

Carpe diem!!! {one should enjoy life while one can}

My name is Surya Pratap Singh and I graduated from the Department of Chemistry, IIT Hyderabad in 2018. I joined the Graduate School of Human and Environmental Studies, Kyoto University, Japan as a Research student in Oct 2018 and currently, I am a second-year PhD candidate. My research theme is 'Photocatalytic Methane Conversion'.

I appeared for JAM in 2016 and successfully qualified for it. Upon counselling, I was allocated some other IITs including IIT Hyderabad. I joined IIT Hyderabad because it was the best IIT among the newly established IITs maintaining a balance between academic excellence and new explorations.

I have enrolled as a Master of Science (MSc) student in the Department of Chemistry, IIT Hyderabad. I enjoyed studying advanced concepts of Chemistry such as spectroscopy and symmetry in the first year while in the second year I was exposed to the research as I did a project as a part of the requirement of an MSc degree. I least enjoyed studying organic chemistry.

I also got an opportunity to learn Japanese Culture at IIT Hyderabad. It was a non-credit course and I enjoyed it. I also played cricket sometimes with friends.

The second year of M.Sc. was a time when I got a chance to work on a research project with a supervisor and other PhD students. Prof. Faiz Ahmed Khan was my supervisor and 'Synthesis of Stilbene Analogs' was the topic. I acquired practical hand-on research and learnt some techniques such as NMR, Mass spectroscopy; etc.

Advanced concepts and the techniques such as NMR, UV-Vis, XRD and IR which I learnt at IIT

Hyderabad are being utilized in my present role at Kyoto University. Thus, IIT Hyderabad builds a foundation for my research in Japan.

Cultural festivals such as open mic, DJ night and ice-cream parties were good. But I enjoyed the director farewell most where we talked for the last time with our friends from various departments before embarking on the next phase of life and career.

I just want to say to the existing students that IIT Hyderabad is the best place for you now. Make the most of it and come out with flying colors.

The cultural festivals and various games facilities in the busy academic environment are the best part of IIT Hyderabad. There should be some meeting regularly say quarterly where the director sir and students can interact directly. It will boost the confidence of students.

Initial days were difficult in a new country with new people speaking a new language. Starting from the names of groceries in the supermarket to the official forms all were in Japanese. There came Ms. Uotsu Mizuho from JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency) and my supervisor, Prof. Hisao Yoshida in my rescue. Uotsu-san took care of my settlement in Japan while Yoshida-sensei (and his secretary, Mrs. Yuri Bonnicha) made sure that it happened smoothly. Yuri-san reserved the dormitory, Uotsu-san paid the bills. Yuri-san handed me over the admission fee and tuition fee invoices, some labmates helped me to fill in some particulars in Japanese and Uotsu-san made sure that the fees are paid on time.

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Now I have come a long way from there. It has been nearly two years for me living in Japan. Now I can read basic Japanese syllables (hiragana and katakana) and can communicate to some local to get along with him/her. The laboratories are equipped with advanced techniques and instruments and we get a world-class research environment in some of the leading universities in the world.

I study at Kyoto University and am working on “Photocatalytic Methane Conversion” in one of the few laboratories in the world working on this hot topic. My supervisor, Yoshida-sensei is kind and friendly to students and I have a frequent conversation with him about my research and my life. Talking with my peers in the laboratory also adds to my knowledge. I am enjoying the research.

There are also a considerable number of Indians in Kyoto making an Indian community that celebrate Indian festivals such as Holi and Diwali together with joy. I also went on some adventures such as hiking, river rafting with my Indian friends. I also made some international friends such as a Zambian friend, Lole. Lole and I are good friends and we sometimes enjoy by watching a movie together. Japan is a good country to live in and you can enjoy even more of it if you get good Japanese language skills. However, there is also another side of the coin.

A busy lifestyle, punctuality and a calm society are synonymous with Japan. Making a balance is the key to enjoy most and I think I am doing it pretty well. Please contact me if you want to know more about my life in Japan.

You can contact me by e-mail. Since IIT Hyderabad e-mail services are being terminated, here is my personal e-mail address: suryapratapsng@gmail.com.

In the end, I just want to say that Carpe diem!!!



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