

JAIN SPIRIT

SHARING JAIN VALUES GLOBALLY

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Jain Spirit magazine draws from one of the oldest living cultures of non-violence and reverence for all life – Jainism. Founded thousands of years ago in India, this little known tradition has its independent scriptures, literature, art, rituals and temples and has inspired sages and people from all ages and backgrounds. Its most famous proponent was Mahatma Gandhi, one of the greatest leaders of the twentieth century. Today, there are Jain temples and centres all over the world, from Japan to Singapore, United Kingdom, East Africa and North America. This magazine connects the eternal values of the Jain tradition to modern lifestyle and concerns in a scientific and non-sectarian way. To find out more about the basics of Jainism, visit www.jainspirit.com

JAIN VALUES

Ahimsa Peace As all actions result from thought, peaceful living requires a stable, relaxed mind. **Satya Integrity** To be true to others, it helps to be true to ourselves. **Aparigraha Simplicity** A life free from clutter or attachments enables us to focus on our own enlightenment and liberation. **Asteya Charity** When we share what we have with others and avoid taking that which does not belong to us, we realise that nothing belongs to us. **Saiyam Restraint** It helps to be masters of our senses and not slaves to them. Restraint in our eating, actions and sleeping will cultivate a deeper peace of mind helping us to lead a balanced and disciplined life. **Anekant Theory of relativity** Truth has many facets, perspectives, and viewpoints. It is almost impossible to know the whole truth at a given time, place, and/or situation. What looks correct today may not be the same tomorrow. We should have tolerance and respect for various viewpoints as this will help us understand the richness of diversity. **Kshama Forgiveness** Blame and hatred result in violence to oneself. When we forgive, we heal ourselves (and possibly others). When we ask for forgiveness, we develop our own humility. We move forward, instead of being held back.

WELCOME

Jai Jinendra.

We wish all of you a Happy Diwali and a Prosperous New Year.

During 2005, I travelled to India, North America and East Africa to attend various Jain events and ceremonies. In Nairobi, I attended an international conference, in New York I witnessed the opening of their major new temple and in California, I attended the JAINA convention and visited Los Angeles. In August, I participated in the opening of the beautiful new Jain temple at Oshwal Centre in London. It was clear from all these visits, that the community is entering a very dynamic and progressive phase.

In three of the major global events, I met Mr. Narendra Nandu and his team, who were conducting the large temple opening Pratishta festivals. Here was a soul with talent, charisma, wisdom and a good sense of humour, who helped raise millions of dollars for each temple. He involved everyone in the ceremonies and made them really feel that it was their own temple, and many became hungry to learn more. In London, I saw two thousand people totally immersed in his meditations, observing pin drop silence. I was later surprised to discover, that he was doing all this whilst fasting, doing his ninth annual *varshitap* (eating only in alternate days). When I interviewed him, Mr. Nandu said that the conviction of the fund-raiser is as important as the fund-raising. Before I landed in London, I took a vow and decided on a target, he explained. And £2.5m was raised in ten days. This has never happened before in the history of London. Donors were queuing up to support this new project.

Resources are critical to the progress of any organisation. As we are poor of time in the West, we need money to build new community centres, temples and manage our institutions. When everyone contributes in their



Mr. Narendra Nandu, him and his team are putting the 'x factor' into the 2005 temple openings left, right and centre- globally!

own way, giving time, ideas, money or even participation and encouragement, a whole community moves forward. Festivals ignite the spirit and raise it to new heights.

In all this change and transformation, media plays a critical role. Paradoxically, although we are living in an information rich society, we are starved of wisdom. We need media to filter good quality information and help us connect with one another and learn about one another and from one another. Jain Spirit has been trying very hard to become one of these critical media resources, and it is now over six years since we launched the first issue in Philadelphia at the JAINA convention.

We thank all our subscribers, life members, donors and advertisers for believing in us and helping us to come this far. We welcome your comments, feedback and criticism, to help us serve you better and grow. We also request you to continue to support us in the future, and not wait for our

calls or appeals to do so. If you are an entrepreneur, consider sponsoring a section or an advertisement, and show that you care for your culture and its future. For professionals, we have lotus or saffron sponsorship schemes, for which you get ten or twenty gift subscriptions to give to friends and family, and at the same time support a worthy cause. Details of all these are on our website – www.jainspirit.com which we request you to visit on a regular basis as we update it frequently. Subscribe to our email newsletter and get monthly updates of major events and celebrations. If we approach you to support us, please understand that we do so with the best of intentions. Help us to help you.

Atul K. Shah
Executive Editor
editor@jainspirit.com

JAIN SPIRIT TEAM

We invite our readers to send articles, 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 people about this ancient and visionary culture. Please contact our head office for more information.

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cover image: INDIA. 1993. Pilgrims praying at the base of the 57 ft (18 metres) statue of Lord Bahubali. Copyright : © Raghu Rai / Magnum Photos



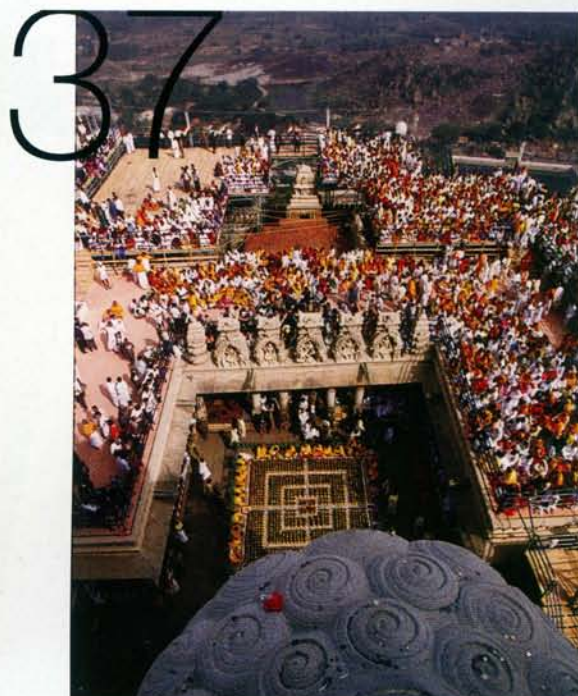
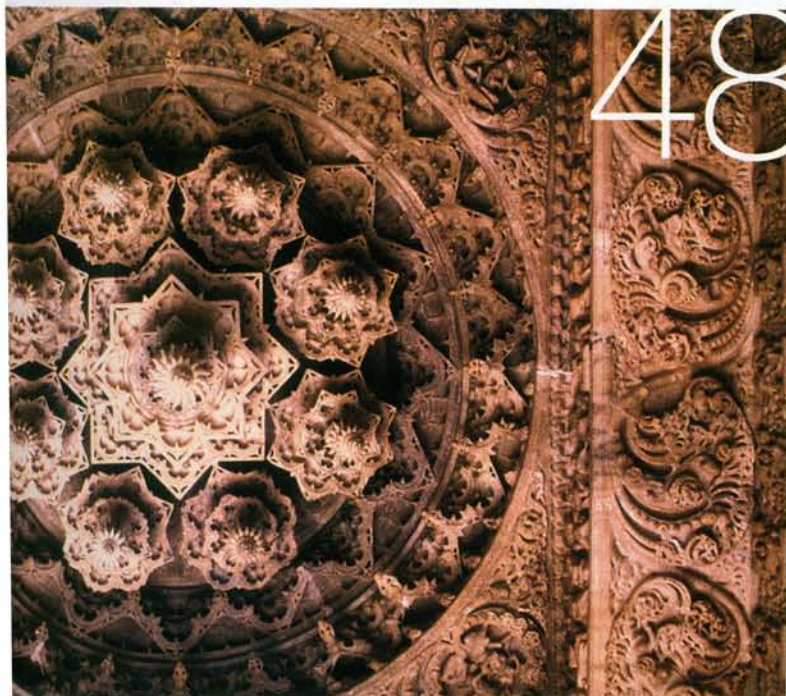
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KID SPIRIT! (separate insert)

Issue 6 of our interactive section for the 5-12 year olds. Kid Spirit Editor, Rebecca Hoh, gives you the fun way to learn about Jain values!



INDIAN SUMMER

NEW TEMPLE CELEBRATED IN THE HEART OF THE BRITISH COUNTRYSIDE

August is a beautiful time of year in England. It's the last official month of summer you get real 'scorchers' and rain the next day that makes you think you could be in India! The 10 days of opening ceremonies for the newly opened London temple got the whole range, starting with a downpour on the 19th (that's ok - it's meant to be lucky) and ending with the muted light of a summer's evening on the 28th. This intricate building in pink sandstone and white marble is the first purpose built Jain temple in this country and is situated on 80 acres of green land owned by the UK Oshwal community in Potters Bar, Hertfordshire.

Jains and Non, flocked from all over the world to see the traditional Pratishtha ceremonies. Jain Temples may open two a penny in India but this sort of celebration is one of the first in this country and is the biggest thing to happen for the Jain community outside of India in many years. 20, 000 people passed through the decorated gates at the Oshwal Centre to the temple site over the 10 days, 6000 of those all attending the final Sunday.

This new place of worship was not yet open to the public and those allowed in were the newly blessed statues of the Gods and the families who had donated to place them inside. These families took part in traditional processions to carry the Gods into their new home, led by drums and dandia. The main pooja tent was constantly active from the 7am start to the 11pm finish, with evening dances and a performance of the famous tale of Chandanbala happening after the blessings and ceremonies that took place in the day. Narendra Nadu and his 10 year old nephew, Megh, from Mumbai performed the day long poojas to the captivated audiences. There were other tents situated on the site, creating places for related organisations to spread awareness such as ourselves and The Oshwal Elderly Association. A special tent was put on by Young Oshwals to host children and young adult workshops.

A beautiful exhibition expressing Bhagwan Mahavir's life, as well as other Tirthankaras, in paintings, rangolis and sculptures was a permanent fixture in the Oshwal Centre's main hall. This was a real hit. Of course, the other show stopper was the delicious Jain food Oshwal put on for the thousands of people who came for the Pratishtha, 3 times a day.

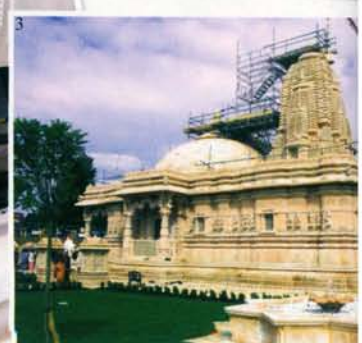
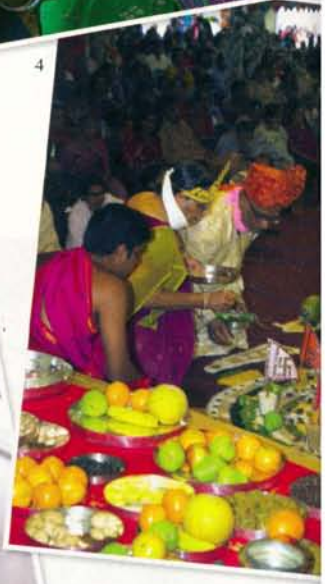
It was an inspiring time for the community, generating donations of £2 million over the duration of the festivities. The celebrations ended fittingly on the 28 August with a Raas Garba for the Young Oshwals, which was - just like the temple - a unique legacy for the future.

A photo DVD is now available, containing 1500 images from the 10 days, priced at £20. Contact Jayni813@hotmail.com for details.

More photos are also available on the Jain Spirit website.

Photo captions

- Main pic** The gods are lovingly taken to their new home.
 2 Decorated elephants guard the new place of worship.
 3 The reason for it all. Photo: www.inaphoto.com
 4 The pooja tent was packed from morning until night. Photo: www.inaphoto.com
 5 Families had a great time in the procession on the way to the site. Photo: www.inaphoto.com
 6 Dhirubhai Karania, Chairman of the temple Construction Committee - couldn't be prouder!





IN YOUR WORDS

We thought the best way to convey the experience is through attendees' quotes and let you, the reader, meditate and reflect for yourself.

TIMELESS

"I felt as if I was in India experiencing the raw beauty and joy of Jain wisdom and culture the way my Grandparents did, without truly understanding it. I now want to learn and practice." **Jayni Gudka**, 17, Student, Stanmore

BEAUTIFUL

"The architecture really stands out from what we are normally used to seeing. In the world today it is rare to build something that is both modern and traditional at the same time and beautiful to the eye." **Paresh Sheth**, Export Sales Executive, Harrow

"A rare blend of the British love of gardens and landscape with Indian sculpture and grandeur." **Amritlal Shah**, Secretary of VOC, Kenya

"The setting of the temple in English countryside makes it stunning. The temple seems to be in complete harmony with nature and makes me feel harmonious." **Jayesh Gudka**, Freelance Photographer at www.inaphoto.com, North London

SELFLESS

"There were volunteers everywhere and they all had smiles on their faces. I have never seen so many people working so selflessly and enjoying it at the same time. In time-poor London this was a rich experience!" **Umesh Parekh**, Project Manager, Kingston Upon Thames, Surrey

SPIRITUAL

"Mr. Narendra Nandu is a master at conveying a profound spiritual experience through music, story and drama and by involving the entire audience." **Mayur Mehta**, Kipfold Group and Navnat Association, North London

CHARITY

"The whole experience inspired us to give and it was a joy to support such a unique achievement. Not once did I feel I was losing my wealth, I was simply keeping it in nature's circulation." **Dhiraj Shah**, Birmingham

UNITY

"The Oshwal Committee should be commended at having created a 'Jain' event. Jains from all over London and UK, irrespective of their community background congregated as visitors or as active participants in the various events around the celebrations. **TOGETHER**. The dedication of the army of volunteers ensured everything went smoothly and everyone had a truly memorable time." **Manick Choraria**, Secretary of the Jain Vishva Bharati London and Chairman of Jain Spirit, North London

JOY

"Being together singing, dancing on a beautiful English summer day is such an uplifting experience that I have no words to describe it." **Amee Gudka**, 14, Student, Stanmore •

Photo captions

Main pic Main statue of Bhagwan Mahavir makes his entrance.

8 Mr B.P. Shah demonstrates that even Tirthankaras need umbrellas.

9 The sound of drums were part of the party atmosphere. Photo: www.inaphoto.com

10 Oshwal media officer Kaushik Shah and President, Ashwin Shah are joined by the mayor of Potters Bar and Oshwal secretary Raksha Shah.

11 Kids having loads of fun at the art workshops.

12 Ancient traditions are brought alive by modern Londoners. Photo: www.inaphoto.com

12

11

9



A TEMPLE FIT FOR QUEENS

New Yorkers celebrate the opening of a \$6 million new sanctuary

There are 65 known Jain Centers in America, but on 18 June, 2005 an extra special one opened on Ithaca Street in Elmhurst, Queens, N.Y. Dr. Mamta Shaha, a spokesperson for the new project explained: "It is unique because it will be the only Jain temple in the world that will serve to unite all Jain traditions under one roof."

It was under the guidance of the spiritual leaders Gurudev Shri Chitrabhanuji and Gurudev Shri Sushilkumarji that the Jain community in New York began to unite and come out of their own homes and into the community for peace and prayer. It was 1981, when this unity gave birth to a small place of worship on Ithaca Street for the New York Jain community. It was a two-family home, which was converted into a temple on the lower level, and the upper level was utilised for housing accommodation for the caretakers and the priests.

Since then, the number of worshippers has grown to over 800 families. With this, there was also a growth in the sense of loyalty and pride to Ithaca Street, so much that when plans were made to relocate the temple to accommodate the growing community, an anonymous donor came forward and contributed \$2 million to build a larger temple at the same location. Additional support also came from his contacts with colour stone and diamond dealers' community. This gave a synergy and enthusiasm among the community which led to the project of building this 16,000 square feet complex at a total of \$6 million. The official opening of the temple was done on 18 June, 2005 that commenced with a nine days of celebration that started on 10 June, 2005.

The excited devotees had already wowed the streets of Queens, in May 2005, with the initial temple procession to place the deities and idols inside the new venue. But the official opening in June included a grand parade with floats, music and participation from hundreds of Jain community members marking the beginning of a new era. The blessing of the installation of idols saw beautiful hymns and many religious ceremonies conducted over the nine days on all the four floors of the 66-foot-high temple constructed in white marble.

The Ithaca Street temple aims to accommodate different practices

of worship observed by the numerous traditions within Jainism, promoting a sense of unity: the Adinath shrine is in the Digambara tradition, the Dhyana Mandir (meditation hall) is in the Shrimad Rajchandra tradition and the Mahavirswami

temple is in the Shvetambara tradition. Similarly on the 4th floor the *Dadawadi* is in the Shvetambara khatargarh tradition. There is also a *sthanak* where *samaik* and *swadhyay* is conducted. This temple is the first temple outside of India that has a *Dadawadi* of Dadagurudev, Shri Jin Kushal Suri. There are also plans underway to house a replica of Asthapad, the oldest known Jain Temple believed to be in the Mansarovar area, which today is invisible to the eye. This is the only replica that is being carved of precious and semi precious stones and the mountain is also being carved out of real crystal.

Apart from the temple, the complex has a Jain Art Gallery, children's religious school with a full computer lab, apartments for the temple caretaker and visiting scholars, and a state of the art kitchen with a dining hall that accommodates 125 people. There are expansion plans for the future.

Several religious leaders from various Jain traditions from across the world, including Gurudev Chitrabhanuji, and local political leaders attended the ceremonies, and many send their blessings, messages and proclamations. The senior members of the community hope that the grandeur of the ceremonies will set a momentum and an example for the younger generation to be aware and be involved in their religion, its activities and most importantly, keeping the Jain religion alive. Dr. Shaha noted, "The younger generation is more spiritual than the first generation!" She said, "With such an amazing head start, let's hope it stays that way!"

More photos are available on the Jain Spirit website •

Photo captions

- 1 Dr & Mrs Mahendra Pandya.
- 2 Nareish Shah.
- 3 Bhattacharak.
- 4 Digambar Pooja.
- 5 Minaben.
- 6 Mr Nandu leading the fundraising.





THE WEST IS THE BEST

**JAINA 2005 IN SAN FRANCISCO
'RAISES THE BAR'**

Rupal Shah, JAINA Media Relations, reports on the Biennial Convention last July

The 13th JAINA Convention, held 1-4 July at the Santa Clara Convention Center brought together a host of Jain religious leaders, scholars, followers and dignitaries for a comprehensive four-day convention focusing on the theme "Extending the Jain Heritage in the Western Environment". The reach of this year's convention was impressive, with more than 70 speakers for a total audience of approximately 3,500 people.

Jain religion dates go back some 2,600+ years, and over the years varying traditions have entered the religious cannon, making it a diverse and unique heritage. Now, as the North American Jain organisation, JAINA, faces the 21st century, some key questions arise about its future and living a Jain way of life in the west. This convention aimed to address some of those questions and pose JAINA as leader in the growth and acceptance of Jainism in North America.

The convention line-up was varied and included some 250 sessions, entertainment and cultural programmes, an *ahimsa* symposium, as well as special Jain cooking seminars and demonstrations featuring the renowned vegetarian chef, Tarla Dalal.

"This convention has been different from others," said convention convener and new president-elect of JAINA, Kirit Daftary. "We had a multiple level of courses offered in the same convention, from beginners to advanced level that were offered in Gujarati, English and Hindi," he added. Many of the sessions addressed questions around everyday life as a Jain, and balancing life between home and work. Specific religious sessions included information for everyone from the beginner to the more devout follower, and included parallel sessions on spiritual exercises such as yoga, meditations, sun gazing, chanting, sutra recitals, *Preksha Dhyana*, and *Pratikraman*. Session topics also covered health, education, women's issues, senior citizens' issues and raising children in a Jain environment.

The convention's informative and thought-provoking sessions were rounded out by entertaining and fun events, such as a *raas garba*, a cultural competition and a musical performance by Anuradha Paudwal and Manhar Udhas. An art exhibit featured works by Jain artists, and a mela featured

booths on Vastu Shastra, acupressure, colour therapy, rangoli, *mehndi*, and Prannic healing, to name only a few.

Speakers at the convention included religious and Jain scholars and monks, academicians, scientists, health professionals and artists from both India and the west. A special symposium, "*Ahimsa* and *Aparigraha* in Contemporary Contexts" was organised by the Ahimsa Center at the California Polytechnic University, Pomona, and focused on spreading the word of *ahimsa* at colleges, universities and at school level.

Understanding the principles of *ahimsa* can lead to solving major problems of the world.

Spreading unity in the world wasn't only related to regions in conflict. Different sects of Jainism came together at this year's convention to take a pledge of unity, which was signed by all attending monks and Jain leaders to take back to India and spread the message of unity.

This year's youth programme, "Communications, Charity and Compassion in Action Through Service," was organised by Nita Itchaporla and it included field trips, lectures and workshops aimed at a variety of age groups and people with diverse interests. The Jain Academic Bowl, a cruise trip, and a trip to Great America were just a few of the highlights. One of the major concerns for the next 25 years is maintaining the Jain heritage within the younger generations. Though Jains have unity and harmony, they do not have uniformity, according to Daftary. Yogendra Jain, head of the Long Range Planning Committee for JAINA, is addressing this very topic when he asks the question, "What do we do for the next 25 years?"

His answers lie in raising the bar of Jainism. He explained that as Jains, "we all want to live a Jain life and we want to preserve that culture," while inviting others to live a Jain way of life. JAINA's purpose, however, is not to convert but to share the philosophies and principles of Jainism with those not familiar with the religion. Lord Mahavir lived the true way of *ahimsa*, and that is the guiding light for Jains the world over. Now, JAINA wants to bring that

way of life to the mainstream. The main goals for the next 25 years, says Yogendra, are to share Jain values in a respectful manner, evolve the practices of Jainism, grow in numbers, expand awareness and strengthen the organisation.

"For thousands of years, Jains have been practising yoga, vegetarianism, meditation and environmentalism," said Yogendra. "Now this movement is happening here in the west and we want to be able to participate in and lead that movement." •

**"AHIMSA IS THE
BEST MESSAGE WE
CAN GIVE TO THE
WORLD."
KIRIT DAFTARY'S
OPENING SPEECH**

photo courtesy of Rupal Shah





photo courtesy of Girish Shah

photo courtesy of Girish Shah



photo courtesy of Raju Shah



photo courtesy of Kirit Dattary

Photo captions

- 1 Inspiring scene of the ascetic attendees.
- 2 Winners of the iron chef competition with judges, including Tarla Dalai.
- 3 Proud Jaina President: Kirit Dattary.
- 4 3500 people attended this years conference.



COOKING AND CULTURE.
THE IRON CHEF
COMPETITION WAS
JUST ONE OF THE WAYS
JAINA 2005 SPICED UP
MODERN JAINISM.

SPOTTED AT JAINA

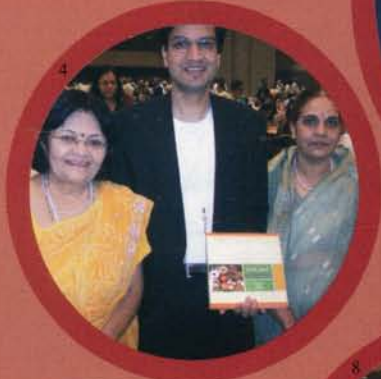
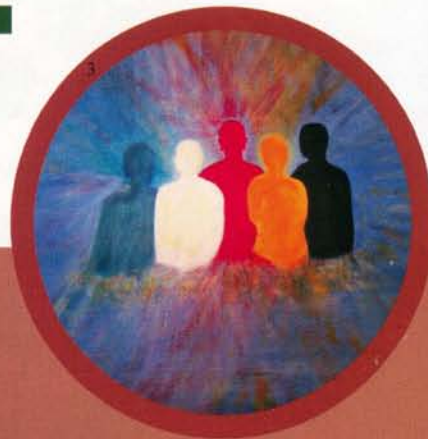
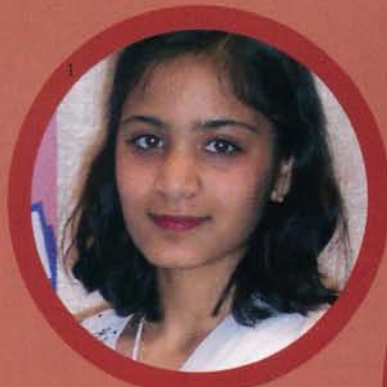


Photo captions

- 1 Young devotional singer extraordinaire, Miss Misty Shah! 2 Hit Exhibition by Sudhir and Anita Shah of www.anekant.org attracted interested delegates through whole weekend. 3 Fantastic art work by Chandu Desai. 4 Cooking up a storm! Tarla Dalal, Manoj Jain and Laxmi Jain. 5 Professors professing - Peter Flugel, Kristi Wiley and Cromwell Crawford. 6 Sun worshipper Hira Ratan Manek. 7 Dr. Rajni Shah, N.Y. 8 Nipul Shah, creator of the popular Jina Installation. 9 Three generations at JAINA! 10 Vinod Daryapurkar - Director of www.jainworld.com

MORE COVERAGE ON THE JAIN SPIRIT WEBSITE:

This year's JAINA exposed some great new initiatives. One of the biggest highlights was the Iron Chef Cookery contest. There were 9 teams in all racing against the clock to prepare a

whole meal, Jain style, in just 1 hour. Raju Shah, a member of the winning team, tells us all about it and reveals the winning recipes.

JAINA 'first timer' Shreyans Parekh also shares his experience with us.

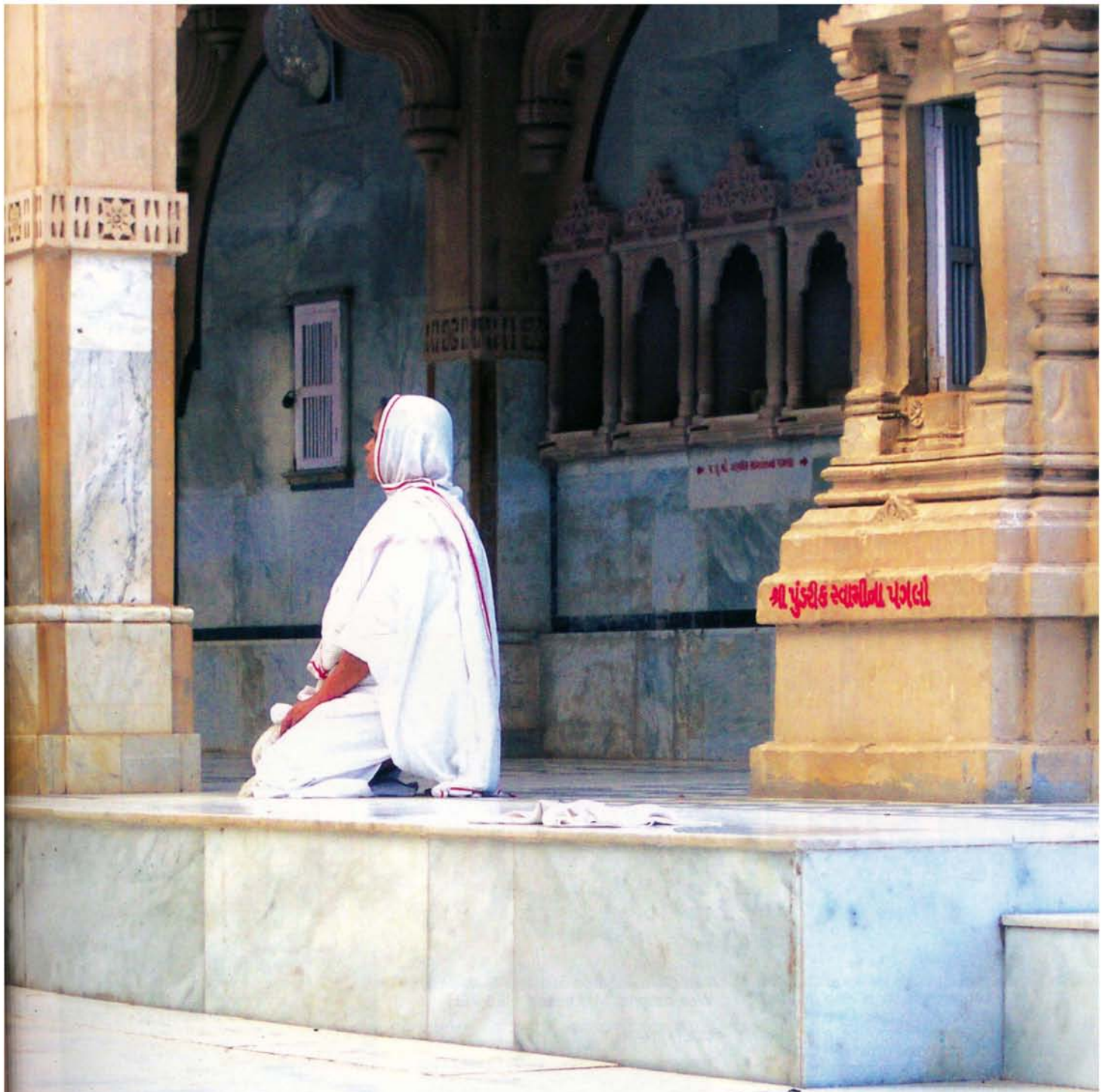
www.jainspirit.com •



Winners of Iron Chef contest



Shreyans Parekh



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news

UK

NEW STATUE INSTALLED

The Jain faith is divided into two main sects, Digambara and Shvetambara, and each of these sects is also divided into subgroups. One of the differences is that Digambara images of *Tirthankaras* have downcast eyes, compared to the prominent ones in the Shvetambara statues. They also depict a simple naked figure, unlike the decorated images the Shvetambara Jains worship. Digambara images are rarer in England, so 19 June was a momentous occasion for the London Digambara community when they unveiled a carved image of Shree Mahavir Bhagwan in their temple in Middlesex. The ceremony was performed by Hansrajbhai Devraj Shah and family. The 5'1" high statue of Mahavir Bhagwan is made of pure white Italian marble, which was shipped to India and meticulously carved in Jaipur. It is the first Digambara carved image of a *Tirthankara* of this size outside India. The occasion was celebrated amongst 300 people at the Shree Mahaveerswami Jain Temple, including a lunch for all. The *Pratishta*

Mahotsav, a celebration that depicts how one can become god from man, will be performed on this statue in order for it to become worshipable. This occasion took place in August 2006. The statue can be viewed by the public at the Temple daily between 8.30am to 11.30am.

