

Divyaatma



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Apurva Shrut Aaradhika Gurunimaiya
Pujya Shree Lilambai Mahasatiji



Life of A legend

A young girl, only twelve years of age, living in the village of Savarkundla by the banks of River Navli, suddenly stopped herself mid-way while preparing a Bajri Roti (Indian bread). She was lost deep in thought, “If a spark of fire has infinite living beings, then how can I light such a fire and then douse it, killing each and every one of those beings for preparing one morsel of my food?” She contemplated for hours on the nature of our lifestyle and the cost that infinite living beings pay to sustain one human life. Her name was Lilavanti.

Jain philosophy depicts that all the elements of nature - air, fire, water, land and vegetation are living beings themselves, with a single molecule being a body to infinite souls, just like any human soul.

Lilavanti was unable to gather her thoughts, she was struggling to learn about a lifestyle that will help her live in harmony with every living being.



When I don't like pain, how can I inflict pain on others? Every soul wishes to live, nobody wishes death. It was this seed of thought that moulded the life of Lilavanti, transforming a young child into an ocean of infinite compassion; who walked the valourous path of Lord Mahavir with tremendous grit, determination and undying faith in the doctrine of Ahimsa. Widely renowned as the Arya Sadhvi (Chief Female Ascetic) of Guru Pran Parivar to more than 100 Sadhvijis of Gondal Gachha (order of ascetics), she was none other than **Apurva Shrut Aaradhika Bhaavyogini Gurunimaiya Pujya Shree Lilambai Mahasatiji.** Her life is a prime example of selflessness, that shines as a bright star in the glorious history of Jin Shasan; a true inspiration for innumerable souls who aspire to walk the journey of Jain Diksha with grace, courage and an unbreakable resolve of sincere chastity.

Birth And Childhood:



Great souls usually take birth on auspicious days, which is an indication of their greatness in the near future. Born on July 20, 1932, on the day of Shraavan Sud Pacham, Lilavanti was the sixth and youngest child of Shrimati Vrajkuvarben and Shri Jamnadasbhai Amarshi Tejani. She was the first girl child of the family after five sons, and was therefore regarded as a symbol of immense auspiciousness and pride, showered with love and affection by one and all.

With a playful, loving and pampered childhood, Lilavanti studied till Grade 4 and completed her primary education. She was brought up in an



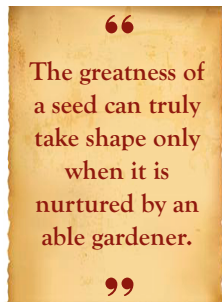
era where formally educating the girl child was not a very common practice. Instead, parents would choose to nurture their children with values and capabilities that would be of help when the girl gets married. Lilavanti's parents too, sowed in her virtues and qualities of the highest regard. Additionally, her own persona was one of tremendous respect towards one and all, an eagerness to selflessly serve others and an intelligence to quickly pick up new things and perform them exceedingly well. She was a pleasing little child, adored by friends, family and neighbours.

Vairagya:



The greatness of a seed can truly take shape only when it is nurtured by an able gardener. A Sadhak too begins the Adhyatmik (spiritual) journey only when nurtured by a Siddh Purush (a great spiritual emancipator). Lilavanti's life was very normal like every other child, but it was only when she first met Saurashtra Kesari Pujya Gurudev Shree Pranlalji Maharaj Saheb - Guru Pran, that destiny took a turn and her journey towards soul purification commenced.

Guru Pran arrived at Savarkundla when young Lilavanti was merely an adolescent. And yet, his powerful persona resonating with the vibrations of the ultimate truth enlightened one and all, including



the young child. One often feels that he is meeting someone for the first time, but where the heart defies this and makes you feel like you have known someone since a very long time, that relation is called Runanubandh. An individual maybe extremely well learned and have a benevolent personality, but his words can touch your heart and he can become your Guru only when you share this unconditional bond of selflessness called Runanubandh. Souls who share Runanubandh may change the physical form, but their bond remains steadfast strong across lives. It is only then that a Guru can help you transform yourself and support you in your journey of self purification.

Young Lilavantiben had met Guru Pran only once, and yet, she felt an unexplainable respect and reverence towards him. She felt an inexpressible trust in his words and an ardent desire to follow his footsteps, to become like him. She did not know what this pull was, but like a diamond grader can recognize a quality gem from afar, Guru Pran recognized this young soul who was going to bring glory to the future of Jin Shasan. In Guru Pran's sanidhya, Lilavantiben memorized Samayik, Pratikraman and the scripture '6 kaay na bol', a topic that threw light on the various forms of living beings. This subject became integral to her Vairagya (detachment from worldly affairs), as it made her constantly think how infinite living beings suffer with the lifestyle that we have. It sowed in her a seed of deep dissatisfaction for the worldly ways of living. With this growing compassion, she questioned herself, what is the meaning of a life where I am the cause of pain and suffering to infinite other living beings with every activity that I do? Guru Pran's pravachans and teachings further deepened her understanding



and intensified her detachment towards Sansar. She became eager to adopt asceticism and follow the Jain ascetic way of life, where she would refrain from causing undue harm to any living being and focus on purifying the soul to free herself from the cycle of birth and death.

