Vol 20 / No. 23/ May 2023

Nepal Parbat

Mighty Mt. Everest: 70 Years of Epic Triumph





NEPAL MOUNTAINEERING ASSOCIATION

© Da Gombu Sherpa

Island Peak, 6189m

Photo by Dabindra Tamang



नेपाल
Nepal

राष्ट्रपति
The President

May 11, 2023

The Message

It is my great pleasure to extend my warmest greetings to the Nepal Mountaineering Association (NMA) and also to all the contributors for the publication of 'Nepal Parbat' magazine on the occasion of the celebration of the *Everest Platinum Jubilee*. I am also happy to take the notice of the fact that this significant occasion marks the 70th anniversary of the first successful ascension of the Mount Everest (Sagarmatha) by Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay on May 29, 1953. Therefore, it is a historic moment of immense joy as well as pride for all of us.

As I understand, the NMA, which is an integral part of Nepal's tourism industry, has significantly been contributing to the country's economy and employment realms. But, I must underline here that, while other nations too suffered enormously, the impact of COVID pandemic on our tourism industry had been devastating. The pitfaslls are multifaceted and owing to which Nepal currently faces a huge challenge in recouping her economy.

In this gloomy situation of nation facing the economic adversaries, all sectors pertaining to financial domain, including the tourism, require to work shoulder to shoulder, yet coherently. In the specific case of the tourism domain, all stakeholders- governmental as well as informal sectors, need to make concerted efforts to help country's economy to rebound.

Given the pandemic situation returning to normalcy, I encourage all, particularly the NMA, to work with a greater degree of vigor and zeal to attract explicitly the international tourists into Nepal. I should also mention here that, as our two neighbours India and China are now the largest economies of the world, Nepal has huge prospect of reaping the benefits from the inbound adventure tourism since Nepal has been blessed with the majestic mountains and natural beauties.

With these words of felicitations and encouragements to the NMA, I would like to I express my best wishes for the brighter future of adventure tourism in the country.

Thank you!

Ramchandra Paudel



Ramchandra Paudel
Rt. Honorable President



Mera peak, 6470m
Photo by Pasang Sherpa

Kathmandu, Nepal

Prime Minister

Message

It gives me immense pleasure to learn that the Nepal Mountaineering Association (NMA), the only national alpine club of Nepal, has published a special issue of 'Nepal Parbat' on the Mt. Everest Platinum Jubilee Celebration and Summiteers Summit which is to be celebrated on the special occasion of the 16th International Sagarmatha Day commemorating on May 29, 2023.

Tourism industry cannot remain aloof from the severe impact left by the global pandemic of COVID 19 on our whole economic scenario. Decrease in the inflow of tourists and its related activities followed by the hike of unemployment is one of the aftermaths of COVID 19. Hence, our whole nation is in need of such promotional activities, which can be of great support measures to reinstate our tourism as before. In such situation, the initiation of Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation to organize the 16th International Sagarmatha (Everest) Day, Mt. Everest Platinum Jubilee Celebration and Summiteers' Summit is quite appreciative.

The worthwhile contribution of our Sherpas to our mountain tourism have made them true heroes of mountains. Hence, they deserve the utmost respect and honor. The 16th International Sagarmatha (Everest) Day, Mt. Everest Platinum Jubilee Celebration and Summiteers' Summit is an appropriate platform for us to remember the valuable contribution of Sherpas. The gathering of national and international Everest summiteers in this August ceremony in the defensive state of COVID 19 will surely disseminate the message of our readiness to welcome tourists. It is a must step of ours to revive our tourism economy. I am overwhelmed to be part of the grand event that is set to take place in the country, which I believe will undoubtedly help in the promotion of the tourism industry.

I extend my best wishes to the NMA and its initiatives for the development of the mountains and its people. The government of Nepal is always willing to assist and oversee any possible ways to aid in their growth and promotion. I am optimistic that Nepal Parbat will cover various issues and aspects of the mountains, contributing to mountain tourism in particular.

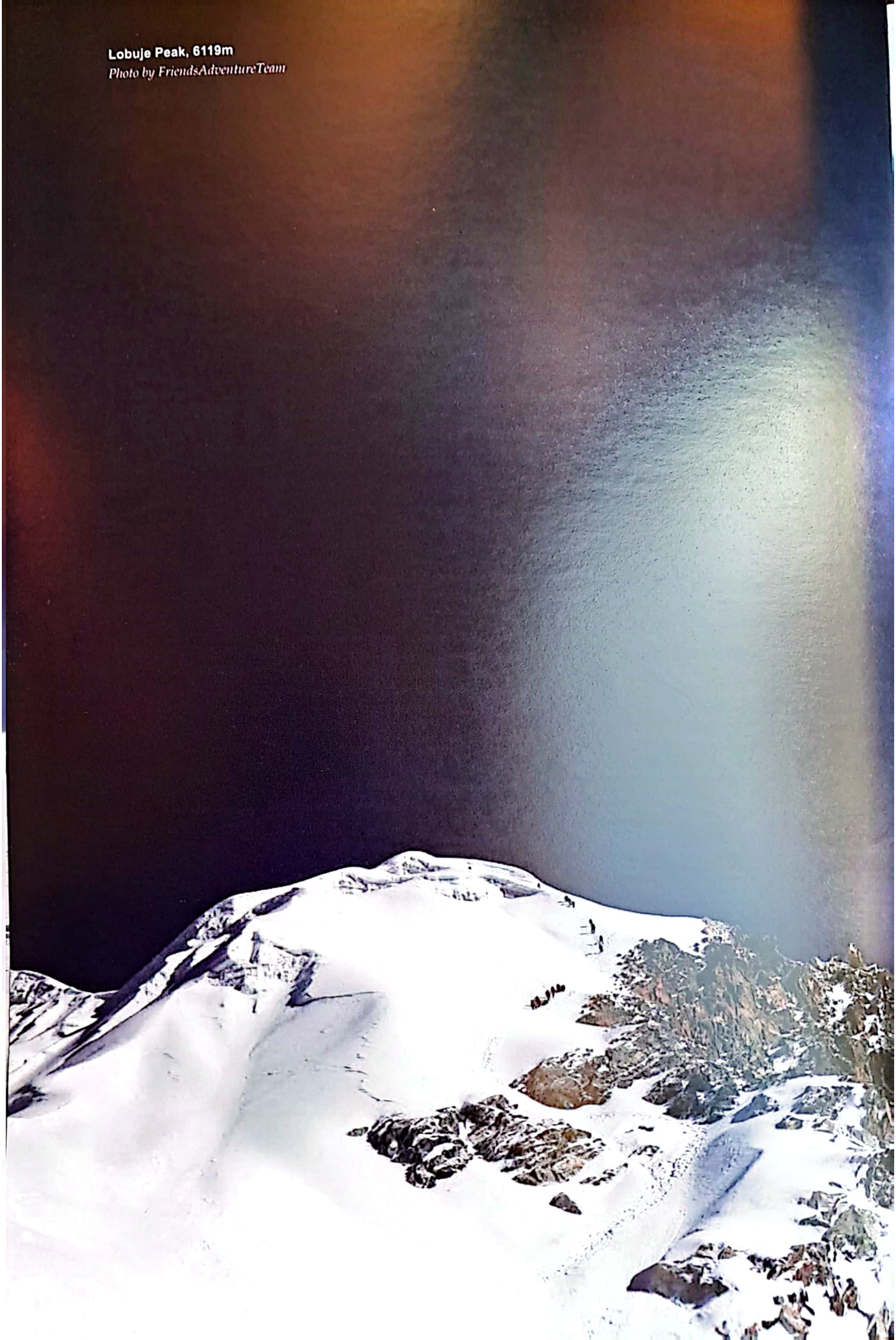
2 May 2023

Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda'



Puspa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda'

Rt. Honorable Prime Minister



Lobuje Peak, 6119m
Photo by FriendsAdventureTeam

Government of Nepal

Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation

Singhadurbar, Kathmandu, Nepal

Ref. No. :

Sudan Kirati
Minister

Message

The 16th International Sagarmatha (Everest) Day, Mt. Everest Platinum Jubilee Celebration is a momentous event for the Nepalese people, and it is fitting that the Nepal Mountaineering Association is bringing out a special supplement of its publication ***Nepal Parbat*** to mark this occasion. This historic milestone in mountaineering history will inspire future generations of mountaineers worldwide to pursue their dreams and conquer new heights.

The Nepalese government recognizes the importance of mountain tourism, not only as a source of national pride but also as a significant contributor to the economy. To promote tourism in the country, the government has implemented several policies and reforms aimed at attracting more tourists to this beautiful nation. The government is committed to working with organizations like the Nepal Mountaineering Association to enhance the tourism sector's image and develop it further.

The Nepal Mountaineering Association's dedication to promoting mountain tourism has been admirable, and I take this opportunity to applaud its efforts. Its initiatives have significantly contributed to the development of the tourism sector, and I hope it will continue to play a leading role in promoting mountain tourism in the country.

In conclusion, I extend my best wishes to the Nepal Mountaineering Association for the success of the Mount Everest Platinum Jubilee Celebration and its future endeavors. I am confident that the Association will continue to inspire and guide aspiring mountaineers while working to advance mountain tourism in Nepal.

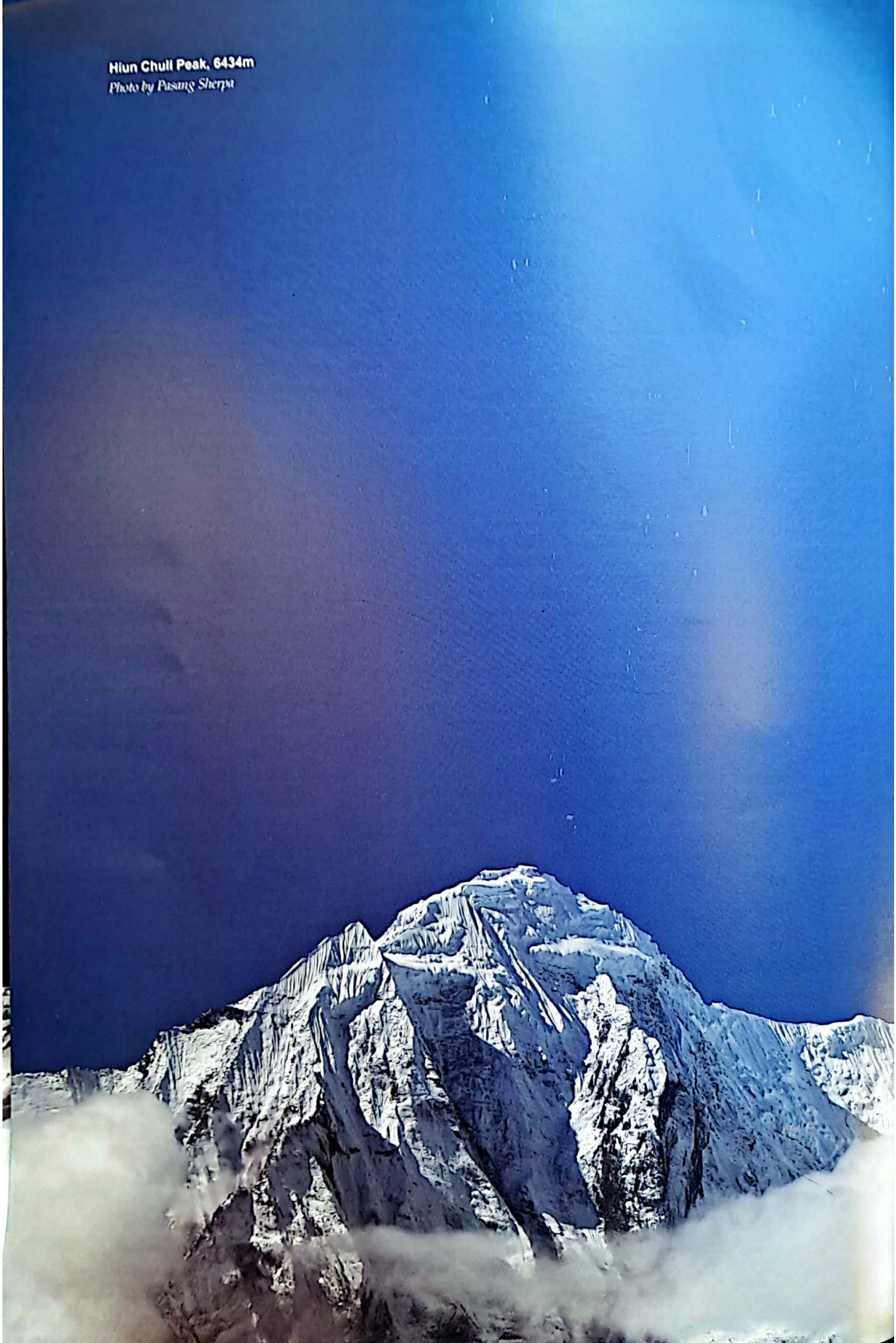
April 02, 2023

Minister
Sudan Kirati
Minister

Phone No. : +977-1-4211879 (Office), Email : sudankirati2@gmail.com, Website : www.tourism.gov.np



