



JAIN AHIMSA TIMES

IN COMMUNITY SERVICE FOR 14 CONTINUOUS YEARS
THE ONLY JAIN E-MAGAZINE • WORLD OVER + 100000 READERSHIP



Volume : 16

Issue No. : 16

Month : November, 2001



*Wish You Happy Deepawali
and a Very Prosperous New Year*



LORD MAHAVIR'S NIRVAN : DIWALI FESTIVAL

Among Jain festivals, Diwali is one of the most important ones. For on this day, we celebrate the Nirvan of Lord Mahavir who established the Dharma as we follow it even today. Lord Mahavir was born as Vardhaman on Chaitra Shukla 13 in the Naat clan at Khattiy-Kundpur, more than 2600 years ago near Vaishali. He obtained Keval Gyan on Vishakh Shukla 10 at the Jambhraka village on the banks of Rijukul river at the age of 42. He initiated his shaashan (Jaina-shaasan) on Shravan Krishna 1 at his first assembly at Rajgrah. After having preached the Dharma for 30 years, he attained Nirvan at Pavapuri, at the age of 71 years and 6 and half months. The day of his Nirvan is mentioned by many ancient authors. "Thus during the Krishna of Kartik month, during the Svati Nakshatr, on the night of the 14th (dawn of the Amavasya), Lord Mahavir became a Siddha." The first line of it was quoted in the Dhavala by Virsenacharya. Thus the Nirvan of the Lord occurred 605 years and 5 months before the Shaka king. Kalpsutra mentions that the King Chetak of Vaishali with several confederate kings, had a great lightning of lights, since they said, "Since the light of intelligence (Vardhaman Mahavir) is gone, let us make an illumination of the material matter." Thus we every year celebrate the famous "Dipalika", to reverently worship the Jinendra on the occasion of his Nirvan. A special request....please don't burst crackers instead, donate that money for a right cause.



CLICK E - GREETINGS FOR NEW DEEPAWALI CARDS

FREQUENT ROBBERY CASES AT SAMMET SHIKHARJI

The cases of robbery and theft are taking place frequently at Sammet Shikharji in Madhuban area. On the 3rd September, ten armed persons got the doors of Shri parshwa Nath temple at the hill top opened forcibly, when overnight Navkar Mantra jaap was going on inside the temple. They broke open the cash box belonging to Digambar sect, which was kept in the temple hall and took away an amount of about Rupees fifty thousand from there. At the same time, the robbers also took away similar box belonging to Shwetambar sect and got away with a large amount. The matter was reported to the local police the next morning but so far nothing is recovered.

Similar incidents have happened earlier also. A few days back, statues were removed from the temple of Shri Sheetal Nath Ji at Madhuban village. On the 22nd August, the robbers removed the cash box kept in front of the worship alter (Vedi) from temple in Kalyan Niketan. On the 28th August also, robbers entered forcibly into 24 Tonk Bahubali Ji temple and removed cash box from there. In spite of the fact that these cases of robbery are occurring frequently, local authorities have not shown any serious interest in carrying out investigations and arresting the thieves so as to prevent such occurrences in future.

CELEBRATE 15TH NOVEMBER AS NIRVANOTSAVA DAY

Shri Vimal Sagarji Maharaj, belonging to the Digambar sect has urged the Jain Samaj to observe 15 November this year as Nirvanotsava Day on the occasion of Nirvan (Moksha) of Bhagwan Mahavir. They should first offer Laddoo in the temple and then lighten the lamps in the evening to express their happiness at the attainment of Kewal Gyan by Shri Gautam Ganadhar.

WORLD RELIGIOUS CONFERENCE – MUMBAI

Mahaveer International, Mumbai is organising World Religious Conference on 30th and 31st December 2001 in Mumbai. The theme of the conference is "World Peace through Non-Violence". A special session is also marked on the importance of vegetarianism and cruelty against animals. For further details please Contact: Mr. M. P. Lodha worldreligiousconference@hotmail.com

JAINS NOT A MINORITY COMMUNITY?

