

# The Sydenhamite

THE BULLETIN OF SYDENHAM COLLEGE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION/

FOR PRIVATE CIRCULATION ONLY/WWW.SYDENHAM.AC.IN VOLUME NO.2, ISSUE NO.1, AUGUST 15, 2021



## From the Editorial Team

Dear Readers,

It gives us immense pleasure to inform you all that 'The Sydenhamite' has completed one year of its publication.

We at the editorial team would like to express our unfeigned gratitude to all the readers for their continued patronage. Without your benevolent support, this would have not been possible.

Throughout our journey of writing articles for the newsletter, we have learned and metamorphosed into consummate editors. The experience has been a beautiful journey we embarked on in August 2020 when we released our first newsletter. And today as we celebrate our 75th Independence Day, we present to you the second volume of 'The Sydenhamite'. We hope you like the newsletter as much as we do.

*Happy Reading!*

## A Sneak Peek into the August Edition



### 1. My Days at Sydenham College

- Mr. Dileep Choksi

".... To the many connected with it, Sydenham is an institution – a source of many life's teachings. To the few who have been part of its memories and experiences, it has left a profound impact on them."

### 2. A Tribute to the Unsung Heroes

".....Our struggle for independence was a long crushing battle that had started way back in 1757 with a patriotic goal of Purna Swaraj. And to accomplish the same, there weren't only the freedom fighters of India whom you know but also the heroes who fought as much but didn't fall in the limelight."



### 3. Thank You Sydenham College

- Mr. Virjanan Mulloo

"....I owe my success and achievements post 1973 to Sydenham College. Thank you, Sydenham College."

### 4. Remembering Mr. Vijay Merchant- The Indian Batting Prodigy

".....Vijay Merchant's immaculate batting performance in his debut series wowed the Englishmen. "Let us paint him white and take him to Australia as an opener," remarked English player CB Fry after witnessing him."



### 5. Interview with Mr. Punit Goyal, the Co-founder of BluSmart

".... You see a lot of ups and downs in life and the motto I have is: never celebrate your success and don't feel bad during your bad times because nothing is permanent"



### 6. International Youth Day

### 7. Eating Out at Kalaghoda and Cinemas of the Past

-Mr. Mozam P Murzan

".....There is only one lane in Mumbai city that yet possesses charm, elegance, class, old stone buildings and a smooth landscape to walk on. Welcome to Kalaghoda lane."



### 8. Lest they be Forgotten

- Mr. Amit Kumar Bhowmik

".... At thirteen, my father, who was and still is, my hero, even though he passed away in 1999, joined the cadre of the Indian National Congress Anushilan (INCA) headed by Surjo Sen aka 'Masterda'. That same year, when he was nearly fourteen, my father was arrested for the first time, suspected of being associated with the INCA."

### 9. Friendship day: Forging bonds and working towards harmony

".....There have been countless examples of friendship throughout history that have transformed the very concept of mankind. Friendship is one such feeling that authors and directors have successfully used in novels, literary works, and films."



### 10. Study Abroad Session

".....Sydenham Alumni Cell organized a 'Study Abroad' session with the objective to guide the students about the opportunities and challenges one faces when studying overseas."



### 11. Glimpses of Volume 1 of 'The Sydenhamite'

The August 2021 issue marks the completion of one year of 'The Sydenhamite.' Here's presenting the glimpses of all the 12 editions we have published so far.



### 12. Alumni Association 2021-22



sydenham\_alumni



Sydenham Alumni



Sydenham Alumni Cell



Sydenham Alumni Cell



SydAlumniCell

# My days at Sydenham and learnings in life

- Mr. Dileep Choksi  
Batch 1971



*To the many connected with it,  
Sydenham is an institution – a source of many  
life's teachings. To the few who have been part  
of its memories and experiences, it has left  
a profound impact on them.  
What made it so, was its people.*



I was in awe that one flavored professionalism in the precincts of that great institution just as I did after my schooling at the St. Xavier's Boys Academy. I first pursued medicine as a career when four months later, a good friend of my father, impressed on me the folly of that decision. It made me seek a course change to pursue commerce.

And the choice was the one and only Sydenham. That was my first meeting with its faculty, the giants of the Accounting Profession – Mr. S. V. Ghatalia, Mr. Bansi Mehta, and Mr. Homi Damania. They had the aura of truly great professionals. Their words came from the depths of expertise and brimmed with integrity and honor. College life began with lectures from people like them, great names like Prof. Mahishi and Prof. Warty who impressed upon us young minds the art of communication, the use of language, and the power of words proving them mightier than the sword. Prof. Bansi Mehta, a gold medalist, walked us through the principles of debit and credit, single entry, amalgamations, and the like.

These maestros make the toughest task look so easy. Prof. Damania exhibited the style of a true professional punching real-life experiences into everything he said. In the field of accounting, these names remain shining stars, not only because of their knowledge but the values they cherished and imparted to us without them being included in any syllabus. Immaculately dressed, punctual to a fault, just and fair to one and all, are values not taught in classrooms but lived by example to be imbibed by us who were fortunate to have them as our gurus.

After graduating, I became a chartered accountant, articulated and part of C. C. Chokshi & Co. Chartered Accountants. The firm later was instrumental in getting Deloitte to India. I was a joint managing partner during which the larger firms of A. F. Fergusson, S. B. Billimoria & P.C. Hansotia became a part of Deloitte. The common thread that wove them together were the founding principles of integrity, knowledge, and humility. Lessons that we learned at Sydenham established by the fact that many leaders in those firms were Sydenhamites.

Sydenham was not all work and no play. National champions like Gautam Thakkar and Yezdi Pavri in badminton, Dinesh Nayak in squash, Dilip Lakhani in table tennis, A.P.

Islami in weightlifting, Khorsheda Mody in sports are some shining examples including others whom I now forget imparted to us the spirit of sportsmanship. Leslie Lewis was a state athlete from my class as were many others who participated in sports and were selected up to the state level. I had the fortune of leading Sydenham's swimming team and competing with national stars of the like of Avinash Sarang, Bharat Merchant, and others. The class of 1970 is a classic example of what friendship and sportsmanship mean. That camaraderie is the best to have. The one to value to win life. The warmth of having done things together and for one another stands out best. Does not the batch of 1970 prove it? Who can deny that the place was Sydenham and joining the hostel helped to master that spirit?

As a chartered accountant I have had the good fortune of also being on the board of some companies in India, like State Bank of India, ICICI Bank, Jio Platforms, and Tata Housing. Life has afforded me my greatest moments in being able to work with Nani and Behram Palkhivala during the time they wrote their eighth edition of the immortal treatise on Income tax. It was during these interactions that I invariably met a Sydenhamite and very often from the same batch. To very many, Sydenham gave them their best of friends & at times life partners. In present covid times, it is those relationships which have held together. We lived them at Sydenham. The spirit of compassion was inculcated by participating in the PSERF (poor students educational relief fund). Professor Leena Desai was in charge – remember? Professors like Soonu Kapadia would spend time with students for English and the immortal P.J. Khandeparkar painstakingly explained the Keynes theory of Economics. It embodied the great values of teaching – noble and revered even today. It was during the years while teaching at the Bajaj Management institute that these teachings always came to mind. How can one forget the charm of our other professors like Prof. Mrs. Nagpurwala, Prof. Mrs. Thatte, Prof. Mrs. Hemmady, and Prof. M. T. Gabhe, and Prof. Kazi who radiated with the brilliance of their knowledge of the subject, keenness of mind, and warmth of heart?