When one realizes the truth, they find it immensely difficult to continue living a life of illusion anymore. A burning desire to walk the path of truth arises in their heart. But walking the virtuous path is not always easy. An eclipse always hinders the journey of the Sun and the Moon, stars never face an eclipse. So also, only a path of greatness and courage sees obstacles, an easy road faces no challenges. Lilavantiben's realization of the truth was very powerful, but being the youngest and the most adored member of the family, her loved ones were extremely uncomfortable of allowing her to lead a life that is so tough, challenging and full of difficulties. They tried hard to convince her otherwise. But Lilavantiben remained steadfast in her decision. For her, the agony and anguish that she caused to infinite living beings was far more grave than the short-lived sorrow of few relations from one birth faced due to their attachment. She worked hard to prove her ability and determination to embrace Diksha. Till the time she did not get permission to take Diksha, she gave up eating green vegetables completely. She would get up every morning at 3 AM and practice 108 Kayotsarg meditation while standing on one leg. She undertook many such vows and practices, constantly testing her

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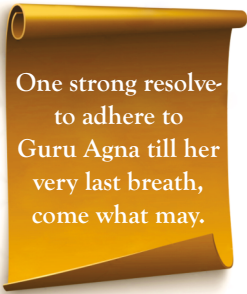
own resolve and uplifting her consciousness with Gurukrupa, moving closer and closer to her goal of becoming worthy of Diksha. Her strong will, intense alertness, and unrelenting efforts finally bore fruit. **Like the gold which shines brighter after being tested with fire, Lilavantiben's Vairagya shone brighter than ever after being put to test.** For seven years, she fought her own Antaray Karma, and finally, a day came when her family too bowed down before her commitment and dedication.

Renunciation:



Extremely grateful to her family for granting her the permission to embrace Diksha, Lilavantiben expressed her ardent desire to Guru Pran, who finally blessed her with the five great vows of Jain Diksha on the auspicious day of Fagan Vad Agyaras in 1953. Under the able mentorship of Gurunimaiya Pujya Shree Fulkunwarbai Swami and Pujya Shree Ambabai Swami, the new renunciate was given a name which has been etched with golden words in history today - Sadhviji Pujya Shree Lilambai Mahasatiji.

From the very day of her new birth, Pujya Lilambai Mahasatiji made **one strong resolve - to adhere to Guru Agna till her very last breath, come what may.** This dedication



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towards Guru Agna gave birth to Param Vinay in this young soul, the root to her greatness which the world witnesses and reveres today. Her Seva bhaav towards her elders was unparalleled, it became her life mantra. Selfless seva is the master key to Pragna or self development, her unconditional Seva earned her the grace and Krupa of her seniors, which enlightened her knowledge, capacity and understanding of the scriptures beyond measure.

Guru Sanidhya:



Pujya Lilambai Mahasatiji's first chaturmas was under the divine sanidhya of Guru Pran. During this Chaturmas, Pujya Gurudev elucidated on the Aagam Granth - Shree Dashvaikalik Sutra and drenched the entire Dharma Sabha (congregation) with Parmatma Mahavir's priceless words of wisdom. Shree Dashvaikalik Sutra is an exemplary scripture for any seeker who wishes to commence the journey of self-realization. Vairagi (individuals preparing for Jain Diksha) as well as Sadhu-Sadhvijs (ascetics) are tremendously benefitted with the expositions of this scripture that lays the foundation stone of Saiyam (ascetic's lifestyle). The teachings of this scripture throws light on every kriya (action) and bhaav (emotion) of Saiyam, and Parmatma Mahavir's vision behind each of them. Further, Guru Pran's deep and insightful explanation of the Sutra entrenched Saiyam bhaav of the highest order in Pujya Lilambai Mahasatiji's life, along with unflinching faith in Lord Mahavir's agna. It was as if this one Sutra imbued in her the teachings of all the 32 Aagam scriptures. Her intense aspiration to faithfully pursue the

Panch Mahavrats (five great vows of Diksha) at any cost, became a lifelong resolve. **Her awe and veneration for celibacy gained prime importance during this Chaturmas, that which she gracefully upheld till her last living breath.** Like a sculptor gives shape to an idol with utmost care, every word that Guru Pran expounded skillfully shaped Pujya Lilambai Mahasatiji's inner Vitragta, wisdom and compassion towards every living being. However, this also marked Pujya Mahasatiji's last Chaturmas in Guru Pran's sanidhya. Shortly thereafter, the world witnessed his Maha Prayaan (mortal demise). The numerous Vairagis and young Sadhvijis under his sandhiya now took refuge under the Pujya Lilambai Mahasatiji and Pujya Muktabai Mahasatiji - who became the chief Mahasatijis. The congregation of Sadhvijis under their able leadership came to be known as **Mukta-Lilam Parivar**. Pujya Lilambai Mahasatiji was fondly known as Pujya Swami among her disciples.

The Storm of ill-Health:

Pujya Mahasatiji grew to become a well-learned Mahasatiji whose disposition of Parmatma Mahavir's teachings were remarkable and revered by Shravak-Shravikas (householders) across Saurashtra. Her dedication to the tenets of Jain philosophy reflected in her determination to adopt every religious discipline with steadfastness and firm belief.

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Her thought-provoking pravachans enlightened many a souls and inspired them to follow the footsteps of Parmatma Mahavir.

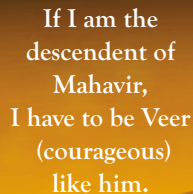
After around 8 to 10 years of Saiyam, she was at the village of Mendarda with several younger Sadhvijis. Pujya Swami was addressing the congregation in her compelling style, and everyone was deeply engrossed. While delivering her Pravachan, she suddenly fainted and the pravachan notes that she held in her hands fell down. Seeing this, her fellow Sadhvijis, Sangh trustees and members, and Shrivak-Shravikas jumped to their feet. Everyone was very worried. But Pujya Swami was instantly calm. She said, she will not need or take any treatment. Without even moving a little, she lied down calmly and with equanimity. The Shrivaks tried their best to give some treatment or other, but her condition worsened with each remedy.

