

# ELEVENTH STUDY TOUR TO EUROPE- MAY 2015

A CONCEPT BY  
ASSOCIATION OF THE FRIENDS OF GERMANY

Association of the Friends of Germany ( Vereinigung der Freunde Deutschlands), founded in 1972 (and registered under various acts), is recognized as Returnees' Association by the Carl Deuschberg Gessellschaft, Germany (Now InWEnt) since 1979.

As one of its objectives, AFG has so far organized for stay of about 800 guests from Germany & German speaking countries in Pune over the last 39 years. Through these guests many small bridges of friendship were built between Pune & Germany. Stress is given on the stay of German students in families in Pune & vice versa. First group of 30 Indian students visited Germany in 1991 and stayed mostly in German families. This group performed a programme "Colourful India" at seven different places including Bremen, Berlin, Munich & Nuremberg.

This friendship has been continued since then through frequent visits of our students to Europe including, of course, Germany. The co-operation between two partner cities Pune & Bremen has increased considerably and is reflected in generous financial assistance from the Bremen State Office for Development and Co-operation to the tune of Rs. 12.0 Million in the last seventeen years for various activities carried out by the Local NGOs in different fields like Developing awareness for protection of environment, reduction of exhaust emission level of city public transport buses, development of integrated bio-gas plants, energy plants on sewerage, improving the life of poor women and children in slums by providing education, review of school text books and helping physically handicapped, slow-learning and mentally retarded children, Family Welfare activities and Promotion of Environmental awareness and scientific outlook.

Executive Committee : Mr. A.N. Godbole ( Chairman), Dr. J.V. Damle (Vice Chairman), Mr. Shrinivas Pendse (Treasurer), Dr. V.G. Neurgaonkar (Secretary), Mr. S.G. Purohit (Joint Secretary)

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## Homburgisches Gymnasium, Nümbrecht

In this Gymnasium (High School) , there are about 750 pupils (Out of this, 320 in High School) and sixty two teachers.

The school is provided with refectory (Cafeteria) for lunch, welfare centre, advanced instruction centre, the centre for physically or mentally challenged students, facilities for physical fitness, sports, fine arts, self study (reading rooms) recreation centre, computer & online ( ie. Internet) facility, facility for learning English, French, Latin] Foreign relations programmes for France & Italy including areas like Energy, Ecology, Sociology & Science. Students also have numerous multipurpose extra curricular opportunities

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## SOTC

SOTC is a part of the Swiss Group KUONI TRAVEL, established in 1906, which is one of the World's largest travel companies. SOTC is India's key outbound travel brand and is a leader in providing an array of products under one roof , namely SOTC WORLD FAMOUS Escorted Tours, SOTC DO IT YOURSELF HOLIDAYS for Individual Travel, SOTC MICE Tours for Corporates, SOTC Trade Fair Tours for Business Travel, SOTC SPORTS, SOTC Students Holiday Study Tours, SOTC Wedding Tours and SOTC Domestic Holidays amongst others. At SOTC you are assured that you will have an entirely new level of holiday experience.

## Messages : Reprinted from 6th Europe Study Tour Booklet.



Message from the German Consul of the Federal Republic of Germany

I am very happy to learn that this study tour and exchange program has completed 15 years, promoting exchange between Indian and German students. It is a pleasure to hear that this cultural program experiences a great success within the local Indian and German Community. I hope all students enjoyed the family stay in Bergneustadt and the interaction with German students of the Städtische Realschule.

Cultural exchange programs for young students are of great value to experience the similarities and the differences between our countries. Thanks to this exchange program students have got a first hand insight of German culture and way of life. The exchange program strengthens the Indian and German bonds, which will eventually lead to further cooperation in fields like politics and economic relations, academic exchange and cultural ties. The close cooperation between Germany and India in various fields is also based on cultural programs like this. I would welcome if this program created an ongoing interest for Germany and Indo-German relations. May this program be continued for many more years and may it carry out to be a great success in the future.



Association of Friends of Germany was founded in 1972 and recognized as returnees association by Carl Duisberg Gesellschaft of Germany now known as InWEnt from 1979. Many small bridges of friendship were built between Pune and Germany through these guests. These achievements can only be made possible by a dedicated team.

Since 1998 Dr. Savita Kelkar has been organizing Students exchange programme personally I admire the strength and the accomplishment reached by Dr. Savita Kelkar with her exchange programme. Students are given the excellent opportunity not only to travel to Europe but to use their in College acquired language skills!

During their stay with German families and visit to Städtische Realschule, ( school) in Bergneustadt town the Indian as well as German students showcase their extracurricular talents through stage performances. As an expert in the field of foreign language teaching I must acknowledge the great value of this programme for the learning motivation and hereby the opportunities given to the students. I congratulate Dr. Savita Kelkar and her team heartily and I am looking forward to meet next year's exchange group in Europe. I wish all the best to the students and parents!

Sophie Engel, Pedagogical Expert, Max Mueller Bhavan/ Goethe- Institut Pune



Roving Ambassador and a trend setter Dr. Savita Vinayak Kelkar deserves to be profusely congratulated for adopting a new trend in the area of Personality Development of young students. In the process she has become extremely popular among the students world.

Cultural Exchange Programme has been a traditional custom in (Bharat) i.e. India for ages. Dr. Savita has obviously taken a cue from this fact. She has been visiting various countries in the West particularly Germany and a few countries in the rest of the world. In the process, she has become a serving ambassador of a famous educational society namely the Deccan Educational Society, Pune. She participates in all social and cultural activities in the DES. The management council of the Deccan Education Society took a special note of her multifarious personal achievements and selected her as a lady life member of the Deccan Education Society. Since almost 50% of the teaching staff consists of ladies Dr. Savita has one more onerous responsibility in lieu. Naturally she has become equally popular in her colleagues.

That is not all while in the initial stages she took only students learning German language. Now she welcomes College students from all other areas too. Besides this the students have now roped in their parents too. They all go to visit the foreign countries, manage to stay with the local families for a short period and invite them in return. This is why I call Dr. Savita a roving ambassador. Dr. Savita is a vital member of a joint family but has been managing her responsibilities inside and outside her home, dutifully well. She conducts large gathering very comfortably. She is equally at home on the fields. She has played Volleyball, Table tennis and tennis during her school, college and university days.

On the academic side she has her Masters in German also Masters in Education and for her Ph.D. she had chosen a subject close to her heart viz. Cultural Exchange Programme. The Yashawantrao Chavan Maharashtra Open University honored her with Ph.D. Do join me for giving a big clap and calling three cheers to Dr. Savita Vinayak Kelkar.

Sri Vasant Shankar Kanitkar,  
Ex. Chairman, Deccan Education Society

## Message From Barbara Pauels

Tue, Oct 20, 2015

Dear Savita,

Now that you have completed so many successful exchange programs in India as well as in Germany, I felt its high time to contribute a few words about our friendship.

If I remember well, around that time, when my husband Ajay was director of IMDR, we were introduced to each other on that very campus in 2007 by Ajay. From that time onwards we felt lots of sympathy for each other. You supported me in writing this guide for a German textbook and we spent many hours together at the PC. How often I heard your happy "hellow... guten Morgen " while walking up the path from the gate to our house. We had tea and you took active part in being a wonderful friend to our son Neil also. He was always enthusiastic, when Savita aunty came to us. In your house my family enjoyed Ganesha festivals, dinners and just simple droppings by. Now you have a new spacious flat, which I have not see yet, but the memories of your tiny balcony in the older house, sitting on a wooden chair with some pillows on it, holding a nice cup of tea and enjoying Makarands botany under the self green painted sunscreens - priceless!!! We had wonderful moments, exchanges of information, problems, latest news, tips and hints for daily life. From you I learned a lot to manage my Indian household and still use it. In this year you and Mr. Pendse have been my guests for a few days and Indian atmosphere and inspiration has moved in with you. We sad relaxed in Kurta pajama around my dining table, enjoying Indian food, refreshing old dear memories. In exchange Neil and I took you around on a stroll around the houses and gardens in my area. At that time, the tulips were blooming I remember. Luckily you took some photos. Many thanks to Mr. Pendse for the lovely dates we had not so long back and this pretty present you brought like this Pooja plate, it decorates my small Ganesha corner; not to forget the Odomos ointment and Mosquito coils I have ordered, since I know, its working great! India is very present in my house and we live its culture to a large extend in cooking, using agarbatti and flowers for the worship of the Ganesha statue, 'kitti wasle' Neil often asks, when he fears to be late for the bus.

My parents have shifted in a different apartment last year and were happy to welcome you after such a long time. We had typically coffee and cake, typical German and warmed up nice memories. You and Mr. Pendse have written in our family guestbook, what is an honor for the family and makes you unforgotten.

You got a guestroom in my house as well as Mr. Pendse, but you decided not to sleep there. So we took a mattress and put it in my room under the roof. So, Neil, you and myself slept there, chit chatting till late in the night. It gave me memories of my childhood, when I had a friend overnight. Its like, we are sisters. This is, why I feel, India occupies a huge part in my heart and it's you and your family to keep the fire burning. I wish you, your family and the wonderful work you do with the students exchange program as well as the parents exchange blessings from god, be only honest hearted people be with you and nurture the international friendship and openness for other cultures.

Warm greetings  
Barbara

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## Looking Back, looking forward- Dr. Savita Kelkar

This year we organized the 11th study tour to Europe. Since 1996 I have been organizing Exchange Programs and in 2004 I started with the study tours to Europe in which family stay in Germany along with a school visit was included. The need arose to start a new programme, because I could not accommodate all the students in the exchange and there were also queries from the other schools and Colleges. I will never forget the support and guidance given by the then chairman of DES Shri. Vasandrao Kanitkar, Secretary Dr. Yashwant Toru and Dr. Vasant Wagh, the then Principal of Fergusson College. They guided me and supported me wholeheartedly. They even taught me how to compare quotations. Now I am happy to say that I have completed a 'सप्त' ie 12 years of this programme. Each programme, is a new and learning experience. This year Pendse Sir and I went ahead of the group, on 2nd May 2015. Pendse Sir is a person, who gives us constant support, but does not speak about it.



Dr. (Mrs.) Savita Kelkar

You can find all the qualities of a true leader in him. Mr. Arvind Godbole, Mr. Jayant Damle, Mr. Sadanand Purohit, Dr. Vijay Neurgaokar, Mr. Shrinivas Pendse, late Mr. Vijay Mahajani and Dr. Vineta Mahajani, all these life members of the Association of the Friends of Germany, since 1973, are there to guide and help us. I am always grateful to them. Pendse Sir and I wanted to meet our old friends, who had helped us with the earlier exchanges.

We first visited Barbara and her son Neil. She had come to pick us up on the Köln-Bonn airport and it was just wonderful to be with them and catch up with the old times. We first went to visit her parents. I had met them in Pune and also in Germany during my last visit. So it was really great to have "Kaffee und Kuchen" with her family. We also met her brother Marcus and his wife Tanja. The love and affection between their families is the same as in India. According to me, you go anywhere in the world, "Love and bonds between many families are strong; the ways of expressing them are different." We stayed with Barbara for two days. We could feel her aesthetic sense everywhere in the house, in the garden, in the kitchen, in the drawing room. In the basement, she has made her office; there is washing machine and a sewing machine. Their two new friends- the guinea pigs- Bobby and Rosi stay in a huge wooden cage constructed by Barbara herself. You do not need a lot of money for this, only imagination and planning.

Neil is a wonderful boy. Growing up very well, he is a very sensitive and emotional boy. Sometimes it is difficult for him to adjust with other German boys, because many a times Neil thinks of others, he understands the needs of others, he is compassionate and when not reciprocated, he feels hurt. But I am sure as he grows, he will learn to adjust in this new environment. He accompanied us to Sankt Augustin and showed us around. Last time Makarand (my husband) and I had visited Sankt Augustin with Barbara's mother. This area is very quiet and nice. Barbara had prepared lovely food for us. We had asparagus with spring potatoes, scrambled eggs and sauce Hollandaise (butter sauce). In the night we chatted till midnight.

In the evening, we had gone for a walk around the residential area where Barbara and Neil live. The single bungalows with the neat and tidy gardens were glowing from the multicolored tulips and other spring flowers. We took lots of photos. Barbara and Neil were giving us information about the place. Then we went for a drive to Bonn on Rhine. wow! It was so beautiful. We saw the cargo and passenger ships moving up and down the Rhine. The silhouette of Bonn with all the churches, the opera house as well as the Beethoven Hall looked impressive.

Next morning it was very difficult for us to say bye to Neil, when he left for the school. Neil went to a private Christian Realschule in Bonn for his 5th standard, but changed the school for 6th standard to the Albert Einstein Gymnasium in Sankt Augustin, since commuting to Bonn was too much for him. He wants to become an architect and is happy to be in the Albert Einstein Gymnasium now, from where he can make the Abitur, a precondition to study at the university.

Then Barbara came to drop us on the bus station. She helped us with the tickets, enquired about our bus to Overath and with heavy hearts we said good bye to each other. From there, we took bus and got down at Saint

Augustin. Our friend Ingrid Grosshans came there to pick up us. With her we went to a few shops to buy a few things. It has always been fun to be with her. She is a very warm person. I first met her at Rohini Damle's daughter's wedding. We had lunch together. Then I had invited her home. She visited me and then every time I went to Kaarst, I visited her. She took me on Mosel, Bonn, and Köln. We discuss different authors, poets. She tells me a lot about the latest trends in Germany. With Makarand also we three had gone on the Mosel, stayed in Trabi- Trabach, visited Engelkirsche, went for a 10 km walk. It was lovely.

This time also, Pendse Sir and I went with her for a walk around the lake in Gummersbach. It was eight o'clock in the evening but was looking like it was 5.30-6 o'clock in the evening. The weather was beautiful, few people were jogging, and a few were walking fast with sticks. Geese were swimming in the lake. The atmosphere was so mesmerizing and serene, I didn't feel like leaving that place.

During a visit to her, she had invited her friend Christle Stinski - Röschke for breakfast. Christle said to me - "you can bring your study tour students for a family stay to Bergneustadt. We would like to host them, you can visit städtische Realschule." She discussed this proposal with the principal and her friend and colleague Dorothee Hovel-Kleibrink. Thrice we visited the school and stayed with the wonderful families, presented cultural program, attended lectures and shared views. Our teacher friend Angelika and her students prepared lovely lunch for us. From both sides, students exchanged views. Some of them went again and met their friends; a few also came to India and stayed with the partners. These are the small ways in which friendships are built. After the third exchange with Realschule, Christle wrote to me that, as the number of students is reducing in Realschule, they would find it difficult to host us. My friend Rohini Damle and her husband Dr. Damle had gone for Ingrid's 60th birthday. During that celebration Rohini met Edith, who was a teacher in Homburgisches Gymnasium, Nümbrecht. After Rohini came back, she had a good news for me. She said, they would love to host us. I sent Edith a mail and through her I got to know Esther and Ulla. We started writing to each other and now after the family stay for three groups in Nümbrecht, we will be organising exchange programme with this school. It is such a wonderful feeling.

Ingrid prepared a special dinner for us. We again had amazing time with her. At midnight we had our magnificent Turkish food and next morning she came to drop us at the school in Nümbrecht. Luckily she had work in that area so it suited us also very well. Otherwise it would have been very difficult to carry suitcases in public transport.

After we went to the school, we met Ulla. She took us to the Director of the school who greeted us officially. The same afternoon he had to Berlin because their girls' team was playing baseball. Next four days he himself was sending updates regarding the game and how the girls were playing and it was appreciated by all staff members.

After the school, Pendse Sir and I went to Ulla's home and had delicious soup and bread and then cake with Ulla and Walter. Walter is also a very warm person. During my last trip, I had stayed four days with them and it was memorable. I had met their daughter Angelika and we had gone to Bonn. In the evening Esther and another colleague Martin Schröder came for dinner. Esther had prepared a sweet dish. I also had carried gulpoli, puran poli, bakarwadi and ambawadi. We had a delightful dinner together and after dinner Walter and Martin played few symphonies on the piano together. It was just wonderful. After dinner I went with Esther and Pendse Sir went with Martin. It was again good to stay with Esther. Three years ago Mrs. Jyoti Savarkar and I had stayed with Esther and Mary, and Mangala Chitale with Edith. This time I got Ben's room. Last time I had met Ben- Esther's elder son. Now he is studying at London. It was in the attic. My room was nice and cozy. Only I had to be very careful while climbing the stairs because they were bit narrow. Manfred carried my suitcase up stairs. Next four days were just magical. Esther and I cooked together and planned many things, were very happy to see that everybody (from both the groups- German and Indian student, even elders including me) had such a warm treatment. For then we were "Atithi devo Bhava". Our students had prepared presentations on political system in Germany and India (Apoorva and Saloni) and Hinduism. 'Marriage system' in India was a last moment addition by me as Esther told me that last time it was appreciated a lot by the students. Secondly it really gives an opportunity to start thinking about the system in India and Germany. How difficult it is in different states, and how different in cities and villages.

In India there are many smaller 'Indias' where each one is different. Suppose you visit a small village in Rajasthan and compare with Delhi- you just cannot do that. They all are poles apart. What we talk about customs and traditions, is seen more in small town than in metropolitan cities 'Dance demo' was a super hit. Aishwarya, Soha and Parul can do Kathak. We also had five Guitarists who could play and sing. (Shubham, Varad, Aniket, Rohit and Hrishikesh.) The interaction in different classes was really excellent. There was so much of give and take, especially about 'love marriage'. My German colleague said, "if you don't find a suitable person, you visit a matrimonial website and try to find a suitable boy/girl." In India the same is done with help of parents or relatives. As many families are still joint families in India (especially in towns and villages) it is always good to get a boy or girl with similar background culture, traditions, customs, etc. If it is a love marriage, then caste, creed, religion do not play a role but many a times it is not easy for the couple, if the girl's or boy's side does not agree with the match / choice.

When our students do presentation, the preparation / orientation programme helps them a lot. Jaya Gadgil, Rekha Palshikar, Pendse sir, Rohini Danle, Tushar Jaykar, Dr. Christoph Semft, Evelyn Regenfuss, Shilpa Rege, Mary Fernandes, Mrs Poonam Joshi- Paranjpe, Dr. S.M. Chitale, Mrs. Jyoti Sawarkar (Please refer to the orientation page and also the feedback). All these exchange programmes are successful, because we give a lot of inputs in the orientation. By the time we finish the orientation, our participants are so confident that they can deal with any situation and discuss about many things with the German partner and the families. If they want to opine about something, or discuss about some controversial issues, they can do it firmly but politely.

When we went to Berlin, Anja Schütze and her brother Momas came to meet us. Anja had conducted many workshops for the students and teachers of PaSch in Pune. (partner school programme). We got to know each other very well. During a visit she said, she would like to bring her family i.e. her parents and brother to India. I advised her to bring them first to my home, let them stay for 3-4 days, let them get acclimatized and then take a tour. She appreciated my advice. Her parents Roland and mother Angelika and brother Momas are like her, very easy to please. Angelika came to our Ankur school for Diwali party, she also came as the chief guest for the prize distribution of our Abhiyakti programme. Roland joined us for my singing class of Mrs. Mangalatai Chitale, learnt "Vitthal Vitthal Gajari" and taught us "Wie va, wie vala Musika." We had a really fantastic time with them. Momas and my son Aneesh, Anja and my daughter Neha, Roland, Angelika and I and Makarand even my Mother-in-law, we liked them a lot! Simple and happy people. They also came to Fergusson College and interacted with my students of German Language. Whenever I have German guests, I make it a point to take them to my class in Fergusson and also to Fergusson Centre for languages. When one gets a chance to interact with the native speaker, one can get a lot of firsthand knowledge and develop confidence. In our home also, there was so much of laughter and exchange of thoughts. Momas came again with his girlfriend Laura for 6 months. We hunted for an apartment on Prabhat road for them. They visited us often and it was again like old times. So when I met them again in Berlin, we had so much to share and to catch up with many of my study tour students also got a chance to interact with them. They discussed with Anja about higher studies in Germany, and about media courses with Momas. This year Makarand and I are planning to visit them in Rabenau in May. Whenever you have guests, the whole family should be equally involved; otherwise the guests do not feel comfortable. But our family loves having people, and are ready to take extra efforts, whether for Indians, or foreigners, relatives or friends!

Our group was very well behaved like our earlier groups. Mrs. Shilpa Rege put a lot of efforts to interview students and select them. Her sister Dr. Manali Khedkar, her friends Mrs. Pallavi Deshpande and Mrs. Swapna Marathe were also with us. All the students behaved very well and as usual we got a lot of praise from the school and host families. I said "it is because of our parents, who imbibe correct values in their children." German parents and students take so much care of us, they ask our students what they would like to do? Did they like the food? My students really feel pampered with the German families. Esther, Ulla all the school authorities and the German students and parents, they do so much for us. You can read the detailed articles about the family stay. Even the German students have written, how they felt, when we stayed with them.

The next evening Dr. Anja Hallacker, her husband Christoph and her daughter Kiara came to meet us. Anja was working in Pune for five years as DAAD director. We got to know each other and Makarand and Christoph also became friends, so it was wonderful to meet them again. When her parents had come, I got a chance to meet them, and they are also very approachable. When Anja was in Pune, she guided the students about the higher studies in Germany. Her assistants Girija and Dhanashree are my students. Girija had taken part in the fourth exchange programme. Dr. Anja Hallacker and vice consul Mrs. Daniela Dirkar had come to guide my earlier batch students. Now Dr. Christoph Senft, Anja's successor is also doing a commendable job. He came and guided my students about the family stay. Mrs. Evelyn Regenfus also had come to talk to students about the family stay and cultural programme. Christoph and Evelyn made my students so comfortable, that when our students went for a family stay with Germans, they did not have any inhibitions. Now Evelyn is in Munich and in the coming may I will go and meet her.

We went to Munich and we wanted to meet Sophie Engel. Like her name, she is really an angel. She initiated the Partner School Programme in different schools and colleges in Pune. (PaSch) took lot of efforts to run it successfully, when she was coordinating, we teachers and students got a lot of opportunities to enrich our language and experience more about Germany. She was also very understanding because she believed in cooperation and partnership. Sophie came to brief my students about the family stay and also as the chief guest along with our ex chairman Vasantraoji Kanitkar. Twice we visited Sophie in Prague. Now she is working as the Language head in Goethe Institutes, head office in Munich.

What I appreciate is, all these people are extremely busy. In spite of their busy schedule, they spare their valuable time, and come and talk to our students, give them useful tips. My comfort level in Germany is so good, because if I need any help, I know I can bank on any of them. I have my German friends, who would go out of the way and help me and my students.

