

from the desk of the
Head of Academy

3 April 2026



Dear Parents,

Today happens to be my birthday. With a mixture of disbelief and amusement, I realise that I left school exactly half a century ago! It feels like a lifetime but, in certain respects, like yesterday. When I think back to my own school days, the contrasts with today are striking. There were no laptops, no smartphones, no internet. Research meant a trip to the library, not a search engine. I was sent to a boarding school in the UK as a youngster. Communication with my parents happened by the occasional letter and certainly not through a steady stream of emails, apps, and notifications.

The curriculum I experienced was narrower and more rigid. There was less emphasis on creativity or student voice. Wellbeing was not supported by the systems and processes we rightly expect today. The idea that schools should nurture emotional resilience or global awareness was largely absent.

In my day, assessment was about what you could remember under timed conditions. Today, we place far greater value on understanding and the ability to think critically. And then there is the world our young people are preparing to enter. Fifty years ago, the future felt, if not predictable, then at least somewhat stable. Today we prepare our children for a world that will continue to surprise us all.

40 years ago, as a young teacher, I sometimes felt overwhelmed in the face of the responsibilities I had chosen. Raising my own children, let alone other people's, was a daunting task. Expert advice wasn't difficult to find. But like drinking water from a firehose, it was hard to take it all in. I've learnt a few things along the way. I wish I'd learnt some of them sooner. Three things in particular stand out - three things I know now that I wish I had known back then.

The first is a realisation that has become clearer to me over time: children are not ours to shape in our own image. As parents and educators, our role is to guide, support, and care, but not to determine the course of a young person's life. Each child carries their own individual potential, their own aspirations and their own unfolding sense of who they are becoming. What matters most is that they find something they can pursue with genuine purpose and passion - a life that is authentically their own, even if it looks different from the one we might have imagined for them. As a parent, I learnt, not always easily, to let go of the life I once had in mind for my children, so that they might find the one that is truly theirs.

The second thing I wish I had known 40 years ago is the importance of being fully present to the moment we are in. As a young parent and a young teacher, I can remember sometimes thinking to myself, *"I wish they were more grown up."* It was as if there was an urgency for childhood to pass more quickly than it should. What I have come to understand is that when we focus too intently on the future, we risk missing the richness of the present. At every stage of their childhood, children are precisely where they need to be. Every minute spent worrying about the future or dwelling on the past is, in some sense, a minute lost. The real work of parenting and of education lies in paying attention to the "now".

The third thing I wish I had understood back then is closely tied to a fear I once held as a parent - the fear of letting go. The thought that one day my children would leave home, become independent, and no longer need me in the same way was not an easy one to face.

Over time, however, I have come to see that children need the freedom to grow into themselves and to find their own independence. Without that, they risk becoming overly reliant on others or held back by a fear of making their own decisions and living with the consequences.

I can recall many moments when my instinct was to step in - to fix things or to make things easier. But what I now understand is that a child's success in life depends less on our ability to solve problems for them, and far more on their ability to find their own way. And that, inevitably, requires us to step back. It is only when we learn to let go that children are given the opportunity to grow. This is not easy. It runs counter to our instincts. But over the years, sometimes reluctantly, I have learnt to replace the fear of "letting go" with the possibility of "letting grow".

Some things have come into sharp focus over the past 50 years. Not the structures or the systems so much as the quieter, less visible things: the freedom for children to become themselves, the importance of being present to each stage of their lives, and the courage to step back so that they can grow. These are not easily measured, and they rarely appear in any curriculum, yet they are the things that make the difference. Perhaps that is the most important lesson I have learnt: that in education, as in life, it is the intangibles that matter most.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jonathan Long". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first name and last name clearly legible.

Dr Jonathan Long

THIS WEEK'S NEWS



PARENT SURVEY

At the moment, we are conducting a Parent Survey as part of the *Middle States Association* accreditation process. If you haven't already done so, I invite you to complete this anonymous survey which should take about 10 minutes. Your feedback is critical in helping us identify ways to make the Academy an even better place and one that is committed to continuous improvement.

You can take the survey here: [MSA Parents' Survey](#).



IN WITH A SPLASH

Swimming is an integral part of the Academy's sports programme, developing skill, endurance and physical well-being. On Wednesday morning, the Senior School hosted its much-anticipated annual Swimming Gala, the final inter-house sporting event of the 2025-26 academic year. Students competed across three categories - Grade 6, Grades 7 and 8, and Grades 9 to 11 - participating in freestyle, backstroke, butterfly, breaststroke and relay events. The four Houses, Kakatiya, Maurya, Pandya and Nizam, competed with energy and good spirit, supported by enthusiastic encouragement from their peers. A highlight of the morning was the Staff versus Students Medley Relay, which concluded in a closely contested finish, with staff narrowly taking the win. The results and medal ceremony will be shared shortly.



SMALL STROKES, BIG PROGRESS!

On Thursday, the Junior School brought its own enthusiasm to the pool, with a gala that was as much about growth as it was about performance. Students of all ages and abilities took part, creating an atmosphere that was inclusive and celebratory. What stood out was the confidence on display. Skills developed over months of steady practice began to show themselves. For many, it was less about competition and more about the simple achievement of doing something they could not have done before. There was a sense of pride that ran through the morning, visible in the smiles and determination. Swimming, as an essential life skill, builds far more than physical strength. It develops resilience, self-belief and a confidence that can prove invaluable.



LITTLE SCIENTISTS, BIG DISCOVERIES

This week, our young learners had an opportunity to visit the Senior School Science Laboratories, where they engaged in hands-on experiments to explore the behaviour of light. Stepping into a new learning environment sparked curiosity and enthusiasm among the students as they investigated how light works. Through guided experiments, students discovered how light travels, how it interacts with different materials and how it can be reflected or blocked. This experiential learning allowed them to make meaningful connections between their prior knowledge and new discoveries. The visit strengthened their conceptual understanding and nurtured important skills of inquiry, observation and critical thinking. It was a worthwhile experience that inspired our young scientists to continue asking questions and exploring the world around them.



