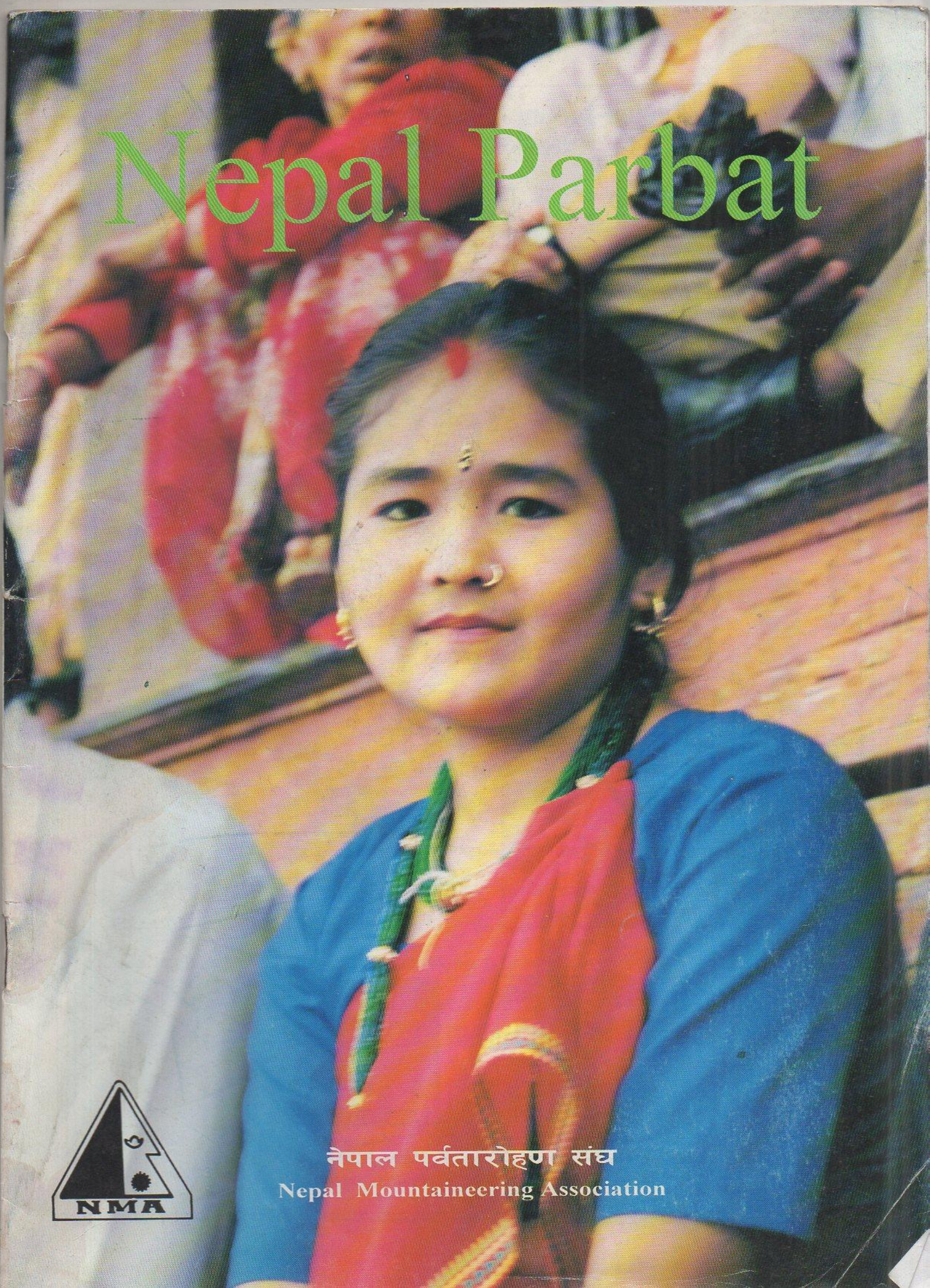
Nepal Parbat



नेपाल पर्वतारोहण संघ

Nepal Mountaineering Association

NMA

Nepal Mountaineering Association

Executive Board Members



President
Tashi Jangbu Sherpa



1st Vice President
Ang Tshiring Sherpa



2nd Vice President
Bikrum Pandey



General Secretary
Bhumi Lal Lama



Secretary
Ang Dendi Sherpa



Treasurer
Girdhari Sharma



Member
Ms.Nimi Sherpa



Member
Zimba Zangbu Sherpa



Member
Phur Gyalje Sherpa



Member
Ang Phurba Sherpa



Member
Ang J.P. Lama



Member
Pasang Sherpa



Member
Ang Phuri Sherpa



Member
Lhakpa Dorjee Sherpa



Member – Past President
Sonam Gyalcheen Sherpa



Member
Rajendra Bantawa
President (TAAN)



Ganesh Karki
Representative
MoCTCA

Nepal Mountaineering Association Publication

NEPAL PARBAT

नेपाल पर्वत

Ashad 2057 June-July 2000

Vol. 1 No.1

Editorial Board
Dr. Hari Prasad Shrestha
(Coordinator)
Ramesh Tiwari
Santa Subba
Hari Bansh Kirat
Bamsingh Ranabhat

Computer Layout
Krishna Bhakta Shrestha

Publisher
Nepal Mountaineering Association,
Publication & Publicity Committee
G.P.O.Box: 1435
Nagpokhari, Naxal
Tel: 434525, 435442
Fax: 977-1-434578
Email: peaks@nma.wlink.com.np
website :
www.nepalmountaineeringassociation.com

Printing
Variety Printers

Cover Photo
A Nepali belle from mountain region
By Prami Shresha

Regd. No. CDO KTM 205/056/57

Views expressed by the contributors are their own and do not necessarily agree with the publisher of this publication.

Contents

- *Minimum Impact, Maximum Experinece - Dr. Harka Gurung*
- *Tourism In Nepal -Dr.Bhuban B.Bajracharya*
- *Speed in his blood, Fame in his future*
- *Wildlife Reserves for Human Welfare - Dr. Soorya Lal Amatya*
- *Female Outdoor Leadership Training - Tara Devi Bajracharya*
- *Interview with Mr. George Dijmarescu*
- *Nepalese Tourism Developmnet - Dr. Hari Prasad Shrestha*
- *Interview with Mountaineer Nazir Sabir*
- *NMA's effort in Cleaning Campaign - Vinaya Shakya*
- *Mountaineering Activities of Spring 2000 - Umesh Kumar Singh*
- *Shangri-La Fifteen Minutes Away - Karna Sakya*
- *Mountaineering In Nepal - Yajna Raj Satyal*
- *My Boyhood Dreams - Tenzing Norgay Sherpa*
- *Mt Everest : Facts And Figures - Samidh Shrestha*
- *Worship The Himalayas - Dr. Shankar Raj Panta*
- *Mountain Tourism - Shilu M. Bajracharya*
- *Make Use Your Own Fertilizer Plant - Sushil Bhattarai*
- *'I will scale Mt. Everest three or four times more' : Appa*

Minimum Impact, Maximum Experience

ADVENTURE TOURISM AGENDA FOR NEPAL

Dr. Harka Gurung



My presentation will be in three components (a) reality check on Pokhara, (b) facts on Nepalese adventure tourism, and (c) ideas on sustainable management. Allow me to begin with two PATA contexts. I was one of the keynote speakers at 42nd annual conference of PATA '93 held in Hawaii. My statement was on "Tourism and Social Consideration and I concluded with the following quote of Chief Seattle in 1855 whose tribal land U.S. government wanted to buy.

"How can you buy or sell the sky, the warmth of the land? The idea is strange to us... Every shining pine needle, every sandy shore, every mist in the dark woods, every cheering and humming insect is holy in the memory and experience of my people .... We are part of the earth and it is a part of us. The perfumed flowers are our sisters; the deer, the horse, the great eagle, these are our brothers ... What is man without beasts? If all the beasts were gone, man would die from great loneliness of spirit. For what happens to the beasts soon happens to man ... This we know. The earth does not belong to man, man belongs to the earth."

This philosophy is an eloquent expression of intimacy between physical and human realm, and that experiences of adventure travel include challenges of nature as well as beauty of culture.

The second PATA context relates to its keen interest in promoting Pokhara. In 1975, a PATA report highlighted Pokhara's unique location as an important destination and projected visitor arrival of 266,000 for 1985. Actual visitors in 1985 came only to 180,989 or only 68 percent of the target as many of the recommendations were not implemented. This was followed by another PATA mission in 1988 with a comprehensive report that visualized Pokhara as a hub for air services to west Nepal as well as connection to Delhi. Most of the PATA findings still remain valid and their follow-up would certainly enhance Pokhara tourism.

1. **Pokhara Highlight**

This brings me to some myth and reality about Pokhara. Physical features assume significance through their unique location. "If there were no mountains, men would create them: like the pyramids in the featureless Sahara". Where there are many stupendows mountains, deep valleys become conspicuous.Here is an observation made over 63 years ago by a pioneer of Himalayan climbing, Gen Charles Bruce:

"There is almost underlying this great center (of mountains), a twon and a mart which always attracted my curiosity almost beyond any other town in Nepal. No one has been there, no one has seen it, but we know that its climate is almost tropical, that it cannot be more than 2,500 ft. in altitude, that it is on the banks of a great lake, that it is an open valley and lies almost immediatel at the foot of these magnificent giants (Annapurna Himal). Phewa Tal is the name of the lake and Pokhara that of the town. Some day and from somewhere some one will arise who will do adequate justice to what must be one of the most impressive and beautiful sights to be found in any mountain country."

The above statement is both realistic and rhapsodic. Yet there is an element of myth in Bruce's colonial view that since no Westerner had been there, others had not been and seen the place. Pokhara Valley then abounded not only with Bahun, Chhetri and Gurung natives, it was actually visited by a Japanese, Ekai Kawaguchi, in March 1899. This Oriental visitor's fascination with the place was recorded in a book published in 1907 (three decades before Bruce wrote) as follows:

"Pokhara looked like a town of villas at home (Japan), the site being chosen for its beauty and natural scenery. Bamboo covered ravines, flower roofed heights, rich in green foliage, picturesque because of its rushing and winding streams, itself set in the midst of high mountains. Such were the characteristic features of Pokhara ... In all my travels in the Himalayas I saw no scenery so enchanting as that which enraptured me at Pokhara."

The second myth is about the origin of Pokhara Valley. Swiss geologist Toni Hagen made the following observation:

'Pokhara area shows the greatest contrasts in landscape. Nowhere in the world, can the highest mountains reaching 8,000 meters level be admired from such a short distance and the tropical lowland without any intermediate mountain ranges. Pokhara is certainly one of the most extraordinary and most beautiful places in the whole world.

However, Hagen attributed the formation of Pokhara Valley as being due

to the drying-up of a huge lake, the existing ones being its remnant. The diagnosis is geomorphologically wrong. Unlike Kathmandu Valley which was a lake during the Pleistocene period as evidenced by lacustrine deposits (kalimati) with horizontal layer-beds, Pokhara Valley was created by the huge outwash flow originating south of Annapurna-III. This mass of glacio-fluvial origin and composed of boulders, pebbles, gravel and sand flooded the Seti river valley and blocked its tributary rivers into lakes on the periphery. The heterogeneity of the drift mass was due to rapid deposition and their bedding as well as the Valley's plain surface slopes towards the south.

This gradient varies from 22 meters per 1.6 km to 35 meters per 1.6 km in the north. It is on this porous gravel materials that Seti river has carved gorges that are as deep as 650 metres in the south to over 1,300 metres in the north according to the thickness of the deposit. The Fulbari Resort was the first in Pokhara to explore subterranean water and the deep bore had to reach 250 meters below the surface. And the only lacustrine construction materials used in the Valley are the 10 million bricks transported from Kathmandu to erect this edifice.

The third myth relates to Machapuchhre peak (6697 m.) attributed to be sacred to the Gurung and therefore, the ban on its climbing. The Gurung do not revere, least of all Machhapuchhre snow peaks. What they consider sacred are the springs, streams, caves, and alpine pastures traversed during the seasonal migration with herds of sheep and goats. Specific sites on such routes are worshipped against natural calamities. In fact, the ban on climbing Machhapuchhre was based on the advice of British climbers who failed to reach the summit by 500 meters (vertical) in 1957 and wished it to remain virgin.

One last point about Pokhara is that introduction of modern transport system here had a reverse squence. First came the airplane in 1952, a DC - 3 with Darbhanga flag-carrier. Then a Willys jeep was flown in 1957. Bicycles and bullock carts (with truck tyress) followed in early 1960's. The road link with Sunauli was inaugurated in 1967 and that with Kathmandu in 1972.

2. **Nepalese Adventure Tourism**

The aspects I deal with are mountaineering, trekking, rafting, and nature parks in order of descending elevation by the theatre of concerned activities. I will examine each of these aspects by seasonality and regional pattern.

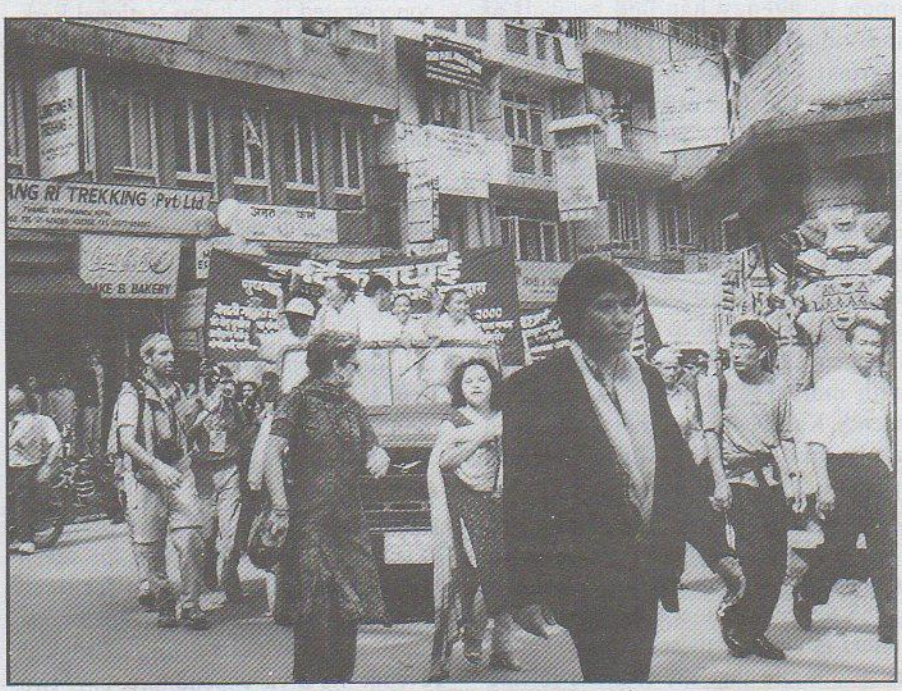
a. **Mountaineering**

Tourist arrivals in Nepal increased by nearly three times from 162,276 in 1979 to 463,684 in 1998. For the corresponding years, the increase in adventure travellers (trekkers/climbers) was over six-fold from 18,270 to 112,644. In 1979, visitors coming for trekking and climbing constituted 11.3 percent of total arrivals. By 1998, they were nearly a quarter of all tourists. In 1998, the number of climbers was twice as many and that of expeditions nearly three times that of two decades earlier (1979).

The increase in revenue from mountaineering was even more significant. Royalty from climbing teams increased from Rs. 1/2 million in 1979 to Rs. 97 million in 1998. Other expenditures made by expeditions in the country rose from Rs. 11 million to Rs. 382 million. The total of royalty revenue combined with other expenditure in 1998 was Rs. 479 million as compared to Rs. 12 million in 1979. During 1979-1998, total expenditure per team increased over 13 fold and that per climber nearly 20 fold. In fact, tourism revenue from mountaineering is many times higher than from other tourism activities. In 1995, revenue per visitor from mountaineering was US$916 as compared to US$49 from trekking, and US$13 from park fees.

During the two decades, 1979-1998, over 2,000 mountaineering expeditions visited Nepal Himalaya. This rose from annual number of 48 in 1979 to 141 in 1998. According to the officially designated climbing seasons, autumn had 57.8 percent of all expeditions. A third came during the summer and only 9.3 percent during the winter season. Autumn expeditions increased steadily from 26 in 1979 to 726 in 1998. Spring expeditions also more than doubled during the period, from 21 to 48. However, winter expeditions varied only marginally from one in 1979 to three in 1998, the maximum being 19 in 1984. There is an obvious imbalance in expedition pressure by season.

The most obvious pattern of climbing expeditions to Nepal is the regional disparity. According to one exercise, Nepal has over 1,300 peaks that exceed 6,000 meters in altitude. By geographic location, the central region has 567, the east 497, and the west 246 of such peaks and pinnacles. Of these, 133 peaks or only 10 percent are open for expeditions. The distribution of such peaks is 60 in central, 47 in eastern and 26 in western region. The expedition destination as illustrated by 98 teams in 1998 has an extremely lopsided regional pattern. The east with 35 percent of climbing peaks had 80.6 percent of all expeditions in 1998. These were directed to 14 peaks of which Ama Dablam alone had 31 expeditions followed by 10 to Everest and 8 to Pumo Ri. The central rigion with 60 climbing peaks had 17



expeditions and 6 of these were to Dhaulagiri-I. The western region with 26 peaks open for climbing had only two expeditions, both to Saipal (7,031 m.). The east had more expeditions for autumn and the central region more for the spring season.

b. **Trekking**

The number of trekking permits issued in 1976 was 13,891. This increased to 91,525 in 1997 or an increase of 6.6 times. Trekking has remained a highly seasonal activity. This temporal pattern can be illustrated by the data for 1997. It has two high seasons with intervening slack seasons. The peak is represented by October and November. March and April appear as subsidiary peak season. Deep valley of depression occurs during June-July with another slack period in January. Thus, October-November claim 38.2 percent of the year's trekkers while the share of June-July is mere 3.4 percent of the total.

Trekking permits issued by geographic area is even more skewed. Of the total trek permits for 1997,69.4 percent was for the central area. Annapurna area alone claimed 54,078 or 59.1 percent all permits issued. The east had a share of 20.6 percent, most of it claimed by Everest region (19.9%). The western third of the country had only 1.1 percent of all trekkers. The destination of other 8,161 or 8.9 percent are unspecified. Of the nine trekking areas, four are designated as 'controlled area' where trekkers are permitted only through agencies. Other five areas are open to agency handled as well as individual trekkers (FIT). In 1997, majority of trekkers were through agencies. The share of individual trekkers was 43.7 percent. The distribution of agency handled trekkers was 63 percent in central, 22 percent in east, 2 percent in west and 12.5 percent other areas. Of the FIT's, 77.6 percent visited the central, 18 percent the east, 4.3 percent other areas and only a few to the west. Helmu-L-angtang area was the only destination with more FIT's than those through agency. Kanchenjunga is not a 'controlled area' but no FIT's visited while Jumla area had no trekkers through agency.

c. **Rafting**

Nepal has many rivers but only ten are open for rafting. The latest data (1988/89) reveals that there were 7,799 rafters in eight of these. I may mention as a footnote that the Karnali rafting between Lakharpata and Chisapani was first explored by me in 1987. As in the case of mountaineering and trekking, rafting also shows high seasonality and regional imbalance. October-November was peak period for rafting with a secondary peak during March-April as for trekking. Curiously the low seasons occured both during the monsoon period June-August as well as dry season of December-January.

Of the 7,799 rafters in 1998/99, 37.5 percent were directed to Trisuli river. In close competition was the Kali-Gandaki with 30.7 percent of the rafters. Thus over two-third of rafters were concentrated in these two rivers. Bhote Kosi came third with about a fifth of total rafters. Other rivers had only a minor share ranging between two to five percent. The famous Arun only seven rafters and Tama Kosi none.

d. **Conservation Area**

Nepal has 18 percent of the country's total area designated to conserve and manage its rich variety of flora and fauna. The eleven parks and reserves represent tropical to mountain environments. Of these, seven are national parks, three wildlife reserves and one hunting reserve. There is no data availale about the seasonality of visitors to these areas although one may assume that six of these located in the mountain/hill would have summer visitors and the five in the tarai winter visitors. Their spatial distribution however, is highly imbalanced. Of all the visitors to such conservation areas, 72 percent was concentrated in Chitwan National Park. Since another 7.3 percent was directed to Langtang, the share of central region was nearly 80 percent. The east received 18.4 percent of such visitors mainly due to the contribution of Sagarmatha National Park. The west with five conservation areas had only 2.1 percent share and most of it was directed to Bardia.

The number of visitors to individual conservation areas has direct implication on the economics of their management. The total budget for conservation areas in 1998/99 was Rs. 46 million of which Rs. 44 million or 95.1 percent was expended. Of the total expended 70.6 percent was for seven national parks, 23.5 percent for three wildlife reserves, and 5.9 percent for one hunting reserve. In terms of visitor revenue vis-a-vis expenditure, only two national parks (Chitwan and Sagarmatha) were in surplus. Chitwan had a revenue of Rs. 54 million against Rs. 7.9 million expenditure and Sagarmatha earned Rs. 4 million against Rs. 3.8 million as expenditure. All other conservation areas had very high expenditure compared to their tourist revenue. Unless, more visitors are generated, these areas cannot be economically viable.

3. **Management Strategy**

The crux of the matter of this Conference theme 'minimum impact with maximum experience' devolves around adventure tourism that makes no adverse effect on the physical and cultural environment. This obviously refers to the relationship between development and environment on this there are five theoretical considerations that range from emphasis on econmics to ecology. The first paradigm is **frontier economics** which is growth oriented without consideration to limits of natural resources. The second **is environmental protection** which is too anthropo-centric with remedial rather than ameliorative measures for environment. The third paradig, **resource management**, came in response to resource depletion and the need to conserve for sustainability. The fourth, **eco-development**, which believes in making human activities synergic with natural processes is too eco-centric. The fifth paradigm, **deep ecology**, is bio-centric and anti-growth with call for back to nature for symbiosis.

Since there can be no end to theoretical debate, we might as well turn to practical aspects. Tourism is an important economic resource but it also has environmental and social costs if not controlled. Hence the emergence of awareness under the rubric of such terms as alternative tourism, responsible tourism, eco-friendly or gently tourism. Their basic concern is the protection of the environment as well as the interests of visitors and the locals.

The pattern of Nepalese adventure tourism activities described above has two dimensions: temporal in terms of seasonality and spatial in terms of destination. Since both exhibit a high degree of disparity, management strategies need to address this problem. One also must consider the third dimension, that of revenue resource necessary for any positive intervention. The essential measures for appropriate adventure tourism in Nepal, therefore, are

seasonal diffusion, regional dispersal, and revenue sharing.

a. **Seasonal Diffusion**

Tourism is, of course, a seasonal activity. But conscious design can minimize the immense gap between the peak and lean seasons. These measures can be to limit number during peak season and promotional incentives for low periods. Tourists opting for the high season can be made to pay more and vice versa. There is also scope for encouraging more tourists to visit rain-shadow areas west of Manang during the summer. Nepal today proliferates with 555 travel/tour operators, 362 trekking agencies, 69 rafting agencies, and 60 safari enterprises that are mostly concentrated in Kathmandu. They should be categorized, not according to their dollar turn-over, but star-rated according to their effort in promoting the low season and new destinations.

b. **Regional Dispersal**

Much of the negative image of adventure tourism is based on problems of a few overcrowded areas: Everest and Ama Dablam for climbing, Khumbu for trekking. Trisuli river for rafting and Chitawan for wildlife. Meanwhile, the wonders of western third of the country remains unexplored. One effective measure would be to limit tourist number in crowded areas during the peak season. There should be price differential in tourism charges between the popular and new areas (cheaper) and incentives to private enterprises that promote and operate new destinations.

c. **Revenue Sharing**

User fees from tourism can be a valuable source of revenue both for environmental control and local development. In 1995, income from mountaineering royalty, trek permit and park entrance fees totaled $3,346,327. Unfortunately, this year's budget speech on abolition of permit system means a loss of at least a million dollars from trekking alone. Tourists don't need subsidy, they need reliable service. Tourism revenue should be shared with the area for which it is charged. With half the royalty HMG/ Nepal collects for the Khumbu mountains, the area would need no outside help for cleaning the garbage and the place could become a piece of Austria or Switzerland. The formula of revenue sharing has the carrying capacity rationale. More the visitors to an area, more the pressure and management cost, but also higher the related revenue.

Finally, adventure tourism is dependent on the scale of the economy. Attracting more tourists will entail a higher level of development intervention and ameliorative measures. Adventure tourism generates economic benefit to the hosts as well as satisfaction to the visitors. Particularly for poor remote areas, it is a unique resource. The only path to building regenerative capacity for 'minimum impact with maximum experience' is controlled management through judicious policies that involve the local people.

(From the keynote address delivered by Dr. Gurung in PATA Conference Pokhara Jan. 2000)

UIAA International Mountain Code

❒ As a response to the growth of mountaineering the world body for mountaineers, the UIAA, has developed a simple, but very worthwhile code, that the BMC's Access and Conservation Committee strongly commend.

❒ Observe restrictions and access agreement negotiated by National Mountaineering Federations, and avoid any actions which might endanger access.

❒ Do not disturb nesting birds or other wildlife. Help protect flowers and respect sites of geological or other scientific interest.

❒ Avoid actions which cause unnecessary erosion (such as taking shortcuts on footpaths) and do not leave unnecessary way marks.

❒ Do not disturb livestock or damage crops or trees.

❒ Do not leave any rubbish. Keep campsites clean. Avoid all risk of fire.

❒ Where toilet facilities are not available, dispose of human waste in a sanitary manner (i.e. under rocks, soil, sand, or in deep crevasses, away from water supplies, paths or climbs).

❒ Do not pollute fresh water supplies. Avoid any unnecessary pollution to the snow pack.

❒ Respect established climbing traditions in ethical matters such as the use of chalk, pitons or bolts, etc. Avoid indiscriminate or excessive use of fixed equipment.

❒ In mountain areas use motorised transport sparingly and park considerately Make use of public transport.

❒ On any excursions to remote or high mountains observe the UIAA Kathmandu Declaration and Ethical Code for Expeditions.

UIAA Kathmandu Declaration

- Protect effectively the mountain environment, its flora, its fauna and its natural resources.
- Reduce the negative impact of man's activities.
- Respect the cultural heritage and dignity of local populations.
- Stimulate activities that restore and rehabilitate the mountain world.
- Encourage contacts between mountaineers of different countries, in a spirit of friendship, mutual respect and peace.
- Make available all information and education necessary to improve the relationship between man and his environment.
- Use only technology respecting the environment for energy needs and the disposal of waste.
- Support developing mountain countries in efforts for the conservation of the environment.
- Widen access to mountain regions unfettered by political considerations.

UIAA Ethical Code for Expeditions

1. Ensure all members of the team are aware of the regulations set by the host country, the objectives of the Kathmandu Declaration, and the UIAA Ethical Code for Expeditions.
2. Adopt a sporting approach to the expedition's objectives and not use equipment or other resources out of proportion to those objectives.
3. Conduct the expedition in a way that maintain the safety of its members and especially those it employs.
4. Whenever possible and appropriate provide technical advice and training to members of the expedition from the host country.
5. Give an accurate report about the expedition to the appropriate bodies.
6. Do not use equipment and materials owned by other expeditions without permission, and be prepared to help local people and other expedition if the need arises.
7. Leave the mountain environment as clean as possible at the end of the expedition.

TOURISM IN NEPAL

Dr. Bhuban B. Bajracharya



Tourism development results from the overall economic development in the universal context. Any individual country can develop through tourism development; but in the universal context, tourism in itself cannot grow unless there is overall economic development. Precisely because of this fact, global economic recession tends to decrease the worldwide tourist movement. So, the economic development at the global level and particularly of newly emerging countries is likely to promote tourism. The economic growth of the south east Asian countries, China and India has a potential of promoting tourism in Nepal. It will also help in diversifying the originating points of tourists.

Tourism is based on unique products not necessarily guided by single factor, and it is very much competitive. Every tourism products compete with each other - whether they are similar or not. So, rich cultural heritage, wild life and national parks, and above all only top Himalayas of Nepal have to compete with shopping paradise, sea beach etc. elsewhere in

Table 1

Growth of Tourists and Tourism Earnings (1962 - 1999)

Year	No.of tourists (in 000)	Growth Rate(in%)	Number of Moutaineers	Number of Mountaine-ering Teams	Number of Employment	Royalty (in Rs.000)	Expenditure of the Team (in Rs.000)
1962	6						
1966	12	19					
1970	46	38					
1974	90	18					
1978	156	15	Na	42	Na	614	Na
1982	175	3	806	84	8839	1036	17504
1986	223	6	807	94	10415	4063	28854
1990	255	3	966	120	12179	7266	68368
1994	326	6	696	105	5239	44498	113501
1996	394	10	851	129	4925	101878	227413
1997	422	7	861	120	7003	108237	295001
1998	464	10	974	141	6942	95479	382441
1999*	491	6	857	115	9720	88739	344624

Source: Nepal Tourism Statistics - 1995 and Supplement for 1996;
Economic Survey - 1999/2000.

the world. So, development of tourism products not just limiting to available products only should form the strategy of tourism development.

Trends in Tourist Numbers and Mountaineering

Nepal was opened to tourism after the political change in 1951. It was only in the mid-70's that the number of tourists crossed the mark of 100,000. In 1999, it was very close to the target of the Visit Nepal Year i.e. 500,000.

Growth rate of tourists was high in the, 60s due to low initial base, which came down to between 6 to 10 percent per annum in the later 90's. In the meantime, there are ups and downs in the trend of annual growth rate. The decline in the growth rate coincided with the oil crisis in the seventies and later with political unrest in the late eighties.

It is worth to be noted that increase in tourists is accompanied by the development of new tourist destinations outside the Kathmandu Valley. The Everest and Annapurna Region, Pokhara Valley, Chitwan, Lumbini etc. Since we are principally relying upon the available tourism products of natural charms, ethnic diversities etc., further increase in tourists and diversifying the tourism earnings to different parts of the country could be forthcoming only through opening new destinations. In order to widely diversifying the tourism destinations across the country, monitoring mechanism for tourist movement and their safety have to be evolved. Towards this direction, role of local government bodies and other NGOs should also be realised.

Mountaineering is a separate brand of tourism and it is getting increasingly popular. However, it is very much adventurous and seasonal. At the same time, there are only a few peaks, which are attracting the mountaineers. The attraction of to be at the top of the world seems to be the singlemost factor directing most of the mountaineers towards that region only. Perhaps because of this factor, there is no significant change in the number of mountaineers even if there is a significant increase in the mountaineering teams and expenses that have been made (Table 1). It is interesting to note that the number of employment has also not shown any increasing trend. Thus, significant increase in expenses without much increase in employment and number of mountaineers indicate that the mountaineering has become more and more capital intensive.

Table 2

Per Mountaineer and Per Mountaineering Team Expenses

Year	Per Mountaineer Expenditure	Per Mountaineering Team Expenditure
1982	12252	220714
1986	17940	350181
1990	20129	630283
1994	71461	1504752
1996	125503	2552643
1997	133844	3360317
1998	105155	3389503
1999*	114888	3768374

Source: Economic Survey - 1999/2000.

Table 2 clearly shows a phenomenal increase in expenses per mountaineering team - from Rs.0.22 million in 1982 to Rs. 3.77 million in 1999. Per mountaineer expenditure also shows a similar trend showing a peak of Rs. 134,000 per mountaineer being spent in the year 1997. It used to be just above Rs. 12000 in 1982.

Going by the number of mountaineers, it has yet to emerge as the tourism product. The thrust of being at the top of the world looks like a only driving force. So, in this context, there is a need to open new peaks and new areas where these mountaineering activities can be promoted as adventurous sports. For this, much more systematic and concerted efforts have to be made in terms of producing qualified and experienced mountain guides, preparing other necessary infrastructures etc. At the moment, mountain guides in Nepal work more like high altitude porters rather than as guides.

Tourism is an important source of foreign exchange earning. Tourism earnings have soared from the modest US $ 78,000 in 1962 to US $ 116.6 million in 1996 and to about US $ 180 million in 1999. This increase is even more phenomenal in terms of Rs. due mainly to devaluation of the rupee. Higher growth rate in tourism earning as compared to growth rate of number of tourists indicates higher per capita spending. Earnings from tourism forms about 34 percent of total merchandise exports of the country in the year1998/99. It is 18 percent of total foreign exchange earnings. Its relative contribution in total foreign exchange earnings shows a declining trend over all these years mainly due to the increase in export (major products being carpet and garments). However, its share in the GDP is steadily increasing, which shows that its productivity in terms of foreign exchange earnings is relatively higher. As compared to other sources like foreign trade and aid, it is likely to be more stable. Comparative advantage is more easily established in this sector than in the trade sector.

Table 3

Tourism Foreign Exchange Earnings as Percent of GDP and Export

Year	As Percent of FOREX earnings from merchandise export	As percent of FOREX earnings from merchandise export and service	As percent of FOREX earnings	As percent of GDP
1974/75	19	11	30	1
1978/79	38	18	27	2
1982/83	74	23	37	3
1986/87	58	23	27	3
1990/91	47	23	22	3
1994/95	50	22	17	4
1995/96	48	23	21	4
1996/97	38	14	18	3
1997/98	36	17	15	3
1998/99	34	18	16	4

Source: Economic Survey - 1999/2000, Ministry of Finance, HMG/N.

Visitors to Different Tourism Destinations in Nepal

As we have observed earlier, the increase in the tourists in Nepal coincided with the diversification of tourist destinations in Nepal. Places like Pokhara, Khumbu area, Chitwan, Lumbini etc. Annapurna Conservation Area, and other National Parks and Conservation Areas are also gradually drawing the crowd. Such diversification of tourist destinations and increasing number of visitors visiting these places are made possible through the infrastructure development. Such diversification has also helped spreading tourism earnings in different other parts of the country. It has created non-farm employment opportunities in the rural areas.

Lumbini is drawing about 30 to 40,000 visitors in a year. Various construction going on in this area is bound to attract many more pilgrims. Tansen draws about 6 to 8,000 people in a year, and it is increasingly seen as a summer hide-outs for the Indian tourists from the border areas. Gorkha is also drawing

Table 4
Visitors to Different Parts of the Country

Year	Everest Trek	Helambu/ Langtang	Annapur-na/Jomsom	Dolpa	Kanchan junga	Jumla/ Dolpo	Others	Restricted Area	Total trekkers	Pokhara
1978									22000	28000
1982	6000	4000	20000				2000		32000	35000
1986	10000	5000	34000				0.8		49000	39000
1990	11000	8000	36000	600	600	negl	5000		62000	59000
1994	13000	8000	45000	600	600	negl	8000	2000	77000	59000

about 3000 visitors. National Parks in different parts of the country are drawing attractions. Accessibility and infrastructure development in the respective areas seem to have defined the number of visitors in each of these national park areas and other tourism destinations.

Visitors by Purpose of Visit

The purpose of visit indicates the types of products tourists are interested in. It has shown a marked change over all these years. In the sixties and seventies, holiday/pleasure (almost 80 percent of visitors) is found to be the main purpose. It slided down to about 53 percent in 1996, and again rose to about 70 percent in 1999. This relative decline in the holiday/pleasure as the purpose of visit is compensated by an increase in the share of trekking and mountaineering, and business. In the nineties, there is a marked increase in the categories of business visit, pilgrims, official visit, conference etc.

Table 5
Tourist Arrivals by Purpose of Visit (1962 - 1999)
(in 000)

Year	Holiday PIeasure	Tre-kking/ Moun-tain-eering	Busi-ness	Pilgri-mage	Offi-cial	Conv Cont erence	Others	Total
1962								6
1966	11	negl	negl		1		negl	12
1970	42	0.5	1		2		1	46
1974	68	12	4		4		3	90
1978	124	17	6		6		2	156
1982	137	23	7		7		1	175
1986	164	34	11		9		6	223
1990	162	40	12	7	26	3	5	255
1994	168	77	23	5	20	5	27	326
1996	209	89	25	5	20	6	39	394
1997	249	91	27	4	24	6	19	422
1998	261	112	25	16	22	5	21	463
1999	346	53	24	19	24	6	19	491

Source: Nepal Tourism Statistics - 1995 and Supplement for 1996.

Note : Before 1992, data on trekking used to be taken from the immigration card only. Later onwards, these data are drawn from the trekking permits issued. Apparently, many more tourists go for trekking even if they mention the purpose of visit as holiday/pleasure.

The discussion so far suggests that tourism is an important sector contributing to the national economy, and it has a great potential not just to promote in terms of numbers but also in terms of spreading to other parts of the country. It indeed requires to ensure the safety of the tourists and proper monitoring of their movement. In this context, there is a need to define the role of local government institutions and even NGOs and CBOs. At the end, it can be said that tourism attractions can be evolved from any interesting things and in this respect private initiative is to be attracted for new product development and promote them in the destination market. *(CEDA, Kirtipur, Kathmandu)*

RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

53/24, International Year of Mountains 2002

The General Assembly,

Recalling Economic and Social Council resolution 1998/30 of 29 July 1998..

Recalling also the relevant provisions of Agenda 21 on sustainable mountain development.

