

The girl who rode a motorbike through Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

Gulafshan Tariq travelled through KP and GB on a motorbike to secure herself a mention in the National Book of Records.

At 24 years of age, Gulafshan Tariq has ridden right through patriarchal barriers of 'social acceptability' on her motorbike tour of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Gilgit Baltistan from May 6 to May 23.

The software engineer from Sargodha managed the feat alone, visiting Shangla, Swat, Mansehra, Gilgit Baltistan, Chitral, Malakand and Upper and Lower Dir on her trusty motorbike.

"I travelled 3,000 kilometers on the rugged roads of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, mostly through tourist hot spots," Tariq told Dawn.

"My travels have taught me much about the rich Khyber Pakhtunkhwa region," she added, beaming at her achievement.

"It was difficult, I met a number of minor accidents because of the state of roads in the region, but I'm grateful to God that there was no lasting harm."

Praising KP's tribes' hospitality and "warm hearts", she said the locals were always forthcoming and appreciated her efforts.

Talking about her inspiration for the tour, Tariq said it was her father's travels over the world that got her interested in the idea of taking a bike tour on the less-travelled roads of KP.

While discussing how she funded her trip, Tariq says she approached the government and other organisations several times for support, but was only discouraged by their response — until a private organisation decided to help her make the trip possible.

Tariq is happy to have managed to secure herself a mention in the National Book of Records by becoming the only woman to have travelled to every district of Phakhtunkhwa and Gilgit Baltistan alone on a motorbike.