

PARSEE MATTERS... PARSEE MATTERS... PARSEE MATTERS... PARSEE MATTERS... PARSEE MATTERS...

Perin & Jehangir Davar Memorial Centres At Shradha Rehabilitation Centre An Oasis At Karjat For The Mentally Ill Road-side Destitutes

Parsis are renowned for their charitable disposition. What's more, their philanthropy is seldom restricted to their own community. Take for example the Tatas, Godrejs, Jeejeebhoyas, Petits or Wadias - the secularism of their giving transcends all barriers of caste, creed or religion. This microscopic community has also proved time and again that one need not necessarily be rich in order to be philanthropic. After all, philanthropy is not just about 'giving money', it is about 'love for humanity'.

Take, for example, the recent act of philanthropy on the part of a simple and relatively unknown Parsi lady, Mrs. Sheru Hosi Mistry (nee Davar). She did not inherit a fortune nor is she privy to vast disposable wealth. And yet, from her own savings, accumulated by thrift, often bordering personal deprivation, she has helped establish two special units - one in memory of her mother (Perin) and the other in memory of her father (Jehangir) at Shradha Rehabilitation Centre in Karjat.

Shradha is a non-

Centre for female destitutes - are the fulfillment of the dream of Sheru's late parents to help the poorest of the poor. This dream - full of pathos and the struggle to make it a reality - is best captured in Sheru Mistry's own words.

"My mother had a dream to become a doctor and serve humanity. She had a dream to go into the villages and give free service to the poorest of the poor. But her dream remained unfulfilled. In her times, girls were discouraged from pursuing higher studies out of fear that it would ruin their prospects of marriage. My mother often cried before me, Sheru, will I die unfulfilled? My heart's greatest desire unfulfilled. Though I knew not how I would do it, I promised her that I will do it for you. You would not have lived in vain. It took 19 years of intensive search before stumbling upon Shradha Foundation. I like to think, now at last, my mother will be happy wherever she is. The Centre will stand as a living testimony that her life's mission has been fulfilled if not in her own lifetime then at least in her daughter's."

by Noshir H. Dadrawala



Late Jehangir Davar



Late Perin Davar

reunited with their families over 1,000 mentally ill roadside destitutes - all for free. Destitute families have been traced to places as far-flung as Srinagar, Bangalore, Kolkata, Hyderabad, Delhi, Kerala and Orissa.

Shradha Rehabilitation Centre has been operational in Karjat since March 2006. It currently houses and treats 50 mentally ill roadside destitutes. With the inauguration of the two new Centres it hopes to house 110 patients.

The Founder of Shradha, Dr. Bharat Vatwani, is of the view that mental illness is like any other human illness which can either be cured or controlled through a judicious combination of medicines, love, care and understanding.

There are over 20 social workers who help Dr. Bharat and his wife Dr. Smitha Vatwani at the Karjat centre. Those patients who are not accepted by their families or whose families are not found become permanent inmates and help the others to heal.

According to psychiatric social workers at the centre, most of the patients are from the poor class and remote villages of India. Due to various social or emotional circumstances they end up becoming insane. Rehabilitating patients includes their involvement in activities like agriculture, dairy



Dr. Vatwani speaking at the inauguration

farming, poultry farming, vocational activities and others. There are several other pastimes like indoor games, television, music and others.

Sheru Mistry believes, "I was in search of the right project where I could donate my lifelong savings and found Shradha the best place to do so. Shradha's work, in spirit, resembles that of Mother Teresa's".

Sadly, in India, the issue of mental illness is not only grossly misunderstood but also neglected.

worship. In the words of that great Lebanese philosopher and poet, Khalil Gibran - "Through the hands of such as these (i.e. those who give) God speaks, and from behind their eyes He smiles upon the world".

Shradha Rehabilitation Foundation is registered as a Public Charitable Trust and donations are deductible (50%) under section 80G and 100% under section 35AC of the income Tax Act 1961.

1001 Tales of Hope

Saujny Dhakane (Before/After)



Tale of Hope

The task taken in hand is huge. But the first step in the proverbial journey of a thousand miles has already been taken. The requirement now is for many others to join Sheru and Hosi Mistry as also Dr. Bharat and Smitha Vatwani in their journey. The cost per month for each unit is estimated to be around Rs.65,000/- per month. Donating to this worthy cause would, in essence, be an act of

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Hosi & Sheru Mistry

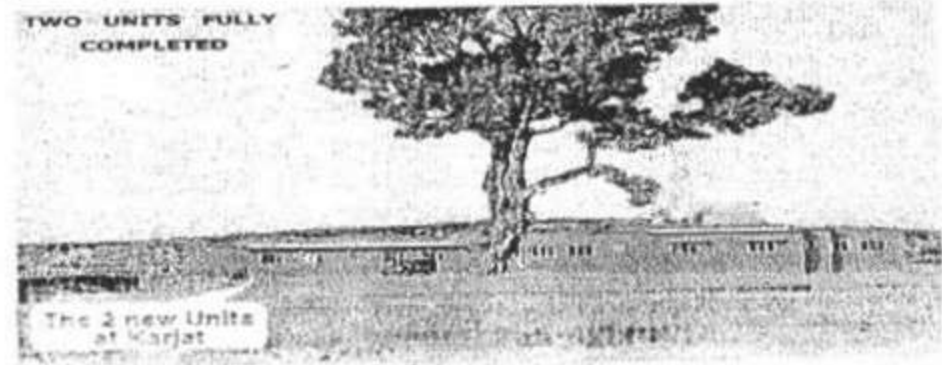
governmental organization (NGO) addressing the issue of 'the mentally ill roadside destitutes. In India, one can find thousands of mentally ill road-side destitutes. However, there are very few organizations which are dedicated to treating and rehabilitating them. One such organization is 'Shradha Rehabilitation Foundation' established by the dynamic and dedicated Dr. Bharat Vatwani.

Inaugurations and opening ceremonies are often dull and ritualistic events which leave people cold and unmoved. However, the inauguration of 'The Perin Jehangir Davar' and 'The Jehangir Ardeshir Davar Memorial Centres' at Vengaoon village in Karjat, on Sunday, 15th April 2007 was something special and inspiring. This was the dream of Late Mrs. Perin Davar which her loving and devoted daughter Mrs. Sheru Hosi Mistry fulfilled.

These two special Centres - The Perin Jehangir Davar Memorial Centre for male patients and The Jehangir Ardeshir Davar Memorial

Shradha Rehabilitation Foundation was founded in 1988, to deal with the mentally-ill roadside destitutes, living off the streets and who are left lonely, haggard and stripped of all human dignity. In 1997, Shradha expanded its services with a 30-bed hospital in Dahisar.

Since its inception, Shradha Rehabilitation Foundation has picked up, treated and successfully



TWO UNITS FULLY COMPLETED

The 2 new Units at Karjat