When I think why these exchange programmes and study tours are so successful- the answer is "because of the wonderful "TEAM". There are so many German and other language teachers and motivational speakers, parents from German and Indian families, Authorities of the schools i.e. Albert Einstein Gymnasium, Kaarst (my first partner school for the exchange) who had hosted us also during the first two study tours. Then the Städtische Realschule, Bergneustadt; Homburgisches Gymnasium, Nümbrecht. I am also working as the coordinator for the Fergusson College's EVS Exchange programme with Andreas Schneider Schule, Heilbronn and the fourth batch is visiting in January 2016. My husband and I also organised parents and professional's exchange programme. During our parent's and professional exchange, we planted a friendship tree in Kaarst. All these exchanges are possible because of the wonderful Germans, whose partnership was very valuable in all these programmes. Next year's tour has been already planned and we will be visiting the Sankt- Afra Landesgymnasium in Meissen courtesy of Mohini Gupte.

Also the authorities of AFG, my council member, colleagues from the Deccan Education Society Colleagues headed by Chairman Dr. Ajit Patwardhan, and Secretary Mr. Anand Bhide, authorities of Fergusson College headed by Dr. Ravindrasi Pardeshi, Consulate General's office in Mumbai headed by Mr. Michael Siebert and the visa section, teachers of Max Mueller Bhavan Pune, headed by Mr. Karl Pechatscheck, S.O.T.C.s Mr. Tushar Jaykar, Mr. Sudheer N.C., Mr. Prasanjeet, Pallavi and others. I am very grateful to all these kind people for their help and guidance.

When our students do presentation, the preparation / orientation programme helps them a lot. ( Pl. See page 21)

Dr. (Mrs.) Savita Kelkar

## Europe Study Tour Impressions

"Ma,am , why don't you plan a Europe Study tour ? "was a question which got me thinking! Should I really take this step? Combining two of my biggest passions, teaching German & travelling! Being equipped with a Consultant Diploma from IATA & Travel agent proficiency from US, having worked as a travel consultant in the USA and having my students' full fledged backing saw this study tour taking shape. I started working on the itinerary and included all the places that were a must see for my students, Berlin for history lovers, Amsterdam for cheese & tulip gardens, Brussels for chocolates, Cologne & Prague for architecture, Salzburg for Mozart & the Sound of Music, Switzerland for the snow & most important Munich for the fairy-tale castle Neuschwanstein, the concentration camp in Dachau, BMW museum & the world famous Allianz Arena! Itinerary in place, group almost ready, fate brought me together with Savita. We were travelling to Mumbai for a seminar & I mentioned this to her and asked her for any suggestions since she has many years of experience in student exchange programs. " Why don't you join me Shilpa?" Just like that... and the family stay in Nümbrecht which she started was added to the itinerary. It was definitely the highlight of the tour!



Shilpa Rege

What I enjoyed the most in this tour? Without question, interacting with the participants! Planning small details with them, for them. For our programme which was to be staged in the school in Nümbrecht, we decided on popular Bollywood hits, London Thumakda, Shake it like Sharmi & Indiwale apart from Kathak, mouth harmonica & Manache shlok . We had many practice sessions for it, some even at my house .The countless messages on WhatsApp , the innumerable emoticons ! And what a rocking performance it was! The presentations on various topics were also highly appreciated by our German hosts. Our entire group was like one big family even before the start of the tour, thanks to the orientations and the positivity amongst the participants! And the family grew to include our hosts in Nümbrecht! On the last day of our stay there, there was only one question on everyone's lips... "Can we stay some more days in Nümbrecht?" Hard to imagine, but true! All it took were 4 days to forge a bond to last a lifetime! Were we 29 people just plain lucky? I don't think so. Esther & Ulla , our German coordinators, are gems and so naturally they must have taken care to find families for us who were also equally welcoming! A lot of credit goes to Savita; her years of patience & perseverance to make this cultural exchange a huge success. I feel fortunate to have gotten a chance to work with Savita on this study tour and get to know each and every one of you, my dear participants! Years from now, when I will look back on this study tour, I will always remember these lines from my all time favourite movie, The Sound of Music "Nothing comes from nothing, nothing ever could...so somewhere in my youth or childhood, I must have done something Good! "

## About the Organiser

Dr. Savita Vinayak Kelkar

Educational Qualifications : M. A. (German), M. Ed, Ph.D.

Takes deep interest in the welfare of students and their all round development.

- 1 Profile of the personal activities and achievements  
Many Awards including Best Teacher Award by Pune Municipality Corporation on 5th Sept. 2012  
State Level Best Teacher Award (राज्य शिक्षक पुरस्कार) by Maharashtra State Govt. on 5th Sept. 2013
- 2 Scholarships : 1. Received a scholarship of the Goethe-Institute, Munich for a refresher's course for teachers in Munich-Germany (1992)
- 3 Visited Dubai to explore the new avenues in the field of education. (2005)
- 4 Visited Gakugeikan High school, Okayama, Japan on invitation by the Gakugeikan high school (2007)
- 5 Received a scholarship of the Goethe-Institute, for a refresher's course for teachers in Bremen and Rostock (Germany) (2008)
- 6 Presented a paper in the international conference in Jena -Germany (August 2009) on 'the Cultural Exchange Programme'.
- 2 Visits abroad: As Organiser and initiator of different cultural exchanges;  
Visited Germany 15 times, France, Holland, Belgium, and Austria many times.  
Has also visited Japan, Thailand (Bangkok), U.K., U.A.E. (Dubai)
- 3 Music :
  - \* Can play mouth organ, harmonium and synthesizer.
  - \* Performed using above musical instruments at prestigious "Firodiya Karandak" & on 'German day' at Fergusson College and S. P. College,
  - \* Plays instruments and sings in cultural programmes during the Exchange programmes and study tours in Europe.
  - \* Organized and participated in the Youth festival in Amalner, during the year 1983-84.
- 4 Games :
  - \* Represented her school in volleyball.
  - \* Has participated as captain in table tennis tournaments at the college and the university level.
  - \* Won the table tennis tournament at Tilak College of Education in the year 1986.
  - \* Can also swim and play tennis.
- 5 Organising experience :
  - \* Teaches German in Fergusson College
  - \* Chief Organiser of the Student's Cultural Exchange Programme and study Tours.
  - \* Working as Honorary Director for the Fergusson Center for Languages.
  - \* First lady life member of the Deccan Education Society.
  - \* West Zone representative of Indo-German Teacher's Association. (InDaF)



**गगनाला पंख नवे :** - डॉ. सविता केळकर \* शब्दांकन - स्नेहा रानडे

“ही कादंबरी नाही, हे स्वप्नरंजन नाही तर साहित्य, कला, शास्त्र आणि संस्कृती यांचा सुरेख संगम आहे. परदेश प्रवासाचं स्वप्न बघायचं एकेकट्यानं, पण प्रत्यक्षात आणायचं मात्र अनेकांना सोबत घेऊन! असा ध्यास घेऊन गेली १५ वर्षं विद्यार्थ्यांच्या व्यक्तिमत्त्व विकासात महत्त्वाची भूमिका बजावणाऱ्या एका विद्यार्थीप्रिय प्राध्यापिकेचं हे प्रांजल निवेदन आहे.”

गगनात भरारी घेणाऱ्या या पाखराच्या पंखाचे पहिले पीस 'माझे जीवन गाणे.' सविता केळकरांच्या व्यक्तिमत्त्वाची आजवरची जडणघडण कशी होत गेली त्याची ही ओघवती ओळख. 'आमची युरोपची भटकंती' या दुसऱ्या प्रकरणात अनेक विद्यार्थ्यांना, त्यांच्या लेखन-नावासह समाविष्ट करण्यात केळकरांच्या मनाचा मोकळेपणा आणि मोठेपणा दिसून येतो. 'पालकांचा अभिप्राय' हे प्रकरण म्हणजे त्यांना दिलेली पालकांची प्रशस्तिपत्रेच आहेत. अभ्यास सहलींची 'पूर्वतयारी' म्हणजे पर्यटन सहलींचे आयोजन आणि नियोजन यांचे अनुभवसिद्ध वस्तुपाठ आहेत. या पुढचे लेखन म्हणजे सर्व परिश्रमांचे फलित. परदेश सहल म्हणजे केवळ 'बघत बघत' फिरणे नव्हे तर जीवन, संस्कृती, कला, प्रगती आणि मनुष्यस्वभाव यांचा प्रत्यक्षदर्शी अनुभव. हे सर्व ज्याचे त्याने स्वतःच वाचून भान हरवावे अशा निवेदन आणि शब्दांकनाचा हा अल्प परिचय! या पुस्तकाची आवृत्ती ब्रेल व हिंदीतही निघाली आहे.

(गगनाला पंख नवे : लाटकर प्रकाशन, प्रथमावृत्ती : रामनवमी, १ एप्रिल २०१२)

श्रीनिवास पेंडसे

## Turning Point

Dear Young Friends,

You had come for interview ! You were selected ! There was an orientation Programme ! You went on the study tour! And you had a dream come true. A series of increasing excitements You are now back here. Do you think, you are the same person ? Certainly not. Right from the day one of the Orientation, began your transformation.



The Study tour to Europe was the turning point of your life. It was an exciting passage of dreaming, visualising, planning and finally the exciting experience - experience of sight seeing through Europe, the thrill of Fantasia Land and much more. Perhaps the greatest & the unique excitement was being received by your partner in Nümbrecht and a really short stay in the family. You have tasted variety of food. You were on the top of the world. The study Tour was really very encouraging, for every one. I call it a turning point.

I am particularly delighted by the lovely & lively narrations you have worded. All this was possible because of meticulous planning, leadership, the love of a guardian & much more beyond words. I believe,

Dr. Savita Kelkar herself is a school of event management.

Shriniwas Pendse

Hon. Treasurer

Association of Friends of Germany

## Barbara Ingrid Martin and I

Shriniwas Pendse

Barbara Paules :

Sometime in October 2009, Dr. Savita Kelkar introduced me to Barbara Paules here in Pune. She was conducting German language classes for corporate and was looking for someone to teach grammar. I joined her in this endeavour. Since then we are good friends.

She used to teach students in her home as well. To discuss the teaching programme and the progress we used to meet at her place. A kettle of hot coffee and variety of cakes and biscuits were always ready on her table. Barbara was very sincere, enthusiastic and innovative in her teaching. Besides formal tuition class she also used to hold conversation and choir evenings in her house. I learnt a lot from her through our meetings. In her free time she had created colourful artefacts to decorate home and I had often appreciated that. I remember the Nikolaus Tag she had organized in her house.

On 2nd May 2015 (this year) excitement and pleasure were visible on her face when Savita and I met her on Cologne airport. She drove us home. This house was as cozy and comfortable as her house in Pune. Barbara had lived in Pune for over 10 years.

We were invited by Barbara's parents that evening. Well attired and with loving smile her father, mother and brother and sister-in-law received us. We were seated around a well laid table decorated with specially prepared cakes, wafers and coffee (Kaffee und Kuchen as one says in German) and a bottle of Champagne. For more than one hour we had a very warm conversation, a surprise sprang before us when we were about to bid goodbye. Herr Paules very humbly placed the Gastbuch before us. In that I wrote something like this: "it is very rare that we meet people like Paules family, who treat us so warmly, as if we know each other for years. Long live our friendship!"

That evening Barbara prepared typical PUNERI JEVAN along with Savita. Next morning NUNU (Neil), Barbara's 10 year old son, took us to the local market and in the evening all four of us went for a stroll in Sant Augustin. There was cold wind and drizzle and no one on the roads, Nunu and I had cameras and I noticed he had an artistic eye while shooting flowers on either side of the roads.

4th May was a busy day. Nunu went to school by bus. Savita & I packed our bags. Barbara came to see us off onto the bus stop and we boarded to the bus to Overath.

Ingrid Grosshans:

Ingrid Grosshans, A very close friend of Mrs. Rohini Damle since 1987, played very significant and influential role in our study tour programmes and we will be always grateful to her for her whole hearted efforts. Please read " Ingrid, Bergneustadt and myself" by Mrs. Rohini Damle, which she had written for the 7th Study Tour booklet, and we have reprinted in this booklet for your information. - (page 10)

On the 4th of May we were impatiently waiting on Overath bus terminus, in warm and somewhat moist afternoon. Just before two O'clock in the afternoon, a small car slowed, took a U turn and stopped near us. A short lady with silver grey crown adorning her forehead, a smile and friendly looks got down, greeted us and opened the hatch to accommodate our bags. She was very close to Mrs. Rohini Damle and Savita since 1998. Obviously she was very glad to see us. She already knew we were going to be her guests for a day or two. I had an unforgettable experience when she stopped the car on the road. We had to climb down 30 steps and climb up another 30, to reach her house, though Savita was not surprised as she and Makarand (Savita's husband) had visited her earlier. I forgot all the trouble on entering her house for two things, a nice mug full tea and a collection of more than 2000 books shelved almost from floor to ceiling all along two walls of the drawing room. A terrace and a beautiful landscape were seen in front of us through the glass on the third side. In the evening Ingrid took us to the market and for a 3 kilometre walk and talk tour around a lake called Talsperre. On returning home she prepared a very tasty salad for us. She had to go for work the next morning, but before going early in the morning she prepared a wonderful breakfast for us. She had cooked two types of beans. (whole pods) in olive oil, with nuts and garlic, and then we had choco-pudding. She returned in the afternoon. To enthusiastic for her age, she was ready in minutes to take us in her car to Nuenbrecht. She had brought handful of chocolates for me, for Savita and for Mrs. Rohini Damle. When I thanked her for her hospitality, she said, "Let me address you as du and call you Shree". She drove us to school and handed over us to our hosts in the school and then left.

On 8th and 9th we had cultural programme at the school auditorium. Ingrid came all the way to meet us again. To my surprise she gave me three copies of some recepies one each for Rohini, Savita and me.

Martin Schroder :

During the 11th Study Tour this year Martin Schroder was my most apposite host partner. I was earlier delighted to see him- on his Email address-on piano. I chose a CD of instrumental film songs to present him. On 5th May Frau Ursulla (Ulla) Koster received us on the school premises and took us to her home. I will never forget the pineapple and cream desert and the wonderful walnut cake she had baked for us at home. I was delighted to see their home. Mr. Koster is a pianist (and teaches music at the local school). Late in the evening Martin came and we had a feast from both the pianist. After dinner I went with Martin to his duplex apartment in Romelsdorf. He was staying alone. We climbed up the spiral stair case in to a big hall with a comfortable sofa, writing table and a big collections of books neatly displayed on shelves on big walls, a stereo system, and a complete glass wall with an opening on to the terrace. I remembered Ingrid's apartment. Soon we became very comfortable companions. Both of us used to get up early around 6 O'clock and get ready to go to school. Every day Martin would be ready by 8.15. He would prepare a mix of yogurt, oats and apple for breakfast for us followed by tea and coffee and then we would leave for school in his car. I stayed with him for 5 days. I found Martin very active, disciplined and also popular with students. He enjoyed the instrumental music CD I presented to him and explained to him some of the songs. On 6th evening Mr. and Mrs. Koster hosted a dinner in their home for all the guests from India. Equally enjoyable was the piano concert when Mr. Koster and Martin played separately and then together. Mr. Sudheer from S.O.T.C. joined us now also to stay with Martin. We had two programmes in the school auditorium on 8th and 9th.

Shrinivas Pendse

## Ingrid ,Bergneustadt and myself

It was in the year 1987 that my sister Nirmala was requested by Mrs. Phadke, the convener of an international exchange program of social workers, to agree to play host for some Swedish or German social worker for two weeks. She agreed. This was 2/3 months before their arrival in Pune. It so happened that some sudden health problem developed in her family and she was unable to play host. She asked me if I could accommodate a guest for the same period. I agreed and hoped that the guest turns out to be German speaking as I had learnt German but I never had any opportunity of speaking to a German person.

This brought Ingrid Grosshans to our house in the winter of 1987. She arrived one Sunday morning with her baggage and a backpack. After exchanging formal pleasantries she moved to her room. It was fortunate that we could provide a separate room for her during her stay. On the very first day she got the shock of her life when she came to know that we cooked only vegetarian food and she could not get chicken, mutton or eggs while she was with us. She recovered in a day or two when she came to know the variety that we could provide in the vegetarian food. All of us, my father-in-law, mother-in-law, my husband and two daughters could speak to her in English and she enjoyed speaking to each of us. She could ask for our individual views about many things in our life such as festivals, school, joint family, medical profession, fine arts, customs, prayers, habits, sports, music and religion etc. All of us freely responded by providing her with relevant answers, right from a girl of 11 to her grandfather of 71. Ours is a typical middle class family and she could easily have an idea of our views and our life. She compared life in her country with our own and found it interesting. She had stayed in two families in Pune before she came to our house. During the two weeks of her stay with us, we became so friendly with each other that she felt sorry when she had to leave our place. She asked if she could visit us and stay with us again with her friend Petra, who was to come later to India and they had planned to travel together and stay for some more time in Pune. In this stay the attachment grew more and remained even after she left for Germany by means of letters, which always refreshed our acquaintance and made us up to date with what little was happening in our personal lives. She visited us many times afterwards and we went for trips together to various parts of India such as Goa, Rajasthan, Kashmir, Varanasi etc., partly because we wanted to see those places and partly because we could spend quality time together. I also got an opportunity to go to Germany and work there in an old people home, for which, of course, I am very much thankful to Ingrid. I stayed with her for more than three months and got to know the Germans and their lifestyle, which would not have been possible without her. During our stay and Journey together we really got to know each other better and also became very close and good friends. This also helped to improve my German language. Gradually I came to know a number of her friends and she came to know most of our friends and relatives. Whenever some of our friend was going to Germany, she treated them as her guests.

In 1998 my elder daughter got married. Ingrid came all the way from Germany. Within one year my younger daughter got married and she came for her marriage also. It was in one of those functions that Savita Kelkar Madam got acquainted with her. At that time she was already pursuing an exchange program for the students in Pune with a school in Kaarst in Germany. Ingrid was acquainted with some teachers in a high school in Bergneustadt, which is in the same region where she stays and works. Savita Madam suggested and Ingrid talked to the teachers in this school. They welcomed the idea and because of the enthusiastic efforts of all of them it turned into reality. The school in Bergneustadt arranged for the visit of students from India and also arranged family stay for them in different families in that region. Even though it was only for just two days the stay definitely gave the students a great experience. They could get some idea of family life in Germany and could get to know the Germans better. Thus in the present program of Study Tour, besides visiting a number of places of tourist attraction, students of the tour got an opportunity of staying in a German family and visiting a school in Germany. All the students who had gone for this Study Tour found this experience unique, interesting and also enriching.

I have no words to express my thanks to Savita Madam and Ingrid who are instrumental in starting this activity and I do not want to offend them by expressing my feelings formally. I thank all the teachers in the Realschule in Bergneustadt who are taking a lot of efforts to make this program successful.

I wish that people from all the countries should have personal friends in other countries and the camaraderie should develop at the personal level. It will be really good for peace, progress and cooperation in the whole world.

The personality of Ingrid is an integration of German and Indian good qualities. Once she decides to do something she does it with all her heart and gets involved in the mission. She is very neat thorough and particular about time. She loves people and likes to interact with them. She is frank and always expresses her views clearly. The truth in her thought and word gets her tuned very well to all the people she comes across.

I am very much thankful to God for blessing me with such a nice friend.

Rohini Damle

Summary of the Student's Exchange Programme between  
Fergusson College, Pune and Albert Einstein Gymnasium, Kaarst

No. of Exchange	Year	German Students	German Teachers	Stay in India	Indian Students	Indian Teachers	Stay in Germany
1st tour	1997-98	16	2	30-35 days	16	2	30-35 days
2nd tour	1998-99	18	2	21 days	18	2	21 days
3rd tour	2000-01	15	3	30-35 days	18	2	30-35 days
4th tour	2002-03	17	3	30-35 days	17	2	30-35 days
5th Tour	2004-05	19	3	30-35 days	19	2	30-35 days
6th Tour	2006-07	12	2	30-35days	12	2	30-35 days

Summary of the Parents and Professionals Exchange Programme  
between Fergusson College, Pune and Volkshochschule, Kaarst

No. of Exchange	Year	German Parents & Professionals	German Teachers	Stay in India	Indian Students	Indian Parents & Professionals	Stay in Germany
7th Tour	2005-06	9	1	21 days	9	1	21 days

Summary of the Student's Exchange Programme between  
Fergusson College, Pune and Andreas Schneider Schule, Heilbronn

No. of Exchange	Year	German Students	German Teachers	Stay in India	Indian Students	Indian Teachers	Stay in Germany
1st tour	2012-13	12	2	15 days	12	2	15 days
2nd tour	2013-14	12	2	15 days	12	2	15 days
3rd tour	2014-15	11	2	15 days	11	2	15 days
4th tour	2015-16	9	2	15 days	9	2	15 days

Summary of the Study Tour Programmes to Europe between  
Fergusson College, Pune and Albert Einstein Gymnasium, Kaarst And Association  
of Friends of Germany& Städtische Realschule, Bergneustadt, Homburgisches  
Gymnasium, Nürnberg

Sr.No.	Year	Indian Students	Indian Teachers	Stay in Europe Days	Stay with German Families days	Name of German Partner School	Countries visited
1	2004	21	2	17	2	Albert Einstein Gymnasium, Kaarst	Germany, Holland, Belgium, France
2	2005	11	1	15	6	Albert Einstein Gymnasium, Kaarst	Germany, Holland, Belgium, France
3	2006	16	1	15	2	Städtische Realschule, Bergneustadt	France, Belgium, Holland, Germany, Austria
4	2007	25	2	14	2	Städtische Realschule, Bergneustadt	France, Belgium, Holland, Germany, Austria
5	2009	21	1	14	2	Städtische Realschule, Bergneustadt	France, Belgium, Holland, Germany, Austria
6	2010	21	1	13	2	Städtische Realschule, Bergneustadt	France, Belgium, Holland, Germany, Austria
7	2011	25	2	13	2	Städtische Realschule, Bergneustadt	& Switzerland France, Belgium, Holland, Germany, Austria
8	2012	25	4	13	2	Homburgisches Gymnasium, Nürnberg	& Switzerland France, Belgium, Holland, Germany, Austria
9	2013	20	1	13	4	Homburgisches Gymnasium, Nürnberg	& Switzerland France, Belgium, Holland, Germany, Austria, Czech Republic
10	2014	5	1	10	6	Michael & Sandra Ilg, Durrlaungen Schule	& Switzerland Germany, Austria & Switzerland
11	2015	25	4	14	5	Homburgisches Gymnasium, Nürnberg	France, Belgium, Holland, Germany, Austria, & Switzerland

Dr. Savita Kelkar accompanied all six exchanges with Albert Einstein,  
one Parents Exchange and nine study tours

