely window of opportunity to grow and glow in her tennis career are her parents Firdaus and Gulshan. "Living and training at The Tennis Village is expensive, costing around Rs 25,000 per month," says Firdaus. Determined to shoulder what is no doubt a strain on family finances while simultaneously looking for sponsors, Firdaus believes that quality exposure and a sound work ethic at an early age will lead to success in a sport which combines talent and temperament, consistency and calculation, art and craft. "Among the boarders at The Village, Kyra is the youngest," says Gulshan. "While many of the local trainees opt for only one training session each day usually in the evenings, Kyra takes both the morning and evening sessions, which

secutive state ranking under-12 tournaments back to back in Bangalore. She has even reached the quarter-finals of the under-14 A.I.T.A. (All India Tennis Association) tournament and this alone is testimony to the fact that this young girl has

works out to almost five-and-a-half to six hours of tennis per day!" "The coaching here is so very different from what I had in Bombay," Kyra said to *Parsiana*. "We are up at six in the morning and at the court by seven for around two-and-a-half hours of tennis, followed by breakfast, bath, studies (with a private tutor) and lunch. After a short rest, it is back to the tennis courts from 2.30-5.30 p.m. Dinner at 7.30 and bed by 8.30 completes the regimen. "The first one or two weeks were a little difficult but now I'm used to it," remarks the gutsy girl who has willingly detached herself from parents and siblings, six-year-old Porus and four-year-old Maya as well as all her friends at Bombay's St Anne's High School, Fort, to relocate to Bangalore to avail of superior training facilities.

"I like the game (of tennis) itself, the strokes, the competition. My forehand is good, the forehand volley is my favorite stroke, my backhand needs strengthening," the pre-teen assesses herself with maturity. With a total of 15 courts, fitness at the gym and on court is emphasized in an international game where muscle and mobility, skids, slides, lunges and power play spell success today.

Describing Kyra's win over Karam-

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jeet Kaur in the girls' under-12 singles final at the Century Club — The Wearhouse tournament (a state ranking event), *The Hindu* of May 31, 2003 reports from Bangalore: "What was notable about this young girl's game was her ability to hit the ball square and clean and to stick around the baseline... hitting some solid winners on the forehand, making some neat returns on the run. The serve, of course, didn't have that bite, but she was consistent enough." Kyra was also the under-12 winner at the Embassy Tennis Tournament 2003, held at Bangalore's Sadashivanagar Club, which is also a state ranking competition. In the Kim's Tennis Academy — Chandrika state ranking tournament in June, Kyra won the under-12 title, reaching the quarters in the higher age group (under-14) as well, according to her bio data.

Kyra's name had been recommended earlier for a summer course at Florida's famous Nick Bollettieri Tennis Academy which has produced many a World Number 1 and Grand Slam champion, but prohibitive costs prevented her going, states her father. International tennis coach Tahir Ali, who along with his son Intikhab, trained Kyra while she was in Bombay describes her as "my most promising and upcoming student and tennis player. She is very talented and hard working. Since tennis is an expensive game, I would like corporate sponsors to come forward to help encourage this talented child."

Starting to build her credentials at age eight, Kyra was ranked as high as No 3 in Maharashtra in the under-10 category. As a MSLTA (Maharashtra State Lawn Tennis Association) registered player, she was selected for the Hero Honda MSLTA Masters 2001 in girls under-10 and reached the finals at the Wodehouse Gymkhana Junior Maharashtra State Ranking Tennis Tournament in her category. In 2002, though only nine-and-a-half, she competed in the under-12 reaching a ranking of No 5, as per her statistical details.

An all-round sportsperson, Kyra has represented her school not only in tennis but in karate, athletics, football and throwball, winning medals and certificates along the way, writes Sister Martina, headmistress of St Anne's High School in her letter of April 2002, commending Kyra's academic and athletic abilities which prompted the School to grant her leave of absence to further her tennis talents. Faring well also at All Parsees Annual Athletic Meets, Kyra picked up the girls under-10 individual championship, breaking the existing record in the 80 m run as well, at its XXII Meet. Sporting genes run in the family, with Gulshan having represented her school/college in athletics and Firdaus having played semi professional cricket in the UK for six years. Firdaus was also a Maharashtra state level junior badminton champion.

Starting professional training at a very young age in tennis is not just an advantage but a necessity, believe the Shroffs, anxious to obtain sponsorships for Kyra to pursue her passion and break into the big league. With Indians having fared exceptionally well this June at what is probably the world's favorite tennis event, Wimbledon [Leander Paes and 46-year-old Martina Navratilova (of USA) lifted the mixed doubles trophy, 16-year-old Sania Mirza won the girls doubles with Alisa Kleybanova (of Russia), while Mahesh Bhupathi and Max Mirnyi (of Russia) lost out in the men's doubles final], there are examples to emulate. On the feminine front, Mirza's feat was all the more praiseworthy as, according to *The Sportstar* of July 19, 2003, "the last woman to play in a Wimbledon final from India was Rita Davar who lost the girls singles final in 1952."

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A WORLD BODY BY END 2003?

continued from page 72

been formed and two BUZY scholars have been selected, he noted, adding that a team of mentors has been set up to guide these students through their academic life.

Paghdiwalla urged the BPP to form a parent body of the youths in Bombay to weave together the disparate baug associations and was informed by Tamboly that the concept was on the Punchayet's agenda.

Delna Pastakia of Borivli spoke of their Udvada pilgrimage, gahambar, religious talks and dumb charades with religious subjects.

Volleyball, cricket and indoor games like table-tennis and carrom tournaments keep the youths of Thana, Mulund, Bhandup and Vikhroli occupied, as per the report of Thana's Havovi Billimoria. Trips to Deolali and Karjat, cleaning agiaries, producing the three issues of their magazine *Youth Vision* a year, have been some of their other activities.

The Nagpur Parsi Gymkhana is the focus

of youth activities, cricket and bridge tournaments and indoor sports being interspersed with a blood collection drive, a bone density camp, work on the publication of the local community directory and organizing of Navroz, Khordad and agiary anniversary celebrations, according to the report filed by Gymkhana president Shiraz Gimi. Having hosted the teams from Surat, Jamshedpur, Secunderabad and Calcutta for the 17th Jiji Irani Challenge Cup Cricket Tournament in Nagpur, the event entailed four days of entertainment followed by a grand dinner in honor of Daisy and Tata Teleservices chairman Dr Jamshed Irani.

Defunct Anjumans

Happy with the successful completion of the task of recovering and liquidating encroached community properties in Cambay, Junagadh and Nadiad, Surat's Sorab Katpitia, coordinator and pillar of the Federation's defunct anjumans subcommittee since its inception nearly 20 years ago, announced that the Amroli problem had also been solved. With the help of solicitor Burjor Antia the long drawn case had been concluded with Rs 42 lakhs in an escrow account, he noted.

The case of the Gadag anjuman property in Karnataka was also close to completion, said Katpitia. Acknowledging that it was the first time that a trustee had extended full cooperation, Katpitia thanked Kekobad Pudumjee of Poona.

Speaking about the valuable but dangerously encroached property in Harda, Katpitia said he invited the cooperation of those whose forefathers had hailed from Harda. People were willing to file affidavits and a Parsi in Australia is willing to come and depose before the court, said Katpitia.

At Nanded the names of Tamboly and Antia were to be included as trustees — a procedure which may have to be completed at the Aurangabad Bench of the Bombay High Court. In Jamnagar, whose trustees now reside in Porbunder and have allegedly entered into undesirable transactions, a lawyer has been appointed by Katpitia on behalf of the Federation. He and the lawyer have been receiving threats from antisocial persons, reported Katpitia.

In places where the Parsi community is dwindling there is a "misunderstanding that the Federation wants to take over their properties." In this context, Katpitia lauded Neemuch trustee Jal for opting

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for the Federation's custodianship. Acknowledging that only two Parsi families remain in Neemuch, Jal urged the BPP and the Federation to help dispose of their property worth anywhere between Rs 2 to 3 crores while preserving the agiary and the dakhma.

Shroff, who said he has been involved with the defunct anjumans sub-committee for the last three years, commended Katpitia's initiative and the cooperation of "our friend from Neemuch." Describing the community as obstructionist rather than cooperative, Shroff clarified, "The Federation can only step in when there is fear that Zoroastrian properties cannot be maintained locally. Katpitia could have better results with local support."

Plans for salvaging nearly a dozen aramgahs in India in various stages of dilapidation were demanded by some of the delegates. Acknowledging the sentiment involved, Gandhi reminded them that a working arrangement existed in several cases. He advocated pragmatic restraint in the light of the financial and supervisory liabilities they entail. "Resources once raised can help with other ideas," said Shroff implying a step by step approach.

World Body

After years of debate, denunciations and dithering, voluminous reports on structuring and restructuring, a world body of Zoroastrians may be "in place by the next Federation meeting" as per Gandhi. After the headaches generated by the thunder and lightning of previous debates what is promised now is birth by stealth.

At a caucus in Bombay in January 2003 (sandwiched between the launch of the Bombay chapter of the World Zarathushti Chamber of Commerce and a meeting of community leaders from around the world) when the Press was expressly excluded, "the Federations of North America, Europe (the UK based Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe) and India discussed and wrote the sense of the meeting" Gandhi now told the Federation delegates, crediting Tamboly for getting the WZO's acceptance "with one or two reservations." Gandhi then urged Shroff "to liaise with other Federations and sign the charter of the world body so that it is in place by the next Federation meet."

Shroff, who had been appointed to chair the liaison group at an in camera

meeting at the Seventh WZC in Houston in 2000, spoke about a "surprising convergence of views on both sides," meaning the WZO and the federations who had hitherto been its detractors. "It is a constructive move forward to have one body instead of two... It augurs well for our small community."

A high profile economist, Shroff has succeeded the late Sohrab Godrej on the steering committee of the Alliance for Religion and Conservation chaired by the Duke of Edinburgh which aims, he says, to direct trillions of dollars worldwide into ethical investments. He is keen that the community appreciate its own high credibility in the wider world. "It is a matter of prestige that we can stand up and be counted," he said. It also means that we must "stop arguing on non-consequential issues."

WZCC

"How the World Zarathushti Chamber of Commerce (WZCC) progresses will depend on how far and how fast we spread," noted Kersi Limathwalla, coordinator of the Bombay chapter. The chapters in Bombay and Delhi need to be replicated all over India, he added.

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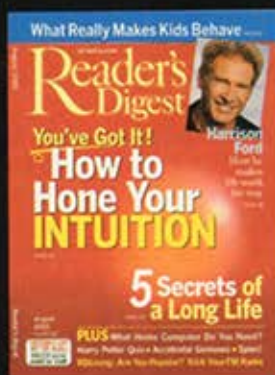
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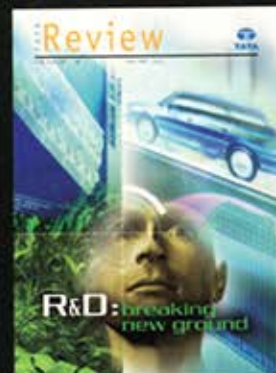
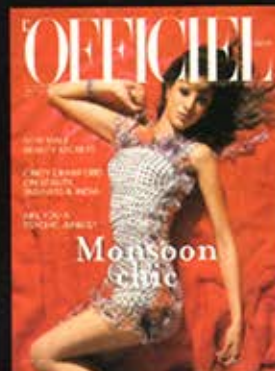
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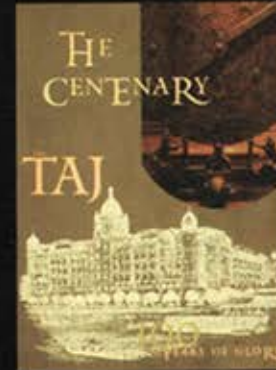
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Though the WZCC is the direct result of the global community's desire to remain in touch, especially as manifested by its founders in North America, it would largely benefit the Zoroastrians of India by providing interaction from well placed Zoroastrians "at pivotal levels in large organizations" in hubs of commerce and industry everywhere.

Eight to 10 areas of business activity have been identified by the Bombay body, according to Limathwalla. Plans were on to hold a workshop and divide members into groups according to their interest to provide the required service. A coordinating committee to link the Zoroastrian Co-operative Bank, the BPP's venture capital body and the WZCC was on the cards. An annual award to recognize an outstanding local businessman/professional was also being planned.

Shroff, who had visited Dubai at the invitation of the Bhesania family while Gulf War II was raging, appreciated the 1,600 venturesome Parsis of the UAE, many of whom had been residents of the bays of Bombay. They proved that the community's "risk-taking capacity was not dead," he noted.

Open forum

As Shroff decreed that topics discussed the last time would not be repeated again in the open forum, a new gamut of subjects came to the fore.

The opening salvo was fired by Dastur with his observation that the 10 percent divorce rate among intracommunal marriages was very high. He informed the gathering that the BPP had formed a committee comprising of an educationist, a psychologist and a retired judge with Antia in the chair to tackle the issue. Shroff, Tamboly, Antia and Meher Guzder were also negotiating the estab-

lishment of a management college on the Cama Athornan Institute's land. The BPP building repair cost is over two crore rupees per annum. "Our community is not concerned about the state of disrepair of the buildings (which) are depreciating and deteriorating at an accelerating rate," he fumed. With one in three marriages being intercommunal, the BPP CEO wondered, "What do we do with non-Parsi spouses in Parsi estates? Throw them out of the colonies?" The BPP's housing advisory committee had suggested that the housing stock should go to intramarried families and if anything remains, to intermarried families, he noted. "Should there be a national referendum on this issue?" he asked the delegates. The need for a single calendar in a community of 75,000, for statutory adoption procedures, for a reasoned approach to the inheritance rights of the children of mixed marriages are topics that have agitated Dastur since some time.

Terming them as "problems largely concerning Mumbai," Shroff recommended that they be put "under the carpet" until the next Federation meet in Bardoli when he suggested a "more structured discussion" for a full day. He then added an undemocratic rider: "It will be an in camera discussion, not for the media."

Gandhi was amenable to a full-day discussion if the delegates came with a mandate from their respective communities. When this suggestion did not find favor he suggested that Dastur work out a note with pragmatic suggestions, then formulate a committee on each subject.

Rustomji related their experience in Delhi when a circular with five specific questions demanding a yes/no response provided a clear understanding of what the community wants.

In response to Baroda trustee Baman Cama's request for "a clarification from the chair" on the high priests' fatwa, Shroff noted that the "three most respected" high priests had restored the status quo. He quoted Nadir Modi, vice president of the Athornan Mandal, to the effect that "there's nothing like a fatwa; it's up to the community to accept or reject their statement." Shroff noted that meeting the high priests once in a month or two in the Punchayet had established a rapport which had helped the trustees through the hurdles associated with the murder investigation at Doongerwadi. According to the orthodox lobby the last word belongs to the high priests. The saner elements in the priestly clan could prevail if you don't humiliate them, he added.

Former BPP chairman Dr Aspi Golwalla opined that "46 agiaries in Bombay was an absolute waste." He also suggested that the community forget about setting up a medical college because it would not be able to generate even 20 percent students to maintain its minority rights.

The current national preoccupation with rewriting school history textbooks led Heerjee to suggest that the community inspect what kind of role is assigned to Zarathushtra, his religion and his people.

