

BAHERAMSHAH SHROFF OPENED THE TREASURE CHEST OF ILM-E-KHSHNOOM 100 YEARS AGO.

This Humble Parsi Pukar Has Completed 10 Years.

It was a day somewhere in 1906/07. The dawn broke out with a radiant ray of the divine Yazatic Light. The Bulbuls and Cuckoos burst out into unheard of melodies. The flowers emanated heavenly fragrance all around. The leaves on the trees gracefully swung into a dance.

Some grace, divine and beautiful, is to descend today on the tiny globe. Some mystery is to be proclaimed by Mother Nature.....

The evening arrives. A Parsi gentleman with an impressive beard and a 'Chinai' pagdi is standing outside an Aderaan called Bag-e-Parsaa in Surat. He requests a Mobed inside to come out, and hands over to him some sandalwood piece to be put on the Holy Aaderaan Atash and some money. The Mobed takes it respectfully. The bearded Parsi gentleman does not enter the Holy Fire Temple and turns towards the road. Suddenly his eyes fall on a nearby verenda - type place. Some Parsi boys are assembled there. An elderly gentleman with the Parsi Fenta is sitting with them. They seem to be having some discourse and discussion. The bearded Parsi gentleman stops and looks on inquisitively. The eyes of the elderly leader of the assembly fell on him. "Come Saheb," he said invitingly. The bearded sir entered and sat on a chair in a corner. The assembly discussion was on Atash in general and "Aater-e-Vohu Friaan" in particular. After sometime the discussion was over and the boys were about to disperse, when the eyes of the bearded sir flashed a little; he raised his hand and spoke in a soft sweet voice, "Boys! You were discussing about Aatar-e-Vohu Friaan, but do you know about Aatar-e-Dara, Aatar-e-Nayiriyosangh, Aatare-Frah and other Aatash's?"

THAT Voice! The elderly chief of the assembly had a silent tremor in his heart. He gazed to the bearded sir. Their eyes met. The tremor increased. He spoke out, "Sir! We have not heard even the names of these different Atash's! Please tell us...."

The bearded Sir was Baheramshah Navroji Shroff, and the assembly leader was Manchershah Pallonji Kaikobad, a renowned teacher, in Surat, actually the headmaster of the Mission School.

The polite coaxing voice of Manchershah inspired a significant smile on the bearded sir, Baheramshah Shroff..... and he started speaking. That was the moment the Mother Earth was waiting for. Baheramshahji was opening the lid of the Treasure Chest of Mystical Revelations of the Zarthoshti Din.

He spoke before the assembly for some minutes. His words were like some technical lecture on some unknown matters about Atash, in Persianised Gujarati. Everybody was aghast at the flow of words. Manchershah Master (as he was known in Surat) had a queer feeling within him. He felt as if some very remote memories were flashing some faint glimpses of light. "I have heard this before, yet I hardly understand. Can this man be not the Parsi Guru I was waiting for?" He was thinking.

"Sir," he said, "what you spoke, we hardly followed. Would you please speak again slowly - slowly (Aaste aaste), so that we may understand what we can?"

Baheramshahji repeated almost word by word, but in slow motion. Manchershah felt as if his memory centres were vibrating fumblingly, as if trying to open up, but unsuccessfully. One more push may be necessary.

"Sir, we are not yet clear," he was emboldened to say with an earnest sincerity, "if you, sir, would take the trouble of speaking once again, we will try to understand as much as we can. We are very anxious to know."

This time Baheramshahji's smile was more radiant. "Sure, sure" he said and spoke out for the third time the same narration.

The memory harp in Munchersshah's heart was giving out some remote melody. Some points were clearly comprehensible. He turned to the boys and tried to explain to them in his own words what was spoken by Baheramshahji. "Sir" he asked Baheramshahji, "have I understood properly as I have said?"

"Yes sir," Baheramshahji said in a sincere and little surprised tone, "You are very near (Ankereb)."

