Jain Bhawan
Pratishthä Mahotsav
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Pujä Book

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INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Before we start, we must emphasize that there are many different ways of doing jñāpā. What you read here and what you may see during the Prātimājī is not the only way, if you keep in mind the Jain doctrine of Arkeṇiṇāda (multiple viewpoints). We want to make it clear that it is not our intention to offend anyone.

With the blessing of Bhagwān Adināth, we are celebrating one of the most memorable Prātimājī Mahotsav in the Jain1 history. The temple is the First Jain Temple in the entire North America to have Prātimājī with Prān Pratishthā, uniting all Jains under one roof - Śvetāmbara, Digōnkar, Śikānakāśī and the inspired ones by Shrimad Rajchandraji. Jain Bhawan and associated activities are the best way to extend our rich Jain Heritage and Indian culture to our next generation, and generations to come.

The word Prātimājī is a Sanskrit word made of two words. The word Prān means Pratishthā or “in person” or “live”, and the word Tishtha means to install or to establish. The combined meaning of the word Prātimājī means to establish live image of Veerāgha or Bhagwān2 in the temple for spiritual grace and fellowship.

1.1. WHAT IS THE IMPORTANCE OF PRĀTIMĀJĪ WITH PRĀN PRATISHTHĀ?

The Prātimājīs are made out of marble. To make them most auspicious and worship-able, Prān Pratishthā needs to be performed. The Prān Pratishthā ceremony auspiciously installs “living-ness” in the Prātimājīs. In other words,

1 Jain word is derived from Jina, which literally means “the Victor” or “the Liberator”. One who has freed himself/herself from the bondage of Karma by conquering nīca (attachment - deceit and greed) & duḥṣa (aversion - anger and ego). People who follow the teachings of Jina are called Jains. Jinas are also called siddham (who treat everything with equanimity) or yogīn (who does not have desires and passions). The teachings of Jina is called Jainism. Bhagwān Mahāvira was the last reformer of Jainism. Jainism is the universal religion (dharma) because the fundamental principle of Jainism Ahimā, either by thoughts, words or action is extended to all living beings. In other words all living beings are considered equal. The Sanskrit word for the religion is dharma. The meaning of dharma is very own nature or quality of the thing. For all living beings, soul is the real thing. This makes “to see, to know and to realize” - the true nature of the things. In other words, the laws of nature in truest and purest form are the religion. Laws of nature lead us to the laws of self-initiatives and self-efforts. Without self-initiatives and self-efforts, one cannot see, know and realize his/her own true qualities. That’s why Jainism relies a great deal on one’s own efforts and initiatives, and laws of nature.

2 Veerāgha means the person who has no attachments whatsoever.

This also qualifies our temple to become a "Tīrth" in a due time. At present, no Jain temple in North America has Prātimājī with Prān Pratishthā. It also require us to perform jñāpā daily. We have planned for a permanent Pujā and also sign up of several volunteers to perform jñāpā daily of the Prān Pratishthā Prātimājī. You may want to take spiritual advantage of this auspicious opportunity by signing up as a back-up volunteer to perform jñāpā when needed.

1.2. RITES & RITUALS IN JAINISM

The one and only purpose of Jainism is to attain Moksha3 (salvation - freedom from cycle of life and death or eternal happiness). Rites and rituals are small but important first steps towards the path of Moksha. The rites and rituals consist of Bhakti and Worship.

Unlike the general concept of rites and rituals, Jains do not perform rites and rituals for worldly happiness, for a certain miracle or to please some divine power. In Jainism, the purpose of rites and rituals is to pay our respect to Tīrthaṅkaras for the salvation they have attained, for showing us the path of

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1 Prātimājī with Prān Pratishthā are the next best to a Tīrthaṅkar in person. As you know we do not have any Tīrthaṅkar on this planet. Therefore, a Prātimājī with Prān Pratishthā, is like a Tīrthaṅkar residing in our temple. The Prān Pratishthā can only be performed by a qualified Acharārya in India as it is in our case. Prān Pratishthā of Prātimājī of Bhagwān Mahāvira, Chandraprabhājī and Shantinathī was performed by H.H. Achāryā Vardhaman Sagaru Maharaj Sāheb, this past February in Jaipur, India. The Prātimājī are now in the Gadbāra Arjan-Sadābāra (Prān Pratishthā) of Prātimājī of our Māl Nāyak Bhagwān Adināth and Bhagwān Pārvānāth, also now in Gadbāra, was performed by H.H. Āchāryā Padma Sagaru Ji Maharaj Sāheb in Pune, India, in April, 2000.

2 The word tīrth means ford (passage) and, therefore, tīrthaṅkar means builders of ford, which leads us across the ocean of suffering and to the bank of everlasting happiness, “Moksha”. In this half time cycle we have 24 tīrthaṅkar, first one being Rūshabdev and the last one Mahāvīr Swāmī. Each time cycle consists of 6 descending (Avastamāts) and 6 ascending (Ustamāts) phases. Currently we are in the fifth phase of a descending half cycle. The fifth phase started from the time of Bhagwān Mahāvira’s Moksha and it will last for 21,000 years. Tīrthaṅkar has revealed the truth of the universe to us. One who sheds all of its four delusions (yuñya) karmas namely Jñānamsa (Knowledge obscuring) karna, Darśanamsa (Perception obscuring) karna, Moksha (Deluding) karna and Aranyakas (Obstructive) karna, and who has had earned Tīrthaṅkar Nānaka karna in his/her previous life becomes a Tīrthaṅkar. These Tīrthaṅkar reinstate the Jain Sangh (four-fold Jain Order) consisting of Śālvāka (monk), Śālvā (nun), Śravaka (male householders), and Śravakā (female householders).

