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Dada Bhagwan Parivar's

AKRAM

Express

Healthy
Competition



Index

Akram Express

Gnani Says...3

Absolutely New and Different...8

At the stadium...learnt something new...4

Photos of Janmashrami...20

Sweet Memories...19

An Extraordinary Race...10

Topic Activity...14

A True Story...15

Mythological Story...16

Editorial

Dear friends,

Who wouldn't like to be popular?

Unfortunately, the poison of jealousy creeps in when one starts having a narrow minded thought that, 'Only I should be popular and no one else'. We cannot tolerate anyone performing better than us. When this happens, we unknowingly try to pull the other person down.

Competition should be 'healthy' with an attitude, 'You progress and I progress too'. We must always be happy with the other person's progress. But where can we find such nobility?

In this edition, Param Pujya Dadashri has given us a beautiful analysis of this concept. So let us read this edition to rid ourselves of the poison of jealousy and replace it with 'healthy competition'.

- Dimple Mehta

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Gnani Says

Questioner: I feel jealous of someone who is more successful than me and I become competitive. I know that this is not right. So how do I turn this into healthy competition?

Deepakbhai: We should not engage in wishful thoughts such as, 'He should get less, he should have a downfall, he should not progress in life, I should know more than him and I should get more marks than him'. There is no need to wish for less for him. There is no need to be spiteful. May good things happen to everyone, may everyone progress and even I will double the effort in everything I do. After that whatever

happens is correct. Do you understand?

Questioner: Yes.

Deepakbhai: If someone has gone ahead of us, then surely there must be someone ahead of that person as well, isn't it?

Questioner: Yes.

Deepakbhai: And wouldn't there be many behind us too? At least we are ahead of them, aren't we? So is there any need to compete? We should advance in our own way and according to our abilities. Let the other person advance according to his ability and his own circumstances. What is healthy competition? It simply is – to honour a competitor's success.

If there is a line drawn on a piece of paper and we want to shorten that line, then what should we do? We would either draw another longer line next to it or erase the original one and make it shorter. So what do you think is the correct way?

Questioner: To draw a longer line next to the original line.

Deepakbhai: Yes. In that case develop your own ability. Study more or increase your sincerity in whatever you are doing. Make every effort to attain success. But never try to bring someone down.

Questioner: I am very dedicated in my work, then why do I feel envious when somebody else gets ahead of me.

Deepakbhai: No, we should always wish that, 'May everyone progress, may everyone get ahead and even I will advance in my own way. I will try. I might get good marks and come first in my class, if not then second, third, or even tenth, at least I passed!' At least have the intention that everyone makes progress. And anyway doesn't the other person sometimes get better marks in spite of our negative thoughts?

Questioner: Yes.

Deepakbhai: In that case didn't your negative thoughts turn out to be useless?

Questioner: Yes.

Deepakbhai: In fact when we engage ourselves with spiteful intentions for the others, it doesn't affect them at all. On the contrary, one day suffering will come upon as a reaction. So we must realise that there are many people behind us as well. At least we are ahead of them! What is the need to be disheartened? On the contrary we should wish that may the people behind us make progress as well. Dada always said, 'I bless you to become a greater 'Gnani' than I am. May everyone get ahead and progress'. What a big heart he has!

At the stadium...learnt something new

Bhumi! Bhumi! Bhumi!!

Bhumi's name echoed throughout the stadium. It was the last round. Bhumi delivered a terrific shot and won the trophy for the Inter School Tennis Championship.

"Heartiest congratulations dear. I am hopeful that you will bring a great honour to the school with your abilities in the forthcoming hockey game next month," the principal complimented Bhumi.

"Great job Bhumi", "Bhumi, you are the shining star of our school!" Parents, friends and the teachers all applauded her.

Upon returning home, Bhumi placed the trophy amongst all her other sports prizes. She relished her trophies for a couple of minutes. Bhumi was now addicted to winning. She had become habituated to receiving attention and praises. The belief that she was the 'best' became deeply rooted in her mind.

The day of the hockey game soon arrived! Bhumi's school 'Little Star' won 5 - 3 against the opposite school. Everyone was extremely happy except Bhumi. She was experiencing a great inner chaos. Not even a drop of happiness was visible on her face on such an exciting occasion! The reason behind this was that today instead of her, it was Ashmi who was the real star of 'Little Star'. Everyone was praising Ashmi. Bhumi could not rejoice the fact that her team won, on the contrary she felt immensely restless because Ashmi played better than her.

"Well done." "Superb." The students and teachers were congratulating Ashmi. Bhumi got very wound up when she heard these praises for Ashmi. She was so used to hearing people praising her that she couldn't tolerate praises for anyone else. "I don't feel well," she excused herself and rushed home without even waiting to receive the trophy.

