

Message from Framroze K Patel: November 2001

*Chief
Justice Of
India:*

A fellow Zarathushti, Justice S P Bharucha was on November 1, 2001 was sworn-in as the Chief Justice of India. Honorable President K R Narayanan (a Tata Scholar) administered the oath of office to Justice Bharucha at a solemn ceremony at Asoka Hall in Rashtrapati Bhavan, official residence of the president.

*S P
Bharucha*

Justice Bharucha, considered a strict Constitutionalist, will hold office for six months. While paying tribute to Justice Bharucha, a former chief justice A M Ahmadi said, "Justice Bharucha is a strong, upright judge who likes to go by the letter of the law. Recently Justice Bharucha nullified appointment of a very powerful and prominent Chief Minister of an Indian state, declaring that people's mandate could not subvert the Constitution and asserting that judiciary could debar corrupt and convicted individuals from holding constitutional office. In addition to Justice Bharucha currently another prominent Zarathushti, Mr. Soli Sorabji occupies the position of Attorney General of India. The Attorney General of India performs functions similar to Solicitor General of United States and represents and advises the Central Government. Most recently he represented the Government of India in the International Court of Justice, at the Hague.

In Pakistan Justice Dorab Patel served with distinction as a Chief Justice of Supreme Court of Pakistan. He resigned as a justice when the military rule was imposed. Justice Dorab was a man of impeccable integrity. When Justice Dorab Patel died even the Chief Justice of "Sharit" (Court of Islamic Laws) paid him glowing tribute. On his death a significant portion of his estate went to public charities.

*The
Congress
2002*

The 12th American Congress will be held July 4-7, 2002 in Chicago. The Congress is hosted by Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Chicago (ZAC) and sponsored by FEZANA. The Chairperson, Miss Rashna Ghadialy and her team have, at various times, done their best to address the issues and concerns some of you have raised. As it is a FEZANA sponsored event, let me, on behalf of FEZANA administrators, highlight the positives:

Financial Success is due to Excellent Organization and Sweat Equity of Volunteers:

☞ 1990 Houston Congress set a standard, which each successive Congresses tried, to accomplish and surpass. Philadelphia, New York reported surplus in excess of \$60,000. Vancouver also reported a small surplus.

☞ These surpluses to a large extent are due to favorable factors, such as:

- Higher than projected attendance, rigid control over expenditures, skillful negotiation with the management of hotel, particularly, credit, payment terms, minimum room night guarantee, and food cost,

☞ ZAGNY was required to pay most of the cost only seven days before the event, and the balance on thirty days credit. Chicago terms are not that favorable, they have to make substantial advance payment very early.

- Donations and Advertisement revenue,
- Aggressive effort to get as much advertisement revenue as possible, and
- Volunteers absorbing the cost incurred by them. This results in higher surplus.

☞ While budgeting for the event the organizers have to take conservative approach. Even though the main objective of the Congress is not to "make money," if there is a surplus it goes to the community. (FEZANA gets \$5 per attendee from the organizers).

☞ The guideline from FEZANA to the organizers emphasizes that the principal goals of the Congress are:

- Participation by a large segment of the community, a well balanced program, and an enthusiastic and active participation by youth, both, as organizers and speakers.

☞ The organizers of each congress discuss at length and in detail the factors affecting the event before the contracts are signed. I have no doubt that ZAC has arrived at a decision having considered all pertinent and relevant factors, such as noted below, but, not limited to:

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2002*

- *Location* (a city or suburban location),
- *Venue* (a prestigious hotel or a university campus or rental of Church hall),
- *Registration Fee* (should we subsidize Students and or Seniors),
- *Financially Successful of the Event* (Should we aim at moderate or a high degree of surplus or financial results should NOT be a primary goal?),
- *Lunch & Dinners*: Is it essential to provide lunch/dinners?
If lunch and dinners are not the part of the program the registration could be lower.
The attendees would select the eatery of their preference.

✍ Traditionally, FEZANA has wisely chosen to let the organizing association use their best judgment. The role of the Congress Committee Chairman is to liaison with the host association and FEZANA administrators. FEZANA should provide additional guidelines for future events.

Here is my personal suggestion to the organizers of future congresses that if a Zarathushti wants to attend the just lectures ONLY, and does not want to participate in paid functions he or she should have the opportunity to attend a Zarathushti event at a minimum cost.

ZAC's Distinctive Program

✍ The sessions will focus on fostering an intergenerational perspective, presenting role models within the North American Zarathushti community, particularly:

- Regionalism: The session will showcase how Zarathushti communities can strengthen and grow by developing regional communications and support structures that strengthen the community.
- Interfaith: This session will address the importance of understanding, sharing and growing with other religious communities.
- Elders: The organizers have planned to address issues confronting aging population of our community.

These issues are at the heart of the future community in North America. The entire program will emphasize audience participation. The organizers are finalizing the arrangements with the session chairs. A detailed program will be published as soon as it is ready in January.

