

SOCIETY TO SAVE ROCKS

1236, Road No.60, Jubilee Hills, Hyderabad-500 033

 saverocks.org

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Quarterly Newsletter

April - June 2023

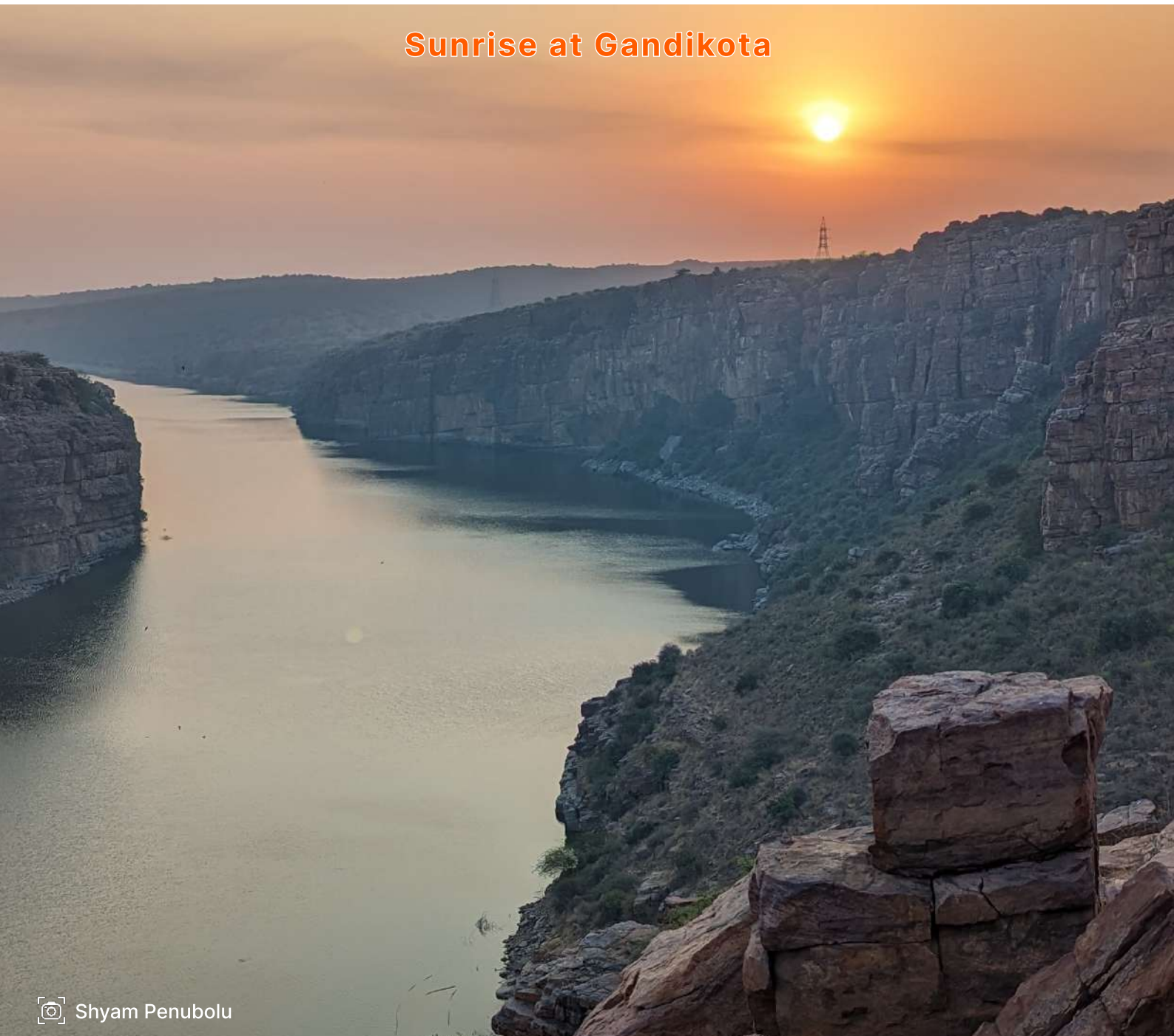
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Sunrise at Gandikota



 Shyam Penubolu

Excursion to Gandikota, the 'Grand Canyon' of India (24 – 27 February 2023)

