

# Vanik Voice



Issue 17 ~ April 2008

**LIVE AND HELP TO LIVE**

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## Your committee

This committee was elected on 12 August 2007
<b><u>Chairman</u></b> Mr. Manharlal L. Mehta 37 Howberry Road Edgware Middlesex HA8 6SS Tel: 020 8952 1165  E-mail: mahar_mehta@hotmail.com
<b><u>Regional Vice Chairmen</u></b>  North: Piyush Mehta  Midlands: Gajendra Chhatrishia  London: Dhiru Galani  South: Harkishan Mehta
<b><u>General Secretary</u></b> Paresh Gandhi
<b><u>Joint Secretary</u></b> Ramesh Shah
<b><u>Editor</u></b> Miss. Heena R. Modi VanikVoice@googlemail.com
<b><u>Treasurer</u></b> Avanti Jasani
<b><u>Executive Committee Members</u></b> Bina Holden Dr Jagdish Shah Bharat Parekh Dr Natubhai Shah Vijay Sheth Saroj Varia Bharat Varia Jayman Mehta

## Global Action Plan – International

We empower people to live and work increasingly sustainably

- individually, in groups, in communities
- at home, school and work
- in many countries

In partnership with the UN Decade for Education for Sustainable Development

GAP is a network of national and in some cases local organisations working for a common goal: to empower people to live increasingly sustainably.

Each member organisation ([http://www.globalactionplan.com/GAP\\_countries/countries.html](http://www.globalactionplan.com/GAP_countries/countries.html)) is an independent entity with full responsibility for designing and delivering appropriate programmes, and for its own funding and financial management.

Alignment of purpose and methods is through exchange of experience. The international secretariat (<http://www.globalactionplan.com/contact.html>) also analyses results of the member organisations and acts as a repository for the growing body of knowledge and theory concerning empowerment, as well as a cross-pollinator through workshops and other events.

In some countries the member organisation has state or other public funding as a basis. In others, grants are the major funding source. In yet others, all or most funding is through contracts.

GAP programmes are based on individual empowerment (<http://www.globalactionplan.com/empowerment.html>). They are delivered and disseminated through a variety of mechanisms that have developed over the past decade, for example through community programmes ([http://www.globalactionplan.com/community\\_pgm.html](http://www.globalactionplan.com/community_pgm.html)) and schools (<http://www.globalactionplan.com/schools.html>).

A key success factor in programmes for sustainable development is the leadership (<http://www.globalactionplan.com/leadership.html>).

### TRAINING

GAP International offers a variety of courses to member organisations and, occasionally, to non-members. Some examples:

- Design of empowering programmes
  - Adapting an existing programme to a new language and culture
  - Empowering coaching – principles and practice
  - Models and methods for sustainable project management
  - Transformative Leadership (with Futures Invention Associates)
  - Synergy effects in the work-place (with Fleck Consulting AB)
- See also the training programmes of member organisations, for example the Empowerment Institute (<http://www.empowermentinstitute.net/files/SLP.html>) in the USA.

<http://www.globalactionplan.com/>

**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 Business Group  
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

**What can YOU do?**

The Hunger Project - UK.

Activism for Ending World Hunger

The Hunger Project-UK is the British chapter of a worldwide movement committed to the sustainable end of world hunger. In thousands of villages of Africa, Asia and Latin America, The Hunger Project empowers grass-roots people to take charge of their own lives and meet their basic needs.

The Hunger Project is a global, strategic organization committed to the end of world hunger. Throughout Great Britain, there are hundreds of individual Hunger Project investors, many of whom are also committed volunteer activists, working to expand our movement of investors.

Registered Charity Number: 326688

<http://thehungerproject.org.uk/>

**Ram Navmi**



**NAV NAT VANIK ASSOCIATION  
OF THE UK CELEBRATING  
SHRI RAM NAVMI**

નવનાત વણિક એસોસિએશન ઓફ ધી યુ. કે.  
દ્વારા આયોજીત

**શ્રી રામ નવમી જન્મ જયંતી ઉત્સવ**

તા. ૧૨.૦૪.૨૦૦૬ શનિવાર  
સમય : સાંજે ૪ થી ૮

સ્થળ : નવનાત સેન્ટર, પ્રીન્ટીંગ હાઉસ લેન, હેયઝ, મીડલસેક્સ.  
સાંસ્કૃતિક કાર્યક્રમ બાદ ભજન અને આરતી તથા મહાપ્રસાદ આપવામાં આવશે.  
સર્વે ભાઈ બહેનોને સહકુટુંબ મિત્રમંડળ સહિત પધારવા ખાસ આમંત્રણ છે.