Sethna noted that these texts denigrate "religions of the book" (viz Judaism, Islam, Zoroastrianism, Christianity) in a subtle way. The information may not be incorrect but the insinuations suggest ideas to childish minds which become difficult to remove, he noted.

Golwalla expressed doubts about the solar reflectors dehydrating the body in four days. "What about solid organs like heart, kidneys, etc?" he challenged. Tamboly offered to show him pictures

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and added that even the *National Geographic* had sought the Parsi experience for their story on the effectiveness of solar energy.

India will be hosting the "Dialog of Civilisations" in connection with UNESCO's declaration of 2003 as the 3000th anniversary of Zoroastrian culture. Zoroastrianism is being recognized as the "mother religion of the world," declared Sethna. Azarbaijan has sought Indian support to restore its fire-temple in Baku, he added.

The new Rs 5 Dadabhai Naoroji coins were expected to be launched on September 4 being Naoroji's birth anniversary. The program has subsequently been fixed for October 2, 2003. A biography by the late Dr Sarosh Wadia is also being updated, noted Sethna. It has been confirmed that Rs 1.25 crore from the GOI and the GOG will be used for the town of Udvada as a heritage precinct.

"Our religion is universal," stated Antia. Drawing an analogy with the different sects of Christianity he continued, "We have to adopt and welcome the Zoroastrians who come from Tajikistan...help them start an agiary in Tajikistan, have a dynamic program, a universal approach."

According to Golwalla, the supply of accommodation in old age homes is outstripping demand. To the home in the Masina Hospital compound and the BPP's Parukh Dharamshalla is being added a facility at the B. D. Petit Parsee General Hospital where Shapurji Pallonji has donated seven crore rupees, he said.

Maintaining that the problem of ageing is increasing all over the world, Sethna sought a grant of seven lakh rupees to enable sociologist Dr Armaity Desai to proceed with her study on ageing "so that facts and figures are before us."

Antia endorsed the need to care for 60 percent of the community who are over 60 years old, though they may not all need to be housed in old age homes. He also felt the need for a corpus for education that would generate 40 lakh rupees per annum to pay fees for four medical students.

Golwalla was unhappy that an overwhelming number of beneficiaries of the BPP's educational grants do not return to India after qualifying in their respective fields and that 50 percent of them marry out. It appeared to him as a waste of resources. Noting that even in the past we had gone everywhere, Dastur countered, "A Parsi is a Parsi anywhere." The

only worry is that they lose contact with the culture." "We see brilliant Parsis in *Parsiana* and the *Fed Newsletter*. How many of them know about Parsipanu?" asked Sethna adding that nonetheless recognition is coming to the community nationally and internationally.

"Is the environment conducive to the advancement of liberal attitudes?" Shroff joined the debate. "Nobody owes anything to you today. Even Parsi (business) houses are not employing Parsis unless you are comparable. Those who are determined to go abroad find the money. By helping them there is a better chance they will come back. But not by holding them back."

Antia believed "we should not prevent anyone from improving his future." Those who do not return should return the money spent on them. If they return, they should be provided amenities like residential accommodation, clinical premises, etc, he noted.

Dastur assured the gathering that the money given as loan is almost always returned. Some like Cobra's Karan Bilimoria has given much more so that others can get the break. Money comes in in response to BPP appeals every two to three years, he noted.

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Rainwater harvesting in Parsi colonies, vermiculture, solar energy generation were other topics discussed in the light of new civic rules and impending shortfalls in established lines of supply. According to BPP trustee Maneck Engineer, who is vice president in charge of construction and property management at Godrej and Boyce, the rocky terrain at Doongerwadi and Godrej Baug would render rainwater harvesting very difficult. He reminded the BPP that he had suggested the institution of a water recycling facility at Godrej Baug when he was the Godrej engineer/architect supervising its construction.

The encouragement of athornan boys to complete their navar-maratab education, preferably at either of the two institutions in Bombay was discussed. Behram Irani told the delegates that Govadia and Antia had gone from village to village in Gujarat to persuade athornan families to send their sons to be educated as sampurna mobeds. Tamboly spoke of a fund donated to the WZO by Ervad (Dr) Kersey Antia of Chicago for the use of financing navar-maratab ceremonies for those who could not afford to do so.

When the question of full-time or

part-time mobedi was raised Antia noted that only 30 to 40 percent of the priests are full-time mobeds. Others work part-time but assume full time mobedi on retiring from their careers. Panthaky noted candidly that one "can't afford to maintain a family on mobedi alone."

Dotivala pointed out that often there is not enough work to keep a full-time priest occupied. A panthaky at one of the agiaries does not have any panthaks to look after so he goes to the Doongerwadi and performs ceremonies there, he noted.

When delegates referred to priests (and nassessalars) who threaten to quit at the least dissatisfaction, Antia suggested that such priests be reported to the Athornan Mandal and/or the Jashan Committee. When told that the officials of those two bodies claim they cannot enforce the law, Antia volunteered to use his moral authority to get such individuals "to behave as good Zoroastrians if not as good priests."

On the cost of encouraging/creating sports superstars, new entrepreneurial ventures and provision of kathi for the sacred fires the post lunch debate pursued the usual long bumpy road to nowhere. However Shroff had wound up the meet before the meal, noting that the

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Changing decades brought in new tastes and newer guests. Mick Jagger, Steven Spielberg, David Rockefeller. From rock stars to Nobel laureates, fashion divas to oil-rich sheiks, the Taj represented a global village long before the term was to become a cliché.

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Daviervala found she needed to counsel parents and siblings as well as teachers. Scholastic backwardness had to be checked against physical learning disabilities and the children so diagnosed were sent to Sion Hospital for remedial treatment as its prescriptions are accepted by schools as well as government bodies, said Daviervala.

Group work, exam study tips, techniques of time management were imparted to the students at both institu-

tions. Though the number of students counseled at Girton totaled 48, only 17 were Parsis. The corresponding figure at CJ were 92 and three. By and large the Parsi students showed greater cooperation and the will to improve, she said.

Dhunjibhoy referred to "approaches through which even normal performance can be enhanced," but the discussion did not proceed.

Those attending the Federation meeting were: Dolat Debara and Porus Debara from Agra; Areez and Persis Khambatta, Porus Karanjawalla and Xerxes Rao from Ahmedabad; Col K. G. and Yasmine Jalnawala from Ahmednagar; Capt Homi Dandiwalla from Allahabad; Pervez Mehta from Bardoli; Jal Patel, Baman Cama, Shavak Patel, Cyrus Cooper and Bomi Talati from Baroda; Sarosh and Pilloo Ginwalla from Bharuch; Gev Dhunjibhoy from Bhopal; Jamshed Guzder, Minoo Shroff, Silloo Kavarana, Dinshaw Mehta, Dadi Engineer, Dinshaw Tamboly, Maneck Engineer, Burjor Antia, Behram Dastur, Sheroo Master, Godrej Dotivala, Homi Mullan, Adil Crawford, Gool Kias, Pareecheher Daviervala, Pearl Mistry and Raika Gazder from Bombay; Noshir Paghdiwalla, Khurshed Pastakia and Delna Pastakia, Marzban Mehta

and Minoo Khan from Borivli; Sami Medora from Calcutta; Marazban Wadia from Davier; Lt Gen Adi Sethna, Dadi Mistry, Keki Gandhi, Farrokh Rustomji and Adil Nargolwala from Delhi; Sarosh Palkhiwala and Shovir Irani from FOZYA; Bomi Heerjee from Indore; Sohrab Dahmubed, Behram Irani, Kayzad Eghlim, Pervez Irani and Mehrwan Irani from Iranian Zoroastrian Anjuman; Homi Bodhanwalla from Jamshedpur; Ronny Dick from Jhansi; Behram and Dolly Masani from Mhow; Dinshaw Mistry from Nagpur; Hoshang Wania and Farrokh Govadia from Nargol; Noshir and Niloufer Jal from Neemuch; Dara Irani, Firdous Kayani, Porusasp Mehta, Zenia Vajifdar, Behafrid Patel and Tehmasp Bharucha from Poona; Yezdi Panthaky, Mahiar Panthaki, Sarosh Poonawalla and Dinshaw Patel from Saronda; Omim Debara and Aspi Debara from Secunderabad and Hyderabad; Sorab Katpitia from Surat; Rustom Cursetji, Pervez Bhesania and Kaizad and Havovi Billimoria from Thana; Kersi Limathwalla, Kersi and Zarine Commissariat and Minoo Mody from WZCC. Dr Aspi Golwalla was a special invitee. The Press was represented by *The Bombay Samachar* and *Parsi-ana*.

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Sentimental journey

In the past the preparations for travel and the journey itself were an integral part of the holiday experience

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We were packed and ready to load the car to leave for the airport to catch a flight to Sri Lanka. As I looked at the two, smart grey coordinated suitcases and the overnight tote, all with sensible wheels and business-like extendable grips to help pull them along, I was overcome by crushing nostalgia.

Nostalgia for when travel was not one-phone-call-to-your-travel-agent away and when luggage did not look like regimented soldiers but came in a variety of shapes and colors. Black, mean tin trunks, lined up alongside khaki green, roly-poly beddings looking like ample proportioned army Majors with tightly pulled belts and buckles around their bellies; the romantic cane tiffin basket, divided into trays and compartments to comfortably hold your tiffin and the graceful *surai*, an earthenware water urn standing in its special wooden rack to withstand the lurching of the train. One or two *kandias* (rough cane baskets) carrying oranges to Bombay and *tarvana kera* (a variety of plantains) on the return journey to Nagpur were also to be counted in.

When I was a child, an annual summer holiday to escape from the grim heat of Nagpur in May, was about the extent of traveling we did. But the anticipation and preparation for it lasted a quarter of a year. And talking about it could easily fill the other three quarters!

A week before departure the most hotly debated topic at home would be, what to take for *bhatu*, the travel repast. *Papeta ma marghi* or *vindaloo*? Patties or cutlets? Bread or parathas to go with it? For nibbling between meals should it be sandwiches or *bhakras*? Such agonizing decisions to be made! Of course a packet or two of the Jubilee Bakery jam-tarts, ginger biscuits or macaroons that we

took for the family in Bombay, could always be opened if we fell short of anything in the train, or if there were interesting traveling companions with whom we might want to share.

Menu set, the tin trunks, tiffin basket and bedding-rolls were taken out of the storeroom, cleaned and sunned. Travel clothes were likewise brought out and inspected. Under grandma's dictat, all the young girl cousins wore similar, brown, checked frocks. Brown was *melkhu* (didn't show dirt) and we could be easily identified in a crowd. The frock had two deep pockets into which were dropped a few annas, a handkerchief, a packet of *SenSen* and a yo-yo or crayons to keep us amused.

Young people today carry a veritable backpack of gizmos to keep them entertained and are yet bored before their flight is over!

The commute from home to station on the day of departure, was an event by itself, involving heavy logistics. Three hours before the scheduled departure of the train, Yakub, our trusted Man Friday would bicycle to the railway station to bargain for and bring home a *tonga* (horse carriage) or two, depending on the amount

of luggage and number of travelers. Amid the din from multiple instructions "*Peti neeché, kandia upar, pani no kujo pag aagal* (trunk down, baskets up, water jug near the feet)," Yakub and Ismail, the bearded tongawalla would load the rickety tonga. Through sheer fright and overburden, the horse would pee in a big puddle and plop cakes of dung. If a youngster exclaimed, "Oh, shit!" an optimistic aunt was bound to say, "*Ai tau sagan kéhvai* (this is auspicious.)" For us children, the plum of excitement on the adventure of clip-clopping to the station would be the chance to sit next to the tongawalla, on a narrow wooden plank in front, with the horse's tail swishing under our nose!

When the train arrived on the platform, temperatures and tempers rose to a crescendo, as shove turned to push and everyone outside tried to get in, even while those inside wanted out! This was the least enjoyable and actually frightening part of travel for me. Fortunately it was intense but short-lived. Once the guard waved his green flag and the train chugged slowly out of the platform, the older folk settled into their seats, with pillows behind osteoporotic backs. We fought to claim the window seats and with faces pressed to the bars, watched brown farmers on their parched brown fields and waved to villagers at railway crossings. Those who had just crossed the age of 12 but were still trying to be passed off on a half

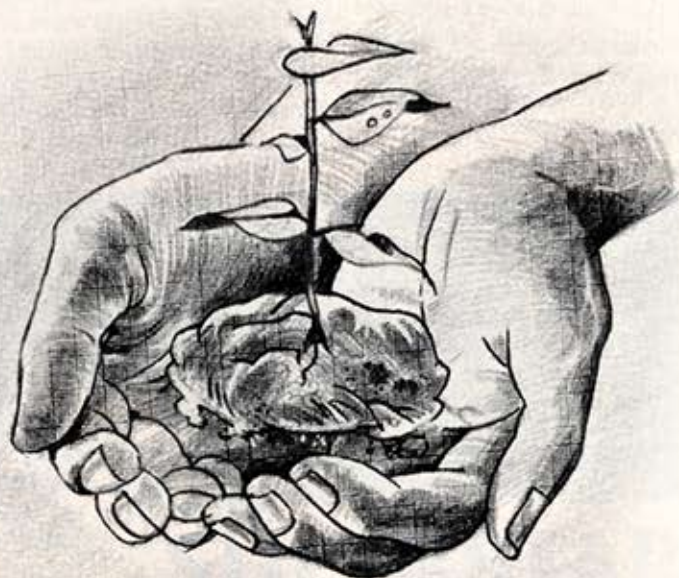
ticket were told to sit tight and do no *bak-bak* (prattle) when the ticket collector came around. About every two hours and in between games of Buzz and Muggins the tiffin basket would be opened for a round of refreshments.

After dinner it would be lights out with a stern admonishment of no further talking or giggling because we'd be left behind in the train if we did





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not get up bright and early. To this day I love the lurch and rhythm of the train, as it speeds through the night, repeating exciting phrases in my ear! Even as I fell asleep my mind would be flying flights of fancy to all the exciting things we would do in Bombay — tramcar rides from Dadar TT to the Victoria Gardens zoo; red double-decker buses taking us to Colaba Causeway to visit vaguely remembered relatives in Cusrow Baug; an evening at Hanging Gardens, as wondrous to my mind as the Hanging Gardens of Babylon! The ultimate Bombay experience, a visit to the beach at Chowpatty or Juhu and the sight of endless blue sea and golden sand!

We would wake up early in the morning to know we were nearing Bombay by the inlets of sea, the energy and purpose with which people on the roads moved and most of all by the peculiar smell of stagnant water and rotten eggs. Years later I was told it was the smell of chemicals and gases from the industrial areas in the suburbs. We would help tie the bedding rolls, by pressing on them with one foot and pulling on the strap with all our might. We ran a comb through our hair, pressed down the pleats of our brown, checked frocks and were ready for the thrills and spills of the big city! As the train slowed down at Victoria Terminus we spotted our aunt and cousins. We had arrived!