Sydenham afforded an opportunity for a complete rounding of personality by also encouraging fine arts. We remember Prof. Mrs. Sarkar who judged performances of budding artists in singing, instrumentals such as the violin and the sitar, and others. The students displayed outstanding talent which many of us fondly recollect. Incidentally, some even opted for it as a vocation in life.



The institution Sydenham was made of these principles every student experienced. As did the batch of 1970. It was the late Nani Palkhivala who while giving a convocation address at a university function mentioned that in universities and courts, they invariably display the portraits of those that led the path as examples of persons one could aspire to follow.

How true.

Many of these would have a Sydenham connect. We also had our share of fun. I remember the time when my friend Sunder Joshi was pushed down the stairs from the first floor and he landed on the ground floor without a tumble all on his heels not knowing what happened to him, much to the awe of everyone around. Sydenham also attracted some of the most beautiful girls including those who were in the 1970 batch. There would be serious consultation amongst friends as to how to attract the attention of the one who has stolen your heart when she really cared a damn. Sagacious advice came forth. It was to take a fountain pen, fill it with ink and when she is wearing a whitish dress, splatter the ink on her. The advice was that at that instant she will hate you. That was the objective. Because once indifference is converted into hate, it is easier to convert it to liking if not love. Long live Sydenham.



# A TRIBUTE TO THE UNSUNG HEROES



As the month of August arrives, the feelings of patriotism and celebration begin to permeate our minds. The eve of India's Independence Day is dedicated to commemorating and remembering our country's independence. India gained independence from British control on August 15, 1947. Every year since then, this day has been celebrated as India's Independence Day.

But this, we all already know. The long lectures on history we all had to sit through have taught us a lot about the Indian A Tribute to the Unsung Heroes freedom struggle, from Champaran Satyagraha to Civil Disobedience. But what we didn't learn were the stories of our unsung heroes.

These heroes selflessly laid their lives for the country so that we could lead a fearless life, a carefree life where we don't have to suffer at the merciless hands of alien enemies.

Those freedom fighters fought with just one focus- to see a free India. Our struggle for independence was a long crushing battle that had started way back in 1757 with a patriotic goal of Purna Swaraj. And to accomplish the same, there weren't only the freedom fighters of India whom you know but also the heroes who fought as much but didn't fall in the limelight.

**It's time you know them.**

**The unsung heroes who have given us the greatest gift of all times- OUR FREEDOM.**

**Velu Nachiyar**

That's the name of the freedom fighter who created the first human bomb. When she found the place where the British stored their ammunition, she walked into the ammunition store after dousing herself in oil and lighting herself to destroy the arms.

She opposed the British rule and emerged as one of the most daring freedom fighters of India much before Sepoy Mutiny or Rani of Jhansi came to light.



**Matangini Hazra**

Matangini Hazra was a part of the Quit India Movement and Non- Cooperation Movement. She was shot thrice in one of the processions but kept moving ahead with the Indian Flag in hand. She kept shouting "Vande Mataram."

**Aruna Asaf Ali**

Not many would have heard of her. But in the list of daring freedom fighters, she ought not to be missed. She hoisted the Indian National Congress flag during the Quit India Movement in 1942 at Gowalia Tank Maidan in Bombay.



**Veerapandia Kottabomman**

In South India, Veerapandia Kottabomman was the revolutionary who refused to pay taxes to the East India Company. Verrapandia was a chieftain from Panchalankurchi in Tamil Nadu but was betrayed by the ruler Pudukottai Vijaya Raghunatha Tondaiman to the British on 1st October 1799. He was publicly hanged on 16th October 1799.

**Bhikaji Cama**

She was a part of the Non-Cooperative movement and Quit India Movement. Not just this, she also stood for gender equality and donated all her personal belongings to girls in the orphanage. She unfurled the Indian flag at the International Socialist Conference at Stuttgart in Germany, 1907.



**Peer Ali Khan**

Peer Ali Khan was a part of the 1857 freedom struggle. He was a rebel who was given capital punishment. Due to his role in the freedom movement, on July 7, 1857, he was summarily tried in the presence of William Tayler, the then Patna Commissioner.



**It's time you know them.**

**The unsung heroes who have given us the greatest gift of all times- OUR FREEDOM.**

**Master Da' Surya Sen**

His revolution gave rise to several freedom fighters in Bengal. He was the man behind Chittagong Armoury Raid (also known as 'Chittagong Uprising') and had 64 revolutionaries along with him. During the Raid, they captured the city and hoisted the Indian national flag declaring Gandhi Raj. He was later captured, brutally tortured and hanged.



Badal Gupta (1912-30)



Binoy Basu (1908-30)



Dinesh Gupta (1910-30)

**The Trio Of Benoy, Badal & Dinesh**

The trio Benoy Basu, Badal Gupta and Dinesh Gupta were 22, 18 and 19 years old respectively when they targeted a brutal Inspector General of Police, Colonel NS Simpson. They wore European outfits, entered Writer's Building and killed him. When they were caught, Benoy took the cyanide pill while Badal and Dinesh shot themselves dead before being captured.

**Tirupur Kumaran**

Kumaran was the founder of the Association named Desa Bandhu Youth Association. The flag of Indian nationalists was banned by the British and he led a protest march holding the same against the colonial government on 11th January 1932. Although he succumbed to injuries, he was found dead holding the flag.



**Begum Hazrat Mahal**

The Indian Rebellion, 1857 found Hazrat in a major role. When her husband, Nawab Wajid Ali Shah, was exiled, she took charge of Awadh and seized Lucknow. Later, she retreated to Kathmandu where she died.

**Tirot Singh**

Tirot Singh, 18th century chief of Khasi people, had only swords, arrows and bows to fight against the British enemy. Untrained in British type of warfare, he resorted to a guerrilla activity which went on for about four years. He was shot by the British and eventually captured in January 1833. His death anniversary is commemorated as a state holiday in Meghalaya.



*This Independence Day, as we recall these unsung heroes and their sacrifices, let us all promise to be responsible citizens and do our bit for our country. This way we can pay tribute and value all the sacrifices our freedom fighters have made for our freedom!*

**जय हिंद**



# Thank You, Sydenham College.

- Mr. Virjanan Mulloo  
Batch 1973

## The ordeal before joining Sydenham

It was 16 July 1969. Just landed in Mumbai for the first time with the great hope and enthusiasm of joining Sydenham College.

My host Mr.P.S.Nerurkar, a Marathi journalist and writer who was kind enough to grant me accommodation in his one-room flat in East Vile Parle, brought me to Sydenham College the following day. Admission rejected. It was too late. The college had already started in mid-June. A desperate situation.

Wanted to return home. Dream quashed.

He finally got me admitted at the Siddharth College of Arts and Commerce in Fort area to appease me.. To be frank, I was neither comfortable in the class nor in his flat as we were living 3 in a room. Poor Madam host had to sleep in the kitchen. Felt very embarrassed. Yet, they were so gentle and cool.

But me, I was like a fish out of water...

Having had ample experience in social matters in Mauritius and having been also in close contacts before with the Brihan Maharashtra Mandal (BMM) in Mumbai, I started making a personal move while absenting very often from college sessions. Thru BMM contacts I could meet Prof.T.K.Tope, Principal of Government Law College, Churchgate who in turn recommended me to Prof. Namjoshi, then Minister of Education, Maharashtra Government. Explained to them the problems which they fully understood and vouched. The contacts were positive and conclusive.

