

GLIMPSES OF HERITAGE



Keshavlal M. Shah

*GLIMPSES
OF
HERITAGE*

COMPILATIONS
BY

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Published in 1999.

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At the request of Keshavlal Bhai, this

PDF Version was created in March 2009

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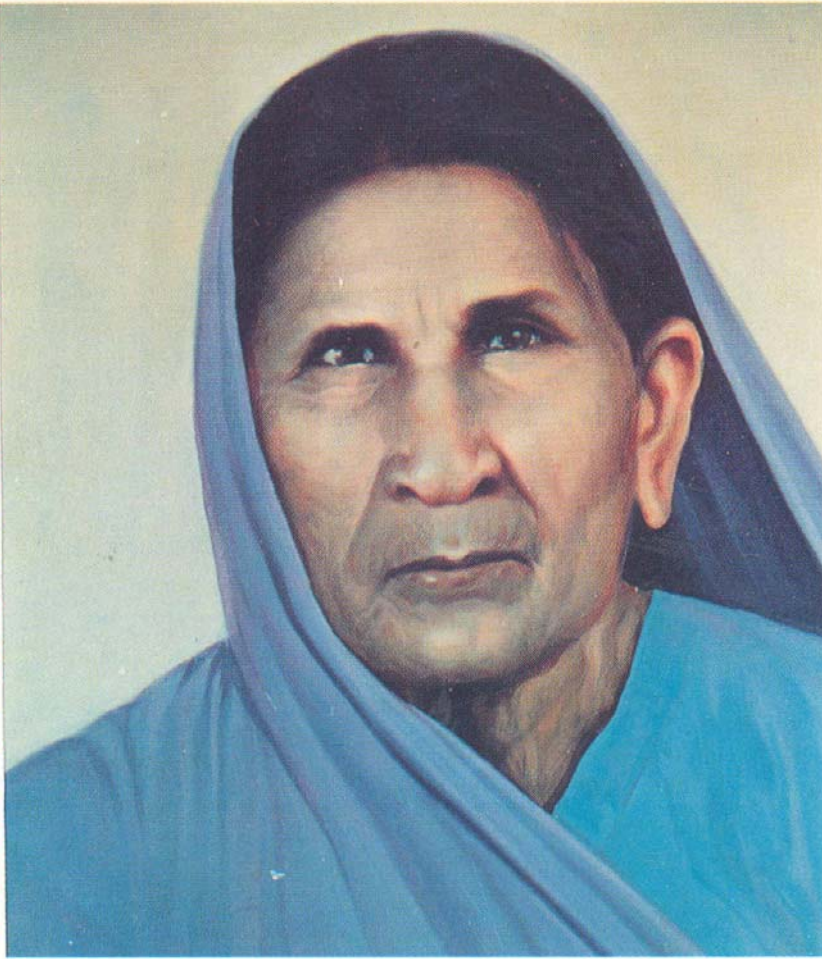
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LATE SMT. RATANBA MAKANJIBHAI

Revered mother, you have given us the strength and the knowledge to make our lives happy and worth living by giving us your love and affection in our growth and have taught us to live with selfrespect in achieving our goals. We pray to god that may your soul rest in peace and your blessings be with us. We will remember you forever in our hearts.



SHRI KESHAVLAL & RADIATBEN

The person who has faught and thrived all his life with the tremendous odds to attain a Glorious and Happy life for himself his family and friends. He has been able to attain a great standard of life with the aim of a Simple, Peaceful and Religious living, setting an example for all the people around him. His wife, Smt. Radiatben has given him an excellent base and support in moulding his and his family's life to this greatness.



Rev. Uncle SHRI NARSHI BHOJA & RATANBEN

We are indebted to him for giving us the encouragement and guidance to build and improve our lifestyle. He was our Guide and Philosopher in helping us to establish and run a flourishing business, with his deep insight of Social, Religious and Economical ways of life. We will worship him for ever and keep attaining his blessings.



Rev. Uncle SHRI DEVCHAND BHOJA

His inspirations have helped us in attaining this position in the society. We shall worship him for ever and keep attaining his blessings.



SHRI KESHAVLAL & HIS BROTHERS

SCHOOL IN NAVA GAM





NAVAGAM

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INTRODUCTION

Shri Keshavlalbhai the son of Shri Makanji Bhoja Dhara and Smt. Ratnabai, was born in NAVAGAM in India in 1926. He studied in Gujarati upto 4th standard and though he wanted to study more, due to the circumstances he had to go to Kenya in 1937 at the age of 11 years. He had to return to India after about two years due to the prolonged illness of his father, who died in 1941. During this period Shri Keshubhai looked after his father and also assumed total responsibility for his family, including his mother. He is a kind hearted person and has a very helpful nature, and hence he took care of his father most religiously without any regrets.

Shri Keshubhai had to leave Navagam for Bombay, to earn a decent living, as he had to support his mother and-family. He had small brothers and sisters, and there were no proper means of income in absence of his father, yet, he did not lose heart and on the contrary made up his mind to do hard work and earn money. As Navagam was a very small place, the opportunities were very less, hence he decided to try his luck at a much bigger and well established business centre like Bombay and started earning.

He married Kumari Radiyat, daughter of Shri Khimji Karamshi Pethod of Kajurda, India, in 1944. She is from a respectable family and is very religious and simple in nature. Keshavlalbhai has got a very strong support and companionship in his life from his wife.

At the end of 1945 Shri Keshubhai went again to Kenya, for better prospects, and joined his uncle Shri Devchand Bhoja in business at Kerugoya (KENYA).He set up a business in 1949'at Baricho (KENYA), but had to wind up the same a few years later in 1951 due the MAD MAD agitation there, which forced many flourishing businesses to close down at that time. He moved on to Forthall (KENYA) and established two shops with his younger brother Shri Premchandbhai, and also invited his other younger brothers

Shri Jivrajbhai and Shri Veljibhai from India and jointly set up a new business at River Road, Nairobi, KENYA, under the title of 'RAMESH EMPORIUM'.

His grandfather Shri Bhoja Dhara expired at Forthall in 1954, and this gave a moral setback to Shri Keshubhai as he lost the strong support and guidance of his grandfather, who had helped him very much after the death of his father. However, after the death of his grandfather, he received excellent guidance from his uncle Shri Narsi Bhoja, and prospered in his business by shifting it to a more lucrative place called Mombasa in 1963, However due to the political circumstances he was forced to wind up his business in Mombasa and emigrate to England in 1975 for permanent settlement.

Shri Keshavlalbai has put in a lot of efforts and has also contributed financially in preparing the FAMILY TREE and I congratulate him for the same.

The family tree has been compiled with great efforts and difficulty as he was staying very far away from his motherland. A lot of hard work and dedication has been put into this book by Keshavlalbai, in the hope that it will be of interest and benefit future generations.

I feel it is necessary for every Oshwal family to keep this book in their library as a reference and remembrance of our forefathers, for the future generations of Oshwals.

- JIVRAJ MAKANJI SHAH

GLIMPSES OF THE LIVES OF OUR LATE PARENTS
SMT. RATNABA & SHRI. MAKANJIBHAI

*YOU MAY NOT REMEMBER THE PAST OR THE
PRESENT BUT
YOU WILL NEVER FORGET YOUR MOTHER &
FATHER.
MEMORY LIVES ON.*

Our mother SMT. RATNABA, was born at Kajurda in India, in the year 1900. She was the daughter of Shri. Hema Ladha Haria. Their family led a very simple, religious and pious lifestyle. Ratnaba, was a very simple lady with a religious lifestyle and a peace loving nature, and this reflected very positively in her dealings with other people.

She had the habit of distributing free milk to the poor and the needy people of her village on every Sunday and on Sud Beej day of every month, and she continued to do so even in her difficult times when she had the sole responsibility of raising her six children with sheer hard work and perseverance after the death of our father who expired in the year 1941.

Smt. Ratnaba emigrated to Kenya in 1960 along with her sons, to settle there, and as she was a very religious lady, she visited a Derasar in Mombasa regularly every day. She was so dedicated in her religion and her visits to the Derasar (Jain temple) that one day, unaware of the time, she woke up very very early in the morning and walked to the Derasar at 2.00 am, on her arrival she was surprised to note that the watchman at the Derasar refused entry to the temple, and realised the time only when she returned home without praying.

She gave excellent training to her children, which reflects even today in their lifestyles. She also gave them the mental strength to

face the world and earn reputation and wealth, in absence of our father. She never made her children feel the loss of a father and gave us the love of both a father and a mother.

Our beloved mother Smt. Ratnaba died peacefully at the age of 75 years on December 26, 1975, in London in the house of her eldest son Shri Keshubhai. She commanded the respect of all her children and relatives by sheer love and kindness.

Our father Shri. Makanjibhai was born in Navagam in India, in the year 1896. He emigrated to Kenya for better prospects even though he had no formal education. He was a strong willed man of very high principles and upon reaching Kenya he joined his maternal uncle (mama) Shri. Keshavji Ramji in business at Forthall under the name of "MEGHJI LAD HA CO.". Our grandfather Shri. Bhoja Dhara, was also associated with this company, but only as a financier, wherein he had lent money to carry on the business of the company.

During the First World War in 1914, our father returned to India after two years of staying in Kenya, and married our mother. He settled down in Navagam in India where he tended to the cattle, ploughed the fields and took care of the land, which was physically tiring work.

In the period between 1928 - 1930 Shri Makanjibhai started suffering from the very dreaded illness of cancer of the intestines, which may have occurred due to the heavy physical work which he did in the fields and in tending the cattle. The illness prolonged as there was no cure and hence he was unable to work. This weakened him economically, and after some time his financial condition became so bad that he had to obtain aid from his father and brother Shri. Narshi Bhoja who were in Kenya. The illness worsened and he finally passed away in the year 1941, leaving behind his wife and six small children.

In his last days, our father was very tensed and worried about his family and the children, but would always reassure them that the Almighty God would look after them in his absence, and that they must never panic. He urged us to work hard and prosper. The advise we followed and are grateful to our father for instilling in us the" high principles by which we lived and by which we have come to where we are today.

Our father had a very pious, helpful and generous nature, and he always ensured that all travellers passing through Navagam were invited for a meal and to rest for a night at our house. **In** such hard times, this was a very difficult task to maintain, but he continued to do so until he passed away, and this is a lasting memory of our father in our minds and has helped us in developing such generosity on our lifestyles.

The family tree (Ambo) published herein is in memory of our beloved parents.

- VELJI MAKANJI SHAH

GOLDEN HISTORY OF NAVAGAM

In the 1852 (Hindu year - Vikram Samvat 1908 on the 8th Magsar), the foundation ceremony of a new settlement was performed, this village was named NAVAGAM. Three families living in the nearby village of Mithoi moved and settled in this new village 'NAVAGAM'. They were, Gaga Kheta Gudka, Nongha Dedhar Dodhia and Manek Padamshi Nongha. It is about 15 miles west of Jamnagar.

During the rule of the 17th Jam of Jamnagar, he gave land on lease to the people enabling them to earn a decent living. The village Navagam, situated in the Jamnagar Kingdom had plenty of fertile land around it, and hence many families from different fields of life settled here within a short time, including many OSWALS. There were many Carpenters, Blacksmiths, Tailors, Goldsmiths, Brahmins, Barbers, etc, who also settled in Navagam. There were, in all, 52 villages in which Oswals had settled and this settlement was called HALAR.

Many people from India went to settle in Kenya (Africa) and the first person to go from Navagam was Shree Nathoo Anand Gudka, in the year 1911, In 1912 Shree Bhoja Dhara Dodhia and his son Makanji Bhoja Dodhia also went to Kenya to better their prospects. It is believed that the fourth person to leave for Kenya from Navagam was Shree Meghji Kanji Bid, who settled in Thika (Kenya). It is widely believed that during the period when Indians started settling in Kenya (Africa), the Indian Rupee, bearing the mark of the British rule, was being circulated as currency in Kenya, Burma, Ceylon (now Shree Lanka), etc. This shows the wide ranging effect and the control of the British rule over its provinces and also the strength of the Indian currency over a vast area spanning many continents.

In Kutch all Oswals were rigidly following the Jain religion, and all the Oswals in Halar originate from Kutch. Farming is the main

occupation of the people in Halar, and hence people had little time for any other activities. Farming in those days was done by manual labour and by using bullocks for pulling the ploughs. This involved heavy manual labour, and hence by evening when people went home they were so tired that they did not even think of any other activities.

When we settled in Halar, about 400 years ago, it is said that it was a dense forest and people faced great difficulty in crossing it on foot, because there were no transport facilities, hence it was also very difficult for the Jain Munis to reach Halar, as they could only walk barefooted, and that too during the day time. They would start walking after daybreak and have to stop walking and stay where they are at the time of sunset. Jain Munis do not eat anything after sunset or before sunrise and hence they must take whatever edible food offered to them by people and finish the same before nightfall, making it more difficult for them to reach Halar.

The well known Jain Muni of that time, SHREE GAUTAM SAGARJI of ACHAL GACHH (ACHAL GROUP) visited Navagam in 1958. All the Oswals became deeply engrossed in his preachings and it touched their hearts when the Muni suggested that Navagam must have a Jain Temple (DEHRASAR). The Oswals decided to build a Dehrasar in Navagam at any cost, and if necessary, they were ready to collect funds from their more prosperous brotheren who were residing in far off places like Bombay etc, for the project.

It is said that as per the advise of Muniraj Shree Gautam Sagarji, two Oswals from Navagam Shri Dervaj Devshi Gudka and Shri Virji Depar Dodhia, went to Bombay to meet two wealthy Kutchi Oswal brothers Shri Meghji Khetsi and Shri Devshi Khetsi, who were grain merchants with a flourishing business there, to collect funds for the construction of the Dehrasar in Navagam. Both the merchant brothers pledged to donate sizable sums of money for the cost of the Dehrasar, due to the love for their native home.

The foundation stone of the Dehrasar in Navagam was laid in 1958, about 50 years after the settlement of Navagam was established. The construction started at the site decided by the Muniraj, and continued for some time. Jain Dehrasar's take a long time to be built, as they are normally constructed with stone, in particular marble, and there are very intricate items to be made and carved according to the available spaces and sizes required. However, after some time, the donations from the various donors started to decrease due to the wide spread recession in business, and hence the work on the Dehrasar could not proceed as planned. The construction was then slowly completed and the remaining work was done by the help of the donations given by the Oswals of Navagam itself. It took about 18 years and finally in 1976 when the opening ceremony was performed, the construction of the Dehrasar was finally completed. There are various rites and rituals to be performed for the opening ceremony of a Dehrasar which can be done only on a particular auspicious date.

The main idol in the Dehrasar is of CHANDRA PRABHUJI and on both sides the idols (pratimas) are of PARSHVANATH. It is believed that the Navagam Dehrasar is the second in the 52 villages of Hallar, the first being in Dabasang.

Navagam is a modern village with all the amenities for the people, such as Nursery School, Separate schools for boys and girls, Oswal Mahajanwadi, Hospital, and Offices for two ministers, Religious leader and his disciples. There are separate accommodations for the male and female disciples. The Nursery school building in Navagam constructed with the help of funds donated by Shri Devji Jetha and Shri Popatlal Virpar. This school is an excellent example of the educative mentality of the people of Navagam. A pen for the animals was also built with the help of the money donated by Shri Laxmichand Meghji Kanji Bid. Here the cattle are looked after very well and are fed every day by the people of Navagam, like their own children, with utmost care.

These cattle pens or GAUSHALAS are one of the main items of the Indian Culture and strong religious belief in non-violence and vegetarianism, especially of Jains, and the respect for the cows, who are considered sacred. Every village, town, and city in India will be having a Gaushala, and these are looked after very keenly and nicely, and the cattle there are fed with the best feed available.

Shri Raishi Jivraj Sarmatia had donated the land site for the construction of a girls school, and Shri Hemraj Nathoo Gudka donated the cost of the construction of the school building which also shows the ideology of these people to educate the female children of the society. The schools were built as per the guidelines of the Education Ministry of the Government of India and are now being managed by the Indian Government.

For 50 years, since the settlement began, there had been no school in Navagam. The first private school was started in 1908 and

1927 the Government also built a school for primary education. I believe, now there are eight forms within the school including secondary education. The people of Navagam living in Kenya started a private school on 1 st March 1943, to teach three years of English and seven years of Gujarati education appointing Mr. Bhagwanji Kalidas Upadhyay of Kandorna as a teacher. He was a very good teacher. Unfortunately the school was closed after five years in existence. The writer studied there upto seventh standard. It was a very good school which gave vast knowledge to all the students, and it was a blessing for the students, as the Jamnagar Boarding did not have enough space to accommodate so many students and hence many children did not get a chance to study there.

The girl's school was started on 15th June 1943, and the Hospital was established on 27th October 1943, Shri Devchand Khimchand Gudka, living in Jamnagar, took care of them. Without him it could not have been possible to run them, but again both of these were closed after five years.

A Mahajanwadi was established with the donations from Shri Premchand Gosar Raja Dodhia and other Oswal members, and it is believed that the Jain Mitra Mandal of Navagam also helped this project by donating funds. This Mahajanwadi was the second within the 52 villages of Halar, the first being in Chela.

There is a dam located about one mile from Navagam on the river Poona. This dam has helped the people of Navagam and many other villages in that area 'by supplying water for agriculture, irrigation, and various other uses. The farmers have benefited very much from this dam. In places where the land is dry, such dams are very useful in collecting and storing the water of the rivers wherever they flow from a higher level to a lower level and it also helps in generating cheap electricity which is useful in the daily lives of the people of the adjoining areas for their daily needs. The Holy place of VACHHRA DADA is situated near this dam. It is a very pious and peaceful place, and all the people living in Navagam and also the adjoining areas visit this place regularly to pray, as they believe that Vachhra Dada helps in keeping the dam intact and also in keeping the water pure and regularly available, thereby benefiting the farmers. It is also believed that originally a small part of the river Indus was going through the region which is now known as Kutch, but due to a major earthquake, the river changed its route, and the British did not re-dig the route to bring water to the Kutch area and therefore, this area became dry forcing people to migrate.

At a distance of about three miles from Navagam there are two villages known as Nani Khavdi and Moti Khavdi. Both have excellently built Dehrasars (temples) funded by the famous Kutchi Oswal Shri Keshavji Nayak.

In the earlier days a railway station called Pipli, which is situated on the Jamnagar - Okha line about three miles from Navagam, was used but now the inhabitants of Navagam use a station called Kanalus which is about four miles away.

There is a village called Sikari near Navagam and it is believed that about a thousand years ago there was a village called Sikalpur situated there. However, there is no evidence of the existence of such a village in the history, even though you can still see the ruins of a Dehrasar, and a guesthouse there.

When India became Independent, the residents of Navagam elected a village committee and also a government body came into existence.

Navagam situated on the banks of river Amravati which meets river Poona, has an area of two square miles. Poona river is about one mile on the east of Navagam, and is about 20 miles long. It starts from Rafudal, flows through Dabasang, Khetalus, Kanalus and meets river Sasoi near the village of Sikari. River Sasoi flows from Mount Dalasa and meets the Bay of Kutch near the village Bed. This river is about three miles east of Navagam and there is a dam on it. Farming is done on the adjacent areas by irrigation from the water of this dam. There is a cemetery between Navagam and the river Poona. There is a daily postal service to and from Navagam.

It is said that in the year 1900 there were two notorious bandits by the name of Raydo and Bhutio who were robbing various villages. They were very ferocious and daring and the people of all the villages were afraid of them. Once, after robbing the village Dabasang these bandits came to rob Navagam with their aides, but the people of Navagam being very strong and daring, themselves started beating them with whatever local arms they could get and the bandits were defeated and fled the village carrying their wounded. They left behind a gun and a sword. The gun was handed over to the Jamnagar government, but the sword was kept by one of the Oswals for a considerable period of time. Shri Keshavlalbai, Shri Hansraj Lakhamshi and others have seen this sword. It is believed that during this fight with the bandits, two brothers, Shri Dhara Hira Dodhia and Shri Depar Hira Dodhia

were the main people to defend the village, as they were known as the heads of the village. The two brothers were congratulated personally by the Jamsaheb of Jamnagar and as a mark of respect they were garlanded with real turbans, as the government of Jamnagar was unable to catch these bandits until the Dodhia brothers defeated them.

An association called Navagam Mitra Mandal was formed on 13th April 1942 in Kenya, and the members were: President - Shri Kanji Nathoo Gudka, Vice President - Shri Hemraj Shamji Dodhia, Treasurer - Shri Velji Khimchand Gudka, Secretary - Shri RupchaBd HiIji Shah, Assitant Secretary - Shri Somchand Kumbha Dodhia.

In Navagam, the Government of Jamnagar did not agree to meet the expenses of the schools and hospital, because there already existed a school and hospital in the nearby village of Saper, hence the above association of Kenya helped in running them, but ultimately they had to be closed after five years, except the girls school for which the government accepted to meet the expenses due to the strong influence of Shri Premchand Vrajpal of Padana.

GUDKA FAMILY OF NAVAGAM

Shri Ganga Kheta Gudka was son in law of Nongha Dedhar Dodhia. He had four sons called Devshi, Jivraj, Murag, Nagpal, and Shri Nongha Dedhar Dodhia also had four sons called Raishi, Ranmal, Hira, Mura. It is believed that Shri Manek Padamshi Nongha was son in law of Shri Hira Nongha Dodhia.

Shri Devshi Jivraj Gudka was the first person to go to Bombay from Navagam, to earn a living for his family. In 1911 Shri Nathoo Anand Gudka was the first person to go to Kenya. In 1954, Shri Hemraj Nathoo Gudka established a Charitable Trust in Kenya, the income from this trust is utilised for the benefit of the Oshwals living there today. Funds from this trust are also utilised for the benefit of Oshwal Associations, Hospitals, Scholarships, Clothing and food for needy people and also for other Non-Oshwal Associations. He gave a large donation for the Kutchi Gujarati primary and secondary schools in Nairobi. Donations were also given to other bodies such as the Bombay Mahajanwadi, Navagam Girls School, for religious activities in Navagam, Palitana Oshwal Yatrik Grab (House of Oshwal pilgrims), Jamnagar Oshwal Boarding and also for the establishment of Kuverbai Dharmshala (religious guest house) in Jamnagar. His donations were also utilised for eye camps.

