

Parsiānā

SEPTEMBER 1998 Rs 27



Attorney General Soli Sorabjee

Whatever.

Whenever.

Wherever.

At AFL, we move anything and everything to anywhere.
Now tell us when, where and what.



Where movement is a science

Parsiana

September 1998
Volume 21 Number 2

EDITOR Jehangir R. Patel

MANAGING EDITOR Arnavaz S. Mama

EXECUTIVE EDITOR Parinaz M. Gandhi

SENIOR EDITORS

Dina K. Mehta, Hilla P. Guzder

ASSOCIATE EDITOR Roxana A. Driver

DESIGN Kranti M. Shiltri, Nivedita S. Dhotre

MARKETING DIRECTOR Veera Patel

ADVERTISING MANAGER Jasmine D. Driver

ADVERTISING EXECUTIVE Susan Hadvaid

FINANCE B. L. Arora

DTP Bakhtavar R. Battliwalla, K. P. Ravi

SUBSCRIPTION MANAGER

Khurshid Panthaki

ASSISTANT SUBSCRIPTION MANAGER

Swarupa Kamat

ACCOUNTANT Anagha Korde

ASSISTANT ACCOUNTANT Varsha Godbole

ACCOUNTS ASSISTANTS

Indu Pillai, Satwant Kaur

OFFICE ASSISTANTS Umesh Poojary,

Selvan Mark, Sunil Sakhare,

Govind Salgaonkar, Mahipat Jadhav

2 Readers' Forum

10 Events and Personalities

18 11th North American Zoroastrian Congress by Porus Cooper

22 Sohrab Chinoy's cheese spread by Hilla Guzder

29 On the Houston skyline by Arnavaz Mama

31 Homi Davier: Marketing the Congress

36 Soli Sorabjee's second serve by Parinaz Gandhi

41 19th century Gujarat Parsis: Near and yet apart - 4

47 Milestones

50 In Memoriam: Minoo Masani

Cover: Photograph by Chetan Mistry

Parsiana is edited and published by Jehangir R. Patel for Parsiana Publications Pvt Ltd at C/o H. L. Rochat, K. K. (Navsari) Chambers, ground floor, 39 A. K. Nayak Marg, Fort, Bombay 400001 and printed by him at Kaiser-E-Hind Pvt Ltd, 300 Perin Nariman Street, Bombay 400001. Processing Comart Lithographers and Tricolour. All rights reserved. ISSN: 0971-3786. Phone: 2078730, 2072624. Fax: 2074541. For editorial enquiries: 2078183. E-mail: parvo@viasbm01.vsnl.net.in For subscription enquiries and payments: C/o Kaiser-E-Hind Pvt Ltd, 300 Perin Nariman St (Behind Reserve Bank of India), Bombay 400001. Phone: 2658619, 2665661. Fax: 2654585.

Annual inland subscription for one year

(10 issues) Rs 275; for two years (20 issues) Rs 525; for three years (30 issues) Rs 775. Foreign subscription rates: Seamail for one year Rs 500/ US \$ 14/UK £ 9; for two years Rs 950/US \$ 25/UK £ 15; for three years Rs 1,400/US \$ 36/UK £ 22 (please allow six months or more for delivery from the time of publication). Airmail for one year Rs 800/ US \$ 23/UK £ 15 (for Pakistan, Indian Rs 575); for two years, Rs 1,500/US \$ 43/UK £ 27 (for Pakistan, Indian Rs 1,075); for three years Rs 2,250/US \$ 60/UK £ 37 (for Pakistan, Indian Rs 1,600). For Indian upcountry cheques add Rs 20 for bank charges; for US cheques add \$ 5; for UK cheques add £ 3. Cheques and drafts are to be drawn in favor of Parsiana and posted to GPO Box 892, Bombay 400001.



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

"Underwater underway"

This is with reference to your report on Taraporevala Aquarium in "Underwater underway" (Events and Personalities, Parsiana, June 1998).

In his letter to the chief minister dispatched by Mr Homi J. H. Taleyarkhan two days prior to his sad demise, a copy of which he faxed me the following day, he writes: "I am very glad and grateful to you for assuring me the other day that the Taraporevala Aquarium will not be pulled down and it will continue as it is... If you wish to have another modern, very expensive underground aquarium, that may be separately considered but not at (the) cost of the existing one which is serving the needs of the poor and economically weaker sections of society at a very economic cost of only two rupees per entrance per person as against the proposed fabulous Rs 140..." His correspondence mirrors his cosmo-

politan outlook as a distinguished Parsi, while reflecting his indefatigable dedication as a front leading crusader for just causes and a champion of the deprived classes. As a committed social worker, it was his final endeavor to save the Taraporevala Aquarium. Its press release should prompt the chief minister to acknowledge and confirm his verbal assurance to a national patriot and a multifaceted, eminent citizen who has made valuable political, social, cultural contribution to the state, but is alas no longer in our midst to lead the causes of the masses.

After my successful orchestration in the matter of Khodadad Circle, Mr Taleyarkhan contacted me with regard to the Taraporevala Aquarium controversy. It was my pleasure and honor to have worked with such a warm and noble personality, and help in the cause of saving a cherished edifice dedicated to the memory of a munificent community member — D. B. Taraporevala.

I would like to take this opportunity to draw your kind attention to a small misconception in your article "With respect to Khodadad," in the Parsiana issue of May 1998. I am not an activist as mentioned by you in the Events and Personalities column. I merely wield my pen for any deserving cause.

It gave me immense moral satisfaction/pleasure to be able to mobilize media support. From conceiving the signature campaign, drafting the memorandum, press statements, letters of concern to the chief minister, municipal commissioner, Congress Member of Parliament Murli Deora, leader of the opposition Chhagan Bhujbal, to getting the attestations of all those Parsi VIPs/supportive non-Parsi Bombayites, was a single-handed endeavor. An effort worth its while. MICKIE N. SORABJEE

"Insure and be secure"

I am referring to the article "Insure and be secure" (Zoroastrians Abroad, Parsiana, April 1998). It is good to know that Cyrus K. Rustamji has made a success of his insurance and travel business in Canada. However, I fail to see how Rustamji hopes to "affirm his faith in the community and its staying power" by tying the matrimonial knot with a non-Parsi!

It is my observation that as soon as

they have made their mark in a chosen field certain Parsi youth think it fashionable to marry a non-Parsi. It is sad that only the less talented and apparently the less well-off, it seems, still want to preserve our community and its culture.

ARDESHIR B. DAMANIA
Aleppo, Syria

"Chhaiyé hamé..."

This has reference to repeated requests by Bhikhaji Adenwalla for the words of the song *Blue Bell* to the tune of which *Chhaiyé hamé Zarathoshti* is being sung. (Readers' Forum, Parsiana, April 1998).

Blue Bell is a World War I song popular in my childhood. I think it is correct, but a word here and there may have eluded an octogenarian's memory.

Blue Bell, the day is dawning,
Sweetheart you must not sigh
Blue Bell your tears are falling,
I've come to say Good-bye—
Good Bye my Blue Bell, Farewell to you,
Last one fond look into your eyes so blue
Mid camp fires gleaming,
Mid shot and shell, I will be dreaming of
my own Blue Bell
Blue Bell they are returning,
Each greets a sweetheart true
Blue Bell your true love's dying
Never one greets you.
Sadly tell the story,
Tell how he fought and fell,
No thought of fame or glory
Only of his Blue Bell V. H. SHROFF

"A measure of mysticism"

Apropos a reference to "Orthodox Islamic view of God as a merciless tyrant" in one of your correspondents' letter captioned "A measure of mysticism" (Readers' Forum, Parsiana, February-March 1998), I, as the author of the book on mysticism under review, would like to clarify as follows:

The orthodox doctrine of predestination holds that God punishes man for sins thrust upon him as if by a fate which is irresistible. It is this doctrine which depicts God in the light of a tyrant.

As against this, the sect of Qadiriyya or Mutazila who called themselves "partisans of the divine justice and divine unity," refuted the orthodox view which made the *Quran* co-existent with God

and regarded the divine attributes separate from divine essence. This, according to them, amounted to polytheism. The sect of Qadariyya also upheld the principle of free-will, and it is the will of man acting against the will of God which is responsible for evil and the sins of man in this world (*A Literary History of Persia* — E. G. Browne, pp 281-82).

It is to be particularly noted, in this regard, that a viewpoint propounded by some orthodox or reformist sect or a school of thought in any branch of knowledge should not, necessarily, be regarded as an absolute truth which is always elusive.

It is true that one of the attributes of God is Rahman or merciful, but then, the theory of predestination militates against this concept, which should not be overlooked.

R. R. MOTAFRAM

"Identity in jeopardy"

Indeed sneer and smear characterize the Khojeste Mistree-John Hinnells tandem tirade you have decided to print (I wonder why the latter's?) in your February-March 1998 issue ("Identity in jeopardy," Readers' Forum). Doubtless through a Freudian slip, Mistree chooses to re-title Hinnells' book *Parsis in Brit-*

ain, which should indicate the itinerant preacher's ethnic preferences. I am surprised that *Parsiana* has unthinkingly (?) published what was in effect a private letter against me personally, and what I uphold as a Zoroastrian, addressed to the Editor of the Royal Asiatic Society (RAS) — so it does now matter to me very much that you print this detailed public reply.

Religious bias and its persistent mention is something Hinnells himself has frequently exercised in his book — his repetition of the *Gatha*-onlyists slander, a nonsense on the "rediscovery of the jashan," and an oblique attack against the *beheshti* Dastur Maneck Dhalla; it is evident that any defence of our Zoroastrian religion as expounded in our sacred books and commentaries against the distortions propounded by his "school" is to be countered with innuendoes, half-truths and a blithe disregard for some important aspects of the actual review printed in the *Journal* (Third Series, Vol7, Part 2, July 1997, pp. 314-317). On his own admission, he is no theologian: from broadcasting that we observe a nine-day muktad to a hopeless muddle of Ahura Mazda's aspects! He is a religious and community historian,

and an indiscriminating one at that!

His absurd insinuation of double-dealing was dealt with effectively by the distinguished Editor who, when requesting that review from me, was informed straightaway that I had been commissioned earlier by *Parsiana* to do one for them. I was urged nonetheless to submit one for the *JRAS*. What Hinnells apparently still doesn't know is that the School of Oriental and African Studies too had approached me to do a review for their *Bulletin*, but was turned down by me.

The real point is the sequel, carefully avoided by both, the council of the RAS refused to countenance Hinnells' protests and declared as much in a plenary session. This was achieved without any representation, protest or defense on my part. The first sight obtained by me of any of Hinnells' correspondence is from *Parsiana*, none of it previously having held any interest for me! Additionally, I was told thereafter by the RAS office-bearers that they would not at all entertain such attempted interference.

Hinnells further implicates High Priest Kaikhusroo JamaspAsa among "unskilled propagandists." Nowhere had I implied this; his unwarranted slur (non-partisan, of course!) against the late



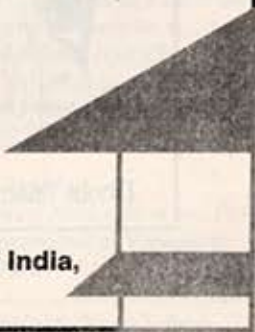
LAND, & BUNGALOWS (Purchase or Lease) at ALIBAG*

Contact
Park Trade
CORPORATION

1107 Arcadia, 195 Nariman Point, Mumbai 400 021
Phone: 287 3270, 282 6125, 282 3932. Fax: 287 3271
e-mail: parktrad@bom3.vsnl.net.in

Property Consultants

* Allbag Taluka, starting 10 Kms (across the Harbour) from Gateway of India, is connected by hourly Public Ferries Oct to May.



Dastur Dhalla had to be countered with reference to persons of the ilk of Mistree, and his agents here.

Mr Vajifdar does not belong to the World Zoroastrian Organisation, and does not accept the label of "reformist" as applied to those who do not subscribe to the conveniently so-called "classical" Zoroastrianism.

Here we must pointedly laugh at Mistree's risible attempts to accuse Dr Sunavala and myself of "rejection of the Middle Persian texts" — quite simply because we have countered his arguments on everything from the calendar to conversion precisely from these very texts utilized both in their originals and in modern translations. His views of a Zarathushtra-free Zoroastrianism are claimed to be based on the so-called "classical" period. What about the pre-classical era, that of the Prophet under whose sacred name he cloaks all manner of antithetic productions and not a few of his own, and the Avestic period when our religion took real shape. These smug "classicists" under pretext of authenticity, have dipped unsystematically into texts of some 1,500 years later, and have produced a garbled cant of a prophetless Zoroastrianism! Where is the voice of

the real Zarathushtra? Why the wilful ignoring of the sole, omniscient, omnipotent divinity Ahura Mazda (Zarathushtra's words, not mine!)? Why the elevation of that negator of life, angra mainyu/ahriman, whom that genius of a Prophet had never countenanced in any way as an (unworthy) opponent of Ahura Mazda? Why are labels switched when those who inquire into Gathic precepts are dubbed "reformists," whilst those who in fact follow reformist texts become "orthodox?"

The fact that "As neither Mr Vajifdar nor Mr (sic) Sunavala have, to the best of my (= Mistree's) knowledge, read for a professional degree in Zoroastrianism, they are at a great disadvantage to comment and indeed challenge..." fills us with a relieved sense of escape when we realize what Mistree has thereby acquired and disseminated. We are not here to further his career; we are here to serve Zarathushtra's cause through truth and not chicanery. This fortunate undersigned, long enabled to cast his learning-net as an independent researcher far wider than these clamorous academics, unlike them seeks neither personal glory nor pecuniary gain. And as such he fervently thanks the benevolent Ahura

Mazda that this variety of academic distinction has mercifully not come his way.

FARROKH VAJIFDAR
London, UK

I am deeply distressed by the sharp confrontation between Prof John Hinnells and Khojeste Mistree on the one hand, and Farrokh Jal Vajifdar on the other.

I have known Farrokh, his wife and son since 1984, and consider myself a friend of the family. Both Farrokh's grandparents were ordained priests, but Farrokh's father chose to be an accountant. Farrokh came to England alone, at the age of 16 years and stayed on to study. His parents followed five years later to settle in the UK. From the beginning, the young lad was passionately interested in the Avesta-Pahlavi texts which he studied with the help of Avesta scholars such as the late Prof Zaehner of Oxford University. As he grew up, he mastered French, German, Italian, Latin and Greek.

Today, Farrokh is much in demand by Avesta scholars as a translator of technical articles and books from French, German, Italian into English. The K. R. Cama Oriental Institute, Bombay, also uses his skill in translating ancient texts

...because we care for your family too.



Your eyes need looking after.

You and your family
need eye check ups.

Spectacles

Sunglasses

Contact Lenses

If you need any of these
Our professional expertise
will look after your problem.



Baliwalla & Homi
Private Limited

Flora Fountain: 365, Dr.D.N.Road, Tel: 287 4916 / 1762.

Dhobi Talao: 614, J.S.Seth Marg, Tel: 201 4906 / 4923 Parel: J.Merwanji Street, Tel: 412 6051

*From industry pioneer
to industry leader*

**COVERING
THE WORLD WITH
THE FINEST IN NON-FERROUS
METAL POWDERS**

ACuPowder International



901 Lehigh Avenue, Union, NJ, USA
Tel. (908) 851-4500. Fax (908) 851-4597

ACuPowder Wishes

**ZARATHUSTI'S
A HAPPY & SUCCESSFUL Yz 1368**

*Dreaming the greatest dreams
Seeking the highest goals
and building the brightest tomorrows*

and critical studies into English.

Farrokh has been guiding and helping me to update my earlier translation of the *Gathas* done in collaboration with the late Dastur (Dr) Framroze Ardeshtir Bode (Allen and Unwin, 1952). When Farrokh's sarcasms were turned against me, I would burst out laughing. They were so deadly to the point. Farrokh would smile ruefully and say: "Piloo, you are the only one who laughs at my barbed wit." One day, I said: "I wonder what the *Slavonic Book of Enoch* looks like?" He replied: "It is on the desk. Have a look." I pored over the volume, fascinated, not understanding a single word. "Can you read it?" I asked. "Yes," he replied, "I'm enjoying every moment."

Does such an individual need a formal university degree having achieved his goal the hard way? I urge readers to suspend judgment and request the Editor to close the issue so that acrimonious accusations do not waste our time and energy.

PILOON JUNGALWALLA
New Delhi

Sanjan Festival

Sanjan Day is celebrated every year to commemorate the historic landing of

the Parsis on the sacred soil of Sanjan some 1,250 years ago.

This year we have decided to convert the Sanjan Day (Saturday, November 21, 1998) into a Festival by hosting a meeting of the Federation of Parsi Zoroastrian Anjumans of India and also felicitating the most honored and decorated member of our community, Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw, in the presence of distinguished delegates from all parts of India and abroad.

The funds required for the Festival will naturally be much more than needed every year for Sanjan Day, as boarding and lodging arrangements will also have to be made for the delegates for three days.

Sanjan Day will start as usual with a jashan ceremony in the morning followed by a free community lunch in the afternoon. We are sure you will contribute to make the Sanjan Festival, the first of its kind in the history of our community, a truly memorable event. We are sure you will extend your whole-hearted support by sending your valuable donation in favor of the "Sanjan Memorial Column Local Committee" to the president at Khan Bahadur's Bungalow,

Sanjan 396150.

ROHINTAN M. DAVIERVALA
President, Sanjan Memorial Column Local
Committee

Academic distinction

Rathestar Mandal and Zarthosti Bhai Bandh Mandali invite applications from Parsi/Iranian Zoroastrian students who have passed SSC/HSC/ICSE/CBSE examination of Bombay division held in March/April 1998, securing an aggregate 85 percent and above marks, at first attempt. Eligible students may please send xerox copy of their mark-sheet duly endorsed by the principal of their school/college along with a covering letter giving their full name, address, age and phone number latest by October 15, 1998 to Mr B. R. Panthaki, trustee and honorary secretary, 721-A, Parsi Colony, 11, Choksi Building, Dr D. Master Road, Dadar, Bombay 400014.

B. R. PANTHAKI
Honorary Secretary Rathestar Mandal and
Zarthosti Bhai Bandh Mandali

Montessori training

We are running a Montessori Teachers' Training Course at R.T.I. Building,



For Pure Diamonds

K. WADIA
JEWELLERS

324, Grant Road, Bombay 400007. Telephone 3099648 Fax 3073483
APPOINTED VALUERS BY THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

**NOW, YOU DON'T NEED RICHARD BURTON'S VOICE.
OR IACocca'S PRESENCE. OR CHURCHILL'S WIT.**



**Godrej draws upon
the world's best talent
to enhance your
presentation skills.**

Godrej Prima Division brings you a range of sophisticated presentation equipment sourced from all over the world. To enhance your communication skills. And ensure that your presentation leaves a lasting impression.

Unforgettable presentations in a snap : The Direct Projector by PLUS Corporation, Japan, lets you project books, magazines, printed documents... with the same ease as transparencies in a single presentation.

A new generation of lighter and brighter overhead projectors : Sourced from Anders+Kern of Germany, these OHPs offer brilliant optical quality and project uniformly sharp pictures.

Larger than life Ideas preserved forever : Panaboard — the Electronic Print Board manufactured by Panasonic, Japan, is an exciting new communication tool which can copy anything that is written or drawn on it.

Computer images projected on the big screen : Now, you can project information directly from your computer or VCR with the Powerbeam LCD Projector and LCD Panels from Davis, Norway.

Godrej

PRIMA DIVISION

Prima Division, Godrej & Boyce Mfg. Co. Ltd., Plant 6, Pirojshahnagar, Vikhroli, Bombay - 400 079 Tel : 5171166/77 Fax : 5172232

For further details please call or fax on the following numbers: **Bombay:** Tel: 2049661 Fax: 2846056. **Maharashtra:** Tel: 5171166/77 Fax: 5172247. **Pune:** Tel: 641740 Fax: 650861. **Ahmedabad:** Tel: 831545/49 Fax: 830336. **Rajkot:** Tel: 24919/27289 Fax: 33297. **Bhopal:** Tel: 572228 Fax: 550029. **Indore:** Tel: 539076 Fax: 533735. **Jabalpur:** Tel: 314321 Fax: 311776. **Delhi:** Tel: 6921071 Fax: 6841482. **Chandigarh:** Tel: 709461 Fax: 703047. **Faridabad:** Tel: 216415 Fax: 212861. **Jaipur:** Tel: 514731 Fax: 515496. **Kanpur:** Tel: 293550 Fax: 256520. **Lucknow:** Tel: 218826 Fax: 221671. **Calcutta:** Tel: 3370895/99 Fax: 3378271. **Bhubaneswar:** Tel: 405082 Fax: 220832. **Guwahati:** Tel: 32901 Fax: 543466. **Patna:** Tel: 225886 Fax: 222579. **Madras:** Tel: 6258804 Fax: 6257155. **Bangalore:** Tel: 2271480 Fax: 2279312. **Hyderabad:** Tel: 202894/5 Fax: 203587. **Visakhapatnam:** Tel: 545262 Fax: 545878. **Cochin:** Tel: 319461 Fax: 371838. **Trivandrum:** Tel: 461649 Fax: 75935. **DEALER ENQUIRIES ARE SOLICITED.**

Top Professional Services Under One Roof

- * Authorised agents for LIC/GIC/FD/UTI
- * Buying and selling of flats/offices
- * Buying and selling of shares
- * Filling of income tax returns under VDIS and new provisions regarding house/telephone/car/foreign travels

Rusi Mundroina
6284214
Sheroo Hiramaneck
4156791/2

Hughes Road, under the aegis of Stri Zarhosti Mandal. Please note that the diploma is given by the Association Montessori Internationale which has its headquarters in The Netherlands and is the only authority on Montessori education which was started by Dr Montessori herself. On obtaining the diploma our students can get jobs in many parts of the world like the USA, Singapore, Middle East countries, etc as the Association Montessori Internationale is recognized throughout the world. If interested, contact Ms Zarin Malva, R.T.I. Annexe Building, First Floor, 35, N. S. Patkar Marg (Hughes Road), Bombay 400007. Tel: 3802781/82, 3804363, Res: 2841672.

ZARIN MALVA

Multilevel marketing

I take this opportunity to bring to the notice of your readers in India the immense opportunities available in multilevel marketing today, as part-time or full-time work.

I joined Modicare a year ago as a consultant and am today a ruby-star director. The company manufactures household cleaning agents, kitchen care,

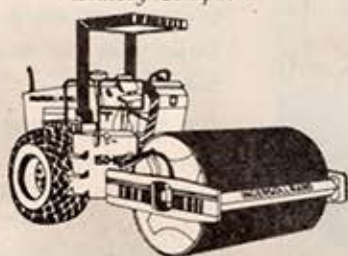
laundry care, personal care, auto care, water filters, etc — a range of 21 products which are very well priced and of excellent quality. In Modicare there are two avenues of income available — the first is a 25 percent commission on all goods bought for personal use and for selling to customers (products cannot be sold in shops, only person to person — direct selling). The second income is bonuses, which in the long run, is the larger income. This is generated by introducing relatives, friends, acquaintances, just anyone who touches your life, to the business, and building a network under yourself. You get bonuses every month on the total business generated by your network.

After a year's efforts, I have 1,500 people under me in my network and am today earning Rs 40,000 bonus per month. This figure keeps increasing as the network grows. Our top achievers in Delhi earn Rs 2,50,000 per month as bonus. I have introduced Modicare to many Parsis in India and with my help and guidance they are doing well in the business.

