

Adyar Newsletter

December-January-February 2026



English Quarterly | Rs 10



Golden Saraca in Full Bloom

150TH CONVENTION OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

The 150th International Convention of the Theosophical Society at Adyar was a living pause in the long journey of a shared ideal. From 31 December 2025 to 4 January 2026, the campus became a meeting place not just of people, but of perspectives, traditions, and inward aspirations. With the theme “One World, One Life: The Spirit of a New Humanity”, 752 members from 30 countries, along with over 1,000 online participants, gathered in a quiet circle of reflection that spanned continents. The lighting of the lamp, prayers of many faiths, and the Universal Prayer opened a space where unity was felt rather than spoken, and Tim Boyd, international President, reminded everyone that harmony arises not from uniformity but from attentive listening to one another and to life itself.



International President Tim Boyd and Mrs Lily Boyd

The Convention celebrated both living insight and careful scholarship. Three book launches marked the event: *Blavatsky Collected Writings: Russian Serials*, edited by Michael Gomes, honoured rigorous study and preservation of theosophical thought; *On the Verge of Wisdom* by Tim Boyd offered reflective guidance for inner renewal and daily spirituality; and *Adyar: The Masters' Home* by Geetha Jaikumar, brought the history, landscape, and spirit of Adyar vividly to life. Exhibitions, lectures, and dialogue

sessions — from contemplative explorations of the “Eternal Now” to reflections on service, consciousness, and a new humanity — interwove history, philosophy, and art. An Odissi dance, music, and the members’ talent show allowed spirit to express itself in movement and sound, reminding all that the search for truth has many languages but one source.

Service and devotion animated the Convention as much as reflection. Visits to the Olcott Memorial Higher Secondary School, the Social Welfare Centre, and the Besant Memorial Animal Dispensary, embodied Theosophy in action, while workshops, meditations, and ceremonies of tree planting, water blessings, and planetary healing offered moments of shared reverence. In his closing address, Tim Boyd invited renewed inquiry into life itself, noting that joy arises naturally when consciousness aligns with truth and compassion. As the final chant echoed and the Convention drew to a close, a quiet sense of sacred peace lingered. Over 1,700 participants worldwide carried away the affirmation that the vision which gave birth to the Theosophical Society 150 years ago continues to live in human consciousness, offering a reminder that when the one life within is recognized, the world itself reveals itself as one family.



Closing of the Convention

ADYAR DAY

The Adyar Day celebration was held on Tuesday, 17 February 2026, at the International Headquarters of the Theosophical Society, bringing together members, students, and friends, in a spirit of reverence and unity. The morning began at 9:00 a.m. with a procession at the portico led by the students of the Olcott Memorial Higher Secondary School.

The formal programme commenced at 9:30 a.m. in the Headquarters Hall with the Universal Prayer. Ms Catalina Isaza-Cantor delivered the welcome address, reflecting on the significance and spiritual legacy of Adyar Day. Mr Hrishikesh Sharan spoke on “Colonel Olcott, Buddhism and Theosophy”,

highlighting Colonel Olcott’s contributions and the Society’s role in promoting interfaith understanding. Devotional chanting by Ms Jaishree Kannan added a meditative touch, and the ceremony concluded with the offering of flowers.



Procession of OMHSS students carrying the portrait of Col. Olcott to the entrance of the Headquarters building

NEWS FROM THE TS SCHOOLS

OLCOTT MEMORIAL HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL (OMHSS)

The school joyfully celebrated Christmas and Pongal with cultural programmes, traditional activities, and meaningful community engagement. The distribution of Pongal dresses to all students brought particular delight to the children. A highlight of the year was the visit of the Convention delegates for the unveiling of the statue of Henry Steel Olcott, Founder of the school. Students marked the occasion with vibrant cultural performances and a presentation on the institution’s rich legacy.



International President, Tim Boyd, contemplates the newly installed bust of Col. Olcott in the Olcott School grounds



Students performing a Pongal dance during the festival celebrations

The 77th Republic Day was celebrated on 26 January 2026 with patriotic fervour. The programme began with a prayer followed by the unfurling of the National Flag by Rtn T. V. Yuvaraj of Rotary Club of Chennai Mitra, followed by a march-past and the National Song. Students delivered speeches in Tamil and English on national themes and leaders, and presented patriotic performances. The celebration was graced by Tim Boyd, international President of the

Theosophical Society, and concluded with a vote of thanks.



Unfurling the National Flag on Republic Day

The Class XII farewell on 31 January 2026 was a heartfelt occasion marked by prayers, reflections, and words of guidance from Chief



Mrs Sasikala presenting a memento to the former Head Boy of OMHSS in recognition of his leadership

Guest Mrs Sasikala, Director Academics (OMHSS), who presented mementoes to the Head Boy and Head Girl. The celebration concluded with cake-cutting, refreshments, and a joyful dance session.