On Friday evening, about 40 enthusiasts were eagerly waiting with their backpacks for the journey to begin- 'Weekend trip to Gandikota - organised by the Society to Save Rocks'

A train and a bus journey later, the group arrived at Gandikota village in the early hours of Saturday morning. After a hearty breakfast at Haritha resort, the trek down to the base of the gorge, the Pennar River, began. For many of us in the group, it was our first visit to Gandikota, and the very first sight of the stunning gorge was jaw-dropping. The trek down and back was nearly 4 hours but worth every bit. Some tried kayaking while some enjoyed the motorboat ride on the river but the view of the gorge from the bottom was as breath-taking as the view from the top. We learnt about the formation of sedimentary rocks, Gandikota quartzite and how they are different from the rocks found in Hyderabad, from eminent geologists who were a part of our group. Nature lovers and bird lovers enriched the trek with their valuable inputs on flora and fauna along the way.

Cont...

Late afternoon was spent exploring the quaint and charming Gandikota village nestled inside the magnificent Gandikota fort replete with old temples, mosque, granary, and jail which proved to be a photographer's paradise. Hundreds of pictures later, the walk culminated with a gorgeous sunset which painted the rocks in many hues. The day ended with a relaxing dinner and bonfire where the group got to know each other better.

Sunday morning, a bus was waiting to take us to Belum Caves and Orvakallu Rock Garden. The Belum Caves were formed over a period of tens of thousands of years by the constant flow of underground water of the Chitravathi river which has disappeared. A detailed tour of these spectacular caves, the second largest cave system in India, was enriched with information and anecdotes by accompanying geologists, Mr. Sesha Rao and Mr. Hanumantha Rao. This natural wonder is worth visiting at least once. The next stop after lunch, Orvakallu Rock Garden, had rock formations that looked so surreal as if you are transported into a different planet!

The bus dropped the group back to Kurnool station and with more fun and making friends, we were back in Hyderabad by Sunday night. Everyone left with promises to meet again and heartfelt gratitude to Society to Save Rocks who conceptualized and executed this memorable, pocket friendly and informative trip.

- B. Meghana

GLIMPSES OF OUR FEBRUARY ROCK EXCURSION

Pranavi at Gandikota



Orvakallu Rock Garden



Some climbing too



Kayaking



A boating interlude



Sarai



Strange calcium formations in mysterious and hot Belum Caves



Deep inside the Belum Caves



All reached the top of the Gorge



Happy train journey home



27th Anniversary Celebration

The Society's anniversary on 26th January 2023 was marked by a small celebration in the most apt venue - the lesser known Herbal Garden on Road No. 10, Jubilee Hills with its rocky outcrops.

25 members gathered to cut cake, toast with chai, and Prof Fatima Ali Khan briefly spoke of the Society's journey of many moons. Our special guests were well - wishers P.Raghuveer, formerly Head of the Telangana Forest Department and Mamatha Raghuveer.



The Hyderabad Literary Festival 2023

The Hyderabad Literary Festival 2023 turned out to be an extra busy time for the Society. Our stall had a captivating rock photo exhibition by members Ashok K Vootla and Amita Talwar. It was so captivating that one aesthetic frame went missing without a trace! Hopefully the self proclaimed owner is helping to spread the message of saving rocks !

On Day 1 many schools and colleges had brought their students who were curious to learn about what is unique about Deccan rocks, where they are located and few made sure they went back with selfies with the rock photos. Many little girls made a bee line for the rock earring making while the boys sported rock tattoos. Some parents had a tough time getting their offspring to abandon rock balancing attempts.



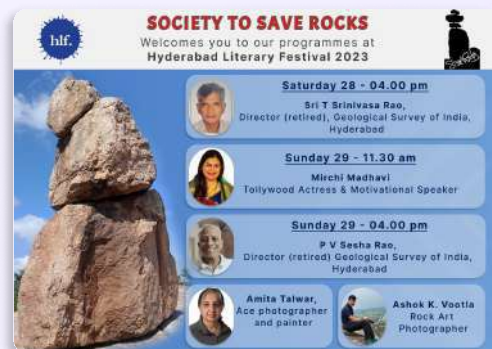
Rock balancing - a popular activity with the little ones at our stall at HLF

Day 2 and 3 were filled with children of all ages eager to make their rock art works with slogans and some penned poems too. Mrs. Ruchi Ranjan was so kind as to display several of her Hindi poems and write-ups on Rocks and nature at the stall, which were much appreciated by our visitors. Our special invitee Mirchi Madhavi drew a crowd with her motivational stories, and the talk on Deccan rocks by Geologists P.V. Sessa Rao and T. Srinivasa Rao threw light on Telangana's rich Natural Heritage.

