

Outfit courtesy: Pervez Aggarwal; Pic: Amol Kamble; Location: Kappawala Fire Temple.

Saal Mubarak!

It's Parsi New Year today and special celebrations will mark the day, along with prayers and culinary indulgence

Ismat Tahseen

It's unmistakable, that wonderful festive air in Parsi households today, one that only a special occasion can bring, as today marks the New Year. And for the denizens of that genteel community they are set to bring in the day with their special philosophy — of good words, good thoughts and good deeds. As TV host Parizaad Kolah Marshall says, "I'm so proud to be a Parsi. Our community has so much to offer. I'd like to wish today that our community grows by leaps and bounds," she smiles.

Prayers and tradition

The Rustom Faramna Agiary at Dadar Parsi Colony is at its brightest as it ushers in the New Year. Sculptor Arzaan Khambatta looks forward to going there with his wife Khushnuma and children Pezanne and Tianna. "Parsis never need a reason to celebrate!" he laughs. "The agiary is a must as prayers are most important. Besides, every second person you meet there turns out to be a friend as our community is not that large," he adds.

For businessman Parvez Damania, it's a tradition he follows religiously to be at the agiary with his wife Roshi and children, Aviva and Arish. "Yesterday at *Pateti*, it was the end of the last 10 days of *gathas* or prayers said for the departed. So today the whole mood is certainly joyous," he says.

Family fun and feast

Post the prayers, the bonhomie shifts to family gatherings and special traditional luncheons. Architect Hafeez and Pearl Contractor are looking forward to a family meal. "It's something we cherish — sharing fun times together," says Hafeez.

No Parsi celebration can be complete without food, and the menu ranges from a choice of traditional food and sweets. "We're having lunch with *dhan dar*-rice, meat and people normally send over a *mava machhi* (sweet fish mithai), so you can be sure there will be at least three of those at home," he muses with a smile. Parvez is upbeat about the food. "So what if there's no fish? There are loads of other dishes. We, Parsis, can never run out of choices!" he laughs.

COMMUNITY FOCUS



FESTIVE FILLE: Parizaad Kolah Marshall makes a wish at the agiary for her community donning a traditional *gara* exclusively for *After Hrs*



Hafeez and Pearl Contractor enjoy a Parsi food spread for the festive day



Parvez Damania goes traditional at the agiary with his family

BUZZ

Tyra is sorry

Tyra Banks has apologized for the controversial *America's Next Top Model* promo that features a 6-foot 2-inch model with a shockingly small waist. "On behalf of the entire *Top Model* team, I am truly sorry for the style in which the *Top Model* promo clip was presented," she wrote on *Tyra.com*. "I can assure you that cut has been removed from the CW airwaves," she added. Banks, 36, came under fire soon after the release of the promo, which features 19-year-old aspiring model Ann from Dallas. "You have the smallest waist in the world," Banks says in the clip, before squealing, "There's something about her I like!"



UNDER FIRE: Tyra Banks

'It's an emotional high'

TV host Perizaad Zorabian who is Iranian is looking forward today as her in-laws are Parsis. "It's Zayaan's (her son's) first *Pateti*, so it's put me on an emotional high. I to relish the entire meal that we indulge in that day, especially eating *baklava* (the Turkish sweet with phyllo pastry, nuts and sugar). It's more of an Iranian dish and my favourite," she says.



Bollywood's gay support

Members of the Indian film industry to fly to New York to attend the festival focusing on sexuality and gender issues

Soumyadipta Banerjee

Bollywood is all set to make its presence felt at I-View Film 2010, one of the biggest film festivals that explores the issues of 'gender, sexuality, culture and religion'. The festival, which begins in New York on September 18, will see many Indian filmmakers and actors fly in all the way from Mumbai to New York to talk about issues concerning alternative sexuality.

