



(Time: 9.00 to 11.15 a.m.)

SATSANG PARICHAY : PAPER - 1

Note: A few of the questions in this Pre-Test Paper will be asked in the Final Examination to be held on Sunday, 6 March 2022. In the Final Examination answers written on extra pages will not be considered valid. Without the prior permission of the Pariksha Karyalay in Ahmedabad, answer papers written by substitute writers in place of the original candidate will not be accepted. Answer papers with more than one type of handwriting will not be accepted. Answers crossed out will not be considered valid. Answers will not be considered valid if they are not written in legible handwriting. Use the latest editions of the exam books. Candidates will not be allowed to keep any electronic items, such as, mobile phones, tablets, laptops, etc. in the examination room.

SECTION 1: SAHAJANAND CHARITRA - 6th Edition, January 2013

Total Marks: 75

Q.1 In the sentences below, state who is speaking to whom and when.

[9]

1. "All the living beings, men and creatures, are nothing but puppets dancing to your tunes."
2. "If the entire Satsang grants you permission only then you can go."
3. "This milk is very sweet. Have you put sugar into it?"

Q.2 From the given options, place a tick (✓) in the box next to the correct options.

[4]

Note: One or more of the options may be correct. Full marks will be awarded only if all the correct options are chosen, otherwise no marks will be awarded.

1. Consecration of Murtis in Bhuj

(1) ☐ Samvat 1879

(2) ☐ Vaishakh sud 5

(3) ☐ Samvat 1882

(4) ☐ Vaishakh sud 10

2. Meeting with Bishop Heber

(1) ☐ Let me give a copy of the Gita

(2) ☐ He has created this world.

(3) ☐ We and all the Hindus know this God as Parabrahman.

(4) ☐ What a great qualitative difference there is between us from the religious point of view.

Q. 3 Fill in the blanks

[4]

1. Due to Gopalanand Swami, a weaver, of had become a satsangi.
2. If you have bad you must overcome them, otherwise, will force you to give them up.
3. In..... the Maharudra yagna was conduted for..... days.
4., who renounced at the word in Maharaj's letter, stay as Paramhansa.

Q.4 Write short notes on any ONE of the following. (In 15 lines.)

[5]

1. Darshan to Kakabhai
2. The Nuisance of Lolangar
3. Test of Jiva Khachar

Q.5 Answer ALL of the following, using one sentence (not just one word) for each answer.

[5]

1. What did Premabai from Port Diu bring for Maharaj?
2. What did the Nawab say when he saw Maharaj munching the cucumber?
3. At which places did Maharaj built mandirs?
4. What did Maharaj ask Sura Khachar to eat?
5. What did the monkey recite after telling the beads?

Q.6 Give reasons for the following. (two to three lines each).

[6]

1. The sadhu's pattar was filled with sweets.
2. All the sadhus apologized and stopped indulging into separatist activities.
3. Maharaj eat food from Sonbai.

SECTION 2: SATSANG READER II - 4th Edition, April 2011

Q.7 In the sentences below, state who is speaking to whom and when.

[9]

1. "We will go and stay in small hut / amid the trees on the banks of the river."
2. "Ask her why she has come and whether she will stay here."
3. "Don't be upset."

Q.8 Select the SIX correct sentences from below and write them in the correct story sequence in the boxes. [6]

Topic: Jaga Bhakta Gained Happiness of Swami

1. Shriji Maharaj bestowed upon Jaga Bhakta the fourfold happiness. 2. Swami told Jaga Bhakta: "This world itself is the cause of suffering." 3. I don't like the Brahmins taunting you. 4. Swami said, "They are all making you suffer because they know that you are my man." 5. We should not make the God-realized sadhu helpless by our actions. On the contrary, parshads should always feel indebted to them. 6. If you have educated your devotees in this way, then happily join me. 7. You have kindly looked upon me as one of yours. Please do continue to own me so. 8. You are helpless before these opposing sadhus. 9. You are the most beloved of Shriji Maharaj. 10. You don't like the other people taunting me. 11. Jaga Bhakta said, "If there is any pain it will affect my body or my swabhav, but my soul shall suffer in the least." 12. Learn and practice the wisdom of the Vachanamrut.

