



MANASHNI SPONSORED BY

**SETHNA FINANCIAL GROUP LLC, ZARIR J. SETHNA, CLU®, ChFC®, LUTCF®**  
**WWW.SETHNAFINANCIALGROUP.COM**  
**OFFICE 713-963-4229**

## SUNDAY SCHOOL

PLACE: ZHCC,  
8787 W. Airport Blvd.  
Houston, TX 77071  
Tel: 713-270-9339

TIME: Different timings for each group

DATE: April 12, 2020

### Children's Session

The Sunday School session starts at  
**11.00 a.m. join in by Zoom**

**Middle Group:** The Sunday School  
session at **10.30 a.m. by Zoom**



### Youth Group:



## UPCOMING EVENTS

Due to uncertainties of the covid-19 *MANASHNI* will **not publish upcoming events** until further notice. Hopefully we will start publicizing the events soon.

This publication is to bring to the readers how the ZAH community is coping with social distancing, staying at home, kids not going to school and basically staying together with the family.

With technological advancement, schools are doing on-line education program and not lagging behind, the Sunday School sessions will also be conducted electronically, by ZOOM technology.

People around the world have resorted to Prayer Vigils and Zarathushtis didn't lag behind.

## COPING WITH COVID-19

### PRAYER VIGIL

**Udvada:** A Jashan was performed on Roj Daepmeher Mah Ava, 28th March 2020, in Paak Iranshah, Udvada, to invoke the blessings of Dadar Ahuramazda, Ameshaspands, Yazatas and Iranshah and seek divine intervention to help mankind in this time of distress, and overcome this calamity brought onto mankind through COVID 19.

Since the Iranshah is not open for Zarathushtis to participate by their physical presence, Dasturji Khurshed Dastoor advised everyone to pray at home for the wellbeing of mankind.

Another prayer vigil took place on Behram Roj where an audio clip of the prayers was sent to everyone, to pray together at the time the Dasturji was praying in Udvada.

**Houston/Sugar Land:** Last month a few friends in Houston came together to hold a "24 hour prayer vigil" to pray for the country and the world and bring peace and healing to mankind. The idea was met with instant acceptance and there was overwhelming participation from volunteers of many faiths.

## **ZAH EXECUTIVE MEMBERS 2020**

Dungor, Nozer – Chairman  
Gandhi, Kamalrukh  
Hormuzdi, Khursheed  
Katrak, Percy  
Khumbatta, Kershaw  
Dastur, Khursheed - Secretary  
Billimoria, Farokh – Treasurer

## **YOUTH GROUP OFFICERS 2018 - 2019**

Mistry, Cyrus – President  
Hormuzdi, Dina – Vice President  
Italia, Zara – Treasurer  
Mehta, Natalya – Secretary  
Bastani, Niousha – Historian  
Sarkari, Rukhshana – Web Master

## **MIDDLE GROUP OFFICERS 2018 – 2019**

Kanga, Neville – President  
Dungor, Natasha – Vice President  
Dastur, Mahtab – Secretary  
Kanga, Natasha – Treasurer  
Dastur, Darius – Historian

## **OUR ERVADS (PRIESTS)**

Boomla, Noozar  
Buchia, Kyrus  
Dastur, Barjor  
Dastur, Darius  
Desai, Adi  
Desai, Farokh  
Firozgari, Bahrom  
Gonda, Pervez  
Kanga, Neville  
Katrak, Rayomand  
Katrak, Vispi P.  
Khumbatta, Noshir  
Kotwal, Zubin  
Masani, Dara  
Nariman, Khushrav  
Nariman, Viraf  
Pavri, Shapur  
Sanjana, Bahmanshah  
Sanjana, Kurush  
Sidhwa, Kayomarz  
Sidhwa, Maneck  
Sidhwa, Yazad  
Unwalla, Peshotan  
Vimadalal, Freyaan

After the success of the first vigil on the 26th of March it was unanimously agreed to hold a 2nd vigil the following week.

Over 45 people from different faiths had joined in the "24 hour prayer vigils" including participants from India and other parts of the US.

We believe, if more groups held these round the clock prayer vigils, we could envelope the world in prayer and conquer this malady.

**FEZANA:** *Soothe the Soul - A virtual gathering of prayer, song and spirit in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic* was watched by many around the world on Youtube on April 5/6 2020. In this short video, Ervads Pervez Patel, Cyrus Pavri and Porus Pavri recited all the prayers and the translations while Mani Rao sang all the Monajats.



