



JAIN AHIMSA TIMES

IN COMMUNITY SERVICE FOR 14 CONTINUOUS YEARS
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Volume : 81

Issue No. : 81

Month : April, 2007

"HAVE COMPASSION TOWARDS ALL LIVING BEINGS. HATRED LEADS DESTRUCTION"

SAINTS



MESSAGE FROM ACHARYA MAHAPRAGYA ON THE OCCASION OF MAHAVIR JAYANTI

It is a matter of great joy for me to wish for your spiritual development at the onset of the new year. I believe that a person's spiritual development is also absolutely necessary along with his material development. Let us all resolutely assert that peace is impossible without spirituality. The first lesson of peace is the development of spiritual awareness and its practical form is ahimsa. We can find a cause-effect relationship between ahimsa and peace.

Ahimsa is the cause and peace is its effect, its result. Let us not talk merely of peace but before it, we must assimilate ahimsa into the heart. The first principle of ahimsa is the purity of one's thought, purity of one's emotion and purity one's deed. We can practise it only by experiencing it in the totality of these conditions. If we do not have a feeling of equality towards all living beings, our dream of peace will just remain a daydream. It will never become a reality. In order to change it into reality, what is needed is the inculcation of a feeling of equality towards all creatures and the practical form that emerges from it is the human solidarity. Besides the legacy of ANUVRAT (a campaign exhorting people to commit themselves to some basic ethical norms), Acharya Tulsi also gave us an aphorism - let us have faith in the unity of mankind. It means an attitude of equanimity, a feeling of equality towards all, considering all human beings equal. No one is small or big, no one is low or high, no one is inferior or superior. After all a human being is just a human being.

Peace will prevail automatically when our thought of equanimity becomes stronger. The problem today is that the behaviour of man towards man is not as humane as is expected of him. In the present age, some people are living in a state of luxury, while there are others who are not able to get enough food to satisfy their hunger. If the social consciousness of equality had been awakened, the problems of hunger, poverty and persecution that we see today would not have arisen. Today the slogan of 'human unity' is reduced to a mere theoretical jargon. It is not being put into practice. Let us try to understand ahimsa and peace at empirical level. If our behaviour is really associated with a feeling of unity, the world can be wholly transformed. It can even be completely rejuvenated.

The second principle of ahimsa is 'exercise restraint in the use of material resources'. Do not use the resources of the planet more than you need. You should bear in mind that these material resources are not for you alone but are meant for the whole society, for the entire humanity. If we go a little further, we can say that they are meant for all the living beings that inhabit this planet. Some people have grabbed these material resources and are using a major share of them for their own comforts. As a result we see an enormous gap between the rich and the poor. This disparity is the major cause of the unrest today. Let us think of bringing about reconciliation among different systems of thinking. Man's mind is independent. It is not possible that all persons have a similar pattern of thinking. When we begin to regard this freedom of thought as something opposed to us, it creates a big problem. Let us learn to respect the freedom of thought. We should, rather, welcome a diversity of opinion. Man is not a machine, which can be cast in a mould. Every man has his own mind, his own views. We should respect the view that doesn't pose a threat to society.

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Today I see an imminent threat to the very existence of human society. Alarm bells are ringing. Fear and hegemony are predominant. It means that the tendency to impose one's authority or sovereignty on others is getting stronger. That is why arms are being piled up. There is a race even for destructive nuclear weapons. Nations are vying with one another to build their arsenals and acquire the highest power of destruction. On the one hand, we see nuclear arsenals and on the other hand, there are piles of weapons of mass destruction. No one is paying heed to the talk of peace. We do not see harmony anywhere. We are sowing the seeds of unrest and are hoping for the fruit of peace. It will never be possible. The fruit comes from what we sow. It is an irony that we sow the seeds of the weapons of mass destruction and expect a crop of peace.

There ought to be a practical aspect of freedom i.e. freedom from the narrow outlook rooted in casteism and sectarianism. One sect should respect the beliefs of another sect. We may think differently and may follow different practices of worship and our ways of paying obeisance to gods and goddesses or to God might also be different but that diversity should not be interpreted as a synonym of antipathy or antagonism. Diversity doesn't mean antagonism. It is the beauty of our way of thinking, our vision. We like a garden where different types of flowers bloom and which has many varieties of plants and trees. If all the flowers and trees are of the same type, the beauty of the garden will also diminish. What pains me most is that we change what is beautiful into violence and antipathy. Is it not the incomplete mentality of our thinking? Let us also ponder over this question.

At the dawn of the New Year, let us have self-introspection, self-criticism. We must not only think of others. On this occasion, let us review the past and look back as to how our past year was. Let us not only look back at the year gone by but should also look forward to the coming year with auspicious thoughts and pray for an auspicious future. Let us introspect and examine what we did in the past and what we are going to do in the future. The talk of peace will remain incomplete till the review of the past, the thought of the present and the vision of the future are in harmony with one another. I wish that we abandon all epithets and think of an existence devoid of epithets. Our consciousness is not devoid of any label: it is influenced by our sect, our caste and our colour. Let us put religion into practice. Let us not regard religion as a mere testimony or symbol.

