

Dear Friends and Members of the "**Coming Together Roundtable**",

In our endeavor to keep the spirit of "**Coming Together Roundtable**" we have been working towards meeting with the goals set out in the last Roundtable held in Mumbai at the Mancherji Joshi Hall at the Dadar Athornan Madressa on January 15, 2008.

A quick review of the developments since :

(1) Global networking – Yazdi Tantra.

(a) <http://theparsidirectory.com/> is constantly being updated which lists Zoroastrians worldwide, with the aim to connect all Zoroastrians with one another. The current tally is 68,000 names and it is constantly growing. Any inputs towards the betterment and updation of the directory will be welcomed.

(b) Make available to Zarathushtis worldwide and/or source liturgical items, religious artifacts, religious books, prayer books and other related items. A website blog www.zoroastrians.net has been setup and running. This blog is the largest aggregation of Zarathushti / Zoroastrian - Parsi / Irani websites / information available online. Several books and references shared by Dr. Homi Dhalla, Khojeste Mistree and others, have been put up on the website, with more to come. Some interesting details about those NGOs who do not have their own websites have also been incorporated. This site works with the aim of bringing ALL Zoroastrians across the world under one roof.

The proceedings of the Coming Together Round Table and the aim / purpose / workings of the Round Table can be found on the www.zoroastrians.net under the category "Round Table"

(2) World Congress RFP [Request for Proposals]

– **Rustom Kevala, Rohinton Rivetna, Firdosh Mehta, Behram Pastakia.**

Finalize and implement the RFP so that the selection of the location and entity for the next world congress is smooth and orderly.

As agreed to during the third Coming Together session held on 15th January 2008, in Mumbai, a revised draft of the 'Request For Proposals' [RFP] to establish a transparent, equitable process for selection of the venue of the World Zoroastrian Congresses has been circulated.

[See Annexure Ia & Ib "Call for World Zoroastrians Congress Proposal & its attachment World Congress Guidelines"] http://zoroastriansnet.wordpress.com/files/2008/09/p02a01a_call-for-world-zoroastrian-congress-proposals.pdf &
http://zoroastriansnet.wordpress.com/files/2008/09/p02a01b_worldcongressguidelines28jul08.pdf

The timeline established is to announce the venue for the 10th WZC one year in advance of the 9thWZC in Dubai, at the 4th Coming Together Roundtable in Houston, Texas on 30th December 2008.

Deadline for receiving applications for the 10thWZC is thirteen months before the Dubai congress {30th November 2008}. Respond to rivetna@aol.com with proposals.

(3) Interfaith and UN Programs – Behram Pastakia, Rohinton Rivetna, Homi Dhalla

(a) Commendable work has been accomplished by the FEZANA UN-NGO team.

A six point report regarding the UN Programs has been presented by Behram Pastakia as detailed in **Annexure II.**

http://zoroastriansnet.wordpress.com/files/2008/09/p03a02_un-reports_behram-pastakia.pdf

(b) Dr. Homi Dhalla's report on the all-India conference for Religious harmony and interfaith activities for the year 2008 organized and participated by him is touched upon in the **Annexure III.**

http://zoroastriansnet.wordpress.com/files/2008/09/p03a03_inter-faith-activities_by-drhomi-dhalla.pdf

(c) A dialogue has been initiated to orchestrate Zarathushti participation in the 2009 Parliament of World's Religions in Melbourne. This was followed by breakfast. The results will be tabled shortly.

(4) Co-ordination of Welfare Programs worldwide – Dinshaw Tamboli

(a) Preparation of a bulletin board for the listing and fulfillment of all welfare requests for the use of Zarathushti welfare organizations worldwide.

Yazdi Tantra is in the process of setting up of the Bulletin Board which will be integrated in the www.zoroastrian.net shortly.

(b) Hold an annual convention of all Zarathushti welfare organizations.

Report is awaited from Dinshaw Tamboli.

