

GOAN RIDER CONQUERS ONE OF THE TOUGHEST MOTORBIKE RALLIES IN THE WORLD

Here's how Goa's Altaf completed one of the world's toughest motor rallies in the Himalayas – solo and minus any crew – to reach second in his category

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Considered as one of the world's toughest motor rallies, Raid de Himalaya has started catching the interest of Goan motor-sports enthusiasts as well. While last year saw three Goan teams, this year as well, three teams from the state took part in different categories.

The event kicked off in Leh and comprised four legs spanning across the wastelands of Ladakh and Zaskar, where the participants' machines and riding skills were tested to the hilt, before it concluded on October 14.

Santa Cruz-based Altaf Khalifa got placed second in the Royal Enfield class in the extreme category this year. The lone rider, without a backup or support crew, was placed 18th overall at the competitive event.

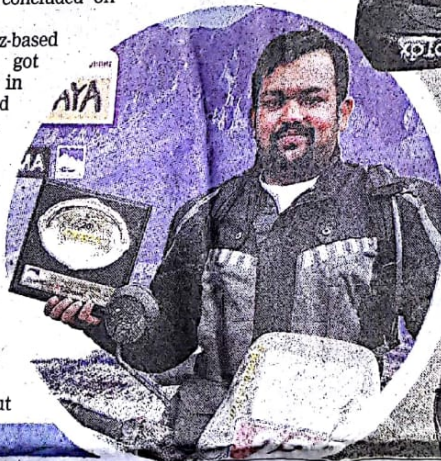
In a chat with Goa Times, the rider talks about

how zipping through the snow clad mountains alone was exciting and challenging at the same time, and what drove him to complete the raid this time.

FROM RIDING ON THE HIGHWAYS TO RIDING INTO THE HILLS

His interest in biking and touring took him to Leh for the first time in 2012. "My dad got me interested in riding. He's been riding a lot, and he's been wanting to race as well, but never could because of family issues. So, he and my mom pushes me to take part in events.

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Altaf Khalifa (inset) at the prize distribution in Leh

I WAS VERY CONFIDENT I'D BE ABLE TO MANAGE. I HAD WORKED ON MY BIKE, AND WE BOTH TOOK CARE OF EACH OTHER. WHILE EVERYBODY WAS WORKING ON THEIR BIKES AND CARS AFTER THE STAGES, I WOULD SIT THERE, LOOKING AT THEM AND EATING CHOCOLATE. THEY MUST HAVE THOUGHT, 'YEH PAGAAL HAI'