3 Moksha = moksa + kāya; moksa means delusion and kāya means eradication. This makes Moksha, a state without delusion and with eradication of all karmas. There are three jewels, sadākṣar-darśana or right perception (inclination or belief), sadākṣar-pārance or right knowledge (cognition), sadākṣar-càrītika or right conduct - these three combined are the means to Moksha.
purification (Moksha), and to get the inspiration to become one like them. The aspirant (Śādhu) attains the inner peace by performing the rites and rituals, and suppresses his/her passions such as anger, ego, deceit and greed. Bhakti and Worship should imprint an everlasting impression of Jain principles in the minds of an aspirant (Śādhu). Rites and Rituals performed with pure thoughts and true Jain principles of Ahimsā in mind, should lead the aspirant to believe the path to Moksha can only be attained by acquiring the three jewels, namely, Sarvāyuj Jināna (Right Knowledge), Sarvāyuj Darśanī (Right Perception), and Sarvāyuj Chārīta (Right Conduct). Then slowly but surely, the aspirant sets out on the path of salvation. Thirthankars were humans like us before they attained Moksha. Similarly, we human beings can attain Moksha and become like THEM.

1.3. WHY DO WE NEED A PLACE FOR WORSHIP? CAN’T WE DO IT IN OUR HOME?

The worshipping place provides the necessary environment for spiritual practice (śādhu) as a school provides for education. Once the aspirant has advanced spiritual level, he/she can continue spiritual activity at any place. But for most of Shrautaks (householders), they need to depend upon external sources such as temple to make initial progress in the spiritual direction. It is also acceptable for an aspirant to practice his/her religion from home as long as he/she achieves the similar or better results. For most Shrautaks, combination of both is the best option.

1.4. WHY DO WE NEED TO DO JINPUJA?

Jinpuja is a spiritual ritual designed for Shrautaks. The presence of image of Thirthankar provides mental peace and harmony and encourages one to detach his/her self from the worldly desires. The forums that Puja gives help people discipline themselves. It is considered to be a simple, preliminary step towards the path of Moksha. We pray and /or worship to pay our respects to the Thirthankars because THEY have attained the liberation, THEY explained the path of liberation and to get an inspiration to become like THEM.

1.5. BHAKTI & PUJA (DEVOTION & WORSHIP)

Bhakti (devotion) and Puja are intertwined with the daily life of a Jain and is considered as part of daily conduct (Vyākhar). This daily conduct should lead us to the path of (Nischay), the realization of absolute purest form of our own-self, the soul. There are nine types of Bhakti: (1) Hearing God’s name (Shrman), (2)

Devotional singing (Kirtan), (3) Remembering (Smaran), (4) Worshiping (Jinpuja), (5) Bowing down (Vandana), (6) Adorning (Archana), (7) To seek refuge in complete surrender - Servitude (Sharan), (8) Friendly sentiment (Maitri) and (9) Dedication of self (Nityan). The Jinpuja process developed by our great Āchāryas include all nine types of Bhakti.

1.6. TYPES OF PUJA

There are two types of Jinpuja: Sagarawa & Ningura. The worship of Jina in the form or Image is called Sagarawa Jinpuja. The worship of Jina as formless (spiritual idea of Jina) is called Ningura Jinpuja. The Sagarawa worship of the Parshvar (Idol) is of eight-fold (Ashapaksha). We require the medium of an Idol or image for worship till we reach the 7th Gaurī (Seventh Stage in the spiritual development). Ningura worship consists of devotion and meditation of the formless one. Once the aspirant is spiritually advanced to significantly higher spiritual level (the stage of the 8th Gaurī and beyond), where Sagarawa worship is abandoned. A beginner requires the medium of Idol. After the end of Dhanṣapujā (Puja that includes physical offerings such as Water, Chandan, Rice etc) we should do the Bhāṣṭpuja (mental / emotional act of Puja without any physical offerings).

There are various types of Pujas: some of the common Puja are (1) Eight-fold Jinpuja (Ashapaksha or Ashadhavasa Puja), (2) Adbhāt (eighteen) Adbhute Pujā, (3) Panch Panneshki Puja (4) Sārām Puja. There are five to twenty one types of Pujas.

1.7. HOW TO BE ENGROSSED IN JINPUJA?

To be engrossed completely in Jinpuja, the aspirant should have Tādhgī Chitt (full concentration), Sarvayuj Vibhāsā (observance of the proper timing), Bhāv Vineddhi (ever-increasing devotion), Visnum (admiration - astonishment), Pidak (delight) and Pranakvredhā (appreciation of great qualities of the Thirthankar).

