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JAIN DIGEST

Summer 2001 Volume 18 No 2



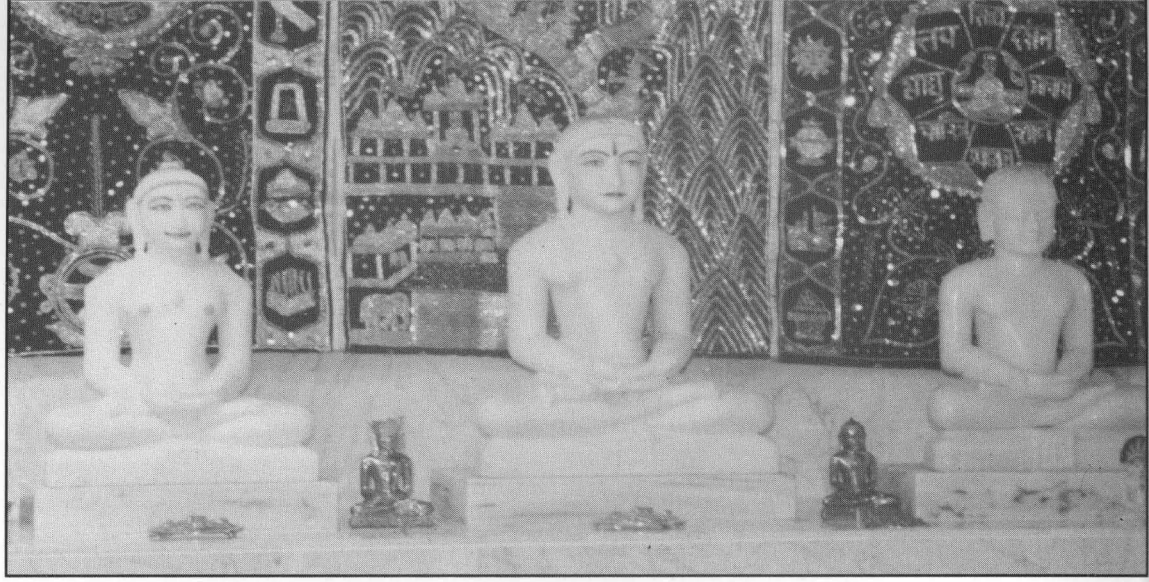
JAINS in the US CONGRESS!

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JAIN TEMPLE, WASHINGTON, DC



JAI JINENDRA

अहो! अहो! श्री सदगुरु, करुणासिंधु अपार
आ पामर पर प्रभु कर्यो, अहो! अहो! उपकार (१२४)

Thanks! the Holy True Teacher!
Unfathomable ocean of compassion;
I'm highly obliged; Oh! good Teacher,
The Pupil poor has no expression. (124)

शुं प्रभुचरणकने धरुं? आत्माथी सहु हीन,
ते तो प्रभुअे आपियो, वर्तु चरणाधिन (१२५)

What should I offer to you, Lord?
In soul-comparison all is trifle;
The soul is gifted by the Lord,
I wish to act to your oracle. (125)

- Shri Atmasiddhi Shastra, Srimad Rajchandra -

We dedicate ourselves to ceaseless efforts of
Acharya Sushil Kumarji and Gurudev Chitrabhanuji,
in spreading the principles of Jainism
among all the Jains settled in North America.

We congratulate the Executive Committee for their devoted service to JAINA.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Dharambandhu,

It only feels like yesterday that this Executive Committee was sworn in two years ago. As they say, time flies when you have fun, even if it is in performing your duties. The enjoyment for this Executive Committee was in discharging its duties to advance the cause of our religion in a very sincere and cooperative manner, always following the essential spirit of our religion—Anekantvad and Ahimsa.

In my acceptance speech, I promised to work on the strong foundation laid down by our past presidents. I would like to review with you some of the achievements we have accomplished in these two years.

As you may have realized, Jain Digest has spectacularly improved in its appearance as well as its diversified contents. Many issues were dedicated to special occasions, such as Prathishtas, YJA/ YJP Conventions, Shrimath Rai Chand's Centennial, and Shri Kanji Swami's Birth Centennial. The Spring issue is dedicated to the commencement of Lord Mahavir's 2600th Janm Kalyanak Celebrations. Our congratulations to its Editor-in-Chief and the entire editorial board.

JAINA's World Community Service, under the leadership of Bachubhai Ajmera, Bhadrash Dhila, and Prakash Mehta, with the guidance of Mr. Dhiraj Shah, has also stood the test of time. As we all know, at present, it's deeply involved in rebuilding villages by adopting them in the earthquake-stricken state of Gujarat. Most of JAINA's member centers, such as New York, Boston, and Washington, have joined with JAINA in contributing their funds, putting full faith in the experience, devotion, and sincerity of our committee members. To other centers, who have still not joined in this long-term task of helping to rebuild, I sincerely advise you to join your hands with JAINA.

JAINA's Tirth Yatra project is getting more and more popular with Jains in North America and receiving full support and welcome in India. Maybe, the dream of its chairman, Mr. Dilip Shah, of taking more sanghs to various Tirths each year may come true one day.

JAINA's newly-formed Tirthodhar Committee, has not only done well in helping institutions take care of our Sadhu sangh, but has also taken important lead in taking care our modern Tirths (our primary educational schools). My hearty congratulations to Mr. Kirit Daftary and his team and his committee members.

JAINA's Media Watch and Public Relations Committee, under the leadership of its chairman Dr. Sushil Jain, has done a tremendous job in promoting recognition of Jain religion and the Jain community in our nation's capital, Washington D.C. For the first time in the history of the United States, a Jain prayer will be recited in the United States Senate and the House of Representatives on May 22nd 2001. The committee has also been active in protecting the name 'JAIN' from becoming a trademark name for a product of the technology giant Sun-Micro Systems.

JAINA's Mahavir Memorial Committee, under the able leadership of JAINA's past president, Dr. Manoj Dharamsi, has already developed plans for year-long celebrations for the 2600th Janm Kalyanak of Bhagwan Mahavir, along with a very impressive and informative booklet on Jainism and Lord Mahavir.

Cover: The cover photograph was taken on the steps of the Capital Building, in Washington DC, right after the prayer in US Congress with Congressman Frank Pallone, Jr., House Chaplain Coughlin, Manek Muniji and Gurudev Chitrabhanu

small photo: All the past presidents of JAINA

Cover Design by: Dhruvil Kumar Purohit, Bear, DE (DRUMDOG007@aol.com)

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The Managing Editorial Board will endeavor to publish all material submitted but reserves the right to edit and/or reformat for clarity and space restrictions. The views expressed in the articles are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Managing Editorial Board of JAIN DIGEST.

PUBLICATION DATES AND DEADLINES

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Summer (June)	May 15
Fall (September)	August 15
Winter (December)	November 15

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<http://www.yja.org/>

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR OF JAIN DIGEST

We encourage our readers to send their questions, comments or views on current issues or concerns facing the Jain community of North America to the Editor in Chief, Lata Champsee. We endeavor to publish all letters, space permitting. The JAIN DIGEST reserves the right to edit all material for clarity and/or space. All letters must include the sender's name, address and phone number to be considered for publication.

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JAINA FOCUS

JAINA publishes the JAINA Focus monthly newsletter for administrative purposes. It is sent to all member organizations and committee members of JAINA. All news items for publication in the JAINA Focus must be sent to the Editor by the 10th of each month:

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President's Message (cont.)

JAINA's Convention Board, with Dr. Bipin Parikh as its conveyor and Mr. Kishore Shah and Mr. Prabodh Vidhya as its co-conveyors, along with the entire dedicated convention team, is making very sincere efforts in giving us a unique, memorable convention, religiously and socially. Full involvement of YJA and YJP will bring our new generation ever closer to our religion. I invite you to come, along with your family and friends to fully enjoy and be exposed to the richness of our religion.

JAINA's Matrimonial Committee has brought many Jain youths together for life long commitments in keeping our Jain heritage alive. Thank you, Hasmukhbhai Shah, for the sincere dedication you have shown in carrying on this vital and time consuming service to our society.

JAINA's Education Committee chairman Mr. Pravinbhai Shah and JAINA Publication Committee chairman Dr. Prem Gada are developing plans to help teachers of Jain Pathshalas and Jains at various centers to publish and disseminate books to enable Jain families in North America to do Swadhaya through self-study.

JAINA's Temple Guideline Committee, under the able leadership of our past president Dr. Jagat Jain, has accomplished a lot in establishing united, non-sectarian Jain institutions in North America.

Our Sadhus, Sadhvis and scholars are the foundation on which we learn the basics of our religion. And for that, we appreciate the long-term commitment of Mr. Nirmal Doshi, in his efforts to make them available to the North American Jain community.

JAINA's Calendar project, which began two years ago, has made Jains throughout North America more cognizant of our heritage. Incorporating all of your valuable suggestions, we are now in the process of producing calendars for the year 2002. We appreciate the hard work and dedication of its newly elected chairman, Mr. Rajeev Pandya, for handling this project from its very inception.

JAINA Trustees and Patrons have proved to be the financial backbone of JAINA, without whose help we would never have been able to make the progress we have made. I sincerely thank them for their regular contributions and commitment by upholding their belief in Jainism.

JAINA has too many other committees to be mentioned performing their duties faithfully. We thank all of these for their continual hard work and sincere efforts, which continue to keep JAINA strong.

Our sincere thanks to Mr. Kamlesh Amin, administrator of JAINA Headquarters, for his sincere hard work and dedication.

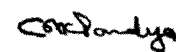
While we can take pride in all of the above achievements, there has been increasing concerns about maintaining our Jain unity among different Jain traditions. The non-sectarian approach taken by Jaina and so far whole heartedly supported by the Jains in North America, has become a bright and refreshing example for the Jain community worldwide. It therefore becomes the responsibility of each and everyone of us as well as the Sadhus and Sadhvis and Scholars to help preserve this unique character of Jains in North America. Those who are coming here to enlighten us about our religion would better serve the Jain community if they refrained from pursuing their own agendas or opening their own ashrams or a branch of their institution in North America. The goal of unity is paramount for us to flourish here and pass our valued religious heritage to the young generation.

Last but not the least, I find no words to express my feeling of happiness and gratitude towards the members of JAINA's Executive Board and their families, for their dedication in performing their sacred duties for JAINA. I also thank all our past presidents, who always extended their guidance to me personally, and to the entire JAINA Organization.

Finally, I do not want to fail in discharging my humble duty to thank Mrs. Asha Pandya, who, along with our joint family of two sons – Sanjay and Rajeev and daughters Renu and Deepti and our six grandchildren, let our family become a JAINA office for the past two years; helping me in each and every task that I was involved in doing for JAINA. I am sure they will all miss this fortunate opportunity given to them, but I can reassure them that I will keep them as busy as I have in the past two years with my continued commitment to JAINA.

Once again, I thank each and every member of the Jain community of North America for their wholehearted support to JAINA. I take full responsibility of not being able to do as much as I wanted or was expected to accomplish. Also for any hurt feelings, which I personally or JAINA members might have caused during the past two years, Micchami Dukadam.

Jai Jinendra and Thank You Very Much!



Dr. Mahendra K. Pandya, President, JAINA

JAINS MADE HISTORY IN THE U. S. CONGRESS



Jaina Presidents with House Chaplain Coughlin, Gurudev Chitrabhanuji, and Manekmuniji at the reception

Jains of North America made history on May 22, 2001 when Gurudev Chitrabhanuji delivered the opening prayer in the House of Representative in celebration of 2600th birth anniversary of Lord Mahavir. For the first time in the history of the United States of America, Jainism and Jains of North America received this unprecedented recognition and honor of delivering a prayer in the US House of Representative. The cover photograph was taken on the steps of the Capital Building after this historic event.

After the prayer, congressman Frank Pallone, Jr. of New Jersey, the sponsor of the event, paid tributes to the Jain philosophy of non-violence and to the Jain community in North America for organizing this event. He Stated "Jains all around the world celebrated the 2600th Birth Anniversary of Lord Mahavir, the last of the revered 24 Jinas who spread the Jain message. I guess you could say, in a way, Lord Mahavir was ahead of his times, once proclaiming that all human beings are equal whether male or female, rich or poor. The Jain religion, which places heavy emphasis on personal and societal non-violence in

thoughts, speech and actions, has flourished in India for over 3500 years". He congratulated Dr. Sushil Jain for organizing, and thanked House Chaplain Coughlin for allowing Jains the opportunity to celebrate the Jain spirit on the House floor.

The prayer was delivered in English in accordance with the rules for the prayer in the congress. It started with "Let us all join our hands, heads and hearts together and bow to all perfect and liberated souls, and to all spiritual teachers" and ended with trans-

lation of Shivamastu "May the entire universe attain bliss. May all beings be interested in one another's well being. May all faults be eliminated. May people be happy everywhere. Om Shanti! Shanti! Shanti!".

Over 140 delegates of Jain community from all over USA and Canada along with the representatives from Indian Embassy witnessed this momentous event from the Gallery of the House of Representatives. Among the delegates were Shree Manak Muniji, current President of JAINA, Dr. Mahendra Pandya, accompanied by all the past presidents of JAINA (Drs. Manoj Dharamsi, Tansukh Salgia, Sulekh Jain, Jagat Jain, Manibhai Mehta, and Dhiraj Shah), Jain Center Presidents and other Jain dignitaries. The day before, the Jain Society of Metropolitan Washington, D.C. held a reception at the Jain Center in honor of all the out of town visiting dignitaries.

After the ceremonies, Congressman Frank Pallone held a reception for all the delegates of Jain community. Father Daniel Coughlin, Chaplain for the House also participated in the reception, and thanked the Jain community for taking the initiative. JAINA representatives also presented a set of books on Jainism to Congressman Pallone, Chaplain Coughlin and their staff. Following the reception, a senior staff member of Congressman Pallone also gave an extensive tour of the Capitol Buildings to all Jain delegates who attended the prayer.



JAINA delegates with Senator Hillary Clinton

A group of JAINA Delegates met with Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton of New York to follow-up on the invitation to be the Chief Guest at the 11th Biennial JAINA convention. Senator Clinton expressed a strong desire to accept the invitation. This delegation also met with Senator George Voinovich of Ohio to co-sponsor similar prayer in the US Senate sometime later this year.

This landmark event was initiated and guided by Dr. Sushil Jain, Chairman of the JAINA Public Affairs Council and Dr. Manoj Dharamsi, Chairman of the 2600th Birth Anniversary Celebrations of Lord Mahavir.

JAIN RATNA AWARD



Dr. Dhiraj Shah receiveing JAIN RATNA award from Prime Minister Mr. Atal Bibari Bajpai

JAINA is pleased to inform you that at a 2600th Birth Anniversary Celebration ceremony held in Bombay on April 8th, the Prime Minister of India Mr. Atal Bihari Bajpai awarded JAIN RATNA award to Former President of JAINA Dr. Dhiraj H. Shah of Buffalo, N.Y.

Dr. Dhiraj Shah, acting chairman of JAINA Charitable Trust was among the 26 prominent Jains world wide to receive this honor at a function organized jointly by many Jain societies representing all four Jain sects. Among others receiving the honor were Dr. L. M. Singhvi, Sheth Shrenik Lalbhai, Shri Kumarpal Desai, Indu Jain of Times of India Group, C. N. Sanghavi, Dr. Natubhai Shah, Nemubhai Chandaria and Musician Ravindra Jain.

The Prime Minister released *Vardhman*, a book on Jainism and the constitution of the World Jain Confederation. The Prime Minister and the other speakers spoke of relevance of Mahavir's message of Ahimsa and Anekantwad in the world today.



Milwaukee Temple

PRATISHTHA IN MILWAUKEE

A small community of less than 30 Jain families in Milwaukee now has a Jain temple of their own. Under the banner of Jain Religion Center of Wisconsin, they have come together and have completed a temple adjacent to the Hindu Temple. The temple now has three beautiful Pratimajis of Lord Mahavira (37"), Parswanth (33") and Adinath Bhagwan (33"), specially carved from top quality Makrana Marble.