Sudan Kirati
Honorable Minister



Hiun Chuli Peak, 6434m
Photo by Pasang Sherpa

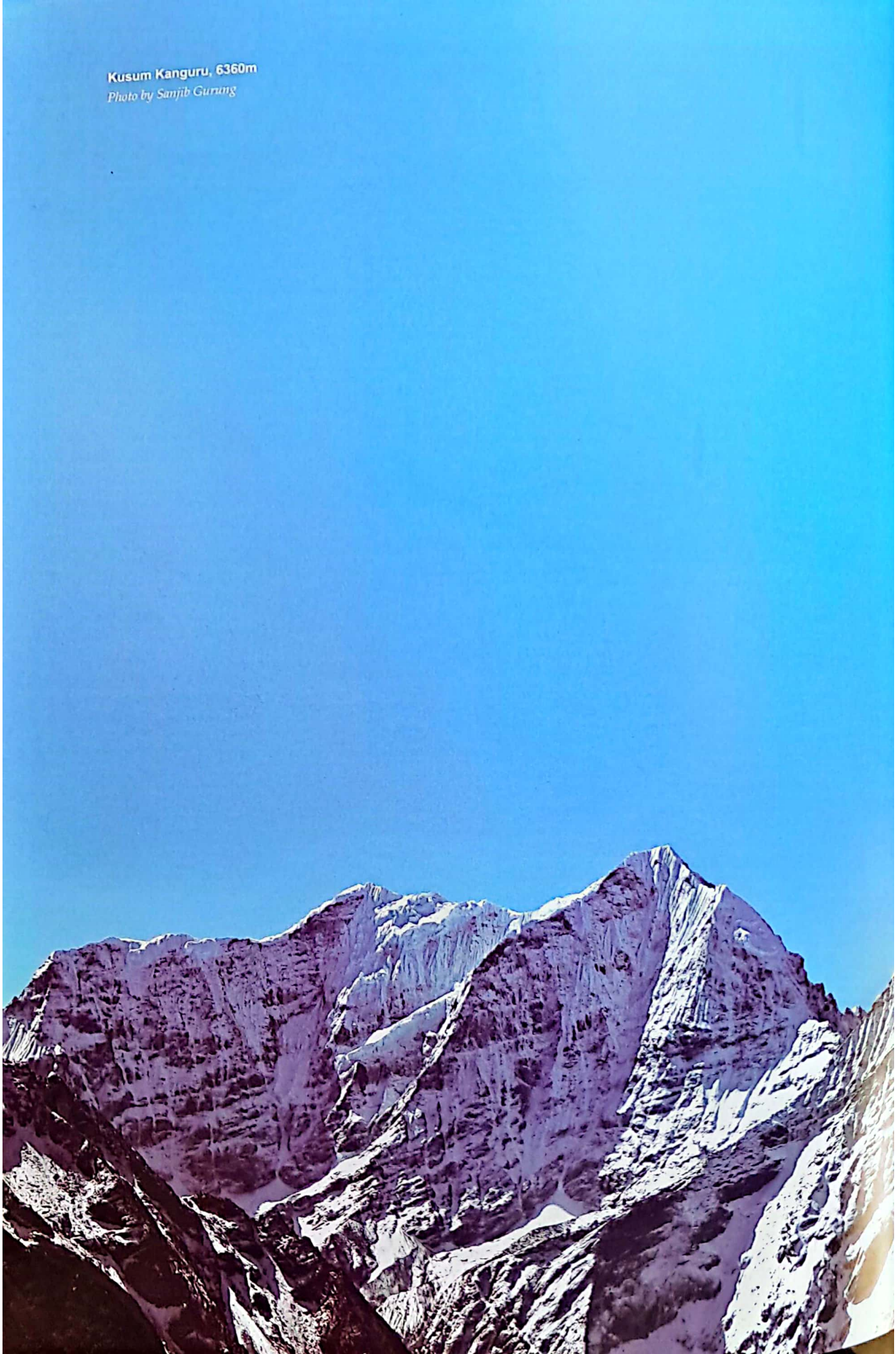
On behalf of the International Climbing and Mountaineering Federation (UIAA), I wish everyone marking the Mount Everest Platinum Jubilee Celebration and 2023 Summiteers' Summit a wonderful celebration. This anniversary provides an opportune moment to commemorate the pioneering achievements of the famous 1953 expedition and the numerous subsequent attempts, often led by mountaineering legends, to scale new routes up the world's highest peak. The UIAA congratulates the Nepal Mountaineering Association (NMA) on the close support and hospitality it has provided climbers and mountaineers throughout its history.

The anniversary also allows us to remember those who have lost their lives on Everest. The UIAA will continue to support steps being taken by authorities in Nepal and by a number of other international organisations to ensure greater climber safety and in tackling the issue of waste pollution and how climate change will impact future Everest attempts.

UIAA



Peter Muir
UIAA President



Kusum Kanguru, 6360m
Photo by Sanjib Gurung

Dear mountain friends and Nepalese friends,

On behalf of Union of Asian Alpine Associations, I would like to congratulate on the 70th anniversary of the first ascent of Mt. Everest with all Asian mountaineers. When I think of the first ascent of Everest, there are three great climbers that come to mind. They are Sir Edmund Hillary, Tenzing Norgay Sherpa and Mrs. Junko Tabei. They should be remembered forever as great people who gave hope and vision to mankind.

Furthermore, every moment when I think of the Himalayas, Sherpa is always the first images of Nepal. I think the history of Himalaya is in the line with the history of Sherpa. After meeting Tenzing Norgay Sherpa, I was deeply influenced and thought about that Sherpa should be respected historically.

Climbing the highest peak on earth 70 years ago was a completely different from climbing Everest today, and it was a historical event that maximized the realm of challenge. Climbers from many countries took on challenges until the first ascent of Mt. Everest, and although they were unsuccessful, we should respect all those challenges and must not forget that those experiences became a valuable foundation for the first ascent in 1953.

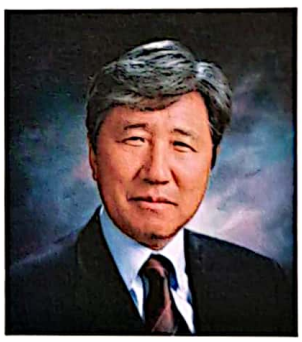
It seems like just yesterday that I attended the 50th anniversary of the first ascent of Everest with Sir Hillary and Mrs. Junko, but 20 years have already passed, and we all celebrate the 70th anniversary again. Unfortunately, the great heroes have all passed away.

After 70 years of the first ascent of Everest, nature and mountains are facing many challenges. Everest climbing is facing a new phase due to climate change and the increase in commercial expedition than before, but Everest is a peak that will forever be loved for its identity as the highest peak on earth. Everest is very valuable in itself. We should respect mountains. We, Asian mountaineers are proud of the fact that the Himalayas are in Asia.

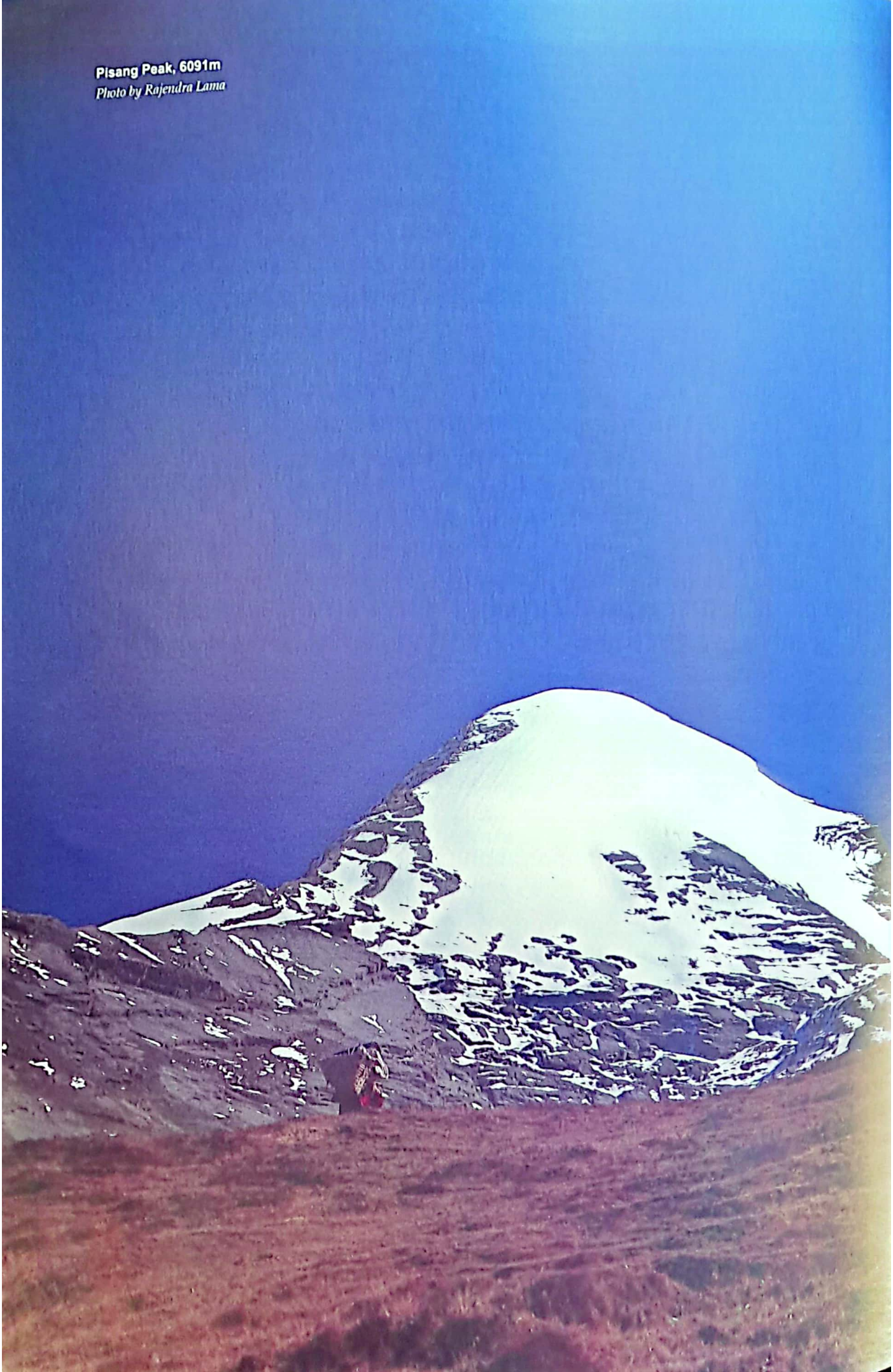
In commemoration of the 70th anniversary, I hope the International Mountain Museum in Nepal expands the Everest special exhibition and Everest-themed corner. Congratulations once again on your 70th anniversary, and congratulations on the 50th anniversary of the Nepal Mountaineering Association. The UAAA will hold the 2023 General Assembly in Nepal to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Nepal Mountaineering Association. We hope to meet in Kathmandu coming November.

Thank you very much.

UAAA



In-jeong Lee
President of UAAA



Pisang Peak, 6091m
Photo by Rajendra Lama

नेपाल पर्वतारोहण संघ
NEPAL MOUNTAINEERING ASSOCIATION

Ref. no 1684 / 079 / 080 Date: 19 May 2023

On behalf of Nepal Mountaineering Association (NMA), I would like to express my extreme happiness for the opportunity to organize Mt. Everest Platinum Jubilee Celebration and 16th International Sagarmatha (Everest) day. On the same occasion, the publication of *Nepal Parbat* has become another reason for which we remain additional happy and satisfied.

The celebration of the completion of 70 years of the first ascent of Everest is itself a great achievement for all of us especially after the pandemic COVID 19, which has severely hit the global economic sectors. Being tourism, as one of the most sensitive sectors, is the first sector to be affected and is the last one to take its previous shape. In this condition, the organization of this type of event is surely expected to draw the global attention because of the presence of the families of Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay Sherpa along with national and international Everest summiteers. Mt. Everest Golden Jubilee Celebration (29 May 2003) and Diamond Jubilee Celebration (29 May 2013) have left outstanding benchmark in our tourism sector, and now it is responsibility to carry forward it.

NMA considers Mt. Everest Platinum Jubilee Celebration and 16th International Sagarmatha Day as our pioneer mountain tourism promotional program because national and international Everest summiteers assemble at the same venue for the single purpose. For the tourism sector to remain as the integral component of our national economy necessitate this type of promotional program, and in this regard, NMA expresses its readiness to accept the responsibility to focus its effort in organizing Platinum Jubilee Celebration of all the mountains above 8000 m as celebrated golden and diamond jubilees previously.