Noting the work already unertake to achieve sustainable mountain development by the Food and Agriculture Organiszation of the United Nations and particularly its role as task manager for chapter 13 of Agenda 21,

1. Proclaims the year 2002 as the International Year of Mountains,

2. Invites the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations to serve as the lead agency for the International Year of Mountains, in collaboration with Government, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and other relevant organizations of the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations;

3. Calls upon Governments, national and international organizations, non-governmental organizations and the private sector to make voluntary contributions in accordance with the guidelines of the Economic and Social Council for international Year and anniversaries and to lend other forms of support to the International Year of Mountains;

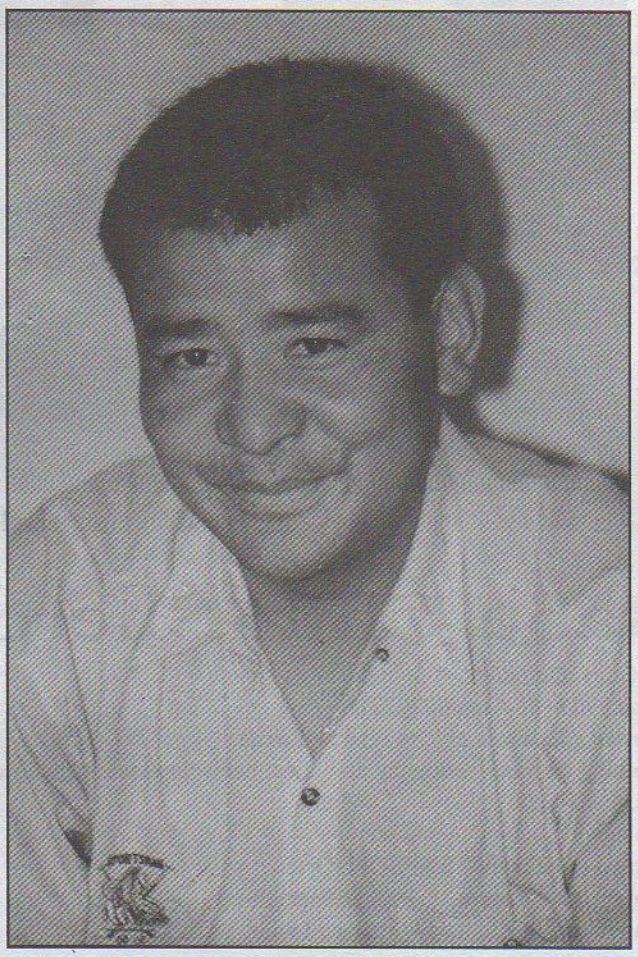
4. Encourages all Governments, the United Nations system and all other actors to take advantage of the International Year of Mountains in order to increase awareness of the importance of sustainable mountain development;

5. Requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session a report on the state of the preparations for the International Year of Mountains.

54th plenary meeting 10 November 1998

Babu Chiri Sherpa

Speed in his blood, Fame in his future



Babu Chiri Sherpa is the name of the Nepali youth who has been strongly forging ahead in the field of mountaineering. No one had been able to spend more than an hour on the summit of Everest till Babu Chiri created history by staying on the peak without oxygen for 21 hours on May 21, 1999 A.D. This year too he made a world record for reaching the summit in the shortest time of only 16 hours and 56 minutes. This record breaking event has made Babu Chiri a renowned mountaineer. Besides this, he has scaled Everest twice in one season in 1995 and 1999. Till date he has scaled Everest ten times successfully

Babu Chiri had never felt that he would one day become such a successful and famous mountaineer. He says, "I had the courage to do something in my field of mountaineering but I had never felt that I would be successful. I became successful because of the weather, situation and everyone's assistance. I feel that it was God's blessings which made me successful." On creating other records, Babu Chiri says, "I haven't given thoughts to this at the moment as there is the problem of a sponsor. If I find a sponsor then I will give thoughts to this."

Babu Chiri says that he had asked others to sponsor the 'Mount Everest Speed Expedition 2000' but they did not show interest and some of them even offered him Rs.25, 30 thousand. But he was satisfied that Gorkha Airlines and Mountain Hardware of USA became the sponsor and helped him. Though the government did not offer any encouragement but this time for the Mount Everest Speed Expedition 2000 the royalty fee was waived. He is satisfied by the necessary encouragement received from his brothers and wife.

About his profession, Babu Chiri says, " Since I had done it before, I am satisfied with my profession in the Himalayan region. I am also happy that I have been of assistance to the foreign climbers." Babu Chiri had plans of scaling Everest twice this season in May but he could do so only once. He had attempted to climb Everest prior to the 'Mount Everest Speed Expedition 2000' on May 6, 2000. The next day on reaching Balcony (8,500 m) there was heavy snowfall and flashes of lightning which made the atmosphere quite scary, therefore, he returned back. Even after resting at the Base Camp for 5 or 6 days the weather did not improve so the expedition called off.

Babu Chiri, son of Lhakpa Sherpa and Pasi Sherpa, was born on June 22, 1965 in Chhilemu, Ward No. 7, Taksendu VDC, Solukhumbu district of eastern Nepal. He started his mountaineering career as porter at the age of 13. He is married with six daughters from the age of 2 to 14 years.

Babu Chiri Sherpa feels sorry for not being able to receive education which he was a child because there was no school in his village. So, he has the desire to see the children of his village becoming educated. This is the reason he wants to enhance the prestige of the country by establishing world records and contribute to the education sector of the village. Now he is making efforts to establish a school in his village Akang, in Taksendu VDC which will have arrangement for the education of about 50 students. In this regard, he says, " For the education of the village children and establishing the school, I will invest all the money received as awards, rewards, etc. I will also talk to foreigners for assistance. I am not very happy at spending the money received as awards for paying rent in Kathmandu and meeting family needs. I want to meet the family and other expenses through the money that I earn from my profession."

Babu Chiri, a simple hearted courageous mountaineer, is gifted with another quality and that is his honesty. Recently, he had the plan of spending 16 hours on the summit of Everest under the Mount Everest Speed Expedition 2000. After he reached the summit, the media publicised that he had reached the summit in 15 hours 56 minutes that is 4 minutes earlier than the time specified. Later, when Babu Chiri returned to the Base Camp, he surprised everyone by clarifying that he had reached the summit in 16 hours 56 minutes and not 15 hours 56 minutes as had been publicised. This is clear evidence of his honesty. According to Babu Chiri, the Everest route is not littered nowadays as it was in the past. He further says, " Now, the mountaineers do not litter much because they have to present the list of goods they are taking on their expedition to the concerned agency and pay a certain amount of money as deposit. On their return from the expedition they have to account for the goods taken on their expedition so there has been reduction in littering along the route. Old clothes, empty gas cylinders, etc. which were thrown on the route in the past are gradually being brought down in the cleaning campaigns conducted from time to time. But there are four dead bodies on

the route at South Col (8,300 m.). Seeing the corpses creates a psychological effect and can frighten anyone. It would be good if the Tourism Ministry and concerned agencies do the needful in bringing the dead bodies back."

In the opinion of Babu Chiri Sherpa, the Nepalese Government must recognize activities including mountaineering in the Himalayan region as sports and development efforts must be made by the Ministry of Sports. If this can be done then Nepalese can create many records in the activities undertaken in the Himalayan region.

The courageous achievements of Babu Chiri in creating world records has made Nepal and the Nepalese People very proud. For his laudable achievements his opinions and feelings must be respected.



Bravo Mountaineers!

Babu Chiri Sherpa

Name :	Babu Chiri Sherpa
Date of Birth :	22 June 1965 (8th Ashadh 2022)
Education :	No formal education, able to read and write.
Training :	No training on mountaineering activities. Feels that mountaineering training for this profession is useful.
Occupation :	Climbing Chairman of NOMAD EXPEDITIONS. (Himalayan Adventure Travel Specialists)
Family :	Six daughters, aged 2 to 14 years and wife.
Hobby :	Music.
Medal/Decoration :	- Rastriya Pratibha Purashkar (With N Rs. 15,000) - Utkrista Yuva Purashkar (with N Rs. 20,000) - Letter of Appreciation with cash prize N Rs. 121,121.00 from Nepal Mountaineering Association in 1999. - Antarastriya Sagarmatha Purashkar (with N. Rs. 10,000 from TAAN in 2000). - Pasang Lhamu Yuva Samman Purashkar in 2000
Language Known :	Sherpa, Nepali and English.
Travel :	Canada, Peoples Republic of China, India, Italy, Mexico, Pakistan and USA.
Favourite Colour :	Green
Favourite Leader / Person	Late Tenzing Norgey Sherpa, first person to scale Mt. Everest and showed the path to others.
Aim :	To establish a School in his own village to develop the educational sector.
First Expedition :	Mera Peak (6654 m.) in 1988.

Feeling on the top of Everest first and last time :

First of all I had gone to the summit of Mount Everest with Mark Batard in the French Everest Expedition in 1990 A.D. At that time Mark Batard had the intention of spending 8 hours on the Everest summit and then scaling Mount Lhotse later on. He reached the summit with other Sherpa friends who arranged everything and descended. I was at South Col and I wished to reach the summit of Everest. I was waiting for the moment. Mark Batard could hardly spend an hour at the summit and he came down. I told him of my desire to go to the summit and he said that if I wanted to go I could. And I alone scaled the peak. At that moment I had felt that I would not be able to scale the peak but I was very elated at being given the opportunity. He had left all his things at the summit and they were scattered. I carried all the things and descended. He thanked me for this gesture. Inspired by Batard's plan to spend

8 hours on the summit, I spent 21 hours on the Everest summit in 1999 A.D. and made a world record. In the latter ascent of Everest I felt that though Nepal is a small country I felt it an honour to have made this unique world record. More than having scaled Everest ten times, I experienced greater joy in spending 21 hours on the summit. Moreover, the rally and honour bestowed on me, in Kathmandu, after the tenth ascent of Everest was also a matter of pride. I would like to thank my goodwishers, and institutions and all for it.

Unforgettable Moment of Life :

Last year, that is in 1999 A.D., while descending from the summit the ladder got loose on the Icefall and I fell 20 meters below hanging by the rope. At that time I was carrying 15 empty oxygen bottles, sleeping bag and walkie talkie which all weighed about 25-30 kilograms. I threw everything I was carrying and then climbed up the rope to safety. I felt very afraid then but I was saved. This is the incident which I will never forget.

Address :

a) Permanent: Chhilemu, Taksendu VDC Ward No. – 7, Solukhumbu District, Nepal.

b) Present : Lazimpat, Kathmandu , Nepal

BABU CHIRI SHERPA

Signature

Successful Expedition of Babu Chiri Sherpa

Year	Mountain	Height in Meter	Season	Country of Team
1989	Kanchanjungha	8594	Spring	Russia
1990	Dhaulagiri	8167	Autumn	France
1990	Everest (South Ridge)	8848	Autumn	France
1991	Everest (South Ridge)	8848	Spring	New Zealand
1993	Everest (North Ridge)	8848	Autumn	England
1994	Shishapangma (Twice within a week)	8013	Autumn	England
1995	Everest (North Ridge) Twice within a week	8848	Autumn	England
1995	Cho Oyu (6 times)	8201	Autumn	England
1996	Everest (South East)	8848	Spring	S. Africa
1997	Evererst (South)	8848	Spring	England
1998	Ama Dablam (Thrice within 15 days)	6812	Autumn	England
1999	Everest (Mexico, Nepal, Sweden, USA)	8848	Spring	International Expedition
1999	Everest	8848	Spring	
2000	Everest	8848	Spring	'Mt. Everest Speed Expedition 2000' Nepal.

(In conversation with Dr. Hari Prasad Shrestha)

Yamamoto, 63, is oldest person to scale Everest

Kahtmandu : A 63 - year - old Japanese mail service manager has scaled Mount Everest, becoming the oldest person ever to reach the top of the world's highest mountain, his expedition leader said recently.

Tokyo resident Tosio Yamamoto reached the 8, 848 - metre summit on May 19. The previous record was held by 60 - year-old Lev Sarkisov who holds both Georgian and Armenian nationality. He reached the top of the world last May.

Thirteen men aged 60-69 from 55 expeditions at competed this spring, the mountain's peak climbing season, to become the oldest to conquer Everest.

Since details are not available from their expeditions, Yamamoto's record could be surpassed. Yamamoto had scaled the 8, 201-metre Mount Cho Oyu in Nepal in August 1995.

Some Observations on the Utilisation of National Parks and *Wildlife Reserves for Human Welfare in Nepal*

Dr. Soorya Lal Amatya



In the period of three decades from 1950 to 1980, there had been rapid deforestation in Nepal. With an effective launching of Malaria Eradication Programme in mid-1950s, the Terai and Inner Terai areas became very attractive for human settlement. The government policy was also to encourage the hill people to migrate from mid-hill areas to Terai and Inner Terai regions. A number of resettlement projects were also initiated in parts of Terai districts. Since there was not much job opportunity and great stress on limited land resources, the people on their own initiative migrated in large number from mid-hill region to Terai and Inner Terai regions. This sort of migration from mid-hill areas to Terai and Inner Terai regions is still continuing. But there has been change in the nature of migration. Now more people are migrating from mid-hill areas to the urban market centres and bazar settlements along Mahendra Highway and other highways.

Landslides, soil erosion and deterioration of environment have been the direct consequences of rapid deforestation. The western scholars not only highlighted the adverse consequences of deforestation but even predicted desertification in Nepal. Although, it has been accepted by leading scholars that much of the landslides, flash floods, avalanches and soil erosions occur due to natural factors in a mountainous country like Nepal. Human interferences in the process of deforestation accelerated the environmental deterioration. In response to global concern of environmental deterioration and national concern for nature conservation, the government of Nepal declared extensive areas at a number of places as national parks and wildlife reserves. At present there are eight national parks, four wildlife reserves, two conservation areas and one hunting reserve. The eight national parks are Royal Chitwan (932 sq.k.m.); Sagarmatha (1148 sq.k.m.); Langtang (1710 sq.k.m.); Lake Rara (106 sq.k.m.); Royal Bardia (968 sq.k.m.); Shey Phoksundo (3555 sq. k.m.); Khaptad (225 sq. k.m.); and Makalu- Barun National Park (1500 sq.k.m.). The four wildlife reserves are Royal Sukla Phanta (155 sq.k.m.); Kosi Tappu (175 sq.k.m.); Parsa Wildlife Reserve (499 sq.k.m.); and Sheopuri Watershed and Wildlife Reserve (144 sq.k.m.). The two conservation areas are Annapurna Conservation Area (2660 sq.k.m.) and Makalu- Barun Conservation Area (830 sq.k.m.) ; and one Dhorpatan Hunting Reserve. The total area covered by eight national parks, four wildlife reserves, two conservation areas and one hunting reserve area comes to about 16,300 sq.k.m., which is approximately 11.07 per cent of the total area of the country. Most of these national parks and wildlife reserves are either located in the Himalaya Mountain region or in the Terai/ Inner terai regions. The two conservation areas incorporate parts of the Himalaya Mountain and Mid-hill regions. The national parks and wildlife reserves have been set up under National Park and Wildlife Conservation Act of 1973.

Nepal is quite rich in bio-diversity. According to the Biodiversity Profiles Project Report, there are 2 per cent of flowering plants, 8 per cent of birds and 4 per cent of mammal species of the world. But in terms of total surface area, Nepal occupies only 0.1 per cent of the world's total land area. According to an estimation there are 181 species of mammals, 859 species of birds, 56 species of reptiles, 43 species of amphibians, 185 species of fishes and 635 species of butterflies in Nepal. According to another estimation there are about 6500 species of flowering plants and 350 species of lichens. Approximately 370 species of flowering plants are endemic in Nepal. Quite a number of these flowering plants (about 700 species) have medicinal properties.

The government of Nepal had adopted a policy of nationalization of the private forest areas in 1957 under Forest Act of 1957 and managed the forests with strict government regulations under district forest offices. The Department of Forests in Kathmandu was well organized and on the basis of aerial survey, it had even properly categorized different types of forest in early 1960s. The forests, then, were considered as one of the major sources of national income. For national elections under the partyless Panchayat System and during the national referendum (1979/80), the forest areas were happazardly misused. There were rampant corruptions in forest administration at field, district and national levels. As a consequence of these factors the forest areas have been deforested and

degraded to a great extent. The National Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act of 1973 was implemented with the main objectives of preserving some extensive areas as national parks and protecting wildlife.

Gradually it was felt that local people's participation is quite essential for management of forest resources. In 1978 the rules governing community and lease hold forests were brought into use and later in 1983,the rules governing private forests were also brought into use.

There have been a number of problems in the management of national parks and wildlife reserves. First, the conflicts between the authorities and local residents regarding the use of forest products like fuelwood and fodder. Secondly,some species of animals have increased with effective protection.Some of the wild animals have been causing injuries to local residents and domestic livestocks and have destroyed the standing crops. Thirdly, it has been very expensive to rely on the assistance of the Royal Nepal Army. It accounts for approximately three fourths of Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation (DNPWC)'s total budget. Fourthly,the local communities have not been associated in the management of national parks and wildlife reserves. As such the local communities have not been entitled to share the benefits generated through park activities. It has been generally felt that the management plans have to be remodified to incorporate the participation of the local communities.

Fifthly,administrative confusion in the management of parks and wildlife reserves has also hampered in the process of planning for further improvement. Royal Nepal Army is entrusted with the responsibility of protecting the wildlife and nature within the national parks, whereas DNPWC is supposed to prepare management plans and execute them. Similarly the Department of Immigration was authorized to issue trekking permits where as DNPWC is supposed to prepare plans for the further development of national parks and wildlife reserves.Recently, of course,the trekking permit requirement for the three main trekking routes of Khumbu region Annapurna region and Langtang region have been withdrawn by the government.However,for the other trekking routes in Nepal the trekking permit is still required.This has considerably affected the business of the trekking agencies. DNPWC has no say in planning number of trekkers to these areas. It also has no mandate to deal with local communities. These conditions have made it very difficult for DNPWC to implement the development programmes in a co-ordinated way. The national parks,wildlife reserves and conservation areas together comprise a substantial proportion of the total area of the country.These protected and conservation areas are not only to be used for preservation of nature and wildlife but are to be developed as tourist destinations in collaboration with local communities. In this context a number of suggestions have been recommended for future development of national parks and wildlife reserves.

First, Annapurna Conservation Area Project (ACAP) and Makalu – Barun Conservation Project have adopted management plans to protect the core zones as national parks and the peripheral zones with human settlements as conservation areas.This sort of arrangement has helped to protect nature and wildlife at the core zones. The local communities have the right to utilize the forest resources like fuelwood and fodder within the peripheral conservation areas in a planned manner.The concept of core and peripheral zones are also needed to be incorporated in the management plans of national parks and wildlife reserves. DNPWC is also to be authorized to deal with the forest users' groups in the peripheral areas. The forest users groups will have to prepare a conservation management plan with the main objective of preserving the forests in the periphery areas as well as utilization of forest resources in a planned way.

A suggestion has also been made to create a buffer zone between the national parks - wildlife reserves and local communities. If the buffer zone could be maintained as conservation areas managed by the local forest users' groups in collaboration with national park and wildlife reservation authorities,there will be effective participation of local communities in the preservation of park and wildlife reserve areas. The utilization of fodder and firewood can be properly regulated and managed by local communities in the conservation areas that fall within the buffer zone.

There is a need for co-operative relationship between park – wildlife management and the local communities. The local communities are also to be associated with the management of parks and wildlife reserve areas with the main objective of promoting the confidence of the local people and their participation.

The park management should be flexible and dynamic in order to develop the national parks and wildlife reserve areas as destinations for the foreign tourists as well as local affluent people.Whereever viable, safari and resort lodges are to be constructed and arrangement should be made for trekking,elephant trek and sightseeing within the park and wildlife areas.

Feasibility study is to be conducted to explore the viability of promoting small and cottage industries based on forest raw materials which are to be disposed of from the park and wildlife reserve areas. The promotion of small and cottage industries will create job opportunities to the local people and thus help to raise their income. The management plan of the national parks and wildlife reserves should be designed with the objectives to promote the human welfare activities along with the preservation of nature and wildlife.

References :

1. ACAP (Annapurna Conservation Area Project) Nepal and SNV (The Netherlands Development Organization),1994,Agro-Forestry & Community development Project,Final Evaluation Report,Kathmandu

2. Eckholm,Erich P.,1976,Loosing Ground : Environmental Stress and World Food Prospects,New York,Norton.

3. Dept. of National Parks & Wildlife Conservation, HMG/ Nepal,1996,National Parks and Wildlife Reserves of Nepal,Kathmandu.

4. Nepal,Sajay Kumar and Weber,Karl E.,1993,Struggle for Existence : Park-People Conflict in the Royal Chitwan National Park,Nepal,Bangkok,AIT.

5. Thapa,Gopal and Weber,Karl E.,1990,Managing Mountain Watersheds : The Upper Pokhara Valley,Nepal,Bangkok,AIT.

6. HMG / Nepal,1988,"Master Plan for the Forestry Sector of Nepal",Kathmandu, Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation,HMG/ Nepal,ADB and FINNID.

7. HMG and IUCN,1988,Building on Success: The National Conservation strategy for Nepal", Kathmandu.

Trainees' view on

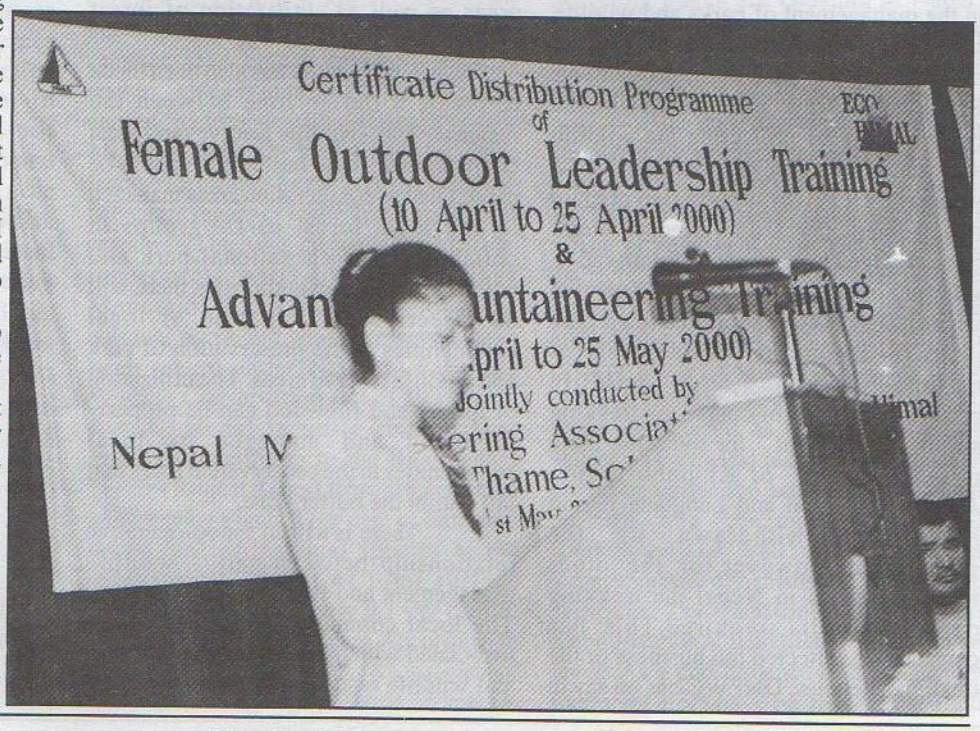
FEMALE OUTDOOR LEADERSHIP TRAINING

❒ **Tara Devi Bajracharya**

Majestic mountain, high Himalayas and lush green alpine and the angryrivers of Nepal has always been the major attraction to the people of the world. These natural beauties are so thrilling and entertaining that one goes ahh! And uhh! When they can feel and experience them through their eyes and soul. As long as these beauties are within us the beauty shall always be forever.

My name is Tara Devi Bajracharya and I have been involved in travel trade and tourism sector for almost 8-9 years and it has always fascinated me meeting new people from all over, exploring the mysterious mountain and the majestic beauties of our nation. Tourism has always been one of the potential sector for the economic and social development of our nation. I was one of the lucky participants of Female Outdoor Leadership Training conducted under the supervision of Nepal Mountaineering Association and Eco Himal (Austrian Development Co-operation) from 10th April till 25thApril 2000. In this context I would like to express and share few of our experiences on behalf of all the girls who have participated in this female outdoor leadership training. And we would like to express our appreciation and thanks to NMA and Eco Himal for such a bold step and encouraging and giving such kind of training specially for those Nepalese women who are very backward in this mountaineering field. This moment shall always be cherished. Such a training will bring up the new hidden talent among the Nepalese women creating a better manpower for this sector which we are famous for. Such a program should be appreciated and encouraged from all the government and non-government sector too to give better place and opportunity for the Nepalese women who are interested in this field and I believe that we should be really proud of thestep initiated by NMA and Eco Himal.

Well, now I would like to continue with our training details. We were all together 13 female trainees. One Austrian instructor (Mr. Herbert Mayerhofer) one Sherpa instructor (Mr. Datshiri Sherpa) and one Sherpa lady instructor (Miss Lhamu Chhoti Sherpa). Our details itinerary started fromKathmandu by flight to Phaplu on 9th April 2000. From Phaplu we started the trek through Solukhumbu area, Namche Bazar and Khunde where we spent two days in Khunde Hospital learning about high altitude sickness and first aid instructions and action plans for those kind of sicknesses from one American doctor (Dr. Jim) and other Sherpa Doctors in Khunde Hospital. From there we went to Thame where we learned about the basic rock climbing instructions and how to use the equipments used for rock climbing. During our rock climbing training we climbed 50 meters high rock which was almost 9 stores high. At first when I tried to climb the rock my feet slip down and I nearly fell down from the rock because rock was quite smooth and there was very little place to hold. I was so scared my legs and hands were shaking. But our instructor told me to try again and I slowly tried again to climb and finally I reached on top. But coming down was quite easy if you don't look down. It was really a great experience for me. This training really changed my life. We all really enjoyed the trip even though there were some hard times too. First two, three days of our training it was little difficult for us because most of the girls in our group were not used to trekking stuff and long day walk but later it started becoming easier and easier and with lots and lots of new experiences and fun experiencing the natural beauties, high snow mountains and all those villages that drove our heart away . Although it was our basic mountaineering guide training, we really learned a lot about mountaineering, trekking, high altitude sicknesses, environment protection, problems of mountaineering tourism and basic rock climbing instructions etc. We promise that we will try our best to become one of the best female mountaineering guide in the coming future, and will follow the foot prints of Pasang Lhamu Sherpa, Lhakpa Sherpa and Pemba Doma Sherpa who are really brave women and whom we should be proud of that they are Nepali women. If given a chance we will definitely try our best to participate in the advance training next year and will make this training worth. At last but not the least we are really very very thankful to our instructors Mr. Herbert Mayerhofer, Mr. Datshiri Sherpa and Miss Lhamu Chhoti Sherpa for being such a wonderful instructor and for all the patience and for making this training a wonderful memory to all of us especially for their kind consideration when we sing in a loud voice just outside their bedroom and wake them up early in the morning at 4 a m. On behalf of all the participants of this training, I would once again like to express my deepest gratitude and appreciation to NMA and Eco-Himal and I believe that such training will definitely be great help in bringing out the new talents in womenhood of Nepal and lastly I would like to give three cheers ..hurry>>>>>hurry>>>>hurry to ..NMA and Eco-Himal for making this training such a wonderful memory and a lifetime experience.....and hope fully I am looking forward to be on the top of Mount Everest one day.



Nepal: A True Leader In High Mountains

Interview with Mr. George Dijmarescu – Everest Summitter

***Mr. George Dijmarescu**, a self employed construction contractor by profession, is a eminent climber of United States of America. Born, on 20 November 1961, in Romania, he became US citizen since 1986. Climbing as a hobby, he started his mountaineering activities only since 1996 and within these four years Mr. George has scaled the highest mountains of South America, North America and the world as well. For the first time he climbed Mt. Washington (2,044 m.) in the state of New Hampshire, USA, in 1996 and in the same year he successfully climbed Mt. Aconcagua (6,966 m.), the highest mountain of South America. He scaled Mt. Aconcagua successfully again in 1997. Furthermore, in 1997 he reached the summit of Mt. McKinley (6,195 m.) the highest mountain of North America. Then his moral was boosted and he tried to ascend Mt. Everest (8,848 m.) in 1998, but unfortunately it was a failure, but he did not lose heart. In 1999, he successfully scaled Everest from North in 1999 together with the renowned climber of the world, Mr. Apa Sherpa. This year also, on 19th May 2000, he reached the top of Everest from North side (China), without oxygen and any Sherpa support.*

Mr. George Dijmarescu opines that Nepalese people are very friendly and wonderful. He says "That is why I am coming here, to Nepal, just like my second home."

*In a recent talk with **Dr. Hari Prasad Shrestha**, Mr. George Dijmarescu shared his views and experience regarding his mountaineering activities. Excerpts :*

What has inspired you to climb Mt. Everest?

I was a little boy back in my native Romania when I saw the first televised footage from the summit of Mt. Everest. I remember vividly it was an American Expedition which made the film, then I promised to one day climb it myself. It was the political cloud of Romania which kept my attention in a different direction. Freedom and democracy in the US slowly brought me back to normal life with its inspirations and dreams. It took a while but it came.

You have already climbed Everest twice, now do you have any plans to climb it again in the future?

For now I can't contemplate myself climbing any mountain other than Everest so next year in the spring season I will attempt Sagarmatha again, for how long I don't know.

You have scaled Everest successfully both the times from the North Side (Tibet), why not from the South or Nepal side?

South side is a new challenge for me and I would like to meet that challenge, but the financial burden is the only obstacle. The cost for Nepal side is ridiculously high, the difference between Tibet and Nepal side is an eye opener for many climbers who don't have large amounts of money at their disposal and make their way into Tibet taking with them a lot of business from Nepal. If I will secure sponsorship, South Col route will be my choice.

Have you scaled any other peaks of Nepal ?

No, unfortunately.

What has been your happiest as well as the most difficult moments in climbing?

No doubt, summitting Mt.

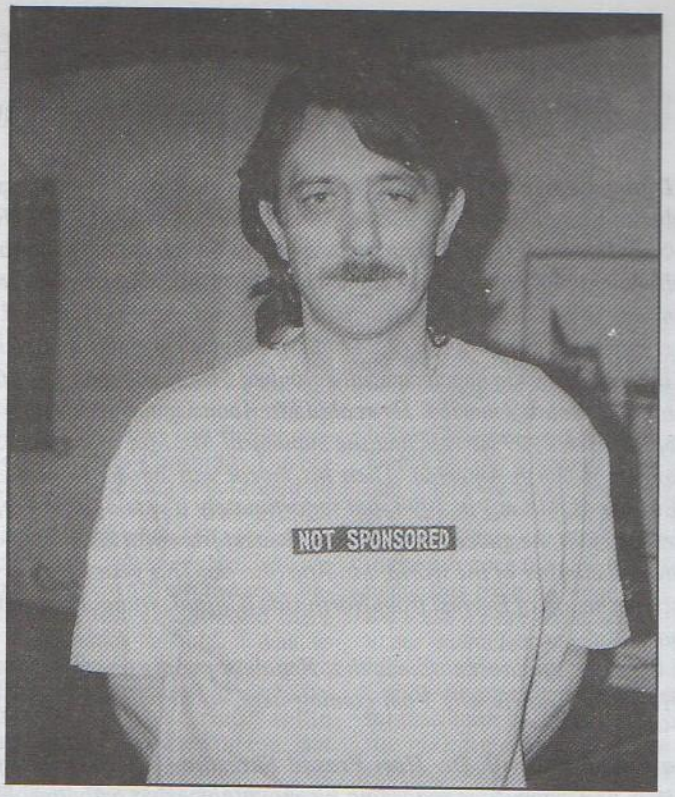


Mountaineer Dijmarescu on top of the Everest with US flag

Everest with Apa Sherpa in 1999. Climbing this year on Everest alone and without the use of oxygen was the most difficult time in my short climbing career.

How did you feel when you reached the highest peak of the world for the first as well as the second time ?

I am a Scorpio so naturally we are very emotional people but we don't like to show our emotions, when I reached the summit of Mt. Everest for the first time my body wanted to cry but my brain no so I tried to hold down my tears unsuccessfully, I hid my face from the 11 ever clicking photo cameras and I felt choking, unable to say a word then, I looked at the very relaxed Apa smiling at every shot and I was immensely happy for both of us. It was he who advised me for many months how to climb Everest and I listened to him like a faithful partner I dedicated that summit to him. The second time it was totally different, alone and without the use of oxygen, I felt like I was on a mission and I had a difficult task to do. I started falling back from the other climbers who used oxygen every hour and I could see them only as tiny silhouettes on the ridge. The weather was favourable on May 19 but, I just could not move my legs faster. After one hour into the climb I realised clearly the difference between climbing with oxygen and without, I also realised that I would be slower and I might have to turn back at some point. I kept looking for signs of bad weather and God answered my prayers. Minutes before I summitted I made the last plan and those were to take pictures and descend immediately. I reached the summit rather late; 2:45 PM Nepali time is a late hour to summit Everest and although I had the summit all by myself I knew I had little time to enjoy the world below me. I was above on the summit for the entire period of 30 minutes taking photographs as fast as possible. I stood up, walked down a few steps then I stopped and looked back at the plastic sunflower someone had left at the summit, the summit which I promised myself to visit again. Slowly and cautiously I descended without any incident. I wanted badly



to sit down for a rest but I knew that could be a fatal mistake I arrived at 8,300 m. camp in total darkness at 8 - 8:30 P.M. Nepali time I spent the night without the burner water. In the morning I was weak but I succeeded my descent to ABC.

What differences did you find between your first and second ascent?

I think there are fundamental differences between the two. On the first ascent I was aided and advised by a world class mountaineer backed by a life time of experience and I mean 19 expeditions only on Mt. Everest in his belt. For many Apa Sherpa needs no introduction. I also have to confess that he is also a dear friend. In the spring of 1999 there were fewer climbers who attempted Mt. Everest making it less crowded. Although in 1999 Apa summitted Everest for the first time via North East Ridge he knew the mountain like his own pocket and never showed any sign of hesitation. The spring of 1999 was a very dry season and difficult to climb on the rocky slopes with crampoons. In general, the 1999 ascent was a harmony and I stood on the summit with 11 other climbers for more than one hour.

In the second ascent, I was on my own like a grown up who has learned his lesson. Without any partner or a vital Sherpa support I put to the test my physical as well as mental capabilities. With the knowledge and experience of the previous 2 Everest expeditions, I gained confidence in myself and even I dare to say that I had no doubt I would summit. This time I knew the route to the very top, its dangers and difficulties. Loneliness was what bothered me most on this years expedition.

What is your opinion regard ing the Nepalese Sherpas who helped you with your Everest Expedition ?

It will be a total injustice not to mention Asian Trekking which is run by a Sherpa family. The professionalism, experience and care made me feel part of the family. In the spring of 1998, I arrived for the first time in Nepal where I discovered the most wonderful people in the world Sherpa people. I could speak weeks about them but I think is better to leave it at this.

Ready at anytime to help and serve with a smile in

even difficult situations. I witnessed 2 rescues last year: one from high altitude and I know that the 2 men lived because of the Sherpa people. Of course, there was no publicity and tribute to them but I know in my heart that they deserve the utmost respect and recognition and this was just one season on one part of the mountain. I also have to say that most of the time only a Sherpa possesses the strength and stamina to make such daring rescues. If it is one negative thing that I have to say about some Sherpas is that they have to look more on the westerners psychology, they end to hide from Sherpas their fatigue. Even though some Sherpas notice a weak climber and his inability to reach the summit safely they still don't know to say a firm "No". This, in my opinion, is detrimental to all. It's exactly what happened in the spring of 1998 when 2 of my expedition members lost their life in their attempt to reach the summit. Another strong personal belief is that without Sherpa support most expeditions will not even try to climb Mt. Everest.

At present, how is the garbage condition on the way to Everest ?

Everest is not only the tallest mountain but is also a very large mountain. It is also true that most people use the normal route which makes it dirty at times. Because I have never climbed the Nepal side, I shall refer only to the Tibet side. Every time I arrived at BC, I noticed some rubbish but nothing significant. A metal can here and there, broken glass was more noticeable but was nothing disgusting. As I went up to ABC it got a lot cleaner, there somehow the glacier took care of everything. From ABC upwards one can spot a few discarded gas cartridges but mother nature covered everything.

On the higher slopes I did notice empty oxygen bottles but fewer than 50, the number of corpses (I counted 9) was something which in my opinion made the mountain less clean. This season there was clean up a expedition from Japan which did a superb job in removing the garbage, tents, debris. They even pushed down the bodies of fallen fellow climbers. So I will have to say with confidence that Tibet side is nothing to worry about. I also noticed that every expedition has garbage bags and plans to carry them down with them when the expedition ended.

What do you feel about the development of mountaineering in Nepal ?

With more ascents of Everest, more and more people in Nepal become summitters with multiple ascents and eventually experts in high altitude with record breaking climbs, Nepali people have set high standards, almost impossible for Westerners to meet. Apa Sherpa has just jumped over the barrier put by legendary Ang Rita Sherpa, with 11 summits and many years left in his career is everyone's guess how many more he will make. Another fast coming Sherpa, Babu Chhiri Sherpa is breaking records every year, this year Nepali women had made a final break putting at last first surviving woman on the summit. So lately Nepal is accelerating rapidly on the international climbing scene and I believe this decade will belong to them. I noticed the efforts and understanding from the trekking agencies of the importance of technical training, Nepali Sherpas are sent to Europe and other parts of the world for training and that is good not only for their skills but also to better understand western climbers, their custom and habits. No one doubts the importance of tourism in Nepal and mountaineering is a branch of this profitable industry. I am confident to say that Nepal will become, in the coming years, the "Who is Who" in the mountaineering world not only as service providers but a true leader in high mountains.

What is the difference between climbing in American mountains and Everest ?

First of all, there is a huge difference in height. Many people believe that a peak in South America is a good training for the giants of Himalaya. I too used to believe that. Unless one goes over 8,000 meters you will never really feel the effects of high altitude. On the Everest climb, we live for 2 months at almost the same altitude as the highest mountain in the Americas. Then it is the human impact which makes a climb a lot more interesting and I am referring to the Nepali people.

