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The Founders of the Theosophical Society:

Helena Petrovna Blavatsky 1831-1891

Henry Steel Olcott 1832-1907

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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NEWS AND NOTES

TS 146TH INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION

The 146th International Convention will be held online, hosted by the International Headquarters at Adyar, Chennai, India, from 27 to 30 December 2021.

Marja Artamaa
International Secretary

ANNIE BESANT BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

1ST OCTOBER 2021

**BTF & BLAVATSKKY LODGE JOINED
THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY, ADYAR**
Webinar meeting at IST 2.00 pm

Their Invite paid tributes to Multi-Faceted Diamond Soul of Dr. Annie Besant with words:

Annie Besant (1 October 1847 – 20 September 1933) was a

Acting Editor – Sis. Mahazaver 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. **Note:** News, Notes and Programs to be printed in the Bulletin be forwarded by

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e-mail to kashmira.khambatta@gmail.com latest by 16th each month. Readers' Views are invited.

Theosophist, Socialist, Women's Right Activist, Writer, Orator, Educationist and Philanthropist. Regarded as a Champion of Human Freedom, she was an ardent supporter of both Irish and Indian self-rule. She was a prolific author with over 300 books and pamphlets to her credit. As an Educationist, her contributions included being one of the Founders of The Banaras Hindu University. She was the Second International President of the Theosophical Society.

The meeting conducted by Sis. Catalina was opened with the Universal Prayer by Bro. Shikhar Agnihotri. In Welcome Address International Secretary Sis. Marja Artamma spoke about the occasion and introduced the Guest Speaker Bro. Pedro Oliveira of T.S. Australia.

Bro. Pedro Oliveira from his Third Book 'Annie Besant in India' shared Testimonies of Annie Besant's Indian CO-Workers:

Tallapragada Subba Raw	Rangaswami Iyengar
Jamnadas Dwarkadas	Bahadur Mulaswami Iyer
Dr. Bhagwandas	Bipin Chandra Pal
B. Sanjeeva Rao	Nilkantha Shri Ram

Though thinking of some of them was different, they greatly admired Annie Besant and gave glowing testimonies. These testimonies spoke about Annie Besant's life dedicated to TRUTH and to India - preparing India for political freedom and spiritual regeneration. **She loved India; the very soil was sacred to her. She believed that 'India has the spirit of Mother of the world'.**

The talk was followed by tributes with a video and a Sanskrit song. The meeting had ended with Vote of thanks by Bro. Shikhar Agnihotri.

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**BTF & BLAVATSKKY LODGE
Virtual Meeting at 6.00 pm**



Sketch by Sis. Aban Patel

In 2019, Door Darshan Hindi Channel had interviewed some of our members of Blavatsky Lodge on the contribution of Dr. Annie Besant on Theosophical Society and her influence in the Independence Movement of India. This year, Sis. Aban Patel recalled her interview and spoke in Hindi about it before starting her class on 1st October 2021.

Sis. Aban Patel's translated speech in English for the Bulletin is as under:

Dr. Annie Besant's name rings merry bells in my ears. This lady, who was known as the *Mahatma - the Mother India* has vast influence on all Indians. Her name even today, vibrates as loudly as my heartbeats. A lady, of Irish origin who inspired the love for our country among we Indians, she declared in 1918 & I quote, "*I love the Indian people as I love none other.... My heart and my mind have long been laid on the altar of the Motherland*". Dr. Besant, though, born of Irish parents in London on 1st October 1847, made India her home from November 1893 till she dropped her physical body on 20th September 1933.

I recall my childhood, when as a 12-year-old schoolgirl I had taken part in Inter House Elocution competition, where I had been given the topic to speak about Dr. Annie Besant's speech as President of Indian National Congress of 1917. You won't believe, but as I was contemplating about the subject, I had spoken years ago, I came across the same material but in an abridged form, which I would like to share with you now. I quote:

"For the first time in Congress history, you have chosen as your President, one who, when your choice was made, was under the heavy ban of Government displeasure, and who lay interned as a person dangerous to public safety. While I was humiliated, you crowned me with honour; while I was slandered, you believed in my integrity and good faith; while I was crushed under the heel of bureaucratic power, you acclaimed me as your leader; while I was silenced and unable to defend myself, you defended me and won for my release; I was proud to serve in the lowliest fashion, but you lifted me up and placed me before the world as your chosen representative. I have no words with which to thank you, no eloquence with which to repay my debt. My deeds must speak for me, for words are too poor. I turn your gift to service to the Motherland, I consecrate my life anew, to her worship by action. All that I have and am, I lay on the altar of Motherland. Vande Mataram."

THEO JYOTI TRIVENI TUESDAY MEET
of Rewa Lodge Vadodara, Rohit Lodge Ahmedabad
& Jyoti Lodge Mumbai on 28th September 2021

It was a unique Meet with Two Speakers of each of Three Families speaking in English, Hindi & Gujarati on 'Selflessness and Divine Life of Annie Besant' and 'Inspiring Life Journey of Annie Besant'.

