

## 'DOES BEING A GIRL MEAN I CAN'T RIDE?'

● **Bincy Joseph**

**H**aving grown up around cousins who are crazy bike junkies and a father who is an avid biker, it didn't take Lani Zena long to discover her love for bike rides.

She started riding when she was 15 years old. "It was around midnight when I pulled my dad out to teach me to ride... That's one night I'll never forget," she remembers fondly. At the age of 19, Lazi stands out among her college mates as she is one of the few girls who turns up to the campus roaring on a bike. "The first bike I rode was Yezdi b-type, the feel and vibe that the vintage beast brings is one that everyone has to experience in life," she says. Growing up, Lazi was used to a father who would participate in bike races and rallies. "He owns a garage, where he restores and modifies vintage (Yezdi and Jawa) bikes," says the Bachelor of

Arts student at Kristu Jayanti College.

She has got both appreciative and amusing comments on people who watch her ride. "Why do you have to ride a bike? You could ride a scooty instead. You are a girl, how are you riding a bike?," are some of the usual questions Lazi says, she encounters as a biker. "I feel awkward," she says. "Yeah, I am a girl. Does that mean I can't ride?" Lazi says she is now used to usual and unusual reactions and enjoys the positive comments more.

When it comes to long rides, she says safety gears are really important. Most of her long rides are the ones accompanied by her father and cousin brothers. "Sometimes long rides do scare you, when you see a live accident," she says.

However, she adds that the pleasure that comes from taking long journeys on a bike is irreplaceable. "It is the greatest stress buster," she says.

Lazi has rode from Bengaluru to Pudukcherry and from Chennai to Pudukcherry. She has also participated in the eighth edition of Southern raid, an annual meet for all the passionate Yezdi Jawa bikers across India which was held at Vagamon hill station in Kerala. She is currently looking forward to ride to Leh.

Her dream bike is Rd 350. "I love vintage bikes and I'm a two stroke fanatic," she says. She believes women should try their hand at riding a bike. "I want to be a racer. I am looking forward to taking part in national level races. One day I'll do it," she says.

*(If you have a heart warming story to share, write to us at [bengalurucityexpress@gmail.com](mailto:bengalurucityexpress@gmail.com))*



Lani Zena