

Hingorani Foundation Internship – Week One

During the first week I have had a great experience, the flight was fine and the transfer to the university was reasonably smooth – I was struck by how busy and chaotic the roads seem! The accommodation and food provided at the university has been great and the heat hasn't been too unbearable! I've attended a number of meetings and court hearings which have been very interesting and have also had the opportunity to experience some of the city and its culture.

Sunday 26th April – Arrival

Following arrival at the National Law University Balaji, one of the students who has been organising my stay and accompanying me on trips and meetings, and some of his fellow 5th year students took me for lunch at a South Indian restaurant in central Delhi. Whilst travelling on the metro the service was terminated due to aftershocks from the recent earthquake - getting a taxi instead ended up providing a whistlestop tour of central Delhi including ministerial buildings, the parliament and India Gate. The meal was great and it was fantastic to experience some of the culture of the city so soon into my trip.

Monday 27th

In the meeting with Dr Bharti, Aman Hingorani and Shweta Hingorani I gained a better idea of the structure of the internship, and particularly the activities I would be undertaking in the first week. In the afternoon Balaji and I travelled for a meeting with the Centre for Policy Research, however, due to miscommunication the meeting did not occur, but it was interesting to see some more of the city on the 4 hour round trip.

Tuesday 28th – WWF India

In the morning I attended an environmental law lecture by Dr Bharti at the university. This was great in providing me with an introduction to the legislation and government policy relating to environmental and climate issues in the country. It was particularly interesting to gain an insight into the competing issues of climate and developmental needs, something we touched upon in the IDLHR core course and directly linked to climate justice considerations. In the afternoon, Siddarth, the other student organising meetings took me to the WWF India office to talk to some representatives from their legal department. This was beneficial in linking the knowledge gained from Dr Bharti's lecture to practical issues faced by organisations acting on the ground, lobbying government and attempting to raise awareness of environmental issues within the general public. After the meeting Siddarth showed me around the central government district, including the President's residence, parliament buildings and India gate.

Wednesday 29th – High Court

On Wednesday I travelled to the High Court to sit in on some PIL cases. It was fascinating to witness the court in action – I was struck by how busy it was! After lunch I sat in on some criminal trials before heading to the Supreme Court chambers to meet Ms Priya Hingorani.

Ben Havard

Thursday 30th – Vatavaran and Ranthambhore Foundation

On Thursday Siddarth accompanied me to meetings with Vatavaran and the Ranthambhore Foundation. It was really interesting to hear how issues of climate and environment have inspired and impacted upon their work respectively. Particularly useful was learning about the ways in which the solid waste management projects and other initiatives of the Vatavaran organisation have inspired changes to policies at a state and national level, such as playing a role in the 'Green Delhi' drive which is so prominently advertised around the city. The meeting with the Ranthambhore Foundation was also insightful in terms of explaining how national law, and particularly its enforcement, will be vital in seeing fundamental changes in attitudes towards the environment. Following the meetings we visited the Qutb Minar and areas of Old Delhi which was great to explore.

Friday 1st May – Supreme Court

In the morning I attended another lecture by Dr Bharti, on Environmental Impact Assessment regulations and solid waste management. It was useful to contextualise some of the information gained from the previous meeting within the legal framework – particularly the work of the Vatavaran organisation. Following this I travelled to the Supreme Court to sit in on a PIL trial and also had the opportunity to talk to some advocates about their work which was valuable in developing my understanding of PIL and the Indian legal system in general.

Saturday 2nd May

As there were no meetings organised for Saturday Siddarth took me to see some more of the city. We visited a different area of Old Delhi to see a Mosque, had lunch in a Muslim restaurant, wandered around some markets and shopping areas and he helped me buy a cheap phone to help with communication whilst I'm here.

Sunday 3rd May

In the Morning Siddarth organised a full body massage which was something I'd never experienced but was very relaxing! For the rest of the day I was able to spend some time researching, relaxing and skyping family.