✽ વધુ માહિતી માટે સંપર્ક ✽

નીતીન પારેખ	—	૦૨૦ ૮૨૦૫૨૩૦૭
અનિલ પારેખ	—	૦૧૯ ૨૩૮૨૯૮૭૬
રૂપલ પુનાતર	—	૦૨૦ ૮૯૦૮૦૮૩૩

**Jain spiritual chaplaincy**

Dear Vaniks  
Jai Jinendra and Jai Shri Krishna

NCVA is engaged in the project of spiritual and religious care of patients in hospitals for three years. As the Vanik community have Vaishnav and Jain religion followers, our interest is to support patients of either religion while they are in hospital.

When the Department of Health through NHS decided to encourage minority faiths to establish spiritual & religious care system of their own, it distributed responsibility to different organisations that have prominent membership of any particular faith.

The Council of Hindu Temples were asked to develop Hindu spiritual care system and The National Council of Vanik Associations (UK) being an umbrella body for Vanik organisations (of which the majority have substantial Jain membership) were commissioned to develop the system for Jain Spiritual Care.

The information shown in this edition of the Vanik Voice summarises the project and its progress to date and advises on how to obtain religious care while in hospital as a patient, their family or staff.

If any one has any suggestions or comments, or has interest in participating in this project, please contact me by e-mail [manhar.mehta@yahoo.com](mailto:manhar.mehta@yahoo.com).

Manhar Mehta - Chairman of the NCVA

## **Spiritual & Religious Care for Patients in Hospitals**

### ***Spiritual Care / Chaplaincy in hospitals***

In the UK, the association between religion and the care of the sick goes back hundreds of years - certainly the Christian church has always regarded this provision as one of its prime duties. There has always been a close relationship between hospitals and the Church, ranging from early monastic infirmaries to the great charitable hospitals founded in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. From the beginning, these institutions cared for both the physical and spiritual welfare of their patients.

The Christian priests who traditionally provide such care are called Hospital Chaplains. The Chaplain provides spiritual advocacy, religious and sacred (devotional) rites to the needs of individual patients. The chaplain can offer emotional support and spiritual care to patients, their families and friends, and also to hospital staff.

We are familiar with the National Health Service providing for our medical needs. What is less well known is that the Patient's Charter (DH 1991) commits all NHS Trusts and Units to provide a service that also meets the spiritual and religious needs of patients, with due respect for privacy, dignity, and religious and cultural beliefs. All NHS hospitals are obliged to provide spiritual and cultural care including prayer rooms and meals that suit the patient's beliefs.

For many years, Jewish priests (Rabbis) have been providing a similar service for their faith. In recent years, the government has been encouraging other faiths to provide a Spiritual Care service in hospitals. As well as the Christian and Jewish faiths, the government recognises the Muslim, Hindu, Jain, Sikh, Buddhist, Zoroastrian and Baha'i religions as world faiths. Many of these communities have started providing Spiritual Care services in hospitals.

### ***Spiritual Care for Minority Faiths***

In 2004, a report initiated by the NHS, recommended that minority faiths be encouraged and supported in setting up their own faith care in hospitals. This report recommended that The National Council of Vanik Associations (UK) (the "NCVA") - as an umbrella body for Vanik organisations (of which the majority have substantial Jain membership) - be commissioned to set up a Jain faith spiritual care system in this country. Responsibility for the spiritual care of Hindu faith patients was given to the Council of Hindu Temples.

Although spiritual care /chaplaincy in hospitals is an established system, Multi-Faith spiritual care is a new concept for both medical and traditional chaplaincy staff. It certainly is a new concept for the communities in this country that follow any of the eastern faiths. For the Jain, Hindu, Buddhist and Sikh communities to set up such a new system, and match the achievements of the established Christian system, is certainly an up-hill task.

### ***Religious Support to Hindu patients in hospitals***

As stated earlier the responsibility to run Hindu chaplaincy has been given to the Council of Hindu Temples (CHT) recently, some Hindu faith care givers/chaplains have been giving this service for many years in certain hospitals within the area of Hindu population. If any Vaishnav Vanik is in need of faith/religious support in hospital, the nursing staff should be able to arrange for the same. If needed, the NCVA will contact hospital authorities or CHT on behalf of Hindu patients.