TRACKING TRENDS

Film personalities who have confirmed their attendance include Rituparno Ghosh, Aparna Sen, Vishal Bharadwaj, Onir, Rohan Sippy, Abhishek Choubey, Sudipto Chattopadhyay, Dibakar Banerjee, Rahul Bose, Juhi Chawla, Raima Sen, Arshad Warsi, Zeenat Aman, Helen, Sanjay Suri, Maradona Rebello, Purab Kohli, Konkona Sen Sharma and fashion designers Bina and Malini Ramani. They have already booked their tickets for the festival as official delegates.

"We have scheduled live interactions between the actors, filmmakers and



SHOW OF SOLIDARITY: (Clockwise) Raima Sen with Rituparno Ghosh, Juhi Chawla, Rahul Bose and Vishal Bharadwaj

DESI DOSE

Films like *I am*, *Just Another Love Story*, *Love, Sex Aur Dhoka (LSD)* and *Mirch* will be screened at the festival.

their audience and fans. All of them have agreed to talk upon the complex issues of gender and alternative sexuality, and the complex issues that the LGBT community faces in the country," says a source. The festival note also makes a mention of screening a pre-recorded keynote address by Bipasha Basu. It is scheduled to take place before the screening of Sudipto Chattopadhyay's



Pankh, which starred her in a key role. "I'm happy to be a part of that festival, and I am going there with my whole cast of the film. We need these kind of platforms to showcase our films," says Onir, whose film *I am* will be screened at the festival. Adds filmmaker Sudipto Chattopadhyay, "Bollywood has never given a response like that for the cause of the LGBT community before. I am going there with the hero of my film (Maradona Rebello). This film festival focuses on South East Asian Films, but I am sure that we'll be doing similar things in Mumbai, and won't have to fly to New York for it."

s_banerjee@dnaindia.net

Black is charismatic



RARING TO GO: Manoj Bajpai

Actor Manoj Bajpai is basking in the success of his Telugu films

Dipannita Ghosh Biswas

WHAT began as a friendly gesture for Ram Gopal Varma, in 1999 with *Premkatha*, seems to have become quite a passion for Manoj Bajpai. His brush with Telugu films have continued since then, with his last release *Vedam* going on to become quite a hit with the critics and mass.

"*Premkatha* was followed by a special appearance in *Happy*. The Telugu industry has welcomed and lauded me for my different films. Often, film-makers have expressed their appreciation and I'm quite overwhelmed with how they keep a tab on all my Hindi films too," Manoj says. And now, Manoj plays a dark character in the forthcoming *Komaram Puli*.

Quiz him on his love for the dark and he says, "Co-incidentally, black is also my favourite colour. It's charismatic and there's a strange pleasure in looking for white in it." But what

about films in the other South Indian languages? "I've taken up work that was offered to me and interested me. In fact, I will soon be doing Surya's (director, *Komaram Puli*) next Tamil film too," he informs.

In spite of being a multiple National Award winning actor, box office success seems to have strangely eluded him. "Since my debut in 1997 to date, I have never said no to a project because of the remuneration. If I'm comfortable with the script and people, I've always worked on the money," he says.

In Bollywood, there's Prakash Jha's *Aarakshan*, *Dus Tola*, Anurag Kashyap's forthcoming film and *Chittagong*, a period film on the national uprising, where he plays the revolutionary Surya Sen. Reportedly, Ashutosh Gowariker's *Khelein Hum Jee Jaan Se* is also on based on the same subject, with Abhishek Bachchan in lead role. "A moment of history can be told in different ways. Abhishek and I are very different as actors. So, where's the question of an overlap?" he signs off.

