

## We remember and honour Dara Feroze Mirza

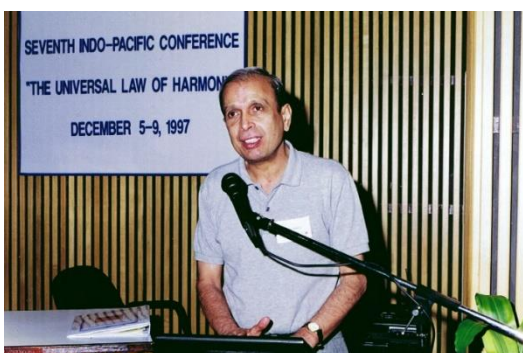
At gatherings of the Theosophical Society, we often recall its founders and draw inspiration from their lives of total self-sacrifice in bringing modern-day Theosophy to the world. It is time now to remember the self-sacrifice of a member who lost his life tragically just ten years ago after decades of complete devotion to the theosophical cause.



*Dara Mirza at the 2001 TS World Congress in Sydney, Australia*

Fourth generation Theosophist, Dara Feroze Mirza was a pillar of the TS and TOS in Pakistan. In addition to his role as Presidential Representative of the TS, he was a member of the Council of Management of the TOS, giving unfailing support to his sister Fareeda in her role as TOS Honorary Secretary and her husband Aman Amir, Honorary Treasurer at the time. Dara was also a member of the Management Committee of the Poor Patients' Relief Society.

A gentle, quiet, caring human being, he reached out even to the homeless animals around his home in Karachi. Dozens of stray cats and dogs were fed twice a day and provided with medical attention. Dara would administer homeopathic medicines to these animals himself as he was a keen student of homeopathy and successfully treated hundreds of sick animals and birds. Loved by one and all, Dara will ever be remembered as an outstanding TS worker, a kind and generous human being and a noble soul.



*President of the Karachi Theosophical Society for over 32 years, Dara conducted a weekly study class on spirituality, ethics and comparative religion for decades. Here we see him in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in 1997 in his role as Vice-President of the Indo-Pacific Federation of the TS. Writes Vicki Jerome of the TOS in New Zealand: "I have this photo of Dara at the 1997 IPF conference on my desk, and look at it every day, remembering that dear man – quiet, humble and caring."*

The international TOS received many tributes to Dara when the news of his death became known:

*“Dara was a gentle, compassionate human being of true humility and quiet inner strength, a shining light for those who knew him. His loss is deeply felt by his family members, the TOS and TS in Karachi and the Indo-Pacific Federation of the Theosophical Society.”*

**“The world has lost a loving and generous man. The Theosophical Society in Pakistan and the international Theosophical Society have lost a sincere, dedicated worker for the cause of Theosophy. The world-wide Theosophical family has lost a loving brother.”**

*“Dara was ready for any vicissitude in life, including death. He was a true philosopher, a dedicated Theosophist and a kind-hearted and generous man.”*

***“We were not privileged to have met Dara. This is entirely our loss, as we would have gained so much from the love, friendship and wisdom he possessed. The Theosophical Society in Pakistan, and the International Society too, has lost a sincere, hard worker for the cause of the Masters.”***

*“Although we did not know Dara (consciously, at least), we feel great friendship and love for this valiant brother of ours and will hold him close in our hearts. Let us all be worthy of his example of courage and service.”*

Many more tributes received expressed affection for Dara and horror at the way he died. On the 14th of September 2007, Dara left for work in the morning as usual but never reached the office. The next day his body was found lying in an area near Mauripur, one of the slum neighbourhoods of Karachi. He had been shot through the heart by terrorists, possibly because of his connection with the Theosophical Society.

Whilst we are all aware of the viciousness rampant in the world, our Theosophical family seems rarely to lose one of its own in such circumstances. It is a dreadful reminder of our responsibility to work for the reduction of violence in the only way that can possibly be effective in the long term: by going to its roots in human nature and combating their outward symptoms at as many levels as possible.



*A fourth generation Theosophist on his father's side, Dara joined the TS in his early teens. Here we see him at the World Congress of the TS held in Salzburg in 1966. He was 29 years old and already a mature, dedicated Theosophist.*

Dara's maternal family were Theosophists too: his mother was a student of Maria Montessori when she ran a teacher training course in Karachi during the 1940s. Dara was especially fond of telling the story of how his mother and aunt skipped school one day sometime in the 1920s to hear Annie Besant talk and how they were spotted in the crowd by a friend of their father!

To mark the tenth anniversary of Dara's passing, his family have paid for the heart surgery of a young girl in urgent medical need.



*Heart surgery beneficiary with her father, brother (in centre) and the medical team (left and right)*

The international TOS salutes Dara and reminds his family that his memory is cherished in the hearts of all.