Pujya Swami understood that these are testing times for her dedication towards Saiyam, and today's pain is only a product of my own Karmas from the past. **When I did not flinch at binding these Karmas, why should I become sensitive when I have to bear their fruit?** She realized that remaining steadfast in these testing times is real Sadhana. Retaining one's Aatmabhaav when the body is writhing in pain, is true valour. To accept help or relief from someone else during such hard times is a hindrance to my Sadhana. **The path to soul-purification and realization is solitary.** When

“
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”

Lord Mahavir began his Sadhana, Indra - the king of celestial beings, requested to accompany him and serve him during his penance. But Parmatma Mahavir politely declined his offer, explaining that one has to fight his own karmas to attain freedom. External help is of no use. This thought evoked inner strength in Pujya Swami, and she thought to herself that **if I am the descendent of Mahavir, I have to be Veer (courageous) like him.** I want to bear my Karmas with a smile, as I am shedding my Karmas and advancing towards purity. There was a battle between her will and her ill-health. The rise of Karmas was depicted only physically in her ill-health but her steadfast soul continued to experience equanimity. With the rising Karmas, her endurance and deep practical understanding and faith on the theory of Karma also increased. She spent nearly two and a half to three years in this condition, until the visionary Tapsamrat Pujya Gurudev Shree Ratilalji Maharaj Saheb gave her the agna to proceed towards Mumbai. With his agna, she arrived in Mumbai in the year 1964.

Pujya Swami did not wish to take any treatments for her ailment, but her supporters implored her as they felt that society shouldn't be deprived of the wisdom and vision of such a capable and young Sadhviji. They wanted her to seek treatment in every possible way. Respecting the feelings of the shravaks, Pujya Swami agreed to undergo treatment. Nearly 50 years ago, in 1966, she stayed back for another 3 months



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after the chaturmas at Kandivali, Mumbai. She then initiated her treatment under the experienced Raajvaidya Shri Krishnakantbhai Sharma. All the Sangh members of Kandivali Shree Sangh, including Shree Chagganbhai Goyani and Shree Umedbhai Doshi, did not miss this golden opportunity of serving her and taking care of her health. Even those who would meet her for the very first time, could experience a different, divine feeling in her sagacious presence.

At that time, Taraben (Pujya Shri Veermatibai Mahasatiji) who was a Vairagi under Pujya Swami, was blessed with the opportunity to serve her and she made the most of it. Right from conversing with the doctor to giving her medicines at the right time, taking care of her ascetic duties and using her insight and ability to gauge Pujya Swami's smallest need or requirement, Taraben served Pujya Swami with immense care and selflessness. She strived day and night with one hope to bring full recovery to Pujya Swami. There was some temporary relief in her health with the treatment, but it did not last long. Suddenly, one night, her condition worsened. As her Vedaniya Karma attacked her once again, her body grew cold and breathing slowed down. Everyone around was extremely worried not knowing what to do. It was late in the night, so immediate treatment or relief was difficult.

But, like an iron lady, Pujya Swami remained steadfast in her *aatmabhaav*. With a strong willpower and an aura of calmness, she said, **“I am at peace. You must stop worrying needlessly and begin chanting the Sharana** (the four auspicious positions of refuge that one seeks when death is close). **I seek forgiveness from all and I have enmity towards none.”** But

there was no comfort, everyone was drowned in worry, not knowing if Puja Swami would see the light of the next day. While her disciples became increasingly concerned and anxious, Puja Swami said with conviction that whatever is meant to happen, will happen. I don't want to bother anyone, nor update anyone with news about my condition.

Saiyam is that which inspires you to protect your soul and it's Aatmabhaav under every circumstance, come what may. Bhagwan Mahavir has beautifully said that he who can protect his soul from the effects of the five senses, crosses the ocean of Sansar. While those who fail to protect their soul and bend to the demands of the five senses, continue endlessly in this cycle of birth and death for infinite time.

At dawn, during the Brahmamuhurat, Puja Swami felt a different exuberance around her. She felt as though Guru Pran was with her, standing right before her eyes and raising his palm to bless her. And on seeing Puja Gurudev, there arose a renewed energy in her, as if drawing from his divine strength. The night passed, and the doctor arrived in the morning. He observed Puja Swami's condition and started her treatment immediately. Her breathing returned to normal within ten minutes. Everyone was relieved. The doctor too was astonished at her endurance and willpower, and he exclaimed, 'We are witnessing Guru Pran's pure grace. Puja Swami's Guru is very strong, and he has saved her.' After that she slowly recovered.

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Pujya Swami and other Sadhvijis returned to Saurashtra after spending three Chaturmas in Mumbai. Pujya Swami continued to carry out immense Shasan Prabhavna in the areas of Khambha, Visavadar, Mangrol and other surrounding regions, immersing one and all in the vast wisdom that she inherited from Lord Mahavir and then, Pujya Guru Pran. Meanwhile, her health continued to see ups and downs.

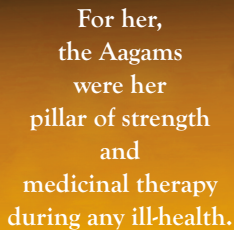
In 1970, Tapsamrat Pujya Gurudev arrived in Mumbai and established the Shramani Vidyapeeth at Ghatkopar, with the aim of making the new generation of Jin Shasan highly knowledgeable. He asked all his agnanuvarti Sadhvijis (Sadhvijis who were in his agna and sanidhya) as well as sadhaks (individuals preparing to take Diksha) to study at this Vidyapeeth, he also directed Pujya Swami to return to Mumbai.

