



OUR MISSION...

" TO STRENGTHEN AND UNITE THE PRAJAPATI COMMUNITY "



- STRATEGY REPORT
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- NAVRATRI AND DIWALI
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Namaste & Jai Shree Krishna

The last edition was published way back in April 2009. The edition focused on issues relating to the environment and how it affects the Prajapati Community. It was very well received by our members and also from the wider environmental community. This edition's main thrust is on "SPA (UK)'s Future Strategy"

Thirty Six people representing all the branches and the management of SPA(UK) attended a Strategy Weekend, which was held in Birmingham from Friday 11th – 13th September 2009 at the Fircroft College in Birmingham. This was followed up by a one day seminar to prepare the output. You will find a summary report in this edition.

Branches have been active in promoting the objects of our Association. It is also encouraging to hear from younger members who have taken time out in getting involved with Samaj and Charity activities. We actively encourage our members to take part in wider activities and use this medium

to report their experiences. We have also listened to children, who wanted to have a page of their interest.

The Editorial team lost the services of Bhavesh and Jiten due to their personal circumstances. We would like to thank them for their contributions over the past 4 editions and wish them good luck for the future. We are therefore looking for new recruits to join us.

We would also like to acknowledge the contribution from Heena Mistry from Leicester for preparing the front page of this edition. Heena Mistry and Yamini Prajapati also from Leicester designed the Mahila Samelan Poster, which is on the back page. Well done to both.

Finally, the editorial team would like to thank you for your support in the past and also wish you a very happy 2010. Please keep sending us your articles and we particularly are looking for contributions in Gujarati.

Jitubhai & Vipul

You can email your articles and suggestions to:



Jitubhai C Mistry

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or



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The Importance of getting involved in Samaj Activities



The reason why I get involved in Samaj activities is because you get to learn about your roots and culture. You get to learn about the Hindu religion and how and why we are Prajapati's.

I think we need more youngsters to come forward and organise more activities and bring the Prajapati Samaj forward. But we need to make the younger and older generation understand what and why it is important for our members to understand why we are Prajapati's and

why we should get involved with Samaj activities.

I would like to urge members please get involved. If you get involved our community will be one big happy family.

This future of the Prajapati organisation lies with the younger generation.

**Jessica Vipulbhai Mistry – Age 8
Birmingham Branch**

Be proud to be Prajapati !!!

President's Message

TO STRENGTHEN AND UNITE THE PRAJAPATI COMMUNITY

A very Happy New Year to all,

As we head into the next decade, you can't help but reflect on the achievements, progress and hurdles we faced as individuals, as a family and as a community.

The circle of life brings with it, the loss of beloved ones and the joy of new born children. Within this period, lie all the challenges of life. There appears to be a fundamental shift in the way we conduct our lives, who we interact with and what influence we have on the future generations.

As immigrants to the UK, our parents and grandparents faced dramatic changes within their lives. I often feel that the hardship of those making the transition from India to UK, in many cases via East Africa, in the last 50 years, will rarely be understood by generations to come. However, the values and work ethics that they have instilled in us, stands them in good stead. In this fast and ever-changing modern world, our challenge will be to maintain pride in our identity and roots. Let us not forget that our rich culture and religion provides an invaluable and essential framework in our daily lives. Devoid of this and we may find ourselves in same vacuum that we find many Western societies in.

In years to come, our children and grandchildren will ask who we are, where do we come from, what identifies us in terms of culture and religion. The Samaj has invariably helped provide a platform for such education and activities in the past.

Shree Prajapati Association (UK) has developed an enviable reputation amongst the UK Gujarati communities and also on an international basis. Its' members are proud to be Prajapaties and aspire to maintain their culture, identity and religious beliefs.

And therefore, it was timely that 35 years since its inception, SPA UK held its first Strategy Weekend last September. A time to reflect, time to consolidate and time to plan ahead.

The time for the 36 candidates, young and old, past and current Executives, together was invaluable – the unity and determination to forge change evidently strong. We have a plan – a plan which with your co-operation, we can deliver – to make our Samaj the first port of call for every Prajapati.

Action always speaks louder than words; therefore, let us ensure that with harmony and unity, with a new vision, we continue to build our Samaj to be a wonderful family that we all are proud to belong to.

Kiran D. Mistry MBA
SPA (UK) President



Namaste Members,

I wish all members a Happy New Year and hope that 2010 will bring happiness, peace and unity to all SPA (UK) members and their families.

Well, a lot of progress has been made since my last update in the 4th edition of the Samachar. You must have also read the report on the Samaj activities in the Sandesh, which was available at from your local branch.

In the months of October and November all branches were busy organising Navratri celebrations and Diwali programmes. I am pleased to say that many branches had younger members involved who proudly participated in these cultural activities and helped their branches to put together a wonderful show. I urge younger members to keep up with this good work and encourage others to come forward.

Many of you took time and trouble to complete and return the questionnaire in preparation for the Strategy Weekend. The feedback that was received by the college was very useful for our weekend discussion. You provided the facilitators at Fircroft College with true and honest views and these points were discussed at great length by 36 members who attended the 2.5 days course. This was the first time that such a discussion was held by various age groups and experienced members of the Samaj. During that weekend a number of points were highlighted such as communication, involvement of all age groups, our Strengths, Weaknesses Threats and Opportunities and how we can address these concerns that you raised.