- (1) Write the correct sentence numbers **Note: (1) 3 marks will be awarded for the correct sentence numbers only if all the six sentence numbers are correct and (2) 3 marks will be awarded only if all the sequence of sentence numbers are correct. Otherwise no marks will be given.**
- (2) Correct sequence of sentence

Q. 9 Write short notes on 'First meeting of Premanand Swami and Maharaj' (in 15 lines). [5]

Q.10 Answer ALL of the following, using one sentence (not just one word) for each answer. [4]

1. When was Karsanjibhai born? (Samvat, Month, Tithi)
2. What did Ayodhyaprasadji Maharaj say on seeing Gunatitanand Swami?
3. What had Maharaj say while praising Nityanand Swami in Vachanamrut Gadhada III 24?
4. What was the dispute between Dada Khachar and the Bhavnagar state?

Q.11 Rewrite the incorrect words shown below in relation to the sentence heading. [4]

Note: Marks will be awarded only if a completely correct sentence is written. Otherwise no marks will be awarded.

Example: Sadguru Nityanand Swami: On Maha vad 9, V.S. 1902, in the presence of Acharya Ayodhyaprasadji Maharaj, Gunatitanand Swami, Paramchaitanyanand Swami, Kripanand Swami and other sadhus, he passed away at Ahmedabad.

Ans. Sadguru Nityanand Swami: On Magshar sud 8, V.S. 1903, in the presence of Acharya Raghuvirji Maharaj, Gopalanand Swami, Shuk Muni, Shunyatitanandji and other sadhus, he passed away at Vartal.

1. **Mukundanand Varni:** Once, Muljibhai was assigned to escort the daughter-in-law of one his neighbors from her parents' house. The father allowed Muljibhai to escort the girl.
2. **Swami Jaga Bhakta:** Gopalanand Swami, who was happy to receive him and listen to his story. However, his uncle, Maghav Bhakta, came to Sarangpur in search of him. He didn't find Jaga Bhakta there, so he decided to go to Bhavnagar.
3. **Sadguru Nityanand Swami:** Prostrated in the holy waters in Kashipuri and Vrindavan, and prayed at sacred ashrams, but his goal of attaining a God was not achieved. Although he was disappointed, he was not disheartened.
4. **Premasakhi Premanand Swami:** Once, the Nawab of Jamnagar heard the music of Devanand Swami at the Ramji Mandir. He felt, 'Such loving from the depth of the soul is not possible anywhere in India.'

Q.12 Give reasons for the following (two to three lines each). [4]


1. Sayajirao asked Nityanand Swami to leave for Ahmedabad.
2. Kamalnayan Shastri's all desires for worldly pleasures were subdued.


SECTION 3: ESSAY

Q.13 Write an essay on any ONE of the following. (In approximately 30 lines.) [10]

1. A Ripe and a Firm Devotee (Enlightening Essays (baps.org), 2020)
2. Ghar Sabha: Make Your Home Ideal (Enlightening Essays (baps.org), 2021)
3. Children's National Satsang Diksha Mukhpath Adhiveshan (Swaminarayan Bliss, May-June 2021, pp. 32-36)



 **Important Note:** Past Papers and solutions of main exam can be downloaded from the BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha's website - Link : <http://www.baps.org/Satsang-Exams.aspx>

 **Matter of above three essays are shown in the following pages.**
(One essay from the list of above essays will be asked in the Final Examination of March-2022)

Satsang Parichay-1

Essay-1

1. A Ripe and a Firm Devotee

HH Mahant Swami Maharaj shares his thoughts about becoming a ripe devotee of God

When a potter makes pots he seasons them by putting them in a kiln. Thereafter, (drinking) water remains in it. Of what use are 1,000 unbaked pots? Only a seasoned pot can be used to store water because it is fully baked. Similarly, there are many devotees of God, but only those who are ripe and strong are the true ones.

