

SILVER EDGE

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The
Support Elders
Newsletter

A bi-monthly round-up
of the events, stories,
learning & more at
Support Elders.

MD Speak

Dear Readers,

The celebration of our Raising Day always brings us great joy and pride. Every year, every member of the team participates in planning and organising this joyous occasion and our 6th Raising Day was no different, as we came together to celebrate the team whose core value has always been "member first". Having fostered this culture here, we lauded the wonderful work of the team through the Support Elders Annual Awards. We are very proud of every single team member and the selection committee had a very hard time picking the nominees and the winners. Though belated, I wish the Support Elders family a very Happy 6th Raising Day!

We are happy to see our members' active participation in our virtual events. The virtual platform has also made it possible for the loved ones of our members to enjoy their parents' or relatives' performances in real time. Their joy and pride are evident in their Facebook comments and testimonials. We are also working towards improving the viewing and audio qualities and making the experience seamless...though I regret to say that sometimes this becomes very difficult due to connectivity issues and platform constraints. However, I assure you that we will try to resolve these issues at the earliest.

Looking forward to your suggestions, feedback and stories.

Happy Reading!

Apratim Chattopadhyay

We came together on August 29, 2020 to celebrate our 6th Raising Day. Albeit a tad different from the other years, as we could meet only virtually, the feeling of togetherness and camaraderie was palpable nevertheless. We have always believed that the nature of our work is such that the unstinted support of our families at home is essential. On this day too, we found our families adding joy and colour to the celebration through well-planned and thoughtful

**6th Raising
DAY**
August 29, 2020

performances. We took this opportunity to kick off the Support Elders Annual Awards to reward the wonderful work done by different members of the Support Elders team. It was also a great learning experience for many, who have recently joined this organisation, to get to know how Support Elders started and how it carved a niche for itself in this segment. **SE**

SEPL events: Mèmoire time

Virtual walk through Park Street

July 14

Ms Flower Silliman, our member, took us on a virtual walk down Park Street of the

1940s to 1960s, and looked back on the many attractions of Park Street of her youth.



Flashback 1947

August 14



Tantalizing tête-à-tête: **Ms Uma Ahmad** and Ms Diya Katyal

Our member, Ms Uma Ahmad, was in a fascinating conversation with her granddaughter Ms D. Katyal on the tumultuous times she experienced around Independence in 1947.

August 15



Gen. Shankar Roy Chowdhury's fascinating memories of freedom at

midnight. Our member and former Chief of Army Staff, General Shankar Roy Chowdhury, reminisced about his childhood memories when India became free. **SE**

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Mesmerized by the Maasai

Ms K. Roy Chowdhury

A visit to Serengeti, Maasai Mara and Amboseli forest reserves is stuff that dreams are made of. It was a dream that came true for our member Ms K. Roy Chowdhury and her husband, Mr R. Roy Chowdhury. They had planned the trip meticulously and enjoyed it fabulously.

The land of the Maasai presents one of the most breathtaking natural vistas. The abundant wildlife and endless plains in this world of the ancient Maasai, who travelled down from the Nile basin, make for eternal memories. Mara means “spotted”. Sure enough, the landscape is dotted by innumerable short bushy trees that so enthralled the Roy Chowdhurys on their trip to East Africa.

There they primarily experienced the many splendours of the Serengeti, Maasai Mara and Amboseli forest reserves. They had planned the trip well and did not need much help in terms of what to do and where to visit once they landed in Nairobi, the capital of Kenya, from Mumbai.

It was the Serengeti National Park, in Tanzania, which mesmerized them along with the Amboseli National Park, crowned, as they were, by the towering Mt Kilimanjaro, Africa’s



(Pix Courtesy Pixabay)

highest mountain. Apart from the sheer vastness of the region, it was the action-packed lives of its fascinating animals, which included the annual migration of the wildebeest, which took their breath away.

