


FEZANA JOURNAL



DECEMBER 1989

VOLUME 11, No. 4

A PLEDGE FULFILLED

The Zoroastrian Association of Pennsylvania has honoured its pledge and donated an amount of \$1,000.00 to FEZANA's General Fund. Can we expect other Associations to follow this unique and generous gesture?

Member Associations must know that FEZANA cannot survive unless life - in the form of financial assistance - is injected into it periodically. FEZANA has no substantial income of its own in relation to any ambitious projects it might plan to undertake. Such ambitious projects should be supported by member associations, since FEZANA is really the root from which we all stem.

Associations must dissolve local boundaries and loosen their purse strings: without this, FEZANA will be supersaturated with "Manashni" and "Gavashni," and a chronic lack of "Kunashni" could lead to its asphyxiation.

* * * * *

THE U.S. AND CANADIAN IRANIAN ZOROASTRIAN REFUGEE PROGRAMS

THE PS 4000 PROGRAM

PS 4000 is the designation given to the program associated with the relocation to the U.S. and Canada of the Iranian Zoroastrian refugees languishing in India and Pakistan. In an effort to oversee a smooth flow of communication, Zoroastrian Studies, Bombay, accepted to play a major role with Mr. Khojeste Mistree as the International Project Manager. A four-member team consisting of Katy Neemuchwalla, Firoza Punthakey Mistree, Mahrukh Mobedji and Pareezad Punthakey was formed to coordinate the work between the State Department officials, U.S. Embassies in India and Pakistan, and the members of the Special Task Committees.

The most trying experience in the initial stages of this process was the determination of the narratives of genuine persecution of the candidates on a chronological basis. This hurdle was successfully crossed with the help of Mr. Ardeshir Khosraviani - a refugee accepted by the Canadian government. He spent many hours of his valuable time explaining to the refugees in their mother tongue what was expected of them. A major part of the groundwork has now been completed. All the candidates listed now have UNHCR blue cards and acquiring this card recognizes these individuals as bona fide refugees by the United Nations, prior to their interviews.

It has taken the efforts of many sincere and dedicated Zoroastrians to achieve the smooth operation of the program thus far. Mr. Farshid Salamati and Ms Susan Varjavand of the Persian Zoroastrian Organization of California deserve special recognition for their sponsorship assistance and for their prompt and efficient dispatch of the required documents. We are also thankful to Mr. Tehemtian Aresh for bringing the issue of Zoroastrian refugees to the attention of the Fourth North American Zoroastrian Congress. This program would have been incomplete without the help of Professor James Russell who aided us by writing letters to various government agencies at all levels, including the office of the President of the United States. Our thanks are due to Mr. Kaemariz Dotiwala for his support during the execution of the program at all times.

Among the U.S. Government officials, the contribution of Dr. Ada Adler was outstanding. The program would not have seen the light of day without her support. Her services to the Zoroastrian community are sincerely recognized.

CANADIAN REFUGEE PROGRAM

Most Iranian Zoroastrian refugees whose names were listed since 1987, have been given legal refugee status since May 1989 by the Canadian High Commission in New Delhi.

The Zoroastrians of British Columbia and Ontario by their efforts at the Canadian end have greatly facilitated the work. Thanks are due to Mr. Mehraban Farhangi, Mr. Mehraban Zarthoshty and the officials of the Zoroastrian Society of Ontario for their valuable assistance towards the success of the program.

Mr. Michael Gagne, the Canadian Immigration Officer, in New Delhi, until recently, interviewed all the candidates on the refugee list. Most of them have been accepted. The priority consideration given to the Iranian Zoroastrian refugees in such a large number is unprecedented. The sympathetic consideration of these cases by Mr. Gagne, has vastly contributed to the success of the project.

Zoroastrian Studies, Bombay, has played a key role in the project by taking care of all administrative details. Hundreds of documents were typed and dispatched to meet the set deadlines. The smooth execution of the entire program was made possible through the good offices of the organization, and we sincerely thank Mr. Khojeste Mistree and his team.

