

Chapter 20

The Birth of Swaminarayan Satsang Patrika

Swamishri was traveling by train from Gondal to Manavadar. As the train was very crowded, Swamishri traveled in first class, accompanied by a sadhu and Chuni Bhagat, who was in his service.

Even while he was traveling, Swamishri continued to serve by answering devotees' letters. Swamishri kept a few postcards, envelopes, and other items for letter writing with him in a small cloth bag when he traveled. As soon as the train left the station, Swamishri took out some letters to read. Then he began to make some notes in the margins of one of the letters with his indipen. He held the indipen in his right hand between his thumb and forefinger, squeezing the nib very tightly. Consequently, his finger would often be stained blue with ink. Moreover, he kept an indipen

that was domestically produced, large, and thick so it could hold more ink. The pen's grip was such that it impacted one's handwriting.

Today, Swamishri wrote some instructions regarding the weekly assembly stating, “Hold the assembly on Sunday...,” along with a list of Vachanamruts and Swamini Vatos to read aloud and explain. Swamishri handed this note to Chuni Bhagat and asked him to write letters conveying this information to the adult wings and children’s wings in eight cities: Mumbai, Vadodara, Anand, Nadiad, Ahmedabad, Rajkot, Bhavnagar, and Himmatnagar. Then, he signed each of the letters.

So began his weekly instruction letters for the Sunday assemblies.

Although he had been writing such instructions for years to centers with devotees who were close to him, now Swamishri began to write these instructions for the Sunday assembly such that they would reach their respective centers before each Sunday. As the number of centers increased, Swamishri began

to send printed postcards with the list of Vachanamruts and Swamini Vatos to be read on Sunday, as well as any special instructions. Swamishri would make sure he signed each postcard.

Soon, sixty-nine such instruction letters were being sent out each week, so Swamishri assigned the Mumbai *mandal* to produce and post these letters. After the number of centers increased to 150, from 5 December 1956, with Swamishri's blessings, the Mumbai *mandal* began sending to each *mandal* the Swaminarayan Satsang Patrika, a newsletter printed using a cyclostyle mimeograph machine to convey instructions for the weekly spiritual assembly and share other Satsang news. From those humble beginnings, the Swaminarayan Satsang Patrika grew extensively over the years.