The 36 members that were involved met up for a follow up meeting since the Strategic weekend and have drawn up a list of common concerns. Plans are being

drawn up to address these points but we cannot achieve these on our own. We need commitment from all UK branches and in turn that will require the help and dedication of all our members. With your passion to help, we can look forward to addressing the needs of our members in the coming years. Please help us to achieve our goals.

Events to look forward in the coming year are the 30th Mahila Samelan which takes place on 25th April 2010 in Leicester and possibly the 35th anniversary of SPA(UK). The SPA(UK) Mahila sub-committee together with Leicester branch Mahilas are busy with the preparation for this big day. Don't miss this opportunity – book your tickets now through your local branch Mahila representatives.

The ITF (International Trust Fund) sub-committee is inundated with requests for financial assistance with education and health especially from South Gujarat prajapati students and other members. The fund is there, for those in need. If you would like to contribute and help, please contact the ITF secretary Shri Prakashbhai or myself for further information.



Finally, the SPA (UK) AGM is scheduled to be held on Sunday 9th May 2010 in Rugby. Please come along and attend the AGM and give us your views of our current performance and suggestions on how we can improve SPA (UK). This is your opportunity to make a direct representation to the management committee and serve the community. Details of the venue can be obtained from your local branch secretary. We look forward to seeing you then.

Lastly, I would like to thank you all for your support.

Jai Shree Krishna
Jasuben Mistry
SPA (UK) Secretary

સર્વને મારા નમસ્તે અને ૨૦૧૦ના નવા વર્ષની શુભેચ્છા.
'પ્રજાપતિ સમાચાર' ની ચોથી આવૃત્તિ પછી થએલા કામકાજનો હેવાલ તમને 'સંદેશ'ના અંકમાથી મળ્યો હશે. ઓક્ટોબર અને નવેમ્બરમા નવરાત્રિ અને દિવાળીના સાંસ્કૃતિક કાર્યક્રમોમાં યુવાનો અને બાળકોએ ભાગ લઈ શાનદાર રજૂઆત કરે છે તે આનંદની વાત છે.

સપ્ટેમ્બર મહિનામાં સંસ્થાની શાખાઓ અને કાર્યકરોને માર્ગદર્શન આપવાના આશયથી એક સેમિનારનું આયોજન કરવામાં આવ્યું હતું. આપણા સમાજને અસર કરી શકે તેવા વિષયો જેવાંકે : જુદી જુદી ઉંમરની વ્યક્તિઓ કેવી રીતે સમાજની પ્રવૃત્તિઓમાં ભાગ લઈ શકે, વિશેષ સમાચાર અને માહિતીને આપણા સમાજનાસભ્યો માટે શી રીતે ઉપયોગી બનાવી શકાય, સમાજની નબળાઈ કે મજબુતાઈને જાણી તેનો અસરકારક રીતે ઉપયોગ કરવા અંગે તેમજ જાહેર જીવનમાં મળતી તકનો લાભ કઈ રીતે લેવો વિગેરે બાબતો ઉપર કાર્ય કરવા ચર્ચાવિચારણા થઈ હતી. આ સેમિનાર બાદ તૈયાર કરવામાં આવેલા પ્લાનને અમલમાં મુકી આગામી વર્ષોમાં આપના સર્વના સહકારથી સમાજને પ્રગતિને પંથે લઈ જવાનો ઉમદા આશય અમે રાખીએ છીએ.

૨૫મી એપ્રિલ ૨૦૧૦ના રોજ ૩૬મું મહિલા સંમેલન લેસ્ટરમાં રાખવામાં આવ્યું છે અને સમાજની વાર્ષિક જાહેર સભા ૯ મે ૨૦૧૦ના રોજ રજી મુકામે છે. વાર્ષિક જાહેર સભામાં આવી તમે તમારા વિચારો અને સૂચનો રજૂ કરી સમાજની પ્રવૃત્તિને અસરકારક બનાવવામા સહભાગી થાઓ એવી વિનંતી છે.

છેલ્લે આપ સર્વનો આભાર વ્યક્ત કરું છું.

જસુબેન મિસ્ત્રી, મંત્રીશ્રી, શ્રી પ્રજાપતિ સમાજ યુ.કે.

SPA(UK) Strategy!

When setting up the Samaj back in the mid 1970s, our elders saw the need to keep our Prajapati roots intact and with that vision established SPA(UK) to be the platform to address the needs of our community members. The strong foundation that was established at that time brought SPA (UK) through some difficult and challenging times. Today we are seen as a progressive community and there are many organisations that look up to us. The world is evolving and therefore our needs change with time too. With this in mind a programme was arranged to get the shapers, influences and the doers of every branch of SPA (UK) together with SPA (UK) Officers to spend time together to take stock of what we have achieved to date, what the needs of our community are now and then to determine what we can do to meet those needs.

With independent facilitators from Fircroft College in Birmingham, 36 people from all our branches got together on the weekend of 11th September 2009 and spent two and half days deliberating on a number of issues and came up with some fundamental

actions. The group met up again on 1st November 2009 at the SPA Birmingham and agreed on our Mission Statement and a few important action points to take us forward.

