



ENERIDE
2022



“Do not follow where the path may lead. Go instead where there is no path
and leave a trail”

Ralph Waldo Emerson



Foreward

The region of north east India comprising of the seven sister states is less travelled by motorcycle riders, a few members of the International Fellowship of Motorcycling Rotarians (IFMR) – India Chapter braved to ride these treacherous terrains and test their grit and skills.

It was a memorable ride for me, a lifetime achievement for sure. The machine below my saddle never failed to keep itself and my spirits at full throttle. I cherish every moment of the ride and it has taught me to be a better person. The culture and people of north east India are true examples of discipline and gratitude.

Memory is the power or process of remembering and storing of things remembered. Recollecting or showcasing achievements can be used as a motivation to oneself and others. Pictures are a perfect source of memory, this book displays the nuances, fun, thrill, endurance and pride of all the brave hearts who successfully completed the ENERIDE – 2022.

This coffee table book (memory book) is compiled by Rtn. Vinod Kumar Agarwal an adventurous rider of the group to showcase the journey of the “Exhilarating North East Ride” ENERIDE – 2022.

I thank all the riders for their camaraderie. My special acknowledgement to Rtn. Prashanth Babu for curating the ride, Rtn. Rajesh A R for leading the ride and Rtn. Vinod Kumar Agarwal for compiling this book.

Ajit Ram,
President, IFMR



Preface

When Rtn. Ajit Ram took over the mantle of Presidentship of IFMR in July 2021, he had announced the trip to Seven Sister States of North East India in the yearly calendar, it was scheduled for April 2022. As we were in January 2022, he announced the dates and complete program of the trip, it took some time for people to understand the same and slowly we had 10 riders giving their names for same. Many meetings took place over zoom and physical, tour operator was finalized, flight tkts to Guwahati and back were booked, bikes were loaded in truck for its safe onward transportation to Guwahati on 20th April, 2022 and the bike trip to NE India took off on 26th April, 2022.

This book will give complete first hand story of our 19 days journey with adequate pictures. My final impression of the trip is, it was a different terrain and a tough one but very much doable and every serious biker should experience the beautiful world of North East India, it is the best kept secret of India. People are more Indian than rest of the country. It was truly an Exhilarating bike trip.

Hope all of you will enjoy the journey with us through this book.

Thank you

Rtn. Vinod Agarwal





Contents

1. Foreword
2. Preface
3. The Team

The Journey

4. Day 00
5. Day 01
6. Day 02
7. Day 03
8. Day 04
9. Day 05
10. Day 06
11. Day 07
12. Day 08
13. Day 09
14. Day 10
15. Day 11
16. Day 12
17. Day 13
18. Day 14
19. Day 15
20. Day 16
21. Day 17
22. Day 18

The Riders





Ajit Ram

True leader, loves to take everyone together and a hard task master.



Rajesh A R

Care free personality, loves his riding and never loses an opportunity to give tips to others on their riding improvement.



Punit Bajaj

Loves his bike and moves like a maharaja on it, big foodie at heart!



Amit Poddar

Enjoys life to the fullest, a no nonsense guy. Loves to be photographed at the drop of a hat.



Raghavendra P Inamdar

Simple and family guy and lives life king size.



Prashanth Babu SJ

Totally bindaas about everything, enjoys his riding and practical to the core.



Vinay Venkatramana

Serious and keen observer, has a slapstick sense of humour.



Vinod Agarwal

Ready to take challenges, for him age is just a number.

Day 0

As per plan we were waiting for 26th April to kick off our NE Ride to Seven Sister States of India. 2 members, Vinay and Ashok had decided to cover the distance between Bengaluru to Guwahati by road itself starting from Bangalore and had left Bangalore on 20th April morning, 2 members from Thrissur sub Chapter, Dr. Shyam Mohan and Dr. Anjana flew from Kochi to Guwahati on 26th evening and 5 of us, Ajit, Rajesh, Prashant Babu, Raghavendra and Vinod flew from Bangalore same time and luckily all of us reached Guwahati around 7 pm in the evening and finally to a good hotel Livin Hub in Guwahati.

Our tour operators Shreyas and Anurag too joined us in the hotel. In fact Shreyas had travelled with 5 of us from Bangalore in the same flight. Our surprise package of the day was mechanic Murli, who had accompanied us in Hima-Leh-Yan ride during July 2021, was too invited for this trip and had flown from Delhi.

We were waiting for two more members of the trip, Punit and Amit to join us next morning from Bangalore. After a brief visit to our rooms and freshen up, were informed by Rtn. Prez Ajit Ram, that we will all join in Rtn. Ashok's room for fellowship and relaxing, everyone were too curious to know about the 3000 kms road trip of Rtn Vinay and Rtn. Ashok from Bengaluru to Guwahati which had taken them 6 days and 5 nights, many incidents were narrated by both of them, it was a great learning for them and us to know the real uniqueness and diversity of our country which one can understand while riding from one state to another and undertaking such long road trip on bikes. Fortunately their trip of 3000 kms was absolutely glitch free. Take a bow brothers on your achievement. Around 9.30 pm we all landed up at the hotels restaurant where our dinner was organised, after a good hearty dinner, all retired to their rooms for next day activity, i.e collecting our bikes from lorry and visiting the world famous Deity Kamakhya Devi's temple and welcoming our two riders from Bengaluru.





Day 1

We had planned to receive our bikes and unload them from the truck in the morning at 6 am in front of hotel itself. Accordingly the truck driver was informed and had the truck in front of our hotel sharp at 6 am and soon in next one hour had all the bikes unloaded in great shape as it was loaded in Bengaluru 7 days ago. Truck was asked to return to his parking place for next 18 days.

Today was totally relaxed day as two bikers Amit and Punit were to join by 12 noon only and no other biking trip was planned as per original schedule, but bikers are bikers once their bike is seen they cannot stop, visit to Maa (Godess) Kamakhya Devi's Temple was planned on bike for all. After good breakfast and shower all assembled at 10 am for the temple visit which was 16 km from hotel but took almost one hour to reach due to city traffic. Had a very good darshan and blessings from Maa (Godess), and some great pics, few decided to visit next temple known as Umananda temple which is situated in a river island, took ferry to reach their and took blessings from Lord Umananda too and were back in hotel around 2.30 pm for lunch. Few had some private visits to friends and relatives and accordingly all dispersed. Rtn Punit and Rtn Amit had joined the group and were welcomed with big hugs from all.