The 7th Mountain Festival (MF) organized on 11 Dec 2022 to mark International Mountain Day organized under the initiation of NMA at International Mountain Museum (IMM), Pokhara is considered one of the greatest events organized after COVID 19. The event witnessed the participation of thousands of national and international tourists in the two-day festival, succeeded in disseminating about the immediate requirement of such programs that can revive our tourism sector in total.

In a final note, NMA congratulates and expresses its best wishes to all the Everest summiteers for the completion of 70 years of first ascent of Mt. Everest. On the special release of our regular publication, *Nepal Parbat*, my hope is that it will definitely uncover some vital information about the attempts and successful ascents of Everest, its environment and culture, and hence will become as a treasurable magazine. Finally, the tireless effort of the contributors of write-up for the magazine, Publicity and Publication Committee and editorial team deserve the heartfelt thankfulness of Nepal Mountaineering Association and of my own.

Nima Nuru Sherpa
President
Nepal Mountaineering Association

P.O. Box: 1435, Manakamana Marg, Nagpokhari, Naxal, Kathmandu, Nepal, Tel: +977-1-4534525, 4535442
E: office@nepalmountaineering.org, info@nepalmountaineering.org, media@nepalmountaineering.org, W: www.nepalmountaineering.org



Nima Nuru Sherpa
President, NMA

Vol.20/No. 22/May 2023
Regd. No. CDO KTM 205/056-057

Publisher

Nepal Mountaineering Association
Nagpokhari, Naxal, Kathmandu, Nepal
Phone: +977-01-4534525, 4535442
Email: president@nepalmountaineering.org
info@nepalmountaineering.org
office@nepalmountaineering.org
cao@nepalmountaineering.org
media@nepalmountaineering.org
Website: www.nepalmountaineering.org

Convener

Mr. Pitamber Gurung

Members

Mr. Pashupati Kandel
Mr. Lachhuman Tamang
Mr. Pemba Bhote
Mr. Rinje Sherpa
Mr. L.P Sherpa
Mr. Chandan Thapa
Mr. Puspa Raj Parajuli
Ms. Maya Garbuja Pun
Mr. Abir Malla
Mr. Siddha Raj Rai
Ms. Juli Gurung
Mr. Satish Man Pati
Mr. Dev Adhikari
Ms. Bimala Gurung
Mr. Danda Gurung

Editorial Team

Mr. Khim Ghale
Ms. Anita Gurung
Mr. Apil Gurung
Mr. Jinesh Sindurakar
Mr. Dipendra Gurung
Ms. Laxmi Gurung

Photo Contributers

Mr. Lala Gurung
Mr. Satish Man Pati

Editorial Support

Highlights Tourism Pvt. Ltd.
Bakhundole, Lalitpur
Tel: 01-5010633
highlightstourism@gmail.com
www.highlightstourism.com

Design and Printing

Jaya Laligurans Investment & Trading Company Pvt. Ltd.
Hariharbhawan, Lalitpur-3,
Phone: 01-5010711, 5010610

Views expressed by the authors are their own and do not necessarily agree with the publisher.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Interview

Interview with Mr. Suresh Adhikari, Secretary - Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation 1

Interview with Mr. Nima Nuru Sherpa, President - NMA 5

Memoir

Tenzing Norgay's Message to the World: Be Great, Make Others Great 12

Expanding the Realm of Possibility and the Legacy of Edmund Hillary 16

Article

Sir Edmund Hillary's Enduring Legacy: Transforming the Khumbu Region 19

Seventy Years On: The Lives and Legacy of Tenzing Norgay & Sir Edmund Hillary Since their First Ascent of Everest 22

Risk and Reward: The Ethical Dilemma of Modern Mount Everest Climbing 28

Transforming Khumbu: Mountain, Mountaineering and People 33

Safeguarding Sagarmatha, the Mount Everest 38

Everest Forever – Sustaining Mt. Everest's Allure in the Face of Climate Change 43

Everest has a mountain to climb: Climate change 48

Mount Everest 1976: A Pioneering Ascent by the AMA 52

Measuring Sagarmatha (Mount Everest): A Matter of Pride for Nepal 56

Economics of Mt. Everest and Mountaineering in Nepal 63

Mallory and Irvine: 100 Years of Climbing on Mt. Everest 66

The First attempt on Mount Everest 71

Tejbir Bura:The Unsung Hero of the Nation 76

Exploring Routes on Mt. Everest 80

Profile

Late Junko Tabei 82

Late Pasang Lhamu Sherpa 84

Kami Rita Sherpa 86

Sanu Sherpa 90

Dawa Yangzum Sherpa 94

Phunjo Jhangmu Lama 98

Pasang Lhamu Sherpa 102

Key Highlights of Mt. Everest after the First Summit 107

Mount Everest Summiteers (1953-2021) 109

NMA Peaks Information 110

NMA Organization Profile 112

International Mountain Museum, Pokhara 115

Manang Mountaineering School 118

International Mountaineers Memorial Park (IMMP), Kakani 119

Annapurna Rescue Center 120

NMA Committees & Staffs 121

NMA Activities 125

First and foremost, I would like to express my pleasure in dedicating the annual publication of the Nepal Mountaineering Association (NMA), "Nepal Parbat," to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the successful ascent of the highest peak, Mount Everest, by Tenzing Norgay and Sir Edmund Hillary. The historic day of May 29, 1953, holds great significance in the history of humankind's harmonious relationship with nature. The Nepal Government, the NMA, and all other stakeholders have joined together to collectively celebrate this momentous occasion as the platinum jubilee of Mount Everest. As the coordinator of NMA's Publication and Publicity Committee, I am proud to lead the publication dedicated to this momentous event.

Reflecting on the past 70 years since the successful ascent of Mount Everest by Tenzing and Hillary, numerous changes have taken place. Nepali mountaineering has not only thrived as a business but has also been instrumental in the development of Nepali tourism and contributed significantly to the country's economy. It has opened doors of opportunity in the challenging Himalayan region. Particularly in the Khumbu region, where Everest is situated, remarkable development and prosperity have emerged, far away from the capital Kathmandu, thanks to Everest and mountaineering.

During this period, mountain climbing has undergone significant changes. From the quality of climbing gear to the technological advancements in weather forecasting, new dimensions have emerged. Moreover, there has been a shift in the types of food required at high altitudes. Luxury facilities are now available at Everest's base camp, and a rush to break world records on Everest has ensued.

Alongside these changes, concerns about the future of mountains, including Everest as well as sustainability and the issue of waste, have gained prominence. If human encroachment continues at this rate in the mountains, can the Himalayas sustain their current condition? What lies ahead for mountains and mountain tourism? These questions have propelled the need for sustainability. What measures should be taken to preserve mountains and mountain tourism? How can we address the accumulation of waste in the mountains? What impact will luxury facilities in the mountains have? Can these issues be resolved solely through our efforts? How does it relate to the global climate crisis? Who is responsible for addressing these questions? We must not delay discussions on such matters.

In this edition of "Nepal Parbat", we have endeavored to shed light on these topics. Our aim is to bring these issues to the national and international stages, at the very least. We hope that the future of our beautiful mountains does not fade into obscurity and that the ancient civilizations they have protected for thousands of years can continue to flourish.

EDITORIAL



✍ *Pitamber Gurung*
Convener

I express my gratitude to Mr. Nima Nuru Sherpa, the President of the Nepal Mountaineering Association, as well as all the officers and members of the working committee, for entrusting me with the responsibility of leading the publication focused on these profound issues during this historic occasion. I would also like to thank all the members of NMA's Publication and Publicity Committee for their support and cooperation in bringing this publication to fruition. Additionally, my thanks go to Chief Administrative Officer Jinesh Sindurakar, Communication Officer Mr. Dipendra Gurung, and Program Officer Ms. Laxmi Gurung, who provided institutional coordination for the event.

I am grateful to all the contributors who have inspired thought-provoking contemplation through their valuable articles on valuable subjects within this publication, as well as the photographers who have provided captivating images. Lastly, I extend my thanks to the Highlights Tourism team for their assistance in making this publication possible, while bearing all the editorial responsibilities involved.

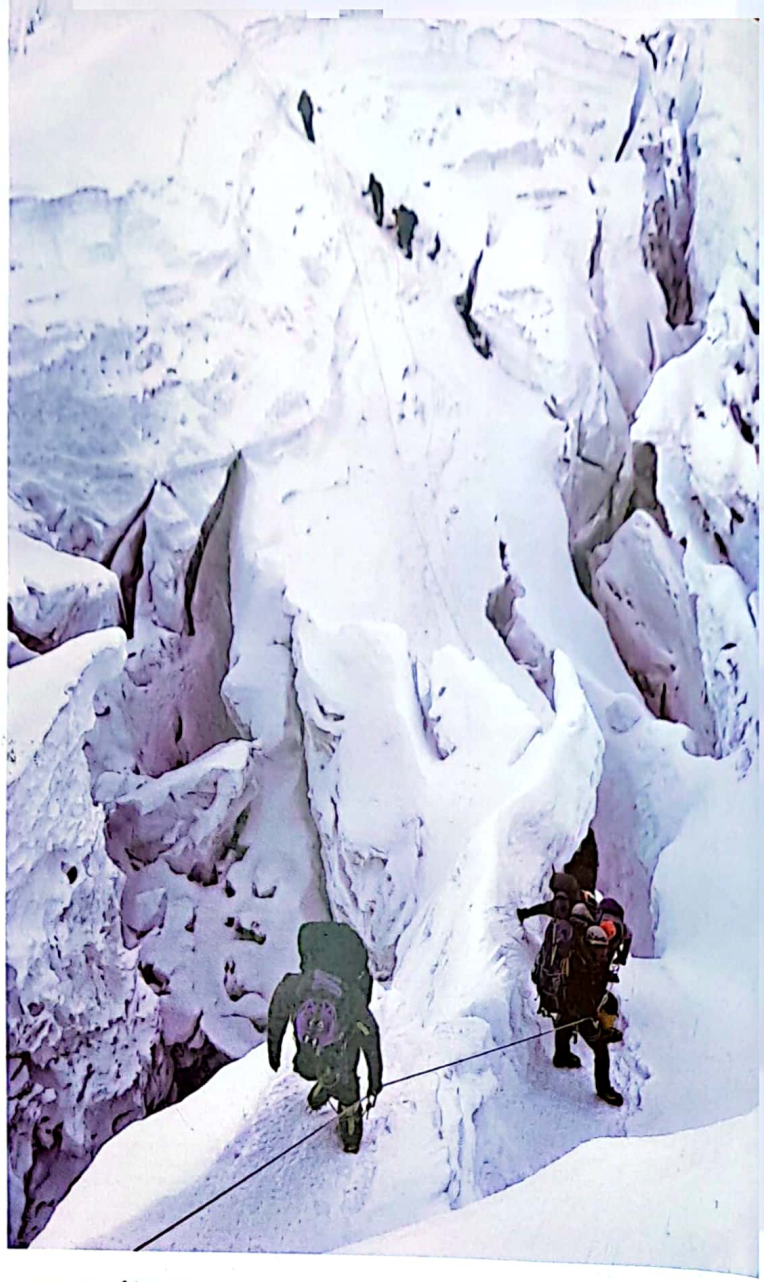
We made every effort to comprehensively cover various subjects and personalities in the publication of 'Nepal Parbat.' However, I sincerely apologize for any errors or oversights that may have occurred. We welcome feedback from our readers so that we can continue to improve the quality of our publication.

of mountain climbing, aimed at finding solutions to the challenges faced by tourists and operators. These discussions will outline the roles and responsibilities of the government and the private sector in addressing these issues.

Another pressing matter that demands attention is sustainability. In recent years, we have collaborated closely with the Nepal Army to spearhead the 'Clean Himal' campaign. The protection of our majestic mountains is not only pivotal for tourism but also holds profound implications for numerous other sectors. Therefore, one of the primary objectives of Everest Day is not only to promote mountaineering but also to advocate sustainable practices in preserving these natural wonders. By encompassing the entire mountaineering sector beyond the magnificence of Mount Everest itself, Everest Day will play a crucial role in the comprehensive promotion of Nepal's tourism industry.

How do you envision the future of mountain climbing during the celebration of the Platinum Jubilee of Mount Everest?

Mount Everest stands as an iconic symbol of challenge and a precious natural resource that requires our utmost protection. Our paramount goal is to ensure that mountaineering practices are safe and environmentally sustainable. This entails taking measures to reduce pollution and embracing safe mountaineering protocols that minimize equipment usage while prioritizing the safety of climbers. Additionally, we must strengthen our capacity for swift search and rescue operations in the event of accidents.