## Names of the Indian students with their Cultural Exchange Partners from Hombürgisches Gymnasium, Nümbrecht.

	Partner in Nümbrecht	age		Partner in India	Age
1	Tabea Stein tabeastein@web.de	14	02293-80340	Apoorva Rege +91 9604141084 apoorvarg4@gmail.com	15
2	Tabea Stein tabeastein@web.de	14	02293-80340	Soha Karyekar +91 8975275808 , +91 9325672100 karyekarsoha@gmail.com,	16
3	Fabienne Schützbds bedachungen@t-online.de			Gautam Katakkar (+91)8805997900 gautam.katakkar@gmail.com	18
4	Sophia Güttler	17	02245-600430	Madhura Warade warademadhura@gmail.com	18
5	Sophia Güttler	17	02245-600430	Saloni Marathe +91 9765269980 samarathe@gmail.com	17
6	Jonathan Bischof jojo.nuembrecht@gmx.de	14		Bhargav Joglekar bhargav.joglekar@gmail.com devikaatul@gmail.com	15
7	Lisa Mesch walter.mesch@gmx.de	14	02293-939663	Rohit Pathak 9860145616/+91 9822040423 rhp.026@gmail.com drupalipathak@gmail.com	15
8	Lisa Mesch walter.mesch@gmx.de	14	02293-939663	Hrshikesh Dabir +91 9850998178 hrishi.shotte@gmail.com	15
9	Alexa Bose rain_bose@t-online.de	16	02245-911210	Rutupama Jadhav +91 774 380 1510 jrutupama99@gmail.com pbjadhav@yahoo.com revati.jadhav11@gmail.com	15
10	Ulla Köster koester_ursula@web.de	58	02291-3588	Swapna Marathe +91 9637089671 samarathe@gmail.com	45
11	Angelika Frisch frisch.angelika@yahoo.de	56	02291-80222	Pallavi Deshpande +91 9822432620 pallavisumant16@gmail.com	45
12	Ulla Köster koester_ursula@web.de	58	02291-3588	Dr Manali Khedkar +919923232011,mskhedkar@yahoo.com	42
13				Parul Pawaskar +91 9689932021 pawaskarag@gmail.com	17
14	Jonathan Bischof	14		Sourabh Annadate +91 9850020414 jayuannadate@gmail.com	15
15	Elgin Caspar-Rother Elgin.caspar-rother@arcor.de		02293-7329	Snehal Walia +91 9890019952	25

snehal\_w@hotmail.com

16	Kim Schwerin sarah.homschuh@t-online.de	15	02245-600567	Tanvi Bhaskarwar 91 98504-33533 / + 91 98901-93210 uday.bhaskarwar@gmail.com	15
17	Kim Schwerin sarah.homschuh@t-online.de	15	02245-600567	Tanavii Naargolkar +91 9822086096 tanunaargolkar@gmail.com	15
18	Medea Krassowka floetennase@gmx.de	15	02245-8407	Falguni Khatri +91 8805197902/ +91 9822043641 gatleenk@gmail.com	16
19				Aishwarya Sane +91 9922913203 aishu1595@gmail.com	19
20	Pashmi Solanki skopsolanki@yahoo.co.uk,	14	02293-903948	Sharvari Kulkarni +91 982150056/+ 91 9823150265 ghkulkarni98@gmail.com	15
21	Esther Rautenbach esther.rautenbach@gmx.de	47	02293-815944	Mrs. Shilpa Rege shilpa4german@gmail.com	
22	Martin Schröder mschroe@gmx.net	49		Mr. Shriniwas Pendse +91 9881154031,shriniwaspense@gmail.com	
23				Mr. N.Sudheer or Mr.Tushar Jaykar from S.O.T.C.	
24	Esther Rautenbach esther.rautenbach@gmx.de	47	02293-815944	Dr. Savita Kelkar savikel13@gmail.com	
25	German friends			Shalaka Ghaisas +91 9422830764 shalaka.ghaisas@yahoo.com	
26	Fabienne Schütz			Saumitra Sovalo + 91 9422830764 shalaka.ghaisas@yahoo.com	16
27	Laura Sievers			Aniket Rege Mobile: + 91 9657340015 aniketrg7@gmail.com	19
28	Fabienne Schütz			Shubham Padgilwar +91 9373388883 /+ 91 9823236689 shubham.padgilwar@gmail.com	15
29				Varad Wattamwar +91 9423142900 varad.wattamwar@gmail.com	16

## INVITATION

To  
Dr. Michael Siebert  
Consul  
Consulate General of the  
Federal Republic of Germany  
Mumbai – India

Homburgisches Gymnasium Nümbrecht  
Mateh-Yehuda- Str. 5  
51588 Nümbrecht  
Tel.02293/913040  
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Mail: [info@homburgischesgymnasium.de](mailto:info@homburgischesgymnasium.de)



Date 29. March 2015

**Sub: Invitation for the group participating in the Eleventh Study Tour.**

**Dear Sir,**

You might be aware, that since 1998 Fergusson College has been implementing a **Student's Cultural Exchange** programme with the Albert Einstein Gymnasium, Kaarst. In 2006, they completed 10 years of partnership and the sixth batch of exchange students visited Kaarst in May-June 2007. On 7<sup>th</sup> April the third exchange group of 10 students and 2 teachers from Fergusson College will be going to Heilbronn through EVS Cultural Exchange Programme. Dr. Savita Kelkar is coordinating this Exchange.

Simultaneously in the year 2004 a 'Study Tour' a concept by "Association of friends of Germany" was started. The purpose of this study tour was to give a chance to deserving students, who were also from other reputed Schools or Colleges. **The Städtische Realschule, Bergneustadt** had invited and also hosted the **third to seventh study tour groups**. The Highlight of their trip has always been their visit to a **German School and the 'Family Stay'**. I strongly feel, that if we want to bring two countries closer '**Cultural Exchange**' is the **answer for it**.

**During the eighth and ninth Study Tour** we hosted them. This year, we are hosting them **from 6<sup>th</sup> May to 10<sup>th</sup> 2015**. They will visit us, interact with our students, present a cultural programme and stay for four nights with German families. On 12<sup>th</sup> May the group will visit Bundestag in Berlin. Along with this cultural program, they intend to take a tour to Belgium, Holland, Czech Republic, Austria and Switzerland **from 3<sup>rd</sup> May to 20<sup>th</sup> May 2015**.

**Mr. Shrinivas Pendse and Dr. Savita Kelkar will come to Germany on 2<sup>nd</sup> May to do the arrangements and to meet old friends from Cologne, Bergneustadt, Gummersbach and Kaarst and will be returning to India on 17<sup>th</sup> May from Munich.**

Homburgisches  
Gymnasium Nümbrecht  
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51588 Nümbrecht  
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[info@homburgischesgymnasium.de](mailto:info@homburgischesgymnasium.de)  
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## Feedback of the Interactive sessions arranged for the Eleventh Study Tour Participants

Date	Guest Speaker	*E	*G	*S	*Ab
29th March 2015	Dr. Savita Kelkar: Briefing about the orientation and tour	14	4	-	7
5-9 pm	Tushar Jaykar : Visa formalities and details about the tour	6	11	1	7
	Mr. Shrinivas Pendse : Briefing about the orientation and tour	2	15	1	7
	Mrs. Shilpa Rege : Briefing about the orientation and tour	14	4	-	7
	Distribution of Rohini Damle's book: German for Indians	5	13	-	7
	4th April 2015	Programme practice at Mrs. Shilpa Rege's house (At Bavdhan)	12	4	-
4-7 pm	Bollywood dances, guitar practice, singing practice, Manache Shlok , mouth organ				
11th April 2015	Mrs. Mary Fernandes: Religions in India	9	7	1	8
2-3 pm					
11th April 2015	Mrs. Rekha Palshikar : Briefing about Political scenario in India	8	7	2	8
11th April 2015	Mrs. Jaya Gadgil : European Union	16	1	-	8
4.30-5.30					
12th April 2015	Dr. Christoph Senft: Tips on Family stay	13	4	-	8
4-5 pm					
12th April 2015	Ms. Poonam Joshi Workshop: Who am I ?	8	7	1	8
5-7 pm					
25th April 2015	Interactive session with previous students				
At 9 am	/ Programme practice	5	13	1	6
25th April 2015	Ms. Evelyn Regenfus: Tips on Family stay				
At 11.30 am	and Cultural Programme !	13	3	-	9
25 April 2015	Programme practice	8	7	1	7
12.30					
1st May 2015	Mrs. Shilpa Rege: At Bavdhan.				
4.30-6.30 pm	Introduction to German language &	10	-	-	15

\* E= Excellent, G= Good, S= Satisfactory, Ab = Absent

1	Dr. S.M. Chitale	9881401275	smchitale123@yahoo.com
2	Mrs. Jaya Gadgil	9422330063	gadgiljaya@gmail.com
3	Mrs. Rohini Damle	9960967763	damlrohini@yahoo.com
4	Mrs. Mary Fernandes	9822661652	mary_fernandes54@hotmail.com
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6	Tushar Jaikar	9822409047	usharj@kuoniindia.com
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8	Dr Mrs. Savita kelkar	9422529335	savikel13@gmail.com
9	Mrs. Shilpa Rege	9921101981	Shilpa4german@gmail.com
10.	Mrs. Rekha Palshikar	9822511509	palshikar.rekha@gmail.com
11.	Dr. Christoph Senft		pune@daadindia.org

Feed back Form for 11th Study Tour - 04 to 19 May , 2015

Hotels	POOR	GOOD	EXCELLENT
NH KONINGSHOF,AMSTERDAM		15	8
HOLIDAY INN EXPRESS MUELHEIML COLOGNE	3	12	6
HOLIDAY INN MITTE BERLIN	11	5	6
HOLIDAY INN MITTE BERLIN	11	5	6
PENTA HOTEL PRAGUE		3	19
MERCURE HOTEL ORBIS MUNICH	1	13	7
MERCURE CITY SALZBURG	1	13	9
DORINT HOTEL ZURICH		6	13
<b>SIGHTSEEING</b>			
MADAME TUSSAUD'S	9	4	2
KEUKENHOF SPRING GARDENS	2	12	8
CHEESE FARM & CLOG FACTORY ZAAANSE SCHANS WINDMILL		3	19
BRUSSELS AUTOMIUM 6 MANNECKEIN PE	1	9	12
COLOGNE CATHEDRAL	1	12	9
BERLIN CITY TOUR		15	7
BERLIN PARLIAMENT VISIT	1	11	11
BERLIN TV TOWER		9	14
COLOGNE CHOCALATE MUSEUM	3	10	10
NEUSCHWANSTEIN		4	14
DACAU CONCENTRATION CAMP	7	13	3
SOUND OF MUSIC TOUR	2	6	14
PRAGUE CITY TOUR	5	9	9
LUCERNE ORIENTATION	7	10	6
MOUNT TITLES		2	21
RHINE FALLS	2	7	14
<b>GUIDES</b>			
MUNICH		13	13
<b>PRAGUE</b>	12	7	3
BERLIN	1	11	11
<b>RESTAURANTS FOR DINNERS</b>	4	13	4
<b>COACH DRIVER</b>		10	13
<b>TOUR MANAGER</b>	3	12	8
<b>FAMILY STAY</b>	1	1	7
<b>SCHOOL / INSTITUTE PROGRAM</b>	1	3	19
<b>COMMENTS</b>			
<b>The Tour Guide in Austria was judged as the Best.</b>			

## Undertaking

To,

March, 29, 2015

S.O.T.C. & Dr. Mrs. Savita Kelkar, Mr. Shrinivas Pendse, Ms. Shilpa Rege

We are aware that the main objective of the 'Ninth Study Tour to Europe' is to spread the message of brotherhood, to develop international understanding and to make our wards global citizens.

We hereby give the following undertaking:

- We trust the tour organizers and accompanying person completely.
- We have paid Rs 2,12, 000/ towards the cost of 'Ninth study tour to Europe'. We give our consent to use our money towards the following expense heads
- § Selection Procedure: Visits to different places in Maharashtra / in India for selection of suitable candidates, presentations, Pre tour and / or post tour get-togethers, orientation programme, meetings, honorarium, hospitality, felicitations, conveyance, developing photos, photocopying, printing, scanning, sweatshirts/T-Shirts, Publicity expenses, communication: phone, fax, internet etc.
- § Hospitality for German / European guests during their visit to India, gifts, mementoes, books etc. bought in India/Germany / Europe for Indian and European guests
- § Visits to Mumbai for visas and other formalities, visa fees, return economy class airfare, accommodation in 2/3 star hotels and, daily buffet breakfast and Indian dinners etc. as mentioned in itinerary, all sightseeing with guides wherever mentioned in the itinerary, all entry fees, entrances, tips, as mentioned in the itinerary & all taxes Pune - Mumbai - Pune transfers, insurance for the tour
- § Any Incidental expenses in India and in Europe not mentioned above.
- We have read all the terms and conditions of S.O.T.C., the tour organizer and we agree to all of them.
- We agree that the organizers are free to make any changes in the programs in India as well as in Europe.
- We are aware that no Educational Society /Institution or any Trust is involved in organizing this tour.
- We are also aware that Dr. Mrs. Savita Kelkar is going to accompany the group in her individual capacity.
- We shall not hold the organizer, accompanying person/s individually or collectively responsible or liable in any way for any loss, sickness, injury, mishap, accident, flight delays etc. that may happen during the preparation, during the period of stay in Europe as well as during the programs in India.
- We also undertake that we will by no way insult the organizer and accompanying person/s by showing any kind of mistrust before, during or after the tour.
- Due to swine flu or any such epidemic or due to unavoidable circumstances if the organizer has to make any changes in the tour / postpone the tour or even cancel the tour, we agree to it and also to the financial consequences, whatever they might be.
- My son/daughter is not suffering from any illness and is fit to travel.
- We agree that our ward will not consume any alcoholic drinks/drugs or get involved in sexual act either with fellow participants or anyone else during the study tour. However in case he/she consumes any such alcohol/drugs or gets involved in sexual act, it will be entirely at his/her own risk and we will not hold the organizers/ accompanying person/s responsible for the same.
- We agree that our ward will not lend or borrow things (camera, phone, sun-glasses, jewellery, money etc.) from other participants and in case he borrows or lends and if there are any financial implications arising out of borrowing or lending., the responsibility lies solely with us, and we will not hold the organizers or accompanying person/s responsible for any financial implications .
- Our Son / Daughter also shall behave properly during the tour and shall adhere to the instructions given by the accompanying person/s and tour leader from time to time. In case he/she fails to do so, the tour leader and the accompanying teacher/ person are free to take suitable disciplinary action. We agree to the same.

We have read and understood all the terms and conditions mentioned above and we accept all these terms and conditions.

Signature of the participant

Signature of parents/ guardian

Name of the participant

Name of parents/ guardian

March 29, 2015

Signatures & Names of the participants & Parents: -----

## Enriching the Experience

Congratulations, friends!

Very few people like you get the opportunity to meet people in other countries with entirely different background-economic, social, cultural and geographical. You are going for a while away from home, the country and of course near and dear ones. When you come back, you will certainly have a lot of things to tell others. To make your tour more free of shortfalls, but confident and enjoyable, this is what you can do:

1. As you are going to traverse part of Europe, go through text-books of history and geography to read about Europe, and glimpse newspapers to be aware of current events.

2. You are going to be "lonely in the group" to take care of your passport, money (especially the foreign exchange), credit cards, contact lenses and jewellery.

3. Looking after yourself: Be conscious about your health, food, sleep, medicines and other comforts. Take with you everything you are asked to carry by your tour operator.

4. Keeping time: You know, how much time you require to "get ready". Most of the people in Europe are very particular about time and meticulous about planning. So cooperate with them, with your leader and the tour guide. You will enjoy the tour. It is a good habit. Don't give it up when you come back.

5. Keen observation : Silence and cleanliness are almost ubiquitous. With your eyes open, and sometimes closed, you may dream of Europe. Yet, while in Europe, observe around hotels, amusement parks, roads and other public places like bus-stops, gasoline stations, rivers, canals, lakes and shores. They are enviably clean. Avoid standing in a moving coach and eating snacks in the coach. That is indiscipline and displeasure of the coach operator. Consciously, find a few minutes to call your near and dear ones at home (Do not worry about the phone bill.)

6. Visiting Places : On your way to visit churches, museums, art galleries, round-the-city tours or a river cruise, an expert guide will eagerly tell you history or some interesting stories. Listen to them. Be on look-out for brochures freely available at many places and collect them. You can recall many things later having them in front of you.

7. Shopping : One can be none but crazy while literally hopping through malls and shopping arcades. Always take advice of your experienced tour guide and remember, you have to buy something (big or small) for everyone at home-relatives and friends- who couldn't join you on this tour.

8. After dinner : Dinner is usually served early in the evening (around 19.30 hrs.). Take this opportunity to talk to your friends and share experiences. The programme for the following day is announced and we disperse. Make it a habit of writing a note on what you have seen, whom you met, what was the weather like, and the hotel and the food. Prepare yourself for the next day and... and switch off.

Thank you

Shriniwas Pendse

ITINERARY FOR : SOTC - AFG GROUP  
Study Tour to Europe May 4-19, 2015

DAY 01- MAY 04 ARRIVAL IN AMSTERDAM

Welcome to Amsterdam. visit Tulip Flower Fields and Keukenhof Garden, Madame Tussauds Wax Museum, transfer back to hotel for overnight stay

DAY 02- MAY 05 CITY TOUR

City tour including Marken Volendam and Windmills. 'Zaanse Schans' Visit to wooden shoemaker & cheese farms, Transfer back to hotel and overnight stay

DAY 03- MAY 06 TO BRUSSELS, CITY ORIENTATION and further TO NUMBRECHT

Breakfast, transfer to Brussels (205 kms - 0310 Hours journey). orientation tour of Brussels including Grand Place proceed to Numbrecht, (271kms - 0355 Hours) Arrive Numbrecht

DAY 04 -MAY 07 to MAY 10 FAMILY STAY in NUMBRECHT

Visit Honburgisghces Gymnasium, Present two cultural programmes, attend lectures and presentations in the school by our students.

DAY 08 - MAY 10 TO COLOGNE

After breakfast, proceed to Cologne (55 kms - 0045 Hours) Visit the Cologne Cathedral, Chocolate Museum, hanging train ride in Wuppertal.

DAY 08 -MAY 11 TO BERLIN

Enjoy cold buffet breakfast at hotel and check out We take you to Berlin (573 kms - 0810 Hours) orientation tour of Berlin including Reichstag (Parliament )Building with Guide.

DAY 09- MAY 12 BERLIN SIGHTSEEING

Kaiser Wilhelm Church, Remains of Berlin Wall, Television Tower; Brandenburg Gate, Museum Island,

DAY 10 -MAY 13 TO PRAGUE AND SIGHTSEEING

After breakfast proceed to Prague, (341 kms - 0535 Hours) Proceed with Prague sightseeing in the afternoon Prague Castle, and Clock Tower

DAY 11- MAY 14 TO MUNICH AND TOUR

After breakfast transfer to Munich, (380 kms - 0610 Hours) tour of Allianz Arena, Football Stadium BMW Welt and Museum

DAY 12- MAY 15 MUNICH TO NEUSCHWANSTEIN, TOUR AND BACK

After breakfast, visit to Neuschwanstein Castle, 19th century Romanesque Revival Palace , In the afternoon proceed to Dachau Concentration Camp, a dark chapter of German History.

DAY 13- MAY 16 MUNICH TO SALZBURG

After breakfast Proceed to Salzburg, Austria through the Black Forest Region of Germany (186 kms - 0255 Hours) On the way stop at Drubba Center proceed for Schaffhausen (Rhine Falls with boat ride), a walking city tour of Salzburg the Mirabell Palace , the "Sound of Music" tour which includes the Van Trapp Family homes , Mirabell Gardens and Pegasus Fountain Leopoldskron Palace Hellbrunn Palace, Nonnberg stc.

DAY 14- MAY 17 SALZBURG TO ZURICH

After breakfast at hotel, take the "Sound of Music" tour of Mirabell Garden and to Zurich (458 Kms - 0720 Hours)

DAY 15- MAY 18 CITY TOUR OF ZURICH AND LUCERNE

After breakfast, proceed to Zurich city tour., Mt. Titlis with ice-flyer/cliff walk, a snow-capped Alp , Lucerne Overnight stay at hotel in Zurich.

DAY 16 - MAY 19 DEPARTURE TO INDIA

After morning breakfast, transfer to Zurich, fly back with wonderful memories of Family stay and sotc tour.

## Views of participants of the Eleventh study tour to Europe 2015

### Family Stay, Nümbrecht 2015



-Tanavii Naargolkar.

After an exciting stay in Amsterdam, visiting spectacular places there, it was time for the most awaited "Family Stay" programme where each of us had to live with a German Host Family for three days and exchange and share the Indian and German Cultures, in a small, quaint yet mesmerising village called Nümbrecht and its surrounding areas. Expanses of large meadows on winding hills, greenery everywhere and pleasant, fresh air gave us an unexplainable high! As the cherry on the cake, I stayed with my best friend, Tarvi Bhaskarwar with a very warm and hospitable German family - The Schwerins.

Our host sister Kim and we were always in contact through various social networking sites and finally meeting her and her family was a special feeling! On the first day itself, Sarah, Kim's mother, took us to the local supermarket to shop for dinner. We made the traditional German classic dish, currywurst. It was delicious! We introduced each other to our families, our hobbies and had an interesting session of question and answers. The family loved the traditional Indian gifts we bought for them and expressed their gratitude with a tight hug! It was a joyful moment in knowing that they were so interested in Indian culture and dances and were huge fans of Indian cuisine! From the first day itself, we felt at our own home in spite of being in a new home, amidst a huge German family comprising of the parents, three brothers and the sister, Kim. :) They had three lovely pets! A Labrador names Miku, a cat and a horse.

The following day we were invited to devour a delicious breakfast with a large spread of cheeses, cold cuts, chocolate, breads and all things one could really imagine eating for breakfast! They really made it special for us. We felt pampered! We had to go to school with Kim for two days and it was really a wonderful opportunity to visit their school, attend a few classes and compare Indian and German educational systems. We presented various presentations on Religions, Weddings, Political Systems, Music and Dances in India which really enlightened as well as entertained the students.

All the tour students also performed a cultural display at the German School function comprising of Indian Dances and songs which made the audience tap their feet and clap their hands in enjoyment! It was a proud moment for all of us.

At home, we stayed as though we were a part of

their family from the very beginning! Helping with chores, preparing food and a lot of other activities made us gel along with the family members really well. We also got to know about the German culture and learnt a lot from it. Punctuality, discipline, assertiveness, tidiness and a lot of other values came along with the fun we had in the family. In only three days we were very attached to everyone. I hadn't seen more helpful people before!

On the final day, the family gave both Tarvi and I some amazing presents like chocolates, some delicious savoury snacks and German souvenirs. The last day was very bittersweet. Sweet as we knew this relation will last for a lifetime and we cherished every moment we had but bitter also because we were not ready to leave the families and were anxious about not meeting our hosts soon. I assure you that we will reminisce this stay forever and living in the family was indeed a highlight of the entire tour, leaving all of us emotionally engulfed.

### Salzburg, Austria

-Swapna Marathe



Sound of Music was one of the movie I grew up watching and singing those lovely songs! So when we entered Salzburg I was thrilled. Situated along the Salzach River, Salzburg with its baroque architecture has an old world charm. It is one of the best preserved cities. The name 'Salzburg' in English translates to 'Salt Castle'.

