

# Vanik Voice



**LIVE AND HELP TO LIVE**

Issue 36 - November 2009

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## Disclaimer

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What's wrong with it and how do we fix it?

The dominant question for humans isn't what's my purpose or why am I here, it's what's wrong and how do we fix it. This question shapes our worldview, our parenting, even our relationships.

We live in a fix it society. As if everything going wrong in the world can be "fixed." This idea is largely responsible for the consumerism in society. If you believe there is something wrong or missing in your life, then some company or industry has a product that will correct what's wrong, or at least make you feel better about it.

Watch any amount of TV and you'll be bombarded with this idea. I've even fallen victim to this with the ads on Simple Marriage - the ones that pushed for clean energy or "green" products (they're gone by the way). I'm all for doing our part to take care of the world we live in, but focusing solely on what's wrong is a black hole.

When it comes to marriage, this type of thinking is common. How often do you hear or say "When are you going to...?" or "You always..." Arguments in marriage come along due to focusing on what's wrong.

It's important to realize that in committed relationships, roughly two thirds of the problems are unresolvable. Two thirds!

With the amount of issues in marriage that aren't resolvable, how do you create a lasting and passionate marriage?

It boils down to choice and focus.

First, choose to stick it out. Marriage is work, there's no way around it. The conflict and struggle of marriage only increase it's value. The things in life that you fight for have more inherent value due to the fight. Hang in there.

Second, what you focus on - grows. This philosophy is true. If you focus solely on what's wrong, everything will appear wrong. Don't believe me, watch only the national and local news and tell me how this affects your worldview. Better yet, watch CNN or FOXNews for 24 hours straight. You'll likely think this whole world and everyone in it is evil incarnate.

Instead, focus on yourself and your contribution to the marriage. Ask this: would you want to be married to you?

One of the things I've loved to do since I was a child is snow skiing. And one thing I like to do while skiing is ski through the trees. The powder's better, it's quiet, and the added risk increases the adventure.

Want to know the key to skiing successfully through the trees? Don't look at the trees! Instead, focus on where you want to go between them.

This principle applies to life as well. If you focus on where you want to go and your role in the process, by default you'll avoid most of the pitfalls and issues along the way.

Interested in learning more about this? Pick up a copy of A Simple Marriage.

Source - <http://is.gd/13Hje>

Jain Events During Inter Faith Week

England will be having it's first ever Inter Faith Week from 15th-21st November. It is being facilitated by the Inter Faith Network for the UK and the Department for Communities and Local Government with faith communities hosting various events to help promote understanding and friendship between people of different faith and belief backgrounds.

The Jain community of UK is delighted to be actively involved during Inter Faith Week and is hosting several events. It is a fantastic opportunity to share the richness of Jain philosophy with the wider public and openly welcome them to our beautiful places of worship. Confirmed events are below and more will be added soon, so please keep checking this site.

Please invite your friends, family, colleagues and the general public to come and learn more about Jainism and our ancient tradition.

Inter Faith Week: <http://www.interfaithweek.org>

Find out what's happening in your local area: <http://www.erffn.org.uk/>

This information on the web: <http://www.jainology.org/?q=news/interfaithweek>

**Groups affiliated to the NCVA**

Aden Vanik Association UK  
Digamber Jain Visa  
Mevada Association UK  
Jain Association of UK  
Jain Samaj Europe  
Jain Samaj Manchester  
Jain Sangh Birmingham  
Jain Sangh of Europe  
Mahavir Foundation  
Navnat Vanik Association UK  
Navnat Youth Association  
Oshwal Association of UK  
Shree Jain Sangh East London & Essex  
Shree Navyug Jain Pragati Mandal,  
Shree Sidhpuria Vanik Samaj  
Shrimali Soni Mandal London  
Vanik Association UK  
Vanik Samaj Leicester  
Vanik Samaj Coventry  
Vanik Samaj of UK Brighton  
Vanik Samaj Southampton  
Veerayatan UK  
Young Jains

**Groups Established by NCVA**

Vanik Professional Group  
Vanik Business Group

**Belgian city plans 'veggie' days**

The Belgian city of Ghent is about to become the first in the world to go vegetarian at least once a week. Starting this week there will be a regular weekly meatless day, in which civil servants and elected councillors will opt for vegetarian meals.

Ghent means to recognise the impact of livestock on the environment.

The UN says livestock is responsible for nearly one-fifth of global greenhouse gas emissions, hence Ghent's declaration of a weekly "veggie day".

Public officials and politicians will be the first to give up meat for a day.

Schoolchildren will follow suit with their own veggie day in September.

It is hoped the move will cut Ghent's environmental footprint and help tackle obesity.

Around 90,000 so-called "veggie street maps" are now being printed to help people find the city's vegetarian eateries.

