

Respected Ervads and Mobediyars and Ladies and Gentlemen,

Welcome to the North American Mobed Council (NAMC) Seminar today. On behalf of the Zoroastrian Association of Greater New York (ZAGNY), I welcome you all to this Seminar.

In the history of ZAGNY, I believe that this is the third time that ZAGNY is hosting this seminar, the last time being in 1998/99. However, this is a Historic Day for the Zoroastrian community. It is the very first time that the NAMC has invited the public to attend this kind of seminar and today it has also invited the public to participate in discussions with the delegates during the concluding session. The paucity of numbers in the hall today indicates that the public probably has not got used to the idea that the Council has in fact agreed to the idea of a limited public participation. This event will also give us all an opportunity to discuss the issues on one-on-one basis during the various breaks.

We have a full agenda for today's Seminar, which is in front of you and I am sure that it is going to be an interesting and a learning experience for all of us. We all look forward to that experience in great anticipation.

One of the most important subjects I am looking forward today is the item of establishment of a "Consecrated Fire temple on the North American Continent". During the last few years, our community have been shown the documentaries about the "Architectural, and historical, aspects of the Fire temples on the Indian Subcontinent and in Iran. We have debated this subject of a "Consecrated Fire temple on the North American Continent" at many Congresses and Conferences. Now I would like you to deliberate and document the main requirements of "establishing a Consecrated Fire temple on the North American Continent". Please discuss this issue from all angles and outline the ceremonies to be performed, the time frame requirements, and any other requirements including minimum subsequent maintenance requirements. You may even discuss the alternatives suitable to the local situation.

This is the challenge for the North American Zoroastrian community, it is a challenge to you all, and so please address the issue. I do not expect that by the end of this day you will have all the answers. But if you begin the process today and continue your deliberations by electronic communication, I am sure that by the time we meet once again in the following year a substantial progress on this issue will be made. It is for you all, reverend Mobeds and Mobediyars, to take, metaphorically, the Bull by the horn and move ahead. And it is for this reason that the community in the future will remember this Seminar as the historic event where the subject of "establishment of a consecrated fire temple on the North American Continent" was discussed, debated, and deliberated for the first time.

Let me close my welcoming address by quoting the following Blessings from Yasna 60.5 "DAHAM AFRIN"

May understanding obedience conquer ignorant disobedience!

May Harmony triumph over Discord,

And Generosity of Spirit over Covetous Avarice!

May Trust replace Suspicion, And may Respect replace Derision!

May Truthful Speech prevail over Falsehood,

And May the Righteous Order conquer the Web of deceitful existence, and eradicate misery from this world!

And finally may we see Thee, as we approach with our dedication to the Exalted and Bounteous Righteous Order!
Amen!

Thank you very much.

July 30, 2005