Once, we were returning by train from Benaras. A devotee had brought two [clay] potfuls of drinking water for us to our compartment. A few minutes later, one of the water pots broke and the whole compartment got wet. Everyone was troubled by it. Just when the compartment was cleaned dry, the second pot cracked. The reason being that the pots had not been fully seasoned in a kiln.

We do not like to eat chapattis and rice that are not fully baked or boiled. We do not accept them, and instead throw them away.

When a devotee of God becomes strong in all aspects Bhagwan resides in him. Shriji Maharaj came on earth and discoursed to his devotees about becoming spiritually ripe and strong. When we do seva, other activities and satsang our focus should be on becoming ripe and strong.

Only during certain incidents or testing situations do we come to realize whether our satsang understanding is robust or not. It's like a student who studies throughout the whole year and he realizes how much he has learnt only when he takes an exam. In the same way, a devotee's understanding depends on how much he remains unwavering in a testing situation. There are those who come to satsang, but become sad, depressed and give it up on facing a minor insult. Such people are not true (ripe) devotees.

Shriji Maharaj defines a true devotee as one who abides by moral instructions (niyam), has faith (nischay) and stands up (paksha) for God, his Sant and devotees. One who has resolute nischay in God and his Sant, strongly abides by niyams and has paksha for them – his satsang keeps on increasing. Shriji Maharaj stated this for Shukanand Swami.

To become ripe and strong one has to introspect. No camera has been invented to inspect things within ourselves. If it existed then the act of introspection would not have been so neglected. Whatever we do, we should introspect honestly. We should set our own question paper, correct it ourselves and give the marks ourselves. Be honest with yourself. Are Maharaj-Swami happy about what I am doing? Keep on inspecting.

When you cannot see your faults ask the Vachanamrut and Swamini Vato. They will tell you immediately. The speedometer in a car shows you the speed, then another meter will show you how much oil or petrol there is in the car. Similarly, the Vachanamrut and Swamini Vato are our life's meters. So, we have to inspect ourselves.

When you have been in Satsang for twenty-five years and still you have no affinity (khap) for it then whose fault is it? It is your own fault! A person driving a car will keep his eyes constantly on the road. He remains alert that his car does not veer off the road even a bit. So, we should remain alert – are we doing anything that displeases Shriji Maharaj and Swamishri?

Do whatever you do for Satsang only for gaining Bhagwan's rajipo. He is always ready to be pleased upon you. Once, Yogiji Maharaj travelled to a village. There were not enough arrangements for his stay there. However, the devotees had lots of love and devotional feelings, so Bapa gave his abundant joy to them. When Bapa was about to depart the devotees cried and regretted that they had been unable to look after him and make proper arrangements for him. Then, Yogiji Maharaj replied, "I had come to please you. When you are happy everything is included in that." God and his Sant want to please you, and they do not want anything in return. All they want are your pure feelings (bhav). We are indeed extremely blessed. We have the association of Pramukh Swami Maharaj – a God-realized Sant. By doing even a little for such a Gunatit Sant he showers his rajipo on us.

It is not so that only when you get 100% (in your spiritual sadhanas) he becomes happy on you. But when you keep on making honest efforts he is equally happy on you. Shriji Maharaj says in Vachanamrut Gadhada I 5, "If during meditation one cannot behold the murti [of God] in one's heart, one should not lose faith and stop meditating. Those who persist in this way will earn the immense grace of God. Moreover, God will be bound by their bhakti." The main thing is the devotee's faith, inner love, enthusiasm and affinity (khap). Talent or skill are not God's parameters.

What can we give to Bhagwan? He has given us this human body. Then, whatever we earn through our body, intellect, knowledge, power, wealth – everything is his. It's okay that we take pride in giving to him. But he is pleased with us by the small things we humbly do for him.

We have met Pramukh Swami Maharaj, who is eternally in communion with Shriji Maharaj. When we are eagerly ready to sacrifice our everything at his feet the words of the Vachanamrut become a mirror for us. We are able to clearly see where our lapses obstruct us. Walk in the footsteps of the Vachanamrut, Gunatit Gurus and Pramukh Swami Maharaj to become strong in faith (nishtha), bhakti and upasana, seva and niyam-dharma. Then, we will easily become a ripe and strong devotee in whose heart Bhagwan will easily and eternally reside.