(5) Worldwide Service Programs – Behram Pastakia

(a) Youth exchange

(b) Operation Eyesight

(c) Organize Zarathushti Peace Corps

Remote Area Medical (RAM)

Volunteer opportunities on weekends:

RAM In The Media

Remote Area Medical has been featured in the national media a number of times in recent years. Most recently, we were featured on 60 Minutes in March

Media report on CBS 60 minutes is embedded here:

<http://www.ramusa.org/learn/media.html>

We are grateful to Porus Dadabhoy of Metropolitan Chicago

porusdad@yahoo.com , for bringing this information to our attention.

Operation Eyesight

A lot of work has been done and reported -- see article in FEZANA Journal Summer 2008 issue Volume 22 no.2. page 72 [Colour advertisement from Dubai 9th World Zoroastrian Congress on the Operation Eyesight initiative] **Annexure IVa**

http://zoroastriansnet.wordpress.com/files/2008/09/p05a04a_operation-eyesight-dubai-2009.pdf and the article on pages 93 and 94 of the same issue summarizing the work which has been done from the months before the 7th World Zoroastrian Congress in 1999 to the present, including the eye camps held in Mumbai and in Jamshedpur during the Thanksgiving week [November 2007] in association with the Lions Club. **Annexure IVb.**
http://zoroastriansnet.wordpress.com/files/2008/09/p05a04b_operation_eyesight.pdf

A new team has been put together and is headed for Colombia, South America during the Thanksgiving week {November 2008} under the leadership of Khush Bodhan from Northern California.

(6) Follow up and Coordination – Yazdi Tantra

(a) A staff person has been appointed part time, to assist on the follow-up items.

(b) The pledged contributions for meeting with the administration expenses have been received from Mr.Dinshaw Tamboli (4 months), Mr. Rohinton Rivetna., Mr.Nagarwalla, Mr. Rustom Engineer, which covers us for 7 months. We thank them all for their generosity. The total amount collected so far, is Rs. 1,05,000 and the total amount spent is Rs. 45,000 (4,000 pm staff + 5,000pm administration expenses which includes putting up the web site, maintaining it on daily basis, programming inputs as & when required, planning & execution of bulletin board etc.) for 5 months so far.

(c) In view of the fact that all the volunteers of the Round Table are offering Honorary assistance to make it successful and would be preoccupied with their other commitments, we have shifted from a Quarterly Reporting to a six monthly reporting.

(7) Cultural Projects – Homi Dhalla

A seven point brief update on a few socio-cultural-educational activities undertaken by Dr. Homi Dhalla viz.

1. DVD of Monajats
2. Digitization of Important Books and Texts
3. Book on “History of the Parsis of Navsari”

4. Delhi Parsi Project
5. Parsi Project
6. Bahrot Caves
7. A Film on Jehangir Sabavala

Refer to is **Annexure V** to read the full Report on the above.
http://zoroastriansnet.wordpress.com/files/2008/09/p07a05_brief_updates_homi-dhalla.pdf

(8) Zarathushti Pravasi's duties, rights and privileges – Behram Pastakia / Rohinton Rivetna.

Articulation of duties ----- (for review by the Roundtable in Houston)

Zarathushtis who have migrated from the mother countries of Iran, Pakistan and India represent a significant section of our worldwide community and can contribute significantly to the welfare and prosperity of our worldwide community.

Having enjoyed the largesse of the community it is their duty to contribute financially and in kind to the communities of Iran and India. It is suggested that they seek out opportunities to contribute such as: adopt an agiyari, support a Dharamsalla, set up programs for the youth in Iran,

It is also their right to have a voice in community affairs in Iran, Pakistan and Iran. It behooves the communities in Iran, Pakistan and India to consider how their voices may be heard. With rights comes responsibility on behalf of the Pravasis to collectively manage those rights.

It should also be the privilege of Zarathushtis living abroad to seek and obtain information in regard to maintenance of their interests in the mother countries and to that extent the mother countries need to set up central information clearing service for Zarathushtis living abroad.

(9) Network of mobeds – PRG & Behram Pastakia

(a) A global network of mobeds to be established with the aim: "To promote interaction of mobeds worldwide; mobeds assisting each other; exchange of thoughts and ideas.

PRG : A list of Mobeds have been received from Fida Shaw of PRG. A full report of the activities are awaited.