In Nairobi, Shri Kanji Nathoo Gudka and Shri Meghji Khimji Gudka served the community as Committee Members and as Presidents of the Oshwal Education and Relief Board. In

Mombasa, Shri Somchand Ladhahbai and Shri Vaghjl Velji of the Gudka family served as Committee Members and as Presidents of Swetambar Dehravasi Jain Sangh. Shri Somchand Ladhahbai who is now retired and living in London, is very well known in the Oshwal Community for his selfless services to the Community, and frequently writes articles in magazines on the Jain religion and on the history of Oshwals.

Smt. Maniben, wife of our famous Oshwalleader and great donor Shri Meghji Pethraj, is the daughter of late Shri Nathoobhai Deva of Gudka family. Shri Ramji Meghji Gudka also served the community selflessly and has also donated to the cost of the Jain Dehrasar built in Bhivandi, near Bombay. Five women from the family of Shri Motichand Depal Gudka have taken Diksha and were named Jaybhadrashreeji, Jaydharmashreeji, Jinpadmashreeji, Jinkalpashreeji and Jindharmashreeji.

Shri Devchand Khimchand Gudka established his business in 1925 in Kisumu (Kenya) and also helped and encouraged other Oshwals in establishing there. Hence there are many Oshwals in Kisumu,

and an Oshwal Association was formed in 1932 by the advice of Shri Devchandbhai. In 1933 Shri Meghji Khimji Gudka established his business in Kisumu and the opening ceremony was performed by Shri Devchand Khimchand Gudka.

DODHIA FAMILY OF NAVAGAM

Shri Nongha Dedhar Dodhia had four sons called Raishi, Ranmal, Hira, and Mura. Shri Hira Nongha had four sons called Dhara, Depar, Deva, Devshi. Shree Bhoja Dhara and his son Shri Makanji Bhoja went to Kenya in 1912. Both of them joined M/S. Meghji Ladha & Company, in Forthall (now called Muranga), as Shri Keshavji Ramji of M/S. Meghji Ladkha & Company, was the brother-in-law of Shri Bhoja Dhara Dodhia. Shri Makanji Bhoja went back to India in 1914 when the First World War started, but his father Shri Bhoja Dhara stayed back in Forthall and died in 1954, after staying there for 42 years.

Shri Nongha Dedhar Dodhia had started the settlement of Navagam and in a period of about 140 years his family increased from one man to a large generation today numbering between

1200 to 1500 people, situated all over the world, but mainly in India, Kenya, and Britain, and almost every one of them have kept good relationship with each other, and in today's world it is difficult to find such harmony in any community, but the Oshwals are foremost in keeping good relations with each other.

Shri Meghji Rupshi Virpar Dodhia went to Kenya in 1925, and took a job with M/S. Kanji Mepa & Company, in Forthall. He then started his own business in Nyeri (Kenya) and became prosperous. He was known as a people's servant and was also very well known for his generosity. In Nyeri he donated large sums for the Oshwal Mahajanwadi, a Primary School for local Africans near Nyeri, and ward for the General Hospital in Nyeri, which is named after him as the Meghji Rupshi Ward. He had also donated for Indian Temple and Guest House, the foundation ceremony for which was performed by Meghajibhai. Not only this, he served the Association as a member of the Oshwal Education and Relief Board. Unfortunately on 4th May 1964, he died in a car accident between Nyeri and Nairobi. After his death his son

Shri. Maganbhai served the Association for two years as the Chairman of Nyeri Oshwal Association.

Shri Narshi Bhoja Dodhia and his father Shri Bhoja Dhara Dodhia were well known for their hospitality. During early settlement of Indians in villages of Kenya, any person passing through Forthall, where they stayed, always enjoyed the hospitality of the Dodhia family, and frequently the guest stayed overnight with them. They had pleasure in welcoming and taking care of the guests, without any discrimination of whether the guest was an Oshwal or a NonOshwal. Today, Shri Narshi Bhoja is 88 years old and is still running his business in Forthall under the title of *M/S. Narshi Bhoja & Sons*.

Shri Panachand Jivraj of the Dodhia family was a young and prominent member of the Oshwal community. He served the community in the capacity as a member of the Oshwal Education & Relief Board and was also a President of Oshwal community in Nairobi. Today, he is a Trustee of the World Oshwal Federation.

Shri Ratilal Devchand Bhoja Dodhia is also a prominent young member of the Oshwal Community. He has served the Oshwal community for the past 20 years in the capacity of Secretary and was also a President of the Oshwal Association of the U.K. for four years. He is the Secretary of the Association today. and has also presided over various other local organisations.

Shri Popatlal Virpar Dodhia is a member of the Oshwal Community of Bombay, in India. He served as a President of the Community, and possesses a deep knowledge of the Jain religion. In 1987 he organised a Sangh Pilgrimage from Navagam to Palitana. Shri Devshi Jetha Dodhia served as a secretary of the Oshwal community in Mumbai.

Sonbai, the daughter-in-law of Shri Depar Hira Dodhia took Diksha in 1959 and was named Sumatishreeji. Hirbai, daughter of Shri Gosar Raja Dodhia took Diksha in 1925 and was named

Harakshreeji. Muriben, daughter of Shri Merag Rajpar Dodhia took Diksha and was named Mahendraprabhashreeji and her daughter Savitaben also took Diksha and was named Surendraprabhashreeji.

Shri Bhoja Dhara and Shri Khima Dhara, two brothers, went to Ahmedabad in 1900 to earn a living but were not successful and hence they went to Karachi, even there they were not successful and went to Bombay where both of them got jobs in Bombay Port. They started their own business in Bombay in 1910, following the advise of one of their friends. Soon after Shri Bhoja Dhara and his son Shri Makanji Bhoja went to Kenya. Shri Khima Dhara and his younger brothers: Lakhamsi, Lalji, and Kanji carried on their business and later they started their own businesses in Prabhadevi, Bombay. Their cousins were also in similar businesses. At that time Shri Bharmal Anand Dodhia and other brothers were also in Prabhadevi. Shri Khima Dhara gave his business to his brother or nephew and went back to Navagam to settle again. Shri Bharmal Anand Dodhia prospered very well in Prabhadevi, and in those days was known as a millionaire (Lakhpati). He was a devotee of Vachhra Dada and believed that whatever he got was by the blessings of Vachhra Dada.

Dodhia families are also living in various other villages of Halar apart from Navagam, such as Dhinchda, Naghedi, Dadasang, Arabluns, Padana, Mithoi, etc. etc.

I congratulate Shri Keshavlalbhaj for his great efforts in preparing the FAMILY TREE and also for his financial contribution for the same. I have tried to write to the best of my ability and as per the details I could gather on all Oshwals, and I could not have done this without the inspiration of Shri Jivrajbhaj, but if there are any mistakes or if anybody is hurt unintentionally, or feels that injustice has been done, I apologise for the same and ask them to forgive me. Lastly I thank Shri Sobhag Narshi Panachand Dodhia, who served the Association for several years and was a member of the

Executive Committee of the Oshwal Association of U.K., and also a Treasurer and then a Chairman of North West Area of Oshwal Association of U.K., for translating this article from Gujarati to English.

BIRTH OF OSHWAL COMMUNITY AND
DODHIA FAMILY (By Shri Somchand
Ladhabhai Gudka)

Seventy years after the nirvana of Shree Mahavir Swami, Acharya Shri Ratnaprabhusuriji of Upkesh Gachh preached to the king and the inhabitants of Upkesh city (in Rajasthan) and converted them to the Jain religion, accepting them as Jains. As time went by old Upkesh city became Oshnagar and years later it was known as Oshia. Similarly inhabitants who were known as the Upkesh Community and then Osh Community and in later years became known as ' OSHWAL MAHAJANS ' .

Acharyas of Achal Gachh, Tapa Gachh preached to the warriors in Marwad, Mevad, Malva, Punjab, Utter Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat, between the twelfth and sixteenth centuries, and converted them to Jainism, accepting them into the Oshwal Community, giving them separate family names. This is how the Dodhia family came into being.

BEGINING OF DEDHIA (DODHIA) FAMILY

(From page 80 of Achalgachh Digdarshan)

Devad Chavda a Rajput was converted to the Jain religion by Shri Jaysinh suriji in Jesalmer during 1199. During this period several Chavda Rajputs accepted Jainism. Zamar, son of Devad Chavda, spent 170,000 Rank (currency in use at that time) on building a Shikhar Bandhi Dehrasar of God Shri Adi Nath, in Zalor. He gave alms and also freed several prisoners. Zamar had a son called Dedhia and his generations were known as Dedhia. Shree Jethanand of the Dedhia family was very rich and he led a religious pilgrimage from Sangh to Shatrunjay where he became the Chairman of 52 leaders who represented the people from various parts of the country. He also donated a lot of money for religious purposes. **In** this family there were many heroes, and their details can be found in the books of the Bhattas.

There is another tale of the Dedhia Family as follows:

Solankis used to capture the various areas of land owned by Dedji (Dedaji). Dedji was a very brave person. He came to Abu and scared the local people known as Mina and Kathi and established a village called Dedva. Dedji went to Mandovar and conquered the land of Padihars. He established a village near Oshia and called it Dedhia, from which the family name came into being.

Parmar of Oshia conquered the village of Dedhia in 1044. Shri Jaysinh suriji converted the Dedhia families and accepted them as Jains in 1198. The Dedhias worship the idol of Mamal Mata, who was the daughter of the Kaka household of Rathod family. She was married in to the Chavda household of the Dedhia family. She became a Sati and blessed the Dedhia family with her divine powers. This family was among the Oshwal families of Kutch.

Similarly, in Oshia, situated between Jodhpur and Jesalmer, Parmar families used this name. In the Marvadi language "da" is

pronounced as "dha" hence the family name was used as Dhedia. In Kutch it was known as Dedhia and in Halar it is known as Dodhia. In 1222 (Vikram Savant) a conference was organised in Marvad by the Kshatriya Oswals of Oshia village who were following the Jain religion.

OSHWALS

Oshwals lived in Marvad, Meral, Malva, Punjab, Sindh, Tharparkar, Bundelkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Utter Pradesh, Gujarat, etc. Oshwals from these various places got together and held a meeting in 1166. The formation of "Oshwal Mahajans" was approved in this meeting. Constitution and Committees were also formed for the well being of the Oshwal Community.

As time went by, foreigners started aggressions and captured several Rajput kingdoms. At that time Rajputs fought among themselves for Wealth, Land and Women. They were brave, but the foreigners took advantage of the situation and conquered the Rajput kingdoms. Consequently the Rajputs had to accept the defeat and live under foreign rule. The harassments of the foreigners on the Rajputs forced them to migrate to safer places.

Emigration also started from Marvad, Meval and Malva. The region of Tharparkar which was in Marvad became a part of Sindh, where Oshwals and Hindus lived. Ahmed Shah of Ahmedabad came to the throne followed by Mohamed Begdo who aggressed on Tharparkar in 1471 and 1504. He defeated the Sama Sumra and Sodha Rajputs and also converted them and other inhabitants. People started emigrating from this place for their safety. Rajput rule ended and Muslim rule was in power now in Sindh. The muslims population started scattering into the nearby villages and their harassments increased day by day.

Jain Munis and Oshwal Mahajans got together and started thinking of moving elsewhere, so they decided to emigrate to Kutch. A delegation of Oshwals, Jain Munis and Bhattas met King Jam Dedaji of Kutch and requested him to accept them as immigrants. Jam Dedaji accepted their request and allowed them to settle into his Kingdom. Jam Dedaji placed an army at the border of Kutch during migration to ensure that aggressors did not follow. Oshwal Mahajans emigrated from Thali, Parkar, Pali, Osrani, Sacjpr, Ider

and other villages and proceeded towards Vagod in Kutch. Similarly Oswals from Tharparkar in Sindh emigrated at night through the desert to Vagod.

Jam Dedaji gave them land to live and for farming. He gave them their rights according to their capabilities. Some settled in the existing villages and some settled in new villages. Thereafter they settled in the Kathi and Abdasa regions of Kutch.

It is believed that Oswals settled in Tharparkar in 1409 and emigrated in 1496 to settle in Kutch. In 1519 they emigrated with Jam Raval from Kutch and settled in the 52 villages of Halar situated between Jamnagar and Khambalia. Jamnagar city was built in 1540.

GLIMPSES OF THE HISTORY OF OSHWALS

History repeated the happenings in Uganda during our times, as it had happened in the times of our ancestors in India. As we are a religious minded community, we have to move from one place to another in order to protect our religion, wealth and integrity and settle peacefully.

It is believed that Oshwals were the residents of Marvad Colony of Rajasthan. During that time, there was a very prosperous and beautiful city called Oshia, which was situated about forty miles north of Jodhpur. Some of us left the city and fled to Sindh due to the invasion of foreigners and their harassments, and similarly from Sindh we fled to Kutch and from Kutch to Halar. After the settlements in Halar we were then known as Halari Oshwals.

From Kutch some Oshwals went to Burma, Bombay, and other parts of India. We Halari Oshwals who went to Bombay, later emigrated to East Africa and settled there. From East Africa, some of us finally emigrated to Britain.

King Ravalji conquered the village of Bed and later the villages Mithoi and Khambhalia. At that time the Oshwals came from Kutch to Halar and our settlement started from Khambhalia colony and then Lalpur and Panchkose colonies. The 52 villages of Halar are in these three colonies. For about a hundred years relatives in Halar and Kutch visited each other during marriages and other occasions. People from Halar used Port Salaya and people from Kutch used Ports Mudra and Mathvi.

Today, Kutch and Kandla in Gujarat are joined by the Disa Railway line. The railway lines and services all over India are good and connect most of the cities, towns and in some places even villages. Rajkot and Bhachau are connected by a main road (highway) and the roads of Gujarat are famous all over India for being very broad clean and well maintained. There is also a regular boat service

from Navlakhi to Kandla. There is an Air service also for travelling between Jamnagar and Bhuj (Kutch), and today Indian Airlines and various other private airlines give excellent services and connections to most of the cities in India and there are services to various important towns also.

We are known by the village name of HALAR in Britain, Kenya and other parts of the world, as there is no evidence as to the name of the village in Kutch from where we originally came. It is believed that we came to Halar from different villages of Kutch. It is also believed that many of our ancestors came from Bhadreshwar in Kutch. Bhadreshwar is a Jain holy place, and there is a very beautiful and large Jain Deharsar there with very good accommodation for pilgrims. It is a big town but we understand that there are no Jain residents there.

If anybody has knowledge about their origin villages of Kutch, please write with details, and the same will be highly appreciated.

Jam Ravalji was on the throne of Khambhalia, and in the year 1540 (Vikram Savant 1596, Wednesday the 7th Sud, Shravan) he laid the foundation stone of Jamnagar. There have been 20 Jams (Kings) of Jamnagar and on that basis we would have about 20 generations in Halar. It is believed that we emigrated about 450 (four hundred and fifty) years ago from Kutch.

Jamnagar is situated in the west of India. The Jamnagar district has historical as well as geographical importance. It has all three wings of the military – i.e. Army, Navy and Air-force, for the defence of India. On the East of Jamnagar there is Rajkot, in the West is the Arabian Sea/Strait of Kutch and the Junagadh district is in the south. Jamnagar district is on 21.47 to 22.57 Longitude and 68.57 to 70.30 Latitude.

Jamnagar has a long coastal area of 355 k.m. It has 10 Talukas (districts), and the three Talukas of Khambalia, Lalpur and Jamnagar cover the 52 villages of Oswals (Halar). Halar does

not have any big mountains but is mostly in plains. Bedi Port of Jamnagar is one of the foremost in the smaller Ports of India. In "Oshwal-Bandhu" of May 1992, Shri Somchand Ladhahai has written that Jamnagar has 11 Talukas, but it is shown as having 10 Talukas, as per "Phulchhab" of 9 .1.1994, one of them may be right.

Jamnagar city is 15.50 sq. k.m in area and the mean height is 7.70 metres above sea level. It has very hot summers and very cold winters. The rainfall is about 47cms. from June to September. Jamnagar is 304 km from Ahmedabad, 148 km from Dwarka, 782 km from Bombay, 246 km from Palitana, 89 km from Rajkot and 257 km from Somnath. There is another convenient railway station for Jamnagar known as the Hapa junction and it is 9 km away.

It is famous for 'Bandhni' and Zari embroidery on Silk as these arts were encouraged by the Jams and are still being produced in excellent quality.

An Ayurvedic University, which also consists of an Ayurvedic Research Centre, is located in Jamnagar. The University is one of the best of its kind in India, where the traditional ancient system of medicine, 'Ayurveda', is taught. A Solarium built by Jamsaheb Ranjit Singhji is also situated there, It is a unique institute of Poly Radio Therapy, and is designed to utilise solar radiation for the cure of skin conditions and other diseases. The famous cricketer Jamsaheb Ranjit Singhji of Jamnagar ruled this princely state from 1907 to 1933.

Rozi and Bedi Ports are one of the main attractions for the tourists and have good picnic spots. Digjam Aquarium has a collection of different species of fish and is situated near the City Lake. Khambhalia Gate is a beautiful sculptured archway. Kotha Bastion is an old arsenal built in the middle of the City Lake, where there is an ancient well from which water can be drawn by blowing a

small hole in the floor. The secret of this construction is yet to be fathomed.

The Lakhota Museum is of special interest to the visitors as displayed on the terrace of the old palace is a fine collection of sculptures dating from the 9th to 18th century AD. Palaeolithic and microlithic finds from the Narmada Valley, early Christian era pottery from Saurashtra, numismatic galleries, epigraphic gallery and paintings, particularly of the Victorian period are of special interest.

Jamnagar has a unique cremation ground called 'Manekbhai Muktidham'. It is a beautifully-constructed place with a well laid out garden consisting of Statues of almost all of India's Saints, Gods and Goddesses; it also has a library and a spacious waiting hall. There are two other important and attractive places in Jamnagar, Ranmal Lake, the centre of attraction in the city is a natural and beautiful picnic spot, and Lakhota fort, a magnificent old structure stands in the middle of the lake linked to the shore by a stone bridge. Very spacious, it served as a fort from within which a thousand soldiers could give fight to an attacking army. It also houses a museum with a fine collection of sculpture and pottery from Saurashtra, manuscripts and epigraphy.

Sasoi Dam is situated about 26 km from Jamnagar. This earthen dam has a storage capacity of about 51 million cubic metres and an irrigation potential of 3,764 hectares. There is a Marine National

Park situated 30 km from Jamnagar along the coast in the gulf of Kutch from Jodia to Okha. This National Park, the first of its kind in India is spread over an area of 160 sq. km.

According to Hindu belief there are four holy places in India, one of which is Dwarika in Halar. Pilgrims from all over India used to come in groups on ox carts, horses and camels to worship at this holy place and would pass through almost all the 52 villages of Halar. It is believed that pilgrims and their animals were fed generously by Oshwals.

In the beginning of the 20th Century Queen Victoria of Great Britain made the Indian Rupee a legal tender, but before that every Kingdom had their own currency. In Kutch and Halar the currency in use was called Kori and it is believed that the value of both the currencies of Halar and Kutch were same.

When King Shri Ranjit Singhji came to the throne he levied cash tax on farming land, earlier, 20% of the crop was taken as tax. There was no tax on hay. The land used for farming by water from Wells was called Vadi and a new tax of ten rupees per acre per annum was imposed. The tax on other farming land, using rain water only, was two and a half rupees per acre per annum.

There were a few famous Acharya Munis from the Halari Oshwals, now not but it is possible to give all the names. Jamnagar was called Jainpuri. In the middle of the town there were beautiful Jain Dehrasars built by Raishi Shah and Vardhman Shah, and both temples are known as Dehrasars of Chandi (silver) Bazaar. There are other Dehrasars and several other holy places in Jamnagar, like Dwarika is a famous holy place of the Hindu religion.

The cemetery in Jamnagar is a well known place. It is beautiful and well worth visiting. There are beautifully carved and painted statues of Idols from Ramayana and Mahabharata.

Jamnagar is a very famous centre in India for the manufacture of Brass parts and Pencil Sharpeners. It is also well known for 'Kajal' a black paste used as an eyeliner, and is supposed to keep ones eyes healthy, 'Kanku' a coloured powder used for making spot on the forehead and for religious purposes, Bangles and other ladies items. Real Pearls are also found in the sea of Pokhitrana. More than 50,000 people are employed in the Salt industry. The ethnic and the most famous industry in Jamnagar is the manufacture of 'Bandhni', a type of textile which has a very special style of design, used a sarees, dress material, etc., is still going on very strongly, and this style of textile has a very special place in our

dressings styles and similarly another typically styled saree famous from here is 'Gharchodu'.

There are about 400 Hindu temples in Jamnagar, including about 175 Shiva temples and you can also see many Muslim Mosques. People of all the various religious sects residing in Jamnagar have built their own religious places here. Jain temples built by the wealthy ancestors of this sect are samples of excellent artistry.

It is believed that Ranjit Singhji, the king of Jamnagar lived in Jamnagar but his heart was all ways in England, and also that he was more loyal to the Queen of England rather than his countrymen. He ruled for 26 years but calculating the small periods of time he stayed in Jamnagar, he may have stayed here totally for about 6-7 years only.

The people of Jamnagar love to eat different types of foods, and a vast variety is available in this city, but the special feature is that more number of people eat on the pavements, from the hawkers, rather than the restaurants, and it is said that Jamnagar has the maximum number of food hawkers on the pavements, in India.

Jamnagar, a city which is running on small industries, braving a shortage of water, and overcrowded with Temples and Mosques, has still many special things of interest to see. This is one of the districts where the population is decreasing day by day, large number of peasants are leaving the area for better prospects, and if peasants leave a place, the culture of the place diminishes. It is said to be a bad omen if the son of the soil leaves his motherland. Yet there is no need to think that everything here is bad. Jamnagar district is going from bad to worse, but Jamnagar city is doing so badly, of course shortage of water had given rise to shortage of electricity, but braving all this, the people of Jamnagar city are able to earn a living, and even the hungry peasant of the nearby district is able to earn a decent living if he is ready to work hard in the big and small industries of this city.

The Brass parts industry alone is paying thousands of workers and other small and big machinery designers and manufacturers are not very educated engineers but are self skilled and experienced technicians who are able to live successfully in Jamnagar.

Thirty villages out of the 52 in Halar have Dehrasars. Almost all the Dehrasars were built by major contributions from Oshwals residing in Kenya. It is believed that the first Dehrasar was built in Dabasang. In Chela there are a few Sthanakvasi Jain Oshwals and in all the other villages there are Dehravasi Jains. In the last forty years there are a few who follow the Digambar Panth of Kanji Swami of Songadh. The village of Chela followed by Padana has the best education facilities. However, seems there may not be any Jain Oshwals in Halar within the next one or two decades.