We hope the joint efforts of the Zoroastrians of North America, India and Pakistan will soon bear fruition. Within a few months these young Zoroastrians will reach the shore of the U.S. and Canada to begin a new chapter in their lives.

REFUGEE REHABILITATION FUND

The Iranian Zoroastrian Association of New York has generously donated \$500.00 towards the fund for rehabilitation of Zoroastrian refugees in North America. Last year, the Association collected \$1500.00 for the refugees and sent the amount to the Karachi Parsi Anjuman to be used to promote refugee relocation programs. The figure for the North American Rehabilitation Fund has now reached approximately \$2,430.00.

* * * *

September 19, 1989

Mr Rohinton Rivetna
President FEZANA
626 West 56th Street
Hinsdale-Illinois-60521
USA

Dear Mr. Rivetna,

We, the Zoroastrian Iranian Refugees who were stranded in Karachi Pakistan would like to thank you and FEZANA for making the PS 4000 Programme such a tremendous success. We would like to thank the members of FEZANA for sponsoring us into the United States of America.

We greatly appreciate the outstanding work that has made this programme an unprecedented success.

We hope to live up to the expectations of all those who have supported us, sponsored us and helped us in our hour of need.

Once again we thank you and the members of FEZANA for all that has been done to get us into the United States of America.

Thanking you,

Yours faithfully,

Ramin Khodadadi N. Kh.
Ramin Kh. Nasrabadi

Mehraban Mehrdad
Mehraban Mehrdad

Shahram Mali
Sharam Mali

Mehrdad Ganji
Mehrdad Ganji

Gordafarid D. Yazdi
Gordafarid D. Yazdi

Parviz E. Kalantari
Parviz E. Kalantari

Farzin Mehrdad
Farzin Mehrdad

Shahbehram Mehraein
Shahbehram Mehraein

AR-KH
Ardeshir Khosravi

Farshid Faramarzi
Farshid Faramarzi

Atoosa D. Yazdi
Atoosa D. Yazdi

Farshad Booromand-E-Rad
Farshad Booromand-E-Rad

* * * * *

ZOROASTRIANS IN AN INTERFAITH DIALOGUE

The activities of the Council for a Parliament of World Religions (CPWR) are proliferating with time. FEZANA's President, Mr. Rohinton Rivetna, is actively involved in the works of this body. As a representative of CPWR he attended the Board meeting of the American Buddhist Congress, to encourage them to become co-sponsors of the Council.

In his message to Zoroastrians on this continent, he says, "As we Zoroastrians establish ourselves on this continent, it is of the utmost importance that we reach out and present ourselves as a major religion to the various other traditions and faiths in North America. Listed below are some of the interfaith groups that have been functioning for some time."

| | |
|---------------|--|
| Los Angeles | Inter Religious Council of S. California (213) 465-7114 |
| Washington,DC | Interfaith Conference of Metropolitan Washington (203) 234-6300 |
| New York | Temple of Understanding (212) 865-9117 |
| Vancouver | Global Interfaith Network Society (604) 732-6-37 |
| Houston | Contact: Dr. Katy Irani who works with a group that promotes interfaith understanding. |
| Chicago | Council for Parliament of World Religions Contact: Mr. R. Rivetna (312) 325-5383 |
| Global | International consultancy on Religion, Education, and Culture, Manchester, U.K. Contact: Ms Barbara Cousins (061) 434-8374 |

Mr. Rivetna further adds, "unless we Zoroastrians take the initiative, we can easily be forgotten. It will take some positive efforts on our part to make Zoroastrianism a recognized word among the peoples of the U.S. and Canada, and to give our ancient faith the place it so richly deserves, alongside the other great religions of the world."

* * * * *

ON THE NAVROZE MODY TRIAL

In a letter received by FEZANA's President, Mr. Gregory J. Sakawicz, Chief, Prosecutors Supervisory section, responds to some of the concerns expressed by the Zoroastrians of North America regarding the Mody Trial. In the beginning he explains: "The Prosecutors Supervisory Section within the Division of Criminal Justice, has been directed to review your letter addressed to Governor Thomas H. Kean and to attempt to address your concerns."