***My action bore fruits.***



---

I was finally admitted to Sydenham College during the second term in October 69 as well as at the Government College Hostel. Great was my satisfaction after 3 months of ordeal, embarrassment, and patience. It was the happiest day of my life.

---



# The Sydenham Era

Accommodated on the 3rd Floor of the hostel, I did not take much time to befriend my immediate neighbours at the hostel the first one being Hemant Joshi from Pune, then K.K.Patel from UK and Firoze Vazifdar from Mumbai. It is a matter of interest to note that we four people are still corresponding and meeting till now even after 52 years. Our last meet was in April 2019 along with the spouses. It was the 2nd great reunion after our first meet in 2004. This type of situation where 4 friends from 4 different places in the world meet with their spouses is, I may say, a blue moon phenomenon.

The first thing that my college students were asking me during my first week at the college was how come you are admitted at that time of the year. After explaining to them the reasons we all became good friends till the end of our graduation in 1973.

Having noticed that there was a sizable overseas students population at Sydenham, it dawned on my mind the need for an association. My good friend K.K. Patel was the first to react positively followed by 40 others. Thus the Sydenham Overseas Students Association (SOSA) saw the day in 1971 with the blessings of the then Principal Shri S.D.Bal. Early in 1972, we had organized a big and successful exhibition called the SOSEX 72 which was opened by the Ambassador of the UK in India Mr. Gillett. Apart from this activity, we had also organized tours in Aurangabad, Shimla, Goa, and Kashmir in collaboration with the Indian Council for Cultural Relations in Mumbai.

As a student, I had really admired most of the Professors and Lecturers although in few boring lectures me and my friends KKPatel and Firoze could not do otherwise than enjoy some silent musical sessions. All the same, I am extremely grateful to Prof Abhyankar, Prof Belsare. and Principal S.D.Bal for their cooperation and valuable advice.



There are two bad experiences that I will always remember. First, the Indo-Pak war of December 1971 where at each siren at night I had to run 4 floors in the dark to go and hide under the sofa in the common room on the ground floor with the heart-pounding while praying to God... The second was during April vacation when the hostel was nearly empty as many had left for their homes. I remember at one time I had only 25 paise in my pocket. My parents had still not sent me money. Was compelled to sell my small Sony radio transistor to a business shop in Colaba for Rs 100.

After the 1973 exams we awaited for the results which came in June. Thank God all those whom I know passed successfully. I left Mumbai on 28 June 1973 with tears of satisfaction and after having fulfilled my objectives and those of my parents.

## POST SYDENHAM ACHIEVEMENTS

I could say I was a complete man after having spent 4 years at Sydenham College with the ocean of experience and knowledge acquired. Before leaving for Mumbai, I had taken 4 years of study leave without pay from Government where I was working as Clerical Officer. Had to resume the same clerical job again end of June 73.

I joined the Administrative service (just like IAS in India) as Administrative Officer in June 1976 after undergoing a series of competitive exams. In 1978 I was sent

to the University of Mauritius to follow a One-year Diploma in Public Administration and Management. My degree from Sydenham College was indeed helpful. In 1988 was promoted to Deputy Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Finance and finally reached the top administrative ladder as Permanent Secretary in 1994 at the Prime Minister's Office.

During my career in the Administrative service I was lucky enough to have had the opportunity of going on various official missions in India, Europe, Africa, Trinidad and Tobago, Solomon Islands, South East Asia and the USA. In 1982 I went for further training at the University of Paris for 3 months on Financial Resources Management and in September 1987 again for 3 months at the International Monetary Fund in Washington on Public Finance.

Retired in 2003 to join the private sector as Administrative Director till end 2017. In 2015 I was appointed by the Prime Minister as a member of the High-level Independent Review Panel for 2 terms of 3 years.

I was awarded the MBE (Member of the British Empire) similar to a Padmashri in 1992 by the Government of Mauritius for meritorious service rendered after having managed successfully as Secretary-General of the 2nd World Marathi Convention in Mauritius in 1991 with 500 delegates around the world where Shri Sharad Pawar, then Chief Minister of Maharashtra was the Chief Guest.

For so many times after studies I have been to Mumbai be it on official or private visits I have never failed to pass through B Road, Churchgate to have a glance at Sydenham College and on some occasions meeting the Principal.

**In fine, I owe my success and achievements post 1973 to Sydenham College.  
Thank you, Sydenham College. I love my Sydenham.**



## Remembering Mr. Vijay Merchant –The Indian Batting Prodigy



Mr. Vijay Merchant is widely considered one of India's best pre-independence batsmen. His batting was the epitome of grace and was defined by flawless foot-work, powerful drives, subtle late cuts, and exquisite hooks and pulls. He was a batter whose batting was a grade above the rest. During the era, Merchant was regarded as one of the finest, with Don Bradman, Compton, and others.

# Remembering Mr. Vijay Merchant –The Indian Batting Prodigy



It was sad that he did not get more Test match opportunities. In his 18-year international career, Merchant only appeared in 10 Test matches. However, he demonstrated his batting brilliance at the domestic level as he was the most formidable Indian cricketer ever.

On this prestigious occasion of National Sports Day, let's take a look at the illustrious journey of our Alumni Vijay Merchant.

## College career:

Mr. Merchant was a self-taught cricketer who honed his immaculate batting style via self-correction. Since he was a teenager, he had a knack for putting up big numbers. He captained Sydenham College and was regarded by his contemporaries as an excellent cricketer. Later, in 1929, he continued to play for his college while also playing for the Hindus in the then-famous Pentangular Series.

## Domestic Career:

Mr. Merchant has a first-class average of 71.64, second only to Don Bradman on the list of all-time top first-class averages. Due to World War, he missed most of his playing years. He played six seasons of First-Class cricket, with batting averages of 114, 123, 223, 285, and 117 in the first five. In 47 innings in Ranji Trophy matches, Merchant amassed 3639 runs at a mind-boggling average of 98.75. Vijay Merchant was chosen in the Indian squad to play against the England side, who were touring India for the first time to play Test cricket on Indian territory.

## A True Patriot:

Vijay was an Indian nationalist. He would have taken part in India's first Test match. However, he canceled a trip to England prior to Independence because Mahatma Gandhi and other freedom fighters were imprisoned. Four years later, he decided to tour England solely because the country's leaders had been released from prison. Following that, he made his Test debut during the 1933-34 England tour.

## Praised highly by overseas greats:

Vijay Merchant's immaculate batting performance in his debut series wowed the Englishmen. "Let us paint him white and take him to Australia as an opener," remarked English player CB Fry after witnessing him. Mr. Merchant accumulated nearly 800 runs on two tours to England, playing in the middle order.

Later, due to poor health, he decided to forgo the Australian tour. The Australians were excited to compete against the Indian Legend. They were disappointed, however, when they learned that he had canceled the tour. "Worst of all, we were denied the sight of Vijay Merchant, who must undoubtedly claim to be the best of all Indian players," Bradman said. Oldest Player to score a Test century

---

In the 1951-52 series against England, Mr. Vijay Merchant scored 154 runs at Kotla in Delhi. It was the final test of his professional career. He became the oldest Indian to score a Test century with this century. The record hasn't been broken yet.



# Interview with Mr. Punit Goyal, the Co-founder of BluSmart

- Mr. Punit Goyal  
Batch 2006

Mr. Punit Goyal graduated from Sydenham College of Commerce and Economics (B.Com 2005- 06). Since then he has founded and run successful clean-energy companies and clean mobility companies both in India and Europe.

