



"I liked Indian cuisine the most but nothing beats the landscapes and hospitality of Pakistan. As for

The people — Afghans are probably the most welcoming and kind-hearted," said Maliha.

"I agree with Maliha — Afghans are nothing like what we know from the media and I think the whole world knows about Pakistan's landscapes and hospitality. However, I personally love Saudi cuisine," said Musdaque.

As their journey drew to a close, the duo found themselves transformed by the overall experience. Yet, even as they bid farewell to the countries that had welcomed them with open arms, their thirst for adventure remained.

Navigating financial waters

Travelling through 10 countries covering 23,000 km over a period of 6½ months can be alluring, however, financing such a journey can be daunting. Be that as it may, Musdaque navigated the financial waters smoothly through planning and strategic partnerships.

He secured sponsorship from Caltex Bangladesh and Royal Enterprise, which covered a portion of the budget. Yet, sponsorship alone would not have covered all expenses if the duo had not employed a variety of cost-saving measures to stretch their budget further. From leveraging social media monetisation to offsetting accommodation costs through hosting arrangements and camping, every penny was stretched to its utmost.

"Considering the trip's overall cost, I

could say that around 35 per cent was covered by the sponsorship. Around 35 per cent was covered by revenue generated from social media platforms. The remaining 30 per cent was my savings," said Musdaque.

According to Musdaque, riding across 10

from Central Asia to Iran. With his Iran visa expiring imminently, he had to adjust his route hastily, skipping Turkmenistan due to its stringent visa regulations.

This detour required him to backtrack through Tajikistan and Afghanistan to re-enter Iran, adding complexity to an already

face of adversity.

Musdaque intends to explore Africa and Europe. Through his ride for the nation, he aims to shine a spotlight on his beloved Bangladesh, sharing its rich heritage and vibrant culture with the rest of the world.

"People in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan



countries — India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Iran, United Arab Emirates, Oman, Saudi Arabia, and Bahrain — covering 23,000 km over a period of 6½ months including visa fees, travel, accommodation, and food costed around Tk 9 lakhs for the duo.

What's next?

The duo have returned to Bangladesh without the motorcycle due to visa complications. Despite the extensive planning, the journey presented unforeseen obstacles, particularly concerning visa expiry dates and bureaucratic hurdles.

As Musdaque traversed through multiple countries, he encountered situations where visa deadlines loomed dangerously close, forcing him to recalibrate his itinerary. One notable instance occurred during his transit

arduous journey.

Moreover, the need for visa extensions and the procurement of subsequent visas necessitated a return to Bangladesh. Given the unpredictable nature of visa processing and the time constraints associated with it, Musdaque deemed it prudent to temporarily halt his journey, regroup in Bangladesh, and obtain the necessary visas for the continuation of his trip.

This decision, though inconvenient, underscored Musdaque's pragmatic approach to circumventing bureaucratic barriers and ensuring the feasibility of his ambitious expedition. Despite setbacks, his resolve to complete the journey remained steadfast, reflecting his unwavering determination and resourcefulness in the

do not know about Bangladesh. Even in Afghanistan, Tajikistan, and

Uzbekistan, people thought I was from India. I felt proud to inform them about my country. It is an exchange of tourism and culture. This is something I love doing on trips," said Musdaque.

In an age where borders may divide us, Musdaque's transcontinental motorcycle adventure fuels unity across the hearts and minds of people. His journey has also opened doors for others to follow in his footsteps.

Musdaque Chowdhury is an adventure motorcyclist. To know more, visit <https://musdaquechowdhury.wordpress.com>

By Ahmed Hasam Rabbi
Photo: Ahmed Hasam Rabbi