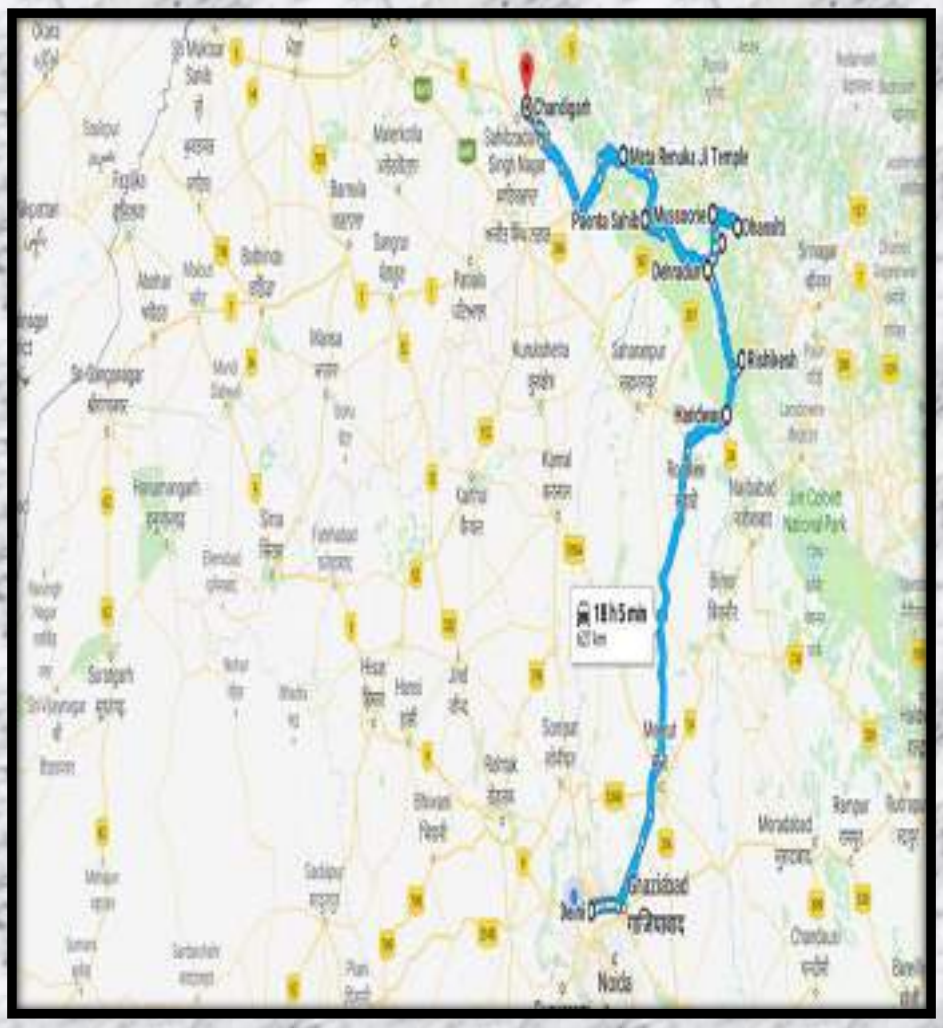
The Backpackers: An Educational Trip

A Report

April 5th - April 9th, 2018

Road Map of the Places Visited During the Trip

Source: http://maps.google.com



Editor's Note

"Not all those, who wander, are lost."

- J.R.R Tolkien

We are delighted to present the report of **The Backpackers: An Educational Trip (April 5th - April 9th, 2018)**. A team of 11 students and 2 teachers went on an excursion trip which crossed the 6 states/UTs i.e. Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Chandigarh and Haryana in addition to Delhi for 3 days and 4 nights. The experience provided a really exciting opportunity to learn about the interdisciplinary nature of an excursion tour and its linkages to Education and Technology.

The objective of this report is to present detailed information of the excursion trip alongside relevant and insightful inputs from all the teammates. The experience was really enriching, enlightening and rejuvenating.

Diksha Kukreja
Editor

Swati Malik
Editor

Vinod Kumar Kanvaria
Editor-in-Chief

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to Prof. Tarun Das, Registrar, University of Delhi for giving us this opportunity to explore various aspects of education through an excursion trip. We would like to thank Prof. Namita Ranganathan, Head and Dean, Faculty of Education, University of Delhi for her consistent and ever ready support from beginning till the end. We extend our sincere gratitude towards IRCTC for their support in terms of the rail ticket concessions. We would also like to thank one and all for providing the opportunity to be a part of this educational experience, in addition to being the blood and flesh of this entire endeavour. We would also like to thank Dr. Geeta Rai for her support during the excursion. Next, we would like to thank all the students who were a part of this educational excursion. Last but not the least we would like to thank all the natives of the places we visited for their tremendous help.

