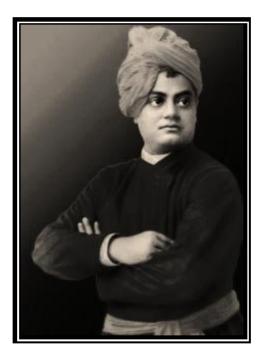


# THE BOMBAY THEOSOPHICAL BULLETIN

THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF

#### THE BOMBAY THEOSOPHICAL FEDERATION

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Arise, Awake and Stop not till your goal is reached

Swami Vivekananda

### **MISSION OF TS**

To serve humanity by cultivating an ever deepening understanding and realization of the Ageless Wisdom, spiritual self-transformation and the unity of all life

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## **Printers Devil**

In the April issue of the Bombay Theosophical Bulletin, we had published an article detailing '140 Years History of the Blavatsky Lodge. We now realise that the first paragraph had got omitted on account of 'Printers Devil'. We regret for the faux pas and reproduce the vital paragraph giving details of the Lodge office Bearers:

"The Lodge Vice President Bro Navin Kumar, has been a vital resource of the Blavatsky lodge over the years. Hailing from a family of Theosophists from the city of Allahabad, he had contributed a lot to the Administration and training in the Lodge. His wife Mrs. Lata Kumar was a former resident of the National Headquarters of the Indian Section TS at Varanasi. Together they have been actively involved. The President of the Lodge Sr. Kashmira Khambatta is actively involved in philanthropy and Charity and a Managing Committee Member of Zoroastrian Trust Funds of India.Her family

Editor – Bro. Rustom R. Dalal Cover Page by: Sis. Kashmira Khambatta Editorial Committee –Sis.Mahazaver Dalal (Reporter & in charge of Mailing List), Sis. Kashmira Khambatta, Sis. Aban Patel and Ex-Officio: President Bro. Vinayak Pandya. <u>Note: News, Notes and Programs to be printed in the Bulletin</u> be forwarded by e-mail to<u>kashmirakhambatta@yahoo.com</u> latest by16th each month. Readers' Views are invited. members are also involved in charity works in Lonavla and in the city of Mumbai. She helps the Editor in the publication of the Bulletin and is a creative content designer. The Lodge is Blessed with a very affable Hospitality Host in Sr, Jasmine Cawasji, the present Secretary of the Lodge. She is also known to be empathetic by nature and has been involved in the Education sector, in the capacity as a Trustee. The author, Arni Narendran has been serving as Honorary Treasurer for the last four years."

#### 

There will be a Virtual **89th Annual Session of Bombay Theosophical Federation in October 2020.** One day there will be an Opening of Annual Session with address by Chief Guest Shri N. C. Krishna. On another day there will be the 89th Annual General Meeting and Closing of the Annual Session. Date and Time for the Chief Guest's address will be fixed after consulting him. The AGM will be on a day and at a time convenient to BTF members. The **Session will be held on Zoom so members are requested to download Zoom** on Laptop, PC or Mobile to join the Virtual Session. **To send Zoom Meeting ID and Password members' e-mail IDs will be required.** Interested members, whose e-mail IDs are not with BTF, please e-mail your e-mail IDs to:

BTF President Bro. Vinayak Pandya's E-mail: cavrpandya@gmail.com <u>or</u> BTF Secretary Sis. Mahazaver Dalal 's E-mail: <u>mahazaver@hotmail.com</u>

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#### **BLAVATSKY LODGE AGM NOTICE**

The Annual General Meeting of the Blavatsky Lodge TS will be held on Zoom platform at 11.00 am on Sunday 27th September 2020. All members are requested to install Zoom on their computer / cell phone. Agenda will be communicated on e-mail and WhatsApp. – Kashmira Khambatta, President

## BIG THANK YOU FROM BLAVATSKY LODGE

Blavatsky Lodge Appeal on TS Mumbai WhatsApp Group to meet Administrative Expenses under COVID 19 Lockdown has been spontaneous by Brethren with their generous Donations. Sis. Aban Patel's suggestion with her first donation has inspired many Brethren to donate as under:

Sis. Aban Patel	Rs.10,000/-			
Bro. Arni Narendran	Rs.10,000/-			
Bro. Navin Kumar	Rs.10,000/-			
Executors to the Estate of Late Purviz H. Banaji	Rs.30,000/-			
Bro. Rustom Dalal	Rs.30,000/-			
Sis. DrRajam Pillai	Rs.37,000/-			
Bro. Ahmed Hirani	Rs.10,000/-			
A Well Wisher	Rs. 5,000/-			
Sis. Meherangiz Baria	Rs. 7,000/-			
Sis. Aban Amroliwalla	Rs. 5,000/-			
Bro. Vinayak Pandya	Rs. 5,000/-			
Once again, many thanks to Dear Brethren				

for supporting Blavatsky Lodge under Pandemic.