While mountaineering serves as a means of income generation for us, we must tread carefully to ensure that we never compromise the intrinsic value and integrity of our mountains. There exist differing viewpoints regarding the permissibility of activities such as paragliding and skiing on mountains like Everest. Some argue that allowing such activities could result in environmental pollution and diminish the mountains' allure, whereas others contend that these activities have the potential to enhance the attraction of our mountains for tourists.

Presently, our stance maintains that while other activities may be permitted on smaller mountains, they should not be allowed on lofty peaks such as Everest, Lhotse, Kanchenjunga, Makalu, Manaslu, Dhaulagiri, and Annapurna. However, there is a growing demand to open up new peaks for mountaineering, and the government is positively considering this prospect. The introduction of new peaks for mountaineering endeavors can amplify the allure for climbers, while smaller peaks can serve as ideal training grounds for mountaineers.

How can overcrowding on Mount Everest be managed?

This is a crucial question that needs attention. We need to acknowledge that mountaineering

on Mount Everest is a seasonal activity, and overcrowding usually happens during two main seasons. It is important to prioritize the cleaning of the mountain during other seasons. However, we should not encourage more people to climb Mount Everest just for the sake of competition or to reach the summit with the help of equipment. Mountaineering is an adventurous activity, and it should be kept that way. While the work of creating ways to icefall and hanging ropes is necessary, it should not be allowed to carry and drag someone to the peak. This undermines the essence of mountaineering and its spirit. We must ensure that overcrowding does not occur, and we need to consider how many groups and individuals to permit during one season. In addition, we should look at long-term solutions, such as better management of permits, stricter regulation of climbers' equipment and experience, and the creation of more mountain routes. These measures will not only address overcrowding but also enhance safety and sustainability in mountaineering on Mount Everest.

Is the government aware of the concerns raised about the facilities provided at places like the base camp of Mt. Everest, where some argue that climbing is no longer considered an adventure?

The government is well aware of the issues related to the facilities available at places such as the base camp of Mount Everest. We have communicated with the organizations of expeditions, as well as with members of the Expedition Operators Association of Nepal and other trekking agencies. We have emphasized that climbers should not be provided with unnecessary or luxury facilities and that only basic support should be available to ensure the safety of climbers. Additionally, it is important to consider the environmental impact of the service facilities provided at these locations and to ensure that they do not harm the environment in any way. We are taking steps to address these concerns and ensure that climbing Mount Everest remains an adventurous activity that is safe and sustainable.

In recent years, climate change has had a significant impact on the mountains, and Nepal seems to be bearing the brunt of a mistake it did not make. In this regard, how is the Nepalese government engaging in national and international forums to address the issue?

The primary objective of the government is to preserve the mountains and find ways to mitigate the effects of climate change. The Ministry of Tourism and separate environmental agencies are actively involved in addressing these issues. The issue of "Save Mountains" has been raised in international forums, and planning documents have been updated to include the environmental sustainability of the mountains. However, there are challenges in implementing these policies.

It is not within our control to prevent the snow from melting or the decrease in snow in the mountains due to global warming, which is a global issue. Developed countries have more resources to tackle this problem, but Nepal does not have the same capacity. Therefore, international cooperation is necessary, and the government is taking the initiative to work with other nations to address this issue.

How is the government promoting climbing in other regions besides Everest and its surrounding mountains, which tend to attract a large number of climbers while other peaks remain relatively less popular?

The government has devised a comprehensive plan to not only open up but also promote a multitude of smaller peaks alongside the majestic Mount Everest. By offering an array of enticing options, we aim to captivate climbers' interests and draw them towards these lesser-explored mountains. Furthermore, we actively encourage climbers to conquer





other peaks exceeding 8,000 meters in height. In comparison to Everest, scaling these alternative mountains incurs lower fees. However, Everest's status as the highest peak naturally allures individuals, irrespective of their prior mountaineering accomplishments. The intrinsic value associated with conquering Everest is unparalleled, making it challenging to mitigate the crowds flocking to its slopes. Nevertheless, the government is diligently striving to entice climbers towards other regions, and this necessitates effective publicity initiatives.

How is the government addressing the lack of interest among the new generation in pursuing careers as mountain climbing guides and the departure of experienced guides from the country?

The government acknowledges the lack of interest among the new generation to pursue careers as mountain climbing guides, and we are equally concerned about the departure of experienced guides from our country. The underlying reasons for this trend include the lack of recognition for their contributions and the prevailing safety concerns in the global context. It is crucial to prioritize their recognition, safety, and social security, particularly considering the risks involved, the occurrence of accidents, and the welfare of their families. While insurance coverage is available, it may not be sufficient, which calls for comprehensive measures to address these pressing issues.

Institutions such as the Nepal Mountaineering Academy are already established to impart training and education to aspiring young mountaineers. However, we recognize the need for additional strategies to attract and inspire young individuals to enter this field. Moreover, diversifying the pool of professionals in this domain by involving individuals from communities beyond the Sherpa community could help alleviate the shortage of human resources.

Crucially, collaborative efforts between the government and the private sector are pivotal to ensuring comprehensive social security measures for travel and trekking agencies.

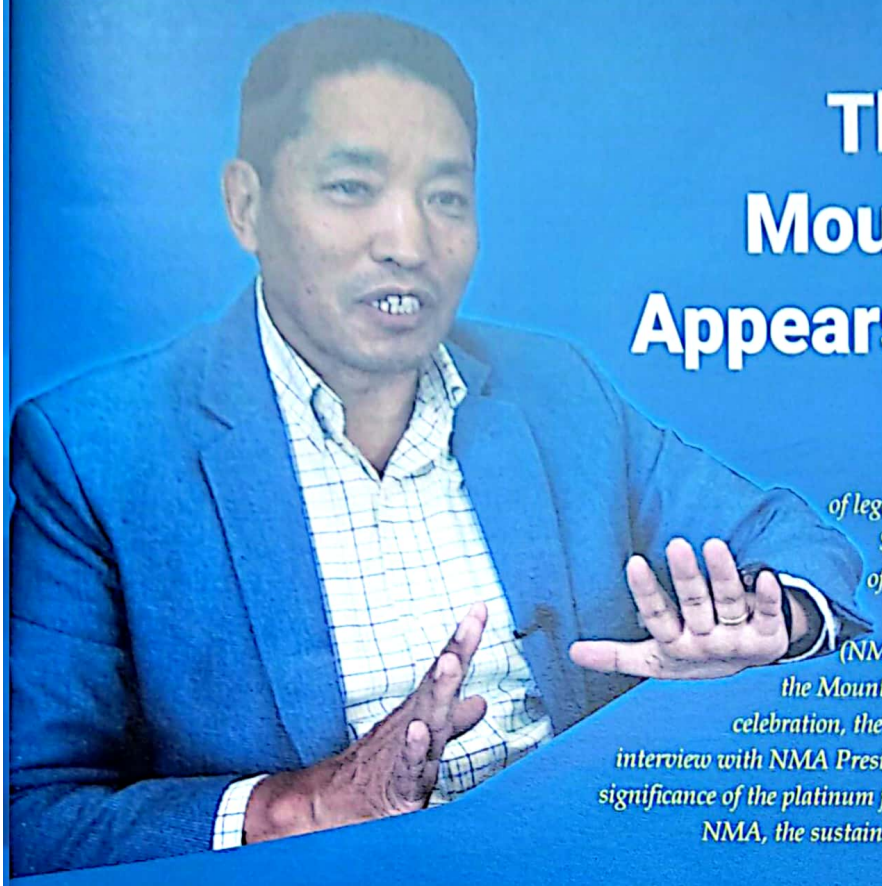
By working hand in hand, we can establish robust frameworks that safeguard the interests of guides, create a supportive environment, and enhance the overall appeal of this profession.

Finally, as we commemorate the Platinum Jubilee of the first ascent of Mount Everest, what message would you like to convey to the national and international mountaineering community on behalf of the government?

As we celebrate the 70th anniversary of the remarkable first ascent of Mount Everest, we honor the indomitable spirit of Sir Edmund Hillary, Tenzing Norgay Sherpa, and all the courageous climbers who have conquered this majestic peak. We also extend our deepest gratitude to those who have introduced Mount Everest and Nepal to the world, allowing the magnificence of Mount Everest to transcend borders. In paying tribute to those who tragically lost their lives on the mountain, we recognize the sacrifices made in pursuit of this awe-inspiring challenge.

On this special occasion, we invite the global mountaineering community to join us in acknowledging the intrinsic value and prestige of Mount Everest. While climbers who have stood atop its summit are dispersed across different nations, we encourage everyone, even if unable to come to Nepal, to celebrate Everest Day in their own unique way. Our heartfelt wishes go out to all the brothers and sisters around the world who have introduced this iconic peak to the world.

As we commemorate this significant milestone, we extend our warmest congratulations and best wishes to both Nepali nationals and foreigners who have made invaluable contributions to the mountaineering sector. Looking ahead, let us unite in our commitment to preserve our cherished mountains and foster sustainable mountaineering practices. Together, we can safeguard these natural wonders for generations to come.



The Future of Mountaineering Appears Promising

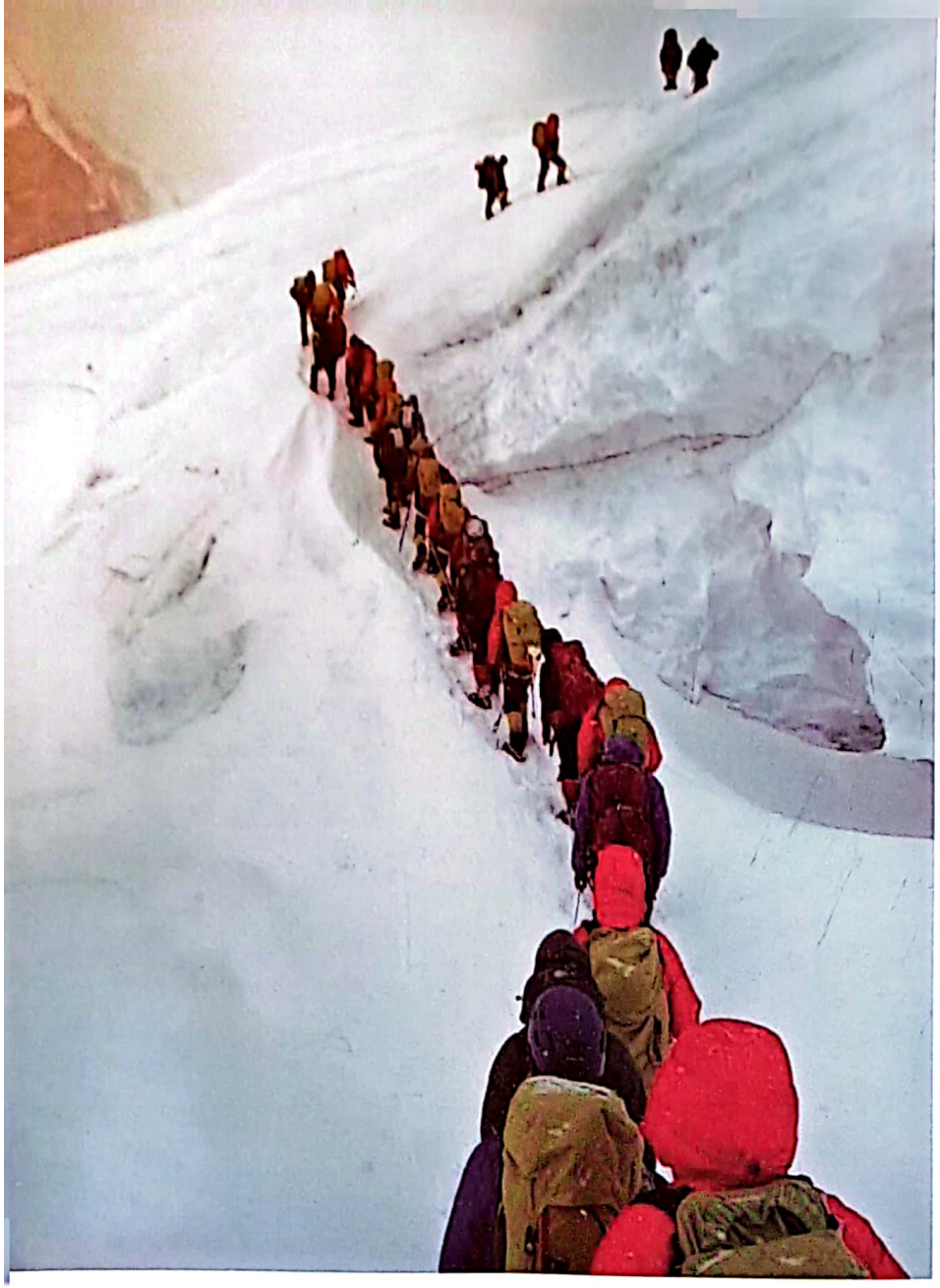
*On the occasion of the 70th anniversary of legendary mountaineers Tenzin Norgay and Sir Edmund Hillary's historic first ascent of the highest peak, the Nepal Government, Nepal Mountaineering Association (NMA),and other stakeholders are celebrating the Mount Everest Platinum Jubilee. As part of this celebration, the 'Nepal Parbat' magazine has featured an interview with NMA President **Nima Nuru Sherpa**, discussing the significance of the platinum jubilee celebration, theaccomplishments of NMA, the sustainability, and the future of mountaineering.*

The Government of Nepal and the Nepal Mountaineering Association (NMA) collaborating with other organizations are celebrating the platinum jubilee ceremony on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the first ascent of Mount Everest. What is the purpose of this event?