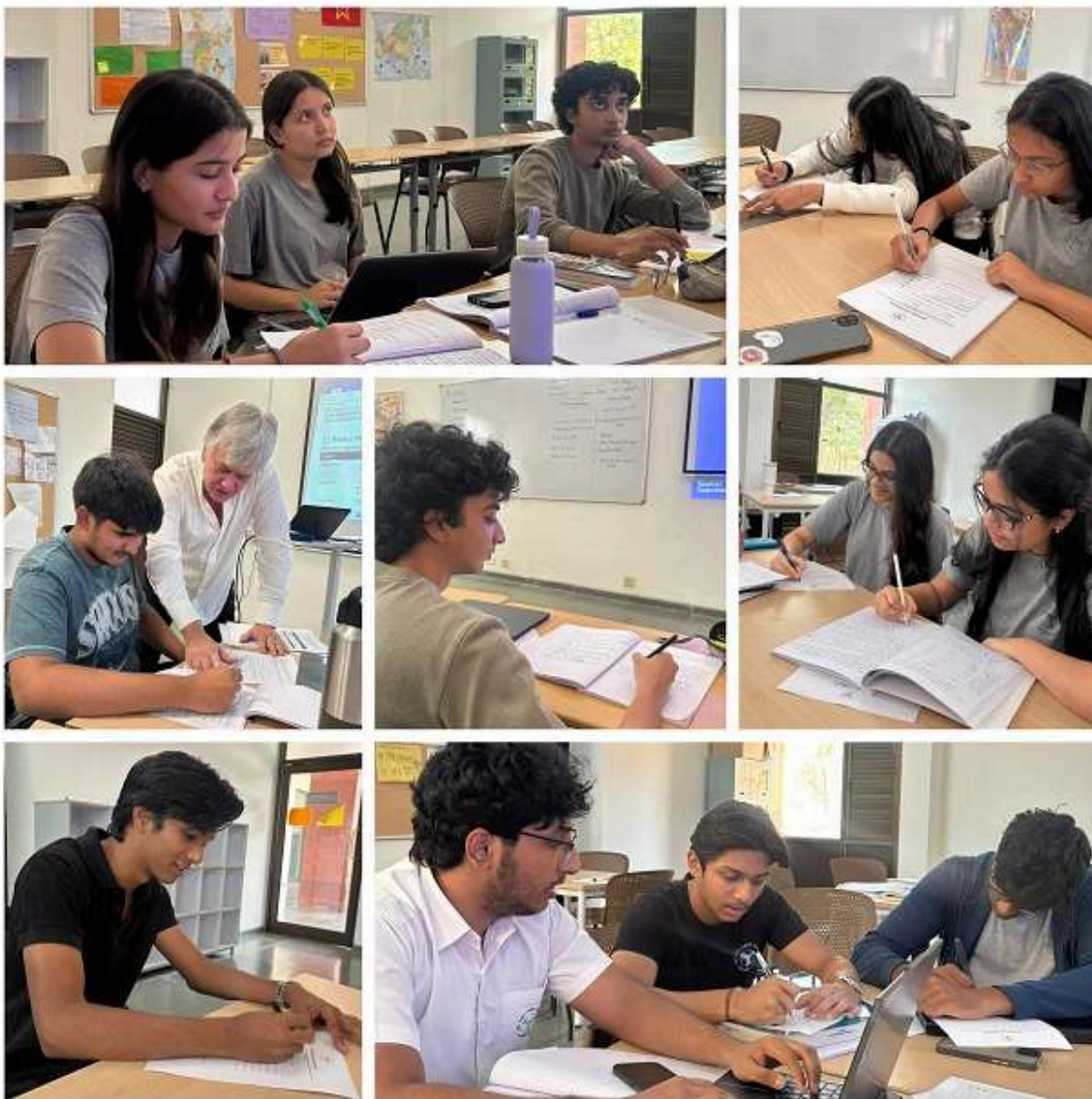
SERVICE WITH PURPOSE

As part of their Creativity, Activity and Service (CAS) programme, DP1 students, Shastha Sattaru, Yuktha Puvvaladasu, Anirudh Duddilla and Ryan Reddy Naynee, organised an awareness session for the Academy's support staff in collaboration with Sparsh Hospice. Sparsh Hospice provides palliative care for terminally ill cancer patients, focusing on comfort, dignity and quality of life when curative treatment is no longer possible. The session, attended by 85 members of our support staff, introduced participants to the importance of palliative care and highlighted the free home-care services offered by the organisation. Conducted in Telugu and Hindi by representatives from Sparsh, the session was informative and engaging, with participants actively asking questions and seeking greater understanding. The initiative was thoughtfully planned and implemented under the guidance of our CAS Coordinator, Mr Venkat Reddy. Projects such as this reflect the spirit of the CAS programme by encouraging students to step beyond the classroom, engage meaningfully with the community and develop a deeper sense of empathy and responsibility. In doing so, they embody the vision of the Aga Khan Academies: to develop ethical leaders who are not only academically accomplished but also committed to improving the quality of life in the communities they serve.



A TASTE OF CULTURE

Last weekend, our Grade 9 Exchange Programme students from the Mombasa and Maputo academies brought the residential community together through a vibrant cultural food event. The students prepared and presented traditional dishes from their home countries, with Kenyan delicacies such as chapati, Maharagwe (red kidney beans) and Kaimati (Swahili sweet dumpling or fritter), alongside Mozambican favourites like Frango à Zambeziana – a dish comprising chicken marinated in coconut milk, garlic, lemon and piri- piri, Matapa – prepared with tapioca, and Xima – a thick maize porridge. The food was prepared by the students under the guidance of the kitchen staff. The event offered students and staff a valuable opportunity to experience and learn about the traditions, flavours and cultural backgrounds of Kenya and Mozambique. The Commons was thoughtfully decorated with posters depicting traditional life, while music from both cultures created an immersive and authentic atmosphere, enriching the spirit of cultural exchange.