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## URGENCY TO AVOID LAPSE OF MEMBERSHIP OF BTF BRETHREN UNDER LOCKDOWN

Membership will lapse on 30th September 2020 for non-payment of Annual Dues of Rs.150/- per year for 2018-2019 and 2019-2020. Annual Dues are part of the Fees collected by Lodges, e.g. Blavatsky Lodge Fees of Rs.300/-.

**Re Blavatsky Lodge Membership Bro. Navin Kumar has personally paid** Annual Dues & Lodge Fees to avoid Lapses and fees for current year i.e. 2019-2020.

**Re Anand Lodge Membership Sis. Zenobia Kumar has personally paid** Annual Dues for 2018-2019, 2019-2020 & 2020-2021as required in each individual case.

BTF greatly appreciates timely help of Bro. Navin Kumar and Sis. Zenobia Khodaiji.

Members whose Membership is paid will be informed about the amount and the mode of reimbursement to Bro. Navin Kumar and Sis. Zenobia Khodaiji. The request is to make the payment at the earliest.

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The 145<sup>th</sup>International Convention online will be hosted by The International Headquarters, Adyar from 2nd to 5th January 2021 on Theme 'Cycles of Awareness'

## NEWS & NOTES

## KALADISHA AND JYOTI LODGE TS GOREGAON IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE BOMBAY THEOSOPHICAL FEDERATION LAUNCHED DHAMMAPADA 'KATHA' & 'GATHA' ON 30TH JULY 2020 ON JIO MEET

**Bro. Taral Munshi of Jyoti Lodge** crystallized his dream of *spreading Theosophy from Jyoti Lodge with creating 'Mann Vijay Kare' You Tube channel* to present *Dhammapada 'Katha' & 'Gatha' IN Hindi with English titles.* Dhammapada is a collection of stories as told by Lord Buddha. Shri Hrishikesh Sharanji has translated the stories in English and Hindi with pictures from original book in Pali language. All stories have 'Gatha' (Shlok) and 'Katha' (Story) Each story with title has Updesh (Teaching).

These stories are recited in a very involved manner by Taral Munshi and Archana Munshi. All the *Warli* paintings used to tell stories are done by Archana Munshi. This is Edited and Directed by Taral Munshi.

At the launch, BTF President Bro. Vinayak Pandya congratulated Bro. Taral Munshi for his perseverance in creating a platform to share Theosophy. Shri Hrishikesh Sharan in Ashirvachan said, 'If one has a chance to read only one book *in Life – it is Dhammapada'*. National Lecturer Shri U. S. Pandey wished that may this be a blessed beginning of spreading Theosophy through YouTube. Dr. Ajay Hora, Sis. Urvi Hora, Bro. Navin Kumar, Sis.Aban Patel and Sis. Mahazaver Dalal wished all the best to Bro. Taral Munshi and his wife Sis. Archana Munshi *for spreading Theosophy beyond Theosophical Society.* 

There are 400+ stories, as they are published and Premiered on Kaladisha to view these stories one needs to subscribe to '*View & Subscribe Kaladisha You Tube Channel*' Contact Kaladisha WhatsApp: +91-8450911118 E-mail: kaladisha24@gmail.com Link: https://youtu.be/np86nlrcfPw

Advantage to subscribe is that one will get direct notification and reminder on his YouTube. One will have to just click on the Link sent to him to reach directly to 'Dhammapada' video. For guidance to subscribe please contact Bro. Taral Munshi.