Primary Sports Competitions were held on 12 February, followed by a grand Sports Day on 13 February featuring a march past and vibrant drill displays. Chief Guest, Uma Raman, encouraged sportsmanship and distributed prizes. On 17 February, the school observed Olcott Day with a floral tribute and ceremonial procession to honour Henry Steel Olcott, reaffirming his enduring legacy of service and dedication to education.



OMHSS students gather at the Olcott Memorial to offer their homage to Col. Olcott — educator, reformer, and steadfast champion of the underprivileged

ADYAR THEOSOPHICAL ACADEMY (ATA)

Learning in Action, Growing in Community

This quarter reflected a steady and purposeful rhythm of learning at the ATA, where inquiry, cultural rootedness, and social responsibility flowed seamlessly across all sections. As part of the 150th International Convention of the Theosophical Society, Ms Sonal Murali conducted two workshops on “Transformative Education: Gratitude and Interconnectedness of Beings”, inviting reflection on education as a relational and transformative process. Delegates also visited “Wonderscape”, an exhibition of interdisciplinary explorations from the academic year 2025–26, featuring Nature

studies, a weather-resilient town-planning project, a city timeline of Kolkata, poetry, SUPW initiatives, and experimental science displays — each reflecting thoughtful inquiry and collaborative engagement.



Students articulate their work to the delegates

Experiential and culturally rooted learning marked the quarter across all sections. Pre-Primary classrooms reflected immersive creativity with visits to Cocoplaynut and Marine Kingdom, while Primary students honoured literary and cultural traditions through Bharathiyar’s birth anniversary, Muthamizh Festival, Pongal, and Republic Day reflections linking heritage with civic and environmental awareness. Educational visits further deepened understanding — from astronomy at the Birla Planetarium and ecological study at Tholkappia Poonga — to

engagements with history at Dakshinachitra and Fort St George.

Sustainability, creativity, and community spirit shaped the quarter, from “Worlds Within Words” and meaningful SUPW initiatives — solar lights for tribal communities, biodegradable crafts, coconut-shell upcycling, and so on. The term concluded with a transformative six-night Grade 8 study tour to Hampi, where history and landscape inspired reflection and growth, reaffirming ATA’s commitment to nurturing thoughtful, compassionate learners.



Pongal Celebration — a blend of expression, festivity and community spirit



Every step in sync, every spirit uplifted on Sports Day

ADYAR ECO DEVELOPMENT (AED)

As the Adyar Eco Development (AED) project completes its second year, its roots continue to deepen in active stewardship of the campus’ biodiversity. The quarter from December to February was marked by renewed vitality — a focused expansion of indigenous species through the nursery and significant landscaping initiatives in preparation for the 150th International Convention. The nursery beside the Great Banyan Tree remains the living heart of AED, steadily extending its green influence across the campus. Seed collection and germination progressed in earnest, including the Heaven Lotus, Baobab, Yellow Saraca, Roxburgh’s Cherry, and Fishtail Palm, among other treasured species. A further 200 saplings

representing over 30 species arrived from a sister nursery in Pitchandikulam, Auroville, enriching Adyar’s growing diversity.



Gardeners at work in the nursery tending the precious saplings

The nursery infrastructure itself was strengthened with upgrades to the water

distribution system, a systematic inventory of tools and equipment, and continued improvements to the new germination shed.

Extensive planting was undertaken in and around the Ponniamman Koil near the main gate, with special emphasis on traditional “sacred grove” species of enduring cultural and ecological significance to local communities. The vision is to create such a grove in the TS estate.



Gardeners tending the sacred grove saplings

In preparation for the Convention, the team enhanced shared spaces across the campus. Beautiful stones and granite benches were installed near the Adyar Theatre and the Bhojanasala, making these communal areas more welcoming and picturesque for delegates. Work continued on the new dining area benches at the Olcott School campus, with polishing, painting, and finishing touches bringing them to completion.



A circle of rough-hewn stone benches near the Adyar theatre



Installation of granite slabs in progress under the watchful eye of Joss Brooks

AED also sustained its vigilant care of rare and precious flora. The Baobab tree near Kasi Vilas was found to be under attack from the same woodboring beetles that affected the Great Baobab near Olcott Cottage and received immediate attention. Bamboo supports were installed and a similar course of treatment initiated — one that has already stabilised its venerable counterpart—demonstrating swift, informed ecological response.

Meanwhile, the children’s toilet near the Olcott Bungalow nears completion, with most interior and civil work finished and exterior façade and final detailing underway.

At the heart of AED’s vision lies environmental education—nurturing the next generation of ecologically conscious community members. The Blue Green Centre behind Olcott School continues to serve as a “classroom without walls,” where young learners explore natural landscapes, watersheds, biodiversity shifts, and the far-reaching impacts of climate change. Through bird and insect identification games and creative natural design activities, children engaged joyfully and deeply with the living world around them.

