Jio Institute
LEARNING FOR LIFE

Proceedings

Business Study Mission 2024-India Immersion Programme

Singapore Management University at Jio Institute

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Undergraduate students of the Singapore Management University (SMU) visited the Jio Institute campus from 7th – 15th December, 2024 as part of their 'India Immersion Programme'. The India Immersion programme aimed to develop a deep understanding of India's dynamic business environment, digital advancements, sustainability efforts, and rich cultural heritage. The 9-day programme combined academic learning, industry exposure, and cultural experiences, providing a comprehensive view of India's transformation to a digital and technology hub.

Below is a day-wise summary of the SMU students' engagements at Jio Institute.

DAY 1: ARRIVAL AT CAMPUS AND PROGRAMME ORIENTATION

The SMU students were welcomed with great enthusiasm at the campus after their travel from Singapore to Mumbai. Post check-in and much-needed rest, **Dr. Seshan Ramaswami**, Associate Professor of Marketing, Lee Kong Chian School of Business, SMU briefed the students about the India Immersion programme. This was followed by an interaction with SMU alumni in Mumbai. **Ms. Vanessa Zhang**, Senior Vice President, DBS India, **Mr. Raj Senapati** from Singapore Leaders network (SGLN), **Mr. Raghav Somani**, Founder and CEO, Headphone Zone and **Mr. Shariq Ashraf**, Founder of WickedGud delivered insights to the SMU students about the business ecosystem in India, drawing parallels with Singapore

DAY 2: MUMBAI HERITAGE TOUR

The students engaged in a cultural immersion experience in Mumbai, visiting iconic landmarks and heritage sites. They explored the **Gateway of India**, the **Elephanta Caves**, and various cultural areas around the city. The itinerary included a tour of the **Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus**, where they admired the architecture and **Art Deco** designs. Participants also visited the **Kala Ghoda** area and the **Mumba Devi Temple**, where they offered prayers. The tour concluded with a visit to the Dhobi Ghat, which provided a unique backdrop for building lasting memories.

In the evening, the students enjoyed **Ustad Amjad Ali Khan's** sarod melody titled 'Sarod Quintet' at the National Centre for Performing Arts (NCPA).

The activities of the day provided students with a comprehensive overview of the financial capital of the country, showcasing its stunning architecture, historical significance, and vibrant cultural tapestry.

DAY 3: EXPLORING CROSS-CULTURAL INSIGHTS, TECHNOLOGY, AND SUSTAINABILITY

The third day of the India Immersion Programme featured thought-provoking discussions and interactions.

The day began with an inaugural address by **Dr. Seshan Ramaswami**, who underscored the importance of cross-cultural exchange in developing future leaders and highlighted the historical ties between India and Singapore.

The discussions centered on sustainability, digital innovation, and business strategies:

- **Dr. Shailesh Kumar**, Chief Data Scientist, Centre of Excellence for AI/ML, Reliance Jio, emphasized the need for human control over technology, contrasting AI applications in the West (focused on convenience) with India's focus on addressing social challenges. He also detailed India's digital initiatives, including Aadhaar, the National Internet Market, and rural connectivity programmes.
- **Mr. Munir Sayyed**, AVP, Reliance Jio, discussed the role of digital infrastructure in India's GDP growth, highlighting the impact of UPI on digital payments, the growth of e-commerce, and IT's contribution to software exports.

- **Dr. Rasananda Panda**, Professor, Mudra Institute of Communications, Ahmedabad (MICA), explored how India's diversity and culture can drive business engagement. He emphasized the need for quality in low-cost products, addressed untapped markets, and provided examples of Indian firms succeeding in Singapore.

The day also included a presentation by **Mr. Mujtaba Rasool**, Products and Partnerships, Reliance Jio, on the Jio Health Hub app, a health tracker designed to address contemporary challenges.

These sessions provided students with valuable insights into India's technological and cultural advancements, its dynamic business landscape, and the pivotal role of digital transformation in driving the nation toward achieving its sustainable development goals.

DAY 4: INNOVATION, HERITAGE, AND TECHNOLOGICAL EXCELLENCE

The fourth day of the India Immersion Programme commenced with a visit to Taramis Labs, a nutritional food start-up in Mumbai. At the facility, students were introduced to a range of health drinks, protein shakes, and other products. They toured the production and packaging units, observing processes such as dehydrating, powdering, and preserving fresh produce. Additionally, they were introduced to the company's range of herbal and natural product mixes and premixes. This visit gave them a first-hand experience of the nitty-gritties of the start-up ecosystem in India.

The students then proceeded to the **Reliance Corporate Park (RCP)**, where they explored the advanced technological infrastructure. At the **Reliance Experience Centre**, they interacted with various innovation pods showcasing a wide array of products and services, including Reliance Jio advertisements, apps, IoT devices, and more.