INDIA QUICKENS PERMISSION FOR SCALING 196 PEAKS NEAR THE BORDER

India has made it easier for mountaineering on 196 Himalayan peaks, scrapping the need for military clearance to climb near the borders of Pakistan and China, an official said recently in New Delhi.

Mountaineers had urged the government to speed up the cumbersome process of obtaining permission to scale the peaks, which could take up to six months, said Ravindra Nath, director of the Indian Mountaineering Foundation. Now, a government permit can be obtained within a month, he said.

The Defense Ministry restricts access to areas it lists as sensitive along the borders with Pakistan and China. India has fought three wars with Pakistan and one with China.

Mountaineers said Pakistan and China have in recent years encouraged expeditions close to their borders with India, which may have prompted the Indian government to review its procedures.

The cleared list of mountain ranges includes 20 peaks higher than 20, 000 feet high (6, 050 meters) that have never been scaled before, Nath said.

He said the decision would create more jobs for guides and porters and bring in more revenue for the government a fee of 65, 000 rupees ($ 1, 500) to 175, 000 rupees ($ 4, 000) to climb the peaks. (AP)

Nepalese Tourism Development: Some Issues

- Dr. Hari Prasad Shrestha

In view of the various tourism products in the country, there is great potential for the development of tourism in Nepal. The prime attractions of Nepal are natural, cultural and religious resources. On top of this, Nepal is famous in the world for cultural tourism. The special attractions of Nepal are adventure tourism based on nature like trekking, mountaineering, rafting and wildlife sanctuaries.

Important Sectors

Tourism is a major source of foreign currency earnings in Nepal. It is also an important sector generating employment opportunities and tourism contributes through both direct and indirect benefits to the country. Despite the fact that tourism prospects are great and that many benefits too accrue, it has not been utilised to the fullest extent in the interest of the country and the people. In fact, the real development of tourism was initiated quite late. Tourism development in Nepal started especially after 1951 A.D. and only in the 1970s planned development was initiated. It is true that tourism development has been taking place continually, but Nepal has a negligible role as compared to the world (tourist arrival only 0.07 per cent) and compared to the South Asian region also it is not very encouraging (tourist arrival only 9.27 per cent).

Tourist arrivals are increasing annually and there are great market potentials but still foreign currency earnings are not as it should be. The expenditure of tourists in Nepal is very low. In the fiscal year 1994/95, the average expenditure per tourist per day was US$ 42.9, which dipped to US$ 38.3 in the fiscal year 1996/97. Similarly, the country earned US$ 118,563 thousand from the tourism sector in the fiscal year 1994/95 but in the fiscal year 1996/97 the foreign currency earnings fell to only US$ 108,527 thousand. But, in recent times, there has been some improvement in the foreign currency-earning scenario.

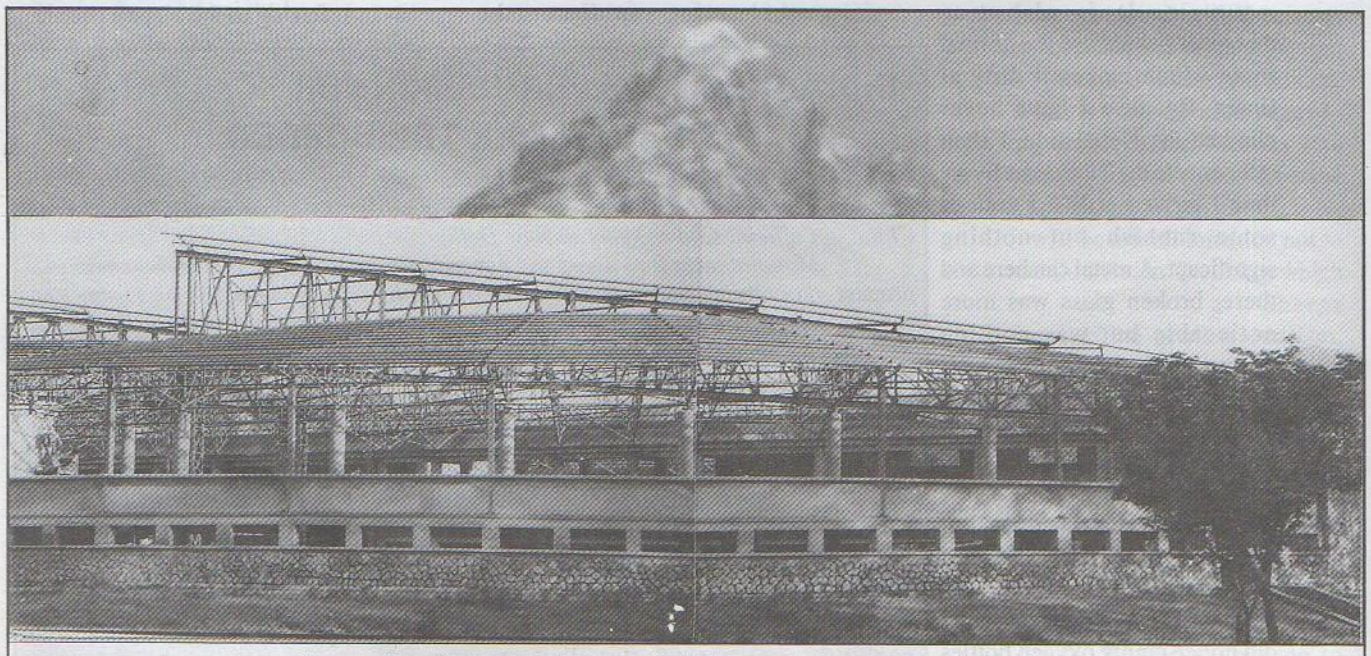
Importance of Marketing

Marketing is the medium to popularise Nepal's tourism products in the global market thereby developing the tourism sector, but the country is lagging behind in this particular field. In fact, the marketing activities of Nepal's tourism sector are very limited. The marketing related activities are very far and few and afar and there is limited publicity of the country and its product among the potential tourists. The country's marketing efforts are disorganised and most of the tourism marketing is done by the private sector and foreign tour operators. In the tourism marketing efforts of any country, the concerned government has a great and important role to play but in Nepal the government participation and efforts are not enough. In this respect, first of all government budgetary allocation for tourism promotion is very low and there is also inadequate tourism related skilled manpower. To develop tourism in the right manner, professional approach is essential but Nepal has not been able to professionally develop tourism.

Motivation

According to one study, the main motivation for foreign tourists to visit Nepal is 'word of mouth'. Almost 68 per cent of tourists visiting Nepal received information about Nepal from their friends and relatives. Other sources that motivated tourists to come to Nepal are guide books (29%), prior visit (23%), travel magazine (20%) etc. Similarly, Nepalese tourism entrepreneurs, while marketing the country abroad, say that most of it (51 per cent) were done through personal contacts. The other mediums for marketing are local and foreign agents (30%), through advertisement (30%) and participating in tourism marts (11%).* Most of the entrepreneurs resort to promotion of their business through 'word of mouth' publicity of those tourists who have already visited Nepal. For the promotion of tourism marketing, the 'word of mouth' medium is very important therefore together with it strong and adequate publicity of Nepal as a tourist destination must be made in potential tourist generating markets so as to attract more tourists.

For the proper development of tourism, good marketing is essential and besides it the identification and development of places of touristic importance must be done on a priority basis, necessary tourism related infrastructure must be developed,



International Mountain Museum Building under construction in Pokhara

* Information based on survey conducted for doctoral research during 1998.

necessary policy and programs formulated and essential services must be provided to tourist so that their stay in Nepal will be comfortable and worth remembering.

Sad Aspect

Here, it is worth noting that marketing, infrastructure, policy and programs, etc. are important factors but they can be developed gradually. But, we have not been able to properly manage the sensitive environmental and other important factors which are very important from the tourism point of view. Kathmandu valley and the main trekking routes are increasingly becoming more dirty. As Kathmandu is polluted, tourists do not like to spend their time here. Kathmandu is only a metropolis in name. Even the local inhabitants have to cover their mouth and nose while going around the city. In this condition, one can imagine what effect it has on the tourists and what will be their opinion about Nepal. It is a common sight to see piles of garbage in Thamel, Pashupatinath, New Road and in front of the major tourist hotels of Kathmandu. Such piles of garbage not only emit bad smell but also prove to be obstacles for pedestrians as well as the motorists. Whose duty is it to check this? Can the problem be solved by any of the ministries of His Majesty's Government, Nepal Tourism Board, Kathmandu Metropolitan City, or any institution related to the tourism industry, singly or jointly?

Complaints

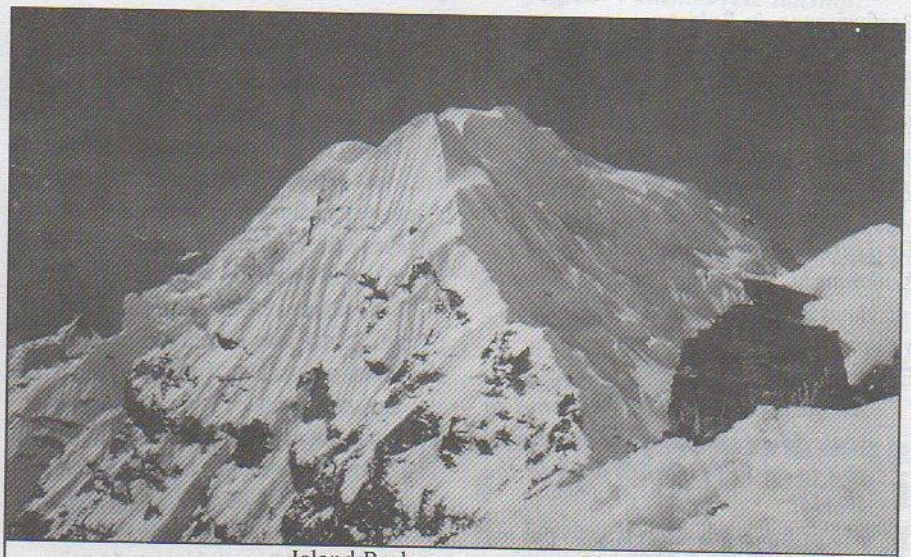
Most of the tourists coming to Nepal complain of the negative effects produced by the condition of the immigration and customs office at the Tribhuvan International Airport and the behaviour of the concerned staff. Visitors complain of having to stand in the queue for hours to fulfil the immigration related formalities, taking a long time to collect one's baggage, irresponsibility regarding the baggage, rude behaviour of the staff and their lack of knowledge of foreign language and the tendency of the taxi drivers and commission agents to unnecessarily harass them by pulling the luggage. Such a situation leads to a negative effect on the tourists just when they enter Nepal. As it is an international airport, it should adhere to the international standard. Instead of making the tourists stand in a long queue for hours to fulfil immigration formalities, it would be more convenient if the number of staff were to be increased and more counters opened then the problem could be solved easily.

The environment outside the airport building is so disorganised that it disappoints everybody. The tourists must be allowed to go towards their destination without any hindrance once they come out of the airport. But, outside the airport it is a terrible mess with the crowd of porters, commission agents, drivers and the rough behaviour of the police while dispersing the crowd and so on make us ashamed. At the Tribhuvan Airport, taxis are not allowed to ferry tourists, only green plated old vehicles are designated for the purpose. By using such old vehicles, service of international standard cannot be provided to the tourists. His Majesty's Government had allowed for the import of taxis and cars by providing customs concession. Such imported vehicles or by providing special privileges, provisions could be made at the airport to provide reliable and comfortable services to the tourists to take them to their desired place in the city or elsewhere. As the tourists are influenced by the services and environment of the entry point, efforts must be undertaken to improve the conditions at the international airport in Kathmandu.

To develop the tourism sector in the right manner, concrete policies regarding tourism services must be formulated and implemented properly. At present, even in the Kathmandu valley the tourists have to return to their hotel room if they have to answer the call of the nature while they are harassed by having to pay entry fees at other places. Bhaktapur was the first city to raise entry fees from foreign tourists and now Changunarayan, Swayambhu, Patan Durbar Square, Patan Museum and Swarna Mahabihar of Patan have followed suit in charging entry fees. And who knows, the trend may spread tomorrow to Dakshinkali, Budanilkantha, Pashupati and Hanumandhoka area of Kathmandu. It is fine to levy entry fees in special areas like the museum but imposing such fees on tourists in other places is not a good move. It is not suitable to burden the tourists with various forms of charges when His Majesty's Government already charges a certain amount for the tourists while issuing the visas.

Necessity

In fact, Nepal is famous for its natural, cultural, historical, religious and other heritages. The foreign tourists are attracted by the heritages of Nepal so there is great potential for the development of tourism in the country. For this, aggressive marketing of the tourism products of the country must be undertaken in potential tourist generating markets while at the same time develop the necessary infrastructures within the country and make everything systematic. The heritages we have may not retain the same attraction for all times. The attraction may diminish in the future or the interests of the tourists may change. In fact, the tourists are always in search of new attractions. In the past, European countries and America attracted tourists in great numbers but now, comparatively speaking, the flow is diminishing while the number of tourists visiting East Asia and Pacific and South Asian countries are increasing. According to one research study, as it is known that the oil reserves in Dubai will dry up in 25 years, the UAE government being alert to the situation is developing shopping tourism and other alternatives in Dubai. Therefore, timely measures must be taken by us for tourism development otherwise it would be like releasing the bird in hand and trying to catch two birds in the bush.



Island Peak *Photo : Lhakpa D. Sherpa*

Interview with Mountaineer Nazir Sabir

Expeditions not smooth like a railway Journey

Mr. NAZIR SABIR, a renowned alpinist, unfolded the flag of Pakistan on the highest point of the earth early in the morning (7:31 AM) of May 17, 2000 became the first Pakistani to reach the summit of Mt. Everest (8848m.). He scaled the peak from the Nepal side. This was his second attempt to Mt. Everest. He made his first attempt to Everest from the north side (China), in 1997, as the leader of Pakistani's Golden Jubilee Expedition but unfortunately it was unsuccessful.

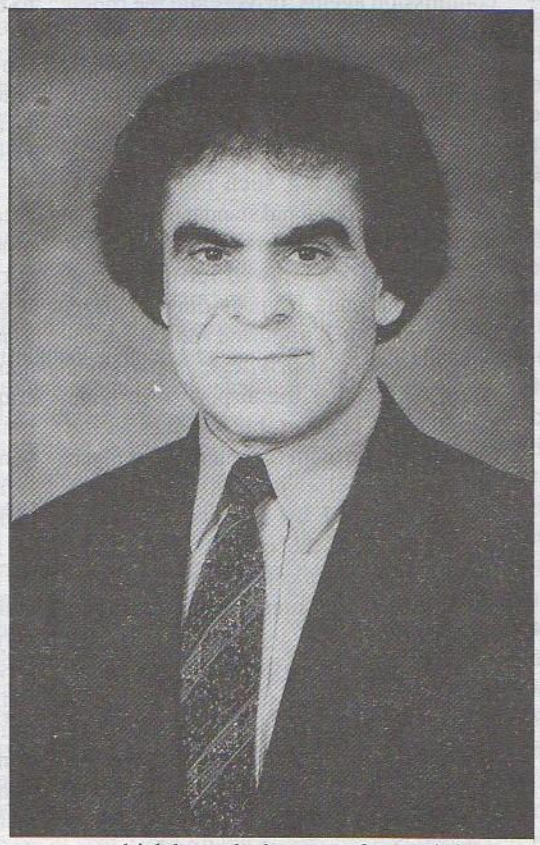
Mr. Nazir, a mountaineer turned entrepreneur, was born on 10th December 1955, in Hunza, Karakoram, Pakistan. Trained with Mr. Allen Steck of USA through Pakistan Alpine Club in 1976, Mr. Sabir for the first time climbed Mt. Paiyu (6666m) of Pakistan in 1976. Other mountains which he has scaled successfully are Passu Peak (7284m) in 1974, K2 first West Ridge ascent in 1981, Gasherbrum II (8035m) and Broad Peak (8047m), with Reinhold Messner and Sher Khan in one week in 1982, winter ascent of Mt. Fuji (Japan) in two hours, first solo climb of Mingling Sar (6210m) in 1989, classic climb of Hidden Peak (8068m) in two days and so on. Furthermore, he is attempting to scale Nanga Parbat (8125m) in July 2000.

In 1982, he was awarded the Presidential medal for Pride of Performance, in Pakistan.

Mr. Sabir, has visited Nepal five times. He says, 'I took Nepal as my second home as mountains and people of Nepal impressed me spiritually. I have very warm feelings for Nepal'.

In a recent talk with ***Dr. Hari Prasad Shrestha****, in Kathmandu, Mr. Nazir Sabir expressed his views and experience regarding his mountaineering career.*

Excerpts:



As the first Pakistani National to scale Mt. Everest, what motivated you to go to the No. 1 peak in the World?

My prime motivation was to put my country in the hallowed list of nations which have the honour of summitting Sagarmatha. It was important as my first attempt in 1997 as leader of our national expedition had not succeeded on account of blizzard, stormy wind and bad weather. That promise to my people had to be redeemed. Then as a mountaineer also having scaled K2 and other major peaks, it was kind of a gap in the career and long awaited dream for me.

What were your feelings on scaling the highest peak of the world?

For those who climb mountains out of love, it is an indescribable feeling. I felt elated and humbled at the same time. It was like encountering a Presence. I don't know how people of other faiths and those also who have none feel when they accomplish a feat of this kind. For me, my natural reaction was to bow my head in gratitude and experience the sheer insignificance of my person in being a part of the Boundless Universe.

Pakistan also boasts for the second highest peak in the world, Mt. K2 (8616m). Have you scaled it?

Yes. I scaled K2 in 1981 with Eiho Otani of Waseda University team from a new route (the West Ridge) which few others have taken to the top.

What difference you find between scaling peaks in Nepal and Pakistan?

Since my first visit to Nepal in 1979 I have seen the development of mountaineering at various stages. The commercial aspect of it is more obvious in Nepal and especially on Sagarmatha. This is still some years away in case of Karakorum. K2 will never attract and allow that number of teams simply because of its steepness and the level of wilderness and remoteness is a lot greater. In Pakistan you can still be very lonely in the mountains and may not see another soul for days together. That is one difference. Nepal is more professional, crew being more competent from a technical point of view I would say and probably having better rescue arrangements with helicopters owned by private sector too.

Do you want to come back to scale Mt. Everest or other peaks in Nepal?

Not again. Twice and once to the top is enough. But I fancy Dhaulagiri and Makalu. Both are very beautiful mountains. And I hope to return in near future.

Did you find any difficulties during your Everest Expedition?

Yes. Some due to lack of coordination within the team. Logistically it was ok except on the 2nd attempt on 15th May when we had to return from the South summit due to shortage of rope as one Sherpa returned leaving the ropes behind. But this is part of the game. Sagarmatha dumps to a climber's calculated risks things like Khumbu icefall and I think technically also even the normal route is a lot more respectably difficult than is often considered and she has proven it over the years. I know of no expeditions which have been smooth like a railway journey.



Sagarmatha (8848 m.) and Nanga Parbat (8125 m.) Nazir Sabir (inset)

You had tried to scale Mt. Everest in 1997 from the Tibet side, but unfortunately it was not successful. Recently this year you have scaled Mt. Everest from the Nepal side. Which route is difficult to scale Everest, North or South?

The North approach is generally considered to be more difficult, I found the South to be more dangerous, particularly the Khumbu ice fall. In good weather both faces can be nearly equally friendly but when the weather turns nasty the difficulties on both sides are different. North then is more hazardous, I would say as one has to be above 8400m for hours on a summit bid.

What has been the most happiest and the most difficult moment in climbing?

I wouldn't say Everest was my happiest. It cannot compare with the joy I felt at Paiyu, my first peak, or K2. You see one's age also counts. Maybe your joy is more profound at my age now, but the acute awareness, the sheer physicalness of the experience when you are young is something you cannot have when you are no more twenty something. The most difficult moment was on Nanga Parbat when I was rolling down in an avalanche that killed Shimura a colleague. On this ascent of Sagarmatha when I saw the body of my dear friend Scott Fisher at 8300m who died in 1996, I was very sad and I had mixed feelings even on the summit. Perhaps that sight robbed me of some of my joy up there.

At present, how is the garbage condition on the way to Everest?

Things are pretty bad at the South Col. But with the awareness growing all around, I hope Sagarmatha will be a cleaner place in the years to come. But I am very pleased to see the trail and the Base Camp area much cleaner than I have been told.

What do you feel about the development of tourism in Nepal?

It is much better than Pakistan with both private and public sectors promoting tourism. Yet, it is obvious, neither in Nepal or in my country it is as good as it should be. We in the sub continent are poor managers. We may blame the tightness of resources, but I think it is just an excuse to remain backward. One thing is very hurting that not much is being done for the welfare of the mountain communities in both countries. I'm shocked to see the living conditions of some families of Sherpas who died on mountains. Nepalese government is not doing anything for them. Even their children are not able to go to school. If they put just one royalty of an Expedition from Sagarmatha into a welfare programme it'll look after their school fee etc. I'm very sad about it and I will take it on various forums.

How has your achievement foster Nepal - Pakistan relationship?

Even before my summit, the relations between the two countries have always been friendly and cordial. But I see great opportunities in tourism for both to collaborate. And I will certainly work with my Nepalese friends to bring the countries even closer. On my first visit to Nepal in 1979 I was amazed to see the kind of interest of a common person in Nepal for Pakistan that told tales of very warm feelings at all levels.

Send Your Feedbacks To Nepal Parbat

NMA's effort in Cleaning Campaign

Vinaya Shakya

We are very much concerned with cleaning campaign in the Himalayas. In 1996, **Nepal Mountaineering Association (NMA)** organized a cleaning campaign in the Everest region and brought about 2000 KG of debris from the region, mobilizing its own internal resources and man power with the help of **Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation.**

This program could not get continuity in the following year due to the lack of financial support from the Nepal Government and other prospective donor agencies. The fact is that running the cleaning campaign in the Everest region is too expensive.

Obviously, it is the duty of all mountain lovers and mountain dwellers to keep these sacred places of adventure for future generation to come. Long back **Sir Edmund Hillary** sought intervention for expedition in **Mt Everest** to regenerate to its original form as the rate of piling of trash increases year after year.

There were number of expeditions in the name of cleaning campaign but in reality, they were interested to climb the mountain only. So, His Majesty's Government, Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation started collecting the garbage deposit for peak climbing since 1992 autumn and also divided the garbage into three categories as disposable, re-exportable and recycling material.

There were some genuine expeditions in cleaning campaign too. This year an expedition named **"Everest 2000 Environmental Expedition"** alone collected used 632 oxygen cylinders from the Everest region, out of which, 5 antique cylinders were donated to **International Mountain Museum, Pokhara** of NMA. Rest of these cylinders were re-exported to the organizers' country according to the rule of His Majesty's Government, as these items are listed in re-exportable goods. There are still such types of garbage in the region which are waiting for another such group for their removal from this place. The foreign groups are interested not only in collecting the garbage item, but also they know the value of the collected items, which can be resale as an antique or present as souvenir.

Nepal Mountaineering Association this year organized one cleaning campaign in **Island peak** area and **Lobuche peak** region as per mandate program of the association. The group collected tin, glass, plastic packet, bottle etc. These were dumped, crushed and burnt according to their nature of combination. Although the dumping pit was covered this can be used for coming two more years, said Convenor of NMA Environment Conservation Committee Mr. Ang Furi Sherpa.

Most of the rubbish were found under the big stones, which were very much difficult to take out. The group dug out these trashes and disposed off. Mr. Sherpa reported that such type of cleaning program would doubtlessly help not only in cleaning the area but also in generating alternate employment in off-season.

Previously, in 1997, NMA and **Sagarmatha Pollution Control Committee (SPCC)** jointly organized a clean up campaign in Sagarmatha base camp area. A total of 2805 kg of garbage was collected and disposed off. At that time too several old pits were covered with soil and new pits were constructed. In addition, the program had an opportunity to educate both the trekkers and villagers who are the caretaker of the region.

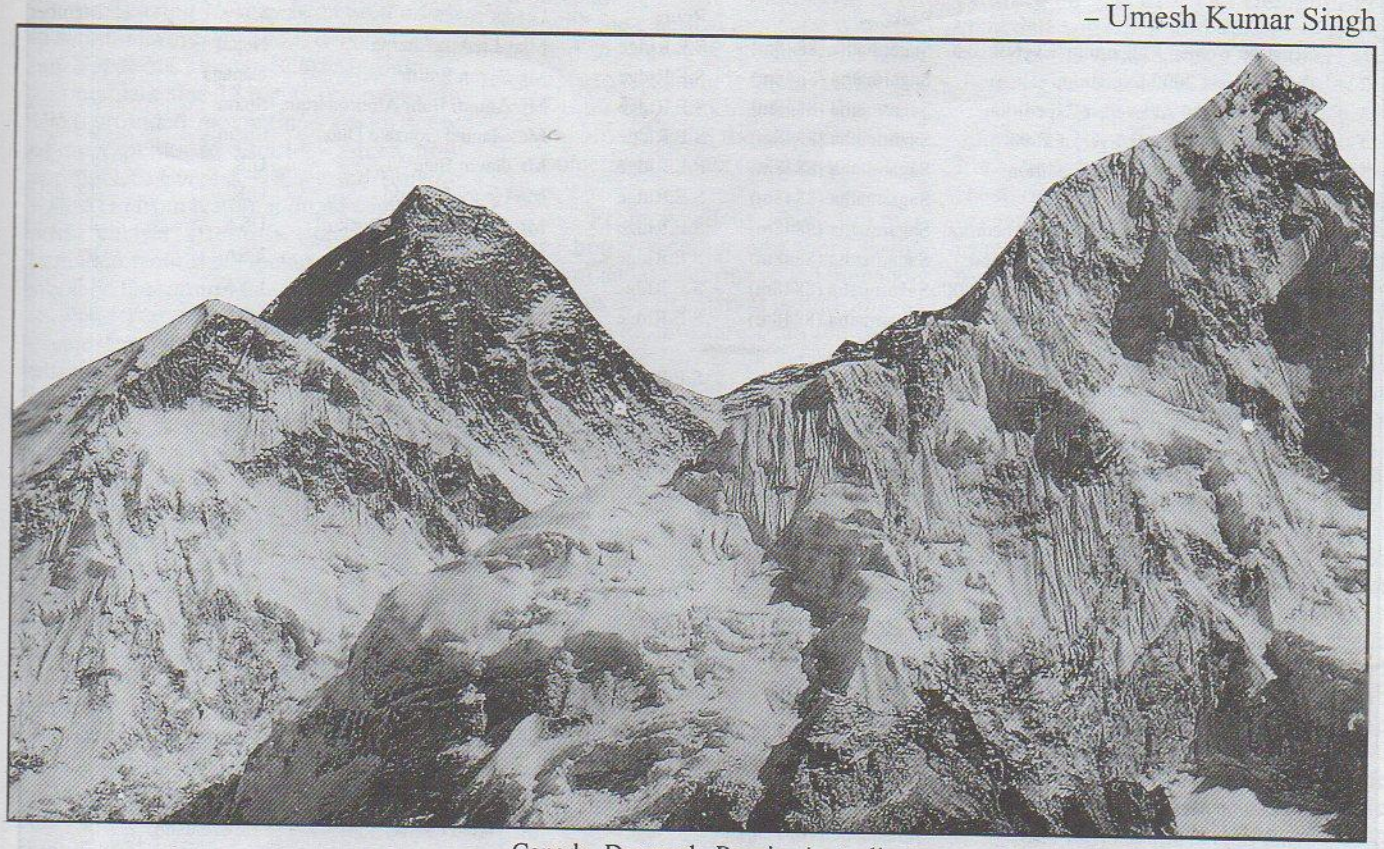
At the end, His Majesty's Government, environment conscious organizations and Mountain users should join their hands in the effort of cleaning campaign organized by NMA by providing moral and financial support in the days to come. Similarly, private sectors should be encouraged to invest in such campaign by providing tax holiday and facilitating with the liberal policies to keep smaller and higher peaks neat and clean as ever, specially in the off-season to generate alternate employment in the country.



NMA's members actively involved in cleaning campaign at Bajra Yogini, Sankhu
Photo : Lhakpa Sherpa

Mountaineering Activities of Spring 2000

– Umesh Kumar Singh



Spring season of mountaineering in Nepal Himalayas, started from 1st March, 2000 and ended on 31st May, 2000. In this season altogether 53 foreign and 3 Nepalese teams tried to scale sixteen different mountain peaks of Nepal. There were 17 teams on Sagarmatha (Mt. Everest 8848 m), 11 teams on Amadablam (6812 m), 3 teams on Annapurna 1st (8091 m), 3 teams on Baruntse (7129 m), 1 team on Chamlang (7319 m), 2 teams on Dhaulagiri (8167 m), 1 team in Gyachungkang (7952 m), 1 team on Ganesh II (7111 m), 4 teams on Kanchanjunga (8586 m), 2 teams on Lhotse (8516 m), 3 teams on Manaslu (8163 m), 2 teams on Makalu (8463 m), 1 team on Nilgiri North (7061 m), 3 teams on Pumori (7161 m), 1 team on Ramtang (6600 m) and 1 team on Tilicho (7134 m). The teams consisted of 361 members in total, making average number of members in each tam as 6.4.

The 56 teams were from 18 different countries of the world. There were 12 teams from USA, 9 teams from UK, 5 teams from Spain, 4 teams from South Korea, 3 teams each from Nepal, Austria, Italy, Germany and Japan. Whereas there were one team each from Canada, Denmark, Russia, Australia, Mexico, New Zealand, Georgia and Switzerland.

Successful climbs were done on Everest, Kanchanjunga, Makalu and Amadablam. 51 Nepalese climbers and 33 foreign climbers got success on reaching at the top of Mt. Everest in this season.

Many new records were established in Everest climbing in this season. Mr. Babu Chhiri Sherpa (34) of Nepal reached at the top of Mt. Everest from its Base Camp in just 16 hours and 56 minutes on 20th May, 2000 and thus he became the fastest Everest climber. This was also his 10th ascent of Mt. Everest.

Appa Sherpa of Nepal scaled Mt. Everest for the record 11th time on 24th May, 2000.

Ms. Pemba Doma Sherpa of Nepal successfully climbed Mt. Everest from the Tibetan side on 19th May, 2000 and she established a record to be the first Nepalese woman climber getting success on Everest from the Northern side.

Ms. Lhakpa Sherpa (27) of Nepal became the 2nd successful Nepalese woman climber to scale Mt. Everest by reaching at its top on 18th May, 2000.

Similarly Dorje Sherpa of Nepal scaled Mt. Everest for the 8th time and Lhakpa Gelu Sherpa scaled Mt. Everest for the 7th time in this season.

A 14 years old Nepalese boy Temba Chhiri Sherpa tried to scale Mt. Everest in order to become the youngest Everest climber but unfortunately his attempt was unsuccessful and he had to return back from a height of 8826 meters because of severe pain in eyes and frost beaten fingers. In this attempt he also lost his five fingers due to frost bite.

Now a question also arises, whether climbing permission should be given or not to the physically weak under-age and over-age peoples, who put their life at great risk just for the sake of new records ?

There were two casualties on Himalayas in this season. German climber Mr. Bernard Mehnert (1966) a Engineer from Dresden, Germany lost his life due to exhursion in camp III of Makalu on 16th May. Ang Dawa Tamang (28), 4 times Everest summitter from Gorakhani VDC of Solukhumbu Nepal was hit by an ice block between camp III and Camp IV of Kanchanjunga on 22nd May, 2000 and died while being carried to the base camp on 23rd May, 2000.

Mountaineering

Permitted Teams of 2000 Spring Season

S.No.	Name of Expedition Team	Name of the Peak	Ascent Route	Name of the Leader	Country	Total Member
1	Nepalese Women Millennium Everest Exp.	Sagarmatha (8848m)	S.E.Ridge	Miss Lhakpa Sherpa	Nepal	5
2	Team Everest 2000 Expedition	Sagarmatha (8848m)	S.E.Ridge	Mr. Byron Smith	Canada	3
3	Expedicio 2000 Al Everest Expedition	Sagarmatha (8848m)	S.E.Ridge	Mr. Antoni Bahi Alburquerque	Spain	2
4	Expedition Andalucia Everest 2000	Sagarmatha (8848m)	S.E.Ridge	Mr. Manuel Gonzale Diaz	Spain	9
5	Sagarmatha Millennium Expedition	Sagarmatha (8848m)	S.E.Ridge	Mr. Gavin Bate	U.K.	7
6	HG Everest Expedition	Sagarmatha (8848m)	S.E.Ridge	Mr. Henry B. Todd	U.K.	2
7	Mountain Madness Sagarmatha Expedition	Sagarmatha (8848m)	S.E.Ridge	Mr. Christine Feld Boskoff	USA	2
8	2000 Everest Environmental Expedition	Sagarmatha (8848m)	S.E.Ridge	Mr. Robert H. Hoffman	USA	8
9	International Mountain Guides Everest 2000	Sagarmatha (8848m)	S.E.Ridge	Mr. Eric Simonson	USA	12
10	2000 Everest Millennium Expedition USA	Sagarmatha (8848m)	S.E.Ridge	Mr. Randy Todd Burison	USA	3
11	Thrane & Thirane Mountaineering Team Everest 2000	Sagarmatha (8848m)	S.Pillar	Mr. Henrik Jessen Hansen	Denmark	7
12	HG III Everest Expedition USA	Sagarmatha (8848m)	S.E.Ridge	Mr. Patrick J. Kenny	USA	9
13	HG II Everest Expedition USA	Sagarmatha (8848m)	S.E.Ridge	Mr. Richard Allen	UK	9
14	2000 Korean 7 Summits Expedition	Sagarmatha (8848m)	S.E.Ridge	Mr. Son Joong Ho	Korea	7
15	Taragon Expedition Everest 2000	Sagarmatha (8848m)	S.Pillar	Mr. Joan Tomas Gebelli	Spain	7
16	Everest Speed Ascent in 16 Hours Exp.	Sagarmatha (8848m)	S.E.Ridge	Mr. Babu Chhiri Sherpa	Nepal	1
17	Everest Expedition 2000 AD New Record	Sagarmatha (8848m)	S.E.Ridge	Mr. Bhakta B. Thakuri	Nepal	7
18	Austrian Amadablam Expedition	Amadablam (6812m)	S.E.Ridge	Mr. Theo Fritsche	Austria	4
19	RAM 2000 Amadablam Expedition	Amadablam (6812m)	S.W.Ridge	Mr.Ronald Matous	USA	3
20	Amadablam 2000 NFB Expedition	Amadablam (6812m)	S.W.Ridge	Mr. Pasquale V. Scaturro	USA	8
21	Siberian Amadablam Expedition	Amadablam (6812m)	S.E.Ridge	Mr. Vladimir Prokopenko	Russia	6
22	American Spring 2000 Amadablam Exp.	Amadablam (6812m)	S.W.Ridge	Mr. Jeffry S. Clapp	USA	2
23	Colorado Amadablam Expedition 2000	Amadablam (6812m)	S.Ridge	Mr. David Penney	USA	8
24	Catalonian Expedition Amadablam	Amadablam (6812m)	S.East	Mr. Xavier Gonzalez Gonzalez	Australia	4
25	Expedition Mexicana Amadablam	Amadablam (6812m)	S.W.Ridge	Mr. Pablo Juarrez Logos	Mexico	6
26	Spice Boys Expedition (Dirt-bag)	Amadablam (6812m)	N.Ridge	Mr. David Crafts	Newzealand	4
27	American Amadablam Expedition	Amadablam (6812m)	S.W.Ridge	Mr. Matthew Floretti	USA	2
28	Valle D'Aosta Team Amadablam Exp.	Amadablam (6812m)	S.W.Ridge	Mr. Rudy Bucella	Italy	4
29	Royal Expedition Annapurna 2000 Spain	Annapurna I (8091m)	N.Face	Mr. Josep A Pujante	Spain	7
30	International Annapurna I Expedition	Annapurna I (8091m)	N.Face	Mr. Edmund Viesturr	USA	7
31	French Annapurna I (GMHM)Expedition	Annapurna I (8091m)	N.Face	Mr. Thierry Bolo	France	8
32	Jagged Globe Baruntse Expedition	Baruntse (7129m)	S.E.Ridge	Mr. Steve Hartland	UK	9
33	Himalaya 2000 Saxony Himalaya Exp.	Baruntse (7129m)	S.E.Ridge	Mr. Gotz Weigand	Germany	7
34	British Baruntse Expedition	Baruntse (7129m)	S.E.Ridge	Mr. John Baker	UK	5
35	British Chamlang Exp.Spring 2000	Chamlang (7319m)	N.Face	Mr. Christopher G. Comerie	UK	2
36	Amical Alpin Dhaulagiri I Expedition 2000	Dhaulagiri I (8167m)	N.E.Ridge	Mr. Hojo Netzer	Germany	12
37	DAV Summit Club Dhaulagiri Exp.	Dhaulagiri I (8167m)	N.E.Ridge	Mr. Stadler Peter	Germany	12
38	Osaka Eiho Alpine Club Exp.2000 Spring	Gyachung Kang (7952m)	S.E.Ridge	Mr. Takashi Shiro	Japan	7
39	Shinshu University Ganesh Himal II Exp.2000	Ganesh II (7111m)	S.E.Ridge	Mr. Hideki Yoshida	Japan	7
40	Valais Kanchenjunga Exp. 2000	Kanchenjunga (8586m)	S.Face	Mr. Andre Georges	Switzerland	4
41	Indo Tebetan Border Police Expedition	Kanchenjunga (8586m)	S.W.Side	Mr. Sunil Datta Sharma	India	8
42	British Services Kanchenjunga Exp. 2000	Kanchenjunga (8586m)	Yalung Face	Mr. Andrew Hughes	UK	15
43	2000 Korean Kanchenjunga Exp.	Kanchenjunga (8586m)	S.Face	Mr. Go In Kyung	Korea	7
44	Lhotse Grus 2000 Expedition	Lhotse (8516m)	W.Face	Mr.Benedict Kashakashvilli	Georgia	10
45	HG Lhotse Expedition 2000	Lhotse (8516m)	W.Face	Mr. Henry B. Todd	UK	7
46	ETB 2000 Expedition	Manaslu (8163m)	N.E.Ridge	Mr. Felix Maria I. Irate	Spain	7
47	2000 Korean Manaslu Expedition	Manaslu (8163m)	N.E.Ridge	Mr. Han Wuang Yong	Korea	7
48	Manaslu 2000 Expedition	Manaslu (8163m)	N.E.Ridge	Mr. Franco Brunello	Italy	9
49	2000 Dongguk Makalu Expedition	Makalu I (8463m)	N.E.Ridge	Mr. Hyung Woo Kim	Korea	6
50	Italian Makalu Expedition	Makalu I (8463m)	N.W.Ridge	Mr. Christian Kuntner	Italy	9
51	French Nilgiri North (GMHM) Exp. 2000	Nilgiri North (7061m)	North Face	Mr. Thierry Bolo	France	8
52	DAV Summit Club-Pumori Exp.	Pumori (7161m)	S.E.	Mr. Roman Dimbock	Austria	9
53	RAX Pumori 2000	Pumori (7161m)	S.E.Ridge	Mr. Gerhard Ferstl	Austria	4
54	Connecting Class Room to the World Pumori 2000	Pumori (7161m)	S.E.Ridge	Mr. Worsham Donald	USA	6
55	BSKE 2000 Ramtang Peak Expedition	Ramtang (6600m)	Normal	Mr. A.J. Edington	UK	12
56	Kozankai Tilicho Peak Expedition 2000	Tilicho (7134m)	N.Side	Mr. Masaki Koike	Japan	3

More than mountains

When Sir Edmund Hillary and Sherpa Tenzing Norgay became the first to summit Everest in 1953, they helped to put Nepal ont he map. Closed to almost all outsiders sine 1816, its re-opening in 1951 provided mountaineers with score of new peaks to tackle - and a new approach to Everest, Hillary and Tenzing walked in from Kathmandu, in contrast to most earlier attempts that had been launched from the Tibetan side. As they stood on the summit they could look down in wonder at a nation dominated by the greatest mountain range on earth, with majestic summits ranged east and west across its whole width.

