

Raleigh International's first ever India expedition takes off

8 February, 2008

This Sunday 10 February will see the first intrepid group of young volunteers from across the UK embark on Raleigh International's pioneering expedition to India, joining young people from the southern states of Karnaka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu to work on worthwhile projects in some of the most remote areas of the country.

Far removed from the well-trampled tourist trails, these volunteers will be contributing to long-term environmental, community and adventure projects which will see them assisting with elephant and tiger conservation work, living with families in India's least developed rural areas whilst installing safe drinking water systems, and canoeing through Kerala's backwaters dense with coconut palms.

'Over the past 23 years Raleigh International has maintained an impeccable reputation as a pioneer of overseas expeditions, with more than 30,000 young people having embarked on the adventure of a lifetime with the charity,' commented Stacey Adams, Raleigh International CEO. 'Our brand new expedition to India takes Raleigh into 2008 with fresh vigour – providing a unique opportunity to not only experience life off-the-beaten-track in this exhilarating country, but to also make a tangible contribution to the future of its most diverse communities.'

For more information visit www.raleighinternational.org or call the team on 020 7183 1270

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Notes to editors:

For more information about Raleigh International and the new India expedition, or to request high-resolution pictures, case studies or interviews, please contact Michelle Byrne on (01242) 210330 or email michelle.byrne@raleigh.org.uk.

Raleigh International works with local NGOs, communities and government ministries in all of its expedition countries, and in India will be working in conjunction with WWF India, the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve, UNESCO, the Ministry of Environment and Forests, Mysore Resettlement & Development Agency (MYRADA) and New Entity for Social Action (NESA) – ensuring its projects have a real impact and are genuinely needed. Raleigh International's expeditions to India have been supported by Aviva.

Raleigh International's expeditions are open to 'venturers' aged 17 to 24 and 'volunteer managers' aged 25 and over, from the UK and abroad, with young people from across India also joining the new expedition. Raleigh International runs approximately 10 expeditions a year – to Malaysia, Costa Rica and Nicaragua, as well as the exciting new expedition to India starting in February 2008.

As a registered charity Raleigh International is dependent on fundraising activities and asks all venturers and volunteer managers to contribute towards the charity's work and expenses. Venturers are asked to raise £2,995 for ten weeks, £2,250 for seven weeks, £1,750 for five weeks and £1,500 for a four-week expedition, while volunteer managers are asked to raise £1,950 for a 13-week expedition and £1,350 for an eight-week expedition.

Raleigh International is a leading expert in structured gap year expeditions and one of the very first organisations to self-assess and certify itself as BS8848 compliant, the new British Standard for overseas expedition safety.