## HOMAGE TO NAR ASHO JAMSHED MEHTA

**TOS Mumbai Region on 1st August 2020** had Annual Program to pay Tributes to Great Theosophist Jamshed Mehta on his 68th Death Anniversary. It was a Virtual Program on Zoom hosted by Bro. Navin Kumar for TOS & TS Brethren. **TOS President Sis. Thrity Dalal** in her introductory words shared *extract from Sadhu Vaswani's article* on Jamshed Mehta. **Bro. Navin Kumar** spoke about 'Jamshed Mehta & Theosophy'. **Bro. Arni Narendran** hailed 'Jamshed Mehta's contribution to Karachi' (where he was Mayor for 13 years). Chief **Invitee Ms. Shernaaz Engineer, Editor of Jam-e-Jamshed Weekly** spoke about 'What we can learn from Life of Jamshed Mehta' and *urged to develop values like compassion, charity, reaching out despite crisis in life etc. as tributes to him.*' **Sis. Silloo Shroff,** very elderly lady, in her sweet voice sang a *song* 'Tributes to Jamshed Mehta' composed by Sis.Jerbanu Patel The meeting had ended with a **Vote of Thanks** by Sis. Thrity Dalal.

## TO CELEBRATE HPB'S 189TH BIRTHDAY ANNIVERSARY PROGRAMME BY UKRAINE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY ON 12TH AUGST 2020

Prof. C. A. Shinde conveyed the invitation of Mrs. Svetlana Gavrilenco, General President of Ukraine Theosophical Society to Brethren of India. It was held at IST 8.30 pm. Quite a few from India had joined. **Prof. C. A. Shinde was the speaker at the first session.** The two more sessions were in their language with English translation on Skype.

## PANDEMIC OPENS VISTAS OF TS MEETINGS

Under Corona Virus COVID 19 Pandemic, with Virtual Meetings now from one's home is mode of TS Meetings, not only of this Lodge, but of Lodges in India and even Abroad.

**Blavatsky Lodge Meetings** of Mondays & Fridays are attended by Brethren of Vasanta, Jyoti, Vimadalal Bilia & Shanti Lodges, Inquirers interested in Theosophy, members of other Federations and invitees like Shri H. K. Sharan.

**Thanks to BTF President Bro. Vinayak Pandya** forwarding the invitations Brethren of Bombay have opportunities to attend TS *Meetings of Lodges in India & Abroad:* 

- The beginning was with Philippines Theosophical Society's 'Guided Meditation' by Mr. Vick Hao Chin on Zoom every Sunday at IST 12.30 pm.
- National Lecturer Shri U. S. Pandey conducts studies in Hindi. UP & UK TFs meetings on Google Meet.
- Shri Pradeep Mahapatra's study of 'Self Culture' on Google Meet in Hindi & English.

- Rohit Lodge of Ahmadabad talks in Gujarati on Saturdays on Google Meet. Our Bro. Zinoo Masterwas an Invitee Speaker for their 8th August meeting. He spoke on 'Basic Theosophy'.
- **Reva Lodge of Vadodara** holds meetings in Gujarati on Sundays on Google Meet.
- **Indraprastha Lodge of Delhi** Theosophical Federation conducts study of I.K. Timini's book '*Science of Yoga*' on Sundays on Google Meet.
- o Kerala TF Lodges have also started Zoom meetings

## There are special program invitations also for BTF:

- **Ms Tran Thi Kim Dieu,** Vice-President of TS France and Chairperson of European Theosophical Federation for Zoom meeting.
- **Philippines TF** invitation to talk of Mr. Gerard Brennan, President Indo-Pacific Federation on 'Finding Joy amidst Uncertainty' on 15th August on Zoom.
- Presentation on '*The Incredible Journey*' by Shri Narendra M. Shah, General Secretary of the Theosophical Society East and Central Africa Section on 22nd August 2020.

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## BTF BRETHREN WITH THEIR CREATIVITY PROPAGATE THEOSOPHICAL VALUES

**Sis. Deepa Kapur shares** – their home production *Short Film called* '7 *Lives' with a message for Organ Donation* is based on a true story her husband Ranjit had heard. The purpose is to change prevailing mind set for organ donation. This **film is live on AMAZONE PRIME in USA and UK.** 

**Sis. Zenobia Khodaiji does seminars** on Zoom and other virtual online meetings like Am a TEDx Speaker. She is a motivation Creative Visualization trainer. She conducts sessions on subjects like Neuro Linguistic program, space clearing,

Vastu, Fengdhul Numerology, Kabalalh Graphology, Annmal Communication, Laws of the Universe.