Source - <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/8046970.stm>

**The NCVA Matrimonial Register**

The NCVA have a professional, anonymous structure in place to help you meet your possible soul mate.

Jayman Mehta is the person to contact if you wish to register for this service.

Once you register, you will receive a list of other people who are looking for a partner. The list is organised so that the reader can learn the height, qualifications, age and reference number of each member. Viewers can see whether the members on the list are male or female by looking at the letter at the beginning of the reference number. However, they cannot see the name of any other details that will identify those on the list.

For further information please contact: - Jayman Mehta

Contact time: Mon. to Fri. evening between 5.30 p.m. & 7.30 p.m. ONLY, on Tel. no. 020 8907 2428

Please DO NOT contact outside above days and time

You can also receive this list by e-mailing [mehtajayman@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:mehtajayman@yahoo.co.uk) or [manhar\\_mehta@hotmail.com](mailto:manhar_mehta@hotmail.com)

**Why are there no more red squirrels?**

Gray squirrels were introduced to the U.K. from the U.S. in the 19th century and have since been blamed for decimating the population of native red squirrels. But, in actuality, deforestation, epidemic diseases and harsh winters have all had an effect on red squirrels' numbers (not to mention hunters, who, let's face it, were killing them for bounties long before gray squirrels even arrived in Britain).

"The idea of exterminating millions of friendly and adaptable bushy-tailed squirrels is madness," says PETA Europe Director Robbie LeBlanc. "We want Americans also to help buy squirrel underwear and so stave off a Scottish attack on these little animals, as, after all, this is the peaceful solution to a problem that they created!" Mee-oww!

Shawna Flavell

Source - <http://is.gd/13HZi>

**Helpful info**

Useful site if you need to book days off work well in advance or even plan for that religious occasion! This website which gives details of various festivals from 2000 to 2031 –

<http://www.hinduism.co.za/newpage3.htm#Hindu%20Festivals2010>

## You don't need an extended warranty to take goods back after 1 year!

Shoppers are being sold short when expensive electrical goods break down. If a TV or fridge packs up just one day after an initial one-year guarantee, customers are told they have to pay for the repair - but the truth is that retailers may be liable for up to six years.

Consumer experts say retailers are exploiting ambiguous legislation to wriggle out of their responsibilities. Ministers, however, claim the law is quite clear. The Sale of Goods Act offers protection against faulty goods even when the manufacturer's guarantee has run out. The act says goods must last a reasonable time - and that can be anything up to six years from the date of purchase. Which? - formerly the Consumers Association - says consumers should argue strongly with retailers when a product breaks down within six years. The Sale of Goods Act doesn't define how long specific products should last, because different products have different life spans. But a survey by Which? of manufacturers into how long they believe different types of appliance should last made interesting reading. All of them said their goods should last five years or more.

But retailers, which should be the first port of call for all complaints, make life difficult for customers who refuse to buy an extended warranty. Even when there is little doubt the fault lies with the goods maker (rather than abuse of the machine) customers are still routinely asked to pay more than £100 for the call-out and a separate amount for spare parts.

Tim Young, a senior researcher at Which? says the problem can be traced back to the sale of extended warranties. "Retailers want to sell extended warranties. Manufacturers know this and they don't want to rock the boat. So you don't have to be too cynical to say it is in the manufacturers' interests to hike up the costs of call-outs and repairs."

In many cases customers are being told to spend several hundred pounds to restore a machine to working order - when they could instead be entitled to a refund under the Sale of Goods Act.

Take the example of an Apple ipod that breaks down outside the standard one-year guarantee. The usual response, or at least the response from both the Manchester and Birmingham Apple Centres, is don't bother getting a repair. Staff say the cost of repair would exceed the value of a £300 40Gb model and refuse a free replacement. Yet iPods are designed to be portable and take a reasonable amount of wear and tear. Consumers should follow the advice of Which? (right) and demand refunds when the fault is not of their making.

Two other examples illustrate how shops and electrical goods manufacturers make life difficult. The glass door shattered on a De Longhi range cooker bought from Comet three and a half years previously. The shop wanted to charge £59.95 for a call-out and more than £500 for a new door. The cooker cost £499.

In another incident, a John Lewis customer reported a fault with the ice and water dispenser on a four-year-old US-style fridge freezer. John Lewis directed the complainant to the manufacturer, Samsung. To check the fridge, Samsung demanded a call-out charge of £79.95 for the first 15 minutes and £25 for each subsequent 15 minutes. Parts would be extra. The customer was told they could ask a third party maintenance firm to check the fridge. The three major firms listed in the local Yellow pages all refused, saying they found it difficult sourcing parts for this style of fridge.

It's a similar story with faulty TV sets. When we rang the service division of Dixons, which is called Mastercare, to say an 18-month-old 42in plasma TV wasn't working we were told that it could send someone out to get it, but it would cost £120 plus any parts. However, we were also told that if it had failed because of an inherent fault, they would try to get the manufacturer to make a contribution to its repair - where appropriate.