Regarding the complaint - permitting Hispanic jurors to remain on the jury that returned the verdict, he explains: "The law in New Jersey is quite clear. If a prosecutor systematically excluded prospective jurors based upon

their race, colour, religion or ethnic background, the courts would rule that the jury selection was flawed and that any conviction that may have been returned would be overturned with the matter being scheduled for a retrial." He further adds, "While I accept your frustrations, I am constrained to advise you that jury exclusion based upon the background of the victims, defendants or others, would do great harm to our system of criminal justice."

While respecting the sentiments of Mr. & Mrs. Jamshed Mody, he says, "since the verdict, I have spoken with Mr. Mody and other individuals from the Indian community . . . I am quite certain that he will support my statement that the Hudson County Prosecutor's Office assigned a very experienced prosecutor who presented the evidence in a very professional and dedicated fashion. I also have come to appreciate," he continues, "the inner strength of the Modys who have endured more than any person should have to bear." Regarding the service of justice, he asserts by saying, "please accept my assurances when I state that we, in New Jersey law enforcement, have attempted to the best of our ability to gather evidence and to make a professional presentation in our attempt to support the charges in the indictment."

This letter to some degree rectifies the matters raised by Zoroastrians across the land in the case of Navroze Mody. It is an experience to recognize that a united front on matters of broader concern such as this, does draw a response from the highest office of the State.

(Abstracted from a letter of the Law Department of the State of New Jersey.)

* * * * *

FIFTH WORLD ZOROASTRIAN CONGRESS

The Congress is being sponsored and organized by the Bombay Parsi Panchayet at the request of the Federation of Parsi Zoroastrian Anjumans of India. It is to be held in Bombay from January 3 to 7, 1990. The sponsors say:

"It has been five years since the last Congress was held. During this period our community - which has dispersed widely - has had to cope with changing times. . . . Moreover, we are at the threshold of a new century; hence the need for us to meet and get together once again as a worldwide community is all the more greater. Taking all this into consideration, the theme for the Congress has been very appropriately selected as '**TO 2000 AND BEYOND.**'"

"The Congress is being hosted to give you and your family an opportunity to meet Zoroastrians from all over the world, hear qualified speakers from different parts of the world, participate in discussions, and be a part of an international gathering that stands for the continuation of the Zoroastrian religion, community and tradition. The Congress will provide a platform for free exchange of ideas and views. And your presence will help formulate plans for our community to meet the challenges of the future."

Topics for discussion have been carefully selected. Under the heading of Social Change Processes will be discussed:

1. Studies of Contemporary Zoroastrian Societies in different parts of the world;

2. Demographic trends of the community and future implications for Zoroastrian Institutions;
3. Strengthening Community organizations - covering aspects such as leadership, asset management, development, philanthropy and communications.

Under the heading of Socio-Religious Concerns, the following topics will be discussed:

1. Identity problems of Zoroastrians in other religious societies;
2. Methodologies of religious education for pre/post Navjote groups;
3. Survival of tradition in the 21st Century.

Eminent speakers from India and abroad have been invited to submit papers and present their views on the selected topics. There will be four speakers for each of the topics; their detailed papers will be distributed among the delegates.

And in order to allow greater participation and in-depth discussions, it has been decided to take up two important topics for discussion at workshops which will be held simultaneously in adjacent rooms. The topics of the workshops are:

- a. Future problems of young Zoroastrian families as perceived by the youth, e.g., problems of marriage, children, adoption, identity problems, etc. This will provide a unique opportunity for greater degree of interchange of ideas by involving the youth of the community in discussing the problems facing the future.
- b. Problems of the poor and the aged in our community.

