

Kerala

## Jilumol Mariet Thomas steers past hurdles to set an 'example', obtains her driving licence after six-year battle

*The recognition came on the eve of World Disability Day.*



Jilumol Mariet Thomas receives her driving licence card from Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan in Palakkad on Saturday

**Aishwarya Prabhakaran**

[NATION](#) [WORLD](#) [STATES](#) [CITIES](#) [OPINIONS](#) [BUSINESS](#) [SPORT](#) [GOOD NEWS](#) [MOVIES](#)

...it was like some magic, in which you wait something, and the universe conspires in helping you to achieve it.” This cosmic alignment became evident in the life of Jilumol Mariet Thomas on Saturday, when following a six-year battle, the 32-year-old obtained her driving licence.

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan handed over the four-wheeler licence to Jilu, a differently abled resident of Idukki, at the Nava Kerala Sadas event in Palakkad. The recognition came on the eve of World Disability Day.

In her journey to become the first Asian without both arms to obtain a four-wheeler licence, Jilu, who controls the wheel with her legs, was aided by the intervention of the State Commissionerate for Persons with Disabilities, particularly its commissioner S H Panchapakesan, and the collaborative effort of the transport commissioner and Ernakulam regional transport officer A I Rajesh.

Given her unique situation, modifications were made to the car to accommodate Jilu's needs. She successfully cleared the written and 'H' tests before personnel of the motor vehicles department. Under Section 41 (2) of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016, individuals with disabilities can make necessary modifications to a vehicle without altering its overall structure, to ensure safe travel.

When asked about her first drive with the official driving licence, Jilu said, “I will go to the cemetery in Karimannoor, Thodupuzha, where my parents are buried.” This victory is not just Jilu's alone but of differently-abled individuals worldwide who often rely on others for mobility.

### **I wanted to set an example for others, says Jilumol**

Born without arms due to a congenital condition, Jilu adapted by performing daily chores with her legs. “Differently abled people face significant challenges in terms of mobility. Our public transport is unreliable and not designed to be disabled-friendly. I wanted to set an example for others undergoing similar struggles,” said Jilu, who works as a freelance graphic designer.

Vi Innovations Pvt Ltd, incubated at Maker Village, in Kochi, handled the electronic modifications on her 2018 Maruti Celerio using assistive technology.



[NATION](#) [WORLD](#) [STATES](#) [CITIES](#) [OPINIONS](#) [BUSINESS](#) [SPORT](#) [GOOD NEWS](#) [MOVIES](#)

The system, customised entirely to Jilu's requirements, took around a year to develop, with technical assistance from IIT Palakkad's Technology Innovation Foundation.

Vimal Kumar, CEO of Vi Innovations, highlighted the significance of the voice command system, emphasising its role in helping Jilu meet the necessary requirements for obtaining a car licence. The technology, installed with the assistance of an authorised dealer marks a significant stride toward inclusivity in transportation for differently-abled individuals.

(With inputs from Palakkad bureau)

[Follow The New Indian Express channel on WhatsApp](#)

[Pinarayi Vijayan](#)[Driving Licence](#)[Jilumol Mariet Thomas](#)[Show Comments](#)

Advertisement

## Related Stories



[NATION](#) [WORLD](#) [STATES](#) [CITIES](#) [OPINIONS](#) [BUSINESS](#) [SPORT](#) [GOOD NEWS](#) [MOVIES](#)

## Kerala: Fire alarm, protection systems must in newly registered buses in, says MVD

Unnikrishnan S • 4 hours ago



## Kerala Muslim groups call for Lok Sabha election date change to avoid clash with Friday prayers

Express News Service • 4 hours ago



## Kozhikode entrepreneur's e-vehicle venture forges green path in Malawi

Pooja Nair • 5 hours ago

[Contact Us](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [About Us](#) | [Terms Of Use](#) | [The Morning Standard](#) | [Dinamani](#) | [Kannada Prabha](#) | [Samakalika Malayalam](#) | [Cinema Express](#) | [Indulgexpress](#) | [Edex Live](#)

Copyright - newindianexpress.com 2024. All rights reserved.

Powered by Quintype