At school, some people kept on praising Ashmi's talent for days. Upon hearing these compliments, the small sprout of jealousy that Bhumi had in her mind for Ashmi grew into a huge tree. 'How do I put Ashmi down? How do I defeat her and get ahead of her? What should I do so that people start acclaiming me instead of her?' Such thoughts raced in her mind constantly. Whether it was a simple



class test or a physical exercise class, or even singing songs for fun, Bhumi always tried to defeat Ashmi and bring her down. She would be happy if Ashmi made a mistake in class or did not get good marks! But in this volcano of 'jealousy', Bhumi's own abilities were deteriorating very fast. Her results in both sports and studies steadily declined. Bhumi's best friend Ritu despised Bhumi's negative behaviour. She could sense Bhumi's jealousy towards Ashmi. She even tried to dissuade her from behaving this way.

"Bhumi there is always a winner and a loser in any sports. A sportsman's spirit only remains intact when the loser and the winner are both happy. Do you know that my daddy plays golf?" asked Ritu.

"Yes, I know. He is a golf champion, isn't he?" said Bhumi in a very low voice.

"Yes" said Ritu with a smile, "But rather than being a golf champion, he is a champion in his attitude towards it. He always says that whilst playing he never aims at defeating the opponent, instead he aims on how he can play to the best of his ability. A competition is healthy when a person feels content and happy in the knowledge that he did whatever he could do to the best of his ability. He doesn't get disheartened with the other person's victory and in fact he tries to learn from him."



"Ritu, I am not interested in listening to your lectures," Bhumi said curtly. Ritu's attempt to explain things to Bhumi did not have the slightest effect on her. On the contrary, Bhumi's hatred for Ashmi multiplied, and more so when it was Ashmi who got selected for the tennis tournament. 'If only Ashmi falls ill. She must lose this time...' Bhumi was walking along the sidewalk while these negative thoughts kept crossing her mind. Just then Ritu appeared from behind her and gently tapped her on the head.

"Look what I've got in my hands," said Ritu extending her hand.

"Please Ritu, I'm not in a good mood right now. Just leave me alone," said Bhumi, cutting her short.

"Well, if you are not in the right mood, then this will change your mood." Ritu said and showed Bhumi two passes for a cricket match which was being played in their city. A very sporty Bhumi was thrilled at this.

The next day Bhumi and Ritu, along with her dad arrived at the stadium to watch the match. Both the teams were entering the pavilion at that time. Players from both the teams were talking to each other as if they were friends. Before the match started both the teams wished each other 'best of luck' as well. Bhumi was really surprised when she saw this.

Both the teams played with a great determination to 'win'. Just the last five 'overs' were left to be played. The players from the winning team were obviously very excited. But the players from the losing team were not disheartened at all; they were not getting annoyed with anyone. But they were trying to figure out a way to play more rigorously. In the last 'over' when the winning team's batsman completed his 'century', the bowler raised his hat as a sign of applaud. Bhumi watched all this with amazement.

"This is real sportsman spirit!" remarked Ritu.

"Yes dear, this indeed is real sportsman's spirit. This is called healthy competition. There is no jealousy for the other person and each other's abilities are accepted heartily," said Ritu's dad in agreement.

At the end of the game the players who lost the game congratulated each and every single player from the winning team. Today, Bhumi witnessed, for the first time, what a 'healthy competition' really meant. As they were leaving the stadium, Ritu's dad commented, "I would say, today's game was a perfect example of healthy competition."

The next day Bhumi went downstairs to play badminton with her friend Vishal who lived in the same building as her. They were playing the game by points. Just as Bhumi raised her hand to serve, Vishal stopped her, "One minute Bhumi," he



said as he came closer. Bhumi was puzzled and couldn't understand what he was trying to do. Vishal extended his hand and smiled, "All the best." Bhumi was surprised. She was in a mood to thrash Vishal at the game. Vishal's gesture reminded her of yesterday's game. She smiled as well and wished Vishal good luck! At that moment Bhumi realised that it didn't really matter who won the game. This wasn't the ultimate loss or victory!

They started playing the game, with great enthusiasm. While playing the game Bhumi kept glancing at Vishal. The game was sometimes in her favour and sometimes in Vishal's favour. She observed that the changing game did not dampen Vishal's spirit at all. Towards the end Bhumi's score escalated and at each shot he complimented her by saying, "Great shot!" Bhumi won the game. Vishal congratulated her heartily. She asked Vishal, "How can you remain so calm even after losing?" Vishal answered, "I obviously wanted to win the game, but that does not mean that you shouldn't win as well." Then they both parted.