FOCUSED PREPARATION FOR IB SUCCESS

In July 2024, our current DP2 students started their Diploma journey. Over the course of 22 months, students advanced their understanding, skills and competences across six subjects, Theory of Knowledge, the Extended Essay and countless other activities inside and outside the classroom. Now that the final, external IB Diploma exams are around the corner, our students' mode of studying needs to shift away from typical daily structures determined by the timetable and activity schedules after school or on weekends. In order to facilitate an in-depth engagement with everything our students have learnt since July 2024, the Diploma students currently engage in all-day revision courses that run over the next three weeks. Two and a half days of focused, immersive revision and exam preparation are scheduled for each subject, and students meet with their teachers not in the Senior School, but in the Annex, away from the typical hustle and bustle. The students' feedback this week included comments such as: Productive! I never actually learned for as many as 7 hours in a day. We should start this earlier. Focused. No distraction. Helpful. Fun! The elimination of distractions and the sense of complete focus on their preparation for exams helps our students, supported by their teachers, achieve a level of exam-

readiness that could not be reached in short, timetabled lessons, as this requires students to process information about six different subjects per day. Our approach to final exam preparation follows a proven recipe for success, and we are seeing that our students are making good use of this experience. Please join me in wishing our DP2 students all possible success in their final exams!



ACADEMY REGISTERED AS A UCAS CENTRE

We are pleased to share that we are now officially registered as a UCAS (Universities and Colleges Admissions Service) centre, with the code 41055 and buzzword AKAHYD. UCAS is the centralised platform through which students apply to universities in the United Kingdom (UK). This registration enables the Academy to streamline and manage all UK university applications more effectively. It will provide our DP students with structured guidance, improved support and a smoother application process, further strengthening pathways to higher education and global opportunities. With the registration in place, we hope to see more candidates applying to top universities in the UK.



NO BAG DAY! NO BAD DAY!

Last week, our Teacher Preparation Program (TPP) fellows carried out a service-learning engagement as part of No-bag day initiative in government schools of Telangana. The fellows designed and implemented interactive drama improvisations, storytelling and comic making sessions in Devendra Nagar Mandal Parishad Primary School, Maheswaram Mandal, Ranga Reddy District. What started as a plan to contribute through structured academic support gradually became a deeper lesson in observation, responsiveness, and collaboration. In their early stage of need analysis, the focus was on understanding the school context before stepping into action. They went in with questions that helped them move beyond and toward a more thoughtful, ethical approach to service. As they reflected on these observations, their preparation became more intentional. Instead of holding on to isolated ideas or imposing pre-planned academic interventions, they began to critically examine whether their original plans truly matched the learners' realities. Service learning is most powerful when it is collaborative, reflective and context-driven. Meaningful service begins not with assumptions, but with listening. In serving, we were also being taught.



CLASS GIFT CAMPAIGN 2026

This year's Graduating Class Gift Campaign, under the banner *#LeadersForTomorrow*, is an opportunity to leave a lasting legacy. The Class of 2026 has chosen to support the Student Scholarship Fund; a unique programme that opens the doors of the Academy to talented young people from underserved and marginalised communities across India. For many of our scholarship students, an Aga Khan Academy education is not simply an opportunity; it is a turning point. It is the beginning of a journey that can transform their own lives and the communities they go on to serve. Every contribution, of any size, is a statement of belief in the power of education to change lives. Collectively, these gifts create opportunities that would otherwise remain out of reach.

We encourage you to make a donation to this special initiative at:

<https://payment.agakhanacademies.org/donation/in> (Or click "Donate" on the Aga Khan Academies homepage.) All donations are tax-exempt under Section 80G. Thank you for being part of this journey.

#ClassGift2026 | #TransformingLivesThroughEducation

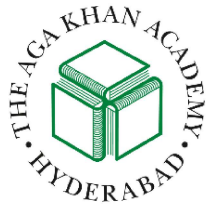
“The students at this institution will be distinguished not only for their academic capacity, but for their character and their commitment to citizenship.”

His Late Highness Aga Khan IV

Groundbreaking of the International Academic Centre of Excellence, Tanzania, 17 March 2005



THE AGA KHAN ACADEMY
HYDERABAD



from the desk of the
Head of Academy

10 April 2026



Dear Parents,

I can't remember how many times I said it, but it must have been hundreds. "*Get this mess tidied up!*" When my daughters were young, this was a regular "request" whenever I saw the state of their bedrooms. There's something about being a teenager that involves a certain amount of untidiness!

We all appreciate a little order and structure in our lives. Having things under control is reassuring, and it's usually the most efficient way of getting things done. In some workplaces, this mindset has been perfected in highly developed systems and policies designed to eliminate uncertainty and anticipate every possible scenario. The ideal, it seems, is a world in which little is left to chance.

This way of thinking can also influence how we approach education - and even how we think about raising children. This is understandable. We want to shape our children's experiences in positive ways, to regulate what they are exposed to and protect them from what may go wrong. We hope that, if we follow the right steps, the right outcomes will follow. And yet, the reality of learning, and of growing up, rarely conforms to these neat expectations.

Children do not grow in straight lines. Anyone who has watched a child grapple with a new idea will know this. Understanding doesn't unfold in neat, linear stages. It involves false starts, moments of confusion and, at times, frustration. From the outside, it looks messy and untidy. From the inside, real learning is taking place.

Of course, not all messiness is helpful. A lack of clarity and order doesn't help support learning. But there is a certain kind of messiness - more subtle and more purposeful - that sits at the heart of intellectual and personal growth. It is the messiness of experimentation, of getting things wrong, making mistakes and trying again.

This is where a subtle tension can arise. Systems are valuable. Policies matter. Clear structures provide a sense of safety and coherence. But there is a difference between managing a system and nurturing a human being. The former benefits from predictability and control. The latter is, by its very nature, organic, individual, and more difficult to reduce to a set of predetermined steps.

As a school, our task is to provide enough structure for students to feel secure, and enough freedom for them to explore and to make mistakes. At times, this may mean that a child's learning and personal development looks less tidy than we might expect. But that untidiness is not a sign that something is wrong. It is often a sign that something important is taking place. At times, this may mean that students break the rules, make mistakes and disappoint us. But that messiness is not a sign that things are out of control.