BHAKRAS

Wheat flour (1 cup)
Refined flour (½ cup)
Semolina (½ cup)
Sugar (1 cup)
Eggs (2)
Curd (2 tbsp)
Ghee (2 tbsp)
Vanilla essence (¼ tsp)
Cardamom and nutmeg (¼ tsp — powdered)
Salt (a pinch)
Soda-bi-carbonate (a pinch)
Oil (for frying)
Ghee (for frying)

In a large thali, mix together the sugar, eggs, ghee, vanilla essence, cardamom and nutmeg and salt, till the sugar dissolves. Add the wheat flour, refined flour, semolina and soda-bi-carbonate with enough curd to knead to a stiff dough.

Cover and keep for three hours.

Roll out quarter inch thick large rounds. Cut rounds of desired size with a small steel glass. Deep fry in half oil, half ghee till golden brown. Drain on paper. Store in an airtight box.

BREADED BREAST CUTLETS

Lamb (1 kg — breast piece)
Ginger-garlic paste (1 tsp)
Salt (to taste)
Pepper (to taste)
Chilli powder (to taste)
Eggs (3)
Bread crumbs (for coating cutlets)
Oil (for frying)

Thick chutney (made by grinding together a bunch of coriander, a bunch of mint, four green chillies, a tsp of cumin seeds and a pod of garlic).

Marinate the meat with ginger-garlic paste, salt, pepper and chilli powder and pressure cook till tender. Drain and preserve stock. While still warm, remove all bones and cut the meat into large squares 3"x 3". Apply chutney on both sides, coat with bread crumbs, dip in well beaten eggs and fry as you would cutlets.

For traveling, take the cutlets dry. If using at home or for a party, reduce the stock in which meat was cooked. Before serving, put the breast cutlets into the stock in a frying pan and simmer for a few minutes. Remove cutlets onto a serving platter and pour the stock over them. It makes them moist and succulent. Bon appétit!

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The origin of Continental or European cuisine dates back to prehistoric times. Italian cuisine, known as the mother cuisine of Europe, was influenced by the Greeks and Moors. They in turn were influenced by the great civilizations of Mesopotamia, Egypt, Assyria and later by those of Iran, India and China with which they were linked through the silk and spice routes. The cuisine and culture that influenced the Greeks most was that of Iran, after Alexander, the 'ahriman,' conquered it.

Now, the Mecca of Continental cuisine is France, though the Italians may not agree on this issue.

Haute cuisine was created by Marie Antonin Carême who dominated the 19th century cuisine of France with his extremely elaborate menus.

Carême was famous for his creations in sugar confectionery and elaborately decorated main dishes, and is especially noted for his *pihces monties*, the precursor of the modern wedding cake. These were extremely elaborate structures, made of edible materials, which looked like architectural works of art.

It was Auguste Escoffier who introduced the practice of serving salad and cheese after the main course, and before the dessert. He reorganized the kitchens of the great hotels of Europe to make them more efficient. He shortened menus and reduced fat and starch in the food.

He became famous in the gay Edwardian period and has created many great dishes. *Tournedos Rossini* was created by him in honor of the composer. It's one of the richest *tournedos* you could have — grilled steaks arranged on fried croutons, over which is placed a slice of *pâté de foie gras*, lightly sautéed in butter, and a layer of finely sliced truffles cooked in Madeira spooned over this. It is finally topped with a well reduced *demi glaze*. Wow! What a dish!

Escoffier also created *Pêche Melba*, a vanilla ice cream with fresh peaches, topped with a *purée* of fresh raspberries and a garnish of green almonds (classically its always green almonds, not the dried ones), and the famous *Melba toast* in honor of the opera singer Nellie Melba.

The start of *Nouvelle cuisine* has introduced small portions (sometimes not larger than a bite) and the use of exotic



Continental cuisine

The author narrates the history and idiosyncrasies of European cuisine

Bhicoo Manekshaw

ingredients together, making a sacrilege of the ingredients and a mess of the dish. Take for example the delicately flavored avocado, which is mixed with the strongly flavored caviar. It completely destroys the fine flavor of the avocado and is a waste of caviar. Or the fabulous smoked salmon. Why mix it with caviar? Lashings of caviar with a few drops of lime juice served on hot buttered toast, or smoked salmon sprinkled with a few capers and lime juice served with wafer-thin lime slices and rolls of brown bread and butter are the best ways to enjoy their flavors. Why mix two distinct and excellent flavors?

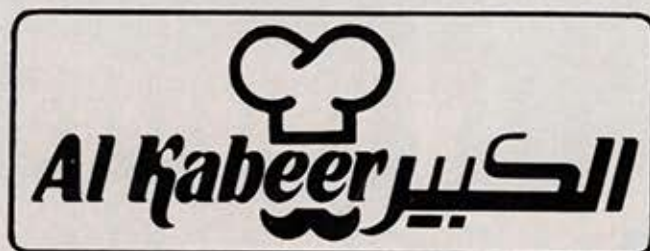
New fads about food have gone completely out of hand. A friend sent me a magazine from the US called *Cooking Light*. I was horrified at the lists of ingredients — no-fat milk powder, ultra-lean ground meat, non-fat sour cream, salt-free stock, reduced fat, reduced sodium,

condensed cream of mushroom soup, reduced-calorie margarine, reduced-fat Cheddar cheese and loads of other low cholesterol ingredients. Eating this type of salt-free, fat-free, low calorie food will create malnutrition. And what about reconstructed egg white and meat, pouch food meant for astronauts, that are reconstructed with boiling water, or milk that has been chemically treated to last forever? Aren't we heading for a weird life-style?

I do not recommend that food should be dripping with fat, nor that one should have a heavy meal everyday, but a well-balanced meal with a good main course served with salads and fruits should be the rule of the day. Our body needs salt, fat and sugar, and all these should be taken judiciously, unless under doctor's orders.

In European cuisine stocks and sauces play an important role.

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European delights

the hollandaise with its variations, the cold sauces like mayonnaise with its variations such as sauce tartare and thousand island dressing. There are also the cold choufroid sauces set with jellied stock, and

lastly the sweet sauces, the most popular of which is crème anglaise, with its variations.

Andre Simon, an authority on choosing and serving wines, wrote in his foreword to William Heptinstall's book *Hors d'œuvres and the Cold Table* that "in gastronomy as in sport, a good start may win the race." He is so right. The hors d'oeuvre comes first in a meal and may make or mar it. For when you come to the table and an hors d'oeuvre is presented to you, you will know after seeing its presentation and tasting it, whether the meal that is to follow will be good or not.

Strictly speaking hors d'œuvres is no

more a part of a meal than the foreword is a part of a story in a book. It is outside (hors) the meal (d'oeuvre), which is why it should be light and dainty. You can serve a canapé with different garnishes, a bouchie (patties of puff pastry baked blind and filled with a variety of mixtures) or barquette (oval tartlets filled with a mixture). Leftovers like smoked salmon, chicken, fish, caviar, etc can be converted into any of these or into individual hot or cold mousses. These are usually served at lunch. If they are served at dinner, then soup is omitted. Henri-Paul Pellaprat, a Cordon Blue of yesteryears, says that it is gastronomically incorrect to serve both for dinner. Le Cordon Bleu in French stands for a first rate cook.

Soups

The most sophisticated soup of the western world, especially of France is the consommé, from which we have many derivations. The vichyssoise which was created by Louis Diart, was inspired by his mother (behind every great cook is a woman), who made a leek and potato soup in her home. Her son turned it into the world famous chilled soup. The French onion soup was created and

Stocks

There are three types of basic stocks made from meat and poultry, fish and vegetables. All these have white and brown stocks.

Sauces

There are two mother sauces — brown or demi-glaze and white or bichamel, dedicated by a court chef to Marquis Louis de Bichamel who was the Lord Steward of the royal household of Louis XIV. From these two sauces many other sauces are made with the addition of various flavorings and ingredients. Then there are the butter-based sauces like



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served by the early morning workers of the market, Le Halles in Paris, which alas is no more. The bouillabaisse was first made by the fisher folk of Marseilles. Actually it should be served as a stew, and the genuine one can't be made away from the shores of the Mediterranean Sea, as some of the fish, like rasasse, which are considered essential for the dish can only be found in the Mediterranean.

Bread

Of all the breads, to my way of thinking the breakfast croissant reigns supreme. The classical French breakfast in fact consists of hot croissants with butter and coffee. There is also the buttery brioche and barquette. Other delightful continental breads are rye, pumpernickel, grain bread and sourdough of Germany; pita of Greece; and focaccia and ciabatte of Italy.

Fish

A la meunière, to my mind, is one of the perfect ways of cooking certain fish like sea sole and pomfret. It is quite difficult to get it perfect. The fish has to be fried in clarified butter. Care has to be taken that it does not stick or burn or break while turning it, and it should be placed

on a warm platter. Then you start over again with fresh butter, this time not clarified, heated in a fresh pan to exactly the point when it turns hazelnut brown, no more and no less. It is poured over the fish with a dusting of finely chopped parsley and a squeeze of lime on top, to come to the table with the butter still foaming. A dish fit for the gods, but you need civilized guests who come on time and are ready to wait for the dish!

Amongst shellfish my favorite is the oyster. The classical way is to have it raw, in its shell, with a sprinkling of lemon or lime juice and a dash of Tabasco sauce, served with thin rolls of buttered brown bread. There are many other ways of eating oysters. I have nostalgic memories of my young days at my home in Bombay, when the *kaloowalli* would come every Saturday with her basket of fresh oysters in their shells, and shuck them open (the culinary term used to open oysters). Our cook John would crumb-fry them and serve them with buttered brown bread rolls.

When served raw, they should be shucked open just before serving. It is better to serve them in the hollow half of the shell so that their natural liquor is retained. The shells are placed on a bed

of crushed ice and the dish is served. Some serve oysters with grated horse-radish or a cocktail sauce, but then the natural, delicate flavor is lost.

Lobsters, crabs, prawns, mussels, clams and scallops are the other great favorites and are cooked in all manner of ways. Lobster thermidors and mules meunières are two of the more popular shellfish dishes.

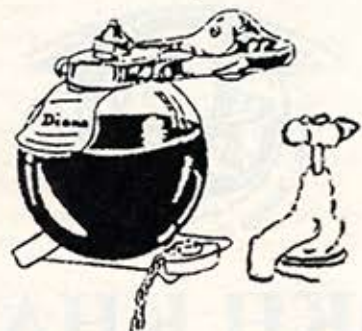
An example of excellent regional cooking of France is the matelote, made with a mixture of freshwater fish, cooked in red or white wine and served with hot crusty bread, a crisp salad and the same wine which was used to cook it.

The French also serve frogs' legs in butter, as a delicacy. They taste like tender chicken and are quite delicious.

Poultry and meat

In the category of poultry, the chicken reigns supreme in popularity. And a good roast chicken is the ultimate. The best way to roast a chicken is the French way, with butter, salt, pepper and a little stock made from the neck and giblets. Another way is to brush the chicken with olive oil and lime juice, sprinkle with dried herbs, roast for a while and then baste with white wine. Delicious, crisp and very

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unusual, especially if a few black olives are added towards the end, as garnish.

Chicken Marengo was created after the famous battle of Marengo was won by Napoleon. He was happy and hungry, and asked his chef Dunand to produce a good meal. The chef scoured the devastated village, found a chicken, some eggs, mushrooms, tomatoes, garlic, crayfish, wine, herbs and truffles and Chicken Marengo was created.

Coq au vin is cooked in pork or bacon fat with mushrooms, baby onions, brandy and red wine, and thickened with kneaded butter. Beef bourguignonne is cooked in the same manner and both are classic dishes of the western world.

There are many ways to cook lamb — noisettes, chops, roasts, stews, etc. A roasted leg of lamb, with slivers of garlic pierced into the flesh, rubbed all over with butter, herbs, salt and pepper, and basted with wine is a delight to serve.

Chops grilled over charcoal, served with sautéed vegetables or a ratatouille is a simple but elegant meal. Navarin of mutton, or a lamb stew, made with the neck of lamb, onions, carrots, turnips, garlic and tomato purée, and served with a purée of potatoes is another typical, simple dish from the West.

Steaks are cooked in several ways and most fall in the category of haute cuisine.

Soufflé

One of the greatest creations to come out of a French kitchen is the soufflé. I wonder who created it. It can be hot or cold, sweet or savory, and it is not difficult to make. There is however an art, or should I say a knack, to making it. The perfect hot soufflé should be made in a regular soufflé dish and should rise about an inch above the rim. The crust should be golden and slightly soft at the center. After it is cooked it should never be placed in a draft or shaken about as it will sink. Nor should it be kept waiting. I was once preparing a hot lobster soufflé for a dinner at the India International Centre, where the late Indira Gandhi was a guest. She was always punctual, but that day she got delayed, and came into the kitchen to apologise. I was so frustrated that I told her a soufflé won't wait even for a prime minister!

Only plan a hot soufflé for a small sit-down meal when your guests are the type who come on time. (Not like the ones who consider it fashionable and a status symbol to come an hour late. It is the

height of ill manners, and it's just as ill mannered of the hostess to keep her other guests waiting for an unpunctual guest.)

It is a fallacy that a hot soufflé should go into a preheated oven the moment it is made.

The secret of making a cold soufflé is to place the pan with the mixture in an ice bath after the gelatine has been added, and turning it with a metal spoon until it is slightly semi-set. Then fold in the whipped cream, beat the egg whites and gently fold in. Spoon into a soufflé dish or coupe glasses and set. Decorate and serve. This way the egg whites will not rise to the top, and the texture will be beautifully homogenized.

Vegetables

Vegetarianism is very much the in thing these days, all over the world. A simple way to serve green or very young vegetables, is to blanch them and toss them in melted butter, with salt, pepper and a squeeze of lime, and serve them al dente. They can also be roasted, grilled, baked, made into a mousse, hot or cold soufflé and exotic salads. Dry beans are frequently used and made into delicious meals. One of the more famous dishes is

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cassoulet—dry beans cooked with herbs and sausage, pork, lamb or preserved goose. There are also the famous Boston baked beans from the US.

Salads

There are innumerable ways of serving a salad, with any combination of fruit and vegetables with different dressing. The most familiar dressing and most often used, is the French or vinaigrette dressing, but there is also mayonnaise with its variations.

Lettuce should be torn by hand and never cut with a knife. Prepare all vegetables for the salad and soak them in ice-cold water. Just before serving, dry them with a kitchen towel, toss in the dressing and serve.

Non-vegetarian ingredients like eggs, poultry, fish, shellfish, beef, sausages, etc, can also be added.

Pastry

Of all the pastries, short crust pastry is the most popular. There are also the choux paste which is used for sweet and savory dishes, flaky and puff pastry. The latter is considered the finest of all pastries and its origin is the Middle East, actually Iran. (We Parsis brought it to

India in the form of the delectable, light, *malai na khaja*, filled with thickened cream and dipped in sugar syrup.)

The French created the magnificent mille-feuilles from the same pastry. They also created *pâté frolle* (with the addition of green almonds), *pâté brisé* (a sweet short crust pastry), *pâté sucré* (a very light, sweet pastry, very difficult to make), and many others.

There is also the strudel pastry, which can be used for sweet and savory fillings and the wonderful stollen of Germany.

Cheese

The connoisseurs of European cuisine serve cheese before the dessert, while the English serve it after the dessert. The cheese of Europe are called "the food of the mountains or the souls of the soil."

