

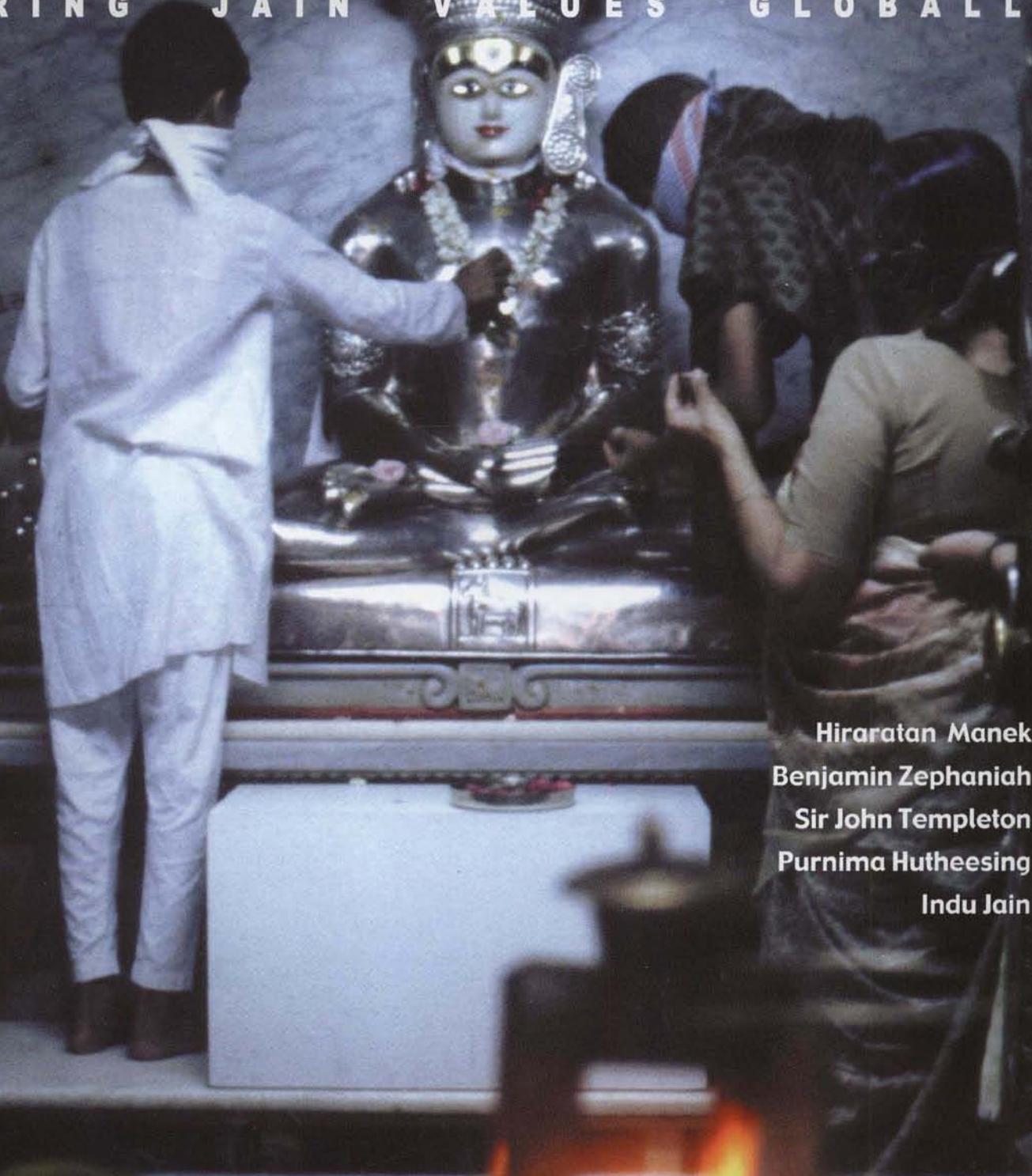


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Issue 16
September - November 2003
Non Profit International Quarterly Publication

JAIN SPIRIT

SHARING JAIN VALUES GLOBALLY



Hiraratan Manek
Benjamin Zephaniah
Sir John Templeton
Purnima Hutheesing
Indu Jain

When eyesight opens, we wake up.
When insight opens, we awake.
Acharya Vijay Ratnasundersuri



WELCOME

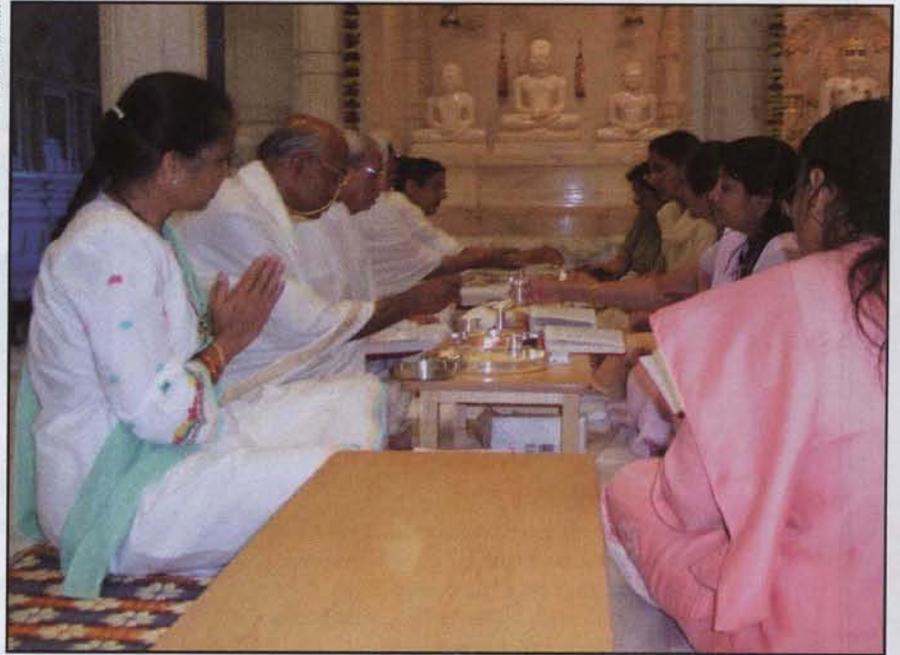
ATUL K. SHAH

As we go to press, six members of the Jain Spirit team have just returned from a promotion tour of the magazine in North America. From 3-5th July, we had a Photo Exhibition on the theme 'Jainism – Ancient Tradition, Modern Values' launched at the JAINA Convention in Cincinnati, Ohio. Thereafter, we were guests of the Jain Societies of Southern and Northern California – Los Angeles and San Francisco. Ingrid Newkirk, the founder of PETA, gave Jain Spirit a very positive endorsement in her keynote speech when she said: "Not only should Jain Spirit go to every Jain home, but it should also go to every politician, every journalist and every legislator in North America." She also added, "All animal lovers are Jainthey just don't know it." We can say similar things about vegetarians, environmentalists, peace lovers and human rights/social justice activists. Jain Spirit is a vehicle to reach out to all these different groups and share our Jain values.

Our visit to California was also very insightful. There was a spirit of unity among the communities. Both Jain centres are well used, with Sunday schools (patshalas) attracting over 300 children each. The leaders are open-minded, proud of their heritage and dedicated towards encouraging children and youth. I witnessed a joint meeting between leaders in San Francisco and the Young Jains of America, where there was unconditional support for the youth given by the elders. This is a rare sight and very inspiring. The next major youth convention in July 2004 is going to be held in San Francisco and we would like to request youth leaders from all over the world to attend this event to create a spirit of global unity. Register early to avoid disappointment, and request your local community to sponsor your flights and registration. You are their future. Visit www.yja.org

In Los Angeles, our host Professor Tara Sethia decided to invite her whole class to see the Photo Exhibition. This was an eye-opener, both for them and for us. We saw how sharing our culture with others and answering their questions strengthens our own knowledge. Their presence for the first time at the Jain temple in Los Angeles enabled them to connect with the living community of Jains. Professor Sethia has set up an 'Ahimsa Center' at California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, to encourage the study and practice of non-violence. Her work deserves support and it is truly *anekanta* in practice. At Berkeley, Professor Padmanabh Jaini was equally effusive about Jainism, stating how we have retained our traditional order of monks and nuns for thousands of years, who still live as simply and modestly as always. They have not compromised their lifestyle despite the modern jet age and materialism.

Unity is priceless and to build it requires enormous



*Worship in San Francisco -
a united community with a unique charter*

patience and self-sacrifice. I discovered this very clearly in my conversations with our host in San Francisco, Mr. Prem Jain, a pioneering leader in Jain North America and Senior Vice-President of Cisco Corporation. The Jain Bhavan in Milpitas is a beautiful building, built with a spirit of democracy and unity, which has led to widescale participation by all members of the community. Costing over \$6 million, most of the donors are anonymous, and ownership of the temple is shared by everyone. All are equally proud, and Jain Spirit received a warm reception here. This is a model institution for the twenty-first century, which the Jain world would do well to emulate. Its leaders are fully committed to openness and democracy, values which are at the core of Jainism. The youths feel very much at home in this environment, inspired to retain their culture and take it boldly forward.

The Jain Spirit team is fully committed to building this spirit of unity, both locally and globally. To do this, we require the cooperation from Jain groups and organisations all over the world. We request you to promote this magazine to your members and get new subscribers, something that will benefit and strengthen all of us. We have colourful posters which you can pin up at your centres and subscription leaflets which you can distribute at your events. Please email us and we will send these to you right away. Our unique Photo Exhibition is now available on tour at your local centre. For details, please contact our Photo Editor James Maturin-Baird on photos@jainspirit.org

Jai Jinendra,

Atul K. Shah

Executive Editor
editor@jainspirit.com

We invite our readers to send photos, letters, news and reports on events, and encourage others to subscribe. Financial support to enable this magazine to reach every corner of the world and every educational library is most welcome. By supporting *Jain Spirit*, you will be taking a pro-active step to inform everyone about this ancient and visionary culture. Please contact our Head Office for more information.

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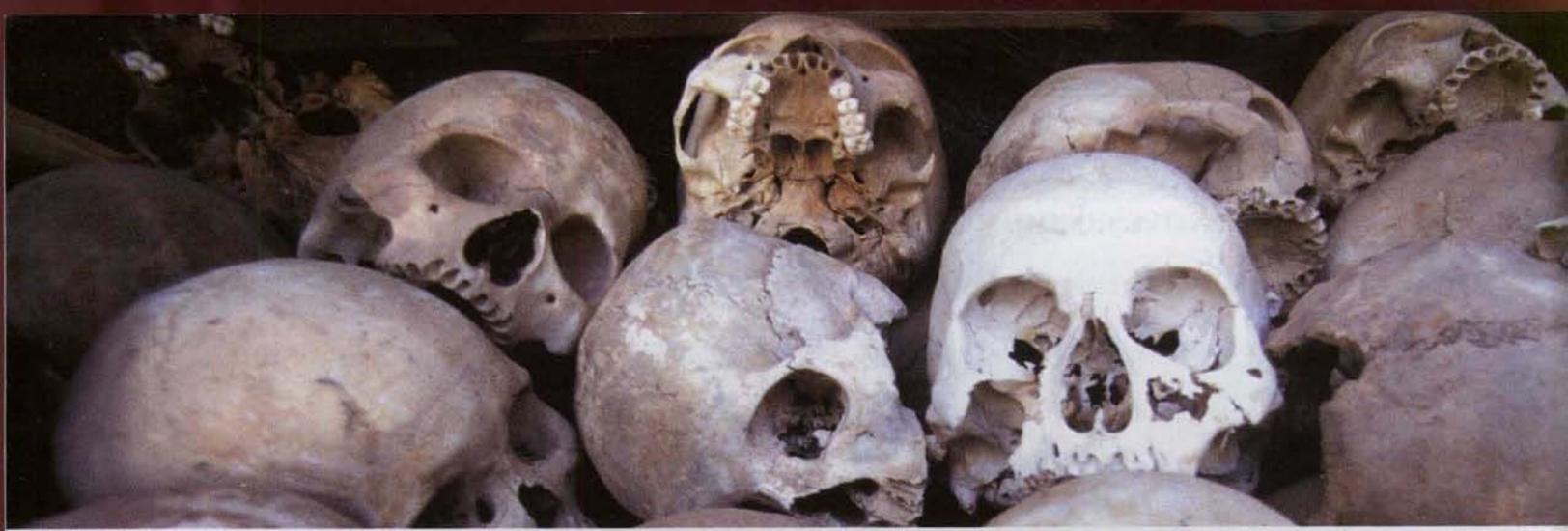
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JAINISM

Mrs Indu Jain 64



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HOW DO WE RESPOND?

Vidhi Jain presents her view of *ahimsa* in the context of modern day terrorism

UNICEF AND WHO REPORTS confirm that since 1990 sanctions on Iraq have killed more than one million people, over half of them under five. A country where now the most serious weapon for mass destruction is only a bottle of water tainted with disease, where for the price of a hawk bomber clean drinking water can be provided to almost one and a half million people for life.

Let us consider the world that future generations will inherit from us. It is a world of deep-seated fears haunting us endlessly, a world full of uncertainty. It is a world full of military and economic terrorism, religious bigotry, unimaginable genocide, trans-national mass murders and senseless slaughter. A world that has 30,000 nuclear weapons. A world full of misery, with 50,000 people starving to death every day. A world that has faced 35 major wars and is preparing to face many more. A world that reminds me of these words from the Bible: "And the sins of parents shall be visited on the heads of the children, even unto third and fourth generations."

With due respect to the intelligentsia, this is not a senseless dramatisation. We are all from different countries, speak different languages, have different lifestyles and cultures, practise different traditions; but we all live in a world of fear and insecurity.

Violence has invaded human society in the form of war and terrorism; it is threatening us in every moment. Whether you kill someone by discreetly planting a bomb or kill someone after an open declaration of attack, it is largely innocent people who suffer.

Terrorism is the result of hatred, sown by dictatorship, bondage and human exploitation, enslaving and brutalising people for financial interests. All this comes back to haunt us in the form of fights for freedom, for justice, for identity, for revenge. War is nothing more than terrorism made popular. War is also the manifestation of the desire of a small elite to extend their power or to seek revenge. Whether terrorism is violence by religious fundamentalists and resistance movements, or it is violence in the name of a political or holy war by recognised governments, it is unjustified because it results in carnage. After 9/11 September, George Bush said, "Either you are with us or you are against us." Bin Laden said, "The world is divided into two sides - the side of faith and the side of infidelity." We are already torn in two worlds, only to be massacred further! We all retaliate. But what kind of retaliation is it where an entire country is punished for the crimes of a few determined, hard-headed criminals as in the recent history of Yugoslavia and

Afghanistan. Rushing to judgment and acting outrageously by viciously murdering thousands would mean repeating mistakes made in the past. How correct was Mahatma Gandhi when he said that an eye for an eye will only make the whole world blind. Evil cannot overcome evil. War is evil and people do not win wars - people die in wars.

Violence in any form is illegal, immoral and downright impractical. If retaliation worked, the Israelis would be the world's most secure people. Kill only one terrorist and a hundred innocent people will be killed, and there is a good chance that several future terrorists are being created. A war only sows seeds of further terrorism and further wars. One gives birth to another. The response cannot be massacre and bloodshed in the name of peace and justice, as it can never bring a peaceful tomorrow. Violence will only escalate when the response to it is violent. It will only end everything: every flower, every tree, everything we love, our children and our children's children.

For once, let us ask ourselves: what is it that we want to achieve - security or revenge? They are mutually exclusive. We can either feel secure or avenge ourselves.

For once, let us ask ourselves how much savagery we are going to commit in the name of peace and justice.

For once, let us stop using metaphors like 'smoking them out of their holes' where many lives are involved.

For once, let the terrorists be wanted for trial and not just wanted dead or alive.

For once, let us try to see the other side of the coin, extrapolate our actions and their consequences.

For once, let us not become the evil that we deplore. We do not live in jungles where survival of the fittest is the rule. Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.

We do need to respond, this is true. But be aware: a violent response is bound to breed resentment. A good response has to be multifaceted, resolute, just and effective. It must be made in parallel with attempts to explore the causes of conflicts. It has to be long-term, driven and guided by values that ensure the kind of world we want our children to live in.

"If you want peace, work for justice," said Pope Paul VI. The most profound dangers today are unequal rights, economic and social injustice, hypocritical foreign policies, deprivation, human exploitation and polarisation of the world. The deepening gap between the rich and poor countries leads to an increasing readiness to use violence to satisfy the greed of power and profit. Weapons of mass destruction are traded to satisfy this greed. To seek economic justice, the disparities between the rich and poor countries need to be reformed by enhancing foreign policies, by sharing wealth and resources.

Human rights need to be protected, for if human dignity is violated and abused anywhere, we are all injured and will be in danger. Real security can be achieved only through full respect for the rights of all. There should not be favouritism of any kind among ethnic groups or nationalities. There is a need for international law applicable to all. No nation has the right to punish human beings outside their border without legitimate judicial process. No government has the right to kill innocent men, women and

children or train people for the purpose of killing. "Every gun that is made, every warship launched and every missile fired, signifies in the final sense a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, from those who are cold and are not clothed" (Dwight D. Eisenhower). Trillions of dollars each year are spent on destructive pursuits, justified in the name of defence and security. But true long-term security needs an investment of a different kind. Billions of dollars were allocated for the war against Iraq. Imagine what this amount of money would do if invested in health, education, infrastructure or environment.

We need to engender an environment of trust through fair and common nuclear disarmament. The rich industrialised states are like leaders and hence carry the main responsibility. They need to set an example by adhering strictly to international rules. They need to be peaceful in mind, generous at heart, humble in spirit and selfless in soul, to chart out new directions in response. The entire world has to unite. Global effort is needed to establish equal rights for all, to build an international court of law where none is exempt and to find solutions to disputes that help in building security and peace. It is needed to bring about nuclear disarmament, welfare and not warfare, to eliminate transnational terrorism and the financial networks that sustain terrorism. Global effort is needed to work in this interdependent world across all boundaries, to secure a common fate, to protect democracy, to improve education, health and infrastructure.

Justice cannot be achieved by retaliation. Neither is it achieved by passive submission. We need a path of non-violence, such as Mahatma Gandhi's *satyagraha* movement which succeeded in attaining freedom for India. There were successful non-violent movements in the Philippines in 1986, in the Soviet Union in 1991; and Costa Rica showed the world that a state can exist without an army while working positively towards peace.

Martin Luther King said, "The past is prophetic in that it asserts loudly: wars are poor chisels for carving out peaceful tomorrows. World peace by non-violent means is neither absurd nor unattainable. All other methods have failed, thus we must begin anew. We have the choice in this world between non-violence and non-existence." Along with King, Gandhi, Albert Einstein, Bertrand Russell, Leo Tolstoy and Romain Rolland were all convinced that the problems of the world cannot be solved by violent means.

In both a personal and a political sense we must dig out the roots of violence in our hearts. Political leaders and governments need to understand that manipulating human feelings for selfish interests may yield short term benefits, but eventually will have disastrous effects. Long-term peace needs justice, tolerance and non-violence. To be non-violent one does not need to be strong and powerful in the conventional sense. It is being powerful and strong in front of the beast inside that is important. It is only fear within us that drives us to misuse power and harm others to maintain, gain or reclaim that power. It is the strength within us that can make us non-violent. The power of non-violence to stand up for rights and justice comes from the spiritual qualities of love, understanding, courage, patience and tolerance. No amount of military might can resist this power.

We cannot live apart. We must not live as nations here and there but as part of a whole. We all must let go of hatred and bloodshed. After all, we want the world to be peaceful. A song comes to my mind which I have sung right from kindergarten to high school: "Deep in my heart, I do believe, we shall over come one day, we shall live in peace one day..."

Vidhi Jain is a 23-year-old MBA student in Bhopal, India, aspiring to a PhD in Organisational Behaviour

JAINA PRESENTS: THE ART OF LIVING

3 – 6 July 2003, Cincinnati, USA

Fourth of July weekend witnessed a vibrant gathering of 3500 Jains and those interested in Jainism for the 12th Biennial JAINA Convention in the city of Cincinnati, Ohio. JAINA (Federation of Jain Associations in North America) is perhaps most famous for this biennial event, which is always eagerly anticipated and well attended by members of the Jain community, both young and old, from within North America and beyond. This year's hugely successful convention was no exception, and in fact it broke new ground: this was the first JAINA convention to be hosted by a small Jain association – the Jain Centre of Cincinnati-Dayton, which compared to Jain associations in cities such as New York and Chicago, is extremely small in terms of its membership. Despite this, or perhaps even because of it, there was no doubt as to the enthusiasm, effort and capability of the host organisers, which was apparent and appreciated throughout the convention.

The weekend kicked off with a vibrant opening ceremony, beginning with a colourful procession of JAINA dignitaries and special guests, followed by some inspirational devotional music and prayers that officially declared the convention open. The convention was addressed and blessed by special guest Gurudev Chitrabhanu, who has been a motivational force in JAINA's history. There was a particularly moving moment during the welcome speeches and acknowledgements when Gurudev Chitrabhanu presented Dr. Surendra Singhvi, a co-convenor of the convention and a leading light of the Jain Centre of Cincinnati-Dayton, with a plaque to acknowledge his great efforts in bringing the JAINA convention to Cincinnati. Dr. Singhvi suffered a stroke last year, which limited his involvement in the convention preparations in recent months, but there was much delight amongst the convention participants, and particularly amongst the local Cincinnati Jains, that he had managed to leave his hospital bed to attend the opening

ceremony and see his efforts come to fruition. The opening ceremony highlights included excellent keynote speeches by Dr. John E. Cort, advisor to *Jain Spirit*, and PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) founder Ingrid Newkirk, who delivered a heartfelt and thought-provoking address about animal rights and vegetarianism.

Following the opening ceremony, convention participants were spoilt for choice of seminars and interactive sessions, all of which focused on one aspect or another of enhancing one's life through Jainism. Each age group was catered for, as were different interests from traditional ritual worship to incorporating Jainism into modern Western lives. The diversity of the sessions on offer was further enhanced by the fact that they were led by a variety of people: academics, monks, nuns, members of the Jain lay community, specialists on fasting and meditation.

Amongst the host of eminent speakers who led some of the key seminars were: Muni Shri Amarendra Muniji and Muni Shri Manek Muniji, both Jain monks; Sadhvi Subhamji, a Jain nun who teaches young children; and Mr. N.P. Jain, a career diplomat; Dulichand Jain, President of the Vivekanand Education Trust; Balabhadra Bruce Costain, who was inspired to the study and practice of Jainism by Gurudev Chitrabhanu; Dr. Atul K. Shah, Executive Editor of *Jain Spirit*. Gurudev Chitrabhanu, Dr. John E. Cort and Ingrid Newkirk also led some of the key seminars during the weekend's proceedings. Topics covered ranged from 'Mantra, Sound and Vibration' to 'Non-violence in America' to 'Concept of Soul in Jainism'. One of the most popular talking points during the convention came about with the seminar led by Hira Ratan Manek, a mechanical engineer by profession who is becoming increasingly renowned as a fasting expert. His talk, entitled 'Solar Energy for Human Welfare and World Peace', focused on harnessing solar energy for enabling long periods of fasting – it certainly generated much discussion and wonder for the

remainder of the convention weekend.

One of the most evident strengths of the convention was the wide selection of activities organised specifically for children and young people, with three key organisations providing these: Young Jains of America, Young Jain Professionals, and Jain Networking Forum. These activities ranged from seminars on anger management, dating and being Jain in college, to songs and games for younger children, to bhangra aerobics for those wanting to kick start their day with early morning exercise, to a fully subscribed morning of service projects. Those who had signed up to the service project activity volunteered their time and energy to local good causes such as a food bank for the hungry, a children's home, and conservation clean-up work.

Convention participants, in addition to organised activities and seminars, also benefited from a wide range of stalls and art exhibitions. These included the *Jain Spirit* photo exhibition, 'Jainism: Ancient Tradition, Modern Values', launched at the convention. This beautiful collection of photographs attracted many convention participants, many of whom stayed and talked to the *Jain Spirit* team, giving us the feedback and suggestions and comments that we value so much.

Furthermore, the convention provided a wealth of opportunities to socialise and to have fun, at mealtimes and during the evening entertainment programmes. These included a lively evening of *raas-garba* (traditional Indian folk dancing), which certainly enthused the crowds on the dance floor; a cultural programme of music, dance and drama; a musical evening in the company of the renowned Manhar Udhas; and dinner theatre.

All in all, the convention struck the right balance between education and enjoyment, and a good time was had by all. Congratulations to the friendly, helpful team from the Jain Centre of Cincinnati-Dayton on a convention that was a pleasure to participate in.



The colourful opening ceremony



Gurudev Chitrabhanu with Ingrid Newkirk of PETA



Gurudev Chitrabhanu with Dr. S. Singhvi



Dr. John Cort's keynote speech



Anop Vora, JAINA President



Balbhadra Bruce Costain's seminar



Cincinnati street art



The bustle of the exhibition hall



Jain Spirit photo exhibition



The Jain Spirit team with visitors to the exhibition

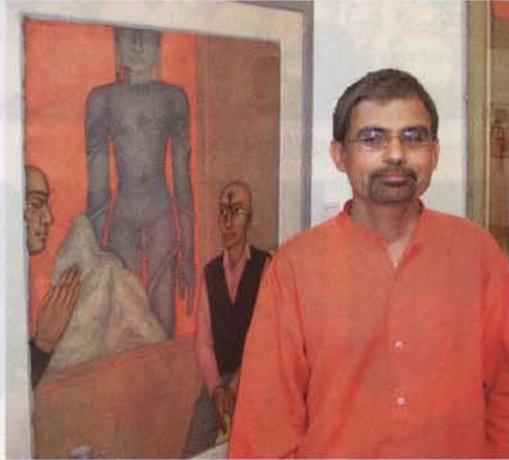


Dancing the night away

MAJOR EXHIBITION BRINGS INDIAN SPIRITUALITY TO LONDON

Shanti Panchal, acclaimed London-based figurative painter and Jain Spirit Art Consultant, enjoyed a major solo exhibition of his work during the month of June. The exhibition, hosted by the MP Birla Millennium Gallery in London at the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, included his most recent watercolours.

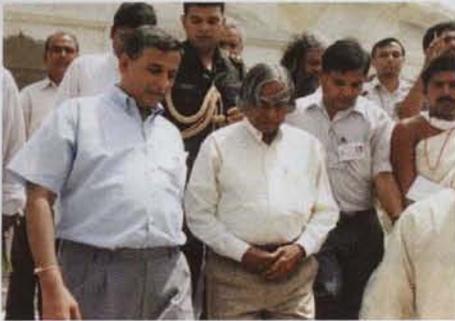
Executing only a few paintings per year, Shanti Panchal combines an Indian spirit and a Western form in his work. Though he no longer paints the Gujarati village life of his childhood, his work is still pervaded by the spiritual intensity of India. As well as



Shanti Panchal and his work

having an innovative and evocative approach to the watercolour medium, his tableaux are characterised by the earthy spice tones associated with the agricultural landscape of Gujarat and with the Indian vegetarian cuisine. The strength of Shanti Panchal's work lies in his ability to depict a wide range of experiences, influenced by vivid memories of the people and the colours from his own past. He regards his memories critical to his creativity and succeeds in sharing them through the characters of his paintings, who are often transfixed in moments of high drama, tension and tragedy.

AHIMSA MIGHTIER THAN NUCLEAR WEAPONS



President Kalam with Pradip Jain

On 30 May 2003, Indian President Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam enjoyed a red carpet welcome when he visited the

Jalmandir temple at Pavapuri in the northern state of Bihar, a site sacred to Jains as it was where Lord Mahavir attained nirvana. Dr. Kalam's visit was an historic occasion as it was the first time that an Indian President had been to Jalmandir. Moreover, the visit was arranged at the special request of the President himself, who listened with great interest as the significance of the site was explained to him by Pradip Jain, a prominent member of the Jain community. The President was said to be particularly moved by the experience of praying at Jalmandir. At a special



Welcoming the President to Pavapuri

ceremony to mark his visit, the President stated that the power of ahimsa (non-violence) is mightier than that of nuclear weapons.

NEW JAIN CENTRE OPENS IN LONDON

Jain Vishwa Bharti, an international organisation based at Ladnun in Rajasthan recently opened a new centre in London. They already have centres in Houston, Orlando, New Jersey and various parts of India. Shramanis Pratibha Pragya and Jina Pragya have been sent on a full-time basis to promote Jain learning and practice. Shramanis take all the vows of a Jain nun except for the restrictions relating to travel and food. They are both well-trained and keen to make a difference. In the few months that



Shramanis Pratibha Pragya and Jina Pragya

Shramanis Pratibha Pragya and Jina Pragya have been in the UK, they have also visited Jain communities outside London. The London Centre hosts regular classes on yoga, Preksha Meditation and Jain scriptures, and personal consultation is also available by appointment. The centre is located at 22 Oxcgate Gardens, London, NW2 6EB. Shramanis Pratibha Pragya and Jina Pragya can be contacted via telephone on (+44) 020 8452 0913 and via email on: jvblondon@yahoo.co.uk

VISION OF HOPE

Punit Haria reports on the 24th Free Eye & E.N.T. Camp in Thika, Kenya, from 5-13 April 2003.

Several years ago I heard of the eye camp in Thika, but to find out more I had to go and see for myself by volunteering my optometric services. The Shree Jain Youth League, Thika, has now been running this free annual eye camp for the past 24 years. When the camp started, the Visa Oshwal Community of Thika numbered well over a thousand people but even now, with fewer than 200 living permanently in Thika, the community still manages to support this work. Every year the camp is sponsored by various members of the Oshwal community, but with no support from any government agency or NGO. It is really surprising how little awareness there is - both outside and within Kenya - about this wonderful Jain contribution to the people of East Africa.

Until nine years ago the camp was for eye examinations only, then E.N.T. services were also introduced, thus broadening the scope for helping people in need of medical services. A team of doctors, surgeons and optometrists from all over India, headed by Dr. S.K. Savla, come to provide their skills free of charge.

The venue for the camp was Thika Girls' School, which was transformed into a hospital for a week. A few classrooms had been emptied of their desks and curtains had been mounted to mark the clinical screening areas. Another couple of classrooms were fumigated and transformed into surgical theatres. The windows were blacked out, extra illumination added and mobile fans installed to provide the best possible surgical conditions. Two huge tents were erected in the playgrounds to serve as comfortable, shaded, seated waiting areas for the

patients. Dormitories were converted into hospital wards for the patients.