The Vietnamese Buddhist monk Thich Nhat Hanh once wrote a book entitled *No Mud, No Lotus*. The image is simple but powerful. The lotus flower, often associated with beauty and purity, does not grow in clear, clean water. It grows in mud. Without the mud, the lotus could not exist at all.

The messy and uncomfortable aspects of life are not separate from growth; they are often the very conditions that make it possible. This is one of the many values I hope our students come to understand during their time at the Academy: that setbacks are not obstacles to be avoided, but opportunities to be worked through; and that in every challenging moment there is a choice - to be overwhelmed by the messiness we encounter, or to engage with it, learn from it, and emerge stronger than we might have been had the path been smooth.

In a world that increasingly seeks certainty and control, this is not always an easy lesson to hold on to. Yet it may be one of the most important: that not everything that matters can be planned for, managed, or made tidy, and that some of the most meaningful growth emerges precisely from those moments that resist our efforts to control them.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jonathan Long". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name and last name clearly distinguishable.

Dr Jonathan Long

THIS WEEK'S NEWS



DEBATING ON THE GLOBAL STAGE

DP1 student Anirudh Duddila recently represented the Academy at the Harvard College World Schools Invitational, held from 3-5 April. Organised by the Harvard College Debating Union, the tournament brings together some of the world's leading high school debaters in the World Schools format. Anirudh was part of one of only four teams representing India - a distinction in itself. His performance earned him recognition as a Top 40 Novice Speaker, as well as the top speaker from his team. Beyond accolades, experiences such as these offer something more enduring: the opportunity to engage with diverse perspectives, to refine one's thinking, and to participate in conversations that extend well beyond the classroom. It is heartening to see our students finding their voice on such global platforms.



CELEBRATING THE SPIRIT OF TELUGU POETRY

We are proud of the rich linguistic and cultural heritage of our region. As a school committed to pluralism and firmly rooted in its local context, we appreciate that language is far more than a means of communication - it is a source of identity, memory and artistic expression. Telugu, one of the world's oldest languages, holds a special place in our community as part of a living tradition of poetry, storytelling and cultural continuity. Last Saturday, the Academy hosted the fifth edition of *Padya Prasthaanam – The Journey of Poems*, a celebration of Telugu poetry. The event, led by Dr Saikrishna Ranga, Head of Telugu Language and Culture, alongside a dedicated team of students, brought together young voices from across the city. We were honoured to welcome Sai Durgha Tej, an acclaimed actor in the Telugu film industry, and Dr V. Vamshi Krishna Reddy, Professor at the Centre for Comparative Literature at the University of Hyderabad. Their presence bridged the worlds of cinema and scholarship, adding depth and perspective to the occasion. The competition drew participants from across Hyderabad. What stood out was the standard of performance and the pride and passion with which students embraced the language. Events such as these remind us that culture is not preserved through nostalgia alone, but through participation, renewal and shared celebration.



BUILDING MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS

Reflection by DP1 student Spoorthi Kandarapu

During our most recent visit to the old age home, something shifted in our approach. Rather than focusing on planned activities, we chose to spend time more simply, through conversation, shared games and quiet presence. What followed felt more natural and far more human. Compared to earlier visits, the interactions were less structured but more meaningful. Conversations flowed more easily, and connections deepened in ways that could not have been scripted. One moment in particular captured this spirit: a resident with whom we had formed a bond invited us to prepare lemonade together. It was entirely unplanned, yet quietly profound – a small act that created a shared sense of joy and belonging. The experience was a reminder that the most meaningful encounters are rarely engineered. They emerge in the spaces where we slow down, listen, and allow ourselves simply to be present with one another.



THE PYP EXHIBITION BEGINS

The PYP Exhibition is now underway – an experience that calls upon the collective energy and commitment of the entire Junior School. From the design of our bespoke PYPX Journal to the willingness of every teacher to step into the role of mentor, this is collaboration in its truest sense. This week marked the opening phase: framing the inquiry. Already, it has been striking to see the breadth of issues and ideas our students are eager to explore. As a Grade 5 teacher, there is a particular satisfaction in watching them begin to take ownership of their learning. Through questioning, dialogue and thoughtful guidance, they are shaping their own central ideas and lines of inquiry. There is something powerful in this moment when students move from being recipients of knowledge to active participants in its creation. The sense of agency on display is not only encouraging; it is foundational to the kind of learners we seek to nurture.



FAREWELL, FRIENDSHIPS AND SHARED JOURNEYS

Last week, our Grade 9 students and teachers said goodbye to their peers from the Mombasa and Maputo Academies, who had spent the past eleven weeks in Hyderabad as part of the Aga Khan Academies' Student Exchange Programme. The farewells were emotional, as such moments inevitably are. Yet they were balanced by the excitement of welcoming back our own students, returning with stories, perspectives and experiences shaped by their time abroad. Beyond travel and exchange, what remains are the relationships formed along the way. Students encountered different cultures, perspectives and ways of life, not as abstract ideas, but as lived experiences. Friendships were forged, assumptions gently challenged, and horizons quietly widened. It is in these exchanges that education takes on its fullest meaning.



LITTLE POSERS!

This week, the Junior School was filled with a sense of anticipation as students gathered for a special photoshoot. Under the morning sun, against carefully chosen backdrops, classes came together to capture moments that reflect both their individuality and their shared spirit. There was laughter, a touch of choreography, and no shortage of creativity as students posed alongside classmates and teachers. These seemingly simple moments often carry a quiet significance—they become part of the collective memory of a school. This is just a glimpse of what is to come. We look forward to sharing more when the 2025–26 School Yearbook is unveiled.



STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS THROUGH MEANINGFUL DIALOGUE

Last week, the *Centre for Educational Research, Innovation and Training* (CERT) hosted an interaction with 23 government primary school teachers from Maheshwaram Mandal, joined by the Mandal Education Officer, Kasna Naik. This engagement forms part of CERT's 10-mile Reach Initiative and represents an important step in its ongoing needs analysis. The discussions centred on classroom practice, approaches to teaching and learning, and the professional development needs of teachers working within the government system. What emerged were insights into the realities, challenges and strengths that shape everyday teaching. Such conversations are essential if partnerships are to be meaningful rather than symbolic. These learnings will inform the next phase of CERT's work, helping to build programmes that are responsive, grounded and genuinely collaborative, with the shared aim of improving student learning outcomes.

“The students at this institution will be distinguished not only for their academic capacity, but for their character and their commitment to citizenship.”

His Late Highness Aga Khan IV

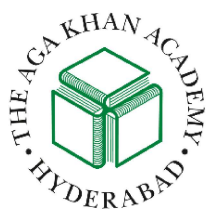
Groundbreaking of the International Academic Centre of Excellence, Tanzania, 17 March 2005



THE AGA KHAN ACADEMY

HYDERABAD

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from the desk of the
Head of Academy

17 April 2026



Dear Parents,

Just over 20 years ago, my wife and I spent eight weeks travelling across the Sahara Desert in our Land Rover. We followed much of the Paris–Dakar Rally route and eventually made our way back to Switzerland after an 8,000-kilometre journey. The route took us from the majestic beauty of the Atlas Mountains in Morocco to vast stretches of desert and towering sand dunes along the Algerian border.

My most vivid memory of that experience is the relentless heat. The heat shaped everything - how far we could travel each day, when we needed to stop, how much water we carried and how carefully we had to manage our energy. It demanded respect, and, over time, a good degree of adaptation. The current heatwave in Hyderabad brings some of these memories back into focus. Stepping outside at certain times of the day can feel overwhelming!

We all know the essentials when it comes to dealing with hot weather. Wearing the right clothing and staying hydrated are essential. Students are regularly reminded to drink water, and we ensure that water is readily available across the campus. Staff encourage students to take this seriously, particularly with younger children who may not always recognise early signs of dehydration. These are practical steps, grounded in experience and aligned with best practice in schools operating in similar climates. They are designed to ensure that the school day can continue safely and comfortably, even in challenging conditions.

Unlike my old Land Rover, all of our indoor spaces are air-conditioned, allowing us to maintain comfortable indoor temperatures throughout the school day. And given the layout of the Junior and Senior Schools, the need for students to move about in the open sun is limited. At this time of the year, outdoor activities are carefully reviewed and, where necessary, rescheduled, shortened or moved indoors.

But there may be a very particular hot-weather capacity we should help children develop. It's a certain form of resilience. Larry Kenney is a professor of physiology and kinesiology at *Penn State University*. He says it is possible to increase our tolerance of hot weather by building up "heat acclimatization". This is the process of going outside on a hot day and engaging in mild activity, like taking a walk for a very short period of time - about 10 minutes - and then repeating the process the following day. According to Professor Kenney, it takes between nine and fourteen exposures to become better acclimatized.

If the experts are right, we can help children find a balance between indoor comfort and outdoor exposure. On one hand, air conditioning can create a comfortable environment that shields children from the health risks of extreme heat. On the other hand, prolonged reliance on air conditioning can create a reduced tolerance for heat and less resilience to hot weather. When children are sheltered from outdoor temperatures, they can become less acclimated to heat and more sensitive to temperature changes.

Our responsibility is first and foremost to keep children safe and well, and we will continue to take every practical step to ensure that. At the same time, part of growing up in a climate

such as ours is learning, gradually and sensibly, how to cope with it. If we can achieve that balance, then the current heatwave isn't just an unwelcome challenge to manage over the coming weeks, but part of a longer process of helping children develop the judgement and resilience they will need well beyond the summer heat.

Best wishes,



Dr Jonathan Long

THIS WEEK'S NEWS



BOOK OF EXCELLENCE AWARD

The tradition of celebrating exceptional students for their conduct and commitment continues with the prestigious Book of Excellence award. This honour is reserved for

individuals whose contributions to the life of the Academy merit special recognition.

This week, we were delighted to present the award to DP1 student and School President, Shastha Sattaru.

Shastha is an outstanding student leader whose impact on the Academy has been both far-reaching and purposeful. As Student President and Nizam House Captain, she leads with empathy and a strong commitment to student voice. Her leadership of the Inter-MUN Organising Committee introduced greater innovation and professionalism, expanding participation, strengthening partnerships and elevating the conference's impact.

Across her roles in Model United Nations, student leadership and wider school initiatives, she has consistently demonstrated organisational excellence and a collaborative spirit. Her commitment to service is equally strong, reflected in her Sports Infrastructure Initiative, her work with Rainbow Homes, and her research into ageing and financial insecurity—each combining thoughtful action with reflection.

Her contributions to organisations such as the Indian Red Cross Society, Blue Cross of India and Sparsh Hospice further reflect a sustained commitment to the community. Alongside this, her intellectual curiosity and creativity are evident in her photography, entrepreneurial work and participation in international case competitions.

Shastha brings intention, integrity and purpose to all that she does. She embodies the values of the Academy and is richly deserving of her place in the Book of Excellence.



EXPLORING LIVES THROUGH BIOGRAPHIES

As part of their unit of inquiry, *Who We Are*, Grade 2 students have been exploring the genre of biography. This learning journey has invited them to look more closely at the lives, values and beliefs of inspiring individuals from around the world. To bring their learning to life, students participated in a 'Live Museum' experience. Through their research, they engaged with figures such as Malala Yousafzai, Coco Chanel, Amelia Earhart and Charlie Chaplin, gaining insight into their achievements and the challenges they overcame. During the event, students stepped into character, presenting aspects of each individual's life. The result was engaging and thoughtful, as students reflected on the beliefs, values and qualities that shape a life. This experience supported a deeper connection to the central idea - understanding ourselves and others - while fostering empathy, confidence and communication skills.



