



Pic: Naazim Osha

# BPO DRAWS FOREIGN BLOOD

WIPRO call centre, Powai, hires 12 Bhutanese youth for its tech support team

C GITANJALI  
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The dream of becoming a celebrity or an actor in Bollywood draws people from across the globe to Mumbai. But now even BPOs are attracting youngsters from other countries. WIPRO, Powai, just got a batch of 12 youngsters — 4 boys and 8 girls — for their tech support team from Bhutan.

Amit Mukherjee, 34, who heads the office's hiring team, said, this is first time that the company has hired foreigners for its Indian offices in such a large recruitment drive. "Someone from Bhutan told us that there were good people training there and we went to have a look at their work, which we found to be good. We then conducted interviews and selected these 12 youngsters," he said.

These boys and girls, who come from different parts of Bhutan, now live in an apartment building at Marol, Andheri (E). Though they have visited other places in the country, this is their first venture into Mumbai. The youngsters were

handpicked by WIPRO from among 160 students at Bkone Bhutan Centre of Excellence in Bhutan. They have been in the city for a little over a month now. Staying in an apartment in Marol, Andheri, for the last one month ever since they arrived in Mumbai, the youngsters say they have already picked up a lot of Hindi thanks to Bollywood. "In fact, we have even picked up a little bit of Marathi," said Pema Choki, 21.

Undergoing their training at WIPRO these days, they will part of BPOs technical support team once they are trained. Sonam Tshomo, 21, explained that there are two call centres in Bhutan but Mumbai presented a better opportunity. "Most people we have met in Mumbai are friendly." City's pollution though has disappointed them. "I thought that since Mumbai was a mega city, it would be like heaven. However, as soon as we stepped out on the roads, we were struck by the noise and air pollution. There is also a lot of traffic," said Tshewang Dendup, 21.

So what places in Mumbai have they visited?

Essel World and some shopping malls. "We work during the week and the weekends are spent washing clothes and revising what we learn during the week," said Kinely Tenzin, 21.

Among the places they would like to visit are Goa and Film City. In fact, start talking about Bollywood and the group doesn't stop. Hrithik Roshan, Shah Rukh Khan, Nane Patekar, Sushmita Sen, Juhi Chawla are some of the celebs they would like to spot in the city. One boy even asked, "Doesn't Shilpa Shetty live in Powai?"

Though it is challenging to be away from home, they quite like it here and have no plans of leaving the city any time soon. Tenzin Jamtsho, 26, said, "We miss home only once we are out of office." The group gushes about the office and their seniors, who they say have been very helpful and friendly. Their trainer, Vincent Nathan, 30, said that it's good to such young people coming to work in India. "They are getting an exposure to the country which is good," he said.

gitanjali@yuva.net.in

Student energy steals the thunder