A questionnaire was designed by Fircroft College and was distributed widely to members throughout UK. The responses were sent directly to the college and the identity of the respondents was kept confidential. Around 120 completed questionnaires out of 450 that were sent were returned making the results statistically representative. There were many positive feedbacks but also indicated that improvements are necessary. One thing that was strongly evident from the results is that members confirmed the need for the Samaj to maintain our culture, language and our ancestral roots. The general feeling was that we will need to move forward with a clear vision by adopting modern management techniques that are applicable to voluntary organisations.

The SWOT analysis results is summarised in the table below:

Strengths

- Strong Established Network
- Recognised Name

Weaknesses

- Lack of understanding of what Prajapati Samaj stands for (Vision / Aims / Values)
- Lack of effective Communication
- Lack of Participation

Threats

- Loss of membership to other groups
- Gradual loss of Identity (Religion, Culture and Language)
- Apathy
- External Environment

Opportunities

- Improve Image
- Tap into skill base
- Regain and Grow
- Become first point of call
- External Environment

All attendees agreed that the role of SPA (UK) is the "advancement of the Hindu religion and education particularly in Hindu culture and the relief of poverty and sickness among the Prajapati Community". If we can get this right, then the other needs of members that were identified could be fulfilled.

From the discussion that took place during the weekend away and the follow up meeting, a very simple but powerful Mission Statement was developed. A mission statement is a live statement and changes as the need of the organisation changes. The mission statement SPA (UK) will be adopting is:

“TO STRENGTHEN AND UNITE THE PRAJAPATI COMMUNITY”

To enable us to support our mission statement, the following action plans have been agreed.

- Deliver outcome of strategy weekend by 30th April 2010 to branch membership- (Action ALL)
- Define a communication policy within 3 months- (Lead – Jitubhai)
- Definition of Roles and Responsibilities of SPA and produce a Communication draft by 30th March 2010 – (Lead Dineshbhai)
- Role of SPA- (Lead – Manubhai)
- Revisit future events – Aims & Objectives- (Lead – Bijal)
 - Mahila Samelan (Ramilaben before 17th January 2010)
 - Youth Ball
 - Sports Day
- New Event in the next 12 Months- (Lead – Jasuben)

In summary SPA (UK) has taken the 1st step and put a team together to take us all, forward as one team to actually be part of our membership not only at Branch level but also with all our members.

We now look forward to working together to ensure this is a success. All ideas and help are welcome.

LET US WORK TOGETHER AND MAKE THE DIFFERENCE THAT WE ALL ASPIRE

Jai Shri Krishna

શ્રી પ્રજાપતિ સમાજ યુ.કે.ની ભવિષ્યની યોજના

૧૯૭૫માં શ્રી પ્રજાપતિ સમાજની સ્થાપના જ્ઞાતિની તે સમયની જરૂરીઆતને સમજી તેને અનુરૂપ જ્ઞાતિજનોને સહાયરૂપ થવા માટે કરવામાં આવી હતી. આજે આપણે સમાજને એક પ્રગતિશીલ સંસ્થા તરીકે જાહેર જીવનમાં ઉપસાવી શકીએ છીએ. સમાજને બીજી સમક્ષ સંસ્થાઓ માનની નજરે જુએ છે. બદલાતા સમયની સાથે સાથે આપણી જરૂરીઆત પણ બદલાય છે. આ હકીકતને ધ્યાનમાં રાખી સપ્ટેમ્બર ૨૦૦૯માં સમાજના કાર્યકરો અને મેનેજમેન્ટના નિષ્ણાંતો સાથે ચર્ચાવિચારણા ગોઠવવામાં આવી હતી. તે સમયે એક સર્વ પણ કરવામાં આવ્યો હતો અને તે મુજબ આપણા સમાજના સભ્યોએ આપણી ભાષાની, સંસ્કૃતિની અને વંશપરંપરાની જાળવણી માટે સમાજે પગલાં લેવા જોઈએ એવો અભિપ્રાય આપ્યો હતો. આપણી સંસ્થા જેવી સંસ્થાઓને અનુકુળ થઈ શકે એવી આધુનિક મેનેજમેન્ટ ટેકનીકનો ઉપયોગ કરી એક ચોક્કસ ધ્યેયથી સંસ્થાએ જ્ઞાતિની પ્રગતિ માટે કાર્ય કરવું જોઈશે. આ માટે સંસ્થા પ્રજાપતિ જ્ઞાતિના ઉત્કર્ષને લગતા કાર્યમાં ભાગ લઈ સભ્યોની જરૂરીઆતને પુરી કરી શકશે. આ હેતુથી સમાજને માટે એકમિશન સ્ટેટમેન્ટ (કાર્ય કરવા માટેનું એક વિધાન) નક્કી કરવામાં આવ્યું છે:

‘ પ્રજાપતિ જ્ઞાતિને એકત્ર અને મજબુત કરવા કાર્ય કરવું ’

આપણા આ વિધાનને પરિપૂર્ણ કરવા માટે વિવિધ ક્ષેત્રે કાર્ય કરવાના પ્લાન શરૂ કરવામાં આવી રહ્યા છે. આપ સર્વને તમારી શાખામાંથી વખતોવખત વિશેષ માહિતી મળતી રહેશે.

જયશ્રી કૃષ્ણ.....

SPA Birmingham Diwali Show/AGM

SPA Birmingham held their Annual Diwali Show on Saturday 14th November 2009. Despite the dreadful weather the event was well attended by over 200 members. There were items by the Prajapati Gujarati Varg students, dance items by the younger members, two brothers playing instruments and also had the audience involved with a game of Deal or No Deal.