Muni Lok Prakash Lokesh, learned disciple of Anuvrat Anushasta Acharya Shri Maha Pragya Ji, who is having his Chaturmasic stay at Pachapadra, reacting to the recent decision of the Rajasthan High Court Bench about Jains are not minority community, commented that it is not proper to call Jain religion as a branch of Hindu religion or Hinduism. Firstly, Hindu is not a religion but it is a culture, it is a way of life and it depicts the nationality. Various old epics and transcripts show explicitly that Hindu word comes from Sindhu and those who lived in Sindhu region were named as Hindus, who later spread to all over the northern part of the country. Thus, in the strict sense, every citizen of the country is a Hindu. There used to be only two types of traditions, Shraman tradition, whose followers were Jains, Buddhists and Ajivaks, and the other, Vedic tradition, which was followed by Brahmans. These two sects had always been opposing each other. Muni Lok Prakash Lokesh, learned disciple of Anuvrat Anushasta Acharya Shri Maha Pragya Ji, who is having his Chaturmasic Stay at Pachapadra, reacting to the recent decision of the Rajasthan High Court Bench about Jains are not minority community, commented that it is not proper to call Jain religion as a branch of Hindu religion or Hinduism. Firstly, Hindu is not a religion but it is a culture, it is a way of life and it depicts the nationality. Various old epics and transcripts show explicitly that Hindu word comes from Sindhu and those who lived in Sindhu region were named as Hindus, who later spread to all over the northern part of the country. Thus, in the strict sense, every citizen of the country is a Hindu. There used to be only two types of traditions, Shraman tradition, whose followers were Jains, Buddhists and Ajivaks, and the other, Vedic tradition, which was followed by Brahmans. These two sects had always been opposing each other.

CONGRATULATIONS - MAUSAM GADIA - UJJAIN & SNEHAL GANDHI – AHMEDNAGAR

Mausam Gadia has secured first rank in all India Chartered Accountants Foundation examination. He secured 333 marks out of 400 which is so far a record. He is son of Shri Mahendra Gadia from Ujjain. Mausam, entire Jain society is proud of you and congratulates you for your achievement. We also wish you many more distinctions in times to come. We also congratulate Miss Snehal Madanlal Gandhi for securing twenty fifth rank in All India Chartered Accountants Foundation Examination. Miss Snehal is daughter of M. K. Gandhi from Ahmednagar. She is also recipient of merit scholarship from Dhirubhai Ambani Foundation.

DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY CONSTITUTED FOR MADHUBAN & PARASNATH

The Govt. of Jharkhand has constituted Madhuban Development Authority for the control and development of most sacred Jain Teerth Shri Parashwa nath. Shri Sohan Ram, Secretary Jharkhand Govt. is designated President of the Authority. Two members each from Digambar & Svetambar sects are also nominated on the Board of the Authority. We hope, the office bearers of this Authority will resolve all pending issues and carry out the development plans and do everything possible to maintain law & order in the area.

DR. NEMI CHAND JAIN EXPIRED AT INDORE

Dr. Nemi Chand Jain a well-known social worker, writer and journalist expired on 8th August 2001. Dr. Jain was recently awarded with Bhagwan Mahavir Foundation Award for his work on vegetarianism. Ahimsa Foundation offers deep condolences and prays for the departed soul.

NINETY SECOND BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF ACHARYA PUSHKAR MUNI CELEBRATED

In a grand ceremony attended by several prominent Jains and Saints, ninety second birth anniversary of Acharya Pushkar Muni was celebrated on 28th October 2001 at Shashri Nagar, at New Delhi. The function was organised by S. S. Jain Sabha, New Delhi under the guidance and blessings of Acharya Dr. Shiv Muni, Saint Shri Rajender Muni and Saint Shri Ravinder Muni. On this occasion a blood donation camp was also organised.

SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

Needy students with exceptional educational background interested to study Medicine, Engineering and Chartered Accountancy may contact for scholarships to Sh. Mahendra Kumar Parekh, Trustee, Shri Jindut Suri Mandal, 20, Vinay Nagar, Dadabadi, Ajmer Rajasthan.

MAHARASHTRA CM TO CONSIDER DEMANDS OF JAIN OBC'S

President of All India Jain OBC organization Professor Pradeep J. Phaltane submitted a memorandum to Mr. Vilasrao Deshmukh, Chief Minister of Maharashtra containing various demands of Jains belonging to Other Backward Class. A delegation of prominent Jains including Mr. K.M. Bukhtar, Mohan Dorle, D. N. Dumane, Anil Saswade met Mr. Vilasrao Deshmukh and discussed about various issues relating to OBC Jains. Mr. Vilasrao Deshmukh assured to consider the demands of the delegation.

