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દિપાવલી શુભકામના

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FROM THE EDITORIAL DESK

Jai Shree Krishna

With the Blessings and Grace of Shrinathji and our Spiritual Head Vaishnavacharya Shri Dwarkeshlalji Mahodayshri (Kadi-Ahmedabad), Vaishnav Sangh of UK (VSUK) is delighted to present the Diwali 2023 edition.

As we embrace the joyous spirit of Diwali, we also celebrate the remarkable journey of the VSUK. Over the years, VSUK has been at the forefront of fostering spiritual growth, community unity, and cultural preservation. This Diwali marks yet another milestone in our ongoing commitment to serving the community, with the release of our Diwali Magazine 2023. This publication is a testament to the dedication and collective efforts of our community members.

Our sincerest thanks go out to The Editorial Team, a diverse group of Vaishnavs spanning various backgrounds and ages. Together, they have seamlessly blended their skill sets to bring you this edition, committing their time and effort to this Seva.

In anticipation of any inadvertent errors or oversights in this publication, we humbly extend our apologies.

May this Diwali bring you joy, prosperity, and spiritual fulfilment, and may this magazine provide inspiration for the various ways in which you can get involved in Seva, Satsang and Darshan at both our Havelis – Vrajdham Haveli, Leicester and Shrinathdham Haveli, London.

Our Best Wishes – Happy Diwali

Hitesh Raichura
Jay Mashru
Mahima Dalal
Mehul Shah
Minaben Popat
Mitesh Kothari
Nimesh Majmundar
Rajan Pitamber
Rio Fernandes
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Rt Hon Rishi Sunak MP

Prime Minister and Leader of the Conservative Party

It gives me great pleasure to send my best wishes for Diwali to all the Vaishnav members of the Shrinathdham National Haveli & Community Centre.

Diwali's universal message of the victory of good over evil, is relevant now more than ever. I hope that this Diwali we can promote our shared values of peace, tolerance and goodwill.

For me, my Hindu faith has been so important in all the decisions I continue to make for our country. I took great pride lighting diyas on Downing Street when I was Chancellor. It demonstrated the shared values of this great country.

I wish everyone a happy Diwali and a joyous New Year.

Rt Hon Rishi Sunak MP
Prime Minister and Leader of the Conservative Party

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1st October 2023

Dear Shri Pramodbhai

Jai Shri Swaminarayan, Jai Shri Krishna!

At the most auspicious start of the Hindu New year, our prayers and good wishes are with all the Trustees, volunteers and devotees of Shrinathdham!

To have the divine association and guidance of Param Pujya Shree Dwarkeshlalji Mahodayshree (Kadi, Amdavad) is indeed God's grace upon you all. It is only when God is pleased, that He grants such association with a Sant. The Sant removes our inner knots and the barriers that our minds create, and in doing so brings us ever-closer to God.

As we offer prayers at Diwali, may Shree Thakorji illumine us all such that we become the instruments of harmony within the family, amongst colleagues, within our community, between sampradayas. May the coming year bring great harmony and unity in all spheres of our life, such are our prayers at Shree Thakorji and Gurudev Yogiji Maharaj's lotus feet.

Jai Shri Krishna! Jai Shri Swaminarayan!
On behalf of the entire Anoopam Mission Parivar,
Ashvinbhai, Manojdas, Himat Swami and Santo –
Satishbhai, Vinubhai, Vijaykumar and all bhakto

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Jay shree krishna -

(His Holiness Sant Bhagwant Sahebji)

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A message from
The Worshipful the Mayor of Harrow
Councillor Ramji Chauhan & Mayoress, Mrs Meena Chauhan

May This Diwali Fulfil All Your Dreams and Bring Happiness To Your Life Forever.

Every Diya That Lights Up The World Brightens Up Each Heart With Joy.

May These Diyas Light Up Your Life with Peace, Prosperity, and Happiness!

All The Lights of The World Cannot Be Compared Even To a Ray of The Inner Light of The Self.

Councillor Ramji Chauhan
The Worshipful The Mayor, London Borough of Harrow

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(Swami Keshavjivandas)

4 October 2023
Robbinsville, USA

To all devotees of the Vaishnav Sangh of UK,

Jay Swaminarayan and Jay Shri Krishna.

On this auspicious occasion of Diwali and the Hindu New Year, we would like to offer our sincere prayers and best wishes to all our friends at the Vaishnav Sangh of UK.

Diwali is a time to celebrate the triumph of good over evil. It inspires values of goodwill, hope and harmony across communities. It provides a source of inspiration for all.

It is a time to not just reflect, but also an opportunity to look forward with hope, optimism, and positivity.

May the New Year usher in a new era of renewed spirituality and faith in our lives.

May Bhagwan Swaminarayan, Shri Radha-Krishna Bhagwan, Shri Sita-Rama Bhagwan, Shri Parvati-Shankar Bhagwan, His Holiness Pramukh Swami Maharaj, and all our revered deities and sages shower their blessings on all for everlasting peace, happiness, and success.

We wish you all the best for the celebrations that will take place in Shrinathdham National Haveli & Community Centre.

With innermost prayers and best wishes for the new year.

Sadhu Keshavjivandas

Sadhu Keshavjivandas
(His Holiness Mahant Swami Maharaj, Spiritual Head, BAPS Swaminarayan Sanshta)

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તા. ૧૦.૧૦.૨૦૨૩

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Hare Krishna!

On the auspicious occasions of Diwali, the great festival of lights, and Annakuta, a joyous celebration of sanctified food, we at Bhaktivedanta Manor wish you happiness during these special holy days. We pray that you attain pure devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

May the illumination of innumerable Diwali candles remind us that ultimately this world is not our real home; that ultimately we are spiritual beings who seek a place without disease, without ignorance, and without unhappiness. That place is the spiritual world, God's world. We belong there, with God and His dear devotees, not in this place of uncertainty, hardships and heartbreak.

Although humankind has made and continues to make enormous strides in technology and science, every one of us is ultimately dependent on the Supreme Being, God. Our business is not to try to conquer, control and defy nature, but to understand who's nature it is. It is God's nature. He has created it, He maintains it, and in the end He will wind it up. We have a role to play in this world, His world, and that role has been explained by Him in the great revealed scriptures of the world; it's not complicated.

The Bhagavad-gita tells us that, "A person in full consciousness of the Supreme Person, knowing Him to be the ultimate beneficiary of all sacrifices and austerities, the Supreme Lord of all planets, and the benefactor and well-wisher of all living entities, attains peace from the pangs of material miseries." (Bhagavad Gita 5.29)

We're all anxious to attain peace in this world, but we don't know the formula for peace, which is explained here. The greatest peace formula is simply this: the Supreme Person is the beneficiary in all human activities. All people should offer everything to the transcendental service of the Lord because He is the proprietor of everything; no one is greater than He. Under the spell of illusion, we're trying to be lords of all we survey, but actually God is the master of material nature, and we are under the stringent rules of material nature. Unless we understand these bare facts, it is not possible to achieve peace in the world either individually or collectively. This is the sense of God consciousness, Krishna consciousness: Sri Krishna is the supreme predominator, and all living entities are His subordinates. One can attain perfect peace in such complete Krishna consciousness.

The light of this knowledge will bring lasting solace to our hearts and minds. As we live by it and make it a practical reality in our lives, we will feel grateful for God's gifts in whatever form they come. We will look to Him for shelter and find in Him not only shelter but also, despite everything, genuine happiness. This can be the transcendent blessing Diwali offers us.

All the best to one and all and our heartfelt best wishes to all the Vaishnavas in London.

Yours in the service of Sri Krishna

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From the Office of the Mayor of the Borough of Welwyn Hatfield

Dear All Vaishnav Devotees,

Jay Shree Krishna !!!

On this auspicious occasion of Diwali, with a humble heart, I want to extend my warmest greetings to each and every one of you. Diwali, the festival of lights, holds a special place in our hearts, symbolising the triumph of light over darkness, good over evil, and knowledge over ignorance.

The festival reminds us of the importance of Unity, Family, and Community. It is a time when we come together to share Joy, Exchange Gifts, and offer prayers for a prosperous and harmonious future.

May the radiance of the diyas light up your homes and hearts with Happiness and Prosperity. Let us cherish the values of togetherness, understanding, and kindness that this festival teaches us.

Wishing you and your family a wonderful Diwali filled with Love, Joy and Prosperity.

Warm regards,

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Mayor of Welwyn Hatfield Borough
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Wish All
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It gives me great pleasure to extend my very best wishes to all the Vaishnavs. I wish everyone Vikrant Samvat 2080 na Nutan Varshabhinandan Diwali depicts good over evil and the divas spread much needed light, happiness peace and harmony in the world.

Since the inception of the Haveli inspired by Shree Dwarkeshlalji Mahodayshree (Kadi Ahmedabad) It has progressed leaps and bounds with the Ashirwad and Blessings showered by Thakorji.

I congratulate Meenaben Popat and Shiluben Patel at the helm furthering the pioneering work by Subhashbai Lakhani. Pray that Thakorji gives you strength to carry on this selfless seva.

Would like to take this opportunity to thank Minaben Popat for the everyday morning Darshan and information about all the utsavs celebrated at the haveli.

I sincerely and wholeheartedly believe the Haveli will go a long way in promoting Vaishnavism and Hindutva not only in Harrow but throughout the UK.

It gives me immense pleasure to wish Vaishnav Sangh UK on behalf of Lohana Community North London and the entire executive Committee A very Happy Diwali and Happy, Healthy & Wealthy New Year.

Jay Shree Krushna and Bolo Shree Vallabhadhish ki Jay!

Your truly,

Meena Jasani

Meena Jasani
LCNL President 2023-2025

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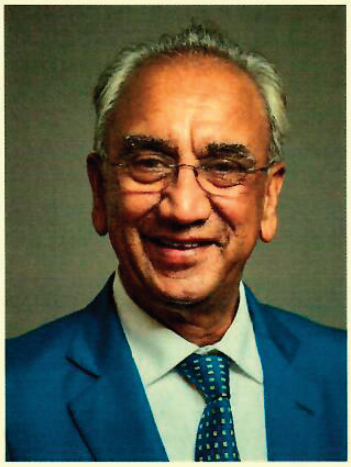
19th September 2023



It gives me great pleasure in wishing the Shrinathdham National Haveli and Community Centre a very happy Diwali and prosperous New Year.

In uncertain times, it can easily become routine to perceive the world with a negative outlook. However, Diwali urges us to remember that good things will always accompany the bad. It is when we come together in our resilient community, that we find this light in the darkness. Alike to the countless times before, the collaboration of our people allows us to boldly overcome any obstacles.

I would like to address the immense sense of pride we should all feel by the appointment of our newest Prime Minister. Such an outstanding achievement by a man of our religion offers no better time to celebrate with friends and family. As Mr Sunak read from the Bible during the King's coronation, he left a long-lasting impression of the simultaneous respect for both our religion as well as the nation we live in. As our faith teaches us to equally value our own beliefs and customs, and those of others, he had dutifully served both the Hindu and British population.

Not to mention that our new Prime Minister causes us to reflect on where we, as a people, started in this nation. From the expulsion of the East African Asians, to being represented on the highest government level, recognition must be given to the great strides we have taken as Hindus integrating into the British collective. When Mr Sunak and I attended Ram Katha at Cambridge University, I saw first-hand this progression that we have made. Commencing his speech with **'Jai Siya Ram'**, whilst also addressing his utmost efforts to serve the country, we were provided a clear example of presenting duty to your roots and to your new beginnings. With such an honourable representation in the government, there is clear reason to be incredibly proud of being a **Hindu *and* being British.**

As we progress to the end of another year, we must remember to appreciate all the good things in our lives that aid us in powering through the bad. With such a valuable and supportive community, I have no doubts that we will all help each other to grow towards a bright future and sustain a positive perspective throughout.

I wish everyone an enjoyable Diwali and a happy New Year.

Yours sincerely,

Dolar Popat

Lord Dolar Popat

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Shree Yamunasakhi Vrund

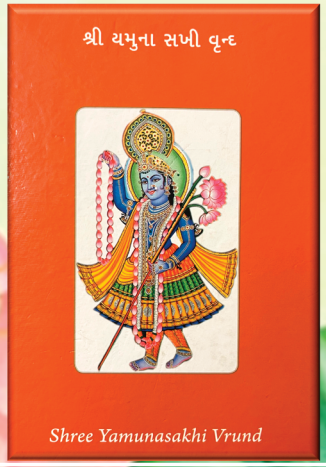
Jay Shree Krushna.

Diwali aney Nuttan Varsh ni Khub Vadhai.

On behalf of 'Shree Yamuna Sakhi Vrund', I would like to congratulate and applaud Vaishnav Sangh of the UK for the smooth running of Shrinathdham Haveli under the guidance and blessings of Jeje Shree Dwarkeshlalji Mahodayshree. It has indeed achieved its' height and goals set by Jeje Shree, alongside the hard work of all the trustees, committee members and volunteers.

Since the time the Haveli has opened in Harrow, it has made vital contribution to the lives of Vaishnavs and their families, which is demonstrated in many ways. Yamuna Sakhis have had the facility to host monthly Satsangs at the Haveli with great ease. Besides that, it is also a learning hub for the young and old as we can join Kirtan classes, yoga classes, as well as religious education classes for children. We get the opportunity for different type of Seva, such as Malaji (flower garland), Tokri Seva(vegetable chopping), Sajaavat (decoration for different festivals and events) etc, which helps us stay connected to the lotus feet of Shree Thakorji and advance in the path of Religion and Spirituality. Let us all flourish and enhance the divinity within to make our world a better place to live in, not just for us, but for the generations to come.Stay blessed and best wishes for the coming year!

Jay Shree Krushna from Shree Yamuna Sakhi Vrund.
Falguni Sejpal



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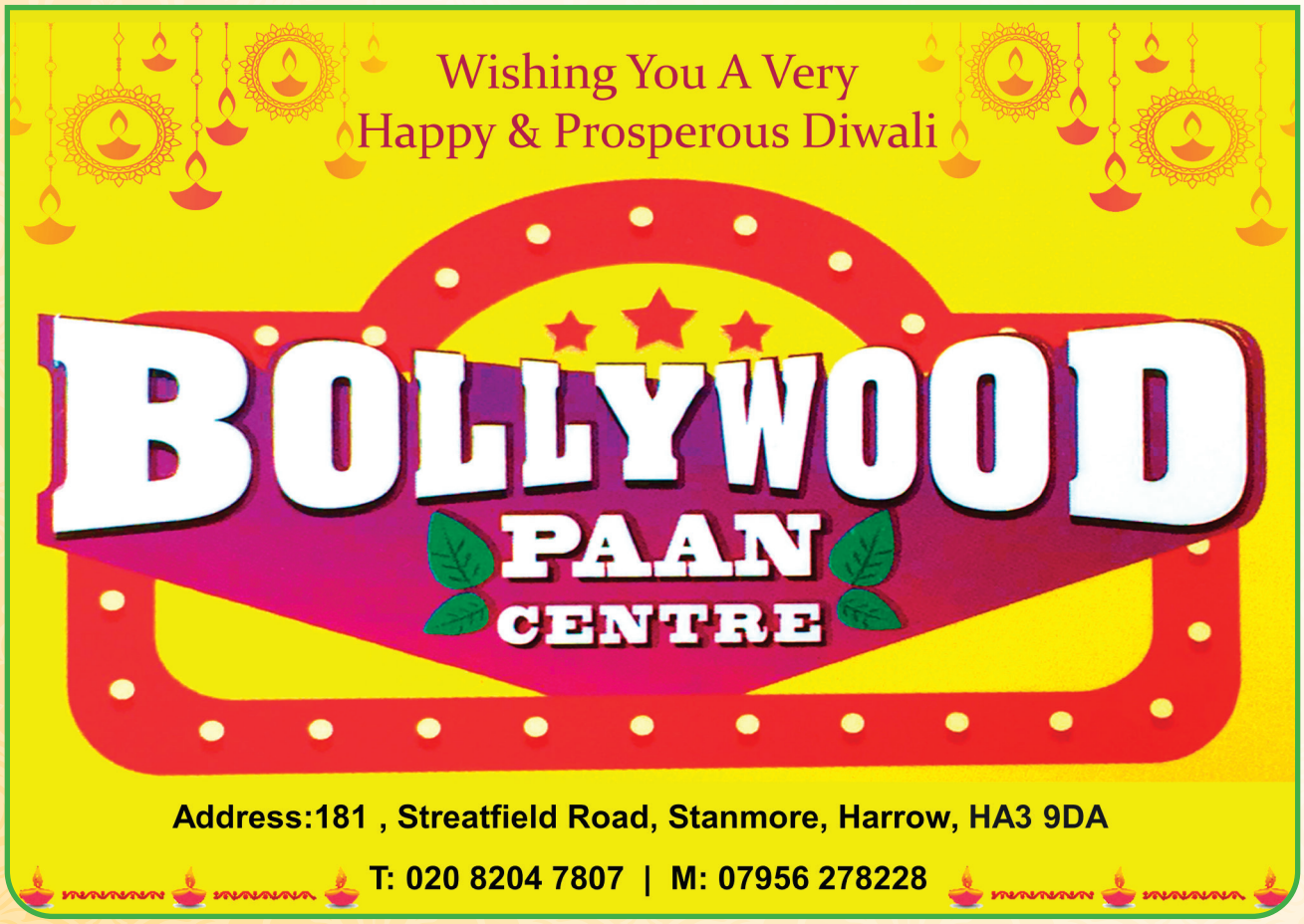
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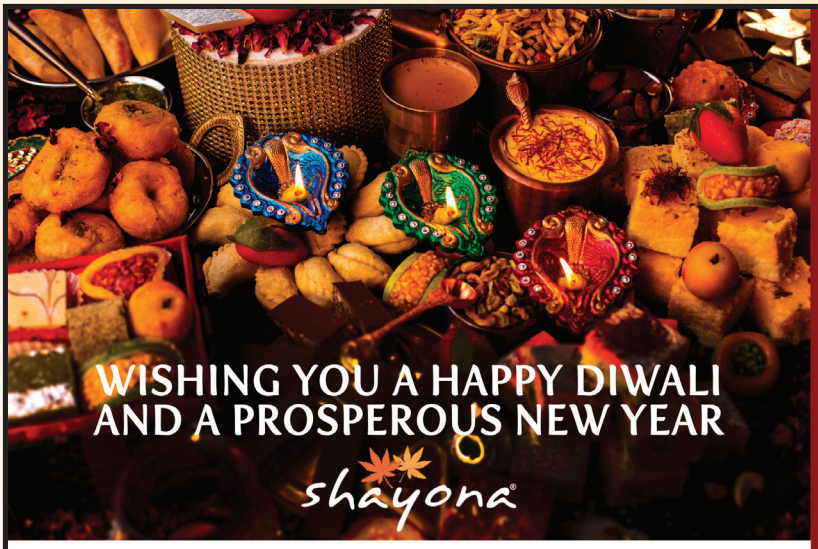

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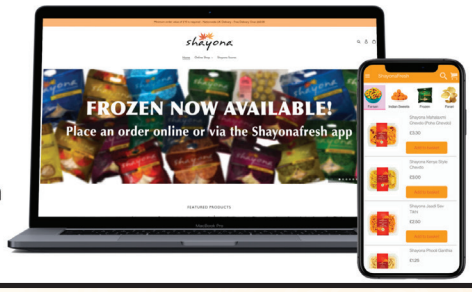

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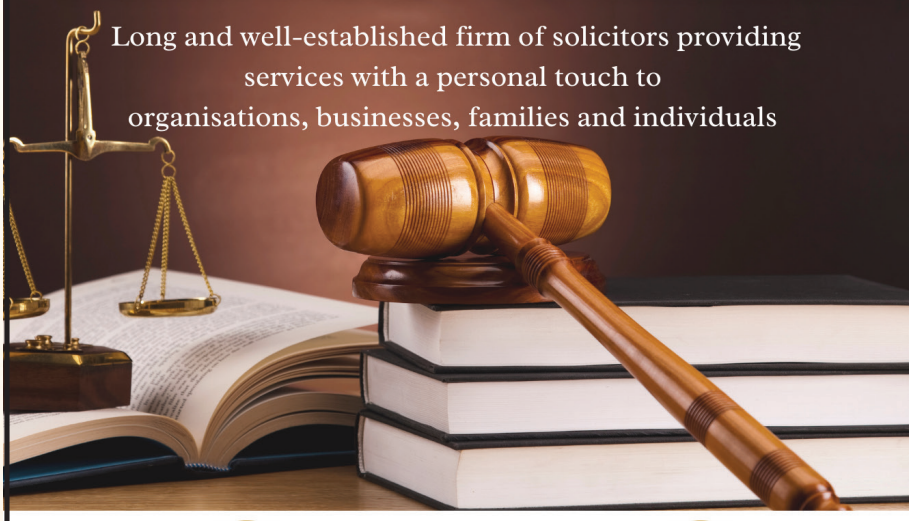

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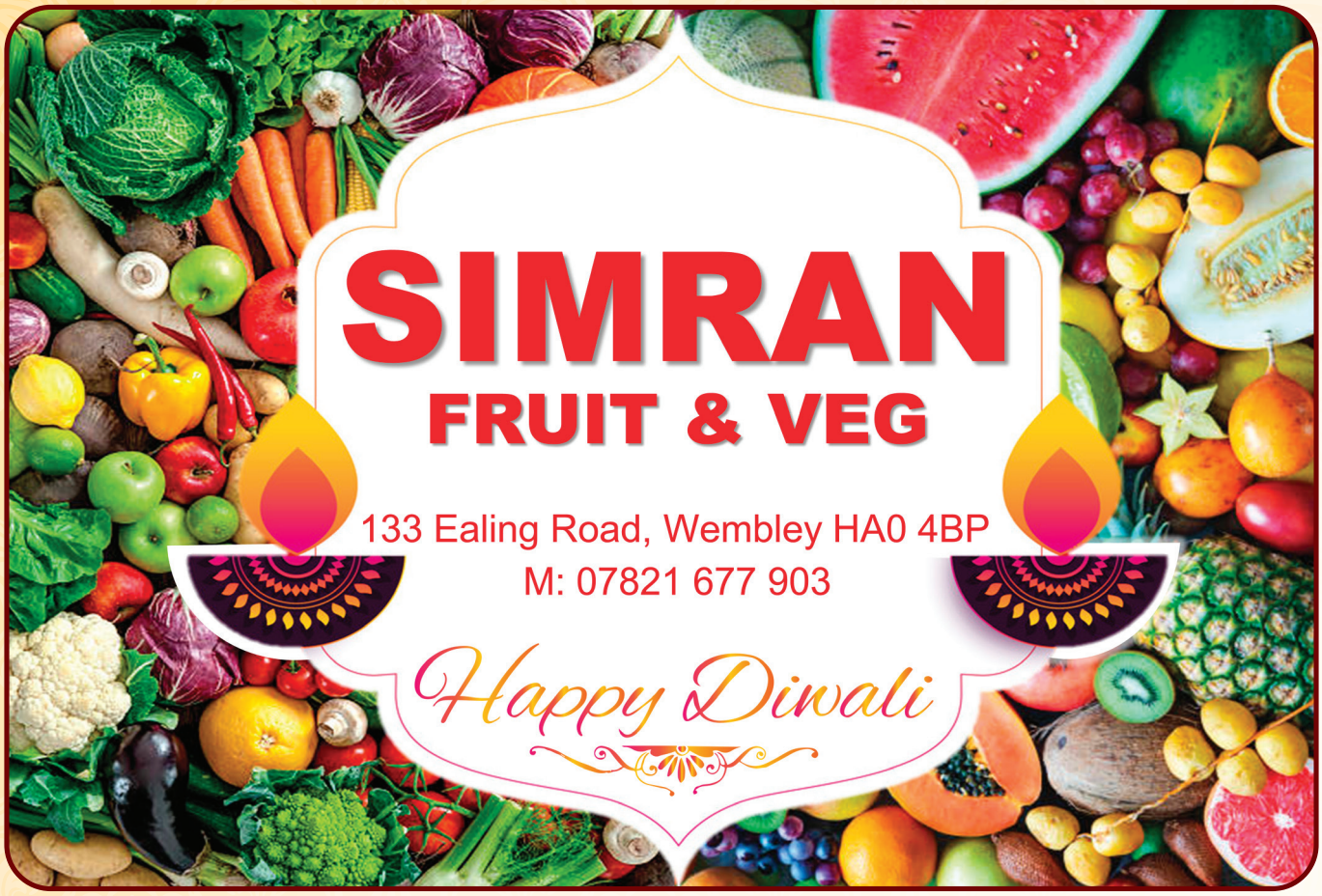
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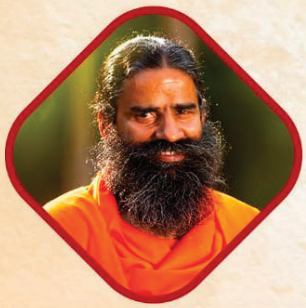

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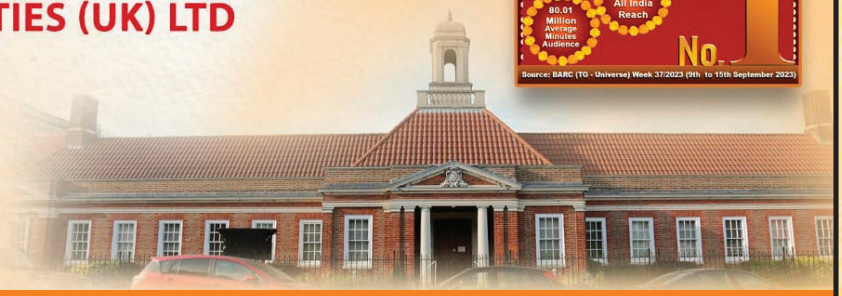

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Ms. Minaben Popat- Chairperson and Trustees
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Dear Minaben Popat,

I hope this letter finds you in good health and high spirits. I am writing to express my heartfelt congratulations on the magnificently organized Sodash Granth Katha with P G 108 Shree Dwarkeshlalji Mahodayshree recently conducted by VSUK under your visionary guidance. The spectacular success and sheer brilliance of the event left an indelible mark on everyone who was fortunate enough to be in attendance.

