



JAIN EDUCATION AND RESEARCH FOUNDATION

Bhagwan Mahavir Professorship of Jain Studies

A JERF Newsletter

Issue No. 3 - November, 2012

A perpetual center of Jain studies was established at Florida International University in April 2010. Since then, many successful Jain studies programs have been accomplished under this endowed professorship.

Second Annual Mahavir Jayanti Lecture at FIU

Prof John C. Cort, Professor at Denison University presented a lecture on ““God as King or God as Ascetic?”.”



Page 1

Prof. Dipak Jain Honored with Doctoral Degree by FIU



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Page 2

Announcement of New JERF Executive Committee

A new executive committee of JERF took charge in a meeting held on April 30, 2012 at FIU.



Page 3

Mumukshu Sheetal's Initiation Ceremony at FIU

Mumukshu Sheetal received her blessing to be ordained from Acharya Shri Mahashraman. Her initiation journey began at FIU.

Page 3

Third Annual Mahavir Jayanti Lecture

Prof. Nalini Balbir, Professor in the Department of Indian Studies at



the University of Paris will present “Women in Jainism”.

Page 4

Summer Study Abroad Program

Twelve graduate and undergraduate students from FIU visited JVBUI and ISSJS India this summer for a six week course on Jainism.

Page 5

Second Annual Mahavir Jayanti Lecture at FIU

“God as King or God as Ascetic?” Prof. John E. Cort, Denison University.

The Second Annual Mahavir Jayanti Lecture was delivered by Prof. John E. Cort of Denison University on April 4th, 2012 at 6:00PM in the GC Ballrooms at FIU. Prof. Cort was introduced by Prof. Nathan Katz, Bhagwan Mahavir Professor of Jain Studies. In his lecture entitled: “God as King or God as Ascetic?” Prof. Cort highlighted the contrasting style of iconography between the Shwetambar and Digambar Jain traditions. The main difference is that the Digambar Jain images of Tirthankars are



naked, unornamented, plain, and made of unpainted stone/metal. On the other hand, the Shwetambar Jain images are always slightly clothed, have expensive ornamentation, are painted, have eyes and permanent forehead decorations, and

are decorated with anga (a limb). In other words, the Digambar Jain images represent God as Ascetic, while the Shwetambar Jain images represent God as King. John E. Cort also mentioned that the visual contrast between these two Jain

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*Samani Dr. Chaitanya Pragma
Dr. Nirmal Baid, San Jose, CA*

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Samani Unnata Pragma*

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images is also present in other religions, such as in Christianity in which Jesus is sometimes represented in a throne as king or crucified as ascetic. A complimentary Jain vegetarian dinner was arranged by the local Jain community on this occasion.

Prof. Dipak Jain Honored with Doctoral Degree by FIU

Prof. Dipak Jain, Chairman of the Jain Education & Research Foundation, has been conferred Doctorate *honoris causa* by Florida International University, Miami, USA on 30th April 2012. This was a great honor not only for Dr. Jain but for the entire Jain community.



Dr. Jain, currently Dean of INSEAD, has overseen the establishment of the Bhagwan Mahavir Professorship in Jain Studies at FIU. The evening before the April 30th ceremony, Dr. Jain was welcomed to campus in a reception hosted by President of FIU, Mark E. Rosenberg at the President's House in the FIU campus. The program was graced by the presence and welcome speech by the President and by Prof. Kenneth G. Furton, the Dean of the faculty of Arts and Science. Mr. Bharat Desai, Prem Jain and JERF board of directors, and distinguished guests were present in the welcome ceremony.

Reception at FIU President's House

Welcome Speech by JERF President

It is indeed a great pleasure to have community leaders together to celebrate our very own Dr. Dipak Jain receiving prestigious honor from FIU. For those who don't know Prof. Dipak, he is a man of soft gestures but leaves everlasting impressions. Famous for his mild manners, quick laugh and a ready hug. I met Dipak at Kellogg Jain leadership conference where I updated him about Samaniji's teaching Jainism and Indian religion courses at FIU. He inspired us to

think big and mentioned "Always remember that the challenge ahead of you is never greater than the force behind you and Dipak Jain is always behind you". He, of course, was true to each and every word he had said.

I cannot resist making a request to Dr. Dipak that "you do not start a story which you cannot complete" – well, you have been the scriptwriter of this story and it is far from complete...we will always need you.