In 1940/41 (Vikram Savant 1996 - Hindu Year) there was extreme draught, which was known as the Chhanvo draught. During this draught a fund appeal was launched in East Africa to help the Oshwals in Halar. When the draught was over, there were some excess funds left over and this was handed over to an association formed at that time called the Oshwal Education & Relief Board. This new association altered the image of Oshwals in India by funding the needy Oshwals for their education. Halari Oshwals have one common quality, that they mix with the local people, like sugar melts in milk, where ever they go. Whenever there is a fund raising appeal Oshwals have always been in the forefront.

It is believed that in 1898 the first Oshwals to emigrate to East Africa were from the villages of Rafudal, Dhunia, Khara Beraja, Arikhana, Khirasra, Mota Ambla, etc. Then in 1903, Shri Keshavji Ramji of Kansumra went to Kenya. He worked there for a long time and then he called his cousin Shri Meghji Ladha, his brothers and his brother-in-law to join him in Kenya. It is believed that they were 15 people altogether and in 1905 who started a business under the name of Meghji Ladha & Company. They expanded their business and had branches in Nairobi, Mombasa, Forthall and another five to seven villages.

Shri Keshavlal Ramji contributed a lot to make a strong Oshwal settlement. In 1905 Shri Bharmal Ladha of Khara Beraja, brother-in-law of Shri Keshavji Ramji went to Kenya. Shri Bharmal Ladha was the father of Shri Hemraj Bharmal running a business under the name of Hemraj Bharmal Ltd. Shri Keshavji Ramji was upfront among the Indian Communities and the foundation stone of the building of Kutchi Gujarati Hindu Union was laid by him. He was an excellent Oshwal Community leader and served the community for the whole of his life for its health, wealth and prosperity. He was the uncle of late Shri Somchand Premchand Ramji. Shri Somchand Premchand was a writer and a poet. He wrote a book called "History Of Oshwal". He always wore white cotton clothes and served the Oshwal and other Indian communities. His ambition was to serve the Oshwal community and he did so. He was a very brave leader.

Oshwals settled in various parts of East Africa where the education was up to standard seven (Primary education). Bearing this in mind our leaders launched a fund and in a few years the Boys Boarding and the Girls Chhatralay were established and solved the problem of higher education for the Halari Oshwals residing in small towns and villages. Similarly in Jamnagar a Boys Boarding and Girls Chhatralay were built and the problem of education for the children living in villages of Halar was solved to a great extent. Long ago education was limited to only 10% of the well off Halari Oshwals, today, of 100% Oshwals excell in education.

Boarding and Chhatralays of Nairobi and Jamnagar were fully utilised. After the independence of Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania, Oshwals living in rural areas moved to big cities and settled there. Likewise Oshwals from Halar were moving to cities for work and business. In 1967 the population of the East African Oshwals reached to about eighteen to twenty thousand. Since then it started decreasing day by day. It is believed that there are about thirteen thousand Oshwals in Kenya at present. There are very few

Oshwals in Uganda and Tanzania. Until 1960 the number of Oshwals who had come to Britain for further education was relatively small. Now there are about eighteen thousand Oshwals in Britain of which 90% are residing in and around London. It is believed that world population of Oshwals is between sixty five to seventy thousand.

In the last hundred years the achievements of Oshwals are as follows: Mahajanwadi in almost all the major cities of Kenya.

In Nairobi – Boys Boarding, Girls Chhatralay, Nursery School, Primary School High School, Sports complex and in Mahajanwadi a beautiful Dehrasar (SHIKHARBANDI DEHRASAR) Oshwal College, offers degree courses in all subjects, except Science.
New Oshwal Complex on 14 acres to be built within the next 5 years. (This land has already been bought)

In Mombasa – Nursery school, Secondary school, Sports complex.
A new Integrated School, comprising of Nursery, Primary and Secondary education, is planned. It is hoped that building this school will begin sometime in 1999, subject to availability of finance, 14 acres of land has already been bought for this purpose.

In Jamnagar – Mahajanwadi, Guest House, Dehrasar of Digvijay Plot, Boys Boarding, Girls Hostel.

In Palitana – Oshwal Guest House.

In Bombay – Huge Mahajanwadi and in Bhivandi, Association activities are in motion.

Shri Lakhamshi Govindji, originally of Kajurda, now having a business in Bombay and Vapi, served the Association in Bombay as President amongst other things for a considerable period of time.

Originally the resident of Dabasang, the donor and Oshwalleader, late Shri Meghji Pethraj Shah built schools in the villages of Halar and handed them over to the Indian Government. M.P. Shah Medical College of Jamnagar is also the result of his donation. In the county of Zalavad in a village near Surendranagar, an Eye Hospital built by the donation from Shri Meghji Pethraj Shah cures many blind people every year.

We have 78 acres of land in Potters Bar, U.K., called the Oshwal Centre. Under the guidance of the Executive Committee of the Oshwal Association of the U.K., we have been successful in maintaining the Oshwal house and building the huge Assembly and Unity Halls. There is also an in-house Dehrasar. In South London there is a Mahajanwadi, in-house Dehrasar and other amenities.

Oshwals are the main contributors in SHIKHARBANDI DEHRASAR of Mombasa which is run by Shri Swetambar Murti Pujak Jain Sangh. Oshwals were also the main contributors in the building of a Jain Primary school in Mombasa. Mombasa is known as the "Gateway of Kenya" and climatically it looks like part of India.

The Dehrasar built in Leicester, U.K., is a beautiful monument in Western Europe. The Oshwals of Britain and Kenya donated generously for the same, of course it is not possible to give all the names but Smt. Maniben Meghji Pethraj and Shri Harakhchand Juthalal Chandaria's donations are notable.

In the beginning of 20th Century Oshwals settled in Kenya. Similarly at that time or a few years earlier Oshwals settled in Bombay. It is believed that in the beginning Kutchi Oshwals helped Halaris in

Bombay and similarly, in Kenya, all the Indian communities lived together in harmony and helped each other.

When our settlement was beginning in Kenya, the railway line from Mombasa through Nairobi, Nakuru, Eldoret to Kampala in Uganda had already been constructed, hence inland settlement was not difficult. In Kenya the majority of business people are now Oshwals. This way Oshwals are contributing in running the country's economy. The Oshwals contribution was also upfront in building Gandhi Memorial University in Nairobi.

Halari Oshwals of a hundred years ago are no longer only residents of Halar, but they are now residing in three continents, Asia, Africa and Europe, in approximately equal numbers. It is immaterial where we live but we have maintained our identity as Halari Oshwals, so we will be in touch with each other for centuries to come. Late Shri Premchand Vrajlal of Padana, Shri Jethalal Devshi of Chela and Shri Khimchand Ramji Malde of Chela and so many other leaders have contributed a lot to the Association and the community at large.

It is believed that Shri Harakhchand Jetha Savla of Navagam, now staying in Bombay are performing excellent social work, by helping the poor and needy and also by arranging admissions and taking care of needy patients in various Hospitals. In the same way Shri Motichand N. Gosrani of Navagam is also helping him in such work and also there may be many other such people doing excellent social work but I regret that as I do not have their names I have not mentioned them here.

A Navagam trio of Shri Raichand Jethalal, Devchand Khimchand and Hemraj Nathu have set an example for donors by donating Rs.80,000/- to the Jamnagar Kanya Chhatralay building.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF OSHWALS

The name 'Oshwal' is derived from the North Indian town of Osahiyanagar near Jodhpur in Rajasthan. The legend has it that the King of Oshiyanganar had a son with the blessings of a Jain monk by the name of Pujya Acharyadev Shri Ratna Suri. The king and his subjects were so impressed with the preaching of Acharya Ratna Suri that they all embraced Jainism. These Jains of Oshiyanganar became known as Oshiyas which, with the passage of time, got transformed into Oshwals.

Religious persecution forced these Oshwals to settle in various parts of India. A group of these Oshwals who settled in the 52 villages in the Halar district of Jamnagar (Gujarat State) became known as the Halari Visa Oshwals. These were the forefathers of

the majority of the present day Oshwal population in East Africa, UK, USA, and Canada. A large number have also moved on from the Halar district to the more lucrative pastures of Mumbai (Bombay).

Most of our forefathers were farmers and small landowners rather than businessmen and traders. However, the enterprising spirit amongst the Oshwals began to surface and around the turn of the century, the first Oshwals ventured out, from India, to East Africa. It is generally assumed that the first Oshwals who arrived on the Kenyan coast in 1899 were Shri Hirji Kara, Shri Popatlal Vershi and Shri Devji Hirji. At that time much of Kenyan hinterland was unknown. Mombasa was a well established trading port and the building of the railway line from Mombasa into the interior had begun. The British brought in a large labour force, from India, to work on the construction of this railway line. The early Oshwals began to be associated with this railway. Some set up the business of providing meals to the railway workers, others undertook work as builders, while some even worked on the actual construction of the railway line.

The railway opened up the Kenyan interior. More people came to Nairobi which was a small trading post. The Oshwals worked extremely hard, gradually called over their families and slowly established themselves in trading centres like Thika, Kisumu, Eldoret, Kitale, Neyri, Nanyuki, Meru, Makuyu, Ruiru, Maragua, Saba Saba, Fort Hall (Muranga), Karatina, Kissi and Nakuru. Some even moved onto the other East African countries of Uganda and Tanganyika as years went by.

Oshwals earned high respect with their puritanical qualities of hard work, thrift simplicity and prudence. Gradually as the members increased they organised themselves into a community.

During the early 1940's Oshwal institutions were established for social, religious, cultural and educational purposes. In 1941 the 'Oshwal Education and Relief Board' was established with the objective of promoting education. To meet the needs of the local Oshwals, community centres (or Mahajanwadis) were set up in various towns and cities in Kenya. In Kenya alone Oshwals have very successful Nursery Schools, primary schools, secondary schools and even a college. Opulent Jain Derasers have been built in Nairobi and Mombasa.

In the early 1960s some Oshwals decided to migrate, from East Africa, and set up home in the UK. Amongst the first families to set up in the U.K. were the family of Shri Meghji Pethraj Shah whose name is not only synonymous with charitable activities in East Africa and India, but who have also made their mark in the U.K. Africanisation policies in East Africa and the post-independence uncertainty led many Oshwal families to look towards settlement in the U.K. and the trickle which started in the late 1960s became a steady flow in the early 1970s. By 1976 it was estimated that there were at least 15,000 Oshwals in the D.K. Today this figure is estimated to be around 18,000. Whilst the majority of the U.K. Oshwal settlement is in the various suburbs of London there are substantial settlements in cities like Leicester and towns like Luton, Northampton and Wellingborough.

In a similar fashion to East Africa, the pioneers of the U.K. Oshwal settlement foresaw the need to organise their growing numbers into a community and the Oshwal Association of the U.K. came into being in 1969. It was then formally transformed into a registered charitable organisation in 1972. The main objective of the Association is the Advancement of Jainism by the provision of a place of worship. It was with this objective in mind that the elders of the community purchased the site in the beautiful Hertfordshire countryside known as "Hook House".

This site, now known as Oshwal Centre, which at the time of purchase, consisted of almost 80 acres of green fields with a listed old mansion and a few run-down stable buildings and barns has been transformed into the headquarters of the Association and its administrative nerve centre. The mansion has been totally renovated, in accordance with the provisions of the law relating to listed buildings, and now houses the Administration block, a small temple (Ghar Deraser) and facilities to organise small functions. The old stables and barns have been removed and in its place now stand the two large assembly halls fronted by a large, well landscaped, car park.

The next phase in the development of Oshwal Centre is the construction of a Shikharbandhi Jain Deraser which will sit amongst beautiful landscaped gardens. This temple is scheduled for completion by the Year 2000.

To meet the needs of the large community the Association has been organised into nine administrative Areas each of which has an elected body of members to carry out the day to day tasks of providing community service to the members of the Association residing in those Areas. One of these Areas has had the good fortune of having been able to have its own 'Mahajanwadi'. The building in Croydon, Surrey, was acquired by the Association to serve the needs of the people residing in the South Area. It too houses a Ghar Deraser where religious activities are organised on a regular basis.

The advancement of Oshwals in the U.K. has been remarkable. Today we have a large number of professionals in fields such as law, medicine, accountancy, pharmacy, engineering, banking, economics, science and commerce.

The characteristics of hard work, thrift, honesty, prudence have served us well in the U.K. and the Oshwal settlement has flourished. Most of the first generation of Oshwals born in the U.K. are probably unaware of the struggles and formidable challenges that had been faced by their parents and grandparents in making a new home in the new country. However, through the auspices of the Oshwal Association of the D.K. and the activities run by the various Areas of the Association it is evident that the Oshwal Youth do respect and understand the need to have and maintain their unique cultural identity.

I am grateful to MS. CYNTHIA SALVADORI for allowing me to reproduce herein a few excerpts from her book 'WE CAME IN DHOWS' , which has numerous incidents and interviews about the early life of Indians in Africa.

- KESHAVLAL M. SHAH.

EXCERPTS & FEW INTERVIEWS FROM THE BOOK

"WE CAME IN DHOWS"

BY CYNTHIA SALVADORI

BY TROLLEY UP TO NAIROBI

From interviews with Shri Mulchand Devji Shah, Nairobi.

In 1899 my father and two of his friends, all three young men, left their home in Jamnagar and sailed on a dhow to Mombasa. They were the first Oshwals to set foot in Africa.

My father's name was Devji Hitji; his friends were Hirji Kara Malde and Popat Vershi. My father's family, and I suppose those of the other boys was in business. Yes, most Oshwals in India then were farmers, but a few were traders. The three went first to Bombay, on business, and then to Arvi (that is in MP State). Then they thought they should go overseas to see what opportunities were there. They found a boat going to Africa and so they decided to come here. It was a sailing boat, and the trip took them one month, but eventually they arrived at Mombasa.

They didn't know anyone there, no-one at all. There weren't any Oshwals in Mombasa. There were Ismailis and Lohanas and Bhatias. Hirji Kara decided to stay in Mombasa, but my father and Popat Vershi decided to continue to Nairobi. The Railway tracks had just been laid but there wasn't any regular train service yet. They came up by travelling on the trolleys that were going back and forth between the railway camps. They would put their luggage on a trolley and push it along the rails. At night they would sleep in the trolley, or in the camps where the coolies were living in tents. It took them nearly one month to reach Nairobi.

My father found a job with Lala Prasad who had a rations and sweetmeat shop in the Indian Bazaar. The temple that he made behind his shop is still there (maybe the first Hindu Temple in Nairobi). After working for six months to get experience my father started a rations and sweetmeat shop under his own name - "Devji Hirji", and as for Popat Vershi, he died after about six months, I don't know how.

My father saw that there were plenty of opportunities for business and he began to call other Oshwals over. He would put them up and provide them with rations until they got established, some stayed with us for six months or even a year. He was a very talkative person who liked being with other people, and he spent all his time in his business and helping his fellow Oshwals. By 1916 there were about 100 families in Nairobi and they established their own Visa Oshwal Community, with my father as its first president.

A CHILD IN THE INDIAN BAZAAR

From interviews with late Kerajbhai P. Anandji, Kericho.

When my father opened his shop in 1900 there were just three roads in the place, Government Road, River Road, and Bazaar Street which consisted of two lines of mabati dukas. My father's shop was on the corner.

There were quite a few dukas when my father arrived because the big merchants mainly Ismailis, had come earlier and had already established shops. There were people like Waljee Hirjee and A.M. Jeevanjee and Suleman Verjee, but the pioneer, the most important trader was, Allidina Visram. He was the main supplier of almost everything for the government and for the railway. All the smaller traders worked alongside him.

The dukas were all the same, with metal sheet walls and roofs and wooden floors. Each building had several sections, each consisting of a shop in front and another room behind where the family lived and the cooking was done. The cooking was done over wood (charcoal came into use later) in a fireplace made of a few bricks. For toilets, we had the bucket type, and the municipality would send carts around to empty the buckets daily. That was the system up to the 1940's. It wasn't very sanitary, and there were lots of rats. Every year at Diwali time there would be an outbreak of plague, right until 1940.

The Indian bazaar, during the wet season, had to be resited about once a month. The bullocks and the carts turned the approach into a quagmire which made it necessary for the duka wallahs the proprietors of shops - to sink packing-cases into the mud as stepping-stones. Eventually even stepping-stones were lost in the glutinous liquid, and it became imperative to move the shacks and shanties to drier ground.

My father did well in business and after two or three years he was able to go back to India. He got married to a girl named Ladhibai and brought her back with him. She was the first Oshwal lady to come to Kenya. They soon had a daughter, Mogiben, and then in 1910 I was born. After me came three brothers and another sister. We all lived in that one room, but that was no problem. During the daytime, we'd pile up the mattresses in the back room. At night they'd be distributed and some of us would sleep in the shop. We had little need of money, or of material things, we were content to live in those small houses with very few furnishings. Our food was simple. We ate the same food that we were used to. The typical food of western Gujarat was kichree (green grams and rice) and rotlis (chapattis made of millet flour), sometimes wheat chapattis, whatever vegetables were available and yogurt and tea. Simple food and healthy food prepared by my mother. She was always working in the house; she didn't help in the shop. She was

a strong healthy woman (she lived to be 100 years old), a bit fat and a little taller than my father who was of medium size, about 5'5". He always wore Indian clothes and a 'pagri' turban.

We children all went to school. We boys went to the Government Indian School, near the Railway H.Q. Our sisters went to a girl's school behind the Khoja Mosque, a private school run by a Parsee lady named Dhanbai. After school the girls helped with the housework and we boys helped in the shop. In 1925 my father started another business, a mill for grinding pulses and spices and wheat flour. That was on Cross Road (I think it is now called Accra Rd). There he put up a stone building, the mill on one side and living rooms on the other, with a walled courtyard. As soon as I finished school I helped my father run that mill, and then in 1935, two years before my father passed away, we opened a similar mill in Mombasa which my younger brother Motichand ran.

It was fun growing up in the Bazaar for there was a lot of harmony in those days. We Indians all lived together. There were a few Indians, so we all helped each other. It was only later when the numbers got many that each community make its own hall and kept apart from the others. There was no competition between the traders. In the evenings all the shopkeepers would gather at Allidina Vishram's. I never met him but my father used to say he was a very generous person who did a lot of good things for humanity. He gave a lot of donations to needy people, up to the end of his life.

At the end, when he was poor and sick, a Brahmin came to his house to ask for a donation. Now you know, Brahmins don't work, they just preach, and live on the donations people give them. But Allidina Vishram's secretary told the Brahmin that Allidina Vishram had nothing to donate. Allidina Vishram was lying on his bed in the next room and he overheard. He ordered the secretary to sell even the furniture, anything necessary so the Brahmin would not go away empty handed.

No, it's not strange that an Ismaili should support a Hindu priest. In those days there was no difference. The Ismailis were just like Hindus. When Suleman Verjee's grandson Hassanali the son of Hussein got married there was a huge celebration. The wedding was performed in the middle of the Bazaar, the mandap (the dias) was erected in the street. The whole street was decorated with flags and flowers. Everyone, all the Indians from all communities, was invited to attend the wedding and to take lunch afterwards. The wedding was conducted completely according to Hindu ceremony by a Maharaj, a Hindu priest.

We were all like Hindus in those days. Even we Jains used the temple built by Lala Prasad. He did well in his business and he made a temple at his place. Of course, we Jains had our own Mahavir shrines in our homes, but it was not until 1938 that we built a community 'deharsar', down by River Road. In the old days in the Bazaar there was a lot of harmony, no colour, no caste. We all helped each other to settle down, to come up in business. My sons here who grew up in the Bazaar too are agreeing with me that those were happy days, very happy ones.

OSHWAL ETHICS

From interviews with R.K.D. Shah, Nairobi.

My grandfather's uncle Keshavji Ramji ran away from home and was one of the first Oswals to come to Kenya. Not the very first, though; that honour goes to Devji Hirji and Hirji Kara who had come in 1895. He ran away because he didn't want to work on the family farm. He wanted to be a trader. First he went to Bombay but he didn't like there. So he got on a steamer intending to go to Madagascar. However, the ship stopped at Mombasa. There he met Hirji Kara who persuaded him to stay in Mombasa.

up and doing some laundry. Health was often a problem. You know, in the 1920s and 1930s there was always plague in Kenya, especially in Nairobi and the Thika area. A lot of people died. My mother's sister died of plague in Makuyu. There were no facilities for medical cremation there, not even in Thika, which was just a very small town, like a trading post. So her body had to be brought to Nairobi. It was carried by ox-cart and it took two days.

Despite such hardships, no one regretted having come here. More and more Oshwals were eager to immigrate from India. My father, like his uncle, helped many people get established. He was a very religious man and strict vegetarian but he was also adaptable. In India he always wore long jacket and a dhoti, but here he wore western clothes. He was very enterprising and became the biggest importer of textiles. Most of them came from Japan. So in 1938 he went to Japan, the first Oshwal to go there, and he stayed there for one year. Although he had never learned much English he managed to learn Japanese.

We Oshwals mixed a lot with other communities, especially in the early days when we were relatively few. (The big influx didn't start until about 1940). Everyone knew us as 'Shahs' as we had all taken that old title as our surname here. We had a very good reputation. All the big companies liked to deal with us Shahs. We never needed references or securities; our word was enough. If you went to buy goods on credit or needed to borrow money, it was enough to say you were a Shah.

We always helped one another. If there were two Oshwal shops side by side, competing in selling identical goods, the owners would still help one another out, lone had a bill to be paid and was short of money, the other would loan it to him without any question, and if he didn't have enough, he would collect it from other Oshwal shops. Everyone realized that it was very important that the bill be paid on time, to maintain prestige.

I remember that one there was an Oshwal in Njoro, he had come very early and established a shop there. He died two years ago in India. He had a big debt of sh. 40,000/- owing to another Oshwal which he simply couldn't pay. He couldn't face that person. He felt so awful that he ran away to India and never came back - not to escape paying but because he felt he had let the community down. Yes, it's true, too, what you heard, that one Oshwal committed suicide because he could not pay a debt, a small debt it was.

That was the beauty of our Oshwal community, our cooperation, By that cooperation our community was built up, and in turn our community has been able to build up the country. Our people were very poor at first, but it was by each person giving a little money, something just very little, that we built our own community places, our temples and social halls and schools. It was also how we educated our children. Few families had enough money to send their children on for higher education. So in 1941 we set up the Oshwal Relief & Education Board to help give loans for school fees and boarding. There was a real feeling of mutual understanding amongst us. That sense of cooperation existed right up until the early 1960s.