We also had our Annual General Meeting on the day. A few new faces have joined a young and enthusiastic team ready to take on challenges in the coming year and take our organisation forward. The Mahila Team were on hand again who prepared a freshly cooked hot meal. The evening ended with an after party with entertainment from UK top DJ “Birmingham DJ Crew”.

The Trustee’s and the Executive Committee would like to thank all the members that made an effort to help out.



Sanjay & Jayna



Gujarati Varg



Trustees & Executives



'Thinking Hard' - Diwali Show Event



Vinnay & Ajay

Shree Prajapati Mandal (SPM) – Toronto celebrates 35 Years !!!

The Shree Prajapati Mandal (SPM) – Toronto celebrated its 35th anniversary on Sat 21st November at the Hindu Mandir at Professional Court in Mississauga, Toronto.

This was an auspicious day. Some of the original founding Fathers were present to grace the occasion and also, a 2 minute silence was given to remember and honor all our members who had passed away. This was a bitter-sweet moment, a day to celebrate how far we had come as a samaj, to celebrate our achievements and also to remember our beloved members who were not present.

The occasion started with a Prathna from our senior members, some of whom were present that day in 1974 when the samaj was first established. Some of the original founding fathers told us the history of our samaj, the challenges they faced and shared their achievements in growing a

community from 125 to over 3000 plus members as of today.

This occasion also marked the launch of our brand new website (www.spmtoronto.org), a new SPM Logo, the 35th anniversary edition of the Prajapatika (Sandesh) and new directory (address book). What a memorable way to celebrate this occasion !!!

The whole evening was filled with memories, stories, live music, dancing, garba, dandiaras and finally, dinner. Over 1200 members attended the occasion and it was a very fitting way to celebrate 35 years for our Shree Prajapati Mandal here in Toronto.

Jai Shree Krishna,
Jayesh M. Lad
Secretary 2009-2010

MEM Awards SPA Birmingham



SPA Birmingham received a donation of £1,000 from a fund set up a year ago to mark the Centenary of The Midland Electric Manufacturing Company Limited (MEM), the Tyseley -based Electrical Manufacturer, now known as Eaton. MEM made donations of around £50,000 to a number of good causes in this period.

The MEM Centenary fund was set up in September 2008 to support charity fund-raising efforts by Eaton employees and customers.

Eaton offered to match its employees' own fund-raising achievements pound-for-pound. £25,000 was allocated for charities supported by employees while another £25,000 went to the Electrical and Electronic Industries Benevolent Association (EEIBA).

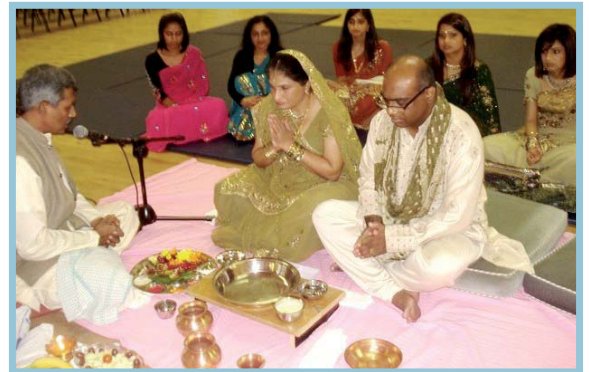
Ambelalbai Lad, Custodian Trustee, and Eaton Applications Engineer Amratbhai Mistry, also a Trustee of SPA Birmingham, received a cheque for £1000 on behalf of the SPA Birmingham Community Centre on Warwick Road. Also present during the handover were, Kelby Henn, Systems Manager and Leo Hayes Plant Manager at Reddings Lane. The SPA Community Centre provides educational and recreational facilities and serves as a Hindu religious Centre for the local community. The money will go towards much-needed renovation of the Centre.

MEM is one of the country's largest electrical equipment manufacturers. Its products, that ranges from domestic switches and socket-outlets to high voltage switchgear for commercial and industrial buildings are found in most major constructions.

Leicester Diwali & Aanakoot Darshan



Diwali Manorajan Participants



Kantibhai & Pushpaben - Aanakoot Pooja



Aanakoot Darshan

Hemant Kumar Mistry's Experience SPA London

Namaste & Jai Shree Krishna

My Name is Hemant Kumar Mistry from London. This year I was elected as Assistant Youth Leader for London Branch. I would like to share with you my recent experiences.

Sport Day 2009 :- was hosted by SPA(London) and was held at Hertfordshire Sport Village. The venue for the 31st Sport Day was amazing and it was good to see that majority of the sports was played within in reach of one another. This was good for the participants as well as spectators who could move around, watch, and feel the buzz of Sports Day! A few new sporting activities were introduced this year. Swimming for girls and boys, age 6 – 16 was one of them and it attracted quite a few young people. Members had travelled from around the country to come to participate and as spectators. People were cheering their teams and generally enjoying the day. We saw some new faces, who didn't shy away from enjoying the moments of the sports day. The weather held up perfectly, with a few breaks of sunshine. Overall, I felt it was a great success.