Mr. Punit founded PLG Power – one of the early solar panel manufacturing companies in India, which manufactured and exported 72MW solar panels to Germany, Italy, and Switzerland between 2008 to 2012. He had founded PLG Photovoltaic in 2010 which set up one of the 1st 20 MW solar power plants in India in 2012 with an investment of \$60mln. Punit exited the 20MW solar asset for \$68mln in 2014.

He co-founded PLG Clean Energy which developed a 70MW solar asset with Suzlon. He is the co-founder of BluSmart and is passionate about smart mobility. He has been awarded “40 under 40 Solar Business Leaders” and “India’s Top 100 Business Leaders in Solar Industry”.

He is an alumnus of Aston Business School, UK (MSc International Business, Class of 2007), London School of Economics and Political Science, UK (Majors in Public Finance, Class of 2006), Harvard Business School (Business Strategy Exec Program Class of 2009 and PLD Class of 2010).



He founded – BluSmart Mobility which started its operations in June 2019. BluSmart is India's largest 100% electric ride-hailing service and the largest EV fast-charging network. BluSmart is currently growing 20% month on month and clocking a monthly run-rate of 60,000 emission-free rides. BluSmart has completed 500,000 emission-free rides with a BluSmart app rating of 4.8 on android and 4.9 on iOS. BluSmart has raised \$10.8 million across its seed round and pre-series A rounds.





## Memories of Sydenham College

PG: I've fond memories of Sydenham College – which is one of the best educational institutions in India. Sydenham has one of the biggest classrooms, great teaching faculty, and a thriving environment for students. Sydenham excels in shaping the students for building a better tomorrow and lays emphasis on equal participation in curricular and extracurricular activities. I was awarded the Sydenham Students' Council of the Year 2004-05 and was the ACOC (Publicity and PR) for Brouhaha'04 (also awarded the Best ACOC for Brouhaha'04). My favourite subjects were Economics and Business Studies and I've spent a lot of time at the Sydenham Library (which was one of the best in the country during my time). Also countless hours in the society meetings at Sydenham.

Students' Council (Apex Student Body of the College). The Sydenham Canteen was a place to spend time catching up with friends during lunchtime.

### *Tell us about your Entrepreneurship Journey.*

PG: I wrote a dissertation on the energy space in India while at college (in the UK), and, while writing it, I understood that there was a huge opportunity. In 2007 a lot was happening in the renewable energy space globally. I found that a lot of solar panels were being manufactured in China and other parts of Asia, and they were being shipped to Europe. This was very exciting for me. I started my first venture in 2008 called PLG Power. We set up a manufacturing facility in India to manufacture 25-megawatt solar panels and export them to the European Union. And I opened two companies, one in Germany, one in Italy, manufacturing 72-megawatt solar panels. It was a massive market opportunity, but around 2012 the entire market was coming down, so I decided that I would exit the manufacturing space and shut down my first start-up. It was a great lesson learned at a very young age. I then got another opportunity. The Government of Gujarat announced a policy to set up 300 megawatts of solar power plants in India in 2011. My company, PLG Photovoltaic (my second startup) got a license but the cost was on the higher side. I collaborated with a Saudi company called Zamil Group and with that collaboration my company set up India's first 20-megawatt solar power plant, which was a historic plant for India – it was a dedication to the nation. My third venture was PLG Clean Energy Projects, again, a joint venture with a company called Suzlon. And together we set up a 70-megawatt solar power plant in India, in Maharashtra. I think our investment took \$55million and the project after commissioning was sold back to Suzlon for \$57million.

### *What made you want to start a 100% zero-emissions ride-hailing service?*

PG: The idea came when I was in the U.S. One of my investee companies is Drivezy, and they were doing car-sharing (I was a seed investor in that company back in 2015). I believe that, in the future, people will not buy cars. In the UK, in London, a lot of people don't own cars, they take the underground, a bus or they take an Uber. That's a trend that we're going to see growing over the next ten years. Me and my co-founder, Anmol Jaggi, had been in the solar energy space for ten years. The total cost of ownership in electric vehicles is 25 percent cheaper today compared to piston-powered, non-electric cars, and they have the advantage of being on the lower side in terms of the fuel cost (which is about 15 percent of the actual fuel cost for a non-electric car). And that's a massive differential, especially for a ride-hailing service. It makes more sense because every car on our platform runs about 200 kilometers a day and the math is very simple; the more you run, the more you save.

So we're trying to build a sustainable, affordable ride-hailing service for people in Delhi. Delhi is the world's most polluted capital, which is not a good crown to have, and Gurugram - another city we operate in, which is next to Delhi - is the world's most polluted city. The whole idea is to decongest the national capital region of Delhi while ensuring that we don't add any pollution. All our cars have zero emissions. Since launch, we have covered about 16 million zero-emission kilometers. Our BlueSmart app has been downloaded by 250,000 people. We have covered about 500,000 zero-emission trips, serving about 500,000 customers, including during lockdown in India, which impacted transportation as a business.

### ***How has Covid-19 impacted your business?***

PG: We used the Covid-19 period to add a lot of safety features for the consumer. On the BluSmart app, you can see the last time your car was sanitized and you can also see the body temperature of the driver. BluSmart customers can see the vaccination status of the drivers on the BluSmart iOS and android app. There's also no physical interface with the driver - you pay through BluWallet, so there's minimal cash exchange, minimizing your chances of getting an infection. In the pandemic, our focus has been to provide a cleaner, safer, and more reliable ride experience for the consumers.

### ***What are your plans for the future of BluSmart?***

PG: We've seen good growth. We've raised a small seed round of \$10.8 million, and these are early days for us. As we speak right now, we are in talks to raise \$20million in our Series A round in August 2021. This will allow us to scale up the fleet (currently at about 412 BluSmart electric cars) to about 3,000 BluSmart electric cars by 2022-23. The major difference between us and Uber is that Uber allows people, individual drivers, to bring assets to the table and start driving. Uber charges commission, which is great for micro-entrepreneurship as asset ownership in the UK is about 750 cars per 1,000 people. The asset ownership in the US is about 900 cars per 1,000 people, but the asset ownership in India is about 22 cars per 1,000 people. Less than three percent of Indians own a car. And we were thinking that if we were to get into the electric vehicle space with the same business model, that doesn't make sense because these people come from the weakest sections of society and we don't want them to spend \$10,000 upfront to buy a car and spend \$800 a month on running costs to earn \$20 or \$50 a month. So we partnered with institutions that are funding renewable energy projects, and they are the ones buying the assets. Meanwhile, we're improving the quality of life for drivers by allowing them to earn without the hassle of overheads. We're also creating a substantial impact because we're improving the quality of life for everybody living in Delhi. Once we scale to about 40,000 cars in Delhi we will reach out to other cities. The second city will be Bombay. Once we demonstrate scale in these two markets, we'll open the franchise model for BluSmart and people can start running it in other parts of India.



### ***Do you have any tips for the readers on being resilient in business?***

PG: You see a lot of ups and downs in life and the motto I have is: never celebrate your success and don't feel bad during your bad times because nothing is permanent. Every event that happens in life, good or bad, teaches you a lot and it's what you use from that time that will help you going forward.

# INTERNATIONAL YOUTH DAY

THE POWER OF YOUTH IS THE COMMON WEALTH FOR THE ENTIRE WORLD.  
THE FACES OF YOUNG PEOPLE ARE THE FACES OF OUR PAST, OUR PRESENT, AND OUR FUTURE.  
NO SEGMENT IN THE SOCIETY CAN MATCH WITH THE POWER, IDEALISM, ENTHUSIASM, AND COURAGE OF THE YOUNG PEOPLE.