For more info on viewing the statue, please contact email londonpratishta@aol.com

The Shree Mahaveerswami Jain Temple is located at 1 The Broadway, Wealdstone, Middlesex, HE3 7EH •

VIJEN SHAH



USA

IN THE FACE OF DIVERSITY

May 2005 was the Asian and Pacific American Heritage month. The USA Federal Government celebrated the diversity of the American population and the impact made by Asian Americans. Part of the *Jain Spirit* Photo Exhibition was shipped to an American military location for residents to soak up some of the images, and a taste of the East went down well! •



EIGHT MEN, ONE ROOM

JAN GOODEY and MONICA PERDONI
report on the outcome of this year's G8 summit

On 5-8 July 2005, just outside Edinburgh, in Gleneagles, Scotland, the G8 was held: billed as the most important to date. Leaders of the top eight industrial powers came together to discuss the global economy. This year, UK Prime Minister Tony Blair found himself in the chair and addressed fellow leaders on climate change and world poverty, focusing on aid needed in Africa.

African poverty was at the top of the agenda, thanks to the international LIVE 8 concerts and the Make Poverty History campaigns held world-wide in support of fairer trade and an end to the misery of hunger and related disease. Sir Bob Geldof, the figurehead for the Make Poverty History campaign, talked of the beginning of the end of poverty in Africa and an equal footing on trade.

Although only a small ripple when a sea of change is needed, the outcome achieved was widely perceived in the press as positive. The target of 50bn dollars for extra aid to poor countries was met, although that only comes into effect in 2010, and an end to agricultural subsidies was agreed in principle, although a firm date is yet to be set.

On the environmental front focus shifted to what would happen when the current Kyoto protocol comes to an

end in 2012. Even though new targets for cutting carbon emissions were not yet set – a hugely missed opportunity – America has at last come to the climate change table along with other countries outside the Kyoto Protocol including China, India and Brazil. •



Razorlight, performers at LIVE 8, spreading awareness of the cause. © Ray Burmiston / Comic Relief Ltd.

KENYA WOMAN OF STEEL

During my recent trip to Kenya, I had the good fortune to meet this unique Jain. Kanchanben told me that she really wanted to show me her book. I wondered what it would be, and she took me to her car to present me with a copy. It was the souvenir of the new Jain temple in Kisumu, Kenya, which was primarily sponsored by their family. At the age of eighty, she published her first book – and was



so proud about it! She described the hurdles: getting good material, type-setting, design, pictures, printing – we in *Jain Spirit* know how hard all this is, but she did it from scratch and on her

own and produced something quite remarkable. Of course, she is also very famous for her determination in helping the poor in her neighbourhood with her personal hands. She also drives a car at this age and is very independent. It seems that everyone in Nairobi knows her and she knows everyone. She seems totally driven by her Jain values and is truly selfless and determined. Despite being a multi-millionaire, there is no ego and she is determined to help people in every which way whilst she is alive.

It is such stories which really inspire the *Jain Spirit* team to keep listening, travelling, connecting and writing. Keep up the good work all you Jains out there! – and to our sponsors: please continue your support and encourage others to support this unique magazine.

PS Kanchanben is affectionately known as 'Handbag Kanchanben' •

ATUL K. SHAH, Editor

INDIA PRESIDENT CONSULTS ACHARYA

Indian President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam and Jain spiritual leader Acharya Mahapragya have been closely associated for six years. On their first ever meeting the Acharya advised the president, who is known as the architect of India's nuclear missile development programme, to devote the rest of his life to preparing 'peace missiles', according to a release issued by the Jain leader's office. From then on the President has kept a watchful eye over the programme, bringing a real heart to India's highest office. He is now looking towards stamping out

corruption within the economic system and once again he has turned to Acharya Mahapragya.

The Acharya has recently arrived back at his South Delhi Ashram after a 5000 km Peace Yatra, which covered several states. This is where Kalam visited him on 4 July, to coincide with the week of his 86th birthday. Their 40-minute discussion included the Acharya entrusting him with the daunting task of reforming the faulty system of modern economics by preparing a complete action plan.

His description was that "the plan should be based not only on the principles of modern economics but integrated with inter-disciplinary research in diverse branches like science, sociology, psychology, philosophy and religion." He went on to say that "unless a new concept of development replaced the 'lopsided

materialistic' one, there could be no solution to the problem of corruption."

Kalam and Mahapragya have been associated for many years with the Foundation for Unity of Religion and Enlightened Citizenship as benefactors. They are jointly writing a book on healthy individuals and noble nations. •



Acharya Mahapragya
© Amit Mehra.



Indian president
A.P.J. Abdul Kalam
© Dinodia.com

UK

'WALK4CHILDREN' MAKES EVERY STEP COUNT

In a week dominated by headlines and events to 'make poverty history', Shishukunj, a UK registered charity, played its part by organising a sponsored walk on Sunday, 3 July 2005 under the 'Walk4Children' banner to help children throughout the world. With over 670 participants and around 80 volunteers, this was one of the biggest sponsored events held at Richmond Park. More than £40,000 is expected to be raised for the following three UK registered children's charities: *Shishukunj* which is dedicated to the welfare and cultural development of children and also works to relieve poverty, sickness and distress of children globally; *Childline* which runs

in the UK a free 24-hour helpline for children and young people; and *Give A Chance*, which works in Kenya to stop the spread of HIV/AIDS and also help the children affected by the virus.

Following a short prayer, the Mayor of the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames, Councillor Robin Jowit, dressed in full regalia, broke a coconut for good luck and sent the walkers off on their way round Richmond Park. Some walked 12 km, others 24 km. Participants ranged from 6 to 74 years of age and included some with disabilities. Everywhere you looked, you saw a sea of white (participants), yellow (volunteers) and green (organisers) Walk4Children T-shirts.

The organisers would like to thank all the sponsors, donors, volunteers and of course the participants without whom the event could not have happened. A culmination of six months of hard work resulted in a day when everyone had so much fun and at the same time they will all be helping the children of the world!

For further details about these organisations contact Hasmita Shah:

By phone :07962 255975 (Ms. Mila Shah), 07720 633516 (Ms. Priti Shah)

walk4children@btconnect.com

www.walk4children.org •



USA

PEACE FOR NEW YORK

Ahimsa Diwas, or Day of Ahimsa, was celebrated at the Bhavans USA Center on 23 July amidst the gathering of religious minded devotees and Bhavans USA members. The whole programme was compèred by Ms. Sneha Mehta. Acharya Shri Amrender Muni Ji blessed all and showed the importance of *ahimsa* in the modern world along with Acharya Shri Chandanaji, who also explained the meaning of *Namokar Mantra*. Gurudev Chitrabhanuji blessed all those who were present. Samani Charitra Pragnaji, who was the chief guest on the occasion, delivered a moving speech on the Jain message and its place in the present day with special reference to *anekantvada*. Vice-Chairman, Dr. Navin Mehta greeted and presented the guests of honour with a bouquet of flowers and as a token of respect he also extended this gesture to some of the Bhavan USA publications. Secretary Shri Rashmi Kamdar thanked all the guests on behalf of Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan. •

DEEPAK DAVE
Manager of Programmes
Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan-USA

UK

LONDON EYE

London is a city never shy of claiming to be one of the design capitals of the world. And just to make sure we know, every year the last two weeks in September the London Design Festival celebrates it with over 70 exhibitions, events, seminars, screenings, lectures and parties all over the city, showing all aspects of design from architecture to fashion.

Photographer Ravin Mehta landed an exciting and prestigious spot this year. Ravin produced the photographic exhibition installed in the Chamber Lobby of City Hall, which ran all through September. The whole preparatory project was carried out over eight days in August when Ravin spent each day shadowing a designer, working with the words Inspiration, Creativity and Diversity. Together they produced an image idea from these words for Ravin to go out and shoot, resulting in the 24 photos featured in the show. The exhibition served to be a pioneering way of collaborating for both the designer

and photographer's perspective in summarising the thoughts created by the words.

The exhibition was also part of the annual London Open House Weekend on the 17-18 September. This is the city's biggest architectural 'exhibition', which gives people the opportunity to visit over 500 buildings, old and new, across London - many of them normally closed to the public, completely free of charge.

Such a high profile appearance was a wonderful event for Ravin's local community in his home city. He describes the experience as, "an exciting opportunity to explore inspiration in an innovative way." •

www.londondesignfestival.com
www.luminium.co.uk
www.apicturewith.co.uk



photo from the 'Creativity' section by Ravin Mehta

USA

STELLA SPELLER

The amount of times you have to spell out the word 'Jain' to newcomers to the faith, and even the word, is astounding. "J.A.N.E.?" "No, J.A.I.N. You know like RAIN but with a J." It is usually followed by a puzzled look from a friend/colleague or perplexed silence on the other end of the phone line. Does any of this sound familiar?! So, it seems only apt that 12-year-old Bonny Jain would be an award winning speller.

Born in Rajasthan, he and his parents Rohit and Beena moved briefly to Scotland and are now settled in Illinois, USA, with addition to the family, four-year-old Riya. The star speller has been placed fourth nationally in the 17th National Geographic Bee held in May this year, and also 28th nationally in the 78th National Spelling Bee held in June. And it's not just spelling. Bonny is an all round go-getter having participated in the Midwestern Talent Search organised by North-western University every year since fourth grade and he has been the gold medal winner with the highest composite score for the last two years. He is also first chair violinist in his school orchestra and is one of the editors of his school's newspaper. And all this by the time he has just completed seventh grade in Wilson Middle School in Moline.

His father, Rohit puts it down to being an old fashioned book worm. "Bonny has been an avid reader since he

started reading at the age of four. From the beginning, he has been attending the accelerated programme for academically gifted students." But it's not all about the academics, Rohit goes on to say. "Bonny's favourite pastimes include playing with Lego, swimming, tennis and playing with his younger sister! He is very knowledgeable and proud about his Indian and particularly Jain heritage. He is a strong proponent of vegetarianism and has a major influence on his friends and classmates in this regard."

Bonny Jain - watch this space! •



Bonny Jain at the 2005 Scripps National Spelling Bee. © Mark Bowen/Scripps National Spelling Bee.

UK

A DAY OF KNOWLEDGE

A new, bright and airy Jain Vishwa Bharti (JVB) centre was opened in Cricklewood, London on 26 June. JVB had been running classes in Prakrit for 25 people all over the summer and to mark the graduation of the 25 students, a programme of *Pragya Diwas* was held. Prakrit is the original language of Jainism and Jain scriptures, and this unique course was open to the public. *Pragya Diwas* means 'a day of knowledge' and began with a few words of wisdom by Chief Speaker, Shri Atmanandji, Head of Koba Ashram. Samani Punya Pragyaaji opened her composition with 'Shri Ri Di Ke Dayak Nayak', bestower of wealth, self-discipline and intellectual power. She then presented a speech as a contributor of equanimity, uplifting the plane of consciousness.

The Prakrit Summer Course students commemorated the day with an on-the-spot quiz on Prakrit language and literature. The quiz was a very close competition between the individual teams. It was such an enjoyable day, with an audience just as involved as the quiz the participants themselves! •

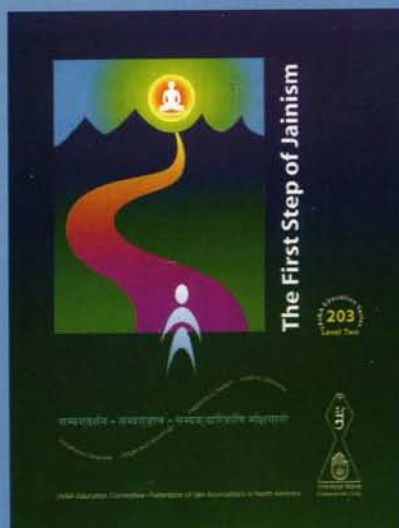
PREKSHA BHANDARI

USA

EDUCATION DEDICATION

Dr. Pradip and Mrs. Darshana Shah of Chicago, Illinois, and Mr. Sudhir and Mrs. Anita Shah of Woodbridge, Connecticut, are 24-hour Jains. Through sheer time, skill and effort they have done an outstanding job of compiling the two most important Jain Pathshala books for level 2 students. Both couples are dedicated to Jain education and Pathshala activities. Using any of their spare time, they have clocked up more than 1000 hours over the past one year to accomplish the preparation of these two books.

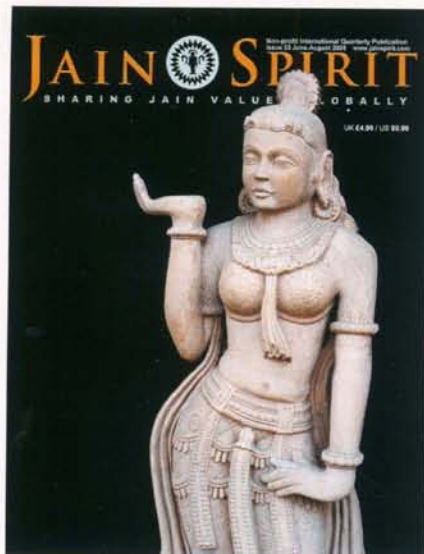
The Jain Story Book (JES 202) is Dr. Pradipbhai and Darshanaben's 160-page illustrated book and consists of 39 stories selected from various Jain literatures covering all segments of historical time period.



The First Step of Jainism (JES 203) is the work of Sudhirbhai and Anitaben. Both are Pathshala teachers and their Jain education website www.anekant.org contains many fun games, teachers' aids and other educational material. They compiled the colourful 144-page book from scratch to cover all aspects of Jain philosophy, ethics, conduct, health and nutrition, yoga and environmental topics.

To find out more about purchasing the books or downloading a copy, plus other Pathshala material, visit the education committee sources on www.jaina.org

For more information on *The Jain Story Book* and *The First Step of Jainism*, please contact Anita@anekant.org •



THE BIG ISSUE

Issue 23 of *Jain Spirit* was made up of a mixture of new and different elements. We had Californian girl Shayna Parekh as Guest Editor. She worked her proverbial Jain butt off commissioning and collating the freshest set of articles. We had our new Art Editor, Joanne Wood, calling the artistic shots from start to finish. This is her 3rd issue to date, but in 23 she really put her graphic stamp on the pages. The magazine is now six years old and it is finally finding a style that makes it a proponent of modern Jainism. The *Jain Spirit* team excitedly watched the issue unfold with a feeling that something really special was happening and to cut the long story short: Issue 23 worked!!! A big thank you goes out to all those involved. Shayna – you can be our guest anytime!



Here is some of the feedback we received:

Wonderful new layout, eclectic range of articles, and highly readable.
Ketan Shah (UK)

I am impressed with the abundance of graphics and pictures incorporated

in the layout. Visually it is very striking, a turn-around from earlier issues. The magazine excels in frequent discussions on core spiritual values and their application to the world today."

Marcus Klein (Subscriber, Germany)

The latest issue of JS has my Wow. It is extremely beautiful and very well done. Another very high milestone and standard that you have established.

Sulekh Jain (Founder Patron, USA)

The magazine gets better and better. The range of articles and quality is impressive. Looking forward to trying the vegan cookie recipe!

Angie (Resurgence Magazine, UK)

It's full of deep cultural values, beauty and expertise. You have brought the journal to new heights.

Paramacharya Palaniswami (Editor of Hinduism Today)

The pictures truly capture the essence of the articles and brings the whole magazine together. Kid Spirit is rare and interesting – a real inspiration to our children. It unites the world and helps us help our future ambassadors of the Jain religion.

Varsha Gudka (Subscriber, UK)



...compliments for issues more brilliant than the former every time. You have articles about a quantity of matters, each one more interesting than the last. I am proud to have subscribed to it.

Pierre Amiel (Nice, France)

Jain Spirit triumphs! The best volume ever in my view. Less tame, more interesting to read and visually absolutely brilliant.

Peter Flugel (Professor of Jain Studies at SOAS, UK) •



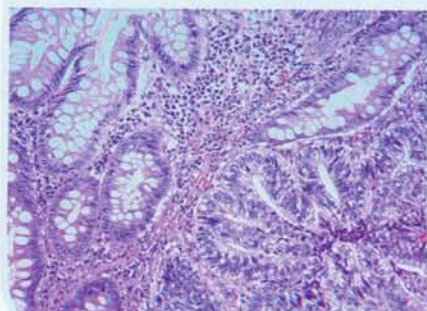
RED ALERT

MAJOR STUDIES FIND LINKS BETWEEN EATING RED MEAT AND CANCER RISKS

The Jain diet may be looking more and more like the way to go for a long and healthy life. The European Prospective Investigation into Cancer and Nutrition (EPIC) looked at the dietary habits of over 500,000 people across Europe over 10 years and the results are worrying. Bowel cancer risk was a third higher for those who regularly ate over two 80g portions of red or processed meat a day, compared to less than once a week. EPIC's study is reported in the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute*. Since the study began, 1,330 people have developed bowel cancer. It also found that low fibre diet increased the risk of bowel cancer.

We can be inundated with new theories or factors which increase our risk of developing the big C, but these studies strongly show that the damaging pressure put on the body when digesting red meat is undeniable. Lead researcher, Professor Sheila Bingham of the MRC Dunn Human Nutrition Unit in Cambridge said: "People have suspected for some time that high levels of red and processed meat increase the risk of bowel cancer, but this is one of the largest studies worldwide and the first from Europe of this type to show a real relationship." Professor Bingham said there were several theories about why red meat should increase the risk of bowel cancer.

She believes the most likely explanation is that compounds called haemoglobin and myoglobin, which are found in red meat, trigger a process called nitrosation in the gut, which leads to the formation of carcinogenic compounds. Alternatively, the problem might be caused by compounds called heterocyclic amines, carcinogenic compounds created in the cooking process. •



UK NEW CULTURAL HUB IN LONDON

Asia House is a non-profit, non-political organisation, established in London in 1996. Its aims are to promote appreciation and understanding of Asian countries, their arts, religions and economies, and to foster closer communication between the peoples of Asia and Europe. Every year they deliver approximately 100 visual, performance based and topical events with this in mind. The organisation covers the countries from

Iran in the west to Japan in the east and from the Central Asian Republics in the north to Indonesia in the south.

Along with the rest of London, they are preparing for a wealth of Asian events over the next year. The main project is the launch of a \$6m arts and business centre for such events, exhibitions and conferences. This will become the UK's head quarters for Asian affairs as well as a major new destination for the general public in central London. The building, a spectacular Grade II townhouse in London's West End, will be inaugurated during a month-long celebration this November. The programme will include a Singapore Jazz evening, a season of Thai food, music, design and art, and an exhibition by acclaimed photo journalist Steve McCurry, best known for his images of Afghanistan in the recent war.

The move to the new venue will mean that Asia House will be able to host a plethora of events in London, but it will continue its collaborations with over 75 partner organisations to co-host events at Asian High Commissions, embassies and cultural centres.

For more info visit www.asiahouse.org •



UK LOCATION LOCATION LOCATION!

The name Navnat Vanik was coined in Mombasa, Kenya around the 1920s. There were nine small Vanik groups that merged and established the name 'Navnat' which literally means 'nine communities'. Navnat consisted of followers from both the Jain and Hindu faiths and together they combined to form the Navnat Vanik Mahajan, hoping to cater for the

religious, social and cultural needs of the Mombassa community. The association grew and grew, becoming more commonly known as Navnat, and when the first immigrants left for the UK, they took it with them! As a result, the Navnat Vanik Association (UK) was founded as a registered charity in 1971, and 34 years on they have had some exciting news. They have acquired a beautiful 18 acre plot of green land in North West London, close to Heathrow Airport. There are the highest of hopes to build a centre with the capacity to hold functions for the whole community, a library, a nursery school, a sports centre and anything else they have always dreamed of! It is a once in a life time opportunity for the London Asian and non-Asian community to create their own hub of calm and togetherness. The project is ambitious but realistic, with an end date of 2009.

To find more information on the aims, ideas and how you can help you can visit www.navnatbhavan.org.uk or call Yogesh Mehta on (UK) 07831100693 •



UK A MOMENT FOR THE GOOD PEOPLE OF LONDON

Jain Spirit, a UK publication, would like to extend all their condolences to those affected by the bomb attacks on our capital city of London in July this year. We hope that peace and tolerance will be found for all those

involved in war, terrorism and suffering here and all over the world. A picture of the cultural and racial diversity of London was shown with a person from almost every colour and ethnic background in the tragic toll of the 52 people killed, including Jain.

Ripples of personal grief ran through the London community for Neetu Jain, who lost her life during the explosion of the bus in Tavistock Square in the first attack, on 7 July. The young professional was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Ramesh Jain of Hendon. The London Jain Vishva Bharati samanis, Samani Pratibha Pragyaji and Samani Punya Pragyaji, performed a memorial and prayer service for Neetu and her family on Sunday, 24 July. •



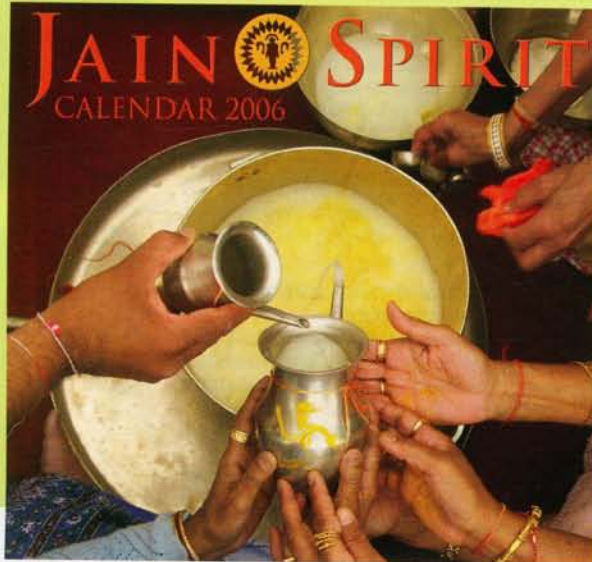
A YEAR OF PEACE- IN PICTURES

An image of a peaceful scene is a portal to a calmer world in the hustle and bustle of our everyday lives. What better way to surround yourself with these images all year long, than with the Jain Spirit 2006 Calendar? 14 months (the calendar starts in November 2005, to coincide with the Indian New Year) of exquisite Jain inspired full colour photos of peace, calm, faith and love researched and handpicked by the Jain Spirit Art Editor, Joanne Wood. Included in the calendar are all the major Jain events throughout the year, such as Diwali, Paryushan and Mahavir Jayanti, up until 31 December 2006. There are also 2 introductory pages explaining the basics of the Jain philosophy, making the calendar a perfect gift for all peace lovers, not just Jain.

You can pick up your own copy by ordering on line on www.jainspirit.com or call us at the office on +44 (0) 1206 766122. Fax your orders to + 44 (0) 1206 766155

One calendar is £5 – plus shipping costs of £2 for mainland UK and £4 worldwide

For more info you can email office@jainspirit.com •



PAINTING A NEW FUTURE

April 15-17, 2005. Evanston, Illinois

In hopes of reviewing the long-term future of Jainism in North America, JAINA's Long Range Planning Committee began work to analyze the trends and patterns of Jains in the United States and Canada. Dipak

Jain, the Dean of Kellogg School of Management, invited Jain leaders from across USA and Canada to a historic first summit to discuss the future of Jainism in North America at the Kellogg School of Business in Chicago. The goal of the summit was to apply Kellogg's leadership atmosphere, innovative thinking culture, and powerful management concepts to develop a strategic plan to bring Jainism to a new level in North America in the next 10 years. •



INDIA'S NUMBER 1 SPIRITUAL CHANNEL LAUNCHED IN US AND UK

AASTHA Television Channel of the Mumbai headquartered AASTHA Broadcasting Network Limited is India's number one Socio-Spiritual-Cultural Network. It was launched internationally in 4 continents of Asia, Africa, Europe and Australia in the year 2000. AASTHA is the world's first 24/7 satellite television network broadcasting India's rich heritage and currently reaches over 20 million households with viewership in excess of 100 million. It broadcasts programming in Hindi, Gujarati and English and regularly features Jain items, including 2005's Paryushan.

In August 2005 Sky Digital began broadcasting AASTHA TV on channel EPG 828 in the UK and in September AASTHA became available in the USA on DIRECTV, Inc. the fastest growing digital service provider. Both companies are seeking to expand the South Asian programming lineup. AASTHA's comprehensive, authentic broadcasting will now both satisfy needs of the spiritually homesick South Asians in these countries and perhaps provide a similar service to the sometimes spiritually starved or simple curious westerners. The multi-year agreement with AASTHA brings viewers the top-rated programs that have made AASTHA India's number one spiritual network and preferred network to Asian Indians in Asia, Africa, Australia and Europe. The AASTHA lineup features spiritual discourses, socio-spiritual-cultural ceremonies and events, meditation techniques and devotional music. It charts the holy places of pilgrimage, elucidates on traditional festivals and focuses on Indian vedic sciences like Ayurveda and yoga. 2005 also saw the beginning of locally originated programming being aired as well.

Kirit Mehta, AASTHA's chief executive officer said of the US deal, "We have joined the DIRECTV platform to be offered alongside other leading South Asian programming that DIRECTV is bringing to United States. We look forward to the relationship and with this expansion we will strive to satisfy the deeply felt need of spirituality from the vast community of Indian residents in America."

For more information visit www.aasthatv.com and www.aasthasansar.com •




Spiritual Discussions and Ceremonies | Meditation Techniques | Documentaries and Drama Series | Devotional & Folk Music |
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For UK  → Watch AASTHA on Channel 828 on Sky Digital



USA AHIMSA PLANS



AHIMSA CENTER
NONVIOLENCE IN THOUGHT AND ACTION

The Ahimsa Center at California State Polytechnic University, Pomona is gearing up to undertake some major initiatives that aim to inform and educate school children, college students and the community about how discord and conflict can be addressed creatively, compassionately and non-violently.

The ethos behind the centre is that schools are the seed-bed for cultivating the culture of peace and non-violence. The innate human potential for love, compassion, caring, forgiveness and reverence for all life needs to be nurtured from the earliest stages of learning and development. Toward this goal, the centre launched a two-week intensive summer institute for school teachers on *Non-violence and Social Change* from 18-30 July 2005. Thirty elementary, middle and high school teachers participated in this programme and gathered on Cal Poly Pomona campus on 4 June for the formal start of the summer institute.

A new course, *Non-violence in the Modern World*, has been recently approved and will be offered at Cal Poly Pomona from the beginning of autumn this year. The course will create a genuine appreciation of the efficacy of non-violent strategies for undergraduates, helping them effectively deal with the problems of violence and conflict at different levels and in different spheres.

The Ahimsa Center's third key initiative is in the area of community outreach. During last year, the Center hosted an *international conference, a one-day* workshop, a public lecture and two dialogues featuring many distinguished experts and practitioners of non-violence. The Center's next biannual community oriented event will be the Meera and Jasvant Modi International Conference on *Ahimsa and the Quality of Life*, to be held on our campus from 28-30 April 2006.

<http://www.csupomona.edu/~ahimsacenter/advisory.html>

INDIA THE SHREE VIJAY VALLABH SMARAK COMPLEX

Complex Chairman, Pratap Bhogilal profiles a globally undiscovered Jain gem

Jain Acharya Vijay Vallabh Surishwer Ji Maharaj (1870-1954) was a spiritual leader, a visionary and an apostle of peace. He chose education as the vehicle to spread the ideals of Jainism and inspired the establishment of many schools, colleges and libraries in many parts of India.

To commemorate his life and death, a multipurpose academic and religious institution in consonance with his preaching was built in 1974. It is situated in 20 acres of green land, in Delhi. The centre includes a pink sandstone shrine to the Acharya it memorialises, situated in the 84"-high two-tier central dome. There are four *Tirthankaras* on the upper floor of the main shrine, facing north, south, east and west. There is also a temple to Devi Padmavati, Parshvanath's Goddess, where thousands of devotees come to worship her every year.

There is a basement for the Reference and Research Library comprising thousands of published works and hand written manuscripts on Jainism and related fields of Indology. The hall also houses the Bhogilal Leharchand Institute of Indology for research in various branches of Indian Culture. Sadhvis and sadhus come to stay and research, and every year a three-week Summer School in Prakrit is held to which students with prescribed minimum educational background are admitted. We provide them with free coaching, boarding and lodging for the duration of the summer school.

There is a predominantly Jain Museum, most of the collections are from Gujarat and Rajasthan. We have a senior Secondary School – Jain Bharati Mrigavati Vidyalaya, which is recognised by the Education Department of NCT Delhi Government, and also affiliated to the Central Board of Secondary Education, and also a nursery school with altogether 1400 students, 80% of whom are from the neighbouring rural populace of 60 villages. An endowment has been put in place so that we can have a community kitchen to cater for everyone, as long as they want wholesome food!

This really is just the half of this amazing centre and we have many plans for the future. We invite any visitors to our complex, so if you would like to find out more, email jainsmarak@yahoo.com. We look forward to meeting you! •



EUROPE MAHAVIR GOLD AND SILVER COINS MINTED IN GERMANY

Accepting and understanding the relevance of the philosophy of Bhagwan Mahavir, Goldquest International Limited has

at the suggestion of Ahimsa Foundation and developed gold and silver coins of Bhagwan Mahavir. The coins are minted at B. H. Mayer's Mint, Germany, both in pure gold and silver. Each set of coins (one silver and one gold) is packed in a gift box and carries a certificate of endorsement issued by Ahimsa Foundation, and other technical details. For further information and buying, log on to www.goldcrest.com •

LABOUR'S VISION FOR INDIA

Britain's re-elected Labour government wishes to increase its economic, cultural and diplomatic ties with India as it develops into a global player, according to Stephen Pound, a Member of Parliament and Chairman of Labour Friends of India. The MP said this in a speech to the Friends at the House of Commons on 25 May 2005, just two weeks after Tony Blair's government had been confirmed in office for a third consecutive term, an historic 'first' for the Labour Party. Mr. Pound hailed the victory as an opportunity to build on and extend Anglo-Indian ties cemented over the past eight years of Labour rule. He congratulated both the British and Indian governments on the Joint Declaration signed in 2004, and announced that Labour Friends of India would be focusing on five key issues highlighted in that document: the UN Security Council reform, trading links, the environment, security and economic growth.

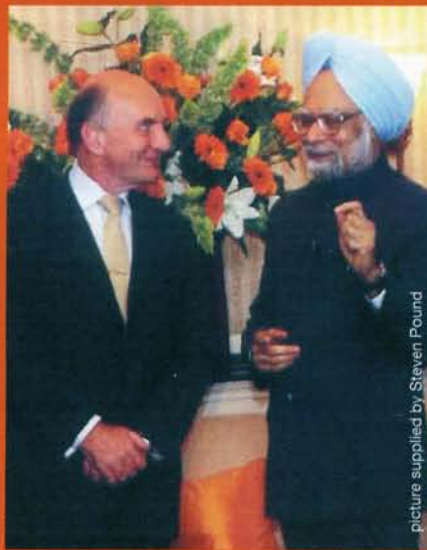
On the UN Security Council (UNSC), Mr. Pound called not only for a seat on the Council for India, but for its representative to have the right of veto. Anything less, he argued, would be mere 'gesture politics'. We want, he said, "a fundamental change that gives a sixth of this world's humanity a real possibility of influencing international relations." In the area of trade, he paid tribute to the advancement of Indian companies into many areas of the British economy. His examples included Tetley Tea, owned by Tata, software and call centres operated by companies like NIIT and Satyam, and financial services provided by ICICI Bank. While British companies such as P&O, BT and British Gas are taking advantage of Indian opportunities, there is still much to be done. British firms could follow the example of their US counterparts, which have shown greater imagination and flexibility in forging relations with India. Mr. Pound welcomed the formation of 'The India Group', a private sector alliance made up of India's largest companies and headed by Sonjoy Chatterji of ICICI Bank.

