

September Jains celebrated one of the holiest festivals of Jainism – Paryushan Maha Parva from 6th September to 13th September 2018.

The eight days long festival, popularly known, as “Paryushan Maha Parva” is a festival of compassion and forgiveness. During these eight days Jains follow total non-violence, love, and compassion through fasting. The festival ordains the Jains to observe the universal supreme virtues in daily practical life. The non-Jains also express high reverence for this Jain festival in India.

On this occasion, Oshwal Association of the UK, Northwest area had invited a respected and learned scholar from India. Rakesh Bhai delivered lecture series throughout eight days both morning and evening. Harrow Leisure Centre, Byron Hall was the venue for the eight-day celebration. Chosen topics were very appropriate for day-to-day life, and about 1000 people participated daily basis. It was truly remarkable to see hall full of people past 10:30 pm during the evening when aarti and mangal devo (auspicious lamps) were sung. Musicians also sang the religious songs during the sessions.

Members of Jain community participated with full vigour and zeal in various religious rituals and bhakti programs. On the 5th day a grand festivity of the “Mahavir Janma Vaanchan”, reading from the holy book Kaplasutra, celebration of birth of Lord Mahavir was very colourful and spectacular. The fourteen dreams of the mother of Mahavir, Trishala Mata, are acknowledged. A “Parnu” (small silver cradle” depicting baby Mahavir is then celebrated. A family would take the cradle home overnight. This is considered very auspicious. This year, Chair of Harrow Interfaith, Varsha Dodhia’s family had the good grace to participate in this joyous celebration.

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