

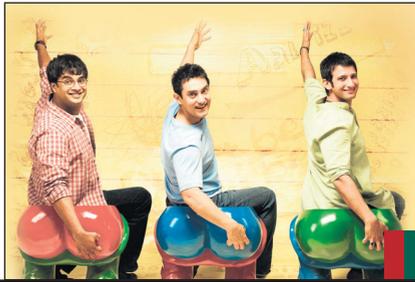
BENGALURU

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Charity with some heartfelt vrooms



These biking buddies get together for a cause

IKYATHA YERASALA

DECCAN CHRONICLE

Long haired, leather jacket-wearing wild hogs — this description might remind you of a bunch of bikers, but how many of them would actually ride for charity? Gautam Kotamraju and his wife Venetia Ansell, avid bikers and founders of the biking club Road Veda are breaking this stereotype about bikers by organising a charity ride to celebrate Republic Day.

"We organise motorcycle rides for people. We visit heritage and cultural places," says Gautam about Road Veda. As for the initiative, Gautam and his wife plan to gather bikers from different biking clubs in the city to ride to Baale Mane, a girls' welfare home in Hesaraghatta. "Baale Mane has 52 orphans who have been picked up from streets, rescued from domestic violence and child labour," says Gautam.

The ride will take place on January 24. With this ride, Gautam wants to change the general 'beer-drinking-bad-boy' image of bikers. He adds, "We also want to get together few Bullet clubs and classic bike clubs to ride for a cause. It

would be great if the bikers could donate basic necessities for these kids like spoons, mugs, mattresses, sanitary napkins etc. We have made a list of items that the orphanage needs. Anyone who purchases something from the list can tell us on the blog www.roadveda.wordpress.com so that no one else purchases that item."

The ride is open to all and the participants will assemble at the Kanakapura toll gate on NICE Road and embark on this charitable journey by 6.30 am. "The orphanage is a 100 km ride from there. The highway is super cool and the ride will be amazing. The girls at the orphanage will perform the *dhola kunitha* dance and will even talk about child rights. Breakfast will be served too," says Gautam. The bikers will then ride back to Opus to hangout, mingle and share stories with each other.

"The ride will be equipped with an ambulance and back-up mechanics," says Gautam who aims at getting together around 100 bikers for the ride. The clubs he is getting in touch with include RTMC, The Bulleteers, Indie Thumpers and 60kmph.

Let's hope that these wild, yet sane bikers get their message across with this noble venture.



Gautam

Back to 'Sanskriti'

Holding on to their heritage is the new rage for youngsters today

SRISHTI MITTAL

DECCAN CHRONICLE

In the rat race, with the world changing at a rapid pace, the youth are now taking a moment to pause and reflect on how they can hold on to their heritage. Over the past couple of months, Bengaluru has seen a spurt in Sanskrit and *Bhagvad Gita* classes for youngsters which goes on to prove how so many of them think its important to reconnect with their roots.

"As a software engineer, my schedule is very hectic," says Venkat Narayan, who feels that in a bid to becoming more advanced, we are forgetting where we come from. "In the middle of all this corporate madness, my aim is to read the ancient scriptures in the original form. Thus, I started learning Sanskrit. All the *pujas* which were first just noises, now have a deeper meaning. I'm spiritually-charged which has helped me in my professional life also," he adds.

Sanskrit, one of the oldest classical Indo-Aryan languages, has also influenced many modern languages. However, it is usually wrongly attributed as just a language for rituals. "One should not get intimidated by the 'ancientness' of Sanskrit," explains Janardhan Hegde, Secretary of the Samskriti Bharati and editor of Sanskrit magazine

Sambhasana Sandesha, "Some of the best poetry and prose is written in Sanskrit. Our research showed that about 30-40 percent of Kannada and more than 50-60 percent of Bengali and Oriya contain Sanskrit words. Sanskrit should be treated as a 'language' without religious connotations." By conducting about a 100

classes in the city at given time, he hopes the language will be revived. "If Sanskrit perishes, India will lose a big part of herself."

Punitha Acharya, 23, feels that the wisdom found in the ancient books is not outdated but most relevant in today's world. "As a child, I used to attend *Harikatha's* and recite *shlokas*," she recollects, "I consider books like the *Bhagvad Gita*, *Quran* and the *Bible* to be personal enhancement dictionary's which give you the meaning of everything in life and beyond.

Amir Khan in *3 Idiots* said 'strive for excellence and not success'; this is written in the *Gita* also!" She considers spirituality to be a lodestar and wonders why people run helter-skelter in frustration. "People spend so much on psychiatrists, searching for answers to life problems. All they need to do is open an ancient book and all doubts will be cleared."



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Punitha