



Canada's Cory, German Naima win

Shiven, Poonam emerge as the Indian National champions of Mountain Terrain Bike races

Adapting well to the tropical conditions that stand in high contrast to the winter chill in their countries, Canadian Cory Wallace (1:43:27.664 hours) and Iranian Farzad Khodayari (1:43:33.288) rode to victory at the 6th edition of MTB Kerala (Mountain Terrain Bike) Kerala by finishing first and second respectively in the men's international category at Mananthavady, Wayanad in December.

The women's segment of the India's biggest competitive cycling event, too, wove a similar narrative when German Naima Madlen Diesner (1:23:42.932) and Nepalese Laxmi Magar (1:37:37.490) emerged as the topper and the first runner-up amid loud

cheers from the crowd at the Priyadarshini Tea Environs near the hill-town, 3,000 feet above the sea level.

In the men's international category, Shiven and Kiran Kumar Raju of India finished third and fifth respectively.

Chandigarh-based Shiven (1:53:51.054) and Bengalurean Kiran (1:54:34.258) thus emerged as the National champion and runner-up in the National segment. Devender Kumar of Uttarakhand was the second runner-up in the



Cycling through the ghats

National category while Buddhi Bahadur Tamang of Nepal came fourth in the international section. The MTB's international and national races were held together, with both spanning the same distance of 38.4 km (eight laps of the 4.8-km track). A total of 78 men in both the international (14 countries including India) and national segments covered the tough stretch of red-earth roads with loose stones, pedalling along the 4.8-km lap, eight times. It was five rounds for the 24 women. Among them, Poonam Rana (1:44:53.490) of Uttarakhand, Maharashtrian Priyanka Shivaji Karande (1:49:58.096) and Joytsna (2:03:02.868) of Karnataka finished third and fourth, thus making them the topper and runner-up in the women's national category of MTB 2019. The

next four were all from Kerala: Ginimol Joseph Kerala (2:07:26.683), Saisree A P (2:08:58.116), Preethi B K (2:08:58.158) and Binila Mol Giby (2:12:37.902). The men's race was flagged off by Kerala Minister Ramachandran Kadannappally. Sri Lanka Cycling Federation President N Karunaratne flagged off the women's race. The December 20-22 event, which held the amateur trial round and finals in the first two days, was organised by Kerala Tourism under the aegis of the Kerala Adventure Tourism Promotion Society (KATPS), Wayanad District Tourism Promotion Council and the Cycling Federation of India (CFI). The event was held in the rugged Pancharakolli village, eight km away from Mananthavady town of northeast Kerala's Wayanad district. 🇮🇳



Naima and Laxmi



Hon. Minister Ramachandran at the start



Inauguration



Shiven and Kiran



Poonam in action



Shiven in action

"I typically conserve my energy towards the final laps. That worked here very well," said International category winner Cory, the biker from Victoria in the Canadian province of British Columbia