BEFORE THE OSHWAL SCHOOLS

From interviews with late Z.K. Shah, Nairobi.

I was one of the first Oshwals born here in Nairobi, my father Keshavji Parbat had come here in 1905. After his brief stint in Fort Hall he settled in Nairobi and called over my mother Jamna in 1907/08. I was their first child, born in 1910.

When the war broke out a lot of people sent their families back to India, and that included us. In 1914 my mother took me and my brother and sister who'd been born after me, back to her in-laws in India. We stayed with my grandfather in the village for four years,

and that's where I had my first two years education, in a little Indian village school.

We returned to Kenya in 1919. By then my father had moved to Mombasa as manager of the 'Meghji Ladha & Co.' shop there, and so I continued my schooling there. My father sent me to the Buxton School, a school run by Europeans for Indian boys. It was near what became Treasury Square, at the back were the railroad lines (which have since been removed). The pupils were almost all Gujaratis, but there were only three other Oshwal children, all friends of mine. The rest were a mixture of Gujaratis, not only Hindus and Jains like us but also some Ismailis and Gujarati Muslims, but there weren't any Punjabis or Goans or Arabs or Africans.

The headmaster was Mr. Sharma. He and all the teachers were Gujaratis. Mr. Sharma was a Barot (a sub-tribe of Brahmins), Mr. Dave was a Brahmin, Mr. Chowla was a Rajput and Mr. Frank was an Indian Christian. The medium of teaching was Gujarati, but we were taught English. Although the school was run by Christians there was no effort to convert the students; we weren't even taught about Christianity. We were left to follow our own religion.

In 1921 we moved to Nairobi (That was when my father left 'Meghji Ladha' to form, the 'Keshavji Parbat' company, with his uncle and cousin. When I was a child in Nairobi, life was very easy, very enjoyable, very cheap. Nothing was difficult. You could buy things for a few cents. You could go out at any time, day or night. There was no crime, no bag-snatching. There were no parking problems - there were hardly any cars, no lorries. People got around by walking or on bicycles or with rickshaws. There was a man named Ali Khan, a Hindu Panjabi, an Afghan I think, who owned a lot of rickshaws; he was a very big man and a good man.

I joined Standard 3 at the Government Indian Boys School, which was then in a small tin shanty building with four or five rooms, opposite the Government Press. Later the school moved into a Railway goods shed, and then in 1929 we moved into the new building that had been specially constructed as the Indian Boys School- it is now Jamhuri School. I did my last year in that building, up to London matriculation.

When I entered the school the headmaster was a Punjabi, Mr. Dunichand, but most of the teachers were Gujaratis. The students were all mixed, Gujaratis and Punjabis. In the secondary school the teaching was all in English but we studied our own languages too, Urdu for the Punjabis and Gujarati for us. When Mr. Dunichand retired he was replaced by our first English headmaster, Mr. J.H. Maxwell. He taught English to the higher classes; I well remember learning Shakespeare's dramas, 'Paradise Lost' and similar classic English literature. Later on Maxwell became the Superintendent of the Oshwal Boys Hostel that my community established in Nairobi - that was the start of our Oshwal school system.

When we Oshwals first came over in the early days very few were educated. At the most, some of the men could read and write Gujarati, but no-one knew any English. One of the major efforts of our Oshwal community has been to educate ourselves and our children. We eventually created our own school system, but when I was a youngster there were no Oshwal schools and so I had to go to the others, but I got a good education.

A NICE ATMOSPHERE.

From interviews with Gulab Gudka, Kisumu.

My father Raichand Virji Gudka was the first person in our family to come to Kenya and was also the pioneer of the Oshwal

community in Kisii. I don't know why my father left Navagam, the village near Jamnagar where the family was living, but whatever the reason, he arrived in Nairobi in 1926. There he worked for an Asian for a while. After a couple of years he moved to Kisumu to work for another Asian there. The following year, 1929, he went to Kisii to start his own business there. He had a general shop, selling local produce (grains) and textiles, and he also did transport - he had his own fleet of vehicles. At the time, most of the traders in Kisii were Ismailis. He was the first Oshwal to settle there.

Once he settled he called his wife Maniben. She came to Kisii and I was born there in 1931. In that same year my father called his brother Somchand Virji Gudka to join him, and soon his wife joined him too. My father obviously saw lots of business opportunities in Kisii, for he wrote home to call more Shahs to come. We got to be quite a big community there. We got to be quite a big family too, for after me, my parents had five more sons and a daughter. Despite having so many children to look after, my mother used to help in the shop, especially when my father was away. He used to make regular visits to India.

There was a nice atmosphere in the town, for the other Indians, as I said mostly Ismailis, were very nice and friendly. We were almost all Gujaratis. Later (when the tea business got going) a lot of Singhs started coming, and also Patels. We children didn't have anything to do with the African children. Unfortunately, the Africans were illiterate in those days.

There was an Indian school in Kisii, for the Ismailis were running a primary school in their mosque. That was in their old mosque, a much smaller building which was across the street from the present big one. The school followed the regular government syllabus, but the teaching was all in Gujarati. I did the first few years of school there, for although it was run by Ismailis it was open to all of us Indians. The only difference was the religion. We were Jains. Our community never built a Jain temple, but I remember we had a shrine in our house. I suppose that since we were the leading Jain family other Shahs used to come to our house for religious festivals like Paryusana.

I was ten when we left Kisii, I cannot recall much about it. My father could have told you much more but he died in 1988. My uncle too has gone. He passed away a long time ago in Mombasa (though my aunt and two sons are still there). What do I remember? I think what I remember most about Kisii was all the vegetation, all the greenery around.

THE TROUBLES OF TRAVEL.

Contributed by Late Meghji Khimji Gudka,
Mombasa.

I used to have a retail business in Kisumu from 1930 to about 1950 when I moved to Mombasa. When I first started the business, Kisumu was not only a centre for the surrounding areas but also a centre for business links between Kenya and Uganda. Business in those days was not conducted by telephones and other quick means of communications which are available today. Traders would go around personally to the surrounding areas to take orders and deliver suppliers, etc.

I used to travel very extensively in connection with my business, sometimes to Nairobi and Kampala but often in the countryside near Kisumu. The condition of the roads was very primitive, none of the roads having a tarmac surface. During the rainy seasons these dirt road would get extremely muddy causing all sorts of problems for vehicles. There were no bridges over the minor rivers. There were just road drifts which were passable only during the normal flow of the river. Heavy rains made the drifts impassable and often journeys had to be abandoned. Even where there were bridges, they were often precarious.

I remember one journey to Kisii that friends and I did by motor lorry (the normal form of transport) during the rains. The narrow plank bridge over the Nyakach gave way and the first lorry fell into the river. We eventually got the lorry out and then the other lorry got stuck in

the mud on the riverbank. It was by then dark and raining. The temperature had dropped considerably and the famous Nyanza mosquitoes were all around. There was a hut not too far off and we approached the old African man living there to give us some kerosene oil to light a fire. He obliged us not only with kerosene but gathered some wood and lit a good fire to keep the mosquitoes off and provide some heat to us.

"Kisii was also approachable by journey on a motor boat plying daily between Kisumu and Kendu Bay; from Kendu Bay one then proceeded by road. On another occasion, in 1937, I went to Kisii with some friends, using this route. We duly made our journey there, completed our mission and returned to Kendu Bay, only to find that we were slightly late and had just missed the boat! This meant our having to return to Kisii and then come back to try our luck the next day.

Just as we were deciding to return back towards Kisii we saw a small dhow about to set sail out of Kendu Bay. On inquiring, more out of idle curiosity than anything else, we were informed by the Captain that he was going to Kisumu and that as it appeared to be a fine day he would reach there by evening. He was willing to take us on so on his assurance we boarded the dhow.

Everything was going well and we were enjoying the experience of travelling by the wind-propelled dhow when suddenly, out of the blue, clouds gathered up in the sky and fierce storm developed, the strong wind and the rain lashing at the boat.

To avoid getting drenched in the rain, my friend and I had to leave the open upper deck where we'd been sitting and go down to the lower deck. It was packed with a herd of sheep and goats and we had to share their company and endure the strong stench created by them for a long time.

Finally the storm subsided and calm prevailed and we could return to the upper deck. The message from the Captain was that all was well

- except that while drifting in the storm the dhow had come into and got stuck in a muddy creek.

Being loaded with sheep and goats and human and other cargo there was no way of getting the dhow afloat without help from outside. It was already dark and cold and there was no sign of any help approaching us. The Captain assured us help would be found the next day and suggested that in the meanwhile we make ourselves as comfortable as possible and try to get some sleep. He gave us a big tarpaulin sheet so we could spread half on the deck to serve as a mattress and use the other half to cover us from the attacking mosquitoes.

The idea did not work entirely satisfactorily and we were bitten by mosquitoes all over. We could hardly get any sleep in those unusual circumstances and were glad to see the light of the dawn which finally came. With the dawn came fleets of fishermen who helped us refloat the dhow and we set sail and began our journey again, reaching Kisumu safely by noon.

Among us were a few smokers who suffered the most, having exhausted their stock of cigarettes early in the day and were reduced to lighting a cigarette and putting it out quickly after taking just a puff or two in an effort to make it last. Their first action on disembarking was to borrow and smoke whole cigarettes.

WHAT TIDKA USED TO BE LIKE.

From interview with Jethalal Kachra Shah, Thika.

My family had a small farm in Chela village near Jamnagar. In 1929 when I was twenty years old I left my wife and I came here together with a friend. When we got to Mombasa we stayed four days with another friend there, another Oshwal. Then we went to Nairobi with the train. Meghji Hirji, my father's cousin who had called me over, had come down to meet us and we came up here the same

day in his car. It was a small box -body car. At first I was working for Meghji Hirji - he'd come in about 1918. I think - in his duka here in Thika. Then I became his driver.

I brought my wife over in 1931 and our four children were raised here. There were maybe about 1000 people in Thika when I arrived, 300 Indians. There were about 25 dukas. They were all built of mabati, on wooden floors up on pillars so that the water would run underneath. I liked Thika from the beginning - it was so green I arrived in May and there was a lot of rain. You didn't see the sun. It was very cold in those days, much colder than now. Africans used to go with small fires under their blankets, and we all had jikos in our dukas.

Meghji Hirji had a big shop, one of the three main shops. The others were 'Juja Trading' and Shah Devshi Vershi's shop. Those shops were mainly for Europeans, selling provisions and farm supplies. There weren't many Europeans, selling provisions and farm supplies. There were many European's in the town, just the DC and a few government people, but all around were European farmers. This was a farming area. The Europeans stayed on their farms, they didn't live in town. The town was mostly Indians. There were two fellows, Sumarbhai and Jacobhai who were doing transport with ox-carts. Ox-carts were still being used when I came here, and donkeys. There were a couple of Goans in government service, and just a few Sikhs. The most was us Shahs, Oshwals.

One Shah, the biggest businessman here, was Premchand Raichand. In 1934 he started the 'Kenya Tannery'. That was the first industry to be started here. In 1936 he started a cotton ginnery at Sagana, and one at Meru. I went to work for him as a driver. My job was to drive all around the Reserve collecting wattle bark. There was a company called 'Natal Trading', a European company that was in Limuru and Eldoret. They had planted some of their own

wattle trees, but we collected bark from the trees that the Kikuyu the people around here were all Kikuyu - planted in their shambas in

the Reserve. I learned to speak some Kikuyu though mostly I was speaking Kiswahili, like we're speaking now, although I've travelled all over Kenya, my home has always been here in Thika.

WE WERE TRAVELLING BY FOOT.

From interviews with Narshi Bhoja, Muranga.

I came to Fort Hall- that's what this place was called then - by foot, in 1923. There was no road, just a little track. In those days we all travelled by foot, with ox-carts, with donkeys, on our own feet.

I had been in Kenya for several years. I'd come to join my father, Bhoja Dhara. The family had a farm near Jamnagar but he left there to come here in 1917 and I came the next year, when I was 12, to join him, I came by myself on a ship.

My father originally came to Kenya to work for Meghji Ladha who was a big businessman of our Oshwal community. He had a company with four or five partners, and the company had a big wholesale business in Nairobi. One of the partners was Keshavji Ramji. They had retail branches in Thika, Maragua, Saba Saba and Embu as well as here; each of the partners stayed in a different place. Meghji Ladha himself came here in 1915 or 1916; he was the first Oshwal to start business in Fort Hall, and he lived here with his family. He was a very nice person, very friendly. He was a very tall person and thin and he used to wear 'Gandhi dress' - a dhoti and a turban.

We stayed in Thika a couple of years then we shifted to Saba Saba and then in 1923 we came here, we came up by foot, with an oxcart and the post-cart. There weren't any roads in those days. We travelled a lot by foot. There was a bomahere and a post office and a small hospital with an Indian doctor, a Kalasinga. The only Europeans here were four or five, just the DC and a few other

government people, and some with the church mission. There was a mission in every district, and each mission had a school. The only other Europeans were far away in their shambas.

The business section was just ten dukas, all made of mabati with dirt floors. The dukas were very small. They belonged to Indians. Sidi Mohammed was one of the first traders here, and Manji Mohammed. Hasham Jiva, another Khoja came in 1909, and when we got here, he had the biggest shop in town, a grocery shop. Mr. Sayani, another Khoja, came after them about 1918. There was a Goan who had a grocery shop too, Mr. Filos, that had a bar with it. He came about the same time that we did, 1920 or 1925. He was very friendly, a very nice man. There were some other Goans working in the Boma, and we were all very friendly.

There was no electricity, not for a long time, not until 1928, and no piped water at first. We got water from a spring here. We'd only bathe every eight days, not every day, like people do now. We had coats and hats then, like these (a white high-necked shirt, jacket and a small black cap). Now people don't wear them anymore, just us old people. There was no telephone, if we needed to get in touch with someone, we would use the post office for letters. We didn't have post office boxes; the mail was delivered to each shop. In the old days we used our feet a lot; there weren't any motorcars.

There weren't so many trees in the town. The main one is that big one just in the middle of the roundabout. It is called the Memorial Tree and it was there in 1901 when For Hall was started, but there were lots of trees in the Reserve. In the Reserve were the Kikuyu people, all around on their shambas, growing millet and maize. No, I don't speak Kikuyu, just a few words; I speak Swahili. In Embu there is another tribe, the Embu, and in Thika there is another tribe too. There was lots of food here, a bag of maize full, cost 3/-, later someone, an Oshwal, made a posho mill where the maize was ground by stones turned by water down below, on the river.

A couple of years after we'd come to Fort Hall we went back to India for my wedding and then we returned here with my wife Ratnaben. Then in 1928 my father started his own business and I was helping him, I moved around a lot, we were always going by foot, only a few people had bicycles for moving around, for carrying goods we went with ox-carts and donkeys. We used to pay for our goods to be transported on those carts. They were big wagons, pulled by four or eight or ten oxen. The ox-carts used to collect goods from the station at Thika until 1924 or 1925 when a station was made nearer here. We'd collect our goods by oxcarts and bring them to the town.

When my father started our own business in 1928, I went to Sagana on a horse-cart and then from there I went to Embu and to Kerogoya on foot, walking alone. There were lots of ox-carts and donkeys, I was always going on foot. There were rough tracks to follow and there was no need to ask the way, but we say 'jambo' hello, to everyone on the way. Everyone said 'jambo'. If it rained we'd just take off our shoes and use a stick to help us keep our balance and get through the mud. In Kerogoyo we got a plot and opened a duka, and then one in Kirinyaga, where there was a mission. We did a lot of wholesale business in Kerogoyo and in Baricho too. I never went up to Meru, but from Embu I'd seen people going there. The African people would put loads on their head or their shoulders and walk up to Meru, it took four days. They would sleep in PWD camps on the way. There were Indians all over in the Reserve, right up to places like Kahuhia, we travelled by foot, sometimes with ox-carts.

I was always travelling around - we were walking so much in those days, I stayed for some time running our shop in Embu, but my wife stayed here with my parents. My eldest child, my son Raichand who is running this shop now, was born here in 1925, and all the other six children were born here too. All my sons and daughters went to school here. We had an Indian school that was started in the

1920s, even the Khojas went to that school. They had their own jamatkhana, up by the Sports Club made of iron sheets (its been demolished now) but there were never more than four or five families so they didn't have their own school.

In 1925 motor vehicles started to bring goods to Fort Hall. Then in 1928 Gosar Mepa (an Oshwal) was the first (Indian) to bring a motor vehicle here, which he used for transporting goods. Even when more motor vehicles came we never went on trips to see the country, only sometimes during the school holidays the children would go to visit relatives in Nairobi or Mombasa.

Business got very good, there were 60 dukas here, the majority belonged to us Oshwals. Eventually we got to be many Oshwals here - about 150 out of a total Indian population of 650 - that we built a sot of temple, with picture of Lord Mahavir inside, but that wasn't until 1950, the same year that the old iron sheet dukas were demolished and we all built new shops here with stone and cement. My father Bhoja Dhara died four years later, and then almost all the Oshwals emigrated, a few to Nairobi and most to the U.K., now there are about 40 Oshwals, seven families, left in Muranga, that used to be Fort Hall.

BIOGRAPHY

I was born in Navagam (Halar). We are four brothers and two sisters. Both my sisters reside in India. My eldest sister Maniben Dhanj Depar, who passed away in 1992, lived in Digvijay plot, Jamnagar. Her husband's family are from the village of Kanaloos. My other sister Amrathben Raishi Vega Virpar lives in Bhiwandi, her husband's home is the village of Vadirisheine.

My brothers and I have lived in the D.K. for the last seventeen years. My brother Premchand and I settled in London and the other two younger brothers settled in Leicester.

At the young age of 10 I left my village of Navagam and went to live in Kenya, due to the fact that we were very poor and I needed work to earn a living. I knew only little written Gujarati and my reading was very scatty, though I was able to get by verbally. That is one of the reasons for my ignorance about my village or my family history. I knew no one from the village apart from my immediate family.

After my father passed away, I came back to India and was married

to Kumari Radiyat daughter of Shri Khimji Karamshi Pethad of village Kajurda, in 1944. She was the daughter of a poor farmer and had not seen the school at all hence was not educated, but has helped me during my severe economic and social problems during the time when I got married. I had left our village for Bombay to earn a living but my wife lived in the village with my mother both did hard labour in the fields to earn a living. She learnt to live in difficulties with the help of the advice given to her by my mother, during her stay of four years in our village. '

My wife has helped me in all the fields of my life and has played a major role in changing our economic situation from poverty to prosperity. I went again to Africa and then called her there, where we were very poor in the beginning, but with her help and advice in my business I was able to prosper. She would learn the languages

and also help me in running the business. On my frequent visits to other nearby places in Africa for purchasing materials and for business, my wife managed our business expertly. Though she was illiterate, she was so strong mentally that she could learn to run the business in my absence, and also look after and bring-up our children in a very good manner. She is well cultured and religious and has a great affection for our family, hence at that time, as soon as our economic condition improved, she called my two brothers who were doing a small business in Bombay but were not very successful, to Africa and made them establish successful businesses.

She brought up our children in such a manner with good education and entered them into good business, with a view that they should not suffer the poverty and problems faced by us in our early days. She also developed and maintains excellent relations with the wives of my sons, and looks after them as our own daughters. They, our daughters-in-law also respect my wife and me as much as their own parents and have never given the feeling of a mother-in-law and daughter-in-law relationship but have mixed with us as their own family.

My dream of a happy, prosperous and joint family has been achieved by the help of my wife, and children, who are all very well cultured, well behaved and religious minded. The religious ideals showered on us by my mother have helped us all in living together in harmony and peace.

My children were always asking me about my roots and the origin and details of my family, and as I knew very little about my family tree (details and names of our ancestors), I felt and thought that maybe I could do something about it and find out.

In 1981, I decided to go to India and put this idea into motion. I was of the impression that it was to be an easy task. I went to Halar (the combined name of 52 villages), met many of the Dodhia family and collected some information about our generations. I visited

many villages and talked to many people, but I was unable to find the type of accurate information that I searched for. I was extremely disappointed and sad and so I abandoned the search.

I visited Nairobi, Kenya in 1984 for the opening ceremony of the Dehrasar (Jain Temple) and there I tried to recommence my search and talked to some elders. I was able to find some information but not as much as I desired. Meanwhile, my children continued to encourage me. They said "if you cannot manage to do the search for the whole Dodhia family, then please just find out about our own family and ancestors".

I tried my best to collect information for our family tree and about Oshwals, but was again and again disappointed from various sources. However, I did not loose heart, and continued my search more and more strongly, and I remembered a saying of India, that a man must become like the "OYSTER SHELL", during a certain period in a year the Oystershell comes up to the surface of the ocean, opens itself and waits for the precious droplet of water from the rain. Once the droplet falls in the shell at the exact time, it closes itself and goes down to the bed of the ocean and converts the droplet of water in to a Pearl. We must also become like that and do our duties and carry out our responsibilities endlessly without looking at the time, and then only one can succeed.

I had dreamt of collecting exhaustive information for my children and grandchildren and from this I also got the idea of writing my own Biography, which I have attempted to do through this book. I had great enthusiasm and zeal and am very happy that my dream has come true. This also proves that if a man has a goal and the enthusiasm to reach it, he will definitely succeed with sincere hard work.

Hence I went back to India in 1986 and visited many people from Bombay, Jamnagar, and Bhiwandi and discussed many issues about this and tried to gather information, of course the response was

always "come back tomorrow", "we will write back to you", that tomorrow never came.

It was because of such response that I decided to meet our Bhatt (a gentleman who keeps records of families). He lived in Kutch. On trying to find out his whereabouts I came to know that he had passed away and his wife was not available at home as she was visiting somebody in Bombay. I met the son and his brother-in-law. They informed me that the books in which the Bhatt kept the written records were very very old and some of the names and pages were not legible. This meant that the information would not be as accurate as needed and it was of no meaning if the information was only partly available and that too without guarantee of being correct. The Bhatt's son could give only what he had.

