

The Theosophical Society's International Convention Returns to Varanasi After 30 Years.

For the first time since 1990 the Annual International Convention of the Theosophical Society will be held at the Indian Section Headquarters at Kamacha, Varanasi. The five day event runs from 31 December to 5 January. It is the TS's 144th annual convention this year attracting more than 1400 members from around the world and across India. This year's theme is "NURTURING THE DIVINE SEED".

What is the Theosophical Society?

The TS was founded in 1875 in New York. Three year later the founders *H. P. Blavatsky* and *Colonel H. S. Olcott* travelled to India and finally established its International Headquarters in Adyar, Chennai in 1882. Since then many outstanding personalities globally have made theosophy known and impacted the spiritual understanding of life to the world. One of the most known here in India was the second President of the TS *Mrs Annie Besant*, the first woman president of the Indian National Congress and an independence fighter for India. The mission of the Theosophical Society is "To serve humanity by cultivating an ever deepening understanding and realization of the Ageless Wisdom, spiritual self-transformation and the unity of all life."

A Rich program

On 31 December the International President, *Mr Tim Boyd*, will report about TS activities in 56 countries. He will also give a Public lecture on the last evening on 4 January at 4 pm on 'The Relevance of Our Work'. Each afternoon at 4 pm the lectures are open to public. Two notable talks are: The Besant Lecture, delivered by *Mr Kalyan Banerjee* from Mumbai, on "Service Beyond Self". Mr. Banerjee is currently a director of United Phosphorus, the largest agrochemical manufacturer in India, and the chairman of United Phosphorous – Banglades, and a person who contributed immensely to eradicate Polio from India. He was also the Rotary Club's third International President from India, serving from 2011-2012. Another distinguished speaker will be *Mr S. Abhaya Srisrimal Jain* who will deliver the Theosophy-Science Lecture on 'Science for Health and Consciousness'. He is an industrialist who in addition to founding and operating schools and a women's college, has run a variety of

cutting edge companies in pharmaceuticals, digital film production, and medical nano technology.is a constant contributor of educational and social issues. He is the inspirer of youth and constantly works for the next generation, male and female, with equal commitment.

The Convention program includes short lectures, talks, a panel discussion and symposium. Evenings are dedicated to entertainment including a concert by the LEAP Boundary Breakers children's choir from Chennai, conducted by the artistic director Srinivas Krishnan. The choir is mentored by two-time Oscar winner A. R. Rahman. Another evening is dedicated to beloved Songs from Old Hindi Movies. On the last evening is a dance performance "Priya Sakha" (Dear Friend) by Odissi Dancer Nityananda Das, who is a world-travelled differently abled dancer.

There is a Divine seed in each of us. Nurturing that seed brings happiness, calm, and peace of mind to ourselves and others.

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