Bharti Nagpal
Student Group Coordinator

Vinod Kumar Kanvaria
Teacher In-Charge & Trip Coordinator

Itinerary of the Educational Trip

(05/04/2018 to 09/04/2018)

5th APRIL, 2018 (THURSDAY) – DAY 1

09:45 pm - Reporting and attendance of group followed by boarding the train at Old Delhi Railway Station (DLI)

10:15 pm - Leaving for Haridwar (Uttarakhand) via (14041) MUSSOORIE EXPRESS, SL - (Sleeper Class)

6th APRIL, 2018 (FRIDAY) – DAY 2

06:05 am - Reach Haridwar Junction (HW) Railway Station

06:05 am to 7:00 am – Preparation for Local Visit

07:00 am to 11:00 am – Local visits in Haridwar

11:00 am – Leaving for Rishikesh (Uttarakhand)

12:15 pm – Reach Rishikesh Bus Terminal

12:15 pm to 07:00 pm – Local visits in Rishikesh

07:00 pm – Leaving for Dehradun

08:30 pm – Arrive at Dehradun Bus Terminal

08:30 pm to 10:00 pm – Local visits in Dehradun

10:00 pm – BedTime

7th APRIL, 2018 (SATURDAY) – DAY 3

08:30 am to 10:00 am – Local visits in Dehradun

10:00 am – Leaving for Sahastradhara and Dhanaulti (Uttarakhand)

10:45 pm to 01:00 pm – Visits in Sahastradhara

01:00 pm – Leaving for Dhanaulti

03:00 pm to 6:00 pm – Excursion at Dhanaulti

06:00 pm – Leaving for Sri Paonta Sahib (Himachal Pradesh).

08:25 pm – Reach Sri Paonta Sahib.

08:30 pm to 10:00 pm - Local visits in Sri Paonta Sahib.

10:00 pm – BedTime

8th APRIL, 2018 (SUNDAY) – DAY 4

07:00 am to 08:30 am – Morning visits in Sri Paonta Sahib

08:30 am – Leaving for Renukaji Lake (Himachal Pradesh)

10:30 am – Arrive at Renukaji Lake

10:30 am to 01:00 pm – Exploration around Renukaji Lake

01:00 pm – Leaving for Chandigarh (UT)

05:00 pm – Arrive at Chandigarh

05:00 pm to 10:30 pm – Exploration in Chandigarh

10:30 pm – Leaving for Ambala (Haryana)

9th APRIL, 2018 (MONDAY) – DAY 5

12:00 am – Arrive at Ambala Cantt Junction Railway Station (UMB)

12:00 am – 1:45 am Relax at Ambala Cantt

01:45 am – Leaving for Delhi after boarding 14034 (JAMMU MAIL) in SL - (Sleeper Class) 05:45 am – Reach Old Delhi Railway Station, Delhi Junction (DLI), Delhi

05:50 am – De-boarding and Conclusive meeting of the group

Bharti Nagpal
Student Group Coordinator

Vinod Kumar Kanvaria
Teacher In-charge

Educational Excursion Summary

The B.Ed. and M.Ed. students of the Department of Education, University of Delhi have returned on 9th April, 2018 from their jointly managed field trip to the states of Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Panjab, Haryana and the Union Territory of Chandigarh. The participants included 11 students from B.Ed. and M.Ed. programmes having their specialisation in Educational Technology. The trip was planned and organised by Mr. Vinod Kumar Kanvaria and supported by Dr. Geeta Rai, faculty members of Department of Education, University of Delhi. The aim of the trip was to gain real-life experiences of the northern region of India with a focus on the use of technology, more specifically educational technology. Before the departure, the group was shared an itinerary for the trip that included the places to be visited and the relevant bookings that were to be done to realise the trip goals. Each of the student participants was made in-charge of at least one location (that was to be visited by the group), who was then expected to explore and make small presentation about his/her exploration on the relevant day as well as in the final group meeting held a few days before the departure.

The first night of the trip was spent in travelling from the Old Delhi railway station to Haridwar by Mussoorie express. The next morning, the group reached its first destination of the tour, i.e. Haridwar. This Friday morning was spent in visiting the markets of Haridwar and enjoying the beautiful, cold yet sacred waters of the river Ganges. After a short-day sightseeing of the bustling market and the magnificent Ganges water at the Har ki Pauri, Haridwar, the troop departed for Rishikesh, the next stop in the tour itinerary. Rishikesh, the next stop was full of beautiful and scenic surprises for all. The trip participants travelled in bus to reach Rishikesh. The first attraction, after reaching Rishikesh was that of the 'Laxman Jhula', an iron suspension bridge as long as 450 feet connecting Tehri and Pauri districts of the state followed by spending time on the banks of the river Ganges, jollity playing with the clear and refreshing water of the river, at the same time knowing more about the (natural and man-made) inhabitants of the place and the mechanisms keeping the suspension bridge afloat in the air for so many years. The group left the place, to visit another attraction in the city, i.e. the 'Ram Jhula', a 750 feet long suspension bridge made from iron across the river Ganges. The group also went onto a boating ride from one end of the ram jhula to the other and then back, witnessing the

ongoing preparations for the famous Ganga aarti in the nearby Ghat. The following night, the group moved towards the ISBT for a re-energising dinner as well as boarding the bus for Dehradun. The night was spent in staying at a modest and comfortable hotel in the Dehradun city.