Our first stop was the Mirabell Gardens where the famous song 'Do Re Me' from Sound of Music was shot. Though I must say the gardens were a disappointment. The garden turned out pretty small compared to the hype. We were done in about 15 minutes! After a small walk we reached Getreidegasse on the other side of the river Salzach. On our way we had Austrian chocolate cake - 'Sachertorte'. The birthplace of the world famous musician Mozart is right here. Though Mozart lived here only during his early years, Salzburg is very much synonymous with Mozart. The street is full of branded stores. We walked through the street to reach the cemetery where a scene from the movie was shot. Nearby standing tall atop the Festungsberg hill is Hohensalzburg Fortress. A funicular cable railway took us to the top where one can see the breathtaking views of Salzburg. There was a puppet museum at the top and one can visit the bed chambers of the Prince-Bishop.

The next day was the 'The Sound of Music' tour with our guide Lisa. I was astonished when she told us that no

one in Salzburg knew about the movie. I guess the movie was popular only in the English speaking countries! We visited the Leopoldskron Palace from outside where the Von Trapp family lived in the film. The location was pristine with the serene lake reflecting the palace in it. Unfortunately it's a private property-not open to the public. The film was shot at different locations. We were singing songs linked to every location - the glass conservatory, the convent, the pavilion where Maria sang the 'Confidence' song. Me and my friends were singing and dancing to the song! The teenagers were watching us and probably thinking 'What's gotten into them?' But we were oblivious to the surroundings and enjoying ourselves! I think I was lucky to be in Salzburg with my school friends!

On the outskirts of Salzburg is the beautiful town of Mondsee situated along the lake Mondsee. The St Michael's church in Mondsee was where the wedding scene from the movie was filmed. The church is very impressive with intricate wood work and sculptures. The church looked just the same from inside as it looked in the movie. On our way back to Salzburg we drove along another two beautiful lakes - Fuschlsee and Wolfgangsee.

Austria will always be one of my favourite Europe destinations. Saying goodbye to Lisa we started our journey to Zurich. I wish I can come back again to explore more of Austria and soak in the beauty once again at a relaxed pace.

## CZECHOSLOVAKIA.

- Snehal W alia



In the month of May, we began our wonderful study tour to Europe. We had a chance to see so many other countries, along with Germany of course and the family stay with a German family was one of the best experiences in this tour. This tour was mainly aimed towards the Germanic countries and discovering their culture etc.

Today I am going to talk about my experience at Czechoslovakia. Not many people know about this state in the central Europe, as it was a small sovereign state with a different culture of its own and not very commonly known like Germany is for example. It became independent from the Austrian empire. Commonly known as Czecho-Slovakia or the Czech - Republic.

Czechoslovakia was linked with the Soviet Union. Due to the long term history, it is important to understand that it is highly influenced by the Slavic countries. So one may feel he or she is in Russia for example. The souvenirs there are almost the same like the Russian ones and traces of the Slavic culture are still evident. On 13th may, we left Berlin and we entered Prague. Prague is the capital of Czechoslovakia and one of the biggest cities there. Its

actual name is ' PRAHA ' but we say Prague. When we entered Prague, it was a different feeling all together, it's known for its unique and beautiful architecture, Slavic influences, and the scenic locations where most Bollywood songs have been shot. One can observe the city well, and realize that the script there and the language is very different than the other commonly known European languages. The official language there is Czech, but most people there speak English as there are many tourists and the older people speak Russian as well as German.

I loved this place because it is like a mélange of Russian and German culture according to me., I always wanted to discover a Slavic country so for me I got a chance to discover this in a short time along with Germany.

Talking about the places we saw, we visited a famous palace which was beautiful and many guards were protecting it all the time. It is one of the largest castles in the world and is one of the most famous world heritage sites. Surrounded and protected by guards everywhere around it, beautiful scenery and marvelous architecture, built by a Slovenian architect. It is the symbol of the Czechs. It also has the church of the Virgin Mary and one can see the ruins of the church of Mother Mary. It was a wonderful feeling to discover this. We also saw the st. George Basilica, one of the oldest Church existing in the Prague castle. We also saw st. Vitus cathedral and the famous ASTRONOMICAL CLOCK. It is one of the oldest clocks in the world and still works excellently. At the stroke of 7 in the evening, we saw many moving sculptures in the clock; each one represents something cultural and historic. We all were waiting, sitting down just for the stroke of 7 so we could experience the sight of this magical astronomical clock. The bridges were beautiful and streets full of musicians and painters painting beautiful sketches. Everything seemed like its straight out from a fairy tale book! It was a very special moment for me as I consider Prague to be one of the most beautiful places in the world and I was so lucky I got to experience it this time. Prague will always remain close to my heart.

The hotel we stayed at was according to me one of the best hotels we stayed in at Europe. I'm sure most of my fellow-mates who were with will agree to this as everybody loved the hotel the most! Probably because the ambiance and decoration was funky and more like a party place! The rooms were so beautiful and it was so sad that we were there just for one night! The hotel was Pentahotel. I feel that we should have stayed for a few more days in Prague to discover the culture more but we had so much more to see. So in all this was my short but sweet ,beautiful experience at Prague, Czechoslovakia.

## GERMAN FAMILY STAY - 2015

- Snehal W alia

My German family stay was one of the best

experiences ever. I always wanted to experience living with a German family as I always heard a lot about the Germans and what we can learn from them. Finally I got a chance because of this study tour.

In my family, there was a couple and they had two sons, one younger and one elder. It was a perfect family! They also had a dog and two cats! So it was perfect for me as I love pets. Their dog was a part of their family, like their fifth family member. It was such a friendly dog! So when we arrived in Numbrecht, it was so beautiful, it was like a forest and beautiful climate. When my German mother came to pick me up I was so happy. She worked at the Numbrecht school as a social worker. The house was very near to the school we had to attend. Dinner was amazing. I also got a chance to taste all typical German beers thanks to my family. The one thing I enjoyed was the food at their place! Typical German salads, sausages, waffles, meat, barbeque, and types of beer and yummy desserts. One thing I noticed was that they drink sparkling water over there and I was not aware of this, thinking it is normal water, when I drank I realized it's different and I had to tell them that I drink normal water as we Indians are mostly used to drinking normal water! But it was a fun experience!

They had a beautiful house with pretty rooms with a pretty fireplace which used to be lit up every evening! We would sit near it and have hot coffee or hot chocolate after dinner and chat about so many things, we would discuss about things in India and in Germany, and it was indeed an exchange of ideas, cultures, ideas, and experiences. I miss that the most, sitting near the fireplace at night after dinner chatting with my family! They loved all my Indian gifts and I got many German gifts in return too. One evening we went for ice cream and shopping, it was a wonderful evening! Another evening we all had gone out for pizza all other Indians and Germans! Such memorable moments! The days at school were really interesting too! I used to attend the classes as well as the presentations of my fellow-Indian-friends and I helped them with it too, we had a chance to interact with so many German children and it was wonderful as I shared experiences about my family and then theirs in the class. The canteen was really nice and I liked the food a lot. So for lunch I would eat over there while some used to eat their tiffins. But I enjoyed the German canteen food! So I never asked for tiffin to my German mother. Then one evening we had our dance show Bollywood and it was a super hit! They loved it so much! My entire family had come to see it that evening! As an Indian I learnt a lot from my family, for example being punctual and organized in every way. We learn and discover a lot from the German families. I also had bought a few extra Indian key chains that I distributed to the children in school I interacted with and applying Mehndi to the girls was a wonderful experience! They all loved the Bindis and Mehndi a lot! The last day of the

family stay was very special. I still remember we all were crying at the bus stop. It was because unknowingly we developed an emotional bond with them. I still miss them and thanks to internet-whatsapp we message each other often and share pictures! It feels really wonderful to have a German family with whom we can share so many things! I also got a chance to improve my German because of them as I just started to learn the language. So it was a very nice exposure for me.

This was my wonderful experience with the family and the experience will always remain alive with me forever!

Munich

-Sharvari Kulkarni



Munich ...my dream city. I have always decided that if I go to Germany I wouldn't return unless I visit Munich. All the palaces and castles of historic importance is the main attraction of Munich.

When we first arrived in Munich we saw Allianz Arena-The home ground of FCB and 1860 Munich. Most of us were crazy to go there as some of them were die hard fans of FCB. Even I was so excited because being a football fan you get an opportunity to visit a football stadium is totally a different happiness. All these years I used to watch on TV that the crowd screaming and to watch the players so closely but I saw that place in real.. as if a dream come true. The players' dressing room, conference hall, the place from where they entry all this was so amazing experience. Unfortunately just 2 days before one of the match was played in Allianz Arena. Our guide was telling us each and every detail of the stadium and all of us were listening so silently that no one could have given this much attention in school lectures also.

Then we visited BMW museum. It was so overwhelming. All those cars ..oh my god.. to see it in real !! Right from the first car of BMW to the latest model..we saw them all and it was so huge museum that three of us got lost inside the museum. We got separated from our group and started searching for our other friends but couldn't find even one. Then we were just climbing up from one side then again coming down to other side and at last found the exit. You can see how big it was. The hotel in Munich was so pretty and the interiors also. We stayed up late in all together in one room and just played and talked. The next day was a bittersweet one. Because first we have to visit this grand palace and then this concentration camp. Ahh ! Neuschwanstein Schloss..it was really a fairy tale castle. I was so excited to visit this castle after hearing the experience shared by my sister. We first gathered at the foot of the mountain on which the

castle was built. And fortunately the climate was cold and rainy. Fortunately for me but some of us wanted a sunny climate. But I loved the climate because everyday wherever we went there was this bright and sunny atmosphere and that day because of the rain the castle was looking more magnificent. When we reached the castle the scenery was so beautiful that one could not take his eyes off from it. Neuschwanstein castle was built by a shy King Ludwig in order to stay away from public life. However vast number of people come to see his private refuge. It was so cold that day due to the rainfall but still the curiosity to see this fairy tale castle couldn't let us go back. When we first entered the castle, I was numbed. How could human hands make such a splendid piece of art?? No wonder why it was called as a fairy tale castle. To my amaze the castle was preserved so beautifully that it was hard to believe that it was built in 1886. Then we went to a bridge which was located high above the castle and was built by the same king to have a look of his castle. The exterior of the castle was beautifully completed but the interior was not completed due to king's death. After that we visited Dachau Concentration Camp. It was the first camp built by Hitler in whole of Germany. All the pictures and information over there brought tears in our eyes. How could anyone be so inhuman? There were beds, showers, toilets, working place etc of the prisoners. I wanted to visit this camp eagerly because while studying about world war and Germany I always wonder how these places look today! Tour of Munich was the most amazing. This beautiful city is like a dream land to me.

### Family stay

-Saurabh Annadate

Our trip was 11th study tour to Europe. The very thought of going to Europe excited me. The most important reason I came on this trip was the family stay. We had three night's family stay in Nümbrecht. Before heading to Nümbrecht, we were in Brussels, we saw atomium and everyone took snap of it, Then in market to buy Belgian chocolates and everyone had waffle of 1 euro. Around 6-7pm, then we reached Nümbrecht we went to Ursula aunt's house and we had dinner there. I was fascinated after taking a look of her house. Jonathan's family was actually a sweet family; unfortunately Jonathan's sister went to Ireland for educational purpose. The Bischof family was mind-blowing, Jojo's father, Michael Bischof being a church musician, he had to go to the church to play the organ. While her mother cooked delicious typical German dinner for us. The very next morning we went to Jojo's school. His school was actually nifty. We attended biology and history lectures and then we returned to his home. We ate noodles at night. We had a nice chat with Jonathan's parents. The day had arrived, which everyone was eagerly waiting for-Cultural program day. After thorough practise for two long

months, we were finally going to perform and we rocked the stage...my other friends also made presentation. Then we headed towards his home. We had dinner there and then we went to get some sleep...we could get up late in the morning since we had no school, It was Sunday. For the first time we actually got interacted with all the hosts, We walked around Nümbrecht with teachers and all the exchange students, chatting, clicking pics etc. Then we headed to cafe to have pizza, which was very tasty. Then we headed to his home. We had peaceful sleep. Next morning we went to Sports Park. It was outstanding. We didn't even realized how these four days passed. In the morning we were supposed to gather at the bus stop at a fixed time so that we could continue our further journey, but we just could not make it on time because we did not want to leave. It was very kind of Mrs. bischof to pack lunch for us to eat during the journey. we all got very emotional when it was the time to go, because we didn't want to leave and they didn't want us to leave. The bischof family gave us the most wonderful experience of our lives. They were really caring, friendly, encouraging and curious to know about Indian culture. They even cooked vegetarian food exclusively for Bhargav and me. We really appreciate and are grateful for the love and care they showed for us. We were also amazed to see their huge collection of classical music, their composition as well as musical instruments. We both were really happy to get such an amazingly perfect family and the best thing that was common...the music...!

### Family stay

-Sharvari Kulkarni

Family stay was the most awaited day in the whole tour. This was such a nice experience to live with people who have different culture, taste, language, food etc. My first night in the family was a bit awkward. It was hard to communicate with Lisa as she was not able to understand what I was saying so I had to speak in my broken German but she was getting what I was saying and was laughing at my attempts to speak German. Her house was so huge and beautiful and her backyard was so big and half of the place was for her rabbits. They were so cute and clean.

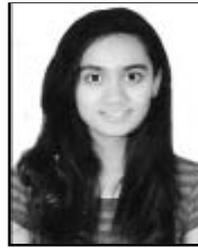
Talking about the food now, first day her mom made this yummy noodles and some kind of sour sauce. First night as I was thirsty I asked for water and Lisa gave a bottle of water and I had a doubt so I confirmed again that was that water and she said yes so I filled my glass up to top and started drinking water but after one sip I realized that it was sparkling water and I was not able to drink that but also I felt awkward to throw the water so I decided to finish this glass and then take normal water but it was not easy to drink sparkling water in one sip. then with great difficulty I managed to finish half of the glass and

then finally I asked for normal water and her mom gave me that smile as if she knew I was not able to drink that water. Then her father started to speak in English with us and that awkward silence vanished. Lisa's sisters were very cute and polite. I was trying to speak in German with them as they both were very small and were not able to speak English. Thanks to Google translator I was able to communicate with Lisa. In the school I made so many German friends like Kim, Medea, Alex, Alexa, Tabea etc. during my presentation I was a bit nervous as we had to explain the Hindu festivals in front of whole class but when we started doing the presentation my nervousness disappeared. Our cultural program was loved by the Germans. The students started dancing the moment Bollywood song was played and after the song 'Indiawale', I felt so happy and proud of India. For them these songs were totally different and while dancing I was cheered up so much because the crowd was deeply enjoying Indian music. We had so much of fun in the school. The girls were fond of mehendi and I drew mehendi on 4-5 girls' hand. Also Lisa's mom liked the mehendi which I drew on her hand and mom's friend also liked it so much that even she wanted but due to short of time I couldn't draw mehendi on her hand so I gave my host mother two cones as gift. My host father used to play guitar so wonderfully and even Lisa played with him. Her house had this huge backyard where I fed her rabbits pet food and played with Lisa on the trampoline. We both had a wonderful time together. She painted my nails and I did her hairstyle which she liked so much that she came like that to school. In afternoon she took me somewhere on foot and that place was so amazing. There were only trees and grass and different types of flowers. I was in love with that place and there were two horses where I and Lisa took so many pictures. Her dad took us to playground where I played basketball with him and there was river, ducks, children's play area and so many more things. The main difference which I observed was the working hours of her parents and their lifestyle. Her mother used to work for 2 hours in school and her father worked for 5-6 hours in some company. They had such a relaxed life with a lot less stress as compared to parents in India. They had so much time for themselves. Even the children had less stress of exams and all. They had to choose subjects which they like and study only those subjects. Anyway I enjoyed a lot in Nümbrecht and the castle was so beautiful. The walk in the forest was so peaceful and pleasant. The last day....everyone was so depressed and sad and the crying ceremony started on the bus station itself. I wasn't crying in the first place but when I saw Lisa crying then I couldn't hold back my tears and I broke down. It was so hard to say goodbye and to realize that three days are over, to leave the family, these special bonds with host mother, father, sisters and Lisa which were built up in just three days was a lifelong experience.

Though Lisa came with us to Cologne that day, still I was crying and in the evening my 800 photos got deleted and I got depressed again and she was trying to console me. When her dad came to Cologne to take Lisa that time I controlled myself and she started crying, even her dad was holding back his tears. Ahh! It was such a wonderful experience to stay with a German family and now have those lifelong bonds. No more words left to express this happiness.

### Family Stay

-Rutuparna Jadhav



Have you ever felt like you have entered a completely different terrain with people with different lifestyles, different cultures and even different eyes? Well, that's exactly how I felt when I set foot on Europe.

Jokes apart, in this article, I'm going to try to tell you about almost everything I did in the 4 days of family stay in Germany. If I miss anything, sorry but hey, how do you expect me to compress 345600 seconds of my stay into just 500 words?"

My host-sister's name was Alexa Bose. Yes, her grandfather was Indian. Our encounter first started on WhatsApp on which we shared everything and even exchanged pictures. That is how I could recognize her when we first met. Her parents were there to greet me too, just like every other day, thereafter. That's one thing I really like about Europeans, or at least German's for that matter. Even if it has been only minutes since you met, they treat you like family.

On the first day, (I say 'day' because even if it was 7:30 pm, it was still quite bright outside) Alexa and I went on a long walk around her 'village'. She calls it a village but trust me, it is nothing like Indian villages. At night, just like every other night, after a feisty dinner we all gathered around the table and talked about almost everything until sleep rang a bell.

A similar 'bell', the alarm clock, woke us all up early each morning for a day of surprises, school and rush for the bathroom.

We went to school for 2 days in which we made our presentations, saw the school and just chilled with friends. We also had a mehendi session. We visited a castle on the 2nd day after school and then headed to a café for Pizza!

School was short on the 3rd day, as Alexa's mom, the cheerful 'Michaela' came midday to pick us up in a convertible and took us to a farm where we saw cows and horses. We had to rush back home as soon we had to leave for school for the cultural program. It was wonderful.

Luckily no one forgot their steps, the music didn't screw up and my extra loose skirt did not fall off. Yippee! We then quickly hurried home for a barbecue night followed by a campfire!

Saturday, the last day with my family, was the best of all, especially since we got two extra hours of sleep. All of us, along with our hosts, visited a museum in the morning. After that we came back home for more surprises. After a picnic lunch in Alexa's backyard, it was time for a thrilling ride on Ronny Uncle's 1100 cc BMW bike! I felt like an actual rollercoaster! Especially since I was wearing a helmet and a properly padded safety jacket. Then we went swimming. You must be thinking, "Swimming?!? She went swimming when the temperature outside was around 15C?!?" Yes folks, yes, I did. However, it was ordinary swimming, Alexa's pool, (private pool, mind you) had a roof which worked on hydraulics. Not only that, the temperature of the water inside could be altered. So on a cold Saturday, Rutuparna, Alexa, Michaela and Ronny Bose were enjoying a swim in warm water at a temperature of 35 degrees while it was 20 degrees colder outside. Next time if I go there, you might find me swimming even if it's raining or snowing.

A repeat telecast of the program and a bunch of selfies later, a few of us headed to Sophia's house for a PARTY!

Soon it was time to say goodbye to our new friends. We left with tears but also with memories, wonderful friends and hopes to cross paths later in life.

Cologne/Koln:

-Rutuparna Jadhav

Introduction- May 10th, 2015 was indeed a bizarre day for me. It was filled with tears, humour, fun, craziness and definitely a little bit of risk.

We left Numbrecht early in the morning that day. As we wished our German friends farewell, a lot of people had their waterworks going. It was probably the last time we were meeting and the memories we shared in the past 4 days were unforgettable and irreplaceable. I couldn't cry though, because no matter how sad I felt, my tears were held in by Ambuja cement. Tada! -\_-

Too Late to apologize-

This funny memory is during the bus ride from Numbrecht to Cologne. Some German students in school had performed the song 'Apologize' during a cultural program. As a result, the song was stuck in everyone's heads. As Sudhir Sir, our tour manager, saw everyone's gloomy faces after the farewell, he apologized for the fact that it had to end this way. And, right on queue as if it was planned, I yelled out 'It's too late to apologize!' The whole bus erupted. So much for making people laugh.

Dancing on the Streets of Cologne-

In Cologne, we visited the Koln cathedral. It was massive. Length-wise. Well, width-wise too, but we weren't allowed to go deep inside as it was 'service only'.

After the cathedral, being the awesome people we are, Soumitra, Shubham, Rohit, Scha, Bhargav and I did a lot of crazy things. The first being dancing to 'Uptown Funk' on a random street of Cologne. True, the road wasn't exactly crowded but it wasn't deserted either. So as people walked by, they watched. What about us? We danced.

Climbing Down (oxymoron intended) an Escalator- Girls do it, so do boys, exercise. To all those who know that was a 'Pretentious Movie Reviews' reference. And to those of you who don't.. It's still a 'Pretentious Movie Reviews' reference. Ooh yeah.

Yep, it is tiring all right. Climbing an escalator which is going down. I must have lost a kilo doing that. Lekin kya kare? Karma toh pada!

'Free' Metro Ride-

Let me warn you, in Europe, nothing, I repeat, NOTHING is for free. But, around 2 in the afternoon on the 10th of May as the sun shone down upon us, we didn't know that. So on the 'experienced' advice of one of our group members; we boarded a metro without a ticket. No parental guidance, no nothing. Just blind faith in a 16 year old, which later turned out to be a very dangerous thing. Luckily, we weren't caught or asked to show our tickets but if we were, we would have had to pay a huge amount as fine and also our reputation would have been ruined.

Moral of the story, never assume anything is for free, never trust a 16 year old and never choose vanilla over chocolate.

That's all for now!

B-bye! See you soon!