### ***Jain Spiritual Care / Jain Chaplaincy/Religious support to Jain Patients***

Contrary to the situation for Hindu faith, to date, there is no one offering Jain religious support in any of the hospitals in the UK. For this reason the NCVA had started working towards a Jain Chaplaincy as one of its many projects before the decision of NHS to support Jain Chaplaincy through us. Jaymanbhai Mehta, Spiritual Care Project coordinator, has described the project and its progress below. Ask hospital staff to contact us for any religious support needed for a patient.

### ***Process for establishing Jain Spiritual Care System***

A programme is structured as shown below.

- ❖ Identify geographical areas where Jain communities are established
- ❖ Raise understanding/awareness of Spiritual Care system in the UK within the Jain community
- ❖ Call for volunteers from the Jain community to join chaplaincy teams in hospitals
- ❖ Prepare training material of chaplaincy in general and of Jain spiritual care in particular
- ❖ Liaise with all hospitals in the country to raise within their staff, awareness and understanding of Jain faith and the needs (including diet) of Jain patients
- ❖ Agree with hospitals within the Jain population areas to recruit Jain spiritual carers in their chaplaincy departments
- ❖ Select suitable volunteers, provide them training, arrange and authorise their placement with appropriate hospital trusts
- ❖ Maintain a register of trained, authorised and appointed personnel
- ❖ Prepare and acquire Jain spiritual care literature for the use of all health care chaplains and for distribution among the hospitals libraries

### ***Obstructions facing the programme***

Although the Jain faith is recognised as one of the nine major faiths, an official procedure of recording a person's faith as 'JAIN' is non-existent.

- The form for the ten-year census in the UK does not include "Jain" amongst the list of faiths
- The forms for admitting patients in Hospitals and for children in schools do not include "Jain" in the list of faiths

In all these cases, one has no option but to tick "Other" or enter 'Jain' in the space against the "Other". As a result, count of Jain population will be hidden under "Other".

This raises a situation that there are no official records of number of Jains in the UK or of Jain patients in any hospital or of Jain pupils in a school.

### ***Progress to Date***

- ❖ A survey has been conducted among all hospital trusts in the UK to find if they have any record of the number of Jain patients, and if they have employed any Jain person in their chaplaincy department.  
The result is as expected; no records of Jain patients ever been admitted nor any Jain being employed as a chaplain.
- ❖ Geographical areas with significant Jain populations, and the hospitals within these areas, have been identified.
- ❖ As part of awareness programme, leaflets have been published and distributed amongst all Jains and talks are being delivered at various community gatherings to explain the system of spiritual care for patients
- ❖ In 2007, then the lead Chaplain at Barnet hospital the Rev. James Linthicum trained Manhar Mehta and Jayman Mehta in the skills of chaplaincy
- ❖ Preparations have started to produce an appropriate training course
- ❖ A sheet of information on 'Jainism and the needs of Jain Patients' has been produced and distributed to all hospitals for insertion in their staff manual. This will raise the awareness of Jainism with their staff and standardise information on this subject among all hospitals (see attachment).

## You Can't Hurry Love ... or Can You?

National Council of Vanik Association speed-dating event. Held on Sunday 16th march 2008

Is three minutes long enough to decide whether or not you've met your soul mate? Most of the participants said a resounding "yes" after attending the latest, and possibly the most successful (in terms of planning and attendance numbers) speed-dating event hosted by the National Council of Vanik Associations (NCVA). For busy professionals who have little time for conventional dating, this event was indeed a godsend.

Some 200 participants took part in this event held at VIP Lounge, the premier north London venue known for some of its glamorous parties. For a small fee, the participants got an opportunity to be matched up other singles for their age group, each of whom was assigned a number.

Once paired off they get three minutes to chat up the person across from them. When the whistle blows, the men all shift one seat over, and another three-minute session begins. After each conversation, you can give each person you met a "yes" or a "no" as to whether you'd like to hear from them again. Then all of the 'yeses' are matched up and you get a list of matches via your email.... From hereon, you can communicate directly with your matches. Nothing could be more simpler.