DIPLOMACY IN ACTION: INSIGHTS FROM THE TURKISH CONSUL GENERAL

DP1 Global Politics students had the opportunity to engage with the Turkish Consul General, Mr Okan, during his visit to the Beyond Borders event at the Academy on Wednesday. Drawing on diplomatic experience across Greece, Germany, South Korea and Bangladesh, he spoke about the importance of cultural awareness, discipline and self-reliance in effective diplomacy. A particular highlight was his interaction with students, during which he responded to thoughtful questions on global conflict, the economic consequences of political decisions, and the role of diplomacy in preventing escalation. Encouraging critical thinking, he described diplomats as “healers” who work to ease tensions and strengthen international relationships, emphasising that in today’s “age of systemic disruption”, peace and security must precede prosperity. He also reflected on the evolving relationship between India and Turkey, noting growing connections in trade, education, investment and tourism. Our thanks go to student leaders Lohit Reddy, Ayaan Gampala, Lokapriya Indukuri, Ramanish Thota and Daksh Kaza, along with their teacher supervisor Mr Peter Kvietok, for their leadership in bringing this enriching experience to our students.



A HOME AWAY FROM HOME

A reflection by Grade 9 student Mehr Goswami

As a Grade 9 student, I had the opportunity to participate in the Student Exchange Programme, spending eleven weeks living and studying at the Aga Khan Academy, Maputo. It was an experience that has stayed with me in ways I am still coming to understand. As I wrote in Maputo's newsletter at the time, "I can no longer imagine my life without the people I've met, the connections I've made and the places I've visited." Looking back now, I realise that this was the point at which I began to reflect on both the end of the programme and the impact it had on me. A city tour of Maputo deepened my understanding of Mozambican history, complementing our classroom learning on empires and superpowers, and helping me make sense of the social and political environment around me. Reflection sessions were equally valuable, encouraging us to examine our experiences more critically—to recognise how our own backgrounds shape our perceptions, and to question our assumptions. Some of my most vivid memories are also the simplest: time spent with friends in the library, conversations that drifted in unexpected directions in art class, afternoons in the pool, and camping together in Moyo—the heart of the campus community. I hope that, in some small way, I was able to contribute to the life of my host Academy, just as it has given me lasting friendships, new perspectives and a broader understanding of the world.



UPHOLDING ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

This week, a group of Grade 5 students led an assembly focused on honesty and integrity in academic work. Through their presentation, they explored the concept of copyright and its role in protecting original ideas and creative expression. In a segment titled *A Trip to Court*, a young plagiariser confronted the consequences of using others' work without proper acknowledgement, bringing the message to life in an engaging and memorable way. The assembly left the Junior School community with a clear and lasting understanding of academic integrity, emphasising the importance of honesty and personal responsibility in all aspects of learning.



U14 GIRLS SHINE AS LEAGUE CHAMPIONS

The Academy's U14 Girls' Football Team delivered an outstanding performance at an inter-school tournament hosted by the International School of Hyderabad on Saturday, 11 April. Competing in a four-school league format, the team remained unbeaten to secure the League Champion title. They recorded a 1-0 victory over CHIREC International School, followed by a commanding 6-0 win against ISH, and concluded with a 3-0 triumph over Keystone International School. Competitions like this play an important role in students' development, fostering teamwork, resilience, confidence and sportsmanship, while providing valuable experience of competitive play beyond the Academy.



WISHING OUR DP2 STUDENTS THE VERY BEST

Our DP2 students are now fully immersed in their preparations for the IB examinations, which begin on Monday, 27 April. This marks a significant milestone, reflecting months of sustained effort and preparation. As they enter this important phase, we wish them every success. May they approach each paper with clarity, confidence and a calm mind!



BUILDING ROAD SAFETY AWARENESS

Awareness of road safety plays a critical role in preventing accidents, particularly among young learners who are beginning to navigate the world with greater independence. As part of their PYP Exhibition on “Road Safety”, Grade 5 students recently participated in a guest speaker session featuring Mr SreeCharan KBR, a climate optimist and road safety advocate, Mr Lokendra Singh, widely known as the Hyderabad Traffic Man, and Ms Hima, a Grade 11 student from Indus International School who has authored children’s books on road safety in three languages, including Braille. The session was engaging and thought-provoking. Students asked insightful questions informed by their research and gained a deeper understanding of the often-overlooked dimensions of road safety.



PETS AND PLANTS SKILL WORKSHOP

In this week's Pets and Plants Skill Workshop, Ms Kasturi, our Telugu teacher, introduced students to her pet dog, Bruno. Through videos and a short presentation, students learned about dogs in an immediate, personal way. The session created a strong real-world connection, making the learning both meaningful and engaging. Students also contributed actively, sharing their own experiences and reflections, adding to the sense of shared learning.



SHAPING EDUCATORS: CELEBRATING THE TPP GRADUATING CLASS OF 2025

We are proud to announce that the Teacher Preparation Programme (TPP) Graduating Class of 2025 has been awarded the International Baccalaureate Educator Certificate (IBEC), a globally recognised credential that affirms excellence in teaching and leadership within IB World Schools. The TPP is a rigorous, values-driven pathway that prepares aspiring educators to serve both within the Academy and across the wider educational landscape. Strengthened through our partnership with the University of British Columbia, the programme is underpinned by robust external assessment and quality assurance. Our interns entered the programme with the ambition to become teachers; they leave as compassionate, skilled and reflective educators. Their journey reflects a deep commitment to lifelong learning and the importance of a growth mindset. We wish all our graduates continued success as they embark on the next stage of their professional journey.

“The students at this institution will be distinguished not only for their academic capacity, but for their character and their commitment to citizenship.”

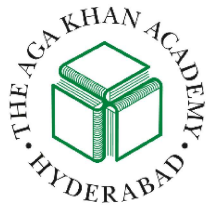
His Late Highness Aga Khan IV

Groundbreaking of the International Academic Centre of Excellence, Tanzania, 17 March 2005



THE AGA KHAN ACADEMY

HYDERABAD



from the desk of the
Head of Academy

24 April 2026



Dear Parents,

Most Sundays, I get up well before sunrise and set off on my motorcycle to enjoy the coolness of the early morning, the freedom of the open road, and the chance to explore some of Telangana's rural beauty. Over the years, I have travelled thousands of kilometres to remote hilltop forts, ancient temples and palaces, through dense jungle roads and open farmland, on dirt tracks and smooth highways.

