

FEZANA *bulletin*

September 2015 / VOLUME 5 • ISSUE 9



UPCOMING DATES

October 9-11, 2015

Survival of Zoroastrians in North America. Hosted by ZAH Library – Home of FIRES. Houston, TX. ahsethna (@) yahoo.com

Oct 11 2015 -Jan 24, 2016

Parsi Silk and Muslin from Iran, India and China Exhibition; East West Center, Honolulu, HI. [East West Center Arts Program](#)

October 13, 2015

Persepolis: Images of an Empire. [Oriental Institute – Univ of Chicago.](#)

October 15-19, 2015

[2015 Parliament of the World's Religions.](#) Salt Lake City.

October 22, 2015

Book Launch of Madhur Jaffrey's "Vegetarian India"; Hunter College, NYC. Visit [IAAC literary](#)

December 18-20, 2015

World Zarathushti Chamber of Commerce (WZCC) Annual General Meeting. Panaji, Goa, India. <http://wzcc.net>

December 25-27, 2015

Iranshah Udvada Utsav (IUU); Udvada, India <http://www.iuu.org.in/>

Dec 28, 2015-Jan 2, 2016

6th World Zoroastrian Youth Congress. Auckland, NZ <http://www.6wzyc.co.nz/>

February 18-19, 2016

2016 Winter Youth Assembly at the United Nations, New York City. Visit faf.org

March 19-May 29, 2016

International Everlasting Flame Programme MoMA India; Parzor: UNESCO.

April 29-May 1, 2016

FEZANA AGM. Novi, Michigan admin@fezana.org

FEZANA Prepares for Parliament of the World's Religions in Salt Lake City

Represented by a group of nearly twenty Zarathusthis from the U.S. and Canada, FEZANA will be actively contributing to the upcoming Parliament of the World's Religions to take place next month in Salt Lake City, Utah from October 15-19, 2015. Over the past year, the group, led by Shernaz Minwalla and Maneck Bhujwala, co-chairs of the FEZANA Interfaith Activities Committee, has been



preparing. Presentation proposals were submitted to the organizers of the Parliament and, due to their persistence and hard work, FEZANA has been approved to sponsor and conduct five panels and presentations during the world class event expected to be attended by thousands of participants.

Participants from FEZANA include: Roya Azarkeyvan; Erv. Jehan Bagli; Mobedyar Maneck Bhujwala; Dolly Dastoor; Homi Gandhi; Khosro Mehrfar; Roya Mehrfar; Firdosh Mehta; Shernaz Minwalla; Marukh Motafram; Ariyan Parvaresh; Behram Pastakia; Erv. Rayomand Ravji; Rohinton Rivetna; Roshan Rivetna; Sam Vesuna; Arzan Wadia; Erv. Kobad Zarolia. Shirin and Russi Ghadiali from Singapore are also joining the FEZANA team at the Parliament.

FEZANA Presentations [Excerpts taken from event program schedule]:

1. *Demonstration of a Zoroastrian Thanksgiving Ritual – The Jashan Ceremony*

PANELISTS: Erv Jehan Bagli, Mobedyar Maneck Bhujwala, Erv Rayomand Ravji
There are many things to be thankful about. Zoroastrians consider themselves to be the co-workers of Ahura Mazda and are enjoined to move His creation to a blissful state that they call *Frasho Kereti*. They invoke the Divine often in all that they do, "Khosnothra Ahura Mazda," and ask for His guidance and wisdom and remain grateful for His providence. Zoroastrian priests will give a short demonstration of this *Jashan* ceremony (Thanksgiving ceremony) and provide a brief explanation. This presentation will give you an insight into the Zoroastrian faith and why Zoroastrians consider themselves to be stewards of creation.

2. *Relationship with the Divine as Manifested by Various Faiths*

PANELISTS: Erv Jehan Bagli (Moderator and Presenter); Rabbi Michael Balinsky; Bibi Jasbir Kaur; Dr. Susan Kopp

While the worship of the Divine is a common thread that weaves through the mosaic of all faiths, the relationship of an individual with the Divine differs from Faith to Faith. This presentation will attempt to bring clarity to the relationships with the Divine as manifested by various faiths and seek to find that common thread of spirituality that binds us. Faith practitioner from various faiths will be invited to write a paper, approximately 1500 words with a short summary. The summaries will be presented followed by questions and answers. Electronic submission of the papers to admin@fezana.org shall be compiled into a booklet, courtesy of FEZANA and be made available to Interfaith groups as a legacy of the Parliament.