Five days before the camp commenced in Thika, screening parties - doctors, optometrists and non-specialist volunteers - were sent out to rural areas around central Kenya, to examine patients, give out medicines, spectacles, advice and seek out any operative cases. If the patients required any type of surgery, they would be given their travel fare and instructed to come to the camp in Thika on a particular day.

One day we went to Raraka, which is an industrial suburb of Nairobi. Screening was carried out in a local primary school. When we arrived at 9.00 a.m., there was already a small group of people waiting. The locals had heard about the screening camp from advertisements in the paper, radio and television. The small queue soon grew much longer, the first few patients having showed off their new spectacles to friends and family in the surrounding neighbourhood. With only the very basic equipment at hand, like hand-made posters on the walls to act as visual assessment charts, large torches to assess for any disease and some medicine, we saw some 500 patients all together, ranging from babies as young as 6 months to patients aged 80 and over.

Many of the symptoms in evidence were of the kind that could be eliminated by better hygiene, sanitation, diet and protection. Some spectacles were given out and many children were given vitamin supplements to promote healthier bodies. Many of the patients smiled and were deeply appreciative when given the appropriate pair of spectacles, which enabled them to read their Bible (printed in the most minute writing), books and newspapers.

With each passing day in the camp,

the queue of patients grew longer. People would start queuing from 4 a.m. and some even camped all night, to ensure they would be seen the next day. In total, over the ten days of the camp some 17000 patients were screened, of which 350 had cataract operations and 150 had E.N.T. surgery. 5000 pairs of spectacles were also dispensed. The camp was run very professionally and smoothly, with the help and hard work of numerous volunteers, young and old. As a volunteer, it is very moving to see the tremendous courage and dignity of the various patients - 'patient' is really the right word for these people from whom we can learn so much!

The warm atmosphere in the camp and the humble hospitality of our Thika hosts will never be forgotten. I thoroughly recommend this voluntary project to everyone; in fact, we have already begun searching for potential volunteers for next year's camp.

For further information on the Thika Eye & E.N.T. Camp, please email:

Kajal Shah:

kajshah@aol.com

Kalpa Shah:

kalpa_malde@hotmail.com

Punit Haria:

punitabla@hotmail.com

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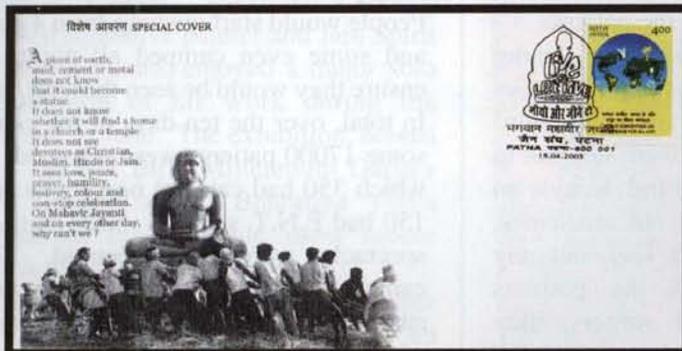


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CELEBRATING LORD MAHAVIR'S BIRTH ANNIVERSARY



Special cover commemorating Mahavir Jayanti



London celebrations

On 15 April 2003, Jains around the world celebrated the birth anniversary of Lord Mahavir, the 24th *Tirthankara*. As well as a community-organised event, this special day in the Jain calendar – known as Mahavir Jayanti – was also commemorated in official circles: in honour of the Jain principle of non-violence, the State Government of Bihar declared Lord Mahavir's birth anniversary a day free from the consumption of meat and alcohol. In addition, a special cover, pictured here, was released to mark the occasion.

To mark the beginning of Mahavir Jayanti celebrations, Jain Mahasabha-Delhi, an apex organisation of Jains, organized an interfaith meeting at Vice-President's residence in New Delhi. The Honourable Vice-President Shri Bharon Singh Shekhawat inaugurated the function by lighting the lamp of *ahimsa* (non-violence) before the statue of Bhagwan Mahavir. In his inaugural address, while advocating the relevance of religious harmony, the Vice-President said that immortal teachings of non-violence, trust and compassion as preached by Lord Mahavir about 2600 years ago have perhaps never been as relevant as they are today. He emphasized that the teachings of Lord Mahavir should be observed in our daily lives. In his welcome address, Prof. Rattan Jain, secretary general of Jain Mahasabha remarked that the history of mankind teaches us that

people have been killed not only by weapons but also by the desire to establish superiority of religious scriptures. On the occasion an unanimous resolution was passed demanding that an inter-religion co-ordination forum be formed to settle religious disputes.

Both the President and the Prime Minister of India gave special national addresses to mark Mahavir Jayanti. Reminding us of Lord Mahavir's legacy, President Kalam spoke thus: "On the auspicious occasion of Mahavir Jayanti, I extend my greetings to all my fellow citizens. May Lord Mahavir's noble teachings inspire us to work for peace, non-violence and harmony among our people. Let us emulate his preaching of right faith, right knowledge and right conduct. On this day, we should take a vow to re-dedicate ourselves to work for the welfare of humanity." Prime Minister Vajpayee, also keen to reinforce the 24th *Tirthankar's* legacy, hoped that the occasion of Mahavir Jayanti would rekindle "the spirit of selfless service, dedication and devotion, as symbolised by Lord Mahavir."

There were numerous ceremonies enjoyed by the Jain communities the world over. The celebrations in Vaishali, India – the birthplace of Lord Mahavir – were held in the presence of thousands of Jains from all over the state. Ex-Chief Minister of Bihar Sri

Laloo Prasad Yadav conducted a *pooja* to bless the developmental works undertaken at Vaishali. Sri Nirmal Kumar Sethi, President of Bharatha Varshiya Digambara Jain Tirtha Samrakshan, Member of Parliament Raghuvansha Prasad Sinha and other dignitaries also graced the occasion. Religious meetings and discussions on Jainism organised by the State Government of Bihar formed a key aspect of the celebrations in Vaishali.

In Patna, India, the celebrations included a street procession, the showing of a film of Lord Mahavir's life and a seminar and quiz competition on his life and ideals. Speaking as chief guest on the occasion, the pro Vice-Chancellor of Nalanda Open University, Vishwanath Agarawal, said the teachings of Lord Mahavir on non-violence were very much relevant in the present age and could save the world from destruction.

In the UK, the Oshwal Association celebrated Lord Mahavir's birth anniversary with a very well received cultural programme, in which the participants were children aged between 6 and 15. The children entertained the audience by performing various cultural items, including Jain devotional songs and a play about Abhay Kumar, a devotee of Lord Mahavir. The play conveyed the principles of non-violence and compassion as the key message.



The installation; Ann with Majdanek survivors

CONVERSATIONS WITH ANGELS

During the summer months, New York-based Jain artist Ann McCoy, who is also a student of Gurudev Shree Chitrabanu, was invited to mount an exhibition at the Majdanek Museum in Poland. The Majdanek Museum is a former Nazi concentration camp near Lublin in Poland where 250 000 perished, and for Ann is “a place where one encounters incomprehensible darkness” to which she wished to bring light.

Ann McCoy’s installation at this site, entitled *Conversations with Angels: An Installation for Majdanek*, consists mainly of images that have come from her drawings of her own dreams. The installation was inspired by the book *Talking with Angels*. Ann explains the connection she made between Jain spirituality and this book, which brought about the exhibition.

“Each morning, in *pooja*, Jains

ask to be forgiven for all they have done and in return to forgive others. The Jain prayer is: ‘May I forgive all souls and have them forgive me.’ For me, Majdanek represents the heart of darkness, a place where all of us could meditate on how to be forgiven for our acts of violence in word and deed. So much of modern culture seems to be programmed for violence. A second part of morning *pooja* involves holding a mirror to reflect images of the divine (transcendent Self) into the heart centre. The practice presents a way of bringing the divine and forgiveness in our own hearts. For me this practice is beautifully described in a book by three Jewish girls who died in the camps. *Talking with Angels* is a book that transcribes the conversations with angels (agents of the divine) experienced by four girls in Hungary between 1943 and 1944. Three of the girls perished in the concentration

camp, and the only survivor published the book in 1953. I was very moved by one of the passages and its relationship to the Jain mirror (*pooja*) practice.

“Listen carefully! There is a wonderful mirror in you.

**MIRROR THAT REVEALS ALL!
IT DWELLS INSIDE OF YOU
AND REFLECTS THE DIVINE.
BUT ONLY IN SILENCE.**

If a tiny mosquito alights on its surface, the mirror is clouded.

If the mirror is not clear, you cannot create.

Focus all of your attention on it. Heaven does not hide before the wonderful mirror.”

My idea is to have each viewer meditate on an image and reflect it into their heart centre. For me the clouding on the mirror is our lack of forgiveness and compassion, our violence and negative judgment.”

Each viewer is asked to sit in one of the chairs, with a hand mirror mounted to the right of each chair. The mirror reflects an image projected on a scrim in front of the viewer, into the viewer’s heart centre. Even though Ann is from a Catholic background and a practising Jain, the images are meant to appeal to people of all faiths, not one particular religion. The child represented in the projections represents new possibility. The images are to inspire meditation on the cosmos and the positive potential found in all hearts.

For further information on Ann McCoy’s work, please visit her web site www.annmccoy.com

UNIQUE NEW INTERCULTURAL PROGRAMME FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

United Religions Initiative (URI) UK is initiating a university-validated Certificate and Diploma in Intercultural Development for young people in the 18-24 age group, and is currently embarking on a pilot phase prior to course validation. There will be a large element of developing practical skills in this programme. It is not intended to be a course in comparative religion, but rather

a community-based programme that builds skills and develops an awareness of how to work with and between different faith groups.

The Certificate will comprise six modules – Organiser Skills, Leadership Skills, Community Module, Faith and Culture, Youth Module and Special Projects Module. All of these will involve community-based learning in which the modules are essentially self-contained activities and can be taken as stand-alone pieces of work. Each of the modules has

an interfaith/intercultural context, although only one – Faith and Culture – will focus exclusively on these issues.

URI UK envisages that in the future an additional layer will be implemented which, alongside the work for the Certificate, will lead to a Diploma. This layer will be more academically-oriented and will suit those such as university graduates who would like to develop professionally.

Please visit www.uri.org.uk for further information.

ANTHROPOLOGISTS DISSECT JAINISM – AND DISCOVER WISDOM

On 13 June 2003, speakers from around the world gathered for an inspiring conference entitled *Text and Context in Jainism* at the University of London's prestigious School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), which is becoming a focus for a major revival in Jain studies. Among the eminent speakers were lead organiser Dr. Peter Fluegel from SOAS, Mr. Niraj Jain from Madhya Pradesh, Dr. Josephine Reynell from Oxford University, Dr. Marie-Claude Mahias from Paris, Dr. Fujinaga Sin from Japan and Dr. & Mrs. Kanubhai Sheth from Ahmedabad. The event was opened by Terapanth Shramanis Pratibha Pragya and Jina Pragya who have opened a new centre in North London. Jains from all over London, young and old, attended this academic conference and found it a fascinating and eye-opening experience. Many of the papers comprised anthropological studies of the Jains and were



Scholars and participants line up for the camera

accompanied by stunning photographs. Seeing scholars study a cultural practice in scientific detail educates the Jains about the wider relevance of ritual and ceremony. Dr. Kalpana Sheth spoke on the Jain manuscript cataloguing project at the British Library, the Wellcome Library and the Bodleian Library in Oxford.

Some of the manuscript painting images were stunning. Dr. Fujinaga Sin analysed the fundamental meanings of *dharma* and *adharm*a from a Jain context. He is a well known scholar from Japan who has trained under the eminent Jain Muni Jambubijayji, one of the leading scholars of Jainism today.

DEDICATED TEMPLE FOR LONDON: A DREAM TAKES FLIGHT

On 10 and 11 May 2003, London's Jain community came together to share in the joy of a collective dream coming true as important steps were taken towards the building of the first ever fully consecrated Jain temple in London. The auspicious *siddhachakra poojan* ceremony and a lively cultural programme were held on 10 May, both of which were attended by over 700 people. The *poojan* was ably conducted by Mr. Jayeshbhai Shah of Jain Samaj Europe.

The following day, over 1000 people gathered to witness the weekend's main event: the ceremonial blessing of the site of the future temple (*bhoomi poojan*) and the laying of the foundation stone (*shilanas*). The *bhoomi poojan* ceremony was performed by Mr. Dipak Vora and his family. In addition, British Member of Parliament (MP) Tony McNulty, in

whose constituency the temple site falls, participated in the ceremony too, making him the first ever British MP to do so. A serene and spiritual atmosphere pervaded throughout, and the way was paved for the construction to begin. The temple project is being taken forward under the auspices of London's Mahavir Foundation, which also organised the weekend's ceremonies and entertainment, and has received the blessing of Shri Shashande. On this occasion, the Foundation took the opportunity to acknowledge the tremendous contributions made by its President, Dr. Vinod Kapashi and his family.

It is planned that the temple will be completed by next year. For further information, please contact the Mahavir Foundation via its Vice-President, Mr. Surendra Mehta, on smehta@ntlworld.com.



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ACHIEVEMENTS

Shri Nirmal Chandraji Jain, a renowned lawyer and social worker from Jabalpur, India has been appointed Governor of the Indian state of Rajasthan. He was the Member of Parliament for the Sivni constituency in the state of Madhya Pradesh from March 1977 to September 1979. He was appointed the Advocate General of Madhya Pradesh and held the prestigious post for a number of years. He was a member of the 11th Finance Commission of India from July 1998 to July 2000.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Ten year old **Jay Pradeep Shah** from Nairobi was selected to represent Kenya at the International Childrens Conference on Environment in Victoria, Canada, based on his award-winning essay "Forests and their importance".

Mr Nemubhai Chandaria was awarded the OBE (Officer of the British Empire) in Queen Elizabeth II's June 2003 Birthday Honours List for his services to the Jain community. Nemubhai is the Deputy Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the London-based Institute of Jainology and has been the primary driving force behind its activities.

In 1988, he read an article in the Herald Tribune announcing the formation of the International Sacred Literature Trust (ISLT) with a mission to undertake translations of scriptures of various faiths into contemporary English. Jainism was not in the list of the translation work. Nemubhai contacted the President of the trust HRH Prince Philip, who responded positively. Nemubhai's desire was to unite Jain sources and avoid duplication with only limited resources available from the community. The proposed activities of ISLT were merged with those of the Institute of Jainology (IOJ) whose objectives were very similar. IOJ represents all Jains sects worldwide and he became its International

Co-ordinator.

In 1993 Nemubhai co-ordinated the Jain participation in the Parliament of World Religions in Chicago, and again, in 1999, in South Africa, he co-ordinated the Jain delegation to the Vatican in February, 1995, for an audience with HH Pope John Paul II and that relationship between the Vatican and the Jains is still very active.



Nemu Chandaria

OBITUARY

MRS PUSHPA GULABCHAND HARIA



Mombasa has lost a diamond.

On 16 May 2003, we were plunged into utter dismay by the sudden and untimely demise of Mrs Pushpa Gulabchand Haria. In her short span of life, she touched so many hearts and influenced so many people. That anyone could grasp so many aspects of life so tenaciously and with so much success is a wonder.

Pushpaben was born on 8 December 1947 in Nairobi. She married Gulab, or 'Batak' as he is more popularly known as, on 1 May 1966. They were blessed with one son, Kunjal, who is married to Meera, and one daughter, Deepa.

Pushpaben's one passion in life was Rangoli - that traditional Indian art of painting the floor with powder colours. Originally, the purpose of rangoli was to drive away demons and bring light into one's life, especially during the festive season of Diwali. Every woman used to make a rangoli at her doorstep. Gradually, this developed into a fine art. Pushpaben honed her skills

and raised the level of this art enormously. The simple patterns became intricate designs and life-like religious figures took shape in her rangolis. She created huge rangolis depicting religious and cultural themes at Victoria and Albert Museum in London, Portugal, Canada, Dar es Salaam and every major town in Kenya - Nairobi, Nakuru and Kisumu. She also conducted rangoli classes at all these places. Pushpaben released a video-cassette "Teach Yourself Rangoli" in the UK, and it proved very popular.

Pushpaben was also very famous for her culinary skills and conducted cooking classes locally as well as internationally. She also dabbled in painting, and was accomplished in craft-work, interior decoration and flower arrangement.

Besides these time consuming hobbies, she found time to do a lot of social work.

- She was the Chairperson of Oshwal Mahila Mandal for two years, and had just been appointed as a trustee.*
- She was instrumental in starting the Ladies Wing of the Hindu Council of Kenya, Mombasa Branch, and was the Chairperson for two years. During this time, she convened two huge cultural programmes "Utsav Darshan" and "Mera Bharat Mahan", which enjoyed phenomenal success and are remembered even today.*
- She has served on the Committee of Shree Visa Oshwal Community Mombasa and was presently the Joint Secretary.*
- She has served on the Committee of Shree Jain Shvetambar Derawasi Sangh.*
- She served as Chairperson of the Ladies*

Wing of the Saturday Club.

One worthy lady, a gentlewoman to the core, Pushpaben was taken away from us in a few minutes. Pushpaben was more than a friend to many of us. She was our guiding light and force, and our mentor. We were always confident that any task, however complicated, would be accomplished with her help and advice. She was a woman of the people for the people. Forever smiling, Pushpaben never learnt to say no to anyone. She was very hardworking, and never felt any job was below her dignity. Caste, creed, colour and status were never her criteria for building relationships. Humble and unassuming, she was not one to seek the limelight.

That, we believe, was the secret of her success. Pushpaben had a charisma that endeared her to everyone, from a child of 8 years to the elder of 80 years. She had a knack of forging and maintaining relationships. To her, family was not just Ba, Batak, Kunjal, Neera and Deepa. The entire Haria Parivar and their friends and relatives were her extended family.

Everyone turned to her for guidance. The strength and courage she showed in times of difficulties was remarkable. Pushpaben has left a legacy of good deeds, words and thoughts.

May God give strength to her family to uphold this legacy. Let us all learn from her to live this special occasion called life to the full.

We know it will not be easy, but let us try our utmost. - From a Friend.

NEW BOOKS

SON OF ETERNAL INDIA

Dinesh Z. Shah reviews a unique new book about the life of Dr. L. M. Singhvi

A Diplomatic Sojourn: Dr. L.M. Singhvi in the U.K.
 Edited by Dr. K. L. Nandan, Himalayan Books, 2002
 ISBN 81-700-2080-8
 Available from *Jain Spirit* £15

EVERY SO OFTEN WE COME ACROSS AN individual, who leaves the footprints of his visit on the sands of time. One such person is Shri Laxmi Mall Singhvi, the High Commissioner of India to the United Kingdom from 1991-1997. When he took up this assignment, relations between the UK and India were at low ebb. However, within a few months of his arrival, traditional British reserve and barriers of protocol came tumbling down. Prime Minister John Major accepted an invitation to participate in the Indo-British Parliamentary Group Curry Club luncheon and this, in fact, proved to be just a tasty starter!

A Diplomatic Sojourn, under the editorship of Dr. K. L. Nandan, gives an insight into the brilliant trail-blazing career of Dr. L. M. Singhvi (LM), focusing in particular on his tenure as High Commissioner in London, where he served three Presidents and five Prime Ministers of India. The book is divided into five sections interspersed with photographs. The foreword is followed by reminiscences of people from different walks of life in the UK and India. The section 'Horizons of Hope and Harmony' contains Dr. Singhvi's own thoughts including excerpts of his speeches. Articles written by his wife Kamlaji and their children are included in 'Heartbeats', while at the end of the book we can read his profile.

The book lists countless examples of Dr. Singhvi's political acumen, vision and diplomatic skills. He foresaw the dangers of terrorism as far back as 1992 at a Human Rights Conference in Bangkok. The signing of the Extradition Treaty between India and the United Kingdom was therefore a milestone. During his tenure, economic ties between the two countries strengthened and trade and investments flowed culminating in the Investment Protection Treaty between the UK and India.

Apart from forging individual friendships with the members in the House of Commons and the House of Lords

from all three major parties, LM cast his net wide in order to encompass a varied range of institutions and individuals. He thus had a large circle of friends among writers, poets, historians, lawyers, professors, journalists and artists. He was the doyen of diplomats in London.

LM appreciated that the largest democracy in the world and one of the oldest democracies had many values in common, including freedom of worship. He therefore ensured that minority religions were not forgotten. Kensington Palace Gardens, his official residence, began to reverberate to Vedic, Buddhist and Jain chants. Readings from the Quran, the Guru Granth Saheb and the Bible became regular features as part of the interfaith dialogue. He addressed the World Parliament of Religions in Chicago in August 1993 and went to the Vatican. On the cultural level, one of his greatest achievements was the establishment of the Nehru Centre in London that has become a vehicle of India's message and point of view. He secured Tagore and Gandhi papers for India and negotiated the return of the rare idol of Nataraja. There are other examples of such achievements, which were only possible due to LM's tenacity, patriotism,

knowledge and diplomatic charm.

Dr. Singhvi was perhaps India's most informal envoy abroad and was rarely preceded or followed by security personnel. LM's upbringing, education and intellect helped to open new avenues of interaction between the host community and the Indian Diaspora in the United Kingdom. As a result, the Indians in the UK today stand tall, aware that they represent a great culture and civilisation. LM is considered one of the great champions of a new global order.

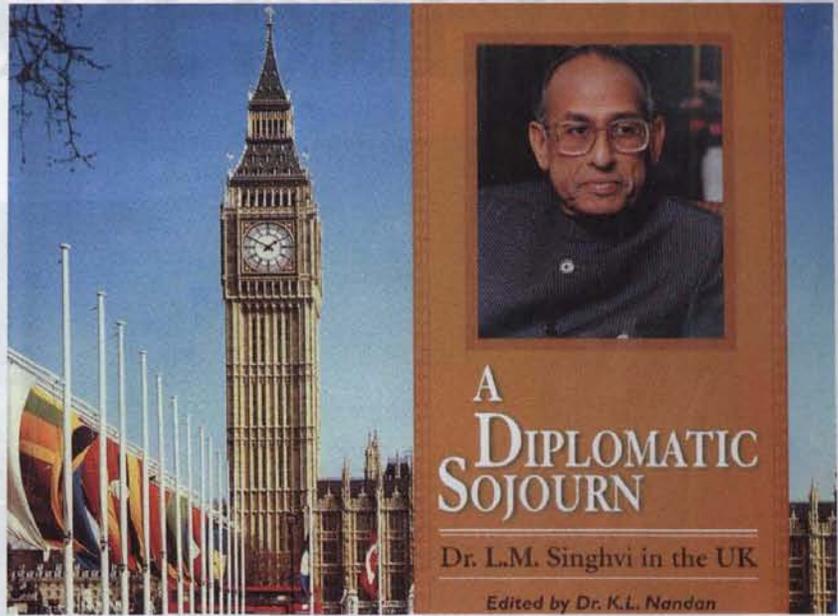
The devastating effect of ecological and environmental destruction has been a constant source of anxiety to him. Indeed it is Dr. Singhvi who coined the word 'ecocide'. During his tenure he planted a thousand 'friendship trees' in the United Kingdom. Dr. Singhvi throughout his life has never lost sight of the Jain philosophy of *anekantvada* and he used it as a bridge building device in the UK and abroad. He met leaders like Mikhail Gorbachev of the Soviet Union or the late Dr Julius Nyerere of Tanzania to listen to their viewpoints. His expert skills as a constitutional lawyer were tapped in drafting the constitutions of Bangladesh, South Africa and Nepal.

The book throws light on the personalities, events and

*"Dr. L. M. Singhvi
 is the champion
 of a new
 global order"*

literature that influenced him most, Mahatma Gandhi having had the biggest impact on LM's life. One will not come across many towns and cities in Britain where a bust of Mahatma Gandhi does not adorn an important square or park. LM put up 125 of them to mark the 125th birth anniversary of Gandhiji. He was equally at ease in the company of royalty. He accompanied Prince Philip to the Swaminarayan Temple in Neasden, London. Other members of the royal family also met him on various occasions. HRH the Prince of Wales and Dr. Singhvi have a mutual affection for each other. Prince Charles once remarked to an Indian diplomat in Kathmandu some years ago: "Do you know Dr. Singhvi? He is an extraordinary man, isn't he?" A very close friend of LM introduced him as "a lawyer by profession, a professor by temperament, a politician by compulsion, a parliamentarian by choice, a researcher by habit, a gentleman by character and a humanist by nature; each manifestation excelling the other." Surely, a polymath!

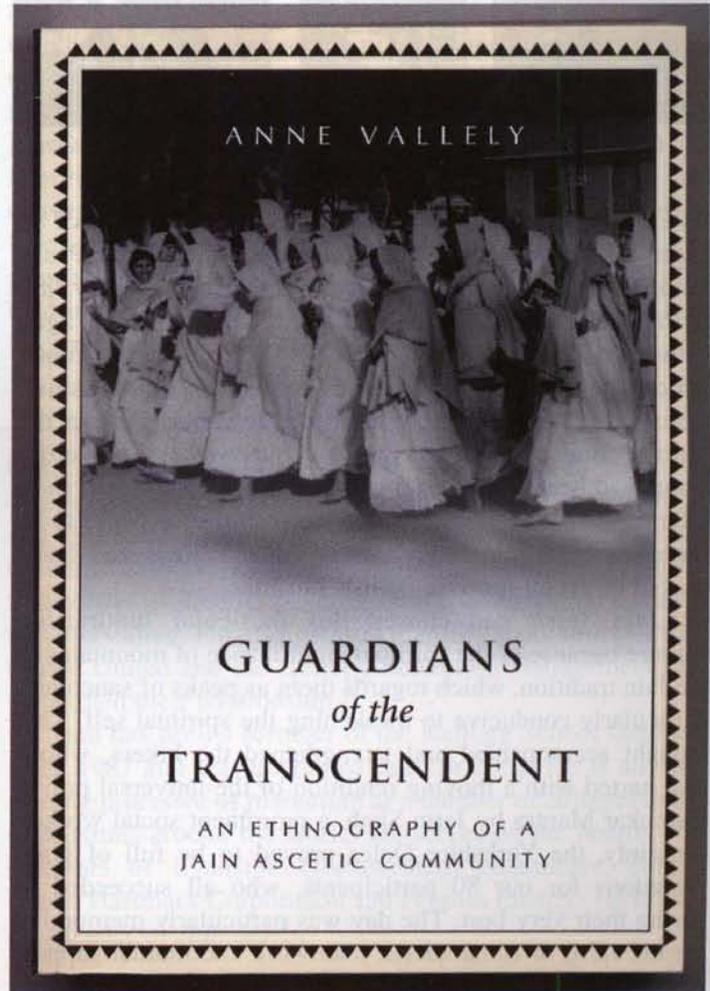
During their stay in London, LM and Mrs. Kamla Singhvi created tidal waves of understanding and goodwill, which truly made India and Indians proud. The book leaves the



reader in no doubt that Dr. L M Singhvi is a true citizen of the world, whose altruism and humility is an inspiration to Indians everywhere from Fiji to the Caribbean. As Kathleen Raine has said, "He is truly the son of eternal India."

**Guradians of the Transcendent:
An Ethnography of a Jain Ascetic Community**
Anne Vallely
University of Toronto Press, 2002
ISBN 0-8020-8415-X

Itinerant, white-robed ascetics represent the highest ethical ideal among the Jains of rural Rajasthan. They renounce family, belongings and desires in order to live a life of complete non-violence. In their communities, Jain ascetics play key roles as teachers and exemplars of the truth; they are embodiments of the *lokottar* – the realm of the transcendent. Based on the author's thirteen months of fieldwork in the town of Ladnun, Rajasthan, India, among a community of Terapanthi Shvetambara Jains, *Guardians of the Transcendent* explores the many facets of what constitutes a moral life within the Terapanthi ascetic community, and examines the central role ascetics play in upholding the Jain moral order. Focusing on the Terapanthi moral universe from the perspective of female renunciators, Anne Vallely considers how Terapanthi Jain women create their own ascetic subjectives, and how they construct and understand themselves as symbols of renunciation. The first in-depth ethnographic study of this important and influential Jain tradition, this work makes a significant contribution to Jain studies, comparative religion, Indian studies and the anthropology of South Asian religions. Anne Vallely is a part-time lecturer in the Departments of Anthropology and Religion at Concordia University, and also in the Faculty of Religious Studies at McGill University.



WALKING IN SUNSHINE



Posing for the camera, ready to set off

3 Peaks Challenge for 3 charities



Limbering up



Jatin Shah flags off the challenge



Team work



The picturesque route towards Whernside



Basking in sunshine



Refuelling

EVEN THE BRITISH WEATHER CO-OPERATED AS 80 eager hikers set off on the Yorkshire Dales Three Peaks Walk, a sponsored walk of nearly 25 miles organised by *Jain Spirit*. On a warm and sunny day the 80 participants, aged between 12 and 61 years, took up the challenging route, which included climbing and descending three small mountains (Pen-y-ghent, Whernside, Ingleborough) in the heart of some of the finest English countryside. The participants had been training for this walk for months, and their efforts paid off as they ascended the picturesque peaks to be rewarded with stunning views of hills, valleys and lakes basked in the all-too-rare British sunshine.

Jain Spirit had chosen this particular fundraising venture because of the spiritual significance of mountains in the Jain tradition, which regards them as peaks of sanctuary, particularly conducive to awakening the spiritual self. This thought accompanied and strengthened the hikers, whose day started with a moving rendition of the universal prayer Namokar Mantra by Jatin Shah, a prominent social worker. Certainly, the Yorkshire Dales proved to be full of good vibrations for our 80 participants, who all succeeded in giving their very best. The day was particularly memorable for the spirit of camaraderie, teamwork and mutual support

amongst the participants, as well as the cheerful assistance of a team of volunteers who fed, watered and encouraged the walkers as they passed through each of the checkpoints along the route. 77 participants finished the course, and most managed to do it within 12 hours, which entitles them to coveted membership of the 'Three Peaks of Yorkshire' club. The strongest motivating factor for each participant was undoubtedly the fact that they were raising money to support three worthwhile charities. The proceeds of the sponsored walk will be shared between the following organisations:

Sargent Cancer Care for Children, a leading U.K. charity for young people with cancer to whom it offers emotional, social and financial support.

The Farm Animal Sanctuary, Worcestershire, offering refuge to sick or injured farm animals. It has over 600 rescued animals in its care. The Sanctuary is run on a voluntary basis, relying on public fund-raising.

