

Joining this Easter holiday visit to Daping, Guangxi, not only is my first time to participate in Project Mingde event, but also my first time to step into the rural area of China. Before the trip, I was quite reluctant to join because of the poor hygiene condition of rural villages in Guangxi, even though I acknowledged the fact that it is going to be an invaluable experience in terms of learning engineering knowledge as well as widening my horizon. I left home reluctantly on the departure day and spent hours thinking about my home during transportation.

My feelings reversed right at the moment when I stepped into Guilin.

I was first intrigued by the local food in the restaurant where we had our lunch after hours on bus and aeroplane. Though the hygiene condition of the restaurant was not satisfying, my focus actually fell into the unique Guilin dishes which I would not be able find in Hong Kong. After the meal, we started the 8 hours bus journey to hotel. Deemed a long and boring journey, I didn't expect much about it. In fact, I started to know my tour-mates through chatting, sharing snacks and playing games with them. We will never forget about the fun 'karaoke games' we played during traffic congestion in Rongshui! We also had endless conversation with Prof. Tham, discussing on topics ranging from university admissions to structural engineering principles. The bus journey was long, but we all treasured it. The trip was starting to be fun!

We spent the following days in various places: Daping Primary School, Kelu's home, Rongshui, Guilin, and etc. The most remarkable one must be our visit to the Daping Primary School - the focus of this trip. The excitement began when we were asked to ride on a dumper due to certain problems of our bus. 19km – that was the distance we travelled - unexpected, unprecedented, exciting, 'painful', unforgettable... verbal expressions are not going to conclude our feelings towards this crazy journey. At Daping Primary School, I had my first hands-on surveying experience. Being responsible of traversing, I learned to set up and utilize equipment such as the total station and the prism

under the careful guidance of Prof. Tham and the seniors. After finishing our part, I was too curious to ask the other tour-mates about their roles, who patiently explained to me the ideas of leveling, detailing, as well as some basic knowledge about rocks and structures. I was also taught to manipulate AutoCAD, a drawing programme to be learned in year 2. It was such an invaluable day which I will not forget about!

Not to mention all the other exciting moments that we had during the trip, I would like to talk about how this trip has changed me. Be observable - this is the most prominent idea that I have learned. Why is it important? Apparently, every member of the project was responsible enough to accomplish the tasks assigned before the trip. We thoroughly understood our parts and generated complete analysis of our work. However, many of us have missed an element which is essential in generating a good feasibility report - be observable not only in our parts, but also in others' areas. We should be watchful on what the others are working on so that we not only could work efficiently without repeating certain similar procedures, but could also facilitate the linkage between different teams' work. If we are considerate enough to have a thorough understanding also on others' duties, we would be able to work hand in hand and generate a detailed report. On top of that, 'be observable' also means to pay attention to the environment of the site where we conducted surveying. For instance, how did the rocks look like? What is the difference between the alignment of the basketball court, the dormitories and the education building? These are all out-of-scope (in terms of our roles) yet important details of the site. They are the keys to generating a good report! Be observable, and we will be able to solve problems and strive for a higher standard of our work!

A trip of endless excitements, learnings and explorations - I can't wait to join the next one!