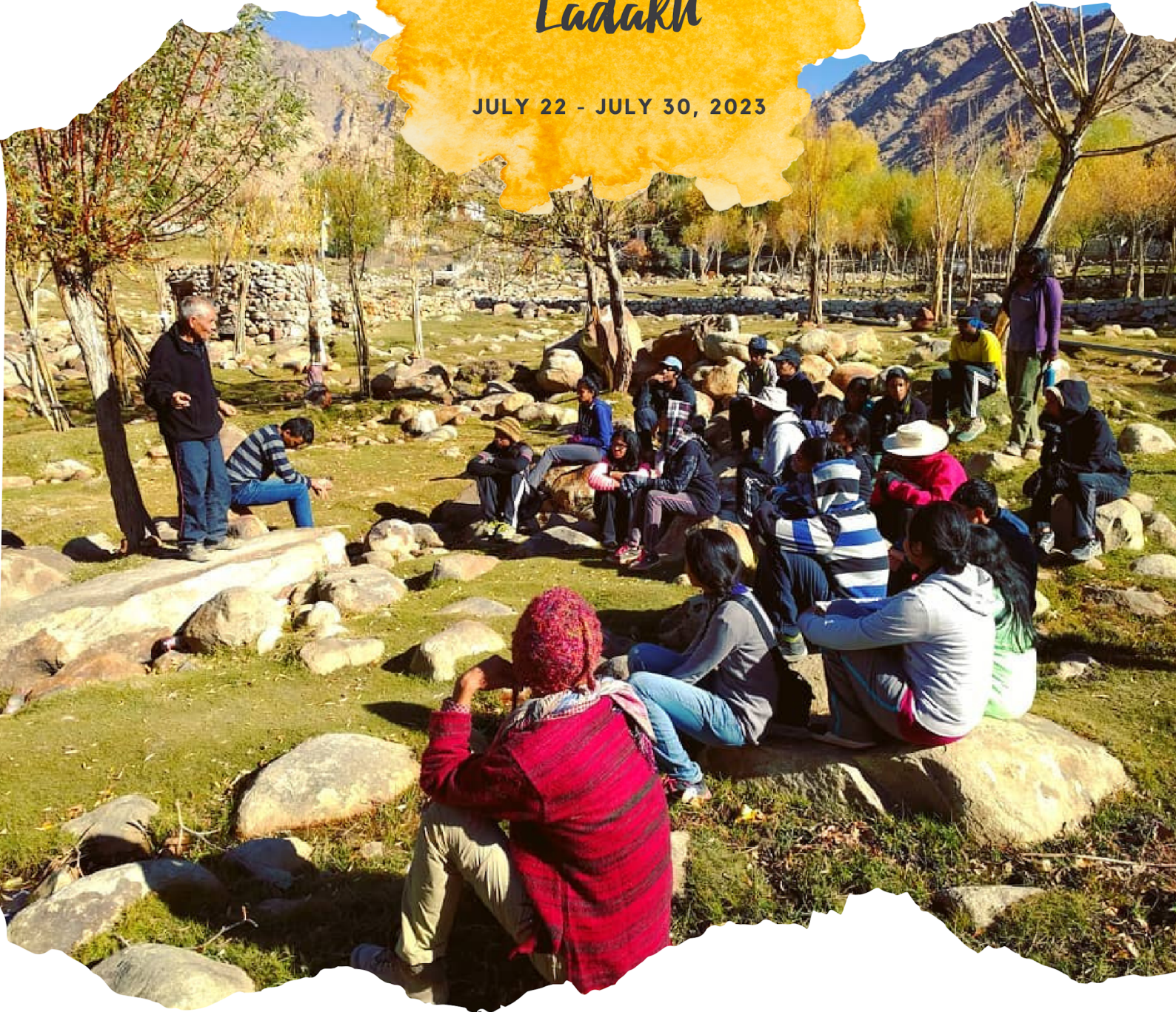


# Learning from Ladakh

JULY 22 - JULY 30, 2023



curated by

*Journeys With Meaning*



### **July 22, Day 1 – Arrival and acclimatisation**

Students arrive at Leh in the morning along with JwM facilitators. We leave for the SECMOL campus, located on the banks of the Indus river. This will be our base for the first few days. On this day, we avoid doing anything strenuous as we need to acclimatise to the lower oxygen levels at this high altitude.

Reach the campus, have breakfast, and retire to the dormitories/rooms for some sleep. Assemble in the dining hall for lunch. Get some more rest post lunch. Over tea, there will be an introduction to the organizations -- Journeys With Meaning and SECMOL -- followed by the trip orientation.