For three days this past Memorial Day weekend, Jains from all over the United States and India celebrated "Pratishtha Mahotsav" in a traditional manner. Pandit Nirmal Doshi from Mumbai and Shri Devendrakeerty Bhattarakji conducted the Pratishtha ceremonies. Sadhavi Shri Shubhamji of Veerayatan and Saman Shrutpragyaji and Sthitpragyaji of Ladnun also graced the occasion and provided spiritual discourses. Three large video screens were set up in various halls on the campus to make sure that all present were able to participate in all of the Pujas and rituals. Saturday evening's performance of the musical drama Nem Rajul attracted a crowd of record size. The weather Sunday morning started out cold and rainy but at the time of 108 Kalash Rath Yatra the skies cleared and the sun came out, making the sight of the procession truly heart warming. The highlight of the day was the actual pratishtha at 11.31 A.M. The welcoming of the lords in the murtis' final positions sparked spontaneous dancing and singing. All present had tears of joy in their eyes. The atmosphere was filled with singing, dancing and the celebratory ringing of the bell. Faith and emotions had overwhelmed the entire crowd of about 1,000 devotees. The evening's Raja Kumarpal Aarti of 108 divas with a band and dancing procession was another emotional experience for the entire congregation. Many claimed that they

had a religious experience of a lifetime during this event. A program of Bhajans and Dandia Ras concluded this remarkable day in Wisconsin for Jains.

Everyone that attended the pratishtha walked away with renewed enthusiasm in his or her belief in Jainism. Many out of town guests said they are now encouraged to build temples in other cities in the United States. For local adults and children these experiences strengthened their faith in the Jain religion and brought it closer to their hearts.

JAINA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETS IN CHICAGO

The Executive Committee of JAINA held its meeting on March 31, 2001 at the Temple in Bartlett, IL.

The following items were discussed at this meeting:

- The meeting was opened with the recitation of Namokar Mantra.

- JAINA President Mahendra Pandya was unable to attend the meeting due to health problems. In his absence Bipin Parikh, First Vice President, JAINA chaired the meeting and welcomed the Executive Committee members, Convention Board members and other guests.

- Bipin Parikh and Vinay Vakani, Secretary, JAINA stated that Mahendra Pandya had been hospitalized in India and wished him a quick recovery. All attendees expressed the same sentiments.

- Vinay Vakani read the minutes of the meeting held on September 30, 2000 at Siddhachalam. The following items were discussed prior to approving the minutes:

1. Dhiraj Shah raised a question regarding the discussion at Siddhachalam that all JAINA Committee Chairpersons should do the disbursement of the funds after review by the Executive Committee. He stated that individual committee traditionally disbursed the funds raised by the committee and did not see need for informing the Executive Committee about this matter. Vinay Vakani stated that all funds raised by various committees were received in the name of JAINA. It was therefore appropriate and prudent that JAINA Executive Committee was apprised (not specifically seeking an approval) of disbursement of the funds. Anop Vora, Treasurer, JAINA stated that he felt comfortable with the current arrangement and did not see the need for informing the Executive Committee. Since there was no resolution adopted on this issue at Siddhachalam meeting, it was decided to delete the reference to this subject from the minutes.

2. The Minutes of the Meeting inadvertently omitted to record the resolution that was adopted at Siddhachalam meeting that elected Rajiv Pandya as the chairman of the Calendar Committee. The resolution was adopted at the time of splitting the Education Committee into various committees. This omission was discovered while discussing the funds needed for JAINA's deficit for the year. For the record, Rajiv Pandya is the duly appointed chairman of the Calendar Committee.

The minutes of the meeting were approved with above two amendments.

- Bipin Parikh, the acting President, presented the following President's Report:

- The celebration of Bhagwan Mahavir's 2600th Janma Kalyanak (Birth Anniversary) will be a focal point of the JAINA Convention.

- On April 6th, 2001, there will be a program on 2600th Birth Anniversary in New Delhi and JAINA will be represented. Dhiraj Shah should represent JAINA as a member of the Executive Committee.

- JAINA calendar was very well received by our community. Rajiv Pandya is already working on the 2002 calendar.

- Gujarat earthquake relief work is going on well. Some of the JAINA members had already visited the affected area.

- April 7th, 2001 is the last day for sending the names of Board of Directors for 2001 to Vinay Jain, Chairman, Nomination and Election Committee.

- The First Vice President of JAINA traditionally acts as the chairman of the Award Committee. Though he would like to stay on the committee, because of other responsibilities he proposed to include Chandrakant Mehta from New Jersey as a member. Executive Committee approved the proposal. Award nomination details went out with the JAINA Convention flyer- first two award are one each and the remaining number would be decided later.

- Anop Vora presented the Treasurer's report. He pointed out that JAINA did not have sufficient funds in General Fund. He proposed to take \$20,000 out of Calendar and Booksource Committee's account. According to Anop Vora, Calendar and Booksource Committee has a balance of \$45,000 and it needs only \$20,000 to publish calendars. It was reasoned that when people send money to JAINA in response to calendar they are really supporting JAINA and not just the Calendar Committee's effort. So it should be acceptable to take the money from Calendar Committee's account. Anop Vora also proposed to get \$10,000 from JAINA Charitable trust.

Dhiraj Shah suggested that just as Jain Digest is a JAINA project we should make calendar also a JAINA project. This way any donation received against the calendar will go to JAINA General Fund.

Vinay Vakani stated that it is totally inappropriate to take money from the Calendar and Booksource Committee without first discussing it with the committee chairman. In light of previous discussion on disbursement of funds by the committee chairpersons, it is only proper to follow the same guidelines. He proposed that Bipin Parikh should talk this over with Mahendra Pandya, and both of them approach Rajiv Pandya to obtain his views on this matter.

Dilip Shah suggested that the general practice of JAINA should be to request the committee for money and not take away directly as these committees raise money for their own use.

Manibhai Mehta's suggestion was to send a Jain Digest registration form along with the calendar, so that we can increase the Jain Digest registration.

Kishore Shah suggested that JAINA General Fund should charge some amount to each committee for administrative expenses. This way we can build the JAINA general funds.

It was decided that Bipin Parikh should discuss the matter with Rajiv Pandya. It was also agreed to request JAINA charitable trust to give \$10,000 for operating expenses of JAINA.

Dilip Shah put forth a proposal to make Jain Digest self-supporting by selling the advertisement space in Jain digest. To achieve this, he proposed that the Executive Committee should create a marketing manager's position. The marketing manager will compile the demographics of Jain Digest readers and present that information to companies to get their advertisement. This will create a continuous stream of revenue, which will support the publication of the Jain Digest.

Lata Champsee, liked the idea of making Jain digest self-sufficient. However, she felt that advertising fee would have to be between \$500- \$1000 for a page and there should be guidelines for the kind of ads we publish.

Vinay Vakani expressed skepticism about treating the Jain Digest as an advertising tool- like a for-profit publication. He also asked whether JAINA – as non-profit organization – could sell advertising space.

Bipin Parikh proposed Samprati Shah as marketing manager for Jain Digest. Dilip Shah suggested that Executive Committee should create an Editorial Board (at present there is an Editorial Board that will be dismantled) that can respond to the readers and the advertisers in a coordinated manner.

It was decided to establish a Managerial Board for the Jain Digest, which will comprise of Editor-in-Chief, marketing manager and circulation manager. It was also agreed that Editor-in-Chief would act as the chairperson of this board.

- JAINA Patrons: JAINA should deliver all the services and privileges to the Patrons as promised. Bipin Parikh assured that steps have been taken on this issue for 2001 Convention to avoid the past mistakes. The Patrons will be given lapel pin and the preferred seating at the opening ceremony, cultural programs, etc.

JAINA Committee Reports:

- YJA Committee: Chintan Shah reported that YJA have elected 4 new members to the YJA Board during their January meeting. They also started 7 new projects. They have started a project to involve more youths in voluntary activities at the local level. YJA was involved in collecting and shipping much needed supplies for the victims of the earthquake.

They have also started a project nicknamed Adinath to upgrade and enhance their website. The website will be more interactive and will also feature online Pathshala.

To celebrate the 2600th Birth Anniversary of Bhagwan Mahavir, YJA has created a play depicting the 27 lives of Bhagwan Mahavir. The play will be performed at various Jain Centers throughout North America. They requested donation for this effort.

He also mentioned that they had planned 5 regional conferences over Thanksgiving weekend last year out of which 3 took place. The conferences were self-supported by the attendees and no money from YJA was spent on it.

Shama Khandwala mentioned that YJA have started a project to update their membership database. She also mentioned YJA website has all the information about the projects that they are working on for 2002 YJA convention. The bids are being accepted from different cities to host the convention. So far one bid has been received. YJA is involved in the Chicago Convention

YJA is also in contact with young Jains in UK, Singapore, and Japan to have more open communication.

Anop Vora suggested to YJA members that they collect all the accounting information within 3 months after the YJA convention and submit it to JAINA Treasurer. This will make the accounting easier. Bipin Parikh suggested that all committees including YJA use accounting guidelines set by JAINA.

- Mahavir Memorial Committee: On behalf of Mahavir Memorial Committee, Sushil Jain reported on the efforts that are being made to kickoff the North American celebration of 2600th Janma Kalyanak of Bhagwan Mahavir. He stated that the committee had prepared a flyer narrating the history and the tenets of Jainism, and the life of Bhagwan Mahavir. This is for distribution to Jains as well as non-Jains while kicking off our celebration.

- Education Committee: Pravin Shah (NC), Chairman of the Education Committee reported that he had contacted the Pathshala coordinators and Pathshala teachers to obtain their input in developing the plans for future activities. The committee will set up a website that will allow all Pathshalas to communicate with each other. Starting in May 2001, he wants to start a 2-day class on Jainism for the Executive Committee members as well as other adults. There will be \$50 fee that will cover food and lodging. If there is good response to this offer, he plans to continue this program every month.

- Website Committee: Girish Shah, Chairman of the Website Committee is planning to have 7 members to work on setting up the website and other IT infrastructure. The committee will have a sub-committee involved in fund raising to support the IT projects. There will also be a sub-committee that will manage the content to be published on the website. Vinay Vakani asked about the advisability of publishing the phone numbers, e-mail addresses and other personal data about the JAINA volunteers. Girish Shah also expressed his concern about this matter and promised to look into the potential problems.

- **Media Watch and Public Relations Committee:** Sushil Jain, Chairman of the Media Watch and Public Relations Committee informed the attendees that Jain prayers would be recited in the upcoming session of the United States House of Representatives and the Senate on May 22, 2001. For the first time in the history of the United States of America, Jainism and Jains will receive this unprecedented recognition and honor. Bipin Parikh and Vinay Vakani enthusiastically commended the achievements of the committee and all present applauded. (See details on this historic event and committee report else where in this issue)

Sushil Jain proposed to change the name of JAINA Media Watch to JAINA Public Affairs Council because the term council would have a lot more impact during press briefings. The Executive Committee members approved the proposal.

- **Jain Digest Membership Committee:** Keerti Shah, Chairman of the membership Committee stated that more Jain Digest members were added since last year. He suggested that it would be good if we could make it a requirement that new directors become life members of Jain digest. He also suggested that all Jain Centers should take the opportunity of Mahavir Jayanti celebration to start the drive to increase Jain Digest membership. Kirit Daftary suggested that the life membership should be increased to \$201 from \$101. Dhiraj Shah suggested increasing the life membership fee to \$151 fee starting July 2001. No decision was made. Keerti Shah mentioned that currently some people get multiple copies of the Jain Digest. This needs to be corrected. Veerendra Shah (CA) volunteered to correct this problem for his Jain Center.

- **Pilgrimage Committee:** Dilip Shah, Chairman of the Pilgrimage Committee reported on the last pilgrimage to Sammet Shikhar. During this pilgrimage, they visited 75 Kalyanaks in 15 days. The details of the pilgrimage are published in the Spring Issue of the Jain Digest. Next year the pilgrimage will include a visit to Shatrunjaya (Palitana), Girnar and Kutch around the same time and for approximately the same cost as this year. Reference material on JAINA was distributed to Jain centers in India to familiarize them with JAINA and its activities.

- **Tirthoddhar Committee:** Kirit Daftary, Chairman of the Tirthoddhar Committee talked about the visit to Lachwad during the pilgrimage. A local school that is in complete disrepair was promised to be rehabilitated. The committee has made arrangement Veerayatan to manage the work and the committee will finance it. Veerayatan is building a new eye hospital in Lachwad.

- **World Community Service:** Dhiraj Shah presented a report on behalf of the Committee. He informed that JAINA has participated with Bhartiya Jain Sangh in setting up schools in earthquake affected areas. JAINA has so far raised \$300,000 in donations. The largest donation of \$100,000 came from the Jain Cen-

ter of America, New York. A total of 500 families have contributed out of which 22 are Jain Centers. Some of the Jain Centers have given donations for specific projects. There are two additional projects- (1) Community Health Center and (2) First Aid Center- that needs funding. If any Jain Center is interested, they need to donate at least \$25,000. Government of Gujarat is likely support these projects in terms of providing land. JAINA plans to sponsor 250 pre-fabricated houses. The houses will be donated based on approved criteria. JAINA has already donated half the money required to build a school in Samakhyan. The committee has also donated to take care of 600 people who were taking shelter in Samakhyan. When Dhiraj Shah went to Gujarat, he took along with him 5000 blankets, 10000 food packets, 10000 mineral water bottles, 1000 torches, and 30000 lbs. of clothes. The second container carrying essentials is on the way to Gujarat. He has also sent 100 wheelchairs, 72 crutches and 18 canes. We still need \$100,000 in donations. The names of the donors are available on www.jaina.org website.

Veerendra Shah of Los Angeles Jain Center gave an update on the relief activity that they carried out to help the victims of the earthquake. He informed the Executive Committee that \$350,000 were collected in the form of donations and 11 containers of essential supplies were sent. He mentioned, he had gathered a lot of information on relief work and was willing to share it.

- **New Committee:** Kirit Daftary proposed a new committee called Book Depot. As per his proposal, the committee will sell books to any individual. The books could be sold at the Convention. Also people can order books for Prabhavna distributions and Gift certificates will also be available. The book depot will work on no profit no loss basis. Currently two publishers in India have agreed to supply books. Girish Shah suggested the name of the committee should be Book Store instead of Book Depot.

Pravin Shah suggested when we sell the books through bookstore, we should ask for donations, because if you sell anything, you have to pay sales tax and that will become very complicated. Instead we can ask for donations. There were others who expressed concern about JAINA selling books (or other artifacts).

The Executive Committee approved the formation of new Book Depot Committee and Rohit Doshi was selected as the chairman of this committee.

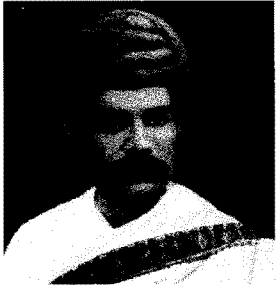
- **JAINA Convention Board:** The Executive Committee was briefed on the activities planned for the July Convention by various individuals involved in those activities.

Vinay Vakani recited the prayer "Khamemi Savva Jeeve..." and the Meeting was adjourned.

-Vinay K. Vakani, Secretary, JAINA

THE LIFE OF VIRCHAND RAGHAVJI GANDHI

Mr. Pravin K. Shah, New York, NY



V R Gandhi 1864-1901

2001 is the Death Centenary Year of first Jain ever landed on American soil Shri Virchand Raghavji Gandhi. He came more than one hundred years ago to attend the first Parliament of World Religions, in 1893 in Chicago, to represent Jain religion, at the age of 29. Shrimad Acharya Vijayanand Suri (Atmanandji) was invited to attend.

But being Jain monk, he could not. So Jain Association of India selected him. He attended it in traditional Kathiawadi costume wearing dhoti, kurta, golden bordered turban (paghdi), white shawl on his shoulder and pointed shoes. To commemorate the centenary of his great historical visit and honor him, Chicago Jain Center had installed his statue at the temple in 1995. JAINA has also established a scholarship in his name.

Shri Virchand Gandhi was born at Mahuva, Gujarat on Aug. 25, 1864. He was a great exponent of Indian culture, religion and philosophy as well as a brilliant scholar of Jainism. He was a great patriot and humanitarian too. He mastered fourteen languages. He was the first Jain graduate of Bombay University in 1884 at the age of 20. He was the first elected secretary of Jain associations of India, in 1885 at the age of 21. He was also the first Jain Barrister qualified in London.