But for the organisers, planning for such an event is a challenge in itself. It involves analysing detailed questionnaires to get a close match between prospective 'candidates', collection of fees, registration formalities, preparing guidance notes, individual table-setting to maintain 'conversational' privacy, catering, etc., all requires detail planning. And in this instance the team led by Rameshbhai Shah, and his daughter Reena and son Sachin, with the help of a small group of volunteers, produced an event which can only be described as par excellence.

It was, in the words of an experienced speed dater, "the best organised event I'd ever been to. The fact that I was able to hold my conversation with my match in private instead of being under the nose of either the organisers or other participants, made this event so different from those I have attended before".

The numbers attending also show how the taboo associated with speed dating in our vanik community is slowly disappearing.

And a lot of them were first timers, so it wasn't the case of the same faces time and time again.

The initiative taken by NCVA in hosting the event is highly commendable, a view echoed by most participants as they were leaving, and for some of them in the company of their newly found matches! Who said you can't hurry love?

Author Rohit and Parina Mehta

## Chel Chabilo Gujarati play at Navnat Centre

Namaskar Mitra,

Its not often that we come across well organised functions particularly on a weekday evening when volunteers have to struggle to be on time direct from work.

The programme arranged by our Bhagini ran like clockwork and was without any major hiccup.

The food was traditional but healthy and excellent.

The play was hilarious and provided lots of uncontrolled laughter.

All in all, a very good programme organised by Bhagini and an excellent value.

Regards and God Bless.

Dhiru Galani

## Is Kenya sitting on a tinder box or has it any future?

How will Kenya, Kenyan Africans and also Kenyan Indians fare in the future after recent clashes between the titans from different tribes is anybody's guess but the omens are not at all positive. Kofi Anan's strenuous efforts would appear to have paved the way but its success or failure depends on the willingness of either parties to the dispute in implementing them in substance and not only in form.

A lot has been written about the events leading up to this unholy mess brought about by rivalry between the incumbent President Mwai Kibeki and his opponent Raila Odinga and timely intervention of dignitaries like Rev. Desmond Tutu, erstwhile president of the Organisation of African Union, the President of Ghana, ex Secretary General of the United Nations, Kofi Anan and the current Head of OAU, the President of Tanzania have prevailed with extreme difficulty in bringing the rivals around the table to discuss and resolve the issues between them. The blame game continues unabated and in the midst of all this tribalism has reared its ugly head leading to genocide and ethnic cleansing as US Ambassador has publicly claimed. It is US who has opposed an in depth investigation into events that unfolded since the rigged election results were announced on 27 December for reasons best known to it. Why US opposes such an investigation by the United Nations remains a state secret.

Most of the EU countries have maintained a studied silence throughout the whole of this period and the ex Colonial power, Great Britain would appear to have shied away from this unhappy episode. It was only last year that the current Prime Minister of this country, one Rt. Hon. Mr. Gordon Brown had a walk about in many African countries promising aid to alleviate the plight of the Africans. The G8 summit had also promised massive aid at its conference in Scotland but all to no avail.

The situation in Kenya is extremely grim with far reaching repercussions on personal safety of the residents of the country. Indians by and large have suffered economically to a substantial extent in the Rift Valley area; shops have been looted, industrial plants have been vandalised and shops have been set on fire. It is more than likely that these were, as is the vogue with our Indian brethren, under insured and any compensation, if and when it comes, will fall far short of the real value.

Fortunately, be it by design or accident, Indians have been spared from physical violence. I have spoken to a few contacts, telephone line permitting, and all of them, without exception, are content to watch this conflagration from the safety of their fortress like well secured homes. The only community that has taken precautionary and positive action to keep its members and others who were willing to join them out of and away from the harms way is the Ismaili community. H.H. the Agha Khan has, without fanfare or unwanted publicity, airlifted his followers and others who were willing to join them from towns and villages to safer places not too far away from Kenya.

Our Indian brethren who have lived in Kenya for a very long time, say 4 to 5 generations and some new arrivals who have gained entry at a heavy price, have the tendency, like ostrich, to bury their heads in the sand when in trouble and hope for better days ahead. Quite a significant proportion of them have enriched themselves by corrupt practices and African elite have not missed out on the spoils thereof. A number of them have, in connivance with the politicians and bureaucrats, disappeared from the country overnight and are living in the lap of luxury in neighbouring countries that presumably have no extradition treaty with Kenya. Legal process, as in India, grinds very slowly and it is not unusual for the witnesses to either disappear or die in the meantime.