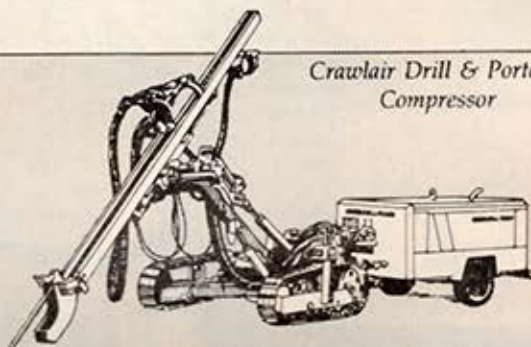
VERA HOMI JESIA

Edited by Parinaz M. Gandhi

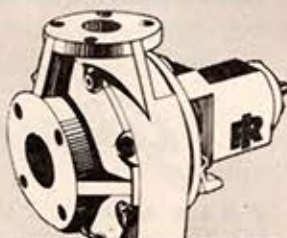
Vibratory Compactor



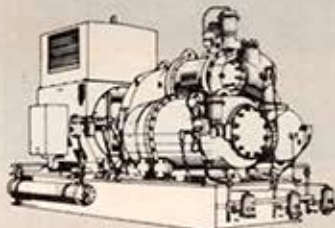
Crawler Drill & Portable Compressor



Chemical Process Pump



Centrifugal Air Compressor



Air and Gas Compressors

Chemical Process Pumps

Construction, Mining & Waterwell Drilling Equipment

Aircraft Ground Support Equipment

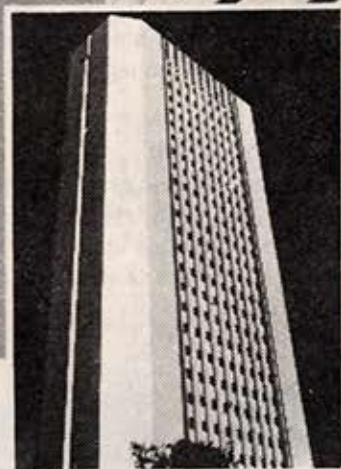


INGERSOLL-RAND

Ingersoll-Rand (India) Limited, Rhône-Poulenc House, S. K. Ahire Marg, P. O. Box 9138, Mumbai - 400 025. Tel : 022-493 6765, Fax : 022-495 0516.



Reaching for the Sky



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

Both built by Shapoorji Pallonji of course!



SHAPOORJI PALLONJI & CO. (PVT.) LTD.

Shapoorji Pallonji Centre, 41/44, Minoo Desai Marg, Colaba,
Bombay-400005. Phone: 2870211/2870195/2870197.

Events and Personalities

51 years as panthaky

Associated with the Seth Bomanji Merwanji Mevawala Dar-e-Meher for the past 72 years, with 51 years as the panthaky there, Ervad Minocher Ardeshir Bajan who is believed to be the seniormost among the Bombay panthakies was accorded a special felicitation on the 124th anniversary of the agiary on May 5, 1998. On behalf of the trustees of the Byculla Dar-e-Meher, Dastur (Dr) Kaikhusroo JamaspAsa presented him with a shawl, a silver salver and a purse, notes a press release.

The present panthaky who is reportedly the fourth generation from the Bajan family to have served this agiary since its inception in 1851 was also felicitated by the Athornan Mandal, the Iran

ing a *maachi* in the Havan *gah*, in the morning a hama anjuman jashan was led by Bajan on behalf of the well-wishers and residents of Byculla. The evening function commenced with a jashan led by JamaspAsa in honor of the founder of the Dar-e-Meher. Following the jashan, Jivanji Jamadar welcomed the guests and recounted a brief history of the agiary. He also commended the services of Minocher Bajan who had studied under the late Ervad Burjorji Bajan and the late Ervad Dinsha Minocher Homji at the J. N. Petit Orphanage which was then situated at Lalbaug. His training as a *navar-maratab* was at Navsari after which he started practicing as a priest under the guidance of his father and grandfather at this Dar-e-Meher.

Originally consecrated at Bhendi Bazar in 1851, in 1875 the fire had to be consecrated afresh as the riots in Bombay the preceding year had nullified the sanctity of the temple. In 1914 the agiary was shifted to Byculla but no major repairs to the building had been done over the years, states the write-up. Recently they were able to raise sufficient funds to conduct major repairs, including tiling and electrical wiring. It was on the midnight of March 19, 1998 that they reenthroned the holy fire in the original *gumbaj*.

In his vote of thanks Ervad Parvez M. Bajan commended the cooperation of community institutions, philanthropists and other individuals who have supported this institution over the years as also on this special occasion. Captivating slides of pilgrimage sites in Iran were then shown to the gathering by Parvez Bajan, with the function ending with the gusty singing of *Chhaiyé hamé Zarathoshti*.

The parting

She came to us, a slip of a girl. Nervous during the first interview she kept fidgeting with a rolled up hanky. Twenty-one years later Zarin Mistry (née



League, the Bombay Parsee Association, the boiwalas of the agiary, the panthaky of the Wadia Agiary at Lalbaug and Rohinton Chinoy of Union Press.

This first *salgirah* of the agiary that was being celebrated in the newly renovated Dar-e-Meher was "marked with religious fervor and gaiety." After offer-

M. Bajan (left) being felicitated by JamaspAsa as Paeterasp Patel looks on

Photo: Rusi M. Davar
Right: Mevawala Dar-e-Meher



Where there's 100% love,



there's an Aquaguard.

Your family means the world to you. Their health, their happiness, that's what really matters. And an Aquaguard water purifier is what you need to keep them smiling, always.



Aquaguard has a complete purification process with an **Electronic Monitoring System** that monitors the level of purity. If the purity level drops, the water flow stops automatically. So you can be sure that every sip your little ones take is 100% safe.

Today, over a million homes in India trust only Aquaguard, to keep their loved ones healthy and happy.

Aquaguard also comes with the Eureka Forbes promise of after sales service at your doorstep (though you may never need it). So call the friendly man from Eureka Forbes today.

ISO 9002 certified
Aquaguard
WATER PURIFICATION SYSTEM



For more information, visit us at: www.eurekaforbes.com

For pure and safe drinking water call or write to: MUMBAI: PRABHADEVI: BHUPESH GUPTA BHAVAN, 85, SAYANI ROAD, PRABHADEVI, MUMBAI 400 025. TEL: 4301725/1713 • TARDEO: TEL: 4949183/6184 • BANDRA: TEL: 6442742/6432263 • ANDHERI: TEL: 8301739, 8362191 • MULUND: TEL: 5640962, 5672098 • COLABA: TEL: 2187441/58 • BORIVLI: TEL: 8065596/601 • KALYAN: TEL: 911- 315735/7 • VASHI: TEL: 7684941/7636462/6463.

A centrally located property in Bombay up for grabs

If you or your family back home have been looking for a residential property in the heart of Bombay look no further.

- * The flat is located in Dadar, the centre of Bombay (or should I say "apru Mumbai"!)
- * The flat is well ventilated, has one bedroom, hall, kitchen, two balconies and measures 500 sq ft.
- * The building is in an agiary compound and can have only Zoroastrian owners/tenants.
- * The building has a lift, 24 hours water supply and best of all wonderful neighbours.

This opportunity will not last for long as the owner is keen to sell.

If interested or wish to know more about the property please call the owner in Sydney, Australia on (02) 9890 5250 (A/H) or 0414 279 961 (Bus). Alternately send an e-mail to dinsha.palkhiwala@apac.dmr.com.au or write to Dinsha Palkhiwala 170 Pennant St. North Parramatta NSW 2151, Australia.

I will be in Bombay from 6th December 1998 till 1st January 1999 and can be contacted on 91 22 6511777 (c/o Jimmy & Roshan Mistry).

Billimoria) was the pushing force behind Parsiana's advertising efforts. Relentlessly pursuing advertisers, chasing recoveries, checking office records and documents, searching out new clients to tap, Zarin put her all into the magazine. Tough and persistent when required, she could also feel saddened when an advertiser was rude to her or unkind. Yet she took the downs stoically never giving up.

She had more than her fair measure of life's tragedies. But she neither grudged her lot nor was envious of those who were more privileged.

Her marriage followed an office romance, her husband Rohinton operated and programed the Company's first computer before leaving for a full-time programing job in a software firm. After trying for a child for many years, a son Kaizad was born five years later. It was a time of joy but followed by heartache as they slowly discovered he was mentally and physically handicapped.

Using all their limited resources they both worked long and hard to help their son. Rounds to doctors, therapists, institutions almost depleted their savings.

Her parents Mani and Cowas with whom they stayed in a two-room apartment next to the former Handloom House assisted with Kaizad, making it possible for Zarin and Rohinton to continue working. They all benefited from the fruits of living in a small joint family.

Zarin died of a massive heart attack early morning August 5, two days after her 40th birthday.

A tribute to her was written by our sister publication *Voyage's* managing editor Jerroo Irani which we reproduce here for our readers:

Zarin Mistry's presence lingers in our office with the all-pervasive fragrance of a freshly plucked rose...Especially around the swivel chair on which she would sit, a fierce frown of concentration lining her brow. Occasionally, she would lean back to smile quizzically at a colleague or rustle the neat stack of papers, to be dealt with the next day.

But, that routine workday in August, no one knew that there was to be no next day for Zarin, our advertising manager. Felled by a heart attack on the morning of August 5 she died instantly and quietly with as little fuss as she had lived.



Mistry: tough and persistent

Wrenched from her family, friends and colleagues in the prime of her life, 40-year-old Zarin had joined Parsiana Publications in May 1977 as a fresh-faced youngster with her entire life ahead of her. Over the years, she grew from

secretary to advertising executive, and then advertising manager. Her portfolio included *Voyage's* sister publication, *Parsiana*, as well as the prestigious *Diners Club* magazine, *Signature*, which Parsiana Publications published till December 1991. When *Voyage* was launched in April 1992, Zarin soldiered on, endeavoring to shore up the fledgling publication's fortunes

with her own special brand of selling skills. This, at a time when selling ad space for a niche magazine was as difficult as selling chickens' beaks!

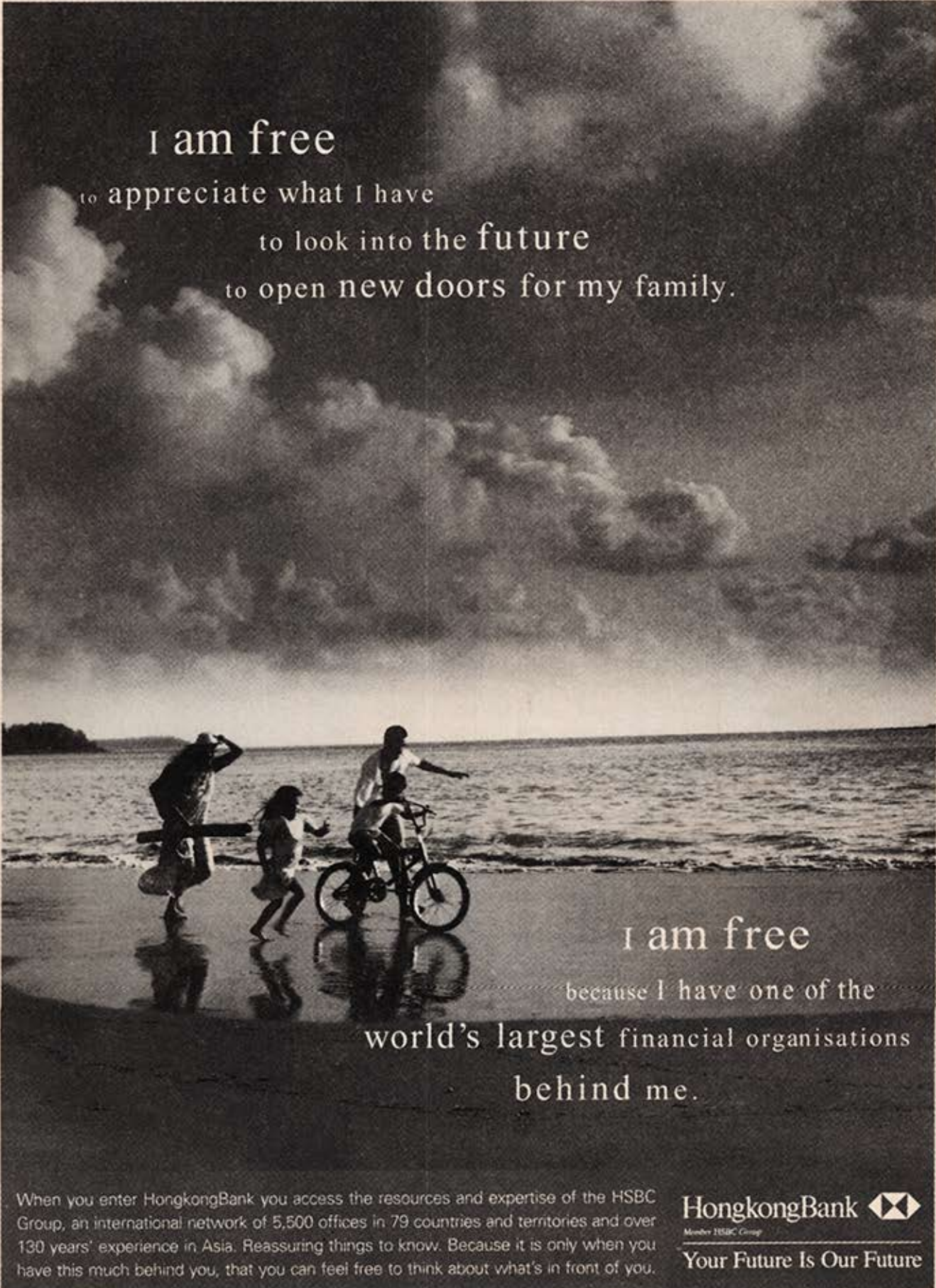
She could be as dizzying in her efficiency as a roller coaster; as lively as a fairground, and as sober as a judge. A great sport, she would rock with Himalayan bouts of laughter even if she was at the receiving end of a practical joke. One can still see the flicker of that fugitive smile, the witty remarks made with casual nonchalance, the tough exterior that hid the softest of soft hearts...

She was blessed with an incisive intellect, a computer-like memory and determination to carry on despite the curves life threw at her. She took them squarely on her chin with a defiant toss of her head. Abundant sympathy flowed for friends who suffered the slings and arrows of fortune less stoically than she did.

As close family, relatives, friends and colleagues gathered at the Towers of Silence in Bombay to bid her farewell, the heavens opened and the rains came down as though in benediction; mingling with the tears on wet cheeks.

Microwave meals

"I know you can heat cooked food in a microwave, but can you really cook in it?" To answer this commonly raised query Bapsi Nariman has authored a 100-page book, *Microwave Cooking for the Indian Palate*. From shorbas and soups to chutney, relish and pickles, an entire assortment of dishes are covered by Nariman. The maximum number of pages, 11, are devoted to the fish recipes. Vegetarian dishes as also mutton,



I am free
to appreciate what I have
to look into the future
to open new doors for my family.

I am free
because I have one of the
world's largest financial organisations
behind me.

When you enter HongkongBank you access the resources and expertise of the HSBC Group, an international network of 5,500 offices in 79 countries and territories and over 130 years' experience in Asia. Reassuring things to know. Because it is only when you have this much behind you, that you can feel free to think about what's in front of you.

HongkongBank 

Member HSBC Group

Your Future Is Our Future



pork, chicken, egg, paneer, potato and rice dishes are covered here too, with two to three pages each reserved for rasam and pani, salads, dals and desserts.

Parsi readers may be interested to learn that according to Nariman, community favorites like a *Parsi pora*, *akuri*, *kanda kothmir per eda*, *ambakalio* and *gajar meva nu achar* can be readied in a microwave oven too.

"Once you get used to it, you will find the microwave an indispensable adjunct of everyday life. I hope that these recipes will give you enough confidence to use your microwave to cook all kinds of foods," states the foreword. "If there are recipes which you would like to try out other than the ones in this book, don't hesitate to do so. Only adapt the timings, power levels, the food-covering, etc., accordingly. Cooking times are approximate and may vary. Once you use a microwave, you will become not only a better cook, but a more imaginative one," the foreword gives an assurance.

Lest the novice be induced to instantly try out a recipe which fascinates him/her, reading the section titled "Background — and a few tips" should be considered mandatory. Therein it is mentioned, "Since microwaves penetrate little more than one inch deep into most foods, the center will cook slower as the heat from the outer area travels inwards: so arrange the thickest part of the food at the edge of a round container for even cooking...Some foods need lower levels of power to slow down the process of cooking e.g. liquids may spill over after they come to a boil..."

"All the recipes bear the hallmark of Nariman's style — clarity and simplic-

ity. Except mutton biryani," wrote Ruth Davidar in the *Indian Review of Books*, April 16-May 15, 1998. She further adds, "Another heartening step in the right direction is that the ingredients have been listed in the order of use, a rarity in cookbooks written in India. Thankfully, except for minor lapses in page references, method, ingredients and their amounts, by and large, there is not much cause for upset." Irked by the repeated mention of "grind to a paste in a mortar and pestle" Davidar comments on "the insufficient knowledge of cooking terminology."

As mentioned on the back cover, Nariman has contributed articles on various aspects of cuisine at home and abroad and is the author of *Party Snacks*, and *A Gourmet's Hand Book of Parsi Cooking*. *The Exotic Vegetarian* is a compilation of her vegetarian and egg recipes. *Microwave Cooking*...priced at Rs 145 was published in 1998 by HarperCollins Publishers India Private Limited, 7/16 Ansari Road, Daryaganj, New Delhi 110002. Bound in the center of the book are eight color pages bearing photographs of exotic recipes by Nauzer Daruwalla.

Muse and the Minorities

"Any attempt to impose a common cultural pattern on India's plurality can only result in tragedy. This book, a collection of the papers and proceedings of an international seminar attended by a number of India's foremost intellectuals and creative artistes stresses that in India differences have always coexisted." So states the write-up on the jacket of the 413-page book, *The Muse and the Minorities-Social Concerns and Creative Cohesion*, released this July by the Presi-

dent of India K. R. Narayanan.

Published by retired Lt Gen A. M. Sethna, chairman of The Steering Committee and Tirlochan Singh, convener, the book priced at Rs 250 is edited by Dr Shernaz Cama and Sudhir Chandra Mathur.

The book is a follow-up on the international seminar on the same theme held under the aegis of the India International Centre, Sahitya Akademi, Delhi Parsi Anjuman and Konrad Adenauer Foundation.

The idea to host the seminar originated with Prof A. G. Khan, School of Studies in English, Ujjain University, Sethna and his daughter Cama, states Singh.

"While teaching English writing by Indian authors (Khan) was struck by their alienation from India," writes Sethna in the book's preface. "He maintained that Parsi writers, mostly from abroad, expressed this most vehemently."

"On looking into this we found that ethnic anxiety was being felt by many creative persons within the country but was getting maximum attention from those writing from abroad. This applied not only to writers of one community but to all. It was also found that many small communities were finding themselves increasingly marginalized, that many had migrated abroad, and others were being increasingly ghettoized," added Sethna.

At the opening of the seminar held in New Delhi in September 1996, Cama stated this is "the first time leading writ-

Second from left: Tirlochan Singh, Cama, Karan Singh, Sethna, Mulk Raj Anand, Varadarajan and Khan



*Toolroom grinding
takes a
new shape
from today*



Introducing the Mikron Challenge.

A grinding wheel far superior to anything else in the market today. Mikron is made from 86A - an abrasive that gives you *higher depth of cut*. Formulated with a unique bond, it ensures *freer cutting and burn-free operations*. A stricter control on imbalance *reduces chatter marks* making it perfect for precision grinding. Be it for surface grinding, tool reshaping or die and plate manufacture. All this at *no extra cost!*

In fact, try the Mikron in your toolroom. You will find its performance far superior to anything else available in the market today. We are sure, it will meet with your expectations. So are you ready for the Mikron Challenge? We are!



MIKRON

Super Edge, Super Grinding.

NORTON

ARMY & NAVY BUILDING, 148, M. G. ROAD, MUMBAI 400 001.
TEL: 2844727 TELEX: 011-82840, FAX: 022-2023711

**GRINDWELL
NORTON LTD.**

ers, film and theater artistes and social workers from all the communities of India will share a common platform and discuss vital issues without fear or favor."

Among the participants were several noted Zoroastrian writers such as poet Keki N. Daruwalla, playwright Dina Mehta and novelist Bapsi Sidhwa.

The welcome address of the seminar was delivered by M. Varadarajan, the keynote address by journalist George Verghese and the presidential address by former union minister Karan Singh. The inaugural address was by writer Mulk Raj Anand.

For the President's eyes

Two brothers, both eminent in their field of specialization, were appointed honorary ophthalmic surgeons to the President of India, notes a communique issued by the Shroff Eye Centre, New Delhi, where they are both medical directors. While 47-year-old Dr Noshir Minoo Shroff is eminent in the field of intra-ocular lens implant surgery, 42-year-old Dr Cyrus Minoo Shroff is prominent in the field of vitreo-retinal surgery. They are the third generation ophthalmic surgeons, their grandfather, Dr Sohrab Shroff, being the founder of the Dr Shroff Charitable Eye Hospital, as recalled in *Fed Newsletter*.

Ever since he performed his first lens implant in 1982, Noshir is said to have performed over 13,000 implant procedures. He was one of the first in India to start phacoemulsification (sutureless cataract surgery) in 1992 and has since the last two years been performing photorefractive keratotomy surgery (excimer laser) for correction of refractive errors, states the write-up. After his early education at Modern School, Noshir graduated and postgraduated in ophthalmology from the Maulana Azad College, New Delhi and has since attended many courses and conferences in India and abroad as guest speaker/instructor/convenor.

Practising exclusively in the field of vitreo-retinal medicine for the past 13 years, Cyrus has reportedly performed more than 3,000 vitreo-retinal surgical procedures and 5,000 laser surgical procedures. At various seminars and medical education programs in India and overseas on the subject of vitreo-retina he has made his presence felt as guest lecturer/instructor/convenor/faculty. His early education too was at Modern School. His medical training though was at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi and the Sankara Nethralaya, Chennai, adds

the press release.

Fusion of forms

Overwhelmed by the response to his fourth solo show, *The Eternal Feminine*, at Bombay's Nehru Centre Art Gallery from June 3 to 8, 1998, artist Firdaus Dadabhoy plans to take this show abroad to Germany and Italy. As explained in the invite, "*The Eternal Feminine* finds its source in an hitherto untapped root of this genre wherein printed image and painted abstraction fuse to uncover hidden worlds of timeless splendor echoing ancient iconography in a contemporary idiom."

The background is a subtle play of earthy colors, set in an abstract form on which is juxtaposed a striking image or figure in the forefront. "Technically you can call it mixed media but it's more than just an assemblage or collage," Dadabhoy was quoted in *Mid-Day*, June 4. "I'm not doing a collage just for the sake of doing it. It's an attempt to blend abstraction with printed or photographic image."

The effect of this "extremely innovative concept" on the viewers can be gauged from the feedback received by Dadabhoy wherein his work has been variously described in the visitors' book as "absolutely gorgeous," "outstandingly unique artistry," "brilliantly portrayed," "the three-dimensional effect is astonishing." From the 30 exhibits on view, a favorite of Dadabhoy as also many of the visitors was the *Portrait of a Lady*. In fact this piece was sold on the first day itself, says Dadabhoy despite the prices of his paintings being in the five figure range. While the smallest exhibit on display was 30"x24", the largest was 7'x4' in size, explains Dadabhoy. Sometimes a large painting may get completed within a few days and he may be laboring over a small piece for weeks, says

Dadabhoy (above) and his *Portrait of a Lady*

Dadabhoy to reiterate that the time expended does not correlate with the size of the canvas.