After about 2-3 days, the Bhatt's son and the brother-in-law sent for me. At that time Shri Lakamshi Samat Patcha Dodhia was also in Jamnagar, hence I asked him to accompany me and we met the gentlemen. They offered to complete the family tree for me, but at a price. The price was very high and after negotiations and bargaining we came to a compromise and discussed the requirements. He asked for the payment in full and that he would send me the family tree later by post, which I refused, he then asked me to pay him half the amount now. I agreed to that but said that I would not pay him directly but will leave the money with a named person. They refused that offer. I offered to leave the full amount with the named person but they would still not agree. The outcome was that, nothing happened and it was just as well as I was informed later that they were unreliable and that had I given them the money for the family tree, I would have lost it. I left India very very disappointed about the idea after that incident.

On my return to England, I decided to carry on with my search. I began to write to various elders and groups of people and kept on writing, sometimes even four letters to the same person, but I received no replies.

In England, at all religious and social functions, the subject of the family tree, name, place of birth was one of the topics that was being discussed by most people.

In my home, even my family was discussing these issues. My children asked me "your birth was in a village in India, our birth was in Kenya, our children's birth in U.K., how will they know where they originated from? Our children will ask us the same questions that we have asked you, what will we reply to them? We have no answers". So my children asked me again to make some sort of chart about their forefathers going back as far as possible.

Hence, once again, in 1989, I decided to go back to India. I decided to collect as much information as I could, but once again ended up without getting much. This time my visit coincided with the Udghatan (opening) ceremony of the dining room in Palitana. I talked to some people there also about this idea. It was there that I met Shri Tarachand P. Shah, he too was from Halar. He advised me to put my questions into their paper 'Halari Bandhu'. Your work will be done, he said. My questions were printed, free of charge in the December 1989 issue of 'Halari Bandhu', but I received only one reply from Shri Maganlal Meghji Rupsi from Nari, East Africa. He sent me some very useful information.

I recommenced writing letters after this, but again no replies came forward. Time was passing by and I was very anxious to complete the family tree, so I went from person to person seeking more and more information. I also telephone many people in order to obtain information from anyone who knew about the Dodhia family and I am happy to say that this was more productive and I was able to collect useful information.

I would like to state here that I have suffered and gone through very great hardships in my life, from my very early days, and have come out of them with my sincere hard work and strong willpower. We get ourselves entangled with the worldly attractions and this is

normal human psychology, but it is our own hard work (purusharth), right thinking and timely actions that bring us out of such vicious attractions. We must always remember the experiences of our elders and friends and all other small and big events of our life and learn lessons from them to improve our life. The experience of happiness and sadness in itself is a big teacher and it teaches all of us how to

cope with situations as and when they occur. We have to go through various and uncountable, unimaginable circumstances in our life but we must never forget Religion, Principles, Culture, and Origin. The experiences undergone by me may not occur to the future generations, but I am writing all this to say that every person must be ready and able to face any eventuality in life.

My best friend Shri Ramji Raishi Jethanand, helped me Morally and financially a lot in Mombasa, and also taught me how to do business and earn a decent living. I consider him to my godfather and adore him. He was from Kharaberaja village of India and his forefathers were one of the first Oshwals to travel to Africa and settle in Madagaskar. He went back to India for a remarriage after the death of his first wife and upon returning he settled in Mombassa and worked with Raichand Devraj Co. He was a very experienced and able businessman. He expired in December 1983, at Mumbai.

I am now very happy to give and pass-on the information I have so far collected, to the community.

My brother Jivraj Makanji and Velji Makanji made the suggestion that I should also include the history of Oshwals, and so, with their help I am also able to do this. There are many different surnames 'ataks' in our community and no one has written about this as far as I know. This is done so that our future generations can know about their origin. They also helped me in giving me some information about my parents.

Due to the lack of reliable information, there are many things that may not be up-to-date, and there may also be omissions. Hence if

there are any mistakes, omissions, in writing or information or if! have offended anyone in the process, then I ask the reader and any such person for forgiveness. If anything is left out and the reader is aware of it, I ask them to kindly include it whilst reading. I want to add some interesting experiences of my life for the interested reader. When I was young I used to take supper with my friends. I was eating carrots, potatoes etc., as well as onions and garlic. We being Jains were not eating these items in our home, as they are roots. One day I asked my parents as to why we do not eat onions and garlic? They replied that - we are Jain and in our religion these items are prohibited. These are roots, and they are cultivated underground. Jain religion does not permit roots as food. I tried to get more information from our elder persons, Jain Munis and some other people with knowledge and wisdom. The reply was uniform, in nature, garlic and onions are "TAMSI' (hot) by nature, and this disturbs a quiet and peaceful mind and does not allow concentration of mind. Their smell is also very bad and disturbs us while doing our religious activities. Roots contain bacteria which are known as living creatures and as per the religion we cannot eat or even kill any living being or creature.

My parents had given me an understanding on this subject, and I repeat the manner and the example given by them, and leave the understanding of the same to the reader:

When a bird lays an egg, it is not a live creature and though there is no sunlight or movement inside, nor it is fed inside, yet after some time when the egg hatches, a live bird comes out of it, it moves, makes noise, etc., in the same way when a root is placed underground where there is no sunlight and movement and even if it is not watered, it starts developing and within a very short time there will be new branches to the root, which means there is life in every root, similarly there is life in every egg, and this is the difference between vegetables and roots, it also applies to eggs of birds, etc. This is the reason that Jain religion prohibits eating of non-vegetarian food, eggs and roots.

I have heard that in today's world, scientists have developed eggs artificially. They do not have life, of course whether this is right or wrong is debatable.

I wish to write about a fruit which does not grow on a tree or plant and is neither a root but grows on a creeper, and is like a pumpkin and called 'KADDU' in Gujarati, and CHOW CHOW in English. Its origin is believed to be in China or Japan, but it is now grown all over the world and is available with all vegetable vendors and green grocers. This fruit can grow by itself, even after six months, if stored as it is after detaching it from the creeper where it itself had grown. Hence we can say that this fruit also has life.

The above ideas have not been written because of any religious knowledge which I may be having but they have been written according to my daily experiences. Life is in everything in this world. Readers may start thinking why I have written such things, but the reason for my writing such things in this book is that one day in 1980 while I was travelling by underground train from South Harrow to Amos Grow, I met a European gentleman, sitting opposite me. He smiled and said hello to me, and asked me that from where I was coming? I replied that I had come from Kenya. He had little knowledge of the Hindi language and I did not know English. He asked me about the religion I followed. He had served in the military for about 8-10 years in India and had returned to England in 1950. I came to know from his talks that he was a vegetarian, and when I said I followed Jain religion, he asked me whether I ate eggs! replied that I do not, so he questioned me that do you drink milk, I said yes, so he said, what is the difference between eggs and milk, both come from the stomach of a living animal or bird, such as cow, etc., to which I could not reply and was confused. Luckily, a Gujarati gentleman of about 32 years of age, entered the compartment at the next station, he was going to his office, and sat next to this European person: I would not have been able to explain properly in Hindi to

the European Gentleman, but with the help of this Gujarati gentleman, who could make the European understand that you get a live bird from an egg but you cannot get any life from milk, even if you keep the milk for any long period of time, it may rot, become bad, but there it will not give out anything with life in it. After this, again with the help of the Gujarati gentleman I was able to explain about all the roots which are prohibited by the Jain religion, to the European and he was very happy and said that he understood the correct meaning of the Jain religion today and that he had read many books on religion in India but he did not come across any such detailed information about the religion in any religious or any other book. The Gujarati gentleman was also pleased on hearing this. I have written this instance here, as I think there is some fundamental truth in it.

The Jain religion stresses and preaches NON-VIOLENCE. Everything that is born or grows on this earth has life. Every person, until his last breath, commits VIOLENCE, knowingly or unknowingly, even the Saints and Munis who have deep knowledge of the religion are also committing violence, unknowingly. Love for a living being and the knowledge to understand the preaching's of God makes a man's life successful. Non-violence is the best means to obtain spiritual freedom for our soul. Violence is the root cause of mis-deeds. Non-violence is the main cause for good-deeds. Non-violence must be there in every cell of our body, it does not come by just pronouncing LIVE AND LET-LIVE. Letting others live by sacrificing our life is the fundamental greatness of life. Non-violence preaches everybody to think that even the smallest living creature must not be hurt. Pity, feelings, love, etc are the images of non-violence. A poor man with a heart full of feeling and love for others is much better and greater than a cruel King. The basic principle of religion is soft heartedness. If soft heartedness dries out from any person, he has not understood the real meaning of true religion, like if the greenery on the banks of a river dries out if the water in the river dries out.

Religion gives human beings the knowledge of life and the way to live life peacefully, it teaches the basic principles of life, but today, there is a lot of show and pomp in the religion and the basic truth and principals of religion seen to have been forgotten. Many people considered to be religious are hiding unreligious activities which they do every day. The basic values of religion have been forgotten and an empty drum is being beaten. Religion has become a business in day to day life, and people have taken various unrealistic meanings of religion and fight for the same. The basic principles of the Jain Religion as shown by Lord Mahavir have been shelved or misinterpreted for their own benefits by the normal person and there is a gap between the preaching and the reality.

It will be beneficial to all if the path preached by Lord Mahavir Swami is followed, and we adopt a life of simplicity and low cost living. We commit various mis-deeds without knowledge, in our everyday life, but we can reduce this by following the simple principals shown in our religion, for example, if a person does some harm to us we immediately think of returning that with a counter harm to him, but if we change our thinking and keep control over our mind and actions, and do not return the harm, it will definitely benefit us in the long run. Such counter action thinking creates and multiplies our problems and difficulties, but can be very easily solved by self control.

We must teach our children about the food we must eat, the same way as we teach them about our religion. Our food must be nutritious and should be able to keep our mind pure and hearts peaceful. We can get a good proof of this from the Zoo we visit. If you see an Elephant, which is a huge animal but is a pure vegetarian and hence it looks, peaceful and tranquil, and in contrast if you near the cages of Lions and Tigers, who eat only meat etc (non-vegetarian food) you can feel the uneasiness and also you can see the unending agitated state of the animal's mind, this proves that all the strength and senses of a living being's body depend on the type of food for their actions and thinking. Hence we must

always take care of the type of food we consume, and eat pure vegetarian food, to keep our mind and body in peace and tranquillity.

Milk obtained by force or by bypassing or giving cruel treatment to the cows, buffaloes, goats or their calves, must be avoided but Jain religion does not object to milk given by these animals by their own intentions and pleasure. There is an example of such pleasure and tranquillity in the minds of such animals too. There is a Boarding School for boys near the town of Mangrol, in Junagadh district. This boarding school is a totally self content institution where children live, and learn to read write, plough fields, take care of cattle, etc. It is believed that the school gets its food grains, vegetables, milk, and all the daily requirements for the children and the staff from its own fields and from its own cows. These cows give the milk twice every day, and the children are also taught to milk the cows, but the cows give the milk only after they have been properly bathed and their shed completely cleaned, and after some soft classical music is played, which is provided by the school with the help of a music system fitted in the cowshed. This is possible, because the cows are habituated to such treatment from their birth. Hence cleanliness, peace and tranquillity effect even the animals, not only human beings.

According to the Jain religion, every living thing is divided into different categories according to the number of senses it has (the senses of Sight, Smell, Touch, Speech, Hearing). The religion also divides the vegetables into two categories, one which are roots and grow underground and have uncountable living bacteria and one which grow on the trees and do not grow further after they have been plucked from the tree or plant. It also classifies some other items such as honey, butter, cheese, etc as prohibited items because they have and create huge number of bacteria even when stored for a short time. Non-Violence is the basic principal of many religions of the world but the Jain religion preaches to follow the

same very very strictly and has shown ways and means to follow this strict preaching of Non-Violence.

The Jain religion believes and preaches that living bacteria are there not only in animals but also in vegetables, in various numbers. Air, water, and soil also contain infinite numbers of living germs or bacteria, and a human being must live in such a way that he avoids the destruction of such micro life. We have to eat in order to give nourishment and health to our body. There are two types of foods, Vegetarian and Non-Vegetarian, Vegetarian food is made up of food grains, vegetables, milk, curd, etc., and the non-vegetarian food consists of meat, fish, etc. A human being must eat a diet which does not destroy the life of some other living thing, even though it may be a micro organism or bacteria.

WHY ONE SHOULD BECOME A VEGETARIAN !

Food is for the sustenance of life. Our diet should be such that the body remains clean, the senses retain their ability to perceive what is aesthetic, the mind is at peace, and the soul is not hindered in its pursuit of the sublime. Hence, he who wishes to attain spiritual sublimity must take food which is pure and untainted with blood. It is the food we take that sustains the body, and it is the body that houses the mind, and it is the mind which gives birth to our thoughts. If the body is sustained by meat and other food which are the product of violence and bloodshed, how can one expect one's mind to generate thoughts which are pure and noble? Besides a vegetarian diet keeps the body clean, for it is easy to digest and is at the same time nutritive. It is surprising then that doctors recommend their patients to eat fruit rather than meat? It is a false notion that a vegetarian diet is not as strengthening as a non-vegetarian one. After all, a child grows up on mother's milk, and the elephant, the strongest of animals, is a strict vegetarian, and consider the powerhouse of a horse who is also a vegetarian.

Economically, too, a vegetarian diet is cheaper. This is of particular relevance to developing countries. A man with a limited income would find it much easier to support himself and his family on a vegetarian diet.

There are some champions of non-vegetarianism who claim that if all human beings were to become vegetarians, there would be an acute shortage of food supply. But do they really believe that the change will take place overnight? It will be slow and gradual, spread over several decades, and meanwhile would it not be possible to bring under the plough the millions of acres of land which are untilled all over the world? Today, countries like the United States throw away thousands of tons of wheat because they wish to maintain food prices! Surely, this surplus can be utilised for countries that do not have enough.

Vegetarianism should also be viewed in the light of ecological considerations and in the interest of any equitable and hunger-free order in the globe. The growing of plants produces more food per person on less land. It takes seven acres of grazing land and pounds of vegetable protein to produce one pound of meat, whereas only one acre of land can harvest four hundred fifty pounds of Soya protein.

From these economic and practical considerations, let us turn again to ourselves and our spiritual and aesthetic needs. Our senses also show a natural inclination toward fruit and vegetables. Put in one bowl apples, oranges, grapes and many other put lumps of raw meat; and what do we find? Our sense of sight, sense of touch, sense of taste, sense of smell will show a marked preference to the first. This shows how much more satisfying vegetarianism is aesthetically to the senses.

Vegetarianism is a discipline that helps to shape a finer sensibility. It is a step in the direction of compassion and sensitivity, and is a negation of cruelty and violence. It is not just a matter of self-denial. It is a positive act, an expression of our love for our fellow creatures, does not mean that all those who eat non-vegetarian diet are cruel and all those who live on a vegetarian diet are kind and compassionate but sociology and other sciences show that those races that are non-vegetarian in their diet have been more war-like and more inclined towards violence.

Man has progressed beyond the stage of primitive hunting. Now, he must advance further in the direction of compassion and kindness, and restrain his primordial impulses. One visit to the slaughterhouse, where these innocent souls are massacred, would be enough to feel the cruelty inflicted upon them. Their looks of fear and the dumb appeal in their eyes as they are dragged away from their dear ones are enough to melt a heart of stone.

There was an incident in the life of the fascinating philosopher Bernard Shaw. Some friends and admirers gave a banquet in his honour, but Bernard Shaw refused to eat. When questioned, he pointed to all the meat dishes and said, "I am human being, and not a graveyard for dead animals".

And who says animals do not have feelings towards one another? There is an incident related by an American writer. One day he saw two mice walking along in a straight fashion. They were holding a straw at each end in their mouths and walking side by side, but with one of them a few inches ahead of the other. Unthinkingly and mechanically, the writer picked up a stone and threw it at them. The voice of "civilisation", our so called civilisation, told him that this was the right thing to do. If you see a mouse or a snake or any other creature that may be going its own way without doing any harm, you hit it with a stick or a stone! Well, the stone hit one of the mice, the one that was in front, and it killed him. But, strange to say that the other mouse did not run away, it began running around in circles, confused, bewildered. Intrigued by its behaviour, the writer picked it up and found to his amazement that it was blind ! And then, with a gasp realised the meaning of the piece of straw which each of them had held. The mouse he had killed had been on a mission of mercy: it had been leading its blind brother. This incident proved to be a turning point in the writer's life. It led him to reflect on the laws of Nature and his cruel deed by which he had violated these laws, and in this awareness he resolved there and then to become a vegetarian.

Even in the world of material things there is a law which commands dogmatically that if you take money from somebody, sooner or later you must return it to him. So, if people fill their stomachs at the cost of the lives of other creatures, will they not have to pay? Indeed, a man would have to be reborn several times to wipe off these bloodstains.

Every morning when we open our newspaper, our eyes are greeted with news of some bloody revolution or outburst of violence or a threat of war. As long as there is this streak of cruelty and violence in many, so long will the world be troubled by wars and revolutions. And how can man stop being violent toward his fellowmen if he does not first learn to be kind and compassionate toward his dumb fellow creatures?

Human beings ask for mercy of their Creator, but the man who has lived mercilessly on the flesh of animals all through his life, how can such a man ask for mercy from God? We should all keep in our minds these famous lines of the immortal poet Coleridge:

*"He prayeth best, who loveth best
All things both great and small;
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all"*

There is a prayer of Bhagwan Mahavira, a prayer which speaks with the voice of non-violence.

*Let there be happiness for all,
Let all be spiritually prosperous;
Let all perceive only that which is good,
Let there be no pain and suffering in life.*

The world is like a wheel, it is moving, and every moment there is a change. Change in time, change in person, change in place, everything changes. Today's land may be tomorrow's water. Where there is vast wasteland - today, there may be a huge city tomorrow. Due to drought or harassment of Kings and rulers, people migrate from one place to another in search of Job, Trade, and Profession.

This might have also happened in the case of Visha Oswals of Halar.

From Jamnagar to Lalpur, and from Jamnagar to Goeej, in the 52 villages of Halar, there was no village like Navagam. Every village had a mixed population of various communities, whereas in Navagam 85-90% of the people were Oswal Jains and only 10-15% were others such as Potters, Carpenter, Barbers, etc. Navagam was surrounded on all sides by green trees - Neem, Banyan, Tamarind, etc., and there were also plenty of trees in the surrounding areas outside the village. It was a thick forest all around and was difficult to pass through.

Farms and fields were lush green and the environment was very pleasant and beautiful. Every day, early in the morning the birds like the peacock, pigeons, parrots and sparrows would sing in their melodious sounds. There were also some deer who would wander here and there. In the early morning the ladies would go to the river and the well to fetch water, farmers would go to their farms with their cows and bullocks. Shepherds would take their cows to the outskirts of the village to graze. These were the beautiful scenes of a regular morning in Navagam.

The people of Navagam were very industrious, hard working, sincere and very brave, and the land and soil of Navagam also had such great qualities. I wish to write a few things about the quality of the soil of Navagam, which had its use in the field of medicine also. From Navagam on the way to Nani Khavdi and Moti Khavdi there was a farming place called Valore, and its mud was famous and known as VALORIA. It had many curing tendencies. People of surrounding areas would fill this mud in their bullock carts, while passing this area, and take it home. It cures many skin diseases and was also used by the ladies for washing their hair, to get rid of dandruff. Local tribal people would mix it with Bajra Floor, and apply it on the stomach to cure stomach pain, disorders and related problems. It has not been heard whether there is such a mud anywhere else in India. I would like to state that this was a fact and reality about 50 - 55 years ago and it stands to be reconfirmed whether or not the same mud has such benefits today or not. Gandhiji had also recommended the use of mud therapy for many a cure and Ayurveda books also mention the use of mud for various diseases. It is also recommended even today by the Vaidis or Ayurvedic Doctors.

Navagam, where I was born, was a unique village in the 52 villages of Halar. Our home in Navagam was near the outskirts of the village and whenever there was a marriage occasion in the village and marriage parties coming from other villages to our village, would halt at the outskirts of our village, near our home, where the in-laws from our

village would come with the bank and the welcome ceremony was performed. The environment would become joyful and happy with the music and singing of the marriage songs etc. I would hardly go to school but pass my time with my friends in the farms, and my father and my teachers would beat me, but I was used to it. There is a difference between farms and fields. Farms are agricultural lands used for the whole year round, whereas fields can be used for agriculture only during the monsoons (rainy season).

On the bank of the river there were farms and there was a well in one of the farms. I would go to swim there with my five six friends. There were many big trees surrounding this well, and we would jump into the well by hanging on the branches of the huge Banyan tree. Once when we were in the well and were about to come out upon tiring, two friends, who were a maternal uncle and nephew to each other were sitting on a branch of the tree as if riding together a motorbike or a horse, Unfortunately, the branch broke and both of them fell into the well with the branch and this big branch hurt me on my right shoulder. We caught both of them who came up after going down in the well and tied them to the wood which was then hung with the help of the slots in the wall of the well. Some of us went up with the help of the hanging branches of the Banyan tree and few of them ran towards the village to call the elders, while some of them threw down the rope used for taking out water. People from the village came running and both of them were rescued by pulling them out with the ropes. It was a shocking incident. My father was informed about this instance by somebody in the evening when he was returning from the field. He was carrying a stick and he started beating me as soon as he saw me near our home and threw me out of the home. As it is he was not keeping well and hence would lose his temper very fast. Before this accident occurred there was another such tragic incident in our village when about 10-12 boys were playing Ambli - Pipli, on the trees at the bank of the river and Zaverchand the son of Shri Kheta Bhima, fell down and he died after two days, and my father had only scolded me this time and hence he was very angry on me at this second incident

and that is the reason for his beating me with a stick, and my being thrown out of the home. I was staying at my friends place and ate what they offered. My body was paining due the blows of my father. After about four days my mother took me home with a few kind words, but after that till today I have never jumped into water to swim, whether in the river nor in the sea. The nephew Shri Nathalal, son of Shri Meghji Rajpar of Vasai died about four years ago in London, and their family knows about the incident of the maternal uncle and the nephew falling in the well. The uncle, who is the son of Shri Jayantilal Panachand Bhimji is still in Navagam.

I am indebted to Shri Sobhagchand Narsi Panachand Dodhia who was in the Central Committee of the Oshwal Association of the U.K., and has also served as President and Treasurer of Oshwal Association of North West Suburb, for translating these writings from Gujarati to English. In the end, I wish to ask pardon for my mistakes, exclusions, or, if it has hurt anybody, directly or indirectly, or any injustice has been done by these writings.

If there are any spelling mistakes or additions, omission or unwanted changes in this book I request any and all the readers to excuse me for the same as I ask all of you for your Kshama Yachana.

I feel that this book should be kept, in their library, by each and every Oshwal family, all over the world, to enable our future generations to know their ancestors and their history.

