

The turn of a new decade has been an exciting year for Friends of Max. This year marked the first of many new initiatives, activities and collaborations.



In January, we launched five new social media segments for each day of the week.



THE 5TH FOM LEADERSHIP SUMMIT 20-21 Feb 2021

February saw us hosting the first ever Virtual FOM Leadership Summit. This was the fifth edition of the Leadership Summit and featured prominent physicians from all over the country and patient advocates from all over the world to bring best practices to our Patient Leaders in India.



The month of May marked the virtual launch of Chai for Cancer Season 8, which came with its own unique additions – firstly, an ambitious target of raising ₹50 lakhs for cancer patients in need; secondly, a



Amma Speaks

So where did 2021 go is the question everyone seems to be asking. Another year carrying the load of the pandemic on our already fragile shoulders considering most of 2020 we were yoked to it.

When we began the year it was with the hope that the virus and its machinations were behind us but that hope was rudely dashed to the ground when the horrific Second Wave hit us. As is wont with the resilient nature of the human spirit we got up, made peace with the collateral damage as best as we could and set about rebuilding life once again. Lessons had been learnt and new habits inculcated as we embraced the new COVID enforced Normal. Living with a life threatening condition was never more intimidating than now with a more heightened sense of vulnerability for us patients and our caregivers.

The City Chapter Leaders worked even more closely with The Max Foundation team and continued to put in efforts which ensured no one went without supply, everyone had a chance to attend meetings still held virtually, patients in various city chapters remained connected through our WhatsApp Groups engaging with one another sharing experiences and compliance measures. Once the second lockdown was lifted it did seem that there was a semblance of back to normal protocols as far as consultations with treating physicians went. We look back at 2021 with immense gratitude for all that we managed to retain and once again hope shines in our hearts as we wait for 2022 to dawn.

- Viji Venkatesh,
Managing Trustee, Friends of Max and Region Head
(India & South Asia), The Max Foundation



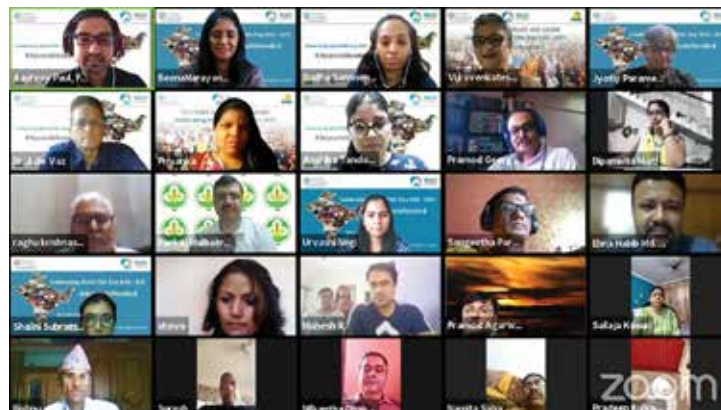
collaboration with web blogger Gowri Mohanakrishnan's Indian Chai Stories to bring her collection of 200 stories from the tea gardens of India and abroad to our platform; and thirdly, a collaboration with renowned city chronicler and journalist Meher Marfatia who brings onboard her own unusual stories from the city of Bombay. In addition, Chai for Cancer also introduced new merchandise for this year's fundraising campaign.

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In September, we circulated a “Know Your CML” disease awareness survey which saw participation from 800 patients and caregivers from 13 different countries across 5 continents.

The survey results were later discussed and insights shared at a national level virtual meeting as part of our World CML Day activities with prominent physicians, The Max Foundation’s South Asia Team and FOM’s Patient Leaders in attendance.



September also saw the release of the first edition of Friends of Max’s Annual Report – another step towards our commitment to providing professional services for the CML and GIST community in India.



In October, Friends of Max participated in the first virtual horizons conferences – “New Horizons GIST” by the Life Raft Group, “CML Horizons” by the CML Advocates Network and “MPN Horizons” by the MPN Advocates Network.