IN INDIA: He represented Jains at "Dharma Mohotsav," held at Ajmer, in 1895 and received gold medal. He founded Hemchandracharya Institution, in India. He fought and won in closing down proposed animal fat manufacturing plant at Sametshikhar and in abolishing Poll-Tax levied on Jain Pilgrims at Shatrunjaya amid lots of risks, including his own life. Sametshikhar at that time was in Bengal and all documents were in Bengali. He stayed in Calcutta for 6 months to learn Bengali to study documents. He not only won the Sametshikhar case but proved in the High Court that Sametshikhar belonged to Jains only.

IN THE WEST: He delivered about 535 speeches on Jainism, which received wide publications. He spoke as a Jain, but as Indian first. He illustrated the specific Jain Code Of Conduct, Jain way of life, non-violence, Anekantvad and Karma philosophy and convinced people about Jain religion as a rational and authentic religion. His approach was the most non-sectarian. He also gave lectures on Vedanta and Buddhism.

He had an impartial ideology. He had a deep knowledge of all world religions. He criticized none (of the religions). He defended Hindu religion when Christian missionaries attacked it. He was awarded a silver medal. Many literary and spiritual institutions, churches, societies honored him and accorded him warm welcome.

Many people thought though he was a household man and not a monk, can expound so well how capable his Guru was to whom he represented. Swami Vivekanand in his letters praised his (VRG's) life style and work.

He talked about economics and political freedom of India well before five decades of India becoming independent. His speeches echoed the true spirit, culture, and perspective of India. He tried to correct the false, twisted and perverse impression of India.

When he was in USA in 1897, India was engulfed in worst famine. He arranged whole ship loads of food grains and forty thousand rupees. He had established a relief committee, under the chairmanship of Mr. C.C. Bonney, then president of Parliament of World Religions. He had also visited England, France, Germany, etc. and gave lectures about Jainism there. Thousands of his followers became Jains under his influence and performed Jain rituals and became vegetarians. One of them, English gentleman, Herbert Warren wrote books about Jainism.

VRG had founded the following organizations in the West.

1. "Gandhi Philosophical Society" in Washington.
2. "Society For the Education of Women In India", in Chicago.
3. School of the Oriental Philosophy.
4. "Jain Literature Society" in London.

ASPIRATIONS AND EARLY DEMISE:

Several Jains in India opposed his travel to the West sailing seas. Every time he returned from the West, they boycotted him, but prominent Jains and nonJains, dignitaries like Premchand Raichand and Mahadeo Govind Rande, Chief Justice, welcomed and felicitated him.

His lifetime ambition was to serve Jain Community and spread Lord Mahavir's message of universal love and nonviolence, across the world. But this young promising man, full of hopes and aspirations, died at the young age of thirty seven on Aug. 7 1901 within a few months of his return from the West of short illness, caused by weather, exhaustion of three long journeys to the West since 1893. The Jain Community mourned his death and kept their businesses closed for five days. His short life span was full of multifarious achievements. He lived and died for the cause of Jainism. It is unfortunate that Jains did not continue his unfinished work.

Year 2001 is his death centenary year and we should make every effort to achieve his lifetime goal. We, Jains, owe him too much for his service to our community. It is our humble duty to leave no stone unturned to revive his memory and accomplish his unfinished work.

SHRI VIRCHAND RAGHAVJI GANDHI'S CONTRIBUTION TO JAINISM

– Dr. Kumarpal Desai, Ahmedabad, India

Certain personalities leave indelible footprints on the sands of time, their legacy is not affected by the constantly revolving wheel of time.

At the World Religions Conference held in Chicago, U. S. A., over a century ago, America, and the west, for the first time, heard the determined, spirited, resonant voice of ancient India, and the message of Indian philosophy and culture. Two Indian delegates participating at this conference awakened the western world to the spiritual heritage of India. One of these was Swami Vivekanand whose success in the World Religions Conference of Chicago is fresh in everyone's memory today. But the contribution of another Indian delegate to the same Conference, Shri Virchand Raghavji Gandhi, the representative of the Jain religion, has a claim to equal attention by virtue of the success he achieved at the Conference and also by his work as a religious thinker.

Hundred years ago in 1893, more than three thousand delegates of different nations and religions had assembled at the conference. The conference was inaugurated on 11th September, 1893, and Virchand Gandhi, Swami Vivekanand, P. C. Majumdar and other eminent scholars from India were present as distinguished participants. The aim of this religious conference was to impart to the world the knowledge of different religions and to promote a feeling of fraternity between followers of diverse religious persuasion, and so to pave the way for world peace.

Virchand Gandhi, a young man of twenty-nine, impressed the delegates not only by his eloquence, but also by the sheer weight of his scholarship. He wore a long and loose kurta, a white shawl on his shoulder, a golden-bordered Kathiawadi turban and country shoes. This external appearance bore the imprint of India. The scholarship, the impartiality of outlook and the oratorical skill of this man fascinated the delegates at the conference of World Religions. An American newspaper wrote, "of all Eastern scholars it was this youth whose lecture of Jain faith and conduct was listened to with the interest engaging the greatest attention."

Virchand Gandhi talked about the doctrines of Jainism in such a coherent manner that some newspapers published the text of his lecture in full. He had a most effective way of handling the otherwise abstruse terminology of Jainism. He had an extraordinary ability to clarify his statements in a consistent and logical manner. As he expounded his views, he would give his own interpretations of some of the most difficult points. His lectures demonstrated the fact that the study of Sanskrit and Prakrit alone was not enough for a proper understanding and exposition of Indian philosophy; it was also necessary to assimilate and to realise India's past culture in its proper context. Virchand Gandhi had realised the cultural context and that is why he was never dogmatic; he

spoke as a Jain and yet he often took sides with Hindus but above all, he always spoke as an Indian.

At the conference Virchand Gandhi made a brief but striking presentation on the fundamentals of the Jain religion. He expounded the Jain religion in two of its main aspects, namely, Jain philosophy and the Jain way of life. He elucidated the nine elements, the six types of Jivas, the subtle strands of thought in Jain philosophy regarding Dravyarthik and Paryayarthi-kanaya, the Syadvad and other philosophical aspects which fascinated all. He illustrated the specific Jain code of conduct, the Jain way of life and explained the cardinal principles of Jain cosmology, comparing it with Buddhism and other religions. He also established the fact that Jainism is older than Buddhism. His discourses convinced the elite of America of the fact that the Jain religion has an authentic and rational religious tradition. Expressing his joy about this new knowledge, an American gentleman gave his opinion about Virchand Gandhi in these words :

"In this religious gathering a number of philosophers, preachers and scholars came from India and delivered lectures and each one of them presented a new perspective and presented a new element so as to convince that their religion ranks high with great religions of the world, moreover, their oratory and devotion presented distinct types and were full of wisdom and contemplation. Among them was an outstanding young man of Jain religion who gave new ideas about morality and philosophy. Though he is only a house-holder and not a monk or religious preacher, he can expound so well. Who must then be his gurus ? His simple but striking philosophy of life is worth knowing, worth understanding."

Another special characteristic of Virchand Raghavji Gandhi's lectures on the Jain religion was that they did not deal in criticism of other religions. Free from sectarian preferences and prejudices, his impartial ideology is an apt expression of the Jain who practices Ahimsa in life and Anekanta in thoughts. His lectures were marked by a fusion of natural sentiments, profound study, and genuine enthusiasm. The lectures served to educate the American society regarding the salient features of Indian culture. Virchand Raghavji Gandhi is the author of 'The Yoga Philosophy', 'The Jain Philosophy' and other books of which 'The Karma Philosophy' may be regarded as his best contribution. In discussing the Jain doctrine of Karma in the book, the author reveals his profound devotion to studies and his awakened and discerning religious sentiments.

Virchand Gandhi was not only a philosophical thinker but he also had the welfare of the nation at heart. There prevailed in America the belief that India was a country of tigers, serpents, magicians and the Kings. Christian missionaries also presented to

foreign countries a missionaries also presented to foreign countries a distorted picture of the people in India. Virchand Gandhi made as great an effort as Vivekanand did to give to the people abroad the true perspective on India. Explaining the importance of Indian culture to foreigners, he said, "It is an astonishing fact that foreigners have been constantly attacking India and face that foreigners have been constantly attacking India and in the face of all these aggressions the soul of India has stood vital and watchful. Her conduct and religion are safe and the whole world looks at India with a steady gaze."

"Cultural distinctions, art, artistic skill, literature, good conduct, means of knowledge and science, hospitality, feminism, love and respect – all these are found in India in quite a different form. If that culture was purchasable, England could have purchased it, adopted it. But it has not happened, it cannot happen."

As early as in 1893 Virchand Gandhi talked of the economic and political freedom of India. He said to the American people :

"India is at present under the foreign hell. She is independent in the field of religion but when India will be free, she will not invade any country in a violent manner."

Virchand Gandhi had a rare ability to see beyond the immediately visible world. He could see beyond this world, he could know the future. Even before the dawn of political independence, Virchand Gandhi had foreseen the proper role of India.

"If India becomes free, she will live in political co-operation with all countries." Five decades before the independence of India, Virchand Gandhi had the prophetic sense; he said in his lecture of 'The Jain Philosophy' – "You know my brothers and sisters, that we are not an independent nation. We are subjects of Her Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria" the 'defender of the faith', but if we are a nation in all that name implies with our own government and our own rulers, with our laws and institutions controlled by us free and independent, I affirm that we should seek to establish and forever maintain peaceful relations with all the nations of the world."

Virchand Gandhi made such a great impact that the conveners and scholars of the conference of world religions awarded a silver medal to him. Subsequently on 8th August 1894 the citizens of Kasadova awarded a gold medal to him. In this city he delivered a lecture on 'Some mistakes corrected.' The newspaper, 'Buffalo Courier', records the immense success of the lecture. In America Virchand Gandhi founded two institutions namely, 'The Gandhi Philosophical Society' and 'The School of Oriental Philosophy'. In Chicago he founded an institution namely 'Society for the Education of Women of India.' The secretary of this institution was Mrs. Howard who had adopted pure vegetarianism and other codes of conduct of Jainism under the influence of Virchand Gandhi. As sister Nivedita became Swami Vivekananda's

disciple, so Mrs. Howard became Virchand Gandhi's disciple and like Jain she practised Samayika.

Later, Virchand Gandhi went to England, where he fulfilled his desire to be a barrister but he did not use this training for monetary gain. Considering the curiosity for Jainism in England, he started a coaching class. Later he founded the 'Jain Literature Society' in London. Herbert Warren, a religious enthusiast, abandoned non-vegetarianism and adopted the Jain religion. He took notes of Virchand Gandhi's lectures and wrote in English a book on the Jain religion. Moreover, Charles C. Bonny, the President of the Conference of world religions, was impressed by him. At the time of the famine of 1896-97 in India, Mr. Bonny was the president of the Famine Relief Committee founded in America by Virchand Gandhi. This committee immediately sent to India forty thousand Rupees and a steamer full of corn. During this travel Virchand Gandhi delivered as many as 535 lectures. He had the command of fourteen languages including Gujarati, Hindi, Bengali, English, Sanskrit and French.

Thus a young man of twenty-nine, preached religion in foreign countries in the face of opposition from his own community who objected to travel abroad. He toured abroad three times to spread the message of Jain Philosophy and he was equally a spokesman of Indian Philosophy.

The short life span of Virchand Raghavji Gandhi is full of multifarious achievements. He was the first graduate of the Jain society to get his BA with Hons. in 1884. When his father died in 1890, he did not allow the primitive practices of wailing and breast-beating during mourning. At the age of twenty-one, as the secretary of 'Shri Jain Association of India', he worked for the abolition of poll-tax levied on pilgrims to Palitana.

Annoyed by poll-tax and other forms of harassment, the Anandji Kalyanji firm had filed a suit against the ruler of Palitana. But Sursinghji, the ruler (Thakor) of Palitana, was a right-hand man of the Political Agent. The Political Agent did not give fair justice. Virchand Gandhi took up the problem. In those days to protest against the dictates of the ruler was to invite severe punishment and even death. He often went up from Mahuva to Palitana and prepared the ground for compromise. He met Lord Ray, the governor of Bombay, and Colonel Watson, the Political Agent and made a strong representation and eventually forced the abolition of the poll-tax. An Englishman set up at Mt. Sametshikhar, a place of pilgrimage in Bihar, a factory for extracting pig's fat on order. Virchand Gandhi went all the way to Calcutta to have the work on the project stopped. He stayed in Calcutta for six months studying the papers regarding the case and learnt the Bengali language and ultimately got this verdict issued.

"Sametshikhar is a place of Jain pilgrimage and nobody else has any right to interfere there." He did not give up his fight until

Shri Virchand Gandhi was a brilliant scholar of Jainism and a great exponent of Indian culture. His speeches at the first parliament of world religion conference in Chicago echoed the true spirit of Jainism and true culture of India. He spoke as a Jain but forcefully defended Hinduism from the attack of Westerners at the Parliament. Above all, he was first Indian then Jain.

He was the only the Jain representing Jainism at the first parliament of world religions held in Chicago in 1893. After the conference he stayed about two years in the USA and delivered more than 535 lectures on Jainism, Yoga, Indian systems of philosophy, Indian culture, occultism, and spiritualism at various institutions.

Virchand Gandhi talked about the doctrines of Jainism in such a coherent manner that some newspapers published the text of his lectures in full. He had a most effective way of handling the otherwise difficult terminology of Jainism. He had an extraordinary ability to clarify his statements in a consistent and logical manner. At the conference, he made a brief but striking presentation on the fundamentals of the Jain religion. He expounded the main aspect of the Jain religion namely: Jain philosophy, Jain way of life, and Jain code of conduct.

The following is the list of publications that summarizes his lectures and articles that were compiled and published either by him or by others after his death.

1. The Jaina Philosophy

His lectures on Jain philosophy, logic, and *anekantwad* have been published in a book named 'The Jaina Philosophy'. The book was compiled by Shri Bhagu F. Karbhari and published by Shri Agamodaya Samit, Bombay in 1910. In these lectures he made the Jaina positions comprehensible to a non-Jain and non-Indian audience. His approach was most non-sectarian and rational. He explained the following basic topics of Jainism in his lectures;

Shaddravaya	Six substances of the universe
Navatatva	Nine principles covering philosophy of karma and path of liberation
Chargati	Four states of existence
Panchavratā	Five great and small vows of conduct
Moksha	Ultimate state of soul when liberated from karma
Nyayavad	Assertion of truth from a particular point of view
Anekanthavad	Principle of Jain Philosophy, which explains that truth should be viewed from all different point of views.

2. The Karma Philosophy

His lectures on the Jaina theory of Karma have also been published in a book 'The Karma Philosophy'. The book was com-

plied by Shri Bhagu F. Karbhari and published by Shri Agamodaya Samit, Bombay in 1913. All Indian religions agree that each action entails its fruit or its result; none can escape the consequences of one's own actions. This fundamental idea on which the doctrine of Karma is based holds crucial importance in the development of ethical thoughts of ancient Indians. The Jaina version of it is illuminating in more ways than one.

V. Glasenapp, a well-known German scholar on Jainism, wrote his doctoral dissertation on the Jaina doctrine of Karma; and acknowledged Gandhi's lectures as his sole influence. Even today, these lectures remain unsurpassed and serve as an independent source of enlightenment on the subject.

3. The Systems of Indian Philosophy

His lectures on the various systems of Indian philosophy have been compiled by Shri K. K. Dixit and published under the title 'The Systems of Indian Philosophy' by Shri Mahavira Jaina Vidyalaya, Bombay in 1970. It explains the various Indian philosophies, which are Sankhya, Yoga, Nyaya (Vaisesika), Mīmamsa, Vedānta, Buddhism, and Jainism.

These lectures bear testimony of his powers of comprehension, his philosophical acumen and his profound learning. He is particularly conscious of the fact that the true strength of India lies in what is moral and spiritual in Indians. He draws no distinction among Brahmanic(Hindu), Jain, or Buddhist cultures. According to him, the basic Indian culture is neither Hindu, nor Jain nor Buddhist. By giving an impressive account of Indian life, he draws a true picture of the social and moral status of ancient Indians.

