

Adyar Newsletter

June-July-August 2025

English Quarterly | Rs 10



A Peahen Strides Proudly – her Downy Chicks Close Behind

QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY, ADYAR, CHENNAI, INDIA

WORLD CONGRESS AT VANCOUVER, CANADA

The 12th World Congress of the Theosophical Society, held at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, from 23 to 27 July 2025, marked a historic double celebration: 150 years of the Theosophical Society Adyar and 100 years of the Society in Canada. With 376 delegates from 29 countries, the gathering embodied the international spirit of the movement. The opening featured prayers of the religions, blessings from Canada's First Nations, and a keynote address by historian Michael Gomes, who was awarded the Subba Row Medal for his contribution to theosophical literature. In his address, President Tim Boyd conveyed a sense of both urgency and hope, highlighting the continuing significance of the Ageless Wisdom in the contemporary world.

Spread over five days, the program combined spiritual practice, study, dialogue, and cultural exchange. Highlights included workshops on meditation, education,

healing, and practical spirituality; intercultural dialogues across continents; and moving contributions from First Nations voices. Key lectures, such as those by Tim Boyd, Pedro Oliveira, Vic Hao Chin, Jr., Elizabeth May, and Stephan A. Hoeller, emphasized insight, wholeness, and the Society's future role in shaping a more unified and compassionate world. Cultural and artistic expressions — from First Nations dance to Indian classical performance, as well as exhibitions and film screenings — deepened the Congress's spirit of unity and creativity.



President Tim Boyd greets the gathering

NEWS FROM THE TS SCHOOLS

OLCOTT MEMORIAL HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL (OMHSS)

The second quarter of the academic year at Olcott Memorial Higher Secondary School was marked by meaningful progress that reflected the school's holistic vision of nurturing mind, body, and spirit.

All the students received uniforms, bags, and books to equip them for their academic journey. A major highlight was the introduction of computer science classes for students from Grades 1 to 8 under the Purna Vidya Project supported by Asha for Education. This initiative, along with an Artificial Intelligence workshop conducted by KPMG for Class 11, exposed students to the technologies shaping tomorrow.

Senior students also benefited from

a career guidance program organized by Bhoomi Academy for Classes 10 and 12, while KPMG welcomed Class 11 students to its office for an educational tour and sessions on tax, auditing, and finance.

Holistic education also means instilling awareness and responsibility. Students observed 'World No Tobacco Day' with a pledge and sapling plantation led by Ms Thenmozhi, IFS, while the Greater Chennai Corporation provided dengue awareness training. A series of drug awareness programs by the Chennai South Zone Police and VHS Hospital guided middle- and senior-school students toward making responsible choices.

Younger children were also cared for

through a screening camp organized by V-Excel Educational Trust for kindergarten and primary classes. Awareness extended into the digital sphere, with senior students staging a skit on the dangers of online gaming and cyber scams during the Independence Day celebrations.

The school's cultural life was at its most vibrant during the Annual Day Celebrations in July, themed on the 'Environment'. Chief Guest Mr V. S. Sriram, Independent Consultant and Asha volunteer, inspired students to embrace the opportunities before them. Teachers with 25 years of service — Mrs Padma, Mrs Guna Sundari, and Mrs Narmadha — were honoured, while students with perfect attendance received recognition.



Dance performance by the students

The quarter was also rich with sporting achievements. The Under-19 Boys Handball team won their Zonal Meet, while the Under-17 team emerged runners-up. At the Rotary Olympiad and Zonal-Level Athletic Meet, students such as Kirishwa (8B) and Lathika (8B) brought home medals in athletics and field events, their success reflecting not only talent but also the tireless guidance of their teachers.

ADYAR THEOSOPHICAL ACADEMY (ATA) **A journey of voices, wings, and wonder at the ATA**

The new academic year at ATA unfolded gently, bringing with it new ideas, friendships, and experiences for both teachers and students.

A particularly touching moment came when the 2000 batch alumni returned to celebrate their Silver Jubilee. After honouring Colonel Olcott's portrait, they reconnected with faculty and students, organized lunch for the entire school, and donated school bags and stationery to younger children.