Essay-2

2. Ghar Sabha: Make Your Home Ideal

Revealing the formula of home assembly (ghar sabha), Pramukh Swami Maharaj provided an extraordinary solution to repairing fractured families, solving individual problems and defusing societal unrest. Here are his thoughts and blessings regarding the importance of doing ghar sabha

A devotee's home and family should be ideal. Having furniture in the house is not the only way to make a home beautiful. In fact, having dharma, values and peace are the true reasons that make a home beautiful. A home should be such that by entering it one experiences peace. But how can that happen? The answer lies in bringing back our foundational values in life.

Today, in the West, we find homes bereft of family feelings. Everyone is independent in their own way. When a son turns sixteen his father cannot tell him anything. And when the father falls ill the son does not go to see him. Whereas our culture is emotionally oriented. If something happens to someone in the family, the other members feel the pain too. However, recently, the Western influence has affected innumerable families in India. Divorces have increased manifold in India.

Today's age is one of materialism. Science has progressed a lot and it is required and necessary. We have street lights and roads. Science has sent man to the moon. It has given us the television and internet. Because of TV, email, internet and other things there are 'fires' in homes. All are burning in that fire. Today, televisions are found in all homes, and all enjoy by watching various programmes. Parents, sons, daughters, daughters-in-law, little children – all sit before the TV and watch things that they should not. Then, how can children learn to respect their elders? All family members should respect elders and conversely all elders should behave in such a way that all are inspired to respect them. But, by watching TV (indiscriminately) how can our children learn our values and exercise discrimination?

How many learn good things from television? In fact, people learn to become violent, stoke commotion, steal, commit adultery, drink liquor and gamble. Because of these vices, they lose their pride, wealth, self-worth and everything. We have forgotten our values. Formerly, when people used to wake up in the morning they would immediately perform their ablutions and daily puja. Today, instead of (giving importance to) a home mandir the television has become prominent.

If we wish to have peace then we'll need to go back to our fundamental values. An increase in materialism and wealth often results in more vices in people's lives. Subsequently, everyone's mind in the house will split from each other. Only if there is spirituality in the home will the members be saved. For that, everyone should sit in the ghar sabha every night and read the scriptures or good books and engage in spiritual talks. Also, by sitting together during meals everyone's minds come together. By doing satsang and reading the scriptures one is able to cultivate vivek. So, our scriptures teach us to accept good things and give up bad things. Our hearts become pure by reading or listening to our spiritual books and the biographies of ideal persons. Children, too, imbibe good values. We make arrangements for our children's education, but miss out in teaching them values. If they do not receive good values at home, they are not going to get them from outside. Do you want to make your children good? Then hold ghar sabhas. Read our scriptures to them. When they read, listen or learn all this from a young age they will be instilled with good sanskars and feel proud about being Indian. Instilling such pride will be a great service to society.

By reading our scriptures one is inspired to introspect and is awakened with sentiments of respect towards one's parents, teachers and guests. Because children are not taught such values from early childhood problems arise in the home. Many parents believe that their children know a lot of things. But what do they know? They know only about worldly things! And parents believe this to be important, but (the reality is) that children lack sanskars. So, it's important to do ghar sabha.

People do not have time because all their time is utilized in earning money. Because one leads a householder's life, money is required. In addition to going to work or doing business, you must also take time out to sit with your children for half-an-hour daily. If you want to bond with them, you must sit, talk and have fun with them and teach them good things. Then, as they grow up they will obey your wishes. Make your young children sit with you when you do your daily puja and also eat

together as a family. At night, during ghar sabha, you can ask them what they have learnt in school. Tell them small incidents and a few inspiring words so that they receive sanskars.