I am also surprised that some of our new generation who have just completed their studies in British Universities have opted to go back to Kenya at a time when people are trying to escape to safer havens nearer to their homes. The lure of lucre and relatively easy life have attracted them back to Kenya.

These unforeseen trouble in Kenya has had an adverse impact on supplies of bare essentials to Uganda, Rwanda and other central African nations and Tanzania's tourist trade has suffered very badly. There are unsubstantiated rumours that Ugandan and Rwandan armies may enter Kenya to secure supplies of essential commodities Presidents Museveni and Kagame both know a thing or two about rebel forces and leading armies to secure what they want.

Kibaki has shown some real courage and faith over his grip of the armed forces given that he could leave the country to attend the AU summit.

In a very courageous and open letter Ms. Sahilja Patel has castigated the Chairman of Kenya Election Commission for his part in election rigging.

Equally in a rather long article Mr. Oduor Ong'wen highlights the fact that election observers from EU, the Commonwealth, the East African Community were in agreement that presidential elections were stolen and yet the West has insisted that this being Africa, the subversion of people's will be ignored for 'the sake of country's unity and stability.' This is an euphemism for 'our strategic interest, our investments, our holidays and safaris are more important than your democratic rights; so shut up, trust and obey. Kenya and most of African countries attained their political independence but economic slavery still continues in a different guise.

He also draws attention to the historical fact that it was in the Rift Valley where British settlers alienated huge tracts of land from indigenous Kenyans, paying a mere 10 cents per acre to the crown, not the owners. It was in the Rift Valley where the Masai community were duped into signing a 100 year agreement with the British in 1904 and denied a hearing by Kibaki's government in 2004 when the agreement lapsed. It is in the Rift Valley where the Pokot were forcefully pushed out of their communal land. He has said a lot more but this is enough for the purpose of this article.

Indians acted as axe handle in executing British masters' orders. Some of my colleagues were compulsorily recruited into the British Army and I know of at least one who died in action.

If one were to examine the history of migration of our forefathers from India to Kenya and other African countries it will show that this migration was not wholly voluntary. Circumstances in India and particularly in Gujarat and Kutch were such that there was nothing for the then generation to do to earn a living and keep the family together. It was out of sheer desperation that they migrated in search of bread and their ingenuity and business acumen enabled them to thrive and prosper over a period of time. Earlier days were extremely tough and the basic salary was in the region of Rs.200 per annum (not month). Our people were thrifty and saved as much as was humanly possible. This contributed to a very substantial extent to their advancement in commerce and industry and improving the environment they lived in. It also provided a boost to religious practice and temples, mosques and gurudwaras, churches and other places of worship sprang up all around the country. We also brought with us our prejudices and superstitions that hindered our integration with the local indigenous communities. This also led to the widening of the economic gap between the Indian community and local people and our preoccupation with problems in our ancestral home at the expense of those occurring in our adopted home created a divide between us, a tiny minority, and majority Africans. Except for the Ismaili community rest of the community with its ancestral roots in India have done virtually nothing when a lot more needs to be done.

Kenyan youths are unemployed and without any worthwhile occupation. Those in Government, be it in Kenya or other developing countries are feather bedding their nest and those of their near ones and could not care less for the unemployed and unemployable youth. We too have a responsibility to be much more proactive in a country which has been our home for 4-5 generations and continues to be so. Unless we take a positive attitude coupled with action to improve the standard of living of our African brethren and assume that the troubles will subside and revert to normality given time we are living in a fool's paradise. We are sitting on a tinder box and it will take only a single spark to set it alight.

Charity begins at home and not some far of country with which our connections are becoming somewhat tenuous.

There are no simple answers to many questions. All we need to ask ourselves is whether we are fulfilling our social and civic responsibility in the countries we live in and where we are a mere drop in an ocean and yet capable of making a difference.

The Kenyan Asian's behaviour and conduct over the years can best be summed up in a short poem written by Pastor Martin Niemoller (1892 – 1984). He wrote:

They came first for the communists,  
And I didn't speak up because I was not a communist.  
Then they came for the Jews,  
And I did not speak up because I was not a Jew.  
Then they came for the Trade Unions,  
And I did not speak up because I was not a trade unionist,  
Then they came for the Catholics,  
And I did not speak up because I was a Protestant,  
Then they came for me,  
And by that time no one was left to speak up.

Mansukh Shah

The political class in India is least bothered about the fate of Indians in East Africa; this has been made amply clear on a number of occasions. I will spare my readers details thereof.

