

## "Lesen leicht gemacht" – Reading made easy

It was one of those hot and humid afternoons when one would prefer to stay indoors in the comfort of air-conditioned rooms, but we had scheduled a trip to the Max Müller Bhavan. So reluctantly we set out as a class to visit the Goethe Institute located on the Kasturba Gandhi Marg, New Delhi, not knowing what to expect from the trip.

As we entered the premises of the institute, we noticed that the place was populated by people with different ethnicities. It was heartening to see that the place always had a fair share of vibrant youth bustling in and out of it. We were taken to the library where we found a large number of books both English and German, tastefully arranged in a friendly setting with a beautiful view of the front lawn. There an enthusiastic young lady told us all about the activities of the Max Müller Bhawan and also about the library in general.

We came to find out that the Goethe Institute is a non-profit German cultural association operational worldwide with 159 institutes, was set up in 1951 and is headquartered in Munich. The Institutes in India are interestingly called Max Müller Bhavan, in honour of the German philologist and orientalist Max Müller (1823-1900), a scholar of comparative religion and co-founder of modern Indian studies. The institute currently offers a wide range of German language courses and conducts a series of tests for learners of German as a foreign language at all levels: A1 up to C2 which can be taken both in Germany and abroad. To facilitate the study of German, there are teachers in the institute who help with classroom courses. The Goethe-Institute also offers e-learning courses which can be availed by registering at the below mentioned website.

Website: <https://www.goethe.de/en/index.html>

The library is well stocked with books and magazines which are available for reading if one is a member of the Goethe Institute. It can help a lot in learning about Germany by providing information on German culture, society and politics, through not just a wide array of books and magazines, but also a large number of German movies, having English subtitles, which can be watched in the library itself on the computers present there. Another interesting find was that the books in the library have a colour coding which differentiates the books on the basis of comfort level of the reader with German language. The students found themselves engrossed in the variety of literature available to them and soon we wrapped up the session at the library.

As we moved out of the building, we realized that we had stumbled upon a whole new world. It was not just a new language but also a new culture, a different set of people and a whole lot of other things, waiting to be discovered, explored and relished. The day ended on a lighter note with all of us posing for pictures in front of the building. It was indeed a day well spent.