DEEP EXPLANATION OF PRAYERS OF
NAVKAAR MANTRA

OM NAMO ARIHANTANAM
OM NAMO SIDHHANAM
OM NAMO AYARIYANAM
OM NAMO UVAJZAYANAM
OM NAMO LOYE SAVVA SAHOONAM

ASO PANCH NAMUKARO
SAVVA PAVAPPANASANO
MANGALANAMCHA SAVVESIM
PADHAMAM HAVAI MANGALAM

According to all Indian scripts, even a small Mantra gives dynamic result if meditated with concentration. Several Indian Saints have written innumerable books over 'NAVKAAR MANTRA' as being the Eternal Mantra from time immemorial. A philosopher in London has opined that prayer of Shri Navkar Mantra is of Universal Character and worth being observed as daily prayers in schools.

1) OM NAMO ARIHANTANAM - He is an illustrious and Brilliant person, irrespective of caste, creed, or sects, who attains perfect knowledge by controlling Passion, Pride, Irritation, Bitterness, Greediness, and Feelings of Hatred, and I worship such a person.

2) OM NAMO SIDHHANAM - Every human being is made of composite Atoms and Spiritual Soul and has the birth right to make his spiritual soul free from worldly attachments and attain Moksha, which means FULL LIBERATION OF SOUL. I heartily prey such persons who have attained that stage.

3) OM NAMO AYARIYANAM - Many of the Indian religions preach ACHAR - SANHITA which means he is a saint, who has not only given up his belongings but has taken an oath to eradicate the symptoms of VIKAR, and besides, they preach how to pass the life controlling five senses, at the cost of his own sacrifice. I bow my head to such personalities.

4) OM NAMO UVAJZAYANAM - There are two types of education being given this world. One teaches man how to enjoy his present life, how to earn money and utilise the same for his bodily benefits. The second type of education gives light and knowledge to man to think that spiritual soul is quite different from the body that is visible outside - thus everyone should act fully for the uplift of the soul rather than bodily matters. I prey such real teachers who give the second type of education.

5) OM NAMO LOYE SAVVA SAHOONAM - Theoretical systems only do not give perfect knowledge, but there are such persons who are practically applying these theories in their own life, which inspires all of us how to follow Satya-Ahimsa, Achaurya, Brahmacharya, and Aparigraha, the five well known acts in our lives. They are very cautious not only for their deeds and speeches but particularly they control their feelings always keeping good in view, I prey such Sadhak.

By bowing our head and praying the above mentioned five saints we can get help to eradicate ill-deeds and purify our soul and obtain a stage of Samabhaav or Vitraag. The above Mantra helps every soul that chants it, hence it has been considered as the super most mangal of life.

SOME BASIC PREACHINGS OF TAIN RELIGION

Karma pursues the doer, and the doer must suffer misery all alone and neither his castemen, nor friends, nor sons, nor brother, can share his misery. He, who has gained victory over his senses and meditates on the very nature of soul, is not bound by Karma.

Even the most offended and powerful enemy does not cause as much harm as uncontrolled attachment and aversions do. Since living beings caught in the grip of miseries of Birth, Old age, and Death, have no happiness in this mundane existence, Liberation is, therefore, worthy of attainment. If you are desirous of crossing this terrible ocean of mundane existence, Oh virtuous one, better catch quickly a boat of penance and self control. From the real point of view, the body and the soul are distinct from each other, that is why shake off the attachment to the body because it is the cause of suffering and pain.

A person who is free from worldly attachments becomes free from sorrow. Just as the petals of Lotus growing in the midst of a lake remain untouched by water, even so, a person who is detached from all passions will remain unaffected by sorrows in this world. He who does not become excited with anger even when terrible afflictions are caused to him by gods, human beings and beasts his forbearance is perfect.

Religion is supremely auspicious; Non Violence, Self-Control and Penance are its essentials. Even the gods bow down before him whose mind is ever preoccupied with religion.

Truthfulness is the abode of Penance, of Self-Control and of all other virtues; indeed truthfulness is the place of origination of all other noble qualities as the ocean is that of fishes. Greed grows with every gain, every gain increases greed. A work which could be done by two grams of gold could not be done even by millions of grams.

Supreme Jina has said that true renunciation consists in developing indifference towards the three, namely, the World, the Body, and the Enjoyment, through detachment for material objects. One may conquer thousands and thousands of enemies in an invincible battle, but the supreme victory consists in conquest over one's self.

Anger destroys love, pride destroys modesty, deceit destroys friendship, and greed is destructive of everything. One ought to put an end

to anger through calmness, pride by modesty, deceit by straightforwardness and greed by contentment.

No mountain is higher than the Meru, nothing is more expansive than the sky, similarly know that there is no religion equal to the religion of ahimsa in this world.

The pure soul is free from activities of thought, speech and body. He is independent infallible and fearless. He is also free from mineness, attachment and delusion. The pure soul is free from complexes, blemishes, desire, anger, pride, lust and all other kinds of defects.

The Faith, the Knowledge and the conduct together constitute the path of Liberation (of soul), this is the path to be followed. The saints have said that if it is followed in the right way it will lead to liberation and otherwise it will lead to bondage.

Without Right Faith, there cannot be Right Knowledge, without Right Knowledge there cannot be Right Conduct, without Right Conduct, there cannot be release from Karma, without release from Karma, there cannot be NIRVANA (SALVATION OF SOUL).

- KESHAVLAL M. SHAH.

LEADING RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

1. JAINISM

Jainism is believed to be one of the oldest religions of the world. To-day, it has around four million followers. Like Buddhism, Jainism was given substance in the 6th Century B.C., and bears many similarities to it. The holy instigator of this was Lord Mahavir, the twenty - fourth and last of the Tirthankaras (Finders of the Path). It recognises no God, no supreme being, but only Tirthankaras, or those enlightened ones, each of whom was originally a man like any other. More than a religion, Jainism is an ethical doctrine with rigorous self-discipline at its core. The concept of reincarnation is a central theme with the ultimate end being the attainment of salvation - Moksha. The Jain philosophy is based on sympathy, compassion and above all ahimsa - reverence for all life and the avoidance of injury to all living things.

2. HINDUISM

An ancient pantheistic and major religion of India, it is practised by 80% of the population within the sub-continent. It dates back to beyond 1000 BC. Although there is a proliferation of deities, there is only one God who is omnipresent. The three main facets of this God are symbolised by Brahma, the creator whose consort is Saraswati, the Goddess of Knowledge; Vishnu the preserver, whose consort is Laxmi, the Goddess of Prosperity and Siva, the God of destruction, whose consort is Parvati. The doctrine of the Gods and the Hindu philosophy are set out most profoundly in the Vedic scriptures and the Upanishads. Hindus believe in the cycle of rebirth, the driving force of which is Karma, the Law of cause and effect. This Law states that your actions in one life determine the role you will play and what you will "have to go through in your next life. Apart from its numerous rituals of worship and festivals,

one of the most distinguishing features of Hinduism is its caste system. In decreasing hierarchical order we have Brahmins, the priests, Kshatriyas, the soldiers, Vaisyas, the merchants and farmers, Sudras, artisans and finally the Harijans, the untouchables.

3. BUDDHISM.

Strictly speaking, Buddhism is more a way of life than a religion. It is philosophy and a code of morality. It was founded in Benares about 500 RC. by Prince Siddhartha Gautama. Having been sheltered from all poverty in his early life, the Prince, on his first sighting of death, forsook all material possession and went on his way to attain enlightenment. After many years, he finally attained Nirvana under the Bodh tree. There are two main schools of thought in Buddhism: Hinayana, stresses that attainment of enlightenment is essentially an individual pursuit whereas Mahayana believes that experience of enlightenment can be and should be pursued collectively by those fortunate enough to have attained it. The Buddha taught that all life is suffering but that suffering comes from sensual desire and the illusion that they are important. The Buddha's solution to this and the doctrine which underpins Buddhism was the noble 'eight-fold path' which requires going through a series of rebirths and aims to break the effect of Karma, leading to eternal salvation. There are currently five million Buddhists in India, but more in the countries to the east and north of India. Today, there are about 250 million Buddhists around the world.

4. JUDAISM

Judaism is the official religion of the Jews. It came about as covenant between God and Abraham in 2000 B.C. and was renewed in the 13th Century B.C. by Moses, who was given the Ten Commandments by God on top of Mount Sinai. Jews believe in the concept of one God, whose will is revealed in the Torah, which

is essentially the first five books of the Bible. The official scripture is the Talmud. The majority of Jews are Orthodox Jews who adhere to strict Judaist principles including dietary laws (kosher). Today there are some 17 million Jews around the world.

a) Noah and the Ark

God saw the evil in the world and decided to destroy the people and all living creatures, except Noah and his family. Noah built an Ark so that he, his family and a male and female specimen of all existing animals could survive the flood. The Holy Ark, incidentally, is the name of the cupboard in the Synagogue where the 'Torah' scrolls are kept.

b) Birth of Moses

Moses, born in Egypt of Israeli parents was a figure destined to play an important part in the formation of the Jewish faith. The pharaoh ordered all male infants of the Israelites to be killed at birth. Moses life was saved by one of the daughters of the pharaoh, who brought him up. He was to lead the children of Israel out of bondage.

c) Synagogue and Moses with the Ten Commandments

Synagogue means 'a gathering' and is the Jewish place of worship. It is here that the faithful gather on the Sabbath and on feasts and holy days. Moses was given the tablets of the Law of Ten Commandments by God at Mount Sinai.

5. CHRISTIANITY

Christianity is the largest religion in the world, with a following of over a billion people. It bases its beliefs in Jesus Christ, a Jew, as the resurrected son of God. The religion has its early roots in Judaism. Christians believe that almost 2000 years ago, God sent his son Jesus Christ into the world as a Saviour of the people and to forgive their

sins. His divinity is derived from his resurrection after death and his ascension into heaven. The Bible is the sacred scripture of the Christians, and consists of two books; the Old Testament, which is the Holy Book of Judaism, and the New Testament, which is a collection of writings pertaining only to Christianity. There are three main divisions of Christianity: Roman Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox.

a) The Crucifixion

Crucifixion was regarded as the most degrading form of death and was agonisingly painful. Jesus hung on the cross for six hours before he died. Among those near him at his death were his mother, Mary Magdalene, and John the Apostle, with angels hovering above.

b) The Nativity

The Nativity has been a favourite subject of artists over the years. During the reign of Herod the Great, Mary and Joseph left their home town of Nazareth and went to Bethlehem in order to take part in a Roman Census by registering their names. It was while they were there, that Jesus was born in a stable.

c) St. Peter's Church and Jesus the Saviour

This church, in Vatican City is the largest Christian church in the world. The Vatican City is the home of the Pope, the head of the Roman Catholic Church. The word 'church' is derived from the Greek language and refers to 'an official assembly of citizens'.

6. ISLAM

Islam is the youngest of the three great monotheistic religions, the other being Christianity and Judaism. Indeed Moses and Jesus are accepted prophets of Islam. Its beginning is thought to have been around 600 A.D. Islam stresses the omnipotence of God - Allah,

(in fact the word 'Islam' itself means submission to God) and his message brought to earth via Mohammed, the prophet. Islam teachings are communicated through the Quran, its Holy book, the substance of which was divinely revealed to Mohammed. There are two main sects: Sunni's, accepting the legitimacy of the first four Caliphs (leaders of the Muslims), whereas Shiites believe that Ali the fourth Caliph, should have been the first. The Islamic way of life is based around the five pillars of faith, which are: recitation of the creed, worshipping five times a day facing the holy city of Mecca, alms giving, fasting between sunrise and sunset through Ramadan and the pilgrimage to Mecca at least once in a lifetime.

a) **Ka'bah**

At the centre of the courtyard of the Great Mosque at Mecca is the sacred Ka'bah, the most revered shrine in the Muslim world. At the height of the pilgrimage, millions arrive in Mecca from all corners of the world. So vast is the congregation that the great courtyard is filled with more than 500,000 people at a time. All must circle the Ka'bah, which is draped in the black and golden tapestry of the Kiswah. At one corner of the Ka'bah is placed a black meteorite stone known as "Hajr - e - Aswad". According to Islamic teachings, this black meteoric stone was given to Abraham by Allah.

b) **Namaaz (Muslim Prayers)**

Muslims attach a great importance to praying.

c) **The green Mosque of Medina and the name of Allah**

This mosque is the Muslim place of worship and serves as a backdrop to the name of Allah- the only God according to the Islamic faith. Pictorial representations of Allah are forbidden.

Keshavji Ramji saw there were many opportunities so he called other members of his family over. In 1900 his nephew, my grandfather's brother Narshi Devji Shah, came together with five companions. They started a shop selling clothes in Mombasa, under the name of the leader 'Shah Meghji Ladha & Co.'. Then they opened a shop in Nairobi and that became the main one.

Then in 1910 they brought my father Khetshi Devshi over though he was only ten years old. His mother had died and he was being looked after by his auntie, Narshi Devji's wife who had stayed behind in India to look after all the children. (Later all the others came too.) My father was first taken to Nairobi where the firm had a shop on Bazaar Street. When he was older, in 1925 he was married to a girl in India named Amritben. The couple lived a while in Nairobi and then moved to Mombasa in 1929, just after I was born. I grew up there, going to the Allidina Visram School, and I knew both the old men. Keshavji Ramji was still alive; he died when I was 8 years old. When he died, the entire Bazaar was in mourning for whole day.

Keshavji was a gentle person, a fine person. We Oshwals consider him one of our important pioneers in Kenya because he did so much to encourage people of our community - and others, too to come from India and settle here. Whenever a new person arrived, Keshavji invited that newcomer to stay with him. He would give him training in the shop - remember that we Oshwals were farmers in India, not traders - and then help him to set up his own business and support him until he got on his feet. Our family continued that tradition of hosting newcomers right up until Narshi Devji's death in 1956.

Life was hard in those days but all in all we enjoyed ourselves. Those were good days. There were hardships, yes, but enjoyment also; we had a lot of fun. People worked hard but were happy. In our home the women did all the cooking - even - if there were ten guests for lunch. The African servants only helped with the washing

RELIGION:	SYMBOL:
JAINISH	-The Jain Swastika
HINDUISM	- OM
BUDDHISM	- The Wheel of Life
JUDAISM	- The Star of David
CHRISTIANITY	- The Cross
ISLAM	- The Moon and Star

THE JAIN RITUALS & FESTIVALS

Jain rituals and festivals are not simply empty play acting but all have a deep significance which is of benefit to both the participant and the on-lookers. The events of Lord Mahavir's life are repeated very frequently in the form of symbols, actions, words and images which all together serve to bring a deeper understanding of the life and message of Lord Mahavir, in the mind of the devotee.

The daily life of a pious Jain will be interwoven with ritual acts such as spreading grain for the birds or boiling water for later use, which both are acts of charity and non-violence. Samayik (or Meditation) usually lasts forty eight minutes and is undertaken early in the morning and also usually at noon and at night. It involves quiet recollection and repetition of ritual prayers. *Pratikraman* should be performed at least twice during the day - in the morning in repentance for wrongs committed during the night and in the evening for wrongs committed during the day. *Pratikraman* is also performed at certain specific times in the year.

Bowing to the image of the Tirthankar and lighting a lamp (deep) before it signals the auspicious start to the day. Worship or Puja can take many forms. *The Snatra Puja* involves the ritual bathing of the image. It signifies the bathing of the new-born Tirthankar by the heavenly beings. *The Panch Kalyanak Puja* commemorates the five great events in a Tirthankar life - conception, birth, renunciation, Kevalya Gnan and Nirvana (Moksha). *Antaray Karma Puja* is a series of prayers to help remove the karma which deludes and hinders the soul. A lengthy puja which can take up to three days to complete is *the Arihant Puja* which is the offering of respect to the arihant (arhat) and to a long list of other beings.

The *Siddhachakra Puja* focuses on the *siddhachakra*, a lotus shaped disc bearing representations of the arhat, the liberated soul, the religious teacher, the religious leader and the monk (the five praiseworthy beings) as well as the four qualities of perception (darshan), knowledge (gnan), conduct (charitra) and austerity (tap).

The Jina image has no miraculous powers. Religious rituals only express, in simple or elaborate symbolic form, the individual's desire and intention to follow the life and teachings of Lord Mahavir. The splendour of the Jain Temple, the words and the chants all help the worshipper towards a reverent state of mind.

A serious Jain will fast on many days in the year. Twice a year during March! April and September/October a nine day period of semi-fasting is observed where Jains take only one meal a day of very plain food. The period is known as the *Oli* or *Ayembil*. A day of complete silence and fasting is observed on the *Maunagiyaras* which fall in November/December. This day is also regarded as the birth anniversary of many of the Tirthankars.

The festival to commemorate the birth of Lord Mahavir is known as *Mahavir Jayanti* and usually falls in March or April. This is an occasion for great celebration where the dreams of his mother may be dramatically presented and explained to the audience. The image of Lord Mahavir is ceremonially bathed and rocked in cradle.

Paryushan is the most important period in the Jain year. It is an eight day period in the Jain year. It is an eight day period of fasting and religious activities. It usually falls in the months of *Shravan* and *Bhadrapad* (August and September). *Paryushan* is a period of repentance for the acts of the previous year. Austerities are carried out to help shed the karma which has accumulated over the year. Such an austerity is the control of one's desire for material pleasures. During this period some people fast for the whole eight days, others for lesser periods. It is considered obligatory to fast on the last day of Paryushan. Fasting usually involves complete abstinence from any sort of food or drink, but some people take boiled water during the day.

During this period regular ceremonies are conducted in the temple and meditation halls. One of the Jain sacred books, the *Kalpa Sutra*, which includes a detailed account of Lord Mahavir's life is read to the worshippers present. On the third day the Kalpa Sutra is carried in a

procession. On the fifth day, at a special ceremony, the auspicious dreams, prior to his birth, of Lord Mahavir's mother. Trishla, are demonstrated before the worshippers.

The final day of *the Paryushan* is the most important of all. On this day all Jains ask forgiveness, from family and friends, for any faults which they have committed towards them in the previous year. It is an annual occasion for repentance and to seek forgiveness is very important. Very soon after *Paryushan* it is customary for all Jains to participate in the *Swami Vatsalya Lunch* (also known as *Savantsari Bhojan*).

One of the most important festivals in India is *Diwali* and for Jains *Diwali* marks the anniversary of the attainment of moksha by Lord Mahavir in the year 527 B.C. It is also the time when the chief disciple of Lord Mahavir, Gautam Indrabhuti, achieved Kevalya Gnan (total knowledge-omniscience). *Diwali* falls on the last day of the month of Ashwin which is also the end of the year in the Indian Calendar (usually falls sometime in late October / early November). The next day heralds the beginning of the New Year and is celebrated joyfully by all Jains who normally get together and exchange greetings. The fifth day of the New Year is known as Gnan Pancham which is the day of knowledge. On this day the scriptures which impart knowledge to the people are worshipped with great religious devotion.

There are lots of other Jain rituals and festivals among which are ceremonies performed at the time of "*Diksha*" i.e. the transfer from the life of a householder into the life of a monk by a Jain; the ceremonies performed prior to the commencement of the construction of a temple such as the *Bhoomi Pujan* (Ground purification ceremony), *the Khannan Vidhi* (the Ground breaking Ceremony) and *the Shila Ropan* (Foundation stone laying ceremony); the ceremony to mark the consecration of a temple or the installation of an idol. Lay people bid excitedly for the privilege of participating in these ceremonies and this enables the raising of large sums of money for the work of the temple. Jains from all walks of life, both male and female, take a very active part in all aspects of religious life including the performance of ritual and celebration of the various festivals.

LORD MAHAVIR

Mahavir, the 24th or the last Jina, is the greatest of all the Tirthankars. His position is of unchallenged eminence in the Jain religion, history and iconography.

Lord Mahavir was born in a royal family in the year 599 B.C. on the 13th day of the bright half of the month of Chaitra (Indian lunar calendar) at Kundagram, a suburb of Vaishali (Bihar State) in India. His father Siddharth was an extremely rich and powerful King of Kundagram, a noble kshatriya (warrior) and well versed in all the arts and sciences. His mother Trishla was the sister of King Chetak of Vaishali and had all the distinguishing features which indicated the destined mother of a great soul. Trishla, before giving birth, had fourteen auspicious dreams which were interpreted by wise men as signs of the imminent birth of a Great Immortal. The child was named "Vardhaman" (the Increaser) because from the day of his birth the wealth, power, glory and prosperity of the royal family and the people began to increase immensely. Both his parents were the followers of the religious teachings of Lord Parsvanath.

From early days of childhood, Vardhaman had shown extraordinary physical strength and exceptional qualities. Undoubtedly he was the acknowledged leader of all the young children. He was fearless, brave and courageous. His courage and bravery earned him the title of "Mahaver" (great hero) by which he universally came to be known. At the request of his parents Mahaver married a royal princess by the name of Yashoda. She bore him a daughter named Priyadarshana who got married to Jamali who later became a disciple of Mahavir.

At the age of thirty, shortly after his parents' demise, Mahavir renounced the worldly life. He gave up all his possessions, including his clothes, and left the royal palace and his family to live all alone in the jungle. For the next twelve years he lived a life of extreme hardship, training himself to endure the pains and discomforts of the body until he became indifferent to them. Mahavir persevered with this austere lifestyle,

marked by long spells of fasting and other penances, and by deep meditation.

At the age of forty two, during one period of meditation by the side of a river, he came to a comprehension of the whole nature and meaning of the universe. This total knowledge, omniscience, or Kevalya Gnan is very important to Jainism. He became a "*Kevalin*" or "*lina*", a conqueror. He became Lord Mahavir. This was the fourth of the five great events of Mahavir's life which are celebrated by Jains today: his conception, birth, renunciation and now enlightenment. The fifth great event, nirvana or moksha came thirty years later.

During these thirty years Lord Mahavir spread the message of Jainism among the people. He now had many followers, both monks and householders. He travelled by foot to different parts of India. Many kings of his time embraced Jainism and became his disciples. Lord Mahavir taught a scientific explanation of the nature and meaning of life and a guide as to how we should behave to draw this real nature and meaning into our own life. The three most important components of this are : (1) **RIGHT FAITH**, we must believe in truth, (2) **RIGHT KNOWLEDGE**, we must study to understand what life is all about, (3) **RIGHT CONDUCT**, the conduct which our faith and knowledge shows us to be correct. These are the three jewels of Jainism.

