

ADDRESS BY MR KAMAL DUGAR AT THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

14<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2015

My Lords, Honourable Members, The Directors of Institute of Jainology, Distinguished Ladies & gentlemen

I would like to begin by paying my humble respects of the venerable Lord Mahaveer, the great prophet and messenger of Ahimsa and peace. As a member of **Jain community** I feel proudly privileged to speak on this **Ahimsa Day celebration** from here, a most important place of the world, from where the socio political affairs of the entire mankind used to be deliberated once. A place where honourable statesmen like Winston Churchill and Lord Attlee raised their voices on issues of global importance that concerned the entire population of world

In 2008, His Holiness Acharya Mahapragya was honoured in this House, with the prestigious Ahimsa award for his lifelong propagation of the main Jain tenet of Ahimsa. I bring for you greetings and blessings from his successor, His Holiness **Acharya Mahashraman**, the 11th pontiff of **Jain Terapanth Dharam Sangh**, who continues the glorious tradition with his relentless efforts in carrying forward the message of peace and nonviolence throughout the world.

**Acharya Mahashraman** is currently on a '**Ahimsa Yatra**' a mission of non-violence walking 40,000 kilometres barefoot across the Indian subcontinent to promote harmony, to promote morality and the eradication of drug addiction. Like all Jain monks, he keeps no money, retains but 2 pieces of cotton clothes and begs daily for food.

He is currently in **Nepal**, having walked there from Rajasthan, and started The Ahimsa Yatra from the Indian capital city of Delhi. He arrived there just before the recent terrible earth quake and despite many calls to leave and move away has decided to stay put, some **50km from Khatmandu and continued the voyage as per schedule**. From there he will travel to Bhutan and the eastern coast of India, Covering over 20000 Kilometres of barefoot journey in the current phase of Ahimsa Yatra.

Friends, today the world is developing at speed with a focus on material advancement, which is clearly dividing the world into the haves and the have-nots. This is creating disharmony in many parts of the world including the European Union. In this context, I emphasize that it is necessary to understand and realise that spiritual growth is extremely important for peace and harmony.

I would like to state here that Ahimsa is not something external. Ahimsa is a way of life. Once the path of **Ahimsa** is chosen by **heart** it will be reflected in our behaviour and every step of our **movement**. This path will guide us to a stage where we will move to a society

free from discrimination and hatred, A society and a world with love, kindness, brotherhood and trust.

Ahimsa or non-violence as a concept needs to be propagated and also taught, studied, explained and researched. I would like to mention here that our organisational network of institutions is conducting spiritual activities and working for non-violence and peace in India and various parts of the world.

In this great city of London and with the presence of **Respected Samanijis, Jain Vishwa Bharati London** is the only Jain organisation in the UK which has a constant presence of Jain nuns who foster Meditation, Lectures and Talks for Adults and Children and represent Jain in multi faith discussion including at the Vatican.

In conclusion I can tell you from my inner voice with utmost conviction & full confidence that ahimsa is the only way which can lead

The world free from the problems of terrorism and it can become a place where people can co – exist with harmony and peace to lead a better quality of life with happiness and prosperity. It is necessary to understand and realise that spiritual growth is extremely important for peace and harmony.

In this context i would like to quote some great lines –

‘Where there is righteousness in the heart

There is beauty in the character.

When there is beauty in the character,

There is harmony in the home.

When there is harmony in the home,

There is order in the nation.

When there is order in the nation,

There is peace in the world.’

I am grateful to the organizers of the program for this historic event and extend my hearty thanks for providing me this opportunity to be here and deem it a great honour to be a part of the event.

**MAY GOD BLESS ALL OF YOU**