

# JOURNAL

Mehr – Avan – Adar 1382 AY (Fasli) ● Ardebehesht – Khordad – Tir 1383 AY (Shenhai) ● Khordad – Tir – Amرداد 1383 AY (Kadimi)

## The Zarathushti World — 2012 Demographic Picture: The Numbers Game

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Cyrus Cylinder  
Celebrated in Chicago



Tanya Bharda's  
Journey in India



ZAKOI Camp Kids'  
"Lookie" Stand

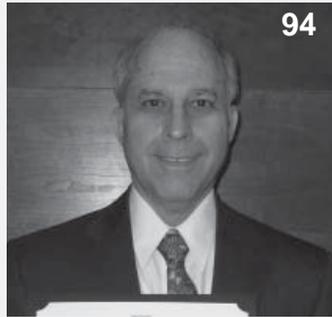


Presentation of  
FEZANA Strategic Plan

# FEZANA JOURNAL

PUBLICATION OF THE FEDERATION OF ZOROASTRIAN ASSOCIATIONS OF NORTH AMERICA

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**Winter 2013**

**The Next Generation's Vision for  
FEZANA**

**Guest Editors**

**Jamshed Rivetna & Behrose  
Taraporewalla**

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## A word from the Editor

Fall is a beautiful season with brilliant colours and short crisp days, with an edge in the temperature reminding us of a change in the life cycle, with plants and animals beginning to hibernate, preparing for the long winter. The cover story of this issue ***The Zarathushti World 2012 demographic picture*** reminds one of the Fall season, when things slow down imperceptibly in the beginning, till it is suddenly winter and everything has gone to sleep. Was the timing of this issue intentional? Is the Z community slowly going into a deep slumber not wanting to face reality?

Roshan Rivetna, our guest editor for this issue has revisited the demographics of the community, and has very painstakingly gathered and compiled data as accurately as possible from associations, individuals, census (where available) of Zarathushtis around the world. She has spread the net wide to capture as many pockets as possible in India, Iran, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, United Kingdom, Europe, Central Asia, Far East, Seychelles, Gulf region, North America, South America, Australia and New Zealand. The picture does not look good.

Since the last demographic survey done in 2004 there has been a growth in the diaspora: 24% in North America, 10% in UK, 40% in New Zealand and 130% in Singapore. All of these increases add up to approximately 5000 people. In the same time period, India, Iran and Pakistan together have lost 18,000 individuals. This has led Mobed Firozgary of Iran to call it a "calamity". It also has the Government of India worried because the 2001 census indicated that the death rate among the Parsis was three times the birth rate. *"The community was staring at extinction and urgently needed to take an interest in the fertility scheme, being implemented through the Union Health Ministry"*. Under the scheme, the government pays for the treatment for childless married couples if both husband and wife are Parsis. But not a single Parsi couple has come forward to avail

of this scheme –the first such plan for any community in India. No one has shown interest, in a scheme where the Government of India has set aside Rs 2 crore for the first year. What does this mean? Is our death wish so very strong that we do not care what is happening to

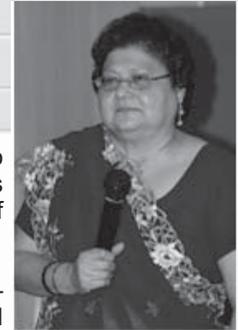


us!!!, However the Government of India cares and is determined to help the community by setting up health camps in Parsi concentrated areas, and consultation with community leaders. Low birth rate, or no births, together with increased longevity is one of the reasons for the decrease in population

With the growth in the diaspora, does the burden of the future of the community and the religion lie with the diaspora only? And is the diaspora capable of carrying this burden? How will and can we keep the next generation and the generation after that interested and connected with the community and the religion? How will we combat the forces of assimilation? Will we show leadership and forward thinking out of the box or will we be stuck in the same groove of inflated egos always wanting to prove ourselves right. Read about the views of the next generation on this subject (page 81). Whether we sink or sail, the choice rests with each present day individual Zarathushti. Organizations like FEZANA can only facilitate and provide impetus but in the final analysis the decision is yours and mine. May the fruits of ***Vohu Mano*** prevail.

Dolly Dastoor

# A Message from FEZANA President



*Dear Zarathushtis*

*On behalf of the FEZANA Executive, I would like to wish each one of you, your families, your associations across North America and globally a very Happy Shahenshahi Navroze Mubarak. May this year bring joy and peace to us all and may we all continue to work collectively and harmoniously worldwide to ensure a happier, healthier, unified and knowledgeable global Zarathushti community in the New Year.*

The FEZANA 2013 Annual General Meeting (AGM) was held in Dallas, Texas from May 3-5, 2013. I would like to share with you highlights from my President's Report .

Each day brings new opportunities so let us look for creative ideas and affirmative solutions and continue to support the following initiatives as we look ahead:

1. **Second Ten Year Strategic Plan (SP)** – Looking ahead, the Executive with the help of the SP team, Committee Chairs and interested individuals from member associations will help implement and monitor the progress of the plan. For details, see page 7.
2. **Infra Structure Development in NA** – Let us continue to identify and prioritize the Infra Structure needs of North America and work together to make it a reality.
3. **Youth Involvement & Development** – Work together with youth committees and organizations like ZYNA, ZYWIB, Zoroastrian Sports Committee, Zoroastrians Stepping Forward, and NextGenNow to foster community involvement and work together on youth related NA and global activities.
4. **Religious Education Class Curriculum** – Contribute & support this initiative led jointly by Lovji Cama and Daraius Bharucha to develop, update, revise and appropriately format the religious class curriculum for various age groups to be shared & used across NA and world-wide.
5. **Welfare & Critical Assistance** – Continue to support the welfare & critical needs of the NA and global Zarathushti Community in conjunction with WZO-Trust thanks to the continued and consistent efforts of Dinshaw Tamboly.
6. **Scholarships** – Thank our donors for their contributions and encourage them and other prospective donors to contribute to FEZANA and help us award academic, religious education, sports, and performing & creative arts scholarships.
7. **NAMC, WZCC, and Return to Roots** – Develop a spirit of teamwork and network with these complimentary

organizations and programs to provide value added services resulting in the achievement of community service objectives.

8. **Corresponding Members** – Reach out and involve these small communities in FEZANA activities
9. **Congresses & Sports Events** – Member Associations together with FEZANA need to develop a strategy to subsidize the participation of youth in North American & World Congresses and Sports Events.
10. **Communication Strategy** - To build, enhance and promote a unified NA Zarathushti Community requires a direct, clear, systematic, well-planned and organized communication strategy. We need to work together and share our achievements, upcoming events, community service projects, welfare & critical assistance appeals and other information using the FEZANA Journal (quarterly), FEZANA Bulletin (monthly), the fezanayahogroups emails and the FEZANA website.

This issue of the Journal focuses on Zarathushti Demographics. Roshan Rivetna, the Guest Editor has presented a compilation of data and commentaries gathered from different countries. 200,000 Zarathushtis among a 7 billion global population! Even though the population trend in North America appears encouraging we have to address other issues that we face: assimilation, dispersed population, inter-marriages, disinterest, apathy .

A cross-section of the Community in NA was asked the questions: What can we do? How can we inspire our next generation, and those on the fringes, to stay within the fold? (For details of responses see page 81) The responses were grouped under

***It all starts at home. : Religious education from early childhood is the key. :Maintain our cultural traditions and religious practices. Encourage marriages within the faith and larger families. Inspire and engage the next generation and those on the fringes. Revive the entrepreneurial spirit***

The positive responses from of our community members gives us hope and provides us a road map that we can develop and follow in the coming months & years to perpetuate our religion and strengthen our community in this world without borders. The FEZANA Executive & I look forward to continue working with you collectively in harmony and with an optimistic can-do attitude to support FEZANA's goals & activities in 2013-14 to achieve a unified, healthier Zarathushti community in North America.

***Katayun Kapadia FEZANA-President***

# Editorial

## Machiavelli and Zarathushtra

The portrait of Machiavelli that emerged at the North American Zoroastrian Congress in New York <sup>1</sup> is of a philosopher who advocates deceit and greed as opposed to the uplifting ethical message of Zarathushtra. It is a stark painting in black and white, without any shades of gray, contrasting pure, pristine and positive thoughts of Zarathushtra with the machinations of a wily, scheming, unscrupulous Machiavelli dispensing advice to would be princes to grab and hold on to power.

But is this really so? Did Machiavelli have no sense of morality or ethics? Or, was he in using his *Vohu Mana*, his good mind, to share his unique gifts of observation and analysis, with the needy, *i.e.* the prince?

In "The Prince", Machiavelli observes that principalities can be acquired by one's own arms and prowess, or by those of the arms of others and by fortune, or through crime. He concludes with remarkable moral clarity. Of those advancing in life from crime, he writes:

*"... it cannot be called virtue to kill one's fellow-citizens, to betray one's friends, to be without loyalty, without mercy, without religion; by such methods one can acquire power, but not glory."*

We find here a Machiavelli appealing to our best ethical instincts. He extols the likes of Moses, Romulus and Cyrus, who reach the zenith through their own strivings:

*"Like these men, those who become princes through their own prowess, obtain their principality with difficulty, but hold on to it with ease..."*

Do these words resonate with an entrepreneur who starts from scratch and establishes a business conglomerate? Machiavelli appeals to us to put our best foot forward, to exert ourselves, making use of our talents, our *virtu*, to move up in life. He cautions us that the proper means of acquiring power makes good governance (*vohu Khshasthra Vairya*) easier. Citing examples from history, he illustrates the law of consequences, the law of *asha*, no different from Zarathushtra's philosophy.

So what is the point of this essay? It is to appreciate that Machiavelli has something to teach us; he is not all evil and bad as made out to be at the 16<sup>th</sup> North American Zoroastrian Congress. All of us, humans,

imperfect as we are, are colored in shades of gray. There is no stark black and white portrait one can draw of any one. Hearing this voice from the Renaissance from Italy provides us with a keener understanding of human behavior. Listening carefully to another point of view better equips us in our march toward creating a more peaceful and perfect world.



For those who would see a change in the world, Machiavelli offers: *"It should be borne in mind that there is nothing more difficult to manage, more doubtful of success, or more dangerous to handle than to take the lead in introducing a new order of things."*

No point deriding Machiavelli - he has shades of gray like the rest of us. We can learn from him; we do not have to accept all that he has written. As long as we as Zarathushtris, are steadfast in our core beliefs, that the means do not justify the ends; that we listen to our own voice of conscience in the choices we make, and in the actions we perform without expectation of any rewards, then "Old Nick" cannot sway us from the righteous path. In many ways, Machiavelli's message is not very different from that of Zarathushtra, it all depends on what lens we use to read what he has to say. We can all be "princes" in our own spheres of life.

### REFERENCE:

- (1). *"Building a New World Order – The Role of Zarathushti Values."*—Keynote address by Trita Parsi "Zarathushti Existence in the Contemporary World" **Fezana Journal**, Vol. 25., No. 4., Pages 5-7.

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**Behram Pastakia is Chair of the Publications Committee of FEZANA**



## THE NUMBERS GAME

**THE LONG JOURNEY.** Thirteen centuries ago, our forefathers, fleeing oppression in homeland Iran, sailed unknown seas, and landed on the shores of India. In a vastly Hindu-Muslim milieu, this first diaspora – the Parsis – managed, not just to survive, but to blaze a trail in commerce and industry, to mold an ethno religious identity with a reputation for industry, integrity and charity, and truly live up to their “sugar in the milk” promise.

Meanwhile in Iran, the Arab conquest ushered in a dark age for Zarathushtis. In 1850, the French ambassador wrote: *“Only 7,000 are left and only a miracle may save them from extinction ... glory is not everlasting, because these are descendants of the people who once ruled the world.”* Conditions eased after the emissary from Bombay, Maneckji Hateria, helped the community regain its social strength and rebuild their institutions. Thereafter, this miniscule community, that Maneckji described as “exhausted and trampled so much that no one in this world can be more miserable” would grow in numbers, and again rise to prominence.

In the 1800s, Parsis from India found their way to other countries: UK, which nurtured three Parsi MPs; the crown colony of Singapore, for trade and business; Hong Kong, for trade with China; and Africa where they played significant roles in the colonial period.

**The “Second Diaspora”** -- to UK, North America, Australia, New Zealand and the Gulf countries, started in the mid 20th century, with Parsis migrating for educational, business and professional opportunities. They were later joined by Iranians escaping the fallout from the 1979 Islamic revolution. After a thousand years of separation, the two branches would come together once again.

**A 2012 DEMOGRAPHICS PICTURE:** At the dawn of the third millennium, Zarathushtis are spread thin around the globe, a scant 200,000 among a population of 7 billion. We present here, a compilation of data, as gathered from ‘experts’ in each country, along with commentaries on “What can we do?”

**THE HOMELANDS.** While the elephant has been in the room for some time, it is heart-breaking to see the actual numbers from the homelands. In Iran, MP Dr. Ekhtiyari estimates “no more than 15,000 Zarathushti born population” and Mobeid Firouzgary makes a soulful plea “Who can put forward an effective ...solution to this calamity?” [page 43]. The rueful numbers from India, based on the GOI census provided by Profs. Armaity Desai and Siva Raju of The Tata Institute of Social Sciences shows a decline of about 10 percent per decade since 1941, down to an estimated 61,000. This devastating loss is attributed to high death-to-birth ratios and “late marriage, no marriage and fertility problems” [page 45]. Likewise Toxy Cowasjee of Pakistan, where population has declined from 2,831 in 1995 to 1,675 [page 51] reports large numbers of youth leaving Pakistan for universities abroad, “never to return.”

**THE SECOND DIASPORA.** With such catastrophic declines in the homelands, it appears, the burden lies on the second diaspora to carry the torch

### ***Our numbers are so small. Can we? Will we?***

Population trends here appear encouraging. In less than a decade North America has grown by 24%, UK by 10%, New Zealand by 40%, and Singapore by 130%! The combined growth, however, totals only about 5,000 Zarathushtis, hardly enough to compensate for the 18,000 lost in the homelands.

### ***Our numbers are too small. Too small to matter much.***

The other elephant in the room, at least for us in North America, is the threat of assimilation, exacerbated by our dispersed population, inter-marriages, conversions, disinterest, disengagement, disenchantment, apathy ... The upward trend in inter-marriages has reached as high as 60%, and initial survey data indicates that at least 25% of children of inter-marriages do not follow the Zarathushti religion. What can we expect from successive generations? If we had come to America in seven ships, landed on the eastern shore and lived together in a colony around a darbe mehr -- perhaps our story may have evolved differently. But we came in one’s and two’s, to universities and job opportunities across the length and breadth of this vast continent. How can one resist the pulls of assimilation when the nearest Zarathushti is a hundred miles away? Gradual assimilation over time is a good thing, and inevitable. But how do we balance that with preservation of our faith, our customs, traditions, language and our communal-religious identity?

### ***Our numbers are so small. Our very existence may be at stake.***

**WHAT CAN WE DO?** How can we inspire our next generation, and those on the fringes, to stay within the fold? We posed these questions to a cross-section of the community in North America and were overwhelmed by the wealth of ideas that came in [page 81]. The wisdom from the minds of young men and women of our next generation gives me much hope.

### ***Our numbers are small. But perhaps that does not matter.***

The key is to come together and commit to work together towards our one common goal – to perpetuate the religion and strengthen our community. Come together -- be it at congresses, seminars, trips, camps – at local, national and world levels. In this day and age, with high tech communication, travel and social media, one need not fear the ogre of geographic dispersion. With our collective effort and commitment, and perhaps redefining ‘the fold’ somewhat for the time and place, we can all remain connected within this, our Community Without Borders.

***Maybe, we will win that numbers game, after all.***

## 26th FEZANA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The FEZANA 2013 Annual General Meeting (AGM), hosted by Zoroastrian Association of North Texas (ZANT) was held in Grapevine, Texas from May 3-5, 2013. Complete minutes of the meeting may be viewed online at <http://www.fezana.org>.

[Photos by *Erv Soli Dastur* and *Zenobia Damania*]



Delegates convene in Grapevine, Texas at the FEZANA 26th AGM



Sherazade Mehta, AGM Coordinator, ZANT



FEZANA delegates enjoyed the 2nd Anniversary Celebration for ZANT Center and Food Fair



Nahid Dashtaki honored after serving two terms as Secretary



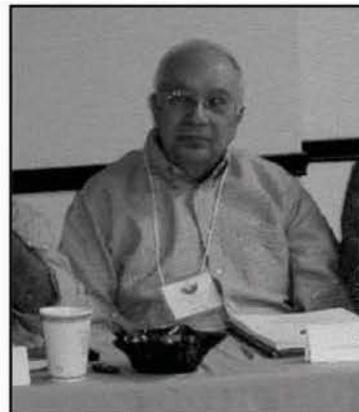
Furrokh Irani, Zoroastrian Association of Florida)



Mobeds perform Bui Ceremony at ZANT Center



Behrose Taraporewalla, ZYNA and ZYWB



Jangoo Mistry, FIRES



Arzan Wadia, FEZANA Web Development and Support



ZANT children perform *The FEZANA Song*



Katayun Kapadia thanks ZANT for their hard work and wonderful hospitality.

# FEZANA UPDATE

## FEZANA STRATEGIC PLAN SECOND 10 YEAR PLAN

2012-2022



“Way Forward” session,  
May 3, 2013 at the FEZANA  
AGM, Dallas, TX.



Mahrukh Motafaram presenting  
the plan

On Friday, May 3, at the Strategic Planning (SP) session discussions, during the AGM weekend, the “**Way Forward**” phase was introduced and discussed. Prior to the session, Members /Corresponding Members/ Standing and Ad Hoc Committees were appraised of the progress made by the SP team with most of the Committee Chairs and the FEZANA executive. It included most of the completed Committee work sheets which reflected individual work plans for each committee, split between “**immediate**” short term goals (2012-2013), short term goals (2014-2016) and long term goals (2017-2022).

The “**Way Forward**” is the implementation phase of the SP that will include the following:

- Standing and Ad Hoc committees of FEZANA to start implementing their own individual plan; assistance from Member Associations and Corresponding Members is strongly recommended
- Terms of Reference for each of the Standing and Ad Hoc need to be reviewed, revised and modified to reflect their committee goals
- Vice President of FEZANA, Coordination and Planning Committee chair, Homi Gandhi will initiate this phase
- Coordination and Planning Committee plays a key role in overseeing Committee goals, provide assistance and evaluate progress

On Sunday, May 5, Katayun Kapadia and Homi Gandhi together identified a few “immediate” short term action items under each of the five goals. These action items are the main objectives for FEZANA for 2013-2014. They are as follows:

### **GOAL 1: SHOWCASE FEZANA GLOBALLY**

- Enhance the FEZANA website, make it interactive with member websites, complimentary organizations, and global entities; independent FEZANA committee websites
- Encourage Zarathushti students at North American Universities to have a presence on Face-Book and Twitter
- Crisis Communication Plan
- Develop on-line media releases; “virtual” media kit

### **GOAL 2: INCREASE AWARENESS OF FEZANA DOMESTICALLY**

- Encourage Members and Corresponding members to actively engage between themselves; increase participation at FEZANA AGM

# FEZANA UPDATE

- Encourage corresponding members/small groups/small associations to host FEZANA AGM's
- Propose a "blue-ribbon Constitution Review Committee" to propose modifications to the current existing FEZANA constitution
- Prepare a bid for future World Zarathusti Congress in North America
- Promote infrastructure projects

## **GOAL 3: FOSTER HAMAZORI BY BUILDING STRONG RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN VARIOUS ZARATHUSHTI ENTITIES/GROUPS**

- Increase inter-generational and cross-cultural participation at youth and adult Congresses; result oriented workshops to be implemented in the community and reported accordingly
- Encourage participation from Zarathushti and non-Zarathushti scholars/speakers at North American Congresses/conferences to allow open debate of diverse viewpoints
- Encourage ZYNA to take on more leadership responsibilities, have seminars and conferences; promote and advertise FEZANA at sports events, youth congresses
- Encourage, organize, and sponsor round table conferences specifically designed to discuss inclusion of diverse groups, FEZANA, to be a leader in encouraging global working partnerships
- Continue efforts to represent FEZANA on an international level; as a key player in the global round table conferences
- Increase student exchange program, domestic and international; explore "Zarathusti youth without borders", "Return to Roots", etc.

## **GOAL 4: CONTINUE TO ADVANCE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND CULTURAL AWARENESS; OUTREACH INITIATIVES THROUGH INTERFAITH DIALOGUE**

- Organize a core curriculum for all ages for distribution; books, CD's, education web-sites that can be downloaded; interactive websites
- Promote FEZANA at Interfaith meetings and conferences; distribution of FEZANA brochures and Zarathushti literature
- Promote to increase awareness of FEZANA at UN activities

## **GOAL 5: INCREASE ECONOMIC STABILITY THROUGH FUND RAISING AND PRUDENT INVESTMENT**

- Enhance volunteer contributions per project by individuals and associations
- Liaison with WZCC to assist young Z entrepreneurs in their communities, employment opportunities
- Infrastructure development; create an exploratory committee to draft a proposal for "FEZANA Foundation"; look into options for global prospective investors to fund specific projects in North America

Progress for these objectives will be coordinated and communicated by the Vice President, Coordination and Planning Chair, Homi Gandhi as follows:

- ***Monthly updates from primary responsible committees to the FEZANA executive (Vice-President)***
- ***Quarterly progress reports to be communicated to Member/Corresponding Members via e-mail and/or FEZANA Bulletin***
- ***Progress reports from Committees at the FEZANA Annual General Meeting***

Evaluation of outcomes and Committee functions will be reviewed each year by the Coordination and Planning Committee Chair, Vice President of FEZANA.

**REPORTED BY MAHARUKH MOTAFARAM**

# FEZANA UPDATE

*Charity is Not Giving What  
We Can Spare,  
Charity is Giving Because We Care*

Charity and service to humanity are principal values of our cherished Zarathushti faith. All of us have been blessed by Ahura Mazda, but there are times in all of our lives when we feel overwhelmed with life's challenges. Some of us may end up being subjected to extreme hardships in one or more areas of our lives. In such times, having the support of your community can be a tremendous source of strength.

The **Welfare & Unity** Committee is empowered by FEZANA to provide such strength to those in need within our community. Each year, we assess applications for aid from across the world. We do our best to identify those with the greatest need and try to make their lives a little bit better. The Welfare & Unity Committee has worked with Zarathushtis suffering from hardships ranging from financial collapse to domestic violence to serious medical emergencies.

Our donors are the lifeblood of our organization. They provide us with a platform to help those in need and provide our donors with the comfort that they have done a good deed and that their donation will always be put toward an important cause.

This past year, the Critical Assistance Committee has provided assistance to those experiencing medical emergencies in India and USA, to accident victims and the ZWIN ZEAL (Zorastrian Elder Assistance Link) project which helps the poor parsis in Pune to name a few.

However, one of the most rewarding success stories is the case of Mr. Cyrus Kharas from Karachi, Pakistan. Mr. Kharas was in dire need of a liver transplant. Through a series of coordinated fundraising efforts, the Critical Assistance Committee was able to raise \$17,500 for Mr. Kharas. He recently underwent surgery in China and is now enjoying a successful recovery in his home in Karachi.

The amount of gratitude displayed by Mr. Kharas and all the others we have helped makes us feel that we really are making a difference in the lives of others.

No matter what our professions are or how busy our lives may be, there is always a way to give a little toward the betterment of the lives of others less fortunate than we are.

Ushtate,

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# FEZANA UPDATE

## Good Leaders Are Made Not Born.

FEZANA's Strategic Plan includes many *Action Items* to accomplish five important *Goals* (see FEZANA Strategic Plan, p. 7 ) . We will succeed in our plans only if we have leaders who will come forward to implement these plans. We will need leaders who can inspire a team to work together with the dedication and zeal to succeed. Everyone has latent leadership potential which can be harnessed with proper training and encouragement.

Today's youth are highly educated, capable, diverse and are maturing at an even younger age. These factors demand new ways of thinking about leadership and leadership training. The world is becoming flatter and those who have been shut out in the past need to have increasing access to leadership training, public speaking, community development and other skill-building activities. Today's leaders will need a more global perspective and will be in charge of a more diverse community. Leadership development needs to be a continuous process that is integrated into our culture. *With your help FEZANA is preparing the next generation of leaders!*

Help FEZANA to invest in our future. Your donations earmarked for "**Leadership Development**" will help ensure that our hard work continues. Online donations from the FEZANA website are quick and easy using secure credit card transactions. We welcome donations of all amounts and payment plans – whether it is a one-time gift, a monthly contribution or part of a matching gifts program. If you would like to sponsor a specific activity or training program, please contact either of the undersigned.

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Kendall Park . NJ 08824 . USA





# FEZANA UPDATE

## FEZANA

### DONATIONS RECEIVED - JANUARY 1, 2013 TO JUNE 30, 2013

#### FEZANA WELFARE & CRITICAL ASSISTANCE FUND

Zoroastrian Society of Ontario	\$ 8,227
British East India Company	7,000
Gurkha Cigar Group, Inc.	4,000
Yasmin & Adi Irani, Orlando, FL	1,352
Behram and Farieda Irani, Plano, TX	1,000
Feroze and Anahita Sidhwa, Coppell, TX	1,000
Freddy Engineer, San Jose, CA	1,000
Hoshedar Minwalla, Silver Springs, MD	1,000
Neville Mehta, Sydney, NSW, Australia	1,000
Zoroastrian Association of Florida	1,000
A collection by Sydney Zoroastrians at a function, C/o Ms. Hutokshi Hira	950
J. H. Dudha, Houston, TX	949
Cyrus Dubash, Sydney, Australia	500
Kaizad Dadyburjor, Plano, TX	500
Porus Austin, Stockton, CA	500
Farokh and Maneck Contractor, Kenner, LA	250
Shernaz Patel, Dobbs Ferry, NY	250
Viraf and Anita Patel, Coppell, TX	250
Viraf Patel, Coppell, TX	250
Guloo and Marzban Austin, London, ON	245
Trust of Dr. Firoze Ichaaporria, Montreal, QC	240
Anonymous	200
Arish Mavalvala, Waitara, NSW, Australia	200
Narges Kakalia, Edison, NJ	200
Parvez Mody, Orangevale, CA	152
Anonymous	150
Zerin D. Bharucha, Herts, United Kingdom	146
Farhad Fereydoonzad, Pointe Claire, QC	101
Minoo Italia, San Jose, CA	101
Pheroza Sethna, University Park, FL	101
Rakhshandeh and Nozer Dhalla, Arlington, TX	101
Adi and Celia Gazdar, Dallas, TX	100
Behzad & Anya Panthaky, Marsfield, NSW, Australia	100
Farrokh and Tanaz Sutaria, Fremont, CA	100
Farrokh Cooper, Fair Oaks, CA	100
Feraydun Bastani, Mississauga, ON	100
Hilla Irani, Lincoln, CA	100
Nina Bahisa, Cupertino, CA	100
Rodabeh Bharucha-Reid, Detroit, MI	100
Tehmtan & Aloo Mistry, St. Louis, MO	100
Rohinton and Pervin Ogra, Romeoville, IL	75
Burjor & Vira Santoke, Huntington Beach, CA	51
Burzin Patel & Dianne Cooper, Foster City, CA	51
Ambrose Commissariat, Sunnyvale, CA	50
Anonymous	50
Cyrus Khory, Toronto, ON	50

**\$ 34,142**

Contd....

#### FEZANA WELFARE & CRITICAL ASSISTANCE FUND - (Contd....)

Dr. Burjor Gandhi, Grosse Pointe Woods, MI	\$ 50
Farrokh Kharas, Wentworthville, NSW, Australia	50
Homai Zarolia, Sunnyvale, CA	50
Jamshed Udwadia Trust, Lansing, MI	50
Kaizad Kasad, Wollstonecraft, NSW, Australia	50
Kurush Kasad, West Pymble, NSW, Australia	50
Marzban Marzbani, Schaumburg, IL	50
Noshir and Faranak Dhalla, Foster City, CA	50
Noshir and Nergish Karanjia, Marlton, NJ	50
Noshirwan Cama, Jarrettsville, MD	50
Rustom and Shireen Damania, Clovis, CA	50
Vinifer Dutia, Cedar Grove, NJ	50
Yasmin & Jehangir Parvereshi, Sunnyvale, CA	50
Zinaida Engineer, San Jose, CA	50
Franey Romer, San Jose, CA	30
Homey Writer, Irvine, CA	30
Kamran Behroozi, Flower Mound, TX	30
Spenta and Delnaz Irani, Plano, TX	30

**\$ 34,142**

**34,962**

#### GENERAL FUND

Zarthoshti Anjuman of Northern California	650
Traditional Mazdayasni Zoroastrian Anjuman	150
Bapuji Divecha, Silver Spring, MD	130
Zoroastrian Association of California	101
Aspi and Nergish Bharucha, Cincinatti, OH	100
Farhad K. Daroga, Broken Arrow, OK	100
Homi and Koomi Italia, Burnaby, BC	100
Shavak R. Madon, Oakville, ON	100
Zoroastrian Association of Pennsylvania & New Jersey, Inc	100
Zoroastrian Association of Michigan	92
Jamshed and Shirin Dastur, Newport Beach, CA	75
Navroze Amaria, Littleton, CO	75
Hoshang Khambatta, San Diego, CA	60
Daraius Antia, Roslyn Heights, NY	55
Pesi Sanjana, Farmington Hills, MI	55
Iranian Zoroastrian Association	50
Perviz Madon, North Vancouver, BC	50
Zoroastrian Association of Greater Boston Area	50
Jehangir & Khurshid Rudina, Lakeville, MN	31
Bella Tata, West Vancouver, BC	30
Daulat Engineer, Glen Ellyn, IL	30
Minocher Reporter, Corvallis, OR	30
Roshni Aibara, Adelaide, Australia	30
Rusi and Piroja Press, Ramsey, NJ	30
Russy D. Sumariwalla, Medford, OR	30
Tehmtan & Aloo Mistry, St. Louis, MO	30

**\$ 2,334**

Contd....



# FEZANA UPDATE

## FEZANA

### DONATIONS RECEIVED - JANUARY 1, 2013 TO JUNE 30, 2013 (Contd)

#### PRAYER BOOK FOR JAMSHEDI NAVROZ

Zoroastrian Association of Greater New York	\$ 250
Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Chicago	250
Zoroastrian Association of North Texas	250
Zoroastrian Society of Ontario	250
Traditional Mazdayasni Zoroastrian Anjuman	151
Persian Zoroastrians Organization	125
Zoroastrian Association of Greater Boston Area	125
Zoroastrian Association of Pennsylvania & New Jersey, Inc	125
Iranian Zoroastrian Association	100
Zoroastrian Assn of Kentucky, Ohio & Indiana	100
	<hr/>
	<b>1,726</b>

#### INFRASTRUCTURE FUND

Soli and Jo Ann Dastur, University Park, FL **1,001**

#### RETURN TO ROOTS

Zoroastrian Society of Ontario	915
Soli and Jo Ann Dastur, University Park, FL	501
Aban Rustomji, Houston, TX	500
	<hr/>
	<b>\$ 1,916</b>

Contd....

#### BANOOBAI AND MANECKSHAW KAPADIA ENDOWMENT SCHOLARSHIP

Amy and Minoos Tarapore, Maroubra, NSW, Australia **\$ 15,000**

#### IN SEARCH OF MY GOD

Arnavaz Dua, Brookfield, WI **100**

#### ZOROASTRIAN STUDIES PROGRAM - STANFORD UNIVERSITY

Zarthoshti Anjuman of Northern California	1,000
Zoroastrian Association of California	1,000
Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Chicago	1,000
Zoroastrian Association of North Texas	1,000
Zoroastrian Society of Ontario	1,000
Zoroastrian Association of Greater Boston Area	500
Zoroastrian Association of Quebec	500
	<hr/>
	<b>6,000</b>

#### CYRUS CYLINDER

Darius Jamshidian, Stamford, CT **1,500**

#### WORLD ZOROASTRIAN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Khershed Cooper, Fairfax, VA **50**

#### GRAND TOTAL

**\$ 64,589**

**The Fezana Information Research Education System (FIRES) is a centralized collection of materials pertaining to Zoroastrianism. Our history, heritage, and literature represent our cultural “wealth”. FIRES has been created by FEZANA to preserve this wealth of knowledge and to increase people’s access to it.**

**FIRES has a large number of materials about the Zarathushti faith, culture and history in print and electronic form. To find out more and access the resources at FIRES visit our website and online catalog at [www.fires-fezana.org](http://www.fires-fezana.org).**

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# FEZANA UPDATE

## YOUNG PROFESSIONALS NOROUZ RETREAT 2013

*Zoroastrian Youth of North America (ZYNA) Chair Behrose Taraporewalla and Co-Chair Dr. Parmis Khatibi, in coordination with FEZANA, planned and executed the Young Professionals Norouz Retreat in New York City, March 1-3, 2013. More than sixty-five professionals, from around the world, mingled and networked at this professional-social event for Zarathushti youth from twenty-five to forty-five years with a broad range of academic interests and disciplines. During the retreat, there were networking activities, socials, and an interactive professional development workshop led by Fred Sarkari. The event focused on building relationships and working together to learn, grow and make a difference in the world we live in.*

### NEW YORK CITY + ZARATHUSHTI YOUTH = FUN TIMES FOR ALL

**Dinsha Mistree**

I was excited as I disembarked the train in New York City; I looked forward to many stimulating opportunities to meet young Zarathushti professionals from all over North America while at the Nourouz Retreat.

The prospect of reuniting with old friends, while making new ones had me giddy with excitement as I dashed from the hotel to the inaugural event at the Latitude Bar and Lounge. As I entered the room, I was overjoyed to see so many familiar and new faces—there were about fifty-five of us. I sensed it was going to be a weekend of fun and learning.

ZYNA used to have regular get together in North America. Inexplicably and unfortunately, they have not been held for several years. It took two assiduous youth leaders, Dr. Parmis Khatibi and Behrose Taraporewalla, to end the hiatus and resume this important and enjoyable tradition. And boy, did they do it in style.

The next day we assembled at the Ravagh Persian Grill. As we entered, we found that the organizers had cleverly stimulated networking by making cards with descriptions of Zarathushti phrases and spirits, and cards describing these phrases and spirits. Everyone had to find their match; mine was “Ahriman,” who turned out to be a sweet girl from my local association. I was enthralled to learn about an invention that she and her sister created and their plans to start a company. We have some amazing and inspiring youth in our Community.

After networking, FEZANA President, Katayun Kapadia welcomed us. She discussed FEZANA’s role in developing a new generation of community leaders. Then, Fred Sarkari, a motivational speaker from Vancouver, related his many personal experiences



and recent findings from psychology. He encouraged us to identify our passions and overcome our problems. Sarkari generously gave several of his books to the attendees.

Following Sarkari’s talk, I presented a new initiative called Return to Roots; it is designed to attract Zarathushti youth from around the world to explore their respective homelands, specifically India and eventually Iran. After this, we continued our networking and introductions.

One would think the participants would have been tired after such a busy morning and afternoon. But no! After networking, we visited museums and took in the City’s



# FEZANA UPDATE

sites. We then got “booted and suited” and reassembled at the Club A Steakhouse for our dinner soiree. This had been a classy weekend—the dinner was the fanciest event of all. Afterward, most of us migrated to a bar for dancing and late-night merriment. Good times were had by all; we all look forward to many more young professional networking events to come!

## LIVING OUR CORE BELIEFS DAY-TO-DAY AS ZARATHUSHTI YOUTHS

*Khushroo Dadachanji*

Behrose Taraporewalla coordinated and Dr. Anahita Taraporewalla moderated a spirited panel discussion featuring four Zarathushti “youth” with diverse backgrounds like medicine, academia, and finance. **Panelists were: Binaifer Daji, Kayana Press, Dr. Soroush Merchant, Dr. Mark Sethna, Khushru Dadachanji.**

Panel members discussed how the threads of their individual experiences and Zarathushti beliefs were intertwined to create their life’s fabric. Dr. Mark Sethna is a general practitioner in Long Island, NY; he frequently works with the underprivileged. He recounted a touching incident he had with an older, uninsured immigrant patient diagnosed with Parkinson’s disease. Although not obligated to treat an uninsured patient, Mark’s beliefs guided him to secure a wheelchair and provide six months of medication—a kindness that would not be soon forgotten by the patient or his loving family. Mark’s story exemplifies the Zarathushti credo of Good Thoughts-Good Words-Good Deeds. The sum of our core beliefs, and us as Zarathushtis, is manifested in our consciences and characters.

An attendee asked the panel why youth (the 18-45 demographic) participation in Zarathushti activities is so sparse. Looking around the room, we realized that the only people in that age-group were on stage. We ultimately concluded that engaging this group would require something that goes beyond simply fostering a sense of community. More targeted action is needed. Logistics and proximity to major Zarathushti centers

was discussed as factors that have discouraged more active youth participation. Most North American Zarathushti centers are located in the suburbs, whereas most Zarathushti youth live within major population centers (e.g., Chicago and New York). They also have limited access to transportation.

Unfortunately, getting youths to a Zarathushti center and more involved is only half the battle. The real challenge for us is how to capture their mindshare and keep them engaged. In a culture of instant gratification and constant connectivity this is tough. Spirited, erudite conversation for the brain and dhansak for the stomach don’t compete with YouTube and Twitter. If we are to engage our youth, the activities and events must be compelling. Perhaps, rather than appealing to their social and spiritual well-being, we should target and stimulate their economic and financial motivators (à la Maslow’s hierarchy of needs). Zarathushti youth typically tend to be well-educated and ambitious. The attendees observed that many of our youth would respond favorably to business networking events.



More information about Zoroastrian Youth of North America can be found at [www.fezana.org/zyna](http://www.fezana.org/zyna), or by contacting Behrose Taraporewalla ([Behroset@gmail.com](mailto:Behroset@gmail.com) or 626.378.5564). Join our Facebook Community at <https://www.facebook.com/ZarathushtiYouthofNorthAmerica>.

# FIRES

## FEZANA UPDATE

**FEZANA Information Research Education System**

FIRES is based in Houston and the FIRES collection is available for loan across North America. It provides research support and links to other Zoroastrian Libraries in North America such as the Zoroastrian Association of Chicago and the Zoroastrian Association of North Texas and the Zoroastrian Association of California.

History •

Philosophy •

Biographies •

Fiction •

Cookbooks

Vendidad, Gathas and Yasna Literature

DVDs •

Manuscripts •

Magazines

The FEZANA Information Research Education System's (FIRES) mission is to establish a centralized collection of materials in print and electronic form, primarily pertaining to the Zarathushti faith, culture and history.

**To access our online catalog, go to:**

**[www.fires-fezana.org](http://www.fires-fezana.org)**

**For more information, contact Aban Rustomji: [Info@fires-fezana.org](mailto:Info@fires-fezana.org)**



# FEZANA UPDATE

## ZAKOI CAMP KIDS MAKE A DIFFERENCE WITH THEIR LOOKIE STAND!!!



We love our religion camp! We all get to stay together at Bakhtavar Aunty and Fred Uncle's house for a whole week. We learn and also have fun. Bakhtavar Aunty teaches us and cooks delicious food for us, and Fred Uncle helps to plan fun activities for us like bowling, swimming, etc. When we first start the classes, we review the basics like: the **Amesha Spentas**, the **5 Gahs**, the **months in the Zoroastrian Year**, and **how to read the Zoroastrian Calendar**. We review the old things first because some of us forget it. Then we start the new stuff. This year in camp we learned about our holy book, the **Khordeh Avesta**. We explored deeper into the various prayers, learning about their meanings, starting with all our kusti prayers. (Photo above the children with Bakhtavar and Fred Desai)

During our classes we talked about good deeds that a Zarthosti should do. One day we were discussing Righteousness and Mukta prayers, and what we should do in our lifetime so that other people remember us in a good way even after we die. We were having a group discussion about helping other people and

what we kids would do during our life time. While we were discussing easy ways for us kids to be righteous, and make a difference, like donating money, it led us to talking about how Girl Scouts make a difference through bake sales. Then we all came up with the idea of having a lemonade stand where we could sell cookies and lemonade!!! Bakhtavar Aunty made us realize that to do this stand we will have to give up our fun activity for the day which was going to see a movie. But we liked the idea of collecting some money to help a good cause. We decided to donate our money to our **ZAKOI Temple Fund**, so we could build our very own temple! We wanted to donate to the Temple Fund because we don't have a temple for ZAKOI, and sometimes we have to drive to Chicago. We decided to call it **the LOOKIE Stand** because we were going to sell *Lemonade and Cookies!*

We did this for two days. On the first day, it started raining. So while some of us helped with making the poster, some kids went door to door in the neighborhood taking orders. Others helped bake and make the lemonade and cookies. Some kids went to deliver the orders to the people who wanted the cookies and lemonade. On the second day, was a nice and sunny, so we put up our LOOKIE Stand and Poster together and sold outside on our street for 2- 3 hours. Again we distributed all the work. In the end it was very successful. Many neighbors and other people stopped by to buy our lemonade and cookies. We would tell them about our religion and why we were doing this, if they asked. Some of our parents too bought our cookies and lemonade when they came to pick us up on the last day. **We raised \$110 for our ZAKOI Temple Fund.** We learned that when we did the lemonade and cookie stand, we were helping to make a difference. This year in our camp we learned a lot, but we also had loads of fun together. We can't wait until we do this again next year!

### WRITTEN AND SUBMITTED BY:

**Arnaz & Anosh Irani** (7 and 11yrs, from Houston, TX),  
**Friyana & Benaifer Sepai** (7 and 10 yrs, from Pittsburgh, PA),  
**Arianna Kelawala** (10 yrs, Columbus, OH),  
**Krish and Arya Chhablani** (7 and 9 yrs, Columbus, OH),  
**Arish Antia** (8 yrs, Wyoming, OH),  
**Farah Desai** (10 yrs, Fairfield, OH)



# FEZANA UPDATE

## ZOROASTRIAN SOCIETY OF WASHINGTON STATE (ZSWS) BIKING TEAM

The ZSWS Biking Team 2013 completed the Seattle WA to Portland OR (STP) a distance of 206 miles on the weekend of July 13, 2013. The team consisted of Arshish Kapadia (42); Viraf Gandhi (37), Karl Buhariwala (25), and Kaizad Irani (28). The team started from Husky Stadium in Seattle early in the morning at 5.25 a.m. Arishsh and Viraf completed the distance, reaching Halladay Park in Oregon State the same day at 9.00 p.m. Kaizad and Karl came through the finish line the following morning, as Kaizad had a flat tire right after 100 miles and Karl suffered a shredded tire between 120 and 140 miles



*Left to right Kaizad Irani, Viraf Gandhi, Arshish Kapadia and Karl Buhariwala*

This STP is an annual bike ride organized by the Cascade Bicycling Club and Group Health that is completed by 10,000 cyclists of which about 1,500 cyclists complete the distance in one day to get their 1 day rider badge.. It is a considerable achievement to complete your first 100 miles in one day, as apart from the distance, the ride has an elevation gain of approx. 5,000 feet.

The ZSWS team was started in 2010 by Arshish Kapadia and Viraf Gandhi and joined by Firdosh Daruwala when they did their first STP in one day, In 2012 the team, consisting of Arshish, Viraf and Karl completed the Seattle, WA to Vancouver BC ride of 180 miles. These young men who all work for Microsoft Inc train together every Wednesday and on weekends, from 6 a.m. They start with a ride of about 25-30 miles increasing in chunks of 5-10 miles a week till they get to 100 miles a day by June.

At the time of the race the families drive alongside the bikers as **Personal Support Vehicles (PSVs)** to top up Gatorade, water and food since these young men are picky about what they eat, and do not want to eat at the rest stops set up every 25 miles.

***Congratulations and Bravo !!***

Anahita Kapadia



# FEZANA UPDATE

## ZOROASTRIANS GOT TALENT

Khushnum Bhandari

On April 20, 2013 the the Zoroastrian Society of Ontario's (ZSO) 100th Toronto Scouts group, held its first Talent show **Zoroastrians Got Talent** at the Darbe Meher in Toronto, as a fundraiser for the Scouts Jamboree in Calgary in July 2013. The cost per child for participation oin the jamboree is about \$1500-\$1700. ZSO has been the sponsor of this scout group since 1990.

With a total of 33 participants the show was divided into three age categories. The talents included magic tricks, a belly dancer, a hula hoop dancer, singers, pianists, guitarist, performance in martial arts, short stories, poems and comedians



Organizing Committee



Age group 1-10 years

The master of the ceremony, Zubin F. Sethna charmed his audience and kept them constantly engaged with laughter. The prizes were awarded to the top 3 talents in each category, except for the first category who were all distributed prizes.

In the 1-10 years age group, the 1st prize was awarded to Rostam Pourmandegarian who played the keyboard, The 2nd prize was awarded to Taronish & Kayishmand Chothia, for their performance of karate, and the 3rd prize awarded to Benjamin Irani, who sang.

In 11-17 years aage group, the 1st prize went to the extraordinary Delicia Saldanha, who did a magical belly dance performance. The 2nd prize was a tie between Ricshe Saldanha who sang, and the team of Shahzad Bharda and Danesh Patel who performed magic tricks. The 3rd prize was also a tie between 3 contestants Yazad Tafti who played the guitar, Araash Chothia who danced to a hip-hop beat, and Zruvan Chothia who played the keyboard.

In the 18+ category, Freddy Mirza won the 1st prize for his mouth organ playing, the 2nd prize was



awarded to Minoo Irani who sang old bollywood numbers with his own twist, and 3rd prize went to Putli Bharda for acting as a typical old parsi lady.

The organizing committee consisted of Shreya Chaturvedi, Araash Chothia, Fravash Chothia, Spenta Chothia, Danesh Patel and Meherangiz Patel. The talent show was attended by more than 100 people and raied \$2200 between entrance tickets and raffle prizes

It was a night to remember for many of the young and old participants who kept the energy levels of the audience on a high and captivated the viewers with their various talents

*Khushnum Bhandari has a degree in Social and Cultural Anthropology from the University of Toronto .Photography is her passion, has completed a course in Photojournalism and wishes to make journalistic photography her career. She free lances with local community newspaper in the Greater Toronto Area, and several of her images have been recognized by the National Photographer's Association of anada and displayed on their website. She lives in Toronto with her parents*



# FEZANA UPDATE



Age group 11-17 years



Age group 18+ years

Photo credits Khushnum Bhandari

## *Bollywood spectacular* !!! !!!

**Zoroastrian Association of California (ZAC) and the California Zoroastrian Centre (CZC) Kick Off Fundraising For The 2014 NORTH AMERICAN ZOROASTRIAN CONGRESS**



Fundraising for the XVII North American Zoroastrian Congress got underway on July 20, 2013 as volunteers from the Zoroastrian Association of California (ZAC) and the California Zoroastrian Center (CZC) worked together to put on a fantastic Gala. Members of both associations and their friends turned out to support a good cause.



PHOTO BY: ARDESHIR BAGHKHANIAN



PHOTO BY: ARDESHIR BAGHKHANIAN



# FEZANA UPDATE

The evening featured a Bollywood Spectacular by **Nauzad Sadry, Rhea Pandit and Kainaaz Pandit**. (photo page 19) The trio backed by **DJ Zubin (Chichgar)** gave a performance that was the perfect blend of nostalgia and pure energy. The dance floor seemed to shrink in size as everyone got up to dance the night away.

As guests sat down for a sumptuous feast, **Farida Lakdawala**, who with her husband, **Khushroo Lakdawala** spearheaded the planning of this event, took the stage to thank everyone for their generous support of the Congress and our community. "...In December 2014, ZAC and CZC are co-hosting the Seventeenth North American Zoroastrian Congress. The Congress will bring together Zoroastrians from all over the world for an exchange of ideas concerning the perpetuation, in harmony, of our community in North America. The theme of our Congress is **Faith and Unity**. To host a Congress, with an attendance of about a 1000 people, is a big deal for a small community like ours. And to pay for it, is an even bigger deal!" she said, amidst laughter and general agreement from the audience, who took up the challenge and participated enthusiastically in all the fundraisers run during the evening.

**Jim Lakdawalla and Saleem Bakza** then conducted a live auction of three original limited edition canvas prints of paintings by Pakistani artist, **Jimmy Engineer**.

The bidding for the auction was a fun and lively affair, with the auctioneers adding just enough mirch-masala to the proceedings to make this an interesting part of the evening. Before long, amidst much good cheer, all three prints were sold!

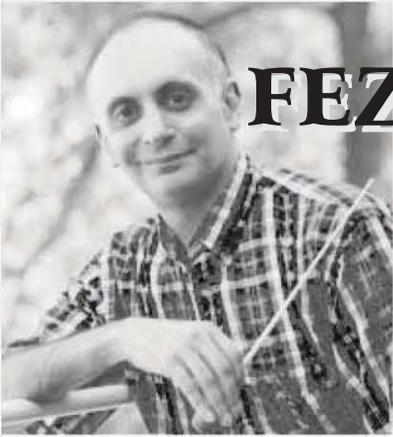


PHOTO BY: ARDESHIR BAGHKHANIAN

A silent auction of jewelry and other donated items was also held during the evening, along with a raffle. Once the winners of these fundraisers were announced, the singers took the stage again, for another round of dancing that left everyone jubilant (and out of breath with excitement!) by the end of the evening.

When the accounting was completed, it was concluded that the Gala was indeed a successful fundraiser for the Congress. But more than just meeting the expectations set for it as a fundraiser, this festive event exceeded expectations in terms of the cooperation and support members of three different local area associations showed to make this a successful event.