Navarati 2009 :- was held at the SPA (London) Community Centre which accommodated for the nine nights as well as Poonam Garbas. It was nice to see members of all ages taking part. Facilities were available to members of all ages. There were large plasma screens which showed live transmission of garba's from other rooms in the centre. The Mahilas dressed Mataji in beautiful sarees and they also enjoyed singing garba in the temple room. The conference room on the first floor had a television and live music being sung by Mistry Sur. I truly enjoyed listening to the melodious garbas and being part of our samaj during the Navratri festival.

As an Assistant Youth Leader I have faced a few challenges but I am enjoying the experience. It is a privilege to work with different people and this way you can gain knowledge which will help you with future successes. We can all help and support each other to bring out the best in our branch; not only now but for generations to come.

Diwali In Westminster :- I had a great opportunity to go and celebrate Diwali in Westminster. The celebration of Diwali in Westminster has been ongoing for 8 years. I had a great time and met new faces from other Hindu and Sikh organisations throughout the UK. Diwali



in Westminster is organised by the Hindu Forum of Britain (HFB), and with the support of various organizations. This year, once again it was celebrated in the House of Commons.

As a volunteer, I was given the opportunity to meet and greet all the guests, who were welcomed by offering the delicious Indian sweets; .i.e. Barfi, Penda, Kaju-Katri, etc. Prominent guests including Ministers, MPs and members of the House of Lords were garlanded before they were given the opportunity to address the invited guests. The co-host for the event was none other than Nitin Ganatra; or known as Mr Masood in Eastenders. It was a great opportunity for me to be a part of this enjoyable experience.

"I believe that the aim to success begins from within. This would require determination and only the best of positive encouragement. Without this you would be nothing.

As life being in nature takes its toll; from a small seed into a roots underground, a stem shoots, and finally a leaf. This is the beginning of the future and determines how your destiny will take shape. If anyone tries to break the stem or leaf, it breaks your development processes and slows your inner motivation. This is often done by those you love or admire truly in your heart.It's a way of life..."

Join and get involved!

Hemant Kumar Mistry – Assistant Youth Leader

Preston Branch Diwali Show 2009



Rohan Mistry



Diwali Show - Nima (3rd from left, 2nd row)



Krishna



Rajan & Prian

I remember when I was a child the Diwali Show was one of the year's highlights. Even though Preston Branch is one of the UK's smallest Branches, we always had a variety of items. In the 1990's Preston's Diwali Show consisted a minimum of 20 items with participation from all age groups. Hours were spent preparing, organising and practicing items. The community overloaded committee members with ideas and suggestions. Preston was at its peak. I was always keen and enjoyed taking part. My first performance was at the age of four and I continued performing many years after. As the years went by ideas, support and participants slowed down. Preston's Diwali Show, which was once at an all time high had dwindled!

Two years ago I decided to venture out into choreographing dances. The first dance I taught was to three 7/8 year olds. The song was called Raadhe Raadhe Shyaman Pyaare. To my amazement I enjoyed not only teaching the dance but also explaining the meaning of the words to the young girls; from this they were able to understand Lord Krishna's glories.

This year I took on the role of the Diwali Show coordinator. My aim was to bring the community's passion, enthusiasm and excitement back into the Diwali Show. I wanted the show to be diverse, exploring all aspects of tradition and culture. With this in mind I was able to work with and encourage members of the Samaj to get involved. There were over 37 willing participants of all ages, ranging from 5 years to 75 years and 5 enthusiastic choreographers, two of which were teaching for the first time. It was an honour working side by side with the

individuals who once taught me to dance. Their guidance, knowledge and experience steered me in the correct direction. Months of dedicated hard work was put in by all.

By working together Preston Samaj was able to produce a riveting Diwali Show with 15 excellently organised items. The show included a variety of dances; our own Preston Samaj ladies performed a traditional Garbo. The younger children performed religious dances, praying to Lord Ganesh and Lord Krishna. There were a number of modern Bollywood dances and not forgetting Krishna's dance performance to an old classic Pyaar Kiya to Darna Kya. Vedic prayers were sung by little Rohan (aged 5) and Bhavin sung the Hanuman Chalisa. There was a skit (play) and this year we even had the audience participating in an entertaining game show. All this was presented by two multi lingual hosts/ MC's. Everyone was impressed with the show and especially enjoyed the delicious meal prepared by our own Samaj members.

Even though Preston has a small Samaj community, people are always willing to give a helping hand. Samaj is one of the most important parts of our lives and its future is in our hands, it is our responsibility to pass on our cultural values and knowledge to the next generation. There is a great deal of talent out there, whether it's in dancing, singing, sports, managing/ coordinating events, or even cooking. SPA hosts a range of events, which everyone can get involved in, let's not allow all that talent and wisdom go to waste!

Nima Lohar,
Diwali Show Co-ordinator

Hemisha in the Himalayas

Namaste

My name is Hemisha Mistry from Rugby. In November 2007, I was one of the group members from Ashlawn School in Rugby to embark on a journey of a lifetime to go on a challenge project to Ladakh, India. The trip involved trekking the valleys of the Himalayas and a maintenance project in a local school. To be eligible for the trip, we individually had to raise £3500 each which was a challenge on its own. My two main fundraising projects were an Indulgence evening and a ticket raffle each raising around £1000, the rest came from smaller events like cake sales, car boot sales and donations from local trusts and funds. After 2 long years of preparation, fundraising, hard work, visits to camping shops and countless injections it was time for the team Ashlawn 1 to leave Heathrow to begin the month long trip that we would never forget.