I had arranged a grand dinner for all at my cousin's house as a goodwill gesture from Anil Jain to we bikers. All reached at 7 pm to his house terrace, we took our entire touring support staff team too. All had great time meeting my cousin, Anil Jain and his family members and few of his close friends, it was a non stop party but we had to leave for next day's ride. They took a close look at our mean machines and took selfie pics with it, admired our bikes to the core, had not seen much of them in Guwahati. After bidding goodbye to the hosts, all were back in hotel rooms for next day's first journey of the trip.





Day 2

Finally the Exhilarating North East India Ride was taking off today, thru WhatsApp Secretary Rt. Rajesh had messaged the flag off time as 7 am and riders sequence was published before hand. All were ready with their bikes, luggage by 6.30 am near our bikes parking area, it was a long ride covering 325 kms from Guwahati to Bomdila. Bomdila is at a height of 8000 feet and journey was covering a distance of 175 kms in plains and 150 kms thru steep hills.

Prez. Ajit had invited our previous night gala dinner host Anil Jain and Sanjay Kedia to flag off the ride officially with the IFMR chequered flag. Hotel had packed breakfast for us. Had a huddle meet with briefing from Rtn Ajit about the riding rules and I was asked to offer prayer for the safe journey. Exactly at 7 am we started our journey, Mr Anil Jain flagged off the ride and our tour operators camera man was taking video. Slowly we were leaving Guwahati and hitting highway, it took some time to exit Guwahati due to heavy vehicle movement by school buses and lorries. Soon we were all cruising at good speed due to excellent road condition. Around 9 am, stopped at road side dhaba for breakfast, unfortunately our packed breakfast was in back up vehicle and was getting delayed, all ordered fresh breakfast of Puri/ Bhaaji, Omlette and tea, it was a great treat for us see the hospitality of Assam people, the staff members of dhaba were ladies and treated us like we had come for a wedding sit-down breakfast. Soon we were out again on highways and continued our journey, stopped for quick tea around 12 noon and continued further, started seeing Tea Garden's in plains field of highway, normally we see such views in hills but as Assam is known as the largest producer of tea in the world, both side of highway had vast stretches of big tea estates. Soon started climbing the hills and found a petrol station as many were in need to refill their petrol tanks of bike. Nearby stopped for lunch and had typical fare of food what one will expect, chowmin and fried rice.

Continued our journey and had reached Bomdila around 5.30 pm and fortunately sunlight was still there. Tour operators Shreyas and team had arranged our stay in the best of hotel possible in Bomdila. All started unloading of luggage from support vehicle, the weather in Bomdila was very cold it was good 10 degree centigrade all were hungry and tea with pakora (snacks) were ordered from a restaurant operated in the hotel building itself. Prez Ajit had carried caps and rain poncho for all, same was given to all. After checking into rooms, it was unwinding for all. Around 9.30 pm had our dinner and hit the bed by 10.30 for next days journey to Tawang









Day 3

Today's saddle up time was 6.30am, breakfast at 7am and start by 7.30am, everything was going as per the clock, riding sequence was shared earlier, we had a briefing by Prez Rtn. Ajit Ram, he explained us the terrain we will be facing today and how to overcome them, he offered the prayer for the safety of all and we started rolling immediately after that, Rtn. Ajit was the lead today.

Our first stop was Dirang, a popular place in Arunachal Pradesh, reached there by 9 am after few misadventure with Google map, the main attraction is a Buddhist monastery, took some great pictures there and tour operators photo shoot team had their Drone flying to get elevated views. Spent an hour in Dirang and started slowly for Tawang. The unexpected was awaiting all of us, the stretch from there we had mix of bollywood masala, emotions, drama, comedy, thriller till our next stop, Sela Pass at 13700 ft.

The road condition was becoming bad and slowly the fog was engulfing us with visibility dropping to 20 meters, all the lights of bikes were put in ON mode with flashers in place, added to misery it had started drizzling making it difficult to ride, many stretches were narrow and opposite side traffic was no less. All riders did their best and reached Sela Pass around 1pm, which is at an altitude of 13700ft, not a great place to stay long due to poor oxygen level, took few pics with the signages of Sela Pass and started again, soon found another must visit place, a lake after the Sela Pass, a man-made lake maintained by our Army, stopped here for photo op and started soon.

We had covered almost 100kms till now and rain was not stopping it was making ride difficult, due to rains the roads had become slushy and slippery. With utmost caution continued till we reached Jaswant Garh Memorial, made by our Army in memory of Army Officer Jaswant Rawat who fought valiantly during 1962 indo-china war, army personnel runs a cafe where they serve snacks and tea at a nominal cost, to everyone's good fortune they were serving Masala Dosa, stopped there for almost 1 hour and had Dosa's for our lunch. Rain was not stopping and light condition was also not good, decided to start, final 60kms of today's ride was becoming really challenging, vast stretch of roads were full of slush and muddy running water. With each other's assistance managed to cross all the hurdle and reach Tawang by 5pm to our hotel. All were tired and went inside their allotted room and came out for dinner around 8.45 pm, it was an excellent dinner, everything was piping hot and were served with a smile. The temperature in Tawang was 7 degree centigrade all went back to the rooms for good rest and sleep.













Day 4

Today was a rest day for all to relax and to visit local places of interest because next ride is to Bumla Pass located at 15000 feet and the battle ground of 1962 Indo/China war. To visit there few permits are required from Tawang District Administration and Army personnel situated at Tawang.

All riders got up aaram se (comfortably), had few rounds of tea before going for breakfast, were taking pictures from hotel balcony of Tawang town. Around 9 am, were informed of breakfast in the dining area, all had a great breakfast, the kitchen team were going all out to make us comfortable with their offerings. As the temperature was 6 degree and no power in Tawang due to weekly maintenance work, all got ready for visiting World famous Tawang Monastery on bikes around 11am.

Tawang Monastery is spread over a huge area on top of Tawang and had awesome breathtaking view of Tawang town, all got busy in clicking pictures, went inside the main hall of Monastery and the view of inside was just mind-boggling, with all hues of coloured decoration and a huge golden statue of lord Buddha was mesmerizing, photography was allowed inside and it was non stop clicking of pictures by all.