*Prof. Dipak Jain's Speech*

It is a great honor to be with you today and receive this doctorate degree. Thank you for this wonderful recognition and warm welcome by JERF members and Jain community. Thanks also to President Rosenberg for his leadership to make this day happen. I cherish the occasion, particularly since we have the opportunity to reflect on FIU's thriving Religious Studies Department.

Specifically, it gives me joy to see Jain Studies flourishing, thanks to the commitment and support of many people, particularly the Jain community in Florida and the faculty of FIU. Of course, we know how instrumental the efforts of Professor Nathan Katz have been as the inaugural Bhagwan Mahavir Chaired Professor of Jain Studies. His passion and scholarship for this subject are a real inspiration. I personally thank the FIU faculty members and the Jain community for their commitment to what has been a dream of mine since childhood to share the Jain values in this way.



At the reception at FIU President's house (Left to Right CAS Dean Ken Furton, Pres. Mark Rosenberg, Prof. Nathan Katz, Dean Dipak C. Jain, Prof. John Stack, Provost Doug Wartzok)

In some respects, it is not surprising that FIU would serve as the locus, the platform, the home for this remarkable effort.



Jainism has a lot to share with the world, especially now. We only need to pay some small attention to the news to understand how much the world needs to hear the Jain message of ahimsa (nonviolence), anekantavada (tolerance for multiple perspectives) and aparigraha (nonpossessiveness). By cultivating these jewels, we each do our part to bring greater peace to this planet.

Leaders who bring such values into their work can build healthy organizations and make healthy contributions to society. Leaders who respect diverse views (anekant) not only create more harmonious work environments, but they also benefit from the diverse insights and talents of their teams.

By inviting us to see the world through eyes other than our own, Jainism helps us gain a more comprehensive understanding of reality, our place within it, and our responsibilities toward our fellow travelers and all sentient life.

In this way, by creating such a comprehensive and inclusive centre, FIU is creating an icon to make this world a better and safer place. The university is helping animate our best qualities. Each person who graduates from this program will be an ambassador for a peaceful world. Let us continue doing our best to share the fruits of this wonderful treasure.

Thank you again for your kindness. In recognizing me today, you are recognizing the scholarship and diversity of this fine institution. I am sincerely grateful for the privilege of being with you—the FIU family—today.

Mumukshu Sheetal's Initiation Ceremony

The Mahavir Jayanti ceremony at FIU started off by an inimitable "Ceremony of Initiation Rituals" for Mumukshu Sheetal. Mrs. Kusum Baid and Jeevan Prabha Mehta carried out the graceful rituals first time in history in a US University. Mu. Sheetal received her blessing

to be ordained from Acharya Shree Mahashraman. The event was attended by the Dean, the Professors and students.

Mumukshu (literally meaning "seeker") are nun-initiates who spend time with the nuns before making final decision in joining the nun order. Mu. Sheetal was in Miami from 2010 and was mentored by Samani Chaitanya Pragya and Samani Unnata Pragya. She was untiring in her devotion, working with the community and at the same time attending FIU courses, helping Samanijis with research, conducting Sunday classes for Jain kids and also in conducting Yoga classes for the grown-ups. Mu. Sheetal decided to join the Samani order while in Miami. She was given a ceremonial send off with traditional procession and religious ceremonies at the Jain temple of Miami. The whole community rejoiced the gracious ceremony, first of its kind in the history of Miami and Florida. Credit for



arranging procession and religious ceremonies in Jain temple goes to Mukund Shah, President JCSF and his active team.

Announcement of New JERF Executive Committee

A new executive committee of JERF took charge in a meeting held on 04/30/2012 at FIU. The new committee consists of Prof. Neptune Srimal (President), Bindesh Shah (Vice-President), Amit Lunavat (Secretary), Gajendra Surana (Finance Co-ordinator), Jeevanprabha Mehta and Prakash Surana (Event coordinator), Lakhpat Jain, Arpit Mehta (youth co-ordinator) and Dr. Devendra Mehta.

The new President expressed his thanks to the outgoing executive committee and to the outgoing president, Sapan Bafna for the outstanding service they rendered to the Jain community by initiating the Jain Studies program at the Florida International University. It was during Bafna's Presidentship that the Bhagwan Mahavir Endowed Professorship was established at the Florida International University, the Latika and Rajiv Jain Fellowship was established for graduate studies on Jainism, Honorary Doctorate degree was conferred on Prof. Dipak Jain, Chairman of JERF and several lectures on Jainism by outstanding Jain scholars were organized.