Mr. Pound applauded the role of India in ratifying the Kyoto protocol on climate change, a treaty which Britain's Labour government strongly supports – in direct contrast to the Bush Administration. He linked the campaigns to preserve biodiversity and conserve water with the movement to lift millions of Indians out of poverty, and also called for greater co-operation between the governments,

businesses and civic organisations of both countries on the promotion of 'greener technologies'. Mr. Pound congratulated India and Pakistan on recent negotiations over Kashmir during the cricket series last year, and called for an 'open skies policy' in trading relationships, removing barriers to trade and promoting cultural ties. He called for Labour's third term to "be used to develop ties based on mutual respect, shared benefit and prosperity for all."

Stephen Pound's speech comes a month after the first celebration of Ramnavami at the House of Commons, the Hindu festival marking the birth of Shri Ram. Parliamentarians of all parties attended – a testimony to the growing strength of Anglo-Indian relations. •

AIDAN RANKIN



Stephen Pound, Chairman of Labour Friends of India with the Prime Minister of India, Manmohan Singh.

KENYA SEEING IS BELIEVING

You cannot put a price on the value of sight, but once eyes need medical treatment and numbers are thrown into the equation, it can become only the rich who can pay for it. Even simple eye care can prove to be way beyond the reach of those less fortunate.

This is an everyday reality in Thika, Kenya. To remedy the crisis, members of the Oshwal community set up the first *Shah Free Eye Clinic* at the Thika Mangu High School in 1980. The camp was a huge success and the Oshwals have tried to recreate it every year ever since, under the banner of the *Shree Jain Youth League*. In order

to raise more funds, life membership scheme was introduced in 1985, of Ksh 5,000/US\$ 65. At present there are 400 members, adding up to pledges for camps up to the year 2010.

Initially, operations were only done on eye ailments of cataracts, entropion, glaucoma and chalazion or squints but as the screening increased, patients in need of spectacles also increased. During the 12th camp the facility of eye refraction was introduced and reading glasses were dispensed. The other most common complaints were ear, nose and throat problems so with their ever expanding needs they became the *Shah Free Eye* and *E.N.T. Camp*.

This year, from 2-9 April, the team comprised of local medics, doctors, eye and E.N.T. surgeons, optometrists and a pharmacist from the UK. Not wanting to restrict themselves, a team of doctors also checked the surrounding area for people in need of help! Three of them flew to Kisumu to screen patients and another team went by road to Kitui South and another to Migwami to do the same. Patients who required surgery were brought to the camp. The organisers provide transport and accommodation to the patients free of any charge. The kitchen offered three hot meals every day to over 500 people. A total of about 100 people are employed temporarily.

The entire camp is run on voluntary services. Everybody is involved in the activities of the camp: doctors, pharmacists, theatre nurses looking after the out-patients or in the kitchen. On average, in every camp they screen 15,000 patients and operate upon 600 of them. To date they have screened over 250,000 patients, operated on over 13,000, issued 55,000 spectacles and 175 hearing aids.

The *Shree Jain Youth League* would like to express their gratitude to all the past chairmen, committee members, doctors, volunteers and all those who have contributed towards the growth and success of the league. It is through their guidance, foresight and hard work that a mammoth humanitarian and noble project continues to take place.

To volunteer or simply to see the *Shah Free Eye* and *E.N.T. Camp* work towards eradicating preventable and curable blindness and deafness in Kenya, you can contact:
Jitain Shah - jitain@colour-international.com
Rajan Shah - windsorflowers@africaonline.co.ke •



news features

EAST, WEST AND A LITTLE OF THE SOUTH

Robert and Smita's story

Robert Arnett is from Columbus, Georgia. He has a Master's degree in History from Indiana University, USA. He studied at the University of Georgia, Tulane and the London School of Economics in the UK. He also spent two years in the United States Army, and was one of the youngest Commanding Officers in the Signal Corps, serving nineteen months in Turkey.

Smita Turakhia is a Jain mum from Lake Jackson in Texas and grew up in India. She loves to paint and loves children.

She is a graduate of Nirmala Niketan, Mumbai, India and also studied fine arts for two years at the University of New Mexico, Albuquerque.

They may not seem the most likely partnership, but somewhere between all these places and occupations Robert and Smita are establishing an important breakthrough in educating their part of the world about the culture of India. Robert has had a love affair with India for many years, resulting in the internationally acclaimed and multi-award-winning *India Unveiled* book, a collection of his photos. And it was at a book-signing that Arnett and Turakhia had a chance meeting in Houston. He had no idea that Smita was an artist but found her to be the perfect candidate to illustrate his new children's book *Finders Keepers?*, a tale which gives the young reader a tour of the colourful country. Since its release, *Finders Keepers?* has won four awards including The Independent Publisher Book Award's 'Ten Outstanding Books of the Year' and The Benjamin Franklin

Silver Medal for the Best Multicultural Book of the Year.

As if this wasn't enough, the two were the main feature of a three-month-long festival at the beginning of 2005, at the Columbus Museum. The Indo-US Cultural Association joined in with the Columbus Museum in an unprecedented partnership to host a series of events highlighting various aspects of India's wondrous cultural diversity. Robert presented a show to the attendees on the cultural diversity of India, using slides from *India Unveiled*, which was the official opening of the photo exhibit entitled *Across India: Selected Photographs from India Unveiled*.

The presentation was followed by book-signing by Robert and Smita for both books. The whole event was a huge success. The two are obviously enjoying their role as unlikely ambassadors for India. Read on for *Jain Spirit's* 60 second interview with each...



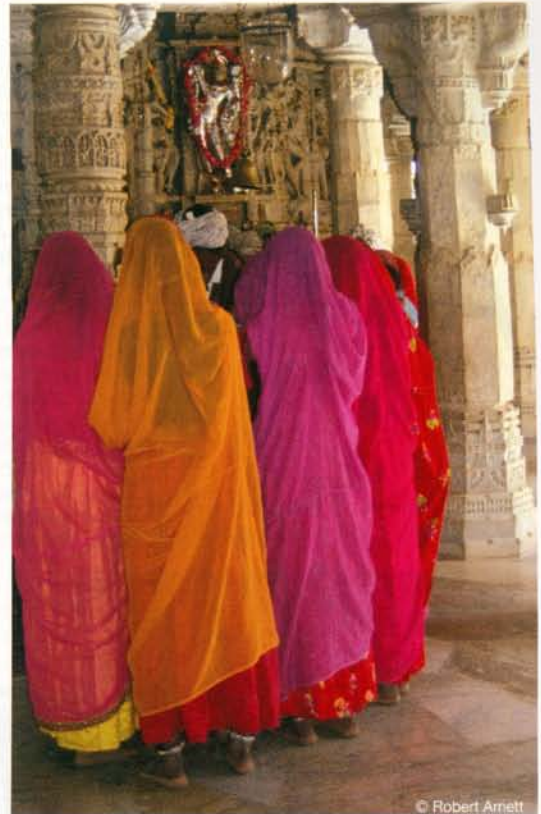
60 SECONDS WITH ROBERT ARNETT

How long has photography been a part of your life? Over 40 years! I was always interested in drawing and colouring pictures in childhood, and realised that I had a knack for photography after graduating, when I was in the military overseas.

How has India been involved? My first trip to India was not to do a book but to visit the country that had such a profound impact on my life through having practised Raja meditational Yoga for 25 years. After returning I realised that I had some very good photographs. It was only then that I decided to do an illustrated book to share the India I loved with the Western world, which in my opinion has no clue of what the beauty of Indian culture entails.

What is it that draws you to India? The spirituality, the innate peacefulness of the people, devotion and strong sense of family values.

You have numerous Jain photos in *India Unveiled*. What has been your experience of Jainism in your life, personal and photographic? The aspect of Jainism that definitely helped me the most, which I was not aware of until I studied the religion, is the concept of 'multiplicity of viewpoints'. Coming to the understanding has helped me function more harmoniously with others by realising that someone's viewpoint that is different from mine may be just as valid for them. I am particularly fascinated by the intricate details of Jain temple carvings. The temples in India probably have the finest carved details in the world.



© Robert Arnett



60 SECONDS WITH SMITA TURAKHIA

How long has art been a part of your life? I always had the creativity inside of me and a good eye for aesthetics and design. My parents always supported and encouraged me to pursue art as a hobby and in India I took private lessons from many artists. After my marriage, when I moved to the US, my art training involved live figure drawing and various art mediums for two years. But most of all I love playing with colours.

How is India involved? Living in the US, I wanted to portray the beauty of the Indian culture as best as I could to help Indian-American children understand and take pride in their cultural heritage, and also to introduce the culture to children from other places. *Finders Keepers?* is set in Mt. Abu and is being very well received in schools and libraries in America. This will help introduce the beauty of India, to include the splendour of Jain temple carvings and the sensitivity of Jainism to all life and creation.

What draws you to it? The traditional values have always had a great appeal to me. Even in college, my classmates teased me about not adopting the more 'sophisticated' ways of the West. Living in America for almost 25 years, though I see the wonderful qualities this country offers, I feel that by combining the best of East and West, we can become stronger.

You depict Jainism in lots of your pictures. What has your experience been of Jainism in your life, personally and artistically? I was born in a Jain family and I have brought up my children vegetarian. Our diet still reflects many Jain influences. I live a life based on my 'needs' and not on 'wants', which has enabled me to devote my time to doing things that I love, rather than getting a job merely for financial rewards. The Jain picture in *Finders Keepers?* shares the gentleness of Jainism and its respect for the environment and towards all creation.

Do you both have plans for the future? We plan to do another children's story together that is also set in India. It also shares moral and ethical values. We are working on 'sharing India' through India Travelling Photo Exhibit in as many major cities as possible in the USA and abroad.

Find out more at www.atmanpress.com •

REBECCA HOH



© Smita Turakhia

MILESTONE IN JAIN STUDIES

New Summer School Attracts Top Scholars

A pioneering International Summer School for Jain Studies has taken place in India to bring together academics and researchers, and to promote a wider knowledge and understanding of the Jain philosophy, culture and way of life. The organisers are a trust known as the International Summer School for Jain Studies which is a project of The Academic Study of Jainism in North America, directed by Professor Cromwell Crawford of

The Summer School took place between 1 June and 31 July 2005 at a number of Indian venues, most of which had strong historical and cultural ties with Jain tradition. An array of competitively renowned scholars attended, such as Professor James L. Fredericks, PhD of Loyola Marymount University, who is also a Catholic priest in the Archdiocese of San Francisco. His interest in Jain studies arose from a long-term involvement in Buddhist-Christian dialogue. Robin Brinkman, a PhD student at Claremont Graduate University, California, has been a spiritual teacher for the International Society for Krishna Consciousness and is working on a comparative study of Jainism and the Hindu Vaishnava tradition. Other scholars included Sarah Hadmack of the University of Hawaii, who aims to promote Jain education in the religious studies departments of

American universities, and Tim Helton of Claremont, who is attracted by the Jain tradition of non-absolutism or *anekantvada*. Laura Newberry also investigated female Jain monks, Marcel Parent researched comparative analysis of Jain and Buddhist religions primarily, and Christopher Handy on mysticism in Jainism. Students and scholars alike were provided with an extensive reading list, which included *Studies in Jain Philosophy* by Nathmal Tatia, Natubhai Shah's two-volume *Jainism: The World of the Conquerors*, and *The Jaina Path of Purification* by Padmanabh S. Jaini, and a host of other books considered as canonical literature by Jains.

Despite this heavyweight presence, the Summer School was anything but narrowly academic. Throughout the two months, the highly motivated students were able to balance their academic study with the lived experience of Jainism. They visited Jain homes, witnessed family ceremonies, temple worship, festivals, visual and performing arts. They also talked extensively with Jain monks, nuns and pilgrims from both the Digambara and Shvetambara branches of Jainism. In Delhi, for instance, they visited the Chhoti Dadabari and Samarak Shvetambara temples, along with Digambara temples including the famous Lal Mandir. Students were shown *poojas* taking place there, and even had the chance to participate in *poojas* themselves. One postgraduate student, Laura Newberry of Claremont, California, described her experiences to Shugan Jain in these terms: "Each moment, as I open, deepen and learn, I am so blessed to have been acquainted with all of you, particularly you for your kind nature and immense understanding of the beauty of Jainism. ... I am excited to await each new day full of possibility and unfolding bliss."

Laura is a PhD student in the Women's Studies in Religion programme at



University of Hawaii. It is sponsored by the Mahavir World Vision, Inc., with Dr. Sulekh Jain as Director of the Board. The project focuses mainly on the United States and Canada, where Jain studies are featured little or not at all in the University programme. However, the scope of the initiative is global and the intention is to make one of India's most ancient doctrines accessible to scholars and students in a range of disciplines.

The project is implanted and administered in India by Mr. Shugan Jain of New Delhi. Participating students from North America will receive credits towards their degree courses at Canadian and US universities. It is intended that the Summer School will be an annual event. Already, it has broken new grounds in Jain studies, in collaboration between Indian and North American researchers, secular and religious scholars.



Claremont Graduate University. She is particularly drawn to Jainism because of its commitment to non-violence (*ahimsa*) and its devotion to the value of all living things. In this, she is part of a growing trend among young scholars of religion in the West, as well as writers, creative artists and political activists. Increasingly, they see Jainism as an ancient philosophy which resonates to a remarkable extent with the problems – social, spiritual and ecological, – with which supposedly ‘advanced’ societies grapple.

The Inaugural Speech, which was written by Professor Cromwell Crawford of the University of Hawaii and read out by the Indian Director of the project, Shugan Jain, emphasised the relevance of Jainism to the West and to a world community in search of ethical reference points. He reminded the audience that Jainism is a living tradition, a practical guide to problems in life as well as a faith of deep antiquity. Tradition, Shugan read, derived from the Latin word ‘tradere’

– to hand over, which means that it is not only about the past but it “points to new developments and continuity in the future.” It is therefore possible that Westerners will find in Jainism “something new which will continue the tradition in many creative forms.” And, in a note of optimism that captured the spirit of the whole two months in a moment, he said: “Who knows – the next Mahavir may be sitting in this class?”

Since the initial Summer School event the school has completed its planned studies and visits to Delhi, Jaipur, Ladnun and Indore. The scholars had an opportunity to visit famous pilgrim places and centres of Jain art, such as Gopachal at Gwalior, Sonagiri, Shri Mahavirji and of course the famous palaces and shrines at Jaipur and Agra. The school concluded in New Delhi on 31 July with a valedictory function for the scholars. Keep an eye out for the next ISSJS event, which will include 15-20 scholars from North America and Europe.

The following Indian organisations participated in this first programme:

Jain Vidhya Sansthan, Shri Mahavir Ji, (Jaipur Branch), Rajasthan
Bhogilal Leharchand Institute of Indology, Delhi
Jain Vishwa Bharati Institute, Ladnun, Rajasthan
Kundkund Gyanpeeth, Indore, M.P
Parshvanath Vidyapeeth, Varanasi, U.P
Ahimsa Foundation, Delhi and Jodhpur
Jain Academy Educational & Research Center, Mumbai University, Mumbai

For information on future Summer School projects and programmes you can contact Professor Crawford on SzaboCrawf@aol.com, Sulekh Jain on scjain@earthlink.net and Shugan Jain on svana@vsnl.com

AIDAN RANKIN •

LOST IN TRANSLATION

The Clay Sanskrit Library bring out a set of Sanskrit tales in English

An exciting new project has just been launched in the United States to bring Sanskrit literature to the reading public in the West. Outside the subcontinent, interest in this ancient literary language of India has been confined largely to linguistic scholars and students or devotees of Indian faith traditions such as Hinduism and Jainism. But the Clay Sanskrit Library seeks to change that and bring the vital and colourful literature to an international reading public. For as the Library's founding statement says: “This literature combines great beauty, enormous variety and more than three thousand years of continuous history and development.”

Twenty-eight leading scholars from eight countries are co-operating to produce new translations in a clear and readable style that remains faithful to the original. For Western readers, access to the language has in the past been hindered by a difficult and unfamiliar script. The new series increase accessibility by presenting the Sanskrit text in familiar Roman letters on the left pages, with the English translation on the right. The books are in convenient pocket size, ideal for reading on public transport or during lunch and tea breaks at work. Their covers are an elegant turquoise that

is at once eye-catching and tranquil. The first twelve titles appeared in February 2005, co-published by New York University Press and the JCC Foundation in Joliet, Illinois. Six new titles were published in August and within the next five years the collection aims to grow to around a hundred titles. The Library's main emphasis is described by John Clay, in his introduction to the first series: “From early on in the common era, a vast creative literature of novels, short stories, plays and poetry began to develop. Some took their subject matter from the national epics or the Buddhist scriptures, but many other sources also provided inspiration. This new literary culture was vibrant and vivid.”

The Clay Library will therefore focus on drama, poetry and novels, together with the famous Hindu epics, the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*, which are also cherished by members of other faiths as the national poems of India. The first series include Volume 1 of the Jain epic, *The Epitome of Queen Lilavati* by the poet and monk Jina Ratna, as well as such classics as *The Heavenly Exploits: Buddhist Biographies from the Divyavadana* (Volume 1), Books 1 and 2 of the *Mahabharata* and the *Love Lyrics of Amaru*. The second volume of *The Epitome* was published in August 2005. The collection's General Editor is Richard Gombrich, a longstanding friend of *Jain Spirit* and Boden Professor Emeritus of Sanskrit at Oxford University.

Sanskrit is closely related to ancient Greek and Latin, as well as to the languages of ancient Persia and modern Iran, the Celtic and Germanic languages and the languages of Northern India and

Pakistan today. Sanskrit works can be seen as part of the English speaker's literary inheritance, alongside Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. Sanskrit also shows that what we call ‘East’ and ‘West’ are really branches of the same cultural tree.

The founders of the Clay Sanskrit Library are John and Jennifer Clay. For more information about the project, visit www.claysanskritlibrary.com

AIDAN RANKIN

Aidan Rankin also reviews the first volume of *The Epitome of Queen Lilavati* in our book review section •

THE CLAY SANSKRIT LIBRARY
FOUNDED BY JOHN & JENNIFER CLAY

EDITED BY
RICHARD GOMBRICH



SPRING/SUMMER 2005

To purchase volumes please visit:
WWW.NYUPRESS.ORG

For a searchable corpus of CSL texts & translations,
& further information, please visit:
WWW.CLAYSANSKRITLIBRARY.COM

HOW MUSIC FOUND US

News Editor Rebecca Hoh showcases the musical story of Sisters Sheelan and Gauri Malde, vocalists on Jain Spirit's Voyage of Peace and Joy CD



"Music for us is pure passion and love. It takes us into another level of life, peace, eternity and bliss. Music brings inner strength within our souls and mind. We feel God has given us a gift to share amongst our people."

That's powerful stuff. You cannot expect much else from two sisters, who have had a life captivated by music since they were toddlers. The two singers, who performed at Jain Spirit's 'Voyage of Peace and Joy' concert this year, shared their story with us.

Sheelan and Gauri's adventure started at the age of three and six when their parents, Rajni and Anu Malde, showed them the way to stardom – MUSIC! It all began with a little help from the lightest of pushes by the lady they call their Guru, Nimaben Shah. She taught them to sing and play the harmonium, and it was her words which spurred them on. "You have a gift from God and have beautiful voices like angels. You must pursue your singing forever."

With this encouragement they went on to learn the keyboard from Mohammed Kassam and before long they were performing in his band. The tabla player of the band was a young man named Kuljit Bhamra and within ten years he went onto be a top producer. The girls played a number of concerts as part of Kassam's band but soon they felt the need to spread their wings and with a taste for performance they began to form their own independent act.

But just as suddenly as they had found their calling, they were hit with a 'dry

spell'; no concerts or performances, the phone stopped ringing and for six months it seemed their destiny had hit a standstill! As many people who love to perform will understand, Sheelan and Gauri describe this time as disheartening and as though they were 'incomplete'. But along with these feelings they also had the view that it "was not only in our hands and that a miracle was going to happen!"

And true enough, at the end of the sixth month there was a light at the end of the tunnel. Their Mum! As mother's do, Anu had immeasurable faith in her children and an iron will for them to succeed! She knew that their talents would be wasted if they did not pursue further into a career of music. She single-handedly searched for freelance musicians and eventually all her hard work paid off. The music found them, and *Dilwale* was born. This is now their band, built from the collection of session musicians found by Anu. Sheelan and Gauri describe it as "music from the heart and the turning point which changed our future completely." They started to live their lives for the music and managing their time became a priority. Sheelan goes on to say, "My sister and I always train our voices before any show. We make sure we put 100% dedication into our work. One of our main aims is to create a deep respect with the younger audience and make English/Hindi style of music appealing to them."

Their schedule began filling up, to date they have played at various festive events. They also got a call from their old friend, Kuljit Bhamra, who asked them to perform with him in London with Sangeeta Kaur, after his stint with *Bombay Dreams* and *Far Pavilions*.

It was last year that they got the call from Kaushik Khajuria and his band *Strings* to see if they would be interested in supplying the backing vocals for the Jain Spirit CD, *A Voyage of Peace and Joy*. They agreed and it is their enchanting voices you hear on the complimentary CD from Issue 21. On 9 April 2005, they took part in the CD launch show hosted by the magazine. The sisters had a great time, "the concert was a lot of fun and was a fusion of all world music fused with Hindustani acoustic melodies." This mix of cultures is something close to their hearts as their ambition is to release their own CD in English and Hindi.

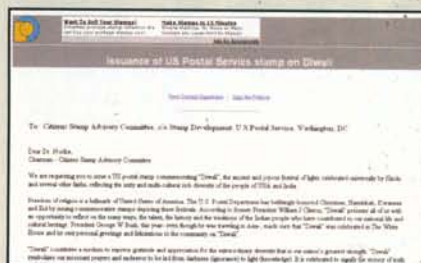
So that's the story so far. Their young career has already been a roller coaster ride, but we are so pleased to have worked with them in the formative years of what will probably be a hugely successful and long life in music. I'll leave you with a message from the girls. "We would like to take the opportunity to thank our family and friends and all those mentioned above for their guidance and support. We couldn't have done it without you!" •

GET ON THE NET

USA DIWALI STAMP?

Diwali is a festival celebrated globally by Hindu, Jain and several other faiths, and the United States Postal Department is thinking about issuing stamps for this occasion. And why not? USPS has stamps for other festivals too, like Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa and Chinese New Year. To do this, USPS needs 500,000 signatures to have the stamp release. If you would like a stamp to be issued to commemorate the festival of lights and the multi-cultural rich diversity of the people of the USA and India, you can go to the site below and support the release. You need not be Indian to sign the petition!

<http://www.PetitionOnline.com/diwali03/>



VOTE TO ENTER BAHUBALI INTO THE RUNNING FOR THE NEXT 7 WONDERS OF THE WORLD

Individuals can cast their vote for their choice of the contenders by 24 December 2005. A total of 77 top scoring sites will be selected by filtering among the numerous sites nominated. An international expert will create a shortlist of 21 sites of these 77 entries. These 21 sites will once again be allowed for public polling. Out of these only the top seven sites will be selected finally under the '7 Wonders of the World', which would be announced on 1 January 2007.

Click onto www.new7wonders.com



THE GREEN SPACE

Monica Perdoni searches for the sites that care for the environment with a modern outlook. This issue, she's all about the carbon...



At this year's G8 summit global warming was finally recognised as the biggest threat to our lovely planet. Yet it is clear that individual action must be taken as well as global. So here are a few tips of how you can make a massive difference in reducing your carbon footprint on Ms. Mother Earth.

- Flying is a big green no-no as aeroplanes are the fastest growing contributors to global warming - so look into alternative methods of travel. It may mean more time sitting in a train seat or on a boat but also more time for Gaia too!

- Log onto leading carbon calculator www.resurgence.org/carboncalculator where you can input your gas bills or travel plans; in fact, anything that creates carbon dioxide emissions, and find out how many tonnes of CO₂ your lifestyle creates. Then you can recognise where and what big changes need to be made. If your output is low enough, you are then eligible to join the Low Carbon Society: a forum for exchanging ideas on how to live life. Email mukti@mitchellyachts.co.uk for more details.

- It seems obvious but turning everything off when you've finished using them is also a valuable way of saving energy. A PC monitor left on overnight wastes enough electricity to laser-print 800 A4 pages, and leaving the TV on stand-by will waste enough energy in your lifetime to fuel a small Third World Country!

- "Think local, act global," is the green mantra. By supporting local businesses and suppliers, you can turn your consumer power into a positive force. Buying from local sources cuts out unnecessary transportation and fuel emissions.

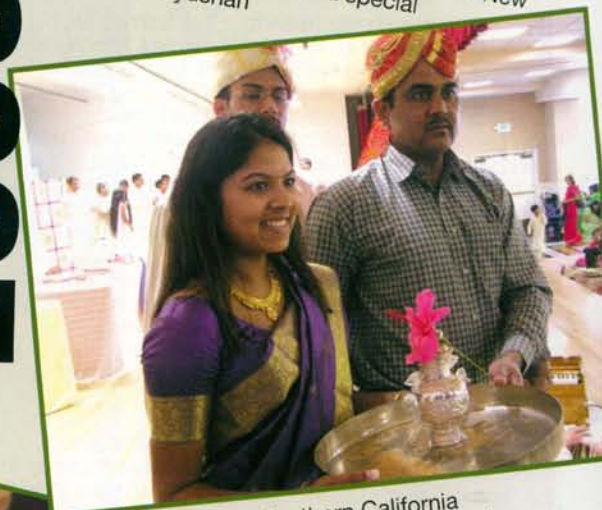
These are just a few suggestions of daily steps we can all take. If you have any more useful gems for this column you can email editor@jainspirit.com. Let's embrace our individual responsibility and choose action not apathy. Those little acorns grow into trees, right? •

PARYUSHAN 2005

Here's a taster of the pictures - go to the website to see your story and more images - www.jainspirit.com



London, UK. The opening of the New Temple made for a special Paryushan



Northern California celebrate in style



Mumbai, India - More than 2,000 individuals came together to participate in the annual festival under the guidance of Gacchadhipati Acharyadev Shrimad Vijay Hembhushansurishwarji Maharajsaheb. Read Bindi Mehta's full coverage on the website •

forthcoming events

SANSAAR'S TREAT FOR THE KIDS THIS DIWALI

Have you ever been to a live Barney or Tweenies show or a Christmas Pantomime? Can you remember it being fun, both for adults and children alike? For the last five years, Sansaar, a UK-based charity, has been successfully staging original shows of this quality, in simple, easy-to-understand Gujarati. Sansaar's main aim is to promote the learning of language through fun and music. To this end, their shows feature traditional and modern Gujarati nursery rhymes and action songs.

Sansaar's first production, entitled *Geet Gamat*, was a huge hit and the second, *Ramat Gamat*, has already been staged to sell-out audiences in and around London. For your last chance to catch their finale performance will be at the prestigious Logan hall in Central London on **20 November 2005**.

The brand new *Ramat Gamat* DVD, will also be launched on the day and will be a valuable addition to the *Ramat Gamat* CD and cassette, which are already available.

More info and images on www.jainspirit.com. For details on how to buy show tickets and products online, please visit www.sansaar.org Alternatively, call Ajay/Rajvee (020 8866 9714) or Shailesh (01923 774348). •

DIWALI – 2 NOVEMBER 2005

The Festival of Lights which celebrates the day Mahavir obtained Enlightenment. One of the biggest dates in the Indian calendar that also marks the end of one year and the welcomes of the next.

Go to Jain Spirit's Get On the Web news section for info on signing the petition for a US Diwali stamp. •



photo: www.dinodia.com

BAHUBALI IS BACK!

HIGHEST JAIN FESTIVAL IN 13 YEARS

The world awaits the first head-anointing (*Mahamastakabhisheka*) ceremony of Bhagwan Shri Bahubali of this century. Dates have been confirmed as starting on **22 January** and concluding on **19 February 2006**. The 30-day festival only happens once every 12 years, (the last one was actually in 1992), and is set to be un-forgettable. Global Media coverage is hotting up and we would recommend early booking. The main attraction of the cleansing and celebration of Bahubali begins on **8 February**.

Indus Tours and Travel Limited are running an all inclusive excursion to the site and surrounding area running from the **10 February to 24 February**. The tour will be guided by a specially selected Jain Scholar from the United States. It will provide both an authentic and comfortable Jain experience, including staying in pilgrim accommodation and visits to many sacred temples as well as free days, sightseeing and a stopover at one of the beautiful surrounding beaches.

Jain Spirit offers an extensive guide to the festival in this issue's Travel section. •

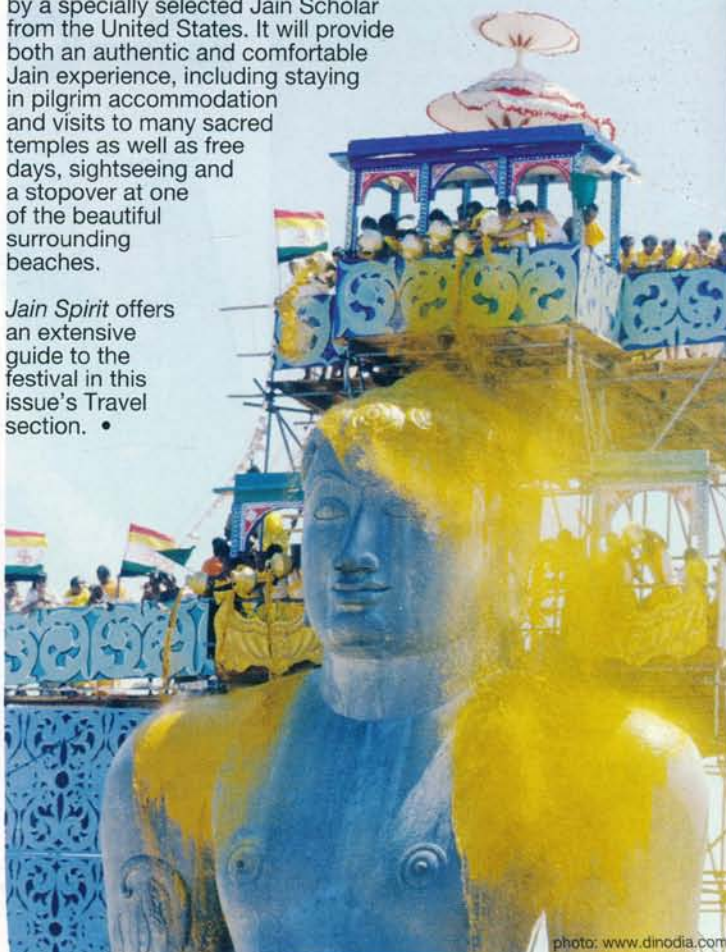


photo: www.dinodia.com

The Jain Spirit Official resource site is www.jainheritagecentres.com

DREAMING OF A JAIN CHRISTMAS?