Acharya Tulsi said, 'Man should set an example of morality, truth and integrity in his life.' Religion should not only be confined to places of worship, it should manifest itself in markets and offices too. The religion enshrined in scriptures and sects should make its way into the markets. If religion doesn't integrate into business and offices and we only over-emphasize its principles, I can not say to what extent it would really mean religion. We have to think of the changes that are necessary in the form of the religion that is in vogue today. If we do not think of changing the effete customary practices and insist on following dogmas, it doesn't bode well for humanity. At the onset of the New Year, let us think of something new. We must not carry the burden of old beliefs merely but we should also learn to unburden our mind. The present age lacks an environment of openness. The tension that we see today might not have existed to this extent in the past. The main cause of the tension that we see today lies in man's infatuation with wealth. Man is seized by his lust for wealth which degenerates into deep infatuation. As a result, he is ignoring morality. The economic infatuation gives rise to crimes, unethical behaviour, theft and even robbery.

All these problems emanate from men's greed for wealth and from his straying away from this world of consciousness. We are all sentient beings. Every human is a sentient being. He has knowledge but difficulty is that he doesn't associate as much with those who have a state of higher consciousness as with the material objects. Therefore, it is imperative that we talk of ahimsa for the sake of peace and think of limiting consumption and accumulation of material objects for the sake of ahimsa. If these ethical norms become a part of our life's daily routine, the dream of peace may come true. What are the causes of tension, diseases and depression? The answer to this question lies in the fact that man is drifting away from his own existence and is getting associated with material objects. Without finding out a solution for this problem the problem of stress and depression can not be solved. Mere medicines and hospitals can not help us to be rid of diseases unless we think over the causes that give rise to them. I plead for peace and nonviolence.

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I myself know it well that it is not possible merely through sermons, discourses and messages. A change may occur in our thoughts and beliefs but it may turn out to be a short-lived impact. A thought that reaches the domain of our conscious mind only may not last long. Its impact on our mental attitude will be transitory till it is able to make its way into the unconscious mind. In order to transmit thoughts into the unconscious mind, we have to undergo rigorous practice. It is not possible without it. Let us therefore, think of practice and training. In the present system of education, a great emphasis is laid on students' intellectual development. They are also taught strategies for technological development but are not taught how to develop their emotional competence. Today training in ahimsa is not being imparted to students. I believe that without training and practice mere discourses in ahimsa will degenerate into the futility of verbal exercise. It will fail to bring about any change in society. If we want to transform society, we will have to change our lifestyle and our way of working. The greatest solution lies in self-restrained lifestyle. There is one main slogan of Anuvrat Movement i.e. 'self-restraint is life'.

We should ponder over the question of self-restraint and self-control. We should not think of controlling others but should think of controlling our emotions and awakening our inner consciousness. The more a person's inner consciousness is awakened the greater will be the solution of the problem. We will not succeed if we try to find out the solution at the external level only. Let us enter the New Year with this pious thought and celebrate it with great joy. May this joy become our permanent attribute and may we succeed in collecting such resources as may make the coming year auspicious and prosperous. Translated into English By Dr. S.L. Gandhi.

CHATURMAS ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Acharya Shri Umesh Muni, belonging to Swetambar Sthanakwasi Shraman sangh to hold his next chaturmas at Indore.
2. Acharya Shri Ram Lal Ji maharaj belonging to Swetambar Sadhumargi Jain sangh to hold his chaturmas at Raipur in Chhatisgarh state
3. Muni Shri Ravindra Kumar Ji disciple of Acharya Shri Mahapragya, head of Swetambar Terapanth sect to hold his chaturmas at Shahibagh, Ahmedabad.
4. Shri Dinesh Muni alongwith Shri Pushpendra Muni, disciples of Acharya Shri Devendra Muni to hold their next chaturmas at Ropar, Punjab.

TEMPLES

DHARMASTHALA: MAHAMASTHAKABHISHEKA CONCLUDES

Ujire April 8: Moodabidri Jain Math Seer Charukeerthi Bhattaraka Swamiji and others performed 1008 kalasha masthakabhisheka to Lord Bahubali at Dharmasthala. Speaking after performing 'jalabhisheka,' Pejawar Math Seer Vishweshatheertha Swamiji said that Mahamasthakabhisheka is not only for Bahubali but also for the masthaka (head) of people with good taughts and qualities. "Just like we get sweet juice after crushing sugarcane, our personality develops when our mind is filled with good thoughts". Aadichunchanagiri (Mangalore) Math Seer Dharmapalanatha Swamiji, Moodabidri Charukeerthi Bhattaraka Swamiji, Lakkavalli Math Seer Vrishabhasena Bhattaraka Swamiji, Varoor Math Seer Dharmasena Bhattaraka Swamiji, High Court Judge Ajith Kabbina, former minister H K Patil, Dhananjay Kumar and MLA K Abhayachandra Jain among others were present. Scholar Prof E Brahmappa was honoured. Moodabidri Jain Math Seer Charukeerthi Bhattaraka Swamiji felicitated Dharmasthala Dharmadhikari Dr D Veerendra Heggade, Hemavathi V Heggade, D Surendra Kumar and D Harshendra Kumar on the occasion. Courtesy: Mr. Gaurav Jain 'Lakshaya', M: (+91)- 981 198 1233.

JAIN TEMPLE IN GOA NEXT MONTH

MARGAO, Goa's miniscule Jain community, numbering around 100 families, will finally realise their dream of having a temple in the state next month. The Lord Mahavir temple will be blessed on April 29 at Mugalli in the village of Sao Jose de Areal. A 1.5 meter statue of Lord Mahavir will be installed inside the temple. Addressing a press conference, the committee of Navnirman Digambar Jain Mandal Trust said the temple, estimated to cost Rs 35 lakh, will meet the requirements of 100 Jain families spread across the state. In addition, plans are afoot to build a dormitory near the temple with a capacity to accommodate around 400-500 people, mostly pilgrims. "Many Jain family were hesitating to visit Goa in the absence of a temple. This temple will solve the problem", said Trust President Bharat Doshi, who expect around one lakh Jains to visit the state every year.