Mani Rao



Cyrus and Porus Pavri



Pervez Patel

## **ASSISTANCE**

### **ZAH Executive Committee**

ZAH Executive Committee has time and again announced that should any community member need help with food, groceries, medicine pickup or any other assistance, to please reach out them by contacting Khursheed Dastur at ([kbdastur@yahoo.com](mailto:kbdastur@yahoo.com)) or Nozer Dungor ([nozerd@hotmail.com](mailto:nozerd@hotmail.com)). They will coordinate with volunteers and subcommittees to assist you.

### **Team Masketeers**

By: Avan Bhathena

These are extreme times that require extreme measures. Enter **Team Masketeers** (drum roll, please!).

When I saw on the news that our healthcare workers, who are on the frontlines fighting the Covid-19 war, don't have enough masks, I decided I had to do something to help. There is a dire need for Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs). I did some online research on masks and asked some nurses and doctors in the neighborhood what their specific requirements were. I learnt how frustrated they were to have to keep reusing their N95 masks, which were in very short supply. They were worried not only about their safety but also for the safety of their patients.

### Youngest volunteers of Team Masketeers



### Another Volunteer



### Bhandara Atash Kadeh First Anniversary Jashan



### Haft Seen Table



After we got some guidelines/requirements from healthcare professionals a neighbor and I started to sew. Every few days the guidelines changed and we tried to improvise to adapt to them. Some healthcare workers need rectangular pleated masks but MOST, working directly with Covid-19 patients in the ICU, prefer the snug fit masks with a pocket to insert a HEPA filter. With the shortage of N95s the doctors/nurses can wear the cloth masks over the N95's to protect them and prolong their life. All cloth masks are washable and reusable. We use 100% cotton tightly woven fabric. Some have fusible lining, others wire. It all depends on the needs of the healthcare workers.

We have given masks to doctors, nurses, therapists, medical students, pharmacists, and nurses who work for hospice, hospitals, nursing homes and for at-home care.

Team Masketeers started with just two members and now we are eight. Some helpers purchase the fabrics, others cut and three of us sew the masks. A big shout-out to my Parsi helpers - Nergish Cooper, Nina Challa, Persis Behramsha, Khursheed Dastur and both of her wonderful kids Mahtab & Darius. Thank you so, so much for your time and effort.

**We have made well over 100 masks. Our goal is 500, so we still have a long way to go. If you are interested in helping, please call or text Avan Bhathena – Tel 281-224-4689 and I will send you the pattern.**

GO TEAM MASKETEERS!!

## SUBCOMMITTEE NEWS

### Atash Kadeh March 2020 News

By: Persis Behramsha

March 21, 2020 marked the First Anniversary of our Bhandara Atash Kadeh. Despite cancellations of large gatherings, we at the Atash Kadeh wanted to bring in the Navroze, and be thankful for a wonderful first year of our beautiful Atash Kadeh. We seized upon Nazneen Khumbatta's idea to Live Stream the Jashan, thereby connecting our community in Houston and beyond.

The Atash Kadeh was adorned with beautiful garlands made by Aban Chhor and Farzan Umrigar, the Haftseen Table creatively decorated by Thrity Engineer and Villi Bhappu, and the Jashan setting bountifully donated by Shernaz & Feroze Bhandara.



### AVAN YAZAD PARABH Jashan



### Fountain



### PRAYER FOR HUMANITY



The outpouring of Sukhar/Diva Offerings/Donations, structured by Kayomarz Sidhwa, with gratitude to participating Mobeds Maneck Sidhwa, Pervez Gonda, Khushrav Nariman, Noshir Khumbatta & Bahrom Firozgary, and dedication of Danesh Desai and Rayhan Nariman who helped to Live Stream, made this event a huge success.

Avan Mahino Avan Roj Parab Jashan was also celebrated by Live Stream.

We thank our March 2020 Behram Roj Jashan sponsors Diana, Adil, Josh, Danielle, Michelle & Joel Balsara, Farahnaz Khumbatta and Nazneen, Kershaw, Mitra & Noshir Khumbatta.

