

The month I spent studying for med school in a mall

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When I completed my A Levels last January, everyone I know took it as a universal sign to tell me what I should do with my life. Granted I think they were just trying to help, but with statements like "turning point" and "most important time" being arbitrarily thrown around more often than *hartal* announcements, it got annoying really fast. Finally I did decide to explore the various career paths that had opened up for me. And when I say "various" I actually mean two: Engineering or Medicine.

publishing house, an optician, a small warehouse and an uncountable amount of start-ups. I once ran into a friend there who said he was getting "visa work done." You could probably live out your whole life in this mall as a hobo and never have to step out for anything ever again. It's just so mysterious it's actually entertaining.

THE SYLLABUS: I hate to be the stereotypical English medium student hating on the National Curriculum but anyone with common sense knows that the system is archaic and counterproductive to the actual gain of knowledge. The initial

Souls-tier, featuring varied monsters like the double answer, the triple answer or even worse, the monster that isn't there – the blank answer. Did I mention the negative marking that punishes you for every misstep and guess you take? Yeah, that's always fun.

SOCIAL LIFE: Doctors almost always make that overused joke about "not having a social life anymore." While personally I don't get to see my friends often now that they've joined engineering coaching, the extent

of your social life really just depends on how much time you're willing to allocate to it. But having a high stress job as a doctor and expecting the same amount of downtime as a guy who has a desk job is still pretty naïve.

While all these seem pretty brutal, being blunt about it is the best approach. Nobody wants incompetent doctors running around, so naturally their courses will be extremely demanding. All you need is unholy perseverance. Also, a little sense of humour about it goes a long way.



The following will list experiences and (maybe) act as a guide for English medium students who are planning to study for public university medical entrance exams:

THE MALL: The first thing you do as a would-be doctor is visit a magical place called Farmgate and go to the coaching district, where buildings are adorned with colourful banners and huge unflattering photos of the country's best students looking down on you with cold, dead eyes. I refer to my coaching as "the Mall" because it is literally inside a shopping mall. Not only does this mall have food courts and shoe stores, it's also home to a

shock of having to memorize page after page of data is the biggest hurdle for students who grew up with exams testing critical thinking, and many quit prematurely. The thing to remember is that doctors are *supposed* to have a lot memorized, and after a week of two everyone gets acclimatized to the methods. The trick is to not get discouraged early on.

SLEEP: What is this thing you call "sleep"?

THE EXAM: The medical exam itself is all MCQs. But before you think you can guess your way to DMC, a distinction has to be made. If A Level MCQs are like Skyrim, Medical MCQs are full Dark



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