

CONNECTING CULTURES

STUDENTS FROM SWITZERLAND SHARE THEIR EXPERIENCES WITH STUDENTS AT CHRIST NAGAR SCHOOL

Express Features

A group of students from Switzerland were in the capital as part of a foreign exchange project, organised by the Christ Nagar School. The week-long exchange programme attended by 19 grade 11 students accompanied by three faculties from Kantonsschule Alpenquai Luzern, Switzerland, visited the school, concluded recently. The event was held as part of the Swiss-Indian classroom project 2016-17.

This is the fifth year where the school is organising a similar project for school students. Sony Palathra, principal, Christ Nagar International School said, "An interaction between different cultures is only going to help us to have more broadminded views on other people, cultures, but basically anything new. The ultimate purpose of the initiative is to adapt some of their learning styles and to see how the facilities and environment are different there."

Thomas Mani, the coordinator of the Swiss-India project, says that while this is the fifth year that we are coming up with an exchange project, the school is joining hands with Kantonsschule for the second time. "Our students had already visited the country in October, and this was a reciprocal visit from the Swiss students. We had sent a group of around 19 children, who were paired with students staying with their families," he said.

For Kurian Chalangady, principal, Christ Nagar ICSE School, and Bino Pattarkalam, principal, Christ Nagar State School, the idea was to give the benefit of such a programme to students from the four different streams in the campus. Bino Pattarkalam said, "Students find it benefitting, not just academically but



While the school had conducted an ex-

Students from Switzerland interacting with students of Christ Nagar School. Tommy Mendel, a faculty member • Manu R Mavell



also in a cultural level. It is an experience where students from both sides learn to collaborate together on academic projects, along with taking part in different cultural activities."

Among their week-long itinerary were visits to a few mosques, the Padmanabhaswamy temple, Kovalam Beach and Santhigiri Ashram at Varkala among others. For Tommy Mendel, one of the faculties from the school who had come for the second time here, the entire event has been an enriching experience. "The unique part of the project is that students are working together, staying with each others' families.

This will help students on many levels- gaining confidence on overcoming language barriers, learning to travel and feeling comfortable with different cultures. For us and the students, it is a lifetime experience which we will never forget," he said.



with two other schools from UK and Liverpool, student exchange programmes were held in the past with students from Hohenstaufen Gymnasium, Kaiserslautern, Germany, and Jean Renoir Middle School Bourges, France, visiting the school.