From the moment I entered the venue, I was truly awe-inspired by the meticulous attention to detail in every aspect of the event. The seamless coordination and the flawless execution were nothing short of exemplary. It was evident that an immense amount of effort, dedication, and countless hours of hard work went into bringing this event to life.
The sheer scale and sophistication of the event were exceeded only by the incredible impact it had on attendees. The atmosphere was charged with an electrifying energy and divinity and everyone throughout the katha was captivated. Each element was thoughtfully curated, ensuring that every guest felt not only welcomed but also an integral part of the event.

The hard work of the entire team, starting from the event planners, coordinators, volunteers, and the youth team, was evident in every detail, leaving a lasting impact on all who were present.
I extend my sincere gratitude and congratulations to you and the entire team at VSUK.
Minaben, your passion, commitment, and determination have set an exceptional standard, not only for organizing events but for making a meaningful difference in the community.

This event has undoubtedly left an indelible mark on the hearts and minds of all those who were fortunate enough to be a part of it. It is a testament to your leadership, vision, and ability to bring people together for a greater cause. Once again, congratulations on orchestrating such a magnificent and amazing katha.

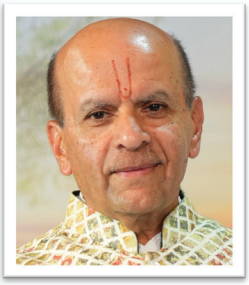
May your future endeavours be as successful and impactful as this one has been. Next katha at Wembley arena or Wembley Stadium!!

Shree Vallabhadish Ki Jai.
PPG 108 Shree Dwarkeshlal Mahodayshree Ki Jai.

Jay Shree Krushna.

Lalit Sodha D.C. Doctor of Chiropractic

First Ever Presentation of 'Vaishnav Ratna Award' By Shree Dwarkeshlalji Mahodayshree



The presentation of the award of such an extremely high valued Vaishnav Ratna from Je Je Shree on Friday 18th August 2023, during the Sodas Granth Mahotsav held at Harrow Leisure Centre was one of the most precious moments in my life. It brought the end of my 15 years at the helm of VSUK in a way that I had never contemplated, a truly memorable, humbling and blissful culmination. What made this presentation even more special was Je Je Shree's Ashirwad and in particular his recollection of my involvement within VSUK from the time even before its formation back in 2019, and how he valued the contribution I had made.

It has been my absolute privilege and honour to have been a trustee/sevak for these years, under guidance from Je Je Shree; words cannot express what this journey/Yatra of over 15 years with VSUK means to me. Not a day has gone by without me being humbled by thoughts of being blessed for such seva of Thakorji, Je Je Shree and the Vaishnav community.

It's only been due to the blissful guidance from Je Je Shree that I have become capable of serving as trustee/chairman of VSUK; I had no prior experience or capacity to serve Shree Thakorji, Guruji and Vaishnavs in such an exceptional and incredible manner. These memories will stay with me for the rest of my life.

As I mentioned to Je Je Shree during the presentation, over these years, I must have made mistakes, slipped up in my seva but never has Je Je Shree paid any attention to any of these, instead there have only been words of total encouragement. I asked for his forgiveness for such shortfalls, aided by the recital of Shree Hariraiji's beautiful paad: Jaiso hu taiso tiharo Shree Vallabh.

I take this opportunity to express yet again my gratitude to the people who have made this journey, not only possible but memorable for me: All my co-trustees, all the committee members and sevak groups, all the Manorathis over the years and all my family members.

I would like to wish the very best to the new board of Trustees, to steer VSUK to even more success and continued serving of the Vaishnav Community.

In conclusion, the sight of the Vaishnav Ratna Award will remind me everyday of my closest involvement within VSUK over this truly magical period.

Subhashbhai Lakhani
Ex Trustee / Chairman – Vaishnav Sangh of UK

Vaishnav Sangh of Uk

Jai Shree Krishna,

Warmest greetings to all of you as we approach the festive season of Diwali.
It is with immense joy that I reach out to each of you through this message for our Diwali Magazine 2023.

Over the past 4 years, Shrinathdham Haveli has made remarkable strides in its journey. Witnessing this progress and having the privilege to shoulder this significant responsibility has been a divine blessing.

Our collective vision for the Haveli has always been to expand its horizons, to nurture the bonds of our Vaishnav community, and to create a space that resonates with the spirit of devotion and unity. I'm thrilled to see us progressing well towards this vision.

At the heart of Shrinathdham Haveli are its vibrant activities and classes, including Balpushti, Kishorepushti, Vaishnav Youth Group, Men's Monthly Satsang, and Ekadashi Satsang. These classes have not only imparted bhaav and anand but have also fostered a sense of belonging amongst our community members. Our vibrant celebrations of vivid utsavs have filled our Haveli with an atmosphere of joy and devotion. More and more Vaishnavs are actively engaging in seva, making our Haveli a true hub of Pushtimarg. It brings me immense joy to witness how Shrinathdham Haveli has become the centre of our community, bringing Vaishnavs together in a harmonious and meaningful way.

Today, our Haveli is affectionately known as the "Nathdwara of the UK" and has also evolved into a hub for Vaishnavs across Europe. Moreover, it proudly holds the distinction of being the National Haveli of the UK.

All our achievements and progress are only possible through the divine guidance and blessings of our Je Je Shri, Vaishnavacharya Shree Dwarkeshlalji Mahodayshri (Kadi, Ahmedabad).

It is His grace that continues to guide us in our vision to serve the Vaishnav community and deepen our relationship with Thakorji. As we celebrate Diwali, let us come together in gratitude for the support and dedication of each member of our community. Your faith and trust in us has been instrumental in our journey, and for that, we extend our appreciation.

In the spirit of Diwali, I pray that Shree Thakorji illuminates your lives with anand, bhaav, and seva. We look forward to your ongoing support as we continue on this beautiful journey of devotion and serving Hari, Guru, Vaishnavs together.

Minaben Popat
Trustee and Chairperson - Vaishnav Sangh of UK
t: 07958 436 586 | e: mina@shrinathdham.org.uk

Jai Shree Krishna

Vaishnav Sangh of Uk

Jai Shree Krishna & Jai Jalaram

Wishing All Vaishnavs and well-wishers a Happy Diwali and Nutan Varsh Abhinandan. Since its inauguration in September 2018, It's been wonderful five year journey that I've been privileged to be part of Shrinathdham National Haveli & Community Centre. The Haveli was acquired with blessings of Pujya Je Je Shree and the support of numerous donors without whom it would not have been possible to purchase the Haveli.

During the unprecedented pandemic period, Vaishnavs have stayed tuned to the Haveli via zoom when they were also blessed by Je Je Shree. The credit for which goes to Subhashbhai Lakhani ,Minaben Popat, Shiluben Patel , Rio Fernandes and the IT team who ensured the same. Post pandemic, various events were held with large numbers attending, including-Sarvottam Van No -Manorath(2022) Shree 84 -Baithakji Mahotsav(2022) and recently the Sodash Grantha Saptah Mahotsav (2023), held at the Harrow Leisure Centre in presence of Je Je Shree and attended by over 1500 Vaishnavs.

I take this opportunity to thank all the dedicated volunteers who performed their tasks diligently and unconditionally at all the above events and for their regular Seva at the Shrinathdham Haveli. I would also like to thank all the donors for their continuous support by becoming manorathis at various events.

Diwali is celebrated by Hindus all over the world celebrating victory of good over evil. Praying to Shri Thakorji & Jalaram Bapa to shower their choicest blessings to All.

Jai Shree Krishna

Pramod & Jasu Thakkar
Trustee & Acquisition Consultant – Vaishnav Sangh of UK
t: 07860 922 770
e:pramod@shrinathdham.org.uk

Vaishnav Sangh of Uk

Jai Shree Krishna fellow Vaishnavs

It is my absolute pleasure to write this message as your recently appointed Trustee of Vaishnav Sangh of UK with the blessing of Je Je Shree.

Pushtimarg is an enduring and illustrious spiritual heritage which holds timeless and universal relevance. Spirituality constitutes an integral element of our socio-cultural heritage and principles. Our philosophy and traditions emphasise that the ultimate goal of an individual's life revolves around "Seva" or selfless service.

I am delighted that I have been given an opportunity to give "Seva" to this incredible institution for generations to come.

Havelis have been the hub of service and socio-cultural activities for centuries. They are not only centres of devotion, but also serve as platforms for giving expressions to art, architectural excellence, literature and knowledge. With the enthusiasm of the whole team and volunteers I am hoping that we can extend this to the entire community.

I take this opportunity to wish all Vaishnavs and the entire Hindu community a bright Diwali and a very happy, healthy and prosperous New Year. Saal Mubarak. May Thakorji's blessing are always showered upon each one of you and stay blessed with best wishes for the coming year.

Jai Shree Krishna

Shirish A Shah
Trustee - Vaishnav Sangh of UK
t: 07836 635 545
e: shirish@shrinathdham.org.uk

Spiritual Benefactor - H. H. Shree Dwarkeshlalji Mahodayshree
(Kadi, Ahmedabad)

Board of Trustees

Minaben Popat
Trustee /Chairperson

Pramodbhai Thakkar
Trustee & Acquisition Consultant

Shirishbhai A Shah
Trustee

Vaishnav Sangh of Uk

Shrinathdham
National Haveli & Community Centre - UK

2a Rosslyn Crescent, Harrow, HA1 2SU
t: 020 8861 1207
e: info@shrinathdham.org.uk
w: www.shrinathdham.org.uk

Vrajdham Haveli
~ LEICESTER ~

58 Loughborough Road, Leicester, LE4 5LD
t: 0116 224 5308
e: info@vrajdham.org.uk
w: www.vrajdham.org.uk

Vaishnav Sangh of UK (Charitable Incorporated Organisation) Registered Charity No: 1183435

Shrinathdham

National Haveli & Community Centre - UK

Haveli Operational Team

Minaben Popat

Rio Fernandes

Shiluben Patel

Devyaniben Vora

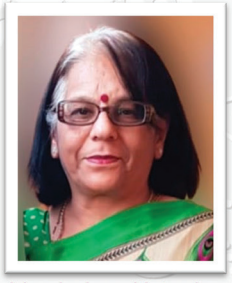
Sub Committees

Accounts
Admin
Baal Pushti
Ekadasi Satsang
Events Co ordination
Haveli Events Catering Team
IT Team
Kishore Pushti
Malaji Team
Marketing and Promotions
Monthly Satsang
Sajavat Team
Social Events
Tokri Seva
Vaishnav Youth Group (National)
Volunteers Co ordination
Website & Zoom

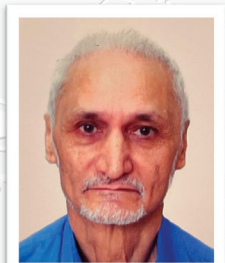
Vrajdham Haveli
~ LEICESTER ~

Haveli Operational Team

Minaben Popat- Trustee / Chairperson

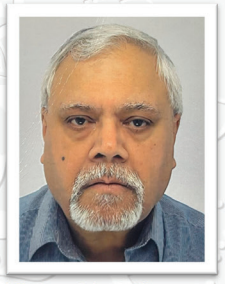


Varshaben Kotecha



Kishorebhai Kotecha

Chandubhai Sonecha

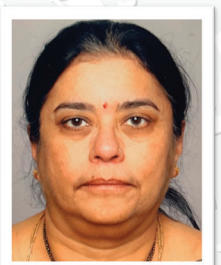


Kishanbhai Ganatra

Rameshbhai Lakhani

Hiteshbhai Raichura

Rupaben Raichura



Chandrikaben Lakhani

Sangita Raniga

Sub Committees

• Malaji Team • Monthly Satsang • Sajavat Team • Giriraj Mandir Seva • Tokri Seva

Vaishnav Sangh of Uk

Vrajdham Haveli
~ LEICESTER ~

Shrinathdham
National Haveli & Community Centre - UK

Follow Us On Social Media

Let's Get Connected for Our Latest News, Events & Updates

FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK
Vaishnav Sangh of UK
Scan me

SUBSCRIBE US ON YOUTUBE
Vaishnav Sangh of UK
Scan me

JOIN OUR WHATSAPP GROUP
07724 393 594
Scan me

FOLLOW US ON INSTAGRAM
vaishnavsanghofuk
Scan me

Vrajdham Haveli
~ LEICESTER ~

For the advancement of Hindu religion, we completed the purchase of the premises of **Vrajdham Haveli** in June 2011, at 58 Loughborough Road, Leicester LE4 4LD.

For the Leicester Haveli project, VSUK managed to raise over £550,000, which was used for the purchase of the Haveli and for the extensive structural and refurbishment works that were carried out. These commenced in August 2011 and were completed in a record 9 weeks, by October 2011. The Haveli had its grand opening on 5th & 6th November 2011, and it has become the first "Shudh Pushti Margiya Haveli" in the UK, named "**Vrajdham, ShriNathji Ni Haveli**". Please see our website for photos & updates.

The Haveli has provided Pushti Marg followers the opportunity to continue this long-established faith. The town of Leicester has a Hindu population estimated at around 8,000, who have benefited tremendously from this Haveli. This has now become the community's focal point; open for darshan every day, throughout the year. The Haveli has been at the forefront of many local activities and is now also offering educational children's & youth classes and much more. Open to one and all, the Haveli offers many opportunities for families & friends to enjoy festivals together.

Vrajdham Haveli has been hosting the Manoraths as per the Pushti calendar, as well as celebrating significant cultural and religious events with grand décor and fantastic community involvement. These include Holi, Ramnavmi, Shree Mahaprabhuji Pragatya, Krishna Janmastami, Navratri, Diwali and many more. Membership has been increasing, as we welcome Vaishnavs from all over the UK to Vrajdham Haveli for Darshan & Utsavs. Along with Shreeji's Swaroops, Vrajdham Haveli also has the Sunder swaroops of Shree Yamunaji, Shree Mahaprabhuji, Shree Gusainji & Shree Girirajji.

In fact Vrajdham Haveli is **the only place in Europe where Vaishnavs are able to perform Dudh Abhishek of Shree Girirajji.**

Dudh Abhishek is performed every Sunday, every Ekadashi, every Poonam and every Aamas. Time: 11.30am - 12.00 noon. We invite you all to come & be a part of this sacred experience only at our Haveli.
Je Je Shree lovingly calls the Vrajdham Haveli in Leicester **UK's GOKUL** & the Shrinathdham Haveli, **UK'S NATHDWARA.**

This year, Vrajdham Haveli will be celebrating 12 years since its grand Patotsav opening – we would like to take this opportunity to extend our sincerest gratitude to our sponsors and to wish you all a very Happy Diwali. Please do come and join us for our 12th Patotsav Mahotsav celebration.

For updates on events, darshan pictures, etc., please join our WhatsApp broadcast group, by sending a WhatsApp message to 07761 595279 asking to be added to the group

Vrajdham Haveli
~ LEICESTER ~

Nitya Haveli Manoraths

Aakha Divas Na Manorth	£101
Aarti Na Manorath	£21
Girirajji Kunwaro	£21
Mangal Bhog	£21
Palna	£21
Rajbhog Aardho (Half)	£51
Rajbhog Aakkho (Full)	£75
Shree Girirajji Dudh Abhishek	£5

Bank Account Details

Vaishnav Sangh of UK (Lloyds Bank)
Account No: 63786960
Sort Code: 30-93-92
Please put your name as reference for identifying purpose.

Darshan Timings

Mangla Darshan: 8am – 8:30am | Mangla Aarti: 8:20am
Rajbhog Darshan: 12pm – 1pm | Rajbhog Aarti: 12:20pm
Shayan Darshan: 5:30pm – 6:30pm | Shayan Aarti: 6:20pm
Girirajji Darshan Abhishek 11:30am – 12:00pm
(Every Sunday, Ekadashi, Poonam, & Amavas only)

If you require more information, please contact:
Minaben Popat: 07958 436 586 | Varshaben Kotecha: 07761 595 279 | Kishorebhai Kotecha: 07980 761 531
Chandubhai Sonecha: 07804 596 677 | Rameshbhai Lakhani: 07930 387 739 | Rupaben Raichura: 07496 827 995

Vaishnav Sangh of Uk

Vrajdham Haveli: 58 Loughborough Road, Leicester LE4 5LD
Tel - 0116 2245308 | Website: www.vrajdham.org.uk | Email: info@vrajdham.org.uk
Vaishnav Sangh of UK (Charitable Incorporated Organisation) Registered Charity No 1183435

Shrinathdham

National Haveli & Community Centre - UK

On September 6, 2009, Vaishnav Sangh of UK (VSUK) was officially inaugurated with the esteemed presence of our Spiritual Head, Vaishnavacharya Shree Dwarkeshlalji Mahodayshri from Kadi-Ahmedabad, fondly referred to as Je Je Shree, serving as the Patron.

VSUK's primary mission encompasses the promotion of Hindu education, religion, and spiritual endeavors. The organization diligently adheres to the sacred principles of Pushti-Marg in its devotion to Lord Krishna. These timeless principles, originally established by the faith's founder, Shree Vallabhacharya Mahaprabhuji, a revered incarnation of Lord Krishna, have remained steadfast for over 550 years.

Je Je, our revered leader, is, in fact, the 17th generation in direct lineage from Shree Vallabhacharya Mahaprabhuji. This lineage is a source of profound respect and esteem within both VSUK and the wider Vaishnav community.

Je Je has harbored a vision for quite some time, reminiscent of Shree Vallabhacharya Mahaprabhuji's own aspirations – a vision to impart knowledge of our cherished Pushti Dharm.

With Thakorji's Krupa and Je Je Shree's Ashirwad, the long-awaited dream to establish a Haveli in London was fulfilled with the strategic acquisition of Jaspar Centre in Harrow, with completion taking place on 28 June 2019. This really was a historic achievement, filled with great excitement and immense pleasure for the entire UK Hindu community.

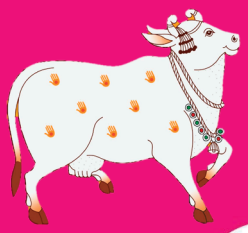
The premises, named Shrinathdham National Haveli & Community Centre, house a grand Swaroop of Shree Nathji together with a Community Centre. The premises acquired are very well located in the centre of Harrow and incorporate Baal Pathshala, Youth classes, Kirtan classes, Gujarati classes, Satsangs, and much more.

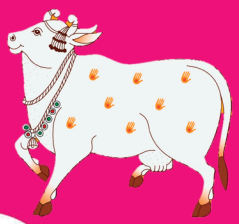
Vaishnav Sangh of UK is fulfilling its commitment to provide a base for the benefit of our upcoming future generations, allowing them to stay connected with our religion. We have no doubt that the entire community, from the very young to the very elderly, benefits from this project.

In fact, we hold separate classes for the elderly, the adults, youth groups, and Nursery level, providing educational, social, and religious facilities. The monthly classes that we currently hold every last Sunday of the month are also incorporated here, with a large number of participants able to join in.

We have been blessed by Pujya Je Je Shree to have organized some exceptional Mahotsavs and Manoraths (auspicious events) over the years, at least one every calendar year.

Vaishnav Sangh of UK (CIO) Registered Charity No: 1183435





Shrinathdham

National Haveli & Community Centre - UK

Nitya Haveli Manoraths

Aarti Manorathi	£21
Palna	£21
Mangal Bhog	£21
Ardho (Half) Rajbhog	£51
Aakho (Full) Rajbhog	£75
Aakha Diwas Na Manorathi	£101

Bank Account Details

Lloyds Bank
Vaishnav Sangh of UK
Account No: 63797160
Sort Code: 30-93-92

Please put your name as reference for identifying purpose

Darshan Timings

Rajbhog Darshan:	12pm to 1pm	Aarti:	12:15pm
Sandhiya Darshan:	6pm to 7pm	Aarti:	6:15pm

Vaishnav Sangh of Uk

Shrinathdham Haveli
2a Rosslyn Crescent, Harrow, HA1 2SU t: 020 8861 1207
e: info@shrinathdham.org.uk w: www.Shrinathdham.org.uk

Vaishnav Sangh of UK (Charitable Incorporated Organisation) Registered Charity No 1183435

Shrinathdham

National Haveli & Community Centre - UK

Kayamee Pushpa (Phool) Seva Scheme

By making a seva of £50 or £100 a month, Phool Malaji will be offered to our beloved Shirjibawa and Lalan on a chosen day of each month from the Manorathi family.

Manorathi will thus have the satisfaction of knowing that their £50 or £100 per month will be utilised towards their beloved Shrijibawa and Lalan.

Please request for a standing order and Gift Aid form and return the filled forms back to us at the Haveli address. It is also available on our website – www.vaishnavsangh.org.uk

Please also confirm in the standing order form, which date of the month you would like your Phool Malaji to be offered to Thakorji. e.g. 1st of every month.

Join this wonderful seva and become part of the scheme which is so dear to Je Je Shree.

For further information contact

Minaben Popat: 07958 436 586 Shiluben Patel: 07828 208 181

Devyaniben Vora: 07896 680 920

Vaishnav Sangh of Uk

Shrinathdham Haveli:
2a Rosslyn Crescent, Harrow, HA1 2SU
t: 020 8861 1207
e: info@shrinathdham.org.uk
w: www.shrinathdham.org.uk

Vaishnav Sangh of UK (Charitable Incorporated Organisation)
Registered Charity No 1183435

Shrinathdham

National Haveli & Community Centre

2a Rosslyn Crescent, Harrow, Middlesex HA1 2SU

£1 a day Rajbhog Seva Scheme for Shrinathdham Haveli

By making a seva of £1 a day, Thakorji's Rajbhog will be offered on a chosen day of each month from the Manorathi family and you will be then be able to collect the Rajbhog Prasad on the day.

Manorathi will also have the satisfaction of knowing that their £30 per month will be utilised towards the beloved Shrinathdham Haveli.

You will receive a phone call from us each month to remind you to collect your Rajbhog Prasad.

Please request for a standing order and Gift Aid form and return the filled forms back to us at the Haveli address. It is also available on our website – www.vaishnavsangh.org.uk

Please also confirm in the standing order form, which date of the month you would like your Rajbhog. e.g. 1st of every month. Your Rajbhog Prasad will be available on the same date each month unless pre- arranged with the Haveli team.

Join this wonderful seva and become part of this scheme, which is so dear to Je Je Shree.

Vaishnav Sangh of Uk

Shrinathdham Haveli: 2a Rosslyn Crescent, Harrow, HA1 2SU t: 020 8861 1207 e: info@shrinathdham.org.uk w: www.Shrinathdham.org.uk

Vaishnav Sangh of UK (Charitable Incorporated Organisation) Registered Charity No 1183435

SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES CURRENTLY AVAILABLE

Shree Giriraj Bhavan	£151,000
Education Centre	£125,000
Cultural Centre	£125,000
Mukhya Dwar	£51,000
Mukhyaji Aawas	£35,000
Bhandar Ghar (Food Storage Warehouse)	£21,000
Vaishnav Hall	TBA

There will be only one Sponsor for each category above

ONGOING SCHEMES OPPORTUNITIES

Haveli Nirman Seva	£10,000
Golden Brick Scheme	£5,000
Silver Brick Scheme	£2,500
Mala Na Manko	£1,000

For further information contact

Minaben Popat: 07958 436 586
Subhashbhai Lakhani: 07748 324 092
Shiluben Patel: 07828 208 181
Rio Fernandes: 07387 393 055

Vaishnav Sangh of UK (Charitable Incorporated Organisation)
Registered Charity No 1183435

WHAT IS GIFT AID?

Gift Aid is a scheme available to charities.
It means they can claim extra money from HMRC.