YOUNG JAINS OF AMERICA CONTRIBUTE TO HELP NEEDY

YJA has teamed up its efforts with a great volunteer organization, Habitat for Humanity, this upcoming year. In cities all across America,

YJA is hosting Jain youth to provide housing communities for those less fortunate. For detailed information, please link to www.yja.org or Kunal Shah (West and Mid-West Region) Kunal.shah@yja.org

P. M.'s HELP SOUGHT TO REMOVE ILLEGAL OCCUPATION OF ANCIENT CAVES

Archeologically famous caves at Khandgiri and Udaigiri in Orissa, wherein a number of statues of Jain Tirthankars are installed are presently under illegal occupation of local unsocial elements. As a result, the holy places of worship, which are more than 2300 years old, are not being properly looked after and their condition is worsening day by day. Acharya Shri Kalyan Sagar Ji Maharaj from Digambar sect is presently holding his Chaturmas near this place. He had appealed to the local authorities in the past to get the illegal occupation of the caves removed but on finding no action, he has represented to the Prime Minister, Shri Atal Behari Vajpai to use his good offices to get the illegal occupation removed immediately.

DIGAMBAR JAIN MADHYALOK RESEARCH INSTITUTE AT SHIKHARJI

A Research Institute has been recently established at Madhuban to develop the design and construct Madhyalok, according to the Jaina philosophy, to provide extensive library facilities and to conduct research in Jainology. This has been possible by the inspiration of Mata Ji 105 Shri Suparshwa Mati Ji and her disciple, 105 Shri Indumati Ji and by the unstinted cooperation and efforts of Dr. Pramila Ji Shastri. The Project has been taken up by a Trust, whose President is Shri Chand Mal Ji Saraogi of Kishan Ganj and Secretary is Shri Ummed Mal Ji Shah of Girdih in Bihar.

PACKAGED FOODS TO DISPLAY IF THEY ARE OF ANIMAL ORIGIN

From October 4, 2001, the Government has made mandatory for all packaged food items containing ingredients of animal origin to sport a brown dot encased in a brown box to inform consumers of what they are all about to eat. Even "Atta" may contain a vitamin obtained from animal extracts. Same with a chewing gum with animal origin emulsifiers. The above concept is cleared by the cabinet recently, was reportedly spearheaded by voluble animal rights champion and Union Minister Mrs. Menka Gandhi.

Products which may have animal extracts are as follows: Agarbatti, Biscuits, Breads and Chyawanprash, Buns, Cakes, Chips, Chocolates, Cola, Condoms, Cricket Balls, Custard powder, Fertilizers, Foreign Cheese, Glue, Ice-creams, Jams and Jellies, Liquor, Margarine, Moisturizers, Paper (Hand made), Perfumes, Photographic film, Safety Matches, Shuttlecocks, Soaps, Suntan Lotions, Toothpaste, Toffees. Peppermint and Vanaspati.

MAINTAIN PEACE AND HARMONY - EXHORTS ACHARYA SHRI VIDYANAND JI

Acharya Shri Vidyanand Ji Maharaj appealed to all the humanity to maintain peace, self-control and mutual harmony when the major nations were passing under a shadow of war and destruction. He spoke about the message of ahimsa given by Lord Mahavir, which is far more relevant today than at any other time in the past. He said that the current period up to the year 2003 was very critical and in many of the countries, great upheaval and bloodshed is likely to result. Many small countries will be completely destroyed or perished in this period. The need of the hour is therefore to respect the human values and work towards avoidance of any loss to humanity.

RELEASE OF BOOK ON JAIN ART AND CULTURE

A treatise on Jainism- its art, architecture, literature and philosophy was released at Secunderabad in the Birla Archeological and Cultural Research Institute on the occasion of 2600th Birth Centenary celebrations of Bhagwan Mahavir. The function was arranged in the holy presence of Saint Shri Saubhagya Muni Ji Maharaj and others. The book is mainly a collection of valuable research papers presented by eminent thinkers and philosophers on Jain religion and culture at the seminar on Jainism.

BEING VEGETARIAN, ELEPHANT IS THE MOST POWERFUL ANIMAL, SAYS R. VENKATARAMAN

Shri R. Venkataraman, past President of India, while inaugurating the first Asian Vegetarian Congress at New Delhi recently, advocated the need to take only vegetarian food in the interest of sound health and physical, mental and spiritual development of people. He added that elephant was the most powerful among all the animals and the reason for it was that it ate only vegetarian food. Humans could emulate many good qualities from animals.