'Aanaae maamagam dhammam', which means 'Agnas my Dharma', is Parmatma Mahavir's definition of Dharma for every disciple. Pujya Swami who had woven this quote in her every breath, action and emotion decided to proceed towards Mumbai without any discussion or resistance. Pujya Swami, Pujya Bhadrabai Mahasatiji, Pujya Bhartibai Mahasatiji, Pujya Sumanbai Mahasatiji, Pujya Rajematibai Mahasatiji, Pujya Veermatibai Mahasatiji, Pujya Rajulbai Mahasatiji with Seven other disciples and vairagi Heeraben (Pujya Hasmitabai Mahasatiji) proceeded towards Mumbai. However, before they could reach Limbdi, destiny had another plan. Pujya Swami usually held onto someone's hand while doing vihar. But that day during vihar, she had a fainting spell. Darkness cast before her eyes and she couldn't move her feet. Despite that, she walked some twenty five steps and then relented. She

couldn't take a single step further. She just sat down on the road. The village was still a little distance away. There was a small hut across the road. The Sadhvijis who were with her, gave her support and took her towards the hut. They sat her down. A village named Tuva was further two kilometers away to get access to any food or water. Two of her disciples proceeded towards the village to seek gochari (alms) and others tried to comfort Pujya Swami. **For her, the Aagams were her pillar of strength and medicinal therapy during any ill-health.** Shortly, some beautiful rhythm of chanting echoed out of the hut. She concentrated all her strength with the help of that rhythm. Whilst listening to it, she contemplated, 'Who helps a deer when it is sick, in the middle of a jungle? Who brings it food or water?' Lord Mahavir has recited this example beautifully in Shree Uttaradhyayan Sutra, and using these pills of wisdom, Pujya Swami tried to heal herself from within and gain strength.

An old man standing nearby was watching this entire episode. He came closer and advised them of a nearby village named Vastadi, a mere 3 kilometers away. He suggested them to try and reach there somehow, his employer lived there and he would help them.

Everyone started wondering that they wanted to reach Vastadi which is 3 KM away, but how to make Pujya Swami do the

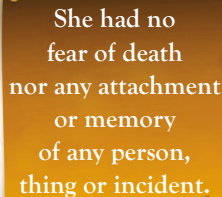


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vihar? At that very moment Pujya Swami said, "I will hold your hands from both sides and walk." The other sadhvis accompanying her were astonished at the commitment of Swami towards her Saiyam. Even in such immense discomfort, she did not opt for any vehicular help. Their heads bowed down in reverence to Pujya Swami for her staunch resolve towards her Saiyam. She started walking. One Sadhviji ensured that the road was proper in the front, two held her from each side and one supported her waist from behind. They crossed about three-fourths of the stretch towards Vastadi when the sun started to set. Pujya Swami's legs started shaking and she fell down. All the other Sadhvijis were worried. Just then, some village women who had come to fetch water nearby, saw them and offered to help. They said they could pick up Pujya Swami and take her to the nearby village. Two of them crossed their hands to make a seat. They made Pujya Swami sit on their hands and with their support, Pujya Swami safely reached a Shravak's house. Thus with great efforts, they finally reached Vastadi. Pujya Swami was feeling weaker, her body temperature had started to drop owing to low blood pressure. Everyone did their evening Pratikraman and Swadhyay as Pujya Swami insisted on continuing with her swadhyay despite her deteriorating health. She also asked for forgiveness from the younger Sadhvijis. She then dictated her Alochana (confession) letter to Pujya Bhadrabai Mahasatiji for presenting to Pujya Tapsamrat Gurudev **"In my ascetic life, I have always tried to uphold every ritual and every agna. Despite that, if I have knowingly or unknowingly, failed to fulfill my Sadhu Dharma at any point of time, then please forgive me."**

Pujya Swami was dictating her Alochana with a strong will, but her disciples were crying endlessly. They were shivering and dreading any untoward incident that might take place through the night. They chanted the Namaskar Mantra for the entire night. Pujya Swami was deeply engrossed in her aatmabhaav and Gurusmaran and **she had no fear of death nor any attachment or memory of any person, thing or incident.** By morning her health showed some improvement. There was only one Shravak's house and a few vegetarian families staying in the vicinity. In such circumstances, seven Sadhvijis stayed there for 31 days.

Meanwhile a sushravak named Shri Lallubhai Shah of Limbdi Sampraday's Chuda Sangh got the message of Pujya Swami's ill health. He immediately arrived and requested Pujya Swami to join him in Limbdi. She agreed and all the Sadhvijis went to Chuda. Pujya Swami had restrictions of taking allopathy medicines, so an experienced Vaidya, Shri Shashikantbhai, was called for her treatment. As time passed, Pujya Swami's health saw ups and downs. One day, her health worsened and she started having loud burps, which could be heard even 3 houses away. This went on for many days. Vaidyaraj was also wondering what to do. One day Vaidyaraj's Guru who was 100 years old, came to visit Pujya Swami. On examining her, he said that this is not a physical ailment. He left right away. Pujya Swami's health deteriorated and the whole



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village of Chuda was disturbed. Followers from different places gathered at the Upashray, thinking that with such a critical condition, she may be nearing her mortal end.

However, with immense Gurukrupa and the prayers of thousands of people, her condition started improving slightly. The Vaidya started a different line of treatment, and it started showing positive effects on her health. Her strong willpower and the Vaidya's treatment bore fruit, and she finally recovered. Everyone breathed a sigh of relief.

Successful Leadership:



Due to her health condition, Puja Swami spent the Chaturmas at Chuda. In Mumbai, the Shramani Vidyapeeth started operations. Puja Mota Swami (Puja Shri Muktabai Mahasatiji) along with other Mahasatijis and followers reached Mumbai. Puja Tapsamrat Gurudev was of the opinion that if such a huge number of Mahastijis are to be stationed at one place for studies, then an able leader was needed to take charge of such an institution. He wanted Puja Swami to take charge of the institution. And thus, after her Chaturmas at Chuda, Puja Swami arrived at Mumbai as per Guru Agna. Puja Mukta-Lilam Gurunimaiya along with a congregation of 30 Sadhvijis and 30 Vairagi stayed stationed in Mumbai for five years to pursue the Shramani Vidyapeeth course. Both the Gurunimaiyas put in all their efforts to nurture their young disciples with deep knowledge and understanding of Jain philosophy, the Aagams, Sanskrit, Prakrit, and a

variety of texts written and composed by our Purvaacharyas. Pujya Swami would recite the Dravyanuyog Granth herself with the teachers like Shri Shobhachandji Bharil, Shri Roshanlalji Jain and Shri Narendraji Jha. Despite her ill-health, Pujya Swami gave priority to imparting invaluable education to the Sadhvijis and Sadhaks, who were going to be the future of Jin Shasan.