Friends of Max was represented at these conferences by Managing Trustee Viji Venkatesh, Trustee S. Parameswaran who chaired the Medical Session at the MPN conference and was one of the speakers at the Regional Meet, and FOM Communications Manager Aashray Paul, who had the opportunity to present on “Managing our CML during the times of COVID” at the CML and MPN conferences.



Aashray Paul



MANAGING OUR CML DURING THE TIMES OF COVID

FRIENDS OF MAX – INDIA
Authors – Aashray Paul, Vijayalakshmi Venkatesh, Param Puthen

Medical Session #1 Covid 19
Impact on CML & Patient groups
#CMLH21



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FOM's poster
for CML Horizons
Conference 2021

FOM's virtual social media workshop



October also saw the FOM City Chapter Leaders joining virtually for the first Social Media workshop – designed to gauge the effectiveness of our social media interventions and gain perspective & feedback from our stakeholders.



In November, our City Chapter Leaders unleashed their creative side in a brilliant display of acting and dancing skills at an online “De-Stress with Drama” workshop which was organized by Raell Padamsee’s The Create Foundation for Friends of Max.

It has been an exciting year for all of us at Friends of Max as we moved from the “New Normal” to new endeavours, new collaborations and new targets with a renewed sense of purpose. As we stand here and look back at the year that has been, we are

thankful to the FOM Trustees, The Max Foundation’s dedicated team in India, the amazing community of patient leaders and caregivers, our extremely supportive physician partners, the generous Chai for Cancer donors and everyone else who has been a part of our journey. As we look forward and step into a new year, let us hold our chins high and make it a remarkable one. To New Beginnings!

- Aashray Paul,
Admin and Communications Manager, Friends of Max



Quotes from our Heroes

FOM's Patient Advocates of the Month for 2021



Krishna Agarwal
Hyderabad



I feel inspired seeing the will power and courage of everyone in fighting CML. I would also like to ask everyone to take this as an opportunity to give back to the society and do whatever little we can in improving the lives of people who are less privileged than us. And make it a habit to contribute something every month- not just in money terms.



Nirmesh Prakash
Mumbai



We all face our own unique challenges in life. There are times when we all think, "Why is this happening?". Or the dreaded "Why me?". We can't decide what's happening outside us, but we can decide how we react to the situation. So, go on... Put a door knob on the wall and open that door! Cheers to Life!



Sr Shalet D'souza
Mangalore



God is in control of our life. He is a loving Father so with faith, we can face our life by living one day at a time. May we become a source of inspiration in accepting illness joyfully and be a blessing in the lives of others.



Mohankumar N. M.
Kerala



In my own experience, I have come to realise that the best medicine to fight cancer is our own will-power.



Shashikant Mahajan
Bengaluru



Life is all about challenges; you never know what awaits you in your life. Take it in a positive stride and face it with a smile.



Tushar Kanti Ghosh
Kolkata



Always have a positive thinking. Be a fighter against any obstacles and stand by other patients dealing with this illness. Caregivers are the most important figures in helping a patient move ahead in life.



JUL

For July, which is also observed globally as Sarcoma Awareness Month, FOM recognized the contributions of not one, but four Patient Advocates from our family of GISTers.



Rashmi
Sachade
Mumbai



Nandini
Dabbir
Hyderabad



Vasamvada
Shukla
Mumbai



Bharat
Bhushan
Delhi



AUG

Bikram Debnath
Mumbai

Take life easily. Tension and fear are useless emotions. Life would be incomplete if it didn't throw hurdles at you – just face them with confidence and everything will be okay. Perseverance and consistent effort are the keys to overcoming all obstacles in life.



OCT

Nitesh Verma
Kerala

People often relate the term 'cancer' with 'death'. But this is not true. CML is not a death sentence. I consider myself lucky to be a CML patient because I can take one pill every day and lead a good life.



SEP

Kamala and
Krishna Modani.
Jaipur

If we try to remain happy in life, and avoid thinking obsessively about the disease, then we can all lead a long and healthy life.