The next day, i.e. Saturday, the group made their way to the famous Dhanaulti early in the morning. The cafes and the eco-park were the main attractions of the place, wherein the participants enjoyed observing the scenic beauty of the two constituents 'Amber' and 'Dhara' parks, along with the saplings planted by previous visitors in memories of their beloved. The group members also participated in the adventure sports facility provided by the park. After the day's sightseeing, the group made its way towards Sahastradhara, in the meanwhile observing the beautiful terrace farming and deep valleys of Deodar, Rhododendron and Oak trees in the Uttarakhand state. Trying to reach from one place to the other, the participants also enjoyed the curvy ride on the ribbon-like roads of the Shivalik hills. Reaching Sahastradhara by mid-afternoon gave the tour members a pleasant break from the meandering roads of the hills as it provided a blazing view of the entire place covered with lush greens and windswept waterfalls. The participants observed the millions of water droplets falling from the top into the water of the Baddi River, giving the entire place its meaning in the modern world. The next place of visit, from Sahastradhara was Sri Paonta Sahib, where the entire group stayed for the night in the welcoming campus of the Sri Paonta Sahib Gurudwara, commingling with the locals of the place and participating in the community service, thereby experiencing an altogether different way of living, living for the community, living for the people and living for the eternal mental peace.

The Sunday morning was marked by the group's travel to the Indian state of Himachal Pradesh, the first of whose attraction was a visit to the holy Renuka Ji Lake and Temple. The state of Himachal Pradesh offered a very different scenic view to the wanderlust members of the group. It offered the sun-drenched greens rugged all over the place. After having a fulfilling lunch and an exciting boat ride at the place, the group trekked back to the nearest Bus stand to board a bus for the next stop for the day i.e. Nahan. However, since the group missed the last bus of the day for Chandigarh from Renuka Ji, we decided to de-tour a bit from our itinerary by boarding a bus for Nahan and then re-boarding another bus from Nahan to Chandigarh. After reaching Chandigarh, the group had the opportunity to have some tasty snacks and food from a local dhaba. The final midnight of

the trip was spent in Ambala from where the Jammu Mail train was boarded in order to reach back to Delhi.

The following report is an attempt to describe, in detail, the experiences, learning and some special inputs from this trip along with beautiful illustrations, through the field pictures clicked by the budding photographers of the group. All the information presented in this report is not confidential and we have the permission from the participants to make it public.

The student members of the trip would like to thank one and all for their involvement, expertise, consistent support and initiation into historical discussions about the places throughout the trip. The staff at the Department of Education, University of Delhi, the Old Delhi Railway Station, Haridwar Railway Station and Ambala Cantt. Railway Station, which provided generous infrastructural and logistical support for the trip.

The Excursion

Friday, 6th April, 2018: Haridwar

Ganga Ghat

A famous Ghat on the banks of Ganga in Haridwar, Har ki Pauri was our first place of excursion. It is one of the major landmarks of the holy city of Haridwar. Lord Shiva and Lord Vishnu are believed to have visited this Brahmakund in Har Ki Pauri in ancient times.

This place is considered as the precise place where River Ganga leave mountains and enter plains. Thousands of pilgrims visit this area daily and as well as for Kumbh Mela and Ardh Kumbh Mela.

Market

The local market near Har ki Pauri gave us the essence of our destination. The shops were full of objects like 'mala', idols of gods and goddesses and many more things used for worshiping. The market had most of the things which can be easily found in Delhi as well. A lot of tourists can be easily seen there accommodated in the local environment.

At the holy Dham- Har ki Pauri

The refreshing 'dubki'

As the fresh breeze of morning set in, we reached Haridwar Railway station and immediately left to visit the holy place of Har ki Pauri. A lot of people were taking dip in the holy water of River Ganga. We joined the tremendous sight and jumped in the water. It was a refreshing experience. The cold water rejuvenated us. It was a wonderful start to the trip.

After a refreshing experience in the holy water, we proceeded to fill our stomachs. The food served in that region is simple, light, and free from spices after which we proceeded towards our next destination.

Students at Har ki Pauri

Friday, 6th April, 2018: Rishikesh

Located in the Dehradun district of Uttarakhand, Rishikesh is a beautiful city. It is located in the foothills of Himalayas and is known as 'Gateway to Garhwal Himalayas'. The famous city of Rishikesh is known as the 'Yoga Capital of the World'.

The group reached the beautiful city of Rishikesh via bus. After reaching the location, the group marched towards the famous Lakshman Jhula Bridge.

