

A THREE-WEEK STUDY INDIA PROGRAMME, ORGANISED UNDER THE UK-INDIA EDUCATION RESEARCH INITIATIVE (UKIERI), GIVES STUDENTS FROM THE UK AN OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN ABOUT THE INDIAN ECONOMY, POLITICS, CULTURE, AND MORE

FOR AN INSIDER'S VIEW



Surbhi Bhatia/TNN

A group of 200 students from 37 universities in the UK is visiting India to get an 'insider's view' of Indian society and culture. The visit is part of a three-week Study India Programme (SIP) organised under the UK-India Education Research Initiative (UKIERI).

Hundred students from this group will be attending classes for one week at Delhi

University. The remaining 100 will be attending classes at Mumbai University. Deliberating on the need for UK students to visit India, Charlie Walker, director, programmes, British Council, India and Sri Lanka, said, "Currently there are 30,000 Indian students studying in the UK. However, the figures reflect a one-way traffic and there needs to be some balance." In order to address this concern, UKIERI has kick-started a unique student exchange

programme where students from the UK will get an opportunity to know and learn about the Indian economy, politics, culture, society and language.

Sally Goggin, director-education, British Council, India and Sri Lanka, said, "We received more than 2,000 applications. It was tough to select 200 students." On how this programme is going to help students from the UK, she said, "Generally students from the UK tend to confine themselves to UK or European universities. But we feel it is important for them to be aware of other issues too like the Indian economy and culture. Besides, there are some specific subjects such as Indian design and architecture, which they will understand best if they are staying in India."

Max Waldron, a student of politics from Durham University, UK, feels that India is fast gaining an important place in the global economy, which is why it is imperative for UK students to understand India. "This programme will help us acquire a better understanding of Indian culture, business and politics."

According to Deepak Pental, vice-chancellor, Delhi University, the presence of foreign students is an interesting aspect of a university. "We have been struggling to accommodate an increasing number of students. But now, DU is taking steps to attract more foreign students. We are part of the Erasmus Mundas, UKIERI and U21 programmes. Also, we want international students to come here and stay for a whole semester instead of spending just a few days."

SIP is being delivered jointly by King's College London (in partnership with HR college, University of Mumbai) and the University of Birmingham (in partnership with DU).

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