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Duo out to cover 4,400km on bamboo cycles for the cause of girls' education

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(Representative Image)

Bengaluru: They're on a mission to spread awareness on the need to educate girl children in rural areas. Sumeet Paringe, 26, and Prisiliya Madan, 22, from Panvel, Mumbai, are journeying from Kanyakumari in Tamil Nadu to Khardung La in Ladakh - a distance of 4,400km across 11 states - on bamboo cycles.

While Sumeet is a techie, Prisiliya has just completed her masters in computer science. They are looking to raise Rs 50 lakh for the cause. Having hit the road on July 14, they've so far had to face heavy rain in the coastal regions and sweltering heat on the barren NH7, but the adverse conditions haven't deterred them from their goal. They have already managed to raise Rs 8 lakh and reached Bengaluru on Thursday night.

While Sumeet went on a solo ride on a bamboo cycle from Panvel to Khardung La earlier, Prisiliya has journeyed alone to Kanyakumari. However, this is the first time that the two have joined hands for a rigorous journey on bamboo cycles and aim to complete the trip in 70 days.

"Education is a fundamental right according to our Constitution, yet so many are deprived of it. In India, educational opportunities for girls from socially and economically disadvantaged communities are less. We are trying to support first-generation girls from underprivileged backgrounds with our campaign," said Sumeet.

They have tied up with a Mumbai-based NGO, IIMPACT, which is committed to educating and empowering rural girl children aged between 6 and 14 years.

"While passing through various cities, people get curious about our ride. They ask us about our purpose and we share our vision with them. We also inform them about the crowd-funding platform - Fuel A Dream, which is backing our

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journey," said Prisiliya.

Having crossed Tamil Nadu and covered parts of Karnataka already, the duo will travel to Telangana, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, New Delhi, Haryana, Chandigarh, Himachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir before reaching their final destination.

CEO of IIMPACT Nirmala Tandon said, "Our aim to create awareness among rural Indians on the benefits of educating a girl child and we hope to achieve our dream through this journey.'

Why bamboo cycles?

Bamboo frames are light and stronger than several steel bicycles. Its tensile strength can exceed that of carbon fibre, aluminium and steel while its compression strength is more than concrete's. Bamboo's ability to absorb shock even on bad roads means there is no need for shock-absorbers. Godrej & Boyce Manufacturing Co Ltd have joined hands with the two cyclists and provided them with bamboo bicycles to help them realize their dream. It is a unique and sustainable mode of travelling

Nirmala Tandon | CEO, IIMPACT

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