I have a favourite route. It takes me along the busy Srisailem Highway to Kalwakurthy and then across a quiet 50-kilometre stretch of winding road to Devarakonda. From there, I ride back to Hyderabad on the Nagarjuna Sagar highway. There is nothing particularly remarkable about this 230-kilometre circuit, apart from the chance to catch the sunrise over the hills of Devarakonda Fort. Like most of the journeys we take, it follows well-known roads to well-known destinations.

But some of my most memorable rides have been different. On those mornings, I simply set off in a general direction, with no particular destination in mind. There is a different quality to those rides. They become a form of discovery. I have found myself taking turns I had not planned, arriving in places I did not expect, and discovering something richer or more interesting than anything I might have set out to find. And that, perhaps, is the point.

We often think about life in much the same way. A journey with a clear route, a set of milestones, and a destination that we can anticipate in advance. In many respects, schooling has been shaped by this idea: a structured pathway and a series of outcomes that signal success. But there is another way of thinking about it. What if life is less like a journey and more like a quest?

A journey usually has a clear destination. You know where you are going, and you have a strong sense of how to get there. A quest is different. The destination is not always clear at the outset, and the path reveals itself only as you move forward. There are moments of uncertainty, wrong turns, and times when the next step is not obvious. But it is in these moments that something important happens. In a quest, the goal is not simply to arrive somewhere. It is about something that happens along the way.

This distinction is important when we think about education. If we see schooling purely as a journey, then our focus narrows to progression through the system: the next grade, the next set of assessments or the next set of results. These things matter. But on their own, they are not enough.

If, however, we recognise that our children are on a quest, then the purpose of education broadens. It shifts beyond what students achieve to what they discover along the way - their interests, their values and their sense of purpose. It asks us to accept that not every meaningful step forward will look tidy or predictable. This is not easy. As parents, it is natural to want clarity and direction for our children. We want to know that they are on the right path. Yet part of our role is also to help them develop the confidence to navigate when the path is not clear and to remain open to possibilities they may not yet see.

When education is shaped too tightly by fixed ideas of what must be learned, it loses

something essential. Real learning depends on an encounter with the unexpected - moments that surprise us and reveal something we had not anticipated. Without this, we may be covering content or training students, but we are not truly educating them. This is true beyond the classroom. In any area of life, making wise decisions often depends on setting aside fixed expectations and responding carefully to the situation as it unfolds.

Our task as parents and educators is not only to keep our children on well-marked roads, moving steadily towards clearly defined destinations. It is also to help them develop the confidence to trust their judgement, to notice what they encounter along the way, and to remain open to discovering something they did not know they were looking for. Because, as I have found on those early Sunday mornings, it is often when we are not entirely sure where we are going that we discover something worth finding.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jonathan Long". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr Jonathan Long

THIS WEEK'S NEWS



BLUEPRINT HYDERABAD: A PROMISING FIRST HACKATHON

On April 18, the Academy hosted its first-ever Hackathon, bringing together over 150 students, 13 organisers and 7 sponsors for an exciting seven-hour event. Participants from Grades 8 to 12, including students from more than nine schools across Hyderabad, collaborated and competed in a vibrant, innovation-driven environment. The Hackathon featured five activity zones, two major workshops and a live drone-flying competition, offering hands-on experience in Printed Circuit Board design and drone assembly. With over 90 certificates awarded and top teams winning drones and free domains, Blueprint Hyderabad made a strong debut within the city's student maker community. Looking ahead, the event's organisers aim to grow this initiative into a recurring platform, expanding its reach and impact with more participants, schools and workshops in the future.



CELEBRATING THE MAGIC OF BOOKS

This week, the Junior School celebrated Book Day with great excitement. Students and staff arrived dressed as their favourite literary characters, bringing beloved stories to life. Among the many imaginative costumes were The Big Friendly Giant, Elmer, George, Tintin and Asterix, alongside many other classics. Non-fiction was equally celebrated, with students dressed as astronauts and colourful sea creatures. The morning highlighted the transformative power of reading. Books transport us to new worlds, nurture imagination, expand vocabulary and build empathy by helping us see through different perspectives. Above all, reading brings people together - sparking curiosity, conversation and joy across our school community.



A JOURNEY INTO LANGUAGE AND IDENTITY

As part of their PYP Exhibition inquiry on preserving languages, Grade 5 students engaged in an insightful session with Mr Sai Kiran, CEO of Boli Cheto. He shared his personal journey and highlighted how language is deeply tied to culture, identity and tradition. Students explored the rich linguistic diversity of India, home to nearly 1600 languages, while also learning about the global picture of around 7000 languages—many of which are at risk of disappearing. Mr Sai Kiran spoke about his organisation's work with indigenous communities in the Northeast and Telangana, supporting efforts to document and sustain native languages. Through real-life examples and an engaging Q&A session, students gained a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by tribal communities and the urgent need to preserve linguistic heritage. The interaction enriched their inquiry and encouraged thoughtful reflection on the power of language in shaping who we are.



A STATE-OF-THE-ART COURT TAKES CENTRE STAGE

The Academy's revamped basketball court was inaugurated on Wednesday, 22 April 2026, during an experiential learning session. This much-awaited, state-of-the-art facility is now open and accessible to students. Following the inauguration, students took to the court for a friendly match, experiencing the upgraded surface first-hand. Their response was overwhelmingly positive, with great enthusiasm for the new space. Despite the summer heat, it has been encouraging to see students actively engaging with the facility. The enhanced court has already begun to add significant value to the sports programme, supporting both regular physical education lessons and after-school activities. We look forward to its continued use and the opportunities it will create for student growth and engagement in the weeks ahead.



LEARNING THROUGH HANDS-ON CREATIVITY

This week, during our skills workshops, the Junior School students engaged in a fun and purposeful hands-on activity, creating a puppy and a paper rocket using simple materials. By carefully following step-by-step instructions, they strengthened their fine motor skills, listening skills and ability to work independently. The session was filled with enthusiasm and focus, as students immersed themselves in the process. It was especially rewarding to see their creativity come to life and their confidence grow, with each child proudly completing their work and sharing it with their peers.