**Bro. Navin Kumar** on 12th June 2020 on WhatsApp shared an audio clip of a duet of Hindi Song sung by him from Mumbai, India and Mrs. Chaudhry from Philadelphia, USA. He had added that this was thanks to '*Lockdown provoking invention of new app STARMAKER*'. If he had not given this explanation one would have thought that it was sung at Support Convention Cultural Evening at Blavatsky Lodge.

# SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

## Bro. Arni Narendran's Article First Published In Hermes Magazine, Athens, Greece Issue III June 2020

In her brilliant lecture, delivered at the conference on Reincarnation organized by the European School of Theosophy, in Eretria, Greece, Ms. Julie Chajes, a post-doctoral fellow of the Ben Gurion University, mentions a Hindu Renaissance taking place almost juxtaposed to the emerging Theosophical movement in India and the West. She mentions Neo Hinduism influencing Blavatsky as much as the esoteric Kabalah. She refers to the Brahmo Samaj of Raja Ram Mohan Roy and the Arya Samaj of Dayanand Saraswathi as forming a new plank in the Neo Hindu movement.

I would have added a third, namely the Advaita movement of Swami Vivekananda (born 12 January 1863 to 4 July 1902) and the emerging Ramakrishna Mission as part of the movement. Although they have been bracketed together, each had a different purpose and goal. While Brahmo founded by Raja Ram Mohan Roy, was aiming at a social reform of the community, the Arya Samaj founded by Swami Dayanand Saraswathi, aimed at a '*Ghar Vaapasi*' (Returning Home) approach to the Hindu converts who were enchanted with otherfaiths.

While the two organizations of Brahmo and Arya Samaj, were popular in the North of India, Vivekananda's Advaita had a pan South Asian reach from Colombo (carried forward by Swami Vipulananda in Ceylon) to Almora. Advaita transcended ceremonial and class structured Hinduism and found a homogenous audience across India.

Both Theosophy and Swami Vivekananda had unintentionally knit the fragmented fabric into one large canvas of a Hindu Subcontinent. The word Hindu itself was an Islamic invention which was enlarged and institutionalized in British India. It has come to stay although its historic reference has been 'Sanathana Dharma'. The Theosophical Society was also instrumental in Buddhist revival in the island of Sri Lanka mainly through the efforts of Col. Henry Steel Olcott, which was referred to as 'Dhamma' in Buddhist scriptures.

Despite Theosophy and Advaita of Vivekananda being the closest in terms of philosophic content, Helena Petrovna Blavatskyand Henry Steel Olcott decided to partner with the Arya Samaj as soon as they arrived in Bombay in 1879. The first issue of *The Theosophist* published in October 1879, carried an autobiographical article by Dayanand Saraswathi. the tryst remained short as Theosophy did not want to be classified as another Hindu organization, nor a Buddhist sect, which the book *Esoteric Buddhism*, written and released by A.P.Sinnett in London, made many believe. *The Secret Doctrine* published in 1888 after years of anxious expectation cleared the air.

Theosophy is a body of knowledge collated from Divine ancient wisdom, extracted from the Wisdom Schools of all Religions. The Hindu philosophical element in Theosophy was not borrowed from any of the aforementioned organisations. HPB sourced the wisdom provided by the Trans Himalayan Masters Morya and K.H. The Theosophical Society always guarded itself from being identified as a religious organization.

The split between Anna Kingsford and HPB is one piece of historic evidence, which proves the point. HPB in every way tried to keep the

balance, countering Anna's Christian emphasis.

Swami Vivekananda was a freemason and graduated from the Shillong Lodge (Lodge Anchor and Hope, Calcutta 1884). The Freemasons, like Mr. G.C. Connors, helped the Swami in 1894 while he was in America. In 2013, the Freemasons of India erected a statue of the Swami, in Freemason attire, at the Vivekananda Kendra in Cape Comorin (Kanyakumari) (The Hindu, Madurai, 27June 2013).