HECTIC PREPARATIONS FOR BIRTH CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS IN NEW YORK

The Association of Jain institutions in USA, named JAINA is organising a large scale function to celebrate the 2600th Birth Centenary of Bhagwan Mahavir in New York City. The celebrations will be in the form of observing this year as Ahimsa Year and this will be inaugurated by Prime Minister, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpai. The programme of inauguration is likely to be held on 8th, 9th or 10th of November, according to the convenience of the Prime Minister. Jaina organisation has one lakh Jains enrolled as its members, who are living in USA and Canada. Centenary Celebrations are also being arranged European countries, South-Eastern countries, Singapore etc.

ACHARYA DEVENDRA MUNI EDUCATION AND MEDICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE TO BE SET UP

An education and research Institute to commemorate Bhagwan Mahavir in the year of his birth centenary is going to be established at Udaipur in Rajasthan. The foundation stone for building the Institute was laid by Rashtra Sant Shri Ganesh Muni in the presence of many other saints and eminent personalities and followers from all over the country on 29th October, 2001.

The Chief organiser of the Project, Mr. Virendra Dangi informed that this Institute will be a Centre of learning and research in the fields of Jain religion, philosophy and culture, medicine, spiritual practices and meditation. The programme was presided over by Shri Dhan Sukh Bhai Ashwin Bhai Doshi and Shri Vijay Kumar Ji Jain from Ludhiana was the Chief Guest.

MAHAVIR INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT AND TECHNOLOGY ESTABLISHED AT MURADABAD

On the occasion of 2600th Birth Centenary of Lord Mahavir, Tirthankar Mahavir Educational and Charitable Trust at Muradabad has established a Tirthankar Mahavir Institute of Management and Technology here. The Institute has also been accorded affiliation by the Ruhelkhand University. The Institute will offer graduate and post-graduate courses in Information Technology, Computer applications and E-Commerce.

JAIN DISCOURSES ON ASTHA CHANNEL

The following saints are presently appearing on the Astha Channel for giving religious discourses.

1. Dr. Shiv Muni, Acharya of Sthanakwasi Jain Shraman Sangh at 8.30 P.M. every day.
2. Muni Tarun Sagar Ji Maharaj belonging to Digambar sect at 4 P.M. daily.
3. Pujya Mata Ji Gyan Mati Ji Maharaj of Digambar sect at 3.30 P.M. every day.

JAIN DARSHAN PROGRAMME ON SANSKAR TV

In the world of Satellite Channel SANSKAR TV is India's first 24-hour channel, which covers Indian culture, heritage and traditions. We cover programmes, which have Bhajans, Kirtans, Sankirtans, Pravachans, and Parikrams of Temples, Utsavs And Melas of various parts of our country. In a bid to have a clearer and cleaner conscious people all over are in race to embrace the eternal truth mentioned in various texts all over the world. We would like you to know that we have a programme at 4.30 P M "JAIN DARSHAN" Where in we cover various activities of the JAIN COMMUNITY and the celebrations for 2600 year of LORD MAHAVIR being done all over the country. Please send us the video recordings of the celebrations or any function you or your Trust would like the same to be aired so that the people not just in INDIA but also in other countries get to see the programme.

NEW JAIN TEMPLE AT UK (LEEDS)

A new Jain Chaitaly is being constructed along with a Hindu Temple at UK (Leeds). The architect of the Chaitalya, Mr Rajesh Samura, has the experience of building several Jain temples in past. The Chaitalya will be made from white marble with traditional designs of Jain art.

NEW PAVAPURI TIRTH NEAR MT. ABU, INDIA:

A model sacred place of pilgrimage is constructed 33 km from Mount Abu Road in Rajasthan. Babubhai Punamchand Sanghvi, a diamond merchant of Mumbai & Surat is spending millions of Rupees, giving valuable time supervising the planning and constructions of not only a religious temple but also a full-fledged social service complex. When fully completed, the 500 acres of land will have a temple, a religious school, an animal shelter, a seminary, a hospital, a dairy and other services such as water, fire brigade, staff quarters and other related services. The temple inaugurations with religious ceremonies was attended by several Acharyajis, sadhus-sadhvijs, religious leaders, political dignitaries, VIPs, guests and thousands of Jains from far and near places in India and abroad. The inner sanctum of the temple has Parshwanath Tirthankara idol as the main and nine other images of Mahavirswami, Adinathji, Sumatinathji, Shantinathji, Sankheswarji Pundarikswami, Sudharma Swami Gautmswami, and Simandharswami.

