



**2025** A REVIEW  
IN PICTURES



Dr Mehool Sanghrajka MBE  
Managing Trustee  
Institute of Jainology

*Jai Jinendra!*

*The year 2025 was one of the most remarkable in the Institute of Jainology's four-decade history. A year of milestones and loss, of doors opened and friendships deepened.*

*From Downing Street to the Vatican, from the House of Commons to Trafalgar Square, the IOJ carried the Jain message to some of the world's most significant stages. We published our first Census report, presented the Ahimsa Award to Dr Sohan Lal Gandhi, and strengthened ties with institutions old and new.*

*In September, we lost our Chairman Emeritus, Nemubhai Chandaria OBE. Much of what you read in these pages traces back to foundations he laid. We carry his vision forward.*

*None of this work is possible without you. Thank you for your continued support.*

*With all good wishes,  
Mehool*





Mahavir Janma Kalyanak Celebrations  
at the Palace of Westminster

April 2025

10 Downing Street

# **Celebrating Mahavir Janma Kalyanak at No. 10 Downing Street**

On 23 April, the Institute of Jainology hosted a celebration of Mahavir Jayanti at No. 10 Downing Street, bringing together Jain community leaders from across the United Kingdom to mark the birth anniversary of Bhagwan Mahavir.

Lord Khan of Burnley and Gareth Thomas MP represented the government. Both ministers recognised the IOJ's role in raising the profile of Jainism nationally, praised the community's contributions to British life, and voiced support for a dedicated Jain tick-box in the national census.



April 2025

St Peter's Basilica, Vatican City

# Passing of His Holiness Pope Francis

On 26 April, the Institute of Jainology represented the global Jain community at the funeral of His Holiness Pope Francis in Vatican City. IOJ directors Dr Mehool Sanghrajka and Dilip Shah joined over 400,000 mourners, including more than 150 world leaders and senior religious figures, at St Peter's Square.

The IOJ's presence reflected a relationship with the Vatican built over many years of interfaith engagement. Pope Francis's commitment to compassion, inclusion and care for the environment resonated deeply with Jain values.



April 2025

Palace of Westminster

# **Celebrating Mahavir Janma Kalyanak at the House of Commons**

On 29 April, the Institute of Jainology hosted an evening of celebration and scholarship at the House of Commons, marking the birth anniversary of Bhagwan Mahavir.

The programme highlighted the breadth of the IOJ's work. OneJAIN Community Awards recognised outstanding service by Dr Saurabh Shah and Niraj Sutaria. Professor Nalini Balbir, editor-in-chief of the IOJ's Jainpedia project, was honoured with a Festschrift for her decades of contribution to Jain scholarship. Speakers also included Professor Jim Mallinson on Jain contributions to the history of yoga, and Dr Sushma Jansari previewing the British Museum's major new exhibition on ancient India.



April 2025

Palace of Westminster

# 2021 Census Report on Jains in Britain

The Institute of Jainology published Jains in the UK, a new report drawing on 2021 Census data to build a detailed picture of the Jain community across England and Wales. The publication was launched at the House of Commons by Lord Khan of Burnley, Minister for Faith, who confirmed he would share its findings with relevant national bodies.

Authored by Samir Juthani and produced in collaboration with the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Jainism, the report covers education, employment, health, beliefs and cultural practices. It is designed as a practical resource for local authorities, schools and healthcare providers, and supports the IOJ's ongoing campaign for Jainism to be recognised as a distinct religion in the 2031 Census.



Lord Khan of Burnley - Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government between 9 July 2024 and 6 September 2025



# Jains in the UK

## The National Census 2021



April 2025

Palace of Westminster

# Felicitation of Professor Nalini Balbir

At the House of Commons celebration of Mahavir Janma Kalyanak on 29 April, the Institute of Jainology honoured Professor Nalini Balbir, one of the world's foremost scholars of Jainism, Sanskrit and Prakrit, with the presentation of a Festschrift compiled by her students and peers.

Professor Balbir's association with the IOJ spans decades. She curated the Catalogue of Jain Manuscripts at the British Library and served as editor-in-chief of Jainpedia, the world's largest digital platform for Jain scholarly resources. The IOJ contributed to the Festschrift's publication in recognition of her extraordinary service to the field.



VISITOR

WELSH  
Welsh Language  
Welsh Language

May 2025  
Stanmore

# **IOJ Patron's Dinner UK-India Trade and Innovation**

On 12 May, the Institute of Jainology welcomed around 100 patrons and guests to its annual dinner, themed around UK-India trade and innovation, days after the UK and India signed a landmark free trade agreement.