For Dadabhoy who is an architect by profession, an average of five to eight paintings are completed in a year. His last solo show in 1991 was on abstract landscapes and prior to that it was completely abstracts, the self-taught painter traces the evolution of his art since he held his first solo show in 1975 at the Jehangir Art Gallery.

After completing his schooling from St Xavier's, Bombay, Dadabhoy studied architecture at the Sir J. J. College of Architecture. The next three years he worked as architect in the civil department of Tata Electric Companies and Tata Consulting Engineers before he chose to set up independent practice in 1970. Beginning 1980 he has been manufacturing office furniture systems under the brand name Interlock Systems and in 1993 he expanded his business yet again with the manufacture of computer work stations in the name of Firma.

Among the projects he has been associated with are the Holiday Home of the Tata Consultancy Services at Panchgani, the primary school for the Tata Electric Companies at Bhivpuri, the modular office system installed at Kilburn Engineering, Bhandup, and the office interiors for Barmag Machines at Nariman Point. In addition to his busy professional life, Dadabhoy also finds time for poetry and writing. The novel which he has just finished writing is awaiting publication, he mentions.

Compiled by Parinaz Gandhi





The Finest Hand Embroidery -- Forever

Armayesh, world leading Manufacturer-Exporters of the finest quality of exquisite Hand Embroidered designs and products supplied around the world, offers the same guaranteed international quality and timely delivery **FOR THE INDIAN MARKET.**

You can select from many existing international designs or order any design of your choice for your Sarees (Parsi Garas are our speciality), Dupattas, Ghagras, Cholis, Jackets, Vests, Hand bags, Cushion covers and other products which will be exclusively hand embroidered for you.

Please telephone **Mrs SHEILA N. AGA** or **Mr ARMAND N. AGA** on 3084283/3072330 to finalise the date and time of your visit to our **Design Studio and Showroom.**

Armayesh Fashions Pvt Ltd

Design Studio and Showroom

513-Veena Killedar Estate

Pais Street, Byculla (W)

Mumbai 400011

Fax : (91-22) 3072301

E-mail: Armayesh@bom3.vsnl.net.in

Defining Zoroastrian commitment

The 11th North American Zoroastrian Congress heard many young voices enunciate their faith

Text and photographs by Porus Cooper

Out in the lobby, people were lining up to give blood. Off to one side, Dolly Dastoor, the outgoing president of the Federation of Zoroastrian Associations of North America (FEZANA), was talking up the Federation's newly created Zarathushti Religion Education curriculum. In another corner, incoming FEZANA president Framroze Patel was discussing his plans to bind the North American community even tighter. Inside, a slick audiovisual production advertised Houston's credentials as the venue for the Seventh World Zoroastrian Congress-2000. From the podium, an electrical engineer named Maneck Bhujwala described the "mobedyaar," or lay mobed, program that he said he enrolled himself in because of a shortage of ordained mobeds in his northern California community.

In between, there were passionate and remarkably personal pleadings to the community to think more inclusively about interfaith families — as well as relatively staid treatises on such topics as "The Social Structure of the Zoroastrian Community, Past, Present and Future."

Of all the Zarathushti rituals examined and re-examined each time one of the North American Zoroastrian congresses assembles, one ritual seems to be growing unchecked, and happily so. That's the congress tradition itself.

The 11th North American Zoroastrian Congress, held over the July 4 weekend in Rye, New York, was bigger (with about 650 attending the various sessions and about 750 signed up for the banquet, it was the largest ever) and among the most innovative. No doubt, the hosts — the Zoroastrian Association of Greater New York (ZAGNY), in tandem with the Iranian Zoroastrian Association (IZA) — built on the experience of their predecessors elsewhere.

For instance, gone were the handful of featured speakers, many of them familiar figures, who customarily an-

chored sessions at previous congresses. In their place were panels of speakers, many of them appearing for the first time, who examined various topics and invited discussion from those in attendance. Youth was served in ample measure. In fact, the room fairly crackled with energy when the younger people spoke. The organizers also decided to rely solely on homegrown North American talent (no resident of Europe or Iran or India or Pakistan was invited to be on any of the panels). Except for Dr James Lovelace, all the speakers were Zarathushtis. With the exception of a few student speakers whose expenses were reimbursed, no speaker was compensated for appearing.

In his welcome address Gev Nentin, president of ZAGNY, referred to the economic and social prosperity of the North American Zarathushtis and prophesied continued growth. "A consequence of this migration... is that inevitably, we will play a greater leadership role within the worldwide Zarathushti community. This is our destiny."

On display was the sinew and fiber of a community that has grown not only in numbers (to 20,000 in the United States and Canada, by some estimates) but also in maturity and organizational sophistication. And new technology has expanded the sense of community. The host group, ZAGNY's, informative internet web page beckoning people to come to the Congress was evidence of this wider community. It joined an already thriving Zarathushti community on the web and off it. At least two video productions tracing the life and times of Asho Zarathushtra were on sale, along with numerous publications, some scholarly, some of immediate practical use, such as the second edition of the directory of North American Zarathushtis.

The Congress, as others before it, seemed only to make this kind of community connectedness more palpable not just between Iranians and Parsis but

among all Zarathushtis. For three days, every two years, in one big hotel ballroom, the illusion is perpetuated that there's a whole lot of us. Let's stop talking about survival, let's start talking about a thriving community, some of the speakers counseled with a degree of ebullience that the overall numbers may belie. Noshir Langrana, an engineering professor at Rutgers University in New Jersey and co-chairman of the Congress, presented the initial findings of a demographic survey. The survey elicited 3,919 responses from heads of households for a total of 8,851 individuals. But fewer than half the entries were complete. Langrana said, with many leaving out essential information such as ages. Factoring in non-responses and the fact that the community is not well organized everywhere, Langrana hazarded the estimate that there are close to 20,000 Zarathushtis in North America.

"We have a problem of inventory," said Anahaita Kotval, a 30-year-old New York lawyer for the Securities and Exchange Commission, who was discussing the impulse toward interfaith marriages among many of the younger generation. At a very young age, she said, she got the message that it would please her elders if she married a Zarathushti — and she did. But she said she can understand why many don't. As she was growing up, there were "perhaps 20 young Zarathushti people in the tri-state area," she said. Expectedly, the panel on interfaith and intrafaith marriages drew the greatest interest. The hall was packed, and the personal testimony of the speakers, sometimes tormented, sometimes defiant, always strikingly candid, could have riveted the attention of any Oprah Winfrey viewer. In the minds of many, marriages outside the Zarathushti community remain a key cause of its erosion. Turn marriage from an exit point to an entryway, some counseled in response. Accept the children of such marriages into the faith, they said, and

the faith, if not its ethnic complexion, will be safe.

"We must do everything we can, as a community, to encourage parents of interfaith marriages to bring up their children as Zoroastrians," said Zarine Weil. She and her Jewish husband, Richard, have two children, Darayus and Delna, and have "adopted a lifestyle where Zoroastrianism is the dominant faith," Weil said.

Zareen Karani Araoz, president of an international cross-cultural management consulting firm, said her first marriage, to a Zarathushti, ended after seven "challenging" years. She is now married to a non-Zoroastrian. "I am not here to advocate interfaith marriages," she said, but asked: "Is it better to have an unhappy, un-Zoroastrian marriage to a Zoroastrian than a genuinely sacred and happy marriage that demonstrates Zoroastrian ideals with someone from a different community?"

That sort of sentiment was echoed by Spenta Cama, 26, a law student at Rutgers University. "From the outset I'd like to say that I am not arguing that interfaith marriages are better. In fact, my belief is that intrafaith marriages are preferable," Cama said. "However, given the Zoroastrian integration into North American society, interfaith marriages will occur. The real issue then becomes how the Zoroastrian community can and will respond to something that has happened, is happening and will continue to happen." Her wedding rites incorporated both Zarathushti and Methodist traditions. If the community rejects the children of marriages such as hers, Cama said, it would lose not only that one member but also that member's children. She also said that non-Zarathushti spouses often are the most dedicated members of the community, "they are greatly involved in planning events and activities, give generously of their time and money, and can be counted on at any time for any kind of help — all very Zoroastrian-like qualities."

In the Brooklyn neighborhood where she makes her home, said Mina Zand Siegal, a graphic arts entrepreneur, there are few Zarathushtis. Her "community" there is all Jewish. "When I need help or have to go to a hospital, I have no Zoroastrian to turn to for help... I have to rely on those other people." She and her

Jewish husband have been married for 13 years, she said. Looking back to the anguish her decision to marry outside the community caused in her family all the way back to Iran, she said she now wonders, "What was all the fuss about?"

Stating the case for emphasizing and encouraging marriages within the community was Jamshed Gandhi, a San Francisco certified public accountant (CPA). "Being of the same faith has brought a great commonality amongst us parents in espousing our common beliefs, traditions, rituals, customs, goals especially in the matter of religion, faith and other spiritual matters to our children," he said.

Looking in from the outside, Prof. Lovelace, a Washington-area non-Zarathushti spouse, tried to get to the



Lively participation from the floor

soul of the debate. "Have you been grasped by Zoroastrianism?" asked Lovelace, associate vice president for academic affairs at the University of Maryland Biotechnology Institute. "Is your spiritual life your ultimate concern? Chances are if you don't take your spiritual life unconditionally seriously, neither will your children."

Respect our choice, speakers who have married outside the community said. Respect our choice to hew to tradition, countered some like Kaemerz Dotiwala, a businessman and leader of the Houston Zarathushti community. Some felt the very panel was skewed toward presenting the case for accepting interfaith families. Moderator Lovji D. Cama, one of ZAGNY's founder members, said the panel only reflected the wider community's response — few came forward to articulate the case for the intrafaith marriages that many feel comport better with Zarathushti tradition.

The standoff was never acrimonious, though Ervad Kersey Antia from Chicago brought up its dark side. He said he and another mobed had received death threats for trying to perform an interfaith marriage. The debate was hardly ended at the 11th Congress; what it afforded, however, was a forum for creative potential ways to move beyond the ideological impasse.

Tamina Davar, 30, a journalist working in New York, has found a way to create a larger, lookalike community of South Asians and other Asians around her. At least some of the impulse among young Zarathushtis to marry outside the community comes from a lack of self-esteem, she conjectured, the result of living in white suburban enclaves. "When kids grow up among people of their own color, they tend to like themselves," she said in an interview. In this respect, the opportunities that the Congress allowed her to socialize with fellow Zarathushtis were invaluable, she said. Others pointed out efforts, including on the Internet, to connect Zarathushtis looking for mates of their own faith.

"The Zoroastrian Commitment in the North American Context" was the theme of this Congress. For most of the speakers, that translated into a search for some common ground to override the obvious divisions that remain. For some, like Prof. Kaikhosrov Irani, that meant a quest for a common goal. "Every religion has a core belief," said Irani, who is emeritus professor of philosophy at City College of New York and a venerable figure in the North American Zarathushti community. "There may be variations in the core belief, but there must be a common goal. The function of religious practice is that it binds the community through common actions." As he has in other settings over the years, Irani exhorted those gathered to examine "our total traditions, beliefs and practices and ask, what must be maintained and what may or may not be and what ought not to be or cannot be maintained. Scientific and other advances require adjustments — rationally and with respect. Traditions cannot be permitted to die out casually, but they cannot challenge reason and survive."

"Traditions cannot be permitted to die out casually, but they cannot challenge reason and survive"

Dina McIntyre, a Pittsburgh lawyer, has searched for and found her religious core in Zarathushtra's "own words" — the *Gathas*. "If we must express the teachings of Zarathushtra in a nutshell, I think it is the concept of the Amesha Spenta," McIntyre said. "In the *Gathas*, they are the beginning, the end, and how we get there. According to Zarathushtra, they are the essence of divinity — the attributes with which he describes God. And they are also the way to God. They are what we worship and how we worship. They are Zarathushtra's way of life and the purpose of life."

For Dotiwala, it meant seeking out a new way to maintain a common Zarathushti goal in the form of two coalitions of groups, one on the traditional side and one liberal. "A rather broad spectrum" of approaches to the practice of the faith has fragmented the community, he said, tracing the spectrum from the Khshnoomists and Pandolites on one end to "orthodox fundamentalists" to "moderate traditionalists" (who would frown on any tinkering with the corpus of Zarathushti scriptures) and "moderate liberals" (who would allow such tinkering) to "the *Gathas* only fundamentalists."

"I believe that the time is ripe for our community... after careful consideration, (to start) a new experiment of the formation of a new Zarathushti group that would embody the outlook of the groups falling under the 'moderate liberal' and the '*Gathas* only fundamentalists.' In order for this experiment to succeed, I believe that in the initial, formative years, the leaders of the new group be from those who are born Zarathushtris. The gates be cracked initially to allow the children and spouses of Zarathushtris, rather than be thrown totally open. What this will do is allow the children of a Zarathushti to be sustained within the community. What it will also do is that the traditional groups will continue to maintain the religion in its totality the way it has been practiced. This will serve as a safety net for the community in case the experiment runs into a hitch.

The leaders of both the groups will have to work with each other honestly and help each other blossom and flourish within their own parameters," suggested Dotiwala.

For Yezdi Rustomji, a lecturer in sociology at the University of Houston, it meant moving beyond a "tribal" concept of the Zarathushti community, where somehow the religion is transmitted as "genetic material" would be. "I will not hesitate to say that the reasons for adherence to the tribal concept by Zarathushtris range from outright racist feelings, to claims of cultural exigency, and a superstitious acceptance of what

personal and professional experiences, it is simply this — we just get one shot at it," Gandhi said. Parents, educators, priests and other members of the community, all "share the ultimate responsibility of studying, understanding and modeling the precepts of our religion as well as its rituals in a balanced and knowledgeable way," she added. "Why then would our children want to abandon this inspiring religion?" Those who do, she said, may well be discarding "cultural baggage" rather than the faith itself.

For Shiraz Antia, a young healthcare administrator from New York, it has meant expressing her faith in action. When there was some damage to the New Rochelle Darbe Mehr, she said, "In a matter of less than a week, there were eight of us who came on a Friday night to clean the walls and repaint the prayer room... That is faith," she said.

For Aysha Ghadiali, a first year student at the University of Boston, it has meant comprehending the prayers both spiritually and literally. "It is the literal translation (in English) that opens the door to help us to understand spiritually what we were taught as children," she said. One way to do that would be to routinely follow traditional ceremonies with an English translation, she suggested.

For Kaizad Cama also, soon to be a senior at Tenafly High School in New Jersey, it meant especially making the navjote ceremony understandable to the child being initiated into the faith. Cama said he surveyed about 40 Zarathushti youths, asking them if they had realized what pledges they were making when they underwent the navjote, and of the 24 who responded, 19 said they did not. He suggested both an English interpretation of the ceremony and an increase in the traditional age of navjote initiates. "Children of, say, 13 years of age, are more mature and will more readily understand the intricate meaning of this very important ceremony," Cama said.

Firdosh D. Mehta, an engineer and

continued on page 26



The community's sentiments were well represented

amounts to nothing more than ideological canards."

For Keki Bhote, a Chicago executive and international consultant, the question to ponder is, will there be a new renaissance of the faith in North America? "We can no longer look to India for inspiration. The Parsi century there is over. We can no longer look to Iran, because despite Khatemi (the current, reform-minded president), the mullahs still reign," Bhote stressed the taking of individual responsibility — from learning the scriptures to practicing the practical tenets of the faith, including environmentalism — to perpetuate the religion.

For Villy Gandhi, an education media specialist from New Jersey, it meant better parenting. "I have spent the better part of my adult career raising our two sons and educating many others. If there is one thing that I have learned from my



Corporate Office:

Prop of: Taj Printing Works 46/A, Cawasji Patel Street, Fort, Bombay 400 001:
Tel: 2042432 ♦ 2854218 ♦ 2853058 ♦ 2853080 Fax: 022-2855325



M. PALLONJI & CO. PVT. LTD.

Leading Contractors for Industrial Painting and Coatings, Anti-Corrosion, Waterproofing, Construction, Diving, Dredging and Offshore Contractors
Members of S.S.P.C. (USA) & N.A.C.E. (USA)

PALLONJI INVESTMENT & FINANCE PVT. LTD.

Manufacturers of Waterproofing material

AquaEpoxy

Manufacturers of Longlasting Exterior coating material

Kenitex



TRAVOTEL (INDIA) PVT. LTD.

Hotel Maya Balrampur

Member of International Hotel Association & FHRAI

Situated at: Balrampur, Dist. Gonda, Uttar Pradesh 271 201.

Tel. No. STD 05263-32208/32507 FAX No: STD 05263-32508



PALLONJI LEASING PVT. LTD.

SEBI REGISTERED MERCHANT BANKER

Hire Purchase, Leasing & other Financial Services



PALLONJI COATINGS PVT. LTD.

Manufacturers of Industrial Paints, Primers & Sealants



STERLING MOTORS

Authorised Telco Dealers

For Nashik, Ahmednagar and Solapur

for **TATA** Passenger Cars and Commercial Vehicles
Sales, Service and Spare Parts

Main Dealership:

Old Agra Road, **NASHIK** 422 001. ☎ (0253) 78298 • 78598 FAX: (0253) 78598

Branches : Super Market, Muraji Peth, **SOLAPUR** 413001 ☎ (0217) 20458

Opp. S.T. Stand, **BABLESHWAR** 413737. Dist. **AHMEDNAGAR** ☎ (02422) 52394

Registered Office :

87, Abdul Rehman Street, Bombay 400 003. ☎ 343 6607 • 342 4150 • Gram : **PALLONJIM**



Chinoy's cheese spread

Cheesophile Sohrab Chinoy makes a connoisseur's range of natural and processed cheese and A.B.C. Farms' four restaurants serve speciality cuisine in a picturesque setting

Hilla P. Guzder

The farm on the bank of a river in Pune's exclusive Koregaon Park offers scenes of serenity. Along one flank flow the gentle meanders of the Pawana, all around are vistas of monsoon verdancy. Silk cotton, chickoo, mango and banana trees dot its two-and-a-half acres. A cheese dairy churns out cheeses, four restaurants serve different cuisine, not in the plush setting of five-star culture, but in a green and earthy ambience.

"Very few people have an insight into what we are doing at the farm," says Sohrab Chinoy, owner and managing director of A.B.C. Farms Private Limited which makes and sells over 50 varieties of natural and processed cheese — Edam, Gouda, Parmesan, French basket, Mozzarellas, cheese dips and spreads, cheese flavored with wine or herbs, low fat, no salt and special goat milk cheese. Milk, butter, yoghurt and their own speciality lemsi, a lemon-flavored lassi, ("health in a 200 ml pouch," Chinoy calls it), are some of the other products sold at the farm and through their three shops in Pune. Franchisees in Vasai, Goa, Ujjain and Hyderabad also vend their products.

Forty-one acres of land at Dehu Road on the outskirts of Pune support 100 head of cattle including Holstein and Jersey breeds, pure bred Swiss Saanen goats as well as local and cross bred ones. Rice and wheat are grown organically, without the use of inorganic fertilizers or pesticides.

Of the over 7,000 litres of milk processed per day, 80 percent is converted into cheese. "We sell more young cheese than mature, with an average of six weeks' maturing time," explains Chinoy who has five years of dairy technology training in Germany and 20 years of hands-on experience in the field tucked under his belt. Adds microbiologist Ashwini Oak, "This being a food indus-

try, we cannot take chances. We take care that nothing is contaminated." Explaining that cheese-making requires different microbes, she describes Camembert as a "cheese wrapped in white velvet," while in blue cheese "the



Chinoy: 100 percent vegetarian cheese

inoculated culture grows like a blue vein," giving the cheese its name.

Taking *Parsiana* on a tour of the dairy, Chinoy briefly explains the cheese-making process. The cheese is made in four to eight hours in large tanks with a capacity of up to 4,000 litres, hand-stirred with long whisks. The starter culture and rennet added to the pasteurized milk cause it to curdle, after which it is cut, agitated and cooked, making it shrink and release more and more whey. This green cheese is then put into molds, pressed and made into one body. It is ripened in the cheese bank, processed in the processing kettle and machine-packed. "As a thumb rule, 10 litres of milk give one kilo of cheese," discloses Chinoy. "Our cheese is 100 percent vegetarian. We use plant, not animal, rennet.

It was Diana Ratnagar, president of Beauty Without Cruelty, who convinced me to do so." The 22-year-old A.B.C. Farms sells around 600-700 kgs of cheese a day, and much of the sale is institutional, states Chinoy. "We sell cheese to a number of five-star hotels and they are very fussy customers. Our cheeses have substituted imports in hotels." Prices range from Rs 150-800 per kg. The farm also maintains dairy cultures, bacteriological as well as fungal, which are sold to franchisees and other institutional clients. It also offers agro-based consultancy services like plant layout, equipment selection, operational know-how, etc and has set up a number of farms in the Sultanate of Oman in the 1980s, states the company profile. Annual turnover, according to Chinoy, is in the range of three crore rupees.

The Koregaon Park farm is situated close to the Osho international commune with its multitude of foreigners whose taste-buds, believes Chinoy, appreciate the flavor of exotic cheeses. Much of ABC's produce is also utilized at the four restaurants within the farm. "We serve Thai, Mexican, Indian, Italian and other continental cuisine," elaborates Chinoy. The open-air Greenfields Jazz Garden, inaugurated a year and a half ago, can accommodate almost 500 people, informs Chinoy's cousin Homi Bhathena, who manages the restaurant with his friend Anand Shankarnarayanan. The terrace overlooking the river is accessed by a quaint iron spiral stairway, the brick-and-stone tables in sync with the out-of-town atmosphere. "A live band on Saturday evenings plays jazz and soft rock," observes Bhathena, with Sunday brunch and evening dinners attracting customers of varying age-groups.

Sala Thai, specializing in Thai cuisine, has split-level seating in cabins surrounded by verdure. "We grow Thai



Top row: Chinoy amidst his cheese at the dairy

(Photo: courtesy ABC Farms)

a verdant view

Middle row: Farm restaurants Sala Thai and Swiss Cheese Garden

Bottom row: Greenfields Jazz Garden, Zubin Chinoy, cheese-making equipment

(Photos: Hilla P. Guzder)

basil, galangal, sweet tamarind, lemon grass and other herbs in a special nursery," claims Chinoy with pride, bending down to part the luxuriant leaves of the lemon grass bushes to display the lower thick stems which are used in Thai cooking. "The chef, Kannika Suwann-putra, is very particular about the way the ingredients are cut," he laughs. "Only her assistant, Sombat Manthap, knows exactly how she wants things done!" Sala Thai, just a few months old, saw the involvement of Bangkok hotelier Sarosh Aibara when he visited A.B.C. Farms on a trip to India. "Sarosh evinced keen

interest in starting a Thai restaurant and asked if we could accommodate him here," recalls Chinoy, adding succinctly, "for me, there has to be a reason for a restaurant with a particular cuisine to be on the farm. Thai cooking uses almost no dairy products, but it can use a lot of our agro-products like rice, herbs, etc." Aibara, declares Chinoy, has put in a substantial investment and is responsible for the running of the restaurant. "I provide the back-up for the restaurants, appoint managers, etc. Unfortunately, people are often 'stolen' in the restaurant business. If a client likes the food, he

calls the chef, strikes up a conversation and then quietly slips his business card into the chef's hand," he remarks ruefully.