CONFERENCES, SEMINARS & EVENTS



CATALOGUE LAUNCH OF JAIN MANUSCRIPTS AT BUCKINGHAM PALACE

Institute of Jainology supported by the Ministry of Culture of the Government of India in partnership with The British Library has completed the cataloguing of ancient manuscripts of the Jain Faith. The catalogue runs into three volumes totaling about 1500 pages. To mark this achievement, catalogue launch function will take place on 15th May, 2007 at Buckingham Palace, in the presence of a member of the British Royal Family. Courtesy: Mr. Nemu Chandaria.

INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL FOR JAIN STUDIES ANNOUNCES FOUR WEEKS PROGRAM ON 'GLORY OF JAINISM'

This is an excellent opportunity for NRI Jains to experience Jainism. The program is designed to provide.

- Balanced (canonical and logic based) knowledge of Jainism.
- Motivation to know more about Jainism and practice it.
- Interaction of children to inculcate Jain values in them with relevance to modern age.
- A set of books, handouts on CD or hard copy (optional) in English.

The Glory of Jainism course will be devoted to history, culture, philosophy, traditions, art, architecture and way of life of Jains. The program includes over 50 academic lectures of 1.5 hours each by eminent Jain scholars, visits to Jain temples, monks and key Jains, observe and perform religious rituals and visit some important pilgrim places for their significance to Jain arts, kalyanakas or other religious occurrences. The course and all the materials will be non-sectarian in nature. The duration of the program is Dec 15th 2007 to Jan 14th 2008. It will consist of three weeks of academic lectures and visits / meetings to temples and monks.i.

For enrolling in the program, please contact: Dr. Shugan Chand Jain, New Delhi India, E-mail : shugan_jain@yahoo.com or Dr. Sulekh Chand Jain, USA. E-mail: scjain@earthlink.net

MAHARASHTRA JAIN SAHITYA PARISHAD KOLHAPUR WILL HOLD 17TH ALL INDIA MARATHI JAIN SAHITYA SAMMELAN

The Sammelan includes, various Seminars, Kavi Sammelan, Cultural Programs, Book Exhibition, Exhibition of Jain Antiques Price Distribution, Holy Attendance: Param Puja Bhattarak Laxmisen Maharaj, Kolhapur, President: Professor Shivajirao Bhosale, Host: Pradyumn Gandhi, Venue: Kantilal Sanskritik Bhavan, Shankar Nagar, Akluj, Dist. Solapur. Program Dates: 26th and 27th May 2007. To participate in various programs in the sammelan, please call: Dr. Ravsaheb Patil 0982278747. Courtesy: Mr. Mahavir Sanglikar, E-mail: msanglikar@yahoo.com

HONOURS & AWARDS



DR. SULEKH JAIN HONORED WITH 'AWARD OF EXCELLENCE' BY INTERNATIONAL JAIN SANGH, USA

Dr. Sulekh Jain has received the 2007 "Award of Excellence" from International Jain Sangh (IJS) of New Jersey at the Mahavir Jayanti celebration program on April 1, 2007. Each year IJS honors an exceptionally worthy person, who has visibly and verifiably demonstrated a great service to further the teachings of Lord Mahavir including peace, nonviolence, Jain education, and compassion either by practice or by influencing public policies, media coverage or through interfaith programs. In his acceptance speech, Dr. Jain shared his experiences about promoting nonviolence outside Jain community and accepted the award in the name of the International Summer School for Jain Studies.

Mr. Naresh Jain, IJS Vice-President, JAINA Interfaith Co-Chair, and a member of the Board of Trustees of the Parliament of World's Religions, Chicago; introduced Dr. Jain to the several hundred people and dignitaries gathered in this 2606th anniversary celebration. Ahimsa Foundation conveys him hearty congratulations on this occasion.

RENOWNED JOURNALIST M. C. JAIN HONOURED AS 'JEWEL OF INDIA'

Renowned social worker, writer and Jain journalist Shri M. C. Jain was honoured recently at an impressive function organised at Kamani Auditorium, India Gate, New Delhi by Manushya Bal Vikas Lok Sewa Academy, Mumbai as the "Jewel Of India". The chief guest on the occasion was The Governor of Rajasthan, Smt. Pratibha Patil. Other distinguished guests who attended the function were past Governor of Arunachal Pradesh, Shri Mata Prasad Ji, Padam Shri Vijay Kumar Shah of Mumbai and Shri Ram Das Hi Athwale, M. P. and others. The programme was conducted by Shri Bala saheb Jagdale, Chairman of Lok Sewa Academy. Shri M. C. Jain has been working in the field of Journalism for the last 45 years.

FIRST MAHAVIR SEVA AWARDS TO BE GIVEN BY INDIAN HERITAGE FOUNDATION

Ahmedabad, The Indian Heritage Foundation, set up by the Institute of Kidney Disease and Research Centre at Civil Hospital, will honour three personalities from various walks of life with "Bhagwan Mahavir Karuna Seva Sanman". Announcing this Institute Director Dr H L Trivedi said these will be the first awards and will be made an annual affair. He said the awards were instituted to honour those who have been working for the cause of uplift of the society at large in various categories selflessly and without wanting any returns for their services.

