

# **OSHWAL** news *e-magazine*

Third Edition E-Magazine | April 2013 | [www.oshwal.co.uk](http://www.oshwal.co.uk)

**Special Edition**  
**Sewa and Environment**

# Enterprise Programme 2013



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**Application Deadline: 30 April 2013**

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## Editor's Note

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Jai Jinendra!

Welcome to the third edition of **Oshwal News E-Magazine!**

The central theme of this E-Magazine edition is **Sewa and Environment**. Special note, that the comments and views expressed in this E-magazine are that of the authors and not the Oshwal Association of the UK or their respective organisations.

As always, we would also like to receive feedback on this E-Magazine. Please email us and tell us what is good and what can be improved in this E-Magazine. Also, if you have ideas about future E-Magazine please feel free to email us.

The Oshwal Media & Communication team can be contacted by email on:

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We would like to thank all contributors to this E-Magazine. Without your input, time and effort this E-Magazine would not have been possible.

***Ashish Jayantilal Patani***

*M&C Chairperson*

### **E-Magazine Editors**

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Jai Jinendra,

Welcome to the third edition **Oshwal News E-Magazine!**  
In this edition we explore some of the issues surrounding  
**Sewa and Environment.**

### World Earth Day

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World Earth Day is on 22nd April. It is an annual day on which events are held worldwide to increase awareness and appreciation of the Earth's natural environment. To mark this day Oshwal Association of the UK (OAUk) has put together this E-Magazine as a means of encouraging discussion as well as beginning to ask members for ideas as to how OAUk can take a more proactive approach and more readily engage with sewa and environment activities.

Our Association has always undertaken sewa work, for example, the Jamnagar Camp for Disability in 2010, participation in Sewa Day in 2010 & 2011. However, these initiatives for sewa and environment have been somewhat irregular within our Association. There is a quiet drive amongst many to embed greater sewa work within the Oshwal Community, through ensuring regular observations of international days, like Earth Day (for environment) and Sewa Day (for tangible charity work), as well as trying to change attitudes to encourage more friendly behaviour at community events and in the day-to-day lives of members and to research into feasibility for OAUk organising or jointly-participating in international sewa projects, like medical camps, school constructions, etc.

Furthermore, in an age of increasing awareness about the impact of humans on the natural world, and greater drive for environmental protection and safeguarding the natural world, it is only right that our Association embarks on a committed and driven programme for sewa and environment work.

### Target Beneficiaries

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Such sewa and environment orientated projects can bring relief of poverty, advancement of education, protection of health to those less fortunate than us as well as care for the environment. The target beneficiaries for such projects are likely to be non-Oshwals either within the UK or internationally.

### Current OAUk Structure

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The current structure of OAUk, has specific committees and portfolios looking at the needs within the community, i.e. Oshwals helping Oshwals. For example, in the field of Education, OAUk has a long established Education committee, and recently an innovative career-focused initiative – Oshwal Business and Professional Network. In the field of Health and Disability, OAUk has the Health & Welfare Committee and Enabling Network. In the field of Youth, OAUk, through the various Areas, has well-established Youth Clubs and initiatives like Summer Camp to look after the youth within the Oshwal community. In the field of Religion and Culture & Heritage, OAUk has strong long-running committees to look after the spiritual and cultural needs of Oshwals.

### Need for Oshwal Sewa

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However, perhaps it is time for a new committee to be formed for undertaking Sewa and Environment projects – which would essentially look to inspire greater sewa work by Oshwals, i.e. Oshwals helping non-Oshwals, who are less fortunate than us. This of course does not negate the sewa work involving Oshwals helping Oshwals which would still continue, but in such initiatives and/or projects the existing relevant committee can oversee the projects. A new committee would help us focus on the environmental impact we make and also provide a platform for Oshwals with experience of sewa to share their knowledge and experience and also for those looking for opportunities to do sewa work, particularly the young.

There are many Oshwals who undertake all manner of sewa work outside of the OAUk framework, because

essentially to date no clear structure exists within the OAUK framework for these good-hearted Oshwals, to support their endeavours and to encourage more people to undertake such sewa work.

## Ideas for Sewa and Environment

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There are many potential ideas for sewa and environment related projects, such as:

- Participation and observance of international days like Earth Day (environment) and Sewa Day (charity work), through ideas like:
  - Tree plantation
  - Recycling projects (clothes, computers, phones, etc)
  - Assisting at homeless shelters or elderly homes
  - Hospital visits to bring joy to others
- Encouraging a mind-set of attitudes to important modern-day issues like:
  - Blood & organ donation
  - The environmental impact of our day to day lives
- Bringing tangible benefits to those less fortunate, like:
  - Medical camps
  - School building projects
  - Sponsor a child programmes
  - Facilitating volunteer work abroad, e.g. teaching English, Maths, etc.
- Organising fundraising activities for sewa work, like:
  - Sponsored sky diving, abseiling, runs, walks, cycling, car washes
  - Charity dinner / dance events for Oshwal led sewa projects

These are just some of the ideas we can embark upon. In seeking to establish a Oshwal Sewa & Environment Committee the aim is to inspire and encourage good-hearted Oshwals across our community to come together to perform sewa and experience the joy of giving in its truest sense. By participating in this collective endeavour, we hope that the seeds of sewa are watered so that acts of kindness and public service are performed more often, and thus become a catalyst for great community unity, spirit and change.

## Get Involved!

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If you have any ideas and would like to get involved with sewa and environment projects, we would like to hear from you. Please email [oshwalnews@oshwal.org](mailto:oshwalnews@oshwal.org) with your comments and ideas.

## Thank you!

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Thank you to all those who contributed, without whom this E-Magazine would not have been possible.

**Ashish Jayantilal Patani**

# World Earth Day

By Deepa S. Gudka

**W**orld Earth Day is an annual day observed on the 22nd of April on which events are held worldwide to show support for the protection of our environment and focus on environmental issues and potential solutions.

In 1969 after witnessing the disaster of the Santa Barbara oil spill, Gaylord Nelson, an American Senator from Wisconsin, inspired by the student anti-war movement, called for an environmental teach-in, later called "Earth Day", to be held on Wednesday 22nd April 1970. Over 20 million people participated that year. It spread internationally in 1990, when events were organised in 141 nations, and it is now celebrated in more than 192 countries by more than one billion people. Earth Day appears on calendars around the world.

## Jain beliefs support the Environment

Jainism prescribes a path of non-violence towards all living beings and spiritual independence and equality between all forms of life. This influences our culture, values and environment. We make considerable efforts in everyday life not to injure plants. Although plants must be destroyed for the sake of food, we tend to minimise violence against plants in our diet. For example, strict Jains do not eat root vegetables, such as potatoes and onions, because tiny organisms are injured when the plant is pulled up, and also because a bulb or tuber's ability to sprout is seen as characteristic of a living being. Simply by being vegetarian, we respect the lives of other living creatures in our environment. Traditionally, Jains avoided going out at night so as not to tread on insects.

## How can you help protect our Environment?

Some of the key areas affecting our planet and simple ways you can help protect it are:

### Electricity/Energy:

- Turn off the power at the wall rather than leaving television sets, stereos and computers on standby with the little red light showing.

- Turn off lights when you are not in the room.
- When putting the kettle on boil only as much water as you need.
- When shopping, check new products for their efficiency grade and rating.
- Harness the sun's energy by fitting solar panels to power homes.

### Pollution:

- Don't drop litter as birds and animals can mistake it for food, or it can end up in rivers.
- Use your bicycle or walk instead of taking the car and reduce exhaust fumes.
- Buy eco-friendly house cleaning products or make your own from natural substances like vinegar and lemon juice and reduce chemical waste.

### Food:

- Reduce your mileage by eating food and drinking drinks with a low carbon footprint.
- Eat organic foods that have had no insecticides and pesticides added.
- Wash your hands and the fruit/vegetables before eating to prevent the spread of bacteria and chemicals.

### Water:

- Turn the tap off whilst brushing your teeth.
- Fill up a small cola bottle with water and pop it into your loo's water tank. Then when you flush and the water fills back up you'll save a bottle's worth every time.
- Collect and reuse rainwater to keep plants healthy in the summer.
- Reduce your shower time.

### Rubbish:

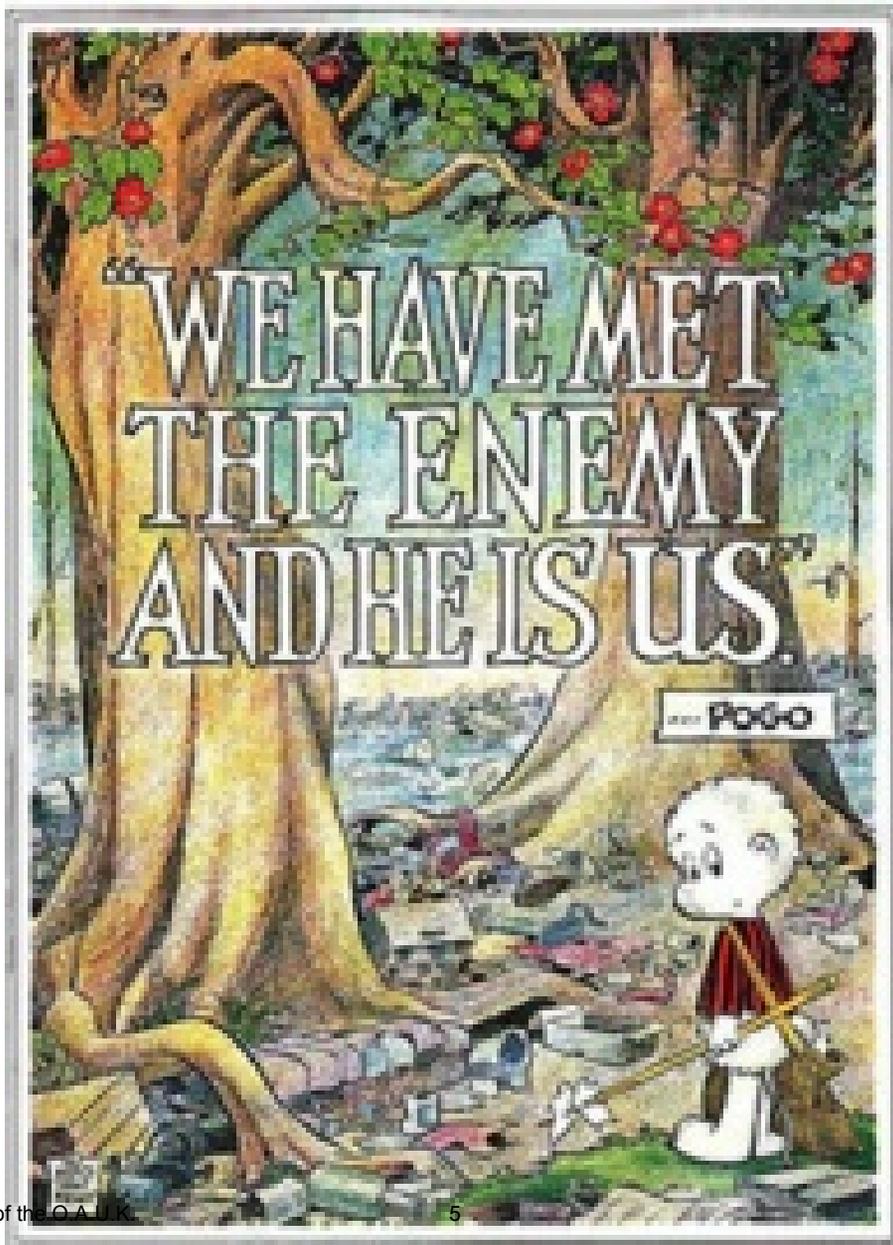
- Sort out unwanted food and green waste for compost and recycle glass bottles, plastic bottles, cans, wrappers, paper and cardboard. Most Local Authorities provide will collect the recyclables separately.
- Give any unwanted clothes to charity shops. These can go to the homeless to keep them warm, be sent to developing countries or be recycled.
- Re-use bags to carry your shopping home.
- Avoid buying products that have a lot of packaging.