Much of Chinoy's cheeses are used in the fondues and other specialities served at the Swiss Cheese Garden. Chinoy and 19-year-old son Zubin point to the numerous logs of the babul tree that impart a Swiss log hut atmosphere to the interior of the restaurant. "We have done everything on our own, without the services of an interior decorator. The upside down *kowlas* (mangalore tiles) lining the ceiling below the slab keep the place cool even in summer and the babul logs, which people so often discard are put to use," notes Chinoy. Outside, the restaurant's manager Kranti feeds a covey of pigeons, including a pure white one, which flutter among the foliage. The 20-foot tall central stem of a flowering African cactus reaches for the sky. "This plant flowers just before it dies," enlightens the dairy-cum-nurseryman. "Its segments fall and propagate themselves towards the end of its life span of 15-18 years." The pool tables nearby engross young guests. At the special nursery, an old gardener

tends to the Brazilian date palms ("only three survived out of the 20 seedlings planted," informs Chinoy), tissue cultures of orchids from Thailand, avocados from Kodaikanal, chives from Germany, Italian basil and other herbs used in the restaurants.

The Sanghmitra, with continental and oriental cuisine, provides an air-conditioned lounge for those in need of cooler climes. The price range for the main course at the farm restaurants varies from Rs 70-120. Native fare is the spice of life at The A.B.C. Garwali Dhaba situated at its retail outlet on Salunke Vihar Road.

As a teenager, farming was not on Chinoy's list of priorities. After schooling at St. Mary's in Bombay, he wanted to be a doctor, he claims. But the sight of blood and gore proved too much for him so, abandoning medicine, he helped his father Eruch at his Modern Dairy in Jogeshwari, a suburb of Bombay. A two-year stint at the National Dairy Research Institute in Bangalore earned him a diploma, gold medal and offer to work in a dairy in West Germany in 1971. "That was a wonderful opportunity for them to exploit cheap Indian

labor, but I exploited them by putting in many long hours and learning everything!" he quips. A masters degree from the Gelnhausen Molkerei Hochschule near Frankfurt followed, which incidentally he did in German!

By 1976, his father, along with his mother Freny's brother Adi Bhatena (founder of Wanson Thermax) and Rohinton Aga (managing director of Thermax) had purchased 27 acres of land at Dehu Road and started A.B.C. Farms, so named after the first letters of their surnames. "Aga persuaded me to return to India to run A.B.C. Farms," observes Chinoy. Teaming up with brother Kersi who was in England studying dairying, the two zoomed back to India on their 750 cc Hondas, traversing an adventurous route through Europe and Asia. "We had a rough time in Turkey," Chinoy laughs, recalling the one-night imprisonment and grilling by Turkish policemen and Interpol who thought they were part of a group of motor-cycle gangsters! Driving into Iran was "like going from hell into heaven!" he narrates. The Shah of Iran was still in power and as Zarathushtis they were welcomed everywhere. "I remember we

With Best Wishes From

Mr Rusy M. Shroff, M.B.E.

and

Mrs Purviz R. Shroff

reached Ahvaz at night, and as an exhibition was on in the city, there was not a single hotel room available," he relates. After two hours of futile search, a hospitable hotelier fixed up two beds for them in the hall, charging not a penny, his only request being that they awaken by six o'clock, so that everything would be in place before the other guests arrived for breakfast!

Back in Pune, the fledgling farm awaited him. "The land was lovely, but there was nothing else!" he remembers. The well was to be dug, the cattle yard to be built, cold Pune nights were oft spent in a sleeping bag on the floor or in the Thermax guest house nearby. It took three to four years for the farm to stabilize. By 1979, after a series of mishaps resulting in a ripped leg, squashed fingers, etc, with medical help being miles away, Chinoy with wife and child decided to move back to Pune city. His uncle Minoo Bhathena, who owned a dairy and milk-bar named Greenfields in Pune, offered him an outhouse behind his residence in East Street in the heart of the town. The Koregaon Park premises, originally a poultry farm, were purchased in the mid-80s. War with the authorities followed. "I wouldn't pay a penny's bribe, so the dairy license did not come," asserts Chinoy. When it did come a couple of years later, the fine print in Marathi stated that it was a storage, not a production license! "I went to see the assistant municipal commissioner and poured my heart out to him. He was very helpful and saw to it that I was not hassled any more." Practical problems over the years included a sudden surplus production of 1,000 litres of milk a day, when his biggest buyer, the Rajneesh Ashram, decided to move out of Pune to Oregon in USA! That was when, in the early '80s, Chinoy started making lemsi, fruited yoghurts and some cheeses, begging people at first to try a slice! In 1993, he held a cheese exhibition of over 50 varieties, allowing customers to freely taste and buy only whatever they liked. Within two days, he sold Rs 50,000 worth of cheese! Today Chinoy believes, not in aggressive advertising, but in "selective promotion."

Chinoy met his wife Marlene, a trained bacteriologist, while he was working in Germany. "She is a wonderful person," he enthuses. "She has been our dairy's microbiologist from day one and makes the mother cultures for the cheeses. One of our major strengths is

our research and development capabilities." Zubin, the eldest of three children, plans to join the dairy institute at Aarey in Bombay for a two-year diploma, while 16-year-old twins, Tina and Diana, are at college in Pune.

"My granduncle Nusserwanji Gove-walla used to be known as the 'milk king of Bombay.' His Byculda Dairy Farm behind Victoria Gardens had over 1,500 buffaloes. My father and maternal uncles Adi and Minoo had set up a milk-bar, Farmer Brothers, at Dadar T.T. in the 1940s," recalls the third generation dairyman. When the government run Aarey Milk Colony was established in Bombay, private entrepreneurship in the milk line became difficult and the dairy moved to Kamshet. Minoo set up Greenfields in Pune which later closed down, but has since been revived at Greenfields Jazz Garden, narrates Chinoy. Farmer Brothers, presently a Chinese restaurant, is run by brother Kersi. The senior Chinoy, Eruch and Freny, managed the Dehu Road farm till last year, enlightens their son, and "even now, my mother manages to slip away to Dehu Road at least once a week!" Eruch, with over 60 years of experience in livestock and milk management, is the chairman of A. B.C.Farms.

Future plans include revamping the existing cheese dairy and expanding the dairy processing facility to double its size. Also on the anvil is the launch of lemsi in Bombay. "Farming is not risky," maintains Chinoy. "But one has to persevere, gain experience and not give up." His advice to Parsi boys: "Take up an assignment and stick to it. If you pull out, it is a loss to the institution and to yourself."

Praising the Parsis of yore who "worked for 40-50 years in one company, like Tatas or Godrej," Chinoy says he is "very happy to be born a Parsi." Though married to a non-Parsi, Chinoy remains a believer in the ancestral faith. "I may not say my kusti every time I visit the bathroom, but we do go to the fire-temple and the children's navjotes have been performed." He does not know of any other Zoroastrian who is into cheese-making, he says, but if someone were to evince interest, he would certainly "lend them an open ear," advise and guide them. "It is easier to locate me at the farm than at home," he chuckles, "as I am here from eight in the morning till about 10 at night," committed as he is to his customers and to his cheese.

GLOBE THEATRES Pvt Ltd

Established
April 3, 1915

Pioneers of Show
Business in India for
the last 82 years

We rededicate
ourselves to the ideals
we have cherished and
practised all along --
namely to show

**NOTHING BUT
THE BEST**

to our ever increasing
number of Patrons

Controlling:

REGAL
BOMBAY

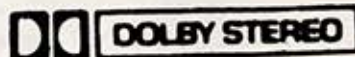
*

CAPITOL
BOMBAY

*

GLOBE
CALCUTTA

All the above Cinemas have
now been equipped with



Sound System



**DEFINING
ZOROASTRIAN
COMMITMENT**
continued from
page 20

*L to R 1st row:
Dolly Dastoor,
Framroze Patel,
Rohinton
Rivetna, Gev
Nentin, Rustom
Kevala
2nd row:
Noshir
Langrana,
Kaikhosrov
Irani, Anahaita
Kotval, Zareen
Karani Arooz,
Jamshed Gandhi
3rd row: Spenta
Cama, Mina
Zand Siegal,
Villy Gandhi,
Kaizad Cama,
Firdosh Mehta
4th row: Pallan
Ichaporia, Aysha
Ghadiali,
Farhang Mehr,
Yezdi Rustomji
and Mehta
5th row:
Keki Bhote and
Adi Davar, Bella
Tata, Karmarz
Dotiwala and
Farrokh Mistree
6th row:
Maneck
Bhujwala and
Kersey Antia,
Dorab Mistry
and Silloo
Kavarana,
Pervez Patel and
Firoz Kotwal*



L to R (1st row): James Lovelace, Lovji Cama and Zarine Weil, Behram Panthaky, Burzin Unwalla and Behram Deboo; (2nd row): Jamshed and Yasmin Ghadiali,

Orang Demehry and Parastu Dubash, (second and third from left) Jehan and Freney Bagli; (3rd row): Ardashir Anoshiravani, Erach Munshi, volunteers who ensured the

smooth flow of Congress events; (4th row): Office bearers of FEZANA, committee chairs and delegates of member associations after the 1998 annual general meeting

president of the Zoroastrian Association of Alberta, suggested a variant of that, with the navjote ceremony followed at a later date, "after the individual has attained a contemplative commitment to the faith at some stage of adulthood," with a second "affirmative" navjote.

For Ardeshir Homozayari, a first year student at the University of Boston and a member of Kankash-e-Mobedan, or the Council of Iranian Mobeds, the Zoroastrian commitment in North America has meant enrolling in the "pre-mobed-yar" program to deepen his knowledge of the religion. The program, set up in cooperation with the Parsi Mobed Council, teaches youth "how to be the leaders of the next generation of Zarthushtis," Homozayari said.

For Sam Vesuna, an Ontario CPA and founder-member of FEZANA, it meant sharing his years of experience in running successful volunteer projects. A spirit of compromise is essential here, he said. "If there is no interest in the project," he said, "ask yourself the question: Is the project worthwhile?"

For Bijan Khosraviani, a Stanford graduate student and chairman of the FEZANA sports committee, it meant emphasizing a better rounded life, celebrating art, music and sports skills as much as academic accomplishments.

For Adi Davar, president of an international consulting firm and president of the Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Washington, it meant seeking answers to present-day dilemmas in the mists of antiquity, when a "multi-racial, multinational mix" of peoples practised the Zarthushti faith.

For Ervad Brig Behram Panthaky who served in the Indian army before moving to the Washington area, where he works in a computer consultancy firm, it has meant being an energetic communicator of the religion to the Zarthushti youth of both areas and to curious members of other faiths. At the Congress, he traced the evolution of the gambhar celebrations from Iran to India to North America. "The Zarthushti religion teaches universal brotherhood," he said, and the "celebration of the gambhars is the best way to achieve this as the rich and poor meet together and learn from each other."

For Yasmin and Jamshed Ghadiali, the Zoroastrian commitment in North America has meant tending to their roots in India. They created, and for years

have led, an effort to raise funds for the B. D. Petit Parsee General Hospital in Bombay. For their quiet but dogged service to the less fortunate, they received the Jamshed Pavri Humanitarian Award.

For Ardeshir Anoshiravani, a Southern California psychiatrist, it meant admonishing the community's leaders to work hard to forge unity and show "moral courage." In the *Gathas*, Anoshiravani said, "there is no evidence that Asho Zarathushtra did ever engage his opponents in a verbal or physical battle."

For Behram S. Deboo, president of the Zoroastrian Society of Washington State, it meant exploring why Parsis do not celebrate Mehran (*roj Mehr, mah Mehr*), Tigran (*roj Tir, mah Tir*) and Jashn-e-Sadeh (*roj Mehr, mah Bahman*), which Iranian Zarthushtis mark to this day.

For FEZANA secretary Mehran Sepeshri of California, it has meant redefining his faith — from "a passive to an active following, from static and micro to a dynamic and big picture understanding" of the religion. "Unquestioning acceptance is not conducive with Zoroastrian philosophy or asho mano," he said.

For Rohinton Rivetna of Chicago, the first president of FEZANA, it has meant raising the profile of the faith among the other faiths. "We can hide or be more visible — the choice is ours," he said. The second diaspora of Zarthushtis — to North America — "comes with certain responsibilities — to be known, to make the word Zarthushti synonymous with charity, industry, goodness," he added.

For Patel, a CPA by profession, it meant articulating an agenda to address critical community needs such as education assistance for the youth and safety-net programs for the elderly (see sidebar).

For Dastoor, a Montreal psychologist, it meant issuing a call to "create in North America a comfortable Zarthushti space" in which each individual can make his or her own unique expression of commitment to preserving the religion. "Let us make the religion spiritually, emotionally and socially relevant and attractive to all age groups, that we all want to commit ourselves to it," she urged.

For many, it meant giving a blood sample in hopes of finding a bone-marrow match needed to save the life of a Zarthushti.

For Mehru Cama, co-chairperson of the logistics committee and one of a small army of volunteers at the Congress, it meant working quietly behind

the scenes. What she took special pride in, she said, was that she designed the logo for the 11th Congress — a kusti encircling an afargan superimposed on a map of the United States and Canada.

A professional journalist in the US for over two decades, Porus Cooper graduated from Bhavan's College, Andheri and received his Masters in journalism from Columbia University. From his fledgling years in the *Evening News* (a *Times of India* publication), he went on to *India Abroad*, the *Courier-Post* and is currently senior editor with the *Philadelphia Inquirer*.



The ZAGNY-IZA initiative

The evolution of the Zoroastrian Association of Greater New York (ZAGNY) itself illustrates how far the community has come — from private gatherings of a handful of area Zarthushtis, sometimes meeting at restaurateur Rustamji Wadia's little Indian eatery in the early 1960s, to a vibrant organization with 370 members. Wadia, a vigorous and gregarious man who arrived in America before the Depression and lived into his 90s, passed away a few years ago. His tiny upstairs restaurant just off Broadway in New York City, also has passed on. Other names and faces, however, brought alive the legacy of those early days in the ballroom of the Rye Town Hilton, when ZAGNY's founding president, Erach Munshi, who is a professor of management at St John's University in New York, was recognized along with other early leaders of the area's then fledgling Zarthushti community.

In 1980, at the behest of Fred Morris, who was then an administrator with the Boy Scouts organization, a committee was formed to develop a course of study for Zarthushti scouts to earn a religious emblem, just as scouts belonging to other faiths could. Since then, the "Good Life" emblem has become part of scouting in the United States, and the 50-page book that is part of the curriculum has become a publication much in demand worldwide by scouts and non-scouts alike and is now in its second edition.

There have been stumbles along the way, including a contentious period that set apart many Parsi and Iranian Zarthushtis in the New York area. The dissension stemmed in part from the very thing that was meant to bring the two closer together: a new darbe mehr. Cul-

continued on page 46

On the Houston skyline

The completion of phase one of the Zarathushti Heritage and Cultural Center edifies the determination of Houston Zoroastrians

Arnavaz S. Mama

"This beautiful center has existed in the minds and hearts of many fellow Zarathushtis for over a decade," Zoroastrian Association of Houston (ZAH) chairman Rustom Engineer told the international Zarathushti assemblage which flocked to the opening of the Zarathushti Heritage and Cultural Center in the evening of April 10, 1998.

A 4,300 square foot assembly hall with a capacity for 400, a prayer room with an original afargani from the Sukkur Agiary (defunct since the 1940s) near Quetta and a kitchen equipped to provide catering facilities for community functions are the main features of the completed first phase of the center, notes Sarosh Manekshaw in an article in the inaugural brochure compiled by Aban Rustomji. A library to house two individual collections donated to the center, a school room and an office surrounding an atrium will constitute the second phase of the center which is racing toward completion for Houston to welcome the Zarathushti tide at the Seventh World Zoroastrian Congress in 2000. Expansion of the hall and outdoor recreational facilities will constitute Phase III, informed Engineer.

"The walls are only mortar and bricks but the devotion which you have poured into the crevices is what will hold your center together forever," noted then FEZANA (Federation of Zoroastrian Associations of North America) president Dolly Dastoor in a congratulatory message, even as Dr Katie Irani and Kaemerz Dotiwala, co-chairs of the ZAH celebration committee, spoke of the center joining "the silhouette of Houston's skyline, as a testament of the Zarathushti people to rise above adversity, refusing to be a victim of fate, but becoming rather masters of their own destiny."

Even as the community celebrated for three consecutive days, "one could not see any Irani Zarathushtis or Parsi Zarathushtis, but could only see

Zarathushtis, brothers and sisters, sharing a common heritage," noted Dotiwala. On a pleasant afternoon of sunny sky and soft breeze "50 children of the Sunday school brought the fire, symbolically lit 17 years ago at the house of Arnawaz and Hoshang Sethna,

**"The walls are only
mortar and bricks
but your devotion...
will hold your center
together forever"**

who had hosted Houston's Sunday school on the second Sunday of each month for 17 years until the first such session was held at the Center on January 10 this year! Benefactors were honored and volunteers congratulated. An ode composed by Magdalena Rustomji was recited by Diana Engineer and Zeeba Kayani (see box). The next day saw a gala banquet with Persian cuisine "to celebrate our Persian heritage" as noted Dotiwala. A "mela" of food and games, programmed for the third day, raised funds for future development.

On receipt of the occupancy certificate on December 19, 1997 ZAH had arranged a special jashan on December 21 when all was spontaneous conviviality with new tables and chairs donated by members being set up with live goldfish and bud vases on each table, at the suggestion of Aban Rustomji, wrote Dotiwala in *Manashni*. Katy Patel prepared torans of carnations. Seven mobeds participated in the jashan with the new *patharnu* spread on the floor, courtesy Ervad Shapur and Yasmin Pavri. Mahnaaz Firozgari, Freiny Rajkotwala, Freiny Sanjana and Pervin Sidhwa made the *malido* for the occasion.

"An assisted living center, a Zarathushti Hall of Fame and Museum" and

a seminary for the training of future priests are part of the community's vision for the center's continuing development, as enunciated by Dotiwala.

"It is seven Sunday school families who each pledged \$1,000 for a start-up kitty" for the center, recalls Farrokh Mistree, saluting the Sethnas. Mistree, the linchpin of the Sunday school in its early years, was succeeded by Vahishta Kaikobad and Noshir Medhora when the Mistree family relocated in Atlanta in 1992.

The vision of the Sunday schoolers was absorbed by the ZAH modifying its constitution to create the Zoroastrian Building Fund (ZBF), writes Manekshaw. ZBF membership was open to all individuals who committed to a minimum monthly donation of \$20 while the youth of the community organized car washes, bingo nights and Valentine's Day balls. Telephone directory sales, May balls and raffles of airline tickets were other ingenious taps on community funds.

But the tide truly turned when the Zartoshty brothers — Mehraban and Faridoon — and Feroze Bhandara of the Mazda Construction Company made substantial pledges in cash and service, recalls Manekshaw. As planning for the Center began in earnest, Karachi architect Dadi Surti donated his service towards the design of the building.

Nonetheless ZAH found that the \$400,000 in the kitty was insufficient to complete the center as designed. Another fund-raising drive netted \$100,000 as Katie and Dinshaw Irani, the trustees of the Incorporated Trust Funds of Hongkong, Canton and Macau and Happy Minwalla donated sizable amounts along with a donation from Karachi in memory of Sorab Homi Mehta. Numerous smaller donations poured in from all over North America in response to the ZAH appeal and in 1996 the then 20-year-old ZAH voted



*Clockwise from top:
Front view of the
Center; a view of the
jashan congregation;
Feroze Bhandara;
Yasmin Medhora (left)
being recognized for
her services by
Dastoor; Purvez
Rustomji receiving a
plaque for his dedi-
cated service from
Kersi Engineer;
Dotiwala in the
background and
Rustom Engineer on
right; the festooned
entrance on the
opening day*



to award the construction contract to the Mazda Construction Company. As Ervad Jal Birdy, president of the North American Mobeds Council noted in his letter of congratulations, "May you enjoy the fruits of your labor... and may the new center serve to bind the community together."

Zarathushtis in the Houston area are said to exceed 500 individuals. Apart from its Sunday school ZAH has provided the community with a newsletter,

Manashni, since 1987. In 1982 the Zoroastrian Youth Group was established which has traveled to conferences, made presentations, instituted workshops, as noted Danny Aga in his contribution to the souvenir. Another creation was the Zarathushti Study Group in 1993 which met for a number of years in the home of Meherwan and Zarine Boyce, writes M. Rustomji. With the primary purpose of studying the *Gathas* and seeking the application of Gathic principles in daily

life, the group is led by Manekshaw and Yezdi Rustomji and is spiritually supported by Ervad Bomanshaw Sanjana. Their first year was spent in studying Mary Boyce's *Zoroastrians: Their religious beliefs and practices*, "as an introductory overview of history," notes M. Rustomji. Thereafter they studied the *Ahunavaiti Gatha* and are currently involved with the *Ushnavaiti Gatha*, basically using the translation by Karachi's Tehmuras Sethna with references to

the work of Bode and Nanavutty, Duchesne-Guillemin, Insler, Jafarey, Moulton and Taraporewala.

In 1990 ZAH hosted the Seventh North American Zoroastrian Congress and in 1996 the Second North American Gatha Conference was held in this city. Preparing to "kick-off a new millennium whose promise is as vast as the Texan horizon," the "entrepreneurial Zoroastrian community" of Houston has already decided that the venue of the World Zoroastrian Congress 2000 will be the luxurious J. W. Marriott Hotel in the Galleria, an area of the town that boasts 300 restaurants and 600 exclusive shops, as notes their flier for the world event.

★★★

May it please Ahura Mazda

by Magdalena Rustomji

Wake up the wind, summon the sun
And gather round the sacred flame
Chant prayers of goodness, justice done,
Ahura Mazda's name

Let grandparents bring gifts of wisdom,
And children their dreams at length
Young adults bring their freedom,
And men their strength

Women bring boughs of intuition,
Babies their sweet soul's chanting
All pledge renewed tradition,
And Priests, their blessing

For in this sanctum made of light
All may worship
In this sacrarium made of sky,
All may pray
In this sacred place made of earth,
All are blessed

And as allies of the Lord of Wisdom
we will think
As philosophers of Asha
we will speak
As warriors for Ahura Mazda
we will act!

Lulled in the earth's ancient pulse,
Held by the warmth of the sun,
in close embrace, we will unite
in the promise of this auspicious day!

So, venerate the altar fire,
And thank our God,
Wake up the wind, summon the sun,
Gather round the sacred flame
Chant prayers of goodness, righteousness,
God bless this sacred shrine!

Marketing the Congress

Hard-nosed entrepreneur Homi Davier, co-chairs the Seventh World Congress steering committee

Arnavaz S. Mama

"Effective fund-raising is what's going to make this Congress," says Houston based businessman Homi Davier who co-chairs the steering committee of the Seventh World Zoroastrian Congress (7WZC), December 28, 2000 to January 1, 2001. Sponsored by the Federation of Zoroastrian Associations of North America (FEZANA) and hosted by the Zoroastrian Association of Houston, the Congress has been labeled "A Zarathushti Odyssey 2000."