Echoing the sentiments of many who witnessed the coming together of this amazing evening, **Shida Anoshiravani**, President of the CZC and NAZC 2014 Committee member, said "*If this was an indication of our future efforts, we all should feel quite hopeful for a very successful Congress next year!*"



# FEZANA UPDATE

The XVII North American Zoroastrian Congress



*This logo is an artistic rendition of our religious symbol.*

## *A Chance of a Lifetime ...*

### **BE A PATRON CONDUCTOR OF THE WORLD ZOROASTRIAN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA**

***The World Zoroastrian Symphony Orchestra unites Zarathushtis from the world over to provide unforgettable musical experiences, under the baton of its Music Director, a professional conductor, Farobag Homi Cooper of Chicago.***

***The WZSO endeavors to delight audiences at The XVII North American Zoroastrian Congress. However, a performance of this magnitude is only possible with support of generous donations from supporters like you!***

***Supporters will be recognized as members of the Conductor's Circle and gain satisfaction in knowing that their contributions helped the WZSO to provide an enhanced cultural experience for Congress attendees, and also allowed Zarathushti musicians of varying proficiencies the opportunity to perform with professionals. The supporter who makes the largest contribution of \$5,000 or more will be recognized as a Patron Conductor and have the opportunity to conduct a simply elegant, short piece, with guidance from Mr. Cooper.***

***The WZSO is unlikely to be able to perform at the Congress if the fundraising goals for this event are not met by December 2013. So don't delay in showing your support for our community musicians by making your pledges today.***

***If you would like to sponsor this event, or contribute towards making it a reality, please contact Vira Santoke at (714) 963 1301 or [vsantoke@verizon.net](mailto:vsantoke@verizon.net).***

***The XVII North American Zoroastrian Congress, an event sponsored by FEZANA, will be hosted by the Zoroastrian Association of California, in coordination with the California Zoroastrian Center, in Los Angeles, from December 29 to 31, 2014.***



# FEZANA UPDATE

## FRENY MEHTA DAR-NI-PORI BAKE-A THON

**ABAN DABOO**

On March 30<sup>th</sup> the Arbab Rustam Guiv Darbe Mehr (home of the awesome Zoroastrian Association of Chicago ZAC) was buzzing from morning till night with the community crew for the Annual Freny Mehta Dar-ni-Pori Bake-a-thon. The description of this creation as a large round flat cake filled with lentils would not do justice to this delicious aromatic snack.

It all started 28 years ago when (Late) Freny Mehta suggested - "Why don't we get together and make Dar-ni-Pori?" to raise funds for ZAC. A simple question that made most of us gasp..."MAKE Dar-ni-Pori???" For people who grew up in Mumbai, you never "made" Dar Ni Pori you always bought it from RTI (Ratan Tata Industrial Institute) whenever you had an urge to eat it, perhaps on "Ava Mahina-nu Parab", (special day devoted to Avan, water) or during wedding festivities. However, Freny aunty in her soft-spoken voice somehow convinced us that it was do-able and very possible. To train us in the fine art of making "haute cuisine" we had the guidance of a band of seniors Jaloo Captain, (late) Tehmina Billimoria, (late) Putlamai Press, (late) Thrity Dordi, (late) Amymai Elavia, and many more.

Much to the chagrin of "our super chefs" we were slow learners for the first two to three years with heaps of broken and not-so-good Poris that did not pass Freny aunty's quality control inspection!!! But over the years we have mastered



the art of making perfect "Poris" and this year we made a total of 325 "poris" and raised \$1,800.

The event of this magnitude needs planning, coordination and dedication. The event starts with Nergish Mehta (Freney Aunty's daughter-in-law) making phone calls to all who volunteer to confirm their roles in the Bake-a-thon as "dar" makers, grocery shoppers, bakers, packers etc. To get a

head start, Nergish and ZAC President, Dinaz Weber start preparing the pastry the day before the Bake-a-thon.

By 10 a.m. on Saturday, a gang of ZAC ladies and a few brave men trickle into the Darbe-Mehr. From then on everyone to their assigned tasks be it making the dough, whipping up the "maan", (lard) rolling out the large "rotlis", filling the "dar" or getting the large trays ready for the ovens.

Once the assembly line is set up, "Poris" come rolling out!!! They are then cooled, packed and delivered to the anxious members. The lunch time break is a traditional round of "masoor", "papeta-nu-saak", french bread, etc. which keeps the workers happy till "chai" (tea) break when any damaged "Poris" that have failed the quality control panel are consumed with gusto. Fortunately or unfortunately, this year there were not many damaged "Poris" as we have become experts! Then back to the grind till all the "Poris" are baked and packed away. By then it is past dinner time and the strong and dedicated souls who linger to the end finish off with "akuri" (spiced scrambled eggs) or "pora" (spiced omelette), or leftover "masoor" (lentils).

It is hard to describe the feeling of community and camaraderie that happens each year at the bake-a-thon. You have to BE THERE to experience this special day. All age groups, from three to sixty plus, have fun sharing, caring, and just enjoying each other's company. The most heartening experience is to see the kids and young moms getting involved. Amongst the sweet and endearing youngsters were Zarina and Kaizad Sribnick, Aliza Dubash, Sanaya Dukandar, Jennifer Kavina, Rustom Ichaporia, Yazmin Rustomji, Sheroy Gonda and Kazvin Marfatia lending their shoulders to the wheel. Special thanks to Zenobia Mehta Sribnick and her family for making a special trip from New York each year to help out with the Bake-a-thon.

We have three generations of ZAC families participating. hopefully the tradition will be kept. It was sheer joy to see little Jennifer filling "Dar" with her dainty little hands and making a perfectly rounded "Pori"! Move over RTI !!

**Aban (Dubash) Daboo** ([parsichef@yahoo.com](mailto:parsichef@yahoo.com)) lives in the Chicagoland area and is an active member of ZAC. She has her own catering business and owns a restaurant with her husband Aspy in Aurora, Illinois. "



# FEZANA UPDATE

## ZAC-CHICAGO COLLABORATES WITH FEZANA AND THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE TO CELEBRATE CYRUS THE GREAT'S CONTRIBUTION TO HUMANITY

FEZANA PRESENTS A REPLICA OF THE CYRUS CYLINDER FOR DISPLAY AT THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO



Photo Krishna Sikrut.

Over 120 members of the Zoroastrian Association of Chicago, (ZAC) representatives from FEZANA, invited speakers and guests from the Oriental Institute - University of Chicago (OI) and the Council of Religious Leaders of Metropolitan Chicago (CRLMC) participated in the full-day "Celebration of Cyrus the Great's Contribution to Humanity" at the Arbab Rustam Guiv Darbe Mehr in Chicago on August 4, 2013. The event was co-sponsored by ZAC, FEZANA and the Oriental Institute.

The Persian emperor Cyrus, who built the Achaemenid Empire, the greatest empire known at that time (ca. 559 BCE) is celebrated for the respect he showed to the nations he conquered. The Old Testament hails Cyrus (also known as Kurush) as a Messiah for freeing the Jews from captivity in Babylon and allowing them to rebuild their temples. These generous acts are recorded in cuneiform on the Edict of Cyrus, a clay cylinder discovered near Babylon, in 1879, acknowledged as the world's first declaration of human rights. The original cylinder, housed at the British Museum, with a replica at the United Nations, is currently on a tour of five US cities.

After tea and refreshments, program, emceed by Mehrab Deboo, began with a Benediction by Mobydar Bomi Damkevala, a beautiful Monajat sung by Mani Rao and a Welcome by ZAC President Dinaz Weber.

ZAC children's religious education class coordinator Zenobia Damania unveiled a Poster on Cyrus the Great, made by the children. On behalf of FEZANA, Afreed Mistry, co-chair of FEZANA's UN-NGO Committee presented to the Oriental Institute, a replica of the Cyrus Cylinder on an engraved stand, and a plaque displaying excerpts from the Edict, with the hope that "the museum will display the Cylinder with pride and

inform and enlighten fellow North Americans about this ancient historical object and its relevance to the present-day world." Accepting the gift "with deep gratitude" on behalf of the Oriental Institute, was Professor of Oriental Studies, Matthew Stolper, who works on Achaemenid Babylonia and ancient Iran, and is director of the Persepolis Fortification Archive project. Dr. Stolper remarked that this *Cylinder was among the few iconic objects of ancient times that provided the key to unlock thousands of years of history.* Not only was it an "extraordinarily valuable source" for our understanding of ancient civilizations, but it has a wider significance as *"a symbol of many grand ideas, expressions and aspirations ... shared*



Above left Afreed Mistry presents the Cylinder to Prof. Matthew Stolper, Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago. Photo Cyrus Rivetna)

by an unusually wide array of political persuasions of various ethnic and religious backgrounds ... well worth celebrating."

Dolly Dastoor Editor-in-Chief FEZANA JOURNAL presented a copy of the Special Issue "*Cyrus Cylinder, a Zoroastrian Heritage*" to speakers and guests and a plaque of the Journal cover to ZAC president Dinaz Weber. With articles contributed by noted academicians, scholars, professors of the Hebrew Bible, historians, and museum curators, this Special Issue records the legacy of the towering historical figure and his iconic cylinder.

Margaret Cool Root, Professor of Near Eastern Art and Archeology at the University of Michigan presented "*Vision of an*



# FEZANA UPDATE

*Ecumenical World order*". Dr. Root approached the topic from the vantage point of architectural and representational evidence, specifically the sculpture relief of Cyrus' figure from the gatehouse at Pasargadae. This figure, which has long intrigued scholars, sheds important light on the nature of Cyrus' ideals of power and governance, his consistent effort at inclusivity and respect for the people he conquered, and his bold new distinctly Persian ecumenical vision of a world order. The Cyrus Cylinder may also be said to forecast an important new dynamic of religious and ethnic tolerance in the Empire.

After a delicious lunch, guests enjoyed a performance on the Achaemenid Persian Emperors by children of ZAC's Religious Education class led by Zenobia Damania and Bakhtavar Press. A magnificent performance by mezzo-soprano Tina Siganporia (photo below) held the audience spell-bound, as she sang an excerpt from the piece *"Zarathushtra"*, composed by Parizad Irani (who currently lives in the Netherlands). The hymn is based on the five Gathas, and the tone remains somber and lamenting as it communicates one's struggle to maintain Vohu Manah. This musical score was crafted specially for the World Zoroastrian Symphony Orchestra, and performed at the North American Zoroastrian Congress in Chicago in 2002.

The moving words of Rabbi Herman Schaalman, of the Chicago Board of Rabbis and a founder, with Cardinal Bernadin, of the CRLMC, stirred the souls of all present. He began with a tribute to the Zoroastrian community: *"... you demonstrate without any doubt that people that have a great tradition and profound values, are survivors, and contribute to the sum total ... I admire that you have continued your work and your presence, here in Chicago ... I salute you."* The esteemed Rabbi then recounted how Cyrus (Kurush) shaped the course of world history and religion: *"Cyrus' willingness to release those whom the Babylonians had enslaved, to go back to their former lands and rebuild their temples, became the starting point for the revival of Judaism in Judea; and from that revival has grown millennia of Jewish creativity and participation in*



*the development of the entire world. Specifically, had Cyrus not revived the Jewish people and culture, there would have been eventually, neither Christianity nor Islam. One may say, therefore that Cyrus is*



Rabbi Schaalman, Photo Cyrus Rivetna

*the real root cause for shaping our contemporary world."*

Jehan Bell gave a historical overview of the time period of the Persian Achaemenid Empire, and an introduction to *"Cyropedia – the Education of Cyrus,"* a work by the Greek philosopher *Xenophon*. He ended with a summary of the talk *"What the US Founding Fathers Learned from Cyrus the Great"* by Prof. Caroline Winterer, Director of the Stanford University Humanities Center. Thomas Jefferson and other Founding Fathers of the US Constitution, had multiple copies of *Cyropedia*, and used it as a guide in the selection of an ideal ruler as US president. (see FJ Summer issue pp 44-46). Aban Grant presented a summary of several articles by scholar and High Priest of Chicago Dastur Dr. Kersey H. Antia, quoting many references to Cyrus in the Book of Isaiah, Talmud, Midrah, and other writings of ancient and modern times. **GRATEFUL THANKS!**

Participants were treated to a delicious dhansakh lunch catered by Aban Daboo, and High Teas in the morning and afternoon with bhakhras, batasas, etc and snacks prepared by ZAC ladies. Thanks to Rohinton Rivetna for orchestrating the Event, to ZAC President Dinaz Weber, FEZANA President Katayun Kapadia, and the Oriental Institute (President Gil Stein, Prof. Matthew Stolper, Registrar Helen McDonald, Director Tracy Tajbl and Asst. Director Brittany Mullins) for their help, presence and support, to members of CRLMC for gracing the occasion with their presence, to the seasoned as well as 'next-generation' speakers and ZAC children, and to all the participants, especially Afreed Mistry and Dolly Dastoor, from FEZANA who came long distances, for contributing to the success of this memorable and inspirational event.

**SUBMITTED BY ROSHAN RIVETNA.**



# FEZANA UPDATE

## Calendar of Festivals

### Calendar of Festivals

September 2013 to March 2014

#### Fravardian Jashan

*Mah Fravardin, Roz Fravardin*

Tuesday, August 6 (K)

Thursday, September 5 (S)

#### Maidyozarem Gahambar

*Mah Ardibehesht, Roz Khorshed-Daepmeher*

Wednesday, August 28 - Sunday, Sept 01 (K)

Friday, Sept 27 - Tuesday, Oct 01 (S)

#### Paitishem Gahambar

*Mah Sheherevar, Roz Ashtad Aneran*

Thursday, Sept 12- Monday, Sept 16 (F)

#### Jashne-Mehergan

*Mah Meher, Roz Meher*

Wednesday, October 02 (F)

#### Ayathrem Gahambar

*Mah Meher, Roz Ashtad-Aneran*

Saturday, Oct 12- Wednesday, Oct 16 (F)

#### Jashne-Avangan(Avan Ardivisur Parab)

*Mah Avan, Roz Avan*

Saturday, October 26 (F)

#### Maidyoshem Gahambar

*Mah Tir, Roz Khorshed-Daepmeher*

Sunday, Oct 27 - Thursday, October 31 (K)

Tuesday Nov 26- Saturday, Nov 30 (S)

#### Jashne-Adargan

*Mah Adar, Roz Adar*

Sunday, November 24 (F)

#### Death Anniversary of Zarathushtra

*Mah Dae, Roz Khorshed*

Thursday April 25 (K) (K)

Saturday, May25 (S)

Thursday, December 26 (F)

#### Maidhyarem Gahambar

*Mah Dae, Roz Meher-Bahram*

Tuesday, Dec 31-Saturday, Jan 04 (F)

#### Jashne Daegan

*Mah Dae, Roz Daepdin*

Tuesday, January 07 (F)

#### Jashne Bahmangan

*Mah Bahman, Roz Bahman*

Thursday, January 16 (F)

#### Paitishem Gahambar

*Mah Sheherevar, Roz Ashtad-Aneran*

Friday, Jan 10 - Tuesday, Jan 14 (K)

Sunday, Feb 9 - Thursday, Feb 13 (S)

#### Jashne Sadeh

*Mah Bhman, Roz Aban*

Friday, January 24 (F)

#### Ayatherem Gahambar

*Mah Meher, Roz Ashtad-Aneran*

Sunday, Feb 9 - Thursday, Feb 13 (K)

Tuesday, March 11 -Saturday, March 15 (S)

#### Fravardegan/Panjeh/Hamaspathmedayem Gahambar

*Five Gatha days*

Sunday, March 16 - Thursday, March 20 (F)

#### Char-Shanbe-Soori (Heralding the New Year)

*Tuesday Prior to NauRooz*

Tuesday March 18 (F)

#### NauRooz or Jamshedi NauRooz (New Year)

*Mah Fravardin, Roz Hormazd*

Friday, March 21 (F)

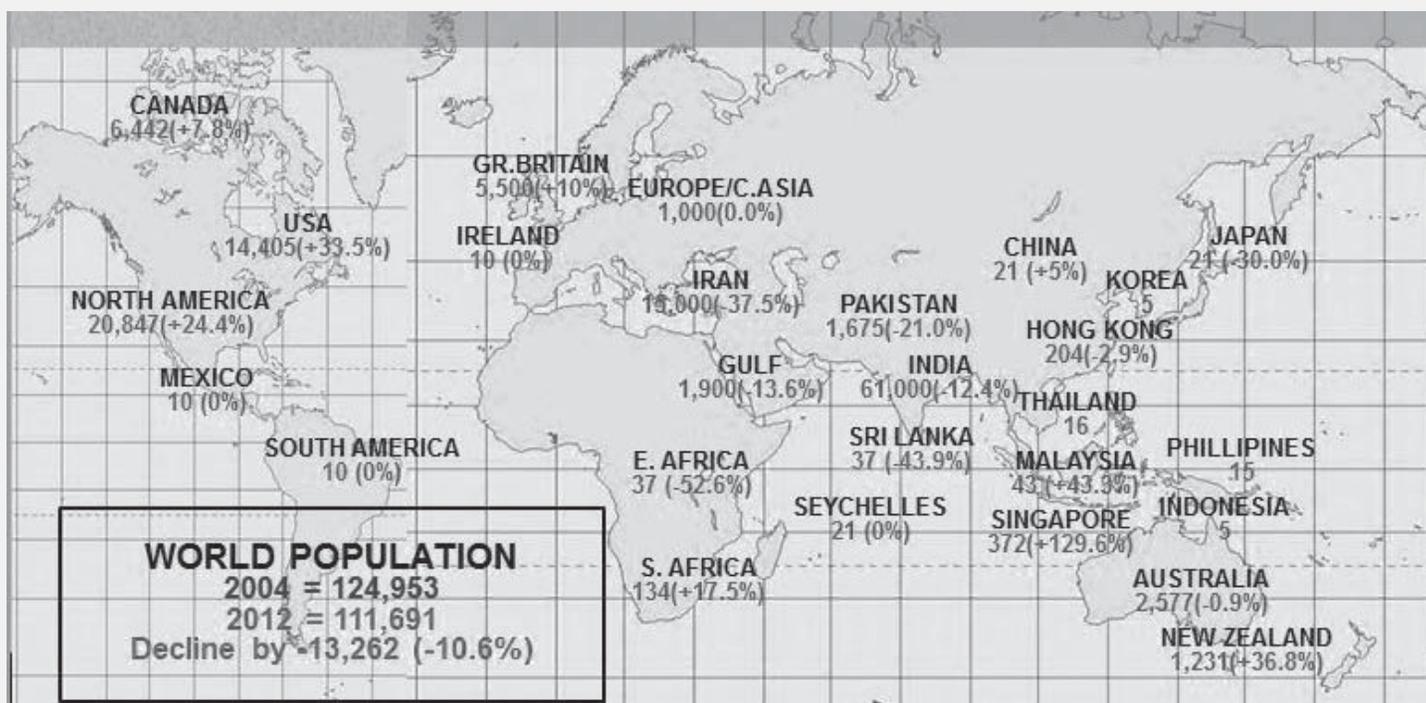
(S=Shenshai, K=Kadmi, F= Fasli)

# THE ZARATHUSHTI WORLD a 2012 demographic picture

Compiled by Roshan Rivetna

Presenting a 2012 demographics picture of Zarathushtis around the world, and comparison with a similar study done in 2004.

**DISCLAIMER.** While every effort has been made in good faith, to seek out reliable sources for each country, state and province for the data presented here, it should be noted that this compilation is a “magazine survey” and not an official, statistically correct census. The data received may be inconsistent, inaccurate and incomplete, and our estimates may be incorrect. We present the raw data here, as received, to get a flavor of the Zarathushti world, and leave it to the demographers and statisticians to determine its credibility and level of confidence.



**ZARATHUSHTI POPULATION 2012.** Population of Zarathushtis around the world. The growth or decline since the 2004 FEZANA study is shown in parenthesis.

## INTRODUCTION

In 2012 FEZANA revisited the demographic survey of the worldwide Zarathushti population published in FEZANA Journal in 2004 [1]. In this issue we present a compilation of demographic data for 2012, along with a comparison with the 2004 data. The early history of the arrival of Zarathushtis in each country along with interesting anecdotal information, was published in 2004; in this issue we present a 2012 snapshot.

The primary goal was to collect data on the Zarathushti population of each country. Gathering population numbers for ‘neo-Zarathushtis’ or ‘Zarathushtis by choice’ is wrought with errors and inconsistencies and should be viewed as a work-in-progress. Only some fragmented data for Europe and Central Asia is presented in this issue [see page 54]. This study will be presented in a future issue of FEZANA Journal, after more comprehensive and consistent facts and figures have been gathered.

In this 2012 study, besides **population** figures, additional demographics data was requested (but not always received), on:

- **Intermarriages:** Number of non-Zarathushti spouses in the Zarathushti population.
- **Age distribution:** Children 18 and under, and Seniors, 65 and over.
- **Sex:** Male or Female.
- **Origin:** Parsi or Iranian.

Optionally, information was requested but very sporadic responses received (from North America only) on:

- Number of offspring of intermarriages not following the Zarathushti religion.
- Number of Zarathushtis converted to/from other religions.
- Number of immigrants to North America between 2004 and 2012.
- Number of new births in North America between 2004 and 2012.

The data presented here is a compilation of the raw numbers as received from the source in each country/state/province. Further details for each country are in the respective articles elsewhere in this Journal.

## PROCESS AND GUIDELINES

For each country we established a knowledgeable source – either a professional demographer (as in India) or an official of the local organization (as in Iran and most other areas) or a long time resident (as in some smaller areas). For USA and Canada we communicated directly with a contact person in **each** state or province. Each source/contact person was sent the data that was published for their country/state/province in 2004. For each US state and Canadian province, we also sent an excel spreadsheet listing all Zarathushtis in their area, generated from the FEZANA directory (at [www.FEZANA.org](http://www.FEZANA.org)) which they could use as a “starter” list. For consistency in responses, the following guidelines were suggested.

- Definition of “Who is a Zarathushti” is beyond the scope of this paper, and was left up to the discretion of each area.
- Data presented here represents a snapshot as of mid 2012.
- Population data was requested at two levels: (a) the ‘recorded count’ based on national census figures, local directories and databases and through personal knowledge; and (b) a ‘gut feeling’ (didn’t we say this was not a scientifically conducted census?) ‘estimated maximum count’, including those who might be ‘out there’ but were not recorded anywhere or known in the community.
- Persons on temporary (< 6 months) professional assignments were counted in their home area.
- College students away from home were counted in their home area.
- For North America, each state and province was requested to respond on the standard spreadsheet, with names listed, to enable us to cross-check for duplicates, moves and missed names. Privacy was respected and assurance given that the lists would not be shared or misused.
- All non-Zarathushti spouses (except those who were divorced or deceased) were to be shown in the listings (but not included in the count of Zarathushti population).
- For purposes of this survey, the guideline was (a) to list all offspring of mixed marriages, and (b) to flag those offspring (child or adult) of mixed marriages who were not initiated or were known not to follow the Zarathushti religion. They were not counted in the Zarathushti population totals. The responses were not always consistent.

## Suggestions to improve the process

1. While every effort was made, given the limited resources, to verify, validate and standardize the data, more effort should be expended to better **define and enforce the guidelines** to be used in collecting the data, to avoid inconsistencies in the reported data from area to area as described above – in the counting process used as well as in the definitions of who is to be counted.
2. In North America, moves of families from one state/province to another were very prevalent. More effort should be expended to cross-check for duplicate and missed listings, and to verify that recently moved families were counted in the ‘other’ state. For this reason, it is important that all respondents **submit their data on the standard spreadsheet provided**, with names and not just send in bottom-line numbers and percentages.
3. **Assurance of privacy should be given** - all information gathered will be safeguarded from misuse.
4. The data from the Iran census (done in December 2011) was not available until October 2012, and the India census (done in 2011) is not available to date (July 2013). Perhaps the **FEZANA survey can be scheduled to follow the Iran and India census by 2 years**, i.e. schedule the next decadal census in 2023.

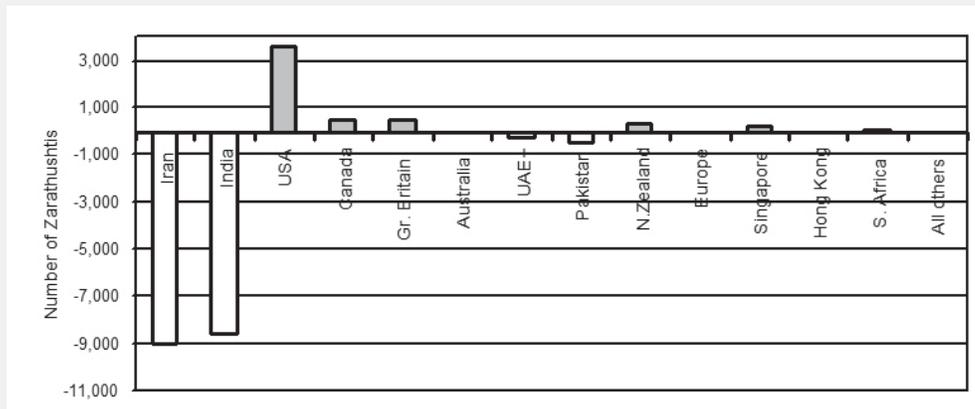
**RESULTS POPULATION.** Table 1 shows a compilation of the best estimates for Zarathushti population for each country as provided by the sources shown, for 2004 and 2012..

**Table 1. Zarathushti population by country - 2004 and 2012**

COUNTRY	Population 2004	Population 2012	Population Growth or Decline	Percentage Growth or Decline	SOURCE OF DATA
Iran	24,000	15,000	-9,000	-37.5%	2004: <b>Mobed Mehraban Firouzgary</b> , based on Statistical Center of Iran figures. 2012: <b>Esfandiar Ekhtiyari</b> and <b>Mobed Mehraban Firouzgary</b> [page 43].
India	69,601	61,000	-8,601	-12.4%	2004: <b>Armaity Desai</b> based on GOI census. 2012: Projections by <b>Armaity Desai</b> and <b>S. Siva Raju</b> pending GOI 2011 census results [page 45].
USA	10,794	14,405	3,611	33.5%	Survey of 50 US states. 2004: <b>Roshan Rivetna</b> and <b>Noshir Jesung</b> . 2012: <b>Roshan Rivetna</b> and <b>Zenobia Damania</b> [page 71].
Canada	5,975	6,442	467	7.8%	Survey of 10 Canadian provinces. 2004: <b>Roshan Rivetna</b> and <b>Noshir Jesung</b> . 2012: <b>Roshan Rivetna</b> and <b>Zenobia Damania</b> [page 69].
Gr. Britain	5,000	5500	500	10.0%	2004 and 2012: <b>Rusi Dalal</b> [page 53].
Australia	2,601	2,577	-24	-0.9%	Survey of 7 Australian states. 2004: <b>Sam Kerr</b> . 2012: <b>Arnavaz Chubb</b> [page 77].
Gulf region	2,200	1900	-300	-13.6%	Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and UAE. 2004 and 2012: <b>Meher Bhesania</b> [page 68].
Pakistan	2,121	1,675	-446	-21.0%	2004 and 2012: <b>Toxy Cowasjee</b> [page 51].
N. Zealand	900	1,231	331	36.8%	2004 and 2012: <b>Tehmus Mistry</b> [page 79].
Europe & Cen. Asia	1,000	1,000	0	0.0%	2004 and 2012: <b>Dolly Dastoor</b> [page 54].
Singapore	162	372	210	129.6%	2004: <b>Russi Ghadialy</b> and <b>Nelly Doctor</b> . 2012 <b>Homiyar Vasania</b> . (page 58).
Hong Kong	210	204	-6	-2.9%	2004: <b>Jal Shroff</b> and <b>Yazdi Viraf Parekh</b> . 2012: <b>Yazdi Viraf Parekh</b> . [page 58].
S. Africa	114	134	20	17.5%	2004 and 2012: <b>Solly Shapurji</b> [page 62].
E. Africa	78	37	-41	-52.6%	2004: <b>Rusi Dalal</b> . 2012: <b>Vistasp Nariman Vatchha</b> [page 64].
Sri Lanka	66	37	-29	-43.9%	2004 and 2012: <b>Jamsheed Choksy</b> [page 52].
Malaysia	30	43	13	43.3%	2004: <b>Nelly Doctor</b> . 2012: <b>Hootoksi Tyabji</b> [page 58].
Japan	30	21	-9	-30.0%	2004 and 2012: <b>Yazdi Viraf Parekh</b> [page 58].
Seychelles	21	21	0	0.0%	2004 and 2012: <b>Soona Oliaji</b> [page 67].
China	20	21	1	5.0%	2004 and 2012: <b>Yazdi Viraf Parekh</b> [page 58].
Thailand, Viet Nam	0	16	16		2004 and 2012: <b>Yazdi Viraf Parekh</b> [page 58].
Phillipines	0	15	15		2004 and 2012: <b>Yazdi Viraf Parekh</b> [page 58].
Ireland	10	10	0		2004 and 2012: <b>Rusi Dalal</b> [page 53].
S. America	10	10	0		2004 and 2012: <b>Roshan Rivetna</b> [page 76].
Mexico, C. America & the Islands	10	10	0		2004 and 2012: <b>Roshan Rivetna</b> [page 76].
Korea	0	5	5		2004 and 2012: <b>Yazdi Viraf Parekh</b> [page 58].
Indonesia	0	5	5		2004 and 2012: <b>Yazdi Viraf Parekh</b> [page 58].
<b>TOTAL World</b>	<b>124,953</b>	<b>111,691</b>	<b>-13,262</b>	<b>-10.6%</b>	<b>Total world Population and growth/decline</b>
Countries above with pop.<100	275	251	-24	-8.7%	Totals and percentages for countries with population less than 100, shown as "All Others" in Fig. 1.

Fig. 1 below shows the change in population between 2004 and 2012 for all countries with a population of more than 100 Zarathushtis. Countries with population less than 100 are grouped under “All Others”.

**Fig. 1. Growth or decline in population by country between 2004 and 2012**



**Observations on the population.** We note here some observations that should be cause for concern.

The world’s Zarathushti population has declined from 124,953 as estimated in 2004, to 111,691 as estimated in 2012.

**In 2012 our survey shows 13,262 fewer Zarathushtis in the world than in 2004, i.e. a drop of -10.6% in less than a decade.**

As is very evident in the graph above, the population decline in the homelands of Iran (-9,000, -37.5%), India (-8601, -12.4%) and Pakistan (-446, -21.0%) adding up to 18047 Zarathushtis, overshadows by far, the growth in USA (+3,611, +33.5%), Great Britain (+500, +10%), Canada (+467, +7.8%), New Zealand (+331, +36.8%) and Singapore (+210, 129.6%). Even though the percentage gains are high, these countries, because of their small numbers, added only 5119 Zarathushtis to the world population.

**Intermarriages**

**Table 2. Percentage of non-Zarathushti spouses in the Zarathushti population**

Country	Percentage 2004	Percentage 2012
Iran	Almost 0%	Almost 0%
India	n/a	n/a
USA	7.7%	9.9%
Canada	4.7%	5.6%
Gr. Britain	5.2%	5.2%
Australia	7.0%	4.0%
ME (UAE+)	0.1%	4.0%
Pakistan	2.4%	2.6%
New Zealand	3.0%	2.6%
Europe	n/a	n/a
Singapore	19.7%	13.0%
Hong Kong	9.5%	15.5%
South Africa	14.9%	20.1%
East Africa	2.6%	2.7%
Sri Lanka	15.2%	21.6%
Malaysia	24.0%	25.0%
Japan	20.0%	18.2%
Seychelles	52.4%	42.9%
China	10.0%	18.2%

Table 2 and Fig. 2 show the percentage of non-Zarathushti spouses in the recorded Zarathushti population, by country, in 2004 and 2012, as submitted by the sources for each country. The percentage ranges from almost zero (in Iran) to 42.9% in Seychelles. In fact the data for Seychelles is off the chart in the figure below.

**Observations on percentage of non-Zarathushti spouses.** From Fig. 2, it is evident that there is a very large percentage of non-Zarathushti spouses (over 20%) in countries with very small populations. Note that in the chart below, countries are shown in order of decreasing population.

**Fig. 2. Percentage of non-Zarathushti spouses in the population**

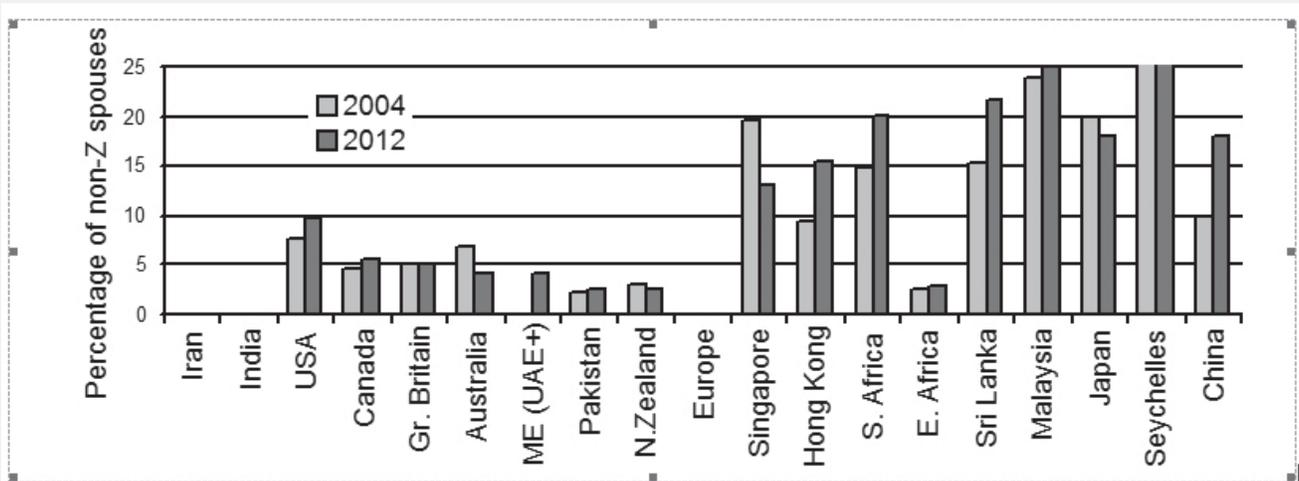
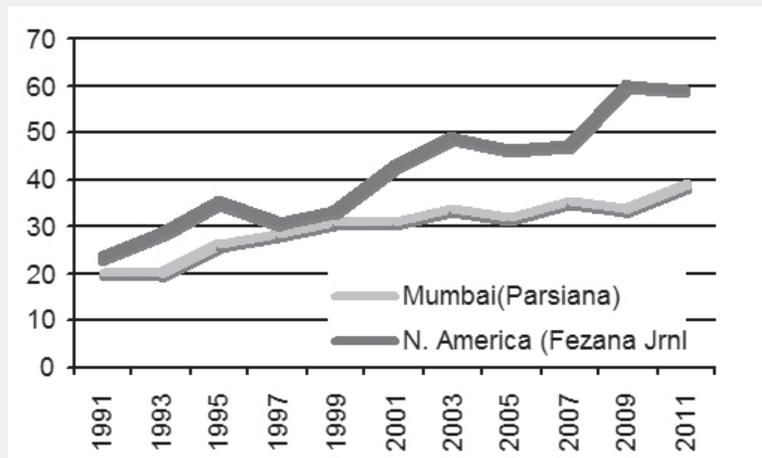


Table 3 and Fig. 3 show marriages (intra and inter-faith) as announced in FEZANA Journal (for North America) and as recorded by Parsiana (for Mumbai) during 2-year intervals for the two decades from 1991 through 2011. This data could, per se be incomplete or biased.

**Table 3. Percentage of intermarriages for North America and Mumbai**

USA & CANADA (FEZANA JOURNAL)				MUMBAI (PARSIANA)			
	Intra	Inter	%Inter		Intra	Inter	%Inter
1991-1992	29	9	23.7%	1992	260	67	20.5%
1993-1994	37	15	28.8%	1993-1994	618	157	20.3%
1995-1996	36	20	35.7%	1995-1996	481	171	26.2%
1997-1998	38	17	30.9%	1997-1998	537	215	28.6%
1999-2000	36	18	33.3%	1999-2000	468	208	30.8%
2001-2002	33	25	43.1%	2001-2002	468	208	30.8%
2003-2004	39	38	49.4%	2003-2004	344	177	34.0%
2005-2006	42	37	46.8%	2005-2006	392	183	31.8%
2007-2008	34	31	47.7%	2007-2008	327	181	35.6%
2009-2010	25	38	60.3%	2009-2010	333	172	34.1%
2011	13	19	59.4%	2011	176	112	38.9%

**Fig. 3. Percentage of intermarriages for North America and Mumbai**



**Observations on intermarriages.** Table 3 and Fig. 3 show a very significant upward trend in the percentage of intermarriages for both Mumbai and North America in the past two decades. For Mumbai, the percentage has grown steadily from 20.5% in 1992 to 38.9% in 2011. For North America, the percentage has grown from 23.7% in 1991 to an

alarming 60% (approx.) for the last three years (2009 through 2011).

**OFFSPRING OF INTERMARRIAGES.** Data received from a few US states and Canadian provinces, representing about 28% of the population, indicates that at least 25% of children of intermarriages do not follow the Zarathushti religion.

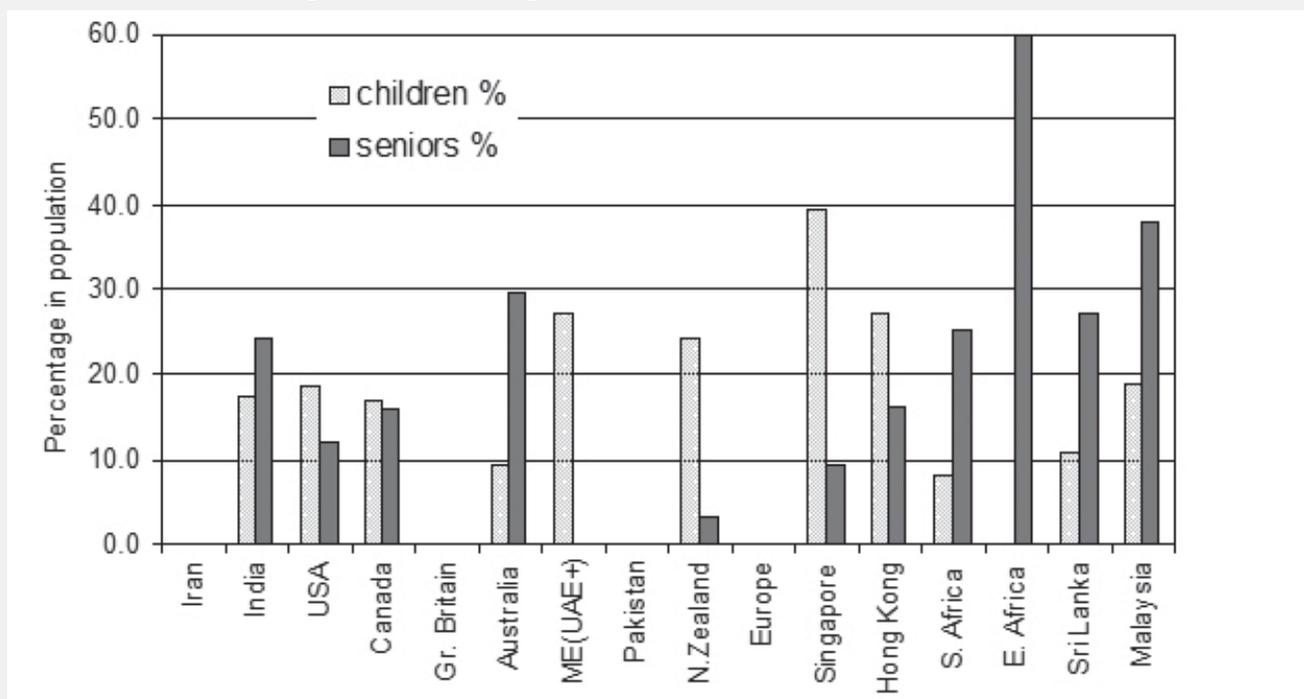
**CONVERSIONS.** Only seven US states/associations representing 25% of the US population responded, and reported a total of 15 Zarathushtis converted to other religions (mostly to Bahai'ism and Christianity); and two spouses of Zarathushtis who had converted to Zoroastrianism.

**AGE DISTRIBUTION – children and seniors.** Table 4 and Fig. 4 show (a) the percentage of children (18 and under) and (b) the percentage of seniors (65 and over) in the Zarathushti population as reported by each country in 2012.

**Table 4. Percentage of children and seniors in 2012**

Country	Percentage 18 & Under	Percentage 65 & Over
Iran	n/a	n/a
India	(2001) 17.6%	(2001) 24.1%
USA	18.7%	12.2%
Canada	16.8%	15.8%
Gr. Britain	n/a	"Aver. Age declining"
Australia	9.3%	29.6%
ME (UAE+)	(under 21) 27.0%	"Small number"
Pakistan	"Very few"	"Too many"
New Zealand	24.4%	3.2%
Europe/C. Asia	n/a	n/a
Singapore	39.4%	9.3%
Hong Kong	27.2%	16.3%
S. Africa	8.2%	25.4%
E. Africa	"No one under 40"	60.0%
Sri Lanka	10.8%	27.0%
Malaysia	18.9%	37.8%

**Fig. 4. Percentage of children and seniors in 2012**



**OBSERVATIONS ON AGE DISTRIBUTION.** Middle East, New Zealand, Singapore and Hong Kong report a larger

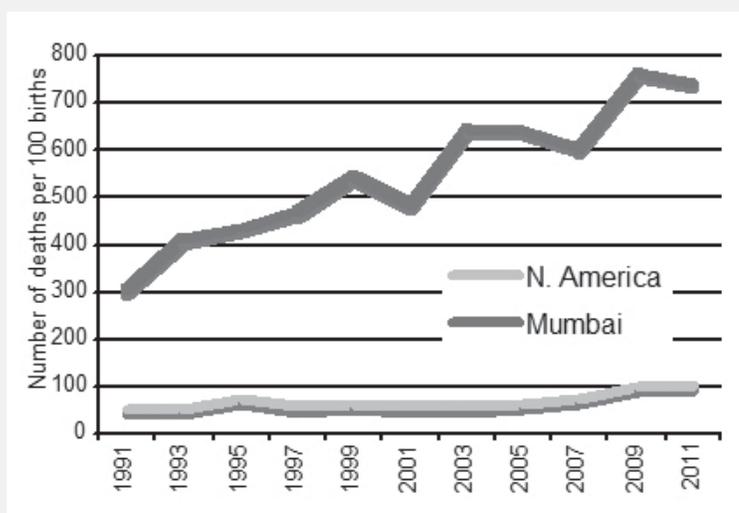
percentage of children over seniors. India, Australia (surprisingly) and very small populations like Africa, Sri Lanka and Malaysia report high percentages of seniors, e.g. Mombasa, East Africa (pop. 15) reports: “There are 9 (i.e. 60%) over 65, and there is no one below 40.”

**BIRTHS AND DEATHS.** Table 5 below and Figures 5, 5a and 5b show the number of births per year, the number of deaths per year and the number of deaths/100 births, from 1991 through 2011, as reported in Parsiana (for Mumbai) and FEZANA Journal (for North America). This data could per se be incomplete or biased.

**Table 5. Births and Deaths in North America and Mumbai**

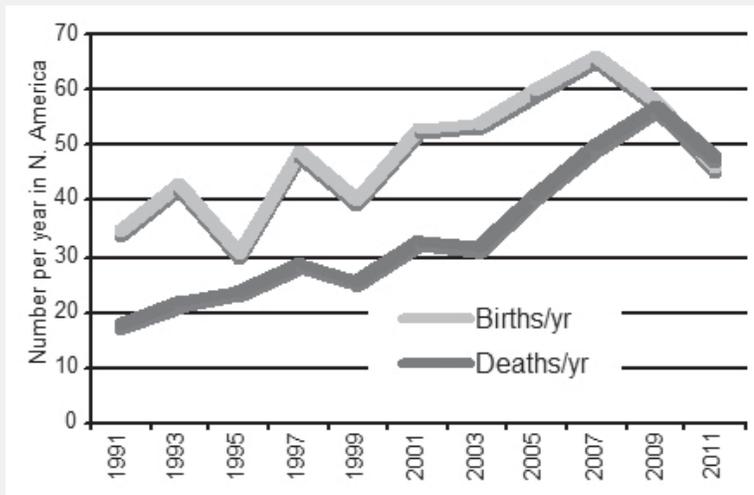
NORTH AMERICA (FEZANA JOURNAL)						MUMBAI (PARSIANA)					
Period	Births	Births /yr	Deaths	Deaths/yr	Deaths/ 100 births	Period	Births	Births/ yr	Deaths	Deaths/yr	Deaths/ 100 births
1991-1992	70	35	36	18	51.4	1992	316	316	958	958	303.2
1993-1994	86	43	44	22	51.2	1993-1994	520	260	2135	1067	410.6
1995-1996	61	31	48	24	78.7	1995-1996	437	219	1904	952	435.7
1997-1998	98	49	58	29	59.2	1997-1998	413	207	1950	975	472.2
1999-2000	80	40	51	26	63.8	1999-2000	342	171	1881	941	550.0
2001-2002	106	53	65	33	61.3	2001-2002	375	188	1828	914	487.5
2003-2004	108	54	63	32	58.3	2003-2004	206	103	1337	669	649.0
2005-2006	120	60	81	41	67.5	2005-2006	249	124	1603	802	643.8
2007-2008	132	66	99	50	75.0	2007-2008	270	135	1631	816	604.1
2009-2010	115	58	113	57	98.3	2009-2010	225	112	1725	863	766.7
2011	46	46	48	48	104.3	2011	103	103	763	763	740.8
<b>21 year total</b>	<b>1,022</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>706</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>69.1</b>	<b>20-year total</b>	<b>3456</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>17,715</b>	<b>886</b>	<b>512.6</b>

**Fig. 5. Number of Deaths per 100 births in North America and Mumbai**

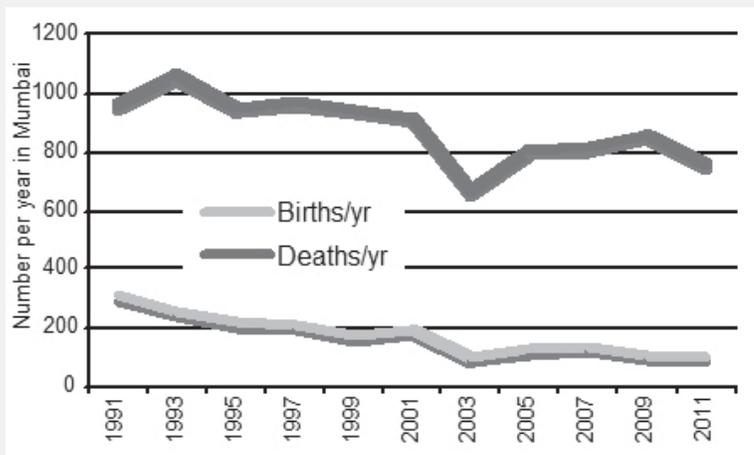


**Observations on the death-to-birth ratio.** For North America there has been a slow increase in the ratio of deaths per 100 births, from 51.4 (in 1991) to 104.3 (in 2011). For Mumbai, there is an alarmingly high growth in the ratio, from 303.2 in 1992 to 740.8 in 2011. That is, **in 2011 there were 741 deaths for every 100 births!**

**Fig. 5a. Number of births and deaths in North America**



**Fig. 5b. Number of births and deaths in Mumbai**



**Observations on births and deaths.**

For North America there has generally been an increase in both the births as well as deaths, with the number of births well above the number of deaths (at least through 2007). The drop after 2007 is unexplained -- perhaps a decline in the population, or aging of the population, or maybe just a drop in the numbers reported to FEZANA Journal. During the 21 year period (1991 – 2011) there were 1,022 births and 706 deaths in North America.

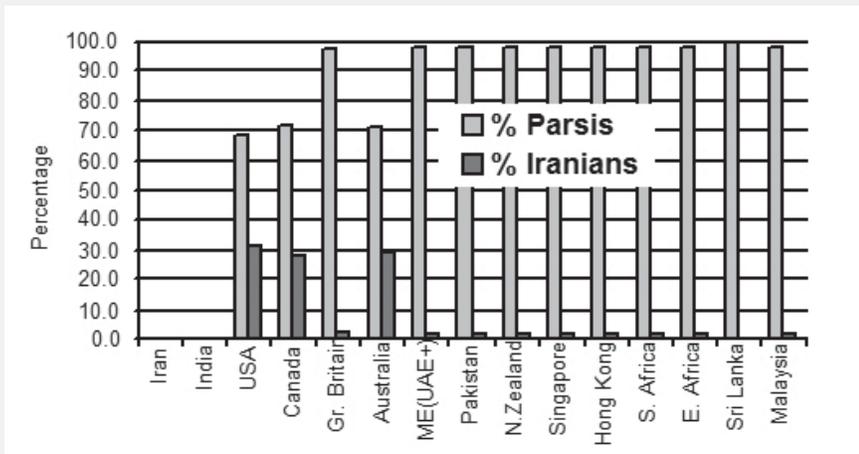
During the 8-year period 2004 -- 2012, FEZANA Journal showed 503 births and 430 deaths.

