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Cultural Differences between Germany and Bangladesh

"Wherever I am, I accept the culture there"

This station deals with the cultural differences between the Bangladeshi or Indian and the German culture. Dinu talks to us about his personal intercultural experiences and shows a great deal of intercultural competence...



"In Germany I've never faced problems with racism or similar things and I've never had problems with the communication. For people who are rooted in the Indian cultures, body language is a very important mean of communication and I got along with it very well in Germany. But of course, at the beginning, when I didn't know that much German, funny things happened in the restaurant I worked. Once a guest asked for a pen but instead of bringing him one I came back with a glass. We both really laughed and it wasn't a problem at all. In Germany everything is generally very systematic and ordered, whereas in Bangladesh everything is more spontaneous. One has to see what people do and then you can react. Otherwise you won't get along there. A very ordered system has its advantages: everything goes more quickly and that's why I think the German or European

way is generally good. But on the other hand, in Germany you need for everything a permission, doesn't matter if it's a cricket match with my restaurant staff or the New Year's Eve celebration in the English Garden here in Munich. In Bangladesh we just have to look for a nice spot and can then celebrate and play cricket there.

But apart from all these differences that of course do exist, the most important thing for me is generally the acceptance of and respect towards other cultures. If you are a guest in another country, you'll have to accept the culture that exists there. In Germany, for example, New Year's Eve is celebrated on the 31st of December, whereas we Bangladeshi celebrate it in spring. But of course, we also celebrate New Year's Eve on the 31st of December, together with our guests in the restaurant. And in India, for example, it is normal to eat with your right hand and to take your shoes off when you enter the house. This might be strange at first glance, but in the end it's just another way of doing it. But actually every house has its own culture. My house is my culture. If you are a guest at somebody's house, you'll have to respect the customs there. This is a sign of a respect and accepting and knowing the other culture enriches you, because you can always learn from it."

Tasks: Answer the following questions:

1. Questions on the text

- a. Why didn't Dinu have any problems with the communication in Germany?
- b. Name one important cultural difference between Bangladesh and Germany.
- c. What is the most important thing for Dinu when it comes to cultural differences?

2. Think about the following questions and think of possible answers.

There is not one correct answer:

- a. Dinu said „My house is my culture“. What could that mean? What about your house? Are there any customs and rules that are only typical of your family? What can we learn from that with regard to cultures of other countries?
- b. Although we have a good standard of living in Germany, many people decide to emigrate to more exotic countries (e.g. in Latin America, Africa, Asia...). Which cultural aspects of these countries could attract those emigrants?