Federation of
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(FEZANA)

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status (Roster) with the
Economic and Social
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FEZANA INFO

Society of Scholars of Zoroastrianism Conference Convenes in Chicago



Dasturji Khurshed Dastur Kaikobad Dastoor -- Vada Dasturji of Shree Pak Iranshah Atash Behram at Udvada and featured guest at the Society of Scholars of Zoroastrianism (SSZ) Conference, hosted by the Zoroastrian Association of Chicago -- spoke about *Living a Zarathushti Life* to the engrossed crowd on September 19, 2015. **[See full story in the FEZANA Journal, Winter 2015]**

[PARLIAMENT OF THE WORLD'S RELIGIONS, CONT.]

3. *Stewardship of the Environment*

PANELISTS: Mobedyar Maneck Bhujwala; Erv Jehan Bagli; Dr. Rajwant Singh; Dr Khosro Mehrfar (Moderator and Presenter)

Zoroastrians strongly assert that Creation is sacred for it is the making of the Divine. The initial declaration of the Principle of Global Ethics confirmed by the Parliament of World Religion 1993 reiterates this notion, when it says, 'Our Earth is experiencing fundamental crisis in global economy, global ecology and global politics.....Our planet continues to be ruthlessly plundered. A collapse of the ecosystem threatens us'. By Zoroastrian theology, humanity is a coworker with the Divine and the steward of the creation. It is the duty and the responsibility of mankind to preserve, and protect the environment. We cannot change the earth for the better, unless we can influence a change in the consciousness of the individuals. The question is how do we spread this notion through the Faith communities that it is a part of their function to bring this idea to their congregation? It is a process of education of the human race. We shall invite faith groups to participate and contribute to this Global issue that demands a critical balance of risk and sacrifice through positive thinking.

4. *The Interfaith Model – Does It Need Tweaking?*

PANELISTS: Erv Jehan Bagli; Mobedyar Maneck Bhujwala; Prof Tarunjit Butalia, Shernaz Minwalla; Michael Terrien; Rohinton Rivetna (Moderator and Presenter)

It is said that there will be no peace in this world until there is peace between the religions; and peace between the religions can only come from dialogue between the religions. The Interfaith model given to us by the first Parliament of World's Religions (1893) is to do just that - dialogue with each other of different faiths in order that it brings understanding of each other and to highlight commonalities. It is hoped that understanding breeds respect for the other and generates a peaceful existence. The world as we know it is in travail. Those of us engaged in Interfaith



CONNECTIONS

A & T Directory Update for Ex Pakistani Zarathushtis in the US/Canada

Calling all ex Pakistani Zarathushtis...

Please send your updated information for the rear of the A & T directory printed in Karachi of our community who live in Pakistan, but you whom we consider 'ours' are also included. Please do not write your children's names. Only those who lived in Pakistan and now are in the US.

All that is required :

Surname
Name
Name of spouse nee town-city
State
Country
Email ids

Please send to:
toxy39 (at) gmail.com
by the October 10, 2015.
Thank you.

work constitute a community. This community has albeit expanded as more and more interfaith groups spring up all over the globe. However its spread has been limited. A majority of people of faith appear generally to have been untouched by the spirituality vested in Interfaith activity. The question is how do we disseminate this Vision and bring it to the mainstream. People of faith will be invited to comment. The proceedings will be collected admin@fezana.org and presented to the CPWR as a legacy of the Parliament, courtesy of the Federation of Zoroastrian Associations of North America (FEZANA).

5. A Petition for the Establishment of a Religious Arm of the United Nations

PANELISTS: Homi Gandhi (Moderator and Presenter); Dr. Harbans Lal; Dr. Khosro Mehrfar; Rohinton Rivetna; Dr. Satpal Singh

The Mission of the United Nations (UN) is to generate world peace yet the world is in travail. The UN is a secular body while a majority of the conflicts around the world have a religious undertone. There are many who feel that the UN Charter ought to be modified to permit a permanent Council of Religious Leaders who may speak out with one voice. After all, no religion promotes violence. To that end this presentation will invite people of faith to speak in favor and or against this proposition. A petition signed by delegates attending the Parliament in favor of this proposition will be presented to the Secretary General of the UN with a draft Charter for consideration following the Parliament, courtesy of FEZANA and any other body that wishes to join.