The visit included an in-depth immersion at the **5G Experience Centre**, where students were introduced to the 5G system model and its functionalities. They also toured the **Network Operations Centre**, observing the network systems and infrastructure.

At the **Reliance Retail Experience Zone**, the students observed the offerings of multiple retail entities. They explored the smart cart system at Reliance SMART, admired products at Tira Beauty and browsed the collection at Reliance Trends, enjoying an engaging retail experience.

The visit to RCP and the various experience centres gave the SMU students a glimpse into the innovative and disruptive technologies being championed by the Reliance Group, the largest business conglomerate in India.

The day continued with a visit to the **Jio World Centre**, where students explored the **Nita Mukesh Ambani Cultural Centre (NMACC)**, including the convention center theatres, the Lotus Ballroom, and the Grand Theatre, which left them impressed with their architectural elegance.

At the **Swadesh** section, students gained insights into India's rich heritage, including its traditional weaves, brocades, and handlooms. They explored various Indian painting styles and artworks, deepening their understanding of the country's cultural diversity.

The fourth day of the India Immersion Programme provided students with invaluable exposure to India's dynamic start-up ecosystem, cutting-edge technologies, and vibrant cultural heritage. Through interactive experiences and in-depth explorations, they gained a comprehensive understanding of the nation's innovations, business strategies, and cultural richness, enriching their global perspectives and professional insights.

DAY 5: FOCUS ON SUSTAINABILITY, CLIMATE ACTION, AND CULTURAL ENGAGEMENT

The fifth day began with a session by **Dr. V. V. Surya Rau**, Group President, Safety and Operational Risk, Reliance Industries Limited. Dr. Rau, with extensive experience in the polymer and agrochemical industries, addressed the pressing challenges facing the current generation and the environmental threats confronting the planet. He emphasized that sustainability should be practiced as a way of life and drew a connection between religion and sustainability, noting that all religions advocate for kindness and ethical discipline.

Ms. Aarti Muchandi, Environmental Professional, Reliance Industries Limited, provided an overview of global and national frameworks addressing climate change. She talked about the **Brundtland Commission, UNFCCC, Kyoto Protocol**, and **Paris Agreement**, explaining their roles in addressing global warning, and the path to reduced emissions.

Mr. Rajdeep Goswami, General Manager, Reliance Industries Limited, discussed advancements from successive COP meetings, including insights from **COP29**. He elaborated on climate finance, resilience building, and carbon market implementation. Mr. Goswami explained the concept of carbon credits, detailing how corporate permits for carbon emissions can be traded if unused, thereby incentivizing reduced emissions.

A panel discussion followed, moderated by Ms. Sujata Goel, HOD-Marketing & Communications, Jio Institute. Panelists included:
- **Ms. Mitika Bajpai**, Deputy General Manager, Sustainability, Reliance Industries Limited
- **Ms. Riddhi Shah**, Partner, Transfer Pricing, Deloitte
- **Mr. Ramnendra Pandey**, Senior Manager, New Energy, Reliance Industries Limited

The panel explored organizational responsibilities in combating carbon emissions and the pivotal role large corporations play in sustainability efforts.

Mr. Ramnendra Pandey highlighted Reliance Industries' advancements in solar power and emphasized the importance of a gradual transition from fossil fuels to sustainable energy to mitigate transition risks.

Ms. Mitika Bajpai introduced innovative sustainability solutions such as carbon capture diamonds, Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs), and REX NFTs, which help reduce environmental deterioration and promote sustainability.

Ms. Riddhi Shah emphasized the necessity of data validation for effective carbon credit implementation and corporate sustainability efforts. Following the intellectually stimulating sessions, the students engaged in a spirited cricket match at the Jio Institute campus, promoting teamwork, camaraderie, and a shared sense of joy, while creating lasting memories of their immersive experience.

The day concluded with a **vibrant cultural event**, featuring traditional dances and celebrations, offering the students an opportunity to experience cultural assimilation. The SMU students danced to popular Bollywood tunes, tutored by Jio Institute's PGP students. This blend of knowledge-sharing and recreational activities marked a well-rounded conclusion to the day.

DAY 6: EXPLORING HEALTHCARE, MUNICIPAL GOVERNANCE AND FINANCIAL MARKETS

The sixth day began with a guided tour of **Apollo Hospital** led by **Mr. Mohan Sunnampalli**, Petchem IT Apps, Reliance Industries Limited. Students explored the hospital's campus, focusing on the emergency and orthopedic wings, and gained insights into procedures initiated upon a patient's arrival.