The Community Ultimately benefits

We have heard your comments relative to registration fee. Please bear in mind that this event is a four-day affair. All previous congresses were limited to two and half days. The registration fee includes: four meals of which three are planned as banquets. A subsidized rate is offered to students and seniors over seventy. The ZAC has publicly stated that the surplus will be utilized for Welfare, Education, Building and Mobe Education Funds.

I trust this information will encourage you to participate enthusiastically. *ZAC needs your support by registering early.* Not only will you save on registration fees by registering before December 31, 2001, but also can book your travel now at unprecedented low rate. Should you or congregation need additional information visit:

zac@zac-chicago.org or call 630-789-1983

Please book your tickets through Zarathushti owned travel agency. If you book your travel plans through internet you might save a dollar or two, at the most. Zarathushti travel agents are best of the best. They need your support, now. It is not only imperative, but also our moral responsibility to support Zarathushti businesses.

*ZYNA
Needs
Delegates*

Miss Sherazade Mehta, co-chair of Zoroastrian Youth of North America (ZYNA), had made an appeal during the last AGM that ZYNA needs enthusiastic volunteers to act as liaison between the Member Associations and ZYNA. The delegates will represent the youth of the respective member associations, and work closely with ZYNA. Miss Mehta and her team are planning fundraising activity shortly. As representatives of Youth, ZYNA is actively involved with ZAC Congress team. In

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order to promote the Congress among the youth, ZYNA needs the delegates from each FEZANA member association. Would you kindly advise the young Zarathushtis who are willing to participate in the activities of ZYNA to contact Sherazade Mehta at

sherazadem@yahoo.com or 617-327-125.

*Views By
Delna Weil
Of ZAC*

Noted below are the views of Delna Weil, who is an eight-grade student from Chicago who wishes she had more answers than questions about the tragedy of September 11.

I was asked to submit my thoughts on the lessons to be learned by our community from the September 11 incident. I noticed the way the terms “good” and “evil” were used in media to describe what happened on that day. Those words suggest that everything about the event, including what may have led to it and what has resulted from it so far can be seen as clear-cut, black and white. The atrocious acts committed were unforgivable, but the issues surrounding September 11 are too complex to be characterized as just “good” and “evil.” They bring up questions that we must consider in order to understand the situation more clearly. For example:

- What sort of people would have such a disregard for human life? Why do they hate those who don't agree with their point of view that they'd be willing to forfeit their lives, as well as massacre thousands of families, hope, and future? Could the people who committed these violent acts have been motivated by a sense of “good and evil” that is different from us? Why can't human beings live and let live? It is important for us in the Zarathushti community to build understanding with other religions and don't isolate ourselves from the bigger world around us.

*8th Zarathushti
Games*

The 8th Zarathushti Games, organized by the Zoroastrian Sports Committee (ZSC) of FEZANA, will be held from July 3 to July 7 2002 in Los Angeles. Nothing has the power to unite Zarathushti youth as does the sports. Zarathushti Games, held on College campus, will include various sports and social activities. We are requesting Zarathushti Associations to sponsor their teams so that team's name along with that of the organization can be displayed at the games. This will help the youth to realize that even though we are scattered across the globe, Zarathushtis are actively working to advance our community and guide our youth to cherish the good religion for generations to come. If you have suggestion, contact the committee at:

zsc@fezana.org Phone: 310-219-8811 or 520-395-5748 (Fax).

*Committee
Reports*

The Working Group headed by Mrs. Khorshed Jungalwala is expected to submit the recommendations of the Final Report to FEZANA Administrators by December 10.

The Constitution Amendment Committee, Chaired by Firdosh Mehta, has circulated the Revised “November 2001” Draft of the Constitution along with the BY-Laws to all Member Associations as per the motion at the AGM to submit the Amendments for your review SIX months before the next AGM, which will be in Montreal, on the Memorial Day weekend, 25,26 and 27 May 2002.

Please try to respond to Firdosh Mehta per the schedule sent so that we can complete this endeavor by the next AGM. It is my desire that you will focus on the practical workability of this document with a compromising outlook, so that we can move forward in an expeditious manner. If the majority members indicate the need to have their representatives meet in person, then we will arrange for a meeting in the end of March 2002, in a Central location. It is my fervent hope that you will support the monumental work with your replies, expeditiously.

*Zarathushtis
of
New Orleans*

Mr. Rohinton K Tarapore, a community leader at New Orleans reports:

We are a close-knit community of seventeen families. We meet once a month at one of the family's home. The normal program is a religious education session for the young Zarathushtis conducted by Meher Banajee. One of the youngsters makes a short presentation on a pre-assigned topic. After that all present partake in “Hum-Bandagi” prayers, including Sarosh Baaj, and Tandorasti. After prayers the families have potluck luncheon. During high holidays of Gatha, we meet every evening for prayers. We invite all those who want to partake in religious ceremony. We are proud of our heritage and keep the flame of Zarathushti din alive in our hearts and make sincere effort to follow the teachings of the Prophet Zarathushtra.