Alumni gathering at Olcott School

Partnership with Pitchandikulam Forest Consultants continued to enrich learning opportunities, proving once again that education flourishes best when supported by a larger ecosystem of care.

The Independence Day celebration served as a symbolic culmination of the quarter. Presided over by Mr Sankaranarayanan, Senior Advocate and former Additional Solicitor General (South), the event reminded students that the nation's freedom is inseparable from educational empowerment.



Independence day celebration at OMHSS

active learning strategies. Together, these sessions encouraged reflection on teaching practices and inspired more engaging approaches in the classroom.

This year also marked ATA's sixth birthday, celebrated with warmth and pride. Children presented original songs and heartfelt reflections, expressing what the school means to them. Their words conveyed a deep sense of belonging and growth, reminding everyone that ATA is more than a school — it is a community.

Connection with Nature remained central to learning this term. Students from Grades 1 to 8 participated in guided walks across the Theosophical Society campus, observing butterflies, birds, flowers, and seasonal changes. The Blue-Green Eco Centre added to this experience, offering opportunities to study plants and insects more closely.

Older students in Grades 7 and 8 attended an engaging session by wildlife expert, Dr K. Sankar. With the help of stories and examples, he introduced them to animal classification and India's rich biodiversity, highlighting the interconnectedness of all life



ATA students win big at the Model United Nations

forms and the importance of conservation.

Assemblies too reflected the school's culture of shared learning. Students led sessions on themes they found meaningful, with guest speakers adding fresh insights.

Beyond the campus, experiential learning continued. UKG children visited the local fire station, where they met firefighters and explored fire engines.

On 15 August, ATA celebrated India's 79th Independence Day with music, poetry, and dance in multiple languages, following the flag hoisting by Marja Artamaa, international Secretary of the Theosophical Society.

August also saw ATA's debut at two major inter-school events. At the Model United Nations, students of Grades 6 to 8 stood out among 40 schools, receiving commendations and awards. Soon after, ATA students excelled at the Lady Andal Literature Festival, winning the Overall Championship through their performances in poetry, debates, monologues, and songwriting.

With each passing day, ATA continues to be a place where the students grow, explore, and learn together.



UKG students at the Fire Station

ADYAR ECO DEVELOPMENT PROJECT (AED)

It was another vibrant and industrious quarter for the AED Project, marked by steady progress in environmental education, ecological restoration, and long-range planning.

The gardening team continued the painstaking removal of invasive species such

as *Antigonon* and *Millingtonia hortensis* from key areas of the estate — the Administration building, Olcott Cottage, Youth Lodge, Sapota Gardens, and beyond. The coconut groves, too, received attention, being cleared and tidied, with a thoughtful plan now in place

to manage the profusion of new saplings sprouting across the two groves.

Special care was directed to some of the estate's most treasured trees. Of particular concern was the ancient Baobab near Olcott Cottage, under attack by wood-borer beetles. Dead portions of the trunk were carefully cleaned, and treatments applied to drive out the last of the pests threatening its venerable life. The Yellow Saraca behind the Administration building also received attention: a granite pillar was installed to support one of its great branches, reducing the strain on the central trunk and ensuring its graceful survival.



The giant Baobab tree undergoing treatment



New touches of beauty were added to the estate as well. Sculptures of a civet cat and an owl were installed among the aerial roots of the Great Banyan, delighting those who wander down Schwarz Avenue. Nearby, a vivid butterfly mural now enlivens the emerging garden between the River Path and the LBC.



New sculptures and paintings

In the nursery, preparations quickened ahead of the northeast monsoon. The botanist and his team worked tirelessly to collect and germinate seeds of *Stereospermum tetragonum*, *Barringtonia acutangula*, *Eugenia bracteata*, *Mimusops elengi*, *Saraca asoca*, and *Cassia fistula*, among others. Seedlings were carefully transplanted into new covers and arranged alongside saplings newly arrived from Pitchandikulam and the Auroville Botanical Garden.

