

Fearless four set for all-women road trip from Kovai to London



Meenakshi Arvind, Meera Kumar, Priya Rajpal and Sangeetha Sridhar will be setting off by road from Chennai

CHENNAI: Who said women are not built for a tough road trip? Four women, two from Coimbatore and two from Mumbai are doing that one of a kind road trip, where they will travel from Coimbatore to London. They plan to have a flag off at Chennai on March 21 next year.

One of them, 45-year-old Meenakshi Arvind found herself to be the only woman when she was part of a road trip group, from India to Thailand a while ago. Meenakshi, an avid traveller, refused to accept that women cannot handle the challenging conditions. "The organiser of this event casually mentioned that he is planning a trip to London. I realised that it was not as adventurous as I thought, and asked myself, 'why don't I plan something on my own?'"

She shared the idea with her friends, Sangeetha Sridhar (49) and Meera Kumar (47). Both of them were delighted to join. Meenakshi posted the concept online and that's how Priya Rajpal (55) from Mumbai came onboard. Meenakshi has charted a road map for the trip covering

Meenakshi has charted out a road map for the trip covering India, Myanmar, China, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Russia, Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Macedonia, Serbia, Croatia etc

India, Myanmar, China, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Russia, Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Macedonia, Serbia, Croatia, Austria, the Czech Republic, Switzerland, Germany, France, Belgium, Netherlands, United Kingdom. "The idea is to cover 24

countries (24,000 kilometres) in 70 days and conclude the journey on India's 70th year of Independence. "We have Shrey Bhansal who has sorted out the logistics for us. We will be on our own in most countries except Myanmar, China and Kyrgyzstan where it is mandatory to have a guide."

They know that the challenges would be many, considering the unlikely situations they could crop up. Though movies paint a romantic picture about the road trips these women are aware of the potential hazards. "I come from a family of racers and I know the process of changing

tyres etc," says Meenakshi, adding, "However, we want to be prepared for all situations. We plan to have a crash course on repairing cars and other basic techniques taught by Leelakrishnan of Red Rooster Racing."

The trip will cost upto Rs 15 lakh per person, including the visa charges and flying the car back once the trip is over. "We are supported by Rotary Aakruthi and we are promoting their Literary mission. We plan to raise money for the cause. We plan to collect a note from every place we visit and donate it to Rotary."

These women love road trips and want more women to explore new places. "If anyone wishes to join us, they can reach us through the link <http://2470ind.org> before November end. Driving knowledge is a must though," says Meenakshi.