Amsterdam, Marken and Vollandam :

-Parul Pawaskar

Our first stop in the tour was the picturesque city of Amsterdam in the Netherlands. As we were landing on the Schiphol airport, I could see from the plane itself just how beautiful and green this city was. I always wanted to visit this city and so I was really looking forward to this experience. We got off the plane, completed all the formalities and got fresh. The weather was really pleasant, sunny but windy at the same time which I'd thought wouldn't have been possible, and not at all hot. We got into our bus for the city tour. I deliberately took the window seat; so I could enjoy the sights outside. I could not stop marveling at the way this city was built. Urban, yet so close to nature. It was a city surrounded by canals and tree lined streets. There were quaint little cafes and shops near the canals. All the houses and buildings were made of bricks. I could see cycles and cyclists literally

everywhere. There were cycles parked close to shops, cafes, in parking lots, close to the canals, everywhere I laid my eyes on. We got down from the bus close to the Madame Tussauds museum in Amsterdam, so that we could visit it. However, we were really hungry so we stopped at one of those quaint shops to have muffins. The other half of our group though, went ahead to the museum. We were searching for them for nearly an hour, but couldn't locate them. They had already gone in to visit the museum and we unfortunately could not visit the museum too. But our walk around in Amsterdam totally made up for it. Next, we visited the Keukenhof gardens, located just on the outskirts of Amsterdam. Amsterdam is specially famous for its tulips, I was really amazed to see tulips of myriad colours and sizes growing in this garden. We had dinner at an Indian restaurant and stopped in a hotel in a town called Veldhoven for the night. The next day, we visited two small fishing villages, Marken and Volendam. Here, we saw fishing boats as well as locals wearing colourful traditional dresses. We also shopped a little in Volendam and ate some fish. Next we visited a cheese and a clog factory. Clogs are made of wood and are traditional Dutch shoes. We saw how clogs are made. We also saw how cheeses are made and even tasted a variety of cheeses! In the evening we visited Zaanse Schans, also known as the windmill village. Zaanse Schans is best known for its massive, well preserved windmills from the 17th and 18th centuries. The wind here was extremely strong, and we were almost being blown away. Although we felt cold, we were really enjoying the experience. It was really memorable. The first part of our trip had started off really well.

### Family stay in Nümbrecht

- Parul Pawasker



I think, I was the most excited for the family stay in this tour. I could hardly wait for it, because ever since I started learning German I always wanted to communicate with Germans in their own language and through this tour I got not only an opportunity to communicate with them, but also to live with them and to get to know their lifestyle. We reached Nümbrecht on the 7th of November in the evening. Nümbrecht is a small but beautiful, green town and is about 55 km away from Cologne. When we reached Nümbrecht, we waited for our host families in the Homburgisches Gymnasium, a school which had organised the family stay for us in Germany. I had communicated with my host partner before, via WhatsApp. Her name was Yuled and she was 15. We had exchanged lots of pictures and stories, and I was really looking forward to finally meeting her. After a while, she entered the room

we were sitting in and whispered my name and looked around. Then I quickly got up and smiled at her and we walked to her car. Her dad had come to pick us up. I hugged my friends goodbye, then sat in her car and we drove to her home. Her dad introduced himself to me and I introduced myself too, but I spoke a lot in English because I was afraid to make mistakes while speaking. Over a while though, my comfort level and confidence level of speaking in German really grew to a great extent.

When we reached her home, I was introduced to Yuled's really warm and caring mother, Elif and her cute little sister, Cennet. I changed my clothes and then had some soup and chicken with the family. They really made me very comfortable and showed great hospitality. Next morning, we woke up at six because I had to go to Yuled's school with her. Her mom had packed lunch for me as well, and the school bus came to pick up both of us. I attended some of Yuled's lectures and afterwards and my friend Aishwarya had to do a presentation on Indian classical dances in German. All the students loved it and even asked many questions enthusiastically. The best part was, we could understand them all and even answer to them in perfect German! When they found out I sing, they made me sing too! Their teacher also praised our German and I felt much more confident as the praise came from a native! In the afternoon, Yuled took me to downtown Nümbrecht with her friend Laura and her host partner Aniket. We explored the malls and even ate ice cream. In the evening, we visited the castle in Nümbrecht and it was very informative and interesting experience to hear the guide speak in German and try to understand everything. After a visit to the castle, all the German hosts, their Indian correspondents and the teachers had pizza at a restaurant. We played ice hockey and table football too and it was really fun. I was so tired that I immediately went to sleep that night as soon as I reached home. The next day, we woke up at six again and got ready to go to Yuled's school. We gave our presentation on dance again in several classrooms. I even sang some Bollywood songs in their music class and the students not only loved the songs but they also recognised them and hummed with me to their tunes. They even told me they watch and love Bollywood films. I felt really proud. When school got over, me and Yuled went to Laura's place because it was Aniket's birthday and we all wanted to celebrate it together. Laura was really an amazing girl and a good friend. Her mom, dad and brother were also really warm and welcoming and greeted me with enthusiasm. Her mom was an avid reader and they had lots of books in her house, some even by Indian authors! We sat in Laura's garden and had some noodles and cake and talked a lot! Laura as well as Yuled were really interested in Indian culture and wanted to know about it, so I and Aniket explained it to them, I in German and Aniket in English. We even showed them Indian currency notes and coins

and they found them fascinating. Later, I and Aniket got dressed up in our costumes because we were going to perform in Szenewechsel, a programme held in Yuled's school which helps the students to showcase their hobbies and talents. When we reached the auditorium, it was really crowded and bustling with energy and enthusiasm. We took our seats and waited for our turn. It was really exhilarating and made me proud to showcase our rich Indian culture on stage to a German crowd. The crowd loved it too! First Aishwarya performed 'Ganesh vandana' and then all sang 'Manache shlok' in Marathi as well as German, after which Savita ma'am played 'Hi chal turu turu' on the mouth organ, I sang and Aishwarya danced to it. Next was Aishwarya, Soha and Rutupama's Kathak performance after which there were three more Bollywood songs and then our performances got over. Each of our performance was greeted with thunderous applause by the crowd. I even made some really good friends there called Mellissa, Till, Medea and Pashmi. That night, I came home and ate a little, then I had a nice conversation with Yuled's mother in German about India and I told her all the wonderful things there are to see over here. She said she wanted to come to India some day because she had heard how beautiful it is. Next morning was Saturday and they had no school that day, so I went with everyone to a tour of the museum that is close to Numbrecht. I learned a lot of interesting things here and got back home at around 3. Yuled had bought some gifts for me and I was really happy as well as touched by her gesture. She bought a German book as she knew I loved books as well as German and some hair products because she loved my hair. I remembered that it was my last day in Numbrecht and I was very sad that I would have to leave. In the evening, we performed again in Szenewechsel and the applause was just as warm and appreciative as it was the day before. At night, we went to an Indian restaurant for dinner and had Biryani. Then we came back home and I packed my bags. The next morning, I got up and had breakfast. It was a Sunday. I went to the bus stop where the bus was waiting for us. Yuled and her mom had come to say goodbye to me. Everyone was crying and really sad because they didn't know if they were going to meet each other again. Nobody wanted to leave because the time we had spent over here was really amazing and everyone had bonded so well with their German host families. Then we all hugged each other and I got into the bus. With a heavy heart, I bid farewell to my family in Numbrecht. It was a once in a lifetime experience and I will never forget it. The family stay in Numbrecht helped me in a lot of things: to explore and learn about a new culture, to get to talk confidently in a foreign language and improve my conversation skills and the ability to adjust to an environment which was a bit different from the one I'm used to. I am thankful I got this opportunity.

Numbrecht

-Saloni Marathe

Tired and awfully sleepy, we finally reached the Homburgisches Gymnasium School in Numbrecht. The most exciting part of our trip was finally here! We got off the bus, unloaded the luggage, clicked a picture with our driver and went inside the school. We walked right inside the staff room. It was huge and welcoming, unlike the Indian staff rooms. Madhura and I looked around for a while and were later introduced to our host- Sophia Guttler. The ride to their house was mainly just awkward silence. Mostly just talks of the weather and how our journey was so far. When we reached, Sophia showed us the house, her 2 horses, and different kinds of chicks and rabbits! Her parents were sweethearts. Her mom cooked us delicious potatoes, eggs and bread and cheese. Once we were done, Sophia showed us to our rooms. She stayed with us talking for a while, we gave her the presents we had bought, and there ended our first night in Numbrecht.

The next day we had to present on certain topics about India and Indian culture. My topic was Hindu Festivals. It went pretty well. I was surprised to see that a few students knew Lord Ram and Lord Ganesh. It was fun interacting with students of all ages during our presentations. We also got to see others present on Hinduism and dance. Later that evening, all the host families along with their guests went out for pizza.

Our performances in their school were really good! They all loved Bollywood dance and music and couldn't get enough of it. Fabienne took us out to the local grocery store, ice-cream shop and also to the park. Our evenings then concluded with small parties with Madhura and I, Kim, Sophia, Alex and their respective guests. Sophia and Kim took us horse-riding as well.

The last day of the student exchange was emotional for some people. The hosts and the guests, both, had developed a bond by the time our stay was over. We clicked tons of pictures, wrote in Media's slam-book, and took their leave.

Numbrecht is an amazing village. It's full of green landscape and meadows. It's quaint and has an extremely warm and quiet atmosphere. Although I was in love with the scenery, the quietness of the place was a little overwhelming.

Numbrecht

- Dr. Manali Khedkar

Green meadows stretching over miles and miles



Clear blue skies, a feast for the eyes;

Quaint tiled homes, blossoms everywhere,

Heaven on earth, must be here somewhere!

The sun in my eyes, the wind in my hair,

A panorama of colours, a fragrance in the air;

An ancient castle, a walk in the woods,

A spring in my step, my head in the clouds;

A fairytale romance, a dream come true!

Nümbrecht...I lost my heart to you!

And I lost my heart to the people of Nümbrecht. Swapna and I stayed with Walter and Ursula, a lovely couple, both teachers. Walter, a pianist, played the piano for us and charmed us with interesting stories of German history. Ursula was the perfect host and made us feel completely at home. She treated us to many German delicacies. We got along so well... in spite of us not knowing a word of German beyond Danke! The HGN school, the interaction with the school teachers and children, the cultural program and the time spent with Walter and Ursula are all beautiful memories I will cherish forever.

#### BERLIN -The City of the War and the Wall

- Dr. Manali Khedkar

Berlin, the capital of Germany...the heart of a great empire. As I entered it, just fresh from the beautiful environs of Nümbrecht and the grandeur of the Cologne Cathedral... got transported into another Germany...a Germany fighting the memories of a War and a Wall.

I started to write a travelogue, a point to point description but could not...the city overpowered me. The grandeur of the Brandenburg Tor, The Victoria Memorial, the tall and mighty Reichstag...the seat of the German Parliament, The Holocaust Memorial...a reminder of the darkest page in German history...a panorama of images creating mixed emotions.

As we toured the city over two days guided by Heike, a walking talking encyclopedia on Berlin, perfect with dates and details, it was a true delight. Check point Charlie, the TV tower, the Kaiser William church, the Ka de we store. As we took in the sights...the city tugs at your heart strings...old grey drab houses contrasting with the new complexes and buildings. Across the city, there are remnants of the wall that was built overnight splitting a city, and families forever. The graffiti on the wall gives a glimpse into the angst of the residents. You can spend your whole life and still not finish reading half of it. A

cobblestone line runs through the city, right behind the Reichstag...a reminder of the Wall.

Heike implored us...this is not Germany...don't carry this image. But for me Berlin left a deep impression...much more than the green meadows and dreamy fogs of Bavaria...

Berlin, my heart bleeds for thee,

A ghost from the past, wherever I see,

The war razed u to the ground,

Stoic, u never uttered a sigh or a sound;

The wall split your heart into two,

A fate worse than death for u,

Your tears have dried but your face is gaunt,

Memories from the past come back to haunt;

Scarred forever, yet your spirit still alive,

From the ashes like a phoenix u shall rise.

#### A Bond which can't be broken...!!

-Hrishikesh Dabir



After spending some quality time in Netherlands and Brussels, our group was travelling to Nümbrecht for the family stay program. Excitement, Nervousness were just few of the many feelings at that time. It was around 6 that we reached Nümbrecht and we had to wait for an hour till we finally meet our host families. The excitement was just killing me in that one hour.

At around 6:50 I finally met my Host, Lisa who came to pick me up and then began the four days of a completely new experience for me. Two of my fellow students were with me in the same family. After about a 10 minute car ride, we reached their home. The first dinner with my family was pretty silent as I expected but we got to know each other very well after that. After dinner, we handed them the gifts that we had brought for them from India and they liked them. It was a huge sigh of relief.

The next day we all went to my host's school where I met up our friends and their hosts. It was a fun day where I experienced how lectures in Germany take place. We also gave presentations about the topics they requested. Me and my friend Rohit met 3 of my host's classmates who were die hard football fans just like us. We talked a lot about the sport which we all admire so much which was really enjoyable. I interacted a lot with not only mine but other hosts as well. Our presentations about Indian dance, music, weddings went really well and the German students seemed to have enjoyed it a lot. I specially remember a presentation on Music where the German students and the Indian students sang a song together. It was quite an experience for a lifetime. We

had a lot of fun in the school be it the presentations, the talks with the students or the rehearsals for the Dance we were doing at the event. Never ever will I forget the things we did in the school.

Not just in the school but the evenings as well with my Host family were quite spectacular. We played Basketball, Frisbee, Talked a lot and laughed a lot as well. There was one evening where my host's father, Walter requested Rohit to play the Guitar and that started the interaction with my family beyond words and language. Rohit played and I used to sing. Then my host's father used to play the guitar. The Music interactions used to be quite fascinating. One day, me and Rohit cooked breakfast for the whole family. I was so glad that we were able to cook it for them. There was particularly a conversation with my family about rain. They hate it and I love it. Those four days are one of the most memorable four days of my life. I would never ever forget those.

Then came the day I think No one wished would arrive. 10th of May, we were to leave for Cologne and bid farewell to our family. It was quite an emotional day. Everyone was sad including myself. No one wanted to leave the beautiful city but we had to. We lost nothing but tears and took nothing but memories. At around 8:45 our bus arrived and we left for Cologne after an experience of a lifetime. Nothing in this world would make me forget those four beautiful days spent with my host family and friends. We had a bond between ourselves, a Bond which can't be broken...

### Family stay

- Gautam Katakhar

After a day in Brussels we headed to Numberecht. The beauty of the place was just amazing. The greenery, the fresh air, it was fascinating. Our host family, Schutz was hosting two of us; Varad and me. We were picked up from the school by our respective host families and so began the much awaited family stay. On reaching home we were given a very warm welcome by the family. Frau Schuetz had prepared an amazing Croatian dinner for us as she is from Croatia. The only discussion during dinner- the Champions League semifinal between Barcelona and Bayern Munich as Herr Schuetz was a big FC Bayern fan and boy was I happy! There was still time for the match to start, so Fabienne (my correspondent) her sister, Varad and I headed out for a walk. We climbed up a hill, just in time to watch the setting sun. The view from up there was just breathtaking. Words cannot explain how beautiful it was. Then we rushed back as we had to watch the match. After the match ended we headed off to bed a bit disappointed as FC Bayern lost. Next morning we had to wake up early as we had to go to school. After an amazing German breakfast we headed to school. The time literally flew, interacting with German students, giving

presentations in classes, playing football in the break, watching friends giving presentations and what not. It was a fun filled but tiring experience. But all that tiredness went out the door as all of us hosts and Indian students walked through the woods towards the castle of Numberecht. We had guided tours of the castle in German as well as in English. I as usual was with the German contingent as I knew German, listening to every word of the tour guide as they fell on my ears. the tour was very interesting and the view from the top of the castle- breathtaking! It was astonishing how quickly the tour had ended. Then we headed home. Somehow while having a chat with Herr Schutz the topic of cars popped up, and being an automobile fanatic I was loving it. It escalated onto how much both of us loved cars and driving! And Herr Schutz was ready for a drive on the autobahn for which frankly I had been waiting for since a long long time!! The experience was out of this world!! Doing 240 kmph isn't normal for Indians is it! Then after coming back we had a fantastic dinner at a pizzeria with all the hosts and Indian students. The next day we had the afternoon free as Fabienne had off lectures. So after attending a few lectures and getting tours of the area by our hosts we headed to the nearby town of Gummersbach. There I had the most amazing lunch at a famous local restaurant. After that we had nutella krepes for desert. Nothing can beat nutella can it? Then we rushed back as we had our performance at the school. The other performances by the German students were mesmerizing. After reaching home, we rushed to bed as everyone was tired. The next day all of us had to be at the bus stop at 9:30 am sharp as we had booked a bus to Lindlar, an open air museum depicting the life in old Germany. There too we had a German guide to whom we listened to very carefully and with some assistance from Fabienne I could get everything he said. We bought a couple of souvenirs from the shop and then the bus dropped us back near the school. As we had a little time on our hands, we went for a stroll in the park. Then all of us had the afternoon free. After reaching home we decided to sleep for a while as we had planned for a session of table tennis later. Well, I didn't want to waste my time sleeping, so the plan.. Obviously a drive on the autobahn but only this time the car was a convertible Mercedes Benz SL. This time the ride was longer and much more fun as my only companions were Herr Schutz, open roads and loud music. Well I simply am out of adjectives to describe this one. I still can feel the wind in my hair. After coming back to earth, we headed to the sportplatz for a session of table tennis. We were accompanied by Jonathan and two of my Indian friends who he was hosting. We laughed more than we played table tennis. After that we we decided to walk down to the school as it wasn't that far. On our way we had ice cream

and apfel strudel which again is a German specialty. After hogging on that beautiful dessert we started walking again. And then suddenly it started pouring. Result- me and Varad getting drenched as Fabienne was the only one who had a water proof jacket. We changed into our traditional Indian kurta as we had to perform in the school once more. Even though we had already seen the others perform the acts were still as interesting as yesterday and still as good if not better. After the event was over, we went home. In the night we were having a gaming contest on the Nintendo wii, in which I beat everyone. I did not want that night to end coz I I knew it was our last night there. We packed all of our stuff as we had to leave early in the morning. The next morning was a very emotional one, as we were about to leave for Koln. Emotions got the best of some of us as the bus arrived. That was the end of our family stay. These four days were undoubtedly the best of our whole Europe tour. This was a really great experience not just for me but all of us. And I would like to thank all the German hosts and their families for hosting us and giving us so many unforgettable memories.

The life time visit ..Europe...!!

-Rohit Pathak

After returning from Brussels, our next stop was Numbrecht, the best day of life.. the family stay in an unknown family. After going into that family the first day was very tough to me because I was not able to speak German and their English was a bit poor. I was with my two friends in that family. Both were knowing German a little bit . ....Poor me... ;)JJ. But I caught up with them after couple of time.

The next day, we went in their school. We attended their lectures. It was a bit difficult to understand the teachers as they were teaching in German and the students were a bit weak in English and I was unable to understand German. We gave our presentations in the school. We all were very excited to present our cultural heritage in front of them. Me and my some friends sang Hindi and English songs and played guitar. We enjoyed a lot. Playing guitar for the German students was a big experience. For one English song, we got 'once more' from them. That was my best day in the school. I got lovely friends like Lisa, Jonathan, Medea, Alexa, Sophia Uled, Pashmi, Kim, and last but not the least ...Joana.J

The third and the fourth days were the best days of the whole home stay, it was the dance program in their school. All the students loved our 'Bollywood Dhamaka' dance. We enjoyed a lot. I am very lucky, that I got to experience this family stay.

This was one of the most priceless experiences one can ever have in his or her life. Nothing can replace experience so I suggest you to have this experience once

in your life

I am very glad that I got to meet so many lovely people and they have taught me a lot of things.

Zurich - Switzerland

Falguni Khatri

Our morning in Zurich began by treating our eyes with the beautiful streets of the city that took us to the mountains brimmed with snow, Mt. Titlis

With the help of cable-car stations, we managed to reach above the glacier. A visit to an illuminated glacier cave freeze us. Reaching the top we experienced an exciting chairlift ride on the Ice Flyer or slide down the Glacier Park snow slide. Captured photos of giant ice boulders & deep crevasses.

Also walking across Europe's highest suspension bridge, the cool 'Mt. Titlis cliff walk', round tours through glacial grottos & the highest lying hanging bridge. At the end last but not the least we were given the pleasure of having Pav bhaji in the coldest of the temperature which wasn't less than a treat to us..!

Nümbrecht - A small town in Germany

Falguni Khatri



Inhabited by so many lovely people A Family tour that was arranged proved to be a priceless experience. Knowing not only more about German language, but also their culture, lifestyle, etc. was the aim of this opportunity given :)

I know I won't be mistaken to say that I had the best family. :) Firstly because the language barrier I thought would be there, wasn't even faced once. Instead they planned to stick around 24/7, be it a museum visit, school activity, my family had always been there with me. ?

The best getaway with my family was during the weekend, the day right before I was supposed to go to cologne with my tour people, my family planned me to take to cologne where and when I got the chance to spend family time and I've known that each of my family member was as lovely as I had thought they'd be. Explored the beautiful streets of cologne, lively markets, and and i won't forget the very first and the best risotto I had with them.

Afternoons were spent cycling for hours and spending time at the silent lakes on the way back home with my correspondent cum German sister and brother. :) Evenings were spent at the school performing our dance events which were highly appreciated by all of them. The last night at the family house was spent with couple of my German sister's family friends namely - Simon and Felix. :)?

The following morning was a heavy day for me as it was the time to bid farewell to the loveliest people on this planet. :( I didn't and still don't know when I would meet them and that thought made me cry. Not only me but my entire family was up in tears. 4 days just 4 days were lived with my family and it felt like I've known all of them since forever.

So happy I've made a lot of memories with the people I love. Coming back home I noticed one thing, as and when I told my Indian parents about my family, I addressed my German parents as my papa and mama which gave me a proud feeling of having one more family existing on this planet. A German family. Wouldn't be able to thank my family people Medea, Mel (German brother), German father and mother enough for such a lovely family stay. :) Love them all.

Brussels

Apoorva Rege



Brussels. Bruxelles. The capital of Belgium. Whatever you want to call it. It was here that we spent the best part of half a day, and even still, it remains the city I want to talk about the most.

Our tour consisted of dashing from one city to the other, from one attraction to the other. But in Brussels, it was exactly the opposite. The bus had dropped us off in a busy square, and we disembarked to pleasant weather and alleyways spiraling outward from where we were standing. If I were expecting us to bustle off to another monument or ancient house or whatever, I was happily proved wrong. The fact was, we were there to just be there. Our only stop was a short walk to something called 'Manneken Pis', and then we were free to do whatever we wanted for nearly three hours!

Sadly, I had no idea what Manneken Pis was until I was standing right in front of it. And it wasn't exactly a surprise; the name itself offered me a notion that it had something to do with pissing, and I was right. The 'Manneken' was actually a statue (or you could say fountain) of a little boy peeing water into a bath kept below. It was such a unique and yet crazy sight that I almost started laughing on the spot.

After taking dozens upon dozens of pictures in front of the fountain, we all headed to a waffle shop, something that almost everyone was looking forward to. With five euros in my hand, I bought a delicious, gargantuan strawberry-and-banana-with-chocolate-syrup waffle (which I had no choice but to share with a friend of mine) and we all had a blast trying to eat it, it was so big!

We were then left to our own devices. Following a group of my friends, I strolled across the cobblestoned

street, curiously looking into interesting-looking shops on the way. Our first stop was to buy souvenirs, something which nearly took us half an hour, after which we casually hung around for a while and then went to search for some food. I (unsuspectingly) accompanied a friend into a nice-looking shop where we were looking to buy a good sandwich or two, and though the sign said that their service was fast, we ended up waiting behind one customer for fifty minutes before we could place our order. Even though the 'baguette au brie' we had was absolutely fantastic, it felt right to share this because it was probably the only frustrating experience I had!

