

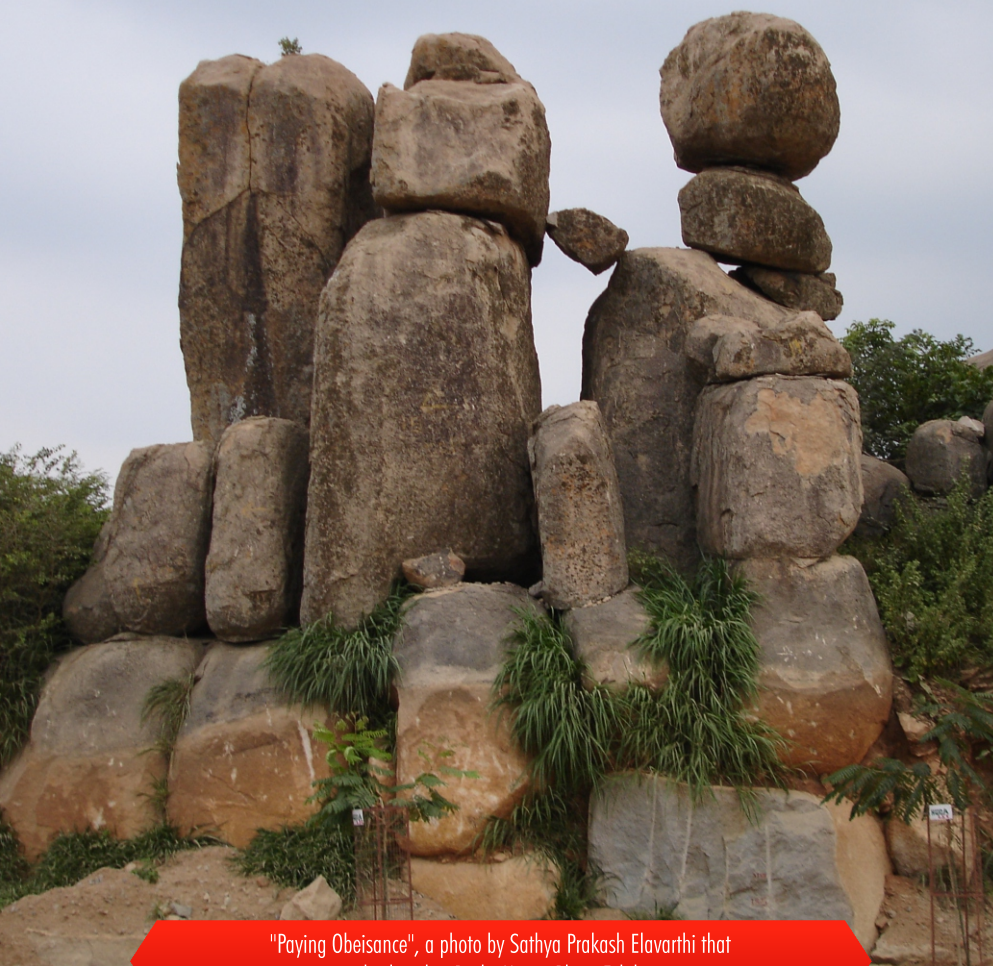


# SOCIETY TO SAVE ROCKS

Quarterly Newsletter

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Editors: Frauke Quader & Padmini B. Patell



"Paying Obeisance", a photo by Sathya Prakash Elavarthi that was displayed at Rocks Matter Photo Exhibition

**ROCKS MATTER**, our virtual Rock Photo Exhibition, was presented by Goethe Zentrum Hyderabad from 2<sup>nd</sup> July to 7<sup>th</sup> August. The Exhibition was curated by our members Sangeeta Varma and Ashok Kumar Vootla with 73 works of 13 photographers. The Consul General of the Federal Republic of Germany Ms Karin Stoll kindly consented to inaugurate the Exhibition online from Chennai. The Exhibition received a heart warming response with people having viewed it from around the globe. We got an excellent coverage in The Hindu besides Telangana Today.

Our sincere gratitude to Amita Desai, Director, GZH, Jyothi Bezawada and Satyander Pal. Thanks to the efforts of all Members and rock enthusiasts who contributed to this important 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event.