BRANCH OF MAHAVIR JAIN VIDHYALAYA OPENED IN UDAIPUR

For the first time in its 85 year history, a branch of Shri Mahavir Jain Vidhyalaya has been opened outside of the Gujarat and Maharashtra states. The learning centre was officially opened on 12 February 2001 by Shri Deepchand Gardi and other distinguished guests. The centre has been constructed to provide education to the bright but poverty- stricken Jains and to enable them to achieve higher education.

PALWAL, HARYANA BANS ALL MEAT SALES IN CITY

The sale of meat has been banned in a north Indian town of Palwal to encourage vegetarianism among all its 1,50,000 inhabitants. Meat traders in the town, south of New Delhi, have reacted angrily to the ban and have already filed a petition in court.

ANCIENT JAIN STATUE UNVEILED IN PARIS

The Asian Arts National Museum of France in Paris (Musee Guimet) has reopened after 4 years of renovating. The museum contains scriptures on Jainism in several languages including Hindi, English, French, and German. However, the greatest attraction for Jains will be the 77 cm tall statue of Rishabhdev, the First Tirthankara. It is made of sandstone and stands remarkably well considering it was made in the 10-11th century.

RESTORATION OF JAIN TEMPLES IN KUTCH AFTER EARTHQUAKE

On 26 January 2001, hundreds of Jain temples were destroyed in the worst and most disastrous earthquake ever in Gujarat. Many temples have collapsed and the sacred idols have been seriously damaged. Bhadrashwar, one of the most sacred pilgrimage places, is badly damaged. These temples will need heavy repairs. Tapovan Sanskarpith of Bhachau has collected information of losses and is preparing plans for restoration. Jain Muni Chandrasekhar Vijayji said that 205 idols from 65 such damaged temples have been located. Jain Sadhu said that millions of rupees were spent in erecting these temples and huge funds are now required to restore them.

Lalitbhai Dhami supervised the team of about 40 volunteers touring the sites, assessing the losses and bringing these valuables to safe place under proper custody within records of location. Besides idols, statues and images, there were gold, jewelry and silver utensils, Gnan Bhandars of rare manuscripts, and other pieces of Jain art and architecture were found extensively damaged. Truckloads of idols and other materials were moved to Tapovann Gandhinagar, near Ahmedabad. About 45 diamond-merchants of Mumbai went to various places collecting for safe custody precious murtis, gold, jewellery, silver canopy, precious stone studded jewellery, materials and other temple properties. Jainacharya Gunuyashurishwarji from Mumbai's Valkeshwar temple and his disciple Kirtiyashurishwarji in their daily sermons referred to this tragedy and inspired many youths for humanitarian work. Approximately twenty million Rupees were collected initially at a meeting. Jain Sashan Pratisthanam sent groups of 25-youths at different places. The groups were involved in the recovering of temple materials and safeguarding the properties, to prevent undesirable elements taking advantage of the situation. In addition daily puja could not be done for a few days, as there was no one to do such ceremonies. About 100 temples and prayer halls (Upashrays) were visited. Some of the broken images will be ceremonially de-stigmatized and dropped in the ocean.

DR. HARISH JAIN JOINS BOARD OF VISION TV, CANADA

Dr. Harish C. Jain was appointed as a member of the Board of Directors of Vision TV, Canada's longest-established national non-profit multi-faith television services. Dr. Jain is a Professor of Human Resources and Labour Relations at McMaster University. Formerly, he was the member of the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal. He has many research publications to his credit.

CELEBRATION OF 2600TH BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF LORD MAHAVIR AT UNITED NATIONS

The international community celebrated the 2600th birth anniversary of Lord Mahavir on 2nd November, 2001, at the Church Center for the United Nations in New York. The celebration was sponsored and organised by International Mahavir Jain Mission and The Temple of Understanding. More than one hundred and twenty-five persons, drawn mostly from the United Nations NGO community and from Inter-faith community attended the event. The celebration started with a rendition of spiritual music with Bina Kalavant on Sitar and Rahman Khan on tabla. Inter-faith prayers were recited by representatives of many faiths. Dr. Nawang Rabgyal, the Representative of His Holiness the Dalai Lama in North and South America recited a Buddhist prayer.

