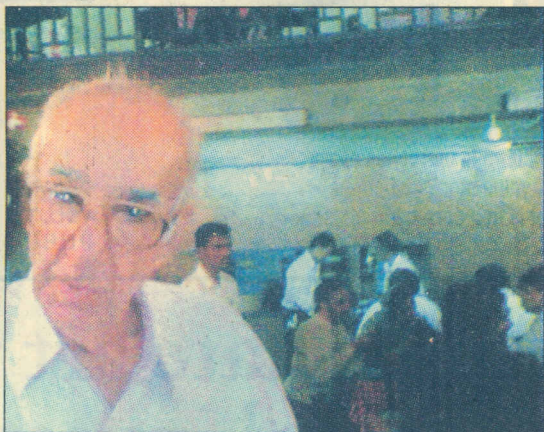


# Snippets

## Parsi community works with Avesthagen



**P**arsi communities in Hyderabad, Navsari and Surat provide participative support to The Avestagenome project. The Avesthagen team is to visit Baroda and Ahmedabad in first week of March. The Mumbai phase is expected to begin in April. Avesthagen Limited, a knowledge-based Life Sciences Company, has successfully initiated the first phase of The Avestagenome project, undertaking blood sample collection of the Parsi population in Hyderabad, Navsari and Surat. This large-scale genomic project aims to study the basis of longevity that is noticed in the Parsi-Zoroastrian population, and also to create a medical database of the community that may aid science in the long term.

The Avestagenome project is the brainchild of Dr. Viloo Morawala - Patell, founder chairperson and managing director of the Bangalore-based Avesthagen Limited. This project is a scientific endeavour that is designed to benefit the entire human race. The results of the research will identify the genetic basis of longevity and for various diseases like cancer, Alzheimer's, Parkinsons etc. The study will also enable the development of new therapies and drug targets.

After completing the blood sample collection from parsi donors at Hyderabad and at Navsari, the Avesthagen team has started the project at Surat from February 10, at the Parsi General Hospital. The Surat Parsi Panchayat is lending full support and assistance under the able guidance of its president Darayas Master. The trustees, secretary, committee members and staff are providing tremendous assistance and encouragement towards the success of this project.

The Avesthagen team from Bangalore comprising doctors, scientists and bioinformaticians have set up a center for the collection and processing of the blood samples from the donors. They are being assisted by volunteers from the parsi community in Surat who are mobilizing members of the community for this worthy cause. The response from the community has been very positive as is evident by the large turnout of donors to date.

On completion of the sample collection drive (433 samples) in the twin cities of Hyderabad-Secunderabad in December 2007, Mrs. Gulbanoo Y. Chenoy, President PZASH in a note to Dr. Patell observed "On behalf of the Parsi Zoroastrian Anjuman of Secunderabad and Hyderabad and the parsis of the twin cities, I would like to convey our appreciation of your pioneering work through the Avesthagenome Project.

Your deep sense of commitment towards improving the quality of life is reflected by this humane and philanthropic project, which is indeed a matter of great pride for us. We wish you and the Avesthagenome Project all the very best. May the blessings of Ahura Mazda be upon you and your company."