When we pushed Mastercare further, the call centre representative said that if they got our TV back to their service centre and it was found to be uneconomic to repair, we could reject the original £125 (plus parts) quote, and simply pay a more reasonable £25 inspection fee.

"We do get a lot of TVs - LCDs and Plasmas - sent in, and most are usually repairable for less than the cost of buying a new one," he said. But, as Which? says, you shouldn't have to pay a penny, even if the guarantee has expired, if the goods are faulty and less than six years old.

### The steps you can take

1. Contact the retailer's head office: You won't get any joy from youthful shop staff or call centres. Be firm and explain you think your product hasn't lasted a reasonable amount time. You want it to be investigated and repaired, or replaced if it turns out to be faulty.
2. Get an independent report: A major retailer is likely to have its own repairs centre or an arrangement with the manufacturer, but this may result in sky-high call out charges. Contact an independent repairer and ask it to produce a report. Most of the independents we contacted charged between £30 and £40 to visit and many would write a short report as part of the cost. You can claim back up to £200 for the costs of the repairer's bill.
3. Commission a repair: Ask the retailer to repair or replace the goods. If the repair cost is disproportionate the retailer can offer a refund of the original purchase price, though probably not a full refund. If the shop makes life difficult you can ask go to an independent repairer and reclaim the whole cost. Make sure they provide evidence of the fault.
4. Be prepared to battle: The company could refuse to refund the repair cost, leaving you to chase them through the small claims court. A judge can order the retailer to settle the claim - up to £5,000 - and pay legal costs. For information on taking a case to the small claims court, read our guide published last week ([guardian.co.uk/money](http://guardian.co.uk/money)). Consumer Direct is the government's new online and telephone advice line. Call an adviser on 08454 04 05 06.

Continued below

## You don't need an extended warranty to take goods back after 1 year continued

The Department of Trade & Industry says the rules are clear and as long as you have evidence of a fault the judge will be sympathetic. But David Oughton, professor of consumer law at De Montfort University in Leicester, says an EU Directive has muddied the waters. "The presumption underlying the new rules is that you have two years to make a case." He says judges may override the old rules giving protection up to six years.

A spokeswoman for the DTI says: "There is a common misunderstanding that the EU Directive requires a two-year guarantee to be given, but that is not the case. UK law in practice provides better protection for consumers than the two-year minimum required by the EU - consumers are able to pursue relevant claims for up to six years (five in Scotland)."

Source - <http://is.gd/13GP5>

## Two beautiful stamps issued on Jain temples

Dear Sir,  
Sadar Jai Jinendra.

Indian Postal Department has issued two beautiful stamps on World famous Jain Temples of RANAKPUR and DILWARA on 14th Oct. 2009. These both multicoloured stamps depicts images of the Temples alongwith the unique architectures of these Temples. Miniature Sheet, First Day Cover and Information brochure of these Stamps have also been issued. Both the stamps are of the denomination of Rs. 5/- each. The First Day Cover and the Brochure are priced at Rs 2 each. Security Printing Press, Hyderabad printed 0.4 million stamps by wet offset process in the sheets of 24 and 0.4 million Miniature Sheet have been printed. These are available for sale at the Philatelic Bureaus of all the G.P.O. as well as big Post Offices of India.

With kind regards,  
Sudhir Jain,  
Universal Cables Ltd., SATNA (M.P.) 485 005, India.  
E-mail : [mrsudhirjain@yahoo.com](mailto:mrsudhirjain@yahoo.com)



## It's all about commuting

A rush-hour train or bus is typically soundtracked by the rustle of newsprint, and the tinny beats leaking from headphones. What about those just sitting there doing nothing?

It used to be that the commuting classes occupied themselves with a neatly folded broadsheet newspaper or perhaps a book. Or even a cigarette. Now, a commuter might read a free newspaper. Nod along to the private beat of their MP3. Text their mates. Play games or catch up on TV on a digital media player. Catch up on sleep. A very, very few take the time to look out of the window. We lead increasingly crowded lives, often cajoled into listening to this album, reading that book, or following another TV show (and made to feel culturally bereft if we don't). Time without connecting into our dizzying global culture seems wasted time.

On a Wednesday morning train service into London, the rush-hour peak has subsided but the carriages are still full of workers, students and shoppers. On one service through Clapham Junction, most read Metro or pick their way through paperbacks.

Every second person seems to wear headphones. Others are texting or making calls on their mobiles. As the train crosses the Thames, only a few glance up to gaze at the muddy river. Reports of the latest celebrity sightings are more compelling.

