

'Lal Pari' Arrives in the UK



Late on Thursday 26th October 'Lal Pari' a 1950 MG YT arrived at Dover driven by Daman Thakore from India. He together with 'Team' Lal Pari, comprising Daman's 75 year old father Deval, his 21 year daughter Devanshi, photographer Vinay Panjwani and Mukesh Bararia had nursed and cajoled the YT 12,000 kilometers across 16 countries retracing the historic route from Ahmedabad to the UK

birthplace of his beloved 'Lal Pari'.

At this point I must just explain the name 'Lal Pari'. Essentially it is translated as 'Red angel'. The name came about as a result of stories made up by his parents of a magical car they would travel in all over India especially during the holiday period of Diwali. As I understand it Daman's father Deval bought the YT back in 1979. Mainly as part of the business





he was running at the time where he would buy older cars and refurbish them. They would normally go on to be sold. Daman would have only been about three years old at this time but he fell in love with the car and the journeys they went on to have in it. Daman told me that to make sure his father didn't sell the car, as was normal practice, he would hide the keys so the car didn't disappear!

Daman's dream to have a very special journey has culminated in him and his team embarking this year on a special journey in a cherished UK made classic car to mark 76 years of India's independence as well as a personal family milestone.

The expedition was symbolically flagged off by Mangal Prabhat Lodha, Minister of Skills, Employment, Entrepreneurship and Innovation in the government of Maharashtra, in Mumbai on Tuesday 15th August 2023.

This date is India's Independence Day and this year is India's 77th Independence Day. The

YT carried a sterling silver radiator monogram of 'Sardar Patel Statue of Unity'



The Statue of Unity is the world's tallest statue, with a height of 182 metres and is located near Kevadia in the state of Gujarat, India. It depicts Indian statesman and independence activist Vallabhbhai Patel (1875–1950), who was the first deputy prime minister and home minister of independent India and an adherent of Mahatma Gandhi. Patel is highly respected for his leadership in uniting 562 princely states of India to form the single Union of India.

Daman was invited to the British Motor Museum at Gaydon on Sunday 29th October, to be greeted by a group of directors and members of the MG Octagon Car Club.

He duly arrived at about 11.30 having driven up from the hotel in London where he and the rest of the team were staying. Deval his father accompanied him on this trip to Gaydon.



Brian Rainbow, Bernard Foad, Graham Smith and Roger Muir were able to welcome him to the UK and the British Motor Museum where he spent some time with us in May at the MG Centenary held there.

Brian Rainbow presented him with a certificate of congratulations from the MG Octagon Car Club on achieving such a momentous journey from India to the UK. Several other Octagon members had made the visit to Gaydon to welcome him together with Mike Brown with his very impressively

restored YT. Several friends of Daman from India and now currently based here in the UK were also at Gaydon to welcome him.

To round off the afternoon a group of us headed to a local hostelry to partake of some luncheon.



Lal Pari's route from Ahmedabad to Abingdon involved almost two dozen halts in prominent places: Mumbai, Dubai, Bandar Abbas, Isfahan, Shiraz, Tehran, Cappadocia, Ankara, Istanbul, (passing through Greece), Plovdiv, Skopje, Tirana, (passing through Montenegro), Dubrovnik, (passing through Podgora in Slovenia), Rijeka (Croatia), Venice, Milan, Lucerne, Paris, Calais, Dover, London. The team avoided Azerbaijan-Georgia because of border issues, and the Netherlands and Belgium as they were short of time.

Roger Muir.

Footnote:-

Hopefully I can persuade Daman in due course to write something for the Bulletin recounting their adventure. But for now I think he needs time to fully evaluate his epic journey in his mind.

@MYLALPARI
#INDIA TO LONDON