Jain Spirit, which is committed to sharing Jain values globally through this quarterly magazine.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Preksha Meditation Camp

The 2nd International Preksha Meditation Camp will be held from 8 October to 16 October 2003 in Surat, India in the auspicious presence of His Holiness Acharya Mahapragya. This 9-day residential camp aims to help participants progress the path of spiritual self-realisation, and to improve their physical, mental and emotional well-being. The opportunity to do so under the inspirational guidance of Acharya Mahapragya – who will personally lead the meditation sessions – is not to be missed! Places are limited, so book early to avoid disappointment. For further information and an online application form, visit www.preksha.org.

YJP Goes To San Diego

The North American organisation Young Jain Professionals (YJP) will hold its 6th Annual Conference in San Diego, from 10 October till 13 October 2003. The conference theme is 'Balance: Inside and Out', and the weekend event will incorporate sessions on spiritual growth, yoga and meditation, professional development, and balancing home and work life – all, of course, with a Jain angle. Whether you are new to YJP or have been to previous events, there is sure to be something to inform and inspire you. For further information, please visit www.yjponline.org.

Hema Pokharna appointed on the Executive Board of the Parliament of World Religions

Indian American and Jain Woman Dr Hema Pokharna has been appointed to the executive board of trustees of the Council for a Parliament of the World's Religions whose mission is to cultivate harmony between the world's religious and spiritual communities and to foster their collective



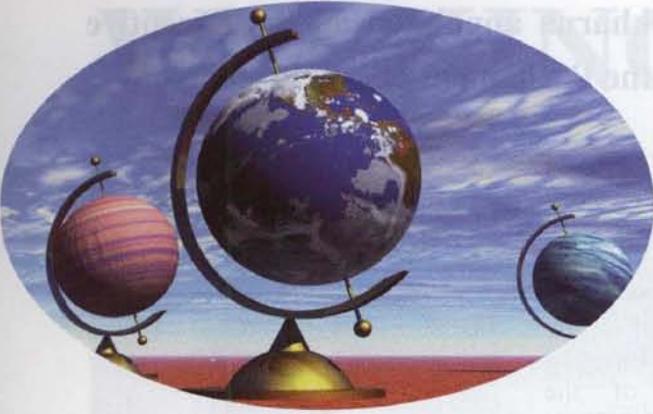
engagement with the world in order to achieve a peaceful, just, and sustainable world. She is also on the board of Play for Peace (www.playforpeace.org). Pokharna is a researcher at the University of Chicago. Her mission is a statement of her journey of life as a Jain Indian woman and scientist to educate, inspire and empower people in the world to discover healthy and harmonious ways of being with themselves and being together. Her mission and the program include different ways to live, learn and share the principles of reverence and respect for life. She has published in science, humanistic and religious journals and featured in newsletters, newspapers and interviewed on radio and is a frequent presenter at Jaina convention. Independently, she is the director of Journeys of Life: a program to promote health, wholeness and disease prevention. The next Parliament of World Religions will be held in Barcelona, Spain, in July 2004. For details and more information, visit www.cpwr.org.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Prof. Dipak Jain, of Chicago, USA has been appointed to the board of directors of United Airlines, the world's second largest carrier. Jain is the dean of the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University. "Jain is a leading-edge thinker with much practical business experience who will provide different and valuable perspectives to United's board deliberations," said Glenn Tilton, chairman of United Airlines. "We're particularly delighted that he's joining us now, as we re-evaluate our approach to the marketplace and our customer relationships," he said. United Airlines operates more than 1,500 flights a day on a route network that spans the globe. "I look forward to working with Glenn Tilton, the United

board and United's management team," said Jain. "The company has made impressive strides in recent months, and I believe it will forge even stronger bonds with its loyal customer base as it develops product and service offerings that bolster its premier position among business and leisure travellers alike. I'm also pleased that this appointment will enable United and the Kellogg School of Management to strengthen their relationship."

Jain has been a member of the Kellogg School faculty since 1987 and was appointed dean in 2001. He is also a visiting professor of marketing at a number of colleges and universities around the world. He serves on the boards of directors of Evanston Northwestern Healthcare, John Deere, Hartmarx Corporation and Peoples Energy. He is an avid reader of *Jain Spirit*.



NEWS IN BRIEF

PRESERVATION OF 10TH CENTURY JAIN TEMPLE SOUGHT

Jaipur, India

In June 2003, the Rajasthan High Court has issued notice to the Archaeological Survey of India and the state government on a Public Interest Litigation seeking conservation and preservation of a 10th century Jain temple in Sanganer near Jaipur. A division bench of the court consisting of Chief Justice Anil Dev Singh and Justice K. S. Rathore, while issuing the notice last week to the respondents, including management of the Digambar Jain Temple, known as Sanghiji Ka Mandir, ordered them to "take steps to conserve and preserve the temple." The court considered a letter addressed to the Chief Justice by Shiva Jan Samasya Nivaran Samiti as a writ petition and issued notices returnable by July 30. The samiti complained that in the name of renovation of the temple, declared as protected monument, unauthorised basic and substantive changes were being made in it by some elements for their own vested interests. Because the Supreme Court asks all Indian state governments to ensure proper maintenance of historic monuments, it was felt that it was the duty of the Rajasthan state to stop the construction work that was playing havoc with the basic structural characteristics of the Jain temple in question.

LORD MAHAVIR JAIN CHAIR FOR INDIAN UNIVERSITY

Kolhapur, India

The news circular of the Higher & Technical Education Department of Maharashtra Government reports that the famous Shivaji University of Kolhapur is going to establish a new chair known as the 'Bhagwan Mahavir Jain Chair'. The Education Department has granted Rs. 25 Lakhs to Shivaji University

for this purpose. This is the result of the demands made by Dakshin Bharat Jain Sabha and the interest shown by ex-Chief Minister Shri. Vilasrao Deshmukh and Chief Minister Shri Sushil Kumar Shinde. Vice Chancellor Mr. Takwale is very much interested in this project and he has appealed to the Jain community to take interest in the project. It should be noted that Kolhapur, where Shivaji University is situated, is a major Jain centre in India from ancient times.

CALL FOR RELIGIOUS SOLIDARITY

Chicago, USA

A conference entitled 'Religious Solidarity in the Midst of Communal Violence' is being organised in Delhi from 7-10 December, 2003. The opening session is expected to be addressed by Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam, the President of India, who will speak on this important theme. His Holiness the Dalai Lama has been invited to give the valedictory address. The events will be held at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi, as well as in the Chinmaya Mission and the India International Centre. The purpose of the conference is to invigorate the consciences of all Indians regarding the need for mutual respect and harmony; to leave a legacy of spirited groups in every state, and within every religious and spiritual community who will speak out with a united voice against intolerance, prejudice, violence and injustice; to affirm the spirit of the Indian people, particularly in times of stress and communal violence and inspire groups at the community level to work together for social and economic justice, harmony and peace. The Chicago Organizing Committee has made a commitment to raise \$15,000 in support of the conference. These funds will be used toward bringing 600 participants from throughout India to exchange ideas and

resources to create inter religious dialogue and engagement within India. The conference is also supported by the Council for a Parliament of the World's Religions (CPWR) whose board approved a memorandum of understanding and whose staff is assisting the organizing committee with planning and communication and will participate in the event.

SETTING PULSES RACING

Los Angeles, USA

In July 2003, PETA announced that Hollywood Homicide hunk Josh Hartnett and model and first niece Lauren Bush had won its 2003 "Sexiest Vegetarians Alive" poll, narrowly edging out a host of other famous veggies, including Jude Law, Pamela Anderson, John Corbett, Common, Kelly Osbourne, Sir Ian McKellen, and Russell Simmons and previous winners Tobey Maguire, Natalie Portman and Shania Twain. Celebrities cite many reasons for forgoing flesh foods, from avoiding the cruelty to animals that is inherent in meat production to improving their health and energy levels to helping the environment by not contributing to hog- and chicken-farm pollution.

Hartnett's decision to go meat-free came several years ago and happened in an instant. "One day I was cutting up a chicken for my mom, and I hit a tumour with the knife," Hartnett said. "There was pus and blood all over the place. That was enough for me."

Bush, the face of Tommy Hilfiger and niece of the President, has been a vegetarian since the age of 4 and is passionate about animal-protection issues. Last Thanksgiving, she told friends that she'd contribute a pie to the family meal but would not cook stuffing for the turkey, saying, "I am a vegetarian. I won't do anything that has to do with the turkey."

OPPORTUNITY FOR GLOBAL ACTION ON PEACE

New York, USA

The International Day of Peace on 21 September 2003 presents an inspiring opportunity for collective global action on peace. The International Day of Peace was established by the United Nations in 1981. Originally tied to the annual opening of the General Assembly, in 2001 its date was fixed annually to September 21. All across the world, groups and communities are encouraged to mark and celebrate this day, and faith communities in particular are in a strong position to organise collective action. Amongst the many possible ways to participate are: to hold a full day of spiritual observance in the form of an International Day of Peace Vigil and to encourage your city, state, or national government to issue a proclamation declaring September 21 as a day of peace, non-violence, and cease-fire. For further ideas and information see www.internationaldayofpeace.org ; www.idpvigil.com ; www.un.org/events/peaceday .

PRESIDENT LAYS FOUNDATION FOR COMMUNITY ACTION

Mumbai, India

In July 2003, Indian President APJ Abdul Kalam formally inaugurated the Times Foundation, a non-governmental initiative by The Times Group, which will work towards the creation of a just and equal society. Speaking in front of a packed house, President Kalam stressed the importance of renouncing the ego in order to remove hatred and violence and to foster peace. Mrs. Indu Jain, Chair of The Times Group, commented that the Foundation was simply walking the roadmap drawn up by the President himself, and that it seemed only fitting that the First Citizen of the country should join hands with other citizens to help realise the goals of the Foundation. The Foundation will develop and implement projects catering to community and individual needs, spiritual and material well-being. These include serving as a platform for the convergence of industry, NGOs and government to bring about policy changes; developing the i-I or individual to Infinity academy, which seeks to help individuals through self-development courses; providing alternative healing systems; helping to catalyse social change through capacity building and media support to NGOS, especially rural ones; and reviving art and the ancient sciences.

CHALLENGE 2015

New York, USA

The publication of the United Nation's annual human development report in July 2003 revealed the stark and widening gulf between the global haves and have-nots. The richest 1% of the world's population (around 60 million) now receives as much income as the poorest 57%, while the income of the richest 25 million Americans is the equivalent of that of almost 2 billion of the world's poorest people. In 1820 western Europe's per capita income was three times that of Africa's; by the 1990s it was more than 13 times as high. The report states that: "The statistics today are shaming: more than 13 million children have died through diarrhoeal disease in the past decade. Each year, over half a million women, one for every minute of the day, die in pregnancy and childbirth. More than 800 million suffer from malnutrition." In light of this, the United Nations is calling for urgent action to meet its millennium development goals for 2015. These include a halving of the number of people living on less than a dollar a day, a two-thirds drop in mortality for the under-fives, universal primary education and a halving of those without access to safe drinking water and improved sanitation. In a challenge to the rich, economically powerful countries to take responsibility, the report continues: "The west needed to tear down trade barriers, dismantle its lavish subsidy regimes, provide deeper debt relief and double aid from \$50bn to \$100bn a year. This would provide the resources for investment in the building blocks of development - health, education, clean water and rural roads." Without such far-reaching measures, on current trends it would be 2147 before the poorest countries in Africa, the poorest continent, halved poverty and 2165 before child mortality is cut by two-thirds.

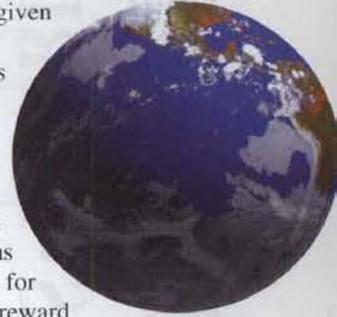


AWARDS FOR CRUELTY-FREE SCIENCE PROJECTS

Cleveland, USA

The American National Anti-Vivisection Society (NAVS) presented awards to three high school students who competed at the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair (IISEF) held in Cleveland, Ohio in May 2003 to honour them for submitting projects that did not involve animal suffering. The winners of the Humane Science Awards, given out in July 2003, received cash prizes of \$5,000, \$2,000 and \$1,000, respectively.

A spokesperson for NAVS said that the organisation was "very appreciative for the opportunity to reward students who are looking at new technology to accomplish their scientific goals instead of accepting the outdated and ineffective animal model for medical research. The IISEF is the only science fair regularly held in the USA where high school students are permitted to perform invasive, or even fatal, animal experiments. NAVS has been working for many years to persuade the Science Service, administrator of the fair, to change the rules that allow harm to animals.



DO YOU KNOW OF ANY HIGH-FLIERS IN YOUR JAIN COMMUNITY?

People of talent, people who have made outstanding contributions to society? If so, contact us at *Jain Spirit* and we will write about their achievements in future issues of the magazine.

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QUOTES & QUIPS

It is better to control myself by self-restraint and austerity instead of being enslaved and subjugated by others.

Uttaradhyayana Sutra 1.16

By knowledge one understands the nature of substances, by faith one believes in them, by conduct one puts an end to the flow of karmas and by austerity one attains purity.

Uttaradhyayana Sutra 28.35

The basis of righteousness (dharma) is faith.

Darsana Pahuda 2

Knowledge is of five kinds: Scriptural (srut-jnan), Knowledge derived from through mind and common sense (Mati-jnan), Clairvoyance (Avadhi-jnan), Telepathy (Manah-paryaya-jnan), Omniscience (Keval-jnan).

Uttaradhyayana Sutra 28.4

Perfect meditation is attained through knowledge and by meditation all karmas are annihilated. By annihilating the karmas, a person becomes liberated. Hence, one should be engaged constantly in the acquisition of knowledge.

Rayana Sara 138

According to the teachings of Jina, knowledge is that which helps to understand the truth, controls the mind and purifies the soul.

Mulacara 585

Even limited knowledge of the scriptures is beneficial to a person whose inner eye has opened just as the light of just one lamp is sufficient to show the path to a person whose eyes are open.

Avasyaka Nirvyukti 98

Humility is the basis of righteousness.

Dasavaikalika Sutra 9.2.2

He who does not endeavor to tread the path of righteousness in this birth, repents at the time of death.

Avasyaka Nirvyukti 837

Just as a fetter whether made of iron or gold binds a person so karma be it auspicious or inauspicious binds the soul.

Samaya Sara 146

One who aspires for merit (punya) aspires for worldly well being in this mundane world; because merit can ensure only a higher state of existence and it is the cessation of merits (punya karma) that leads to liberation.

Dvadasanupreksa 410

A person who renounces the worldly pleasures, although he is capable of enjoying them, destroys a great heap of karmas, which ultimately yield the fruit of emancipation.

Bhagvati Sutra 7.149

Without character, human birth is futile.

Sila Pahuda 19

A person having right faith is one who knows what is to be relinquished and what is to be accomplished.

Sutra Pahuda 5

Essentially the soul is righteousness itself.

Darsana Pahuda 20

I have heard and experienced that bondage and liberation are within your self.

Acharanga Sutra 1.5.2.36

In the absence of the soul, knowledge is non-existent and in the absence of knowledge, the soul is insubstantial.

Niyama Sara 171

There are no qualities without a substance and no substance without any quality.

Pancastikaya 13

All persons who are ignorant of the truth suffer misery. They remain forever entangled in the endless cycle of worldly existence.

Uttaradhyayana Sutra 6.1

Intense anger, which lasts forever like a deep crack on a rock, drags the soul to hellish existence.

Sthananga Sutra 4.2

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS - FASTING

Atul K. Shah interviews **Hiraratan Manek**, a unique expert on fasting

MR. MANEK WAS BORN IN 1937 AND BROUGHT up in Calicut, Kerala, South India. He is a mechanical engineer by profession. "Since birth, I have been traditionally fasting – eight days, sixteen days, one month and one year. Later, inspired by Lord Mahavir, for the last eighteen years I have learned to fast in the original Jain way. I completed a 411-day fast in 2001, which was supervised throughout by medical scientists and NASA. During the last eight years I have lived only on liquids for hospitality and social purposes like tea, coffee, buttermilk and water."

Why is fasting important to you?

Fasting is important in Jainism to eliminate our past karmas - *nirjara*. The past comes from so many births, and accumulated karma can only be eliminated by fasting (*tapas*). I am thirsty for liberation.

Would you say that fasting is central to Jainism?

Definitely. The most important desire of man is food, and if food is totally eliminated, all other desires will disappear.

Medical science would suggest that prolonged fasting is probably nutritionally not healthy and can seriously damage health. Yet you say that fasting in the Jain tradition is very important. We indeed know of a lot of people who do long fasts and they do survive.

I have been successful in convincing medical scientists that if fasting is done in the correct way the body can sustain it without difficulty. If we fast the traditional way, we are sustained only by the accumulated energy of the body. You cannot fast for years and years as Lord Mahavir did, purely on the basis of this accumulated energy. Having understood Lord

Mahavir's practices and principles of *atap* and *atapana*, walking in the hot sun for days barefoot and frequently looking at the sun, I have rediscovered the Jain science. Solar energy can be tapped by humans as a primary source of energy – food is a middleman in this context and involves a lot of wasted energy. I am merely reliving an ancient technique developed by Lord Mahavir. If energy is received from the sun directly, the body can be sustained and long fasts can be done; man can remain on sun energy for his entire life. That is all I have been practising and a lot of people are now following this.

How can we tap into solar energy?

The brain is a powerful recipient and the retina and the pineal gland are equipped with photoreceptor cells. When we worship the sun by gazing at it (*Surya Namaskar*), a kind of photosynthesis takes place. Starting with just gazing at the sun for ten seconds on the first day, one can gradually increase it in three months to ten-twelve minutes. The circuit inside the brain has to be charged very slowly and at the appropriate time, which is one hour after sunrise and one hour before sunset. In three months, one can realise the freedom from mental disturbances and fear, thus achieving perfect balance.

Could you elaborate on the proper method of fasting? A lot of people want to fast, especially during Paryushan, but they do not know the right technique.

Lord Mahavir says that when you fast, food is always there in the emotions or desires. As long as food is in your mind, it does not qualify for the alleviation of your past karmas. He says: "Hunger has to disappear from you." If there is no hunger, you won't eat anything. During the safe periods of

The sun is the primary source of energy for all living beings on earth

the sunlight, you look at the sun or gaze at the sun and charge your brain, which is lying idle 99% of the time, and it is slowly awakened as the sunlight or the sun energy reaches the brain. A lot of the infinite inherent powers recharging the human being are awakened by solar energy and slowly we see the earth at a higher standard. Fasting happens in you; you are not fasting but controlling it. When hunger disappears, fasting happens very naturally.

It seems that there is a very important spiritual dimension in fasting. It is not something that people just do to keep the body healthy. Spiritual faith is essential for prolonged fasting. Can you elaborate on that?

Every human being at birth is gifted with good and bad qualities. But in the absence of good energy for the brain and the body, the purest form of which is through the sun, the body develops bad qualities. The moment we free ourselves with the sun, the bad qualities disappear, good qualities recharge us, and all the ordinary men become real extraordinary human beings.

What would you say about the nutritional problem of fasting? Wouldn't the body lose the vitamins and the minerals? Are there any dangers in fasting?

There is absolutely no danger in fasting. The body requests energy, so whatever we eat, the sum total ultimately is energy for the body. Food is all originally manufactured by the solar energy. What we eat today is a secondary form of this solar energy, as we are avoiding the original purest form. But the body has a mechanism to receive directly the original form of sun energy, and automatically everything that is necessary is manufactured within the body. If energy were manufactured and absorbed in a pure state then we would not need to follow the traditional way of intake of food and nutrients.

The majority of Jains are not going to be fasting the way you are doing it. However, they can do a certain amount of fasting from time to time and also have a positive attitude towards diet. What would you say to them, how frequently should they try to fast? Should every Jain try to do the eight-day fast every year during Paryushan for their health as well as their spirituality?

From the health point of view, even medical science accepts that one fast only on water, three continuous fasts once a month and eight or ten fasts continuously once in a year are good for the health of the body because this tones up your entire energy system and enables many body parts to rest and rejuvenate. Medically, fasting is now becoming an important part of the treatment. I think Jains should fast at least one day a week and definitely do the Paryushan *athaai* every year. I am suggesting to the masses of humanity that it is possible to fast for the whole of your life if you gaze at the sun, if you just reproduce the technique I have revived. There are thousands of people living on light energy and people who live without food for three or four years. If fasting is practised, then everybody in the world would desire less; there would be natural fasting for all, it would help cure people with mental or physical illnesses and remove spiritual ignorance. Then everyone would become Jain: a desire-less person. If this message becomes known, Jainism will become universally accepted and popular.

What is wrong with desire?

Desire leads to karma. When you desire to acquire food and you want to fulfil your desire, you are disturbing someone near you. When you have this feeling of desire it is the karma, the sin is coming to pass.

A lot of young people today do not worry about karma and sin. They are living in a world where the idea, especially the Western idea, is to enjoy, celebrate and have fun, to do what you want and when you want it. What is wrong with that philosophy?

There is nothing wrong with enjoying your life as long as your enjoyment doesn't disturb others. And there we have it: in making other people understand the true spirit of Jainism we have to project the scientific benefits of the Jain principles. People find it difficult to control the mind of their desires; they find it difficult to fast; they find it difficult not to commit sins. It is very easy to eliminate all bad things from life. If scientific methods are observed, then everyone will accept it.

So in one sense people are talking about vegetarianism as a method of healthy living, but you are going one step beyond vegetarianism, and also talking about naturalism.

Even if you are a vegetarian, what you eat is food, and as we desire food we sin. When we do this we definitely exploit. When we exploit other people that is a normal trend, but when food is eliminated from you then all desire is eliminated; you are lighter, carry less luggage, have more comfort and your travel is a pleasure. If people are educated in the right way, then more and more desires are lifted from them. If you want to enjoy real life with mental peace you have to slowly eliminate your desires and with the principle of *atap* and *atapana* of Lord Mahavir, anyone can easily do it.

What is the role of water?

After the sun, water is the next element of tremendous energy. It is the water that we are actually eating. The body is made up of 75-80% of water. If we analyse our day-to-day intake of whatever we eat, everything carries more than 50% water. Actually, it is the water that we are eating. Water definitely is a must for the body and it is the main source of energy.

Do you feel related to the plants that seem to be fasting all the time, because they depend purely on water and solar energy? Do you feel a kinship with plants and trees?

Definitely, the only difference between human beings and plants being that we are not walking barefoot as Lord Mahavir did. If we walk barefoot that means we are touching the earth through the heels of our feet. This is akin to the plant root; it is the only thing we are lacking. If we walk barefoot, similarly to what the plants manufacture in energy from the roots is food for us; we are drawing energy from the earth into our body. This is the only difference between man and plants. The moment you start walking barefoot on earth you are in affinity with plants.

How do you feel today?

I feel totally neutral – complete equanimity. In my life there is nothing like happiness or sorrow. Everything is a neutral thing for me. I don't consider myself as a doer in the events that are taking place around my life. I am only a witness to the events that are taking place. I am least affected by joy or sorrow in my life. That never touches or affects me now.

Do you ever feel tired?

No, I never feel tired. I have no fatigue because of the sun energy. Fatigue has totally disappeared from me. Sometimes, I give three or four lectures a day and never get tired. The word 'fatigue' is not in my dictionary.

What about sleep?

I sleep very little. People sleep due to fatigue. The moment fatigue goes, sleep goes too. Lord Mahavir has given three important principles – hunger has to disappear, sleep has to disappear, and we should only pass on good messages to humanity. These three things you must achieve and then the path to *moksha* is very easy. So it is not only the food that should be eliminated but even sleep has to disappear.

Why are you not a monk?

I am not a monk in the traditional way of putting on some robes. As Lord Mahavir said, it is not the dress that matters it is the

way you live. It is only the inner spirit, the principles of austerity, the desire-less person, that is what is remarkable. It does not mean that you have to go in the traditional way. I do not want to be identified because of my dress, but only because of my deeds.

So you never married?

I am married; I am like anyone else. I have a son, a daughter and grandsons.

What diet would you recommend?

As far as possible, people should remain only on raw food, no cooking is necessary. Boiled or baked vegetables and grains should be avoided. This is the best way because by heating at high temperatures the sun energy is completely lost and no nutrition is left in the food. If you want to take in fully the benefits of nutrition in the different varieties of food then cooking is to be totally avoided. 🙏

Hiraratan Manek lives in Florida and India. He can be contacted at hiraratanmanek@yahoo.com



Hiraratan Manek

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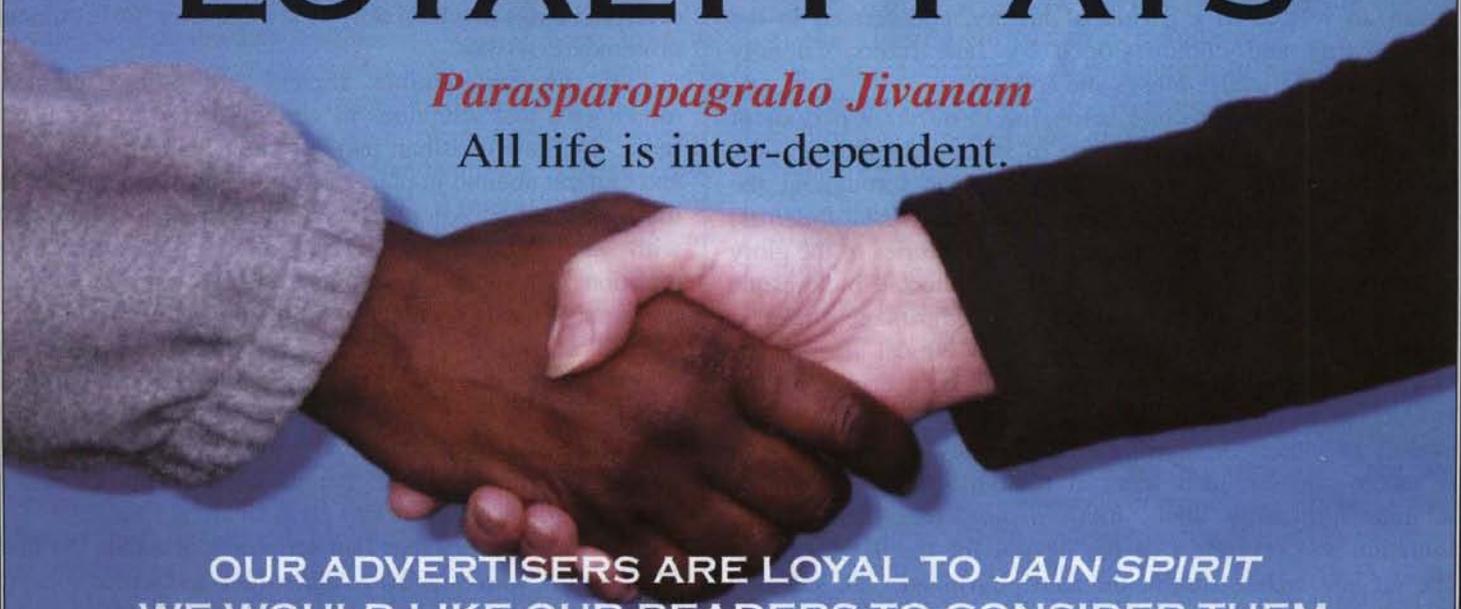
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THE JAIN ART TRADITION

L. M. Singhvi examines the role of art in Jain heritage

INDIAN ART, WHICH JAIN ART IS AN INTEGRAL PART of, offers us both beauty and truth in its quest of universal well-being through *ahimsa*. The Jain value system based on non-violence has a universal appeal. It has a deep contemporary resonance and relevance in our world afflicted by divisive and disruptive violence. There is a sense of 'sacred' in Jain art and an artistic sensitivity in its celebration of the sacred. It beckons the world to a culture of peace, tolerance and understanding. Indian art exemplifies unity in diversity that arises from the different periods of history, different religious and aesthetic traditions and geographical locations.

There is a continuity of cultural context in Jain, Buddhist and Hindu architecture and sculpture. Their artists, architects and masons were often the same as were many of their themes, episodes and ideas. They shared aesthetic sensibilities, the sense of symmetry, perspectives and proportions and the approach to iconography. Jain art is thus quintessentially Indian art related to a period of history, consecrated to the *Tirthankaras* and commissioned by Jain rulers, friendly patrons, high officials, donors and sponsors.

Jain art and architecture belonging to different periods of history is found in almost all parts of India and testifies to the widespread prevalence of the Jain tradition throughout the country. In particular, the pilgrimage centres (*tirtha-kshetras*) with their sacred associations are great repositories of the glory of Jain art. The Jains almost invariably selected picturesque sites for their temples and pilgrimages. A pilgrimage (*tirtha*) is meant to be a source of spiritual and ethical inspiration, instruction and edification; it is meant to be a bridge for the aspirant to facilitate his 'crossing over' of the river of his worldly existence. Many of the pilgrimages are on hilltops or in serene and secluded spots at tranquil sites. There is a sublime spirituality about these *tirthas*, sanctified by the adoration and reverence of the devout for the *Tirthankaras*. The art and architecture at the Jain pilgrimages are suffused with the spirit of Jain religion and culture. The pilgrims and visitors spiritually experience the sacred ambience through aesthetic beauty and prayerful worship. The ubiquitous centrality of *Tirthankaras* in Jain temples is an expression of the veneration that Jain tradition has for the ideal of renunciation, enlightenment and complete liberation from the

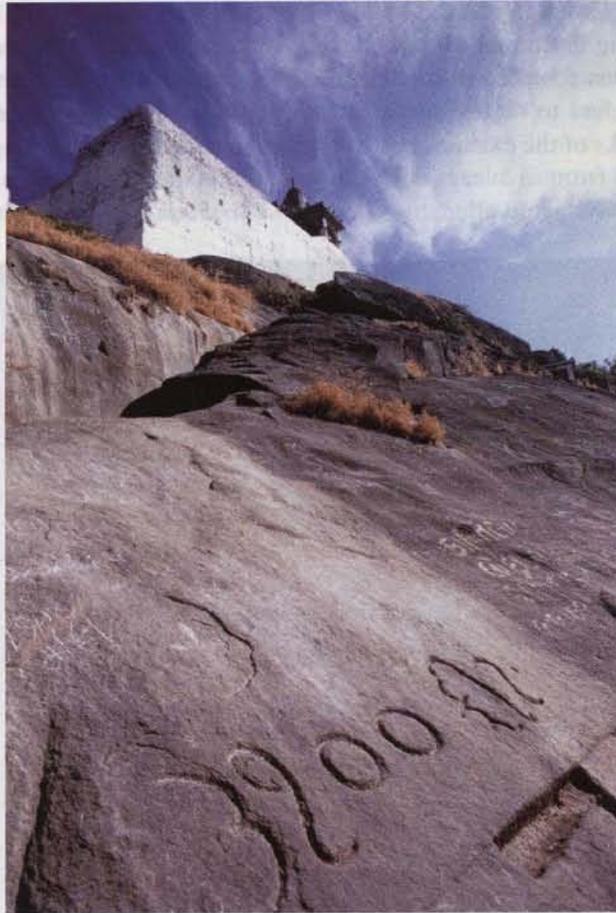
cycle of rebirth. The *Tirthankaras* are regarded as saviours and adored because of the supreme example of their lives and their non-expectation of any worldly help. Those "perfect beings are forever beyond the pale of human affairs."