By performing Jinpuja on a regular basis with pure feelings (bhāv - mental / psychic aspect), it can remove eight types of karma: knowledge-observing karma, perception / awareness obscuring karma, belief and conduct diluting karma, energy obscuring karma, life-span determining karma, body-

7 There are 14 stages of spiritual development, namely: Wrong belief (Mithyādhi), Clouded right belief (Śrīmūla), Right belief (Śrīmūla), Right belief with partial vow conduct (Ācāraya Sarvajñādarśh), Right belief with complete vow conduct (Ashtavakrapaksha), Stage of basic thought activity (Āparna Kāma), Stage of advance thought activity (Āparna Kāma), Stage of subtle greed (Sukhamā Sarvajñā), Suppressed passions stage (Upājita Moha), Passionless stage (śūra Moha), Active Omniscient (Sagyābali), Inactive Omniscient (Avagyābali).
determining karma, status determining karma, and pain-pleasure producing karma. Thus, liberate our selves from the bondage of karma forever.

1.8. Purity to be observed for performing Puja:

The purity of the surroundings inevitably affects one’s purity of thought. Purity of the Jnāpāj ceremony is integral to the proper completion of Jnāpāj.

Physical purity: The aspirant should take a bath using the least necessary amount of water to clean his/her body. For Digambar Puja, after wearing Puja clothes, take Kesar (saffron paste) on your right ring finger and place it on various parts of the body to symbolize that you are clean and ready to start the Puja. In this order, you anoint the forehead, left and right earlobe, the neck, and near the belly button. Clean your fingers after this and do not use the same Kesar for Puja.

Purity of clothes: We should have a special set of clothes worn only for puja. The clothing should never have been worn while using the rest room and while eating or drinking. Traditionally, garments should be generally white and unstitched. Men are recommended to wear dhoti and khes. In contemporary times, women can wear almost anything as long as the clothes are new. For Digambar Puja, the clothes must be hand-washed clean. One must not have eaten or gone to the bathroom in those clothes.

Purity of mind: While worshipping avoid stray thoughts. We should utter relevant verses and meditate on the virtues of the Bhagwān.

Purity of groats: We should sweep the floor of the temple, clean and arrange the articles of worship.

Purity of Upaskar (items used in worship): We should buy good and clean items for worship.

Purity of money: Money to be used in religious purposes must be earned honestly. Ill-gotten wealth should not be used.

Purity of Ceremony: We should stop thinking of worldly affairs as soon as we are on our way to the temple. We should not carry out any worldly business in the temple area and should perform the Puja ceremony systematically.

1.9. Tilak (Agnāchakra)

We put a Tilak (vertical flame like) on the forehead. This means that we are obeying the commands of Tirthankar (His teachings) for liberation of our soul.

Round Tilak is not recommended. After putting Tilak, the aspirant with folded hands should say "Namō Jinaṁaṁ" as if the Parnāmāṁ is in the front of him/ her.

1.10. How to stand in front of the Parmātma?

While worshipping or doing darshan of the Parmātma, men should stand on the right side and women should stand on the left side of the Parmātma. This is done to observe the courtesy, and to allow others to see (darshan) the Parmātma.

1.11. Ten Triks (Group of Three) to be observed while worshipping


(1) Nisīhi Trik: We should utter words 'Nisīhi' (to give up) thrice first time while entering the main door of the temple. It means that I will restrain myself from engaging in worldly activities, physically, verbally and mentally. The second time 'Nisīhi' is uttered before entering the inner temple (Gabbhāṁ). This signifies that I am abandoning the activities relating to the temple matters. The third time 'Nisīhi' is uttered after completion of Aṣṭaṅgaṇījñā Pujā. This signifies that I will restrain myself from physical acts of worship (Dvīṣaṇi Pujā) before performing 'Oṃkāra Vandana' (Bhūṣṇo Pujā).

(2) Pradaksinā Trik: After doing Tilak, we should proceed to perform three Pradaksinā (circumambulation) around the Parmātma (in Bhomati, also called Gomati), starting from the right going to the left of HIM. It is symbolic for acquiring virtues of right perception, right knowledge and right conduct. While performing Pradaksinā, we should recite hymns of auspicious prayer like some hymns from the Ratnākara Sāhasī or from Bhaktamrāta Sūtra with full devotion. While performing Pradaksinā, we should do 'Navasikaṁ' with folded hands whenever we see the Parmātma.

(3) Pranām Trik a) On seeing the Parmātma, we should utter "Namō Jinaṁaṁ" with our both hands folded together. b) We should bow down bending the upper part of our body half way before the Parmātma and do Pranām with folded hands. c) Bow down by bringing the five limbs of the body together (two arms, two knees and the head) on the floor.

(4) Puja Trik a) Ang Puja - We worship the Parmātma by touching it. It consists of Jal Puja, Chandra Puja and Pushpa Puja. b) Agra Puja - We worship the Parmātma by standing in front of Him by waving incense, lamp (Diya) and swaying the Chāṇar. Then we worship the Parmātma by making a rice-sweetuk
1.17. HOW TO COME OUT OF THE TEMPLE?

After ringing the bell, you must leave the temple without turning your back towards the Pāmātāna (Idol). You must retreat walking backwards.
After coming out of the temple, sit for a few minutes outside the temple visualizing the Pāmātāna with eyes softly closed, steady body and full mental concentration.

1.18. ADHAR (EIGHTEEN) ABHISHEK PUJĀ

The direct translation of Abhishek is "coronation". Abhishek signifies the cleansing of the mind and body as a way to begin puja. The process involves using of eighteen different substances while reciting the auspicious aphorisms and Mantras. This Abhishek Puja is performed for the purification of altar, Pratima and participants.