Brussels, for me, is unforgettable mainly because it is a francophone city and almost everyone there speaks French, one of the only foreign languages that I know and understand. The rest of our trip was mainly focused on German, and I obviously had no scope there, so I thought that I might as well make use of Belgium while it lasted! It made me proud to think that I could converse with shopkeepers and the like in French, and that they could in turn actually understand what I was saying. And to top it all off, the weather couldn't have been better either; though the sky clouded over occasionally, the sun always came out in the end. In fact, it seemed as though good weather followed us wherever we went, because no sooner did we climb into the bus at the end of our stop, than it began to rain madly.

In conclusion, I'd like to say that one of the main reasons I loved Brussels is because we got so much freedom to do whatever we wanted there. I believe that touring an area, or a country, doesn't only involve visiting its famous landmarks, but rather being able to experience the actual local lifestyle and seeing what it's like to delve deep into the small streets, shops, and scenery. I am happy to say that this tour was planned so perfectly that we got to visit such attractions but at the same time we were allowed to enjoy ourselves to the very best in doing what we wanted.

In Nümbrecht

Apoorva Rege

This summer was the summer we'd all been waiting for: a tour to Europe, yes... But even more exciting, a group of us students would be given the chance to stay chez a German family in the village of Nümbrecht! When my mother told me about it months earlier, I said yes without hesitation, because I'm always up for this kind of thing. And so a few weeks before our departure, I got an email saying that I, along with Saha Karyekar, would be staying with a fourteen-year-old Tabea Stein for three days. It was, sadly, that email which brought out the feeling of enthusiasm as well as foreboding inside of me. I couldn't wait to get there, but at the same time, I wished I never had to.

First things first: I'd like to say this, and I'm sure

most of the group will agree with me; the one big change I noticed when I first arrived at her home was the fact that it was in a spacious, green neighbourhood dotted with large white and brown cottages with slanting roofs. It was such a contrast to the houses in India that it was almost a marvel to my eyes! Even her house, the interior as well as the exterior, was like a dream. If I had to count on my fingers the number of times I asked for a pardon while I took pictures of the unique rooms, the garden, and especially the food, I'd probably need ten hands.

Leaving aside the house and other things, I have to admit that before I got there, I was nervous beyond belief. I had, of course, been in touch with Tabea over WhatsApp, and although we had many a normal conversation, I still did not know what to expect. One thing that slightly unnerved me when I met her was that she was beyond six feet tall, but despite this surprise, I found that she had a kind face as well as a kind nature, although she was a little shy. Even her family was terribly hospitable, and they used to enlighten me and Soha about various German traditions and facts about the neighbourhood and scenery. The night we arrived, Tabea and her elder sister, Rahel, took us around the village and described many things for us. If we were nervous when we came, we were definitely comfortable now.

The next day was our first at her school, Homburgisches Gymnasium. Luckily for us, she had English class first, so we didn't get entirely bored (At least we could understand what everyone was saying. Most of their other classes were taught in German!) and immediately afterward, Soha and I rushed to watch various presentations. Over the course of two days, we attended presentations on religion, dance, wedding, music, and politics, the last of which I myself did along with another friend of mine.

The lunch breaks and evenings were spent in the village, each host family doing a different thing. I remember exploring the park as well as the supermarket, where I bought many 'Haribo's and 'Milka's, along with a few traditional German foods. Tabea was very courteous, taking us wherever we wanted to go without a second thought. One afternoon her family was kind enough to take us to Bonn, a gesture which none of the others received! Soha and I had a great time exploring the city, starting with a walk around the House of History, followed by a fast jaunt along the magnificent river Rhine and concluded by a refreshing ice-cream sundae in the very heart of the city marketplace.

That evening, all of us, along with our hosts, went walking up to the Nümbrecht castle to tour it. We had a great time (listening to the English audio guide, of course) and we definitely walked out with much more knowledge about Nümbrecht history than when we walked in. Once we were done, we began to head back. Our walk back

through the forest was pleasantly rewarded by pizza, as we directly headed to a pizzeria to have dinner, after which we went back to her house and concluded our first day staying with a German family. It wasn't, by far, as unsettling as I thought it would be!

The next day showed our cultural programme. In the evening, after dressing up in our traditional skirts and kurtas, we sat through a few spectacular dances and music performances before it was our turn to take over the stage. For me, it wasn't daunting in the least. It seemed like everyone really enjoyed it, and so did I.

The following day was a Saturday, and hence there was no school (hallelujah for the German students!). It was also our last day staying with the family, and everyone wanted it to be worth it. In the morning, all of us left for Lindlar, where we excitedly explored their Open Air Museum. It was fascinating to see olden houses, stables, as well as forges among other things, and I would be surprised if anyone didn't take over a hundred pictures.

We had the cultural programme again that evening, and it went as smoothly as expected. I didn't even hesitate to provide my rapt attention throughout, and it held my interest even though I was watching for the second time! Back at my school, our annual 'Harshotsav' never includes Kung Fu, ballet, and least of all life-threatening gymnastics. No wonder my attention was never divided.

Soon after, we headed back to Tabea's house to spend our last night, and it was a last night well spent! Tabea, Soha and I began with chilling in front of the TV, surrounded by snacks. We watched a movie all the way into the night and had some interesting conversations in between. Looking back, I really miss it now. Going back to Nümbrecht would be a dream come true.

If I had to write down every single thing I'd miss about that place, it would fill a book. I miss the landscape, the weather, the activities we were part of. I miss the school and the friends I've made. I miss the wonderful adventures we've had with the food there. I miss everything, and if someone gave me the chance to go back, even if it was just for a day, I'd take it in a heartbeat.

## Dachau Concentration Camp

-Aniket Rege



"No prisoners shall be allowed to fall into the hands of the enemy alive."- Heinrich Himmler [on what should be done with Dachau's prisoners towards the end of the war]

Dachau was where it all started for the prisoners of World War II. On 22nd March 1933 the concentration camp was named the "the first concentration camp for political prisoners." After the 1935

change in laws, which institutionalized racial discrimination, Dachau became prison for homosexuals, Jews, emigrants, and more 'deviants' (or so called by the oppressive German regime at the time.)

The camp served as a model for other camps. It claimed to re-educate and promote labor, but in all reality, forced labor was one of the many torture methods used on the prisoners. The camp also served as a SS training space.

The prisoners were treated with the utmost disrespect. They were segregated based on what kind of prisoners they were (homosexuals, Jews, etc.), used for shooting practice, forced to take part in medical experiments, killed for entertainment, and executed. The tortures, disregard to human rights, and apathetic view of human life at this scale started in Dachau.

After the U.S troops came to liberate the prisoners, they found them in state of sickness, (approximately 1100 prisoners) buried in mass graves, and the rest surviving with scars so deep that no rescuing could save them.

So when we visited the site during our tour, I was apprehensive to say the least. It was right after an uplifting and cheerful (and extremely cold) visit to Neuschwanstein castle near Munich.

We arrived at the gates at around 4.30, and the inner buildings were set to close at 5.00. We rushed throughout the inner buildings and saw the sorry living conditions of the prisoners, who were crammed into tiny living quarters wrought with diseases and death. Prisoners were punished harshly if any aspect of their life, including the state of their bed, were not up to the Nazi ideology of perfection.

As I stood on that ground, on what were probably the bones of thousands of innocent men and women, I was struck by the cruelty of the human race. How could the hate of one man towards communities he thought lesser to his own 'superior race' lead to so much wanton death and horror?

I understood that the German people had preserved the history of this place, not as a proud mark of their history, but as a reminder. A reminder of how fragile life is, a reminder of the injustice and destruction that was brought on by the Holocaust.

The gates are still inscribed with the following words:  
Arbeit Macht Frei.

Work will make you free.

Germany now stands free, and still ashamed of its history. Their brave display of their own mistakes, however, is something we can all learn from them. Dachau serves as a reminder of the triumph of humanity over adversity. For all his strength and intelligence and cunning, Adolf Hitler's treatment and segregation of the human race was not allowed to continue.

A reminder of the pain and the sorrow he brought to

the world, and how it should never be repeated, stands 16 kilometers northwest of Munich.

Family Stay

-Aniket Rege

When I was first approached by my mother about the possibility of joining her on a German tour in the summer of 2015, I was apprehensive. I didn't know anyone in the group, I didn't speak a word of German, and most of my would-be companions were all quite younger than me. Apprehensively agreeing, in hindsight, was one of the best decisions of my life.

A key part of this trip would be a cultural and educational exchange with a school from a little town called Nümbrecht, 40 kilometres east of Cologne. After landing in Amsterdam, and touring the nearby Eindhoven and Dutch countryside, as well as the beautifully quaint Belgian metropolis and capital city of Brussels, we stepped off the bus into the clean, fresh air of Nümbrecht. I don't think I speak for myself when I say we fell in love with the place at once.

Lush, green, cool, and peaceful, with the kind of clean, pure air Indians are rarely exposed to. After the long drive from Brussels, it was just the panacea we needed. After a short wait in the chilly evening air, the students proceeded to their respective hosts' homes, and eventually, I to mine! My host was a girl in 9th grade named Laura Sievers, who I had briefly spoken to on WhatsApp the week before. I had no idea what to expect, but she had seemed really nice while texting.

Turns out she was even nicer in real life, along with her family! Our first major act in the exchange was having drinks and snacks and watching the Barcelona-Bayern Munich Champions League semi final. The entire match was punctuated and interspersed with cries of "Schön!" This was especially when Lionel Messi was on the ball. After a Messi masterclass ended with a 3-0 Barcelona win, Laura's father jokingly told me that today I was a Bayern fan! (as usually I support Barcelona). I was welcomed into their home with football and food. It had to be the start of something special.

After the match, Laura and I stayed up talking about India and Germany till 3 am. After a refreshing wholesome 3 hour sleep, we were off to the Homburgisches Gymnasium, Nümbrecht! Laura had explained to me the three-tier hierarchy of German schooling, and that a local 'Gymnasium,' which she attended, was the most elite of the three tiers.

After a brief meet, we were off with our respective partners to wherever we fancied! The entire morning was spent sitting in geography, history, and French classes, out of which I understood the most in the French class (ironic), and absolutely nothing in the rest. In Laura's class, one other girl was a part of the exchange, hosting Parul.

Her name was Yuled, and she was part Turkish. Laura and Yuled were friends since 1st grade. So, in the break, the four of us explored Nümbrecht "downtown", a phrase at which both Laura and Yuled burst out laughing, as the bustling "downtown" consisted of only a few convenience stores, banks, and the like. After enquiring and purchasing some local German specialities at the market (mostly Haribo and chocolate), we were back to the school to attend to practice for our cultural program on Friday and Saturday.

By this point Laura and I's relationship had moved past the awkward phase, and we were starting to become quite good friends. After a lot of hanging around, our whole group was off to Nümbrecht Castle for a guided tour! After a beautiful walk and a somewhat drawn out and apathetic tour of an actually lovely castle, we were back to the school and ready for dinner!

Dinner that night was planned at a nearby pizza parlour called 'Alte Schmiede.' Delicious Pizza was accompanied by many a foosball game. The first game was Yuled and I versus Parul and Laura, which we won 10-9. The next match was a Germany-India bout, where we got our butts royally kicked (I think Germans are just naturally gifted at all football related things).

That night was also, surprisingly, spent talking till late night. Many songs were exchanged that day. Biste Braun Kriegste Frau. That's all I'm saying. The day was extra special because the next day (Friday) was my birthday! Laura stayed up with me and wished me at midnight, as I replied to 1000 messages from my amazing friends. I also gave Laura, her mother Mieke, and her brother and father the various gifts I had brought for them from India. Laura liked the scarf I got her and her mother gave me hug for all the rest of it! (Is there such a thing as too sweet?)

The next morning I was greeted by one of the most wonderful acts I've ever experienced. Laura and her family had bought cake and presents for me! I was overwhelmed by their kindness and thanked them all profusely and awkwardly (awkwardness is just a package with me). The day was filled with many wishes and many presentations. We spent most of it chilling in different rooms listening to music and dances of India, and participating with the German students as well. Boulevard of Broken Dreams was played around 8 times, over the course of the day. The birthday was accompanied by many a joke and laugh, and it was one of the best I've ever had.

The evening signalled the start of our program. We waited around and practiced, and Laura joined in! She became better than me at the dance in about 5 minutes and laughed at my silly attempts in practice, and in the final performance itself. I danced to two popular Bollywood songs. After the program, we were back home and on another one of our late night talks about life and the

universe (nothing so grandiose, probably just about food or something).

Saturday was our last full day in Nümbrecht, and it started by a tour of a nearby open air museum of Lindlar, where German life in the 19th and early 20th century was preserved. I was not accompanied by Laura for this trip, as she had an important tennis match to attend (She is an avid sports player and fan). After walking around absorbing the sights, and honestly just waiting to get back to Nümbrecht, we were back. What happened next was probably my most favourite memory of our entire tour.

Laura had promised to walk a local dog as a job, something she had done many times before, and I of course gladly accompanied her, being a dog lover myself. We walked all through the Nümbrecht countryside, and found a treehouse overlooking the entire landscape and just sat there chilling and talking. It was one of the most peaceful and brilliant experiences of my life. On our long walk to the next village it started pouring! So Laura, I and the dog ran for our lives through the pouring rain back to the house through that beautiful landscape, as we had to get back in time for the cultural program round II in the school. Needless to say, we got soaked, and it was the most fun I'd had in a long, long while. After dropping off that weird dog (She randomly used to drop and roll in the grass) and seeing one of the most beautiful and clear rainbows both of us had ever seen, we were back to the school.

We managed to reach about 15 seconds before the start of my act, which I think I aced (probably not). After that, our group of four left for the downtown to enjoy our last night in Nümbrecht. Yuled and Parul had to leave for a dinner hosted by Yuled's parents, so Laura and I having bought an entire tub of ice cream, hid from the cold in a bank (yup) and ate the entire tub of ice cream. After meeting a few of Laura's friends outside, we went back home and spent our last night doing the same thing as all the nights before. Just sitting, chilling, and talking, like two normal teenagers.

And as I left the next morning with strongly mixed feelings, I realised that in a short span of not even four days, I had developed a bond that I hoped would last for the rest of my life. I hate being dramatic, but I'm going to say it. I think I now have a family in Germany too :')

## Allianz Arena

Allianz Arena. The moment I was waiting for my whole trip had come. 15th May, 2015. I could never forget that date. This was the home ground of Bayern Munich, one of my favourite football teams. For me, it was not just a ground, it was a temple. I was so excited.

We also had a tour of the stadium. It was like heaven for me. I had dreamt of being in this stadium for many years. And I was finally living it. The infrastructure, the

design, the stands, all were so good.

We arrived at the stadium at 3pm. Our tour was scheduled to start at 3.30pm. We waited for the guide to come. On our way we saw many people wearing Bayern Munich jerseys. I badly wanted to get my hand on one. But I decided to wait until the tour got over.

So our tour guide arrived at 3.30 pm. Firstly, we went to the away supporters stand. The guide explained to us that only away teams' fans are allowed here. She told us that Allianz Arena is the only three-story stadium in Germany. We were all struck with awe! The stadium was so big! It was an architectural genius. Then the guide told us about its history. The stadium was completed in 2005 and was used for the World Cup matches in 2006. It is not only used as the home ground for Bayern Munich, but also another team from Munich, 1860 Munich.

The stadium is also used for rock concerts other than football matches. Then the guide proceeded to show us the dressing room of Bayern Munich. It was no less than a shrine for me. It was a heavenly feeling to actually be in the room where the players are during every match. Then we proceeded to see the shower room and the press room. We came to know that only three matches in the entire history of the stadium were not sold out. There, I learned that Germans are very passionate about football. We finished the tour shortly after that.

Now was the time to visit the Bayern Munich fan store. I was so awed by all the things there. I did buy some and I was so glad about it.

So, hopefully Allianz Arena is one of the many stadiums I visit in my lifetime. But the Allianz arena, it's good for a start!

### Family Stay

-Bhargav Joglekar

Nümbrecht. The name still echoes in my mind. I had never thought that I would have such an emotional bond with this town. After Amsterdam and Brussels, it was time for Nümbrecht. We arrived at Nümbrecht on the evening of Wednesday, 6th May. I had spoken with my correspondent, Jonathan before through email and I was very excited to meet him. I knew it was going to be fun living with him, inside his house, and with his parents.

So we arrived in Nümbrecht at 6.30pm. Jonathan had his drum lessons, so we waited for him at Mrs. Ursula and Mr. Walter's house. We were to have dinner together with them and after dinner we were to go to Jonathan's home. After dinner, Jonathan's mom performed a lovely opera song. I was completely spellbound. Her voice was too good.

When we went to Jonathan's home, His Dad greeted me and Sourabh. We quickly unpacked our bags and I removed the gifts I had brought for them. They included two traditional kurtas for Jonathan, different types of tea

for his mom, facewash and after shave lotion for his Dad. They all loved my gifts and they were so fun to be with! I liked the small family instantly.

Jonathan also had an elder sister, Hanna who was in Ireland for an exchange program. She had been to Pune on an exchange program. So Jonathan knew a fair bit of things about Pune and India.

After giving the gifts, we all went to sleep as we had school in the morning. The name was Homburgisches Gymnasium. We woke up in the morning at 6am and after getting ready, we all sat for breakfast. The fruits there were too good. I loved them. The bread was fresh. The breakfast was very heavy and we were all ready for school.

After arriving in school, we went to Jonathan's class for the first class, Physics. As the teacher taught in German, I was not able to understand much. But after looking at the figures drawn on the board, I was able to understand a bit. They were learning about electric circuit today. After the small break, Jonathan had a free period. He asked me and Sourabh to tell him more about Indian food. His friend, Sandro also joined him. We explained different types of Indian food and both of them listened with utmost attention. Then Jonathan introduced me to his other friends- Max and Daniel.

At 2pm, the mayor of Nümbrecht gave a speech to our whole group. They expressed their gratitude towards us and also thanked us for being there. We and our hosts were given certificates by her. But unfortunately Jonathan was not there because he had his sports class. We were told that we were to visit the famous castle of Nümbrecht with our hosts. So we visited the castle after the school got over at 3.30pm. It had been decided that we were going to have our dinner at a pizza café in Nümbrecht. The payment was arranged by the school and we had a lot of fun there. After pizza, we played table soccer. Then we returned to Jonathan's home. We were very sleepy. And so, I and Sourabh slept instantly.

The next day dawned. It was the day of our performance. We were all very excited. Jonathan had half day school that day. So the school got over at 12.30pm. Jonathan had an appointment with the dentist after school. So I and Sourabh rested for a while until he came back. Then we had our lunch. Jonathan's mom had prepared some type of Austrian noodles with some wheat balls and a sauce. It was very delicious. We had time until 6pm. So Jonathan suggested that we can play Table Tennis. We both agreed. We went to the clubhouse where they had the table for Table Tennis. We were there for an hour or so and then we decided to leave as all of us had to get ready for the concert. We reached the school auditorium at 6pm. We practiced for a while outside the auditorium until 7pm. The concert started at 7pm. It was full of the most skillful and wonderful performances. Finally our turn came. We were really nervous. We danced the

best we could and the performance was greatly appreciated by the audience. Jonathan congratulated me after my performance. I was very happy to hear that. We were so happy with ourselves after the performance. We were now waiting eagerly for the other performances now. I met a new girl named Joana during the concert. She was also going to perform. I love her performance. She made friends with our whole group. It was a very nice feeling.

At the end we had Jonathan's drum performance and Oh My! He was exceptional. I congratulated him after his performance. He was very happy to receive this compliment. After the concert ended, we met Jonathan's mom who congratulated both of us. When we reached home, I wasn't hungry at all. But Sourabh had the Austrian noodles. After that we went to sleep as we were very tired.

Jonathan had no school next day as it was Saturday. But a trip to a museum which had houses from different time periods was planned for us. We had to reach the school entrance at 10am. We went to the museum by bus. It was a great museum and I absolutely loved it. After the visit, we returned home and had lunch. Today, Jonathan's mom had prepared French pancakes called crepes. It was very similar to the dosa we have here. After

lunch, we again went to play Table Tennis where we were joined by our friends, Gautam and Varad, along with their host, Fabienne. After returning, we got ready as we had to perform the concert once again that day. The concert that day was even better. We were so proud of ourselves. The audience had loved us. We were very happy in that town. We never wanted to leave it. We wanted to stay there forever.

But as soon as I had said that I realized that we were going to leave tomorrow. I just happened to lay awake all night. I almost cried then. I didn't want to leave these people, this school and this town. And finally the morning dawned.

We were told to wait at the bus stop at 8am. We arrived there after having our breakfast. And then, I could no longer hold my tears back. I was going to miss everyone around there. I started sobbing I didn't want to leave Jonathan or his family but I promised him that I would return. I would. Jonathan made me smile when he said that he was going

So, Numbrecht was one of the best things that ever happened to me. I hope to visit that town again as soon as possible. I miss the people, the school and everyone very much. I promised everyone there that I would return.

I am sure that I would!

## मराठी सहभागी विद्यार्थ्यांची मनोगते

### फॅमिली स्टे



### ऐश्वर्या साने

हे शब्द जरी ऐकले तरी मन भरून येतं. मुळात माझं या ट्रीपला जाण्याचं कारणच 'फॅमिली स्टे' होतं. मी गेली ४ वर्षांपासून जर्मन शिकत आहे. मला त्यांची व इतर सर्व गोष्टी माहित करून घ्यायच्या होत्या. मला सर्वात जास्त उत्सुकता फॅमिली स्टेबद्दल होती. पण दूर सुरू होण्याच्या आदल्या दिवशीपर्यंत मला फॅमिली मिळाली नव्हती. माझा खूप विरस झाला होता कारण फॅमिली स्टे साठीच मी दूरला जाणार होते आणि म्हणून माझं रडून पण झालं होतं. अखेर दूरला जायच्या दिवशी म्हणजे ३ मे ला मला Elgin (my host mother) चा मेल आला. तो मेल बघूनच मी आनंदाने उड्या मारायला लागले. त्यानंतर आम्ही एकमेकांबद्दल माहिती सांगितली. मी तिला जेव्हा सांगितलं, की मी जर्मन शिकते तेव्हा ती खूप खुश झाली. त्यामुळे आता मी पूर्णपणे तयार होते दूरला जायला.