He was followed by Sister Joan Kirby who recited a Christian prayer. Muslim, Hindu, Jain, and Sikh prayers were also recited. John Miller, Co-Chariman of the Temple of Understanding spoke on Ahimsa, Love, Compassion. He inspired the gathering with an account of his own spiritual experience and understanding of Ahimsa, which is Love and which is Compassion. Alka Sama, performed a dance 'Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram'. This was followed by chanting by disciples of Acharya Sushil Kumarji, Shanti Jain Smith, Kathy Kellogg, Sue Graves and Rick Pezzullo. Pezzullo explained the effect of sound and mantras before the group recited the mantras.

MAHAVIR NIRVAN KALYANAK PROGRAM ORGANISED AT CALIFORNIA

Jain Center Of Northern California is organising Mahavir Nirvan Kalyanak Program on Saturday, November-10, 2001 at 1.00 pm to 7.00 pm. It would be graced by Samni Madhurprajanaji and Samni Jayantprajanaji. All members and others interested are invited by the Jain Centre to attend the programme which will consist of lectures, stavans, Bhajans, Youth Swadhyay, Aarti and Mangal Divo, Sadharmic Vatsalya and a cultural programme presented by Pathshala students. Any further information may be obtained from Mr. Ashok Domadia. E-Mail : adomadia@cisco.com.

ANCIENT JAIN TEMPLES FOUND AFTER EXCAVATION IN PURULIA

Three temples supposed to be belonging to 10th to 12th century, having black stone statues of Jain Tirthankars, have been recently unearthed at Gajpur village, 14 km. away from Purulia District Head Quarters in the State of Jharkhand. As the news spread in the near-by villages and towns, huge number of people are visiting the place every day. It is said that a local priest got a message in his dream from a goddess, asking him to dig the place, where statues would be found. On doing so by the villagers, the dream came true. The District administration has taken over the security of the place. It is believed that this region had been very rich earlier from the point of view of Jain followers.

COIN TO BE RELEASED TO MARK BHAGWAN MAHAVIR BIRTH CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

It has been decided by the Government of India to release coin of the denomination of Rupees five in order to mark the 2600th Birth Centenary of Bhagwan Mahavir. Arrangements are being made to officially release the coin through a grand function sometime in this very month.

NEPAL GOVERNMENT TO ISSUE 15 GM. SILVER COINS HAVING MAHAVIR'S IMAGE

The Government of Nepal has decided to release silver coins of 15 gms. weight on the holy occasion of Birth Centenary of Lord Mahavir, apostle of Jain religion. The coin will have an image of Mahavir on one side. The coin will have 92% silver content and it would be sold at Rs. 160/- only.

PUNJAB STATE GOVERNMENT TO ISSUE GOLD AND SILVER COINS

The State Government of Punjab has also decided to bring out gold and silver coins to commemorate Birth Centenary of Bhagwan Mahavir. The gold coins would be of 24 carat, weighing 10 grams and silver coins would be of 50 grams weight.

EFFORTS TO BAN EXPORT OF MEAT AND CLOSE MECHANISED SLAUGHTER HOUSES

A high level committee to oppose the opening running of slaughter houses in Andhra Pradesh has been recently constituted under the leadership of Shri Bandaru Dattatreya, Minister of State for Urban Development, Government of India. The committee will send a delegation of eminent persons to the Prime Minister, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpai, for requesting him to ban the export of meat and close down all the mechanised slaughter houses in the country, as a mark of respect for Bhagwan Mahavir, whose 2600th Birth Centenary is being observed throughout the country. The delegation will include Shri Bangaru Laxman, the erstwhile President of Bharaiya Janta Party, M.P.'s and M.L.A.'s from the State.