1.19. PRATISYTTI (CEMENTING) VIDHI

This spiritual process involves cementing of Pratima on its platform (Gādi). There will be the same number of the metal sticks under the Gādi as the participating families. Each participating family will remove one strip and cement that particular place from where the metal strip is removed. Then move back to allow other participants to do the same. Before and during this process, the auspicious Mantras are recited.

1.20. ASHAPRAKARI (EIGHT FOLD) JINPUJĀ OF SVETĀMBAR PRATIMAŚ

This particular Jinpuja is usually performed in the morning. Eight different rituals are performed during the Puja: jala (water), Chanda (sandalwood paste), Pushpa (flowers), dhoop (incense), dāpūk (light), akshat (rice), nascita (sweets), and jala (fruits).

Jala Puja: (Water): Before performing this, everything (like flowers), from the Pāmātāna should be removed. Then insects (if any) on the Pāmātāna be removed gently by using a peacock feather-brush. After this, we should sprinkle water (abhishek) on the Pāmātāna. Then remove stale sandal paste by wet cloth (Pota), apply the Vālakṣaṇa (brush of hair-like Chanda sticks) gently on the places where dry paste is stuck.

Water symbolizes life’s ocean of birth, death, and misery. This Jinpuja reminds that one should live his life with honesty, truthfulness, love, and compassion towards all living beings. This way one will be able to cross life’s ocean and attain liberation (Moksha).

Chanda Puja: (Sandal-wood): Wipe the Pāmātāna by three pieces of cloth to remove all water, and make the Pāmātāna completely dry. This Puja involves puja of nine limbs: (1) two toes of the feet, (2) two knees, (3) two wrists, (4) the shoulders, (5) the head, (6) the forehead, (7) the throat, (8) the chest and (9) the naval.

Chanda symbolizes knowledge (jñāna). By doing this Jinpujā, one should thrive for right knowledge.
Pushpa Puja: (Flower): The flower symbolizes conduct. Our conduct should be full of love and compassion towards all living beings, like flower provides fragrance and beauty, without any discrimination.

Dhup Puja: (Incense): Dhup symbolizes monkhood's life. While burning itself, incense provides fragrance to others. Similarly, true monks and nuns spend their entire life selflessly to benefit all living beings. This Jnappja reminds that one should thrive for an ascetic life.

Dipak Puja: (Candle): The flame of Dipak represents a pure consciousness, i.e. a soul without bondage of any karmas or a liberated soul. By doing this Jnappja one should thrive to follow five great vows; non-violence, truthfulness, non-stealing, chastity, and non-possession. Ultimately these vows will lead to liberation.

Akhshat Puja: (Rice): Rice is a kind of grain which is non-fertile. One cannot grow rice plants by seeding rice. Symbolically, it represents the last birth. By doing this Jnappja one should thrive to put all efforts in life in a way that this life becomes the last life, and there will be no more birth after this life. Literally, Akhshat means unbroken, and it stands for unbroken happiness. The bright white color of rice represents the purity of our soul.

Naitvedya Puja: (Sweets): Naitvedya symbolizes tasty food. By doing this Jnappja, one should thrive to reduce or eliminate attachment to tasty food. Healthy food is essential for survival, however one should not live for tasty food. Ultimate aim in one's life is to attain Moksha where no food is essential for survival.

1 Sādhu (Jain monk) or Sādhi (Jain nun) is who practices five mahavesānas (great vows), five samās (restraints) and three āsās (restraints); has taken Dikshā (initiation) per either Digdharth or Sthānākar tradition, 2. who practices Samās (equanimity; treats the favorable and non-favorable situations indifferently), 3. who follows and preaches the major path of liberation expounded by our Tirthankars, 4. emphasizes on the self-efforts and self-initiatives, 5. who firmly believes in and practices the upakāsās, and 6. has given up pleasures of five senses, has no worldly attachments like assets, family, bank balance, house, car and similar things and has won over internal enemies like anger, ego, deceit and greed. They travel bare feet, they do not use any transportation system, they do not take shower, they do not shave, they do not eat after sunset and more. Their only goal is to attain Moksha. The message of Jina, Bhagwan Mahārāj, the last Tirthankar, is carried by the Ahrūmā, the spiritual leaders. The responsibility of the spiritual well-being of the entire Jina Sangh rests on the shoulders of the Ahrūmā. Before reaching that state, one has to do an in-depth study and gain mastery over the Agama. In addition to acquiring a high level of spiritual excellence, they also have the ability to lead the monastic congregation. They should also know various languages of the country and have a sound knowledge of other philosophies, ideologies, and religions of the region and of the world. The title of Upakāsā is given to those Sādhus who have acquired a special knowledge of the Agama (Jain scriptures) and philosophical systems. They teach Jain scriptures to deserving aspirants, including Sādhus and Sādhis.

I.21. ASHTAPRAKĀRĪ (EIGHT FOLD) JINPPJA OF DIGAMBAR PRATIMĀHIS

Abhishek: Abhishek is performed by the Pujārī (male); the rest of the members participate in reading the Jnappja. Altar area is cleaned. Abhishek involves cleaning of the altar by sprinkling saffron water in the eight directions and cleaning of the Pammānā, then wiping the Pammānā dry by using dry cloth. Several kalashas (pots) of pure water is used in bathing the Pammānā as the bell is rang and the Abhishek path is read or Namokar Mahā Mantra is recited. The rest of the participants are reading or chanting the Abhishek Path. Usually, there should be a continuous stream of water until the Abhishek Path is complete. Then the Pammānā is first wiped by wet cloth and then with a dry cloth.