- Kailash Satyarthi



*International Youth Day is celebrated every year on the 12th of August and is an initiative that celebrates the qualities of young people and that recognizes the challenges that today's youth can face.*



The theme of International Youth Day 2021 was, “Transforming Food Systems: Youth Innovation for Human and Planetary Health”, with the aim of highlighting that the success of such a global effort will not be achieved without the meaningful participation of young people.

There is a need for inclusive support mechanisms that ensure youth continue to amplify efforts collectively and individually to restore the planet and protect life, while integrating biodiversity in the transformation of food systems.

International Youth Day was first celebrated in 1999 when the General Assembly endorsed the recommendation made by the World Conference of Ministers Responsible for Youth that 12 August be declared International Youth Day.

The Assembly recommended that public information activities should be organized to support the Day as a way to promote better awareness of the World Programme of Action for Youth, adopted by the General Assembly in 1995 (resolution 50/81).

This day is dedicated to the role young women and men play in bringing change in tackling global issues and achieving sustainable development. It also serves as an opportunity to raise awareness of challenges and problems facing the world's youth.

International Youth Day emphasizes the rights of young people to have full access to education, healthcare, employment, monetary services, and complete participation in public life. This day recognizes and celebrates the contributions of young volunteers and activists who are pushing for positive change around the world as youngsters serve as catalysts for peace and prosperity, not only in their local communities but on the global stage.





# Eating Out at Kalaghoda and Cinemas of the Past

- Mozam P Murzan  
Batch 1981

**There is only one lane in Mumbai city that yet possesses charm, elegance, class, old stone buildings (brilliant architecture) and a smooth landscape to walk on.**

**Welcome to Kalaghoda lane. A few restaurants in our city can boast of a past so traditional, so royal with sumptuous cuisine prepared to feed a king, so tasty and lively and yet so subtle.**

**Welcome to Khyber restaurant, a 63-year-old eatery (established in 1958) that has grown from a 50 seater to a 300 seater fine dining restaurant. It has various rooms to choose for your dining comfort, the aroma of authentic north Indian delicacies that can arouse a corpse back to life.**

**Brick Wall interiors since 1987, rustic surroundings, huge urns and Mughal royalties grace the Wall making it an indescribable experience to relish.**

I have distinct memories of visiting Khyber in the early 70s, when it was a multicuisine eatery ground + 1. They served both Indian and Continental cuisine. My Mom loved the Lobster Thermidor preparation, it was not crusty, nor was it tender.... just right. Juicy lobster was a delicacy.

The Ground floor section had the aroma of barbaqued meats, it was so tandoori, so succulent and so tempting. Dad, my sas and I would share two plates of chicken tikkas and two mutton biryanis. The tender meat, saffrony rice would melt in the mouth.

Chicken Korma was my favourite creamy blend of a smooth saffron gravy, it was braised with yoghurt and traditional spices. The chicken so tender, and the gravy so flavoursome...a connoisseur's delight.

Dum gosht biryani (so piquant), Bhuna gosht (smoky urn aroma of marrowy meat), Kebabs (never-ending favourite), Tikkas (what starters ! ), Pulaos (true rice feast blended with seasoned spices ) and Curries (exotic and so smooth ) and a lot more. The rotis, naans, parathas and desserts.

Khyber restaurant is truly a gourmet's delight. Definitely the best North Western cuisine served in Bombay city, always packed and booking is a must. One should definitely visit this place.

If ever there was a cafe in Bombay city, that was so lively, so friendly and the delicacies there were too homely with a rustic ambience to soak in- It was Samovar cafe situated near Jahangir Art gallery. During college days, holidays and whenever we had free time off-Samovar was our favourite venue.

Mint tea was served in a kettle, sipped and relished with kanda and batata bhajias. I loved the garlic chatni (sweet and sour ), it was so smooth. I would order more bhajias to soak in our chatni. Cheese omelette toast sandwich, it was so sumptuous, so cheesy, crunchy and delicious. The sandwiches were so fresh, so homely and so buttery enjoyed with fruit sauce. Lunch time special would be Prawn curry rice, nothing fancy. The tomato and coconut gravy filled with eight small pieces of prawns and served with rice, it was a tangy curry with just the right portion. Chicken baida roti would be our evening snack along with a chilly cheese toast, the toast would be cut in 8 pieces. It would be flowing with cheese and chillies on top....yes, we loved Samovar.

A normal journey to Jahangir Art Gallery would begin by viewing creative artistic paintings on both sides of the ground floor (left and right). They were too artistic for us to comprehend and at times, truly eye catching as well.



They were so colourful, the modern art was so meaningful. They have so many versions to think of just on one piece of art, it was truly amazing. We would collect a detailed brochure on the art displayed by the creative artists and tuck them in our pocket. And then would marvel them when we reached home. The aroma arising from Samovar would incite us to visit at once. It was too tempting. But we would resist and proceed to the first floor.

What a glamorous view from the top, huge century old trees. It was full of greenery all round and wide roads towitness, colonial stone buildings to gape at. What a scenic beautiful city our Bombay was (and still is) A treat to our eyes!

Proceed to the mini art studio, ponder, appreciate the paintings. They are truly creative, true to life and such a treat to our eyes. Rush down to Samovar, yes those were the days when I.S. Johar would occupy the first seat from the right side, sipping beer and nibbling on peanuts. Yes, yes those were the days. Samovar amiss. Nostalgic memories to cherish forward.

The constitution of India was conceptualized and written by Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar at Wayside Inn on Kalaghoda. If it was open our eatery would complete 95 years of service to Bombay city (it opened in 1925), but sadly closed down about 15 years ago. Red and White table cloths would adorn every table of different sizes. It was a meeting place of Socialites, Editors, Artists, Advertising fraternity and Who's Who of Bombay city (Maneck Davar, media honcho, he would always be present at tea time in the early 90s ) Colonial British charm presence.

Waiters adorning a white uniform, it was truly courteous. Fish and Chips was my favourite, it was too tasty. I enjoyed with tartar sauce and bread rolls. Mutton cutlets served with tomato gravy was another favourite, it was oval shaped and a reminder of cutlets prepared by Mom at home. Even the Potato chips preparation was brilliant, thick (not thin like McDonald's) potato pieces so well fried, not oily when enjoyed with salt and pepper sprinkled on top and fruit sauce. Delicious.



Main course would be Mutton Dhansak (Wednesdays and Saturdays ), the dal was so smooth, medium spicy and mixed with three juicy pieces of boneless meat.....original Dhansak taste. Brown rice with onions sprinkled on the top it was enjoyed with kachumber, truly a feast to cherish.

Butter and Mustard Laden Mutton/Chicken /Roast meat sandwiches. Relished with fruit sauce, Mutton/ Chicken/ Vegetarian crust pattice the thin crust with generous fillings. It was too tasty. When Packed at office hours and packed at tea time. Yes, Wayside Inn was not only a part of Bombay city but a pillar of India.

Metro had the biggest canteen area. On the ground floor there was a huge canteen, as you enter towards the left. On the first floor also there was a big canteen serving all our favourite items. Metro was the theatre that started the famous softie ice cream cone (vanilla ice cream on cone). Every snack served was a delight to relish. Ahead of the 1st floor canteen was a huge sitting area where one could relish their snacks. Table, chairs, more than 60 people could be accommodated. In the 70's, Metro had a beer bar licence and would serve Beer as well. After several years the section was renovated and converted as a video parlour. About 8 machines were placed (this was around the mid 80's). By the early nineties they discontinued the video parlour also and it was once again a canteen to relish your snacks on. Metro was also adorned with lovely photographs framed of celebrities of Hollywood. Who's who along with lovely wooden frames showing the old advertisements of Coca Cola. Wondrous buildings, Art Deco Heritage II - A structure. Built and run by Metro Goldwyn Mayer (MGM).