For those unfamiliar with the creature, it is a gnu, an antelope, and belongs to the family *Bovidae*, which includes antelopes, cattle, goats, sheep, and other even-toed horned ungulates. It looks like a thin, muscular cow with a large, sloping back, curved horns and striped bodies. The fascination of Serengeti increases manifold when more than two million wildebeest, zebras and gazelles move through the Serengeti and Masai Mara ecosystems in search of green pastures, every year.

The Roy Chowdhurys watched with bewilderment “the wildebeest, the most unusual of species, and their migration from Tanzania’s Serengeti to the south of Kenya’s Masai Mara in search of lush grazing grounds and life-giving water. Their virtually endless journey is dictated by the seasons and follows a pattern. They all move in a line and a group”. (See pix. Courtesy Pixabay)

Interrupting this amazing sight was a shocker. A crocodile caught hold of a wildebeest’s leg and tried to drag it away. However, the wildebeest managed to “flee with an injured leg”. Strangely, the other members of the flock were not “bothered about the attack. They kept moving towards their destination!”

Every aspect of the trip remains etched in the Roy Chowdhurys’ minds. The sturdy tourist vehicles took the uneven terrain in their stride, crossing streams without a qualm. On the way back from the forest tour, however, the waters from the higher reaches of the mountain, which had experienced a heavy shower, had gushed down and the streams looked like hissing spurts of water threatening to wash away the vehicles. The drivers stopped as the passengers cringed with fear.



Matters were resolved when the hotel sent a big bus to rescue its guests. “Everything was well managed but that hour-long wait was quite frightening”.

Our members had planned a night halt at Amboseli en route to Maasai. It was yet another exciting night with the hotel almost inside the forest. The guests were told that the wildlife often made nocturnal calls and, if they did, the guests would have to stay calm and not make a noise. There was a focus light that was switched on after sunset and a piece of flesh was kept near a stream of water to satisfy any marauding animal. There was a tunnel through which the younger and more daring guests walked to where the animals came. Ms Roy Chowdhury chose the safety of distance, but did manage to spot the cheetah coming to consume the meat.

On to the Masaai village the next morning. There they witnessed the interesting customs of the semi-nomadic tribe that was coming to terms with modernism. Their children went to schools and even colleges. Things were a-changing, albeit slowly, for the Masaai. “I was amazed to see cars parked outside few of the houses and learnt that some of the children attended schools and colleges in nearby cities. They wore normal clothes there but, back home for holidays, they wore their traditional costumes”.

The vernacular architecture is interesting too. The Maasais traditionally rely on readily available materials like mud, sticks, grass, cow dung and cow's urine. They use indigenous technology to construct their unusual and interesting houses, built by the women mainly. The friendly Maasais, with distinct traditions, customs and dress, heavy ornaments and their easy interaction with tourists, made for indelible memories. SE



A Click in Time

1. Mysore Palace lit up for Independence Day — Mr A. Chaudhuri
2. Mauve hibiscus in her garden — Ms M. Mitra 3. Sailing on the Atlantic! — Ms M. Mitra 4. The Taj at dawn — Mr A. Chaudhuri

Member-chef

Bebinca- the Queen of Goan desserts

Our member, **Ms J. Kar** and her husband Mr B. C. Kar have stayed in different parts of India. Mr Kar had a transferable job as general manager of Indian Airlines. It was scenic Goa, with its simple and honest people that stole their hearts.

“There were no boundary walls between two houses” and Catholics stayed next door to Hindus. “The only identifier was the *tulsi manch* in front of the Hindu home and a cross in front of the Catholic’s.” Goan food was lip-smacking as well but it is Bebinca, the dessert, a traditional **Indo-Portuguese** multi layered cake, mainly made of coconut that lingers on the palate.

The Bebinca demands patience throughout the two hours that are needed to make it as each layer gets cooked separately.