The charity can claim an extra 25p for every £1 you donate. That's as long as you've paid the basic rate of tax and make the donation from your own funds. That means Gift Aid can increase the value of your donations by 25%, so you can give even more to the causes you care about.

Gift Aid is important for charities and means millions of pounds extra go to the charity sector.
Each time an eligible taxpayer donates and forgets to tick the Gift Aid box, the charity misses out.

giftaid it

Make your gift go further
at no expense to you!

giftaid it

It only takes a tick

ARE MY DONATIONS ELIGIBLE FOR GIFT AID?

A charity can claim Gift Aid when you make a monetary donation from your own funds and have paid UK Income and / or Capital Gains Tax during that tax year.

The amount of tax you pay needs to be at least equal to the value of Gift Aid the charity will claim on your donation(s).
If circumstances change and you no longer pay enough tax, it's important to tell all the charities you support. If you don't tell them and they continue claiming Gift Aid, you'll need to pay any difference back to HMRC.

Here is an example of how Gift Aid works

Shrinathdham
National Haveli & Community Centre - UK

Private Hire

WHATEVER THE OCASSSION, WE CAN ACCOMMODATE YOUR EVENT

Contact us today to book your event:
Telephone number: 020 8861 1207
Email: info@shrinathdham.org.uk Website: www.shrinathdham.org.uk
Address: 2a Rosslyn Crescent, Harrow, HA1 2SU

Shrinathdham National Haveli & Community centre is Situated in the heart of Harrow, directly opposite the Harrow Civic Centre

Bus Routes to the Shrinathdham Haveli: (140, 182, 186, 258, 340, 640, N18)
Bus Stop: Harrow Civic Centre
Train: Harrow and Wealdstone station is a 5 minutes' walk away which connects to the Bakerloo line, London Overground, London Midland line and Southern Line

The Shrinathdham National Haveli & Community Centre is located in the Centre of Harrow and is available for private hire for a wide range of functions, activities and group sizes. Our helpful team are here to assist with your booking and to provide a bespoke package best suited to your needs. Whether you're organising a meeting, seminar, health class, Katha, Satsang, loti utsav, bhajan, birthday party or any wedding function, our beautiful building can accommodate your requirements. We have halls of various sizes and kitchen/dining facilities available for hire.

Benefits:

- Range of room sizes;
- On site Catering facilities;
- Inhouse catering;
- On site car parking for 30 cars and public car parks nearby;
- Disabled facilities;
- Licensed for Civil Ceremonies;
- PA system available for hire;
- Short walk to Harrow and Wealdstone Station;

NB: Strictly No alcohol or meat allowed. Food without No onion and garlic only.

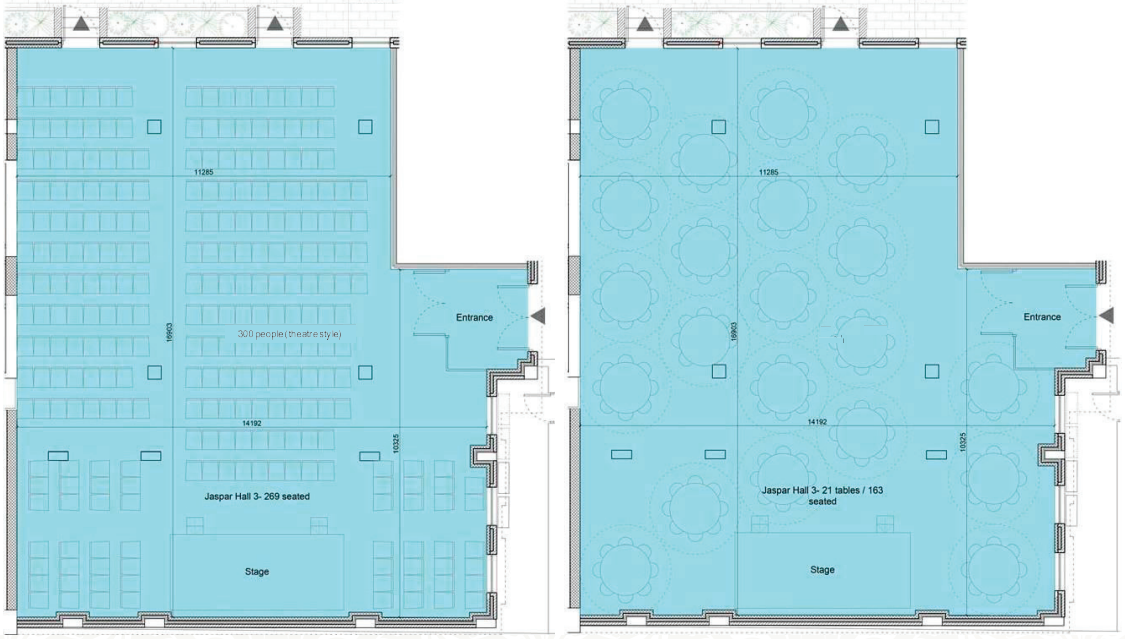
Venue Summary

Venue	Capacity (people)
Vaishnav Hall	300 (Theatre Style) 140 (Round Table Seated)
Shree Yamuna Bhavan	120 (Theatre Style)
Cultural Centre	40 (Theatre Style)
Prasad Bhavan	65 (Seated)

Vaishnav Hall

Capacity: **300 people (Theatre Style)**
140 people (Table Seated)

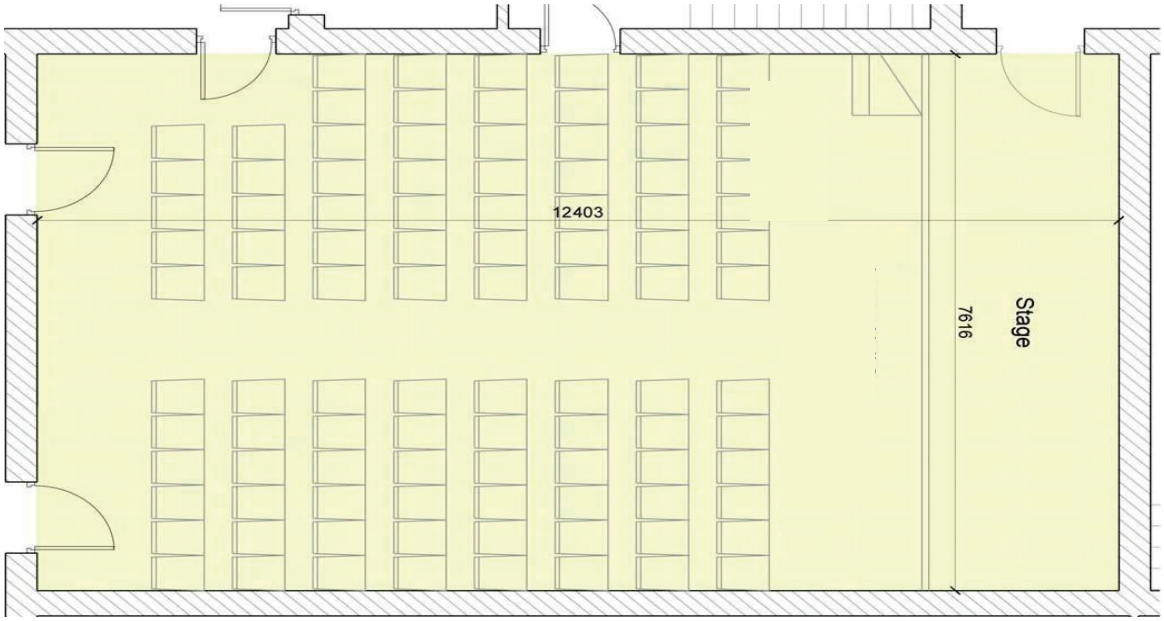
Our new state-of-the-art 300-seater Vaishnav hall is the perfect venue for any event. With an adaptable stage, professional lighting and a modern sound system, we have the facilities to enhance any type of event.

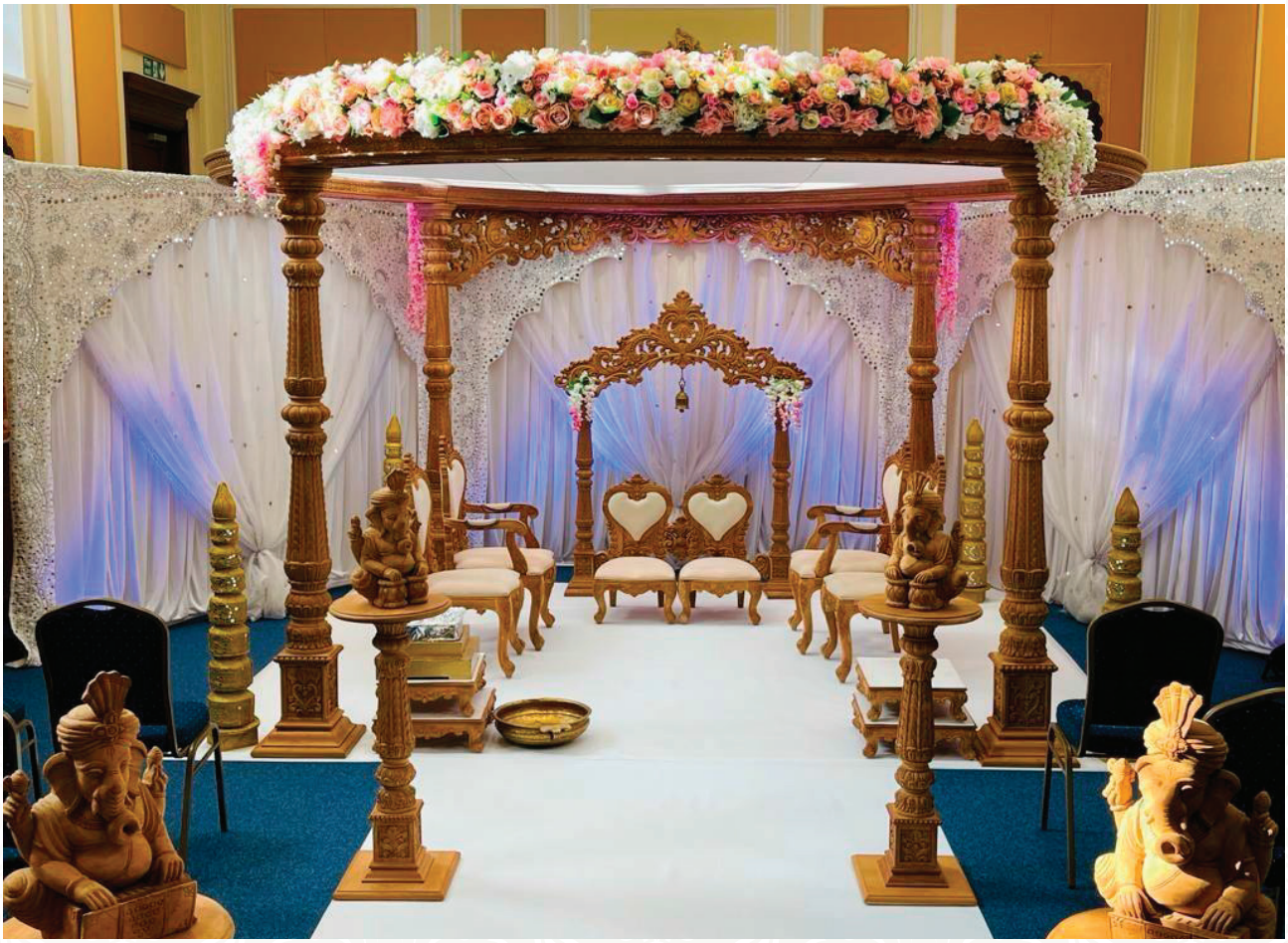


Shree Yamuna Bhavan

Capacity: 120 people (Theatre Style)

This beautiful converted court room can be used for a variety of different events from Birthday parties, satsangs, pre wedding functions to small weddings.



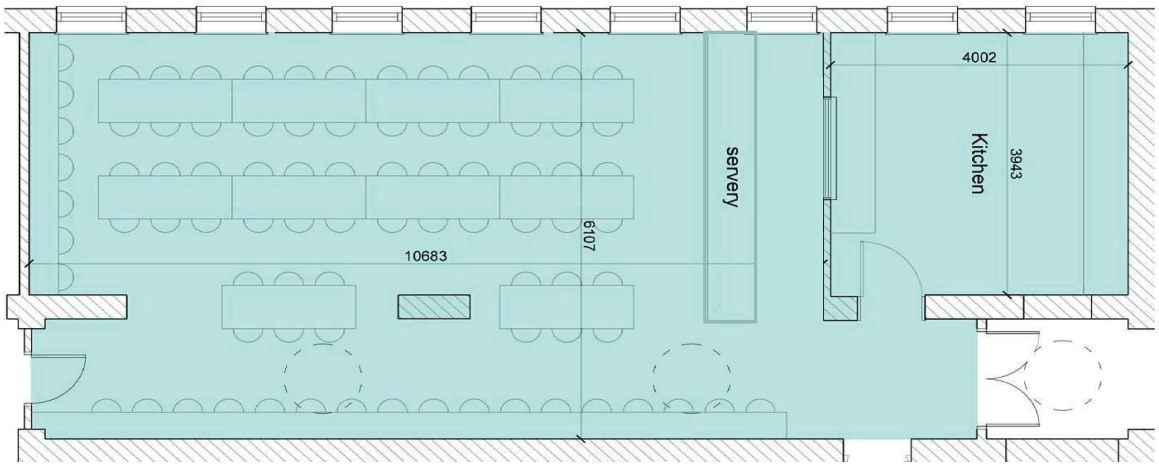


Prasad Bhavan

Capacity: 65 people (seated)

The kitchen comes fully equipped with American fridge freezer, a 4-ring industrial gas hob, oven and microwave for heating up food. There is sufficient workspace for sorting out your catering order and a hatch to access the servery in the adjoining dining area.

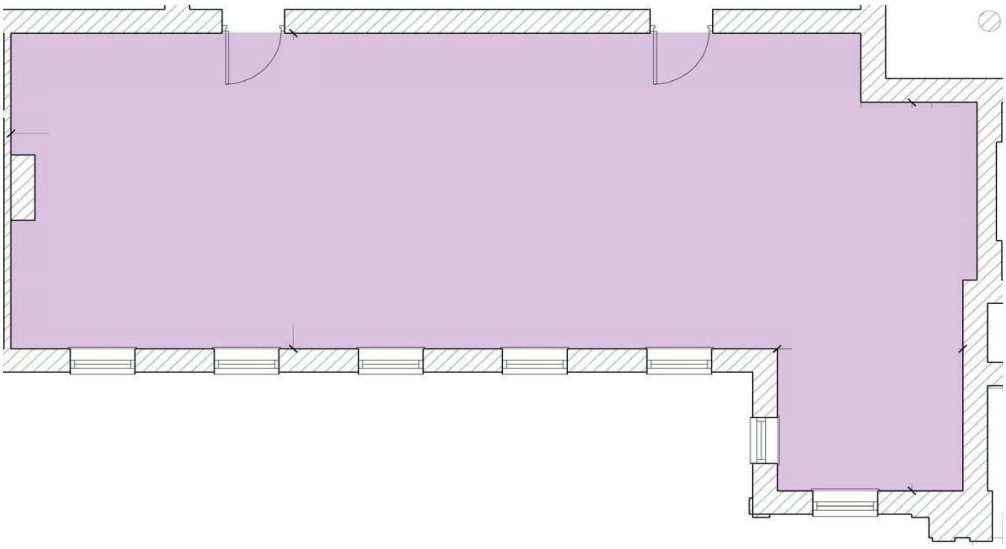
The dining area accommodates 65 people comfortably with access to handwash sinks and a water fountain.



Cultural Centre

Capacity: 40 people (Theatre style)

The Cultural Centre is ideal spaces for conferences, meetings and small gatherings. The rooms also have large flat screen TVs, which can be used for presentations.



Shrinathdham
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Shrinathdham

National Haveli & Community Centre - UK

Civil Ceremonies

The Shrinathdham Haveli is Licensed to hold Civil Marriage Ceremonies under the section 41 of the Marriage Act 1949 and so is the perfect venue for your big day.

The heart of every wedding is the Bride and the Groom, and our goal is to see that your wedding day dreams come to life.

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VAISHNAV YOUTH GROUP

Blessings From Our Spiritual Head Vaishnavacharya Shri Dwarkeshlalji Mahodayshri (Kadi, Ahmedabad) on the launch of VSUK Vaishnav Youth Group (National)

"On the occasion of the launch of the Youth Group through Shrinathdham Haveli, and Vaishnav Sangh of UK, I send my congratulations and blessings to all the Youth.

Vaishnav Youth Group will conduct a variety of nationwide activities - cultural, social and spiritual - through which enthusiastic youth in the community can come together and engage in undertakings for the benefit of society, and bring Bhakti and meaning into their lives.

The Youth are enthusiastic and ready, and want to pursue several projects and Shrinathdham is giving them this platform. I am sending my heartiest congratulations for the launch of Vaishnav Youth Group. My blessings are that Thakorji makes this group progress and blossom in their Bhakti and Social work."

The Vaishnav Youth Group (National) arm of Vaishnav Sangh of UK (VSUK), with the blessings of our Spiritual Head Vaishnavacharya Shree Dwarkeshlalji Mahodayshree (Kadi, Ahmedabad), exists to enable youth aged 18-40 from the Vaishnav community across the UK to come together to engage in undertakings for the benefit of society, as well as bring meaning to their lives. The purpose and activities of the youth group are facilitated through 3 pillars, namely Social Work & Volunteering, Seva & Spiritual Education, and Culture & Arts. Through events and activities across these areas, young Vaishnavs have the opportunity to spend time with like-minded individuals, learn more about Pushtimarg, serve the community, and gain useful life skills by building on each other's strengths.

The group is run by a committee who work together to organise fun & meaningful activities for the wider Vaishnav youth to meet the purposes outlined above. So far, the youth have organised and participated in numerous exciting events and activities

The group has representatives in all major areas of the UK, whose role it is to help to spread awareness of the group and its work within their local areas, as well as assist incoming Vaishnavs into that area to settle in and feel a sense of community.

List of Youth Events we have organized so far:

Committee Meet & Greet

The aim of this event was to brainstorm, support, enable multiple events for the youth throughout the year. The committee members had a funfilled afternoon starting with Manglacharan, introductory icebreakers, tasks and creative thinking activities to churn out the best from our talented committee members. We ended our session with Yamunastakam and a spiritual takeaway from Pujya JeJe Shri.

We also exchange and inspire each other to read books or texts from our Granths during each of our monthly meetings and the Youth Group eventually aims to have a library at the Haveli and encouraged the youth to engage and read more scriptures.

Holi Utsav

The first event where the VSUK Youth Group actively participated and took up sevas to make the event a grand success. The Youth group organized everything from selling tickets to bringing in stall holders, to food preparation, music and overall coordination.

Ahimsa Eco Farms

Volunteering at AHIMSA Eco Farms was the first VSUK Youth Volunteering event. An action-packed getaway at the farm in Lincolnshire with a stellar line-up of activities immersing each and everyone in the vibrant rural life and in the service of our beloved cows. Our host, the farm manager, and his wife, narrated their connections to the land and the cows. They also shared their experiences in producing cruelty free fresh milk and cheese.

Picnic in The Park

The meet up organized in London was a fun day with ice breakers, games and lots of homemade goodies.

Sodash Granth Saptah Mahamahotsav

The youth played an active part in the recently concluded Sodash Granth Saptah mahamahotsav, in the presence of Pujya Jeje Shree. It was a wonderful experience for so many youth to get involved with serving the vaishnav community.

The youth could be seen in many areas: setting up, welcoming guests, queue control, decorating the hall, cleaning, and packing up on the final day.

The youth have begun taking responsibilities in organising events such as these, and are working closely with the experienced Vaishnavs within the haveli. The youth involvement was strong and greatly appreciated by the Vaishnavs - they could be seen as the future of the Vaishnav community.

Taking on seva at the Saptah was an experience like no other - everyone was enthusiastic, motivated and engaged for 7 days, and felt uplifted with Jeje Shree's vachnamrut and His presence.

Newsletters

To enable the spiritual development of members, the youth publish monthly newsletters to learn and teach about various aspects of Pushtimarg. Each newsletter consists of leelas, facts, understanding of utsavs and lots more. Have a read of them through the Vaishnav Sangh website: https://vaishnavsangh.org.uk/vaishnav-youth-group-newsletters

Future Events

VSUK Youth Group is constantly endeavouring to organize events that support the development of the Youth in both Spirituality/Bhakti and overall personality development.

Future events include:

- Monthly virtual satsang for everyone to join nationally, covering themes of Utsavs, Granths and Tirths of relevance to Pushtimarg
- Large annual events such as Diwali and Holi
- In person practical learning events at the Haveli (e.g. cooking classes, team building, event management, video editing, etc.)
- In person Spiritual, Social and Cultural events

We look forward to welcoming you all at future events!

To join the youth group, register online
https://vaishnavsangh.org.uk/vaishnav-youth-group
or scan the QR code below:

For more information, please contact:

Chairman	–	Umang: 07510 598 324
Secretary	–	Sonal: 07505 364 612
National Coordinator	–	Bhavin: 07956 687 964
Treasurer	–	Lay: 07940 163 661
National Events Coordinator	–	Mohit: 07886 549 082
National Events Coordinator	–	Reema: 07711 299 800

Sodash Grantha Saptah

By Bansi Hirpara

Je Je shree na yugal charano ma dandavat pranam. Vahala vallabhi jano ne jay shree krushna.

This year Jeje Shree came to London to explain the 16 books known as Shodash Granth compiled by Shri Vallabh Acharyaji. Each day there was a different manorath such as Girikandra, Nand Mahotasav etc.

Shri Vallabha Acharyaji compiled 16 books (or doctrines) into the Shodash Granth. They are Pudhtimarg's core principles. For devotees, the Granths act as a lighthouse. They discuss how smarana ('remembering') and seva ('service') increase one's affection for Shri Krishna. Shri Mahaprabhuji uses these teachings as a means of energising and illuminating his followers as they travel the Path of Grace. Total submission to Lord Shri Krishna is the Shodasha Granthas' main message. An eager soul might be introduced to Shri Krishna's love devotion and service by a Goswami (Vallabhkul). The verses provide practical advice as well as explanations of the many types of devotees, how to surrender, and the reward for seva. We also refer to it as the "Vallabh-Geeta". Since it contains every Pushti Marg principle, Vaishnavs also often refer to Shodash Granth as the "Upanishad" of Pushtimarg. These 16 hymns were composed separately and at various times in order to give Vaishnavs direction.

The list of the 16 Granths:

1. Shri Yamunashtakam: An ode to Shree Yamuna Maharani
2. Bal-bodh: A guide for beginners on the path of devotion
3. Siddhant Muktavali: A string of pearls consisting of the principles/fundamentals of Pushtimarg
4. Pusti-Pravaha-Maryada-bhedh: The different characteristics of the different types of souls (receptivity of the Lord's grace)
5. Siddhant Rahasya: The secret behind the principles
6. Navratna: Nine jewels of instructions (priceless instructions for a devotee)
7. Antah-Karan-Prabodhah: Consoling one's heart (request to one's own heart)
8. Vivek-Dhairya-Aashray: On discretion, patience and surrender
9. Shri Krushna Aashray: Taking Shree Krishna's shelter
10. Chatuhshloki: Four verses (Verser) illustrating the four principles of life; Dharma, Arth, Kaam, Moksh
11. Bhakti-Vardhini: Increase of devotion
12. Jal-bhedh: Nineteen types of orators (Vakta)
13. Pancha-Padyaani: Three types of listeners (Shrota)
14. Sannyasa-Nirnayah: Decision on taking Renunciation
15. Nirodh-Lakshanam: Identifying characteristics of detachment
16. Sevafalam: The reward of performing seva (worship) of the Lord

Kishore Pushti

Shrinathdham Haveli has been running the Baal Pushti paathshaala for several years now and is an extremely successful initiative. This paathshaala was for all children under the age of 18. However, to cater better for teenagers, in 2020, JejeShree launched the Kishore Pushti group.

Kishore means Youth and is used to describe Shri Krishna is His youthful years. The Shrinathdham Haveli Kishore Pushti group is aimed at children and teenagers between the ages of 12 and 18. The group engages in bi-weekly satsangs during term time and other activities such as Dance, Drama, Seva and Event organising.

Satsang

Over the last 3 years, the Kishore Pushti Satsangs have been hosted online on zoom. They occur every 2nd Sunday during term time from 11am-12pm. The Satsang is hosted by a group of capable and trained teachers who teach in English.

Satsangs start with everyone greeting each other with Jai Shri Krishna and is then followed by Manglacharan. The group then proceed to paath recitation. This includes Paath's such as Yamunashtak or Madhurastakam.

The next session includes a topic walkthrough from the curriculum that touches on the Basics of Sanatan Dharma and Pushtimarg. Some previously discussed topics include The Dasha Avatar and meaning and significance of Krishnashray.

