

# SOCIETY TO SAVE ROCKS

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## QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

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White Quartz



View from Dargah



Hunting Lodge



## WHITE CLIFF – NATURE'S JEWEL

Surely you have been to the RG Airport several times via the ORR and hardly noticed a whitish hillock on the horizon. Chances are even less that you took a detour to investigate how this hill looks so different from the Deccan granites one is used to seeing. Two kilometers off the Shamshabad main road one enters Narkoda. As you go along a winding mud road to the left a temple arch welcomes you. This leads to the Siddeshwar Temple at the foot of the white hill referred to as White Cliff. Locals call it **Sidulagutta** due to the old Shiv ling which attracts large crowds during the annual Shivaratri festival.

Step to the right of this shrine and you will notice a spectacular quartz hill emerging almost in fits and starts from the earth below. When the quartz catches the sunlight you will know why we call it Nature's jewel – for it resembles a mammoth uncut diamond which sparkles all round. With a little effort one can scramble up and lo and behold a surprise awaits you ! Atop this cliff sits an old hunting lodge of a Paigah family – constructed in the typical Deccan style with arches and turrets that speak of the bygone era of poetry in mortar. Sadly this structure

Photos by Frauqe Quader

is close to collapse and a family feud is evident from a marking that divides the lodge into two equal halves. Needless to say the Nawabs had a bird's eye view from here exposing their helpless prey while on a hunt besides providing the ideal getaway from their 'devdis' in the city. Yet, they apparently felt a need to stay connected with their Maker and build a mosque within a stone's throw, known as the Baba Sayed Shabuddin Dargah. Perhaps both the temple and mosque have been instrumental in safeguarding this obscure little jewel of Nature from the greedy eyes of land sharks. Or maybe the fear of misfortune befalling those who tamper with holy shrines keeps intruders at bay. Something that certainly works to the advantage of us rock lovers putting White Cliff on the must-see rocksite list. One that you can scout out enroute to the airport next time. Or you can join our upcoming rockwalk this month.

- Padmini B Patell

## CALENDAR LAUNCH

The much awaited calendar was launched on 26<sup>th</sup> of January by Principal Secretary Tourism B.P. Acharya, coinciding with the Society's 19<sup>th</sup> anniversary. After a lot of time, effort and care to detail the wall calendar turned out as a visually appealing representation of the 23 Heritage Precincts of Hyderabad. The calendar was sponsored by Telangana Tourism and designed by our member Supriya Bhalerao with professional photographs contributed by members and other rock lovers.



Photo by Sangeeta Varma

Left to Right: Narendra Luther, B.P. Acharya, Jayesh Ranjan, Frauke Quader

Members have been busy distributing the calendar to many government departments and institutions to make sure all officials connected with our rocksites are aware of their Heritage status.

Few copies are still available at the Society's office.



Milind Soman with members of the Society and Pinkathon Ambassadors

Photo by P. Vishwanath

## PINKATHON - 2015

The prelude to the Pinkathon organized in the city by Milind Soman to create an awareness about Breast Cancer was a warm-up trek at **Fakruddingutta**, our pet rocksite.

United Sisters Foundation CEO and film personality Milind Soman along with Pinkathon Ambassadors were guided by our members Ravi, Sandeep, Madhu and Vishwanath.

Milind Soman is quoted in the Times of India as saying, "My God, this place is beautiful. What a place! You're lucky to have it. I can't believe no one knows or talks about this place. Had I been here this would be one place that I would haunt."

## CONSERVATION THROUGH INTEGRATION

Photo by Sangeeta Varma



**Office of the Director General, Anti-Corruption Bureau, Hyderabad** located at MLA Colony Banjara Hills has been generous to accommodate a prominent rock formation on their premises setting a fine example of Conservation through Integration. Inaugurated in 2013 the idea to preserve this typical Deccan granite called for some changes to the civil construction and foregoing of built-up area. The idea of including the impressive rock in the layout was strongly advocated by Architect Sridhar Gopiseti of TeamOI (ex member of the Society). Their website describes it aptly "It provides an efficient layout and an environmentally sensitive building while complementing the primary goals directing the design of the building."

### TWO DECADES DEDICATED TO THE DECCAN ROCKS

The Society will complete 20 years of its existence on 26<sup>th</sup> January 2016. To mark this significant milestone we would like to hold 20 events starting from June this year that will spread the awareness of why rocks are essential to human existence and also make known the Society's tireless efforts. We welcome your support and your suggestions.

## ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION DUE ON 1ST APRIL 2015

We request Active and Student members to pay the annual subscription on time to ensure smooth running of the Society. We also request you to encourage family and friends to join our Rock cause with new subscriptions – numbers matter and so does revenue!

## Rock Walks in April, May and June 2015

Date :	Place :	Time / Meeting Point:
Sunday April 19, 2015	White Quartz Cliffs near Shamshabad	7.30 a.m. at NMDC, Masab Tank Return 11 am
Sunday May 17, 2015	Fakhruddingutta near Khajaguda	4.00 p.m. at NMDC, Masab Tank or 4.45 at DPS Gate, Khajaguda
Sunday June 21, 2015	Baatasingaram near Ramoji Film City	2.30 p.m. at Gun Park opp. Public Garden

Rock walks are conducted on the third Sunday of every month. They are widely announced in the press and social media, and of course on our website. Everybody is welcome. Walking shoes, a cap, long pants and a water bottle are a must. Please enrol a minimum of 2 days in advance with Uma Maheshwari on 98660 19402 or with Ravi Setlem on 98662-41768.

### We welcome our new members:

T. Purnachandra Rao and B. Vidya Lakshmi, Life (couple)  
Shubhangi Singh and Kush Badhwar, Active (couple)  
Salil Jain, Student

### Managing Committee

President:	Narendra Luther	- 23399778	Members:	
Vice President:	Aparajita Sinha	- 9849655363	Padmini B. Patell	- 9912865299
Secretary:	Frauke Quader	- 9849936248	Dr. Sudheer Bhan	- 8106072537
Joint Secretary:	Amita Talwar	- 9849010704	Ravi Setlem	- 9866241768
Treasurer:	Sangeeta Varma	- 9849044624	Dr. Madhusudan Srinivas	- 8886516222

### Membership Fees

Class	Admission	Annual Subscription
Active (Single)	Rs. 100	Rs.200
(Couple)	Rs. 100	Rs.300
Student	Rs. 100	Rs.100
Life (Single)	Rs. 2,000 for Life	—
(Couple)	Rs. 3,000 for Life	—
Institution	Rs. 10,000	—
Corporate	Rs. 50,000	—