



Experience report for my term abroad at the Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad

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- Bitcoin and the Blockchain (0.5 credits)
- Intelligent Transportation Systems (0.75 IIMA credits)
- Quantitative and Algorithmic Trading (0.5 IIMA credits)
- Doing Business in India (1 IIMA credit)
- Strategic Transformation and Change in the Indian Economy (0.75 IIMA credits)

Introduction

My life in India and studies at the Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad (IIMA) have definitively been a personal as well as an academic challenge. A term abroad in India is definitively an adventure. My term abroad in India has been an enriching, valuable and interesting, diverse experience. In the following I try to present an honest and comprehensive report of what I have experienced during my time in India and at the IIMA.

Preparation

Auslandsbafög and PROMOS Scholarship issued by the DAAD

If you seek financial support for your term abroad you can apply for Auslandsbafög. Even if you don't receive BAföG to support your studies in Germany, you may be eligible for receiving Auslandsbafög since the limits and conditions are somewhat different. It's worth checking at least. The Studierendenwerk Tübingen-Hohenheim in Reutlingen (<https://www.my-stuwe.de/auslandsbafoeg/>) is responsible for processing applications for Auslandsbafög for studies in India. If you're granted Auslandsbafög you receive 1000 € for travel expenses, 71 € for travel insurance and additionally up to 649 €/month (as of 2017). It's best to check their website to verify the exact amount of money one gets.

Another possibility to receive funding for your term abroad is the PROMOS scholarship issued by the German Academic Exchange Service/Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (DAAD) (<https://www.daad.de/en/>). You apply directly through your home university, in my case the University of Cologne (<https://www.portal.uni-koeln.de/promos.html>). If you're granted the PROMOS scholarship you receive 525 € for your travel expenses and additionally 300 €/month (as of 2017). If you receive the PROMOS scholarship you're obliged to hand in an experience report after your return to Germany. Of course, there is a bunch of other scholarships you can also apply for.

The term abroad in India started in the beginning of September. It is generally recommended to apply for Auslandsbafög six months in advance to make sure you get the funding on time in case you're granted Auslandsbafög. The application deadline for PROMOS has been in the end of April. Since the application is quite extensive, it is wise to start early. The results of the PROMOS application came around eleven weeks after the deadline. Besides, it is possible to receive Auslandsbafög and the PROMOS scholarship at the same time without any issues.

Student Visa

For my studies in India I needed a student visa. I applied for it through the Indo-German Consultancy Services Ltd. (<http://www.igcsvisa.de/>). There are a couple of different subsidiaries of the Indo-German Consultancy Services Ltd. and the one you have to apply at to get your visa depends on where you live in Germany. The subsidiary in Frankfurt is processing applications from residents of North Rhine-Westphalia. The cost of the student visa is 91,50 € (as of August 2017), but prices have increased in the meanwhile. You have different options to obtain your visa. You can either apply for it by mail or in person in Frankfurt. In either case you have to fill an online application and send your documents to Frankfurt via mail or hand them in personally. When your visa is ready you have different options, too: You can either collect your visa personally, have someone collect it for you with an official

authorization or have it sent to you via mail or express delivery (express delivery costs 20 € extra). Applications via mail take around two to three weeks while applications in person usually take three to seven days. The Indo-German Consultancy Services Ltd. in Frankfurt collaborates with the Indian Consulate in Frankfurt and they're the ones who issue the visa ultimately.

There are a couple more things that you need to be aware of when it comes to obtaining a student visa for India. First, the student visa is valid from the day it is issued, i.e. probably already shortly after you hand in your application. Second, if the student visa is valid for 180 days or more you have to register with the FRRO (<https://indianfrro.gov.in/frro/>) soon after your arrival in India. This is something you want to avoid. Dealing with bureaucracy and official institutions in India is something you want to avoid in general. Therefore, make sure you don't apply for your visa too early and don't have your visa exceed 180 days of validity if possible. If your visa is valid for more than 180 days and you don't register on time at the FRRO, you have to pay a fine of around 2000 Rupees and write a letter to explain why you delayed the registration. Third, the validity period of the student visa is quite arbitrary. Usually Term V at IIMA officially ends in the beginning of December. Some students will receive a visa that ends soon after the beginning of December while others receive a visa that might be valid until Christmas and beyond.