OBITUARY: Sis. Dhun Fitter, member of Blavatsky Lodge with membership of 33years passed away on **30th September 2021**. She

was an active member of her Mother Lodge – Besant Lodge, which used to meet at a member's place in Princess Street. When Besant Lodge closed, her membership was transferred to Blavatsky Lodge. She was also a Co-Freemason with High Degree. May her soul be blessed with eternal peace.

Advaita Vedanta: Self-Realisation is realising one's real Self

Our Blavatsky Lodge TS life member Bro. Janardana (now Br. Damodara Chaitanya, Chinmaya Mission), during his recent visit to Mumbai, was invited to our lodge for an interaction with our members on 27-09-2021. The gist of deliberations during the said interaction meeting is being shared with our members as under:

The meeting started with our universal prayer followed by welcoming of *Br. Damodara Chaitanya* and members for the occasion. Thereafter, in response to a query, the principles of Dvaita, Vishishta Advaita and Advaita Vedanta (propounded respectively by Sri Madhvacharya, Sri Ramanujacharya and Sri Adi Shankaracharya) in the recent past, were explained. It was elaborated that though all these great Acharyas derived their inspirations from the same scriptures, the differences in the essence of their teachings could be due to reasons of then prevailing conditions in the society and their levels of comprehension, etc.

The Vedanta or the Upanishad reveals the essence or the ultimate teaching of Vedas, which are the holy scriptures of Sanatana Dharma. Through the process of systematic study and practices under a competent Guru, Vedanta guides seekers towards Self-Realisation, leading to the ultimate freedom from fear, finitude, sorrow, death, etc., in the very lifetime, which, otherwise, seems to have no end.

Self-Realisation is realising one's real Self as the Sat-Chit-Ananda Brahman, free of dualities and complexities arising out of that notion of duality. Because of beginningless ignorance about one's real identity (Self-ignorance), the individual is unable to comprehend his real nature and instead identifies himself with something else, which he is not. In other words, it is non-apprehension of oneself as absolute Reality, leading to misapprehension of oneself as some transactional reality. This misapprehension is the cause for all the complexities in one's life. The answer to be free from the complexities is right apprehension of one's real identity by comprehending the Reality (Self-Knowledge).

The situation is like that of a lion-cub, growing up amongst a herd of lamb due to some unforeseen incident. Though the lion-cub is ever the King of the animal world, unaware of his real nature, being with lamb-herd, he behaves like a helpless lamb and suffers throughout. But, when he comes in close contact with a lion and comes to apprehend that he too is a lion, then all his sorrows end and he becomes free instantly.

Scriptures are life manuals for understanding the human life and its ultimate goal. The Upanishads reveal that Parmatma or Brahman alone is the absolute Reality, amidst the plurality of this perceived creation, comprising varied names and forms and that whatever is seen or perceived, is nothing but the manifestation of Brahman alone. In other words, whatever is, in essence, is Sat-Chit-Ananda Parmatma alone. This understanding of oneness within all perceived manyness is the result of Self-Enquiry through study of scriptures under the guidance of the Guru.

The example of Gold and Ornaments could illustrate clearly the understanding of Oneness within the perceived manyness. The One Gold manifests as many ornaments. Though variety of names and forms of ornaments are perceived, it is clear that they are all nothing

but that One Gold alone and other than Gold, there is nothing else in the ornaments. So, though there is only one substance called Gold, the same Gold is called in different names depending upon their shapes and utilities. Thus, the one substance, i.e. Gold alone, is called in different names for transactional convenience. As such, these perceived names and forms do not have any reality of their own and they are mere appearances of the one Reality, i.e., Gold. So, when the gold is changed from one shape to another shape, what changes is the name and form, but the **gold** remains the same all through. Thus, by enquiring into the nature of different ornaments, it is understood that all names and forms called ornaments are, in essence, gold alone and there is nothing other than gold in them.

In the same way, since this creation is the manifestation of One Brahman as revealed in the scriptures, the varied names and forms perceived are nothing but One Brahman alone, in essence. Since we are unable to comprehend this one essence in the things and beings of the world, we struggle in the midst of plurality and suffer. So, when enquired into the essence, the substance of these names and forms of the creation, it becomes clear that they are nothing but One Brahman alone, in substance, in essence. **In other words, just as One Gold is called in different names depending upon their forms and utilities though they all are essentially nothing but One Gold alone, the variety of names and forms in the entire creation is nothing but One Brahman, as all names and forms essentially are nothing but One Brahman alone.**

This understanding of Oneness leads to the end of perceived manyness. Thus, realising our essential nature as not this temporary, everchanging, perishable, inert body-mind-intellect complex, but that indwelling One Sat-Chit-Ananda Brahman, which is the essence in all things and beings, would end our ignorance about our real Self. Absolute freedom is abiding in this new realisation of Oneness amidst all pluralities, now having understood the essence, the substance of