Lakshman Jhula Bridge

The Lakshman Jhula Bridge is an iron suspension bridge located over and across the river Ganges. The bridge connects two villages Tapovan in Tehri Gharwal district to Jaunk in Pauri Gharwal District. It is said that Lakshamana crossed the river Ganges on jute ropes where this Jhula is located. It was built in 1929. The famous thirteen-storied Trayambakeshwar temple is also located near Laxman jhula

After walking for a really long distance down the hill, our team reached the Lakshman Jhula Bridge and we were awestruck by the sight. It is surrounded by mountains, the beautiful river Ganga flowing beneath and the magnificent Jhula on which we were standing was a perfect combination we could have asked for. After crossing the Jhula, we reached the Ghat and rushed in the cool and soothing water of Ganga.

The time spent there was filled with lots of photographs, videos and fun. We splashed water on each other, danced into the refreshing cold water and enjoyed as much as we could have. Nobody wanted to leave the place but the team had to move on with a hope of having fun in abundance, in the locations to come.

The team posing near Lakshman Jhula

Ram Jhula

The team left Lakshman Jhula to reach Ram Jhula via a Bolero, which dropped the team at the main market area. Moving through the lively market which had beautiful shops selling clothes and other daily items, the team reached Ram Jhula.

Built in 1986, the bridge is one of the ironic landmarks of the city of Rishikesh. Though similar in design, the bridge is bigger than Lakshman Jhula. The bridge is constructed with a tremendous span of 750 ft.

The magnificent view of Ram Jhula

Team of students near Ram Jhula waiting for the ferry boat to arrive

The Ferry Ride

Students enjoying the ferry ride

One of the major attractions near the Ram Jhula is the Boat ride. With a minimal amount, a boat ride across the river Ganga is what one wants to ask. Safety is fully ensured on the boat ride and one can enjoy the terrific view of lush green mountains and the calm Ganga.

Ganga Aarti

The sunset Ganga Aarti at the Parmarth Niketan draws hundreds and thousands of visitors from all across the world daily. The power of Aarti is universal and divine. It begins daily at sunset at Parmarth's Ganga Ghat. However, unfortunately we were not able to witness the Aarti in its full swing.

As the sun marched its way down in the mountains, we proceeded towards our Hotel in Dehradun for night stay.

Saturday, 7th April, 2018: Dhanaulti

The next morning, before the sunrise, the team started on its way to our next destination, a beautiful hill station - Dhanaulti. It is located 24 km from the popular hill station Mussoorie where we stayed for a while for light refreshment. At an altitude of 2286 m,

Dhanaulti is known for its quiet environment amidst the alpine forests of Deodar, Rhododendron and Oak. The temperature was cold but pleasant.

Seated in the calm and soothing environment of the serene hill station, the team had a delicious breakfast.

Eco-Park

It is the main attraction of Dhanaulti. It has been developed by the Forest Department of Uttarakhand with the help of local youth. It had many adventure sport facilities for tourists like walking over flying fox and Burma bridges. The view is serene.

Dhanaulti's major attraction- The Eco-Park

Saturday, 7th April, 2018

Sahastradhara

After enjoying the chilling beauty of the mesmerising hill station of Dhanaulti, the team proceeded towards one of the most popular tourist destination located in Dehradun-Uttarakhand. Sahastradhara, which means thousand-fold spring, is known for its ecstatic beauty and therapeutic value since its water contains sulphur. The place has magnificent beauty of nature where water drips from the limestones salicylates, making the water abundant in sulphur and thus the place is known for its sulphur springs. The place was a mixture of beautiful caves, waterfalls and terrace farming by local people. One can end up being awestruck by the beauty of such a place. The team ventured in clicking photographs and capturing the beauty by not just camera but eyes and heart was our main agenda.
The light drizzle added to the icing on the cake as if many more Sahastradhara pour over us as we enjoy the amazing view of Sahastradhara. We wanted to stay there, but more places awaited us.

The beautiful - Sahastradhara

Sunday, 8th April 2018

Sri Paonta Sahib Gurudwara

The historical – Sri Paonta Sahib Gurudwara

As the day came to end, we moved towards our next destination, the next state - Himachal Pradesh. Gurudwara Sri Paonta Sahib is located in Sirmaur District of Himachal. We proceeded for langar after keeping our luggage in the rooms. The place has a peaceful and disciplined environment.

The next morning, we woke up to visit the Yamuna Ghat followed by consuming langar in morning.

Renuka Ji Temple and Lake

The picturesque way on route to Renuka ji

Located 672 metres above the sea level in the Sirmaur district of Himachal Pradesh is the Renuka Ji Lake. It is the largest lake in Himachal Pradesh with circumference of 3214 m. It was named after goddess Renuka ji. A mini Zoo and Lion safari is also located near the lake.

We visited the Renuka ji temple. Parashuram temple was also located in the premises with Dasaavtara of Lord Vishnu. After the holy visit to temple, we proceeded for boating which was a fun filled and thrilling experience.