Twelve hours later I found myself in Delhi. As I got off the plane I remember being hit by an unforgiving heat of 32°C. We left swiftly from Delhi and made our way to Leh, a small town in the region of Ladakh. This was the beginning of the 1st phase of the trip, acclimatisation. Flying low over the Himalayas was breathtaking enough, however it was arriving at an altitude of 3500 metres which gave my lungs the real work out. During the four days spent in Leh, we carried out several acclimatisation walks to traditional Buddhist temples and ancient palaces which allowed us to experience the local traditions and culture. This proved to be an eye-opener for all of us.

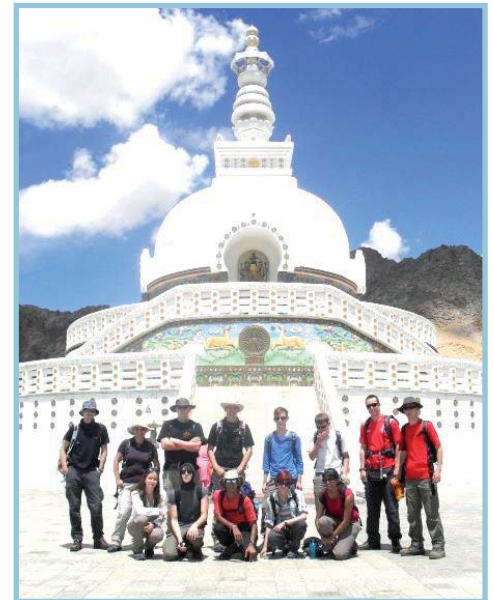
With the first phase of our expedition finished, we were all looking forward to spending the next five days completing our project in a small village by the name of Igu. As we approached our campsite which was basically someone's

back garden we seemed to have an audience, it looked like the entire village had gathered to see us. Well it's not everyday that a group of foreigners come to stay in your back garden is it?

As the project site had to be changed at the very last minute we only had one option which was to paint and clean up the local school. Throughout the five days we somehow managed to paint the solar system, alphabet, a giraffe height chart and a few of the common elements. I felt the most rewarding part of this phase was definitely interacting with the locals especially the children, and experiencing a completely different culture and lifestyle.

Turning to the main part of the expedition, it took 7 long hours to reach the beginning of the trek on a rickety bus. As we arrived at the Tso Mori Lake it really dawned upon me that we were standing in the Himalayas. The highest point of the expedition was at 5500 metres and it took us 10 days to cover that. On the first day alone we climbed over 946 metres and that was my most challenging day of the expedition both mentally and physically but reaching the highest pass was well worth it, both for the views and the feeling of success. Like that day, everyday we were faced with new challenges such as illnesses, river crossings and changes in weather. During the trek we experienced some testing times, beautiful flora and fauna, amazing views and most importantly we experienced the Himalayas.

After completing the trek we made our way back to Leh to unwind, re-pack our bags and finally get a proper wash. For our last few days we managed to visit some of India's highlights including the Taj Mahal, Jaipur and the golden Temple.



The trip for me was a total eye-opening experience which I'm glad I've had before going off to university. The expedition pushed me to go beyond my comfort zone and into something where I was tested both mentally and physically. I have gained and developed many skills, which will unquestionably help me in the future.

Finally I would like to thank all the donors without which this special expedition trek may not have been possible.

Hemisha Mistry
Rugby

Rugby Diwali Show 2009



Shayna Mistry - Talent Winner

To celebrate the 2009 Diwali & Bestu Varsh a meet & greet evening was organised for our members, which once again proved to be a very popular event.

After missing a few years, the branch organised a Diwali Show on Sunday 1st November 2009. The theme of the event was "Rugby's Got Talent". It was a great pleasure to see such a good turnout and support from our members. The day will be truly remembered for the excellent entertainment, which included various dances, Bhajans and also participation from the audience, some of whom took part in the fun activities. Activities such as ladies showing their D.I.Y skills in attempting to wire up a plug, while the men's contest to roll out the most rotli's in a minute while some others tried to see how many roti's they could eat in a minute kept the audience in stitches. There was also a male versus female competition to see who could put on a sari in the quickest time. Though we did not have a Simon Cowell or a Cheryl Cole on the Panel of Judges the volunteer judges we had, were very witty but fair in their comments. The overall winner was Shayna Mistry, who had the majority of the votes from the audience. Well done Shayna Mistry and to all other participants who took part.

A game of bingo was played, along with a raffle draw and games for the youngsters. A delicious veg & non veg meal was prepared by our members. We would like to thank all the members and participants who helped out to make a successful Diwali Show.

Looking ahead to 2010 Rugby branch are hoping to host various other events throughout the year, so please keep a lookout for further information in the branch newsletter & hope we can maintain your support.

Jai Shree Krishna & A Happy 2010 Rugby SPA Committee



Bhajan Singers



What a Laugh



The Spice Group



Ladies trying DIY

Wife's Gift of Life



Hasmukhbhai & Elaben - Walsall

This is a message of hope to inspire and encourage members of our community to give serious consideration to donating a kidney or other organs to dramatically transform someone's quality of life.

I speak from personal experience, as having been diagnosed with chronic kidney failure in June 2007 and as a result having undergone two years of numerous surgical procedures for various forms of dialysis.