Those chosen for this year's awards are: Swami Sachidanandji, of Dantali Ashram, for his services in the field of religion; Pandit Nandan Mehta, for his contribution in the field of classical music and the brain behind the city's most popular classical music show, Saptak; and Jayantilal Chandulal Sanghvi, who has been offering free tiffin service (250 tiffins daily) to needy kidney patients undergoing treatment in the Institute for the past 14 years. The awardees were chosen by a panel headed by Dr. Trivedi.



D. R. MEHTA TO BE HONOURED WITH 'ACHARYA DEVENDRA SHRUT SEWA SAMMAN'

It was announced at Udaipur by Shri Dhansukh Bhai Doshi, Chairman of 'Jainacharya Shri Devendra Muni Shikshan and Chikitsa Shodh Sansthan Trust' that Shri Devendra Raj Mehta, founder of 'Prakrit Bharati Academy' Jaipur, a renowned social worker and Chairman of SEBI from 1995 to 2002 and Deputy Governor of Reserve Bank of India from 1992 to 1995 will be honoured with "Acharya Devendra Shrut Sewa Samman" for the year 2007 at Ropar (Punjab) during the chaturmas period of Shri Dinesh Muni, Shri Dwipendra Muni and Shri Pushpendra Muni, disciples of Acharya Devendra Muni. This award was instituted by the blessings of Mahashramani Shri Pushpawati Ji maharaj and it consists of a cash amount of Rs. 21,000, a letter of ,a shawl and shrifal.

THIRTEEN YEAR JAIN YOUTH WINS FOUR AWARDS AND HIGH ACCLAIM IN SCIENE PROJECTS



Vishal Mehta, a 13 year-old, 8th grade student at Clague Middle School in Ann Arbor, MI, USA, recently won broad acclaim and four awards at the 2007 South-East Michigan Science Fair for his project and display, titled "Future Power: Fuel Cell Power Output Study." He is the son of proud parents, Drs. Manish and Varsha Mehta (members of Jain Society of Greater Detroit, USA), and grandson of Mrs. Kanak Mehta and late KS Mehta of Singapore. Vishal is a regular student at the Jain Pathshala held bi-weekly at the Detroit Jain Temple, which he has attended since he was 3 years old.

Vishal's Science Fair entry consisted of assembling a hydrogen fuel cell (an emerging renewable chemical source of clean, non-polluting energy using hydrogen and oxygen as input reactants), linking it to a hydrogen generator and an electrical load circuit for measurements. He proved his hypothesis that the power output for a given current value is linearly scalable for multiple fuel cells in a stack. All young scientists also had to develop a poster for display of their experimental results and for judging by a group of eminent scientists from the SE Michigan region, drawn from the automotive, manufacturing, life sciences, academia and other industrial organizations. At the final judging on March 10, Vishal's awards included: (a) 7th place overall out of 300 entries; (b) National Nanotechnology Infrastructure Network Recognition plaque; (c) certificate from National Statistical Society Ann Arbor Chapter for outstanding use of statistical analysis; and (d) Recognition certificate from Sigma-Xi, the US-based honors society for scientists.

CONFERENCE PAPERS

EVOLUTION OF SHRAMANIC JAINISM, RELIGIONS IN THE INDIC CIVILISATION

(A Paper presented by Mr. Bal Patil in the Conference on Religions in Indic Civilisation in New Delhi, December, 18-21, 2003, Organised by the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies in collaboration with International Association for the History of Religions and India International Centre.)



PRE-ARYAN ROOTS

Almost all the scholars agree that Jainism has Pre-Aryan roots in the religious and cultural history of India. As Dr. A. N. Upadhye remarked – "The origins of Jainism go back to the pre-historic times. They are to be sought in the fertile valley of Ganga, where they flourished in the past, even before the advent of Aryans with their priestly religion, a society of recluses who laid much stress on individual exertion, on practice of a code of morality and devotion to austerities, as means of attaining religious Summum Bonum." (Jainism by Colette Caillat, A.N. Upadhye & Bal Patil, Macmillan, 1974).

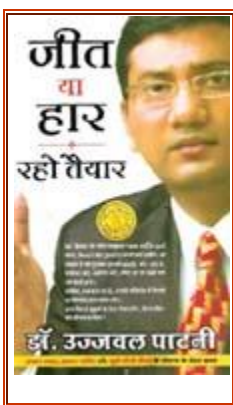
The late Heinrich Zimmer, who is reputed to have been the greatest German Indologist of modern times, in his celebrated posthumous work, The Philosophies of India, conceded that there is truth in the Jain idea that their religion goes back to a remote antiquity, the antiquity in question being that of the pre-Aryan, so called Dravidian period, and that Jainism is the oldest of all Dravidian born philosophies and religions. He also psychologically demonstrated that Jain Yoga originated in pre-Aryan India, and has nothing to do with orthodox Brahmanism which simply appropriated it in later centuries.

NEW PUBLICATIONS

PREKSHADHYAN - An Introduction -Acharya Mahaprajna, This book contains 8 chapters: - The Making of Personality - Relief from Tension - Time Management - Self Management - Physical Health - Mental Health - Emotional Health - Working Proficiency. There is a profound relationship between an individual and society, like that between a drop and a ocean. The drop and the ocean like the individual and the world cannot be separated and therefore they cannot be viewed in isolation. Whatever is in the embryo is in the universe and whatever is in the universe is in the embryo. According to the philosophy of Anekant, the relation between the individual (the embryo) and the collectivity or society is so close that it cannot be severed. There is a saying that shaking a finger results in shaking the whole world. The commentators have put the whole concept instructively thus: whenever a sage or anyone tears a cloth, some particles of the atoms thus released may travel thousands of miles and may cause ripples in a sheet of water if they strike it. This encapsulates the entire theory of the environment. Everyone and everything is so closely related to one another that it is undesirable to harm, obstruct or oppress anyone or anything. We should experience this all pervasive universal interrelatedness. It applies to the individual and society as well.

