

## **Cultural Visit to IIITDM Kurnool (under EBSB)**

Our college planned a cultural trip to IIITDM Kurnool from 23<sup>rd</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> December 2019. Many students were interested for this trip and lastly around 50 of them were selected. We all started our journey on 22<sup>nd</sup> Dec at night, by train. It was fun travelling with everyone. When we reached Kurnool, IIITDM's bus was ready to pick us up and took us to the boys hostel. Their campus was new and under construction. The academic block, the hostels and the mess were fully built. We relaxed a bit and then went to the Academic Block for the introduction session. The buildings were quite far from each other so we had to use the bus everytime. The teachers and the director interacted with us in the session. The students were very friendly and individually asked our names, places we belonged to and our hobbies. They gave a brief introduction of their college and some information about Kurnool. They even presented some cultural dance and music performances.

Next day, we had a workshop on food and culture of Andhra Pradesh. A student delivered a presentation about the various features of their state. It included its history, religions, various cities, tourism places, cultures, songs, traditions, dance forms, dresses, languages and festivals. It was a great presentation and made me learn a lot about their state. There was a fun quiz related to the presentation. We were asked to correctly pronounce as many Telugu words as we could which were used in the presentation. It was quite difficult to get the pronunciation right but everyone tried and it was a lot of fun listening to the wrong pronunciations. After this we had a culinary competition. We had to make a dish of our choice based on the ingredients provided. The students were divided into 6 teams. After about an hour, everyone was ready with their dish, which obviously had a Maharashtrian flavour to it. The judges tasted every dish and gave the marks accordingly. After that everyone jumped on the dishes and finished them in no time. Next, we had a Treasure Hunt planned for us. Again the students were divided into teams and the game began. Everyone was running here and there in search of clues with the final goal of finding the treasure and winning the game. Our team lost but it was so much fun. This is when I thought the day was over, but actually there was movie night coming up. We all gathered in the Seminar Hall to watch the movie Rang De Basanti. I had never watched it and it was a great experience watching it with everyone together, people cheering on songs and dances and twists of the movie. Finally the day was over and instead of taking the bus, my group went on foot to the hostel. It was a perfect evening, the sunset, the cold breeze and all of us tired with all the work we had done in the day.

On the third day, we went to Rolapadu Village which was about 40kms from the institute. On reaching there, we went to a bird sanctuary and a safari. We couldn't spot most of the birds but it was a great place to click pictures. We saw many deer during the safari and it was enjoyable to be with everyone. Next we went to a lake and spent some time sitting near it, clicking pictures. In the evening we went to a famous fort. It wasn't much big but it had a great history. We came to know about the ruler which had built it and the functions it served at that time. Then we all scattered to visit the nearby market. Google Maps helped a lot in the navigation as almost every sign was in Telugu and we didn't understand a word. We visited a few shops and bought some stuff. We even played games in one of the malls of the city. Then we went back to the college after having dinner in the market itself. It was a good way

of experiencing life in Kurnool, as we encountered various people on our way and even found new flavors of the dishes we knew.

On the fourth day, we visited Rock Garden. It was much better than I had expected. It was basically a rocky terrain with a lake to its side. All the students climbed the rocks, clicked pictures and jumped here and there. Everyone around you could be seen posing and climbing high rocks just to get good pictures. After we had explored almost every part of the garden, we were ready to head back to the hostel. We were all too tired because of the walking and climbing. In the evening we visited Shaktipeeth Shri Jogulamba Devi Temple in Alampur. There were many temples in the area and we visited almost all of them, then we went to the main temple and took the blessings. After this we went for boating in the river which was just by the side of the temple. We enjoyed the boat ride. We were briefed about the various sculptures, the temple designs and the history of the place. Then we went back to the hostel, to get prepared for the last day of our visit.

On the fifth and the last day of the visit, we all gathered in the Seminar Hall in traditional dresses. Everyone in the hall was wearing the traditional dress of his/ her region. The director and the teachers addressed the students. Then there was a cultural walk organized. Many other fun activities were also planned for us. Then there was the group photograph with the organizing committee. In the evening we had our last meal in Kurnool city. Then we left for the railway station and came back to our college.

This cultural visit, overall was a lot of fun. I learnt many new things, experienced new cultures, tasted new food, explored a totally different place. It helped me understand that there are so many places in India, I might have never planned to visit, but it's worth visiting those places because you will always find something new, something unique in every place and Kurnool was no exception. I truly enjoyed the visit and I am looking forward to welcoming IIITDM's students in my state, during their visit.

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