

This is Purav M Asher, a yatri of Chinna Shodha Yatra 57.

I am still in a dilemma that I am at home. I still miss the breeze, I still miss the village vibes. I was scared at the start of meeting new people. As an introvert, meeting these many new people was truly an amazing experience. Sorry if I don't mention anyone's name, I usually don't remember names, so I would just call them yatris.

Starting at day one, we came late but we still met a yatri in our auto. We shared a moment there and had a very little interaction with everyone there.

Then the actual yatra started. Firstly, visiting Sangham Radio, the best experience of life I would say. I got a chance to see how an actual radio caster setup looks like. It was just an unimaginable experience. Then opposite to that, I thought it was the place where bricks are made, but I was wrong. It was a school. I was jealous that I couldn't attend such a school. The architecture was just a piece of engineering.

Then we continued our walk, talking with new yatris, sharing their POVs, their experiences. It was just amazing. Like, how can strangers be this friendly?

Then we reached the ZPHS school where we had our lunch. Being a picky eater, I thought I would starve for 3 days or just live on water and some biscuits, but the food was so simple and delicious that I couldn't resist eating more.

After lunch, when Thata garu was telling stories about the grassroots innovators, their stories were really interesting. As an engineering student, we tend to solve complex problems and find problems here and there which aren't even relevant. But when we heard the stories and understood the innovators' POV, we realised problems are within us.

Then at night, when we were sharing the impressions, I was tired but still I was basically listening. I thought I missed many perspectives that I never saw.

Then at night, the TEEN yatri gang laughed the hell out. Even the stories we laughed about had 0 logic and sense. We laughed the hell out. It was another experience.

Then the next morning, I woke at 5:30 am. The sounds of nature were such a heavenly experience. The cold breeze was too relaxing. Then everyone was waking up one by one, some were already awake. Still, the morning was a lifetime experience.

Then after breakfast, we started the walk again. The next day, yatris got more connected. We had a lot of talks with new members who came on that day, and we had a walk with Thata garu. The previous day, he told some really important stuff that we know but never knew it. He told us life is simple, we complicate it. We actually complicate it.

Then exploring a village by myself with no restrictions really helped me open up. I tried talking alone with strangers, which I was scared to do before. Then I sat on a tractor for the first time. It was also a crazy, wonderful experience.

Then we ate in a park where our beloved yatri (the DOG) left. I guess it left us for good. It walked with us at night, stayed with me. I was emotionally attached, but even it taught me not to build emotional attachments this soon.

Then the night walk was also a learning experience. The whole night walk, I was speaking to myself and also aware of the yatri I was holding hands with. It was like a responsibility for his security.

Then the last day came, where strangers became a family. Even though we didn't know them, we became a family just in the span of 2 days.

The water spot was also inside my bucket list to go alone. Even that was an experience.

Then the last food we ate together actually felt different. I had a lot of questions: Is this over already? Will I ever meet them again? Etc. etc.

The last impressions were heart-pouring.

Finally, I would say that I would never regret that I joined this yatra, and I would really try my best to come to the next yatra.

PURAV M ASHER