The Centre also hosted training and exchange sessions with government educators and environmental non-profits,

strengthening collaboration and collective learning in the field of ecological education.

In January, the OMHSS students stepped forward as ambassadors at a local Ecofest of schools. Their bilingual posters — on the medicinal value of so-called “weeds” and the intricate architecture of ants — were thoughtfully researched, creatively designed, and warmly received, reflecting the confidence and ecological awareness the programme seeks to cultivate.



OMHSS students at the Ecofest

BESANT MEMORIAL ANIMAL DISPENSARY (BMAD)

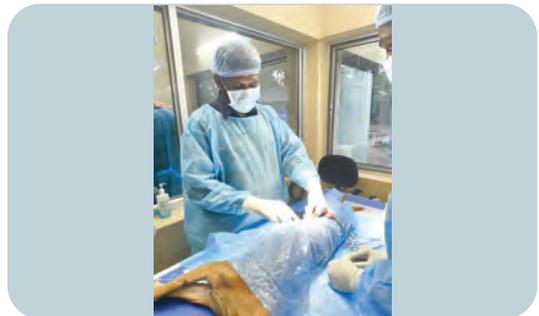
Till the end of December, BMAD’s Outpatient Unit recorded an annual footfall of over 30,000 cases, the highest ever registered in a single year. With cases steadily increasing each day, our veterinary and support teams continue to respond to an ever-growing demand for accessible, timely, and compassionate care. From routine consultations to complex medical interventions, BMAD’s OP unit remains a critical first point of contact for countless community and companion animals, reflecting both the trust placed in BMAD and the pressing need for sustained veterinary support across the city.

community animals and reducing unchecked population growth in a humane and scientific manner. Beyond population management, these surgeries play a vital role in preventing disease transmission, minimising conflict, and safeguarding the long-term health and welfare of the city’s traumatised street animals.



People with their companion animals queue up outside the BMAD OP gates

In a significant boost to BMAD’s Animal Birth Control efforts, Azim Premji Foundation has generously contributed ₹10 lakhs towards ABC surgeries for street animals. This timely support makes it possible to scale up sterilisation drives, reaching more



ABC operation in progress

Two separate turtle emergencies were admitted to BMAD’s Wildlife Unit within a short span of each other. An Olive Ridley sea turtle, rescued late at night by the Students Sea Turtle Conservation Network (SSTCN) in coordination with the Tamil Nadu Forest Department, was brought in with a fish hook deeply embedded in its mandible. Exhausted and distressed, the turtle bore visible signs of struggle — a stark reminder of the hazards that marine debris and fishing gear pose to ocean life. The BMAD veterinary team moved swiftly to stabilise the patient. In a delicate and carefully orchestrated

procedure within the Wildlife Operation Theatre, BMAD surgeons, assisted by Dr Sridhar, successfully removed the hook. The surgery demanded precision and patience, mindful not only of the physical injury but of the immense stress endured by the animal. After a period of monitored recovery — during which the turtle gradually regained strength and buoyancy — it was transported back to the shore and released into the sea, disappearing into the waves it calls home.



The rescued Olive Ridley with a fish hook embedded in its mouth



The healed turtle swimming and splashing powerfully before its release into the sea

Soon after, a Hawksbill sea turtle was brought in by forest officials after being

found floating in a tilted position. Upon examination, BMAD veterinarians suspected Atelectasis, a condition where portions of the lung collapse or fail to inflate properly, affecting the turtle’s buoyancy and ability to swim normally. The hawksbill is currently undergoing treatment and is showing steady improvement under close medical supervision.



The juvenile Hawksbill turtle on its healing journey in BMAD

These wildlife interventions, though few in number compared to the thousands treated in the OP Unit, carry profound significance. They affirm BMAD’s expanding commitment not only to domestic and community animals, but also to the fragile ecosystems that surround us — land, coast, and sea. Each rescue and release back into the wild speaks of extending the circle of compassion to all beings, great and small.

WISDOM FOR LIVING (WFL) LECTURE SERIES

On 24 January 2026, Dr Aswathy Rajan spoke on “Lessons We Can Learn from Nature”, highlighting harmony, resilience, interdependence, and the wisdom inherent in natural processes, encouraging participants to align their lives more consciously with nature.

On 7 February 2026, “Beyond the Visiting

Card” by Mr Ram Kumar, explored life after retirement, focusing on identity beyond profession, purposeful living, health, relationships, and inner growth.

Together, the sessions reflected the series’ aim of fostering thoughtful and balanced living at every stage of life.

Cover Picture: Geetha Jaikumar. Behind Adyar’s Administration building, the Yellow Saraca (*Saraca thaipingensis*) blooms in golden clusters — fragrant, vibrant, and sacred. Revered by Buddhists for blessings and cherished in Hindu tradition for love, the flowers of this “happiness tree”, carry joy while dispelling sorrow.

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