

GUJARATI ARYA ASSOCIATION LEICESTER - NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 7 - SEPTEMBER 2026



UPCOMING EVENTS 2026

Saturday 26th Sept:	Chai Nasto Event
Friday 2nd Oct:	Shraadh Bhajans 6pm-8pm
Sun 11th to Mon 19th Oct:	Navratri
Thursday 15th Oct:	Aarti Competition
Friday 16th Oct:	Kids Fancy Dress Competition
Saturday 17th Oct:	Kids Garba Event 12pm-3pm
Sunday 18th Oct:	Aatam Havan

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Follow our GAA Leicester Whatsapp channel. Scan the **QR code** on the contact page of this newsletter or click on **HERE**. You will need to click follow in the top right corner & **turn on notifications**, to get all the latest information.



Catch up on all our newsletters by heading to our website **www.gaaleicester.com**. Click on the 'Newsletters' page & download any of our past issues.

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COMMITTEE UPDATE



On Monday 29th June 2026, GAKM had the privilege of representing our community at Action for Harmony's Annual Gathering, "In Conversation with the Hindu Community" held at the UK House of Commons.

It was a proud moment to showcase the contribution our Mochi community continues to make across the UK through the dedication of our volunteers, families and local associations. Our proud representatives were President of GAKM: **Mr Pradeep Chavda**, CEO of BPM: **Mr Ashwin Parmar**: Executive Committee Culture Lead: **Priya Vara**. Our speakers were - President of GAA London **Mr Kamlesh Vara** and **Hershey Champaneri** General Secretary for GAKM and Vice President for GAA Leicester.

We shared how GAKM supports our community every week through preserving our faith and culture by celebrating festivals such as Navratri, Holi and Diwali; Investing in young people through sport, education and community activities that build confidence, belonging and leadership and improving health and wellbeing through partnerships with the NHS and Imperial College, bringing trusted health initiatives directly into our community.

Our message was clear: community organisations are trusted partners in strengthening social cohesion, improving public health, supporting young people and building safer, more connected communities. We were honoured to share our work and reaffirm our commitment to working alongside government, public services and other faith communities to help build a stronger, more cohesive Britain.

NORI NOM CELEBRATIONS



Our fantastic Mahila Mandal and their team cooked a wonderful meal of traditional vardu and rotis for our annual Nori Nom celebrations on Friday 21st September. It was brilliant to see so many of our community members attend and enjoy lunch together.

STEP BACK IN TIME



Our history is made up of the people, memories and stories that came before us. In this section, we look back at the early days of Mochi community through old photographs and personal memories shared by those who moved to the U.K. and helped shape our community. These stories give us a glimpse into where we came from, the experiences of those early years, and the journey that brought us to where we are today.



Mochi men, standing outside the Surat District in Nairobi

We will be sharing this photo on **social media**. If you recognise any members, please let us know who they are by commenting on the post.

Do you have any photos of our community in other countries? If so, please feel free to share them with us by emailing info@gaaleicester.com

Sharing Memories

In this issue, we speak with Champaklal Ramjibhai & Dakshaben Parmar. Champaklal was born in Killa Pardi, Gujarat and moved to Ndola, Zambia. Dakshaben was also born in India, before moving to Bulawayo, Zimbabwe. After their wedding, she moved to Ndola, before they moved to the UK together.



What made you move to the UK?

Our eldest daughter was studying here in the UK. She was at a boarding school, so we decided to come here to the U.K. so we could all be together and for a better education and lifestyle for our children.

How did you feel about the move?

We were both very excited, but at the same time, it was so overwhelming to move the whole family to a new country. We wondered if we had made the right decision to move to the U.K. There was a lot of tension at the time, but it was all worth it now.



What were your first impressions?

The UK wasn't like the pictures we saw! The roads, the weather, the buildings and streets were all different to Zambia.

What challenges did you face?

The first challenge was the weather. We did not have winters like this in Zambia. We experienced heavy snow and frozen pipes, then the pipes burst, with flooding in the house. It was something we had never experienced. Other challenges were looking for a house and also jobs, which were not easily available.

What achievement are you most proud of?

Champaklal: Running my own businesses, playing cricket for the samaj. I also have a large stamp collection from my very early days in Ndola and I'm really proud of my garden. Dakshaben: Moving across the other parts of the world with my family. having a job that I enjoyed and being able to support my husband. I also enjoy doing volunteer work too.

What are your fond memories about the mochi community during your first years in the UK?

We joined the GAA Leicester when we moved from Leicester. It was great being part of a samaj & meeting friends and family. We enjoyed trips to temples across the U.K. and to the seaside. There were lots of programmes in the samaj we used to go to such as Navratri, and especially cricket matches for Champaklal.

Is there any advice you would give to the younger generations?

Respect your elders, always be kind and respectful. Enjoy your life, (in a sensible way) and make sure you travel the world. Most importantly, be proud of being mochi and the samaj.

If you or someone you know, has memories to share in our future newsletters, please get in touch with Monica on 07711 707551 or email us at info@gaaleicester.com.



