

Youth Exchange Program-2019

There are moments, situations and opportunities that makes one the person that one is, motivates one to be the best version of themselves, and teach lessons for life. Being a delegate to YEP Kazakhstan 2019 was one of such event for me. After rigorous training, physical, mental and emotional, from august 2019, we had to appear for our final selection for the YEP during our republic day camp 2019. I was on top of the world when I got to know that I have been selected and, will be representing my country with a bunch of 11 more dynamic cadets from around India. Being one of the million students that NCC has trained to represent our great nation over around the last seven decades was a soul stirring experience.

As it is rightly said that treasures are always hard to achieve, we have to put our heart and soul and burn ourselves to get the gold. We we supposed to do the same. In our Kazakhstan delegation, there were 12 cadets, each from different state, and 1 officer- wing commander Jayandan.

On 23rd of Sept. we got assembled in DG NCC cantt. area, Delhi and spent 7 days there. That one week is something i always wish returns back to me some other day. We had on our shoulders great responsibility of representing a country as great as our India with such enriching past, with culture and heritage like no one else so we had to be trained by the best. We got the training there by the officers on dining etiquettes, cultural programmes, that we had to present in Kazakhstan , and on how we had to present ourselves as INDIANS. Training always teaches you a lot, but Kazakh training was beyond special and I can second that every moment. It in a way introduced us to new ourselves, I was the one who never danced, but by the end I knew how to dance my heart out, it taught me how life can be enjoyed even with strangers and how countless memories can be created and be cherished for lifetime. Our delegation leader, Wing Cdr. Jayandan had a very jovial nature, so we enjoyed every moment of this Kazakhstan trip along with learning a number of lessons from the bravest himself.

YEP has been famous for the kits that it provides students with. The bandhgalas for the boys, sarees for the girls, canes with our name engraved on silver, and above all the tracksuit and uniform that gives us another level confidence.

It was on 1st October 2019 that our journey was finally starting. With excitement, anxiety nervousness, joy and pride we packed our bags, exchanged our currencies (into TANGE- KAZAKHASTAN'S CURRENCY) and departed from Delhi International Airport. I still and will always remember the privilege that I had of wearing the jersey of India. We realized that we were special or that we had a great amount of responsibility when amongst hundreds of people, all eyes were fleeting looks on us.

It was a 4 hours trip to Almaty, Kazakhstan. We were so excited on reaching Kazakhstan. We started exploring Kazakhstan from 2nd of October. We also went to visit parks, monuments, museums, and mausoleums. We also saw the war memorial of Shymkent where all the names of martyrs of the WWII were written.

We got so delighted on visiting Turkestan, the religious capital of Kazakhstan. Turkestan is full of mosques and mausoleums. In Taraz too, we visited the boys of the Cafedra and showed them our drill. Later on, we also saw their drill and they gave us a demonstration on operations of their weapons. Unlike NCC, where we are confined to just INSAS and .22 rifle, the cafedra cadets were given regular training on HMG, LMG, AK-47 and AK-56.

Later, we also went to Taraz Arena, a full indoor sports complex. Many great sports persons of Kazakhstan got trained here. The sports inside were- volleyball, football, judo, taekwondo, boxing, swimming, table-tennis, and badminton. After seeing the whole building, we played volleyball there.

In Taraz, we went to the beautiful Qara khan and Aisha Bibi Mausoleums. The Taraz state university which had organized our visit was built after the name of Mohammad Haider Dulati, who ruled in Kashmir for 12 years and died there.

.Being someone who wants to join the armed forces, the best part of the 2 week programme was to interact with the officers and war veterans of Kazakhstan. Stories of bravery and valour encouraged me a lot. Through this trip I found out that good people are everywhere in the world. To travel is the best way to know the world and even yourself more and I am forever grateful to NCC for giving us such a one in a lifetime opportunity. Finally on 11th October 2019 with heavy hearts but heavier memories, we returned back to our nation with a promise that we will keep in touch and will contribute in the best way for our India that we can.

Representing is one thing, but being the only one from my state to represent india was another level joyous and encouraging as I was also lucky enough to represent my country as well as my state UTTARAKHAND and to narrate to the two countries what a beautiful place it is. I made friends from both the countries and are even hoping to meet each other soon post pandemic to refresh the best 14 days of our lives. Being a YEP Cadet I can proudly say it helped us be more optimistic, practical, never giving and self confident. Being someone who leads the crowd and not just survives as a part of it is the greatest lesson that I learnt throughout the course of my training. I hope NCC continues on the great path that it is on and keep blessing more students like us through its various programs. Looking forward to be a part of more such events.