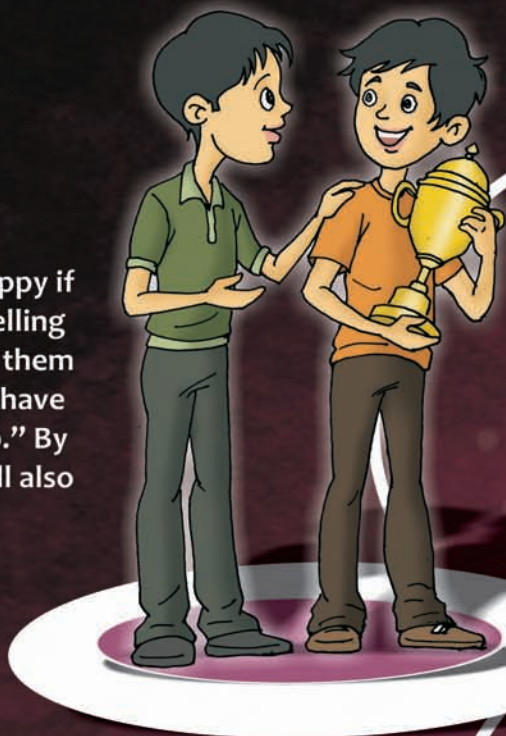
Bhumi went home. Even while having dinner, she kept on thinking about yesterday's match and her game with Vishal. There was no sign of constraint on Vishal's face even after he lost the game! She recalled her own condition. How she had become so restless when Ashmi did better than her and gained compliments from everybody. She felt deeply ashamed of her narrow mindedness. She understood the meaning, importance and beauty of 'healthy competition.' At that moment she made up her mind that "from today I will compete, but it will be a healthy competition because

- In a healthy competition both the teams play with a determination to win the game.
- Despite this, the winning as well as the losing team are equally happy.
- The loser heartily accepts the abilities of the winner.
- They do not feel jealous of one another.
- There is always a readiness either to learn or even teach the other person.

Today Bhumi understood that competition is not bad. Great progress can be achieved if the poison of jealousy does not mix with it.



We should be happy if someone is excelling and compliment them by saying, "You have done a great job." By doing so, you will also progress.



We are not able to enjoy what we already have and instead we add misery to our lives by competing. Whatever we have is as a result of our past merit karmas (merit deeds) and if others have more than us, then it's a result of their past merit karmas.'



Absolutely
and

New
Different!

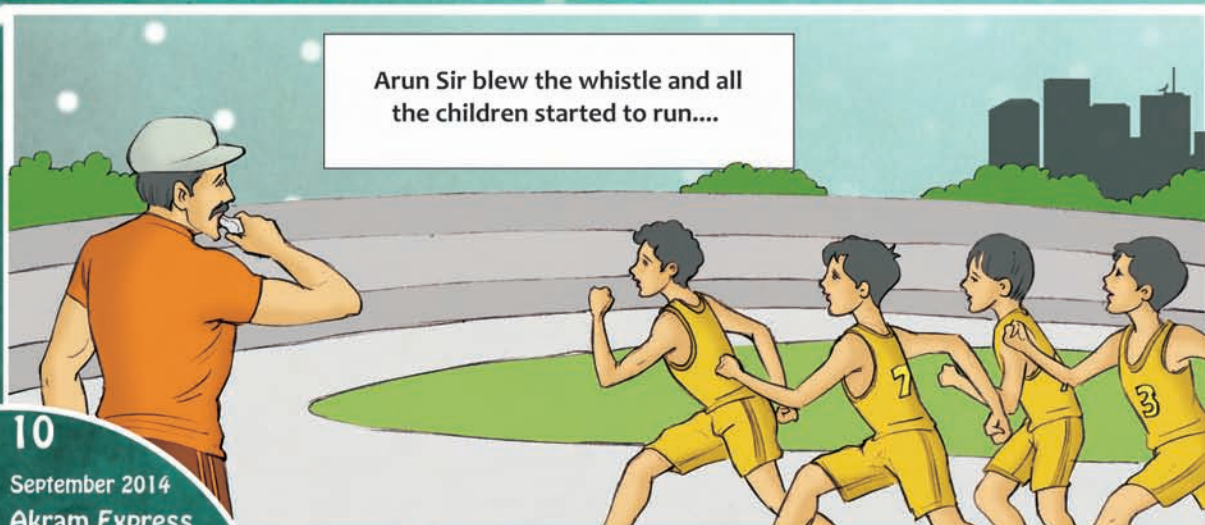
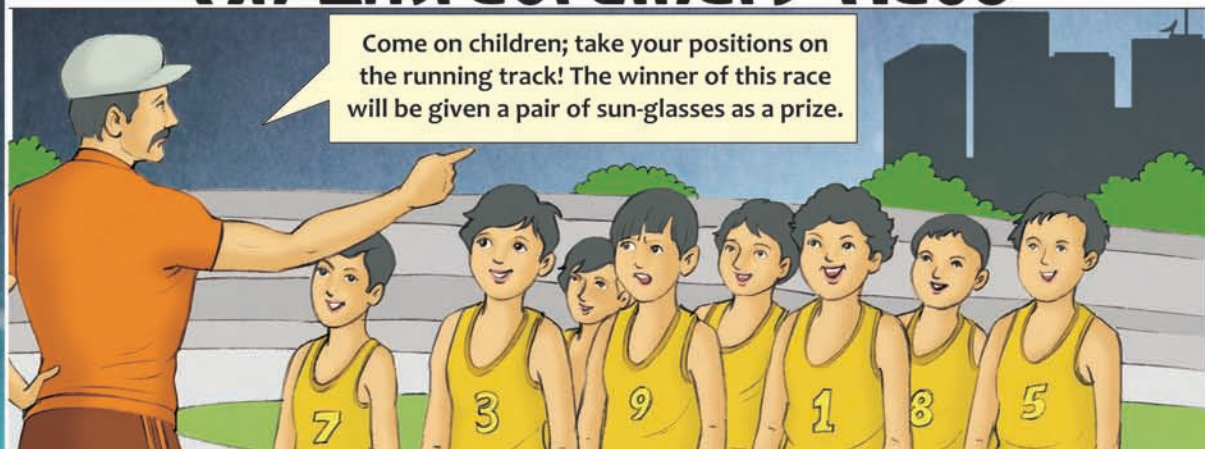


