

SPECIAL ISSUE

Indian student life in Chemnitz

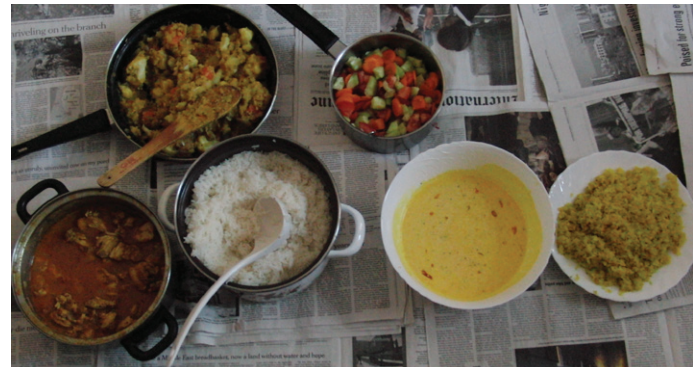
During the past years, the number of Indians who study at Chemnitz University of Technology has increased considerably. Some of them have come to Chemnitz as participants of the joint double degree programme with Manipal University in India; others study here for the whole M.Sc. course Print and Media Technology. Therefore we would like to give you an idea about their daily life, activities and experiences.

Swati Soni, double degree student, says, "I have always wondered 'why' and 'how' the **German education system** is one of the best in the world and after completing my one-year exchange, I can now give a good explanation. Classes do not have compulsory attendance and every student is free to enter and leave the class at any moment. Nevertheless, lecturers expect attendance and students seldom leave before the 90-minute lecture is over. Germans always prefer to be on time and so did I. The course structure at pmTUC is composed of theory and practical courses. Labs are fully equipped with latest technology and students are supervised by highly educated staff members. I have not only worked with latest technology but was also informed about future trends. Theory courses are also based on current technology and pmTUC continuously integrates latest innovations in the world of printing into the seminars. The university itself is fully equipped with high-tech classrooms and high-speed Wi-Fi Internet. The study material is available online so that the student can prepare the next lecture in advance by printing out the notes."

"The student research assistant programme allows students to learn and earn money at the same time. In Germany, these students are called '**Studentische Hilfskraft**' and here among the students they are mostly referred to as 'HiWi'. Information about job openings can be found at the TU Chemnitz website. Function of a student is to assist a faculty member in descriptive, exploratory or experimental research, publication activities, data collection, management and analysis. Working hours are mostly flexible so that it does not coincide with the lecture timings. Working contracts are between 20 and 80 hours/month. It provides an opportunity to earn up to 650 Euros/month. Faculty members at pmTUC are very kind and friendly with students. They always provide useful literature for better understanding of the work. They train students to work efficiently in the labs and also supervise the work. Faculty members always communicate in English language which eliminates the language barrier and overcomes the communi-

cation gap. Knowledge of German language is an advantage but it is not a requirement for working under pmTUC. I was always motivated to work at pmTUC where I can learn about the modern day technology and gain some real time experience of printed electronics." - explains **Amey Pradhan, 3rd semester M.Sc. student**.

Sunu G V, alumna of pmTUC, comments on **food & accommodation**: "Unlike in Indian hostels, there is a cooking facility in the dormitories, so you won't miss the Indian cuisine while you are in Germany. Dormitories are furnished with bed, mattress, table, chair, wardrobe & shelf. High-speed Internet connection is offered as well. The kitchen is normally equipped with hot plates, fridge and sink. In common kitchens there is an oven, too. A common washing and drying room can also be found in the basement. There are grocery shops nearby the student dormitories, so getting the cooking ingredients is not



that difficult. Few Indian/Asian shops are there as well, where you can find Indian spices and other typical Indian/Asian food items. Frozen cut vegetables and fresh cut meat and fish are obtainable which ease the cooking. Lot of students eat lunch at Mensa, but they prefer to prepare dinner on their own. Sometimes cooking is done in groups, which is much more fun than cooking by your own. Vegetarians also have many options."

Ankur Joshi & Yuvaraju Vaikuntaraju, recent post-graduates from pmTUC, on **leisure activities and sports** respectively: "The dormitories are well-equipped and there are several rooms for activities and games, like pool, music room, clubs, etc. Parties are held many times in a week so that the students can relax and enjoy after a strenuous day of lectures and studies. Moreover, students can book the clubs for special occasions like birthday parties. Also there are special days and functions held in Club of Cultures (CdK), like Turkish Night, French Night or the most famous DIWALI NIGHT especially for Indian students.



The university has got a well-equipped football ground, basketball court, tennis court, etc., which are open to all students. Participation in sports and active recreation helps to improve physical and mental health. The USP (Universitäts-sportprogramm) and ZFG (Zentrum für Fitness & Gesundheit) provide various opportunities to practice a new activity or improve your skills at known sports. It is always stimulating to play cricket, which is one of the most familiar games played by many in India. Chemnitz University also has its own cricket team and there are several tournaments.

Student hostels also have some facilities to practice indoor games such as table tennis and billiard. The entire student crowd can be seen in summer playing or making a barbecue or whatever they like. Apart from the campus, there are other places where one can go to pass time. The nearest nightclub is "Braclub", which is famous for its music and special DJ appearances. You can also visit "Flower Power" for some karaoke or "Terminal 3" for good music. Being a student city, all these places have nominal costs. Patenprogramm organizes various events & several short trips for students. After coming from a hot climate like India, what better than going ice skating and skiing at winter time."

"The everlasting **friendship** between Germany and India forms the platform for many students to broaden their scope of knowledge and technical expertise. It is a hidden opportunity to build a personal connection to another culture. I have made a lot of friends and I really enjoy the various aspects of German culture that they've introduced me to. With many programmes being arranged, I never felt strayed and most certainly felt at home. Having friends along, helps you in many ways like learning language, travelling and aiding you at studies. Though initially language problem may seem to act as a barrier, it gets better with time. In this multi-cultural place, it would be a great experience to roam around the beautiful cities of Europe with the locals. Like every grapevine, every

friendship gets sweeter with time. To sign off, I would like to end with a famous quote, 'the only ship that doesn't sink is friendship'" - **Viswanathan Chinniah, 1st sem. M.Sc. student.**

Travelling - by **Manickavasagam Rajan, former double degree student** - "Since I was 'only' staying in Germany for one year, I had no desire to waste my time sitting in my room and, thus, I made a lot of plans with my friends to travel around Europe. In one year, I have travelled nearly ten countries (Austria, Czech-Republic, Italy, Spain, France, the Netherlands, Poland, Switzerland, Sweden and Norway) and also some larger cities in Germany, like Dresden, Leipzig, Görlitz, Berlin, Düsseldorf, Essen, Nuremberg, Stuttgart and Munich. All my travels were perfect because I could plan everything in advance by using the Internet and my credit card. There were no late trains or delayed flights, everything went well and finding any particular spot is very easy with the help of a city map or guide, which can be found in the cities' tourist centres. They provide exact information on the location of trains, busses, trams, or their timetables and other useful notes. I have seen diverse people with different cultural backgrounds during my travels but the way of living and style seems similar all around Europe. In buzzing towns like Paris and Zurich you constantly meet people from around the world on the streets. If you arrive in a new city and you'd like to eat some familiar foods, you will find a wide range of Indian and Chinese restaurants in most of the cities, for instance, the Indian Saravana Bhavan in Paris."



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