One of the early movies viewed was the re run of Lawrence of Arabia (Peter O' Toole, Anthony Quinn, Omar Sharif). What a star cast! It was a wondrous movie. A lot more followed in the years ahead. But by 1970 screening of Hindi movies began. Bobby (a lovely love story with its unforgettable songs) was the first. The premiere of Satyam Shivam Sundaram was definitely an occasion to celebrate. Major film stars of Bollywood were present along with a fireworks display before the Premiere. Raj Kapoor and Zeenat Aman were walking in



together( hand clung to his arm ). Those were the days. It was the first auditorium to hold the Filmfare awards in 1955. Huge crowds would gather. The Police bandobast and a brilliant band playing music outside the cinema hall. During the early 60s attending an evening show (mainly on Sundays) was like going for an Opera show. I would be dressed in my best shirt and corduroy pant (cufflinks on shirts), my sister would look charming in a maxi along with my Parents formally dressed. Mom attired in an evening gown and Dad all suited and booted. The seating was very comfortable. No complaints. There was no small wall after the A row (on Dress Circle). Instead the wall was tall and you had to sit upright to watch your film. Relaxing rules censored.

Yes, Metro was the grandest theatre of Bombay city. True charm amiss. We truly miss the charm and grandiose of entering Metro anymore. Gush of a/c would strike our forehead. It was so refreshing. It is now a multiplex (I think since 1907). Popcorn, samosa and cold drinks costed the same as our ticket. All good things in life must come to an end for better times ahead.....I disagree. I want my old Metro back.

New Empire was a very lucky theatre with a phenomenal number of smashing hits viewed here. Constructed in 1908 as the first cinema hall to show dramas in English, Gujarati and Marathi. 40 years down the line our Art Deco building was renovated in 1948. Many of our favourite movies were viewed at this venue. Memories of viewing Airport, Burt Lancaster and Dean Martin (Ti Amore)...the last 40 minutes of this film was truly intriguing..... edge of seat thriller. Enjoyed thoroughly.

The Godfather trilogy of films viewed multiple times at this venue..... how we loved the 1st version (Marlon Brando at his best), we adored the second version (Al Pacino at his best) and were disappointed by the 3rd version (could have been avoided). The third version got released after a very long time (1980) and lacked the thrill and storytelling of the first 2 films. Yet recollect the scene in Godfather 1 of the dead horse's face placed on Woltz bed. Giving the signal "you don't play

around with the Godfather or the hair raising scene. Shot Mafia style. Too good. Excellent storytelling, brilliant direction and superb acting. A tribute to film making witnessed at New Empire.

Love Story another classic we viewed, a brilliant simple love story. I still remember the last scene when Ryan O Neil tells his Dad " Love means never having to say you are sorry". What an ending!

Other two musicals ( yes we loved musicals ) we enjoyed were Saturday Night Fever and Grease. Loved John Travolta in SNF, his bouncy walk, his style of acting and we adored his dance moves (More than a woman). We by hearted all the songs written and sung by the Bee Gee's, the ultimate favourite being "How Deep Is your love" sung by Barry Gibbs (a wondrous singer, going strong at the age of 70 +), luscious words, unforgettable tune. I think 2 years later came Grease an enjoyable high school drama. It was based on mainly two characters, Danny (John Travolta) and Sandy (Olivia Newton John). It also had some lovely music by Michael Gibson. And Excellent choreography . They should make such movies more often. Come on 50 years have passed when will we dance again.

The Eatery at New Empire was okay. The menu had rolls, sandwiches, samosas, crust pattice, popcorn. Cold drinks contained tea, Coffee etc. Those days snacks were galore next to our 3 theatres, you had Vithal Bhelwala (best bhel in Bombay – now no more), Cannon Pav Bhaji (opposite Capitol talkies) and Waikiki (next to Sterling now no more).

The washroom at New Empire was the smallest amongst all our English theatres. Wonder why! No explanation. Decent theatre, excellent movies shown. Now amiss.....defunct. End of another landmark of Bombay city.

Strand was our homely theatre delight. It was tucked in the by lanes of Colaba road with a decent open air car park . Opposite was an old Irani restaurant along with an interesting flipper machine and a brilliant football playing machine. Just passing that lane where Strand cinema was located gave me a homely feel. Grand Entrance, with the red carpet laid out. From the left you would proceed to the Balcony and Dress Circle and on the right you could go to the upper and lower stalls. Grand canteen would at one time serve Chicken Rolls (from Paradise), excellent punjabi samosas (really crusty layer fill with potatoes minced in a turmeric preparation) and lovely Chutney sandwiches (hot and sweet).....the Goans and Parsees preparation was exotic . Other snacks served at were also good. Strand boasted of Golden Jubilee hits....The Dirty Dozen, Where Eagles Dare, Mackennas Gold (seen in Strand thrice and at the New Excelsior re run in 1979).

This was the theatre that displayed Terrance Hill and Bud Spencer movies. What a duo. Full of fun and excitement. They made about 20 movies together. Our favourite two movies of this duo was "They Call me Trinity" and "Trinity is still my name". What action packed comedy movies they were. They don't make such movies anymore. Now-a-days the trend of movies being made are really different. Parasite was good. Joker was very good. But these movies don't tickle your cheek bones. In our times we also had such movies but with a mix of comedy, romance, murder mysteries, Spy encounters etc.

The Favourite movie I viewed at Strand was Duchess and the Dirtwater fox, it was a brilliant western comedy with Superb acting by George Segal and Goldie Hawn. I was sitting in C row, with my legs stretched. (Yes C row at Dress Circle in Strand was the best row to relax your body, it was so relaxing). The West should make Cowboy movies again.....We all love Cowboy movies.

From the mid or late 70's onwards Strand stopped displaying English movies and it became a Hindi theatre . And by the early 90's our theatre also become defunct.

It was really sad..... we have nostalgic moments to cherish .

Two cinema houses closed down, one film cinema hall showing 2 to 3 pictures on their single screen every day. Some cinema halls get renovated and become multiplexes and new multiplexes keep on springing up..... C'est la vie .





## LEST THEY BE FORGOTTEN ....

-Mr. Amit Kumar Bhowmik  
Batch 1970

On August 15 we shall be celebrating yet another Independence Day, once again, forgetting, however, (as always!), the sacrifices of thousands of our country men and women who laid down their lives; suffered unimaginable cruelties to wrest this freedom, that we take for granted, literally with their blood, sweat and tears from the British imperialistic yoke. The martyrs are countless. Hence, it is not possible to mention all their names and deeds of valour in this article, which I am dedicating to Surjo Sen aka 'Masterda'; the Naval Ratings Uprisings; Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose and his Indian National Army (INA) or Azad Hind Fauj; who, to my mind, were the true architects of our independence. History is written by the conquerors! Thus, even though Gandhi Ji's 'Quit India' movement launched by him on August 8th, 1942, against Sir. Stanford Cripps, was a damp squib and a monumental failure, just because the stalwarts of the Indian National Congress (INC) were on shoulder-rubbing terms with the British and in the driver's seat so-to-say, they claimed the trophy – and clung on to it, as if it was their personal fiefdom. could live free. Or, deliberately, down-playing their imperative and dominant roles. My father, late Fanindra Nath Bhowmik, was just eleven years old when his father died from throat cancer. My paternal grandfather had moved to Jalpaiguri, in North Bengal, from Faridpur, in erstwhile East Pakistan, now Bangladesh.