- Avoid products made from tropical hardwoods such as teak and mahogany that take hundreds of years to grow.
- Check before buying flowers such as orchids that may come from the rainforest.
- Save trees by recycling your own paper for doodles/notes and buying recycled paper.

These are just some of the ways in which we can all take simple steps to help protect our environment and ensure a better future for our children.

### Rainforests (Deforestation):

- Rainforests provide us with oxygen and help to regulate the world's climate and atmosphere. They also support preservation of the species of animals and plants that live in rainforests. Many plants can be used for medicines.



# Whose planet are we living on?

By Dr. Harshad N Sanghrajka

**The question: 'Whose Planet?' is very interesting indeed. It may be simpler from the mono-theistic philosophies to point the finger at God. But Jainism does not believe in a creator God. So the answer has to be different.**

First, I will try and explain the Jain perspective on environment. I claim that Lord Mahavir, the last Jain leader of this era, 599 BCE – 527 BCE, was our first environmentalist.

His discourses on the following precepts support this claim:

1. Ahimsa (Non-violence) – negation of violence in all forms
2. Anekanta (Pluralism) – negation of singularity in opinions
3. Aparigraha Altruistic (Attitude) – negation of accumulation

These precepts address the environment from both angles: social as well as ecological. This paper will be limited to the precepts and their relation to **ecosystems**.

Eco is our natural surrounding in which earth, air, water and vegetation are in **common ownership** passed down from generation to generation. Eco cannot be isolated from life because LIFE is totally dependent on eco. We **cannot** imagine life in the absence of eco-friendly earth, air, water or vegetation.

Ernst Haeckel (1834 -1919), a German life-scientist, coined **ecology** by conjunction of the Greek words Oikos and Logos, which is now defined as the study of the relationships of organisms to their environment **and to one another**.

That organisms have relationship with one another was stated in the Jain work TATTVARTHA SUTRA from 2nd century CE and I quote aphorism 5.21:

***parasparopagraho jeevaanaam***



Souls render service to one another; they create a common environment and live together in weal and woe. In other words, all life is interdependent.

Scientists in modern times have been warning us about the protection of the environment and the results of ignoring it since 1900. But, Mahavir defined this phenomenon in the first scripture of the Jains called Acharanga Sutra which is extant and dated at 6th century BCE by academics.

To relate AHIMSA to ecosystems, it is relevant here to understand the definition of the constituents of ecology as defined by Mahavir.

In Indian tradition the five basic elements of nature: earth, water, fire, wind and space are defined as pancha mahaa bhoot ~ or five greater existents. These are so defined because the manifest universe arises from, subsists on, and disintegrates into these five elements.

Mahavir classified four of these elements, excluding space, as sentient, as conscious, as capable of feeling. Thus, earth, water, air and fire are living organisms, not to be confused with other life which subsists within them.

With plant life added to these four, Mahavir defined **five individual life forms** as one-sensed, immobile, living

beings. In a **single** group he combined the remaining life forms, with two to five senses, as mobile living beings.

On contemplation, we can appreciate that Mahavir gave five times as much importance to **the elemental beings** compared to the mass of mobile beings, which, even with higher levels of senses were grouped into one.

Having established the natural elements and plants as living beings with consciousness, perception and feeling, Mahavir proceeded to define sinful acts against these elements and prohibited such acts of violence.

Here are some quotes from the Acharanaga Sutra:

*“See! There are beings individually embodied (in earth; not one all-soul). See! There are men who control themselves ... .. because one destroys this (earth-body) by bad and injurious doings, and many other beings, besides, which he hurts by means of earth, through his doing acts relating to earth.”* 1.1.2. (2)

*“He who injures these (earth-bodies) does not comprehend and renounce the sinful acts; he who does not injure these, comprehends and renounces the sinful acts. Knowing them, a wise man should not act sinfully towards earth, nor cause others to act so, nor allow others to act so. He, who knows these causes of sin relating to earth, is called a reward-knowing sage. Thus I say.”* 1.1.2. (6)

The messages are repeated for water, fire, plants, mobile life and wind. Thus, Mahavir has preached total protection of the natural elements of ecology as well as human and sub-human life. He further warns that violence against any one of the life forms is violence against all life forms.

*“He who perfectly understands (what has been said in the preceding lesson) and follows the (faith) to be coveted, should therefore do no sinful act, nor cause others to do one. Perchance he meditates a sin (by an act against only) one (of the six aggregates of lives); **but he will be guilty (of sin against) every one of the six** ... ..”* 1.2.6. (1)

*“... .. all breathing, existing, living, sentient creatures should not be slain, nor treated with violence, nor abused, nor tormented, nor driven away.”* 1.4.1. (1)

With Ahimsa, defined as non-violence in thought, speech or deed, to be observed in direct and indirect activity against even the lowest form of life, **AND** the ecological

elements defined as life, it is absolutely clear that Mahavir preached preservation of the natural environment through the precept of Ahimsa over 2,500 years ago.

As the most intelligent beings on earth, we, humans are responsible for the environment of weal or woe. Environment is universal, and as a result we will have to live in whatever environment we create. The message here is for the humans to take care of the elements if the elements are to take care of all other life forms on earth including the endangered human species!

Mahavir blamed the desire for ownership and accumulation as the single major cause of violence. Desire for ownership is tantamount to attachment.

Here are some quotations related to the precept of aparigraha from Saman Suttam, a collection of verses from diverse Jain scriptures:

*“Owing to attachment, a person commits violence, tells lies, commits theft, indulges in sex and develops a wish for unlimited hoarding.”* (140)

*“A person who hoards even the slightest amount of an animate or inanimate thing or gives consent to someone for hoarding, will not escape from misery.”* (141)

Desire for ownership drives our action for acquisition. Intensity of desire generates intensity in action. Intensity can be directly related to irrationality. Irrationality leads to anger, greed, deceit, ego, falsehood, stealing, adultery, destruction, pollution, terrorism and other vices.

When one becomes engrossed in the thought of “owning” someone or something, one may go to any length to satiate that desire.

Our ever-growing desire for material things are the cause of degradation and depletion of the ecosystems. Each and every article which we possess, or desire to possess, is manufactured from natural resources. Thus, overuse and misuse of these resources creates imbalance in ecology.

Let us not congratulate ourselves for having successfully authored our disaster through producing infinite types and quantities of material objects for our comfort. In reality, we have guaranteed extinction of life by not understanding Mahavir and not respecting the natural elements.

I would like to propose that each individual can save the earth simply by saving one drop of water a day. Just multiply and work out the volume. And, if we take care of one drop, rest assured that we will THINK of protecting the environment in everything we do. IT IS the ATTITUDE.

Let us not worry about what the GOVERNMENT WILL DO for the ecosystems.

No Government is more powerful than the individual when each one acts with a single purpose in mind. This is why Mahavir preached this to the masses, in their own language.

Let us make it a habit to THINK! Think of the repercussions on the environment of all our actions.

'Whose Planet?' A very interesting question.

Jainism believes that the universe is in existence from time immemorial and it is eternal. Its constituents can neither be created nor destroyed. It is according to the inherent qualities of the constituents that change takes place all the time.

The planet is but a collection of ecological elements and life forms. Hence, the occupants are the owners of the planet. Do we not own our properties jointly with our spouses as 'TENANCY IN COMMON'? Well the same applies to this planet; only the number of tenants is infinite.

And in that joint ownership, do we not assume responsibility according to our skills? Well, we should apply the same principle to the planet. So, just as we would do it in commercial enterprise, we should assign the responsibility to the most apt. Let us humans assume responsibility for the ecosystems on behalf of the joint owners of the planet.

By not believing in a creator god, or a supreme being who owns, controls and dispenses everything, Jainism makes us responsible for everything that happens to us. Through the doctrine of Karma, the ultimate law of causality, we are responsible for our own deeds and hence we are responsible for the fruits of such deeds.

The same principle applies to the balance or imbalance of the ecosystems.

As ye sow, so shall ye reap! Or, what goes around comes around!!

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Article by,

**Dr. Harshad N Sanghrajka**

VISA OSHWAL COMMUNITY, NAIROBI  
Whose planet are we living in?  
February, 2011

# Modern Food Ethics: How Jainism Helps

By Sagar Kirit Shah

**M**embers of the Jain community are familiar with the idea of using diet to address ethical issues in food production. From avoiding meat, fish, eggs and honey, to only drinking boiled water and avoiding green leafy vegetables during the rainy season – the traditional Jain diet was pioneered to nourish the human body while minimising harm to the other living beings we share the planet with.

Jains living in the West now face an unprecedented degree of choice when it comes to food. Modern farming and processing techniques mean that we are able to eat an incredible range of foods from all over world at any time of year. This is a wonderful luxury, but is not without cost. We are now more divorced from food production than at any other time in human history. Very few of us know where our food is grown, how it is made, or how it is transported.