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Man is full of passions. The cycle of passions is operating within the definition of doctrine of Karma. Going by the Vedas, Rajogun and Tamogun are active, i.e. the disposition of activity or passion (rajas) and that ignorance, moroseness, inertness or maliciousness (tamas) are at work. Tension is the effect not the cause. There are many causes of tension. In the language of doctrine of Karma the biggest cause of tension is Mohakarma (the fourth deluding Karma out of eight Karmas at whose appearance a soul is subject to attachment, hatred, passion, sexual enjoyment and falsehood), which causes anger, pride, greed, fear, hatred and lust, all of which generate tension. Besides rajogun and tamogun, there are physical cusses also leading to tension.



JEET YAA HAAR, RAHO TAIYAAR (Hindi) Dr. Ujjwal Patni Bringing honour to Jain community, is a leading author and motivator, Dr Ujjwal Patni's, whose fantastic book 'JEET YAA HAAR RAHO TAIYAAR' was released recently at Raipur by the Speaker of Jharkhand Vidhan sabha, Shri Prem Prakash Pandey. This glorious book tells all about winning with pride and losing with honour. This is a straight forward practical book which touches deep inside and motivates the reader. Dr. Ujjwal Patni is a leading international success coach and a corporate trainer from India. He has also received GUINNESS World record. He is also the the recipient of KAMAL patra for the year 2006. The Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh, Dr. Raman Singh said that we are proud of Dr.Ujjwal Patni and his team that are bringing global achievements to Chhattisgarh. Dr. Ujjwal Patni is a pride of Jain community. His earlier book SAFAL VAKTA SAFAL VYAKTI is already a best seller and has been released in Hindi, English, Marathi, Punjabi, and Bengali. The author can be contacted at medidentindia@indiatimes.com or patni.seminars@gmail.com

MISCELLANEOUS



PRESIDENT & PRIME MINISTER GREETED CITIZENS ON THE EVE OF MAHAVIR JAYANTI
Greeting the citizens, Kalam said: 'Lord Mahavir renounced the world for the cause of humanity and preached ahimsa (non violence), truth and compassion.' May his noble teachings continue to inspire us to strive for love, peace, harmony and amity and work for the unity and progress of our motherland. In a message, the Prime Minister said Lord Mahavira's life and teachings are constant reminders of the extraordinary power of non-violence, truth and peace. Lord Mahavir showed us the path to enlightenment in a manner which does not cause hurt to living beings. His profound message is a beacon of hope and salvation for the entire humanity, the Prime Minister said in a statement here.





SONIA GANDHI'S MESSAGE ON MAHAVIR JAYANTI

Mrs. Sonia Gandhi, AICC president delivering her message on the occasion of Mahavir Jayanti, said that Bhagwan Mahavir's immortal teaching of 'live and let live' is as relevant today as it was about 2606 years ago. She said, we want peace and harmony because there is no alternative to it. In the age of nuclear bomb, communal violence and terrorism, there is no way to resolve problems other than through peaceful and non-violence means. She said people need to adopt the golden principal of non-violence, anekanta, world peace, brotherhood and communal harmony that was proposed by mahavir.

PUNJAB CM ADVOCATES LORD MAHAVIR'S TEACHINGS

Khanna, March 31: Punjab Chief Minister Parkash Singh Badal inaugurated the Lord Mahavir Vanasthali Meditation and Interpretation Centre at Barmalipur village, near Doraha, on the occasion of 2606th Mahavir Jayanti. The centre is spread over 11 acres and has been constructed by Bhagwan Mahavir 2600th Birth Kalyanak Samiti Punjab, headed by Ram Kumar Jain, who is also the chairman of Ludhiana-based Sharman Group of Industries. Jain saints, industrialists, politicians and hundreds of followers of Jainism were present on the occasion. The project was completed in the span of five years and was aided by state government and the Centre. The state government, headed by Badal, had given a grant of Rs 2.60 crore in 2001 and Rs 1.81 crore was given by the Centre.

KARUNA INTERNATIONAL HOLDS RANGOLI COMPETITION TO CELEBRATE MAHAVIR JAYANTI



CHENNAI : The competition was organised by Karuna International, an organisation that works with 1,200 schools countrywide to inculcate compassion, non-violence and environmental values. It conducts activity-oriented programmes such as poster and art competitions to engage school children in their teachings, said Duliachand Jain, president of the Chennai branch. The city has about 150 member schools. Many teams took up 'ahimsa' as their theme. One school's entry featured Sri Mahavir seated on a globe with doves in the frame. Other themes that the children chose to illustrate through their rangolis were cruelty to the bullocks that pull carts, vegetarianism and peace. The winning team gets Rs 5,000 to share amongst its eight members. Each of the 45 teams that participated also gets certificates and Rs 250 each. Teams in the second, third, fourth and fifth places respectively get Rs 4,000, Rs 3,000, Rs 2,000 and Rs 1,000 as cash prizes.



WEST BENGAL GOVT. GRANTS MINORITY STATUS TO JAINS

The Jain community of the state which has long been demanding for the official status of minority is going to get it at last. Chief minister Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee, who is also in charge of the minority department, has taken a decision in this regard, according to sources in the Writers' Buildings. The number of Jains who form 0.07 per cent of the state's total population . When conferred the status they will be the sixth minority community after Muslims, Christians, Shikhs, Buddhists and Parsees, to get the status. The state government has the powers to confer this status on a particular community.