In their footsteps came others. Determined, stubborn or visionary, they began exploring the surrounding valleys and summits. It was the dawn on trekking, though it wasn't until the 1970s when it really took off. Backpackers made Kathmandu an established part of their overland routes and Nepal became a Mecca for people interested in Buddhist values, culture and mountains. Today tourism in Nepal has come of age, broadening out to offer activities besides hiking, with tours and treks to suit all pockets. With hundrerds of companies and thousands of kilometres of trails and rivers, Nepal has adventures for everyone, along with a rich and varied cultural heritage and the friendly welcome of the Nepalese.

It is important to realise that Nepal is not uniformly covered with high peaks. In the south is the Terai, Nepal's breadbasket, a fertile rolling plain extending well into India and watered by the Himalayan snowmelt. The region is a mix of farmland mixed with the original environments of forest and grassland and is home to Nepal's famous Royal Chitwan National Park.

Between the Terai and the Himalaya themselves are a series of low ranges of hills divided by cool valleys such as the Kathmandu Valley. Most of the population of Nepal live in this zone and it is through here that most visitors come to reach the bigger mountains to the north.

Basically Nepal has a monsoon climate, though there is more variation than with the classical monsoon with just wet and dry seasons. Spring runs from February to April and is dry and mild. It's good time for trekking with the wild flowers blooming on the slopes but haze does sometimes detract from the mountain views.

From April to June, summer brings hotter weather and there is the chance of squally storms as the monsoon nears. This usually arrives in mid-June as air heavy with moisture from the Indian Ocean hits the barrier of the Himalaya. Rain falls once or sometimes twice a day and the damp weather brings out the leeches in force so this is not the best time for trekking.

That time arrives with autumn as the air clears and temperatures are warm but not too hot. Hikers and mountainbikers flock to the country between October and mid-December and whitewater sports are great also with the rivers at their highest points.

As the temperature drops further through December, winter arrives and the snowline comes down to around 2000m. High passes become blocked but it's an excellent time to visit the warmer lowland areas of the Terai.

For most visitors to Nepal, Kathmandu, set in the valley of the same name, is their gateway to adventure. The Kathmandu Valley is an oval bowl set amongst the foothills of the Himalaya and as you arrive by air you get great views of the valley's patchwork of farms set around small red brick towns. Space is at a premium with so little land suitable for farming in Nepal so settlements are crowded together and terraced fields clutch at the valley sides. Dotted here and there are the golden spires of temples.

The town of Kathmandu itself dominates Nepal's cultural and economic life. The older streets of Kathmandu are a feast for the senses. Bustling market scenes, Buddhist temples, squares and places, quaint houses with balconies overlooking the street; there is an almost medieval feel to it. A more recent addition are the scores of travel companies that have set up here, altering the economic landscape for many local people. Everywhere you look there are signs for tours, gear, guides and hotels. Here you can set yourself up for your trekking-whether you are taking an organized package or a so-called 'teahouse trek', an independent trip where you sleep and eat in the trailside lodges. Then there are mountainbiking and whitewater packages, or you can combine two or more of these activities if time allows. The gentlest options are fascinating cultural tours of Kathmandu and of the even more picturesque town of Bhaktapur, from there the sky is almost literally the limit. If you have a few weeks to spare, the base camp of Everest itself comes into range, or you can relocate to Pokhara, Langtang or another area after equipping yourself.



Renowned Mountaineers Appa, Babu Chiri, Lhakpa and Pemba Sherpa accepting the greetings of the people Photo : HPS

The most popular treks are in the Annapurna, Everest or Langtang areas but don't be put off by their popularity. The number of hikers on these trails is still low by Western standards- none of the trails see as many visitors in a year as a park such as Yosemite or Yellowstone sees in a single busy weekend. Conversely, you'll have to try hard to find absolute solitude. The trails that crisscross Nepal are very much a working communications netwrok in the absence of roads. Almost every hillside is inhabited and you'll have opportunity to meet local people wherever you go.

One essential in trekking in the Himalaya is behaving in the right way on the trails. Respect all the people you meet, not just the porters and guides that work

Caravan: *Dolpo people's timeless saga*

Eric Valli



The idea of the film came from the epic life of two of my best Nepalese friends. One, Tinle, is a yakpa, a "cow boy" a man of action, a fighter, a challenge-seeker, a leader. The other, Norbou, is a lama, a monk, a painter, a man entirely devoted to his prayers and his art.

At the time I met him, his had never walked out of his monastery. Both live in the Dolpo region, one of the highest, most isolated area, deep into the Nepalese Himalayas.

By uniting the lives of both characters, the film naturally came out: Tinle became Norbou's father, a mysterious death suddenly brings them together, however, different they may be they are confronted with a superhuman ordeal altering the whole valley's destiny.

I had to remain true to my sources, it was essential. The writing of the story with Olivier Dazat therefore had to be done in cooperation with Tinle, Norbou and the other main characters, in the film. I intentionally use the word 'characters' instead of the term 'actors', because these men and women had never experienced a camera and played their own part in everyday life. A life we don't have to romanticize: they all could be the main characters of a novel by Jack London or Joseph Conard.The action takes place at the season of snow when yak caravans cross the Himalayas, as they have always done, carrying the salt from the high plateaus down to the plains.

This film is a sort of western–a Tibetan western–a universal and timeless saga that tells a story of power, pride and glory that might have taken place, just as well, in the seas of Japan, in the Normandy plains or deep in Texas.

In order to show respect for this reality, that we had no desire to disguise, we were bound to shoot the film where people really lived, and place the local man in the heart of that particular environment that had mounded him. A nine-month shoot in Himalayas, between 4,000 and 5,000 meters high. A physical and technical challenge, and a beautiful adventure for a score of movie technicians.

A documentary film-maker's joys and frustrations have naturally led me to the joys and frustrations of a feature film. To work with a crew (a score of technicians– a comparatively small team for such a film) was a heavier and slower task that I was accustomed to. But this team work has allowed me to build and recreate moments of emotion a documentary film cannot always capture. For me, it was important to seize the very essence of their universe, So different from ours.My work as director was mainly to let my characters express themselves as they wanted.

I had to be a trapsparent as possible and let the force and richness of their own lives step forward; it is their story and history - I was telling. They were the masters, I was their student.

I have chosen not to speak about politics. Other authors, other writers, have done it. I have only wanted to show the life of these snow-country men, their weaknesses, their beauty, their humanity.

Norbou, my friend the painter, says: "We had to make this film as a testimony, before tradition melts away and vanishes just as snow does under the sun."

Synopsis of Caravan

In a far-flung village in the Dolpo, in the Noth Western Himalayas region of the Himalayan Kingdom of Nepal, at the altitude of 5,000 metres, Tinle, a charismatic old chieftain, whose eldest son has just died, refuses to allow the young Karma, whom he accuses of being responsible for the death of his son, to lead the yak caravan.

Karma goes against the oracles and Tinle's anger. Before the ritual date he leads the caravan away, followed by the young men from the village.

On the day fixed by the Gods, Tinle, assisted by the second son, Norbu the Lama, his grandson and his old companions, decides, against all reason to set off in his turn. Then the ancestral duel between man and mountain recommences.

(Eric Valli is the Director of Caravan, the first Nepalese film nominated for the most coveted, Academy Awards)

---

for you, and respect the trails too. Carry out all you bring in and reduce what you bring in to a minimum, especially the mineral water bottles which make up a huge percentage of the refuse brought down from the mountains. Use iodine to purify spring water instead. Toilet paper is another problem. Keep the used paper in a plastic bag and bring it back with you, or bury your waste and clean yourself with water, not paper.

Mountainbiking is an increasingly popular way to see Nepal. Trails run in all directions from Kathmandu and you can take on stunning routes that climb thousand of metres, or you can use the bike as a way to explore the valley bottom more fully. If you plan to bike on an existing trekking trail, try to get information on the trails first, many include regular flights of steps and riders commonly have to carry their bikes for 70% of the ride or more.

The whitewater of Nepal has a world-class reputaiton and it's well deserved. The best times to go are just either side of winter: September to early December, and March to early June, when the flows are off their peak but still considerable. It pays to do your homework in selecting an operator to go with–choose a professional and make sure you check exactly what's included.

Nepal is a richly rewarding place to hike, bike or try whitewater sports. In many ways it is the home of adventure sports operators–the world's first trekking companies started here, and both mountainbiking and whitewater sport have a long history in the country. The action is superb, the setting is unforgettable. Keep to the spirit and minimize your impact while you're here; you can be sure that Nepal will maximize your experience.

ROCK CLIMBING IN SOLU VALLEY

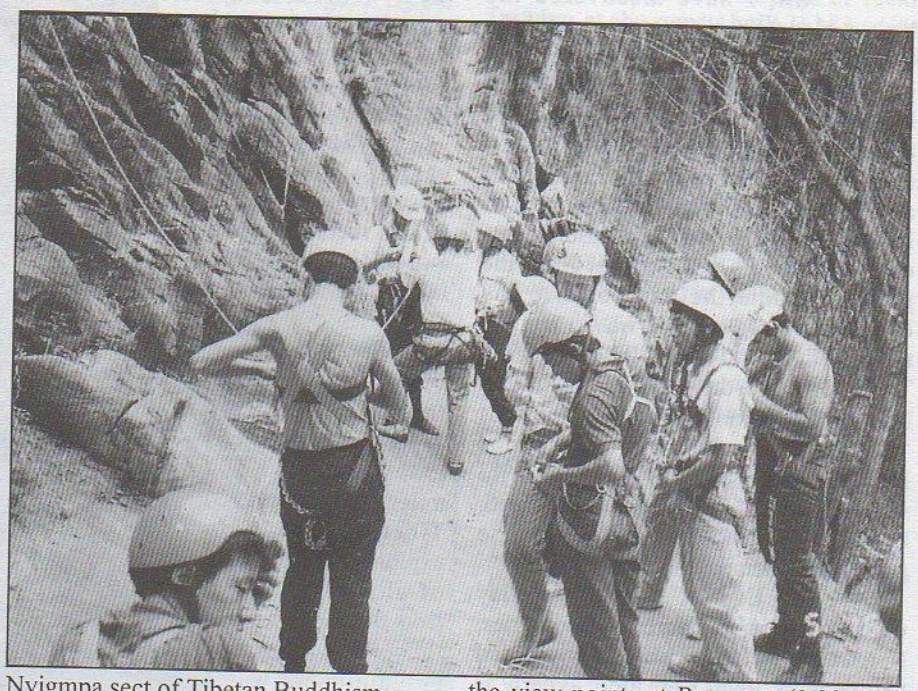
Nepal Mountaineering Association at the invitation of the District Development Committee of Solu Khumbu and Lion's Club of Solu Khumbu, Phaplu is planning to take a group of local rock climbing enthusiasts to explore cliffs situated at the foot of famous Chiwang monastery in Solu Valley with a view to promote this place as centre for rock climbing in Nepal.

The cliffs here situated in two sections are between 300-500 metre in height and covers an area of almost one kilometer from one end to other. Although the formation of the cliff may be sedimentary in its origin, the rock is solid with holds offering varied technical difficulty to suit all level of climbers (5/8-5/12). One section of the cliff (10-15 meter in width) which runs just below the monastery building is very impressive to look at with its surface smoothen by a water fall that forms in monsoon time. This section of cliffs needs no cleaning and offer excellent challenges with overhangs at some places.

In the surrounding of the cliffs, sparsely forested with rhododendron woods, are found exotic Himalayan wld-life species such as musk deer, ghoral and Danphe– the colorful national bird of Nepal. The verdant slopes stretching south-wards from here are always pleasing to eye and mind.

The cliff site is approached from Phaplu (daily STOL flights operated from Kathmandu) with a leisurely 1.30 minutes walk mostly on flat trail. Chiwang a Sherpa village with 8-10 houses is the nearest village to the cliff site. For those preferring to find their accommodation in a house, simple tea house style accommodation are available here. Phaplu and the neighboring town of Sallery (which is also the administrative headquarter of the region) provide more upscale accommodation with hot water bath, email, internet and ISTD services (Phaplu has also a good hospital staffed by two resident doctors founded by Sir Edmund Hillary).

Exploring and climbing the virgin rocks in this area for 10 days, the group may, then, join in the Mani Rimdu festival which will begin from 2nd December in the monastery situated atop the cliffs. People from all over Solu Valley including Tibetan refugees from the nearby town of Chyalsa assemble at Chiwang monastery for three days to see the monks dancing and to get blessing from HH Tulshik Rimpoche who is the most revered living Rimpoche of



Nyigmpa sect of Tibetan Buddhism.

HH Tulshik Rimpoche old monastery lies on the north side of Mt. Everest at Rongbuk. To eacape the onslaught of red army during the height of cultural revolution in Tibet/China he fled to Nepal and started a new monastery, Thukten Choling, about 35 years ago. Thukten Cholin monastery with a population of about 500 resident monks and nuns is the biggest and most active monastery in rural Nepal. This monastery which is about 3 hours walk from Phaplu is situated near Junbesi (on the Jiri to Mt. Everest road).

Solu is the other half and lower region of Sherpa country which is well known for its Swiss like scenery with rolling hills topped with pristine rhododendron and pine forests. Dominated by Dudh Kunda Himal in the north, the main Solu Valley is encircled by the ridges of Pieke, Jantardhaap, Ratonange. The Solu Khola draining in Dudh Kunda Himals flows southward to meet Dhud Kosi through the heart of Solu valley-forming a wide gorge at Salme.

Solu valley is also well known for the exquisite Sherpa houses considered most well built in rural Nepal which is built with solid rock wall and plenty of pine timber. The carpenters (mostly Sherpas) from Solu area are well known through the hill and mountain region of Nepal.

Junbesi, Goli, Jyalsa, Gora, Chinakpur are the older villages of the region each having their own monastery thought older than those in Khumbu. From the view points at Ratanage (1.30 min. from Phaplu) most of the mountains in Khumbu Himal including Mt. Everest is viewed. Jyalsa (Chyalsa) about 1 hour from Phaplu is a settlement for Tibetan refugees. Sallery the town that is adjoined with Phaplu is the administrative, political and education centre of the area where people from all over the Solu Khumbu region even from Khumbu merge for all kind of purposes. The colorful Saturday market which is held near Sallery is the main local attraction. Sherpa Yak herders from high mountain pastures, Brahmin rice seller from Rong (low-land), Tamang, Rai and Magar people from hill area bring their merchandise in the form of dairy products, grains, vegetables, fruits, handi-crafts and goods imported from Kathmandu and India to trade for their weekly consumer need.

Living shadowed in the immense heights of Mt. Everest, Solu valley has received little attention from visitors so far. This valley possesses tremendous cultural/architectural heritage and natural resources and offer best sites for para gliding, fresh water fishing, mountain biking, short beautiful hikes and above all ROCK climbing. The people of Solu want you to come and see their country. Here you will see and experience active culture and religious centres, pristine of ridges offering mountain views, virgin of rhododendron and pine forests, and to top it up a diverse group of people ready to share their 'southern hospitality'. They are ready to welcome YOU.

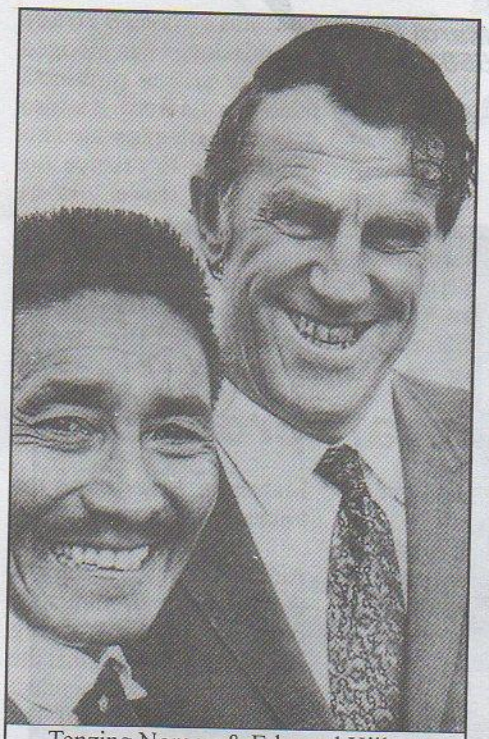
Sherpas from Nepal looking for work migrated to Darjeeling as they were favoured by the British as ideal porters and climbers. Among them was a young Sherpa named Tenzing Norgay.

Finally in 1949, Nepal opened up its doors to foreigners just as communist China was closing in on Tibet, bringing and end to expeditions from that end. Nepal became the route to Everest and in 1952 the Swiss guide Raymond Lambert and Tenzing Norgay made an attempt for the summit. Though all attempts including this one failed, the invaluable knowledge and experience gained was of tremendous assistance to later expeditions. In fact each expedition made the next a little easier with the knowledge gained. In the beginning nobody even knew if a man could survive at 29,000 ft and that humans have a remarkable ability to adapt to high altitudes.

One fine day, on May 29th, 1953, two superbly fit mountaineers Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay stood on the summit of the highest mountain in the world. Everest had been conquered. When asked why they had climbed it, Hillary repeated the now famous words of Mallory, "because it is there." Fittingly the conquest coincided with the coronation of a new British Queen as this was a British Expedition led by the indomitable Briton, John Hunt. (Lord Hunt passed away on 7th Nov. 1998). Ironically, the two who made it to the summit were not even British but a New Zealander and a Sherpa from Nepal. The first Britons to reach the top were Dougal Haston and Doug Scott in 1975.

Tenzing's happiness was short lived though. No sooner had they arrived in Dolalghat, he was hounded by the local reporters pressuring him to claim that it was he who reached the summit first and that he was a Nepali citizen. Tenzing refers to this incident in his autobiography as a most depressing experience and how he wished he had stayed behind at Solukhumbu with his friends. It was a traumatic moment for a simple minded Sherpa to whom nationality meant nothing. He was a Sherpa and he loved the mountains. Later many Nepalese people were to accuse him of becoming an Indian citizen the moment he returned from Everest. Some still do. The fact is, many Sherpas had settled in the little Indian hill station of Darjeeling where all the early Everest expeditions began. The earlier settlers worked in the tea plantations or as porters and rickshaw pullers in town. Tenzing left for Darjeeling at the age of 18 and initially worked as a milkman and cowhand.

Dr. Kellas was the first to train the Sherpas as climbers and porters andTenzing joined his colleagues. By the time he climbed Everest he had lived in Darjeeling for 20 years and was 39 years old. He had a wife and two daughters living with him in Toong Soong. After the successful expedition many Sherpas like Thondup, Dawa Thondup, Pasang Dawa, Ang Temba and others returned to



Tenzing Norgay & Edmund Hillary

Darjeeling. Tenzing and his family accompanied Hillary, Hunt and Mrs. Hunt to London to meet with the Queen of England. Before they left, they were decorated by King Tribhuvan in Kathmandu and attended numerous receptions.

Tenzing finally returned to Darjeeling which had become home to many Sherpas just as thousands of Nepalese are today settling in the U.S. The road to Toong Soong was named Tenzing Norgay Road. His life would never be the same again. What would Tenzing have gained had he chosen to live in Nepal? Once you are decorated and a reward bestowed on you, you are forgotten. In India the then Chief Minister of West Bengal Dr. B.C. Roy immediately set up plans to start a Training School for young boys to learn mountain climbing. Thus was born the now famous Himalayan Mountaineering Institute (H.M.I.) of Darjeeling which also includes a mountaineering museum.

Our mountaineering museum is yet to be completed in Pokhara 46 years after Everest was conquered. In 1954 Tenzing was appointed Director of Field Training at the newly built H.M.I. with which institution he was involved most of his life. Many Sherpas even today are employed as trainers. Nawang Gombu, the first man to climb Everest twice was also employed there. Tenzing died in 1986.

Sir Edmund Hillary who had a vast climbing experience both in his native country as well as abroad flew in from New Zealand to join the expedition of '53. After their triumphant ascent Sir Hillary devoted much of his life to helping Sherpas around Solukhumbu, building schools, hospitals, an airport and also had the Thyangboche Monastery rebuilt after it was destroyed by fire. He is an honourary member of the Mountaineering Assocation of Nepal and visits Nepal at least once a year. He lives in his native country New Zealand.

Initially Tenzing and Hillary refused to reveal who stepped on the Summit first. They even went to the extent of signing a document declaring they both stepped up almost together. But Tenzing being an honest and humble man wrote in his autobiography, "Hillary stepped on top first. And I stepped up after him." To the two great people it was of little importance who was in front as all the way they had been taking turns to lead. It so happened that Hillary was leading when they arrived at the top. It was their expedition anyway and it was a great honour for Tenzing to be chosen as one of the two who should try for the summit. He deserved a place in history and he proved worthy to the occasion.

We express our heartfelt condolence on the untimely demise of

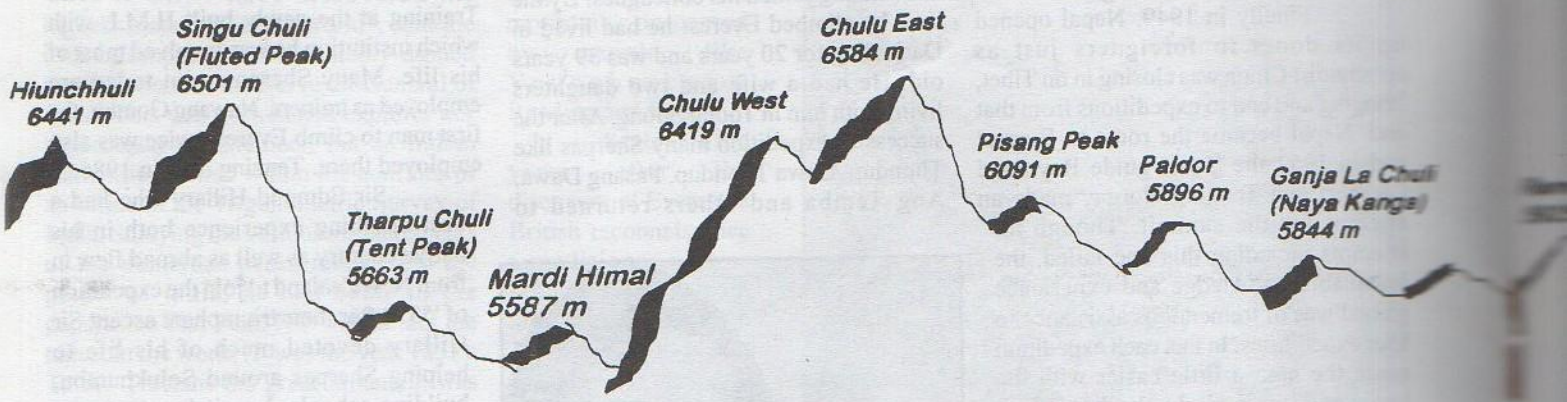
Chet Narayan Kharel

Co-ordinator of Kakani Mountaineers Memorial Park and active member of NMA

We pray for Peace to the departed soul

Nepal Mountaineering Association

from East to West -



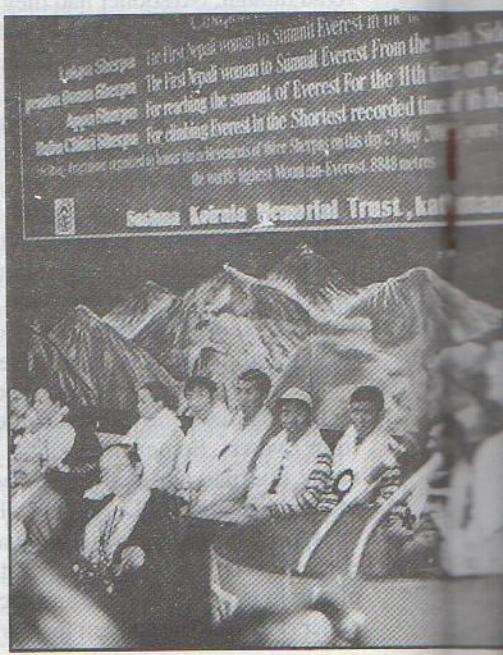


His Majesty the King with the mountaineers of the Royal Expedition Annapurna 2000 of Spain

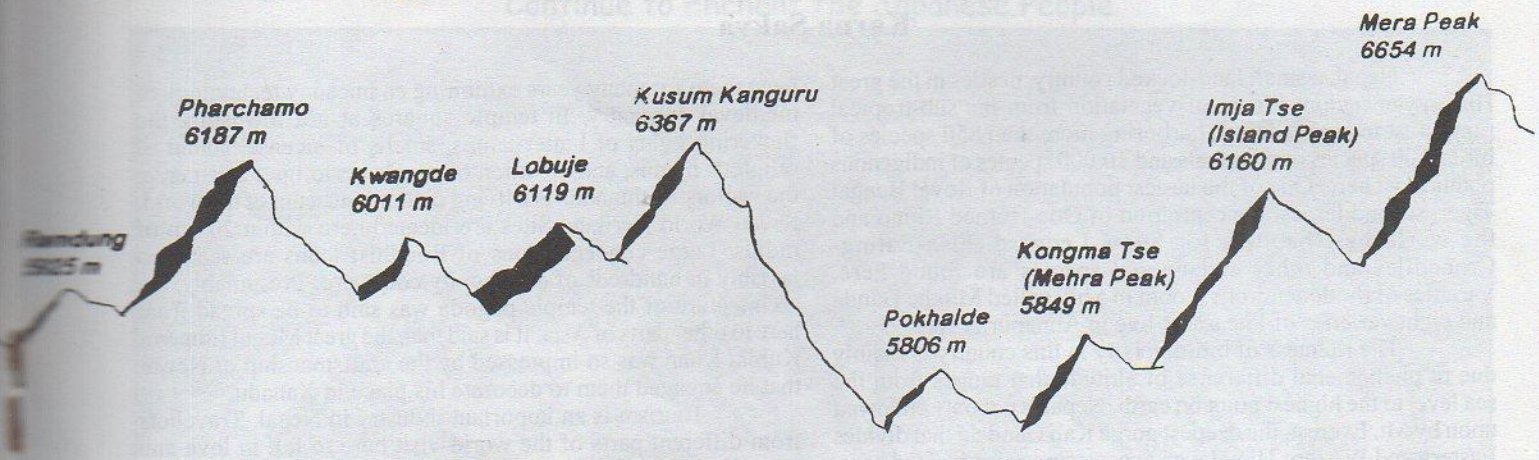




Former Prime Minister S.B. Deuba presenting souvenir to Lhakpa Sherpa



the NMA Peaks

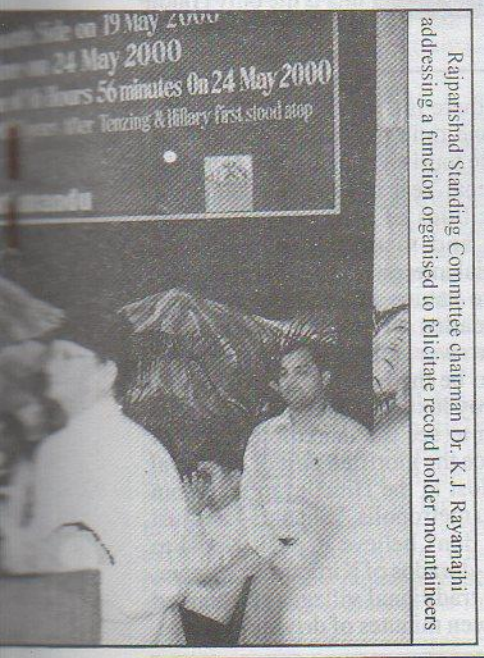




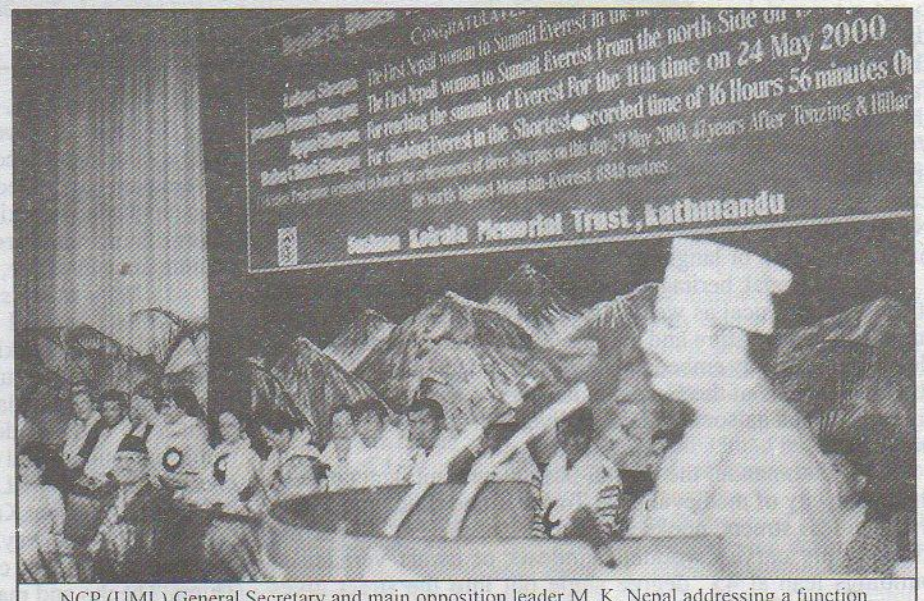
Mountaineers Appa, Lhakpa, Pemba and Babu Chiri



Prime Minister G.P. Koirala with the members of the Nepali Women Millenium Expedition spring 2000



Rajparishad Standing Committee chairman Dr. K.J. Rayamajhi addressing a function organised to felicitate record holder mountaineers



NCP (UML) General Secretary and main opposition leader M. K. Nepal addressing a function organised to felicitate record holder mountaineers

Shangri-La Fifteen Minutes Away

Karna Sakya

Nepal, a small land-locked country, nestles in the great Himalayan region. Plenty of vegetation from the sub-tropical rain forest to alpine desert, harboring more than 850 species of birds, 100 species of mammals and 10,000 species of indigenous plants exist here. One of the largest population of Royal Bengal Tiger, second largest concentration of One-Horned Rhino and the world best habitats for Snow Leopard, Fish-Eating-Crocodiles and other endangered species are found here. Varieties of rhododendrons bloom in a hill called Milkhe Danda and eight varieties of Pheasants live in Annapurna area.

The richness of bio-diversity in this country is mainly due to phenomenal difference of altitude that ranges from the sea level to the highest point on earth. Nepal is not only endowed upon by Mt. Everest, the deepest gorge Kali Gandaki that divides Eastern and Western Himalayan ecosystem is also located here.

Beyond the Himalaya, there is vast horizon of rain shadowed trans-himalayan region such as Dolpo, and Mustang where miles of meadows are dotted with rare wild flowers. Thirteen percent of the country's land mass is protected under seven national parks and five wildlife reserves, two of which, Everest and Chitwan National parks, are listed in World Heritage Sites. With so many rugged mountains, the country is indeed an economist's nightmare but an ecologist's dreamland. That is why many nature lovers say that Nepal is an Africa of Asia as well as Switzerland of the orient.



Kwangde: A Popular NMA Peak

Because of outstanding differences in altitude, the resultant climatic factor has influenced a great extent on cultural composition of this country. There are more than 36 ethnic groups who speak 70 languages, still practice their rituals and wear colorful indigenous customs. The religious tolerance and cultural coherence are the most important part of the Nepalese society. Never in the history, had there any ethnic riots taken place in the name of religion or language.

In Nepal, heritage is not just architectural monuments, it is a total physical as well as spiritual manifestation of man's interaction with nature and culture. Music, dance, festivals and devotion are deeply embedded in shrines and temples. Therefore the timelessness of the Nepalese heritage is the strong cultural living force of its society. People live with it and they are the part of it.

Kathmandu, the capital has an aura and ambiance of the magic city of medieval past. To see it one should be lost in the map-less streets, nooks and corners of the city. In narrow allies richly carved wooden windows of dwarf vernacular buildings lean at 45 degree angle out into the street gives impression that it will fall down anytime, However they have been there for many years exhibiting an uncanny technology of medieval carpentry. In temple squares at old township, the flickering lights of butter-lamps, smells of incense, sound of religious hymns, and devotion of rituals performed mesmerize the visitors.Kathmandu is a living cultural museum of the world. Seven World Heritage Sites are located here within 20 km of radius. Large concentrations of Buddhist icons are scattered lavishly in hundreds of community courtyard. Presumably, the architecture of the temple pagoda was said to be spread from here to other parts of Asia. It is said that, the great Mogul Emperor Kublai Khan was so impressed by the craftsmanship of Newar that he engaged them to decorate his place in Xanadu.

Tourism is an important industry in Nepal. Travellers from different parts of the world visit here to fall in love and come back again and again. Many travel writers have described this country in a very romantic way such as Himalayan pilgrimage; Nature Amphitheater; Wildest dream of kew; Spiritual land; the country of as many god as many people, as many temple as many house and as many festivals as many days of the year; the Land of Johnny Gurkha; Shangri-La; Hidden valley of Crystal Mountain; Melting pot of Hinduism and Buddhism including the one where people shake their heads to say yes.

Nepal is indeed a tourism gold mine, however not many people are aware of it. Very few tourists know that Buddha was born here, that this is the only Hindu Kingdom of the world, that Sita, the spouse of Lord Rama, was born here, and that there is a race called Tharu who wear 32 items of jewellry in one time that weigh about 7 kg. With a view to enhance Nepalese tourism industry, the Nepalese government celebrated Visit Nepal Year in 1998. The objective is to upgrade the existing facilities of urban tourism while diversifying and promoting and marketing of endemic, ecotourism, adventure, and special interest tourism in rural areas.

With many superlative nature and cultural wonders, Nepal has two and half decades of professionalism in mountaineering, trekking, white river rafting, and jungle safari outfitting. They are supposed to be the best in Asia. However, Nepal may not be a place to enjoy luxury of man-made tourism but it is an ultimate destination to see the incredible world of nature and culture and experience the glorified past of medieval civilization. Shangri-La is not lost in the Himalayan Kingdom of Nepal. Even from Kathmandu metropolis, "Shangri-La is just Fifteen Minutes Away". If you don't believe it, Visit Nepal to see yourself the living cultural el-dorados of Kirtipur, Bhaktapur, Thimi, Thecho and many other traditional villages surrounded by green paddy fileds within fifteen minutes of driving distance.