Over past few years, I have spent a considerable amount of time investigating contemporary issues in the ethics of food. As adherents of the principle of Ahimsa, I believe the Jain community should pay great attention to these issues too.

In this article I shed light on some of the issues I have uncovered, and offer some tips on how we can reduce the himsa footprint of our food choices. In particular, I highlight how some initiatives such as “organic” and “slaughter-free milk” actually involve much more violence than first meets the eye. And why several traditional Jain practices are very useful for those seeking to reduce the “himsa” footprint of their diet.

## **Milk production involves the killing of cows and is damaging for the environment too**

While Jain households may have traditionally looked after cows like a member of their family, the treatment of cows on modern dairy farms now involves levels violence far beyond what ancient Jains considered to be acceptable. In addition to withstanding terrible

welfare conditions, cows are forcefully made pregnant through artificial insemination, slaughtered long before they would naturally leave their bodies, and male calves born to these cows are killed just days after being born.

The killing of cows on dairy farms is not the only reason why Jains might wish to reconsider their use of dairy products. Dairy products are an environmental disaster. Not only are cows incredibly inefficient at converting what they eat into human food, they also generate a huge amount of methane – a gas 25 times more damaging than carbon dioxide in terms of its impact on global warming. Just adding a dash of dairy milk to cup of tea more than doubles its impact on climate change.

A recent study into the environmental impact of various diets found that removing dairy products from a vegetarian diet could reduce annual water requirements by 60% (a saving of 117,000 litres) and could reduce the carbon impact of the diet by around 75% (a saving of about 1 tonne of CO2 equivalent a year).

As a response to the treatment of cows in mainstream dairies, a number of Jains have turned towards using organic milk and slaughter free milk. The unfortunate reality is that these products involve unacceptable levels of violence. Cows on slaughter-free farms are sexually abused in order to guarantee pregnancy, and cows and calves on organic farms are still killed long before they would naturally die. And because cows on organic and slaughter free farms require more land and produce less



## ~ Modern Food Ethics ~

milk per unit of food consumed, milk from these farms might even be worse in terms of their impact on climate change.

*TIP 1: If you want to minimise violence to cows and damage to the environment, the best course of action is not to go for "ethical animal products" but to avoid animal products altogether and to go for plant-based alternatives instead.*

*TIP 2: If you want to do something to help cows and other animals, consider offering support to an animal sanctuary that lets animals live out their lives without exploitation such as Huglett's Wood Ahimsa Farm.*



### Out of season vegetables can do more damage to the environment than meat

A vegetarian diet avoiding the use of dairy is widely considered to be one of the most effective ways of reducing damage to the environment. The unfortunate truth however is that many out-of-season vegetables we consume in the UK are considerably worse for the environment than meat.

The CO2 emissions associated with producing one kilogram of organic UK tomatoes in July is about 400g. This is considerably lower than a kilogram of beef, which, on average, is associated with about 17kg of CO2 emissions. But if we were to buy a kilogram of UK grown 'on-the-vine' cherry tomatoes in winter (as many of us do), the emissions rocket up to 50kg of CO2 - three times worse than beef.

The reason is that to grow summer vegetables like tomatoes

in the winter, it is necessary to use heated greenhouses - an absolute disaster for the environment. The same applies to many other popular foods like strawberries and peppers. Although it sounds counter-intuitive, during the winter months, tinned tomatoes imported from overseas do a lot less damage than 'fresh' tomatoes grown in the UK.

*TIP 3: Avoid out-of-season fruits and vegetable.*

*TIP 4: In addition to avoiding harmful pesticides and fertilisers, growing your own food can help build awareness of when products bought in shops are in season, and when they are likely to be grown in heated greenhouses.*

*TIP 5: Traditional Jain foods such as grains, beans pulses and lentils can be stored for a long time and are a good choice when your favourite fresh fruits and vegetables are out of season. Daal and rice can be enjoyed all year round.*

### 'In season' fruits can be just as damaging if they are air freighted

Unfortunately, even some fruits and vegetables which we normally think of as being 'in season' can be disastrous for the environment too.

Many Indians in the UK look forward to the summer months when fruits like mangoes and papaya are in season. But these fruits are so perishable that they can't be shipped - they need to be air freighted, making them an environmental disaster. Other fruits, such as bananas and apples can be shipped from the southern hemisphere when out of season in the North, and generally have a far



## ~ Modern Food Ethics ~

lower environmental footprint.



*TIP 6: Avoid air freighted foods.*

*TIP 7: If, like me, you are unable to resist the urges to consume perishable exotic fruits like mango and papaya - try and go for the dried versions which can be shipped and thus are a lot less damaging for the environment.*

### Palm oil products destroy rainforests...

Palm oil is common ingredient in many processed foods. The oil is affordable, incredibly efficient to produce, and has many useful culinary and industrial properties. Unfortunately, palm oil is also associated with the destruction of primary rainforest in Malaysia and Indonesia – the habitat of Orang-utans.

It is a big challenge to identify and avoid foods that contain palm oil. Most companies simply label palm oil as “vegetable oil” or “vegetable fat”. Some companies claim to use “sustainable palm oil”, but there is wide recognition among environmental groups that the certification process is deeply flawed. One helpful rule of thumb is to look at fat content. If “vegetable fat” is an ingredient, and the percentage of saturated fat (of total fat content) is higher than 30%, destructive palm oil is probably an ingredient.

Soya is another food commonly associated with rainforest

destruction. But I believe soya should be less of a concern for Jains in the West. Globally, the biggest producer of soya is the US. And a vast majority of soya is used to feed animals (including dairy cows), not humans. Moreover, soya is generally very clearly labelled as an ingredient, and in the UK it is easy to find soya products that have been produced in a sustainable, non-destructive way.

*TIP 8: Avoiding processed foods with a high saturated fat content is a healthy and easy way to avoid destructive palm oil products.*

*TIP 9: Avoid animal products and highly processed foods containing soya. If you choose to consume soya, go for lightly processed products (e.g. soya milk, tofu) that are specifically labelled as being produced in a sustainable way.*



### Waste less food...

In the UK, we waste about 25% of the edible food that we buy, mainly because we buy too much! One of the easiest ways to reduce the himsa arising from our dietary choices is to simply reduce the amount of food that we waste.

*TIP 10: Some waste can be reduced by making more of the food we do eat (for example, eating bread crusts and fruit peel).*

*TIP 11: Following a traditional Jain diet which involves lots of beans, lentils, pulses and grains is a great way to reduce food waste. These items can be bought*



*in bulk, stored for long time, and cooked in small quantities as and when required.*

### Blood and bones in organic vegetables...

Organic food is widely considered to be the cornerstone of the ethical food movement. In order to be certified organic, foods must be grown without artificial pesticides and fertilisers. In principle, this sounds completely consistent with the principle of Ahimsa and ideal for Jains in the West.

In practice however, the ethics are less clear-cut. Instead of using petroleum-based fertilisers, organic farmers generally use crushed (animal) bones and blood instead. By purchasing organic fruits and vegetables, we actually provide a subsidy to the meat and slaughterhouse industries.

In reality, it seems neither organic nor non-organic foods are ideal.

*TIP 12: Grow your own fruits and vegetables. In addition to being a healthy physical activity, growing your own foods is one of the only ways to ensure your foods are free of harmful pesticides and not fertilised with bones or blood.*

*TIP 13: Support stock-free organic farms such as Tolhurst Organic Farm. These farms apply organic principles, but do not use animal products (blood, bones or manure) in farming. It is currently hard to get hold of their produce in London, but accessibility will improve with increased support.*

### Ethical food is a challenge, but Jainism helps...

Some people may read this article and feel that trying to adhere to a diet truly consistent with Jain principles in the Western world is a big challenge. I would agree.

But accepting that it is a big challenge doesn't mean that we should give up or not pay any attention to these issues at all. We all need to eat to live, and will inevitably end up eating a huge amount over the course of our lives. Over thirty years, even very small dietary changes can have a huge impact.

Some of the suggestions I have put forward (such as giving up cheese, fresh mango and papaya) may seem

unpleasant or unenjoyable. Fortunately, Jainism teaches us why making changes to our diet may be in our own interests, and offers many tools to help us make changes in our life.

Jainism teaches us how the pleasure we gain from luxurious foods is temporary, and how our attachments to food may actually be a source of suffering. The suffering is not just experienced by those who are adversely affected by dietary choices, but by ourselves too. We suffer when we are unable to obtain the foods we are attached to, and we may also bind karma when we consume them too.

Jainism also provides many tools to help practice the art of detachment (vairagya). For example, fasting on a regular basis helps us detach ourselves from food and develop control over our senses and taste buds. If we are able to detach ourselves from the need to have luxurious and rich tasting food at every meal and recognise it is possible to nourish our bodies with relatively little – all meals can become fulfilling, even on a very simple, restricted, ethical diet.

To conclude, the ethics of food in the Western world are complex, with many “ethical food” products actually involving far more violence than meets the eye. Following a diet truly consistent with Ahimsa is a big challenge. But by following some simple suggestions and using the tools offered by Jain teachings and traditions, it is very possible to gain greater control over our taste-buds and reduce the negative impact our dietary choices have on ourselves and the world around us.