For Mumbai, there has been a general decrease in both the births as well as deaths per year, with the number of deaths remaining exceedingly high every year compared to the number of births. **During the 20 year period (1992 – 2011) there were 3,456 births and an alarmingly high number of 17, 715 deaths in Mumbai!**

**NEW BIRTHS IN NORTH AMERICA.** Between 2004 and 2012, based on responses from only 5 Canadian provinces and 10 US states we estimate perhaps 200 new births in Canada, and 750 in USA, i.e. 950 in North America. Only half this number was announced in FEZANA Journal (see Table 5)

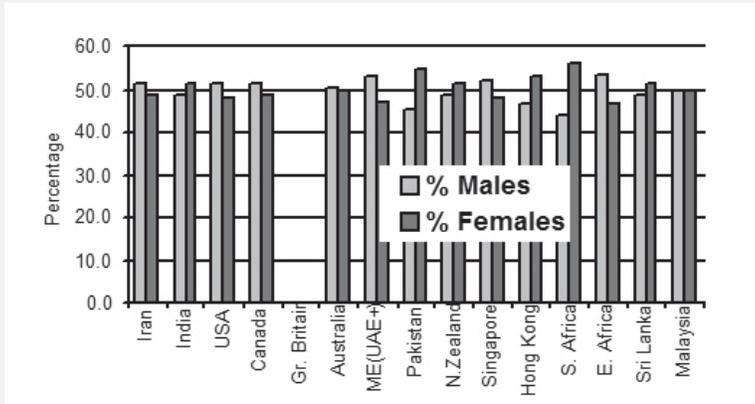
**IMMIGRATION TO NORTH AMERICA.** Between 2004 and 2012, based on responses from only 4 Canadian provinces and 10 US states we estimate perhaps 500 immigrants to Canada (including 300 from Iran to British Columbia) and 2000 immigrants to USA (including 1670 from Iran to California), i.e. 2,500 in North America, with a large majority of them from Iran.

**DISTRIBUTION BY ORIGIN (PARSI-IRANIAN) AND SEX (MALE-FEMALE).** Table 6 and Figures 6a and 6b below, show the distribution by Origin (Parsi or Iranian) and Sex (male or female) as submitted by the sources for each country. ‘Parsi-Iranis’ from India were counted as Parsis.



**Fig. 6a. Distribution by origin.**

The smaller countries (ME through Malaysia) mostly reported a population of almost all Parsis noting that “Data on Iranians was not available.” In the USA, Canada and Australia, the percentage of Parsis is more than double that of Iranians, but there are exceptions, e.g. the state of California where the population of Iranians is much higher,



**Fig. 6b. Distribution by sex.**

Nothing very remarkable was observed in the distribution of males and females.

**Table 6. Distribution by origin (Parsi-Iranian) and sex (male-female)**

Country	% Parsis	% Iranians	% Males	% females
Iran			51.1	48.9
India			48.8	51.2
USA	68.1	31.9	51.7	48.3
Canada	72.0	28.0	51.4	48.6
Gr. Britain	97.0	3.0	n/a	n/a
Australia	71.1	28.9	50.3	49.7
ME (UAE +)	~ 98.0	~ 2.0	53.0	47.0
Pakistan	~ 98.0	~ 2.0	45.6	54.4
New Zealand	~ 98.0	~ 2.0	48.8	51.2
Singapore	~ 98.0	~ 2.0	51.9	48.1
Hong Kong	~ 98.0	~ 2.0	46.7	53.2
South Africa	~ 98.0	~ 2.0	44.0	56.0
East Africa	~ 98.0	~ 2.0	53.3	46.7
Sri Lanka	100.0	0.0	48.6	51.4
Malaysia	~ 98.0	~ 2.0	50.0	50.0

## SUMMARY

In this paper, we present a compilation of data as gathered from ‘experts’ in each country. While we leave it to the demographers and statisticians to determine the credibility of this data, some significant, and rather alarming observations are summarized below.

**POPULATION.** The Zarathushti population of the world in 2012 is estimated at 111,691, which is a decline of 10.6% or 13,262 Zarathushtis, since the 2004 compilation. This decline is largely attributable to a decline of 18,047 Zarathushtis in the homelands of Iran, India and Pakistan. The diaspora communities in North America, Great Britain, New Zealand and Singapore show large percentage gains, but because of their small numbers, add only 5119 Zarathushtis to the world population.

**INTERMARRIAGES.** There has been a very significant upward trend in the percentage of interfaith marriages. The percentage in Mumbai has increased from 20.5% in 1992 to 38.9% in 2011 as reported by Parsiana. In North America, the percentage has increased from 23.7% in 1991 to approx. 60% for the last three years, 2009 – 2011.

Data received from a few US states and Canadian provinces indicates that at least 25% of children of intermarriages do not follow the Zarathushti religion. While the level of confidence in this data may not be high, this should be cause for grave concern, especially in succeeding generations.

**CONVERSIONS.** In regards to conversions, data received from only a few US states, representing 25% of the US population, indicated 15 Zoroastrians converted, mostly to Christianity and Baha’ism; and two spouses converted to Zoroastrianism.

**CHILDREN AND SENIORS.** India, Australia (surprisingly) and some countries with very small Zarathushti populations like E. and S. Africa, Sri Lanka and Malaysia) reported very high percentages of seniors in their population. Some communities,

notably Middle east, New Zealand and Singapore, reported low percentages of seniors and high percentages of children.

**BIRTHS AND DEATHS.** The situation in India is exacerbated by an increasing trend in the deaths-to-births ratio, with an alarming 7-to-1 ratio reported in 2011. In the last 20 years, there were only 3,456 births and a five times larger number of 17,715 deaths in Mumbai.

**PARSI AND IRANIAN ORIGIN.** In USA, Canada and Australia, the percentage of Parsis is more than double that of Iranians (with exceptions, such as the state of California). All other diaspora countries reported that their populations were almost all Parsis and data on Iranians was not available.

**MALES AND FEMALES.** Nothing very remarkable was observed in this distribution.

**GROWTH IN NORTH AMERICA.** Rudimentary estimates indicate perhaps 2500 new immigrants to North America, mostly from Iran, and perhaps 950 new births, during the period between 2004 and 2012. Assuming the number of deaths to be somewhat less than the number of births as indicated by Table 5, we can perhaps estimate the net growth to be about 3,000. This is somewhat short of the growth of 4078 shown in Table 1.

While not an official scientifically conducted census, this compilation does serve to give a demographic picture of the Zarathushti world. We urge community leaders to take note of some rather alarming trends world wide, seek the help of professional demographers to analyze the data, and implement actions tailored to the unique situations in each country, to reverse the trends, and bring about a Zarathushti renaissance.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- [1] All the sources and contact persons from each country/state/province for their cooperation and diligence, for taking the responsibility and spending their time and effort to collect data for their area to the best extent possible.
- [2] FEZANA administrator Zenobia Damania, for help with verifying, cross-checking and updating the spreadsheets received from the various sources, compiling the data, and for technical help at every step.
- [3] Aban Vazifdar of Zoroastrian Association of Chicago for compiling marriage, births and deaths data from FEZANA Journal; and Roxana Driver of Parsiana for compiling similar data from Parsiana records.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Roshan Rivetna, "The Zarathushti World – a Demographic Picture," FEZANA Journal, Winter 2004.

**Roshan Rivetna** ([RRRivetna@aol.com](mailto:RRRivetna@aol.com)) is deeply committed to perpetuating the Zarathushti religion, customs and traditions in the diaspora. Perhaps she is best known for her stewardship of FEZANA Journal for 15 years, from a fledgling newsletter to a world-class publication. The FEZANA publications "The Legacy of Zarathushtra" and "Zoroastrian Connections with Judaism and Christianity," edited by her, are widely used for showcasing Zoroastrian history, religion and culture. Professionally, Roshan pursued a career in science at Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, Mumbai, Argonne National Laboratory and AT&T Bell Laboratories.



DEMOGRAPHY

IS

DESTINY

ARTHUR KEMP

# CRITIQUES and COMMENTS

Demographers and researchers critique the FEZANA study and give their comments on the world demographic picture.

*“... possibly the best estimate that is available for the Zarathushti population worldwide.”*

Zubin Shroff ([zcs885@mail.harvard.edu](mailto:zcs885@mail.harvard.edu)) is a Research Officer at the World Health Organization, Geneva, Switzerland. He completed his medical degree at Delhi University followed by Master's and Doctoral Degrees in Global Health and Population from Harvard. His research paper “The Potential impact of intermarriage on the population decline of the Parsis of Mumbai, India” was published in the *Journal of Demographic Research* in 2011 and is available at <http://www.demographic-research.org/volumes/vol25/17/>.



Collating and compiling information on the Zarathushti population worldwide is a challenge. We need to have a common form/system that is used by all associations worldwide that would report births, deaths, marriages and migration. Till such a system is in place, what you have is possibly the best estimate that is available for the Zarathushti population worldwide.

**POPULATION BY COUNTRY.** Given the data, the overall population decline shows that the claim “Parsis in India will disappear but Zarathushtiism will survive” is over optimistic. This needs to be highlighted.

The decline of the Parsi population in **India** has been seen for over six decades now, with Kulke providing data that deaths have exceeded births for each year since 1955. The fact that this happened well before immigration and intermarriage were significant factors, is I believe the strongest refutation to those who suggest that the Parsi population decline in India is chiefly due to these two factors. Roshan Rivetna's finding that immigration from India in the last few years has been small, provides further strength to this argument.

Regarding **Pakistan**, I would presume that the acceleration in the decline is chiefly due to immigration given the political situation over the past decade or so. I really don't know much about the fertility rates of the **Iranian Zarathushti** population and would not like to hazard guesses for the relative role of fertility, immigration and accuracy of reporting for the decline we see there.

With respect to the population in the **US, Canada and Britain**, the growth in population is certainly encouraging. This is even more so given that you have some data for the US and Canada showing that recent immigration is not driving this. However, it is important to remember that this is still not a population that has stabilized. Most arrivals happened after the 1970s and are still probably at most in their sixties and early seventies. We will only know of the self-sustainability of the North American population in the absence of immigration over a longer period of time. This is not counting the drop out that will happen as a result of both intermarriage and general assimilation that tends to happen especially in the Americas. Both these factors make me less optimistic about the actual extent of growth of Zarathushti Diaspora population than I would otherwise be given the numbers.

**DATA ON AGE DISTRIBUTION** The data on Australia regarding seniors is certainly surprising. Given that the UAE doesn't allow immigrants to settle down and get permanent residence/ citizenship it is not surprising that we see few seniors there.

**BREAKDOWN BY IRANIANS AND PARSIS.** Given their very different historical trajectories and experiences it would be interesting to have data on births, deaths and intermarriage broken down by Parsi or Iranian Zarathushtis. This is something Zarathushti associations in the Diaspora could do without much additional reporting burden.

**INTERMARRIAGE.** The upward trend in intermarriage is inevitable and something that Parsis particularly need to display an attitudinal change towards, promoting inclusiveness as opposed to mere acceptance [see my comments on page 48]. Encouragement of children of intermarriage to identify as Zarathushtis and have their navjotes performed even as adults is something that must be undertaken.

The information from the US and Canada that about 75% of children of intermarriage are following the Zarathushti religion is encouraging. However, we must exercise caution when looking at this figure. This data has been provided by associations that together have a catchment area of less than 30% of the population. Hence the sample is not representative of the Zarathushti community in North America. The other reason for skepticism is what researchers term selection bias. That is

only those who are interested in the community and its affairs are probably responding to the survey.

Until we develop a common form/system for reporting demographic information, this is possibly the best estimate we have for the worldwide Zarathushti population today.



***“Congratulations on gathering this data and bringing to light the grave situation of declining population.”***

**Dr Sayeed Unisa** ([unisa@iips.net](mailto:unisa@iips.net)) is Professor at the International Institute for Population Sciences. She has nearly 25 years of teaching and research experience in mathematical demography, biostatistics, reproductive health, and gender issues at doctoral and postgraduate levels. Currently she is principal investigator for a project on comprehensive nutrition survey in Maharashtra, funded by UNICEF

I am happy to see that the author has gathered worldwide population data to the maximum possible extent from published and unpublished sources; and also tried to validate the available census and survey data and portrayed the picture of Zarathushti population globally. When the 2011 census data by age is available for India, we would

like to update the fertility rates.

The majority of Zarathushtis live in India and Iran. In these countries, the population growth rate has been negative for many decades. Particularly in the case of India, the problem of negative growth of Parsis is well established. The main factors contributing to negative population growth are non-marriage, late marriage and low fertility.

Financial help, motivation by the government or any other initiative will not be able to change the scenario unless and until the Zarathushti community wants to change it. For the next twenty years, there will be still fewer women in the reproductive ages. Majority of the Zarathushtis living in India or other countries are educated, and they can understand the grave condition of declining Zarathushti population. Males and females in the reproductive ages have a major responsibility to change the situation. Hence, young people have to reverse the disturbing Zarathushti population situation by getting married and having progeny.

I congratulate the author on gathering this data and bringing to light the grave situation of declining population.

***“The most remarkable finding in this study is that the demographic trends are global now...”***

**Paul Axelrod** (shown here with wife Michelle) ([AxelrodP@ripon.edu](mailto:AxelrodP@ripon.edu)) is Ralph Hale Ruppert Distinguished Professor Emeritus at Ripon College, USA. He studied the demographic patterns of the Parsis and other economically successful Mumbai groups in 1972-73. His studies in Mumbai led to a larger interest in colonial and postcolonial studies. Most recently his academic interests focus on colonial and post-colonial Goa.



The conclusions of my 1972-73 study of Parsis in Mumbai and Gujarat [Axelrod, Paul. “Natality and Family Planning in Three Bombay Communities.” *Human Organization*, 47. 1 (1988): 39-47.] identified low birth rates, late marriage and a high number of never-married adults. In short, the population of Zarathushtis in India was declining at the time primarily because Parsis were not even producing enough babies to replace the dying population [Axelrod, Paul. “Cultural and Historical Factors in the Population Decline of the Parsis of India,” *Population Studies: A Journal of Demography*, 44. 3. (1990): 401-419]. This has been affirmed by several recent studies.

I also assessed the relative impact of emigration from India and marriage outside of the community. Those patterns were contributing to the population decline, but alone were far less significant than low natality. Marriage outside the community, widely believed at the time to be a major contributing factor, exacerbated the population decline, but played a minor role. In a 2011 report, Shroff and Castro [page 47] also showed that in Mumbai marriage outside of the community plays a minor role in the population decline.

This FEZANA compilation shows that in India at least, death rates still exceed birth rates by a large margin and still play a major role in the population decline. That is significant for Parsi demography because of the size of those populations. But this data also shows that outmarriage is far more vital a factor than it was in the 1970s, and the rate is rising at a staggering pace both in India and abroad. It is clear that these factors are going to make the population decline worse in years ahead.

The seemingly positive growth trends in Canada and the U.S. and other diaspora communities probably will not stem the worldwide population decline, as some of this growth is due to immigration. Even if the populations are growing, the very high rates of outmarriage may well undermine these positive effects. We don't know if low birth rates, late marriage and non-marriage continue in these communities. Research on those topics is needed.

The most remarkable finding in this FEZANA study is that the demographic trends are global now and that beyond India, marriage outside the community will contribute in a major way to the population decline among Zarathushti emigrants and their offspring. This data also suggests that Zarathushti demographic patterns need now to be examined in each context as the diaspora communities grow and produce their own patterns.

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***“For the sake of the community, will FEZANA please follow up words with actions?”***



**Dinyar Patel** ([dinyar.patel@gmail.com](mailto:dinyar.patel@gmail.com)) is a PhD candidate in the department of history at Harvard University. He is completing a dissertation on the political thought of Dadabhai Naoroji and is the co-editor for a forthcoming volume of selected

*correspondence from the Naoroji Papers.* **T**he evidence for the decline of the worldwide Zarathushti population is overwhelming. Astoundingly, there still remain many people in the community unwilling to see the writing on the wall. “Parsis might die out, but the religion of Zarathushtra will live on,” they say, or “Millions are converting elsewhere,” or “It is not the quantity but the quality that matters.” None of these statements, unfortunately, are reflective of what is really going on (millions, or even hundreds of thousands, of conversions is a myth!).

Over the past sixty years, the worldwide Zarathushti population -- and especially the Parsis -- has sustained a dramatic fall in fertility, as a result of personal choices and marriage behavior rather than any medical or biological problems. During these years, there has also been a large body of professional demographic scholarship charting this decline and the specific reasons for why this has happened. Roshan Rivetna's survey

complements this scholarship and highlights the need for the Zarathushti community leadership to seek active measures to minimize—and hopefully reverse—the trends.

The burden now rests on community leadership to finally acknowledge these very grave facts and take some concrete action by helping young Zarathushtis meet, promoting marriage, and encouraging having children. This has been done to a degree in India, where the BPP has set up a large and active youth chapter, ZYNG, and has been supporting matrimonial meets. I have assisted in PARZOR's efforts to get Indian government support and money. Much more needs to be done, however, especially for giving young Zarathushtis a real stake and voice in community matters at the highest levels. It is only with proper youth representation that youth issues will get the attention they demand.

FEZANA can—and must—do much, much more to engage and involve the youth lest it soon become a senior citizens' club. Young adults should be the number one demographic for FEZANA to actively recruit, engage, and involve in community decision-making, yet this is precisely the age group that seems to be most lacking and uninvolved in the organization and its component associations. One reason for high rates of intermarriage is the lack of opportunities for young Zarathushtis to meet, and this problem can be tackled via increased involvement and engagement and a better youth focus.

FEZANA must start by providing more opportunities for young adults to meet and get involved with the community. Youth congresses are excellent programs, but they are too infrequent and often too expensive for many people to attend. Regional meetings and get-togethers between the youth of neighboring organizations will be a good supplement. Regular congresses must be much more youth oriented, and it would be wonderful to give discounts or scholarships to young Zarathushtis who find the costs prohibitive. I met my own fiancée at the Dubai Congress of 2009, but both of us had initial

reservations about attending due to the high attendance fee.

Continuing mere talk and discussion is one way of evading the serious issue at hand. For the sake of the community, will FEZANA please follow up words with actions?

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***“Zarathushti migrants coming from many countries settling in countries around the world, typically come together to recall their common past and to reaffirm their shared identity.”***

**Author and Scholar John Hinnells** ([jhinnells@btinternet.com](mailto:jhinnells@btinternet.com)), was on the faculty of the Department of Comparative Religion, University of Manchester and of SOAS, London. His major books include *“Zoroastrian and Parsi Studies”* (Ashgate, 2000) and *“The Zoroastrian Diaspora”* (Oxford University Press, 2005). He is now retired, lives in Oxford and is working on his next book with Dastur Dr K. M. JamaspAsa on the Parsis in Colonial India.



**Z**arathushtis have formed diaspora groups for centuries, not just with Parsis in India for over a millennium, but before that, under the Achaemenid, Parthian and Sasanian empires groups of Persians settled in much of the Middle East and western Asia, mainly retired soldiers, traders and government official, but they have left very few records, unlike the Parsis. There has been much academic discussion over when the Parsis settled according to how authors viewed the account in the *Qissa ye Sanjan*, which the latest writer Alan Williams takes as an example of epic poetry, after the fashion of the Shah Nameh.

In the mid twentieth century groups of Parsis and Iranian Zarathushtis from India, Pakistan and Iran settled in the New World, first in Britain then in North America, Australasia and in more recent times in the Middle East, mainly seeking employment in the petro-chemical industry. They have come together in relatively small numbers. Zarathushti migrants coming from many countries, for different reasons, settling in countries around the world, typically come together to recall their common past and to reaffirm their shared identity.

Although there are differences between the diaspora communities, typically they are younger and even better educated than their coreligionists in the old countries; that is largely because it has been the educated high flyer and socially mobile who have been tempted to migrate. In most of the diaspora they have passed these values on to their young people. Though many of the young have turned their back on some of the values and customs of the ‘old country’, many others cling on to them with determined commitment and seek to pass them on to their young. So in North America there are widespread moves to convey knowledge of the traditions, both the religious and cultural heritage. There are educational religious and social activities, some concerned with the youth, others focusing more on their elders. Various groups published separate local newsletters, but in North America many have been replaced by the continent wide and lavishly produced FEZANA Journal. By working collaboratively they have created something no local group on their own could match.

In recent years the Association in Britain has had a different emphasis. At both the local and the national levels they have been active in the educational, national and political activities spreading knowledge of their ideals and social functions through communal and national bodies, spreading awareness among school children and adults, so that Zarathushtis are welcomed to and involved in civic social and religious activities. The aim is not to convert but to spread understanding, respect and tolerance. This has led to official respect and recognition. So the Zarathushtis are regularly invited to parliamentary and royal events such as the annual Commonwealth Day where leaders of the nine recognized religions now regularly include Zarathushtis. This has resulted in two royal visits to the Zoroastrian Centre, the last by the Queen’s consort His Royal Highness, Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh who in a jocular aside referred to his arrival in a ‘Zoroastrian vehicle’, a land rover, a manufacturer recently taken over by the Tatas. These programs have shown beyond doubt the value of collaboration between Zarathushtis and outside bodies. Hiding behind insular walls is not in the interest of Zarathushtis.

# THE INTERNET PLATFORM

Using today's technology to show Zarathushti demographic trends and keep this "Community Without Borders" well-connected.

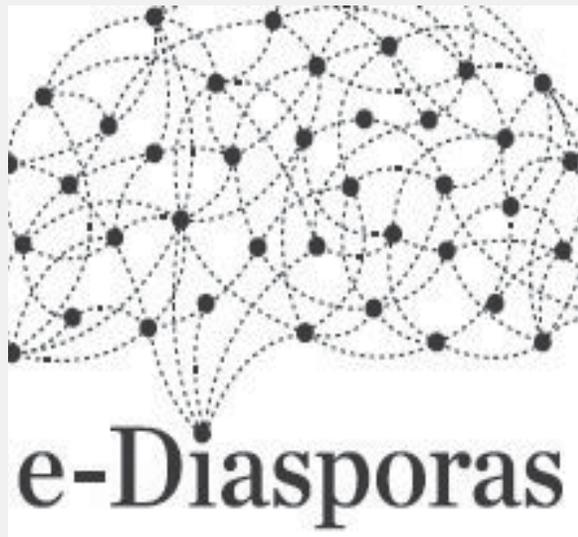
## DISCOVERING THE ZOROASTRIAN E-DIASPORA

by David Knaute ([dknaute@yahoo.fr](mailto:dknaute@yahoo.fr))

The small community of Zarathushtis scattered around the globe use the Web and other digital media to stay connected.

Today Zarathushtis number some 120,000 people, based in India/Pakistan and Iran with diaspora communities in North America, the UK and Australia. For such a small and scattered community, the Internet represents a unique platform to discuss community matters and bring together far-flung groups.

Like other diaspora communities, Zarathushtis extensively use the Web and other digital media to organize themselves and remain connected. This "e-diaspora," in addition to highlighting some traditional characteristics of Zarathushti communities, clearly intertwines with the development of a new balance of power, with diaspora communities becoming more influential. It also accelerates the emergence of a universal conception of what it is to be Zarathushti, which greatly transforms the socio-cultural and religious identity, and reshapes past and present divisions between various communities.



What immediately comes out of the visual analytics of the 159 websites which form the corpus of Zarathushti websites, is the high concentration of websites based in the US and Canada (37.1%). Indian and Iranian websites make up 20% of the corpus each. Using the Internet is a necessity for North Americans to connect isolated communities to one another, while the clustering

of Zarathushti communities in India and Iran reduces this need. In the UK, maybe due to the concentration of most Zarathushtis in London, all the individuals gather around one unique organization, ZTFE, which has the only website for British Zarathushtis. The WZO is also based in the UK and has its own website, however its outreach is global. (Visit: <http://www.e-diasporas.fr/working-papers/Knaute-Zoroastrianism-EN.pdf>).

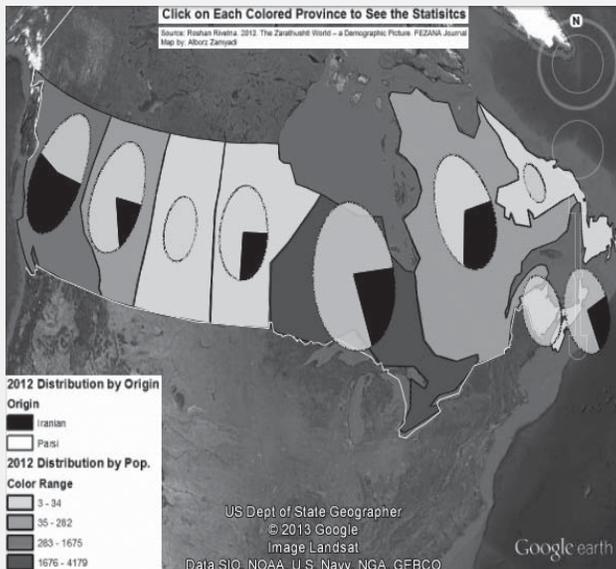


**David Knaute** is writing his PhD thesis on Zoroastrianism at the Centre for Indian and South Asian Studies (CEIAS) of Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales (EHESS), Paris. His research concerns the outmigration of Zarathushtis from Pakistan, and contemporary diaspora communities in the UK and USA. David spent ten months in Karachi, Pakistan, in 2009–2010, was also introduced to Zarathushti communities in Gujarat, and has met Zarathushtis in Paris, London, Manchester and Boston.

# WEB MAPPING IN SERVICE OF ZARATHUSHTI COMMUNITIES

by Alborz Zamyadi ([alborz.zamyadi.1@ulaval.ca](mailto:alborz.zamyadi.1@ulaval.ca))

*Interactive Web maps facilitate sharing of information on the global demography of Zarathushtis with community members and external observers.*



*Snapshot of Zarathushtis thematic web map for visualization and exploitation in Google Earth.*

Thematic web maps provide a very neat and organized presentation of the descriptive and statistical data (i.e. thematic data) that corresponds to the specific geographic features (e.g. landmarks, cities, countries) which are the subjects of interest. Organized communities use customized thematic web maps to increase the transparency and visibility of their interests internally or toward external observers (common medium to exploit the information, observe the situation, and foster communications). Thematic maps use various graphical styles such as colors, localized charts, and markers to enrich crowded data sheets with accessible visual representations (e.g. darker colors on map shapes represent higher value of a specific theme like population, than lighter colors).

After I observed your interesting work on gathering the valuable demographic data, I saw the great potential to help upgrading FEZANA's and the worldwide community's information infrastructures. The main objective of this voluntary activity has been to provide community members and external observers with

an interactive medium to facilitate the exploitation of the information they seek on the global demography of Zarathushtis. For the very first case, the map demos feature two layers of information as distribution of Zarathushti population across Canada by colored symbolism and the ratio of distribution based on the origin (i.e. Parsi and Iranian) by localized pie chart on each corresponding province. To ensure easy integration with FEZANA and community websites, two accessible web mapping engines, Google Map Engine Lite and Google Earth API, have been used. These engines are free of charge for non-beneficiary purposes. We look forward to expand the proposed initiatives by receiving feedback and ideas for future information layers. (visit <https://sites.google.com/site/alborzzamyadi/fezana>).



**Alborz Zamyadi**, PhD candidate at Laval University, Canada, is an experienced Geomatics specialist with professional expertise in geographic information systems, 3D geospatial modeling, and mapping technologies. Alborz would like to help his fellow Zarathushti communities with profiting from modern mapping solutions. Contact: <http://alborzzamyadi.wordpress.com>.

*Historical records indicate that the Zarathushti presence in America dates back to the 1860s: during California's Gold Rush, one of the prospectors was a Zarathushti named Cawasji Zaveri; in 1865, New York's Evening Post published a letter protesting slavery from a Zoroastrian named Dosabhai Faramji Cama. Other early Zarathushtis include Pestonji Framji Daver, a Parsi who came to San Francisco in 1892, and the first recorded Irani Zarathushti, Rostam Kermani, who settled in the United States in 1926. It is believed that the first North American Zoroastrian Association was formed in 1929, when a group of seven Zarathushtis in the New York area gathered in one Phiroze Saklatwala's living room on November 10, 1929.*

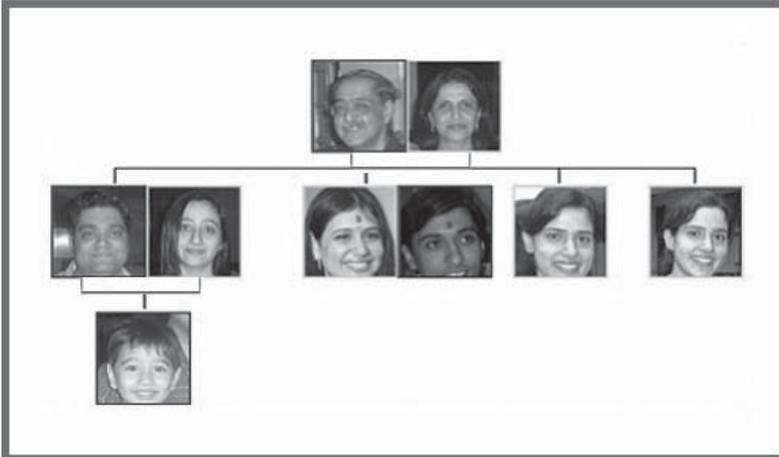
*Courtesy: Rusi Sorabji, California*

## A WORLDWIDE ZARATHUSHTI FAMILY TREE

by Yazdi Tantra (yazdi@on-lyne.com)

*A unique Web-based initiative to connect each and every Zarathushti in the world through a single online family tree.*

With the scant number of Parsis and Iranian Zarathushtis spread all over the world, the web is the best way one can keep connected. Besides, for those who are originally from major pockets like Indian or Iranian cities, the need to connect is even greater. The second and third generations are slowly missing out on their roots, especially when their immediate or extended family is spread far and wide.



**www.TheParsiFamily.com** is a unique initiative to keep 'The Parsi Family' together, worldwide. The vision is to connect each and every Zarathushti through a single, online family tree. Here, one can find their own relationship with any other Zarathushti from across the world; and the unique search feature helps you reach out to anyone who is registered in the directory.

In addition to this most powerful concept of a common family tree, the site also offers features and benefits like: postings of association events; a Classifieds section and Yellow Pages for business/professional listings, marriage, birth and death announcements, and a section for Matrimonials. All Zarathushti publications which are freely available online can be put

up on this common platform. Currently FEZANA Bulletin and Parsi Times are uploaded.

So, visit the site, and enter your family tree – you might find some unexpected relatives! Associations and individuals are also urged to post their announcements and use the other features of this website to connect and interact with Zarathushtis around the world. The entire site is bi-lingual – English as well as Gujarati, which makes it easy for our brethren in all areas.

The following sites, which all help to connect the far-flung diaspora, may also be worth mentioning:

**www.Zoroastrians.net.** A very rich collection of Zarathushti resources, organized under easily accessible categories, with the objective of putting "Parsis, Iranis, Zarathushtis, all under one roof."

**www.TheParsiDirectory.com.** The world's largest free listing of Parsis and Iranis with more than 77,500 listings from all over the world, which can be searched by name, location or profession.

**www.TheParsiInstitutions.com.** Again, the world's largest listing of Zarathushti institutions, easily searchable, citywise, with lists of agiaries, atash behrams, anjumans, associations, clubs, dharamshalas, sanatoria, hospitals, dispensaries, hostels, and more.

**www.TheMissingParsi.com.** Another one-of-a kind resource, open to all who are looking for friends or family members you may have lost touch with. More than 50% of the enquiries are resolved.



*All the above sites facilitate the community to network, interact, connect, and strengthen bonds with Zarathushtis around the globe.*

**Yazdi Tantra** is a strong proponent of putting the community online, in various ways. He believes that it is only through such initiatives that the community can hope to stay together, from wherever they are, and connect with the diaspora worldwide. He has played a stellar role in encouraging entrepreneurs and networking through the World Zarathushti Chamber of Commerce ([www.wzcc.net](http://www.wzcc.net)) for professionals and businesses worldwide.



# ZARATHUSHTIS IN IRAN

## population concerns

by Mobed Mehraban Firouzgary  
in consultation with Dr. Efsandiar Ekhtiyari

“The census figures do not appear quite correct .... Dr. Ekhtiyari agrees with me in the belief that if we were to count the Zarathushti born population, it would not add up to more than 15,000.”



**POPULATION.** A good estimate of the present population of Zarathushtis in Iran, may be placed at a figure of **15,000**. This is bearing in mind that in Iran, children born to parents who are both Zarathushtis can be registered as such.

- The population of the Iranian male and female Zarathushtis are nearly equal in numbers.
- The population concentration, area wise, is: the maximum in Tehran with Yazd, Kerman, Karaj, Shiraz, Isfahan, Ahvaz and Zahedan following.
- Family members average to about 3.5 persons/family
- It is established that there is no illiteracy amongst Iranian Zarathushtis and the majority of our youth have high level University education.

**INTERFAITH MARRIAGES.** As the person in charge of the Tehran Marriage Registry for Iranian Zarathushtis (a post granted to me by the Iranian Ministry of Justice) I can say that to my personal knowledge, the number of interfaith marriages is minuscule. Among the cases known to me, in the last three years, there have been only three interfaith marriages (with Christians or Jews) among Zarathushtis in all of Iran, and among the tiny number of

those, they are assimilated within, rather than disowned. The Iranian Constitution, based on Sharia Laws, requires that marriage to a Muslim can only be registered with an Islamic Register, and be bound by its rules, such as the non-Muslim partner must convert. In view of these limitations, we hear of few if any such marriages. One can safely say then, that **the rate of ‘outside the religion’ marriages among Zarathushtis in Iran is almost zero.**

**HISTORICAL DATA.** Historical data from the Statistical Center of Iran Census (Source: [www.sci.org.ir/persia](http://www.sci.org.ir/persia)) is shown below. Alongside the census data for 2006 and 2011, we show the best estimates as derived by Dr. Ekhtiyari.

In comparison, the SCI gives the total population of Iran as over 49 million in 1986, over 60 million in 1996 and over 75 million in 2011.

**2011 CENSUS.** The 2011 census data (shown in the table below) shows a total Zarathushti population of 25,271 in Iran.

The census figures do not appear quite correct: several of the smaller provinces could not have as many Zarathushtis as listed, while on the other hand some, like Yazd and Tehran, seem to be greatly undercounted. Also there appear to be discrepancies in the figures for other minority populations of Iranian Jews and Christians – while it is known that Christians

Year of Census	Males	Females	Pop(Census data)	Decadal Diff (census)	Pop (Est'd)	Decadal diff (Est'd)
1986	16,666	15,923	32,589			
1996	14,173	13,747	27,920	-14.3%		
2006	10,127 (51.1%)	9,696 (48.9%)	19,823	-29.0%	24,000	
2011	n/a	n/a	25,271	+27.5%	15,000	-37.5%

Province	Pop 2012 Census	Province	Pop 2012 Census
Sistan + Baluchistan	668	<b>Iran Total</b>	<b>25271</b>
Fars	983	E. Azerbaijan	562
Ghazvin	169	W. Azerbaijan	590
Ghom	195	Ardabil	225
Kordestan	288	Esfahan	1147
Kerman	1404	Alborz	710
Kermanshah	430	Haam	165
	160	Bushehr	155
Gulestan	124	Tehran	8768
Gilan	157	Chahr Mahal Bakhtiyari	223
Lorestan	414	S. Khorassan	196
Mazandaran	325	Khorassan Razavi	1272
Markazy	279	N. Khorassan	136
Hermezgan	264	Kuzestan	1137
Hamadan	386	Zanjan	191
Yazd	3432	Semnan	116

have been migrating out of Iran in larger numbers than other minorities, their population shows a large increase! Dr. Ekhtiyari agrees with me in the belief that if we were to count the Zarathushti born population of Iran, it would not add up to more than **15,000**. However, there are many who would like to announce their religion as Zarathushti for various reasons. This assessment will be quite clear if one would notice the high figures that are reported from several cities and states where we have hardly any Zarathushti born persons living there.

Parviz Varjavand (of the noted Varjavand family in Iran, who resides in USA) concurs: "Our numbers in Iran are now below 20,000 and perhaps in the vicinity of 15,000. Even the smallest of Iranian villages has double this population!"

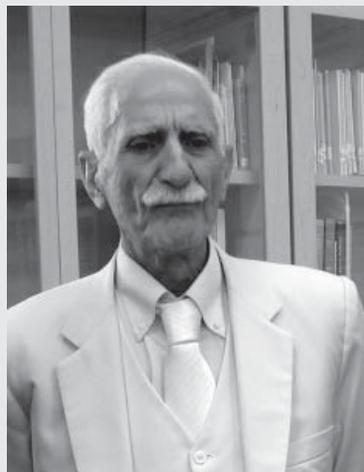
**CONCERNS.** Every one of us here has a natural deep concern about our diminishing figures. A major reason for the decrease in our population figures is the continued emigration of Behdins out of Iran. Following that is our present community structure, an aging community, where death figures exceed our birth figures significantly. The peak of Zarathushti emigration out of Iran has taken place during the period from 2006 to 2011 ... but there is some glimmer of hope in the rumors that the organization which has been very active in helping minority members to emigrate out of Iran, is now slowing down its efforts.

Add to that, our population/diaspora is so widely scattered, and facilities as well as expectations for getting married and bringing up children have become so demanding and out of reach. There will be some respite if our Zarathushti youth would be less choosy in getting married, marry at a reasonable age, and reproduce in reasonable numbers!

Who can claim, honestly, to have been able to put forward an effective preventive and reversing solution to

this calamity? Who can, honestly and with certainty put forward successful and fool proof programs for reversing these trends? Who can, honestly, express an optimistic or miraculous reversion?

**Mobed Mehraban Firouzgary** ([firouzgary@afra.net](mailto:firouzgary@afra.net)) is



a member of the Board of Directors (Managing Committee) of the Tehran Anjuman e Mobedan, having been elected repeatedly to serve for over 30 years, to manage the Anjuman's affairs and constitutional duties. He has been authorized by the Iranian Ministry of Justice, as the sole Zarathushti marriage licence issuing

authority in Tehran. Born in Yazd, he received his Electronics degree from St. Xavier's Tech Institute in Mumbai, and worked at J. N. Marshall in India, and at IBM, Honeywell, a medical instrument distributor and manufacturing plant in Iran.

**Dr. Esfandiar Ekhtiyari, PhD** ([EEKHTIYARI@YAHOO.COM](mailto:EEKHTIYARI@YAHOO.COM)) is currently serving a second term as elected Member of



Parliament to the Iranian Majlis on the Seat allotted to the Zarathushti minority population of Iran, and takes an active part in the affairs of all the Zarathushti Anjumans in Iran. Born in Yazd, he has a PhD from Amir Kabir University of Technology and is a Project Management Professional. He is currently Head of Research and Technology Committee

in the Parliament of Iran, on the academic staff of Yazd University and Head of Marker Knowledge Paradise in Yazd. In previous years, he has served as VP Technology and Head of Techno Center at Yazd Science and Technology Park and Director of Research Affairs at Yazd University.



# ZARATHUSHTIS IN INDIA

## understanding the population decline

Population data courtesy of  
Prof. Armaity S. Desai and Prof. S. Siva Raju

“The picture gets dimmer day by day. Everyone by now is attributing the reasons for the decline to late marriage, no marriage and fertility problems.”

*community outside Europe to have experienced dramatic population and fertility decline ... Their population started declining since 1941 and the explanations that are put forth pertain to the issues of under-enumeration, fertility decline and emigration. This study demonstrates that the unprecedented fall in fertility among Parsis is the prime contributor ...”*

**HISTORICAL DATA.** The table below shows the Zarathushti population of India every decade from 1901 – 2001. It shows an increasing population through 1941, after which the population has declined every decade, even considering that about 5,000 Parsis were counted in Pakistan after the partition in 1947. An analysis of the historical data is given by Desai [1]. (\*) Note that a correction was applied for an undercount in 1981.

Noting the decline by 10% per decade for the last two decades, Unisa et. al. write [2]:

*“The Parsi community in India is perhaps the only*

**PROJECTED ZARATHUSHTI POPULATION OF INDIA 2011 AND BEYOND.** The 2011 Government of India census results broken down by religion are not yet available (as of July 2013). The table on next page [2] gives projections for 2011 and beyond, where:

**Projection 1:** The Total Fertility Rate (number of children born per woman during her reproductive span) will decline from 1.0 in 2001 to 0.75 in 2051.

**Projection 2:** TFR will remain constant at 1.0 from 2001 to 2051.

Year	Zarathushti Population of India	Decadal growth rate	Male	Female
1901	94,140		-	-
1911	100,096	+6.33%	51,123	48,973
1921	101,778	+1.68	52,335	49,423
1931	109,329	+7.42	56,366	52,963
1941	114,890	+5.09	58,248	56,642
1951	111,791	-2.70	56,137	55,654
1961	100,772	-9.86%	49,425	51,347
1971	91,266	-9.43%	44,803	46,463
1981	71,630 (86,013) *	-21.52% (-5.75%)*	35,328	36,302
1991	76,382 (77,353)*	-6.63% (-10.07%)*	37,736	38,646
2001	69,601	-8.88% (-10.02%)*	33,949	35,652

**Projection 3:** TFR will increase to 2.1 by 2021. The replacement fertility level is 2.1.

According to Desai [3], the TFR in 2001 was .94; the 2011 data is not yet available but it is expected to be lower.

Year	Projection 1	Projection 2	Projection 3
2011	61,000	61,000	62,000
2021	53,000	54,000	57,000
2031	46,000	47,000	53,000
2041	39,000	40,000	49,000
2051	32,000	34,000	47,000

**INTERMARRIAGES.** Based on Parsiana records, there has been a steady rise in the percentage of inter-marriages in Mumbai, from 20.5% in 1992 to 38.9% in 2011 [see Table 3 and Fig. 3 on page 30]

**BIRTHS, DEATHS AND AGE DISTRIBUTION.** Based on Parsiana records [see Table 5 and Fig. 5 on page 32] the “Deaths per 100 Births” has risen from 303.2 in 1992 to an alarming 740.8 in 2011. According to Desai [3], 18.9% of the 2001 population of 69,601 were 19 years and under; and 24.1% were 65 and older. 48.8% are males and 51.2% are females. There are less females at younger ages, but more from 55 upwards. According to Unisa [2] in 2001, 12% were under 15 years. For this paper we will extrapolate that in 2001, 17.6% were 18 and under.

**COMMENTS ON THE POPULATION DECLINE.**

**Zubin C. Shroff [4]** blames the decline on the low fertility rate:

*“The main factor behind the dramatic decline of the Parsi population is the abysmally low fertility of the community, as expressed by a TFR of only .89 in 2001... Even doubling of fertility would lead to a 2051 population that is still 30-40% smaller than that observed in 2001. Only a fertility level three times larger would produce a positive population growth... Intermarriage is not the principal driver of this sharply declining population trend,*

*and acceptance of children of intermarriages can play, at best, a marginal role in stemming the decline.”*

**Dinyar Patel [5]** mentions late marriages and non-marriage as a contributing factor:

*“While the debate has been wrapped around issues such as intermarriage and out-migration, scarcely any attention at all has been paid to what professional demographers have identified as the prime reason behind the dwindling numbers: late-marriage and non-marriage .... Subsequent generation of youth have therefore become smaller and smaller, resulting in the rather absurd situation today when the Parsi community has several times more old people than it does children”.*

**Dinshaw Kaiki Tamboly [6]** ascribes the decline to the aging population:

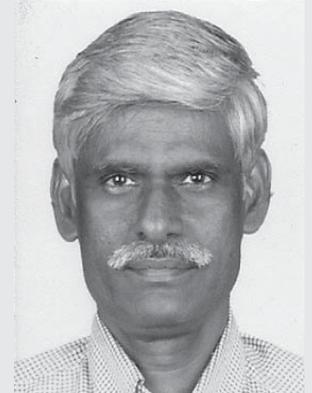
*“...While India has less than 5% of the population over 65, the Parsees have 24.1% - probably the highest ratio anywhere in the world....When this generation of elders pass on, the intensity of our depleting numbers will be even more rapid ... Assuming a 10% decrease every decade, the Parsee community in India will come down to 41,099 by 2050 and 24,268 by 2100. If one calculates the depletion at 12% per decade, the figure can be 36,730 by 2050 and 19,382 by 2100.”*

**ADDRESSING THE CONCERNS.** The picture gets dimmer day by day. Everyone by now is attributing the reasons for the decline to late marriage, no marriage and fertility problems. For PARZOR, I have completed a proposal on the issue of fertility, setting up a wider network in Mumbai and Gujarat. It is being financed by the Planning Commission for which Mr. Keki Daruwalla, who is on the National Minorities Commission needs to be thanked. The BPP experience has greatly helped in moving in this direction on a larger scale. However, my belief is that only early and almost universal marriage, as in other communities, can make a better dent in the population, along with facilities to access fertility treatment for those who require it an earlier age. There are many strategies we need to adopt collectively and not episodically.



**Prof. Armaity S. Desai, PhD, ([armaity@mtnl.net.in](mailto:armaity@mtnl.net.in))** was Chairperson of the University Grants Commission (1995 - 1999); Director of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai (1982 – 1995). Starting as a lecturer, Dr. Desai became principal of the College of Social Work (Nirmala Niketan), Mumbai (1957 – 1982). Dr. Desai has been on the boards of numerous educational, governmental and non-governmental bodies, including the PARZOR Board where she is advisor and coordinator of research projects on demography and health. She is currently editing four volumes of research undertaken at TISS to address demographic concerns [to be published by SAGE].

**Prof. Siva Raju ([prof.sivaraju@gmail.com](mailto:prof.sivaraju@gmail.com))** is a Dean, School of Development Studies, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai. He recently directed the project “Situational Analysis of Elderly Parsis in India” sponsored by UNESCO PARZOR Foundation, Delhi. He is a member of the Committee on Protection and Welfare of the Elderly for the National Human Rights Commission and Expert Committee Member on Ageing, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, New Delhi.



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- [2] Sayeed Unisa, R. B. Bhagat and T. K. Roy, *Demographic Predicament of Parsis in India*, International Institute for Population Sciences, Mumbai [http://iussp2009.princeton.edu/download.aspx?submissionId=91429], presented at XXVI IUSSP International Population Conference, Marrakech, 2009.
- [3] Armaity Desai. Personal Communication.
- [4] Zubin C. Shroff and Marcia C. Castro, *The potential impact of intermarriage on the population decline of the Parsis of Mumbai, India*, 2011. [www.demographic-research.org](http://www.demographic-research.org).
- [5] Dinyar Patel *Understanding Parsi Population Decline in India: a Historical Perspective*, presented at Jawaharlal Nehru Center, Mumbai, 2011.
- [6] Dinshaw Kaiki Tamboly *Decline of the Parsee community in India*, 2012.

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# INDIA – addressing demographic concerns

Community leadership in India identifies concerns of demographic decline and economic vulnerability and takes steps to alleviate the situation with support from the Government of India

## ZARATHUSHTIS OF INDIA AND THEIR DEMOGRAPHIC DEBACLE

Dinshaw Kaiki Tamboly

With the fertility rate of the Parsis perceived to be in the region of 0.8 can there be any doubt that the community is headed towards extinction?

The future is ominous as far as the Parsi community of India is concerned; we are well on our way not only towards extinction, but our economic vulnerability is also growing as a result of our rapid demographic decline.

Here we present some pertinent facts culled from the 2009 survey, “*Socio-Economic and Educational Status of the Parsee Community in India*” initiated by Dr. Mehroo Bengalee, during her tenure as Parsi Member, National Commission of Minorities, and conducted by Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS).

**DEMOGRAPHIC DECLINE.** It is a universally known fact that for a community to sustain itself, it must have a fertility rate of at-least 2.1 children per family. It is also a known fact that in a community where the fertility rate has been 1.9, the decline has, so far, never been reversed. When there are 1.3 children per family the decline becomes impossible to reverse. With the fertility rate of the Parsis perceived to be in the region of 0.8 can there be any doubt that the community is headed towards extinction?

**ECONOMIC VULNERABILITY.** Contrary to general belief, the conclusions of the TISS study reveals that there is a small fraction of the community which lives even below the ‘poverty line’, which the Planning Commission of India defines as Rs.32 per day. The TISS report concludes that

amongst Parsis surveyed, that are dependent on doles, the income of 70% of those surveyed was below the poverty line.

Adverse family characteristics have resulted in a skewed age composition and a high dependency ratio. It is obvious that the growing economic distress of the community has significant linkage with the changing demographic pattern.

### PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED BY TISS

- The ‘Work Participation Rate’ of the community is extremely low. The growing dependency ratio, fallout of the skewed demographic profile, has restricted the proportion of economically active population.
- In urban areas there are generally less than three members on an average in Parsi households. Most are extended families consisting of members who are not currently married. Issues of marriage and fertility assume importance in this context.
- One-fifth of members residing in the age group of 41 and above, and more than one-fourth in the age group of 31 to 40, are not married.
- Low fertility is a major issue. The distribution of married women by the number of surviving children shows that around 23% do not have a single child and more than

one-fifth have only one child.

- The average gap between young and old members of a family is abnormally high, where for one child there are three old persons.
- Female headed households constitute one of the most vulnerable group. Around 33% of households are headed by females -- over half are widows and over 25% unmarried. Around 45% belong to single member households and about the same percentage do not have a single earning member and hence, no regular income.

Unfortunately space constraints do not permit highlighting additional data and possible solutions to the problems.

**ATTEMPTS TO IMPROVE THE SITUATION.** Suffice it to say that in this day and age, where the community profile reflects relatively equal ratios of late marriages, no marriages and interfaith marriages, to try and arrest the decline by offering financial compensation of a few thousand rupees every month, and in return expecting youth to marry early and within the community is clichéd wishful thinking, simply an exercise in futility.

To combat the low birth rate, a pioneering initiative



**Dinshaw Tamboly** ([dinshawtamboly@gmail.com](mailto:dinshawtamboly@gmail.com)) has been actively associated in community welfare activities since 1983. He a founding Trustees of the three WZO Trusts in India and spearheads their welfare activities. Dinshaw was a Member of the International Board of World Zoroastrian Organisation, London (1983 - 2004), Trustee of Bombay Parsi Punchayet (Nov. 1996 – Sep 2008), and Trustee of many other institutions comprising Trusts, Hospitals and an Agiary.

was taken in January 2004 in Mumbai by the Bombay Parsi Punchayet, of extending financial support towards fertility treatment for young couples who could not conceive. As per the last report published (February 2012) in the community media it was mentioned that since the project was introduced in April 2004, clinically assisted pregnancy has occurred in 222 of the couples treated (avg.27.75 additional children per annum).