Vaccinations and Medical Preparation

Before I traveled to India I refreshed a couple of old vaccinations and also got some new ones. I received them at the Institut für Medizinische Mikrobiologie, Immunologie und Hygiene of the Uniklinik Köln (<http://immih.uk-koeln.de/impfsprechstunde>). Service and consultation have been very nice there. My German health insurance refunded the costs for the vaccinations (but not the consultation, which costed 20 €). Another option is the Reisepraxis Köln (<https://www.bcrf.de/>). Be sure to check with your health insurance what exactly they refund and what they don't. For some health insurances it might also matter where you get the vaccinations. You should bring mosquito repellent since there are plenty of mosquitos, especially in September and October, spreading Malaria and Dengue on campus. During my stay at IIMA I only heard of a couple of people who got Dengue, though. Also bring along medicine against diarrhea and stomach problems. It might take some time to get used to the Indian cuisine and hygienic standards are below those of Germany.

Flight to India

I took a flight from London via Delhi to Ahmedabad with Air India three days before the official start of the lectures and paid around 310 €. On my way home I booked a Sri Lanka Airlines flight from Sri Lanka via Doha to Frankfurt for about 390 €.

Life in Ahmedabad

Ahmedabad

Ahmedabad is located in the state of Gujarat in the west of India and is one of the largest Indian cities in terms of population (approx. 6 million inhabitants). It is also considered one of the wealthier and more livable cities compared to other large cities in India. From Ahmedabad you can take planes, trains and buses to go anywhere in India and the surrounding countries, usually at acceptable rates. Don't be

surprised to see cows and street dogs all over Ahmedabad. Usually they don't want you any harm as long as you leave them alone.

Living Costs

Living costs in India are considerably lower compared to Germany. While in Ahmedabad you probably won't spend too much money given that there is not much to do there apart from restaurant visits and the like. Food in particular is quite cheap in India. This means that there is usually quite some money left for traveling.

Alcohol Permit

The peculiar thing about Gujarat is that it is a dry state. This means that alcohol is generally not publicly available. Alcohol is mostly only available in special shops in some hotels (like the Hyatt and Marriott hotels near Alpha Mall not far from the IIMA campus) where one can buy limited amounts of beer, wine and liquor. To do so, however, one needs a special permit. As a tourist, you can apply for such a permit online (<http://eps.gpeonline.co.in/>). In case you want to apply for an alcohol permit, you should do so shortly after your arrival in Gujarat since the time window to do so is small (ca. 15 days). You also need to keep your boarding pass/ticket which you used to enter Gujarat. If you successfully apply for a liquor permit you have 30 days within which you can buy alcohol at the special hotel shops mentioned above. It is important to mention that you're only allowed to buy alcohol every ten days. It is also important that you don't provide any information in the application process for the permit that links you to IIMA. After the 30-day period has ended, there is no more possibility for a tourist to obtain alcohol legally in Gujarat. Alcohol is freely available in neighboring states like Rajasthan.

Things to do in Ahmedabad

Although Ahmedabad is one of the biggest cities in India there is not much you can do there. There are a couple of temples, mosques and Sabarmati Ashram where Ghandi used to teach. There is a cinema in Alpha Mall where they sometimes show movies in English. There is a place where you can play paintball, but I personally cannot recommend it since the field is very small and the equipment of very low quality. There are a couple of nice restaurants (e.g. SandwichworkZ) and other food places (e.g. Food Truck Park in Ramdev Nagar). There is a nice barber shop near campus called Pooja hair style where Kamlesh does a really good job. It might be that Kamlesh needs to move his shop soon due to road constructions that are planned in the area.

Alpha Mall

Alpha Mall is a shopping center in direct proximity to the IIMA campus with all kinds of shops, a supermarket and a food court, including not only Indian food places but also Subway, KFC, McDonalds and Burger King. There you find almost everything you need. By Tuktuk it takes about five minutes, depending whether you live on Old or New Campus. Don't pay more than 30 Rupees from Old Campus to Alpha Mall and more than 40 Rupees back from Alpha Mall to Old campus. Since I lived on Old Campus I don't know the exact Tuktuk prices from New Campus. You can just ask one of the Indian students living on New Campus for advice.

Useful Apps and Websites

Public transport in Ahmedabad is not very convenient and if you don't want to negotiate with a Tuktuk driver either, you can order a driver via **Uber** or **Ola**. You need an Indian phone number to get both

apps running. Uber and Ola are usually cheaper than normal Tuktuks and more comfortable for longer distances within the city. It might happen, though, that an Uber or Ola driver accepts your ride request, but actually has no clue of where to go. Then it might be necessary that you help him navigate. Same might happen with Tuktuk drivers. And don't expect them to speak much English.