Left Monastery around 12.45 pm, as it was almost lunch time, decided to have lunch with precondition that we will have best authentic Tawang food, googled and found a restaurant called Taste of Tawang, fortunately it was close to our hotel, reached and everyone gave their preference of Tawang food from menu, all enjoyed the hospitality and food of the restaurant after which decided to go back to our hotel for rest. Meanwhile our tour operator was working behind the scene for Bumla pass visit with authority for permits, had taken our bikes documents to ensure we visit the Bumla pass in our bikes and not in govt organised vehicle. On reaching hotel, many wanted to refill the bikes with petrol and went ahead for searching a petrol station, few went around for window shopping as our hotel was in the midst of the Tawang commercial market. Many retired to room for a rest before lavish dinner at 8pm by hotel. By 9.30pm all were in rooms for a good sleep/rest for the next days ride to Bumla Pass, where the temperature goes down to -3 degree centigrade. Prez Ajit had instructed all not to compromise clothing and layers of clothing to be worn along with riding gear and rain gears for tomorrows ride and after which all dispersed to their rooms.









Day 5

As we got up in the morning we were greeted by a clear sky and sun was welcoming us to our today's destination i.e Bum La Pass . After a good breakfast in hotel, we were informed that our permits to Bum La Pass has been received by the tour operator and the permits were for travel by motorbikes, all were jumping with joy, that the purpose of coming all the way is getting fulfilled finally.

We were assigned our riding sequence and we started rolling out around 8 am from Tawang to Bum La, briefing and prayers were deferred to a little clear and clean place because Tawang was totally slushy and with steep roads around was not possible to assemble. Tawang as such is a big Army Cantonment due to its historical background of it being the battle field of 1962 Indo/China war, the entire stretch of 32 kms to Bum La is under Indian Army's control. Immediately after start we felt the ride is going to be extremely challenging one despite the less distance, the roads were very steep, curvy, width of road were in slant and too many bends to gain altitude. Moreover the road was single lane with middle of it having gravel and loose stones, making our ride a challenging one. After crossing 6 kms we stopped near a leveled patch of road for briefing and prayer, Prez Rtn. Ajit informed about the terrain and guided us how to overcome them. Secretary Rtn. Rajesh offered the prayer for the safety and success of today's ride. Immediately, there we realised that we were surrounded by many bunkers of our 1962 war which had got covered by grass and algae. It was giving us goosebumps. We started our ride very slowly as army vehicles were moving too. After another 5 kms of travel our first check post of Army came and all of us were stopped for screening of transit permit, took some time and were asked to move ahead. The ride was becoming difficult but the views across was more breathtaking, both sides of road had mountains full of snow, in few places we were riding at the peak of the mountains and were cutting through the clouds. Soon another army check post stopped us for permit verification and were allowed after some time when few vehicle for top had cleared the road, again we started, this time the beauty of this place was just getting better and mesmerising, nothing less than film directors Mani Ratnam's movie Roja, snow covered canvas backdrop all around. Encountered many lakes and had stopped for few photo op. Closer to Bum La Pass another army check post stopped us for final verification.

Around 10.30 am we had managed to reach Bum La Pass, all were jumping with joy for having made it despite all the hurdle. All went berserk clicking pictures with the Bum La Pass altitude stone for their life time memories. Army personnel maintains a cafe here, all enjoyed their offerings of Samosa, Momo and Soup. Soon we decided to leave so that we can capture pictures of the backdrop which we had left behind. Slowly we started our descent to Tawang, stopped at many places for taking life time pictures, many were giving poses along with their bikes and taking pictures. Since we were left with half a day time after coming back to Tawang, decided to visit few more places of interest in Tawang, first we visited popular Budha Park, went around it and took some pictures with Drone flying. Our next visit was to Tawang War Memorial, the place made all of us very emotional with the details of 1962 war, more than 2040 army personnel were martyred and their names were put on the walls of memorial. We were all filled with gratitude to our Indian Army personnel for their sacrifices to keep us safe and our country protected from the evil design of enemy countries.

Time was 2 pm, all were hungry and wanted to have lunch at the number one restaurant of Tawang, Dragon Restaurant, fortunately we got a table and thoroughly enjoyed our food. Were back to rooms by 4 pm and retired for rest and dinner in the evening. After good dinner with local drink, "Aara Chang", offering as a special gesture by the host of the hotel, we hit the bed.







Day 6

Today we were leaving Tawang, and going to next major town of Arunachal Pradesh known as Dirang, famous for Kiwi and Apple orchards. In fact we had passed by Dirang on our way from Bomdila to Tawang. Morning saddle up and start time was fixed for 7.30 am, had a sumptuous breakfast at the hotel and gathered for briefing, Prez Rtn. Ajit boosted our confidence with a few word as this it is the same route which we took while coming from Bomdila (Day 3) and a few of us were apprehensive of the route and it's challenges. He offered prayer for safe ride, riding sequence was announced and at 8 am we started our journey.

First 40 kms was full of slush but since it was not raining we managed it somehow, soon our horror started, it had started raining and temperature dipping, riding was becoming difficult with in between slushy road and opposite side military convoy, things became nightmarish closer to Sela Pass as the fog had also set in, rains were becoming icy and hitting our bikes windshield and forming a layer of ice, the temperature had dropped to 1 degree centigrade, speed had dropped to 10 km as visibility was just 10 metres. Slowly and steadily all negotiated the road and reached Army camp at Baisakhi, by then things had improved and there we saw a small restaurant, stopped for tea, but seeing his wood fired tandoor all decided to warm up in front of it as all were freezing and soon decided to have lunch as well as it was close to 12.30 pm. It was steaming hot lunch which was enjoyed by all.

After lunch we started our decent to Dirang, close to 3.30 pm we were in Dirang but got our hotel rooms around 5 pm, all retired to rooms and regrouped for hearty dinner and a review meeting with the tour operator for onward journey. All retired to their rooms by 10 pm for next day's ride to world famous Kaziranga National park.





