

FEZANA *bulletin*

March 2014 / VOLUME 4 • ISSUE 3



UPCOMING DATES

March 18-30, 2014

22nd Environmental Film Festival, Washington D.C.

[Click here](#)

March 21, 2014

Application Deadline for 2014 Summer Internships, Pluralism Project, Harvard Univ. 617-496-2481 www.pluralism.org;

Through Aug 16, 2014

Beyond Bollywood – Indian Americans Shape the Nation. National Museum of Natural History, Washington D.C. [click here](#) for details.

March 22, 2014

ZANT Gala Celebration. Frisco, Texas. zenobiachinoy (@) hotmail.com

March 22, 2014

Norouz Celebration 2014. Iran Heritage Foundation, London. <http://www.iranheritage.org/>

March 29, 2014

Chicago Nowruz Parade 2014. Federal Plaza; 11:30a.m. [click here](#)

March 29, 2014

Groundbreaking for New Darbe Mehr, 3:45pm. Suffern, NY. [ZAGNY](#) and [IZA](#)

(DATES CONTINUED ON PAGE 3)



NAVROZE MUBARAK NOUROUZ PIROUZ BAD

FEZANA wishes a very Happy, Healthy and Prosperous Navroze/Nourouz to fellow Zarathushtis and to our friends across North America and worldwide.

ZAGNY Hosts Inspirational Panel Discussion



L to R: Shanaya Deboo, Navroz Udwadia, Jehangir Mehta & Dinyar Devitre



L to R: Zubin Mehta and Porus Cooper, Chair FEZANA Public Relations Committee

ZAGNY (Zoroastrian Association of Greater New York) had the honor to host five distinguished Zarathushti luminaries at a panel discussion entitled *The Power of Cultural Influences and Inspirations for Success* in New York City on Friday March 14, 2014.

At a sellout crowd of over 200 people gathered at the prestigious Cooper Union, financier Navroze Udwadia, chef Jehangir Mehta, philanthropist Dinyar Devitre, educator Jamshed Bharucha and music Maestro Zubin Mehta participated in two panel discussions moderated by Shanaya Deboo and Anahaita Kotval.

A detailed report and the entire video recording of the event will be on ZAGNY's website soon. Visit <http://zagny.org/?p=1167> □

International Day of Nowruz - March 21

[International Nowruz Day was proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly, in its resolution [A/RES/64/253](#) of 2010, at the initiative of several countries that share this holiday.]

"On this International Day of Nowruz, I offer my best wishes to those who celebrate, and express hope that all people can use the occasion to reflect on the beauty of nature, the promise of Spring and the power of culture to build peace."

— U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon



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Zoroastrian
Associations of
North America
(FEZANA)**

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NGO in consultative status
(Roster) with the Economic
and Social Council of the
United Nations



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FEZANA INFO

FEZANA Delegation at U.N. CSW 2014 Presents Well Received Workshop

NEW YORK, March 10, 2014 – Women from all over the World gathered to attend parallel events happening at the Church Centre in the UN Plaza for the Commission on the Status of Women Conference at the United Nations. Havovi Bharda, Tanya Bharda, Raymond Dinshaw, Homi Gandhi, Nurelle Mehta, Afreed Mistry, Nina Mistry, Behram Pastakia and Mani Rao from FEZANA were all representing the Zoroastrians at the UN CSW meeting. The group has been working since November 2013 to put together a panel discussion titled,



**Zoroastrian Delegation at the CSW Meeting at
the United Nations, March 2014**

**L-R: Havovi Bharda, Tanya Bharda, Nurelle
Mehta, Homi Gandhi, Mani Rao, Afreed Mistry,
Raymond Dinshaw, Behram Pastakia.
Missing: Nina Mistry**

and how their innovative tools like microfinancing, education and healthcare play a crucial role in breaking the circle of poverty.

Afreed Mistry from Toronto, presented examples of how India's largest private sector bank, ICICI, has contributed to alleviating poverty by providing small loans to the rural women, empowering them to lift themselves out of poverty. The women who participated in these projects, gained self-confidence and were able to mobilize their communities to participate in other areas of their lives. Afreed went on to talk about Education being crucial for children in rural villages and gave examples of Akshaya Patra, an NGO that is partnering with the Government of India in implementing a food program which provides a mid-day meal for school children. She also talked about Ashta-No-Kai's bicycle program, in rural Maharashtra, which has helped girls to transport themselves to high schools that are far away so that they can continue with higher studies.

Tanya Bharda, who is pursuing Women's Studies at University of Toronto, continued the discussion on the importance of education by speaking from her experiences with NGOs in India. Tanya addressed issues that the Indian girls are facing with parents being a barrier for not allowing girls to attend schools, lack of encouragement for educating girls, the need for girls to interact with each other to learn more about life and health issues and the lack of technology and finance. She explained solutions to all these issues from the NGOs she had personal experiences with.