Zomato is an app for food delivery. Around the IIMA campus there is a bunch of places that you can order food from and get it delivery directly to campus or even your dorm. A meal with friends can be shared in CT, Bizarre or one of the other food places on campus as they don't really mind whether you order your food there or bring it with you from somewhere else.

Makemytrip is a website where you can book, amongst others, plane, train and bus journeys for your travels in India. They also have an app, but their website is more convenient, especially when it comes to the payment process. International credit cards usually don't work in the app.

PayTM is an app where you can book all kinds of services like flights, trains, buses and much more. The interesting thing about PayTM is that it is a widely accepted alternative to cash payments in India. Credit card payments are not very popular and should be avoided due to risk of credit card fraud. When you want to pay in some restaurant or shop and they offer payment via PayTM, you can simply enter their number in the app or scan their QR code and easily do a payment. To do so, however, you need money in your PayTM account. PayTM doesn't accept international credit cards or bank accounts so it is easiest if an Indian student sends you money to your PayTM account and you give him cash in return.

Indian Phone Number and Mobile Data

It pays off to get an Indian phone number for the time of your stay in India. The Exchange Council, run by Indian IIMA students, helped us get a Vodafone SIM card very easily (it requires a bureaucratic process even to get a SIM card in India including a passport photo you need to submit). We paid approximately 400 Rupees in total for three months and got 1 GB of 4G data per day and 300 minutes of call time for calls within India per day. The SIM cards were activated from Vodafone's side after a couple of days and we also had to go through a short, simple activation process. Mobile data works all over India where there is a network available, but calls appear to work in Gujarat only. Mobile data speed also often appears to be slower than what it should be with 4G.

IIMA

General

The IIMA is the best business school in India and among the best in the whole of Asia according to different rankings. It is particularly characterized by a case-based teaching style. Attendance and participation are important for the grades in most of the courses. Assignments, quizzes and group projects are also a normal thing in most courses. It has been clear that academics in general will be very different from what I'm used to in Germany. I was still surprised by the chaos and amount of miscommunication prevalent not only in the administration of the IIMA, but also in some of the courses I took. In many courses I felt that there was a lack of structure and a specific target; in many courses we discussed different cases in each session without considering the big picture and putting everything into context in the end.

Shortly after we arrived at IIMA, we were asked to pay a fee of around 86.000 Rupees for accommodation, study materials and other expenses (around 1100 € as of September 2017). A processing fee of around one to two percent has been added on top of the study fee. We could either pay online or in cash. Given the limited amount one can withdraw from ATMs it is recommended to pay online if possible. It is worth mentioning that the largest part of the study fee is to finance study materials which constitute books and readers for the different courses. The readers are collections of printed course materials like cases, papers, articles etc. Some of them consist of hundreds of pages. Providing the course materials as digital documents instead of printing all those pages would certainly save costs and be more environmental-friendly.

Unfortunately, the main library on campus was under construction during our time at IIMA. Therefore, we had to use the smaller, secondary library. There have been many constructions on campus in general during the time of our stay. Wifi is available almost all over the campus, including the dorms. The process to connect your devices to Wifi and LAN is quite complicated. It is easiest if you get one of the Indian students to help you connect your devices or you pay the computer center on campus a visit. Don't expect the Wifi to be consistently reliable and super-fast.

There are plenty of street dogs on campus and sometimes in the dorms as well. But they're in better shape than the street dogs outside of campus. Some of them are curious, but none of them want you any harm. At least I didn't have any negative encounters with them.

Buddy Program

A couple of weeks before the beginning of our term at IIMA we were contacted by the Exchange Council, a student body run by Indian students to support incoming exchange students. They matched exchange students and buddies who would answer our questions before our arrival, help us with the arrival on campus and support us in the first days at IIMA and throughout our entire stay. Some buddies were very helpful and good relationships between exchange students and buddies developed, but some exchange students didn't hear from their buddies or meet them.