Day 7

Today's start was at 7.30 am and accordingly all had got up early and freshened up by 7 am and were down to parking area near our bikes. Had decided to have breakfast on the way to save early morning time and avoid rains if possible. All bikes were checked by our star mechanic Murli for chain lubes, engine oil and brakes etc. Prez Rtn Ajit briefed all of today's terrain and suggested today's lead rider Rtn Amit to offer prayer, after which we started.

It was decided that Bomdila town is on the way after 40 kms and we will stop there for breakfast. Slowly we were leaving Dirang in fact we were leaving the enchanting state of Arunachal Pradesh after 5 days of stay, I can only say it is highly underrated State of our country, it is a must visit for one and all once in life time, it is nature's best kept secret state. The journey between Dirang to Bomdila took us one hour and then stopped for breakfast and refill of petrol in bikes. Close to 10 am, started from Bomdila, soon we found fog engulfing all of us while riding but was manageable and the surrounding of mountain was awesome with lush greenery all around. There were broken patches of road but other than that it was a smooth ride, crossed a military township on the way.

After a downhill riding of around 125 kms, we were leaving Arunachal Pradesh and had entered Assam once again, rode for another 75 kms crossing Bhalukpong, and reached Tezpur, a major city of Assam, saw a nice 3 star hotel, lead Rtn Amit decided to stop for our lunch. Place was great, food was superb, after constant eating of local fare, looked we were back to our normal food habits.

As we came down to our parking area, we were greeted by two members of Red Land Brother's Axom bikers club from Tezpur, Mr. Anup Mandal and Mr. Deep. They wanted to meet and greet us and felicitated all of us by garlanding the traditional handloom Assamese towel. In return our Prez Ajit who is always ready with IFMR merchandise, gave them IFMR flag, stickers, caps and key chains. It was nice to see how riding community respect each other. In fact had forgotten to mention similar felicitation of traditional Assamese towel garlanding on our second day of arrival by the staff members of Secretary Rajesh's security firm, a warm gesture by them, big thanks to them. Around 3.30 pm we started our last leg of today's ride, close to 75 kms of riding to Kaziranga resort. As we started rain had started but we continued our ride as all were prepared with their rain gears, the road leading to Kaziranga is beautifully maintained by the government, full marks to government for it, all around was thick greenery and jungles and proper traffic signages. Reached resort around 5.30 pm, soon we were in our rooms for unwinding. Met around 9 pm for good dinner, retired to our rooms by 10 pm.





Day 8

Today was a rest day but an important day as we were visiting Kaziranga National park, the home to the world famous One Horned Rhino, which are in good numbers in this park. Advance booking is suggested for the safari and accordingly Prez Rtn Ajit had our bookings done online well in advance.

The visit timing of booking was 7.30 am, so all had to rise little early instead of sleeping little more, all had quick breakfast and were ready to jump into two Gypsy safari vehicles which had come from National park to take us from our resort itself. Absolutely great service by the management of Kaziranga National park. Fortunately our resort was just 2 kms from park. All tried to take the vantage position in the Gypsy to get best view of park.

Soon we were inside the park, and the view of it was changing rapidly, it is spread over 800 square kms and from distance itself we could spot many world famous One Horned Rhinoceros, slowly the vehicle was moving and we spotted many elephants, deers, sambar, different types of migratory birds. The view of park is an absolute delight, everything was maintained as natural as possible, be it the water body or grassy fields, thick forests, no one can point any kind of flaws in its maintenance. Over 300 Gypsy safari vehicles move inside the park with given intervals. The distance covered inside the park is close to 12 kms in two hours, adequate time to spot Rhinoceros and take pictures. Soon to our delight we saw a Rhinoceros on right side of our vehicle and we stopped the vehicle, slowly the giant Rhinoceros came out of the bushes and crossed our vehicle to go to the other side of the road, it could not have been more closer view of a Rhinoceros, all were busy taking video and clicking pictures of it.





Inside the park two barricaded places are made for visitors to come out of vehicle for closer look of Rihno. One was a two storeyed 360 degree view Machaan, elevated structure to view the entire park and look for Rhino from there. All were jumping with joy on climbing the Machaan and taking selfie and pictures with sprawling park's backdrop. We spent over 15 minutes to understand the park and soon we were inside our vehicle for the return journey, saw few foreigners in Gypsy vehicle with their jumbo camera mounted in front of the vehicle for closest pic of Rhino.

After spending over 2 hours we stopped at the souvenir shops which were selling miniature wooden Rihno, few of us bought one or two and headed to our resort. All in all a great experience, full marks to the Administration for the maintenance of National park, very proud to have it in our country. One item from "Once in a life time bucket list" was achieved today. Since not much work was planned all got busy in getting their bike maintenance, all were trying to dry their riding gears etc. Mechanic Murli was busy in checking each bikes and attending it with their shortcomings.

Close to 1 pm we decided to visit the bestest restaurant of Kaziranga for lunch, John's Kitchen, just 1 km from our resort, once inside the restaurant, to our delight found that it belonged to a hardcore biker John, who had made the interior of restaurants on bike theme, all around the restaurant his passion for bikes was visible, his bike clubs event pictures and flags was put up all around. Tried to reach out to him, he was traveling to Guwahati, but Prashant Babu spoke to him over phone. Had great food in a relaxed atmosphere, staff were extremely happy to serve we bikers. On finishing our lunch, Prez Rtn Ajit handed over our IFMR goodies for John to his manager and fixed our flag and sticker on their wall of fame. They in turn gave their bikers club Calendar to each one of us and took pictures of it. Soon we left for a nearby petrol station for refueling the bikes, and then back to resort for complete rest. Gathered in the evening for a lavish spread of dinner organised by our F and B incharge Rtn. Punit Bajaj. Big thanks to him for taking good care of us by coordinating with the kitchen staff at the resort. All were back to rooms for a good night sleep for next day's ride to Nagaland.





Day 9

Today we were completing rides of two States, Arunachal Pradesh and Assam and entering the third state of North East India, Nagaland. All were excited, time to start was 7.30 am, after breakfast at 7 am, all were ready, Prez Rtn Ajit had a briefing on today's ride, riders sequence was informed and asked Rtn Raghavendra to offer prayer for today's ride safety, which he obliged.