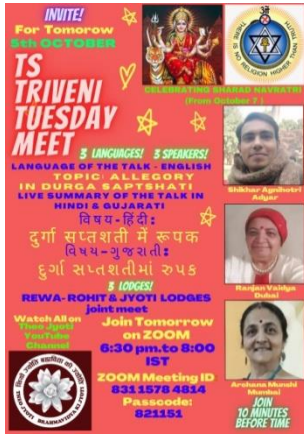
those names and forms. Inferring our nature as Sat-Chit-Ananda Brahman was further explained through our daily experiences in Waking, Dream and Deep-Sleep states, where though the waker, dreamer and deep-sleeper change from one state to another, what is constant all through is the One Witness of these states, day-after-day, month-after-month, year-after-year and so on, the Self, the Brahman. The Self-Enquiry, thus, guides us in eliminating the misapprehension about our real nature, leading to right apprehension of our essential nature as the One Sat-Chit-Ananda Brahman.

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*Synergy' Year 3 July – December 2021 Issue on
'Zen and Art of Mindfulness'*

This Synergy issue has cover profile of young Theosophist of Philippines Ms. Marlyn Ranola. Dr. UMa M. Shankar writes about 'Shankara – Divinity in Human Form'. 'My Journey with Theosophy' is by Late Bro. Rustom R. Dalal. Bro. Arni narendran explains 'Zen and Art of Mindfulness'. Sis. Catalina Isaza Cantor Agnihotri gives 'Profiles of Four Women in the Fields of Literature and the Theosophical Movement'. There are articles on 'The Psychedelic nature of Islam Art and Architecture' and 'The Forgotten Priestesses of Cetts'. Climate Soul Song and other information opens up spiritual vistas. **Synergy receives appreciations from readers of Japan, Finland, England, Austria, Ireland, India, Netherlands, east & central Africa, Philippines, Adyar, Australia and Toronto.**

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BTF BRETHREN AT TRIVENI TUESDAY MEET

On 5th October 2021 Sis. Archana Munshi translated in Gujarati Shri Shikhar Agnihotri's talk on '*Allegory in Durga Saptshati*'. There are 700 Shlokas which explain Durga as 'Shakti', hence shlokas are called '*Saptshati*'. Sis. Archana spoke about Saptshati in light of Theosophy.

On 19th October 2021 Bro. Navin Kumar was Speaker in Hindi on '*Brief Elements of DR. Annie Besant's Bhagvad Gita*'. He said that Bhagvad Gita is a scripture which mainly covers '*Brahm Vidya*' and '*Yog Shastra*'. The Second Chapter summarizes the essence of these teachings as under:

- Find out your duties and perform them, come what may.
- The soul is immortal; it is unaffected when body dies.
- One should strive to raise one's consciousness to the *Buddhic Plane*, then one is called "*Sthit Pragya*"
- One should try to identify the actions which are of the nature of "*Sacrifice*" or "*Yagya*". They are actions which are not

- one's duty but what one should do for the welfare of people in general.
- e) The last 18 shlokas of chapter 2 tell us about the qualities of a person who is a "*Stithi Pragya*"

Email from Mr. Fali Engineer regarding an article on his son Jimmy Engineer in the October's BTF Bulletin.

Dear Mrs. Kashmira Khambatta,

I am most grateful for sending the article on my son, Jimmy and a specimen of your Bulletin, which features the article. We had the same master, Sufi Barkat Ali, a sage who loved and guided us on the right path, as he did for countless others.

I have been a member of the Theosophical Society for 55 years, first with the Karachi TS and now with the American TS. We have a Theosophical Lodge in Houston, which was personally chartered by Annie Besant in May 1912 and whose doors have remained open since. I was its president for 7 years, 2006 - 2013.

I am a TM teacher for 46 years, after being qualified by its founder, Maharishi Mahesh Yogi in Switzerland in 1975. I first taught in Pakistan till 1987 and in Houston since then.

I am familiar with Mumbai as I spent my vacations there during my education in Chennai, from middle school to an engineering degree in 1950.

Kindly convey my fraternal greetings to your Lodge and accept my heartfelt gratitude for bringing us in touch.

Warmest regards,
Fali Engineer

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and in this grove, a glass house
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once there was a forest
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when you struck a tiny match
for the glory of the game
for fire drew you more than light
and slowly this lovely world turns

And the forest blazed like molten glass
as the fire scored its path
and the forest blazed like molten glass
and my aching heart stood worn and still
and yearned for the flames to pass

The grove and glass once glistened
 evading wealth and fame
 emerald leaves and branches
 and gleaming windowpanes
 ancient life has come and gone
 and quickly this deep beauty burns

And what if the match had lit a candle
 which gave off a soft light
 that is a world that I could handle
 and we would have been alright

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