The best known varieties are the French Roquefort, Brie, Camembert, Gruyère and Emmenthal; the English Stilton, Cheddar, Wensleydale and Cheshire; the Dutch Edam; the Italian Parmesan, Gorgonzola, ricotta (something like our paneer), mozzarella and *bel a paise* (a soft cheese); and the Greek feta. There are over 300 varieties of cheese in Europe. Most of them don't leave the villages in which they are made

as they don't travel well. Some start maturing from inside outwards and others from the outside inwards. Like wines they are matured in caves and need a cool temperature. They should never be frozen, and go well with wine, but need to be properly matched.

Desserts

The French, Italian and Swiss and perhaps the Germans as well, are famous for their creations of desserts. The ice creams, pastries, meringues, vacherins (meringue crowns, mounted on top of each other and filled with an assortment of ice creams or Chantilly cream), light gateaux, croquembouche (made of choux paste, meringue, almond paste and various fruits particularly oranges), babas and savarins (cakes made with yeast and soaked in liqueur-flavored syrups), the rich fruit puddings, fruit poached in wine, brandied fruits and sweets made with nuts are but a few of the great desserts of Europe. The ultimate is *marrons glacés* (preserved chestnuts which are then glazed — a long and intricate process).

Wines

The incomparable richness of French cuisine is a result of the marriage of the



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wine and food that France produces. Italian and German wines, and recently Australian, Californian and South African wines are also very good. Good wines, well chosen, can create a symphony for a great meal, with a liqueur like apricot, cherry, orange, peach, or the king of liqueurs, cognac as the finale.

Incidentally, one thing to remember is that a chef will always use a good wine, not a cheap one, for cooking.

The white and red wines and the rosé are popular and well known, but the sparkling wines, of which champagne is the best known are also excellent. I once had a sparkling wine called zitza, which was made by the monks of the mountain village of Metsovon in Greece. It was served with a smoked cheese and rose-flavored grapes. I have yet to taste a cheese or wine as superb as these. We declined to have the sheep's head which was also served — eyes, teeth and all! I know that sheep's head is delicious when cut up into little pieces and the eyes are a delicacy in Arabia, but what about the teeth!

Menu to serve 8

Chilled Melon with Port
Sole Meuniere with Grapes
Chimay Chicken Breasts

Mixed Vegetables
Tossed Iceberg Lettuce
Assorted Cheese
Italian Ice Cream with Fruit Salad
Coffee

CHILLED MELON WITH PORT

Green melons (2 ripe — peeled, seeded and cut into 1/4" cubes)

Castor sugar (3 tbsp)

Port (1 cup)

Mint (8 sprigs)

Place melon in a bowl, sprinkle with sugar and port and chill for 2 hours.

Spoon into 8 coupe glasses and garnish with a sprig of mint.

Variation: If you don't want to use port, prepare a dressing of balsamic vinegar, olive oil, salt and coarsely ground fresh pepper and use it in its place.

SOLE MEUNIERE WITH GRAPES

Sea sole (8 fillets — 150-175 g each)

Salt (to taste)

Pepper (freshly ground — to taste)

Lime juice (1 tbsp + extra for seasoning fish)

Seasoned flour (for dusting)

Butter (200 g + 100 g)

Oil (2-3 tbsp)

Green grapes (500 g — seedless)

Chopped parsley (for garnish)

Season fish with salt, pepper and lime juice. Heat 200 g butter with oil in a non-stick frying pan. Dip fish in seasoned flour and fry in hot butter and oil till golden brown on one side. Flip over and fry the other side. Place on a hot platter.

Wipe pan clean or use a fresh pan and melt 100 g butter with 1 tbsp lime juice till butter is lightly foaming. Quickly spoon over fish, surround with grapes, garnish with parsley and serve immediately.

Note: The classical method uses clarified butter without oil to fry the fish.

CHIMAY CHICKEN BREASTS

Chicken breasts (8 medium-sized)

Salt and freshly ground pepper (to taste)

Button mushrooms (500 g — trimmed and kept whole)

Juice of 1/2 a lime

Asparagus tips (400 g)

Butter (250 g + 2 tbsp)

Oil (2-3 tbsp)

Seasoned flour

Thickened gravy (425 ml, made with a strong chicken stock, 1 tbsp butter and 1 tbsp cornflour)

Season chicken breasts with salt and

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pepper. Blanch mushrooms in boiling salt water with lime juice for 1-2 minutes. Remove from heat and plunge into ice-cold water till cold, or place in a strainer under running cold water till cold. Drain and set aside.

Blanch asparagus in boiling salt water for 2 minutes, drain and plunge into ice-cold water till cold. Drain and set aside.

Heat 250 g butter with oil in a large non-stick pan. Dip chicken in seasoned flour and fry till cooked. Place on a hot platter and keep hot.

Clean pan with paper tissue and melt 2 tbsp butter. Add mushrooms and toss for 1-2 minutes. Remove from pan and keep hot.

Add asparagus and toss gently till heated through.

Garnish chicken with mushrooms and asparagus, surround with thickened gravy and serve immediately.

MIXED VEGETABLES

Baby potatoes (200 g — scrubbed)
Baby Brussels sprouts (100 g)
Snow peas (50 g — trimmed)
Baby carrots (200 g — trimmed)
Salt and freshly ground black pepper (to taste)

Butter (100 g)

Oil (1 tbsp)

Boil potatoes till tender and peel. Blanch remaining vegetables separately and plunge into cold water.

Sprinkle all vegetables with salt and pepper.

Heat butter and oil in a large frying pan or kadhai. Add vegetables and toss till heated through. Serve immediately.

TOSSED ICEBERG LETTUCE

Iceberg lettuce (1)

Vinaigrette dressing

Wash lettuce, tear leaves with your hands and soak in ice-cold water for 30 minutes. Drain, dry and toss in dressing.

Serve in half plates or lettuce bowls.

ASSORTED CHEESE

Salt biscuits or Melba toast

Green or black grapes

Arrange all ingredients on a platter and pass it around.

Note: Never serve butter with cheese when it is served after lunch or dinner.

ITALIAN ICE CREAM WITH FRUIT SALAD

Ice cream

Sugar (300 g)

Milk (150 ml)

Egg yolks (10 — well beaten)

Cream (1 ltr)

Vanilla essence (2 drops)

Fruit salad

Black grapes (500 g — seedless)

Fresh strawberries (600 g — cleaned)

Apples (2 — peeled and cubed)

Chikoos (4 — peeled and cubed)

Juice of 1 lime

Sugar (to taste)

Hot strawberry sauce

Strawberry jam (500 g — sieved)

Cornflour (1 tbsp)

Kirsch (2 tbsp)

Ice cream

Dissolve sugar in milk and bring to scalding point. Remove from heat and slowly pour in egg yolks, whisking all the time.

Allow to get completely cold and stir in vanilla essence.

Whisk cream till semi-stiff and fold into custard.

Freeze till set.

Fruit salad

Mix all ingredients together and chill for 1-2 hours.

Hot strawberry sauce

Put jam in a stainless steel pan. Mix cornflour with 2 tbsp water and stir into jam.

Place pan on low heat and cook till jam thickens slightly. Add kirsch and serve hot with ice cream and fruit salad.

Note: The vanilla in the ice cream is just to remove the taste of the eggs. The ice cream should not have a vanilla flavor, so don't use too much.

COFFEE

Experiment and make a blend of different coffee beans of your choice, roast and grind them. Don't roast too much at a time, as the beans lose their aroma after a while.

Coffee can be made by steeping, percolating or filtering. The last method is considered to be the best, and that is how the South Indians make their coffee.

Serve your after-dinner coffee hot with warm milk. Connoisseurs do not serve cream with their coffee, but the choice is yours.

Bon appetit!

Bhico J. Manekshaw, a graduate of the prestigious Cordon Bleu School of Cookery, London and author of *Traditional Recipes of India* and *Parsi Food and Customs*, has been associated with many haute cuisine organizations in the country.





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The journey to India

Adi H. Doctor

From the Iranian Plateau to the Shores of Gujarat. The Story of Parsi Settlements and Absorption in India by Mani Kamerkar and Soonu Dhunjisha. Published in 2002 by Allied Publishers Private Limited, 5, J. N. Heredia Road, Ballard Estate, Bombay 400001. Pp: xxviii+220. Price: Rs 390.

The book under review is informative for any reader who wants to get acquainted with the history of Parsi settlers in India, their social and religious customs (Chapter 8 is solely devoted to this theme), and with their achievements and contributions.

The very first chapter gives an illuminating picture of the common Indo-Iranian heritage and linkages. Although Dr Mani Kamerkar, a historian interested in Parsi history and vice president of The Asiatic Society of Bombay, and Dr Soonu Dhunjisha, reader of history at Bombay's S. N. D. T. College of Arts are aware of the various contending theories pertaining to the Aryans (including the one which claims that the Aryans did not come into India but spread westward from India which was their homeland), they adhere to the traditional view that the Aryans entered India from a common northern home. This explains the remarkable similarity in language (Avesta is described as an ancient sister dialect of Vedic Sanskrit) and common basic teachings contained in the *Gathas* and *Rig Veda* which according to the authors are contemporaneous works composed between 1700-1000 BC. The authors highlight the many common principles enunciated in the *Rig Veda* and *Avesta*, viz. the principle of one single creator who governs on the basis of order (*rita*) and truth (*satya*) while society had natural social divisions headed by the teacher (Brahmanas in Vedic and Athravans in Avesta). Other similarities highlighted include the investiture wherein the child is received as

a member of the faith. This is called the *upanayana* after which the child is described as twice born or *ch'ija* in Sanskrit, while the similar Zoroastrian ceremony is called *navjote* meaning new birth.

The Zoroastrians and Vedic Aryans held similar ideals and lived as one people

for many centuries. Subsequently a break or rift seems to have arisen due to disputes over religious matters, and this explains why certain ancient words relating to worship in the *Avesta* came to mean the opposite in the *Veda*. The *asuras* are evil in the *Vedas*, but good in *Avesta*. Zarathushtra, "probably a priest of the old Aryan religion," came in the sixth century BC and

preached reform and a return to worship of the one and only divine Ahura Mazda. Zarathushtra urged his followers to abandon the degenerate practices of worshipping the elements like fire, earth, sky and water as divinities which were but the expression of the one divinity. The coverage of the Indo-Iranian heritage and linkages is fairly comprehensive and lucid and the authors correctly conclude that the question is not whether India influenced Iran or vice versa, but whether the people of these two great civilizations were one and the authors seek to leave us in no doubt that they indeed were one.

The second chapter takes us through the myriad and conflicting theories and accounts of the date and place of the Parsi advent into Gujarat and the Konkan coast of India. After the initial defeat of the Sasanian dynasty at the hands of Arab invaders, the Zoroastrians

Kamerkar (right) and Dhunjisha: extremely valuable research



spent nearly a century in Iran living in refuge in the south-east mountainous regions of Khorasan and along the coast of Hormuzd. However with the rise of the Abbasids, the Zoroastrians were discriminated against and economically marginalized. Their trade and professions suffered, especially with the development of new cities like Baghdad. This began a chain of migrations. The authors give a comprehensive account of the many legends, stories and records of the date and place of arrival of the Parsi refugees to India which would be of invaluable assistance to the interested scholar.

What emerges as broadly certain is that migration from Iran started around 670 AD and continued for about two centuries, resulting in Parsi settlements all along the Gujarat and Konkan coast of western India. Of all the settlements Sanjan was perhaps the most important and best known and prospered by 871 AD. The authors opine that "The leadership of the community seems to have, from the beginning, been taken up by the priests, who through discourses with the learned Brahmins established the existence of common ritual practices. The concept of ritual purity and other exclusive practices made it understandable for the Hindus to accept the Parsis as a caste group within their cultural and religious traditions." The authors also opine that the Parsi settlers of Sanjan "probably suffered the most" due to Muslim invasions of Gujarat around 1393 or 1405, when the Parsis true to their pledge of assimilating with the local population and loyalty to the ruler, gave "tremendous support to their local chief. Unfortunately the Hindu-Parsi defenders were ultimately defeated. There



was a terrible massacre and the surviving Parsis fled to the nearby Bahrot hills with the sacred *Iranshah* (holy fire) and hid in the hills where they spent nearly



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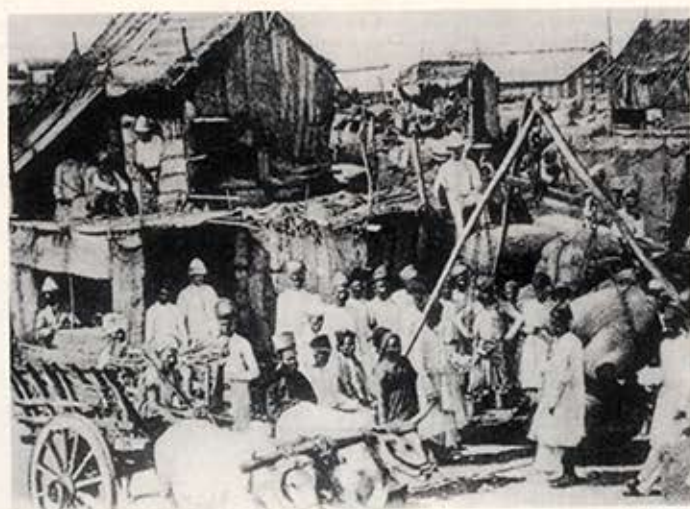
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12 years. The authors claim that "the flight to Bahrot Hills, 20 km away and the sojourn of the Zoroastrians there is no longer disputed as preliminary explorations have uncovered possibilities of a Parsi settlement." From Bahrot Hills, the Parsis found refuge in Vandsa on the Ajmalgarh hills and stayed there for another 14 years before the Iranshah was carried to Navsari under the leadership of Changa Asa and installed there in 1419. Both the dates 1393 and 1419, Kamerkar and Dhunjisha admit are controversial, "but seem to be closest to the facts."

The most important settlements after Sanjan were Navsari and Surat, with Navsari becoming the first important center of Parsi religious and political leadership. We learn about the Parsis arriving in Navsari from about 900 AD and their participation in trading activities and their varied craftsmanship and occupations (especially farming, growing cotton, and "becoming the master



Cotton merchants weighing the bales of cotton Courtesy: Asiatic Society of Bombay

weavers of Gujarat") from local references, European travelers and Arab historians. The Parsis of Navsari and later of Surat are specially mentioned for their *kinkhabs*, *tanchois* and *baftas*. By 1100, the Parsis of Navsari had become a sufficiently united and sizeable community to ask for priests to be sent from Sanjan to serve the community. Kamdin Zarhost is believed to have consecrated

the first fire-temple to be built in Navsari in 1142. The mobeds assumed the leadership of the community and became the keepers of its literary, religious and cultural traditions. The checkered history of Parsis in Navsari is well narrated and documented under the local rulers, Muslims and during the period of Maratha invasions. As other towns of Parsi settlers like Bharuch, Khambhat, Ankleshwar and Thana grew and thrived, each of these towns called for priests

from Sanjan and Navsari to conduct their religious affairs. As the number of priests increased, so did the conflicts amongst them over jurisdiction, etc as also conflicts/differences between the priests and the laity began to surface.

