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NEWSLETTER

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The Salman Khan Foundation**



A Decade of Chai for Cancer



Message from the Trustees, Friends of Max

Chai, the very thought of it brings a feeling of being reenergised within oneself be it young or old. Who would have expected ten years ago, in a basement of a building, a tea mug lying on a table, would have triggered an initiative that helped Friends of Max move ahead confidently with the goals and objectives that we had set for ourselves. When I look back and think about the day when we were in Amma's cabin thinking of how to raise funds and realize the mission of FOM, we did not make any headway after discussion for couple of hours. Suddenly the Archimedes within Amma said Chai for Cancer. And thus began our unique venture as an ambitious effort to give Friends of Max a tool to raise funds to support its wide range of patient-focused activities.

It is the brain-child of Viji Venkatesh, Region Head (South Asia) – The Max Foundation, and the Chairperson & Managing Trustee of Friends of Max. "Our slogan is 'Drink To A Cause'. I thought a simple association between cancer and a

cup of chai which is everyman's drink would have recall value as well as bring a sense of comfort and normalcy to the feared condition", says Viji.

Amma and her connections helped give the push to the initiative which was needed initially and it still continues. CFC Addas which were hosted indoors moved outdoors, from homes they moved into workplaces/hospitals.

Let us join this Chai for Cancer movement. Host an Adda. It's not the amount that you collect in these Addas, it's the joy that you get in conducting it, giving back to the community who gave you so much till now. Recommend it in your place of work, housing society or community. I am sure it will help bring smiles to many more faces and Amma's vision will reach new beneficiaries.

Pramod John George
Trustee & Jt. Secretary
Friends of Max



Amma Speaks

If someone had told me that day in 2014 when I hosted the first ever Chai for Cancer Adda that in its 10th year, I'd be taking the campaign on the road I would have, well, said, "why not? what a great idea!" I think it is that fearless audacity that has taken Chai for Cancer places. That and the manner in which everyone who has experienced an Adda has felt one with the sentiment and now owns the campaign.

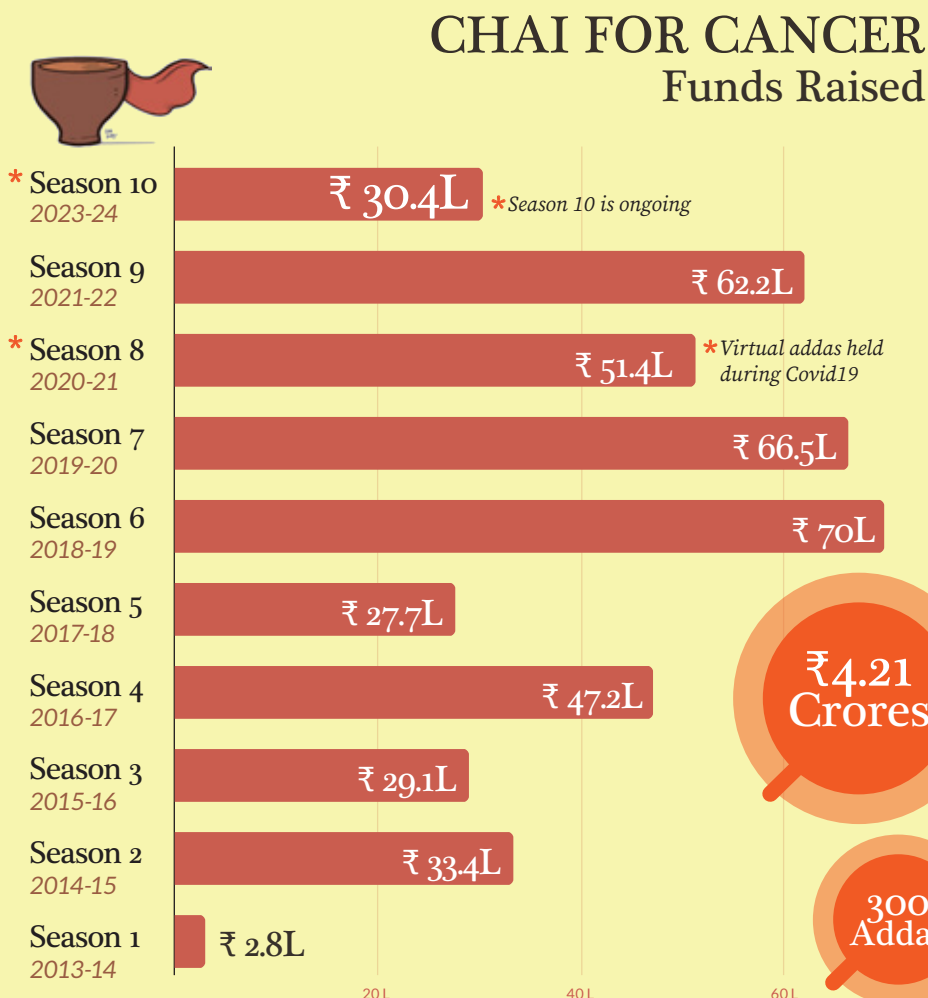
Chai for Cancer conceptualized as an awareness and fundraising tool has become a vehicle through which anyone can achieve a sense of fulfilment and a way of giving back to the community.

