



THE BAV GAZETTE

Your quarterly dose of all things happening among the
Bengalis of Victoria

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

By Surashmi Chatterjee

Dear BAV Community Members,

As we look back on 2021 and usher in our 2022 calendar of events, it feels quite satisfying to note that despite the threats of the pandemic and its various waves; despite cancellation and postponement of scheduled events, we managed to stay in touch as a community using the digital medium.

In October, community members participated in our online hosted Mahalaya and Durga Puja. It was very uplifting to receive positive feedback for the virtual concert of Subhamita Banerjee, organized in collaboration with Art Unbound. In case you missed the live program that day, you can view the recording [here](#).

In November, we also hosted online Kali Puja in collaboration with Vedanta Center of Melbourne. The ramp up of the COVID vaccination program and easing of social distancing restrictions gave us the opportunity to meet each other in person.

The month of December began with our Seniors team celebrating social freedom with a day trip to the Yarra Valley; and the following day, we celebrated with Satyajit Ray 'Ekai Eksho'.

Saraswati Puja celebrations kicked-off 2022 calendar of in-person events; it received wide participation from various communities including first time BAV event attendees.

We will be hosting Spandan - the resonance of hope (9/10th April 2022) in collaboration with ACERS Victoria and Vedanta Centre of Melbourne; followed by Barshobaron Utsab - Poila Baisakh (16th April, 2022); Durga Puja (1st/2nd October, 2022). Most importantly for our members, please reserve the date for our AGM on 21st May, 2022; details and agenda to follow.

On behalf of the 2021-23 BAV executive committee, I thank you for your enthusiastic response to our call for membership renewal; thank you for your trust, support, and engagement through expressions of interest and volunteering. A big thank you to our sponsors and to those who booked stalls for our cancelled Anondo Mela event. We are hoping for your renewed support at our Barshobaron Utsab event.

I am looking forward to meeting some of you in person during our upcoming events.
Thank you.



OTHER STORIES INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- BAV Seniors' Update
- BAV Treasurer's Update
- BAV Social Media & Community Lead's Update
- Upcoming BAV Events
- Other

FROM THE SENIOR CITIZEN CONVENOR'S DESK

by Dr Asim Das

Since our last Face to Face (F2F) get-together held on 14 July 2021 at GWCC, we have not been able to hold our regular monthly F2F get-togethers due to Covid restrictions. After a few difficult months, housebound seniors were finally able to let their hair down and have a cracking good time on their excursion to Yering Station Winery on 4 December 2021. 33 of our seniors made the bus trip to the winery with a brief stop at Healesville enroute to stretch their legs (seniors needed this).

Once we arrived at the winery, some of us indulged their taste buds, sampling a selection of fine wines, while the rest indulged their cultural & artistic senses, visiting the boutique art gallery showcasing local talent including sculptures.

Next it was lunch at Yarra Valley Grand Hotel which was enjoyed by all. After having their fill of food & drinks, we then moved to Yarra Valley Chocolaterie & Ice Creamery, with its mouth watering display of artisan chocolate. Most of the seniors (grandparents) bought gifts of cocolate for their grandchildren.



Dr Asim Das
BAV Senior Citizen Convener

Then it was back to Vermont South, after an outing for over eight hours, tired but happy. It was a most relaxing day with many catching up on old friendships and forging new ones.





Thank you all for making this a successful & memorable day and hope you will join us for future outings.

We had our usual get-together at 2pm on 6 December at GWCC. The attendance was a bit low (only 20) but that was not unexpected because of three consecutive events taking place one after the other. Bus trip on the 4th, then BAV Satyajit Ray on the 5th followed by BAV Seniors' meet on the 6th. However, all present enjoyed the very informal & typical Bangla Adda in a relaxed manner.

We had plans to hold a Movie Chat Session for the seniors to join in a light-hearted discussion on a selected movie on 29 January 2022; however, due to prevailing COVID restrictions we were forced to cancel it.

Saraswati Puja was held on 5 February at GWCC by BAV with limited capacity.

Our next get-together is scheduled to be held on 19 March from 11 am to 2pm at GWCC.

BAV Seniors is open to anyone from the community. The only qualification is that you have to be 60+ years old. We use the BAV Seniors WhatsApp platform to send out notifications of future programs.

Please **contact** the convener for further details:
Dr Asim Das
M:0499 073 332 | E: seniors@bavwebsite.org.au



FROM THE TREASURER'S DESK

By Narayan Banerjee

Grants update: In the current financial year BAV has received grants from **City of Monash** and the **Dandenong City Council** for Positive Ageing programmes, Spring Festival and the Festival of Learning. The **Department of Premier and Cabinet** has also provided a grant for our Barshobaron Utsab programme in April 2022. These funds have helped us a great deal in organising events. We thank them for their generous support.