The next discussion is based on utsavs and events that are relevant at that particular period. This allows everyone to understand practices and celebrations that they may be witnessing at the time in their homes and at the haveli. For example, a lesson on the significance of Holi in the months of Phaagun or a lesson on Brahma Sambandha during Pavitra Ekadashi.

The satsang usually closes with a short quiz, game or activity related to the topics recently discussed. These are interactive and well enjoyed by the members.

Finally, we end with a recital of Aashray nu Pad and greet each other with Jai Shri Krishna again.

Dance, Drama & Arts

Participating in arts is a huge part of the Kishore Pushti group. Despite the group having started during the pandemic, it has always stood out in participation of dance and drama during utsavs.

During the pandemic, when utsavs were celebrated virtually, the Kishore Pushti group put together several performances right from their homes. These were meticulously organised, with everyone re-enacting different parts of a story from their homes and editing it together to recreate a whole lila for the Anand of Vaishnavs.

After COVID, the group started gathering at the haveli for practices and put together performances for events. These were planned, rehearsed, and performed all by the Kishore Pushti members with some assistance from Vaishnav Youth Group.

Some of the dramas performed include, Pratham Milan leela, Maan leela, Makhan Chori leela, amongst others.

This summer, during the Pavitra Baras celebration at the haveli, the Kishore Pushti group did a stunning Raas performance for Vaishnavs and JejeShree. The group started practicing the dance 2 months in advance and were extremely dedicated in getting it right. Despite several of them having end of year exams prior to the performance, they all made time to come together at the haveli for practices. While this was important for the performance, members also used this practice time to take a break from revision and spend some time like-minded peers. The hard-work paid off when Vaishnavas applauded their performance with lots of enthusiasm and JejeShree praised them and rewarded them with Ashirwad and certificates.

Seva & Event Organising

Ask any of the Haveli Sevaks and they will tell you that the Kishore Pushti group are their favourites when it comes to volunteering during utsavs. Over the last few years, the group has proven itself to be a vital part of all events by always being there for the different organising committees.

During manoraths at the Haveli, the group gets involved in sajaavat (decoration) seva like decorating hindola and preparing rangolis and sanjhis. They are also very helpful when it comes to organising and tidying up after events and are quick to make sure the Haveli is spotless and neat for the next utsav.

In recent events, they have provided lots of support to the Youth Group volunteers. During the Youth Group Holi mela, they designed all the banners, posters and owned all the decoration. They also helped serve prasad and manage the games station. During the Saptah this year, the Kishore Pushti group was at the forefront of queue and crowd management as well as desk manning.

Kishore Pushti is a fantastic initiative for anyone between the ages of 12 and 18 looking to make friends within our community and learn more about Pushtimarg. The variety of activities offered means that there is something for everyone. In the next year, Kishore Pushti hopes to grow further with more in-person events and satsangs.

To register with Kishore Pushti, please scan the QR Code on the following page or get in touch with Artiben Ved, Urvi Rajdev or Nyrali Patel – contact details can be found on the following page.

Shrinathdham
National Haveli & Community Centre - UK

VAISHNAV SANGH OF UK

With Blessings of Shree Dwarkeshlalji Mahodayshree (Kadi-Ahmedabad)

VSUK Kishore Pushti

Registration for Kishore Pushti

Joining Kishore Pushti gives an opportunity to the youth to learn about the origins of Pushtimarg, participate and engage in a community.

In this group of young people from the ages of 12 to 18, you can gain the chance to engage in events that happen in the haveli and involve yourself you help the Pushtimarg community by doing seva and immersing yourself in the teachings of our Guru Shree Dwarkeshlalji and the founder of Pushtimarg, Mahaprabhuji himself.

For further Information, please contact:	Artiben Ved 07438 125469	Urvi Rajdev 07752 369148	Nyrali Patel 07493 873954

Balpushti

By Thakorji's grace and Jeje Shree's ashirvaad, we are entering our fourth year of Balpushti Paathshala.

This year we have introduced our children to different utsav's, digging deeper into our Pushtimarg Dharm and Sanatan Dharm. It has been incredible to see the impact these classes have had on these young children. They not only join these classes, but also take part in cultural performances, regularly get involved in seva at the Haveli and are always enthusiastic – we feel their presence within the community,

During COVID restrictions, we ran our sessions through Zoom, and the kids continued attending consistently because they enjoyed coming to Pathshala. The age group for Balpushti Pathshala is 5 to 11, after which they join Kishore Pushti.

During our classes, we cover:

- ✓ Recitation of paths
- ✓ Gujarati Lessons
- ✓ Moral Stories
- ✓ Lessons on various topics: kirtans, utsavs, avtars, etc.
- ✓ Creative activities: colouring, arts and crafts, etc.
- ✓ Games, e.g. Kahoot

We feel so proud to be involved with Balpushti Pathshala and are always inspired by how the children continue to grow and learn in Pushtimarg.

Currently classes are ran o Sunday mornings every 2 weeks at 11AM. These will be facilitated at Shrinathdham Haveli from the new year, and are currently ran online on Zoom.

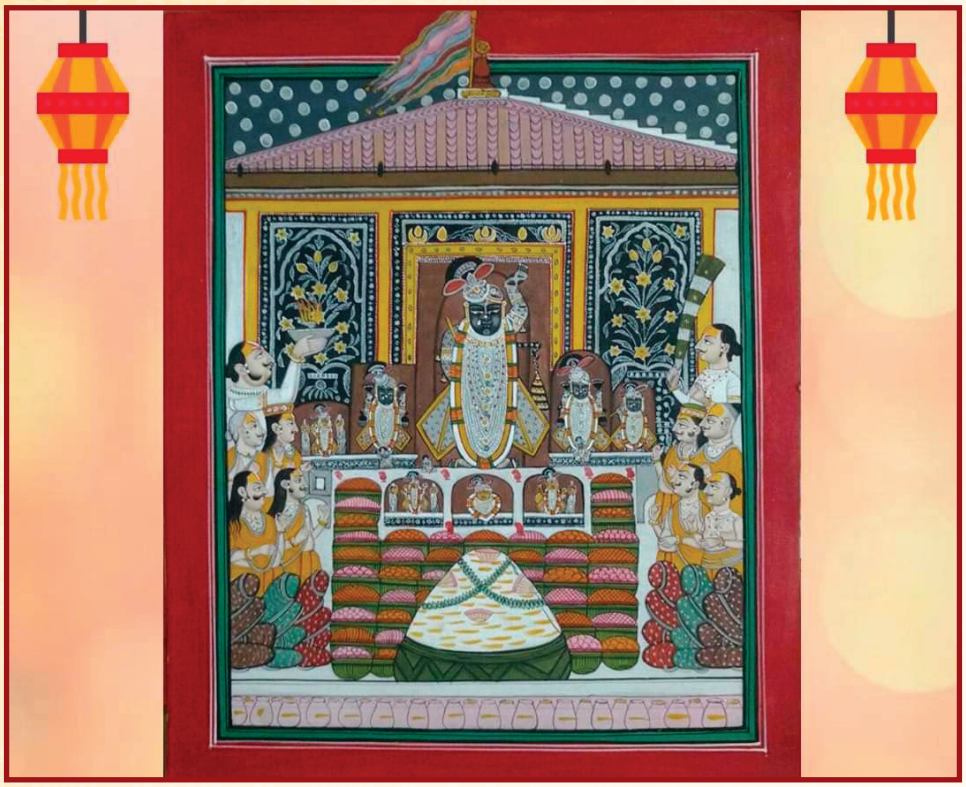
To enrol your children in Balpushti, please contact:

Mamtaben Kothari : +44 7817 985860

Binduben Shah : +44 7919 973781

DIWALI IN PUSHTIMARG

By Arti Ved



Diwali, the festival of lights, also known as Deepotsaav, is the biggest and brightest festival in India. It falls on the darkest, new moon night of the Hindu month Kartik. The celebration starts earlier, from Agyaras, the 11th day of the Krishna paksh Aaso.

Diwali takes on a special meaning for Pushtimargiya Vaishnavs. While all Hindus celebrate Diwali, Pushtimargiya Vaishnavs celebrate Diwali in a unique way that focuses on service (seva) to Thakorji and commemorates his divine leelas. The festivities focus on Thakorji's seva based on "Nandalay" (Nand Baba's house). Hence, all the samagri (offerings) vastra (clothes) aabhushan (ornaments), and saajavat represent various emotions and sentiments of vraj bhakts (shri Krishna devotees of vraj) Deepmalika and Saras Leela kirtans are recited before Thakorji while rows of diyas illuminate the Havelis and homes of Vaishnaavs. A variety of Annakoot samagri is prepared, remembering Goverdhan Leela.

Rama Ekadashi

It is said that, on this day, a gopi named Rama wishes Diwali badhai to Yashodaji in Nand Bhawan. On this day, the badi seva of preparing the large gujiya in various shapes with a saffron design on top is prepared for Annakoot, and the seva of preparing “khatha ki goliya” takes place for the Paan seva of Shreenathji.

Vagh Baras

The Leela that inspired today's Utsav occurred when Brahmaji saw Shri Thakorji in Bacchhavan doing Gocharan leela (Grazing cows) and Chhaak leela (having fruits/snacks outdoors) with all his sakhaas. Brahmaji thought that if Thakorji were all-powerful, why was he acting so ordinarily? So to put Thakori's abilities to the test, he abducted every cow and cowherd (Gop baalako) and brought them all to Bhramalok. After a year, he discovered Thakorji had taken the forms of cows and cowherds, and things were just normal; in fact, the mothers of all cowherd boys and the mother cows were showering more love on their offspring. This caused Brahmaji to realise that his ego was incorrect, and he returned all of the cowherds and cows while asking for forgiveness from Thakorji.

Dhan Teras (DHANYA-TE-RAS)

In Pushtimarg, Dhan is described as अर्थो हि हरिः एव ही।
Our Dhan, or utmost belonging, is our Thakorji. We should protect and treasure our Thakorji as our most precious wealth.

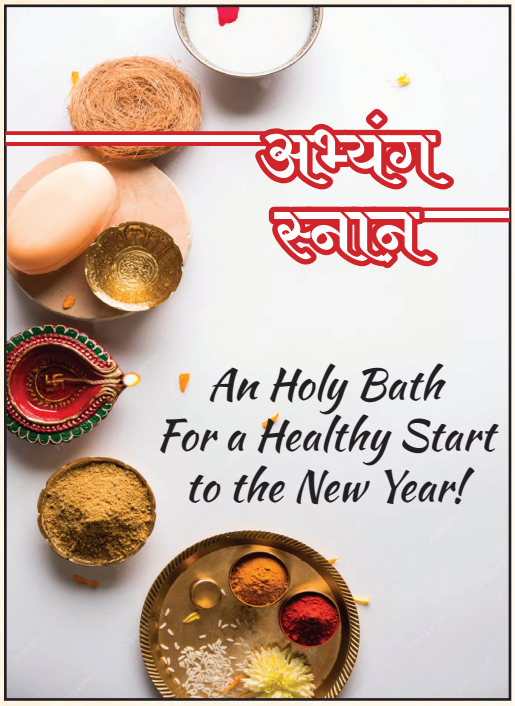
On Dhan Teras, the poojan of wealth and the ornaments are done. While Shree Yasodaji does the poojan of the ornaments of Shree Krishna and Shree Baldevji. We get the reference of this in kirtans “Dhan Dhovat Nandrani”. Yashodaji also bathes Shri Thakorjii, and does a lovely shringhaar of Thakorji, as he is the real Dhan. As mentioned in Janmashtami vadhai kirtan

“Dharma hi te payo Yaha Dhan, Dharma hi te payo,
Nike rakhi yashoda maiya, narayan vraj aayo.”

For Vrajwasis, cows were considered Dhan (wealth), so, today Shringar is done to Cows (they are decorated), and the poojan of Cows is done. Today, cows are offered “thuli”. From today, ‘Deep Maalika’ (artistic rows of diyas) are placed before Thakorji.

Roop Chaturdashi

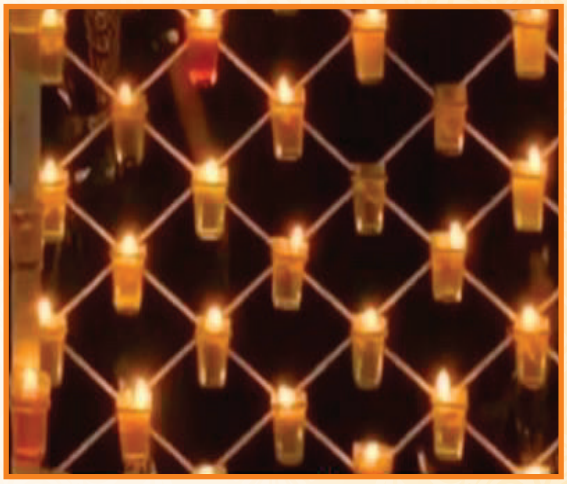
This day is celebrated to commemorate the Lord's victory over the demon Narakasur. Today, Shri Yashodaji wakes Thakorji earlier than usual, and Abhyang Snaan is done before sunrise. The same is done in Havelis, Mangala is done before sunrise, and Abhyang is done. Thakorji is anointed by Tilak, and Aarti is done when Thakorji is seated on the Snaan Chowki before the Snaan.



Diwali

As it is the dark night of Amavasya, the people of Vraj try to dispel the darkness by placing rows of diyas on all the steps of the Kunds in Vraj and at the feet of Shri Girirajji. They experience a very beautiful environment in the divine presence of Prabhu. The way little lamps conquer darkness, the lamps are lit in the bhakt's soul. How could darkness prevail in a bhakt's soul - now every bhakt's soul is glowing! With the same Bhaav, rows of diyas (Deep Malika) are arranged in front of Thakorji in the Sandhiya Darshan, and Deep Maalika pads are sung.

While Nandraiji does poojan for the welcome of Laxmiji. Yahodaji sets out thousands of clay lamps around Nand Bhavan and erects a grand platform piled high with mithai (sweets). She generously distributed the sweets to all the Vrajwasis. Thakorji loved the sweet treats and had a mischievous plan. When Yashodaji went inside, he pretended to be a shopkeeper seated in a pavilion of mirrors called "Hatdi."



In Haveli, Today Thakorji is seated in a "Hatdi, which means small shop. He would sell goods for which he uses golden/silver weighing scales while he bargains in the currency of love. Anything one desires will be received. Our prabhu is full of madhuriya, so he enchants gopies and distributes "ras" While doing this Leela, During this distribution each bhaktas gains their desires according to their capacity (Patrata)

Kaan jagai

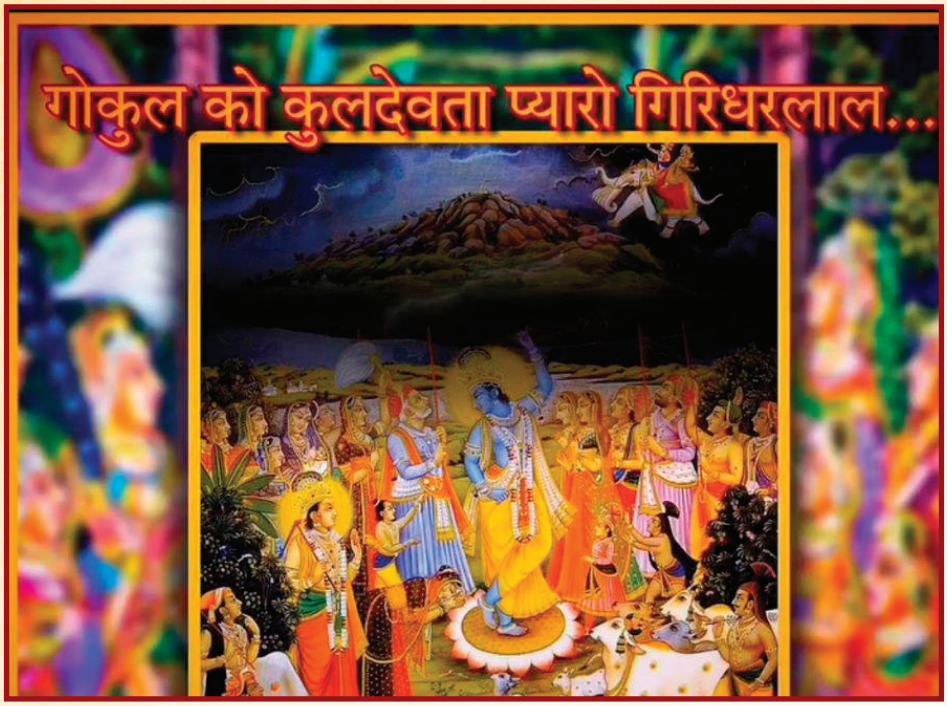
Thakorji, along with Gop Balak, would go to the cow shed to invite cows for the next day's Goverdhan Pooja. He whispers in the ears of cows and says, "Kal Goverdhan pooja mai begi begi aayio," which means tomorrow comes early for Gorverdhan pooja.

In Sandhiya darshan, along with Deepmalika and Hatdi, there is a tradition of playing Chopat/Pasaa Khel (a game with dice) on the night of Diwali. With the same Bhaav, Chopat is put in the Shaiya Mandir to allow Yugal Swaroop to play Chopat throughout the night.

Govardhan Pooja & Annakut

This day holds special significance for Vaishnavs as it honours the Govardhan Leela, one of Prabhu's most significant Leelas. Annakut and Govardhan Pooja are done with the bhaav of the leelas done by Thakorji - when Thakorji stopped Indra Yagna to establish Govardhan Poojan and declared to offer Annakut to Shri Govardhan. Thakorji himself appeared from Shri Govardhan to accept the Annakut with thousands of hands. By doing this Leela, Thakorji stopped Vrajvaasis from doing Anyashray.

As Vrajwasis stopped doing Indra poojan and performed Goverdhan poojan instead, Indra dev felt angered and humiliated. To take revenge, he poured heavy rains on Vraj. To protect the people, children, cows and animals, Prabhu Shri Krishna lifted the Goverdhan parvat on his little finger and stood for seven days. In this manner, Prabhu indicated that all his bhaktas should forgo the need to surrender to other devi-devtas and seek solace only at the divine lotus feet of Nand Nandan Shri Krishna. Thakorji was only seven years old when he performed this leela.



Annakut represents a MahaYagna, which is done for Pushti Purushottam's happiness and to ask for forgiveness for any mistakes made throughout the year. In any yagya, these three things must be done:

- Yagya Sahitya: Payas - all types of Kheer, Ghee, Handi, Til, Udad Dal etc. are used in Annakut
- Tarpan: The Goswami Balaks take the Prasadi - Dudhghar is Tarpan
- Marjan: The Distribution of this Mahaprasad is the Marjan. Due to this, all Bheels (One type of Community) are offered this Annkut mahaprasad in Srinathji.

The entire Heap of Rice is the bhav of the heart of Shreeji; The Circular Chakra (wheel) is the head (Shri mastak) of Shree Prabhu; and the four gunjas on four sides are the bhav of the four arms (Shree Hasts) of Shree Prabhu.

The Annakut ceremony is performed annually on Kartik Sud Ekam, though in Vaishnav households or Havelis, it could take place until Maha Sud Chaturthi. The area where Annakut will be offered is cleaned, and cloth, or patal, is laid on the floor. The Samagri is offered in a specific order: first Doodhghar, then Naagari, followed by Ansakhdi, and finally Sakhdi. The Ann (rice grain) Kut (mountain) made of Sakhdi is placed in the middle of the Sakhdi Samagri. A line of turmeric separates each type of Samagri. As much Samagri as one's capacity and the Guru's aagya allow is offered.

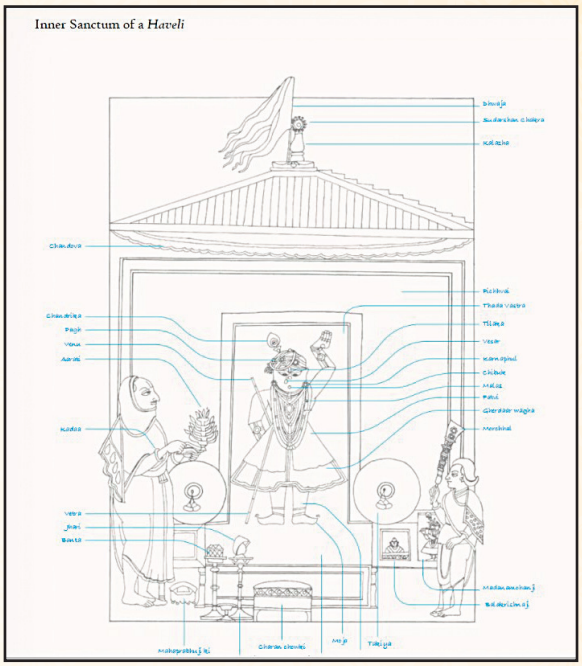
Bhai Bij

The story behind today's Utsav is that Yamraj visited his sister Shri Yamunaji's house for lunch on this day. Impressed by Shri Yamunaji's hospitality, Yamraj granted her a boon. Shri Yamunaji asked that any devotees who drank her waters on this day would be spared struggles and suffering at the time of death. Thus, Yamuna Snaan and Yamuna Paan have great significance today. There is also the custom of brothers being invited to their sisters' homes for lunch on Bhai Dooj.

Shrinathji Shringara during Diwali

By Yash Kashiwala

Diwali and New Year hold a special place for the followers of Pushtimarg. As in Pushtimarg Seva, Raag (spiritual Indian music), Bhog (Vegetarian Satvik food) and Vastra or Shringar (adornment or deity in a magnificent attire) play the most important role while performing Thakorji's seva. We will mainly discuss the magnificent Shringar, and settings followed in Pushtimarg during the time of the grand festival - Diwali. Although the festival lasts for many days, here we will focus on the main seven days: Rama Ekadashi, Vagh Baras, Dhan teras, Kali Chaudas, Diwali, Annakut and New year (Nutan Varsh).



Rama Ekadashi

Rama Ekadashi is one of the Ekadashis which comes 4 days before the Diwali. The 11th day of Krishna Paksha (Moon's waning Phase) in the month of October-November is celebrated as Rama Ekadashi. On this day Thakorji is offered the Vastra of black Zari. Thakorji wears a Cheera (Turban made of Zari) with a Naagfeni Katra on the Shri Mastak and ornaments made of diamonds.

Vagh Baras:

Vagh Baras is dedicated to calves. In the preparation of the festive season, Shrinathji invites Cows and calves to the haveli and worships them.

Shrinathji wears a gold brocade "Kachani" (skirt like dress practiced by Rajput and Mughal nobles) with numerous necklaces of pearls and emeralds. The Yellow Turban is decorated with gold ornaments. The stele (pillar) is covered with dark green silk, in contrast with a red and golden Pichwai (A colourful backdrop (usually on cloth) and is used to signify a specific event). Acknowledging and celebrating the good harvest and abundance of nature, pichwai depicts golden flowers growing on a delicate moughal trellis. The chamber directly in front of the inner sanctum, is decorated with banana plants and the leaves of asopalav tree (cypress).

Navnit- Priyaji (the baal Swarup of Shree Krishna) is similarly dressed in golden apparel and adorned with pearls and emeralds. The Pichwai today is of purple colour with yellow strips on it. The Veranda outside the inner sanctum is covered in white wall hangings studded with silver moons. Cows in Miniature form along with small painted wooden herdsmen are kept waiting near to door for the lord to come out and play with them. Gopis in the silver attire serve the lord with the various fans, chamars and the like.

Dhan teras:

During the 3rd day of the Diwali, to honor the goddess Lakshmiji, Shrinathji wears a regal Charvagha (Four-pointed cornered dress) of green and golden brocade. Several jewels of pearls, diamonds, rubies, and emeralds are topped with a flume of peacock feathers set in a glimmering turban. The stele is covered in contrasting red, while the pichwai sets the mood of royal garden pavilion. Parrots and Peacocks perch amid flowering creepers as elephants dance near the base of the pichwai.

Navnit Priya ji (Lalan) also adorns the green and the gold brocade. Today all his favourite toys, utensils are of pure gold. The pichwai behind lalan represents the three pavilions surrounded by beautiful garden containing a fountain and a fishpond.

Radha and Krishna both sit near the central pavilion and welcome and greet the guest on this auspicious day. In the front, Krishna, Balram and other friends play with the cows specially decorated for the Diwali festival. Also, In the evening of Dhan teras vegetable starts arriving in the carts and Shri Krishna and other haribhakts get busy to prepare for the Diwali and Annakut Mahotsav to offer the most delicious food in large varieties.

Roop Chaturdashi:

On the day of Kali Chaudas, the 4th day of Diwali, lord Dwarkadhish defeated Narkasur and helped 16000 women free themselves from the prison in his palace. Out of eternal compassion and grace, Lord Krishna married all 16000 women and made them His princesses.