Mani Rao, a health consultant from Chicago, covered the health challenges of malnutrition, teenage pregnancy, infertility and lack of health education faced by women, children and infants in Kharel, Gujarat. She spoke about Gram Seva Trust and the work they are doing to offer women health educational programs, antenatal and prenatal care and she also handed out a pamphlet to the attendees with the formula for a high protein energy powder made from local

“Empowering women to break away from the vicious circle of poverty.” The panel discussion moderated by Behram Pastakia was extremely well received.

Nurelle Mehta, a Political Science student at Brock University in Ontario, presented the problems faced by rural villages in India, illustrating how lack of education, no access to clean

water, malnutrition and lack of employment contribute to the vicious circle of poverty. The panel went on to show powerful examples of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and the private sector



UPCOMING DATES

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

April 6, 2014

All NA Zoroastrian Religious
Tele-Class; 11:00 a.m. (EST)
Contact dastur @
comcast.net

April 13, 2014

Persian Day Parade 2014.
New York City. Madison Ave
(38th to 26th Sts). Noon.

May 1-4, 2014

*Faiths Coming Together
Through Awareness,
Compassion and Justice
Conference.* Edmonton,
Alberta.
www.edmontoncpr.ca

May 4-June 1, 2014

HPY 2014. [Holiday
Programme for Youth]
Mumbai. <http://hpy.co.in>

May 16-18, 2014

*FEZANA Annual General
Meeting*, Bellevue, WA.
Hosted by ZSWS

July 2-6, 2014

14th Zoroastrian Games. Los
Angeles, CA.
<http://www.zathletics.com/>

August 10-13, 2014

*North American Interfaith
Network (NAIN) Conference.*
Wayne State University,
Detroit, MI. <http://nain.org/>

December 29-31, 2014

17th North American
Zoroastrian Congress,
Los Angeles, California
www.nazc2014.org

ingredients for malnourished women and children which only costs \$3 per month per child.

Rayomond Dinshaw, a Law student from Queen's University, Ontario, Canada did a great job of putting together the panelists' presentations. He also attended a panel session on International Women's Day where the speakers were UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-Moon, and former US Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton. You can also read about Rayomond's CSW experience in upcoming FEZANA publications.

About FEZANA UN-NGO Committee

The FEZANA UN-NGO Committee is always looking for participants to join the committee. CSW59/Beijing+20 (2015) at United Nations Headquarters in New York, is tentatively scheduled for March 9 – 20, 2015 - See more at: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/csw/csw59-2015>

If you are interested in being a part of a great team, please send an email with your resume and letter of intent to ALL 3 of the following individuals:

Homi D. Gandhi (homidgandhi (@) gmail.com)
Behram Pastakia (bpastakia (@) aol.com)
Afreed Mistry (afreed.mistry (@) gmail.com)

FEZANA, as an NGO in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council and with the Department of Public information of the UN will register selected participants to facilitate access to meetings, discussions groups and conferences, but will not provide financial support. All attendees are expected to make their own arrangements for visas, tickets, accommodation, food and transportation in the city. □

Reflections of the CSW 2014 Conference

by Mani Rao



This last week, I had an opportunity to attend the U.N. 58th conference on the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW 2014) in New York City along with other members of the FEZANA UN-NGO Committee. The delegation was led by Afreed Mistry from Toronto, Canada.

The Program started with a Consultation Day, early Sunday morning which gave us an overall agenda for CSW 58. Listening to women leaders, Doon-Young Yoon, UN representative for the International Alliance of Women and Chair, NGO/CSW/NY and Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director, UN Women, was not only inspiring but uplifting. Panel discussions were very encouraging and exhilarating including Moderator/Panelist Malika Dutt (CEO and President of Breakthrough Organization) on "Legacy of the 1990's UN conferences and what do we plan for Beijing conference for 2015." In my opinion, attendees, especially first time delegates, should attend this Consultation Day program.

Our presentation on "**Empowering Women to Break Away from the Vicious Circle of Poverty**" was very successful. The presenters were Tanya Bharda, Nurelle Mehta, Afreed Mistry, Behram Pastakia and myself. Rayomond Dinshaw put together the panelists' presentation. Homi Gandhi filled in during the question-answer part of the session. The room was filled completely, no chair was left to sit and some attendees had to stand. The audience was very attentive and interactive. It was a rewarding and gratifying experience to do the presentation.



SCHOLARSHIPS

NAIN Young Adult Scholarships

The North American Interfaith Network (NAIN) offers a unique opportunity to include younger representatives (ages 16-35) in a valuable interfaith encounter during the 2014 NAINConnect in Detroit, Michigan. This scholarship recognizes young adults across the continent who are actively engaged in important work at all levels.

If you are passionate about interfaith work, you are encouraged to apply.

Application deadline is April 15, 2014

For details or to download the application, [click here](#).

SCHOLARSHIPS

Vakhshoori Scholarship Recipients Announced

The Vakhshoori Scholarship Recipients, 2013-14 have been announced. For details, [click here](#).