Everyone feels anxious as the world goes through difficult times with the Corona Virus Pandemic. The Atash Kadeh Committee deeply appreciates our Mobeds Pervez Gonda and Maneck Sidhwa, who willingly and graciously give their time to serve the Atash Kadeh so our faithful fire is kept glowing non-stop. They are committed to keeping our religious traditions alive and continue with daily Boyes, prayers, and Sponsored Jashans without interruption. We are very grateful to them for their unwavering support.

Our wonderful community is doing its part to maintain Social Distancing while continuing with newly adjusted routines. We thank everyone for following the necessary guidelines and not visiting the Atash Kadeh as requested, so our Mobeds can stay healthy and continue with their daily routines. To accommodate the spiritual needs of our community, we are accepting Machi requests, which will be conducted remotely via Audio or FaceTime. Please contact Persis Behramsha at 713-294-7747.

Please stay connected with your families, friends and acquaintances, and be sure to think of those that might be by themselves, who may need to hear a friendly voice every now and then, so they know we are all here for each other. As AT&T used to say in the 80s, Reach Out and Touch Someone” - we are positive you will make a difference.

Stay Connected, Stay Safe, Stay Well. Amen.



**La Historia de Iza  
Grace Ramsay – 1869**



**One of 9 best images of Iza**



**Pictures taken from Google Images**

**Library Committee Report**  
By Jangoo Mistry

**Reflections on Lockdowns**

*"Poetry is a mirror which makes beautiful that which is distorted."*  
Poet Percy Shelley. Here's a timely poem sent by Magdalena Rustomji during this Poetry Month.

And people stayed home  
And read books and listened  
And they rested and did exercises  
And they made art and played  
And learned new ways of being  
And they stopped

And listened more deeply  
Someone meditated  
Someone prayed  
Someone was dancing  
Someone met his shadow  
And people started to think differently

And when the danger ended  
And the people met  
They wept for the dead  
And they made new decisions  
And they dreamed of new visions  
And they created new ways of life.  
When the storm passes  
And the roads are tamed  
Let's be survivors  
of a collective shipwreck.

With a weeping heart  
and fate blessed  
we will feel happy  
just for being alive.

And then we will remember  
all that we lost  
and at once we will learn  
everything we did not learn.

We will understand how life is fragile  
And what it means to be alive  
We will sweat empathy  
for who is and who is gone.

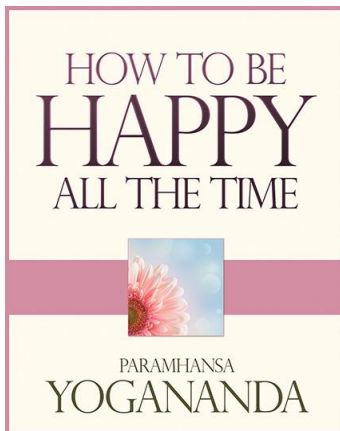
And everything will be a miracle.

(Excerpted from the "Story of Iza" by Grace Ramsay. 1869)

### Be happy



### Book on How to be Happy



### Watch the traffic from Balcony



### Gilli-Danda Base Ball of the East



## On Being Happy - Thoughts to Ponder

By: Jangoo Mistry

Sentiments of despair and boredom are common during trying times like these. Yes, we are all in the same boat. And we are all being bombarded in magazines, newspapers, and online blogs about what to do while confined to the four walls with spouse and kids. They tell you to learn a new language or pick up that musical instrument from high school, or they give you lists of movies to watch on Netflix, or books to read. And we are sending each other videos of how to tolerate your full-time spouse, or keep your children occupied and happy.

All of this is aimed at keeping you "happy" -- happy as in the typical Western approach to happiness. In normal times, happiness for us has been going from one happy experience to another, sharing with friends the restaurant you visited, or the pictures you took in your travel, or the new toy you just bought. When these sources of happiness are cut off, as now, life stretches out in front of you as one long road of boredom and sadness. Current philosophy holds that sadness and rejection must be downplayed and rejected at all costs. No wonder that self-help books on how to be happy flourish, and products to reduce anxiety and sadness are constantly marketed. And no wonder that Google has a "Chief Happiness Officer", and Yale University's most popular course is "The Science of Being Happy" taken by a million students so far and even offered online.

