



# Jain Academy of Scholars Trust *Ahmedabad, India*

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## **Report on JAS Conclave held at Ahmedabad** (26 - 27 March,2022)

**A discussion meeting of fellows of JAS was held at Ahmedabad for two days. The following points arose during the discussions**

1. Jain concepts and doctrines have a potential to guide scientific research in many areas. Such areas identified and recommended for further research are: matter (pudgal and vargana), cosmology (geography and astronomy), consciousness (chetana and Gyan), karma theory, lifestyle.
2. There are serious discrepancies between 1. Jain geography/cosmography and modern geography/astronomy and 2. Jain Shrishtivad and Darwinian evolution which are urgently needed to be resolved to restore faith in Jain doctrines.
3. Study and research of Jain doctrines is a neglected area which need to be strengthened and need to be presented on global platform in the modern context and with modern logic and in modern language.
4. In this Century of knowledge, it is desirable to present the treasure of knowledge that exists in Jain philosophy to the world and to bring out its potential of resolving most problems the humanity is facing today by Jain principles and practices. The Jain Saints can play an important role in bringing awareness and importance of research and study of Jain doctrines and orient the mindset of Jain samaj.
5. The future of Jain philosophy looks very bleak because 1. the number of Jain followers are reducing fast because of their low birth rates, social factors, and the disadvantage a minority has in the present system. One estimate is that the number of Jains in the world will reduce to about one Lac, by a factor of 50, before the end of this century. Furthermore, the Jain doctrines are becoming increasingly irrelevant in day to day life and therefore the youth is not attracted towards it. We can improve this situation by research, study and global dissemination of this knowledge. The Jain community (samaj) must take cognizance of this possibility.

In view of the above issues, the following recommendations are made

1. Research and study of Jain doctrines must be intensively supported. Jain saints and Jain samaj are requested to encourage such activities. we may begin with constituting an All India level Board of Research in Jain doctrines (may be on line with Tata Trust) with some seed money. The board will
2. a. Invite research proposals related to Jain philosophy from potential researchers, b. scrutinise the proposals, c. provide appropriate grants for their execution, monitor the progress and ensure that the results are published in standard international journals.

This Board will also

- a. Provide suitable research scholarships to young researchers on a sustainable basis and help prepare a group of Jain scholars
- b. JAS feels that every senior Jain scholar is provided with one or two research assistants/scholars, to learn and carry forward their activities. JAS currently has about 50 renowned scholars from all over the world. JAs can thus help prepare a modern crop of young researchers.
- c. Visiting Fellowships for scholars to travel and stay at different institutions in connection with their research
- d. Help in publication of books, Journals etc related to Jain philosophy so that the publication record of scholars can be improved and they can avail of new job opportunities
- e. Encourage the use of modern technology to help people lead a Jain life style, with minimum violence, minimum parigrah and application of anekanta philosophy.

The leaders of various Jain samaj may explore possibilities of providing financial support for the above activities to the extent possible so that Jain darshan can be propagated in the world in an effective manner.

So far the research and study of Jain doctrines is based on individual interest and efforts of scholars on their personal level. Diverse opinions abound on many important academic topics creating confusion. For sake of clarity, it is necessary to present a consensus view on various doctrines and theories which can be achieved if the research work is institutionalised. The JAS can help and strive to attain this goal. The learned acharyas, scholars and members of Jain samaj should all make an integrated effort towards this goal to propagate the messages of Tirthankars to the world population.

This can be achieved to some extent by preparing suitable teaching courses at college levels and opening Jain chairs in some Universities, as has been done in USA by the Jain community there, by the efforts of Dr Sulekh Jain and others. The same model with suitable modifications can be adopted. It is a matter of survival of Jain thought and to take it much beyond ahimsa to great academic heights.

There is a question of survival of Jain samaj into the next century. The Jain concepts, values, sanskars, life style etc. can survive only if Jain samaj survives and thrives. This is something to ponder over.

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## **Resolution adopted at the conclave by JAS Fellows**

**THE FELLOWS OF THE JAIN ACADEMY OF SCHOLARS,**

In a conclave held on 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> March, 2022 at Ahmedabad,

**DEBATED** THE POTENTIAL OF JAIN DOCTRINES IN LEADING SCIENTIFIC

RESEARCH IN MANY FIELDS, AND

**CONCERNED ABOUT** THE CURRENT STATUS OF ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES

RELATED TO JAIN DASHAWN, AND REALISING THE **NEED** TO PRESENT THE JAIN

DARSHAN SCIENTIFICALLY ON THE GLOBAL PLATFORM

**RECOMMENDS** THAT RESEARCH IN JAIN DOCTRINES,

INTERPRETATION OF JAIN CONCEPTS IN THE PRESENT CONTEXT

AND THEIR APPLICATIONS MUST BE ENCOURAGED

AND

**RESOLVES** THAT

STUDY AND RESEARCH SHOULD BE ACCELERATED TO ESTABLISH SCIENTIFIC  
FOUNDATIONS OF JAIN DOCTRINES,

MAKE EFFORTS TO TRAIN A LARGE GROUP OF SCHOLARS, BY CREATING AND

PROVIDING FACILITIES, BOTH THEORETICAL AND EXPERIMENTAL, INSTITUTING

SCHOLARSHIPS AND

**URGES** THE JAIN SAMAJ TO SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGE ACADEMIC PURSUITS.

*signed by Fellows of JAS at the conclave present*

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