Chai for Cancer is not about a lot of money. It is about (hopefully) a lot of people giving a little money to a cause they can believe in. And because they care and know what a difference that little amount can make in the life of a cancer patient.

Chai is a feeling, an emotion and a non-threatening, non-intimidating part of our daily existence. The idea is to bring cancer into that space where there is understanding & camaraderie, where there is no place for stigma and isolation. Where together over a cup of chai we learn how to fight the fear and bring hope and dignity back into the lives touched by cancer.

Here's to the next 10 years and more.
Raise your cup and drink to this cause.

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



SPECIAL FEATURE

Our Heroes

This special section is dedicated to recognizing and showing gratitude to the amazing individuals whose support and unwavering commitment to our cause has made the Chai for Cancer campaign so successful and people driven.

In this section we pay tribute to their joint efforts, which have allowed so many patients with CML and GIST to lead normal, fulfilling lives. We thank you for being a part of our journey.

Committed hosts

#raiseyourcup #drinktoacause

Sindhushree Khullar



An IAS officer with over four decades of senior strategic and operational experience in the government across sectors, who retired in 2015 as the first CEO of NITI Aayog. Sindhushree, a graduate of Lady Shri Ram College, Delhi, has proudly watched Viji, her close friend from college, in her journey from Vijayalakshmi to Viji Venkatesh to Amma and now Ummachi. From being a willing host of an impromptu Adda in her garage to raise awareness to the recent most successful Adda held in Delhi, which she hosted to celebrate her birthday, Sindhu has always been a dear friend and a proud supporter.

“In my professional life, I have encountered people for whom access to health care is a dream. Families end up carrying both the emotional and financial burden of illness. Chai for Cancer fills this critical gap by supporting cancer patients in ways that might lighten the load somewhat-by providing assistance towards transportation, educational expenses and nutritious diets. All of this is done with compassion, highest standards of transparency, integrity and honesty and dollops of help and advice to those who need it and seek it. Who does that? I will pray that the Chai for Cancer movement continues to imbibe this spirit and keeps the flag flying high. Best Wishes.”

