



Duke of Edinburgh – 2015

The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award is the world's leading youth achievement award, bringing together practical experiences and life skills to equip young people for life. JIRS has been offered the award as a part of its co-curricular activity program.

This program enables students to attend and participate in the adventure expedition to the Himalayas, where they learn team work and leadership building. They need to earn an award with perseverance and enterprise by completing 12 to 18 hours of service, learning skills, and sports for physical fitness. The most exciting section is the adventure and expedition, which has taken off in a big way.

Till today, JIRS has given 113 students to grab the opportunity to enroll themselves for this program which includes 50 Bronze Awardees and 63 Silver Awardees.

We provide a balanced program of activities that develops the whole person – mind, body and soul – in an environment of social interaction and team working. Young people progress through three levels of Duke of Edinburgh programs to achieve a Bronze, Silver or Gold Award.

Taking part builds confidence and develops self-esteem. It requires persistence, commitment and has a lasting impact on the attitudes and outlook of all young people who do their Duke of Edinburgh.

This award is valued immensely by top world institutions for giving priority in admissions. The award seeks to maximize the potential of the young people, so that they may contribute considerably to society and subsequently to the nation.

Annually treks are arranged at Sikkim, Manali, Ladakh or Darjeeling. This year 17 students of grade 12 went for the gold award to the Himalayan region of Leh-Ladakh in Jammu and Kashmir.

At Leh, the first day was spent by the team acclimatized-getting adapted to the high altitude weather at about 11,500ft above sea level. The second day, students visited The Hemis Monastery which is located 40kms from Leh, and is the wealthiest, best known and biggest Gumpa of Ladakh. They had to climb almost 300 steps to reach the monastery. The next visit was to Thiksey Monastery. The Thiksey Monastery is situated at a distance of approximately 18 km from the town of Leh. One of the most beautiful monasteries of Ladakh, it belongs to the Gelukpa Order of Buddhism the new monastery was situated on a hilltop, to the north of Indus River. It has a 15 meter high statue of the Maitreya Buddha, the largest such statue in Ladakh.



On third day, students proceeded to Leh to Nubra Valley via Khardungla Pass: 140 km. It is the highest motorable road in the world 18,380ft above sea level. On arriving at Nubra Valley, students went to the White Sand Dunes at Hunder and took camel rides and also practiced archery. Students went for long walks at Leh exploring the local culture and talking to the local people about their lives and livelihood during extreme seasons. At night, they camped in their pitched tents and had a camp fire.

Next day, they went to surrounding villages trekking and to the nearby glacier stream and swam and also played sports like cricket and badminton. On their return the next day students visited Diskit Monastery, one of the oldest temples of this area, the temple has a huge idol of Tsong-kha-pa, crowned with a Gelugpa yellow hat. Here again student trekked to the top of the hill to reach the monastery.

All the students drove to Pangong Lake on the Indo China border (280kms round trip). Enroute crossing Changla Pass, the third highest motorable road in the world. Pangong Lake is an endorheic lake in the Himalayas situated at a height of about 4,350 m (14,270 feet). It is 134 km long and extends from India to Tibet. 60% of the length of the lake lies in China. The students went around the lake and spoke to the localities there. It was a strenuous 10 hour journey with lot of learnings and an eye opener.

On the last day, students' troop adventurously went to the sham valley to Indus-Zanskar Confluence (Sangam) which lies in Ladakh at Nimu. Enroute visited Magnetic Hill and Gurudwara Patthar Sahib, built in 1517 to commemorate the visit to the Ladakh region of Guru Nanak Dev, the founder Guru of the Sikh faith.

Hall of Fame is constructed by the Indian Army. There are memorabilia, eminent defense personalities' biographies, images and weapons used during Kargil war and belongings of enemy soldiers found at war site. Also, history of the various war heroes who sacrificed their lives for the country and a video bringing to life the Kargil war which is very moving.

After 8 days of the tremendous trekking, students left Leh with lot of knowledge & memories of the history and culture of Leh-Ladakh, the adventure, team work and the experience of life at such high altitudes in difficult terrains and extreme climatic conditions.