Swami Vivekananda approached Col. Olcott for a letter of introduction for participating in the Parliament of Religions in 1893. The meeting took place, probably at the Adyar Headquarters of the Theosophical Society at Chennai. At that point of time the Ramakrishna Mission was not established. Among Swami's ardent admirers and benefactors were the Raja of Ramnad, the zamindars of his kingdom, the Raja of Khetri and the Raja of Mysore. This may explain his choice of return via Colombo port instead of Bombay. Many of the Indian Gurus going to the 'New World' in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries had royal benefactors. Paramahansa Yogananda, founder of the Self Realisation Fellowship (SRF), and the first Indian Guru to set base in America, had the Raja of Benaras. Bhakthi Vedanta Prabhupada of the Hare Krishna Movement had Smt. Morarjee, a shipping magnate, pay for his passage to America from Bombay. Swami Vivekananda set sail from the port of Bombay on the SS Peninsular on 31 May 1893, via Singapore, China and Yokohama, until he finally arrived in Canada. Vivekananda met the Indian Industrialist Jamshetji Tata on the ship while traveling from Yokohama to Canada, inspiring him with his vision of a modern India.

In one of his public talks in Chennai, Swami Vivekananda makes his mention of trying to secure a letter of introductionfrom the Theosophical Society– Col. Olcott, who insisted on membership in the Society, of which the Swami was unwilling. He was described in the guest speaker manifesto at the Parliament of Religions, as representing "A monk of the orthodox Brahmanical Religion". He speaks kindly of William Q. Judge whom he happened to meet in Chicago along with Dr. Annie Besant in 1893, at the world Parliament of Religions. It was his erudite talk on Hinduism at that event which catapulted Swami Vivekananda to fame.

# Dr. Annie Besant records her meeting the Swami in the following words:

"A striking figure clad in vellow and orange, shining like the Sun of India, in the midst of the heavy atmosphere of Chicago, a lion head, piercing eyes, mobile lips, movement swift and abrupt- such was my first impression of Swami Vivekananda, as I met him in one of the rooms, set apart, for the delegates to the Parliament of Religions. Monk they called him, not unwarrantably, warrior monk was he, and the first impression was that of a warrior, rather than of a monk. He was off the Platform and his figure was instinct, with pride of country, pride of race, the representative of the oldest living religions, surrounded by curious gazers of nearly the youngest religion and by no means inclined to give step, as though the hoary faith he embodied was in aught inferior to the noblest there. India was not to be ashamed before the hurrying arrogant West, by her envoy and her son. He brought her message, he spoke in her name, and the Herald remembered the dignity of the Royal Land whence he came. Purposeful, virile, strong he stood out, a Man among Men, able to hold his own.

"On the Platform another side came out. The dignity and the sense of worth and power still were there, but all was subdued to the exquisite duty of the spiritual message, which he had brought, to the sublimity of that matchless truth of the East which is the heart, life of India, the wondrous teaching of the Self. Enraptured, the huge multitude, hung upon his words, nota syllable must be lost, not a cadence missed! 'That man a heathen!' said one, as he came out of the great hall, 'and we send missionaries to his people! It should be more fitting that they should send missionaries to us.'"

The Parliament of Religions, 1893, made Swami Vivekananda a new Beacon of India, where he was able to amplify the philosophy of

Hindu Wisdom, what the Theosophists had done two decades before. He is quoted as saying to his western audience "*The Hindu Faith is as much yours as mine*", the Hindu concept of *Vasudeva Kutumbhakam "The World is one Family*" echoing what the Theosophical Society stood for–Universal Brotherhood.

Writing to his devotee in Chennai–Alasinga Perumal, on 2 November 1893, Swamiji writes that from India there was a large delegation, P.C.Majumdar represented the Brahmo Samaj from Calcutta, one Mr. Virchand Gandhi represented the Jains, B. B. Nagarkar represented the Brahmo Samaj from Bombay and the Theosophical Society was represented by William O. Judge, Annie Besant, G. N. Chakravarty of Allahabad, Miss Henrietta Muller from Europe and Mrs. Isabel Anagarika Oakley from Australia. and Cooper Dharmapala represented Buddhism. Alasinga Perumal, editor of a Vedanta journal based in Madras, in his final years gravitated towards the Theosophical Society, through his association with Col. Olcott.