At  
thirteen, my father,  
who was and still is, my hero,  
even though he passed away in 1999,  
joined the cadre of the Indian National  
Congress Anushilan (INCA) headed by Surjo  
Sen aka 'Masterda'. That same year, when he  
was nearly fourteen, my father was arrested for the  
first time, suspected of being associated with the  
INCA. He was beaten black and blue. Baba was  
made to lie down naked, on blocks of ice. Then, he  
was locked up in a dog kennel; crouched up for two  
days, before being brought out at mid-day and  
forced, at bayonet point, to look at the sun. His  
eyes were forever damaged and he had to wear  
numbered glasses from that age. But Baba  
never squealed on his colleagues. He  
rarely spoke of those days. But, I  
learned of his exploits from  
his sisters, my aunts.



Surjo Sen, was born on 22nd March 1894 in Chittagong. He was a school teacher. 'Masterda' was influenced by Nationalist ideals in 1916 while he was a student at the Behrampore College. Sen recruited young and passionate revolutionaries known as the 'Chittagong group', including Ananta Singh, Ganesh Ghosh and Lokenath Bal, who waged a guerilla war against the British, putting their own lives on the line. The Chittagong armory raid, also known as the 'Chittagong uprising,' was an attempt made on 18th April 1930 to raid the armory of the police and Auxiliary Forces at Chittagong in the Bengal Presidency of British India (now in Bangladesh). The purpose was to show to the people of India that the British rulers were not invincible. The raiders were all members of the 'Indian Republican Army' (IRA), which was a branch of the INCA, who favored armed uprisings as a means to achieve India's independence from British colonial rule. They were led by Surjo Sen. After the incursions, the rebels gathered outside the police armory, where 'Masterda' took a military salute; hoisted our National flag in place of the Union Jack and proclaimed a 'Provisional Revolutionary Government'. The 'Chittagong Revolutionary Group' suffered a fatal blow when 'Masterda' was arrested on 16th February 1933 from Gairala village after a tip-off was received from an insider of the group. For the reward money, Netra Sen, informed the British Government that Surjo Sen was hiding in his house. But before Netra Sen was able to collect his Rs.10,000/- reward, a princely sum at that time, he was assassinated by the revolutionaries. Surjo Sen along with Tarakeswar Dastidar were hanged on 12th January 1934, after being subjected to inhuman torture in prison. 'Masterda's teeth and finger-nails were pulled out. He was hanged while he was unconscious.

The 'Royal Indian Navy Mutiny', also called the '1946 Naval Ratings Uprising', was an insurrection of Indian naval ratings, soldiers, police personnel and civilians against the British Government in India.

The revolt was finally called off following a meeting between the President of the Naval Central Strike

Committee (NCSC), M. S. Khan, and Vallabh Bhai Patel of the Congress, who had been sent to Bombay to settle the crisis. Patel issued a statement calling on the strikers to end their action, which was later echoed by a plea made in Calcutta by Mohammed Ali Jinnah, on behalf of the Muslim League. Under these extraordinary pressures, the strikers gave way. Arrests were then made, followed by Court Marshal and dismissal of 476 sailors from the Royal Indian Navy. None of those dismissed were reinstated into either the Indian or Pakistani Navies after their Independence!

Subhash Chandra Bose's Indian National Army (INA) had also shown the British that their days in India were numbered. These, according to me, were the clinching factors that forced the British to give us Independence, factually, on a silver platter! They realized that they had lost control over the Armed Forces and that it was better to save face rather than being forced out. But they played their ultimate card; their usual practice, when leaving, with their tried and tested Divide and Rule policy, to which the senior politicians concerned at the helm of affairs on both sides, readily succumbed—or connived with! It is important also, I think, to note that the honorific 'Mahatma' was given by Rabindra Nath Tagore to Gandhi-ji. The sobriquet 'Father of the Nation' was by Subhash Chandra Bose, who began every address over the Azad Hind radio with: "Salutations to Mahatma Gandhi - Father of the Nation!" This, despite several prominent members of the INC, openly spewing venom and spreading falsehoods against 'Netaji'!

I know, personally, for a fact, that Baba's associate, Lakhan Moulik who we all called 'Lakhan-da', was employed as an usher at the 'Dipti; cinema hall at Kadamtala in Jalpaiguri! In his youth, Lakhandu had taken on the might of the British, like a tiger. But, sadly, he, along with thousands in worse conditions, were over-looked by the wily politicians, regardless of the hues they sported, in their quest for power and acquiring lucre, albeit largely illegally, and at cost of our Nation and its people!

## TO THE UNKNOWN MARTYR\*

The heavens blazed with glory.  
God opened his eyes.  
A man had broken captive chains;  
and, so condemned to die.  
His sixteen years were tempered well  
in liberty's immortal flame.  
His heart had leapt, phoenix-like;  
that heart whips could not tame.  
When he saw his people  
bound like beasts  
to the imperialistic halter,  
as incense he had brought his blood  
to Freedom's sacred altar.  
Unafraid, he faced the hang-man's noose;  
a god condemned to die.  
A smile played on his tender kips;  
a tear rolled down his eye.  
The noose was place around his neck;  
the crowd silent ad grim.  
The prisoner knew he had lost today,  
but, someday, he knew he would win!



---

\*Note: I wrote this poem in my early teens dedicated, particularly, to Pradyut Kumar Bhattacharya, who was hanged inside Midnapore jail on 12th January 1933 for gunning down a European Magistrate, Robert Douglas, on 30th April 1932. Douglas had pronounced death sentences on many revolutionaries, out of hand, which were instantaneously carried out, even without the benefit of a sham Trial. Pradyut was sixteen. He was a friend of my Baba, who was then fourteen. Baba, along with other 'freedom fighters' incarcerated, were brought out at dawn to witness the execution, as a deterrent. But Pradyut's last words: "I shall return to set my Motherland free!" had the opposite effect! So much for British justice and atrocities committed against minors, including, arbitrarily, awarding capital punishment to them. Ofcourse, the actual tasks were carried out dutifully; with great enthusiasm and vigor, by their Indian lackeys. I was at that time, I think, an agnostic and not an atheist!

**JAI HIND!**



# Friendship day: Forging bonds and working towards harmony



"The glory of friendship is not the outstretched hand, not the kindly smile, nor the joy of companionship; it is the spiritual inspiration that comes to one when you discover that someone else believes in you and is willing to trust you with a friendship."

-Ralph Waldo Emerson



It's tough to discern the emotions and sentiments associated with friendship. There have been countless examples of friendship throughout history that have transformed the very concept of mankind. Friendship is one such feeling that authors and directors have successfully used in novels, literary works, and films.

The great ancient Greek philosopher and scientist, emphasizing the value of friendship, declared, "Man is a social animal by nature; anybody who is unsocial by nature and not by mistake is either invisible to us or more than human. The person exists in the context of society.

Anyone who cannot lead a common life or is self-sufficient to the point of not needing to, and so does not participate in society, is either a beast or a god."