Admission to the Fifth World Zoroastrian Congress will be restricted to those who make a donation falling under any of the following categories:

| | |
|--|--|
| Patron (with spouse) | Rs. 2,000/- (includes free admission to the Gala Dinner-Entertainment and Play for both) |
| Vice-Patron (with spouse) | Rs. 1,250/- |
| Member of Reception Committee | Rs. 500/- |
| Member's spouse | Rs. 200/- |
| Delegate (local & overseas) | Rs. 100/- |
| Delegate's spouse | Rs. 50/- |
| Student (school, college & postgraduate) | Rs. 20/- |
| Full-time practising Mobed | NIL |

The official inauguration of the Congress by H.E. Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma, Vice-President of India, takes place at 5:30 p.m. on January 3, at the Parsi Gymkhana Grounds. The Plenary Sessions being each day at 9:30 a.m. at the Birla Matushri Sabhagarh and end at 5:30 p.m. The Gala Dinner-Entertainment is planned for 7:30 p.m. on the evening of January 4, at the Parsi Gymkhana Grounds and the Play is scheduled for 7:30 p.m. on January 6, at the Birla Matushri Sabhagarh. Workshops on January 5, 2:00 to 5:30 p.m. will be held at the S.N.D.T. College.

* * * * *

YET ANOTHER SKI ADVENTURE FOR THE YOUTH

FEZANA would like to cordially invite you to the second annual Z-Ski trip being held this year at 'Smugglers Notch' in Vermont between January 2-January 7, 1990.

The total cost per head is \$230.00. This includes five nights deluxe condominium lodging, five days unlimited lift tickets on all three inter-connected mountians, guided three-mountain tour, indoor swimming, sauna, and hot tub privileges, ice skating, movies, bonfires, entertainment passes to five lounges with dancing, and village activities including hot chocolate and cider around the bonfire every day after skiing. This also includes tax, service charges, and a \$50.00 deposit.

The condominium is located 10 yards from the ski slopes. It accommodates 12 people comfortably, includes 2 bathrooms, washer, dryer, fireplace, a full size kitchen with utensils and a deck overlooking the mountain.

The cost does not include meals, so we recommend you bring some extra money for meals and other extraneous expenses.

This meeting will put an emphasis on having fun together as a group, to get to know other people from different regions of North America. Group discussions will be held but they will hinge primarily on one's own experiences and feelings on any subject the speaker wishes to talk about. The success of the previous Z-Ski trip has lead us to arrange this trip. We certainly hope many of you will be able to participate.

There is limited accommodation available so we request that you send in your reservation along with a \$50.00 deposit per person as soon as possible. This will be on a first come first serve basis. Please send to:

Farzeen Jungalwala
950 Main Street
Clark University
Box 1118
Worcester, MA 01610

Telephone: (508) 795-6854 or (508) 443-6858

The balance of the amount of the trip will be collected on December 15, 1989. Travel plans should be made in advance to get to Burlington, Vermont, by air, or Smuggler's Notch by bus or car. If you have any inquiries, do not hesitate to give Ferzeen a call.

* * * * *

ZOROASTRIAN FRIENDSHIP SERVICE

The June 1989 issue announced the possible initiation of the Zoroastrian Friendship Service in FEZANA's Journal. The first announcement is as follows:

Lady aged 31 years, with postgraduate qualifications,
living in Canada, seeks partner from U.S.A or Canada.

Ad. No. 1

Please put AD. No. ... on the outside of your reply envelope and mail to Mrs. Dolly P. Dastoor, Secretary, FEZANA, 3765 Malo Street, Brossard, Quebec J4Y 1B4, Canada.

* * * * *

A DEDICATED ZARATHOSHTY PASSED AWAY

A TRIBUTE TO MR. JAMSHEDJI KHURSEDJI PAVRI

Mr. Jamshedji Pavri, a resident of Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, a Zoroastrian of unmatched dedication to the religion of Zarathosht, passed away on Saturday, October 14, 1989, at the age of 72.

The demise of 'our' Jamshedji marks the end of a milestone in the lifespan of the community of North America. With his intense dedication and passion for perpetuation of the Zoroastrian faith on this continent he has carved out a chapter in the history of this community and has left an awesome void, too formidable to fill.