Find out how the Gandhi Foundation is commemorating the 60th anniversary of Gandhiji's untimely demise

My friend has sent me this message. It is something that we all need to think about regardless of our race, religion, gender etc. The Gandhi Foundation is commemorating the 60th anniversary of Gandhiji's untimely demise by organising a series of events to spread the message of non-violence.

Non-violence is an important message for young people today where people are carrying knives and guns and are increasingly not afraid to use them on other humans. Just last week a Gujarati lad was jailed for life for the fatal stabbing of another young person.

More here: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/northamptonshire/7251462.stm>

The events that he is talking about are: ~

The Gandhi Foundation has much pleasure in inviting your organisation to participate in "The Festival of Nonviolence" during the 18 days from Tuesday 25th March to Saturday 12th April to mark the 60th year since Gandhi's death in 1948. Representatives of participating organisations will be invited to The Festival Launch Party on 25th March at The British Library Conference Centre on Euston Road when The British Library will unveil their new exhibition: "The Life of Gandhi" At 7:30, a number of eminent people from the worlds of the arts and culture will each contribute a short piece on Nonviolence. Indian and Western music will be played during refreshments.

**ORGANISATIONS SUPPORTING THE FESTIVAL [to 25th February]**

The British Library & The India Office, The Indian High Commission & The Nehru Centre, The TUC & their EU + International Relations Department, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, St Ethelburga's Centre for Peace and Reconciliation, Peace Child International, The Noble Sage Art Gallery, The Conflict Research Society, The Christian Ecology Group, "Yoga and Health" magazine, The Acronym Institute for Disarmament Diplomacy, The Schumacher Society, The Environmental Law Association, The Jeevika Trust, The Prem Rawat Foundation, The Blake Society, The Power of Word & Song, The Inter-Faith Network, "Alternatives" at St James Piccadilly, The London Socialist Film Club, Action for UN Renewal, The Commonwealth Countries League, The Centre for International Peacebuilding, Green Mantle [Ecosophy], The ministry for peace, The Christian Council for Monetary Justice, The Global Justice Movement, The India League, The Gandhi Tour and iane Abbott MP, Peter Bottomley MP, Mike Horovitz, Dr James Chiriyankandath, Diana Basterfield, Manab Majumder, Harry Marsh

**PATRONS:**

Godric Bader, Sir Bernard Crick, Lord Navnit Dholakia, Eirwen Harbottle, Professor Eric Hobsbawm, A L Kennedy, Dr Nanda Kumara, Mrs Monika Mohta, Roger Lloyd Pack, Lord Bhikhu Parekh, Martin Polden, Clive Stafford-Smith, Princess Helena Moutafian MBE

RSVP: John Rowley

73 Carysfort Road, London N16 9AD Tel: 0207-249-4471.

Email: [festival.of.nonviolence@gmail.com](mailto:festival.of.nonviolence@gmail.com)

Website: [www.gandhifoundation.org](http://www.gandhifoundation.org)

Further details:

"The Festival of Nonviolence"

Tuesday 25th March to Saturday 12th April

The Gandhi Foundation has created "The Festival of Nonviolence" to complement The British Library's travelling exhibition of "The Life of Gandhi" while it is in London.

Both serve to mark the 60 years that have passed since Gandhi's death in 1948 and both will open together at The British Library on 25th March. The 6 panels of the exhibition will be on public view for the first time on the following Saturday [29th March] at Kingsley Hall in Bromley-by-Bow where Gandhi stayed in 1931. The Festival will end on Saturday 12th April when the exhibition moves to Hull, the next stop on its journey round the country.

The aim of The Festival is to remind Londoners not only of their tacit and personal adherence to the principles and practice of Nonviolence but also of its power to solve the major problems of our city, namely, violence in the street, in the home, at work, at school, between the State and the individual, and towards the environment. Adopting Nonviolence explicitly as a basic law of behaviour is the most effective means to implementing justice, creating and maintaining communal harmony, achieving authentic race and inter-faith relations and establishing environmental integrity.

We believe that you and your organisation are one of many committed to the basic tenets of Nonviolence and that your work reflects this. We note that there are huge numbers of other people and groups in London who share this commitment with you. They range from the Faiths, not-for-profit and campaigning groups, most businesses, central and local governments to teachers, police, journalists, trades unionists, social and community workers, lawyers, managers, artists, academics, counsellors, politicians and many more.