Prof. Srimal recalled how the outgoing committee succeeded in raising more than a quarter million dollar within a span of two weeks to meet the deadline for the expiry of the matching grant program of the state of Florida. He expressed his gratitude to the Jain community, esteemed donors and FIU administration, and to Prof. Dipak Jain for his continuing involvement and guidance.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Annual Mahavir Jayanti Lecture

Mahavir Jayanti Annual Lecture series organized by Bhagwan Mahavir professorship of Jain Studies:

Prof. Nalini Balbir is a Professor in the Department of Indian Studies at the University of Paris-3 Sorbonne-Nouvelle and the Director of Studies in Middle Indian Philology in the School of Advanced Studies in History and Philology at the Sorbonne, Paris, France. Her chief research interests are in Jainism, Sanskrit, Pali, Prakrit, Theravada Buddhism, and Hindi languages and literature of the 20th century.



Professor Balbir's current academic responsibilities include the secretary ship of the French Association for Indian Studies and the editorship of the Bulletin of Indian Studies. She is also a member of various academic associations and institutions in France and elsewhere.

Professor Balbir, winner of the Ahimsa Award 2010, is the editor-in-chief of JAINpedia. She also undertook the project of Catalogue of the Jain Manuscripts of the British Library including the Victoria and Albert Museum and the British Museum.

When: April 11, 2013, 6PM - 8:30PM

Topic: "Women in Jainism"

Where: FIU Modesto A. Maidique Campus, Graham Center Ballroom, FIU, Miami, USA

Sponsored by: Bhagwan Mahavir Professorship and Jain Education and Research Foundation

Contact: samanijifu@gmail.com

Plans for Spiritual Entrepreneurship Program

In the course of the Board of Directors meeting held on 29th April 2012, Dr. Dipak Jain led a brain storming session on the future programs of JERF. In the course of that session he proposed the idea of a program on Spiritual Entrepreneurship. He explained the classical entrepreneurship tries to make as much money as possible for the business, Social entrepreneurship transcends classical entrepreneurship, is not driven by profit motive and is driven by an urge to make a difference to the society.

The spiritual entrepreneur feels oneness with the world and is driven by an urge to benefit other people and world around them. They will not do anything unethical in their business. They earn money to channel it back to the society. Prof Nathan Katz, the first Bhagwan Mahavir Professor, suggested that we explore the possibility of working towards a certificate program in the FIU business school incorporating the teachings of spirituality in the business studies. It was decided to arrange three major invited lectures to be delivered by leading figures in the business world from which the outlines of the program will evolve.

The kickoff lecture, the **Inaugural Mahavir Nirvan Lecture**, has been arranged for November 14, 2012 where Prof. Dipak Jain will deliver a lecture on "Spiritual Entrepreneurship: From Knowledge to Wisdom". This lecture is being co-sponsored by JERF, College of Business, FIU and the Bhagwan Mahavir Professorship of Jain Studies at FIU.

Bob Callahan Award and Farewell

Robert E Callahan, Asst. Dean, College of Arts and Science, FIU retired from the university



on July 30, 2012. The university arranged a farewell party for Dean Callahan. JERF was represented in that party by our chairman Dr

Dipak Jain, by member of our advisory council, Shri Rajiv Jain, by our president and Vice President, Dr Neptune Srimal and Mr Bindesh Shah.

Dean Robert Callahan was JERF's contact



person at FIU and from the very inception of the Jain studies program at FIU he had guided, advised and helped the program to take shape. Dr Jain recalled Dean Callahan's contribution in the following words:

"Bob, your commitment to FIU's Jain Studies Program shows that you are both a great advocate for scholarship and a true friend to the South Florida Jain community. It has been a very fond desire of this community to share the age-old philosophy of Jain living — of nonviolence, multiplicity of viewpoints and of



responsible consumption —with western academic world. Your actions reveal a person with a sincere desire to make the world a better place through these enlightened Jain values."

A plaque and a letter was presented to Dean Callahan on behalf of JERF by Prof. Neptune Srimal. In addition, as a token of it's appreciation of the help provided by Dean Callahan, Dr. Jain, on behalf of JERF, announced an award to be named the Robert E Callahan award which will be awarded to the best student in the university every year. This gesture was highly appreciated by the university audience present in the farewell party.

