

Maha Sud Bij

Abhinandanswami Janma Kalyanak

On this day, Jains try and do at least one 'mala' reciting:

"Om Hrim Shri Abhinandanswami Arhate Namah"



56 Dik Kumaris and 64 Indras Janma Kalyanak Ceremonies



As per Jain texts, these Janma Kalyanak ceremonies by the 56 Dik-Kumaris and 64 Indras are the same for all Tirthankaras after their birth.

56 DIK KUMARIS

After the birth of the Tirthankara, from all around come the fifty six Goddesses of Directions – known as Dik-kumaris. On arrival, they circumambulate the Tirthankara mother three times and tell her "Reverence to you, mother of the unique Tirthankara, who is going to be compassionate to all living beings and propagate the Jain Dharma. Oh mother, you are the giver of light in form of omniscient Tirthankara to the world."

Of the fifty-six Dik-kumaris, eight come from the lower world, responsible for looking after the house. Eight come from the upper world, who sprinkle fragrant water on the ground, then scatter five coloured flowers knee deep. The eight from the southern Rucaka mountains come with pitchers filled with water, whilst eight from the east Rucaka mountains carry large mirrors reflecting the beauty around them. Eight Dik-kumaris from the west mountains come with palm-leaf fans, whilst a further eight from the north come holding 'chauris' – special fans made from the long white hair of chamari cows. Four come holding lights and the last four cut the newly born Tirthankara umbilical cord, living three inches. All the Dik-kumaris undertake their duty in the purifying birth rites.

The Dik-kumaris construct three plantain dwellings, placing four quadrangles between them. In the first quadrangle, the baby's body is rubbed with oil and fragrant ointments. In the second, baby is bathed in pure water and sprinkled with perfumes; in the third, the baby's body is anointed with sandalwood paste. The mother and baby are seated on thrones in the fourth quadrangle whilst the Dek-kumaris sing devotional songs, dance, perform dramas, play musical instruments creating an auspicious atmosphere that not even a poet can imagine it.

After completing their ceremonies, praising the newly born Tirthankara and exhibiting their utmost devotion to him/her, all the Dik-kumaris return to their abodes.



References:
Tirthakara Mahavir
Jain Saga Part 1
Tirthankara Charita

64 INDRAS

At the time of the birth, Indra becomes aware of the birth of a Tirthankara when his throne starts trembling. He moves in the direction in which Tirthankara was born and with utmost devotion glorifies the Divine by reciting the Namathanam Sutra.

The celestial gods celebrate the birth event of Tirthankara on Mount Meru. Indra, induces a

state of deep sleep known as 'avasvapini-nidra' in Tirthankara mother and places an exact replica of the baby besides her. Then with his divine power, he creates five Indras resembling him. One of them picks the Tirthankara baby with his palms, another holds an umbrella behind Indra. The other two move the whisks on the two sides and the fifth one moves ahead holding a thunderbolt in his hand.

Indra, along with thousands of other celestial beings sit on Mount Meru, facing east and perform the anointing ceremony. In this great abhishek ceremony, there are eight different types of pitchers, with 8000 pitchers of each type and 250 abhishek are performed with each pitcher, resulting in a total of 16million abhisheks.

Indra returns the baby to the mother after completion of this ceremony.

Snatra Puja written by Shri Virvijayji Maharaj, is a ritual performed frequently in our Derasars, in which the ceremonies performed by the 56 Dik-kumaris and abhishek by Indra and other celestial beings on Mount Meru is symbolically re-enacted.



BY KISHOR B SHAH



Abhinandan Bhagwan is the fourth Tirthankara in the current time cycle. His parents were King Samvar and Queen Siddharti and was born in the city of Ayodhya. His symbol (lanchan) is ape/monkey. His symbolic colour is gold.

After attaining Samyak Darshan, Abhinandan took three bhavs to attain Moksha.

Birth 1: As King Mahabal of Manglavati/ Ratnasanchay town in Purva Mahavideh Kshetra as per Jain cosmology. Although a King, he was simple, generous, and humble person and was not attached either with his kingdom or with wealth and money. He remained humble and equanimous whether people praised or criticised him.

He became influenced by the sayings of Acharya Sri Vimal Chandra that "World is full of challenges and our body is mortal, human life is difficult to get and only a human can attain complete 'moksh' and this is the only time when you can try and attain salvation". After ruling for many years, he took diksha from the Acharya. As an ascetic, he was popular due to his virtuous nature and humility. He practised severe penance and meditation and as a result acquired the Tirthankara naam and gotra karma.

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Birth 2: As a celestial being in the Vijay heaven as per Jain cosmology.

Birth 3: As Abhinandan Bhagwan. Whilst the Queen was pregnant, everyone in the kingdom were happy and elated, filled with feelings of humility and brotherhood. Irrespective of age, caste, creed and status everyone started greeting and honouring others. This was due to pious soul in Queen Siddharti womb. Thus, when she gave birth, after nine months, seven and one-half days, the child was named Abhinandan, which means bringing happiness.

Abhinandan succeeded his father and was King for many years. He eventually renounced the world and became an ascetic. He indulged in rigorous penance and lofty spiritual practices as an ascetic for eighteen years. One day, after fasting for two days, in Sahasramravana, under a Priyala tree, he attained Kevaljanana. His deshna (first sermon) was on Asharan Bhavna which is the absence of any refuge or shelter that can protect us from death and the uncertainties of life.

He had 116 Gandharas - his chief disciple was Vrajnabh. He attained Moksha at Samet Shikhar.