Ann Johnson, 63, is one of the few making the journey without distractions. She has a copy of the Daily Express at her side, but it's for her sister, who is in hospital. "I don't normally have a paper. I don't have an iPod, I couldn't have that in my ears," she laughs. "I look at what's going on, what's gone up since my last journey." Today, for instance, she's been thinking about her sister in hospital. If she's on a shopping trip she'll work out what she needs to buy. What does she notice about her fellow travellers habits of shutting out the world around them? "Just that they all tend to be on the phone. I can't help but listen to their conversations. I think people used to talk more. If you're on a long journey and someone's sitting opposite, you'd start a conversation."

On the same service is Laura Jenner, 30, who works for Lewisham Council carers' support. She has her bike on the train, and her backpack on her knees. "Normally, I've either got a book or I'm listening to an iPod," she says, but today she's tired from her bike ride and just wants to relax. She's been thinking about a charity run she wants to take part in, in memory of her father who died from cancer two years ago. "I've been thinking of how I can get more people to sponsor me, so I'm thinking of setting up a Facebook page. Nothing too deep and meaningful. "I used to drive to work and this is much more relaxing. I would rather go on the overground now."

Student Steve Bamigboye, 34, from Mitcham, would normally be reading the paper but this late-morning trip from London Bridge to Earlsfield is his second journey of the day - he's already read his free newspaper. "I don't want to read it twice."

"I've been thinking about so many things," he says, but won't elaborate. While he sometimes listen to music on his phone, he thinks it's a shame so many people shut out the outside world. "You can't talk to people when they are listening to music."

On the train to Epsom an hour later, Julia Malykh, a 24-year-old geologist originally from Russia, takes the trip in her stride. Compared to the 18-hour train ride from Moscow when she visits her family back in Russia, the short journey to work hardly registers. She spends the time looking out of the window, "thinking about my friends, the new friends I have made here in Britain.

"In Russia the trains are a lot busier and a lot more crowded. It's not really convenient to read a newspaper." But might we be better served if we just sat and watched the world go by more often?

Dr Angela Carter, an occupational psychologist at Sheffield University's Institute of Work Psychology, says there are several reasons why we feel the need to envelope ourselves in words, games or music. One is to protect our time and personal space, using an activity to take ourselves away from the reality of a crowded carriage. This helps create the bubble needed to daydream, perhaps, about lying on a beach doing nothing. "People tend to use their time very differently," says Dr Carter. "Some of them will use it to read a newspaper, some like to reflect, some have to have time to use their gadgets."

A commute for some people now might be anything up to three hours - and our modern human minds, it seems, just can't take that amount of time without stimulation. "If you engross yourself in something, you can make the time pass quite quickly," Dr Carter says. But you have to choose your distraction carefully. A laptop's no good if you can't get a seat. "If you're jammed up against someone in a sweaty carriage, then music is a fantastic way to achieve that experience."

### Me time

Sometimes, our ability to deal with this dead time is decided by our background.

"If you're an only child, then you're used to being by yourself and you can manage that time quite well.

"You either like spending time by yourself, or you don't. Three hours on a train, for some people, is almost like a divorce."

But, Dr Carter says, it might help to occasionally turn the iPod off, put the book down, and allow our brains to recharge with some time off. "It's just a personal viewpoint, but I think it's good to have some me time. Just to be more effective. We've got to give ourselves a rest. "Running from work, watching an action movie on a device and then running off somewhere else to me doesn't sound very relaxing. "We talk about taking mental holidays - train travel is a perfect time for that. Why wait for your two-week holiday when you can have some of it now?"

## A Suitable Peg to hang the Mind

I employed a carpenter to do some minor work in my house. On the first day of his work, his tyre got punctured on the way and it delayed him by an hour. Halfway through his work, his electric saw failed. At the end of the day, his little van refused to start so I agreed to drop him home.

He did not utter a word on the way but when we arrived, he invited me in. "My wife and children will be pleased to meet you", he said. Before entering the house, he went to a small tree and placed both his hands on the trunk of that tree. When he entered the house, there was an extraordinary change in his attitude. There was a pleasant smile on his face which was looking very tired until now. He embraced his two children and he kissed his wife.

He had the courtesy to escort me to my car and when we passed that tree, I could not suppress my inquisitiveness and asked him: "Why did you touch this tree before entering the house?". "Oh!", he said: "This tree is the peg of my mind. When I go to work anywhere, there are bound to be some problems. But what have those problems to do with my wife and my children? So when I return from work, I hang all the problems from my mind on this tree before entering my house. In the morning, I collect the problems back from the tree".

Finally, he added: "It is surprising that from the numerous problems which I leave on the tree in the evening, many have disappeared in the morning!".