The years of peace which had enabled the people of Gujarat to develop peacefully and prosper ended with the invasion of the Khilji rulers from the North and were followed by 200 years of continuous uncertainties, warfare and sufferings (famine, etc). It was a period

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of great confusion with little governance beyond military control. With Akbar's entry into Gujarat times again changed for the better. The role played by Dastur Meherjirana during Akbar's reign is well examined by the authors who inform us that so impressed was the emperor that he is reported to have installed a small fire-temple in the palace and put it under charge of Abul Fazl, and, that he even donned the Zoroastrian sudreh and kusti for a very short time and later removed them only on his mother's behest. The authors significantly observe, "This investment of sudreh and kusti if true, belies the fact that the Parsis did not convert people to Zoroastrianism. No doubt during the early days, quite a number of such conversions must have been made."

Having established the holy fire (Atash Behram) in Navsari the life of the community became very stable and Navsari became the center of the Parsi community. Its head priest acquired precedence and authority over others and came to be recognized as the head priest of all the panthaks. The members flourished as landlords, traders, money changers, merchants, ship-builders, toddy sellers, weavers and artisans and even vairs

(physicians). Parsis were also found amongst the talatis, patels and desais during the Sultanate and Mughal period.

With the coming of the Europeans we find that from the beginning, the Portuguese, Dutch and English employed Parsis as interpreters (dubashs) and agents (shroffs). It appears they were always close to those in power and succeeded in becoming a part of the administration.

As the power of the Parsi laity increased, thanks to economic trade, enterprise and prosperity, they began to demand a separate identity for themselves and not let the priests enjoy an unchallenged monopoly in all matters of social life. This factor was responsible to a great extent for loosening the community tie. Thanks to the internecine warfare, the Sanjanas decided to take the holy fire out of Navsari to Bulsar in 1740, stayed there for two years where they were given a warm welcome and then took the holy fire to Udvada where it has found a revered place up to now.

With the growth of Surat and then Bombay as centers of commercial and economic importance, Parsis began to migrate to these towns. The various crafts and industries continued to flourish in

Navsari till the imperial economic policies of the British destroyed the indigenous industries in Gujarat as elsewhere. Commercial transactions began to be conducted more and more from Surat (described by the authors as the city of gold) which overtook Navsari as the premier Parsi center in the 18th century. The authors also have a chapter each devoted to three other Parsi settlements of Bharuch ("A Known and Welcome Refuge"), Khambhat ("A Once Thriving Entrepot") and Bilimora, whose development from a village to a prosperous town is well detailed. Interested readers will find a rich collection of history and data in each of these chapters. The chapters dealing with the settlements could have been made more readable by avoiding repetitions and paying less attention to many "petty" details.

The authors conclude with the advent of the Parsis into Bombay. The migration towards Bombay was not only the result of the shift of the East India Company's headquarters from Surat to the harbor city of Bombay, but also due to a general economic decline brought about by the breakdown of Mughal rule in Gujarat in the early 18th century which had created conditions of uncertainty



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around the gulf of Khambat and the "traumatic" Maratha incursions into the Gujarat towns of Surat, Navsari and Gandevi. The first few Parsis migrated as agents, contractors and shop-keepers in the Fort area. When the British established a mint, dry-docks, a court of justice, printing press and a local panchayat, again, the major group to take advantage of these facilities were the Parsis. As Parsi sethies began to amass wealth and attain a high status, they also took time to make Bombay a better place for all to live in. Their social service and charities soon became legend. The Parsis of Bombay were also the first to take advantage of English education and thus take the initiative in entering new professions like journalism, law and medicine. As the power base of the community shifted from wealth to education, they also began to acquire a position and role of significance in the area of political authority and governance. The names of Dadabhai Naoroji, Dinshaw Wacha and Pherozeshah Mehta are now part of the well documented history of India's demand for constitutional self-government. The year 1905 was a turning point in the history of India's industrial development. Reacting to the call of

Swadeshi (economic nationalism), several Parsis responded by starting enterprises. Many of these collapsed, but many also survived. The notable success, to mention a few, were the Tatas, the Godrejs, Davars, Wadias...

The book ends with a sketchy reference to a few Parsi achievers in the post-Independence era in the fields of Hindustani and Western music, science and nuclear physics, and others. The concluding paragraphs of the book also has a one line comment on Parsi achievers abroad: "The Parsi diaspora abroad has achieved leadership in various fields the world over as well."

The value of the book is enhanced by the photos (in color as well as in black and white) inserted at the beginning and middle of the text. No doubt, such books can be written regarding all the communities that progressed immensely especially after the advent of British rule in India, like the Banias, Marwaris, Jains, etc. The volume under review is the outcome of the painstaking and extremely valuable research undertaken by the authors at the behest of the K. R. Cama Oriental Institute on the occasion of its platinum jubilee celebrations from De-

cember 18, 1990 to December 18, 1991.

The prescriptions of Parsis

Western Medicine and Public Health in Colonial Bombay, 1845-1895 by Mridula Ramanna. Published in 2002 by Orient Longman Private Limited, 1/24 Asaf Ali Road, New Delhi 110002. Pp: xii+270. Price: Rs 550.

For Parsis prone to giving themselves the proverbial pat on the back for the community having produced many a leading light in the medical field, this book should be of more than passing interest! Dr Mridula Ramanna's *Western Medicine and Public Health in Colonial Bombay, 1845-1895* is replete with Parsi names — of medical institutions founded by Parsis as well as individual medical men and women.

Perhaps the genesis of this Parsi interest in medicine is to be found in Bombay's early colonial history. Up to the first decade of the 18th century, the town had a reputation among Europeans for being extremely non-conducive to health! This was ascribed mainly to the humid climate, the 'native' practise of "manuring" coconut palms with dead fish, the pestilential deposit left by the

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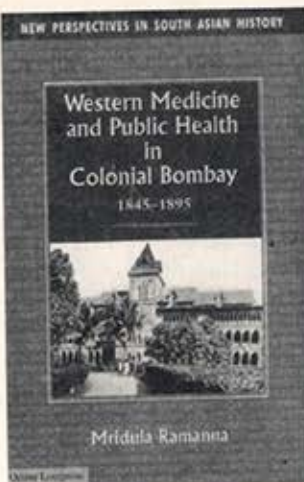
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sea during high tide and the dissolute lifestyle of the majority of Europeans!

By the mid 1800s, notes Ramanna, Bombay had already acquired a status "as the second city of the (British) empire, after London." The first all-India census of 1872 placed Bombay's population at 6,44,405 — according it also the dubious distinction of being the largest city in India, with the highest density! And with the people came the problems. Epidemics visited regularly — fevers, typhus and typhoid, cholera, small pox, and of course the deadly plague which broke out in 1896.

By 1881 the British government had executed a series of measures to improve the living conditions. Clean water supply schemes were implemented, the beginnings of underground sewerage and drainage laid, hospitals and dispensaries set up. Small pox vaccination was introduced.

Ramanna's book focuses on the pe-



riod 1845-1895. It was in 1845 that the first medical institutions in the city — the J. J. (Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy) Hospital and its adjacent Grant Medical College (GMC) — were founded by that great Parsi businessman and philanthropist Sir Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy. These institutions continue to function, even 150 years later, as major healthcare providers for the people. Initially, it was the British doctors

from the Indian Medical Service (IMS) who promoted Western medicine among the locals. By 1851, the first batch of students graduated from the GMC, and Indian doctors qualified to practice Western medicine became available. Several Parsi doctors, however, passed the IMS exam in England — Rustamji Byramjee in 1856, D. N. Parekh, H. D. Masani, K. S. Nariman, K. H. Mistry, B. N. Koyaji, R. H. Cama, etc in the late 1870s. Most of them qualified for the LRCS (Licentiate of the Royal College of Surgeons) and LRCP (Licentiate

of the Royal College of Physicians), in addition to their basic medical training in India. On their return to government service in India, writes Ramanna, their patients were mostly fellow Indians, with European women declining to be treated by them and even British officers reluctant to seek their advice! Nearly all the doctors practicing Western medicine in Bombay presidency were the alumni of the GMC. The University of Bombay awarded the Licentiate of Medicine (LM) degree from 1862-1877, thereafter it was redesignated as Licentiate of Medicine and Surgery (LM & S). Ramanna informs us that of the 48 doctors listed in 1871, almost half (20) were Parsis, 11 were Europeans, 10 Indian Christians and seven Hindus. By 1895, out of a total of 63, more than half (35) were Parsis, 13 were Hindus, 12 Christians, two Europeans and one Muslim!

Besides Jejeebhoy, many a Parsi philanthropist voluntarily came forward with large donations. Bomanji Hormusji Wadia of the legendary shipbuilding family donated Rs 12,000 and provided a house for the Meethabai Hormusji Dispensary which was founded in Kurla in 1856. When the inhabitants of Bandora (Bandra) petitioned for a dispensary, the majority



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of donors were Parsis, resulting in the establishment of the Lowji Wadia Dispensary in 1865. While the initial endowments were made by the donors, the government often refused to pay the salaries of the doctors working in them, compelling the donors to raise further funds to hire their own doctors! An offer by Dinsha and Nusserwanji Manekji Petit to endow a dispensary at Colaba was turned down by the government. M. F. Panday's sanatorium accommodated the ill and convalescent Parsis free of charge. A large number of leprosy cases led Rustomji Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy to offer in 1865 to construct a leper ward at the J. J. Hospital provided the government maintained and repaired it. The ward was later set up, but closed in 1889 with the 24 male and three female patients sent to the Edalji Framjee Albless Home at Trombay and Dinsha Manekji Petit Hospital at Ratnagiri respectively. The J. J. Dharamshala accepted lepers from its inception in 1844 as well as all kinds of indigents, till the Acworth Leprosy Hospital was opened in 1891.

Sir Cowasji Jehangir Readymoney's munificent donation of one lakh rupees set up the C. J. (Cowasji Jehangir) Ophthalmic Hospital in 1866, Pestonji Hor-



Ramanna: insight into medical history

musji Cama's one lakh rupee donation, later increased to Rs 1,64,000 set up the Cama Hospital — the first hospital exclusively for women and children, to be managed exclusively by women — a concept reluctantly accepted by the government! A donation of Rs 72,000 from the trustees of the estate of Bomanji Edulji Allbless led to the neighboring Allbless Hospital being built. The Parsi Lying-in Hospital founded in 1887 by Tehmulji Bhicaji Nariman, the Bai Motlibai Obstetric Hospital attached to the J. J. Hospital, the Petit Hospital for Women and Children, the Avabai Bhowanagari Home for Pupil Nurses, the Wadia Home for Nurses — the pockets of Parsi philanthropists were deep and fulfilling!

Delving into detail, Ramanna provides many a nugget of interesting information — Kaikhosru Nasserwanji Bahadurji was born to poor parents in Umra near Surat, yet won a scholarship to study in England, acquiring research experience at the Pasteur Institute in Paris and later with revered names like

Robert Koch in Berlin; R. M. Kalapesi with a diploma in tropical medicine from London University assisted Waldemar Haffkine in developing the plague prophylactic at what was then the Bombay Bacteriological Laboratory; Heerajee Eduljee's *History of the Medical Art, Past and Present* published in 1880 commended the use of anesthesia and new methods of arresting hemorrhage during surgery as well as the use of the aspirator to remove effluents from the inner cavities of the body!

Academic angles did not lag behind. Parsi doctors presented papers at national and international conferences on subjects as diverse as arsenic poisoning, disbelief in the local custom of curing snakebite with charms or an analysis of the soil, vegetation, hospitals, bazaars and jail in the British outpost of Aden! Publications like *Parsi Punch*, owned and edited by Barjorji Nowrosjee, carried cartoons, sketches and colorful advertisements for medical products and people. A single copy cost eight annas, the yearly subscription rupees six!

Not shy of locking horns with the authorities, Parsis spearheaded drives for social reform and participated in the civic life of the city, with Cowasji Hor-

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musji and Nariman serving as sheriffs of Bombay. Bahadurji, N. N. Katrak, Rustamjee Khory and F. N. Bisni were doctor members of the Corporation; D. P. Cooper and N. F. Surveyor were among the fellows of Bombay University.

Ramanna's two-pronged research analyses "in micro-focus" the policies of the colonial rulers in the domain of public health and civic amenities on the one hand and the reactions of the populace to Western medicine on the other. The fact remains, she believes, that even in the last decades of the 19th century, the majority of Bombay's population still went to *vaid*s (practitioners of Ayurveda) and *hakims* or even to quacks. The celebrated Parsi bone-setters were patronized by the poor and the well-to-do. Hakims sometimes succeeded where Western medicine had failed. Edulji Pestonji Hakim was known for his ointments and plasters, successfully treating even a British member of the Viceroy's Council, Pranacharya Rustomji Edulji Hakim was reputed for his non-operative treatment of piles and remedy for diabetes.

A reader in history at the SIES (South Indian Education Society) College, Bombay, Ramanna has been teaching and researching the history of Western

medicine in India since 1994. The book carries no pictures (save the one of the Goculdas Tejpal Hospital on the cover), but is studded with tabulations of the city's patient population, community wise and gender wise, disease and mortality figures, etc — a book of value for the serious student and for the layman seeking an insight into the health history of the Bombay of yore. HILLA P. GUZDER

Cama reprint offerings

Thanks to a magnanimous donation given by the Zartoshty Brothers (Faridoon and Mehraban) Fund, The K. R. Cama Oriental Institute has been able to reprint six scholarly books pertaining to Zoroastrianism. In order to acquaint readers with the content of the books the Institute has prepared a brief write-up on each text. The books are available on sale from The K. R. Cama Oriental Institute, 136, Bombay Samachar Marg, Fort, Bombay 400023, tel: 22843893, fax: 91-22-22876593, e-mail: krcamaoi@vsnl.com

The Zoroastrian Religion in the Avesta: Translated from the German of Professor Dr Karl F. Geldner by Jehangir C. Tavadia this book is a treasure house of knowledge on ancient Zoroastrian scriptures. The x+80-page book, printed in 1935

and reprinted in 1998, will be of great interest, not only to scholars but to our youth and to the common man. Price: Rs 125.

An Introduction to the Shah Nameh of Firdousi from the French of Jules Mohl by Jamshedji Dorabji Khandalawala. The viii+116-page book, reprinted in 2001, was originally printed in 1898. Price: Rs 250.

After briefly indicating the historical background on which the epic is based, Jules Mohl gives a life sketch of Firdousi, mainly from what Firdousi himself has said in the *Shah Nameh*. Mohl briefly charts the different states from the times of entering the then prestigious court of Sultan Mahmood to the breaking of the promise repeatedly given by the royal Sultan and the last tragic days of the Shaeron Sahaer. And then he comments on the satire against Mahmood by Firdousi.

The Laws of the Ancient Persians as found in the Matikan E. Hazar Datastan or The Digest of a Thousand Points of Law translated by Sohrab Jamshedjee Bulsara. The 767-page book, reprinted in 1999 was first printed in 1937. Price: Rs 1,000.

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compiler of the *Matikan E. Hazar Datastan* observes that the "aim of law is to further the mighty word of the All-Knowing Creator and to defeat falsehood and thus to compass in the end the immortal, the illustrious and the most brilliant and perfect sovereignty." The compiler firmly believes that law forms an essential part of the religious system of the Zarathushtrians.

