

Grand Global Cultural Festival and Bathukamma Celebrations  
by Brahma Kumaris and Dept. of Language and Culture

**“Bathukamma is about gender equality, peace, justice, and life in harmony with nature”, says Mr. B. Venkatesham, Secretary of Govt. of Telangana, as the magnificent Global Cultural Festival begins in Telangana.**

The Global Cultural Festival and Bathukamma Celebrations began in Hyderabad, Saturday, 13 October, with the record-breaking participation of artists from 21 countries, including Russia, Brazil, Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, and others. The Festival has been organized by the government of Telangana (Department of Culture and Tourism) and the Brahma Kumaris.

**The programme “The Rhythms of the Soul”** became a beautiful prologue to the Festival. It was held at Dr. MCR HRD Institute, Jubilee Hills, Hyderabad, as a special event for AIS (IAS, IPS, IGS, IRS) Officers. The event started with a soft melody flute performance by bro. Ilia from Russia.

This time a special guest of Telangana is **Mr. Alexey Talai** from the Republic of Belarus who has been invited by the Brahma Kumaris to visit India and share his unique and motivating experience. As a result of explosion of the World War II old ammunition, Alexey lost his both legs and arms when he was 16 years old. Yet, he did not give way to despair and started a new life. Today he is a master of sports in swimming, a member of the Paralympic national team of Belarus and has the black belt in taekwondo. He is a brilliant motivational speaker and trainer.

Bro. Alexey Talai was welcomed with standing ovation. His message that "When spirit is strong, body matters nothing" inspired everyone. Bro. Alexey spoke words of inspiration at other major events within the framework of the Festival as well.

The chief guests to “The Rhythms of the Soul” were: Mr. APN Sharma, Advisor to Govt. of Telangana, Mr. B. Venkatesham, IAS – Secretary of Govt. of Telangana, Dept of Culture and Tourism, Mr A. K. Goyal, Advisor to Govt. of TS, Mr Jagadeshwar, Sr. Women Development and Child Welfare, Mr Raghunandan, Collector, Hyderabad.