The Boating sight at Renuka ji Jheel

Monday, 9th April, 2018

Ambala Cantt. Railway Station

By the end of the day, we reached Ambala Cantt. railway station from Chandigarh to board the train. The station was dancing in a light show which just made our tiredness disappeared. The train arrived on time and reached Delhi on time as well. We de-boarded and wished everyone goodbye with heavy hearts but beautiful memories.

The Breath-taking: Ambala Cantt. Railway Station

Student Reflection Section

What Did We Learn?

The current section focuses upon the learnings that the group members had from the recent educational trip, especially with respect to educational technology.

Through our trip we could carefully observe the levels of technology integration in the lives of the people staying in different places that we visited. For instances, in places like Dehradun and Chandigarh, people have access to newer technologies such as smartphones, internet connection, easy availability of transport etc. However, in places like Dhanaulti that are at quite a significant height from the sea level, meeting even the basic needs of life is challenging, leave alone having access to internet or expensive and luxurious gadgets all the time, therefore, our insights for utilising whatever available resources in the best possible manner, thereby maximizing its efficiency, hence, one of the core goals of educational technology.

Through this trip to the distant and hilly areas of north India, we also learnt that communication over long distances is not as simple as it seems. However, if one wishes to establish a communication channel, he/she can successfully do that. One finest example of this can be found in the perfect communication between the passengers and the bus drivers (who come only once or twice a day) without the use of any modern-day technology such as mobile devices, telephones or internet. This is a fine example of virtual communication without the help of any digital device. Moreover, a realisation also came that the very use of simple educational technological devices can lead its way for social changes in terms of increasing the reach, mobility and access to basic needs of life as well as education. However, the question that comes to our minds is the danger of the natural sanctity and essence of that particular place being lost due to technological infestation. We also understood the importance of the need for clear communication for the success of not only large group instructions but also small group instructions (both within and inter-group).

Through this trip we also learnt about the importance of cooperative instructions and learning wherein each of the members learn from each other's' strengths and also work towards fulfilling the gaps created due to the weaknesses of others, trying to make up for the loss. This is exactly what happened with us on our trip, wherein each one of us, acted like a strong support for others, supporting them in their times of weakness and also

seeking support in their times of strength, together, trying to make the entire experience, a memorable one.

Throughout the entire experience of planning, managing, executing and reflecting back upon the trip, one major thing that we could realise the importance of was the systems technology and management technology (two of the seven approaches of educational technology). We realised that in order to make any endeavour successful be it academic or non-academic, classroom situations or any educational excursion, it is important to plan, execute and manage it in a systematic manner. The principles of systems approach of educational technology were of great help to us during this trip.

While travelling through the meandering roads of the mountains and walking in to the daily lives of the locals, we could witness the pluralism existing in the lives of people living in the hilly areas and the people living in the plains or rather metro cities like Delhi. We could realize the importance of technology in our lives, which otherwise is so easily taken for granted in Delhi, thereby also understanding the crucial role that digital access plays in ensuring equality in the modern-day digital world.

However, this does not mean that there is no technology in the hilly areas. Inhabitants of the places we visited were determinant enough to make technology and other services (goods and products) available to them. They might not be as addicted to social media as every other person in Delhi metro is, but that does not mean that do not have access to any technology (mobile networks and internet connectivity) at all. Rather, it is the way technology is used by its users that makes it dominant, oppressive or slave to humankind (Feenberg, 1960s).

Since, inhabitants of these places have to travel far too long to reach their schools, colleges, we could realise the significance of ubiquitous learning and the amount of difference these technologies (such as Distance education, MOOCs, NROER etc.) could make in enhancing the quality of education with minimal resources expended, thereby making lives (getting education) easier for them.

The presentations that we (location in-charges) made to the entire group before the group visited each of these places during the trip, acted as an advanced organiser for us. The information given to us about the historical and social relevance of the places we were to visit, acted as an advanced organiser for us, thereby, helping us to better connect with the places on this tour, hence, also connecting the dots for us, as educational leaders, to the educational significance of the Ausubel's advanced organiser model, more generally the models of teaching.

Some Special Inputs

Voices from the Voyagers

In order to make this report more special, personal and meaningful to all the readers as well as the members of the trip, this section is an attempt to bring out the voices of the trip members straight from their hearts, to the hearts of the readers of this report. Following are the personal accounts of the trip members.

An Unravelling Educational Trip

-Sarah M. Baru

A combination of 'educational' as well as 'Teertha yatra' was the blend of this amazing trip. It was one of its own kinds, which was unique in itself, having '13 lucky' members on the group. The trip was very interesting as it unravelled itself at different junctures of the journey. Thanks to Mr. Vinod K. Kanvaria who lead the 'One-man army' and to Ms. Geeta who supported the team in many other ways.

This trip helped us move out of our comfort zones and see the other side of life. Traveling in the buses was fun. We were smell bound at the magnificent work of the 'Creator' of the hills, rivers, the vegetation and all of creation. The ribbon like roads that swerved us out of our seats. Oh My!!! I was also amazed at the skilful drivers who drove with so much confidence and were at their best. I never forgot to thank them before I de-boarded the bus. The dedication of service at the gurdwara was one to admire.