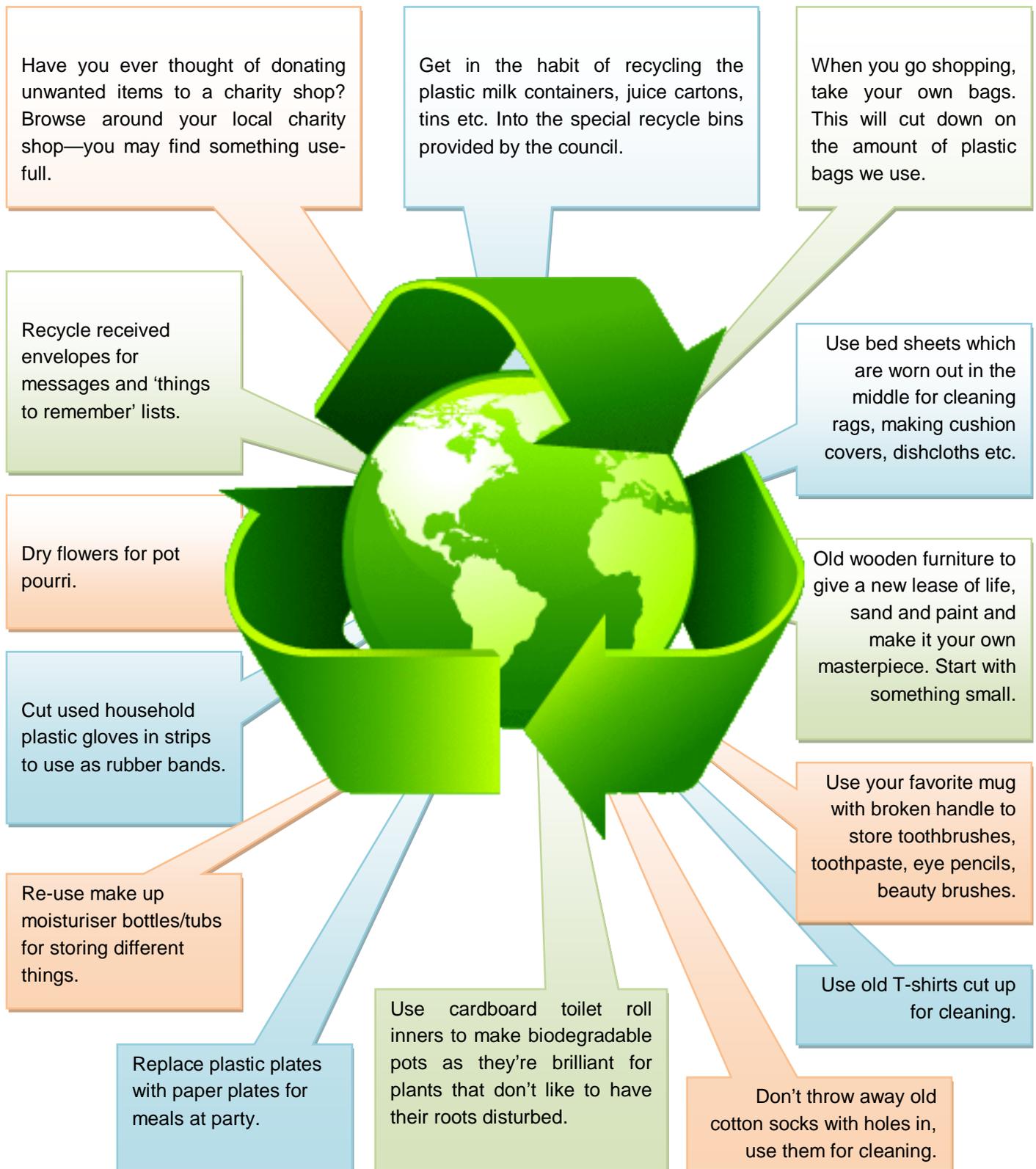
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#### Editor's Note

*An earlier version of this article was published in the November 2012 issue of the Young Jains Magazine. Thanks to Jyoti Mehta and the Jain Vegans team for helpful comments and suggestions.*

# Recycle, Reduce, Reuse- 3R's

From the Oshwal Wednesday Club



- There's many more. Searching on Google and watching TV programmes like Superscrimpers can give you more ideas.
- Think before discarding things and see if we can get more use out of it.
- So let's give ourselves the challenge of being aware of our lifestyle and where we can make changes to implement the 3R's.
- Please share your 3 Rs tips.

# Jamnagar Disability Camp

January 2010

**A**s we all know in the middle of last year the Oshwal Association of the UK was approached by Ratana Nidhi Charitable Trust – based in Mumbai – to support them financial to enable them to undertake a camp for assisting the disabled residing in Jamnagar District in Gujarati. Ratna Nidhi has already undertaken such camps with the help of Gujarat State government in various other parts of Gujarat and had achieved huge success in reaching and rendering assistance to the disabled by assessing and providing within the camps, Jaipur foots, callipers, hearing aids, tricycle, wheel chairs, waist and knee supports etc.

We, the Oshwal Association of the UK under our president Tusharbai J Shah, decided to support this venture as it was happening in Jamnagar District – the home of our forefathers. This was, besides helping the unfortunates – was also a way to reconnect to our roots. We managed to collect over £150,000 from nearly 500 individuals donors within the UK. More than 30 of our members, and other Oshwals from Kenya, Australia, Canada and Jamnagar, actually took time to participate and do sewa during the course of 15 days of the camp.

The Camp took place at 4 locations – Khambalia, Lalpur, Jamnagar and Dwarka all in Jamnagar District from 15th December to 31st December 2010. This was biggest event undertaken by Ratna Nidhi and the Oshwals who did sewa during this camp were all humbled by the experience of seeing different types of disabilities, the ways the disabled and their families tried to cope and how relatively small help that was rendered at the camp brought joy on the faces of the recipients.

Following items were dispensed during the camps:

Foot and Hand Callipers	6,877
Crutches	2,611
Waist, collar & knee belts	13,718
Tricycles	1,015
Wheelchairs	618
Hearing Aids	6,069
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>31,330</b>

We are informed by Ratna Nidhi Trust that the total cost for the camps is in the region of £464,000.

The UK volunteers all helped in various aspects of the camp – registration of the disabled persons, crowd controlling, food distribution, guiding the disabled, etc.

Oshwal Association of the UK – feels honoured to have been able to participate in this camp and thanks its sister organisations in India for all the help rendered. Oshwal Association also thanks all donors – over 500 individual donors – for supporting this Camp financially and also all the volunteers who took time to do actual sewa at the camp.

*Rajni B Shah*



# Interview with Kavita Shah

## Harrow Heroes Award



*Kavita Shah, 27, is Natural Health (North Finchley) Nutritionist, having studied BSc Nutrition at University of Nottingham and MSc Nutrition at King's College London, has been involved in a range of voluntary work within Harrow. Let's hear what Kavita says about her voluntary work.*

### **How did you get involved in volunteer work?**

While looking for work in 2010, I contacted the Nutritionist who works for the NHS Harrow Public Health team and she got me involved in the work that they do which involves helping to set up and run Cook & Eat sessions and Healthy Eating Workshops, providing Nutritional support for families and providing staff training within the 16 Children's Centres in Harrow.

### **What has been the best bits about working at Children's Centres in Harrow?**

Being able to make a difference to people's health and wellbeing. Meeting new people and working with children.

### **What has been the most challenging bits about working at Children's Centres in Harrow?**

None

### **What advise / tips / guidance would you give to people to help between understand the importance of health eating?**

Everything in moderation! Try and eat fruit and vegetables raw as cooking/ heating foods destroys many of their vital nutrients. Avoid eating deep fried foods which contain saturated fat as this type of fat increases the cholesterol in our blood and high levels of blood cholesterol increase our risk of heart disease and stroke.

Exercise is also very important in maintaining a healthy lifestyle. As little as 20 minutes of walking a day can have benefits to your health.

### **What would you like to see happen with regards to the Children's Centres in harrow? i.e. what additional resources / support is required?**

Additional funding to help staff set up cooking/ healthy eating workshops is always required.

### **How did it feel to win the 2012 Harrow's Heroes Award?**

I didn't even know I had been nominated for the award so when I received the invite to the awards ceremony I was quite surprised. I felt very pleased and honoured to have won the award and I think it is fantastic that volunteers are shown appreciation with such awards.

### **How can someone get involved in the volunteer work you do?**

They can contact me directly (you can provide my email address kavita-shah@hotmail.co.uk) or they can contact Lauren Hayes- Public Health Officer NHS Harrow (lauren.hayes@harrow.gov.uk)

### **What would you like to see happen in terms of health and wellbeing within the Oshwal community?**

A reduction in type 2 diabetes which is very common in the Oshwal Community. Also for the community to understand the importance of uncontrolled type 2 diabetes as in the long term this can lead to a variety of other health complications.

**N**ayla was staggeringly beautiful. There was no question about it. If there was a 'Vogue' for Bengal tigresses, she would be the face of it. In fact she was the most photographed tiger in the area – the humans came from far and wide to capture her every move. Secretly Nayla loved the attention too.

Even after having 3 children – Jasmine, Maya and Emir – Nayla looked like she was ready to take on the world. She walked with the swagger of the top predator; and rightly so. She had been at the top of her game for a few years now. Her mum, Tara, had only recently passed and Nayla knew she could rule their territory with the same authority that Tara had.

But Nayla had seen enough change in her territory recently to know that something was wrong. Something very bad was happening around her and she had to figure out a way to stop it.

It all started with the news about her dad, Mohan. Like all tiger fathers, he hadn't stuck around after Tara had had Nayla and her brothers. About 3 human years ago Nayla had heard that her dad had been ousted by a local new boy and had decided to move on and find new territory. On his way north he had been hit by a truck on a road built to cope with the traffic overflow between two megacities.

Nayla had been to check out the spot where her dad met his untimely death. On the other side of the highway, what used to be lush jungle and rumoured to be great hunting grounds now resembled something almost extraterrestrial. There were lights in all colours, loud music and the smell... oh, the smell of the food...

Drawn by the prospect of bagging herself a meal and awestruck by the blinking lights, she made the same mistake that her dad had and stepped out on the road, straight onto the path of oncoming traffic. "BEEEEEEEEEP!" Honking and blinking the truck sent

her scrambling back into the undergrowth, heart in mouth and breathless, her brief life flashing before her eyes.

Thankfully her reflexes had been impeccable but she had realised just how close she came to her own end. She vowed never to go back anywhere near that road again, food or no food, lights or no lights.

But some of her fellow tigers weren't as lucky or quick as her. They didn't make it to the other side of the highway. Eventually word spread and tigers learnt to steer clear of the highway.



Jasmine, Nayla's oldest daughter was the curious one. She was always straying away, seeking new adventures. Up trees, under rocks, into rock pools – always looking for new ways to get herself into trouble. But like a homing pigeon she always came home by dusk.

Until that awful day last summer.

Jasmine didn't return well into the night. Nayla started panicking, all sorts of thoughts running through her head. What if Jasmine had fallen off a tree and broken her leg? Or gotten stuck under a rock? What if she had ignored her warning about the highway and gone out to check it out? Nayla went out to look for her daughter, retracing her

steps during the day, calling out to her, all the while hoping and praying that Jasmine was ok.

Suddenly she heard the faintest of sounds – a sob. “JASMINE!” Nayla bellowed and once again, all she heard was sobbing. Picking up the sounds and Jasmine’s scent, Nayla took off towards the sound.

What she saw stopped her dead in her tracks. Her stomach did a tumble and she had to stop herself from retching at the sight. Jasmine was lying on the ground next to a rock, her foot caught in some kind of a wire contraption, a giant pool of blood around her and bleeding profusely.