RATNAKAR BANK OPENS ITS FIRST BRANCH IN NORTH INDIA AT NEW DELHI

Ratnakar Bank was established 60 years ago with a small capital by a group of Jains from Sangli and Kolhapur . It has been operating as a scheduled bank since 1956. Over the years, it has grown by leaps and bounds and presently, it has a deposit of Rs. 532 crores and working fund of Rs. 601 crores. The speciality of the bank is that most of the trustees, Directors and account holders are from Jain community, covering a large section from big industrialists to small investors and individuals. At the beginning of the day's work, all the employees join to recite prayer and Navkar Mantra. All of them are required to take strictly vegetarian food and abstain from smoking, drinking, taking tobacco, gutka or pan masala. The Bank provides prompt help and service to all its clients and special care is taken to help old persons, senior citizens and needy persons, who are poor or backward in the community by offering higher interest rates on deposits received from them. The Bank is presently having 70 branches spread in the States of Maharashtra, Karnataka and Goa . Most of the branches have been computerised. The Bank has this year given a dividend of 17%. It has now opened its first branch in the northern part of the country at Karolbagh in New Delhi.

PRAVIN DESAI AND PRAVIN SHAH HONOURED BY ASIAN AMERICAN CHAMBER, USA

Pravin Desai and Pravin Shah were two of the ten who were presented with awards by the Asian-American Chamber of Commerce, Chicago, USA. Desai, a research consultant, received the award for his contribution in Science and Technology. Ms. Shah, President and CEO of Stone Tec Inc. received the award for designing.

DR. JAYENDRA H. SHAH AWARDED JOHN D. CHASE AWARD, USA

Dr. Jayendra H. Shah, chief medical officer and professor of medicine and radiology at the University of Arizona College of Medicine, has been awarded the John D. Chase Award for "physician executive excellence" by the Association of Military Surgeons of United States. The citation says that Shah had exhibited an "impressive capacity" as a health care administrator and had taken a leadership role in the improvement of programs and systems for delivery of care to federal beneficiaries. His "Telephone Linked Care" program received two other awards and his other projects earned two big grants for the department.

ATUL MEHTA BEST BUSINESSMAN OF THE YEAR - ASIAN AMERICAN CHAMBER

Atul Mehta was awarded "Best Businessman of the Year" by the Asian American Chamber of Commerce at its 6th Annual Award function at Izlin, NJ, USA.

MR. MANU CHANDARIA - BEST CHIEF EXECUTIVE (EAST AFRICA)

Mr. Manu Chandaria, a Jain entrepreneur was selected as The Best Chief Executive in the whole of East Africa in a recent survey.

ACHARYA KUNDAKUNDA PURASKAR FOR PROF. S. SETTAR

Acharya Kundakunda Puraskar for the year 2001 has been awarded to Professor S. Settar of Dharwad (Karnataka), former Chairman of the India Council of Historical Research, New Delhi. The award, sponsored by the Foundation of Gandhi Nath Rangaji, Sholapur, Maharashtra, was presented by Sri Shivaraj Patil, former Speaker of the Lok Sabha, in the presence of an august body of scholars and national leaders at Sholapur on 9th September. The seventh Kundakunda Puraskar is given in recognition of his pioneering contribution to the Philosophy of Death.

DEV LOK GAMAN BY SAINTS

(I) Shri Sanjay Muni, disciple of Pravartak Shri Ramesh Muni Maharaj breathed his last at Pune on the 23rd September, 2001 after a short period of treatment at the age of 56 years. Earlier, he had been having unbearable pain in the eye for which he was operated in a Pune Hospital. Soon after, his blood pressure went down and his kidney and heart both were affected. He could not be saved inspite of

unstinted efforts by the doctors attending on him. Shri Sanjay Muni was born at Jodhpur on 27th September 1945 and he was the son of Shri Chhagan Lal Ji Sand, a person, highly dedicated to religion. He was accepted to Jain order of sainthood in Samvat 2034 by revered Shri Pratap Mal Ji Maharaj at Singh Pole, Jodhpur and he was made the disciple of Pravartak Muni Shri Ramesh Muni. Shri Sanjay Muni was a highly learned saint, having had deep insight into Agamic literature and was an effective and eloquent speaker. His untimely demise has left a void in the Sthanakwasi Shwetambar Jain saint Order. To offer condolences, peace meetings were held in various towns in the country.

(II) Muni Shri Mohan Lal Ji 'Amet' disciple of Acharya Shri Tulsi left for heavenly abode after a prolonged illness at Bikaner . He was a true reformist and was strongly against casteism and sectarianism. He had a great preacher and philosopher, totally dedicated to the cause of spreading the message of ahimsa.

Ahimsa Foundation expresses deep sorrow for the loss to the Jain community due to the sad demise of these revered saints and pray for their souls to attain Moksha.

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

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