What surprised Munchersshah was that all the three narrations of Baheramshahji followed the same line of reasoning and elaboration as if he had thoroughly mastered the subject.

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That was the day when the Master, Ustad Saheb Baheramshah Shroff, opened the golden lid of the Treasure Chest of IIm-e-Khshnoom.

This happened hundred years back.

That assembly of young boys at Baag-e-Parsa Aderan Saheb was small, very small, perhaps less than a dozen. Yet each of them had, that day, a Nahn, spiritual bath of life. They became the disciples of the Master. Nothing is known about who they were, except that one of them was the well known angelic **Doctor Edalji Koyaji of Pune**, who remained the Master's disciple life long.

"Saheb! from where did you get this amazing Knowledge?" Baheramshahji was eagerly asked. Without a drop of any ego and little hesitatingly he revealed that he had the good fortune of being taken to a sacred place over the mount Demavand of Iran, where a band of highly, advanced Zarthoshti Ashavans have their secret abode. He was there during 1875-78, at his age of 17 years and stayed there for about 3^{1/2} years. He was passed through certain spiritual disciplines and exercises, and his heart and mind were filled with Divine Knowledge. A hidden spring within him was pierced open.

A small fountain from that spring is sprinkling the Parsi Community for 100 long years and gives a heart throb of devotion to those who are spiritually destined to receive the sprinkles.

It is a long history spread over a century, as to how the Divine knowledge, termed by Ashavans as IIm-e-Khshnoom, percolated in the Community. Baheramshahji taught Khshnoom to the thirsty Parsis of Surat and in about 1908 was brought to Mumbai.

Since then the river of IIm-e-Khshnoom goes on running in the veins of the Community. Many are aware of it, some are in it, some are not aware of it, some avoid it deliberately, some scholars and Dastooris are highly jealous of it, some public men steal from it and yet pretend to ignore it, some have no capacity to understand it. Those who are in it have moulded their personal life around it. They are the happiest. The current of divine bliss ever flows in their heart in spite of all the troubles and toils of life. Life is a den of fire and yet they feel cool and calm in its midst. A Gujerati Saint has

sung:

અંદર પડયા મહાસુખ માણે
દેખાણહારા દાઝે જો ને.

"Those who have fallen in it are enjoying a great bliss (Ushtaa),

But look! those, who are onlookers from outside, get serious burns!"

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The propagation of IIm-e-Khshnoom have passed through various time-periods. A series of Khshnoom Magazines have kept the Khshnoom garden ever green.

There was "Frashogard" of Phiroze Masani from 1911 to 1943.

Then came Parsi Avaz floated by Jehangir Chiniwalla from 1947 to 1974 of which your humble KND was the Assistant Editor.

After the death of Jehangir, this humble KND floated Dini Avaz in 1976 and later handed it over to Cursetji Patel, the stalwart of Khshnoom-propagation. He flourished it with his tireless zeal in spite of being a leukemia patient for more than 15 years! After his death, Dini Avaz still continues.

Your humble servant KND floated this Parsi Pukar in July 1995. One aim was to propagate Khshnoom particularly in English. The other aim was to combat the onslaught of the faithless (otherwise called : reformists or liberals or non-conformists).

On the third cover page of this issue the main titles of the subject matters published in ten years (1995-2005) is given. They are taken from an exhaustive Index prepared by my bosom friend Malcolm Bhesania of California, a zealous colleague of Silloo Mehta. The index spread over 36 pages sets out the subjects "by category", with 35 headings. We have a few xeroxed copies of the full index which will be available at Mehlla Patel Agiary Library (a product of the stalwart Cursetji Patel) at Rs. 5 each.

Parsi Pukar has now entered its 11th Year in July 2005. This issue is Vol. 11-1 and bears the period July-August-September 2005 - Published in February 2006. (My apologies).