Mount Everest holds tremendous significance as a source of pride for Nepal and serves as an iconic symbol of mountaineering worldwide. The historic and successful ascent of Everest's highest peak in 1953 by Tenzing Norgay and Sir Edmund Hillary marked a pivotal moment in world history. Now, in commemoration of its 70th anniversary, we are collectively celebrating the Platinum Jubilee in collaboration with the Government of Nepal and numerous tourism-related organizations. This celebratory event aims to be a festival, bringing together all those individuals connected to mountains and engaged in the world of mountaineering. To oversee this event, a main ceremony committee has been established, headed by the Secretary of the Ministry of Tourism of the Government of Nepal, Suresh Adhikari. The Nepal Mountaineering Association, the Department of Tourism, and various other tourism-related organizations are actively participating in this committee, showcasing their commitment and involvement in making this celebration a resounding success.

The event presents an opportunity to reflect on the last 70 years of adventure tourism in Nepal. It allows for contemplation, discussion, and examination of how tourism can not only promote the mountain region but also foster sustainability and progress. The celebration seeks to demonstrate Nepal's status as an adventure tourism hub and the growing competence of Nepalis in this field. With over 1400 mountains within Nepal, the relatively small number that has been opened and climbed emphasizes the capability of Nepalis to conquer all these peaks.

The event also serves to educate the international community about the Nepali Himalayas, providing insights into the lives of the local population and the field of mountaineering. Attendees will gain valuable information regarding expedition conditions, the Nepali government's perspective, and relevant rules and regulations. Furthermore, this occasion will enhance understanding of the changes and safety measures implemented in mountain climbing. Ultimately, the celebration aims to emphasize Nepal's development as an adventure tourism destination and the competence of Nepalis in this domain.



If we consider the climbing of Everest by Tenzing and Hillary as the starting point, what changes have been observed in mountain climbing in Nepal over the past 70 years?

Over the course of these decades, significant transformations have taken place in the field of mountaineering. Firstly, there have been notable changes in legal aspects. Regulations and guidelines governing mountain climbing have evolved to adapt to the growing industry. Additionally, advancements in technology have revolutionized the equipment used in mountaineering. State-of-the-art gear and tools are now available, offering climbers greater safety and efficiency.

Another area of change relates to the availability of resources. In the past, high-altitude food options were limited. However, with advancements in food technology and logistics, climbers now have access to specialized high-altitude nutrition, catering to their dietary needs during expeditions.

Regarding human resources, there has been a remarkable development in the availability of experienced and professional Sherpa guides. Previously, local Sherpas were hired as climbing Sherpas. However, today's guides have not only received national-level training but also international-level training, which has made them as skilled as any guide in the world. This transformation has significantly contributed to enhancing the safe and success rates of climbing expeditions.

Moreover, in the earlier days, climbing Everest was primarily reserved for experienced alpinists However, with time, it has becom more accessible to a broader rang of individuals. Today, anyone with the required training and preparation can attempt to climb Everest as a hobby or personal challenge. Trained Sherpa guides are readily available to assist them Consequently, mountain climbing has evolved into a popular sport.

What has been the impact of climbing Mount Everest and the development of mountaineering, especially in the Himalayas, on th people and culture of the Khumbu region?

Mountaineering plays a crucial role in Nepal's tourism industry, and its development owes much to the contributions of the private sector. The private sector's involvement, dedication, and investments have brought global recognition to Nepal's tourism. Consequently, this has had a significant impact on the residents and the culture of the Khumbu region. However, the government's participation and involvement in the sector have been relatively minimal. Not enough efforts have been made to formulate policies conducive to the development of the climbing community and the region as a whole. Simply showcasing Everest and the Sherpa community is insufficient. Merely providing them with honorary

certificates and sustenance falls short. Tourism growth in the Khumbu region can largely be attributed to individual initiatives. However, it is imperative for the government to pay attention to the effects of tourism on the people, culture, and environment of the area.

From my perspective, there has been a notable development of entrepreneurial skills among the local population. People have established and operated tourism-related businesses, which was not prevalent before. Another significant impact is cultural exchange. Westerners have gained an understanding of our culture, while we, in turn, have had the opportunity to learn about their cultures. This exchange has brought a positive effect, fostering a sense of pride in the local community regarding their language and traditional attire. It has created a renewed enthusiasm for cultural preservation. Additionally, we have learned from our visitors how to effectively engage with tourists and manage their needs. Through interaction with the more advanced tourism industry of other nations, we have acquired knowledge ranging from hotel management to climbing techniques.

Mountaineering is an inherently adventurous activity. However, with the increasing popularity and interest in mountain climbing, safety concerns have also arisen. What measures should be taken to enhance the safety of mountain climbing?

The primary objective of the Nepal Mountaineering Association (NMA) is the development, protection, and promotion of mountain tourism. Within this framework, we advocate to the government that all mountains spanning the east to the west of Nepal should be accessible for climbing.

Nepal is home to over 1,400 Himalayan peaks, as identified by Dr. Harka Gurung. Currently, only around 414 of these peaks have been opened for climbing. Moreover, there is a situation where only 50% of the open peaks are being actively promoted. Therefore, we believe that if the government recognizes more peaks and entrusts greater responsibility to the Nepal Mountaineering Association, we can contribute to the promotion of all peaks. Through our international networks, such as the UIAA (International Climbing and Mountaineering Federation) and UAAA (Union of Asian Alpine Associations), we engage in promotional activities. Recently, we have also joined the International Mountain Tourism Alliance to further our promotion efforts. These networks assist us in establishing guidelines for managing mountaineering activities and ensuring safety. However, we believe that it is equally important to focus on enhancing the skills and capabilities of our human resources. To this end, the Nepal Mountaineering Association has been conducting advanced and basic training programs. We have already trained over 1,900 individuals. In the future, we aim to expand our training programs by collaborating with rural municipalities in various Himalayan regions. Additionally, we plan to establish a training institute in affiliation with Council For Technical Education and Vocational Training (CTVT) to produce skilled human resources and offer mountaineering-related education to both professional and hobby climbers.

Furthermore, the Nepal Mountaineering Association has played a significant role in promoting mountaineering internationally by establishing the International Mountain Museum in Pokhara. This museum serves as a unique platform to showcase Nepal's mountaineering heritage to the world. It is the first international mountain museum of its kind in Nepal. Additionally, we are working on an innovative project called the International Mountaineers Memorial Park in Kakani. This initiative aims to enhance previous successful concepts and ensure their continuity.



What kind of work do you think the government could have undertaken for the development of mountaineering in Nepal?

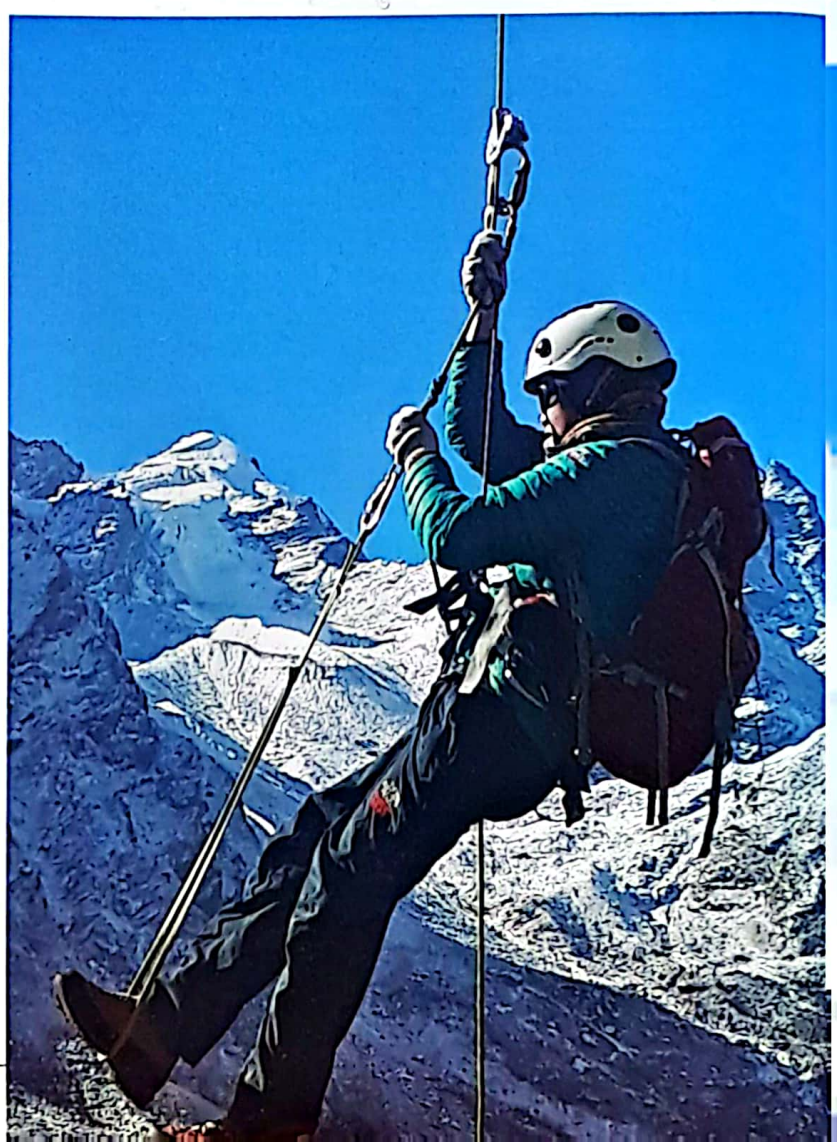
Nepal currently has numerous organizations involved in mountain tourism, with the Nepal Mountaineering Association (NMA) being the sole alpine club in the country. It is crucial to recognize the professional assets and significance of this institution, which was established fifty years ago. The government should view the NMA as a companion and integral part of mountain tourism. The NMA represents the people of the Himalayan region, workers engaged in the mountain tourism profession, advocates for global warming and environmental issues, and represents ordinary porters working at high altitudes. Understanding the multifaceted role of the NMA would enable the government to progress more effectively.

It is important to avoid duplicating the work carried out by the NMA. For instance, the internationally recognized training programs conducted by the NMA hold their own importance. The government should discourage redundant training initiatives and establish a unified policy. Such a policy would facilitate better management of adventure tourism. Currently, the Tourism Act of 2035 restricts the responsibility of managing only 27 designated peaks. However, the government should consider opening all peaks below 6,500 meters and entrust the Nepal Mountaineering Association with the responsibility of their management. By doing so, the government would demonstrate its commitment to promoting and developing adventure tourism and show respect for the climbing communities.

There is also a need to address the concerns of record-holding climbers and professionals working in the sector who often feel neglected. If the government entrusted the Nepal Mountaineering Association with greater responsibility, these issues could be effectively addressed. Therefore, the government must recognize the importance of this matter and approach it seriously. Although there is an institution like the Tourism Board tasked with promoting tourism, its understanding of mountain-related activities may be limited. For instance, during the recent platinum jubilee celebration, there was an objective to organize an Everest submitters Summit, but it could not materialize. If the Nepal Mountaineering Association had been entrusted with this responsibility, it could have been successfully executed.

What can be done to attract the new generation to become mountaineering guides, considering the lack of interest among them and the trend of experienced climbers from the older generation moving abroad?

Firstly, it is important to address the limited expedition season in Nepal. Although Nepal boasts the highest number of mountains above eight thousand meters, climbing opportunities are comparatively restricted. Previously, Nepali guides had to seek work in Tibet, but now they train their own guides and do not allow outsiders. This has limited the opportunities available for Nepali guides. Opening up more mountains for climbing



and extending the climbing season would provide increased opportunities for guides and climbers. Promoting mountain climbing throughout the year, in all four seasons, would further enhance these opportunities.

Additionally, it is crucial to consider the future of guides beyond their climbing careers. Currently, there are no provisions for old age provident funds, gratuities, or other retirement funds for guides. Arranging funds to secure their future would boost their morale and provide them with a sense of security. Moreover, employing experienced and record-holding climbers as liaison officers would not only offer them livelihood but also earn them respect within the industry.

Efforts should also be made to train and involve more young people from diverse communities in mountaineering. Currently, this field and those associated with it feel neglected. By prioritizing and giving importance to this sector, the government can play a significant role in attracting and retaining talent.