4. Yoga Philosophy

His lectures on the various aspect of yoga have been compiled by Shri Bhagu F. Karbhari and published by Shri Agamodaya Samit, Bombay in 1912. His exposition of Yoga philosophy and its technique of eight-fold yoga to achieve the suppression of the manifestations of mind entailing the unagitated pure state of mind, is brilliant. He aptly discusses the interesting topic of miraculous powers, which a yogi acquires by reason of performing the highest form of concentration on the required event, aspect, or thing.

The source of the positive power lies in the soul. The very wording of the definition of yoga involves the supposition of the existence of a power which can control and suppress the manifestations of the mind.

5. Essay - "Radya Kutvani Hanikarak Chal"

Shri Virchand Gandhi was a great social reformer at a very young age. He wrote a 37 page long essay "Radya Kutvani Hanikarak Chal" (crying and breast-beating by a widow or other women relatives after a death of a person) against social evils at the

young age of 22. When his father died in 1890, he did not allow the primitive practices of wailing and breast-beating during mourning. He continuously fought against social evils and was successful in eradicating some.

6. The Unknown Life of Jesus Christ

Shri Virchand Gandhi wrote this book by translating an ancient manuscript. The book was published in India in 1894 while he was in Chicago.

7. Savirya-dhyan

Shri Virchand Gandhi translated the first two chapters of the original text "Jnanarnav" written by Acharya Shubhachandra. The translation was published in the book called Savirya-dhyan in 1903.

8. Concentration

This small book consisting of 64 pages was first published in 1916. It contains a summary of Shri Virchand Gandhi's 12 lectures on meditation according to Jain tradition. He describes that the need of meditation is to attain mental peace and to rise above feelings of worry and anxiety. Next he explains the basic rule governing the practice of meditation.

It can be said that Gandhi was a formidable champion of Jain philosophy, a brilliant exponent of the systems of Indian philosophy, and a fervent lover of Indian culture. He was the most astounding scholar with a versatile personality combined with a catholicity of outlook. Various publishers republished most of his literature in 1993 on the occasion of the 2nd parliament of world religions conference.

Voices from all over the world have rejoiced in celebration of the 2600th Janma Kalyanak or Birth Anniversary of Bhagwan Mahavir.

Jain community throughout the world is participating in the celebration that was kicked off in New Delhi, India on April 6, 2001. The following are excerpts from some messages from the dignitaries that were received by various Jain organizations:

• From Vatican City- (From Secretary of State at Vatican in Rome addressed to Mr. R. P. Chandaria in U.K.)-

"His Holiness Pope John Paul II was pleased to learn that the followers of the Jaina Dharma are celebrating the 2600th Anniversary of the birth of Vardhaman Mahavira, and he sends good wishes to all taking part in the celebration on 7 April in London. His Holiness has stressed that all religious man and women of every kind must work together for peace..."

• From United States Senator Hon. George V. Voinovich from Ohio:

"I am pleased and honored to take this opportunity to recognize all those joined today to commemorate the 2600th birth (anniversary) of Lord Mahavira. The year 2001 has been designated the Year of Ahimsa. In today's celebration we must all strive to help achieve individual peace and peace as a community..."

• From Buckingham Palace, U.K.:

"I am very pleased to have this opportunity to congratulate the Jain Community on the 2600th anniversary of the birth of Lord Mahavira"

• From Hon. Robert Taft, Governor of the State of Ohio:

"I want to extend my warmest greetings to the Jain community ... as you celebrate the 2600th anniversary of the birth of Lord Mahavira...."

• From the State of Ohio House of Representatives:

"On behalf of the members of the House of Representatives of the 124th General Assembly of Ohio, we are pleased to extend special recognition.....on the auspicious occasion of the birth of Lord Mahavira..."

(Editors Note: Please forward messages related to the celebration of the 2600th Janma Kalyanak that your organization may have received for publication in the Jain Digest.)

(VR Gandhi's contribution(cont from page 10)

he achieved his objectives and got the factory closed down. He brought the dispute regarding the temple at Kavi to a happy resolution. He attended the International Commerce Conference as an all-Asia delegate. As a delegate from Bombay, he attended the Indian National Congress held at Pune in 1895. He was a strong advocate of Rashtriya Mahasabha or the congress. He seems to have come in intimate contact with Mahatma Gandhi. In a letter written to V. R. Gandhi's son, Gandhiji sends his blessing and asks 'Have you adopted any ideals of your father?'

Virchand Gandhi passed away in 1901 when he was only thirty seven. He rendered yeoman service to India and Jainism by interpreting Indian culture and religion in its true spirit to the western worlds. In this respect he enjoys the pride of place in the galaxy of Indian thinkers and philosophers and his name will continue to be remembered as a great champion of Jain religion.

COMMITTEE NEWS....

WORLD COMMUNITY SERVICES:

GUJARAT EARTHQUAKE AND JAINA

It is a matter of great pride and pleasure to inform all of you that the Federation of Jain Association in North America (JAINA) has raised \$350,000. JAINA sincerely appreciates 25 Jain Sanghs and more than 500 donors who generously responded and contributed such a large amount to alleviate pain and suffering caused by this massive natural calamity.

JAINA has spent so far \$24,000 cash for earthquake victims. Distribution of 500 blankets, 10,000 food packages, 10,000 water bottles, 1000 flashlights, sponsoring a primary school at Samkhyali near Bhachau, feeding 600 people for one month at Mandvi, immediately after the earthquake were carried out. JAINA also donated ten (10) computers for children, victims of earthquake at Veerayatan Vidhyapeeth, Bhuj. JAINA also shipped 100,000 lbs. of clothes, 100 wheelchairs, 50 walkers, 100 crutches, 100 canes and medical supplies to earthquake affected area, worth hundred thousand dollars.

WHAT JAINA PLANS TO DO IN NEAR FUTURE:

JAINA has planned to rehabilitate 250 families who lost everything and have no source of income. e.g. a widow with a child or children who have lost their bread winner, widower (who has lost his business or job) with child or children, widows, physically handicapped, old aged couples who have no family members to

support. JAINA also intends to build primary and middle school, library, community hall and first aid health care center.

Average house will be 350 sq. feet, built on a 1000 sq. feet plot. Total cost for each unit will be approximately \$3000. JAINA's share per unit will be \$1500 (50% of total cost), the other \$1500 will come from Government and local N.G.Os. JAINA is still short of approximately \$50,000 for the construction of 250 houses. Jain Sanghs who have raised funds for earthquake victims and have not forwarded them to JAINA are humbly requested to do so.

Primary school is sponsored by Jain Society of Toronto. Middle school is sponsored by Jain center of greater Boston. Library is sponsored by a community from upstate New York. Community hall and first aid health care center each costing \$30,000 needs a sponsor. Jain Sanghs sponsoring any of above projects will have privilege to inscribe their names on marble plaques in front of these buildings.

Marble plaque in front of Mahavir nagar or Vardhman nagar (a name of entire project) will have the name of the Federation of Jain Associations in North America and Jain Center of America, New York, NY. The Jain Center of America contributed very generous sum of \$96,000 for this humanitarian project. The entire project will be built near village Bhujodi, Seven (7) kilometers away from Bhuj.

We urge all the individuals and Sanghs who have yet to contribute to JAINA, please do so as soon as possible.

For further information and suggestions please contact following JAINA representatives:

B.S. Ajmera
Chairman
WCS
301-431-2525

Prakash Mehta
Co-Chairman
WCS
703-318-8252

Bhadresh Dhillia
Co-Chairman
WCS
301-570-1117

Dr Dhiraj H. Shah
Project Manager
Earthquake Victims Relief
716-773-1314

JAINA CALENDAR AND MINI-LIBRARY

The response to the JAINA Calendar in the past two years has been extremely heartwarming, both spiritually as well as financially. Incorporating your valuable suggestions, we have:

- increased the quantity of calendars printed to 11,000
- changed the layout of Calendar 2002, making it more informative and educational
- ordered 1,200 sets of the following three books, making them available to all of the active Trustees, Patrons, Sponsors, respondents and selected educational institutions in North America:

- JAINISM – A Pictorial Guide to the Religion of Non-Violence* by Mr. Kurt Titze

- JAINA – Religion and Philosophy* by Dr. Nagin Shah
- ASPECTS OF JAIN RELIGION* by Dr. Vilas Sangave

As we celebrate the 2600th Janm Kalyanak of Bhagwan Mahavir, during the year 2001-2002, we plan that the remaining 5,000 Jain households in North America will receive these books and calendars free of charge, which will cost us approximately \$ 200,000.00.

To fulfill this objective, an early commitment of your generous contribution will help us in planning and carrying out this great project.

Rajeev K. Pandya
Chairman, JAINA Calendar Committee

COMMITTEE NEWS....

MEDIA WATCH & PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE:

For the past 4-5 months the Committee has been involved in clearing misconception in the media about Jainism. Sushil Jain has prepared an Interfaith Alliance statement and issued a statement on gun control and a statement on houses of worship. The committee is continuing the work with Interfaith Alliance in educating the public about bias against prayers in the community. Regarding Mr. John Ashcroft's nomination as Attorney General, the Committee neither opposed it nor endorsed it, instead questions were sent to the United States Senate asking how Mr. Ashcroft will distance himself when making race related decisions. The Committee also issued a statement on faith-based charity. The Committee was successful in not allowing Sun Microsystems's claim to make JAIN as their company-owned trademark. This issue may come up again in about 5 years, so we need to educate non-Jains and non-Hindus about Jainism. This should also include interfaith leaders, United States Congressmen and Senators so that they would be aware of Jainism as a faith. The Committee worked with Interfaith Alliance in issuing a statement on campaign finance reforms and is preparing a statement against hate crimes. The Committee is currently looking at other religion-websites to see how they are organized and what they offer.

Jain prayers would be recited in the upcoming session of the United States House of Representatives and the Senate on May 22, 2001. For the first time in the history of the United States of America, Jainism and Jains will receive this unprecedented recognition and honor. (See report about this historic event elsewhere in this issue)

Sushil Jain, Chairman

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE :

At a recently held executive committee meeting, JAINA has added one more center to the JAINA family. Please join me in welcoming Jain Society of Greater Lansing, Michigan. With the continuous efforts of the membership committee, JAINA is becoming a stronger organization year by year. Let us all work together to keep up with our united actions to attain newer heights. A Special Request to ALL member centers....In order to keep you informed of all the developments at JAINA, we need to have the current contact information for your center. When your center has a change in the administration/ president, please notify us the changes within 30 days. Please incorporate this in your procedure for change of administration. The incoming Presidents are requested to include your name, address, phone, fax and e-mail address and mail (on the letterhead of your center) with your original signature, to :

Kamlesh Shah, Chairman

13704 Valley Oak Circle ,Rockville MD 20850

PH: (301) 838-9778.

MAHAVIR MEMORIAL COMMITTEE

The 2600th Janma Kalyanak day of Lord Mahavir on April 6 was celebrated with Navkar Mantra Jaap and other religious activities at all Jain centers. Various other programs will be held at all Jain Centers throughout the year 2001 to celebrate this historic event. Several mayors and Governors have declared year 2001 as the year of nonviolence to commemorate these celebrations. Celebration of 2600th birth year of Lord Mahavir will be a focal point of the JAINA Convention in Chicago on July 5-8, 2001.

A 3-fold leaflet providing a short summary of Jainism was published on that day to commemorate the 2600th Janma Kalyanak day of Lord Mahavir. This colored leaflet has been written mainly for those who do not know much about Jainism. The main purpose of this leaflet is to promote awareness of Jainism in North America through media, interfaith organizations, educational institutions, etc. Copies of the leaflet have been sent to all Jain Centers for their distribution to libraries, schools, media, community leaders, religious leaders of other faiths, and interfaith organizations. Please join hands with your Jain Center officials in increasing awareness of Jain religion.

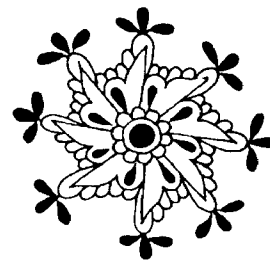
A historic event took place on May 22 when the U.S. Congress opened with a Jain prayer in celebration of the 2600th birth anniversary year of Lord Mahavir. (Details given on page 4).

A big celebration is being planned in September 2001 in New York. This function is expected to be presided over by the Prime Minister of India Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee. Bhartiya Vidya Bhawan and the Jain Community are working on these celebrations.

Dr. Manoj Dharamsi, Chairman

Phone: (703) 620-9837

E-Mail: Dharamsi@hotmail.com



VIRCHAND RAGHAVJI GANDHI SCHOLARSHIP

We are pleased to announce that the award of scholarship has started this year the Death Centenary Year of Shri Virchand Raghavji Gandhi and 2600th Janma Kalyanak of Bhagwan Mahavir.

After review of several applications received from different institutions and universities through our India based subcommittee and its recommendations, five scholarships for year 2000-2001 were awarded:

Name of student Course/subject Amount of award

- 1.Mehta Pravinaben P. M.Phil.(Amdavadni Chaitya Paripati) Rs. 7,500
- 2.Mishra Arunkumar M.Phil. (Jainism) Rs. 7,500
- 3.Shah Pravin C. M.Phil. (Jain Philosophy) Rs. 7,500
- 4.Babaria Ketna L. M.Phil. (Jain Darshan &Achar) Rs. 7,500
- 5.Shah Jawaharlal P.Ph.D.(Jainology) Rs. 10,000

Applications for the year 2001-2002 would be invited by issuing notification at appropriate time.

Committee is also planning to publish the reprint of small booklet in Gujarati "Jyotirdharni Jivan Gatha", his life story, by P.R. Shah and distribute free at VRG booth at the Chicago convention and thereafter, after its due release at convention. Publication of its English edition is also under consideration.

For further information and comments please contact Pravin C. Shah 516-248-8265 : email kenpet007@hotmail.com and/or any committee member."

TENNESSEE, TN

Jain society of Middle Tennessee (JSMT) celebrated 2600th Birth Anniversary of Lord Mahavir, on 7th April 2001. With the sincere and dedicated efforts of the outgoing members and youth the program was a great success! We had sequence of few cultural programs in the celebration of the occasion. On that auspicious day all the Jains recited the Jain prayer and stavans, which added life to the program. Another high light was the performance of 3 skits provided by YJA regarding Bhagwan Mahavir's Life. Deven, Kunal, Nirav Shah, Ishita and Ishan Parikh's performance was loved by the audience. Balbhadra had graced the occasion with knowledge of Jainism and spiritual uplift to more than 200 in attendance people. He laid emphasis on how important the "Navkar Mantra" and other slogans are and how it generates powerful vibrations throughout the day. He also laid emphasis on Soul "The ATMA" he says ATMA is Eternal and is very powerful. We also had number of cultural items such as Divda Dance performed by enthusiastic youths. Ghada Dance and Raas was performed by youths and adults. sequence of dances like ghadadance, stick dance, divdadance performed by youths and adults. Program was attended by 30 students and Professor of Western Kentucky University - Bowling Green, KY. They are taking Comparative religious class. They were very much impressed by our philosophy, culture and delicious vegetarian food. President Pravin Mehta thanked Ashok, Dilip, Natvar Shah, Mona and Dr. Paresh Sheth, Navin and Nisha Shah for their contributions. People came from Bowling Green, Owensboro, KY and within 150 mile radius to make it a great success.

Next Program will be a camp of Saman Shchitpragya and Shrutpragyas from June 7 to 10. After Summer there will be self study classes and preparations for the Paryusana.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS:

2ND MEDICAL CAMP BY JAINA AT BHAGYODAYA TIRTH IN SAGAR, MADHYA PRADESH

To serve the poorest of the poor with the assistance of JAINA and Jain doctors from USA, a second free surgical camp was organized at Bhagyodaya Tirth Hospital during February 19th to 21st, 2001.

Last year, a medical/ surgical ICU unit was sponsored by and dedicated to JAINA, with a contribution of \$ 21,000. This year again, we have contributed \$ 25,000 for the expansion of the medical staff. After the camp, the doctors attended the celebration of Mahamastikavishek of Bade Baba in Kundalpur and received the blessings of Shri. Acharya Vidhya Sagarji Maharaj.

