

Om

Honourable Members of the House,

Worshipful Mayor of Harrow

Invited Guests,

Community Presidents & Members and

my fellow Directors at IoJ

Jai Jinendra to all

Today, I have the honour to announce the name of the person being awarded the OneJAIN Lifetime Achievement Award and to read the citation for the award.

The person to be named has so many achievements to his name that he stands head and shoulders above most of our community members.

The OneJAIN Lifetime Achievement Award 2024 is being given to the current Chairman of the Institute of Jainology, Mr Nemu Chandaria OBE. His name is well known within the Jain and interfaith communities both nationally and internationally and it has almost become synonymous with Jainism in the UK.

He started from very humble beginnings in India and at a young age migrated to Kenya. He worked as a Medical representative for CIBA GEIGY in Nairobi, and later on moved to Ethiopia to establish aluminium and steel galvanising plants for the extended family. There he rose to Chairmanship of the Steel Corporation of Ethiopia at a tender age of 26 years and became the youngest Rotarian there. He was also a part of a Ethiopian State delegation led by Emperor Haile Selassie to Kenya.

In 1972, he moved to the UK to establish his own business. It was in London that he found his true calling. He was elected as a Member and later Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Oshwal Association of the UK a major Jain organisation. This was his first formal connection with the Jain faith and the community.

In the late 80's with the help of two large Jain Organisations in the UK, he managed to get the Jain faith registered as a member of the I S L T and become a part of the project for translation of scriptures of the world faiths in contemporary English. At the same time a team of 35 renowned international Jain scholars and saints under Nemu's leadership created the 'Jain Declaration on Nature' document. This was presented to

HRH Prince Philip at Buckingham Palace in London and Jainism was accepted as the 8th faith in the world.

In 1993, he led a Jain delegation to the centenary celebrations of Parliament for the World Religions being held in Chicago and carried a special message for the event from the Prime Minister of India. He arranged for a statue of Shri Virchand Gandhi to be installed at the Jain Centre Chicago to commemorate the first-ever Jain scholar's visit to Chicago in 1893.

On Interfaith level he led several delegations and participated in audiences with eminent faith leaders – PP Pramukh Swamiji, HH The Pope, HH the Dalai Lama and other religious leaders.

In 1995, he led a team of global Jains and partnered with DeBeers Group for Jain Art from India exhibition at the V&A Museum in London that was inaugurated by HRH Prince Philip. Another major project included the Cataloguing of Jain Manuscripts in the collections of the British Library, British Museum and V&A Museum. It took over 15 years to complete and publish into three volumes with the support of a Heritage Grant from the UK and funding by the Government of India.

Under his leadership, for the last two decades, the UK Jain community along with Jain All Party Parliamentary group celebrates the annual AHIMSA DAY at the House of Commons and presents AHIMSA AWARD to a person who has committed his life to the benefit of mankind or the environment. Several eminent people have received this coveted award.

In 2014 he brought over 30 UK Jain Organisations to work together under an informal umbrella of 'OneJAIN' on matters of common interest. This module has established an example of sharing, caring and working together and it is spreading globally within Jain and other communities. On 14th July 2024, OneJAIN will be celebrating 2550th Mahavir Nirvana Kalyanak Mahotsav.

I would also like to acknowledge the role of his wife Meena, always at his side along with his three children Asha, Rony and Amit and the extended family supporting his work. Nemu was always entertaining at home and she hosted hundreds of guests. He was always holding meetings at home relying on Meena to provide the refreshments.

Nemubhai's 36 years of dedicated work deserve recognition with a LIFE TIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD from the community. I request both Nemubhai and Meenaben to come forward and receive the award, please.