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An interview with two students from Singapore Management University

As Myanmar students are studying in Singapore’s tertiary institutions, I had an interview with Khin Thida Hnin (3rd year) and Aye Kyithar Swe (2nd year) about their experiences and the student life.

Profile:

Name: Aye Kyithar Swe
Age: 21
Education: 2nd year (Economics, Social Sciences), Singapore Management University

Name: Khin Thida Hnin
Age: 21
Education: 3rd year (Marketing), Singapore Management University

Q: Why did you choose to study in Singapore and SMU?

Hnin: Universities in Singapore have different teaching styles. I chose SMU because they offer the subjects I’m interested in and because I like the teaching style.

Aye: There are many MNCs here in Singapore from which I can gain a lot of exposure. Besides, SMU has a lot of CCA clubs. For instance, music clubs for those who are interested in music and different arts clubs for those who are keen on the arts. In addition, there is an array of choices for both local and overseas community services. We have quite a variety in the countries that we can go, and that’s also one of the main reasons that I chose SMU.

Q: So, if you have the option of choosing from a lot of countries, what about the costs?

Hnin: For community services, there’s an internet portal from school that we can check. It features details of the community services such as the country, the NGO affiliated, and the scope of the project. I went to Cambodia. About 60% of the costs was subsidized by the NGO which organized the project. We spent 20 days there, teaching children English and helping in building a primary school.

Aye: I went to India and there were 17 of us. It is a mountainous state in northern India called Sikkim which borders with Nepal. The Office of Student life subsidized me for about 60% as I’m a foreigner, and the local students in my team are subsidized to the same amount by the Singapore Government. It was a 17-day project.

Q: What did you do during your overseas community services? And what are the benefits?

Hnin: I learnt about the Cambodian culture. As I taught the children English and encouraged them to be self-confident, I also became more confident of myself.

Aye: Our main project revolved around assisting in a paper factory, whose main purpose is to provide employment for women of little means (for instance, less educated or widowed women). The raw material used to produce paper is readily obtained from the barks of a kind of local shrub. As it can be easily propagated and grows fast, the natural environment is also not harmed. The scope of the project also involved teaching computers skills at the village computer centre and teaching English.
Q: Any suggestions for students who want to study in Singapore?

Hnin: Students should work on their English skills, in addition to getting the specific qualifications as needed by the schools that they want to apply to. In order to get the necessary scores, students should prepare in advance for about a year rather than acting in the last minute. They should know what they want so that they can prepare themselves.

Aye: Students should figure out what they really want out of their life. In Myanmar, most of the students, if they have scores, decide to go to the med school just because their friends happen to do so – which I think is should not be the case. If you know what you want to be, there are many ways to achieve your dreams. The most important thing for students is to find out what they want to be.