- Ingredients:** ● Coconut Milk: 3 cups (medium sized)
● Granulated Sugar: 2 cups
● Egg Yolks: 24 ● Flour: 2 cups
● Ghee (clarified butter): 1 ½ cups ● Garnish: Almond

Recipe: Mix coconut milk and sugar in a bowl and stir till the

sugar dissolves. In another bowl, whisk the egg yolks until creamy. Add the coconut milk mixture to the eggs and combine well. Add the flour, a little at a time, mixing well and ensuring that there are no lumps.

Preheat the oven. In a baking tray, at least 5/6 inches deep, put a tablespoon of ghee. Put the tray in the oven and wait till the ghee melts.

Take pan out of the oven and pour enough of the prepared batter to form a 1/4-inch-thick layer. Put the pan back in the oven and cook until the top is golden, watching it carefully.

Remove from the oven again and immediately add another tablespoonful of ghee on top of the previous layer. It will melt automatically because of the heat. Pour another layer of batter of the same 1/4-inch thickness. Cook until golden. Keep repeating the layering process until all the batter is used up and put the remaining ghee for the top layer.

When the cake is done, turn the Bebinca over on a serving plate to let cool. Garnish with almond slivers and cut into slices; serve room temperature or cold. SE



Big Ticket

International Day of Older Persons Celebrations

It is September and we are all set for the next big event in our calendar. Yes, you got it right! October 1! It is the International Day of Older Persons, as designated by the UN. This gives us just another excuse to celebrate with our esteemed members. Since we need to adhere to social distancing, unlike other years, we will not be able to meet you physically, but we promise to make this day as memorable as the previous years.

So, instead of catching up at the Saturday Club, or at the Okakura Bhavan, this time we will meet you in the cosy comfort of your homes, as we come together virtually on this very special day. We hope to have you with us for a programme specially lined up just for you.



Creative Space

Community Spirit

From Goa to Guwahati

In a bid to get like-minded members together, Support Elders has facilitated the formation of two new communities under ECS. One is for music and the other for recitation. Many more are in the offing.

The Choir

This community has now begun connecting people from across the land. The newest member from Goa has joined seven local enthusiasts: Ms A. Bose, Ms D. Bose, Ms R. Samanta, Sqn Ldr A. Dasgupta, Ms M. Kar, Ms S. Chakraborty and Ms S. Deb.

SEPTEMBER



11.09.2020

When the soul takes over tunefully...
Members create a dream cultural evening



17.09.2020

Ethereal Earth: A virtual tour of Kumortuli



25.09.2020

Tamil Traditions; Kolkata Konnect: Raju Raman, the quintessential Tam-Bong, looks back on an enriching association between the two cities and its people

OCTOBER



01.10.2020

Rise and Shine: Raising a Toast to our Members on the International Day of Older Persons



09.10.2020

Ektara Bawlay: The journey of Bengal's wandering minstrels come alive in Dipanwita Acharya's Baul songs



16.10.2020

The Dance of Shiva: Our member, Dr Irene Sarkar, presents a seismological study of the Himalayas



23.10.2020

Shantirupena Samasthita: Our Members mesmerize us with their cultural show around the Goddess Durga



30.10.2020

Cinema Cinema: From Single Screeners to Multiplexes – Kolkata movie theatres' chequered story from Saptarshi Roy Bardhan

* Events subject to last minute changes due to unforeseen circumstances

They are all avid music lovers and prepare a list of songs that they sing. Their one-hour long sessions start at 5 pm every Wednesday.

Recital

This community thrives on the spirit of recitation, from music to poetry, meeting for an hour every

Monday. It comprises seven TSC members Ms K. Pal, Ms K. Chatterjee, Mr S. Chatterjee, Ms R. Dutta, Ms S. Dasgupta, Ms B. Bandopadhyay and Ms J. Mukherjee. Ms S. Dasgupta, who joins us from Guwahati, Assam, generally prepares a poem or a "Shruti Natak" (audio drama) and reads it aloud. SE