Born, March 20, 1917 in Bombay, India; Jamshedji obtained his early education in Bombay. He left for Hong Kong at the young age of 17, only to return to Bombay for further education in 1941. He attended Sir J.J. Zarathoshti Madressa, and studied Avesta, Pahlavi and Pazand, with outstanding savants and educators, Behramgore Anklesaria, and Irach J.S. Taraporewala. In 1958, Jamshedji emigrated to Canada with his wife Roda and son Yazdi, and resided in Vancouver ever since.

His zeal and enthusiasm for religious knowledge and social concern for humanity surfaced at an early age of 22, when he organized discussion groups on these subjects in Hong Kong. He was the founding member of the Zoroastrian Society of British Columbia, which was incorporated in February 22, 1968. He also played a leading role in the formation of several Gujarati and Indian Societies in British Columbia. He represented Zoroastrians at the British Columbia centennial celebrations.

Jamshedji has left behind a legacy of 1200 volumes on the subject of Zoroastrianism. His most passionate concern was for the future of North American Zoroastrians, which he once expressed in the following remark: "In North America to hold the community...the only cementing bond possible...would be a community publication that regularly provides...information and sent out free to all Zoroastrians".

He was a knowledgeable counselor whose advice and opinion will be sadly missed by this vibrant community.

May his soul find the unabated peace and tranquility and continue to guide us from the Divine House of Peace.

EDITOR

YOUTH SECTION

ZOYNA (Zoroastrian Youth of North America) issues its first Newsletter.

The creation of a Newsletter pertaining to the Zoroastrian youth of North America has been discussed and debated for a long time, and now it is finally here. Let me first of all welcome you to our first issue. My name is Jamshed Engineer and I hope you, our readership, will think of this Newsletter as a first of its kind in our small but vibrant community across North America.

I feel the main purpose of this Newsletter is to provide young Zoroastrians across North America with vital information on upcoming events, activities and news throughout the country. Furthermore, I feel we should think of this newsletter, which for now is titled ZYONA (Zoroastrian Youth of North America) as a link between every community in North America. It is a way to keep in tune with the Zoroastrian community on a national level.

Frequently, when the word "national" is associated with Zoroastrians in North America, only one association springs to mind: FEZANA. FEZANA is the Federation of Zoroastrian Associations of North America and through it ZOYNA is made possible. The editing, printing and circulation tasks of ZYONA are all performed by FEXANA, while the news and editorial content of ZYONA are that of the Zoroastrian Youth of North America from which this Newsletter gets its name.

If there are any other suggestions for naming this newsletter, please let us know by contacting either myself or Dr. Jehan Bagli, editor of the FEZANA Journal, at the address listed at the end of the newsletter.

Most of the news and information embedded in ZYONA is related directly to the Youth Congress held annually in various North American cities. We at ZYONA realize not every Zoroastrian in North America has had the opportunity to attend the previous three Youth Congresses; as a result, we hope to inform these youth as well as the youth in attendance about what transpired at those meetings. As I mentioned above, the goal of this newsletter is to keep everyone up-to-date and informed on the issues and news affecting the Zoroastrian youth as a community in North America.

HOUSTON CONGRESS AIMS AT STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY

Hosted by the Zoroastrian Youth Group of Houston and FEZANA, the third Annual Zoroastrian Youth Congress of North America was aimed at strengthening the awareness of several basic issues facing the Zoroastrian youth community in North America.

The question as to whether this year's congress was successful in raising the discussion and debate of various issues in the Zoroastrian world has no easy answer. Each Zoroastrian in attendance must play judge and decide for himself on how successful this camp-style congress was.

The four-day camp began June 30, and concluded July 4, with a pool-side party at a country club just outside the Houston city limits. The gala event lasted the night and brought many key figures together for the last time.

Key figures included Dr. Farhang Mehr, a noted scholar and teacher in the Zoroastrian world, and Professor James Russell, assistant professor of Ancient Iranian history at Columbia University in New York.

Naturally, both men directed their opinion-free lectures towards the youth and provided the group with facts, figures and documentation from various sources and texts in Zoroastrian literature to the best of their abilities.