Soon we were on the highway, it was a great ride, road was perfect, both sides of road had vast stretches of Tea Garden's and soon we had covered 100 kms in exact 100 minutes, Rtn Prashanth Babu was the lead today and stopped for the first tea break. Now the road condition was starting to become little bad and we continued our journey and after 40 kms of ride we were entering the state of Nagaland and the border town of Dimapur, we had to cross Dimapur town for Kohima. Soon we were seeing 4 lane highway on mountains, Kohima is situated at a height of 1444 meters, the climb had started, as we were ahead of our schedule time, decided to take one more tea break at small road side shop. From here the last 70 kms was becoming difficult, innumerable road work was happening at too frequent stretch, road was broken, slush at many places and one side of road was closed resulting in traffic from opposite, it had become dusty and temperature was rising and feeling the heat. Slowly and steadily we entered Kohima, greeted by serpentine traffic all over, a normal thing in Kohima, managed to reach our hotel, started to unpack and all decided to take quick shower due to heat and dust on the way.

All joined for lunch at 1.30 pm at the dining hall of hotel, after which few decided to go around the market and few got busy in their office work over phone and laptops. Close to 9 pm all re-grouped for a lavish dinner and after which retired to rooms for a good night sleep.





Day 10

Today was a rest day - Kohima sightseeing and meeting with Rotary Club of Kohima. Today everyone got up after 7 am and had decided previous night itself to walk up to the number one tourist spot of Kohima, i.e War Memorial Cemetery of World War 2, which is a walking distance from our hotel. All spent over one hour in understanding the history behind the war cemetery, mentioned all over the memorial. It is a beautifully maintained cemetery/memorial with great landscape, took many pictures there and slowly walked to the market area nearby, found many street food options specially for non vegetarian, variety of options are available here, starting from frog, dog meat to roasted pork sausages. Spent another one hour doing window shopping and returned to hotel for breakfast. All enjoyed the relaxed breakfast, wanted to visit few more places of interest but rain God was not happy with our plan, it had started raining, for next two hours.

All had returned to the room for their bath and upkeep of their clothes and riding gear etc. Close to noon, as rains had stopped, all decided to step out for proper shopping of traditional handloom clothing of Nagaland, visited Heritage Ethnic shop, spent over one hour in selecting items as per ones liking and requirements. It was lunch time, decided to visit Crecent International for lunch, restaurant is the best fine dine of Kohima, had a great lunch and all decided to visit Nagaland Museum after that.

All took cabs and visited the Museum, great museum to understand the Naga's and their culture, very well maintained and curated museum, took pictures and decided to return to hotel. We were having a meeting with members of Rotary Club of Kohima at 5 pm. Meeting venue was our hotel and we arranged it with putting our IFMR banner in the meeting hall and kept ready flag etc for exchange purpose. All had assembled in the hall with IFMR attire in place at 5 pm and welcomed their members, had a meeting for close to two hours, Prez Ajit explained the working of IFMR and it's history and presence worldwide. RC Kohima members introduced themselves and explained their Rotary projects, had great exchange of ideas. Prez Rtn Ajit gave away IFMR flag to their club Prez Rtn. Kezhokhoto Savi and presented specially automobile themed designed mementos to all their members, took group pictures and requested them to flag off our ride next day at 8am, which they agreed and then they left. Close to 9 pm, all had dinner and soon retired to rooms for next days ride rest.









Day 11

Today we were entering the fourth state, i.e Manipur and visiting its Capital city Imphal, home to Boxer Mary Kom. All had got ready and gathered at the dining hall for a good breakfast at 7am. Immediately after that Rotarians of RC Kohima arrived for the flag off ceremony. Had our huddle meet, Prez Ajit briefed on today's route and cautioned about the route. Sequence was announced and Rtn. Kezhokhoto Savi, President of RC Kohima offered a prayer for our safety and success. He then felicitated us with traditional Nagaland handloom shoulder bag. He had suggested that we all follow him for a ride in Kohima, he took us around Kohima city, two other members of Kohima club were at the tail of our convoy, basically it was a good public image activity for Rotary. We gathered near a popular junction where Rtn. Kezhokhoto Savi flagged off the ride and escorted us upto the police check point of Kohima city.

Our first stop after leaving Kohima was the world famous Hornbill festival heritage village, it is a must visit for all, a very well maintained infrastructure for the festival and becomes a tourist spot during rest of the year. Spent over one hour taking pictures and riding inside the village. Soon we continued and our horror too started, it had started raining and the road was totally slushy. Road was one way with opposite side vehicle coming too, totally broken road, we were just crawling for next 30 kms and trying our level best to balance the vehicle and move ahead in the slushy broken roads. It took about two hours to cross the stretch. Got the respite on crossing Nagaland border and entering Manipur border, rains had reduced and road was slightly better. Slowly it started getting hot and dusty and too frequent broken road, stopped on a road side tea stall for a break and moved ahead, close to 1.30 pm spotted a good restaurant, stopped there for a lunch and resumed our journey to Imphal. Had reached our hotel close to 4 pm. All had got busy with quick shower and washing of riding gears as they had become muddy and dusty all over. Had our dinner around 8 pm and retired to rooms for early sleep and next days ride to Moreh, border town of Myanmar.



President of Rotary Club Kohima, Rotary International Advocate Kezhokhoto Savi officially flag off the 10 Rotarian bikers from International Fellowship of Motorcycling Rotarians INDIA CHAPTER to Imphal, Manipur from Kohima on May 7. The bikers from several Rotary Clubs of Bangalore are on a motorcycling tour to seven sister states and had visited Kohima on May 5 and 6, stated a press release from the media Cell, Rotary Club Kohima. Rotary Club Kohima had a meeting with the bikers at East Gate Hotel, Kohima on May 6.





Day 12

As per schedule today we were riding to a town called Moreh from Imphal, it is the border town on Indian side for crossing to Myanmar (Burma). All were ready after breakfast at 8.30 am, and had a huddle meet, Prez Rtn. Ajit Ram briefed on the route situation and suggested how to overcome them. Rtn. Raghavendra was asked to do the prayer and he invoked Lord Ganesh by reciting mantra and sought his blessings for everyone's safety.