At the age of seventy two, Lord Mahavir left the human body fully conscious and attained nirvana or moksha at the place called Pavapuri on the 30th day of the month Ashwin in the year 527 B.C. The last two days and nights he spent continuously preaching, for he knew that his body would exist for that time only.

JAIN TEMPLE - DERASER

A temple is a place of worship where the aspirant experiences immense peace, serenity and a state of beatitude. The images of the Tirthankars and the temple environment promote introspection and bring home the feeling that God resides in one's own heart. Therefore each person pursues the path of purification of the inner self devoid of ego and attachment to the illusory web of life. Jain temples are known for their serene, peaceful and graceful settings, meaningful architectural concepts, artistic workmanship, intricate carvings, exuberant life-like sculptures and pleasing ornamentation. Most of these temples are built of marble or exquisite stone.

Jains, young and old, visit the temple in the morning and in the evening. They feel blessed by the sight of the Lord - the Tirthankar - and carry out activities such as worship, reciting mantras, prayers and meditation. By coming into close proximity with the magnetised sculptures and contemplating upon them, one is placed in rapport with consciousness of these forerunners of Mankind. The impact of the energy imbibed in the heart of the worshipper or the religious aspirant helps to unfold the latent spiritual seed in him, much like the sun rays which enable the growth of the seed sown in the earth.

The temple itself usually consists of four main parts - the entrance porch (or "choki"), the main space for worshippers (or the "Rang Mandap"), the place where the devotees can light the "deeps" (or the "Kodi Mandap") and the inner sanctum (or the "Garbh Griha") containing the icons. The layout, the geometry and the numbers of corners, sides, columns, etc. are closely governed by religious and cosmological ideas.

The Jain temple with picturesque settings with high "Shikhars" and columns, brackets, capitals and architraves provides a very characteristic eastern effect. The "Shikhar" over the Garbh Griha is of a receding pyramidal shapes. The dome, over the Rang Mandap, is formed in horizontal courses and the circular cornice from which the

dome springs is supported by struts from the capitals of the columns. The columns are much used and exhibit a great variety of design and sculpture. The mouldings are usually motifs of flower petals or leaf patterns and scrolls.

The Ranakpur Temple, in India, is perhaps the best of all Jain Temples. It stands on a lofty structure of some 300ft square surrounded by 86 cells, each crowned with a "Shikhar". There are five shrines, four open courts, 20 domes of 21 feet diameter. The Ranakpur Temple is said to have 1444 columns. It is known that one can have the "darshan" of the "murtis" from any angle and none of the pillars in anyway obstruct the viewing of the shrines. The interior is a great web of architectural beauty in design and detail, vistas of columns, light and shade from open courts and the variation of domes provide a very delicate nature of the sculpture. With the mountains in the background the Temple is rich and varied in character.

Palitana offers the most enlightening experience in India. One has to climb hundreds and hundreds of steps to Mount Shatrunjay from the town of Palitana. At the top one experiences the breathtaking sight of more than 860 Jain Temples. The white marble columns and walls are so intricately carved that they seem to be made of hand carved porcelain. The holiest part of the mountain tops is occupied in Shri Adishvara temple, particularly ornate building dating from 1530 AD but the sire of a very much earlier temple dating from the tenth century and perhaps before. Jain Temples of Palitana provide an exquisite scene of architectural beauty and magnitude. One experiences a delightful extra terrestrial feeling.

The object of Jain worship is not really confined within walls, but the temple, hallowed by the presence of the Jina image and by the prayers of devotees is the most important institution of the living faith of the Jains.

OPINIONS OF SOME GREAT LEARNED PEOPLE ON
JAINISM

"There is nothing wonderful in my saying that Jainism was in existence long before the Vedas were composed"

Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan (Former President of India)

"Jainism began when this world began. I am of the opinion that Jainism is much older than the Vedic Darshana"

Swami Rammisraji Shastri (Professor, Sanskrit College, Benares)

"Jainism is really neither Hinduism nor Vedic Dharma. It contributes in the advancement of Indian Culture and study of Indian Philosophy"

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru (Former Prime Minister of India)

Jainism is one of the three great indigenous religions of India. The other two are Hinduism and Buddhism. While both these have spread widely the frontiers of India, Jainism has, until recently, remained peculiarly Indian religion. It is one of the oldest religions in the world, so old that it is not possible to date, with certainty, its beginnings. It is believed that its culture, which professes non-violence, truth, good conduct, refraining from theft and restraint on accumulation of possessions, existed in India before the advent of Aryans who believed in the Vedic religion.

Jainism does not postulate a leader and its followers do not worship any deity. They follow the teachings of the 24 Tirthankars or saints. The last and the most significant Tirthankar was Mahavir. It must be understood from the onset that Mahavir was not the founder of Jainism. What he did was to bring together in a systematic form the beliefs and

philosophy of his predecessors and preach them widely throughout India. He lay the foundation of an organised Jain 'church' with monks and nuns and lay people following his teachings. The social order that he created still exists to the present day.

The term Jain is derived from the word Jina, or the one who had conquered enemies like passion, greed, attachment, jealousy, etc. In ancient times a great saint or a liberated soul was known as a Jina. Modern Jain scholars prefer to call Jainism, along with Buddhism, a *Shramanika* religion or belonging to the *Shramana* ascetic tradition, as opposed to the Vedic, Brahmanic or Hindu tradition.

THE JAIN TIRTHANKARS

Tirthankar is a term which has generally been reserved, exclusively, for the Founders of the Jain doctrine who organised the *four fold Jain Sangha*, Church, made up of the Monks (*Sadhus*), the Nuns (*Sadhvis*), the Jain Laymen (*Shravaks*), and the Jain Laywomen (*Shravikas*). Tirtha is the Jain Sangha and a *Tirthankar* is one who establishes or organises the Jain Sangha. Jain writers offer another explanation of the term *Tirthankars* - builders of the tirtha, ford, which leads one across the ocean of suffering.

It is believed that 24 Tirthankars appear in each half of a time cycle. The two halves, aras, of every time cycle are known as *utsarpini* (ascending order showing man's gradual progress) and *avasarpini* (descending order showing man's gradual regress). The Jain doctrine is, therefore, eternal and the Tirthankars only re-establish it from time to time. The half cycles each last for a vast, but, finite number of years. At present time our earth is in a descending half cycle (*avasarpini*).

The first Tirthankar of the present *avasarpini* was Lord Rishabhdev (also known as Lord Adinath). He is supposed to be the forerunner of human civilisation. He is said to have laid the foundations for

orderly human society, family system, institutions of marriage, of law and order and justice, and of state and government. He taught to mankind the cultivation of land and is considered to be the first agriculturist. After having guided his fellow beings for a considerable time and fulfilled his mundane functions, Lord Rishabhdev abdicated all temporal power in favour of his eldest son, Bharat. He then retired to the forest to lead a life of penance and austerity. He attained *Kevalya Gnan* (Supreme Knowledge) became a Jina at Prayage (Allahabad). For a number of years he then preached, to the suffering mankind, his message of peace and liberation, giving the creed of love and non-violence. He was the first preacher of Ahimsa dharma. In the end he attained *nirvana* at Mt. Kailash (Tibet).

Lord Rishabhdev was followed by 23 other Tirthankars who came at intervals varying in duration. It appears that the Indus Valley civilization continued to flourish from the time of Lord Sambhavnath, the 3rd Tirthankar, to that of Lord Suvidhinath (also known as Pushpadanta), the 9th Tirthankar.

The 10th Tirthankar, Lord Shitalnath must have seen the rise of Vedic Aryans and their Brahminical culture and civilization. The next nine Tirthankars witnessed the gradual Aryanisation of the country and the expansion of the power of the Vedic Aryans.

In the times of Lord Munisuvrat (20th), Lord Naminath (21st) and Lord Arishtanemi or Neminath (22nd) the temporal power of the Vedic Aryan Kshatriyas, their sacrificial cult and the ascendancy of the Vedic Brahmans were at their zenith. Ram, the hero of the Brahminical Ramayan, is also the hero of *Jain Padmapurana* and lived during the time of Lord Munisuvrat. It was during this time that the practice of Vedic animal sacrifices were questioned and challenged.

The 22nd Tirthankar Lord Neminath was a prince of the Yadav Clan, in Dwarka, and a first cousin of Shri Krishna. He renounced the world just as he was about to be married to Princess Rajul. His bride to be,

followed him and became a Sadhvi. Lord Neminath went on to preach against killing of animals. Krishna, who had a great respect for his apostle of ahimsa, attempted a cultural fusion and a reconciliation between the Brahmanic and the Shramana systems as well as between the Aryan and non-Aryan people inhabiting the country. Lord Neminath attained nirvana at Mt. Girnar and on the same lovely mountain is shown a grotto where Rajul breathed her last.

By far the greatest leader of this Shramana revival was Lord Parsvanath who was born at Varanasi in 877 B.C. He was the son of Ashvasen, King of Varanasi and Vamadevi. After living as a householder till the age of thirty he retired and performed severe austerities as an ascetic. During these penances he was molested by a non-Jain ascetic, called Kamath, and protected and sheltered by a Naga, Dharnendra. He attained Kevalya Gnan in a forest outside the city of Ahicchatra. He devoted the remaining seventy years of his life to the service of suffering humanity. He revived the teachings of the earlier Tirthankars in a very forceful manner and probably codified the main points of the doctrine as we now know it. He also tried to purge asceticism of corrupt practices and unnecessary torture of the body. He attained nirvana at Mt. Sammedacala (Parasanath Hill in Bihar) in 777 B.C.

Lord Parsvanath's influence does not appear to have remained confined to India alone, but probably reached parts of central Asia and even Greece. His faith continued to flourish till the 6th Century B.C., when it received a fresh renovation at the hands of Lord Mahavir, the last of the 24 Tirthankars. Lord Mahavir reorganised the religion and has been the spiritual guide of the Jains. The lives of the 24 Tirthankars are described in the Jain holy book called the "*Kalpa Sutra*".

The Tirthankar is a propagator of truth and the path which has been taught in the same manner by all teachers of his ever-present, imperishable tradition. These teachings are neither received through divine revelation manifested through some inherent magical power. It

is the individual human soul itself, which aided by the earlier teachings, comes to know the "*truth*". Worshipping or following the teachings of a particular Tirthankar has no special significance, nothing new is taught and the path remains the same - the path of purification of the soul. However, it is only natural that those teachers who immediately precede the present age are remembered more readily. Thus we find that the last few Jinas, specially Neminath, Parswanath and Mahavir are often regarded as **THE** teachers and taken as objects of profound respect. Jainism is an ethical doctrine. It recognises no God, no Supreme Being, but only the Tirthankars or those enlightened ones, each of whom was originally a human being like other human beings.

THE SACRED PATH **PLACES OF PILGRIMAGE**

Almost every religion in the world considers pilgrimage a sacred path, and Jainism is no exception. The journey of the mind, body and soul to a sacramental site is a dream that every devout Jain will attempt to fulfil at some point in life.

Jainism has a long tradition of holy sites dotted all over India. These sacred places are known as tirthas or tirthakshetras, i.e. places that show the way through the transmigration of life, and remind us of how the great Tirthankars led their lives at these sites.

The Jains consider the following places their tirthakshetras:

- *where Tirthankars are born;
- *where Tirthankars first renounced their material lives;
- *where Tirthankars practised great austerities;
- *sites where Tirthankars achieved omniscience or kevalgnan;
- *where enlightened souls attained liberation or moksha;
- *sites where celebrated religious or mystical event occurred;
- *places famous for their beautiful temples and exquisite architecture;
- *places famous for their idols.

The above criteria is often used in the general classification of such sites, and differs in the Svetambara and Digambara sects of Jainism. The Digambaras separate all tirthas into two main categories, Siddhakshetra i.e. places where Jinas achieved moksha, and atisayakshetra, places which are holy for other reasons. This kind of division is not known amongst Svetambara Jains.

Most tirthas are now characterised by individual temples or some sort of shrine; places like Shatrunjaya tirtha, can even be entire temple cities. The Jain temple plays an important role in the worship of such sites, as it is the sanctum where the pilgrim can revere the image of the Tirthankar and kindle his devotion. The feelings of awe are religious fervour, that one experiences during a pilgrimage, are often amplified in the quiet, calm beauty of the temple; and it is probably for this reason, that the centre focus of the pilgrimage is very often the temple itself e.g. at Pavapuri, or the Delwara temples of Mount Abu.

The tirthakshetras are usually sited at the summit of a hill or in areas secluded from habitation. Being isolated, and having a peaceful and serene atmosphere, ideal for meditation, they continually attracted attention from Jain ascetics over the ages. Due to the patronage of these holy men, these areas became sanctified, and over the course of time, temples were erected at these locations.

There are five Mahakshetras, or great tirthas, as accepted in the Svetambara faith. These are considered to be the holiest of all pilgrimage sites and are mentioned in the scriptures;

- * Shatrunjaya, Palitana;
- * Sametsikhara;
- * Abu in Rajasthan;
- * Gimar and
- * Taranga in Gujarat.

Other pilgrimage sites that are important are Kangada, Pavapuri, Jaisalmer, Ranakpur and Shravana Belgola. There are, of course, many others that are considered sacred, e.g. Mehsana, Songhad, Devghad, Ellora, Ajanta, Mudbidri, etc.

SHATRUNJAYA, PALITANA: Rishabhath (the first Tirthankar) is said to have attained moksha at this site, and therefore, the principle temple is devoted to him. Over 900 temples are immured in nine enclosures at this ancient Tirtha. Most of the temples can be traced back to the tenth

century AD., but many are considered to have foundations dating back to even earlier. Palitana suffered a lot at the hands of Muslim invaders in the fourteenth and fifteenth century AD., but after considerable renovation and political favour, was reinstated to its present glory in the year 1582 AD. Thousands of pilgrims flock here every year, to climb the 3000 or so steps that cover the two and half mile track to the summit.

SAMETSIKHARA: This site is described as the supreme tirtha; Twenty of the twenty-four Tirthankars meditated and attained liberation here. The mountain is also known as Parshwanath mountain, and rises from forested lower slopes to a summit that bears the principle idol of Parshwanath. In addition to this, there are eleven other temples on the mountain. The pilgrimage circuit is about 30 miles long, and is considered a penance comparable only to spiritual cleansing.

MOUNT ABU: At a height of 1220 meters above sea level, in the lap of Mount Abu, lie the Delwara temples. Renown world over for their exquisitely delicate white marble carving, the ceilings, domes, pillars, arched gateways and walls of these temples are almost indescribable in their beauty. There are two major temple complexes, Vimalavasahi commissioned by Vimalashah, and Lunavasahi - commissioned by the Vastupal - Tejpal brothers. Vimalavasahi houses the image of Rishabhath, while the Lunavasahi temple is dedicated to Neminath. It is said that Vimalashah obtained the land for the temple only after covering the ground in gold coins. Furthermore, the masons working on intricate designs, were asked to scrape the marble, rather than chisel it, and were paid in the weight of gold equivalent to the marble dust collected. The Delwara temples truly captivate the heart of the pilgrim.

TARANGA: In the Thirteenth century A.D., King Kumarpala commissioned the building of a vast temple in the midst of the Arvalli Hills. Legend has it that at the time it was built, this temple had fireproof wood ceilings, that would expel water from the wood in the event of a fire. The temple was largely destroyed after Kumarpala's reign, but was extensively renovated in the sixteenth century under the rule of Akbar. Today, the main temple at Taranga

is considered an architectural beauty, with a colossal spire that rises 142 feet into the sky.

GIRNAR: This hill is referred to as Ujjyantagiri or Raivatgiri in the Scriptures. It is here that Neminath (the twenty second Tirthankar) renounced the worldly life to become a monk, gained omniscience and attained moksha. The salient temple on this Thirtha is over 1000 years old and is surrounded by a courtyard that contains over 70 Jina images. The temples at Girnar have undergone extensive restoration work, most of which is well documented in inscriptions.

KANGADA: This tirtha is considered to be of the time of Neminath, and is one of the earliest known existing Jain temples in worship today. The principle image is that of Rishabhath. The simplicity and plain interior of the temple reflects the ancient architectural style. Set in the shadow of the Himalaya mountains, the scenery reflects the peaceful aura of this shrine.

PAVAPURI: Set in the midst of a lake full of lotus flowers, this shrine dedicated to Mahavir Swami, marks the site of his final emancipation from this world. According to the popular belief, the lake has been formed over hundreds of years, by countless pilgrims marking their foreheads with a pinch of dust from this holy ground. To the pilgrim, the surrounding landscape of Pavapuri is also sacred, for this where Mahavir Swami propagated Jainism as we know it today.

JAISALMER: The tirtha is situated on top of the hill in a fortress near Jaisalmer town. The temple was built in the twelfth century under the rule of Rawal Jesalji, and was reconsecrated in the fifteenth century. Carved in magnificent yellow stone, from afar, the domes and spires mimic gold structures. Every inch of visible stone surface is carved with intricate design, and these are matched by the splendid architecture of the temple itself. This type of craftsmanship is unique to Jaisalmer, and is also displayed in other buildings within the city. There are over seven libraries or bhandaras housing a collection of ancient Jain palm leaf manuscripts, eighteen upashrayas and over 7000 idols of Jinas, the largest number outside the temple city of Palitana. All these establish Jaisalmer as an important place of pilgrimage.

RANAKPUR: Built in the style of a mythical airborne vehicle known as the Naliniguhna, the temple complex at Ranakpur has a history dating back to the fifteenth century. Commissioned by Dharnashah, the temple took over 50 years to complete; and is enriched by 84 shrines, 29 halls with open courts, 1444 majestic pillars, 32 arched gateways and 38,000 sculpted images set on three floors. The main temple shrine is a chaumukha, or four faced shrine, housing four six foot high statues of Rishabh Nath. The temple was extensively repaired and restored to its former glory after a long period of abandonment.

SRAVANABELGOLA: Located in South India, about 62 miles from Mysore, is Sravana Belgola. Here on a hill, at 470 feet above the level of the plain is a 57 feet high majestic statue of Bahubali, carved from solid granite. This is the largest monolithic statue in the world, and was created in 981 A.D. One has to climb over 500 steps in order to reach the summit of the hill where only the feet of the statue are worshipped on a daily basis. Once every 12 to 15 years, a colossal scaffolding is erected and the image is bathed from above. This statue of Bahubali is also known as Gommateshwara Bahubali, and is one of the most important Digambara places of pilgrimage in India.

There is a great value associated with visiting places of pilgrimage. The journey itself, can often be a test of endurance, and in earlier times (and even today), was regarded as a form of penance or austerity. Devout pilgrims will walk on foot e.g. monks or nuns, whilst others may choose to travel by alternative means. It is considered equally pious to help other people go on pilgrimage, and often wealthy Jains will sponsor and arrange for large pilgrim parties to visit sacred sites.

Different people will reach differently to the experience of being a pilgrim. Many are drawn into the religious spice that flavours these sites, and will deepen their spiritual enhancement. Some will return the following year to repeat the penance, but one thing is certain; the pilgrim will never go home untouched by the spiritual aura associated with places of pilgrimage. The pilgrimage path is truly sacred one.

FAMILY TREE

	ASHOK	KESHAVLAL	MAKANJI	BHOJA	DHARA	HIRA	NONGHA	DEDHAR
MITAL	MUKESH	KESHAVLAL						
	DILIP	KESHAVLAL						
	RAMESH	PREMCHAND	MAKANJI	BHOJA	DHARA	HI RA	NONGHA	DEDHAR
	BHARAT	PREMCHAND						
	PRATUL	PREMCHAND						
	MOHAN	JIVRAJ	MAKANJI	BHOJA	DHARA	HI RA	NONGHA	DEDHAR
	KANTI	JIVRAJ						
	RASHMI	VELJI	MAKANJI	BHOJA	DHARA	HIRA	NONGHA	DEDHAR
	KAUSHIK	RAICHAND	NARSHI	BHOJA	DHARA	HIRA	NONGHA	DEDHAR
	PRAFUL	RAICHAND						
		AMRUTLAL	NARSHI	BHOJA	DHARA	HIRA	NONGHA	DEDHAR
	ANUP	CH HOTALAL	NARSHI	BHOJA	DHARA	HIRA	NONGHA	DEDHAR
	AJAY	CH HOTALAL						
	KETAN	GULABCHAND	NARSHI	BHOJA	DHARA	HIRA	NONGHA	DEDHAR

		CHAMPAK	NARSHI	BHOJA	DHARA	HIRA	NONGHA	DEDHAR
	NIKHIL	SOB HAG	NARSHI	BHOJA	DHARA	HIRA	NONGHA	DEDHAR
	NEEL	SOBHAG						
	SHEETUL	SHANTILAL	DEVCHAND	BHOJA	DHARA	HIRA	NONGHA	DEDHAR
	AMIT	RATILAL	DEVCHAND	BHOJA	DHARA	HIRA	NONGHA	DEDHAR
	SACHIN	ASHWIN	DEVCHAND	BHOJA	DHARA	HIRA	NONGHA	DEDHAR
		TANSUKH	DEVCHAND	BHOJA	DHARA	HIRA	NONGHA	DEDHAR
			KARABHAI	BHOJA	DHARA	HIRA	NONGHA	DEDHAR
		ARUN	LAD HA	KHIMA	DHARA	HIRA	NONGHA	DEDHAR
				NATHUBHAI	DHARA	HIRA	NONGHA	DEDHAR
		RATILAL	RAISHI	LAKHAMSI	DHARA	HIRA	NONGHA	DEQHAR
	SANJA Y	ZAVERCHAND	RAISHI					
NITISH	RAJEEV	ZAVERCHAND						
	CHETAN	GULABCHAND	RAISHI	LAKHAMSI	DHARA	HIRA	NONGHA	DEDHAR
	MANAN	GULABCHAND	RAISHI					