On this special day, Shrinathji is adorned in a vibrant orange-red and gold brocade ghagarjama, symbolizing auspiciousness and the abundance bestowed by Thakorji. The Lord is bedecked with dazzling jewels that compete for attention, while colorful flowers echo the brilliance of gemstones on His graceful form.

Navnit Priya ji wears an exquisite orange-red brocade outfit with green silk flowers and a jewelry assortment featuring pearls, diamonds, rubies, and emeralds. The pavilion surrounding Thakorji is adorned with natural elements and joyful Gopis bearing gifts, alongside decorative vases, jhariji, paan boxes, Mughal surahies, and canopies lit by candelabras, all paying homage to our dearest Thakorji.

Diwali:

Today Shrinathji wears a silver brocade charvagha and is adorned with innumerable jewels and a jewel fitted turban topped by large flume of peacock feathers. Shrinathji's plaited hair swings cheerfully to his left-hand side while holding aloft red roses on his left hand. The stele today is covered with yellow silk cloth and the pichwai is decorated with pearl and gold.

Navnit priyaji is also richly dressed today with all the white colored wall hangings around him.

Today, as the night descends, lights and lamps are lit to eliminate the darkness and fear. A new year is eagerly awaited as people of Ayodhya wait for Lord Ram to return from his exile.

Annakut/New year:

On this day, Lord Krishna worshipped the mount Govardhan. By worshipping mount Govardhan, the lord wanted to remind Indra of his ego/pride towards his devotees and his part in the universal leela.

First day of the year, Shrinathji appears in his rich apparels. Today he wears a red brocade 'Gokarna Mukut', a turban with its ends flared out to resemble the large ears of the cows. This kind of turbans are worn by cowherds during such special occasions. The Shringar of Shrinathji is same as that of Diwali to represent the continuous, cyclic, nature of time. Today, Shrinathji provides darshan in the mangla during the morning and Annakut darshan late at night. All the devotees today are busy performing their best in various sevas.

Huge quantities of food is prepared on the day of Annakut with large amount of rice- Sakhdi (in kilos) is used to make a representation of Govardhan- Nathji. A huge gunja, sweet cake is placed on the top and four other cakes are placed on the corners. This also depicts the time when Shri Krishna produced many hands to accept and eat various bhog offered to him from his devotees the people of Vraj.

Shringar and Annakut darshan on New Year's Day at Srinathdham Haveli, Harrow, London

Badam Mesub

Ingredients

1 cup almond flour, or you can use groundnut flour or cashew flour
1/2 cup sugar
3/4 cup ghee
Kesar and cardamom powder
Grease mould tray (thali) with ghee

METHOD

1. In a wok combine all ingredients.
2. Put the wok on medium flame and start rotating the mixture in a clockwise direction.
3. Keep on stirring in the same direction till the Mesub looks frothy, fluffy with holes forming, and the colour changes to light brown, and ghee starts separating.
4. Pour the mixture into a prepared greased tray. And bang slightly on the worktop to level the mixture.
5. Sprinkle with kesar, cardamom powder. (Optional)
6. Tilt the tray, and use a spoon underneath to take out any extra ghee.
7. Let it cool for about 5 minutes, cut into squares or desired shape, Mesub ready to eat.

Pawa salad

Ingredients

2 cups thick pawa
1/4 cup roasted/shallow fried peanuts
1/4 cup cucumber diced in small cubes
1/4 cup mixed peppers (red, green and yellow) diced
1/4 cup tomatoes diced leave in strainer to remove tomato juice
1/4 cup boiled sweet corn
1/4 cup finely chopped coriander

Method

Dressing
Juice of 1 and half lemon, 4 tablespoon oil
Green chillies paste (as per taste), Black pepper (optional)
Salt and sugar to taste
Place all ingredients into a mason jar and shake till creamy or in a whisk together in a bowl to combine.

For tempering /Vaghar

2 tablespoon oil , 1/4 teaspoon jeeru, 1/4 teaspoon rai (optional), Chopped green chillies, Limdo (curry leaves)

1. Soak the pawa for 5/10 minutes depending on the thickness of pawa, wash, drain, and dry on the tray single layer.
2. Combine all ingredients, add salad dressing and tempering, and serve.

Oats Dhokla

Equipment

Steamer with moulds or thali (trays)
Grinder

Ingredients

1 cup oats flour, 4 tablespoon fine semolina, 1/2 cup fresh or frozen peas puree, 1/4 cup fresh Coriander puree, 1/2 cup Yoghurt, 1/2 cup water, 1 tablespoon ginger paste, 1 teaspoon eno, Salt and green chilli paste as per taste

For tempering

2 tablespoon oil, 1 teaspoon mustard seeds, 2 teaspoon sugar, 1/2 lemon juice, 150ml water, 2 green chillies slit, Handful of curry leaves, Coriander to garnish.

Instructions

1.) Grease thali/moulds with oil. 2.) Blend peas and coriander into puree. 3.) In a large bowl, mix together oats flour, semolina, yoghurt, water, peas and coriander puree, ginger paste, salt, chilli paste till everything is evenly mixed into a smooth thick pour able batter. 4.) Set aside for 20 minutes, it helps the flavours to blend. 5.) Get your steaming device ready. Fill water into your Steamer and bring it to boil. 6.) Add eno to the batter and mix well. 7.) Immediately pour the batter in the greased thali/moulds and steam for 15/20 minutes until the toothpick comes out clean. 8.) Allow to cool for 5 minutes. 9.) Now prepare tempering - Heat oil add mustard seeds, let it sputter, and add slit green chillies and curry leaves. Stir in sugar and water, and bring to boil till sugar dissolves. A few minutes. 10.) Cut dhokla into squares and pour tempering evenly over the dhokla. 11.) Garnish with Coriander and serve.

Dudhi/Lauki/Bottle Gourd Barfi

Ingredients

4 cups grated dudhi
300ml tub fresh cream double
1/2 cup milk, 3/4 cups coconut flour
1 cup sugar, 4 tablespoons ghee
1/2 teaspoon cardamom powder
Sliced nuts for garnish
Few drops green colour optional

Instructions

1. On low flame, heat 4 tablespoon ghee and saute dudhi for 10 minutes.
2. Add cream and milk and cook on low flame stirring.
3. Once the cream & milk have evaporated, add coconut powder, cardamom powder, and sugar.
4. Cook on low flame till sugar dissolves and the mixture becomes a ball, and leaves the side of the pan.
5. Transfer to lined tray with baking parchment and garnish with sliced nuts.
6. Allow the barfi to set for a few hours.
7. Cut in squares or diamond shape.

Basics of Pushtimarg & Brahmsambandh

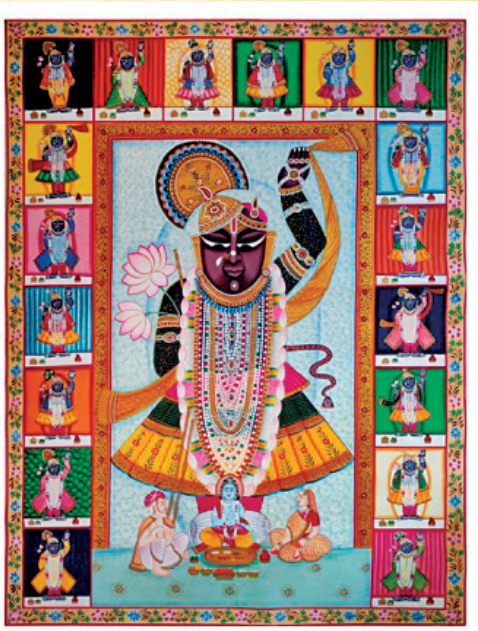
By Kruti Dattani & Shrini Sachdev

A lot of us might be wondering what Pushtimarg is and why one should follow it. To understand any concept or person, knowing its attributes is the best way. Similarly, the attributes of Pushtimarg would give the best introduction to Pushtimarg.

1. Where Lord Shri Krishna Himself takes steps towards His Bhaktas (Disciples) without any boundaries of the laws of *Kaal* (time period) or *Karma* (past actions).
2. Despite enjoying all worldly pleasures, *Bhaktas* (disciples) always have the memory of Shrinathji in their heart and are always joyful. Their days also pass by very smoothly and quickly with this happiness.
3. Where an individual experiences God's grace in every second of their life. Even though worries come by, one remembers that Shrinathji, Shri Yamunaji and Shri Mahaprabhuji are always alongside them.
4. Despite being alone, when one does not feel lonely, instead feels the presence of 84-252 *Vaishnavs* (Some of the initial ardent & beloved devotees of Shrinathji)
5. When seeing a cow anywhere reminds one of Gokul (Place in Mathura district in India where Lord Krishna spent His childhood)
6. When one becomes overjoyed on getting an opportunity to visit Govardhan (mountain where Shreenathji himself appeared in the 15th century C.E.) in *Vraj* (Region in India on both sides of Yamuna River in the State of Uttar Pradesh)
7. One Becomes emotional on listening to *Ashtachhaap Kirtans* (Poems composed by the eight designated poets)

In literal words, '*Pushti*' means grace and '*Marg*' means path. Hence, Pushtimarg is also known as '*Krupamarg*' i.e. the path of God's Grace.

One might wonder, as to where and how all of this began. Just like the water under the ground always existed and it only became known when somebody dug in underground until water started flowing; similarly, Lord Shri Krishna, His *Bhaktas* (disciples) and their *Bhakti* (devotion) always existed, it only became known when Lord Shri Mahaprabhuji gathered all the *Bhaktas* and formed the base of Pushtimarg. The *Bhaktas* (disciples) of Pushtimarg are lovingly referred to as '*Vaishnavs*'.



The uniqueness of Pushtimarg lies in its emphasis on '*Seva*' (Service). It gives each of its *Bhaktas* (disciples) the opportunity to serve Lord Shri Krishna in their respective homes as their own family member. An individual or family graced by God can do seva by first taking Brahmsambandh - the process of entry of a *jiva* (soul) into Pushtimarg is known as ***'Brahmsambandh'***. Then, a Vaishnav can ask for *agya* (instruction) from a Vallabhkul Balak (lineage of Shri Mahaprabhuji) to begin Seva. Once granted, Vallabhkul will sanctify the *Chitraji* (Photo-frame of Shri Thakorji) or *Swaroop* (form) of Shri Thakorji for the Vaishnavs, who can then begin daily Seva with their Guruji's instructions. Seva must also been done in Apras which means looking after your hygiene – being clean and wearing clean clothes. In Pushtimarg, when doing Shri Thakorji seva, the attire for men is dhoti bandi, and females wear a chaniya choli or saree. Seva is a vital part of worship in Pushtimarg – it is made up of 3 key aspects: Kirtan (playing, and listening to traditional kirtan and paths), Bhog (offering samagri), and Vastra and Shrinagar (Shri Thakorji's clothes and jewellery). There is seva pranalika (system of seva) which will give guidance of what kirtan, samagri, vastra and shrinager are to be offered to Shri Thakorji daily.

Brahm means Lord Shri Krishna and *Sambandh* means relation. Hence, *Brahmsambandh* means establishing relationship with Shri Thakorji. This initiation of establishing the relationship can only be done by descendants of Shri Mahaprabhuji.

When Shri Mahaprabhuji was doing Prithvi Parikrama (World Pilgrimage) at the age of 14, He saw with His very own eyes a very sad picture of the mental states of people, who were once in Shrinathji's Divine Leela. The souls had ingrained many faults and frailties by being exposed to the struggles of this world. They not only forgot who they were, but had also forgotten Shri Thakorji. Shri Mahaprabhuji began contemplating how to re-unite these embodied souls with Shri Thakorji.

On the 11th day of Shravan Sud in 1492 C.E., when Shri Mahaprabhuji was absorbed in meditation at Govind Ghat on the banks of River Yamuna, Shri Govardhannathji i.e. Shri Thakorji, manifested himself in front of Shri Mahaprabhuji. He gave Shri Mahaprabhuji the proper path and '*mantra*' (Sacred Composition) to unite the embodied souls with the Divine. This mantra is known as the Brahmsambandh mantra. On giving this mantra, Shri Thakorji promised the following to Shri Mahaprabhuji:

a. To whoever you shall give the Brahmsambandh mantra, I shall undoubtedly accept that soul

b. Once if I have accepted a soul, I shall never let go

c. Whatever '*Bhog*' (Offering) is served to me by remembering you, I shall definitely accept it

d. In whichever household you would hand me over to, I shall reside in that household forever.

After Shri Thakorji gave this '*Updesh*' (sermon), Shri Mahaprabhuji offered Pavitra composed of 360 *taars* (connections) which He had prepared with His own hands to Shri Thakorji. He also offered '*Mishri*' (sugar crystals) to Shri Thakorji and started singing the Madhurashtakam – "*Adharam Madhuram Vadanam Madhuram*..". This day is also celebrated as Pavitra Ekadashi.

The very next day, known as Pavitra Baras, the first Brahmsambandh was given by Shri Mahaprabhuji to Shri Damodardas Harsanji (Damlaji). Damlaji had forsaken his father's wealth and home to perform devotional service at the feet of Shri Mahaprabhuji and had gathered immense knowledge about Pushtimarg from Him. Shri Damodardasji was the first disciple of Shri Mahaprabhuji and remained with Him throughout his life.

Giving this mantra is a key step of giving Brahmsambandh and can only given by Vallabhkul (descendants of Shri Mahaprabhuji) after fasting for one full day. It is an oath taken by the *jiva* (soul) to mentally surrender everything to Lord Shri Krishna.

The English translation of the Brahmsambandh mantra is as follows: "It has been ages since I (the individual soul) has been separated from you Shri Krishna. The joy that comes from experiencing a pang of separation from you and then deeply desiring to reunite with you has disappeared too. So, I surrender to you my body, senses, soul, intellect and its activities, and belongings. I am your servant, Oh Krishna, I am yours." (These last 5 words are known as the Panchakshar Mantra and should be recited to our Swaroop daily).

The underlying meaning behind the mantra is that the *jiva* (soul) first accepts the fact that he is aware about having been separated from Lord Shri Krishna. It is only after this awareness that one can realize how to then re-unite to the Supreme. Because the soul now knows that something is missing and he needs to attain that, he then prays to Lord Shri Krishna that he has surrendered everything that he is attached to. This implies that he is now mentally a detached soul and entirely belongs to Lord Shri Krishna. Thus, he is now re-united with Shri Thakorji.

This mantra is intimate and pure. From the day of attaining Brahmasambandh, the *jiva* (soul) begins a new life who will now be referred to as a Vaishnav. The Vallabhkul who gives Brahmsambandh is referred to as ones Guru for life and must always be remembered and respected.

Every Brahmsambandhi must also always wear two Tulsi Kanthis around their neck and must recite sacred compositions like Yamunashtak, Krushnashray, Sarvottam Stotram and do Ashtakshar Mala (Shri Krishnah Sharnam Mama 108 times) everyday. This is a reminder that Shrinathji, Shri Yamunaji and Shri Mahaprabhuji arel always with us.

Ayurveda

by Urvi Rajdev

The term Ayurveda is derived from the Sanskrit word Ayur (life or longevity of life) and Veda (science or knowledge). It therefore can be translated to knowledge of life. Ayurveda aims to help people live healthy lives by understanding their unique bodies and identifying practices that suit their individual nature.

There a few key concepts in Ayurveda:

1. **Agni (fire):** Agni can be thought of as the body's Digestive Fire. When Agni is strong and in balance it allows us to digest our food properly and to assimilate our experiences and memories; absorbing what our bodies need and burning off what we don't.
2. **Pancha Maha Bhutas (Five Big Elements):** According to Ayurveda, everything is made of 5 elements; Prithvi (Earth), Ap (Water), Tejo/Tejas (Fire), Vaayu (Air), Akasham (Space or Ether).
3. Different combinations of these 5 elements give rise to certain biological and physical characteristics. These characteristics are known as Doshas.
4. **Dosha:** Dosha means faulty or in the context of Ayurveda, that which can become faulty or imbalanced. The Doshas are Vata (Air + Ether), Pitta (Fire + Water) and Kapha (Water + Earth)

Everything, including humans are made of a combination of the 3 Doshas, for most people 1 or 2 of the Doshas will trump the rest. This combination is determined at conception and is known as the Prakruti (nature) of a person. For example, one may identify their prakriti as 'Predominantly Pitta' or 'Vata-Kapha'.

Each Prakriti has some defining characteristics. Some basic guidelines are:

Dosha	Qualities	Traits
Vata (Air+Ether)	Dry, Light, Cold, Rough, Subtle, Mobile, Clear	Those with this vata dosha are usually described as slim, energetic, and creative. They're known for thinking outside the box but can become easily distracted. What's more, their mood is highly dependent on the weather, people around them, and foods they eat
Pitta (Fire + Water)	Hot, Sharp, Light, Liquid, Spreading, Oily	People with pitta are said to usually have a muscular build, be very athletic, and serve as strong leaders. They're highly motivated, goal-oriented, and competitive. Still, their aggressive and tenacious nature can be off-putting to some people, which can lead to conflict
Kapha (Water + Earth)	Heavy, Slow, Cool, Oily, Smooth, Dense, Soft, Stable, Gross, Cloudy (Sticky)	People with this dosha are described as strong, thick-boned, and caring. They're known for keeping things together and being a support system for others. Kapha-dominant people rarely get upset, think before acting, and go through life in a slow, deliberate manner

Knowing your Prakriti can help you understand your imbalances and therefore gives you the tools to alter your lifestyle to bring balance back to your body. For example, a person with a mostly Pitta dosha is prone to suffer from excess Pitta i.e. signs such as anger, acne. Knowing this, the person should bring qualities opposing Pitta into their life. Kapha foods and Kapha building activities will help this person cool down internally. This may include incorporating cooling foods such as milk and fennel in their diet and, spending time near water bodies and walking on grass.

Ayurveda is extremely tailored and individualised and there is no 'one size fits all' approach as everyone's Prakriti is different and therefor everyone's imbalances are different. A food that may benefit a Vata person may be disease-causing for a Kapha person. Therefore, trying to understand your individual body and its imbalances is extremely important.

That being said, there are several practices that ayurveda recommends that benefit people of all doshas and can encourage balance in all bodies.

- **How you eat:** How you eat is just as important (if not more) than what you eat. Eating should be treated as an independent activity and should not be done whilst engaging in other activities such as working, walking, talking, or watching TV. Each bite should be well chewed. Eating with a sense of gratitude rather than guilt, or rushing or simply focusing on calories, allows food to be easily digested.

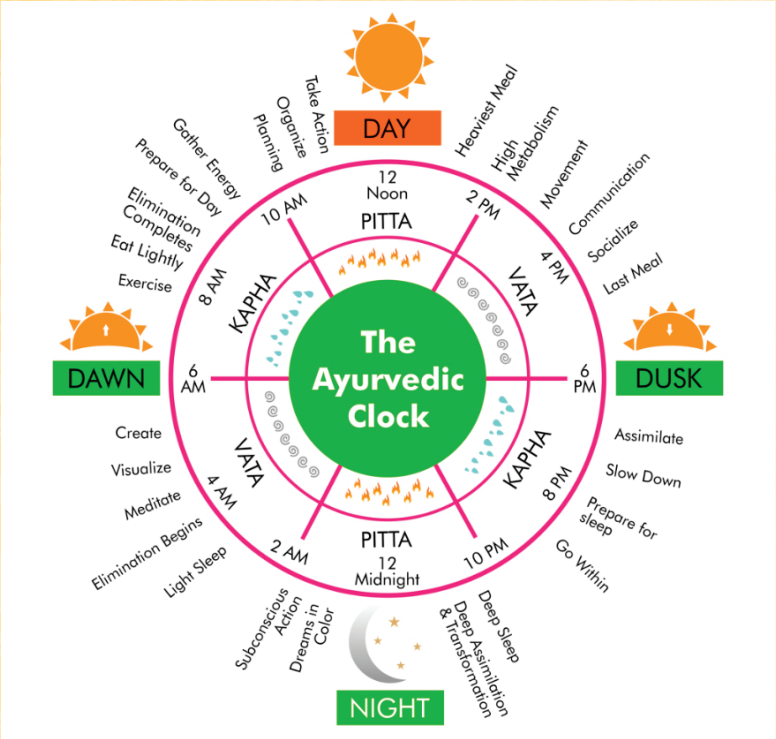
- **When you eat:** Each 4-hour period in the day has a dominant Dosha associated with it and this affects our agni (digestive fire) at different times of the day. For example, 6-10am is a Kapha dosha period and agni is just waking up so meals/breakfast should be light at this time. 10am-2pm is a Pitta dominant period making makes it the ideal time to have the largest meal of the day as agni is at its highest. Agni in our bodies runs in sync with the sun, so if the sun has set, your digestive fire is low and therefore meals should be small, light and easy to digest (e.g. dinner).

- **Eat fresh:** The best way to increase ojas i.e the supplier of life force in the body, is to increase prana (vitality). Foods with abundant prana come straight from the Earth. The moment food is picked, its prana begins slowly diminishing. Therefore, eating foods that are as fresh as possible will increase prana. Foods stored for a long time such as packaged and frozen foods have little vitality and should be avoided.

- **Keep it warm, cooked and spiced:** Agni, the digestive power body is similar to a blazing campfire. Ideally functioning, it is hot, bright, and able to digest food, thoughts, emotions, and experiences. It is necessary to avoid dimming agni's intensity with cold foods and beverages. You should lean toward warm, cooked foods that incorporate warming spices to ensure your digestive fire remains strong.

- **Food combination:** Combining foods with radically different energies/natures can overwhelm the digestive fire (agni) and can cause indigestion, fermentation, gas, bloating, and the creation of toxins. Some examples of incompatible combinations include milk with fruit e.g. fruit salad in milk custard.

Embracing the wisdom of ayurveda slowly helps us to cultivate a refined awareness around how our dietary and lifestyle choices affect us. This knowledge can be an invaluable asset, so be gentle with yourself, progressing at a pace that works for you and start by incorporating practices that do not overwhelm you. Listen to your body along the way, knowing that each and every person is unique and that listening to what works and doesn't work well for your individual body is more important than living the 'perfect' ayurvedic lifestyle .



Images Sources: https://sunshineayurveda.com.au/ and Ekam Yogashala

The values of Pushtimarg in the modern world – the importance of equality

By Krish Gadhia

Despite being formed in a different country and in a different century, the teaching, and values which Pushtimarg preach are still applicable to all people, everywhere, always. This is because of Mahaprabhuji's emphasis on equality, which is not only integral to Pushtimarg but also a transient value which can be employed in our own lives.

The idea of equality comes from Mahaprabhuji's Shudhadvaita philosophy which perpetuates the idea that everything is Krishna and nothing but Krishna. This idea is made clear in the Siddhanta Muktavali where Mahaprabhuji writes that "without a doubt, one's own Inner Self is Krishna, and He is filled with Perfect Joy." The idea that Krishna resides within all leads to a uniform vision of the world as being non-different from Him. This idea is exemplified in the Gita when Lord Krishna says "the truly learned see with equal vision a scholar of humility and learning, a cow, an elephant, and a social outcast" therefore urging us to regard all in one manner of respect and love. This teaching of equality is something which has become even more prominent in recent times and especially within the multicultural and diverse society we live in as Vaishnavs. Therefore, Mahaprabhuji's path teaches us to see our beloved Thakorji in all people regardless of their race, gender, or class, which is a teaching we can all imbibe and practice when confronted with people from different walks of life.

Mahaprabhuji's own practice of equality can be considered as being revolutionary in comparison to his contemporaries. Mahaprabhuji internalised Lord Krishna's statement in the Gita which explains that "women, vaisyas and Sudras…can attain the supreme state by taking refuge in Me." Referencing a time when women and other discriminated castes were excluded from religious practices and attaining God. This led Mahaprabhuji to create an indiscriminatory path in which anyone can approach Krishna and receive the happiness of the Vraj Bhakts. This is why Mahaprabhuji is given the name of "the uplifter of the ones who were discriminated such as women and Sudras". Therefore, in his own theological context Mahaprabhuji tackled issues such as sexism and casteism which is something that we can extend to the wider society.

This importance of practicing equality was clearly demonstrated by Gusainji through the story of the parched woman on his travels from Gokul to Jatipura. Once during the height of summer when travelling, Gusainji's palanquin stopped in the middle of the road. Gusainji enquired what the issue was, and His attendant reported that there is an old woman who seemed incredibly thirsty and was unable to move and that they have no water to give to her in a separate, disposable container. Gusainji's sevaks felt that they would be breaking their cleanliness if they gave her water from their own vessels. Instinctively, Gusainji picked up Shree Navneetpriyaji's gold Jhariji and left His palanquin. He gave the woman water with His own hands; He spoke kindly to her and gave her the Jhariji to make sure she had water for the way home. On reaching Jatipura an attendant of Gusainji's was puzzled by the incident. This prompted Gusainji to explain that whilst they saw an old, poor, woman He saw Shree Thakorji sitting in the middle of the road, He saw that His beloved Thakorji needed water. Gusainji elucidated that Mahaprabhuji's Shudadvaita philosophy teaches us that every particle of the universe is a part of the Lord - therefore how could He see the old woman in the road as anything other than the Lord Himself? This story highlights as servants of Mahaprabhuji and Gusainji we have a duty to treat everyone with love and respect, which is a timeless value which has as much relevance now as it did over four centuries ago.