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I seek permission of my readers to say something on a personal note.

I have completed 79 years. IIm-e-Khshnoom is interwoven with my life and even my worldly career, since my age of 12 years. In school days i was with my kakaji, known as Baapaaji Rustom Dinshah Dastoor Meherji Rana, who was a dear disciple of Baheramshahji. In college days at Surat i was led to befriend an ardent practical Khshnoomist Soli Contractor, who was a near disciple of Bomanshah Hakim who was in turn a close disciple of Baheramshahji, and who had a number of miracles in his life. In college and thereafter in Mumbai, i was led to become the disciple of Chiniwalla brothers. I was the junior advocate of Jehangir Chiniwalla; and i learnt much Khshnoom from him and his brother Dr. Framroze Chiniwalla, who was the disciple in chief of Baheramshahji and who wrote 50000 pages of IIm-e-Khshnoom. I was with both the brothers till the days of their death: 6-8-1962 Framroze's and 13-10-1973, Jehangir's.

After Jehangir's death i was systematically drawn in the propagation of Khshnoom by the higher forces. I had a great teacher in Dosabhai Desai, a silent savant of Khshnoom and an idol of Armaity. I have written innumerable articles on Khshnoom and Modern Science, given 5000 lectures and conducted 15 religious camps in USA, inspired by Silloo Mehta's exertions.

All along, i have in my heart, in my mind, in my thought and in my consciousness, the 'Saheb-Delaan's of Daemavand, in whose Holy Orbit Baheramshahji was for 3^{1/2} years. "Saheb Delaan" is the Ashavan whose heart is the conscious abode of Sarosh Yazad, and who is ordained to carry out certain divine tasks as the holy deputies of Sarosh. Ashavan means one who has attained certain level of spiritual advancement, authority and power. Somehow, my faith in Saheb-Delaans augmented through the Sufi Poets, Rumi and Hafez. Hafez referred to them specifically by that name! Both the Poets are constantly reminding me of them, i dont know why.

The word Saheb-Delaan occurs in the 5th Gazal of Diwan-e-Hafez :

દેલ મી રવદ ઝ દસ્તમ સાહેબ દેલાન ખુદા રા
દરદા કે રાઝે પેનહાન ખાહદ શુદ આશકારા.

"Ai Saheb-Delaan! For sake of Khuda, (hear me) that my heart is going away from my hands;

It is my heart-felt Prayer that may the hidden secrets be revealed."

Hafez repeats "Pir-e-Magan" numerous times in his Diwan. Ustaad Baheramshah and Framroze Chiniwalla have said that "Pir-e-Magaan" refers to the Zarathoshti Ashavan who was Hafez's Guru and who led him on the Path of Islam, which was Hafez's birth-Religion. 'Magaan' is from 'Maga', 'Magav,' 'Magi.' All these words denote the Zarathushtrian Ashavan. Gatha Ha 53-7 has the words "Magahyaa", "Maghem". The three wise men of the East who came to see and bless the newly born Lord Jesus, are described as "Magi" in Biblical writings. Hafez uses the words: "Murshid-e-maa Pir-e-Magaan", "Daire-e-Magaan", "Kooye Magaan."

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So, this Parsi Pukar enters its 11th Year. It hopes to pour the cool waters of Ushtaa -the Divine ecstacy in your heart, and to point you out to the divine Path - "Aerezoish Patho" leading you "nearer and nearer to Thee my Lord."

"Khshnoom," One of the Wheels of Din

The Chariot of the Din has six wheels: the thoughts, word and deeds - divine, the devotion (Vaham), the Knowledge divine (Khshnoom) and Faith. Whosoever mounts the Chariot shall be driven by Spitma Zarathushtra, Vishtaspa, Frashostra and the Saoshyants on the Path of Truth (Areyzoish Patho).

- Gatha 53-2

(Please see page 20 for Khshnoom in Gatha 48-12)

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