Behram Pastakia : "To promote interaction of mobeds worldwide; mobeds assisting each other; exchange of thoughts and ideas.

The North American Mobeds Council was incorporated as a religious organization, under the laws of the Province of Ontario, Canada on September 24th 1992 and was granted a tax exempt status by the Government of Canada, in 1993.

The newly launched web-site <http://www.namcweb.org/home.htm> carries contact information of office holders, a list of mobeds in North America, summaries of past presentations at Seminars organized by the NAMC and more of interest to the priests and 20 laity of the Zarathushti community.

Thanks to our NAMC correspondent, Erv Soli Dastur of Sarasota, Florida, dastur@comcast.net , for sharing this resource.

Ervad Soli P. Dastur's note on the 2008 NAMC AGM meeting in Toronto, May 24-25, is attached in **Annexure VI**. http://zoroastriansnet.wordpress.com/files/2008/09/p09a06_soli-dastur-report.pdf

(10) Network of Youth – Passing the Torch to the next generation – PRG

- (a) Establish a network of youth worldwide.
- (b) Promote holding of local and regional Next Generation conferences, for the recognition of challenges faced by the Next Generation.
- (c) Promote Next Generation to hold office, locally and regionally.

A list of Youth E Mail addresses have been receive from Freyaz Shroff.

We are also approaching other organizations to obtain more E Mail addresses which will help in reaching out to a wider Youth audience.

The second NexGenNow conference was held at George Mason University, Fairfax, Virginia [Metropolitan Washington DC] from August 1st to 3rd 2008 organized and managed by Jim Engineer (Chicago), Mantreh Atashband (Toronto) Armaity Homavazir (Toronto), Farah Minwalla (Las Vegas/New York) and Nikan Khatibi(California/Kansas). A report will appear in the Fall 2008 issue Vol 22 No.3 of *FEZANA Journal*.

(11) Infrastructure Breakdown/Rebuild.

- (a) Identify key infrastructure breakdowns and research resources to repair and/or restore.

An article by Shernaaz Engineer entitled “Thoothi Agiary: Resplendent & Renovated”

tells us “The spanking new 149-year-old Thoothi Agiary, refurbished and redone by the efforts of a committed Zarathushti family, is all aglow with the glory and grace of Dadar Ahura Mazda’s bounty, as every Agiary should be...”

The entire article with pictures of the renovated Agiyari may be viewed at <http://zoroastrians.net/2008/05/27/thoothi-agiary/> and is also attached in **Annexure VII** http://zoroastriansnet.wordpress.com/files/2008/09/p11a07_thoothi-agiary.pdf

- (b) Identify infrastructure needs worldwide.

Updates awaited.

(12) Interfaith Marriages – Homi Dhalla

(a) Identify ills of interfaith marriages and propagate caution worldwide.

Updates awaited.

(13) Cultivation of the Ethic of Collective Giving – Adi Vakharia

Propagate the idea of families worldwide giving 2% of gross income to Zarathushti causes.

At the third "Coming Together Round Table" in Mumbai this year, the attendants realized that in order to meet the financial goals of the community we should all enlist in "The Ethic of Collective Giving." We appeal to all Zarthusti Families worldwide to donate 2% or more of their gross income to any Zarthusti cause of their liking. Other communities collect tithes from their adherents and their communities have prospered as a result. Likewise, Zarthusti causes can enjoy such financial success with community members' support. Therefore we encourage you to join this worthy cause and agree to give whatever part of your income you can. Charity and philanthropy is a proud tradition in the Zarthusti community. Let's reawaken our commitment to the ethic of collective giving that prior Zarthustis have exhibited. Please sign your name to our petition which will be shortly put up on the www.zoroastrians.net and click on the link 'Petitions' on the left under 'Select Category'.

Pls forward this email to your friends to begin our Collective Giving. Thank you.

Code of Civil Conduct/Civility – Er. Ramiyar Karanjia

Prepare and popularize through media a code of civil conduct for Zarathushtis interacting with other Zarathushtis.