One must always reserve a little time for children. The reason why kusang takes over lies in us not giving quality time to our children and, as a result, no mutual bonds develop. The lack of bonding leads to conflicts and unrest in the house. Never scold your children. Similarly, a husband should never rebuke his wife and vice versa. Talk to each other with love. By so doing, the other person will accept what you say. Talk gently with your children and with love. By becoming angry on your children nothing is accomplished. Talk and listen to them with love. Try to understand what they say and they will understand you. The more loving your bonds are with them the more peace and happiness will prevail. To develop such bonds do ghar sabha.

During former times, after the evening meal was over, all the family members would gather together and talk about satsang. One can talk about incidents that impact us from the Ramayan and Mahabharat – who was Ram and what was Ram rajya like. However, today, one finds the sovereignty of Ravan in most homes – in other words there are conflicts and commotion. Bhagwan Ram was maryada Purushottam. When you have Ram in your heart you'll know how to conduct your social affairs and behave in society. But if you have Ravan in your heart then there will be explosions around. Till one does not remove him one will not experience peace in one's heart and family.

Today, people do not spare time to listen to such talks because they keep roaming outside and thus never come home in time. Subsequently, one thinks that by doing this one has advanced and become a better person. But, in fact, one has become spoilt. There are no prohibitions in earning money but one must observe moral disciplines (maryada).

If one wants to keep a wholesome ambience at home then adjust your time and have dinner together. Then, sit together and read the scriptures. But we never think about sitting together, and therefore conflicts arise. We have to understand our own self. By so doing, our family will be happy and you will also be happy. If you introduce the tradition of sitting together, observing a little silence and singing a prayer and dhun then your life will get better.

Keep a mandir in your house and install whichever deity you believe in. Do daily arti, offer thal and sing bhajans and prayers. When your children see this they will know about the murti of Bhagwan. Otherwise, there are children who do not know this. In fact, parents should take the initiative and care in such matters. One must also take care in doing ghar sabha.

There is no end to our logical arguments against spiritual matters. However, by having faith in God's words, scriptural words and the words of great spiritual masters, and accepting that whatever they say is true and there is not an iota of falsehood, then one becomes spiritually liberated. However, we doubt whether anything can happen by practising spirituality. But it can, providing we offer bhakti with resolute trust and faith.

When one member of the family sits down to do ghar sabha with faith then the entire family will experience peace. Gandhiji had faith in truth. Subsequently, many joined him on his word and made India independent (from British rule). Likewise, what cannot be achieved by having faith in Yogiji Maharaj's words? Do ghar sabha with such faith. Even when no one listens, do it alone with resoluteness. Contemplate about it. Gradually, all the members will join.

Today, brothers and sisters have become independent in their homes. So, they don't listen to each other. Though they belong to one family, they file suits against each other. The reason for such conflicts lies in the erosion of our culture and sanskars. Without sanskars, patriotism, family feelings and societal feelings break down. Then, there will be conflicts. In addition, corrupt sanskars lead to disrespect among family members. A husband and wife fail to respect each other. They thus quarrel and fight. I have heard of many such cases. Children cry and say that their parents fight with each other. Give up your fights so that your children do not fight. Fights erupt because of minor differences. But what is the benefit of fighting?

To avoid this, all members should assemble together to do ghar sabha and share their thoughts, pray to God, do bhajan and remember Shriji Maharaj. Try to understand each other. Tolerate a little and learn to let go. This will definitely bring peace in your home. That is why it is necessary to do ghar sabha. It ushers in spirituality. The reason for pain and discord in all homes is due to lack of sanskars. However, if there is spirituality at home then the family members will forgive each other and dignity will be restored.

By sitting together our minds coalesce. In other words, thoughts become one and life becomes straightforward. Because we do not sit together to talk, our thoughts get disturbed, we become angry and break moral rules.

When you marry off your son then believe his wife to be your daughter. And when you marry off your daughter then believe your son-in-law to be your son. Additionally, believe his relatives to be yours too. Believe your spouse's relatives to be yours as well. However, after marriage, the spouse

blurts out, “I don’t want your parents in my home!” Such behaviour leads to conflicts and eventually results in divorce. But you must understand that this is not our culture. We should consolidate cultural values in our lives to such an extent that others are touched by them and derive inspiration.