Narayan Banerjee

Event update: As COVID restrictions eased, we were able to organise our first face-to-face event. It was a unique cultural show celebrating the life and works of the legendary Bengali filmmaker, Satyajit Ray. We were grateful that the community stood by this event, not just as an audience, but also as enthusiastic participants. We welcomed our dear friend, **Matt Fregon MP** who sat through the program till the end and provided small tokens of appreciation to the participants. We thank him for his continued support to the Bengali Association of Victoria.

I leave you with some pictures and a video link to a innovative showcase depicting Satyajit Ray's films.



Glimpses from backstage



With Matt Fregon, MP

To see more pictures, visit our Facebook post [here](#) and album [here](#).

To see the recording of the program, check out our YouTube Playlist [here](#).

To watch the showcase of Ray's films, check this [link](#).

FROM SOCIAL MEDIA & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT LEAD'S DESK

Dr Dakhina Mitra

Greetings everyone!

I am writing to you all for the first time. Last year, I took on the mantle of leading the events, social media and communications for BAV. Since the formation of the EC in April '21, we tried to put together a number of events for the community. But of course, COVID had other plans and we had to cancel a few. That did not stop us though - we moved everything online.

Contrary to our apprehensions, the perks of moving online were unexpected - for our Mahalaya event, we were able to do a Zoom panel discussion between a few avid fans of the legendary Soumitra Chatterjee and his daughter, Poulami Chatterjee who was in Kolkata. Ms Chatterjee shared some amazing stories about her father - for example, I learnt that Soumitra loved 'shingara' (samosa) - like me! Such stories brought him a little bit closer to us. Watch the recording [here](#).

We were also able to live stream Durga Puja ceremony and pushpanjali each day during Saptami, Ashtami and Nabami. The cultural evenings were filled with local artists and the finale was the online concert of Subhamita Banerjee, live from Kolkata!

Our team worked hard to put together all these events and I had a lot of fun hassling them with timelines and run-sheets!! But what touched my heart was seeing the happy faces of entire families with different generations, watching our online Durga puja, Kali Puja and cultural programs.

I also had the pleasure of meeting a number of community members at our in-person Ray event in December and the Saraswati Puja earlier this year. Our new Saraswati protima was finally unveiled and the event was amazing! I thank all the community members who generously volunteered their time to make these events successful!

As a migrant Bengali here, like many of you, I have missed going to India and have terribly missed family during the festivities. But being involved with BAV so closely has reduced that yearning considerably. I have made several new connections and have gained a sense of belonging to the community.

So join us, get involved and make the events your own platform for social connections! I am sharing a few links and photos from all these events.