Climbers have primarily been focused on the Everest region and a few other mountains. What should be done to attract climbers to the mountains in other regions of the country?

Some of our mountains have been opened without sufficient information about the routes leading to them. This lack of information poses challenges for climbers who seek details about the technical aspects of the routes, and the available facilities in those areas. We should not merely open mountains without comprehensive knowledge about them. It is essential to profile all the peaks and maintain updated profiles for climbers' reference.



The initiative to profile peaks was started by former presidents of NMA. But unfortunately, it was discontinued due to various shortcomings. We feel government prioritizes updating the profiles of all the peaks. Alternatively, the government should entrust it to organizations like the Nepal Mountaineering Association, which possess the history, experience, and vision necessary to undertake this task.

Opening peaks alone is insufficient. We must also provide climbers with accurate information and convince them about the facilities available in the region. These fundamental tasks are necessary to promote the mountains effectively. It is crucial for both the climbing community and the government to approach this with a positive attitude and work together to achieve these objectives.

Now, there is a growing concern regarding the sustainability of mountaineering. What measures should be taken to ensure the long-term sustainability of Nepali mountains and the mountaineering industry?

Yes, the issue of sustainability in mountaineering is being raised, and it holds great importance. Without sustainability, the current situation becomes futile, where short-term gains overshadow the long-term consequences. It is essential to think about the future and take action to prevent the destruction of our natural resources. The mountaineering sector, like many others, is facing the challenges of global warming, and without careful consideration of sustainability, its future remains uncertain.

When discussing sustainability, the foremost aspect to consider is the preservation of our mountains. Proper management of these areas is crucial. In the context of global warming and environmental concerns, our efforts should be focused on maintaining the mountains in their pristine condition. It is our responsibility as a climbing community to minimize the negative impact we have on these natural wonders. Through training and education, we can empower professionals working in the field to adopt practices that reduce their ecological footprint. This includes proper waste management, ensuring cleanliness, and treating

the mountains with the utmost respect. Training plays a vital role in promoting sustainability.

In terms of consumables, we must explore alternatives that align with our current environmental conditions. For instance, implementing solar energy-based lighting and cooking facilities at Everest Base Camp can significantly reduce pollution caused by traditional energy sources. Our adviser Dr. Ganesh Gurung and our team of consultants have been working on concepts that aim to mitigate pollution and find sustainable solutions. Additionally, promoting the consumption of locally sourced foods and vegetables from the Himalayan region, rather than relying on supplies from Kathmandu, can contribute to sustainability goals.

How do you envision the future of mountaineering?

The future of mountaineering appears promising, but it requires effective utilization and understanding. Nepal holds a unique position in adventure tourism, with its abundant natural resources and unmatched mountainous landscapes. No other country can rival our offerings in terms of mountains and experiences. However, it is crucial to comprehend this aspect and for the government to establish itself as a prominent hub for adventure tourism. By recognizing and embracing adventure tourism as our identity, developing suitable policies and laws, and making proactive advancements in related areas, the future of mountaineering can thrive. It is important not to remain complacent and solely rely on the existence of mountains for success. Instead, efforts should be made to promote the significance of adventure tourism globally, create alluring climbing opportunities, and continuously enhance the attractions associated with mountaineering. By doing so, we can anticipate a bright future with increased visitor participation. It is essential to remember that progress is achieved through proactive measures and not by staying stagnant and relying solely on the existing conditions.

What message would you like to convey to the national and international climbing community as the President of the Nepal Mountaineering Association on the occasion of Everest's Platinum Jubilee?

On this momentous occasion,



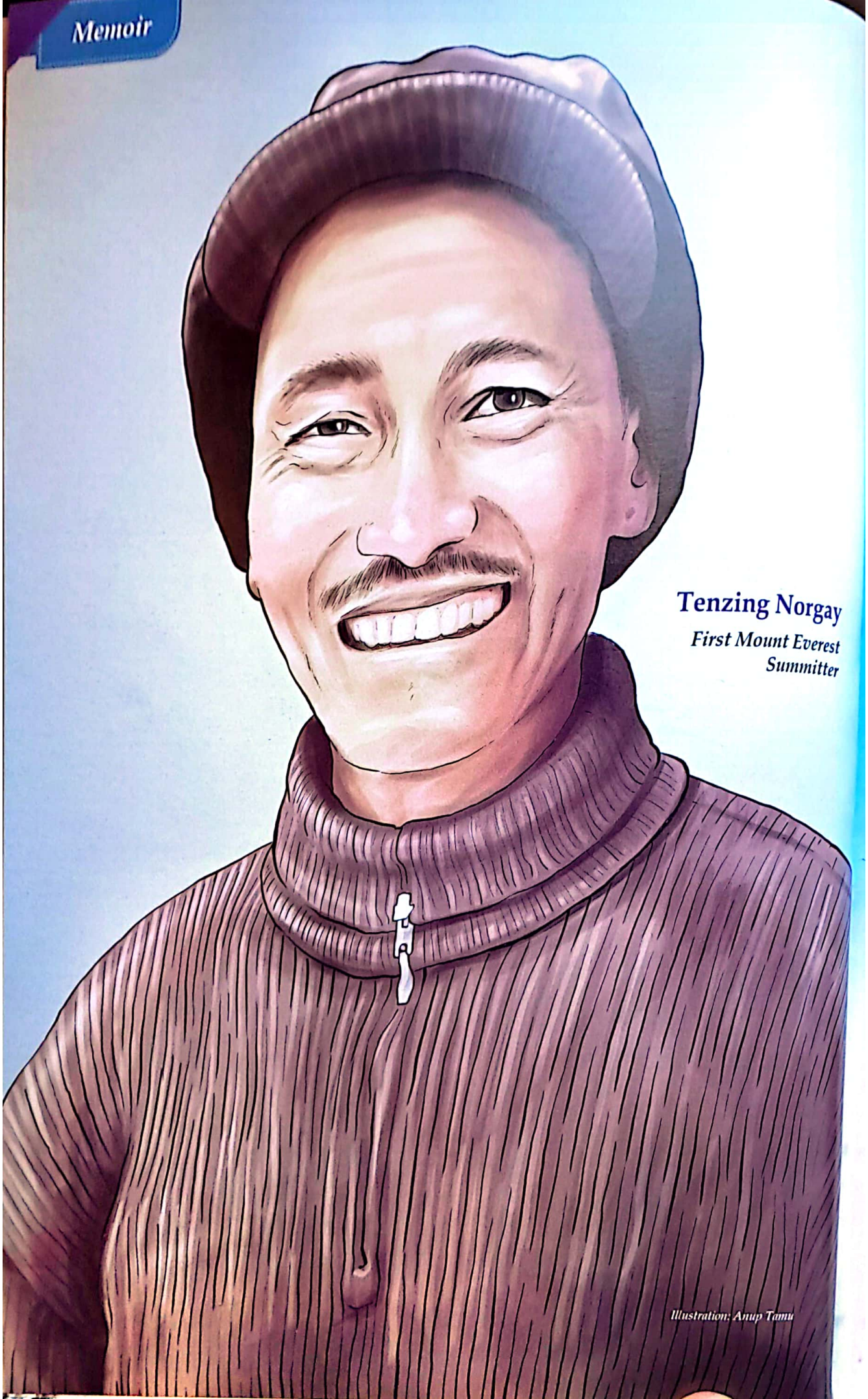
I would like to pay homage to the legendary climbers, Tenzing Norgay and Sir Edmund Hillary. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to all those who have successfully conquered Everest and other magnificent peaks in Nepal, bringing glory to this region. I also wish to honor the memory of those who tragically lost their lives or encountered challenges while mountaineering in the Everest and Nepali mountains.

During this milestone celebration, I would like to share valuable insights about the mountains of Nepal with the international community. Nepal boasts an extraordinary range of mountains, spanning from 5,800 meters to the world's highest peak, Mount Everest. Of the fourteen mountains standing above eight thousand meters worldwide, eight are located in Nepal. Our country offers remarkable heights along with numerous mountains that pose technical climbing challenges. Peaks ranging from 6,700 to 6,800 meters in Nepal provide excellent opportunities for technical climbing. While we have traditionally promoted mountains in the alpine style, we now aim to develop them for sports climbing as well. There are also plenty of mountains in Nepal that cater to hobby climbers, offering exciting climbing experiences and safety.

The Nepal Mountaineering Association (NMA) places paramount importance on ensuring climbers' safety. With 50 years of experience coupled with Nepal's mountaineering history of over 70 years, we have accumulated extensive knowledge on safe climbing practices, environmental conservation, and waste management. We continuously strive to make climbing in Nepal a clean and sustainable endeavor. Therefore, as Nepal offers a diverse array of peaks beyond just Everest, I extend a warm invitation to all enthusiasts to return to Nepal and fulfill their dreams by climbing the mountains of their choice.

On this momentous occasion, let us celebrate the achievements of the past while looking forward to a future filled with exploration, adventure, and responsible mountaineering in the majestic mountains of Nepal.





Tenzing Norgay

First Mount Everest Summitter

Illustration: Anup Tamu

Tenzing Norgay's Message to the World: Be Great, Make Others Great

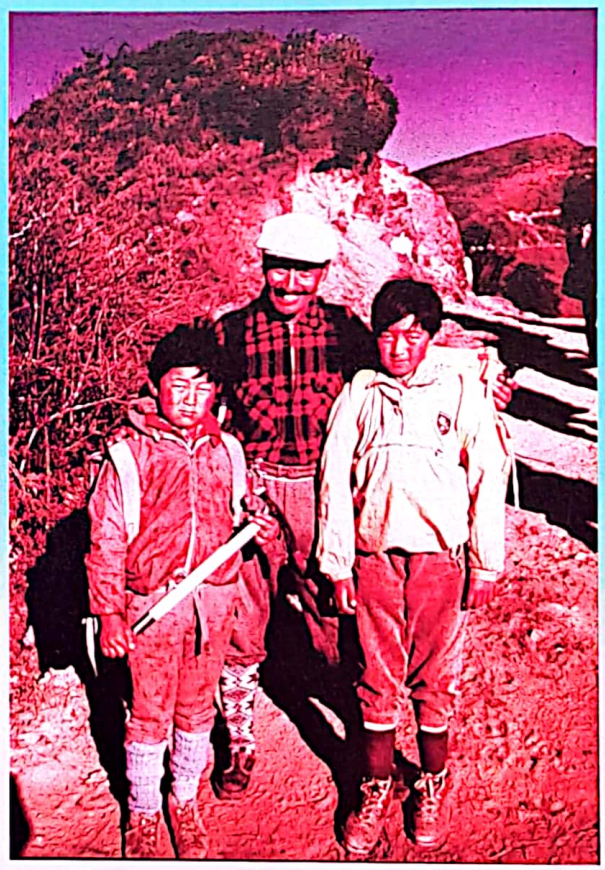


✍ Jamling Tenzing Norgay

"My father was much more than just the first person to climb Mt. Everest. He was an adventurer, an explorer, and a great human being who inspired millions of people around the world."

Growing up as the son of Tenzing Norgay, the first person to climb Mt. Everest alongside Sir Edmund Hillary, was an experience that fills me with pride and gratitude. Despite his worldwide fame, my father remained a humble and grounded person who led a simple life. He believed in providing his children with the best education, as he never had the opportunity to receive any formal schooling himself.

While my father's most well-known achievement was undoubtedly his successful ascent of Everest, he had a lifetime of exploration and adventure before that. He had been traveling the Himalayas since he was 18 years old, exploring remote parts of the region and leading numerous expeditions. The mountains had a calling for him as he traveled the entire length of the Himalayan range while including dozens of expeditions and exploration trips to remote parts of the Himalayas. These included five expedition trips from Darjeeling to Tibet from the 1930s to the 1940s. He had even journeyed beyond the Himalayas to places like Pakistan, Afghanistan, and the Hindukush Himalayas. After climbing Everest, he helped hundreds of Sherpas and people that lived on the shoulders of the Himalayas. He helped improve the education, health care, employment, and cultural preservation of the region and brought the community together.



Jamling and brother Norbu with his father



My father's approach to life was shaped by his experiences as a mountaineer. Born and raised in a village named Thame in the Everest region, he remained a simple and humble person despite the worldwide fame and recognition that he received. He



Tenzing Norgay Sherpa on Nanda Devi

instilled in me and my family the values of discipline, respect, and teamwork. I looked up to him as my greatest role model and always wanted to be like him. He believed that climbing should be approached with the right motivation and with respect for the culture and environment.

My father was known for his contagious smile and his great leadership personality. He was taller than most Sherpas and very approachable. My father traveled a great deal all over the world and he also spent a lot of his time in the mountains training students from the Himalayan Mountaineering Institute, Darjeeling. I went to St. Paul's School, Darjeeling which was a boarding school, and only got to visit home on holidays. Hence we were not able to spend much time with our parents while we were growing up. However, when we had long winter vacations I remember spending most of my time accompanying him on his treks to various parts of the Himalayas. He was able to balance his desire for adventure and exploration with his family life.

