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Re: E-paper Volume 1

I was flying to India with a lot of concerns. The process of enrolling for courses was very chaotic and the university didn't provide me with any clear instruction nor password to email account. Two things I knew were that I should not take regular taxi at the airport and I knew the address of the school. The prepaid taxi was of course very overpriced, huge traffic and tons of trash on the streets. When I came to university there was nobody to help me out with orientation. Finally the janitor found a key to my room and I went alone looking for room O-301. It took me about 20 minutes walking around hostel to find my room. It turned out that there is no bed sheet nor blanket, just raw mattress. Next day in the morning I got peace of material which suppose to bed sheet and old blanket which wasn't washed for long time. In the noon I had orientation with exchange coordinator. It turned out that they asked us to come 1,5 week to early and I because of no clear instructions for course enrollment I enrolled for courses which are in the same time. In other words: total chaos – simply, India.

Although every exchange student had to apply for student VISA before coming to India, we had to register again in so called FRRO. Our exchange coordinator prepared documents for us which we diligently filled and took one hour ride just to be informed that our forms are not up to date. We finally after many discussions got all forms and clarifications about what exactly needs to be submitted. Next day I took challenge and went to FRRO office once again. It took overall 8 hours to finalize and receive simply one paper which could have been issued simply by embassy – another proof of inefficiency in Indian administration system.

Indian students were totally not interested in only white person in the campus which felt really strange. Thanks to some of the students who went for exchanges I didn't get crazy thinking that maybe I became invisible. One of the students asked me if I want to join her for Yoga course and I was very happy to do it looking at the perspective of 1,5 week till first classes start. We took a

night bus. It was first time I travelled in a bus with beds and surprisingly I fit the space with my almost 2 m body. We reached the place in the morning and I didn't expect to come to place which looked like a holy place. Ashram, this is how Indians call places built by so called Gurus and where you can pray to your devotees. It is kind of retreat, but for religious purposes. I registered and went to eat lunch. I joined other people sitting on the ground and waited for the food. It was served on a leaf of bamboo and had to be eaten with hands. Amazing experience and cultural shock from the very beginning. Yoga classes were very intensive and started 4 am with called shower and no breakfast. We were given only vegetarian food and water. I felt very refreshed after the course and experiences I had looking at the temples, lingas and talking to people about this spiritual place.