STREETLIGHTS AT SHIKHARJI NOT IMPORTANT TO JHARKHAND TOURISM DEPARTMENT

Tourism opportunities are aplenty in Jharkhand. But the State Tourism department doesn't seem to be serious to cash in on them. Religious sites and scenic beauty attracts a large number of pilgrims and tourists to the Parasnath hills and Madhuban throughout the year. Two years ago, India Tourism Development Corporation installed at least 110 streetlights on the 5-km-long Madhuban Road that leads to Shikharji Jain temple located on the Parasnath hills. The arrangement cost the government about Rs 30 lakh. To facilitate power supply, the state electricity board installed a 100-KVA transformer at Jharkhand Bhavan. Even as everything was arranged, the street has plunged into darkness again. Thanks to the lackadaisical attitude of the state tourism department. All the state tourism department needs to do is appointing a caretaker to look after the maintenance of lights and pay the power bill on

time. In September 2006, the ITDC handed over the responsibility to the tourism department. But the area remained lit up for only three months. The department didn't bother to clear the dues of the electricity department and the supply was discontinued. "The department neither appointed a caretaker nor paid the three-month bill of Rs 38,000. On March 1, the supply has been snapped," said the sub-divisional officer (electricity) D.P. Bhagat. Courtesy: Mr. Gaurav Jain, E-Mail : gauravejainyji@gmail.com



JAIPUR FOOT TAKES OFF FOR LEBANON

The Jaipur Foot - artificial legs made in Rajasthan - is all set to travel to war-hit Lebanon and Sri Lanka to aid amputees there. Experts from the Bhagwan Mahaveer Viklang Sahayta Samiti will travel to the Middle East on the invitation of the Indian contingent of the UN peacekeeping force in Lebanon, BMVSS general secretary S.R. Mehta said. The team would open a camp in Lebanon April 14 to 25. Five technicians would accompany the team to fit the artificial limb on survivors of Israeli and other bombings. Mehta told IANS that 100 people have been identified for the fitting.

"After Lebanon, we propose to go to Colombo." BMVSS had organised a 15-day camp in Jakarta in February that saw 350 people fitted with the Jaipur Foot. "These were people who had lost their limbs to diseases or mishaps. There were some who had lost it in the tsunami," Mehta said. "Besides Jakarta, we have held camps in Sudan, Afghanistan and parts of Latin America." A Jaipur resident, Ram Charan Sharma, who hailed from a family of sculptors, conceived of the Jaipur Foot in 1968. With the assistance of orthopaedic surgeon P.K. Sethi, the Jaipur Foot was launched in 1968. The artificial foot - made of rubber, wood and aluminium - is attached free of cost in the premises of the BMVSS, which was established in 1975 here.

From 1968 to 1975, only 59 patients were outfitted with the Jaipur Foot. But the use of the new limb spread outside India during the Afghan war. The International Committee of the Red Cross discovered that the Jaipur Foot was the hardiest limb for the mountainous Afghan terrain. Since then, countless landmine victims in many countries have been fitted with the Jaipur Foot. The beauty of the Jaipur foot lies in its lightness - those who wear it can run, climb trees and pedal bicycles - and its low price. While prosthesis for a similar level of amputation can cost several thousand dollars in the US, the Jaipur Foot costs only \$20-28 in India.

MUMBAI YJI USABLE CLOTHES DONATION PROGRAMME A GRAND SUCCESS

The citizens of Mumbai wholeheartedly undressed their closets on Aparigrah Day celebrated on April 1 across the city by the non-profit organization Young Jains of India. Aparigrah which means non-possessiveness and teaches us to limit our wants to our requirements is one of the AAA principles that YJI propagates. YJI is a secular organization that promotes Jain Way of Life signified by Ahimsa(non-violence), Aparigrah(non-possessiveness) and Anekantavaad(non-one sidedness).

Aparigrah Day was organized to coincide with the Mahavir Jayanthi celebrations on the birth anniversary of Lord Mahavir. Detachment from worldly desires, restricting our possessions to our necessities and to detest from hoarding resources more than our consumption are the primary objectives of Aparigraha. Lord Mahavir believed that if each one of us practiced Aparigraha there would not be much disparity among individuals with abundant resources to satisfy all our basic necessities. This will lead to a much more peaceful society that encourages sharing and caring.

The support for their clothes donation camp has been unbelievable! The objective of the camp was to collect old usable clothes and donate it to the underprivileged in villages in Northern Maharashtra and Bihar. The villages identified face extreme poverty where residents including women and children do not have the means to buy clothes to even cover their entire body.

The camp received magnanimous response from Mumbaikars with people from all walks of life going to the nearest centres to donate. Enthusiastic volunteers driven by sheer dedication, tireless efforts and commitment towards society put in all their energy collecting and packing clothes donated by equally enthusiastic and caring donors.

The cumulative collection of all the centres exceeded 3 truckloads. The centres at Thane, Mulund, Bhandup, Ghatkopar, Andheri, Vile Parle, Powai, Borivli, Vashi and CBD Belapur received overwhelming response with Sarvodaya Nagar Mulund, Lokhandwala Andheri and Borivli being the busiest centers. Almost all the clothes collection centers were Mandir/Derasar/Chaityalaya premises and the authorities provided maximum support, offering even lunch and refreshments to volunteers!