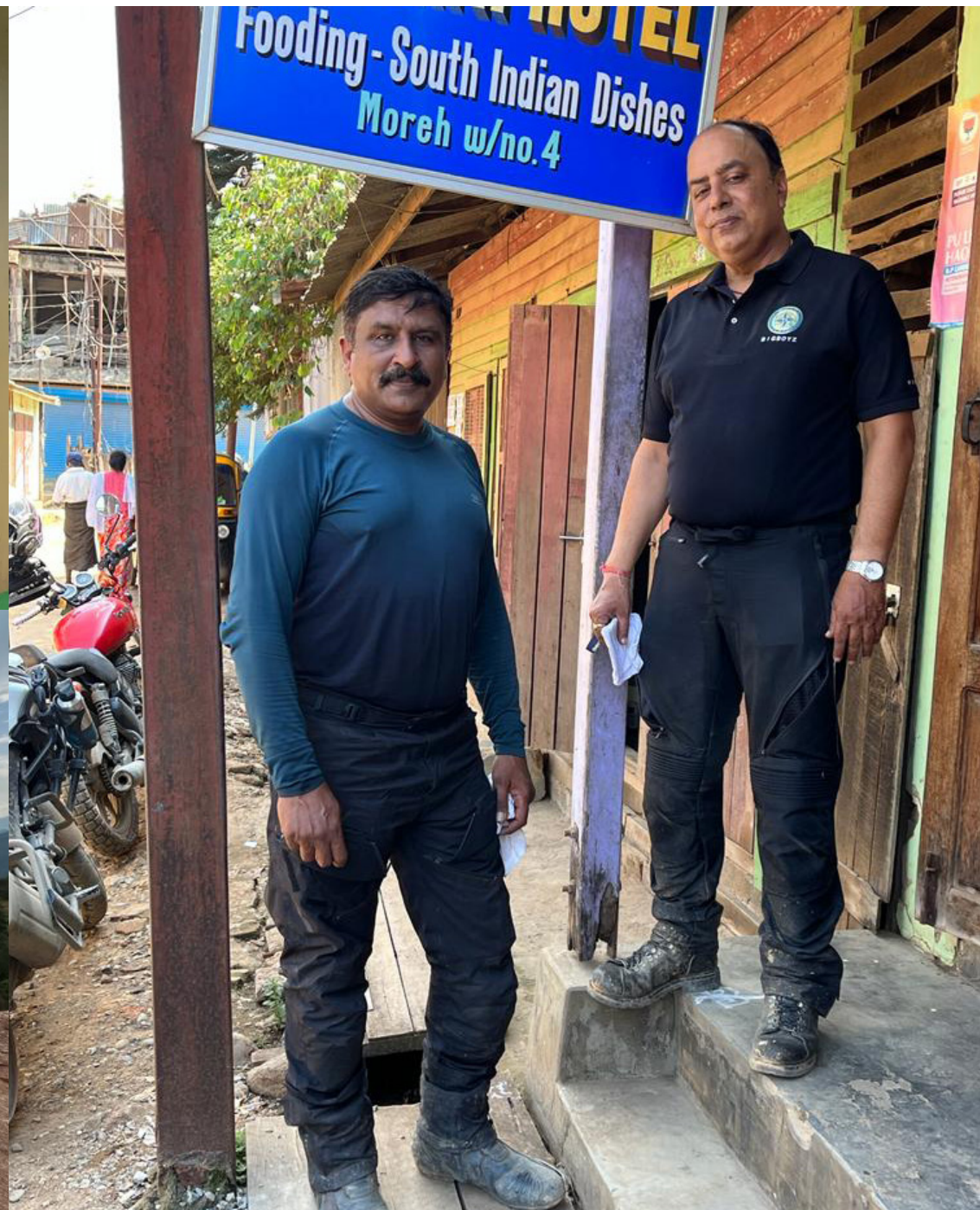
We were on road of Imphal at 8.45 am, first thing first, all wanted to refill their petrol tank, no one wanted to take chance on availability of petrol in border area. First 45 kms of ride was on highway, which was a breeze for all, soon we had started climbing the mountain and ride was smooth for further next 25 kms, in between we were stopped by our Army checkpost guarding the movement to Mayanmar Border, took our details and issued a token pass to each rider to be submitted at another army check post near the border for proper reconciliation of visitors movement. Last 40 kms of ride had all the drama, soon we were greeted by thick layer of slush on a big stretch of road which was under construction, saw a Maruti van coming from opposite side which was just swerving instead of moving ahead on the slush. With each other's help and juggad (tricks) we finally crossed the slushy stretch but our happiness shortlived, the entire stretch of final 40 kms turned out to be paradise for off-road riders, no tarmac, only broken roads with slush and thick layer of jelly stone spread all over due to road work. Slowly and steadily all crossed the stretch, we were stopped near the border by our Army personnel for collecting the token issued earlier. They guided us to the Moreh town, reached the crossing bridge area and all started taking pictures with that backdrop. Soon realised that heat was becoming unbearable, it was touching 39 degree centigrade and with riding gear on, it was making us miserable further, decided to have lunch at a popular south Indian restaurant (Lakshmi Hotel) run by a Tamil family, settled here for generation in Moreh.

After almost 15 days had an authentic Sappad(South Indian Lunch) and Dosa's. Decided to leave soon, as heat was becoming unbearable. Started our return journey to Imphal from Moreh. To our great fortune the horror stretch of 40 kms had become easy, as heat had dried up most of the slush and it was more of baked road and jelly stone spread had settled little more, spotted few wild buffalo crossing the road from close quarters. Stopped at a tea stall for a well deserved break, and decided that we can visit the famous Loktak Lake on the way back to Imphal by taking an extra detour of 10 kms. All decided to visit the lake, soon it was again a never ending ride to lake taking us thru paddy fields and narrow Kutcha roads, thanks to Google maps, reached the other side of Lake's park, which was not very happening, took few pictures and left for Imphal, reached hotel and went for quick shower, all had huge deposit of dust and dirt all over and wanted to get fresh. Assembled at the dining hall around 9 pm, had good dinner and retired to our rooms for a well deserved rest.









Day 13

Today was a complete rest day for all, since morning all were relaxed as no rides were planned, all had a delayed breakfast, after which many wanted to get their bikes checked by our mechanic Murli and after that few went away for sightseeing of Imphal and shopping at famous Manipuri market.