With a budgeted target of \$ 600,000, Davier, the chairman/president of Capricorn Travel and Tours and vice chairman of Baltic International Airlines, wants "business houses to sponsor us," with substantial donations and underwrite the function. "Imagine the publicity behind the Congress for someone who'll be the lead underwriter!" exclaims Davier, adding that Dara Panthaky, who heads a major investment/banking firm in California, has made such a verbal commitment without even being asked. "That, my friends, is Zarathushti generosity!" jubilates Davier.

The sturdily built entrepreneur says he has hitherto preferred to remain in the background at community events. He was nonetheless awarded the Zoroastrian Business Award at the Eighth North American Congress in Vancouver in 1992.

Other sources of income would be through sale of advertisements in the Congress souvenir and registration charges which they are trying to peg at \$ 99, Davier told *Parsiana* in the course of an interview at his mother's Spenta apartment on Bombay's Ridge Road. Also, Zoroastrians the world over have been urged to contribute \$ 2 per head per year and Davier gratefully acknowledges the \$ 6 donation from Dastur (Dr)

Kaikhushroo JamaspAsa, High Priest of Bombay's Anjuman Atash Behram — the first Zoroastrian from India to send it. At the recently concluded 11th North American Congress they collected \$ 3,000, he adds.

"My whole team thinks I'm crazy but

I am aiming at 2,000 participants for the year 2000," Davier confides gleefully. Wanting to give the youths "an opportunity to decide how they want to carve their future," Davier has been "knocking at the doors of affluent friends," seeking one lakh rupees each. "If I could collect 50 people who would donate," it would enable 100 Indian youths to be sponsored to attend the Congress. "The money could be controlled by our

representative here — someone we would select," maintains Davier and the youths would be chosen by competition (e.g. an essay competition) or lottery. "We will pick up their registration (charges) and give them home stays or (accommodate them) four to a room in the hotel," says Davier, estimating normal hotel charges at upwards of \$ 200 per person. "Those who attend will be very fortunate. They will come back with a lifetime of memories," promises Davier.

Marketing being his forte, Davier has decided to market the Congress globally, well in advance: "If you call it a world congress and have only North American participation, it doesn't make sense." Accordingly Dolly Dastoor, former president of FEZANA who is his co-chair on the steering committee, is in communication with the Zoroastrian anjumans in Iran, seeking their ideas. "The Indian Zoroastrians have sent their ideas, thoughts and what their vision is," says Davier. As for emerging Zoroastrian groups in central Asia, he adds, "If people from Eurasia come, they'll be



Davier: "always doing something innovative"

The aim is to project the Congress as a platform for Zoroastrian talent in art, music, finance

welcome. (We will) make them stand up and talk."

Noting that the normal congress fare consists of discussions on conversion, intermarriage, traditions, etc Davier is keener to see a "Zarathushti meets Zarathushti" ambiance at Houston where exchange of ideas may lead to business. "(We) may see an increase in commercial activities among Zarathushtis. There may be entrepreneurs from India with items they can export. We want the Congress to be the venue of their marketing efforts," he enthuses.

With an "ulterior aim" of converting 30 percent of the next generation of Zoroastrians into entrepreneurs, Davier says they are hoping to use the Congress to launch a system of allowing/persuading existing entrepreneurs to take the youths under their fold, like the old apprenticeship system. "A stock sharing plan is the best incentive you can give an employee," he adds.

A founding member of the Zoroastrian Chamber of Commerce in North America along with Rohinton Rivetna, Sarosh Collector, Farshid Salamati and others, Davier said the Chamber is open to participants worldwide, and expressed the founders' hope that Indian and Pakistani Zarathushtis would set up their own chapters, learn from each other. Looking forward to the second North American Business Conference in Las Vegas, November 13-15, 1998 Davier noted, "We'd love to have someone from here to come and talk."

Aiming to "do something out of the ordinary," the steering committee of the Congress will "take the best from the past plus current issues plus (use) the Congress as a platform for resolutions," says Davier. ("Who does the final authority rest with? Priests? Intellectuals? Who's the decision maker? Unless we decide that we'll argue for the rest of our lives!" he maintains.) He adds that a lot of networking is being effected on e-mail.

An opening jashan with 40 to 50 mobeds ("as many as we can gather") is on the cards with a second jashan on January 1, 2001 conducted by the young mobeds — a symbolic change of the guard. The mayor of Houston, Lee Brown, has agreed to be the keynote speaker. A "drug czar" under the Bush

administration, Brown has been the police chief of Houston and New York, informs Davier. The governor and congressmen of Texas will be among the invitees according to Davier who says he is very active in Indian politics there. A board member of the South Asian Chamber of Commerce, Davier says he is trying to use his experience and the intellectual data and contacts available to him for the benefit of the Congress which will include "a week of festivities." The aim is to project the Congress as a platform for Zoroastrian talent in art, music, finance and virtually every other aspect of life. In the meantime Washington based attorney Kersi Shroff, former president of ZAMWI (Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Washington, Incorporated), is advising the committee on visa problems, informs Davier.

The son of Manchershaw (ex Cafe Health and Cecil Hotel, Matheran) and Hilla Davierwalla (who has established and runs the popular eatery, Grub Corner, in Bombay's Flora Fountain area), Davier says he grew up in Bombay behind Handloom House, attended Campton School and joined the Nagpur Flying Club but didn't finish his course there. Instead he joined Air India as a traffic assistant going on to Oman and Muscat where he worked with Gulf Air. While in Oman, Gulf Air put him through a supervisory management course pertaining to the aviation industry run in collaboration with a British university. He moved to the US in 1980.

Davier credits his wife Nergish (née Kurva) as "the main strength behind my success... I'm the dreamer in my family," he smiles. He obviously dotes on his daughter, the 20-year-old Capricorn born Jenisteen (whence the name of his company) who is currently into an internship with an advertising company.

Capricorn Travel which is the general sales agent (GSA) for KLM, Lufthansa, Gulf Air, Thai and Singapore Airlines is the "leading agency" in Texas today, Davier expresses his sense of achievement in agreeable, matter-of-fact terms. The venture had begun around his dining table in 1983 when the family helped him decide to essay into advertising and selling. In March this year they merged with Global Travel which

has an all-corporate clientele and Fourway Travel which he describes as a "full-blown retail outlet," forming a mega travel agency under Capricorn Travels. "Merging is fashionable," he says. "It makes economic sense to cut costs and increase business," adds the entrepreneur who describes himself as "always doing something innovative."

What put Davier on the international map however was a "fluke" opportunity he grabbed in 1990 to invest in an airline in Latvia. Together with his partners Robert Knauss and Paul Gregory, Davier picked up this "division of Aeroflot and privatized it. It was the biggest thing anybody could have done," he exults. Going under the name of Baltic International USA, they "made the initial investments and then took the company public," Davier recalls. Since its initial flight from Riga to Frankfurt in July '92, there have been many changes. The name of the airline has changed to Air Baltic. They have sold part of the shares to SAS (Scandinavian Airlines System) with the agreement that they manage the airline. "We are good at putting together deals — very bad at managing them," confesses Davier.

Lack of adequate airline catering facilities in Riga was seen as another business opportunity by the three hard-nosed businessmen. Two of their Latvian pilots were able to resource local talent but lacked finance. "We gave them \$ 5,000 and the same company (AIRO Catering Services) was valued at \$ 5,000,000 last year." AIRO is now a partnership venture between Baltic International USA and LSG Lufthansa Service/SKY Chefs, a major airline caterer. Together they are exploring the vast emerging market of eastern European cities and those of the Baltic states like Kiev in the Ukraine, Riga in Latvia, Tallinn in Estonia. Davier continues to be a director of the company and was its president until August 1995.

Though his attempt to set up an airline, Air Asian, in India based in Jaipur was aborted because his Indian partners "couldn't come up with their share of the investment," Davier is all praise for the state government of Rajasthan, describing it as "the cleanest government I ever saw." It was "the high level of political bureaucracy at the center that

did not make it... economically viable," he adds. Nonetheless it is his dream to "help privatize Air India and Indian Airlines in a manner best fitting for the government and the employees." Being a "very strong believer in karma," Davier adds, "if it's going to happen, it will."

Davier says he has seen a lot of change among the Zoroastrian youths of North America.

They "talk of doing something on the side — stocks, bonds, investments." He cites the example of a friend who functions as a "freelance marketing guy," getting orders for printing. A case closer to home is that of his brother-in-law Maneck Sidhwa and his wife Pervin who moved to Houston from Nigeria. A computer engineer, Sidhwa decided he "would work only for himself" and started his own little enterprise, Xebur, to repair electronic equipment like TVs etc. Having started from nothing, Sidhwa now has several people working for him, relates Davier.

"People say America is the land of opportunity. I say, look around you: India is the land of opportunity," says Davier, strongly recommending that Zoroastrians get into manufacturing:

**"Those who attend
will be very fortunate.
They will come
back with a lifetime
of memories"**

"That's where the money is." Placing India second to China in the size of its disposable income, Davier emphasizes, "Don't think of today or tomorrow. Think of five years from to-

day... (and) be innovative — manufacture something not available in India."

With oil painting as a hobby which he has not been able to pursue in a long time, Davier is an antiques collector with a collection of Russian icons. He says he enjoys writing and sends weekly e-mail to the family. "A traditionalist, not diehard but a traditionalist nonetheless," is how Davier describes his approach to his faith, adding, "That's how I was brought up." He also notes, "We have to take our community to the next millennium with open minds. It's our duty to do that."

*We never take our guests and
breath-taking views for granted*



Lord's Central Hotel

Matheran 410102

Matheran Telephone 021483-0228 Fax 021483-0595

Bombay telephone 3867776



**With
best wishes
from**

**Farah
&
Tanya**

Under the auspices of the **MAZDAYASNI MONASTERIE** and the **ALL INDIA SHAH BEHRAM BAUG SOCIETY** (for Scientific and Educational Research)

The one and only

in the world

ZOROASTRIAN COLLEGE

Correspondence address : Mustafa Building, (2nd floor), Sir Pherozeshah Mehta Road, Bombay 400001, India.
Tel: 2660214, 2662950 after hours: 3644737 Fax: Bombay India 022-2662735-A/c 121 and 3634274 A/c 141

DAME DR. PROF. MEHER MASTER-MOOS LECTURES IN EUROPE

REPORT OF LECTURES, CONFERENCES, & AWARDS FUNCTIONS EUROPE TOUR OF APRIL - MAY 1998 - ENGLAND, FRANCE, SWITZERLAND, BELGIUM, GERMANY, AUSTRIA, POLAND

(14) In the Frankfurt GERMANY Suburb of Eppstein Bremthal, the Zoroastrian College Representatives, **Dr. Prof. Sir Hermann Schmidt** and **Dr. Prof. Dame Marianne Schnackig** had arranged a Seminar on Ancient Mazdayasni Zarathushtrian Wisdom and Alternative Medicine through the Bai Hui Centre III and jointly with the Zoroastrian College, which was attended by about 16 persons from various towns of Germany in their historical over four hundred years old home, on Saturday 9th. The next day was a most interesting visit to the Healing Ancient Rocks known as Weiss-stein in the forest near Eppstein. These over nine hundred thousand years old Crystalline Rocks have been used as a cultic place of worship and healing from the ancient times of the Germanic Edda.

(15) BONN & KOLN. On Monday 11th Dr. Hermann Schmidt who has translated into German, Behramshah D. Pithavala's Book, IN SEARCH OF DIVINE LIGHT, and Dame Meher Master-Moos visited Bonn University Oriental Religions Dept.; and had a very useful discussion with the renowned **Prof. Dr. Klimkeit**, for development of collaboration for academic research between Zoroastrian College and Bonn University students. **Dr. W. Peter Schneemelcher**, Bonn University Zoroastrian Avestan Research Scholar entertained both Dr. Schmidt and Dame Meher for a luncheon discussion at the most beautiful restaurant with a panoramic view of the ten hills of Bonn with its elegant mansions and flowering tree lined avenues and church spires towering over the city sky line. In the afternoon, a visit to the Central Bibliothek of Germany for Medicine established a firm collaboration for book exchange with the Zoroastrian College. In Koln also, the

magnificent Cathedral provided an over one hour long special Maria Rosary Mass with the grand music of the organ pervading the Chapel adjoining the Golden Casket supposedly containing the relics of the holy bones of the Three Magi, the Persian Zoroastrian Kings who had gone to Bethlehem at the birth of Lord Jesus Christ. In the Dom Museum there is a small fragment of a fifth century Persian carpet which supposedly accompanied the bones and the True Cross on its return from Iran to Rome via Constantinople. A late night return to Eppstein found Dr. Marianne Schnackig and others engrossed in the performance of a Mazdayasnan Zarathushtrian and Ancient German Fire Ceremony in their court yard of their historic home under a beautiful full moon.

(16) Tuesday 12th May saw the beginning of a safari by car into the Black Forest via Heidelberg. The University Town of Heidelberg is renowned for its Natural Herbal Medicine Museum and Library in the Schloss on the Hill overlooking the Neckar River. There was a worthwhile visit to the University Library whose Chief Librarian, Dr. Rolf Wörner Wildermuth gave a courteous welcome. Also an interesting encounter with an Iranian who had settled in Germany, Mr. Babak Fard, who kept a communication centre with, as he claimed, over two million Iranians, Zoroastrians and others, residing in Germany. There was not sufficient time to visit Dr. Alin, in charge of Avesta Studies in the Oriental Department, for the way into the Black Forest was long even though much of it was through autobahns, and winding country first class roads. A glorious sunset shed its golden rays of light over the hills and valleys covered with tall dark pine trees. Dr. Hermann pulled into the Swiss Chalet style farm house - hotel with the cows and the chickens sharing the barn below our bedrooms.

(17) Wednesday - Thursday 13th/14th May were relaxed days enjoying the energy of the Healing Rocks of Odin and

Freya ancient cultic place near Carlstein, the highest peak in the Black Forest. We visited the mouth blown glass factory; and the shops with one thousand varieties of the special Black Forest Cuckoo clocks; with Hermann, Marianne and Herr Werner making a foursome. At a very famous Asparagus Inn near the Carlstein, **Hermann Benz** a very old friend and supporter of the Zoroastrian College especially motored down to have the season's Spargal for a fascinating discussion of Mystic and Occult movements and happenings in Germany and the Western World over dinner. It was a joyous reunion with him. Since 1982 he was instrumental in the development of the German Department of the Occult Research Wisdom and Studies of the Zoroastrian College, reviving ancient bonds. We awoke to the smell and the sound of the cattle bellowing and munching the sweet flowers bespattered green grassy meadows outside our farm, as the farmer's wife Frau Maria, treated us to farm fresh milk and cottage cheese, a delicacy homemade by her. After a sumptuous breakfast, the quartet motored via Schweningen Villingen through gorgeous country side past the beginnings of the Blue Danube en route to Munich. It was a long drive for over eight hours; en route we visited Dr. Marianne's daughter and grand children at a very famous Spa Health Resort, south of Munich.

(18) MUNICH - 14th - 15th - 16th - 17th May

Dr. LEONORE GIERLICH, the radiant mother of a divine little boy, Johannes and her gracious husband Dr. Hermann Schlichting, herself a renowned Opera Singer and Holistic Health Healer, was the key focus of the main Seminar Highlight of this visit to Munich. She had organised a large scale Seminar open to public, at the best hotel in Munich, The Kempinski, for the Zoroastrian College President to teach the Zarathushtrian Way of Light. Large numbers of German anthroposophists and Mazdayasnas as well

as Alternative Medicine Health Practitioners had attended this full day Seminar which included a Fire Ceremony, Kusti ritual, after death Dokhma Ceremonies, explanation, Manthras recitation, Colour Therapy, and Aura - Chakras Photography. The Seminar was very well received and many persons demanded a longer Follow-up Training Seminar for a week in May 1999. A very special personality in Munich was **Dr. Roland Steinle**, the music publisher who graciously considered publication of German Edition of Behramshah Pithavala's Magnum Opus, "In Search of Divine Light". Dr. Roland - an enlightened soul - has his main mission to spread Joy through Music and he is publishing the Great Songs of the Golden Tenor voices of Tauber, Caruso, Gigli and the 150th Anniversary of the Waltz - King, Strauss and Centenary of Lehar. God's Goodness is unbounded through His Graciousness in giving such wonderful voices to the World. All things shall perish from under the sky; Music alone shall live, never shall die. At the Central Maria Dom Platz in Munich is a lovely shop named **Zarathushtra** whose Iranian proprietor sells beautiful Edelstein. Large numbers of Iranians reside in Germany where the Ancient Aryan Heritage can still be preserved.

(19) Munich Staat Bibliothek, now housed at the University, boasts the largest single collection of books on Avesta and Zarathustrian Religion, thanks to the patronage of King Ludwig I and II the Bavarian 19th Century Monarchs, who were great patrons of the Aryan Revival. **Dr. Christian Bartholomae**, **Dr. Rast**, **Dr. Westergard**, and other 19th Century scholars were enabled to do Sanskrit and Avestan Research thanks to Royal Patronage. At present, however in Germany after World War II, the Avestan Departments in German Universities are not flourishing as they were a century ago. At present there are scholars/professors in Hamburg, Berlin, Göttingen, Bamberg, Erlangen and Tübingen Universities but alas none in Munich, Köln, Bonn, Heidelberg and other old Universities. It was a special joy to meet Dr. Frank Fickenscher, the founder of Haus Chandra in Colombo, at Munich over dinner and revive Medicina Alternativas.

(20) An early Sunday morning train from Munich via Mozart's home town Salzburg, past the great Benedictine Melk Abbey straddling across the Danube, brought Dame Meher into Vienna - City of Dreams - in pouring rain. **Dr. Shiraz**

Rabady was waiting with a trolley at Wien West Bahnhof, and whisked Dame Meher away in his waiting car to his mother Rhoda Rabady's residence before proceeding for a late lunch to the home of **Frau Eva Weinenger**. She had graciously arranged hospitality at her home and there was much discussion about India and Natural Health Care Methods. Dr. Shiraz had very kindly arranged Opera tickets for Mozart's "Marriage of Figaro" at the Stadt Oper Haus; and it was a delightful performance with young dynamic singers having vibrant voices and a completely new choreography. It was a real sadness that dear friend and old East African Parsi Family member Rhoda was away at the time; yet she arranged gracious hospitality in her castle like abode in Vienna and Dr. Shiraz was most kind and helpful in every way possible to make it a memorable visit. On Monday 18th, at the **University of Vienna**, **Dr. Carlo G. Cereti** and **Dr. Nosratollah Rastegar** of the Commission für Iranistik had arranged a most fruitful discussion Meeting; and in the evening an Avesta Gatha Class conducted by **Dr. Chlodwig Werba** of the Institute für Indologie and a Meeting with **Prof. Dr. Heiner Eichner**. The work of Zoroastrian College Doctoral Degree Avesta Research Scholar, **Dr. Purviz Kolsawalla** of Australia and the living faith knowledge of Ilm-e-Kshnoon was appreciated and its impact through the work of the Zoroastrian College was making itself felt in the Academic circles.

(21) Tuesday 19th May saw Dame Meher en route through one of the most scenic train routes of Austria, from Vienna to Graz to keep a tryst with **Dr. Manfred Hutter** who had organised her lecture at the **Graz University Institute für Religionswissenschaft**. After receiving her at Graz Station he whisked her away to the Hotel Strasser near the Bahnhof and from there to his University Institute where

his students were awaiting their weekly lecture at noon on the Living Zoroastrian Faith. Dame Meher addressed the students on the work of the Zoroastrian College with a slide show on Ancient Iranian History and The Living Faith in Fire Temples in India, at Sanjan, Udwada, Bombay and elsewhere, which was much appreciated. **Prof. Dr. Otto König** of the Inter Faith Comparative Religions Department and **Prof. Manfred Hutter** arranged gracious lunch and dinner hospitality at the home of Dr. König with typical Graz food; specially prepared vegetarian style. It was a great pleasure to meet **Prof. Dr. Larcher**; and to develop good ties for their students group visit to India later this year. The most interesting development was to see the impact of the Zoroastrian College Avesta and also inter-Faith Depts. work in encouraging the study of the living faith rather than linguistic books studies in the Universities in Austria & Germany. **Madame Anna König** arranged gracious hospitality at her home for dinner.

Seminar at Munich 16th May 98 with Dr. Leonore Gierlichs, and Dame Meher and others. (Below) Munich with Herman Schlichting, Dr. Sir Herrman Schmidt, Dr. Dame Marianne Schnaking, Dame Meher and Dr. Leonore Gierlichs and Herr Werner.



Sorabjee's second serve

The only individual to serve the nation for two terms as attorney general, Soli Sorabjee delineates the improvement necessary for India's progress

Parinaz M. Gandhi

The same political party which he had dauntlessly criticized in the past invited him to serve as attorney general. This could not be a move to silence him for the intrepid Soli Sorabjee enjoys a reputation for his frank and forthright views. In this, his second term as India's attorney general, the only individual to enjoy the distinction of occupying the country's apex legal post for two terms, he encounters a new situation "in view of the pressures and problems which the government would face on account of its coalition partners and parties supporting it from outside. For this reason, an independent and firm attorney general was thought necessary, particularly when the law minister is not a lawyer," explains Sorabjee.

The ruling Bharatiya Janata Party which he had criticized in the past on certain issues wanted "someone who would not be regarded as a party person and whose advice would be acceptable to all," mentions Sorabjee who says "after having initially declined the Prime Minister's offer, I was persuaded by my two good friends H. R. Khanna and V. M. Tarkunde to accept the post." He may also create history by being the nation's shortest-lived attorney general, smiles Sorabjee who is unable to predict how long the accord within the present government will last. If the government is dissolved, he would as per tradition be required to submit his resignation like he did following his earlier tenure of 13 months in this office in 1990-91 under the Janata Party regime.

In April 1998, he assumed office. He cannot vouch for the date, he is sure though that it was *Ardibehest roj*, the fiery *roj* on which he was born. Despite the many pressures of his office, a single request for an interview appointment

was promptly acknowledged by his Delhi office intimating us that he would grant us the necessary time on July 1, 1998 when he is in Bombay. The day prior he was to return from Bangalore after addressing a Commonwealth Secretariat



Sorabjee: need to launch a crusade

Photo: Chetan Mistry

workshop on "Access to Justice." A week earlier he was in Lisbon attending a colloquium organized by the University of Goa and Fundacao Orient on contemporary India and Portugal. The morning after the interview, he was to return to Delhi.

At 68, eight years after our last meeting, Sorabjee was still his courteous, genial, informal self, taking care to use the choicest words and phrases to express his thoughts. Like a hard-core lawyer, he requested for a copy of the earlier *Parsiana* interview lest he repeat himself.

"There should be some consensus solution to the frequent dissolutions and hung parliaments," says Sorabjee, exasperatedly. Among the suggestions he has to offer for the prevailing political instability are: fixing a minimum period of one year for each party in case of a coalition government; allowing the

President to take charge should the parliament be dissolved before the expiry of its full term...

As against the inertia and lethargy in the citizens a few years ago, the present electorate, according to Sorabjee, is "more educated, more keen, more mature." Participating in elections "gives them a sense of satisfaction, of power."

Of utmost concern to Sorabjee is the "delay in delivering justice when the rule of law is being substituted by the rule of *lathi* by people in search of quick, easy justice." Since they have no patience to wait for years, many, especially in the metropolitan areas, are employing mafia agents to recover possession of premises or loans. To clear the backlog of judicial cases "now we will need to launch a crusade, not just a battle," Sorabjee is convinced.

