

Oshwal Awaaz



Teachers & committee members at Paryushan Festival

The beauty about festivals is the fact that it creates a mutual bond where families are able to meet, greet and celebrate as one. This is an important way of building a community which is founded and formed by the spirit of love and togetherness.

The Paryushan Festival brought families and friends together and through the festival, people held their hands together, prayed as a community, they sang in harmony and forgave one another.

In this second edition of our Newsletter; the Oshwal Awaaz breaks down some of the important facts about The Paryushan Festival. Majorly the meaning of the festival and the important days which are followed by the community.

To add on the festivities, the Samvantsari lunch also brought together approximately 4000 members under one roof. We will also provide a brief coverage of the lunch. Check them out and other interesting stories in this edition.

The editorial team,

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Some of the VOC Religion Committee Members



Teachers of the Paathshala



Our young ones at The Paryushan Festival

Nikunj Vora's experience

As The Paryushan Festival was fast approaching, I made a decision to try and fast for all the 8 days. The first two days were not too difficult since I had a number of activities that kept me going. I went to college which is part of my daily routine, then afterwards rest after my classes. In the evening I attended "pratikaman", followed by Aarti. Fast forward, the third and fourth days were very tough. But after the fourth day, I lost my craving for food. As a mental support, my loving family also observed 8 days partial fasting, by eating a few variety of beans and "Taap's". Thus 8 days of fasting went very successful by the help of God's grace and my parents' blessings.



During the 8 days of fasting, drinking boiled water that was bacteria free gave me tremendous strength and created no harm in digestion.

On the 9th day, many of my close friends & relatives came to Oshwal Centre to celebrate with me. They helped me break my fast with digestible liquids like "Moong Soup", Sugarcane Juice, "Rab", strengthening spices and nuts.

Essentially, this was my first step of conquering my mind over food. The 2nd good part of my fasting is that I lost weight, now the only mission is to make sure I don't gain back what I had lost.

Our experience and say about the fast and Paryushan Festival

Krish Ronak Parikh



My name is **Krish Ronak** and I am 11 years old and I managed to fast for 16 days in 2016. However, last year I did 9 days and in 2014 I managed to fast for 8 days. In addition to that, I attended and participated in all the activities during the Parushan Festival at Mahajanwadi, Pooja Vidhi, Vyakhyan and evening Pratikraman. I truly believe that fasting is an activity of controlling oneself and willingness to win over bad virtue. This also calls for determination.

Aagam Ronak Parikh



My name is **Aagam Ronak Parikh**; a brother to Krish Ronak and I am 7 years old. I fasted for 9 days in 2016 and 8 days in 2015. To keep myself stronger, I attended all the activities during the Paryushan Festival and through the rituals and the lessons that were taught during the festival, I learnt many things which enhanced my willingness and determination that built my faith in Jainism.

A rundown of Paryushan Parva

By Ayushi Dodhia

Paryushan comes once a year, before Diwali and is celebrated religiously by our community, with great focus and dedication. Many of you experienced a part of it, when you attended the various “Bahuman”- appreciation ceremonies that were held.

This festival focuses on self- purification of one’s own soul, through practicing various austerities and rituals. Shvetambars, who observe the festival over a period of eight days begun on the 29th of August this year, while the Digambars, for whom Paryushan Parva lasts ten days began on the 6th of September.

Self-purification can be practiced internally (Pratikraman, Samayik (meditation), taking vows etc.), and also externally (fasting, praying, going to the derasar, attending religious sermons etc). This is one of the core principles of Paryushan- to recognize the body as a means for the soul to grow, rather than the misleading notion that you are the body.

Pratikraman is one of the main rituals that people follow. The pure soul, has infinite perception, infinite knowledge, infinite vigor, and is non-attached.

Self- awareness is a powerful tool - something as simple as not stepping on grass, drinking un-boiled water, getting caught up in anger, deceit and greed can have an impact on the binding of karma. In Pratikraman, meditative contemplation (Samayik) is undertaken for 48 minutes, during which one sits in a quiet place and dedicates some time to the soul through reading scriptures, reciting prayers, meditating and allows us to experience the life of a sadhu/sadhvi (monk/nun) for a brief period of time. We also worship our Tirthankars and appreciate their qualities, and pay our respects to all our gurus - making us humble and more receptive to knowledge.