Zoroastrian Civilization — From the Earliest Times to the Downfall of the last Zoroastrian Empire, 651 AD by Maneckji Nusserwanji Dhalla. The xxviii+395-page book, printed in 1922, was reprinted in 2000. Price: Rs 500.

It covers Iranian civilization from the earliest times and includes the Peshdadian, Kianian, Median, Achaemenian and Sasanian periods. The author has very exhaustively covered very wide and varied fields and has ably given to the readers an overall view of the ancient Iranians, Avestan literature, education, law and justice, priests and priesthood, warriors and warfare, agriculture, art, architecture, commerce, domestic animals, festival and feast, Pahlavi and Pazand literature, calendar, medical and public health, dress and ornaments, etc.

Pahlavi Vendidad (Zand-I Jvit-Dev-Dat). Transliteration and translation in English by Behramgore T. Anklesaria. The xii+404-page book, first printed in 1947 was reprinted in 2002. Price: Rs 500.

This is the complete Pahlavi version of the Avesta *Vendidad*. The book will be of much interest to our priestly class and to scholars in Avesta.

The Persian Rivayats of Hormazyar Framarz and Others — Their version with introduction and notes by Ervad Bamanji Nusserwanji Dhabhar. First printed in 1932, and reprinted in 1999, the Lxviii+657-page book is priced at Rs 1,000.

Hormazyar Framarz had made a collection of some eight *Rivayats* sent from Iran at different times. His son Darab had listed more *Rivayats*. Even so, some four *Rivayats* were left out. Ervad Dhabhar has covered the whole series of *Rivayats*. The *Rivayats* are a repertory of useful information throwing considerable light on the religious beliefs, customs and practices of the Persian Zoroastrians and of the Indian Parsis who lived between the end of the 15th and of the 18th centuries of the Christian era.



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than what you see..."

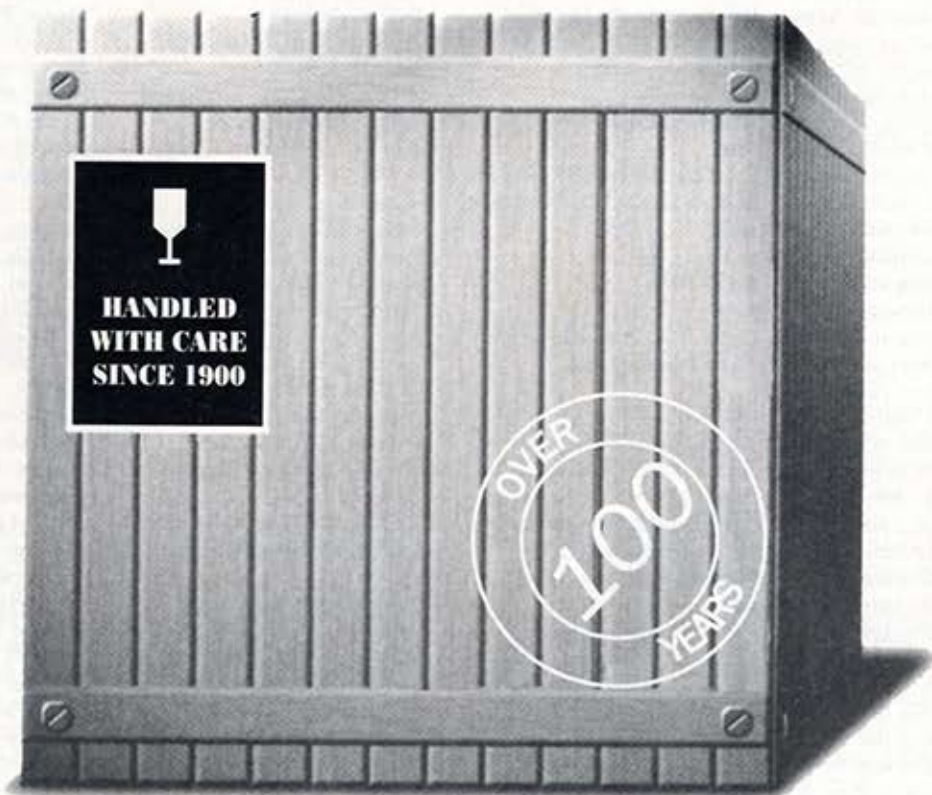


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MILESTONES

This issue of *Parsiana* publishes Milestones data for the two months of June and July 2003.

The age of Zoroastrian brides (as listed in this issue) ranged between 22 and 53 years, the arithmetic mean (the total number of individual ages divided by the total number of brides) being 32 years. The corresponding figures for the grooms were 24 and 59 years, averaging at 37 years.

Births numbered only 15 whereas the death toll for the two months was 160. The main killer — diseases related to the heart — claimed 52 Zoroastrians (17 falling in the above 80 age group). The next two major killer diseases were lung disease/pneumonia and cancer whose count was 37 and 17 deaths respectively. Septicemia proved fatal for 10 patients while another 10 died due to old age/general debility. Hypertension felled five persons whereas three each succumbed to gastro-intestinal bleed, diabetes, liver and brain diseases. Two lives each were lost to leukemia and anemia. Among the isolated cases were fever, osteoarthritis, gastroenteritis, kidney failure, dehydration, jaundice, hypercalcemia (excessive calcium in the blood), sepsis, dementia and low blood pressure. June and July also saw the community lose two babies who were stillborn. The eldest to breathe his last was a nonagenarian (96 years) while the youngest was a youth in her late thirties (39 years). The Zoroastrian life expectancy at birth for June and July, in Bombay, was 75 years.

The data on births, marriages and deaths has been compiled from information supplied by various newsletters and announcements in India and abroad, courts and hospitals. This information is not always complete or consistent: we are unable to carry data from areas where the announcements do not furnish the particulars; the birth figures for Bombay are supplied by two 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 break-

up 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.

AHMEDABAD

DIED

Phiroz Savaksha Green (59), husband of Zarin on January 13, 2003

BANGALORE

died

Gool Disawalla (85), wife of Manchi and mother of Ronnie; June 9

BARODA

BORN

A girl, *Parzin*, to *Kavita* and *Viraf Tavadia*; June 9

MARRIED

Jaloo Jalejar Deboo and *Jamshed Adi Chinoy*; January 24
Nazneen Dali Tangari and *Neville Marazban* *Pagdiwalla*; May 11
Bakhtawar Savaksha Panveliwalla and *Farhad Godrej Bhagwagar*; June 7
Nilufer Nariman Havewalla and *Vispi Godrej Bhagwagar*; June 7
Shiraz Marazban Dordi and *Burzin Firoz Contractor*; June 26

DIED

Perinbanoo Homi Guzder (79); May 16
Noshir Framroze Chawda (83); May 17
Firoze Ratanshaw Udwadia (67); June 15

BOMBAY

BORN

A boy to *Kashmira* and *Kaizad Manecksha*; June 8
A girl to *Shireen* and *Shiavax Vazifdar*; June 12
A girl to *Kamal* and *Khushnoor Jijina*; June 16
A girl to *Zia* and *Khushroo Buhariwala*; June 18
A boy to *Freny* and *Homiar Goiporia*; June 20

A girl to *Mehnaz* and *Eric Lath*; June 24
A girl to *Dolly* and *Neville Shroff*; June 26
A boy to *Beroze* and *Neville Amaria*; June 27
A girl to *Sherazade* and *Keki Patel*; July 3
A boy to *Neevia* and *Zoru Bhathena*; July 4
A girl to *Havovi* and *Shahrukh Goveshni*; July 5
A girl to *Fareeda* and *Darius Moos*; July 9
A boy to *Dilnaz* and *Zubin Sidhwa*; July 16
A boy to *Khurshid* and *Adil Kotwal*; July 17
A boy, *Vivan*, to *Parizad* and *Zubin Zarthoshtimanesh*; July 29

MARRIED

Jasmine Dhun Mehta and *Jamshed Adi Cooper*; April 18
Sharmine Merwan Kuchak and *Sharam Mashallah Fallahtafiti*; May 16
Khushnuma Kaikobad Patell of *Bilimora* and *Farhad Dara Kapadia*; June 1
Farnaz Jal Gazder and *Sherzad Marzban Wadia*; June 1
Jasmine Rustomji Karkaria and *Pervez Sorabji Daroga*; June 2
Arnavaz Minoo Irani and *Minocher Nadir Mehta*; June 2
Bakhtawar Bhikhaji Mistry and *Hoshi Baji Sahiar*; June 7
Dinaz Minoo Gandhi of *Ahmedabad* and *Neville Hoshang Wankadia*; July 4

DIED

Soli Byramji Desai (93), residing at A/11, Blossom Co-op Hsg Soc, N. Dutta Marg, 4 Bglws, Andheri (W), 400053; June 1
Gool Vafadar Irani (85), 25/B, Sagar Sangeet, 58, S. B. Rd, 400005; June 1
Pervez Faramroze Mistry (70), 289, Bazar Rd, Bandra (W), 400050; June 1
Piroja Cawasji Mistry (90), 2/A, Petit Block no 4, Opp Mehlla Patel Agiary, Grant Rd, 400007; June 1
Aloo Khurshed Shroff (86), Pundole Bldg, J. Daji Cross Lane, Sleater Rd, 400007; June 1
Naozer Minoo Kavarana (62), Southlands, 177, Upper

Colaba, 400005; June 2
Khurshed Noshir Cooper (46), Soman Cottage, 17, E Ward, Lonavala, 410401; June 3
Homi Behramsha Karma (93), C/o B. S. Todiwalla, C/10, Dalal Est, Bombay Central, 400008; June 3
Dadi Jehangirji Mistry (83), B/003, Sweta Shelter, Jankalyan Ngr, Malad (W), 400095; June 3
Hoshang Jehangir Mistry (78), F. S. Parukh Dharamshalla, 34, Hughes Rd, 400007; June 3
Sheroo Framroze Daruwala (67), 41, Jame Jamshed Bldg, Jame Jamshed Rd, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; June 4
Perviz Rustomjee Engineer (83), 679, Koodiyana Bldg, Katrak Rd, Wadala, 400031; June 4
Parhang Bemanali Mobarakeh (51), 15, Mody Hse, 9, Padamji Marg, 400004; June 5
Sorabji Cowasji Kodia (*Kharwanwalla*) (76), Mishra Bhavan, 13, Wadia St, Tardeo, 400034; June 6
Rati Merwanjee Mehta (76), Fernandes Villa, 95, Hill Rd, Bandra (W), 400050; June 6
Khoshed Pestonji Sanjana (87), 613, Dinsha Bldg, Jame Jamshed Rd, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; June 6
Jinny Homi Desai (75), B/10, Cusrow Baug, S. B. Rd, 400039; June 7
Motibai Sheriar Irani (89), 34/38, Mohammedi Hse, Jijibhoy Dadabhoy Lane, Fort, 400001; June 7
Tehmina Ardeshir Chichgar (81), K1/62, Merwanjee Cama Park, Cama Rd, Andheri (W), 400058; June 8
Kety Ratan Dandiwala (75), B. Wassiamull Bldg, Grant Rd, 400007; June 8
Minoo Beramji Gandhi (73), 5, Mehta Bldg, Panthaky Baug, Andheri (E), 400069; June 12
Piloo Phiroze Dastoor (92), 6D/201, Salsette Parsi Clny, Pump Hse, Andheri (E), 400093; June 13
Noval Jehangir Bilimoria (78), 4, May Fair Hse, Little Gibbs Rd, 400006; June 14
Dorab Framji Cooper (74), Petit Mans, 95, Sleater Rd, Grant Rd, 400007; June 14
Rati Dara Davur (72), 21/3B, Tata Clny, Tardeo, 400034; June 14

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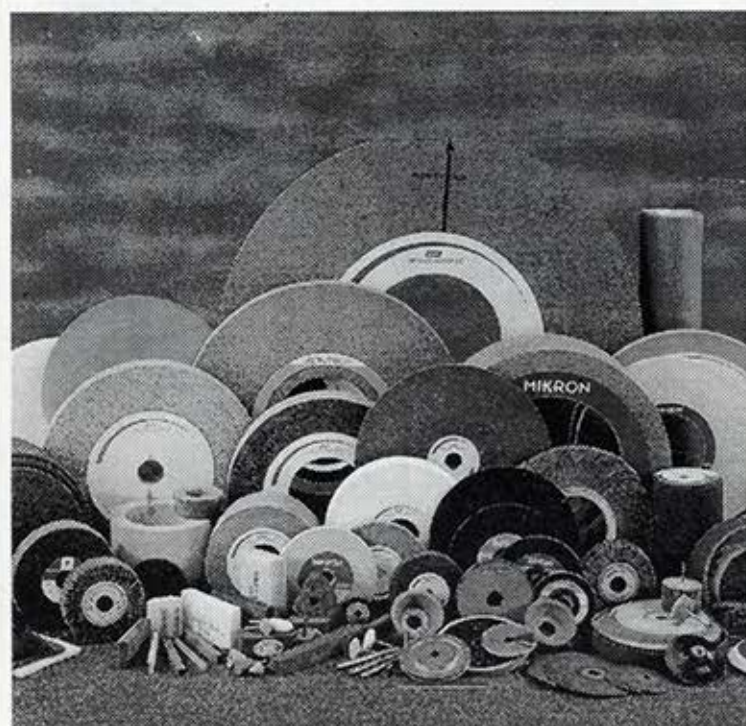
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Minoo Burjorji Daruwalla (66), 1/A, Karai Est, Tardeo Rd, 400007; June 15
Jehangir Framroz Chinoy (91), B, Motiwala Mans, Gowalia Tank, 400036; June 17
Adi Maneckshaw Cooper (76), Noshirwan Mans, Henry Rd, Colaba, 400005; June 17
Dali Kaikhushroo Daruwalla (84), 739, Cama Bldg, Rd no 5, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; June 17
Naja Behram Kateli (91), D/17, Juhu Park Apts, Juhu Santacruz (W), 400049; June 17
Kawas Jehangirji Katpitia (64), 3, Sir Ratan Tata Bldg, S. V. Rd, Bandra (W), 400050; June 17
Rustom Hormusji Irani (89), C/o Viraf Ghyara, 102, Belscot Bldg, Lokhandwala Complex, Off Link Rd, Andheri (W), 400053; June 18
Dara Sorabji Nakra (73), 21, Sunville Apts, 685, Khareghat Rd, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; June 18
Piloo Homi Sidhwa (78), Bldg no 20, 3, Marine St, 400002; June 18
Phiroze Kaikhushroo Master (89), 221, Haveliwalla Bldg,

Bora Bazar St, Fort, 400001; June 19
Tehmina Maneckji Mirza (86), C/o F. G. Choksi, 722/A, Meher Bldg, Dinshaw Master Rd, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; June 19
Coomi Jamshed Contractor (78), S. B. Bharucha Baug, Opp Shoppers' Stop, Andheri (W), 400053; June 20
Aspy Minocher Guzder (57), Dadiseth Bldg, Wadia St, Tardeo, 400034; June 21
Yasmin Keki Jasavala (76), B, Gowalia Tank Bldg, 400036; June 21
Gool Homi Patel (75), 31/B, Gool Mhl, 10, Sleater Rd, 400007; June 21
Jer Merwanji Patel (87), 614, Bhiwandiwalla Bldg, Dhobitalao, 400002; June 21
Jerbanoo Pirojshah Bhagat (72), 4, Panday Sanatorium, Wodehouse Rd, Colaba, 400005; June 22
Hoshang Jamshedji Katrak (70), Sangam, Bora Bazar St, Fort, 400001; June 22
Kersi Pestonji Khambatta (75), 49, Panday Sanatorium, Wodehouse Rd, Colaba, 400005; June 22
Roda Kali Patel (64), 23,