"There is no real earnestness, only lip service and slogans," regrets the attorney general. "In this ambitious plan, there must be collective effort from all three sectors: The government must see that filling of judicial vacancies is not unduly delayed and limit the number of appeals to the High Court and Supreme Court by restricting them only to cases when an important point of law is to be decided or the issue is of such a nature that it requires authoritative interpretation. The judges should not grant frequent adjournments. We'll have to lay down strict rules for judges who do not work for the full five hours. The Bar Council must frame appropriate regulations and clarify that it would be unethical, amounting to professional misconduct, for a lawyer to delay disposal of cases by unworthy means. Senior lawyers should take the lead and abstain from indulging in dilatory tactics even



Our Services go a long way.



Across the country, in fact. In the last 5 decades we have grown to be leaders in the field of *Steam Engineering and Control Instrumentation* serving customers through over 25 offices. But that's not all.

Over the years we've come to recognise and realise that the community around us lacks basic essentials. Like clean water, hygienic living facilities, health care, sources of income. And yes, literacy. Which is what we've been giving to the people of Kasarwadi. Services that go a long way in improving the quality of life for the underprivileged residents of this entire area within 5 km radius. Just our way of serving the society that has served us so well.

 **Forbes
Marshall**

Mumbai-Pune Road, Kasarwadi, Pune 411 034, India.

Tel: 91(0) 212 - 794495, Fax: 91(0) 212 - 797413

at the cost of their convenience and displeasing their clients." Often, after a stay order has been obtained in favor of their clients, lawyers take recourse to frequent adjournments, Sorabjee lays his finger on the legal pulse.

"To raise the standards of the bar" Sorabjee would like to impress on his colleagues that "this is a service oriented profession, not a trade or business operating on the laws of demand and supply." Disapproving of the extortionate fees charged by some members of the legal fraternity on the ground that "the client can afford to pay," Sorabjee advocates, "You may charge reasonable fees from corporations and big companies, but you must remember that the poor should not be deprived... There should be some rule that every member of the bar accepts a couple of briefs free of charge, *pro bono publico* (for the public good). The seniors should set an example by voluntarily accepting five briefs every month. No indigent or economically disadvantaged person should be unable to afford counsel. Otherwise there would be no equality of arms."

While the attorney general's post involves "a considerable drop in my personal income," despite his having to

work at least 14 hours a day, Sorabjee recalls the time when as an independent counsel his services were sought by the Air-India management which had already engaged six senior counsels. The scales being already tilted in favor of the management which could afford to cough up the high fees, Sorabjee chose to offer his expertise instead to the cabin crew.

The setting up of a national judicial commission entrusted with the task of appointment, transfer and removal of High Court and Supreme Court judges is being given weightage by Sorabjee: "The reason being dissatisfaction with the process of impeachment laid down in the constitution for the removal of a judge who is guilty of judicial misdeemeanor." The names suggested by the Commission, those accepted, the ones declined and the reasons for the same should be made public knowledge. At present, there is no real transparency, points out the attorney general who would like the Commission to assume "judicial primacy with executive participation, not exclusivity." The composition of the Commission "is of crucial importance too otherwise we would be jumping from the frying pan into the fire." Ideally seven to nine members

should sit on the Commission headed by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. A couple of other judges from the Supreme Court, one or two more from the High Court, a retired Supreme Court chief justice, a retired High Court chief justice and some representative from the government like the law minister or the chairman of the Bar Council could also be included, opines Sorabjee.

"To look into the distortions that have surfaced in the course of working of the (Indian) constitution in the last 50 years" is also deemed essential by Sorabjee. "There are so many directive principles of state policy which are not enforceable because of the very terms of the constitution." Presently the right to education and the right to medical relief have been interpreted as fundamental rights by the judges. "This is a good development but lest the judicial mood change," Sorabjee would like to see the changes incorporated in the constitution itself such that by including these in the chapter on fundamental rights they become clearly enforceable.

Article 356 which permits imposition of President's rule should be amended too as there is substantial misuse of this important clause which has



MASTER MARINE SERVICES

Surveyors Licence No: SLA 19207

Surveyors and Consultants

Ship, Cargo and Marine Surveyors, Loss Assessors, Technical Consultants,
Container Terminal Superintendents and General Contractors, Container Repairers

Reefer Cargo/Container Surveyors

22/D, S.A. Brelvi Road, Fort, Mumbai 400001

Phone: 2873567/2832145/2870716/2886642/43 • Cable: 'MOORINGS'

Telex: 118-2119 MMSB IN • Fax: 91-22-2870139 • Email: g=mms/s=bom/p=gems/a=vsnl/c=in

Internet: mms.bom@gems.vsnl.net.in

Branches

Ahmedabad -- Calcutta -- Jaipur -- Kandla -- Ludhiana -- Nhava Sheva -- New Delhi -- Surat



**She
used to be a
ragpicker once.
Now look what
she has
in her hands.**

**TODAY SHE IS STUDYING
AT A BOARDING SCHOOL
IN LONAVALA,
TOWARDS A BRIGHTER FUTURE.**

Draupada Pawar's mother died when she was 2. Living on the pavement outside Vile Parle station, she worked as a ragpicker and relied on charity food. Till she came in contact with SAMPARC, an organisation that works with street children, actively supported by Concern India Foundation*.

Concern India Foundation supports various

such organisations devoted to the cause of the disabled, the under-privileged, the aged, prostitutes and other underprivileged people in the society. And it's easy for you to contribute, really, with or without donations. As a writer, a designer, a doctor, a lawyer, as anybody. To help in whatever way you can, please call 2029708 / 2855487 and speak to Anahita. However small you think your help will be, remember, it still means a lot to us.

CONCERN
INDIA FOUNDATION

Helping People Help Themselves

"such grave repercussions on center-state relations," believes the attorney general. "In the recent Bommai case, the Supreme Court laid down certain criteria for invoking these principles. The Supreme Court has also said that the exercise of this power is judicially reviewable. Since this was not a unanimous judgment, why not amend article 356 so that we do not have to depend on judicial vagaries?" questions Sorabjee. The imposition of President's rule should be left to the discretion of the President who need not be bound by ministerial advice, recommends Sorabjee in the interests of the nation.

He is in favor of a uniform civil code. "But it should be gradually implemented. The movement for the same should originate from the community or a sizeable section of the community" to ensure its acceptance. He was recently elected member for a four-year term on the Geneva based Subcommission on Human Rights of Minorities and Prevention of Discrimination.

Among the present laws governing the Parsi community he feels the Parsi Marriage and Divorce Act should permit irretrievable breakdown of marriage as one of the grounds for dissolution of

a marriage just as divorce by mutual consent was worked into the last amendment.

"For me it's surprising that a community otherwise progressive and enlightened should still stagnate under the weight of irrational beliefs, practices and customs," says Sorabjee who has noticed no constructive changes among the dwindling community in the course of the last decade. "The orthodox sections have not yet relented as regards conversion, disposal of the dead, acceptance of children of Parsi women married out of the community."

In his pre-teen years when he was a student at St Xavier's School, Sorabjee says he used to devote at least one hour a day to prayers. Gradually that lessened and now "unfortunately only on certain occasions like muktad and uthamna" does he frequent the fire-temples, candidly admitting, "I am not the atash behram type."

His base now is Delhi, although he continues to frequent Bombay when work brings him here. Having observed the community in Bombay and Delhi, he says, "The basic values and outlook on life is the same — frank, straightforward, zest for life. But the Delhi Anjuman

is more understanding and progressive."

Among the community institutions with which Sorabjee has continued to maintain his ties is the J. N. Petit Institute where he is repeatedly elected as managing committee member, years after he ceased to avail of the library facilities which he happily did when he was in college at St Xavier's. His interest in poetry abides with him even today.

Jazz music is another passion which has had to take a back seat. Sorabjee confesses to not having the time to even open the plastic covers of the new jazz albums. His present portfolio includes new responsibilities following his appointment as United Nations' country rapporteur to report on the human rights situation in Nigeria.

During the course of the *Parsiana* interview, his little granddaughter Maya too kept making appearances, hoping to catch a few moments with him before scampering away. He lovingly explained to her that the interview was like an examination. Considering the number of times the seasoned jurist must have had to conduct and appear in a cross-examination, this occasion must surely have seemed a case for easy dismissal!



PRUDENTIAL SHIPPING AGENCIES PRIVATE LIMITED

Shipping agents, cargo brokers and container operators

55A/63A, Walchand Hirachand Marg, Opp G.P.O.,
Mumbai 400001, India

Tel: 2692787 (10 Lines), Fax: 2652841, Tlx: 11 82307 PSAB IN

Website: www.mastergroups.com

Internet: prudential.bom@gems.vsnl.net.in

Registered Office: 77, Mint Road, Fort, Mumbai 400001, India

Tel: 2694203, 2659055, 2658396

Branches

Bombay -- Nhava Sheva -- Kandla -- New Delhi -- Ludhiana -- Ahmedabad

Gujarat Parsis: Near and yet apart — 4

Faithfully feasting

Celebrations and festivities were tied to days of religious significance

That the howl of a dog at night is believed to foretell a death or other evil in his master's family; that the persistent cawing of a crow is supposed to be the harbinger of bad news are some of the superstitions frequently repeated among Zoroastrians. What may not be as well known is the notion that the spasm of breath in sneezing or in yawning is the work of an evil spirit which should be countered with the words "Broken be ahri-man." And that a drawn tooth or cut nails are to be buried four inches below the ground whilst reciting the sacred texts.

Insights into the life-style, value systems, code of conduct, performance of elaborate ceremonies among the Parsis of Gujarat in the latter part of the 19th century can be had from perusing the *Bombay Gazetteer*. The relevant chapters of the compendium which had been sent to us by the noted Bombay dentist Dr Dinshaw F. Boga are being edited and carried over six instalments of *Parsiana*.

In the first instalment we learnt how the Parsis landed on the shores of India, how circumstances led to subsequent migrations and an increase in their numbers. Though reputed to be kind and considerate, even at that time dissensions were known to exist among different factions.

Being shrewd traders and businessmen they were seen flourishing along the Malabar coast, recalled the second instalment. Not only were they known to own the most beautiful villas and gardens in Surat, but they were also reputed for not having a single beggar amongst them.

The dress and ornaments worn by the priests and laity, the nature of their dwellings, their life-style and preoccupations found a mention in the third instalment. With Parsis, eating and drinking are religious duties which help to drive away the evil spirit, it was stated therein.

Their religious beliefs, their mode of celebrating auspicious occasions and feasts are referred to in this fourth episode. In the midst of rejoicing they were also enjoined to observe a code of behavior that prescribed wearing of sudreh-kusti and covering the head and feet at all times, thanking God before every meal and keeping silence whilst eating!

The customs accompanying first pregnancies, births, navjotes and marriages will be detailed in the fifth instalment. When a much awaited male child was born, instead of the child, some cowdung was shown to the mother, supposedly in the best interests of the mother and the child. Elaborate were the marriage rituals too and as noted therein, the poorest Parsi could hardly marry his son for less than Rs 400 or his daughter for less than Rs 250.

Most of the practices accompanying death rites seem to be preserved to this day as will be indicated in the last instalment. There were some noticeably different customs too: for three days after a death no food was cooked in the house of mourning, except for dogs. To save the soul of a Parsi man who died without a male issue, it was mandatory to announce an adoption on the uthamna day. Often too were donations to charitable causes made on this day.

...

The sacred books of the Zoroastrians are known as the *Zend Avesta*, literally the translation of the *Avesta* or sacred texts. According to tradition, in Zoroaster's time these books included 21 *nusks* or parts. Of these ancient writings there remain little more than fragments. In addition to these fragments, the sacred books of the present Parsis include more modern (200 to 500) commentaries, explanations and essays. The language of the early fragments is known as *Zend* and that of the commentaries as *Pahlavi*. Few Parsis are able to read or understand either the original *Zend* texts or

the *Pahlavi* commentaries. In addition to the *Zend* texts and the *Pahlavi* commentaries the Parsis have a collection of writings in Persian called *Revayets* meaning customs which are accepted as authoritative. These are the result of references by Indian Parsis to Persian Zoroastrians on doubtful points chiefly of ritual when in the 15th century a fondness for their religion was revived among the Parsis.

The leading beliefs which as a Zoroastrian the ordinary Parsi holds are the existence of one God, Ahura Mazda, the creator of the universe, the giver of good, the hearer and answerer of prayer. Next to Ahura Mazda the name most familiar to a Parsi is that of Ahri-man, Anghro Mainyu, or Satan, to whom he traces every evil and misfortune that happens to him, and every evil thought and evil passion that rises in his mind. He thinks of Ahura Mazda and Ahri-man as hostile powers and in his prayers he often repeats the words, "I praise and honor Ahura Mazda; I smite Anghro Mainyu." He believes that every man has an immortal soul which after death passes either to a place of reward, *behesht* or of punishment, *duzak*. The reward or punishment of the soul depends on its conduct during life. At the same time the due performance by its friends of certain rites helps the soul of the dead to reach the abode of happiness. He believes in good angels, who carry out the wishes of God and who watch over fire, water and earth. He venerates fire and water and the sun, moon and stars which Ahura Mazda has made. He believes in evil spirits who are in league with and obey Ahri-man. He believes in Zoroaster or Zarathushtra as the Prophet who brought the true religion from Ahura Mazda. He believes that when the world becomes overburdened with evil, Saoshiant, the son of Zarathushtra, will be born and will destroy evil, purify the world, and make the Mazdayasnian religion su-

preme. He calls his religion Mazdayasni *din* or Mazdayasni Zarathoshti *din*, (that is, the religion of Mazda the all-knowing, or the religion of Mazda through Zarathoshti). His code of morals is contained in two sets of three words, the one set humata, hukhta, huvarasta, holy mind, holy speech, holy deeds to be praised and practised, pleasing to God, the path to heaven; the other set, dushmata, duzukhta, duzuvarasta, evil mind, evil speech, evil deeds, to be blamed and shunned, hateful to God, the path to hell.

Fire is the chief object of Parsi veneration and the fire-temple is the public place of Parsi worship. Gujarat fire-temple in outward appearance do not differ from the better class of Parsi dwellings. Atash dadgah is the hearth fire which a Parsi never allows to die out. If he changes his place of residence in the same town or village he carries his fire with him to his new abode. If he goes beyond the town or village he gives his fire to his neighbors or relations who mix it with their own fire.

Religious Parsis visit the fire-temple almost daily, and on four days in each month, the third, ninth, 17th and 20th, which are sacred to fire, almost all Parsis go and offer prayers. Men and women come to the same part of the temple and worship the fire in the same way. The day of the month that bears the same name as the month is a holiday. On the name-day of each month the high priest, priests, and leading men meet in the hall of the fire-temple. They sit on a carpet with trays of fruit and flowers before them and with a small fire-urn which one of the priests feeds with sandal and frankincense, and recite hymns of praise and thanksgiving in honor of the guardian angel of the month. When the prayers are over the fruit is handed round and all present are bound to taste it. This rite, which is kept by well-to-do families in their houses as well as in the fire-temple on behalf of the community as a whole, is called jashan, that is, feast. The animal feast called Bahman jashan after Bahman the animal guardian, falls on Bahman, the second day of Bahman the 11th month. During the whole month of Bahman all try to show kindness to animals, feeding street-dogs with milk and cattle with grass. The earth feast or Aspandad jashan, falls on Aspandad, the fifth day of Aspandad the 12th month. On this day every family brings from the priest, generally their family priest, dry sand which the priest has purified by

pronouncing certain prayers over it, and a piece of paper on which a Pahlavi text is written. The sand is sprinkled in every corner of the house, and the paper is fixed on the main entrance door. The Pahlavi text on the paper runs: "By the name of the Creator Ahura Mazda, on the day Aspandad of the month

When two Parsi males meet, with their hands interlocked they bless one another

Aspandad, I close the mouths of all hurtful animals, evil spirits (devs), perverting spirits (darujs), sorcerers, elves, oppressors, the wilfully blind, the wilfully deaf, evil doers and robbers. I do this in the name of Ahura Mazda, of the valiant Faredun, of the Testar star, of the Sataves star, of the Vanant star, and of the Haptairing star."

Besides the monthly jashans or feasts other festivals called gambhars, literally season-feasts, are held in great veneration among the Parsis. These feasts, which are commonly called gambhars, originally marked the seasons. They are held six times a year, each lasting five days, when the whole community meet on terms of equality and offer prayers and thanks and join in common feast.

In Gujarat the muktad holidays generally last 18 days, the first seven days of the first month of the new year being added to the regular 10 days. To hold the muktad in each house, in a neat and clean place is raised a brick and mortar platform or an iron or brass stand. On the stand are arranged piles of brass or silver or glass vessels filled with water. Fruit is set near them and flowers are laid on and near them. Close to the platform a lamp burns night and day and at night many lamps are lighted; sandalwood and incense are burned in an urn; rich food is cooked and placed near the platforms, and ceremonies are performed in honor of ancestors and dead relations whose souls are believed to visit the homes of their family during these days.

Besides the month-name days or jashans, the season-feasts or gambhars, and the five hymn days, the Parsis keep seven leading high days. The first of these is Navroze, the New Day, commonly known as Pateti, a day of univer-

sal rejoicing. It is Hormazd, the first day of Farvardin the first month. On this day Parsis both men and women rise earlier than usual, bathe, put on their best clothes, and deck their children with ornaments. After offering prayers of repentance in their houses, they go to the fire-temple with offerings of sandalwood. In the streets and in the temple they give alms to the poor. In the fire-temple they offer their prayers before the sacred fire and then go visiting friends and relations, the hosts offering the guests the choicest wines, fruits and sweets. When two Parsi males meet they perform the joining of hands, hamajor, and while their hands are interlocked bless one another with the words, "Let us give our strength to purity. May God guard you. May you live long and happily." After the visits are over they spend the rest of the day in feasting with their families or in attending garden parties. The second high day falls on Ardibehesht, the third day of Farvardin the first month or two days after the New Day. On this day the Rapithvan or mid-day ceremony is performed in the fire-temple. This originally marked the beginning of summer, but by neglecting to add an extra day in a leap year, the Rapithvan instead of in summer falls in September. The third high day is three days later, the sixth day of the first month. It is called Khordad Sal and is believed to be the anniversary of the birthday of Zoroaster. It is kept with as much pomp and rejoicing as Pateti or Penitence Day, now New Year's Day. The fourth high day, the Amerdad Sal, falls the next day after the Khordad Sal on the last of the muktad days. Holiday-makers keep it as a feast in continuation of the Khordad Sal. The fifth high day, Jamshedi Navroze or Jamshed's New Day falls on March 21, when the sun enters Aries. This day is believed to have been fixed as the New Year's Day by Jamshed, the third king of the Peshdadian dynasty. It is kept with great honor by Parsis whose learned men hold that in early times the Parsis began and ought now to begin their new year from this day. The failure to keep to the old day is believed to be due to the neglect of the leap year. The sixth high day is Zarathoshtno Diso which falls on Khorshed, the 11th day of Deh the 10th month and is held sacred as the anniversary of Zoroaster's death. The seventh high day, Mahrespand jashan, falls on Mahrespand, the 29th day of Aspandad



With Best Compliments From

LEACH & WEBORNY

When in Bombay Contact us
for attending to your laundry.
We are Launderers & Dyers of repute.
We will also attend to your carpets
for cleaning or dyeing.

66, Off E. Moses Road, Worli, Bombay 400018
Phone: Head Office 2654294 Factory: 4924384, 4925644

the 12th month. This is called Din behé Mazdayasni jashan, that is the feast of the holy Mazdayasni religion, because it is believed that on this day Zoroaster proclaimed his religion in the court of king Gustasp. As among Parsis eating and drinking are considered religious acts and fasting and penance are forbidden, all holidays are spent in feasting, rejoicing and prayer.

Besides the leading rites and ceremonies and the keeping of feast days the Parsis have many minor practices and observances to which more or less of a religious sanction is supposed to attach. A Parsi must always keep his head and feet covered, he must never be without the sacred shirt and cord, must never smoke, must wash his hands if he ever puts his fingers in his mouth, if he eats from the same dish with two or three others he must not let his fingers touch his mouth but fling the morsel into his mouth; similarly in drinking if the lips touch the rim of the goblet the goblet should be washed before it is again used. He must return thanks to God before every meal and keep silence while he is eating. After shaving his head a Parsi should bathe before touching anything. Similarly on leaving his bed, before he can touch or do anything, a Parsi is required to perform the smaller ablution, that is to wash his face, hands and feet, and to perform the larger ablution, that is to bathe his whole person if he has had impure dreams or has cohabited. In practice, though they know they are laid down in their religion, Parsis neglect many of these rules. Parsis are very careful regarding the ceremonial uncleanness of a woman in her periods. During her impurity a woman is not allowed to touch any person or thing. She has to sit apart on an iron bed placed in a corner of the house, her food is served to her from a distance, and all clothes which she has worn during her period must be washed before they can be again used.

After sneezing or yawning old Parsis generally say, "Broken be Ahriman," apparently believing that the spasm of breath in sneezing or in yawning is the work of an evil spirit. When a tooth is drawn or when the nails or hair are cut, texts should be said over them and they should be buried four inches underground. Temple priests are careful to observe this practice. The cock is held sacred and is never killed or eaten after it has begun to crow. When a cock or a

parrot dies the body is wrapped in a sacred shirt, sudreh, a sacred thread, kusti, is wound round him, and he is carefully buried.

Village Parsis conform to many early practices which they share with Hindus and Musalmans. They make offerings at the burning pile of the Holi, offer vows and sacrifice goats and fowls to the smallpox goddess, and a few carry oil to Hanuman, the Hindu village guardian.

Among Parsis eating and drinking are considered religious acts and fasting and penance are forbidden

Some offer vows and make presents to the Moharram shrines or *tabuts* and at the tombs of Musalman saints. Faith in ghosts, magic, astrology and witchcraft is strong and widespread. They believe that many diseases are caused by spirit-possession, and employ Musalman, Hindu or Parsi exorcists to drive out evil spirits and to cure the effects of the evil eye. Children, especially pretty children, have soot or lampblack rubbed on their eyes, cheeks and brow to keep off the evil eye. In cases of sickness the horoscope is often consulted to see how the sickness will end and women sometimes put grains of rice and a copper coin in a bag, pass the bag seven times round the sick man's head, and leaving it under his pillow for a night, send the bag to a sorcerer to say if the sickness is caused by an evil spirit. Women have great faith in amulets which they buy from sorcerers and wear round their necks or in their hair to win or to keep the favor of their husbands. Strict old women never let people sleep with the head towards the north, because the north is the home of Ahriman and his evil spirits. The howl of a dog at night is believed to foretell a death or other evil in his master's family. Similarly a crow persistently cawing is believed to be the harbinger of bad news.

All Parsi priests in India are believed to be descended from a priest named Shapur Sheheriar who with his sons Ramiar and Dhaval and his grandsons Hormazdiar and Nerioshang (the last the translator of the *Zend Avesta* into

Sanskrit) are believed to have been among the first Parsi settlers of the priestly caste at Sanjan in North Thana (716 AD).

Different branches of the original family have distributed the Parsi settlements in Gujarat into districts or charges in one of which the members of each branch alone may serve as priests. Over the priests of certain districts or divisions is a high priest called dastur, literally director, whose office is hereditary, passing to the eldest son. The high priest does not leave his headquarters to visit the priests under his charge but hears and settles any complaints against his priests that are lodged before him. Though the descendants of priests can alone act as priests, a priest may either partly or wholly employ himself in secular business. Though their sons married the daughters of laymen the priests till lately never let their daughters marry anyone but priests. The business of weaving the kusti or sacred cord belongs solely to the women of the priestly class. Lay women are not allowed to weave sacred cords and until the last few years might not spin the wool which was to be used for the girdle.