You can now make your organisation's commitment to Nonviolence explicit by participating in The Festival either as a "Supporter": you simply put the title and logo on your publicity for your normal work and activities. Or as an "Activist": you put on a Special event during the 18 days of The Festival. The Programme shows the events already organised. Clearly, the more there are, the greater the impact of our unifying theme.

Once you register as either a “Supporter” and/or an “Activist”, we will post you a hard-copy Invitation Card for the Launch Party at The British Library, 6:30pm on 25th March. In between times, we will:

1. Email you weekly up-dates on Patrons, Supporters and Activists.
2. Add your Special event and details to the Festival Programme and GF website.
3. Include your Special event in The Festival London-wide marketing campaign.

Provided by Heena Modi

<http://www.heenamodi.com/2008/03/17/find-out-how-the-gandhi-foundation-is-commemorating-the-60th-anniversary-of-gandhiji%E2%80%99s-untimely-demise/>

### Plagiarism – a boon or a curse for students and teachers alike.

The term ‘plagiarism’ according to Oxford English Dictionary means ‘to take the work or idea of someone else and pretend it is one’s own. This practice is not the sole monopoly of students as even celebrated writer and author like Dan Brown of ‘The Da Vinci Code’ fame, was unsuccessfully sued by Michael Baigent and Richard Leigh in the British High Court on the basis of their allegation that Dan Brown had stolen their ideas and infringed their copyright. This claim was thrown out by the High Court Judge Peter Smith. If anything it gave Dan Brown’s book a wider publicity at no cost to him.

However, regrettable though it is, this is not a new phenomenon amongst students aspiring to secure higher grades without putting in any or nil effort in their studies. In the olden days when the new gizmos were not available the used to memorise essays by heart, scribble major points in the palm of their hands or tiny pieces of paper, excuse themselves on the pretext of going to the toilet where reference and guide books were hidden, look into the neighbour’s answer paper and use all sorts of ruses they could think of. Occasionally they were able to provide word perfect answers, including punctuations etc but to a wrong question!!.

In my school days way back in the 1940s in Kenya and in early 1950s at University in India I had witnessed this sort of practice almost at every examination. There was favouritism by teachers towards students from rich families and also those who were their private students.

In India copying was encouraged by illiterate ministers in some of the states. Any disciplinary action was frowned upon culminating in students going on mass strikes.

Plagiarism was, is and has always been a very serious problem in under developed countries but teachers in UK are now worried that this is spreading even in developed countries.

In a recent report filed by Avril Ormsby of Reuters on 18 January 2008 she highlights the fact that in a recent survey <http://www.reuters.com/article/oddyEnoughNews/idUSN1842305120080118?fe> more than half the teachers complained that plagiarism from the internet was a problem. One teacher from Leeds said that in one piece of work so blatantly ‘cut and pasted’ that it still contained adverts from the web page.

The General Secretary of the ATL also emphasised that ‘teachers are struggling under a mountain of cut-and- pasting to spot whether work was student’s own or plagiarism. 58% of the teachers estimated that over quarter of the work returned by their pupils included plagiarism.

Up until now this was a problem of the under developed countries but now it seems to be spreading even in countries of the west.

The positive discrimination or what was generally known as positive action in the interest of minorities and scheduled castes (SC), scheduled tribes (ST) and other backward classes (OBC) enshrined in the Indian Constitution for 10 years has continued even to this day after 60 years of independence and the vote bank politics is averse to drawing a line underneath this. Admission to higher schools of learning is not based on merit but on caste classification. What the product of such a system will be like is for you to determine.

Mansukh Shah ( [mb@shah1933.plus.com](mailto:mb@shah1933.plus.com) )

How you can help Leicester City Council erect a statue of Mahatma Gandhi in Leicester.

Dear reader,

This message was sent to me by email. I think it's really important for members of ANY community to be reminded about how we can live without violence, rather with, communal harmony. There aren't enough figures in the past or the present who can teach us how to do this, nor are they given enough publicity.

It's up to us to create an environment that we desire. Now it's up to you to make a choice and sign the petition or abstain. Please sign this Petition to Support the application to Leicester City Council that a statue of Mahatma Gandhi be erected in Leicester.

The statue would celebrate the life and work of Gandhi Ji as the leading figure of non-violent resistance and as a champion of communal harmony.

Gandhiji's message has become more important than before in this fractured world.