Professor Jaideep Prabhu of Cambridge University examined the deal's implications. Lil Bremermann-Richard, CEO of Oxford International Group, analysed the government's new immigration white paper. Gareth Thomas MP, Minister for Exports, recognised the Jain community's role in strengthening business ties between the two countries. The evening also featured Peter Tabichi, Kenyan teacher and IOJ Ahimsa Award recipient, who spoke about his continuing work in education.



Guest Speakers: Lil Bremermann-Richard, Peter Tabichi, Gareth Thomas MP

May 2025

St Peter's Square, Vatican City

# Inauguration of Pope Leo XIV

On 18 May, the Institute of Jainology represented the global Jain community at the inaugural mass of Pope Leo XIV in Vatican City, joining heads of state and religious leaders from around the world.

The following day, the IOJ delegation was invited to a private audience with the new Pope. Dr Mehool Sanghrajka presented His Holiness with a copy of the Tattvārthasūtra, a foundational Jain text from the 2nd century and universally accepted by all Jain sects. The moment continued a relationship between the IOJ and the Vatican stretching back more than 30 years, built on shared commitments to interfaith dialogue and mutual respect.



May 2025

British Museum, London

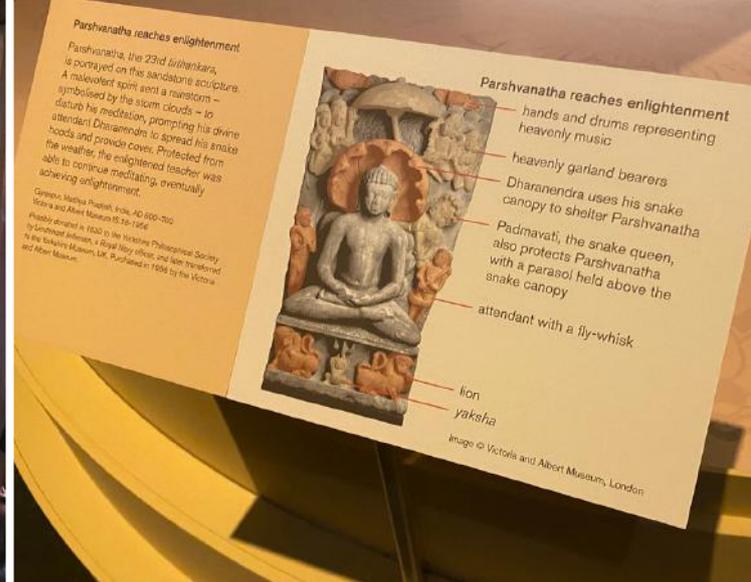
# Ancient India: Living Traditions Exhibition



Curator Dr Sushma Jansari  
Speaking at the MJK event in  
April 2025

On 22 May, the British Museum opened its major new exhibition Ancient India: Living Traditions, featuring dedicated galleries for Jainism, Buddhism and Hinduism. The Institute of Jainology alongside other OneJAIN organisations played a key role in its development, serving on the Museum's community advisory panel alongside curators Dr Sushma Jansari and Kajal Meghani.

The Jain gallery includes a striking 7th-century sandstone relief of Lord Parshvanatha on loan from the V&A, sacred manuscripts, temple artefacts and a video installation filmed at the Jain derasar in Potters Bar. The Guardian awarded the exhibition five stars. It ran until October 2025.



June 2025

Pontifical Gregorian University, Rome

# Vatican Conference Renewing and Re-igniting Hope

In June, the Institute of Jainology joined Buddhist, Christian, Hindu and Sikh leaders at a major interfaith conference hosted by the Vatican's Dicastery for Interreligious Dialogue, exploring how spiritual traditions can address polarisation, ecological stress and disconnection.

The IOJ sent four delegates who presented a rounded view of Jain thought on hope, drawing on concepts including ahimsa, anekantavada and the transformative potential of every soul. Dr Marie-Hélène Gorisse, Dr Jinesh Sheth and Vibhuti Mehta each offered perspectives connecting ancient Jain philosophy to the pressing challenges of today.



September 2025

# In Memory of Shri Nemubhai Chandaria OBE (1939–2025)

On 27 September, the Institute of Jainology lost its Chairman Emeritus and founding member, Shri Nemubhai Chandaria OBE. For more than 30 years, Nemubhai led the IOJ with a quiet determination that transformed it into a globally respected centre for Jain scholarship, outreach and interfaith engagement.

Under his stewardship, the IOJ catalogued Jain manuscripts at the British Library, staged a landmark exhibition at the V&A under the patronage of Queen Elizabeth II, built lasting ties with the Vatican, and united over 30 UK Jain organisations under the OneJAIN banner. His warmth, humility and vision shaped everything the IOJ is today.



