

A Hamlet in Oblivion

Visiting a quaint and quietly secluded place such as a hamlet was never on my cards until I discovered an essence of tranquillity while I stayed in Nyoma. On our way to certain attention seeking places such as the highest located astronomical telescopic observatory in 'Hanle', the famous hot water springs of Ladakh and the remotely located lake of Tsomorari, we decided to sojourn for a night at a small meagrely equipped place called Nyoma. While Nyoma is nothing more than a desolated village which fills in the needs of tourists like us for some shelter, it is one of the domains of solace after you have travelled a back breaking journey of nearly 200 kms from Leh. With a population that will hardly exceed even 500, the village emerges chirpy and filled with liveliness as the sun dawns spreading its comfort rays all around embraces every corner of the hamlet. A small government clinic, a government school both for boys and girls, the BSNL tower and the Power and Water Department offices can be seen located close to the vicinity and in easy communication. For the frequent mobile users and internet freaks who otherwise find it difficult to communicate due to poor network Nyoma comes as a surprising relief.

As for me I couldn't wait moving out from my small guest room to seek the pleasure of sun basking even in the month of October. The village seemed to be blessed by a healthy air, peace flowing rivers of Indus, a monastery to experience divinity and its ever smiling people who would always exude a welcoming charm around you with their hospitable ways and helpful nature. School children would stop past my room and look forward to play with my two year old daughter. In return my daughter would insist me to take her to visit a nearby hostel from whence they came to share their smiles and laughter with us. She would be pepped up with such a lively entertainment thrown by villagers of all the ages. Morning teas with plenty of herbs such as dried mint and basil brewed with ginger were the luxurious begins as I would sit perched on one of the open terraces of my rooms and silently admire the tall ice peaked mountains staring me from their static distance. Local shops would sell everything from vegetables and fruits cluttered with woollen clothes, cosmetics, stationary as well as some medicines so one doesn't have to prioritize what they need first to buy, just land in one of these shops and watch for a while.... and you while find everything in these miniature malls to serve your needs. An owner with her face covered leaving her eyes exposed and one of her toddlers tucked neatly behind her back explained that since the visit by tourists to their village is nearly sparse and only existed in summers they had to clog all kinds of items ranging from consumer to cosmetic in small place as it became easier for the customer and saved their time. Well indeed I thought... for I nearly picked up some gloves, a sachet of a hair conditioner and a packet of noodles from one same shop!

Although my stay at Nyoma was just a few days it left a lasting impression on my mind as apart from other happening tourist spots in Ladakh, this one took me back to solitude and a world of its own where people were found to live with just one thing... harmony!!