DEC

Shaila Bhandari
Jaipur

If you don't give up till your last breath, you will win this battle. I don't believe in sharing about my discomforts with other people. They come with their sympathy and take away your strength.



NOV

Dhirendranath
Chakroborthy
Kolkata

Don't lose your mental strength. Presently, there are medicines to help us overcome this disease. It is important for us to take it with sincerity. It is equally important to maintain a healthy diet and lifestyle as that helps us build immunity against various diseases.





Chai For Cancer Season 8

Ek Chai Zindagi Ke Naam



MAY 09

Virtual Adda with Viji Venkatesh and RJ Rishi

Viji Venkatesh and RJ Rishi Kapoor of Red FM hosted the curtain-raiser Adda for Chai for Cancer Season 8. Keeping in mind the COVID crisis and the lockdown restrictions, the Adda was organized virtually, which on the bright side, enabled well-wishers and supporters of the cause to join in not just from different parts of India, but even as far as England!



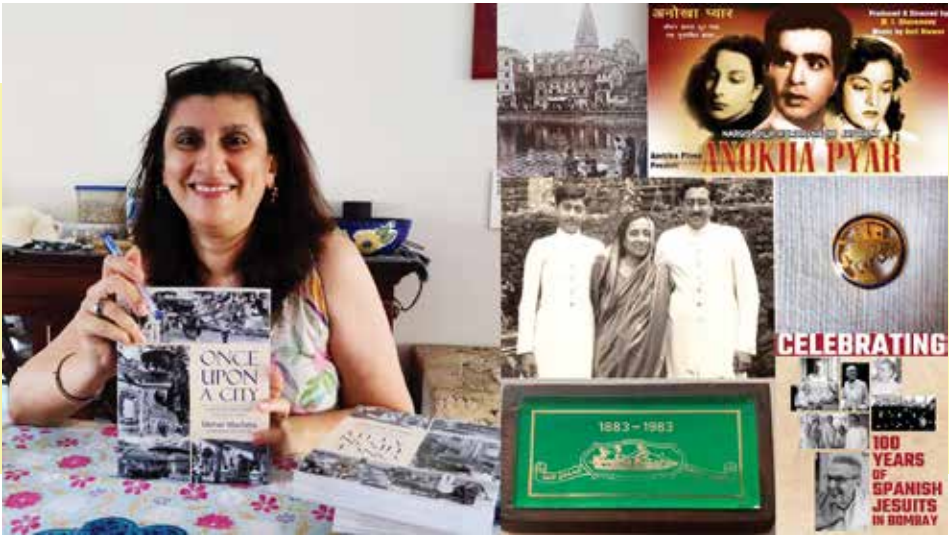
Indian Chai Stories

One of the highlights of the curtain-raiser Adda was Chai for Cancer’s collaboration with Gowri Mohanakrishnan, who captures the essence of life in the tea gardens in her blog “Indian Chai Stories”. As Gowri herself puts it, “This year Chai for Cancer’s theme is “Ek Chai Zindagi ke Naam” and back in the tea gardens, our motto has always been “Ek Zindagi Chai ke Naam””.



Piyo Chai Suno Kahani

Another big collaboration this season has been with renowned city chronicler, journalist and published author of the book “Once Upon a City”, Meher Marfatia, whose inspiring stories collected from the city of Bombay have been a welcome addition to our social media pages.