Young Jains in Indore are holding a conference in December 2005 based upon the theme "How can we make Jainism an acceptable lifestyle in India by year 2020?"

The conference will run for three days and two nights from **23-25 December 2005**. The speakers will include Deepak Jain (Kellogg's), Dr. L.M. Sanghvi, Satish Kumar and Srinivas Jain (NDTV). 250 Jain youths have been selected from all over India through the submission of a paper presentation, with 20% reservation for the Girls/ Women.

For more details about this conference, you can visit www.yjindia.co.nr •

CALLING ALL CREATIVE ASIAN WOMEN!

DAWN (Dynamic Asian Women's Network) is one of the first networks for Asian women providing a unique forum with a holistic approach to addressing their professional, entrepreneurial and self-development needs. It is a forum for talented Asian women who are determined to succeed and passionate about their identity, retaining their unique characteristics and values.

DAWN CREATIVE is an event happening on **28 November**, supported by the Creative London. It is aimed at new and emerging entrepreneurs in the creative sector. On the evening of November 28, they are bringing together thought leaders in the industry at a fantastic exclusive event at The British Library, Conference Centre, Meeting Room 2 from 6-8pm followed by Q&A. You can then move to the foyer for drinks and to mingle and make new contacts.

To find out more about DAWN and DAWN CREATIVE you can visit www.mydawn.co.uk •



ART SHOW ON RAJASTHAN IN LONDON, UK

On **10 November** Namita Jain will exhibit her show 'The Colours and the Traditions of Rajasthan.' The show will take place at the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan UK Centre, at 4a Castletown Road London in Kensington, West London. Jain has been studying the culture, atmosphere and scenes from Rajasthan for two years in order to produce this series of 40 paintings. All are welcome to the free admission show which is part of Asian Art in London 2005.

For more information visit <http://www.bhavan.net>. You can also contact the Curator, Abi Isherwood at Tel: +44 20 7381 3086/4608 or email: abi@bhavan.net •



4th INTERNATIONAL PREKSHA CAMP

Set for **11 - 18 November 2005**, Preksha International is holding its highly successful 8 day residential camp in the Capital of India New Delhi at 'Adhyatma Sadhana Kendra'. It takes place on the above dates in the presence of H.H. Acharya Mahapragya.

For more info and applications go to www.preksha.com •

Viva! THE INCREDIBLE VEGGIE SHOW!

Wembley Conference Centre, London, UK

Saturday 12 November 2005, 10am - 5.30pm

Vegetarians International Voice For Animals (VIVA) are putting on a day long event with 'everything you ever wanted to know about going or being veggie or vegan- or simply cutting down on meat!' Featuring veggie product stalls, cookery demos, free food and free nutritional advice.

Admission: £2 and under 16s free

Find out more at www.viva.org •



new books

The Epitome of Queen Lilavati Volume One

By Jina.Ratna, edited and translated
by R.C.C. Fynes (New York: Clay
Sanskrit Library, 2005. Series Editor:
Richard Gombrich)

This Jain epic is one of a series of Sanskrit classics published this year to launch the new Clay Sanskrit Library. It was written in 1285 by the monk and poet Jina.Ratna, as a way of promoting and explaining the ethic of Jainism to a lay readership. It tells the story of the lives of a group of souls as they pass through a series of incarnations, or embodiments in Jain terminology, on their way towards *moksha*, which is liberation from *samsara*: the cycle of birth, death and rebirth.

Epitome is, accordingly, a collection of moral tales loosely woven together, replete with memorable incidents and all the quirks, eccentricities and even perversions that make up the human experience. Characters include, for example, Dhana, the rich merchant who seeks to justify crooked business deals, Padma.ratha, who attempted to seduce the ladies of the royal household whilst invisible, and Basun.dhara, the bogus holy man who was caught copulating with a female dog and so symbolically exposed as a fraud. To the Western reader such stories call to mind the bawdier sections of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* or (perhaps even more) the dark yet sinisterly comic visions of Hieronymus Bosch.

The stories are related to Queen Lilavati and her husband King Simha by the teacher-monk Samarsena. They cover a wide range of issues, such as anger and violence, greed, possessiveness or attachment, promiscuity and the propagation of falsehoods. These and other passions build up layers of karma which stand as obstacles – physical as much as intellectual and moral – to liberation and self-realisation. In a sense, the adventures of Jina.Ratna's characters resemble those of Christian, the hero of John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*. He, after all, is tested by an array of problems in living as he strives to attain perfect knowledge and faith. But in Jainism, the *jiva* or the individual soul is tested over many lifetimes.

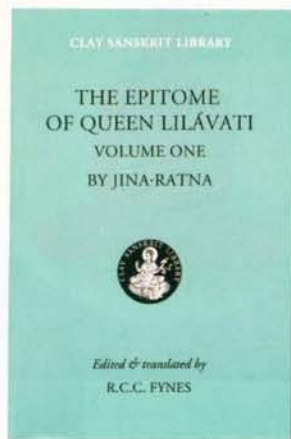
Moksha does not involve submission to an all-powerful creator, but freedom from all worldly constraints, including both submission to power and desire for power. It is a state of

pure consciousness achieved by the shedding of karma. This is reflected by the wide range of characters in Jina.Ratna's tales. They are all seeking their own distinctive paths to the truth and although many of them deviate from that path, there is always the possibility of success. The difficult ascetic practice, that is the surest way to liberation, is presented in all its rigours, but in an extravagant language that fires the visual imagination:

"Good sir, initiation as a Jain ascetic in the form of the five great vows acts as a diamond for the rocks of karma produced over many lives of good fortune; it acts as a mass of rain clouds for the extinction of the flames of the fires of manifest suffering; it acts as a boat for crossing the boundless ocean of existence."

Epitome is one of the hidden jewels of Jain literature. It has great relevance to those of us who are striving for spiritual truths in a complex and often confusing world order.

AIDAN RANKIN •



Jain Food: Compassionate and Healthy Eating

By Manoj Jain, MD, Laxmi Jain and
Tarla Dalal, 174pp
Copyright 2005 Manoj Jain and Laxmi
Jain. Copyright 2005 Tarla Dalal for
recipes by Tarla Dalal
\$14.95

Jain Food is an exciting introduction into the lifestyle of nutrition within Jain culture, written by India's best-selling cookery author Tarla Dalal, along with US based MD Manoj Jain

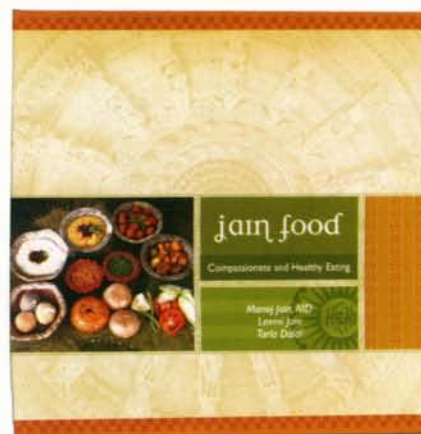
and Laxmi Jain, renowned for her cookbooks and cooking shows.

Not only does the book provide colourful, yet practical recipes for everyday cooking but it also gives the readers a spiritual insight into the ideals of the Jain religion, including the chapters *The Spiritual Journey* and *Food of Jain Ascetics*. It equips the reader with an understanding into the religious aspects of eating, providing newcomers to the philosophy with a great insight into the Jain approach to nutrition and healthy eating.

The recipes range from drinks, soups and appetisers to vegetables and international dishes – including Mexican, rice and lentils, and desserts! The instructions are fairly straightforward, and although not every dish is illustrated, it is relatively easy to follow. The book includes a separate chapter of recipes for young people and first-time cooks, providing them with the simpler dishes, such as rice, so once people get to grips with those they can move on to the more complex dishes. *Gatta Pulav* - Stir Fry Rice with Chickpea Flour Balls - is just one of the varied recipes featured in the rice and lentils section, and not only is it simple to prepare and cook, but is healthy too and only takes just 15 minutes to complete. Great if you need to prepare your evening meals quickly. As a nice touch, all the recipes in *Jain Food* have intro comments by their creators.

Overall, the recipes in *Jain Food* are very varied and well expressed. This innovative team have managed to provide people, followers of the Jain diet (or simply those curious) with a spiritual and unique way of eating.

LAURA WILKINSON •

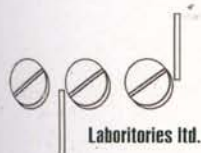




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BE PART OF THE MAGIC

Ever wondered how Jain Spirit pops through your mailbox every quarter? Put it down to the work of the Jain Spirit fairies! The silent hard graft - the articles, images, writers, illustrators, poets, the printing and distribution - it's all up to us and we like it that way - it is our pleasure to bring it to your doorstep. But there is one thing even fairies need help with. Jain Spirit is a registered charity and without the financial contributions from our supporters the editorial, design, marketing, printing and office team could not exist. So, in the same breath we want to emphasize both our appreciation and need for donations, subscriptions and advertisements in order to continue sharing our unique magazine with you. If you feel there is any way that you can help us financially we urge you to pick up the phone, send us an email or post us a cheque today. And as if by magic Jain Spirit will continue to be yours.

But why hear it from us? Please meet some of our current supporters.

Jain Spirit advisor in Hawaii, Professor Cromwell Crawford comments one of the most prolific ways you can help JS.

"By advertising you inform the readers as to who you are, where you are, and what you have to offer in way of skill, talent and commodity. When you advertise in Jain Spirit your ad is elevated to art...finding the most appealing medium to catch the reader's eye. In addition to business dividends, you also tell readers that you believe in the values and principles expressed in its pages, and that you wish to supply means to advance these ideas and values, along with selling your product."

Founder Patrons AND advertisers of Jaya Travel, Arvind Shah and Jaya Shah give you their thoughts:

"Jainism is a religion of hope and of help towards one's neighbour. We must strive to work for the benefit of others by contributing to charitable organizations that benefit humankind."

From its inception, Jain Spirit has spread the message of Jainism throughout the world through its magazine. Jain Spirit is a magazine that can be enjoyed by all individuals of all ages. Its diverse articles are important in promoting the spirit of Jainism in a very understandable way to its audience.

Jaya and I are proud to contribute to Jain Spirit because we feel that it has a total commitment of promoting Jainism throughout the world."

Thanks to Founder Patron Dr. Mahendra Varia and Dr. Chandra Varia.

"Jain Spirit is doing a wonderful job in promoting the message of Mahavir to the modern world."

This was echoed by Dr. Jasvant Modi, a new Founder Patron who also sponsored a Gift Subscription to Jain families in Los Angeles, USA.

Thanks to our other new donors this issue:

Mr & Mrs J.L. Jain, London UK
Shruti Shah, London, UK

And lastly a word from the lady who will answer your call, email or letter.

"Hi, I'm Kiran I do the marketing for Jain Spirit. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your support, and a special thank you to the Jain Spirit ambassadors and volunteers in Kenya, USA, India and UK who have helped us create this global marketing team."

On behalf of the Jain Spirit team I would also like to thank our advertisers and sponsors who ensure that Jain Spirit has the financial support and foundation it needs to continue its journey of sharing Jain Values globally.

Thank you all once again..."

Kiran Nandha



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INVEST IN THE FUTURE OF YOUR CULTURE

Our forefathers would invest in the building of temples to ensure that Jainism was carried onto the generations yet to come. In today's busy world the media has become another way in which we can pass on the same beauty and those same values of the culture onto our children.

You can help *Jain Spirit*, to try to ensure that the ancient values of Jainism stay accessible to young people, by sponsoring an advertisement in the magazine, or by simply making a donation of whatever you can afford.

Although financial support is essential, and highly appreciated by *Jain Spirit*, we also need lots and lots of help promoting *Jain Spirit* around the world. Word of mouth marketing is free and great for the environment, so please tell all your friends why they should consider subscribing to *Jain Spirit*. If you really enjoy the articles and news about Jain values, maybe they would too! If you do need extra subscription forms, just let us know, alternatively, we have an online subscription/renewal facility on the *Jain Spirit* website www.jainspirit.com. Hope to hear from you soon! As we know that you are all very busy, we have enclosed an envelope addressed to us just to make it easier for you to get in touch!

Jain Spirit Limited is registered as a charity in England and Wales (registered charity number: 1094414).

Saffron and Lotus Sponsorship Schemes

In September 2004, *Jain Spirit* introduced two new sponsorship schemes as part of a 5th Anniversary Appeal. These are the Saffron and Lotus Sponsorship Schemes. Saffron Sponsors generously donate a minimum of £1000 and Lotus Sponsors give a minimum of £500.

Both Saffron and Lotus Sponsors are acknowledged in 4 issues of *Jain Spirit* magazine and on www.jainspirit.com for at least a year. Additionally, as a small token of our appreciation, Lotus Sponsors are offered 10 one-year *Jain Spirit* gift subscriptions, and Saffron Sponsors are offered 20 one-year *Jain Spirit* gift subscriptions, to share with family, friends and colleagues!

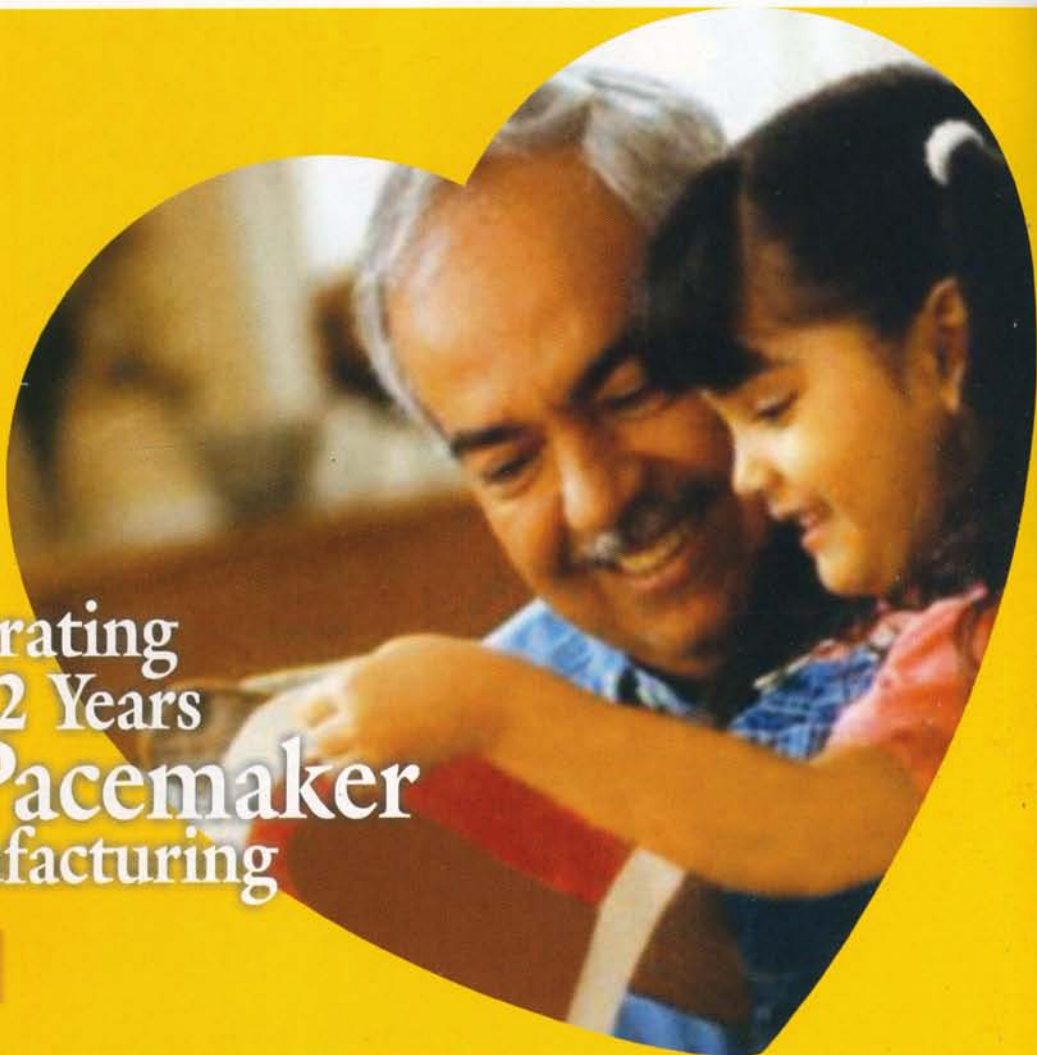
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MAHAMASTHAKABHISHEKHA 2006

The 30 day Mahamasthakabhishekha ceremony of the statue of Lord Bahubali happens in the sacred city of Shravanabelagola, Karnataka state, in India once every 12 years. This tradition has stood since March 13, 981 A.D. and the next one has been confirmed as 22 January – 19 February 2006.

During this time 1000's of people will gather in the town to watch and take part as the monolithic statue of Lord Bahubali is worshiped with showers of water, paint, powder, flowers and rice with an abundance of accompanying festivities. Here is *Jain Spirit's* guide to the Mahamasthakabhishekha experience.

This year's Mahamasthakabhishekha event is being held under the holy blessings of Elacharya Sri Vidyanandji Muni Maharaj and in the holy presence of Acharya Sri Vardhamansagarji Muni Maharaj. The entire event will be held under the leadership of His Holiness Swasti Sri Charukeerthi Bhattaraka Mahaswamiji, the pontiff of the Shravanabelagola Jain Mutt. - NITIN HP

BAHUBALI-MAN AND MONUMENT

RAJU SOBHAG SHAH talks us through the history behind Bahubali, his statue and it's place in India



Bharata and Bahubali fighting in water, folio from a manuscript of the Mahapurana, painted c. A.D. 1420, probably Delhi School, Collection: Shri Digambara Jain Naya Mandir, Old Delhi.

MAN

According to the Jain text *Adipurana* by Jinasena, it is believed that Yasavati and Sunanda were the two queens of Rishabhdeva (Adinath), the first Tirthankara. Bahubali was born to Sunanda, while the other queen gave birth to Bharata and many other sons and daughters. Upon relinquishing his kingdom, Rishabhdeva divided it between the two. Soon thereafter Bharata embarked on a trip to triumph over other kingdoms, becoming a *Chakravartin*, a world conqueror who subjugated six continents. He expected Bahubali's submission as well - Bahubali refused and both the brothers were engaged in duels, Bahubali won the first two and in the third duel he showed his superiority by lifting Bharata in his arms to dash him to the ground. Bharata called for his divine disc weapon (*Chakratna*). The *Chakratna* appeared but instead of harming Bahubali it went round him and stood on his right side. At that moment, Bahubali realised that he was about to commit the sin of fratricide and he gently put Bharata down.

Though he was the victor, Bahubali was full of remorse because he felt that in defeating his brother Bharata, he had insulted him- the man who

was acknowledged as the universal monarch. He begged his brother's forgiveness; fled to the forest, pulled out his hair and stood in the *Kayotsarga* posture, which is taken to abandon the body. There he remained in meditation for so long that creepers wound around him. An anthill grew around his feet, vines and snakes began to embrace his body and hair. In spite of severe self mortification, he failed to attain *kevalagnana* or omniscience. Concerned and perturbed by his brother's condition, Bharata sought the advice of a sage who informed him that Bahubali still suffered from pride and resentment. Accompanied by his two sisters Bharata went to Bahubali and whispered "Dismount from the elephant of pride". With this Bahubali understood that he had not been humble enough to go and bow before his younger brother. The direction of his thoughts changed and as he made his final bow he attained omniscience and liberation (*moksha*) in matter of moments.

Because of this Bahubali is a symbol of the highest form of detachment. He is considered as a human form of penance, severe austerity and complete meditation and his story evokes great admiration and devotion.



A detail of a painted wooden manuscript cover, patti featuring Bahubali. ©: Kusum and Rajaya Swali.

MONUMENT

Bahubali means a 'man with strong arms' and as homage to his story the statue is shown with elongated arms hanging loosely by the sides, the exaggerated shoulders and long pendant ear-lobes. The creepers which grew unheeded over the deeply meditating saint are represented as curling tendrils over his limbs. The anthills and serpents issuing from them and the creepers entwining over the great distance create a magnificent effect in stone. The nudity of the figure suggests absolute renunciation and full detachment from the world in his body abandonment pose. Outwardly he appears calm but inwardly we know he is fighting a battle with his proud ego. The statue is visible for almost 10 miles around. It outstrips the other two well known Bahubali statues at Karkala and Venur which come in at 42 and 35 feet high that were consecrated in the 14th and 16th century. Both are in Karnataka state where the worship of Bahubali was very widespread.

Shravanabelagola's Bahubali is one of the two biggest sculptures in the world after the colossus of Rameses II

in Egypt. It was carved during the time of Rachamalla Satyavakya, the Ganga King during 981 AD on the instruction by his chief minister Chamundaraya, at the request of his devout mother Kalaladevi. Bahubali's statue is also fondly nicknamed Gommeteshvara as Gommat was the childhood name of Chamundaraya, meaning beautiful. Gommeteshvara means the God of Gommat.

The main sculptor is known to be called Aristnemi. The colossal image is 57 feet high, carved from a single living rock of fine grained granite and is free standing. He stands with his eyes half-open, looking towards the north at the Himalayas. The inscription at the feet of Bahubali is not only in Kannada but also in Tamil Grantha, Prakrit, Sanskrit, Devanagari and Marathi. They state that the statue of Gommata was caused to be erected by Chamundaraya. They are also thought to be the first recorded Marathi inscriptions in the world and are of great historical importance as they give information of specific old dynasties, kings and saints who visited this place.



photo: www.dinodia.com

LOCATION

Jainism has always flourished in Karnataka, South India, largely because of the stable relationship with the Ganga and the Mauryan dynasty. The establishment of Ganga dynasty is cited as 265 AD and is credited to a Digambara monk called Simhanandi. The Mauryan dynasty was founded by the Jain King Chandragupta in 321BC. Thereafter, for these centuries the Jain communities in Karnataka enjoyed the continuous patronage of this dynasty. Since then Shravanabelagola, right in the middle of the state, has become a great place of pilgrimage. It is located in the midst of two hills. It is situated about 157 km west of Bangalore and is known for its landmark statue of Bahubali. In fact Shravanabelagola literally means 'white pond of the Jain monk'. The statue is on Indragiri Hill,

which is also called Vindiyagiri Hill. Indragiri is the bigger of the two hills and today one has to climb this hill bare foot roughly 600 stone steps to reach the top. As well as this there are many temples and undisputed records of Jain history. It is here that King Chandragupta and his mentor Bhadrabahu are said to have taken their final breath by observing the Jain vow of Sallekhana (actively fasting until death). The caves where they died and two carved foot prints of Bhadrabahu are still found on Chandragiri which is the smaller of the two hills. There is also a complex of 14 Jain temples on this hill. Steps have also been cut for the ascent of those wishing to see these historical sites and the ancient inscriptions covering the surroundings rocks.

Having visited this place twice, I feel this place portrays the most magnificent symbols of the Jain faith of tenderness and religious sanctity. It is truly an opportunity not to be missed.

Raju Sobhag Shah, is a retired Chartered Surveyor and is a volunteer at the Victoria and Albert Museum in the Indian and South East Asian Department •

photo: www.dinodia.com



POMP AND CEREMONY

DR. DEVENDRA KUMAR JAIN gives us the run down of the 30 days and their meanings. Information on events for 2006 have been supplied by Nitin Parshvanath, director of www.jainheritagecentres.com

A first glance at this giant statue enthalls us all and the Mahamasthakabhishekha is truly something breathtaking. While catching the magnificence of the moment, a spectator takes a deep breath as if he or she has experienced the fullness of life. This type of epic event not only brings sections of the community together but also promotes a sense of social harmony.

The history of the ceremony began with the statue's consecration for the public in March 981 AD. The event was marked with the celebration of Mahamasthakabhishekha. This was the starting point of a tradition which has spanned centuries, continuing to take place every 12 years.

The feet of Bahubali are bathed and worshipped everyday but it is only on this occasion that the whole statue will be cleansed. Cleansing is done by Priests and devotees by pouring sacred substances over him. Only on the eve of the ceremony temporary scaffolding will be constructed behind the statue, terminating in a platform just above the head; for the anointers to stand upon. Worship will be offered according to Jain Agamas. In front of the image, there will be articles of worship with 1008 pots (*kalasha*) filled with sacred water and decorated in auspicious colours, arranged in geometrical pattern. After the sacred bath with milk and ghee is over, the priests will arrange the great Abhishekha. Under the guidance of the leader the priests will pour the 1008 pots of water over the image simultaneously by chanting mantras. Then they pour milk, curds, ghee, sugar, sandal wood paste, almonds and gold and silver handmade flowers. It is expected that the mixtures poured over the statue's head should

reach the feet and only then the consecration is complete. Each *Puja* is set to take 10 hours.

Though it is mainly 'Priests' reciting various mantras during the rituals of Mahamasthakabhishekha, followers can make donations to perform the pouring of *kalashas* over Bahubali with their own hands. Jain religious activities are mostly participatory in nature - this is encouraged rather than the use of hierarchical figures.

IT IS BELIEVED THAT PARTICIPATION IN THIS CEREMONY BRINGS PARTICULAR SPIRITUAL MERIT TO THESE PEOPLE AND ALL THOSE PRESENT.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF MAHAMASTHAKABHISHEKHA

For Jain devotees Abhishekha or the *santra puja* is a regular display of reverence to their Jinas and is performed on daily basis. It symbolizes the cleansing karma from the body and the mind to its purest state. This water based puja gives idols a bath from head to toe in purified water and Mahamastakabhishekha is a grand bath in front of the masses with even grander celebrations! It has a particular focus on anointing the head of the deity. This spectacular activity has become popular for extra ordinary large idols that require extra care and extra ordinary preparations. The pujas are also beneficial from an archaeological point of view as the cleansing of a statue this large is one of the only ways it can be maintained and preserved from the elements.

photo: www.dinodia.com 'Lord Bahubali Gomateswara, Shravanbelgola Hill, Karnataka, India'



30 DAYS OF FESTIVITIES

• DAY 1 - 17: 22nd January 2006

The 22nd second marks the inauguration of the festival followed by over two weeks of cultural events and presentations to be held at the main stage set up in the town. Over these 2 weeks there will also be a wealth of *Pujas*, *Aradhanas* and *Panchakalyanak* performed with an intention of global peace, harmony and well being. (*Panchakalyanak* will be held from 4th to 9th February 2005)

• DAY 18: 8th February

Panchamruta Abhishek 108 Kalashas
(Pots of sacred coloured water)

• DAY 19: 9th February

Panchamruta Abhishek 504 Kalashas
(Pots of sacred coloured water)

• DAY 20: 10th February

Panchamruta Abhishek 1008 Kalashas
(Pots of sacred coloured water)

• DAY 21: 11th February

Sarvathobhadhra Puja This is a special kind of joint *Puja* where all 24 *Tirthankaras* are worshiped simultaneously. This is held in an ancient temple, Bhandara Basadi, at Shravanabelgola

• DAY 22- 23: 12th - 13th February

Panchamruta Abhishek 1008 Kalashas
(Pots of sacred coloured water)

• DAY 24: 14th February

Maha Puja Worship of *Sahasrakoota Jinabimba* (1008 idols of Jina). This is a large depiction of 1008 Jinas sculptured from a single metal block. This is one of the most attractive and stunning sights at Shravanabelgola and can be viewed from directions of the site. The idols are worshipped with 1008 *kalashas* and other *pujas* such as *deva*, *shastra*, *guru* and *ashtaka*.

• DAY 25-26: 15th -16th February

Panchamruta Abhishek 1008 Kalashas
(Pots of sacred coloured water)

• DAY 27: 17th February

Saraswathi Jinavani Maha Shastra Puja Worship of Jain Scriptures. As the source of right religious knowledge, the scriptures, appearing on palm-leaf manuscripts are displayed on this day and worshipped by devotees. They will be brought in on a silver palanquin and kept on a silver altar.

• Day 28-30: 18th -19th February

Panchamruta Abhishek 1008 Kalashas
(Pots of sacred coloured water)

WHAT DO THE ACTIVITIES MEAN?

WHY SO MANY SUBSTANCES FOR ANOINTING THE STATUE?

In everyday life most *pujas* are carried out with purified water but one of the most spectacular aspects of the Mahamasthakabhishekha is the vast array of colours and substances which make up the atmosphere of the festival. So why so many? *Panchamruta Abhisheka* itself means 'anointing and bathing with five nectars'. Traditionally these the nectars are milk, curd, ghee, sugarcane juice, and sandal wood paste with saffron and have always been most popular among Jains in southern part of India.

Over the years 15 substances have been used for the Shravanabelgola ceremony. Coconut water, almonds, dates, milk, curd, vermilion mixed water, ghee, sandal flowers, turmeric, saffron, petals, precious stones, gold/silver are now included!

Scholars do disagree on the reasoning behind the substances but the most rational explanation is that the variety and beauty of this type of grand scale puja expresses a variety and beauty of reverence on a scale that only befits Lord Bahubali!

NUMBER MAGIC

WHY EVERY 12 YEARS?

A 12 year gap is mentioned as positive in Jain scriptures and was instructed by the installer Chamundaraya. It must also be noted that celebrations on such a magnitude undoubtedly take many years of preparation!

2006 is a particularly lucky Mahamasthakabhishekha as it comes

after a 13 year gap, perhaps the first known. The extended gap was due to the persistent droughts from 2001 to 2003 in the state.

WHY 108 AND 1008?

The number 108 is derived from a formula based on theories in Jain scriptures:-

There are 4 kinds of *Kashayas* (passions)

These come into our life in 3 ways - *thought, speech and body*

There are 3 aspects of passions - *acting with passion our selves, acting with others and instigating/encouraging others to do so.*

It takes 3 steps for an act to take place - *Resolution, start, and execution.*
Therefore the formula used is
 $4 \times 3 \times 3 \times 3 = 108$

So 108 is the number of ways a human being can indulge in impure activities. Each way must be closed to the influx of bad karmas. With this reasoning 108 *Kalashas* of pure water are poured on Jina idols just to achieve the purification of our body and soul.

1008 is an equally auspicious number for Jains, again, it is described in Jain scriptures that after gaining enlightenment each *Tirthankara* is so omniscient that he/she can be worshipped by devotees with 1008 different names. The pouring of 1008 *Kalashas* becomes a ritualistic way of showing the highest form of respect to the concept of enlightenment and is repeated for 7 days of the festival.