Jain Studies and Research at FIU

Jain Studies at FIU

There is a good response from students to the courses related to Jainism. We have an environment at FIU where we can smell fragrance of Jainism in the



academic programs of the University. Through in person, online and various electives courses almost 500 students are taking courses with Jain content every year at FIU. The reception of Jain teachings by the students is exciting. From 2011 one online course related to comparative Jainism has been started and one more online course "Introduction to Jainism" is going to start soon from Spring 2013.

Research in Jain Studies

Research in Jain meditation is initiated at FIU. Samani Unnata Pragma started off with a pilot project on the benefits of Preksha Meditation (PM) at FIU in 2011. The subjects were of two groups, students with learning disability and without learning disability. Pre and post test were conducted to analyze their pulmonary function and cognitive skills. Subjects were students of the university and keen in meditation.

The results showed both groups were equally receptive to PM and showed a significant improvement in their peak flow measures. The cognitive skills did improve in some aspect, but it does need a longer durational study with a bigger cohort to explore the results.

Latika & Rajiv Jain Fellowship in Jain Studies at Florida International University

Candidates are sought for a two-year graduate fellowship to be awarded to a highly qualified and motivated student in Religious Studies with a concentration in Jain Studies.

Candidates should have a B.A. (all fields will be considered), an undergraduate GPA higher than 3.5, and meet university requirements for admission.

Deadline for applications is March 1, 2013, and the fellowship will be tenable from August 2013.

Please address questions to:

Dr. Nathan Katz,
Bhagwan Mahavir Professor of Jain Studies,
Department of Religious Studies
Florida International University
Miami, FL 33199 USA

<http://casgroup.fiu.edu/religion/pages.php?id=1621>

Steven Vose Joins FIU in Jan 2013

Steven Vose Joins FIU as Assistant Professor under Bhagwan Mahavir Professorship of Jain Studies in Jan 2013

Steven Vose, one of the brightest among the young Jain scholars in the western world, has accepted the offer of a faculty position under Bhagwan Mahavir Professorship in the Department of Religious Studies at FIU. His appointment starts in Jan 2013. Vose has a master's degree from Harvard and is finishing up his PhD at the University of Pennsylvania on "Jain Monks as Political Leaders in Sultanate-era Gujarat". Vose is a versatile linguist, being fluent in Sanskrit, Prakrit, Gujrati and old Gujarati and conversant in Hindi, Nepali and French. A summa-cum-laude student, Vose has won many awards, honors and fellowships in his field of study.

Research Project in Preksha Meditation

The present research aims to analyze the impact of Preksha Meditation on the cognitive abilities and pulmonary functions of students. Pre- and post-meditation tests are taken to analyze the benefits of PM on the subjects. The research team includes Dr. Devendra Mehta, Samani Dr. Chaitanya Prajna, Samani Unnata Pragma and Students from FIU.

There are 25 students enrolled in the project. Students will meditate for two months, three days a

week. One experimental and other control group are guided with two different types of PM. The research is carried as blind experiments where in the subjects are not told about the meditation benefits nor are they told in which category they belong to.



The meditation sessions, guided by Samaniji, are gradually increased in duration from 15 mins to 25 mins each. The pre- and post- test includes simple buzzing exercise, the peak flow test, Spirometry test, memory test, Corners CPT test. The research will be repeated again in spring. The students are enjoying the sessions, experiencing relief from stress and an overall feeling of wellbeing. Expert statistician will undertake the data analysis. The research received the research funds from Rajiv and Latika Jain and is also supported by the Bhagwan Mahavir Professorship of Jain Studies and the Department of Religious Studies, FIU.

Lecture at FAU on "Justified Violence"

Noemi Marin, Director of Peace Studies, at FAU

invited Samaniji for a lecture on Jain concept of violence and nonviolence. Samani Unnata Pragma delivered a lecture exploring the issue of "Justified Violence" and its healing component solidified by the enlightenment of Bhagwan

Mahavir. The lecture raised awareness and furthered the connections between different US universities to promote Jain studies.