At the Olcott Blue Green Centre (BGC), environmental education blossomed further. Educators developed engaging lesson plans on wasps, dragonflies, native flora, and microhabitats. The Centre also welcomed students from neighbouring schools for half-day programs, broadening its circle of influence. A new system of documenting student journals was introduced, enabling learners to trace their evolving understanding of nature over time. Educators and AED members also roamed the campus to record its flora and fauna for developing a biodiversity repository. As part of the National Moth Week, a special screening survey identified more than 30 species of moths and other insects — adding fresh marvels to the catalogue of life at Adyar.



A painting on granite in the Tim and Lily Boyd garden

The quarter also saw the beginning of a vision for the Olcott School campus, with plans emerging for outdoor classrooms, dining areas, and the beautification of ponds and courtyards.



OMHSS students learn about planting seedlings

Equally important was the revival of a comprehensive study of the estate's precious open wells. Led by resident architect Fatima Martin, and assisted by visiting students from Mauritius, this effort included water testing, infrastructure mapping, and systematic documentation. Their work also produced a streamlined method for surveying the campus flora, a breakthrough that will accelerate the development of a detailed botanical map aligned with the Theosophical Society's overall survey of the grounds.



Joss Brooks oversees the unloading of special sacred grove seedlings from Pitchandikulam



Gardener at work in the nursery

BESANT MEMORIAL ANIMAL DISPENSARY (BMAD)

At BMAD, every day is a journey of healing — rescuing, treating, and caring for animals both great and small, whether wild or domesticated.

In one such rescue, the Tamil Nadu Forest Department brought in a wounded peafowl suffering from a severe wing injury. With skill and tenderness, BMAD surgeons, assisted by Dr Sridhar, performed a delicate surgery, fixing the fracture with a plate and giving the bird a renewed chance at life. The peafowl is now under post-operative care in BMAD's Wildlife Hospital, slowly regaining strength on the path to recovery.

Bruce Banner, a resilient pit bull, was found abandoned near Kilpauk. At BMAD, he received intensive treatment and nurturing care, and with time, his spirit and health blossomed again. Today, Bruce is thriving — healthy, joyful, and patiently waiting for the warmth of a forever home.



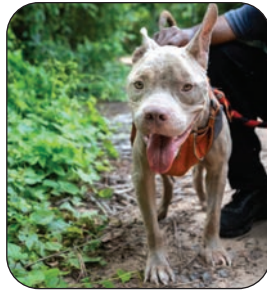
Peahen with a bandaged wing

Equally touching was the arrival of a fragile one-month-old puppy, brought to the Outpatient Unit with deep dog-bite wounds, infested with maggots. With round-the-clock treatment and gentle care, she healed beautifully, her pain replaced by the safety of love. Now discharged, she is safe in a foster home, waiting to begin the next chapter of her life with a family who will cherish her.

At BMAD, these aren't just rescues — they are stories of resilience, compassion, and second chances.



Bruce Banner — before and after



The brave puppy awaiting a loving home



LEAVES FROM THE ARCHIVES

HPB's Monogram and Crest

The crest described here appeared on H. P. Blavatsky's personal stationery at the time of the founding of the Theosophical Society in 1875. Several letters and envelopes preserved at Adyar still bear this crest, rendered in red and gold. It features a snake, a crown, a double triangle, a swastika, H.P.B.'s monogram, and various astrological and cabalistic symbols — each element stamped in gold on a vivid red background. Notably, the area occupied by the interlaced double triangle was left uncoloured, revealing the white of the paper beneath.

The five-pointed crown featured on the crest was a heraldic emblem traditionally used by members of the continental European nobility. On her visiting card, however, HPB employed a crown with nine points — symbolic of the rank of a countess. Within the central double triangle appeared the initials

"E.B." for "Elena Blavatsky," as she frequently signed herself Elena, the Greek/Russia form of Helena. One of the Serapis letters from 1875 even refers to her by this name.