Course Selection

A couple of weeks before the beginning of the term at IIMA exchange students received a list of courses available for the exchange term along with a timetable, including an overview of courses and clashes between courses. The process of course selection at IIMA is very different from what we're used to in Germany and it is quite complicated and confusing at the beginning. During the whole course selection process many questions came up and it was oftentimes not clear whether a specific course was available for exchange students or not. Questions could be asked via email, but not all emails and questions were always answered. Final course selection for many exchange students was completed in the first days at IIMA. Issues related to course selection and the dropping of already selected courses was also handled after arrival at IIMA. Dropping and changing courses is also possible within a specific time window at the beginning of the term. Officially one is only to allowed drop one course without having to pay a penalty of about 100 €. However, I haven't heard of any exchange student who dropped more than one course and had to pay the penalty.

Courses are selected in an online auction shortly before the beginning of the term in early September. IIMA has a special online platform where exchange students log in, receive about 200 bidding points and then bid on courses during up to three bidding rounds. Information on how the process works is provided and there is a mock bidding before the actual bidding process takes place. The higher the

demand for a certain course, the more points one has to bid to enter that course. For some courses one doesn't even need to bid a single point since many seats are available and demand is low. Bidding data from previous years is not available so it is not entirely clear which courses are popular and which are not. Buddies can provide insights into this.

Accommodation

Student accommodation is available on Old and on New Campus. The student dormitories differ very much, depending on where on campus they are. Female and male accommodation is separated and there is a guard in the entrance of the female dorms since male access to female dorms is restricted. Female dorms are only available on Old Campus. Indian and exchange students live together and some dorms are noisier than others. Pictures of dorm rooms on Old Campus are not available on the IIMA's website as far as I'm concerned. It is obvious that accommodation differs from German standards.

The student dormitories on Old Campus (where I stayed) are very basic and made of brick and concrete. My room had a desk, a fan, a bed, a chair, a shelf and a locker for clothes. The bathroom installations are very basic, not always clean and sometimes smelly. There are one to two bathrooms with two toilets (one "Western style" and one "Indian" style toilet) and one to two showers per bathroom on every floor. Every dorm building has a cleaner who cleans the building usually every day. The cleaner also cleans the students' rooms, but only at certain times (so you have to be there to have your room cleaned). Drinking water is available from a white tap on most floors in the building. Usually there are two washing machines in every dorm. Not all work properly or at all and sometimes clothes are dirtier than before or damaged. There are usually ten students living on each floor on three to four floors in total per dorm. You should bring a mosquito net. In the dorms on Old Campus there are none installed, but there are some installed in the most dorms on New Campus. The description above concerns only the dorm (17) I stayed in. Since dorms differ heavily the description above may not fully apply to other dorms as well.

Dorms on New Campus are newer and built of concrete. Most of them are better than the ones on Old Campus. If you get a room on Old Campus try to move to New Campus instead if you can. Try to do that even though dorms on New Campus are generally a bit further away from the library, some food places and the lecture halls where most exchange students' classes take place.

Activities

The temperature-controlled library can be a nice place to spend some time and meet friends when the own room is too hot or poky. There is a gym on Old Campus which has basic, old equipment, but it does its job. There is a smaller, but usually less crowded gym on New Campus. As far as I know there is another gym on New Campus, but I have never been there. There are a couple of places where people play football, cricket and frisbee. There are also some volleyball, basketball and tennis courts. There is another building where one can play badminton, table tennis and squash. Most sports activities take place in the evening given the heat and high humidity before it becomes cooler in late October. There are also many student clubs and organizations where one can get engaged if wished (<https://web.iima.ac.in/institute/campus/student-activities/clubs.html> and <https://web.iima.ac.in/institute/campus/student-activities.html>). The food places are also used by students to hang out. In the SAB (Student Activity Building) you can hang out and watch football games.

Food and Shops

On campus there are a couple of food places where one can eat mostly Indian food at affordable prices. The Mess serves breakfast, lunch and dinner seven days a week. It's a mix of almost exclusively Indian food. It takes some time to get used to it, particularly the different spices and the spiciness of the food. Sometimes there are non-spicy alternative dishes available. Different subscriptions for a whole month are available, but I don't recommend getting one. I bought such a subscription for the first month and it contained breakfast, lunch and dinner. It was really hard to eat in the Mess three times a day during the first month since the food is always quite the same with almost no variation. Of course, I didn't have to eat there all the time, but given that I paid around 60 € for three all-you-can-eat meals one month long I had to make the money worth it.