Doctor Bldg, S. B. Bharucha Baug, S. V. Rd, Andheri (W), 400053; June 22
Darab Rustomji Mistry (75), Hill-View, Radhavji Rd, Cumballa Hill, 400036; June 23
Nariman Rustomji Mistry (80), 632, Marker Mans, Lady Jehangir Rd, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; June 23
Kety Behram Chhapgar (69), 103, Siddhivinayak Apts, Jankalyan Ngr, Marve Rd, Malad (W), 400095; June 24
Roshan Sam Dastoor (77), Dastoor Bglw, Dastoorwadi, Naigaon Cross Rd, Dadar, 400014; June 24
Dolly Dinyar Fatakia (71), 203, Florence, E C/11-A, Fairfield Co-op Hsg Soc, Evershine City, Vasai (E), Dist Thana, 401201; June 24
Firdosh Sorab Patel (89), 55, Panday Sanatorium, Wodehouse Rd, Colaba, 400005; June 24
Cawas Kaikhashroo Todiwalla (65), N/6, Nowroz Baug, Lalbaug, 400012; June 24
Behram Pestonji Umrigar (83), 2, Dinshaw Bldg, Dhunbaiwadi, Dadabhai Rd, Vile Parle (W), 400056;

June 24
Roshan Dadi Arsiwala (70), 2/F, Dalal Est, Dr D. B. Marg, Bombay Central, 400008; June 25
Villi (Viloo) Rustomji Bengali (70), Cama Bldg, Gilder Lane, Lamington Rd, 400008; June 25
Freny Firoze Dorabshaw (67), 9, Golfinks, Khar, 400052; June 25
Cyrus Jal Jamshedji (78), 804/C, Ratty Lodge, Dr Ambedkar Rd, Dadar, 400014; June 25
Piloo Sam Shroff (90), Roxana, 109, M. K. Marg, Queens Rd, 400020; June 25
Perin Faramroze Bhagwagar (82), A/3, SBI Alka Soc, Caesar Rd, Amboli, Andheri (W), 400058; June 26
Rustom Dossabhai Patel (81), 7/9, Tata Clny, Tardeo, 400034; June 26
Silloo Cawas Patel (86), Mazda Villa, Owen Dunn Rd, Gamdevi, 400007; June 26
Dhan Fardunji Bharda (79), E/7, Central Bank Soc, Dadabhai Cross Rd no 3, Vile Parle (W), 400056; June 29
Kerbanoo (Keran) Rustomji Gandhi (85), 27, Godrej Bldg,



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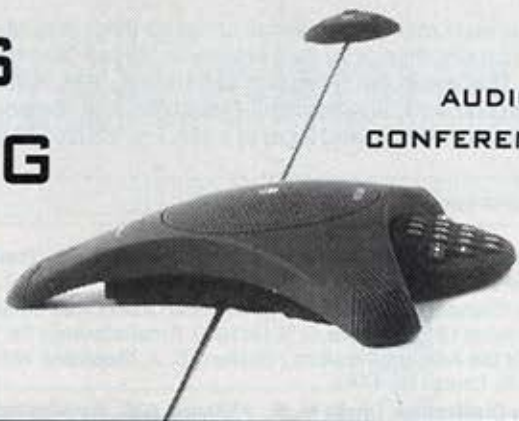
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Ketayun Sorab Bharucha (82),
4, Clover Apts, Sleater Rd,
Grant Rd, 400007; July 1
Bhimji Ratanji Dapoliwalla
(83), F. S. Parukh
Dharamshalla, 34, Hughes Rd,
400007; July 2
Rustom Aspiandiar Irani (74),
19/15, Panthaky Baug,
Hargovindas Sanatorium Lane,
Andheri (E), 400069; July 2
Soli Pestonji Sahiar (78), 81,
Kapadia Hse, Trinity St,
Dhobitalao, 400002; July 2
Mani Baji Patel (70), F. S.
Parukh Dharamshalla, 34,
Hughes Rd, 400007; July 3
Homi Jehangirji Vevai (86), 4,
Sunshine, Churchgate Recl,
400020; July 3
Nariman Behramshah
Khambata (77), Soonawala
Bldg, 12th Cross Lane,
Khetwadi, 400004; July 4
Behram Burjorji Anklesaria
(76), Mithaiwalla Agiary, J.
Daji St, Opp Grant Rd Stn,
400007; July 5
Noshirvan Pallonji Bharucha

(84), 7/A, Hormuz Baug Bldg,
Avabai Kashinath St, Tardeo,
400034; July 5
Savak Framroze Bharucha
(85), A, Imperial Mhl,
Khodadad Circle, Dadar,
400014; July 5
Baby of Vabiz Viraf Bhesania
(stillborn), 13, Station Ter,
Sleater Rd, Grant Rd, 400007;
July 5
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F. S. Parukh Dharamshalla, 34,
Hughes Rd, 400007; July 5
Keki Savaksha Patel (89), A/2,
The Reward, 220, Tardeo Rd,
400007; July 5
Rustom Bomanji Sahiar (89),
20/02, Yusuf Manzil, 12th
Khetwadi Lane, 400004; July 5
Gool Erach Carnac (79), B,
Yusuf Mans, Khetwadi Back
Rd, Grant Rd (E), 400007;
July 6
Gool Jehangir Engineer (91),
Jyoti Mhl, Sleater Rd, 400007;
July 6
Dinshaw Nusserwanji Mehta
(74), 13/A, Samata Apts, Gen
J. Bhosale Marg, 400021;
July 6
Bomi Fardunji Avari (43), 302,
Madhuvan Bldg, Shri Krishna
Complex, Vartak Rd, Virar
(W), Vasai, Dist Thana,
401201; July 7

Homi Kaikahushroo
Daruwalla (75), 14/15,
Panthaky Baug, Sir M. V. Rd,
Andheri (E), 400069; July 7
Daugdo Pestonji Dubash (78),
B/604, Raj Tilak, Yari Rd,
Versova, Andheri (W),
400061; July 7
Pervez Jal Dubash (63), E/35,
Jerbai Baug, Dr Ambedkar Rd,
Byculla, 400027; July 7
Hormusji Munchershaw Mistry
(88), F. S. Parukh
Dharamshalla, 34, Hughes Rd,
400007; July 7
Adi Jehangirji Patel (79), 8,
Ness Baug Annexe 1, Nana
Chowk, 400007; July 7
Burjorji Nadirshaw Reporter
(78), Breach Candy Garden, B.
Desai Rd, 400026; July 7
Behram Edulji Dandiwalla
(87), Princess Bldg, 275,
Princess St, 400002; July 8
Roshen Farokh Daruwalla
(56), F-1/B, Jolly Highrise
Apts, Palimala Rd, Bandra
(W), 400050; July 8
Kakoo Ardeshir Irani (58),
Firdaus Manzil, 75, Waroda
Rd, Bandra (W), 400050;
July 8
Gool Erach Mistry (79), The
Beacon, Madam Cama Rd,
Opp Mantralaya, 400020;
July 8

Mehroo Minoo Mistry (56),
A-16, Cusrow Baug, S. B. Rd,
Colaba, 400001; July 8
Noshir Byramji Umrigar (79),
782, Patel Bldg, Joshi Rd,
Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014;
July 8
Piloo Homi Variava (72),
275/F, Old Khan Bldg,
Zoroastrian Clny, Chikalwadi,
Tardeo, 400007; July 8
Percy Framroze Cooper (49),
6/39, Sonapur St, Chira Bazar,
400002; July 9
Dhun Dinshaw Patel (91),
Kashinath Bldg no 3,
Kashinath St, Tardeo, 400034;
July 9
Jehangir Cohyar Coyajee (56),
Dilkhush, 40, Ridge Rd,
Malabar Hill, 400006; July 10
Jaloo Adi Mapla (85), 6/C-2,
Petit Bldg, Balaram St, Grant
Rd, 400007; July 10
Jamasr Sorabji Tata (91),
Hasanali Bldg, 5, Jijibhai
Dadabhai Lane, Fort, 400001;
July 10
Erach Hormusji Dastur (68),
E/24, Jerbai Baug, Dr
Ambedkar Rd, Byculla,
400027; July 11
Ratanbai Bhikaji Tata (76),
4/2, Ahura Apts, Gunpowder
Rd, Mazgaon, 400010; July 11
Dara Kaikhushroo Kotwal



From

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(76), 682/A, Kapadia Bldg, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; July 12
Dhanji Behramji Manina (64), 815, B. A. Engineer Bldg, Jame Jamshed Rd, Dadar, 400014; July 12
Dhunjishaw Fardunji Patel (85), N-17, Godrej Bldg, Off Napean Sea Rd, 400036; July 12
Khorshed Nowroji Tavadia (62), 10, Kuka Bldg, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; July 12
Nash Framroz Vakil (86), 602, Mon Repos, 45, H. K. Bhabha Rd, Bandstand, Bandra (W), 400050; July 12
Hoshang Edulji Aga (90), 51, Sommerset Hse, Off Warden Rd, 400026; July 13
Jaloo Pirojshah Dubash (94), F. S. Parukh Dharamshala, 34, Hughes Rd, 400007; July 13
Rusi Cawasji Kharadi (76), 654, Rashnav, Firdoshi Rd, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; July 13
Banoor Eruch Katrak (92), C/2, Cusrow Bldg, S. B. Singh Rd, 400039; July 14
Tehmi Adi Elavia (78), 654, Rashnav, Firdoshi Rd, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; July 16
Baby boy of Armine Firdosh Mehta (stillborn), A-16,

Captain Clny, Tardeo, 400034; July 16
Ratan Rustomjee Damania (Photographer) (88), Nityanand Ngr, Mira Rd (E), Dist Thane, 401104; July 17
Homi Jehangir Dastur (78), 4/D, Daruwalla Bldg, Tata Blocks, Bandra, 400050; July 17
Mehroo Dominic D'souza (63), 51/8, New Contractor Bldg, Dr Ambedkar Rd, Byculla, 400027; July 17
Sohrab Ardeshtir Kirmani (58), Ashok Silk Mill Compd, Near Sunder Autoworks, Dharavi, 400017; July 17
Jerbai Manchershia Patel (85), C/o K. M. Patel, 316/318-A, Kanta Bldg, M. S. Rd, 400007; July 17
Tehmi Keki Rao (76), 4/A-1, New Khareghat Clny, Babulnath Rd, 400007; July 17
Fali Edulji Daruwalla (90), 1, Lady Meherbai Tata Bldg, S. V. Rd, Bandra (W), 400050; July 18
Dhun Homi Patel (86), 33, Sheesh Mhl, 5-A, Pali Hill, Bandra, 400050; July 18
Maneck Hormuzdiar Punagar (85), Rajesh Mans, Churchgate Reel, 400020; July 18
Nariman Behramji Bajina

(73), 600, Bachan Manor, Jame Jamshed Rd, Matunga, 400019; July 19
Yezdi Sarosh Lala (55), 22, Zehra Manzil, Opp Paradise Cinema, L. G. Rd, Mahim, 400016; July 19
Jer Minoo Tarapore (78), 7A, Patel Bldg, Cama Rd, Andheri (W), 400058; July 19
Sanobar Nozer Doctor (39), 502, Rang Mhl Soc, 2, Mt Mary Rd, Bandra (W), 400050; July 20
Najamai Sorabji Siganporia (89), 22/L-2, Meherwanji Cama Park, Cama Rd, Andheri (W), 400058; July 20
Nerges Ratan Surveyor (70), 91-B, Paradise Apts, Nepean Sea Rd, 400036; July 20
Katy Motaji Anklesaria (76), N/7, S. B. Bharucha Bldg, Andheri (W), 400054; July 21
Aloo Sorabjee Kapadia (82), 16, Khareghat Clny, Hughes Rd, 400007; July 21
Khorshed Jivanji Mistry (84), Mistry Bldg, 162, Khetwadi Back Rd, 400004; July 21
Naju Jal Panthaky (87), 4/59, A. H. Wadia Bldg, Parel Tank Rd, 400033; July 21
Freny Savakshaw Sethna (77), 1002, DNS Towers, Near Thane Court Naka, Thane (W),

400601; July 21
Bejan Nasarwanji Anklesaria (82), C. G. G. G. Bldg, Gowalia Tank Rd, 400036; July 22
Jaloo Jehangir Khambatta (82), B. Empire Ter, N. Petit St, Grant Rd, 400007; July 22
Ratanshaw Hormusji Saher (63), 71, Hirabai Petit Bldg, Grant Rd, 400007; July 22
Perviz Keikhushru Irani (89), 125, Hampton Court, Wodehouse Rd, Colaba, 400005; July 23
Dadabhai Nariman Kapadia (80), 5/153, Vijay Ngr, MHB Clny, Bandra (E), 400051; July 23
Nergis Sorabjee
Pochkhanavala (87), 683, Vakil Bldg, Khareghat Rd, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; July 23
Zarine Soli Pochkhanavala (56), R/5, Dalal Est, Lamington Rd, 400008; July 23
Behram Faredoon Dehmeri (75), 8, Faroodin Mans, Cama Rd, Andheri (W), 400058; July 24
Nariman Savaksha Kapadia (83), 8/12, Rustom Bldg, Victoria Rd, Byculla, 400027; July 24

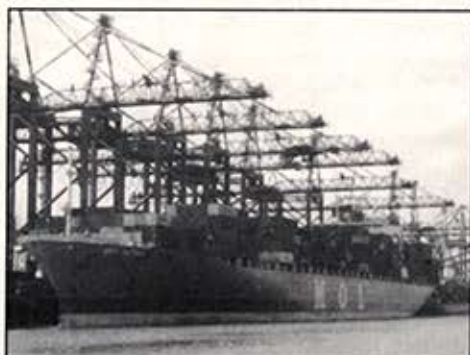
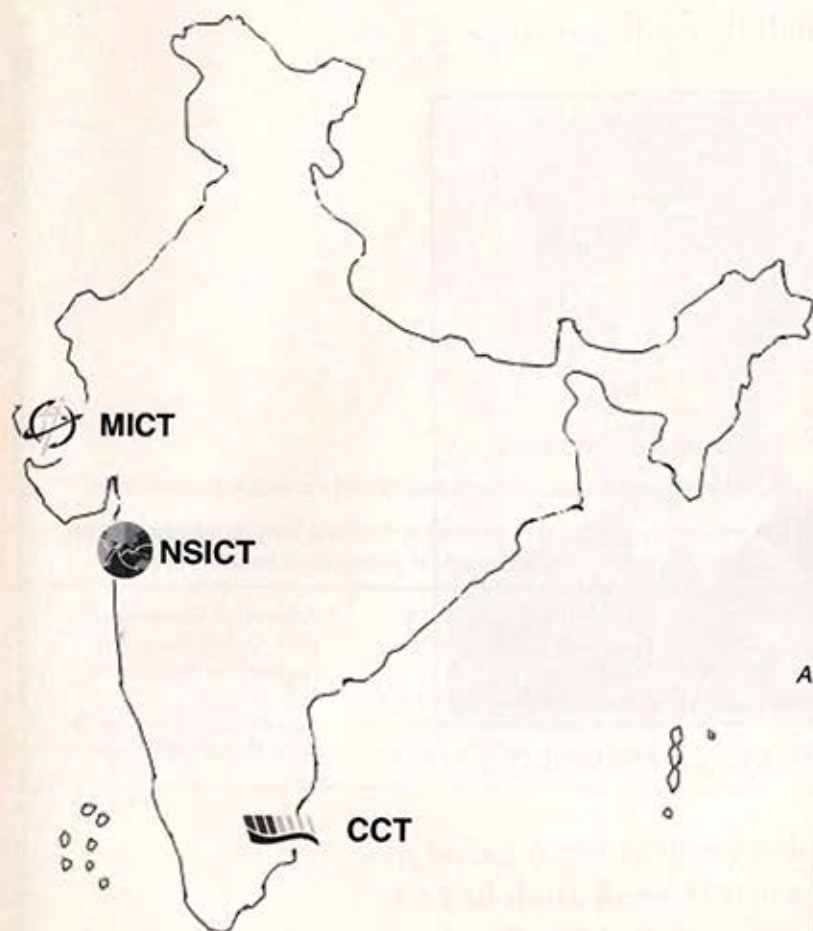
*But the man who does not desire
to come to him for enlightenment
will surely fall among the companions of the Lie.
For he is holy
to whom the Follower of the Truth is a friend.
It has ever been thus
since You first created consciences in men, O Mazda.*

(Zarathushtra's Trials, Yasna 46, verse 6
 Courtesy: The Gathas of Zarathushtra, Hymns in Praise of Wisdom
 Translation and Commentary by Pilo Nanavutty)





P&O Ports



The largest vessel to dock at NSICT was the MOL Mosel. NSICT handled 2315 TEUs on the vessel.