Translation by a member of the community who wishes to remain anonymous

### મનની ખીટી

અમારાં ઘરમાં રિપેરકામ માટે એક સુથારને બોલાવેલો. એના કામના પહેલા દિવસની આ વાત છે.. કામ પર આવતાં રસ્તામાં ટાયર પંકચર થયું એમાં એનો એક કલાક બગડ્યો. કામ શરૂ કર્યા પછી અધવચ્ચે એની ઇલેક્ટ્રિક કરવત બગડી ગઈ. દિવસ પૂરો થયા પછી ઘરે પાછા જતી વખતે એની નાની ટ્રક ચાલી નહીં. હું એને મારી ગાડીમાં એના ઘેર મૂકવા ગયો. રસ્તામાં એ એક પણ શબ્દ બોલ્યો નહીં.

અમે એના ઘેર પહોંચ્યા ત્યારે એણે કહ્યું : 'ઘરમાં થોડી વાર આવો ને । મારાં પત્ની અને બાળકોને તમને મળીને આનંદ થશે.' ઘરમાં દાખલ થતાં પહેલાં નાના ઝાડ પાસે એ રોકાયો. બન્ને હાથ એણે ઝાડ પર મૂક્યા. બારણામાં દાખલ થતી વખતે મેં એનામાં અજબનો ફેરફાર થતો જોયો. એના થાકેલા ચહેરા પર સ્મિત ફરી વળ્યું. એનાં બે બાળકોને વહાલથી ભેટ્યો અને પત્નીને ચૂમી આપી. મને એ કાર સુધી મૂકવા આવ્યો. અમે પેલા ઝાડ પાસેથી પસાર થયા ત્યારે મારું કુતૂહલ હું રોકી શક્યો નહીં. મેં એને પૂછ્યું : 'ઘરમાં દાખલ થતાં પહેલાં તમે ઝાડને શા માટે અડ્યા ?'

'અરે, હા. આ ઝાડ તો મારા મનની ખીટી છે. હું કામે જાઉં ત્યાં કોઈ ને કોઈ તકલીફ તો આવવાની જ, પણ એક વાત નક્કી કે ઘરે મારાં પત્ની અને બાળકોને એની સાથે શું લેવાદેવા ?

એટલેજ્યારે સાંજે કામ પરથી ઘરે પાછો આવું છું ત્યારે તકલીફો આ ઝાડ પર લટકાવી દઈ ઘરમાં દાખલ થાઉં છું. સવારે કામ પર જતાં આ ઝાડ પરથી તકલીફો પાછી લઈ લઉં છું.

પણ નવાઈની વાત તો એ છે કે રાતે મૂકેલી તકલીફોમાંથી ઘણીખરી સવારે ત્યાં હોતી નથી.

## Events

Jain dharma training – 8/11/09, 10:15am – 2pm at Sayer Centre, NW2 7JN. To register, email [training@youngjains.org.uk](mailto:training@youngjains.org.uk)  
Yoga & Meditation on Wednesdays from 7.30-9.30pm at Canons High School. Contact Deepa on 07875 087 672 for more info.  
Sweet Harmony – Every first Mondays of the month, from 8.15-9.45pm at Canons High School. Contact [nilpa@youngjains.org.uk](mailto:nilpa@youngjains.org.uk)

An amazing PLAY that we have planned for 29/11/09 at Sadhu Vaswanl Centre. The play is set in a Court Room where the Animals have brought a case against those who harm them, use them and eat them!! Contact Deepu for more info about the event - [deepumirpuri@aol.com](mailto:deepumirpuri@aol.com)

Faith and Climate Change – Evening Workshop on 9 November 19:00 – 21:00. The British Council and the Science Museum are delighted to invite you to an evening workshop examining the role that faith communities can play in combating climate change. For more info visit [www.sciencemuseum.org.uk](http://www.sciencemuseum.org.uk)

## Whither is the NCVA headed?

The National Council of Vanik Association is fast approaching its 30th Anniversary and an ambitious programme has been organised to celebrate the event on 11th July, 2009.

Over the past 30 years a lot of water has flown under the bridge and perhaps it is time to take stock of the current situation and put our heads together to plan for the future. We cannot afford to stay static as the social and cultural changes we have witnessed over the past 30 years are proof enough of the inevitable changes we will be confronted with if our thinking and practice remain rooted in the 1970s and traditions of yester years that we brought to this country, be it from India or Africa, are not adapted to conform with the realities of life of our adopted homeland.

I was privileged to be a part of NCVA executive committee when it was first established some 30 years ago at the behest of my elders, late Shree Prantal Sheth and late Shree Navnitray Sheth. I was reluctant to join for several reasons but could not turn down my elders' pressure.

NCVA was founded with the objective of bringing all the Vanik organisations spread all over the UK under its umbrella. It was also agreed that all the affiliated organisations were to be allowed to operate independently but within the parameters that were to be defined by the umbrella organisation after due deliberation by a panel of eminent individuals. The panel's recommendations were published in a booklet form but to the best of my knowledge they have never been implemented by any one of the affiliates in the past 30 years and not a single copy of the said booklet can be traced today.