In one giant leap Nayla was with Jasmine and pulling and tugging at the contraption, trying to get her free. But the harder she pulled, the tighter it got. Jasmine had clearly been here, in this way for a few hours already. She was weak from all the blood loss, so weak in fact, she only barely had the strength to sob in pain, let alone speak to her mum and tell her what had happened. She was shaking uncontrollably and felt as cold as ice.

Nayla roared in anger at her own helplessness. She didn’t know what to do. She couldn’t chew through metal and she couldn’t find a way to get the blasted contraption off her daughter’s foot. Who would do this? Why would they want to leave behind such an obvious hazard? The thought that this was deliberate didn’t even cross her mind. If she ever found who did this, she would rip him or her apart. She wanted to call for help but she had no idea who, if anyone, could chew through metal.

In a moment of panic filled clarity, Nayla remembered the humans that patrolled the territory – maybe they have something that can help? Torn between wanting to help her daughter and not wanting to leave her in that state, Nayla realised if she didn’t pursue the only option that she could think of, her daughter will not make it.

She bounded off in search of the shed where they spent their nights. She stopped just inside the opening and started snorting and puffing to get their attention. First one human and then another came to the window, seemed to recognise her and slowly opened the door. She stayed in her place, looked at them in eye and then in the direction that she had come from. They understood. She was calling out to them.

They followed her in their car to where Jasmine was and immediately seemed to recognise what the problem was. They didn’t seem shocked to see the horrendous gash on Jasmine’s leg or the pool of blood around her; had they seen this before?

One of humans turned on his heels and sprinted straight back towards the shed but the other one stayed, pointed

his torch at the contraption and started to undo the wire. It seemed like hard work; even the human was huffing and puffing as he tried to bend the wire to ease the pressure on Jasmine’s foot.

Jasmine was already fading in and out of consciousness. Nayla tried to comfort her as much as she could. She licked her nose and tried to keep her warm using her own breath but Jasmine was in too much pain. The human was doing all he could and if she could bring herself to leave her child, she would run after the other human and drag his sorry self back to help the one that stayed. She couldn’t believe his nerve – to simply turn and run away! Hmmp! What’s more, the sun was already starting to come up and Nayla knew her other children would soon venture out of their cave looking for her.

And at this very moment, heaving and panting, the second human burst through the trees, carrying a huge toolbox and a bag with a white cross on it. What happened next was a blur of giant scissors, injections, stitches, bandages and disinfectant. On any other day, Nayla would have chased away any human that came within 25 metres of her and the family with good old belly roar. Today, all she could do was pace up and down while the humans pricked and prodded her daughter.

The humans had managed to stop Jasmine’s wound from bleeding but she was still weak and unable to stand up, let alone walk. It didn’t look like the humans were going anywhere just yet and although she really wanted to go and attend to Maya and Emir, she decided to stay and watch over Jasmine.

The humans had been talking amongst themselves all this time but Nayla hadn’t been paying attention to them – she was too worried about poor Jasmine to pay attention to their muttering. Besides her heart was beating so loudly with all the worry that she couldn’t actually hear them above it!

But now that Jasmine wasn’t bleeding any more, Nayla was starting to calm down too. The humans looked worried so Nayla focused on what they were saying.

“... he wasn’t so lucky. We had to put him down”, said one human, who upon closer inspection looked older than the other one.

“That’s so sad”, said the other. “It’s such a shame. They are such beautiful animals. It would be a real pity to lose them entirely” he continued.

“Animals... Beautiful animals... Are these humans talking about us, the tigers?” Nayla wondered.

“Yes, but at this rate I don’t know how long we will be able to keep protecting them. Just the other day I heard that

one was found with a bullet wound. They couldn't save him either."

"A bullet? Where did they get the guns from?!"

Nayla was starting to get worked up again.

"Ah son, you have a lot to learn still. The last few years have been terrible. We have lost so many of these lovely creatures to poaching. And the methods and tactics they are using are getting increasingly sophisticated."

Nayla was sure they were talking about tigers now and her ears were glued to their conversation. But the last time she had heard the word 'poaching' it was whilst eavesdropping on a tourist couple discussing their breakfast. 'Poach' was what one did to eggs – did they do that to tigers too? Did humans eat tigers for breakfast?!

"These guys are now part of a big international gang" continued the older human. "They have a lot of money and fancy equipment."

Jasmine stirred, gasping for air. The humans immediately turned their attention to her, calming her, comforting her. Nayla too went over, gave her a little lick on her nose to assure her everything was going to be ok.

"But this snare is not sophisticated, bhaiyya (brother). It looks like a homemade wire trap" the younger human went on.

"Indeed. And it is very likely that the guys who put this here are simply trying to make a living for their families."

Nayla was furious. She couldn't believe what she was hearing. How can someone think they were making a living for their family by harming hers?

"But what are they doing with all these tigers? Why would they kill them?"

The older human smiled – the kind of knowing smile when you realise someone is asking all the obvious questions, but the answers are so painful, you have to soften them.

"You will not like what I am about to tell you son" warned the older human. "Tiger parts are in huge demand in some countries. They use the skin to make rugs for home decoration and to wear during special occasions; the bones are used to make wine, ointments and other medicines and the claws are used for jewellery."

Nayla couldn't believe what she was hearing. The younger human seemed to agree with her.

"You have got to be kidding me! Why would you kill another creature just so you can lay it on your floor? Why..."

He couldn't finish his torrent of questions. Jasmine gasped for air again and they both turned their attention to her.

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The older one looked extremely worried. He started wrapping Jasmine up in a blanket and asked the younger one to call a 'vet'. Nayla figured a 'vet' was a doctor, or at least she hoped it was. She started pacing and growling. What were they doing to her daughter? Were they going to take her away? Will they 'put her down' too? Having heard what she just did, she didn't know whether she could trust these humans. But they had stopped Jasmine's bleeding and they had looked after her all night. Maybe they weren't the bad guys...

The humans bundled Jasmine up and took her away in their car. It was now well into the morning and she really had to get back to Maya and Emir. Maya and Emir would be wondering where Nayla went – they still had to go out and get some food for themselves. Nayla put her faith in the humans; she didn't follow the car and dashed back to the cave they were in last night.

Hurdling over giant rocks and fallen trees like a Kenyan at the Olympics Nayla sprinted back to the cave and almost tripped over Emir lying at the entrance of the cave. She wanted to gather the two of them and head straight back towards the shed to keep an eye on Jasmine.

But Emir didn't look well. Writhing in pain Emir explained that he and Maya had taken the initiative to go out and seek their own food. During their forage he had spotted something shiny on the ground that smelt like food. He had seen the tourists eat it previously. Besides, just the smell had made him want some too. But now his stomach hurt so much.

Maya hadn't known what to do so she had gone to look for Nayla but promised to come back as soon as possible.

Nayla couldn't help but smile. She had made the same mistake a few years ago and had remembered what happened afterwards. She had warned Emir about the shiny objects but she knew his curiosity and his stomach would get the better of him one day. Emir looked really unhappy but she knew he would live. She went out to get him some grass and roughage that would help rid the food wrapper from his system.

Just as Nayla returned to the cave, Maya came back too. Making sure Emir was as comfortable as he could be with a good supply of leaves, Nayla left Maya in charge of Emir and Maya headed out to the shed where she hoped she could still see Jasmine. All she told Maya was that Jasmine had had an accident and she had to see to her. She couldn't bring herself to relive the horror of Jasmine's

gash and pain. And she certainly wasn't about to share the humans' conversation with Maya – Maya was far too sensitive for that.

At the shed she heard the humans talking and this time there was a new voice too. She couldn't come up all the way to the shed – it was too exposed at this hour. But she could still catch Jasmine's scent in the air so she listened from the safety of the tree line. She could only catch snippets of the conversation "...blood loss...weak...flesh wound...bandages...two to three weeks...painkillers". Nayla had no idea what all of this meant. She just wanted to know if Jasmine was going to be ok. So she started calling her, ever so gently so as not to attract too much attention.

"Mum?" Jasmine purred back. To the humans that could have sounded like any other tiger growl but to Nayla that was the best sound she had heard, ever! All the while that Nayla and the humans were caring for Jasmine earlier this morning, Jasmine hadn't said a word – she was in too much pain. Nayla hadn't realised how worried she had been until she felt the tears rolling down her cheeks.

"Yes honey, it's me. I am right here" she called back. "How are you?"

"It hurts... but I will be ok mum. Where are Maya and Emir?"

"They are back at the cave. You should rest. I am right here if you need me."

Jasmine went silent and Nayla didn't know what happened. Nayla paced by the shed all afternoon. She was thirsty, hungry and exhausted but she was not about to leave her daughter' in the hands of humans – after all, what kind of creature would think it's ok to make dresses out of other creatures?!

Just before dusk Jasmine called out to her mum again. She was adamant that her mum go back to the others, get some rest herself and come back in the morning. Jasmine was certain the humans were going to look after her. After much persuasion Nayla agreed. She had to check up on Emir anyway.

Nayla could smell the cave before she even got there. For the second time that day she couldn't help but smile. Maya was laying by entrance of the cave, upwind from the cave entrance, a paw firmly on her nose for good measure. Emir was snoozing gently in one corner, exhausted from battling his stomach ache.

As soon as she heard Nayla's approach, Maya was up and pestering her for an update. She just had to know how her elder sister was. Nayla batted her questions away, asking how her day had been.

"Mum, it was so funny! When they started it sounded like bubbles in a stream. And then Emir let one rip so loudly it scared all the birds nearby! He scared me half to death too!" she said through a fit of giggles. "And then he had to run out of the cave for a long call and I had to stand guard because he was scared he may pass out in the process..." she giggled some more. "Mum it stank! The smell is stuck in my nose now", she pouted.

"But he saw that shiny piece of wrapper in his poo and now he has promised never to eat anything without asking you mum."

Nayla laughed and gave Maya a huge hug. She loved her cubs. She resolved never to let anyone make rugs, dresses or medicine out of them. Ever. She will do whatever it takes to make sure there were no more wire contraptions or anything else that may hurt her children in her territory.

That night they slept outside, away from Emir's bad stomach, under the sky.

Over the next two weeks Nayla went from the shed to the cave countless times. She talked to Jasmine from the safety of the tree line and gave her updates on Maya and Emir. Jasmine told her about the humans looking after her and how her leg was healing so quickly. Eventually Nayla took Maya and Emir with her so they could speak to Jasmine too.