An overview of the Chennai Container Terminal



Operations commenced at MICT on 18th July 2003 with the 1st call of MV MSC Camille.

P&O Ports manages and is a majority shareholder in – Nhava Sheva International Container Terminal (NSICT), Chennai Container Terminal (CCT) and Mundra International Container Terminal (MICT). P&O Ports is the largest private Container Terminal operator in India.

P&O Ports – a world leader in cargo handling services and port management set up the first Port state of the art Container Terminal – NSICT in India on BOT basis. NSICT has delivered outstanding performances and is a jewel in the P&O crown.

P&O's commitment to trade led to setting up of CCT at Chennai which is identified to be the 1st Hub Port on the East Coast of India.

P&O has commenced operations at India's newest Container Terminal – Mundra International Container Terminal.

Dinshaw Nariman (79), G/6, Spenta, Gibbs Rd, Malabar Hill, 400006; July 24
 Behram Aderji Tarapore (51), B-11, Rustom Baug, Victoria Rd, Byculla, 400027; July 24
 Faredoon Gushtad Yazdani (90), Crown Bldg, Uranwala St, Grant Rd, 400007; July 24
 Shavak Sorabji Chikhiwala (96), 9-B, Gulnar, St John Baptist Rd, Bandra, 400050; July 25
 Homi Maneckshaw Edibam (78), 1005, Himachal, Juhu Lane, Andheri (W), 400058; July 25
 Ardeshir Cawasha Bhungara (78), 42, Vaibhav, Antop Hill, Wadala (E), 400037; July 26
 Minoo Ardeshir Pastakia (76), 6/1, Khan Est, Mahim Stn Rd, Mahim, 400016; July 26
 Dolly Tehmurasp Mirza (78), 704-705/1-13, Salsette Parsee Co-op Soc Ltd, Pump Hse, Andheri (E), 400093; July 27
 Pervaz Kakhshrew Bharucha (83), 670, Zaverbanu Ter, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; July 28
 Doly Fardoon Panthaki (65), E/33, Jerbai Baug, Dr Ambedkar Rd, Byculla, 400027; July 28
 Rusi Bhikhaji Patel (74), Room no 11, Agiary bldg no 2, Dr S. S. Rao Rd, Lalbaug,

FIGURES AT A GLANCE*						
	Bombay		India		World	
	This issue	2003*	This issue	2003*	This issue	2003*
BIRTHS						
Boys	7	29	2	3	—	—
Girls	8	29	1	6	—	—
MARRIAGES						
Parsi	8	99	5	9	—	—
INTERCOMMUNAL						
Males married out	—	—	—	—	—	—
Females married out	—	—	—	—	—	—
DEATHS						
CONSIGNED						
Males	86	262	16	41	—	—
Females	74	243	20	48	—	—
CREMATED						
Males	—	—	—	—	—	—
Females	—	—	—	—	—	—

*Running totals for 2003 (March 2003-August 2003 issues)

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.

*Running totals for 2003 (March 2003-August 2003 issues)

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*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.

400012; July 28
 Behram Aderjee Elavia (77), 10/1, Sir Ratan Tata Clny, Sir Ratan Tata Rd, Tardeo, 400034; July 29
 Jaloo Rusi Kuka (75), 686,

Vevai Villa, Khareghat Rd, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; July 29
 Bapsy Jahanbux Laskery (74), F. S. Parukh Dharamshalla, 34, Hughes Rd, 400007; July 29

Jaloo Hirji Bhathena (81), P/17, Godrej Baug, Off Napean Sea Rd, 400036; July 30
 Fali Pheroreshaw Gandhi (76), Mohamedi Manzil, S. V.



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Rd, Khar (W), 400052; July 30
Nergish Soli Hozdar (64),
 Chothia Bldg, Chikalwadi,
 Tardeo Rd, 400007; July 30
Rati Edulji Madon (82),
 149/A, Doctor Bldg, A. K.
 Marg, 400036; July 30

CALCUTTA

DIED

Rati Keki Tamboli, mother of
 Darius; May 12
Dina Dinshaw Antia, mother
 of Rohinton, Zarrar and Zarin
 Dinshaw Bilimoria; May 21
Erach Navrojee Medhora,
 husband of Dinoo and father
 of Astad; June 21

INDORE

DIED

Kaikhushru Madan (83),
 June 16

NAGPUR

BORN

A boy, *Yohaan*, to *Jasmine*
 and *Parheez Gimi*; May 23

POONA

DIED

Hormazdiar Noshirvan Dastur
 (78), father of *Mehernavaz H.*
Vakil; February 26

SECUNDERABAD

BORN

A boy, *Sarosh*, to *Shahnaz*
 and *Zubin Jogina*; March 23

DIED

Noshir Rustamji Mistry (85),
 husband of *Soonamai* and
 father of *Marookh Dinyar*
Bharucha; June 2
Mehra Khurshedji Lashkari
 (88), sister of *Manek*, *Nausha*
Bomansha Printer, *Hilla*
Godrej Malaowalla and late
Naja Rustom Penty; June 10
Homai Pesi Hormusji (73);
 June 13
Farida Maneckshaw Debara
 (61), sister of *Mahrookh*,
Omim and *Firdosh*; June 18
Aban Fardoonji Jailor (68),
 sister of *Zarin P. Mistry* and
Mehroo Gandhi; June 19
Tehmi Sohrabji Parakh (82),
 sister of *Gool* and *Dhan*;
 June 20
Adi Kanga (72), son of
Hiramai and *Burjorji*, husband
 of *Silloo* and father of *Rashid*
 and *Farida*; June 24
Soonamai Naoshir Chenoy
 (94), mother of late *Shahpur*,
Goolbanoo Yadgar Chenoy,
Naozar, *Pouruchisti*, *Sohrab*.

Arnawaz Behram Mistry and
Armaiti Burjor Vachha;
 June 26

Banoo Patell (84), wife of
Homi and mother of *Farrokh*,
Bomi, *Pourush* and *Parvez*
Dara Bhole; July 4
Roshan Noshir Masani (84),
 mother of *Jamshedji*, *Zareen*
Liddell and *Firoze*; July 30

SURAT

DIED

Aspi Ratansha Dehnugara
 (47), *Keka Bava's* *Compd*,
Siganpore; June 6
Rohinton Sorabji Ichhaporia
 (49), *Parsiwad*, *Gam Bhatha*,
Dist Surat, 394510; June 7
Kershji Sorabji Umrigar (57),
Union Parivar Soc, *Ichhanath*
Rd, 395003; June 13
Tehmina Hirjibhai Meghora
 (68), *Kanbiwad*, *Gam Kathor*,
Dist Surat, 394150; June 30
Jal Nanabhai Mir (69), *B/2*,
Meherzin Apt, *Vakil St*,
Shahpore, 394003; July 3
Noshir Navroji Kavarana
 (69), *Nariman Home* and
Infirmary, *Shahpore*, 395003;
 July 4
Prochi K. Panthaki (77),
Nariman Home and *Infirmary*,

Shahpore, 395003; July 7
Bamansha Pirojsha
Ichhaporia (82), *Parsi Wad*,
Ichhapor, *Dist Surat*; July 10
Dhanben Jamsheji Bhatporia
 (71), *Ratan Park Apt*, *Adajan*,
Dist Surat; July 15
Ratimai Jahangirji Bilimoria
 (78), *Nariman Home* and
Infirmary, *Shahpore*, 395003;
 July 19
Homi Nariman Doctor (52),
Ahura Mans, *Bibi-ni-wadi*,
Sayedpura, 395003; July 19
Kumiben Bapuji Amariya (82),
Chanpawadi, *Songadu*, *Post*
Raniamba, 394365; July 21
Tehmina Minochehar Wadia
 (80), *Ripa Apt*, 101, *Bhaya*
Mohallo, *Nanpura*, 395001;
 July 22
Ketimai Bahadursha Bam
 (86), *Malesar Mohallo*,
Rustompura, 395002;
 July 27
Shirinbai Bearamsa
Ichhaporia (99), *Hodiwala*
Hse, *Bibi-ni-wadi*, *Sayedpura*,
 395003; July 28
Dadi Nariman Master (67), 29,
Busha Complex, *Dalief Rd*,
Bharuch, 392001; July 30

Compiled by Roxana A. Driver

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Dastur of the Deccan

Parinaz M. Gandhi

Died: Sardar Dastur Hormazdiar Noshirwan Dastur, 78, High Priest of Poona and the Deccan, and president of the Sardar Dastur Schools Trust which runs four schools, on February 26, 2003 at Poona's Ruby Hall Clinic following lung complications.

"The entire Zoroastrian community... over a period of several decades benefited immensely by his knowledge, guidance and educational as well as monetary help," wrote the president of the Athornan Mandal Dastur Khurshed Dastoor in his condolence letter. "He dispelled misery and sorrow from countless homes by giving free lodging, boarding and education to deserving Parsi children and monetary help to the poor and infirm," mentioned Dastoor.

Hormazdiar had succeeded his father Noshirwan as High Priest in 1949. Since the late High Priest's diocese extended beyond Poona to Madras and Bangalore as well, the president of the Madras Parsi Zarhosti Anjuman Nariman Mogrelia acknowledged, "He had been extremely helpful and (a) guiding force for our Dar-e-Meher and its affairs."

The Bangalore Parsee Zoroastrian Anjuman specially convened an uthamna in honor of Dastur on February 28 and passed a resolution referring to the High Priest as "a known scholar and authority on the Zoroastrian faith (who) discharged his duties with a strong commitment and devotion, and in doing so kept alive the customs and traditions of the faith in the footsteps of his illustrious father and grandfather." When the Bangalore Anjuman chose to appoint its own High Priest in 1996, although some of the other High Priests objected to this precedent, Dastur magnanimously greeted Nadirshah Unvalla on his elevation as High Priest.

"He was a very lovable, disciplined and a humble individual who fulfilled his priestly duties very creditably," re-

marked Dr Keki Grant, chairman and managing trustee of the Grant Medical Foundation which runs the Ruby Hall Clinic. Having known Dastur since his childhood days when they were play-mates, Grant gave him credit for being "mainly instrumental in transforming the Dastur School to be one of the finest in (Poona)."

When he took over as president of the Sardar Dastur Schools Trust in 1949 there were only two schools in existence, the Dastur Girls High School and the Dastur Boys High School. The full fledged Primary School came up in 1953 and the Co-ed School, named after him, as Sardar Dastur Hormazdiar High School commenced in 1998. Nearly 4,500 children benefit from the education imparted in these four institutions, stated Shernaz Edibam, principal of the Bai Najamai Noshirwan Dastur Primary School, referring to the dedication of Dastur as also his late wife Mani, "a gracious and gentle lady (who) was also a regular visitor of the School." Always present at the Schools' extra curricular programs, Dastur made it a point to commend the efforts put in by the principals and staff, sending them a note of appreciation. "Dasturji invariably would be moved to tears especially during annual day functions, or while taking the salute at the march past competitions or when he heard our girls and boys spiritedly sing the School song *We are Dasturians*," noted Edibam.

"To me Dasturji was an epitome of strength...my memory goes down to my nursery days when I remember him tirelessly walking around from one school to another, and standing at the edge of the playground watching the antics of every little child yet keeping a watchful eye on the older students," noted school captain Prashant Mishra in his speech at the condolence meeting convened on March 27, 2003. "Little did I then know that as a high school lad I too would be pulled up for not tying my shoe laces well or dodging him because I did not have my tie-pin on," added Mishra, thankful to Dastur for giving him "values for life..."



Dastur:
impressing
students

"Our grateful boarders who will sadly miss his benevolent presence will vouch for the fact that he made a home away from home for them all," noted Std VIII student Roxanne Wadia at the condolence meeting appreciating his "indulgence towards the students. While playing football our students would accidentally break the rear view mirror of his car. He always told them, 'Next time I will make you pay for it.' Of course he never did."

"He was very approachable. Children wouldn't run in the opposite direction on seeing him. Instead they'd go up to him and wish him," noted head girl Disha Saraya. Reportedly any child visiting his office was invariably rewarded with a handful of sweets from the jar he kept on his desk. "Another thing that impressed everyone was his kind, loving and caring nature," said Saraya, referring to the stray dogs which, on entering the School compound, were never driven out but cared for and immunized.

He always wanted the students to do well on the play field and bring laurels for the School. A sports enthusiast himself since his younger days at the Sardar Dastur Hoshang Boys High School and the Nowrosji Wadia College whence he graduated, Dastur held the Western India Badminton title.

Besides looking after the 160-year-old familial Sardar Sorabji Ratanji Patel Dar-e-Meher, the oldest fire-temple in Poona, Dastur was involved with the Edulji Dinshaw Charitable Trust, Yervada Central Mental Hospital Parsee Nurse Trust, Aid for Religious Services for Peace of Mind of Zoroastrian Mentally Handicapped Trust, Junior Red Cross, Poona, and had served as divisional air raid warden during the Indo-Pakistan War, notes his life profile.

He saw to it that no needy Zoroastrian student was ever turned away from his educational institution. Even on his last day at School he was taking interviews of pre-nursery children! At the Founder's Day function two years ago he had impressed on his students: "One tree can make a forest/One hand clasp lifts a soul/One laugh can conquer gloom/One voice can speak with wisdom/One life can make the difference/You see, it's up to you."

The dedicated Dastur is survived by his daughter Mehernavaz Vakil.

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