After a night of social interaction through group activities and games, both the youth and adults retired and prepared for the first full day packed with lectures and discussions. Saturday began with a three hour lecture by Professor Russell on "The Zoroastrian Roots of the Western Tradition" dwelling on the history of the Zoroastrians, scanning the religion's basic beliefs, traditions and customs.

The following day the youth group awoke from a night of dancing to both the traditional Iranian music in the cafeteria, and the more modern up-beat rap music in the lecture hall. Some attended breakfast while others caught up on much needed sleep on Sunday morning, and then proceeded to the lecture hall.

Sunday's keynote speaker was Dr. Farhang Mehr who delivered a talk on "Internalizing Zoroastrians for Daily Life in the New World." Mehr's informal approach appealed to the youth and provoked many youth to take notes on what he was talking about. Mehr began quizzing various youth on the material he presented, and even inserted a few points of humour to relate to the youth.

Through a few confrontations between the orthodox ideologies of the adult and the more liberal views of the youth, Mehr found a balance between both groups and silenced the adults and reminded them with a little help from representatives of the Zoroastrian Association of Houston that the congress was geared towards the youth.

Games and activities relating to basic views and ideas in both life and Zoroastrianism occupied most of the afternoon. Activities such as Agree/Disagree were very popular amongst the mixed crowd of youth and adult. The crowd would split most of the time to the side they felt was right in their opinion.

One side was the agree side, and the other was the disagree side. Ideologies ranged from "all women should stay in the home," to "it is preferable for Zoroastrians to marry other Zoroastrians." Each side would send a speaker to debate why he/she felt the way they did, and then both sides would hear explanations and opinions from both Mehr and Russell.

The group then had an opportunity to retire from the lectures and spend more time socializing. The following day after a discussion entitled "Zoroastrian Family Values/Identification of My Personal Philosophy," the group visited the historic city of Galveston, and its beach. Although the heat and the mosquitoes did not co-operate with the campers, most youth said they still had a very enjoyable time.

Following the trip to Galveston the youth remained in their swim suits and travelled to a swimming pool in a clubhouse buried inside a subdivision in a suburb neighbouring Dickinson. In hopes of evading the huge mosquito population that infested the pool area, most people decided to go swimming. The zesty smell of pizza, however, drew them out of the pool and the party continued.

Independence Day marked the official end of the Congress. Some youth caught early flights back home, but the majority of the youth remained for the concluding remarks, resolutions, evaluation and benediction. The evaluation consisted of each person present speaking about their personal feelings on the camp's effectiveness. The general consensus generated was that the Third Annual North American Zoroastrian Youth Congress had accomplished a lot, and that a strong positive future for the youth community lay ahead.

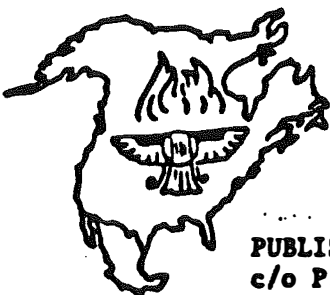
Note: Please send your opinions or comments on the Newsletter and any ideas for a new name, if necessary, to:

Jamshed Engineer, 1959 Bristol Ct., Naperville, IL 60565
(312) 983-7792

or

Dr. Jehan Bagli, 7 Cleveland Lane, R.D.#4, Princeton, N.J. 08540
(201) 329-6529

* * * * *



Editor: Jehan Bagli (New Jersey, USA)
Associate Editors: Dolly Dastoor (Quebec, Canada)
Sabar Balsara (Ontario, Canada)
Aspy Deboo (Illinois, USA)
Ali Jaffarey (California, USA)
Roshan Rivetna (Illinois, USA)
Committee Member: Savak Katrak (New York, USA)
Finances: Gev Karkaria (Quebec, Canada)

PUBLISHED FOR FEZANA AT:
c/o P.O. Box 35, Station Beaconsfield
Beaconsfield, P.Q. H9W 5T6