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Jasmine was allowed to leave about 4 weeks later but Nayla wouldn't let her do anything on her own. Maya and Emir were so thrilled to have their older sister back they constantly fussed over her.

Nayla went back to posing in front of the cameras and although Jasmine had a slight limp from her injuries she was growing to be just as striking as her mother.

Nayla also organised their local neighbourhood watch scheme to look out for any strange goings on. When speaking to some of the other tigers she discovered that the presence of the snares had increased since the road had been built. One of them had even seen the people laying the traps in the middle of the night. Every time they heard or saw any strange goings on, the tigers would go and alert the humans – and the humans had begun to understand the different calls from the tigers.

Sometimes Emir joined the show and if he ever saw a tourist drop any rubbish, he would stare at them pointedly and growl, a deep, menacing growl. The humans had come to recognise this pattern and when Emir growled they would make the tourist go out and pick the trash up.

Emir always threw in another well timed growl just as they bent over to pick it up – that'll teach them!

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## Tigers

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Tigers are often described as majestic, dangerous and beautiful. Sadly though, these words do not reflect the current state of play with global wild tiger populations. Dangerous as they may be, wild tigers are actually endangered. Below are some key issues and debates in wild tiger conservation.

### What is the problem?

In 1900, over 150,000 tigers roamed across 25 countries. Today, fewer than 3,500 remain and are found in only 13 Asian countries. This represents a 97% decline and the extinction of three sub-species since the 1900s. The greatest population of tigers is in India.

### Why does this problem exist?

#### 1. Human encroachment

The rapidly growing human population in many tiger range countries means that tigers are in direct competition for diminishing forest resources. Livestock and agriculture are shrinking tiger habitat fast, and their prey is poached by people living alongside tiger habitat.

#### 2. Poaching

Tigers are illegally killed for their body parts, used for home decor, medicines and tonics. In some countries, tigers are farmed for their body parts. There are more tigers held in such farms, than exist in the wild the world over.

#### 3. Pollution

In parks visited by tourists, tigers often ingest various forms of rubbish left behind by the visitors. Although this may not always be fatal, the long-term health and vitality of these remaining populations is severely threatened by this.

### Why should we save tigers?

As top predators, tigers play a vital role in the ecosystems in which they live. The presence of a healthy population of tigers indicates healthy ecosystems. Conversely, if we lose tigers from the wild, ecosystems in those regions would suffer immensely.

Where tigers are protected in parks, they provide a great source of employment and income for the tourist industry. The loss of tigers can therefore have a wide-ranging impact on livelihoods in these regions.

Moreover, tigers have roamed the Earth for millions of years. It would be our moral responsibility not to lose them, for ourselves as well as the generations to come.

### What can you do about it?

#### 1. Awareness

Information is power. There are plenty of resources available on tiger conservation (see below). It is equally important to spread the message about tiger conservation. Claims of health benefits of tiger bone, etc are unfounded and have no scientific proof. Often the use of tiger body parts is not connected with the killing of these animals or the devastation it causes within local ecosystems and communities.

#### 2. Shop wisely

Don't buy tiger products but buy forest friendly products.

#### 3. Donate

There are various organisations that work to protect wild tiger populations. Below are some, in no particular order .

WWF:

[http://wwf.panda.org/what\\_we\\_do/endangered\\_species/tigers/](http://wwf.panda.org/what_we_do/endangered_species/tigers/)

Environmental Investigation Agency: <http://www.eia-international.org/our-work/environmental-crime-and-governance/illegal-wildlife-trade/tigers>

Save Wild Tigers: <http://www.savewildtigers.org/>

Born Free: <http://www.bornfree.org.uk/animals/tigers/>

#### 4. Volunteer

These organisations are often small and need help in their day to day running.

#### 5. Contact your local representatives

Sometimes all it needs are the right people in the right place enforcing tiger protection with the right tools. Ask your local representatives to push for global treaties to protect the wild and where they are not, to introduce trade restrictions.

Saving the tiger is a huge, complex but achievable undertaking, involving national and state governments, corporations, wildlife departments, international NGOs, grass roots organisations and local people.

#### Author's Note

*The above information is taken from a briefing pack issued to volunteers at the recent Tiger Tracks event held in London.*

# Jiv Daya

## An essential activity for us in the west



Jiv daya is the act of caring for life. For many, the expression conjures up images of cows being lovingly cared for at a cow sanctuary. For others, it brings memories of feeding grain to birds, or the image of ornate collection boxes at temples through which funds are passed on to animal sanctuaries in India.

In this article, I outline why jiv daya in the form of support to animal shelters (panjapols) is an important activity to participate in, especially for those of us living a modern western lifestyle. I also offer some thoughts on other ways in which we might be able to extend the compassionate spirit of jiv daya in our daily lives.

Living in the UK, it is all too easy to forget our interconnectedness with the other beings we share the planet with. We reside in cities where most natural life has been concreted over. We spend our time in buildings, which block us from seeing the few plants and animals that do live around us. And we buy our food from supermarkets and restaurants - a distant world from the tropical environments where many of the fruits and vegetables we eat were grown.

Although we may not see it directly, our lifestyles have a huge impact on the world around us and the creatures we share the earth with. When we build on new land, we displace living creatures who were there before us. As the land used for farming increases to support the world's growing population, less space remains for wild plants and animals. And when we farm fruits, vegetables and grains, we deliberately protect the crop (often through violent means) from insects, birds and mammals in order to ensure a bountiful harvest for ourselves.

Our demand for certain products can have an even greater impact on the animals. Protocols encouraging animal testing mean that innocent beings are brutally tortured in order to serve our demand for medicines and cosmetics. And because cows need to be made pregnant in order to give milk and are only productive for a fraction of their natural lifespan, millions of cows and calves are killed each year as a direct result of our taste for milk.

For many of the animals we displace or harm as a result of our lifestyles, panjapols (animal sanctuaries) are the ONLY the safe place to go. They are places where animals can live freely and peacefully without being suppressed or exploited. They are places where animals receive unconditional love and care, and can express natural behaviours. They are places of true compassion.

Unfortunately, there are far more animals in need of support than there are spaces in animal sanctuaries. Each year in the UK, about 800,000 unwanted male calves born to dairy cows are sent to slaughter shortly after being born - only a handful will be lucky enough to be saved and taken in by a panjapol. In India, the lack of space for retired dairy cows at gaushalas (cow shelters) has resulted in the country becoming the world's biggest exporter of beef.

The sad truth is that most panjapols and gaushalas are desperately underfunded. Most struggle to meet the cost of day-to-day feed and medicines, let alone the costs of repairs and maintenance for barns and shelters. Without more support, taking in more animals just won't be possible.

Jiv daya, in the traditional form of support for panjapols, is generally offered in two ways - money and time. By offering money and encouraging others to do the same, you enable panjapols to improve their facilities and take in more animals, extending their reach. And by visiting sanctuaries and volunteering directly, you not only get the chance to learn about the animals and support them directly, but you also gain a powerful opportunity for personal development and inner transformation.

In western society, our lifestyles often run counter to the principle of aparigraha (non possessiveness or non-attachment). Success is typically defined by the accumulation of wealth or power, not by strength of character, kindness or humility. Most actions are carried out with some degree of attachment or expectation - be it in the form of financial return, reciprocation or recognition. Very often, it can even feel like society actually discourages us from giving unless we are going to get something in return.

Spending time at a panjapols helps us reflect on the nature of our daily lives and is a helpful counterbalance to the individualistic pressures of western society. Panjapols open our eyes to the tireless work that fellow humans do to support other living beings, without

expecting anything in return. They show us how little we need to live a fulfilling life, and how fortunate we are to have what we have. And they allow us to see first hand the virtues of compassion, detachment and equanimity. Everyone I know who has visited a panjapol has returned a stronger, better person.

In the UK, we are fortunate to have over 15 different animal sanctuaries that are run by vegans who do not seek to profit from the exploitation or killing of animals. Many of these are within a 2 hour drive from major Oshwal communities, and organise open days for members of the public to learn about their work.

If you have not yet visited a panjapol, words cannot describe how strongly I would recommend you go. It will be a transformative experience for you, and help you do your small part to make the world a better place. The next time an opportunity arises, make sure you take it.

**List of UK-based animal sanctuaries run by vegans**

- Hugletts Wood Farm Animal Sanctuary (East Sussex)**
- Farm Animal Rescue Sanctuary (Warwickshire)**
- Tower Hill Stables (Essex)**
- Hillfields Animal Sanctuary (Worcestershire)**
- F.R.I.E.N.D. Farmed Animal Rescue (Kent)**
- The Algernon Trust Animal Sanctuary & Wildlife Rescue (Northamptonshire)**
- Brinsleyanimal Rescue (Nottingham)**
- Brook Farm Animal Sanctuary (Northamptonshire)**
- The Farm Animal Sanctuary (Worcestershire)**
- Farplace Animal Rescue (County Durham)**
- Folly Wildlife Rescue Trust (Kent)**
- Hillside Animal Sanctuary (Norfolk)**
- New Life Parrot Rescue (Cambridgeshire)**
- Rainbow Ark Animal Sanctuary (County Durham)**
- Retreat Animal Rescue (Kent)**

*Article by Sagar Kirit Shah, member of the Jain Vegans Working Group*



Over the past year, I have been fortunate to be working closely with a charity called CAREducation Trust, helping to make a difference to underprivileged children around the world.

CAREducation Trust is a UK registered charity whose aim is to better the lives of underprivileged and naturally challenged children through the power of education. By partnering with local organisations that become stakeholders in their projects, CARE has a vision to provide effective and sustainable support to educational establishments around the world.

CARE's ethos of being a 100% grass root charity, with no administration costs taken from donations ensures that any money raised for the charity reaches the education establishments it supports, giving direct benefit to the children in need.

Volunteering as part of CARE Youth, I am part of a team of like-minded people who help to organise fundraising events and create awareness for the charity.

My involvement with CARE was inspired by CARE's core belief of providing children with the tools to fight poverty through their application of learnt trades and skills, which can give them the opportunity to lead financially independent lives.

Just as CARE has the aim of educating underprivileged children in developing countries, I believe that this vision extends to the children in our society and community.

Having attended North Area Oshwal Gujarati School from the age of five to fifteen, I saw the benefits of extra-curricular education first hand. Not only was I learning important aspects of my culture, heritage and language, I had found a sense of belonging to a community and had made long lasting friendships.

After finishing our studies at Gujarati School, a group of us friends would continue to attend the school on Saturday mornings, helping to organise activities for the school pupils, ultimately giving them a form of education.