Children's Mental Health – Building Emotional Resilience

By Sonal Rajdev
(Children's Mental Health Practitioner)

What is emotional resilience?

Emotional resilience is your ability to respond to difficult situations that come your way. Those with strong emotional resilience can look at difficult situations they face and see a challenge and be motivated to tackle it. Those with weak emotional resilience find challenges extremely stressful and are unable to manage their emotions in order to tackle it.

Why is it important?

Emotional resilience is a key skill that is needed throughout life. Life will present kids with various challenges, for example, bullies, moving homes, losing friends, taking tests, trying new things, etc. so they need to able to hold themselves together emotionally while facing these difficult challenges. Looking at difficult situations as challenges that must be overcome is what helps boost our perseverance and determination – something that young people often lack these days.

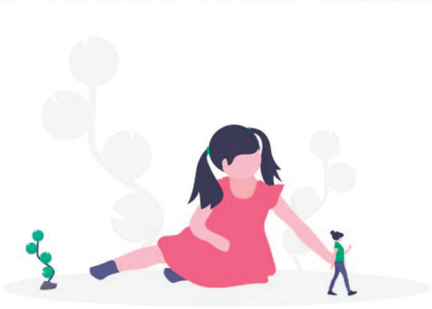
Resilient kids are also more able to take healthy risks because they're not afraid of taking on new challenges or failing. They don't see failure as the end. They have more curiosity and so are able to try new things and are brave enough to tackle it. They are able to see the safety in relationships and can identify boundaries. This enables them to take small steps outside of their comfort zone, knowing well that they have a place to come back to.

Strategies

Strong Emotional Connection With Your Child

Building a strong emotional connection means that your child feels safe to take on new challenges. They have faith and trust that you, as a parent or carer, will be standing there waiting to hug them as they succeed or fail. They have no doubts that you will hold them. When a child has a strong emotional connection with the parent, they are certain that they have someone to go to in order to ask for help.

Don't Fix It

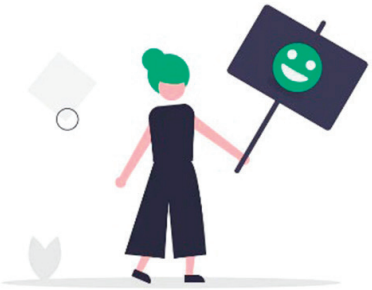


As a parent, not fixing things for your child is extremely difficult. It means that you have to watch your child struggle. However, this struggle is what will help them grow. It will enable them to become stronger. The strategy to use is to guide them by asking questions. Ask them what the options they have are and what they think the advantages and disadvantages of each of those options are.

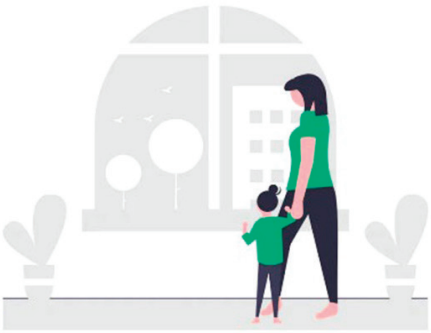
This will help them build problem solving skills which will be essential for them as they grow.

Label Emotions

Emotions are a key part of every situation – your response and your behaviour are based around what you feel. Knowing exactly what you feel will enable you to take the correct decisions and behave appropriately.



Embrace Mistakes



Mistakes need to be seen as just mistakes – we, as parents without any ill intention, often focus on the negatives of the mistakes. For example, you tell your child to put their dishes in the sink, and they go to the sink with their plate and drop it in – this causes the plate to shatter. What is your first reaction? Why did they do that? Maybe they saw you throw a spoon in to the sink yesterday and thought that's how you're supposed to put things in the sink? Instead, if we focus on the positives and the learning, children will learn to see mistakes as stepping stones towards growth, rather than a reason to feel like a disappointment and think less of themselves.

These are a few of the strategies that you can keep in mind as your child builds emotional resilience within themselves. Be sure to be there for your children as a guide and as a role model so that they can learn how to become emotionally resilient. Have a think about your reactions and compare them with your child's – are there any similarities?

Emotional resilience is a key skill needed to face challenges throughout life – if you or your child are having any struggles with their emotions, please do not hesitate to get in touch and I can give you some tips.

Yoga

By Nina Keshani
(Yoga Classes at Shrinathdham Haveli)

Yog is so much more than exercise - it is a tool that unites mind, body and soul assisting in our journey. Yog has been a saviour in many people's lives, not only in overcoming various health complications, but also helping to gain an inner strength and give confidence. As well as this, it promotes good health and healthy living through five principles: Pranayama (breathing exercises), Asana (physical exercises), Ayurveda, Acupressure, and Naturopathy. It brings discipline in life. With Yog, we work upon our system rather than our symptoms. The therapeutic use of Yog helps in removing toxins from body and nourishing our body with the support of right food.

Benefits of Yog can be divided into two parts, Physical and Spiritual.

Physical benefits:

1. Bringing the physical body in perfect shape
2. Muscles becomes flexible
3. Body becomes energetic
4. Improve quality of life
5. Achieve complete physical, mental and spiritual health by balancing reproductive, excretory, skeletal, respiratory, nervous and endocrinal systems

Spiritual benefits:

1. First is the Self-realisation; Atma Bodh
2. Atma Darshan – we visualise our self-energy and perceive others better
3. Sthit-pragyat – overcoming of worldly desires, lust and materialistic greed – we come to a completely still position
4. Gaytavya Prasn – upon attaining the state of controlled thought and establishing contact with supreme, divine knowledge manifests in the individual
5. Kaialyam' Gunatit Samadhi' – this ensures body remains in balance

Benefits of Pranayam (breathing exercises):

- ✓ Increases level of oxygen in blood cells
- ✓ Improves immunity
- ✓ Toxins are eradicated from the body
- ✓ Mind becomes stable and tranquil, become easily practicable
- ✓ Exercises internal organs
- ✓ It fixes your system, not your symptoms
- ✓ Ageing is slowed, face becomes bright, the forehead becomes shiny, luminous and calm
- ✓ Increases good hormones

Benfits of yog Asanas (physical exercise)

- ✓ Strengthens joints
- ✓ Imparts strength, agility and soundness to nervous system
- ✓ Improves the health of our entire body
- ✓ Improvement in digestion of fluids & foods - energises the whole body
- ✓ Helps the heart to pump blood more effectively to all parts of the body

"You do and you will achieve"

Yog is the foundation of disease-free living and a complete medical science. In fact, Yog is a way of life. We welcome you to join us in the practice of Yog and we assure it will help you to overcome your limitations, cross your obstacles and by doing so you will need little care and support.

Fasting for Good Health

By Forum Thakker
Clinical Nutritionist
Certified Diabetes Educator | Certified Nutrigeneticist
Research Presenter at IFSO, London | Past Faculty at CEMAST | B. Tech- Biotechnology

Fasting has been known to be a therapy since ancient days and Hippocrates the Father of Medicine used this to 'cure' various health diseases. But the fasting that science talks about is Intermittent Fasting, which is basically not consuming calories for the given period of time.

Intermittent Fasting (IF)

IF has been known to energize and extend the lifespan and more importantly the health span.
The human body is dependent on glucose as its primary source of energy. In absence of glucose, the body starts using ketones as the secondary source of energy.

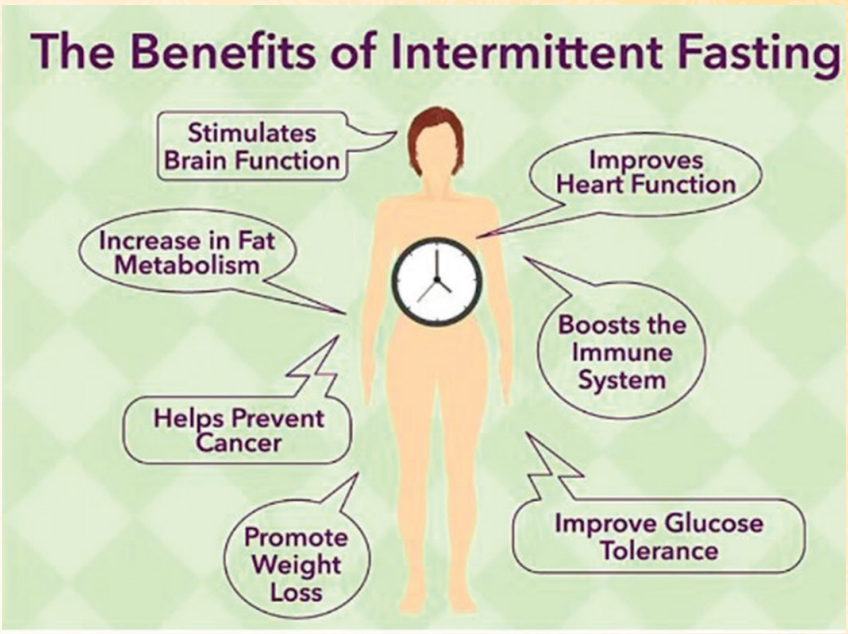
IF is a metabolic switch between glucose and ketone utilization resulting in enhancement of brain and body functionality and increasing stress, injury and disease resistance. Thus, repeating this switch between fasting and recovery (feeding) phase can lead to a healthier lifestyle.

The benefits of IF are seen in treating various types of cancers, neurodegenerative disorders like dementias (Alzheimer's being the most common), Parkinson's disease, metabolic syndrome (Obesity, Diabetes, Hypertention, High cholesterol) and many more.

In simple terms, Lipolysis that is breakdown of fat and Autophagy which means body's capability to cleanse out old damaged cells and regenerate new healthy cells can be achieved by intermittent fasting.

Benefits of Intermittent Fasting:

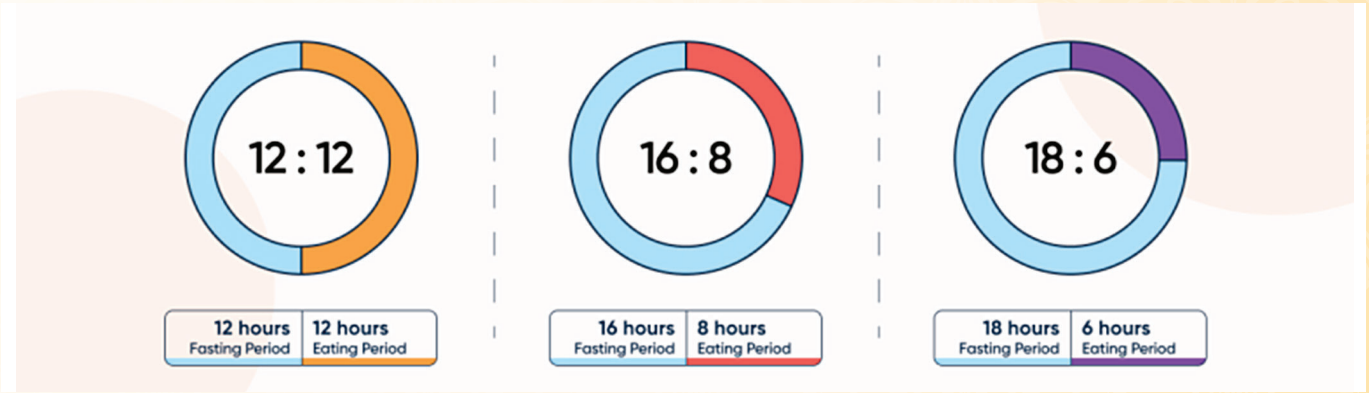
- ✓ Reduces damage to the cells and tissues of the body (Inflammation)
- ✓ Helps to repair DNA damage
- ✓ Improves autophagy
- ✓ Helps to reduce Fat mass from the body without affecting muscle mass
- ✓ Improves Blood glucose control
- ✓ Increases resistance to stress
- ✓ Improves stamina
- ✓ Improves health of neurons
- ✓ Improves sleep
- ✓ Modulation of the gut microbiota that is it helps in regeneration of good bacteria in the gut
- ✓ Improves Energy Levels



Research has shown that IF for 14 hours daily for 30 consecutive days is associated with improved metabolism, insulin signalling, improved sleep patterns, DNA repair, healthy immune system and better cognitive function which means that IF helps to improve brain activity.

Intermittent fasting is of three types:

1. Alternate day fasting – periodic fasting (PF)
2. 5:2 diet: 5 days normal intake with 2 days low calorie intake (500 calories)- Calorie Restricted (CR)
3. 16:8 fasting – 16 hours fasting with 8 hours feeding or time-restricted feeding (TRF)- most comfortable and commonly practiced type of IF



Tips for successfully implementing IF

1. "Start slow" – especially if you are not used to fasting.
2. Instead of consuming carbohydrate rich foods it is best to do IF – focus on consuming healthy foods like fruits, dairy products especially yogurt/curd, nuts, fresh dates, etc.
3. Avoid consuming fried foods
4. Gradually increase the frequency of intermittent fasting along with well balanced diet
5. Try and have an early dinner and then nothing till next morning – minimum 12 hours
6. Increase the gap by half hour every week till you reach the target of 16 hours
7. Limit your meals to three in the 8 hours of feeding time
8. Discuss with your dietitian regarding your daily caloric intake and balanced diet
9. People with medical conditions, especially diabetes should consult doctor and dietitian before starting IF

Pushtimarg Haveli Sangeet

By Chirag Tanna and Prem Popatiya

Kirtan (Bhakti sangeet) has its own importance in Pushtimargiya system of worship (seva). So many devotees – poets starting from Shri Mahaprabhuji's era have written various kirtans on the Swaroop (person) Leela, Guna (qualities), names of Shree Thakorji, virah pads & of Dinata-Ashraya in various ragas for various occasions & utsavs. These kirtans are no imaginations of a poet as the normal poetries are, they are the spontaneous renderings of sentimental experiences of Shree Thakorji's swaroop, leela, guna etc. in form of poetry.

Kirtan worship is included in the main nine worships (Navdha bhakti) described in scriptures. Bhagwat also narrates in detail the comparative importance & greatness of kirtan bhakti as under:

1. *'Trayanam (Shravan-kirtan-smarnanaam) Dehpatparyantam – avruttaanaam Evaabhaysadhaktwam*
   Meaning: Listening (shravan) expressing before others (kirtan) remembrance (smaran) if practiced till end of life will make the worshipper fearless.

2. *'Shrotruvaktrudoshairn Shravankirtane Sambhadyete | Apahatpapmatvat Tvayoho |*
   Meaning: Listening & expressing are sin-destroyers. Hence the defects (Doshas) in narration of kirtans have no relation with the listener and/or the speaker.

3. *'Kirtankartrunamapi Kirtiryatra Sarvanpunati Tatra Kim Vaktavyam Kirtanasya Sarvapavakatvam' |*
   Meaning: Just the fame of those who sing or speak in appreciation of God's swaroop & leela is capable of purifying the listeners hence, how can there be any doubt about the capability of kirtan itself.

By above quotations of Bhagwat etc. it is proved that kirtan of God's own leela etc. makes any being pure. Hence any human being is eligible (adhikari) for it.

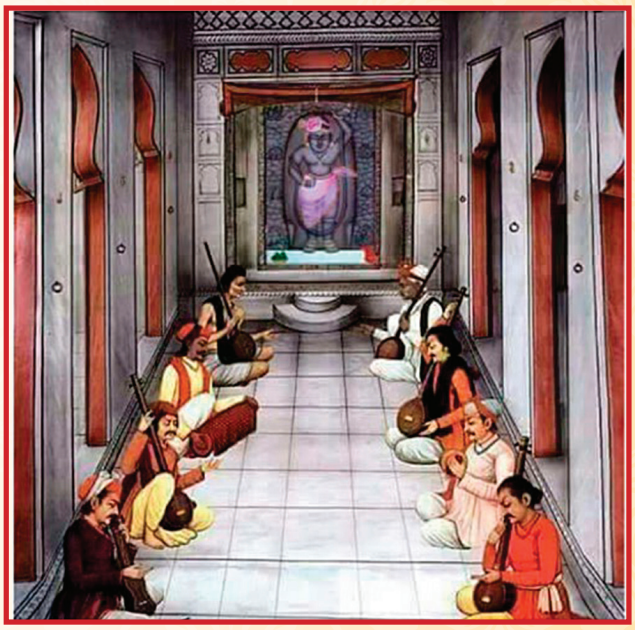
Kirtan (Haveli music) is similar to any other Indian music except for one major difference that other music is mainly meant for public entertainment while kirtan is meant & sung for the joy of Prabhu. The devotee by singing kirtans in this manner gets his mind more & more absorbed in the swaroop & the leela of Shrinathji.

Kirtan system started right from the time of Shree Mahaprabhuji & it is popularly known as kirtans of 'Ashtachhap (8) Kavis (poets)'. Out of these eight kavis, four were disciples of Shree Mahaprabhuji & the other four of Shree Gusaiji. Surdas, Kumbhandas, Parmananddas & Krishnadas were the disciples of Shree Mahaprabhuji while Nanddas, Chhittswami, Chaturbhujdas & Govindswami were of Shree Gusaiji.

In Shri Thakorji's Seva there are many Raag to be sang such as Bilawall, Bihag, Malkauns, Vrindavani Sarang and many more. Raag is a combination of notes which express emotion, time of the day and the seasons of the year. Having this special element in Pushtimarg is a beautiful way to perform Seva in front of Shri Thakorji.

Below are just a few examples, but there are many Pads we can sing during the time of Diwali and the corresponding Raag that they are sung in.

Kirtan	**Raag**
Aaj Diwali Mangal Chaar	Nat Bilaval
Chel Chabilo Lal Kahat Nand Rai So (Shringaar)	Bilaval
Phule Gop Gwal Ghar Gharke (Rajbhog Aaye)	Sarang
Aaj Kahu Ko Raat Madho (Shayan Bhog Aaye)	Kanhara
Ve Dekho Barat Jarokhan Dipak (Podhave)	Bihag
Aaj Dipat Divya Dipmalika (Shayan Bhog Sare)	Hamir
Tohe Milan Ko Bahut Karat Hai (Maan)	Kedar



Purshottam Maas

By Yash Kashiwala and Heenal Shah

Purshottam Maas(month) also known as Mal Maas or Adhik(Extra) Maas, is an additional month that comes once in every three years. This month is a very special and auspicious month in the Hindu calendar. In 2023, this year we were blessed to have Purshottam maas from 18th July until 16th of August. During this time, Pushtimargiya vaishnavs and other devotees engage in various religious activities like Prabhu seva(worship), spiritual service, fasting, charitable giving etc. to take full advantage of all the fruits this month has to offer to the individual souls. Also, it is believed that the religious acts done during this month is 10 times more fruitful than the worship done in any other month. In the Hindu religion, although all the holy deeds and personal rituals such as marriage, housewarming, naming, purchase of valuable items are generally not advised during this month, it can also be a highly auspicious month to deepen your soul into the seva of Shree Krushna. Now let's understand how this extraordinary month of the year Adhik maas was originated and why does it come in every three years?

History of Adhik Maas:

In every month of the Vaishnav lunar calendar, a date or tithi is often missed due to adjustments or nakshatra (constellation). Sometimes two dates may even fall on the same day, which is known as Kshay Tithi. All the missed days accrue after every third year (or thirty months) into a 30-day month called Adhik Maas. Astrologically, Surya (Sun) does not enter Sanskriti in this month, which means that no other auspicious days fall in this month – which is why it is also called Malmaas.

The tale goes as such: Mal Maas approached Shri Thakorji and complained that all the other days and months have been accepted by all other gods and goddesses but for me there is no one and no occasions are celebrated in my month. Upon hearing his pleas, Shri Thakorji accepted the month as His own, and gave it His own name (another name for Thakorji is Purna Purshottam), which is why it is sometimes also called Purushottam Maas.

Thakorji showed Kripa upon Mal Maas, the month that stands alone and is most ignored, into the most honored month, and was then named after the Lord Himself, Purshottam Maas. A lesson for us is that we all have an equal chance to have Thakorji's Kripa by simply being at His lotus feet.

The Purushottam Maas comes between the Indian months of Chaitra and Ashwin. All utsavs (festivals) of the year are celebrated once again during Purshottam Maas, as stated in Vaishnav pranalika (calendar). In this month, all the year-round festivals are celebrated daily with lots of enthusiasm, giving Vaishnavs a chance to perform Aadhik (home) seva for the happiness of the Lord. This is a holy month - Vaishnavs dive deeper to strengthen their relationship with Thakorji, e.g. make seva more elaborate, do more paath, listening to katha, etc. The month is also auspicious for doing a lot of charity/daan which one should perform as they wish.

Hence, we should use this month to strengthen our relationship with Thakorji.

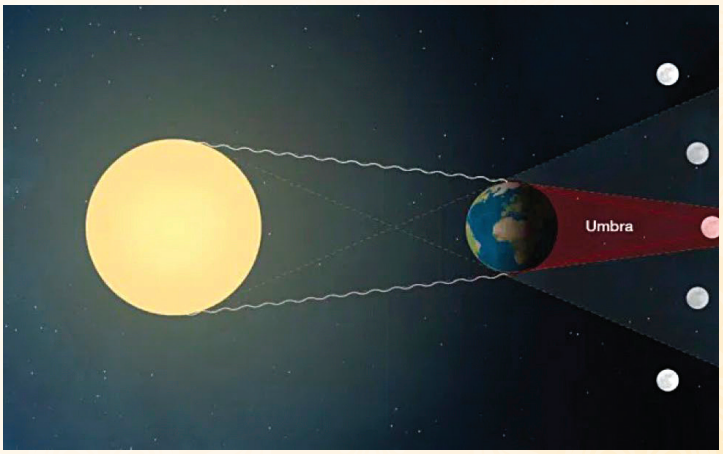
Why does Adhik Maas come every three years?

According to Vasishtha theory, Indian Astrology runs according to the calculation of Sun Maas and Moon Maas. Adhik maas is an extra month added to the Hindu Lunar Calendar every 32 months, 16 days and 8 hours to balance the gap between Lunar and Solar years. As per Hindu calendar year, each sun year is 365 days and about 6 hours, whereas Lunar year is 354 days. This difference of 11 days, 1 hour, 31 minutes and 12 seconds start accumulating every year, which equals about 1 month every approximately 2.5 years.

The ancient astrologers figured a clever way and added an extra month approximately every 2.5 years. This added the correct number of days needed to bring the solar and lunar years in agreement and helped keep the seasonal cycle in order.

By putting your soul in the service of God, you can take advantage of this month and this special time that only comes every few years.

We eagerly await the next Purshotam maas which is likely to be in 2026, from 17th May until 15th of June.



Shrinathji's Charan Chinha

By Jay Mashru

Sixteen Chran Chinhas (16 symbols on Shrinathji's feet)

Nine Chinhas on Right Foot (Dakskin)

1. Dhwajaji – Flag

- 7 Flags on Shrinathji's Temple are the 7 Bhavs
- With meditation of Dhwajaji, a person becomes Abhay (Fearless) and gains Knowledge

2. Ankush (Goad)

- An elephant is controlled by use of Ankush by his Mahout.
- Similarly, we need to control our, larger than elephant, MIND.
- As an elephant goes where the Mahout will take him, we go where the MIND takes us!
- The mind will pull us towards samsara – it is selfish and only cares for itself. The mind will not want you to be good (e.g. miser and not allow you to donate) and it is difficult to control – you have to take control of it.
- Thakorji's Krupa keeps us away from paap by always creating circumstances that stops us committing paap. It is Thakorji's Krupa to control the Mind, With Grace you may guide the Mind to go to only good places and good thoughts.

3. Vajra (Thunderbolt)

- The Vajra, the thunderbolt is a weapon wielded by Indra, the god of devas. It is as hard as a diamond and represents dharma, firmness of spirit and spiritual power.
- Shri Hariraiji explains: Vajra crushes large mountain rocks.
- Vajra Charan Chinha meditation aids destruction of our two 'mountains' of Paap and Dukh, and assists in attaining Pun and Sukh.

4. Swastika

- Mangal Sign, Brings Goodness and Removes Negativity
- The Four Arms - Signifies Four Purusharths

5. Urdhva Rekha

- The Urdhva Rekha is a long straight line going upwards found in the 'Charan Chinha'
- It represents wealth, auspiciousness, and courage
- It travels upwards as should our thoughts and mindsets, we need to learn to move them from lowly thoughts to the best thoughts of Shri Thakorji and his Lilas.

6. Kamal (Lotus)

- Kamal Grows/Live in Water but does not touch it, similarly we have to grow/live in samsara but do not get attached to it!
- Kamal only grows with water and similarly Vaishnavs are Rasik (have ras) and hence Bhakti and Bhav is able to grow in Vaishnavs mind.