Sthāpānā: Take three full cloves and hold one clove at a time between the two ring fingers. While keeping the clove head pointing forward and while chanting the sthāpānā, place the cloves in an elevated place. The first clove represents that May Dev-Shostra-Guru come into my thoughts, second clove represents that May Dev-Shostra-Guru stay in my thoughts, and third clove represents that May Dev-Shostra-Guru be near me.

Invocation: The rays of the sun of omniscience illuminate whose inner self, That voice of Jivātma expounds beautifully the fundamentals of our being. The monks who precede on the path of right faith, knowledge, and conduct, I bow to thee, oh God, scriptures and monks of the Jain order, a hundred times. I invoke of the trio to settle in my mind, while I am offering this homage.

Brief Description of AshtPrakārī Puja:

Water: Pleasures of the senses are sweet poison, nevertheless one is attracted towards this handsome human frame, I have failed to comprehend that all this is the manifestation of matter alone, Forgetting my own glories, I have adhered to attachments of the non-self. Now I have come to you to wash off wrong faith with the pure water of right faith. I offer to you this water for destroying wrong faith as it has not been able to quench my eternal thirst.

Sandalwood: All the sentient and non-sentient entities behave and act in their own limits of existence, Calling them favorable or unfavorable is a false attitude
of the mind, have only lengthened the circle of life and death by becoming unhappy with unfavorable associations, I have come to you with a grieved heart to get peace of mind, as from sandalwood. I offer to you this sandalwood to destroy the anger in me as this has not been able to keep me calm and undisturbed.

Flower: This flower is very soft; it has no crookedness or deceitfulness, I accept that there is no straightness in my own self. My thinking, expression and action - all are different from each other. I, therefore, implore you to grant me stability that washes off inner impurities. I offer to you this flower to achieve supreme straightforwardness in my nature.

Incense: I have entertained the false belief that inanimate karmas are the cause of my wanderings in the four phases of life. As such I indulge in attachment and aversion, when these karmas behave in themselves, Thus, I have been passing through material as well as psychic karmas for centuries, I have come to thee, oh trio, to burn internal incense for achieving the sweet spiritual incense of my own-self. I offer to you this incense to destroy the antagonistic inclinations of my existence.

Lamp: I was under the impression that my life will be illuminated with this inanimate lamp, Which changes into deep darkness just in a heavy tempest of wind, I have, therefore, come to place this mortal light at your feet, And to light my own inner-lamp with your supreme light of omniscience. I offer to you this lamp in order to destroy the darkness of my inner self.

Rice: I am pure and without any blemish, having no connection with the non-self. Even then I always take pride in favorable associations of this world, This is a homage of the sentient to the non-sentient elements, destroying our modesty, I have come to you, oh supreme trio, for the realization of my supreme bliss. I offer to you this unbroken rice to achieve the non-destructible treasure of joy.

Sweets: My hunger has remained insatiate even after consuming countless inanimate articles, The pit of greediness has been filled time and again, but it has remained empty, I have been moving in the sea of desires and sinking therein from times immemorial, Renouncing all pleasures of senses and mind, I have come to thee for drinking deep of the intrinsic nectar of the soul. I offer to you these sweets in order to win victory over my passion of greed.

Fruit: Whatever material entities I call my own, leave me all of a sudden, I, thus, become perturbed and this mental disorderliness leads to others of the same kind, I want to see my delusions dashed to pieces, and that is the purpose of my prayer to thee, I offer to you this fruit to obtain the fruit of supreme bliss.

Mass of all the Eight Substances: I wash off all imperfections of wrong belief after drinking deep of my own sentient nectar, Thus I destroy all passionate feelings and enjoy that sentient drink of my own-self, Matchless bliss is then born and sun of omniscience rises with all its glory, Sentient Perception and Vitality then appear in their fullness, which is the state of the Arhatagāthā. Offering you this combination, I collect all the great attributes of my soul, I am confident that I shall now achieve the glories of the supreme omniscient being I offer to you this mass of eight substances in order to achieve everlasting happiness of the soul.

Visharjan: The Closing: If I, knowingly or unknowingly committed any mistakes, By Grace of God, may they be pardoned. I do not know how to invite you, how to respect you and praise you. Please forgive me. I do not know any mantras; I am poor and have no knowledge. But kindly allow me to continue to worship you. I have paid my respects the best way I could and I request that you go to your respective places.

1.22. Shikhar Kalash Stilāpaṇ & Shikhar Divajā Stilāpaṇ

Shikhar is a pyramid-shaped dome placed on the top of the temple, above the Mul Niyak and other main Pratamājī. Shikhar signifies the house of Veenāg Bhaṣagāthā who has expounded the path of everlasting happiness for the benefit of all living beings. The everlasting happiness, Moksha, is attained only through the combination of the right knowledge, the right perception and the right conduct. It signifies that non-violence is the supreme religion. It signifies the religion, which involves self efforts and initiatives. It signifies that every living being is in control of his/her destiny. It signifies the religion, which appeals to our common sense and explains everything with proper reason. It is based on the laws of nature. This is the house of Universal religion. This is the holiest of holly things, the cause of benevolence, the house of the supreme religion, and it is wished that long live the teachings of Veenāg Bhaṣagāthā (Jain Shisam) for the benefit of all living beings.