Talking about this relentless pursuit of happiness, Johnny Carson quipped: *"Whoever says money can't buy happiness doesn't know where to shop!"*

This Anglo-American philosophy differs markedly from the Eastern approach to happiness. Happiness in the East is not actively pursued, and sadness is not actively rejected. I remember how just standing by the window and idly watching people on Mumbai streets below was strangely satisfying, instead of constantly trying to find fun things to do and keep myself busy or entertained. No surprise that a person living in a Western culture is 10 times more likely to develop clinical depression or anxiety than a person in an Eastern culture. Like the famous poet Shelley wrote: *"Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought"*.

So let's recondition ourselves not to want but to be satisfied in all feelings, happy or sad. Thomas Jefferson's vision of "...pursuit of happiness" in the Declaration of Independence was not about the pursuit of material gain, or notching up gratifying experiences. It was a happiness that was merely the lack of physical pain and mental disturbance. Above all, it was a vision that lent itself to constant gratefulness. Instead of working hard at being happy, let us just be grateful for the many blessings we still have. It will take us through these challenging times more contentedly and truly happy.

Stay safe and be "happy".





**Lets have a chat**



**Family time**



**Community  
Stay Together Strong & healthy**



## **ZAH CARES Team** (Crisis Action Response Team)

We at ZAH CARES hope you are well, safe and in great spirits!

The mandated, though much-needed, lockdown will probably last for at least another couple of months. It is frustrating, lifestyles are changing and depression can set in even before you realize it. The ZAH CARES team is ready to help. With current stay-at-home orders, we are not able to visit you but we are definitely available for chat sessions. Once social distancing is relaxed, we will start home deliveries of urgently required items.

There are some positives in these difficult times. When do you last remember spending so much quality time with family? It feels good to take a walk, and enjoy the fresh air, a cool breeze and the chirping of birds around the neighborhood. It is quite a detox to only hear sound of nature and silence. We have time to read and get more organized. We are now practicing better hygiene and safety than ever before.

The pandemic has created not only medical issues but also a huge economic slowdown. There is an overload of information TV. The three best links to credible information are:

<https://www.cdc.gov/>  
PREMIER AUTHORITY FOR HEALTH ISSUES

<https://www.ssa.gov/coronavirus/>  
SOCIAL SECURITY - CORONAVIRUS INFO & PROGRAMS

<https://www.irs.gov/coronavirus>  
IRS - FOR CORONAVIRUS CASH & LOAN RELIEF PACKAGES

Keeping busy is very important.

This pandemic will end but leave behind a global recession that we need to pay heed to and be prepared to face. Progression back to civility and life as we enjoyed will be back but at a different pace, different locations, different experiences. It may never be the same. So many will be jobless and literally a third of the small businesses may crash. Spiritual feelings will grow. BE AWARE THAT COMING BACK TO REALITY WILL BE HARSH AND SO WE WILL NEED TO BE STRONG AND BE TOGETHER AS A COMMUNITY IN SPIRIT & PRAYERS. All we need to do is to LOVE, KEEP FAITH & EXERCISE EXTREME PATIENCE..... IT WILL ALL FALL IN PLACE.

Keep in touch. Tell us how you are coping. Feel free to call any of our team members if you need a friendly voice or a helping hand.

With our best wishes for your good health and safety,

Your ZAH Cares Team

Davier, Homi	Behramsha, Persis	Chhor, Aban
Collector Sarosh	Dungor, Nozer	Engineer, Yasmin
Khumbatta, Nazneen	Sagar, Pervin	Sarkari, Shirin

### "Khata Pita" Golden Group



### Morning Prayer



### Coffee on the Porch



### Uninteresting and Unwanted messages?



### Activities of a COVID-19 Prisoner

By: Jehanbux Mehta

The Golden Group was geared up for their April 04 event at the ZAH Centre. It was to be something different: an afternoon of sing-along of popular songs from Hollywood movies and Broadway shows plus some unforgettable Gujarati Parsi natak songs including my favorite: that of a ganga and her *ghagri*. But then, Covid-19 raised its ugly head.

Consigned to the house on strict orders of our children, we seniors were left to our own devices to work out schedules for the hours at home. Gone were the unnecessary visits to the super markets and the stolen hours away for a quaff of beer and lunch at our favorite pub or dinners with friends. What then?