**CONCLUSION.** Each one can draw her / his conclusion on the efficacy of measures undertaken to combat our demographic decline. My personal take is that those occupying positions of responsibility are aware of the crisis situation, but the narrow and divisive religious centric leanings that propel their actions, have proved to be a deterrent for collective application of minds that would have the courage and wisdom to create solutions.

Having pursued the policy of remaining exclusive it is clear that we Parsis have already passed beyond the point of no return; we meekly and unquestioningly allowed our minds to be brainwashed into believing the ridiculous and fallacious beliefs extolling the presumptive superiority and purity of the 'Parsi race.' Having long remained intoxicated from the stupor of having drunk from the poisoned chalice of theological wine, it may well turn out that it is already too late for redemption.

## THOUGHTS ON THE FUTURE OF THE PARSI POPULATION IN INDIA

Zubin Shroff

An attitudinal change and a comprehensive set of incentives will be required for the survival of the Parsis

It would take a dramatic effort to arrest the population decline of the Parsis of India. This requires attitudinal change and putting together a comprehensive set of incentives, such as those suggested below.

- **PROVISION OF HIGH QUALITY DAY CARE SERVICES** for working women where there are substantial Parsi populations – in Mumbai (city and suburbs), Poona, Surat, Navsari, Ahmedabad, Hyderabad at the very least.
- **PROVISION OF A MEANINGFUL MONETARY INCENTIVE.** Giving 3000 and 5000 rupees a month (as is done by the Bombay Parsee Punchayet today) is not going to help with the additional expenses of a second or third child. More importantly, this should not be made to seem like some charity; it should be

positioned in the manner of a tax credit (even though it will have to be done through the BPP or anjumans, since we cannot expect the Government of India to provide tax credits for bearing children in India!).

- **INCLUSIVENESS AS OPPOSED TO MERE ACCEPTANCE OF INTERMARRIAGE.** In most of India (with the happy exceptions of the Delhi and Jamshedpur anjumans) we are still at a stage where people look at children of intermarriage as individuals who need to be 'accepted' at best. The community needs to recognize that no one with self respect wants mere acknowledgement and acceptance, as if the community is doing you a favor. Children of intermarriage need to be made to feel wanted and not as if they are second class Parsis. I say this as someone married to a child of intermarriage raised in

Mumbai.

- **ENCOURAGEMENT OF EARLY MARRIAGE.** This needs to be done through things such as the “Return to Roots” program and encouraging interactions among young Zarathushtis. However, it is important to maintain subtlety while doing this. Calling these meetings ‘heart meets’ and the like certainly discourages a number of

young people from attending.

These incentives may be expensive but are things that a wealthy community like the Parsis needs to implement for its survival.

**Zubin Shroff’s photo and bio are on page 36.**

## THE DEMOGRAPHIC DILEMMA

**Shernaz Cama**

The Infertility Program ... has been passed by the Ministry of Minority Affairs and will soon begin operating across the country.

Ever since the 2001 Census of India, the Parsi Zoroastrian community and social scientists have become increasingly alarmed at the rapid decline of the Parsi population across India. The empty homes are now not just found in rural Gujarat but even in the heart of Mumbai. ‘Youth’ unmarried and in their late forties can be seen at every social function, while infertility, slowly being spoken about openly, is no secret to doctors treating Parsi couples.

Since the beginning of the demographic module of the PARZOR Project over ten years ago, the reasons have become apparent. Non marriage or extremely late marriage, low levels of fertility, lack of peer pressure to either marry at the right age, and lack of parental support if an early marriage is planned, have all been cited in the Youth and Family Studies conducted by PARZOR with TISS researchers on a national basis.

It is now time to frankly face these issues, and for this community pressure is essential at all levels. The old excuses of higher education, more educated women than the rest of the Indian population, no longer hold. The rest of India too is now highly educated, women work and excel in every field yet marriage is a primary family responsibility, and the extended family does everything it can to ensure that the next generation enjoys this essential relationship. They may use the internet and *shaadi.com* rather than a local match maker, but the essence remains.

While the PARZOR – TISS studies on the Parsi demographic dilemma are being published by SAGE, and these four volumes of research, edited by Prof. Armaity Desai will give details of how to face and tackle these issues, the Government of India through the Ministry of Minority Affairs

has also decided that it is time the nation intervened to prevent the Parsis from a path which can only lead to ethnic extinction. After several years of discussion and debate, reaching up to the highest authority, the Planning Commission of India, the urgency for action has been demonstrated by Mr. Keki Daruwalla, Parsi Member, National Commission for Minorities as well as Prof. Desai and famed demographer Prof. Ashish Bose.

**THE INFERTILITY PROGRAM** or “Scheme for Containing Population Decline of the Parsis” has been passed by the Ministry of Minority Affairs and will soon begin operating across the country.

This Scheme consists of a two-pronged approach. The first is Counseling; besides the necessary counseling on the nature of the process and procedures for the treatment of infertility, trained social workers will work under Dr. Zinobia Madan to create awareness at Panchayat and Anjuman level, not only in Gujarat but at 13 towns and cities across India. Literature is being prepared to try and counter the very negative attitudes expressed by youth with regards to marriage. Both individual and group counseling is being planned.

At the clinical level Dr. Anahita Pandole of Jaslok hospital will direct the medical interventions if and when required. She, in consultation with a select committee, will use her experience at the Bombay Parsi Panchayat Fertility Clinic, to ensure the best possible methodology of intervention in chosen hospitals across India. The Scheme is undergoing final tuning but we expect that very shortly this program will be given wide publicity in both Parsi and national media and on the internet.

Our community is facing an acute decline; it is only with the support of the whole community, that action can begin which in the long run could stabilize the population.



**Dr. Shernaz Cama** ([shernazcama@hotmail.com](mailto:shernazcama@hotmail.com)) is Associate Professor, at Lady Shri Ram College, Delhi University and has edited and authored several books. In 1999, Dr. Cama was invited by UNESCO to initiate a project on the Preservation and Promotion of Parsi Zoroastrian Culture and Heritage. As honorary Director of UNESCO PARZOR Shernaz guides researches in Zoroastrian culture and demography, has produced three movies, and curated the PARZOR exhibition, “Pictures with a Purpose”.

## THE BPP FERTILITY PROJECT

Report submitted by Mehli Colah, Chief Executive at Bombay Parsi Punchayet  
(mehlicolah@gmail.com)

The BPP Fertility Project is bolstered by the Government of India Scheme to increase the population of the Parsi-Irani Zoroastrian population of India

The Bombay Parsi Punchayet (BPP) has been gravely concerned about the low birth rate and the high death rate (about 200 births as against 800 deaths annually in Mumbai) of the Parsi community.

There are quite a few cogent reasons for this alarming situation amongst the Parsis, such as late marriages, spinsterhood, bachelordom, desire to have a reasonably decent lifestyle before procreation, mixed marriages, disintegration of the joint family system, housing problems and more. But one of the cardinal factors for this imbalance is poor fertility levels, both male and female.

**THE BPP FERTILITY PROGRAM.** To effectively overcome this acute problem the BPP had started a 'Fertility Drive' on a war footing, originally with leading obstetrician and



gynaecologist, Dr. Anahita Pandole and a well-known psychologist Dr. Pervin Dadachanji. Many a times it is not a physical problem but psychological factors that play heavily on the minds of young couples and with minor adjustments the problems get resolved

The project was conceptualized by the BPP to increase awareness amongst young couples of our community. A step by step systematic procedure is followed which includes consultations, recording of brief medical history of both partners, baseline gynaec examination, blood investigations, semen analysis of the male, counseling sessions, ultra sonography, endoscopic surgeries (laparoscopy and hysteroscopy), intra uterine insemination and even IVF/ICSI cycles – the BPP fertility program covers it all.

The BPP has so far spent Rs. 81,80,319 (about US \$150,000) from 2004 to date, for giving 100% finance for the

IVF and ancillary treatment to Parsi couples.

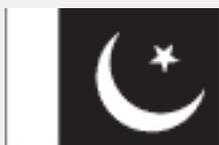
**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA SCHEME.** With a view to expand the fertility treatment activity, an approach was made to the Government of India some time ago, and after much efforts and endeavors of the Parsi member of the National Minority Commission, Mr. Keki Daruwalla, the Ministry of Minority Affairs (MOMA) Scheme has now been finalized for increasing the population of the Parsi/Irani Zoroastrian Community of India.

The Scheme proposed by the Government, has two parts -- *Medical and Sociological*. It has been decided to try and cover all couples who need help in the form of medical intervention for conception, as well as create an Advocacy Program to encourage Parsis from the sociological angle, to understand the value of early marriage, family counseling and when needed, fertility counseling. The counseling will be done across India, with a trained team led by Prof. Armaity Desai and we hope, help from all Anjumans and Punchayets, while 17 hospitals/experts from different cities are needed for the medical interventions. We have approached the various Parsi Anjumans to collect and collate the details. In Mumbai, we have identified and obtained consent of the following additional doctors -- Dr. Firuza Parikh at Jaslok Hospital, Dr. Faram E. Irani, and Dr. Adi E. Dastur; and efforts to enroll further gynaecologists who can administer IVF Treatment, are in process.

The Ministry of Minorities Affairs of the Government of India has launched a scheme "*Jiyo Parsi*" to help arrest the decline in population of Parsis. The scheme, to be implemented by PARZOR Foundation, BPP and other community organizations, is possibly the first of its kind in the world where a government will give financial stimulus to increase the numbers of a minority population group

Through the *Jiyo Parsi* program, Rs 10 crore (about \$1.7 million) will be spent over four years for a two-pronged approach to reverse the population decline: **advocacy and medical assistance**. About 7% of the funds will be spent for counseling Parsi youth and their families for early marriage, conceiving at the right time and training volunteers. The rest will be spent on detection and fertility treatment for married couples.

Source <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/delhi>



# ZARATHUSHTIS OF PAKISTAN

*Toxy Cowasjee*



Meticulous data records of the Karachi Zarthoshti Banu Mandal show steady decline from 2831 Zarathushtis in 1995 to 1675 today.

This data does not include 47 students from Pakistan studying at Universities abroad in 2012, mainly in England, USA/Canada and Australia. (Note: Students were included in the 1995 data.) Another six students went to Universities in US/UK and Australia later in 2012. None of these students will return, besides one or two. As far as I can see we (Pakistan) have lost them.

**POPULATION** In 1995 a nationwide census was taken by the Karachi Zarthoshti Banu Mandal, which I am confident in saying is 100% correct. Since then, meticulous records have been kept of all relocations, births, marriages and deaths. The table below gives the Zarathushti population of Pakistan by city, as of 31 January 2012, Sept 2004, Oct 2001 and 1995

**INTERMARRIAGES** Among the 2012 population, there are 43 intermarriages, of which 10 Zarathushti men and 33 Zarathushti women, have married outside the Zarathushti religion. The 10 Zarathushti men have been counted, but per the guidelines of the KZBM committee, the 33 women and their offspring have not been counted in the Zarathushti population. The percentage of intermarriages in the Zarathushti population is 2.6% (43/1675).

City	Males 2012	Females 2012	Totals 2012	Totals 2004	Totals 2001	Totals 1995
Karachi	728	871	1599	2012	2220	2647
Lahore	16	20	36	46	72	94
Multan	1	1	2	2	7	8
Quetta	10	7	17	30	32	45
Pindi/Islamabad	9	12	21	30	36	30
Sargoda/Peshawar, Gujranwala	0	0	0	1	11	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>764</b>	<b>911</b>	<b>1675</b>	<b>2121</b>	<b>2378</b>	<b>2831</b>



*Over 700 Zarathushtis attended this function at the Karachi Parsi Institute in 2011, to honor eight octogenarians for their services to the community. The KPI was formed by a group of gentlemen in 1893 as a sports gymkhana. Today it is a community center for all Zarathushtis of Karachi to enjoy, whether it is indoor or outdoor sports, swimming, entertainment or simply enjoying the spacious lawns, a true oasis in a teeming metropolis. [Photo Ronnie S. Dubash].*



**AGE DISTRIBUTION.** I wish I could have correct age information, but whenever I have requested this for the census, I have never been successful in getting the data. However, there is absolutely no doubt that the majority is old ... just for your records, in a few months since January 2012, seven more have died.

**Toxy Cowasjee** (*toxy39@gmail.com*) lives in Karachi, Pakistan. She is the Editor of *Hamazor*, the quarterly magazine of the World Zoroastrian Organization, London, since 2002. She has given her voluntary service to Karachi Zarthosti Banu Mandal for nearly 40 years and was the first and so far, the only lady President of Karachi Parsi Institute, a male bastion. Toxy feels privileged to belong to and serve her community which is of paramount importance to her.



## ZARATHUSHTIS IN SRI LANKA

*Jamsheed K. Choksy*

The population count of 37, represents a 44% drop in the Zarathushti population of Sri Lanka, since 2004.



**POPULATION.** Based on the Ceylon Parsi Anjuman and Parsi Sports Club rosters, the number of Zarathushtis in Sri Lanka = 35 plus 2 others, not on the Anjuman roster, but who are members of the Parsi Sports Club: 1 woman whose mother was a Zarathushti and who has

undergone the navjote initiation (the Anjuman accepts only children of mixed marriage where the father is a Zarathushti); and 1 mobed on contract from India.

This population count of 37, represents a 43.9% drop since 2004 when the total number of Zarathushtis in Sri Lanka was 66 [See *Fezana Journal*, Winter 2004].

**BREAKDOWN BY SEX, AGE AND ORIGIN.** Of the total of 37, there are 18 (48.6%) males, 19(51.4%) females, 4 (10.8%) under 18 years, and 10 (27.0%) seniors. All are Parsis, none are Iranians.

**INTERMARRIAGES.** There are 8 non-Zarathushti spouses (8 wives and 0 husbands) and an additional 10 adults (offspring of single Zarathushti parents) who have chosen not to undergo the navjote initiation. None of them are counted in the Anjuman roster, but are members of the Parsi Sports Club. It may be noted that some of these offspring of intermarriages may have been counted in the 2004 survey, if they were still children. The percentage of intermarriages in the Zarathushti population = 21.6% (8/37).



**FURTHER READING:** Jamsheed K. Choksy, *Iranians and Indians on the Shores of Serendib (Sri Lanka)*, in *Parsis in India and the Diaspora*, ed. J. Hinnells and A. Williams (London: Routledge, 2007), pp. 181–210.

**Jamsheed K. Choksy, PhD** (*Harvard University*) (*jchoksy@indiana.edu*) is Professor of Iranian Studies at Indiana University. Prof. Choksy grew up in Sri Lanka, where his great-grandfather, Kaikhusru D. Choksy, emigrated from Surat to Colombo in 1884. His grandfather, Nariman K. Choksy, was a Queen's Counsel and a Justice of the Supreme Court of Ceylon. His father Kairshasp N. Choksy served as the Minister of Constitutional Affairs and Minister of Finance of the Republic of Sri Lanka.



# THE DIASPORA IN GREAT BRITAIN

*Rusi Kekobad Dalal*

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“The Zoroastrian community in Great Britain has marginally increased to around 5500, over the last ten years.”

*Great Britain reflects a nominal increase over the last ten years.*

**AGE DISTRIBUTION .** From the records of Births, Navjotes, Weddings and Deaths, it is noted that there are more deaths than births, although such a number is small averaging a reduction of about 20 per annum. This number is balanced by the inflow of a small number of new comers from India and Iran on the “Highly Skilled Works Permit” and “Asylum Refugees” categories. The net effect is that the total number of Zoroastrians in the UK has marginally increased. It is more significant to note that the aging population is gradually replaced by the new borns, bringing down the average age of the population.

**PARSI/IRANI ZOROASTRIANS.** The large majority of UK Zoroastrians are Parsis, notably from India, Pakistan, East and South Africa. Most of the earlier Zarathushtis from Iran migrated to USA (California) with around 150 Irani Zarathushtis (about 3%) constituting the current UK population. The June 2013 “Irani Evening” function attracted some 80 Irani Zarathushtis, of which almost half were student-aged youths. This high youth ratio suggests the Irani Zarathushtis are of younger age group tending towards larger families.

**NAVJOTES AND MARRIAGES.** There has been an increase in the number of Navjotes performed. Statistics of the last six months (to January 2013) indicate that the families of 8 of the Navjotees chose to go to Mumbai for the initiations, indicating family ties with India. There have been a lower number of weddings, indicating the general Zoroastrian trend of late marriages. The weddings include intermarriages that are low and at a sustainable level. (In 2004, the percentage of non-Zarathushti spouses in the population was estimated to be 5.2% based on a sampling of the ZTFE directory). ***In conclusion, the Zoroastrian community in Great Britain has marginally increased to around 5500, over the last ten years, and is moving towards lowering of the average age.***

**POPULATION** Census for Great Britain is conducted by the National Statistics Office in the UK every ten years, the last such census being carried out in 2011. An important question asked has been that of religious affiliation. As the numbers of Bahais, Jains and Zoroastrians are significantly smaller they have been grouped under the category of “other religions,” separated from the Buddhists, Christians, Hindus, Jews, Muslims and Sikhs. Members of the “other religions” were required to write in their own faith affiliation but the National Statistics Office, however, has acknowledged there have been significant “blanks” pertaining to the affiliation of ‘other religions’. It is therefore not possible to ascertain an accurate number of Zoroastrians in the United Kingdom, but it is accepted that there must be more Zoroastrians than the numbers that have been positively identified from the census.”

The 2011 NSO census data has indicated an increase of 9.8% over the 2001 census in the number of Zoroastrians in Great Britain. Reflecting on this census data as well as resources of the Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe (ZTFE), the ZTFE estimate for Zarathushtis in the British Isles in 2011 is shown below:

<b>Great Britain</b>		<b>5,500</b>
England:	5,400	
Scotland:	65	
Northern Ireland:	25	
Wales:	Less than 10	
<b>Republic of Ireland</b>		<b>10</b>

From our own resources of information of our membership and their activities, growth and population movement pattern it is estimated that ***the total number of Zarathushtis in***

**Rusi Kekobad Dalal** (*rusidalal@hotmail.com*) was elected to the ZTFE Board in 1984, served as President (1994-1997) and is currently a holding Trustee. He is very active in community and Interfaith affairs, and was the first to formally meet Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, representing UK Zoroastrians, in 1993. He was awarded the “Hind Ratan” for outstanding services at the NRI Congress (Delhi, 2003).



# ZARATHUSHTIS IN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA

*Dolly Dastoor*

We are truly becoming a world-wide community without borders and we need to know how many Zarathushtis (born and of choice) are living, and where, within these invisible borders.



The data presented here should be viewed as a work in progress, as it has been very difficult to synthesize the information received from the various sources. While all the sources were reliable, the data they sent us was at times incomplete, we were not sure of overlap, and also not clear on whether the counts included only ‘born’ Parsis and Iranians, or also Iranians who were reclaiming their ancestral Zarathushti heritage.

In Tables 1 (for ‘born’ Zarathushtis of Parsi and Iranian origin) and 2 (for ‘Zarathushtis by Choice’) we have stated the responses as received from the various sources, and, for the reasons outlined above, refrained from coming up with definitive totals at this time.

A more comprehensive compilation of data on “Zarathushtis by Choice” will be presented in a forthcoming issue of FEZANA Journal.

TABLE 1 SHOWS POPULATION DATA FORr 2004 AND 2012 FOR ZARATHUSHTIS OF PARSI AND IRANIAN ORIGIN.

COUNTRY (Cities)	Population 2004	Population 2012	SOURCES/COMMENTS
Germany (Bonn, Frankfurt, Hamburg, Dusseldorf)	250	106	<b>2004:</b> <i>Rusi Dalal</i> ( <a href="mailto:rusidalal@hotmail.com">rusidalal@hotmail.com</a> ), former President, Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe. <b>2012:</b> <i>David Knaute</i> ( <a href="mailto:dknaute@yahoo.fr">dknaute@yahoo.fr</a> ) Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, Paris. PhD thesis on Zoroastrianism [see <a href="http://www.e-diasporas.fr">www.e-diasporas.fr</a> ]. His data refers mainly to Parsi and Iranian ‘born’ Zarathushtis. Knaute gives a figure of 106 for Germany. <i>Dr. H. Rad</i> ( <a href="mailto:Dr_H_Rad@hotmail.com">Dr_H_Rad@hotmail.com</a> ) long-time resident of The Hague, Netherlands, gives a figure of 500 in Germany, but is not sure of their origin.
Sweden (Stockholm, Gothenburg)	175		<b>2004:</b> <i>Mobed Kamran Jamshidi</i> ( <a href="mailto:kamran.jamshidi@gmail.com">kamran.jamshidi@gmail.com</a> ). President of Zoroastrian Community, Zoroastriska Centret, and <i>Bahram Mondegari</i> , President of Anjoman of Zoroastrians of Sweden (Sveriges Zoroastriska Forening). Most are of Iranian origin. Dr. Rad estimates over 200. Rusi Dalal estimates 6 Parsis. <b>2012:</b> In progress.
France (Paris)	150	74	<b>2004:</b> <i>Mehrafzoun Sassanfar</i> president, Zoroastrian Association of France, Paris. About 70 in Paris, rest in other towns. 50% of Iranian origin and came after the 1979 revolution. Dr. Rad estimates over 200. <b>2012:</b> <i>Parvine Kaikobad</i> ( <a href="mailto:pkaikobad@gmail.com">pkaikobad@gmail.com</a> ). There are 37 Parsis and 37 Iranian Zarathushtis living in Paris and surrounding areas.

Switzerland (Geneva, Basel, Zurich)	35	11	<b>2004:</b> <i>Behram Irani</i> ( <i>birani@vtxnet.ch</i> ) longtime resident. Estimates 20 in Geneva and 10-15 in Basel and Zurich. <b>2012:</b> <i>Aspi Sattha</i> ( <i>aspi_sattha@hotmail.com</i> ) long-time resident of Switzerland, whose information is based on personal knowledge. David Knaute estimates 4.
Spain (Costa Brava)	30	1	<b>2004:</b> Rusi Dalal. Dr. Rad estimates 15. <b>2012:</b> David Knaute.
Portugal (Lisbon, Porto)	20	11	<b>2004:</b> Rusi dalal. 3-4 Parsi families. <b>2012:</b> David Knaute.
Austria (Vienna)	12	2	<b>2004:</b> Rusi dalal. <b>2012:</b> David Knaute.
Greece (Athens)	12		<b>2004:</b> Rusi dalal. 2 Parsi families in Athens. <b>2012:</b> David Knaute.
Cyprus		4	<b>2012:</b> David Knaute.
Denmark (Copenhagn)	10	4	<b>2004:</b> Rusi dalal. <b>2012:</b> David Knaute.
Russia (Moscow)	7		<b>2004:</b> <i>Burzin Atashband</i> ( <i>tzar_russia@yahoo.com</i> ), resident of Kiev.
Norway (Oslo)	6	5	<b>2004:</b> Rusi Dalal (4 Parsis) and <i>Kurosh Aryana</i> (2 Iranians). <b>2012:</b> <i>Dariush Dario Bahrami</i> ( <i>dario.bahrami@gmail.com</i> ) Zarathushties Anjoman, Norway.
Netherlands- (Amsterdam)	6	13	<b>2004:</b> Rusi Dalal. <b>2012:</b> David Knaute.
Ukraine (Kiev)	5		<b>2004:</b> Burzin Atashband.
Italy (Rome)	4		<b>2004:</b> Rusi Dalal.
Belgium (Brussels)	2		<b>2004:</b> Rusi Dalal.
Malta	1		<b>2004:</b> Rusi Dalal.
Czech Rep. (Prague)	1		<b>2004:</b> Rusi Dalal.
Demnark		4	<b>2012:</b> David Knaute.
TOTALS	726	?	

In 2004, the total of 726 was rounded to 1,000.



In 2012 Mobed Kamran Jamshidi estimates there are 2,000 Zarathushtis of Parsi/Iranian origin in all of continental Europe with the greatest concentrations in Scandinavia (Sweden and Norway) and France.

Longtime resident of Paris, **Parvine Kaikobad**, (photo left), supplied the population data for France. Group photo shows Zarathushti residents of Paris, from left, Niloufer Ravari, Bachoo Agarwal, Mahmood and Farida (Gazdar) Haerizadeh, Jamshid Ravari, Yassaman Shahrokh and Aban Patel



## Zarathushtis by choice.

Table 2 below shows population estimates for 'Zarathushtis by Choice' who have been formally initiated into the Zarathushti religion.

COUNTRY (Cities)	Population 2004	Population 2012	SOURCES AND COMMENTS
Sweden/Europe	25	2000?	<b>2004: Mobed Kamran Jamshidi</b> ( <a href="mailto:kamran.jamshidi@gmail.com">kamran.jamshidi@gmail.com</a> ). President <b>of Zoroastrian Community, Zoroastriska Centret (ZC)</b> . <b>2012:</b> Mobed Kamran travels all over Europe to perform Sudreh Pushi of individuals of Iranian origin who wish to revert back to their ancestral faith. He writes that in Europe there are over 2,000 Zarathushtis, and over 20,000 who want to be initiated into the religion. These are mainly in Europe (Scandinavia).
Kurds-Temple in Sweden			<b>2012:</b> According to <a href="http://www.rudaw.net/english/world/4466.html">http://www.rudaw.net/english/world/4466.html</a> , the first <b>Kurdish Zoroastrian temple</b> , Agri Temple or 'Temple of Fire' opened its doors for believers of the faith on the Kurdish New Year, Newroz. The Center is located north of the Swedish capital, Stockholm, and was built after permission was obtained from the Swedish Government. Their leader <b>Andaz Hawezi</b> says the Kurds want to revert back to the religion of their ancestors. He believes Kurds must return to the Avesta in order to find themselves: "It has our language and customs; we can find our identity in it. The Kurdish identity is in the Zoroastrian religion." The Avesta is translated into Kurdish. Youtube ( <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3j2TaSmfqOAR">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3j2TaSmfqOAR</a> ) shows a Sudreh Pushi performed by the <b>Kurdistan Zarathustrian Assembly</b> in Sweden, a ceremony very similar to what is done in Iran and the language is also very similar, as Kurdish and Persian are sister languages. Some critics of the Kurdish Zoroastrian trend say followers promote nationalism in the guise of religion; but Hawezi dismisses this argument.
Belgium/ Europe	11	1832?	<b>2004: Dr. Khosro Khazai Pardis</b> ( <a href="mailto:info@gatha.org">info@gatha.org</a> ), <b>European Centre for Zoroastrian Studies</b> , Belgium, <a href="http://www.gatha.org">www.gatha.org</a> . <b>2012:</b> This center has been active in fulfilling the needs of individuals of Iranian origin who want to practice the faith of their ancestors. Dr Khazai writes that 1832 individuals mainly of Iranian origin who come from all over Europe have had their Sudreh Pushi done over the past 10 years, and a certificate given by the Centre. Now one does not know whether the 1832 of this Centre are included in the figure of 2000 quoted by Mobed Kamran.
Uzbekistan (Tashkent)		34	<b>2004: The Mazda-Yasnish Zarathushtrish Anjuman</b> of Uzbekistan (MYZA), Tashkent, headed by <b>Rustam Abdukamilov</b> ( <a href="mailto:spanta8@yandex.ru">spanta8@yandex.ru</a> ) has 400 members, not formally initiated. <b>2012: Rustam Arin</b> ( <a href="mailto:spanta8@yandex.ru">spanta8@yandex.ru</a> ) of MYZA, writes, "From the 400 members, 34 (16 women, 15 men and 3 children) were initiated with Sedre Pushe in 2006 - 6 by Mobed Kamran Jamshidi of Sweden and 28 by Mobeds Khushroo Madon and Framroze Mirza of India. There are an additional 500 who want to become Zarathushtrians. Government has given special permission -- so we can have near 40,000 schoolchildren learning Avesta (I teach the Avestan language) in our <b>Zarathushtrian Children School</b> ."
Russia	30		<b>2004: Burzin Atashband</b> ( <a href="mailto:tzar_russia@yahoo.com">tzar_russia@yahoo.com</a> ). In addition the <b>St. Petersburg Zoroastrian Community</b> has 43 members, initiated by <b>Pavel Globa</b> and <b>Mikhail Chistiakov</b> of St. Petersburg, Russia. <b>2012:</b>
Tajikistan (Dushanbe)	20	11	<b>2004: E. Azarmehr</b> . <b>2012: Dilshod Azimov</b> ( <a href="mailto:zandgmy@yahoo.com">zandgmy@yahoo.com</a> ) a Tajik lawyer who lives in Germany writes: "There are 11 Tajiks (10 males, 1 under 30, 9 over 30, and 1 female under 30) whose Sudreh Pishi was done by Mobed Kamran Jamshidi and by a Parsi priest. 8 of these Tajiks live in Dushanbe, 1 each in Frankfurt and Khujand, and 2 in Isfara. There are 2 neo-Zarathushtis of Tajik origin in Russia (2 males and 1 female)"
Ukraine	20		<b>2004: B. Atashband</b>
France	7		<b>2004: M. Sassanfar</b> , Zoroastrian Association of France, Paris.
Belarus	6		<b>2004: Jamshid Zartoshti</b>
Norway	5		<b>2004: Kurosh Aryana</b>
Italy	1		<b>2004: Michele Moramarco</b>
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>?</b>	



*Rustam Abdukamilov (Arin) at the Zarathushtrian Children School in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. Rustam, who has been teaching Avesta for 34 years (since 1979) writes: "I teach Avestan Language, the Avesta texts and Zarathushtrian philosophy to our children and some adults too. We have 30 children in the class, but we change classes every day, so we teach about 180 children per week." On the question of Navjotes, Rustom says: "34 Navjotes have been done for 31 adults and 3 children, by Mobed Kamran Jamshidi of Sweden, Mobed Khushroo Madon and Mobed Framroze Mirza of India."*



In 2004, Mobed Kamran Jasmshidi [photo left] stated that the Sweden-based Zoroastrian Community (ZC) had initiated 80 persons spread over Europe and Central Asia.

In addition to those formally initiated, as recorded in Table 2 above, in 2012, Mobed Kamran estimates there are 20,000 Zarathushtis-by-Choice in Europe and Central Asia who wish to be initiated.

For the reasons outlined earlier, we have not been able to synthesize the information received, into definitive bottom-line totals. It is obvious, however, that there is a real need to do an in-depth analysis to obtain a count of the number of individuals in the world who have been initiated and follow the Zarathushti religion. This requires time and effort of developing and establishing reliable contacts in each country and nurturing them to build mutual trust. This is all done on a voluntary basis and generating good will is important.

Whether we like it or not, there are people in this world who want to revert back to their ancestral religion and practice the faith. This would include the Kurds, who have set up a Kurdish Zoroastrian Temple in Sweden [see Table 2 on page 56]. They do not seek or need anybody's permission to do so.

The mainstream community needs to be prepared as to the numbers we are dealing with and our response to this phenomenon which is occurring, and will continue to occur. The first step is to obtain a snapshot of this phenomenon. The implementation of this first step needs an organizational effort with the co-operation of individuals in countries across the world.

We are truly becoming a world-wide 'community without borders' and we need to know how many Zarathushtis (born and of choice) are living and where, within these invisible borders.

**Dolly Dastoor (dollydastoor@sympatico.ca)** is past president of FEZANA and editor of FEZANA JOURNAL. She is committed to preservation of the Zarathushti religion, and travelled to Norway, Sweden, Moscow, St Petersburg, Kazakstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, to learn more about the religion as practiced there, then and now.



# ZARATHUSHTIS IN THE FAR EAST

A demographic picture of Zarathushtis in Singapore, Hong Kong, Malaysia, China, Japan, Phillipines, Indonesia, Korea, Thailand and Viet Nam



THE TABLE BELOW SHOWS THE 2004 AND 2012 DEMOGRAPHICS DATA FOR COUNTRIES IN THE FAR EAST

Country	2004		2012						COMMENTS
	Pop. recorded	Pop. estimated.	Pop. recorded	Pop. estimated	% growth (rec'd)	% growth (est'd)	Percentage children, 18 and under	Percentage seniors, 65 and over	
Singapore	152	162	322	372	111.8%	129.6%	39.4%	9.3%	<b>2004: <i>Russi Ghadiali</i> (<a href="mailto:russighadiali@yahoo.com">russighadiali@yahoo.com</a>)</b> Past President, Parsee Zoroastrian Association of SouthEast Asia-Singapore (PZAS). <b>2012: <i>Homiyar Vasan</i> (<a href="mailto:homi_vasan@hotmail.com">homi_vasan@hotmail.com</a>)</b> President, PZAS. Males = 51.9%. Females = 48.1%. All are Parsis. There were 30 (19.7%) non-Z spouses in 2004 and 42 (13.0%) in 2012.

Hong Kong	200	210	194	204	-3.0%	-2.9%	27.2%	16.3%	<b>2004: Jal Shroff</b> ( <i>Shroff@fossil.com</i> ) and <b>Yazdi Viraf Parekh</b> ( <i>kpparekh@netvigator.com</i> ). <b>2012: Yazdi Viraf Parekh</b> . Males = 46.7%. Females = 53.2%. All but 1 man are of Parsi origin. There were 19 (9.5%) non-Z spouses in 2004 and 30 (15.5%) in 2012.
Malaysia	25	30	36	43	44.0%	43.3%	18.9%	37.8%	<b>2004 and 2012: Nelly Doctor</b> ( <i>nellydoctor29@gmail.com</i> ) PZAS; and <b>Hootoksi Tyabji</b> ( <i>tyabji@gmail.com</i> ) Kuala Lumpur. Males = 50%. Females = 50%. Breakdown by city: Kuala Lumpur (26), Penang (3), Ipoh (6), Alor Star (1). There are two Zarathushtis baptized as Christians. Their wives and children are all Christians - none has been counted here. There were 6 (24%) non-Z spouses in 2004 and 9 (25%) in 2012.
China	10	20	11	21	10.0%	5.0%	n/a	n/a	<b>2004: Jal Shroff</b> and <b>Yazdi Viraf Parekh</b> . <b>2012: Yazdi Viraf Parekh</b> . Breakdown by city: Shanghai (5), Beijing (4) and Canton (1). There was 1 (10%) non-Z spouses in 2004 and 2 (18.2%) in 2012.
Japan	20	30	11	21	-45.0%	-30.0%	n/a	n/a	<b>2004: Jal Shroff</b> and <b>Yazdi Viraf Parekh</b> . <b>2012: Yazdi Viraf Parekh</b> and <b>Noriko Katsuki</b> ( <i>nrktsk@kj9.so-net.ne.jp</i> ). Breakdown by city: Tokyo (7) and Kobe (4). There were 4 (20%) non-Z spouses in 2004 and 2 (18.2%) in 2012.
Philippines)	0	0	5	15			n/a	n/a	<b>2012: Yazdi Viraf Parekh</b> . In Manila. There were 4 (80%) non-Z spouses in 2012.
Indonesia	0	0	1	5			n/a	n/a	<b>2012: Yazdi Viraf Parekh</b> . 1 in Jakarta.
Korea	0	0	2	5			n/a	n/a	<b>2012: Yazdi Viraf Parekh</b> .
Thailand	0	0	5	15			n/a	n/a	<b>2012: Yazdi Viraf Parekh</b> . 5 in Bangkok.
Viet Nam	0	0	1	1			n/a	n/a	<b>2012: 1 man</b> in US Foreign Service.
<b>Far East</b>	<b>407</b>	<b>452</b>	<b>588</b>	<b>702</b>	<b>44.5%</b>	<b>55.3%</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>Totals and percentages for all countries in the Far East.</b>

**POPULATION.** The percentage growth in the recorded population from 2004 to 2012 for each country is shown in the table. The recorded population in the Far East has grown by 181 Zarathushtis, i.e. 44.5%.

The percentage growth in the estimated population from 2004 to 2012 for each country is shown in the table. The estimated population in the Far East has grown by 250 Zarathushtis, i.e. 55.3%.

Among all countries in the world where Zarathushtis reside, Singapore shows the highest percentage population growth, from 162 Zarathushtis in 2004 to 372 in 2012, i.e. an increase of 129.6%.

**INTERMARRIAGES.** In the Far East there were 60 (i.e. 14.7%) non-Zarathushti spouses in the Zarathushti population in 2004 and 89 (i.e. 15.1%) in 2012.

**AGE DISTRIBUTION.** The percentage of children, 18 and under, and the percentage of seniors, 65 and over, for each country are shown in the table. Among all countries of the world, Singapore has the highest percentage of children (39.4%).

**MALE-FEMALE DISTRIBUTION.** The sex distribution (where known) for each country is mentioned in the Comments.

**PARSI-IRANIAN DISTRIBUTION.** Almost all persons counted here are of Parsi-Irani origin. Data is not available on Zarathushtis of Iranian origin.

## ZARATHUSHTIS IN HONG KONG AND THE FAR EAST

by Yazdi Viraf Parekh

For over a century, Zarathushtis have lived all over Asia, including China, Hong Kong and Japan. Recent years have seen a small but significant shift of Zarathushtis leaving Japan and into the rest of Asia including China and Hong Kong. This



is primarily due to the dynamic and growing economies in countries such as China, as opposed to the stagnation of the Japanese economy.

The Hong Kong Anjuman is a strong and thriving community of Zoroastrians. The community comprises of families who have lived there for generations as well as families and individuals who have come there for work. The community is socially active, harmonious, and always willing to help each other out.

Over the last decade, however, the population has remained steady. Because of the nature of employment in Hong Kong and the fact that Hong Kong does not allow immigration at will, young Zarathushtis often find themselves in transit in Hong Kong. Employment assignments last anywhere from six months to five years. While the older community members were mostly involved in the trading business, younger professionals work in fields such as finance, shipping and education.

Permanent residency in Hong Kong can be established after seven years. However, high property values sometimes affect the decision of community members to stay permanently in Hong Kong.

The Hong Kong Anjuman owns a 23-Storey commercial building [photo left] in the Causeway Bay district of Hong Kong Island. Four floors are used by the community for social functions, as well as a prayer hall, and a residence for staff. The two floors that are used for social functions recently underwent a complete renovation to ensure that the facilities stay modern and comfortable.

The Anjuman employs four full time people to serve the community: one priest, two chefs, and a caretaker for the Parsi Cemetery. The association is very active with events held at the Parsi Club at least three or four times a month. Events like Navroze have almost a 75 percent turn out rate.

The Anjuman uses its resources to help needy Zarathushtis around the world, donating millions of dollars every year. The future looks strong for the Zoroastrians of Hong Kong, built on a history of strength, unity and faith.

**Yazdi Parekh** is a third generation Hong Kong resident. He has also studied and worked in Southern California. He is currently working in Hong Kong for the family trading and property business, established over 75 years ago. He lives with his wife, Chermeen, and daughters, Sanaya and Ava.



## ZARATHUSHTIS IN SINGAPORE

**Homiya Vasania**

The idea of having a “Zoroastrian House” in Singapore was born in 2009, after my father passed away, in his memory. Shortly thereafter, in November 2010, my wife and I purchased a property, an 80-year old “conservation shop” house [photo below] in the Little India area of Singapore, centrally located and a stone’s throw from the noted Mustafa Center. The property has been given on lease to the Parsee Zoroastrian Association of Singapore, at one dollar rent. The property was renovated and inaugurated in April 2011. The cost of renovation and maintenance have been contributed by members of the Association, with some donations in kind and guidance from India as well.

The lower floor is the prayer area [photo below], and the upper floor and attic, which also has a kitchen and terrace, is used for social functions, meetings, kids TV, and recreation area. Zoroastrian House is used regularly for prayers every Sunday,



on Behram Roj, Pateti, Navroze, PZAS meetings, gahambars, jashans and other functions.

Zoroastrian House has been a community effort. Among the many who have been active in its creation and continue to help in community affairs are Freddy Bavadum, Neville Dotivala, Hanoze Contractor, Hormuz Avari, Pesi Chacha, Russi Ghadiali, Minaz and Rumi Kanga, and our Dasturji Percy Khambata.

The demographics data shows that Singapore has the highest percentage of children among all countries -- this will be an important legacy for our children in Singapore.

**Homiyar Vasania** is the current President of PZAS, and the moving spirit and initial donor behind the new Zoroastrian House in Singapore. Born in Navsari, brought up in Jamshedpur, he moved to Singapore in 1998, where he lives with his wife Vidya, and three children. Homiyar is in the fund management business, worked with Morgan Stanley for 13 years, and has just started his own firm, managing money for high net-worth families.

## ZARATHUSHTIS IN MALAYSIA

*Hootoksi Tyabji*

**M**alaysia is proud to count among its Parsi Zoroastrian population a permanent resident who is 102 years old: but the Parsi population trend in Malaysia is in decline. Since this data was compiled in mid-2012, one person passed away and 4 others left the country, bringing the current total to 32.

Ten Parsi families numbering 19 individuals (about 60%), are living permanently in Malaysia – most retired and 8 working as professionals. The other 40% are expatriates engaged in teaching, engineering, consulting, management, insurance, and business.

Among our small group we were fortunate to have had two elders who were Navars. In the past 10 years they have performed Jashans, Navjotes, a wedding, and prayers for the dead. Sadly one of them passed away early this year and the other is 93 years old.

There is no official or permanent association of Parsi Zarathushtis in Malaysia, and no focal point of reference



for newcomers who are posted here on assignment. The 'bush telegraph' seems to work and it is only through word of mouth that newcomers are introduced to each other and the community.

We get together in Kuala Lumpur once a year on Navroze, when we celebrate with a catered dinner at the oldest resident's house in Kuala Lumpur [photo previous page].

Malaysia is home to many Iranian families, perhaps there are several among them who are Zarathushtis but unless there is a concerted effort by the younger members of the group to reach out and embrace them through digital forums, social gatherings or other such initiatives, there is no platform for Zarathushti families in Malaysia to connect and keep in touch.

**Hootoksi Tyabji** was born in Mumbai, married Robert Tyabji who worked for UNICEF and lived with their 3 children in Bhutan, Somalia, Yemen, Tanzania and Nepal, where she worked with NGO's in the fields of health, education and HIV/AIDS. Hootoksi retired to Malaysia, to watch over her parents who are resident there.



## PRESENCE IN SOUTH AFRICA

*Sohrab Framroze Shapurjee*

“I have always been an optimist, but now I have to concede that this microscopic community at the southern tip of Africa looks like it could in the near future face the possibility of extinction!”

- Solly Shapurjee

**POPULATION.** The tables below show the Zarathushti population in two provinces of South Africa and neighboring independent Southern African countries. Johannesburg is in the province of Gauteng, formerly known as Transvaal, and Durban is in Kwa-zulu Natal, the former province of Natal. The increase of 20 Zarathushtis since 2004 is attributed to coming across Parsis unexpectedly. I met two Parsi families that we did not know about at a wedding in Johannesburg ... and heard of 4 other Parsis in other provinces, whom I have not yet been able to contact. Despite this small increase, in general the population has declined steadily from 200 in 1900 when the second wave immigrants came to Johannesburg and Durban, to the present-day number of 113 in those two cities.

The situation for Zarathushtis in South Africa does not bode well. The community is just too too small to flourish. The Anjuman's numbers and activities have steadily declined since the 1920s, attributed to various factors: fewer births, large percentage of aged, deaths of the elders, emigration due to oppressive political laws during Apartheid, and now, post-democracy (in 1994), there is no active immigration of Zarathushtis to South Africa, which, unfortunately is not

### Southern Africa 2004

South Africa	83
Gauteng Johannesburg	50
KZN Durban	33
Maputo	15
Swaziland	10
Botswana	4
Zambia	2
<b>TOTAL Southern Africa - 2004</b>	<b>114</b>

### Southern Africa 2012

South Africa	113
Gauteng Johannesburg	83
KZN Durban	30
Maputo	15
Swaziland	6
Botswana	0
Zambia	0
<b>TOTAL Southern Africa - 2012</b>	<b>134</b>

one of the preferred countries for immigration for Parsis.

**INTERMARRIAGES.** There are 27 non-Zarathushti spouses (17 females and 10 males). The percentage of non-Zarathushti spouses in the Zarathushti population = 20.1% (27/134). In 2004 it was 14.9% (17/114). Since 1994 democratic dispensation the new generation of Parsi youth (few in number) have been exposed to a multi-cultural society and are choosing partners from different religious groups. This will lead to an increase in marriages outside the Zarathusti faith. There is just not enough sustained exposure that we can provide to keep their interest and faith in our religion. This has been a problem that we have been facing from the time of our forefathers that settled here. The Parsi tradition of having nuclear families will in my opinion not lead to any boom in births. Deaths will as usual follow a slow trend as most of the older generation have now passed on.



*A rare photo of Parsis in Johannesburg, taken at the wedding of Dina Cursetjee and Rusi Patel of Maputo, in 1960.*

**BREAKDOWN BY SEX, AGE AND ORIGIN.** In the total population of 134 Zarathushtis, there are 59 (44.0%) males, 75 (56.0%) females, only 11 (8.2%) children 18 years and under and 34 (25.4%) seniors 65 and over. Except for 1 Iranian, all are Parsis.

I have always been an optimist ,but now I have to concede that this microscopic community at the southern tip of africa looks like it could in the near future face the possibility of extinction!

**Dr Sohrab (Solly) Framroze.Shapurjee** (*shapurji@gmail.com*) with his family, in Johannesburg, 2013. Solly, grandson of Shapurjee Cawasjee Patel, an early Parsi pioneer in South Africa, retired in 2010 as head of the Department of Anaesthesia at Natalspruit Hospital in Johannesburg, and is now in private practice. He is very active with the Transvaal Parsi Association and currently serves as Treasurer.





# EAST AFRICA - KENYA & TANZANIA

“The decline started some years ago, and now there is no chance whatsoever, of reversing that trend.”

*Vistasp Vatcha, Mombasa*

<b>Kenya</b>		<b>60</b>
Mombasa	40	
Nairobi	20	
<b>Tanzania</b>		<b>18</b>
Dare Salam	15	
Zanzibar	3	
<b>TOTAL East Africa - 2004</b>		<b>78</b>

<b>Kenya</b>		<b>35</b>
Mombasa	15	
Nairobi	20	
<b>Tanzania</b>		<b>2</b>
Dare Salam	0	
Zanzibar	2	
<b>TOTAL East Africa - 2012</b>		<b>37</b>

**POPULATION.** The tables above show the rapid decline of the few remaining zarathushtis in east africa.

## ZARATHUSHTIS IN KENYA

**Vistasp Vatchha**



(vatchha@gmail.com)

Of the 15 Zarathushtis in Mombasa, there are 8 men and 7 women, of whom two are widows, one person is separated from the spouse, 7 are unmarried and 3 married. There is one non-Zoroastrian spouse. There

are 2 children of mixed marriage that do not follow the Zarathushti religion. Nine (60%) are over 65 years and the remaining six (40%) are between 40 and 65 years of age. The youngest is 40 and the oldest is my mother Tehmina, who is 86 years old. All are of Parsi origin.

We do not acknowledge the children of intermarriages and they do not play an active role in matters of the Anjuman, though they do participate in our functions. I am the third generation of Vatchha family in Mombasa. My late father and I were born and brought up here. The Vatchha family is now scattered all over, with most having settled in the UK. I am married with two children. I run my own business Shavir Co. [photo above] selling spare parts and accessories for motor vehicles.

The decline in our population started some years ago, and now there is no chance whatsoever, of reversing that trend.

## ZARATHUSHTIS IN TANZANIA

**PERVIN NUNES, (nunes@wildersunsafaristanzania.com)**

After the revolution in 1963 in Zanzibar, almost all of the 250-300 Zarathushtis who lived on the island of Zanzibar left for UK, USA, Canada or India. Zanzibar united with Tanganika to form Tanzania. The agiary and aramgah were maintained by the few remaining residents (though the fire was extinguished in 1969) and the grounds sold to a Muslim family some



years ago. Only one family of 2 remains in Zanzibar now. I do not know of any Zarathushtis in Dare Salam.

My Grandfather, Rustomji Sethna, (born in 1888) came as a young man to Zanzibar from Surat, India. It was during the British Raj when India was colonized by Britain and Zanzibar was a British Protectorate. The British brought people from India to work as clerks and other office jobs. Rustomji went back to India and brought his bride to Zanzibar. Those days, during the British rule one would get 3 months home leave every 3 years. In 1947 my father Fali made the 2-week journey by ship to Mumbai and brought back his bride Jeru. I

am the first born of 4 children, and my grandchildren are now the fourth generation to be born in Zanzibar. Life in Zanzibar was great then. We got along very well with Hindus, Christians and Muslims and everyone celebrated all the different feasts! After the revolution in 1964, I moved to Dare Salaam and got married. The rest of the family went to India. Later, wanting to start a safari business, we moved to Arusha.



Our dream became a reality when we started **Wildersun Safaris** ([www.wildersunsafaristanzania.com](http://www.wildersunsafaristanzania.com)), 33 years ago. The company, now run by our son Ervin and his wife Lillian, has a fleet of 15 Land Cruisers [photo left] with pop up roofs for unrestricted game viewing. Our English speaking guides are very knowledgeable about animal behavior, flora and fauna. The world famous Serengeti National Park, Ngorongoro Crater, Mt. Kilimanjaro, Zanzibar Island are a few of the many places travelers come to explore.

**Pervin Nunes** with husband Merwyn, daughter Jervin (behind Merwyn), son Ervin (far left) and their families.

## A ZARATHUSHTI IN ZANZIBAR

Excerpts from Farah Bala's blog ([Farahbala.wordpress.com/2012/07/22/a-Zoroastrian-in-Zanzibar/](http://Farahbala.wordpress.com/2012/07/22/a-Zoroastrian-in-Zanzibar/)) about her meeting with the one remaining Zarathushti family in Zanzibar -- and her visit to the erstwhile agiary and cemetery.

