

## SHATAVDHAN – A glimpse at the power of the soul

How often have been embarrassed because you could not remember names of people you met at a party or a business meeting? Have you had difficulty recalling birthdates of your children? What would you give to have a better memory? While most people can remember 8 or 10 events sequentially, ancient Jain literature is replete with references to Jain scholars and sadhu bhagvants called SHATAVDHANIS demonstrating their ability to remember 100 things or more - a talent acquired by deep meditation or power of pure soul. Such achievements were demonstrated among other historical figures by Shrimad Rajchandra Ji in 1887 and by Shri Dhirajlal Tokershi Shah in 1957.

Muni Shri Ajitchandra Sagar Ji (Munishri) took diksha at the age of 12 under Anuyogcharya Naychandrasagarji. Today at the age of 22 Munishri has been observing silence (MAUN) for the last six and half years– speaking only to his Guru Ji in his quest for intense meditation and swadhyay – study of Agams and memorizing thousands and thousands of gathas (stanzas). During those years of silence, he has demonstrated his ability to observe and retain 100 facts such as list of proverbs, rivers, mountains, religious festivals, nations, sentence in any world language etc or glimpse of photographs of monuments or famous people or mathematical problems – all randomly selected by the members of the audience. To the amazement of all present, Munishri would then recite all hundred items sequentially, in reverse and also in random order.

I was one of the four hundred extremely fortunate Mumbai residents gathered early morning on Saturday, February 4, 2012 to witness a rehearsal program of MAHA SHATAVDHAN -200 Avdhans – by the Munishri. In addition to all the items mentioned above, the Munishri also demonstrated SAMYUKTA AVDHAN (Multi tasking). In this exercise, a member of the audience named a large number divisible by 9 - 963. Munishri were to fill in all 81 spaces in a table of 9 rows and 9 columns in such a manner that each of the rows or columns would add up to the chosen number (963). The mental contemplation without the aid of any physical aid - paper or pencil was to take place while a loud bell was ringing at regular interval, three members of the audience standing near him to throw cowry shells to hit his body at time of their choosing, opening his eyes momentarily to view four objects on the table – all this in 30 seconds while loud music was being played to try to distract him. It took 2 and half hours for all of the 200 questions being set and now it was Munishri's turn. Calmly and methodically he recited the questions and their answers in a serial order from 1 to 200 and then from 200 to 1. He then invited members to ask what the question was of a given number say 85 and so on. Lastly he gave the serial number of questions when answers were presented to him. He filled out the 9 x 9 table for member of the audience to verify that all the rows and columns added up to 963, he told how many times the bell rang and at which ringings the cowry shell had touched his body and the four objects he had observed during the exercise.

At the end of the event, Guru Maharaj spoke about what we had just witnessed. He emphasized what we had seen was not an exercise in memory power but the achievement of the soul. By preserving his energy in observing prolonged silence, by deep study of AGAMS and prolonged meditation on it opened up his soul to synchronize with the deepest mysteries of the same. Tapping into vast potential of the soul, Munishri became a self taught Shatavdhani. We were also told that Munishri would remember all the items for the next 6 months. It was also important to note that he experienced no stress due to the entire exercise, no special preparation time on the day of the demonstration and would resume his daily rituals of study etc right after the demonstration. The rehearsal program was organized by The Sarwati Sadhna Mahasangh and the main performance will be at Sanmukhanad Hall in Mumbai on March 4, 2012. More information on the program on March 4 can be obtained by writing to [mahashatavdhan@gmail.com](mailto:mahashatavdhan@gmail.com)

Respectfully submitted by  
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