## Here's a sampling of viewers comments:

- "What a beautiful exhibition! Thanks a lot"  
– Samuel Berthet, Director Alliance Francaise Hyderabad
- Es war eine wunderbare Reise fuer mich durch die Landschaft der maechtigen Felsen. (It was a wonderful journey for me through the landscape of mighty boulders!)  
– Inge Sharma, Kuala Lumpur
- What a great exhibition (& a wonderful presentation of the "gallery experience"). Thanks for sharing it again as I hadn't taken the time to go through it before. It brought back lovely memories of Hyderabad.  
– Jan Augustine, USA
- I would like to congratulate you and all contributors for these wonderful pictures of rock boulders. We use these boulders for understanding the seismic hazard of a region. The precariously balanced boulders provide insights into the levels of seismic shaking that a region has experienced in the past.  
– Dr. Senthil Kumar, Geologist
- I've just entered your virtual exhibition, very interesting indeed. The interface to simulate a real exhibition is also very curious, and it works very well.  
– Jose Brilha, Geologist, Portugal
- I just had a tour of the beautiful and irreplaceable rock formations in our Twin cities. Thank you for sharing them with me and so many others.  
– Sister Kathleen, Hyderabad

## Update on Fakhruddingutta (Khajaguda Rocks)

The Stay Order on the cutting of rocks in the hill of Fakhruddingutta is very much in place. After our protests about the ongoing destruction amidst the boulders recently, the work has stopped at the site. The local Municipality (Manikonda Municipal Commissioner) has assured us that the area will be patrolled and protected. Of course, there is still work going on at the temple site at the back of the Hill, but Covid had halted it for quite some time, and we were assured that no rock cutting will be done in future !

Join 7500 people who support Fakhruddingutta by signing the online Petition for its Protection on [change.org](https://change.org), **Appeal Society to Save Rocks**.



## What is happening to the legislation on the Conservation of India's Geological Heritage?

The Society of Earth Scientists has prepared a draft legislation for the Protection of India's Geo-Heritage to ensure the survival of the best representative examples of the country's geological features and events: rock types, fossils, rock landscapes. The Draft was submitted to the Government of India in 2019. As no reaction has come from the GOI, a Public Interest Litigation is now being prepared, petitioning the Supreme Court of India to direct the Authorities to act on the legislation proposal by India's geologists and earth scientists urgently.

And yet another Petition, this one initiated by The Society of Earth Scientists, is online, and through it you could support their claim. You can reach it on [Change.org](https://change.org), [Legislation Geoheritage](https://change.org). It has by now garnered almost 2000 signatures. More are needed for more weight ! Add your signature and ensure that the Government is listening and finally an India-wide conservation of geo-sites can be achieved. And we will make sure that this will also include the stunning granite rockscapes of the Deccan and Hyderabad !



The Society will organise its annual Run for Rocks together with the Hyderabad Runners on Sunday, 31st October 2021 from 6.30 am onwards. There will be a 21 km Run, and a 6 km Run, starting at the Maidan in Fakhruddingutta. For registration details see our website [www.saverocks.org](https://www.saverocks.org), closer to the event.

## Events Last Quarter

**July 21st:** National Geo Heritage day was celebrated by the Society of Earth Scientists (TSES) with an online talk on Geodiversity and Geoheritage to which the Society was invited. Dr Satish C Tripathi, General Secretary, TSES also made a mention of the Society and our work to save the Deccan Rocks. The presentation on Geo Parks made by Guest Speaker Prof José Brilha, University of Minho, Portugal was an eye opener and one that we can explore for conserving the Deccan rocks.

**July 25<sup>th</sup>:** SEVAK (Society to Establish Vishwa as Kutumba, Bangalore) invited the Society to make a presentation about Deccan Rocks at their online World Family Day 2021 event. A 30 minute presentation was given by Sangeeta Varma and has helped create awareness among several viewers who attended.

**August 26<sup>th</sup>:** The Society presented the Plaque of Appreciation to Lamakaan's Executive team Ashar Farhan, Humera Ahmed, Elahe Hiptoola and Biju Mathew in recognition for the rock formation preserved on their premises.





## German Ambassador in Hyderabad



H.E. the German Ambassador to India Mr. Walter Lindner, visited Hyderabad from New Delhi. We had the chance to show him some of our rock formations on **16.9.2021**: The famous Tortoise Rock in BNR Hills Colony in Jubilee Hills, and the overwhelming view from a rock cluster in Nandi Hills over the Durgam Cheruvu (at one time Secret Lake). Needless to say that the Ambassador and his delegation were readily convinced that the rocks of Hyderabad need to be protected and saved!



## Media

On Sunday, September 19, Natasha Rego reported in the **Hindustan Times** from New Delhi about the geological history of the Indian Subcontinent, with a separate piece on the rock formations in our city.

**Times of India** has, in their Anniversary issue on **25.9.2021**, published an article with a story about the rocks of Hyderabad.