FEZANA is also planning to have an exhibit booth at the event.

To be an integral player in this world class event is indeed an honor. We thank the FEZANA Interfaith Activities Committee co-chairs, Shernaz Minwalla and Mobedyar Maneck Bhujwala, and the many Zarathushtis who are participating, for their tireless efforts and coordination in anticipation of the Parliament. **[See the Winter 2015 issue of the FEZANA Journal for full coverage of the Parliament.]** □

ZAH Library Annual Gala Event to be Held

The ZAH Library – home of FIRES - is holding its 12th annual gala event on October 9, 10 and 11 which will be held at the Zarathushti Heritage and Cultural Center, Houston. The theme: "Survival of Zoroastrians in North America: Potential for a Positive Outlook" is hotly debated these days. The focus will be on how the diaspora in North America can thrive and remain a vibrant force for decades to come.

Two outstanding experts, who have studied the issues and can present viable alternatives to address this important topic, will make presentations. **Dr. Rashna Writer**, author of several books and recognized speaker, will present the strategic planning required to ensure a thriving Zoroastrian community in the North American diaspora. The second speaker, **Roshan Rivetna** has studied and researched this issue for several years and will present data on population trends, etc. that will highlight the problem before us. She will present action items that will inspire us to action, especially the younger generation. The two talks in the morning session on Saturday, Oct 10, will be followed by a panel discussion featuring younger members of the community in the afternoon. The panelists **Zia Anklesaria, Nozer Dungor, Tannaz Macchi and Toshar Mondegarian** will share their perspective of the future of Zoroastrianism in North America. On the next day, Sunday, there will be a 2-hour informal question-and-answer session.

Details of the event can be found on the event flyer. To view or download, visit the [ZAH website](#). □



BOOK AWARENESS



The final book in the bestselling Ibis trilogy by Amitav Gosh, ***Flood of Fire***, is full of historical detail, where Shireen Modi, a determined widow is enroute to China to reclaim her opium-trader husband's wealth and reputation. While Gosh's books are compelling fiction, FIRES has another recommendation.



China and the Making of Bombay by Madhavi Thampi and Shalini Saksena, is a well-researched book that focuses on the families who played a leading role in Bombay's economic and civic life in the nineteenth century who owed their fortunes to China trade. China was the major market for raw cotton and opium exported through the port of Bombay. This trade was also the springboard for the growth of its dockyard and textile industry and left its imprint on artistic and cultural tastes and traditions in India.

Visit our website at
<http://www.fires-fezana.org/>

Florida Zarathushtis Host Udvada's Vada Dasturji Khurshed



ZATAMBAY group greeting Dasturji Khurshed and his wife Havovi from Udvada. [Left to right]: Havovi Dastoor, Anahita Tamboli (Hostess), Sarosh Tamboli, Dasturji Khurshed, Hoshedar Tamboli (Host), Jo Ann and Soli Dastur



Dr. Hovi Shroff – Zoroastrian Association of Florida's children class teacher – presenting the Ashirwad ceremony at a gathering on September 13, with over 70 people in attendance including Dasturji Khurshed [upper right]

Faiths for Earth Campaign Appeal for Action

By Homi D. Gandhi

I am writing to you concerning one of the greatest challenges that the believers of the world's religions and all men and women of goodwill face today: protecting the earth and its climate.

Climate change is one of the greatest challenges of our time. If we stay on our current course, we can expect more devastating natural disasters, more shortages of food and water, more mass migration, and new threats to our health and security. These effects will hurt all of us -- but especially the hungry, the sick, and the poor.

People of diverse faiths and goodwill understand that it is our collective responsibility to protect our world of abundance and flourishing. We are called upon to care for the Earth, which shelters and sustains all life. For this reason, I join with global faith leaders in the Faiths for Earth campaign to reach out to persons of goodwill to take action to protect all that we love and care for. As people of faith, we must commit ourselves to taking action to preventing the worst impacts of catastrophic climate change.

Will you accept this noble duty to protect our earth?

Join the Faiths for Earth Campaign to Protect Our Earth by signing the online petition of your respective country here: <http://faithsforearth.org/>

FEZANA had supported Meher Sidhwa (a sustainable energy professional) for a "Teach-in" of Earth-Faith-Peace in Hyde Park, New York last month. [See [FEZANA Bulletin, August 2015.](#)] The Teach-In was a preliminary event to involve youth from various faiths for this "Faiths for Earth" program. Meher is one of the four youth from the Teach-In, selected to attend the International Climate Change United Nations meeting in Paris in November 2015. Meher will speak on the Zoroastrian Faith's perspective to protect our shared planet from the ravages of Climate Change.