Dr. Devendra Kumar Jain is a scholar based in Mumbai •



JOURNEY TO SHRAVANABELAGOLA

NITIN HP gives us the practical lowdown on the 30 days

HOW CAN I GET THERE?

Shravanabelagola is in the state of Karnataka which is in the South West of India

AIR

Two Indian airports in Karnataka closest to Shravanabelagola are either:-

- **Bangalore** (the capital of Karnataka). This is well connected with all the major cities of India and one of most connected with the rest of the globe.
- **Mangalore**. The airport at the port city is connected with some of the major cities of India.

CAR

- Shravanabelagola is situated at a distance of 51 KM south-east of Hassan, the district centre.
- It is a distance of 12 Km to the south from the Bangalore-Mangalore road (NH-48)
- 13 Km to the south-east of Channarayapatna
- 78 Km from Halebidu
- 89 Km from Belur
- 83 Km from Mysore
- 233 Km from Mangalore.
- 157 Km from Bangalore.

It is well connected with State Highways and District roads.

TRAIN

At the time of going to press special train services to the site were being organised to be in place by the beginning of 2006.

It will further facilitate the connections with the major junctions such as Arasikere and Bangalore. The visitors and pilgrims can reach Shravanabelagola through Arasikere and Bangalore through Channarayapatna. Channarayapatna is the key centre leading to Shravanabelagola from which ever route chosen by rail or road (except for one road route). Alight at Channarayapatna and proceed to Shravanabelagola by the frequent local taxis and buses.



OTHER JAIN AND SPIRITUAL AREAS OF INTEREST

For Scholars, visitors and lovers of Jainism there are many other unmissable places to complete your experience.

The other two very important Jain pilgrim centres near Shravanabelagola are **Kanakagiri** (credited to be the only Siddakshetra in South India) and **Kambadahalli** (Kambapuri). Kanakagiri is 136km distance from Shravanabelagola and Kambadahalli is 18km away from the main town. Both are worth visiting.

Belgaum is the birth place of many of the Digambar ascetics and the district has a rich heritage of Jainism. It is at a distance of 502 Km from Bangalore

Moodabidri is also colloquially called the 'Jaina Kashi' as of its popularity as a Jain pilgrimage site. It is at a distance of 35 Km from Mangalore the district centre.

The other two Jain pilgrim centres well known for their antiquity and historical importance are:

Huncha or Hombuj. (329 Km from Bangalore and 55 Km from Shimoga the district centre) Popular for the shrine of Goddess Padmavathi and the Tirthankara Parshvanath and is connected with the story of Jinadattaraya.

Narasimharajapura (N.R.Pura) also called as Simhanagadde. (75 Km from Huncha and 330 Km North West of Bangalore) Popular for the shrine of Goddess Jwalamalini and the Tirthankara Chandraprabha.

As mentioned there are other Bahubali statues dotted around Karnataka. They are situated in:

- **Bastihalli** (50 Km from Shravanabelagola) Gommatagiri (23 Km from Mysore)
- **Karkala** (52 Km north-east of Mangalore)
- **Venur** (55 Km from Mangalore)
- **Dhamasthala** (75 Km east of Mangalore)



ACCOMMODATION OPTIONS

Shravanabelagola, a small town, administered by the village municipality has gained the luster of a semi urban civilization by virtue of itself being a pilgrim place for the Jains and a tourist destination. It is well equipped with good accommodation facilities with as many as 28 guest houses to accommodate around 2000 visitors per day.

The Karnataka Government is providing temporary accommodation near to the site specifically for pilgrims and visitors staying for the festival. The committee plans to have five types of cottages being classified into A, B, C, D & E. All the cottages would be built of zinc sheets and coir matt flooring. The first three types would be having attached bath and toilet facilities and the other two being dormitories.

The different price ranges and the dimensions of the cottages are as below.

All types of cottages can be reserved

well in advance and often need to be. The application forms for the reservations are available at the website www.jainheritagecentres.com

There will also be some temporary cottages in Kambadahalli, 18km away from Shravanabelagola, to accommodate visitors. There is also information on this at the above address.

In addition to this most of houses at Shravanabelagola the surrounding villages are usually available for rent during the event. The prices of the houses will depend on the facilities.

Apart from this, tourists who wish to have a comfortable place to stay can opt for well equipped rooms at the district centre Hassan and make the journey to Shravanabelagola.

Nitin is a software professional based at Mysore. He is the webmaster and chief coordinator www.jainheritagecentres.com. Further details regarding accommodation and all options mentioned above will also be available at this website •

	Details	Cost per day (in Rs)
A	A room and a hall each of 12x14 feet, 4 beds with fan, chair and table.	500/-
B	A room and a hall each of 10x12 feet, 3 beds with fan, chair and table.	350/-
C	A room of 10x10 feet and a hall of 10x6 feet, 2 beds.	150/-
D	A room of 10x10 feet.	50/-
E	For people coming in groups and tourist buses, a large hall of 40x60 feet (for approximately 50 people)	300/-

THE WHOLE PACKAGE

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Jain Spirit is working in conjunction with Indus, Soul of India Tours who are offering a comprehensive, professional and all inclusive tour of all the places of interest over a 15 day period, with a focus of the Mahamastakhabhishekha. See advertisement opposite for details. >

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

There will also be tours conducted by:

India Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC)

For more information visit www.theashokgroup.com

Karnataka State Tourism Development Corporation (KSTDC)

with Hassan, Bangalore and Mysore as the starting points. Their website is at <http://kstdc.nic.in/>

Details of current and subsequent Jain centres and tourist attractions of south India with maps will be made available at the website www.jainheritagecentres.com

www.mahamastakhabhisheka.com
www.shravanabelagola.com •

Shravanabelagola Tour

A 15 day visit to the Jain tirthas of South India, including attendance at the Maha Puja at Shravanabelagola

11-26 Feb 2006

£1720 per person (inc. direct BA flight from London)

£1295 per person (international visitors joining at Bangalore)

A **JAIN SPIRIT** TOUR
brought to you by Soul of India Tours*

Itinerary

Sat 11 Feb 2006 Direct BA flight from Heathrow T4.

Sun 12 Feb 0500 arrival in Bangalore. Stay at St. Marks Hotel. Rest of the day at leisure.

Mon 13 Feb Drive to Shravanabelagola for the Mahamasthakabhishekha festival. Stay at the Hoysala Village Resort in Hassan.

Tues 14 Feb Attend the Mahamasthakabhishekha festival, including a short visit to the Panchakuta Basti in Kambadahali.

Wed 15 Feb Attend the Mahamasthakabhishekha festival; then, in the evening, drive to Mysore. Stay at the Southern Star Hotel.

Thur 16 Feb Day visit to Somnathpur to visit the Keshava Temple and nearby Kanakagiri.

Fri 17 Feb Day visit to Gomatagiri, Bastihalli, and Brindavan Gardens.

Sat 18 Feb Day free for sightseeing - Mysore Palace, Chamundi Hill, local temples.

Sun 19 Feb Return to Hassan, and the Hoysala Village Resort. Visit the magnificent and historic Hoysala temples at Belur and Halebid. On the way back to Hassan drop by the village of Adaguru, where the Jain temple is renowned for its Sahasrakuta image adorned with 1008 tirthankaras carved from a single stone.

Mon 20 Feb Drive to Mangalore. Stay at the Summer Sands Beach Resort. Rest of the day at leisure.

Tues 21 Feb Day visit to the bastis and Bahubali statues of the nearby villages of Venur, Karkal and Dharmastala.

Wed 22 Feb Day visit to Mudabidri to visit all 18 Jain bastis.

Thur 23 Feb Day visit to Varanga, Sringeri, Hombuja and Narasimharajapura.

Fri 24 Feb Air Deccan flight to Bangalore. Stay at St. Mark's Hotel.

Sat 25 Feb Day free for sightseeing in Bangalore.

Sun 26 Feb Direct BA return flight to London Heathrow T4.

We warmly invite all readers and friends of Jain Spirit to come with us on this once-in-a-lifetime visit and pilgrimage to Shravanabelagola. The group will be accompanied by Dr. Bob del Bonta of the Asian Art Museum in San Francisco. Dr. del Bonta is a leading expert on the Jain art, architecture and symbolism of the Hoysala period, and will add immeasurably to our experience.

And of course it's not just Shravanabelagola. We will also be visiting the great cities of Bangalore and Mysore, and a host of other important sites in and around. All those names we have known for so long, but few of us have yet had the opportunity to visit: Somnathpur, Hassan, Belur, Halebid, and many more...

We have teamed up with Soul of India, part of Indus Tours and Travel Ltd., acknowledged experts in religious interest travel to India, and fully ATOL bonded.

First come, first served so call today. More details of the itinerary, together with additional photos, can be found on their website, www.soulsofindia.com.

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



ATUL SHAH GOES
INTO HIS OWN
ROOTS AND
DISCOVERS
TIMELESS VALUES



MOMBASA



SPRINGBOARD OF WISDOM

The vast distance between India and Africa is bridged by the Indian Ocean. When in 1899, Hirji Kara and Devji Kara travelled to Kenya in a dhow, little did they know that they were to start a whole revolution in the migration of Jain culture and values. It is as if a vast bridge was built for culture to travel inward and further outward to the West, via the channel of Africa. Even in the UK today, the majority of Jains are from East Africa. To me this vividly demonstrates that the only thing that lasts is culture, and the Karas certainly were the pioneers of a unique legacy. The challenge today is for us to use the media technology of the twenty-first century to take this culture global. And we have the means to do it – let us build the will and march forwards positively and proactively.



One of the greatest success stories of this migration has been economic – this is true of most Jain migrations anywhere in the world. Success in any field requires discipline, hard work and integrity. These qualities come naturally to Jains. Also commerce is one of their key professions, so it was commerce which helped them to succeed economically. In those early days, the community was at the centre of all activity, and hence mutual support in business was commonplace – it was almost as if everything was done collectively. The fact that basic quality infrastructure for education and medical care did not exist, brought Jains together to work for a common cause and build and manage these institutions for future generations. Some of these schools and hospitals that were built then are today top in the country, thanks to that early vision and dedication.

The port town of Kenya, Mombasa, is a beautiful island in the Indian Ocean with coastal reefs and lovely views of the sea. In the early 20th century, the hinterland was not developed so it was here that the first settlers arrived and stayed. It was also here that the first authentic temple was built in the heart of Mombasa town in 1963. When the new temple at Oshwal Centre in London was completed this summer, it will have also completed a generational transfer in heritage and culture, not from the shores of India, but from the continent of Africa. Far from becoming diluted, it is amazing to witness how the Jain culture has renewed itself outside India without losing any of its authenticity. It demonstrates that in-built in this is the timelessness and borderlessness of the Jain religion.

I was fortunate to be one of the grandsons of this temple, which became a focal point of a whole new revolution in Jain knowledge, lifestyle and wisdom. Daily *poojas*, the celebration of every festival, lectures by eminent scholars and even pathshalas for children brought the whole community to this complex on a regular basis. They came for peace and inspiration and carried this with them to faraway places. Even in terms of multi-faith dialogues, this temple was pioneering with visitors from different faiths and public events open to all the residents of the town. Looking at some old photographs, I was astonished to see my mother on stage at major community events, accompanying my father who was a community leader. Here again, the Jains were very liberal,

giving women tremendous importance – something which is rare today even in the UK and North America where the wives of leaders are not visible on stage.

As a child growing up in Africa, I was fortunate to be exposed to eminent lecturers from India, the most prominent of which were Gurudev Chitrabhanuji, Prof. Ramanlal Shah and Dr. Taraben Shah, Mr. Shashikant Mehta, the music of the late Shantilal Shah, the late Babubhai Kadiwala and many others who continued the connection with the homeland. Community leaders of that time were bold and visionary, and passionate about keeping the culture alive even among the young generation. The main temple in Nairobi was built much later in 1981, and therefore my peers at that time missed out on this early foundation in culture. It is only now that Nairobi is experiencing a revival of interest in our culture, thanks to the pioneering work done by young people keen to transfer culture and values to their children – the Young Jains.



I visited Mombasa in May 2005 and went to the temple on a Sunday. It was almost as if I had never left it. The whole place was buzzing with activity, with a *jaap* in the upstairs prayer room, a pathshala for children next door, worship and *pooja* being done by regular worshippers in the temple, lunch being prepared in the ambelshala by women volunteers, elders meeting at the entrance having a casual conversation. The photos alongside this article demonstrate this spirit – many readers who originate from Mombasa will be flooded with old memories when seeing these.

Today, there are altogether some 10,000 Jains in Kenya. Over one hundred educational, charitable and spiritual institutions have been founded and are still being managed by them. The 21st century poses new opportunities and new challenges. Education is the greatest asset and can help transform the community to new levels, provided it is put to selfless use. Unfortunately, modern education manages to convert people into selfishness, egoism and materialism, and we need to deal with this. Perhaps our progress has been more material and less spiritual, and in studying our past we will understand the endurance of spiritual wisdom. Let us learn to draw from it and live by those ancient timeless values. •

Atul Shah is the Executive Editor of Jain Spirit. This spread was designed by Chris Brook.

NO PAIN, NO JAIN

Photographer THOMAS DIX captures temples despite a shoestring budget because of his deep inner passion for Jain architecture.

My first meeting with Jainism and its stunning architecture came in 1991, when visiting Ranakpur for the first time. Travelling by public bus all the way from Udaipur, I arrived after a very nice ride through the Aravallis, offering some breathtaking panorama views getting closer to Ranakpur. Seeing the impressive exterior of Dharna Vihara for the very first time has been a really great moment for me and I was deeply impressed by its dimensions. When finally standing in the light-flooded domed halls, I was totally overwhelmed by all this unbelievable beauty. With the photo permission granted by the temple manager, I was able to take the first photos of Dharna Vihara with my heavy and bulky large-size 4x5" field camera. I must have arrived during some special festival as the whole western facade had been illuminated by thousands of little coloured lights and in an adjoining tent I listened to songs performed by monks, worshippers and pilgrims. This spiritual atmosphere really touched me and in addition to my visual impressions I knew I had to return to this unique place once again for documenting Ranakpur in all its magnificent beauty.

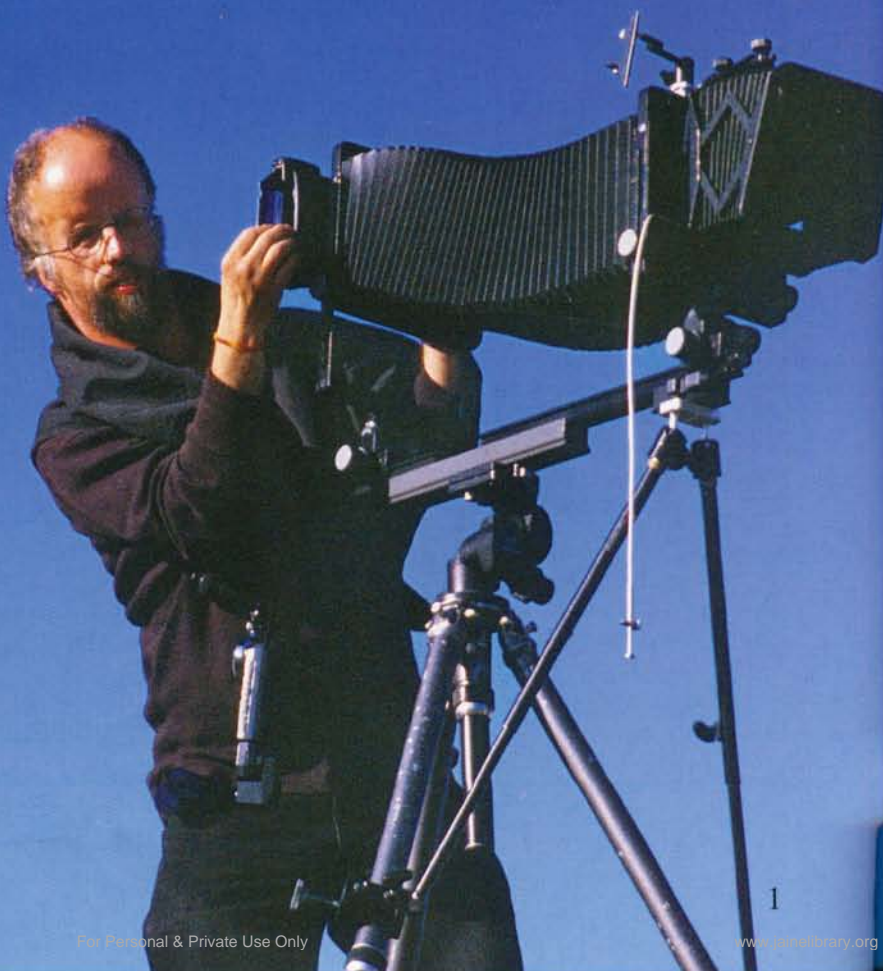
The following year, I showed some prints of the photographs to some priests I had met last time. One elder priest was so overwhelmed by the captured beauty of Ranakpur that he said with tears in his eyes, "I worship now your picture." What an unexpected appreciation of my work!

The temple management granted me permission to photograph inside the temple in the mornings – a rare opportunity. Now I could work for the next seven days from sunrise to sunset on the documentation of this jewel in marble, counting in the end more than 150 photographs. During the regular dinnertime I was still photographing in the temple, therefore for one week I was obliged to have my daily *thali* in the nearby guesthouse. Photographing

the wall-relief representing Mount Shatrunjaya, it took me several days to find the perfect light for this picture – which lasts for five minutes only.

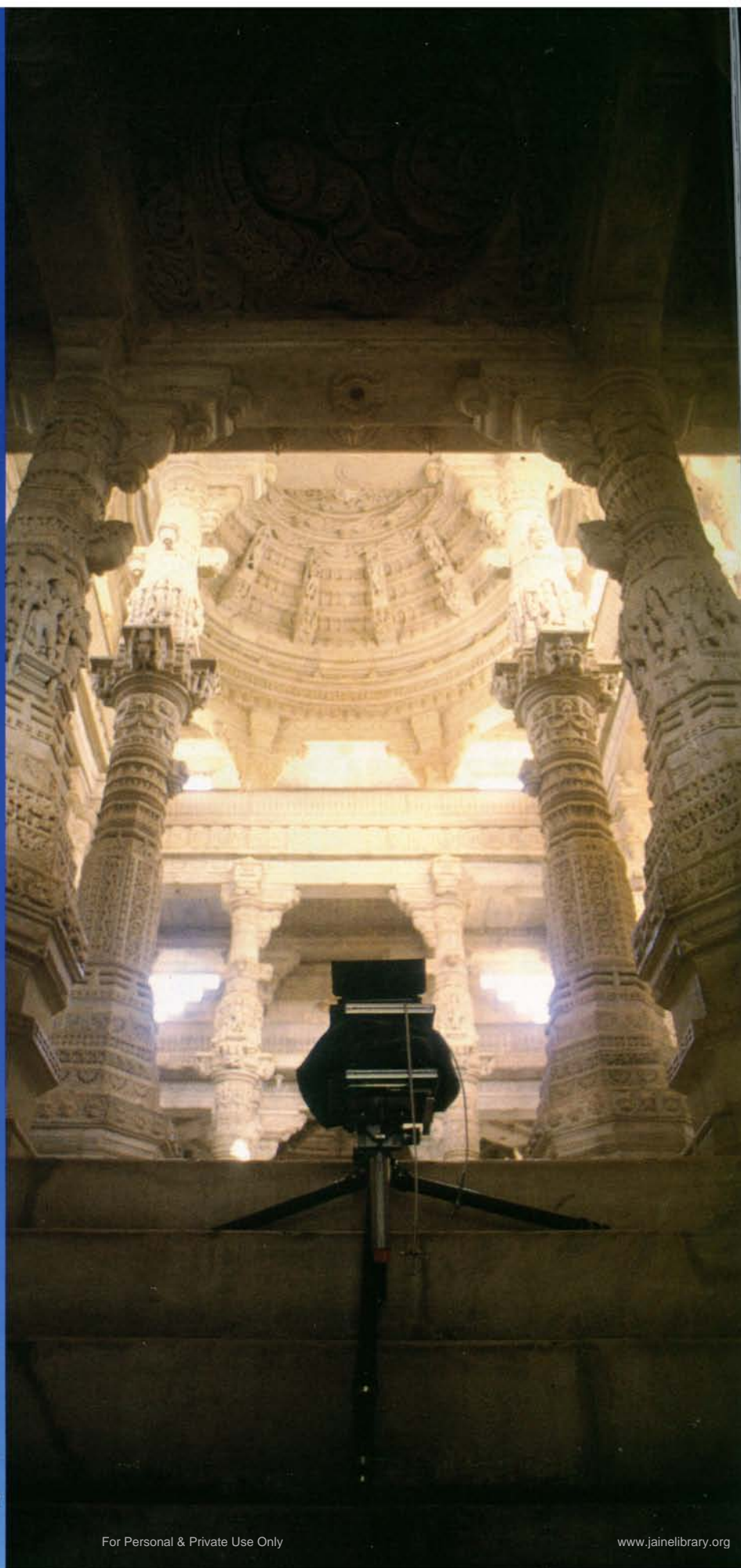
One of the basic problems of every photographer is that the sun is never waiting for them – you just have to be at the right place at the right time! Therefore, my whole photographic documentation of Ranakpur is based on a quite precise shooting-plan I set up, using a detailed ground plan of the temple on which I marked most of my angles and the correspondent approximate timing. Sometimes, my work had quite a meditative character. Especially when worshippers were chanting during the evening *arti*, the temple was filled with the beats of the kettle drums and the clangs of the bells and cymbals, or when only the tiny bells tied to the flag-staffs atop of the spires were lightly swinging in the wind.

In Mount Abu I concentrated more on the intricately carved ceilings and domes. But this meant mostly shooting from the quite tiring frog-eyed view. And once again, when entering the



Dilwara Temples for the first time - not that attractive from the exterior! - I was just overwhelmed by the incredible work the sculptors have created here, especially considering that marble is quite a hard material to work with. It took me quite a time to assimilate all this beauty: the abundant ornamental details, the elegant spanning, filigree worked arches, the wide domes with their jewel-like pendants and gracefully carved deities, the narrative ceiling panels with their mass scenes, the richly decorated doorways and all the most elegant pillars.

In one of my books on India I read about another important holy place for the Jains: Mount Shatrunjaya in Palitana. Fascinated by a photograph in this book, I knew that I had to go and see this unique place, despite the fact that about 3500 steps on the way up to the *tirtha* were waiting for me - and my heavy camera equipment. Next morning at half past five, I was at the starting point of the way up. As soon as I took my huge backpack out of the car, several porters offered their services to me. So I chose for the job a lady standing a little bit aside from all the other shouting porters. I had a rather uncomfortable feeling seeing her balancing my precious camera free on her head, but she did an excellent job. I carried my 35-millimetre equipment of about ten kilograms weight and the stand. I also was astonished seeing some nuns climbing all the distance barefoot. I preferred doing my own kind of pilgrimage all the 3500 steps up to Mount Shatrunjaya in this starry full-moon dawn. When the first sunbeams came over the horizon, we reached the top after a climb of about forty minutes. Most of the people then turned to the left ridge, but I turned to the right ridge (*navtuk*). From there I could enjoy one of the most splendid panoramic views I have ever seen - showing the incredible number of temples on Mount Shatrunjaya in the soft early morning light. This sight made me immediately forget all the strain to reach there. As no food is allowed within the *tirtha*, a priest offered me generously some *prasad* that I appreciated very much. This place made such a deep impression on me, that I returned the very next morning and also my porter was much delighted when I engaged her for a second time.





One of my most published photographs of Palitana is showing a roofed gallery with a long row of seated *Tirthankaras*; last time it was used as cover for the April 2005 issue of *Jain Spirit*. For me, this photograph radiates a lot of Mount Shatrunjaya's spirit as one of the five holy places for the Jains.

Working as a professional photographer in India and using a stand is not easy, as you need for every single monument that you would like to photograph a prior written photo permission. You have to apply for it in general at the ASI (Archaeological Survey of India), either in New Delhi for the central protected monuments or at the respective ASI branch of each state for the state protected monuments. To make it even more complicated, there are many monuments like most of the Jain temples, under the responsibility of private organisations or trusts. Now you have the problem of finding out who is responsible for what monument. And then you have to find out where the authorities are located, because they are rarely based next to the monument. For example, I had to get my photo permission for Palitana in Ahmedabad. Sometimes I travelled in India with three or four different permissions in my pocket – but without those papers you just couldn't do anything.

When I go to India, it is not a holiday at all as I am travelling in most cases with about one hundred kilograms of luggage. As I am an architecture photographer, I use besides my 35-millimetre camera, a heavy 4x5" large-size field camera with stand and extra tungsten lighting equipment. And of course, travelling by aircraft with such equipment is a rather costly affair considering the fact that you are allowed 20 kilograms of luggage only. On all my flights to India I have spent a fortune for excess baggage.

Fortunately, my photographs of India have been published in many books, some in calendars and as postcards. Among them are two monographs on Jain temples in Northern India focussing on Ranakpur, Mount Abu and Palitana. Another highlight for me has been an exhibition of Jain Art in the Victoria & Albert Museum in London called "The Peaceful Liberators", where some of my photographs of Mount Abu and Ranakpur have been shown as photo murals.





Also my book *Jainism and the Temples of Mount Abu and Ranakpur* has a special genesis. I have a good Indian friend, Dialup Susanna from Jodhpur, who is a Jain and a tour guide. He himself has a good German friend, Lather Claremont who is also a tour guide for Studios Travels. One fine day after having guided the Dilwara Temples in Mount Abu, he said to Dialup: "Sometime I would like to do a coffee-table book on Mount Abu; there is nothing really good existing in the book market so far." And Dialup replied with a smile on his face: "Listen Lather, here is the address and telephone number of a friend of mine in Germany. He is a photographer, just go and meet him." That is exactly what he did and we worked out a layout for the book. He did a good, not too scientific text, that can be understood also by an ordinary reader and Dialup looked for a publisher in India. In the meantime, the first edition of our book is almost sold out, and Lather and I became also good friends. Together we produced for a German publisher a splendid coffee-table book on Rajasthan. And also

Dilip, who had a bookstore in Jodhpur, is happy as he finally could fulfil the promise he made to his father, who asked him once: "Son, you are a Jain and you have a bookstore – and how many books on Jainism are there? Not a single one!"

Considering all this, I really have to say that I invested a lot of time, money, energy and my life-blood into India and especially into Jainism. Many things you can't necessarily buy with money came back over the years: new friends, unforgettable experiences, diverse impressions and a meeting with a subcontinent offering such a rich and ancient culture. •

1 Thomas Dix with some of his photographic equipment. It is expensive to take this equipment on the plane and it is heavy and bulky to carry around.

2 Dharna Vihara - It's impressive interior was to spark off the love affair between Thomas Dix and Jain architecture.

3 The 'frog-eyed' view of Mount Abu's ceiling. This illustrates the awkward positions taken on by the photographer to achieve such beautiful pictures. There is a sacrifice behind every photo.

4 Dancers on a column of the navchoki in the Tejapala Temple.

5 Symbolic representation of Shatrunjaya, the holiest mountain of the Jains. The photo opportunity lasted only five minutes a day as it relies on the light.

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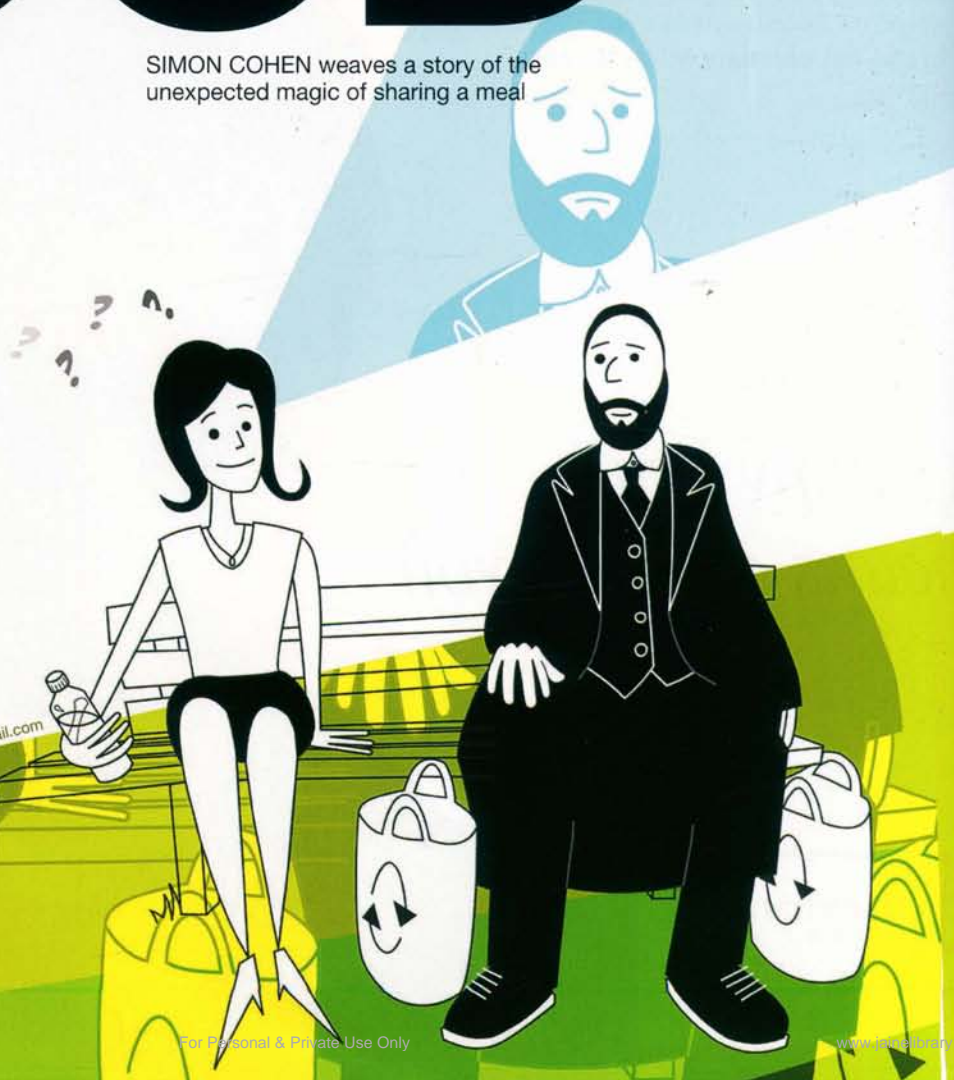
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FAITH IN FOOD

SIMON COHEN weaves a story of the unexpected magic of sharing a meal



Jonathan sweats profusely as he trudges along Kings Road. His dull black attire sucks in the relentless heat of the August sunshine, in stark contrast to the luminescence of the Palace Pier in the distance – mocking, he thinks, in its reflective beauty. Jonty desperately clings to his schoolboy nickname, which his friends think a little odd for a forty-year-old. He rests on a bench opposite the burnt-out remains of the West Pier, placing his shopping bags by his feet. Thousands of revellers sun themselves on the pebbled beach beneath him, while others play in the glistening waters.

