



MUKTHI BIKE CHALLENGE

INCLUSION | NOVEMBER 2019



Thank you for supporting our Mukthi Bike Challenge 2019, where 14 riders from India and overseas rode from Bangalore through Mysore, Mangalore, Murdeshwar, Dharwad, Miraj, Mahabaleshwar, Navi Mumbai and finally reached Kamathipura, Mumbai's largest red-light area to highlight the real threat of human trafficking.

Ranita Sarma, our Relationship Officer in Bangalore played a key role in organising the Bike Challenge. She writes about her experience below:



This is my second time being associated with MBC. We worked really hard as a team and our goal was to increase recognition in the cities and locations we travelled to and to establish relationships for future events.

Along the way, we witnessed many on the ride being emotionally attached to the journey, especially organisers in the other locations. I remember while conversing with Mr. Ahuja from Miraj who was extremely collaborative and deeply rooted to the cause Oasis stands for. He wanted to establish a further intrinsic relationship for next year's MBC. Building relationships like this is important for Oasis to continue doing what it believes in.

My favorite moment was when we stopped for lunch at a Maharashtra dhaba enroute to Dharwad where we all sat with different teams and got to know more about each other. That felt like real bonding even if for a short while.

The DRISHTI team from Centre for Social Action (CSA), Christ (Deemed to be University) joined the riders in creating awareness through street plays. This is a centre for promoting volunteerism, enabling students to develop as socially responsible citizens through developmental initiatives that contribute to sustainable change in society.



Daniel Jabaraj was one of our key organisers who worked hard in planning MBC 2019.



Although fundraising was one of our goals, we focused on raising awareness on human trafficking and its different forms to the general public. This year, we had the opportunity to collaborate with many government agencies that work to end trafficking. We were fortunate to organise programmes with the Department of Women and Child Development, Child Helpline, Duty Chief Petty Officer, local Panchayats and Child Welfare Committee. We were also able to connect with various schools and colleges to raise awareness on

trafficking. These agencies and schools connected us with a mass audience of young and old to convey the real nature of trafficking and the various forms that it exists in.

The unity that we felt during the ride was amazing. All our hard work felt worth it when we saw people asking questions and being inquisitive about trafficking after watching the play or listening to someone talk. This is just the beginning for MBC. We hope next year will be much bigger than this.

Susie was one our pillion riders on MBC 2019. She was joined by Jeremy (husband) and her daughter.



Susie with our Blue Edge students at the MBC opening event in Bangalore

How can one encapsulate the Mukhti Bike challenge in a few words? Impossible! But for those of us who escaped our 9-5 jobs in the UK and lowering temperatures ushering in our winter, perhaps the word 'mukhti' (freedom) does it best! It was fantastic to be free from the demands of the clock, following the lead of our guides and organisers, eating scrumptious thalis whenever lunch happened to be.

Mukhti Bike Challenge also gave me the perfect opportunity to re-visit India after almost 20 years, and to share with my daughter the experiences of living in India that she could not remember! I had not expected travelling pillion for over 1000 km to be fun, in fact I had expected it to be

torturous. Having driven around Delhi decades ago, I had a fairly accurate expectation of how sore it was going to be for my back, but the view from a bike of tropical green jungles and the paddy fields of Karnataka and Maharashtra was simply stunning and made all the stiffness & pain worthwhile.

I really loved the street play - the scenarios were acted out with such intensity and passion and as I listened to them through the week I understood more through my resurrected Hindi. I embraced the opportunities that we had to speak out about the gravity of human trafficking to those who enquired. Chatting with the Oasis staff about their work and our visit to Kamathipura, Mumbai really helped me understand the extent of Oasis' work with the victims of trafficking so much better - rather important when my brother-in-law, Andy and other friends have been working in Oasis for the past 25 years!

Michael Almeida works as Project Executive in Grant Road, Mumbai. He was a pillion rider with Sudesh who is a former Oasis staff from Mumbai.



This year was a challenging one from the very start. The weather was a big concern as in Mumbai it was raining continually and we were wondering how it was going to be especially the thoughts of climbing the Ghats in Mahabaleshwar in this weather was scary!

It was a tiring ride but it was full of memories. Since this was our 3rd consecutive year participating in MBC, it felt like a great achievement. And even though there were mishaps along the way, the ride continued with the same spirit. We made many new friends, enroute.

It was very good to network with NGOs, schools and there was a good media coverage for the Challenge. In Belgaum, there was a performance in Siddharameshwar school where a girl in the first row was deeply touched by the play and she started crying. As I helped to console her, I realised the importance of the message of trafficking.

Damien was one of our riders from the UK. He is a chef with a love for riding bikes!



I did not have any expectations for this trip because I had never done anything like this before. I was quite nervous but I knew I had to do this to do something for those who do not have a voice.

This journey has been one of the best I have ever done. Each day was challenging in its own way with cows, dogs, monkeys, donkeys, horses, pot holes, monsoon etc. You cannot get that anywhere else. The ride has brought an awareness to people that might not have heard of the plight of people who were trafficked

There are many highlights like the bikes, the scenery, the culture, the food, the kindness of people, the street play team with their amazing performances which did not need words to understand, strangers that I can now call friends and spreading the message that help is there for you if you need it. I would believe that the work of Oasis is the highlight because they are dedicated to fighting for those who cannot fight.

A journey of a lifetime. Here's a walk down the memory lane of MBC 2019. Click on the link to watch the video!

[Watch video](#)



If you would like to participate in MBC next year, contact

Vishwas Udgirkar - +91 9158676138 | vishwas.udgirkar@oasisin.org

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Our mailing address is:

Bangalore: No 201, Amazing Grace, 2nd Floor, 3rd 'D' Main, Ramaiah Layout, Opp. BBMP Kuvempu Park,
Kacharakanahalli, Bangalore- 560084

Chennai: 18, Secretariat Colony, 1st street Kilpauk, Chennai - 600010

Mumbai: 101, 1st Floor, Mahavir Darshan, Opp. Old TMC Office, Stadium Road, Jambli Naka, Thane (West) -
400601

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