

Senior Citizens Meeting February 1st 2017

On Wednesday February 1st, the Senior Citizen's Club held their second meeting at Galle Community Centre. People gathered outdoors in the shade of the playpark. Twelve elders attended, and one was accompanied by their son, who supported with his mobility. Two elders were newcomers, and the others greeted each other as friends.

The men engaged in craft activities making boats and flowers from paper and folding fabric serviettes into different shapes. One elder entertained others by making a squirrel (*lena*), which jumped up his arm when he stroked it. The ladies wore chef hats, which had been made for them by ECSAT's vocational training group. They made ginger plain tea and *samaposha*, a snack made from cereal and sugar.

Everyone said how they enjoyed sitting outdoors and chatting while they carried out different activities and discussed ideas for future meetings. One man said his paralysis started with a headache and people asked for more information about this. Staff agreed for the next meeting to be an awareness raising session about problems associated with paralysis and to arrange for someone from the hospital to come and answer their questions.

One man is a lottery club agent and said he needed help selling tickets to earn money but he has no bicycle. Another elder said he could help because he lived nearby. A friendship was started. Also he sold some tickets to elders at the club.

Elders joined in singing old Sri Lankan songs and clapping in time to the melodies. Then everyone enjoyed their tea and *samaposha*. The meeting started at 2:30pm and by 4pm elders were still chatting and reluctant to leave.

The next meeting is 15th February.

Roshan also enjoyed the meeting and was happy to see elders coming together and making new friends. This is a new idea in Galle and a wonderful opportunity for elders to have somewhere to go especially for them. They can make it their own club doing activities they share with others. Roshan hopes this idea will spread and renews his thanks to his host organisation in California for initiating this concept.





Figure 1: A collage of photos at the Senior Citizen's Club Meeting.