The grief of competition can be likened to making delicious basmati rice and then adding a handful of grit before eating it. When we become competitive all we get is misery, misery and misery!

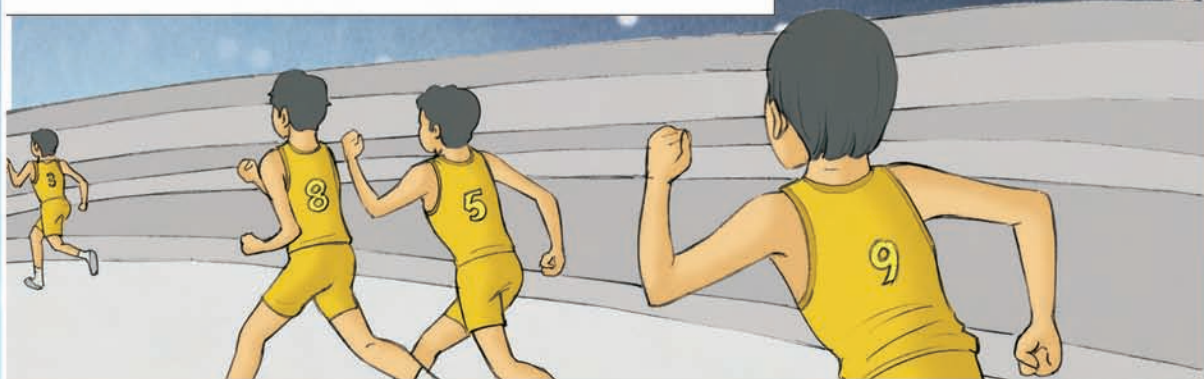


Our knowledge increases tenfold within us if we share it with others. While the other person learns one thing, we will learn ten things. Hence our knowledge will manifest. For example: If your friend makes a request, 'Will you teach me how to do this sum?' We should heartily teach him. At that moment we must never think, 'He will get a lower mark if I don't show him how to do it and hence I will get a better result'. We must never engage ourselves in such cunning thoughts.

An Extraordinary Race



Aalap was running as fast as he could... But in a few minutes he could see the backs of the other children, which hinted his defeat!



And he went to Arun Sir to collect his prize.

