

ZOROASTRIAN ASSOCIATION OF GREATER NEW YORK

Member, Federation of Zoroastrian Associations of North America (FEZANA)



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEW YORK AREA ZOROASTRIANS PREPARE TO CELEBRATE NAUROOZ

NauRoouz, falling each year on the Spring Equinox, March 21, marks the official New Year for Zoroastrians worldwide.

Zoroastrian organizations throughout North America to hold prayers and ceremonies to mark the auspicious occasion.

New York, NY, Feb. 27, 2007 –ZOROASTRIAN ASSOCIATION OF GREATER NEW YORK (ZAGNY) today announced that Zoroastrian organizations throughout the United States and Canada will celebrate the important festival of NauRoouz (pronounced Noh-Rooz), March 21, 2007, marking the official celebration of the Zoroastrian New Year at the turn of the spring equinox. ZAGNY will mark the occasion with a prayer ceremony at 4-30 PM on March 21 at ARBAB RUSTAM GUIV DARBE-MEHR, 106 Pomona Road, Suffern, NY 10901. Media and the public are invited to attend. (Please visit ZAGNY website www.zagny.org for directions).

“The beauty, meaning and symbolism of NauRoouz can best be experienced by sharing in our traditions and understanding the depth and breadth of NauRoouz as more than just a religious holiday, but a celebration of a *New Day*, and a resolve to work for a brighter year ahead,” said ZAGNY President Mr. Homi Gandhi. “While we are in no way the only people to celebrate NauRoouz, our customs, culture and celebrations are unique to our religion and our story as a growing religious body in North America.”

Zoroastrianism, founded circa 1500 BCE, is credited to be the oldest monotheistic religion, influencing post-exilic Judaism, which adopted some Zoroastrian beliefs such as the ultimate victory of good over evil and the resurrection of souls. These percepts were then transmitted through Judaism to Christianity, and later to Islam. Zoroastrianism flourished as the ‘imperial religion of three mighty Persian empires, those of the Achaemenians, Parthians and Sasanians, as the focal religion at that time, extending from Turkey, and eastward to China.

North America's Zoroastrian community largely encompasses Parsis, who arrived from the Indian subcontinent, and those who came directly from Iran seeking religious freedom. "The media in recent years has devoted a lot of ink to our declining populations in India, but the untold story is that the North American Zoroastrian community is vibrant and growing, and still celebrating and perpetuating auspicious holidays like NauRooz," says FEZANA president, Dr. Rustom Kevala. "As we grow in the North American diaspora, it is our responsibility to proactively reach out and educate the public at large, and to showcase the many contributions being made each day by Zoroastrians throughout North America, and indeed throughout the world."

About ZAGNY

Founded in 1973 and headquartered in New York, ZAGNY represents the interests and provides a spiritual base for Zoroastrians throughout the Metropolitan New York area. ZAGNY provides its membership with spiritual and religious guidance, religious education, interfaith participation and leadership, as well as social, cultural and community programming. For more information please visit: www.zagny.org

About FEZANA

Founded in 1987, FEZANA serves as the coordinating body for 25 Zoroastrian associations throughout the United States and Canada. FEZANA promotes the study, understanding and practice of the Zoroastrian faith in North America., represents the interests of its member associations, and carries out philanthropic and charitable activities worldwide. The FEZANA Journal, FEZANA's official publication, circulates to Zoroastrian households in more than 22 countries, as well as to scholars, academicians and religious organizations worldwide. For more information visit www.fezana.org.

###

Contacts:

ZOROASTRIAN ASSOCIATION OF GREATER NEW YORK (ZAGNY)

Homi D. Gandhi, President

Mobile: 201.410.8963 or homidgandhi@gmail.com

FEZANA Media Relations:

Jim Engineer

jim.engineer@e-rainmaker.com or

Mobile: 630.728.1387