There are more food places on campus. Bizarre offers different Indian and Asian dishes. Same for CT, but I personally didn't eat there very often. Radikha's also serves food and snacks. The Tea Post offers snacks, sandwiches, tea and coffee. There are some more small shops that offer drinks, fruits and snacks. Sometimes there is also an Indian lady in front of the Mess selling fruits.

S-Mart is a small convenience store on Old Campus next to the underpass that leads to New Campus. There you can get snacks, coffee, ice cream and the like. S-Mart also offers a bulk deal that it advertises via email shortly before the arrival of the new exchange students. It costs about 20 € and contains different items like pens, a notebook, a text marker, a dust bin, scissors and many more items that I personally didn't use (e.g. pillow, stapler). If you can spare 20 € it is alright to get the bulk deal, but it is not absolutely necessary for your survival on campus.

Many Indian and also exchange students order food from outside campus via the Zomato. Too bad that there is no place really where you can share ordered food with your friends apart from the food places on campus. But they don't really mind when you bring your own food.

What I personally found striking is that even on campus, at an institution like the IIMA, some food places didn't make the best impression when it came to hygienic standards. It happened occasionally that people got sick from the food they ate on campus, either because the food was spoiled or the kitchens didn't meet certain hygienic standards.

Courses

General

There are courses with 0.5, 0.75, 1 and 1.25 credits at IIMA, respectively. These credits translate into 10, 15, 20 and 25 sessions per course, respectively. Students are generally obliged to have an attendance of 80 per cent per course. Naturally, the more credits a course has, the higher the workload. But some 0.5 credit courses had disproportionately more workload than courses with more credits. The University of Cologne requires exchange students to earn the equivalent of a minimum of 20 ECTS to receive 24 ECTS for the studies abroad modules at the University of Cologne. 20 ECTS translate into 3.33 credits at the IIMA. The IIMA officially requires a minimum of three credits to be made during the exchange term, but this rule can be circumvented in some cases, as far as I'm concerned. Most Indian students have around six credits per term, which is a lot. I personally don't recommend taking too many credits and too many courses. The workload is definitely higher than at

the University of Cologne and in some courses the academic level is also higher. But there are also courses where the academic level is well below that at the University of Cologne. But don't expect to earn good grades easily at IIMA. Besides, it is said that no exchange student fails a course at IIMA if one fulfills the minimum expectations even with low effort. In my case, grades were not transferred to the University of Cologne and I had to make sure to not take courses that dealt with topics that are related to my major at the University of Cologne.

There are sessions on Saturdays and some exams take place on Sundays. Session times for courses are not always fixed and individual sessions or sessions in general may be shifted to other dates and times. Group projects with Indian students may not always be easy to pull off since they work very differently. Oftentimes they submit assignments just shortly before the deadline after having started with the assignment and completed it the night before the deadline. I personally had no issues working with Indian students on group projects, but I heard some wild stories.

Bitcoin and the Blockchain / BB (0.5 IIMA credits)

BB has been one of the more popular courses and not everybody got a seat. There were about 50 students in the course, so almost all seats in the lecture hall were taken. The course was a finance course that examined the subject of cryptocurrencies and the blockchain from a financial market perspective. First, the current state of banking and the financial world was introduced and then blockchain technology along with Bitcoin. In most sessions the professor was talking all the time and except for occasional questions the course was not very interactive. The course was quite demanding and for someone who had no idea of the topic might be very overwhelming. The exam was incredibly hard and some unexpected things were asked. We also had to submit two group projects. One was a lab project where we should build a blockchain ourselves and experiment with it. The other group project was a business project where we should examine a business application for blockchain technology in the area of finance that wasn't already covered in the course. During the two group projects there was almost no assistance from academic staff since the group projects' deadlines were well after the last official session. Overall the course was very demanding and the workload was quite high.

Intelligent Transportation Systems / ITS (0.75 IIMA credits)

ITS was mainly about transportation systems and infrastructure projects and on how to solve problems connected to these topics and project management. In each session a specific case was discussed that often dealt with regulatory issues and project management of infrastructure and transportation projects. Each case dealt with a different topic and it was sometimes hard to see the big picture and how everything was related. The course entailed a field visit to the control room of Ahmedabad's Bus Rapid Transportation System and the Airport Air Traffic Control at the Ahmedabad airport. We had to write a report on the field visit. We were also given an airport case and had to analyze it. In the end there was a group project where we had to pick a topic related to ITS and write a ten-page report. The German exchange students had to give a short presentation on the German Autobahn. The Indian students and exchange students from other countries also had to give a short presentation on a topic related to their home country, respectively. The course was not very demanding and workload was moderate. After the last session the professor invited everybody to dinner, which was quite nice.