**D**uring my conversations with the locals when I heard that there was indeed a Parsi family still living in Zanzibar, there was no way I was leaving the Island without meeting them.

After more inquiries, I found out that the Agiary had been sold a few years ago, to a Muzammill family – they own high end appliance stores in Zanzibar. I was supposed to leave the next day, but decided to extend my stay for a day. I had to meet this Parsi family, and visit the Agiary.

I headed towards the house of the Parsi family. There was a Tourist Safari Agency on the ground floor. I asked them how I could get to the apartment upstairs. I was directed to a doorbell outside the building and told to stand there, in full view of the windows above, so that I could be seen and approved, before anyone came to open the door. I rang the bell and waited ... After what seemed like an eternity, a woman opened the door. I introduced myself, and as soon as I said I was Parsi, I saw that smile of familiarity on her face. Diana Darukhanawala was warm and more than willing to talk to me. She lived with her 83 year old father. Her mother passed away last year.

Diana's grandmother was from Zanzibar and grandfather from Bombay. It was an arranged marriage. He came to Zanzibar on one of his work trips, and decided to stay on after the wedding. She spoke of the thriving Parsi community she had grown up in, and when it became unpleasant to live there, they all moved away; to Canada, India, America and England.

When I asked about the Agiary and if I could go see it, she warned me that it was now nothing but a dilapidated building. Community representatives from London had come and taken all the scriptures, books, altar materials and paintings in an effort to preserve them. She spoke of visiting the Agiary as a child and her memories of the beautiful rose gardens; she had never seen anything like those blooms.



*Diana Darukhanavala and her 83-year old father are the only two remaining Zarathushtis now, in Zanzibar.*

I headed on my walk towards the Agiary ... 30 minutes later I was at exactly what I was told to expect – a dilapidated building hidden amidst unattended grounds that once used to bloom exquisite roses.



*Shamba ya Parisi, Swahili for Temple of the Parsis*

I met John, the old caretaker of the property.... The Muzammills are using the property as a godown for storage. He then took me to the cemetery attached to the grounds. Walking through the wild, tall grass and taking pictures of hidden tombstones; obituaries inscribed on stone, on marble, some in English, some in Gujarati, others in both, reading names and brief stories of a generation twice removed from mine, was probably the most beautiful of my experiences.



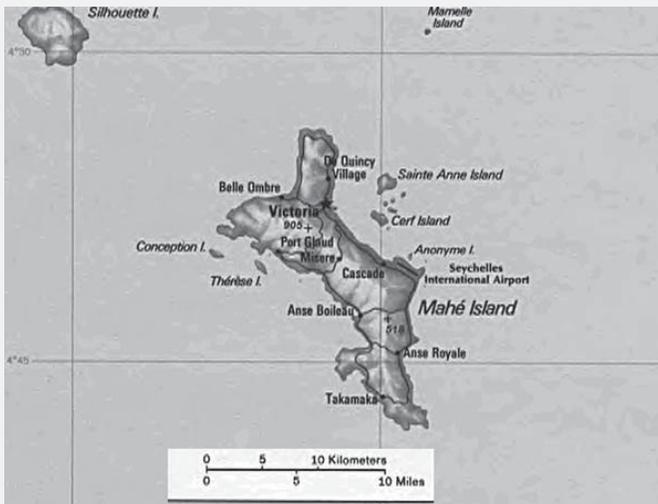
Originally from Bombay, **Farah Bala** ([www.farahbala.com](http://www.farahbala.com)) has an MFA in Theater from Sarah Lawrence College (NY). An actor, producer and educator based in New York, she has an impressive list of theater credits and awards. On TV, Farah has been seen on various South Asian channels, HUM TV, ARY TV and HBO, and profiled in Umbrage Edition's latest coffee table book, "Green Card Stories."

**Distribution by Religion (Source Wikipedia)**

US population	= 313,900,000 (313.9 million)		
Canadian population	= 29,639,035 ( 29.6 million)		
Indian population	= 1,210,193,422 (1.2 billion) (grew by 17% since 2001)		
	USA	Canada	India (growth in 10 years)
Christians	78.4%	77.1%	2.3% (grew by 22.6%)
Judaism	1.7%	1.0%	
Buddhists	0.7%	1.0%	0.8% (grew by 24.5%)
Muslims	0.6%	2.0%	13.4% (grew by 29.5%)
Hindus	0.4%	1.0%	80.5% (grew by 20.3%)
Jains			0.4% (grew by 26.0%)
Sikhs		1.0%	1.9% (grew by 18.2%)
Others	< 0.3%	0.4%	
Unaffiliated	16.1%	16.0%	

**Zarathushtis are not mentioned in this list, the FEZANA study shows:**

<b>In USA</b>	<b>(estimated pop. 14,405)</b>	<b>Zarathushtis are 0.0045% or about 1 in 20,000.</b>
<b>In Canada</b>	<b>(estimated pop. 6,442)</b>	<b>Zarathushtis are 0.02% or about 1 in 5,000.</b>
<b>In India</b>	<b>(estimated pop. 61,000)</b>	<b>Zarathushtis are 0.005% or about 1 in 20,000</b>



# PRESENCE IN SEYCHELLES

**SOONA OLIAJI**

“In a country of 100,000, our tiny community of 21 still has a visible and influential presence.”

**POPULATION AND BREAKDOWN BY SEX AND ORIGIN.** The Zarathushti population in 2012 consists of 21 Zarathushtis. There are 12 (57%) males and 9 (43%) females. All are of Parsi origin.

**INTERMARRIAGES.** Among the 21 Zarathushtis, there are 9 non-Zarathushti spouses, i.e. the percentage of non-Zarathushti spouses among the Zarathushti population is 42.9% (9/21). In 2004, it was 52.4% (11/21). There are 22 children in the community, of which 19 have not had their navjote done, are not following the Zarathushti religion and have not been counted here. One Zarathushti female has converted to her husband’s non-Zarathushti faith. Sadly,

all the marriages of the second generation have been interfaith, and only 3 of the 22 children are being brought up as Parsis.



In the spirit of adventure, Sorab Olia who was working in the Mazagaon Docks in Bombay in 1900, boarded a dhow headed towards Africa. On landing in Seychelles, he took a job as a shop assistant with a Mr. Tehmoolji, and in the 1920s bought the business from his former employer. Tehmoolji & Co grew to become the largest privately-owned general merchandise store on the island of Mahe, and now occupies the ground floor of the building known as “Oliaji Trade Center.” [photo left]. The upper floors are rented to the British High Commission, Seychelles Minister for Education, and other firms.

While our numbers are small, I am happy to say that in a country of 100,000, our tiny community of 21 still has a visible and influential presence.



**Soona Oliaji** ([meher@bbmax.co.uk](mailto:meher@bbmax.co.uk)) [second from left] matriarch of the Parsis in Seychelles, is actively involved in managing family businesses – real estate holdings and Tehmoolji & Co. Soona came to Seychelles in 1958 when she married Sorab Olia’s son Jamshed. A good role model for multi-culturalism, Soona, with family members, colleagues and friends [shown at left] organized a truly inter-faith ceremony for laying the foundation stone of a new venture – Oliaji Trade Center II, with Parsi Zarathushti, Catholic and Hindu blessings.

# ZARATHUSHTIS in the GULF REGION

*Meher Bhesania*

“Gulf countries being at the forefront of growth, it is likely that more Zarathushtis will keep coming to this region either for employment or doing business.”



**POPULATION** The demographic data for the Gulf region comprising Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and United Arab Emirates (UAE) is based on the ‘Z Directory’ project that was undertaken in 2012 by the young Zoroastrian volunteers of YLEP team (Youth Leadership Enhancement Program), Z Committee Members from Gulf countries and a few senior members from the UAE, under the able guidance of Meher Bhesania.

The table below gives estimated population figures for 2004 (as published in FEZANA Journal, Winter 2004) and 2012.

**BREAKDOWN BY SEX, AGE AND ORIGIN** Of the total estimated population of 1900, the actual count recorded was 1137 as at July 15, 2012. There are 27% children under 21, 53% are males and 47% are females. The breakup is as follows: boys under 21 (14%), girls under 21 (13%), males, 21 and over (39%), females, 21 and over (34%). There are not many members in the Gulf region who are above the age of 65 years, as persons beyond this age limit can only stay in the Gulf countries if they have busi-

Country	2004	2012
Bahrain	125	85
Kuwait	100	75
Oman	300	250
Qatar	75	120
United Arab Emirates	1500	1,270
Other	100	100
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2200</b>	<b>1900</b>

nesses of their own or are on special visas or alternatively, are sponsored by their children who hold resident visas in the Gulf countries.

Almost all in the data are of Parsi origin coming from India and Pakistan. There is no separate data available on Zarathushtis of Iranian origin.

**INTERMARRIAGES.** 4% of the couples are inter-married in the total count of 1137. If you deduct 4%, i.e. 46 persons who are non Zarathushti spouses from 1137, then the total count will be 1091.

**FUTURE TREND.** Gulf countries being at the forefront of growth, it is likely that more Zarathushtis will keep coming to this region either for employment or doing business.



Children gather in Dubai for “Kids Day” organized by EZY – Emirates Zoroastrian Youth.

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# ZARATHUSHTIS IN NORTH AMERICA

## a demographic profile

*Roshan Rivetna and Zenobia Damania*

There is encouraging growth of population in Canada and USA since the 2004 FEZANA study; it needs, however, to be tempered with caution,



The demographics data for Canada and USA was compiled with information collected from a contact person or Association, in each of the 10 Canadian provinces and 50 US states. Data collected in a 2004 FEZANA study [1] is also presented here for comparison.

**Population.** The raw population data, as received, is presented in the tables below.

- **The ‘recorded’ population** is as available from local databases, directories and personal knowledge.
- **The ‘estimated’ population** includes a ‘gut-feeling’ number of additional Zarathushtis who might be living in the area but are not known to anyone and may have been missed from the recorded count.

The following additional demographics data was also collected, by state/province:

- **Intermarriages:** Number of non-Zarathushti spouses in the Zarathushti population.
- **Sex:** Male or female.
- **Origin:** Parsi or Iranian

Optionally, information was requested but only a few States/Provinces provided data on:

- Number of **offspring of intermarriages** not following the Zarathushti religion.
- Number of Zarathushtis **converted to/from** other religions.
- Number of **new births** since the 2004 FEZANA study.
- Number of **immigrants** from other countries.
- Age distribution: Children under 18, and Seniors 65 and over.

The demographics data is summarized after the population tables below.

### DEMOGRAPHICS DATA FOR CANADA

TABLE 1. CANADA – Population and Sources for each Province

Province	2004		2012			SOURCES AND COMMENTS
	Pop. recorded 2004	Pop. estimated 2004	Pop. recorded 2012	Pop. estimated 2012	Percentage growth (est'd) 2004-2012	
AB	134	138	215	220	59.4%	2004 and 2012: <b>Firdosh Mehta</b> ( <a href="mailto:fdjmehta@shaw.ca">fdjmehta@shaw.ca</a> ) former President, ZAA and <b>Neelum Austin</b> ( <a href="mailto:bapaiji@shaw.ca">bapaiji@shaw.ca</a> ) first President, ZAA.

BC	1089	1189	1375	1675	40.9%	<b>2004 and 2012: Homi Italia</b> ( <i>homiitalia@hotmail.com</i> ) ZSBC President and <b>Yasmin Kapadia</b> , ZSBC Secretary.
MB	25	35	24	34	-2.9%	<b>2004: Khorshed Karai Jones. 2012: Hushtasp Bhumgara</b> ( <i>hbhumgara@hotmail.com</i> ) and <b>Kaikhushroo Baria</b> ( <i>kbbaria@mts.net</i> )
NB	4	4	9	9	125.0%	<b>2004 and 2012: Shirin Jagosh</b> ( <i>s_jagosh@hotmail.com</i> ), Zoroastrian Association of Atlantic Canada.
NF	4	5	2	3	-40.0%	<b>2004 and 2012: Shirin Jagosh</b>
NS	35	35	34	34	-2.9%	<b>2004 and 2012: Shirin Jagosh</b>
NWT	0	0	0	0		<b>Noshir &amp; Jai Panthaky</b> moved from Baffin Island in NorthWest Territories to Toronto in 2000. There are no Zarathushtis in NWT now.
ON	3802	4300	4079	4179	-2.8%	<b>2004: Sam Vesuna</b> ( <i>sam.vesuna@sympatico.ca</i> ) ZSO President. <b>2012: Pervaze Rabadi</b> ( <i>PRabadi@aol.com</i> ), Membership and Directory sub-committee Chair.
QE	243	263	252	282	7.2%	<b>2004: Ness Iakdawala</b> ( <i>ness@dectron.com</i> ) ZAQ President and <b>Pheroze Austin. 2012: Rohinton Marolia</b> ( <i>marolia.mtl@gmail.com</i> ) ZAQ Treasurer.
SK	5	6	5	6	0.0%	<b>2004 and 2012: Saros Cowasjee</b> ( <i>Saros.Cowasjee@uregina.ca</i> ).
	<b>5341</b>	<b>5975</b>	<b>5995</b>	<b>6442</b>	<b>7.8%</b>	<b>Canada - all 10 provinces.</b>

**SUMMARY FOR CANADA (all 10 provinces):** (Percentages corrected for provinces that did not respond.)

Total recorded population of Canada was 5341 in 2004 and 5995 in 2012.  
Total estimated population of Canada was 5975 in 2004 and 6442 in 2012.

Growth in recorded population between 2004 and 2012 = 654 Zs or 12.2%  
Growth in estimated population between 2004 and 2012 = 467 Zs or 7.8%  
Percentage of children (18 & under) in recorded population = 16.8%  
Percentage seniors (65 and over) in recorded population = 15.8%  
Percentage of males = 51.4%. Percentage of females = 48.6%  
Percentage of Parsi origin = 72.0%. Percentage of Iranian origin = 28.0%

**INTERMARRIAGES.** Percentage of non-Zarathushti spouses among the recorded Zarathushti population = 4.7% in 2004 and 5.6% in 2012.

**OFFSPRING OF INTERMARRIAGES.** Only two provinces (pop. 1627, representing 27% of the total recorded Canadian Zarathushti population) responded with the numbers of children of inter-marriages who were not Zarathushtis. Of a total of 135 children of intermarriages, 37 were “not following the Zarathushti religion,” i.e. 27% of children of intermarriages were not following the Zarathushti religion.

**CONVERSIONS.** There were no reports of Zarathushtis converted to/from other religions.

**IMMIGRATION.** Four Canadian provinces (NB, NF, NS and QE, pop. 328, representing 5.1% of the total estimated Canadian Zarathushti population) reported 10 new immigrants between 2004 and 2012. British Columbia (pop. 1675) reported 300 new immigrants, mostly from Iran, during that period. We can perhaps extrapolate this to a total of approximately 500 (300 in BC and 200 in the rest of Canada) immigrants to Canada between 2004 and 2012.

**NEW BIRTHS.** Five Canadian provinces (BC, NB, NF, NS and QE, pop. 2003, representing 31.1% of the total estimated Canadian Zarathushti population) reported 59 births. Perhaps we can extrapolate this to 190 (rounded to 200) new births in Canada between 2004 and 2012.



## DEMOGRAPHICS DATA FOR USA

TABLE 2. USA POPULATION AND SOURCES FOR EACH STATE

State	Pop. recorded 2004	Pop. estimated 2004 2012	Pop. recorded 2012	Pop. estimated 2012	Percentage growth (est'd)	Sources and Comments
AL	11	13	29	33	153.8%	Birmingham, Huntsville. <b>2004 &amp; 2012: Nergish &amp; Hoshi Aga</b> ( <i>nergisha@yahoo.com</i> ).
AK	8	8	16	17	112.5%	Anchorage. <b>2004: Kavasji and Pouruchisti Dadachanji</b> ( <i>kavasji@gmail.com</i> ). <b>2012: Kayomarz Ferozepurwalla</b> ( <i>kkaaferoze@hotmail.com</i> ).
AZ	133	143	182	192	34.3%	Phoenix, Tucson, Scottsdale. <b>2004: Roshan Bhappu</b> ( <i>rbhappu@aol.com</i> ). <b>2012: Jamsheed Mehta</b> ( <i>Jamsheed@yahoo.com</i> ) President, AZA (ZAAZ) and <b>Shariar Farahzadi</b> , AZA Persian Group.
AR	10	10	16	18	80.0%	Little Rock. <b>2004 &amp; 2012: Feraydoon Bahrassa</b> ( <i>fsbahr1@msn.com</i> ).
CA - CZC	n/a	n/a	1519	3038		<b>2012:</b> Mostly Iranians of Southern California (Los Angeles). <b>Rouzbeh Kasravi</b> ( <i>frkasravi@aol.com</i> ) CZC, writes: "Many are not on the CZC directory and do not wish to give information to CZC. I estimate we could have at least four to five thousand people in Southern California." Hence the estimate for CZC was assumed to be double the recorded count of 1519.
CA-ZAC			844	860		<b>2012:</b> Mostly Parsis of Southern California (Los Angeles). <b>Sheila Madon</b> ( <i>smadon5@sbcglobal.net</i> ) Jt. Secry. ZAC.
CA-PZO			447	547		<b>2012:</b> Mostly Iranians of Northern California (San Francisco). <b>Saman Niknam</b> ( <i>sniknam1980@gmail.com</i> ) President, PZO.
CA-ZANC			980	1060		<b>2012:</b> Mostly Parsis of Northern California (San Francisco). <b>Nazneen Spliedt</b> ( <i>nazehler@aol.com</i> ) President, ZANC and <b>Ehler Spliedt</b> , Secretary, ZANC.

CA total	2709	2729	3790	5505	101.7%	<b>2004: Noshir Jesung</b> ( <i>njesung@gmail.com</i> ) Chair, FEZANA Census-Directory Committee. <b>2012:</b> Totals for California merged from CZC, ZAC, PZO and ZANC data (above).
CO	58	62	80	85	37.1%	Denver. <b>2004: Rumi Engineer</b> , President ZARM ( <i>rengineer@qwest.net</i> ). <b>2012: Neville Rustomji</b> ( <i>Neville_Rust@hotmail.com</i> ) President ZARM and <b>Bucky Amaria</b> ( <i>bnamaria@aol.com</i> ), Founding Member, ZARM.
CT						Included in New York area.
DE	44	46	37	47	2.2%	Wilmington. <b>2004 and 2012: Diana Dadachanji</b> ( <i>dadachan@sas.upenn.edu</i> ) member of ZAPANJ and board member of ZACUCE.
FL-TAMPA	35	35	79	84	140.0%	Tampa bay and West Coast. <b>2004 and 2012: Soli P. Dastur</b> ( <i>dastur@comcast.net</i> ) Coordinator, ZATAMBAY.
FL-CFG	76	81	115	125	54.3%	Orlando. <b>2004: Soli Dastur. 2012: Sarvar Dehmehri</b> ( <i>1sarvar@gmail.com</i> ) Coordinator, CFG.
FL-ZAF	162	168	219	229	35.2%	Miami, Boca Raton. <b>2004: Soli Dastur. 2012: Jahan Daruwala</b> ( <i>jisam@comcast.net</i> ) President, ZAF.
FL total	273	284	413	438	54.2%	Totals for Florida merged from ZATAMBAY, CFG and ZAF (see above).
GA	133	145	146	161	11.0%	Atlanta. <b>2004: Gulshan Deboo, Sherry Unwala</b> and <b>Cyrus Aidun. 2012: Cyrus Aidun</b> ( <i>cyrus.aidun@me.gatech.edu</i> ) President, AZA.
HI	9	11	25	30	172.7%	Honolulu. <b>2004: Meheroo Jussawalla</b> ( <i>meherooj@aol.com</i> ). <b>2012: Katy Kelawala</b> ( <i>tskelawala@yahoo.com</i> ).
ID	12	15	8	11	-26.7 %	Boise, Idaho Falls. <b>2004 and 2012: Khurshed Tengra</b> ( <i>ttengra@msn.com</i> ).
IL	540	590	513	563	-4.6 %	Chicago. <b>2004 and 2012: Aban Vazifdar</b> ( <i>pavazifdar@hotmail.com</i> ) ZAC-Chicago.
IN	85	100	68	83	-17.0 %	Indianapolis. <b>2004: Shapur Irani</b> ( <i>skjirani@comcast.net</i> ). <b>2012: Bakhtavar Desai</b> ( <i>bfdesai@aol.com</i> ) FEZANA representative for ZAKOI.
IA	3	6	7	12	100.0%	Des Moines. <b>2004:</b> Personal knowledge. <b>2012: Xerxes Colah</b> ( <i>xrhc@hotmail.com</i> ).
KS	85	115	101	131	13.9%	Kansas (including Kansas City, MO). <b>2004: Rustom Ferzandi</b> , President ZAKA. <b>2012: Dr. Daryoush Jahanian</b> ( <i>djahanian@gmail.com</i> ), Founder, ZAKA and <b>Khodadad Mazdayasni</b> ( <i>khody.yazdi@kcmo.org</i> ) President ZAKA.
KY	30	47	31	41	-12.8 %	Lexington, Louisville. <b>2004: Zavera Kanga</b> ( <i>zjkanga@hotmail.com</i> ). <b>2012: Bakhtavar Desai.</b>
LA	46	58	42	54	-6.9 %	New Orleans, Shreveport. <b>2004 and 2012: Rohinton Tarapore</b> ( <i>rktarapore@cox.net</i> )
ME	3	3	5	5	66.7%	Bangor, Portland, Orono. <b>2004: Sherazade Mehta</b> ( <i>sherazadem@yahoo.com</i> ) former President, ZAGBA. <b>2012: Parastu Dubash</b> ( <i>parastu3@gmail.com</i> ) former President, ZAGBA.
MA	203	223	315	335	50.2%	Boston. <b>2004: Sherazade Mehta. 2012: Parastu Dubash.</b>
MD						Included in Washington DC area.
MI	189	200	193	204	2.0%	Detroit. <b>2004: Jamshed R. Udvardia</b> ( <i>udvardiajr@att.net</i> ). <b>2012: Neville Bugli</b> ( <i>nbugli@sbcglobal.net</i> ) President, ZAOM.
MN	82	102	94	109	6.9%	Minneapolis-St. Paul. <b>2004 and 2012: Jehangir Rudina</b> ( <i>JERudina@aol.com</i> ).
MS	0	0	4	5		Jackson. <b>2004:</b> No known Zarathushtis. <b>2012: Kian Partovi.</b> There is only 1 family.
MO	36	40	47	52	30.0%	St. Louis. Zarathushtis in Kansas City, MO have been counted in Kansas. <b>2004: Persis Mehta</b> ( <i>pmhelix@yahoo.com</i> ). <b>2012: Anosh Jehanbux Wadia</b> ( <i>anosh@anoshwadia.com</i> ) St. Louis Zoroastrian group.

MT	0	0	2	2		<b>2012: Rustem and Minkie Medora</b> ( <a href="mailto:rustem.medora@gmail.com">rustem.medora@gmail.com</a> ) of Missoula, MT, write: "We were probably the only permanent East Indian family in Montana when we arrived here in 1967. There are no other Zoroastrians in MT since our two children moved to the West coast in the 1990s."
NE	9	12	5	8	-33.3 %	Lincoln, Omaha. <b>2004</b> and <b>2012: Kersi and Roshan Pajnikar.</b>
NV	12	16	44	54	237.5%	Las Vegas. <b>2004: Kaizad Yazdani</b> ( <a href="mailto:kaizady@yahoo.com">kaizady@yahoo.com</a> ). <b>2012: Abaan Irani</b> ( <a href="mailto:abaru711@cox.net">abaru711@cox.net</a> ).
NH	9	11	20	22	100.0%	Manchester, Nashua. <b>2004: Sherazade Mehta. 2012: Parastu Dubash.</b>
NJ						Included in New York area..
NM	30	35	35	40	14.3%	Albuquerque. Las Cruces. <b>2004: Feroza Jussawalla Dasenbrook</b> ( <a href="mailto:Imohf@aol.com">Imohf@aol.com</a> ). <b>2012: Kamal and Mehraboon Irani</b> ( <a href="mailto:kamal.irani1@gmail.com">kamal.irani1@gmail.com</a> ).
ZAGNY			1148	2296		<b>2012:</b> From ZAGNY databases (mostly Parsis). <b>Homi D. Gandhi</b> ( <a href="mailto:homidgandhi@gmail.com">homidgandhi@gmail.com</a> ) former President, ZAGNY and <b>Meherzeen Daruwala</b> ( <a href="mailto:Meherzeen.Daruwala@rbs.com">Meherzeen.Daruwala@rbs.com</a> ), ZAGNY Managing Committee. As in 2004 (see comment for NY below) Homi estimates the numbers are double those on record.
IZA			161	231		<b>2012:</b> From Iranian Zoroastrian Association (IZA) database (mostly Iranians). <b>Shirin Khosravi</b> ( <a href="mailto:sherrykiamane@hotmail.com">sherrykiamane@hotmail.com</a> ) President, IZA.
NJ-ZAPANJ			134	167		<b>2012:</b> From ZAPANJ database (mostly Parsis). <b>Diana Dadachanji</b> ( <a href="mailto:dadachan@sas.upenn.edu">dadachan@sas.upenn.edu</a> ).
NY, NJ, CT TOTAL	1097	2194	1443	2694	22.8%	<b>2004: Homi D. Gandhi.</b> "My experience has been that in a large city like New York we know only about 50% of the Zarathushtis, hence our numbers could well be double those on record." <b>2012:</b> Totals for NY, NJ, CT, merged from ZAGNY, IZA and ZAPANJ data (above).
NC	75	85	84	104	22.4%	Raleigh, Durham, Chapel Hill. <b>2004: Tehmi Dalal</b> ( <a href="mailto:t-dalal@cfl.rr.com">t-dalal@cfl.rr.com</a> ). <b>2012: Farida Bam</b> ( <a href="mailto:faridaz99@hotmail.com">faridaz99@hotmail.com</a> ).
ND	1	1	0	0		<b>2004: Shiavax Cowasji</b> of McVille, ND was the sole resident of ND. <b>2012: Shiavax Cowasji</b> ( <a href="mailto:cowasji@excite.com">cowasji@excite.com</a> ) writes: "We have moved to Rhode Island, and are not aware of any Zarathushtis currently living in North or South Dakota."
OH	147	157	162	172	9.6%	Cincinnati, Cleveland, Columbus. <b>2004: Kamal Mehta</b> ( <a href="mailto:teena8@hotmail.com">teena8@hotmail.com</a> ). <b>2012: Kamal Mehta</b> , Cleveland Zoroastrian Group and <b>Bakhtavar Desai.</b>
OK	27	32	53	58	81.3%	Oklahoma City, Tulsa. <b>2004: Manek Anklesaria</b> ( <a href="mailto:manek7@cox.net">manek7@cox.net</a> ), ZAO - not formally organized. <b>2012: Shahnaaz Irani</b> ( <a href="mailto:rirani@cox.net">rirani@cox.net</a> ) ZAO and <b>Manek Anklesaria.</b>
OR	74	89	87	102	14.6%	Portland, Eugene. <b>2004</b> and <b>2012: Dinaz Kutar Rogers</b> ( <a href="mailto:drogersor@msn.com">drogersor@msn.com</a> ). Not included here are about 90 members (mostly Iranian expatriates) of the International Mazdayasnan Order headed by Dr. Behest Najad (Parthava), Springfield, OR, incorporated in 1979. Members wear sudreh and kushti, and get together at the 3-acre facility which includes a Zoroastrian Meditation Retreat, for celebrations, prayer and Persian studies.
PA-ZAPA			98	108		Pittsburgh area. <b>2012: Sarosh H. Sepai</b> ( <a href="mailto:sarosh@hotmail.com">sarosh@hotmail.com</a> ) President, ZAPA and <b>Veera Sigantorporia</b> ( <a href="mailto:veerasiganporia@gmail.com">veerasiganporia@gmail.com</a> )
PA-ZAPANJ			169	184		Philadelphia area. <b>2012: Diana Dadachanji.</b>
PA TOTAL	220	235	267	292	24.3%	<b>2004: Houtoxi Contractor</b> ( <a href="mailto:huty.contractor@gmail.com">huty.contractor@gmail.com</a> ) President, ZAPA and <b>Diana Dadachanji</b> , ZAPANJ. <b>2012:</b> PA totals merged from ZAPA and ZAPANJ (above).

RI	13	15	20	22	46.7%	Providence. <b>2004</b> and <b>2012</b> : <b>Jerry and Celeste Kheradi</b> ( <a href="mailto:JerryKheradi@aol.com">JerryKheradi@aol.com</a> ).
SC	24	29	29	33	13.8%	Myrtle Beach. <b>2004</b> : <b>Rohinton Sarkari</b> . <b>2012</b> : <b>Nivi Shroff</b> ( <a href="mailto:nivi.shroff@mbseasideresorts.com">nivi.shroff@mbseasideresorts.com</a> ).
SD	4	4	0	0		<b>2004</b> : One family, since moved to Texas. <b>2012</b> : See Shiavux Cowasji's comments for North Dakota.
TN	18	30	15	27	-10.0 %	Nashville, Memphis. <b>2004</b> and <b>2012</b> : <b>Minoo Wadia</b> ( <a href="mailto:wadiam@apsu.edu">wadiam@apsu.edu</a> ) writes: "I am not I touch with any other Zoroastrians in TN. 99% of my interactions with Zoroastrians for me now happens on Facebook!"
TX-Hous	655	680	818	843	24.0%	Houston, Austin. <b>2012</b> : <b>Arnavaz Sethna</b> ( <a href="mailto:asethna@comcast.net">asethna@comcast.net</a> ), ZAH.
TX-Dall	366	391	459	484	23.8%	Dallas. <b>2012</b> : <b>Anahita Feroze Sidhwa</b> ( <a href="mailto:afsidhwa@verizon.net">afsidhwa@verizon.net</a> ).
TX total	1021	1071	1277	1327	23.9%	Houston, Dallas, Austin. <b>2004</b> : <b>Arnavaz Sethna</b> (Houston, Austin). <b>Anahita Sidhwa</b> (Dallas area). <b>2012</b> : Totals for TX merged from Houston and Dallas areas (see above).
UT	9	12	10	13	8.3%	Salt Lake City. <b>2004</b> and <b>2012</b> : <b>Farhid Hafezi</b> ( <a href="mailto:farhidh@yahoo.com">farhidh@yahoo.com</a> ).
VT	4	4	5	5	25.0%	Northfield. <b>2004</b> : <b>Sherazade Mehta</b> . <b>2012</b> : <b>Parastu Dubash</b> .
WA- Iran			150	170		<b>2012</b> : <b>Afshin Sepehri</b> ( <a href="mailto:Afshin.Sepehri@microsoft.com">Afshin.Sepehri@microsoft.com</a> ) President, ZSWS. Data is for Iranian Zoroastrians in WA.
WA-Parsi			124	134		<b>2012</b> : <b>Anaheita Kapadia</b> ( <a href="mailto:anaheitak@yahoo.com">anaheitak@yahoo.com</a> ). "We are Parsis organized as a group at <a href="mailto:WSbawas@yahoo.com">WSbawas@yahoo.com</a> ."
WA tot	82	112	274	304	171.4%	<b>2004</b> : <b>Khooshnam Commissariat</b> . <b>2012</b> : Totals for WA merged from ZSWS and the WSbawas (see above).
VA-N						Northern VA is included in Washington, DC area.
VA-C )	n/a	n/a	55	60		Central Virginia. <b>2012</b> : <b>Rumy Mohta</b> ( <a href="mailto:RICHTRVL@aol.com">RICHTRVL@aol.com</a> ).
Wash DC area	n/a	n/a	650	850		Washington DC area, including Maryland and N. Virginia. <b>2012</b> : <b>Neville Gai</b> ( <a href="mailto:nevgai@yahoo.com">nevgai@yahoo.com</a> ) Jt. Treasurer, ZAMWI and <b>Farzad Aidun</b> ( <a href="mailto:farzad.aidun@gmail.com">farzad.aidun@gmail.com</a> ) creator ZAMWI directory.
WashDC area + VA (C)	1500	1600	705	910	-43.1 %	Washington DC area plus Central VA. <b>2004</b> : <b>Behram Pastakia</b> ( <a href="mailto:bpastakia@aol.com">bpastakia@aol.com</a> ) President, ZAMWI, in consultation with ZAMWI Council of Elders and ZAMWI Board. <b>2012</b> : Data merged from Washigton DC area plus Central VA (see above).
WI	71	91	58	78	-14.3 %	Milwaukee. <b>2004</b> : <b>Mahrukh Motafram</b> ( <a href="mailto:mahrukhm83@gmail.com">mahrukhm83@gmail.com</a> ). <b>2012</b> : <b>Touranj Dhondy</b> ( <a href="mailto:tdd@magnumspike.com">tdd@magnumspike.com</a> ).
WV	3	3	3	3	0.0%	Weirton. <b>2004</b> and <b>2012</b> . <b>Adi Tamboly</b> ( <a href="mailto:aditamboly@comcast.net">aditamboly@comcast.net</a> ). Only one family in WV.
WY	6	6	4	4	-33.3 %	Gillette. <b>2004</b> : <b>Neville and Zarin Sarkari</b> ( <a href="mailto:nsarkari@hotmail.com">nsarkari@hotmail.com</a> ). <b>2012</b> : Neville Sarkari writes: "There is only one family in WY now, running a motel business."
USA	9158	10794	10764	14405	33.5%	USA - all 50 states

**SUMMARY FOR USA (ALL 50 STATES):** (Percentages corrected for provinces that did not respond).

Total recorded population of USA was 9158 in 2004 and 10764 in 2012.

Total estimated population of USA was 10794 in 2004 and 14405 in 2012.

Growth in recorded population between 2004 and 2012 = 1606 Zs or 17.5%

Growth in estimated population between 2004 and 2012 = 3611 Zs or 33.5%

Percentage of children (18 & under) in recorded population = 18.7%

Percentage seniors (65 and over) in recorded population = 12.2%

Percentage of males = 51.7%. Percentage of females = 48.3%

Percentage of Parsi origin = 68.1%. Percentage of Iranian origin = 31.9%

**INTERMARRIAGES.** Percentage of non-Zarathushti spouses among the recorded Zarathushti population = 7.7% in 2004 and 9.9% in 2012.

**OFFSPRING OF INTERMARRIAGES.** Only 13 states (pop. 3020, representing 28% of the total recorded US Zarathushti population) responded with the numbers of children of inter-marriages who were not Zarathushtis. In these states, out of a total of 375 children of intermarriages, 97 were “not following the Zarathushti religion,” indicating that 26% of the children of intermarriages are not following the Zarathushti religion.

**CONVERSIONS.** Seven US states (AZ, FL, IL, IN, NJ-Zapanj, OH, TX, with pop. 2893, representing 25% of the recorded US Zarathushti population) reported a total of 15 Zarathushtis converted to other religions, mostly to Bahai’ism and Christianity; and 2 spouses of Zarathushtis converted to Zoroastrianism. No data was reported about other conversions to Zoroastrianism.

**IMMIGRATION.** California CZC and PZO (pop. 3585) reported approx. 1670 new immigrants, mostly from Iran, during the period between 2004 and 2012. Ten US states (CA-ZAC, CA-ZANC, FL, MO, NC, OK, OH, OR, PA-ZAPA, RI and TX, with pop. 4303, representing 30% of the estimated US Zarathushti population) reported 53 new immigrants. We can perhaps extrapolate this to a total of approximately 1870 (1670 in CZC and PZO, and 200 in the rest of USA) rounded to 2000, immigrants to USA. There were also a few reports of persons moving back to India.

**NEW BIRTHS.** Ten US states (CA-ZAC, CA-ZANC, FL, MO, NC, OK, OH, OR, PA-ZAPA, RI and TX, with pop. 4303, representing 30% of the estimated US Zarathushti population) reported 213 births. Perhaps we can extrapolate this to 712 (rounded to 750) new births in all of USA between 2004 and 2012.

### **DEMOGRAPHICS SUMMARY FOR NORTH AMERICA (CANADA and USA)**

Total recorded population of North America was 14,499 in 2004 and 16,759 in 2012

Total estimated population of North America was 16,769 in 2004 and 20,847 in 2012

This represents 18.7% of the estimated world population of 111,691 Zs

Growth in recorded population between 2004 and 2012 = 2260 Zs or 15.6%

Growth in estimated population between 2004 and 2012 = 4078 Zs or 24.3%

Total estimated immigration to North America (2004-2012) = 2500 Zs (in round numbers)

Total estimated new births in North America (2004-2012) = 950 Zs (in round numbers)

The five largest states by Zarathushti population, in North America, with their percentage growth are shown below:

California	5505	+101.7%
Ontario	4179	-2.8%
NY,NJ,CT	2964	+22.8%
Br. Columbia	1675	+40.9%
Texas	1327	+23.9%

### **REFERENCES**

[1] Roshan Rivetna, *The Zarathushti World – a Demographic Picture*, FEZANA Journal, Winter 2004.

Roshan Rivetna’s photo and bio are on page 35.



**Zenobia Damania** ([damaniaz@yahoo.com](mailto:damaniaz@yahoo.com)) is the FEZANA administrator at the FEZANA Office in Chicago and produces the monthly FEZANA Bulletin. She is an active member of the Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Chicago, where she conducts children’s Religious Education classes. Zenobia was the cover designer for FEZANA Journal (1992 – 2005) and helped with design and layout of brochures for numerous FEZANA and ZAC-Chicago events. She has a BS in Landscape Architecture from Purdue University and has worked as Production Designer/Editor at Alphagraphics, Bedford/St. Martins book publishers and Editorial Humor magazine.

# SOUTH AND CENTRAL AMERICA

*Roshan Rivetna*

## Glimpses of the handful of Zarathushtis settled in the countries of South and Central America

One can estimate no more than 10 Zarathushtis settled in the countries of South America, and possibly another 10 in Mexico, Central America and the Islands – Bahamas, Cuba, Bermuda, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Jamaica or Virgin Islands, though there may be more on periodic business and professional assignments. The few known families that we know about in these countries are listed below.

**BRAZIL.** Heera Daver ([heeradaver@gmail.com](mailto:heeradaver@gmail.com)) writes:



“My husband Erach Pestonji Daver (who passed away in 2006) and myself have lived in Sao Paulo, Brazil since 1959. Erach, an electro-mechanical engineer came originally to work with Kaizer-Frazer. He then invented a special type of construction using plastic bottles within concrete walls

which is very economical and strong. Later, we bred



rabbits on a large scale at our farm 80 km from Sao Paulo. Now, I have been teaching English to Brazilians and Portuguese to foreigners for the last 45 years.

“We do not know of any other Zarathushtis in South or Central America.”

**DOMINICAN REPUBLIC.** Mr. Dariush Dario Bahrami ([Dario.bahrami@gmail.com](mailto:Dario.bahrami@gmail.com)) of Oslo, Sweden, writes: “My brother Bahman Bahrami, 55 years old, lives in Dominican Republic.”

**GUYANA.** Zavera Kanga ([zjkanga@aol.com](mailto:zjkanga@aol.com)) of Lexington, KY, writes: “Our son Hormazd Kanga, and his wife Saneeya have been posted to Georgetown, Guyana, South America for a couple of years.”



**MEXICO.** Nazneen Spliedt ([nazneen\\_spliedt@yahoo.com](mailto:nazneen_spliedt@yahoo.com)) informs us: “Kaizad Dalal lives outside Mexico City, with his wife Angelica Flores and 2 children. He moved there from the San Francisco Bay area, to work for Schenker.”

**VENEZUELA.** Zareen Bodhanwala Photo left ([zareen.bodhanwala@gmail.com](mailto:zareen.bodhanwala@gmail.com)) writes:

“My husband Jimmy and I live in Caracas, Venezuela for the last 25-30 years and our two children grew up here. Jimmy is a petroleum engineer and has his own business.

“When we first moved here and found out that we were the first and only Zarathushtis ever to move to this side of the world, I felt like Christopher Columbus having discovered America!”

# DIASPORA IN AUSTRALIA

**Arnavaz Chubb**

“Every generation wonders and worries if successive generations will fly the flag, keep the torch burning, procreate or perish.”

**POPULATION** The recorded and estimated population numbers and the percentage growth for each State are shown in the table below.



State	Pop. recorded 2004	Pop. estimated 2004	Pop. recorded 2012	Pop. estimated 2012	Children, 18 and under	Senior, 65 and over	SOURCES AND COMMENTS
NSW (Sydney)	1356	1850	1330	1530	80	530	<b>2004:</b> <i>Fariborz Jamshidi</i> ( <a href="mailto:fariborz@jamshidi.net">fariborz@jamshidi.net</a> ) President, AZA and <i>Sam Kerr</i> ( <a href="mailto:smcn534@bigpond.com">smcn534@bigpond.com</a> ). 85% are Parsis and 15% Iranians. Majority in Sydney. <b>2012:</b> Fariborz Jamshidi.
			-1.9%	-17.3%	6.0%	39.8%	Percentages for NSW
Victoria (Melbourne)	400	420	489	516	82	33	<b>2004:</b> <i>Arnavaz Chubb</i> ( <a href="mailto:arnavazchubb@yahoo.com.au">arnavazchubb@yahoo.com.au</a> ) former President, ZAV. 66% Parsis and 34% Iranians. Majority in Melbourne. <b>2012:</b> Arnavaz Chubb.
			22.3%	22.9%	16.8%	6.7%	Percentages for Victoria
Western Australia (Perth)	175	200	252	277	n/a	n/a	<b>2004:</b> <i>Farida Madon</i> ( <a href="mailto:Madon@perth.oilfield.sib.com">Madon@perth.oilfield.sib.com</a> ). 75% Parsis and 25% Iranian. Majority in Perth, 5 in Kalgoorlie, 7 in Mandurah and 4 in Karatha. <b>2012:</b> Arnavaz Chubb, per 2006 census.
			44.0%	38.5%	n/a	n/a	Percentages for Western Australia
South Australia (Adelaide)	78	78	74	80	n/a	n/a	<b>2004:</b> <i>Keki Mehta</i> ( <a href="mailto:keki_mehta@hotmail.com">keki_mehta@hotmail.com</a> ). All are Parsis. <b>2012:</b> Arnavaz Chubb, per 2006 census.
			-5.1%	2.6%	n/a	n/a	Percentages for South Australia
Queensland (Brisbane)	45	50	111	121	17	9	<b>2004:</b> <i>Roshani Khodaiji</i> . Most are between 40-65 years, very few children under 10 years. Majority in Brisbane. <b>2012:</b> Roshani Khodaiji and <i>A. Kekobad</i> .
			146.7%	142.0%	6.0%	8.1%	Percentages for Queensland
ACT	-	-	29	32			<b>2004:</b> <i>Sam Kerr</i> . Families of ACT (Australian Capital Territory, capital Canberra) are included with AZA (NSW). <b>2012:</b> <i>Arnavaz Chubb</i> , per 2006 census.
NT	-	-	8	9			<b>2004:</b> <i>Sam Kerr</i> . NT (Northern Territory) families move on after a short stay. <b>2012:</b> <i>Arnavaz Chubb</i> , per 2006 census.

Tasmania	3	3	11	12			<b>2004: Sam Kerr.</b> Possibly only one family, in Hobart, Tasmania. <b>2012: Arnavaz Chubb,</b> per 2006 census.
Total Australia	<b>2057</b>	<b>2601</b>	<b>2304</b>	<b>2577</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>572</b>	<b>Totals for Australia</b>
			<b>12.0%</b>	<b>-0.9%</b>	<b>9.3%</b>	<b>29.6%</b>	<b>Percentages for Australia</b>

During the period 2004 – 2012, the recorded population of Australia has grown by 247 Zarathushtis i.e. 12.0%, and the estimated population has declined by 24 Zarathushtis, i.e. – 0.9% . This drop might be an aberration caused by the fact that in 2004, NSW (Sydney) had estimated almost 500 more than the recorded number, whereas in 2012, NSW has estimated only 200 more than the recorded number.

### INTERMARRIAGES

In Australia, there were 144 (i.e. 7.0%) non-Zarathushti spouses in the Zarathushti population in 2004 and 93 (i.e. 4.0%) in 2012.

**AGE DISTRIBUTION.** In 2012 there were 9.3% children, 18 and under. This was weighted heavily by NSW (Sydney) reporting a very low percentage (6%) of children.

In 2012 there were 29.6% seniors, 65 and over. This again, was weighted heavily by NSW (Sydney) reporting an exceptionally high percentage (39.8%) of seniors.

**MALE-FEMALE DISTRIBUTION.** In 2012, there were 1159 (i.e. 50.3%) males and 1145 (i.e. 49.7%) females.

**PARSI-IRANIAN DISTRIBUTION.** In 2012 there were 71.1% Parsis and 28.9% Iranians.

That the Zarathushti population of Australia has such a high percentage of seniors and low percentage of children, came as a startling revelation to me. These percentages surpass even those of India where these trends have been observed over a long period of time. I suppose I could be excused for being surprised as I live in Melbourne and it was the telling figures from Sydney that tipped the scales for Australia.

Sydney boasts the largest Zarathushti population in Australia, followed by the other capital cities - Melbourne, Perth, Brisbane and Adelaide. The first Zarathushti migrants to Australia settled in the Sydney area, but subsequent migrants were encouraged to settle in other parts of the country, which may explain why the population in the Sydney area is ageing as compared to the rest of Australia.

Of the eight States and Territories in Australia, current population estimations were only received from three States – New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria. Gleaning and recording actual demographical data has for the most part been based on estimation and calculated guess work. Even so, these startling initial statistics are something for Australian Zarathushtis to investigate further.

While the overall population of Zarathushtis has increased in Australia, it would appear this is mainly due to migration rather than birth. Are we staring down the barrel of gerontocracy, where elders rule and younger people submit? It is well known that older generations have different priorities to the younger. Will youth be counted and have a say in community affairs and policy planning for the foreseeable future, or will they be outvoted by their elders?

Most young adults appreciate an acknowledgement of their skills and are happy to participate and use their talents for the benefit of the Zarathushti community. Generally, young Zarathushtis are well assimilated within the multicultural population of Australia, but they have, to a large extent, maintained their identity and remain proud of their Zarathushti heritage.

Every preceding generation wonders and worries if successive generations will fly the flag, keep the torch burning, procreate or perish. The future holds many twists and turns that we cannot foresee, but for now, each generation needs to acquit itself without unduly fretting over those who will follow. The vision we uphold belongs to Zarathushtra, the translation of it into reality is a job for each and every one of us, in the here and now.



**Arnavaz Chubb** (*arnavazchubb@yahoo.com.au*) is the current Vice President of the Zoroastrian Association of Victoria, 2012-2013. She has been actively involved in community activities, serving on the Managing Committee of the ZAV in various capacities over the years.



**Kersi Parekh [left]**  
([president@aza-committee.org.au](mailto:president@aza-committee.org.au)) President of the Zoroastrian Association of Australia informs “The Australian Zoroastrian Association’s Darbe Meher [photo left]

known as AZA House, is located in Annangrove, a small semi rural suburb 55km from Sydney city center. This 5-acre property was purchased in 1985. AZA was established in 1971. The current Darbe Meher building was built and completed in 1994. In January 2013 a new kitchen block was inaugurated, from funds provided by the Ostowari family. At our AZA house the monthly activities are usually held on Sundays; Sunday School, full day Seniors gathering with breakfast and lunch

and the monthly working bee. We organise some of the festivities at AZA and at times also hire a hall. Besides, the sporting tournaments, trivia nights and sleep over parties are also organised. Community members also hire the AZA hall for Navjotes or birthday parties.”



## GROWTH in NEW ZEALAND

**Tehmus Mistry**

Zarathushtis in New Zealand have among the highest percentage of children, the lowest percentage of seniors, and the highest growth percentage from Zarathushti communities in other countries!

**POPULATION** The table below shows the estimated demographics data for Zarathushtis in New Zealand. The population of New Zealand has increased rapidly from 17 in 1986 to an estimated 1231 in 2012. Since a similar FEZANA study done in 2004, the recorded population in New Zealand has grown by an estimated 391 Zarathushtis, i.e. 46.5%, and the estimated population has grown by 331 Zarathushtis,

i.e. 36.8%. 90% of the population lives in Auckland. The data provided in this article is an estimate, awaiting the 2013 New Zealand census results, expected later in 2013.

	2004		2012			
	Pop. Recorded	Pop. Estimated	Pop Recorded	Pop. Estimated	Children, 18 & under	Seniors, 65 & over
<b>Number of Zarathushtis</b>	840	900	1231	1231	300	40
<b>Percentages</b>			46.5%	36.8%	24.4%	3.2%

**INTERMARRIAGES.** In New Zealand, there were 25 (i.e. 3.0%) non-Zarathushti spouses in the recorded Zarathushti population in 2004 and 32 (i.e. 2.6%) in 2012.

**AGE DISTRIBUTION.** In New Zealand in 2012, there were 300 (i.e. 24.4%) children, 18 and under; and 40 (i.e. 3.2%) seniors, 65 and over. Zarathushtis in New Zealand, thus, have among the highest percentage of children and the lowest percentage of seniors, from Zarathushti communities in any other country!

**MALE-FEMALE DISTRIBUTION.** In New Zealand, there are 601 (i.e. 48.8%) males and 630 (i.e. 51.2%) females in 2012.

**PARSI-IRANIAN DISTRIBUTION.** In 2004, 98% of the population was Parsi-Irani from India and 2% were Iranians from Iran. Data was not available for 2012.

