

# Palitana Donkey Relief Project

**A**mongst all the Jain temples, the Palitana temples are considered to be the most sacred. Located on Shatrunjaya Hills, Palitana houses perhaps the largest cluster of Jain temples with over 1,200 temples. The path winds through 3,950 steps for a trying 3.5km up the Shatrunjaya Hills. Much of the track is unshaded and the higher you climb the more the heat haze skimmers across the plains from below.

Because of its sanctity, every devout Jain aspires to climb to the top of the mountain at least once in his lifetime. The journey is arduous. The walk up the stone stairway hewn into the mountain face takes on average about an hour and a half. For those unable or unaccustomed to the strain, sling-chairs are available for a cheap price.



But, for the donkeys that work on the Shatrunjaya Hills, there is no sling chair to take the strain! They carry heavy loads (often too heavy, which breaks their backs) up to the hills, sometimes many times in one day and often ill treated by their owners/keepers and not treated for medical conditions. The donkeys suffer greatly and we have seen them actually crying! Their suffering is shameful and regrettable in a sacred pilgrimage place for all Jains, who believe in Ahimsa.



So, please help us do something positive about the terrible plight of the donkeys of Palitana. We do not plan to stop the owners from making a living – we want to educate them to treat their donkeys

better, get medical care when needed, and above all, treat them with kindness.

We have already had blessings from Pujya Shilapiji and Pujya Vijyashen Vijay Maharaj/Pujya Hemprabha Vijay Maharaj in Palitana as well as support from Kastur Dham in Palitana. The enthusiasm and kindness of people who have heard about the project has overwhelmed us and we have had good wishes for a successful project from everyone.

But, now the Palitana Donkey Relief Project needs YOUR financial support to help the donkeys and reduce their suffering at one of the world's most beautiful and sacred religious sites. Our first camp providing veterinary care and education for the owners is planned for 15-18 November 2008. Sufficient funding in the future will ensure that these camps take place on a regular basis.

Please send any contributions by cheque. Also please make it payable to: SHIVSAKTI SEVA TRUST (registered charity No 1114378) and send it to: 3 Hervey Close, Finchley Central, London N3 2HG.

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**Sunday 30th November 2008 10am – 5pm**