For information on our third camp and planned yatra of Central India (Bundelkhand), please contact Dr. M. K. Pandya (718 816-0083), Dr. Ishwar Bhuta (334 834-2862), or Dr. Dilip Bobra (480 839-2682).

MIDWEST

Manubhai Doshi, Regional Editor

CHICAGO, IL

Indira Mansukhlal Doshi Memorial Trust decided to extend relief to the earthquake stricken people of Gujarat. Two of its Trustees went to India for that purpose in March and extended financial aid to the extent of about Rs. 900,000.

On the occasion of Chaitri Oli arrangements for observing Ayambil were made at the Jain Center on March 31, April 1, 7 and 8. Total Ayambils observed were more than 350. 32 persons observed 9 days oli on that occasion. It is noteworthy that Yashoda Shah 72 years old has been in the midst of 33rd Oli of Vardhaman Tap.

26th centenary of Lord Mahavir's birth day was celebrated on April 8. The program started with a short drama, which was followed by the declamation contest. Different subjects were assigned to the different age groups. The subject for those belonging to 10 to 13 was Message from the Life of Jain Entity of Your Choice; for 14 to 18 years the subject was Keeping Jain Values alive in the Western World and for 19 and above the subject was Jainism and Global Peace. 34 students took part in the contest. Three prizes of \$ 101, 75 and 51 were announced for each age group. They were given to the following contestants.

The age group 10 to 13: Palak Shah, Madhur Paharia and Soniya Vasanwala; The age group 14 to 18: Teena Shah, Hemant Mehta and Arun Singavi; Age 19 and above: Sejal Jain, Shailee Masharuwala and Ankur Mehta.

The contest was followed by a talk of Shri Chitrabhanuji. Thereafter there was Swamivatsalya. The celebration was attended by about 1500 persons.

The first centenary of Shrimad Rajchandra's passing away was organized on April 15th. The program started with light-

ing of 100 lamps by different people. The devotional songs, Separation songs, Atmasiddhishastra etc. were recited on that occasion. That was followed by Swamivatsalya. About 200 persons participated in the function.

A meeting of Mahavir Senior Center was organized the same day. About 40 seniors were present. The information about Medicaid, Medicare, SSI, retirement benefits etc. was given to them.

A Musical Fund Raising program for earthquake stricken people was organized on April 21st. About 300 persons took advantage of it and about \$ 3500 were collected.

Laghurajswami Samadhi day was observed on May 6. More than 50 persons participated.

DETROIT, MI

A consortium of organizations of Detroit Metro area have formed "India Earthquake Relief Organization of Michigan" – "IEROM". The Jain society is an active member of this organization to help support the relief efforts in India. About \$500,000 were raised for distribution to various non-Governmental relief agencies in India.

2600th Mahavir Jayanti was celebrated on April 8, 2001. The day long program started with Shatrunjay Patt Darshan, Snatra Puja, followed by Cultural Program of Devotional dances by local students of Nartan group, Arti/Mangal Divo and Swamivatsalya Dinner. Program was well attended by 700 members.

A special "Bone Marrow Drive" was organized at the temple, on the same day by Social Services Committee. Approximately 100 members registered to volunteer for bone marrow donation. One of the members of the society has been diagnosed with a rare disease requiring bone marrow transplant.

Student day celebration is fixed for May 13th. This year's theme is Bhagwan Mahavir's life. The highlights of his 27 lives are to be presented in dance drama and skit from by students of various Jain study classes.

Ayambil Oli was observed from March 31st to April 8th. Twenty six members participated in Oli.

JOY had their winter camp from March 23rd to 25th, 2001, @ Khardomah Lodge for fun filled weekend.

ST. LOUIS

An earth quake relief lunch program was organized on March 4, which was helpful in raising an amount of about \$ 10000. The efforts of the persons who took part in the collection were recognized on April 7. A small skit by the youth members was also organized on the same day.

26th Centenary celebration of Lord Mahavir was organized from April 6th to 8th. Rajnibhai Shah of New Jersey was invited to speak on that occasion and he gave talks on different subjects during those three days.

SOUTHEAST

Surendra Shah, Regional Editor

ATLANTA, GEORGIA

The inaugural ceremony of the permanent center building for the Jain Society of Atlanta took place on April 6-8 of 2001. The ceremonies started on Friday with the Bhavana followed by Garba and Dandia Rass. Snatra pooja and vastupuja were on Saturday. Sadhviji Shri Subhamji from Veerayatan, India graced the occasion.

On Saturday April 7th Shri Virendrabhai Shah and Chandrakant Mehta from New Jersey provided music, stavans etc. for the occasion. Idols of first tirthankar Bhagavan Adinath and 24th tithanker Mahavirswami

REGIONAL NEWS (continued)

were also installed. Later in evening a program of dances and music followed.

On Sunday Shilaropan (Foundation laying) ceremony followed Navagraha pooja for the planned temple on the center building. About 500 people from Atlanta and adjoining states participated in the ceremonies.

The center has a large 4500 square foot assembly hall. The kitchen, dining hall, library, and study halls are to be added next. Also, a temple to house the idols is also planned. The hard work of volunteers has paid off. Mrs. Madhuben and Dr. Jagdish Sheth along with others have contributed monetarily as well as in time.

The center is centrally located in Norcross, a suburb of Atlanta. The center cost about one million dollars. The center fulfills the critical need for the permanent gathering place for the Jain community of the Atlanta area.

WEST

Chandrakant Parekh, Regional Editor

LOS ANGELES, CA

Jain Center of Southern California (JCSC) celebrated the 2600th Mahavir Janma Kalyanak on April 8. The program included a cultural program presented by Pathshala students, a lecture by Girishbhai Shah, a progress report on the new Jain Bhavan, an update on the earthquake relief fund, and a report on the onsite relief efforts by the members who had recently returned from a visit to Gujarat. JCSC has raised nearly \$430,000 for earthquake relief efforts, and distributed an additional \$32,000 to 32 Panjarapors in India. The outgoing members of the Board of Directors were recognized for their services. The Centennial of Shrimad Raj Chandraj's

Nirvan was celebrated with a bhavana program on April 13. The 10th Annual Medical Camp jointly organized by JCSC and Jain Social Group was held on April 28. Medical professionals representing nearly 30 specialties were present to provide free services, tests, screening and consultations. John Muller, Chairperson, and Franki Berry, Vice Chairperson of the City of Buena Park Planning Commission were the guests of honor for the event.

Following nearly 15 months of efforts by the Architects, various consultants, the Building Committee, 15 Sub-committees, and community input, the first set of drawings of the new Jain Bhavan was submitted to the City of Buena Park Planning Department on May 15 for plan check. If no major issues would be outstanding to gain the City's approval, the goal is to organize the groundbreaking ceremonies in August, in time for the Paryushan Mahaparva.

Information about forthcoming programs and regular activities are posted on JCSC's website at <http://www.jainbhavan.com>. For additional information, please contact Sumatibhai Shah, JCSC President, at 562/926-4075 or at : sumati1@hotmail.com.

SAN FRANCISCO, CA

Jain Center of Northern California (JCNC) celebrated the 2600th Mahavir Janma Kalyanak from April 21-22 with a wonderful cultural program *Trishla No Jayo* presented by Pathshala students, and lectures by Saman Shrut Pragyaji and Sthit Pragyaji. Bhakti and Pujas were conducted in all the major Jain traditions over the two days' event. Samanjis also gave a series of lectures to both adults and youths during their two weeks' stay. JCNC will celebrate the Centennial of Shrimad Raj Chandraj's Nirvan from May 25-28 in the presence of Swadhyaykar Shrimati Sudhaben Sheth and Shri Niranjanbhai Sheth from India. Planned activities for this event include

Bhakti and Swadhyay, exhibition of over 250 pictures depicting Shrimadji's life, and discussions in English on *Jainism Today* for young professionals and youths.

With the opening of the Jain Bhawan in August 2000, there has been a tremendous increase in the number of activities and participation. Puja, Arti, and Mangal Divo are conducted daily. In addition there are regularly scheduled monthly Snatra Puja, Bhakti Bhavana, Navkar Mantra Jaap and Swadhyays and lectures by visiting Monks and Scholars. Over 250 children and youths, ranging in age 4 to 18 years, attend the Pathshala held twice a month at the Jain Bhawan. The Pathshala, conducted by 45 teachers and volunteers, has become one of the most successful programs. In addition there are also regularly scheduled Mokshmala Youth Swadhyay and Preksha Dhyam Classes.

A comprehensive schedule of programs for various Jain traditions has been planned and posted on JCNC's website at <http://www.jcnc.org>. This popular website is updated regularly. For additional information, please contact Jay Itchhaporia, JCNC President, at 408/263-8739 or e-mail: Itchhaporia@yahoo.com.

SACRAMENTO, CA

Jain Center of Greater Sacramento (JCGS) organizes a number of activities, religious celebrations, and lectures by visiting dignitaries. Members meet regularly for a monthly swadhyay. For additional information, please contact Manoj Desai at 916/791-4111 or e-mail: manoj.desai@nec-computers.com.

SAN DIEGO, CA

Jain Society of San Diego (JSSD) has elected a new committee, which includes Parul Kothari, Rekha Savla, Swati Vora, Jagruti Maniar, Lata Vora, Suniti Jain,

Nayana Sanghani, Apurva Shah and Vipul Shah. The 2600th Mahavir Janma Kalyanak was celebrated on April 6 at Shri Mandir, and included a bhavana by Paresh Shah. Sahil Sanghani, Sparsh Kothari, and Shreya Doshi were the first place winners of an essay competition on *Life and the Message of Mahavir*, which was judged in three age categories – 5-8 years, 8-11 years, and 12-15 years. On April 22, nearly 33 Jainshala children ranging in age from 4 to 15 years presented a drama on *Life of Mahavir - A Journey of the Soul from Ordinary to Divine*. The drama directed by Kokila Doshi depicted the theme of Trishaladevi's Dreams, Mahavir's past life as King Tripustha and Goyal, and Janma Abhishek. The skit and the props were provided by YJA. An adult drama entitled *Parivartan* directed by Rohak Vora emphasized the theme of Asharan Bhavna with a message that only our Karmas come with us. Inspiring pravachanas on Karmavad, Niyati and Purusharth were presented by Shramanji Shrutpragna and Shitpragna from May 6 - 9. Regular activities include - a monthly Jainshala for children, adult classes, swadhyay by Girishbhai Shah, and a weekly pooja on Saturday at Shri Mandir. For additional information, please contact Kokilaben Doshi at 858/679-7645 or email: kdoshi@acusd.edu.

SEATTLE, WA

Over 150 people participated in the 2600th Mahavir Janma Kalyanak celebration on April 7. The program included skits and devotional songs presented by the Pathshala students. Jain Pathshala is held on the 1st Saturday of the month and is conducted by Aleena. For additional details, please contact Aleena at 206/236-0170. Jain community members get together every month. For additional information, please contact Mukesh Jain at 425/558-1949 or email: mukeshj@microsoft.com.

CANADA

Dr. Mahendra Mehta, Regional Editor

TORONTO, ONT

2600th Bhagwan Mahavir Janmakalyanak:

The auspicious occasion of Bhagwan Mahavir's birthday was celebrated in Toronto on 6th April 2001 at Jain Society, Sanatan Mandir and Sri Jain Mandir, each of them having separate functions at different times. There were special Pujas, Bhavnas, Angi, Bhakti and a video of a play entitled 'Shaibhadra'.

And 12.39pm, a chanting of Namokar Mantra was organized to mark the Vijay Muhart or the time of Bhagwan's birth.

Among other initiatives taken were an Inaugural Acharya Sushilkumarji Peace and Non-violence lecture on 'Religion and Warfare', an article in Toronto Star entitled 'Understanding Nonviolence' by Prakash Mody and issuing of 'Picture Postage' Canadian stamp with Jain Symbol.

Two books in English were released on this occasion. Jain Vishwa Bharti published 'Economics of Lord Mahavir' and 'Lord Mahavir's Scripture of Health' by Acharya Mahaprajna.

Shrimad Rajchandraji's Emancipation Centenary Celebrations were concluded and a special bhakti was organized at the Jain Center in April.

Jain Society of Toronto participated in Interfaith Universal Peace Festival, as part of 2600th Janmakalyanak Celebrations. The Interfaith event took place at Metro Hall Square in Toronto. Last year, the event attracted over 2000 visitors and 11 faith groups at Nathan Phillips Square in downtown Toronto.

Annual General Meeting: This meeting took place on Sunday 22nd April at Jain Center. After presentations of reports from the President, General Secretary and the Treasurer, the work of 'Land Acquisition Committee' was presented. There were many varied points of view voiced and it

seemed the audience was not in favor of the report.

The next item was 'Consideration of Incorporation and Constitutional Amendments'. The invited speaker, a member of one of the local law firm, explained the advantages of incorporating our Society. However, the discussion went off the track and the chair decided with audience's concurrence, to let the members study the proposed amendments to the constitution and write the executive of their concerns within 30 days. And after 60 days in the later part of June 2001, a Special General Meeting will be convened to vote on the issue of Incorporation and Constitutional Amendments.

Elections for the Board of Trustees: There were three vacancies following competition of terms of three trustees. and the three new Trustees are, Mr. Bhusan Vora, Mr. Ramesh Varia and Dr. Mahendra Mehta.

"Revealed: Voices of Women" was the theme of a three-day exhibition at Toronto's Queen Quay to coincide with International Women's Day. Amongst the seven participating artists was Jayshree Khimasia with her several paintings and ceramics.

Dr. Chandrakant P. Shah was presented with Special Honor by the City of Toronto's Department of Public Health for his long and meritorious services.

Dr. Sirish L. Shah is appointed to the newly created Chair of Senior Industrial Research in Computer Process Control at the Faculty of Engineering, University of Alberta, Edmonton.

Vikas Jain, 21, recently won the EDCO 2000 Marketing Award of Excellence, an award of distinction for non-traditional promotion by the Economic Development Council of Ontario (EDCO).

Prakash Mody, won the two of the three prizes in the Bhagwan Mahavir Stamp design competition by the Jain Social Group International Federation, Mumbai, India.

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

2600 Birthday of Lord Mahavir was celebrated on April 8 before 350 guests at the Hindu temple. The program began with Mahavir Puja for an hour, followed by Crystal Glass Meditation and Interfaith Dialogue between the Jains, Hindu, Buddhists and Christians on Ahimsa and Compassion. The Speakers and Jain Families were presented with a Book on Lord Mahavir, with compliments from Chandaria family. Jain Digest, supplied by JAINA was distributed to each family.

Mahavir Jayanti was also celebrated in Calgary. Jain Prayer was recited at the 'UN Day for the eradication of Racism', at the Edmonton City Hall by Niraj Maniar & Alisha Patel. On 9th April, Jain Prayer was recited at the City of Edmonton Council meeting by Niraj Maniar. Jain Digest was distributed to each Council Member.

On April 25, Jitendra Shah made a presentation on Jainism at the Streathern United Church. Jain Digest was distributed at the Church.

Regularly monthly pathsala and puja are held at the temple and at private Jain Residence.

SOUTHWEST

Jadavji Kenia, Regional Editor

NORTH TEXAS (DALLAS AREA)

Mahavir Jayanti was celebrated on April 08, 2001 at the Jain Center in Richardson, TX. Program started with Mahavir Jin Pooja. Then Pathshala children took over. Young group (ages 4-8) sang Jain songs and one of them read a short essay that he had written on Mahavir's teachings. Both older groups (ages 9-13 and 14 & up) presented a play written by YJA about Bhagwan Mahavir's past lives. The play ended with

the birth of baby Vardhaman and the celebration by the angels. This celebration was depicted by a beautiful dance by the Pathshala girls on a song "Helo Maro Sambhalo He Vardhaman Jina Raya." Several weeks of practice by students along with the help from some dedicated parents and teachers really paid off as the performance went very well. It was not only entertaining but informative as well and was well received by everyone present. All the participants (47 in all) were given a trophy with a Jain logo and a Jain storybook in appreciation of their efforts.