Summer Study Abroad Program

Twelve graduate and undergraduate students from FIU visited JVBV and ISSJS India this summer for a six week course on Jainism. Sharing his experiences Logan Backman, a graduate student, writes:

"Compared to other great cultural, philosophical and religious traditions of India, Jainism has received surprisingly little scholarly attention until very recently, and, even now, programs such as these remain exceedingly rare. I am, therefore, incredibly grateful to have had the opportunity to interact one-on-one with important Jain religious leaders, to

Jain Studies and Research at FIU

spend time observing the daily lives of Jain monks and nuns and to experience the incredible hospitality and friendship of Jain families. These are worlds of experience that most non-Jains will never know.

The experiences I had this summer, both inside and outside of the classroom, have enlarged my world-view. As a student of Indian religions I am certain I will return to India many times in my life, but these programs provided a wonderful introduction to the richness and diversity of Indian culture. The summer heat in India can be intense and some people will experience moments of profound

Bhagwan Mahavir Senior Research Fellowship



Under BMJR Summer Fellowship program one of the senior fellows, Prof. Manuel Gomez of FIU Law School spent time in India researching "Internal Conflict Resolution among Jain Diamond Trading Community in Gujarat". The summer research program, which is subsidized by the Bhagwan Mahavir

Visit to Kundkund Jnanapeeth, Indore

Kundkund Jnanapeeth in Indore, India is one of the foremost center in the world in the field of Jain scholarship and research. Samani Dr. Chaitanya Prajna was invited by Prof. Anupam Jain, Director of Kundkund Jnanapeeth Indore, to deliver a lecture



on the "Development of Jain Studies and Research at FIU" on 6/12/2012. The session was presided by Prof. A. A. Abbasi, the Former President of Ahilyadevi University, Indore. Prof. Pradipakumar Singh and Prof. Prakash Kasliwal welcomed Samaniji and Prof. Abbasi. Other esteemed members of KJP were present at this occasion.

In her talk Samaniji expressed her observations about the Jain Studies at FIU and also described the response of FIU students to Jain studies and research. In the words of one student "teaching Jainism in western universities is extremely benevolent and time effective because the western religious culture seems to be very superficial and void and lack the intensity to understand the religions." In her concluding remarks, Dr. Chaitanya Prajna said that Jain people and organizations should find an efficient, organized way to share their universal

values and philosophy with people of the world through education. With some kind of infrastructure or collective effort Jains can enlighten westerners about the time-effective principles of Jainism and its overall belief towards harmony and non-violence. Those concepts are very popular in the western world today, particularly because atheism is rising and people are seeking a new morality that works in today's world. In today's world more fights are being fought over religion and in the name of religion than bringing peace to the world in the name of religion. A religion like Jainism propagates peace, tolerance, and prosperity. This is essential if we are to move forward in today's globalized society.

After the talk the dignitaries presented their views on the need of Jain studies in modern times and showed their full cooperation to enhance Jain studies and research activity started at FIU.

Lecture on "Jain Meditation" by Samani Unnata Pragma

On Nov 6, 2012, the Center of Spirituality at

FIU organized a lecture by Samani Unnata Pragma on the topic "Jain Meditation". The lecture was one in the series of lectures organized by the Center of Spirituality FIU. Jain Meditation, an ancient meditational practice, has assisted innumerable souls to accomplish enlightenment. The audience was eager to know about the ancient practice and also as to how did it survive from the ancient India to the modern times.

Samani Unnata Pragma



delivered an explanation of Jain meditation and explained how the ancient practice can be relevant in the modern times. The lecture was accompanied by guided meditation session. Both the students and non-students in the audience were very appreciative of the meditation session, which gave them new insights into the wisdom and practices of ancient India.



culture shock, as well. Nevertheless, I would recommend both JVBU and ISSJS programs to anyone with an adventurous spirit who longs for a glimpse of Indian life and religion not seen by the average tourist. For me, it was unforgettable."

Professorship at FIU, has become very popular among the FIU community and we hope to expand the opportunities further in future.



Community Outreach Activities

10th Biennial YJA Convention in Tampa, Florida

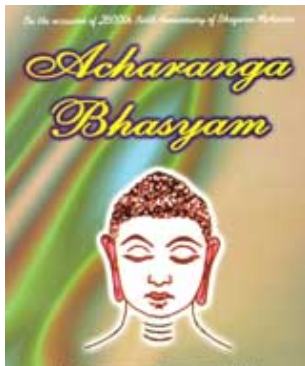
Four Samanijis participated in the 10th biennial convention of YJA (Young Jains of America) in Tampa. A lecture titled "Model of the Universe in Jainism" was presented by Samani Dr. Chaitanya



Pragya. Samani Unnata Pragya conducted a guided session on trance experience of meditation. In addition, Samani Bhavit Pragya led a youth discussion session for the participants in the convention. This discussion session helped the young Jain participants to openly voice their modern day concerns and to delve deeper into an awareness of Jain Principles and values.

