



6th **INDO BHUTAN** FRIENDSHIP CAR RALLY 2018



..... A REPORT

Diplomatic relations between India and Bhutan were established in 1968 and 2018 is certainly a landmark benchmarking the golden jubilee of this bondage connecting culture, heritage and happiness between the two of the closest neighbours.

Government of India and Bhutan jointly has initiated programs throughout the year commemorating this landmark year and we, with our experience of successfully organising the last five biennial episodes, have organised the

INDO-BHUTAN FRIENDSHIP CAR RALLY

A motor sporting event for Four wheelers in the Time-Speed-Distance format was an international zone event under the aegis of Federation of Motor Sports Clubs of India (F.M.S.C.I.) being guided by FIA was held between 4th to 11th March 2018.

Being promoted by India-Bhutan Foundation (I.B.F.) and supported by Indo-Bhutan Friendship Association (I.B.F.A.), Bhutan India Friendship Association (B.I.F.A.) and Indian Military Training Team (IMTRAT) was technically organised by Bengal Motor Sports Club.

This event due to its magnanimity had tremendous enthusiasm amongst participants from Pan India and apart from neighbouring states of Bhutan we had participants from Coimbatore, Nagpur and Bengaluru. IMTRAT and Royal Bhutan Army also tried their hands in professional motorsports and a separate segment was made for the armed force.

The Kolkata chapter of the flagging off was seen off by Shri Alapon Bandyopadhyay, Additional Chief Secretary, Department of Transport, Government of West Bengal and Dasho Thinlay Wangchuk, Consul General, Royal Bhutanese Consulate, Kolkata and other well-wishers from the Indo-Bhutan Friendship Association.

With a total team of 38 vehicles including participants, officials, medical support team and mechanics and paramedics were flagged off from Siliguri on 8th March at 08:00 AM and after traversing a total of around 270 Kms. reached Phuentsholing being greeted by Shri Pieyush Gupta, Consul General, Consulate General of India, Phuentsholing, Dasho Thinley Gundu, Secretary General, BIFA along with other dignitaries from the Royal Government of Bhutan.

The competitors were waiting for the final day when all vehicles will reach the final destination. The vehicles got flagged off at 8:00 AM amidst huge fanfare and we virtually had the whole of the city at the flag off point cheering the participants as they slowly move on the track and glide away through the quietness of the hills moving ahead. As the vehicles pass through small towns on way the locals greet them giving the event its perfect blend and the branding its worth CONNECTING PEOPLE.

The helipad on way is where all of us had our lunch break and certainly the make shift arrangement at such a heavenly location could only be made possible as it was IMTRAT. From this point all the vehicles lined up in a convoy and entered the city being guided by police convoy. The whole of Thimphu traffic and the whole city traffic came to a standstill to felicitate the participants who has braced the heat and the dust and made every possible blockage pass through to reach on its destination.

It was indeed like home coming being received by HE Shri Jaydeep Sarkar, the Ambassador of India to Bhutan and his wife along with MS Neetu Bhagotia, Secretary IBF and other dignitaries from the Royal Government of Bhutan.

The results were declared on the 10th March at 9:00 AM followed by the Prize Distribution Ceremony which was held at the Clock Tower and was well attended by dignitaries from Royal Government of Bhutan and Government of India. The Hon'ble Speaker Royal Government of Bhutan, the Chief Guest and HE Shri Jaydeep Sarkar, Guest of Honour gave away the prizes and with a final guided convoy throughout the city with all winners and participants being greeted by the people of Thimphu.

With the curtains now been drawn all vehicles left Thimphu on 12th March 2018 and with sweet memories of a historic event and tremendous hospitality moving down towards the ultimate destination HOME wherefrom all activities started.

We had the Closing Ceremony at Kolkata on 12th April 2018 at Hotel Sonnet felicitating all who had supported us in creating history with a musical programme.



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