There should be no clashes in a satsangi’s home. Everyone should live with love, talk with love, do bhajan out of love and work together lovingly. When this happens, we have truly come to understand what satsang is.

The highest of all things is love. No matter how bad a person may be, but he can be transformed through love. So, when a person improves, the family improves; when a family improves, society improves; when society improves, the country improves; and when a country improves, the world improves. But the family improves through the practice of ghar sabha. Therefore, do ghar sabha and make your house sacred and ideal like a mandir.

Essay-3

3. Children’s National Satsang Diksha Mukhpath Adhiveshan

Guruhari Mahant Swami Maharaj gifted the Satsang Diksha shastra to all BAPS followers on Guru Punam 2020. Thereafter, he expressed his wish that devotees memorize the text. Hence, initially, balaks and balikas were encouraged to memorize the Gujarati text. Thousands of children throughout India endeavoured to memorize the text. After clearing the local phase, they participated online in the zonal phase in September 2020. Of these participants, 744 balaks and 455 balikas were judged to have fully and fluently memorized the Gujarati text of Satsang Diksha. Thereafter, Swamishri expressed his wish that youngsters also memorize the Sanskrit text. So, the Bal Pravrutti Central Office in Ahmedabad launched a national adhiveshan in December 2020. Again, many balaks and balikas from BAPS centres throughout India took up the challenge to fulfil Swamishri’s wish. They were tested via video calls at local, zonal and national levels in January and February 2021. Of the 458 balaks and 234 balikas who reached the national phase 226 balaks 125 balikas were judged to have properly memorized the Sanskrit text. From all these successful children, 167 balaks and 75 balikas had memorized the Sastang Diksha in both Gujarati and Sanskrit.

PERSONAL AUDIENCE WITH SWAMISHRI The outstanding efforts of the 351 children who had memorized the shastra in Sanskrit were rewarded in a special way. Between 8 and 17 March, the 226 balaks and the fathers of the 125 balikas were personally blessed via video conference by guruhari Mahant Swami Maharaj. In these sessions, the balaks were introduced and their efforts highlighted. After the balaks, the fathers of the balikas received Swamishri’s blessings on their daughter’s behalf. The balaks and balikas had devoutly prepared galands, cards, chhadis, bouquets and other items to offer to Swamishri. At the end of each session, the children collectively offered the various delicacies they had prepared to Swamishri. During the introductions, Swamishri delightedly responded to each, accepted their prayers and blessed everyone. During these personal darshan sessions, Swamishri animatedly responded to the children. He also expressed his deep appreciation for their efforts through many statements to the sadhus. The following are a selection. 8 March 2021

They are our future. Now we know the power that ‘rajipo’ generates.

I have never had so much fun... divine fun! They were all so innocent. Listening to them brought such divine joy. It was great fun.

12 March 2021

This is beyond imagination. Something that has never been heard of or seen before.

16 March 2021

This will still continue to give them many benefits... their faith will increase... concentration will increase.

17 March 2021

From each participant, there is something new. They memorize by listening. And also recite in their sleep!

Atmaswarup Swami asked Swamishri, “You bow down twice to each balak. When they offer a garland and when they are introduced.” Swamishri said, “It happens naturally. They are such muktas.”

Swamishri performed a pradakshina of the large LED screen displaying the balaks and said “I have done a pradakshina of the balaks.”

Even those who do not know how to read or write recite the verses so fluently in Sanskrit. Just as if they are accomplished pandits.

19 March 2021

Today's programme was incomparable. Not even a 100,000 blockbuster films can match it. It was live, practical, inspiring and real. In films, much is fantasy. But this was actual. Incomparable.

CHILDREN COMPLETE MUKHPATH AMID CHALLENGES

In the past 12 months the coronavirus pandemic has disrupted everyone's lives. Especially those of children. They have had to rapidly adapt to new norms and restrictions which limit their natural urge to play and learn. Yet many responded with keen interest and determination to Mahant Swami Maharaj's wish that even children memorize the Satsang Diksha. But, as is natural with so many noble endeavours, many children faced unexpected challenges. However, their desire to please guruhari Mahant Swami Maharaj, earn his rajipo and be a part of the 'Mission 2000' spurred them to adapt and succeed.