Quantitative and Algorithmic Trading / QAT (0.5 IIMA credits)

QAT was about trading of different instruments in financial markets using quantitative and algorithmic tools and concepts. The course generally took a very technical and theoretical approach, but theoretical concepts were usually illustrated by real-life examples and stories. The course was held by three different professors, each of which held a block of four sessions in a consecutive order. Course participation and attendance counted only little towards the grade. There were three quite demanding assignments in total, each professor posing one. In the end, there was a doable exam that accounted for the major part of the overall grade. The course was quite demanding (especially when one has only limited knowledge of financial markets) and the workload was also quite high.

Doing Business in India / DBI (1 IIMA credit)

DBI was split up in three different parts that were covered by three different professors. One part was on the Indian economy, one was on the Indian consumer and marketing and one was on the legal framework and related topics in India. The order of the session was confusing since the professors held the sessions alternately. DBI was for exchange students only. Usually the professors were talking about what things are like in India and about their own experiences, involving the students and comparing what things are like in the students' home countries. There were some cases and some material to be read. Attendance and participation counted toward the final grade. There was a quiz/exam in the last session of each professor. Communication of important course- and exam-related information didn't always work perfectly and there were a couple of misunderstandings. The course was not very demanding and the workload was not very high.

Strategic Transformation and Change in the Indian Economy / STC (0.75 IIMA credits)

STC was held by a German professor. The course was on privatization of formerly state-owned enterprises into corporate entities in India that were either fully privatized or still controlled by the Indian government. Each session covered a case which the professors presented and analyzed. Attendance and participation counted toward the grade, but overall participation was relatively low. Originally, we had to submit only one case analysis, but then we had to submit another because participation was so low and nobody really read the cases before the sessions. There was a final exam that entailed a very extensive case analysis. Overall the course was not too exciting and it was difficult to grasp the structure and overall goal of the course. Miscommunication was also an issue. The course was quite demanding and workload was moderate.

Travelling

Given that there is not much to do in Ahmedabad and on campus and if you choose your courses wisely, there is plenty of time to travel. India has almost endless possibilities for traveling and offers the opportunity to visit very diverse places across the country. There is everything in India from cities, to beaches, to deserts, to mountains and much more.

From Ahmedabad you can take planes, trains and buses to most places in India. Air travel is recommended for longer distances since it is more convenient. Naturally, plane tickets are much more expensive compared to train and bus tickets. But sometimes there are nice deals. For train trips it depends whether it is a trip over a short distance or over a long distance or overnight. For short

journeys train tickets can be usually obtained at a quite low fare directly at the train station a couple of days or shortly before the journey. When you want to travel long distances or overnight, you should book your tickets well in advance since tickets might sell off fast especially on popular routes (e.g. Goa to Kerala). On short journeys the cheapest class on the train should be fine, though usually very crowded and without A/C. On longer and overnight journeys, more expensive classes like 3AC or 2AC are recommended. Buses are usually rather inexpensive, but not very comfortable. Night buses are available where one can either book normal seats or sleep cabins, depending on the bus type and operator, but don't expect to get much sleep when taking a night bus. Most roads are pretty bad in India. Makemytrip or PayTM can be used to book most journeys. There is a travel agency on campus, but you don't really need their help if you're willing to do the research for connections and the organization of your trips on your own. Other travelers and fellow Indian students are always willing to give advice.

During my term abroad I visited Udaipur, Jaisalmer, Jodhpur, Ladakh, Delhi, Agra, Jaipur, the Andaman Islands, Kerala, Goa, Mumbai and Sri Lanka. All those places are worth a visit, some more than others, depending on what you're looking for. For more detailed information and travel tips for the places mentioned above feel free to reach out.

Conclusion

I didn't have many expectations before my journey to India since I didn't really know what to expect. It is difficult to build up precise expectations based on the experiences of others. The first days and weeks certainly have been a shock and a huge challenge given the ubiquitous chaos, cultural and academic differences and overall different standards compared to Germany. It took some time to get used to many things and to some things one simply doesn't get used to. If you want to leave your comfort zone, experience an adventurous time and exploit great travelling opportunities, then India and the IIMA are the right choice.