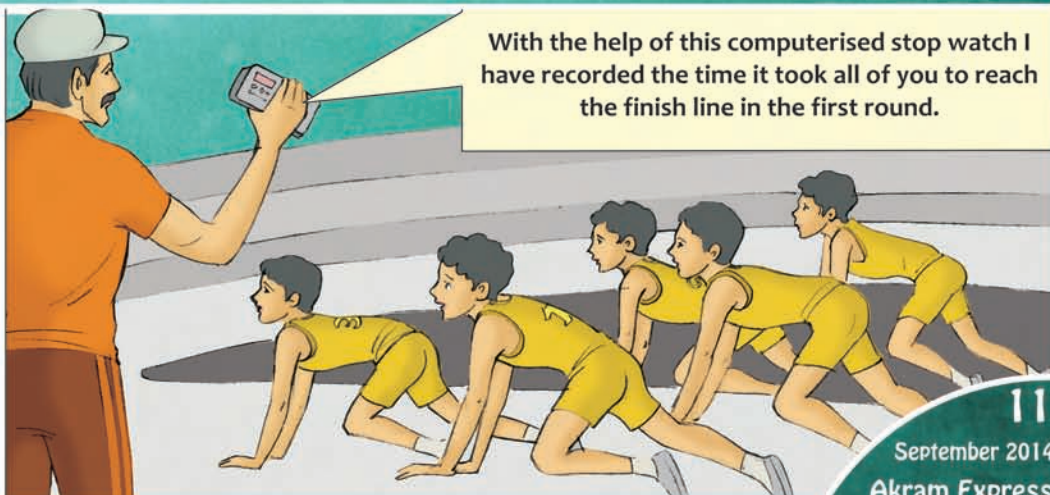
Uh hhh not yet. This was the first round. You still have one more round to go.



Jaimin muttered...



Once again the children took their positions in a straight line. But instead of blowing the whistle, Arun Sir raised a small electronic item.



All the children listened attentively.

...And now whoever finishes the second round quicker than the first round shall be the winner.



What? So the person who reaches the finishing line first is not the winner?



No, this is a different type of race. All of you are not competing with one another, but with your own self. Come on, are you all ready?



Arun Sir blew the whistle...

Today is the first time that I'm actually enjoying the race. Today is also the first time I'm not paying attention to who is ahead of me and who is behind me.



My focus is only on making sure that I am doing better than the previous round.



The race was over. All the children gathered around Arun Sir with hopeful look in their eyes.





All of you have performed better than the last round. This means that all of you are winners!



After saying so, Arun Sir gave a pair of sunglasses to each child. It was as if Aalap got a new vision after wearing them...

that... competition does not just mean to do better than someone else, but it also means to try and do better than your own previous performance...



From that day onwards, Aalap never got nervous or tired of competition. He always focused on how he could improve on his own performance.



Topic Activity !

Friends in this edition we learnt about healthy competition. Now let us make use of this understanding. Study the situations given below carefully:

1. Gautam and his friend Vishal were selected for the Japanese karate club competition. The audience gave Gautam a big round of applause after his performance. However, it was Vishal who won the first prize. As a result Gautam felt really sad and disheartened.



2. Tapas was thoroughly enjoying the football match. But this feeling disappeared half way into the game and a negative feeling of jealousy encompassed him. This was because his friend Kartik had already scored three goals while he hadn't yet scored a single one.

3. Smit had been under the impression that he was Lata teacher's favourite student. But ever since Meet joined the class, Smit felt that Lata teacher favoured Meet. With such negative thoughts he started feeling jealous of Meet.



4. Sneha always thought that her parents loved her younger sister Neha more than her. Be it sports or academics, Neha always achieved a better result.

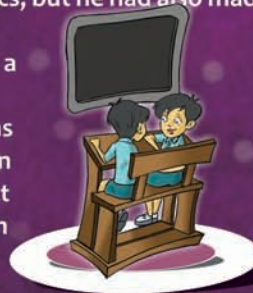
When Neha won a prize for the painting competition, Sneha was extremely jealous, and got lost in thoughts like, 'How can I bring her down?' In the end she felt like tearing up Neha's drawing.



5. Harsh had become reserved ever since a new boy named Apoorva joined his class. Apoorva was not only very clever in sports and academics, but he had also made friends with the whole class within a few days.

Harsh was scared that he would lose his best friend to Apoorva and as a result of this insecurity he barely spoke to anyone in the class.

Did you study these situations carefully? Now find out which of the options below is appropriate for each of the situations mentioned above in order to turn them into healthy competition. You just need to write down, next to the correct understanding, the name of the person to whom it applies. You can write more than one name as well.



Correct understanding

14

September 2014
Akram Express

1. One ends up suffering as a result of wishing ill for others. Hence, I will always wish that, "May good things happen to him/her" and I will put in double the effort in whatever I am doing at my own pace.

2. I will heartily accept and appreciate all his/her good qualities, and will remain friends with everybody.
3. Whatever I have got is a result of my merit karma (punya) and whatever s/he has got is a result of his/her merit karma (punya). I will be happy for him/her and wish that s/he gets more.
4. Is there any need for me to compete against him/her? The result I have got is based on my ability and his/her result is based on his/her ability. I am happy for him/her.
5. I will play with an attitude that, "I will do my best". But why should I spoil the excitement of the game by comparing myself with others? Instead of comparing myself, I will support him/her and tell him/her, "You did really well."