	HITESH	DIUP	RAISHI	LAKHAMSI	DHARA	HIRA	NONGHA	DEDHAR
	PARAS	DIUP						
	SACHIN	SHAIKESH	HANSRAJ	LAKHAMSI	DHARA	HIRA	NONGHA	DEDHAR
				MEPA	DHARA	HIRA	NONGHA	DEDHAR
				KANA	DHARA	HIRA	NONGHA	DEDHAR
	MANISH	MANSUKH	KHETSI	DEVRAJ	DHARA	HIRA	NONGHA	DEDHAR
	SAMIR	MANSUKH						
		ARA VIND	KHETSI	DEVRAJ	DHARA	HI RA	NONGHA	DEDHAR
		CHANDRAKANT	GULABCHAND	DEVRAJ	DHARA	HIRA	NONGHA	DEDHAR
		HARESH	PANACHAND	DEVRAJ	DHARA	HIRA	NONGHA	DEDHAR
	KALPESH	RAMESH	NEMCHAND	DEVRAJ	DHARA	HIRA	NONGHA	DEDHAR
	DIPEN	MUKESH	NEMCHAND	DEVRAJ	DHARA	HIRA	NONGHA	DEDHAR
	VISHAL	HASMUKH	NEMCHAND	DEVRAJ	DHARA	HIRA	NONGHA	DEDHAR
		HITESH	NEMCHAND					
		ANIL	NEMCHAND					

		SUNIL	HARAKHCHAND	LALJI	DHARA	HIRA	NONGHA	DEDHAR
		HITESH	HARAKHCHAND					
	CHIRAG	RAMESH	GULABCHAND	LALJI	DHARA	HIRA	NONGHA	DEDHAR
	SUMIT	RAMESH						
	NIRAV	PRAFUL	GULABCHAND	LALJI	DHARA	HIRA	NONGHA	DEDHAR
	PARIN	MANSUKH	PREMCHAND	LALJI	DHARA	HIRA	NONGHA	DEDHAR
		ARVIND	PREMCHAND					I-
			KARMAN	RUPA	DEVA	HIRA	NONGHA	DEDHAR
	ASHOK	RAICHAND	SAMANT	RUPA	DEVA	HIRA	NONGHA	DEDHAR
	JAYESH	RA TILAL	SAMANT					
	KETAN	VELJI	JUTTHA	JESANG	DEVA	HIRA	NONGHA	DEHAR
	PRASAN	VEWI						
HITESH	VENICHAND	NA-RSHI	PANACHAND	BHIMA	DEVA	HIRA	NONGHA	DEDHAR
HARSHAD	VENICHAND	NARSHI						
MAN ISH	VENICHAND	NARSHI						

MEHUL	SHOBHAG	NARSHI						
NEEL	CHIMANLAL	NARSHI						
KALPESH	RAMESH	NARSHI						
SAMIR	RASIK	NARSHI						
MUKESH	CHANDRKANT	NARSHI						
	SHASHIKANT	JAY ANTILAL	PANACHAND	BHIMA	DEVA	HIRA	NONGHA	DEDHAR
	JA YESH	JAY ANTILAL						
	BHARAT	JAY ANTILAL						
		ZAVERCHAND	KHETA	BHIMA	DEVA	HI RA	NONGHA	DEDHAR
	ASHWIN	HIRJI	KACHRA	HEM RAJ	DEVSHI	HIRA	NONGHA	DEDHAR
ATEET	BHARAT	HIRJI	KACHRA					
	HITESH	JAY ANTILAL	KACHRA	HEMRAJ	DEVSHI	HI RA	NONGHA	DEDHAR
	KIRAN	JAYANTILAL						
	JAYESH	JAY ANTILAL						
			PUNJA	HEM RAJ	DEVSHI	HIRA	NONGHA	DEDHAR

HITESH	MANSUKH	JIVRAJ	DEVRAJ	DEPAR	HIRA	NONGHA	DEDHAR
PARESH	MANSUKH	JIVRAJ	DEVRAJ	DEPAR	HI RA	NONGHA	DEDHAR
	SANTILAL	JIVRAJ					
	DHIRU	JIVRAJ					
	ASHWIN	JIVRAJ	DEVRAJ	DEPAR	HIRA	NONGHA	DEDHAR
	NARESH	JIVRAJ					
AASHISH	DINESH	PUNJA	DEVRAJ	DEPAR	HIRA	NONGHA	DEDHI4R
	ANIL	PUNJA	DEVRAJ				
			VEERA	DEPAR	HIRA	NONGHA	DEDHAR
			VIRPAR	DEPAR			
SAGAR	ARVIND	BHARMAL	LAKHAMAN	DEPAR	HI RA	NONGHA	DEDHAR
	DHANJI	BHARMAL					
	KISHORE	BHARMAL					
DHIRAJLAL	AMRUTLAL	VELJI	LAKHAMAN	DEPAR	HIRA	NONGHA	DEDHAR
	HIRJI	VELJI					

		KANTI	VEWI					
	RASHMI	CHANDULAL	MEGHJI	LAKHMAN	DEPAR	HIRA	NONGHA	DEDHAR
	RAJIV	CHAGAN	MEGHJI					
	HIREN	CHAGAN	MEGHJI					
	SHITAL	CHAGAN	MEGHJI					
		LILADHAR	PREMCHAND	LAKHMAN	DEPAR	HIRA	NONGHA	DEDHAR
		MANSUKH	PREMCHAND					
		NAVIN	PREMCHAND					
		MAGAN	HANSRAJ	JETHA	DEVAN	RAN MAL	NONGHA	DEDHAR
	SUNIL	MANSUKH	HANSRAJ					
	NITESH	BHAGWANJI	HANSRAJ					
		JAYANTILAL	HANSRAJ					
SAGAR	NARAKHCHAND	SOMCHAND	LAKHANSI	JETHA	DEVAN	RAN MAL	NONGHA	DEDHAR
DEEPEN	HARAKHCHAND	SOMCHAND						
BHAVIK	CHANDRKANT	SOMCHAND						

KEVAL	CHANDRKANT	SOMCHAND						
NEEL	CHANDRKANT	SOMCHAND						
SHRENIK	JITENDRA	SOMCHAND						
	NITIN	CHUNILAL	LAKHAMSI	JETHA	DEVAN	RANMAL	NONGHA	DEDHAR
	SANJAY	CHOT ALAL	LAKHAMSI	JETHA	DEVAN	RAN MAL	NONGHA	DEDHAR
	DEEPEN	CHOT ALAL						
		SUBHASH	HIRJI	MEGHAN	DEVAN	RANMAL	NONGHA	DEDHAR
		SHANTI	HIRJI					
		KEVAL	HIRJI					
		HARAKHCHAND	KESHAVJI	MURA	DEVAN	RANMAL	NONGHA	DEDHAR
	SHAILESH	HEMCHAND	KESHAVJI	MU RA	DEVAN	RANMAL	NONGHA	DEDHAR
	ATUL	HEMCHAND	KESHAVJI					
			GOVINDJI	DEVRAJ	RAJA	RANMAL	NONGHA	DEDHAR
			SEJPAR	DEVRAJ				
	PRADIP	GULAB	MOTICHAND	DEVRAJ				

	NEELES	GULAB						
	PARAS	CHUNILAL	MOICHAND	DEVRAJ	RAJA	RANMAL	NONGHA	DEDHAR
	PRIYESH	KANTILAL	MOTICHAND					
	SHUKHEN	KANTILAL	MOICHAND					
	PARIN	VEENU	MOICHAND					
			NATHU	GOSAR	RAJA	RANMAL	NONGHA	DEDHAR
			JUTHALAL	GOSAR				
	KUMAR	VEWI	PREMCHAND	GOSAR				
	TINU	VEWI						
	SHAKUNJ	VRAJLAL	PREMCHAND	GOSAR	RAJA	RANMAL	NONGHA	DEDHAR
	NEEMIT	CHANDULAL	PRAMCHAND					
	BEJU	JAY ANILAL	LAKHANSI	SHAMANT	RAJA	RANMAL	NONGHA	DEDHAR
	SWIT	JAY ANILAL	LAKHANSI					
	VISHAL	GULAB	LAKHANSI	SHAMANT	RAJA	RANMAL	NONGHA	DEDHAR
		RAMESH	LAKHANSI					

		MANU	LAKHANSI					
			VEERCHAND	SHAMANT	RAJA	RANMAL	NONGHA	DEDHAR
		SHOBHAG	ZAVERCHAND	SHAMANT	RAJA	RANMAL	NONGHA	DEDHAR
	SHRIKAR	CHANDRAKANT	ZAVERCHAND					
	ANAND	DINESH	ZAVERCHAND					
	PARESH	DINESH	ZAVERCHAND					"
	SARJI	MAHENDRA	LAW I	SHAMANT	RAJA	RANMAL	NONGHA	DEDHAR
		HITESH	LAWI					
	PARESH	CHANDRAKANT	LILADHAR	SHAMANT	RAJA	RANMAL	NONGHA	DEDHAR
	BHADRIK	CHANDRAKANT	LILADHAR					
		MUKESH	LILADHAR					
			MEPA	VEERPAR	PARBAT	RANMAL	NONGHA	DEDHAR
MAHESH	MAGAN	MEGHJI	RUPSI	VEERPAR	PARBAT	RANMAL	NONGHA	DEDHAR
DIPAK	SOB HAG	MEGHJI						
HITESH	SOBHAG	MEGHJI						

RAJESH	BABULAL	MEGHJI						
MAN GAL	MAHENDRA	MEGHJI						
PRADHYUT	MAHENDRA	MEGHJI						
SACHAN	PRAVIN	MEGHJI						
MANISH	VI NOD	RAISHI	RUPSI	VEERPAR	PARBAT	RANMAL	NONGHA	DEDHAR
SACHIN	RAMNIK	RAISHI						
BHAVIN	CHANDRAKANT	RAISHI						
APURVA	JAYENDRA	RAISHI						
ARKESH	KANTI	RAISHI						
	HARILAL	RAISHI						
SHAILESH	HIRJI	DEVCHAND	RUPSI	VEERPAR	PARBAT	RANMAL	NONGHA	DEDHAR
SAMIR	LAWI	DEVCHAND						
AMIT	LAWI							
VIPUL	RAMESH							
VINIT	RAMESH							

CHIRAG	RAINI							
VIRAG	RAINI							
	PRAFUL	DEVCHAND	RUPSI	VEERPAR	PARBAT	RANMAL	NONGHA	DEDHAR
	SATDEEP	PREMCHAND	KHIMJI	VEERPAR				
AJAY	HARAKHCHAND	SOMCHAND	KUMBHA	MOKAR	MURAG	RANMAL	NONGHA	DEDHAR
MICHAEL	JAYANTILAL	SOMCHAND						
ANKIT	MANSUKH	SOMCHAND						f
	MAYUR	SOMCHAND						
KIRTAN	AMICHAND	LAWI	KUMBHA	MOKAR	MURAG	RANMAL	NONGHA	DEDHAR
	KANTI	LAWI						
	MAHENDRA	LAWI						
PARESH	MANSUKH	PREMCHAND	RAIMAL	MOKAR	MURAG	RANMAL	NONGHA	DEDHAR
RAIIV	MANSUKH							
SUNAY	BIPIN	PREMCHAND						
NILESH	BIPIN							

PARAS	PRAKASH	PREMCHAND						
SANJAY	PRAKASH							
	KISHORE	PREMCHAND						
			HARAKHCHAND	JIVRAJ	MURAG	RANMAL	NONGHA	DEDHAR
	BIMAL	SHANTILAL	VERSHI	JIVRAJ				
	NITAL	SHANTILAL	VERSHI					
	NIAL	MAHENDRA	VERSHI					
	NATASHA	MAHENDRA						
		KISHORE	VERSHI					
			LAKHAMSHI	POPAT	MURAG	RAN MAL	NONGHA	DEDHAR
	JINESH	JAG DISH	PREMCHAND	POPAT				
	PARISH	JAGDISH	PREMCHAND					
		VIPIN	PREMCHAND					
			MEGHJI	JUTTHA	MURAG	RAN MAL	NONGHA	DEDHAR
			ZAVERCHAND	JUTTHA				

DILIP	ARVIND	KARAMAN	JUTTHA				
SHITAL	ARVIND	KARAMAN					
	MANSUKH	KARAMAN					
RIKHESH	MOHAN	RAICHAND	KHETSHI	MURAG	RAN MAL	NONGHA	DEDHAR
NARESH	MOHAN	RAICHAND					
NAVIN	LILADHAR	RAICHAND					
VIMAL	LILADHAR	RAICHAND					
MANSUKH	PANACHAND	RAICHAND	KHETSHI	MURAG	RAN MAL	NONGHA	DEDHAR
PARESH	PANACHAND	RAICHAND					
			SAMANT	MURAG	RAN MAL	NONGHA	DEDHAR
			MEPA	ANAND	MAY A	NONGHA	DEDHAR
SEJAL	NAVIN	VEERCHAND	BHARMAL	ANAND	MAY A	NONGHA	DEDHAR
SETAL	DHIRAJLAL	VEERCHAND					
	RAMESH	VEERCHAND					
	SUB HASH	CHAGANLAL	BHARMAL	ANAND	MAYA	NONGHA	DEDHAR

	HASMU KH	CHAGANLAL					
	MANSUKH	HIRJI	BHARMAL	ANAND	MAY A	NONGHA	DEDHAR
	DINESH	HIRJI	BHARMAL				
		PANACHAND	KESHAVJI	ANAND	MAYA	NONGHA	DEDHAR
JITENDRA	AMRUTLAL	KUMBHA	KARAMAL	ANAND	MAY A	NONGHA	DEDHAR
SUBHASH	AMRUTLAL	KUMBHA					
BIPIN	RAICHAND	KUMBHA	KARAMAL	ANAND	MAY A	NONGHA	DEDHAR
AN ISH	RAICHAND	KUMBHA					
KUNJAR	PANACHAND	KUMBHA	. KARAMAL	ANAND	MAY A	NONGHA	DEDHAR
					DHARAMSHI	NONGHA	DEDHAR
				DEPAR	RA ISH I	NONGHA	DEDHAR
				KARA	RAISHI	NONGHA	DEDHAR
			KHIMA	PUNRAJ	RAISHI	NONGHA	DEDHAR
			LALA	PUNRAJ			
		KUMBHA	NATHU	PUNRAJ			

			FULCHAND	JHINA	PUNRAJ	RAISHI	NONGHA	DEDHAR
PRITESH	SURENDRA	GOSAR	VEERPAR	JHINA	PUNRAJ			
AMIT	SURENDRA							
ANKIT	SURENDRA							
	RASIK	GOSAR						
	KISHOR	GOSAR						
HASIT	CHOTALAL	GOSAR						
NIKHIL	CHOT ALAL							
PARAS	JA YSUKH	GOSAR						
SAMIR	JA YSUKH							
	ANIL	MULCHAND	VEERPAR	JHINA				
	SANDEEP	MULCHAND	VEERPAR	JHINA				
	SUNIL	MULCHAND	VEERPAR					
	DINESH	MULCHAND						
	SUDHIR	BHAJLAL	VEERPAR	JHINA	PUNRAJ	RAISHI	NONGHA	DEDHAR

	HITESH	BHAILAL	VEERPAR					
	PRAFUL	RAICHAND	DEVRAJ	KHETA	PUNRAJ	RAISHI	NONGHA	DEDHAR
KALPESH	HARKHCHAND	RAICHAND	DEVRAJ					
BIPIN	HARKHCHAND							
PANKAJ	KESHAVLAL	RAICHAND	DEVRAJ	KHETA	PUNRAJ	RAISHI	NONGHA	DEDHAR
HIREN	AMRUTLAL	RAICHAND	DEVRAJ	KHETA	PUNRAJ	RAISHI	NONGHA	DEDHAR
PRAFUL	AMRUTLAL	RAICHAND						
KIRAN	PRAVIN	RAICHAND						
	CHOT ALAL	PUNJA	DEVRAJ	KHETA	PUNRAJ	RAISHI	NONGHA	DEDHAR
	ASHOK	PUNJA	DEVRAJ					
	KIRIT	PUNJA	DEVRAJ	KHETA	PUNRAJ	RAISHI	NONGHA	DEDHAR
BIPIN	GULAB	PUNJA	DEVRAJ					
	NITIN	MEGHAJI	DEVRAJ					
	DIKSHIT	MEGHAJI	DEVRAJ					
	ANIL	JAY ANTILAL	DEVRAJ					

	JA YESH	JAY ANTILAL						
	MAN ISH	JAY ANTILAL						
	SAN DEEP	JAYANTILAL						
	MANOJ	JAYANTILAL						
	KALPESH	JAYANTILAL						
		GULAB	LAKHAMSHI	JETHA	SAGAN	RAISHI	NONGHA	DEDHAR
		CHANDRAKANT	LAKHAMSHI					
		ANIL	LAKHAMSHI					
		SUBHASH	LAKHAMSHI					
		RAJU	LAKHAMSHI					
		JITENDRA	LAKHAMSHI					
	RITESH	MANSUKH	MAGHJI	JETHA	SAGAN	RAISHI	NONGHA	DEDHAR
	BHADRESH	MANSUKH						
	JITESH	MANSUKH						
	HARSHID	HARKHCHAND	MEGHJI					

	DARSHAN	VI NOD	MEGHJI					
	SUCHIT	PRADIP	MEGHJI					
	JITAL	VIJAY	LILADHAR	JETHA	SAGAN	RAISHI	NONGHA	DEDHAR
	VISHAL	VIJAY						
	SAGAR	RAMESH	LILADHAR	JETHA	SAGAN	RAISHI	NONGHA	DEDHAR
	SUNIL	ASHOK	LILADHAR					
		NA THALAL	MOTICHAND	JETHA	SAGAN	RAISHI	NONGHA	DEDHAR
		DEEPAK	MOTICHAND					
		BHAILAL	MOTICHAND					
		CHOTALAL	JIVRAJ	JETHA	SAGAN	RAISHI	NONGHA	DEDHAR
		VIJAY	JIVRAJ					
	ASHWIN	KANTI	JIVRAJ					
	HARASAD	KANTI	JIVRAJ					
	JITENDRA	KANTI	JIVRAJ					
	NILESH	AMRUTLAL	JIVRAJ	DEVRAJ	SAGAN	RAISHI	NONGHA	DEDHAR

	HARASAD	RASHMI	JIVRAJ	DEVRAJ				
		PANACHAND	JIVRAJ					
		RATILAL	JIVRAJ					
		HARAKHCHAND	JIVRAJ					
	HARASAD	RAMESH	MOTICHAND	DEVRAJ	SAGAN	RAISHI	NONGHA	DEDHAR
	NEEL	RASIK	MOTICHAND	DEVRAJ	SAGAN	RAISHI	NONGHA	DEDHAR
	RISHI	ANIL	MOTICHAND	DEVRAJ				...
	ANIT	JINIT	MOTICHAND					
	PRUNIT	JINIT						
	NISHIT	JINIT						
		TARACHAND	MEPA	MEGHA	SAGAN	RAISHI	NONGHA	DEDHAR
		LAW I	MEPA	MEGHA				
			MERAG	RAJ PAR	KACHARA	RAISHI	NONGHA	DEDHAR
			NA THALAL	RAJ PAR				
AMIT	PREMCHAND	LAKHAMSHI	SAMANT	PACHA	KACHARA	RAISHI	NONGHA	DEDHAR

	PREMCHAND	LAKHAMSHI						
BIPESH	RAMESH	LAKHAMSHI						
RAVI	SURESH	LAKHAMSHI						
CHETAN	SOMCHAND	ZAVERCHAND	SAMANT	PACHA	KACHARA	RAISHI	NONGHA	DEDHAR
CHAROSH	SOMCHAND	ZAVERCHAND						
DIPESH	SOMCHAND	ZAVERCHAND						
KETAN	DENESH	VEWI	SAMANT	PACHA				
	KISHOR	VEWI						
DIPEN	RAMESH	VEWI						
	LILADHAR	HEM RAJ	SAMANT					
	MOHAN	HEMRAJ						
	CHANDRAKANT	HEMRAJ						
	BHARAT	HAMRAJ						
DINESH	MEGHAJI	LAKHAMSHI	DEVSHI	PACHA	KACHARA	RAISHI	NONGHA	DEDHAR
HASMUKH	MEGHAJI	LAKHAMSHI						

BHUPENDRA	GULAB	LAKHAMSHI						
KISHOR	GULAB							
DIUP	RATILAL	VARDHMAN	DEVSHI	PACHA	KACHARA	RAISHI	NONGHA	DEDHAR
RAJESH	RA TILAL							
CHIRAG	MAHENDRA	VARDHMAN						
	PREMCHAND	VARDHMAN						
	RAJNI	VARDHMAN						
	INDRAVIJAY	VARDHMAN						
	HEMANT	VARDHMAN						
	CHANDRAKANT	LAWI	DEVSHI					
	INDRAKANT	LAW I	DEVSHI					
	ASHWIN	DEVCHAND	DEVSHI					
RIKESH	RASHIK	DEVCHAND						
ANAND	RASHIK	DEVCHAND						
	BHAGESH	DEVCHAND						

VIJAY	DEVCHAND							
	AMU	VEERCHAND	JrnHA	PACHA	KACHARA	RAISHI	NONGHA	DEDHAR
	NAVIN	DEVJI	JrnHA					
	PANKAJ	DEVJI	JETTHA					
	SURESH	DEVJI	JETTHA					
				BHIMA	KACHARA	RAISHI	NONGHA	DEDHAR
			HANSRAJ	KUMBHA	KACHARA	RAISHI	NONGHA	DEDHAR
HARAKHCHAND	MANSUKH	POPATLAL	VEERPAR	KUMBHA	KACHARA	RAISHI	NONGHA	DEDHAR
AM IT	MANSUKH	POPATLAL						
VINOD	MANSUKH	POPATLAL						
NILESH	RAMESH	POPATLAL						
VISHAL	SURENDRA	POPATLAL						
ATUL	SOMCHAND	LAKHMAN	JESANG	BHOJA	KACHARA	RAISHI	NONGHA	DEDHAR
KALPESH	GULAB	LAKHMAN						
HITESH	GULAB	LAKHMAN						

RUMIT	DINESH	LAKHMAN						
	FULCHAND	LILADHAR	JESANG	BHOJA	KACHARA	RAISHI	NONGHA	DEDHAR
	ASHWIN	LILADHAR	JESANG					
DIUP	MANSUKH	LILADHAR	JESANG					
BABU	MANSUKH	LILADHAR						
JIGNESH	DHIRAJLAL	LILADHAR						
KETAN	DHIRAJLAL	LILADHAR						
MILAN	BHARAT	LILADHAR						
	ANIL	MULJI	JESANG	BHOJA	KACHARA	RAISHI	NONGHA	DEDHAR
	HASMUKH	MULJI						
	KIRTI	MULJI						
RUM IT	GULAB	KESHAVJI	JETTHA	BHOJA				
	VIPUL	KESHAVJI	JETTHA	BHOJA	KACHARA	RAISHI	NONGHA	DEDHAR

MAP OF 52 OSHWAL VILLAGES OF HALAR