Study of Jain Agama "Acharang"

There has been a longstanding need from Jain community of Miami to include classes on "Jainism Theory" in addition to the ongoing Preksha Classes. Samanijis are now conducting Preksha Meditation session followed by the study of Acharang Sutra in these classes. This format of teaching has been very well received by the participants. Copies of the Acharang Sutra have been made available to the attendees. Since Acharang sutra is a Jain sacred text and is held in high esteem by the Jains, students are instructed to provide proper care and respect of the book.



"Jain Sacred texts are treasures of science and spirituality." This is the message rendered by Samani Dr. Chaitanya Pragya in her discourse on Acharang, the first of the Agamas.

These bi-weekly sessions which are organized by the Miami Jain Temple includes students from different sects of Jains and are always accompanied by lively discussion.

Paryushan Celebration and Tattvarth Sutra Lecture

Paryushan was organized with session of meditation, chanting and discourse in West Palm Beach and Miami. Varsha Shah with her team took the initiative to organize the event which was hosted by Kirit Shah and Deepika Shah. The festival was joyous rendering a touch to the inner self. Before Paryushan a week long program held on "Tattvartha Sutra and Spiritual Healing" among Jain and Hindu community of Vero Beach. Indu and Rakesh Vora took the initiative and with great enthusiasm organized the whole seven days program. The experience was spiritual awakening for one and all. Samaniji presented one language of spirituality which engrossed Jains and non Jain community.



Video Conference Lectures on Jainism among YJA

Young Jains of America hosted it's second Video conferencing lecture on "Philosophy of Karma and Its Impact on Life" on October 19, 2012. The lecture was delivered by Samani Dr. Chaitanya Pragya, currently a faculty at FIU. Her clear presentation and lucid explanation enriched the young Jains. Around 50 Young Jains from all over America attended the session. The young Jains, concerned about survival of Jainism in the face of global materialistic onslaught, find resurgence in Jain studies reassuring.

Here are some of the comments from the young Jain participants of the conference: Paras Vora expressed that it was very easy to understand and relevant to our daily lives. For Paarth Shah, it was very informative. Viraj Mehta says, "The content was simple, and very easy to follow". Neha Vora enjoyed learning about the different karmas and requested for more of such sessions. Avanish Mishra's experience was awesome, simply amazing and believed; it possibly will provide us with tranquility. Novice like Shrenika Shah was into it too. For Pankti Doshi, "The opportunity to discuss after the lecture was cool and had a great discussion". Pinkesh Gala says, "I think it was just perfect."

The presence of knowledgeable spiritual leaders and the endeavor of YJA will render more opportunities for the exploration of Jainism through internet in which anyone from anywhere in the world are welcome to join.

Our Esteemed Donors

We are fortunate to receive enthusiastic and generous support from the Jain community across the US. Our heartfelt thanks to our esteemed donors.

We appeal to the Jain community to take part in this historic endeavor with their generous donation.

Many employers have a matching donations program to charitable institutions. Please let us know and we will help with paperwork.

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Shah Bindesh & Roopal, FL
Shah Bipin & Rekha, CA
Shah Dilip & Darshna, FL
Shah Guni, AL
Shah Hemendra M. & Unita, KY
Shah Kamlesh & Avani, FL
Shah Kirit & Harshida, FL
Shah Kirit R., FL
Shah Kunal, FL
Shah Mehul & Anita, FL
Shah Naresh K & Indira, WV
Shah Nayan & Harsha, FL
Shah Neeral, AL
Shah Rajen & Beena, AL
Shah Rajni, AL
Shah Satish & Geeta, FL
Shah Tushar, FL
Shah Vasant & Mona, FL
Sipani Dhanraj, GA
Srimal Neptune & Sangeeta, FL
Surana Ajay, GA
Surana Manohar Singh & Prabha, VA
Surana Prakash & Lata, FL
Surana Vikas & Deep, FL
Talati Dipak & Siddhi, FL
Thakker Hemant & Taru, FL
Tolia Kishore, FL
Tolia Mihir, FL
Vakharia Vijay & Daksha, FL