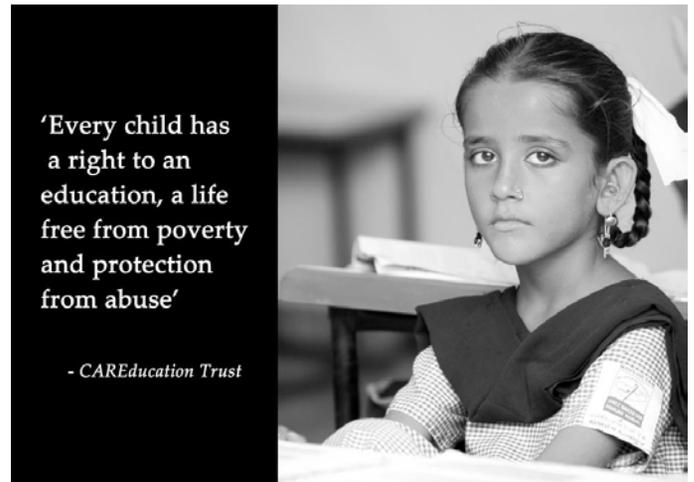
Ironically, it is this same group of friends that I now have the pleasure of volunteering with as a part of CARE Youth.



Being a part of making a difference to those less fortunate has helped members of the CARE Youth team develop key skills that will help them in everyday life as well as sharing the fulfilment of helping those in need.

Last year, nine members of the CARE youth team undertook an incredible journey to drive 1,800km through India by rickshaw, raising over £30,000 and creating huge amount of awareness for the charity. Branded "The Rickshawalas", their journey reached and inspired large audiences, greatly increasing the following and support of the charity.

This year, CARE Youth are planning a trek to climb the highest freestanding mountain in the world, Mount Kilimanjaro. By organising these regular adventures, CARE Youth are continually looking to increase the size of their team and are looking for like-minded people to increase the charity's support.



## More Information

[www.careducation.org/youth](http://www.careducation.org/youth)

My name is Ajay Gudka and I set up BEHT as a registered charity in 1998 with 2 other Trustees, Dr. Chetan Shah and Mrs. Shobhna Shah.

## Reason for setting up this charity

In 1994/5, I visited Chaparda, a small village in Junagadh District in Gujarat with my family – my mother, my wife, Mira and my son, Jaymal. We came to stay in a small ashram in this village. Mira had made contact with the sadhu living in this ashram through her circle of friends and he had invited us to visit him and see firsthand how he was using the few funds that this group of friends were sending to him for feeding cows in a small dairy farm. We stayed three weeks with him in this ashram and every day we were enlightened with his wisdom. This saint, Pujya Muktanandji, fondly called Bapu, had left school at the age of 8 but showed wisdom and maturity beyond belief.

The following year, we wanted to visit Bapu again and we stayed two weeks. In this trip, bonds were created and seeds were sown which made us feel attached to that place. Every year then on, we visited Chaparda either in December or in July/August school holidays and spent few weeks each time in Bapu's company. We witnessed firsthand how practical he was and what great humanitarian work he was doing selflessly and without any publicity. We witnessed eye, medical and animal camps in various locations, he was initiating 'samu lagna' (mass weddings between all communities) thus saving thousands of rupees in meaningless ceremonies, he was renovating schools and motivating the educational staff to teach properly etc.

As most of his helpers did not receive a good education, it was difficult for them to keep records of what Bapu was achieving. My first suggestion to them was to start keeping records in written form and also photographically so they could show any visitors what good work they were doing. They heeded my advice and soon saw that it started bringing positive feedback in the way of more donations as people started believing and trusting in what Bapu was doing and delivering.

In the following trip, a bond of trust formed between us and Bapu, who had already registered a charitable trust called Bhagvatinandji Education Trust (BET) named after his Guru who had passed away about 10 years

previously. He invited me to join the trust as a Trustee which I humbly accepted. During this time, we registered three more trusts to do various charitable works, namely Health Aid Trust (HAT), Help the Elderly Trust (HTET) and Help the Animal Trust (HTAT). The reason for creating separate trusts was to make them transparent financially so that donors would have complete faith in where their funds were being used. This has proved to be beneficial even though it has created more work for the book keeper and for the compliance officer.

On my return to London following this trip, we registered Bhagvatinandji Education & Health Trust (BEHT) in London in 1998 with the following objectives:

- 1) To provide relief to the poor, the handicapped, the disabled, the sick and the aged
- 2) To provide relief for victims of disaster of people living in the area of benefit.
- 3) Advancement of education of people living in the area of benefit



The area of benefit was limited to India at that time, and we felt that it was right that we helped our motherland. The main reason for registering was to make sure that we benefitted from the Gift Aid allowance so we could raise 28% more funds.

Our first project was to send funds for an ambulance project. Most of the villages in Junagadh District did not have an ambulance service for that area and the need was urgent. The funds were raised with help of BEHT's 1st swimathon and the ambulance was procured locally. The generosity of the donors and the keenness of all the volunteers spurred us to take on bigger challenges. Next we decided to collect funds for a school project.

Pujya Bapu and I had been discussing why India was not progressing, especially in the villages, whilst the rest of India was developing rapidly. Pujya Bapu said that the main reason for this was due to the lack of good education in the villages. There were schools in the villages but they were poorly managed and staff were generally demoralised. At times, teachers were not even present and there was a general lack of discipline and respectability. He suggested that the only way we could address this problem was by educating these children ourselves. That day the seeds were sown for the Education Project that one can see today.

Initially, the plan was to board 200 children by building one boarding house and ferrying the children to schools in Junagadh City schools. Soon, as the building project started and as we had plenty of land donated to the Trust, we decided to build a school next to the boarding house. Once the buildings were near completion, the Gujarat Earthquake happened on 26th Jan 2001. Pujya Bapu with a few volunteers went to Kutch to help in the relief work. After staying 3 months in Kutch, and calming and settling the community in Adhoi Town, Pujya Bapu returned to Chaparda with about 200 orphan boys and settled them in the new boarding house and started the school with these children.

With Pujya Bapu's intense attention and time, the school started progressing and soon it was felt that we should expand the school to give the local boys an opportunity to study. From that time up until today, every year, we have kept on expanding due to the demand. We have now put a limit with the maximum capacity in this school to be 2000 children – all boarded.

In addition to this school, it was decided to build a school in Adhoi, Kutch for the local population as the previous schools had all collapsed and were in ruins. Today, almost 800 children are studying free of charge and whose fees are donated by an American group of donors.

In the initial years, girls were not admitted in the school in Chaparda so to address this, a new boarding house for 100 girls was built in Chaparda with the help of our UK based sister charity, Mukti Trust. Another boarding house for 380 girls was built in Junagadh city by another of our sister charities Inner Joy Foundation.

Four years ago, Nividya Trust based in Savar Kundla, about 50 miles from Chaparda came under the management of BET. This trust was founded and run by a hard working, down to earth couple, Dr. Bhaskerbhai Banjara and his wife Suwarnaben are helping to educate 500 slum children in Savar Kundla.

So now, overall, the trust in India is helping to educate about 4000 children at any one time in 4 different locations. Over the years, thousands of children will have benefitted and hopefully we have changed their lives for the better.

The school in Chaparda has now become a centre of excellence and many schools in the District look up to it to set the trend. There are many other education related projects now taking place in this school like Headmaster and teacher training programme, science and sports centres etc...

### **Apart from education, we carry out the following activities through our various trusts:**

- a) Health related – exactly a year ago, a 172 bed hospital opened in Chaparda to serve the local Taluka. The fees are set at nominal amount and we hope to make it self-financing in 3 years time. A monthly medical camp is held in the hospital to create awareness amongst the local population of what it can offer.
- b) Elderly welfare – about 150 elderly people who do not have anyone to care for them are looked after and cared for in the Elderly Homes. They are looked after free of charge and we give them dignity and hope until they die. The cost is donated by many well wishers - local and overseas.
- c) Animal welfare – dairy farms and promotion of good quality Gir breed is encouraged. Regular veterinary camps are held in Chaparda.
- d) Farming – promotion of Good Agricultural Practice (GAP) by creating a model farm with drip irrigation, net house and poly house to help neighbouring farmers understand and learn about modern techniques and technology.
- e) Environment and conservation – encourage tree planting. Promote water conservation by using drip irrigation, digging up riverbeds and constructing Check

dams and rain water harvesting. Promoting recycling of waste responsibly.

## Benefits from the work

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- a) Satisfaction that you are doing something good
- b) Promoting well being and transferring good proven practices to another part of the world which is helping to change lives for the better.
- c) Sharing our wealth and knowledge (generally people live in fear and want to hold on to everything)
- d) We are here today and gone tomorrow so why not share
- e) Leaving a good legacy for the future generation.
- f) If everyone did their share, the World would be a better place for all

## Present day BEHT

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BEHT is 15 years old and has raised over £2 million and donated to many worthwhile causes in Gujarat. Currently, we have six Trustees who regularly go to India and visit

the projects mentioned above and we have a maximum admin cost of 5% only – meaning for every £100 donated, £95 would reach where it was intended for. BEHT works with trusted parties in India who have a good track record and who work within our objectives. We are trying to make all our projects self sustaining as far as possible and we would like to invite any visitor, who may be interested in seeing our work.

What started out as a small project of feeding cows in a dairy farm has grown into a huge project helping to change thousands of lives for the better. This can only happen where there is faith and trust between both parties.

## More information

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[www.beht.org](http://www.beht.org)



## How can Sewa help our Community and the Environment?

*"The best way to find yourself, is to lose yourself in the service of others" - Mahatma Gandhi.*

Sewa is a sanskrit word that translates a "selfless service or work" one performs for the benefit of others in need without any thought of reward or personal benefit, putting aside religion, ethnicity and status for the greater good. It is about volunteering to serve humanity and our environment, animals, plants in distress, and aiding local communities.

Sewa can be performed in three ways:

- **Tana (body)** - giving our time and effort physically which can directly help those in need. Establishing dignity of manual labour. For example, some volunteers and I organised a Cake Day event at work in order to raise funds and buy gifts for children under the age of 12 in the local community who were going through a difficult time. To do this, volunteers and I had to bake quite a few cakes, and serve them.
- **Mana (mind)** - giving our time mentally. Contributing one's talents such as creative, communicative, managerial etc. to the welfare of humanity. The volunteers on the Cake Project used their decorating skills on the cakes out of compassion.
- **Dhana (wealth)** - giving our wealth through donation for charity projects. Not debasing for the receiver nor ego-entrenching for the giver. The colleagues at work contributed generously when purchasing the cakes and of course enjoyed eating them at their teabreak.