Jonty's mind, however, is somewhere else. In two days' time it will be Tisha B'Av, the day when Jews across the world mourn the tragedies that have befallen their people. He stares at the West Pier in sad contemplation. The First Temple. The Second Temple. The Holocaust. Jonty's bottom lip begins to quiver.

Out of the blue appears Jwala, a first-year Chemistry student at Sussex University. She has already built a reputation with her tutors for her inquisitive nature. Her parents often wonder whether the birth mark on her neck is in fact an elongated question mark. Jwala, literally meaning flame, loves the sun – but today, Friday the 8th, is hot even for her. She pauses at an ice cream van to buy a bottle of

water and sits on a bench to her left.

Beside her is a strange looking man who is staring into the distance. About to ask why he is wearing black clothes on such a hot day, she thinks better of it when she sees the sadness in her neighbour's eyes. Instead, she offers him some water and asks him what the matter is. Jonty's honest response prompts a barrage of questions from Jwala, who is captivated by this bearded man in black. "You do ask a lot of questions, don't you?" Jonty says. "That's how I learn," she answers.

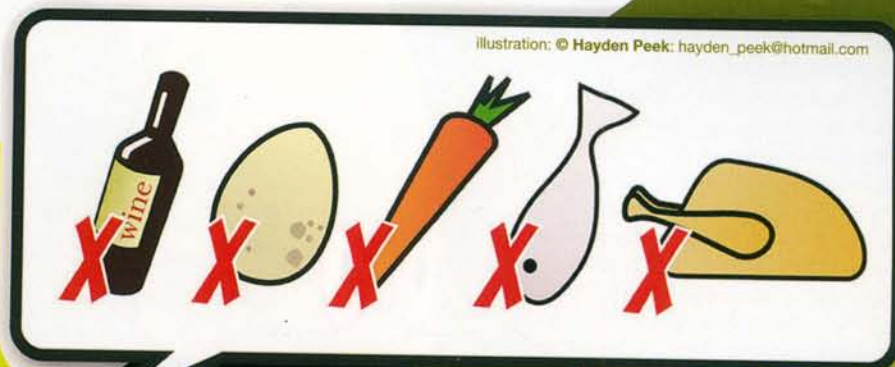
Jwala impulsively invites him to her house that evening for dinner so that he can meet her mother. Jonty tells her that he is an Orthodox Jew and so he only eats food from home or at specially licensed food outlets. However, he is taken by Jwala's curiosity and generosity of spirit, and invites her and her mother to his home for a Sabbath meal. Jwala excitedly accepts and writes down the address. Standing up to leave to her lecture, she says, "By the way, we are Jains and don't eat meat, fish, root vegetables, eggs, onions, garlic. And we don't drink alcohol." She flits away, calling her mother to inform her of their plans for that evening. Jonty peeps furtively into his shopping bags, sighs and smiles. He stands up and heads back down Kings Road to get

some more ingredients.

At 8:30pm, Jwala and Arati arrive at the home of the Goldmans. Jonty, having just returned from the synagogue, invites his guests inside and introduces them to his wife Rita and their four children. Arati apologises (not for the first time) to Jonty for her daughter's impudence earlier in the day, something she does almost as an automated response.

Rita is an instantly likeable lady, with an inimitable warmth and serenity that seems to follow her as she scurries to and from the kitchen preparing the Sabbath meal. She explains to her guests that this particular time of the month of Av is very sombre but Sabbath supersedes everything and they are most welcome as guests.

Jonty leads his family and guests to the dining room, which has two candles burning brightly at the centre of the table and two platted loaves of bread covered with a cloth. Everyone stands behind their respective chairs. Jonty says a blessing over the wine and carefully passes the glass to his wife. It makes its way from person to person until it reaches Mark, Jonty's fifteen-year-old. Mark, who is always the first person to tell everyone



he is not a child, takes a large gulp of wine from his mother's glass, before shuddering in silence. The head of the table then leads his family and friends to the utility room. Sarah and Louise, both three, enthusiastically raise their index fingers to their mouths, motioning everyone to remain silent. Taking Jonty's lead, everyone washes their hands and return to their seats at the dining table. Paul, a ten-year-old with a penchant for melodrama, grunts and stares wildly at little Louise, who is unwittingly holding her middle finger up to show the guests they are still not allowed to talk.

Jwala and Arati sit respectfully, mesmerised and touched by the rituals being performed before them. Jonty then lifts the cover off the bread, says a prayer and passes a piece to each of his guests. Paul waves across the table to Jwala and Arati and proclaims, a little louder than necessary, "It's ok, you can talk now." By this time, Jwala was practically bursting with curiosity. "What was that language you were praying in, what is the month of Av, what do the candles mean, why do you eat so late...?"

"Please excuse my daughter; she has a habit of asking question after question." "That's OK, Arati," Jonty replies knowingly. "After all, that's how we learn."

The guests enjoy a wonderful vegetarian meal. Rita reassures Arati that it was really no effort to prepare a Jain-friendly meal, as during the first nine days of Av, observant Jews refrain from eating meat and drinking wine (except for on the Sabbath) and there were plenty of vegetables in the house. Jonty recalls his Kings Road trek in the sun, but says nothing. Rita goes on to say that the other restrictions on ingredients encouraged her to be more creative in the kitchen and she actually really enjoyed it.

This predictably leads to a further inquisition from Jwala. Before Rita can answer, Mark interjects, "Don't you have to be going soon?" "Mark Goldman, how DARE you?" Jonty is usually a mild mannered man and considers himself to be a pacifist (something, he discovers later that evening, consistent with the Jain principle of *ahimsa*) but the severity of his tone incites floods of tears: first from Sarah and then Louise. Realising that his turn of phrase sounded far from hospitable, Mark continues, "What I

meant," the cacophony of crying in the background begins to subside, "is that I thought Jains don't stay out after sunset because they don't want to hurt the tiny creatures that come out at night?" Jonty and Rita hold hands under the table, collectively praying their son has not offended their guests.

Jwala explains that Orthodox Jains do not eat after sunset for several reasons, including the one Mark stated, but there is nothing in the Jain tradition related to staying out at night. Arati kindly praises Mark for asking the question. If he didn't ask, she states, he wouldn't have known any better.

Following the after dinner prayers, the ten-year-olds' tantrum, several songs and a reciprocated question and answer session, the friends part company, having made arrangements to see each other the following week. The Goldman's stand at the door to wave good-bye; Sarah and Louise cling on to their father's legs stubbornly fighting sleep, while Mark stands arm in arm with his mum just behind them. Paul watches from his bedroom window with his bottom lip defiantly erect.

Jwala and Arati turn right on to Kings Road and walk



serenely along the Esplanade. The beach is now deserted and only the whisper of waves and the occasional car break the silence of the night. They look to their left. The lights of the Palace Pier look more beautiful than ever. The warm summer breeze then shifts their attention towards the bench where Jwala had met Jonty.

They sit down and look silently at the West Pier. Jwala's bottom lip begins to quiver. Arati wraps her daughter under her wing, grateful for her kind heart and inquisitive nature. Never again, she thinks, will she apologise for her daughter.

Sarah and Louise Goldman are tucked up in bed, dreaming of tiny creatures of the night called Jane. Paul mournfully walks downstairs in his pyjamas with his head bowed and apologises to his parents. Rita and Jonty kiss him goodnight. Mark ridicules his little brother for his wimpish behaviour and is promptly sent to bed himself.

Rita and Jonty sit in each other's arms on the living room sofa. They have bellies full of vegetarian delights. Their ears still resonate with the sapiential sound-bites from their new friends. Their interfaith meal has somehow infused them with empathy and faith. Tisha B'Av, the saddest day of the Jewish calendar, is a day of mourning and remembrance. We must remember, Jonty muses, to show respect and to move forwards with a clearer perspective. Rita smiles and says softly, "I will always remember tonight." •

Simon Cohen is passionate about inter-faith friendship. For more details on inter faith eating, please visit www.faithandfood.com or www.globaltolerance.com





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Quotes . and Quips

Just as a tortoise withdraws all its limbs within its own body, in the same way a wise man protects himself from sins through spirituality.

Sutrakrutang 1-8-16

Death is a natural part of life. Rejoice for those around you who transform into the Force. Mourn them do not. Miss them do not. Attachment leads to jealousy. The shadow of greed, that is.

Yoda, Episode I: The Phantom Menace

Why are you fighting with external enemies? Fight with your own self. One who conquers one's own self, enjoys true happiness.

Uttaradhyayan 9-35

STRENGTH FLOWS FROM THE FORCE. BUT BEWARE OF THE DARK SIDE. ANGER, FEAR, AGGRESSION: THE DARK SIDE OF THE FORCE ARE THEY. EASILY THEY FLOW, QUICK TO JOIN YOU IN A FIGHT. IF ONCE YOU START DOWN THE DARK PATH, FOREVER WILL IT DOMINATE YOUR DESTINY.

Yoda, Episode V: The Empire Strikes Back

Having one child makes you a parent; having two makes you a referee!

Anon

Knowingly or unknowingly one should not kill animate or inanimate living beings in this world and should not cause them to be killed by others either.

Dasvaikalik 6-9

Peace cannot be kept by force; it can only be achieved by understanding. I am not only a pacifist but a militant pacifist. I am willing to fight for peace. Nothing will end war unless people themselves refuse to go to war.

Albert Einstein

Death must be so beautiful, listening to the silence. To have no yesterday and no tomorrow. To forget time, to forgive life, to be at peace.

Oscar Wilde

They call our language the mother tongue because the father seldom gets to speak!

Anon

Wise men talk because they have something to say; fools talk because they have to say something.

Anon

A hero is someone who understands the responsibility that comes with his freedom.

Bob Dylan

One should not call a one-eyed person one-eyed, an impotent person impotent, a diseased person diseased or a thief a thief.

Dasvaikalik 7-12

An ignorant person believes that wealth, animals and relatives are his protectors. He says, "they belong to me and I belong to them." But they are neither his protectors nor shelter.

Sutrakrutang 2-3-16

IT IS SINFUL TO UTTER HARSH LANGUAGE OR WORDS. HENCE ONE SHOULD NOT USE THEM TO HURT OTHERS, EVEN IF THEY ARE TRUE.

Dasvaikalik 7-11

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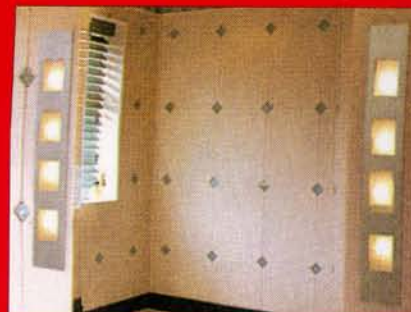
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**ACHAL SHAH EXAMINES
THE CHALLENGES OF BEING
AMERICAN AND JAIN AT THE
SAME TIME**



Freedom and discipline are opposites. America encourages individualism and freedom whereas Jainism teaches discipline. Ours is also a culture of material well-being and consumption. All this may appear as being at odds with some basic Jain values, for example, non-materialism (*aparigraha*), self-restraint (*saiyam*) and contentment (*shaucha*).

On closer examination, there really should be no incompatibility with the values per se. These shores have long welcomed those seeking the freedom to practise their religion. Cherishing *individuality* means that there is no compulsion to 'blend in' and give up one's values. *Self-progress* can be applied to ethical progress just as easily

as to material progress. However, among Jains in North America there are two big barriers to truly *knowing* Jainism.

The first is not giving a high enough priority, and hence time, to culture. The emphasis on self-progress demands *success in one's career or business*. We regard material success as a condition of lasting happiness and in order to achieve this we tend to spend large portions of our lives at work. Whatever free time remains is rapidly eaten up by family and social engagements. As Jains, we are meant to study and reflect, to ask questions, to look for answers – all this takes time which we do not seem to have.

AS JAINS, WE ARE MEANT TO STUDY AND REFLECT, TO ASK QUESTIONS, TO LOOK FOR ANSWERS - ALL THIS TAKES TIME WHICH WE DO NOT SEEM TO HAVE.

Secondly, it is difficult to find good teachers – people who have a fair knowledge about Jainism and who can guide others in their own pursuit. The largest North American Jain population centres may be exceptions but most Jains here, who are interested, have to rely on visiting scholars from India. While these visits are at times valuable, they are like kindling to a fire – without sustained, continuous effort their benefits dissipate quickly. However, even medium-sized North American cities have a number of Jain families – often enough to start study groups and *pathshalas* for children and adults. Also, as the following examples

show, there are things one can do as individuals.

Paying attention to children is one key. *Ensure that they have regular contact with other Jains, that they attend a pathshala if possible and that they have Jain friends. Cultivate a sense of pride about Jain practices and disciplines.* These views were echoed by Neil Shah, a young Jain in his late-twenties who grew up in California. He credits his parents for providing such an environment. He is now pursuing that quintessential American dream: building a software company he co-founded. He is very much aware of the compromises he has to make to some Jain values (e.g. simplicity), but this awareness is half the battle. On staying vegetarian, he does not compromise. During his time at high school and college, this was his only link to Jainism.

In order to be comfortable with being a Jain in North America, it is cool when your personal beliefs are aligned to Jain and American values. Then you're not doing something simply because you have this 'Jain' label – instead, it is the values which influence

your daily activities and actions. You preserve your individuality. This is the opinion of Alina Misra, a teenager from Washington. The influence of the Jain pathshala and the summers spent in India with her grandmother teaching her about Jainism when she was a young child are evident. She is a vegan, tries to live as simply as possible and keeps her material possessions to a minimum. She is deeply interested in the philosophy of Jainism and tries to educate herself by reading contemporary works and reflecting on them. Once a month, she holds a pathshala session for a small group of young children where she simply

teaches them the basics about Jainism without preaching any point of view. It is her way of giving back.

Jains here do not often have ready access to temples or to Jain centres. The advice of Prakash Jain, a software engineer, is to create a sanctuary in *your own home – perhaps in a spare bedroom*. You can use this space like a temple – to withdraw from the world and retreat to study Jainism. He feels strongly that Jains in North America should pay a lot of attention to studying Jainism. He admits that this is not easy. Even in his native Indore, he found that it was a big step for him to attend Jain study group sessions. It was the kind of thing young people just did not do.

But if one can devote half an hour or an hour daily, immersed in the study of Jainism, it will pay huge dividends. If one has a family and children, this practice can be extended to include the whole family. It is also important to link up with other like-minded Jains, to share knowledge and ideas on a regular basis.

About three years ago, Prakash and a small group of interested Jains started weekly Jain classes for adults in the Seattle area, starting with the most basic fundamentals. The group started with the *Balbodh Pathmalla* series of text books, books normally used in *pathshalas*. Currently the group is studying advanced Jain fundamentals, the *Tattvartha Sutra* and *Samayasara* – they have made significant progress in such a short time.

It is clear that in order to make progress as Jains, it is vitally important to know Jainism. Most Jains will say that they know the Jain rituals and practices, but these by themselves are not enough. They are important though as a bridge – a means of crossing over to where one can start knowing Jainism at a deeper level. The problem is that people tend to linger on the bridge, never quite making it to the other side. For us in North America, the other side can seem very far away, but it really is not. And small efforts can bring instant peace and renewed self-confidence to live and experience eternal truths. •

Achal Shah lives in Redmond, WA where he works as a software engineer. He learns about Jainism with a small group of people who meet regularly to study it.

FITNESS STARTS FROM THE MIND

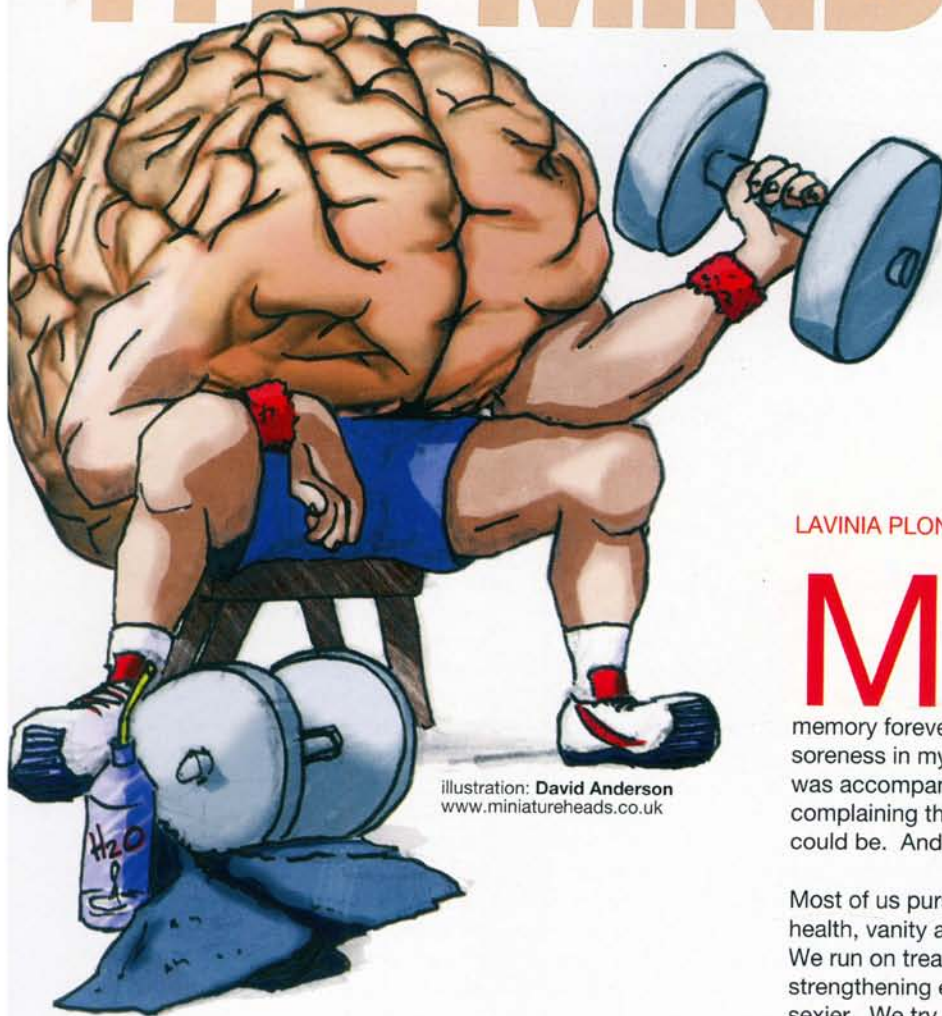


illustration: David Anderson
www.miniatureheads.co.uk

LAVINIA PLONKA teaches inner aerobics

My first article for *Jain Spirit* was a reflection on pilgrimage: what it felt like to walk up.... and then down the steps at Palitana. The experience of reaching the top as dawn broke is etched in my memory forever. Equally memorable was the incredible soreness in my legs. For days afterward, any descent was accompanied by a moan. As I tried to sit, my complaining thighs reminded me that I was not as fit as I could be. And yet, I felt incredibly fulfilled.

Most of us pursue fitness for purely temporal reasons: health, vanity and insecurity are three major ones. We run on treadmills in front of the TV, do core strengthening exercises in the hope that we will be sexier. We try Atkins diets, grapefruit diets, Zone Diets, South Beach Diets to regain a youthful figure. We lift weights to try to defy the aging process.

Yet of what value is all this fitness if 'inner fitness' is not part of the equation? The human organism is not just abs of steel, a figure to die for or a gorgeous 'bod'. Mental, spiritual and emotional fitness are equally important. Until the advent of cars, fast food and television, physical fitness was a non-issue for most people. They walked or rode horses, harvested their food, washed their clothes by hand, chopped wood and fetched their water. Life was short and hard. The advent of technology has eliminated the need to move, fast food has made us fat and television has made us passive. We live longer, but joy and vitality elude us.

THE HUMAN ORGANISM IS NOT JUST ABS OF STEEL, A FIGURE TO DIE FOR OR A GORGEOUS 'BOD'. MENTAL, SPIRITUAL AND EMOTIONAL FITNESS ARE EQUALLY IMPORTANT.

Now that America is the world leader in obesity, with much of the rest of the world close behind, many experts have tried to stress the importance of fitness as a way of life. While there are many reasons for obesity, one thing is certain – exercise alone does not eliminate the problem. Many doctors are beginning to advocate what they call a 'lifestyle change'. In addition to exercise, this kind of programme often calls for stress reduction strategies such as meditation and breathing exercises, addressing emotional issues, elimination of toxic habits like drinking or binging. Add a vegetarian diet and you have prescribed a Jain lifestyle! Jain monks and nuns utilise an integrated approach that includes meditation, *pranayama* (breathing exercises), fasting, plenty of walking (thousands of miles a year) and Hatha Yoga practice. Yoga? The hot, new fitness fad? Which kind?

Bikram Yoga is done in a room heated to over 100 degrees Fahrenheit. Bikram Choudhury is in the process of trying to patent the 5000-year-old *asana* (yoga postures) and has even initiated law suits to stop teachers from using 'his postures'. Ashtanga Yoga, originally developed for overactive 12-year-old boys in Mysore, India, is now taught as 'Power Yoga' in gyms with names like Crunch. Then there's Iyengar Yoga, Viniyoga, Anusara Yoga, Yogalates (no, it's not a coffee drink, but a blend of yoga and Pilates – another workout regimen.) There are yoga clothes, yoga props, yoga snacks. Yet yoga began as part of a spiritual practice, which now seems to have been forgotten in the rush to live.

The word yoga, which comes from the Sanskrit word for 'yoke' signifying union, has undoubtedly introduced many people to a more spiritual lifestyle. But for countless others, it's just another fitness fad or marketing opportunity. What distinguishes many contemporary yogis and yoginis from Jain monks and nuns is the intent of the practice. Inner and outer fitness for Jain

saints is a spiritual practice. Contrast this with using a spiritual practice to get fit and fabulous. Even meditation for some is merely a means to help you focus on 'getting what you want' instead of being with what is.

Like Yoga, there are other physical disciplines that have links to 'inner fitness'. The deeply meditative martial art Thai Chi was originally developed by monks as a way of using chi (energy) to repel bandits who raided monasteries. Aikido, a Japanese martial art, was called by its founder 'The Way of Peace'. In Aikido, one uses the energy of the attacker to disarm without harming. Like many of the samurai arts, it demands that one develop the body, mind and attention. Nia is a new form of dance developed in the US. The name is an acronym for Neuromuscular Integrative Action. It combines dance, martial arts and healing arts into a dance form designed to get the participants in touch with body, mind and spirit. The Feldenkrais Method is a form of movement education that guides students' attention to their habitual holdings and tensions. In fact, The Method's founder, Moshe Feldenkrais, once said, "It's not flexible bodies I'm after, it's flexible minds." Many times people begin one of the above disciplines for physical reasons, then discover that it can provide a contemplative path as well. Really, any kind of physical activity with the right

attitude can provide a path toward enlightenment. In Zen there is a saying, "Chop wood, carry water." And the Native Americans try to walk as if "every step is a prayer."

Which brings me back to pilgrimage. People undertake pilgrimages for various reasons – from wanting

a boon granted to deepening their spiritual experience. Is one desire more noble than the other? Are those who choose to renounce the material world better than those who want beauty and success? Can I be in the world and still evolve spiritually?

Any aspect of a spiritual practice can be perverted. Hitler considered himself a spiritual man and was a strict vegetarian. Chanting for a new car or doing *asana* to lose weight is a detour on the path to enlightenment. For many, that detour will lead to a spiritual dead end. But for some, it is the beginning of a journey. One can begin by training the body and discover the ineffable connection to the spirit along the way.

The holy men and women of various religions serve the community in multiple ways. Their example of inner and outer fitness is a standard towards which we can aspire. Or we can be satisfied to tone the body for merely temporal results. Whether undertaking a pilgrimage, a meditation practice or a fitness regimen, the important questions to ask are: What is my aim? What do I serve? Is there inner peace?

Lavinia has spent 35 years researching and teaching how movement - from dance to the martial arts to somatic studies - enhances quality of life. Her book, What Are You Afraid of? A Body/Mind Guide to Courageous Living is now available in paperback.

COLOURS OF KARMA

MONICA PERDONI attends an
exciting exhibition of South Asian art,
that celebrates the unique nuances of
colour and faith



Madhuri Bhaduri
Turquoise Temple
oil on canvas 24"x24"

Modern life is driven by routine. Much of it is spent at work or in the home or school. While the routines create discipline, they also create prisons. Hence the opportunity to attend an art exhibition was for me a welcome break from routine and I was enveloped by colours and creativity from the moment I entered.

As part of my journalism course, I undertook a week of work experience in the offices of *Jain Spirit*. I really love art that has even a hint of ethnicity to it, and got the opportunity to write an article on an exhibition in London. The exhibition was intriguingly called *Colours of Karma* and was held in February at The Private Gallery, London, UK.

Launched in 1994, co-founders Abhilasha Mehta and Neha Sanghrajaka of *Reflections-Art* are the innovative vision behind the expo. Abhilasha Mehta states that their aim is "to create an international platform for award winning artists as well as for up and coming artists from the South Asian subcontinent. Art shows and exhibitions in London do not truly reflect the diversity of artists from the South Asian region, therefore regular exhibitions from different ethnic backgrounds help to give a voice to those who are not given an opportunity in mainstream art."

A key struggle for any artist is one of self-promotion and publicity. The image of the penniless, isolated artist is sadly not a myth and it is easy to see how ethnic art has even more difficulty to be shown - here in the West. The ethos of *Reflections-Art* to bridge the gap between such boundaries is explicitly displayed in their bi-annual shows, focusing on individual as well as group artists. The hardest part is, in actual fact, not so much bringing artists together but deciding on a theme which includes a wide range of work to reflect the different aspects of South Asia.

Abhilasha Mehta said: "We want our exhibitions and website to reflect an array of artists who depict multicultural and dynamic South Asia in different forms. Religion, lifestyle, environment and globalisation are affecting the South Asian subcontinent in different ways and are represented in different forms in the art of that region. At *Reflections* we want to represent the art and their artists and thereby provide a glimpse of reflection of the South Asian lifestyle."

Colours of Karma really is the epitome of the overarching aim to convey the different facets of Asian life through the medium of art. Paintings by renowned

masters and of fresh talent from India and Sri Lanka were proudly displayed: Stanley Kirinde, Bairu Raghuram, Subrata Gangopadhyay, P. A. Dhond, Chandra Bhattacharjee, Madhuri Bhadhuri, Shehan Madawela, Druwinka Madawela, Laxman Aelay, Gopal Adivekar, Partho Shaw and Rameshwar Singh.

Shalini Ganendra, director of The Private Gallery said: "The title for the exhibition reflected the diversity of the works, the varying 'Colours' all from South Asia and 'Karma' being the most representative of common spirituality and philosophy for this region."

Walking into the gallery felt like entering another world and that for me is always a good sign. Being able to escape into an alternative culture and even identity, makes you feel the artist has touched you as well as the canvas! Each individual work really was just that - individual - and revealed a poignant insight of its creator's life and history, evident in titles such as: *The Balance of Peace*, *Turquoise Temple* and *Looking at Me*. What was immediately striking was the eclectic mix of paintings in form and medium. The wide range of mediums included acrylics, oils, pen, ink and water drawings, etchings and watercolours. Along with the conventional use of canvas and paper as backdrops so were bamboo paper, Nepalese rice paper and even beaten gold. This all added to the sense of timelessness inherent in art and historical beauty.

In all the paintings, the spectrum of colour was explored to enhance the striking simplicity and emotion behind the images. For example, in the ethereal *Sea Scape* works by leading Indian watercolour artist, P. A. Dhond the textual hues of colour and light were effectively played with to depict the transparency and shimmer of water. Bolder and vibrant splashes of colour were used in the acrylic portraits by realist painter Subroto Gangopadhyah. With *Pond* and *Maidens* the depicted life-like figures were so real, I felt as if these beautiful ladies were about to walk out of the painting towards me. (Now that's realism!) The significance of faith for all the artists was subtly hinted at throughout the show, epitomised in the calming and peaceful sense of P. A. Dhond's watercolours, and the sense of movement bringing long forgotten memories alive in Subroto Gangopadhyah's paintings. Let's not forget that the region gave birth to the three major religions of Hinduism, Jainism and Buddhism.

Abhilasha explains: "Religion plays a very important part in the subcontinent. We do see this reflected in the artists' work, but more often there are indirect



Madhuri Bhadhuri
The Blue Grotto
oil on canvas 24"x24"



Madhuri Bhadhuri
Crimson Temple
acrylic on canvas 21"x48"

reflections of it. We also see the popularity of religious figures like the Lord Ganesh, represented in a painting or as a statue. The representation of pilgrimages, like Palitana in India, is also considered auspicious and most artists explore their own religious belief in some form or other during their career."

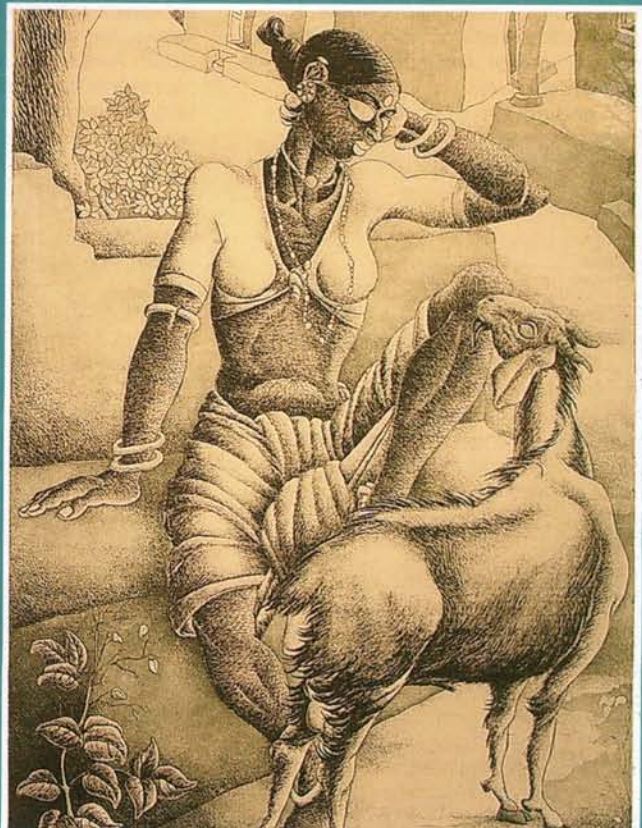
Every work conveyed the essence of Asia. I have always wanted to visit this intriguing and enigmatic subcontinent. After seeing this dynamic exhibition, I now more than ever need to see the inspirational land these artists have derived their creativity from.

www.reflections-art.com
www.theprivategallery.com

Monica Perdoni is a green-living freelance journalist with an interest in alternative lifestyles.