Priests who are wholly or partially employed as priests differ from other Parsis by dressing in white and wearing a full beard. They are forbidden to shave the head or face or to wear even a colored skull-cap. The men of the priestly class who are engaged in secular business are allowed to shave the head and chin and wear colors like laymen. After a priest has so far given up his hereditary position as to shave his head and wear colors he is disqualified from performing the higher priestly offices. The religious functions of a priest are to recite prayers at the houses of laymen or of priests engaged in secular work, to recite prayers and to perform rites for the dead in the house of mourning or in the fire-temple and to perform ceremonies at the investiture of the sacred girdle and at marriages, in fact at all religious rites and ceremonies.

Priests who, as a class are called athornan or athravan in the *Zend Avesta* and andhiarus or darus, supposed to be the Sanskrit *vidiaryu* learned, are of two orders, a lower order called herbad or religious men and a higher order called mobeds or learned men, that is full priests. The son of a priest, if he is otherwise qualified, can become a herbad or under-priest between 10 and 12 and a

mobed between 12 and 15 or 20. To be qualified to become a herbad or under-priest a priest's son in addition to the parts of the *Zend Avesta* he learned for the navjote or investiture must learn by heart the 72 chapters or *has* of the *Yasna* besides some other portions.

To pass from a herbad or under-priest to be a mobed or full priest, the youth, who has generally been two or three years a herbad and is 14 to 16 years old, has to learn the *Vendidad*. After he is duly qualified in the necessary parts of the *Zend Avesta* the herbad goes to the barashnumgah or place of purification, goes through the barashnum or cleansing with the same details as in cleansing for admission to be a herbad. On the 10th day after the cleansing is over, bathed and dressed in new clothes, he goes through the yasna ceremony at the dar-e-meher with the same details as during the novice's four days' preparation for the herbadship. On the night of the 10th day from midnight till morning the candidate recites or reads aloud the *Vendidad Sade* or *Vendidad Code* which includes the *yasna*, *vendidad* and *visperad*. On this occasion all the vessels are arranged on the stone stool in front of the candidate and are used dur-

ing the rites and the fire is kept burning on the third stone stool further in front. On the day after these rites are completed the candidate has gained the rank

They believe that the spasm of breath in sneezing or in yawning is the work of an evil spirit

of a mobed or learned man.

He is now fully qualified to perform religious rites and ceremonies at the dar-e-meher or smaller fire-temple, and all other functions of a priest. He is now said to be a mobed with barashnum, that is in a state of purity. He must never be bareheaded and never shave his head or face. If his turban happens to fall off, or if he travels by rail or sea his barashnum or state of purity ends and he is unable to perform rites and ceremonies in the fire-temple till he again goes through the cleansing ceremony in the place of purification and passes nine nights in retreat at the smaller fire-temple and performs the yasna ceremony on the morning of

the 10th. A mobed who is paid to do it sometimes goes through the cleansing rite for the salvation of some man or woman among the laity. While a priest is in a state of purity he must lead a strictly pure life and must eat no food cooked and drink no water drawn by any one but a man or woman of the priestly class.

According to the Revayets or Persian precepts the perfect priest must be *avije him*, that is of pure life, *asnidhe kherad*, of high talent, *din aspnargan*, devoted to religion, *yazdan manidar*, mindful of God, *mino vinashne*, fixed on the next world, *pak manashne*, pure in mind, *rast gavashne*, true of speech, *kherdi kunashne*, wise in act, *yozdathre tan*, holy in body, that is free from bodily defects, *shiva hezuan*, of sweet speech, *narm nask*, a distinct reciter, *rast Avesta*, a correct reader of the *Avesta*, *padiab sazeshe*, an observer of cleanliness, *hiv nirang*, learned in the ritual, and *naver jivan*, devoted to religious practices.

A man with any bodily defect or disease, who is hunchbacked, of defective sight or hearing or afflicted with leprosy or itch is disqualified from being a priest, and is forbidden to go through the martab ceremony.

To be continued.

Always remember



સ્ત્રીલમાં TATA

બુટમાં BATA

કેટરમાં KHAMBATA

Ketayun & Bomi

22/A, Wellington Terrace
Wellington Street, Bombay 400002
Tel No: 2069636, 2057242
Pager No: 9602-104007

Dorabji's

JERROZ HOTEL

Under Cliff Bungalow,
Ring Road, near Parsi
Fire Temple
Panchgani 412805

Phone: (91) (02168) 40238

On sale

original Chinese
garas, Swiss borders,
pure silver and gold
borders. When you
visit India contact
and visit us:
2833078, 2873873

MATRIMONIAL

Alliance invited from tall, educated, well settled Zoroastrian boy from good family background for a 26-year, 5'6½", attractive, fair, domestically trained, good natured, post-graduate girl with an artistic temperament. Please send detailed information with a recent photograph (returnable) to:

The Advertiser

Parsiana, Matrimonial (Sept/17-98)*
GPO Box 892, Bombay 400001

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

MATRIMONIAL

Young man, 36 years, 5'8" tall, B.Com (1st class Hons) Associate Member of the Institute of Cost and Works Accountants of India, earning over 3½ lakhs per annum -- Manager in ESPN, a multinational TV channel company, invites matrimonial correspondence from highly educated, cultured girls around 30 years willing to live in North India. Only home loving girls need apply with recent color photograph and all details to:

The Advertiser

Parsiana, Matrimonial (Sept/18-98)*
GPO Box 892, Bombay 400001

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

MATRIMONIAL

A Zoroastrian girl of 39 years BA (1st class Hons.) MBA, Senior Systems Executive employed in a reputed company in UK for Birla -- Horizon International in New Delhi, earning a five figure income in Pounds Sterling per month, seeks matrimonial alliance with an educated Parsi boy upto 40 years of age. Permanent job in UK/USA. Please apply with detailed bio data and a recent color photograph (returnable) and family details to:

The Advertiser

Parsiana, Matrimonial (Sept/19-98)*
GPO Box 892, Bombay 400001

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

DEFINING ZOROASTRIAN...

continued from page 28

tural differences soon surfaced, including calendar conflicts over the observance of major holidays and divergent tastes in food. The Iranians then set up the Iranian Zoroastrian Association (IZA), leading to a mutually uncomfortable joint use of the darbe mehr. Yet another fault line in the Parsi-Iranian relationship then emerged as the Arbab Guiv Foundation, which was set up following the demise of Arbab Rustam Guiv, the Iranian philanthropist who funded the purchase of the darbe mehr building, demanded formal ownership of the property. It would take five years of litigation, including an appeal to the Supreme Court of New York, to establish the Darbe Mehr Zoroastrian Temple as the legal owner of the property in New Rochelle, a suburban town outside New York. The ruling also consolidated ZAGNY's role as the manager of the darbe mehr.

It took time and a renewed spirit of accommodation on both sides to heal the wounds.

"With the ownership of the Darbe Mehr firmly established, the darbe mehr trustees decided to...provide a proper role for both ZAGNY and the IZA in the management of the darbe mehr," according to Lovji Cama, a temple trustee since its inception and founding member of ZAGNY. "At a meeting of the trustees and the boards of ZAGNY and IZA, a formula was worked out by which representation on the board of trustees and the cost of running the darbe mehr would be divided in proportion to their dues-paying membership. The proportion worked out to be 5:1 ZAGNY:IZA, and was to be reviewed and changed if necessary every three years, with a minimum representation of one trustee from the smaller association. The election of trustees was by open election from the congregation, as required by the Religious Corporations Law. This arrangement has worked out exceedingly well for both communities and there is now no source of friction between the Parsi and Iranian communities."

The New York Congress just concluded was sponsored and organized by ZAGNY in cooperation with the IZA whose members were extensively represented in the organizing committees and who also staged the Iranian dance and musical performances that were part of the excellent entertainment pre-

sented at the event by ZAGNY youth.

The relationship between the two organizations is "based on understanding, cooperation, mutual agreement and mutual discussion," according to Shirin Kiamanesh, a database analyst who is president of the IZA. The cultural differences remain, Kiamanesh said in an interview after the Congress. "Cuisines and tastes are still different, and in my opinion, the Parsis should celebrate the old festival of Mehragan," she added. But the attitude now on both sides is, "Why go back to the old quarrels and disagreements? Why keep bringing up what happened 10 years ago?" she said. A joint Jamshedi Navroze celebration recently was only the most obvious effort made by the two groups to find common ground. Kiamanesh's husband Ardeshir has served as a darbe mehr trustee alongside ZAGNY representatives, and their three children, ages five to 17, attend prayer classes with Parsi children. "Parsis and Iranians can do some things separately and yet be together," Kiamanesh said.

P. C.



Patel: Consolidation is the key

It has been quite a journey for Framroze Patel, from his years at the Surat Parsi Boys Orphanage to his election as president of the Federation of Zoroastrian Associations of North America (FEZANA).

He lost his father, Kaikhushroo, at an early age and his mother, Goolbai, was unable to provide for his education, Patel recalls. "This experience taught me humility," he says, adding that he is "a proud product of Zarathushti charities." At the Orphanage, the students were repeatedly told, "Today you are being helped by the community, tomorrow it will be your turn to pay back," Patel says.

It is in the spirit of his formative years that he says he put in his bid to lead FEZANA, which is the coalition of more than 20 Zarathushti organizations in the United States and Canada. His election virtually coincided with the recent North American Zoroastrian Congress, held in Rye, New York.

One key task, he says, is to help and encourage smaller, unorganized groups of Zarathushtis in the vast American hinterland to organize themselves as member associations and join FEZANA. "In their formative years, I will personally advise them" in incorporating, says

Patel, who is a certified public accountant with a master's degree in business administration from St John's University in New York. He has also served FEZANA as a treasurer for seven years and vice president for more than two and is a founding member of the Zoroastrian Association of Greater New York.

Another mission would be to assist the aging first generation of Zarathushti immigrants to prepare for their senior citizen years. One part of that effort would be to compile a medical information data bank of "organizations and support groups that would provide information and assistance in case of catastrophic events." Another would provide funeral planning advice, including insurance that would pay for funeral costs and a list of funeral parlors "which are aware of our needs."

He would also involve FEZANA in an even bigger way in becoming a "clearing house" for religious training materials so that they may be shared by all North American Zarathushti associations no matter which association develops them.

He would also use FEZANA's influence to help counter any media misrepresentations of the Zarathushti faith and culture. In that regard, he says, "FEZANA should become a more active participant in interfaith activity at local and national levels" and "wherever possible, knowledgeable members of our community should address religious congregations and better inform and educate other faiths about our glorious religion."

Finally, he says he would make it a priority to create an education assistance fund to help deserving students as well as provide career and marriage counseling to young Zarathushtis. "Our children are highly educated and secular in their outlook. They are exposed to a multicultural society and have a different vision" from the older generations, Patel says. It will take a constant dialogue and repeated opportunities for the youth to meet among themselves to make the relationship between generations more amicable, he believes.

Citing what he says is the North American community's mentality of compartmentalizing its members by national origin or liberal or conservative viewpoint, Patel concludes, "What we need is unity, not uniformity." P. C.



MILESTONES

This issue of *Parsiana* presents data for the months of July and August 1998. However, due to constraints of space, the Bombay death list for August will be carried in the October '98 issue.

The age of Zoroastrian brides — as listed in this issue — ranged between 18 and 36 years, the arithmetic mean (the total number of individual ages divided by the total number of brides) being 24 years. The corresponding figures for the grooms were 22 and 37 years, averaging at 28 years.

As compared to 26 Zoroastrian births in Bombay for the two-month period there were 83 deaths in the month of July only. Heart disease, the major killer, took a toll of 27 lives of whom 15 were 80 years and above. The other major killers were pneumonia/lung disease (13) and cancer (11). Liver ailment and brain disease claimed five lives each, whereas four Zoroastrians fell prey

to hypertension, three to old age/general debility and two to uremia. There were 13 isolated cases registered in July, they being: haemorrhage and shock due to firearm injuries, malnutrition, scleroderma (hardening and ulceration of the skin), tuberculosis, nervous disorder, haemorrhage and shock due to multiple injuries, diarrhoea, diabetes, kidney failure, haematemesis (vomiting of blood), septicemia, fever and bronchitis. Four youths with ages varying from 18 to 35 years and a stillborn baby boy were lost to the community. In the case of one death the coroner's report was yet to come. The eldest to breathe her last was a 97-year-old lady. The Zoroastrian life expectancy at birth for July, in Bombay, was 72 years.

The data on births, marriages and deaths has been compiled from information supplied by various newsletters and anjumans

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

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

BOMBAY

BORN

A girl, *Nazneen*, to *Farida* and *Zarir Bharucha*, sister to *Aazrine* on June 9, 1998
A boy to *Firoza* and *Dinyar Contractor*; July 5
A girl, *Nyra*, to *Jasmine* and *Burgis Dariwalla*, sister to *Malcolm* and *Farah*; July 6
A boy to *Khushnuma* and *Gilan Ferzandi*; July 7
A girl to *Jasmine* and *Shavir Irani*; July 8
A girl, *Sanaya*, to *Shiraz* and *Sharoukh Irani*; July 13
A boy to *Parvana* and *Yazdi Katak*; July 21
A girl to *Danizada* and *Rummy Jada*; July 22
A boy to *Rukhsana* and *Behram Guard*; July 23
A boy to *Benaaz* and *Phiroze Mistry*; July 25
A girl to *Veera* and *Romie Umrigar*; July 25
A girl to *Dilshad* and *Jamshed Kershaw*; August 1
A boy to *Roshni* and *Feroze Soonawalla*; August 2
A boy to *Roxan* and *Nikhil Jhaveri*; August 5
A girl to *Mehernavaz* and *Rustom Vesavevala*; August 6
A boy to *Jerroo* and *Kayumars Mehta*; August 8

A boy to *Arnawaz* and *Hoshie Mevawala*; August 12
A girl to *Shermaz* and *Gerard Desai*; August 17
A boy to *Mehernaz* and *Zubin Malao*; August 18
A girl, *Kainaaz*, to *Pearl* and *Farrokh Pavri*; August 19
A girl, *Huzan*, to *Havovi* and *Shahzad Madon*, sister to *Danish*; August 20
A boy to *Hilla* and *Khushveer Engineer*; August 21
A girl to *Gulshan* and *Firdaus Shroff*; August 22
A boy to *Monira* and *Jimmy Bhada*; August 25
A girl to *Nina* and *Edul Dhondy*; August 27
A girl to *Nancy* and *Dinshah Fulwadiwalla*; August 27
A boy to *Meher* and *Pervez Dhanidaduna*; August 31

MARRIED

Faranaz Adi Aga and *Khushroo Hoshang Kavarana*; May 3
Sanaya Soli Jamooji and *Rayomand Jehangir Eranee*; July 5
Anahita Ratansha Paowala and *Nawzor Hoshang Billimoria*; July 12
Mahvash Faredoon Kajian and

Khushroo Bomi Irani; July 16
Farida Behram Irani and *Darius Parvez Mistry*; July 24
Ruby Aspi Driver and *Minocheer Boman Parva* of *Lonavla*; August 2
Mahbi Dara Golimar and *Shazad Noshir Chikliwala*; August 10
Velvin Ratansha Saher and *Yazdi Pesi Billimoria*; August 30

DIED

Ratamai Bomanshaw Patel (81), residing at *Dossibhai Home* (charity trust), Behind *Masina Hospital*, *Victoria Rd*, *Byculla*, 400027; June 30
Kavasji Behramji Umrigar (75), Room no 2, *Doctor Bldg*, *S. B. Bharucha Baug*, *S. V. Rd*, *Andheri (W)*, 400058; June 30
Zarin Bejanji Kanga (55), 22-23, *Four Bglws*, *Andheri (W)*, 400053; July 1
Pheroze Cooverji Kudianawala (80), 127, *Desai Chmbs*, *Mody St*, *Fort*, 400001; July 1
Homi Rustomji Vajifdar (86), 259, *Engineer Bldg*, *Princess St*, 400002; July 1
Cyrus Khodadad Irani (40), 32/C, *Mulla Manzil*, *Balaram*

St. Grant Rd, 400007; July 2
Arni Sorab Malegamwalla (52), G/7, *S. B. Bharucha Baug*, *S. V. Rd*, *Andheri (W)*, 400058; July 2
Dhun Rustom Sidhwa (65), 89, *Queens Chmbs*, *M. Karve Rd*, 400020; July 2
Homaye Rusi Dastur (81), C-1, *Breach Candy Apts*, *B. Desai Rd*, 400026; July 3
Bomansha Eruchshaw Writer (71), C/o *Dali J. Dastoor*, *Readymoney Bldg* no 2, *Ratan Tata Rd*, *Tardeo*, 400034; July 3
Parvez Behramshaw Engineer (84), Room no 20, 382-A, *Pouwalla Bldg*, *Grant Rd*, 400007; July 4
Freny Fali Pardiwalla (67), Room no 13, 7-E, *Dinsha Bldg*, *Fish Market Lane*, *Dhobitalao*, 400002; July 4
Rati Burjorji Driver (76), *Tapia Bldg*, *Jalbhai St*, *Charni Rd Junction*, 400004; July 5
Naju Rustomji Laskari (65), C-21, *Contractor Bldg*, *Mori Rd*, *Mahim*, 400016; July 6
Homi Nariman Kapadia (76), E/220, *Anjali Bldg*, *J. P. Rd*, *Seven Bglws*, *Versova*, 400061; July 7
Ardeshtir Pestonji Ravji (70), *Fatima Manzil*, *R. S. Marg*, *Fort*, 400001; July 8
Rita Eric Rohinton (76), 10/7, *Tata Clny*, *Tardeo*, 400034; July 8
Pilloo Burjor Suntook (74), *Mody Mans*, 49, *Mereweather Rd*, *Colaba*, 400001; July 8
Meheru Jalejar Bharucha (87), 5, *Nadirsha Dinshaw Bldg*, 4, *Babulnath Rd*, 400007; July 9
Jal Cooverji Patel (88), *Glamour*, 24, *Malcolm Baug*, *Jogeshwari (W)*, 400102; July 9
Bejon Eruchsha Rao (75), 18-12/14, *Ashish Apts*, *Sorabji Suntoke Lane*, *Dhobitalao*, 400002; July 9
Banoo Kaikhushroo Mehta (84), *Wimbridge Hse*, 20, *Sleater Rd*, 400007; July 10
Sarosh Sorab Irani (49), C/o *Rohinton S. Irani*, M/3, *Cusrow Baug*, *S. B. Rd*, 400039; July 13
Daisy Hormasji Kapadia (80), A2/20, *New Khareghat Clny*, *Babulnath Rd*, 400007; July 13

Freni Dadiba Mistry (72), Kala Niketan Bldg, 95, M. Karve Rd, 400020; July 13
Frenny Shavaksha Madon (87), Sleater Hse no 1, Sleater Rd, 400007; July 14
Banoo Sohrab Mahwa (76), B/603, Ahura Apts, Edelji Rd, Cherai, Thane, 400601; July 14
Nelly Bejan Anklesaria (68), C-1, Gwalia Tank Bldg, Gwalia Tank Rd, 400036; July 15
Naval Cavaji Dumasia (80), 667, Dhunmai Bldg, Lady Jehangir Rd, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; July 15
Meherbanu Farkhondeh Parvereshi (81), 207, Alpawalla Bldg, Dhobitalao, 400002; July 15
Najoo Jehangir Gimi (95), Khush Villa, 621, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; July 16
Rustun Burzor Joshi (88), Panday Bglw, Panday Rd, Colaba, 400005; July 16
Hilla Kaikhushru Bhedwar (89), 17, Sleater Rd, 400007; July 17
Adi Burjorji Bhiwandiwalla (86), P-3, S. B. Bharucha Baug, S. V. Rd, Andheri (W), 400058; July 17
Banoobai Ardeshtir Bokdawala (84), Batliwala Bldg, 721, Dr Dinshaw Master Rd, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; July 17
Russi Pirozshaw Vachha (75), Hirji Sethna Bldg, 275-A, Zoroastrian Clny, Chikalwadi, Tardeo Rd, 400007; July 17
Shehroo Keki Behramkandini (78), 9, Kala Niketan, 47-C, B. Desai Rd, 400026; July 18
Manchersha Edulji Billimoria (90), F. S. Parukh Dharamshalla, Hughes Rd, 400007; July 18
Adi Kaikhushru Daruwalla (91), Cama Bldg, 739, Rd no 5, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; July 18
Hilla Phiroze Dastur (89), F-1, Mistry Bldg, Captain Clny, Haji Ali, 400034; July 18
Navaz Jimi Kathawala (30), 4/2, Malcolm Baug, Jogeshwari, 400102; July 18
Dara Rustumji Motafam (82), Sethna Bhabha Bldg, Banaji Atash Behram Comp, B. J. Marg, 400002; July 18
Zenobia Neville Velati (30), Q/26, Godrej Baug, Off Napean Sea Rd, 400036; July 18
Rohinton Framroze

FIGURES AT A GLANCE*

	Bombay		India		World	
	This issue	1998*	This issue	1998*	This issue	1998*
BIRTHS						
Boys	13	62	1	1	3	29
Girls	14	56	—	4	7	21
MARRIAGES						
Parsi	8	149	1	4	2	6
INTERCOMMUNAL						
Males married out	—	14	—	1	—	1
Females married out	—	17	—	1	—	—
DEATHS						
CONSIGNED						
Males	41	281	24	81	—	20
Females	44	310	26	71	—	18
CREMATED						
Males	—	7	—	—	—	—
Females	—	4	—	—	—	—

*Running totals for 1998 (January-September 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.