दूरचे पहिले दोन दिवस मस्त गेले आणि मग आम्ही पोचलो Numbrecht मध्ये सगळेच जण खूप एक्सायटेड होते की

फॅमिली कशी असेल? आपण कसे राहू त्यांच्याबरोबर. ७ वाजता मला आणि स्नेहलला माझी होस्ट मदर घ्यायला आली आणि आम्ही घरी गेलो. सुरुवातीला सगळंच खूप वेगळं वाटत होतं. खूप मजा येत होती त्यांच्याशी जर्मनमध्ये गप्पा मारायला. त्यादिवशी एल्जिनने आमच्यासाठी चिकन आणि सॅलड केलं होतं. ते खूप चविष्ट होते. यावेळची एक आठवण. मला चिकन हाताने खायला आवडतं. नवीन देशात त्यांच्या शिष्टाचारात ते कदाचित बसत नाही. म्हणून मी जरा दबकतच एल्जिनला हळूच विचारलं, 'durfen wir mit den Handen essen? (Are we allowed to eat with our hands?) ती हसली आणि माझ्याकडे प्रेमाने बघून म्हणाली, 'येस, शुअर.' आणि मी माझे आवडते चिकन हाताने खायला लागले. बघायला गेलं तर ही खूप छोटी गोष्ट आहे, पण आपल्याकडे आलेल्या अतिथींना कम्फर्टेबली राहता यावं हा सूक्ष्म विचार ते करतात, ही किती मोठी गोष्ट आहे. मग सगळ्यांशी नीट ओळख झाली. सगळे म्हणजे माझे होस्ट फोदर जॉन, दोन भाऊ सेबस्टियन आणि बेनेडिक्ट आणि आई एल्जिन. त्यादिवशी थोड्या गप्पा झाल्या आणि आम्ही त्यांना त्यांच्यासाठी आणलेली गिफ्ट्स दिली. रांगोळी स्टिकर्स, अत्तर, टी शर्ट्स, अगरबत्ती आणि मँगो पल्प आणि त्यांना हे सगळं जर्मनमध्ये समजावून सांगताना खूप मजा आली. रांगोळी स्टीकर त्यांनी लगेच घराबाहेर लावलं आणि मग आम्ही सगळे झोपायला

गेलो.

पुढच्या दिवशी एल्जिनने आम्हाला ७.३० वाजता शाळेत सोडलं. तेव्हाची एक आठवण. त्यादिवशी सकाळी आम्हाला खूप थंडी वाजत होती आणि मी पायमोजे घातले नव्हते. तेव्हा माझी होस्टमदर मला हळूच खोटंखोटं चिडून म्हणाली, “काय हे, मोजे घाल आधी. केवढी थंडी आहे. मी तुझी आई आहे. त्यामुळे तुला माझे ऐकावेच लागेल.” हे ऐकून मला वाटलं, खरंच माझी आईच माझ्याशी बोलते आहे. मग शाळेत गेल्यानंतर माझी एका अत्यंत प्रेमळ मुलीशी ओळख झाली. मेडिया. ती माझ्या भारतीय मैत्रीणीची, फाल्गुनीची लॅंग्विजिनिंग होती. मी तिच्याशी जर्मनमध्ये खूप गप्पा मारल्या. आमची घट्ट मैत्री झाली. मग १० वाजता माझं आणि पारूलचं प्रेझेंटेशन होतं. डिफरन्ट क्लासिकल डान्सफॉर्मस् हा आमचा विषय होता. ते विषय करतानाच मी कथक शिकत असल्यामुळे कथक करून पण दाखवायचे आणि मग शेवटी आम्ही सगळ्या स्टुडंट्सना बोलावून त्यांना मी बॉलीवूड डान्स शिकवायचे. इतका अविस्मरणीय अनुभव होता हा, की जर्मन लोकांसमोर जर्मनमध्ये प्रेझेंटेशन करणं, त्यांच्या प्रश्नांना उत्तर देणं, त्यांना सगळ्यांना माझा डान्ससुद्धा खूपच आवडला. आमचं प्रेझेंटेशन सर्वांना इतकं आवडलं, की दोन दिवस आम्हाला बारा वेळेला प्रेझेंटेशन करावं लागलं. काही वर्गामधल्या मुलांनी माझ्याबरोबर फोटोसुद्धा काढले. मला अगदी ‘सुपरस्टार’सारखे वाटत होते. मग त्या दिवशी घरी गेल्यावर खूप गप्पा झाल्या. आणि मग सर्व होस्ट फॅमिलींसाठी पिझ्झा पार्टीचे आयोजन केले होते. खरंतर माझे होस्ट फादर आणि होस्ट ब्रदर्स येणार नव्हते. कारण ते दिवसभर काम करून खूप थकलेले होते. पण फक्त मी त्यांना यायचा आग्रह केला म्हणून माझ्यासाठी ते आले. माझ्या आनंदासाठी ते दमलेले असतानाही आले. मला खूप ‘लकी’ वाटत होते.

पुढच्या दिवशीसुद्धा शाळेत प्रेझेंटेशन झाले आणि माझा एक जर्मन मित्रपण झाला. फेलिक्स स्टॅक. त्याच्याशी पण जर्मनमध्ये गप्पा मारून खूप मजा आली. त्याने जर्मन संस्कृती, शाळापद्धती या सगळ्याची माहिती दिली. त्याच दिवशी आमचा कल्चरल प्रोग्रॅमसुद्धा होता. तो पण खूप छान झाला. दुसऱ्या दिवशी मी, एल्जिन, सेबास्टियन आणि स्नेहल खरेदीला गेलो. खूप चॉकलेट्स घेतली. सेबास्टियनबरोबर मी फुटबॉल खेळले. सायकलिंग केलं. त्यादिवशी लंचला खूप मजा आली. एल्जिनने आमच्यासाठी मुद्दाम बिर्यानी केली होती. आणि मला पोटॅटो सॅलड खायचं होतं. ते पण केलं होतं. त्यादिवशी खूप गप्पा झाल्या. अरेंज मॅरेज विषयी बोलणं झालं. महाराष्ट्रीयन लग्न कसं असतं ते मी सांगितलं. विधी म्हणजे काय हे सांगितलं. आणि मला हे सगळं जर्मनमध्ये

सांगता येतंय हे पाहून खूप छान आणि समाधानकारक वाटलं. असं वाटत होतं, की मी माझ्या स्वतःच्या घरीच आहे. ते खरंच माझे पालक आहेत. मग आम्ही त्यांचा लग्नाचा अल्बम पाहिला. त्या दिवशी पण संध्याकाळी आमचा ‘कल्चरल प्रोग्रॅम’ झाला. माझ्या फॅमिलाला माझा डान्स खूप आवडला. त्यांनी मला घरीसुद्धा डान्स करायला सांगितला. त्या दिवशी मी मेडियाच्या घरी जाऊन आले. तिच्या आईबाबांशी, भावाशी खूप गप्पा मारल्या. सगळ्यांनी मला जर्मनबद्दल कॉम्प्लिमेंट्स दिल्या. ते ऐकून मला खूप आनंद झाला. मग मी माझ्या घरी गेले आणि आम्ही गप्पा मारून झोपलो. पुढच्या दिवशी आठ वाजता आम्हाला सगळ्यांना निघायचे होते. जाण्याच्या आधी मी त्यांच्याबरोबर खूप फोटो काढले. रडूनही झालं. त्यांच्याबरोबरचे हे संबंध सदैव असेच राहतील. भारतात आल्यावरही आम्ही व्हाॅट्स अॅप, फेसबुकमुळे संपर्कात असतो. स्काइपवरून व्हिडिओ कॉल केल्यावर त्यांना इतक्या दिवसांनी बघितल्यावर मला खूप आनंद झाला. त्यांची घरातल्या इतर मंडळींशी ओळख झाली.

किती लिहू आणि काय काय लिहू? कितीही लिहिलं तरी खूप काही लिहायचं राहिलंय असे वाटणारी ही ट्रीप खरोखरीच अतिशय वेगळी आणि सुंदर अनुभूती देणारी झाली. आणि ती मला ज्यांच्यामुळे करायला मिळाली त्या केळकर मॅडम यांची मी सदैव ऋणी राहीन. या ट्रीपच्या आठवणी कायम आनंद देत राहतील.

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## German Host Partners-

Medea Krassowka

Es war wunderschön mit meinem indischen Gastmädchen, vor allem, wenn sie für uns gesungen, getanzt oder gekocht hat und es war (auch menschlich) eine Erfahrung, die ich für kein Geld der Welt bekommen könnte!

Lisa Mesch

Es war eine sehr schöne Erfahrung indische Austauschschüler zu haben! Wir hatten viel Spaß bei unseren Ausflügen wie zum Beispiel Schloss Homburg aber auch beim Pizza essen.

Wir haben zusammen gesungen und meine Familie und ich konnten indisches Essen probieren.

Ihren Auftritt beim Szenenwechsel werde ich nie vergessen!

Froh bei diesem Austausch mitgemacht zu haben, kann ich nur "Danke" sagen, dass sie gekommen sind.

Laura Sievers

That I agreed to take part in the cultural exchange programme was one of my best decisions in my life. Even though it lasted only four days I had a very good time and experienced a few "little adventures" which I'll never forget. I didn't only learn many interesting things about India; I learnt how to dance a traditional Bollywood dance and to see Nürnberg with different eyes! I had so much fun with my exchange partner and we became friends very fast. Although I didn't want to cry when he left Nürnberg, I had to. I wished that that he and the whole group would have stayed a few days longer. I'm really looking forward to go to India and see him again. If someone would ask me whether I would do this cultural exchange programme again, I would agree without hesitation.

Kim Schwerin

Da ich selber Familienmitglieder aus Indien habe, war es gar keine Frage, ob wir Gastkinder aus Indien aufnehmen oder nicht. Für uns war es sofort sicher, dass wir gerne Austauschschüler aus diesem Land begrüßen würden.

Als Frau Rautenbach uns dann die Handy-Nummern der Schüler gegeben hat, und ich die Namen der Mädchen erfuhr, die bei mir wohnen würden, war ich sehr aufgeregt und gespannt mit ihnen zu schreiben. Auch Indien hat WhatsApp!

Ich habe ab diesem Tag wirklich jeden Tag und jede Minute in meiner Freizeit mit den beiden Mädchen geschrieben. Dort konnte ich schon einiges über die beiden erfahren. Lustig fand ich es, dass sie sagten, sie würden in einer kleinen Stadt neben Mumbai leben, die 5 Millionen Einwohner hat.

Als dann der Tag der Ankunft gekommen war, waren alle aus meiner Familie sehr aufgeregt. Wir haben uns gefragt, wie es denn sein wird und ob das mit unseren Englisch-Künsten hinhaut.

Aber als sie dann endlich bei uns waren, ist uns aufgefallen, dass das gar nicht so schwer ist und man sich sehr gut mit ihnen unterhalten - wenn auch manchmal mit Händen und Füßen - und viel Spaß haben kann.

Ich habe die Tage und Ausflüge mit den beiden sehr genossen und es war schön, auch mal die anderen indischen Gäste kennen zu lernen. Es gibt bestimmt noch so viel, was wir uns hätten erzählen können.

Allgemein hatten hoffentlich alle genauso viel Spaß wie ich.

Ich hätte sie gerne noch länger hier behalten, um noch mehr mit ihnen zu unternehmen. Leider waren alle Tage so gut organisiert, dass leider keine Zeit für private Ausflüge mit der Familie war.

Aber ich bin mit allen Schülern weiterhin in Kontakt und freue mich wahnsinnig auf den hoffentlich

stattfindenden Rücktausch 2016.

Ich würde mich riesig freuen, ihre Familien mal kennenzulernen.

Auch interessant sind bestimmt die Kultur und vor allem die indische Tradition, von der ich immer noch viel zu wenig weiß.

Jonathan Bischof

Der Besuch der Inder war eine der besten und interessantesten Erfahrungen, die man machen kann. Wir haben viel über Indien gelernt, wie z.B. indische Musik, Küche, Politik, Schule und Religion, aber vor allem war es toll zu sehen, dass wir unseren Gästen in vielerlei Hinsicht wirklich ähnlich sind. Es gab viele gemeinsame Interessen, wie Fußball, Tischtennis und Musik, über die wir uns austauschen konnten. Der krönende Abschluss des Besuches waren die beiden Szenenwechsel-Auftritte der Inder. Der letzte - vielleicht nicht ganz so krönende - Abschluss war dann die Abreise am Sonntag. Alle waren traurig, da man in den vergangenen Tagen viele neue Freunde kennengelernt hatte, die jetzt alle schon bald wieder in Indien waren. Doch die meisten von uns bleiben in Kontakt und werden sich schon bald wiedersehen. Vielleicht in Indien?

Meine Erfahrungen mit unseren indischen Gastschülerinnen

Wie fing es an? Alles begann damit, dass unsere Tochter uns fragte, ob wir eine indische Gastschülerin aufnehmen könnten.. Nun haben wir bereits zum dritten Mal indische Schülerinnen zu Gast, dieses Mal zwei Studentinnen.

Wie ist es mit der Verständigung?

Die funktionierte vom ersten „Hallo und herzlich willkommen“, zumal die beiden dieses Mal nicht nur Englisch, sondern auch Deutsch und Französisch sprachen.. Das wurde ein lustiges Kauderwelsch, Verständigungsprobleme gab es nicht.

Was ist „typisch indisch“? Natürlich sind in Indien die Menschen genauso verschieden wie bei uns. Uns erschienen bisher alle unglaublich offen, interessiert, unkompliziert und dankbar für die Erfahrungen, die sie auf ihrer Reise machen konnten, vielleicht speziell in Nürnberg, weil sie dort in Familien untergebracht waren.

Was war schön? Schön war es vom ersten Augenblick an mit Erhalten der Kontaktdaten.. Sofort stellte sich ein intensiver Mailwechsel ein mit Austausch von Fotos der Familien inklusive Haustieren, Erfragen der Vorlieben beim Essen und über welches Mitbringsel aus Indien wir uns denn freuen würden..

Als wir die beiden in Empfang genommen hatten, gab es sofort Gesprächsstoff und das hörte über die ca. vier Tage auch nicht auf. Die Unterhaltung begann auf dem Weg zum Auto und hörte jeden Tag erst gegen

Mitternacht auf, was nicht daran lag, dass es nichts mehr zu erzählen gegeben hätte. Wir hatten unendlich viel Spaß miteinander und haben selten mit Besuch so viel gelacht...

Was war interessant? Natürlich war es für uns interessant zu erfahren, wie die beiden in Indien leben, über ihre Wünsche und manche Traditionen zu sprechen, indischen Tanz kennenzulernen und ihre Vorstellungen, was denn „typisch deutsch“ sei, nämlich z.B. Kartoffelsalat, Bier, Schokolade und Dimml. Wir kamen manchmal ganz schön ins Überlegen z.B. über die Frage, wo in Nümbrecht es denn etwas typisch Deutsches zu kaufen gäbe...

oder nach Katzenfutter ohne Rindfleisch zu suchen, eine der beiden wollte ihrer Katze nämlich deutsches Katzenfutter mitbringen...

oder dass beide sich standhaft weigerten, Socken anzuziehen und lieber kalte Füße und Halsschmerzen in Kauf nahmen...

Was war nicht so schön?... dass wir viel zu wenig Zeit füreinander hatten..

Was geschah beim Abschied? Der Abschied verlief tränenreich und traurig.. Auf jeden Fall wollen wir uns wiedersehen in Indien oder in Deutschland... auf jeden Fall aber per Skype..

Und dann? Seitdem schreiben wir uns fast täglich, obwohl die Europareise längst zu Ende ist und beide wieder zu Hause sind..

Wir haben inzwischen die ganze Familie kennengelernt, wissen, wie ein indischer Geburtstagskuchen aussieht und dass es dort auch Schwarzwälder Kirschtorte gibt, dass „unsere Töchter“ im nächsten Jahr wieder kommen wollen „zu unserem Haus mit Mutter deutsch, Vater deutsch und den Brüdern“, bekommen immer wieder Nachrichten und sprechen über Skype miteinander. Auch unsere Kinder stehen in

lebhaftem Kontakt mit ihren indischen Schwestern.

Sonst noch was? Wir sind dankbar,

-weil es wunderschön ist, im fernen Indien „Töchter“ zu haben und eine Familie zu kennen, in der man willkommen ist...

-einander zu vermissen, weil wir eine zwar sehr kurze, aber umso intensivere, komplikationslose, interessante und fröhliche Zeit miteinander gehabt haben

-und morgens auf Whatsapp „guten Morgen Mutter deutsch“ zu lesen..

Außerdem ist es einfach schön, ein Stückchen der großen weiten Welt in einem kleinen Nümbrechter Dörfchen zu Besuch zu haben...

Jederzeit wieder!!!

Elgin Caspar-Rother

## Alexa Bose

Für mich war der Indische Besuch eine wunderbare Erfahrung. Wir hatten in diesen 4 Tagen unfassbar viel Spaß, und es entstanden wunderbare neue Freundschaften. Es war unheimlich Interessant die Indische Kultur aus erster Hand kennenzulernen und sich die Zeit in der Pause mit Henna malen zu vertreiben.

Die Museums besuche waren aus meiner Sicht leider etwas Langweilig, was jedoch nichts an der Stimmung in unserer Gruppe änderte. Bei dem Szenen Wechsel konnten wir die eindrucksvollen Bollywood Tänze ansehen und später am Abend bei Freunden die fremde, aber dennoch sehr Stimmungsvolle Musik genießen. Von unseren Indischen Gästen lernten einige von uns Traditionelle Tänze und außerdem wurden viele Vorurteile über das Indische Leben vertrieben. Egal wie schwer der Abschied war, ich bin einfach glücklich bei diesem Projekt mitgemacht zu haben. Außerdem bin unfassbar dankbar das ich neue Leute und eine ganz neue Kultur kennenlernen durfte.

## Parents' Feedback



My daughter, Parul had gone for the 11th study tour to Germany and other countries with Savita madam and Shilpa madam. It has been a week since she is back but she is still to come out of the trip mode. The experiences that she encountered during the tour form much of our discussion on the dining table every evening. The family stay, the visit to various countries, the group's performances in school, the bonhomie of the entire group, this and much, much more. Since Parul wishes to pursue a career in foreign languages, she had much to gain from the tour. The knowledge of local dialects, the customs, the lifestyle,

the education system, the local history, etc has given her an enriching experience. Savita madam and Shilpa madam were very caring guardians during the entire tour and I am sure that their valuable experiences which they shared with students must have certainly been the highlight of the tour. The pre and post tour meetings with parents and students were an excellent idea as the parents were also kept in the loop throughout. I went in flashback mode during the post tour meeting when a film about the tour and

the photographs were shown and when the children shared their experiences. I became nostalgic.

The year 1997-98 seemed just like it was yesterday. I was one of the 18 members around the world selected

for a course ' Management of urban infrastructure ' in Germany on a Carl Duisberg Gessellschaft scholarship. With my wife pregnant, it was a hard decision to make. I decided to go for the course. A strenuous language course in Saarbrencken followed by classes in Stuttgart and company training in Bremen was what the course was about. I had learnt that the Germans are reserved and shy. But I realised that you can win the Germans if you speak their language. I did precisely that and the Germans warmed up to me. It is a matter of pride for me that I could top both - the language course and also the technical course. I shared a good camaraderie with many Germans who have remained friends of mine to this day. Germans too are very inquisitive about our country, our customs, the unity in diversity of our country. It's just the matter of getting close to them. The experience that I had from that tour was invaluable and has helped me a lot in my career thus far. This precisely was the reason why I jumped up to the opportunity of sending Parul for a study tour. I am sure she and all the other students have mellowed from this experience. A window to a new world outside our world has been opened to them and it is now up to them to grab this golden opportunity with both hands. I am looking forward to such a tour for my younger daughter, Mahee two to three years from here

5 stars from me to Savita madam and Shilpa madam  
!!! Take a bow, Madams !!!

Aniruddha Pawaskar  
9689931324

### My kid's Europe Tour



Summer vacation is something which each one of us always looks forward to. In school life, it is more so exciting and enjoyable time to spend. My son, Hrishikesh, was appearing for his board exams this year and as we do every year, we discussed about vacation this year many times. But this time, we wanted to make it a bit special. Some information of this

'exchange' program and our excitement grew. Once we came to know the details from Shilpa madam, it was an instant 'YES' for Hrishikesh to be part of it. We enrolled!

Right from the start, where we asked numerous questions and queries, to the orientation programs, to travel information and arrangements, to conducting this tour, it was splendidly thoughtful, organized and showed lot of experience of the organisers in conducting such wonderful but not-so-easy activity.

Having said this, on the day of departure (3rd May), we were slightly tensed. Although, Hrishikesh had travelled (without us but with some group) to adventure camps here and there in India, travelling abroad without us and too for almost three weeks, six countries made us worry a bit.

But of course, the reassurance was there from the organisers and friends travelling together. Thanks to the orientation programs and practice sessions, a very good team was already formed prior to travelling.

During the tour, we had very little contact with Hrishikesh. From all his activities, travelling, excitement and time difference, we could hardly speak with him 5-10 minutes in a day. But whatever we could speak, day by day we realized the unique experience he was going through. Most of the places visited were suitable to kids of his age depicting the value it was adding to him. From gardens to cathedrals, chocolate factory to BMW workshop, Berlin wall to Mount Titlis it was wonderfully thought out and very well executed plan. And yes, not to forget Allianz Arena, world famous football stadium, which is very close to Hrishikesh's (and probably everybody's) heart. Just awesome! May be, once in a life time experience for some.

But the show stealer was the family stay! This surely is once in a life time experience for all. Being able to spend some time with families based in Europe, understand their culture, habits, views and much more is something we had never thought of earlier. As soon as we came to know about family stay, we also came to know how immensely beneficial it can be. The chosen families were excellent; their hospitality and friendliness was appreciable. The programs in their schools, where either of them expressed their own country, was one of the highlights of the tour. Kudos!!

Often during the conversations we had with Hrishikesh, he was so happy, excited and enjoying the tour, he would mention about not coming back to India. But came back safely on 20th!

We found this concept, planning, communication & execution extremely good. Shilpa madam and Savita madam worked very hard to make this happen. Thanks!! SOIC played their part in Visa formalities, flight bookings, hotel bookings and travel bookings within Europe. Each of the travelling and hotel facilities were five star worth rating. (Especially, the hotel in Prague which Hrishikesh absolutely loved!)

It was memorable experience to all the kids as well all the parents. We hope the team keeps on arranging such wonderful programs in years to come. Sincere and best wishes!

We would like to mention, for any help required in future, we would be more than happy to contribute.

Thank you for such a delightful tour and once again best wishes for future endeavours! Keep up the excellent work!!

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## “युरोप ट्रीप- आमचे स्वप्न”

स्टुडंट कल्चरल अँड एक्सचेंज अँक्टिव्हिटीज- युरोप-जर्मन ट्रीप - मुलीला पाठवणार का? असा फोन आल्यावर मनात एक आनंदाची लकेर उठली. ही माझ्या मुलीसाठी, सोहासाठी चांगली संधी होती. सोहा अकरावी आर्ट्स, विषय - जर्मन व दुसरी गोष्ट म्हणजे गेली दहा वर्ष ती कथकचे शिक्षण घेत आहे. त्यामुळे तिला ह्या संधीचा पुरेपूर उपयोग होईल असे वाटले.

सोहाच्या बाबांचे ‘युरोप ट्रीप’ हे स्वप्नच आहे. या स्वप्नाचा योग मुलीला येत आहे, म्हणजे दुधात साखर!