In September 2007, following Medical tests performed at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Birmingham and based on the results, I was

judged suitable to be added to the national kidney transplant register. In the mean time my treatment using dialysis was to continue.

After some personal research, in November 2008, my wife, Ela volunteered to be considered as a potential live organ donor. In the following months, a number of compatibility tests were carried out and after a successful psychological evaluation, a Live Donor transplant was carried out on 14th May 2009 at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. We both made good recovery and Ela returned to full time work 2 weeks after surgery and I was able to resume work after four weeks. There were regular post-op check-ups and we are now past the 3 month post-op critical period.

The 2 year period leading to a transplant is a very short time in the grand scheme as it would normally be a wait of 4 years or more for our community. However, I was extremely fortunate to have a wife who was brave and prepared to make such a generous and selfless sacrifice for which I will be eternally grateful.

If you know someone with kidney failure, you will be aware that not only is that person experiencing physical trauma on a daily basis, but they are also suffering mental trauma for the constant anxiety that the entire family endures. This suffering for the whole family will continue over many years until a compatible donor organ becomes available.

There is a major shortage of donor organs from the Asian community, and in this day and age of a better educated and well informed population, there is no logical explanation why this status quo should exist or be allowed to continue.

I believe our community organisations need to address these issues with urgency through education and awareness. We should promote the process of live organ donation from family members.

**Jai Shree Krishna.
Hasmukhbhai**

Walsall invades Isle of Wight

In July, members of Walsall branch took a long weekend trip to the Isle of Wight. It was very much a "last minute" organised event but the executive team were very impressed with the take up from our members as within a few days we had a coach full of people.



We took the ferry from Southampton to Cowes and then we went to see a stately home,

followed by the beach, shopping and a visit to the local dinosaur museum for the children. In the evening the elders had a get together in the bar/ restaurant where they played cards and had a sing song whereas the youngsters ventured out into town.

The next day we had a tour of the Island followed by a visit to the famous pearl factory and them concluded by an afternoon at the famous Needle Rocks where we had lunch, sat on the beach, got involved in some arts and crafts and the children enjoyed the fairground rides.

The one strong message that came out of this trip is that everybody really enjoyed themselves spending a weekend together. On the coach trip we had lots of food and laughs and we've had many requests to arrange an even longer trip or a cruise next year.



As a small branch, we kept our members involved through other activities such as the Shradh Bhajans and Navratri celebrations.

Charity Work at Wellingborough

It's been another busy year for us here at SPA Wellingborough. Most of our activity during this year and previous years is focused around raising funds for those in need. We are extremely proud of our achievements over recent years and the chart below shows how much we achieved. In just 5 years, our small branch has raised close to £14,000! The committee would like to thank all branch members and the wider community who are always willing to help and contribute to our events. The 3 main events we hold are the Waendel Walk, Bhuvaneshwari Katha and the end of year theme party. We're not taking it easy and already planning for 2010 where the designated charities are Diabetes and Children with Leukaemia.



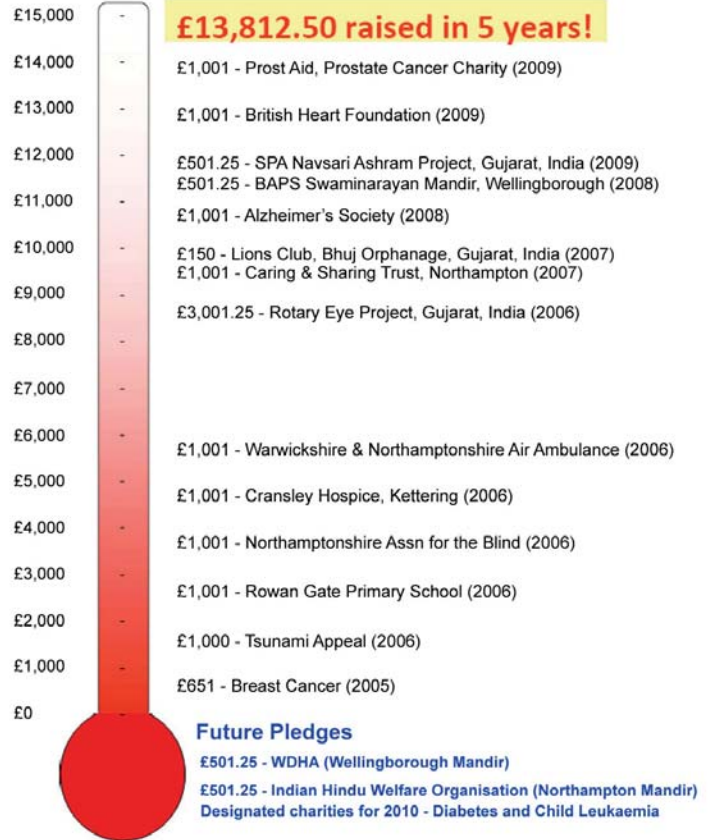
Waendel Walkers (2009)



Prost Aid £1,001 (2009)



Charity fundraising chart



The Great North Run



Over the past few years Nileshbhai Mistry from Leicester has been raising funds for the British Heart Foundation (BHF). Nileshbhai said "As heart disease is commonly prevalent in the Asian community, I wanted to do something that brings awareness to individuals and at the same time raise valuable funds for research. This Great North Run was in memory of my Motaba who passed away recently and also had a heart condition."