According to Professor Padmanabh Jaini, "we must understand Jain image-worship as being of a meditational nature: the Jina is seen merely as an ideal, a certain mode of the soul, a state attainable by all embodied beings. Through the personification of that ideal state in stone, the Jains create a meditative support, a reminder of his lofty goal and the possibility of its attainment." Although renunciation is the highest ideal in Jain tradition, its lay followers are not entirely different from the common Hindu devotees, who expect the deity to confer boons and favours on them. Perhaps that is why many Jain temples have idols of Lord Ganesha, Lord Bhairavanatha, Padmavati and other celestial beings to whom prayers are made for the fulfilment of mundane wishes.

Of the innumerable ancient Jain sites, temples, monuments and sculptures in virtually every part of north India, the State of Bihar, parts of Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Gujarat abound in places of pilgrimage associated with the *Tirthankaras*. After their era, other regions of India vied with each other in embracing and adopting the Jain tradition. The evidence in stone testifies to the conspicuous presence of the Jain tradition throughout India. There were periods of history when Jains constituted a significant segment of the population. The denominational demography of the adherents of Jainism has declined but its impact has survived substantially in terms of the ideas and practices of non-violence, compassion, charity, tolerance and vegetarianism, in art as well as in architecture.

According to ancient Jain scriptures, Rshabha the first *Tirthankara*, who established agriculture and settled society, had preached Jain tenets in Maghadha, Bihar. Many of the *Tirthankaras* were born in Bihar or Uttar Pradesh and all *Tirthankaras* with the exception of the first and the twenty-second, Aristanemi, attained their *nirvana* in Bihar. Among the most notable of Jain pilgrimages are those associated directly with the *Tirthankaras*. For that reason, the Sammet

Shikhar on Parsvanatha hill, the Girnar and Pavapuri enjoy a traditional preeminence. Equally important pilgrimage centres are the Dilwara temples, Ranakpur, Palitana (Shatrunjaya), Shri Taranga Tirtha, Shravana Belgola, Nakoda Parsvanatha, Shri Jaiselmer Tirtha, Shankheswara Parsvanatha, Shri Kumbhariaji and many other old and new temples. Many of them are in a state of neglect and ruin, many were transformed while others mistaken for as Buddhist. Quite a few temples have also been built on ancient and medieval sites. Noteworthy examples of Jain temples built overseas during the last twenty-five years, among others, are those in Leicester, Nairobi, Mombasa, Chicago, Singapore, Kobe, Milpitas, Antwerp and Los Angeles. Innumerable temples and monuments, educational and research institutions, hospitals, dharmasalas and dadabaris have been built by the Jains in India throughout history.



Mt. Girnar : Many of the pilgrimage sites are on mountain tops

Many ancient sites bear witness to the glory of the Jain tradition in Bihar. Apart from the association of many *Tirthankaras* with Bihar, including Lord Parsva and Lord Mahavira, many important rulers there were followers of Jainism, among whom were Srenik (Bimbisara), Ajatasatru (Kunika), Cetaka, Nandivardhna, Chandragupta Maurya (grandfather of Emperor Ashoka) and Samprati (grandson of Emperor Ashoka). According to tradition, the tenth *Tirthankara*, Sitalanatha was born in Kuluha; the twentieth, Munisuvrata in Rajagrha; the twenty-first, Naminatha in Mithila; and the twenty-fourth, Vardhamana Mahavira was born in Kundagram (Kundalgram) near Vaishali.

The teachings of Lord Parsva and Lord Mahavira held sway in the Kingdom of Kasi-Kosala, Anga-Magadha and in the territories of the Vrji-Licchavis and Mallas. Besides these Parsvanatha hill, Rajgrha, Nalanda, Vaisali, Pava, Sravasti, Champa (near Bhagalpur), Mithila (Janakpur), Kuluha hill and the districts of Gaya, Manbhumi, Singhbhumi, Dhanbad, Sahabad, Arrah, Bhagalpur and Patna are replete with treasures of Jain antiquities and associations, most of which have been sentenced to tragic neglect or quiet oblivion.

In *Kalpasutra* we have an account of the areas in which Lord Mahavira spent the forty-two rainy seasons after his renunciation at the age of thirty. He spent his first rainy season

in Asthigrama (also called Vardhamana or more recently Burdwan) and the next three rainy seasons in Champa and Prsthachampa (in the kingdom of Anga, conquered by the Magadha Emperor Bimbisara who became a follower of Lord Mahavira). The next twelve rainy seasons were spent in Vaishali and Vanijyagrama and fourteen rainy seasons thereafter in Rajagrha and Nalanda. Vaishali was the seat of republican Vrji-Licchavis and Vanijyagrama was a centre of trade in the suburb of Vaishali. According to the Digambara and Shvetambara traditions, Lord Mahavira was born in Kundagram. Some believe that Kundagram was near Vaishali, while others say that he was born in Vaishali because his mother was the sister of the head of the Licchavi republic. According to another theory, Kundagram was near Nalanda. Be as it may, the Vaishali and Nalanda regions were undoubtedly the

stronghold of Lord Mahavira's following. It was in the Vaishali region that, in all probability, he was blessed with the ultimate enlightenment. Regrettably, there is so far no befitting commemoration of Mahavira in the Vaishali or Nalanda region.

The Rajgir(Rajagrha)-Nalanda area, which Lord Mahavira frequented, though bereft of its ancient glory in stone, has many eloquent reminders of the Jain tradition. Veerayatan is a modern Jain centre of humanitarian service and spiritual quest in Rajgir. There are Jain temples on the top of the five hills: Vipulachala, Ratnagiri, Udaygiri, Svarnagiri and Vaibharagiri. The Chinese traveller Hiuen Tsang, who visited India from 629-655 AD, noted the presence of Jain Nirgranthas on Vaibharagiri. There are footprints of Jain *Tirthankaras* and many Jain images on the five hills in Rajgir. An ancient image of Lord Parsvanatha lends lustre to a cave in Udaygiri hill. There is a Jain inscription in the Sonabhandar caves, once identified as Buddhist Sattapanni caves. A figure of Parsva with the seven-headed serpent hood was found by General Cunningham sometime around 1851-62 in Moniyar Math, which has a Jain shrine located on a brick mound.

Lord Mahavira attained *nirvana* in Pavapuri. The ►

◀ beautiful Jalamandir where the cremation of Lord Mahavira took place reminds us of his sublime teachings. It is believed that a likeness of Lord Mahavira was sculpted in his lifetime. Professor Satya Ranjan Banerjee refers to the evidence of the inscriptions and sculptures and speaks of the existence of a very strong Jain tradition in Bengal from a very early age. According to Ayaranga Sutta, Mahavira travelled to parts of Bengal before he attained *kevalynana*. The well known Jain saint, Bhadrabahu was also born in northern Bengal.

The history of Jainism in Orissa goes back to the time of Lord Parsva, although according to tradition the eighteenth *Tirthankara*, Lord Aranatha received his first alms in Rayapura, probably the capital of Kalinga. It can be said with reasonable certainty that both Parsvanatha and Lord Mahavira visited the kingdom of Kalinga. A Jain ruler of the Nanda dynasty, who defeated and captured Kalinga, is believed to have taken with him the image of Kalinga Jina as a trophy, which was brought back to Kalinga in his twelfth year of reign by the Jain Emperor Kharavela. He was a powerful ruler of his time and under him Jainism had its golden age in Kalinga. The Khandagiri and Udaygiri caves in Orissa continue to command attention as cultural centres of Jainism.

Vidisa in Madhya Pradesh was an ancient centre of Jainism. There are several caves and rock-cut temples that go back to the fifth century. Jainism flourished in Khajuraho, Mahoba, Devgarh, Ahar, Tikamgarh and Madanesagarapura. Although the Khajuraho and Mahoba Jain temples have been denuded of their glory and many images have been mutilated, there is exquisite charm and artistic delicacy in them. The Candela kings ruled in the Khajuraho-Mahoba region and shifted their capital from Khajuraho to Mahoba around 900 AD. Hiuen Tsang, the Chinese traveller, called the place Jainabhukti. In the Bundelkhand-Vindhya region as well as in Gwalior and Indore, Jainism continued to have a substantial number of followers, with many Digambara and Shvetambara temples and notable sculptures there.

Many *Tirthankaras*, including the first and the twenty-fourth, were born in Uttar Pradesh, among the important places of which are Ayodhya, the birthplace of the first *Tirthankara*;

Sravasti, the birthplace of Sambhavanatha, the third *Tirthankara*; Kausambi Kampila, the birthplace of Vimalanath, the thirteenth *Tirthankara*; Ratnapura, the birthplace of Dharmanatha, the fifteenth *Tirthankara*; Hastinapura, the birthplace of Santinatha, Kunthunatha and Aranatha being the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth *Tirthankaras* respectively; Varanasi, the birthplace of Lord

Parsvanatha; Ahichatra, where Lord Parsvanatha attained *kevalygnana*; and Mathura.

The excavations in Kankali Tila in Mathura and more recently in Fatehpur Sikri have yielded a wealth of archeological evidence of Jain *stupas* and the most beautiful statuary images including an unsurpassed sculpture of the goddess Saraswati. A *stupa* made by gods (*devanirmitah*) is assigned the date of 3rd century BC. Many images of the *Tirthankaras* including Rshabha, Suparsva (the seventh *Tirthankara*), Parsva and Vardhamana Mahavira were also found in the excavation.

Jainism may have entered Punjab soon after the *nirvana* of Mahavira. King Samprati, the grandson of Ashoka must have contributed to the propagation of Jainism there and in other parts of India. It did not spread as widely in Punjab as it did in the

adjoining areas of Rajasthan, but it did reach the people as far as Taksasila, near Rawalpindi. According to a legend, Rshabha divided his kingdom among his sons with Bharat getting Ayodhya and Bahubali getting Taksasila. Bahubali is said to have built the Simhapura *stupa* in his kingdom to commemorate the visit of his ascetic father Rshabha. The excavation of a mound of great antiquity in the village of Harappa yielded many statues resembling Rshabha and possibly other *Tirthankaras*. Excavated evidence, sculptural remains and literary references lead us to the conclusion that there were hundreds of Jain temples in Punjab and in the city of Taksasila, the magnificence of which was destroyed by epidemics and the invasion by the Turuskas around the sixth century. Hiuen Tsang tells us about both Digambara and Shvetambara Jains in Punjab, in the province of North West Frontier and other regions of India. A Jain monk, Harigupta was the mentor and



One of the earliest sculptures at the Patna Museum

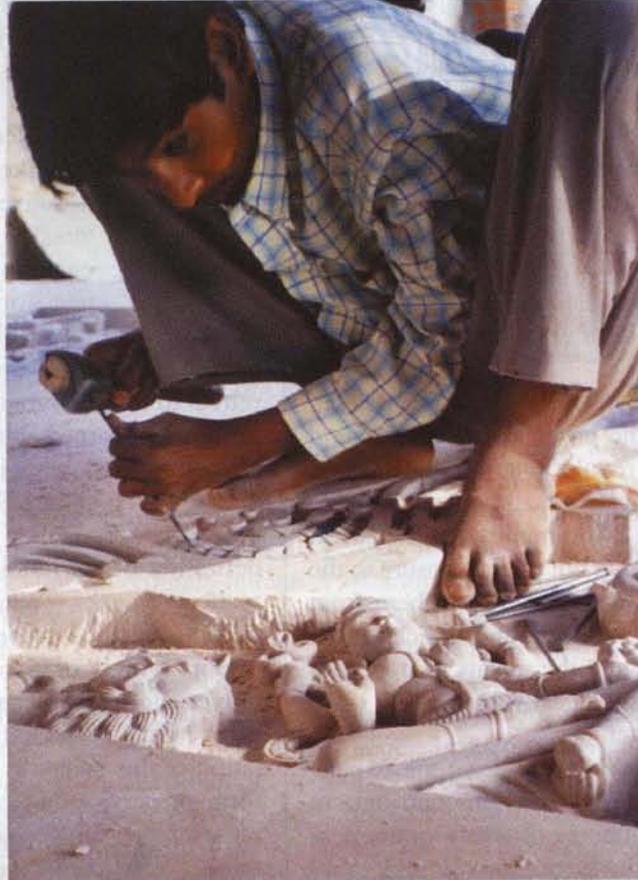
preceptor of the famous Hun prince, Toraraya or Toramana, the king of Parvatika on the banks of the river Chandrabhaga. There was a sizeable and influential population of Jains in Uttarpath in the 6th century and also in Nagarkot, Kangra, Mullan, Muzaffargarh, Montgomery, Dera Ghazikhan, Kohat, Bannu and Mianwali for several centuries until the partition of India. A Jain saint, Jinadutt Suri established the *panchanadi pooja*, the worship of the combined stream of the five rivers of Punjab. Jainism flourished in Punjab during Akbar's reign and a number of temples were also built with royal permission. It is said that a Jain monk composed a *stotra* containing a thousand names of the sun, and it was recited before Akbar every Sunday. He also conferred the title of Jagadguru (world-class teacher) on a Jain monk.

The Badli inscription, which dates back to 84 years after the *nirvana* of Lord Mahavira, helped establish the presence of Jainism in Rajasthan in the fifth century BC. According to another inscription from 1276 from Bhinmal, Lord Mahavira himself came to Srimalanagar. Yet another inscription of 1369 from Mungsthala indicates that Lord Mahavira had visited Abu and Mount Abu region in the 37th year of his life. The claim based on the two inscriptions is not supported by any other evidence, but the inscription from Bairath does take us to the period of king Samprati, the grandson of Ashoka, also known as Jain Ashoka. Hiuen Tsang also refers to Bhimal and Bairath as centres of Jainism.

The Pratihara kings in west Rajasthan encouraged Jainism. Vatsaraja Pratihara built a Mahavira temple at Osian, near Jodhpur in the 8th century AD. Osian, with which the genesis of the Oswal Jains in Rajasthan and Gujarat is connected, is an ancient pilgrimage. The Mahavira temple at Osian has Maru Rajasthani features as well as the later Gujarati style and the impress of the Chahmana (Chauhan) period. According to Professor Dhaky, the main temple is the oldest example of Maha-maru architecture, and its rich treasures of Jain iconography and the Devakulikās are the earliest masterpieces. Like the Mahavira temple in Osian, the Parsvanatha temple in Phalodi (Phalvardhika) was also renovated and repaired later. Indeed, there are thousands of such examples of Jain temples throughout Rajasthan, which were repaired or replaced,

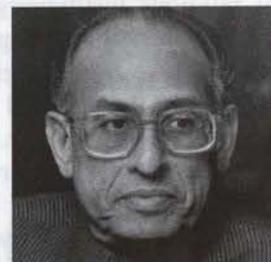
although many more were destroyed or appropriated for Shiva or other worship. Dr. U.P. Shah has shown that the famous Kirti Stambha of Chittore, that has eight storeys and is about eighty feet high, was a Jain Digambara manastambha. It was built in c.1100 AD and repaired in c.1450. At the famous shrine of Keshariaji in the formerly princely state of Udaipur Adinatha Rshabha is worshipped

by Jains, Hindus and tribals alike. The pillars and ceiling patterns in the famous Adhai-din-ka-Jhonpada mosque complex in Ajmer show at a bare glance that earlier it was a Jain temple and monastery. The Rathors of Hathundi were Jains and ruled in the 10th century AD. Many of the rulers, though not Jains themselves, respected Jainism: Harsha Vardhana was one such example. The Chalukyas, Cholas, Rashtrakutas, Parmars, Sisodias and several other dynasties including Akbar of the Mughal dynasty with many of their ministers and feudatories were patrons and sponsors of the Jain art. When the Chauhans held sway in north India, there was a profusion of Jain temples and sculpture. Many of the Chalukya kings were Jains, who established important Jain temples and temple cities. Jainism was well established in every princely state of



The tradition continues

Rajasthan, notably Jodhpur, Jaiselmer, Jaipur, Bikaner, Sirohi, Udaipur, Dungarpur, Kota and Bundi. Jains occupied the highest offices in the state, many of them as leaders of trade and commerce. Beautiful temples and large libraries were built. Nakoda Parsvanathji near Balotara and Mahaveerji still attract thousands of visitors and pilgrims. 🙏



Dr. L. M. Singhvi is the former Indian High Commissioner to the UK. The above article is extracted from 'Jain Temples in India and Around the World', Himalayan Books, 2002, available from Jain Spirit at £30 plus p&p.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REQUIRES SPIRIT

Dennis Oliver explains how lasting progress requires spiritual strength

COMMUNITY SERVICE OF ANY KIND REQUIRES immense resources. This work is as much about expectation and engagement as economics, but also about complex power shifts – all requiring grace and endurance. The official focus (outputs and outcomes) seems limited to the material and measurable. Yet, isn't it obvious that both the problems and their solutions are not just materialistic? Improved housing, education, health, local services, employment opportunities, life skills and other training, and a full range of community-led initiatives cannot just be bought. They must be delivered to and by people, not by predictable machines. No wonder that this kind of work is so difficult, so slow and so ambiguous. It requires all we can muster, and much more. Every milestone can seem a miracle. Perhaps many of them are.

Are we surprised, after decades of massive social investment, that deprivation remains? Many of the problems need structural solutions – some requiring radical and revolutionary social change. Some people work hard for such political ends, others concentrate on simply lending a helping hand. Community development workers are, most often, in the latter group but their exposure to the underlying realities of poverty and its causes can lead them from community service to community organisation and direct action. Whatever the approach, both the goal and the means to it require more than money can buy; they require the best within us all, if we want to make the largest possible impact.

In the North Atlantic English speaking world we are experiencing a new awareness: religious organisations can contribute to broadly-based social goals. Representatives of many faiths now meet with government officials, business executives and other community leaders to develop and deliver programmes for social regeneration. This has not always been the case but the atmosphere has changed and all parties concerned are learning to relax with the concept of secular/religious cooperation.

Why the new openness? First, because so many churches, mosques and temples are the centres of committed and caring people. They can be the starter soil for the new growth intended by the fresh initiatives. Faith communities are rightly recognised as nurturing people towards stability and socially positive action. Secondly, because these people are the stewards of immense human and material resources. Local religious institutions are included in these broad partnerships, which are now discussing and delivering strategies for local improvement. The sleeping giants are moving away from their introversion and self-service, and they follow some of their own neglected core teachings. There is a move, for example, among conservative, evangelical churches from 'taking care of our own' to 'caring for our neighbours'. One expects this trend to be increasingly reflected in the faiths which represent recent immigrants; and, in fact, many have already taken their place around the partnership table. The British Deputy Prime

Minister's Inner-Cities Religious Council has been addressing such issues for a decade, with representation from five faiths. Even the US President was careful to embrace all traditions when he formed the White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives in 2001.

Faith groups now have a widely recognised crucial role in facing the civic challenges of our time, with an implicit task to deliver solutions like voluntary help, shared premises and programmes of delivery. My own tradition has hundreds of agencies and tens of thousands of individuals who deliver a variety of regeneration agendas in a range of contexts. We know that some formerly dominant religious groups are faltering, at least in the West. Their numbers are declining, their influence is waning and the majority of their members retreat to the reassurances of an interiority and introversion that is little concerned with social reconstruction. The Churches present a God who is cut off from ordinary living, argues Gerald W. Hughes, a Scottish Jesuit with a history of living the opposite approach. Referring to the Oxford Dictionary definition of spirituality ('concerning the spirit as opposed to matter') he asks, "What kind of person would I be, if I were to become spiritual according to this definition?" Hughes speaks disapprovingly of a common kind of faith that is reverential in prayer and worship, careful in its creeds and liturgy, but taking great care to keep God away from everyday affairs. One articulation of this stance is an insistence that worship is the highest form of service, which with prayer and fellowship demands most of our time. No doubt, every religion has people like these. Yet, within the most insulated and isolated traditions there are live wires who live the vision of community service, especially to people whom others despise and neglect. Within this latter group some feel nurtured by the old traditions, while others feel a great distance from them. Still, they seek spiritual nurture for their service.

How do we get a handle on this controversial dimension of our humanity? Hughes argues for a spirituality in which God is recognised and experienced as both transcendent and immanent. As transcendent, God remains a mystery, always greater than our present knowledge and beyond our present experience. But this reality is joined to an immanence, a very present Presence which is "nearer to me than I am to myself" (Augustine), and known characteristically as compassion. The spiritual masters of many faiths often recommended finding a proper rhythm in our living: first retreating towards the transcendent (humbly gaining from the Infinite), then going forth in service (sharing what we have received). With a similar concept, a Goan priest, Valeriano Vaz, recently surveyed twenty experienced international development workers. Most of them identified with some traditional faith, though some had no such

allegiance. Yet all of them had some form of spirituality - understood as the "personal beliefs or values held within the core of a person's being, directing one's life". Service-oriented individuals feel the need for an enabling strength from the act of worship, and from the support of their faith communities. Their struggle for justice, humanisation and community building is too depleting without it. Therefore, Vaz concludes, spirituality should be recognised as a key asset and important factor for building on the existing strengths of communities. It should be recognised and encouraged – not ignored or minimised.

In our pluralistic and post-modern Western societies there is a well-established spirituality that is not religious. Secular humanism (whether agnostic or atheistic, associational or individualistic) has been able to provide many modern people with a satisfying and challenging alternative to religion. Superficial critiques of such positions, who imply that they have no ability to transcend the weak and destructive aspects of our human nature, are not (to this writer) convincing. Humanists do not often speak of 'saints' but they do turn to inspiring examples and tell stories of those who achieve and endure beyond all ordinary human expectation. They identify abiding qualities which help us achieve great good by accessing the best within our common humanity, such as courage, fidelity, sacrifice and fellow-feeling. They too realise resources that often seem beyond our capacity.

Vaz' extensive bibliography indicates that the linkage between spirituality and service is increasingly acknowledged. Governments are recognising that faith communities have much to contribute to social betterment and that they will be good stewards of the money invested for social purposes. As he points out, the developing world is less individualistic, more prone to identify with religious communities and more explicit about their faith. Collectively they indicate that the spirituality of development workers is able to motivate, inform and sustain their challenging service.

I am impressed by the spiritual qualities of some of my community work associates who, like Vaz' international development workers, manifest sensitivity, courage, determined purpose, self-discipline and self-sacrifice. Another personal observation is that not all involved in community service and religious observance show such characteristics. Frankly, as I reflect on my own life I must admit that there were times, some prolonged, when I worshipped and served with little sense of the immanence and transcendence of which Hughes speaks. Most of us are very 'humanly' disappointing to our own ideal. But this does not discount the significance of all that is good and inspiring – and there is a wonderfully large amount of such spirituality among us. Perhaps the most striking and provocative reality that I have noticed is that those on the receiving end of do-gooders like myself

can evidence the same spirituality and render a more effective service among their neighbours than any well-resourced professionals.

Recently I moved into a community in North East England (one of the UK's poorest regions) without the services and resources that are on offer in most middle-class communities. The kids who visit us for a snack and a peek at our piano, seldom go far on holiday, have music lessons or after school activities. Neither do they frequent any church, mosque or temple. All those things, they think, are for 'posh people'. For all its problems (considerable indeed, including substance abuse and crime), my neighbourhood has veins of spiritual gold in the midst of deprivation. Though they are in the jaws of the poverty

trap, they evidence a measure of inner prosperity. I have witnessed and experienced understanding and support for those wrestling with great problems, their easy and outgoing love for the people they can trust, mutual helpfulness, sharing and a lot of laughter. We do have plenty of reasons to laugh and to cry in my neighbourhood where darkness and light are both so apparent. Our neighbours and any others we regularly serve can evidence some of what we all long for: generosity, openness, forgiveness, courage and hope. In fact, their righteousness (or rightness) will likely exceed ours in at least some specifics – no matter whom we mean by 'them' and 'us'. The greatest challenge facing all service providers is perhaps to recognise the potential that exists – here and now – in so many of those we wish to help. If we could find the grace to behave as fellow pilgrims rather than as Lady Bountiful and Lord of the Manor, how much more effective our service could be.

This is the reason for providing the reader with an exercise in personal reflection – a chance to 'retreat' in all honesty and humility, and then 'advance' farther and deeper along the chosen path, wherever it leads. Both the Prince (Siddhartha, the Buddha) and the Carpenter (Jesus, the Christ) taught that all people, every individual can make an immense difference in the world. 🙏



Faith groups can help to bring about change



Dennis Oliver lives in North East England, working in development and support for the Scarman Trust. He is supporting several religious organisations, and is active in local community service and national peace and justice initiatives.



Strive to be a good example for your child

IDEAL PARENT

Parenting can be full of spirit and joy, explains **Mirra Alfazza**

THE FIRST CRITICAL ASPECT OF PARENTING IS the act of procreation. Instead of doing the thing like an animal, driven by instinct or desire and most of the time without even wanting it, human beings do it at will. I knew people who put themselves in a state of aspiration, almost of prayer, chose special circumstances and prepared themselves through concentration and meditation, to bring down an exceptional being into the body they were going to form. In many countries the woman who was going to have a child was placed in special conditions of beauty, harmony, peace and well-being, and in very harmonious physical conditions, so that the child could be formed in the best possible circumstances. This is obviously what ought to be done, for it is within the reach of human possibilities. Human beings are developed well enough for this not to be something quite exceptional; however, very few people think it over and there are innumerable people who have children without even wanting them.

Maternity is considered as the principal role of the woman. However, this is only true so long as we understand what is meant by the word maternity. To bring children into the world as rabbits do their young – instinctively, ignorantly, machine-like – this certainly cannot be called maternity! True maternity begins with the conscious creation of a being, with the willed

shaping of a soul coming to develop and utilise a new body. We forget it but too often that the true domain of women is the spiritual. To bear a child and construct its body almost subconsciously is not enough. The work really commences when, by the power of thought and will, we conceive and create a character capable of manifesting an ideal. Do not say we have no power to realise such a thing. I saw several instances of this very effective power myself. From among them, I remember two little girls very clearly; they were twins and perfectly beautiful. The most astonishing thing about them was how little like their parents they were. They reminded me of a very famous picture painted by the English artist Reynolds. One day I mentioned this to the mother, who immediately exclaimed: "Indeed, isn't it so? You will be interested to know that while I was expecting these children I had a very good reproduction of Reynolds' picture hanging above my bed. Before going to sleep and as soon as I woke, my last and first glances were for that picture and in my heart I hoped: may my children be like the faces in this picture. You see that I succeeded quite well!" She can be truly proud of her success and her example is of great utility for other women.

With this effort, maternity becomes truly precious and

sacred; with this we enter the glorious work of the Spirit. Womanhood rises above animality and ordinary instincts, towards real humanity and its powers. In this attempt lies our true duty. If this duty was always of the greatest importance, it has certainly taken a capital one in the present turn of the earth's evolution. All those who feel that their heart extends further than the limits of their own person and family; all those who realise that they belong not to themselves or to their family or even to their country but to God – who manifests Himself in all countries through mankind – they indeed know that they must rise and set to work for the sake of humanity, for the advent of the Dawn.

In this momentous, endless and many-sided work, what can be the part of womanhood? It is true that, as soon as great events and works are in question, the custom is to relegate women to a corner with a smile of patronising contempt which means: this is not your business, poor, feeble, futile creatures... And women – submissive, childlike and lazy perhaps – have accepted this deplorable state of things in many countries. I dare say that they are wrong. In the future, there shall be no more room for such division, such disequilibria between the masculine and the feminine. The true relation between the two sexes is on equal footing of mutual help and close collaboration.

Here we come back to our starting-point: our duty of true maternity. Who else is to construct this form; who is meant to manifest the spiritual force capable of transforming the earth's present conditions if not the women? It is no longer sufficient to form a man similar to the greatest men we have heard of or known, or even greater, more accomplished and more gifted than them. We must strive to come in touch mentally by the constant aspiration of our thought and will with the supreme possibility which, exceeding all human measures and features, will give birth to perfection.

Parents know very well that their children must be educated and they try to do what they can. But even among those who are the most serious and sincere, very few know that the first thing to do in order to be able to educate a child is to educate oneself, to become a conscious master of oneself so that one never sets a bad example. It is through example that education becomes effective. To speak good words and to give wise advice to a child has very little effect if one does not give

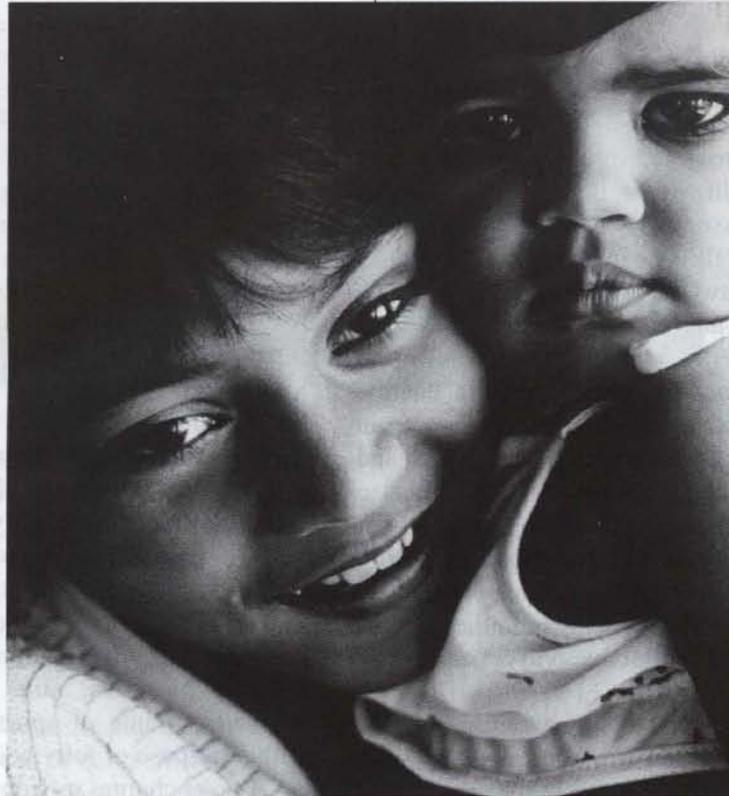
him an example of what one teaches. Sincerity, honesty, straightforwardness, courage, disinterestedness, unselfishness, patience, endurance, perseverance, peace, calm, self-control are all things taught infinitely better by example than by beautiful speeches. Parents have high ideals and always act in accordance with them. You will see that little by little your child will reflect this ideal and spontaneously manifest the qualities you would like to see expressed in his nature. Quite naturally children have respect and admiration for their parents; unless they are quite unworthy, they will always appear to their children as demigods whom they will try to imitate as best as they can.