7. The Kalash

- A pot filled with water symbolises Amrit, the nectar of immortality and is placed at the centre of this Shatkona.
- Kalash is filled with Jal and present in all auspicious occasions/ceremonies.
- Vaishnavas consider their Heart is a Kalash filled with Prabhu Bhav and Bhakti.

8. Ashtakona

- Octagon Shape
- Hariraiji Explains: meditation on The Ashtakona grants Eight Pusti Siddhis (Divine) as recited in Shri Yamunastakam and Eight Yog Siddhis (material).

9. Jav (Barley)

- Jav is the King of Grains and is Utilised in Yagna
- Hariraiji explains that Jav is highest form of Kirti (Fame) and aids knowledge of Prabhu's Kirti
- Jav grows quickly. Like Jav, we can now make quick spiritual progress because we are conscious of the prejudices that lurk in our hearts and minds.

Seven Chinhas on Left Foot (Vam)

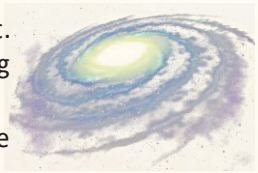
1. **Matsya (Fish)**
   - Fish is very 'chanchal' (unsteady) – like the mind
   - Bhagavad Gita Chapter 6 verses 33 to 36: Arjun to Shri Krishna: 'How does one control the mind, it is like the wind difficult to control?' Shri Krishna replies: 'by Practice and Renunciation.'
   - Fish needs Water, cannot survive without water.
   - Bhav: We need Shri Thakorji, we cannot survive without Shri Thakorji

2. **Dhanush Baan (Bow and Arrow)**
   - Dhanush is strong but flexible - We must be strong/firm and flexible
   - To String the Dhanush, need to flex it – In samsara we must be flexible when necessary
   - The Arrow aiming at target - Mind aim at Shri Thakorji (Practice and Focus)

3. **Trikona (Triangle)**
   - Jivas have three types of Gunas: Sattvic, Rajasic and Tamasic
   - All Vaishnavs with Guru Krupa are uplifted soon as we take shelter (Sharan)
   - Shri Thakorji will not waste time on trying to change your Guna, He accepts Vaishnavs as they are because of His promise to Shri MahaPrabhuji to accept all his disciples.

4. **Gopada (Hoof Print of a cow)**
   - When you feed a cow, it is equivalent to feeding all Devtas.
   - One who has Surrendered to Shri Krishna - Sharanagat – for that person the Ocean of Samara is easy to cross and overcome as easily as jumping over the puddle of water created by the Gopada (hoof print of a cow).

5. **Akash (Space, Ether)**
   - Akash is everywhere and is Our Support (Adhar), we are dependent on it. Similarly, our support is Shri Thakorji who is everywhere and always doing what is best for us.
   - Only Shri Thakorji's Krupa grants us capability, strength, and knowledge of Sewa.



6. **Ardha Chandra (Half Moon – The Crescent)**
   - Ardha Chandra represents ever changing nature of life.
   - Ardha Chandra residing on Shivji's head and Shri Thakorji's Charan, it stabilizes life and is unaffected by time (Kal)

7. **Jambu (Indian Blackberry)**
   - Hariraiji explains: meditation on Charan Chin of Jambu grants your desires.
   - People always Pray for attainment of worldly Happiness (laukik sukh)
   - Vaishnav's pray for attainment of Shri Thakorji's happiness (Divine Happiness- alaukik sukh)

Shri Krishna Sharanam Mama - Ashtakshar Mantra

by Rajan D. Pitamber

In *Pushtimarg dharma* the initiation into the tradition means *Brahmsambandh* - union of the *atma* with *Brahm* (the supreme *Bhagwan*). *Bhaktas* (devotees) are initiated through two specific mantras:

1. *Ashtakshar mantra*: ***'Shri Krishna Sharanam Mama'***
2. *Nivedan* mantra: a longer holy mantra which is only spoken and not revealed on paper

The *ashta* (eight) *akshar* (syllable) mantra literally means "*Shri Krishna* is my refuge/shelter." These eight syllables contain within them a profound truth, power and deep meaning. It is the all curing 'elixir' for *Vaishnavas.*

A mantra is a combination of sacred syllables, which forms a magnetic centre of spiritual energy to attract spiritual vibrations. The chanting activates and accelerates the spiritual force thus promoting harmony in all parts of the human being. Mantra is not prayer (requests) – it is a sequence of sounds which embodies a particular form of *shakti* (*Bhagwan Shri Krishna* in this case). When chanted with sincerity of devotion and purity of thought/action, and in the manner prescribed by our *Vallabhkul gurudev*, then we benefit in numerous ways as our attachment to and *prem* for *Thakorji* increases.

By continuously repeating the mantra, *Shri Krishna* bestows His *krupa* on *bhaktas*. One gains courage and strength to easily face life's tribulations and overcome challenges. One is protected under the shelter of *Thakorji*. Sinful actions, harmful conditions, detrimental situations are all destroyed and *anand swaroop Shri Krishna* everlastingly resides in the heart. For *Vaishnavas* this is the supreme mantra that bestows eternal peace, prosperity and *saiyujya mukti* (eventual merging with *Shri Hari*).

Each *akshar* is embodied with divine powers and every *Vaishnav* should repeat it unceasingly with a pure heart to attain those precious fruits. It destroys egoism, and awakens the pure sentiments of '*daas bhava*' in serving *ShriNathji* as a humble *sevak*. *Ashtakshar* mantra has not been created by anybody, but it is wondrously and divinely manifested in *Golok Dham*.

Divine Manifestation of *Ashtakshar Mantra*

Once in their forest garden in *Golok Dham*, *Shri Krishna* and *Radhaji* assumed the play of reciprocal *maan-lila* i.e. annoyance in love. At the exalted moment of the ecstatic reunion of the divine couple, *Shri Vallabh* gazed towards them and pronounced ***'Shri Krishna Sharanam Mama'***, which means 'Shri Radhaji and Shri Krishna I surrender unto you'. In this way *ashtakshar mantra* got manifested. At that moment the name *Shri Vallabh* was given to Him by *ShriNathji*, as *Vallabh* means 'dearly beloved'. Following this, according to *ShriNathji's* instructions, *Shri Mahaprabhu Vallabhacharya* manifested on Earth to grant salvation to all *daivi* souls, and He bestowed the *Ashtakshar Mantra* as the first initiation.

Shri Vitthalnath/Gusaiji reveals in-depth description of the significance of *Ashtakshar Mantra*:

»	SHRI	-	Grants attainment of good fortune
»	KRU/KR	-	Destroys sin
»	SHNA	-	Destroys three types of sufferings
»	SHA	-	Removes the suffering of the birth and death cycle
»	RA	-	Grants attainment of divine knowledge
»	NAM	-	Grants unwavering devotion for *Shri Krishna*
»	MA	-	Grants divine love for Guru who reveals the precious jewel *Shri Krishna*
»	MA	-	Merging with *Shri Hari* and being liberated

'SHRI' is the bestower of good fortune, *Lakshmi*, and makes one *dhanwaan*. Here good fortune refers to a happy married life *soubhagya*, for which ample wealth/*dhan* is required. *Sarva prakar sampati* comes of its own to a devotee who unceasingly repeats *ashtakshar mantra* and he will not be required to engage in any efforts to obtain it himself. The reason for this is that *Prabhu's bhaktas* are always desireless. One who practices *Ashtakshar Mantra* with no desire will attain these pleasures just by the pronunciation of the *Akshar 'Shri'*.

'KRU/KR' - The pronunciation of this *akshar* absolves a soul of all *paap karma*. The various means for becoming purified of sins delineated in the scriptures are rigorous and requires undergoing much hardship and physical *tapasya*. Entrance into the devotional path becomes possible only when *sarva dosho* have been destroyed. There are three types of sins: (1) committed by the body, (2) committed through speech, (3) committed in thought. Chanting *Ashtakshar Mantra* is an exceedingly simple means for removing all of the three types of *paap*, obtaining *kshama* (forgiveness), and the pronunciation of this *akshar* will destroy them all.

'SHNA' - Human beings experience three types of sufferings "*trivid taap*" resulting from *paap karma*: (1) *Adhibhautik* – inflicted by other living entities, (2) *Adhyatmic* – inflicted by the body and mind itself, (3) *Adhidaivik* – inflicted by environment/natural disasters. When free from these sufferings the heart and mind become purified and only then *Prabhu's smaran* and *seva* become easier. Pronunciation of this *akshar* removes the *trivid taap*, the heart and mind get purified, and pious inclination arises.

'SHA' - By pronouncing this *akshar* one becomes liberated from the repeated painful cycle of birth and death. By becoming free from egoism and attachment, one is released from worldly bondage and becomes worthy for *Bhagavad* attainment.

'RA' - One who is devoid of all worldly attachment considers mundane pleasures to be insignificant. At that point an intense desire for attaining *Bhagwan* arises and profound questioning begins - Who is Krishna? What is His nature? What is the nature of an individual *atma*? How one can please *Prabhu* and thereby attain Him? By pronouncing this *akshar* a penetrating mind on all these matters awakens, and upon realisation of this knowledge (*Mahatma Gyan*) total fulfilment is attained.

'NAM' - After realisation of the knowledge about *Paramatma*'s personality one attains *akhanda bhakti* (perpetual devotion) through a firm unwavering love for Him. By pronunciation of this *akshar* the divine *prem* for Him develops ever stronger. Devotion is not attained by everyone but depends upon divine grace. *Prabhu* bestows His *krupa* on those to whom He so desires.

'MA' - For entering into *bhaktimarg* the guru's grace is mandatory and hence realisation of *Krishna Bhagwan* comes through *Shri Vallabha's krupa*. Then one attains worthiness for *seva*, since the guru is the bridge between the *atma* and *Paramatma*. Love for *Thakorji* comes where there is first love for guru. This love is attained by pronunciation of the letter 'Ma'. It is through guru's grace that the darkness of ignorance is removed, knowledge of *Pushtimarg* is attained, and subsequently one experiences the *anand* of *Prabhu's swaroop*.

'MA' - Just like a single flower is part of the greater *shringar*, once the *jeev-atma* becomes totally and exclusively absorbed in *Paramatma* by pronunciation of the second "Ma', it merges with *Prabhu* and takes no further birth. This is called *Saiyujya Mukti* - merging in the devotional path is considered superior to gaining moksha.

In this way, each letter of the *ashtakshar mantra* has the capacity to bestow divine powers. Knowing that the souls have surrendered to Him and are entirely devoid of any means for divine attainments, *Shri Mahaprabhuji* in his unlimited compassion bestowed this divine precious gift to us.

- One of the distinguishing characteristics is that this *mantra* does not begin with *Om*. According to scriptural law, any *mantra* beginning with *Omcar* should not be pronounced in any impure state, such as if one has not bathed or during the *sutak* period.
- In his unlimited compassion, *Shri Vallabh* bestowed grace upon daivi souls so that they would not be deprived of the right to repeat *Prabhu's* name even for an instant in this age of *Kaliyuga*. Perpetually, day and night under all circumstances, *Ashtakshar Mantra* can be and should be repeated within the heart.
- Through this continual repetition one can avoid useless thoughts and discussion, and seva in the form of *Thakorji's* name can be performed.
- Also, as we walk and move about throughout the day and night, unknowingly ants and other insects are crushed beneath our feet. If at that moment *Prabhu's* name is being repeated in our heart, by the power of *Bhagavad* name, that soul will be liberated and we will be saved from the sin of killing a living creature.
- In this way by the repetition of *Ashtakshar Mantra* with humbleness, all suffering and faults will be removed. Wealth and other worldly necessities will be gained, and liberation, full absorption, and merging into *ShriNathji's* divine form will be realised.
- *Shri Mahaprabhuji's* main teaching is that *Ashtakshar Mantra* should be repeated with every bhava – *Bhagwan* is ever present both in *Naam* and *Swaroop* - ***"I have explained to all of you formerly that the perpetual repetition of Ashtakshar Mantra is for your welfare and the welfare of those who will hear it"***. In this way *Shri Mahaprabhuji* taught the power of *Ashtakshar Mantra* to his intimate sevaks.

Other Benefits of doing *Jaap* of *Shri Krishna Sharanam Mama*

- ✓ The ability to concentrate is increased
- ✓ Helps develop single-pointed focus on life goals
- ✓ Control of breath, temperament, health
- ✓ Control of emotions and calming of mind
- ✓ Reduce Stress and psychosomatic issues
- ✓ Cleanse the mind and prepare mental space to store higher knowledge and understanding
- ✓ Accumulation of positive thoughts will erase negative thoughts
- ✓ Relief from loneliness, depression

Interesting Note

Ashta = Eight. When 8 is turned on its side it is the present-day scientific symbol of Infinity which means = Endless = Boundless = Limitless = Universe (*Brahmand*) = Vishnu = Krishna!

Vaishnav Sangh of Uk

Men's Satsang at Shrinathdham Haveli by Mehul Shah

It was a real privilege to be given the honour to restart the Men's Satsang, in accordance with Je Je Shree's Blessings. The Men's Satsang is close to Je Je Shree's heart and his original project since the inception of VSUK in September 2008, only interrupted by the pandemic in December 2019.

Based on a lecture seminar (two-way) format, we have a long array of outstanding Teachers, each with their own particular backgrounds, perspectives and specialisms geared towards providing an open-minded and analytical form of learning of the Pushtimarg tradition and Hindu Dharma.

The overall objective is to enhance spiritual knowledge of our Dharma which is relevant today as it was in times past and its innate ability to provide solutions to ever-evolving problems both at a practical level as well as a philosophical level. As generations of Hindus experienced life in Britain, the answer to the "Why" question has become more important for parents and mentors to keep our traditions alive. Inspired by our Gurus, the various traditions have debated the various inter-relationships between the soul-body-world-universe-supersoul and according to their perspectives provided definitive solutions to everyday issues.

We welcome all members to explore their heritage in an atmosphere where learning is professional, intense yet fun-filled and practical.

The Satsangs are monthly with a duration of two hours followed by darshans of Shrinathji and Mahaprashad for all attendees at the magnificent Shrinathdham Haveli.

We look forward to welcoming You All.

Jai Shri Krishna
Mehul Shah

For more details, please contact Mehul Shah, Minaben Popat and Shiluben Patel

Shiksha Patra – The Essence of Pushtimarg

By Jatin Sagani

Introduction

Shiksha Patra (the granth) is an essential granth in Pushtimarg and though the granth has been written more than 400 years ago, the messages, teaching and learning provided in this granth helps Vaishnavs to live a pious life balancing various aspects, such as:

- Understanding Pushtimarg and Thakorji's Lila
- How to get close to Thakorji, what is endearing to Him
- Facing worldly challenges effectively and not worrying
- Appropriate behaviour towards Vaishnavs and society at large
- Distinguishing good from the bad
- How to develop focus and commitment to path of righteousness

The granth is a compilation of 41 letters written by Goswami Shri Harirayji Mahaprabhu to His younger brother Goswami Shri Gopeshwarji. The related explanations of the letters have been kindly provided by Goswami Shri Gopeshwarji for the benefit of Vaishnavs.

Goswami Shri Harirayji Mahaprabhu

Goswami Shri Harirayji was born in Samvat 1647 (AD 1591) and blessed Vaishnavs until his *Lila padhramani* (ascending to Thakorji's Lila) in Samvat 1772 (AD 1716) at the age of 125 years. He was the son of Goswami Shri Kalyanraiji, grandson of Goswami Shri Govindrayji, the second son of Goswami Shri Vitthalnathji (Gusainji), son of Mahaprabhu Shri Vallabhacharya.

- During His lifetime, He was constantly engaged in the salvation of divine beings and the realization of Bhagavat Rasa, just like Shri Vallabhacharya, so in the Vallabh sect, He was given the same dignified honour by calling him "Shri Harirayji Mahaprabhu". Like Gusainji, due to His spirit of service and organization ability, He is also addressed as "Prabhucharan".
- Despite being a revered dharmacharya and an excellent scholar, Shri Harirayji had a simple heart and had a high degree of empathy and compassion towards all. The height of His affection, humility and compassion towards the Vaishnavas is clearly expressed in his verse – " हो वारों इन वल्लभीयन पर, मेरे तन को करों बिछौना, शीश धरो इनके चरणनतर। ". i.e. "I give obeisance myself to Vallabh's Vaishnavs, make my body as a carpet for them and bow my head on their feet".
- Shri Harirayji composed more than 200 pushtimargiya literature and provided commentary on various on pushtimargiya granths. One of His most illustrious composition is Shiksha Patra.

Shiksha Patra

Shiksha Patra is a collection of 41 letters written by Shri Harirayji Mahaprabhu, to His younger brother Shri Gopeshwarji as Shri Harirayji Mahaprabhu knew that Shri Gopeshwarji's wife, who was very dedicated to the service of Thakorji, was poorly and would be going into Golok (Thakorji's Lila) soon. Knowing this, Shri Harirayji Mahaprabhu, during His travel, started to write to Shri Gopeshwarji to relieve Him of distress and to help Shri Gopeshwarji focus His heart on Thakorji's seva.

- Shri Harirayji Mahaprabhu's letters were acknowledged lovingly by Shri Gopeshwarji, however not opened and were simply kept in a drawer
- Subsequently and after the Golok progression of his wife, Shri Gopeshwarji's was overwhelmed with sorrow and mourned on continuing Thakorji's seva alone.
- A sevak of Shri Harirayji Mahaprabhu visited Shri Gopeshwarji and humbly reminded Him of Shri Harirayji Mahaprabhu's letters. Based on the first letter reading, Shri Gopeshwarji's anxiety was dispelled, and He then proceeded to write commentary on each of the 41 letters.

Select insights

Below are some key insights from the 41 letters

How to gain Thakorji's grace?

- You should surrender your mind, speech and actions to Thakorji alone.
- Keep the same sentiment for Shri Vallabhacharya's followers, Vaishnavs, as for Thakorji himself. There is no doubt that Thakorji will be pleased with you, if you please His devotees
- Practically engage your whole being, both physically and mentally, in making His service, keeping your consciousness inseparably linked to Thakorji.
- One should not covet wealth but if you have it use it wisely as an asset to improve one's service to Thakorji. Protect it, as such an asset is favourable to Thakorji's service
- At every given opportunity, engage in Satsang with Thakorji's sevaks, kirtans or literature
- Love for Thakorji is like a fire (Gujarati: taap). Add fuel to it along with good association and the divine sentiments will flare up like fire. Worldly company is like water which may extinguish the fire.

Six ways to ensure you have Thakorji grace in your heart

- Know that the best place to be is where Thakorji is
- Know the best time is when Vaishnavs gather in devotional association or Satsangs
- Know that the best wealth is that which is used to serve Thakorji
- Know the best attitude is to be detached of all pride of doer – think of it all as Thakorji's grace permitting something to be done by you
- Know that Thakorji's name to be supreme, his Lila to be supreme and participating in them is the highest quality reward
- Know that the ultimate privilege is to serve Thakorji

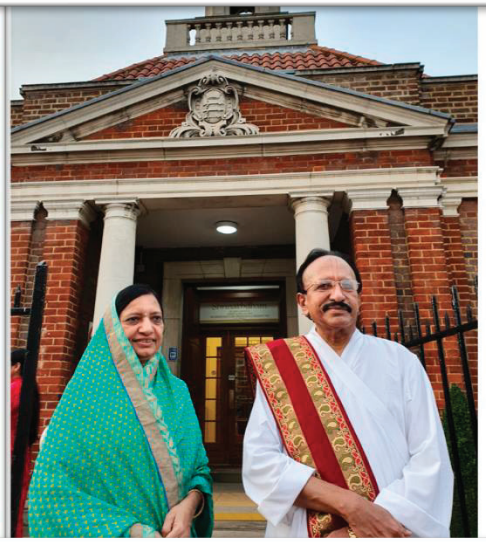
What should a Vaishnav do to avoid anxiety

- When there is lot of anxiety, a Vaishnav should "take refuge in Lord Krishna" and "surrender his worries and troubles to Him".
- Shri Harirayji says that by doing so, the Vaishnav will be able to "receive the protection and guidance of Lord Krishna" and "overcome the causes and effects of anxiety".
- He also says that by taking refuge in Lord Krishna, the Vaishnav will be able to "develop faith, patience, courage and detachment" and "face the challenges and difficulties of life" with a calm and positive attitude.

Two biggest pains for Vaishnavs?

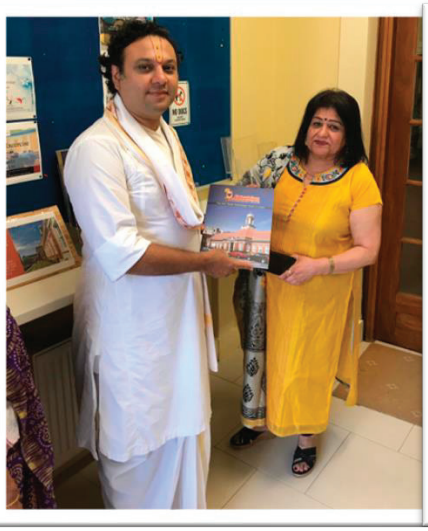
- To associate and speak with worldly souls
- Not being able to associate or discuss (carry out Satsang) with Vaishnavs

Vallabhkul Padramani @ Shrinathdham Haveli



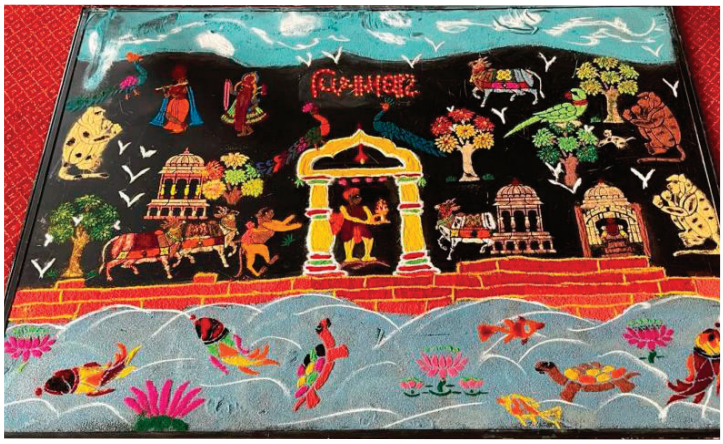
Vallabhkul Padramani @ Shrinathdham Haveli

Vallabhkul Padramani @ Shrinathdham Haveli



Diwali, Anakut, Govardan Pooja - November 2022

Shrinathdham Haveli Sanji Manorath Darshan



Shrinathdham Haveli Vividh Manorath Darshan

Holi – Shrinathdham Haveli – May 2023

Shree Krishna Raspan Mahotsav, Leicester August 2023

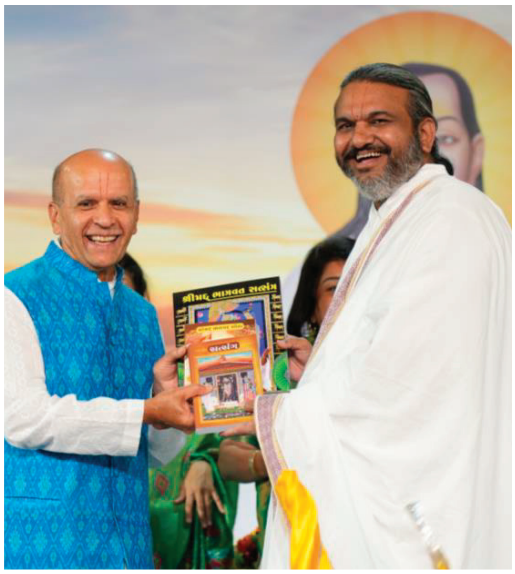
Adhik Maas – July-August 2023

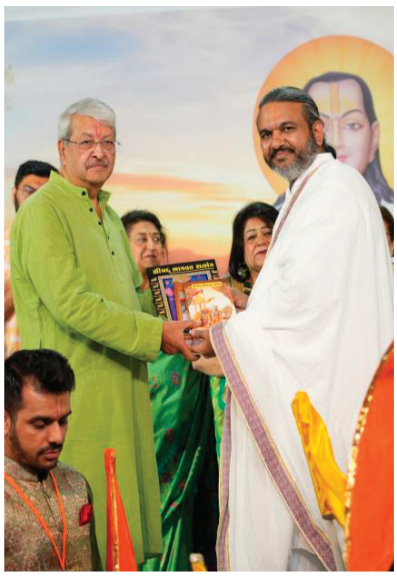
SarvottamVan No Manorath – May 2022, London