Hamazor 1 – A follow up of 'Coming Together' meet at London which was held at M.Joshi Hall, Madressa Annex on 08-01-2007. This wonderful write up in **Annexure VIIIa** http://zoroastriansnet.wordpress.com/files/2008/09/p14a08a_hamazor-1-strenght-in-unity_by-drramiyar-karanjia.pdf explains to us the word and concept of "Hama Zor".

Hamazor 2 - The Opening remarks presented by Erv Dr. Ramiyar Kananjia during the Coming Together (15th January -2008, Athornan Madressa Hall, Dadar Parsi Colony, Mumbai, India) may be read in the **Annexure VIIIb**. http://zoroastriansnet.wordpress.com/files/2008/09/p14a08b_hamazor-2-comming-together-15jan08_opening-remarks-by-drramiyar-karanjia.pdf

The "Code of Civil Conduct" that we need to adopt universally world wide, is under preparation by Ervad Ramiyar Karanjia. In the meantime, a culmination of the wisdom imparted in the above annexures should form the basis for the "Code of Civil Conduct".

(15) Establish local Mandals in Mumbai with a network- Faredoon Kapadia

(a) Identify local operating Mandals in Mumbai and those that need to be set up.

(b) Assist in establishment of new Mandals and set up a network of all Mandals in Mumbai.

A basic Name list of the Baughs & Colonies in Mumbai, have been prepared and may be seen in **Annexure IX.** http://zoroastriansnet.wordpress.com/files/2008/09/p15a09_list-of-baugh-colonies-in-mumbai.pdf

Further inputs will be forthcoming from Prof. Faredoon Kapadia.

(16) Education for Irani Zarathushti Youth in India – Khodayar Attaie and Dinshaw Tamboli

(a) Identify available educational resources in India and pair with Zarathushti

youth in Iran that come forward to avail of the opportunity.

An exchange of correspondences were entered into with Khodayar Attaie, with regards to the Student's Exchange program and were informed that Khodayar Attaie is to have meetings with the students and come to a final list.

(17) Announce the availability of worldwide service and invite inquiries.

Yazdi Tantra with the assistance of the part time staff Percis Dubash, may be contacted for the coordination and follow-up of activities. With the co-operation and inputs from other members of the "Coming Together Roundtable" they will also collate information and inquiries and endeavor to make it the center of the worldwide service.

Their respective e mail addresses are : yazdi@on-lyne.com or yazdit@gmail.com and pdubash1@gmail.com

(18) Promotion of Navroze (21st. March 2008) Celebration Worldwide.

A Petition addressed to the United Nations has been initiated by the Persian Cultural Center, San Diego, California - USA for the Inclusion of Navrouz – New Day on UN Calendars and is picking up momentum with almost 15,000/- signatories to the petition.

Details of the petition may be viewed at : <http://www.PetitionOnline.com/Norouz/>

To read about FEZANA's Initiative for NauRooz Celebrations around the World, refer to **Annexure X** http://zoroastriansnet.wordpress.com/files/2008/09/p18a10_naurooz-celebrations-around-the-world.pdf

(19) LIST OF PROJECT TOPICS that need to be looked into for further discussions and actions :

To conclude the report, the following is a list of the issues brought to the notice by Firdosh Mehta as part of the "**Coming Together Roundtable**" from the point of view of how we can assist via FEZANA and via North American Donations etc.

LIST OF TOPICS:

- Pravasi Bharatiya Divas

- ParZor Foundation
- Gene Study Project
- Dastur Meherji Rana Library
- K. R. Cama Oriental Institute
- World Zarathushti Cultural Foundation
- Gujarat Literature Preservation
- Zoroastrian Directory.Com, Parsiana Yellow Pages
- Projects In Iran
- Parsi Resource Group
- Persepolis Fortification Tablets
- Religious Infrastructure
- Appeal from Delhi Parsi Anjuman, Patel Agiyari Mazagon Mumbai.
- Sadhana School For Autistic Students
- Farohar Foundation
- Other Community Projects

For extensions on the Project's agenda refer to **Annexure XI.**
http://zoroastriansnet.wordpress.com/files/2008/09/p19a11_projects-for-further-review.pdf

Of course, there is lots to do and much more to achieve, and with the active co-operation of the community we are sure to make greater strides in the coming years.