With very few exceptions, parents are not always aware of the disastrous influence that their own defects, impulses, weaknesses and lack of self-control can have on their children. If you want your child to respect you, have respect for yourself and be worthy of that respect at every moment. Never be authoritarian, despotic, impatient or ill-tempered. When your child asks you a question, do not give him a stupid or silly answer under the pretext that he cannot understand it. You can always make yourself understood if you take enough trouble; contrary to the popular saying that it is not always good to tell the truth, I affirm that it is

always good to tell the truth. The art is in telling it in such a way as to make it accessible to the mind of the hearer. In early life, until he is twelve or thirteen, the child's mind is hardly open to abstract notions and general ideas. Still, you can train it to understand these things by using concrete images, symbols or parables. Up to quite an advanced age for those who mentally always remain children, a narrative, a story or a tale well told can teach much more than any number of theoretical explanations.

Parenting is a spiritual act which requires faith, wisdom and discipline. May every parent nurture unique souls and enable their self-realisation. 🙏

Mirra Alfazza was affectionately known as 'The Mother' in the Aurobindo Society.



Parenting requires faith, wisdom and discipline

THE AMAZING POTENTIAL OF PRAYER

M.K. Pandey explains why praying is not pointless

IT HAS BEEN SAID THAT PRAYERS GO ABOVE AND blessings come down. Prayers link us with cosmic consciousness and operate at a very high level, far away from the limited domain of petty gains and mundane considerations. If there is a force of piousness, purity and sublimity in our prayer, divine blessings will enrich our life in manifold ways. In our age of crass materialism, even blessings from near and dear have become rare because they hardly flow from the heart.

People try to create an outwardly perfect life but its true quality is based on the inward alignment of harmony between our thoughts and actions. Prayer gives us the ability to experience spiritual dimensions that supply us the energy, passion and insights to redirect and transform our lives from within. Thoughts create a sense of division within us and around our world. That is why we pursue different paths to reach our goals. If we change from within, the power of our change will have ripple effects on our surroundings. With prayerful heart, we may change our surroundings with love, tolerance and compassion. If we do not believe in the concept of individual prayer, vibrations of collective prayers can create space for it within us.

Vedic seers nurtured the view that the most sacred sound of the universe, 'Om' resonates within the space of the sixth *chakra*, located mid-brow, between the eyes, in the area known as the 'third eye'. The essence of thought, word and sound is 'Om', says the *Chandogya Upanishad*. 'Om' represents pure consciousness. We may harness our inner power of intuition through the recitation of prayers from the sacred Vedic *mantras*. The practitioner evokes tremendous power within, strengthening the breath force, energising the mind, focussing the single-point attention and immunising the body through the intonation of the sounds.

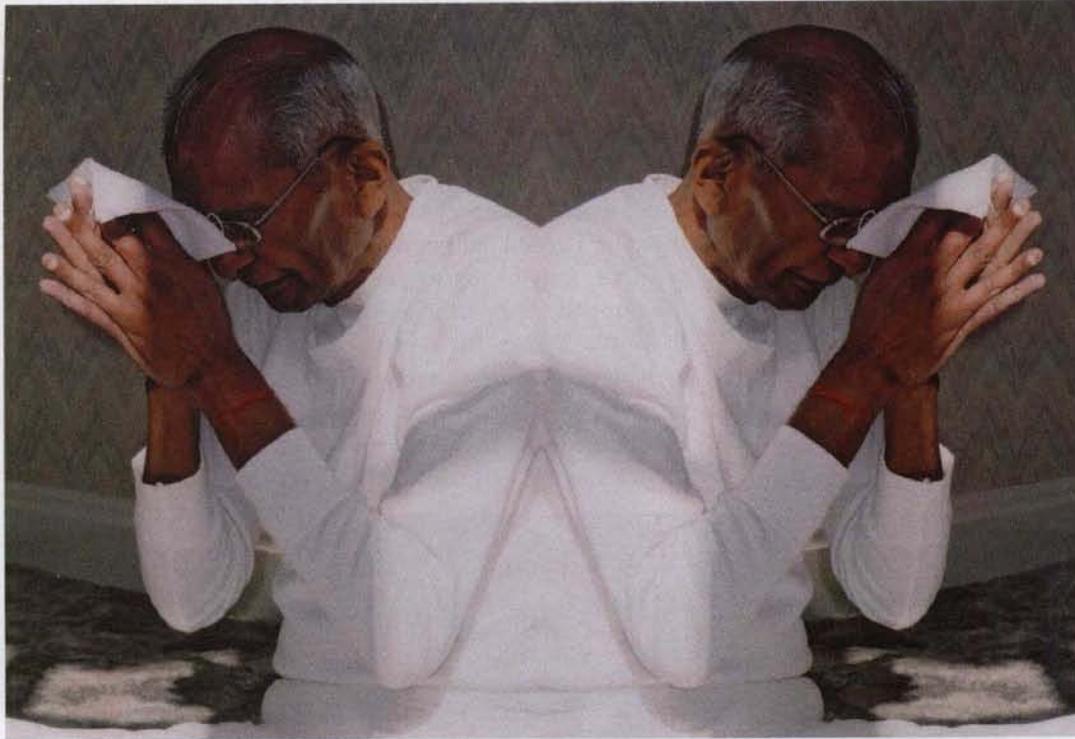
Prayers through the sacred *mantras* generate healing sounds that have a far deeper effect than their audibility. Just as the earth moves in harmony with the vibrations of celestial music, we too can become aware of the rhythms and move in harmony with all. In fact, we give voice to our inner sound with healing chants. Prayer is an unconditional and emotional surrender to God. It is the devout breathing of our faith, without which we cannot bring a turning point into our life. Faith fuels the energy-field of the prayer. Faith is not an empirical formula which can be verified and tested in any scientific laboratory. It is not material that can be seen, heard,

smelled, tasted and touched. Faith, like reality, is beyond words because it is an inner, intuitive and unshakable belief. Faith does not take refuge in the mind because the mind is fluid and manipulative. Faith lives in the kingdom of the heart where natural and honest longings, feelings and desires regenerate and uplift us to the higher planes of thinking. Having no faith leads to our mental bankruptcy. Prayer reinforces our faith and trust in ourselves so that we can see it through reflections in others.

The air of the surroundings and the fragrance of the flowers cannot be seen; they can only be experienced. Similar is the condition of faith. Hope is a wish, a longing for something. Faith adds surety to the expectation of hope. Unshakeable faith, either in all pervading cosmic divinity or in the divine existence within us, creates a will-power to do anything. The feasibility of any task depends on the magnitude and intensity of faith within us. That is why reasoning cannot fathom the depth of faith. Prayer driven by the energy-field of faith leads us to the harmonious assembly of body, mind and spirit. It aligns us with life's sublime purposes, aims and ideals. Since this is a smokeless flame of spiritual realisation, it always burns with a purpose of lofty heights.

Prayer charges us from within. It is an inward quest for inspiration. It is the illumination of man in his continual search for meanings. Prayer broadens our vision and binds our faith in the underlying concept of humanity and rationality. Prayer is a sacred house of devotion, love, compassion and sacrifice. It is the antithesis of rivalry, hatred, greed, anger and self-centred possession. It mirrors our prejudices, parochial thinking and mental blocks through the process of introspection and inward-looking outlook.

Prayer is powerful because it tunes our awareness with divine consciousness. Every one of us is endowed with a divine spark. Inside every one of us is a person who embodies the spirit of a teacher, a pathfinder, a guru; all these are the tools and mediums of divine reflection. This moral teacher sitting within us reminds us about our bad or good deeds. Prayer gives us strength to feel the pulse of our inner voice and if we are not willing to experience its call due to delusion-afflicted intelligence, we distance ourselves from the twilight zone of prayer.



Prayer joins us to the infinite

In fact, our level of ignorance is responsible for a situation where we are not able to differentiate between chaff and grain, knowledge and wisdom, sight and insight. Listen to the thousands-year-old wisdom of *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*:

“O Lord! Lead me
From untruth to truth,
From darkness to light,
From death to immortality.”

Prayer empowers us with wisdom instead of knowledge. It enriches us with compassion instead of competition. We come to a situation where the feeling and healing components of experience make us internally festive. We experience a perceptible change and acquire a wider space of tolerance and compassion. After passing through such a mental frame, we do not see reality in piecemeal but with holistic vision. This gift of holistic vision endows our angle of vision to conquer negativity within us and see only the good, humane and bright aspects of human nature. As a result, we become more and more tolerant in our approach. All individuals appear to be good and the concept of ‘hate the sin and not the sinner’ enters silently within us.

Prayer is the innermost expression as well as the expansion of our mental horizon to our Master. Prayer does not change God; it changes us. It changes our linear attitude for the sake of the altitude of vision. It opens our inner doors to let in God and let ourselves out; to let in love and let out hate; to let in faith and let out fear; to let in appreciation and let out criticism; to let in tolerance and let out arrogance. Wilfred A. Peterson beautifully sums up that “praying is not to get more, but to be more. Prayer brings God into our relationship with our fellow

men. Prayer is thinking and thanking.”

Prayer is the simplest form of speech that infant lips can try. This is confidence of trust. It is not eloquence but is earnestness. It is not a substitute for work. It is a determination to work hard and become effective beyond the range of one’s normal capacities. Real prayer is always gifted with two blessings. It either liberates us from the troubles we fear from or empowers us with strength and coping capacity to meet them when they come. Prayer should not be undervalued as a formalised routine of words. In fact, it brings about the ultimate integration and harmony of man’s highest faculties.

Conditional prayer is meaningless. When we expect something from God in return for our prayer, it is bargaining. If God knows everything, what is the point of asking anything from Him? Only those lacking in faith in God would do it. Pain and pleasure, plenty and deprivation, light and darkness – all these conditions are the creations of God. Out of ignorance, we are not able to understand that the stressful or traumatic experiences we are going through may prove ‘blessings in disguise’. In fact, every problem is an opportunity to grow. Problems test our patience and increase our inner strength. Prayer gives focus and direction to our karmas, thereby facilitating our way of living and thinking in close proximity to balanced and blissful thinking. Work becomes worship only when it is preceded and accompanied by prayer.

The concept of collective wisdom flows with devotional fervour in the prayer of a gathering. The positive and healing vibrations of the responding voice of group prayer permeate the bottom level of our mind and help us in internal cleansing. “Prayer is not for asking, it is a longing of the soul. It is daily admission of one’s weakness. It is better in prayer to have a heart without words than words without heart. A family that prays together stays together.” These are the words of Mahatma Gandhi, who believed in the magic of collective *bhajan*. 🙏

Dr. M.K. Pandey is a freelance journalist and broadcaster based in India.

I TAKE FULL RESPONSIBILITY

Chetana Catherine Florida chooses to inspire and liberate

One of the greatest gifts of wisdom I have gained in this lifetime is to realise that I am ultimately responsible for being happy or sad, joyful or sorrowful, optimistic or pessimistic, loving or hating. Someone else or something else can not be responsible for the choices I make or for the consequences of my actions. This wisdom allows me to see that neither God nor anyone else is trying to make my life miserable, when I am trying to be a 'good' person. Through meditation I started gaining an awareness that it was me, myself and only I who through my choices in thoughts, words and actions made myself happy or sad, optimistic or pessimistic, loving or hating.

Through meditation I gained the knowledge that with every action there is a consequence and there is also a choice of how I respond to that consequence. If I choose to respond negatively, then I certainly can expect some negativity to come to me. The more I meditated, the more I saw how important it was not only to watch my thoughts but also to become very clear that I am the one who can and will make the decision; I have the choice of what I want to do with that thought. I may choose to seek out a positive outcome but get negatively involved with my thoughts, and then I will experience a negative outcome.

The second realisation I had was the experience that there is power in the spoken word. I began to choose words that would flower with beauty rather than pierce like thorns. What or whom we hurt will eventually in some way come back to haunt us. If they are hurtful words, we will be hurt; if they are loving words, love will come to us in response.

Thirdly, I gained an understanding about my actions: they did not just appear by themselves. Somewhere in the recesses of my mind a thought triggered my actions. If it was a good thought, it would lead to a good action. If, however, my thought was a bad one, my action would follow as bad.

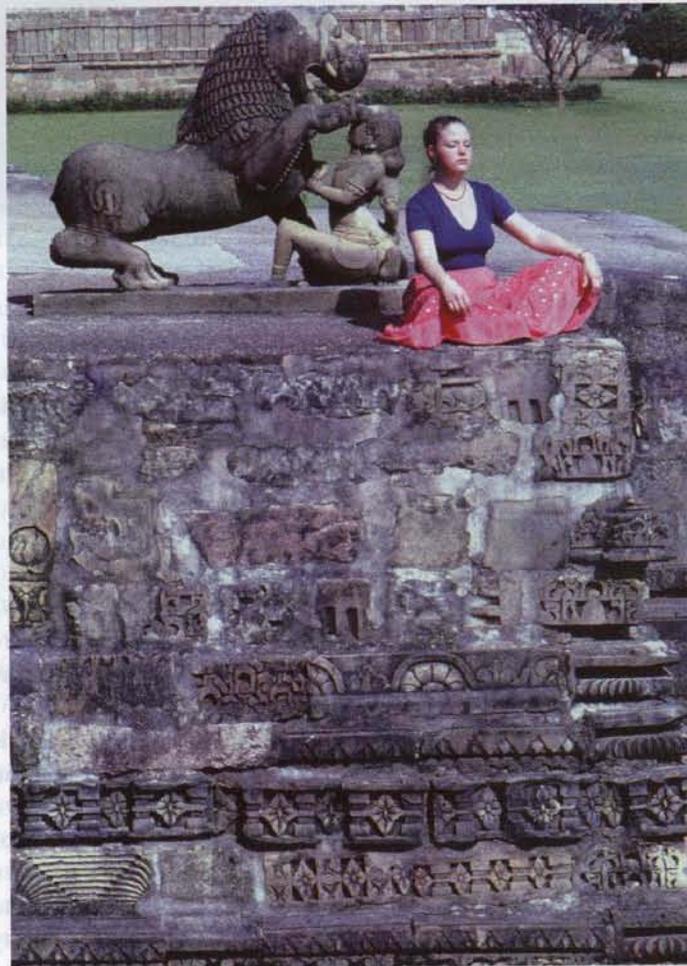
I also became conscious that if I was aware of a negative thought, I could deliberately choose an action that would be positive, thus changing the circular consequences that had me trapped. If I was able to do that, then I could eventually free myself from the negative consequences. As I did this, a change came about and slowly I began to have a life filled more with light and love.

I also learned that it depends on how many times I may have knowingly or unknowingly repeated an action that will be played out in my life in some way at some point. I realised that just as one meditation does not change the whole of my being, one good action does not change the pattern of negative actions either. Still, it is a beginning. Each time I choose a positive action instead of negative one, I am building a positive consequence and a new pattern of positive actions that will little by little replace the negative pattern from the past. In making positive choices, I gradually free myself from the actions that made me unhappy.

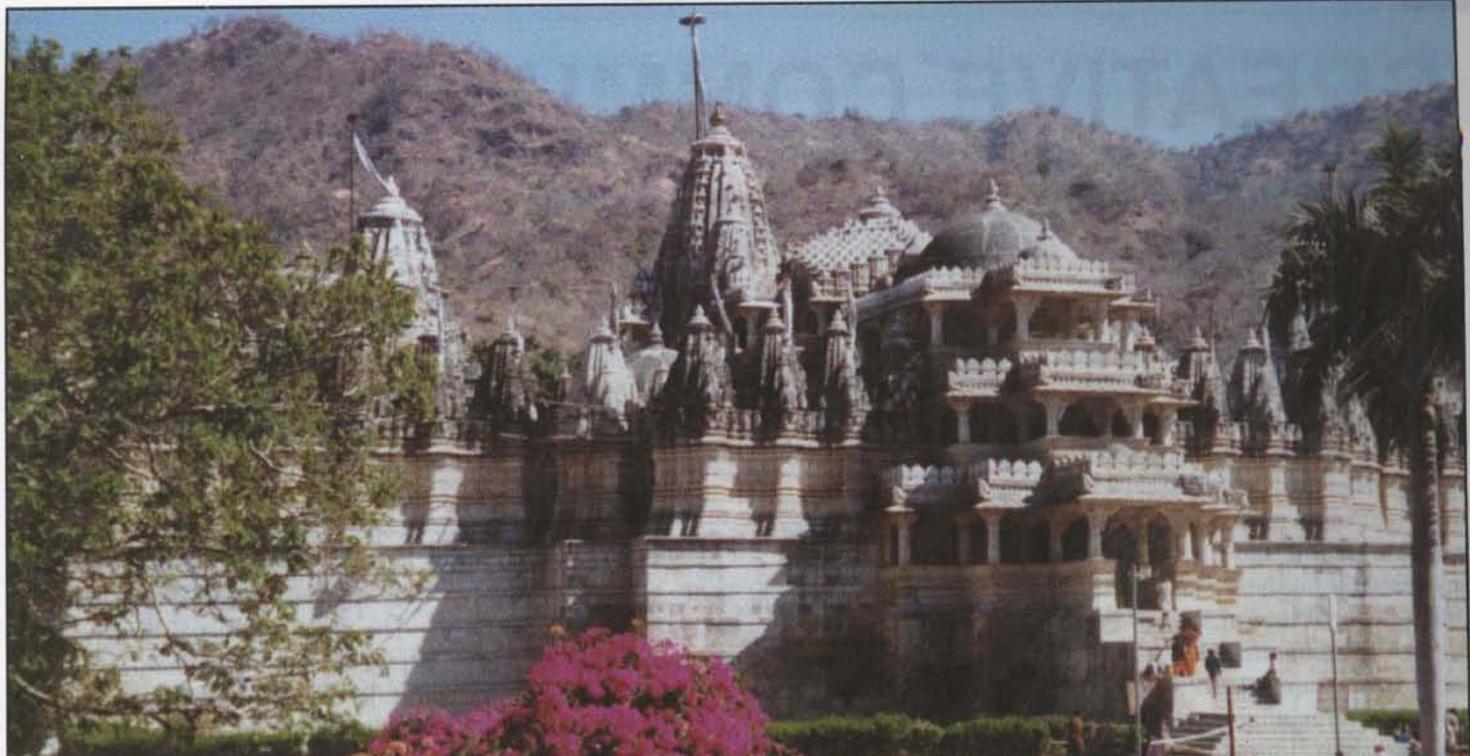
Meditation makes all of this possible. Meditation was and is the most important action for me to take to heal my being. I also found that I could work with daily affirmations, and they would be the seeds of future actions in the garden of my mind. Before meditation, I felt powerless over the circumstances in my life. Through meditation, however, I feel

the power of being able to re-create my life with loving thoughts, loving words and loving actions. 🙏

The late Chetana Catherine Florida was the founder of The Lighthouse Beacon, a non-profit organisation in Michigan, USA. She was strongly influenced by Jain philosophy.



Meditation helps us accept the joys and sorrows of life with equanimity



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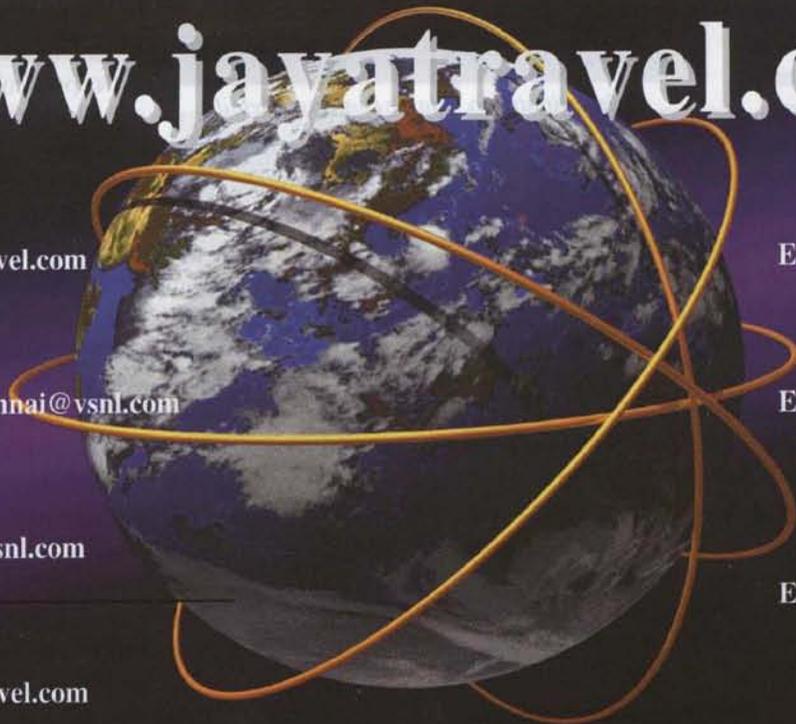
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CREATIVE COMMUNICATION

Raju (Sobhag) Shah analyses the creativity of Vijnaptipatra, a letter of request to a monk

MODERN LIFE IN THE age of information generates a huge amount of communication. Despite this, we are often told that we lack the right skills to do it properly. The Jains seemed to have a creative style of communication, which I discovered recently in my research on the *Vijnaptipatra*, a unique letter of request.

A *Vijnaptipatra* is a Sanskrit word for a formal letter of request sent by a community to a Jain monk, inviting him to spend the four months of the rainy season (*chaumasa*) with them. The request is usually sent in autumn for the next rainy season, which lasts from June through September, when the munis are supposed to stay in one place. This is the only time in the year when Jain monks can do so – at other times they cannot live in any one place for more than a few days. This is all the more the reason why it was important to attract monks to a city, and especially those who had special skills. In addition, the presence of knowledgeable and wise men in those days was a rarity. There were very few schools, colleges, let alone the media like radio, papers or TV, so monks were highly respected and treasured guests in any town or village as they brought with them the light of knowledge and wisdom.

Sometimes the *Vijnaptipatra* is also called *Kshamapana patrika*, which is a letter of pardon. This was prepared by the Jain laity and clergy with care and embellishment to send it to their ecclesiastical head of the neighbouring place on the last and holiest of days of the eight-day festival of Paryushan, Samvatsari. The letter was aimed at well-known and eloquent saints who were in demand and possessed special skills for preaching and inspiring. It would have to be sent well in advance of the Paryushan to ensure that the invitee had sufficient time to walk to the city which gave the invitation.

Around the 16th century, rather than sending a simple text letter, the invitation took the form of a long, narrow, hand-painted vertical scroll that began and ended with the text. These scrolls can vary in size from about 8–60 feet in length and 8–12 inches in width. The purpose of the paintings was to



Vijnaptipatra to Vijayasena Suri (detail)

demonstrate to the monk the attractiveness and prosperity of the town. A majority of these were prepared and repeatedly copied by professional painters. This accounts for a remarkable stylistic conformity among the large number of such illustrated invitations that have survived. The majority of them were prepared in Jodhpur or Nagore in Rajasthan by professional Mathen painters. Quite a few of these pictorial manuscripts are stored in the treasure houses of Jain temple libraries (Bhandars) of Gujarat and Rajasthan, the most important ones being located in Patan, Cambay and Jaisalmer.

The illustration usually begins with the eight auspicious emblems (*ashtamangalas*) and the symbolic representation of the fourteen dreams of Queen Trishala. Then scenes from the town sending the invitation are painted, sometimes showing a street with various types of shops, prominent temples and bustling markets. This is followed by a procession of elephants, musicians and dancers, perhaps as an enticement to the monk as to the kind of reception he is likely to get when he arrives. These scrolls are sources of social history as well as records of the movement of monks from place to place. The scroll is painted in bright colours of strong reds and greens, and enlivened by a floral border on either side. Animal and human figures in various actions are vividly portrayed along with Jain monks and nuns dressed in white addressing the devotees.

During the reign of Moghul Emperor Akbar a fully-fledged workshop of painting (atelier) was set up. Painters were recruited from various parts of India and worked under two masters, Abdus Samad and Mir Sayyid Ali, who came to India from Persia with Humayun. Under the inspiring guidance of Akbar a new style of painting emerged – the Moghul style. These paintings mark the beginning of the various Rajasthani schools. During 1550-1750 the Jains faithfully followed the practice of commissioning copies of their religious texts. It is gratifying to know that during his

reign, it is believed that Akbar gave orders not to hunt or kill animals for six months. His tolerant policy was partially reversed by Emperor Jehangir, with the curtailment of the Imperial atelier. Several discharged artists came to work with Rajput maharajas and sometimes the wealthy Jains also commissioned works from them.

The earliest recorded *Vijnaptipatra* dates back to 1610, when the Moghul Emperor Jehangir issued a rescript (*farman*) at the request of Vivekaharsha and Udayaharsha, pupils of Muni Vijayasena Suri, ordering that during the twelve (now eight) days of the Paryushan there would be no killing of animals of any kind in the slaughter houses of their kingdom. It was an event of great importance to the Jain community and an artist called Ustad Salivahana made a pictorial record. It formed part of the *Vijnaptipatra* dated Vikram Samvat 1667 (1610 AD) sent by the Shvetambara Jain community of Agra to Muni Vijayasena Suri, then resident of Devakapatan in Saurashtra, requesting him to grace the town of Agra with his presence. The granting of the *farman* and the events depicted in the illustrated letter point to the great tolerance practised by the early Moghul emperors. The Jains had a very cordial relationship with the Muslim rulers. Ustad Salivahana worked for patrons belonging to both the Tapagachchha and Kharataragachchha sects of Jainism, notwithstanding the almost bitter hostility and the intrigue between them to gain possession over Shatrunjaya Hills. His talent was available for the use of any discerning and generous patron, regardless of religion or sect. He painted Jain subjects for Jain patrons although he was not a Jain.

The top of the epistle shows the portrait of Jehangir with the young Prince Khurram (ShahJahan). Below the Emperor to the right is shown Raja Ramdas holding the rolled up *farman* with Muni Vivekaharsha. Towards the end of the scroll they depict the presentation of the *farman* to Muni Vijayasena Suri by unrolling it and reading the contents by Muni

Vivekaharsha. Historically this *Vijnaptipatra* is very important and it is very well exhibited at the LD Institute Museum in Ahmedabad.

In another *Vijnaptipatra* dated 1852 VS (1795 AD) and belonging to a German collector the letter is almost 15 metres long with a written text of about 5 metres. In the text there is a description of Jain religion, the life of the various *Tirthankaras* and pilgrimage places including Keshariaji. The Rana Bhim Sinha of Udaipur sent the letter to Muni Vijaya Dharmendra Surishwar of Bhavnagar, Saurashtra. The paintings are based on Udaipur and its region. A description of Mewar is given with its people, rivers, gardens and lakes. All this is depicted in order to attract the muni to grace his presence to Udaipur. Towards the end the names of all the 108 Jain leaders of Udaipur are mentioned.

In the olden days, communities and art were interlinked. It was a matter of great joy for many communities to have particular munis, who were revered as saints to conduct their *chaturmas* in their city. It was also believed that their presence during Paryushan brought prosperity to the area and people. It is fortunate that such competition for certain monks still exists in parts of India today. However, our modern communication on email or text is rough and ready and has very little artistic value. The art of writing letters is almost dying. If we were to incorporate art in our important communications, the outcome may be very different. Looking at the world today, religious tolerance is at its lowest ebb. It is high time that the world learnt to live with each other and respect the different faiths and their cultures. 🙏

Raju (Sobhag) Shah is a volunteer assistant in the Nehru Gallery at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London.



Extracts from a Vijnaptipatra depicting a Jain temple in Udaipur (c.1795)



A FAMILY PORTRAIT

Mira Kamdar takes us back to Burma, where her family became very rich

WITHIN A FEW SHORT YEARS, THE KHARA brothers turned a shop selling kitchen utensils into a highly profitable import-export business. Burma produced little or no manufactured goods. Joining the many Indian merchants who came to dominate trade in Burma, the Kharas undertook to provide the local populace with anything it might desire that was not made locally, which is to say almost everything. The only thing the Kharas would not sell were goods deriving from the slaughter of animals, such as leather items. At various points in time, the brothers dealt in such diverse products as steel machine tools and Swiss chocolates, though textiles were always the mainstay of their business. The Kharas were very successful. They acquired enough capital to build rice mills and made a handsome profit on Burma's number one export crop.

By 1920, Motiba's father, Muljibhai Khara was able to gather his prosperous family on the roof of the family's grand villa in Akyab for a group portrait. In the photograph, one can make out some tropical foliage and the neoclassical balustrade that encircled the rooftop terrace. There are actually two photographs, evidently taken the same day, with exactly the same cast of characters except that my great-grandfather himself only appears in one of the pictures. Curiously, my grandmother, age twelve years, and her new stepmother, Samrathben, who was all of sixteen, swapped outfits so that each is wearing the other's clothes in the second photograph. As this exchange of outfits indicates, the two young women had become very close; so close that none of Motiba's children learned until very late in life that Samrathben, the woman they knew as Motiba, grandmother, was not their mother's real mother.