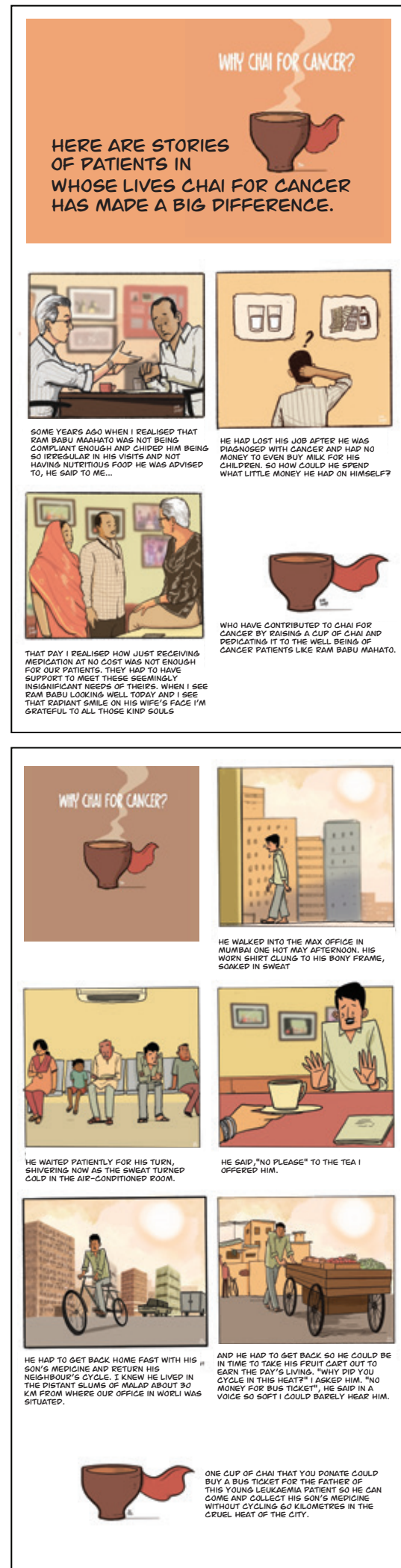
Bharati Golatkar



Bharati Golatkar, a practicing psychotherapist working in the field of Mental Health for the last 39 years lives in Vashi, Navi Mumbai. It was a reunion of sorts for Bharati and Viji when they reconnected after a long gap of many decades through the former's daughter, Ketaki and the 100 Saree Pact. Both Bharati and Viji had worked together during the early 80s when Bharati worked in Labour Welfare and Viji in Cancer Awareness at work places.

“I had organised Chai for Cancer on 17th June 2023. Though I had participated in Chai for Cancer on two occasions, this was the first time I had organised at my home. This was held in memory of my husband whom we lost a year back. I thought this was the best way of honouring his memory where our contributions would help someone suffering from Cancer as I know the treatment is very expensive. This was a very overwhelmingly satisfying experience for all of us. I think more and more friends should come forward to raise a cup of chai for cancer as many myths and misconceptions about this disease also were put to rest during the event.”

While every contribution big or small plays a crucial role in achieving our mission, some individuals truly stand out. It is the combined effort of these extraordinary people, including individual hosts, corporate employees, physicians, patient leaders, media partners and members of the design team, that have had such a profound effect on the campaign.

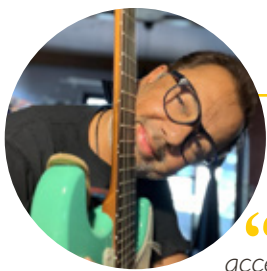




Abhishek and Amruta Patidar

Settled in Pune, Abhishek and Amruta (Trustee, FOM) are IT experts who are unwaveringly committed to making a positive difference in the lives of those touched by cancer through their dedicated efforts.

“What resonated with us most is the concept of contributing a cup of tea to enhance the well-being of our fellow patients. This thoughtfully crafted campaign has demonstrated its significant impact on the lives of numerous individuals, and we are witnessing the tangible difference it is making. It is most touching to see strangers become friends, which has made us believe in our dreams even more. If you haven't experienced an Adda yet, we encourage you to join one, and if you've already been a part of one, we invite you to host one.”



Pranay Ranjan

Pranay who is FOM City Chapter Leader, Bangalore and Hyderabad, is also a corporate professional & a passionate music producer and performer!