My father's legacy continues to inspire people today. Coming from humble beginnings, he was the first Asian to become a worldwide icon and this gave hope to millions of people. He proved that with determination, courage, and the right motivation, there are no limits to the enduring spirit of adventure. His message to young people would be to give their all to whatever they do and to strive for greatness, while also making others great.



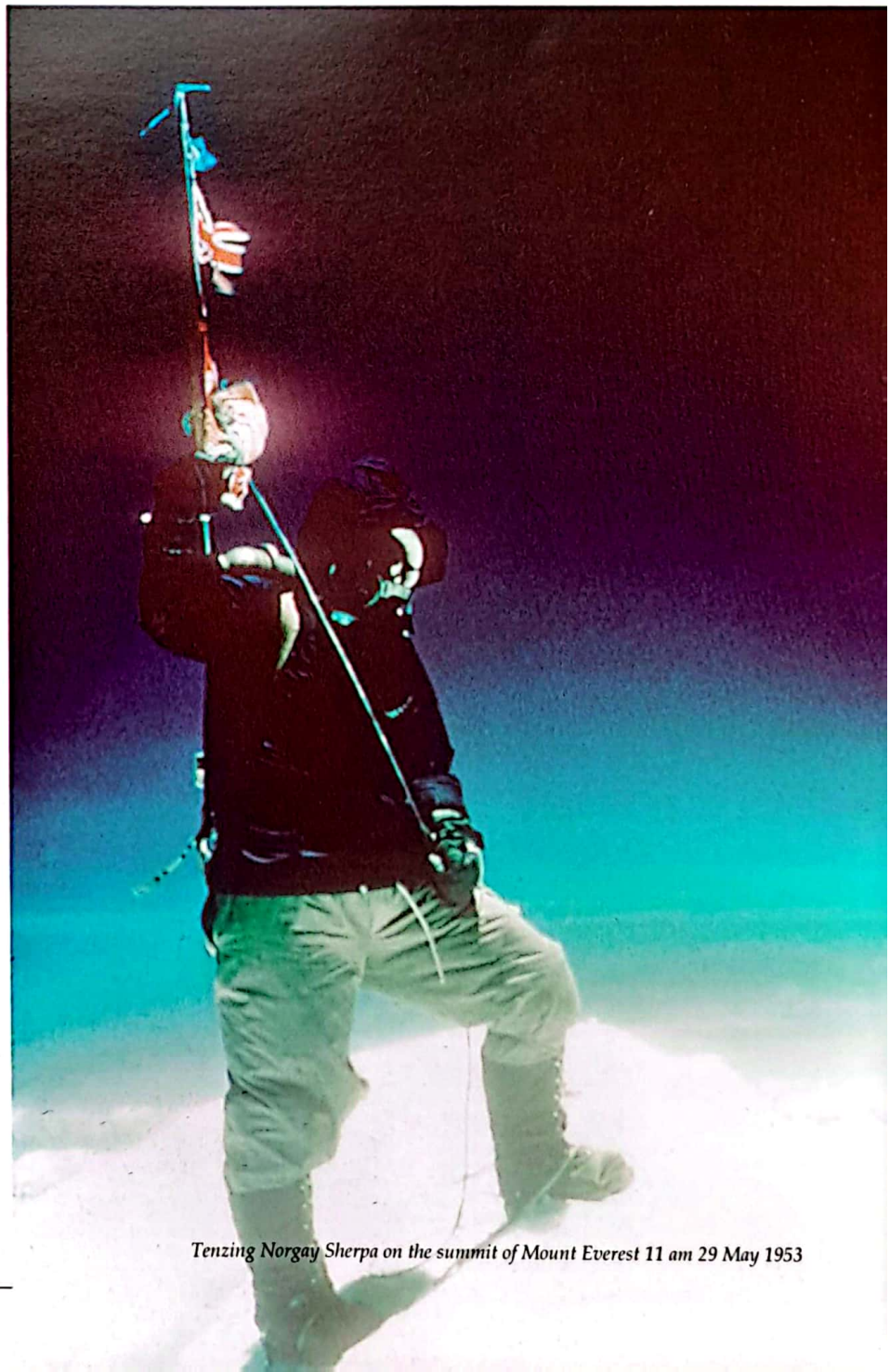
Jamling Tenzing with his father



tenzing with iceaxe

Jamling Tenzing Norgay, the "Son of the Everest Pioneer," did not idle in the shadow of paternal legacies. He is a member of a living dynasty of climbers, with 16 of his relatives summiting Mount Everest. Jamling's spiritual journey has led him to an attachment to the Himalayan region and its jagged 8000-meter peaks. Because of his acclaimed mountaineering expertise, Jamling leads novices and experts alike into the Himalayas maintaining an ancient family profession in a modern era. Based upon his experience and reputation as a mountaineer, Jamling was also chosen as the Climbing leader of the International climbing team that created the awe-inspiring IMAX documentary film, 'Everest'. Jamling has also entered the literary world with Touching My Father's Soul, (an International Best Seller) a poignant reflection on his relationship with his father and his 1996 Everest ascent. He is also a well sought motivational speaker. Physical accomplishments aside, Jamling has been instrumental in bringing much-needed social services to many of the more remote Himalayan villages. His philanthropic contributions are as valued and honorable as his mountaineering endeavors.

In conclusion, my father was much more than just the first person to climb Mt. Everest. He was an adventurer, an explorer, and a great human being who inspired millions of people around the world. His legacy continues to inspire generations and will do so for many years to come. My father was never one who sought recognition but over the years he received awards from communities and leaders around the world. It is a feeling of great pride and honor for Sherpas, Nepalis, Tibetans, and people across the Himalayas to recognize a true hero whose achievement has been the inspiration for many who flock to our mountains each year to seek out their own "Everest". His name is synonymous with the Himalayas and indelibly linked to Everest. His spirit of adventure continues within our family which now has over 16 members who have climbed Everest. His message to the young people can be put simply in a sentence quoted from his book "No man, on a mountain or elsewhere, gets more out of anything than he puts into it..... BE GREAT, MAKE OTHERS GREAT". Tenzing Norgay Sherpa, Tiger of the Snows.



Tenzing Norgay Sherpa on the summit of Mount Everest 11 am 29 May 1953

Sir Edmund Hillary

First Mount Everest Summitter

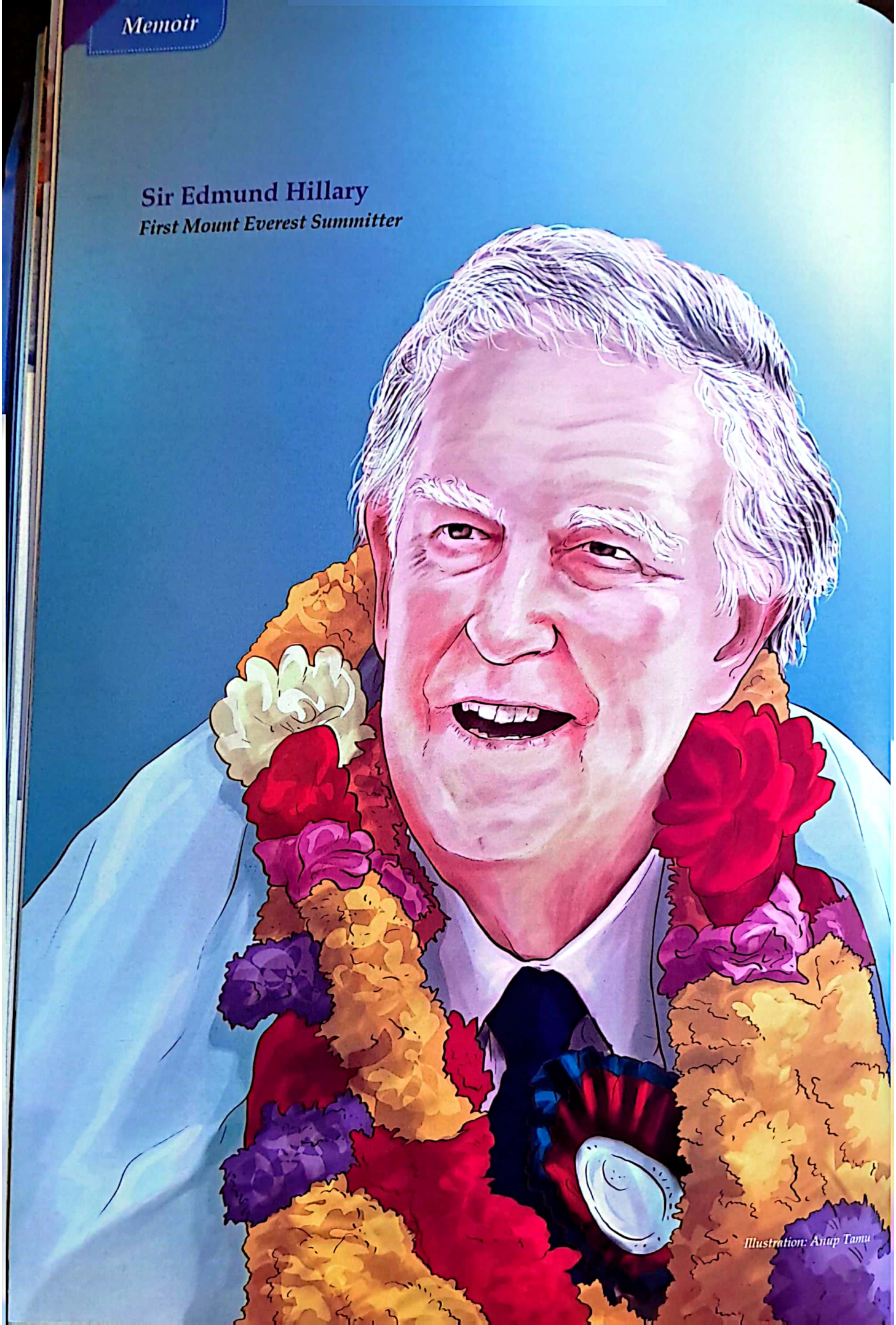


Illustration: Anup Tamu

Expanding the Realm of Possibility and the Legacy of Edmund Hillary



✍ **Peter Hillary**

The 70th anniversary of the first ascent of Mt Everest and the continuing relevance of reaching the summit …….. and expanding the realm of possibility!

"2023 is the 70th anniversary of the first ascent of Mt Everest by Ed Hillary and Tenzing Norgay. From Khumjung to Namche Bazaar to Kathmandu, to Delhi, and to London this anniversary will be celebrated; not for the singular achievement of reaching the top first but for the symbolism and inspiration that it can be done!

People ask what is so significant about this climb seventy years ago? While Ed Hillary and Tenzing Norgay just wanted to climb the mountain because no one had reached the summit it never occurred to them that this daring climb into the physical and physiological unknown expanded the realm of possibility for every one of us down near sea level - the fact that we too could climb the highest mountain if we wanted to. And in the same way, Neil Armstrong expanded our perception of what was possible by putting a boot print on the moon. Most of us will never climb Mt Everest or land on the moon but we know we can. That is a giant leap in terms of what we think is possible and now we know there are few barriers to our capability given the skills, innovation, motivation, time, and teamwork.

The truth is we are all liberated by the successes of others because their successes show that it can be done.

But Hillary and Tenzing went beyond just reaching the summit of the world's highest mountain It was what they did with their families and the communities they cared about, particularly in the Himalayas, that makes their legacy so remarkable. It was through friendship and generosity – schools, hospitals, environment - a legacy to be proud of, a legacy that their families continue to this day.

We were so lucky with my father Ed Hillary because he included us in so many of his activities from climbing mountains to building schools and hospitals in the Himalayas. Effectively his history became our own and in so many ways a shared history is one of the great legacies of family. Of course, we grew up knowing he was different because some of my earliest memories are of people asking for his autograph, or a photograph, or a request to shake him by the hand. Everyone seemed to know Ed Hillary.

And that was part of his strength that he continued to reinvent himself throughout his life. After the first ascent of Everest in 1953 he led the Trans-Antarctic Expedition Ross Sea party when they built Scott Base on Ross Island, did scientific research for the International Geophysical Year, and drove converted Ferguson farm tractors across Antarctica to reach the South Pole in 1958. My father became the third person to reach the South Pole over land after Amundsen and Scott and the first to drive a vehicle to the Pole.