New Zealand's Zoroastrian population has been growing steadily over the years, with the majority of migrants coming from India. Many of these Zarathushti immigrants are young families or young couples looking to start a new life in New Zealand. Often people do not find jobs in their chosen field and have to accept any job to help them make ends meet. Those who are lucky to find jobs in their chosen field of expertise have to start in a junior position because they lack "New Zealand experience". However, with hard work and moving up the ranks, most of the Zarathushti migrants are well settled in a few years, with many choosing to buy a house and raise families.



Young Zarathushtis reflecting the generation brought up in New Zealand.

Since many of the Zoroastrian migrants came as young families or couples, several have had children in New Zealand. This has meant there is a growing community of New Zealand-born Zarathushtis. Like their parents, these young New Zealand Zarathushtis have good values, do well in school and will grow up to be successful and contribute to New Zealand society and its future prosperity.

Some of the migrants also brought their parents across to settle in New Zealand. Some of these seniors who are under 60 manage to get jobs while others over 60 lead a semi-retired life. For the growing number of seniors, the Zarathushtian Association of New Zealand has started regular get-togethers.

With the growing population, arose the need to have a place of worship and a community meeting place.

The Zoroastrian Community Trust was formed with the sole purpose to collect funds and establish a place of worship and community center. This vision will take a few years to achieve as the migrant community is young, and even though it is over a thousand strong, is not financially very well off.

The community has blended well into New Zealand's culture. Zarathushtis are actively contributing to New Zealand's growth and prosperity and are making their mark in their adopted country. With the younger Zarathushtis also gaining academic and sporting achievements, the future of the Zarathushti community in New Zealand looks bright and prosperous.

**Tehmus Mistry** (*tehmus@gmail.com*) has been living in Auckland, New Zealand since 1990 and was one of the founding members of the Zarathushtian Association of New Zealand and the Zoroastrian Community Trust of New Zealand. He is married and has two sons.



# ADDRESSING DEMOGRAPHICS CONCERNS IN NORTH AMERICA

Roshan Rivetna

In response to a letter sent out to a cross-section of elder community leaders as well as young men and women of the 'next generation,' requesting their thoughts on addressing demographic concerns in North America, an over-whelming number (over 80) of responses were received. Every respondent had taken the time and trouble from their busy lives, to give thought to these matters, and send in their suggestions – each one well-thought out, articulate, beautifully expressed– a most valuable compilation for securing the future of Zarathushtis on this continent.

Alas! Space limitations preclude us from publishing them in this print version of the Journal. However, as they say “Out of adversity, comes opportunity,” so, we take this opportunity to introduce a new 'online' addendum to the Journal.

**A compilation of all submitted articles is available for viewing (and will be archived) alongside this Fall 2013 issue of the Journal, at [www.fezana.org](http://www.fezana.org).** The wealth of ideas and suggestions therein will serve as a valuable base for discussion and action by our leadership. Here we only give the request letter identifying the broad concerns, and a brief glimpse of the responses.

## Request letter identifying the broad concerns

“... While the FEZANA study showed an impressive 24.3% growth in population in North America in less than a decade, there are some disturbing indications of subtle future decline due to assimilation, that we can expect to be exacerbated in succeeding generations, unless we take pro-active measures now:

- Upward trend in intermarriages over the last two decades (from 24% in 1991 to 60% in 2011).
- Over 25% of the children of intermarriages are not following the Zarathushti religion.
- Gradual assimilation exacerbated by our small numbers, dispersed population, conversions, disinterest, disenchantment, disengagement, apathy .....

“Please give these matters some thought, and come up with one or two specific actions that you think are most important for us to take in North America -- in our homes, in our Associations or by FEZANA -- to address these concerns, so that we can sustain and grow the impressive increase in our population numbers (quantity), whilst also meeting our vision of “a caring, compassionate, harmonious, altruistic, observant, esteemed and prosperous community, with respect for all, committed to moving Ahura Mazda’s Creation forward towards Frashokereti. (Quality).”

## A glimpse of the responses

Responses spanned the whole ideological spectrum from: “The recipe of success has already been developed by our forefathers. Simply follow the traditional tenets of the religion” (**Faridun Dadachanji**) to “We should encourage and welcome conversions into our faith aggressively all over the world” (**Sohrab Salamatipour**). And then there were those who felt: “The challenge is to rekindle the light in our hearts and let that light shine the way” (**Zubin Tantra**).

If I may venture to summarize, I would say some of the broad themes that emerged were as shown below.

**IT ALL STARTS AT HOME.** “Inculcate a love for the religion in our children at the family level.” – **Jal Birdy**

“Religious education begins at home – dinner time prayers as a family, visiting India/Iran and taking the children to agiaries and atash Behrams there, following the traditions as we lived them ...” – **Bucky Amaria**

“In our homes, diligently follow customs, traditions and a Zarathushti way of life ... help your children develop a cultural identity.” – **Aspi Engineer**

“What is taught and modeled at home is more important than any institutionalized program.” – **Aban Rustomji**

“Make a Zarathushti home a priority ... In a multicultural society, parents hold a supersized responsibility to ensure that Zarathushti values, history and heritage are passed on.” – **Farishta Dinshaw**

“Children are reflections of their parents. If the parents have the interest and passion in furthering their knowledge about our religion, then the same will be mirrored in their children.” – **Mehernosh Gundevia**

“I was lucky to be raised in a strong Zarathushti home where I saw religion practiced daily by my parents. It was never a choice, but rather a way of life. Today I recognize the value of what I saw them practice, and now strongly believe our community’s survival in the diaspora, begins at home.” – **Urvaksh Patel**

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION FROM EARLY CHILDHOOD IS THE KEY.** “Religious education from early childhood can create powerful and lasting feelings in a person – of love, respect and pride for one’s religion.” – **Bakhtavar Desai**  
“We need to emulate other religions that provide opportunities to learn, internalize and participate in the religion. Our religious leaders should create sermons, and services for mass worship for the community.” – **Sarosh Collector**

“My concept of education implies comprehension of the basic principles, reflection on them, and sharing personal

experiences on how they shape our lives.” – **Keki Dadachanji**

“The root of most of our problems is the apathy of all Zarathushtis about our religion, and not taking time to learn more about it and inculcating it into their children’s daily lives.” – **Er. Soli Dastur**

“I teach Sunday School in Atlanta, and I try to teach the children about our faith and engage them in discussion, so they may one day find that Zoroastrianism is the best religion for them.” – **Farzin Avari**

“One way in which our religion is beautiful is that it offers unending occasion for the study of the same. Throughout life, one can always learn more of the good religion.” – **Natalie and Rusi Gandhi**

“Create age-specific Religious Education curricula with one goal: to instill pride in being Zarathushti. Focus on things that foster interest and excitement. If we want to keep future generations in the fold, we must make the battle for the hearts and minds of young Zarathushtis a priority.” – **Shazneen Rabadi Gandhi**

“Build a core religious education program ... provide online materials for preparing children for their Navjote. We can use technology to enhance what we have kept so sacred for all these thousands of years.” – **Ferzin Patel**

“The best way to sustain and grow our community is to educate our children about its beautiful teachings and traditions, its rich history and the accomplishments of our revered members.” – **Zenobia Ravji**

“Zarathushtis have a rich and unique history. If we make faith education fun, we will encourage excitement amongst our children and ensure that they want to be a part of the story.” – **Fred Sarkari**

**MAINTAIN OUR CULTURAL TRADITIONS AND RELIGIOUS PRACTICES.** “Zoroastrianism cannot sustain itself as a living religion without ritual practices ... What makes us uniquely Parsis are those doctrines, ritual practices and traditions that differentiate us from other major religions. These are the core of our identity.” --**Sarosh Manekshaw**

“Consider a Cultural Road Show with prominent educators who can influence and articulate the importance of rituals and traditions to the first and second generation parents and their children.” – **Neville Bugli**

“The bedrock of Canadian immigration, the Multiculturalism Act encourages communities to celebrate their differences and maintain their heritage, language and intrinsic qualities, guiding us away from the ‘melting pot’ towards a multicultural mosaic – yet why have we so readily accepted the assimilation route?” – **Teenaz Javat**

“We need to revive those traditional values and customs that past generations took such pains to preserve--prayers, sudreh-kushti, learning about the religion and commitment to choose Zarathushti life-partners.” – **Pervez Patel**

“I want a world where the Zarathushti population grows

and the extinction elephant in the room is but a specter. Help me achieve it. Commit to a Zarathushti life and doing your kushti prayers regularly. Do your kids’ Navjotes no matter whom you choose to marry ...” – **Spenta Cama, in a letter to her children.**

“We should not forget what our ancestors went through to preserve our religion through the centuries. The ‘assimilation’ that we face in America, could easily wipe out everything they worked for.” – **Mehernosh Gundevia**

“Praying together as a family can be very meaningful and intimate, especially when everyone participates.” – **Shenaya Tarapore and Pirzad Motafram**

**ENCOURAGE MARRIAGES WITHIN THE FAITH AND LARGER FAMILIES.** “FEZANA has worked tirelessly to encourage Zarathushtis to be involved in countless ways – congresses, UN work, ZYNA, YLEP, Sports .... I truly believe that if our young people participate and volunteer, each individual will meet their partner within the faith.” – **Kayras Irani**

“Matchmaking should not be a dirty concept. It has worked for millennia in India.” – **Gev Nentim**

“Take our responsibility to teach our children to be good Zarathushtis, and if necessary adopt children to ensure that our legacy continues.” – **Rustom Kevala**

“Tap into the youth’s passion for social media – Facebook, Twitter -- for sharing experiences, concerns, thoughts, ambitions and goals ... Host webinars where young Zarathushtis can develop lasting relationships.”- **Zeeba Kayani**

“For the first time in history, women have choices to postpone motherhood with the help of modern science. The community may consider providing resources, counseling and financial help for freezing and harvesting of fertile eggs, and also assist infertile couples with in-vitro fertilization programs.” – **Homi Gandhi**

**INSPIRE AND ENGAGE THE NEXT GENERATION AND THOSE ON THE FRINGES.** “Engagement and involvement of the youth is key to community continuity and to the nurturing and reinforcing of identity” – **Daraius Bharucha.**

“Our focus should be on **encouraging, not enforcing** our children to consider marrying within the fold...teach and help them to focus on **being** the right person instead of spending time on **finding** the right person” --**Meher Amalsad**

“Inspire, not direct our children to want to live their lives as Zarathushtis and with Zarathushtis ... they need to truly feel that belonging to this community is meaningful and precious to them and their future.” – **Zareen Karani Araoz**

“Focus on networking and socializing within the younger generation ... create interactive networks, organize trips, quarterly 3-day mini congresses ...” – **Sarvar DeMehri**

“We are not alone in our struggles with assimilation -- follow the Jewish example and embrace more welcoming

viewpoints, targeting three population groups – the youth, young professionals and newlyweds.” – **Nikan Khatibi**

“We need to have our children involved with other young Zarathushtis at a young age – at family gatherings, religious classes and Association events, so they form enduring friendships.” – **Parmis Khatibi**

“Develop programs like volunteer projects, networking, mentoring ...where youth can get to know one another at a deeper level, and establish relationships through their interests, wants and needs.” – **Behrose Taraporewalla**

“All it needs is to patiently persist and ask them to get involved. You will see wonderful long-term results as they become integral part of the community and take on roles of responsibility and leadership.” – **Arzan Wadia**

“One of the strongest ways to address issues of apathy and disengagement is to empower our local Associations. The Boston organization, ZAGBA, took me under its wing during my tenure as a graduate student, engaged me with organizing social and educational events, and brought me closer to the Zarathushti faith.” – **Daryush Mehta**

“The best way to get those on the fringes to participate and be active in the community, is to welcome them, get them involved, and ask them to volunteer their services in the area of their expertise.” – **Dinaz Weber**

**PROVIDE SPIRITUAL UPLIFTMENT.** “Let us build Atash Kadehs in every community, so our children will find spiritual peace and enlightenment when they come to our darbe mehrs.” - **Kobad Zarolia**

“Expansion of the para-mobed program should be elevated to top priority. We need good religious teachers and priests – be they male or female, born in priestly class or not -- to inspire our community.” – **Framroze Patel**

“Enhance our Prayer Halls to provide that feeling of peace, spiritual upliftment and connection with Ahura Mazda, that would inspire people to come.” – **Cyrus Rivetna**

“Invite motivational speakers - mobeds and scholars with passion and soul, to ‘move’ the audience spiritually, to provide renewed faith in the religion and loyalty among its followers.” – **Sarosh Sepai**

**CELEBRATE THE TOGETHERNESS - Iranian and Parsi Zarathushtis.** FEZANA must help bridge the undercurrent of schisms and divisions that exist in North American Zarathushti life. We must embrace our diversity, celebrate our assimilation, and strengthen our inter-connectedness.” – **Jim Engineer**

“My Zarathushti Association (in Kansas) thrives in spite of small numbers, and is as cohesive as it gets ... They do not draw lines between the Iranians and Parsis... In other cities, there are lines drawn, and it truly saddens me, for we know that ‘Together we stand, divided we fall.’” – **Tanaz Ferzandi**

“Here we have Zarathushtis from Iran and India coming together with two different ethno-cultural backgrounds. By celebrating our differences, we have a chance to

emerge as a strong and healthy community.” - **Mahrukh Motafram.**

“Understanding and reversing the trend (diminishing population and economic difficulties) in Iran should be given the highest priority ... Facilitate a program for our youth to visit Iran and experience our magnificent culture and history. It would be tragic for them to only know this country from what they hear in the news.” – **Cyrus Aidun**

**REVIVE THE ENTREPRENEURIAL SPIRIT.** “Knowing the value our community has brought to humanity and the potential that it holds for the future, should give us the vigor and strength to turn the tide. Let us commit, not just to survive, but to grow and prosper - perhaps through an entrepreneurial renaissance.” – **Rohinton Rivetna**

**GET POLITICALLY ACTIVE.** “Getting into politics and government service can open many doors for our community. We can wield greater influence and identify opportunities for ourselves by building relationships with policy makers and by having Zarathushtis plugged into the local and federal governments.” – **Viraf Soroushian**

**ADAPT AND ADJUST.** “We are living in America. Our new generation is neither Indian nor Iranian, but American and Canadian. We face different challenges and our social issues have to be resolved here. We have to adjust our customs and traditions to make them more receptive to the young generation.” – **Daryoush Jahanian**

“I would like to reinvent our religion. Customs, traditions, rituals are necessary in all religions, and they change and adapt to different circumstances as time goes by ... We need to define the qualities of a good Zarathushti like respecting and enhancing human life and nature, charity, positive thinking ...” – **Hosi Mehta**

“The key is to leverage an evolving culture to grow our numbers, not stifle growth by rejecting the evolution of the culture ... Embrace the change and turn it into a positive element – rather than fighting it.” - **Perseus Kanga.**

“The link between race and religion (not originally the Prophet’s doing) is fast dwindling. We can learn to adapt to our new circumstances as long as we maintain adherence to our Prophet’s main tenets which are eternal and universal.” – **Dastur Kersey Antia.**

**ATTITUDES TOWARDS INTERMARRIAGES.**

“Intermarriages have been and will be the greatest factor for future downfall of our religion and community ... I sincerely appeal to my own priestly community to refrain from performing intermarriages and Navjotes of their children.” – **Pervez Patel**

“It must be emphatically reiterated – to erase the brainwashing of centuries – that interfaith couples are fully within their rights to bring up their children as Zarathushtis, if they both choose to do so.” – **Er. Jehan Bagli**

“Zarathushtra speaks of marriage in the Gathas, but he does not mention whose wedding ceremony can or cannot be performed. For me it is an honor to officiate and bless the couple – whether it be an intra or interfaith marriage ...

If asked, I will also perform Navjotes of their children, and of adopted children.” – **Er. Noshir Hormuzdiar**

“Local Mobeds and Associations should go out of their way to welcome and involve intermarried families into our community events, and give religious/cultural courses specially designed for them.” – **Nazneen Spliedt.**

“The acceptance issue, touched upon in my film “Being Zoroastrian” touched a nerve in many viewers. People feel these practices are outdated and have alienated many from earnestly practicing the faith. A common sentiment is that ‘Sadly, we have become our own worst enemy.’” – **Kainaz Amaria**

“Encourage and welcome spouses and children of mixed marriages into the community...happily welcome them into our Agiaries and Atash Behrams to experience the beauty of our prayers and rituals.” – **Zareen Hakim Austin**

“I am a child of an intermarried couple... If we continue to have our “mixed” kids sit outside on the steps of our fire temples, as only our grandparents go inside to pray, lest we “offend” a “real” Zarathushti, nothing will change ... and those “mixed” kids who carry the Zarathushti banner with pride in the beginning, will sour.” – **Anahita Dua**

“My husband and I are both part of tight knit religions – Zoroastrianism and Judaism ... Our children will be a part of both community centers, and learn the richness of both religions and cultures.” – **Nina Godiwalla**

“We need a paradigm shift so that interfaith marriages are viewed as an opportunity to share our faith and celebrate love. If they are welcomed, the likelihood increases that the family will remain in the fold.” --**Zenobia Homavazir**

“If we want to be caring and compassionate with

respect for all, then we should include children of all intermarriages. After all we are a religion that treats men and women with equality.” – **Zenobia Tantra**

**ACCEPT CONVERSIONS.** The scriptures do not say that those willing to embrace the religion through proper learning should be prevented [see *Vendidad and Vaetha Nask*] ... but we should first establish that they are motivated by purely religious convictions and not by any other worldly considerations.” – **Pallan Ichaporia**

“We have to come to terms with our outdated and irrelevant stance on conversion ... why do we still persist on excluding those who want to follow Zarathushtra’s teachings in seeking their enlightenment?” – **Rustom Ferzandi.**

“It is up to our leaders to be brave, not be influenced by systems and beliefs of their homelands and release the brakes. We can start by embracing the spouse and children of mixed marriages.” – **Fariborz Rahnmoon**

**CLOSING THOUGHT.** A lady who wishes to remain anonymous, sums up our fears about assimilation:

*“I’m the only mid- 40s ‘half Zarathushti’ that I know. My daughter and son are the only ‘quarter Parsis’ that I know. They are second generation American. They do not look Parsi or Indian at all, and neither do I. The odds that they will marry inside of the Zarathushti faith are slim to none. In two more generations, the Parsis will ALL be like us, at least in America!”*

**We hope the wealth of ideas and suggestions provided by our concerned and committed men and women above, will prompt some action by FEZANA leadership, so we can prove this lady wrong!**



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# GLEANINGS FROM SURVEYS OF INTRA- AND INTER-MARRIED ZARATHUSHTIS IN NORTH AMERICA

*Roshan Rivetna*

We share here some interesting thoughts and suggestions gleaned from responses to two separate surveys – one sent to inter-married couples, and another to young intra-married couples, in Canada and USA – to address concerns of subtle future decline due to gradual assimilation into the North American milieu. As this might be a sensitive issue for some, no names were asked for, and complete anonymity is maintained in the summary below. There is a wealth of information beyond what is briefly summarized below -- the full survey responses (again maintaining complete anonymity) offering a plethora of ideas and insights, will be analyzed and used as a base for future action by FEZANA.

## **SURVEY OF INTRA-MARRIED COUPLES**

***“How can we facilitate and inspire young Zarathushtis to marry within the faith and stay connected with the community?”***

The survey questionnaire was sent to about 100 young North American ‘intra-married’ couples whose names were suggested by Associations across USA and Canada. A compilation of the 45 responses received is given here. Numbers in parenthesis indicate the number of respondents that cited this item.

### **SUGGESTIONS TO FACILITATE INTRA-FAITH MARRIAGES**

1. North American youth get-togethers: Congresses, Youth Congresses, Youth camps, Z-trips, Young professionals gatherings ... (37)
2. “Introductions” by family and friends (26).
3. Parents to encourage marrying a Zarathushti from early childhood, and show the benefits thereof, for the couple as well as the community (25).
4. “Introductions” by match-makers (e.g. FEZANA Journal Matrimonial page ) (16)
5. Inculcate a sense of responsibility to marry a Zarathushti, and have lots of children, in order to perpetuate the religion (16).
6. Matrimonial websites (9). Suggestions included *shaadi.com*, and an online dating service at *fezana.org*.

### **SUGGESTIONS TO PROMOTE EARLY MARRIAGES AND LARGER FAMILIES**

1. Parents, friends and community to encourage early marriage and more children (18).
2. Grandparents to help with child-rearing for working couples (17).
3. Community funds to subsidize children’s education (11).
4. Support group, counseling and medical help for couples with inability to have children (8).
5. Community funds to subsidize other necessities (6). Suggestions included housing, mortgage, day care.

### **OTHER IDEAS AND SUGGESTIONS**

1. Build apartment blocks in cities like Toronto where Zarathushtis could live together. I really liked the atmosphere of the ‘baugs’ in Mumbai.
2. Awareness programs about benefits of early marriage, pregnancy, baby care and raising a family, and that working professionals can also get married and have children.

Of all the respondents, 41 said they had resolved to find a Zarathushti partner and 11 were open to marrying a non-Zarathushti.

Responses on how they met are listed in priority order below:

1. **Introduction by family or friends (16).**
2. **A Congress or other FEZANA event (12).**
3. **Association Navroze function (3).**
4. **Online (3).**
5. **Introduction by matchmaker (2).**
6. **Shaadi.com, “destiny”, “at college in India” and “by coincidence” (1 each).**

All the suggestions appear quite do-able, and FEZANA and the Associations will do their part. But ultimately, the commitment has to come from the hearts and minds of each individual.

## **SURVEY OF INTER-MARRIED COUPLES**

***“How can we inspire and engage inter-married couples and their children to remain in the fold and connected with the community?”***

The survey questionnaire was sent to about 100 inter-married couples whose names were suggested by Associations across USA and Canada. A compilation of the 55 responses received is given here. Numbers in parenthesis indicate the number of respondents that cited this item.

**REASONS WHY PARTICIPATION IS NOT HIGHER ARE SUMMARIZED BELOW IN PRIORITY ORDER.**

1. Turned off by prejudices and doctrinal conflicts (21).
2. Too busy with work/school and other such activities. Community is not a priority (18).
3. Turned off by dissensions among elders (17).
4. There are very few or no Zarathushtis where we live, or at work, or at our children’s school (16).
5. We feel uncomfortable at community events (12). Reasons included: people sit in their own cliques; do not feel welcome; talk in Gujarati or Farsi; feel like a second class citizen; the spouse gets bored; major functions are often too expensive for a large family; distance is too far.
6. Time conflicts with children’s other activities -- baseball, soccer, scouting, etc. (9).
7. Mobeds do not provide ministerial services in times of need, as do priests of other faiths (7).
8. We feel more comfortable in non-Zarathushti spouse’s or other’s church/temple/mosque (7).
9. We do not have the need/interest, like the first generation did, to bond/connect as a community (6).
10. Prayer services do not provide spiritual upliftment and peace that we can find elsewhere (4).

**IDEAS AND SUGGESTIONS ON WHAT THE COMMUNITY/ASSOCIATION/FEZANA CAN DO TO HELP INTER-MARRIED FAMILIES (AND OTHERS) STAY CONNECTED WITH THE COMMUNITY** are summarized below in priority order.

1. Have simple books and websites introducing the religion to the non-Zarathushti spouse (27).
2. Have structured **online** religious education classes, navjote prayers, daily prayers (27).
3. Have an inter-married couples support group (22).
4. Strengthen the “Small Groups” network and make special efforts to reach out and keep families in out-lying areas informed and engaged (20).
5. Enhance the priesthood, so that besides performing rituals, our Mobeds also provide ministerial services to the congregation, and be learned teachers and inspirational speakers (18).
6. Organize local and regional youth get-togethers (camps, congresses, trips ....) (18).
7. Show the benefits of bonding/connecting as a community (17).
8. Make a special effort to welcome families at Association events (17).
9. Make a special effort to involve families and seek their assistance for community projects (e.g. organizing events, web maintenance, etc.) (14).
10. Dar-e-mehrs to provide more spiritual upliftment and peace (10).
11. Develop support structure for Zarathushti professionals and entrepreneurs (8).
12. Organize voluntary service projects to serve the local area (2).

**A** short demographic profile of the 55 respondents may be of interest.

To the question on whether they had done, or planned to do, their children’s Navjote, 26 replied “yes”, 15 replied “No” and 14 were either “Maybe” or no response. On the question on number of children, 9 had no children (at least not yet),

12 had one child, 25 had two children and 9 had three children.

There was an equal number of men with non-Zarathushti wives, as there were women with non-Zarathushti husbands. Among the non-Zarathushti wives there were 15 Christians, 3 Hindus, 1 Jewish and 9 unknown. Among the non-Zarathushti husbands, there were 11 Christians, 5 Hindus, 2 Sikhs, 2 Jewish and 2 Muslim, and 5 unknown.

**ONE COUPLE'S COMMITMENT.** While the suggestions above will guide our Associations and FEZANA on what they can do, one young couple wrote a heartwarming note on what they themselves have committed to do.

"We fully intend to raise our three children as Zarathushtis. I pray with them every night and they are fairly good with *Ashem Vohu*. We also drive to S. Florida at least for the Navroze and Pateti functions each year and usually squeeze in 1 or 2 more events. ***It's a 300-mile drive but we make the time.***

In the next two years we plan to take them to Mumbai, and do that regularly. This way they can learn more about their family, culture, background and religion. We plan to do their Navjotes in India or here in the US, and send them to Zarathushti activities and trips as soon as they are a little older. We have a great new Z-Club in S. Florida and soon we'll use these outings to help them build friendships like the ones my sister and I had with other Zarathushti kids while growing up in Michigan and South Florida

What would help us the most (as soon as they are a little older) is keeping the youth connections strong through FEZANA activities, especially youth and adult congresses. We would also like to emphasize and incorporate Persian Zarathushtis into their lives. I would also like to have a great library of Zarathushti books and materials to help teach my children. It's a challenge in N. Florida but we will make it work. It's very important to my wife and me to have them know and partake in the rich heritage of our religion!"

**This young man and his non-Zarathushti wife have said it all. What more can we say, except a big THANK YOU!**

## MIXED MARRIAGES & NAVJOTES NA MOBEDS COUNCIL STANCE

*Gev Karkaria and Kobad Zarolia*

A consensus on the performance of inter-marriages and Navjotes  
of their children continues to elude the North American Mobeds Council



*Attendees at the NAMC AGM 2013 in Montreal, standing from left, Ervads Tehemton Mirza, Cawas Desai, Jal Panthaky, Cyrus Mirza, Nozer Kotwal, Noshir Mirza, Pesi Vazifdar, Mehad Dastur and Soli Dastur. Seated, from left, Ervads Adi Unwalla, Kobad Zarolia, Ardaviraf Minocherhomji, Gev Karkaria and Khushroo Bharda.*

Since the formation of the North American Mobeds Council (NAMC), the subject of mixed marriages and Navjotes of their children, has been extensively discussed at various AGMs. Since the membership of NAMC is widely divided on this issue, the General Body of NAMC has not been able to reach any consensus on the performance of wedding ceremonies of mixed couples or the performance of the Navjote ceremony of children from mixed marriages.

At the NAMC AGM in April of 1982, one of the members tabled a resolution for the Council's consideration that:

***“The performance of Ashirvad for the marriage of a Zoroastrian and a non-Zoroastrian or the performance of Navjote ceremony of a child whose either parent is a non-Zoroastrian by a mobed is in no way against the tenets of the religion of Zarathushtra.”***

After a lengthy discussion by the members, representing both sides (for and against), there was no agreement and the member in question withdrew his resolution from being voted on.

A similar letter from a member was presented once again at the AGM in March 2002 requesting the general body to take a stand on both these issues. Once again, both sides debated the issue without any consensus. However the Council did pass a resolution on the issue of wedding ceremonies with 90% approval in the form of recommendation which is reproduced below:

***“NAMC recommends that the entire wedding ceremony (Ashirvad ceremony) be performed only when both partners are Zoroastrian. In the event that one party is a non-Zoroastrian, there will not be an Ashirvad ceremony, but the Mobed/Mobeds may perform only a blessing ceremony through recital of Tandarosti Prayers.”***

At the April 2010 AGM held in Chicago, the following resolution was tabled by a member, voted upon and unanimously passed:

***“NAMC would have no objection to any of its members performing the Navjote of children natural or adopted by heterosexual Zoroastrian couples or heterosexual couples of interfaith marriages where one spouse is a Zoroastrian.”***

In conclusion, because of the divisive nature of this issue and for the sake of maintaining unity and harmony amongst its members, NAMC has consistently reiterated that the performance of such ceremonies including the performance of Navjote of a non-Zoroastrian adopted child, would best be left to the individual conscience and responsibility of the Mobed.

At the 2013 NAMC AGM in Montreal, there was discussion on “Performance of Navjote ceremony under unusual situations and circumstances,” the following resolution was passed:

***“Any Zarathushti child (at least one parent Zarathushti) irrespective of any disability can have his or her Navjote performed.”***

This resolution addresses performance of Navjotes of children with varying degrees of physical and/or mental challenges.

**Ervad Gev Karkaria** [photo in group above, sitting second from right] ([Karkaria@videotron.ca](mailto:Karkaria@videotron.ca)) has served the community as a Mobed for the past 35 years, has been a member of NAMC since its inception, served as its Treasurer for 16 years, and is currently serving as Secretary. He is a Chartered Accountant, and has been actively involved with the Zoroastrian Association of Quebec ever since he came to Montreal, Canada in 1975, having served as its President and Treasurer.



**Ervad Kobad Zarolia** ([kobadzarolia@gmail.com](mailto:kobadzarolia@gmail.com)) was the founding President of NAMC and was re-elected as President in 2008 which position he currently holds. He has served on the Board of the Zoroastrian Society of Ontario (ZSO) as Executive Officer and President and is also the founding President of the Ontario Zoroastrian Community Foundation (OZCF) and one of four founding Directors of the World Zarathushti Chamber of Commerce (WZCC). In 1994 Kobad was awarded the Achievement Award on Canada's birthday from the province of Ontario.

# New Zealand Zarathushtis

## DETERMINED TO MARRY WITHIN THE FOLD

*Pervin Kersi Medhora, Auckland, New Zealand*

Now that I live in New Zealand I have had time to reflect from a distance on many of the Zarathushti traditions and rituals that my parents grew up with, e.g. like going to the fire temple during the holy Muktd, the celebration of Ava Yazad and Atash nu Parabs, the Ghambars and many others, some of which we need to be taught or are so intricate that we need to practice their performance.

The main reason for celebrating my daughter, Kashmira's, wedding in India was to fulfill her dream to have a traditional wedding. We literally scoured the internet for publications and books on Zarathushti weddings in an effort to understand the unique concepts of celebration, tradition and ritual prior to and on the day of the wedding. We complemented our research with invaluable support and advice from the elders of our family and friends.

It was a fairy tale wedding and Kashmira was overjoyed to include in her ceremony the traditions of *MadavSORO*, (tree planting ceremony) *Supra ni reet*, applying of haldi,(turmeric), the concept of *Divo Adarni*, the various sagans, (celebrations four days before the wedding), *nahan ritual*, (purification bath), *chalks*, (limestone designs on the floor) and the fun that her sister derived from demanding money after the *haath borvanu* (washing the hand of the groom) ceremony. Many of our family and friends were surprised that such a young couple would cherish these older traditions. They were even more surprised and delighted that we included the authentic *patra nu bhonu* (dinner on plantain leaves) and we, as a family, circled the Baug shaking hands with each and every individual present.

Kashmira's kiwi friends had specially travelled to India to join us at the wedding celebrations. They were the first ones to book their flights and even bought sarees to wear at the wedding. They embraced our customs, the different décor, food, colors and flowers that make up the traditional Zarathushti wedding. Kashmira has fully embraced the traditions of her heritage and has approached her married life with mind and heart at one with the understanding of traditions. I am confident that Kash will continue to uphold these ways and pass them on to her children when the time comes. The future is in capable hands.

Upon returning to New Zealand, I read an article on the young Australian Zarathushtis which emphasized their turning to traditional ways to celebrate love and marriage and how this might be one small step towards saving our dying religion. This inspired me to put together this article which focuses on the views expressed by newly wedded young Zarathushtis of New Zealand.

### **KASHMIRA AND MOHZAD DUBASH (Married in India February 2013)**

Kashmira and Mohzad embrace marriage as a *celebration of love*. They knew that marriage would be all



about growing up; developing emotionally and mentally together and standing by each other through thick and thin. Kashmira's inspiration came from her grandparents who were also young when they got married and even today at the age of 85 they are still in love. They inspired their granddaughter to observe, "marriage must be bliss".

For this young couple marriage is fun, even though they are two very different people, they respect and value each other. Marrying into the community made the new transition easy. (photo above)

### **MARZBINA and BAKHTYAAR IRANI (married in New Zealand) (photo below)**

For Marzbina and Bahktyaar; *marriage is a joyful union of husband and wife who learn to share happy and not so happy moments of their lives together and also to love and respect each other's families*. Marzbina doesn't want to see our community dying and advises youth *to marry within our community and increase the Zarathushti population*.

### **PERZEN AND RUSHAD PATEL (Married in India November 2012)**

*According to Perzen, marriage is a relationship that you work at. It is the opportunity to be with the person you love*



and support them through life's ups and downs so that you can face whatever life throws at you together.

Perzen's advice to the youth is *that you take the time to find a Parsi guy – hard as it may seem nowadays – being the same culture and having the same tradition is a huge benefit once married. (photo below)*

**DELZIN AND ZIRAK VAZIFDAR (Married in New Zealand), (photo bottom)**

Del and Zee believe that marriage is a beautiful union between two people, ordained by God, to



share the same values. Vowing to be each other's halves for the rest of their lives, always being faithful and always trying to improve one another, states Zee. Having a similar up-bringing and sharing similar values made the decision to tie the knot quite easy. The inspiration

for settling down came from the love and care they witnessed from their parents.

Zee advises young people to have patience in finding the right match within the community.

Today's youth are being exposed to a plethora of religious beliefs and traditions and parents do not have all the answers to the many challenges that their children face. Today's youth are interested in learning more and more about the practices and traditions of our Zarathushti faith. Living in NZ our youth are striving to preserve and understand our cultural identity against a backdrop of global diversity.

There is a growing awareness of tradition amongst the younger generation and there is a sudden influx of young Mobeds in NZ. This will be the subject of my next article.



**Pervin Medhora** migrated to New Zealand in 2001 and acquired a Postgraduate Diploma in Business Administration from the University of Auckland [UoA] and qualified herself as a registered Project Manager.

*Her vision is to help strengthen the spirit of oneness within the community, whilst preserving the identity of Zoroastrians within New Zealand and internationally. Her experience with her own daughters encourages her to pursue growth within the community and to nurture the participation of the youth members.*



# In The News



discover  
your  
past

*Ancient treasures in the  
Dasturji Meherjirana Library  
Navsari, Gujarat, India*



The Dasturji Meherjirana Library in Navsari is a treasure trove of Zoroastrian History. We are looking to create a global team to restore, preserve and protect our past.  
**Do you know of any: social media experts, fundraisers, & techies?**

*Not sure, but want to help out?*  
**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:**

*Mantreh Atashband - [mantreh.ataashband@gmail.com](mailto:mantreh.ataashband@gmail.com)  
Armaity Homavazir - [rmyt3993@gmail.com](mailto:rmyt3993@gmail.com)*

## WZO TRUST FUNDS SUMMER CAMP A MEDLEY OF KNOWLEDGE, DEVELOPING SKILLS, ADVENTURE, FUN & GAMES

By Simin Bharda

Member – WZO Trust Funds Navsari Local Committee.



Beginning the day with prayers



Aerobics Workout

# In The News

The annual summer camp sponsored by WZO Trust Funds has become an event keenly looked forward to by the youth of Navsari and nearby areas..

Exuberance and joy was writ large on the faces of 48 kids from Navsari, Billimora & Nashik assembled in the premises of Bai Dosibai Kotwal Parsi Boys Orphanage on May 1st for the third edition of the summer camp. The smiles did not leave their faces till the camp concluded on 5th May.

May 1st to 4th were packed with activities for the children. The days began with kusti and prayers at the Orphanage Dadgah followed by umpteen different activities. Aerobics, glass & pot painting, reading, gardening, games, and the much sought after 'adventure sport activities' such as wall, net & monkey climbing, river & commando fox crossing and so on. It was a treat to see some of the children visualising themselves as the local 007's.

May 5th , 2013 began the final day of the camp with



Pizza time at US Pizza parlour

great excitement for the outing to Ajmal Gadh hills in Vansda where our sacred Pak Iranshah was lodged for 14 years (1405 to 1418 CE). The children took great pride in climbing the hill up to the 'Memorial Column' commemorating the 15 year dwelling of Pak Iranshah. Kusti prayers and humbundagi were performed with fervour at the column. Children enjoyed the open spaces at the summit, the pollution free environment and the oneness with Mother Nature.

The village of Ghodmal at the base of Ajmal Gadh hills were also visited. Mr. Cyrus Kasad hosted them for some time. Thereafter the party moved on to Vaghabari village where the ever obliging Mrs. Sunno Godrej Kasad, a culinary queen in her own right prepared mouth watering Dhanshak cooked on wood fire that had the children and volunteers drooling. We thank them both.

Returning back to Navsari late in the evening, the camp concluded with new friendships having been forged, eyes moist, new skills learnt, horizons broadened.

Member of WZO Trust Funds Navsari Local Committee are very thankful to the Trustees of WZO Trust Funds for sponsoring the camp, the Trustees of Bai Dosibai Kotwal Parsi Boys Orphanage for allowing the use of their grounds free of charge for the duration of the camp, Paris Bakery of Mumbai for supplying free of charge a variety of their excellent biscuits, all our volunteers and supporters for their very hard work and without whose assistance and support it would not have been possible for the children to have such a fun time.



Being taught to be in sync with Mother Nature

The new website of  
World Zoroastrian Organization  
Trust/WZO Trust Funds/WZO Trust  
for Women and Children has been  
launched

Visit [www.wzotrust.org](http://www.wzotrust.org)  
and learn all about their social and  
welfare programs

e.mail [trustees@wzotrust.org](mailto:trustees@wzotrust.org)  
[dinshatamboly@gmail.com](mailto:dinshatamboly@gmail.com)

# In The News

## Dr. Murad Eruch Lala On Top Of The World At 29, 035 Ft.

Dr. Murad Eruch Lala, 49, accomplished his childhood dream when he summited the mighty Mount Everest on 19th May 2013 at 9.10 am. He is the first Zarathushti as well as the first Indian doctor to have achieved this feat.



Dr. Murad Eruch Lala is the youngest son of Air Vice Marshal (Retd) Eruch S. Lala and Mrs. Coomi Lala. His octogenarian parents who are residents of Secunderabad are themselves an epitome of courage and fortitude. Dr Murad has always been an avid sportsperson and achieved several laurels since his childhood: *the Duke of Edinburgh Gold, silver and bronze medals, the 'All Indian Air Wing NCC Best Cadet Award', the 'Prime Minister's Gold Medal', etc.*, and has represented India in Singapore in the N.C.C. Indian contingent. and holds a Private Pilot's License. But destiny had other plans for him and he went on to become a surgeon with a super specialization in Cancer Surgery. He has been working as a consulting cancer surgeon at the Hinduja Hospital in Mumbai for the last 13 years. He has a number of publications & presentations in various National and International Conferences and has won many awards & scholarships in his chosen field. He has done multiple fellowship programs in Germany, Amsterdam, US including Sloan-

Kettering Cancer Center.

Dr Lala is a keen mountaineer having completed his Triple Crown Expedition Training in Nepal which is compulsory for attempting to summit Mt Everest. In 2012 he scaled three peaks near Mt Everest, upto an altitude of 21, 000ft and was certified fit to ascend the world's tallest peak.

His wife, Dr. Mamatha Lala is a pediatrician working in several charitable hospitals and orphanages caring for HIV infected / affected children in and around Mumbai and is an adventure sports enthusiast herself. Apart from academic achievements, extreme adventure sports has been a passion for the Lala couple, who have undertaken several mountaineering expeditions, extreme adventure sports, sky diving, river rafting, car rallies, etc. Dr. Mamatha Lala was the Expedition Doctor for the Indian Scientific Expedition to Antarctica, which spent a grueling 6 months period in the icy continent with freezing temperatures of - 20 to 30 degrees. The husband wife team has also won a trophy in the Himalayan Car Rally, slated to be one of the toughest car rallies in the World. They are blessed with 2 lovely children - daughter Menaita Lala and son Minnat Lala, both of whom are pursuing academics and sports with equal passion and already have several trophies and medals to their credit.

**CONGRATULATIONS DR MURAD AND DR MAMATHA LALA**

# In The News

## Zubin Mehta

### RECIPIENT OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA TAGORE AWARD AND THE GERMAN ORDER OF MERIT

To commemorate the 150<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore, the Government of India instituted the Annual Tagore Award, which carries an amount of Rs One crore, a citation in a scroll, a plaque as well as an exquisite traditional handicraft or handloom item.

On July 10<sup>th</sup> 2013 Zubin Mehta, the well known conductor was the recipient of the 2013 Tagore Award in recognition of his outstanding contribution to cultural harmony. This was an unanimous decision of a four-member jury led by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, with Chief Justice of India, Justice Altamas Kabir, Leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha, Sushma Swaraj and Gopalkrishna Gandhi. The first Tagore Award was conferred on sitar maestro Pandit Ravi Shankar in 2012.

Zubin Mehta was also the recipient of the Commander's Cross of the German Order of Merit, the highest award bestowed by the German President.

On September 7<sup>th</sup>, Zubin Mehta conducted the "**Bayerische Staatsorchester**" which is the Bavarian State Orchestra, from Munich in the picturesque Shalimar Bagh on the banks of the Dal Lake in Kashmir.

Titled, "**Ehsaas-e-Kashmir**", the event was sponsored and organized by the German Embassy and 1,500 people were invited and attended. The Mughal garden in the valley underwent restoration work for the concert and despite fatwas being issued against public performances, the event took place without a hitch.

At a press conference held in Delhi German Ambassador Michael Steiner said, "This concert is for the people of Kashmir. Beethoven, Haydn and Tchaikovsky, played by a world acclaimed maestro and one of the best orchestras of the world in one of the most enchanting places in the world: this is a wonderful cultural tribute to Kashmir and its warm hearted and hospitable people."

After the concert, the members of the Orchestra met with students of the Faculty of Fine Arts in Srinagar. The last performance of Mr Mehta in India was in 2008 with the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra.

One more feather in Mr Mehta's illustrious career. **Congratulations, the world wide Zarathushti community is proud of you, Zubin Mehta.**

## YEZDI GODIWALLA AWARDED THE 2013 "W.P ROSEMAN EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING AWARD" AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-WHITTEWATER

"The W. P. Roseman Excellence in Teaching Award" is presented annually to a faculty member of the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, in recognition of outstanding teaching. The award was established in memory of W. P. Roseman, who directed the campus elementary school from 1919 to 1942. The recipient of this award is selected by a committee composed of faculty representative, student representative from each academic college, with an ex officio member chairing the committee. The selection is based on the professor's teaching policy, their individual accomplishments within and outside of the college, and the impact they have on their students,

### **The 2013 award was given to Prof Yezdi Godiwalla, Professor of Management**

University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, USA. He has been with the university for 36 years, serving on numerous faculty and administrative committees at the university, college and departmental levels, was chairperson of Management Dept, of the University Organizational Committee and the University Academic Development Committee, published numerous research and scholarly books, articles, papers, seminars, research projects, and consulting in the areas of: strategic management, international management, organizational theory, international expatriate training and development, ethics and social responsibility, management of technology, and marketing management.

Prof Godiwalla graduated from Ranchi University in 1966 with an Honors in English Literature, Economics and Psychology and in 1968 he obtained his MBA, Management, Marketing from Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad, and in 1977 his Ph.D in Management, Marketing, Sociology, from Oklahoma State University.

**CONGRATULATIONS PROF GODIWALLA. THE NORTH AMERICAN ZARATHUSHTI COMMUNITY IS PROUD OF YOU.**



# In The News

## ARMENE MODI, THE PRIDE OF PUNE



The **Pune Pride Awards** are given to honor and felicitate Pune citizens who have made the city proud in various walks of life.

BramhaCorp, a reputed group with businesses in real estate, hospitality and leisure initiated the award in 1992 to honor those who make exemplary contribution to their fields of work or for the betterment of society.

Every year, a list of Pune citizens are presented the award at a ceremony held as part of the anniversary celebrations of the Residency Club. On March 23, 2013, seven professionals and innovators from the city were presented the annual **Pune Pride Awards** at the Residency Club in a glittering ceremony with winners sharing their experiences.

Armene Modi , received the award for **EXCELLENCE IN SOCIAL WORK** . Her citation states :

*"Armene received the award in recognition of her altruistic contribution to the empowerment of rural women through **Ashta No Kai**, as its Indian Founder (for a Better Tomorrow). With simplicity to the core, exemplary enthusiasm and tireless dedication to serve the community in upgrading the economic and social development of rural women through literacy, health awareness and self development programs. Pune is proud of you." Zoroastrians are proud of you too.*

**Ashta No Kai** is solely dedicated towards empowerment of rural women (See FJ 2012, Vol 26 No 1). The NGO aims to better the lives of rural women by providing them education, vocational skills and resources required for economic independence and self-reliance.

Together with Armene, Dr. Ram Takawale, former Chancellor of Pune University received the award for Excellence in Academics along with five other eminent Pune citizens for excellence in sports, innovation, arts and culture. Earlier recipients of the Social Work award are Anna Hazare, Dr. Banoo Coyaji, Mohan Dharia, and Baba Adhav among others.

At the 16th North American Congress, Rye New York 2012, Armene Modi was a presenter on the "Combating Poverty in our Community Abroad" panel.

**Ashat No Kai** collaborated with the Center For International Understanding, University of North Carolina, in hosting 40 teachers in July 2013 who visited Pune to get insight into the Indian educational system. This program aims to expose the teachers to life in India by giving them a better understanding of its history and culture, so they can share the knowledge with their students.



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# In The News

## ORDER OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE (OBE) DORAB MISTRY

In her birthday announcements in June 2013, HRH Queen Elizabeth II named **Dorab Mistry** the officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (OBE), in recognition of his services to the Zoroastrian Community and to interfaith relations. Dorab was the 24<sup>th</sup> President of **Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe (ZTFE)**, current honorary treasurer and external relations interfaith officer. A qualified chartered accountant, Dorab is the Director of Godrej International Limited and Vice-president of Godrej in charge of vegetable oil buying and selling portfolio for the Far East.

## AWARDS IN NEW ZEALAND DARIUS MISTRY

**Darius Mistry** from Auckland, New Zealand was the recipient of two prestigious awards:

1. **Business Excellence in ICT Category** conferred on him by Deputy Prime Minister of New Zealand, Bill English
2. **Best Medium Sized Business Award** conferred on him by the Indian High Commission & CEO of UNITEC

Darius, a dedicated Zarathushti from New Zealand provides a motivational role model for the community. He has focused his life on serving the Zarathushti community and committed this dedication towards reaching out to the future generation. Currently he is the Trustee of the **Zarathushtrian Association of New Zealand**

## INTERFAITH AWARD DR HOMI DHALLA

In recognition of his contribution to the global interfaith movement, **Dr Homi Dhalla**

was given an award by the Government of Kazakhstan at an interfaith meeting in New Delhi, March 28, 2013. Dr Dhalla presented a paper **“Suggestions to revitalize the Council of Religious Leaders”**. Kazakhstan has been organizing conferences on global peace, human rights and inter-religious dialog to foster goodwill among nations.

## FUTURE ASTRONAUT FROM SINGAPORE – ARMAAN ADIL DHALLA

**Armaan Adil Dhalla** whose passion has always been Aeronautics won the best junior cadet award at the Space Camp organized by the **Space Academy of Singapore (SAS)** at the Science Centre where the instructors were former NASA rocket scientists/engineers. The junior event is a two day camp with a variety of activities, including building and testing flying objects, accessing live data from NASA weather satellites. The instructors observe the performance and leadership qualities of all cadets, before deciding on the best cadet. Armaan hopes to be an astronaut one day!

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**BOMBAY PARSI PUNCHAYET**

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**10<sup>th</sup>**  
WORLD ZOROASTRIAN CONGRESS

MUMBAI  
27th to 30th December 2013

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CHAIRMAN, SERUM INSTITUTE OF INDIA LTD.

## IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Change in Venue for the 10th World Zoroastrian Congress – From National Centre of Performing Arts (NCPA) to National Sports Club of India (NSCI)

We are pleased to inform you that the number of delegates who have registered till date has exceeded our initial expectations. Based on this, the Organising Committee has taken the decision to change the venue of the 10th World Zoroastrian Congress to the newly inaugurated National Sports Club of India (NSCI) near Haji Ali, Worli. The NSCI is a sprawling institution located in the heart of South Mumbai, with an impressive seating capacity of up to 5,000 guests.

At the NCPA, two large auditoriums—Jamshed Bhabha Theatre and Tata Theatre—had been booked. The seating arrangements were planned on a first come, first served basis, where 900 delegates would be seated at the main Jamshed Bhabha Theatre, and the rest of the delegates would view Congress proceedings and the entertainment programmes through video conferencing in the Tata Theatre. The Organising Committee wasn't very happy with this arrangement where delegates would be divided into two groups due to space constraints. Hence, the Organising Committee has decided to finalise NSCI ultimately.

Please make a note of this change and see you all at the Congress!

### Congress registrations fees now at extremely attractive rates!

With the availability of a larger venue, the Organising Committee is keen to nurture the anticipation and enthusiasm felt by our community members and encourage greater participation at the Congress. To this effect, the Organising Committee has decided to continue the earlier offer rate for registration for all who wish to apply now.

#### Attractive Offer Rate:

Indian Delegates: ₹ 8,000/- + ₹ 990/- service tax per delegate

Foreign Delegates: \$200 + \$25 service tax per delegate

This extension is also valid for the Youth Delegates to ensure more participation from persons under 25 years of age.