## The Story of Shilparamam

G.Shankar Narayan, Architect - shankar@shankarch.com

Not many are aware that Shilparamam predates the Hi Tec City by a couple of years. When we got to the site in Madhapur (when I first heard that name, I imagined it to be somewhere near Vijayawada!) about thirty years back, we saw a lone farmer ploughing the land with bullocks. The silence and the breeze were broken only by the bizarre forms of rocks and miles of horizon stretching beyond.

Originally named 'Prakriti Gram' these 65 odd acres of land was to be a sort of Suraj Kund mela of the South. The basic idea came from some free-thinking officers from Dilli's babudom to have crafts people stay on campus, make and sell their wares. As architects (Shankar & Narasimham Associates) we quickly realised that the land with its contours, the inimitable rocks was to be the main cast of the whole story. And the 'hero' were the rocks and the ridges which roughly ran in a C shape at the periphery. In 1998 the Cyber Towers began rising next door. And slowly – quite rapidly, as we all know – the landscape transformed from natural forms to glitzy manmade skylines. Alas, Shilparamam became a victim of its own success. Successive State governments started smelling



the moolah in its land and open areas. By now the public space was bang in the centre of the Hi Tec City and its commercial potential had ballooned. The first structure to break the code was Shilpa Kala Vedika which overshadowed the landscape with its huge bulk. A shallow rocky ridge which used to form an enchanting backdrop to the thatched huts got obscured and all the concrete in the parking and forecourt masked the natural ground and the earthy smell that used to be characteristic of Shilparamam. The Night Bazaar at the other corner was the next to pour more concrete. Though the inner core of Shilparamam thankfully remains idyllic, the peripheries have been nibbled away and shrouded. The rocks which once were visible as one drove past are no more seen. Their connect and dialogue with the city was silenced. If they could speak, one wonders what they would have to say!

Rock Walks are conducted on the third Sunday of every month. They are announced in the press and social media and on our website. Everybody is welcome. Walking shoes and long pants should be worn. Please enroll with G.R.B. Pradeep at 9866752114. Participants are expected to follow adequate Covid 19 protection rules.

### Rock Walks in Oct - Nov - Dec 2021

Day and Date	Place	Time and Meeting Point
Sunday, Oct 17, 2021	Peerancheru Rocks near Dargah Peeran Shah Wali	8:00 a.m. / Entrance Gate of PBEL City, off Kali Mandir Moinabad Road
Saturday Sunday, Nov 20 & 21 2021	Warangal - Day I Hanumakonda-Meerpet Kazipeta-Mettugutta Day II Pandavula Guhalu Ramappa Lake & Temple	7:00 a.m. / Society's office in Jubilee Hills, OR 8:00 a.m. / Near Uppal Police Station, Uppal Cross Roads
Sunday, Dec 19, 2021	Hyderabad Central University	7:00 a.m. / Entrance Gate of HCU, Old Mumbai Road <b>New Timing 2.30 p.m</b>

### Welcome to our New Members

Lisa Roy, Life	Jean Audrey Thomas, Life	Kamal Krishnan, Active	Nandana Manu, Active
Niran Manu, Student			

### Managing Committee

President:	Padmini B. Patell 9912865299		
Vice President:	Aparajita Sinha 9849 655 363	Dr. Sudheer Bhan	8106072537
Secretary:	Frauke Quader 9849 936 248	Dr. E. Sathya Prakash	9440057846
Joint Secretary:	Sangeeta Varma 9849 044 624	Amardeep Singh	9246150207
Treasurer:	G.R.B. Pradeep 9866 752 114	Sajid Mehmood	9810528070

### Membership Fee

Class	Admission	Annual Subscription
Active (Single)	₹ 100.00	₹ 500.00
Active (Couple)	₹ 100.00	₹ 600.00
Student (Under 18 Years)	₹ 100.00	₹ 200.00
Life (Single)	₹ 3000.00	Active and Student Members are requested to pay their Subscription Fees and Arrears. Please contact the Office at 9849936248 for details of your dues.
Life (Couple)	₹ 5000.00	
Institution	₹ 10000.00	
Corporate	₹ 50000.00	

*Obituary*

The passing on 23.9.2021 of our Life Member, Mr. Ajay Gandhi, a well-known personality in cultural circles of Hyderabad, is a great loss for our city and friends around the world. A co-founder of Manthan Samvad, a "platform for social discourse", he was also a trustee of the Hyderabad Literary Festival. He has supported the cause of our mission to save our rock scapes wherever possible. We deeply mourn his death.



Pandavulagutta, a fabulous rock site we will visit during our November Rock Excursion.