g_dipannita@dnaindia.net

Art meets America

Ahmedabad artist gets an opportunity to showcase his art works in USA

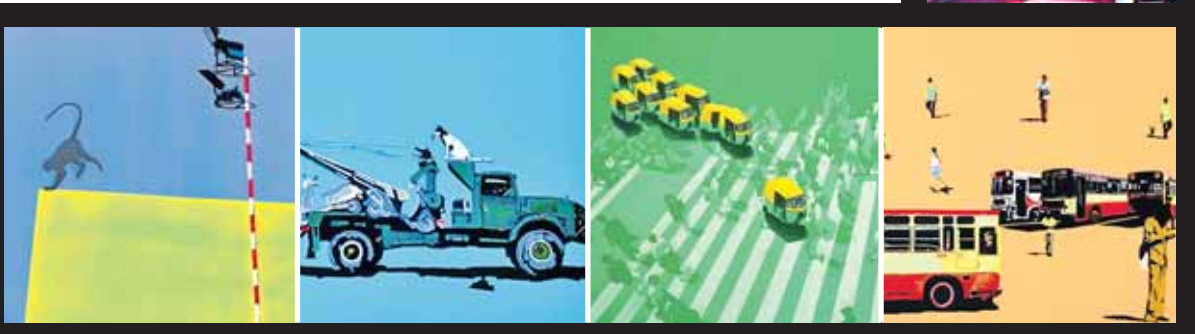
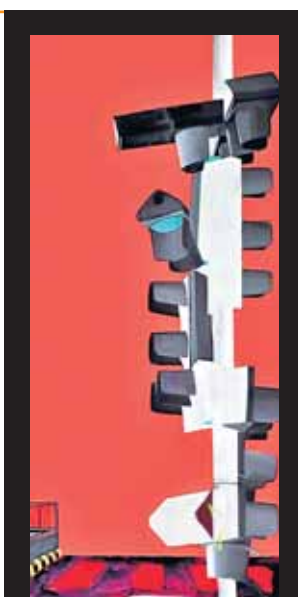
Devika Chaturvedi

A city-based artist feels even the mundane and the routine that can prove adequate inspiration for art. Jignesh Panchal, an artist who has showcased his art on various platforms across India, fell deeply in love with painting five years ago. And now, he has been se-

lected by the US-INDIA art and cultural exchange centre for an exchange programme, which selects artists from around the world. The young artist will be visiting USA for a month.

Both artists feel it's a great platform to showcase their art and enrich their work further. Panchal, a student of CN college of Fine Arts in Ahmedabad, says, "When I stroll in city streets, I observe the signals, admire the rivers and glance at the bridges."

Both the artists are being promoted by Frangipani Art. Founder of the company, Harsh Shah is evidently thrilled. "We are very particular about giving our artists international exposure and promoting their work in US and UK. Indian artists get their best costs abroad," he says. Shah says he travels across the country to select artists whose work they represent. "We look at people who already have decent exposure of global perspectives and benchmarks," he adds.



A tale of two Rauts



What's brewing, Alesia?

Prachi Kadam

Is Alesia Raut now set to put her painful marriage and divorce behind her? If sources are to be believed, something might be up between the beautiful model and model-turned-TV actor Siddharth Shukla. They were recently spotted at Jodhpur together, but both are in denial mode. When contacted, Alesia said in an emotional tone, "All this is wrong. I have a son and family. I am not seeing Siddharth." Siddharth acknowledged knowing Alesia as a model, but adds, "We are from the same field. But I don't know from where all these stories have come in. And I haven't been to Jodhpur for a long time now!"

k_prachi@dnaindia.net

Debutante called Anjali

Prithwish Ganguly

Perseverance is definitely a virtue and no one knows it better than supermodel Ujjwala Raut's sister Anjali. The hottie, who has become quite a known name in the Delhi modeling circuit, faced setbacks for three years back-to-back as she was turned down during her auditions for the Lakme Fashion Week (LFW). But Anjali never gave up and will walk the ramp at the LFW this year. "It has been a dream for me to walk in Mumbai and this year I'm living it. I'm super-excited and so is my family. We have celebrated the news too. My sister (Ujjwala) is very happy about my achievement. She has always been a big support," says Anjali.

g_prithwish@dnaindia.net

