

Couple's 18-country sojourn on bike bears fruits of friendship

Mohnish Nelarwar | TNN

Nagpur: Rarely do people make friends touring a foreign country and more rarely does anyone have a human connection. But Anuradha and Manas Dewan will tell you that just saying 'hello' to a complete stranger is enough to have a friend for life.

The couple, in their 40s, did exactly that on the trip they 'Dosti on Wheels' covering 20,000km and 18 countries in four months on a motorcycle.

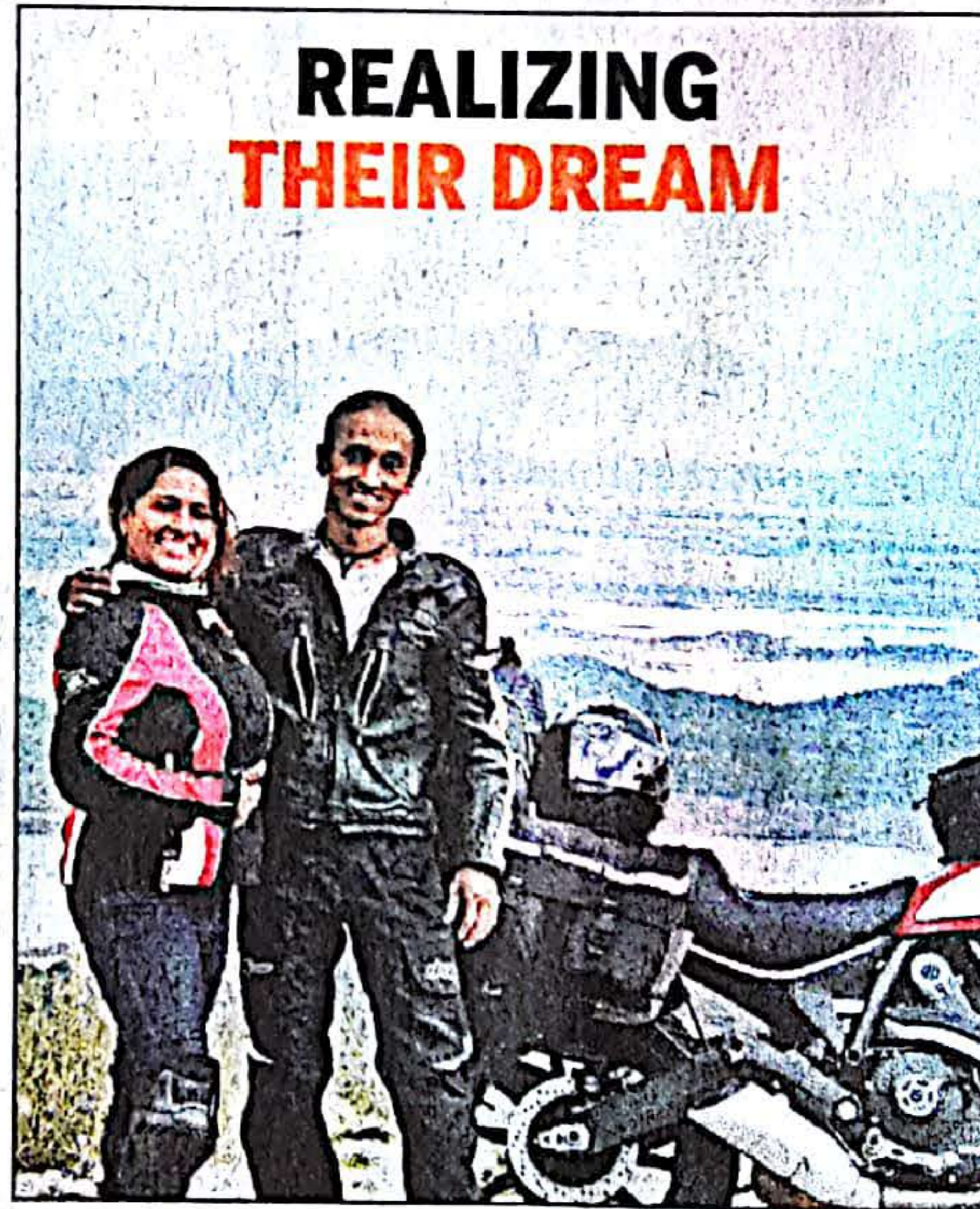
After 20 years of lucrative jobs in Oman, Manas, a marketing head at a multinational corporation and Anuradha, a philosophy teacher, quit their jobs in March 2017. They bought a Ducati Scrambler motorcycle and embarked on their epic journey. The Dewans said they had to cut the proverbial 'anchor' and realize their dream of experiencing different cultures of the world.

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ANURADHA DEWAN

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It wasn't an easy journey to plan as they commenced from Valencia in Spain and had to ship the motorcycle there. It was in Valencia where the couple started to experience humanity at its best.

“Our bike was held by Spanish customs longer than we expected due to issues with paperwork and felt dejected. To our surprise, a Ducati dealer here knew about our jour-

ney and offered to give us a brand new Scrambler for our tour. He didn't have to do it but the gesture itself meant so much,” said Manas.

Their bike was eventually released. The couple made sure to avoid major cities during their trip, because, as Anuradha said, “The true culture of a country resides in its villages.” According to the Dewans, the news of their trip spread like wildfire as they entered into every country.

“Strangers we befriended on our journey would insist we live at their homes with their families. When were to leave to continue our way, they gave their friend's phone numbers telling us they will help us on our route. And they did help us,” said Anuradha.

“Strangers who had become our friends would constantly call us to make sure we reached safely,” said Manas. The couple said the trip has changed the way they look at life.