We are honored to inform you that donors who were unable to reach the center during the scheduled time are still visiting the centers with their donations. This has inspired YJI to continue the effort . They plan to have more centers over the next weekend at the request of many more interested donors. YJI is proposing to make Aparigrah Day an annual event to be organized simultaneously across the nation during the week of Mahavir Jayanthi. www.yjiindia.org, Courtesy: Mr. Gaurav Jain gauravejainyji@gmail.com.

AHIMSA TIMES INVITES NEWS CORRESPONDENTS FOR HELPING IN NEWS COLLECTION

We invite Jain volunteers from different geographical area to join the team of Ahimsa Times Correspondents. The interested readers may send their profile and a photograph to The Editor at E-Mail: ahimsa@jainsamaj.org.

EXPERTS PANEL ON SOFT DRINKS FOR STUDYING THEIR HEALTH IMPACT

New Delhi, A national-level experts group set up by the Centre to study the issue of pesticide content in soft drinks has stressed on the need to study the health impact of carbonated drinks. "There is a need to carry out well controlled studies to assess effects of consumption of carbonated water on health," the experts committee said in its report submitted to the Supreme Court. The panel, set up by the Union Health Ministry and chaired by N. K. Ganguly, Director General of the Indian Council of Medical Research, said the contents of carbonated water could be harmful if their intake exceeds the maximum permissible limits. It recommended setting up of an independent cell for risk analysis to promptly provide an objective risk assessment and risk evaluation on a wide array of food safety issues.

"Efforts should be made to develop capacity of analytical facilities in selected laboratories which could be used for monitoring purposes," the report said. The committee, which recommended the first-ever standards for soft drinks in the country, said data should be generated on consumption pattern of carbonated beverages. The experts have also recommended that awareness should be spread, especially among school-going children, to wean them away from consuming high calorie rich and non-nutritious junk foods and drinks.

DIKSHA CEREMONY

Shri Mahendra Ji Maloo, of Barmer, Rajasthan will accept Bhagwati Diksha on the 2nd May, 2007 with the blessings of Poojya Shri Lalit Prabh Sagar Ji maharaj and Poojya Shri Chandra Prabh Sagar Ji maharaj, both disciples of Acharya Shri Kailash Sagar Ji. Celebrations to mark the occasion will take place for three days, starting with Bhaktamar mahapoojan on the 30th April, then Varghoda to be taken out through the town on the 1st May, 07, Bhajan sandhya and abhinandan ceremony in the evening and grand Deeksha function to be held on the 2nd May.

Kumari Vijiya Kataria daughter of Sri Mishri mal Ji Kataria Singhvi belonging to Balotra (Rajasthan) will accept Jain Bhagwati Diksha on the 2nd May with the blessings of Acharya Shri Jin Kailash Sagar Suri Ji maharaj, Upadhyay Shri Maniprabh Sagar Ji maharaj and other saints from Shwetambar Moorti-pujak sect. Kumari Vijiya has passed her B.Com. in Computer Science and carried out intensive studies of Jain religion, along with severe austerities in the form of 45 agam tap, 14 Poorva tap, Panchmery tap, atthai, 10 upwas, Navpad Oli etc. prior to accepting Diksha.

VIOLENCE AGAINST ANIMALS

ACTRESS SHILPA SETTY TO APPEAL FOR THE BOYCOTT OF CIRCUS

The well-known Bolywood actress, who gained international fame by her appearance in the British show, Big Brother, announced recently at Dubai that she will issue an appeal to the entire humanity to boycott circus in the interest of animal welfare. Animals, like elephants, lions, monkeys, etc. are given very harsh treatment and are subjected to highest level of cruelty by the circus managers, which is totally inhuman and unethical. She is closely associated with the welfare organisation, "People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals" (PETA). She proposes to place advertisements showing her selves in a tightly fitting body-suit sitting in a small cage and depicting the feeling of pain and agony.

VIEWS FROM READERS

Minority status for Jains- Dhanpal Solanki Jain, E- Mail: ghanpaljain@rediffmail.com -Jains must be notified as National Minority on the eve of Mahavir Jayanti. My request to A. R. Antulay, through you & to the Govt. of India, is that the Jains community must be included National minority commission or notified as a minority, Under Article "25" clause "2" of the Indian Constitution. You Should Take Up This Issue With The Govt.of India & Central Minority Affairs Ministry.

I Dhanpal Jain Student of Mumbai University studying Journalism in third year appeal to you, that the Jain community must be included in the National Minority Commission. As Article "25" clause "2" gives the JAINS, SIKHS & BUDDISTS reconize these Community as RELIGIOUS MINORITY, Therefore my Question to the Govt. of India is that when the Sikhs & Buddhists are reconized as Minority Nationally?

WHY SECURE MINORITY STATUS ? This question keeps repeating often usually asked by one who doesn't wish that Jains should get such a status so as to confuse the issue. Answer is simple If one genuinely believes Jindharma and proud of their Jain heritage. Look around; you are minuscule minority among minorities. Unless one is blind and shrouded in ignorance about Jain History and our greatest contribution to Indian civilization and is trying to dodge the issue.