THE HIMALAYAS

Continue to Enchant the Japanese People

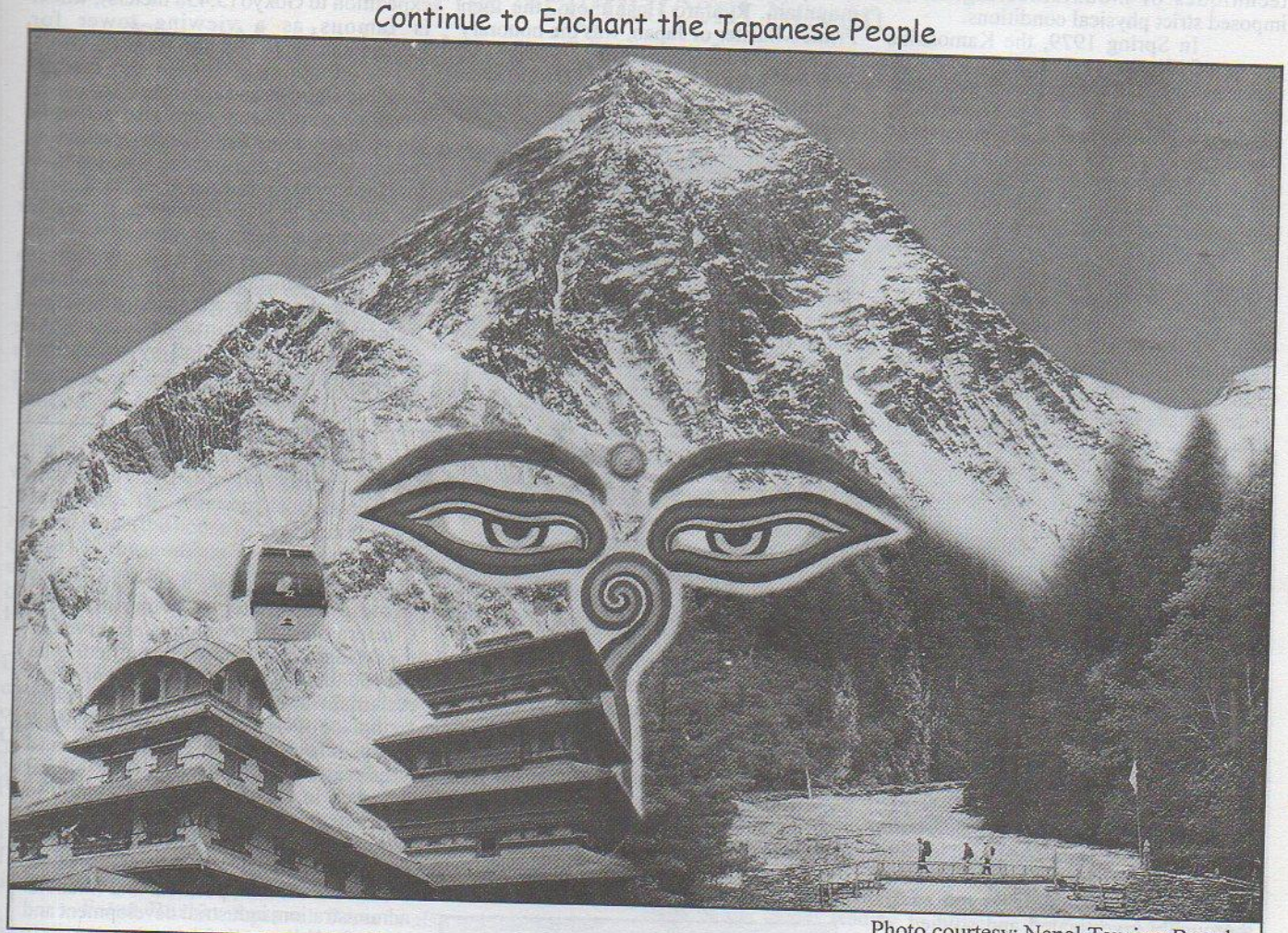


Photo courtesy: Nepal Tourism Board

The beautiful and mysterious nature of the Himalayan mountains of Nepal have always been enchanting to the Japanese explorer. Indeed, the Japanese were second only to the Europeans in coming to Nepal to start mountaineering in the Himalayas. They have made significant achievements in mountaineering, and have developed deep friendships with the Nepali people through their mountaineering activities.

Ekai Kawaguchi, a Buddhist monk and the first Japanese to visit Nepal in 1899, was also a keen trekker and climber. He entered Kathmandu via the Terai plains, crossing the Siwalik hills and the mountains of the Mahabharat range. He then proceeded northwards following the route along the Kali Gandaki river valley to its upper reaches, and journeyed across the snow-clad Maryum La situated to the north of Dhaulagiri before finally penetrating into Tibet.

After World War II, but before the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Nepal, Japanese mountaineers started planning for a forthcoming expedition to the Himalayas. In 1952, Eizaburo Nishibori visited Nepal officially. His objective was to get permission for the Japanese expedition to scale Mt. Manaslu. During his first trip to Nepal, Nishibori was assisted by Krishna Bahadur Verma, the vice-president of the Nepal Sports Council. The Japanese team made three initial attempts on Manaslu (8,163 meters), but without success. In the spring of 1956 the team finally succeeded in making the first ascent of the peak. One of the members of the team, Toshio Imanishi, later served as the Honorary Consul General of Nepal to Osaka. Gyaltsen Norbu, a Nepali Sherpa who ascended the peak with Imanishi, was invited to Japan and officially commended. Sadly, Sirdar Gyaltsen and several members of another Japanese expedition were killed by avalanche while climbing to Mt. Langtang Lirung (7,234 meters) some years later. To honor his achievements, a scholarship was established by the Japanese mountaineering team in order to enable Gyaltsen's children to study in school.

This period was pioneering time in Himalayan mountaineering. A number of Japanese expeditions competed with each other to ascend virgin peaks. In the spring of 1964, the All-Japan Mountaineering Association made the first ascent of the west face of Gyachung Kang (7,220 meters), located to the northwest of Sagarmatha. At the time, this was the highest unconquered Virgin peak in the world.

In 1965, the government of Nepal banned all Himalayan mountaineering for a five-year period. Innovations and variation marked the era which began after the reopening of mountaineering on Nepali peaks. Women's mountaineering activities also began in conjunction with the celebrations of International Women's Year as declared by the United Nations.

One of the most remarkable feats of 1970 was the successful ascent made by Yuichiro Miura, a leading expert of adventure skiing, who skied from the Sagarmatha South Col in the spring of that year. Another memorable event was the successful expedition of the Japanese women's team to Annapurna III (7,555 meters). For the first time in mountaineering history, the mountain was scaled from the inner side.

The 1975 ascent of Sagarmatha by Junko Tabei, deputy leader of the Japanese Women's Expedition, proved to be another great moment in mountaineering history. She reached the peak along the southeastern ridge along with the Nepali sirdar Ang Tsering. Tabei, aged 35 and mother of one child, became the first woman ever to climb to the top of Sagarmatha.

Next came the era of the so-called "handicapped" mountaineer, during which solo climbing, climbing without oxygen, and winter climbing became the fashion.

During this period, too, Japanese mountaineers challenge these new techniques of mountaineering which imposed strict physical conditions.

In Spring 1979, the Kamoshika group of climbers attempted to cross traverse the Dhaulagiri range. They successfully completed the traverse by climbing to Dhaulagiri II (7,751 meters) and Dhaulagiri V (7,618 meters) from either sides and then meeting each other at Dhaulagiri III (7,715 meters) situated between the two mountains.

In Spring 1980, members of the Alpine Team made the first ascent of Kangchenjanga from its north face. Six members reached the peak for the first time without oxygen.

In Spring 1988, a joint Japan-China-Nepal mountaineering expedition made a successful ascent of Sagarmatha from both the Chinese and Nepali sides. The final stage of the climb was broadcast live on Japanese television from the top of the mountain. Ryutaro Hashimoto, the then Prime Minister of Japan, was the honorary leader of the Japanese team.

From 1990, Himalayan mountaineering has gained further popularity, and as a result middle-aged and senior citizens as well as young climbers started to visit the mountains. Trekking along the Nepali foothills, which became popular in the seventies, was now extended to the areas situated closer to the high mountains. In Autumn 1994, a Japanese team comprised mainly of climbers in their fifties attempted to climb Dhaulagiri I from its northeastern ridge. With the help of Nepali Sherpa members, five members reached the summit.

It should be noted that with the increase in the number of visitors, there has also been a rise in accidents. In Autumn 1995, all 13 members of a Japanese expedition to Gokyo (5,438 meters), which is famous as a viewing tower for Sagarmatha, were killed in an avalanche.

It is finally worth noting that the Japanese alpinists and climbers who so love Nepal's natural beauty are also active in providing support for the conservation of the Himalayan environment. The Institute for Himalayan Conservation initiated under the auspices by Jiro Kawakita, a cultural anthropologist, has concentrated its efforts on the preservation of the environment in Myagdi and Mustang districts. In addition, Junko Tabei and her companions have put tremendous effort into collecting and processing of garbage left by expeditions to Sagarmatha area.

(Courtesy: Info/Japan)

Ekai Kawaguchi

First Japanese Visitor to Nepal

Ekai Kawaguchi (1866-1945), a Buddhist monk known as an early explorer of Tibet, was the first Japanese visitor to Nepal. Having studied the Tibetan language in Darjeeling, the 34-year-old Kawaguchi came to Nepal in 1899 with the goal of sneaking into Tibet, which was then closed to foreigners. Originally he hesitated about whether he should go to Tibet via Bhutan or Nepal. Eventually he chose the Nepal route, considering that even if he failed to enter Tibet, Nepal had many Sanskrit manuscripts which deserved to be thoroughly investigated and studied, as well as many sacred Buddhist pilgrimage sites. He was also interested in the fact that no Japanese had ever been to Nepal. A final reason for choosing the Nepal route was an encounter in Darjeeling with a Nepali by the name of Jit Bahadur K.C., who served as Vakil (Consul-General) in Lhasa. K.C. wrote a letter of introduction to Rev. Buddha Vajra, the "Chiniya Lama" of Boudhanath, who later hosted Kawaguchi in Kathmandu.

After collecting information on various possible routes into Tibet, Kawaguchi proceeded to Tsharang in Mustang via Pokhara, Tukche and Marpha. In Tsharang, he studied Buddhism and Tibetan rhetoric under the guidance of a Mongolian Buddhist scholar. Then he retreated to Marpha, and ultimately succeeded in secretly crossing the Tibetan border via a pass in the Dhaulagiri Himal.

Kawaguchi stayed for about two years in Tibet, pretending to be a local Tibetan. Eventually his true nationality was revealed, and he was forced to leave Tibet. He escaped with great difficulty and returned to Darjeeling, where he learned that several Tibetan friends who had helped him had been arrested by Tibetan authorities. Kawaguchi determined to visit Nepal for the second time,hoping that Prime Minister Chandra Shamsher Rana would transmit his letter of petition to the 13th Dalai Lama to release his Tibetan friends. Kawaguchi also requested the prime minister to accept a set of the Japanese Buddhist Tripitaka in exchange for various Sanskrit manuscripts of Nepal.

He returned to Japan in May 1903, but came back to Nepal in March 1905 and presented the prime minister with the 100-volume set of the Tripitaka. This set is at present kept at the National Archives in Kathmandu. In response, Prime Minister Chandra Shamsher instructed government officials to collect various



Sanskrit manuscripts and presented them to Kawaguchi. Kawaguchi himself also collected many Sanskrit manuscripts, as well as Buddhist scrolls, paintings, and religious objects.

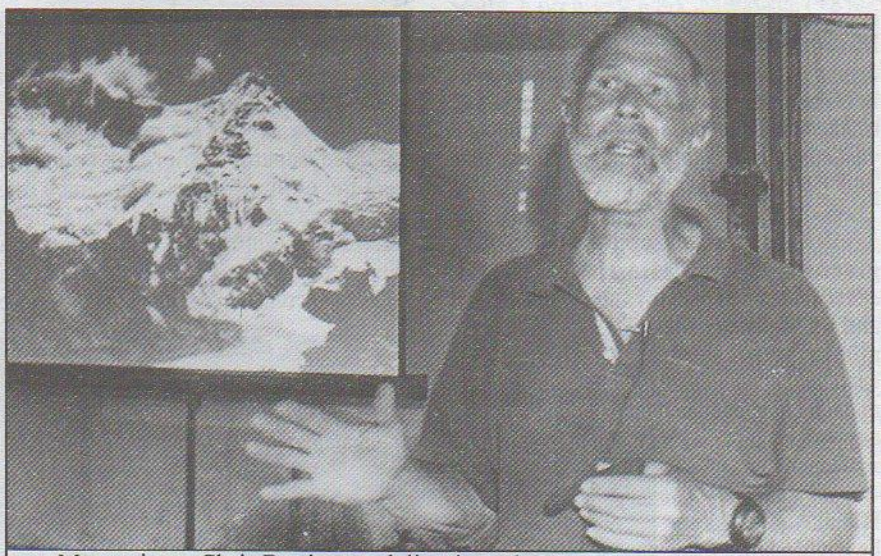
During his third visit to Nepal, while waiting for the collection of the Sanskrit manuscripts, Rev. Kawaguchi wrote a long letter to Prime Minister Chandra Shamsher which is preserved in the Madan Pustakalaya. In the letter, he propounded the unity of Asia and Pan-Asianism and described Nepal as the birthplace of Gautam Buddha, who spread the precious teaching of "Light and Moderation". Believing that Nepal deserved in exchange the opportunity to benefit from Japanese science and technology, he offered several suggestions for the development of the country, in the areas of education, political and financial administration, industrial development and the building of socioeconomic infrastructure. Rev. Kawaguchi was thus the first Japanese to consider the possibility of extending Japanese cooperation in the development of Nepal. A memento of Kawaguchi's Himalayan travels exists in Japan, in the Buddhist temple of Obaku-san Manpukuji on the outskirts of Kyoto. Here Kawaguchi pursued various Buddhist disciplines when he was young. Two tall Himalayan cicada tower near the gate of this temple. It is said that the saplings of these trees were brought to Japan from Nepal and were planted there by Kawaguchi. As mentioned above, one of the reasons Kawaguchi took the Nepal route to Tibet was Nepal's abundance of sacred Buddhist pilgrimage sites. In 1896 the Ashoka Pillar had been discovered in Lumbini, the birthplace of Gautam Buddha. Kawaguchi must have heard about this discovery at the time. In 1912, he visited Lumbini on pilgrimage, accompanied by Prof. Junjiro Takakushi. Rev. Ryutai Hasebe, and others. The local people of Lumbini at this time had mistaken the image of Maya Devi, the mother of the Buddha, for a Hindu deity, and were offering animal sacrifices to it. It is said that at Kawaguchi's request, Prime Minister Chandra Shamsher issued a decree prohibiting animal sacrifices at Lumbini.

The Magnificent Seven
The World Heritage Sites of the Kathmandu Valley

The Valley of Kathmandu is fertile, flat and compact. It is situated at the altitude of between 1,200 to 1,500 meters (between 4,000 to 5,000 feet).

The valley is also small, with an area of only 220 square miles (570 square kilometers). Yet in its smallness, there are record seven World Heritage Sites declared by the UNESCO- a fact unrivalled anywhere in the world! The seven man made wonders are the milestones of Nepal's past prosperity, artistry and religiosity which made the Valley a "living museum".

Kathmandu Durbar Square : It is also called Hanuman Dhoka (the gates of Hanuman) which is divided into two principal chowks (courtyards). The outer one is renowned for the Kumari Ghar (the house of the Kumari or virgin, or the "living goddess"), Kasthamandap (the wooden house), Narayan Mandir, the stone statue of Garuda (man-bird), and Shiva-Parvati Temple House.



Mountaineer Chris Bonington delivering a lecture on mountaineering in Kathmandu recently

The inner chowk is the Hanuman Dhoka and its durbar complex. The principal chowk within-chowks is Nasal Chowk, the seat of important national ceremonies, including coronations. Mohan Chowk, Sundari Chowk and Lohan Chowk are other courtyards. There are four towers named after Basantpur, Kirtipur, Lalitpur (Patan) and Bhaktapur.

There are many temples here, the most notable being the Teleju Temple dedicated to the famale royal deity, Taleju Bhawani. This ultra-sacrosanct temple is opened only once a year, and only the King and certain priests can enter it.

Patan Durbar Square : Patan is also notable for the four stupas erected by Emperor Ashoka at the four cardinal directions of the city. The palace square sits somewhat between these four milestones. The royal palace's sprawling landmarks are Sundari Chowk, Tusha Hiti, Mul Chowk, Bidya Mandir, Taleju Shrine, Taleju Bhawani Temple, Golden Gate, Keshab Narayan Chowk, and Degu Talle.

The outer perimeters are noteworthy for the Krishna Mandir in stone, Hari Shanker Temple, statue of King Siddhi Narsingh, Char Narayan Temple, Bishwanath Mandir, Bhimsen Mandir, Manga Hiti and others.

Bhaktapur Durbar Square is entered through the massive royal gate, and opens up to a most unspoiled complex of palaces, shrines and other landmarks in the Valley. On the right are a pair of statues in stone of Ugrachandi with her 18 arms. Then there is the Rameshwor Temple. In the middle of the square is the gilded statue of King Bhupatindra Malla seated on a tall stone pillar, and faces the most exquisitely artistic Suun Dhoka, or the golden gate, leading into the royal palace. The royal palace is also known as the "palace of 55 windows", next to which is the National Art Gallery. The inner portion of the palace has the Taleju courtyard and her house. Beyond is the Sundari Chowk.

The outer perimeters of the complex is replete with pillars and pavilions: Chyasalin Mandap, Durga Temple, Taduchhen Bahal, Batsala Durga, Pashupati Temple, Taumadhi Tole and others. To the right, and in another square, is the famed 30 meter (98 feet) Nyatapola Temple, the tallest and most multi-roofed edifice in Nepal. To it right is the Kashi Bishwanath Temple. On the side of the square is the vantage Nyatapola Cafe, and beyond it is the community of the famous potters.

The itinerary leads to the distant Dattatreya Square, but well within the city, which is a world of its own.

Swayambhunath is a Buddhist stupa on a western hill of Kathmandu. More than 2,500 years old, this ancient landmark is connected to the visit of Manjushree who created Kathmandu- a lake then- by draining its waters. The sage saw a celestial lotus in bloom on the top of this hill and sanctified it.

The stupa of Swayambhu is a hemispherical mound of compacted earth, and is built to specific rules, and is replete with symbols. The mound represents the four elements of earth, fire, wind and water. The 13 gilded rings of the spire symbolize the 13 steps of the ladder leading to *nirvana*, the final salvation. The shrine is bedecked in colorful prayer flags.

The pilgrim's progress to Swayambhunath's holy premises is actually through a sylvan path of 365 steps. The entrance is graced by a huge *vajra* (symbol of thunderbolt). Statues of Buddha are on the four corners of the stupa. Statues of goddesses Ganga and Jamuna guard the eternal flame behind it. There is a Tibetan *Gompa* (monastery) and innumerable *chaityas* (small stupas). The balconies of Swayambhunath are ideal for viewing the entire Valley.

Boudhanath : This is another Buddhish stupa, but is built on flat surface, and is the largest in Nepal. It is in various levels of terraces, and is painted in pastel, and is adorned with prayer flags. It is set in the *mandala* design. Altogether 108 Buddha images and 147 insets of prayer wheels adorn the base of the huge circular edifice. The settlement of Boudhnath has the largest community of Tibetans-12,000 in all.

Changu Narayan : This is the most ancient Hindu temple in Kathmandu, and is dedicated to lord Vishnu. Another fact is that the complex is built on a peninsula which was not submerged in water as most of the flat valley once was. The lavishly decorated two-tiered principal temple stands on a spacious courtyard, and is literally littered with artistic and priceless statues, idols and sculptures. Some date back to 4th century AD.

Pashupatinath : The most sacred Hindu temple in Nepal, it is dedicated to Lord Shiva. In February-March, the site holds the famed *Maha Shivaratri*, the great night of Siva.

The Pashupatinath complex is very large, with guest houses, temples, shrines and other landmarks. Its burning *ghats* on the river banks are the holiest in Nepal.

Conclusion : The aforementioned seven wonders of the Valley are not singular destinations. Each one leads to other many and different attractions-other temples, shrines and monasteries, bazaars, rural areas, short treks, countryside visit and other joyful activities.

MOUNTAINEERING IN NEPAL

YAJNA RAj SATYAL

The Nepal Himalaya surpassing for eight hundred kilometers from the Kanchenjunga to the Mahakali River cacounts for a third of the Himalayan Mountain system. Eight of world's fourteen peaks exceeding 8,000 meters are in Nepal. Sagarmatha (Mt. Everest) 8848 m. the tallest mountain in the world and a vast custer of mountains having more than 240 peaks of 6000 meters and above. There is nothing to compete the serenity of lofty peaks and the epic silence of their glaciers. Nepal Himalayas are of exceptional interest for the mountaineers and undoubtedly the most impressive centre of mountaineering activities in the world.

Nepal Himalayan peaks can be divided into three categories as follows:

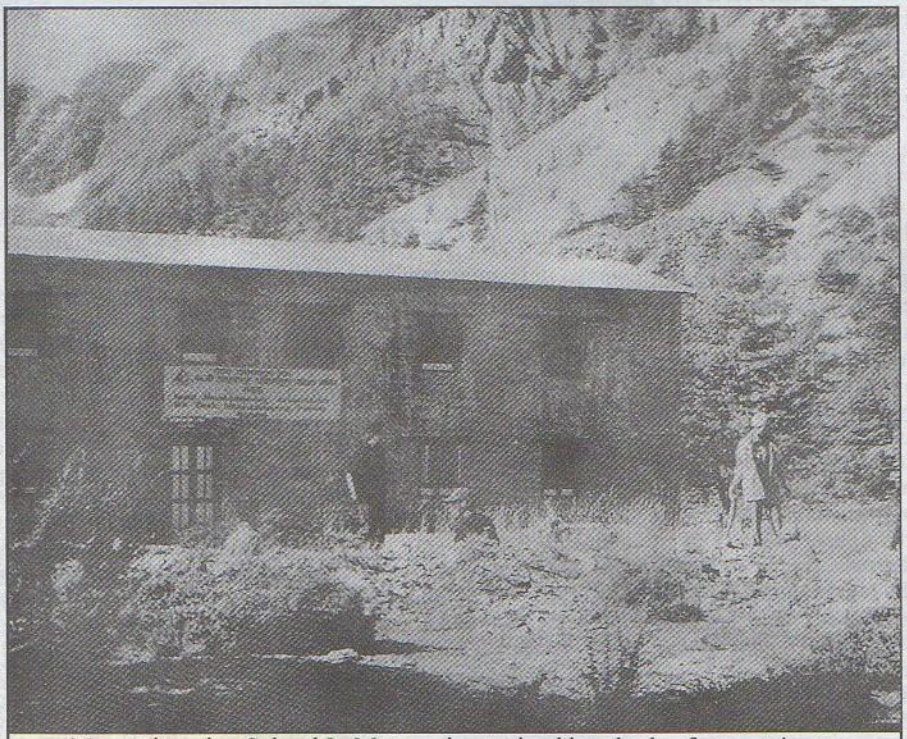
AboveEight thousand meters - Eight of the fourteen highest peaks in the world.

These peaks can be categoried as (1) Mount Sagarmatha (Mount Everest) 8,848, the highest peak in the world. (2) Kangchenjunga - (8586 m.) (3) Lhotse - (8516 m.) (4) Makalu - (8463 m.) (5) Cho-oyu - (8201m. (6) Dhaulagiri (8167 m.) (7) Manaslu - (8163 m.) (8) Annapurna I (8091 m.)

About seven thousand metres - 127 peaks

About six thousand metres - 1166 peaks.

Nepal Himalayas are of exceptional interest for the mountaineer and are undoubtedly the most impressive scenic spots in the world. The first attempt to climb Sagarmatha (Mt. Everest) was made as early as 1922 A.D. The Nepal Himalayas have since become a great centre of mountaineering activities. The highest and most dramatic peaks lie to the north and in the eastern half of Nepal namely Dhaulagiri (8167 m.), Annapurna I (8091 m.), Sagarmatha (Mt. Everest) (8848 m.), Lhotse (8586 m.), Makalu (8463 m.) and Kanchenjunga (8586 m.). Standing as sentinels all accross the Northern border of Nepal, Nepal Himalayas allure the mountain climbers of the world to climb over the peaks. Ever since the country was first opened to climbers in 1949, Nepal Himalaya has become a great theatre of mountaineering feat. There have been about 570 small and large expedetions to explore and climb peaks during the period 1949-1980 and their drama of success and failure have provided impetus to more adventurers to meet the ultimate mountains. Since then, up to the present, there has been a steady increase in number of expeditions and climbers. This was further facilitated in 1978 by increase in number of peaks open for climbing and devising of permits by different routes and three seasons in a year. The royalty of peaks varies according to their altitudes and has been adjusted from time to time. In 1980-90, there were too many expeditions to list in detail. During the year 1990 alone as many as 120 expeditions attempted to scale different peaks of the Nepal Himalayas. For 1991, approximately 130 expedition teams have been given permission to scale different peaks. One hundred five teams were given permission to climb the Nepal Himalayas in 1994 and they provided royalty of Rs. 4,44,98,527/- and employment to 5236 persons. The income generating potentials of the mountaineering and employment generation are immense which can be gaused from the above figures.



Mountaineering School In Manang has trained hundreds of mountaineers

Nepal Mountaineering Association established in 1973 is safeguarding the interest of the professional Nepali mountaineers by improving their skills. It is engaged in popularizing amateur mountaineering and organising Nepali expeditions. It is trying to popularize Nepal Himalayas in the world. It has also taken steps to preserve ecological balance of Nepali mountains. NMA has been playing very important role in the development of mountaineeing activities in Nepal. His Majesty's Government of Nepal has authorized NMA to charge royalty for 18 small peaks which are providing revenue for income sources to carry its activities since 1978. World's most professional mountaineering services are provided in Nepal. Since His Majesty's Government of Nepal adopted liberal policy in mountaineering in early 1980's there has been quick growth of mountaineering activities in the Nepal Himalayas. This has motivated the zeal of mountaineers of the world for climbing satellite summits, lesser peaks and attempting new routes. Some of the peaks previously been closed to foreigners were opened. Peaks previously unnamed were given new names. His Majesty's Government of Nepal has opened eight new peaks in the Western side of the Nepal Himalayas in 1992, bringing the total number of peaks above 6,000 metres open to climbing to 1222. Each year, during the season- mid-October to the end of December, January and February of the Spring months of March and April from different country of the globe, the mountaineers take up the challenge of the Nepal Himalayas. Today, no expedition-whether it is to Mt. Everest, Makalu Annapurna, Dhaulagiri, Lhotse, Manaslu or Kanchangunga is attempled without its Sherpa guides and porters. Sherpas, are famed for their mountaineering successes, companionship and hospitality. They are glad to welcome visitors to their land and assist them in their mountaineering activities.

WORLD TOURISM - 1999

World's Top 10 Tourism Earners in 1999					
Preliminary Results					
Rank	Country	International Tourist Receipts (US$ million)			% Change
1999		1998	1999		1999/98
1.	United States	71, 250	73, 000		2.5
2.	Spain	29, 737	25, 179	(9)	9.5
3.	France	29, 931	24, 657	(9)	6.3
4.	Italy	29, 809	31, 000		4.0
5.	United Kingdom	20, 978	20, 972		0.0
6.	Germany	16, 429	9, 570	(7)	-0.2
7.	China	12, 602	14, 099		11.9
8.	Austria	11, 184	11, 259		0.7
9.	Canada	9, 393	10, 282		9.5
10.	Mexico	7, 897	7, 850		-0.6

According to preliminary results released by the World Tourism Organization, international tourist arrivals reached 657 million last year, an increase of 3.2 per cent over the previous year, Earnings from international tourism also rose by 3.2 per cent in 1999 to reach US$455 billion, following two straight years of flat growth.

"After two years of negative results, the Asia/Pacific region was once again the star of world tourism in 1999, reaching a growth rate of 7.5 per cent and a new record total of nearly 94 million international tourists," said WTO Secretary-General Francesco Frangialli.

Other regions of the world that were hot spots for tourists last year included Central America which showed an increase of 23 per cent in arrivals, the Middle East (+17.5%), South America (+10%) and Africa (+9%).

Countries in the Western Mediterranean also fared particularly well in 1999 as tourists shunned destinations perceived as being close to the conflict in Kosovo and avoided Turkey due to political problems and the earthquake. International arrivals to Spain, for example, rose by nearly 9 per cent, while Morocco increased by nearly 22 per cent.

But a much-heralded boom in year-end travel for the millennium failed to materialize, resulting in annual totals that were somewhat lower than anticipated.

"There was no Y2K bug and there was no boom in travel." said Mr. Frangialli". There was no mass fever to travel to exotic locations for the millennium, nor to attend special parties with outlandish prices, but since many people don't believe the millennium starts until 2001 maybe the travel industry will get a second chance."

Regional Highlights

Africa. The Africa region showed a growth of 9 per cent in arrivals, nearly three times more than the world average. The best performing countries included Morocco (+22%), Zimbabwe (+17%) and Zambia (+26%), while the important tourism destinations of Tunisia (+3% and South Africa (+3.2%) continued to show steady growth.

Americas. The region's overall growth rate was just over the world average at 3.8 per cent, due mainly to sluggish growth in the region's top three destinations : the United States (+1.3%), Mexico (+2%) and Canada (+3.8%). South America and Central America fared much better, especially Argentina (+23%), Guatemala (+29%) and El Salvador (+26%). Results in the Caribbean were mixed, with Cuba (+16%) and the Dominican Republic (+12.6%) among the big winners and Puerto Rico (-10.4%) the big loser.

East Asia/Pacific: After two years of decreasing tourist arrivals, East Asia and the Pacific bounced back strongly in 1999, attracting nearly five million more tourists than the previous record set in 1996. Growth was widespread, with especially good results in Singapore (+11%), Japan (+9.6%), South Korea (+9.6%), Malaysia (+8%), China (+7.9%), Hong Kong SAR (+9%) and Thailand (+5.6%).

Europe: Overall, tourism to European grew by just 1 per cent in 1999 with results mixed according to region. Southern Europe had a good year, expecially Spain (+8.8%), Greece (+5%) and Portugal, which increased its arrivals by nearly 3 per cent despite the 11 per cent growth posted the previous year as a result of Expo '98. Notable results were also achieved by the Netherlands (+5.3%) and Ireland (+7.4%). On the other hand, the Kosovo crisis and instability in the Russian market caused problems for mature destinations in Central and Eastern Europe such as Hungary (-13.8%), Poland (-4.5%) and the Czech Republic (-1.8%). However, emerging destinations did manage to attract the interest of travellers, for example, Estonia (+10.3%), Latvia (+5.8%) and Georgia (+10.4%).

Middle East. The Middle East is one of the world's smallest regions, receiving only 18 million tourists in 1999, but it also had the fastest growth rate with arrivals up by 17.5 per cent. Egypt, which represents half of the regional toatal, posted a spectacular growth rate of almost 40 per cent and a record number of tourist arrivals that far exceeds totals achieved before the Luxor attack. Syria also fared well, with arrivals increasing by nearly 10 per cent.

South Asia. Held back by flat results in most countries of the region, South Asian tourism grew by only 3.7 per cent in 1999. While India (+1.1%) and Pakistan (+1.6%) showed slow growth and arrivals to Bangladesh fell by 2.3 per cent, Sri Lanka (+16%) and the Maldives (+10%) enjoyed a very positive year.

World's Top 10 Tourism Destinations in 1999					
		Preliminary Results			
Rank		Country	International Tourism Arrivals (000)		% Change
1999			1998	1999	1999/98
1.	250	France	70, 000	71, 400	2.0
2.	724	Spain	47, 749	51, 958	8.8
3.	840	United States	46, 395	46, 983	1.3
4.	380	Italy	34, 829	35, 839	2.9
5.	156	China	25, 073	27, 047	7.9
6.	826	United Kingdom	25, 745	25, 740	0.0
7.	484	Mexico	19, 810	20, 216	2.0
8.	124	Canada	18, 837	19, 556	3.8
9.	616	Poland	18, 780	17, 940	-4.5
10.	40	Austria	17, 352	17, 630	1.6



Nepal : A country of different ethnic communities

Photo courtesy : Nepal Tourism Board

THE PATA ENVIRONMENTAL PLEDGE

1. Foster environmentally responsible practices including waste management, recycling, and energy use.
2. Encourage an understanding by all those involved in tourism of each community's customs, cultural values, beliefs and traditions and how they relate to the environment.
3. Enhance the appreciation and understanding by tourists of the environment through the provision of accurate information and appropriate interpretation.
4. Establish detailed environmental policies and / or guidelines for the various sectors of the tourism industry.
5. Adopt the necessary practices to conserve the environment, including the use of renewable resources in a sustainable and responsible manner and the conservation of non-renewable resources.
6. Contribute to the conservation of any habitat of flora and fauna and of any site whether natural or cultural, which may be affected by tourism.
7. Encourage relevant authorities to identify areas worthy of conservation and to determine the level of development, if any, which would ensure those areas are conserved.
8. Ensure that community attitudes, cultural values and concerns, including local customs and beliefs, are taken into account in the planning of all tourism-related projects.
9. Comply with all international conventions and national, state and local laws in relation to the environment.
10. Provide the oppurtunity for the wider community to take part in discussions and consultations on tourism planning issues in so far as they affect the tourism industry and the community.
11. Acknowledge responsibility for the environmental impacts of all tourism-related projects and activities and undertake all necessary responsible remedial and corrective actions.
12. Support the inclusion of professional conservation principles in tourism education, training and planning within your own community.

Terai's wild places

As the summer warms the southen slopes of the Himalaya, snowmelt flows down to the Ganges plain far below. This plain covers huge areas of northern India, but a narrow belt also extends into region of Nepal called the Terai. This area contrasts strongly with the brilliant peaks that are the draw for most tourists, but this land of forests and farmland includes one high-light that is worthy of inclusion on any itinerary–the Royal Chitwan National Park.

The park is within easy access of both Kathmandu and Pokhara and is undoubtably one of the best places in Asia to go and see mammals in their natural habitat. Indian rhinos, leopards and tigers are the main wild attractions, but there are also several species of deer, gaur (the world's largest cattle), sloth bears, monkeys and two types of crocodile, as well as an imported population of trained elephants used for touring the park. In addition, the mix of riverine, hardwood forest and grassland habitats means Chitwan is home to more than 400 species of birds.

The park was founded in 1973 to protect the rapidly diminishing jungle that was being cleared to set up farms. Modern pesticides had brought the fierce local mosquitoes under control and people from the mountains flocked to the Terai to take advantage. As the forests were felled, the mammals indigenous to the area began to suffer, with the rare tiger and rhino hit particularly hard.

Sine the park was established, both populations have recovered slowly from near-extinction up to today's levels of more than 400 rhinos and around 80 tigers. There are still reasons to be vigilant though and the park's 1000 guards keep poaching and wood-cutting down to a minimum though they can do little to help when the animals stray onto neighbouring private land. Recognising the need to keep the relationship as harmonious with local landowners, the park's authorities allow some harvesting of grass in the park to take place each February. This has a positive side-effect for park visitors, opening up areas where it is easier to spot wildlife.

Elephant treks are the most popular way to see the wildlife, but there are also jeeps or canoes. Get to Chitwan by plane, take a bus or hire a car in Kathmandu, or raft down the Trisuli River for a few days. Stay at the lodges at the western end, including the famous Tiger Tops, or a Sauraha just outside the park to the north of the Rapti River.

SAGARMATHA NATIONAL PARK

Sagarmatha National Park covers an area of 1148 square kilometers in the Khumbu region of Nepal. The park includes the highest peak in the world, Mt. Sagarmatha (Everest 8848 m.), and several other well known peaks such as Lhotse, Nuptse, Cho Oyu, Pumori, Ama Dablam, Thamserku, Kwangde, Kangtaiga and Gyachyung Kang.

As Mt. Sagarmatha and the surrounding area is of major significance not only to Nepal but to the rest of the world, its status as a national park since 1976 is intended to safeguard its unique cultural, physical and scientific values through positive management based on sound conservation principles.

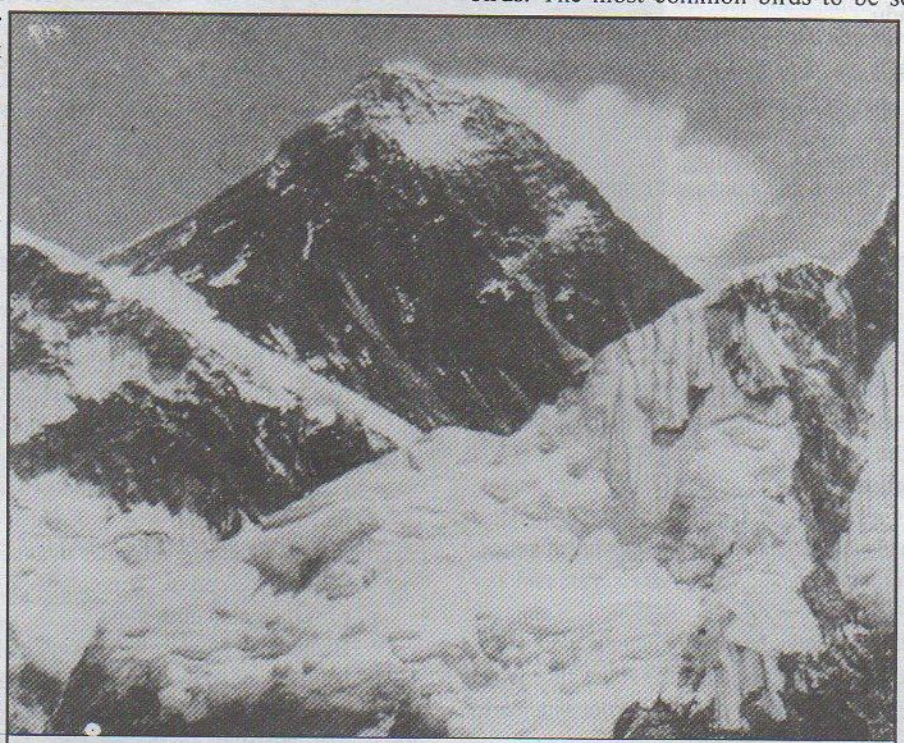
HOW TO GET TO THE PARK

The most common ways to get to the park are :

- Flight to Lukla, followed by two days' walk
- Bus to Jiri and trek for two weeks.
- Flight to Tumlingtar, trek for 10-11 days.