Walk around the campus and familiarise yourself with the place. Chat with the SECMOL students. Over dinner, students get introduced to SECMOL's dinner time activities where students practice speaking in English, sing a Ladakhi folk song, and have a short GK quiz for their students. Get a good night's rest as there are a lot of exciting activities planned over the next few days!

### **July 23, Day 2 – A day in the life of a SECMOL student**

Join the early morning activities as the campus wakes up to the day. After a hearty breakfast, students will join different teams of SECMOL students who will give us a tour of their sustainably-built passive-solar campus with its rammed-earth buildings.

The SECMOL campus is run entirely by the students. This activity will help our students' get a better understanding of SECMOL and its students, while also learning how these Ladakhi teenagers, who come from remote villages mostly, handle their daily responsibilities and run the entire campus by themselves. After the campus tour, the SECMOL students and our students gather together and participate in some fun games and activities to get to know each other.

Post lunch, both groups of students engage in Conversation Class. The purpose of this exercise is to help SECMOL students practice communicating in English while bonding with visitors. And our students learn about life in Ladakhi villages and the aspirations of Ladakhi youth.

After tea, students can rest a bit, read, or participate in the games-hour with SECMOL students. As the brilliant hues of sunset light up the barren landscapes of Ladakh, we huddle up inside the common hall to beat the outside chill and indulge in a fun and interactive game designed by JwM, followed by a film-screening session. We will end the day with a discussion post-dinner.



### **July 24, Day 3 - Students' day out in Leh. Back to SECMOL.**

Gear up for an exciting day outside SECMOL. The group sets out to visit Leh today to spend time in the market. SECMOL students and our students will be paired together and sent on a tour of Leh. Each group will be given a list of landmarks to visit and people to meet in and around Leh. The groups will also be given lunch money – the idea is to eat at the local places that serve delicious Tibetan and Ladakhi food.

Back at the campus by late afternoon, it's momo-making time! All the students get together and make momos for dinner. It's one of the most fun activities at SECMOL... :)

### **July 25, Day 4 – Visit to Phyang village and HIAL campus.**

After breakfast, the students along with some SECMOL students gear up for an exciting day outside SECMOL. We head to a nearby village called Phyang where Sonam Wangchuk's new university for mountain people, the Himalayan Institute of Alternatives, Ladakh (HIAL), is located.

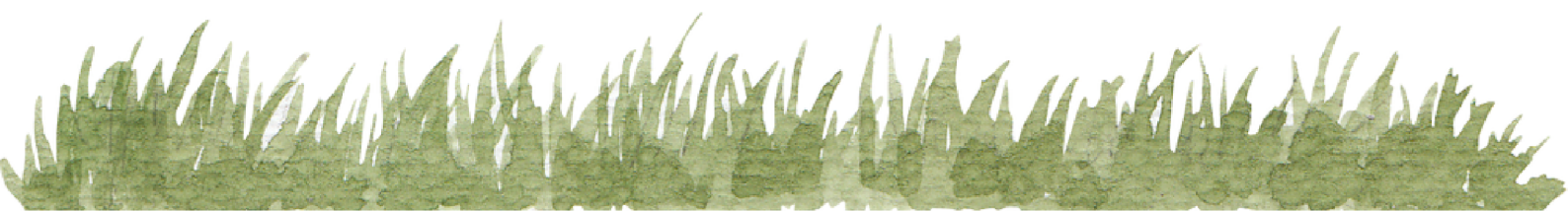
At HIAL, we will learn more about the need for a separate university for hill people that focuses exclusively on subjects that are relevant to their lifestyles and challenges. We will also learn about the workings of the innovative *Ice Stupa Artificial Glaciers* as the HIAL team has been building these all over Ladakh and are now being invited by other countries to build these amazing innovations in countries like Switzerland and Peru which share a similar landscape.

### **July 26, Day 5 – Our final night at SECMOL.**

In the morning, the students work on the campus with SECMOL students followed by Conversation class. In the afternoon, we'll walk down to the picturesque Indus River, soak our feet in its cold waters, and reflect over the learning of the last few days.

During dinner, we will celebrate our time there with a cultural exchange program and farewell celebration – with music and dance along with the SECMOL students and end the night with a fun dance party.

Exchange numbers and hugs with your new best friends as we say goodbye to SECMOL with the promise of staying in touch... :)





### **July 27, Day 6 - Learn about Ladakhi culture and traditions at Gya.**

Leave after breakfast for the village of Gya, generally considered to be Ladakh's oldest living village. En route, we'll visit the beautiful Thiksay monastery and have lunch at a restaurant en route after seeing the monastery. At Gya, we'll settle into our comfortable homestay and interact with our warm hosts so that we learn more from them about their way of life in this challenging part of Ladakh.