Chandra Bhattacharjee
Woman in Blue
 acrylic on canvas 36"x30"



Bairu Raghuram
Woman with goat
 etching 4/25 12.6"x19.25"



P.A. Dhond
untitled
 watercolour 22"x30"



Subroto Gangopadhyah
'Winter table'
 oil on canvas 56"x42"



NVA

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The exciting news is that the Vanik community have acquired an amazing site; 18 acres of green fields surrounded by trees, a functional hall with parking for over 400 cars and accessible within 30mins from North and South London. It has the potential to fulfil all of our dreams and more. We have been extremely lucky to buy this site at a significant discount, around 35%, due to our charitable status.

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.....for our community.

Should any one require any additional information please contact:

Subhash Bakhai 07815 740 202 / Mayur Mehta 07957 140 261 / Yogesh Mehta 07831 100 693

A photograph of Kevin Shah, a man with dark hair and a mustache, wearing a black shirt. He is holding a mridanga drumstick with a blue head and is about to play a large wooden mridanga drum. The drum has many horizontal wooden bars. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

LIVE THE DREAM

KAVIT HARIA interviews percussion crazy Kevin Shah

Making music is one of the most exciting and empowering activities, especially when you get to go all creative and just play whatever you want! That's exactly what Kevin Shah does, and now he has just landed himself the biggest dream of his life – a place at the world's top music institute, Juilliard.

Indian culture has always been about being an accountant, businessman, a medical professional or simply anything that can just bring lots of money in. What is not understood is that there are so many opportunities flooding into our path every single day, ready for the taking. Kevin applied to university in America to study political science and a year later, he said, "all I really knew was about drumming! I didn't want to be a political scientist or anything else. What mattered to me were my drums." Kevin raised his game by really seeking out what he wanted and is now a student at the world's top music institute.

Kevin is a great percussionist and when speaking with him, he told me that when he was in college, most of his friends went into medicine, economics or engineering. He said, "I was the only one to pursue music. You could say in some ways I was rebelling. The more people thought what I was pursuing was uncharacteristic for an Indian, the more I wanted to prove them wrong."

When Kevin moved to America from

India at the age of six, he was eager to fit in and through the local Jain Centre he was able to experience the intertwined life of an American and Indian Jain. He said, "The biggest lessons I learned from Jainism had to do with faith, hard work, self-control and patience." He told me that most of the Jain principles came into play when marching with the Santa Clara Vanguard. "What most people don't see is the work that goes into it," he said. "It is a very physical activity – so much so that we spent a couple weeks before we toured just conditioning." Every morning Kevin would work out, run and partake in vigorous exercises before spending the rest of the day playing and marching. He said, "I was always a little chubby and not very athletic so doing this was a huge challenge for me. It was a real test of my inner strength."

There were many days in his training when he really wanted to quit, but he said that he would only be letting himself down if he didn't get through. "During that time I thought about all the Jain concepts, how the body is just a burden on the soul. For me to succumb to my body's complaints (just like during fasting) would be a lack of strength. Eventually, my body started doing what I told it to do – and I finished the summer 60 lbs lighter," he said.

Kevin ended our conversation by saying, "The only way that I think I've got here is by being humble and working hard – a lesson my parents really ingrained in me. I know I don't go to the temple as much anymore or study any scriptures but all the basic principles of Jainism play a very central role in who I am today."

This interview was a real inspiration. I could not help but reflect on all those people out there who think that pursuing a creative career is not right for an Indian – stop and think! Is it all about what type of career you are in and whether you are making money, or about how you integrate your faith in your life?

Kevin can be contacted at
kevinsshah@gmail.com
Kavit Haria is Jain Spirit's Youth Section UK Assistant. He is crazy about the drums too and joyfully spends days creating rhythm. •

EVER WONDERED WHY?

As Jain females, we've all been frustrated with it before. In this article, CHIRAG BAJARIA looks into the exact reasons why Jain women are not traditionally allowed in the temple during "that time of the month"...

The historically acknowledged 'reasons' for menstruating women being prohibited from the temples come from the Vaishnav faith, in which it is important to observe 'physical purity' and thus it prevents bleeding people (of either gender) from engaging in temple worship. As a zealous method to uphold this requirement, Vaishnav women do not attend the temple during menstruation. Through association, Jains and Vaishnavs commonly assume that the same rules apply when, in fact, they do not.

The soul is the true form of a Jain, not the body, therefore in identifying

ourselves with our bodies and aspects of this material realm, we only bind karma. When we as Jains attend temple, we seek to focus our minds on shedding karma through meditation and introspection. Why should an educated Jain woman, embodying progressive thinking and seeking freedom from bodily attachment (particularly during her period!), be kept out of the gates of Palitana?

The traditional reason for this is that a woman in menstruation experiences changes in both body and mind. These changes are thought to 'disturb' the meditation of others and therefore contradicts *ahimsa*. However, it is implied that if a menstruating woman does not disturb others in this way, she is free to worship wherever appropriate.

Chirag Bajaria is an active Jain in London, England. •





Rachna Jain

Name: Rachna Jain

Location: Beltsville, Maryland

Career: Doctor of Psychology

What she does: Coaches a wide range of people from all over the world (mainly via email and telephone) on various issues such as relationships, businesses and marketing ideas. She helps people to break free from limited thinking in order for them to enrich their lives and sustain them.

The journey: Although her family was hesitant about her occupation and wanted her to become a physician, she followed her dream as she felt her qualities were better suited to the job of a psychologist. So she set to work, she went to graduate school where she took a full-course in clinical psychology, which she found to be highly stressful in itself, let alone her school's expectation for her to follow an outside clinical placement and deal with at least two clients within the school's clinic. But nevertheless, she survived it all and came through on top – she is now a life coach.

Benefits: Rachna finds her job as life coach to be very rewarding. She has "always been interested in helping people." Apart from enjoying her course in clinical psychology, she seems more than pleased with where her course has taken her. She has learnt a lot about how people can overcome their 'self doubt and personal limitations' to help them create the lifestyle they have always dreamed of. She finds it gives her an exciting thrill to see the journey people go through when reaching for big dreams and then attaining them. She finds many of her clients to be driven, motivated and ambitious; this has provoked her to continue learning about herself and growing in order to be an effective coach.

Jainism and her career: She feels that part of being a Jain "is to be the best person you can be." She believes that life coaching helps her to be the best she can be and allows her to help others to reach this same state of high achievement. She advises all those interested in life coaching to work with a mentor, seek coach training and continue to become "more and more of your best self."

John Harvey profiled Rachna Jain. He is 17 years old and lives in East London. He has a deep interest in Eastern traditions and is studying religion, psychology and English. •

**COOL
CAREER**
psychologist

Dear Aunties,

My sister is getting married next spring and her groom-to-be is not a Jain. This means that there will be a mixture of cultures at the wedding, which I think will be fun but my sister is worried about how the food is going to be organised - her fiancé is from a family of big meat eaters.

Any advice?!

Nervous in Nairobi

ASK AUNTIE'S

This issue a trio from Texus takes on your troubles.

Dear Nervous,

Congratulations! Marriage is such a special event! I see that there could be a slight problem with the wedding, but there are two things that can be done as a compromise.

First, try to make the groom understand your position in the religion you follow. Jains are strict vegetarians and as a child you were brought up in a family where you were taught that all animals are like humans; we don't kill them, let alone eat them. But remember that food is not the main aspect of the wedding. It is a secondary thing to the actual marriage itself. You are getting blessings from family and friends, so concentrate on that instead of the food. Remember the wise proverb: "We eat to live, not live to eat."

If this doesn't work, then you can come to a mutual understanding as the second option. Maybe the bride and her family pay for the vegetarian dishes while the groom and his family pay for the non-vegetarian dishes. By doing this, both the bride and the groom are satisfied and the bride stands firm in her beliefs yet she is compromising with her groom. Though this may be against her traditional beliefs, she must remember that interfaith marriages are about compromise. It is not fair and not in accordance with the Jain principle of anekantvada to tell the groom his ways and beliefs are wrong; we must remember that he grew up thinking these things were right just as we grew up thinking our ways were right.

When we choose to marry outside of our religion, race or culture, we must be prepared to COMPROMISE, COMPROMISE and COMPROMISE!

I hope this helps you and your family out in the situation, and good luck at your sister's wedding.

Jayant Pragyaaji and Sanmati Pragyaaji

Dear Nervous,

Congratulation on the occasion of your sister's wedding!

From my point of view, I see a small problem that can easily be solved. Being brought up in a Jain family, it is hard to disagree with the Auntie's opinion towards this situation. My question to you all is - why is it important to care so much for something so small? Yes, people do wonder what they will eat, but the majority of the people I know attend a wedding only due to the fact that it is an important journey from being single to family life. I am not saying that everybody is alike, but please think about this. So tell your sister to relax about what they are going to eat at the wedding, and instead to concentrate on the more important things. Continue to stand up for your beliefs and religion and everything will fall into place. Just wait and see. Good luck at the wedding!

Nisha Gosar

FEATURED
'AUNTIES':



Nisha Gosar



Sanmati
Pragyaaji



Jayant
Pragyaaji

Our world and all the life on it is signalling distress – it's time for leadership from Jainism and the Jain community.

The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA), a four-year study conducted by 1,300 experts from 95 countries, was released on 30 March 2005. The findings are grim: over the past 50 years, humans have changed ecosystems more rapidly and extensively than in any other time in history. The degradation of ecosystem services could grow significantly worse in a non-linear way, by abrupt, unpredictable and potentially irreversible changes. We are conducting an experiment on ourselves and we have no control over what can happen. The changes have made the rich richer, but inequality is rising – the number of people in poverty, without safe water and lacking food is increasing. While noting that our activities have “resulted in a substantial and largely irreversible loss in the diversity of life on Earth,” this human-centric report made no reference to the misery that other life forms are experiencing.

Similar reports like this have been presented, such as in 1997 when more than 1,500 of the world's most distinguished senior scientists, including the majority of Nobel laureates, signed a landmark consensus declaration urging leaders worldwide to act immediately to prevent the potentially devastating consequences of human-induced global warming. However, little action has resulted.

So how does the MA relate to Jainism? The MA concludes that “it lies within our power to ease the strains we are putting on the nature services of the planet.” Another conclusion is that “the challenge of reversing the degradation of ecosystems, while meeting increasing demands for their services, involves significant changes in policies, institutions and practices that are not currently under way.” Our society refuses to face such news and embrace new opportunities. Jainism can provide us a perspective to see this situation with clarity and act positively.

Let's look at this situation: species are becoming extinct, asthma rates are increasing in children, the poor are becoming poorer, 400 children under

five are dying every hour due to bad water, more people are going to bed hungry every night. It looks like the problems are economic, social, medical and ecological. But looking through a Jain lens, all these man-made problems are symptoms of an increase in the violence in our society.

Creating a non-violent society will solve most of the problems at the source. The MA points out that ‘significant changes’ are needed to reverse the trends. The seeds of Jainism (*ahimsa*, *aparigraha*, *anekantvada*) can help us make these changes. We need to replant these seeds in today's society. While the seeds are eternal, the practices we follow were developed in an age when food was grown locally, there was no oil-based transportation, there was no electricity, all our waste was non-toxic and biodegradable, the human population was small while resources were plentiful – life was lived quite differently. So the wise translated Jain principles into practices mainly around worship and food (since it was both a sign of consumption and a main source of violence). Today the situation has changed. What we eat is less important than how it was grown (whether toxic pesticides were used), where it was grown (was it grown in the next town or 10,000 miles away), or what we are eating in (reusable or disposable utensils). Now it's time to consider the *karma* generated by our transportation ritual. Does it matter whether we walk, cycle or travel by bus, train, a hybrid car or an SUV? Whether we drive fast or if we carpool? For

DARE TO BE SIMPLE

RAJESH SHAH EXPLAINS THE COURAGE OF LIVING A JAIN LIFESTYLE

those of us who refuse to accept this man-made situation as inevitable and who want to struggle against the current system, how should we proceed?

The first step is awareness and acknowledgement. Our households use toxic chemicals that harm life downstream. Our marble comes from quarries that drain aquifers and deplete people, animals and plants of water. Our electricity comes from coal power plants that cause pollution and global warming. Our dams cause untold suffering and death due to flooding of prime land and displacement. Our petrol and plastics cause devastation at the source, pollution at the refining, global warming during use, suffocation at disposal and wars over control. Transportation for us and our goods is streaming pollution around the planet.

The second step is to practise sufficiency, control our wants and reduce our desires. While Jains admit that happiness comes not from our material goods, we need to put that into practice by reducing our drive to build wealth and acquire property. We need to stop compartmentalising our lives, in which we remain devout vegetarians

Illustration: © Hayden Peek: hayden_peek@hotmail.com

while spending our time in the rat race seeking vast fortunes through industries such as chemicals, petroleum, diamonds, armaments, investments, etc., activities at complete odds with the teachings of *ahimsa* and *aparigraha*. We should be reducing our water usage, eliminating the use of chemicals in our home and avoiding disposable products.

Thirdly, as a group we need to be beacons of light – examples of living and thinking non-violently. Our Jain centres should be completely non-violent through their construction and use. It should matter how people get there and what they do there. Can you imagine a Jain convention that produces not the dozens of truckloads of plastic waste that kills land converting it into landfill, but only biodegradable waste that nourishes the land and life? We need to practise our values in public gatherings and show by example that simplicity is indeed practical.

Finally, we need to go beyond our focus on our personal life and action and think of the state of the world in our next life. Using *anekantvada* we can develop social and spiritual connections to all life. We need to serve, to be a source of social transformation, showing a non-violent path for the world to embrace, to heal the wounded planet and to ease the suffering felt by all life on it. •

Rajesh Shah lives in Oakland, California and is trying to become a non-violent life-form.

BRAHMA KUMARIS: ANGELS OF WISDOM

MAUREEN GOODMAN explains the growth of this global movement

In 1937, a quiet revolution was started in India. Brahma Baba, a 60-year-old man with a family and jewellery business, had a series of visions about the future of humanity. It brought home to him some essential truths: the human spirit was suffering and it was time for a spiritual re-awakening to guide us back onto the path towards the Divine. The Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University was founded from Brahma Baba's profound experiences and realisations. And the revolution? Rather than himself, he

put young teenage women in charge of running the organisation. The move was unheard of in those days: women had a very narrow role in society and to break down the barriers of social and cultural expectations was one that led to fierce opposition among the local community.

But Brahma Baba was firm in his belief and faith that women, with their ability to spiritually nurture and inspire co-operation, would be the ones who would help fulfil his vision of the future. Today, 36 years after Brahma Baba passed on, the BKWSU is a global organisation – with over 5000 centres

in more than 90 countries, and over 600,000 regular students and activities reaching out to millions around the world. Since becoming affiliated to the United Nations and subsequently gaining General Consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council, the Brahma Kumaris have worked on international programmes such as value-based education in schools. And those same teenage girls who joined all those years ago are still here...the "Dadis" (elder sisters) have been the backbone of the organisation's rapid development and growth over the past 68 years.



photograph: Giorgio Pili of BKWSU 'Meditation on Baba's Rock, Mt Abu'

Dadi Janki, co-administrative head of the Brahma Kumaris, says their aim throughout the years has been a simple one – to give people an experience of their true selves. “When we look deep within us, we will find something magical. It is our true spiritual power that has been latent, but by the practice of meditation we can merge it practically into our lives and we will be able to see with our own eyes the remarkable transformation it can create.”

The links between the Brahma Kumaris and Jains are numerous. The BK’s headquarters are in Mount Abu, Rajasthan, India. Mount Abu has a rich spiritual heritage, with many thousands of visitors a year coming to see the temples at Achalgarh, Guru Shikhar, Gaumukh and Adhar Devi. It is at Mount Abu that the world famous Delwara Jain Temples are also to be found, with their stunning and intricate architecture and statues of 108 deities, each with their unique carvings and features. There is something special about the location of the Jain Temple and the Brahma Kumaris headquarters – known as ‘Madhuban’ – in Mount Abu. Indian scriptures are filled with legends of how the gods would retreat to the mountains and immerse themselves in solitude and gain spiritual power through meditation. When you go to visit both places in Mount Abu, you become instantly aware of the vibrations of peace and spiritual power that fill the air.

Throughout India, there are many BK centres that work in villages and small

local communities. In 1993, the Brahma Kumaris opened the Global Hospital and Research Centre. It became the first hospital in the area to offer modern medical treatment and services free of charge to large numbers of local people. Its innovative Village Outreach Project has also helped hundreds of villages in the surrounding region to deal with common illnesses and diseases.

The organisation’s most recent complex, the Shantivan in Taleti at the foot of the mountain, is a world record breaker in its own right. Using cutting edge technology, the majority of the complex’s electricity and power is supplied by solar energy. It has the world’s largest solar cooker, which can cook meals for up to 30,000 people at a time. The same technology has enabled many homes in local villages to erect solar panels on their rooftops – ensuring that for the first time they have free electricity to help develop their land and improve their economic situation. The Rural Wing of the Brahma Kumaris in India has also developed a sophisticated network of education programmes and training initiatives for farmers throughout the country. Social programmes include helping to eradicate illiteracy and reduce dependencies on smoking, alcohol, tobacco chewing and drug addiction.

Since the time the organisation came into existence, the Brahma Kumaris have maintained a constant focus on essential spiritual practices, which they believe form the basis for real inner growth. Like Jains, there is a strict

observance of vegetarian diet, which includes avoiding fish, eggs, onions and garlic. This helps the process of cleansing the mind spiritually by only eating food that will not conflict with the natural balance of the mind and body.

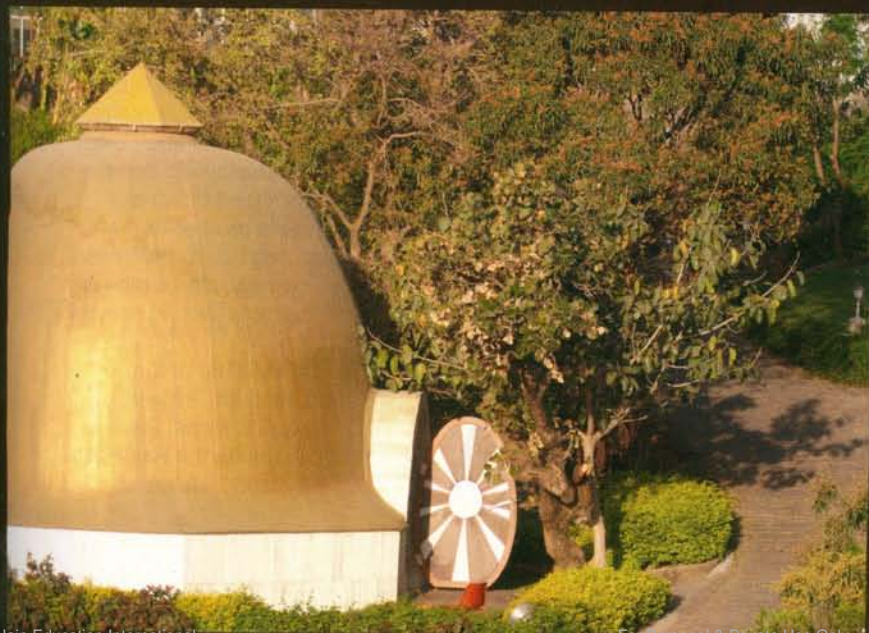
Celibacy, also highly esteemed in the Jain community, is an important part of a BK lifestyle. Raja Yoga meditation, the core practice of all BKs, involves raising the individual’s awareness from ‘body consciousness’, where they identify themselves solely as physical beings, towards ‘soul consciousness’, where the individual ascends to an awareness of their true selves – the spirit, or the soul. Celibacy enables the individual to experience the truest state of ‘soul consciousness’.

The BK philosophy transcends culture, religion and race. And that is something that has been exemplified by the global presence of the organisation, where many members are also Jains. The ‘Serve Africa’ project will have a BK centre in every country on the continent within a year. With its main base in Nairobi, Kenya, where members are from both the Indian expat and local African communities, the Brahma Kumaris have benefited thousands through seminars, public events and courses on Raja Yoga meditation.

In the UK, the youth wing of the Brahma Kumaris have also co-ordinated joint events with the Young Jains, including a national one-day event exploring the concept of the soul. The BK’s Global Retreat Centre in Oxford has also hosted interfaith retreats for young people, some co-organised with members of Young Jains, as well as those from different professional backgrounds.

Ravi Khanna, one of the youth co-ordinators of Brahma Kumaris in the UK, said that it was just the beginning: “We are very aware of the desire among young people to really understand and learn from the wisdom of their faith and culture. We hope to build on our relationships with groups like Young Jains to show how the power of positive change is something that young people can and will be at the forefront of.”

Maureen Goodman is programme co-ordinator at the International Centre of the Brahma Kumaris in London.
www.bkwsu.com



photograph: Giorgio Pili of BKWSU 'Meditation Dome, Gyan Sarovar'

EVA DE CLERCQ explains the Jain version of the Ramayana...

The ancient legend of Rama, the prince of Ayodhya, and the search for his kidnapped wife Sita, is one of the most popular and influential stories in and beyond South Asia. This is evident from the great number and variety of adaptations of the story, which we find in so many different forms: from the reliefs at the Prambanan temples in Indonesia to the classical dances of Thailand. What many Jains are unaware of is that since antiquity there have been Jain versions of the story as well. Tradition holds that this Rama story was told by Mahavir himself. The teachings of Mahavir were compiled by his immediate followers into twelve texts, the *Angas*, of which the twelfth, thought to contain the original Jain Rama legend, has unfortunately gone lost. What remains are later poems in Sanskrit, Prakrit and vernacular languages by poets narrating the Rama story as they have learned it from their respective teachers. Vimalasuri's *Paumacariyam*, 'The Deeds of Padma', with Padma referring to Rama, is the oldest available Jain *Ramayana*. According to a manuscript of this text, the poet belonged to the first century. However, several scholars suggest he rather lived in the third or fifth century. Vimalasuri's narrative was followed by many later authors, the most notable of whom is the famous Acharya Hemachandra (12th century).

This Jain *Ramayana* first narrates the history of the different dynasties in which the protagonists are born. The originator of the Ikshvaku dynasty, to which Rama and his relatives belong, was the first *Tirthankara*, Adinath Rishabha. When Rishabha renounces the world, he distributes his land among his relatives, who all form their own branches. At the time of the second *Tirthankara*, Ajita, a new dynasty arises in Lanka, the Rakshasa dynasty named after a *vidya*, a magical power which

protected (from the Sanskrit root *raksh*) the city of Lanka. Contrary to other versions, these Rakshasas, here meaning 'descendants of the Rakshasa dynasty', are not demons but a noble race of humans. Generations later, the Rakshasa king donates the island of Vanara to his brother-in-law, giving rise to the Vanara dynasty, also a race of humans, not monkeys.

At the time of the twentieth *Tirthankara*, Muni Suvrata, Ravana is born in the Rakshasa dynasty. He grows

...ONE DAY
LAKSHMANA GOES
OUT FOR A WALK AND
SPOTS A MAGICAL
SWORD HOVERING
IN THE AIR...

THE

JAIN RAMAYANA

ARRIVING NEAR THE SHRUB, SHE FINDS HIS DECAPITATED BODY.

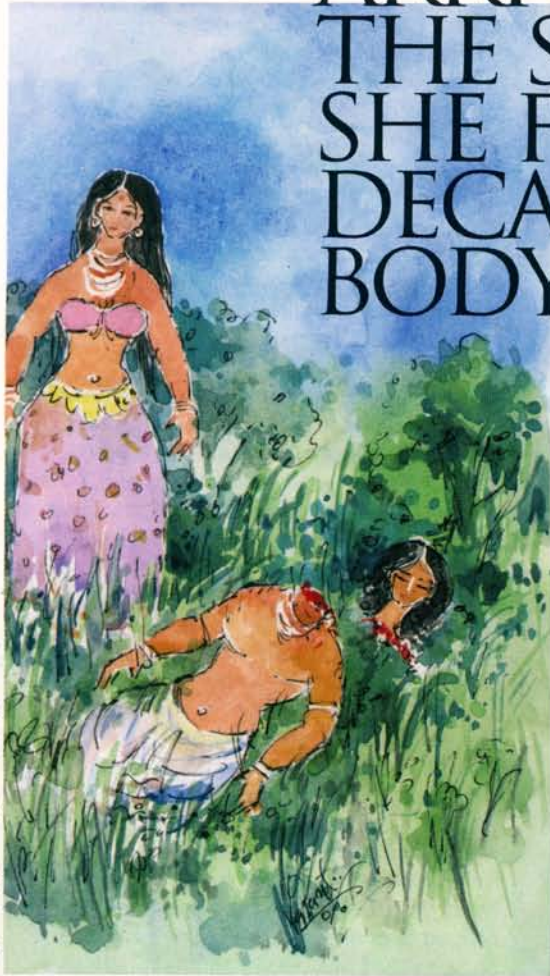


Illustration: © Vasant Chinchwadkar

up to be a great and noble king. At the same time, in another great dynasty, the Ikshvakus of Ayodhya, Dasharatha ascends the throne and begets four sons: Rama, Lakshmana, Bharata and

Shatrughna. One day, the neighbouring king Janaka is overrun by hostile tribes and requests Dasharatha's help. Rama and Lakshmana are sent to his aid and Rama is awarded the hand of Janaka's daughter, Sita in return. Some time later Dasharatha is struck by the ephemeral nature of the material world and he decides to abdicate and renounce the world. Bharata shares his father's feelings and also wishes to take *diksha*. When his mother Kaikeyi hears of this, the dread of losing both her husband and her son at the same time, is too much to bare. Therefore, she asks Dasharatha, by way of a boon, to make Bharata the new king instead of Rama, prohibiting Bharata's renunciation. Hereupon Rama decides to go into voluntary exile to facilitate Bharata's rule. Sita and Lakshmana accompany him. The threesome head towards the south to start a life in the forest.

On their way, they encounter many devout Jain rulers in distress. In return for Rama's aid, all become allies of the kingdom of Ayodhya. After settling in the Dandaka forest, one day Lakshmana goes out for a walk and spots a magical sword hovering in the air. He takes the sword and hacks into a bamboo shrub nearby to test its qualities. As he pulls the sword back, the head of a young boy rolls out of the shrub. While Lakshmana runs to Rama to inform him of what happened, Ravana's sister, Chandranakha, arrives there to visit her son who had been performing austerities for years to obtain that magical sword. Arriving near the shrub, she finds his decapitated body.

Looking around for his killer, she sees Rama and Lakshmana in the distance and forgets her sorrow and immediately falls in love with them. She approaches them, but when the brothers politely decline her, she runs away and sends armies of Rakshasas after them. All are slain by Lakshmana. When Ravana himself goes to the battlefield, he notices the beautiful Sita nearby and falls in love with her. Using one of his *vidyas*, he lures Rama away from her, quickly grabs her and flies with her to Lanka.

Meanwhile, Sugriva, the king of the Vanara dynasty, is banished from his kingdom by a doppelganger, in fact a disgruntled suitor of his wife, Tara. Roaming through the woods with a few loyal servants, Sugriva heads towards where his long-term allies, the Rakshasas are fighting Lakshmana, to ask for their help. Arriving there, he witnesses Lakshmana obliterating the Rakshasa forces and grows even more desperate. Running out of options, he approaches Rama and Lakshmana for help. Rama promises Sugriva to help him, provided that Sugriva assist Rama in the search for his missing wife. Rama

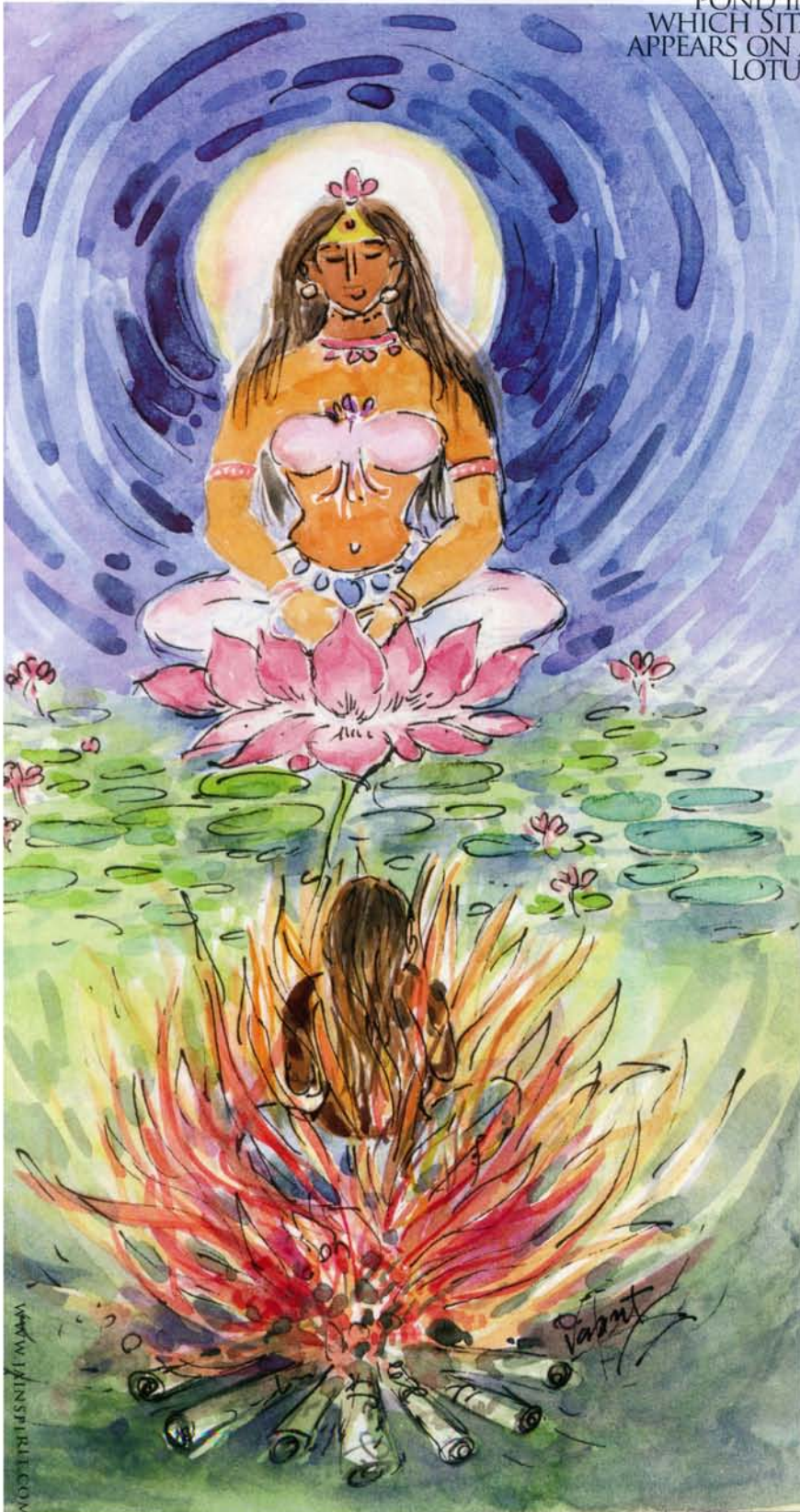
AS SHE ENTERS
THE FIRE, IT
MAGICALLY
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POND IN
WHICH SITA
APPEARS ON A
LOTUS

himself kills the doppelganger and reinstates Sugriva. To fulfil his end of the agreement, Sugriva sends troops in every direction to look for Sita. The troop going south encounters a man who has witnessed a crying woman, Sita, being flown to Lanka by Ravana. When Rama hears of this, he vows to kill Ravana. The Vanaras send their close ally, Hanuman, to Lanka with a message of reassurance for Sita. After visiting Sita, Hanuman attempts to persuade Ravana to solve the matter peacefully, but to no avail.