Mahavir Janma Kalyanak celebrations at 10 Downing Street, April 2025: Gareth Thomas MP, Lord Khan of Burnley, Nemubhai Chandaria, Minaben Chandaria

October 2025

Trafalgar Square, London

# Diwali in Trafalgar Square

On 12 October, more than 30,000 people filled Trafalgar Square for London's annual Diwali celebrations. OneJAIN, the umbrella body for 35 UK Jain organisations coordinated by the Institute of Jainology, served on the organising committee and ran a marquee introducing visitors to Jain philosophy and traditions.

Jain representatives spoke in the Harmony Zone on the spiritual significance of Diwali as a celebration of Lord Mahavir's Nirvana, while the SRMD team performed on the main stage and young flautist Dhyana Haria played in the Culture Zone. The Mayor of London praised the contribution of all communities involved.



One JAIN

Remitly



DO YOU LIVE BY YOUR VALUES WITHOUT KNOWING?

Menu board with images of food items and prices:

- Samosa - \$4.99
- Chana Chaat - \$4.99
- Dahi Puri - \$4.99
- Samosa - \$5.00

Ch...

October 2025

Palace of Westminster, London

## 22nd Annual Ahimsa Day

On 16 October, the Institute of Jainology and the Jain All-Party Parliamentary Group hosted the 22nd Annual Ahimsa Day at the House of Commons. This year's theme explored the role of faith during a time of existential crises, marking the 60th anniversary of Nostra Aetate, the Vatican's landmark declaration on interfaith dialogue.

The IOJ Ahimsa Award was presented to Dr Sohan Lal Gandhi for his lifelong advocacy of non-violence through the Anuvrat Movement. Distinguished speakers included Monsignor Santiago Michael, representing the Vatican, and Archbishop Nikitas of Thyateira and Great Britain. The evening also paid tribute to the late Nemubhai Chandaria.



Dr Sohan Lal Gandhi receiving the Ahimsa Award trophy from Matt Turmaine MP, newly appointed Chair of the Jain APPG

October 2025

Pontifical Gregorian University, Rome

## Conference: Nostra Aetate at 60

From 27 to 29 October, the Institute of Jainology led a delegation of ten from the UK and India to a major international conference at the Pontifical Gregorian University, marking 60 years since the Vatican declaration that transformed the Catholic Church's relationship with other faiths.

Although Nostra Aetate did not originally name Jainism, the IOJ has spent two decades building a close working relationship with the Vatican. Dr Mehool Sanghrajka and Samani Dr Amal Pragya both presented papers arguing that Jain principles of non-violence, many-sidedness and restraint offer practical tools for interfaith cooperation today.



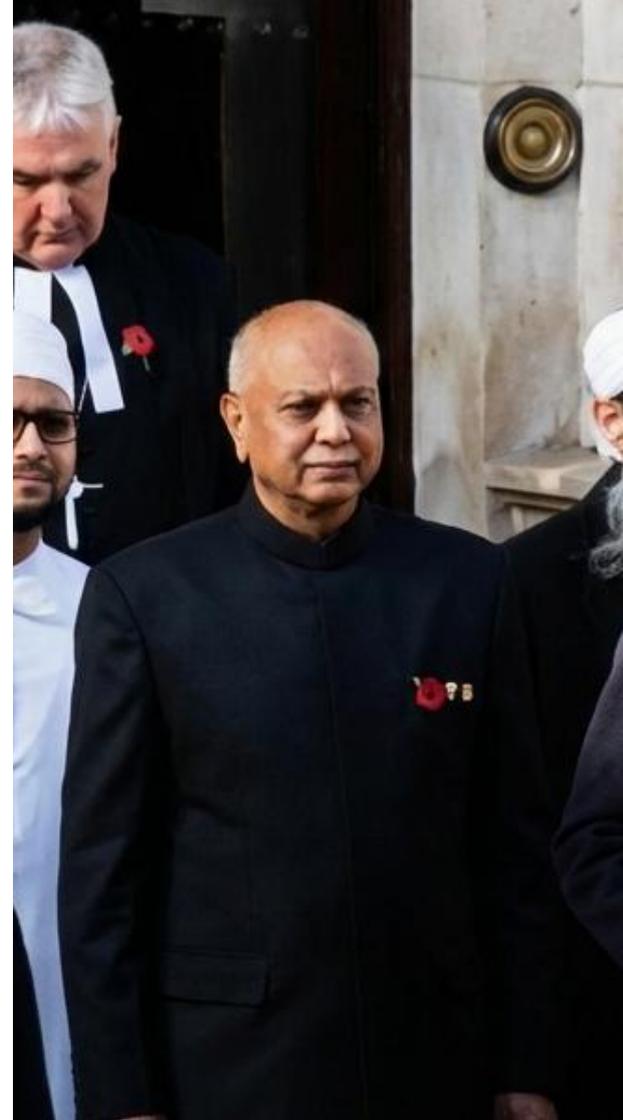
Shandip Shah, Mehool Sanghrajka, Jayesh Shah, Ajit Shah, Nilesch Kothari, Sangeeta Bavisha

