



The World Zoroastrian Organisation

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135 TENNISON ROAD, SOUTH NORWOOD, LONDON SE25 5NF

Website www.w-z-o.org

Charity No 1023334

Chairman Shahpur F Captain's Address at AGM held in London on 4th September, 2017.



Ladies and Gentlemen and members of the Committee of WZO,

I welcome you all to this 36th A G M, Notice of which along with Annual Report and Accounts were sent to you on 1st September, 2017. No doubt, you would have gone through the Report and Accounts and noted that we work all over the world and that our finances are strong.

I would like to take the opportunity today to inform you of other work being done by your Committee. But before that allow me to digress a little to say a sincere farewell to three of our overseas Committee members, who passed away this year. They are Prof. Kaikhosrov D. Irani from USA, Mr. Abtin Sassanfar from Paris and lately Switzerland and Mrs. Dhunmai Dalal from USA. I knew all of them personally very well and am truly bereft at losing their advice and support.

Allow me to say a few words about them individually. I think it was in 1982, that I embarked on a trip to USA and Canada to inform Zoroastrians and Organisations of the formation of WZO in 1980 with headquarters in London. I visited New York, Chicago, Toronto, Vancouver, Houston and Los Angeles. I met the Committee of the New York Association at their building donated by Arbab Rustam Guiv and his wife.

It was at this meeting that I met Kaikhosrov and he most willingly joined WZO and its Committee. He used to visit London, every year to give talks at the University of London. At my request, he gave talks on our religion, which were organised at the Indian Students Hostel, not far from here. His yearly visit stopped after his lifelong partner, Piroja, a charming lady became wheel-chair bound some 10 years or so ago.

He was an imparter of knowledge par excellence. He captivated his audience with his wide knowledge, his easy style of delivery interspersed with candour, humour and self-deprecation. It is a tribute to him that an ex-student of his endowed a substantial fund to establish "The K. D Irani Chair of Philosophy" which was established in October 1998 at the City College, City University of New York.

This speaks volumes for Kaikhosrov's knowledge and mastery of his subject of the Philosophy of Science and the manner in which he imparted his vast knowledge to his pupils. We in WZO are proud of the fact that Kaikhosrov has been immortalised by the creation of a Chair of Philosophy in His name.

Professor joined me in my numerous yearly meetings with the Trustees of the Bombay Parsi Panchayat in Mumbai as he and Piroja used to visit their families in Mumbai. In all the meetings I attended with him in India and elsewhere, he never waived from his absolute loyalty to WZO and its ideal of Zoroastrian Unity Worldwide.



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In Los Angeles, I stayed with Dhunmai Dalal and family at their residence. I knew her husband Feroze from my school days and their views coincided with mine on religious and community matters. I addressed a fairly big gathering of Zoroastrian community of LA at their residence and after hearing me expound the concept of WZO, she willingly joined the WZO Committee and made her family members of the WZO.

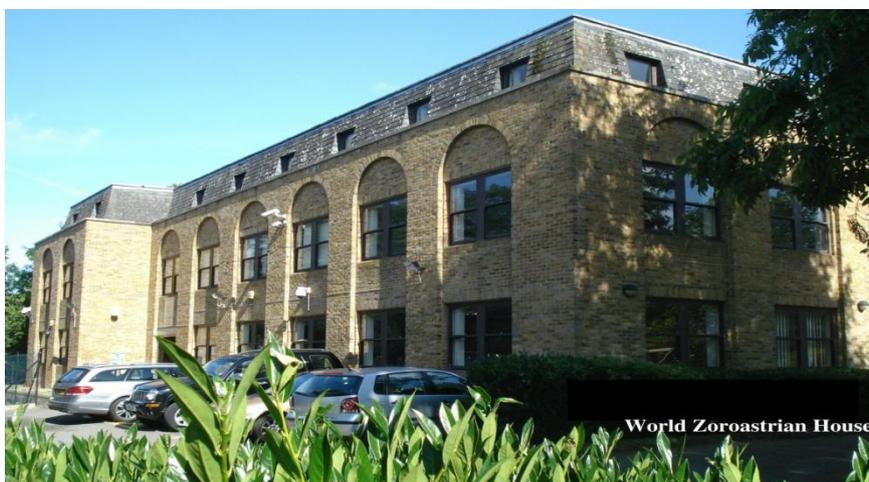
I knew of Abtin living in Paris and his passion for his community. He had heard about me from his relatives and contacts from USA/Canada. I corresponded with him and asked him to join WZO, which he willingly did. Abtin studied Law at Sorbonne University, Paris and practiced it successfully in France. He was a fairly affluent person, who pledged WZO £500,000 in 2013, which kick started our journey into buying the WZO H.Q in Feltham.

Allow me to read a personal tribute to Abtin written by Shahin Bekhradnia, which she delivered at the Brookwood prayers organised by Ursula and Sammy Bhiwandiwalla.

Apart from this donation, Armaiti Engineer too has obtained substantial financial help for the Building Fund. So have Trustees of the Firuz Madon Foundation with their donation of £ 1 million.

Since 2013, we started looking for a suitable property for WZO. This search was conducted by Darayus Motivala, who visited various sites, some of which were unsuitable. Sammy also searched for suitable property and the three of us went to see those, we deemed suitable. We took our Architect with us to evaluate the property and guess at the cost of conversion etc. His advice in those early days was highly valued by me.

A long search ended when Darayus found the present property at Feltham. The property was rented out to schools which we continued till January, 2017, in order to raise finance.





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Now called World Zoroastrian House, it is a three story building tucked away from residential area and beside a small park. It is very near the Feltham railway station and numerous bus routes. It is 10minutes' walk from the station and bus routes and so is very accessible.

We shall be occupying the ground floor for our functions and half of the first floor for SetayashGah, a Committee meeting room and a small library. The first floor will also have a flat for the caretaker. We hope to rent out the rest of the first floor and the second floor. We shall also be renting out the ground floor, when not occupied by us.

After a considerable amount of work, in all of which Darayus, Sammy, Armaiti and Minoo, were involved, we are about to enter an agreement with a builder, who will be supervised by the Quantity Surveyor and our Architect, plus ourselves. I recognise that there is many a slip between the cup and the lip when dealing with builders. But, with the Grace of Ahura Mazda, we hope to have the building ready for occupation by April/May of next year. We shall have a proper opening ceremony to which all of you will be invited.

Apart from the building, we have to buy many items such as an Afargan and related items etc, tables/chairs, crockery/cutlery, towels kitchen ware etc. We shall be delighted if our members came forward to donate for specific items or just generally towards such items.

Naturally, our thoughts and minds were concentrated on this massive project. Nevertheless, we have continued to do our charitable work, educational and medical help and we continue to seek your support and financial help more than ever.

At this point I have to specially thank Toxy Cowasjee who through her dedication and commitment, single handed produces Hamazor each year to the delight of our readers and to Minoo Mistry and Monaz Patel for all their work in connection with the development of the WZO website.

At the formation of WZO in 1980, the dream of Shirinbanoo Kutar and myself of having a building for WZO itself, will finally be realised in 2018---38 years later.

My sincere thanks to the Sadri Foundation, Dasturji Sohrabji Kutar Benevolent Fund, The World Zarathushtrian Trust Fund, Firuz Madon Foundation and various donors to our Organisation. I also have to thank many supporters of the WZO US Region, WZO Canada, New Zealand and India. We are deeply grateful to all our donors, big and small, for their kindness and generosity.

Thank you.