SOME NOTABLE STORIES

Devarsh Harikrishnabhai Patel, age 8, Sojitra. Devarsh's father's work colleague was frustrated by many problems and told Harikrishnabhai that he wanted to commit suicide. Devarsh found out the intentions of the frustrated colleague, whom he knew, and phoned to counsel him. Devarsh gave him a positive outlook and sent him a copy of the Satsang Diksha and requested him to read verse 41, in which suicide is firmly forbidden. Devarsh said, "I believe these words will help him." And, indeed, the words impacted the colleague and he has developed a positive outlook on life.

Vinit N. Dodia, age 7, Surat. From birth, Vinit has been plagued with severe health problems. He has had to undergo 10 major operations till now. In August 2020, Vinit developed a bladder problem and was advised total bedrest at home. Despite the discomfort and difficulties, Vinit continued memorizing the Satsang Diksha. Bravely enduring the pain and the limitations of his severe health problems, Vinit said, "I feel pain, but never cry, because, as stated in the Satsang Diksha, whatever God does is for our good. So, with that thought, I remain happy."

Manan V. Nakum, age 8, Pune. Manan memorized the Satsang Diksha in both Sanskrit and Gujarati. He daily offers panchang pranams to his parents and the family regularly holds a ghar sabha. On his birthday, Manan gifted the Satsang Diksha to 45 people. Once, when Manan and his father went shopping, his mama (mother's brother) asked him to buy a bottle of Bournvita for him. So they did. With the bottle, they received a free mug. His father told Manan to keep it, but Manan recited verse 32 and said, "The mug really belongs to mama, since it is given with the Bournvita. So, I cannot keep it."

Jignasu A. Kargathra, age 12, Vadodara. Jignasu's mother met with an accident and was confined to bedrest. Jignasu took up to household responsibilities of cooking, laundry, cleaning and washing utensils. As well as caring for his mother, his 1½-year-old brother and other duties, he also attended his online school classes. Amid all these tiring, demanding and time-consuming tasks, he still found time to memorize the Satsang Diksha. Jignasu revealed, "I made use of the short periods of free time throughout the day to memorize. My goal was to please Swami Bapa, so I did not find this difficult."

Vandan M. Thakkar, age 12, Mumbai. Vandan suffers from thalassaemia and so requires a blood transfusion once or twice a month in the hospital. He regularly attended the online Satsang Diksha classes even when he was in hospital undergoing treatment. He also contracted the coronavirus, but continued memorizing the Satsang Diksha.

Varni P. Darji, age 12, Gandhinagar. Varni completed the mukhpath in Sanskrit and Gujarati. Then, he resolved to memorize the text in all published languages by the time of Pramukh Swami Maharaj's Centenary Celebrations. He has already memorized the English and Hindi texts and is memorizing it in other languages.

Hitakshi Sakhia, age 12, Kolkata. Hitakshi and her family developed fevers and were quarantined. Despite feeling unwell, she remembered verse 48, which encourages everyone to remain strong and joyous amid difficult circumstances. So, she continued memorizing the entire text.

Nishtha A. Maheshwari, age: 11, Udaipur (Rajasthan). Nishtha memorized the Satsang Diksha in both Sanskrit and Gujarati. She stopped watching TV to create time to memorize. She also gave a copy of the Satsang Diksha to her school teacher and inspired her to read it daily. Due to the pandemic, her father lost his job. This caused her mother to worry. To help her remain positive, Nishtha encouraged her to daily recite verses 147 and 148 which explain that everything happens by God's wish and is for our benefit. Such deep understanding for a young girl was amazing!

Pushti H. Patel, age 8, Sojitra. Pushti memorized the Satsang Diksha in Gujarati and Sanskrit. When memorizing the Sanskrit, she endeavoured for upto 12 hours daily and completed the mukhpath in 15

days. Then she motivated the rest of her family to memorize the Satsang Diksha. Her brother, Devansh, completed the mukhpath, but due to her home responsibilities, her mother struggled to find time to memorize. So, Pushti took up the household tasks and responsibility of caring for her grandmother. Thereafter, her mother did complete the mukhpath.