The placement of Shikhar Kalash signifies the best Mangal. The best Mangal is to eradicate karma, to free our selves from the misery of Sansāra (material world), to remove of the darkness of ignorance, to practice Right Religion and to practice the path that is beneficial to the Self (our soul). This is the holiest of holly places. Aṭhār Aṭhīshek Pujā is performed before the Shikhar Kalash is placed in the Shikhar. Thus, shikhar Kalash is like a head of the temple.

12 The term Arhat is made up of Ari meaning enemies, and hati meaning destroyer. Consequently, Arhat means destroyer of all internal enemies such as anger, greed, ego, and deceit. Essentially, the meaning of Arhat, Jina and Tirthankar is the same.
Placement of Shikhār Dīśaṣṭa signifies the kingdom of our Veerāṅg Bhagāwatin who expounded the path of Mokṣa for the benefit of all living beings. It is a symbol of the Jain Shāṣṭra teachings of our Tirbhuvanins. It signifies the kingdom of non-attachment and non-aversion, which has always existed, it exists now and will exist forever. If the teachings of Veerāṅg Bhagāwatin are followed, the darkness of ignorance will be permanently removed, the miserable cycle of birth and death will be permanently ended, the association with the foreign dust of karma will be completely terminated, and the true qualities of the souls will forever be realized. It symbolizes the everlasting happiness, Mokṣa. Akār Abhishek Puja is performed before the Shikhār Dīśaṣṭa is placed on the Shikhār.

By seeing Shikhār and/or its Dīśaṣṭa, one knows it the most auspicious place, Jain Temple. He/she pays his/her respect to Veerāṅg Bhagāwatin by saying “Namo Jīvanam” and gets an inspiration to visit the Jain temple.  

1.23. Pratīṣṭhā of NamoKār Mahā Mantra Shilā

NamoKār Mahā Mantra is the most auspicious Mantra of Jainism. It is recited in the morning, evening and for that matter at any time of the day. While reciting Narmakār Mantra, we pay our utmost respect to five supreme beings (Panch Parmeshtha) - all Abhisantras, Siddhas, Achāryas, Upādhyayas and Siddhas & Siddhīs. Abhisantras and Siddhas have liberated themselves. Achāryas, Upādhyayas and Siddhas & Siddhīs are pursuing the path of the liberation by practicing five great vows. This Mantra is also called Narmakār Mahā Mantra or Namaskār Mahā Mantra.

The Pratīṣṭhā process of NamoKār Mahā Mantra Shilā involves Pratīṣṭhā (cementing) Vidhi, Bhāv Vidhi and Jāp (recitation). To stand in front of the NamoKār Mahā Mantra Shilā is like standing in the front of Panch Parmeshtha. We should pay our utmost respect to them. It points out that if we want to be truly liberated, we must detach our selves from all aspects of worldly life like them. We are supposed to remember their virtues and remind ourselves that we want to be like them. NamoKār Mahā Mantra represents the essence of the Jainism.

1.24. Offering (Par-Vastu Tyāg)

There are two significant purposes of offering: 1) Now, we are going to have the house of Veerāṅg Bhagāwatin and we can become like them by detaching our selves from all foreign elements (Par Vastu). As a symbol of the faith in HIS teachings, we are offering our valuables at the occasion of Pratīṣṭhā. 2) These valuables get buried under the Mund Nāyak Pratīṣṭhā, and can be used for the revival of the temple (jīvonīkā) after big disaster or similar event. Also it purifies and also creates positive vibrations from the earth to the temple.

1.25. Temple Dwār Opening & First Darshan & Puja

This is a significant and auspicious event after the Pratīṣṭhā of Gaṇakār Pratīṣṭhā. After we have Prān Pratīṣṭhā (“Living”) Veerāṅg Bhagāwatin in our Temple; a) to open the Dwār (door) of the temple for the first time, b) to be the first one to do Darshan (see) of Veerāṅg Bhagāwatin and c) to be the first one to do Puja which are the most auspicious things to do. This is a rare opportunity to open temple Dwār (door) for Darshan to the entire Saṅgh for the first time after the Pratīṣṭhā.

1.26. Aṣṭapakārī (Eight Fold) Devī-Devtās

Essentially, this Puja is very similar to Aṣṭapakārī (Eight Fold) for Puja except, these heavenly beings are just like us except they have been the guards of the Jain Shāṣṭra. Because of this, we are thankful to them for the duties they have performed and are performing for the Jain Shāṣṭra.

1.27. Pratīṣṭhā of Shrimad Rajchandraji’s Pratīṣṭhā and 3 Chitrāpatis

Shrimad Rajchandra is a Sadguru (true self realized Teacher, Master). He was a disciple of Bhagāwatin Mahāvīr. He attained Sarvajñ Darshān (Right Perception, Self Realization) at an early age of 23 and a state of absolute pure consciousness before he was 28. He has said in His own words, in the Letter number 680: “I have attained Pannamānemp meaning the highest form of pure consciousness...”. After attaining the pure state of consciousness, Shrimadji composed one of the outstanding spiritual works of the modern times, Atmanātādhi, which means self realization and is consisted of 142 verses.