“As working professionals, our realisation of the gap in the access to treatment, remains very limited until you have a personal experience of some kind. Then, commitment to contributing for the cause is not easily possible for common people. But Chai for Cancer, made it so simple – and I could bring my personal commitment to the cause, and passion of music, together through the musical fundraiser adda every year! Grateful.”



Dr. Dinesh Bhurani
Director, Department of Hemato-Oncology & BMT
Rajiv Gandhi Institute and Research Center, Delhi



“The Chai for Cancer campaign resonates with me on a personal level because it beautifully combines the simple act of sharing a cup of chai with a powerful mission to support cancer patients. I believe in the healing power of human connections, and Chai for Cancer embodies this spirit. One of the most touching moments from my collaboration with Chai for Cancer is witnessing the strength and resilience of the patients and their families. It's truly heartwarming to see the support and hope that this campaign brings into their lives. The smiles on their faces during our chai gatherings are memories that I always cherish.

I believe that every small act of kindness and support can make a significant difference in the lives of cancer patients. Chai for Cancer has shown us that a simple cup of chai can be a source of comfort and hope. I encourage everyone to join this movement and make a big impact by contributing to the well-being of those fighting cancer. Thank you once again for this opportunity, and I look forward to being a part of the special edition celebrating a decade of Chai for Cancer.”



Dr. Reena Nair
Senior Consultant, Department of Clinical Hematology, Tata Medical Center, Kolkata.



“Tata Medical Center, Kolkata is one of the first centers to be associated with the 'Chai for Cancer' initiative of the 'Friends of Max'. From the first Chai Adda 10 years back, we have become addicted to an afternoon every year, when we drink Chai together at the Hospital Reception Foyer. Patients and Relatives, Customer Care, Nurses, Doctors, Security and Housekeeping staff come together as the Adda changes the vibes of an otherwise mundane

WHY CHAI FOR CANCER?

IT WAS WITH A HEAVY HEART THE TEAM DECIDED TO CLOSE HIS CASE.

WE HADN'T HEARD FROM HIM IN MANY MONTHS; MAYBE WELL EVEN IN A YEAR, DESPITE REPEATED CALLS AND ATTEMPTS TO COUNSEL.

HE WAS A FARMER FROM THE INTERIORS OF MAHARASHTRA WITH A SMALL HOLDING WHERE HE GREW VEGETABLES, STRUGGLED WITH THE VAGARIES OF MOTHER NATURE AND YET TRIED HIS BEST TO PROVIDE FOR HIS FAMILY OF SIX

HE WAS PROUD OF THE FACT THAT HE COULD SEND HIS CHILDREN TO SCHOOL AND EVEN MORE PROUD, HIS YOUNG DAUGHTERS AS WELL. WE HAD GROWN CLOSE TO HIM WITH OUR PERIODIC FOLLOW UP AND BEING WITH HIM ALL THROUGHOUT THE EIGHT ODD YEARS HE HAD BEEN WITH US

HE WAS A ROLE MODEL FOR OTHER PATIENTS AND A REGULAR AT OUR SUPPORT GROUP MEETINGS

WE FEARED THE WORST, AND THEN, HE TURNED UP. HE HAD TAKEN A LOAN TO MAKE ONE LONG OVERDUE TRIP TO THE CITY AND SEE THE DOCTOR AND COLLECT HIS MEDICATION. HE COULD NOT AFFORD THE COST OF PERIODIC TESTS HIS DOCTOR SAID HE NEEDED TO UNDERGO. HE PRAGMATICALLY TOOK THE DOCTOR. IT MEANT PENNYING HIS WIFE AND CHILDREN MANY BASIC NECESSITIES. HE ALSO NEEDED TO FIND SUITABLE GROOMS FOR HIS DAUGHTERS. THE SICKNESS WAS TAKING TOO MUCH AWAY FROM HIS FAMILY.