On the 20th September 2009, he ran The Great North Run half marathon through the steep gradients of the Newcastle streets with 50,000 other runners. He came 30485 in

a time of 2 hours 23 minutes- a marvellous achievement.

Nileshbhai had his wife Neepa and his two boys Jaimin and Jayan to give him the moral support on the day. He said "It was the best thing I've done and I look forward to doing more runs in the future and would encourage others to do it as well. Finally I would like to take this opportunity to thank everybody who has supported me on this occasion in helping me raise £976 for the British Heart Foundation."

Well done!! Nileshbhai

Sudoku

6	3		5		9		4	
9	5					6		8
			6		3		2	
5		6		9		2		7
			2		8			
8		1		5		3		6
	7		9		6			
2		9					7	4
	1		8		7		6	3

Easy Sudoku

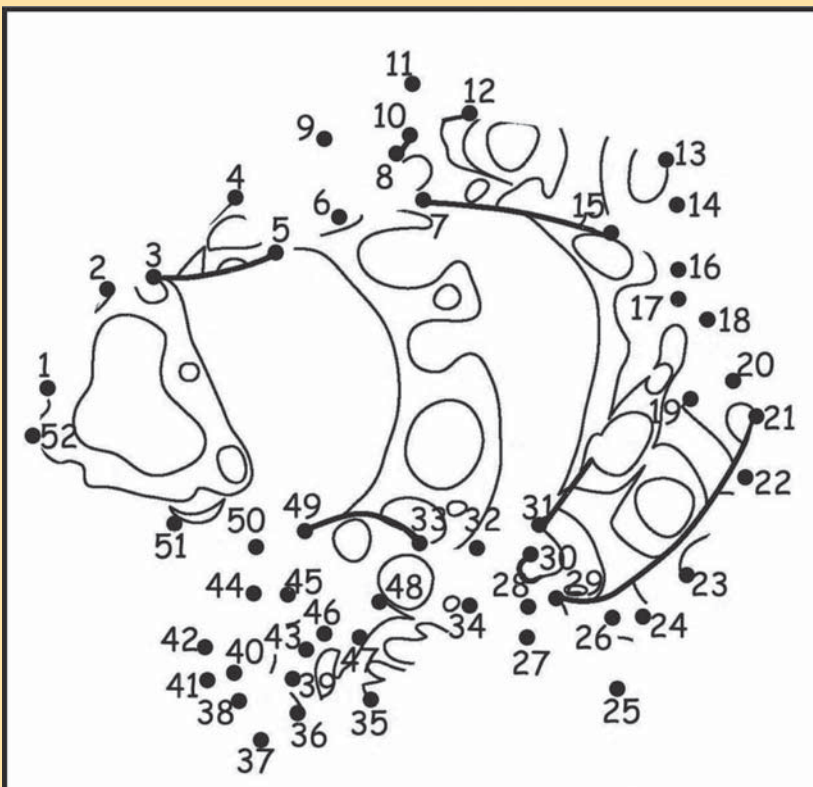
Fill in the empty squares so each of the digits from 1 to 9 occurs once in each row and each column. Each 3 x 3 box must contain one of each of the digits.

Festival Wordsearch

D	H	W	Q	E	T	L	V	O	G
A	I	P	Z	C	F	N	I	I	U
Z	N	W	K	H	Y	A	S	Q	R
V	D	U	A	O	U	M	H	W	U
E	U	Y	X	L	I	U	W	E	P
R	Z	T	Z	I	I	N	A	R	U
I	M	V	A	N	M	A	R	G	R
R	M	K	K	G	H	H	K	I	N
T	T	Z	L	Q	T	G	A	R	I
A	S	E	O	K	S	A	R	T	M
R	W	E	N	M	A	A	M	A	A
V	R	A	V	C	M	B	A	R	Z
A	E	S	B	Y	N	D	U	V	W
N	D	T	N	T	A	J	I	I	C
Q	X	E	M	G	J	L	P	H	V
C	H	R	I	S	T	M	A	S	H

- Diwali
- Christmas
- Janmashthmi
- Hindu
- Ramnavmi
- Hanuman
- Holi
- Shivratri
- Gurupurnima
- Easter
- Navratri
- Vishwarkarma

Dot 2 Dot



Connect the Dots

To play, simply draw a smooth line from the dot numbered 1 to the dot numbered 2 and so on, all the way up to the dot numbered 52!



SHREE PRAJAPATI ASSOCIATION (UK)

ESTABLISHED 1975

CHARITY NO. 802570

શ્રી પ્રજાપતિ સમાજ (યુકે)

Presents 30th Mahila Samelan

પ્રસ્તુત કરે છે

૩૦મું મહિલા સંમેલન

Cultural Variety Show

કલ્ચરલ વરાયટી શો

Sunday 25th April 2010

9.30am - 4.30pm

Ticket price: £3.00

For further information please contact:

Manjulaben: 01274782184

Ramilaben: 01274412510

Or your branch mahila
representative/secretary

Venue:

Shree Prajapati
Association Leicester

Ulverscroft Road

Leicester

LE4 6GN



Shree

PRAJAPATI

ASSOCIATION - LEICESTER

Established 1975

શ્રી પ્રજાપતિ સમાજ લેસ્ટર

Designed by Heena Mistry and Yamini Prajapati - Leicester