*The virtue of friendship has been appreciated by one and all over the world. To encourage the global bonding of friendship among people, Friendship is celebrated among people on different dates. Most of the countries like India followed the USA date of the occasion which falls on First Sunday of August every year.*

## Origin and significance of Friendship Day

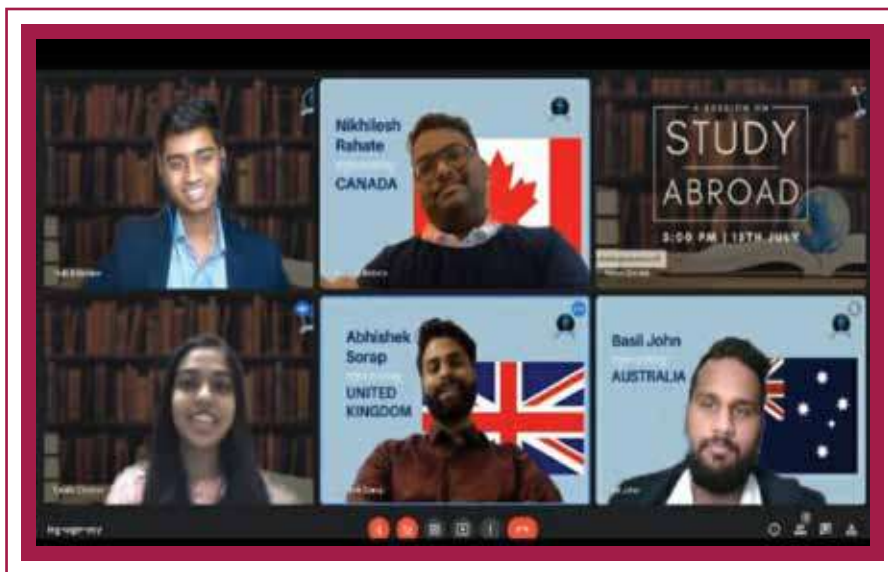
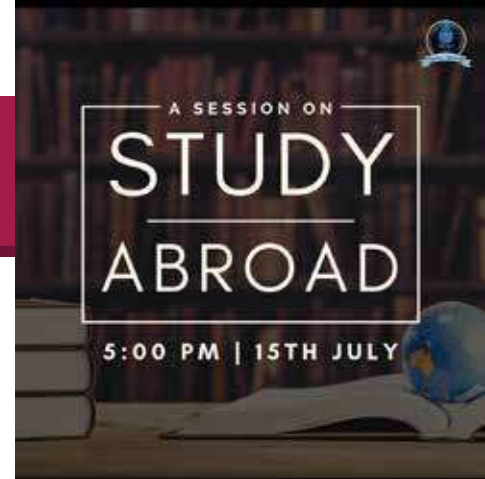
In the year 1930, Joyce Hall, the creator of Hallmark Cards, came up with the concept of Friendship Day. It was previously planned to honour Friendship Day on August 2nd by sending greeting cards and other things as part of the holiday celebrations. During the 1920s, the greeting card National Association promoted the notion further, but it was not regarded in a positive light since it represented a commercial ploy to market greeting cards in the name of Friendship Day.

The current efforts in this regard were visible when the US Congress voted to commemorate a day in honour of friends in the year 1935. Although the original cause for the commemoration of Friendship Day is unknown, the necessity for it was recognized in the aftermath of the First World War's catastrophic consequences. The event was envisioned as an attempt to break down distrust, anger, and enmity amongst individuals from diverse countries by fostering strong worldwide friendship links.

To strive in the same direction, the United States Congress declared August 1st as Friendship Day, a holiday to honour friendship, by an official proclamation issued in 1935. Later, more countries participated in the celebration, and Friendship Day began to be observed in other countries. According to a United Nations resolution passed in 2011, International Friendship Day will be observed on July 30th. It was determined to form a strong link of friendship between individuals from other nations, regardless of race, colour, gender, religion, nationality, or other characteristics. This friendship day let us forge bonds with different people while coagulating present friendships and work towards appreciating and accepting others for who they are, creating harmony and peace.

# Study Abroad Session

Sydenham Alumni Cell organized a 'Study Abroad' session with the objective to guide the students about the opportunities and challenges one faces when studying overseas. The program was initiated with the aim to equip the students with the basic knowledge about the admission process and various other factors involved.



This session was graced by three recently passed out students including Mr. Abhishek Sorap (Masters of Finance from University of Hertfordshire, London), Mr. Basil John (Masters of Banking and Finance, Monash University, Australia), and Mr. Nikhilesh Rahate (Post Graduate Diploma in Business Management, Fanshawe College, Canada). They shared their nuances and personal experiences while also clearing the doubts of students.

The speakers explained about the importance of proper research one should do while planning to study abroad. They also shed light on the importance of soft skills and interacting with new people. The speakers guided the students about the scholarship process and how one should budget his/ her finances in order to execute a smooth path towards studying abroad. With this, they also shared some of their personal experiences and the challenges they faced.

The speakers gave valuable tips to the attendees. Starting with when should one ideally kick start the preparations, researching about different universities and the courses offered and how to avail the different scholarship schemes. They also emphasized on the importance of learning important life skills such as cooking. During the session the speakers spoke of their craziest and funniest moments to lighten the mood of the students.

The program turned out to be a great and memorable one. It proved to be a valuable session that helped the students get better insights into planning their future and understanding the necessities one should keep in mind in order to study abroad.



The session was well appreciated by the students and garnered over 900 views on YouTube.



# Glimpses of Volume 1 of 'The Sydenhamite'

*The August 2021 issue marks the completion of one year of 'The Sydenhamite.'*  
*Here's presenting the glimpses of all the profound memories of the 12 editions we have published so far.*





## **SYDENHAM ALUMNI ASSOCIATION 2021-22**

- **ALUMNI AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

**Chairman - Mr. Ajit Lalvani**

**Co-Chairman - Mr. Rajiv Podar**

- **INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

**Chairman - Mr. Gautam Puri**

- **CULTURAL & SPORTS AND WELLNESS COMMITTEE**

**Chairman - Mr. Shyam Kotak**

- **STAFF & ADMIN COMMITTEE**

**Chairman - Mr. Ashok Shah**

- **NEW COURSES & FRESH FACULTY COMMITTEE**

**Chairman - Mr. Khurshed Pastakia**

- **BRAND BUILDING & SOCIAL MEDIA COMMITTEE**

**Chairman - Mr. Nehal Desai**

**Co-Chairman - Mr. Satish Sinnarkar**

- **FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE**

**Chairman - Mr. Ajit Lalvani**

- **PROGRAMME COMMITTEE**

**Chairman - Mr. Hosi Channa**

**Co-Chairman - Mr. Snehal Muzoomdar**

- **FINANCE, ACCOUNTS AND COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE**

**Chairman - Mr. Ashok Pradhan**

- **WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT COMMITTEE**

**Chairman - Mrs. Amita Parikh**

**Co-Chairman - Mrs. Nini Kothari**



Sydenhamites can send their E-mail Addresses/Contact Details at **[sydenhamalumnicell@gmail.com](mailto:sydenhamalumnicell@gmail.com)** for the free subscription of our monthly newsletter

Editor: Sakshi Chavan  
Sub-editor: Paras Dhuliya  
Layout Designer: Kaumudi Pradhan.

The views and opinions expressed or implied in THE SYDENHAMITE are those of the authors or contributors and do not necessarily reflect those of the Editorial Team or the SYDENHAM COLLEGE ALLUMNI ASSOCIATION . Material in this publication may not be reproduced, whether in part or in whole, without the consent of SYDENHAM COLLEGE ALLUMNI ASSOCIATION