The reason Jains need minority status in India is as follows Because of rapid growth of radical ideology in Hindu dominated Indian politics Jains are being assimilated at alarming rate and loosing their rights as independent religion. There is enormous growth in illegal activities Our Sacred religious Tirthakshetras and heritage institutions are being encroached by Vedic dominated Hindus Recently we lost Girnar the most sacred Nirvan place of Bhagavan Neminatha 22nd Thirthankara to Hindu fanatics. If minority status granted in Indian constitution is approved at the center [i.e. Delhi parliament] it would become law and Jains will have and can demand legal protection as a independent religion At this very moment Jains are treated as part of Hindu branch. So the movement to secure such a minority status for independent Jain religion where by all history books around the world has to mention Jainism as an independent religion. This independent minority Status can be secured if we present united front on all grounds.

Here are the points take a note if you want to how Jains can benefit from Minority status in every state regardless of small size of Jain community.

- 1) By law Jains can demand protection for their Thirthakshetras so no other religious Group can occupy or take your place of worship like sacred heritage place of Girnar.2) By law it provides personal protection to your religious activities.
- 3) By law Jain religious Saints or Munies will have protection from freedom of movement to practice their religion.
- 4) No government can interfere in your religious institutions.
- 5) Any Jain trust can open and operate private College or Schools and no government authorities can control or check any of the financial matters.

Only Minority status will save Jain religion Enormous benefits of Minority status for a Cash Rich Jain community.

1. Start your own Medical/Engineering colleges without Reservations.
2. The colleges can have reserved seats for community.
3. The Jain trust though cash rich if given minority status can be independent of Govt. control to rise at optimum levels.
4. Minority status will help all Jain Business people with added benefits.
5. Minority status globally recognized will help us build India better place.
6. With Minority status your kids can get Bank loan for education

And with that loan you can go for higher study in foreign countries. You are missing all these benefits.

There are others who don't want you to have these benefits so is the attempt to discourage the Jain dharma gurus and religious leaders to unite And secure such a Minority status in India.

Killing of animal is sin - Mr. Ajeetsingh Patwa, Chartered Accountant, Faridabad. ajeetsingh_patwa@rediffmail.com
On 1.4.2007 a news appeared in Times of India : Delhi students boycott goods from Karnataka in protest : JEEV HATYA PAP HAI - NIRDOSHO KI HATYA BAND KARO : Kranataka Govt. started culling dogs. Incensed by the culling of dog a in Banagalore, animal lovers in Delhi have decided to boycott all Karnataka goods.

Jains first will have to agree if the killing of animals is sin at all or Jains take that killing by ourselves only is sin and if the sin is committed by others we are not affected. In the campaign like killing of animal, I think Jain society must be the prime section to appear in public but I feel the Jains do not have time left after performing Pooja in temple or listening the sermons from Jain Saints to participate in such kind of campaign. The image of Jain society is falling : the participation in the campaign against killing of animal perhaps can improve the prestige but we will have to render selfless service. I therefore, want to send a call to all India Jain Samaj to understand the matter and then fix up a time schedule for starting campaign : First by peaceful sitting at all district level in India, second submitting Memorandum to Government State and Indian both, then start one day fast and further to be followed by fast by chain for times to come. I do not know how much I would be successful but I want to give a chance to Jain Society and if they do not agree to any kind of agitation as perhaps the Saints will tell them that there is sin in agitation and we must not commit sin for saving the lives of deaf animals.

DEVLOK GAMAN

Sadhwi Shri Kamlawati Ji maharaj, disciple of Acharya Shri Mahapragya left for her heavenly abode after a santhara period of 13 days on the 16th February, 2007 at the age of 77 years. She had accepted Jain diksha at the age of 21 years.

OBITUARY

Smt. Prabhawati Devi wife of late Shri Sukh Lal Jain passed away at the age of 90 years at Jodhpur on the 20th April, 2007 (Akshaya Tritiya Day). She was the mother of Shri P. L. Jain, Chairman of Ahimsa Foundation and grand mother of Shri Anil Kumar Jain, Founder-President. She was a highly devoted and enlightened lady and was always a source of inspiration for the family members. She had taken many vows and religious rules, including regular daily Samayik, Abstinence to night meals, several green vegetables, onions and other jamikhand etc. She had high degree of reverence for Jain sadhus and sadhwi, specially Acharya Shri Devendra Muni and Poojya Shri Hastimal Ji maharaj. Trustees of Ahimsa Foundation and members of the Advisory Council offer their deep condolences to the bereaved family on this sad occasion.

Shri Pyar Chand Ji Parmar, a truly devoted Shrawak, residing at Malad, mumbai attained holy death after accepting Chauvihar santhara (vow to abstain from taking both food and water) on the 11th march, 2007. His santhara lasted just for 10 days. Having a strong desire to attain the goal of self-realisation, he had accepted tiwihar santhara (abstaining from food) on the 2nd march in the presence of Sadhwi Shri Sadhana Ji and Jagrit yashaji. Agrand procession was taken out through Malad town on the next day.



Dr. Amrit Lal Gandhi, retired professor of Political Science at the Jai Narayan Vyas University, Jodhpur passed away at the age of 78 years at Jodhpur on the 24th April, 2007 after a protracted illness. He was a highly religious, devoted and dedicated person and was a chairman/trustee of various religious and charitable trusts and temples, including Shri Nakoda Jain teerth, Delwara Jain temple Trust and Shri Bhairubagh Teerth. He has left behind two sons, S. Shri Basant and Suresh and a daughter, Smt. Chandra.

JAIN YOUTH ICON PARESH JAIN PASSES AWAY

An extremely effervescent and vibrant young leader of Jain community passed away. He was suffering from cancer for sometime. His sudden demise is a big loss to the whole Jain community. He was the Founder of Young Jains of India institution and actively associated with Ahimsa Times. We offer our deep condolences and pray to almighty for his soul to

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rest in peace.