

My experiences in India

India is a country which is full of diversities. India has more than twenty one different languages whereby, the two official languages are Hindi and English. Nearly ten students from Poland three students from Aschaffenburg and ten students from Hannover went with us to India. Our group from Bielefeld lived in Vadodara, a City in the state of Gujarat. Gujarat is a dry state so we couldn't buy any alcohol in a restaurant, in a bar or in the supermarket.

This incredible journey or the Indian Summer School was friendly supported and financed by the DAAD! We were thirty people from Bielefeld. Three people were from the nursing education department, the others were mechanical students, electric engineering students, business education students and management students.

The university, which is named Parul University, is located in Vadodara, too. From Monday to Thursday (sometimes to Friday) we were taken by bus to the University. From the Hotel we drove 45 minutes by bus and the university normally started at ten in the morning. In Germany I'm studying nursing education (I would like to be a teacher in nursing), but in India they can only study to become a nurse. The nursing and the teaching system in Germany is completely different compared to India. I'm not going to explain that because it is really complicated!!

So I was in the nursing department at the university. I could see the Hospital at the Campus, the Mental Health Hospital of Vadodara and another Hospital (Sunshine Global), which was more luxury. We visited the Muni Seva Ashram (Donations we're given from countries all over the world) as well. So that poor people, elderly people, children, people with cancer and disabled people can get a chance there, to go to the doctor, to the hospital and to get a small room or house for themselves. The Ashram is a spiritual thing, which I can't describe. I think everyone needs to go there by themselves to feel this spirit and the aura. At the standard hospitals there were many beds in one room. I saw a ward, which has ten or twenty beds in one room. There are many signs and they describe how to wash the hands, but they have no disinfection bottles, like Virugard or Sterilium (just in luxury hospitals or in the ICU). I think Indians have a different understanding of privacy than we Germans have. We could go in every room, where patients were lying, even in the ICU or at the operation theatre. That was strange... The toilets are really horrible at the hospitals and that's a pity!

The lessons at the university show a classic lecture format (The education focused on teachers). The pupils just need to repeat what the teacher was saying before. A Skill Lab like we do it in Germany is for Indian students a completely new experience. We did a lesson for them. Students learned how to mobilize a patient from the bed to the wheelchair. They created groups, one was the patient, one the nurse and one the observer. I think it was a great experience for us, of course it was our first lesson in English!!!

We visited the Taj Mahal in Dehli (Agra), The Luksmi Vilas Palace in Vadodara, saw a great water temple and an awesome laser show at a temple in Dehli. The Indian students danced for us at the cultural evening. We had a tent at the Campus where we ate lunch and talked to each other. They only did this for us and that was unbelievable! We went shopping with our Indian students, did the Holy Festival of Colours and some other games, went to a music Festival and yes we such had a wonderful time together.

The Indians were so kind and friendly to us. They helped us every time, they always gave us a smile and were really lovely to our group. I think sometimes it is not easy to handle a chaotic group of Germans!!! =).

I need to write this down and this is the negative side of India. If I could express a wish, I wish that many Indians won't close their eyes. India is a great country, with an interesting culture, with great buildings, Bollywood Films, rich people and poor people. The poor people mostly can't get a chance to get a good education (even the children, they need to go to work and earn money for their families). That's because of the cast system and less money. India is dirty, due to the pollution and the plastic on the street (There are not many rubbish bins). Many women got raped from men. There are less women, who were born, because girls and women are more expensive, due to dowry for the marriage and they are sometimes worth nothing.

Of course I can say that, the Indians always smile, maybe they are sometimes just satisfied with what they have, because they know that changes will come slowly. With the Muni Seva Ashram, Terre des Femmes, Indira Social Welfare Organization and other organizations, India is on a long but on a good way!

I want to say thank you again for the greatest time in my live and for the good treatment. Travel is the only thing which makes us richer!! India was an incredible chance for me. I will tell it to others to do this experience. It is a unique chance!!!

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