The capturing of the slow-motion videos was the best part, where we tried to put our technical skills to test as we strived to get the best shots. These memories will last forever. Every time I travel and face similar situations, these memories will come back to life. A big THANK YOU to the entire team for making this trip a memorable one.

A Reflection on Educational Excursion

-Nagendra Pandey

It was really a good experience for me to visit these (Haridwar, Rishikesh, Dehradun, Dhanaulti, Sri Paonta Sahib, Renuka ji) famous and historical places. Each place has its own significance. However, being a student of social sciences, I want to mention about

Sri Paonta Sahib gurudwara. It has its own historical context. It is a noted gurdwara in Sri Paonta Sahib, District of Sirmour, Himachal Pradesh. The gurdwara was built in memory of Guru Gobind Singh ji the tenth guru of Sikhs. It was a very pleasant moment to be at the shore of perennial river Ganga in Rishikesh. I felt very cool and calm, at the same time I was anxious to think about the condition of the river in other cities. I enjoyed a lot and learnt how to plan an educational trip as well.

My First Experience!

-Swati Malik

Travelling is not just a recreational activity, rather if done in the right manner can lead to lifelong learning. Such learning was experienced by us, a team of 13 enthusiastic minds during our excursion visit. The trip was an example of edutainment i.e. education plus entertainment.

We got to experience the essence of different places not as tourists but from ground reality. Travelling in local transport, communicating with local people, living in between them for 3 days was really enriching.

This was my first visit to such a place, and to be honest, I was amazed by the beauty, the functioning of the places located in isolated regions. Cut off from social media and city life was refreshing as well as rejuvenating. I learned to observe the beauty of the mother nature.

Memories to Cherish

-Bharti Nagpal

Someone has rightly said 'travelling leaves you speechless then turns you into a storyteller'.

From the beginning 'booking of the tickets' to the end 'Jammu mail journey' this trip had been very adventurous and had taught a lot of lessons. It seemed very tough to get our tickets being booked but the feeling of victory that we got after the tickets were booked was speechless and from there the story of our journey began. The 'Subah wali chay' in Mussoorie express, 'Ganga snan' in Haridwar, 'Fear of falling from Laxman jhula' in Rishikesh, 'Boat wali masti' near Ram jhula, 'Night at hotel Balaji' in dun, 'Mountain climbing' in Dhanaulti, 'Tickling by fishes' at Sahastradhara, 'Guru ka langar' in Paonta sahib, 'lovely lake' in Renuka ji, 'Yummy dinner' at Chandigarh ISBT to 'sleepy traveling'

in Jammu mail, every moment of this trip was a therapy to become ready for the future. The adventures of this journey showed us our capabilities. There were times when it felt like 'why can't we stay here forever' which involved the 'clifftop of ecopark, early morning gurbani at Sri Paonta sahib and many others. Although this journey seems very little but the memories that we have made during this little time are very large. Through this trip we get to know about our capabilities of flying with our wings. Each and every moment with each other led to the success of this trip. I don't know where we will go for the next trip but I'm sure it won't be boring.

An Unforgettable Memory

-Shadangish Gupta

These are few words I've put together in an attempt to express the excitement, the fun and the joy I experienced in those 100+ hours in the company of the fantastic people on the trip.

The whole trip was a big fluffy bag of feelings, experiences and emotions, reviving old ones and creating new ones. It was mixed with fantastic ones, a few that one would love to forget and some with a tinge of both joy and sadness.

As the wise people say we need to remember the happy moments and should shelve away the sad ones on the topmost shelves where one cannot reach easily. I've tried to do the same, remembering those worth and pushing away those that might ruin the moments.

The most exhilarating one of the whole duration for me was that - this trip made it possible for me to travel to those scenic, wonderingly beautiful places along with two of the most wonderful people I've met in the last two years. The hills, the roads with their curves and slopes and heights, the mountain peaks, the rising sun, the setting sun with the calm water of river Ganges in the foreground. All this made beautiful frames to be captured by the lenses of the cameras most of us were carrying. But to me they were moments captured deep in my heart. Some brought back happy memories and others created many new ones.

They say 13 is an unlucky number. Yes, it might be to those who are afraid to make new friends, new memories, to take new risks, which by now is crystal clear that none of us are.

To me and I bet, to all the other twelve this number 13 proved to be the luckiest so far.

A Feeling of Gratitude

-Geeta Rai

Thanks for organizing the trip and making it possible to reach every impossible destination. Enjoyed the company of my young friends. Each and every one of us has lovely memories captured in their mobiles as well as in our memories. The lovely homemade parathas, the PJ's of boys, the lovely weather, the bugs bugging the beautiful gals, the sexy zigzag roads making the strong boys vomit, the sweet-sour Maggie like journey, woh machar ka gungunana, bekhof sunsaan sadko mai ghumna...