Shree 84 Baithakji Charita Mahotsav – August 2022, London

Shodash Granth Saptah Mahotsav – August 2023, London

Granthotsav – London and Leicester, August 2023

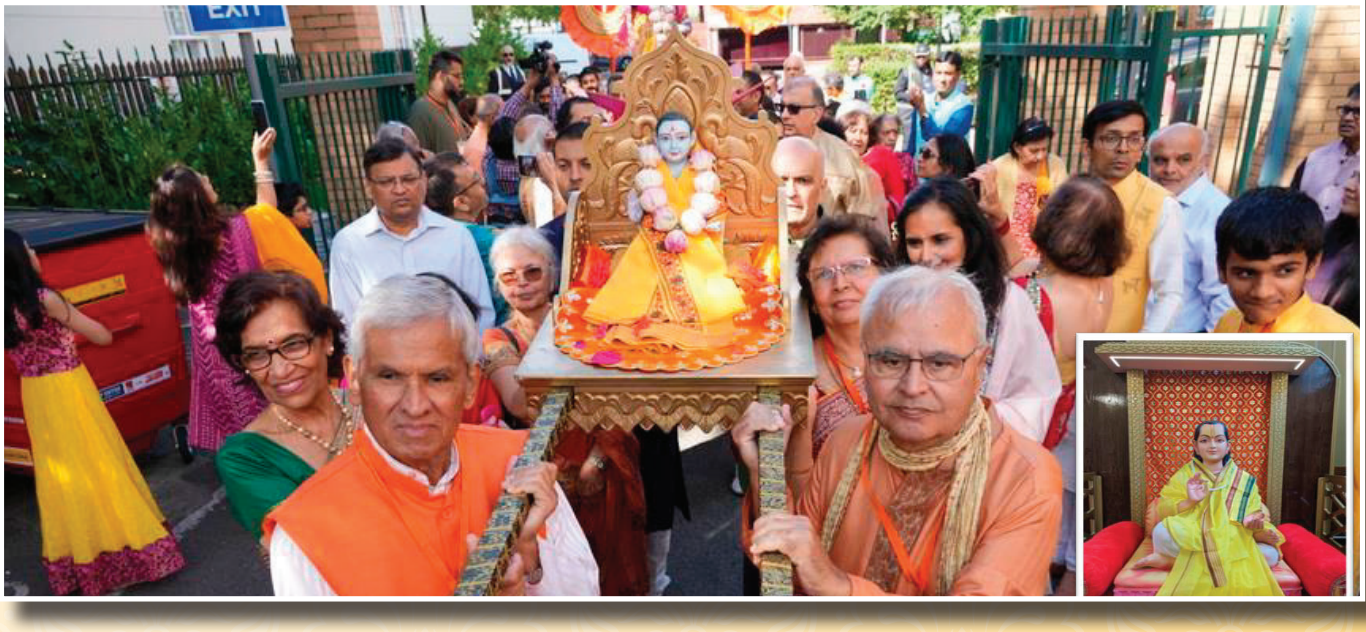




First time ever the 56 Bhog Manorath
Performances by VSUK baal pushti, Kishore pushti, Mahila Mandal at
Shrinathdham Haveli Harrow London UK in presence of JeJe Shree – Aug 2023

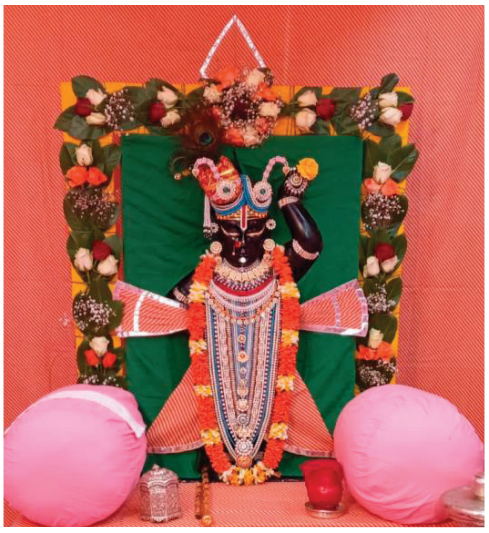
Pavitra Ekadashi & Trividh Swaroop Mahotsav

Pavitra Ekadashi & Trividh Swaroop Mahotsav

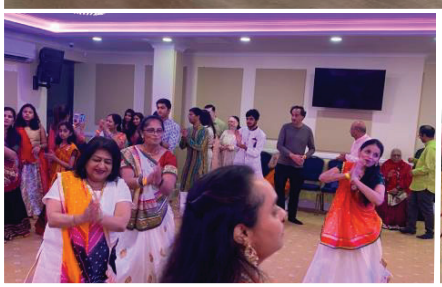


Hindola Darshan @ Shrinathdham Haveli

Vivid Manoraths @ Vrajdham Haveli



Nav Villas



The Visionary, H.H Vaishnavacharya Shree Dwarkeshlalji Mahodayshri

Enduring Legacy of Pushtimarg

In the realm of spiritual leaders and visionaries, Je Je Shri stands as a shining beacon of devotion and service. His life has been a constant dedication to the principles of Pushtimarg, the welfare of Vaishnavs, the preservation of Hindu culture and religion, and the upliftment of humanity. Following the footsteps of Jagadguru Shreemad Vallabhacharya Mahaprabhuji, Je Je Shri embarked on his spiritual journey at the tender age of 17, and since then, He has tirelessly traversed the globe with a singular mission – to revitalise the Pushtimarg dharma.

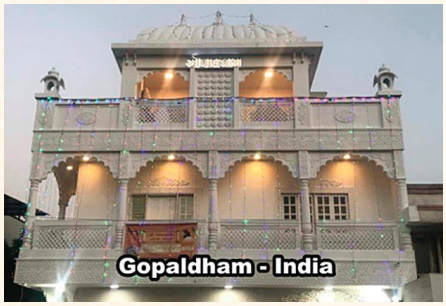
Je Je Shri's service is an epitome of selfless love and devotion. He has shouldered a colossal Dharmic responsibility, one that seeks to awaken, enlighten, and motivate devotees worldwide. His eloquence as an orator, coupled with His profound knowledge, has earned Him widespread acclaim. Through His captivating discourses enriched with profound wisdom, Je Je Shri has succeeded in touching the hearts of audiences young and old. His persuasive words have not only rekindled the faith of Vaishnavs but have also acted as a guiding light, leading them back to their cherished religion.

At the core of Je Je Shri's mission is the vision of unity within our Hindu society and the preservation of the rich heritage of Pushtimarg in the upcoming generation. This vision materializes through the establishment of Havelis (spiritual centers) across the globe. Under the guidance of Acharya Shree Dwarkeshlalji, these Havelis serve as vital hubs for local community education, Satsangs, and various spiritual and cultural activities as well as social services. Their presence has been instrumental in nurturing and strengthening the bonds of the Vaishnav diaspora as well as Hindu community.

Je Je Shri's journey has witnessed the establishment of Havelis on all five continents, embodying the universal reach of Pushtimarg teachings. One of the earliest Havelis, 'Shree Vallabhdham Haveli,' found its roots in Nairobi, Kenya. Melbourne, Australia, saw the establishment of 'Shree Nathdwara Haveli,' followed by 'Shrinathdham Haveli' in

Maryland, USA. Back in his homeland, India, Jejeshri has pioneered the establishment of numerous Havelis. In the UK, 'Vrajdham Haveli', Leicester was founded in 2011, followed by 'Shrinathdham National Haveli and Community Centre', London in 2019.

Upcoming Haveli in Perth



New Horizons in Pushtimarg

Along with various religious activities, Je Je Shri also performs a great number of charitable deeds benefiting the wider society and community. Projects include (to mention just a few) - education for children, free medical camps, donations for cataract surgeries, Gau seva, daily feeding programs for children and the needy, various grand donations globally towards natural calamities & the pandemic, tree planting programs, amongst others. These numerous programs have been established to globally, to benefit people all over the world. In the time of crisis due to the pandemic, Je Je Shri organized various programs such as - Anna Daan Abhiyan (provision of basic food necessities), Mahaprashad Abhiyan (provision of Mahaprashad to those affected in the pandemic at their doorsteps), provision of medical advice with the help of doctors to those in need free of charge, as well as donation of various amenities like Oxygen Concentrators.

In this digital age, Je Je Shri has also embraced various online platforms, enabling Vaishnavs from across the globe to connect with Pushtimarg. Je Je Shri is the first Acharya of Pushtimarg who is viewed and heard by millions of people on various renowned television channels and online platforms . Je Je Shri also has a very active presence on social media platforms like YouTube & Facebook with the highest number of followers for His divine Vachnamruts, which have enlightened a large number of Vaishnavs for a better and purposeful living.

For the benefit and ease of Vaishnavs across the Globe, Je Je Shri has created the first ever application of its kind, "Bhakti Radio". An application that provides a vast and detailed Kirtan collection used in daily and Utsav seva of Thakorji, unlimited vachnamruts on various divine topics, numerous e-books and much more all at the ease of one's mobile phone. Je Je Shri also publishes a divine magazine bimonthly called, "Pushti Darshan" which is helpful to all Vaishnavs with the in-depth knowledge of Pushtimarg.

The journey of progress continues with the completion of the Vaishnav Sangh Academy in the USA. For the first time ever in Pushtimarg, an online University of Pushtimarg has commenced for all Vaishnavs across the globe with an aim of spreading spirituality with knowledge.

These monumental achievements are a testament to Je Je Shri's dedication to education and spiritual growth within the community.

Je Je Shri's commitment to Pushtimarg knows no bounds. He has initiated 'Granthotsav,' a global project dedicated to distributing Granths (sacred texts by Shri Vallabhacharyaji) to every Vaishnav household FREE OF COST. To date, this project has successfully distributed over millions of Granths that include the Shrimad Bhagwat, simplified; Bhagwat Geeta, and Sodash Granth as well as kirtans and dhol pads, in all continents around the world. This endeavour serves as a source of spiritual nourishment for countless souls.

Breaking new ground, Je Je Shri is set to establish a Girls School in Ahmedabad under the name of Vallabhacharyaji. This pioneering initiative will provide girls with access to international standard education, fostering their progress and empowerment.

Messages from International Vaishnav Sanghs

Vaishnav Sangh Germany

"Dear VSUK Team....Bhagavad Smaran from the whole Vaishnav Sangh of Germany team. I will say VSUK as the Mother of VSG. VSG would not have been present without VSUK. All the initiatives taken by VSUK like Kishore Pushti, Bal Pushti and Kirtan classes brings huge motivation to the Youths and Kids of Vaishnav Sangh of Germany. Different Utsav that gets organized & more importantly getting live telecasted by Shrinathdham Haveli is a unique initiative and it brings millions of Vaishnava´s across the world together. Our heartiest gratitude to the whole of VSUK team for guiding us time to time as well as driving the unique initiative of bringing millions of vaishnava´s across the world together through digital platform. We have no better words to express our thankfulness to VSUK. Again, Bhagavad Smaran and Jay Shree Krushna to all VSUK members from Vaishnav Sangh of Germany."

Vaishnav Sangh Australia

"Shrinathdham Haveli, London has become one of the leading Centres of Pushti Bhakti Sampradaya not only in Europe but in the world. The seva of Shri Thakorji, Shri Vallabh & Vaishnav by the volunteers of Vaishnav Sangh of UK is admirable and inspirational. Shri Thakorji ni Krupa Sadat badha par bani rahe evi Prarthana. Bhagvad Smaran"

Pushtimargiya Vaishnav Sangh, Nairobi

"Shrinathdham Haveli ma birajta Shrinathji na jyaare darshan kariye, tyaare tya na bhagvadiya vaishnavo na Prem, anurag ane dhradhta na darshan thay che. Darek na radhay ma Shrinathji biraji na gaya hoy? Eva darek na mukharvind eva komal ane etla aloukik thaygaya che.

Jeje Shree na marg darshan thi, ane Meena na ben na saath thi, Sakhi mandal and Youth khub khub sundar rite seva kare che.

Dar vakhate nitya navin utsavo layine, London Haveli manorath kare che, to aakhu vishwa e manorath na darshan karva aatur hoy che."

Pushtimargiya Vaishnav Sangh
• Nairobi •

Vaishnav Sangh USA

"Vallabhadhish ki Jai!

Subh Diwali to everyone and on behalf of Vaishnav Sangh of USA, we are honoured to be under JJ shri umbrella of Imternational Vaishnav Sangh. Vaishnav Sangh of UK and Shrinathdham Haveli is really setting an example for all of us to follow and entire team headed by Minaben is extremly talented and inspiring to everyone across globe. Everyear we see VSUK doing something unique and different for vaishnav under JJ shri guidance.
I alongwith all the VSUSA family wish everyone a prosperous and happy diwali and new year."

Shodas Granth August 2023 Manorathi Experience

By Alkaben and Jayant (Jaibhai) Mashru

With the Blessings (Ashirwad) and Grace (Kripa) of Shree Girirajdharn, Shree Govardhannathji, Vaishnavacharya Shri Dwarkeshlalji Mahoday (Kadi-Ahmedabad), and Vallabhbi Vaishnavs, we had the privilege of participating as Manorathis in the Auspicious Shodas Granth Manorath at Harrow Leisure Centre.

Upon arriving and approaching the venue, we were greeted by vibrant Pushti decorations adorned with various designs. The pleasant weather, with a sunny disposition and a gentle breeze, immediately filled us with a sense of joy. As we entered, a warm and auspicious welcome awaited us at the entrance. We were marked with a Tilak symbolizing Shreeji Charan on our foreheads by a dedicated Vaishnav volunteer. A friendly volunteer then greeted us with a warm smile, saying, 'Jay Shree Krishna,' guiding us to our seats while explaining the day's and week's procedures.

The divine presence of Shri Mahaprabhuji was palpable, as evident from the beautifully crafted pichvais depicting Shri Mahaprabhuji at a bathakaji on the banks of Shri Yamunji river, surrounded by blossomed lotuses (kamals) in lovely shades of pink. The seating arrangements were meticulously planned, with tables set up with Pujan samagri and Arti items. The Shodas Granths Scriptures Pothi, containing the Sixteen Siddhanth within, filled the air with Pushti Bhava and Bhakti. On the stage, the Pushtivrund Group, led by Krishndasji, played kirtans, warming the hearts of the Vaishnavs present in readiness to receive Je Je Shri.

The grand arrival and entrance of Je Je Shri was a spectacle of fanfare, with dancing and singing Vaishnavs lining the red carpet route to the stage. Alka and I, as Manorathis, were presented with the Shree Mahaprabhuji Swarup and Pothis, leading the procession with Je Je Shri. A Shobha Yatra comprised of singing and dancing Vaishnavs (Gopis and Gopas) escorted us to the front and stage, where Jharijiji – Bantaji, and others offered their respects to Shri Mahaprabhuji Swarup, in the presence of Je Je Shri. The melodious kirtans by Krishnadas and group added to the blissful atmosphere.

Now, on to the main stage for the Pothijis and je Je Shri's Mala and Arti offerings by Manorathis. The moment we had all been waiting for had arrived – the commencement of the Shodas Granth Katha. Je Je Shri set the scene, and all the Vaishnavs present at the venue, as well as those viewing live on YouTube, were transported into a state of deep contemplation. Je Je Shri's discourse recreated the actual scenes and atmospheres of each Granth from Shri Shodas Granths, as well as the locations where the Granths were initiated.

The seven days of the event passed by quickly, a testament to the single-minded focus of the Vaishnav audience, a credit to Je Je Shri's blessings. The volunteers, affectionately known as Gopis and Gopas, deserve our utmost praise. They displayed professionalism and impeccable Vaishnav etiquettes throughout the event. Anand hi Anand prevailed all seven days.

Messages of reflection sharing experiences at Shrinathdham & Vrajdham Haveli from Balpushti, Kishorepushti and Youth Group:

The recent manoraths that were organized at the haveli under the leadership of our JeJe Shree have not only deepened my connection with our Shreenathji bawa but also allowed me to connect with like-minded individuals on the path of bhakti. These manoraths and association with fellow Vaishnav's leave me with a heart full of joy, gratitude and a renewed commitment to my spiritual journey. One of the most memorable moments for me was celebrating the Nand Mohotsav which was a truly joyful and divine event.

Poonam Haria, 22

What I like about the Haveli is that they have a lot of different and fun activities in bal pushti pathsala. Also what I like about the haveli is that when you do Darshan, Thakorji is wearing beautiful clothes and there are lots of nice decorations. After joining pathsala, when I go to the Haveli I feel like Krishna is telling me something special.

Kashvi Chokshi, 8

Since Kashvi has been attending Bal Pushti classes we have seen a great increase in her knowledge around Shrinathji and gujarati, but not only this, we have also seen that since attending classes she is also making good choices in her day to day activities.

The regular classes have also helped her in being able to sing Yummashtak and Madhurashtakram fluently.

Arti Chokshi (Kashvi's Mum)

The month of August was truly special as we were blessed with the divine presence of Jeje Shree. As a Vaishnav community, we all came together during the manoraths to experience a heightened spiritual atmosphere, seeking guidance and spiritual connection whilst also enjoying the joy of the festivities. One of the many highlights for me, was the colourful and energetic dance, performed by the Youth Group as well as a Youth Group garba night. It was truly spectacular.

Anika Haria, 27

When I first came to the UK, I was looking for a place where I could reconnect with my Vaishnav heritage and faith, a place where I could go to interact with other Hindus and enjoy our traditional festivals as I once did back home; thankfully, I found Shrinathdham Haveli and was able to experience the joy of various manoraths and beautiful darshans like I was used to. When I met Jejeshri, I was entranced by His soft demeanour and His patient method of explaining deep concepts that are integral to our Vaishnav identity. I was fortunate to have Jejeshri bring His holy presence to my own home and purify the atmosphere with His divine wisdom. For this, I am forever grateful to Pujya Jejeshree and this Shrinathdham community.
Jejeshree ne mara dandvat Pranam, Sarve Vaishnavo ne Jay Shri Krishna

Dillon Patel, 28

The weekend of Manoraths at the Haveli was not only a divine but also an incredibly fun experience. From the beauty of the different manoraths, starting with the Shobha yatra and Kunwaro Manorath on Pavitra Ekadashi to the installation of the three new beautiful swaroops which have completed our Haveli. Celebrating Pavitra Baras in the presence of Jejeshree was surreal as well as being able to see the Chappan Bhog Darshan. Overall the weekend was truly unforgettable!

Krish Gadhia, 18

Full-form of Balpusti:

B Balpusti is all about Anand and Bhakti

A Alot of learning, listening to nice stories and games about Pustimarg and Gujarati

L Lovely lessons and topics

P Perfect way to grow spirituality

U Utsav, we learn lots about Pustimargiy uttsav in pathsala

S Shri Vallabha rachit Grath. We sing Shri Mangalcharn, Shri Yamnastak, Shri Krushnashray, Shri Madhurastakam and Astakshar in every pathsala

T Teachers are lovely

I inspiring to learn new things about Pustimarg

Devki Raichura, 11 years

Jai Shree Krishna, I've been in Pathshala for 5 years and it's been an valuable journey, learning about the values and importance of Pushtimarg, and gujarati. I find these lessons interesting because I learn something new during every single lesson. We also learn about the Shreemad Bhagvat Geeta and the Krishna leela. The most enjoyable thing is they recently added a quiz to finish off each lesson, it includes of the things we have learnt during the lesson.

Overall, I think Pathshala is a great way to learn about importance of Pushtimarg

Darsh Jobanputra, Age 11

I always look forward to take part in pathsala because I love the quiz game, education about our religion, culture and learning Gujrati.

I also like to sing various bhajan and path during the pathsala. I have learned a lot about Thakorji.

Sanika Raichura, 8 years

I am so excited to express my gratitude to Jejeshree for the wonderful, soul satisfying Manoraths and the divine speeches. I am sure, though this Jejeshree touched the lives of many vaishnavs, fostering devotion and deeper understanding of vaishnavisam principles. I am also grateful for the opportunity to take part in Balpushti, and seeing the next generation of Vaishnavs learn about Pushtimarg gives me great Anand.

Mamta Kothari, 45, Teacher at Balpushti Pathshala

My experience with JejeShree has been many, but one of my closest experiences is when I celebrated my 21st birthday. Jejeshree himself graced the occasion and surprised me at the Haveli.

During the shodash granth saptha I had the fond opportunity to serve Jejeshree and the Vaishnavs.

Another experience with Jejeshree is at one point I was struggling on whether to carry on with my education or not. So I asked Jejeshree for his guidance. Apshri just said make sure you carry on, you have My Aashirvad, have faith in Thakorji. A year later I am proud to say with Jejeshree's Aashirvad I have been passed with a distinction. Whatever I am, it's all because of Jejeshree's Aashirvad and guidance. I am forever grateful to have a guru like Jejeshree!

Prem Popatiya, 21 and Rachna Popatiya, 25

As we celebrate the various Utsavs throughout the year at Shrinathdham Haveli, we get a feeling that we are in Vraj and Gopal Prabhu is doing the Leela right in front of us. During the days of Vasant we experience being in Gulaal Kund and during Nand Mahotsav we feel we are Vrajbhakts going to Nandalay in Gokul to celebrate Prabhus birth. We indebted are grateful to Jejeshree for bringing Nathdwara and Vraj to our doorstep.

Vicki Mehta, 29

With Shri Vallabh's Krupa I was able to be part of the Sodas Granth Mahotsav where I had an opportunity learn some basics of Shodash Granth written by Shri Mahaprabhuji. After listening to Jejeshree vachanamrut I'm now able to engage my self in seva with more sincerity and interest. Although I'm still learning, I feel my practice of being a Vaishnav has improved.

I also got an opportunity to take part in a dance performance and do various seva with my Kishore Pushti friends and teachers. I feel blessed to be part of VSUK.

Jay Shri Krushna

Heer Ved, 15

In our Pushtimarg, Thakorji loves to enjoy all the days in different ways and we celebrate all the Utsav and Manorathas at Vrajadham Havali with Jejeshree's agya.

All the hard work of the committee, and the Vaishnav's enthusiasm lead to wonderful Thakorji's manoraths at the Haveli all the time, which we get to enjoy and take part in.

Jejeshree's blessings always deepen our connection with Thakorji, and His presence creates enchanting and exquisite celebrations of Manoraths and Utsav in the Haveli.

Bhoomi Mehul Dholakiya, 29

Attending the Haveli during the Manorath's and being fortunate to do seva is a special feeling to be able to serve and learn about the different aspects of being a vaishnav. At all times Thakorji's darshan is always divine and mesmerising but during Jejeshree's presence it is even more special.

Ruchika Raichura, 25

Shrinathdham Haveli (UK's Nathdwara) hosts many manoraths throughout the year and give Vaishnav's a chance to have darshan of Thakorji. On Monday 28th August 2023, Vaishnavs were given the very first labh of Chappan Bhog (56 Bhog) Bado Manorath at Shrinathdham Haveli which was so well organised and was astonishing to see the turnout of Youth volunteers and the seva all of them were doing. Jejeshri's Vachnamrut are more like a blessing to Vaishnavs and during His vachnamruts He gives so many examples which are all relevant to today's times and the topics are broken to such a level where the new Youth generations are able to contemplate and have an understanding of Pushtimarg.

Hemal Shah, 21

Meeting Jeje Shree was a wholesome experience and one that will live with me forever. Listening to him whether it be at Manoraths, on TV or at Kathas, is truly awe-inspiring. I hope this continues long into the future.

Amar Chotai, 31

My experience of manoraths at the haveli have been excellent as I have had the opportunity to learn something new each time. This is a great experience for the young generation like myself as you get to learn new skills and you can easily identify your strengths and weakness by working with lots of people. Jejeshree is my guru and the definition of guru is a spiritual teacher who takes you from the darkness to lightness. Whenever Jejeshree comes to London, He brings so much happiness to all of us and with His blessings we have been able to organise and successfully manage all the events.

Kia Pandya, 15

Jai Shree Krishna from

Sushilaben Amratlalbhai, Neil, Komal,
Asmitaben & Vinodbhai Badiani na Jai Shree Krishna

Krushna Krupa Trust na Jai Shree Krishna

Jayshreeben, Prashantbhai, Pranav, Meera, Bhavin,
Thiya Desai & Dipti Amin na Jai Shree Krishna

Vijyaben & Khushalbhai Popat na Jai Shree Krishna

Jagdishbhai Shardaben Patel
& Parivar na Jai Shree Krishna

Kantaben Chhaganlal Suchak &
Dinaben Suryakant Suchak na Jai Shree Krishna

Kantaben Thakrar & Parivar na Jai Shree Krishna

Jai Shree Krishna from

Raithatha Parivar - Illaben Kanubhai, Rakesh,
Kinnari, Karina & Kesha na Jai Shree Krishna

Harshaben Jayeshbhai Patel & Anjuben Patel na
Jai Shree Krishna

Yamuna Sakhi Vrund na Jai Shree Krishna

Rajeshwari Divakar Shah & Munjal Mital & Mishri na
Jai Shree Krishna

Godavriben & Jamnadas Dharamshi,
Jyotsna Manharlal Kantaria & Parivar na Jai Shree Krishna

Hemantbhai Matani na Jai Shree Krishna

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& Prosperous New Year

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