There are many different ways and causes you can connect with. A sample of contributions to date that many colleagues in the community have undertaken are: planting an olive tree in Egypt as part of the reforestation program, participating in the 24 hour relay for Cancer Research and Ladies Midnight Walk in support of St Lukes Hospice for the care of ill patients, volunteering time at weekends to the local charity shop which helps with recycling of goods and materials in order to raise funds, donating goods to local charities such as the RSPCA that help animals or international charities in

India that help with disaster reliefs, sponsoring students in Kenya to study at University, a wheelbarrow race in Kenya, blood and organ donation, mountain climbing to raise funds in support of children in Gujarat requiring better health and education, volunteering at Oshwal community centre functions, etc.

The Sewa Movement is an established Hindu faith humanitarian, non-profit organisation active in 17 countries including the UK. It provides relief and rehabilitation, by mobilising technical assistance to relief operations and invests in building infrastructure and services in areas which suffer from natural disasters. Sewa International has supported development projects internationally in countries like India, Kenya, Guyana, Malaysia, Peru, Sri Lanka, and Suriname. A number of volunteer activities supports local communities and causes. In the United States, programs such as the Diwali Food Drive help the local homeless shelters. Sewa Day programs supports local causes such as planting trees, preserving the environment, and Meals on Wheels. Such simple programs all endear basic Jain philosophies.

Sewa is the celebration of humanity and our capacity for goodness. It helps make a difference to the quality of lives of those suffering from misfortune, rebuilds prosperity in communities. It works to care for the environment through continual re-use and recycling of resources for the benefit of those in need. It is not only good for community relations, but also provides one with a spiritual and moral uplifting and peace.

I hope reading this has inspired you to help others.



# A Spring Garden

By Varsha Shah

I first learnt about gardens from my grandfather. His garden was austere, a quadrangle with sharp-edged borders and an apple tree in the centre. As a child I followed him around with a plastic trowel and spade as he grew tomatoes, that were hard as green marbles when unripe, pink carnations with the scent of cloves, and, in contrast to the severity of the rest of the garden, marigolds, a riot of fiery orange and gold. From him I learnt about weeding and pruning and the sharp tang of vegetables grown at home.

My dad is a different kind of gardener. When he bought his first house in London he planted roses. The stems stood upright like toy soldiers. Each summer they bloom, filling the garden with thick fragrance and velvety blooms of cream, magenta and deep pink. There are blackberry bushes too, bristling with black fruit that are best eaten with single cream and sugar in autumn, a horse chestnut tree that tips with shiny conkers, and a tall and resplendent Yucca plant.

My own steps in gardening came gradually. For years I had no garden. I lived in flats with windows. I fell in love with plants when travelling: the damp, freshness of the Hanging Gardens in Mumbai; the rock gardens and waves of cherry blossom in the temples in Japan, the Eucalyptus trees that grow in the Blue Mountains in Australia. Then I came back home for a while and wanted to plant things. I had no garden so I helped a friend at an allotment and picked salad leaves and radishes and rhubarb for lunch and filled the house with daffodils and tulips. Then I tried gardening on my own. It was a slow process and one with lots of failures and stops and starts, but fun.

There is something lovely about gardening and being outside in watery sunlight or cool patches of rain, about doing something that creates scents of rose, lilac and mint, a frenzy of colour, food for the table, that creates a place to relax or invite friends over, a place that fills with the sound of birds.

How to start gardening? I am not the best one to say - my luck with gardens is more to do with trial and error, and the fact that it is hard to make a mistake that it is not possible to erase or cover with new plants in the new season, but I write just a couple of steps as a starting point:

1. Look at how much of a garden you want or already have - a windowsill is not too small to start, and you can find allotments later if you want a bigger canvas
2. Determine the nature and type of soil and look at light and shade - not everything grows well everywhere and life is much easier when you grow those things that would do well naturally
3. Ask friends and family for advice - people know so much and on the subject of gardens are happy to help and generous with their knowledge
4. Read books and articles on gardening - most weekend papers have a page on the topic and there are lots of wonderful books that cater to the beginner
5. Visit gardens for inspiration - England has so many- Kew Gardens is a beautiful starting point and
6. Clear the area of weeds, turn the soil and plant something that you would love to see grow



## Jains and the promotion of vegetarianism and animal welfare in the UK

There are 5 million vegetarians in the UK and there are tens of thousands of people who actively campaign to promote vegetarianism and compassion towards animals. For me all these people are Jains and so suddenly the population of Jains in this country is not just 35,000 but 5 million! However we have to reach out to these people and extend our hand of support to promoters of Ahimsa in this country.

The Young Indian Vegetarians society has been working in this field for over 35 years. Around 15 years ago some 10 English women fasted for 5 days outside the ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries. They were protesting against the export of animals. On the day they ended the fast we served them hot food. There were tears of joy in their eyes and so much respect for the Jain community. We have organised mass vegetarian rallies and presented Mahaveer Awards to people who have tirelessly worked for animals. Amongst the recipients of the Mahaveer Award are Tony Benn, Uri Geller and many less well known people who are fighting for the rights of animals. All these people have come to appreciate Jainism and many say that if they were to be born again they would want to be born as Jains! We also presented the awards to Swami Ram Dev and Shri Shri Ravi Shankar, this got us huge coverage in India and reminded the people of India of the importance of vegetarianism.

There are hundreds of animal sanctuaries in this country. Most of them are run by dedicated individuals who are struggling due to lack of finance. We support many such sanctuaries but we could do much more. We have been supporting an animal sanctuary in Burwash, Sussex for the last 20 years.

So what do Jains need to do to become more pro active? First of all become familiar with vegetarian and animal rights group in this country. Here is a selection of the organisations that promote vegetarianism and animal rights, that we can consider supporting:

**Animal Aid:** Promotes vegetarianism and exposes cruelties to animals in slaughterhouses and in laboratories where cruel experiments are carried out on animals. They are also campaigning to stop horse racing in which horses suffer a lot and retired horses face

slaughter or neglect. By becoming a member you will support this organisation and get their magazine. There are opportunities for Jains to help in collecting funds through street collections which is organised regularly.

**British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection:** BUAV has been campaigning to abolish the experiments carried out on animals. We are currently working with them to ban the export of monkeys from Mauritius which are used for experiments in the UK and other countries.

**League Against Cruel Sports:** Worked to ban fox hunting and campaigns to stop bull fighting, shooting of birds for fun and many other cruelties to animals.

**Viva!:** A very active and successful organisation promoting vegetarianism. The founder Juliet Gelletly is the recipient of our Mahaveer Award.

**Compassion in World Farming:** CIWF works to bring in stringent laws to reduce the suffering of farm animals. They have had many successes. A Europe wide ban of small pens in which pigs are kept has come into force. A whole set of rules for the welfare of animals that are being exported have also come into effect. The more difficult it becomes for those who abuse animals the more such practices will stop. I have been a trustee of this organisation.

**The Vegetarian Society of the UK:** A well established society with branches all over the country. They are always looking for people to join the national committee.

**The Vegan Society:** Vegan society promotes a completely animal free diet so in a way meets the Jain dietary standards in that they do not consider eggs as consumable. The Jain Vegans are doing a splendid job of working with the Vegan Society.

**Quaker Concern for Animals:** They are Christian vegetarians who have great respect for Jains. I am a patron of the organisation.

**Royal Society for the Protection of Animals:** A high profile organisation which prosecutes animal abusers and also gives shelter to abandoned pet animals. The new director for RSPCA is very enthusiastic and very much wants to build strong links with the Jain community. There are opportunities to volunteer.

~ Animal Welfare ~

**Catholic Concern for Animals:** Actively promotes compassion to animals amongst the Catholic community.

Apart from the above organisations we support:

- Animal Protection Agency ([www.apa.org.uk](http://www.apa.org.uk)). They monitor the illegal sale of birds and the general abuse of Parrots and other birds.
- Hillside Animal Sanctuary ([www.hillside.org.uk](http://www.hillside.org.uk))
- International Fund For Animals ([www.ifaw.org](http://www.ifaw.org)): They rescue animals like bears, elephants from countries where they are abused.
- Mare and Foal Sanctuary, Newton Abbot
- Animal Care in Egypt: They educate the local people in taking care of donkeys which are used as a means of transport.
- The Mahew Animal Home. ([www.mahewanimalhome.org](http://www.mahewanimalhome.org))
- Network for Animals: Rescues dogs in Philippines where they are killed for food

- Peta (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals). High profile organisation which promotes vegetarianism and fights the fur trade and all animal abuse.
- The Dog Trust: Gives shelter to abandoned dogs and finds loving homes for them.
- World Society for the Protection of Animals: Rescues abused animals like bears, horses and donkeys where ever they are abused.

There is a whole world of cruelty to animals, birds and aquatic animals. They are abused in circuses, laboratories and so called sports. Jains should be actively involved in every aspect of preventing cruelty to animals, they should set a personal example by avoiding buying leather goods and anything in which animals would have suffered. Don't eat honey, avoid milk as milk production is associated with beef production. Every Jain has to look within and become proactive as days, weeks and years are passing away and such a opportunity may not come in our future births!

# Oshwal Directory

## *Front Cover*

# COMPETITION



**This is your chance to design the front cover of the new Oshwal Directory. Open to Oshwal Members' children ONLY (aged 18 or below). For more details and how to enter go to:**

**[www.oshwal.co.uk/media](http://www.oshwal.co.uk/media)**

**Deadline for entries: 31 May 2013**

**EC Youth  
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**For ages  
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- Abseiling
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- Mountain Biking
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- Zip Wire
- And more

**Price**

£195 – Oshwal Members  
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(Includes Full board – Vegetarian Meals).

For further information please contact:

**Anjali Gudhka**

[anjali.gudhka@oshwal.org](mailto:anjali.gudhka@oshwal.org)

Also, check out more details  
on the Oshwal Website:

[www.oshwal.co.uk/youth](http://www.oshwal.co.uk/youth)

**Location**

Osmington Bay, near Weymouth in Dorset,

**Accommodation**

Chalets with en suite bathrooms. Your group will stay in en suite rooms sleeping 4-6.

**Facilities**

Osmington Bay has a comprehensive programme of activities. The site includes all-weather facilities.

