

» TODAY'S PAPER » TAMIL NADU

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Cycling across countries to fuel mobile clinic service

- [A.D. Balasubramaniyan](#)

Swiss youth cover 7,000 km to raise funds



Matthias Calvin Trub and his father Thomas Trub from Switzerland, who came on a cycle expedition to Tiruvannamalai on Wednesday.—
Photo: Special Arrangement

Matthias Calvin Trub, a youth from Hettingen, accompanied by his father Thomas Trub, reached Tiruvannamalai on Wednesday by cycle. He is not yet another foreigner visiting Tiruvannamalai just for the purpose of tourism or for finding spiritual solace.

He took up the cycle expedition that started from a place called Winterthur in Switzerland and culminated at Vedyappanur, a village near Tiruvannamalai, for the cause of raising funds for a mobile clinic that serves remote villages.

Vedyappanur based Regenboog India Foundation (RIF) runs the mobile clinic free of cost for the people of several villages in Tiruvannamalai, Chengam and Polur taluks.

Matthias, a fresh mechanical engineering graduate from Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, told *The Hindu* that he started his expedition on June 20 and cycled through Italy, Austria, Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia, Bulgaria, Greece, Turkey and Iran. From Iran he flew to Mumbai skipping Pakistan for safety reasons.

From Mumbai he resumed cycling and he reached Vedyappanur, his destination on Wednesday.

"I covered 7,000 kilometers by cycle," a visibly happy Matthias added without any trace of exhaustion. He said that he wanted to explore different countries, terrains and cultures and he was happy about the experiences he had en route.

When asked about this trip, Madhan, Managing Trustee of RIF, told *The Hindu* that the mobile clinic project launched in 2010 serves about 100 villages in three taluks of Tiruvannamalai. A doctor, lab technician and two nurses work for the project. The mobile clinic runs on a specially made bus that consist of medicines, a fridge to store them, oxygen cylinder, x-ray viewer, water tank etc. The mobile clinic tries to fill the gaps in the public health system by serving the people of villages who have to travel to another village for a government Primary Health Centre (PHC).

"For example people of certain villages we serve in Jawadu Hills have to travel even 20 kilometres on hilly terrain to reach a PHC. We serve them at their doorstep. However our donors Medische Kampen India discontinued their assistance to our mobile clinic and we face huge difficulties in continuing the programme. Meanwhile, Matthias who was in Tiruvannamalai in January 2014 met me, visited our place and we became friends. On hearing the difficulty that our mobile clinic face he decided to take up the expedition for the cause of raising funds for the clinic that serves about 35,000 patients every year," he said.

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