This is also a call to support Meher's presentation at the UN meeting in Paris by signing the petition and thus showing our community's support from Zoroastrian Faith's perspective. □



FEZANA Academic Scholarships, 2015-16 Announced

The 2015-16 FEZANA Academic Scholarships have been awarded. The Academic Scholarship Committee was greatly impressed by the high caliber of applications received. This year, fourteen recipients were awarded scholarships:

BANOUBAI AND MANECKSHAW KAPADIA ENDOWMENT SCHOLARSHIP

Rohan Chakraborty (*University of California - Berkeley*)

FEZANA 25th ANNIVERSARY ENDOWMENT SCHOLARSHIP

Armene Modi (*Fletcher School, Tufts University*)

FEZANA ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIPS FOR UNDERGRADUATE AND POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

Ratushtar Kapadia (*University of California – Los Angeles*)

Tanaz Naterwala (*North Western University*)

Kashmin Dalal (*Kent State University*)

Jall Cowasji (*TISCH School of Arts, New York University*)

Bahman Jamasbi (*University of Virginia*)

Rustom Dalal (*Brandeis University*)

MEHRABAN AND MORVORID KHERADI ENDOWMENT SCHOLARSHIP - THE FEZANA SCHOLAR

Parmis Khosravi (*Catholic University of America, Washington DC*)

MORVARID GUIV ENDOWMENT SCHOLARSHIPS

Cyrus Patell (*University of Pittsburgh*)

Ayesha Rabadi (*Teachers College, Columbia University*)

PURVEZ AND ABAN RUSTOMJI ENDOWMENT SCHOLARSHIP

Friyana Sidhwa (*Texas A&M University*)

DR. MINOCHER RUSTOM VESUNA WZO CANADA SCHOLARSHIP

Sepideh Noruziaan (*University of Western Ontario*)

DOWLET MINOCHER VESUNA WZO CANADA SCHOLARSHIP

Urvaksh Daver (*University of Ontario Institute of Technology*)

[Look for full write-ups on the scholarships and their recipients in the Spring 2016 issue of the FEZANA Journal.]

2016 Winter Youth Assembly at the UN

**United Nations Headquarters, New York
February 18-19, 2016**

Agenda: ***Transforming Our World: The Role of Youth in the Implementation of the Sustainable Developmental Goals***

As the world embarks on a new set of development goals for the next 15 years, today's youth generation is placed in a crucial moment in history to make them into reality.

Are you ready to take this challenge?

Registration opens on October 1, 2015.

<http://www.faf.org/main/youthassembly/registration/>



Zarathushtis Attend Community Reception to Welcome Prime Minister of India

By Poruz Khambatta



On September 27, 2015, Shri Narendra Modi, the Honorable Prime Minister of India, visited Silicon Valley. A Community reception was held at the SAP Center in San Jose which was attended by thousands. This marked the first visit to California by any Indian head of state since Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru visited San Francisco in 1949.



The Prime Minister gave a rousing address to the energized crowd who had filled an arena to hear him speak. He thanked those in the United States who were part of the Indian diaspora for showing the rest of the world the many talents of the Indian people. Furthermore, Prime Minister Modi discussed India's strong emergence on the international stage over the last few decades and his plans for continuing

and accelerating the development of the world's largest democracy.

Thanks to the efforts of Bomi Patel and Nazneen and Ehler Spliedt, FEZANA and ZANC (Zarthoshti Anjuman of Northern California) worked in unison to build a strong Zoroastrian presence at the event. Eighty-five Zoroastrians registered to attend the historic event, and some even wore traditional Parsi attire (pictured here). The Prime Minister has always been very supportive of Zoroastrians and will be visiting Udvada on December 25-27 to celebrate the Iranshah Udvada Utsav. Those in attendance will include many of our Zoroastrians from North America as well as Ratan Tata, who will be recognized during the festivities. □

Zarathushtis Join Celebration of the New Year Festival of Faiths



On September 20, members from the Zoroastrian Association of Chicago participated among eight other religious faiths, in the "Celebration of the New Year Festival of Faiths" sponsored by the Council of Religious Leaders of Chicago. **[See full story in the FEZANA Journal, Winter 2015]**