Right from the start the Executive Committee was not amenable to the then president's somewhat authoritarian approach and Executive Committee meetings held at different venues all over the UK became somewhat acrimonious with the passing of time. First few years were marred with controversy at a senior level and the then president had to resign as the circumstances obliged him to do so. In such an environment it was well nigh impossible to make any progress in uniting the community and NCVA became virtually a defunct body.

It was only after the founding president's resignation that NCVA perhaps achieved some of its aims and objectives under the leadership of late Shree Babubhai Kapadia of Manchester and now under the guidance of the current incumbent Shree Manharbhai Mehta and his team.

When Shree Kapadia was the Chair a tentative idea of setting up a Vanik Bank or a Building Society was mooted and a lengthy discussion took place at the late Shree D. N. Shah's office. The objective was to help our people who were facing difficulties in raising mortgage to buy a property or loan finance to run a small business because racial prejudice, in its subtle form, was still rife against our people. Mr. Gardi and I were asked to carry out a feasibility study and we were ready to do so on a pro bono basis provided the potential directors were equally prepared to follow suit. However it transpired that potential directors were expecting to draw salaries commensurate with their status and all the perks of the job. I found the proposition too horrendous and accordingly Mr. Gardi and I withdrew from the meeting.

Even today it seems that desired objectives have been achieved but to a limited extent and a great deal remains to be done. Amongst its achievements the most important are:

- Ø 1. Publication of NCVA Directory at regular intervals and also updating it on a regular basis. It is now accessible on the internet. However it seems that most of the names listed in the directory are of those who are members of Navnat Vanik Association of UK with a sprinkling of a few names of the members of the Oshval Association of UK.
- Ø 2. Organising speed dating programmes at regular intervals with a view to facilitating meeting of our new generation who are looking for a soul mate. I am very happy to learn that such events are over subscribed by youths not only from Vanik community but also other Hindu youths as well.
- Ø 3. Shree Manharbhai Mehta and Shree Jaymanbhai Mehta have worked hard to provide chaplaincy service to Jain patients in UK hospitals.

There are a few things that stick out like a sore thumb. These include, inter alia the following:

- Ø 1. All the office bearers are drawn from the Navnat Vanik Association and it is blatantly obvious that in its 30 years history no affiliates have had a chance to serve on the NCVA Executive Committee in any capacity whatsoever.
- Ø 2. Two of the groups established by NCVA, i.e. Vanik Professional Group and Vanik Business Group are no longer in existence although our new generation has excelled itself in these fields and are a cause of envy to others. They have moved away from the corner shop mentality of the elders. Our affiliates in the Oshwal Community also had a Business group and Professional group but to the best of my knowledge no attempt has ever been made to unite them under a single umbrella.
- Ø 3. No apparent attempt seems to have been made to bring into its fold many of the affiliates whose names are listed in NCVA mouthpiece 'Vanik Voice'. I do not know whether Vanik Voice is circulated to all the affiliates and whether regular meetings are held with the affiliates to enable them to air their views.
- Ø 4. It also looks that a substantial proportion of our youngsters are no longer selecting their life partners from Vanik community and inter racial, inter caste and inter faith marriages have become the vogue of our youths. It would appear, prima facie at least, that NCVA has not kept pace with the changing times, environment of the country we live in and other factors to accommodate the changes that are taking place and are irreversible.
- Ø 5. May be we are ambivalent about deciding whether we now belong to India or our de facto home is in the UK. However for our new generation it is UK where they belong and they are no longer confined to caste or sub caste systems. Marriages between our girls to English boys and vice versa are becoming common and no pleading on our part is going to stop them. It was significant that some months ago Shree Dhirubhai Galani raised the question provoking a debate on who came within the definition of a Vanik. At the end of the debate it came out that there were at least 84 categories of Vaniks some 70 or so years ago and it is likely that further subdivision has increased a few more castes and sub-castes.

Continued below

## Whither is the NCVA headed continued

∅ 6. There are more than 15,000 Oshwals in this country but they would not appear to have any representation in the Executive of NCVA.

∅ 7. It is self evident that we have gradually but inexorably moved away from our mother tongue, Gujarati, and in most homes English has taken its place at all levels.

In the last 30 years the whole climate has changed and so has the society and unless we keep pace with them and adapt ourselves to changing circumstances all I can see is a bleak future.

Mansukh Shah

## When you thought i wasn't looking

A message every adult should read because children are watching you and doing as you do, not as you say.

When you thought I wasn't looking, I saw you hang my first painting on the refrigerator, and I immediately wanted to paint another one.

When you thought I wasn't looking, I saw you feed a stray cat, and I learned that it was good to be kind to animals.

When you thought I wasn't looking, I saw you make my favorite cake for me, and I learned that the little things can be the special things in life.