Rest for a while in the afternoon. After tea, go for a village walk and learn about the different traditional and sustainable cultural and farming practices of the village. Have a good dinner and head early to bed.

### **July 28, Day 7 – Visit to Tso Kar lake. Documentary screening.**

After an early breakfast, we will head to the beautiful Tso Kar lake where we will be joined by a naturalist from the **Nature Conservation Foundation** working on wildlife and snow leopard conservation in Ladakh. He will talk about the experiments being done by NCF in minimizing animal-human conflict and protecting the endangered snow leopard.

We will also look out for the Black Necked Crane and other migratory birds around the lake that come all the way from Siberia.

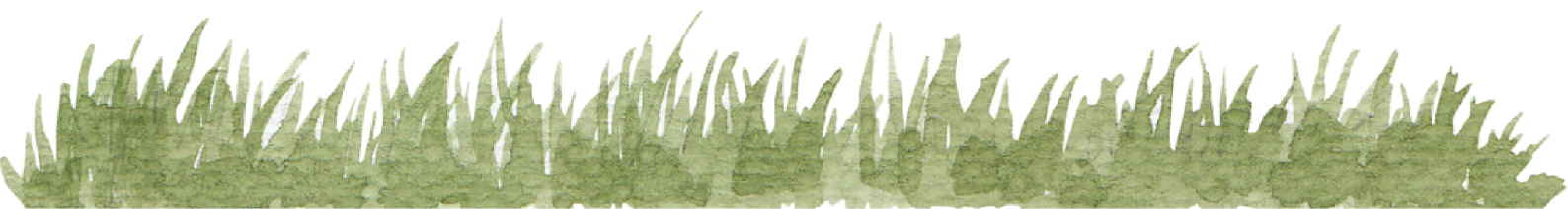
After lunch at a local restaurant, return to Gya by dinner time. In the evening, huddle up inside the warm homestay and watch a beautiful documentary on the lives of the shepherds in Ladakh. Follow up with a conversation over dinner.

### **July 29, Day 8 – Day in Leh.**

After a good local breakfast, we leave for Leh where we will settle in and have lunch at our hotel. The students then get the afternoon and evening to explore the market, pick up souvenirs and gifts for their families and friends, and enjoy the many offerings at Leh's quaint and cozy cafes. In the evening, we head over to the beautiful Shanti Stupa to view the sunset before we return to our hotel for the night.

### **July 30, Day 9 – Jullay Ladakh!**

Say our goodbyes to Ladakh and fly out.





*Journeys With Meaning* has been facilitating learning journeys to Ladakh and other regions around India since 2007.

For this, we were recognized as India's **BEST EXPERIENTIAL TRAVEL** organisation in the *Outlook Indian Responsible Tourism Awards 2019*.

## Testimonials

"Our daughter went on a trip with JwM in May 2018. The concept is fantastic -- that we don't just consume as tourists, but learn and contribute in whichever way we can. That we get to know local issues and get responsible. Also, being a bit of an introvert, our goals for our kid included going out there and talking to people.

Well, she hasn't stopped talking about the trip since they came back. The group coalesced and the kids are still in touch with each other, some beautiful friendships. One of the first things she told us was: "Guys, there are going to be some lifestyle changes in our home. We waste so much!" ... A realization in a home that prides itself on being green, organic, going low on waste, et al. Something that will get into her value system given this trip and the exposure she got.

Thanks a ton, *Journeys With Meaning*! They were so well taken care of in the best way possible – not cosseted, but cared for. Loved that, the independence given with an eye being kept on them."

**Sangitha Krishnamurthi (parent)**  
**May 2018, Learning from Ladakh – Students' Program**

This is a combined trip for **The Orchid School, Pune** and **Swadhaa School, Pune**.

## Inclusions and Exclusions

### INCLUSIONS

- All acco, meals (b'fast, lunch, dinner, tea/coffee), and local transportation in Ladakh
- All activities and experiences mentioned in the itinerary
- All learning material for the sessions conducted during the trip
- Permits for restricted areas
- Oxygen tank for any emergencies
- Basic first-aid kit
- Environmental fee, Wild-life fee, and Red Cross fee

### EXCLUSIONS

- Travel costs from your home city to Leh and back
- Entry charges to local monuments
- Travel Insurance
- Medical expenses
- Air tickets
- Mineral Water (we recommend carrying your own water bottles to refill)
- Extra food or any activities not already included in the trip costs
- Any personal shopping done during the trip

### CONTACT US

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