Janmashtami – Fri 4th September
Shravan Ends – Thurs 10th September
Shraadh – Sat 26th Sept to Sat 10th Oct
Shraadh Bhajan – Fri 2nd October (6–8pm)
Navratri – Sun 11th Oct to Mon 19th Oct
Aarti Competition – Thurs 15th October
Kids Fancy Dress Competition – Fri 16th Oct
Kids Garba – Sat 17th Oct (12–3pm)
Ashtami – Sun 18th October
Aatam Havan – Sun 18th October
Vijaya Dashmi / Dashera – Tues 20th Oct
Dhanteras – Fri 6th November
Diwali – Sun 8th November
Besta Varas – Tues 10th November
Bhai Bhij – Wed 11th November

DONATE ❤️

Kids Garba

We always appreciate any donations for our Kids Garba event.
If you would like to donate for the event, please contact Hema on 07714 720 203



WHY DO WE CELEBRATE SHRAADH?

Shraadh, also known as Pitru Paksha, is a sacred period in Hinduism when families remember and honour their ancestors who have passed away. During this time, people offer prayers, food and water as a way of expressing gratitude, respect and love for previous generations. Traditionally, families gather together to remember their loved ones on the specific shraadh, enjoy a vegetarian meal together and remember their ancestors. A common belief is that crows, in particular, are associated with ancestors (pitru). Offering food to a crow is therefore seen as a way of making an offering to one's departed family members. When a crow eats the food, it can be understood as a symbolic acceptance of the offering and blessings from the ancestors. It is believed that performing these rituals helps honour the departed and brings peace and blessings to the family.

The date for a person's shraadh is traditionally worked out according to the Hindu lunar calendar, rather than simply using the person's date of death on the English calendar. For Pitru Paksha, each day corresponds to a particular tithi (lunar day). A family generally performs the annual shraadh for a deceased relative on the same lunar tithi on which they passed away. For example, if someone passes on the 1st day of the Hindu month, this corresponds to 1st day of the shraadh.

There are two days which remain the same every year in shraadh. The 13th day of shraadh is observed for any children who have passed (this year on Thursday 8th October), and the final day, called surva pithru amaas, is for ancestors (this year on Saturday 10th October).



Supplements

Supplements can be useful to support health or a specific health goal.

In this newsletter, we look at some of the most popular supplements and their benefits. It is important to mention that supplements should never substitute a balanced diet and you should consult your doctor, before starting a supplement if you are on medication.

Vitamin D – Bone & Immune Support

Vitamin D helps regulate calcium and phosphorus, making it essential for maintaining healthy bones and muscles. It also plays an important role in normal immune function.

Why do we need it? Indian skin needs more UVB exposure to produce the same amount of vitamin D as lighter skin. In the winter months, when daylight is limited and we are indoors, we are more at risk of vitamin D deficiency.

Best for: Bone health, muscle function, immune system.

Omega 3 – Heart, Brain, Eyes, & Immune System Support

Omega-3 is a type of polyunsaturated fat that your body needs to function properly. It plays many important roles in your body. The best sources are oily fish such as salmon or sardines. However, vegetarians can also boost their omega 3 intake by including foods such as flaxseeds, chia seeds and walnuts in their diets.

Why do we need it?

It lowers high triglycerides, reduces blood pressure, and supports memory. It also acts as a major building block for the retina to keep vision sharp and eases joint stiffness from inflammation whilst protecting skin health.

Best for: Heart, Brain & Eye Health, Joint and Skin Relief.

Magnesium – Muscles & Normal Energy Metabolism

Magnesium is an essential mineral that your body needs to function properly. It acts as a helper molecule in more than 300 biochemical reactions in your body. Dietary sources include nuts, seeds, whole grains, legumes and leafy green vegetables. If you are looking to supplement, magnesium glycinate is ideal as it is easy to digest and easy to absorb.

Why do we need it?

Energy production, metabolism, muscle & nerve control, Strong bones, Sleep and Stress.

Best for: Muscle cramps, improving sleep quality.

Tip: If you are taking magnesium to improve sleep, take it about 1 hour before bedtime.

B12 – Blood Cells & Metabolism

Its role in energy metabolism means that a deficiency can contribute to tiredness and lack of energy. It is essential for normal red blood cell formation, neurological function and energy metabolism. It is commonly found in meat, fish, eggs, milk and cheese.

Why do we need it?

Make healthy red blood cells, maintain a healthy nervous system and help release energy from food.

Best for: Vegans.



Marketing

Ever wondered what different careers are really like? Meet members of our community who are sharing their career journeys, what they do, and how they got there. In each newsletter, we will explore a range of different roles and industries to introduce our younger members, to the wide range of job roles that are available.

In this issue, we speak with **Ricky Chauhan**, who works in the field of Marketing, as a Project Management Office & Innovation Consultant.

What previous job positions have you held?

My previous roles/titles included Product Manager, Customer Experience Manager, Marketing Manager, Marketing Communications Manager.

What inspired you to choose this career?

I've always loved what makes business work and attract people to products or services and making them or the process better. Marketing as a whole gets under the skin of the business as it touched pretty much every part from the customer facing to background operations.