Please click on the link below and register your support for this noble cause.

<http://petitions.pm.gov.uk/Leicester>

<http://www.heenamodi.com/2008/03/14/how-you-can-help-leicester-city-council-erect-a-statue-of-mahatma-gandhi-in-leicester/>

The Unwinking Gaze

I received this message by email and felt compelled to share it. If it's anything like the film ([Dalai Lama Renaissance](#)) I saw at the [Be the Change event](#); it will be amazing!

Opening Night for the London International Documentary Festival (LIDF) in the heart of London's Chinatown. This is currently scheduled as a one-off screening.

'This astonishing and revealing film is the result of three years of unrestricted access to the Dalai Lama. An intimate portrait of the exiled leader of Tibet as he struggles to negotiate a political settlement with China and contemplates his possible successor.'

Followed by a panel-led discussion with the director broadcast across the world via the web.

The film will sell out.

Book tickets today over the phone in advance - contact the Box Office on 0870 811 2559 for credit/debit card bookings (add 25p/ticket) Ticket price: £6.50. Box Office Open 1.30PM to 8.30PM.

If you miss out this time, we will in due course be gathering email addresses to keep you up-to-date regarding future screenings that arise across the UK and internationally.

The launch on the 29th March will be the start of an ongoing campaign to inform the debate on the Tibet issue. Recent days have seen rioting on a scale unprecedented since 1989. The spotlight is on China and our film will look at the one man who holds the key - there couldn't be a better moment to raise this issue especially in the run up to the Olympics. Shortly our website will be up and running which will give regular updates and news of screenings and developments.

We hope you can make it. Thanks in advance for joining the debate by showing this film your support.

Please forward this invite to your friends and encourage them to pass it on via their social network sites and email to their friends/work.

<http://www.facebook.com/event.php?eid=24087260352>

<http://www.heenamodi.com/2008/03/15/the-unwinking-gaze-launched-on-the-29th-march/>

## Mahavir Janma Kalyanak Celebrations

Saturday 26 April 2008

Byron Hall, Harrow Leisure Centre, Christchurch Avenue, Harrow HA3 5BD

We are pleased to announce the Joint Mahavir Janma Kalyanak Celebration event, which will be held under the united name: Jains UK.

The details of this historical event are: -

Date - Saturday, 26<sup>th</sup> April 2008

Timings - from 12 noon onwards

Venue - Harrow Leisure Centre, Byron Hall, Christchurch Avenue, Harrow HA3 5BD.

Programme:

- |                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| 1.30pm           | Doors Open   |
| 1.45pm           | Welcome and Introduction   |
| 2.00pm           | Keynote Speech by Pujya Pramodaben Chitrabhanu (a truly personified living Jain) |
| 2.50pm - 5.30pm  | Seminar, Exhibition, Workshops, Kids' Activities and Lectures                    |
| 5.30pm – 7.30pm  | Dinner   |
| 7.30pm - 10.30pm | Bhakti and Cultural Programme, Aarti and Mangal Divo                             |

Entry is by a nominal donation of £2 each per person. This allows the donor to attend all programmes, dinner and evening celebrations. This donation is introduced so that we can get an estimate of numbers of people attending and, therefore, make catering arrangements accordingly. Entrance passes will be available soon from your organisation or from the address above.

It has been agreed by the Jains UK organising committee that in order to meet the costs of this celebration, we are seeking main patrons who, by donating £1,001, will have the opportunity to participate in the Divo lighting ceremony. Only two members per patron will be able to participate in these vidhis. Further sponsors at £500 each are also sought who will be appropriately acknowledged. A number of pledges have already come forward, but we need many anymore. Any donation is very welcome and will help us to deliver this historical event. Cheques should be made payable to Jain Vishwa Bharati. Please write 'For the Mahavir Janma Kalyanak Celebrations' at the back of your cheque.

Every Jain organisation is doing great work to promote Jainism to its own membership. However, we humbly appeal to all Jain organisations to support this joint celebration. It is essential for the whole Jain community here in the UK to come together to celebrate the birth of Bhagwan Mahavir in order to instill a greater sense of gravitas and importance to Bhagwan Mahavir's teachings both within our own communities and externally. It is also important to create the opportunity for us promote Jainism with 'one voice' externally to local, regional, national and international bodies.

We very much look forward to seeing you on Saturday, 26 April 2008 – it will be an amazing day.