The current seal of the Theosophical Society differs from this original crest in several respects: the crown, monogram, and the astrological and cabalistic figures have been omitted. Instead, the Egyptian Tau now appears at the centre of the interlaced triangles. One change worth noting is the orientation of the swastika, which in the present seal is depicted as rotating clockwise.



ADYAR LIBRARY AND RESEARCH CENTRE (ALRC)

A two-day seminar on "Sciences: Based on Indian Knowledge Systems" was organized by the Adyar Library and Research Centre on 20 and 21 June 2025.

Long before the very notion of the "West" emerged, India's ways of understanding and explaining the world were already evolving. In the sciences, this heritage is vast and remarkable. Unlike the later developments in the West, Indian knowledge systems were

deeply interwoven with spiritual insight and religious observation.

The seminar opened with a warm and insightful online address by President Tim Boyd, setting the tone for the sessions that followed. Over two days, a distinguished group of experts explored diverse aspects of India's indigenous scientific traditions, and how these systems continue to hold relevance and inspiration today.

INDIAN DONATIONS TO THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

1 June 2025 to 31 August 2025

(Above Rs 20,000)

	Rs.		Rs.
ADYAR RENOVATIONS		Ajay Kumar	26,261
Sukanya Barooah	20,000	Ramya Narayan	26,050
BESANT MEMORIAL ANIMAL DISPENSARY		Revathy Balaji	25,350
A. K. Prabhu	2,50,000	Vasisht Sharma	25,000
Jayashree S Mani	1,07,500	Sumithra Gopalakrishnan	24,000
A. K. Siva	1,00,000	Nivedita Shinde	24,000
K. Priyadarshini	86,800	Devi Gurunathan	24,000
S. Fardeen	86,000	Bennet Selvaraj	23,641
Hari Pranav B. Gargi	76,010	Josika Navukkarasu	23,640
Rochana Mehta	72,000	Seethalakshmi Ramaiah	23,000
Rajni Soundararajan	61,000	Narmadha Nagaraj	22,410
Adarshya	61,000	Venkatesha prasad	22,000
Chitra	59,300	Sountharya	21,050
Nalini Muthumalai	50,500	Vidya Vijay	21,000
Shobu Yarlagadda	50,000	Krishna Mines	6,00,000
Ranjani Venkataramanan	50,000	Neelima Bajaj Swamy	1,80,000
Vinodhini	47,400	Social Restaurants Pvt. Ltd.	42,780
PRANI Animal Trust	45,450	T. A. Adhishwar	2,00,000
Shunmuga Nathan Narendran	43,100	Rotary Club of Madras Central Charitable Trust	60,000
Magesh Dhasayyan	41,300	CSR DONATIONS	
Prasanna	35,000	Radiance Realty Developers India Ltd.	25,00,000
S. Indira	35,000	BHARAT SAMAJ	
B. Swaathi	33,000	J. Ramakrishnan	1,00,000
Roopa Krishnan	30,000	ONE ROOM AT LBC	
Vikram Surana	30,000	Shella Maganlal Genstra	3,50,000
Diyya Vummidi	30,000	SOCIAL WELFARE CENTRE CONSTRUCTION	
Arana Srikkanth	30,000	Chetna Narayan	2,50,000
Umamaheswari Venkateswaran	26,850	Sanjiv Narayan	18,05,000

INDIAN DONATIONS TO THE OLCOTT EDUCATION SOCIETY

1 June 2025 to 31 August 2025

(Above Rs 10,000)

	Rs.		Rs.
Natarajan T. Chandrasekhar	15,000	A. Meenakshi	18,000
KPMG Assurance and Consultancy Services LLP.	3,73,349	Shaunak Ajay Hora	20,000
Dharma Paripalana Sabha Annadhanam & Charitable Trust	45,000	Ulaippavaruku Udhavi	20,000
Zenobia Adi Khodaiji	20,000	Wipro Cares	7,50,000
		Rahul Shankar	1,00,000
		Online Giving Foundation	11,376

Cover Picture: A. Chandrasekaran. The TS estate has become a thriving space where peafowl abound, breed and raise their young.

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