#### Attractive Offer Rate for Youth:

Indian Delegates: ₹ 5,000 + ₹ 618 service tax per delegate

Foreign Delegates: \$125 + \$16 service tax per delegate

We request those who wish to register to do so at the earliest.

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# THE EVERLASTING FLAME

## Zoroastrianism in History and Imagination

A visual narrative of one of the oldest world religions

11 October – 14 December 2013  
Brunei Gallery, SOAS, University of London

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Open: Tuesday – Saturday: 10:30 – 17:00  
Late night Thursday until 20:00  
Closed: Sundays, Mondays and Bank Holidays

### 11 October – 14 December 2013

One of the world's oldest religions, Zoroastrianism originated amongst Iranian tribes in Central Asia during the second millennium BCE and spread to Iran where it became the principal faith until the advent of Islam. Central to the religion is the belief in a sole creator god, Ahura Mazda, his emissary Zarathustra (Zoroaster) and the dichotomy between good and evil.

*The Everlasting Flame: Zoroastrianism in History and Imagination* is the first exhibition of its kind to provide a visual narrative of the history of Zoroastrianism, its rich cultural heritage and the influence it has had on the major world religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

The exhibition takes you on a journey from the earliest days of the religion to its emergence as the foremost religion of the Achaemenid, Parthian and Sasanian empires of imperial Iran.

A fascinating and diverse collection of artefacts, texts, paintings and textiles are displayed alongside spectacular installations that include a walk-in fire temple and a ten-metre glass etching based on the cast of the western staircase from the palace of Darius at Persepolis in the British Museum.

A two day conference, "**Looking Back: The Formation of Zoroastrian Identity Through Rediscovery of the Past**", organised by the Centre for Iranian Studies at SOAS will take place at the **Brunei Gallery Lecture Theatre** on the **11th and 12th October 2013**.

Overleaf photo: *Kirdir inscription at Naqsh-e Rostak*. Photograph – Khojeste Mistree  
L: Detail from the *Ambassadors painting*, south wall, Institute of Archaeology, Samarkand Photograph © MAFOUZ de Sogdiane  
R: *Ever depicting senmury and the Tree of Life*, The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg  
Photograph © The State Hermitage Museum/Vladimir Terebenin, Leonard, Kheifets, Yuri Molodkovets

# Youth Without Border

## Comforting Alone, Person to Person:

### *My Experience with a Surgical Mission to Chad, Africa*

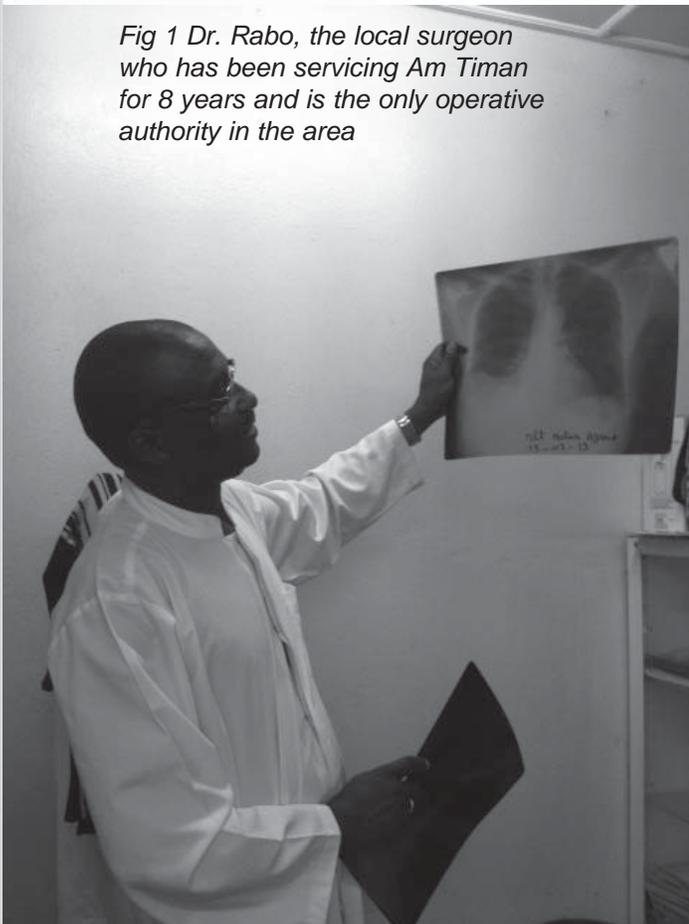
Forbes has deemed it the 11th most dangerous country in the world. The Global Risks Index 2010 put it in the “extreme risk” category right next to Afghanistan and Iraq. The Fund for Peace, an organization dedicated to preventing violence and achieving security, considers it a “failed state” and gave it the fourth highest score on the Failed State Index of 2012. But after volunteering as a surgeon in Chad this past month, I see this beautiful country as neither a failed state nor a dangerous place, rather an opportunity to extend a humanitarian helping hand to our brothers and sisters currently in their time of need.

**Chad** has been plagued by a humanitarian crisis for centuries. Africa has been ravaged by war and this particular landlocked country has been experiencing attacks, assaults and instability since the Egyptian pharaohs’ rule. Recent history has not been kind to the Chadian people either. In 1960, Chad obtained independence under the

leadership of François Tombalbaye. Resentment towards his policies in the Muslim north culminated in the eruption of a long-lasting civil war in 1965. In 1979, the rebels conquered the capital. However, the rebel commanders fought amongst themselves until **Hissène Habré** defeated his rivals. He was overthrown in 1990 by his general, **Idriss Déby**. Déby has remained in shaky power since 1990 crushing repeated attempts at expulsion by rebel groups approximately every two years. Since 2003, the Darfur crisis in Sudan has completely destabilized the nation of Chad as literally hundreds of thousands of Sudanese refugees escaped their home country’s violence and came to live in refugee camps on the eastern Chad border. It is here, in a rural African village called Am Timan, I was lucky enough to spend time working alongside one of the only other surgeons in the country, Dr. Rabo (figure 1), caring for local citizens, rebels and refugees. In 2006 Chad, a country three times the size of California with a 12 million population, had only 6 surgeons for the entire country. Today that number has barely grown given the fact that there is no surgical training program in the country. “Surgeons” in Chad are family practice or internal medicine physicians who do a 6-12 month shadowing experience under a general surgeon, primarily to learn how to perform obstetric emergency surgery. The local surgeon and I worked together in the Am Timan district hospital with one operating room performing primarily general surgery and trauma cases. A tattered list of the surgical procedures we performed and their prices, was stuck to the front door of the office (figure 2). Patients waited outside the clinic building in 109 degree Fahrenheit Chad, sun for hours waiting to see us. What always amazes me, no matter how many medical missions I have been blessed enough to go on, is how every patient is the same no matter the color of their skin, language, economic status or age. Patients come to you in their most vulnerable and raw human state. Emotions surround their visits and one does not even need to be fluent in the local language to communicate about a medical issue. Empathy and sympathy serve as the doctor’s tools and soon a diagnosis and management are conveyed to the patient resulting in that universally understood human symbol: a big, thankful smile.

My first patient in Chad was a middle aged man who came into the clinic and sat just adjacent to me pointing at his left armpit. I asked him to raise his arm and no sooner had he got it to 90 degree when a burst of foul smelling, yellow fluid mixed with blood jetted right onto my headscarf! He had a massive, ruptured abscess under his arm and

*Fig 1 Dr. Rabo, the local surgeon who has been servicing Am Timan for 8 years and is the only operative authority in the area*



# Youth Without Border

Fig 2 Tattered list of the surgical procedures we performed and their prices

MINISTÈRE DE LA SANTÉ PUBLIQUE  
DELEGATION SANITAIRE REGIONALE DU SALAMAT  
HÔPITAL DU DISTRICT SANITAIRE D'AM-TIMAN  
SERVICE DE LA CHIRURGIE

TARIFICATION DES ACTES CHIRURGICAUX	
<b>PETITE CHIRURGIE</b>	5000 F
INCISION D'ABCES-SUTURE-KYSTE- LIPOME-CIRCONCISION- EXTRACTION DENTAIRE-PONCTION DE LA VESSIE-CURETAGE UTERIN- DILATATION URETRALE-EXTRACTION CORPS ÉTRANGER	
<b>CHIRURGIE MOYENNE</b>	10 000 F
HEMORROÏDE-HERNIE-HYDROCELE- CYSTOCELE-FISTULE ANALE- FISSURE ANALE-PROLAPSUS ANAL- CALCUL VESICAL-CERCLAGE DU COL	
<b>GRANDE CHIRURGIE</b>	20 000 F
LAPAROTOMIE EXPLORATRICE- HYSTERECTOMIE-KYSTE OVARIEN- FISTULE VESICO -VAGINALE- PROSTATECTOMIE-AMPUTATION- BRIDE-NODULE THYROIDIEN	

NB : LES PATIENTS HOSPITALISES PAYERONT LES  
FRAIS D'HOSPITALISATION QUI MONTENT A 2000 F

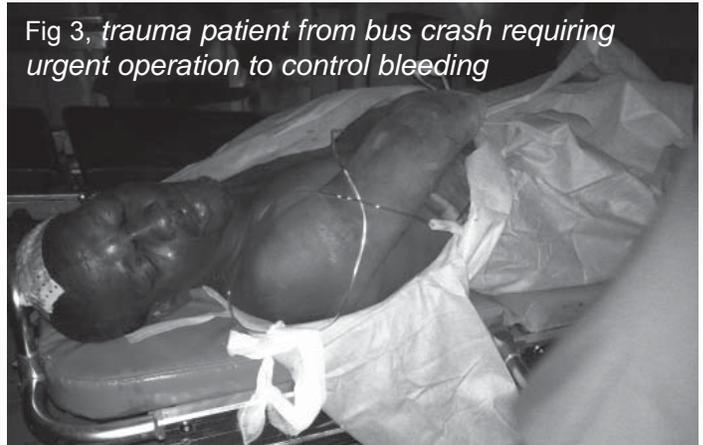
LE MEDECIN CHEF

in the USA that finding would likely be associated with a Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus aureas (MRSA) infection. But not in Chad. In Chad, the most common cause of this same pathology was most likely tuberculosis. We took him to the operating room and decided that we would be able to extract the large, necrotic mass from his armpit without anesthesia. The mass was deeply embedded into his armpit right down to the muscle and the entire procedure was plagued not only by the patient's agonal yelps but by the many flies that insisted upon landing all over us, the patient, and selectively within the surgical field itself, contaminating the whole procedure.

Another patient that really brought the plight of the Chadian people to light was a young woman who came in with a man old enough to be her grandfather who turned out to be her husband. He had multiple wives and was concerned because she, his latest, was unable to keep a child alive. When we asked what the problem was, she unwrapped her scarf and revealing gigantic breasts that literally were down to her navel. This medical condition gave her terrible back pain and also prevented her from breast feeding. She had a baby about 5 month ago and

the child had starved to death because she was unable to breast feed and the family could not afford to buy formula. The child undoubtedly became dehydrated and perished within a couple of weeks. She was now 3 months pregnant again and her husband wanted us to do something for her breasts. While it was possible to cut out excessive breast tissue, she would not be able to breast feed based on the procedure we outlined. The conventional way of reducing

Fig 3, trauma patient from bus crash requiring urgent operation to control bleeding



breast tissue was impossible to perform because it would require ventilation during anesthesia and since we did not have a consistent electricity supply at our hospital, putting patients on any machine, like a ventilator, that required electricity could be devastating if we lost power. Above all these experiences the most memorable one came on the last night I was in Chad.

A bus load of people were driving home in Am Timan, Chad when their vehicle crashed into a river embankment. Multiple casualties were dragged out of the bus, put into cars and rushed to the hospital. This mass casualty situation was one I had learned about from my experience as a resident, but never did I think I would actually see the day in a rural town in Africa with no resources. I relied wholly on my own knowledge and what my incredible trauma/acute care surgeons mentors have taught me throughout the years not only medically, but also in terms of how to handle a chaotic situation where you just want to run and hide. The book *“Top knife”* discusses how important control of the trauma team environment and situational awareness is in managing trauma patients and I saw this live in Chad. We were able to direct staff to maximize their usefulness, triage patients effectively, and ensure that the care provided was in keeping with up to date guidelines as best we could given our location. We stopped bleeding, cleaned out wounds, and adequately managed pain. The last patient was a man who sustained a head injury and

# Youth Without Border

Fig 4 Patient Ward at Am Timan General Hospital



required the operating room to control his bleeding (figure 3). While I was operating, the generator broke taking all electricity with it; thinking out of the box, I rounded up a bunch of people and finished the operation under the gentle yellow glow of 15 cell phones screen lights. As a result, in a place where mortality statistics from motor vehicle crashes are some of the highest in the world, we did not lose a single patient that night. Our patients were taken to the general ward to recuperate and the orthopedic patients with shattered arms and legs waited three full days for a vehicle to take them to a faraway hospital where some basic fixative orthopedic operations could be performed (figure 4).

Eleanor Roosevelt, United Nations Diplomat and former First Lady, said, ***“we gain strength, and courage, and confidence by each experience in which we really stop to look fear in the face... we must do that which we think we cannot.”*** Mother Theresa said ***“do not wait for leaders. Do it alone, person to person.”*** These two quotes really summarize what I took from my experience in Chad. The world has deemed it a dangerous place

and said just forget about it nothing can be done. I say something can be done. Something was done. And there are dedicated people within that country trying to make a difference person to person. The most important thing we can do here is not forget those that need our help and use our privilege to assist those less fortunate.



Anahita Dua, MD has completed her 2nd year as a general surgery resident and is currently working at the University of Texas-Houston on her post-doctoral trauma research fellowship. She is also in the process of finishing her Masters degree in trauma sciences. Anahita's primary interest is in vascular trauma care and she spends a substantial amount of time traveling abroad on medical

and surgical missions. Past experiences have included medical work in Haiti, Afghanistan, Palestine, India, Peru, and Democratic Republic of Congo. Anahita hopes to complete her medical training and go on to do fellowships in both vascular and trauma surgery with dedicated time spent in underserved nations each year. When she isn't traveling or working she loves to volunteer at a pit bull rescue shelter caring for abused and neglected dogs. She is a mommy to two beautiful pit bulls, Chloe and Ginger, and an old English Sheep dog named Tofu.

***Embrace the faith that every challenge surmounted by your energy; every problem solved by your wisdom, every soul stirred by your passion and every barrier to justice brought down by your determination will ennoble your life, inspire others, serve your country and explode outward the boundries of what is achievable on this earth***

***Madeleine Albright  
Former United States Secretary of State***

# Youth Without Border Equality and Respect

With Underprivileged Women and Children in India  
April to August 2012

My experiences with the underprivileged women and children of India began during my first trip in 2011 and resumed during the summer of 2012. As a student majoring in Women and Gender Studies at the University of Toronto, I knew the general situation. However, being there, working with some amazing NGOs, meeting devoted staffers and mentors, and, most importantly, the underprivileged women and children was priceless formative for me.

My first week was with **Vinimay Trust**, an NGO that provides rehabilitation services to underprivileged children living in child welfare institutions (CWIs) in the Mumbai area. During my 2012 trip, I spent the entire week with girls that came together at a **Vinimay Trust camp**. The camp's purpose is to provide a safe and productive environment

where girls from several CWIs can get together, meet other girls, and socialize. These camps provide a unique opportunity for the girls to experience new things and understand what life will be like after they leave their CWIs. Mostly, these girls just wanted someone to be there and listen. I felt like an older sister when they trusted me with their issues and confided their problems and expectations of life.

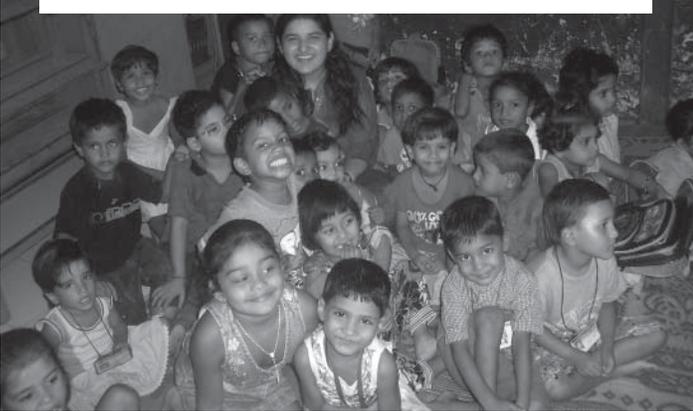
After Vinimay, I went to **Asha Sadan** (also in Mumbai). It is an organization run by the Maharashtra State Women's Council that fulfills the social and medical needs of underprivileged women and children. **Asha Sadan** is a home for orphaned children, six years and younger, where prospective parents from around the world can come and adopt a child. May is a vacation month for the children;

**Sujaya Foundation** : 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students  
with Tanya.



# Youth Without Border

**PremDan Garden School in the slums of Mumbai**



but, since they cannot leave the institution and experience the outside world, we had to find creative ways for these children to have fun inside the **Asha Sadan**. Their intense craving for a mother-figure is so great that they call their caregivers “mom.” **Aisha Sadan** is also a home for unwed, pregnant teenage mothers that come to the institution for prenatal, birthing, and postpartum care. It is the mother’s decision whether she keeps her child or places it for adoption.

Next, I visited eight villages in the state of Gujarat with **Dinshaw and Bachi Tamboly** from the World Zoroastrian Organization. During this visit, my long-held misconception that there are no poor or lower-class Parsis was dispelled. In Bartad, I met a Parsi man who worked with cattle during the day and went home at night to a hut that had no windows or doors. During the monsoonal season, he was unprotected from the rains. Every day he ate a meal of rice and dal that was cooked over an open fire. Then, in Vaghai, I was shocked to see two Parsi chai walas (tea vendors)—I never expected to see Parsis making tea for a living. These experiences really opened my mind. **Every Zarthushti youth should come and experience the reality of Parsis in these villages.**

Then, my journey led me to the **Sujaya Foundation**, in Mumbai, which is a school where underprivileged school age children are taught mathematics, science, English, and computers. I worked with two groups of fifth to eighth grade students and taught them basic conversational English phrases if they need to speak with someone who does not speak Hindi or Marathi

I returned to **PremDan Garden School** in Mumbai again in 2012. It is an institution, run by Catholic nuns, that provides a good educational foundation (and hope) to street children gathered from Mumbai’s slums. I taught them English words for colors, numbers, as well as the

alphabet and other basic words and phrases. I also went to a school located in the slums. Due to leakage from the roof and poor drainage, the school’s floors were flooded by monsoon rains, making the children and their teachers retreat to relatively dry “islands” within the classrooms. Nonetheless, the important part is that these children are receiving a basic education, regardless of the circumstances.

Returning to **Salaam Baalak Trust** this year I had a poignant rebonding with the kids and staff. The children remembered me and we became even closer because they trusted me and confided their problems to me. I worked with five girls that attended the English Medium School; I helped them with all the subjects where they needed tutoring. The school sponsors a motivational reward for all the children that scored 60% or higher in the preceding school year—this year, they watched the Bollywood movie *Rowdy Rathore*. (photo next page)

This year I raised C\$1,700 (INR 94,000) that I allocated to the NGOs with which I work. All went to the kids, nothing went to administrative costs! All was spent on books, raincoats, blackboards, food, clothing, and shoes that I purchased and distributed. Although money may not buy happiness, it does go a long way in bringing smiles to the faces of these underprivileged children.

**Home visit in the slum with Salaam Baalak Trust**



The four months passed so quickly and it was soon time for me to return home and start my third year at the University of Toronto. My work in India does not go toward any credits at the University; however, it has helped me to evolve and become more enlightened regarding my future goals and aspirations. My work is not done yet and I shall return with a bigger plan in the next few years to make a

# Youth Without Border



difference in the lives I have touched (and have touched me) over the years.

My work is a drop in the ocean of humanity, as we work towards resolving profound social issues. I would like to thank all the NGOs, street kids, women, and my family and friends in India and Canada for their support towards paving a path towards my career goals as I am majoring in Women and Gender Studies.

*Equality and Respect to all of humanity is key. We need to work towards one global goal to live in harmony no matter what.*

Vinimay Trust for Underprivileged Children & Youth:  
[www.vinimaytrust.org](http://www.vinimaytrust.org)

Maharashtra State Women's Council (Asha Sadan):  
<http://www.mswcindia.org/Index.aspx>

Sujaya Foundation: <http://www.sujayafoundation.org/index.html>

PremDan Garden School: <http://premdan.org/>

Salaam Baalak Trust: <http://www.salaambaalaktrust.com/>

*Tanya Bharda is a third year student at the University of Toronto majoring in : Women and Gender Studies.*

**TANYA EXEMPLIFIES THE SPIRIT OF YATHA AHUVARIYO IN ITS FULLEST**

## Zoroastrian Youth Without Borders

SEEKING POSITIVE CHANGE IN GLOBAL SOCIETY

Living in a place like North America our community's youth is privileged, in many ways, but that does not mean that there are no other issues around the world. We, as Zarathushtis are taught to think good thoughts, speak good words, and do good deeds. Helping out the underprivileged by doing good deeds is to not only be aware of the outside world, but at the same time to make a difference.

To promote humanitarian work, FEZANA (Federation of Zoroastrian Associations of North America) has an ongoing program known as Zoroastrian Youth without Borders (ZYWB). This program is a way for Zoroastrian youth of North America to get more involved in humanitarian issues and to make a difference in global society. Please read past issues of FEZANA Journal, where those who have been abroad have participated and shared

their experiences. As well as the one featured on pages 99-101 which highlights Anahita Dua's volunteer work as a ZYWB Fellow.

Through these humanitarian internships, ZYWB will subsidize a portion of the cost of the internship for Zoroastrian youth interested in helping those who cannot help themselves. From Health & Hygiene Issues to Support to Poverty Reduction & Hunger Relief, any humanitarian issue can be focused on. This can be done through a Nongovernmental Organizations (NGOs), or through a legal, medical, or social service settings.

If you are interested in making a change, please contact Behrose Taraporewalla at [behroset@gmail.com](mailto:behroset@gmail.com) or 626.378.5564. She would be happy to assist you in developing a project, or helping you through the application process. For more information about

ZYWB, kindly visit <http://zywb.weebly.com/>. An application can be found at: <http://zywb.weebly.com/application.html>. Your efforts to make a difference in the lives of underserved communities, has the ability to make a difference in global society—we are in the world, to change the world.

**Tanya Bharda** from Mississauga, Ontario, is pursuing an undergraduate degree in Social Sciences at the University of Toronto in Mississauga. In 2011, Tanya took a 4 month assignment to travel to India to work with various Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) and in 2012, she returned to India to continue her work in social service with various NGOs. In March 2012, Tanya participated on a panel for UN Women and shared her experiences in India at the United Nations Head Quarters in New York City

# Youth Without Border Zoroastrian Youth of New Zealand

**YOUTH CONGRESS DECEMBER 28, 2015- JANUARY 2, 2016**

The Zoroastrian Youth of New Zealand (ZYNZ), the youth branch of Zarathushtrian Association of New Zealand, were appointed to organise the monumental event attended by young Zoros from all over the world: The World Zoroastrian Youth Congress. The sixth one will be held in Auckland, New Zealand, 2015 and the preparations are well under way with spirits being higher than ever. The ZYNZ have been working immensely hard since March 2011 to raise funds and look for the perfect venue to host the congress. The dates have been set for December 28<sup>th</sup>, 2015 till January 2<sup>nd</sup> 2016, so mark your calendars boys and girls as this is one event you don't want to miss.

The ZYNZ have grown to be a tight knit team and as ambassadors of the Youth Congress, they feel it's imperative that their responsibilities as young Zoroastrians extend further than just organising the event. Zoroastrianism has been a model for philanthropy and as the saying goes, 'Charity begins at home', the ZYNZ have started giving back to the community they call home.

Below is an article giving a brief account about what the ZYNZ have been up to apart from organising the congress. We hope this ignites something in the reader's heart and inspires them to give back to their community, not just today but every day in one way or the other.

## THOUGHT FOR THE DAY -

The ZYNZ support 'JAMMIES IN JUNE AND JULY' to make a difference in their society.

*Fear less, hope more. Eat less, chew more.*

*Whine less, breathe more. Hate less, love more; and all good things are yours".*



Roxanne and Tinaz at their visit to Kids First Community health office.



Joanne with Tinaz and Roxanne accepting the pyjamas for 'Jammies in June'



'Thought of the day' on the walls of the Kidz First Community Health Off (3 August 2013)

The essence of these words is only truly understood by your heart, which never fails to inspire. In July 2013 the Zoroastrian Youth of New Zealand (ZYNZ), the youth branch of The Zarathushtrian Association of New Zealand (ZANZ), found their inspiration in the Kidz First and Middlemore Hospital's project '*Jammies in June*' which was further extended to July.

**Kidz First Children's Hospital & Community Health** is purpose built to provide *whanau* (family) focused medical, developmental, emotional and social care for Kiwi kids and their families, some of whom live in impoverished conditions. The Middlemore Foundation works to help charities like Kidz First to raise funds which go towards providing the best health support to young children and their families. Their project, 'Jammies in June', comprised of collecting warm flannelette pyjamas for children under the care of Kidz First aiming to reduce the high rates of preventable respiratory

# Youth Without Border

illnesses and readmissions to hospitals across New Zealand.

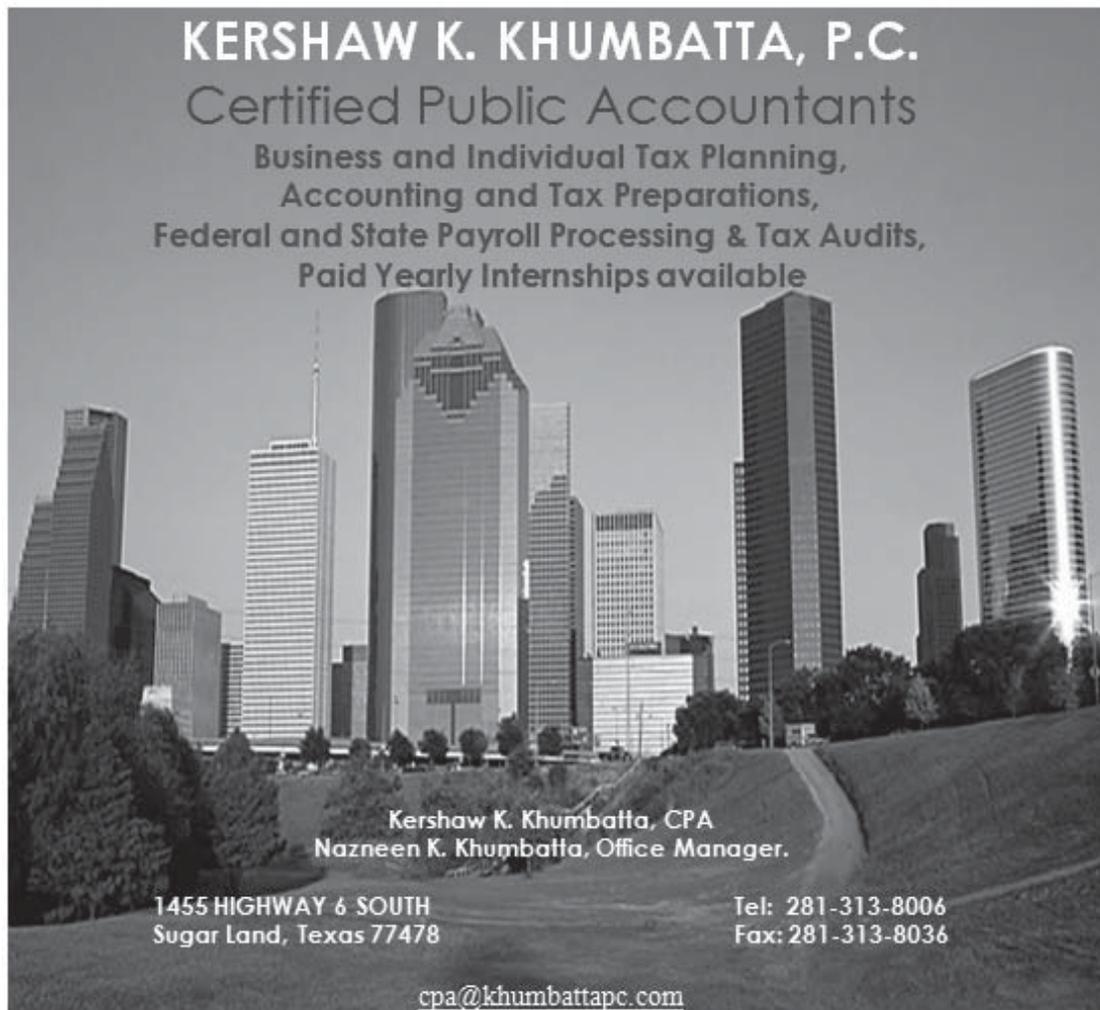
When the ZYNZ first heard about this project from a member of their community, **Mrs Shernaz S Petigara**, who is also the Admin Assistant at Kidz First Community Health, they embraced the opportunity and started campaigning during the month of July. They managed to raise fifty-three pyjama sets as donations, to add to the 5700 pyjamas Kidz First had received from various different entities over the two months.

On behalf of ZYNZ, **Tinaz Karbhari and Roxanne Medhora** met with **Joanne Hand**, Relations and Fundraising Officer from the Middlemore Foundation, at the Kidz First Community Health office to hand over the pyjamas. At the meeting Joanne shared that the PJs were going out faster than they were coming in, highlighting their immense need. She expressed the importance of the appeal, turning their attention to the 'thought of the day' displayed in the office. It's sombre to know that poverty still exists in our own backyard, but this only inspires and motivates the ZYNZ to help out more charities like Kidz First in the future. It reminds them to not fear and start hoping, start chewing, start breathing and start loving.

The ZYNZ would like to thank all their friends, families and colleagues who supported this project. A special thanks to **Ms. Nazneen Daruwalla**, a fashion student, who along with her supervisor hand-stitched five lovely pyjama sets to donate. The team would also like to thank **Mr. Dinsha Mistree**, who all the way from New Jersey, USA, took the time to buy pyjama sets online to be delivered to ZYNZ for this project.

ZYNZ congratulates the valiant efforts of people like Joanne, Shernaz and the staff of Middlemore Foundation and Kidz First who are working every day to make a difference in people's lives and inspiring others as they go along.

**The 6thWYZC Organising Committee.**



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# Personal Profiles

## *Khodamorad Kamran (1932 – 2013)* A Visionary and a Philanthropist

**EULOGY READ BY PARISSA FARAHI FAR, AT THE FUNERAL OF HER GRANDFATHER**

My grandfather was born to Mr. Mehraban Poortirandaz and Ms. Faranguis Kamran, in Rahatabad, Taft, Yazd, Iran on October 30, 1932, as the eldest of 4 children, followed by his sister, Dorokhshandeh Farahi-Far. His two younger brothers died at a very early age.

His mother's death in his childhood affected him greatly, he always remembered her with fondness and spoke often about her lovingly. At age 12, while still at school, my grandfather started working to help support his family in Yazd. At age 14 he started painting homes and quickly established a reputation for hard work and excellence. He then moved to Tehran where he contracted jobs with many prominent Zartoshti families and established a reputation for honesty and hard work. At the age of 21, he married his beloved wife, Ms. Banoo Zohrabian (photo right) and had three daughters, Faranguis, my mom, Mahdjabin, khaleh Madji and khaleh Shahin.

It is said you should love what you do, and my grandfather truly did. He observed and was fascinated by the home construction process, of architectural details and designs. In his late 20's he started borrowing money from benevolent Zartoshtis and formed partnerships with them to build houses. His love of the construction business and his desire to provide a comfortable living for his family kept him busy building new homes all over Tehran. His several commercial buildings include the **Tehran Clinic, Tehran Hospital, Ministry of Oil buildings, the Science Academy building, and many others.** Throughout his life, my grandfather was faithful to the Zarathushti principles of speaking the truth and helping the needy whenever he could. He formed a council to address and resolve concerns about the function of the local Dakhmeh in Yazd, ("tower of silence"), and he financed and built a cemetery in Yazd.

In 1979, he moved to France with his family to join his eldest daughter who was studying there. In the early 80s, the family moved to the United States and settled in the Washington DC area, as he always loved 4-seasons weather. In Washington he went back to work, language and unfamiliarity of a new country were no barriers to him. He soon established himself as a successful builder, but always stayed humble, helping those in need. In 2006, he purchased 101 parcels in the Parklawn Cemetery of Rockville which he donated to the Zarathushti community of Metropolitan Washington DC. In 2007, my grandfather started a dream, a dream which was so close to completion - the dream of having a Darbe Mehr for the Washington area Zarathushti community.

About a year before he died, Baba told me a story, a simple anecdote that left a profound mark on me. We were talking about jobs and his first job and how he got to where he is today. This is a story about what happened to him when he first started working. He was very young - maybe even younger than 15 had quit school to help the family

job of the whole house by himself. This was his first big job. He hired a few men to help him with the actual painting so the work could be done in time. He was very knowledgeable in how to paint walls, but he had never painted ceilings before! They painted the ceiling with a simple coat of paint. But it didn't look right. So he put on a second coat. And the paint started to fall off the ceiling. My grandfather started to worry the house would not be ready as the deadline was fast approaching. He thought "what am I going to do". He went to the store to buy different kinds of paint to try. And he asked the shopkeeper, "do you know why this is happening to my ceiling?" And the shopkeeper said, "**Nil laazem dari pesar, Nilll.**" ("you need paint thinner my boy, paint thinner is the key"). He bought the paint thinner and was able to finish the house, beautifully, ahead of schedule. After this he took on bigger jobs, building houses and high rises in Iran, until he became the well-known builder of today. The lesson is, at that moment someone else might have said...***I'm in over my head, I can't do this, it won't work, I should give up, I don't know how to do it, it can't be***



financially. But even without any formal education, he was always **very sharp.** He was employed as a painter, and soon he decided he could take the paint

**done.** But even at 15, my grandfather found a way to make it happen.

This little anecdote, made me realize 2 things. 1) it is OK to make mistakes. If

# Personal Profiles

your starting efforts are not perfect. you can always work to improve and build on what you have done so far. Little by little, you will get to where you need to go and you will accomplish what you need to accomplish until the job is done. **Be farsi be in migan poshtekar.**

And the second thing I realized was **"is ehtemaad be nafs"**. Believe in yourself that you can do anything. Maybe for now you may not have the right tools or the right knowledge to complete the task. But if you really want to, you will get the right tools, you will get education, you will ask around for help, people will be there to guide you, to help you or direct you to the right person who can tell you how. And you will get the job done.

And God knows he has done the job, for his family, for his friends, for his community, and even for perfect strangers. He was really about doing.

Thank you for being an example to me, to all of us. Maybe not always with your words, but with your actions, you taught us more than any words can say. Wherever you are, we all hope you are happy, and watching over us. Truth be told, we all wish we had just a little more time with you. We all wish you had a little more time with us, enough to see one of your last big dreams come true. But above all, we all hope you finally rest in peace.

## EULOGY TO MY FATHER, MY GUIDE, MY SUPPORTER AND MY HERO. SHAHIN KAMRAN

*Growing up in Iran, my dad always seemed so busy; he would leave the house very early in the morning and return home very late. He loved to work and loved his profession which was to build homes, high rises and developments. But he loved it because it symbolized progress, life improvement and participation in an active life. And he always encouraged his children, his relatives and other youth in the family to have the same attitude towards life. And although, while as a child, I didn't see him that often, I have striking memories of the kind of caring and brave person he was. And although he was a very strict and demanding boss, he cared about his employees that they were forever loyal to him. People loved him for his jokes, his smile and his positive attitude towards life.*

*After the Iranian Revolution of 1979, he had to leave all of his fortune in Iran and come make a living from scratch in the United States, He embraced life, and started the construction business with the same energy and enthusiasm that he always had. He was always busy working, and yet he cared so much to know how each one of his daughters, nieces, nephews, grandchildren, and relatives were doing. He always made suggestions for people to improve their life, their job or their way of living. Whenever he encountered people, he wanted to share with them whatever good he had just learned, whether it was the best way of making something, or the best deal in town, He would get so excited if people wanted to learn how to build a house and came to him for advice. He always wanted to share his knowledge with others.*

*My dad was not a very religious person but he lived his life abiding by the simple mottoes of the Zarathushti religion which is "good thoughts, good words, and good deeds". He insisted that it is one's duty to always speak the truth and help the needy. He always told us, "Telling the truth is your best armor against evil". He lived the life of a model Zarthushti and was a great example for our family. At the age of 76, he started devoting all of his time and most of his fortune to the construction of a Darbe Mehr for the Zarathushti community. so that our community can finally have a place to call their home for future celebrations and congregations*

*Although his time to pass came way too soon, and he never lived to see his Darbe Mehr opened, I hope he went with the satisfaction that his final good deed, his great deed, in this world was done. I am taking it upon myself and am urging the community to take it upon themselves to see the Darbe Mehr, which is only months away from completion, opened.*

**I pray to see that my father's dream which was for all of us to celebrate many happy moments at the Kamran Darbe Mehr come true.**

که در کار نیکش چنان قهرمان  
که مردی است دانا و روشن روان  
زنی خوب و فرمانبر و مهربان  
همه با سواد و همه پرهیز  
که باشند عمری خوش و بادوام  
که در آن نمودست سنگ تمام  
به زرتشتیان چون گل و گلشن است  
ز بهر تمامی زرتشتیان  
عروسی نمایند و وصلت کنند  
چو بلبل که آیند در بوستان  
خوش و خرم و شاد دلها شود  
که در نیک مردی نظیرش نبود

درد فراوان بر آن کامران  
یکی با جناقم بد او کامران  
بود همسرش بانوی بانوان  
سه فرزند دارند چو در و گهر  
همه شوی و فرزند و دنیا به کام  
ز بنیاد کامران بگویم کلام  
سرایبی که بینی چنین روشن است  
بنایی بنا کرده در آن مکان  
بیایند اینجا عبادت کنند  
یکایک بیایند از بوستان  
عروسی و جشنی که برپا شود  
خدایا بر آن روح پاکش درود

سروده اردشیر ماندگاری تفتی

## BIRTH

**Barjor Coachbuilder**, a boy, to Shaumika and Sarvin Coachbuilder, grandson to Deenaz and Pheroze Coachbuilder (Southern California) in Dallas, TX on November 12, 2012.

**Anushe Divecha**, a girl, to Shireen and Behram Divecha, granddaughter to Dinaz and Noshir Divecha and Vera and Adil Kaikobad, niece to Roohshan and Zarsheesh Divecha in Vancouver, BC on December 6, 2012.

**Firoze Canteenwalla**, a boy, to Ushta and Zubin Canteenwalla, brother to Neville, grandson to Bakhtawar and Marezban Canteenwalla, Kamal and Virasp Davar in New York on December 24, 2012.

**Anaya Ahunavar Chhapgar**, a girl, to Ahunavar Phiroze Chhapgar and Nitila Suresh Patel in Fremont, CA on January 17, 2013.

**John Cavas Roselli**, a boy, to John and Natasha (Kotwal) Roselli, brother to Julia, granddaughter to Jasmin and Maneck Kotwal, niece to Zarina in New York on January 23, 2013.

**Nathan Irani**, a boy, to Ingrid and Kaizad Irani, grandson to Veera and Darayus Irani, great grandson to Perin Irani, nephew to Yohan in Vancouver, BC on February 5, 2013.

**Saloni Sudhir Pargaonkar**, a girl, to Afreen and Sudhir Pargaonkar, granddaughter to Shaheen Rustom (Houston, TX), niece to Zeeba Kayani on February 6, 2013.

**Annika Rose Thakarar**, a girl, to Sam and Allyson Thakarar, sister to Eva, granddaughter to Gool and Ramesh Thakarar in New York on February 15, 2013.

**Zara**, a girl, to Zain Mavalwalla and Shiraz Italia, granddaughter to Homi and Koomi Italia and Darayus and Hufriez Mawalwalla in Richmond, BC on March 12, 2013.

**Shiraz, Nina, and Noah Mulla**, triplets, to Jasmine and Cambeez Mulla, grandchildren to Katy and Noshir Mulla and Dinaz and Phiroze Dotiwalla, great grandchildren to Silloo

Taraporewala in Toronto, ONT on March 9, 2013.

**Aleksandra Zarina Kim**, a girl, to Diane Udwadia-Kim and Mike Kim, granddaughter to Katy and Viraf Udwadia in New York on March 11, 2013.

**Kiyan Kaiser Cooper**, a boy to Ziba and Kaiser Cooper, grandson to Bakhtawar and Behram Irani and Jer Mody (all of Mumbai) in Denver, CO. on March 25, 2013.

*Photo below Kaizer Cooper holding Aria Victoria Irani on the right and Kiyan Cooper on the left, both born in Denver Co.*



**Landon Adil Kruse**, a boy, to Amy and Shaun Landon, grandson to Adil and Arnavaz Godiwalla (Houston, TX) on April 2, 2013.

**Arman Sidhwa**, a boy, to Burjis and Persis Sidhwa, grandson to Bomi and Bachi Damkewala (Naperville, IL) and Maneck and Pervin Sidhwa (Houston, TX), nephew to Diana (Roy) Gazdar and Zarine (Mehrab) Deboo, Xerxes Sidhwa, and cousin to Natasha, Kashmira, and Camran in Naperville, IL on April 3, 2013.

**Leila Rose Stapleton**, a girl, to Zia Karkaria and Conor Stapleton (Montreal, QUE), granddaughter to Shirine and Ervad Gev Karkaria (Montreal, QUE) and Dolores and late John Stapleton (Dublin, Ireland) in Seattle, WA on April 7, 2013.

**Nashwan Dastoor**, a boy, to Homyar and Jennifer Dastoor, grandson to Hoshang and Bapsy Vaid and Silloo and late Noshirwan Dastoor in Mountain View, CA on April 22, 2013.

**Aria Victoria Irani**, a girl, to Cyrus and Nikki Irani, granddaughter to Maharukh and Bejan Irani, niece to Khushnaaz (Zubin) Daruwala, cousin to Ava and Katy in Denver, CO on April 23, 2013.

**Sanaeya Kaela**, a girl, to Meher Dalal-Rossi and Marcelo Rossi, granddaughter to Freny and Hormuz Dalal in Mountain View, CA on April 27 2103.

**Naomi Zubin Bagwadia**, a girl to Kaynaz and Zubin Bagwadia, granddaughter to Cyrus and Vera Bagwadia (Mumbai) and Godrej and Feroza Mehta (New York) in Boston MA on April 27 th 2013.

**Nazneen Master**, a girl, to Mahazabeen and Aziz Master, granddaughter to Viloo and Viraf Darukhanawalla and Mani and Rusi Master (Mumbai), niece to Benaifer Darukhanawalla, Farina and Jehzeel Master in Chicago, IL on April 28, 2013.

**Cyrus Wageneck**, a boy, to Ayesha and Jason Wageneck, grandson to Vispi and Pervin Sagar (Houston, TX) and Bill and Suzanne Wageneck on April 30, 2013.

**Karl Dorabshaw**, a boy to Nazneen and Ferzad Dorabshaw, grandson to Firoze Dorabshaw and Yasmin and Kali Mistry (Mumbai), in Toronto, on May 14, 2013.

**Kaiyan Perry Unwalla**, a boy, to Perry and Sasha Unwalla, brother to Tatiana and Rainia, grandson to Darab and Nellie Unvala (Boca Raton, FL) in St. Augustine, FL on May 17, 2013.

**Arzan Cama**, a boy, to Farzana and Cyrus Cama, brother to Delara and Rayan, granddaughter to Mahruk and Rohinton Cama and Niloufer and Edul Daver in New Jersey on May 31, 2013.

**Kaizad Zubin Panthaki**, a boy, to Dimple and Ervad Zubin Jal Panthaki,

# MILESTONES

as of September 15, 2013



brother to Karl and Kayaan, grandson to Dr Nergish and Ervad Jal Panthaki and Hoofrish and Satish Hirji in Miami, FL on June 9, 2013 (Photo above).

**Jack Andrew Malcolm**, son to Sharmeen and Darran Malcolm, brother to Isabella (Ella), grandson to Parveen and Farhad Khursigara, of Mississauga, and great grandson to Goolu Mistry, in Toronto, on June 11, 2013.

**Asha Rusi Gandhi**, a girl, to Natalie and Rusi Gandhi, granddaughter to Yasmin and Hormaz Vania, niece to Homi Gandhi and Mani Rao, in New Jersey on June 12, 2013.

*(Photo below, Asha with her parents)*



**Kyrin Harris**, a boy to Tristin and Zachary Harris, grandson to Mahnaz and Dr. Yazdi S. Turner and Lynn and Leon Harris in Montreal, on June 21st, 2013.

**Ryan Fitter**, a boy, to Percy and Sanobar Marker, grandson to late Dara and Pervin Fitter, Eddie and Phirozie Marker in Seattle, WA on June 22, 2013.

**Ella May Cooper**, a girl to Xerxes and Karen Cooper, granddaughter to Kersi and Aniheeta Cooper of Toronto, and John and Mary Tu of Niagara

Falls, Ontario, in White Plains, New York, on June 24, 2013.

**Kiyan Dabestani**, a boy to Ardeshir Dabestani and Arshin Mehraein, grandson of Alayar & Guity Dabestani, and Mehraban & Parvin Mehraein, in San Diego, on July 1, 2013.

**Ava Ardeni**, a girl, to Zubin Irani and Thrity Kasad in Kirkland, WA on July 12, 2013.

**Ariana Damania Bhatnagar**, a girl, to Tarana Damania and Saurabh Bhatnagar, sister to Izelle in San Diego, CA on July 17, 2013.

**Ethan Eric Elavia**, a boy to Zinnia and Eric Elavia, brother to Serena, grandson to Sheroo and Parvez Madon (Montreal) and Arnavaz and Dara Elavia, in Chicago, on August 16, 2013. (Photo below).



## NAVJOTES

**Arshan Sorab Daver** son of Sorab and Huzan Daver of Sydney, Brother of Sherzan, grandson of Minu and Roshan Daver of Mumbai, in Vancouver, on January 7, 2013

**ZARA GREEN**, daughter of Rashne and Garrett Green and grand daughter of Pervin and Adi Davar, all of Falls Church, Virginia The initiation done in the Davar home by Mobed Jimmy Antia of Chicago, in Virginia, March 30, 2013.

**Asha Ilaria**, daughter of Dilnavaz and Nenshad Bardoliwalla, granddaughter of Hutoxi and Dinshaw Bardoliwalla in Munroe, NJ on April 21, 2013.

**Carl and Natasha Patel**, children of Dianne and Burzin Patel (Foster City, CA) in Burlingame, CA on May 12, 2013.

**Farah, Rayan and Mila**, children of Cyrus and Shilpa Madon, grandchildren of Shavak and Freny Madon, in Burlington, Ontario on May 17, 2013.

**Cyrus Dadina**, son of Navaz and Rohinton Dadina, brother of Shirin in New York on June 23, 2013.

**Nergis Davar**, daughter of Urmez and Rovena Davar (New York), sister of Jamshed on June 29, 2013.

**Saena Sarkari**, daughter of Hutoxi and Marazban Sarkari (New Jersey) in Mumbai, India on July 6, 2013.

**Karl Forbes**, son of Kainaz and Barzeen Forbes in Brampton, Ontario on July 6, 2013.

**Zara and Cyrus Kanga** children of Jasmine & Darius Kanga grandchildren of Minoo & Dougdo Kanga and Aban & Eruch Mistry in Toronto on July 27, 2013.

## WEDDINGS

**Rokhsar Panthaky**, daughter of Cavas and Silloo Panthaky (Vancouver, BC) to **Mehernosh Kekobad**, son of Viraf and Aban Kekobad in Mumbai, India on April 5, 2013.

**Aban Jasoomani**, daughter of Armine and Aspi Jasoomani to **Sammy Shaker**, in Mississauga, on May 4, 2013.

**Tina Mehta** (Houston, TX), daughter of Kamal and late Kersi Mehta (Willoughby Hills, OH) to **Burzeen Karanjawala** (Houston, TX), son of Eruch and Lily Karanjawala (Santa Maria, CA) in Cleveland, OH on May 11, 2013.

**Nazneen Bahrassa**, daughter of Feraydoon Bahrassa and Persis Shroff (Little Rock, AK) in Woodside, to **Zal Billimoria**, son of Yaz and Firoza Billimoria (San Diego, CA) on May 18, 2013.

**Neville Clubwala**, son of Behroze and Astad Clubwala to **Raquel de Castro Erwin** in Millstone Township, NJ on May 25, 2013.

**Dr. Zain Yazdi Turner**, son of Mahnaz & Dr. Yazdi S. Turner [Montreal] to **Karina Khushro Tarapore**, daughter of Gulshan and

# M I L E S T O N E S

as of September 15, 2013

Khushro N. Tarapore [Toronto] in Toronto on May 25th. 2013.

**Rodabe Amaria**, daughter of Bucky and Navroze Amaria (Colorado) to **Marzban Palsetia**, son of Daulat and Rusi Palsetia (Mumbai) in Denver, Colorado on May 27, 2013, (Photo below)



**Anahita Bhatena** daughter of Sheroo and Minoos Bhatena (Toronto) to **Joe Grandis** son of Linda and late Randy Grandis (Iowa) in Toronto, on June 8, 2013. (photo below)



**Neville Dastoor**, son of Tehmi and Firdaus Dastoor (Houston, TX) to **Sukanya Subramanian**, daughter of Ananthi and Sethu Subramanian

(Wake Forest, NC) in New York, NY on June 15, 2013.

**Mehraan Pavri** son of Shirin and Farokh Pavri to **Freny Jehangir**, daughter of Pervin and Late Rohinton Jehangir, in Caledon, Ontario, on June 28, 2013.