It is obvious that the family has dressed in its finest for the occasion, and the clothing together with the crystal vases and the carved teak tables convey my grandfather's success as a merchant. The women wear exquisitely embroidered *cholis*, or blouses, with gold fringe sewn onto the hems of the sleeves. Their heavy silk *saris*, drawn demurely over their heads, have wide borders of gold. My grandfather's second wife holds a plump infant on her lap who would grow up to be my kindly great-uncle Manumama, Dhirajmami's now-deceased husband. The older sons stand behind. They wear jackets and shoes. Seated in the centre are the adults, with the younger children at their feet, including a sister who died in early childhood. Strangely, her image is the only one that is blurred, as if her death were foreshadowed somehow in that uncanny way photographs can have of capturing things we do not 'see' at the time. Everyone looks very, very serious. Certainly, one gets the impression that dignity counted more in that bygone era than in our own, where one must smile 'toothfully' so as to give

the eternal impression of having fun. Maybe it was only having to stay still for so long while the image developed on the old glass negatives, but still, my grandmother looks more than serious. She looks intensely sad. And beautiful. And very young, yet strong. She has high cheekbones, full lips, buttery skin and luminous, haunting eyes. I have stared into these eyes for hours, trying to imagine the girl looking out from them. I don't know what was happening on that day in 1920. I do know that Motiba had lost her mother a few years earlier and that she missed her very much. Her younger sister, my Jayamasi, the one who later lived in Singapore and London, was so traumatized by this disappearance that she refused to be near anyone else. So, Motiba was made to drop out of school in the fourth grade so she could keep her little sister company during the long days the sheltered girls spent at home.

The villa in Akyab where Motiba grew up was utterly destroyed by the Japanese during World War II, which is a shame because it looks as if it was a beautiful house. Motiba's childhood in Akyab, even if confined, was a pampered one. There were scores of servants to cater to her every need. If she was hungry, she had only to convey an order to the kitchen via one of her maids. When she shed her clothing, she simply dropped it on the floor, where it was picked up and whisked away to be washed and pressed and put away by the next morning. There were maids to brush and plait her hair, maids to oil her skin and massage her legs, maids to keep her company. A hierarchy of servants placed those brought over from Kathiawar at the top, those from elsewhere in India next, and the Burmese, who did the hardest work, last. The head cook was a Kathiawari Jain woman whose competent hands could be entrusted with the feeding of a large and devout vegetarian family. Young Motiba's social circle in Akyab was firmly limited to the young ladies from similar backgrounds. Indeed, family members were preferred above all other acquaintances, and Motiba grew up, as was typical in her day, in the company of legions of cousins: first, second, once- even twice-removed.

Of Burma, Motiba remembered most the luxurious life she enjoyed there as a child; the beautiful pagodas and, with some envy, I think, the independent, cheroot-smoking Burmese women. When asked about the country, Motiba would inevitably make a comment along the lines of, "In Burma, the women are very strong, very smart. They handle all the money and run all the businesses. They work very hard, while the men just take it easy." I always interpreted this less as a fully accurate commentary on

gender relations in Burma than a glimpse into Motiba's perspective on sexual politics outside her own protected sphere.

The Khara brothers moved their business headquarters from Akyab to Rangoon soon after Muljibhai Khara had his

city par excellence. With its broad avenues, parks full of flowers, lakes fringed by great trees and graceful colonial architecture of high ceilings, balconies and colonnaded galleries, Rangoon was regarded as one of the most



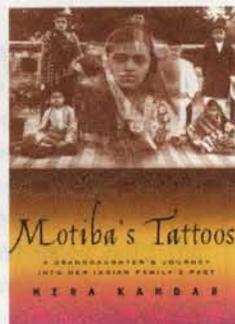
Two contrasting portraits taken on the same day in Burma, c.1920

family's portrait taken on the terrace of its villa. From Rangoon they branched out, opening a network of outlets all over Burma. The Kharas' move to Rangoon was a typical one for a successful Indian merchant family. Rangoon was the business capital of the country and by the time the Kharas got there, fundamentally an Indian city itself. In fact, by 1931, the year my father was born in Burma, fully half the population of Rangoon was Indian. Most of the buildings were owned by Indian landlords, most of the shops were run by Indians, most of the money was exchanged through Indian hands. The lingua franca of the city was Hindustani, liberally peppered with Burmese, Tamil, Chinese and English words.

In the early decades of the twentieth century, Rangoon's Surati Bazaar was a kaleidoscope of people from every region of India. On one corner, wrapped around an ancient banyan tree, was a sort of all-purpose Hindu shrine, with niches for the worship of Lakshmi, Hanuman and Ganesh. This island of Hinduism was surrounded by a sea of Buddhist pagodas and Muslim mosques. Further on was a larger temple to Shiva, with a massive carving of the temperamental god cradling his voluptuous consort Parvati in his protective arms. In the narrow lanes, brilliant silk and cotton *saris* hung in long banners of fuchsia and emerald over the balconies to dry. There were sweet shops selling *barfis*, grain merchants sitting among piles of rice and wheat, spice merchants surrounded by little golden and scarlet piles of ground turmeric and dried chillies. *Paanwalas* set up their supplies and tools on small wooden trays outside the temples, near the tea stalls on the street corners. People squatted along the sidewalks near vats of hot oil where *bhajiyas* and *pakor*s fried temptingly. All year long, it was hot and densely humid. The air smelled like fermenting fruit, with occasional whiffs of cumin, coriander, ginger and raw sewage.

Yet this richness of religious and ethnic diversity of colour and smell existed within the rational grid of a British colonial

beautiful cities in Asia. Along the Rangoon River ran the Strand with the Post and Telegraph Office, the Court House, the Customs House and, of course, the celebrated Strand Hotel, rivalled only by the Raffles in Singapore as the epitome of colonial elegance in the East. The next several blocks backing up from the riverfront were laid out in neat rows of broad parallel avenues: Merchant Street, Dalhousie, then Canal, which at a certain point became Fraser, followed by Commissioner's Road, on which stood the Central Jail just opposite the Jail Garden and followed by Rangoon College on one side and the Phayre Museum on the other. Commissioner's Road turned into Montgomerie just before it reached the railway station, followed by the 'native burying grounds' and, finally, the separate Protestant and Catholic cemeteries. These avenues were neatly bisected at regular intervals by absolutely straight, perpendicular streets: Keighly, Morton, Phongyi, Godwin, Latter, then China Street in the heart of the city's Chinatown, followed by Mogul Street in the centre of the Indian section. The resident or visitor to Rangoon in the 1930s could stroll in any number of parks and gardens: Victoria Park, of course; Fytche Square; the Garden of the Agricultural and Horticultural Society; Dufferin Garden; and in the shadow of the great Shwedagon Pagoda, the Cantonment Garden directly across from the European Infantry Barracks. 🏠



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Mira Kamdar is a Senior Fellow at the World Policy Institute and a regular broadcaster on Los Angeles radio. Her book, (serialised above), *Motiba's Tattoos* is available worldwide from Amazon.

GOOD HOPE

Benjamin Zephaniah

I believe

There is enough food
On this planet
For everyone.

I believe

That it is possible
For all people
To live in peace.

I believe

We can live
Without guns,
I believe everyone
Is important.

I believe there are good Christians

And good Muslims,
Good Jews
And good not sures,
I believe
There is good in everyone
I believe in people.

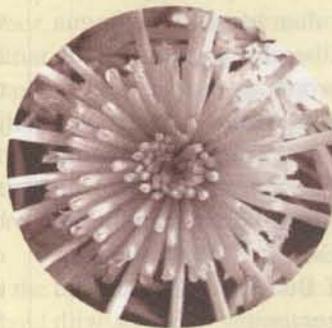
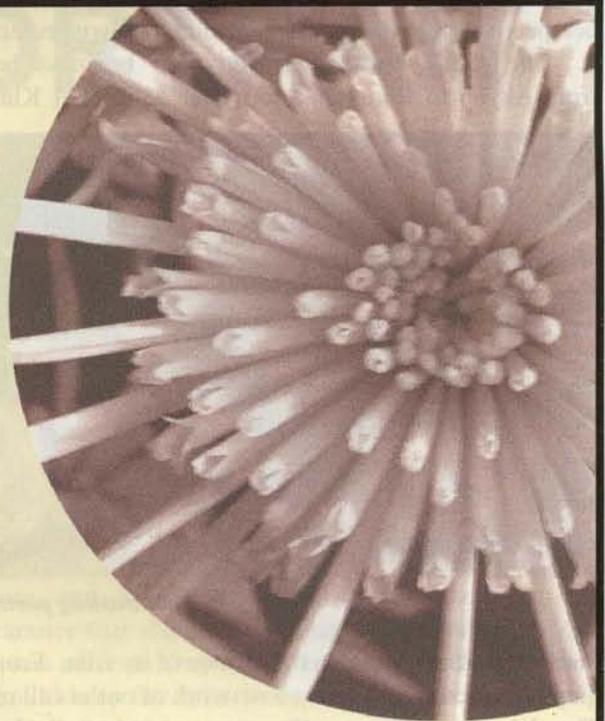
If I did not believe
I would stop writing.

I know

Every day
Children cry for water,
And every day
Racists attack,
Still every day
Children play
With no care for colour.

So I believe there is hope

And I hope
That there are many believers
Believing
There is hope,
That is what I hope
And this is what I believe,
I believe in you,
Believe me.



©Benjamin Zephaniah, who is the
author of *Talking Turkeys*, *Funky Chicken*, *Face and*
Refugee Boy. He is on the advisory board of *Jain Spirit*.
Visit www.benjaminzephaniah.com

TRUE FRIENDSHIP

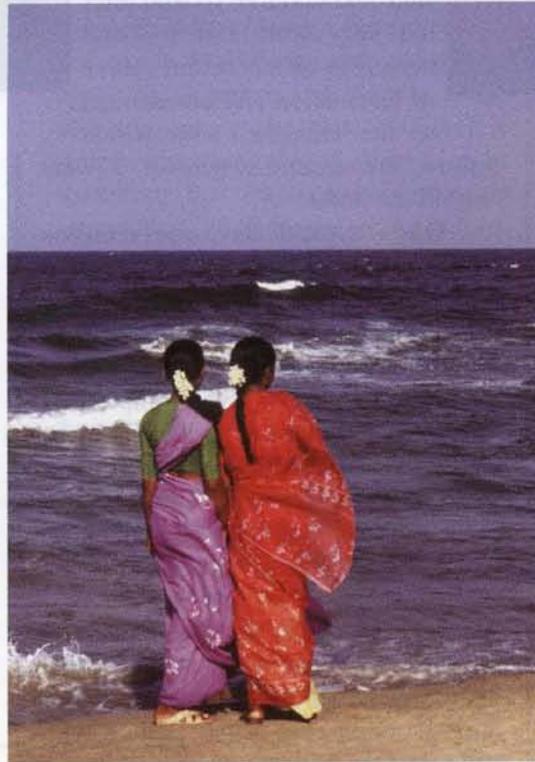
Manshi M. Shah analyses the nature of friendship

WHAT IS FRIENDSHIP? How do we make friends? Why do we choose certain people to get close to and maintain distance from others? Let's go back to that first day at school or university when we saw new faces, new people. We smiled at a few and chose not to respond to others. Soon we started interacting and made a few good friends with whom we always wanted to be together. Why did we get close to those selected few? Because somewhere our ideas met, somewhere we thought we could share and talk, we grew closer and proceeded to gradually build a rapport with them. Why did we choose them in particular when we met for the first time? Was it only appearance? Or was there some bond already existing between us? I believe that the answer to this latter question is: "Yes, there was." It is the karma, good or bad, accumulated in previous lives that determine who we are to meet in the present life; when we have generated good karma, we meet people who are good to us.

Friendship is a relationship we form by choice, unlike family ties that we are born into. Jainism teaches that a true friend will always try to stop us from doing wrong things, but it is up to us whether we take the advice or ignore it. Jain philosophy also teaches us that our soul is our closest and truest friend: if we understand and foresee what we are doing, we do not need anyone else to tell us what is right or wrong. Conversely, when we do not know what we are doing, or when we keep on doing the wrong things, we become our own worst enemy because we do not

try to understand the true nature of the soul.

Jainism provides two key perspectives on being friends: one is friendship (*shatrutva*) and the other is



Friendship requires trust

friendliness (*maitribhav*). Friendship means choosing the people we like from amongst a host of other acquaintances to be our friends. Friendliness, on the other hand, is choosing none and treating everybody the same; it means not favouring some while neglecting others. In friendship there are expectations and when these are not fulfilled, we tend to hold the other party in poor regard and might even develop feelings of enmity for

them. However, in friendliness we are all equal and we have no expectations from any particular soul. We are not biased so we have no enmity.

We are often told that it is essential to respect our elders. Thinking about it from a Jain perspective, universal friendliness means that we should extend this respect to all living beings. Age is not the only thing that is important; rather it is the qualities of a person that are most important. One who recognises and appreciates the qualities in another, probably also has the same qualities within himself. We become biased when we have respect only for a certain set of people but when we respect everyone, we become equal to all. In friendship, the qualities of trust, love, affection, respect and morality are important, but the most important is the sense of detachment. All friends are attached to each other in one way or another because there is an emotional bond between them. However, this attachment has to be detachable as we have to accept that one who comes into our life also has to go some day. Lacking this ability we hinder the other person – our friend – from progressing in life and, in turn, we hurt ourselves. 🙏



Manshi Shah (Gholani) is a young Jain living and studying in Mumbai, India.

A PASSAGE TO INDIA

Underprivileged children inspire
Heena Gudka toward simplicity



Joy of childhood

TRAVELLING IS THE fulfilment of one of my dreams. Being able to observe cultural differences and to gain insight into another way of life is what I find truly inspiring. The best way to experience the essence of a country is to actually live there and work with local people: a live lesson in the Jain principle of *anekantvada* (multiplicity of viewpoints) if you will. So when the opportunity to go to India arose, I accepted it with relish.

I stayed in a children's care home in Tamil Nadu, where I helped to care for the youngsters. I also worked at a local school and a nearby hospital, teaching conversational English to the pupils and the trainee doctors. Upon arrival, I was overwhelmed by the enormous effort they made to welcome me into their home. The children's smiles were so warm that feeling unappreciated or not needed could never enter into the equation.

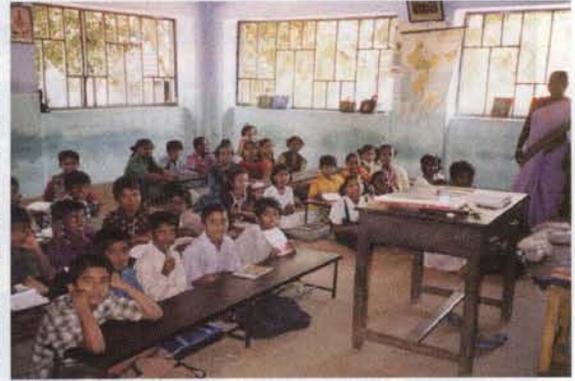
The accommodation was very basic but clean. I had to get over my squeamishness about insects as I was sharing my room with many six-legged friends! I did not have the luxury of having a western commode; instead there was a hole in the ground and a bucket of water for a flush. It was quite

an adjustment to get used to living without creature comforts but I realised that it was all about give and take and accepting that this is their way of life. I expected to feel homesick at some point, but actually I didn't at all. The staff and children looked after me very well and I found myself to be a constant source of fascination and amusement to the children, who would

follow me around wherever I went within the home.

On a typical day, the children awoke at 5 a.m. and carried out their duties of cleaning and washing their own clothes. They slept on the floor in large communal rooms without beds or mattresses. Meals were simple and eaten off a banana leaf. Despite the fact that these children had very few privileges and material possessions, they were the happiest children I have seen. I could sense such a spirit and soul in them. They have so little by Western standards, yet are immensely grateful just to be there, realising that they are the fortunate few. Life was indeed simple, but it was infused with compassion, respect and happiness.

The children from the home were educated locally. They walked to school in the scorching heat with no feet protection. The school I was teaching at was very basic with no chairs, desks or fans. Yet, the students sitting in rows on the floor facing the blackboard looked enthusiastic and made my teaching experience most fulfilling. I learnt as much from these children as they did from me. I did not have any previous teaching experience, so walking into a classroom of forty pupils was daunting to say the least! At



Heena's class

first I had serious doubts about my ability to cope but I soon discovered that the children were very eager to learn. I was settled in no time and merrily singing 'If you're happy and you know it'.

My time in South India was a wonderful opportunity to help a community in need and to fully immerse myself into a whole new world. Teaching was hard at times, but very rewarding. Staying and working with the local villagers gave me a special insight I would not have found otherwise. Though I never really got used to the poverty (and I don't think anyone brought up in the West really can), this experience made me humble and will put any hardship I have to deal with into perspective. It was a privilege to be with these children and an experience I shall remember for the rest of my life. 🙏

Heena Gudka lives and works in the UK and is passionate about travelling.



BORN CONFUSED

Falguni J. Patel reviews **Tanuja Desai Hidier's** acclaimed debut novel, *Born Confused*

SEVENTEEN-YEAR-OLD Dimple Lala has a classic case of the ABCDs: American Born Confused Desi-itis. She is not as Indian as her parents, nor is she as American as her best friend Gwyn. What she is is Confused. Dimple has spent most of her life resisting her parents' Indian traditions, but now suddenly finds that Indian-ness is hip. It is as if everything is being turned on its head and everyone wants a piece of the Indian action: from Starbucks serving chai to blonde-haired, blue-eyed Gwyn raiding Dimple's stash of bangles and bindis to accessorize her latest clubbing outfit. The trouble is that Dimple herself is still struggling to figure out how she can live with and within both Indian and American cultures without falling apart in the process.

Born Confused is a charming and vibrant coming-of-age tale, which charts Dimple's adventures through the course of a particularly colourful and chaotic summer, featuring encounters with identity politics, a thriving underground South Asian club scene, the Indian Marriage Mafia, cool college boys, drag queens and fusion fashion. The exuberant language and loveable characters make the book an un-put-down-able read, and Desai Hidier captures perfectly the multi-layered, kaleidoscopic world of an Indian-American teenager in the process of finding herself and her culture.

What is wonderful about this novel is that its story of growing pains, friendship, family and love holds universal appeal, while its distinctly youthful Indian-American voice will resonate deeply with thousands of real-life Dimples. Just as for Dimple, for many of us of Indian origin born outside India (and increasingly for those within too) identity and culture are critical issues that sometimes seem

overwhelming as we strive to create our own place in the world without giving in to others' attempts to put us into convenient but ill-fitting boxes. It is thrilling that finally there is a realistic, daring and insightful work of young adult fiction that celebrates the hybrid nature of identity in general and of Indian-American identity in particular.

Dimple's story of self-actualisation emphasises that identity and culture are not static but fluid and constantly changing. Culture and identity shape and reinforce each other. Neither is simply something that is given to us or something that we are born with – we are not passive receivers of our culture or our identity. In fact, as Dimple discovers, we are not only active participants in creating our own identity but can also help to create cultures and sub-cultures, as she learns from the students involved in the South Asian college and club scene. Culture is not just about heritage, history and tradition, it is also about how those things that are passed down are relevant to us now; it is also about innovation and lifestyle in the present day. It is about what we fuse and create, not just about the customs that we uphold.

Dimple, an aspiring photographer, has always loved taking black and white photographs, but finally decides to experiment with taking colour images. As she does so, it is as if her perspective changes and she begins to notice and appreciate the infinite variety of nuance and shade in real life as in her photographs; even her black and white photographs seem to have more shades of grey in them than before. With this new multi-coloured lens on life, Dimple finds herself and her world enriched. She finds that much of what she had dismissed is,

upon further examination, actually more complex and more interesting than she had imagined possible, with more connection and continuity between what she had previously regarded as disparate fragments of her world. Crucially, the new multi-coloured lens also enables Dimple to be more aware of other people's points of view, and in fact she finds that she cannot resolve the tensions in her personal relationships with her parents and her best friend without first understanding more about their perspectives. As she works through the difficulties in these relationships, both Dimple and the reader realise that, even when you feel you have been wronged, there is always someone else's side to the story.

As Dimple opens up her black and white world to the glory of colourful possibilities, she develops a much-needed sense of self. She becomes a skilled cultural navigator, more confident and less confused, learning a valuable lesson in cultural identity: "You were the dancer and the dance, and you could shape yourself through a riff, or a shrug, or on an on-the-back spin, adapt to new rhythms without losing a sense of harmony with yourself. And that harmony, that was no static thing either, but many different parts coming together to sing the same song." 🍷



Born Confused
by Tanuja Desai Hidier
Published by Scholastic
(USA: 2002; UK: 2003)
ISBN 0439 978 629

For more
information, visit
www.thisistanuja.com

Falguni Patel is News and Youth Editor and Director of Jain Spirit.

AMBIKA — THE PROTECTOR OF FAITH

Urmish Mehta recounts a unique story of courage and devotion which gave birth to the Goddess Ambika. Illustrated by **Charlotte Hodgson**

A SACRIFICE OF PERFUME FILLED THE QUIET hours of the early morning. Ambika with her two sons, Siddha and Buddha, sat in calm felicity. Her mind was a sea of sincerity, passionate in flow, without a single turbid wave. She was a princess of spotless ecstasies and delight. Ambika's husband, Somabhatt was a Brahmin priest. His nature was quite a contrast to his wife's. He was content to breathe, to feel, to sense, to act. He worked for the body's wants. He did not crave more.

On the day when Somabhatt had gone on a journey a wondering Jain monk, a direct disciple of Bhagwan Neminath, arrived in town. He was begging to break his one-month-long fast. He arrived at Ambika's house and stood outside. He clapped his hands to beg but his mind was not engaged in the begging. His seeking mind had ceased in the Truth that knows. Timeless silence prevailed in his eyes, the one Consciousness that acts as an infinite substrate of the entire universe was alone seen and experienced. His existence was luminosity, force and cosmic harmony.

Ambika saw the Jain monk standing like a fixed pedestal of prayer at her door. He looked calm and motionless, like a marble monument, his body supported a figure of eternal peace. He calmly accepted the alms Ambika offered. She felt as if some holy influence fell on her. A tide of mightier surging bore her life and the divine Presence moved her soul. Her face shone with the grace and beauty of spiritual light. Her doubts, like the murmuring of a celestial fire, broke out seeking an answer and said in a humble voice: "It seems like we move out of the unknown to the unknown. Our brief existence here is always surrounded by the grey shadow of unanswered questions. The dark clueless mysteries remain unsolved behind the starting line of our unknown fate. Life on earth is a brute accident, a net of birth and death in which by chance we live and die. Life's farther end is hidden from our sight. This ignorant and miserable life is a mere chance happening."

A soft response sprang from the Sage's heart to quell Ambika's doubt. "If a living Image that sits in your heart is known then all is known. Go within to find the origin and the master-clue. It is a boundary-less wideness and a fathomless point. It is the Truth and a substrate of all these cryptic shows in the world. Our strivings should always move towards that

which is Real. Know it and you will be freed from the miseries of your earthly life."

"How do I know that living Image within?"

"First, the questioner must admit the existence of the questioner, that is: herself. Examine: who is the questioner? It is the feeling of 'I' in you. Pursue the 'I' till you find that living Image within."

"But it is elusive. When I try to seek 'I', I don't find anything – no answer comes."

"Don't look for an answer that can be formed by words. Try to see who it is that does not find anything."

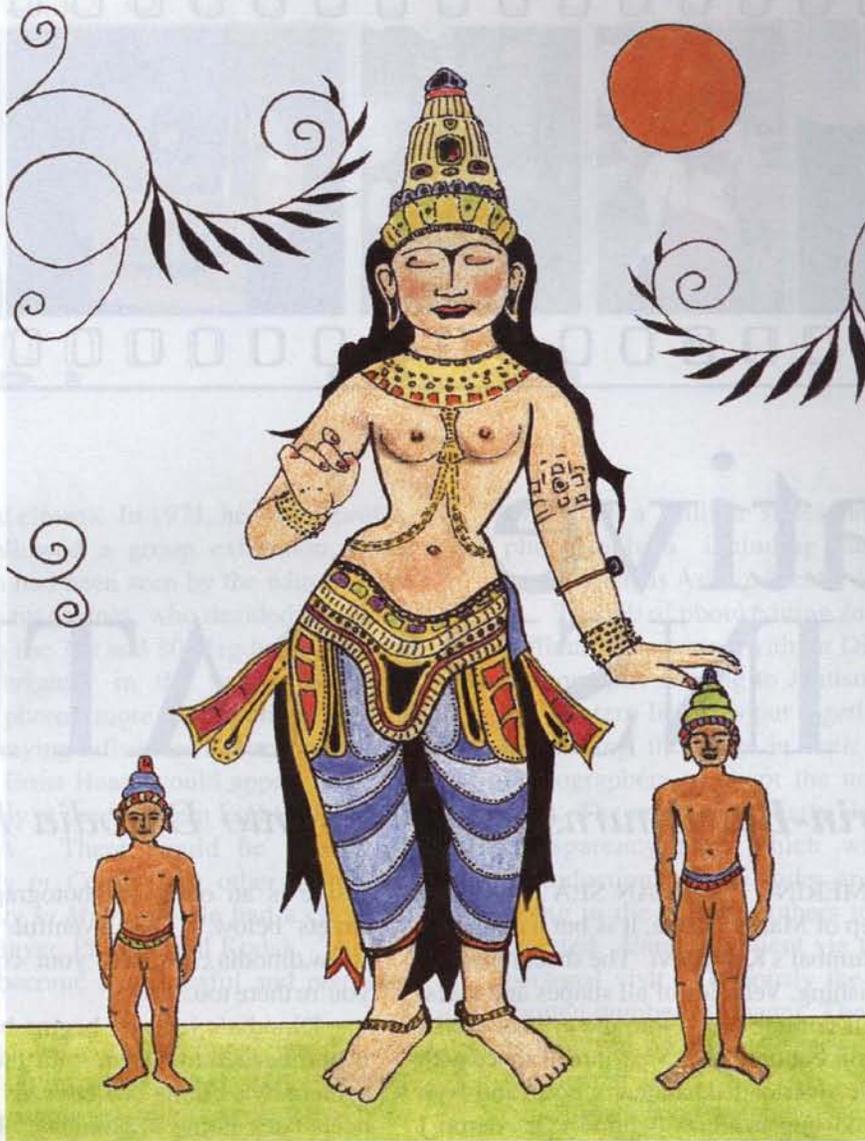
Ambika listened to her thought's inner sound and followed the rhythmic meanings of the sage's words. Upon return, Soma's ego was hurt on hearing from Ambika that she gave alms to the Jain monk. Being born in Brahmin heritage, how can one give alms to a non-Brahmin monk? The dragon-bird of anger raged in Soma: "Get out of my house at once and never return." Ambika had no choice but to leave her husband's house with Siddha in her right arm and Buddha clinging to her feet, and began walking through the endless night. She advanced her foot to plunge into the dread and hueless vacancy. At first they moved in a blind stretch of woods with anxious paces. The long green leaves pressed the three forlorn souls dimly through a realm of lonely whispers.

Ambika did not measure her loss with helpless thoughts. She leaned out over her two crying children in the great stillness without stir or voice, as if her mind had died with their hunger and pain. Still the human heart in her beat on. Her only aim, joy and origin were her two children, Siddha and Buddha. Her treasure was saved from the collapse of the entire space. She kept the grief in her personal depths. Even in this moment of her soul's despair, in its grim rendezvous with death and fear, no cry broke from her lips. Her heart was greater than human fate. Courage kept her mute. Yet, only her outward self suffered and strove, her spirit opened to the Spirit in all. A slow, faint, shadowlike remembrance moved in her heart. She felt like the sage was talking to her: "It is not by mere thinking but by a change of consciousness that you will open to the Truth. If you pass from the external thought activities to a direct, intimate,

thought-less inner consciousness then you will open to the Light. It is by the self-giving and surrender.”

Yes, surrender is a master act. It can link man’s strength to a transcendent force. Then a miracle is made the common rule. This mighty deed of surrender and prayer can change the course of karma. Suddenly there came the change on her, her soul was held up towards its luminous source. The veil between her and her Soul was torn. The thinker was dissolved forever, only the source was seen. Then Ambika realised a calm power seated in her heart. She knew this was the power that moves the universe, being itself immobile, and looks on life as only a witness. It remains untouched and tranquil amid errors and tears of life. The soul, who had hidden so far, soared out of the luminous nest of her heart. Her grief passed away, her mind became still and her heart beat quietly with a sovereign force. Silence and swiftness prevailed. All her acts sprang from godhead’s calm. Earth wove its sweetness, greenness and delight round her sweet and innocent children. Its agreeable brilliance of vivid hues delighted her heart. All of a sudden, a dried mango tree by the roadside came to bear mangoes and a dry lake nearby was filled at once with water to quench the thirst and hunger of two young toddlers. A wide and tranquil air remembered peace again. Calm ecstasy filled meditation’s solitary heart.

Upon hearing this miraculous news, Soma’s sight turned within. He realised his mistake. The mere memory of Ambika filled his heart with devotion to Bhagwan Neminath. The presence was born in his heart, a guiding light awoke within. Stillness fell upon his mind. He understood that in the moments when an inner lamp of repentance is lit and the mental thoughts are left outside, his spirit speaks to the Spirit only to eliminate



Ambika with her two sons, Siddha and Buddha

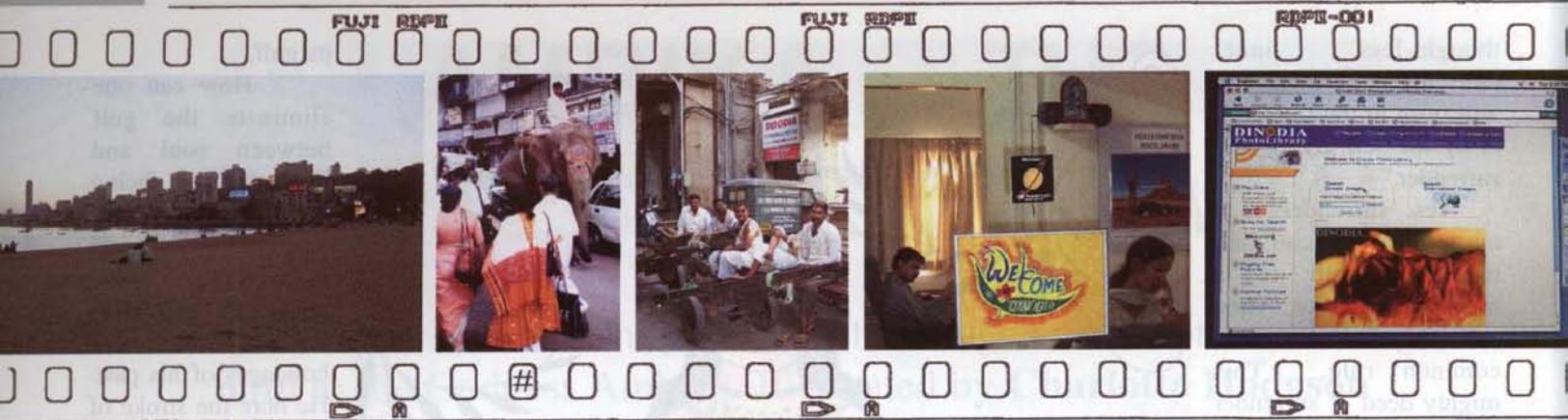
its gulf.

