

## DAAD report

A destination that was a dream from long finally became a reality when I got the opportunity to start my Ph.D. thesis work at the Chemnitz University of Technology, Chemnitz, Germany. Supported by DAAD, I was provided the time span of four months which turned out to be one of the best stints of my educational life.

Right from the day I landed at Frankfurt and till the day I boarded the flight to India from Frankfurt it was a journey to remember and cherish. From a temperature soaring at 40° C to -20° C it was a nature's welcome for me, who love to be in cold climate. With heavy luggage behind me, I had to travel for almost four hours from Frankfurt to Chemnitz via Leipzig. A fascinating train journey entirely different from the Indian experience made me more comfortable. I was put up at the Wohnhotel Kappel for the initial month of my stay. It was a very interesting part of my stay as I was introduced to the local transport of Chemnitz. The tram and the bus works in tandem to take people to their destinations with ease and comfort. For the first time I was taking the time management seriously in my life as I almost missed two important appointments due to my delay in boarding the appropriate tram. Also the cold climate and the snow made me to enjoy my travel to the university and back. It was white and white everywhere which reminded me of the Himalayas in India during winter.



At the University Building

After the initial formalities came the time to be introduced to the work. Entirely different work atmosphere compared to India. I started my work at one of the most sophisticated lab set up for the research of Printed Electronics. For the remaining period of my stay, the lab and my cabin at D-312 was the place I spent most of my time with the work.

The major hurdle I had to face during my stay was with the food. Being vegetarian and having a craving for spice, the plain vegetable salad and baked potatoes was the only option everywhere. Until I shifted to my new home at Vetterstrasse 70, where I could cook my own food, I had to survive on the McDonald

veggie burger and Subway veggie delights for the entire first month. Also the pizza and brat noodles at Turkische Kebap helped me during lunch for most of my stay.

German language is a most important problem if you have no idea of the same. Even though I had a fair bit of knowledge, I found it extremely difficult to communicate in the initial days as I had to catch up with the speed and accent of the locals. But still it is good to have a good knowledge of German language before landing in Germany.

Europe, known for its beautiful landscapes, did not let me down when I started exploring the continent during weekends and holidays. I had the opportunity to visit Austria, Poland, Netherlands and a good bit of Saxony with other German places like Hof, Munich, Frankfurt and Düsseldorf. It was really fascinating to see the advancement in technology and maintenance of places. Some of my Indian friends accompanied me to these trips making it the most memorable part of visit.



Berlin Hangout

DRUPA!!, the most important part of my visit. The mega print expo that takes place once in four years was a dream come true for me. It was a delight to my eyes to see the bigwigs of print industry on a common platform for nearly two weeks. Even though I spent two days there, it was a most memorable one. I had the opportunity to interact with many industry giants and also the latest technology in the market.

Local life was also different from the Indian style. The supermarket concept for every single requirement, differentiation between the high society products and cheaper ones like Edeka and Penny was a new concept for me. I loved to shop at Sachsen Alle Kaufland for most of my requirements. But

the shops in Chemnitz used to close at 8 p.m. and that was the end of the glitter unlike India where you can enjoy until late nights.

Coming back to work, it was a great time exploring and working with different options with different chemicals to print the solar cells and then test the same. Also interactions with my German colleagues helped me to know more about the German way of research and also enhanced my knowledge on Printed Electronics.

Overall, it was a great exposure to the German culture and system which is entirely different from the Indian way of living. After four months of stay it was really hard to say goodbye to Chemnitz. But will be cherishing every moment spent for the entire stay.



Final get together

Vielen danke to one and all for making the visit a successful and memorable one.

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