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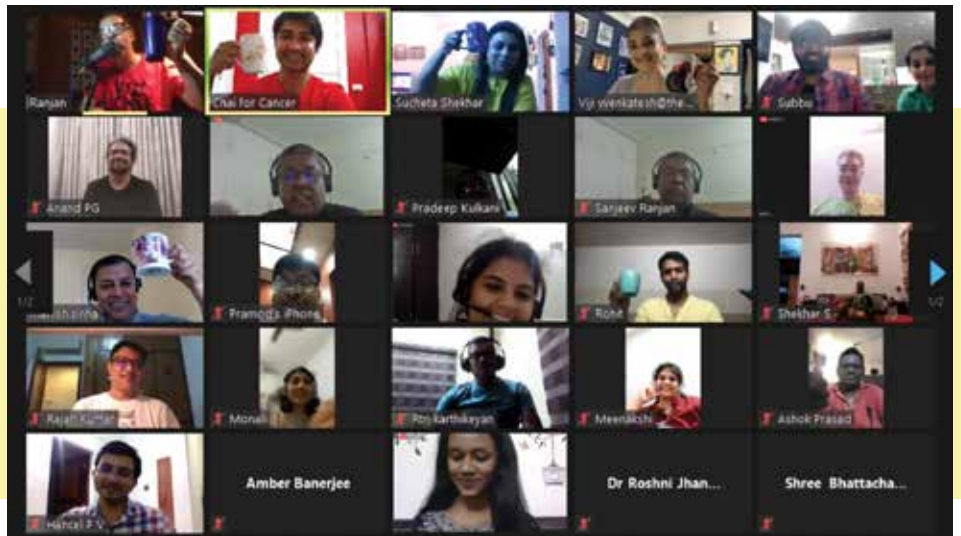
Rohini Bhowmick's Virtual Campaign

Rohini Bhowmick of Thane, Maharashtra along with her husband Chirodeep Chaudhuri, added her own unique flair to our Season 8 campaign by urging their friends, family and colleagues to not only donate to our cause, but by also spreading the joy of giving. Their efforts led to raising ₹ 266,617 for cancer patients in need.

JUNE
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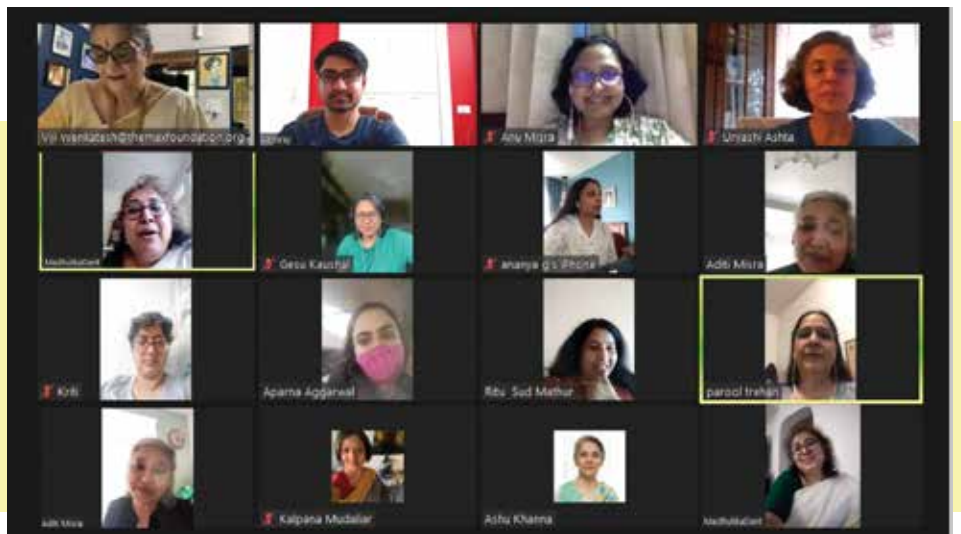
Musical Adda with Pranay Ranjan and B-Reloaded

We say "Musical Adda", but it was really a full-fledged concert by all means and measures. The hosts – B-Reloaded band – dedicated this event to the celebration of the great Indian musician R. D. Burman's 82nd Birth Anniversary. Each of the band members carried out their own rendition of Burman's classic tunes, which was accompanied by a pop quiz.

