

# PURPLE

## Volvo Challenge

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Tired of your droning life? Life is short, live it up! Go out there and seize the day!

Two dare devils, Lukas Baumann from Switzerland and Shaun Rolevink from Australia, in their late 30s buckled up for a journey full of adventure and substantial obstacles. Their goal is be the first to drive a VOLVO Polar station wagon with a Swiss number plate all the way to Melbourne Cup. Their journey starts from Switzerland to Singapore and across to Australia solely over land. They started their epic journey on 29th March 2009 and they are still on the road. So far they have visited 13 countries: Switzerland, Lichtenstein, Germany, Austria, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Turkey, Iran, Pakistan, India, Nepal, Bangladesh and have four more to go - Myanmar, Thailand, Singapore, and finally Australia.

### How it started:

Lukas was employed as an executive board member, head of Marketing and Sales, for Gutzwiller Fonds Management AG, a subsidiary of the Swiss Private Bank E. Gutzwiller & Cie, Banquiers, Basel (founded 1886). Shaun worked as a Radiographer and Inspector in oil fields in Papua New Guinea. One Sunday morning he was having conversation with Shaun, who told him about job opportunities in Australia. Coincidentally, Lukas was running a company of his own in Australia called LCB Direct about nine years ago. During their discussion, Shaun and Lukas came up with the idea to drive Lukas' Volvo Polar station wagon all the way from Switzerland to Australia to reactivate LCB Direct in Australia. The idea started as a joke then transformed in to a task to which they were committed. Shaun departed from Australia and headed for Switzerland from where they can start their ambitious expedition.

There were two main reasons for deciding to commit to such an ominous task. Lukas wanted a change from working at the top position for about 20 years in Switzerland. Shaun had a soul trembling experience of a helicopter crash just recently, which could have ended in a fatality. On the other hand Lukas had also experienced 6 funerals and accidents in his family and that's when he decided to live life to the fullest from what was going around and if he can endure such experience, then surviving the trip through all the countries should be child's play. Everything around them was influencing them to "Crape Diem"! 'Seize the day!' And that's when the idea of VOLVO challenge became a reality.

They started their journey from Zurich and so far they drove 300,400km and more 8,500km is yet to cover.

### Their biggest challenge:

Their major challenge was that they had to prepare the whole trip including paper works and all obligatory personal health preparations within six weeks only. Endless obstacles and challenges were like companions along their trip.

### Obstacles in their way:

Certain incidents slowed them down. When they were in Nepal their car got raked. VOLVO office in Switzerland pointed them to VOLVO India and from their they were referred to Khaled Hossain Anwar's Group and ended up in Ford set up in AG Automobiles Bangladesh.

### Their experience in Bangladesh:

In short they found that the people of Bangladesh are truly helpful with a good sense of humor. One of their most exciting experiences in Bangladesh was when they were on their way from Gulshan1 to Gulshan2; Lukas was tempted to try out Rickshaw pulling for which he told the Rickshaw puller to sit behind with Shaun. He pulled the Rickshaw all the way to Gulshan2. They appreciated the local hospitality and referred it as "GDS" in other words Global Direction System!

Due to the uncoordinated and hazardous driving practices by trucks and busses on the highways, they avoided the night driving.

But overall in their opinion the customs service and other services provided to them out performs Turkey's services.

### People who helped them in Ford set up of in AG Automobiles Bangladesh:

Sayed Iqbal Ahmed and his team, Rashed Hossain, Khair Uddin and Mansur Ahmed. They will soon continue their tour and depart for Myanmar as soon as they get the visa or drive to Chittagong then to Yangon via shipping.

Their journey inspires us and gives us the message that it's never too late to live our life the way we want. All we need is a clear vision and absolute keenness.