Answers:

Understanding number:

1 – Sneha, 2 – Harsh, 3 – Smit, 4 – Gautam, 5 – Tapas

A True Story

On 2nd December, 2010 during a Spanish cross country race the sports world saw a unique example of sportsmanship.

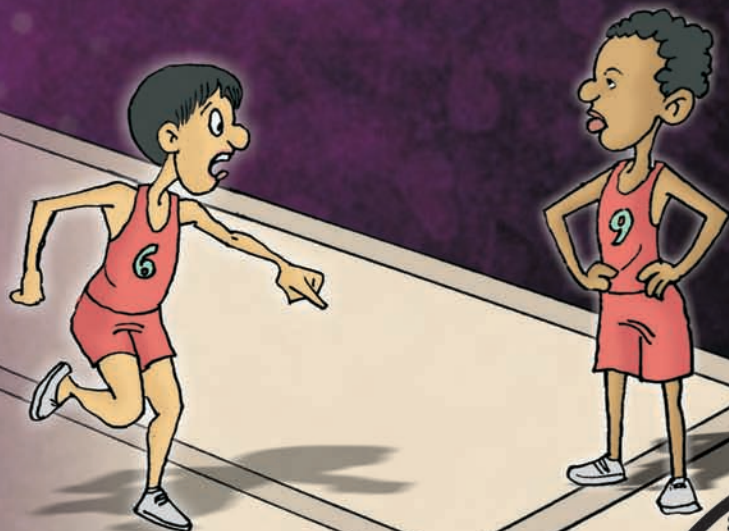
Ivan Fernandez from Spain was running at second place in the race while Ivan Mutai from Kenya was at the first place.

Assuming that he had reached the finishing line, Ivan Mutai stopped running when he was still 10 metres away from it. But Fernandez did not take advantage of this mistake made by Mutai. As he drew closer, he signalled Mutai to keep on running. He let Mutai cross the finishing line first.

Later when Fernandez was asked why he did this, he answered, "Mutai was really the winner. I would not have been able to catch up on the distance between the two of us, if he hadn't stopped by mistake.

Besides, I did not want to win the game by taking advantage of his misunderstanding."

People hailed Fernandez with a big round of applause.



The illustration is a colorful, stylized artwork. In the upper left, a man with a white turban and a woman in a green sari are shown; the woman is holding a baby. Below them, a large, detailed face of a woman with a golden crown and blue sari looks forward. In the lower left, a group of several women's faces are shown, each with different colored saris and jewelry. On the right side, a man in a white dhoti and shawl sits on a low platform, gesturing with his hands. A woman in a yellow sari is kneeling in front of him with her hands in a prayer position. The background is a dark blue gradient with a large, curved orange shape separating the text from the illustration.

Mythological Story

In the city of Rajgrihi, there lived a merchant named Rushabhhatt. His wife, Dharini gave birth to a beautiful baby boy. They named him Jambu. Jambu grew up to be a very bright and intelligent and was dearly loved by all.

As Jambu entered his youth, his virtues and good looks attracted many parents who were eager to have their daughters marry him. Jambu's parents selected eight girls for him and he was engaged to all of them. It was a joyful celebration.

One day Sudharma Swami came to Rajgrihi to deliver a sermon. Even Jambu went to the assembly to listen to the sermon.

Upon listening to the sermon, Jambu developed a sense of detachment towards worldly objects and family life. He decided to renounce this worldly life. However his parents did not approve of his decision and neither did the parents of all the eight brides. They were concerned as to who would now accept their hand in marriage.

Everyone tried to convince Jambu to change his mind and continue leading a happy and comfortable lifestyle. They also reminded him of his obligations towards his parents and his future wives. Jambu listened to them with patience, but he remained firm in his decision.

His parents thought, 'Once Jambu gets married, he will start enjoying his life and soon forget the idea of becoming an ascetic'. They therefore commanded Jambu to get married.

Jambu agreed to get married under one condition and said, "I'll get married, but the very next day I will renounce the worldly life."

The wedding took place on a grand scale. Highly distinguished guests graced the occasion. The newlyweds got a lot of expensive gifts and presents. The city of Rajgrihi had never witnessed such pomp and splendour.

Everybody congratulated Jambu on marrying such beautiful brides.

However, Jambu was totally unaffected by this splendour. He was firm in his decision of renouncing the world the next day. He also wanted to prepare his wives to live a life of renunciation.

