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Press Release

Dealing with fear vital for a globe-trotting rider: Cyclist Dhruv Bogra

The author-traveller made a presentation on his adventurous cycling trip from the Arctic to the Andes at 'Yaanam 2025' in Varkala

Varkala (Kerala), Oct. 19: It is highly vital for a bicycle rider to learn how to deal with fear while exploring challenging terrains and unknown lands, besides keeping physical and mental strength intact, said expeditionary cyclist and author Mr Dhruv Bogra.

Mr Bogra, who completed a 400-day solo cycling from the Arctic to the Andes in 2016, was addressing the delegates at the country's first travel literary festival, 'Yaanam 2025', that opened at this seaside getaway on Friday.

While speaking at the session 'Grit, Gravel and Gear', which also happens to be the title of his maiden book on the trip, Mr Bogra said one has to overcome the fear of riding into unknown lands to accomplish the mission.

"There are a lot of things involved in dealing with your fears. You have to brave the weather conditions and face challenging landscapes confidently," he noted.

Mr Bogra's cycling journey started in 2012 with a group of people to Khardung La, a high mountain pass in the Himalayas, located in the Leh district of Ladakh.

During the 2016 trip, Mr Bogra cycled across 10 countries, two continents and four time zones, covering around 15,000 kilometres.

"After a lot of research, I landed in one of the most fascinating routes that cover the Southern and Northern hemispheres of the world. So I decided to start from the Arctic in Alaska and cycle all the way down to the Andes, the world's longest continental mountain range, in Peru," Mr Bogra recalled.

Talking about his one-year-long preparations before the trip, Mr Bogra said he underwent endurance training, prepared meticulous route mapping and planning, learned nuances of wilderness survival and took Spanish language lessons.

On his bicycle, 'Quest,' he packed bags containing water bottles, food, a laptop, cameras, a tent, his



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passport and money to embark on the journey after completing trekking in Alaska as an orientation before the daunting trip.

On the first day, the temperature fell to minus 5 degrees Celsius, and he had to travel through the most dangerous road, the Dalton Highway in Alaska, where only 300 people live in a significant portion of the road.

“There wasn’t any water to refill, replenish food and mobile network for almost ten days,” Mr Bogra said.

When he entered Mexico, he had to doze off in the long stretches of desert in Baja. In the northeast of America, the incessant monsoon dunked him in almost one month, amidst other hardships like interception by anti-drug cartel troupes of Mexico.

“I had to endure 3,000 metres of high altitude in Peru, whereas the highest elevation reached by a bicycle was 5,000 metres. I also passed through Ica in Peru, the driest place on the earth,” he said.

Mr Bogra has written two books on his bicycle expeditions, and the third one, which is about his bicycle trip to the Himalayas along with his wife, is on the anvil.

Journalist and author Sabin Iqbal, also the Festival Director, shared his experiences of trips to Poland in a session titled ‘Literary Trails in Poland’ with poet and artist Madhu Raghavendra.

Organised by Kerala Tourism at Ranga Kala Kendram at the Cliff here, the October 17-19 festival brought together leading travel writers, vloggers and social media influencers from around the world, setting the stage for them to share their insights and perspectives on sustainable and inclusive tourism to meet the demands of the present-day travellers.

‘Celebrating Words and Wanderlust’ was the theme of the three-day festival.

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