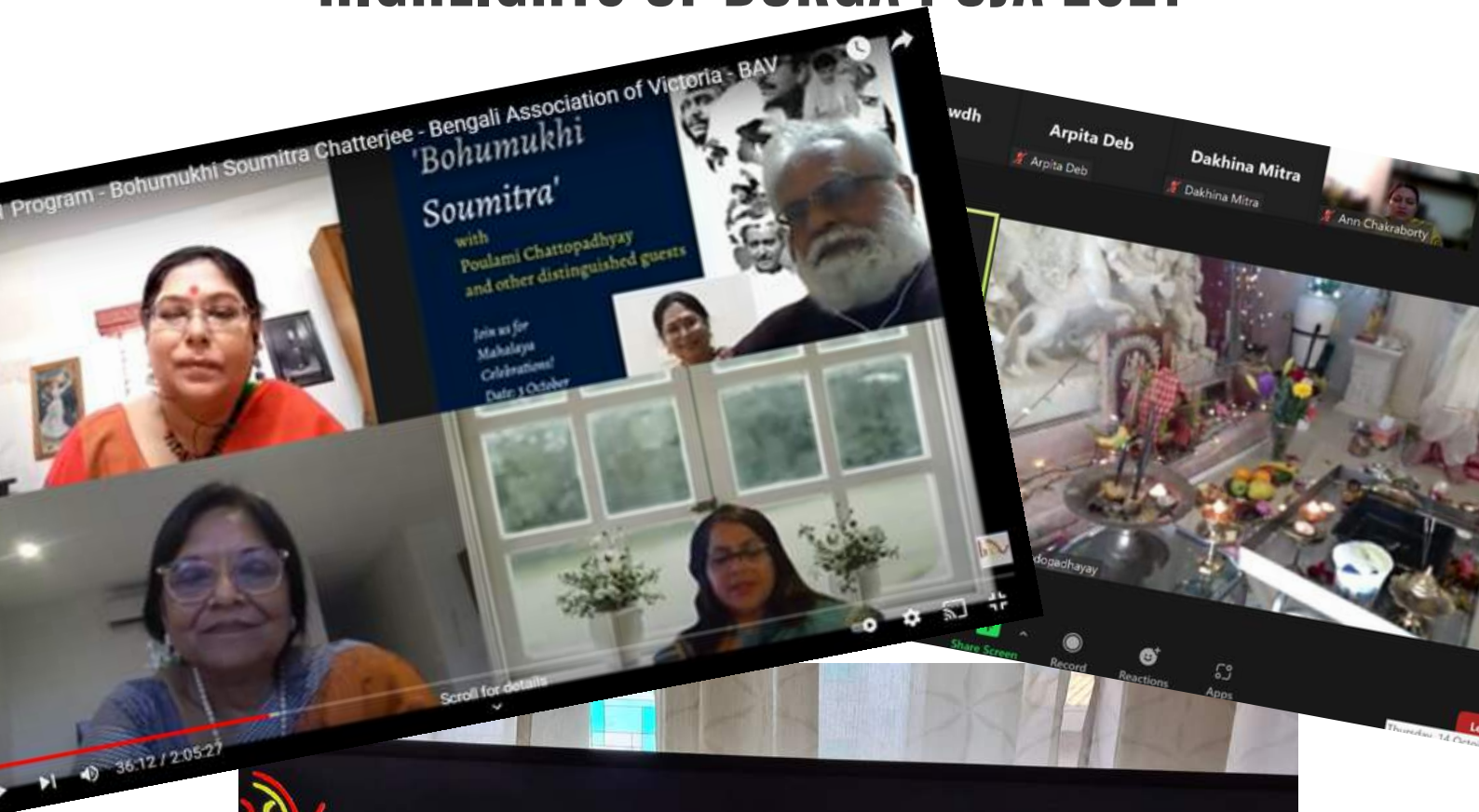


Dr Dakhina Mitra



Check out our Durga Puja Wrap-up video [here](#) and the program playlist [here](#)!

HIGHLIGHTS OF DURGA PUJA 2021



FROM SOCIAL MEDIA & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT LEAD'S DESK - CONTD.

Saraswati Puja, 5th February, 2022; GWCC

It was quite exciting to experience the energy of our community coming together to celebrate our Goddess of Knowledge, Saraswati.



COVID Protocols check-in procedures are part of the new normal for such social gatherings

Children doing Hath-e-khori

UPCOMING BAV EVENTS

We are excited to announce a variety of event dates for the upcoming months. These include:



Spandan - the resonance of hope

BAV, in partnership with Australian Creative & Experimental Revue Society (ACERS) and and Vedanta Centre of Melbourne (VcM)

A delicately curated potpourri of culture and art come together in this program that sets the heartbeat for a hopeful tomorrow, with a promise to stir the soul. The program will present the trials and tribulations, and realisation of hope in a collage of theatre, poetry, dance, and music to form a true resonance of HOPE.

Same program on two dates: 9 and 10 April, 2022

Time: 4.00pm to 6.00pm

Venue: Clayton Theatrette, Clayton Community Centre, 9-15 Cooke Street, Clayton VIC 3168

Reserve your spot [here!](#)

BAV Barshobaron Utsab

Join our Poila Boishak celebrations this year and enjoy some amazing local performances, savor delicacies at food stalls and take part in some fun activities! We are sure that the the mela atmosphere will have something for all ages!

Date: 16 April, 2022

Venue: Glen Waverley Community Centre

Time: 3.00pm to 8.00pm

Stay tuned to the Facebook event page [here](#) for more updates!

Save these dates:

BAV Annual General Meeting

Date: 21 May, 2022

BAV Durga Puja 2022

Date: 1 and 2 October

BAV Kali Puja 2022

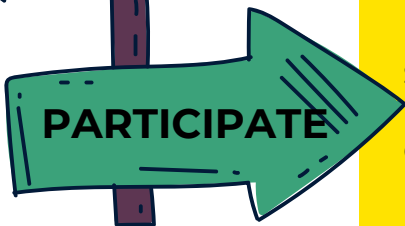
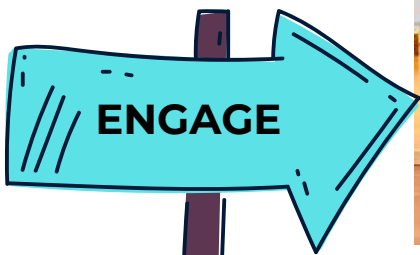
Date: 25 October

Please note that the timing and venue will be confirmed in the coming months - follow our [Facebook Page](#) for latest updates!

GET INVOLVED

Our events are successful because community members work hand-in-hand with our team!

We welcome more of you to join us to build long-lasting social connections and continue to enjoy the richness of Bengali culture and heritage, here in Melbourne.



Next Gazette:

- Highlights from upcoming events
- A guest column about life of a Bengali in Victoria
- And much more!

Stay tuned!

Get Involved:

If you want to contribute, share your news with the wider community, take part in an event or learn more about our activities, feel free to write to us at -

info@bavwebsite.org.au

Follow us on [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#)