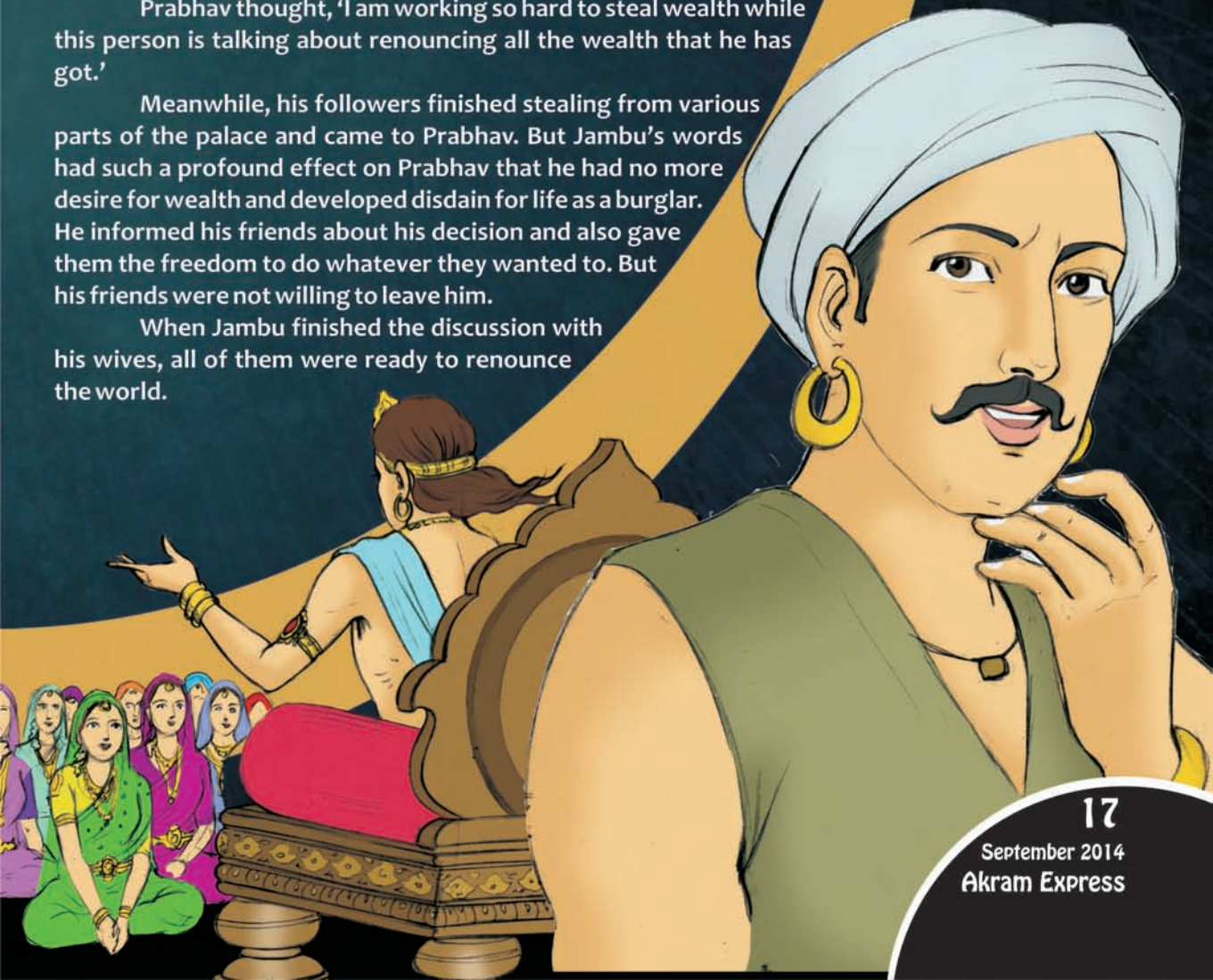
On the wedding night, when Jambu was talking to his wives about temporary and transitory nature of worldly life and relationships, a famous burglar named Prabhav and his 500 accomplices entered the palace with the intention of robbing. Prabhav was once a prince of Rajgrihi's neighbouring kingdom called Vindhya. As a result of a disagreement with his father he had left the kingdom and become a thief. He was a very able and clever burglar. With his special skills he could make anyone unconscious and break the most secure locks. He wanted to steal the abundant treasures that Jambu and his wives had accumulated on the occasion of their wedding.