During this period, Tapsamrat Pujya Gurudev also inspired the Gujarati translation of the Jain Aagams. Acharya Shree Devardhigani Kshamashraman who had viewed, reviewed and inscribed the teachings of Lord Mahavir in a physical format 980 years after his Nirvana, and it was his sheer effort that has made the invaluable Aagam scriptures within our reach today. Tapsamrat Pujya Gurudev too, envisioned the need of authentically reviewing the different versions of the Aagam scriptures and translating them into the Gujarati language which was widely adopted in the Jain community. And thus, the Gujarati translation of Aagams began with help of Shravak Shree Premjibhai Gala and others. It was a major milestone in the history of Sthanakwasi Jain Samaj. This translation task was awarded to young Sadhvijis and Vairagis of the Shramani Vidyapeeth. Under the able supervision of Pandit Shri Shobhachand Bharilji, 19 Aagams were translated and printed in Gujarati. Pujya Swami had translated Shree Acharang Sutra (part 2) and Shree Dashvaikalik Sutra, but after that due to reasons unknown, the translation process got stuck. During these 5 years, Pandit Shri Shobhachandji Bharil was deeply impressed by Pujya Swami's Bhaav Sadhana and her ascetic life. He conferred upon her the title of '**Bhaavyogini**'.

While contributing tremendously to Shasan seva, Puja Swami's health also started improving gradually. Puja Swami had commenced a Sadhana of reciting Shri Bhaktamar Stotra. For 21 days at a stretch, she would recite the Stotra thrice a day in the same place and at the same time. She would also observe daily penance along with this Sadhana. At that time, each and everyone wanted to contribute and do whatever they could for Puja Swami's healthy recovery. 108 couples came together to do akhand Jaap Sadhana of Shri Bhaktamar Stotra for one whole day. Puja Swami was deeply engrossed in the Sadhana, in deep bhakti towards Lord Adinath. And like Acharya Shri Mantungsuri (the original composer of Shri Bhaktamar Stotra), who broke the shackles and fetters with the recitation of this Stotra, Puja Swami too shed the shackles of her Vedaniya Karmas with the Sadhana of this Stotra. The Stotra had a transformational effect on her health, that saw a huge improvement. Thereafter, she became an ardent Aaradhak of the stotra which had given her a new lease of positive energy to pursue her Saiyam with renewed vigour and strength.

It was then that Tapsamrat Puja Gurudev's supreme vision came to light. His agna to Puja Swami for coming and staying in Mumbai for five continuous years had a great indication and a dual positive effect -

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Stotra.

”

The spiritual and intellectual progress of young Sadhvijis and Vairagis, coupled with the wellbeing and health recovery of Pujiya Swami. Mumbai was blessed with Pujiya Swami's sanidhya and deep spiritual intelligence for ten years thereon, as she travelled across Mumbai to Santacruz, Walkeshwar, Kandawadi and other parts of the city to spread the fragrance of Jin Shasan in thousands of hearts.

Ascetic Fragrance:

Pujiya Swami had vowed that she will never use a wheelchair, she will travel outside Mumbai only when she has the physical capacity to walk by herself. And thus, after spending ten years in Mumbai and having completed about thirty years of her ascetic life, Pujiya Swami regained the strength to do vihar for about ten-twelve kilometers daily with Dev-Guru krupa, her Sadhana of the revered Bhaktamar Stotra and immensely strong willpower.

In the year 1978, she restarted her vihar from Mumbai. With several Sanghs requesting her to grace their Sangh for Chaturmas, Pujiya Swami's chaturmas was held at Sangli, Maharashtra. In this Chaturmas, she expounded the captivating and deeply enthralling sachitra pravachanmala on Shri Bhaktamar Stotra - the Stotra which had become the pillar of strength in her life. Having immersed in deep Sadhana of this Stotra, she revealed its deepest secrets to the whole Sangh who felt enormously blessed with her gracious presence that took their devotion and aradhana of Jain principles to new heights.

After Sangli, she gradually traveled towards South India. In this southern state, Gujarati speaking Sadhu-Sadhvijs did not arrive very often. In 1981, Puja Swami arrived for her Chaturmas in Bengaluru (Karnataka), for the very first time. All the communities therefore felt extremely grateful to Puja Swami for gracing their land, and came together to make the most of her historic Chaturmas.

Puja Swami's deeply inspiring pravachans created a tide of devotion in thousands of hearts. With her inspiration, Shri Rupaben Kothari and Shri Ilaben Gohil were strongly inspired to renounce the world. The year 1984 witnessed their Diksha in Bengaluru, and they then transformed into Puja Rupabai Mahasatiji and Puja Aartibai Mahasatiji.

Puja Swami spent around seven to eight years in South India, travelling through various cities, towns and villages, including Chennai, Coimbatore, Bijapur, Mangalore, Hyderabad, and more. When Sadhu - Sadhvijs do vihar across the country, they rejuvenate every place they visit and instil the values of Dharma in souls, young and old. It is with their arduous effort that Jin Shasan continues to remain vibrant in today's pancham kaal too. After spreading the fragrance of Jin shasan in the whole of South India and earning utmost respect for Gondal Gachha and Guru Pran Parivar among all the different communities, Puja Swami returned to Mumbai with her congregation of Sadhvijs.