Upon hearing Hanuman's account of his visit, Rama prepares for battle. Together with his allies, he sets out for Lanka. The war begins and duels between the Rakshasas and Vanaras are fought, with casualties and imprisonments on both sides. When Lakshmana is mortally wounded, Rama sends Hanuman to Ayodhya to get the magical healing bathwater of Kaikeyi's niece, Vishalya. Vishalya herself accompanies Hanuman to Lanka and heals Lakshmana and several other wounded soldiers.

The war comes to an ultimate duel between Ravana and Lakshmana, in which Lakshmana kills Ravana with his own *chakra*. Rama and Sita are happily reunited and return to Ayodhya where Bharata renounces the world. When Rama receives news that the citizens of Ayodhya doubt Sita's chastity, in Lanka, he feels obliged to conform to the will of his people and banishes her. His charioteer abandons the pregnant Sita in the forest where she is found by a distant relative who takes care of her as a sister. Sita gives birth to two sons. When years later, the boys come to hear of the treatment their mother received from Rama, they attack Ayodhya to avenge her. Rama learns of the identity of the two, embraces them and asks Sita to undergo a fire-ordeal to prove her chastity. Sita reluctantly accepts and as she enters the fire, it magically transforms into a beautiful pond in which Sita appears on a lotus in divine attire. To Rama's dismay, Sita immediately thereupon takes *diksha*. In due course, the other main characters of the story die or renounce the world. Rama in the end attains the *kevala* knowledge and *moksha*. •

Eva De Clercq studied classical Indology and completed her PhD on the Jain Ramayanas at the University of Ghent in Belgium. She is presently working as a postdoctoral researcher on Krishna in the Jain tradition.





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DEATH TEACHES US ABOUT

LIFE



CHRISTOPHER KEY Chapple explains
the science of fasting unto death

For the Jain community fasting to death celebrates a life well lived and emphasises the key aspects of Jain philosophy. First, it demonstrates a willingness to devote oneself in an ultimate sense to the observance of non-violence. By not eating, no harm is done to any living being. Second, it functions to burn off residues of karma that otherwise would impede the soul and cause further bondage. Like the Vedic practice of *tapas*, it purifies the soul by releasing the fetters of past attachment (*nirjara*).

In *How We Die: Reflections on Life's Final Chapter*, Dr. Sherwin B. Nuland of Yale University Medical School tells the story of Miss Hazel Welch, a 92-year-old resident of a convalescent home in Connecticut. One day, Miss Welch collapsed; she was diagnosed with operable peritonitis. Initially, she refused the operation, stating she had been on the planet long enough and did not wish to go on. Dr. Nuland talked her into the operation, and though her chances of surviving the operation were one in three, she did in fact live through the surgery. Her recovery proved agonizing. She required a breathing tube for nine days and, as Dr. Nuland writes, "she spent every minute of my twice-a-day visits staring reproachfully at me." As soon as she returned to her convalescent home she arranged with her trust officer from the bank that handled her estate to draw up papers assuring that she would, in the event of a future health failure, receive no more than nursing care. "She wanted no repetition of her recent experience and emphatically said so in her written statement." Two weeks later she had a massive stroke and died in less than a day. Somewhat ruefully, Dr. Nuland writes that he wished he had abided by her wishes the first time and agreed not to perform the initial surgery. However, he also notes that his colleagues of the hospital's weekly surgical conference would disapprove, would retort with a

remark such as, "Does the mere fact that an old lady wants to die mean you should be a party to it?"

Nuland points out that eighty percent of American deaths occur in the hospital. As French historian Philippe Aries has noted, "Our senses can no longer tolerate the sights and smells that in the early nineteenth century were part of daily life, along with suffering an illness... the hospital has offered families a place where they can hide the unseemly... the hospital has become a place of solitary death." Though he offers no easy solutions, Dr. Nuland presents the stark reality and pervasiveness of an alienated and fundamentally unhappy death process in America.

By contrast, I want to describe the death of Mrs. Vijay Bhade, a Jain woman suffering from sarcoma (cancer) in West Virginia. She was raised within the Jain community in India and was married to a Jain physician. Her struggle with illness led her to pursue treatment according to Western medical practices. She also applied an attitude toward death and dying, learned from and encouraged by the philosophy of Jainism and the traditional practice of *sallekhana*. Modern cures were sought but when these proved futile Mrs. Bhade actively pursued death in the traditional manner of gradually letting go, first of solid food, then liquids, then water. Her goal was to make a conscious transition into death. She died at home, surrounded with family and friends.

Dr. Bhade commented that the passing of his wife was a beautiful experience. At the age of 43, stricken with sarcoma, she underwent six months of treatment to no avail. When it was seen that nothing more could be done, she explained to her three children (aged 17, 15, 13) that she was leaving. During the last week of her life she took water and juice only. In the beginning of the week, she took a morphine drip for a time, but then decided to do without it; when she stopped the morphine,

she no longer experienced pain. On the morning of her death, she called her friends and relatives at 4 a.m. and asked them to come to the house. She took a bath and did *pooja*. She asked for forgiveness of everyone (*ksama*) and talked with her family members. She chanted the *Namokar Mantra*, the *Samadhi Marana*, the *Bharat Dharana*, the *Namo Siddhana* and the *Arhanta Siddha*. Later in the morning she died alert and conscious. Those gathered were thrilled to witness the peacefulness of her passing.

On reflecting on the process of seeing his wife die, Dr. Bhade, as a physician analysed the differences between death in his Digambara Jain community in Maharashtra and death in West Virginia. He noted that his exposure to death in India was somewhat limited, though in his home community he noted that many choose to fast at what was deemed to be the end of their lives. The munis or Jain monks take up the final fast when they can no longer keep up their vows. For instance, when their sight dims, the monks cannot effectively ascertain that no bugs have entered their food. Due to difficulty maintaining such basic practices of *ahimsa*, the monks will embark on a terminal fast. In the case of his own family, Dr. Bhade cited the instance of his mother. She experienced heart failure at the age of 74. She was offered but rejected angioplasty and went on a liquid diet. Eventually, she entered a period of total fasting and gave up her life in a fully conscious state.

Many of the younger and middle-aged people have left West Virginia, seeking opportunities out of the state. Consequently, many elderly are left behind without a family in close proximity. The adult children responsible for the care of their elderly parents generally see them only once a year. Consequently, they are interested in prolonging the life of their parents (perhaps out of guilt, Dr. Bhade surmises) and will agree to extraordinary measures. Dr. Bhade noted: "Terminal death is very painful. It can involve

three to six months of torture. In some cases, families want to do everything possible [to keep the person alive]... Elderly people lying there so helpless with feeding tubes are a horrible sight. In general, in India people do not suffer this way."

"THERE IS AN END TO LIFE. THIS IS THE FIRST STEP. PEOPLE NEED TO UNDERSTAND THIS... WHEN YOU ARE BORN, YOU ARE GOING TO DIE."



Dr. Bhade, for religious, practical and economic reasons, would support a greater awareness of the advantages of fasting to death. At the onset of our conversation he stated, "There is an end to life. This is the first step. People need to understand this... When you are born, you are going to die." He suggests that the role of the physician

is to make people comfortable and that in many instances the prolongation of life with medical technology does not increase a person's comfort. In advocacy of fasting, he stated, "Fasting helps give up the attachment to this life. Desires decrease through fasting." Dr. Bhade's statements evoke basic

Jain cosmology.

Desire, including the desire to live, can be an obstacle to one's ultimate happiness. By attenuating desire, one prepares to let go. By entering death in a process of conscious prayer, the transition, according to eyewitness accounts, becomes painless. Not all Americans choose to use extraordinary means to extend life. Scott Nearing, best known for his advocacy of simple living in the classic he co-authored with his wife Helen, *Living the Good Life*, chose an unconventional life. A pacifist and a communist, he retreated to a homestead in rural New England after he was dismissed from his professorship at the University of Pennsylvania due to his staunch opposition to World War I. With Helen he developed a maple sugar farm in Vermont and eventually settled on the coast of Maine. The two pursued a life of learning and subsistence, and managed to survive for several decades largely independent from the needs of the external economy.

They grew their own food, built their own houses and lived healthily on a vegan diet. In his 99th year, Scott Nearing lost his physical mobility. After several months of near-total debility (LaConte), he decided to stop eating. In her book *Light on Aging and Dying*, Helen Nearing describes the process as follows: "He drifted away and off,

like an autumn leaf from the parent tree, effortlessly and tranquilly. It was a benign and calm departure, well-timed and appropriate. He breathed low; then he breathed no more. He went somewhere else, with active volition. He had practised the art of dying well." One cannot help but notice the similarity between Nearing's passing and that experienced by Mrs. Bhade.

The Jain philosophy of life and death places the human in the centre of the universe. Only from human birth may one ascend to *kevala*, the realm of ultimate meaning and liberation. For the Jains, the key to entering this realm lies in the purgation of karma through the observance of non-violence. Through observance of a carefully constructed code of behaviour, both lay and monastic Jains aspire to cleanse themselves of karma and advance from the lower rungs of existence (*gunasthanas*) toward liberation. Fasting on a regular basis, particularly during the Paryushan observances of late summer, helps advance a person in this spiritual quest. At the end of one's life, the final act of expiation, the final sacrifice of one's body and karma involves the manner of one's death with the ideal passing taking place consciously, at the conclusion of a successful period of fasting. By contrast, the drive to extend human life in contemporary medical practice rather than allowing for a letting go, enforces a holding on to life that, for some, can be quite painful and distracting. In such circumstances, the inevitable passing into death becomes an arduous ordeal. The Jain attitude and approach to death, although controversial, provides an alternative non-violent approach to the ultimate rite of passage.

Christopher Key Chapple is Professor of Theological Studies at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles, where he teaches religions of India and Jainism. He has published twelve books, including 'Jainism and Ecology' and 'Reconciling Yogas: Haribhadra's Array of Views on Yoga'. •

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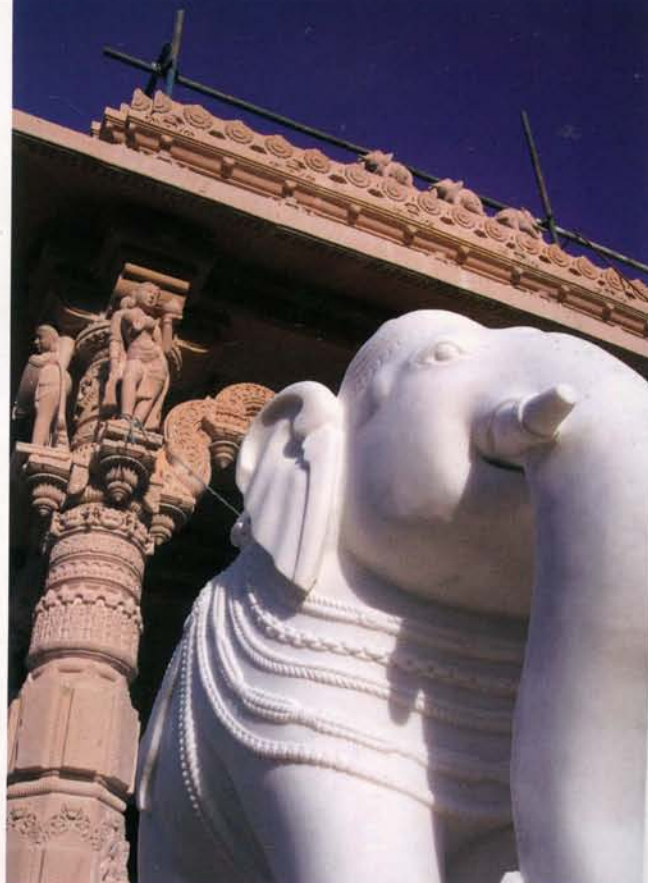
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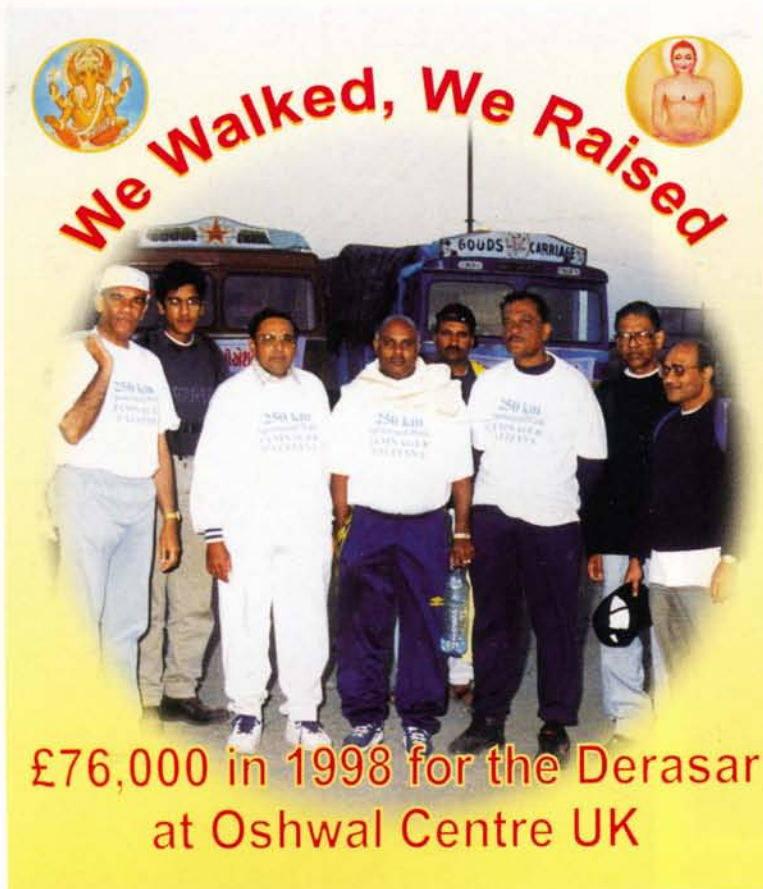
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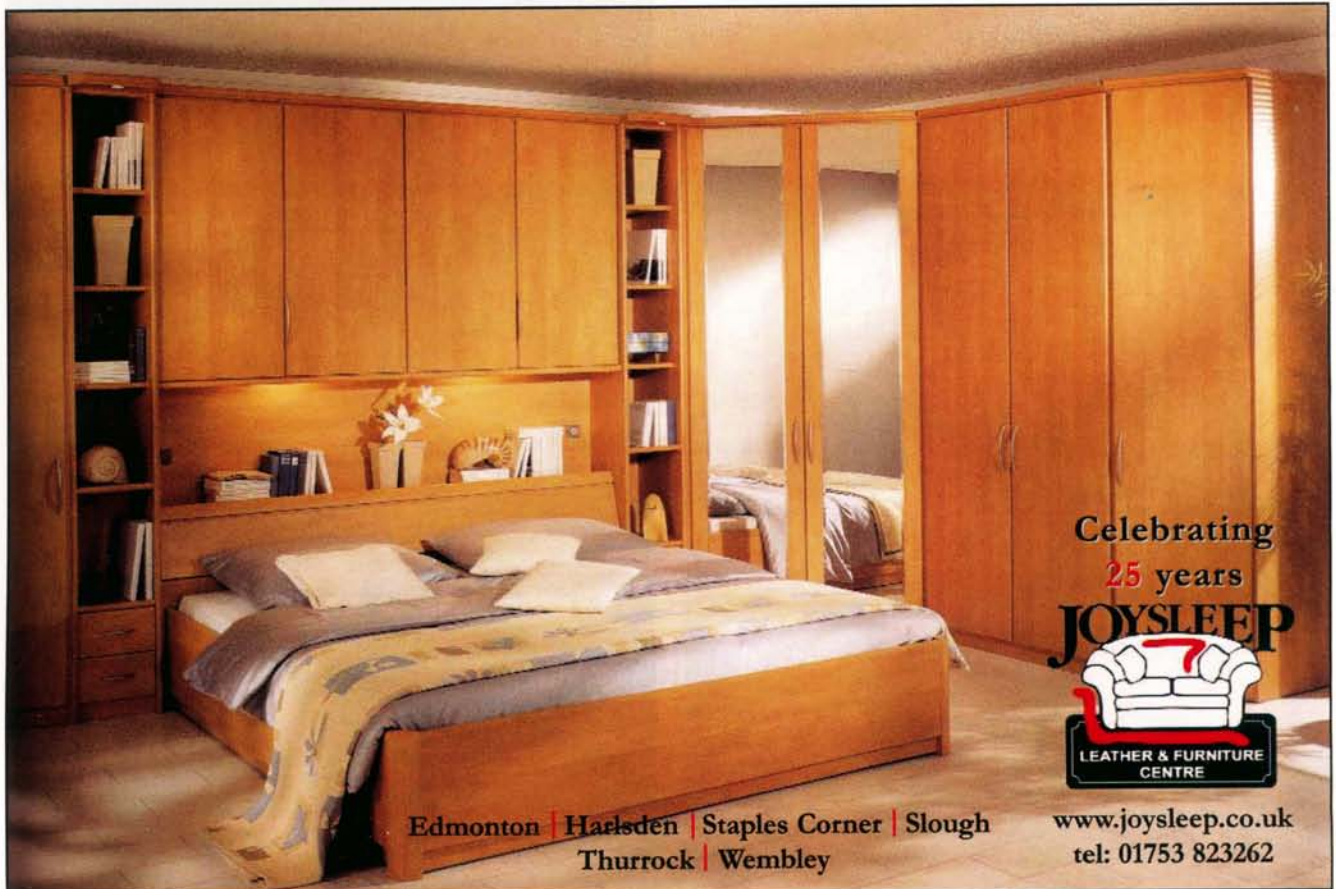
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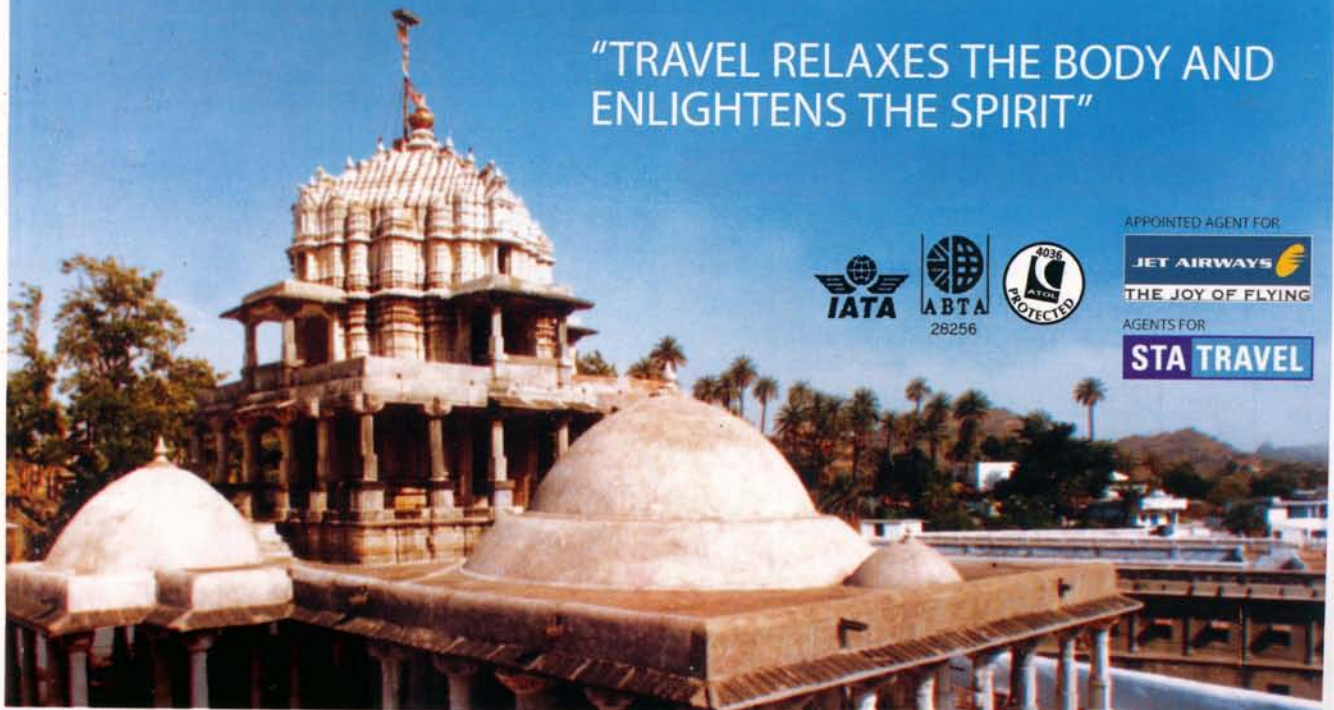
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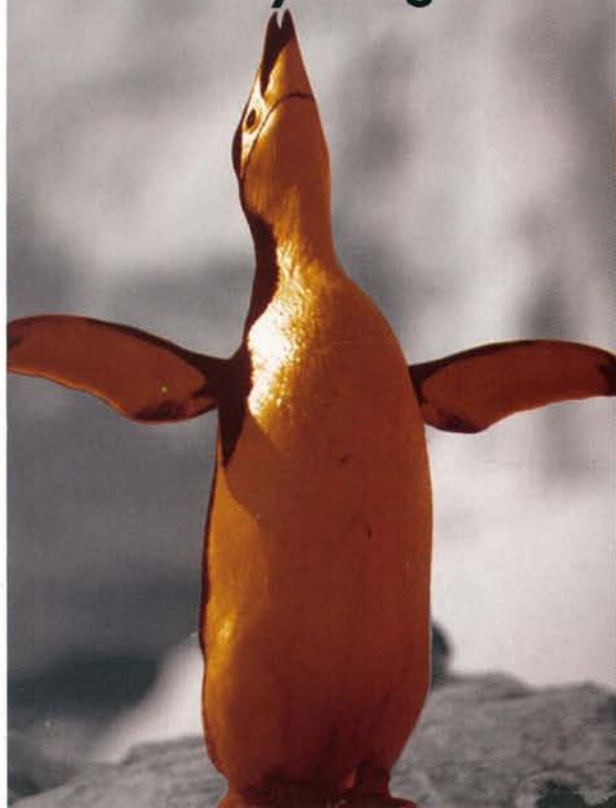
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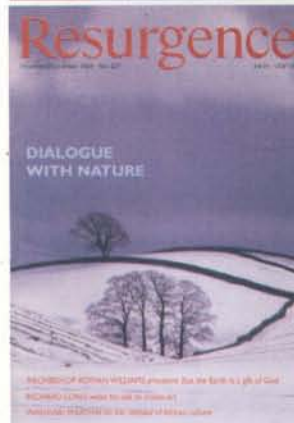
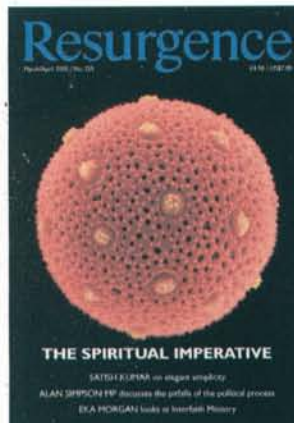
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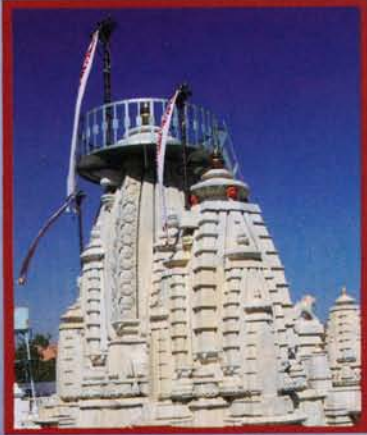
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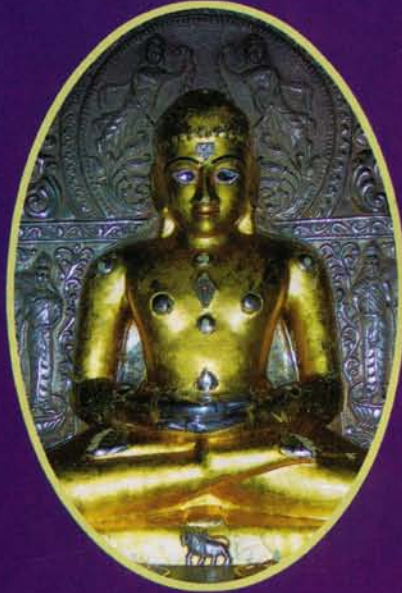
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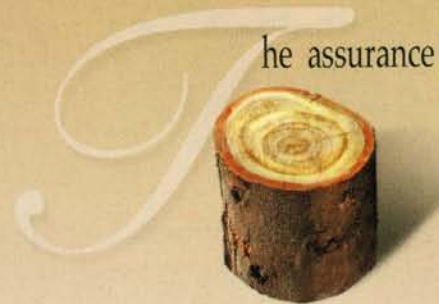
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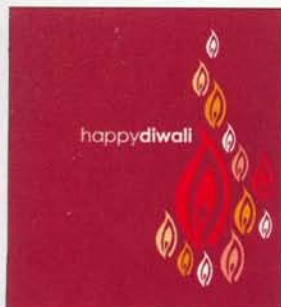
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JAMBO

Jitendra Shah takes us back to the future

When the first migrants arrived here way back in 1898, they had very little baggage but very high culture. Fortunately for them, Kenya welcomed them with open arms and allowed them to practise their culture and religion without any hindrance. In fact, they actually supported their work – today many of the core workers in our schools, hospitals, temples and community centres are Indigenous Africans. We treat them fairly and in return they are very loyal to us. Many want to learn our culture and some even speak Gujarati very fluently. In our Jain schools, I have even heard African students saying the *Navkar Mantra*!

What our forefathers did for our community was nothing short of remarkable. They had very little education and perhaps that was their major advantage. They had no hang-ups but tremendous determination and will-power. Above all, they had the highest humility and sense of community – everything they did, they did together. I feel very proud to say today that this spirit still lives on here in Kenya. Only recently, we have constructed one of the best new schools in Kenya in Mombasa. Our \$7-million Oshwal Centre in Nairobi is regarded as the best Jain community centre outside India. Our community-managed schools are some of the best in the country and students from here have even gone to Oxford and Cambridge Universities. When we hosted our recent International Jain Conference in Nairobi, we had over 300 volunteers working day and night to make it happen. In fact, two out of every ten members of the community here give at least five hours a week to voluntary service. Many of these have very successful business and professional lives but they still give us their time.

Our business and commercial success has also been unprecedented. I would estimate that the net worth of the Kenyan Jain community would be over \$10 billion. This has been built on our ethics of trust and mutual support, which continue to this day. Also, our 'people exports' have been very successful – in the UK, the Kenyan Jains really shine and have built some significant cultural and educational institutions.

Many are leaders in various professions and industries. The first Jain temple in London is about to be opened by the Oshwal Association UK. The crucial challenge we face is to keep our values alive against this growing global climate of materialism and selfishness. We all need to be alert that our education does not become subverted into our greed and individualism – that the knowledge we have is used for social upliftment not private extravagance. And the key thread for all this is our religion and culture. Religion and community are twin partners – one cannot live without the other. For our youth it is important that all elders set a good real life example and live by the values that our forefathers brought to Kenya. We need a high dose of humility and charity. Our own local experiments of building unity have reaped bountiful rewards. I would encourage all Jains to rise to the challenge of transferring our beautiful culture to future generations.

Mr. Jitendra H. Shah is the Chairman of the Visa Oshwal Community, Nairobi.

"WE NEED A HIGH DOSE OF HUMILITY AND CHARITY."



BEHIND THE SCENES

WHAT IS JAIN SPIRIT?

Jain Spirit is the only non-sectarian international quarterly magazine in English on the Jain culture, one of the oldest living non-violent traditions in the world. It relates the ancient values to the modern world in a fun, educational and creative way. English is increasingly becoming the global language of communication, and the Jains are a global community. Each issue is over 80 pages long, containing a wide range of articles written by people from all over the world, from scholars to artists and young people.

HOW IS IT PUBLISHED?

Jain Spirit is a UK charity and a company limited by guarantee. A professional team of four full-time and various freelance staff work to produce each issue. The printing and global distribution is done from India in order to save on cost. A range of donors and advertisers fund the publication and support the existing infrastructure. *Jain Spirit* is a professional charity whose primary mission is to 'Share Jain Values Globally'. We do need regular support from sponsors – individual and corporate – and invite you to come forward so that we can concentrate our limited resources on publication and dissemination. In particular, we invite businesses to take an active stake in this project and use their unique fundraising skills for the benefit of the global community. To donate any amount, please email us on editor@jainspirit.org for information on our schemes.

WHO IS BEHIND JAIN SPIRIT?

As well as a team of full-time staff there are many volunteers who help the charity in various ways from writing to marketing, fundraising and

management. Dr. Atul K. Shah is the founding editor who has given up a highly successful academic career to focus full-time on this project. He was also the founder of the Young Jains movement, the first non-sectarian democratic youth Jain organisation. We have an international advisory board who critically review and comment on articles and the magazine. The editor regularly speaks at various events and is available to give presentations to different audiences.

WWW.JAINSPIRIT.COM

is the 24/7 internet home of *Jain Spirit*. Here you will find more detailed information about each of the above and an on-line secure credit card subscription form and advertising rates. Gift subscriptions are a unique way to spread this magazine and we encourage you to sign up for them on our website. Latest news and announcements will be disseminated through this, so we encourage readers to visit it regularly. We have also started an e-mail newsletter, and to subscribe e-mail marketing@jainspirit.com – this is a unique forum for announcement of quality Jain events and news. We would also like to invite people to submit unique photos for the website and the magazine. Writers are welcome to contact us with articles or suggestions for new articles.

HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED?

We are looking for ambassadors for *Jain Spirit* in different parts of the world who can promote the magazine, send us news and information and collect subscriptions on our behalf. If you are interested please email Kiran Nandha on marketing@jainspirit.com •



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