A Lifelong Learning

-Payal

I enjoyed a lot on the trip. I was very excited to be a part of this trip. I learned a lot regarding planning, organisation and management. I would like to discuss about how this trip make me realise that learning from real life experiences is very effective. During the trip we visited number of places with different cultures, different routines, and different lifestyles. Being a Delhiite reading educational books never made me to realise that how difficult it for a child is living in hilly area to get to the school, because an unpredictable weather is always a big problem in such areas. I was reading for years about child centred education. Just like others I also rote memorised the answers. But after experiencing the different places during this trip, I understood the meaning of child-centred education. For example, a child living in hilly area doesn't have any experience with metro train. So, there is no point in telling him/her stories related to metro.

I also understood the concept of experiential learning i.e., learning based on experiences. Instead of learning about flora and fauna from books it's worth to go to places like Dhanaulti and Rishikesh and have a live experience of the rich flora and fauna.

There is a lot to share but everything can't be expressed through words. I, as a teacher, would like to give ample opportunities to my students to learn from the real-experiences of their own rather than from the books. I can relate it to Rousseau.

Learning is not memorising it is reinventing, discovering, revealing the art of survival and sustainability.

A Cost-Effective Trip

-Anil Yadav

It was an amazing trip which actually helped me to experience things I had never thought I would experience in a Department trip. Visiting so many places and locations in a very less amount shows the management skills of the trip planners.

Getting close to nature is the most wonderful feeling I have till date. And therefore, I loved this trip from Haridwar to Renuka ji and various other places.

Destination is always beautiful but the journey must be equally exciting.

Travelling for hours in the mountains doesn't make you feel bored and that's what I like about nature.

There have been various problems too but the way we managed it with our unity was a learning experience.

A Mindboggling Trip

-Anshul Saraswat

Trip started from old Delhi railway station. Announcement of various trains arriving at different timings from all over India was a good experience as ever because there are not many things which unify India as a country like railways.

Trip started by interactions with many people some who were going to Haridwar or going back. Orientation of berths and choosing one most suitable was not a big dilemma as upper one was most stable and comfortable.

Upon reaching Haridwar, sanitation and cleanliness of railways station made a good impression. Arrangements of shops all over the Hamilton road all the way to Haridwar main entry to Ghats was a colourful view incorporating different local item shops, general items shops, local cuisines etc.

Ghat view was overwhelming. It was full of so many people who have come here for different purposes. Arrangements of different things like, locked bridges, chains for holding while taking bath, photographers around to click you gave an impression how well managed this area was in spite of so many people there. We also did speed boating here.

Further we moved in to Rishikesh and lesser number of people taking a dip there in water directly resulted into cleaner water. It was more amazing as calmer water allowed us to explore these Ghats more.

We took bus and hired auto-rickshaws mainly to further explore Dehradun and its different parts. Ecological Park was main attraction of here, surrounded by many eating spots full of local foods as well as Maggi etc. Park had two parts and the upper part was more interesting and worth exploring. It included many swings, tall trees, little bit of hiking. It was full of greenery along with labels for every tree in English and Latin nomenclature.

Further we moved onto Dhanaulti which being at 6000 feet was first time experience. Entire route was a feast for eyes covered in greenery and not much cemented road with 0 advertisements. Only warning and instructions were there. High altitude and lower temperature gave a feeling of awestricken which can't be explained justifiably.

En-route to Dhanaulti, Musoori and our tea time there, presence of dogs, monkeys etc. made us feel like how amazing, serene and beautifully natural evert city can look like.

Then we moved on to Sahastradhara, which was the most amazing part of this trip. It was a collection of naturally dripping clean, portable water coming down from rocks and small bushes filling up the many small pools level wise. We stopped for tea and snacks which were amazing as it started raining at that time.

Then Sri Paonta Sahib Experience was rare and first one for me as I've never been to any gurudwara ever. Learning their culture and customs. Entire experience including Gurbani, their staying space, food distribution centre, their method of doing everything was splendid.

Renukaji Lake was explored after it all. Exploring the lake and surrounding area, feeding the fishes, boating, visiting few temples reading the epigraphs trying to interpret it was astounding too.

An Edu-Motional Trip

-Varish Dedha

Every trip charges us with lots of mixed emotions. I experienced the same feelings and emotion on this journey too. I was blessed to be a part of this trip as I got the opportunity to meet and interact with some new people like Anil, Anshul, Swati, Shadangish and Ankit from my Department with whom I had hardly interacted in the past. Meeting these people and knowing them was a wonderful experience in itself. We all, the students from B.Ed. and M.Ed., with our teachers worked like a single team in every tough situation faced during the course of this trip.

This trip helped me to understand more closely the ground realities. Travelling in public transport, interacting with the local people, understanding and listening their side of the story gave me an altogether different insight about the places that we visited (like Haridwar, Rishikesh, Sri Paonta Sahib etc.).