How can one eliminate the gulf between soul and Soul, without facing the engines of karma’s massed machinery? Soma knew that he had to free himself from the bondages of his past. He bore the stroke of that almighty, the *Aayushya karma*, which kills to give a new life. Soma died and was immediately reborn as a lion in the forest. Soma’s new birth as a lion was to serve his family, to fulfill his duties that he never fulfilled as a father and a husband before. Memories that were dissolved from the mind in karma’s natal sleep flickered in the gloom as if they wished to live again. The lion’s saffron mane was jewelled with the mystic glow that gleamed in the darkness. He served as a vehicle for

Ambika, now the protector of Jin Sovereignty (*Sasan-devi*) and the Mother Goddess.

Many years later, in 1335, a sacred image was made by Acharya Jin-Prabha Suri, besides which a lamp continued to stay alight. A mediating ray never stopped to touch the earth bridging the gulf between the minds of devotees of Neminath and Bhagwan Neminath. Its brightness linked their transience to the Eternal. The sacred image of Ambika made Neminath’s devotees aware of their spirit’s true celestial source. Ambika forever reminds us that the Jain guardian spirit helps us in our efforts to seek the self (*Samyak Darshan*), our true prosperity. She helps us secure true devotion to *Bhagwan Tirthankara*, our only protection. 🙏

Urmish Mehta is a Pathshala teacher for the age group of 2 to 7. He lives in Columbus, Ohio, USA.



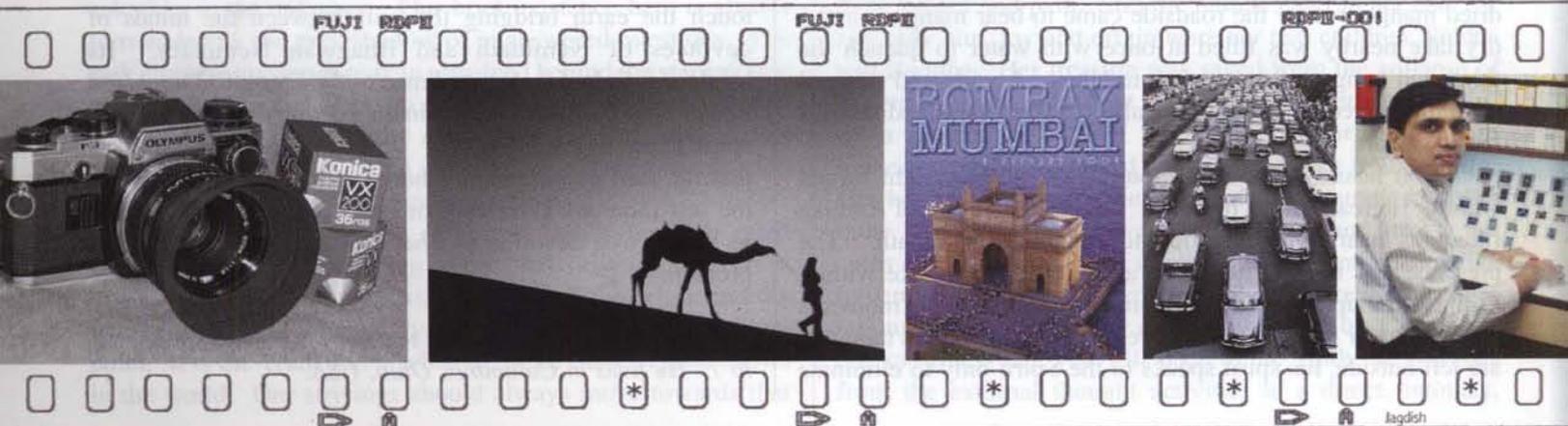
creative INSPIRATION

James Maturin-Baird turns his focus onto Dinodia Picture Library

FROM THE SHIMMERING ARABIAN SEA AND THE cosmopolitan sweep of Marine Drive, it is but a couple of hundred yards to Mumbai's Kalbadevi. The sheer tumult in this district is quite astonishing. Vehicles of all shapes and sizes, with their radios up to full volume tuned into the cricket whilst their drivers blow their horns continuously, vie for road space with an endless stream of people, overloaded handcarts, cows and even the occasional elephant. Skirting an anti-Valentine's Day demo, I bear off the main street until a Shiva Trident marks the beginning of a narrow lane, down which a group of barrow boys are taking their leave under a red and white sign. Then, up a dimly lit staircase to a door with a hand drawn poster, so reminiscent of 1960's psychedelic art, is a sign which announces 'Welcome to Dinodia'.

Inside is an oasis of photography from the chaos of the streets below. Less eventful but much easier is to tap www.dinodia.com onto your computer, click go, and now you're there too.

Dinodia's journey begins back across the Arabian Sea in the bazaars of Aden with the purchase of an Agfa Box camera by a doting uncle for his teenage nephew kicking his heels back home in Bombay. That gift would fire Jagdish Agarwal's imagination and his interest in photography and would prove to be his 'ticket to ride'. Photography courses were rare in India at that time but upon discovering that the Indo-American Institute ran them, Jagdish enrolled as a student and proceeded to sweep the board of prizes both in





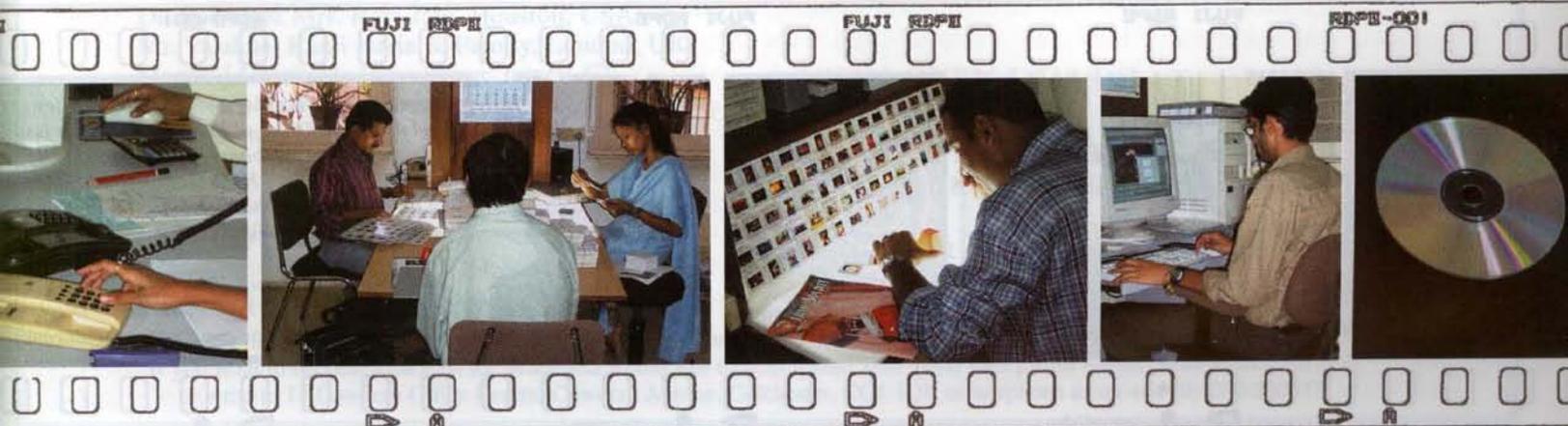
his foundation and advanced classes. In 1971, he turned professional. His big break followed a group exhibition at the Jehangir Art Gallery, which had been seen by the editor of one of the *Times of India* Group magazines, who decided to publish one of his photos. Through the 70s and 80s Jagdish Agarwal's name would burn ever brighter in the world of Indian photography. His beautiful photos, more often than not in black and white, occasionally betraying influences of such masters as Henri Cartier Bresson and Ernst Haas, would appear in seven one-man shows, most notably at the Southern Lights Gallery in San Antonio, Texas, USA. There would be two books published: *India – a Study in Colour*, the other going into reprint at present as *Bombay to Mumbai*. He had a client list which included Air India, Bayer, Phillips and Kodak. The boy with the box camera had become a successful and respected photographer.

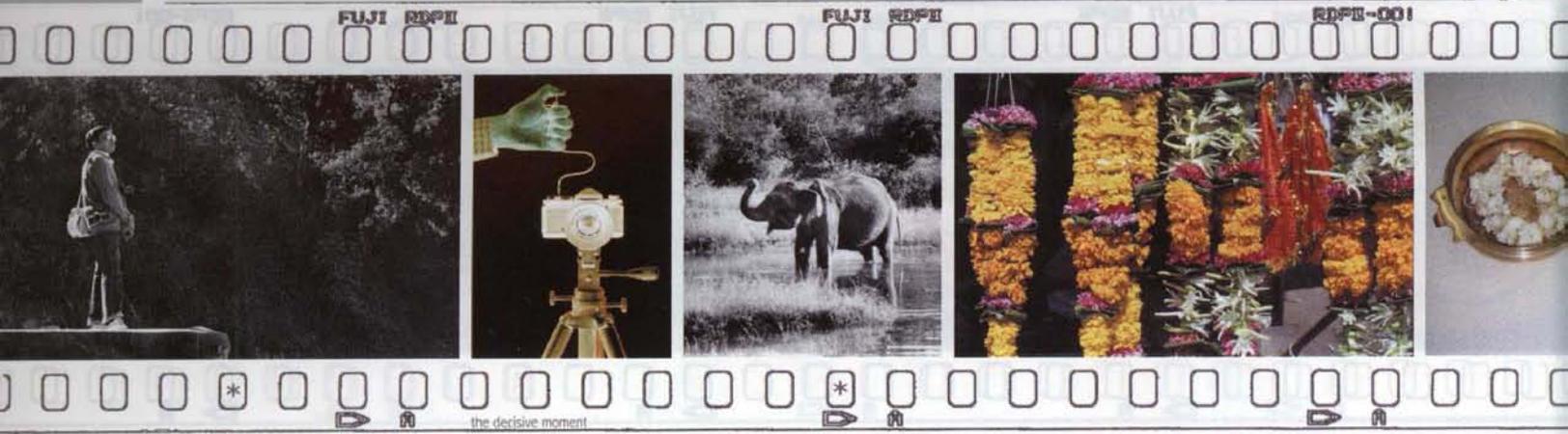
Come the mid-eighties, and Agarwal found that he was spending ever more time sourcing images from fellow photographers for his clients. This is how the picture agency was born. It was given the name Dinodia in recognition of the Agarwal family roots in the village of Dinod in Harayana. With a reputation for honesty, integrity and growing sales, entire libraries and back catalogues were handed to Dinodia to represent. Today, it is the largest image library in India, with

over half a million slides and prints by three hundred photographers including such internationally known cameramen as Ashvin Mehta, Anil Dave, and Hari Mahidar.

The job of photo editing *Jain Spirit* would be a far more difficult proposition without Dinodia, for their collection of photographs relating to Jainism is greater than those of all the western libraries put together. Photo libraries work by identifying the gaps in their archives then sending out photographers to shoot the necessary images to plug the gaps. The images are nearly always shot on low I.S.O. rated transparency film which was traditionally better for reproduction. These slides are then edited down: the best going to the website; others to be filed and the rest to be rejected. Enter the client via the Internet, the phone or by personal visit. Obviously the website can only contain a limited number of images. The Internet side of the business is now run by Tushar Agarwal, Jagdish's son, who joined the firm in 2001.

If there is no suitable image on the website, a request to Tushar will be responded to with a selection of photos which can be accessed via a link or received by email. Failing all of these methods, Dinodia will dispatch a cameraman to shoot that specific photograph for you. In general terms, a visit to the library pays the best dividends





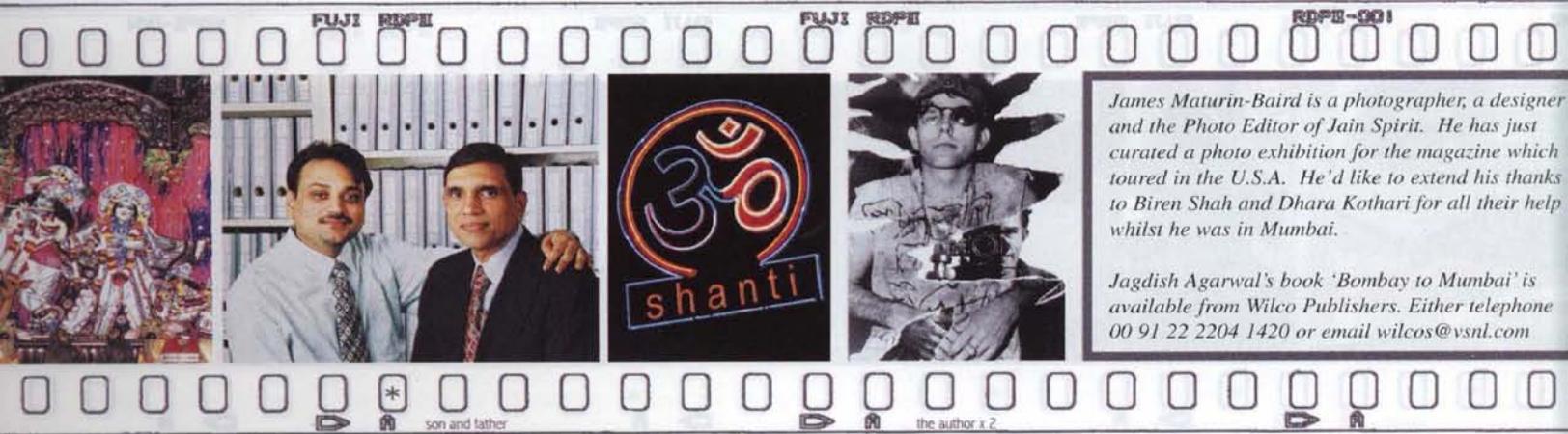
where you can choose from the complete collection then receive the images as digital or analogue duplications. Dinodia exemplifies a new spirit among the Indian business community - a quality of service, which always tries to fulfil the requirements of the client as patiently, quickly and politely as possible.

Of medium height, wearing outsized spectacles which give him a boyish look and with a smile on his face, Jagdish Agarwal moves around his desk to shake hands. Significantly, this managing director chooses to share his office with five others. His manner is warm and engaging as we exchange pleasantries, though a hint of sadness flickers in his eyes when talk turns to his present photographic projects, "Sadly, I just don't get time for photography at the moment, but I will return to it." So the creative impulse is on hold for now. "Before I picked up a camera, I painted and wrote poetry, then photography took over completely, I even had my darkroom next to my bedroom!" Like Ansel Adams, whose work he so enjoys, Jagdish believes that photography can be a spiritual practice. "I can break it down into three parts: the searching, through a jungle, up a hill, down a street, wherever, until the subject is found; the meditation on the light, on how I wish the print to look; then the exultation or joy when all the elements are right and you press the shutter, what Cartier Bresson called 'the decisive moment'. Throughout this process, I am in a state of complete concentration. My wife always claims that if she accompanies me when I am shooting, I appear unaware of her

existence."

Photography is a powerful tool for altering people's perceptions. However, for the photographer of conscience it can also present conundrums. "The cliché 'a picture is worth a thousand words' is wholly true. Therefore we have to take responsibility for our work. In my career, I've seen poverty, corruption, negligence and violence. Do I put down my camera and try to help then and there or do I take the photograph which may prove to be more beneficial in the long run? It can be a cruel choice."

Both Jagdish and Tushar are veterans of meditation, and *pooja* is always offered at the start of each day. "I've tried various practices within different philosophies, all of them being facets of the one. They play a profound part in my life and that of the Dinodia," Jagdish explained to me. Although it is impossible to measure, it is a fact that Dinodia remains at the top of the tree in its homeland. Agarwal perceives his work as being a pleasurable duty to both his personal and extended family of photographers and all those that work for the company. For me perhaps the best illustration of the ethos of Jagdish Agarwal and Dinodia is when in Mumbai recently, I was having problems with my cameras. They offered unconditional advice and support in these matters despite the fact that, short term, it could only prove detrimental to their income. In doing so Jagdish made something more important than money, a friend. 🙏



James Maturin-Baird is a photographer, a designer and the Photo Editor of Jain Spirit. He has just curated a photo exhibition for the magazine which toured in the U.S.A. He'd like to extend his thanks to Biren Shah and Dhara Kothari for all their help whilst he was in Mumbai.

Jagdish Agarwal's book 'Bombay to Mumbai' is available from Wilco Publishers. Either telephone 00 91 22 2204 1420 or email wilcos@vsnl.com



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The above is based on information available as of mid July 2003. New additions will appear in the next issue.

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CHILDREN ADORE NATURE

Duli Chand Jain reports on a unique initiative, the Karuna Clubs, to educate children about compassion

THERE IS A NEW AWAKENING TODAY IN THE whole of humanity about the reverence for all life. Many eminent thinkers say that the life of every being is sacred and must be respected. "Our task must be to free ourselves by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures, the whole of nature and its beauty," said Albert Einstein. There is a lot of emphasis on animal rights along with human rights by statesmen and educationalists. In India, the efforts of the late Smt. Rukmani Devi Arundale were successful in passing the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act in 1960, and that year under her presidency the Government of India established the Animal Welfare Board of India.

Remarkable thinkers of the modern world have emphasised the need for a humane education programme all over the world. Yehudi Menuhin once asked, "Why is compassion not part of our established curriculum, an inherent part of our education? Compassion, awe, wonder, curiosity, exaltation, humility – these are the very foundation of any real civilisation, no longer the prerogatives of any of the churches, but belonging to everyone, every child in every home, in every school." The Karuna Club programme is part of this humane education activity.

The objective of Karuna Clubs is to create awareness amongst students from the early stages of their life and kindle their feelings of love, kindness and compassion towards all living beings, animal life and plant life. This is an activity-oriented programme and it has proved highly successful in changing the attitude and character of the student community.

All the great teachers of humanity stressed the importance of compassion (*karuna*). "Live and let live," said Lord Mahavir. In Vedic religion *ahimsa parmo dharma* means non-violence is eternal *dharma*. Lord Buddha said, "He who seeks his own happiness by punishing or killing animals, will not find happiness after death." Jesus' words are, "Thou shall not kill." Prophet Mohammed claimed, "Whoever is kind to lesser creatures is kind to himself." In spite of these teachings, animal cruelties have been on the increase in all parts of the world. Animals are butchered to get meat, to be used in industries, in research, in chemicals, drugs and cosmetics, in insecticides and pesticides. In 1933 in the USA, the National Parent-Teacher Association Congress declared that children trained to extend

justice, kindness and mercy to animals become more kind, just and considerate in their relations with one another. Therefore, it is important to teach the principles of justice, goodwill and humanity towards life in the schools and colleges. The cultivation of the spirit of kindness to animals is but the starting point towards such an ideal. A generation trained in these principles will solve the problems and encourage a bond of friendship rather than rivalry at an international level.



Karuna Club member acting as a tree

The Karuna Club organisation started in 1995 in a humble way in Chennai in just three schools. Within a short period of time it has grown to 508 clubs in schools and colleges. We are now endeavouring to spread it to all parts of India and abroad. In order to achieve this, we have consulted many educationalists and teachers on how to develop an effective programme which will really promote compassion and kindness in the hearts of children.

The unanimous advice has been that children prefer activity-oriented programmes to lectures and talks. We have developed a fourteen-point programme which will be popular with young people. It was also felt that training the teachers is essential,

so orientation and training programmes for them were also started. The name 'Karuna Club' itself denotes that it is an enjoyable activity. It is not merely preaching to students; they can use their own initiative under the guidance of teachers. Each school is expected to conduct a minimum of six programmes a year. This year we have included a number of activities which would inspire and kindle the qualities of compassion and reverence for life in our students. The following programmes serve as a guideline to promote *karuna*.

SCHOOL PROGRAMMES TO PROMOTE COMPASSION

- Monthly/bi-monthly meetings on animal protection, non-violence, *karuna* and vegetarianism where a school teacher or a guest speaker will interact with the students,
- Drawing, painting, elocution competitions, essay writing and quiz programmes,
- Films and video cassettes on animal welfare, on the

prevention of cruelty to animals and on the vegetarian way of life,

- Annual exhibition of charts, photos and cartoons on the evil effects of slaughter-houses and on the merits of a healthy and nutritious diet,
- Organising picnics with a variety of vegetarian food brought by the students,
- A monthly wall magazine where children can display articles, stories, drawings and the distribution of literature on the subject of compassion and vegetarianism to the public for awareness (in local languages); introducing relevant books and periodicals at the school library,
- Organising rallies in the school area or in town with banners and flags to promote the above objectives, to take part in the activities of other organisations with similar aims, like Blue Cross.

Karuna Clubs are requested to take up a minimum of ten activities a year and send us reports regularly. The reports will be maintained in the respective school life and will be considered for evaluation at the end of the year when presenting awards.



Peace March to commemorate World Animals Day

EXAMPLES OF ACTIVITIES

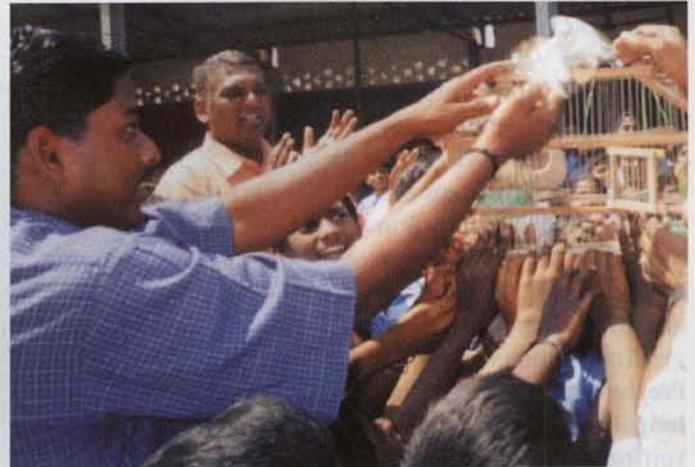
- Celebrating *Vanamahotsava* day by planting saplings, growing plants in coconut shells, watching germination in the pots, watering plants in the garden,
- Celebrating Animal Welfare Week by conducting awareness rallies on animal and human welfare, printing pamphlets, enacting dramas or conducting competitions. Any other activity to the convenience of the school can also be undertaken,
- Feeding birds/animals with grains, keeping the environment clean and green, adopting and observing a tree in the school campus,
- Enacting animal stories like *Panchathantra* stories, compassion stories, *jataka* tales using animal masks, role play and mono acting,
- Preparing an album about domestic, wild and endangered animals, including their feeding habits, visiting a zoological

park or bird sanctuaries,

- Visiting old people's homes, orphanages, homes for the handicapped, the destitute and mentally retarded, spending time with them, or helping the blind crossing the road,
- Visiting *Gosalas* and *Pinjarapoles* (animal sanctuaries), Blue Cross, SPCA and PFA, and collect information about animal welfare activities,
- Paper folding, making animal shapes, animal homes (natural habitats) like nests, burrows or caves.

Teacher training programmes were conducted to hand over the theme and spirit to the torch bearers, the teachers who are responsible for moulding the young minds. A special mention has to be made about the tremendously positive attitude of teachers who are eagerly waiting to pass on the benefits of the Training Programmes to the students. Humane education is possible only through a comprehensive syllabus which is made an essential part of the curriculum and followed in all earnestness and sincerity, without attaching any stigma of marking and ranking.

We hope that people in different parts of the world can



Releasing the white dove of peace

replicate this approach in their own local schools or communities or, at the very least, remember to expose their own children to *karuna* in simple and practical ways, whether at home, during trips or through books and videos. In this way, children will grow up experiencing the beauty of compassion and become its practitioners. Practical example is by far the best way of education. We should endeavour to be good examples for our future generation. 🕊️



Dr. Duli Chand Jain is the untiring founder of Karuna Clubs and author of a number of books including 'Pearls of Jaina Wisdom'. He can be contacted on karunainternational@vsnl.net

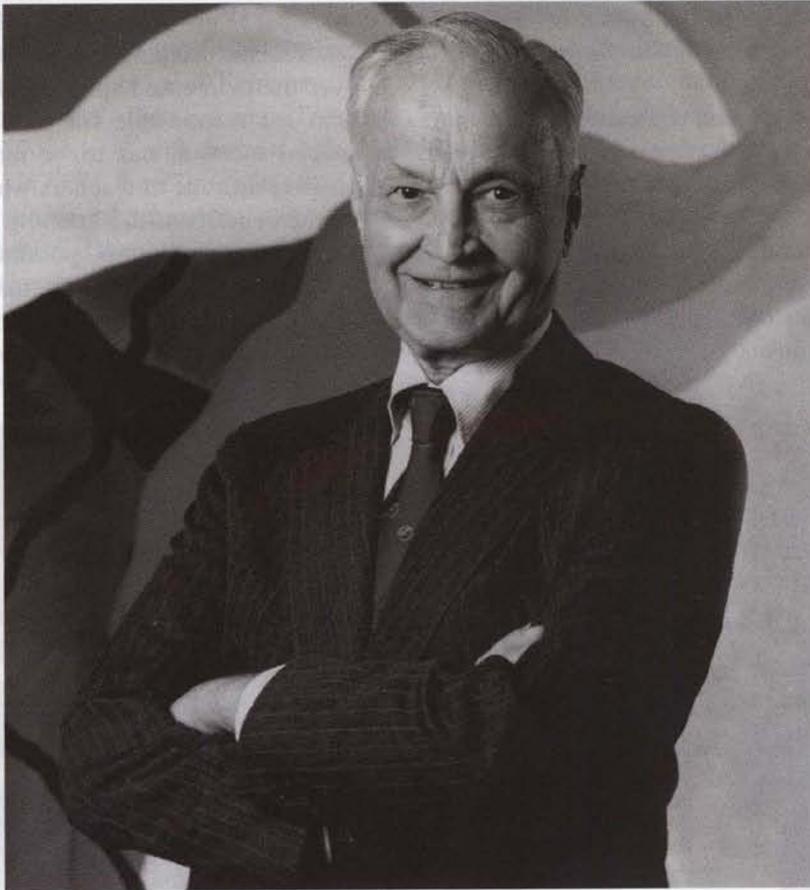
SOCIETY NEEDS FAITH

Sir John Marks Templeton explains to **Michael Tobias** why faith is crucial to society

THE SIMPLE beginnings of the life of John Marks Templeton, born in the small Tennessee town of Winchester in 1912, held little indication of the enormous financial empire he would one day oversee. In 1954, he began the Templeton Growth Fund, an investment corporation that has become legendary. By 1992, Templeton's companies were controlling thirty mutual funds around the globe, including his Growth, Global and World funds, managing over \$20 billion in assets; far more money than the annual GNP of many countries combined.

Templeton, who is a Presbyterian elder, has long maintained that spirituality and not economics has been the single most important aspect of his life. The combination of studious business practices with an unflinching devotion to seeking a higher truth has become the hallmark of Templeton's life. He feels that both disciplines have limitless potential, but only spirituality can bring real advancement to an individual and to the world. Templeton's actions give credence to his tenets.

One accomplishment indicative of his beliefs was the establishment of the Templeton Prize for Progress in Religion in 1972. Convinced that the Nobel awards overlooked achievements in spirituality, Templeton created the prize to honour what he considered to be more important than all categories of the Nobel prizes combined. The Templeton Prize, currently worth more than one million dollars, is the world's largest award. In the stated objectives of the award, Templeton says that progress is needed in religion as in all other dimensions of human experience and endeavour. There has been a long departure, at least in Western culture, from the last



Sir John Marks Templeton

synthesis when religious and scientific knowledge were organically related. It is urgent that progress in religion be accelerated as progress in other disciplines takes place. A wider universe demands deeper awareness of the dimension of the spirit and of the spiritual resources available for man, of the infinity of God, and of the divine knowledge and understanding still to be claimed.

The first recipient of the Templeton Prize was Mother Teresa of Calcutta. Others have included: Chiara Lubich, founder of the Focolare Movement in Italy; Prof. Thomas Torrance, Moderator of the Church of Scotland; the Rev. Dr. Billy Graham; the writer Alexander Solzhenitsyn;

the Rt. Hon. Lord Jakobovits, Chief Rabbi of Great Britain; Dr. Inamullah Khan, Secretary-General of the World Muslim Congress in Pakistan; Sir Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, former President of India and Oxford Professor of Eastern Religions and Ethics; and the Rev. Nikkyo Niwano, founder of Rissho Kosei-Kai in Japan.

On a smaller scale, the importance of spirituality in Templeton's life becomes evident by the opening prayers at the annual meetings of his mutual Funds. Templeton says that the prayers are not designed to make the stocks improve but rather to calm and clear the minds of the stockholders. He explained to Michael Tobias:

"Our antagonisms come from the human ego and self-centredness. You don't find people fighting each other over their doctrine. You find them fighting each other over territory and authority. Throughout history when a high priest and a dictator were the same persons, they fought

over territory, over authority, not over religion. Religion has always shown a tendency toward peace.

There are people working towards uniting the different faiths and denominations. But I don't think that is God's purpose. As I study God's creations, I can see that he didn't create only one kind of insect; he created more than a million kinds. As you go down through geologic history, the variety has not got less but greater. I think the same is true in religion or the study of spiritual matters.

It is part of God's purpose, too, to have his children study from every different aspect and then to love each other, talk to each other, learn from each other. I rejoice that there is a wonderfully rich variety of religions now. Surely we will not only love each other, but also learn from each other. That is a far greater blessing than if we just had a uniform concept without any progress.

We can admire what is done by everybody. There is no form of worship of God that I don't admire. I admire the ancient scripture, I am an enthusiastic Christian, and I believe that the gospel of Christ is a marvellous revelation. But at the same time, I can learn by reading the Jewish scriptures, or the Hindu scriptures, or the Buddhist scriptures. They are all approaching the question of God and God's purpose and spirituality in different ways. It adds a rich variety to my knowledge and yours if we have all these people trying to share their most beautiful insights, their most beautiful triumphs. The secret of success is to try to give it away. If your life is focused on getting, you are going to be miserable. If your life is focused on giving, you are going to be an automatic success.