CLIMATE

The summer climate is cool and wet and winter is cold and dry. Almost all of the annual precipitation, averaging less than 1,000 mm., falls during the summer monsoon, from the end of May to September. Climatically, the best time to visit the park is between October and May, except for December to February when, daytime temperatures often drop below 0°C and there is heavy snowfall.



Mt. Everest

GEOLOGY

According to the continental-drift theory, the Himalaya were uplifted at the end of the Mesozoic Era, some 60 million years ago. The resulting young mountains of this region are still rising, and the net growth is a few centimeters per century.

LOCAL INHABITANTS

The park is populated by approximately 3,000 of the famed Sherpa people, originating from Tibet in the late 15th or 16th century A.D. Their lives are interwoven with the teachings of Buddhism. The main settlements are Namche Bazar, Khumjung, Khunde, Thame, Thyanboche, Pangboche and Phortse. There are also temporary settlements in the upper valleys where the Sherpas graze their livestock during the summer season.

The economy of the Khumbu Sherpa community has traditionally been agriculture, livestock herding and trade with Tibet. With the coming of international mountaineering expeditions in the 1950s, the region has also attracted larger numbers of foreign trekkers. Today the Sherpa economy is becoming increasingly dependent on tourism.

ACCOMMODATIONS

There are trekker lodges with food available in places like Namche Bazar, Thyangboche, Pheriche and Lobuche, and along most of the main trekking routes.

VEGETATION

Vegetation in the park varies from pine and hemlock forests at lower altitudes, fir, juniper, birch and rhododendron woods at mid-elevations, scrub and alpine plant communities higher up, and bare rock and snow above tree line. The famed bloom of rhododendron occurs during the spring (April and May) although much of the flora is most colourful during the monsoon seasor (June to August).

WILD ANIMALS

The wild animals most likely to be seen in the park are the Himalayan tahr, goral, serow, musk deer and Himalayan black bear. Other mammals are weasels, martens, Himalayan mouse hare (pika), jackals and langurs.

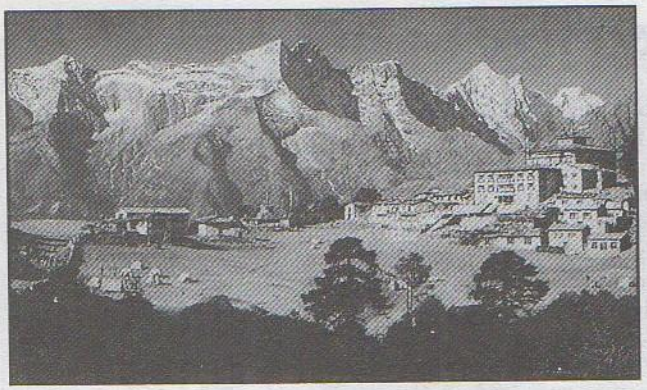
BIRDS

The park provides a habit for at least 118 species of birds. The most common birds to be seen are the Impeyen pheasant (the national bird of Nepal), blood pheasant, cheer pheasant, jungle crow, red-billed and yellow-billed coughs and snow pigeon. Fairly common birds are the Himalayan griffon, lammergier, snow partridge, skylark and others.

TREKKING ROUTES AND DURATIONS

Although the most popular trekking route has been towards Kala Pathar, treks towards Chhukung and Gokyo valleys are worthwhile alternatives. If you are intending to trek to Kala Pathar, allow at least nine days from Lukla and five more days to return. For the Gokyo lake trek, allow seven days to go up and return from Namche Bazar or Khumjung/Khunde. At least fourteen days are essential if you intend to trek to both Kala Pathar and Gokyo Lake.

From	To	Hours/Days to Reach by Foot
Lukla	Namche	2 days
Namche	Thyangboche	5 hours
Namche	Khumjung	2 hours
Khumjung	Thyangboche	4 hours
Thyangboche	Pangboche	2 hours
Pangboche	Pheriche	3 hours
Pheriche	Lobuche	5 hours
Lobuche	Gorakchhep	3 hours
Gorakchhep	Kala Pathar	3 hours
Pheriche	Dingboche	1 hour
Dingboche	Chhukung	4 hours
Namche	Thame	5 hours



It is not advisable to try to climb any peak or cross a high pass without proper equipment and Sherpa guide, particularly if you have no previous experience in climbing. It is illegal to climb a peak over 6, 600 meters above sea level without a permit from the Ministry of Tourism and below 6, 600 meters from the Nepal Mountaineering Association, which are based in Kathmandu.

SAFETY PRECAUTIONS FOR TREKKERS

Ascending too quickly to high altitude can effect anyone regardless of physical fitness. Symptoms may take 12 to 24 hours to develop. They include headache, insomnia, reduced output of urine, nausea, vomiting, and breathlessness that persists at rest, dizziness and confused thinking. Further deterioration can be fatal.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To prevent altitude sickness, ascend slowly.
2. THE BEST TREATMENT for any of the above symptoms is to return to lower altitude.
3. When in the Pheriche area, seek advice from the doctor at the HRA Trekkers Aid Post before ascending higher.

There are park radio sets at the Park Entrance Station (Jorsalle), Park Headquarters (Namche Bazar), Khunde Hospital, Thyangboche Park Lodge and Pheriche Trekker's Aid Post. There are hospitals or trekker health posts at Namche, Khunde and Pheriche. If you or your friend is seriously ill, seek the nearest health post so that medical assistance can be sought. In extreme cases helicopter evacuation can be requested by radio, but the patient is obliged to cover the cost of the charter from Kathmandu and return. Do not rely entirely on helicopter rescue.

PARK REGULATIONS

- Flora and fauna are fully protected and must not be disturbed.
- Camping visitors should be self-sufficient in fuel upon entering the park.
- Rubbish must be buried or disposed in a refuse Pit.
- An entry fee of Rs. 1000.00 per person is payable at National Park's ticketing counter at Dept. of Immigration building based in Kathmandu or at Park Entrance stations.
- No one should walk within the park between the hours of 7:00 p.m. and 5:00 a.m.

HIGHLIGHTS IN HISTORY ON MAY 29

1765 Patrick Henry, who became the first state governor, introduced seven resolutions in the House of Burgesses in Virginia, attacking the right of Britain to tax the colonies by the Stamp Act.

1848 Wisconsin became the 30th state of the United States.

1894 Joseph von Sternberg, Austrian film director, born. Best known for bringing Marlene Dietrich to prominence, he directed her in *Morocco*, *Shanghai Express* and *The Blue Angel*.

1903 Bob Hope, US comedian, born at Eltham, London. Star of radio and cinema, most notably the *Road* films with Bing Crosby. He also performed for US troops in World War II.

1914 The liner *Empress of Ireland* carrying 1,477 passengers and crew collided with the Norwegian freighter *Storstadt* in the St. Lawrence River in Canada. At least 1,012 people died in one of the worst maritime disasters ever.

1917 John F. Kennedy, who became the 35th President of the United States, born. He was President from 1961 until his assassination in November 22, 1963.

1940 In World War II, German forces captured Ostend and Ypres in Belgium and Lille in France.

1942 John Barrymore, US stage and screen actor, died. He starred in films from 1913. In *Rasputin and the Empress*, he appeared with his sister Ethel and brother Lionel Barrymore.

1944 *The Block Island*, an American aircraft carrier, was sunk by a German submarine near Madeira. She was the only US carrier lost in the Atlantic in World War II.

1953 Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay, a Sherpa, reached the summit of Mount Everest, the first team to reach the summit of the world's tallest mountain. The feat was not reported until June 1.

1968 The United Nations Security Council passed a resolution imposing manadatory sanctions on Rhodesia.

1974 Northern Ireland was brought under direct rule from Westminster one day after the collapse of the Northern Ireland executive. The crippling general strike in the province also ended.

1979 Bisho Abel Muzorewa was sworn in as first black Prime Minister of "Zimbabwe Rhodesia," as the country was briefly known prior to independence.

1982 pope Paul II, in the first papal visit to Britain since 1531, prayed alongside the Archbishop of Canterbury, head of the Church of England, in Canterbury Cathedral.

1985 Thirty-nine fans, mostly Italian, were crushed or trampled to death in rioting involving Liverpool and Juventus supporters at the European Cup Final at Brussels Heysel stadium. Over 400 people were injured.

1994 Erich Honecker, who ruled East Germany with an iron fist for 18 years and supervised the creation of the Berlin Wall, died in exile in Chile.

1997 President Laurent Kabila took office as head of state of the Democratic Republic of Congo, promising to hold elections in April 1999 and bury the legacy of dictator Mobutu Sese Seko.

1998 Barry Goldwater, former Arizona senator and Republican presidential candidate, died.

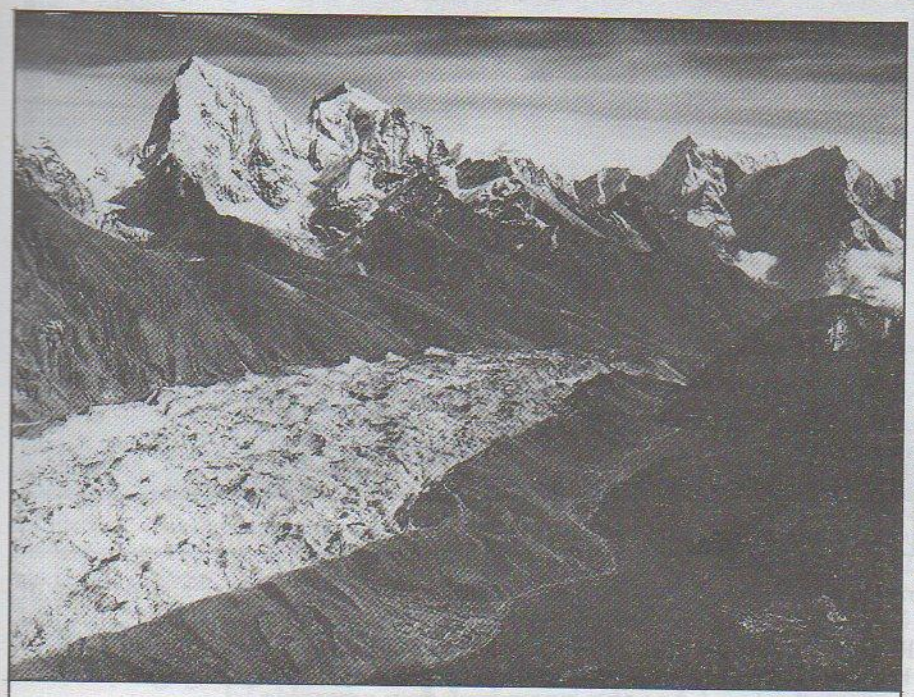
1999 Nigeria's elected President General Olusegun Obasanjo was sworn in.

2000 New world records on Mt. Everest

(Reuters)

Mt. Everest & More ....

Traveller's Information



Gokyo Lake, Khumbu Himal and Nozumba glaciar

Nepal is one of the richest countries in the world in terms of biodiversity due to its unique geographical position and altitudinal variation. The elevation of the country ranges from 60 m at sea level to the highest point on earth, Mt. Everest at 8, 848 m, all within a distance of 150-km resulting into climatic conditions from Sub-tropical to Arctic. Nepal - occupying only 0.1 % of the earth - is home to :

- 2% of all the flowering plants in the world;
- 8% of the world's population of birds (more than 848 species);
- 4% of mammals on earth;
- 11 of the world's 15 families of butterflies (more than 500 species);
- 600 indigenous plant families;
- 319 species of exotic orchids.

NEPAL AT A GLANCE

Area : 147, 181 sq. kms.

Geography : Situated between China in the north and India in the south.

Capital : Kathmandu

Population : 22 Million

Language : Nepali is the national language. However travel-trade people understand and speak English as well.

Currency : Nepalese Rupee (approximately US$ 1 equals to Rs. 69.05 as of August 1999).

Political System : Multi-party Democracy with constitutional monarchy

Religion : Nepal enjoys the distinction of being the only Hindu Kingdom in the world. However, there is a harmonious blending of Hinduism and Buddhism.

Climate : Nepal has four major seasons, namely, (1) Winter : December – February, (2) Spring : March – May, (3) Summer : June – August (4) Autumn : September – November, Nepal can be visited the whole year round.

People : Nepal has more than 40 ethnic groups and 70 spoken languages.

What To Wear : Light weight clothing is recommended for May through October. Warm garments are required in October-March. An umbrella or a raincoat is a must for the rainy season.

ENTRY PROCEDURES : A visa is required to enter Nepal except for Indian nationals. One can get a visa at the Royal Nepalese Embassy or Consulate or at the apirport upon arrival. Children under 10 years need not pay any visa fees. Two passport sized photos mandatory.

i. Single entry: US$ 30 for 60 days.

ii. Additional re-entry cost: US$ 25-Single; US$ 40-Double; US$ 60-Multiple.

iii. Visitors who intend to re-enter the country within 150 days after leaving the country during the same visa year, entry visa fee is US$ 50 for 30 days.

iv. For visitors intending to stay more than 60 days, tourist visa extension fee is equivalent of US$ 50 (in Nepalese currency) for 30 days from the Department of Immigration.

v. Business visa (with multiple entry) can be obtained from the Department of Immigration for the period of one year and five years upon the recommendation of the Ministry of Industry by paying the equivalent of US$ 100 and US$ 250 respectively in Nepalese currency for the foreign investors.

ACCESS TO NEPAL

BY AIR : The Royal Nepal Airlines (RA) is the national flag carrier of Nepal with flights to/from:

Kathmandu RA	Bangkok	2.50hrs
	Calcutta	1.00hrs
	Delhi	1.15hrs
	Dubai	4.11hrs
	Frankfurt	10.00hrs
	Hong Kong	4.50hrs
	Mumbai	2.20hrs
	Osaka	7.20hrs
	Paris	11.00hrs
	London	12.00hrs
	Shanghai	4.50hrs
	Singapore	4.30hrs

Other International Airlines operating from/to Kathmandu are :

Aeroflot Russian Airlines	SU Moscow	9.30hrs
Austrian Airlines	OS Vienna	7.50hrs
Biman Bangladesh Airlines	BG Dacca	1.10hrs
China South-West Airlines	SZ Lhasa	1.05hrs
Condor	N.A, Munich	
Druk Air	KB Paro	1.00hr
Gulf Air	GF Abu Dhabi	4.15hrs
Indian Airlines	IC Delhi	1.15hrs
	Calcutta	1.00hr
	Varanasi	1.10hrs
Necon Air	3Z Patna Calcutta via Biratnagar	1.hr 2.05hrs
Pakistan International Airlines	PK Karachi	2.45hrs
Singapore Airlines	SQ Singapore	4.30hrs
Qatar Airways	QR Doha	4.25hrs
Thai International	TG Bangkok	3.00hrs
Transavia	HV Amsterdam Via Sharjah	13.00hrs

All flying hours are only approximate.

BY LAND : All visitors entering Nepal by land must use no other entry points other than (1) Kakarbhitta (2) Birgunj (3) Belhiya, Bhairahawa (4) Nepalgunj (5) Dhangadi and (6) Mahendra Nagar in the Nepal-India border and (7) Kodari in the Nepal-China border. The overland tourists entering the Kingdom with their vehicles must possess an inernational carnet.

FOREIGN EXCHANGE : Foreign currencies must be exchanged only through the banks or authorized foreign exchange dealers. The receipts from such transaction are to be

obtained and retained. Visitors can exchange money at the foreign exchange counter at the airport upon arrival also.

CUSTOMS FORMALITIES : All baggages must be declared and cleared through the customs on arrival at the entry. Personal effects are permitted free entry. A tourist may bring in dutiable goods, such as tobacco and liquors, within the prescribed quantity free of duty. Carrying narcotics, arms and ammunition are strictly prohibited. Visitors can export souvenirs to their respective countries. The export of antiques requires special certificate from the Department of Archaeology, National Archive Building, Ram Shah Path, Kathmandu (Tel: 215358).

AIRPORT TAX : Rs.600 per person for departure to SAARC (South Asian) countries and Rs. 1000 for departure to other international destinations.

DOMESTIC AIRLINES : Royal Nepal Airlines (RA) has an extensive network of air services in the interior of Nepal. RA flies to Taplejung, Bhadrapur, Rajbiraj, Bhojpur, Phaplu, Lukla, Lamidada, Tumlingtar, Rumjatar, Biratnagar, Nepalgunj, Chaurjhari, Surkhet, Rolpa, Jumla, Kolti, Mahendranagar, Dhangadi, Silgadi, Tikapur, Sanphebagar, Baitadi and Darchula. Besides RA, other domestic airlines such as Buddha Air, Cosmic Air, Lumbini Airways, Gorkha Airlines, Manakamana Airways, Karnali Air Services, Necon Air, Skyline Airlines and Yeti Airways provide regular and charter services to popular domestic destinations.



Advance mountaineering training by NMA

MOUNTAIN FLIGHT : Royal Nepal Airlines and other domestic Airlines in the private sector operate breath-taking mountain flights for tourists round the year.

GETTING AROUND : Metered taxis are easily recognizable by the taxi sign and black number plates and can be hailed off the street. Metered tempos (three wheeler scooters), cheaper than taxis, are also available. No tip is expected. There are regular bus service within the three cities of the Kathmandu Valley. The Bus Terminal is located at Gongabu (new bus terminal) and Bagbazar (old bus terminal). Similarly, scheduled bus services for outside the valley operate from the Gongabu Bus Terminal. In addition, one can also hire mountain or motor bikes at nominal rates.

TREKKING PERMIT : Trekking permit is not essential for the general trekking areas such as the Everest, the Annapurna, the Langtang and Rara. Trekking permit should be obtained for the following places.

1. **Lower Dolpa and Kanchenjunga** – Equivalent to US$ 10 per person per week for the first four weeks and US$ 20 per week thereafter.
2. **Manaslu** – US$ 90 per person per week for trekking during September-November and US$ 75 per week during December-August.
3. **Humla** – US$ 90 for the first seven days and US$ 15 per day thereafter.
4. **Upper Mustang and Upper Dolpa** – US$ 700 per person for the first 10 days and US$ 70 per person per day thereafter.

Note : Trekking to Dolpa, Kanchanjunga, Makalu and Upper Mustang can be undertaken through registered trekking agencies only

For trekking through National Park Areas, an entrance fee of Rs. 650 is levied. Likewise, an entrance fee of Rs. 1000 is levied for trekking at the Annapurna Conservation Area.

FACILITIES : Nepal has every category of accommodation facilities. These range from the international standard star hotels to budget hotels and lodges. In order to have an assured quality service, it is advisable to use the facilities and services of government registered hotels, lodges, travel agencies, licensed tour guides only and engage an authorized trekking guide or porter only through a registered travel/trekking agency.

MAJOR TOURIST ATTRACTIONS

Few destinations in the world can match Nepal in the variety of adventure tourism as Nepal: be it mountaineering, trekking, mountain biking, nature tours, culture tours, pilgrim tours, white-water-rafting, kayaking, canoeing, mountain flights, hot air ballooning, pony trekking, jungle safaris, bird watching, fishing, hang-gliding, ultra-light aircraft ride, etc. In addition, we have several special interest tours like orchid tours, culture trek, honey hunting, village tours, fossil hunting, meditation courses and seminars, Shamanism-Panimism tour, cave culture, snow leopard and blue sheep trek and many more that take place throughout the year.

Trekking : Nepal is the ultimate destination for the trekking enthusiast–offering a myriad of possibilities from the short and easy to the demanding challenges of the snowy peaks. Easy, moderate or rigorous–there is something for every palate. Nepal has aptly been called "A Trekkers' Paradise" as her terrain–mountains, hills and the Terai–offers some of the most spectacular trekking routes in the world. The immense contrasts in altitudes and climates found here support an equally spectacular mix of lifestyles, vegetation and wildlife. Trekking in Nepal is as much a cultural experience as a Himalayan adventure. In the shadows and foothills of the icy pinnacles of the Himalaya, one passes picturesque charming villages inhabited by diverse ethnic groups. Treks vary from expeditions, high altitude treks to simple easy paced walks.

Mountaineering : With eight of the highest peaks in the world, it is hardly surprising that Nepal has been the stage for some of the most outstanding achievements in the world of mountaineering. The dauntless icy peaks have since decades challenged the bodies and spirits of those daring enough to want to conquer the hulks. All inquiries and arrangements for expeditions have to be made well in advance at the Ministery of Tourism & Civil Aviation, Mountaineering Section, Bhrikutimandap (Tel: 256234, Fax: 227281) where the guidelines have been laid down.

River Rafting/Kayaking : Few rafting rivers in the world can match the thundering course of the rivers of Nepal originating from the snow meltdown of the Himalayan terrain. The rivers

gush through the twisted canyons, winding through calm valleys where small settlements are perched on the banks, taming out only as they spill out into the Indian plains to merge with the Ganges. A river-trip is one of the best ways to explore the typical cross-section of the country's natural as well as the ethno-cultural heritage with massive doses of adrenaline buzz on our world caliber white-water thrills.

Jungle Safari : Chitwan offers exciting safari destination in the world. Jungle activities here include venturing into deep jungle on elephant back or four wheel drive to view wild animals in their natural habitat, canoe rides on the jungle rivers, nature walks, bird watching and village tour excursions.

Sight-seeing : For those who cannot withstand the rigorousness of mountain climbing there are mountain flights which fly around Mt. Everest and other summits providing a close-up of the top of the world. On a clear day, the hill resorts of Nagarkot (32 km east of Kathmandu), Dhulikhel (32km) and Daman (80 km southwest of Kathmandu) offer magnificent views of the entire Himalayan range. For the less adventurous, Pokhara, the lake city of Nepal provides ample opportunities for fishing, swimming, canoeing and boating along with majestic panoramic views in its background.

A rich cultural heritage : Nepal offers an incomparable scope to connoisseurs of art and culture to see and study the different aspects of the fine arts in its painting, sculpture, woodcarving or architecture. The three main historic cities of Kathmandu, Patan and Bhaktapur with numerous historical monuments, old palaces and palace squares, shrines and temples, ageless traditions and legends make it a veritable living museum. The Kathmandu Valley boasts of seven World Cultural Heritage Sites all within a radius of 20 kms.

World Heritage Sites (Cultural) :
1. Swayambhu 2. Bouddha 3. Bhaktapur Durbar Square 4. Changunarayan 5. Pashupatinath 6. Kathmandu Durbar Square 7. Patan Durbar Square 8. Lumbini (Birthplace of Lord Buddha)

A rich natural heritage : Thanks to Nepal's extensive and effective Parks and Reserves system, the country has managed to preserve more endangered species of flora and fauna than any other area in Asia. Nepal has nine National Parks and three Wildlife Reserves, which include areas in the highest mountains in the world as well as sub-tropical lowland of the plains.

World Heritage Sites (Natural) :
1. Everest National Park (1148 sq.kms.)
2. Royal Chitwan National Park (932 sq.kms.)

Other National Parks :
1. Royal Bardiya National Park (968 sq.kms.)
2. Langtang National Park (1710 sq.kms.)
3. Shey-Phoksundo National Park (3555 sq.kms.)
4. Rara National Park (106 sq.kms.)
5. Khaptad National Park (225 sq.kms.)

Wildlife Reserves :
1. Sukla Phanta Reserve (305 sq.kms.)
2. Parsa Reserve (499 sq.kms.)
3. Koshi-Tappu Reserve (175 sq.kms.)

Conservation Areas :
1. Annapurna (2600 sq.kms.)
2. Makalu-Barun (2330 sq.kms.)

Hunting Reserve :
1. Dhorpatan (1325 sq.kms.)

- Nepal Tourism Board

Hillary - Making the Himalayas his mission

NEW DELHI : Fear was not written in his heart when he first made his tryst with the Himalayas. Now nearly five decades later, "the rapid commercialisation of the mountains" scares Sir Edmund Hillary to death.

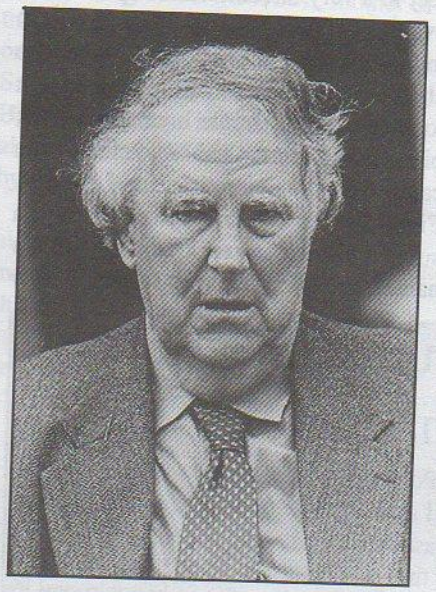
"The rapid commercialisation of the Himalayas is very scary and would further aggravate the degradation of the Himalayas," says the living legend, who was the first to scale the Everest.

"Promote adventure tourism by all means but not at the cost of exploiting the environment," says Hillary expressing shock at photographs of garbage strewn at the highest reaches of the Himalayas.

"We cannot afford to destroy the pristine beauty of the mountains. The mountaineers in particular who have taken a lot from the Himalayas have to reap back something to it rather than defile them," says the mountaineer.

"Just because the mountaineers have exceptional skill and abilities does not give them some dominant right to abuse the mountains they claim to love," he staunchly remarks.

"People need to be educated and tour operators need to ensure that they are more sensitive to the environment as these areas have tremendous influence on the climatic conditions across the globe," says Sir Hillary. Also, one today merely has to pay $65, 000 to be conducted to the summit, he says.



Adventure tourism is also one of the fastest growing tourism activity, he says, nothing, "When I first visited India 50 years ago it was almost nonexistent."

Comparing the present nature of the sport with what it was 50 years ago Hillary says that climbing has now become easier due to availability of modern mountaineering equipment.

"Things have changed greatly since we climbed in 1953. We had to pioneer the route to the mountains and on the ice wall. Today, climbers merely have to follow the footsteps. Even the ice wall is covered with ladders and fixed ropes," he says.

Recounting the day when he first stood on top of the world, Hillary says that he merely experienced a great deal of satisfaction and not so much excitement when he reached the final summit.

"For two months me and my partner in the grand endeavour, Tenzing Norgay, battled our way up the mountain to reach the final summit, I had no feeling of extreme pleasure, but quiet satisfaction and even perhaps a little bit of surprise. So many tough climbers had tried for the summit and failed, but now Tenzing and I were there."

Success on the Everest made a great difference to his life and he became closely involved with the welfare of the Sherpas.

"We built a school in a place called Khumjung village, constructed a simple hospital in Khunde and also set out to replant trees establishing several nurseries," he says.

"Of all the things that I have been able to do, I have found this work with the mountain people of the Himalayas the most satisfying," he notes.

Besides the Himalayas, he also loves travelling and has traversed extensively across Nepal and "never ran out of new places to explore."

By Vandana Ramnani

MY BOYHOOD DREAMS

Tenzing Norgay Sherpa

I was born and raised near the foot of Sagarmatha in the region known as Solu Khumbu. As I tended my father's yaks I used to gaze on the mountains, especially Sagarmatha, and imagine what it must be like to climb so high to the sky. Surely only the Gods could live at such heights.

During my youth, Nepal was closed to foreigners, so all expeditions to Sagarmatha started from Darjeeling and approached the Mountain from the north. Sherpas who had gone on expeditions returned home to Solu Khumbu with wonderful stories of their adventures in the mountains and amazing tales of far away places. I was so excited by these stories that I ran away from my home when I was 18 years old and went to live in Darjeeling. After a few years I was lucky to meet Eric Shipton, who was then on his way to attempt to climb Sagarmatha. I was very surprised when he accepted my application and chose me as one of the high altitude Sherpas for his expedition. My greatest dream had come true; I was finally to have the chance to fulfill my boyhood wish.

Yet my first expedition was not successful in reaching the summit, but I had found my life's work. I enjoyed climbing and was determined to reach the summit of Sagarmatha. I went on 5 more expeditions to Sagarmatha without success. In 1952 the first attempt on Sagarmatha from the Nepalese side was made by the Swiss. In the spring we reached so close to the summit that it seemed a pity to turn back, but the safety of the whole expedition forced us to retreat. Raymond Lambert and I reached 28,215 feet without oxygen. At our last camp we did not have food or sleeping bags. Lambert and I spent the whole night huddled together trying to keep warm; it wasn't so difficult because Lambert is a huge man, so we were not too uncomfortable. The next morning the weather was terrible; we probably could have reached the summit, but it would not have been safe, and we certainly would have had trouble on the way down. So we turned back.

Finally on my seventh attempt on Sagarmatha we achieved success. Edmund Hillary and I made our last camp at 28,000 feet in a very uncomfortable spot. In the evening we decided to leave at 5 or 5.30 in the morning , but we left a little bit late about 6 a.m. because of the long time it took to make a simple breakfast of tea, biscuits and salmon fish. The climb from camp 6 to the summit seemed endless. Finally, after climbing over the south summit and a steep rock and ice wall we named Hillary's Chimney, we finally saw the summit above us. On 29 May, 1953, we finally achieved our goal. The summit of Sagarmatha is large enough for 4 or 5 people to stand together; this was a great surprise to me. Many people have asked me who was the first one to the summit Hillary or myself. To a real mountaineer, this question makes no sense, as it is always a team effort when climbing together on an expedition, but I will now make clear exactly what happened. As we approached the summit, we rolled the rope in our hands and Hillary and I reached the summit at almost the same time.

During our expedition in 1953 we were very lucky because good weather allowed us to achieve our goal. But the most important thing which contributed to our success was the team spirit and the way in which everyone on the expedition worked to help only two of us reach the summit. It is this kind of team work which is essential for every Himalayan climb, I am sure that all those who participate in the silver jubliee celebration of the first ascent of Sagarmatha will realise the part that team spirit and cooperation played in the success of our ascent and that the first ascent of Sagarmatha was accomplished by many more people than just Hillary and myself. The leader, financial resources and the cartons of equipment are all very important, but if the expedition does not work together, success can not be achieved. The Nepalese people, whether they serve as low altiude porters, high altitude Sherpas, guide or members of the expedition should all work together to assist climbing teams in their efforts to reach new summits and create new adventures in Nepal, among the highest of all mountains.



Tenzing Norgay Sherpa

The high altitude lakes of Sagarmatha region

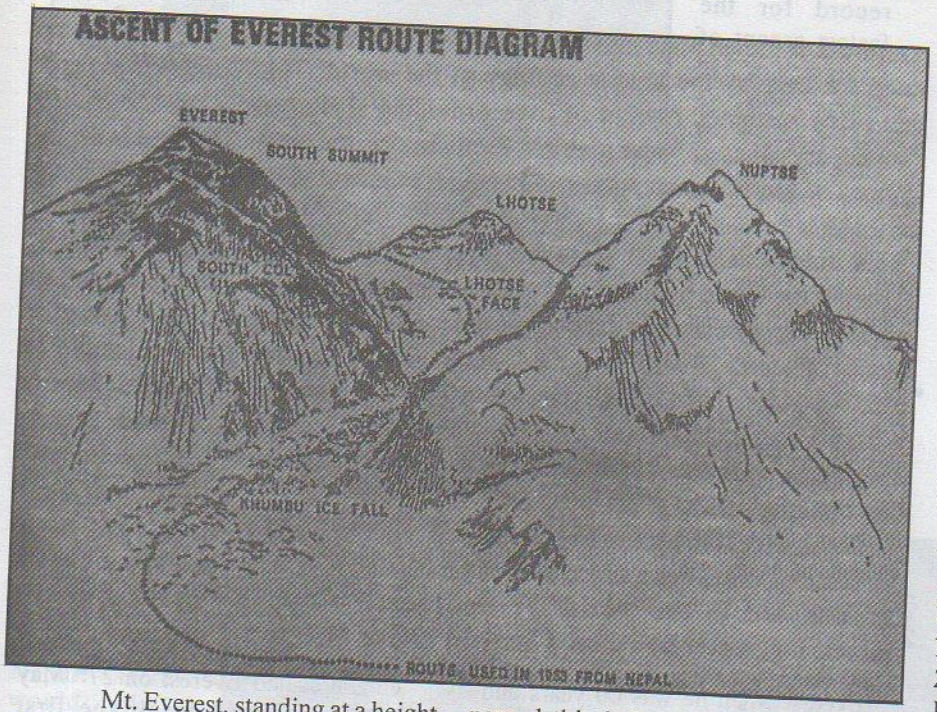
Lake Gokyo also known as Dudh Pokhari is the largest lake in the Khumbu Himal region of north-east Nepal. Situated at an altitude of 16,000 feet above sea level, its water are mounted in a setting of pastureland. Lake Gokyo or Dudh Pokhari is the source of the Dudh Kosi river, one of the main features of the Khumbu Valley.

At the foot of Koryolung (21,920 ft.) there lies a small lake named Dudh Kund. In the South-West of Lobujya Yak Pasture there is a small beautiful Tschola Lake (14,872 feet). Tschola Lake is reached from Pheriche after passing Phalang Karpo, a small summer settlement and then climbing terminal and lateral moraines of the Khumbu glacier.

At the foot of the fertile morainic amphitheatre of Khumbu glacier, watched over by the towering mass of the Khumbu Himal group, is the peaceful little lake Gorakshep. Associated with every Everest expeditions this often frozen lake is known all over the world as Lake Camp. The most magnificent view of Sagarmatha (29,028 feet) can be had from Kala Pathar or Black Rock (18,192 feet) behind Gorakshep Lake. In the northern shore of Laka Gorashep there are not less than a dozen of bivouac walls which bear witness to the passage of previous Everest expeditions. Some isolated fang like ice pinnacles create a magnificent scenic backdrop to the lake.

Mt Everest : Facts And Figures

❒ Samidh Shrestha



Mt. Everest, standing at a height of 8,848 meters (29,035 ft) above the sea level, is the highest point in the world. It is situated in Solukhumbu district of North-Eastern Nepal. Today, Mt. Everest is well known all over the world and it is the main treasure of Nepal. It lies between 27°59′N latitude and 86°56′ E longitude in the border between Nepal and Tibet. It is estimated that it was formed about 60 million years ago.

It is interesting to note that before Everest was discovered in 1852, Mt Kanchenjunga was considered to be the tallest mountain. Since 1849 to 1855, Department of Survey of British-India government had surveyed the Himalayas. During that time, the peaks didn't have any confirmed names so they were symbolised by Roman figures by the surveyors. In 1852, with the efforts of Sir George Everest, British surveyor general to India, surveyor Radha Nath Sikhdar and Nepali corporal Tej Bir Budhathoki, the highest mountain in the world was discovered and was symbolised as Peak XV. In 1855, Peak XV was accepted as the planets tallest mountain standing at a height of 8,848 meters above the sea level. In 1856, Sir Andrew Waugh proposed for the name of Peak XV to be Everest to honour Sir George Everest who was his predecessor as surveyor general. Later in 1865, the Geographical Society of Britian agreed to give Peak XV the name of Everest. Even though Sir Andrew Waugh named this lofty peak as Everest, the Tibetans in the North call it „Chomolungma" or „Goddess, mother of the world". In Nepal it is „Sagarmatha" or „the goddess of the sky". The name Sagarmatha was given by historian Baburam Acharya in 1956. The peak was also named as the „Globe's Third Pole" by Marcel Kurz, in 1933.

As Everest was heralded as the highest summit on Earth, it was only a matter of time before the people decided that Everest needed to be climbed, explored and conquered. Before Everest was finally conquered, it took the lives of 13 men, the efforts of 15 expeditions and a duration of 101 years.

The first expedition to Everest was of a British reconaissance team led by Lt.Col.C.K.Howard Bury in 1921. With the permission of Dalai Lama, this team had planned to climb Everest from the Tibetan side. The main aim of this expedition was to find out the climbing route to Everest as well as to conquer it. Dr. A.M. Kallas, a member of the team, was the one who introduced the Sherpas to mountaineering. Thus, now the credit for the success of the Sherpas in mountaineering goes to Dr. A.M. Kallas. He died when he was on his way back to the Base Camp. It was because of his death that the expedition was abandoned. He was also the first person to die on Everest.

Since 1921 to 1938, seven British mountaineering teams had come to Nepal with the purpose of climbing Everest and for research. Upto 1949, foreigners were forbidden to come to Nepal and most of the mountaineering activities in Nepal were from the Northern side via Tibet. In 1949, Erich E. Shipton discovered the southern route to Everest, i.e. from the Nepalese side. Similarly, after the advent of democracy in 1950, the door of Nepal was opened to foreigners to visit Nepal. Similarly, as mountaineering was prohibited from the Tibet side the main gate to Everest was from Nepal.

After nearly three decades, man's failure to scale Everest was finally ended. It was on May 29, 1953, when two brave men, Tenzing Norgay Sherpa of Nepal and Edmund Hillary of New Zealand finally conquered the indomitable Everest. The two men of the British Expedition were the first to stand on the top of the world. Tenzing was succesful in his seventh attempt. He had reached 28,215 ft.together with Lambert of the first Swiss expidition in 1952. The success on Everest showed the undying ambition of man to achieve something.