When you thought I wasn't looking, I heard you say a prayer, and I knew that there is a God I could always talk to, and I learned to trust in Him.

When you thought I wasn't looking, I saw you make a meal and take it to a friend who was sick, and I learned that we all have to help take care of each other.

When you thought I wasn't looking, I saw you give of your time and money to help people who had nothing, and I learned that those who have something should give to those who don't.

When you thought I wasn't looking, I saw you take care of our house and everyone in it, and I learned we have to take care of what we are given.

When you thought I wasn't looking, I saw how you handled your responsibilities, even when you didn't feel good, and I learned that I would have to be responsible when I grow up.

When you thought I wasn't looking I saw tears come from your eyes, and I learned that sometimes things hurt, but it's all right to cry.

When you thought I wasn't looking, I saw that you cared, and I wanted to be everything that I could be.

When you thought I wasn't looking I learned most of life's lessons that I need to know to be a good and productive person when I grow up.

When you thought I wasn't looking, I looked at you and wanted to say, 'Thanks for all the things I saw when you thought I wasn't looking.'

## ALL EYES SEE A LOT

Each of us (parent, grandparent, aunt, uncle, teacher, & friend) influences the life of a child. How will you touch the life of someone today? Live simply. Love generously. Care deeply. Speak kindly.



## The Nava Durgas



### **SHAILAPUTRI**

The embodiment of the power of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva, she rides a bull and carries a trident and a lotus in her two hands.

### **BRAHMACHARINI**

She is the one who practices devout austerity. Filled with bliss and happiness, she is the way to emancipation - Moksha.

### **CHANDRAGHANTA**

She is the apostle of bravery; she rides a lion, and has ten arms. She drives away all evildoers and demoniac incarnation.

### **KUSUMANDA**

Seated on a lion, she has a magnanimous presence, and possesses eight arms. Her abode is the Solar region.

### **SKANDAMATA**

She is the Goddess of Fire. She has four arms and three eyes. She rides a lion.

### **KATYAYANI**

The chosen goddess of Vrindavan, she is alluring in her golden form. She has four arms and three eyes, she is seated on a lion.

### **KAALRATRI**

This four-armed form rides an ass. She dissipates darkness from amidst her devotees, and bestows freedom from fear and adversity.

### **MAHA GAURI**

She is like an eight-year-old girl. She is intelligent and peaceful, possesses three eyes and four arms, and uses the bull as her vehicle.

### **SIDDHIDATRI**

The bestower of accomplishments, this manifestation is worshipped as one blessed with glory. Seated on a lotus, she has four arms.

### ***Durga Puja***

To gain the grace of Mother Divine and receive Her blessings to remove ignorance, provide protection from adversity and eliminate suffering on an individual and cosmic level. Durga Pujas can be of various lengths, from two hours to six hours or more, and may be performed on a single day, or on consecutive days. The recitation of selections from the Durga Saptashati, a collection of beautiful hymns to Mother Divine, is an especially enjoyable part of this Puja.

### ***Chandi Homa***

This is a more elaborate Yayga that is understood to have powerful effects on the cosmic, global and individual levels. It is traditionally performed to alleviate the adverse affects of the planets, liberate man from all troubles, restore friendships, gain blessings of wealth and beautiful children, and to overcome enemies and evil planetary influences. Performance of the Chandi Homa includes Puja two to three hours long and a Homa (fire ceremony) that lasts approximately four hours. It includes the recitation of all 700 verses of Durga Saptashati, a collection of beautiful hymns to Mother Divine.

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## ***How to fast for Navaratri?***

Strict fast is observed in Navaratri only Fruit and Liquids are allowed. No Grain or Flour is allowed. One meal should be taken.

If for health reasons you are unable to fast in the above manner than you can have one meal but try to avoid grains.

### ***Puja***

1. Commence worship and fast on the first day of Navaratri (morning and evening).
2. An Akanda deep should be kept burning all the time through the whole Navaratri.
3. Puja should be done as follows.

Recite the following mantra:

***Aum Namō Bhagvaty Mahā Durgaye Namha.***

(Puja to be done on a mutie or in front of a picture of Mother Durga.

1. Offer water thrice.
2. Offer pancha Amrit six times
3. Offer water twice
4. Cleanse murtie or sprinkle water on the picture
5. Offer Kum Kum (red) rice and Flowers Agarbatti Prasad (Fruit) all should be done reciting the following mantra.
6. Conduct Aarti using wicks dipped in Ghee

### ***Jap Mantra***

***AUM AIM HRING KLEENG CHAMUNDAYE VICHHEY***

This mantra should be recited 108 time to gain the greatest Benefit from the Fast.

### ***Mantra to offer Dhaar***

***Aun Jayanti Mangala Kali Badra Kali Kapalini Durga  
Kshana Shiva Dhatri Swaha Swadha Namostute***

On the tenth day Vijay Dhashmi/ Day of Victory Visarjan to mother Durga is done and the fast is complete and salt can be eaten.