युरोपमध्ये कोणती ठिकाणे बघणार हे कळल्यावर बाबांनी आम्हाला गप्पांमधून छोटी ‘युरोप ट्रीप’ घडवलीच. त्यांच्याच उत्साहामुळे सोहाच्या ट्रीपवर शिक्षामोर्तब झाले.

युरोप ट्रीपला सोहा जाणार हे ठरल्यापासून काय व कसे घडत गेले हेच कळले नाही. एकटी जाणार म्हणून मनात थोडी धाकधूक होतीच. पण अकरावीची परीक्षा होईपर्यंत हा विषय काढायचा नाही असे ठरले. पण मन शांत बसायला तयार नव्हते.

एकदाची अकरावीची परीक्षा पार पडली आणि युरोप ट्रीपचे वारे जोरात वाहू लागले. ट्रीपसाठी लागणाऱ्या महत्त्वाच्या गोष्टींपैकी दोन गोष्टी- पासपोर्ट आणि व्हिसा! पण ह्या महत्त्वाच्या गोष्टी डजढड चुटकीसरशी सोडवल्या. त्यानंतर महत्त्वाची गोष्ट म्हणजे खरेदी!

खरेदी करताना खाऊ काय बरोबर हवा याची भलीमोठी यादी तयार झाली. कारण खाद्यसंस्कृतीचा प्रथम अमेरिकेचा अनुभव होताच. भारतीय खाद्यसंस्कृतीची जिभेची चव सहजासहजी बदलायची हे मोठे आव्हानच होते! हा प्रश्न डॉ. सविता केळकर व शिल्पा रेगे यांनी सोडवला. सर्व विद्यार्थ्यांना एक भारतीय पदार्थ आणण्यास सांगितले. सर्वांत सोपे! ओझे कमी, वजनकाटा वर जायची भीती नाही व सर्वांना सर्व पदार्थ मिळतीलच याची ग्वाही!

अखेर ट्रीपला जायचा दिवस ठरला. सकाळपासून गडबड सुरू होतीच. एखाद्या ‘सामू’प्रमाणे सूचनांचा भडिमार सुरू होताच. अर्थात या सूचना काळजीपोटी होत्या, हे कळण्याइतकी ती मोठी होती. घरात पसारा करणारी मुलगी सातासमुद्रापलीकडे कशी राहणार? जर्मन लोकांमधल्या शिस्तीला सूट होणार का? वेळेवर झोपणार, उठणार का? खाण्यासाठी मागे कोण लागणार? उपाशी राहिली तर? असे अनेक प्रश्न मनात गर्दी करत होते.

अखेर सोहाची बस सुटली व मनातले विचार तेथेच थोपवून धरले, ते अगदी सोहा परत येईपर्यंत...

पंधरा दिवसांच्या प्रवासानंतर सोहा भेटली. जेटलॅगचा विचार न करता, एक रात्र आम्ही बोलत बसलो. किती भरभरून ती ट्रीपबद्दल सांगत होती. अगदी पुणे सोडले ते परत पुण्यात पोहोचेपर्यंत सर्व.

हे सर्व ऐकत असताना जाणवले ते आम्हाला दिलेले शेड्यूल व त्यांनी ठरवलेले शेड्यूल तंतोतंत एकच होते. त्यामध्ये कोणताच बदल केला नव्हता. ठरल्या वेळेप्रमाणे व ठिकाणांप्रमाणेच सर्व घडत

होते. खूपच नवीन गोष्टी पाहायला, अनुभवायला मिळाल्या. शिस्तीच्या वातावरणातूनसुद्धा ह्या मुलांना त्यांचा एकत्रित वेळ मिळत होता.

मौज, मजा, खाणे, पिणे, दंगा सर्वांची लुटालूट होत होती. हे फोटा बघताना जाणवले.

जर्मन फॅमिलीत असताना, सोहाचा फोन आला, ‘माझी नवी फॅमिली खूप छान आहे. याचा प्रत्यय ती पुण्यात आल्यावरसुद्धा आला. सध्या तिची दोन घरे आहेत. एक पुण्यात व दुसरे जर्मनीमध्ये.

सोहा आल्यापासून खुश होती. तिच्यात झालेला बदल जाणवत होता. आत्मविश्वास वाढला होता.

रोज सकाळी ‘आईऽऽ चहाऽऽ!’ ही आरोळी थांबली होती. चहाची जागा जर्मन स्टाइलने कॉफीने घेतली होती. आता मलासुद्धा आयती कॉफी मिळत होती. नाष्टा करताना अरबट चरबट खाण्यापेक्षा, ती जागा फ्रुट ज्यूसने घेतली होती. सर्वांत महत्त्वाची गोष्ट पहिले काही दिवस कोणतीही गोष्ट करताना माझी परवानगी मागत होती. मला जरा आश्चर्य वाटले! आपल्या भारतीय संस्कृतीत ‘आई’ गृहित धरली जाते. परवानगी मागणे तर दूरच...

ट्रीपमध्ये खरेदी करण्याचा अनुभव सोहाने घेतलाच. किती व काय खरेदी करावे हा विचार तिने केला आहे याची जाणीव झाली. या ट्रीपमध्ये ‘व्यावहारिक’जगात सोहा सहज निभाव लावू शकेल याची खात्री पटली.

कल्चरल अँक्टिव्हिटी सादर करताना सोहा अजून उत्तम पद्धतीने कथक सादर करते. सादर केलेला भाग काही अंशच होता, याची थोडी खंत वाटली. कारण सोहामध्ये तेवढी क्षमता आहे. पण या क्षमतेचा वापर लाजेखातर केला नाही का? हा विचार आलाच. पण जर्मन लोकांनी तिचे घुंगरू घेतले, न्याहाळले, प्रश्न विचारले हा आलेला अनुभव तिला खूप काही शिकवून गेला. अंगात असलेली ‘कला’ सादर करता आली पाहिजे याची जाण आली.

‘युरोप ट्रीप’चे अनुभव लिहा, असे लेखन करायला सांगितल्यावर एका दिवसात, एके ठिकाणी असून लिहिलेले सोहाचे लेख अपूर्वच म्हणावे लागेल. दहावीचा अभ्यास एवढ्या नेटाने केला नसेल.

सोहामध्ये झालेला बदल, आत्मविश्वास हळूहळू बाहेर पडत आहे व तो अनुभवता येत आहे हे लक्षात आले.

याचे खरे श्रेय आहे शिल्पा रेगे व डॉ. सविता केळकर यांना. त्यांनी आयोजित केलेल्या नियोजित व अविस्मरणीय युरोप ट्रीपला!

त्यांच्या संयोजनाने इतर देशांमध्येसुद्धा ‘कल्चरल एक्सचेंज प्रोग्रॅम’ सुरू व्हावेत ही मनापासून सदिच्छा!!

अंजली कार्येकर

## “पुरा जर्मनी ठुगदा...”

परवाच २०१५ची ‘स्टडी टूर’ जर्मनीसह युरोपमध्ये जाऊन सुखरूप परत आल्याप्रित्यर्थ गेटटुगेदर होतं. सगळी मुलं अजून पूर्णपणे भारतात परतलेलीच नव्हती. साहजिकच ‘युरोप स्टडी टूर’बरोबर ज्या सुंदर देशात फिरले, सुंदर माणसांना भेटले, जर्मनीतल्या घरांमध्ये चार दिवस



राहिले. त्या सगळ्यातून ती लवकर बाहेर येतील असे वाटतही नाही!!

ह्यावेळी माझ्या मुलीचं ऐश्वर्याचं सिलेक्शन झालं आणि मी जराश्या टेन्शनमध्येच फर्ग्युसन कॉलेजमधल्या 'दि ग्रेट ऑर्गनायझर, मेन कोअर अशा केळकर मॅडमना भेटायला गेले... आणि काय सांगू? पहिल्या पाचच मिनिटात मनावरचा ताण पळून गेला.

स्टडी टूरचा इतका दांडगा अनुभव असलेल्या केळकर मॅडमच्या समजावण्यातून जो स्पष्टपणे जाणवत होता. मुलांच्या व्हिसाची तयारी, तिकडच्या राहण्याच्या सोयी, स्टुडंट एक्स्चेंजचे चार दिवस, तिथल्या चालीरिती, वातावरण आणि या सगळ्याशी आपण कसे मिळते जुळते घ्यायचे! शिवाय त्या व शिल्पा मॅडमबरोबर असणारच होत्या. एसओटीसी तर्फे असणारे व जर्मनीतली सगळी जबाबदारी सांभाळणारे श्री. पेंडसे सरही सोबत असणार होते, हे ऐकून निश्चिंतपणे ऐश्वर्याला स्टडी टूरला पाठवण्यासाठीची तयारी झाली व पुढील २० दिवसांसाठी ती 'युरोप स्टडी टूर'ला रवाना झालीसुद्धा...

मुळातच जर्मन शिकत असल्याने तिला थोडे हायसे वाटतच होते, पण तरीही तिकडचा अललशर्पी, ऋश्रीशपलू जमेल का? जर्मनमध्ये गप्पा मारता येतील का? हे प्रश्न मनात होतेच. पण काय आश्चर्य... तिकडे गेल्यावर, हळूहळू बोलायला लागल्यावर बोलणे समजत गेले आणि आत्मविश्वास वाढला. कुठल्याही जर्मन व्यक्तीकडून 'तू छान जर्मन बोलतेस' हे ऐकल्यावर आनंदासह तिचा उत्साह वाढला आणि आत्मविश्वासही!

जर्मनीमधील खोलीशालहीं मधे ऐश्वर्याला चार दिवसांसाठी राहायला जे घर मिळालं ते खूप छान होतं. अवघ्या चार दिवसांत तिने त्यांना व त्यांनी तिला आपलेसे केले. त्यांच्या चालीरिती, वातावरण, शिष्टता, सभ्यता आणि आपली संस्कृती यांची चर्चेसह देवाणघेवाण झाली. ऐश्वर्या कथक शिकत असल्याने तिने कथक व बॉलिवूड डान्सची प्रात्यक्षिके दाखवून सर्वांचीच मने जिंकली व कलेला भाषा नसते हे पटलं. तसेच कुठलीही कला ही स्वतःला व दुसऱ्याला किती आनंद देऊ शकते हेही अनुभवलं... कला हा दोन मनांना, माणसांना, देशाला जोडणारा दुवा आहे हेही खरं!

जर्मनीतल्या चार दिवसांबरोबरच ऑस्ट्रिया, स्वित्झर्लंड, क्रेश रिपब्लिक, हॉलंड इ. नवनवीन देश त्यांच्या सौंदर्यासह व वैविध्यांसह बघताना ऐश्वर्यासह सगळीच मुलं हरखून गेली होती. ह्या सर्व टूर दरम्यान केळकर मॅडम व शिल्पा मॅडम ह्या मुलांना खूप छान मार्गदर्शन आणि त्यांची काळजी घेत होत्या. आणि म्हणूनच आम्ही सर्व पालक इथे निर्धास्त व वेगळ्याच समाधानात होतो.

अशा ह्या स्टडी टूरस ह्या वयोगटातील विद्यार्थ्यांसाठी खूप उपयुक्त आहेत. ते जे शिकत आहेत ते सर्व त्यांना अनुभवायला मिळालं, की त्यांना खूप हुरूप येतो. टूरला जाण्याआधीची ऐश्वर्या आणि टूरहून परत आलेली ऐश्वर्या ह्यातला सुंदर फरक मी बघत आहे आणि त्याबद्दल खरंच केळकर आणि शिल्पा मॅडमना मनापासून धन्यवाद! ही सगळी मुलं परदेशात जबाबदारीने घेऊन जाऊन सुखरूप परत आणणे ही मोठी जोखीम

त्या लीलया पार पाडतात. आणि श्री गणरायाच्या आशीर्वादाने ह्यापुढेही पार पाडत राहतील ह्याच त्यांना मनापासून शुभेच्छा!!

ऐश्वर्या परत आल्यावर तिच्या जर्मन मदरशी फोनवर बोलताना खूप छान वाटले. कोण कुठले राहणारे आपण... चार दिवस आपली मुलगी जर्मनीत जाते आणि परत आल्यावर अगदी मनापासून म्हणजे, की "माझी आता दोन घरे. एक भारतात आणि एक जर्मनीत..." हे विश्वची माझे घर, विश्वबंधुता! ह्या संकल्पनेचं इतकं छान उदाहरण असू शकतं का? भिन्न देशातले भिन्न लोक मनाने एक होणं, खूपच ग्रेट आहे हे सगळं!

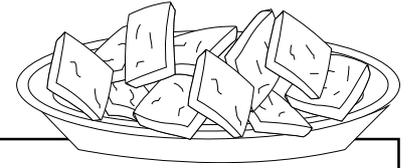
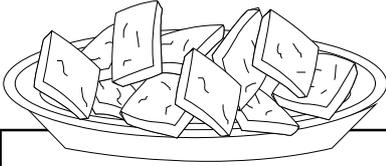
परवाच्या गेटुगेदरमध्ये टूरमधले सगळे फोटो व व्हिडीओज बघताना, मुलांच्या बरोबरीनेच आमच्याही चेहऱ्यावर तोच आनंद फुलला होता. थॅक्यू केळकर मॅडम... ऐश्वर्याला हा युनिक आणि ग्रेट अनुभव दिल्याबद्दल!! ऐश्वर्याने केलेले कथकचे तत्कार आणि ते बघून आनंदणारे जर्मन शाळेतील स्टुडंट्स, शिक्षक, पाहुणे आणि नंतर तिच्याबरोबरीने आनंदाने नाचणारे सर्वजण बघून खूप आनंद झाला... जेव्हा जेव्हा हा आनंद आठवेल तेव्हा तेव्हा मन आनंदाने म्हणत नाचेल, "पुरा जर्मनी ठुमकदा..."

कौमुदी चारुदत्त साने

## यशस्वी युरोप दौरा

माझी मुलगी पारुल नुकतीच जर्मनीसह इतर देशांचा अभ्यासदौरा करून आली. पारुल हिला जर्मनी तसेच इतर परदेशी भाषांमध्ये करिअर करायचे आहे. दौऱ्याचे संपूर्ण नियोजन श्रीमती सविता केळकर करणार आहेत ही बाब मन सुखाणणारी होती. एकतर फर्ग्युसन कॉलेजमध्ये पारुलला त्या जर्मन शिकवत होत्या व सर्वात महत्त्वाचे म्हणजे त्यांनी आत्तापर्यंत तबबल दहा अभ्यास दौऱ्यांचे यशस्वी नियोजन केले होते. पारुल गेली तो अकरावा दौरा. या दौऱ्यातून खूप मोठा अनुभव मिळणे स्वाभाविक होते. जर्मनी व इतर देशांना भेट देऊन तेथील संस्कृती, भाषा, लोकांची विचारसरणी, सवयी इ.ची माहिती होणार होती. तसेच दौऱ्यादरम्यान श्रीमती सविता केळकर व श्रीमती शिल्पा रेगे यांच्याकडून विविध देशांचा इतिहास, त्यांनी केलेली प्रगती इ.ची देखील माहिती मिळणार होती. दौऱ्यामधील 'फॅमिली स्टे'ही संकल्पना तर फारच अफलातून होती. जमून परिवाराबरोबर राहणे, संवाद साधणे, एकत्रित जेवण करणे इ. मुळे त्या परिवाराशी नाते घट्ट होण्याबरोबरच आपल्या मुलांमध्ये आत्मविश्वासदेखील निर्माण होतो व पारुलच्या बाबतीत आम्हांना हेच दिसून आले. तिच्या झकरीअरफच्या दृष्टीने या दौऱ्याचा तिला खूप फायदा झाला आहे हे नक्कीच. दौरा झाल्यानंतर मुलांसह पालकांनादेखील दौऱ्यासंदर्भात सादरीकरण करण्यात आले हे विशेष. त्यामुळे पालकांनादेखील दौऱ्यासंदर्भातील वृत्तांत 'आँखो देखा हाल' म्हणजेच फोटोंमधून व त्या दिवशी मुलांनी केलेले नृत्य, गायन इ. मधून बघता आला. श्रीमती केळकर व श्रीमती रेगे यांचे मी यशस्वी नियोजनाबद्दल अभिनंदन करू इच्छिते तसेच भविष्यात इतर मुला-मुलींना त्याचा लाभ मिळावा म्हणून दोघींना भविष्यात दौऱ्यांचे नियोजन करण्याची विनंती करते.

पूजा पावसकर



## Khavayyegiri

Days	Name	Sweet	Spicy
Day 1	Shubham & Manali	Khava Poli	Kachori
Day 2	Sourabh & Sharvari	Sanja Poli	Tikhat Mithachya purya
Day 3	Snehal & Gautam	Kajukatli	Methi Theple
Day 7	Pallavi & Apoorva	Bhopla Gharge	Pharsan
Day 8	Tanu & Hrishikesh	Puran Poli	Pohe Chivda
Day 9	Aishwarya & Bhargav	Karanji	Khakra
Day 10	Soha & Varad	Amba Barfi	Batata Chivda
Day 11	Rohit & Parul	Gul Poli	Kadboli
Day 12	Aniket & Falguni	Shankarpali	Khakra
Day 13	Shalaka & Soumitra	Naram Boondi ladoo	Shankarpali
Day 14	Madhura , Saloni & Rutuparna	Besan ladoo	Shev, Chakli
Day 15	Tanvi & Swapna	Chikki	Bakarwadi

### FEEDBACK FROM THE SOTC TOUR LEADER MR. SUDHEER

Dear Mrs Kelkar,

Hi, it was a great pleasure as a tour manager to accompany you and your students to Europe.

One of the highlights of the tour was my stay with Mr Martine Shröder. I managed to interact with him quite extensively and learn more about the German culture which will come in handy on my future trips to Germany. He looked after Mr. Pendse & me very well.

Your students were indeed a credit to you. They gave me a lot of respect which was quite touching. They ensured that I had my meals on time and even provided me with Indian snacks which they had brought along.

All in all it was a truly memorable and enjoyable trip. I wish you and your students all the very best in your endeavours. I thank each one of you from the bottom of my heart. It was an experience which I will cherish in years to come.

Regards.

Yours sincerely.

Sudheer N.C, SOTC Tour Manager.

## From the German Newspaper

### 'फ्रेंड्स ऑफ जर्मनी' चा मेमध्ये अभ्यासदौरा

म. टा. प्रतिनिधी, पुणे येते. या दौऱ्यात सहभागी होण्यासाठी जर्मन भाषेचे जर्मन कुटुंबांमध्ये ज्ञान असणे अनिवार्य नाही. वास्तव्य करून युरोपचा दौऱ्यात जर्मनीतील काही अभ्यास करण्याची संधी शैक्षणिक संस्था, बर्लिन देणारा 'असोसिएशन ऑफ पार्लामेंट, बर्लिन वॉलचे फ्रेंड्स ऑफ जर्मनी' या अवरोष यासह हॉलंड-संस्थेतर्फे मे महिन्यामध्ये बेल्जियम, ऑस्ट्रिया-अभ्यासदौरा आयोजित स्विट्झर्लंड चेक रिपब्लिक करण्यात आला आहे. ३ या देशांच्या भेटांचा समावेश ते २० मे या कालावधीत आहे. अधिक माहितीसाठी हा दौरा होईल. यंदा या संपर्क : डॉ. सविता केळकर उपक्रमाचे ११वे वर्ष १४२२५२९३३५, शिल्पा रेगे आहे. हा अभ्यासदौरा १३ ११२११०१९८१, श्रीनिवास वर्षावरील विद्यार्थ्यांसाठी पॅडसे ९८८११५४०३१. असून विद्यार्थी व पालकांच्या वेबसाइट : [www.savikelexchange.com](http://www.savikelexchange.com) मुलाखतीनंतर २० जणांची त्यासाठी निवड करण्यात

## LOKAL-ANZEIGER

Mahnenstraße 10  
51545 Waldbröl

Montag, 03.08.2015 12:17 Uhr

Telefon: 02291 / 9203 - 0

Fax: 02291 / 9203 - 60

info@lokalanzeiger.de

### Gymnasiasten wechselten die Szenen



Die indischen Gastschüler waren in ihrem Element.

eif. Nümbrecht. Wenn am Homburgischen Gymnasium auf der Bühne die Szenen gewechselt werden, können sich die Zuschauer traditionell auf ein anspruchsvolles Programm aus Musik, Tanz, Kunst und Sport freuen.

Zum 14. Mal präsentierten die Schülerinnen und Schüler aller Jahrgangsstufen an zwei Abenden ihre "Künste". Unter Regie der Lehrer Christine Meurer und Tobias Hammer hatten sie wochenlang für die

zweieinhalbstündige Aufführung in der ausverkauften Aula geprobt. Das Repertoire umfasste klassische und moderne Musikstücke, Hip-Hop Tanz, klassischen Spitzentanz und Gesang. Höhepunkt war der Auftritt der indischen Gastschüler, die mit ihren "Bollywood-Tänzen" bei den Zuschauern für Begeisterung sorgten.

Aus dem Bereich des Theaters überzeugten ein witziger Sketch zu "Romeo und Julia" - der sehr originelle Poetry Slam "Eine ganz normale Klausur". Akrobatisches Voltigieren auf einem Holzpferd sowie die Shaolin-Kung-Fu Performance und eine Modenschau der Kunstkurse rundeten die Szenenwechsel ab. Moderatoren waren Maureen Markowski und Mats Woermann. Das Instrumental-Ensemble unter Leitung von Mechthild Franke sorgte mit "Bilder eines Dorfes" für einen stimmungsvollen Ausklang.

Letzte Änderung: Donnerstag, 28.05.2015 11:21 Uhr

### मनाचे श्लोक

मना श्रेष्ठ धारिष्ठ्य जीवी धरावें ।  
मना बोलणे नीच सोशित जावें ।  
स्वयें सर्वदा नम्र वाचे वदावें ।  
मना सर्व लोकांसि रे नीववावें ॥७॥

Sei Deine Seele mit erfüllt

Lass Sie Dulden böses Wort

Sprich dürftig, sei gut

Bring den Seelen Frieden und Gult

नको रे मना द्रव्य ते पूढिलांचे ।  
अति स्वार्थ बुद्धि ने रे पाप साचे ।  
घडे भोगणे पाप ते कर्म खोटे ।  
न होतां मनासारिखे दुःख मोठे ॥९॥

Wünsche nie, was dir nicht gehört

Dich verdirbt die Selbstsuch nur,

Und die Untat zur Sünde führt

Und das Gewollte nie erreicht

जनी सर्व सूखी असा कोण आहे ।  
विचारे मना तूचि शोधूनि पाहे ।  
मना त्वांचि रे पूर्वसंचित केले ।  
तयासारिखे भोगणें प्राप्त झाले ॥११॥

Wer ist zufrieden un der Welt?

Mein Geist, bedenke dies erst

Deine Taten - gute oder schlechte

Fallen auf dich doch zurück

From the book by Dr. Vinita Mahajani