Jagruti S. Gujar, age 12 & Devyani A. Gujar, age 9, Japi (Maharashtra). Due to the pandemic, both balikas moved with their families from Dhuliya to their home village of Japi. At night, when Jagruti's father returned from their farm, she would listen to and note down the verses. The next day, the two balikas would sit in the mandir to memorize the shloks. They would return home only after they had memorized the daily quota. They said that previously they were irregular in observing ekadashi. Now, having learnt of Swamishri's wish, we always observe ekadashi.

MANAGING TIME Many balaks and balikas undertook self-imposed restrictions from their favourite things to create time for and increase their focus on memorizing the Satsang Diksha.

These included:

Not using mobile phones

Not playing video games

Not watching TV

Not eating chocolates, ice cream, cakes and other favourite foods

Reducing play time

Reducing sleep time

Staying up late to memorize

Waking up early Some contracted serious illnesses, sustained injuries that required operating or a hospital stay and experienced other setbacks. However, the children's deep desire to please Mahant Swami Maharaj enabled them to bravely overcome all challenges and complete their mukhpath.

SHISHUS SHOW THEIR METTLE 'Shishus' are balaks and balikas between the ages of 4 to 9 years. Many shishus were encouraged by their parents, siblings and karyakars to memorize the Satsang Diksha. Some of the younger shishus had barely started school and could not fluently read or write. Yet, by repeatedly listening to the audio of the shloks they memorized the entire Satsang Diksha. The efforts of the parents and karyakars played a big role in this. They often spent many hours with the shishus reciting the verses and helping them to pronounce the words appropriately. These shishus persevered for many hours despite their natural tendency to fidget and move around. They could be forgiven for being easily distracted or frustrated by this difficult task, but they had their focus on pleasing Swamishri and so were able to memorize the text. In total, around 80 shishus memorized the Satsang Diksha.

SOME INSPIRING STORIES

Shashvat S. Patel (5) and his cousin sister, Vani S. Patel (7) of Anand both began to memorize the Satsang Diksha. With their encouragement, Shasvat's 3½-year-old brother also started and both sets of parents were also inspired to memorize. Eventually all seven of them memorized the entire Satsang Diksha.

Yogi A. Adeshara (5) of Ahmedabad, memorized the Satsang Diksha by listening to the audio. Once, while playing he fell and fractured his right elbow. He required surgery to fix it. Still, he was not deterred and persisted to complete the mukhpath in Sanskrit.

Charmi M. Movalia, a 7-year-old balika from Pune memorized the Satsang Diksha in both Gujarati and Sanskrit. During this time, her birthday came. She told her family that as a gift to her they memorize the Satsang Diksha. In this way, she inspired her grandmother, cousin sister and other family members to memorize the text.

LESSONS LEARNT THROUGH MUKHPATH

Dhruv V. Patel, age: 6, Gandhinagar. As Dhruv was unable to read, his grandfather would recite the shloks and Dhruv would repeat and memorize them. After memorizing verse 56, in which, Swamishri instructs every family to hold a regular ghar sabha, Dhruv would ensure that all family members got together for the sabha.

Prayag H. Vaghela, age 7, Ahmedabad. Prayag's maternal grandmother passed away. Naturally, his mother was deeply saddened. So, Prayag wrote shlok number 152, which states that everything happens by Bhagwan Swaminarayan's wish and is for our ultimate benefit and gave it to his mother.

She was surprised by the deep understanding that memorizing the Satsang Diksha had generated in him.

Palak B. Patel, age 9, Bengaluru. Palak gave her teachers copies of the Satsang Diksha and explained its glory to them, “This shastra by Mahant Swami Maharaj will provide answers to all your questions in life.” One teacher asked her which shloks he should observe. Palak knew that he ate meat, so she told him to recite shloks 26, 27 and 29 with her and encouraged him not to eat meat. The teachers were inspired by her message and resolved to read the Satsang Diksha.