

# 'No motor, no sails' odyssey hero on a *moksha*

British adventurer Jason Lewis is on a self-discovery voyage in a specially designed human powered-amphibian vessel

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MUMBAI

THE Greek mythological hero Jason sailed the seas in his boat Argo in search of the "Golden Fleece." Now comes the modern day British adventurer Jason Lewis roughing himself in the seas and rugged land not in the quest for the "Golden Fleece," but for a higher purpose. He is on a self-discovery voyage in a specially designed human powered semi-amphibian vessel aptly named "Moksha."

As soon as his human powered boat docked at the Mumbai's quaint old Colaba docks, Lewis with a far away look and weather burnished hair, said, "I along with my partner initiated on this adventure-ride when I was 26 and now I'm 39."

"No Motor! No Sails! That's how Lewis likes to describe his unique, yet simple human powered boat. From the time of his departure starting at the Greenwich Meridian Line in 1994, Lewis has travelled more than 35,000 miles, almost three



Jason Lewis on his bicycle (R) while *moksh* is offloaded. FPJ

quarters of the way around the planet, on Moksha. He has cruised across the world's oceans; bicycling and even rollerblading

over the planet's most rugged surfaces, while, and narrowly missing from losing both his legs, after being run over. On

August 19 in the year 2006, Jason became the first person in history to pedal across the Pacific Ocean from San Francisco in

the US to Port Douglas, Australia within a span of 178 days covering a distance of 8,000 nautical miles.

His former passage, was travelling through South East Asia into China, on his way to Tibet and then hiking over, the awesome and mystical Himalayas. And now finally Jason has landed in Mumbai. The expedition is expected to come to an end by early summer in 2007 following the next leg of crossing the Indian Ocean to Djibouti, located near the tip of Africa, and then continuing through various other countries to finally finish at Greenwich in London.

Meanwhile, during his stay in the country for the next five weeks, Jason plans to visit schools, with an aim to promote qualities of international understanding, tolerance amongst people of different cultures and many more such related aspects, in collaboration with UNESCO's Associated Schools Network. So far, he has covered 894 schools in various parts of the world.

While his boat cannot be categorised as totally amphibian. Till his tour in the Indian sub-continent gets over, his alien look pedal boat will be tucked away at the Royal Bombay Yacht Club, till he sails again on the emerald waves under the starry skies listening to the mysterious whistling of whales and dolphins.

Incidentally, the first person who attempted to traverse the globe without any external assistance in the form of motor or even wind power was done in 1512. "But then despite this simple apparatus we need support not only in the form of sponsors and organisations," Lewis said.

As to the name of boat, "Moksha," Lewis with this typical far away look said, "Me and my friend used to read Bhagwad Gita a lot and we found the concept and term Moksha, resplendent with a luminosity of purity. It was something so spiritually high. This spiritual purity or Moksha, we sensed once when we were passing over the Atlantic."