The reception which the Swami received in the materially enriched, but spiritually yearning West, prompted his repeated visits to both Europe and United States. In 1895 he gave two lectures at the Arvan Theosophical Society of New York, at the Hall of Universal Brotherhood. The first day the topic was "What is Vedanta" and on the second day it was followed by "What is Yoga". Leon Lordsburg, a part time lecturer of the Theosophical Society, was so impressed that he joined the Swami to become Swami Kripananda. This was chided by W. Q. Judge in The Theosophist of August 1895. On anotheroccasion he gave a talk on 'Bhakthi' at Blavatsky Lodge, in St. Johns Wood, London, on 9 July 1896. In that talk Col. Olcott was also present (a reflection of past wounds having been healed). Again, on 11 February 1897 Swami lectured at the Blavatsky Lodge in the presence of Dr. Annie Besant. L. Frank Baum- author of The Wizard of Oz, America's most popular fairy tale writer and a member of the Theosophical Society also became a staunch student of Vedanta. Devi Mukherjee, a Brahmo votary and a prominent member of the TS in Calcutta, who had accompanied Madam Blavatsky and Burjor Padshah on their tour of the West, after an eventful tryst with Theosophy, also joined the Swami. Ironically Advaita philosophy had already been infused into Western Consciousness through the label of Theosophy twenty years before. This made Swami's work much easier in the West.

Vedanta Societies were established in America and Europe as the interest started growing and many Western converts embraced monkhood in the newly established Ramakrishna Mission. The most famous was Sister Nivedita. Born Margaret Elizabeth Noble, an Irish teacher who was influenced by Swami Vivekananda ever since she had met him in London in 1895. She became a lifelong Brahmacharini (nun) and selflessly served in Calcutta during the 1899 plague, also helping establish the Sharadha Mutt and other educational institutions. The seeds of Advaita which Swami Vivekananda planted have today fructified in the opening of the Vivekananda Yoga University (VaYu) in Los Angeles in early June 2020. It was facilitated through a virtual launch from the Indian Embassy in NewYork.

In the words of Prof. Nicholas Goodricke-Clarke: Blavatsky's preference for Advaita Vedanta related to its exposition of the Ultimate Reality as a monoistnontheistic impersonal absolute. The non-dualistic view of the Parabrahm, as the Universal Divine principle would become the first fundamental proposition of The Secret Doctrine. This clearly shows that occasion he gave a talk on 'Bhakthi' at Blavatsky Lodge, in St. Johns Wood, London, on 9 July 1896. In that talk Col. Olcott was also present (a reflection of past wounds having been healed). Again, on 11 February 1897 Swami lectured at the Blavatsky Lodge in the presence of Dr. Annie Besant. L. Frank Baum- author of The Wizard of Oz, America's most popular fairy tale writer and a member of the Theosophical Society also became a staunch student of Vedanta. Devi Mukherjee, a Brahmo votary and a prominent member of the TS in Calcutta, who had accompanied Madam Blavatsky and Burjor Padshah on their tour of the West, after an eventful tryst with Theosophy, also joined the Swami. Ironically Advaita philosophy had already been infused into Western Consciousness through the label of Theosophy twenty years before. This made Swami's work much easier in the West.

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Secret Doctrine Centenary Issue, Adyar Lodge, Chennai 1988.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cdTy8e7XMxA

The glory of life is not in *'never* falling'. The true glory consists in 'rising' each time we fall. Swami Chinmayananda

# BTF & LODGE PROGRAMES SEPTEMBER 2020

With new cases of COVID 19 still surfacing actual meetings at Lodge premises will not be held in September 2020. Following Lodge members are requested to be in touch with your Lodge Contacts and BTF Secretary Sis. Mahazaver Dalal (M):91-9833131216 to learn about BTF & Lodge activities.

- 1. ANANDA LODGE: Theosophical Colony, Juhu, Mumbai 400049.
- 2. BLAVATSKY LODGE: 7 French Bridge, Mumbai 400007.
- 3. 5, CENTENARY LODGE: contact Sis. Najma (M): 9987204038
- 4. JYOTI LODGE: Contact Bro. Taral Munshi (M): 9820187317
- 5. SHANTI LODGE: C/o Bro. Rustom Dalal, Sleater Road
- 6. UNITY YOUTH LODGE: Sis. Soonoo Vesuna (M): 9619339787
- 7. VASANTA LODGE &
- 8. GANESH LODGE: C/O Sis. Kalpana Pramod Jani, Santacruz (West)
- 9. VIMADALAL BILIA LODGE: Family House, Dadar Parsi Colony

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