

NUS students go on desert trek to help the disabled

By AMOS LEE

ENDURING 3 deg C nights, sandstorms and snowstorms were among the challenges faced by two Singapore students who took part in the Gobi March Desert Race 2015 from May 31 to June 7 in Inner Mongolia, China.

The National University of Singapore students from Tembusu College – John Low, 22, a Year 1 life sciences student; and Alexis Lee, 19, a Year 1 business student – did it to raise money for charity.

Their 250km trekking journey was in aid of the Riding For The Disabled Association of Singapore (RDA).

The pair aimed to raise \$12,000, which would sponsor a horse for an entire year, and fell short of this by



less than \$100. Their endeavour was shared on Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong's Facebook page on May 17, a week before their departure to the Gobi Desert.

RDA Singapore is the only registered charity here that provides horse-riding therapy, or hippotherapy, to those with special needs. Hippotherapy aims to help those with physical and learning disabilities to

pick up crucial motor and social skills.

During the trek, John hurt both his Achilles tendons, and had to withdraw after completing 130km of the race.

Alexis managed to complete about 240km, while the remaining distance was cancelled due to a sandstorm.

Said Mr Daniel Chua, executive director of RDA Singapore: "It is not every day you get people who say they will run across Gobi Desert to raise

funds for your charity.

"I applaud their spirit for undertaking such a challenge and I thank them for supporting our free horse-riding therapy for those with disabilities," he added.

The charity's donation portal (tinyurl.com/horsebackgobi) is open until June 30. All donations are tax-deductible.

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NUS students Alexis Lee (far left), 19, and John Low (front centre), 22, taking part in the Gobi March Desert Race 2015 in Inner Mongolia. The trek was in aid of the Riding For The Disabled Association of Singapore.

PHOTO:
JAMES NG