THE CUP OF CHAI YOU WILL RAISE AT A CHAI FOR CANCER ADDA OR EVEN AT HOME, FOR THE WELL-BEING OF A PATIENT WILL HELP RESTORE THE DIGNITY OF MANY PATIENTS LIKE THE SIMPLE FARMER AND GIVE THEM HOPE ONCE AGAIN.
#RAISEYOURCUP #DRINKTOACCAUSE

WHY CHAI FOR CANCER?

LITTLE SUDIPIA WAS MAYBE SEVEN YEARS OLD WHEN SHE WAS DIAGNOSED WITH CML. A BRIGHT AND ENDEARING LITTLE GIRL WHO LOVED HER SCHOOL AND HER FRIENDS AND HATED TO MISS EVEN ONE DAY WITH THEM. HER PARENTS WERE OVERJOYED WHEN SHE WAS ABLE TO ACCESS HER LIFE SAVING MEDICINES FOR HER LEUKAEMIA AND RESUME SCHOOL, GOING BACK TO AS NORMAL A LIFE AS POSSIBLE.

ON ONE VISIT TO MY OFFICE PERHAPS A COUPLE OF YEARS OR SO LATER I ASKED HER A ROUTINE QUESTION, "HOW'S SCHOOL BETA", AND I SAW HER GROW ALL STILL AND QUIET. SHE WOULDN'T MEET MY EYES, THIS BUBBLY GIRL WHO HAD SHARED SO MANY OF HER SCHOOL STORIES WITH ME. I LOOKED UP AT HER FATHER WHO ALSO WAS VERY UNCOMFORTABLE. FINALLY SHE SAID SHE HADN'T BEEN TO SCHOOL IN TWO MONTHS. SHE WAS IN TEARS.

HER FATHER IN A GRUFF TROUBLED VOICE SAID HE WAS UNABLE TO PAY BOTH SCHOOL FEES AND BEAR THE COST OF HER DIAGNOSTIC TESTS (THEY NEED TO BE DONE PERIODICALLY AND COST AROUND INR 8000/-)

SO WHEN THE TESTS NEEDED TO BE DONE SHE STAYED HOME FOR A FEW MONTHS

THIS BROKE MY HEART AND THIS IS ONE OF THE REASONS THAT CHAI FOR CANCER WAS PUT IN PLACE. SUDIPIA IS IN 9TH GRADE NOW. FUNDS FROM CHAI FOR CANCER PAY FOR BOTH HER TESTS AND HER SCHOOL FEES.

afternoon hospital atmosphere. The "Bear Hugs" of Viji Amma, the smiling faces of her Team and Friends of MAX Kolkata Chapter, the sale of tea along with mugs and T-Shirts consumes the place. The clicking of the cameras doesn't stop. It's an Adda which gives everything that no doctor can even imagine giving to the patients – the emotional support filled with fun and frolic, all the time gathering financial support for those CML patients across the country who need it most.

Watching Viji and her Team take this journey forward over a decade and achieve the incredible feat has been truly amazing. Over 15,000 cups of Chai for Cancer at over 15 Addas year on year till 2022 and the journey continues... Ms Viji and her Team has made a difference in the lives of our CML patients, so raise a cup, drink to the cause and donate generously in Season Ten, 2023! ”



1:22 pm · 8 May 2014

Collaborators

Salman Khan

Being Human -
The Salman Khan Foundation

Says Viji, “With a person like Salman Khan one doesn't really have to say anything. He has this uncanny knack of knowing what you need and very quietly sets about fulfilling that need. It could be just simply taking your call and talking to a patient you're putting on the line. Or it could be sharing your post on his Twitter account so that your voice and message is amplified a hundred thousand times. Or it could just be being there for you, heart and soul. That's the kind of human being he is. Right at the beginning of the Chai for Cancer campaign in 2014 it was his posts on Social Media that gave us the visibility we so desperately needed.”



