

A Surprise Tour

Last year during summer vacation, one fine morning when I woke up, I saw my parents packing our bags. I asked them why they were packing. They didn't give me an answer but told me that we were going to someone's house. Then I asked my grandmother, she said that we were going on a trip. After hearing that, I was very excited! We reached the Kolkata airport in a taxi. We then boarded the flight to Guwahati. After reaching Guwahati, we went to a hotel and refreshed ourselves. We joined a few other families who also came there. We went to the Kamakhya temple followed by the visit to Brahmaputra River side in the evening. The very next day we departed to Meghalaya with all our friends and relatives. After few hours of journey through the hill road, we reached Shillong, I understood then the meaning of 'going to someone's house'. It meant that we were going to the home of the clouds. Meghalaya means "abode of clouds". We were a group of 25 people including 12 members from our family. We enjoyed seeing the Double-Decker Living Root Bridge, the tree was around 150 years old, the Seven Sister Falls at Cherrapunji and the Dawki River. When we travelled, the whole road was filled with clouds! It felt like we are moving through them. It was a beautiful sight! Later, we reached Mawlynnong, the cleanest village in Asia and also known as God's Own Garden. Mawlynnong is mainly inhabited by Khasi tribe. This village tells us an amazing story of cleanliness, environmental conservation and civic discipline. The place is so spic and span that we didn't find even a tiny bit of paper or dry leaf anywhere. Flowerbeds of all hues dot both sides of the roads. One of the residents, who described himself as in-charge of the village, welcomed us and other tourists. He said, "Cleanliness and hygiene are a part of our culture." I realized that in Mawlynnong, every adult and every child is responsible for cleanliness. Hygiene and cleanliness are a value they imbibe since their birth. I believe, if we all try together, like Mawlynnong, the whole world can be the "God's Own Garden". If we get an opportunity again, we will visit Meghalaya.



By Riyan Das, Indian School Muscat, Class VII/H.