It is part of God's ongoing creative process to have every human being different, to have a wide variety of religions and a wide variety of denominations and churches. He gives some talents to every human being, but not the same talents. He didn't give me the musical talents he gave you. And not the same quantity of talents, either. The parable of the talents in the Bible teaches us that whatever gifts God gave us, it is our duty to use them to the utmost: "The lord of the manor went away and gave to one servant five talents, another two, and another one. The first two servants multiplied the talents and gave them back to the lord. The one with one talent was fearful and buried his talent, and gave the lord back only what he had been given. So the lord said to the first two, 'Enter into the joy of my kingdom.' And the third man he banished from the kingdom." It is a dramatic, clear lesson: you should discover what your talents are and then use them to the utmost to do the most good in accordance with God's purposes. If you start out to gain happiness for yourself, you'll never achieve it. But if you start out to give happiness to other people, you can't help the happiness coming back to you.

Science has discovered coal, then petroleum, then nuclear energy and now the renewable types of energy. But it goes far beyond that. Science is discovering the creations of the creator. For fifteen billion years, our universe had been in the process of creation. Still, just in the last seventy years have scientists been

able to see for the first time what happened a billion or fifteen billion years ago. We never knew, until seventy years ago, if there was any galaxy outside our own little Milky Way. Now we know there are a hundred million other galaxies – surely all created by the same creator. The majesty of God, his infinity and eternity is becoming more and more apparent because we are seeking it. That is what we should be doing in religion. My efforts now, for the rest of my life, are focused on spirituality. How can people grow spiritually the way they have grown scientifically and materially?

I will give you one illustration. One of my foundations has published a book called *A Bibliography of Research by Natural Scientists on Spiritual Subjects*. We have collected over a hundred and fifty articles from learned, peer review journals of the highest scientific standard where scientists have been studying spiritual matters. For example, none of them doubt there is such a thing as love, and yet little has been done scientifically to study love. It is beginning, though. Prayer, worship and all the other things that are of a spiritual nature can be studied, and if they were studied it would be a marvellous thing. (The amount that is being spent worldwide on scientific research today is about a billion dollars a day).

I have established prizes for progress in religion. Let's take Sir Alister Hardy, who was one of the prize winners, as an example. When he was fifty he became world famous and was knighted by the Queen for his work in botany because he was the world expert on the varieties of planktons in the ocean and in the air. Then he stopped all of that and said he was going to do the same thing with the varieties of spiritual experience. So he spent the last thirty years of his life collecting, classifying and studying the varieties of religious experience and wrote a whole long list of books with wonderful titles like *The Biology of God*.

We are now thinking of having a survey to find out among the professors of hard sciences, such as chemistry, medicine and so forth, how many of them pray. We presume it is going to be a very high proportion. To be a scientist doesn't mean that you close your mind to the underlying realities. Scientists are only studying those things that are tangible and visible, but that is not the total, the underlying reality. The thing that sustains and improves the outward appearances is a spiritual matter. More and more scientists are coming to believe that the real underlying facts are religious and that science is just the study of the manifestations. Everything that we touch, see or hear is temporary, compared to the underlying reality that has created the universe. 🙏

The above article is extracted from 'A Parliament of Souls' edited by Michael Tobias, Jane Morrison and Bettina Gray and published by KQED Books, San Francisco. For more details visit www.templeton.org

REAP WHAT YOU SOW

P. S. Surana explains and demystifies the practical implications of Karma Philosophy

THE DIVERSE AND STRANGE EVENTS WHICH take place in the world and in our lives have their roots in karma. We can see the tree but not the seed. Without the seed the tree wouldn't be there. Similarly, the world that we see, the occasions, the events have karma as their seeds. Karma is not visible, yet it monitors and records our thoughts, words and deeds, impacting the quality of our present and future lives.

There are two main divisions of karma. One is *Ghati karma*, which destroys the main attributes of the soul (*atma*). They are Gyanavaraniya, Darshanavaraniya, Mohaniya and Antaraya karma. The other group is *Aaghati karma* (*Vedaniya*, Aayushya, Nama and Gotra karmas) which do not destroy the main attributes of *atma*. All Jivas acquire karma by thoughts, speech and actions. We can acquire auspicious karma and inauspicious karma, and they are being constituted continually. Acquired auspicious karma gives us happiness and inauspicious karma gives suffering.

Gyanavaraniya Karma

Some people are more intelligent, some are less. Some are clever at studies whereas some are dull. Some are smart, some are not. The reason for these variations is their own Gyanavaraniya karmas. These karmas don't allow you to get knowledge or information. It prevents you from knowing what others are thinking. It prevents you from knowing the world. This karma covers the infinite knowledgeable *atma*, like clouds over the Sun, same as when the eyesight is blocked if we cover the eyes. The thicker the block, the less is the development of knowledge and vice-versa. We attain true knowledge (*kevalgyana*) if we remove the cover. Gyanavaraniya karmas are acquired in the following ways: criticising the guru and other learned; taking wrong credits of the good deeds of others; giving trouble to the learned; creating hurdles in learning; hating or not respecting books; creating unnecessary fights and controversy with the learned.

One who surrenders himself to the guru, dharma, the learned or knowledge and one who performs penance can destroy Gyanavaraniya karmas. He can become good in future if he dedicates himself sincerely. There are five kinds of Gyana: Matigyana, Shrutgyana, Avadhigyana, Manpariyavgyana and Kevalgyana. One should not forget the following five vices, which always obstruct knowledge: pride, anger, recklessness, sickness and laziness.

Darshanavaraniya Karma

These karmas reduce the power of vision and perception. They reduce the powers of senses in the same way as a guard prevents people to meet the king directly. We cannot see the things behind a wall, a mountain or even our head. We cannot see the entire world at a time. The reason for the obstruction is

our Darshanavaraniya karma. Due to these karmas we become sleepy. One can sleep while lying down, while sitting, while standing or while walking. One would have his favourite meal in sleep or travel somewhere, but he may not remember his deeds when he wakes up.

Darshanavaraniya karmas are acquired by neglecting or criticising Tritatva (deva, guru and dharma); by misusing speech, eyes and other senses; by not following dharma with faith. Darshanavaraniya karmas bind you in six ways: criticising the 'curious' (the knowledge seeker); taking wrong credits of the good deeds of others; giving trouble to the 'curious'; creating hurdles for the 'curious'; hating the 'curious'; creating unnecessary fights and controversy with the 'curious'. You can suffer in the following ways: Nidra, Prachala, Thinadrinidra, Chakshudarshanavaraniya, Achakshudarshanavaraniya, Avadhidarshanavaraniya and Kevaldarshanavaraniya. We can destroy these karmas by worshipping and devoting to Tritatva faithfully and by making good use of our senses.

Mohaniya Karma

Mohaniya karma destroys our senses in the same way as drinking alcohol destroys our senses. Under the effect of this karma, the Jiva doesn't recognise a good teacher, good deva, good dharma and his own soul. It would consider good things as unwholesome and falsehood to be true. Anger, pride, attachment and avarice are the results of these karmas, which can put smiles on some faces and tears in others' eyes. It gives happiness to some, unhappiness to others. They make people afraid, collide and fight, and at times they unite them. They make us doubt about dharma, guru and god. Of all the karmas, Mohaniya is dreaded the most. They are built by intense anger, intense pride, strong attachment, acute avarice and deceit.

It can be destroyed by treating everyone alike by endurance, by true knowledge of the soul, by practising detachment to worldly life and living like a Lotus (which is in the water but always above the water). Mohaniya karma binds you in six ways: intense anger, intense pride, strong attachment, acute avarice, intense darshana-mohaniya and intense charitra-mohaniya. It can make you suffer in twenty-eight ways.

Antaraya Karma

You have money, food and clothes, which you can give to the needy. But if you don't feel like giving it, the reason behind it is Antaraya karma. You are trying hard to get money, success, fame, and if you don't get it, it means your Antaraya karmas are obstructing you. You have many of your favourite dishes, beautiful clothes, a nice house, a loving mother and money. But you can't eat those dishes,

can't wear the clothes, can't stay with your loving mother in your house and can't enjoy your money. This is the punishment of Antaraya karmas. If you haven't given food or donated money to the needy or if you prevented others from donating; if you spoilt relations between other people or hindered someone's penance, then you acquire Antaraya karma. They can be destructed by donations to genuine people, by penance, by showing love and compassion to all Jivas, by kind acts and by supporting others' good actions. Antaraya karmas bind you and make you suffer in five ways: Danantaraya, Labhantaraya, Bhogantaraya, Upabhogantaraya and Viryantaraya.

Vedaniya Karma

There are two types of Vedaniya karma: Sata Vedaniya and Asata Vedaniya. The first gives happiness, health, happy family life and mental peace. It is acquired in ten different ways: by making others happy, giving them peace, repose and help; saving and serving others and keeping compassion for the feelings of animals; by not making them unhappy; not troubling them; having sympathy for their worries, grief and wailing and never killing them. They make you enjoy life in several different ways viz. beauty, good colour, good smell, good touch, happiness of mind, soft speech and healthy body. Asata Vedaniya karma gives unhappiness, health problems, mental agitation and trouble from family members. Asata Vedaniya karmas are acquired by making other Jivas unhappy, troubling, killing or beating others.

Convenience of household life and health fitness are achieved by Sata Vedaniya karmas. If you want happiness, peace and health avoid Asata Vedaniya karmas, which are acquired in twelve ways and make you suffer in eight ways (exactly opposite of Sata Vedaniya karmas).

Aayushya Karma

There are four types of Aayushya karma: Devagati (angel-), Manushyagati (human-), Tiryanchgati (animal-) and Narakgati (hell-beings) Aayushya, which influence the future life form.

Why did we become human beings, i.e. manushya? If a Jiva is simple, humble, without envy or pride and is merciful, then it can become human in the next life.

Who can be a deva-being? Mainly four types of behaviours have been indicated for devagati: accepting *Sadhu jeevan* or attachment to austerity and acceptance of ascetic life; becoming a *Shravak* (one who lives with Jain principles in daily life); performing penance for no materialistic benefits; bearing pain with equanimity.

Why do some Jivas attain tiryanchgati? Jivas indulging into any of these activities can attain Tiryanchgati: committing frauds; speaking lies to deceive someone; keeping incorrect weights and measurements; and for misrepresentation.

Who go to hell? Jivas that eat eggs and meat, kill panchendriya Jiva, go for abortion, do major sinful work, or those who are too materialistic and run for worldly possessions. People who do the above things in any form, or help others doing such things or recommend others to do the above things also go to Narakgati, which is the most painful of the gatis. One

can attain *moksha* (get relieved of four *gatis*) only from Manushyagati, which is considered better than Devagati and the most important of all gatis. There can be no alterations once the Aayushya karma is built or acquired. The Jiva has to accept the Aayushya of the gati endowed to it and live for as many years as has been endowed. Due to this karma, the Jiva has to get birth and pass through the life and death cycle many times.

Nama Karma

Some people are fair while some are ugly. Some are strong in body whereas some are weak. This is the magic of Nama karma. Some are black or white and some with yellow skin or red skin, some are tall and some are short. Out of two equally sweet tongued persons one is liked while the other is disliked. Some get credit, others discredit; some get good fortune, others misfortune. The creator of this is Nama karma, of which there are two types. Auspicious or Shubha Nama karma gives good body, beauty and colour appearance by the good use of body, speech, simple thinking and love for virtues. Inauspicious or Ashubha Nama karma gives ugliness, unhealthy body due to crooked use of the body, speech and thinking, by injuring someone or by spoiling others' life. Both Nama karmas bind in four ways and make you suffer and enjoy in fourteen different ways.

Gotra Karma

Gotra karmas are of two types: High Gotra and Low Gotra. With High Gotra karma a Jiva gets respect, power, honour and an affluent and cultured family. Due to Low Gotra karma a Jiva gets insults, dishonour and poor status in the society. Low Gotra karmas are built in eight ways: vain pride of strength, power, wealth, community, intelligence, penance, knowledge and money and also by arrogance and hatred towards others. High Gotra karmas are acquired by politeness, humbleness, simplicity, by bowing down to elders and by doing salutations to virtuous people.

According to Jain philosophy, our karma is solely responsible for our present and good future. Our life's direction is governed by our own karmas. All events and happenings in our life are controlled by our past and present karma. Therefore we should be careful in all our deeds, thoughts and actions, and keep them in the right direction at all moments for beautiful, peaceful, tranquil and fulfilled future life.

Karma is an automatic natural justice. We should be neutral in all circumstances (whether adverse or favourable) so we do not bind new karmas. We should remain on the right path and always keep a benevolent mind. 🙏



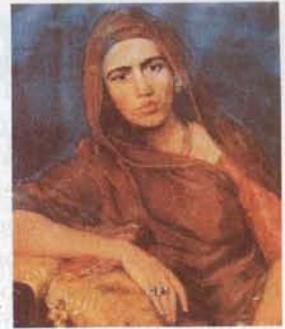
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Sheth Hutheesing

VISIONARY PHILANTHROPY

Purnima Hutheesing relates her unique family history



Harkuvar Shethani

BESIDES BEING FAMOUS FOR ITS TEXTILES AND for the cultural fusion reflected in the Sultanate period, particularly in its architecture, Ahmedabad has had a long tradition of another, and somewhat intriguingly unique, fusion: that of religious fervour, wealth and philanthropy. It is demonstrated in the fairly large number of luminaries amongst the opulent tradesmen, who possessed a Midas touch where commercial enterprise was concerned and, at the same time, were deeply religious and socially conscientious citizens. They were genuinely convinced that they had a moral obligation to share the benefits of their prosperity with their less fortunate fellow human beings. Among the numerous extraordinary persons in this category, the names of Sheth Hutheesing and Harkuvar Kunvarba Shethani figure prominently.

Sheth Hutheesing was the son of Sheth Kesarising, who by the mid-19th century had established a flourishing silk trade business. In 1796, when Sheth Hutheesing was barely in his teens his father passed away, leaving the family fortune and the formidable responsibilities of a vast business on his son's and his cousin Mahakham's young shoulders. Despite the effects of an understandably shattering experience, with his fortitude and an innate propensity for commercial enterprise, he not only took firm control of the business but within a short period of time managed to expand and diversify its trading activities. He became one of the most successful and prominent tradesmen of his time in the region. The most considerable boost to his prosperity, however, was due to the export of opium to China and, in exchange, the import of silk. He eventually established an office in Mumbai and conducted the export trade from the port of Cambay.

At the age of sixteen he married Rukmani, the sister of Sheth Hemabhai Nagarsheth, a wealthy aristocrat from Ahmedabad. 'Nagarsheth' was the title conferred by the Mughal rulers on a family outstanding for its wealth, social status and philanthropy. Unfortunately, only a few years after their marriage, Rukmani lost her eyesight due to an illness. After a few more years, she died childless. He later married Rukmani's sister, Prasanna, but she, too, died within a very short period of time, once again leaving him forlorn and alone. Sheth Hutheesing's mother, Surajba, felt very unhappy and insisted that her son marry a third time.

Sheth Hutheesing travelled on pilgrimages to Jain temples a great deal all over Gujarat. On one such occasion when he

was visiting Ghoga, a city in the Saurashtra region on the east coast of the state on a pilgrimage to Parsvanatha, his attention was drawn by one of his officials to a 13-year-old girl who was plastering the walls of her hut with cow-dung. She was exceedingly beautiful and radiated a magnetic charm. Sheth Hutheesing was instantly fascinated and after discovering her identity, he commenced consultations with her family. After scrutiny of her horoscope, he consented to marry her. Though born in a middle-class family and with little formal education, Harkuvar was highly intelligent and her familial environment had made her a highly accomplished person. Also, she had a strong religious orientation. She was well versed in religious rituals and could recite extempore from the scriptures. She proved to be an exemplary housewife and won the affection and admiration of the entire family.

However, the most astonishing and almost unbelievable aspect of her abilities and character had yet to come to light. Not long after the wedding, she started to take active interest in her husband's business activities. The uncanny ability she exhibited in grasping the ethos of the world of commerce and in comprehending the intricacies of national and international trade were intriguing: Sheth Hutheesing would often consult her regarding important policy decisions. Her extraordinary fortitude, foresight and acumen, however, were fully manifested when Sheth Hutheesing suddenly died at the age of 49. With no one in the family on whom she could lean, she not only refused to allow this disastrous and stunning occurrence to break her, but to the amazement of all concerned, she took firm control of the situation and carried forward the family trade with supreme confidence and expertise. As a result, she came to be ranked among the leaders of the industry in an almost exclusively male-dominated area of social activity during a period of history when the association of women in business could hardly be deemed appropriate. It is also a measure of her tremendous strength of character that she did not permit her heavy preoccupations with the management of such a large-scale business to dampen her religious fervour and commitment.

Surajba, too, was a deeply religious and compassionate lady with abundant qualities of forbearance and empathy. As Sheth Hutheesing was much influenced by his mother,

holding her in high esteem and reverence, he imbibed all these qualities from her. Not merely ritualistically, but a genuinely religious person, he was so sympathetic and eager to understand the plight of the needy and to know and help solve their problems that he was affectionately called Hathio Hakim. He donated liberally to religious and social causes. His mother was very keen to build a temple, which he did, in the compound of their house known as Hutheebhai's Wadi. He himself harboured a more ambitious dream of building a large temple outside Delhi Gate, for which he had initiated the preliminary building activities, but he died before the construction work could commence.

Harkuvarba was well aware how dear this project was to her husband. Accordingly, she took it upon herself to ensure that his dream was realised, assuming personal charge of the whole venture. She held meetings with the architects, contractors, draftsmen and all others concerned, and supervised the progress of the day-to-day construction, keeping a keen eye on every detail of the structure. Her work schedule often ran late into the night. It took two years and cost eight lakh rupees to complete the Hutheesing Temple, which became one of the most prominent landmarks of the city, and eventually an important tourist attraction. The deity's installation ceremony took place on Maahaa Sud Panchami in Vikram Savat 1903, (1847 A.D.) This turned out to be a historic event not only for the Jain community but for the entire city of Ahmedabad, attested by the sheer magnitude of people who attended the function. Besides the local people and Jain luminaries, representatives of the Jain sanghs and prominent social workers across the country attended the function. The entire area from Delhi Gate to the Mughal palace in Shahibag, named Hathipura after the family, vibrated with life and brisk activities as thousands of tents were pitched with the assistance of the city collector to accommodate the hordes of devotees and invitees. Harkuvarba saw to it that all necessary amenities like boarding, lodging, food, water supply and sanitation were adequately provided. The grand success of an event of such gigantic proportions brought into focus yet another facet of her dynamic personality, namely her organisational capability.

Harkuvarba's commitment to religion was no mere reflection of her husband's zeal. It was a very personal involvement. Like her husband she was resolutely devoted to performing the rituals of visiting numerous Jain pilgrimage

centres. The foremost among them was to organise a sangh to travel to Sammet Shikhar, Bihar, which took months to complete. Cognisant of the hardships involved in this arduous journey, she went to great lengths to provide adequate facilities, amenities and also medical care to ensure optimal comfort and enjoyment. This was an incredible feat especially in view of the fact that in those

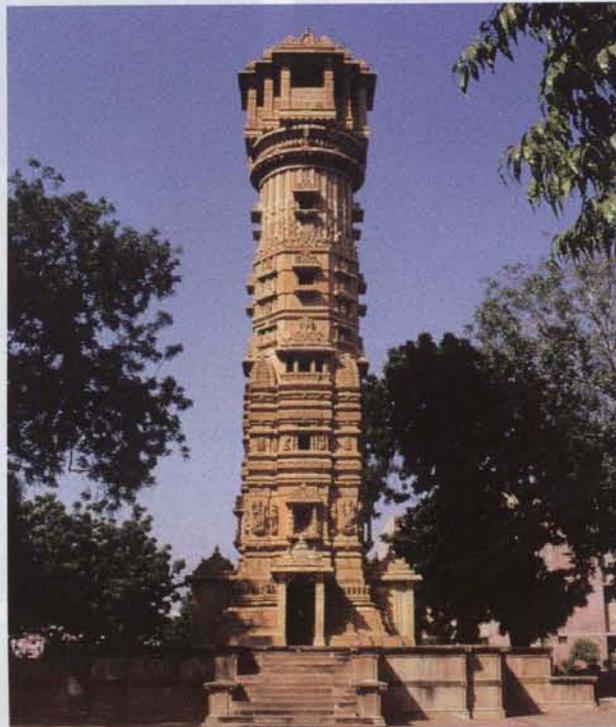
days the infrastructure was extremely minimal, lacking even a basic outline. She undertook similar trips with sanghs to Palitana and other Jain centres in Gujarat.

Besides the Hutheesing Temple, she built other temples in the city, like the Mandvi Pol, Patasa Pol and Tankshal. More importantly, she played a pioneering role in pursuing and stimulating social welfare activities and donating liberally to many projects, for example her keen interest in the activities of the Gujarat Vernacular Society which was established in 1848. Her tremendous dedication to philanthropic activities led her to establish the first Civil Hospital in Ahmedabad, for which she donated Rps. 50,000.

Especially concerned with women's issues and realising the potential of education in the emancipation process, she took it up as a mission. She established the Harkuvarba and Jyotiba Kanyashala in 1855, a well-equipped institution with faculties including history, geography, mathematics, Sanskrit and Gujarati, and facilities for various co-curricular activities. She even launched a teachers' training college for women, and initiated several other welfare schemes, including some especially designed to ease the traumatic existence of widows of that period.

In appreciation of her contributions to society, the British Government conferred upon her the title of Net Sakhavati Bahadur and presented her with a gold medal. Even the Gaekwad of Baroda, now Vadodara, honoured her with the title of Chobdar. Harkuvarba Shethani was a visionary who totally immersed herself in selfless work and was able to see her many dreams come true. In short, Harkuvarba possessed incredible qualities of head and heart of the kind with which few human beings are blessed. 🙏

Purnima Hutheesing is a descendant of Sheth and Harkuvar Hutheesing



Manastambha, Pillar of Respect at the Hutheesing Temple, Ahmedabad



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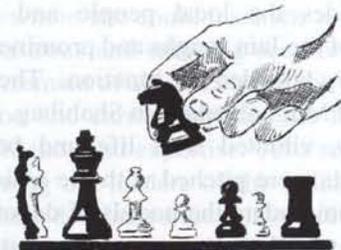
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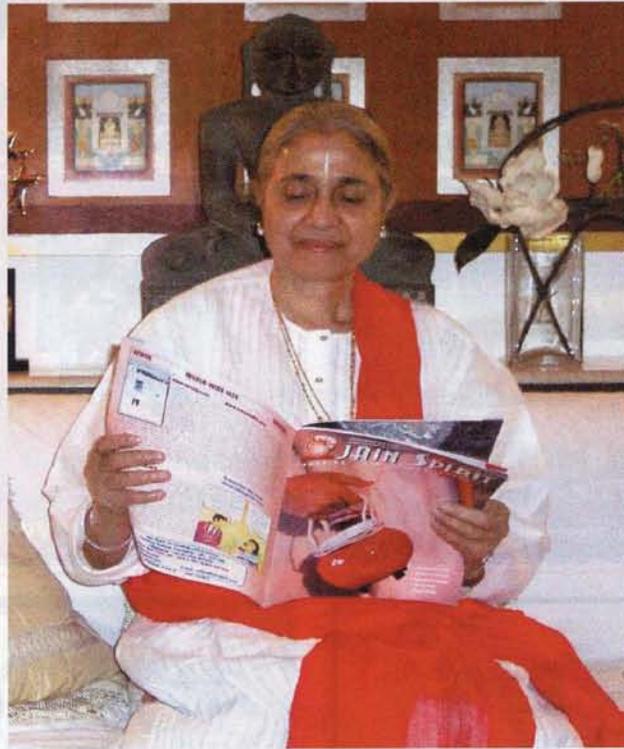
MODERNISING JAINISM

*One of the most prominent Jain media leaders,
Mrs. Indu Jain recommends new thinking and action*

THE OLDEST PRINCIPLES of spirituality that we now know as Jainism still have a wide acceptance. The principles, laid down by those who desired to attain salvation, took the form of a rulebook. These practices were unaffected by the changing times. This can be one reason why they are sometimes not taken seriously today. Rapid advances in technology and their impact on society have given rise to differences in the people's attitude towards religion. If the common man's interest in the faith is to be sustained, then changes are imperative.

Since Jain monks and nuns are not allowed to travel outside India, spiritual and knowledgeable leaders need to make an effort to promote Jainism elsewhere. Moreover, the younger generation does not find the discourses and the standardised lectures attractive enough. A different form or methodology is called for in the changed circumstances. While retaining the essence, a new language or idiom ought to be employed to convey old truths to the new generations. The ways of society, its customs and methods that existed in ancient times do not interest the modern youths. Today the routes to right thinking and right living need to be illustrated with contemporary examples and true stories in a form that is easily intelligible. This also means that some outdated expressions and norms should be suitably amended.

Shravakas and *shravikas* (lay Jains) need to discuss all these with the Jain saints. Laypersons and Jain monks need to communicate frequently. Everyone, whether rich or poor, needs true spiritual guidance. There are many, especially non-Jains, who are drawn to the faith and are keen to have more information. The media can play a pivotal role in making such information freely available to one and all. Much of the Jain wisdom still has to be translated into local and other languages. In particular, English is very quickly becoming the language of global communication. If this translation work is speeded up, it will help many people appreciate the greatness of Jainism.



Mrs. Indu Jain, Chairman of Times Foundation

There is also the need to put Jain material onto the World Wide Web. This will go a long way in granting access to the common man to Jain wisdom. Another factor that needs to be addressed is donations. Devotees are willing to meet temple-based expenses incurring in *pooja*, flag hoisting or temple building. But there is also the need to ensure a systematic and continuous flow of donations to other cultural activities like education. There are many Jains engaged in business activities that may not get the approval of the community at large. Instead of disregarding such businesses, alternatives and incentives should be provided that would automatically help Jains better themselves in the long run. This applies to products as well. For example, the issue of banning leather is a

complex one and does affect some of our businesses.

The system of imparting knowledge needs to be adapted to the changing times. New innovations are paying dividends. Take for example the 'Art of Living' courses. More people have been converted to vegetarianism through this than by any other means. 'Preksha-dhyan', which is all about meditation, has made significant strides. Mobile courses, which take the message to the people in a creative way, have become more popular and effective than religious discourses. We should have similar courses for imparting Jain wisdom.

I am very impressed by the initiative taken up in the UK by *Jain Spirit* magazine to promote the best of Jain wisdom in such a professional and creative way. This is a fountain of ideas and inspiration, which is charting a new dawn for Jainism. 🙏


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Mrs. Indu Jain is Chairman of The Times of India and The Times Foundation, a leading educational charity promoting Indian spirituality.

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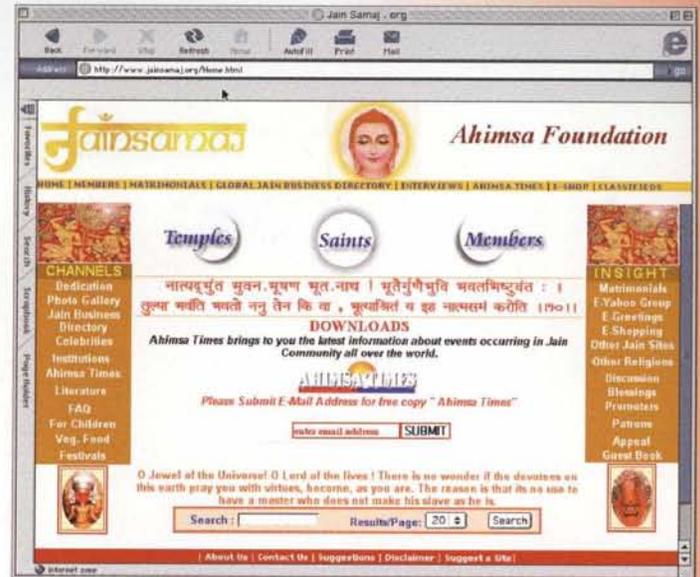
This is the colourful web site of the India-based Ahimsa Foundation, whose aim is to globalise the Jain religion. One of the Foundation's key activities is the production of a pioneering free monthly e-newsletter, which is available to download from this site. The newsletter, called Ahimsa Times, is packed full of news relating to Jainism, and one can subscribe to it by signing up on the web site. Back issues are archived and easy to access from the web site. In addition to Ahimsa Times, this easy-to-navigate web site features a variety of other sections such as a Jain business directory, a photo gallery and an informative section on Jain festivals.

www.newint.org

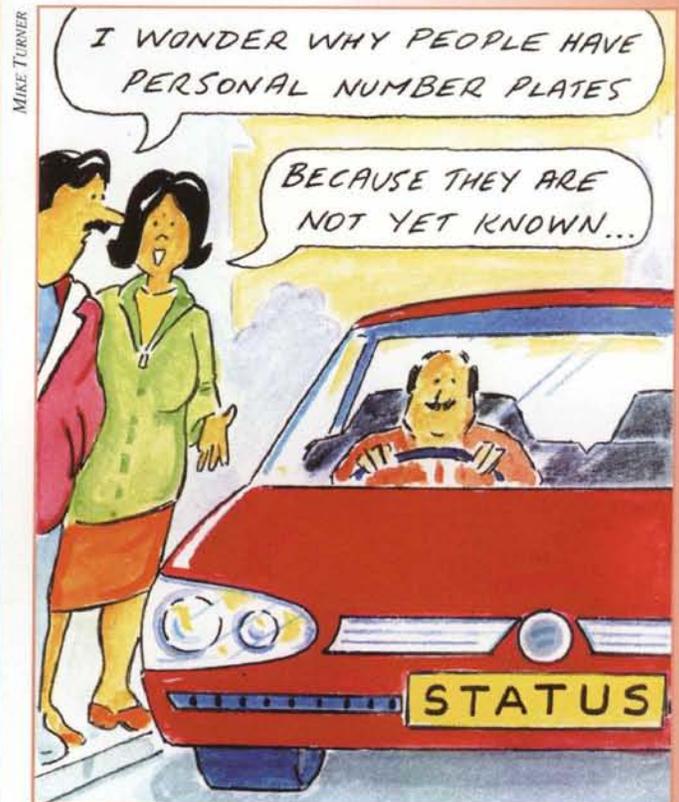
The web site of the New Internationalist (NI), a communications co-operative based in the U.K., is brimming with insightful information, resources and comment on our world. This site will certainly appeal to those interested in different perspectives on international issues, for it hosts over 5000 pages of the award-winning New Internationalist magazine, a subscription magazine which investigates and reports poverty and inequality issues, as well as campaigning for the material and spiritual needs of all to be met. NI also produces other resources, such as books, country profiles, and tools for teaching and campaigning on global issues – you can find more details on all these on this web site.

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