Not surprisingly, when I broached the subject with fellow silver-haired friends, I learnt that they, like Sillie and I, had adapted to a style that keeps us occupied. Bored? Not at all. Each day goes by with something or the other to do, and, no kidding, even to look forward to. Waking up in the morning, (be it at 7:00 or 8:00 or even later - who are we to report to?) to find a foot touching solid ground is an unbounded blessing, prompting a Yatha for gratitude of just being here. A leisurely wash and off for the first "looking forward to" moment.

The brewing of the first round of coffee. Ooh, the aroma! Straddled with a hot mug – cups are for tea, you know – with newspaper in hand, sitting in the kitchen, or better still, on the porch keeping company with nature: yet another blessing to be thankful for. Skipping through the pages with a cursory glance at the woeful tales and repetitious warnings and advices, one turns to the Comics section for the much-needed laughter. The mug hath run dry; it is time for another "look forward to" activity. Yes, a simple breakfast. All this while music permeates. A shower preceding a short prayer. A second mug of java while running through a magazine, drooling over pictures of forbidden food. The awaited moment has arrived: the first nap of the day. What bliss!

Awakening after 15 or 20 minutes, we proceed upstairs to pore over uninteresting and unwanted messages on the computer. To the rescue, a voice beckons to bring out the chilled beer and birdie numnum. Difficult decision has to be made: should it be pistas or cashews or the always-popular peanuts. What a delightful way to spend 30 odd minutes doing absolutely nothing but sip and munch. Then, another "event" to look forward to: yup, lunch. Wow, five or six hours have gone by. Wash up, gargle with warm salt water and turn on the stupid smart phone. An avalanche of articles on the covid which can be mercifully dispensed with by just a click of the "delete" tab. Enjoy the funny anecdotes and hilarious cartoons sent by considerate friends to remind us that laughter overrules worry. Yet another moment has arrived: the second and longer nap of the day.

Whatdya know? It's teatime. A hot cuppa with a batasa or two to dunk in, sitting outside listening to the chirping of birds oblivious to the woes of the world.



**Ervad Ramyar Karanji reciting  
Tandarosti Prayers**



A bit of reading before turning on Dua Tandarosti beautifully recited by Ervad Dr Karanjia, while seated on the patio surrounded by nature. So soothing! So peaceful!

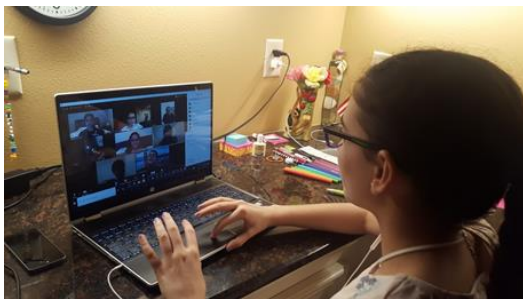
Off upstairs for another bout with the computer, cleaning up material stored over the years but hardly perused. Back in the bedroom – no, no, not another nap, though tempting – but for some more reading or to watch a movie. Omigosh, it’s already supsup time. Flag the page or press the pause button, proceed to the cabinet to select the eau de vie, pour a generous measure in a glass and continue reading or watching the movie with legs outstretched on the bed. Dinner awaits. Complete the movie. Guess what? 12 hours have elapsed since awakening. So soon, we ask? Read some more till sleep calls. Was it not a wonderful day? Definitely!

Good night all. Keep well, stay safe and look forward to the next day

**Mahtab talking to friends on computer**



**And Staying Connected**



### **Adapting to Changing Times**

By: Mahtab Dastur (8<sup>th</sup> Grade)

These times have called for a Change - change in eating, drinking, communicating, working and relaxing; a change in our lifestyle as a whole. What do these changes include? What is our community doing during these times? In a friend group circle called, *The Ghelas*, friends are bored. They are used to going outside, communicating in person with real people, and hanging out with their friends. This has suddenly been taken away, and now there is nothing to do. However, as human beings, we adapt, not always in the best way though. Now we are almost always on electronics, watching videos, YouTube, Netflix, playing games and on social media. We are also trying to communicate with the rest of our friends through not only texting and calling but also through video apps, such as Zoom, Houseparty, Duo and more.

Despite these changes, there have also been a few changes for the better. Because of stay-at-home orders, families are spending more time with each other. They play games, watch TV/movies, exercise/take walks, and talk and laugh with each other. We as a human race have also become more technologically advanced. We are learning to depend on online programs, to electronically submit schoolwork, to talk to people, to do quizzes and tests, and to basically do everything we used to do in person. We have also seen our community step up. We have seen our community make homemade masks for hospitals, and hold 24-hour Prayer Vigils. Our Sunday School teachers have been working hard, and have even come up with a virtual way to hold Sunday School during these times. Isn’t that amazing?

