

Review of Past Lives: The Exhibition
Nehru Centre, London
Presented by Oral Histories of British-Goans project



Usually at bingo I have little luck getting the opportunity to shout "housey, housey" but today it's been smiles all round, I've managed to call "housey, housey" not once but twice.

The first occasion of "housey housey" was when visiting the Oral Histories of British Goans at the Nehru Centre, 8 Audley Street, W1 - The Tour to be conducted by Selma Carvalho. Thankfully her tour was advertised as "booking closed" as the two exhibition halls were full to the brim and any more would have resulted in a *patlean vos, fudlean vos* scenerio just like on the bus from Calangute to Mapusa.

The second occasion was a little while later. After visiting the pub, Melvyn and I were driving past our most favourite Goan restaurant in Norbury (this is 14 miles away from the Nehru Centre) when on the spur of the moment decided to pop in and takeout a *rechard* mackeral as it was Friday.



Review by Rose Fernandes
Pictured above at the Exhibition



The door opened to a restaurant full of our people, looking like the ones we had previously seen at the first "housey housey" occasion. Melvyn got suitably chided never to pour me two glasses of wine as this only leads me to imagine the Goan world as being incredibly small. You get the gist, this project has gelled our community no end and it is good to see everyone enjoying not just a morning out at the exhibition but also extending camaraderie to a cosy authentic Goan lunch afterwards.

Now for the feedback - The Tour: Love, Life and East Africa was apt because nowhere have I seen anyone with such a love for East Africa as Selma. For enthusiasm alone, she gets a five star rating coupled with a capital 'E'. She knows her East Africanders better than they know themselves and tells their stories with such passion it is as though she lived through these stories herself.





If my memory serves me right, first was the story of three Goans finding themselves in a jail in Zanzibar, next it was two famous Goan pioneers dying in Mombasa a few days apart from each other resulting in about 300 Goans attending the funeral (probably the entire Goan population in those very early times).

(Three must be a significant starting Goan number - today 3 almost entire villages have decanted from Goa to Swindon). Then came the nail biting story of a famous Goan saving himself inches from the jaws of a charging lioness.

Story after story, sunuppers, sundowners, thrilling accounts of our tall rugged ancestors who braved the wild and went where no other men would dare putting our now feeble feats under the shade of the coconut tree.





The photographic display reflected a super trouper behind the camera lens bringing together the entire exhibition into the modern age.

To view the exhibition, details of daily events and visiting times can be found on Goan Voice UK under Oral Histories of British Goans.

Well done and congratulations to Selma and the rest of the team for an uplifting insight into our past lives.