The programme continued with a visit to the **Navi Mumbai Municipal Corporation (NMMC)**, where students learned about waste management systems and city infrastructure. They observed processes for separating and disposing of dry and liquid waste and were introduced to concepts such as property tax and city cleaning mechanisms. **Dr. Kailash Shinde**, Commissioner, Navi Mumbai, shared insights into initiatives undertaken to enhance sanitation, beautification, and the overall functioning of the city.

The students then visited the **Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE)**, where they attended lectures on the institution's history, including its founding in 1875 and the clauses of the Securities Contract Regulation Act, 1956.

The day concluded with a cultural experience at the **National Centre for Performing Arts (NCPA), Mumbai**. Students attended a Kuchipudi dance performance by **Ms. Sreelakshmy Govardhanan** and **Ms. Jaya Jaya Deva Hare**, followed by a Manipuri dance performance by **Ms. Bimbavati Devi** and her troupe. The event showcased a rich array of Indian classical dance forms.

The sixth day of the India Immersion Programme offered students a multifaceted learning experience, blending insights into healthcare, urban governance, financial systems, and Indian classical arts. These engagements deepened their understanding of India's infrastructure, economic frameworks, and cultural heritage.

DAY 7: INTERACTION, REFLECTIONS, AND PROGRAMME CONCLUSION

The seventh day of the India Immersion Programme commenced with an interactive session featuring **H. E. Cheong Ming Foong**, Consul General of Singapore. Students engaged in a discussion on topics including the future of Singaporean industries in India, the presence and scalability of Indian industries in Singapore, industrialization opportunities across various Indian states, the adaptability of high-end products, and the integration of foreign technology in India.

Students shared their experiences from the programme, highlighting their appreciation for the dynamic mix of small shops and the vibrant energy of large cities. They praised the hospitable business environments, ongoing development, and cultural exposure. Many noted how this immersion programme broadened their perspectives on business opportunities in a diverse market like India.

One student expressed gratitude for the insights provided by Jio Institute into the operations of retail conglomerates, which significantly enhanced her academic understanding. Others emphasized the value of the programme in deepening their knowledge of Indian culture and its implications for social and business studies, as well as the potential for future career opportunities in India. Another participant remarked on India's "orderliness in chaos" and its immense growth potential.

The session concluded with the distribution of certificates marking the successful completion of the India Immersion Programme by Jio Institute.

Later in the day, the SMU students worked with Jio Institute's PGP students to present their solutions on specific case studies: **ITC's e-Choupal initiative** and the **ChotuKool** refrigerator by Godrej & Boyce. These cases highlighted the impact of digitization in the cooperative agriculture ecosystem, and how bottom-of-the-pyramid solutions for rural India were implemented through partnerships with micro-lenders

Following the presentations, **Dr. Vishnu Prasad**, Assistant Professor, Jio Institute took a detailed session on these cases. This case solving exercise gave the SMU students a chance to work closely with Indian students, and to understand the depth of innovation in India's various agrarian dependent businesses and micro-economies.

The day concluded with a visit to **Nexus Mall** in **Seawoods**, where students indulged in Indian street food and explored the culinary delights and entertainment options within the mall, rounding off their experience with enjoyment and camaraderie.

DAY 8: VISIT TO OSCAR FOUNDATION, DHARAVI, AND CULTURAL EXPLORATION

On the eighth day of the India Immersion Programme, students visited the **OSCAR Foundation**, an NGO focused on teaching football and other sports to children from underprivileged backgrounds. Students observed and cheerfully participated in the matches, experiencing moments of excitement and adrenaline as they supported the players. This visit provided keen insights into the grassroots sports ecosystem in India.

Following this, the group visited the **Dharavi settlements**, where they studied the local ecosystems and small-scale industries, including the handicraft and leather industries, which are integral to the local economy.

The students then visited **Juma Masjid Dargah** in Mahim and the **Sacred Heart Church**, thus getting a glimpse of India's religious co-existence and unity in diversity. They later explored **Linking Road**, a bustling shopping street, where they experienced Indian street shopping, marveling at the wide variety of garments, accessories, and materials.

The day concluded with a sumptuous dinner, where students expressed their gratitude to the chefs and staff who had been serving them throughout the programme. They also thanked the Jio Institute team for their support and hospitality.

CONCLUSION

The India Immersion Programme 2024 provided the undergraduate students of Singapore Management University with a comprehensive and enriching experience, blending academic insights with real-world industry exposure and cultural immersion. Through engaging sessions with distinguished experts, visits to key industries and cultural landmarks, and hands-on experiences, the students gained valuable insights into India's business landscape, digital advancements, sustainability efforts, and diverse cultural heritage. This programme not only enhanced their academic understanding but also induced a deeper appreciation for India's dynamic transformation and the opportunities it presents for future collaboration and growth.