Weekly and monthly programs at the Jain Society of North Texas including Swadhyay sessions, Poojas, Pathshala classes, etc. are continuing as usual. Among the dignitaries during summer we will have Niraj Jain in mid-June, Dr. Bharill in mid-July and Dhirajbhai Mehta and Sunandaben Vohra later in the year. We also had an unplanned visit by Dr. Pravin L. Shah of Reading, PA in May where he was able to come to the Jain Center 3 times and deliver discourses on Samaysar and Aatma Siddhi while on a personal visit to Dallas. A picnic is being planned for early June.

JSNT contact is our president Swatee Kalamkarat 972-530-7356 swateek@yahoo.com. The web page for the JSNT is www.dfwjains.org.

PHOENIX, AZ

2600th Janma Kalyanak of Bhagwan Mahavir Swami was celebrated on April 15th with over 270 people in attendance. Highlight of the event included a drama on Kunkunda Swami and a dance by Pathshala students, teachers and parents. Audience also enjoyed "Kaun Banega Disciple of Mahavir" (Based on the famous TV show "Who Wants to be a Millionaire"). All Pathshala students prepared seriously for this game show and correctly answered the questions from the life of Bhagwan Mahavir.

Two samanji (saman Shrutpragya and saman Sthitpragya) from Ladnu, Rajasthan visited Phoenix for the first time from April 27 to April 30. Samanjis are well-qualified Jain scholars who spread the words of Bhagwan Mahavir without any religious barriers. Both Samanjis spoke in very simple and practical language, with personal touch of humor. They spoke in Gujarati, Hindi, and English. Pravachan, Yoga, meditation and exercise sessions were held during those days. Many members took part in the activities. Members enjoyed and learned from these sessions and expressed interest in inviting them in the future. Contact for JCGP is Mehul Rajparia at jainphoenix@hotmail.com

TULSA, OK

The Tulsa Jain Sangh has reached a major milestone in their quest for a new Jain Center building with Derasar, Pathshala rooms and an assembly hall. The SHILA ROPAN has been scheduled on June 24, 2001 with a 2-day ceremony. Gurudev Chitrabhanuji and Pramodaben will be here June 23-24. Also present will be Saman Shrutpragya and Saman Sthitpragya from June 22-28.

The following are the scheduled events for SHILA ROPAN ceremony:

SATURDAY AM : Kumbh Sthapana, Navgrah Puja, Meditation led by Gurudev Chitrabhanu, Lecture by Samanji, Lunch.
SATURDAY PM: Dinner, Lecture in English by Shrimati Promodaben, Bhavana.
SUNDAY AM : Meditation by Gurudev Chitrabhanu, Snatra Puja, Lecture by Gurudev, Shila Ropan ceremony, Lunch.

For additional information about our Derasar, Sangh or the dignitaries, please contact TJS president Mukesh J. Shah at (918) 299-2873 or E-mail at: mukesh@galaxy-1.com

HOUSTON, TX

Here are some updates for last several months from the Jain Society of Houston. Past year has been a very busy year. Executive committee accomplished a lot of things. The biggest of all was the approval of a revised constitution by the committee, trustees and finally by the general body. Last year we were blessed by quite a few scholars and Sadhus. Earlier Atmanandji, Tarlaben Doshi, Dr. Atul Shah, Muni Rupchandji and Muni Jinchandraji visited and Samaniji Akshaypragyaji and Sanmatipragyaji blessed us during Paryushan.

Under Secretary General Wangde's guidance and leadership each and every religious and cultural organization in Houston participated in millennium Republic day celebration. Our society also participated. Our Jain fellowship students' band was very impressive.

We have a new executive committee in place. Our new president is still Bhupesh Sheth and VP is Pratima Desai. Navin Shah will likely be our chief trustee. Udaibhai Jain will assume the JAINA VP position for the Southwest region. Among other accomplishments, we organized our library and bought a new computer for the library. Now, we have bar codes for library books and video for quick check in/out. About 100 of us went to New Orleans for "Chaitya Paripati". New Orleans Jain Sangh took good care of us. That Sangh is very small but everybody there has a big heart. They were very good hosts. Hats off to them. We successfully collected \$55,000.00 for the Gujarat Earthquake Relief fund. This includes \$25,000.00 contribution from the Jain Society of Houston.

Throughout the whole year our executive committee worked hard. Under their coordination and full support from parents and children we celebrated lots of blessed occasions such as Diwali day celebration, Swami Vatsalya day, Mahavir Jayanti, Republic day

celebration, and to top it all off, the best one was the 2600th Janma Jayanti of Bhagvan Mahavir in April 2001. It was a three -days celebration. On Friday evening, April 6th we did jaap and bhajans which were sung by a famous singer Mrs. Minoo Purushottam. On Saturday, April 7th, lectures and seminar started at 10.00 am. Around 2:30 p.m., Mr. Wangde visited our center. Then, Jain fellowship students 14 and up presented the YJA drama on Bhagwan Mahavir's past lives. They did an excellent job. The background and the costumes were excellent. Everybody worked hard. Thanks to the participants, and the organizers. On Sunday, April 8th we had 2 more hours of fun. This time it was younger Pathshala children who performed very well. Now, the parents, teachers and students are so excited that they want to do similar type of presentations more often. Such programs are very healthy for the Jain Sangh as they bring out togetherness, leadership, and teach us to tolerate other people.

JSH contact is Parimal Desai at 281-859-3661 Perry.Desai@Jacobs.com

NORTHEAST

Dinesh Chheda, Regional Editor

NEWYORK, NY

Jain Center of America (JCA) New York February 4, 2001 JCA had fund raising for devastating earthquake in India. More then 500 members gathered and collected approx \$130,000.00 for this fund. March 31st, 2001 to April 8th, 2001 more then 30 tapasvis took part in Aayambil Oli on April 6th, 2001 Uthapan (removing) ceremony of Ithaca street temple was celebrated for construction of new temple of about 25,000 sq. ft.

Jain Center of America celebrated 2600 Janma Kalyanak of Lord Mahavir on April

22, 2001. More than 150 participants ranging from age 5 to young adults presented 9 cultural items related to Jainism. More than 1500 sadharmik brothers and sisters joined the celebration. Shri Chitrabhanuji read Janma Mahotsav.

WASHINGTON, DC

Jain Society of Metropolitan Washington The 2600th Janma Kalyanak day on Friday April 6, 2001 was celebrated with Pooja in the morning, Navkar Jaap during the day, and a Bhavana program in the evening. Mahavir Jayanti celebration was held on Sunday, April 8, 2001 with a stage program followed by Swami Vatsalya Bhojan. The stage program was presented by youngsters and consisted of prayer songs, prayer dances, Ras/Garba and skits. About 600 people attended the program.

A reception was held in honor of Gurudev Chitrabhanu, Manak Muniji, JAINA presidents and other dignitaries who had come to Washington to witness the historic recitation of a Jain prayer in the US Congress. The reception was unique in that all JAINA presidents attended it. All dignitaries were requested to give a short address to the audience. Their message, in general, stressed that JAINA is well known for its unity and that we must continue the same. On May 22, the U.S. Congress opened with a Jain prayer in English recited by Gurudev Shree Chitrabhanu. This historic event was followed by a short speech by congressman Frank Pallone who paid tributes to the Jain philosophy of non-violence and to the Jain community in North America.

Upcoming programs include a Meditation/Pravachan session with Samni Mangal Prajnaji and Samani Vineet Prajnaji on Saturday June 16, and a Pravachan series by Dr. Hukamchandji Bharill from June 25 to July 1, 2001.

JAINA DIGEST LIFE MEMBERS UPDATE**JAINA CURRENT FINANCIAL STATEMENT****JAINA FINANCIAL STATEMENT AS OF 30/05/01**

598U	Jaisukh Gosalia	Tallassee, AL
599U	Hansraj & Usha Maru	Brookfield, CT
600U	Kirit & Pramila Daftary	Waco, TX
601U	Ashok & Deepika Dalal	Cooper City, FL
602U	Girish & Dutta Shah	Campbell, CA
603U	Madhuker & Gita Mehta	Durham, NC
604U	Gita Pancholy	Troy, OH
605U	Mahendra Doshi	Alpharetta, GA

JAINA General Fund	\$22,606.77
Various sub-committee balances:	
Education Committee	\$10,028.92
Jiv Daya Committee	351.16
World Community Service	5,163.20
Temple Guideline	1,401.00
YJA	33,796.59
Virchand R. Gandhi Fund	9,308.00
Mahavir Memorial Committee	1,573.41
N. American Jain Family Assistance Program	5,484.00
Tirthoddhar Committee	35,083.55
Pilgrimage Committee	1,020.40
JAINA Book Source Committee	17,833.28

COMMITTEES TOTAL \$121,043.51

Please send your \$101.00 Jain Digest life membership dues to Keerti Shah, 842 Lakeside Drive, Bartlett Illinois 60103, Phone: 630-837-8716.

Money Market fund for JD Endowment	\$17,559.91
CD for JAIN Digest Endowment Fund	\$57,674.02
JAINA Charitable Trust as of 3/13/00	\$176,785.23

as per information supplied by Jagat Jain

GRAND TOTAL \$395,669.44

*submitted by
Anop R. Vora, Treasurer*

FEDERATION OF JAIN ASSOCIATIONS IN NORTH AMERICA APPEAL

I want to help retaining Jain identity and culture by supporting JAINA and I want to be a proud Jain!

Please fill out this form and support JAINA.



**Mail this completed form and your financial contribution to:
JAINA Headquarters
PO Box 700 Getzville, NY 14068**

- ☐ I want to be a Trustee of JAINA Charitable Trust and will donate \$500 every year
- ☐ I want to be a JAINA Patron and will donate \$251 every year
- ☐ I want to be a Life Member of JAIN DIGEST and will donate \$101
- ☐ I want to subscribe to JAIN DIGEST for one year (Winter 1999 to Fall 2000) for \$11
- ☐ other amount: ☐ \$10 ☐ \$25 ☐ \$50 ☐ _____

Name _____

Address _____

Phone () _____

Email _____

Please make checks payable to JAINA. Your donation is tax-deductible. Please advise if you wish to remain anonymous. 950 Jain families have already done so, would you not do so? If not for you, do it for your children and grandchildren.

MIS REGISTRATION FORM - PAGE 1

Send this completed form, a check in the amount of \$25 and a recent, full-length photograph of yourself with your name printed on the back to:

**Hasmukh M. Shah, 8721 Scrimshaw Drive,
New Port Richey, FL 34653-6623 Phone: 727/376-7989
hasmukh33@yahoo.com**

Name (please print): _____

LAST

FIRST

MIDDLE

Address: _____

STREET

CITY

STATE

ZIP

Phone: () _____ Fax: () _____ Email: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Height: _____ Weight: _____

Are you a vegetarian? YES NO

Do you smoke? YES NO

Do you drink? YES NO

Have you been married before? YES NO

If yes, indicate the name of your divorced spouse. _____

Your visa status in the USA/Canada? _____ When did you enter the USA/Canada? _____ MONTH/YEAR

What languages do you speak? _____ What is your religion? _____

What languages do you read? _____

What languages do you write? _____

Education: _____

DEGREE YEAR RECEIVED MAJOR NAME OF UNIVERSITY/COLLEGE

Work experience: _____

COMPANY'S NAME POSITION DURATION

Father's Name: _____ Occupation: _____

Mother's Name: _____ Occupation: _____

Brother(s) and/or Sister(s) _____

NAME(S) AGE(S) EDUCATION OCCUPATION

Do you have other relatives living in the North America? _____

NAME RELATIONSHIP OCCUPATION ADDRESS

Other relevant information (use additional paper if necessary): _____

Candidate's signature: _____ Date: _____

Important Considerations:

It is important to remember that the MIS is a non-for-profit, voluntary community service. The MIS and JAINA assume no responsibility or liability for the accuracy or authenticity of the information furnished in the ads or any consequences resulting thereof. The entire responsibility rests with the candidates themselves. All information furnished to the MIS is confidential. Only those who are sincerely interested in looking for a Jain life partner should send a Registration Form. While matching, photographs will not be passed on to the candidates by the MIS. Parents/guardians should communicate with the candidate before placing ad and assist them in making a final decision.

MIS REGISTRATION FORM - PAGE 2

1. Two references who are members of the Jain Community or other Indian organizations.

A. Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Member of: _____

ORGANIZATION'S NAME

B. Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Member of: _____

ORGANIZATION'S NAME

2. Indicate your personal preference of these criteria for the match.

Age: Between the ages of _____ and _____ or open.

Height: Between the height of _____ and _____ or open.

Weight: Between the weight of _____ and _____ or open.

Education: ☐ Bachelor ☐ Masters Degree ☐ Other

Major: _____

Vegetarian: YES NO Work experience: YES NO

Residence: (state) _____

Visa Status: _____

Length of time in North America: _____ years.

Language. English: YES NO

Other (specify): _____

Congratulations!

Female: 113, Male: 102 (Married / Engaged)

JAINA would like to congratulate all couples who have come together with the help of the services of the MIS. JAINA wishes to thank them for their generous donation. More and more Jains around the world are not only appreciating this much needed service, but are also taking advantage of it. Simultaneously, the flow of ads in JAIN DIGEST is gradually increasing.

Guideline to all perspective participants

Be positive, constructive, creative and friendly! No match is going to be "perfect." Complement and support each other practicing respect, sharing, acquire knowledge and maintaining your uniqueness while keeping an open mind. These are the qualities that make for human perfection.

MIS INFORMATION: THIS IS HOW IT WORKS

Our world is shrinking and we are a global village and life is not always easy. However, we can carry our philosophy and our value system that is very worth while, with us. Accept the challenge and make your choice be a worth while one.

Placing an Ad and Registration with MIS

Anyone wishing to place an ad and register with the MIS must follow these instructions care-fully:

1. Fill out the attached Registration Form Page 1 and Page 2. The registrant must fill out this form. *Do not leave anything blank.*

2. Mail the the completed form + a check in the amount of \$25 payable to Hasmukh M. Shah. Leave the Memo or For column blank.

3. a recent, full-length photo of yourself with your name printed on the back.

4. Upon receipt of this information the MIS will draft an ad for you and it will appear in the JAIN DIGEST—but only once. Remember, JAIN DIGEST is a quarterly publication.

Placing an Ad Only

If you do not wish to register with the MIS and wish to draft an ad yourself, you may do so in 30 words or less. Remember that the MIS reserve the right to edit all such ads. Follow step 2 above, but submit your own ad with phone number instead of a completed form and photo. Full Name, Address, Phone number of the candidate must be furnished with the ads for MIS records, without which MIS will not be able to process the ad for publication.

Responding to an Ad (only if contact info isn't available).

If the phone number or address is not given in the ad, then you must contact the candidate through MIS. Follow these step-by-step instructions. Place your bio-data and a recent photograph of yourself in a sealed, stamped envelope with your return address in the upper left-hand corner and the MIS ad reference number in the lower left-hand corner of the envelope. Leave space on the envelope for an address. Place this envelope in another envelope with your return address in the upper left-hand corner and mail it to Hasmukh M. Shah. Upon receipt of these responses the MIS will place the ad holders address on the inner envelope and mail it. Remember, MIS is not responsible for responses that do not conform to these instructions.

Please notify the MIS

Please notify the MIS when an engagement or marriage has been announced. This helps us to know if this community service is working to help maintain our traditions. Please note that if a successful alliance has taken place, both parties will agree to donate what ever amount they wish to JAINA to help defray the cost of publication.

MATRIMONIALS - MALE

M657: Alliance invited from cultured, educated girls for handsome, talented, vegetarian, Gujarati boy, born Oct 69, 5'11", BS (Comp. Sc.), well employed as Analyst. Call: 732/821-2055.

M720: Alliance invited for Gujarati, handsome, vegetarian boy, born July 76, 5'11", BS (Comp. Sc.), well employed with software co., from cultured, educated Girls. Call: 860/673-7549. Email: kamanis@yahoo.com

M813: Gujarati parents invite proposals for very handsome, fair, brilliant, vegetarian, US born son, Jan 75, 5'7", 155 lb, MS EE, well positioned with reputed co., from cultured, educated, pretty girls. Call: 281/955-8224. Email: paras_shah@email.com

M838: Jain parents invite proposals for handsome, vegetarian, accomplished, US citizen son, born Oct 76, 5'10", 155 lb, MD, doing first year residency, from cultured, strict vegetarian, professional girls, preferably MD. Call: 219/247-9240.