Bob and Bobby

Bob and Bobby are filmmakers, animators and illustrators, who are passionate about telling stories that are drawn out of things they see and things they don't. They have directed a music video for Vishal Bhardwaj and are currently finishing the script of their feature film. They are also the creators of our Chai for Cancer Season Nine and Ten mascot - the cool Kullhad with the cape and the creators of the evocative 'Why Chai for Cancer' series.

“Chai for Cancer besides being a guiding light to people going through the darkest of times, also empowers them, treats them with utmost dignity and in the process, they inspire others to come forward and be a part of this genuine initiative; one of the many reasons that we resonated with this campaign. In the two Addas that we have been part of, we met some of the kindest humans with the most enriching stories. And of course, every time we meet Viji ma'am, it is unforgettable, the kind of inspiration and positivity she leaves us with! If you're reading this, be a part of this initiative. Also, make sure you attend at least an Adda once, you can thank us later.”



Gowri Mohanakrishnan

Gowri Mohanakrishnan of Indian Chai Stories fame has been a regular contributor to Chai for Cancer. This blog is a collection of real life stories from people who live and work in the tea gardens.

“Greetings from the tea estates of Assam. I was delighted when my sister Viji asked me to share Tea Garden stories (Indian Chai Stories blog) with all of you as my contribution to Chai for Cancer. The 'Chai Adda' is such a wonderful way to bring people together. Drinking a cup of tea - a 'chai ka pyala' - together creates a bond between strangers as well as friends. Behind each cup of tea there are thousands of stories of men and women who work and live in the tea gardens of our country, who make sure you get your chai every day, just the way you love to drink it!”



continued from Page 5

It's true that there is no one whose life is untouched by sorrow or adversity. It is equally true that people everywhere still have enough humanity to reach out and offer comfort to those who suffer. I think Chai for Cancer exemplifies this quality. Cheers to all of you at Chai for Cancer, and congratulations on the success of the ongoing Season! I do hope to bring you many more stories from the world of Tea. Cheers to the spirit of Indian Tea! ”

Red FM 93.5

Rishi O Kishnani, National Content Director, Red FM, our committed Radio Partner, believes in the importance of long-lasting relationships to create meaningful impact. This explains the close relationship with Red FM for close to a decade now, as old as Chai for Cancer campaign itself! Over the years the relationship has only grown stronger with Red FM always being present to amplify the message of supporting cancer patients in need.

“We at Red FM are immensely proud of our enduring partnership with Chai for Cancer. Together, we've woven a tapestry of hope and healing, blending the power of music and compassion.



Our collaboration has not only raised funds but also amplified awareness for the critical cause of cancer support. Through the harmonious chords of radio and the warmth of chai, we've touched hearts and changed lives. This association embodies the spirit of unity and empathy, proving that together, we can turn a simple cup of chai into a catalyst for change. Here's to many more cups, songs, and smiles in our beautiful journey together.”

Meher Marfatia

A freelance writer, columnist and published author, she is one of the most unique contributors to our campaign. Every month, Meher lends us unique stories from her book “Once Upon a City” which are published on our social media handles for raising funds and awareness to support cancer patients in need. She resides in Mumbai.

“At an online adda I attended during the initial COVID months, I fell in love with the simple but stirring premise of

CFC: the amplitude of gratitude. That when you indulge in something as simple as sipping a cup of your favourite brew, the resulting sense of well-being could well lead you to think about supporting cancer patients in whatever small way. For several years now, I have always done some amount of “volunteer writing” for organisations supporting various causes. And took this up because I have the privilege of enjoying a large and loyal readership. So, each time a monthly “Bombay vignette” does the rounds, friends and other readers dig into their pockets with touching generosity. I thank and bless them for the difference their thoughtfulness might make to all the wonderful work Max Foundation does.”

