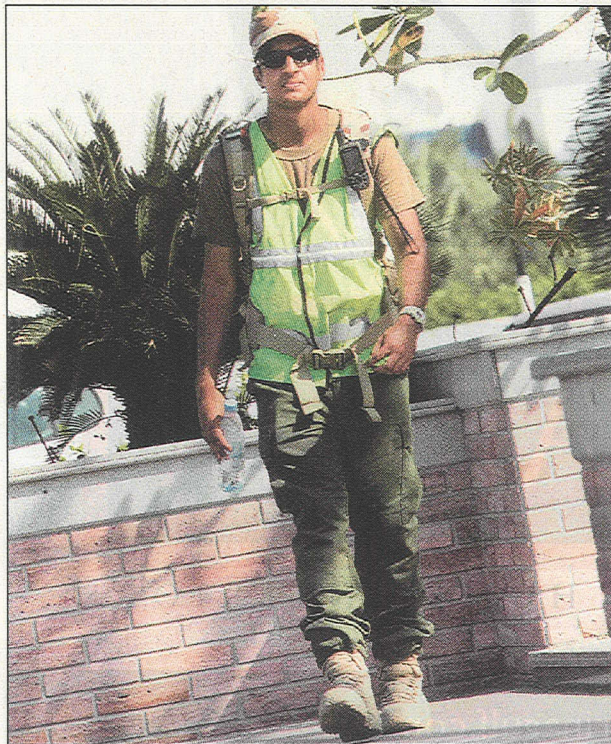


Youth treks on despite blisters and hunger

From Sweihan he walked to Al Ain, crossed four northern emirates and hopes to reach Abu Dhabi by Thursday



ASGHAR KHAN/Gulf News

In Dubai

Bin Thaneya, who is on a 500-km trek, at Jumeirah Beach Road.

BY MARIAM M. AL SERKAL
Staff Reporter

Dubai A young UAE national who set out on a 500-km charity walk across the Emirates said yesterday blisters and hunger made him more determined than ever to complete the trek.

Jalal Bin Thaneya, whose mother is British, said he suffered muscle and joint pain on several occasions, and had to cut off blisters from his foot.

He has had only three showers since January 3 — one at a petrol station and two offered by strangers who took an interest in his cause.

Supplies

He has been living on canned food and dates.

Tramping along Jumeirah Beach Road in Dubai on the 18th day of his trek, trailed by an all-terrain vehicle carrying supplies, he

CONTACT

- Find out more information on the UAE walk, you can contact Jalal Bin Thaneya at his blog site: jalalwalk.blogspot.com
- All donations for the Dubai Autism Centre can be made at:
- Emirates Bank Account number 0079361036001

said he hoped to finish his journey by reaching Abu Dhabi on Thursday.

The 20-year-old student originally expected to finish on January 15, but he told *Gulf News*: "I'm late because of lack of resources. There isn't a cafeteria every 20km to have a snack, so it's been hard to keep up."

Bin Thaneya set off to raise funds for the Dubai Autism Centre, as previously reported by *Gulf News*.

Starting in an anti-clock-

wise circle from Sweihan, north of Abu Dhabi, he walked to Al Ain and then to the northern emirates of Fujairah, Ras Al Khaimah, Umm Al Quwain and Sharjah.

Support

"Those who saw me walking supported my cause and said that there should be more people like me who took an active interest in society," he said.

Suha Krimeed, 27, a marketing and public relations consultant, walked with Bin Thaneya yesterday.

She said she related to his cause because her cousin was receiving treatment for autism in London.

"I sent my cousin's parents all the articles about Jalal. He's my hero and I appreciate what he's doing at such a young age," said Suha who walked from Mercato shopping centre to Ibn Battuta mall.