M848: Proposals invited for good looking, talented, vegetarian, Gujarati boy, born Nov 73, 5'8", 170 lb, BE (comp sc), well employed with Microsoft, from cultured, educated match. Call: 425/558-2469. Email: nehalr@hotmail.com

M853: Correspondence invited for handsome, smart, intelligent, vegetarian, US born / raised Gujarati boy, Dec 75, 5'10", 158 lb, B.E. (comp eng), well employed as e-commerce analyst, from pretty, US raised, educated girls. Call: 201/792-2774.

M855: Gujarati parents invite proposals with biodata / photo for handsome, bright, vegetarian son, born Feb 77, 5'8", 170 lb, MBA (USA), ACCA (UK), from cultured, educated, Jain, pretty girls. Call: 909/789-9817. Email: rpmehta@aol.com

M856: Gujarati parents invite correspondence for handsome, talented, vegetarian, US born / raised son, July 72, 5'9", 150 lb, BA (Fin), MBA (MIS), well positioned as Sr. Fin. Analyst, in an Intl. Co., from US raised, cultured, caring, professional, vegetarian girls. Call: 631/789-9157. Email: SHAH2791@aol.com

M857: Correspondence invited for handsome, fair, brilliant, vegetarian Gujarati boy, born Sept 72, 5'6", 136 lb, MS (comp sc), well employed with multinational co., from cultured, educated, good looking girls. Call: 972/943-3358. Email: swastik108@yahoo.com

M859: Jain Aunt invite proposals for a good looking, brilliant, vegetarian, nephew, born Dec 75, 6'2", 180 lb, MBA (Australia), from cultured, educated girls. He is currently in Bangalore, India and willing to settle in USA. Call: 847/695-0935. Email: Hmomaya@aol.com

M861: Proposals with biodata / photo, invited for handsome, talented, accomplished, vegetarian, Gujarati boy, born Nov 75, 5'6", 138 lb, MS, well positioned as Dev. Scientist, from cultured, educated girls. Call: 252/215-1108 or 734/394-1606 at pratiksheth@hotmail.com

M864: Gujarati parents invite responses for their very handsome, fair, brilliant, vegetarian, vivacious, US born son, Oct 76, 5'11", BS (Civil Eng), well employed as Quality Engineer, from cultured, educated, pretty girls. Call: 334/283-5340. Email: jaygosalia@hotmail.com

AM248: Alliance invited for handsome, intelligent, vegetarian boy, 27 years, 6'00", 145 lb, BS IE, working as Materials Manager with an electronic co., Call: 972/473-7417.

AM254: Alliance invited for handsome, athletic, US citizen, born Jan 67, 5'7", MS (Mech. Engg), employed at Ford Motor as Product Development Engineer. Email: Smehtaone@yahoo.com or Call: 734/207-1773.

AM306: Gujarati parents invite correspondence with biodata for US born son, Aug 73, 5'9", 150 lb, MD, doing Surgery residency at prestigious university hospital, from professional, vegetarian females. Call: 734/516-1379.

AM308: Alliance invited for handsome, highly accomplished, vegetarian gentleman, born April 58, 5'11", 150 lb, slender, looks younger, MBA (Harvard), was in CA (USA) for 8 years and now very well settled in his own computer, IT venture since last 4 years at Bombay, from cultured, graduate girls not more 35 years and willing to settle in Bombay. He is an issueless divorcee. Bombay Phone: 4937934 / 4951906. Email: smehta@foremost-systems.com

AM309: Gujarati parents invite responses for US raised, good looking, intelligent, vegetarian son, born in Gujarat March 74, 5'10", 150 lb, BS Biochemistry, well employed in Technology co., from cultured, educated, pretty girls. Call: 408/733-1328. Email: vcshah1@yahoo.com

AM314: Jain parents invite responses with biodata / photo for handsome, brilliant, vegetarian, US citizen son, born March 75, 5'7", 145 lb, BS (chem engg), well employed as Process Engineer in a reputed co., from cultured, pretty, caring, educated, vegetarian girls. Call: 201/348-4959. Email: pcjain09@hotmail.com

MATRIMONIALS - FEMALE

F581: Gujarati parents invite responses for beautiful, talented, cultured daughter, born Dec 73, 5'1", 110 lb, BS (molecular biology), biotech / software professional in silicon valley, CA, from well educated, Gujarati professionals. Call: 408/272-6833

F714: Alliance invited for beautiful, fair, charming, vegetarian Jain girl, born Aug 74, 5'6", 125 lb, BA (Comp Sc), MS (Info sys), well employed as consultant in a reputed co., from professional well educated, cultured boys. Call: 732/922-6274. Email: pearl_jain@yahoo.com

F797: Gujarati parents invite responses for beautiful, fair, attractive, slim, vegetarian, US citizen daughter, born Dec 77, 5'1", 105 lb, BA (comp sc), from well educated, professional cultured vegetarian boys. Call: 704/599-6575. Email: phool195@hotmail.com

F854: Gujarati parents invite correspondence for pretty, talented, vegetarian, US citizen daughter, born Dec 70, 5'5", 135 lb, BS (Intl business), well employed as administrator in a reputed co., from cultured, educated boys. Call: 631/385-0797. Email: bobby@tsiny.com

F858: Responses invited for fair, slim, pretty, charming, compassionate, accomplished, Biological engineer, Canadian raised daughter, March 68, 5'3", MD, US MLE, doing residency in Family Practice, from well established Jain professional family. Call: 416/593-7546. Email: jainva@hotmail.com

F860: Gujarati parents invite proposals with biodata / photo, for pretty, slim, vegetarian, US citizen daughter, born Sept 73, 5'4", 100 lb, AAS (Medical lab tech), well employed with reputed bank, from well educated, professional, Gujarati boys. caste no bar. Call: 847/259-1367. Email: koza3@hotmail.com

F862: Gujarati parents invite correspondence for their beautiful, slim, vegetarian, talented, US born daughter, June 75, 5'6", MD, from vegetarian MD / Professional boys. Mail photo / biodata to: D. Shah, 3345-E North Chatham Rd., Ellicott City, MD 21042.

F863: Gujarati parents invite proposals for beautiful, fair, slim, talented, virtuous, vegetarian, US born daughter, Oct 75, 5'2", 105 lb, BS (Fin / MIS), well employed in a reputed co., from well educated, cultured boys. Call: 334/283-5340. Email: guni3@yahoo.com

AF298: Alliance invited for pretty, slim, attractive, vegetarian, well rounded, eastwest balanced, US raised daughter, born Oct 75, 5'5", 110 lb, MBA (Fin), well employed, from cultured, professional, vegetarian, non-smoker boys. Call: 718/454-4069.

AF305: Alliance invited for a Bombay raised Occupational Therapist who has been in the USA for the last 4 years, born April 75, 5'3", 106 lb. She is attractive, adventurous and vegetarian. Phone: 630/728-1887. Email: swatig3@yahoo.com

AF307: Responses invited for Gujarati vegetarian, fair girl, born Jan 76, 5'5", MBA (Fin), working for Fortune 500 co., in a senior position. Call: 610/317-8027 Or Fax: 610/419-1248.

AF310: Alliance invited for pretty, intelligent, professional, vegetarian, Gujarati girl, born Oct 68, 5'0", 115 lb, BS (Accounting), well employed as Manager, from professional, vegetarian, cultured match. Call: 714/985-1465. Email: ydoshi@informslink.com

AF311: Well-settled Jain brother in US invites responses for beautiful, attractive, slim, talented, family oriented sister born Sept 78, 5'3", 100 lb, MBA, from educated, cultured boys. She is in India and willing

to settle in USA. Call: 916/923-9701. Email: kawediya@intel.com

AF312: Alliance invited for pretty, charming, professional, divorcee, Gujarati female, born March 67, 5'6", 127 lb, MS (biotech / biochem), well employed as Research Associate in a reputed co., from educated, caring, simple, open minded match. Call: 818/735-0916/ Email: kikowani@aol.com

AF313: Jain parents invite proposals for their beautiful, slim, vegetarian, US born daughter, April 73, 5'2", PhD (June 2001), from well educated, professional boys. Call: 973/467-5949.

AF315: Gujarati parents invite proposals for beautiful, attractive, intelligent, vegetarian, US citizen daughter, born June 73, 5'1", 115 lb, BS (biology), BS (gen studies), well employed as Research Asst. at Uni. school, from cultured, well educated, non-smoker boys. Call: 314/781-6759. Email: kapadias@slu.edu

AF316: Gujarati parents invite correspondence for their charming, very pretty, attractive, slim, intelligent, vegetarian, US born / raised daughter, July 76, 5'4", MD, beginning residency June 2001, from cultured, professional well educated, vegetarian, non-smoker boys. Call: 650/326-7188.

AF317: Alliance invited by Jain family for very beautiful, charming, slim, virtuous, accomplished, vegetarian daughter, born June 77, 5'3", 99 lb, BS (nutrition), pursuing MS (nutrition), from professional, cultured, vegetarian Hindi / Gujarati boys. She is currently in India and willing to settle in USA. Call: 248/626-1117. Email: asmitajain@hotmail.com or bhuvan Jain@hotmail.com

YOUNG JAIN PROFESSIONALS :

YJP Embraces the New Millennium: Fourth Annual YJP Conference in Everglades National Park

From its inception in 1997, the Young Jain Professionals Organization (YJP) has come a long way. The seed was planted when a group of young Jains envisioned having an organization devoted to the needs of a growing population of North American Jains—those just beginning their professional lives seeking to better incorporate Jainism into their professional and personal lives. **YJP strives to increase the knowledge and application of Jainism principles Jains between 24 and 39. This is done through creative events that promote our understanding of Jainism as well as encourage professional and social networking.**

The 4th Annual Young Jain Professionals Convention was held in Florida from March 2nd to 5th, 2001. Young Jains from the US, Canada and England left their hectic lives retreated to the Everglades National Park to engage in **peer-led introspective and educational discussions based on the Jain Vrats**, or vows; Asteya, Ahimsa, Aparigraha, Bhramacharya, and Satya. Creative scenarios, role-playing, and smaller group discussions were used to explore the application of the five Vrats in our daily practice of Jainism. We noted differences between how the Vrats apply to householders versus sadhus and sadhvis. We identified those pressures stemming from home, work and social situations that challenge our adherence to the Vrats and ultimately our ability to attain Moksa, and explored “Jain” ways to deal with such pressures.

The weekend began with opening remarks by our keynote speaker, Professor Anne Vallely, from McGill University, who led an inspiring and insightful presentation illustrating the **broader perception of Jainism** in North America, that is rooted in ecology, environmental concerns and is an evolving tradition as we are faced with new challenges daily. Dr. Vallely did her doctorate dissertation on Jainism from the University of Toronto. She has written Custodians of the Lokottar: An Ethnography of a Jain Ascetic Community, based on her research among Jain ascetics in Rajasthan. Currently, Dr. Vallely teaches at McGill University and Concordia University in Montreal.

Dr. Vallely, and our five facilitators, Ms. Paulomi Gudka, Mr. Amar Salgia, Mr. Gabriel Figueroa, Ms. Neha Jhaveri and Dr. Rita Kothari are commended for an exceptional job! In order to better understand the application of the Vrats, a Jain Experiment was initiated to encourage each participant to take a vow to practice the five Vrats in thought, word, and deed, to the greatest extent possible, beginning a week prior to the conference; individual experiences were shared in a wrap-up session.

In addition to nourishment for the soul, our bodies were **energized by the gourmet vegetarian cuisine** that was served. We were very lucky to have a chef that found the vegetarian/vegan menu a personal challenge. His efforts far surpassed all of our expectations. Participants also took advantage of the **many outdoor activities** such as canoeing, kayaking, bicycling, and hiking. Rest assured there were no casualties from alligator encounters. In addition, the participants enjoyed a **sunset riverboat cruise** with an informative guide who spoke of the history and wildlife of the Everglades.

The Fourth Annual Young Jain Professional Conference proved an invigorating experience for all who participated. All had a wonderful time, as old and new friendships were strengthened and participants had the rare opportunity to discuss applying Jainism to our daily lives in a National Park setting. A special thanks to all the participants for making the event a success!

Upcoming Elections:

Are you interested in being involved with YJP to encourage the practices and principles of Jainism in creative and interactive ways? If you would like to work with a dedicated, fun and energetic group of young Jains and are between the ages of 24 and 39, inclusive consider getting involved with YJP. Learn more about YJP by visiting our website at <http://www.homestead.com/yjp/>. Elections for new officers will be held in July/August...please contact any board member to ask questions or get a perspective of their experience in serving on YJP. The contact information can be found at the bottom of the next page.

YJA Executive Board will have open positions this summer. To join the board, please visit <http://www.yja.org> for regular updates or email Birud.Jhaveri@yja.org

YOUNG JAIN PROFESSIONALS:

YJP EVENTS AT ELEVENTH BIENNIAL JAINA CONFERENCE (JULY 5 – 8, 2001)

Young Jain Professionals has been working very diligently over the past several months to organize a number of sessions for the Eleventh Biennial JAINA Convention. Make sure to check your JAINA packets and schedule for dates and times of the following session that we plan to hold:

Secret of Their Success: Five Successful CEO's Share Their Stories. Join our five CEO panelists, including Ms. Shobhana Kamdar, Ms. Jugna Shah, Dr. Manu Vora, Mr. Nitin Talsania, and Mr. Ronak Shah, who are accomplished in a variety of fields including business, telecommunications, medicine and public health and the arts, and hear their stories from when they got started—their motivations, their successes and disappointments, and how they manage to thrive in a competitive market.

Twilight Light Zone.... Jain Style: This session is a spin-off of the famous X-Files Session held at the JAINA 1999 Convention. Our peers will propose questions related to Jainism, never before asked and whose answers are in the realm of the unknown. For example, what if the world was predominantly Jain? What if there was no concept of reincarnation in Jain Philosophy? If such questions wet your palate, join us to look at Jainism from a radically different perspective. Let's think outside of the Jain box.

Jain Ethics and Social Activism: Traditional Jain teachings advance the ideals of individual restraint, asceticism and ultimately withdrawal from worldly existence. Can these ideals be sustained in the North American context? Should they be re-interpreted? In this session, Professional Anne Valley will lead a session to explore the ways in which young Jains are re-envisioning their tradition and the extent to which this is a North Ameri-

can phenomena or one that is pervasive throughout Jain communities.

Jain Fishbowl Session – An Intergenerational Discussion About The Evolving Roles Of Jain Women and Men of the 21st Century: What do we expect from ourselves and each other? Please join us for an energizing discussion about the dynamic nature of gender roles. We will share the views of our parents and those of our own generation as we talk about our hopes, dreams and fears. What are our expectations from each other and how do we perceive one another on an individual level and in the Jain community at large?

Accommodations: Watch for impromptu social and networking opportunities at JAINA 2001 in Chicago. YJP has reserved rooms at the Holiday Inn O'Hare International, which is only a five minute walk from the Rosemont Convention Center to facilitate easier access to YJP gatherings. Please call 888-642-7344 or 847-671-6350 and make your reservations as soon as possible, as rooms are limited.

To register for the JAINA Convention, you can visit www.jaina2001.com.

Would you like to Volunteer: To volunteer to help out with YJP at the convention, please contact shilpashah@attglobal.net. We will need volunteers to sit at the YJP booth during the event and help out at the various sessions. All youths between the ages of 24 and 39 are encouraged and welcome to volunteer— even just an hour of your time! Thanks!

Jai Jinendra and hope to see you in Chicago!

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Federation of Jain Associations in North America

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Jai Jinendra!

Fueled by the inspiration of this year's 2600th Mahavir Jayanti, the Young Jains of America Executive Board has been diligently working for the past six months on a variety of projects. With this year being a non-convention year for YJA, we have been able to direct our undivided attention and energy towards projects ranging from upgrading our website to providing coordination for Project Ahimsa, our disaster relief project that was undertaken following the Gujarat earthquake.

