

SGI President To Receive 1st Tagore Peace Award COURTESY OF SGI NEWSLETTER

The Asiatic Society, headquartered in Calcutta, India, has informed SGI President Ikeda of its decision to name him the first recipient of the Tagore Peace Award.

In his letter, Acting General Director Anil Kumar Sarkar affirmed that Mr. Ikeda was selected in recognition of his “creative contribution to the development of human understanding toward peace.”

The director further explained that the award has been inaugurated by the institute to promote global peace through advancing the humanistic and pacifist tenets of the esteemed Bengali writer Rabindranath Tagore (1861–1941), winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1913.

The Asiatic Society, currently headed by General Secretary Chandan Raychowdhury, was established in 1784 by Sir William Jones (1746–94), a British jurist and Eastern studies scholar. In 1984, the bicentennial of its founding, the society was designated as “an institution of national importance” by the Indian government.

A leading pioneer in promoting literary and scientific activities in India, the society has spawned associations and centers for Asian studies spanning the globe. Its fields of study include philosophy, language, history, art, literature, science, archeology and an array of other subjects concerning the people, culture and environment of Asia.

Tagore, whose legacy the award honors, was an individual of diverse talents who during his lifetime achieved renown as one of India’s most noteworthy figures. He was a dramatist, gifted composer and among India’s foremost painters. Tagore was also an outspoken opponent of the evils of nationalism and envisioned a time when the values of the East would become the driving inspiration for a revitalization of global humanism and spirituality.

In August 1996, an SGI youth cultural delegation visited the Asiatic Society in India. During this visit, the Institute of Oriental Philosophy, which was founded by Mr. Ikeda, and the Calcutta-based institute signed an official agreement for scholarly exchange.

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