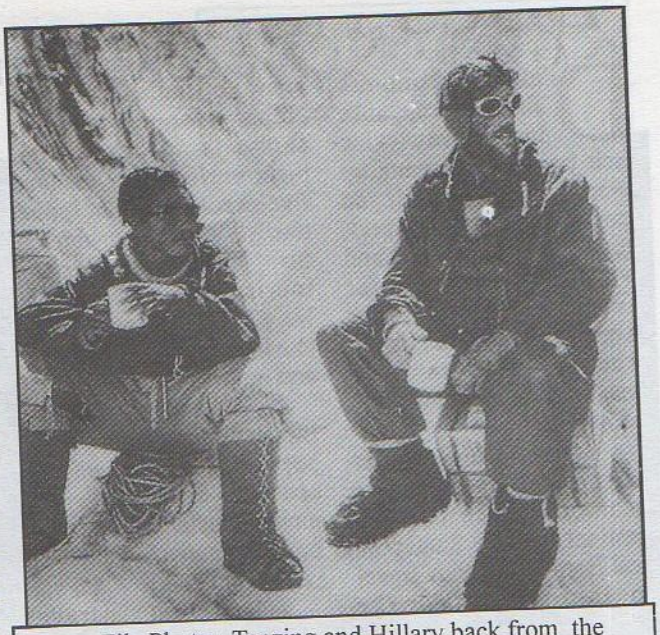
Everest, though the world's tallest summit, is still growing. According to Dr. Bradford Washburn, the height of Everest has increased by two meters than it's initial height of 8,848 meters. It's new height is 8,850 meters. The height of Everest is increasing by about half a centimeter every year and is also being pushed in the north-east direction steadily at the rate of 3-6 millimeters every year. However, the Government of Nepal has not accepted this new height

Everest has captivated the imagination since it's discovery in1852. Some interesting facts about Everest are :

- The use of oxygen in mountaineering was first introduced in 1922.
- In 1924, George Mallory and A.Irvine made their attempt to scale Everest but they never returned home. After 75 years, in 1999, Eric Simpson's team made the stunning discovery of Mallory's body below the North East Ridge.
- Reinhold Messner from Italy was the first person to make a solo ascent of Everest. He did this on 20th August, 1980 but before him the first solo attempt to Everest was made by

Maurice Wilson in 1934 but he was frozen to death at 22,000 ft.

- Seventeen years after Everest was conquered from the south side by Tenzing and Hillary , for the first time in 1960, Mt. Everest was scaled from the Chinese side. The summiters who reached the top were Wang Fu Chou, Gonpa and Chu Ying Hua.
- The first joint expedition was between Americans and the Swiss in 1962 but it was a failure.
- The first international expedition comprising 12 nations took place in 1971. It was considered the strongest team to Everest consisting of 32 members including 18 climbers. This expedition too was unsuccessful.
- Twenty-two years after man's first conquest to the summit, women also set their foot on the top of the peak. In all woman Japanese Expedition led by Mrs. Eiko Hisano, Mrs. Junko Tabei accompanied by Ang Tshering Sherpa scaled the peak on 16th May, 1975. She was soon followed by Miss Phantog of the Chinese expedition on 27th May of the same year.
- American Bicentennial Expedition under Phil Trimble successfully scaled Everest on October 1976 to celebrate the 200th Anniversary of American Independence. Dr. Chris Chandler and Bob Cormak were the summiters who reached the top.
- Reinhold Messner from Italy and Peter Habelerto from Austria became the first to scale Everest without the use of artifical oxygen, In 1978. Reinhold Messner is also the first person to climb all the 14 peaks of the world that exceed 8,000 meters.
- Appa Sherpa, 40, has scaled Everest 11 times making it a world record. He recently has broken the record set by Ang Rita Sherpa for the most ascent of Everest (10 times). Appa Sherpa Scaled Everest for the 11th time on 24th May, 2000
- Babu Chiri Sherpa holds the record for staying on the summit for the longest period of time. He stayed on the summit for 21 hours without the use of artificial oxygen in 1999. He also holds the record for the fastest ascent of Everest. On 21st May, 2000 he scaled Everest clocking a time of 16 hours 56 minutes breaking the record of 20 hours 24 minutes set by Kazi Sherpa in 1998.
- Cath 'O' Dowd, a South African citizen is the first woman to scale Everest from Nepal and Tibet side in 1996 and 1999 respectively.
- Lave Sharkshov is the oldest summiter to scale Everest. He scaled Everest when he was 60 years and 161 days old.
- Shambhu Tamang is the youngest summiter to Everest. He climbed Everest back in 1973 when he was 17 years 7 months and 14 days old . In 1999 and 2000, attempts were made by Arbin Timalsina, 15, and Tembachhiri Sherpa, 14, but both were sunsuccessful. Arbin had to abandon his climb when he was 98 meters short due to his eye problem. Meanwhile, Tembachhiri had to abandon his climb as his fingers were frostbitten when he was only 22 meters below the peak.
- French climber Jean March Boivin became the first person to paraglide from the summit in 1988. He descended almost 8,000 meters and reached Camp II in 11 minutes.
- The first person to descend on skis is Yuiich Miura, in 1970.
- On 14th May, 1995, Kazi Sherpa scaled Everest wearing *daura suruwal*, the national dress of Nepal. Lopsang Jangbu Sherpa also scaled Everest three times wearing *bakkhu*, *daura suruwal* and a karate uniform in 1995, 1996 and 1997 respectively.
- Tom Whittaker, a disabled American citizen scaled Everest on 27th May 1998, making himself the first disabled person to reach the top of the world.
- Jamling Sherpa and Peter Hillary, sons of Everest heroes Tenzing and Hillary respectively also have scaled Everest. Jamling also plays the lead role in the IMAX film Everest.
- The best year for Everest was in 1993, when 129 reached the peak and eight died at the ratio of 16:1 and the worst year was in 1996 when 98 stepped on the peak and 15 died at the ratio of 6.5:1
- A new milestone was added in the history of mountaineering in 1988 when members of the China–Nepal–Japan Friendship Expedition simultaneously scaled the world's highest peak from both North and South side putting a record 12 climbers on the summit.



File Photo : Tenzing and Hillary back from the summit of Everest on May 29, 1953

Seventeen years after Everest was conquered from the south side by Tenzing and Hillary , for the first time in 1960, Mt. Everest was scaled from the Chinese side. The summiters who reached the top were Wang Fu Chou, Gonpa and Chu Ying Hua.

As regards Everest, there is a great race to establish world records In different categories like solo climbing, most climbs, fastet ascent, longest time spent on the peak, climbing in various dresses, making ascent through different routes, the youngest climber and so on. So far, in the bid to scale Everest, 1200 times people have become successful in standing on the peak and more than 160 people have lost their lives and no one knows how long the desire to conquer Everest will remain in the heart of the people.

WORSHIP THE HIMALAYAS

Dr. Shankar Raj Panta

Literally 'Himalaya' means house of snow or one can say resting place of snow – Him (= snow) plus Alaya (= house or abode). But there is a lot more than what this word carries out. This meaning of Himalaya, apparently, is just the outer manifestation of physical reality what we see before us the awesome, challenging and gorgeous snowy mountain peaks. Actually, none can completely describe the Himalayas in its total potentiality, for it is as fathomless as God and takes innumerable values and forms according to the people of innumerable feelings, observation and conceptions. Sometime I wonder if there would be no Himalayan range, what would happen to this planet earth and surely there would be no such countries like Nepal. Here I would like to mention what Maurice Herzog rightly points out in his address :

" ... .

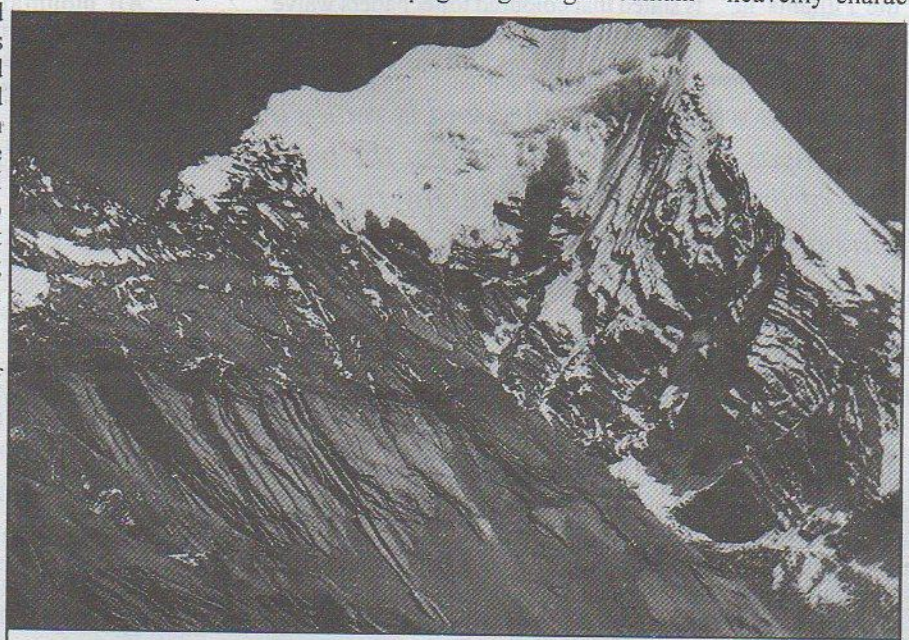
All the regions of the world cannot pride themselves in possessing such exceptional and high mountain range as Nepal, with, a long history, rich in events, specific culture (due to the presence of Himalayas) all being the attractions of travellers. The geographic sites; in the world are not all of equal quality."

Some fifteen hundred years before, the famous Sanskrit poet KALIDAS, in the Mangalacharan (start) of his famed epic Kumar Sambhabam, wrote this sloka :

..... अस्त्युत्तरस्यां दिशि देवतात्मा ।
हिमालयो नाम नगाधिराज : ॥

Meaning, in the north direction there dwells the Himalaya the king of all mountains is and the spirit of deities. He further declares that Himalaya is the axis (Merudanda) or pivot of the world itself. All Nepalese regard Himalaya not only the majestic granduer form of nature, but also spiritually the true abode of the supreme divinely couple "Shiva & Parvati". Because of the Himalaya as the perpetual abode of lord Shiva, and the birth place of Mother Goddess "Arpana" (Parvati), the national deity of Nepal resides as "Pashupatinath" in the heart of this Himalayan country. In Hindu mythology, the whole of Himalaya itself represents a living God.

Different snowy peaks, mostly in the mid – range of Himalayas lying from Laddakh to Bhutan, and lying in Nepal, bear the names of Hindu and Tibetan Gods or Goddess . One of the most revered Himalayan Peaks is Mount Kailash, which is situated near by Mansarovar, is considered to be the center of universe, and is known as Sumeru Parbat, described in many Puranas. Thousands of pilgrims, Hindu and Buddhist flock to this holy mountain for pilgrimage. High mountain



Pisang Peak

tourist from all over the world, saints, monks and minded religious people always keep keen desire to visit this place and make a round (a difficult parikrama) of Kailash, the actual embodiment of Lord Shiva.

The other Himalayan eight thousanders high peaks, who bear the name of God are (i) The Sagarmatha (The Mount Everest) meaning the heaven touching mountain in Nepal and the Chomolongma (or Quomolongma) meaning Mother Goddess in Tibet. Upon first seeing this highest peak George Mallory gave his impression as 'Lord of all mountains, having vast splendour and radiating the divineness , all around , It is correctly named as the third pole of the earth. Pivoting its 'matha' or head high towards the 'sagar' Heaven. (ii) Mount Gaurishanker literally meaning the representation of 'Shiva' and 'Parvati', the supreme divine couple, is another sacred peak, which is revered and respected so much that none is allowed for climbing. It remains one of the most virgin peaks and the Nepalese people, in the vicinity, worship it daily. (iii) There is Ganesh Himal after the name of Lord Ganesh, worshipped always in the first hand, in every religious performances. (iv) Annapurna Himal, represents the Goddess 'Anna Purna', sustaining lives by providing grains. The other most revered ones are 'Machhapuchchhre, Dhauligiri and Kanchenjunga which manifest similar divinely attributes.

That is why, due to these heavenly characteristics of Himalayas, Lord Krishna in Srimad Bhagavad Gita declares that as a non–moving fixed entity, Himalaya manifests Himself :

महर्षिणां भृगुरहं गिरामस्येकमक्षरम् ।
यज्ञानां जपयज्ञोकस्मि स्थावराणां हिमालय ॥ (२५/१०)

(Among the Rishis, I am Bhrigu Rishi; Among the letters, I am 'OM' – one letter, among the rituals I am the recitation of God's name and among the fixed things I am the Himalaya.)

In the same chapter of Gita, he declares, among the peaks the Meru (Sumeru) peak represents him, as reflected in :

मेरु शिखरिणामहम् ।

Numerous citations about the divinely state of Himalayan mountains are found in Mahabharat and other Puranas.

The purpose of indicating (writing) these quotes (or Slokas) from religious texts is simply to make understand by all of us (International tourists as well) that Himalayas are there not only for challenges, for adventurous sports of climbing and trekking, but they are there as utmost auspicious divinely places to be cared and to be revered as, temples, churches and other holy places.

Besides the divinity and the spirituality of Himalayas (which ranges from Afghanistan to Brahmaputra region in Asam) the high lofty eight–thousanders (eight of them lying in Nepal) as well as more than thirteen hundred snowy peaks, exceeding six thousand meters, and innumerous ones below six thousands peaks, all command the most magnificent natural scenic beauty of the mother earth,

with unique combination of snow, rocks (rolling and fixed), forests (alongwith Himalayan shrubs and herbs), perennial glaciers and icy rivers. The heavenly grand picturesque of collassal peaks during sunrise and sunset is indescribable both in writing and painting.

It is for this majestic view of Himalayan peaks, that tourists, from all over the world pour in Nepal for at least a loving memory to be cherished for life-long. Every nature lover on this globe wants to see these majestic pose of nature, and, feel within himself the serenity, the tranquility and the aweness that comes by beholding this supreme manifestation that God has in the form of Holy Himalayas.

Again in the words of Maurice Herzog :

"..... Whatever their origin, language, ethnicity and religion men have deep respect for high summits. Be it Kailash in Tibet, the Fujiama in Japan and many others, pilgrimage are regularly organised to visit them. It is also a form of touring (and worshipping) to honour Shiva, Brahma (Bishnu?), Buddha, Confucious and others ; ....."

Except for the daredevil people like climbers and mountaineers and the native people, the sacred and secluded Himalayan region is nearly inaccessible and unapproachable to ordinary common folks. Saints, Rishis and hermits stay in the Himalayan caves for fear of being disturbed by mundane people. They are afraid of the people disturbing them in their meditations for Realisation or for God–Vision. From time immemorable, the Himalayas have become the abode for meditation , truth-searching and God-realising souls. They have found this region so suitable for their God-Realising efforts, and for so inaccessible to common folk due to rough Himalayan weather. Continuous avalanche, abysses, crevasse due to Glaciers, rocks rolling storms and lightnings all make common people fearful to visit frequently. This high Himalayan region is so difficult and hazardous to travel that Lord Shree Krishna says in Sri-Mad-Bhagavata

धिष्ण्यानामस्म्यहं मेरुर्गहनानांहिमालय ।
वनस्पतिनांमश्त्थओषधिनांमहं यव : ॥ (२१।१६।११)

(Among the dwellings, I am the Mount Meru, and among the most graceful and difficult things, I am Himalaya. Among the trees I am the Pipal tree (Bo tree) and among the medicinal herbs, I am the oat plant.)

Now, let us turn to the environmental problem that the Himalayas are facing since last three decades. None had to bother about this problem at least forty years before. Then, a small number of trekkers and mountaineers used to follow the existing itineraries and were not the causes of environmental pollution , now thousand and thousands pieces of rubbishes (burnable and non-burnable) litter everywhere from the base camp to even the last camp also. Thus the high mountain and the highest summit of the Himalayas also suffer from specific forms of degradation. As the number of these mountaineers increases longer and longer year by year the defilation of Himalayan Environment is reaching to the breaking point.

Leaving aside the terrible state of base camps and other high camps covered with plastic bags, tins, oxygen cylinders and non-burnable itineraries, it is stated that coloured toilet papers waive all around the trekking routes. This may be an exaggeration, but one report about the worst situation of defilation of Himalayan sites, states:

"..... Because of irresponsible handling of excrement itself there have been situations like when a team that entered late season had to pitch a tent on a top of the toilet of a previous team, because there was no alternative place. At a high altitude camp, because of the lack of space, people need to pitch their tents very close together, so if the snow or ice melted to make water for meal it is seen yellow."

How disgusting pictures of polluting the natural sites of high Himalayan could be than this?

Yet, the mountain tourism and the scaling attempts of snowy peaks can not be stopped or checked.. The contribution of mountain tourism to the central exchequer is not a small amount. The tourism section provides noticeable percentage in the national GDP and it represents nearly twenty percent of the total foreign exchange earnings. It is stated that adventurous tourists increased three times in 1998 than in 1979 making the increase in revenue a significant figure.

So, we have to enhance well the mountain tourism year by year, side by side keeping an eye on the famous axiom that says 'don't kill the goose that lays golden eggs'. To keep the mountain adventurers fluxing more and more and to restrain from further deterioration of Himalayan Environment, we must start a religious movement of worshipping the Himalayas in the form of cleanings - for cleanliness is the next to godliness. I think the following measures should be practised seriously :

1. Though the presence of God is everywhere, but one should feel and observe the Himalayan region distinctly characterized by His presence. Every person, at least the mountaineers, religious or atheist, must be fully aware of his moral obligations to keep his surroundings unfoiled , must respect (and worship in his way) and should keep the friendly and devotional attitudes towards the Himalayas.
2. All mountaineers (climbers, trekkers, porters and etc.) must keep a religious vow, and utter some praying before they start their adventures trip. They should vow that they will make the Himalaya as much as clean as they do in their temples, churches and their holy places.
3. As Bojan Pollack remarks in his article : " A thought in the relationship between Man and Mountain ", that a mountaineer must hold peaceful and friendly view towards the mountains. They are not his enemies. Neither they stand there for them to come and feel victories. So the Himalayan, the abode of God is there, does not mean that people should think it presents a challenging sport. Instead of that the climber should feel gracious, devotional and respectful, that he is making a visit to the holy place where God dwells. In other word, every climber should think that he is a devoted vowed pilgrim.
4. Everyone who loves nature and is really a lover of Himalayas must seriously protect the irreplaceable nature of the Himalayas by thinking that if his manifest destiny and working hard to keep the Himalayan region busting with life and vigour to lost for ever for the generations to come .

So why don't we make some more additions in the Himalayan codes of conduct adopted by UIAA or at least in the codes of conduct announced by NMA?

Everyone who loves nature and is really a lover of Himalayas must seriously protect the irreplaceable nature of the Himalayas by thinking that if his manifest destiny and working hard to keep the Himalayan region busting with life and vigour to lost for ever for the generations to come .

Mountain Tourism

Prospects, Problems and Strategies

Mrs. Shilu Manandhar Bajracharya

Background :

The importance of mountain tourism in Nepal can be guessed from the fact that modern tourism in Nepal started with mountaineering. The Annapurna I (8091 m.) Expedition in 1921 AD led by Mr. Maurice Herzog must be considered as the beginning of modern tourism era in Nepal. Despite the beginning of mountaineering, tourism in Nepal really was initiated after the dawn of democracy in 1950. Himalayas, the highest mountain range in the world, since then have attracted patience, endurance and perseverance of human kind. Its alluring power has been so great that despite the huge risk, more and more people come every year to accept the eternal challenges posed by the magnificent Himalayas. Alongwith the mountaineering, trekking tourism also grew. Those who cannot climb the mountains, trekking in Nepal provides a unique opportunity to be nearer to the gorgeous Himalayas apart from many other opportunities to enjoy the serene nature, exotic flora and fauna and uniquely hospitable communities ever waiting to greet visitors as 'Gods'. Trekking tourism gained popularity since the sixties and has created such a niche in the world tourism market that even many competitor nations like India and Malaysia have sold Nepal including in their itinerary. This clearly shows the vast potential of mountain tourism in Nepal.

The Existing Situation:

Trekking and mountaineering have become the second most important segment in the tourism market of Nepal as clearly illustrated by the following data :

Table 1
Number of Tourists by Purpose of Visit

Year	Pleasure	Trekking, Mountain-eering	Business	Official	Pilgrim age	Meeting/ Seminars	Others	Total
1975	70,124 (75.9)	12,587 (13.6)	4,911 (5.3)	4,227 (4.6)	-	-	591 (0.6)	92,440 (100)
1980	1,30,600 (80.2)	19,302 (11.8)	5,491 (3.4)	4,654 (2.9)	-	-	2,850 (1.7)	1,62,897 (100)
1985	128,217 (70.0)	28,707 (15.9)	10,416 (5.8)	9,230 (5.1)	-	-	4.419 (2.4)	180,989 (100)
1990	168,552 (66.1)	39,999 (15.7)	11,728 (4.6)	29,416 (11.6)	-	-	5,190 (2.0)	254,885 (100)
1995	183,470 (50.5)	84,524 (23.3)	21,829 (6.0)	20,090 (5.5)	5,257 (1.4)	5,272 (1.5)	42,953 (11.8)	363.395 (100)
1996	209,377 (53.2)	88,945 (22.6)	25,079 (6.4)	20,191 (5.1)	4,802 (1.2)	6,054 (1.5)	39.165 (10.0)	393.613 (100)
1997	249,360 (59.1)	91,525 (21.7)	27,409 (6.5)	24,106 (5.7)	4,068 (1.0)	5,824 (1.4)	19,565 (4.6)	421,857 (100)
1998	261,347 (56.4)	112,644 (24.3)	24,954 (5.4)	22,123 (4.8)	16,164 (3.4)	5,181 (1.1)	21,271 (4.6)	463,684 (100)
1999	345,897 (70.4)	52,925 (10.8)	23,813 (4.8)	24,132 (4.9)	19,198 (3.9)	5,965 (1.2)	19,574 (4.0)	491,504 (100)

Source: Economic Survey 1999 - 2000
(Figures in parenthesis show percentage.)

The proportion of trekking mountaineering tourists has gone up from 13.6% in 1975 to 24.3% in 1998. It is true that in 1999 it was reported that there has been a sharp fall in the share of trekking and mountaineering tourists. Within 23 years (1975 - 1998) the trekking and mountaineering tourists grew by almost 10 times compared to 5 times growth in total tourists. It clearly shows that the pace of growth of trekking and mountaineering tourists during the period is almost double that of average growth of tourism. The annual average growth of trekking and tourism at 6.2% is low compared to total tourism growth of 7.2% per annum if we include 1999 figures. It establishes the importance of the sector through the sharp decline of 1999 also spells out serious problems. If the decline of 1999 is true, it may be solely attributed to increasing law and order problems caused by insurgency. If the situation continues, it may have a serious repercussion on trekking and mountaineering tourism. The deteriorating law and order situation actually may even kill the trekking and mountaineering tourism in Nepal, in which it has been created a world wide niche.

Table 2
Annual Growth Rate

Year	Total	Trekking and Mountaineering
1980	12.0	8.9
1985	2.1	8.3
1990	7.1	6.9
1995	7.4	16.1
1996	8.3	5.2
1997	7.2	2.9
1998	9.9	26.6
1999	6.0	-43.0*
Average	7.2	6.2

*The data for 1999 for trekking and mountaineering shows a sharp decline. However, the average length of stay is reported to have gone up from 10.8 days to 12.8 days. This appear to be highly contradictory as the major cause for higher length of stay in Nepal is trekking and mountaineering. Therefore it is hard to believe that in the year when there has been a sharp decline in trekking and mountaineering tourism, the length of stay of tourists has gone up by 18.5%.

Table 3
Mountaineering in Nepal

Year	No. of Teams	No. of Mountaineers	Size of Employment	Royalty Rs. '000
1980	64	639	7638	843
1985	91	824	8835	3298
1990	120	966	12179	7266
1995	91	624	5195	37307
1996	129	851	4925	101878
1997	120	861	7003	108237
1998	141	974	6942	95479

Source : Economic Survey 1999 – 2000.

The Table 3 shows that mountaineering expeditions are increasing in the seventies and eighties but have shown a stagnating trend in the nineties in terms of number of expeditions and number of mountaineers. One good thing noticed is new countries are coming afore to take this "Himalayan" challenge. It also created a sizable employment opportunities. In the nineties, the revenue from royalty is increasing mainly contributed by change in the rate of royalty. Despite a limited number of tourist arrivals specifically in terms of number, the real benefits from employment and revenue generation is quite phenomenal.

Besides, trekking and mountaineering tourism helps to spread the fruit of development even in isolated and remote regions. Virtually all trekking routes are in remote regions. Any development therein has been mainly contributed by tourism. It also contributes to generate employment and economic opportunities in route. Thus, unlike urban based tourism, trekking and mountaineering take economic opportunities to impoverished and deprived regions. No other segment of tourism has such a ramification in remote area development as trekking and mountaineering.

Prospectus :

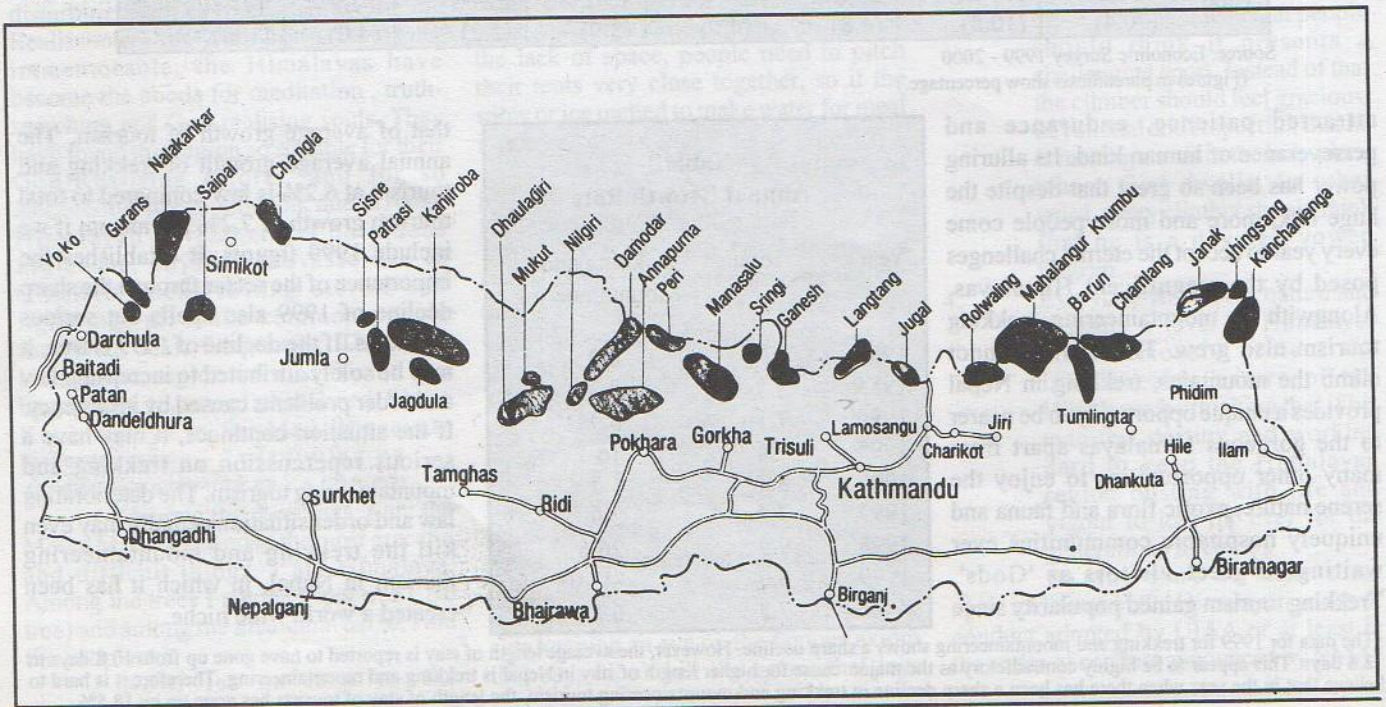
Nepal is naturally endowed with immense potentialities to promote trekking and mountaineering. Nepal not only has eight of the fourteen peaks above 8000 meter height but also 122 peaks above 7000 meters and 1400 peaks above 6000 meters. It is not only Mount Everest but also other famous names like Kanchenjunga, Lhotse, Makalu, Cho Oyu, Manaslu, Annapurna I and Dhaulagiri have been a perennial source of attractions to those who wants to test their endurance by taking this toughest challenge. Nepal also has some of the most beautiful peaks in the world like Machhapuchchre (not permitted for climbing) and Ama Dablum. Some peaks are tall while others are extremly arduous to climb. Yet others pose the challenge of inhospitality. All these continuously endure the patience of the humanity and poses thrills and enchantment. So climbing continues and will continue to attract not only because it is there but also it continuously poses a challenge to humanity.

In respect to trekking also, the present development is limited to Annapurna, Sagarmatha, Langtang and Kanchenjunga regions. There are many other possibilities which could be developed to benefit all. Thus, the prospects are immense and Nepal can really develop packages featuring adventure, challenge, people and locations.

Problems :

Trekking and mountaineering tourism in Nepal, however, is not beset without problems. Some of the major problems are listed below.

1. 1995 tourism policies do not adequately address the issues and problems of trekking and



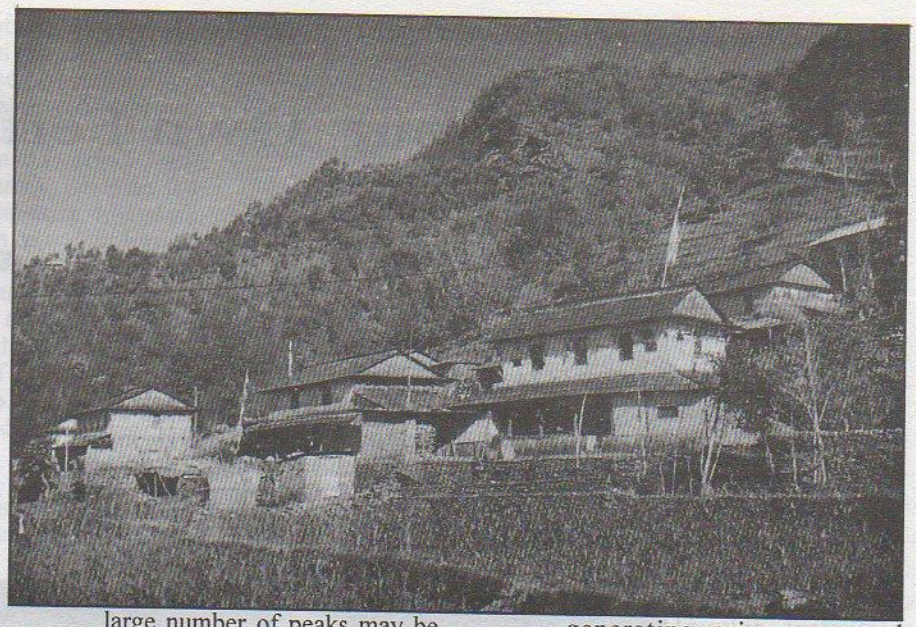
mountaineering tourism.

2. Environmental deterioration, continued rise in waste in the trekking as well as climbing routes, and increasing congestion in popular routes have not helped to allure visitors.
3. Deteriorating law and order situation caused by poor security is increasingly becoming a major threat to this industry and if not addressed properly and adequately could completely wipe out this industry.
4. There is a complete lack of innovativeness in the industry. Opening new peaks and opening new routes are the limits for innovativeness. This has not helped to promote these activities dynamically.
5. Quality of services in many places may not be up to mark. Distinct quality with localised flavours may be missing in and around many routes.

Strategies :

In order to overcome these problems and develop trekking and mountaineering tourism in Nepal, following strategies may prove to be beneficial.

1. Security situation must be improved at least at the trekking routes. Visitors come for adventure and peace and not tension and insecurity. Hence, adequate attntion is required to upgrade the feeling of security.
2. Many peaks and trekking routes are degrading environmentally at a fast pace. The piled up and scattered waste act as distinctors to visitors. They act as eye sores. So, periodic campaigns should be launched to clean and cleanse the trekking trails and climbing routes. Similarly, periodic climbing expeditions should be promoted to bring back waste. Prevention measures should also be taken to reduce the volume of waste itself. The local authorities should also come forward to manage waste. The income from royalties etc. may be allocated to help the cleaning and cleansing process.
3. More importantly, new innovative products need to be developed and promoted. A large number of peaks may be developed to suit adventure, achievement, entertainment and self fulfillment. Some can be developed purely as high risk adventure while others as entertaining sports. Still others could be developed as trekking routes. In the trekking area, trekking routes could be developed as nature treks, wildlife treks, social treks, adventure treks and mixed treks. New routes and alignments could also be developed. Various adventure/climbing competitions may be launched to attract visitors. Alongwith, the advantages gifted by the nature as winter sports could also be developed which is virtually missing or at low key in this part of the world. There are a few innovativeness which could certainly help not only to nature but also promote tourism in the country.
4. Peaks should be closed and opened strategically to ensure (a) cleaning of peaks, (b) allow for regeneration and (c) more importantly limit the access. Such a strategy should help to generate demand more extensively. New and exotic peaks also be opened keeping in view the trend and demand.
5. In view of the importance of trekking and mountaineering, the government should define clean policies incorporating aforementioned strategies.
6. Excessive competition generating price wars and leading to low quality service should be curbed by defining minimum norms for the industry, agencies and facilitators. Any industry, agency or facilitator not confirming up to norms should not be allowed to operate.
7. The government must establish and strengthen the monitoring mechanism to ensure adoption of norms and maintenance of quality.
8. Carrying capacities should be defined and mechanisms developed to limit visitors as per carrying capacity. Efforts are also needed to enhance the carrying capacity.



Conclusion :

Trekking and mountaineering are probably the most important segments of tourism industry in Nepal. The decline in 1999 is really worrying. To overcome such a trend, proper strategies must be adopted. Some of the strategies mentioned above could help expand trekking and tourism in a sustainable and broad based approach. Adequate new alternatives should also be explored and developed to encourage revisit and lengthen the stay. Other activities also may be linked or integrated thus diversifying the interest of visitors and meeting their needs. The government must understand the sensitive nature and work hard not to destabilize any element that could kill the industry.

Protect effectively the mountain environment, its flora, its fauna and its natural resources.

Make Use Your Own Fertilizer Plant

- Sushil Bhattarai
Environment Expert and Member, NMA

Because of the presence of the world's tallest mountain, the Mount Everest (8848m) and the majestic Himalayas, Nepal has become an important tourist destination. Tourists are mostly attracted for mountaineering, trekking, rafting, jungle-safari and site-seeing. Out of the 14 peaks above eight-thousand meters high in the world, nine (9) of them are in Nepal. Tourists are also attracted to Nepal because of her rich biological, cultural and ethnic diversity, and having the World's Heritage sites including Lumbini, the birth-place of Buddha. Kathmandu is also becoming a venue for many scientific meetings, conferences and conventions because of having Birendra Convention Centre with high quality facilities. However, the ever increasing number of tourists have also produced negative impact on the ecology and environment of the mountain. On the other hand, increased population (both local people and tourists) created high demand of firewood causing further deforestation of the nearby forests. This has also caused the shortage of fodder for cattle and litter to make compost for agricultural production. Although chemical fertiliser is in use in Nepal since a few years, it is not easily available and also not affordable to the rural poor. At the same time, it produces long-term negative environmental impact if applied improperly without mixing with compost.



Nitrogen, Phosphorus and Potassium are the main soil nutrients essential for plant growth.

Nitrogen (N)- Nitrogen is one of the major component of soil nutrient for the overall growth of the plant. Atmospheric Nitrogen can be fixed and add to the soil through the root-nodules of leguminous plants such as Acacia, Sesbania and crops like Soya beans, cowpea, etc. Nitrogen is also made available by using chemical fertiliser in the form of Urea, Ammonium Sulphate, Complex salt, etc.

Phosphorus(P)- Phosphorus is another important component of the soil nutrient essential for plant growth. Phosphorus is essential for overall plant growth, seed formation, root development and help to convert sugar into starch in the leaf. Phosphorus (P) is made available in the form of P2O5 (Phosphorus pentaoxide) from Calcium phosphate, Di-ammonium phosphate and Single Superphosphate.

Potassium(K)- Potassium is equally important for plant growth. It is generally found in the soil. It's deficiency can be replaced by adding potassium in the form of Potassium chloride. In Nepalese hills, especially in Shifting-Cultivation, farmers burn agricultural wastes and shrubs to get potassium from the burnt ash.

Research on Fertiliser use in Nepal:

After the World War II, most of the countries, except USA, were suffering from food shortage. Then an achievement was made by the name of "Green Revolution" in agriculture sector, mainly through the application of large amount of chemical fertiliser that contain mainly nitrogen and phosphorus. Later on, with the introduction of improved technology the use of improved hybrid-seed, cultivation of nitrogen-fixing plants, and use of azolla, etc., has further enhanced the Green Revolution.

The crop production (yield /ha) is not promising in Nepal. The increase in yield shown in government documents is not the increase of yield per unit area rather an addition of crop production by converting forest and marginal lands into agriculture. The sustainable increase in crop yield is possible only through intensive agriculture by increasing inputs such as: improved seed and agricultural technique, more application of fertiliser (the average use of chemical fertiliser in Nepal is about 30 kg per hectare) and bringing more land under irrigation. More use of chemical fertiliser not only makes soil acidic and hard but also contaminates water bodies. Other ways to add soil nutrients are through the application of Farm Yard Manure, cultivation of Nitrogen fixing plants, and use of azolla, etc.

The Soil Science Division of Nepal Agriculture Research Council (NARC) has studied on the application of Nitrogen (N), Phosphorus (P2O5) and Potassium (K2O) for improved variety of major crops in Nepal in the ratio: 100:30:30 to produce average 3.8 Mt./ha of rice, 120:50:40 to produce 3.3 Mt./ha of maize, 100:40:30 to produce 3.2 Mt./ha of wheat and 60:45:75 to produce 14 Mt./ha of potato, under normal condition. This figure however, varies depending upon the type of soil, climatic condition, land configuration and its nutrient content. NARC has also done research on Integrated Plant Nutrient Application, i.e,.appropriate use of organic and chemical fertilisers to maintain soil fertility for sustainable and environmentally sound agricultural production. Research has also been done on the traditional use of plant material in rice crops (seed bed and field) such as the leaves and twigs of Artimesia vulgaris (Titepati), Adhatoda vasica (Asuro), Eupatorium glandulosum) and the available percentage of NPK are 2.4: 0.42: 4.9 from Titepati, 4.3: 0.88: 4.49 from Asuro and 2.35: 0.71: 5.43 from Banmara.