Most recently, we have been wrapping up our efforts for the nationwide 2600th Mahavir Jayanti celebrations, which took place in early April. YJA was pleased to assist many Jain centers with producing the play, "The Past Lives of Tirthankar Mahavir." We are excited to showcase the talents many youth and adults from across the continent displayed at their celebrations of the 2600th Mahavir Jayanti. To view updates and pictures of the different play productions please visit our website at <http://www.yja.org>.

January 26th, 2000, the Republic Day of India, was also the fateful Friday on which a devastating earthquake rocked the state of Gujarat. That weekend, YJA conceived Project Ahimsa. Thanks to the hard work and effort from our members all across the continent, we were able to send money, medicine, clothes, food and other supplies to India. YJA is grateful for all your support during this relief effort. For further information or a detailed update, please visit our website at <http://www.yja.org>.

YJA's preparations for the 2001 JAINA Convention in Chicago are underway. YJA, along with the Chicago Youth Convention Committee, are developing seminars geared towards the youth that will be attending the convention. We are also proud to announce that during the convention, YJA will introduce the site of our next biennial convention to be hosted over the 4th of July weekend in the summer of 2002. Make sure you join us in Chicago to find out where the 5th Biennial Young Jains of America Convention will be!

To learn more about any of our current projects, hear about what is going on in your region, or to find out how you can get involved, please visit our website at <http://www.yja.org>. We are always in search of dedicated youth to join our Executive Board. If you are interested in becoming a part of this exciting youth-led organization or if you have any questions, concerns or suggestions feel free to contact either one of us via phone or email.

Sincerely,

Birud Jhaveri and Nirav Shah

Young Jains of America (YJA) is the umbrella youth organization of the Federation of Jain Associations in North America (JAINA). The mission of YJA is to be recognized nationally and internationally as an umbrella youth organization for establishing a network to share Jain heritage and religion through youth.

THIS IS JAINISM

by Dhrumil Purohit

I was so excited! Just a few months ago I had turned vegan, and I was searching everywhere for a natural foods store that would meet my needs. And there it was, I had finally found one! All this time it was right under my nose, only a five minute drive from my house here in Delaware.

First on my grocery checklist was Vegan Chocolate! MMMmmm, so good. I had tried some a few days ago at a veggie market in Philadelphia and enjoyed it very much. The chocolate taste itself was nothing special, but just knowing it was vegan made me love biting into it all the more.

After I had found my chocolate, I walked around a bit more. My eyes showed my enthusiasm as I roamed the aisles in astonishment. About fifty percent of the total goods in the Newark Coop Natural Foods store were vegan, and I was loving it! I found everything I needed and so much more. Vegan items from marshmallows and cereals, to cheese, recipes and even toothpaste, were abundant and ready for my taking.

The toothpaste was something that really made me smile. I had only recently learned that the majority of brand named toothpastes out there were made with cow bones and other similar ingredients. I could no longer look in the mirror each morning knowing that my teeth were being cleaned at the expense of a sentient being. Not only that, but sixty-one percent of the cow's value is based upon the sales of its by-product (Stepaniak Pg 114). Meaning, farmers make most of their money by us using products like these toothpastes with animal by-products in them.

Unfortunately, I was faced with a dilemma. The natural toothpaste was made with the underground vegetable ginger. Although I had only given up some underground vegetables, (reasons were for strengthening of will power) I had never given much thought to ginger. So I contemplated whether to buy the product.

Contemplation took thirty seconds. What is worse, I told myself, to continue to use a product that supports the killing of sentient being, or to get an underground derived toothpaste for now, and look for others that are not made with a root later? Although we are deciding from one of two necessary evils, the answer is simple. Why do I raise this if it is so easy to understand?

Avoidance of underground vegetables originally came about by those who began to take karmic principles to the next level. Minimization of suffering, one of the great Jain themes, was the basis behind this action. Underground vegetable extraction was associated with the harming of beings in the ground and the destruction of the actual soul of the plant (when pulling an apple off a tree the tree itself is still intact but when pulling a carrot out of the ground, the whole carrot plant dies).

At that time, the suffering of higher sense beings was unheard of (someone who was concerned about the suffering of lower sense beings was not causing harm to higher sense beings). Does it

make sense to devote much of our attention to the avoiding onions and potatoes when we are still consuming products that support the killing of cows and other higher sensed beings?

Jains and Non-Jains alike often ask me whether this "Vegan thing" is a "Jain thing". When I reply I often illustrate this analogy for them: Recall a restaurant that you recently visited. See if you can recall the menu. Did it have any "Fried Human Legs" on the appetizers list? What about "Cat Dung"? If they answer yes that is another issue, but if they answer no I ask them why. The general answer I get is that it is unheard of. "Who serves cat dung at a restaurant?" they often ask me. In that same sense, it was previously unheard of for a practitioner of the Jain religion to support the killing of a five-sense being. The concept of being a Vegan was never an issue for the Jain community, because animals were treated with great care. Previously cows were not injured while obtaining milk, previously animal products were not used in the cooking and preserving of materials and foods, but they are today. What we must realize is that usage has caused immense amounts of suffering to our surrounding environment.

I think it is great that people avoid onions and other underground vegetables. I think it is great that people are vegetarian. I also think it is great that people eat one less meat because they have had an encounter with one of you lovely members of society. In addition, I realize that veganism, like avoiding underground vegetables, is only one small step in the gigantic ladder we are trying to ascend. I don't consider myself better than someone who is vegetarian, but I do consider myself fortunate to have had the experiences that led me to it. For those who have not had similar experience, it is my obligation to present them with it.

We must take some time to sit down and think about our actions and the reactions that follow. We cannot go by what others have said, rather we must learn to investigate for ourselves and come to our own conclusions. However, we can only come to conclusions after we have investigated.

This is Jainism.

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Vegan Sites

<http://www.goveg.com>

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The Past Lives of Tirthankar Mahavir

The **Young Jains of America** is excited to display the talents of many youth, adults and Jain centers from across the continent from their celebrations of the 2600th Mahavir Jayanti. This was a momentous occasion for our Jain community. YJA was pleased to assist many Jain centers with the play, "**The Past Lives of Tirthankar Mahavir.**" This play chronicled the births of Tirthankar Mahavir from his life as a simple town leader, Naysar, through his next 27 lives to his final birth as Prince Vardhaman.

Many cities have participated in this performance from across the USA and Canada. As they become available, pictures and summaries of the Mahavir Jayanti celebrations and plays from all over North America are being shown on the web. <http://www.yja.org/mj2600.htm>

Charlotte, North Carolina

Jain Study Group celebrated Mahavir Jayanti on April 8th 2001. Celebration started with a Asthnaprakari Puja, and after the Puja, we had a Discourse on Bhagwan Mahavir's life and Jain principals by Shri Vijaybhai Doshi. Our young girls from 8 years to 13 years presented a beautiful melodious Stavan Dance. But the highlight of the program was a play depicting the twenty- seven lives of Bhagwan Mahavir. The play was divided into four acts for different past lives. We had great props to beautify the stage with mountain scene, trees and King's court. All the children did a superb job to play their own character.

Mr. Surendra Patel, Sanghpati of this year said that this was a very successful program and everybody enjoyed the Swamivatsalya after the program. We like to thank Young Jains of America, and especially Pavan Zaveri for all their help in the play and for supplying all the beautiful props and ornaments.



Vasudev Tripristha (Nirav Doshi) tells his servant (Ryan Singhi) to have the musician (Jainesh Shah) stop when he falls asleep.

Chicago, Illinois

On April 8th, 2001, the Jain Temple of Chicago celebrated Mahavir Jayanti with the production of the play, "The Past Lives of Tirthankar Mahavir" and declamation speeches given by Pathshala students.

Thirty-five Pathshala students, ranging from ages five to twenty-four, took part in our production. Determination and dedication by the participants, their parents, and other assistants helped make the play a big success. This play would not have been possible without contributions from YJA and especially Pavan Zaveri for writing the play and supplying props for each Jain center.

Pathshala students also participated in the declamation speech contest, which was divided among ages. The topics included: "A message from the life of a historic Jain person of your choice," "Keeping Jain values alive in the Western world," and "Jainism and global peace." In conclusion, it was an auspicious occasion as the Jain youth of Chicago celebrated Bhagwan Mahavir's 2600th birth anniversary.



Chicago youth enthusiastically perform the play for the Mahavir Jayanti celebration.

Dallas, Texas

Jain Society of North Texas celebrated the 2600th Mahavir Jayanti with a full program on April 8th, 2001. Approximately 300 people attended. The morning began with a series of Pujas. Following that, the cultural program was initiated with the youngest Pathshala children, ages 5-8, reciting Namokar Mantra, Icchami Khamasano and a bhajan.

Next was the production of the YJA play, "The Past Lives of Tirthankar Mahavir." The play brought together 35 students of the remaining two Pathshala groups, ages 9-13 and 14 and up. The production came off without difficulty and was greatly appreciated by the audience. The play was directed by Pathshala teacher Charu Khara and Sushma Shah. Following that was a celebration of the birth of Prince Vardhaman with a colorful dandia dance.

The program concluded with Aarti and lunch. The program was enjoyable for all and a very well-received event.



The whole Dallas cast poses for a picture

Houston, Texas

Jain Society of Houston held a three-day event from April 6th - 8th to celebrate the 2600th Mahavir Jayanti. Friday morning began with pujas, and the evening held a pravachan by Samani Sanmati Pragyaji, a Namokar Mantra Jaap and bhavna with Minoo Purshottam.

Saturday was filled with seminars on various aspects of how Jainism has influenced our life over the past two millennia. Following that was the play, "The Past Lives of Tirthankar Mahavir." Twenty youth played the various characters with many adults assisting in the background. Over 300 people attended the performance. Several dances accompanied the play celebrating the birth of Bhagwan Mahavir.

On Sunday, April 8th, the program began with a pravachan by Samani Charitra Pragyaji. Then, many of the younger Pathshala children, ages 9-13, performed dances and skits illustrating events from Bhagwan Mahavir's life. Other events included the story of Chandkaushik, Chandanbala and the cowherder putting thorns in Mahavir's ears. The Jain Fellowship of Houston, the Pathshala teachers and the Jain Society all came together beautifully for a tremendous weekend of programs celebrating this momentous occasion, the 2600th Birth anniversary of Tirthankar Mahavir.



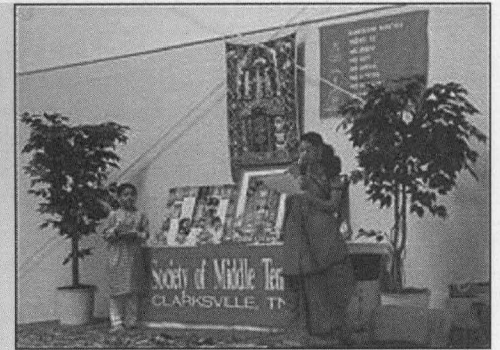
Chakravarti Priyamitra (Palak Parikh) listens to a discourse from the munis (Nitesh Daga and Amit Shah).

Middle Tennessee

Jain society of Middle Tennessee (JSMT) celebrated 2600th Birth Anniversary of Lord Mahavir, on 7th April 2001. With the sincere and dedicated efforts of the outgoing members and youth the program was a great success!

As usual we had sequence of few cultural programs in the celebration of the occasion. On that auspicious day all the Jains recited Jain prayers and stavans. Like every year this time we had a Jain scholar, Balbhadraraj, who came over to enhance our knowledge of Jainism. He laid emphasis on how important the "NavkarMantra" and other sayings are and how they generate powerful vibrations throughout the day.

We then had a swapna darshan ceremony, followed by skit prepared by youth, which had inspiring messages to convey. The future generation is definitely benefited by this exposure. It helps to keep Jain traditions intact, while developing good values among youth. We also had a sequence of dances performed by enthusiastic youth. Finally we had our authentic traditional dinner.



Ishan Parekh and Ishita Parekh display and discuss the dreams Queen Trishala

Orlando, Florida

Jain Society of Central Florida celebrated the 2600th Mahavir Jayanti on April 8th, 2001 at the Hindu Temple with about 250 people in attendance. The entire program was organized by the youth.

First, several young children recited the Namokar Mantra followed by a play, "Mahavir is My Hero," by several young boys. Next was a dance to Maro avato bhav avo apaje by three girls. And then the play on "The Past Lives of Tirthankar Mahavir," by about twenty youth. The effort was directed by Rajendra Mehta. In celebration of the birth of the Tirthankar, there was another dance by thirteen young children to Mahavir Bhagwan no Helo. The program concluded with a lecture by the Samanijis. The whole event was thoroughly enjoyed by all. Mr. Ramesh Kotadia commented "it was very nice to see the young people so involved in knowing about their religion and presenting it."



The cast of the Past Lives of Mahavir play in Orlando.

San Diego, California

Jain Society of San Diego held their Mahavir Jayanti program on April 22nd in which they put on a play called "Mahavir's Life: A Journey of the Soul from Ordinary to Divine", in which the 32 youth performed portions of the play "The Past Lives of Tirthankar Mahavir". It was followed by another drama and then followed by dinner.

The play was most definitely the highlight of the evening, with its colors, dance and music. There were also many adult volunteers who worked on this play, from choreography to stage decor. San Diego certainly brought forth the spirit of MJ2600.



Rejoicing in the birth of Bhagwan Mahavir

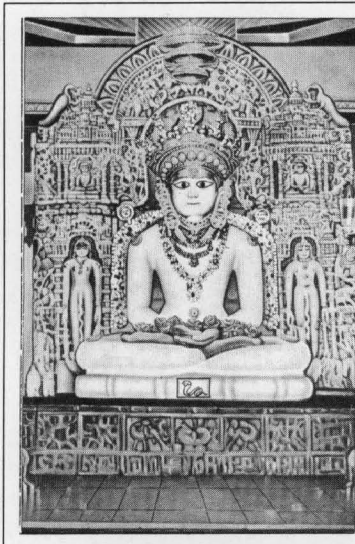
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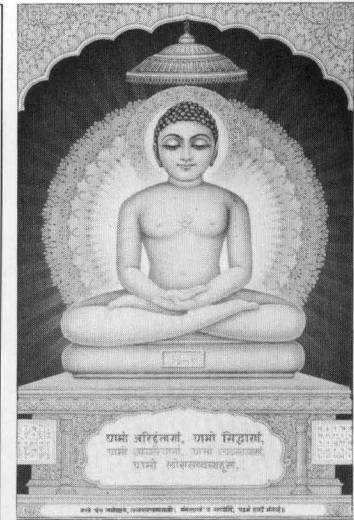
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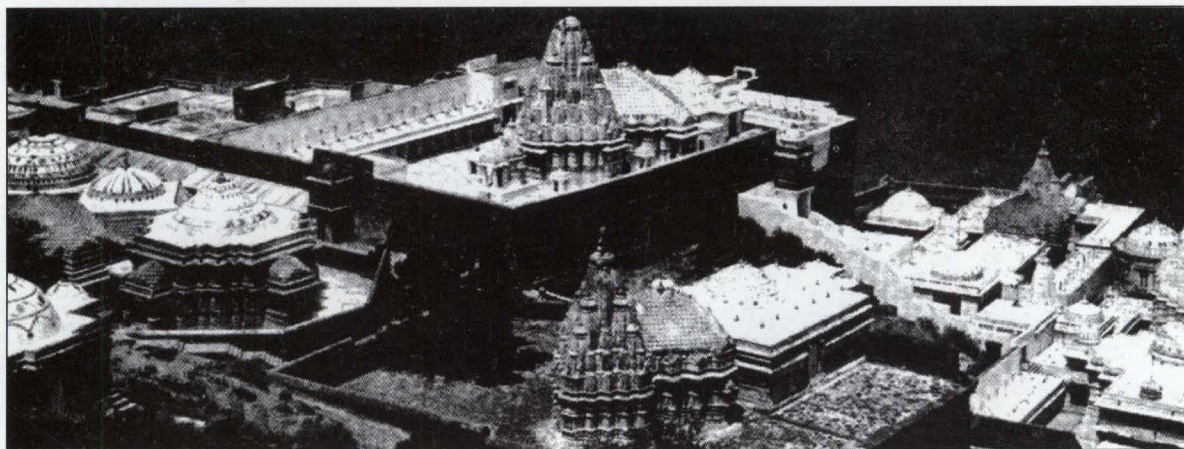


Tirthankar Mahavir

Jain temple format

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