In the year 1992, Tapsamrat Puja Gurudev's Samuh Chaturmas was going to be held at Rajkot. All the Sadhu-Sadhvijs of Guru Pran Parivar were going to come together, as Puja Gurudev was going to take the vow of Maun

(silence) for lifetime during this Chaturmas. To make the most of his sagacious sanidhya, Sadhu-Sadhvijiis from across the country came together at Rajkot Royal Park Upashray. **The Samuh Chaturmas of 7 Sadhu Bhagwants and 85 Sadhvijiis was a historic event in Rajkot, giving the entire Jain community a glimpse of the divinity that souls would experience in Tirthankar Parmatma's Samavsharan.** At this Chaturmas, Pujya Mukti-Lilam Gurunimaiyas played a pivotal role and their able leadership and management of the 85 Sadhvijiis was resplendent in every manner. Thereafter, 1995 and 1997 witnessed two more such Samuh Chaturmas in Tapsamrat Pujya Gurudev's sanidhya, at Vadiya and Rajkot respectively. Pujya Swami's contribution at all the three Chaturmas was substantial. Imparting deep knowledge and principles of ascetic life along with critical virtues of Samuday Dharma effectively uplifted the Pragna of one and all, while instilling a feeling of mutual respect and intimacy among all the members of Guru Pran Parivar.

Apurva Shrutseva:



1997-1998 marked the centenary year of Guru Pran's Janma Jayanti. Tapsamrat Pujya Gurudev aspired to publish the Gujarati translation of all the Aagams in lieu of his memory and heritage. The translation which was previously left incomplete, was now initiated once again with Pujya Gurudev's blessings. Pujya Swami took the responsibility of writing, editing and compiling the Aagams. To successfully complete this herculean task,

Pujya Swami also took several vows and abhigrahas (resolves). She commenced various Jaap Sadhanas, different types of penance and also advised other Sadhvijis to do the same according to their own capacity. With firm determination and dedication, she stayed at Rajkot for Nine years and decided not to do vihar outside Rajkot till this Shasan Seva was fully accomplished. **Just as Acharya Shri Devardhigani Kshamashraman devoted Thirteen years to the task of the very first Aagam inscription and compilation in the state of Vallabhipur, Pujya Swami too depicted the very same dedication and devotion to Shrut Seva and Guru Agna.** Pujya Aartibai Mahasatiji and Pujya Subodhikabai Mahasatiji were joint editors while she remained the chief editor. Several other Sadhvijis and Shrivak-Shravikas were assisting Pujya Swami according to their capacity. At such an old age, she spent 8 - 10 hours everyday in compiling and proofreading the Aagam scriptures. She stayed alone in her room throughout this period, refraining from giving any discourses, with the one single aim of fulfilling her Guru's dream and agna of Shrut Seva. After nine years of tremendous devotion and hard work, the task was finally complete. Guru Pran Aagam Batrisi was finally published. Today, world over, these Aagams are helping countless Sadhu-Sadhvijis, Sadhaks and

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Shravaks ascend in their spiritual journey, while also ensuring that an authentic legacy of Lord Mahavir's invaluable knowledge is passed on to the future generation for eons to come that keeps the lamp of Jin Shasan burning brightly.

Pujya Swami's efforts towards this Apurva Shrut Seva was lauded by the Chaturvidha Shri Sangh. Aagamdiwakar Pujya Shree Janakmuni Maharaj Saheb was astounded and deeply moved. At the Lokarpan function (official launch) of the Guru Pran Aagam Batrisi, he said, "In this fifth era, you are not just a sati, but a Mahasati in the true sense." He expressed his inability to commend her work. He said, **"By dedicating yourself to this apurva Shrut Seva, you may have surely earned Tirthankar Naam Gotra Karma. I hope to become your Gandhar when you attain Kevalgnan and become a Tirthankar!"** With such deep appreciation, he bestowed upon her the title of 'Apurva Shrut Aradhika Pujya Shree Lilambai Mahasatiji'.

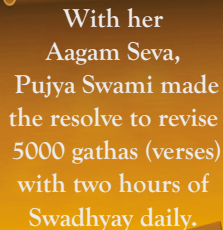
Jeevan Sandhya:

After Pujya Swami completed nine years of this incredible Shrut Seva, her exile came to end. All the Sanghs of Saurashtra were eagerly awaiting the opportunity of her Chaturmas. Aagamdiwakar Pujya Shree Janakmuni Maharaj Saheb with his two disciples, and Pujya Swami with her eight disciples graced Jetpur for Chaturmas. During sheshkaal, they did vihar in various areas of Saurashtra, including Gondal, Junagadh, Visavadar, Veraval, Una, Dhari, Bagasara, Kundala and several other places of

Saurashtra before returning to Rajkot. With advancing age, her body was becoming weaker. She thus limited her vihar yatra and now stayed at Rajkot.

Shrut Seva had an indelible impact on Pujya Swami's life. Aagam Swadhyay is the breath of a Sadhak's life. As one's swadhyay (study of the Aagams) increases, one's Saiyam bhaav and understanding becomes stronger and stronger. Swadhyay has the power to deeply intensify one's Vairagya bhaav. **With her Aagam Seva, Pujya Swami made the resolve to revise 5000 gathas (verses) with two hours of Swadhyay daily.** She also believed that in the present times, due to unavailability of open spaces, natural body discharges cannot be properly disposed. Hence, she would practice 108 Kayotsargs of the Iriyyavahiya Sutra daily and ask for forgiveness from every living being. She lived by these two principles throughout her life, till the very end.

As her age advanced, she slowly and steadily turned inward. Her Maun Sadhana increased. Every Monday, she would take up complete Maun, refraining from using any gestures or sign language also to communicate. Tirthankars too have revealed that maun has great strength to connect one with the Self. Silencing the outer noise empowers one's inner voice. When a seeker understands the importance



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of maun sadhana, he gradually gains control over his mind, words and actions. He thus experiences extreme detachment from worldly affairs and unprecedented satisfaction with the Self. Applying this principle to her life, Pujya Swami would daily practice maun from 11.00 AM to 3.00 PM and 7.00 PM to 9.00 PM. Her Sadhana inspired all the Sadhvijis and Sadhaks in her sanidhya, who would follow her footsteps and intensify their efforts towards soul purification.