Water Pollution:

Water pollution in the hills and

mountains are mostly through the contamination of nitrogen and phosphorus that are produced from human waste (Urine and stool) and from the use of chemical fertiliser. Maintenance of hygiene depends upon the quality of water and improved sanitation by reducing pathogen-transmitting vectors through domestic waste water that contains human and livestock waste and other solid waste (organic and inorganic). Diseases like diarrhoea, hookworm infection, schistosomiasis, trachoma, ascaris, etc are generally occur through water pollution. Contamination of water through sewerage, which contains NPK, is causing Eutrofication in the lakes, example: Phewatal in Pokhara has been polluted by the sewerage discharge from the adjoining restaurants, hotels and lodges, and also from the city.

It is estimated that pollution loads of a person including urine discharge to the sewerage, contains 66 % of nitrogen and 50 % of phosphorus (Sewerage Works Guidelines, Ministry of Construction, Japan, 1996).

The use of Urine:

Urine is pathogen free and has some medicinal value as antiseptic. In Hindu religion, cow's urine is taken as secred and used in several religious occasions.

No research has been done yet on the application of Urine and its nutrient content in Nepal. The Swedish Environmental Protection Board (SEPA), 1995 has analysed human urine and stool as follows (Table 1).

Table: 1 Analysis of nutrient content of human urine and stool

Parameter	Urine g/person/day	Percentage (%)	Stool g/person/day	Percentage (%)	Total Discharge g/person/day	%
Wet weight	900-1200	90	70-140	10	1000-1400	100
Dry weight	60*	63	35	37	95	100
Nitrogen	11.0	88	1.5	12	12.5	100
Phosphorus	1.0	67	0.5	33	1.5	100
Potassium	2.5	71	1.0	29	3.5	100

- A large proportion of this dry material is rapidly bio-degradable and is difficult to get correct figure.

From the table, it shows that Urine contains much higher percentage of Nitrogen (N) 88 % , Phosphorus (P) 67 % and Potassium (K) 71 %, which are very essential as plant nutrient, as compared to that from Stool. If we collect urine separated from stool, and use in agriculture sector, we can reduce the use of synthetic fertiliser, which is not easily available and also very costly.

The traditional use of NPK by the farmers, especially in and around Kathmandu valley is interesting. Till few years, before Kathmandu city had bitumen road around, the farmers from Thimi (Bhaktapur) and Lubu (Patan), after selling their vegetables, used to carry back home soil from the road-side where people (trespassers) urinate. This gives us evidence that farmers in Nepal already knew the use of urine as fertiliser.

The author has already used urine to manure pot plants and vegetables in his kitchen garden. He found the result very promising and thus, recommends that every household should collect his/her urine and apply in the kitchen garden to grow vegetables and flowers. Even public toilets could be made in such a way that urine is separated and use for agricultural crops. This would help the country to enhance agriculture production and create a sustainable society and also save foreign currency used to import costly synthetic fertiliser from foreign countries.

People on trekking and mountaineering routes are mostly engaged in tourist activities such as, porters and tea-shops & lodge operators, leaving their traditional agriculture, while the former being more lucrative and profitable. Dr. Saburo Matusi, from Kyoto University, Japan has designed a special type of toilet, with urine and faeces (stool) separation (fig.1). In Nepal, this type of toilet could be constructed along the trekking and mountaineering routes for tourists. This will not only reduce water pollution but the collected urine would help to cultivate agricultural crops by the people living along such trails. This type of toilet is also feasible in urban areas, as community toilets.

Cost/Benefit:

Let us estimate the population along the Mount Everest trekking and mountaineering route as 1 million(including tourist population)

As per Table 1, the total NPK produced by one person is 15 gms/day

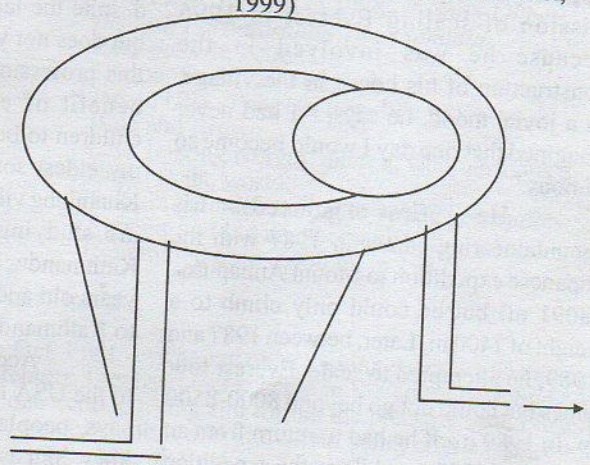
1 million population can produce 10,00,000 x 15 = 150,00,000 gms. i.e., 15 mt.

1 mt. of combined NPK costs about Rs. 35,000 in Kathmandu, which is equal to Rs. 35,000 x 15 = Rs.5,25,000/day, or Rs 191.6 mill per year. i.e., US $ 2.7 mill./ year saving of fertiliser cost in this sector.

The above cost excludes the cost of transportation of fertiliser from Kathmandu, which is almost half the cost of fertilizer in Kathmandu. The cost of pollution control measures, if urine is allowed to be wasted in the sewerage, is also not taken into account.

Similarly, the cost of construction of toilet(fig.1) is not included.

Fig.1 Urine and Stool Separated Toilet (Saburo Matusi, 1999)



Stool in Septic Tank or Bio-gas plant

Urine Collection Tankfor fertillizer

Experiment:

If any one wish to do experiment before making such toilet, simply collect urine in a pot or container. A four litre container will take 2-3 days to fill-up with one person, depending upon how often the person passes urine. It is better to keep the can for another 2 days for chemical reaction and then put in vegetable or pot plants. Application of urine once in two weeks is preferable, and daily application may produce some toxic effect.

Conclusion:

Nitrogen, Phosphorus and Potassium are the basic elements for plant growth in the soil. We are wasting them through sewerage, and involve in heavy cost to neutralise (such as denitrification) in the water bodies (lakes and reservoirs). If we start using urine in agriculture, we would be helping to minimise water pollution and help to enhance agricultural production which ultimately help to build a sustainable society. Nepal is a poor country having 2/3 of its area under mountainous and rugged terrain, this technique would be of great help to the people, both in maintaining clean environment and having readily available fertiliser without any cost involvement.

Reference:

1. Dhruva Joshy, 1997, Soil Sc. Section, NARC, Nepal. Soil Fertility and Fertiliser Use in Nepal.
2. ICIMOD Occasional Paper No.21, 1992, The Land, the Farmer and the Future: A Soil Fertility Management Strategy for Nepal.
3. Saburo Matsui, 1999, Kyoto University, Japan, Changing the Concept of Sewerage Works for Sustainable Society, paper submitted to the "International Symposium on Efficient Water Use in Urban Areas- Innovative Ways of Finding Water for Cities" 8-10 June 1999, Kobe, Japan.

Appa Sherpa
'I will scale Mt. Everest three or four times more'

Appa Sherpa has made a unique world record by successfully scaling Mt. Everest eleven times. Prior to the 1990s, no one had heard about Appa Sherpa and whatever achievements and records he made was in the last decade that is in the 1990s. He first successfully scaled Everest in 1990, with Peter Hillary, son of the famous mountaineer Edmund Hillary. After this first successful ascent of Everest he scaled the highest peak eleven times by 2000. He did not attempt to climb the peak only in 1996 otherwise every year saw him going for the ascent. Appa says that he could not go on the mission of scaling Everest in 1996 because he was involved in the construction of his house in the village. In a jovial mood, he says, " I had never imagined that one day I would become so famous."

He first started his mountaineering career in 1987 with the Japanese expedition to Mount Annapurna (8091 m) but he could only climb to a height of 7400 m. Later, between 1987 and 1989, he attempted to scale Everest four times but could not go beyond 8000-8500 m. In 1989 itself he had to return from an altitude of 6500 m. while on the expedition to Mount Dhaulagiri (8167 m). But in the autumn 1990 he successfully scaled Cho Oyu (8201 m) with an expedition team from Spain. After this successful ascent, he has climbed Everest eleven times till date. In 1998, he was twice atop the peak of Everest. In a reply to the query about why he had not ventured to climb other Himalayan peaks, he says, "I love Everest very much and my inclination is towards it. Moreover, climbing Everest is better compared to others both in terms of money and fame."

Born in Solukhumbu district of eastern Nepal in 1960, Appa Sherpa is the son of Lopsang Sherpa. Appa Sherpa is happily married with two sons and two daughters. Among his four brothers, his brother Aarita Sherpa has also scaled Everest thrice with Appa in 1995, 1998 and 2000. Appa says that he has had to embrace this mountaineering career despite the fact that there are great risks but does not want his children to take up this profession. "I did not have the full benefit of education but I want my children to be fully educated. At present my eldest son is studying in Class 8 in Khumjung village. One son and a daughter are studying in a boarding school of Kathmandu. My youngest daughter is six years old and I'm planning to bring her to Kathmandu for her education."

According to Appa, he has been to the USA twice. In the foreign land, he says, people greatly respected him and knew him as the person who has climbed Mt. Everest many times. The people and even journalists asked him many questions but due to the lack of education he is not able to express his ideas and experience to them and this makes him very sad. This is the reason why Appa says that when he is on a foreign tour he always feels the urge to return to his own country. This year too Appa is visiting USA on the invitation of his friends there. Recalling his experience in USA, Appa says, "I feel happy when my American friends introduce me to others saying that I have successfully scaled Everest ten times but when they ask me about the facilities that I receive in Nepal I feel quite ashamed to reply. They feel quite surprised that a person who has climbed Everest so many times is ignored by the government." According to Appa, his well wishers also feel that he should receive recognition and awards from the government but I laugh and say that I don't know anything about this. But he believes that one day the government will give him

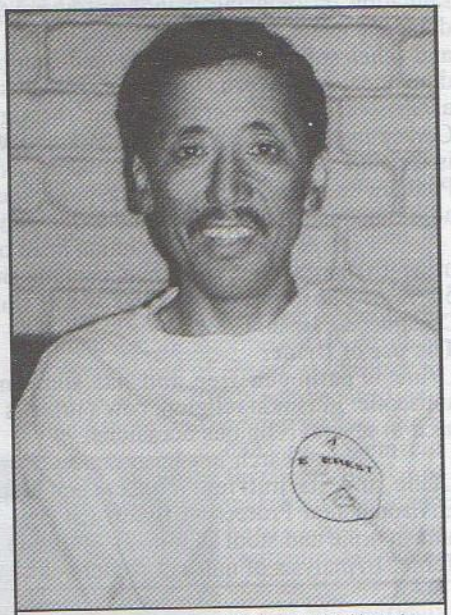


Photo : Prami Shrestha

Appa has a great desire in his heart. About this, he says, " I have a great desire to go to the Royal Palace and have an audience with His Majesty the King but I don' know how this will be fulfilled.

Appa feels that Nepali mountaineers in the mission of climbing Everest not only have created records which have given them personal benefits but has also led to the promotion and publicity of Nepal in the world. He wants to ascend Everest three or four times more. In this regard, He says, "Now I also have to pay attention to my age. My wife says that as the government doesn't do anything for you despite your mountaineering achievements so why to go on doing it. She also says that if something happens



Appa breaks a record on Mount Everest on 24 May, 2000

to me what would she do. I feel that she is speaking the truth. Still I will scale Mt. Everest three or four times more." Accepting the fact that she does not want to send Appa on expeditions, his wife Yangjee Sherpa says, "It is better if Appa does not go to scale the Himalayan peaks. Every year I have been telling him not to go but he doesn't agree. .....We never quarrel on this issue. We never quarrel."

Appa feels that descending is more difficult than climbing. In his opinion, not only making the ascent but successfully coming down is also important. He says, "A pilot should be capable of not only flying to heights but also should be able to make a successful landing." For the first three times Appa used artificial oxygen but in all the later expeditions he did not need it.

In his sixteen attempts to climb Everest he achieved success eleven times. He says that his first successful ascent of Everest was the most difficult. Besides this, as he himself had to make the path, climbing Everest was difficult in the years 1994, 1995, 1997 and 1998. As for climbing Everest from the north and south side, in Appa's opinion reaching the peak from the Nepal side is steep but the distance is short. Going from the China side the route is convenient but the distance great and strong wind blows. He feels it easier to climb Everest from the China side.

ppa says that now the route to Everest has become quite clean. This year's 'Environment Everest Expedition 2000' of USA, in which Appa also participated, did much to contribute to the cleanliness campaign. 'The Environment Everest Expedition 2000' consisted of a clearing team of 22 Sherpas and another climbing team of 18 Sherpas and 12 climbers. Among them including Appa and 9 other Sherpas together with James M. Williams (USA), Francaise Slakey (USA), Lily Richardson Leonard (Hongkong, China) successfully reached the peak of Everest. The expedition gathered and brought back 632 disposed oxygen cylinders from South Col and above. From Camp I and II alone about 1600 kg. other items thrown by earlier expeditions were carried down. Among them, about 800 Kg. of the rubbish could not be burnt so they were carried and handed over to Sagarmatha Pollution Control Committee (SPCC) for destruction and other goods like tin, plastic, batteries, small gas tanks, pieces of the ladders, oxygen cylinders. etc. have been brought to Kathmandu to be dispatched to USA. This time, Appa says, the cleaning campaign was quite successful because the Sherpas put in their best of efforts as they were paid US $ 7 per kilo for collecting the disposed items.

It is hard to believe for anyone with such an ever smiling thin person with polite behaviour and simple manners like Appa could have undertaken the tough career of mountaineering and created a record of its own kind by scaling the highest peak of the world within a short span of only ten years. Appa is still moving forward. All the best wishes to Appa!

APPA SHERPA

Name		Mr. Appa Sherpa
Date of Birth	:	1960
Education	:	Class 4
Training	:	No formal mountaineering training
Occupation	:	Climbing
Family	:	Wife, 2 sons aged 13 and 11 and 2 daughters aged 9 and 6.
Hobby	:	Film
Medal/Decorations : -		*TAAN Antarrashtriya Sagarmatha Pursashkar* (with Nrs. 10,000) in 1998- *Pasang Lhamu Bishesh Parbatorohan Yuva Samman Purashkar* in 2000
Language Known	:	Sherpa, Nepali and English
Travel	:	Japan, USA, People's Republic of China
Favourite Colour	:	Blue and Brown
Favourite Leader/Person	:	Late Tenzing Norgay Sherpa, who introduced Nepal to the world.
Aim	:	To train mountaineering to young generation
First Expedition	:	Annapurna I but unsuccessful (Summitted upto 7,400 m. in 1987)

Feeling with top of Everest First Time :

In fact, I felt very happy on achieving success after many attempts. I realised that success in life could be achieved if one kept on trying and for me the pleasure of the first successful climb is still more than being on the peak for the eleventh time.

Unforgettable Moment : So fare I did not feel such moment.

Address :

a) Thame, Namche VDC
Solukhumbu District, Nepal.

b) Jyatha Tole, Kathmandu.
Tel # 247750, 424249

Signature :

Successful Expeditions of Appa Sherpa

Year	Mountain	Height in Meter	Season	Country of Team
1990	Cho Oyu	8201	Autumn	Spain
1990	Everest (South Col)	8848	Spring	New Zealand
1991	Everest (South col)	8848	Spring	USA
1992	Everest (South East)	8848	Spring	USA
1992	Everest (South East)	8848	Autumn	USA
1993	Everest (South East)	8848	Spring	USA
1994	Everest (South East)	8848	Autumn	Japan
1995	Everest (South East)	8848	Spring	USA
1997	Everest (South East)	8848	Spring	Indonesia
1998	Everest (South Col)	8848	Spring	USA
1999	Everest (North)	8848	Spring	USA
2000	Everest (South East)	8848	Spring	USA

(In conversation with Dr. Hari Prasad Shrestha)

to me what would she do. I feel that she is speaking the truth. Still I will scale Mt. Everest three or four times more." Accepting the fact that she does not want to send Appa on expeditions, his wife Yangjee Sherpa says, "It is better if Appa does not go to scale the Himalayan peaks. Every year I have been telling him not to go but he doesn't agree. .....We never quarrel on this issue. We never quarrel."

Appa feels that descending is more difficult than climbing. In his opinion, not only making the ascent but successfully coming down is also important. He says, "A pilot should be capable of not only flying to heights but also should be able to make a successful landing." For the first three times Appa used artificial oxygen but in all the later expeditions he did not need it.

In his sixteen attempts to climb Everest he achieved success eleven times. He says that his first successful ascent of Everest was the most difficult. Besides this, as he himself had to make the path, climbing Everest was difficult in the years 1994, 1995, 1997 and 1998. As for climbing Everest from the north and south side, in Appa's opinion reaching the peak from the Nepal side is steep but the distance is short. Going from the China side the route is convenient but the distance great and strong wind blows. He feels it easier to climb Everest from the China side.

ppa says that now the route to Everest has become quite clean. This year's 'Environment Everest Expedition 2000' of USA, in which Appa also participated, did much to contribute to the cleanliness campaign. 'The Environment Everest Expedition 2000' consisted of a clearing team of 22 Sherpas and another climbing team of 18 Sherpas and 12 climbers. Among them including Appa and 9 other Sherpas together with James M. Williams (USA), Francaise Slakey (USA), Lily Richardson Leonard (Hongkong, China) successfully reached the peak of Everest. The expedition gathered and brought back 632 disposed oxygen cylinders from South Col and above. From Camp I and II alone about 1600 kg. other items thrown by earlier expeditions were carried down. Among them, about 800 Kg. of the rubbish could not be burnt so they were carried and handed over to Sagarmatha Pollution Control Committee (SPCC) for destruction and other goods like tin, plastic, batteries, small gas tanks, pieces of the ladders, oxygen cylinders. etc. have been brought to Kathmandu to be dispatched to USA. This time, Appa says, the cleaning campaign was quite successful because the Sherpas put in their best of efforts as they were paid US $ 7 per kilo for collecting the disposed items.

It is hard to believe for anyone with such an ever smiling thin person with polite behaviour and simple manners like Appa could have undertaken the tough career of mountaineering and created a record of its own kind by scaling the highest peak of the world within a short span of only ten years. Appa is still moving forward. All the best wishes to Appa!

APPA SHERPA

Name		Mr. Appa Sherpa
Date of Birth	:	1960
Education	:	Class 4
Training	:	No formal mountaineering training
Occupation	:	Climbing
Family	:	Wife, 2 sons aged 13 and 11 and 2 daughters aged 9 and 6.
Hobby	:	Film
Medal/Decorations : -		*TAAN Antarrashtriya Sagarmatha Pursashkar* (with Nrs. 10,000) in 1998- *Pasang Lhamu Bishesh Parbatorohan Yuva Samman Purashkar* in 2000
Language Known	:	Sherpa, Nepali and English
Travel	:	Japan, USA, People's Republic of China
Favourite Colour	:	Blue and Brown
Favourite Leader/Person	:	Late Tenzing Norgay Sherpa, who introduced Nepal to the world.
Aim	:	To train mountaineering to young generation
First Expedition	:	Annapurna I but unsuccessful (Summitted upto 7,400 m. in 1987)

Feeling with top of Everest First Time :

In fact, I felt very happy on achieving success after many attempts. I realised that success in life could be achieved if one kept on trying and for me the pleasure of the first successful climb is still more than being on the peak for the eleventh time.

Unforgettable Moment : So fare I did not feel such moment.

Address :

a) Thame, Namche VDC
Solukhumbu District, Nepal.

b) Jyatha Tole, Kathmandu.
Tel # 247750, 424249

Signature :

Successful Expeditions of Appa Sherpa

Year	Mountain	Height in Meter	Season	Country of Team
1990	Cho Oyu	8201	Autumn	Spain
1990	Everest (South Col)	8848	Spring	New Zealand
1991	Everest (South col)	8848	Spring	USA
1992	Everest (South East)	8848	Spring	USA
1992	Everest (South East)	8848	Autumn	USA
1993	Everest (South East)	8848	Spring	USA
1994	Everest (South East)	8848	Autumn	Japan
1995	Everest (South East)	8848	Spring	USA
1997	Everest (South East)	8848	Spring	Indonesia
1998	Everest (South Col)	8848	Spring	USA
1999	Everest (North)	8848	Spring	USA
2000	Everest (South East)	8848	Spring	USA

(In conversation with Dr. Hari Prasad Shrestha)

Lhakpa Sherpa atop Mt. Sagarmatha



The team leader of the Nepalese Women Millennium Everest Expedition, Spring 2000, Miss Lhakpa Sherpa, 27, successfully scaled the 8,848 metre high Mt. Sagarmatha. Sherpa, a resident of Balakharka, Ward No. 5 of Makalu Village Development Committee of Sankhuwasabha district ascended to the summit at 6:30 A.M. on May 18.

Of the Nepalese women climbers who had attempted to scale Mt. Sagarmatha in the past, only Pasang Lhamu Sherpa was successful in her bid to reach the top six years back. Sherpa who established the record of being the first woman climber to scale Sagarmatha had lost her life while returning to the base camp.

The five-member Nepalese women expedition team comprising of Lhakpa Sherpa, Mingma Yangzi Sherpa, Dawa Yangzi Sherpa, Dolma and Kasang Dikki Sherpa had been seen off from Kathmandu on April 8.

Lhakpa Sherpa received her mountaineering training in Manang and had earlier successfully scaled the Mera and Nawal peaks. She comes from a family of seven sisters and three brothers. She is the seventh child in the family and was born in 1973. Lhakpa joined the adventure industry in 1992.

Men climbers Ang Phurba Sherpa, 40, of Thame of Namche VDC-4, And Pasang Sherpa, 32, of Thame, Namche VDC- 7, and Ang Mingma Sherpa, 30, of Hilajung Namche VDC-9 have also successfully reached the summit along with Lhakpa.

The five member Nepalese Women Millennium Sagarmatha Expedition, Spring 2000 was organized by Sushma Koirala Memorial Trust.

After Tenzing Norgay Sherpa and Edmund Hillary reached the Sagarmatha summit in 1953, May 29 for the first time, 874 climbers have already reached to the top of the world's highest peak. Hundred and eighty climbers have so far lost their lives in the unpredictable slopes of Mt. Sagarmatha.

Juko Tabei of Japan was the first woman to scale Sagarmatha. She had won the prestigious crown in 1975. Fifty-two women climbers from different nations have so far scaled the world's highest peak.

Pemba third Nepali woman to conquer the tallest peak

How much does a single day mean to a woman huffing and puffing her way up the treacherous slippery and snowy slopes of the world's highest peak, Mt. Everest?

Very much, if you were Pema Dolma Sherpa. For just by a single day, Pema had to console herself to become the third Nepalese woman to conquer the world's tallest peak, Mt. Everest.

If Lhakpa Sherpa, 27, the team leader of the Nepalese Women Millennium Everest Expedition Spring 2000, stood on top of Mt. Everest on May 18, then Pema Dolma Sherpa, 30, surveyed the world as far as her eyes could see from the highest pinnacle of the world on May 19.

Though Pema, who hails from Namche VDC, Solukhumbu district, is now the third Nepalese woman, after Pasang Lhamu Sherpa and Lhakpa Sherpa, to have scaled the Third Pole, she will be holding the national record of being the very first Nepalese woman to



successfully climb Mt. Everest from the North Face from the Tibet Autonomous Region of China.

She reached the 8,848 meter pinnacle of Mt. Everest at 9:20 A.M. on 19th of May, 2000.

Pema summitted Mt. Everest from the Chinese side as member of the Swiss Everest Expedition Spring 2000, according to Ang Tshering Sherpa, Agent of the China Tibet Mountaineering Association and Chairman of the Asian Trekking Company which is associated with the Swiss expedition.

Like Lhakpa Sherpa, who pipped her to becoming the second Nepalese woman to successfully climb Mt. Everest by a single day, Pema is not a rookie as far as climbing mountains is concerned. She had been climbing the Alps of Europe in the past.

The Swiss Everest Expedition was led by Karl Kobler and had 12 climbing members, including the leader. The team had left for the Everest Base Camp from Kathmandu on April 12, 2000. The Swiss Everest Expedition Spring 2000 was organized by the Iceland Trekking and Expedition, Nepal.

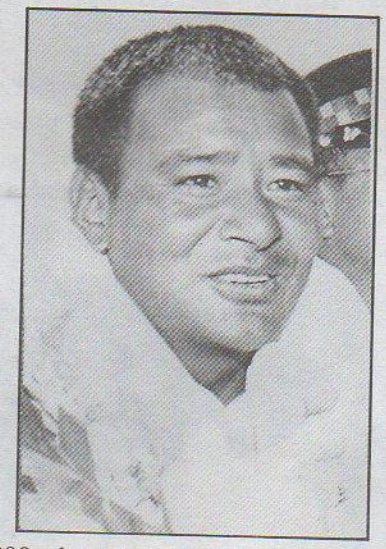
Babu Chiri : highest no. of world records

This Spring Babu Chhiri Sherpa became the first peson to hold the highest number of world records in conquering Mt. Sagarmatha on May 21 at 8.56 a.m. he set foot atop the world's highest peak setting a new record for the fastest climb on the mountain. Despite unfavourable weather condition it took him only 16 hours and 56 minutes from the Base Camp to reach the pinnacle. "Strong winds and extreme cold at the South Summit delayed me by almost an hour," he said.

Normally, other climbers take some four to five days with breaks in between to scale the 8,848 meters mountain. "My familiarity with the route helped me achieve this record," Babu Chhiri said. The May 21 summit was his tenth successful climb to the Mt. Sagarmatha.

Only three mountaineers in the world have records of assaulting the mountain ten times and more. Apart from Babu Chhiri, mountaineering veteran And Rita Sherpa, popularly called the 'Snow Leopard', is the first person to summit Mt. Sagarmatha for ten times. Another Nepalese, Appa Sherpa holds the record of climbing the mountain for the most times. On May 24, Appa stepped on the Roof of the World for the eleventh time.

Babu Chhiri broke the record made by Nepalese Kaji Sherpa back in



1998 when Kaji had speed-climbed the mountain in 20 hours and 24 minutes. "But I am not in competition with anybody," said the modest Babu Chhiri.

"I am happy that compatriot broke my record, the national pride of having a mountaineering record is safe with Nepal for the time being," said Kaji Sherpa. Kaji Sherpa did not climb any mountain this season. "But I have not taken retirement, I will try to improve my timing, but mind you, I am not in a competition with Babu," he said.

In the first week of May last year Babu set a world record by spending the longest time of 21 hours atop Mt. Sagarmatha (Mt. Everest), one hour beyond his initial target. He summitted the world's tallest peak on May 6, 1999 at 10:55 a.m. and camped on the icy summit till 7:55 a.m. the next day despite medical claims that it would be impossible for a human to spend more than an hour at a height of 8,848 metres without supplementary oxygen.

In his ten climbs of the mountain, six times from Nepalese side and four times from the Chinese side, Babu has never used supplementary oxygen.

"I could have stayed longer, but I ran out of gas and water," he had said in his return last Spring. Not only the medicine practitioners, but meteorologists as well had reservation about Babu's record setting bid to Everest. Normally wind of 55 knots atop Sagarmatha are considered dangerous, but Babu Chhiri Sherpa climbed and spent 21 hours there when the speed of the wind measured above 65 knots on the anemometer.

Babu Chhiri also holds the world record of ascending Mt. Sagarmatha twice in the same mountaineering season. In 1995 Spring, he ascended the mountain twice within two weeks from the Chinese side of Everest's North Ridge. In May 1999, he scaled the majestic height of 8,848 meters twice within three weeks from the Nepalese side.

Ram Krishna Shrestha on top



Ram Krishna Shrestha, 22, a member of Everest Expedition 2000 A.D. New Record, has successfully scaled the 8,848 metres high Mt. Everest.

Shrestha, a resident of Kathmandu Municipality Ward No. 15, reached the peak through South East Ridge on May 21 at 10:40 A.M. and spent five minutes there.

Shrestha had left for the world's tallest peak from Camp IV on May 20 at 11:00 PM.

Meanwhile, Temba Chhiri Sherpa-the youngest climber aspiring to be atop the tallest peak- abandoned his endeavour due to exhaustion and frostbiting, Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation Ministry said. Temba Chhiri, 14 reached up to Hillary Step accompanied by Ram Krishna Shrestha.

The seven-member expedition team was permitted to climb the Everest from South East Ridge route under the leadership of Bhakta Bahadur Thakuri, 49, the ministry said.

Paul Frank Giorgio, an investor from the USA and Nima Gombu Sherpa, 34, of Gaurishankar Village Development Committee, Dolakha also scaled the tallest mounain on May 24 at 06.30 AM.

Glorgio and Sherpa, the members of a nine-member H.G. I Everest Expedition from the United Kingdom led by Henry B. Todd, had started from Camp IV on May 23 and climbed the Everest from South East Ridge route.

Andrew Lock, a member of H.G. III Everest Expedition from the U.K. led by Patrick J. Kenny, also summitted the tallest peak on May 24 at 06 .30 AM. using the same route. Andrew had left for the peak on May 23 at 10.00 PM.

Meanwhile, Christian Kuntner, Stephan Andres and Abele Blanc of Italian Makalu Expedition team summitted 8, 463 metres Mt. Makalu on May 15.

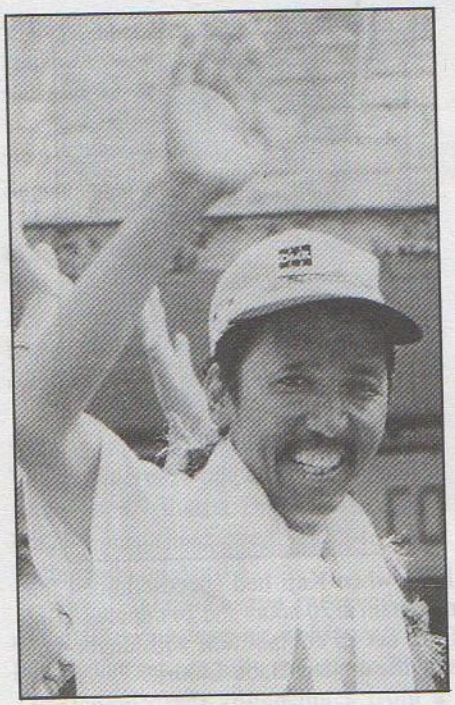
Similarly, Steve Hartland, Mathew Dickinson and Mark Winkworth of Jagged Globe Baruntse 2000 Expedition scaled the 7, 129 metres Mt. Baruntse on May 15.

Climbs are not for records: Appa

Appa Sherpa made international headlines when he scaled the majestic height of 8,848 meters Mt. Everest for the eleventh times on May 24, one assault beyond the previous record made by mountaineering veteran Ang Rita Sherpa. Ang Rita, popularly known as the Snow Leopard, officially announced his retirement last year due to illness.

How did he feel in breaking the record set by his "hero"? Appa said his climbs are not for records. "A son's responsibility is to add to the family wealth earned by his father. I am, as Ang Rita's junior, happy that I could make to the top for the eleventh time, furthering the record for the most climbs of the mountain," Appa said with a shy smile.

During his short tete-a-tete with the press, Appa repeated that his climbs were not for breaking or making records, "Sagarmatha is the nation's identity internationally. To perpetual our international identity as the country of mountaineers I will continue to climb," he said. He also said that he has not planned his future, but he intends to continue his career as far as his health allows.



His younger brother Arita Sherpa, three time Mt. Sagarmatha summitteer, accompanied him in his two climbs, of 1995 and 2000. Appa said he wanted his children to find careers in other fields than take to risky mountain climbing.

In this expedition, Appa stepped atop Sagarmatha twice. On May 24, he first stepped on the top at 8 a.m. to fix the climbing rope for his team-mates and returned back to the Hillary Step. However, , the strong winds blew away the rope and he had to climb to the top again at 9 a.m. to fix the ropes. "I leave it to the press to decide if it were two separate climbs on the mountain," he said.

Appa Sherpa's Sagarmatha (Mr. Everest) saga began back in 1990. In the Spring a decade back he ascended, for the first time, the Roof of the World with a New Zealand team led by veteran climber Bob Hall. Hall succumbed to an Everest disaster six years later in 1996. Since then, Appa has succeeded in each of his Everest attempts.

Mountaineer congratulated

Main opposition party leader in the House of Representatives Madhav Kumar Nepal has on behalf of the CPN-UML congratulated Appa Sherpa, Babu Chiri Sherpa on setting a world record on fastest climbing of Mt. Sagarmatha and women climbers Lhakpa Sherpa and Pemba Dolma Sherpa on successfully scaling the world's highest peak recently.

At the House of Representative meeting on May 22, opposition leader Mr. Nepal said the Nepalese climbers have enhanced the prestige of Nepal by conquering the world's highest peak.

Beding Village Sherpas Set Records

Twenty-eight Sherpas in Beding Village of Gaurishankar VDC Ward No. 1 of Dolakha have between them scaled the world's tallest summit, Mt. Sagarmatha, 70 times.

Of them, Nwanyolden Sherpa has set a record for scaling the 8848 metre peak in winter.

Late Lopsan Janbu Sherpa, who succeeded in climbing the peak four times, set three different records. He died at the age of 24, in an avalanche in the Tibet region while returning from the fourth climb.

He climbed the mountain in Sherpa and Kunphu costumes as well as in the national dress, Daura Suruwal.

In addition, Dawa Tashi and Nima Dorje of the same VDC climbed the summit seven times each, Minma Chhiring Sherpa six times, Norbu Sherpa aZnd Sonam Chhiring Sherpa five times each, Pasang Chhiring, Dawa Chhiri and Nimagumbu Sherpa four times each, Minma Norbu, Nima Tempa, Pasang Kidar, Pemba Dorje, Nimagyaljen and Phinju Norbu Sherpa twice each and Anga Phurwa, Angatemba, Gylbuphinjo, Nyawang Tenje, Nyawang Phurwa, Danu Sherpa and Angchhiri Sherpa once each.

According to Nyanyolden Sherpa, Pemba Dorje, Dawa Tasi, Gyalbu and Minma Tasi were the first Nepalese to scale Godwin Austin (K2), the second highest peak in the world.

We enhanced the pride of Nepal by successfully carrying out expeditions on Mount Everest in different styles, as the risk of our lives. And it was Japan which accorded our endeavors high respect in contrast to His Majesty's Government, which only offered citations, first successful Everest climber from Beding Village Nyanyolden, said.

He also set a record by scaling Dhaulagiri 1 by the south-west ridge, the most arduous route to the peak.

Situated at the altitude of 4, 000 meters above sea level, there is a shortage of arable land in Beding Village. Nothing can be grown there other than potatoes and radish. The locals have to migrate thrice a year because of the climate.

The government should give special consideration to this village and launch a development project there, Norbu Sherpa, another mountaineer, says.

Some 800 mountaineers have reached the world's highest summit so far, according to the Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil aviation'.

Of the total number of successful expeditions, 181 were from among the Nepalese, according to Ang Phurba Sherpa of Wilderness Experience Pvt. Ltd.

Nepal Mountaineering Association

TRAINING & EXPEDITION COMMITTEE

Pasang Sherpa	Convenor
Ang Norbu Sherpa	Member
Prem Gurung	Member
Lhakpa Norbu Sherpa	Member
Dolma Sherpa	Member

WELFARE COMMITTEE

Ang Phurba Sherpa	Convenor
Ang Rita Tshiring Sherpa	Member
Ang Thupten Sherpa	Member
Kaji Sherpa	Member
Shree Sharma "Moorkha"	Member

ENVIRONMENT CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

Ang Phuri Sherpa	Convenor
Dr.Shanker Raj Pant	Member
Ang Jangbu Sherpa	Member
P.T. Sherpa (Kerung)	Member
Narayan Sundar Shrestha	Member
Ang J.P. Lama	Counsellor

PUBLICATION & PUBLICITY COMMITTEE

Dr. Hari Prasad Shrestha	Convenor
Ramesh Tiwari	Member
Santa Kumar Subba	Member
Hari Bangsha Kirant	Member
Bam Singh Rana Bhat	Member

FOREIGN RELATION COMMITTEE

Phur Gyaltze Sherpa	Convenor
Ang Kami Sherpa	Member
Vijay B. Shrestha	Member
Chhewang Sherpa	Member

INTERNATIONAL MOUNTAIN MUSEUM COMMITTEE

Jhalak Thapa	Convenor
Haridhoj Tulachan	Member
Dinesh Gurung	Member
Jal Krishna Shestha	Member
Santa Bir Tamang Lama	Member

MOUNTAIN RESCUE COMMITTEE

Lhakpa Dorjee Sherpa	Convenor
Babu Chiri Sherpa	Member
Dr. Lekh Raj Subedi	Member
Rinji Norbu Sherpa	Member
Da Gombu Sherpa	Member

KAKANI MOUNTAINEERS MEMORIAL PARK COMMITTEE

	Convenor
Yankila Sherpa	Member
Prachanda Man Shrestha	Member
Bishwajeet Kiranti	Member
Ashok Basnet	Member
Diwas Pokharel	Member
Representative, MoCTCA	Member

PLANNING & FUND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Nimi Sherpa	Convenor
Kirpasur Sherpa	Member
Mingma Doma Sherpa	Member
Maitri Ratna Tuladhar	Member
Buddhashree Lama	Member

जि.प्र.का. काठमाडौं दर्ता नं. २०५/२०५६ ०५७

GREETINGS



On the auspicious occasion of
the 30th Birthday of
HRH Crown Prince
DIPENDRA BIR BIKRAM SHAH DEV
we extend our loyal felicitations
and pray for His Royal Highness's
long life, good health
and
happiness

TASHI JANGBU SHERPA
President
and
NEPAL MOUNTAINEERING ASSOCIATION FAMILY