We had more than 500 visitors at our stall and enrolled some new members too.

It was heartening to see the concern of Nature lovers and their eagerness to join our rock walks. Needless to say that our participation in HLF was fruitful and a lot more people have been converted into rock enthusiasts !

We are grateful to Ashok for gifting his framed photo exhibits to the Society



Mirchi Madhavi talks about Rocks and their importance for the environment

Farewell to Ashok Vootla and his wife Madhavi

A Committee get-together was arranged at President Fatima Alikhan's residence on 8th February 2023, to say good-bye to Ashok Kumar Vootla and his wife Madhavi who have relocated to London.



From right to left: Ashok K. Vootla, Frauke Quader, Fatima Alikhan, Sangeeta Varma, Ravi K. Vundavalli, Dr. Sudheer Bhan, GRB Pradeep and Madhavi Vootla

The Rockathon 2022 thanks-giving

The Hyderabad Rockathon 2022 Core Organisers - the Society & GHAC thanked the Volunteers who helped to pull off the event, for their efficient support. A small coffee mug with their name and photo was presented to them. We gratefully acknowledge GHAC Members - our active Rockathon partners.



From left to right: Bhavana, Sangeeta, Frauke, Uma, Keku, Vidya, Sajid, Bhanu Maddiee, Jai, Abdullah, Raghu and Amardeep

SCHEDULE OF ROCK WALKS

Rock Walks are conducted on the third Sunday of every month.
Everybody is welcome. Walking shoes and long pants should be worn.
Registration with GRB Pradeep at 9866752114

**16 APR
SUN**

Gandipet

7:00 a.m. / Near Café Sandwicho,
Off ORR Narsingi junction-
Osmansagar road, Kokapet.
(Return at 11 a.m. approx.)

**21 MAY
SUN**

Durgam Cheruvu

7:00 a.m. / Near Footwear Design and
Development Institute, Off Dargah Road
under Shaikpet flyover, Shaikpet.
(Return at 11 a.m. approx.)

**18 JUN
SUN**

Moula Ali

7:00 a.m. / Opp. St. Ann's School,
White House, Tarnaka.
(Return at 11 a.m. approx.)

BECOME OUR MEMBER

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	NA
Life (Couple)	₹ 5000.00	NA
Institution	₹ 10000.00	NA
Corporate	₹ 50000.00	NA

MANAGING COMMITTEE

President	Prof. Fatima Alikhan	98493 62944
Vice President	Sangeeta Varma	98490 44624
Secretary	Frauke Quader	98499 36248
Joint Secretary	Padmini B Patell	99128 65299
Treasurer	G.R.B. Pradeep	98667 52114
Members:	Dr. Sudheer Bhan	81060 72537
	Sajid Mehmood	98105 28070
	Amita Talwar	98490 10704
	Ravi Kumar Vundavalli	94944 89472

We Welcome our New Members:

Zoe Kennedy-Hughes and **Harish Vijayasarathy**, Life (Couple)
Nihal Kovalli, Life (Single)
K. Venkateshwarlu, Life (Single)
Asma Osman, Life (Single)
Ch.Ch. D.V. Prasad, Life (Single)
Srinivas Reddy Cherukula and **Divya Kuppili** (Active Couple)
Bharat Kanchanla, Active (Single)
Ram Phanidha Rao, Active (Single)

Mala Pasha, Active (Single)
Rama Thoopal, Active (Single)
Bhavita Mandava, Active (Single)
G.S. Sagar, Active (Single)
Thara Shaar, Active (Single)
Valerie Bidaut, Active (Single)
Bhaavika Ramkumar, Student

Please come forward to coordinate a rock photo exhibition in your Gated Community/Society/Office/Club to help spread the awareness about the Deccan's stunning rocky landscape