Pratikraman ends with Prakhyan which means taking any vow that would allow you to consciously exercise discipline over your own body e.g. following the food habits stipulated during Ayambil and Paryushan, vowing to spend 10 minutes of your day in meditation, learning a new prayer(s), promising to fast on certain days etc. The purpose of this is to encourage your own spiritual development, so as you gain knowledge- your self-awareness increases leading to your karmas being shed/ reduced.

Seniors at the Paryushan Festival

KANTABEN PREMCHAND POPAT’S EXPERIENCE



My name is KANTABEN PREMCHAND POPAT SHAH, residing in Nairobi and I am 70 years old. I fasted for 35 days(Mass Khaman) in respect of our Jain paryushan and more so in sincere dedication to my late husband who passed away in March this year. During my fasting, day by day I felt more and more energetic, stronger and blessed. This i achieve through my intuitive strength and willpower which has allowed me to complete 21 Varsitaps(one-year tap), 40 Athais including 6 Mass Khamans(35 days fasts), 1 big 65 days fast), and many other related small and big taps dedicate strictly to our Jain dharma. I wish to continue carrying out such taps in the future as long as i have the strength and will power to fast and as much as God wishes me to do.



Samvatsari preparations

The food was amazing...and tasty. I loved the fact that they were able to prepare a variety of meals. We had so many things to choose and eat. That's very incredible...I can't wait for next year's luncheon



Sania H. Haria

The Luncheon

Anjna: Today's lunch was very organized and I believe everybody enjoyed it as I did....
Chetna: The volunteers also did amazing work to see that the event was a success...then I think the idea of not wasting food is excellent. they should keep it up



Anjna and Chetna

Fun facts - Samvatsari lunch

- ◆ 180kgs of Peas were shelled
- ◆ 50kgs of flour used to make 1032 Dhosa Ladoos for the volunteers lunch on Saturday
- ◆ 600 volunteers shelled the peas and made Bundi Ladoos in less than 3 hours.
- ◆ 4000 people attended the Samvatsari lunch
- ◆ 300 volunteers showed the true Oshwal spirit and volunteered to serve on the day of Samvatsari lunch.
- ◆ Over 5000 Bundi Ladoos consumed through the Samvatsari lunch

By OYL

Battle of the Brains

Oshwal Youth League hosted a fierce Battle of the Brains on the 11th of September, 2016. There were a total of 8 teams, varying in age and expertise, with two of the youngest teams consisting of 13 year olds. Participants had favorite rounds, and they thoroughly enjoyed the Battle, as did the spectators who also got a chance to participate and showcase their amazing minds. The Brain Teaser round had people leaping out of their chairs, while the Rapid Fire had the audience waiting with bated breath.

The Silhouette and Logo round tested their memories, while the Four Pictures One Word allowed them to rack their brains. Countdown was best played by the entire team working together against the clock, while the Memory Round elicited great audience participation through cheers and sighs of disappointment when their preferred team was eliminated.

Immigration essentials

By Jayendra Malde, director of Immigration & Security at Hindu Council

Hindu Council of Kenya; Immigration and Security Directorate held an open forum where the Director of Immigration Services Dr. Gordon Kiilanalangwa and his team attended. The Director of Immigration Services enlightened the audience on the following; citizenship, permanent residence, work permit, alien card and special pass.

Firstly, the director advised on citizenship application and its eligibility. Ideally, all applications have to be made online from the foreign nationals site. Secondly, work permit applications must also be made online. For Directors Permit (Class G) investment brought in from outside Kenya must be shown. Thirdly, the director advised that those who intend to bring workers from abroad can apply for a special pass which is issued within a day or two. Lastly, issuance of Alien Cards have been delayed since two different departments are currently processing the cards.

Coming up

Events

Aymbel
Venue
Mahajandwadi
Date

8th to 16th Oct, 2016

Blood Drive
By HAC, VOC and OYL
Venue
Oshwal Centre
Date
9th Oct, 2016

Diwal Fair
By VOC
Venue
Oshwal Centre
Date
16th Oct, 2016

Bhavya Bhavna
By VOC
Venue
Oshwal Centre
Date
28th Oct, 2016

Chopda Poojan & New
Year's meet + greet
By VOC
Venue
Oshwal Centre
Date 30th Oct, 2016