**Natalia Kola** daughter of Ruhangeez & Meheraban Kola and **Cyrus Irani**, son of Shahin & Khushru Irani in North Vancouver, BC, on June 28, 2013.

**Kairus Rudina**, son of Khurshid and Jehangir Rudina to **Charlene Charles**, daughter of Sherri and Rick Charles in Minneapolis, MN on July 6, 2013.

**Roshni Kasad**, daughter of Persis and Adi Kasad to **Ajith Mascarenhas**, son of Benedicta Moras and Anthony Mascarenhas in San Francisco, CA on July 6, 2013.

**Parmis Behmardi**, daughter of Iraj & Fereshteh Behmardi to **Arman Sarfehnia** son of Mehran & Homa Sarfehnia, in Burnaby, BC, on July 13, 2013.

**Manek Mavalvalla**, son of Hufritz & Darayus Mavalvalla to **Fiona Rodrigues**, daughter of Carmen & Joaquim Rodrigues, in Vancouver, BC, on July 27, 2013.

**Yazdi Balsara**, son of Pesi & Viloo Balsara to **Shamirah Alia Khan**, daughter of Farzanah and Feroz Khan, in Richmond, BC, on August 30, 2013.

**Sharon Amrolia**, daughter of the late Faredoon Amrolia & Piroj Amrolia, to **Desmond Fyffe** son of the late Oscar & Mary Fyffe, in Vancouver, BC, August 24, 2013.

**Felice Doctor**, daughter of Eric & Prochi Doctor, to **Cyrus Mizan** son of Dinaz & Behramsha Mizan in Pitt Meadows, BC, on August 24, 2013.

## DEATHS

**Nargesh Mehernosh Dastur**, wife of late Mehernosh Barjorji Dastur, mother of Banoo (Adil) Makoojina (Houston, TX) and Barjor (Khurshed) Dastur, grandmother of Rustom, Mahtab and Darius in Mumbai, India on December 26, 2012.

**Gool Kapadia**, 95, mother of Zarin Dexler and Pervin Kapadia (Malcolm) Edmonds, grandmother of Rona Dexler in Southern California on December 28, 2012.

**Dhunjisha Surti**, 85, husband of late Piroja, father of Nilufer, (British Columbia) brother of Nergesh Surti (San Diego, Ca) and Dadi Surti (Karachi, Pakistan) in Toronto, ONT on January 8, 2013.

**Shahriar Dini**, 87, husband of Eshrat Sepanta, father of Mehrtaj, Bahram, and Manochehr (Vancouver, BC) on January 18, 2013.

**Pesi Dumasia**, 84, father of Freddy, Marzban and Sanobar (Sunny) Dumasia (Northern California), grandfather of Joshua, Sherry, Mehrab and Rayan in Pune, India on January 20, 2013.

**Vispi Kabraji**, husband of Tehmi Kabraji, father of Navroze (Faranak) Kabraji, grandfather of Kaizaad Kabraji in Mississauga, ONT on January 23, 2013.

**Piloo Randeria**, wife of Godrej Randeria (Houston, TX) on January 26, 2013.

**Khorshed (Kay) Nargolwalla**, wife of Feroze Nargolwalla (ONT), mother of Pervez Jamula, Tanya Nargolwalla and Charis Wania on January 29, 2013.

**Dolly Kerawalla**, wife of late Homi Kerawalla, mother of Murzi and Navaz (Southern California), grandmother of Shirin, Cyrus, Darius, Daniel and Jasmine on January 31, 2013.

**Thrity Firoz Master**, wife of Firoz Master, mother of Pearly, Lillian, and (late) Rayomand in San Mateo, CA on February 6, 2013.

**Banoo Farrokh Irani**, mother of Thirty (Kersi) Engineer (Houston, TX), grandmother of Zubin, Zaran and Zarius, aunt of Mahnaz Firozgary (Houston, TX) in Pune, India, on February 20, 2013.

**Soli Bamji**, 93, father of Cyrus Bamji (Fremont, CA), grandfather of Dinaz in Mumbai, India on February 28, 2013.

**Dolat Merwan Bamji**, 83, mother of Edul (Tehnaz) Bamji, grandmother of Zarina and Spenta in New Jersey on March 4, 2013.

**Maneck Pochara**, 95, husband of Jer, father of Peri, Bomi, Billy, Hormuzd, grandfather of Shania, Nozer, Cyrus, Persis, Diana and Neville in New York on March 14, 2013.

**Hoshang Khambatta**, 90, husband of Pilloo Khambatta, father of Kayomarz (Goolcher) Khambatta, grandfather to Poruz and Karl in New Jersey on March 19, 2013.

**Najoo Eduljee Merchant**, mother of Meher (Jehangir) Irani and Freddy, grandmother of Saleena and Anushka in Toronto, ONT on March 21, 2013.

**Homai Mehrwanji Shroff**, mother of Diniar and Meher Shroff, sister of Baktawar Marfatia and Fareedoon Darabshah Golwala (Brampton, ONT) on March 26, 2013.

**Mehru Tavariva**, 68, wife of Shashi, mother of Ashdin (Senaeya) Tavariva in Richmond, BC on April 2, 2013.

**Mehelli (Mehewan) Mehta**, husband of late Roshan Mehta, father of Soli (Dolly) Mehta, Katy Mehta and Meher (Rony) Langdana in Canada on April 11, 2013.

**Villoo Kharas**, mother of Zenobia (Shahrukh) Lala, Farmington Hills MI, and Dilnavaz (Rusi) Lord, on April 13, 2013.

**Rusi Cooper**, 90, brother of Farrokh (Katy) Cooper (Fair Oaks, CA) in Sacramento, CA on April 17, 2013.

**Meher Panthaki**, 52, wife of Keki Panthaky, mother of Rohan and Jehan in Burnaby, BC on April 24, 2013.

**Tehmi Pardiwalla**, sister of Soli (Perin), Godrej, (late) Katy, aunt of Zenobia (Harry), Shehnaz (Joe), and Tanaz, in Toronto, on April 27, 2013.

**Keki Bhote**, husband of Mehroo Bhote, father of Safeena, Shenaya, Adi (Marcy), Xerxes (Amy), grandfather of Spencer, Olivia, Annabella, Garrisson, Lilly, Emma, and Evie in Chicago, IL on May 7, 2013.

**Nari Pavri**, 95, father of Nagia Bamji, grandfather of Dinaz Bamji (Northern CA) in Mumbai, India on May 10, 2013.

**Nariman Unvala**, husband of late Dhun Unvala, brother of Darab (Nellie) Unvala (Boca Raton, FL) in Boca Raton, FL on May 11, 2013.

**Silloo Farock Batliwala**, mother of Kashmira and Hutoxi Batliwala, grandmother of Cyrus, Persis, and Alexis on May 20, 2013.

**Hutokshi Sohrab Gimi**, mother of Khursheed (Rayomand) Ichhaporia (Chicago, IL) and Barjor Gimi in Mumbai, India on May 21, 2013.

**Nargis Surveyor**, 76, wife of Aspi Surveyor, mother of Gulnar (Shahrukh) Irani (Houston, TX), grandmother of Anosh and Arnaz Irani, in Mumbai, India on May 22, 2013.

**Homai Nadirshah Sidhwa**, mother of Ava (Jal) Boga, Mississauga, Armaity (Maneck) Dastur; late Perviz Fram Framji, grandmother of Meher and Rustom Boga, Mississauga, in Karachi, on May 27, 2013.

**Arnavaz Mama**, wife of Capt Sam Mama, mother of Khushnum, Parizade and late Anahitis; sister of Minoo Marshall (Mumbai) and Freny Jehan Bagli (Toronto) in Thane, India, on June 5, 2013.

**Rustom Ardeshir Irani**, father of Amy (Eruch) Balsara and Nergesh Irani (Houston, TX), grandfather of Karl and Sherry Balsara, in Mumbai, India on June 18, 2013.

**Mahnaz Kaykhosrow Izadyar**, wife of Farshad Boromand Rad, mother of Sarah and Seena, daughter of Pourandokht Piltan and late Kaykhosrow Izadyar, sister of Mehrdad, Shahnaz, and Behnaz, in Baltimore, Maryland, on June 21, 2013.

**Houshang Khatibi**, husband of Fareshteh Khatibi, father of Artemis, Nikan and Parmis Khatibi in Southern California on June 29, 2013.

**Adi Bharucha**, husband of Lorraine Fiset, father of Yasmin (Jocelyn), Richard and Eric, grandfather of Elliott and Justine, in Quebec City, Canada, on July 3, 2013.

**Kuroosh Framroze Mistry**, Husband of Purviz, father of Roxanne (Phiroz) and Darius, grandfather of Sophia Mistry in Toronto, July 7, 2013.

**Shahbahram Bahrami**, 90 years, husband of Touran Shahriari, brother of Berdjis Bahrami, uncle of Shirin

Abadi, (Vancouver), in Tehran, on July 9, 2013

**Yezdi Homi Tata**, 88, husband of Aloo (Vania-Dubash), father of Farida (Neville) Divecha (Houston), Tenaz Dubash (New York), Jamshed (Parastu) Dubash (Shrewsbury, MA), grandchildren Ashraf and Phiroze Divecha and Zarius and Zinara Dubash, brother of Perin (Jamshed) Vazifdar, uncle of Avan Bhatena (Houston) in Worcester, MA on July 12, 2013.

**Arnavaz Darayus Irani**, wife of late Darayus Irani, mother of Pervin (Ronnie) Ogra, Feroze (Mehnaz) Irani and Firdous (Dilshad) Irani (Toronto, ONT), grandmother of Farzeen (Zubin) Sukheswalla, Khushnaz (Darius) Bamboat, Taronish, Shirin, Shayan and Darayus Irani, great grandmother of Neville and Freeya Sukheswalla, sister of Fareedoon Irani (Karachi, Pakistan), late Homi, Jehangir and Marezban Irani in Naperville, IL on July 13, 2013.

**Rusi Singaporewalla**, uncle of Havovi Jokhi (New Jersey) in Crawley, UK July 13, 2013.

**Khurshed Bhikaji Birdie**, husband of Phiruzza Birdie, father of Danny (Scherazade) of Brampton, Ontario and Mitra Ashrar Bharucha in Karachi on July 16, 2013.

**Noshir J. Kotwall**, father of Jamsheed and Jasmine Gamwalla (Mississauga, Ontario) in Karachi, on July 19, 2013.

**Banoo Driver**, 86 years, wife of the late Homi Driver, mother of Cyrus, Darius and Shiraz, mother-in-law of Cheryl and Vera, and grandmother of Zubin, Zena, Zar and Reza, in Vancouver, on July 24, 2013.

Jehangir (Jingo) Jamshedji, husband of Vera, father of Zia Maude, Sheriar (Sunny); and Tanya Amroliwalla, in Houston, on July 30 2013.

**Mobed Dr Sohrab Khodabakhshi**, husband of Kharman Yezeshni, father of Taraneh and Tooraj Khodabakhshi (Vancouver, BC) in Tehran, Iran.

**Mahindokht Eishabadi** (Farhangi) (CA) in Iran.

**Nargis Homi Mistry**, 87 years, mother of Thrity, Mehr, Akbar & late Rustom, grandmother of Adeel & Zahra, in Edmonton, Canada on August 11, 2013.

**FEZANA Journal will coordinate initial contacts between interested parties; We do not assume any responsibility for verifying credentials. Contact Roshan Rivetna at RRRivetna@aol.com.**

Female, 32, Masters in Physical Therapy, currently residing and working in the Midwest, USA. Loves to read, travel, listen to music and hang out with friends. Contact kfragest@gmail.com. [F13-06]

Female 30, physician, born and brought up in the US. Currently finishing a fellowship on the East Coast. Interested in traveling, cooking, great sense of humor. Wishes to meet a professional Parsi gentleman. Contact farrahz@comcast.net. [F13-09].

Female, 34, Masters in Management Studies, Working as head of the HR team at a bank in Mumbai. Outgoing, and enjoys reading, music, outdoors, trekking and supporting social causes. Contact sister in New Jersey at (646) 315 0296. [F13-10].

Female, 35, well-educated with Masters in Public Health from US University, working on the East Coast. Born in USA, good looking, family-oriented, loves reading, movies, art and music. Interested in meeting well educated, family oriented man, settled in USA or Canada. Contact parseelady123@hotmail.com. [F13.21].

Female, 32, Associate degree in computers, living in USA with her parents. Currently employed by Pennsylvania state government. Very pretty, happy spirited, loving and easy to get along with. Interested in meeting a loving, smart, understanding Zoroastrian man from USA or Canada. Contact heavenly\_destiny81@yahoo.com. [F13.33].

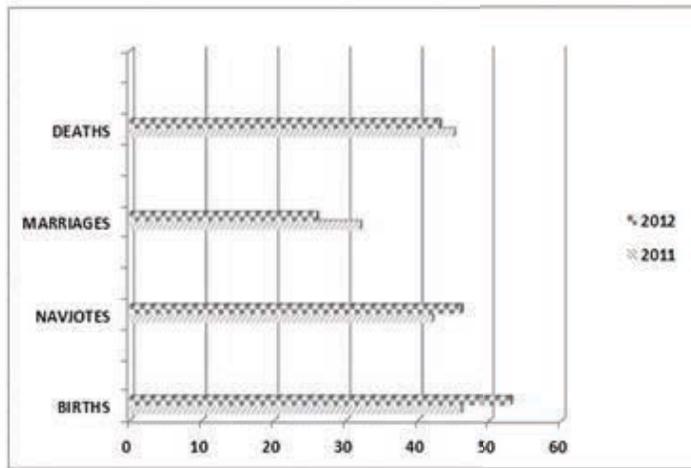
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[www.chaalokaajkariye.com](http://www.chaalokaajkariye.com) (new website, launched in 2011)  
[www.Matrimonial.Zoroastrianism.com](http://www.Matrimonial.Zoroastrianism.com)  
[www.zoroastrians.net](http://www.zoroastrians.net)

[www.TheParsiMatch.com](http://www.TheParsiMatch.com)  
[www.shaadi.com](http://www.shaadi.com); [www.ParsiMatrimony.com](http://www.ParsiMatrimony.com)  
[www.ParsiShaadi.com](http://www.ParsiShaadi.com)  
[www.MatrimonialParsiZoroastrianism.com](http://www.MatrimonialParsiZoroastrianism.com)  
 Mrs. Gool Banaji, Parel, Mumbai, goolpesi@gmail.com, tel: 91-22-2416 6120.

	BIRTHS			NAVJOTES			MARRIAGES			DEATHS		
<b>2011</b>	<b>46</b>			<b>42</b>			<b>32</b>			<b>45</b>		
<b>2012</b>	<b>53</b>			<b>46</b>			<b>26</b>			<b>43</b>		
	<b>15%</b>			<b>10%</b>			<b>-19%</b>			<b>-4%</b>		

	BIRTHS			NAVJOTES			MARRIAGES			DEATHS (NA)		
	BOY	GIRL	TOTAL	BOY	GIRL	TOTAL	INTRA	INTER	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
<b>2011</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>2012</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>43</b>





## ZANE COMMISSARIAT ERVAD YAZAD KAYOMARZ SIDHWA

Son of Farzana & Kayomarz Sidhwa of Houston, TX; grandson of Dolly and Yezdi Sidhwa and Banoo and Keki Elavia, Mumbai, India was ordained as a navar on Friday, December 28th, 2012 (Mah AMARDAD and Roj TIR, 1382 Y.Z.) at Modi Sorabji Vatcha Gandhi Agiary near Khareghat Colony, Hughes Road, Mumbai

### ERVAD ROOYINTAN NOZER MEHENTY

After 37 years, the complicated Geti Kharid ritual was performed by 9 year old *Ervad Rooyintan Mehenty*, at the Wadiaji Atash Behram in Mumbai. This is a ceremony which lasts 19 days (April 24-May 10) where a Nahn is taken for the first 9 days and for the next 10 days the Ijasne and Visparad ceremonies are performed with the vendidad ceremony on the last day. The Geti Kharid ritual was performed with Ervad Adil Bhesania.

Young Ervad Rooyintan completed his Sampuran Navar at age 8 years and Martab initiation at age 9 years, Every week he performs the Ijasne ceremony at the Wadiaji Atash Behram and to date has performed 50 such ceremonies as well as three vendidads

May the blessings of Ahura Mazda always be with this committed and brilliant young priest.



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# Obituary

## IN MEMORIUM

### The Passing of an Icon Keki Bhote (1925 - 2013)

In the 1950s and 1960s any Zarathushti bound for America was given the names of Keki and Mehroo Bhote to contact upon arrival. And indeed, Keki (who arrived in the USA in 1948) and his wife Mehroo (who joined him in 1955) earned this reputation from their passionate commitment to the fledgling Zarathushti community on this continent.



We were fortunate to have the towering presence of Keki and Mehroo, in Chicago during our early formative years. Deeply engaged and committed to the community, their hospitality to any new arrival in the Chicago area in those early years, is legend.

Keki's vision was that of an open, committed, well-connected and prosperous community in North America, a community that was independent and unfettered by the strictures of the past. In the inaugural newsletter of the "**Zoroastrian Association of America**" (ZAA) which he founded in 1965, Keki writes ".... *It is time now, for those of us in the vanguard of this migration, to plan on ways and means to preserve our identity and our heritage while participating fully in the American way of life ....*" While the thinking was visionary, the ZAA was perhaps a few years ahead of its time, and gradually folded. However, one can say his vision is undoubtedly unfolding as we grow and mature on this continent, as we

see the seeds planted by Keki now flowering in the form of Zoroastrian Associations across USA and Canada as well as FEZANA, the Federation of Zoroastrian Associations in North America.

Keki was a seeker, whose independent and well-researched reflections have had a lasting influence on many – students and scholars alike. He was well endowed with a sharp intellect, a thirst for knowledge and masterful oratory. His research and writings on the Zarathushti religion made him a sought-after speaker at conferences. In his later years, he spent much of his time engrossed in his studies and his writings. We anxiously look forward to his book on Zarathushti history.

While he was beloved and respected for his contributions to his own Zarathushti community as well as to local and national civic organizations, Keki had achieved worldwide recognition professionally, as the authority on '**Six Sigma Quality**'. Recipient of a number of prestigious civic and professional awards, Keki has also authored over 20 books, including *World Class Quality*, a NY Times Bestseller, which have become reference manuals for Quality in business and industry.

Originally from Coimbatore, India, Keki came to Harvard as a Tata Scholar in 1948. After his MS in Applied Physics and Engineering, Keki secured a job with the "up and coming, new company, Motorola" in Chicago from where he retired 42 years later as a Senior Corporate Consultant for Quality and Productivity. He later founded the consulting firm of **Keki R. Bhote Associates**, providing services worldwide.

A man of many talents and many passions, Keki has left a legacy on many fronts. A loving husband, father, and patriarch to his growing family, a man of vision to his North American Zoroastrian community, a benefactor to the worldwide Zoroastrian community through his role as President (North American region) of the World Zoroastrian Organization, a scholar and teacher, a professional of worldwide acclaim, and above all, a wonderful human being.

We shall miss him sorely. May Ahura Mazda grant him "*Garathman Behesht.*"

**Rohinton Rivetna**, Founding President, Zoroastrian Association of Chicago and of FEZANA

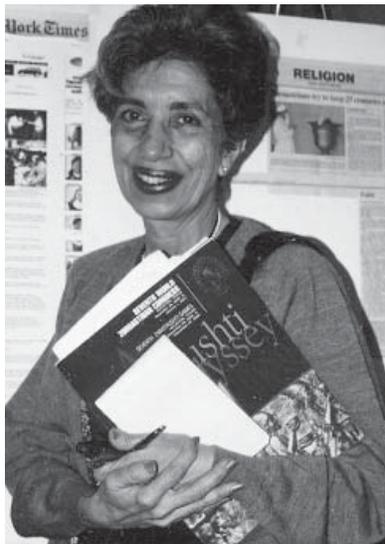
**Photo Keki Bhote with his wife Mehroo,**  
**courtesy daughter Shenaya**

## ARNAVAZ MAMA 1940- 2013

Passing of a trusted and respected colleague is hard to accept and difficult to adjust to. In 2005 Arnavaz was lauded as one of the three premiere journalists of the Zarathushti press in a special article *“Three women on their writing machines”*, in the FEZANA JOURNAL as a tribute for keeping the community connected, well informed, and presenting us with issues at hand that need to be addressed. Today Arnavaz is not with us but her memory and contributions linger on. Her face will always be the face of “Parsiana”.

I knew Arnavaz as the journalist at Parsiana who had interviewed me several times many years ago and then as a friend when we shared a hotel room at the 2005 Eighth World Zoroastrian Congress in London. Her professionalism and her keen sense of grasping the issue at hand and presenting it in a succinct form always amazed me, so also her humour and ability to see the other side of each situation. She always tried to understand the subject before writing about it, presenting the whole story with a balance perspective.

Arnavaz was born in Mumbai as the youngest of three siblings, schooled at Alexandra Girls’ English Institution, graduating from St Xavier’s college with an honours in English and French. She wanted



to be in the Indian Administrative Services (IAS) but joined the *Onlooker Magazine* instead. Working for seven years on an annual economic Journal whetted her appetite for economics, so much so that she resigned and went back to school, to obtain a second degree in Economics. She got married just before her final exams, raised her daughters and ten years later joined *Parsiana*. As a journalist she travelled extensively in India and abroad covering different meetings, events, and interviewing people. She enjoyed meeting high achievers and reflecting their achievements, and yet she was not afraid to take a stand and tackle controversial subjects e.g. the Roxan Shah episode and the decision

to publish data on interfaith marriages. She covered the sixth (Iran), seventh (Houston) and eighth (London) World Congresses.

She enjoyed cooking and baking, getting her hands dirty with potted plants, walking her pets, (at the time of her death she had six dogs, seven cats and five birds) reading authors like Neale Donald Walsch, and Paulo Coelho.

Our condolences to her husband Sam and daughters Kushnum and Parezade, her brother Minoo Marshall (Mumbai) and sister Freny Jehan Bagli.(Toronto). Her youngest daughter Anaitis died at age 17 from cancer. Rest in peace my friend, you will be missed by all who knew you. The community owes a huge debt of gratitude to you. Dolly Dastoor

### ***KERSI DARA KAPADIA October 30, 1942 - September 26, 2013***

Kersi Dara Kapadia passed away at the age of 70, on September 26, 2013. He is survived by Katayun Kapadia, his wife (FEZANA President), his children: daughter Zarin, son LT Farrokh Kapadia (USN) and daughter-in-law Tralene. He was a brother to Dogdoe Tehmtan Arjani, Bakhtavar Noshir Lam, and Diana Darius Dadachanji and brother-in-law to Bakhtawar and Rustom Dinshaw. He was a loving husband and father, a trusted friend and a beloved uncle to all who knew him.

Kersi was a quiet man of great strength whose words held vast wisdom. A man whose smile was elusive and rare, but brought joy to all those around him. He always placed the needs of others before those of himself, especially to help the youth of the community. An accomplished cook, his chai was legendary and his garden bursting with flowers and vegetables which he would share with everyone including the animals in the backyard.

While his passing is a great loss to the community, we can all take solace in the fact that he is finally able to get the sleep and rest that he deserved. Kersi’s life may have ended on September 26, but his love, and his memory will continue on in the lives of those he touched and those lucky enough to know him.

***FEZANA JOURNAL EXTENDS CONDOLENCES TO KATAYUN, ZARIN, FARROKH AND TRALENE.  
MAY HIS SOUL REST IN ETERNAL PEACE***

## ADI R. KANGA (1923- 2013) *A Visionary And The City Of Navi Mumbai*

Before his death on April 1, 2013, I only knew Ardeshir (Adi) Rustom Kanga as Zubin Kanga's grandfather, Homi Kanga's brother, and the uncle of my friend Cyrus Vazifdar. Later that April, I received a package from my friend Dinshaw, it contained pictures and information that chronicled his former Scoutmaster's (Adi's) fascinating life. Through this article, I pay homage to Adi and his contributions to Navi Mumbai, India, the Parsi Community, and humanity.

### NAVI MUMBAI THE ZARATHUSHTI LINK

The role of Parsi philanthropy and public service in the development of Bombay for more than 150 years is well-known throughout India. However, our role in the concept development, planning, and construction of Navi Mumbai is not as renowned.

Navi Mumbai, the world's largest planned city, covering 344 square kilometers, has a population approaching 1,500,000, a large international airport, the purportedly best cricket stadium in India, metro system, railhead, and a port designed to be the largest transshipment terminal in India was the brainchild of Adi Kanga.

During the 1960s, Bombay was "bursting at the seams" and there was no space available for expansion. Adi and several friends discussed extending the city eastward, reclaiming marshland across Thane Creek. The responsible state and local governments approved their ideas and formed the **City and Industrial Development Corporation of Maharashtra**, making Adi Kanga its General Manager.

Kanga drew the plans for the New City on the family dining table and hand-colored the various zones of the proposed city. To overcome serious delays experienced

by government agencies in the acquisition of land for the project, Kanga conceived and designed a 20-mile long road and bridge over Thane Creek that connected Bombay to Vashi, ensuring logistical expediency.

With the Navi Mumbai project successfully under way, Adi moved on to establish four more "new cities," including New Aurangabad and New Nasik.

### WHO WAS THIS RENAISSANCE MAN ?

Adi Kanga was born in Bombay on March 16, 1923, to Piroja and Rustom Kanga, the second youngest of five children. Rustom had five children, two girls from a first marriage and two boys and a girl from a second. Coincidentally, both wives were named Piroja.

Adi's high school education was at St. Xavier's School; his B. Sc. was from St. Xavier's College in Bombay. Later, he earned a degree in civil engineering from Pune. During his high school and college years, he engaged in elocution, drama, and Boy Scouting—he was the Scoutmaster of the 8<sup>th</sup> East Bombay Boy Scout troop for many years.

In 1950, Adi married Vira Vazifdar and began a life story, beautifully and lovingly narrated in his 200-page posthumous tribute *The Story of Vira*. Sadly, their loving partnership missed their golden anniversary by one year when Vira died in 1999.

Adi was an accomplished artist, prolific painter, and poet. His artwork adorns the homes of friends and relations around the world. His illustrated poems are the prized possessions of his family. In the small booklet, *Laments and Libations*, he deftly paints virtual masterpieces using words with lucidity; enabling the



reader to see nature through his eyes. Zarathushti and nature lovers will be drawn into this brilliant work.

Throughout his life, Adi had an insatiable curiosity about mathematics. He contributed many papers to scientific journals and in 1995, authored a book on number theory, *Number Mosaics*, that is still available from Amazon and other book retailers. His research and discoveries in mathematics includes several extensions to the Pythagorean Theorem contained in the book.

Those whom are interested in mathematics and Pythagoras in particular, will find Adi's article *Pythagoras and the Story behind Croton Crown* thought-provoking (See [http://www.avesta.org/kerr/Pythagoras\\_and\\_the\\_story\\_behind\\_the\\_Croton\\_Crown.pdf](http://www.avesta.org/kerr/Pythagoras_and_the_story_behind_the_Croton_Crown.pdf)). This article, written with Sam Kerr, will be interesting to Zarathushtis as it traces Pythagoras' Zarathushti connections.

Always willing to share his knowledge and time, he counseled children and friends to continue their education, believing that education is a lifelong process and investment in the future. His advice was well-heeded by his progeny: four of his six grandchildren are

close to receiving their Doctorates in fields as diverse as architecture, law, music, and science. The others are still undergrads.

Adi, a devout Zarathushti throughout his life, and Kaikhosrov D. Irani formed the intellectual Zarathushti discussion group, "***Philosophy of Ideas***," in Bombay. Speaking with Professor Irani last June, he laughingly reminisced about "those friendly literary union meetings [spent] discussing mostly the Gathas."

Continuing to share his talents, even as a resident at the Lady Gowrie Nursing Home in Australia, he entertained the other residents with piano playing.

Exactly 15 days after enjoying his ninetieth birthday party with family and friends at a local restaurant, he yielded his quest for an "unbeaten century," when the "Umpire of us all called the draw of stumps." Thus ended his temporal inning, peacefully dying, surrounded by family and friends during the evening of April 1, 2013.

## A POSTSCRIPT

The Kanga family is blessed with a genetic proclivity for music. While Adi was an accomplished composer who played the piano and mandolin, his elder brother, the late Homi Kanga, was a violinist with the London Philharmonic Orchestra. Adi's grandson, Zubin, is a brilliant, award-winning concert pianist, a rising star in the musical firmament. Sam Kerr, of Sydney, Australia, once told me that he saw Zubin play a piano sonata with his toes. One of the grandfather/grandson musical collaborations of 2004 was the popular *Song of the New Millennium*—with music from Adi, as arranged by Zubin. The song was first performed in Sydney during the August 2004 Norooz event and rapidly gained an international appreciation. Later it was played at FEZANA Congress 2005 and at Zarathushti functions around the world.

**“The Song has ended, but the memory lingers on.  
On the once flat reclaimed land on which  
now stands Bombay’s twin city,  
Navi Mumbai,  
there also stands a Gulmohar tree.  
It was the first tree on the barren virgin land,  
planted by another environmentally concerned Zarathushti,  
Vira Adi Kanga.”**

*Rusi R. Sorabji has been writing for pleasure since over 65 years and has been a frequent contributor to the FEZANA JOURNAL and other leading Zoroastrian journals for over a decade*

# A Single Roll of the Dice Obama's Diplomacy with Iran

By *Trita Parsi*

Yale University Press

284pp., \$26.16 (Hardcover), \$17.00 (Paperback)

Reviewed By Dr Keki Dadachanji

**Trita Parsi** is the founder and current president of the [National Iranian American Council](#). In *A Single Roll of the Dice* he examines various approaches tried by the United States to influence Iran's nuclear policy. He analyzes President Obama's approach of using diplomacy and draws conclusions why it failed. Whether the reader agrees with his analysis will depend on the reader's values of how to understand a hostile nation or, on a more modest scale, how to empathize with a disagreeable person. The reader who thinks that force is essential to managing the behavior of a hostile nation will disagree with Dr Parsi's conclusions. Conversely, the reader who thinks that force can never produce sustainable change will concur with his analysis.

## OUTLINE

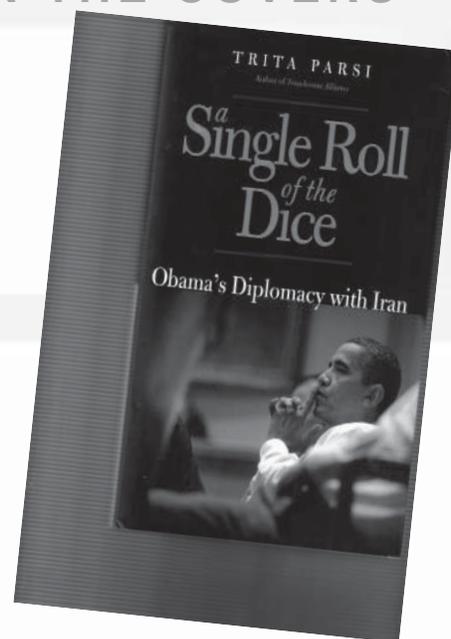
Dr. Trita Parsi analyzes three instruments of dealing with Iran: war, sanctions, and diplomacy. War and sanctions (with the threat of escalation to war) are exercises of power. Diplomacy, like negotiation, is an attempt to understand the deeply rooted desires of the parties and find a mutually beneficial solution—in the case of nations, hopefully averting war.

The book's overarch is:

- Diplomacy was ruled out as a valid strategy with Iran (and other nations hostile to the United States) by the Bush administration.
- Obama entered the scene with a firm resolve to find a diplomatic solution to problems with Iran. He has failed in achieving that objective. Did his failure show that diplomacy is an inherently flawed idea, or was his failure because of the way it was carried out?
- If diplomacy is dead, what does the future hold for us?

## OBAMA AND DIPLOMACY

According to Mohamed ElBaradei, the former Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the Bush administration saw the problem as Iran's development of nuclear weapons. ElBaradei readily recognized that the nuclear issue was not the root



problem; possibly, it was a symptom of the continuing dispute between the United States and Iran. "Anytime you try to isolate a country, the situation gets much, much worse," he said. The end result of the isolation policy was that instead of limiting the Iranian program to a few dozen centrifuges, Iran amassed several thousand centrifuges, stockpiled several hundred kilos of low-grade enriched uranium, and mastered knowledge of the nuclear fuel cycle. ElBaradei ascribed this failure to "a combination of ignorance and arrogance."

This diagnosis has proven true not just in case of Iran, but North Korea, where efforts to isolate have proven ineffective in preventing a nation from developing or getting nuclear weapons.

The book further outlines Obama's diplomacy and its ultimate failure.

## STAKEHOLDERS AGAINST DIPLOMACY

Dr. Parsi meticulously identifies various stakeholders and their interests in Obama's diplomacy with Iran. He proves that many stakeholders did not want diplomacy with Iran to succeed. Israel had enjoyed unambiguous support of the United States for years. If relations between Iran and United States were to improve, Israel would face an America attempting to take a more balanced view of problems important to Israel (especially, the Palestinian issue). Saudi Arabia did not want Iran's power base to grow. A normalized relationship with the United States would further legitimize Iran. This would upset the balance of power between the Arabs and the Iranians, and between Shia's and Sunni's. Russia and China were concerned about the United States gaining greater influence over Iran. The US Republican Party wanted to make Obama a one-term president and did not want him to have a major diplomatic success with Iran. Finally, there were people within Iran's political structure that saw

a hostile relationship with the US as a convenient mask for its serious domestic problems. If this mask were to fall off, the true problems of Iran would be exposed.

### PREPARING FOR DIPLOMACY

To prepare for diplomatic negotiations, the Obama administration carried out a policy review. Two aspects of this review dominated:

The first was to clarify the United States' position on Iran's uranium enrichment program and how much latitude might be allowed around this position during negotiations. This review was inconclusive.

The second was a decision to follow a "dual-track" policy. Middle East Envoy Dennis Ross favored the hybrid choice that combined tightening the sanction noose while engaging Iran, without preconditions. "The hybrid option is designed to concentrate the minds of Iranian leaders on what they stand to lose without humiliating them," Ross wrote. Obama agreed acquiesced into this position and made it his central policy—a decision that ensured diplomacy's failure.

### WHY DIPLOMACY FAILED

The book details the various stages of negotiation, from which Dr. Parsi draws the essential conclusion that every element of negotiating "best practices" were violated. The US was under pressure from Israel, through their powerful Congressional lobbyists to impose strict deadlines. The diplomacy myopically focused on the single topic of nuclear enrichment. The US neither understood nor addressed what was important to Iran, beyond this single issue. There was a profound lack of trust on each side.

### IF WE TRY AGAIN...

Dr. Parsi summarizes what we should consider if we were to try diplomacy again:

Diplomacy must succeed for the sake of resolving the conflict, not for the sake of creating an impetus for more sanctions. Reducing thirty years of wide-ranging US-Iran tensions to a single topic negotiation is not a formula for success. Focus on the long-term benefits of engaging Iran and the dangers of non-engagement.

### REFLECTIONS ON RESOLVING CONFLICTS

Life is full of conflicts. We disagree with our children; parents; friends; and other Zarathushtis, religions, and nations. Wisdom is knowing how to respond to conflicts.

Love is often defined as respect for a person with whom we disagree. This idea, expanded to an international scale, becomes "diplomacy." When each listens to the other—with complete attention and respect—solutions emerge.

This is the essence of Dr Parsi's analysis. Whether we agree with his thesis depends on which we think is the better teacher: Machiavelli or Zarathushtra.

**Keki Dadachanji** is a high school teacher, with interest in literature, music, performing arts, and spiritual living. He is a graduate of IIT India in Mechanical Engineering and doctorate from Chase Western University in Operations Research.

## GIFTS TO A MAGUS

*Indo-Iranian Studies Honoring Firoze Kotwal*

**Edited by Jamsheed K Choksy and Jennifer Dubeansky, pp 342 Cost US \$93.95 (Amazon US \$84) ISBN 978-1-431-2051-0. Peter Lang Publishing, NY 2013**

**Reviewed by Meheryar N. Rivetna**

**Dastur Kavasji Edalji Kanga**, in the preface to his translation from French of *Extracts from the Narrative of Mons. Anquetil du Perron's Travels in India*, states: *It has been with the study of Zend as it has been with the study of inscriptions and architecture of the caves. Philological light has in the former, as magnesium light in the latter, illumined many dark places in the structure of Zend, and in the philosophy and ethics of Zoroaster.* For this we are indebted to European

scholars who have been and are the only expounders of the Zend Avesta.

Truer words have not been spoken with reference to Zoroastrian studies and we get a glimpse of the monumental work done by western scholars in this field in *Gifts To A Magus: Indo-Iranian Studies Honoring Firoze Kotwal* (edited by Jamsheed Choksy and Jennifer Dubeansky; Peter Lang Publishing, NY, 2013.) The generosity of the Zoroastrian Association of Ontario (Canada),

The Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe (U.K.), and The Center for Avestic Research (U.S.A.) made the publication of the volume possible.

The book is a collection of essays on various aspects of Zoroastrianism as a tribute to the Magus—a Zoroastrian High Priest—Dastur Dr. Firoze Kotwal of Mumbai, India. The book scintillates with articles by such luminaries as Mary Boyce, Almut Hintze, Martin Schwartz, Michael Stausberg, Prods Skjærvø, James



## BETWEEN THE COVERS

### Adil Dalal Awarded Prestigious 2013 Axiom Business Book Award for *The 12 Pillars of Project Excellence*

ISBN: 9781439849125 ; ISBN 10: 1439849129

Publication Date: October 17, 2011, Number of Pages: 691 Cost \$64.00

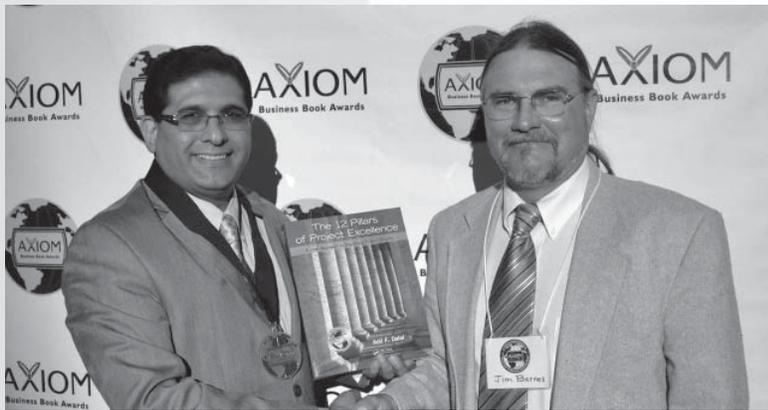
Since its publication in 2011, Adil Dalal's *The 12 Pillars of Project Excellence* has continued to garner critical praise from throughout the business and academic communities. The Amazon and Barnes & Noble reader reviews heap pragmatic plaudits on Dalal's book from leaders throughout the project management discipline.

In a book review for PM World, **Michele Muse**, PMP writes, "...not only very readable, but also inspirational. The book serves the dual role as

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State of New Mexico and former CIO of the Department of Taxation and Revenue Department, State of New Mexico

... one of the best books I have ever read on the project leadership. The book has extraordinary concepts on leading a project, which are unique and exceptional. This book reveals the facts behind project failures and the approaches to overcome those failures by leading all projects to a successful close. I highly recommend this book for all project managers and executives who are serious about building successful project leaders in their organization.



'mentor in a book' for the individual and as 'consultant in a book' for the organization."

**Mikel Harry**, the co-creator of Six Sigma, called Dalal's work, "...a highly pragmatic guide to project management. Not only does the book provide the fundamental tools that leaders need to get better project results, it lays out the way of thinking that underpins success."

Most recently, the respected Axiom Business Awards recognized the book's preeminence in the category of Organizational Management, Lean and Continuous Improvement at a gala ceremony held in New York City on May 29, 2013. Accepting the award, Dalal said, "It is truly an honor to have my very first book recognized by the business community and I am humbled to be among the esteemed Axiom award winners."

Adil Dalal is the CEO and President of Pinnacle Process Solutions

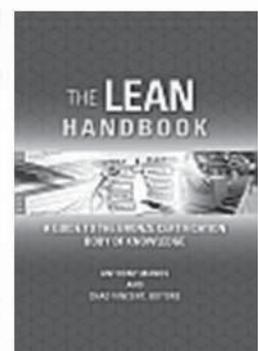
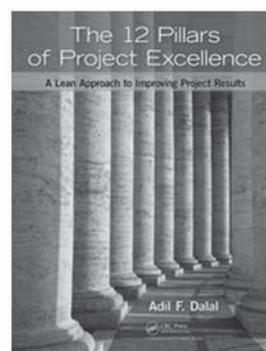
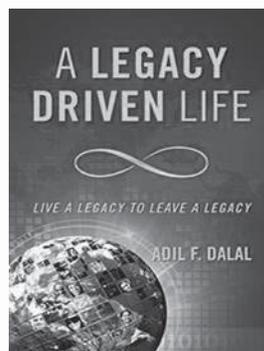
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Eloquent testimonies to Adil's deep respect from the project management community are well presented in these quotations from —John Salazar, CIO Department of Work Force Solutions,

Adil discusses key aspects of *The 12 Pillars of Project Excellence* in an enlightening interview that can be viewed on YouTube at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=dUfl6htrqq8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dUfl6htrqq8), where he discusses project management as a personal path to leadership; concepts such as the power of visualization™, pinnacle performance zone™, and sensei leadership™; and, the role of stress. With its broad appeal, the book and its accompanying CD are destined to become as synonymous with project management as **Dr. W. Edwards Deming's Out of the Crisis** was to management.

Adil can be reached at [info@pinnacleprocess.com](mailto:info@pinnacleprocess.com). For more information regarding his company's services, visit [www.pinnacleprocess.com](http://www.pinnacleprocess.com). Adil has coauthored *The Lean Handbook* and recently published a critically acclaimed book 'A Legacy Driven Life: Live a Legacy to Leave a Legacy'.



To The Editor  
FEZANA JOURNAL

## PRIESTLY DIKTATS AND TRADITION VERSUS ASHO ZARATHUSHTRA'S GOOD WORDS

I am concerned that priestly diktats and outdated traditions are leading to the inevitable extinction of the Parsi community.

Should the basis of our Parsi community's faith be the quintessential Words of our Prophet, Asho Zarathustra, or the extraneous notions espoused by the community and its priests?

For example, we Parsis cling to practices like dokhma, casting out our girls for marrying non-Parsis, refusing to welcome others into our faith, and many other practices that have no basis in Scripture. The schism's depth between Asho Zarathushtra's teachings and current dogma is highlighted by some Vada Dasturjis' going so far as to rename our venerable Religion to "Parsi Zoroastrianism."

Some diktats fail the test of common sense. Take the prohibition of non-Zarathushtis becoming members of the Parsi community. Had this been part of Ahura Mazda's Word, there would be no Zarathushti Religion because all who wanted to follow the Prophet would have been turned away.

I submit that we should return to the fundamentals of Asho Zarathustra's Good Philosophy and remove accreted diktats and superfluous convolutions. All Parsis should recognize that:

- Asho Zarathushtra wanted Ahura Mazda's Good Religion to be spread to all corners of the world.
- There are no scriptural prohibitions for anyone to join the Zarathushti Religion.
- Dokhma is a human tradition, it is not from Ahura Mazda. (In fact, the Vendidad prohibits Dokhma in the absence of birds.)

So, my dear Parsi friends, we are rapidly approaching a crossroads: follow the diktats of the priests and continue our decline OR return to the Good Word, as taught by Asho Zarathustra, and become revitalized, relevant, and resurgent. It is our choice.

It is never too late to engage in a constructive debate framed by Good Thoughts, Good Words, and Good Deeds. Will Fezana's readership respond to this letter, join the discussion, and reverse our dwindling numbers?

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Pune, March 2013

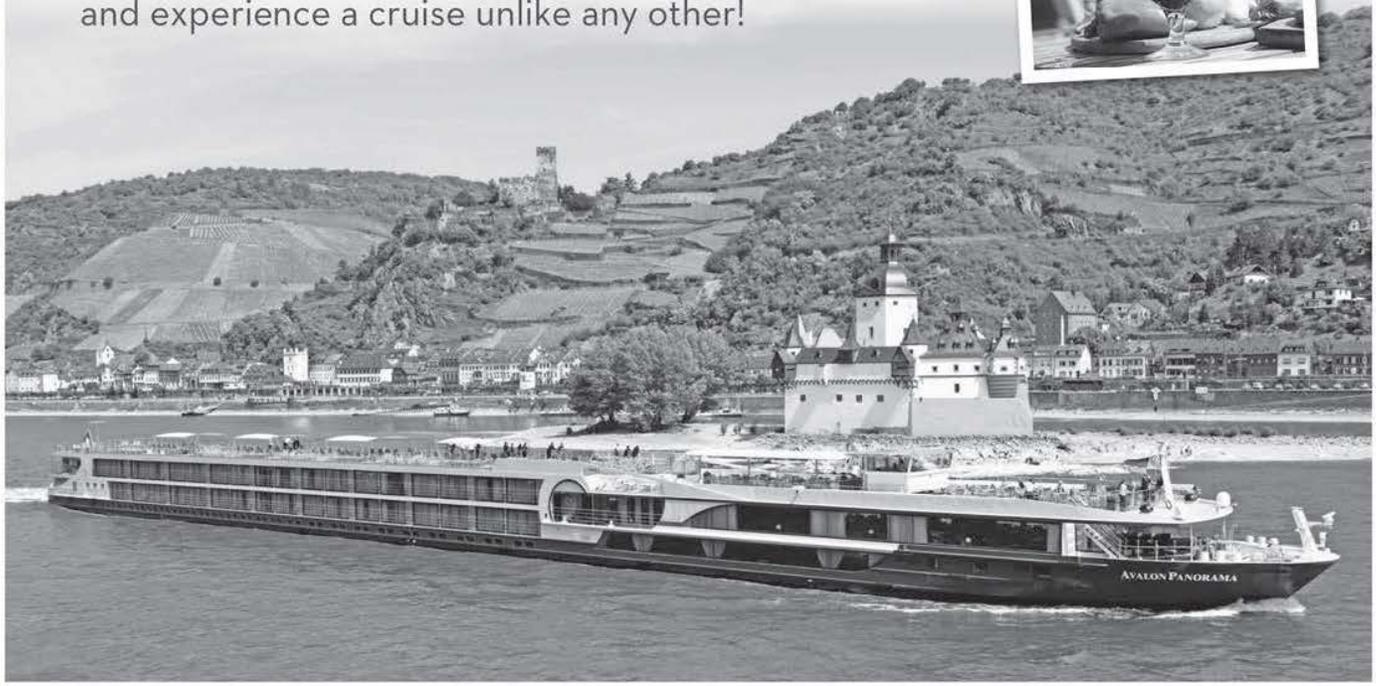
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1 Publication Title <b>FEZANA JOURNAL</b>	2 Publication Number <b>1 0 6 8 - 2 3 7 6</b>	3 Filing Date <b>09/30/13</b>
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4 Issue Frequency <b>QUARTERLY</b>	5 Number of Issues Published Annually <b>FOUR</b>	6 Annual Subscription Price <b>\$25.00</b>
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7 Complete Mailing Address of Known Office of Publication (Not printer) (Street, city, county, state, and ZIP+4®) <b>5750 JACKSON ST. HINSDALE, IL 60521-5109</b>	Contact Person <b>ZENOBIA DAMANIA</b> Telephone (Include area code)
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8 Complete Mailing Address of Headquarters or General Business Office of Publisher (Not printer)  
**5750 JACKSON ST. HINSDALE, IL 60521-5109**

9 Full Names and Complete Mailing Addresses of Publisher, Editor, and Managing Editor (Do not leave blank)

Publisher (Name and complete mailing address)  
**FEZANA - 5750 JACKSON ST., HINSDALE, IL 60521-5109**

Editor (Name and complete mailing address)  
**DOLLY DASTOOR, - 3765 MALO, BROUSSARD, QC J4Y 1B4 - CANADA**

Managing Editor (Name and complete mailing address)

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Full Name	Complete Mailing Address
<b>FEZANA</b>	<b>5750 JACKSON ST. HINSDALE, IL 60521-5109</b>

11 Known Bondholders, Mortgagees, and Other Security Holders Owning or Holding 1 Percent or More of Total Amount of Bonds, Mortgages, or Other Securities. If none check box  None

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12 Tax Status (For completion by nonprofit organizations authorized to mail at nonprofit rates) (Check one)  
The purpose, function, and nonprofit status of this organization and the exempt status for federal income tax purposes  
 Has Not Changed During Preceding 12 Months  
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15. Extent and Nature of Circulation <b>USA, CANADA, UK, AUSTRALIA, BELGIUM, GERMANY, HONG KONG, INDIA, PAKISTAN, UAE, IRAN, SINGAPORE, MALAYSIA, JAPAN, NEW ZEALAND, UZBEKISTAN</b>		Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
a. Total Number of Copies (Net press run)		915	860
b. Paid Circulation (By Mail and Outside the Mail)	(1) Mailed Outside-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541 (Include paid distribution above nominal rate, advertiser's proof copies, and exchange copies)	546	509
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f. Total Distribution (Sum of 15c and 15e)		839	795
g. Copies not Distributed (See Instructions to Publishers #4 (page #3))		76	65
h. Total (Sum of 15f and g)		915	860
i. Percent Paid (15c divided by 15f times 100)		88.80%	81.40%
16. <input type="checkbox"/> Total circulation includes electronic copies. Report circulation on PS Form 3526-X worksheet.			

17. Publication of Statement of Ownership

If the publication is a general publication, publication of this statement is required. Will be printed in the **FALL 2013** issue of this publication

Publication not required.

18. Signature and Title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager, or Owner

*Sally Dalton*

Date  
**October 1, 2013**

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