We had a joint meeting scheduled with two clubs of Rotary of Imphal. We had 6 members visiting us around 6 pm for the joint meeting, 3 each from Rotary Club of Imphal and Rotary Club of Polocity Imphal, all members present were introduced. Prez Rtn. Ajit presided over the meeting and gave a nice presentation about our Fellowship group of IFMR and it's working and suggested to start a Sub Chapter in this region too for IFMR. Tea and snacks were served, mementos were presented to AG Rtn. Ashok Agarwal, key members of both clubs and plesentaries were exchanged and meeting was closed.

All assembled for dinner and discussed next day ride to Kolasib, soon we had a visitor the President of Royal Riders, Manipur Riding club and he wanted to meet us. After the meeting we all retired to our rooms for a busy ride tomorrow.





Day 14

Today was the longest ride of this tour and we were entering the fifth state of our tour, i.e Kolasib in Mizoram State. All were waiting for this date to undertake this part of tour ride. When ever we discussed visit to Kolasib with our Rotarian friends from Kohima and Imphal, they were not very comfortable with it, they were apprehensive to the idea of visiting Kolasib as the terrain was bad and road condition were terrible. Despite their warnings, knowing bikers fetish for taking challenges, we were all ready for the upcoming challenges from Imphal to Kolasib. Since distance was mammoth and to reach before dusk, it was decided to leave at 5.30 am without fail. All were ready at 5 am with their ride gear on and so was the rain God to throw challenges at us, It had been raining all night. Message from Prez. Rtn Ajit was, rain or shine the ride is on. Had a quick huddle meet, rider sequence was announced and for a change our Marshall Sreyas recited the prayer for everyone's safety.

Started the ride at 5. 30 am, first 30 minutes took us out from Imphal city at a good speed due to zero traffic despite non stop rain. Entered the highway towards Kolasib for next 210 kms, we crossed over 8 mountains in the process, the road condition was terrible, full of craters and bike breaking condition, slush all over and water puddle in many places with no clue about the depth of it. On top of it non stop rains for the entire 210 kms. Slowly and steadily we continued our ride and covered good distance in slow pace but we're moving ahead. Around 9.30 am we had packed breakfast from hotel and stopped for lunch in a road side restaurant close to 2 pm. Somewhere near Lakhipur town close to Silchar we deviated towards Kolasib highway, road condition started looking little better and rains were intermittent, before 50 kms of Kolasib we had entered the border of Mizoram from Assam side and gave us the distinction of covering 5th North Indian state on bike, reached our hotel close to 6.30 pm and managed to achieve what many were not comfortable.

Great feeling. All were exhausted and tired, took quick shower due to mud and dirt splattered all over riding gears. Had dinner close to 9 pm and retired to rooms for good rest and sleep.





Day 15

Today we were entering the sixth state of our ride, Tripura, a place called Dharma Nagar. As it was not a familiar route to any one of us despite short distance, it was decided to start by 8.30 am.

After a good rest and sleep all woke up comfortably for today's ride, all had a good breakfast and were ready for saddle up by 8 am itself. Prez Rtn Ajit had a briefing meet on today's ride, guided all to ride carefully because today's ride will be more in mountain ranges than plain area. He himself offered to recite the prayer for today's ride success and safety, riding sequence was announced and immediately we were on road.

Slowly and steadily we were negotiating the unending curves of mountains and were making our way to Tripura state. Roads were in good shape, due to curvy road, speed was slow. After 60 kms of steady ride, got a diversion for Tripura state, road had become little bad and had to cross few major slushy stretch, all managed to negotiate them. One good thing today happened was, no rains in route. Closer to Dharma Nagar, stopped near a petrol station to top up fuel so that we save time tomorrow. Soon we had many young boys and men surrounding some of our group bikes like V Storm and BMW's were admired by them and wanted to take few selfie picture with those bikes. Reached our hotel close to 1.30 pm, straight away went for a good lunch and good rest in respective rooms and then met all for dinner and then retired to rooms for a good sleep, next day is again a long ride of 220 kms to Dawki.





Day 16

All were very excited today that we will be entering the seventh and final State of North East India and formally completing the tour. The saddle up time was 7 am, all were ready and got the breakfast packed from hotel, Prez Rtn Ajit addressed us in the huddle meeting and informed us about today's terrain and route, riding sequence was announced, he was the lead today, asked Rtn. Raghvendra to offer today's prayer, which he obliged and invoked Lord Ganesha for today's safety.

Sharp 7.30 am we were on roads of Dharma Nagar, criss crossing the lanes and bye lanes, we were out of it soon, but soon we were stopped at a sales tax check post, which remains closed till 8 am, it was decided to have our packed breakfast without losing time on the way. Started our journey after 8 am on gate opening. Slowly we were on the highway for nearly 80 kms, without any problem except for negotiating too many stray cattle cluster on the middle of roads. Rains had started and all were ready with their rain gears. Soon we were climbing the mountains and had entered the seventh state of NE India, Meghalaya, all were very thrilled for having achieved the feat for which we had started the ride. First town to cross in Meghalaya was Umikyang and soon we saw a bike with Bangalore registration number with a solo rider, stopped him, and exchanged plesentaries and Prez Ajit gave him our IFMR small gifts as a good will gesture and took pictures with him, his name is Babbar from Bangalore on a 200 cc Bajaj Pulsar, riding solo from Bangalore for NE Ride, really admire his grit and determination.

Soon rains became pretty heavy and we were crossing another town in Meghalaya, Kuliyang, basically a BSF outpost township. After covering 50 kms in hill inside Meghalaya with heavy rains we were witnessing a huge line of lorries covering a few kms distance were parked on the left side of roads without knowing the reason for their parking, we were thinking that they have parked before a checkpoint, but to our horror we saw that a big portion of road had got washed away in the heavy downpour and big land slide had taken place, it was not possible to cross further till road repair happens. Many of us got down from bikes and tried to assess the depth of water flow and ground reality, took video of all around situation and concluded that it is not at all humanly possible to cross the damaged big stretch road on bikes, didn't know how many more such land slides will be there on the way. All retreated to nearby roadside restuarant, ordered lunch as it was close to 1 pm. After long consultation among us, it was decided that we return back to the closest town of Silchar in Assam, which was 105 kms away and proceed further from there. Apparently found that town of Dawki and Cherapunji were inaccessible from any side.