The first verse of Atmanātādhi truly signifies the significance of Pratīṣṭhā for each disciple:

Je Svarup Samjñaa Vinā, Pāmyo Dukh Ānand, Samjñāvu Te Pad Nāmu, Shri Sadguru Bhagavant

As real self I never knew, So suffered I eternal pain; I bow to Him my Master True, Who preached and broke eternal chain

By installing the Pratīṣṭhā of Shrimad Rajchandra, we are paying our humble tribute to our Sadguru, to get His divine blessings and to get inspiration to put in necessary self effort to attain self realization. The following verse signifies the purpose of the Pratīṣṭhā of a Sadguru:

Dhyān Mulam Gurumurti, Puja Mulam Guru Padam
Mantra Muniān Guru Vākyam, Mokṣa Mulam Guru Krūpā
The image of Sadguru is of great importance and it is only next to the image of Veer Singh Bhagwan. In modern times, it is difficult to find truly self realized Gurus. Sadguru’s image is a basis for the meditation. His lotus feet are basis for worship, His divine words are basis of Mantra and His divine grace is a basis of salvation.

We are fortunate that Shri Lagurajswami (Prabhuṣhiri), who was a true disciple of Shrimadji and had attained self realization. He has graced us with his divine blessing by introducing Shrimad Rajchandra as our Sadguru Bhagwan. Prabhuṣhiri established Agas Ashram and spent his entire life to reinforce in all of us the significance of Shrimadji’s Agrnāmaṇtra and gave his personal guarantee: “Any one who believes in Shrimadji’s teachings based on my testimony and worships Him with His Agrnāmaṇtra will attain liberation (Moksha)...”.

By installing the Chintpat of Lagurajswami, we are reminded of his testimony to worship Shrimadji with all our faith and follow His teachings to attain self-realization. In general, one has to take and practice the Agrnāmaṇtra as prescribed by Prabhuṣhiri in order to recognize the true power of Shrimadji’s teachings.

By installing the Chintpat of Shri Brahmacariji, we are following the Agrnā of Prabhuṣhiri to reinforce the Muhrā of Shrimadji which was handed over to Shri Brahmacariji by Lagurajswami who has given his testimony: “It is my seal of approval that Brahmacariji has attained self realization”. In fact most of the literature we have today about Shrimadji’s teachings has materialized and blossomed due to enormous efforts and dedication of Shri Brahmacariji who spent thirty years in Agas Ashram under the direct guidance of Prabhuṣhiri. It is stated without a doubt that one cannot truly understand and receive Shrimadji’s divine grace without studying and respecting Patnasaṅkha and Pragvedabodh, the modern Shrimad Bhagwan composed by Shri Brahmacariji.

1.28. KUMBH STHĀPAṆA PŪJA

According our rich Indian tradition, we put a Kumbh in a new place like a new shop or a new house, before we move in there. Putting in a Kumbh signifies an auspicious beginning. It is symbolic for "good luck". There is an Indian belief that a couple or a person, who puts the Kumbh in a new place before its use, will be blessed with good luck through his/her own self-efforts. Similarly per our scripture to begin our Pratishthā Mahotsav, we place the auspicious Kumbh with recitation of Navakār Mahā Mantra, Usasvakṣaraṇ and Moti Shānti while we have a continuous flow (ākhand džānā) from the Kumbh by a couple. This is an auspicious ritual and it brings inner as well as eternal peace.

1.29. AKBHĀN DIPAK STHĀPAṆA PŪJA

According to our scripture, we should install Akbhan Dipak (continuous light from Dipak). Dipak has a candle like flame) for the most auspicious Pratishthā Mahotsav event. This one is done next to the right of the Kumbh. The place where the Akbhan Dipak is installed, it is believed that the place will be free of any external disturbances (upadhan). At this place, the heavenly beings with right perception (Sarvākār Darśāne) are present to guard. Dipak is a symbol of inner peace and awakens our “pure” consciousness. It represents the brightness of right knowledge (Sarvākār jñāna) and removes the darkness of our ignorance.

1.30. JWĀRA ROPAN

With the auspicious aspiration, happiness and peace are wished to every living being in the universe. In this auspicious ritual, four or more unmarried girls (Kṣetriṇī Kanyā) mix the rich farm clay and grains in a clay utensil, and then gently pour pure water on the mixture. This is like a process of sowing good seeds, which will grow into a very green and healthy plant. Similarly, during this auspicious ritual, it is prayed that our Sangh will grow spiritually stronger to represent the teachings of Bhagwan Mahavir.

1.31. NAVGRAHA PŪJA

As we’re devotees of the Veer Singh Bhagwan, nine planets among others are also devotees of HIM. They are very powerful. As we invite other Sanghas to our Pratishthā Mahotsav, we invite these nine planets (Nav graha) to our Pratishthā Mahotsav by performing certain rituals in accordance with our scripture. Asht Clan Pujā is performed by reciting appropriate Mantras for each planet. We pray for peace, contentment, growth and protection of our entire Sangh. Using cotton rosary (Meliśa) with unique color for each planet, the auspicious Mantras are recited. This ritual is believed to at least spiritually benefit the families who are participating with the right aspiration, and affects others positively.