Personally, I love to read about geography, and it was this trip that helped me to not only learn but also experience the difference between DOON and DUARs (topographical terms unique to Shiwalik and Himachal mountains). While travelling from Delhi to Haridwar and Rishikesh, I could see the steep Shiwalik and also the beautiful transitional phase from the plains to the mountains (DUARs). While entering into Dehradun by buses, the stable Himachal Mountains prominently depicted DOONs. This difference, which I had previously read many a times in books only, was very much in front of my eyes. This excursion helped me in furthering my understanding of such technical, geographical terms.

Talking to people at gurudwara Sri Paonta Sahib helped me to better understand the Sikh culture, historical significance of Sri Paonta Sahib and religious importance of Nishan Sahib.

This trip and our sir and ma'am provided me with different opportunity like leading the group many a times, keeping group together throughout the journey, negotiating prices at some places, organising logistical things for group like allotting seats in the trains, buying tickets, arranging for tea etc. Such responsibilities helped me in develop myself as an individual.

However, I also think there were some moments in this trip which could have been avoided to make this trip more wonderful and meaningful. As it was a bag packer trip full of trekking one has to understand everyone's temperament and should support each other which we most ardently did.

At the end I can proudly say that I was a part of a trip which was economical and full of exploration not only geographically but also socially in terms of exploring oneself and others through numerous interactions.

The Mystical Charms of the Mountains

-Diksha Kukreja

Being an ardent believer of life being too short to be wasted staying at one place, is what recharges me to take on adventurous travels every time.

And that's why my interest and participation in this trip to the mountains. This trip, although on paper might look like any other travel experience, was unlike the ones I had previously experienced. It was adventurous in its own way, in the sense that this was my first time travelling as a traveller and not as a tourist. The reason being that throughout the trip, we travelled like the locals of these places would, we conversed, ate and slept like the locals would do, thereby, being able to gather enormous amounts of practical knowledge and memories to cherish all throughout our lives.

Memories of the night time masti, the feeling of success after reaching the cliff of the Eco-park, the endless PJs that we cracked, the endless pictures and 'slow-mos.' that we clicked, the raw shayari, the bus journey, the songs that we played etc. These are all memories for lifetime.

Amongst all the unlimited fun, that would make any barren field green once again, were the overarching, breath-taking views of the Magnum Mountains ready to hug you so warmly that you'll forget anything and everything around you, so much so that you don't want to leave those places ever again. Those rhythmic movements of the tall trees, those exuberant waters, those meandering roads, and those windswept weather conditions, played their own magic in rejuvenating our minds, bodies and souls, thereby, allowing our inner child to come forward and effortlessly have all the fun in the world. That was the mystical impact of the luscious and serene greens that all these places had to offer. Feels beautiful doesn't it?

Every picture that I took there and every picture that I now see after coming back, makes me fall in love with the place again and again. It makes me say that the earth has music for those of us who are ready to listen!

So, are you ready to listen?

Our Co-existing Support System

Overall In-charge: Mr. Vinod Kumar Kanvaria

Female Teacher Support: Dr. Geeta Rai

Location In-charges:

Haridwar- Mr. Anshul

Rishikesh – Mr. Ankit

Dehradun – Ms. Bharti

Sahastradhara – Ms. Swati

Dhanaulti – Mr. Nagendra

Sri Paonta Sahib – Ms. Diksha

Renukaji Lake – Mr. Varish

Chandigarh – Ms. Sarah

Ambala – Mr. Anil

Tickets Booking: Mr. Anshul, Ms. Swati, Ms. Bharti, Ms. Sarah and Ms. Payal

Endless PJs: Everyone because no one can crack sane jokes

Picturesque Photography: Mr. Anil, Ms. Diksha and Mr. Vinod

Style Inputs and Directions: Ms. Swati and Ms. Payal

Historical and Informational Inputs: *Mr.* Vinod and Dr. Geeta

Moral Support: Chai Wale Bhaiya and Auto Wale Bhaiya, Dhanaulti k Cafe Wale Bhaiya, Renukaji Ke Bus Wale Uncle and Sulabh Shauchalayas

Healthcare Support: *Mr.* Ankit, Mr. Anil, Mr. Nagendra, Mr. Varish and Mr. Vinod

Musical Support: Ms. Swati, Ms. Diksha and Mr. Anil

Charging Support: Ms. Sarah, Ms. Swati and Train Coaches

Medicinal Support: Ms. Sarah, Mr. Shadangish, Mr. Vinod and Ms. Bharti

Managerial and Logistic Support: Mr. Anshul, Mr. Anil, Dr. Geeta, Mr. Varish, and Mr. Vinod

Homemade, Tasty Food Support and Inventions: Ms. Swati, Mr. Anshul, Dr. Geeta, Mr. Vinod, Ms. Bharti (the Dhanaulti cow had a treat) and Dhanaulti Cafes

We Covered

7 States and Union Territories

11 Cities and Towns

17 Locations

5 River Cities

3 Lake Cities

5 Dates

4 Nights

3 Days

6 Modes of Transport

Expenditure per Person Rupees 1208 only

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