

Ajay Kumar Gautam

'People should get used to seeing female bikers on road'



Riya Yadav at Pangong Lake and (right) in Gurgaon

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Riya tells us, "I was really excited about this trip. When I told my parents about it, first they took it causally, but when they realised I was serious about it, they agreed. I think those were the best 13 days of my life. After crossing Manali, my phone didn't have any network, and I had no contact with my parents. But I needed to do this. I have never gone anywhere alone except to an NCC camp when I was in Class IX. I remember I cried a lot back then, but this trip changed me completely. I only had my bike and the determination to conquer the highest motorable road – it was an experience of a lifetime for me."

Though it was a successful journey, Riya says that it wasn't an easy one. "I have learnt to ride only recently, so there were problems. I would always panic if the road had too much traffic, but this trip taught me to be calm and face hurdles. I went along with Sarah Kashyap (an off-road rally racer) and she helped me a lot during this trip. I had all my belongings in only one bag, had problem breathing and didn't get to wash my hair for days. But when you think about achieving something, you do it without thinking about anything else," Riya says.

After returning, her classmates and college authorities congratulated her one her first day of second year. She says, "Not many knew that I was going for this trip, but when I came back, my classmates started cheering for me as soon as I entered the class. My principal has also asked me to meet her, and I am going to do

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that soon." Riya now plans to go for Raid De Himalaya – the world's highest rally raid – next year. "I used to practice with my brother in my society during the initial months. He would run after me, and then some people thought that he was my boyfriend and complained to my mother!" she says and adding, "I don't think female riders are in anyway better or worse than male riders. Women riders are always appreciated more than male riders. I am sure that soon there will be more female biker groups. *Logon ko ab aadat daal leni chahie ladkiyon ko road pe bike chalate dekhne ki.*"

Riya has submitted her entry for Limca Book of Records and India Book of Records, and is hoping to hear back from them soon.

— Riya.Sharma@timesgroup.com

I DON'T THINK FEMALE RIDERS ARE IN ANYWAY BETTER OR WORSE THAN MALE RIDERS. WOMEN RIDERS ARE ALWAYS APPRECIATED MORE THAN MALE RIDERS. I AM SURE THAT SOON THERE WILL BE MORE FEMALE BIKER GROUPS. *LOGON KO AB AADAT DAAL LENI CHAHIE LADKIYON KO ROAD PE BIKE CHALATE DEKHNE KI*

On a musical odyssey

Pics: Shashank Sane



Ameya Dabli and Dada JP Vaswani

Internationally acclaimed singer Ameya Dabli launched his music album *Ekam Satt - One Truth, One Humanity, World Music* at the hands of global humanitarian and spiritual leader Rev. Dada JP Vaswani as part of the latter's centenary birthday celebrations in Pune. The album is available on all digital platforms through Times Music. Inspired by respected Dada's message of selfless love and service for humanity, the album features the works of legendary poets and saints such as Kabir Das, Mirabai, Narsinh Mehta, Guru Nanak Dev, Khwaja Garib Nawaz, Buddha, Tukaram, Tulsidas, Gospels and others.

Given the continuous stress and turmoil that individuals across the globe face, there is an urgent need for each of us to pause, reflect and connect with each other, cutting across our religious, social and cultural beliefs. The album's songs focus on this precise theme that eventually it is a 'one world family' and showcases the best of sufi, folk and contemporary world music across different genres. The album has foot tapping numbers covering Indian and international musical forms to appeal to audiences across age groups. With an aim to spread the message of love and unity across cultures and society globally, Ameya Dabli and his business partner Purvi Soali quit their successful corporate careers to become social entrepreneurs.

A versatile singer, Ameya has performed over 1,500 concerts across 15 countries. The music from the album is already a rage with live renditions by Ameya across 25 locations including for large corporates like Aditya Birla Group and at the Indian High Commission in London. He is currently touring India, US and Dubai for his other musical con-



The launch was attended by a large number of people

cept 'Heart 2 Heart' covering melodious ghazals and folk music.

His 10 city 'Heart 2 Heart' tour covering melodious ghazals kicked off in Mumbai yesterday and will further move to Bangalore, Pune, Hyderabad, Kolkata and other cities.

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Suniel Shetty on his recent visit to the capital

'Delhi is one place where I always cheat on my diet'

Suniel Shetty is known as one of the most fitness-conscious personalities in Bollywood. Even though the actor is in his mid-50s, the fitness buff never skips a day in the gym and is known to be particular about what he eats. However, we recently learnt that the one city that manages to throw his diet plan into disarray is Delhi. When we caught up with him during his recent visit to the capital, the actor told us, "Delhi is known for its food. Every time I come

to the city, I cheat on my diet. And how could I not? The capital is one place where you have to cheat! You have such amazing food here, be it *chhole* or *gol gappas*. Here, *bhaturas* are twice the size of what we get in Bombay." The actor, however, clarified that cheating on the diet isn't as catastrophic as one might think. He said, "If you don't cheat, you will never be conscious about what you should eat and should not. So cheating is essential to staying fit. Of course, you should only do it occasionally."

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The actor also talked about his new association with boxing. He said, "I have a connection with boxing because I used to kickbox when I was younger. Whatever I am in my career as an action star, I owe it to that skill. I felt that getting involved with boxing was something I could do. Additionally, these newer leagues can use some support and help. Be it *kabaddi*, wrestling or boxing, sports that need some push should be supported. I am just happy that sports apart from cricket are being seen as career options these days."

— Abhimanyu Mathur @timesgroup.com

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