1.32. DAS DIKPĀL PŪJA

In this auspicious ritual, we invite Das Dikpāl (ten heavenly beings who are responsible for guarding ten different directions) as we invited nine planets to our Pratishthā Mahotsav by performing certain rituals in accordance with our scripture. We also perform their Asht Clan Pujā. Because of the presence of powerful heavenly beings, our Pratishthā Mahotsav will be auspiciously celebrated without any disturbance. We also pray to these heavenly beings to help in maintaining and enhancing the peace, contentment, growth and protection of our Sangh.
1.33. AshtMangal Puja

After the birth of a Tirthankar, Indra Mahārajā (King of heavenly beings) takes HIM to the Meru Parnāt (Mount Meru) and performs the Abhishek Puja. Then he (Indra Mahārajā) makes AshtMangal (eight auspicious things) using rice made out of gold or silver. After this, Indra Mahārajā brings this AshtMangal in a grand procession towards the Tirthankar Darshan (viewing) of the AshtMangal is auspicious and earns good Karma (Punya). In this auspicious ritual of AshtMangal, AshtPrakāri Puja is performed.

1.34. Ārāti

There are many meanings of Ārāti. One meaning is to experience the spiritual joy from all directions (Ārāti = Ā + Rāti; Ā means from all sides and Rāti means Joy - spiritual joy). When a religious activity is concluded with success, we do Ārāti to express our spiritual joy. Ārāti also means to seek the end of “Ārt” (misery). This material world (Samsār) is full of misery, and the aspirant is performing Ārāti to free himself / herself from the cycle of the misery of the material world, cycle of birth and death. Third meaning is that to fill our inner selves with spiritual joy, and to end the mental unhappiness.

To free from the miserable cycle of the material world (Samsār), one needs to have bright light of five types of knowledge. That’s why we light five Dipaks (which has candle like flame). These five Dipaks symbolizes five great vows (Panch Mahā Vrat) through its practice, one attains the salvation. Five Dipaks are also symbolic of practicing five Samitis (Restraints), It is also representative of restraining negative activities of five senses and five characteristics of Samyak Darshana (Right Perception).

Another way to understand the purpose of performing Ārāti is that, to free our selves from the miserable cycle of material world, we need to detach our selves from all worldly attachments as five supreme beings (Panch Parneshth) have done it. To pay our spiritual tribute to these five Panch Parneshth, we light up five Dipaks, and we mentally contemplate that “I want also to give up all worldly attachments, and want to initiate myself (take Diksha) to become a Sādhu (or Sādhi) to free my self from four Samsarik destinies and to attain the fifth destiny, Moksha.

1.35. Mangal Divo

Mangal means to eradicate bad karma (pāpa), to free our selves from Samsār (material world), to remove the darkness of ignorance, to have an auspicious opportunity to practice Right Religion and to practice the path that is beneficial to the Self (soul). Only path of Moksha is beneficial to our Self that is attained by eradicating all karma. By removing the darkness of karma, one enlightens himself / herself with the Absolute Knowledge (Keval Jnāna). One Dipak is used in Mangal Divo to symbolize the one and only Perfect Knowledge, Keval Jnāna through which the darkness of ignorance is permanently removed, the miserable cycle of birth and death is permanently ended, the association with the foreign dust of karma is completely terminated, and the true qualities of the souls are forever realized. In other words, one Dipak in Mangal Divo symbolizes the one and only path of Moksha as expounded by Tirthankars. We should mentally contemplate while performing Mangal Divo that “I want to enlighten my inner Dipak (self) just like this Mangal Divo by attaining the perfect knowledge, Keval Jnāna by practicing the path of Moksha as expounded by Tirthankars.”

1.36. Śaṁti Kalash

This is performed for inner and external peace for everyone and everywhere in the universe. In the beginning, Namokār Mahā Mantra and Uusaygantham are recited, and then it is followed by Brdh-Śaṁti while maintaining a continuous flow of the Panchāṛma from Kalash in to a Pot. In this process, the peace in the universe is prayed for by wishing good physical, verbal, mental and spiritual health to all living beings and absence of misery everywhere. This done in the manner it was done by the heavenly beings and their king (Irukha) while performing Jñanakshetra of Tirthankar on the Mount Meru. Aspirant pays his / her respect to all twenty four Tirthankars and prays for suppression of passions (Kashā) everywhere. Inner and external peace is wished to the four folded community (Sangh) and to all living beings, guidance from Jain monks and nuns is sought, Mantras are recited, help from heavenly beings is sought, environment, that is free of diseases, wars, droughts, disturbances and unhappiness, is sought. The spiritual progress, contentment and well being for everyone is wished. It is prayed that every living being becomes free of all kind of fears, fear of water, fire, poison, animals, disease, war, enemy, robber, etc. It wished that each living being helps each other, everyone eliminates his/her own faults, and everlasting happiness for everyone is wished.

1.37. Śaṁti Snāna Puja

This pūjā is performed to conclude the Pratibhā Mahotsara. During this pūjā, Śri Lalgī śrī Śaṁti, which is consisted of 27 aphorisms, is recited involving unique ritual process. This Puja is performed for the well being of entire Sangh, for its spiritual growth, for its inner happiness and peace, to calm down the outside disturbances and for curing uncontrolable diseases. After the conclusion of this Puja, the temple is sprinkled with the holy water (Namavat).