Badhniwalla (61), 302, Noorani Apts, Rebello Rd, Bandra (W), 400050; July 19
Nergish Bomanshaw Colsawala (84), 691, Dinshaw Master Rd, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; July 19
Perin Kaikhushru Kalyaniwalla (66), 2, Cyrus Bldg, 1st Ganthan Lane, Andheri (W), 400058; July 19
Firoze Hormasji Lala (82), 20-G, Seervai Bldg, Girton School Comp, Sleater Rd, 400007; July 19
Homi Navroji Mistry (75), 7, Bhedwar Bldg, Khan Est, Mahim, 400016; July 19
Bachoo Fredoon Mody (73), A-56, A. H. Wadia Baug, Parel Tank Rd, 400033; July 19
Nadirsha Darabsha Umrigar (74), Lady Jehangir Bldg, 785/B, Khareghat Rd, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; July 19
Jamshed Darabshaw Doctor (68), Captain Bldg, 275/B, Zoroastrian Clny, Chikalwadi, Tardeo Rd, 400007; July 20
Bertie Cursetji Major (72), 33, Alexandra Ter, Byculia, 400027; July 20
Pervaz Nasserwanji Mehta (44), Room no 9, Dr Engineer Bldg, Kashinath St, Tardeo,

400034; July 20
Mani Burjor Vakil (68), Dina Abad, 644, Khareghat Cross Rd, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; July 20
Minocher Jamshedji Pavri (80), 46, Devchhaya, Tardeo Rd, 400034; July 21
Dina Pesi Colabewala (75), P-35, Nowroz Baug, Lalbaug, 400012; July 22
Cawas Minocher Bilpodiwala (57), 796, Jame Jamshed Rd, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; July 22
Perin Hosang Dhabhar (64), 15/1, A. H. Wadia Baug, Parel Tank Rd, 400033; July 22
Rustum Jehangirji Khambata (96), Sister Bglw, 39, Khurshed Bhabha Rd, Bandra, 400050; July 22
Jini Hormusji Mistry (83), Zoroastrian Bldg, 642, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; July 22
Naja Sorabji Ayrton (96), 24, School Bldg, Cusrow Baug, S. B. Rd, 400039; July 23
Yezad Firoz Engineer (18), 4/59, A. H. Wadia Baug, Parel Tank Rd, 400033; July 23
Fali Dadabhai Mehta (76), 23/10, Sir Ratan Tata Bldg, Tardeo, 400034; July 23
Gool Merwan Baria (91), Laxmi Bhuvan, 803-C,

Dr Ambedkar Rd, Dadar, 400014; July 25
Cavas Hormusji Daruwalla (55), New Khan Bldg, 275/N, Zoroastrian Clny, Chikalwadi, Tardeo Rd, 400007; July 25
Dinamai Ratanshaw Khambatta (86), 1, Shushrut, MBPT Hospital Campus, Wadala, 400037; July 25
Bahadur Pirozshaw Pettigara (81), H-4, Cusrow Baug, S. B. Rd, 400039; July 25
Gool Noshir Anklesaria (86), Dhunmai Bldg, 667, Lady Jehangir Rd, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; July 26
Daudat Phirozsha Ilavia (81), Adajania Hse, 803/B, Dr Ambedkar Rd, Dadar, 400014; July 26
Bapsy Dara Mistry (47), Room no 5, Parekh Bldg, Marazban Clny, Gilder Lane, 400008; July 26
Khushroo Boman Moradian (Irani) (74), A-302, Vikas Towers, Opp Amboli Phatak, Andheri (E), 400069; July 27
Burjor Minocher Writer (66), 42, Lalkaka Hse, 684, Khareghat Rd, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; July 27
Manekbai Mancherji Italia (97), C/o Pesi D. Gundevia, 22-23 Ashish Bldg, Sorabji

Suntoke Lane, Dhobitalao, 400002; July 28
Minoo Pirojsha Patel (77), The Cliff, Raghavji Rd, Cumballa Hill, 400036; July 28
Hoshi Dadiba Zaiwalla (35), 7-A, Hormuz Baug Bldg, Kashinath St, Tardeo, 400034; July 28
Dhunmai Rusi Bharucha (82), Room nos 3 and 4, 13, Shehnaz Manzil, Mehela Patel Agiary Lane, 400007; July 29
Meher Ardeshir Dubash (92), C/o Dr M. N. Nalladaru, B. D. Petit Parsee General Hospital, 400036; July 29
Dara Dhunjishaw Mistry (63), Tehmi Villa, 798, Jame Jamshed Rd, Parsi Clny, Dadar, 400014; July 29
Khurshed Jamshedji Sanjana (74), 12/4, A. H. Wadia Baug, Parel Tank Rd, 400033; July 29
Pallon Jalejar Mistry (72), A-2/23, New Khareghat Clny, Babulnath Rd, 400007; July 30
Pillamai Jemi Adenwalla (75), Padamji Bldg, Station Rd, Mahim, 400016; July 31
Pilloo Dhanjishaw Bilimoria (69), Najoo Mans, Nawab Tank Rd, Dockyard Bridge, Mazgaon, 400010; July 31
Nariman Ratansha Daruwalla (48), F. Adam Mhl, Wadia St, Tardeo, 400034; July 31
Dinsha Khodayar Irani (83), 304, Mahavir I, Off J. P. Rd, Opp Pratap Soc, Andheri (W), 400058; July 31
Baby boy of Villoo Khusru Mistry (stillborn), 84, Satnam Apts, 93, Cuff Parade, 400005; July 31

CALCUTTA

BORN
 A boy, **Zahan**, to **Kainaz** and **Kurush Bharucha**, brother to **Kayan**; August 12

DIED

Phiroze Motabhoj Guzder; June 13
Diniar Peshotan Madan, husband of **Antara** and brother of **Shirin** and **Ratan**; June 23
Jer Nariman Guzdar, mother of **Tina Meher Mehta**; July 4
Nurgez Ratan Dustoor, mother of late **Meher R. Panthaki** and **Manek**; July 9
Tehmina Minocher Bulsara,

mother of **Beji**; July 12
Hoshang Buchia, husband of **Dolly** and brother of **Soli**; July 20
Naja Contractor, daughter of **Tehmi** and **Malcolm** and sister of **Dilshad**; August 21

NAGPUR

DIED

Amy Medhora (40); June 9

NAVSARI

DIED

Pirozsha Manekji Asundaria, husband of **Nargis** and father of **Villie**, **Minoo** and **Firdosh**; July 31

POONA

DIED

Rustom Kaikhushroo Commisariat (84), Ruvina, 101, Salisbury Park, 411037; June 1
Dina Erach Sarondewala (79), Green Acres, Salunke Vihar, 411048; June 2
Rustom Kaikhushroo Irani (84), 840, D. M. Rd, 411001; June 8
Hoshang Rustom Irani (33), 2415, East St, 411001; June 9
Shirin Faramroze Vakil (92), 1, Kahaun Rd, 411001; June 9
Mani Nusservanji Kharadi (82), Shanti Kunj Comp, Opp GPO, 411001; June 10
Veera Alborz Irani (37), 12, Banton Court 2, Salisbury Park, 411037; June 11
Hilla Homi Toddywalla (74), 189, Dhole Patil Rd, 411001; June 12
Navajbai Eduljee Batliwalla (94), 2, Koregaon Park, 411001; June 15
Hormusji Ardeshir Aibara (99), Sakar Villa, 1980, Convent St, 411001; June 26
Bezonji Firozshah Moos (89), 24, Central Apts, Convent St, 411001; June 28
Faramroze M. Merchant (74), Anklesaria Bldg, D. M. Rd, 411001; July 1
Silla Jehanbux Satha (89), 201, Cawasji Apt, 11/1, Salisbury Park, 411037; July 1
Keki Burjorji Cooper (84), 608, Miami Apts, St Vincent St, 411001; July 11
Nariman Navroji Icchaporia (54), K/6, Konark Puram, 411048; July 15
Noshir Hormuz Gandhi (72), Behramji Bldg, Sholapur Bazar, Near Poolgate, 411001;

July 16
Nariman Ratansha Sukhia (86), 2/A, Clover Ter, Nathan Rd, 411001; July 16
Katy Sohrab Wadia (75), Sanaya Plot 10, Rajiv Ngr, Viman Ngr, 411014; July 21
Rustom Ardeshir Irani (68), H/1, 6, Salunke Vihar, 411048; July 27
Ratansha Darabsha Chhoga (82), 616, Sachapir St, 411001; July 28

SECUNDERABAD

DIED

Alamai Behramji Chinoy, mother of **Roshan Patel**, **Feroze** and **Jehangir**; May 6

SURAT

DIED

Rati Savakshaw Cooper (87), Saiyedpuri Bhagol, Bibiniwadi, 395003; July 8
Khorshed Rustomji Bhagat (75), Vakil St, Shahpore, 395003; July 11
Adil Bomi Master (29), Bejonji Kotwal St, Nanpura, 395001; July 11
Roshan Hiraji Daruwalla, Joshi Block, Shahpore, 395003; July 17
Maneckben Bhikhaji Munshi (67), Village Umersadi, Taluka Mandvi, Dist Surat, 370465; July 31
Bomi Sorabji Patel (71), Savasadi Sadan, Bhavnagri St, 395003; August 1
Siloo Burjor Sethna (70), 12/627, Kelani Vakhar, Rani Talao, 395003; August 8
Goolbanoo Hirjibhai Dastur (75), Dhunchhaya, Agiary St, Rustompura, 395002; August 9
Cooverbai Ardeshir Roowala (87), Parsiwad, Rander; August 14
Eruchshaw Merwanji Jijina (69), Shakti Apt, Vakil St, Shahpore, 395003; August 14

VADODARA

MARRIED

Rukhshana A. Debara and **Javed Cawas Wykes**; June 11

DIED

Meheramai Navroji Hirjibehdin (91); January 25
Dolatbanoo Kaikhushroo Patwa (74); February 14
Jehangirji Framroze Marawalla (63); February 28
Sam Dhunjisha Anklesaria

(74); March 3
Manimai Behramji Chinoy (78); March 24
Bahadursha Dhunjishaw Khambatta (Godrawalla) (86); April 22
Frenymai Rustomji Patel (80); May 5
Behroze Yezdi Surti (42); May 6
Fakirji Rustomji Chitalwalla; May 30
Adi Marazban Elavia (Rajpipla) (54); June 10

AUSTRALIA

South Australia

BORN

A girl, **Tanya**, to **Kamal** and **Carl Kavina**, sister to **Zhea** at **Adelaide**; May 5

New South Wales

BORN

A girl, **Zoish**, to **Ashish** and **Zal Irani**; August 6
 A boy, **Kevin**, to **Dinaaz** and **Farokh Batliwalla**, brother to **Annita**; August 28

MARRIED

Shahrazad Yazdani and **Jamshid Goshtasbi** at **Sydney**; July 24

Victoria

BORN

A boy, **Arman**, to **Mehrnaz** and **Kurush Bilimoria** at **Melbourne**; July 2

CANADA

British Columbia

BORN

A girl, **Neeku**, to **Monick** and **Jamshed Amanat** at **Vancouver**; April 28
 A girl, **Maleena**, to **Roshni** and **Daren Dell** at **New Westminster**; April 29
 A girl, **Neusha**, to **Armita** and **Azadmehr Kaviani** at **Vancouver**; May 29
 A boy, **Zubin**, to **Farah** and **Roozbeh Mehrabadi** at **Vancouver**; June 16
 A girl, **Zahra**, to **Tazeen** and **Kersasp Bharucha** at **Coquitlam**; June 25
 A girl, **Monaz**, to **Shahnaz** and **Porus Irani** at **Vancouver**; July 26

MARRIED

Armity Namiranian and **Parviz Javanmardi** at **Vancouver**; June 27

Compiled by Roxana A. Driver

The titan against the tide

Parinaz M. Gandhi

Died: Minoo Rustom Masani, 92, one of the last surviving members of the Indian Constituent Assembly and an eminent parliamentarian who was a socialist turned liberal with a progressive vision for a free India, on May 27, 1998 in Bombay following cardiac arrest.

"The best tribute that can be paid to the memory of Minoo Masani is to imbibe his spirit of constructive dissent, active citizenship and courage to speak out what needs to be said for the public good," concluded the resolution passed at a condolence meeting in Masani's honor on June 12, 1998 at the Bombay House Auditorium. "A fighter for the country's independence...a patriot with an international outlook...a diplomat, a prolific writer and a rare combination of a thinker and a man of action, Minoo Masani was a man who strove constantly to educate himself...He was indeed very 'modern' and intellectually relevant," summed up the condolence resolution.

The importance of practising what one preaches and never resorting to wrong means to achieve right ends were the lessons he said he learnt from Mahatma Gandhi, conveyed eminent freedom fighter Dr Usha Mehta who chaired the meeting. Commending him for his independent judgment, Mehta referred to one occasion when there was a possibility of offering him ministership in the union government. When Masani was asked whether he would side with Pandit Nehru or Sardar Patel on becoming minister, Masani is said to have responded, "I won't side with either of them. I will wait to see who agrees with the proposals I would be putting forward..."

While Mehta was representing the Bombay Freedom Fighters Association, the Bombay Gandhi Smarak Nidhi and the Mani Bhavan Gandhi Museum at the condolence meeting, the other organizations to participate in the meet were: Adult Education Institute, Arun Mangal Seva Vikas Yojana, Avagahana (Gun-

tur), Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay Sarvodaya Mandal, Citizens for Democracy, Forum of Free Enterprise, *Freedom First*, Hindustani Andolan, Indian Committee for Cultural Freedom, Leslie Sawhny Programme, *New Quest*



Masani: constructive dissent, active citizenship and courageous stand

People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCI), Project for Economic Education, Rajaji Foundation, *The Secularist*, Society for the Right to Die with Dignity, Swatantra Bharat, Trusteeship Foundation, Yusuf Meherally Centre.

Eminent jurist Nani Palkhivala commented on Masani's "unsurpassed reputation as a man of total integrity in public life. And this quality by itself was sufficient to disqualify him from being a successful politician." The last decade of his life, observed Palkhivala, was devoted to free the Indian economy from the shackles of bureaucratic control. "He became a great champion of deregulation and economic liberalization." The future of India lay in imparting value-based education and giving the youth the right lead to realize their true potential, Palkhivala conveyed Masani's views. In the last of his many books, *We Indians*, he had candidly acknowledged, "We, of my generation,

have made such a mess of our country's affairs that, in my opinion, we have no right to preach to young folks."

"I rebelled against him as a teenager," recalled Masani's son Zareer by his second wife. "I became a socialist when he had strongly rejected socialism. He used to say to me, 'If you are not a socialist at 20 you have no heart, if you are still a socialist when you are over 40 you have no head.'" As mentioned Zareer who had flown in from London to pay his tributes at the condolence meeting, "He would not have expected a eulogy. He would have approved if I begin by mentioning some of his faults." His impatience, particularly for the proverbial inefficiency and indiscipline endemic to India, was his major drawback, according to Zareer. "God give me patience but hurry up about it," read a plaque presented to Masani by his third wife Sheela, confided Zareer to sum up his father's impatience. "He totally rejected populism whether of the socialistic sort or of the nationalistic sort...He was not prepared to compromise his principles on anything. The result was he never held high political office. He was always greatly respected. He had great influence on those in office but he never held office himself or when he did, he resigned for reasons of principle," stated Zareer.

He had been nominated by the Government of India as representative on the United Nations Sub-Commission on Minorities. However, as points out his close associate of 40 years S. V. Raju in his editorial in *Freedom First*, a quarterly of liberal ideas founded by Masani in 1952, "Masani invited Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru's wrath when he refused to turn a blind eye to the persecution of minorities in the Soviet Union and its satellites in Eastern Europe and was sent off in 1948 as India's ambassador to Brazil." During his tenure as member of the Lok Sabha between 1957 and 1971, among the important posts he held were chairman of the Public Ac-

counts Committee of Parliament and leader of the single largest party in the opposition (the Swatantra Party which he had co-founded with C. Rajagopalachari in 1959) with the accompanying prerogative of opening the debate on the Finance Bill that follows the introduction of the Union Budget. Although he was elected to the Lok Sabha as an independent candidate from Ranchi, Bihar, within two years he was at the helm of the liberal-conservative Swatantra Party, directing its policies and affairs.

Referring to his self discipline, one of his colleagues in the fourth Lok Sabha, D. N. Patodia, narrated one incident when the Speaker Sanjeeva Reddy accustomed to repeatedly ringing the bell to remind parliamentarians to stick to the time allotted to them for their presentation, mistakenly pressed the bell before the time limit while Masani was making a point. Masani, reportedly, stopped speaking instantly and sat down before even finishing the sentence. Reddy pleaded with Masani to continue but he declined. A stickler for punctuality, on one occasion he is even supposed to have started a meeting without the chief guest who was late, recounted lawyer Navroz Seervai at the condolence meeting.

Referring to Masani as a "master draftsman," Tata Sons director Dr Freddie Mehta declared, "His brilliance combined with his passion for punctuality and inability to suffer fools may have unfortunately won him a few enemies, but that still did not prevent him from emerging as an organizer par excellence. But above all, Minoo belonged to that band of incredibly fearless warriors of the intellect who would suffer any penalties rather than bow to the prevailing wind of populism."

Commending his intellectual honesty, Yogesh Kamdar of the PUCL noted, "In our society and country we don't admit we are wrong. He did it a number of times in his life." His book, *Our India*, was a textbook in schools even in pre-Independence India and it was a primer for all social activists. Yet a few years later in *Socialism Reconsidered* he admitted he was mistaken and repudiated many of the things he had

said in *Our India*. His other works include: *Your Food, Picture of a Plan, Plea for a Mixed Economy, Our Growing Human Family, Cooperative Farming, the Great Debate, The Communist Party of India — A Short History, Too Much Politics Too Little Citizenship, Liberalism, Is JP the Answer.*

His impeccable integrity — intellectual as also financial — was a source of admiration for all. As revealed M. R. Pai of the Forum of Free Enterprise,



Masani (left) with J. R. D. Tata: exchange of ideas

"Some years ago he asked me to help arrange his finances for his old age. And when I saw his assets I was surprised that they were so meagre. It was an indication of what has been said that for a person who has been honest in public life he must be committed to voluntary poverty. Had he concentrated on his profession which was management consultancy, he would have been a rich person. He gave his time and talent for the cause of the country."

In Masani's own words, first carried in *The Illustrated Weekly of India*, November 16, 1969, "Since 1954, I have been, at the instance of my good friend

Jayaprakash Narayan, Sampattidani No 29 on the roll of the All India Sarva Seva Sangh, giving a small part of my income every year to enable the landless to be given a plough or a pair of cattle or some seed to cultivate the land made available as a result of Bhoodan. This modest attempt at 'trusteeship' gives me considerable personal satisfaction, even though it also creates a certain amount of financial strain and embarrassment."

The Stoic philosophy and the logic of the *Meditations* of the Roman emperor, Marcus Aurelius, had impressed Masani since his youth. As conveyed by him, "It is only what we ourselves do that can hurt us, nothing that anyone else does, however beastly, can possibly diminish one's dignity or make one shrink. I find that this philosophy helps in making it possible to tell the truth even when it is unpalatable and builds resistance to smears and lampooning as also a relative indifference to popularity, the pursuit of which is the bane of our national leadership. From youth onwards I have responded to Tagore's invitation 'Ekla cholo ré (Tread the path alone)' and the sentiment of James Russell Lowell in his *Stanzas on Freedom*: They are slaves who fear to speak/For the fallen and the weak;/They are slaves who dare not be/ In the right with two or three."

As editor of *Freedom First* he fought the censorship imposed during Indira Gandhi's Emergency. As wrote India's attorney general Soli Sorabjee, "At a time when fear gripped editors and proprietors of most newspapers, Minoo decided to challenge the censor's action. He succeeded. The Bombay High Court in a landmark judgment... observed, 'Under the censorship order the censor is appointed the nursemaid of democracy and not its grave-digger.'" But when the Janata Party was elected to power in 1978, Masani who was appointed chairman of the Minorities Commission resigned from this post soon thereafter over differences on principles and approach.

Yet another occasion when Masani had chosen to oppose the authorities was when the Indian government abolished privy purses. His Swatantra Party

then was reportedly alone in opposing the move in Parliament.

"As the party's ideologue he was clear that the Swatantra Party should eschew non-parliamentary forms of protests like satyagrahas, morchas, bandhs and walkouts in the legislature. He was largely influential in ensuring that the Party did not form fronts in the trade union and student movements. Perhaps it was his insistence on discipline and doing the right thing that led to the Party's exit from electoral politics," assessed Raju. In 1971 after their miserable performance in the polls, he resigned from the presidency of the Party and from party politics.

Following his retirement from politics he continued to be active in public life. He founded the Leslie Sawhny Programme of Training for Democracy, the Project for Economic Education, the Society for the Right to Die with Dignity. His own health was in sound condition thanks to his regimen of diet and yogic exercises. As explained Sheela, "Minoo would have lived to be a hundred, so robust was his constitution but for the fact that the most cherished part of his self started giving way — his sight... And as his ability to read and write started giving way, so did his zest for living." She quoted a couple of lines from his two-volume autobiography, *Bliss was it in that Dawn and Against the Tide*, wherein he wrote, "Whether mine is a life of wasted opportunities I do not know, but it is a life I would live again, if I had the option."

The son of Sir Rustom and Lady Manijeh, the formative years of Masani's exhaustive life were spent at the Bharda School. He later graduated from the Elphinstone College, the London School of Economics and Lincoln's Inn. He joined the Bombay Bar but soon gave up practice to participate in the freedom struggle. He was instrumental in forming the Congress Socialist Party (CSP) with the likes of Jayaprakash Narayan, Achyut Patwardhan, Yusuf Meherally and became its joint secretary. Disillusionment with Soviet communism led him to question Marxist dogma and to rethink his socialist beliefs, with his consequent resignation

from the CSP. When Gandhiji launched the Quit India Movement, Masani who was then working with the Tatas, resigned from his job and volunteered as a satyagrahi, even courting imprisonment.

On his release from jail, Masani entered the political arena via the Bombay Municipal Corporation where



Masani as a child: "It is a life I would live again, if I had the option"

he had served as mayor in 1943 and thence to membership of the Indian Legislative Assembly (later the Constituent Assembly). He was then called upon to assist in the drafting of the Indian Constitution as a member of the Fundamental Rights Sub-Committee and Union Powers Committee. On the 50th anniversary of the first meeting of the Constituent Assembly in December 1996, he was to have been felicitated in the Central Hall of Parliament by the former President of India Dr Shankar Dayal Sharma. Due to his ill health, the memento to Masani was eventually presented almost a year later at his residence by the Maharashtra chief minister Manohar Joshi, as per a write-up in *The Indian Express* of No-

vember 8, 1997.

His efforts were next expended on the Democratic Research Service which he founded with the blessings of the then deputy prime minister Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. He later took the initiative to establish the Indian Committee for Cultural Freedom with some other stalwarts and affiliated it to the Congress for Cultural Freedom in Paris. The Swatantra Party's affairs then kept him busy for the next 12 years or so.

The reservoir of experience came to the conclusion, "Since our politicians are by and large beyond repair, if India is to be saved, it will have to be saved by the small man, particularly the middle class of the cities and the landed farmers of the countryside who are the backbone of the nation."

The hard-core liberal who was known to be an agnostic had opted for cremation. Masani was not active in community institutions but took an interest in community developments, often commenting on something he had read in *Parsiana* to the magazine's editor who is also associated with *Freedom First* from the time Masani rejoined as editor in 1971. His father Sir Rustom had authored a book on Zoroastrianism titled *The Religion of the Good Life* which for years was the standard text on the religion in many universities

abroad.

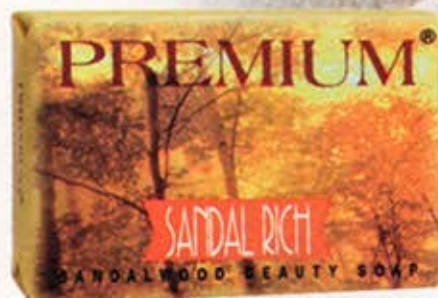
According to Masani, "Liberalism is not anti-religious but it is non-denominational and perhaps sceptical... A good liberal would tolerate and respect all religions equally." On another occasion he wrote, "To those timid spirits who are afraid of radical change, I commend the words of George Bernard Shaw in his play *Major Barbara*: 'Well, you have made yourself something that you call a morality or a religion or what not. It doesn't fit the facts. Well, scrap it. Scrap it and get one that fits. That is what is wrong with the world at present. It scraps its obsolete steam engines and dynamos; but it won't scrap its old prejudices and its old moralities and its old religions and its old political constitutions.'"

The non-conventional thinker is survived by his wife Sheela and son Zareer.

DISCOVER THE LUXURIES OF A PREMIUM BATH



Sandal Rich



Imparts natural richness
of Sandal to your skin

Deo Fresh



With TCC which cuts down odour and
gives you freshness for hours together

Luxury



With 80% TFM to prevent
afterwash dryness



Luxuriate in a skin friendly PREMIUM bath *J.K.Hillier Curtis Limited*



Indian or West Indian,
connoisseurs are of
one opinion. Best pineapple,
Rasna pineapple.