Final Battle:



At a very advanced age, one more disease set in – Pujya Swami started bleeding from her nose. Sometimes, the bleeding would continue for several hours. Other Sadhvijis would stop all their activities, and try to profusely offer some help and relief, but to no avail. Pujya Swami would patiently explain to the worried Sadhvijis, '*Kadann kammanna na mokkh atthi*'- one has to bear the fruits of his own Karmas. I feel satisfied that my Karmas are permanently shedding with this temporary suffering.

The other Sadhvijis felt that Pujya Swami's disease should be diagnosed, so that it can be treated. But the one who has internalized and imbibed the true essence of the Karma theory in her life, feels no need to know the cause of disease from doctors. This continued for almost five years. Pujya Swami endured this suffering very peacefully. Pujya Swami also developed a small boil under her chest. Gradually, it increased in size and became as big as a mango. Yet, Pujya Swami wouldn't apply any medicine or

take any treatment. **The body continued as per its nature, while her soul continued to revel in its own Aatmabhaav.** She believed that recognizing the soul distinctly from the body is a Sadhana that is possible only in the priceless human birth. Her Karmas were giving her an opportunity to experience this reality, and she wanted to make the most of it.

Pujya Swami decided not to consult any doctor – whether be it a boil or a tumor. In spite of such unbearable pain, she never took any allopathic medication or sent her blood for testing to laboratories. She would explain that when blood is sent for testing, it remains untested for several hours. During that period, several tiny organisms are born inside it and we are partially responsible for their death. Pujya Swami would remove the pus from the boil and clean the wound herself. When the pain became intense, Shravaks requested and pleaded her to call a nurse for doing the dressing. Pujya Swami agreed, but she refused to take any medication. She bore this limitless pain for 9-10 months, before succumbing to it. Pujya Swami realized that this was the last struggle of her body. And hence, weaving her life with the mantra of Param Samta (supreme tolerance), she engrossed herself completely in Sadhana and Swadhyay.

In the last one year of her mortal life, Pujya Swami increased her practice of Pratilekhana – an ascetic's practice of carefully examining every activity and every object of use to ensure no living being is harmed. Her disciples would often request her to let

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them do her ascetic duties, like inspecting her Rajoharan or setting her bed. But she would always say that I am not doing mere Pratilekhana, I want to make my memory of Saiyam so strong in this birth, that I never lose this connection in future births to come. Pratilekhana-This seed of Saiyam sanskar will become my Guru in my next birth and awaken me from within, protecting my soul from falling into worldly attractions.

Her body was becoming weak with every passing day. Age-related problems like knee-pain and stiffness of the leg were causing difficulties in standing and walking. Pujya Swami had become completely bedridden in the last one and a half month. With great difficulty, she would take 2-4 spoons of food in the entire day. Pujya Swami told the Sadhvis who were in her Seva not force feed her, but instead give food to her only when she asks. All the treatments were stopped. Due to extreme weakness, Pujya Swami could not sit or even hold a book. She did her religious rituals while lying down. In spite of all these difficulties Pujya Swami continued her Swadhyay and daily resolutions. Since she could not hold a book, Mahasatijis in her seva opened the binding of the Aagam scriptures, separated the pages and put them in plastic bags for Pujya Swami to hold and read. In this manner, Pujya Swami read 5000 gathas until the very last day. During this one and a half month, the entire day was spent in studying of the scriptures and Sadhana.

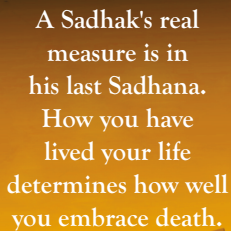
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Just as a student's real intelligence is gauged during his performance in the final exam, **a Sadhak's real measure is in his last Sadhana. How you have lived your life determines how well you embrace death.**

Lord Mahavir said, '*Munnino Saya Jagranti*', which means that a Sadhak or a Muni is he who is always conscious. Pujya Swami was a living example of this doctrine. She never feared death, instead she said that, "Only if death comes, will I be able to experience the pinnacle of my real identity and realize how I am distinct from this body. O Death, I welcome you with open arms!"

On the day of Ashadh Vad Atham, Sadhivijis brought her Ayambil food as Pujya Swami always practiced Ayambil every Atham and Punam / Amaas. But Pujya Swami refused to take anything, said she won't have anything - perhaps it might be okay to do Upvas. At 5 PM, to keep the other Sadhvijis happy and give them comfort, Pujya Swami took merely one teaspoon of moong water and one piece of dhokla. This was her life's last Ayambil.

After completing Pratikraman that evening, Pujya Swami was fully conscious and aware. The Sadhvijis were continuously reading and singing various verses and soulful prayers like Ratnakar Pachisi and Apurva Avsar. Engrossed in deep bhakti, Pujya Swami continued her alochana. At the peak



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of utmost inner joy, her body's unbearable pain was unable to have any impact on her. Her body had become steady. Seeing the worry and pain on the faces of those around her, Pujya Swami asked Pujya Renukabai Mahasatiji to recite a nice story. After hearing the story, she heartily laughed in the midst of her seething pain, with the thought that I want to keep my Shishya parivar always smiling even after my demise. Seeing her smile lightened everyone's mood a little. They did not know that this was the last time they would see Pujya Swami laugh.