The Vakhshoori Scholarship (formerly Ahura scholarship) was created with an eye toward fostering the next generation of community leaders. Each spring the Scholarships are awarded to promising Zoroastrian students at the undergraduate and graduate levels in the U.S. and abroad.

I am thankful to FEZANA NGO committee, especially Homi Gandhi, Behram Pastakia and Afreed Mistry who have done a great service by building up this platform at the UN level which gives access to Zoroastrian Youth to express their ideas and to learn and to have a global networking opportunity. I really encourage Zoroastrian Youth to participate and take advantage of this opportunity.

Overall this was a great experience and the icing on a cake was the opportunity to work with Zoroastrian Youth from Canada who were vibrant, loving, and respectful, an experience which I will cherish for a long time.

Mani Rao is a Health Benefit Consultant, Healthcare Solutions Team in Lombard, Illinois □

ZAH Celebrates the Advent of Nowrooz

To celebrate the advent of Nowrooz at Asia Society Texas Center, the Zoroastrian Association of Houston (ZAH) was in the forefront in organizing



Interactive session with the ZAH Dancers

family activities which were enjoyed by Houstonians at large. Vehishta Kaikobad, an Educator at Asia Society Texas Centre, planned and coordinated the event. Filled with art and craft activities that included Persian Miniature collage, Near Eastern architecture, egg decoration and book marks, Avan Bhatena's floral painting activity was extremely popular. The day was filled with melodious Iranian music played by Behzad and Kameh Keyghobadi and family. People were greeted by Giti

Darayan's spectacular display of Haft Seen table and Lyla Daroga gave visitors a stem of flowers, sprinkling of rose water and a mirror to see one's own smiling face to further capture the joy of event. Next to the Haft Seen table, was a most valuable Shahnameh displayed in a show case graciously loaned by Darioush Vafadari. The Persian atmosphere was further enhanced by free-standing banners of Persepolis reliefs assembled by Aspi Colah and Kaemerz Dotiwala's recitation from the Shahnameh.

Participation from the Iranian Cultural Foundation and the Agha Khan Council further enhanced the program, while Arzan Gonda's ZAH girls stole the show with their beautiful dancing depicting spring time. □

All NA Zoroastrian Religious Tele-Class 16 Sunday April 6th 2014, 11am (EST)

Open to all, the next All NA Zoroastrian Religious Tele Class will present a detailed history of the Gahambar: their importance; how they were celebrated in Iran in the past and today; how they were celebrated in India in the past and continued to date; and how the various diasporas all over the world celebrate them today.

These Tele-Classes have become a valuable educational resource available to the North American Zarathushti community. To obtain class materials and tele-conferencing instructions contact Erv. Soli Dastur: dastur (@) comcast.net.



SHARING INSPIRATION

Pratham USA

Pratham's mission is to ensure "Every Child is in School and Learning Well." The organization was founded on the firm belief that education is the fundamental right of every child and no child should be deprived of this basic right simply because they don't have access to school or resources that would enable them to realize their dreams. Find out what Pratham is doing to advance education for India's underserved children and communities.

[Click here](#) to view newsletter.

ARCHIVES

First issue of *Peshutan* [March 1948] is available in electronic format

Peshutan, a Zoroastrian monthly publication, that debuted in March 1948, was published in Farsi and English and had a circulation in Iran and India.

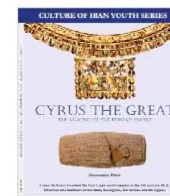
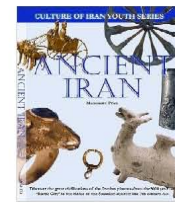
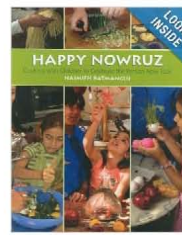
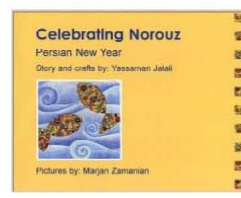
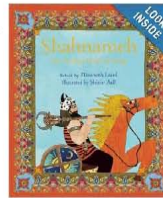
The timeless articles of this publication were, in many ways, years ahead of its time and is still unique in many aspects of Zoroastrian publications to date.

The first issue of *Peshutan* is available in electronic form through the efforts of Mr. Daryush Keshavarz, president of the Zoroastrian Association of Sweden.

[Click here](#) to view.

NOWROOZ MUBARAK FROM FIRES

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www.fires-fezana.org

ENTERPRISE DUBAI
19th -21st Dec, 2014

Enterprise Dubai presents
BUSINESS CONTEST
IDEA, INNOVATE & IMPLEMENT

A business competition that honors the best and brightest innovators and entrepreneurs.
So turn your ideas into business and participate now.

Prize Money

First Prize - Aed 30,000/- (US\$ 8,000/- or Rs. 5,00,000/-)
Second Prize - Aed 12,000/- (US\$ 3,000/- or Rs. 2,00,000/-)

Application deadline: July 31, 2014 to enterprisedubai2014@gmail.com

For guidelines and application, [click here](#).