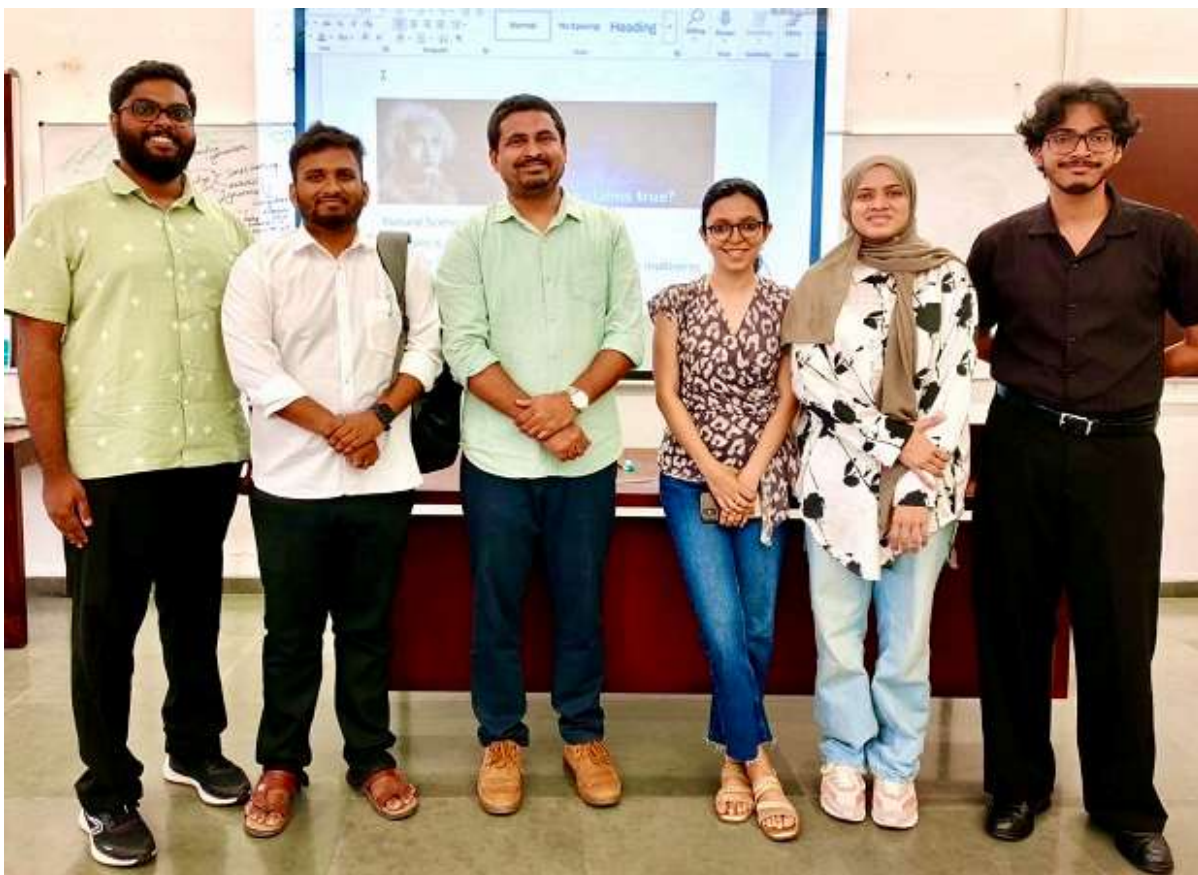
STITCHES OF KINDNESS: A VALENTINE'S DAY TO REMEMBER

On Valentine's Day this year, our campus was brightened by a remarkable display of creativity and generosity from the Crochet Club. Their beautifully handcrafted crocheted roses became the centrepiece of the Valentine's Day fundraiser, adding charm and meaning to the celebration. The students' dedication and artistry played a key role in the success of the fundraising initiative of the External Affairs department. Proceeds from the rose sale contributed to supporting talented students from marginalised communities in accessing world-class education, making each creation part of a larger, impactful purpose. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the Crochet Club members for the time, care and effort invested in every stitch. In recognition of their outstanding contribution, External Affairs presented the Crochet Club members with a small token of appreciation this week—an expression of our sincere thanks for their commitment and generosity. Their efforts truly reflect the core values of our academy, demonstrating how creativity, compassion and collaboration can come together to create meaningful change.



EXPLORING EXPRESSION THROUGH THEATRE

Mr Shamim S. Sheikh Akhtar, one of our Senior School teachers, led an engaging guest session for Grade 4 students on the theme of expression in performance. He traced the evolution of theatre, beginning with Charlie Chaplin and the power of storytelling without dialogue, before connecting it to regional traditions from Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. Students were introduced to forms such as Tholu Bommalata and Nukkad Natak, learning how culture shapes styles of expression. Through demonstrations, Mr Akhtar highlighted how voice, movement, sound, costumes and props work together to convey meaning, with special emphasis on the role of chorus in building rhythm and audience engagement. The session offered students a deeper appreciation of how expression in drama evolves across time, cultures and contexts.



EXPLORING TEACHING AND LEARNING IN TOK

This week, our Teacher Preparation Programme (TPP) Fellows, engaged with authentic problem scenarios, centred on the Theory of Knowledge theme of navigating unknown answers and responding to challenging students. To extend their inquiry, the programme welcomed Mr Santosh Reddy, HOD Mathematics and TOK teacher, as a guest speaker. The session explored how the disciplinary foundations of the IB Diploma Programme can foster interdisciplinarity through its core component, theory of knowledge. Fellows examined key concepts such as the knowledge framework, the role of the knower, and the areas and ways of knowing that shape our understanding of the world. The discussion concluded by revisiting the initial scenario, prompting reflection on knowledge, authority and intellectual honesty. A key takeaway was that recognising and correcting errors is not a failure, but an essential part of how knowledge develops and evolves.

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