After this brief conversation, she became still once again. She collected all her emotions and eulogized a devotion filled prayer towards Parmatma and her Guru. "O Parmatma! O Pujya Guru Pran, the owner of my heart, the emancipator of my soul, the ignitor of my inner lamp of knowledge, the one who has blessed me with the priceless vows of Diksha! I seek refuge in your benevolent Sharan! As I count my last few breaths, I bow down to you with earnest gratitude! You have given me this new birth, this new identity, introduced me to my real identity! Had it not been for you, I would never have existed, I would never have recognized myself! For my entire life, I have tried my utmost best to adhere by your agna, your wish and your precepts. I have tried to remain alert and faithful towards the invaluable Panch Mahavrats that you have blessed me with. Despite that, if I have knowingly or unknowingly, committed a mistake, disrespected any vow or failed to adhere to any samiti or gupti, I seek forgiveness with a crying heart. I beg for forgiveness to all those lives in this world whom I may have hurt to serve my physical being. All the worldly living beings, please forgive me, forgive me."

She thus expressed a heartfelt alochana to Parmatma and Guru Pran. She also asked for forgiveness from all those in her sanidhya, young and old. She said, “I seek forgiveness from each of you. You have selflessly served me throughout all circumstances and tried your best to help my failing health. You have displayed unconditional sevabhaav. I bless you all that you may further your inner journey, and attain immense spiritual prosperity and success.” She then renounced her physical body and all the four Kashayas of anger, ego, deceit and greed. Looking away from everyone, she focused her sight in the east direction to internalize.

In the midst of writhing pain, she had become peaceful and serene. The calm on her face was becoming an aura of divine light. She indicated that her end was near. “This life's drama is coming to an end. Please grant me the final vow of sallekhana and the refuge of the four auspicious Sharanas. Gulabbai Mahasatiji, please give me santhara immediately.” Pujya Mahasatiji was perplexed, she turned to Prabhabai Mahasatiji and asked her, “Mahasatiji, what do we do?” At that moment, Pujya Swami said, “Don't ask Prabha. I don't have much time. Please grant me santhara or give me the permission to take it myself.” In the end, she took the ultimate vow of fasting unto death, giving up on food and water completely for the rest of her life. She joined her hands with overwhelming gratitude and accepted santhara. Pujya Swami suggested that no one should call her now. She was lying by one side, but she straightened her body herself to lie in a sleeping shavasan position. She kept both her hands by her sides, with palms facing upwards and her sight focused in north-east direction. Everyone was echoing the reverberating

chants of the four Sharans, “Chhattari Sharanam Pavajjami, Arihante Sharanam Pavajjami, Siddhe Sharanam Pavajjami, Sahu Sharanam Pavajjami, Kevali Panattam Dhammam Sharanam Pavajjami”.

Her breathing started slowing down. And then, as everybody was incessantly praying for her, early morning at about 3 AM, her pious soul left this mortal body. **The sounds of Arihante Sharanam Pavajjami continued to reverberate. The holy bird pursuing nirvana was freed from the cage of this body.**

For some time, everybody around her became speechless. There was a void of emptiness in their hearts, a sudden darkness that their eyes were unable to accept or comprehend. They just stood there like lifeless robots. Every Mahasatiji found it extremely difficult to gather her thoughts and emotions, and accept the fact that their revered Gurunimaiya was no more.

But time had played its part on the body. In the end, everyone was forced to face the truth. After a few brief moments of accepting this reality, they had to look after their duties. Somebody spoke to contacting a doctor who would be able to issue a death declaration certificate. Pujya Swami had upheld the vow of celibacy with such integrity and grace throughout her life, that no male doctor had ever touched her body. And thus, it was appropriated to wait for a female doctor even at the time of her Kaal Dharma to come and examine her.

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”

Pujya Swami had waited till midnight for the six Mumukshus, who were soon going to adopt Jain Diksha in sanidhya of Rashtrasant Pujya Gurudev Shree Namramuni Maharaj Saheb, to arrive and shower her blessings on them. One of the Mumukshus, Dr. Poojaben Vegda (now Dr. Pujya Param Asmitaji Mahasatiji) was an MBBS. She arrived and offered her deep respects to Pujya Swami, the Param Upkari Gurunimaiya under whose Sanidhya all Sadhvijis of Guru Pran Parivar were and the new Mumukshus were soon going to be initiated. She then examined Pujya Swami's pulse and declared her body to be dead.

Antim Yatra:



The Royal Park Shree Sangh respectfully placed her body on a decorated Palkhi, so that all her followers could offer their last respects to this pious soul. As the news of her Kaal Dharma spread, devotees from not just Rajkot but all over Saurashtra, Maharashtra and other states arrived to pay their last respects. Everyone was deeply saddened by her demise. **It was a huge loss for the entire Jain community, as a sheltering tree of compassion, unprecedented wisdom and Vairagya was no more.** Sadhu-Sadhvijis across sects were disturbed by the news. The farewell to Pujya Swami was one filled with utmost reverence, upholding the stature and position of a soul who had taken Jin Shasan seva to new heights and enshrined the bhaav of Saiyam in thousands of hearts. Her antim yatra was reminiscent of Parmatma's palkhi for one and all.

The great soul who took birth in in the Tejani family, who had accepted the auspicious vows of Saiyam from Pujyavar Guru Pran, who had been nurtured with knowledge, experience and wisdom by Pujya Ful-Amra Gurunimaiya, and who had adhered her life to the agna and blessings of Tapsamrat Pujya Gurudev, who had now moved on with her Mahaprayan. She had evolved to become the able and venerable caretaker of Guru Pran's entire Samuday.

Blessed are we to be acquainted with this Divine Soul.

**We salute Pujya Swami's life, her journey,
her resolve and her inner steadfastness towards Parmatma.
Jin Shasan is eternally glowing with such pious souls who uphold the
tradition of Saiyam with such grace and dignity.
The world remains in awe and mystery of how, in today's times too,
the soul can manifest powers beyond measure,
simply by an effort to realize the Self.**



Available at :

Shri Royal Park Sthanakvasi Jain Mota Sangh, C.M.Sheth Paushdhshala, Omanwala Upashray,
2- Royal Park, Gadipati Pujya Shri Girishmuni M.S. Marg, Kalawad Road, Rajkot - 360005


PARASDHAM

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