**Jasmine Davar**

A fervent homegrown porcelain artist who finds boundless inspiration in the delicate beauty of porcelain. She strives to breathe life into this fragile material, transforming it into a canvas that tells stories, evokes emotions, and captures fleeting moments of beauty. Jasmine is the creator of our bestselling Chai for Cancer Season 10 hand painted mugs.

“Chai for Cancer devoted to providing solace and camaraderie to those navigating the challenging path of cancer, resonates profoundly with me. As I work with porcelain—a medium both delicate and resilient—I draw a parallel to the courage and strength exhibited by individuals confronting cancer. As I continue to create, I am reminded that art has the ability to heal, inspire, and bring people together. The Chai for Cancer campaign stands as a testament to these ideas.”

**Deepa Vishwanathan**

Deepa is a creative consultant who has been associated with Friends of Max for over 18 years. Her work can be seen on the FOM & CFC websites, newsletters, reports, information booklets and other FOM publications.

“I was brought into the fold by Amma (Viji Venkatesh) in the initial days to

create the first Friends of Max website. My time with FOM has proven to be an enriching and learning experience every year. I have met and been inspired by all the patients and volunteers at many events - from the First All India Annual Meet in Mumbai to the support group meetings at Bengaluru and Kolkata. I try to bring across the warmth and joy that I feel for every person's story in all the communications I design for FOM.”



Snapshots from Our Journey



THE CHAI FOR CANCER ROAD SHOW 2023

The South

Flagging off on 19th October 2023

CELEBRATING THE LEGACY OF MAX

- 19th October, 2023 - Udumalaipettai
- 20th October, 2023 - Kochi
- 21st October, 2023 - Calicut
- 22nd October, 2023 - Gudalur
- 23rd October, 2023 - Mysore
- 24th October, 2023 - Bengaluru
- 25th October, 2023 - Pondicherry
- 26th October, 2023 - Chennai



October 18th - 26th, 2023

The Chai for Cancer Road Show 2023

Our latest initiative, The Road Show was flagged off on Max's Day, 19th October 2023, took our awareness and fund-raising campaign on the road, for the first time.

It was especially planned to celebrate the legacy of Max in whose name The Max Foundation was set up and who inspires and motivates us every day.

Starting from Udumalaipettai in Tiruppur district of Tamil Nadu, the Road Show covered a distance of about 1500 kms, making pit stops enroute in the picturesque towns of Kochi, Calicut, Gudalur, Mysore, Bangalore, Pondicherry with a final stop at Chennai. Behind the wheel of the Toyota SUV was FOM City Chapter Leader and ace motorist Karthikeyan who was accompanied by Amma (Viji Venkatesh) throughout the nine days.

During the roadshow, nine very successful Addas were also hosted.



To host an Adda
please send an email to:
chaiforcancer@gmail.com

CHAI FOR CANCER

THE ROAD SHOW

19TH OCTOBER 2023



Rs.10,00,000 raised

9
Addas

1500 kms
Distance travelled

1000+
Guests

10000
Cups of chai

Inaugural Adda on the eve of the flag off

OCT 18 VENUE : Udumalaipettai
HOST : Karthikeyan



OCT 19 VENUE : Kochi
HOSTS : Dr Vijayalakshmi G Pillai & Deepak Gopakumar



OCT 20 VENUE : Kochi
HOSTS : Hotel Abad Plaza



OCT 21 VENUE : Calicut
HOSTS : FOM Kerala



OCT 22 VENUE : Gudalur
HOSTS : Rotary Club of Gudalur Valley



OCT 23 VENUE : Mysore
HOSTS : Dr Mukesh S & Dr Girish M S



OCT 24 VENUE : Bangalore
HOST : Sreedevi Raghavan



OCT 25 VENUE : Pondicherry
HOSTS : Suryan FM, Pondicherry



OCT 26 VENUE : Chennai
HOSTS : Adyar Cancer Institute (WIA), Chennai & Friends of Max



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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