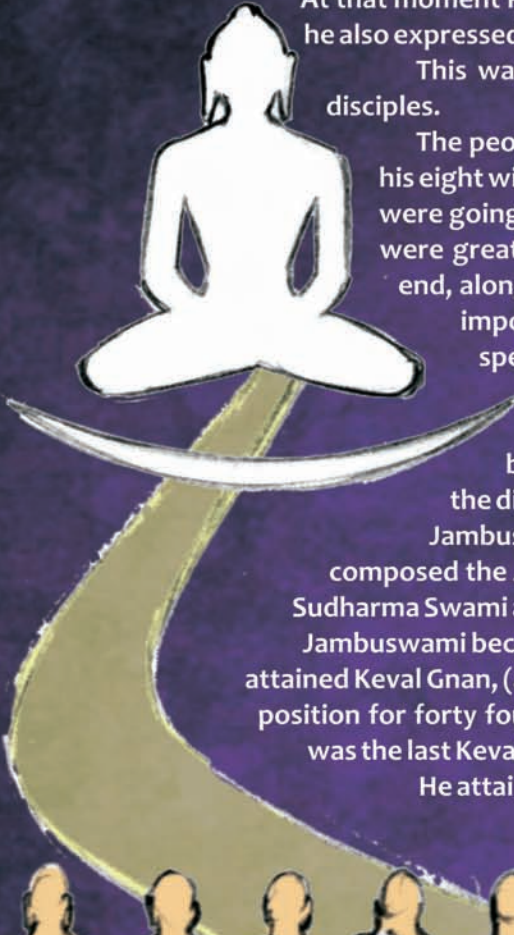
As he entered the palace, he heard Jambu and his wives talking about renunciation. He came closer to the door in an effort to hear what Jambu was saying. Jambu's words were so powerful that Prabhav could not move away, and continued listening.

Prabhav thought, 'I am working so hard to steal wealth while this person is talking about renouncing all the wealth that he has got.'

Meanwhile, his followers finished stealing from various parts of the palace and came to Prabhav. But Jambu's words had such a profound effect on Prabhav that he had no more desire for wealth and developed disdain for life as a burglar. He informed his friends about his decision and also gave them the freedom to do whatever they wanted to. But his friends were not willing to leave him.

When Jambu finished the discussion with his wives, all of them were ready to renounce the world.





At that moment Prabhav entered the room and confessed his true identity; he also expressed his wish to lead a life of an ascetic.

This way Prabhav and his 500 followers decided to become his disciples.


The people of Rajgrihi woke up to the shocking news that Jambu, his eight wives, the most feared burglar Prabhav and his 500 followers were going to renounce their worldly lives that day! Jambu's parents were greatly saddened as their wish did not materialise, but in the end, along with the parents of the eight wives, quickly realized the importance of Jambu's message and they all joined him. A spectacular procession followed Jambu on his way to see Sudharma Swami.

Everyone bowed down to Sudharma Swami and became his disciples. Prabhav and his 500 friends became the disciples of Jambu.

Jambuswami studied the entire teachings of Lord Mahavir. He composed the Jain religious scriptures in the form of dialogues between Sudharma Swami and Jambuswami.

Jambuswami became the head of the religious order after Sudharma Swami attained Keval Gnan, (a state of Absolute Enlightenment). Jambuswami held this position for forty four years after which he himself attained Keval Gnan. He was the last Kevali (enlightened person) of this era.

He attained Nirvana (liberation) at the age of 80 years.



Sweet Memories

This is an incident in connection with Niruma. There was a statue of Simandhar Swami in her room. Two glass elephants had been placed on either side of Swami's statue. As usual one of the sisters had come into the room to do some cleaning. After wiping the statue with a piece of cloth she picked up one of the elephants to give that a wipe as well, but while doing so it slipped from her hands and the trunk broke. As this sister had broken many other glass objects in the past, Niruma had given her a special name - 'glass breaker'.

The sister panicked as she had broken yet another glass object! What was she going to say to Niruma? She became quite nervous. She tried to fix the elephant's broken trunk with super glue and asked others to help her too, but unfortunately none of their efforts worked. In the end she returned the broken elephant in its original place.

She made up her mind to tell Niruma what had happened. She approached her a couple of times, but couldn't gather enough courage to say anything. The day moved on and soon it was night time.

After dinner when Niruma was relaxing, the sister approached her and said to her timidly, "Niruma, today I broke one of the glass elephants."

Niruma burst out laughing when she heard this. Lovingly, she started talking to the sister how she had carefully brought this elephant from afar. The sister's fear completely vanished as Niruma talked to her without scolding her! She happily carried on with her duties in service of Niruma.

After some time Niruma called the sister and offering her a towel, she blessed her and said, "This is my oblation to you for disclosing the truth."

The sister was overjoyed. As she was leaving, Niruma smiled at her and said, "Be careful not to break any more things in order to get another oblation."

They both burst out in laughter.



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