November 2025

The Cenotaph, Whitehall, London

## Remembrance Day

On Remembrance Sunday, the Jain community was once again represented at the National Service of Remembrance at the Cenotaph, joining faith leaders and dignitaries in honouring those who gave their lives in service of peace. Led by HM The King, the annual ceremony is one of the most solemn moments in the national calendar. The Jain community's continued presence reflects its deep respect for those whose sacrifice secured the freedoms enjoyed today, and its enduring commitment to the principle that peace must never be taken for granted.



December 2025

Westminster Abbey, London

# Service to Celebrate Christian Witness in Advent

On 10 December, a Jain community representative attended a candlelit service at Westminster Abbey celebrating Christian witness during Advent. His Majesty The King was joined by church leaders from across the UK and the Middle East, representatives of other faiths, and charity figures.

The ecumenical service honoured persecuted Christians worldwide and featured an address by Cardinal Timothy Radcliffe. The Jain community's invitation to this significant interfaith occasion reflects the relationships the IOJ has built with Christian institutions over many years, and its recognised role as a voice for non-violence and compassion across faith boundaries.



## Other Events

March 2025

Westminster Abbey, London

### **Commonwealth Day Service**

On 10 March, Jain community representatives attended the annual Commonwealth Day Service at Westminster Abbey, the largest inter-faith gathering in the United Kingdom. Organised by the Royal Commonwealth Society, the service was attended by Their Majesties The King and Queen, The Prince and Princess of Wales, and senior members of the Royal Family, alongside High Commissioners, faith leaders and around 2,000 guests.

This year's theme was "Together We Thrive," marking the Commonwealth's 75th anniversary. The Jain community's participation in this prominent national occasion reflects the IOJ's continuing work to ensure Jainism is represented alongside other faiths at the highest levels of British public life.



October 2025

University of Birmingham

### **Paul Dundas memorial conference**

IOJ supported a memorial conference honouring Professor Paul Dundas, one of the world's foremost Jain scholars, drawing a record number of academics in Jain studies.

October 2025

No. 10 Downing Street, London

### **Celebrating Diwali at 10 Downing Street**

IOJ attended Prime Minister Keir Starmer's Diwali reception at Downing Street, representing the Jain community alongside members of OneJAIN at the annual celebration of the festival of lights.



December 2025

Lancaster House, London

## Christmas Reception

Foreign Secretary Yvette Cooper hosted the annual Christmas reception for the diplomatic corps at Lancaster House, the historic government venue adjacent to Buckingham Palace. High Commissioners, ambassadors and interfaith leaders gathered for an evening celebrating the ties between the UK and the international community.

The Jains being represented at this prestigious diplomatic occasion reflects the growing recognition of the Jain community's contribution to interfaith dialogue and its established relationships across government and the diplomatic world.



## About the Institute of Jainology

Founded in 1986, the Institute of Jainology is a principal voice for Jainism in the United Kingdom. Our mission is to share Jain values of non-violence and compassion through scholarship, education, interfaith engagement and public life.

Over four decades, we have built lasting partnerships with museums, libraries, universities, educational bodies, members of the UK Parliament and interfaith organisations. Through OneJAIN, we help unite the Jain community across the UK, ensuring it speaks with one voice on matters of shared importance.

None of this work happens without people. We are deeply grateful to the leadership of the Jain community, our patrons, donors, volunteers and supporters whose generosity and commitment make everything in these pages possible.





### **About the Institute of Jainology**

Our mission is to bring awareness and promote the Jain faith and its communities in government, interfaith matters and at universities, national libraries and museums.

### **For more information**

Email: [info@jainology.org](mailto:info@jainology.org)

Website: [www.jainology.org](http://www.jainology.org)

Find us on Social



### **About OneJAIN**

We represent the collaboration of all 35 UK Jain organisations under the OneJAIN banner. Together, these organisations represent a community of at least 65,000 people, many of whom play an outsized role in civic and community life, as well as excelling across professional, business, and academic pursuits.

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