The above fast is based on the scriptures and should be followed according to your means and capabilities.

If Ahimsa is integral to Hinduism and Jainism, why are most of us failing to follow this principle?

... I do not regard veganism as a matter of "lifestyle," "diet," "health" (although it is increasingly clear that animal products cause physical damage), or ecology (although it is increasingly clear that animal agriculture is an environmental disaster). Veganism is nothing less than a fundamental commitment of the individual to Ahimsa. Veganism represents a crucial and necessary step in the Atma turning away from the violence of the material world.

I do not think that the concept of Anekantavada gives us a "free pass" to say that veganism is a matter of option or choice. There are very few clear principles in Jain Dharma that admit of no exception despite the general recognition that truth is often a complex matter: inflicting intentional suffering and death on innocent, multi-sensed mobile creatures is one of those clear principles. And there can no doubt that all animal products involve suffering, torment, distress, and death. Indeed, denying that is on the same level as denying gravity.

Unfortunately, Jainism as a general matter has not embraced veganism. Indeed, I had the honor of giving the keynote talk at an event celebrating Gurudev Chitrabhanu Ji's birthday. The event was held this past Saturday, August 1. One of the issues that came up was that Gurudev lost many followers when he started talking about veganism.

How very sad. People accept that Gurudev is a great spiritual leader--until he tells them that their ice cream or ghee is Himsa. As someone raised in the Christian tradition, I always found it sad that so many Christians accepted what Christ said--until it came to something that they wanted to do. Chitrabhanu Ji was once considered one of the most important figures in modern Jainism. And he has lost followers to raita and ice cream and wool!

The fact that we are not embracing veganism is not only a problem in itself, but it is increasingly making flesh eating a matter of "choice," "opinion," "lifestyle"--a matter for more "free passes" under Anekantavada.

An increasing number of Jains are turning back to flesh eating and more Jains are now investing in and owning stores and shops that sell flesh products. I have seen statements that the number of Jains consuming flesh is increasing in both the U.S. and the U.K. Apparently, more and more Jains are accepting that these issues are all just matters of personal opinion and not fundamental moral doctrine. More and more Jains are using Anekantavada as an excuse for moral relativism. Anekantavada means only that truth is complicated; it does not mean that there is no truth because everything is relative to the whim of the individual. Indeed, if Anekantavada means moral relativism and denies that there are any clear moral truths, then Jainism collapses and loses all meaning.

I gave a lecture on animal ethics/veganism at Princeton University last winter. One of the students agreed with me that all animal products involved suffering and death but he pointed out that Jains did not reject dairy so Jain Dharma was arbitrary on the point of Ahimsa and Ahimsa means whatever the individual thinks it means. The student (who was not a Jain) made a correct observation: we are behaving inconsistently on this issue. Others see this; why don't we?

Jainism is the religion of Ahimsa. And Ahimsa is very clear. The fact that many Jains have not traditionally embraced veganism is now bearing its fruit.

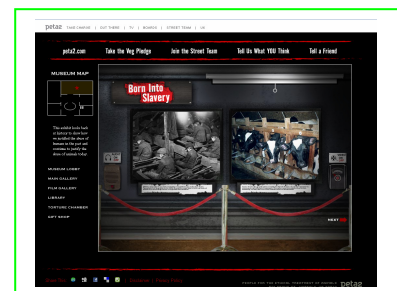
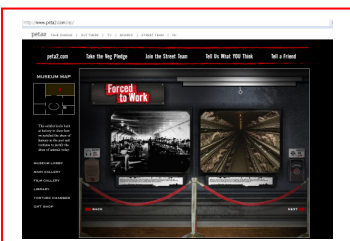
In this age of relentless narcissism and materialism, it is quite natural that the failure to reject all violence against nonhumans will lead to more violence against nonhumans given that there is no logical distinction between flesh and dairy, ghee, raita, milk, wool, etc. And that will only facilitate acceptance of violence toward humans as well. That is precisely what is happening. We are living in a time of unparalleled violence in conduct, speech, and thought.

The principle of Ahimsa is in crisis. Whether we realize it or not, we are facing a significant challenge to restore Ahimsa as the central doctrine of Jain Dharma.

If I have offended anyone, Micchami Dukkadam, Micchami Dukkadam, Micchami Dukkadam.

Source - <http://www.herenow4u.net/index.php?id=69386>

It was acceptable to force a particular race of people to work. This has now changed. Is it acceptable to force animals to work in this way? Also it is to feed us right? This makes it OK because we are superior to animals! BUT we are so stupid! We produce too much food and so much of it goes to waste. Can we really call ourselves superior?



Slavery was acceptable if done to certain humans. Has this classification evolved so that all humans are now exempt from it and animals have taken our place?