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Antakshari Adda with ELSA Mumbai

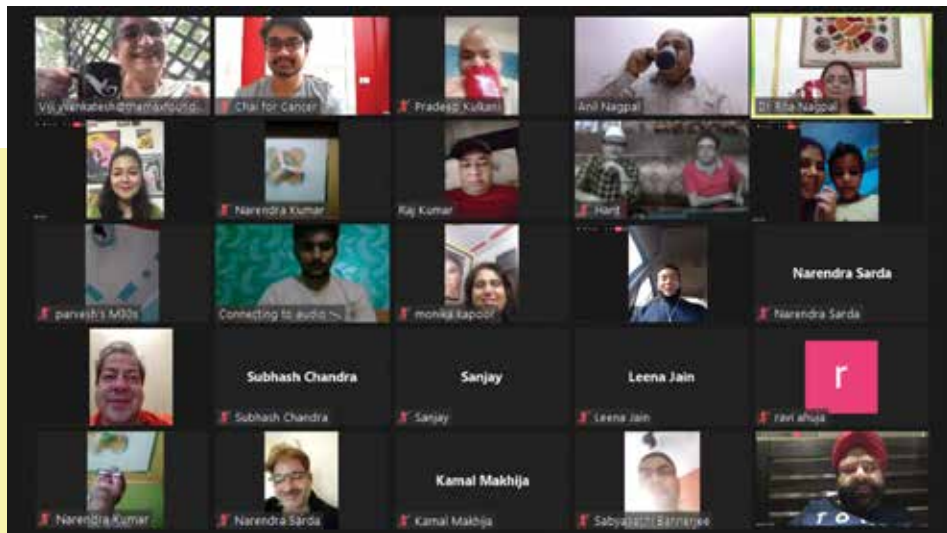
The Lady Sri Ram College Alumni (ELSA), Mumbai hosted an Antakshari themed Chai for Cancer Adda. It was a cheerful gathering of people who joined in from their cars, homes, offices and friends' homes to spend an evening with friends and raise funds for cancer patients – everything that the Chai for Cancer initiative stands for.



SEP
05

Virtual Adda with FOM Delhi

Friends of Max's City Chapter Leaders from Delhi hosted their first Chai for Cancer Adda of 2021. Joined by the dynamic RJ Swati of Red FM Delhi, this Virtual Adda was no less than any physical Adda we have organized before – complete with music, poetry, laughter, stories and of course, several cups being raised for cancer patients in need.

SEP
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02

Tiya Thakur's Virtual Campaign

Tiya Thakur of Mumbai, Maharashtra led her CFC Campaign to create awareness and raise funds for cancer patients in need. As part of her efforts, Tiya urged her family and friends to share their Chaifies, donate towards our cause and even hosted a Virtual Chai Adda on 2nd October to honour her mother – Dr Manisha Sen, whom she had lost to cancer a few years ago on this day.

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Ravikumar's Virtual Campaign

Unable to host a physical Adda but inspired by FOM and CFC's online interventions, Friends of Max's City Chapter Leader from Calicut, Ravikumar P. dedicated his birthday this year towards raising awareness and funds for cancer patients in need. Through his efforts, he has raised close to ₹40,000 for the Chai for Cancer Season 8 campaign.



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Address : Friends of Max, Secom Business Centre, A Block Basement, Shiv Sagar Estate, Dr A B Road, Worli, Mumbai 400018

Website : www.friendsofmax.info

Website : www.chaiforcancer.org

Email : friendsofmax@gmail.com

Facebook :

www.facebook.com/CMLGISTsupportgroup/
www.facebook.com/Chai-for-Cancer

LinkedIn : <https://in.linkedin.com/in/chai-for-cancer-702630117>

Twitter : @Friends_Of_Max
 @chaiforcancer

To Donate:

Cheques should be drawn in favour of Friends of Max and couriered to our office in Worli (Mumbai);

To donate online visit www.friendsofmax.info;
 Receipts u/s 80 G of Income Tax Act, 1961 will be issued.

Friends of Max is registered as a Public Charitable Trust: Regn No E-24284(B) Mumbai, dated 4-7-2007