As a wise man once said, “when the going gets tough, the tough get going”. Through these demanding times, we have learned to adapt and change for the better. We have learned that together we can make a bigger impact. The going got tough, so the tough got going, and that is why you are able to read this today.



**Friends on Zoom**

**ZUBIN MASTER**



**NATALYA HAVELIVALA**



**DATE ROLL**



**And now for some Good News**  
**Winners of the MNE Scholarship 2020**

The ZAH Mike N. Engineer Scholarship Committee is pleased to announce the winners of the 2020 scholarships.

**Zubin Master**, a freshman at the University of Houston, majoring in Business Administration and Management, will receive a \$3,500 scholarship.

**Natalya Haveliwala**, a post-graduate student at Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center, pursuing a Doctor of Physical Therapy degree, will receive a \$2,000 scholarship.

Both Zubin and Natalya excel academically as well as strive to make a difference to their community through their involvement in ZAH activities. We are confident that they will continue to be mentors to our youth for many years to come.

Congratulations to Zubin and Natalya! We wish them continued success in their academic endeavors.

Future applicants should look for next year's application on the ZAH website in November 2020.

MNE Scholarship Committee

**Date Roll**

Yummy recipe by Yasmin Medhora

Soften dates; Add nuts and roll in crushed cookies or coconut powder.

**You will need:**

8 oz Meghdoot pitted dates (any soft dates)

4 T whipping cream

1/2 cup chopped mixed nuts (pistachio, almonds, cashew, walnuts, peanuts, any nuts)

6 T powder – any plain cookies or crackers, dry coconut or nuts (Marie Biscuit, Petit Burre, Ritz crackers or any)

**Method**

A) Put dates in a non-stick pan and sauté on medium heat

B) Add whipping cream so that dates do not stick In the pan and helps to soften them.

C) Lower the heat. Dates will soften in about 20 minutes. Remove from stove and mash them with a spatula or fork.

D) Add chopped nuts and mix

E) Form sausage type roll.  
Roll in crushed cookies or coconut powder.

F) Keep roll in fridge overnight to firm.

G) Slice each roll next day and enjoy or freeze roll for later use.

You may add a few figs to the dates or make a fig roll. Enjoy.



## FEROZE BHANDARA OFFERS HIS NOW UNOCCUPIED HOSPITAL TO THE CITY OF HOUSTON



### Excerpted From Fox News & Houston Chronicle

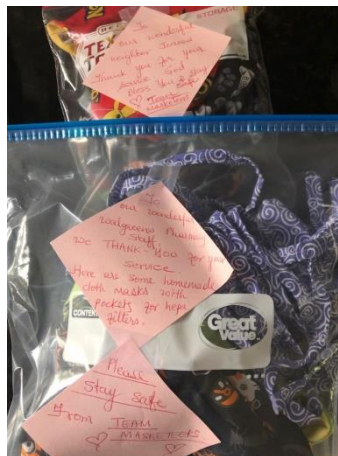
HOUSTON - Congressman Al Green is taking a look at an unoccupied Houston hospital as a potential spot to house patients, if necessary, as COVID-19 continues to spread. The Congressman toured the building which is in the Westbury area and has been closed since 2017. Now it could reopen as a spot to house COVID19 patients.

Congressman Al Green says "This may be a possibility. I've spoken to Mr. Fred Bhandara. He came to me and offered this facility. It was Westbury Community Hospital at one time."

From 2010 to 2017 it was the Hopebridge Mental Hospital which the building owner Fred Bhandara says closed just before Harvey. Bhandara says the building flooded in the hurricane, but has been remediated and now needs to be renovated.

Feroze will do all the necessary renovations himself. "If I had to predict, we can get some rooms available between 30 to 60 days," explains Bhandara.

## ANOTHER HOUSTON ZOROASTRIANS VOLUNTEER EFFORT TEAM MASKETEERS AT WORK FINISHED PRODUCTS FOR HEALTHCARE WORKERS





## KIDS – BEFORE & DURING COVID-19



Enjoying with no care in the world



Overnight matured and taking responsibility - volunteering to make masks