Reached hotel in Silchar close to 5.30 pm, checked into a hotel and joined for a good dinner close to 8.30 pm and soon retired to rooms after a long day's ride, with some satisfaction of having finally touched base with 7th North East state of India.





Day 17

Since the regular route via NH 6 to Shillong was closed yesterday due to landslide and we had to return to Silchar for night stay and it was not possible for us to visit Dawki and Cherrapunji. We decided to go to Guwahati through another route via Lumding covering a distance 417 kms, with an overnight stop at Lumding.

Our saddle up time was decided at 8 am with starting at 9 am. All woke up comfortably to overcome yesterday's disappointment of not being able to make it to Dawki. Had a good breakfast and were ready to move on. Prez Rtn Ajit had a huddle meeting, informed about the route, sequence and immediately we started. After covering a distance of 12 kms on the highway, law and order police had closed the highway for any vehicle movement citing reason as agitation happening on the highway ahead and section 144 is imposed, but suggested to connect the highway through a 25 kms detour, all detoured with little disappointment. Looked like some forces were stopping us from reaching Guwahati for our scheduled flight on 15th May. Came back to the highway with inside roads and bypassing the agitation area. Hit the road for Lumding, but were cautioned by few local people that road is closed with heavy mud slides due to incessant rains previous day and road widening work going on. But none of us listened to them and decided to move, soon saw a sea of knee deep mud/slush all over, but at places where few trucks had moved earlier had little lower level of mud/slush and one by one all entered the sea of mud/slush, without realising what we were doing. As we proceeded we realised the foolishness of our decision, but knowing our determination slowly we tried a distance of 500 metre of that stretch and soon gave up, all were exhausted completely. Met the supervisor of road widening at one point, he quietly suggested that it is fatal to move further and advised us to return back, after resting for a while and gathering some strength all decided to return back slowly without falling. We were crawling with our bikes and our each side shoes were carrying few kgs of additional mud and few kgs of mud had got stuck all over our bikes specially between the tires and mud guards and moving the bike was getting more difficult. With each other's help all managed to come out of the disastrous attempt and came back to a road side restaurant for some rest, all were sweating, few removed their gears and T Shirt for cooling themselves. It was becoming the toughest day of tour, time was 1 pm and we were in a position of no point of return to Guwahati from anywhere.

Had a collective meet and all decided to try once again the regular route, NH 6 of Guwahati through Shillong route from where we had returned due to land slide yesterday. Again to reach that route we had to ride extra 25 kms to avoid agitation spot and bypass Silchar. After crossing many inside broken roads or no roads we managed to come to bypass road, decided to stop for lunch at Kalaian. Soon it started pouring heavily, but started our ride, were excited to see many heavy vehicles coming from opposite side, indicating that road is restored. Slowly we continued our ride and close to 5 pm reached the very spot of landslide on NH 6, to everyone's amazement it looked as if nothing had happened yesterday, the National Highways Authority of India and infrastructure team had completely restored it as if nothing had happened there. Soon we decided to proceed to Shillong and stay there for the night. Saw many prominent Cement factory after crossing the area of land slide patch, looked that road must have been repaired due to their heavy traffic of vehicle movement on each side. Continued our ride and with each other's guidance had managed to reach Shillong little late in the evening, enroute had to face variety of road conditions, stopped for early dinner and successfully reached our hotel for a good rest and sleep. All were very happy that we had managed to come closer to Guwahati, 88 kms from our hotel in Shillong, and a night stay in Meghalaya. This made it to night stays in all 7 sister states completed, to be a certified rider of 7 NE state.



Day 18

Today was last day of our ride and riding distance was not much, it was decided to relax little more in Shillong. All got up very late and had breakfast close to 9 am, decided to start our final leg of ride at 11 am. Prez Rtn Ajit had a quick breifing on today's ride, sequence was announced, yours truly was made the lead and was asked to offer the prayer too, which I did it by reciting Gayatri Mantra for today's safety and successful closure to a great ride. Started our ride to Guwahati in great enthusiasm, our first stop while coming out of Shillong was a popular must visit place is Umiam Lake, spent few minutes to take pictures and started the ride, we had hit the beautiful four lane highway known as GS Road, i.e Guwahati Shillong Highway, the beauty of this highway cannot be described in words, one has to experience it and specially the lead enjoys it to the maximum in any group ride, both sides were surrounded by greens all around with low mountains and totally serpentine, road conditions was awesome, one will feel like riding on a race track. After covering a distance of 50 kms, time was showing 1.30 pm, stopped at a popular Punjabi Dhaba, spent over one hour on lunch and chit chatting. Started for the final stretch and were entering Guwahati city, stopped at a Petrol station, seeing all of us in our riding gear and Karnataka registration bikes, the owner who had studied in Bangalore came running towards us and requested all of us to have tea/coffee with him in the super market in the station. His name is Amit Jain, exchanged plesentaries, showed his love for bikers, took few pictures with us, Prez Rtn Ajit never looses an opportunity to share information about IFMR and explained him and team about it and our ride in particular, presented small gifts of IFMR to him and he in return presented a gift to our President Ajit. Said goodbye and started our ride.

Soon we were entering the CBD area of Guwhati, it was decided to head towards the place where we had our truck for loading our bikes for return journey to Bengaluru, since place was my cousin's godown and with me as lead, took everyone to the loading point. Finally handed over our bikes to the truck driver and loading boys. Prez Rtn Ajit had a conclusion talk on the entire 18 days ride and thanked one and all for their cooperation in completing the ride successfully, he requested everyone to give their final impressions of experience of this ride. All shared their feelings and thanked each member for rallying behind each other and making the ride highly successful one, slowly we moved to our hotel for night stay in Guwahati. Few opted to have dinner with their friends and relatives in Guwahati and went out. All were eagerly waiting for tomorrow's flight to Namma Bengaluru, our home sweet home to meet family members and friends, it was long trip and were missing all of them.

Friends, this is the last summary of the trip and I would like to place my sincere thanks to Prez Rtn Ajit, Ride Captain Rtn Rajesh A R and Past President Prashant Babu for taking good care of all of us and little extra for me being the senior most member of the group, will miss all the fun but will carry and cherish the memories for life time.









Remarks





Designed and compiled by Studio Baftnama.
Writeups contributed by Vinod Agarwal.
Images shared by members who were part of the
journey.