What does a typical day look like?

Currently overseeing multiple projects people are working on, looking at project and product roadmaps, planning, liaising with different teams, stakeholders & producing commercial presentations to update directors.

What qualifications / training did you need?

I needed a Bachelor's degree in Business and multiple post-graduate qualifications such as Chartered Institute of Marketing qualifications. Definitely post-graduate training in specific areas helps to build understanding which helps with job prospects but nothing better than doing and learning. Marketing is always evolving, especially with AI now so it's important to keep yourself updated with current trends and what's going on.

What skills are most important for success in this career?

I think that resilience is important because it is a tough role. You have to convince people of your ideas and you will get "feedback." Also, it's a competitive market for roles. Communication and presentation skills. Analytical and idea generation skills. Being a team player and able to work with different people from different backgrounds.

What's the biggest lesson you've learnt?

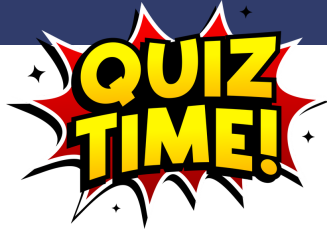
Always put yourself in your customers shoes. Everybody thinks and is different. Don't take things personally and always keep learning. Any feedback isn't necessarily a reflection on you, or to make you feel dumb. Use it as fuel to get better, learn more and learn from your peers. Also, learn from those around you, your managers and their behaviours but still be your own person. I've been lucky to always have good senior managers. Always treat people how you want to be treated. Respect people but don't forget they're just people.

Who is your role model and why?

My Dad - He came here with nothing, educated himself in a field, and created a successful business which has been going for over 40 years.

If you are interested in pursuing a career in marketing and would like some advice, please get in touch with Ricky on 07866 730 653 or rickychauhan82@gmail.com.

If you would like to contribute to our future newsletters & offer your advice for our younger community members, please contact Monica on 07711 707551.



Who is known as the Father of the Nation in India?

a) Jawaharlal Nehru b) Sardar Patel c) Mahatma Gandhi d) Subhas Chandra Bose

Which Indian city is known as the "Pink City"?

a) Jaipur b) Jodhpur c) Udaipur d) Agra

Which is the largest Indian state by area?

a) Maharashtra b) Madhya Pradesh c) Rajasthan d) Uttar Pradesh

What is India's national animal?

a) Lion b) Elephant c) Bengal tiger d) Leopard

Who was the first Prime Minister of independent India?

a) Mahatma Gandhi b) Sardar Patel c) Rajendra Prasad d) Jawaharlal Nehru

Find the answers at the bottom of the page and see how many you guessed correctly.

Why not try learning how to Code?

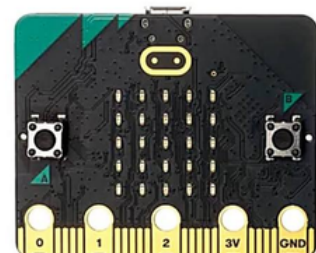
The BBC micro:bit is a small, pocket-sized computer designed to help children learn about coding, electronics and digital technology in a fun, hands-on way. It was originally created as part of a BBC-led project to give children across the UK an opportunity to get creative with technology.

It helps develop:

- Problem-solving – breaking challenges into manageable steps
- Coding skills – learning programming concepts in an accessible way
- Creativity – designing and building inventions
- STEM skills – combining computing, science, engineering and maths
- Logical thinking – understanding cause and effect
- Confidence – experimenting, making mistakes and improving ideas



To find out more,
visit www.microbit.org





GAA Leicester Pool Tournament

Our GAA Leicester Pool Tournament was held on Sunday 16th August at Club 147. We had a great turnout and we are very grateful to everyone who came about and helped. Congratulations to everyone who participated.

The winners were as follows:

Main Tournament:

Winner - Valjit Singh

2nd place - Raj Parmar

3rd place - Vijay Rathod

Plate Tournament

Winner - Anita Chapaneri

Runner up - Jayman Surti

Ladies Tournament

Winner - Koki Parmar

2nd place - Hema Parmar

3rd place - Tanuja Chauhan



FOOTBALL CLUB

We're looking for new members aged between 7-12 years old for our Leicester football team.

If you are interested, contact **Khelan** on
07708 839212



MAHASABHA
POOL TOURNAMENT
CLUB 147
BELGRAVE GATE, LEICESTER, LE1 3HS

27th September 2026
Start time 10.00 am prompt
Closing date for entries:
12th September 2026

16 and Under 3 players in a team £20 pp
Seniors 5 players in a team £25 pp

Spectators are welcome to dine £10 pp
Please State of any allergy
Includes Veg / Non Veg meal after
Contact: **Vijay (vizz) Rathod - 07973102695**
Contact : **Gitesh Chauhan - 07801101102**

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Shok Sabha Services

Our hall is available for Shok Sabha, khichdi (after funeral services) and barmu/termu for a nominal fee.

This is subject to availability.



To book our hall,
please contact
Amratbhai.





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