He led expeditions in the



© Himalayan Trust

Belinda, Peter, Ed & Sarah Hillary on the beach in Northland, NZ c1970



Himalayas that climbed all of the Khumbu peaks around

Mt Everest, they did high-altitude physiological research, went in search of the Yeti, and began building schools and hospitals for the people of the high villages of Solu Khumbu. All of these projects were at the request of the local people and with their collaboration. That was a key part of the Ed Hillary approach to community work. From 1960 to the 1990's he and his Himalayan Trust team built 42 schools and hospitals, bridges, water systems, forestry nurseries, 3 airstrips including Lukla, and he helped with the establishment of Sagarmatha National Park with the involvement of the NZ Department of Conservation.

Ed Hillary wrote books, made documentary films including two with National Geographic, he supported conservation through the World Wildlife Fund, spent five years in New Delhi as New Zealand's High Commissioner to India and the Ambassador to Nepal. If he believed in a cause he supported it and he wrote scores of forewords to books about adventure and mountaineering and the Himalayas.

He was a mountaineer at heart and the adventure to be found in the high hills was what drew him there and the camaraderie he experienced there kept him coming back. He loved story-telling and laughter and being surrounded by a group of good friends. Our household always had visitors which made it an exciting place to be as expeditionary plans were hatched and for me, this was incredibly exciting.

My father was a born leader, he was an articulate speaker and communicator and an incredibly generous person. This commitment to helping others came out of the experiences he had as a young man learning from his father about the horrors of the First World War in which his father served at Gallipoli and suffered horribly. There was his own service during the Second World War and a growing sense that service to people, friendship, and respect was far more important than just personal goals and ambitions. The serendipity of the timing of his friendships with the people in the Himalayas led him to commit fifty years of his life to the Himalayan peoples and he frequently said this was his greatest and most worthwhile achievement ... even higher than Everest!

Right to the end of his life, Ed Hillary saw the importance of protecting the environment and fostering education; of challenging yourself, of setting goals, and going out there and achieving them. He encouraged young people to seek adventure because by definition an adventure brought uncertainty into the equation and that is where you learn the most both from your efforts and sometimes your failures, and significantly it is where you learn about yourself – your strengths, vulnerabilities, your psycho-emotional landscape. My father said, 'It is not the mountain we conquer, but ourselves.

Peter Hillary is an accomplished mountaineer who has participated in more than fifty expeditions across the globe. He has successfully summited Mt. Everest twice, completed a new route across Antarctica to the South Pole, completed a high-altitude traverse of the Himalayas from Sikkim to Pakistan, and climbed many peaks in the Himalayas and Antarctica. As the son of Sir Edmund Hillary, who, along with Tenzing Norgay, achieved the first ascent of Mt. Everest in 1953, Peter has continued his father's legacy by serving as the chairperson of the Himalayan Trust. The trust is dedicated to providing education, health, and environmental services to the people living in the Mt. Everest region. For more information about Peter's adventures, please visit his website at www.peterhillary.com.

Sir Edmund Hillary's Enduring Legacy: Transforming the Khumbu Region

"Sir Edmund Hillary is credited with bringing about significant improvements in education, health, drinking water, and the environment in the Khumbu region, where many have pursued higher education and careers in various sectors."

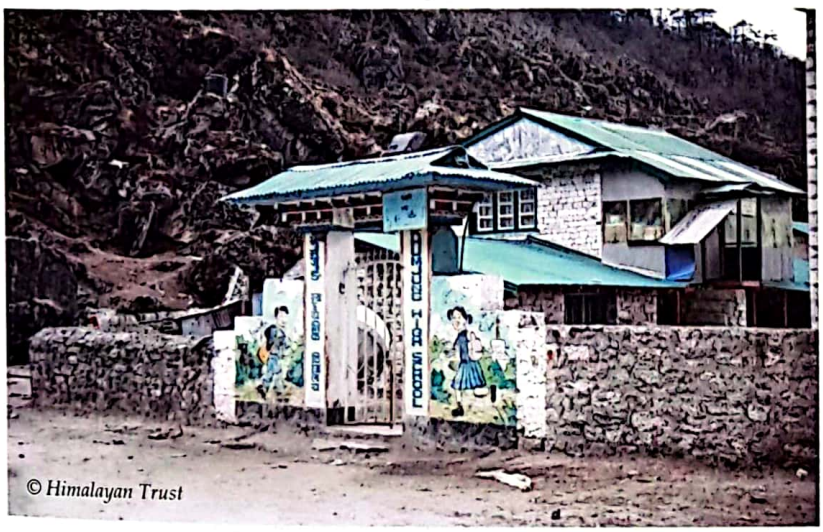


✍ *Ang Tshering Sherpa*

At the outset of this article, I would like to briefly describe the Khumbu region's conditions at that time. On May 29, 1953, Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay Sherpa accomplished the first successful ascent of Mount Everest, the world's highest peak. The present-day Khumbu region, a trekking and climbing hotspot, was not as it is today. The primary occupations of the local people were animal rearing and agriculture. Due to the proximity of Tibet, which is 40 kilometers north of the Nepal border, some people were also engaged in trade, importing salt, wool, oats, and Champa from Tibet and exporting rice, corn, millet, and other commodities from the south.

However, after the first ascent of Mount Everest, significant changes occurred in the Khumbu region. The main occupation of the people in the area transitioned to hospitality. Climbers from all over the world visit the region to scale Mount Everest and other peaks. Currently, Lukla's airport is one of the busiest airports in the country during peak season, and businesses related to tourism have flourished.

There have been substantial improvements in education, health, drinking water, and the environment. Many people who have studied in the region have obtained higher education, become doctors and engineers, and hold positions in various sectors. Credit for all these positive changes goes to Sir Edmund Hillary. His return to the Khumbu region after successfully climbing Mount Everest and his contributions to education, health, the environment, and more are exemplary not only for the people of that region but also for the entire country. Even for myself, I believe that he has contributed to my success; if he had not opened a school in Khumjung, I would not have been able to study, and what would I have done without an education?



© Himalayan Trust

After Hillary had climbed Mount Everest, the search and study of the Yeti continued. There is still a mystery surrounding what it is. He made numerous expeditions in search of that secret. During one of the expeditions to the Khumbu area, a smallpox epidemic broke out, causing great distress in the region.

Hillary immediately thought of working on smallpox control. He prepared to land at Mingbo, where Amadablam mountain's base camp is now located, for planes like the Pilatus and Cessnas to land. Kathmandu was Nepal's first airport, followed by Pokhara as the second, and Mingbo Airport as the

third, constructed in 1959. Hillary built this airport to transport health supplies and a team of doctors from Kathmandu to control the smallpox epidemic. The airport, situated at an altitude above 4,600 meters, is also the world's highest airport. Although there are no flights at the airport now, Amadablam has become one of the most famous mountains globally.

Following the Yeti Expedition, Hillary decided to conduct further research on the Yeti. He borrowed the Yeti scalp from the Monastery in Khumjung and embarked on a world tour. My father Konchumbi Sherpa, Sir Edmund Hillary, and Desmond Doig traveled the world with the Yeti scalp. They first visited Europe, followed by America and Japan.

Urken Sherpa was also a Sirdar of Hillary's team during the Yeti research expedition in 2060. Hillary asked him, "If there was anything I could do for the Sherpa people, what do you think that would be?" The members present, including Urken, requested, "Our children have eyes but they are blind and cannot see. We would like you to open their eyes by building a school in our village." Keeping that in mind, he mentioned in many places that he should open a school in Khumjung while traveling the world, and he collected funds.



In the 1960s, Hillary founded the Himalayan Trust with the objective of contributing to the well-being of the region's people. At the end of December 1960, my father and Sir Edmund Hillary arrived in Khumbu via helicopter. People of that time believed that only gods and goddesses could fly in the sky. Although I was young at that time, I still remember the events. After they came flying from the sky in a helicopter, the residents showed great respect. Upon reaching Khumjung, Hillary, and his team, including Khumbu Sherpas, built a school within three months and put it into operation. I remember very well how Hillary and his team members did the work by themselves, from chopping wood and carpentry to kneading mud and making walls. Thus, they brought the school into operation within three months, and finally, in March 1961, the school opened. I was one of the first batch of students at the school. At the time, I was 8-9 years old, and some boys who enrolled with us were 16-17. In this way, education gained a foothold in the Khumbu region. The establishment of that school was the first step in the development of that area in that region. Education gradually provided the people there with an opportunity to understand and learn about the outside world. I attribute Hillary's contribution to my current position. I wouldn't have received an education if he hadn't opened that school.



Then Hillary built Lukla airport in 1964. At that time, Hillary was preparing to build a hospital in Khunde through the Himalayan Trust. Numerous supplies were needed for the hospital, which would have been impossible to transport by porters. So he initiated the construction of an airport in Lukla to bring the materials needed

to build the hospital. The real development of the Khumbu region began after Lukla Airport was built. Lukla and Namche are known as gateways to Mount Everest. After the airport was built, visitors gained access to the region, and the two weeks trek from Kathmandu to Lukla was shortened to a 40-minute flight. This made the Everest region accessible even to regular visitors. Foreigners started coming for mountain climbing and trekking in the region. With the arrival of foreigners, tourism-related businesses began in that area, bringing positive change not only in the Khumbu region but also on a national level.



In 1966, a hospital began operating in Khunde, providing quality health services to the area. For Khunde's hospital, a doctor was brought from New Zealand, and my sister Nima Yangin Sherpa served as the first nurse. My older sister, who worked as a nurse in Santa Bhawan Hospital, Kathmandu, was asked to come there because it would be better if she were local.

Hillary made significant contributions to the education and health sectors of Solukhumbu as a whole, not only in the Khumbu region. Initially, the school opened in Khumjung but later expanded its services to other areas of Solukhumbu. They fully or partially funded the construction of 62-63 schools in Solukhumbu. They operated the hospital in Phaplu and later handed it over to the Nepal government. They also established many health clinics in different locations.

Hillary contributed to the environmental protection of the Mount Everest region as well. He played a role in the establishment of Sagarmatha National Park and set up a nursery for tree seedlings. Additionally, he carried out significant work in the fields of roads, bridges, and drinking water through various projects. My family has had a long association with Hillary. My father was the talukdar (A person with government authority) of the area. When expedition teams arrived, they would first visit my father, who would manage local arrangements such as porters, guides, and other accommodations. My father had a good relationship with British citizen John Hunt, who was the team leader of Hillary's Everest expedition. Later, my father accompanied him on a world tour.

Hillary often said he was blessed by Everest and the Sherpa people. He would say, "It is Mount Everest and the Sherpas here that brought me to this position, so I have to do something for the place and the people who brought me to this place." He believed it was his responsibility to contribute to the development of the Everest region.

In 2003, when I was the president of the Nepal Mountaineering Association, we celebrated the Golden Jubilee of the first ascent of Mount Everest. Hillary attended the event, along with about three hundred foreign journalists. Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay brought international attention to Nepal, opening the door to mountain tourism in the country. In particular, Hillary did a lot for the Sherpa and Khumbu regions and Nepal as a whole. He remained a friend and well-wisher of Nepal, the Nepali people, Khumbu, and Sherpas until he passed away on January 11, 2008. His contributions and legacy will always be remembered.

Tourism and Aviation entrepreneur Ang Tshering Sherpa is the Chief Advisor and former president of the Nepal Mountaineering Association (NMA), an honorary member of the International Climbing and Mountaineering Federation (UIAA), Immediate Past President of the Asian Mountaineering and Climbing Federation (UAAA), Honorary Consul of Belgium to Nepal and former dean of Honorary Consular Corps Nepal (HCCN).

Seventy Years On:

The Lives and Legacy of Tenzing Norgay & Sir Edmund Hillary Since their First Ascent of Everest

Seventy years after their historic climb, the legacy of Tenzing and Hillary is being celebrated in Nepal, New Zealand, India, and the United Kingdom during a series of events, receptions, unveilings, and openings in their memory. Echoing the past, by chance, the coronation of King Charles III takes place in the same month.



✍ *Lisa Choegyal*

Seventy years ago at 11.30 am on 29 May 1953, Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay made exploration history as the first mountaineers to stand on the summit of Mount Everest. A combination of strength, organization, tenacity, experience, luck, and sheer grit got them to the top. With that last summit step to the highest point on earth, the climbing duo broke altitude and endurance barriers and ventured beyond the known limits of human physiological capacity.

The iconic image of Tenzing, bundled up unrecognisable but triumphant on the summit, was snapped by Sir Ed who did not bother with one of himself, characteristically self-effacing in that moment of accomplishment that changed their lives. Tenzing's winning smile and Hillary's craggy features would become known around the world. News of the success of the British Everest Expedition, led by John Hunt, took a few days to reach London, brightening a war-weary Britain on the morning of the young Queen Elizabeth's coronation.

The rest of their lives were lived in the reflection of this single achievement. Both Tenzing and Hillary were named among Time Magazine's 100 most influential persons of the 20th Century, both were highly decorated, and both had to reinvent themselves as the hero conquerors of the world's highest mountain. Both refused to answer the pressing question of 'Who got there first?' as being irrelevant and against their spirit of teamwork and mutual respect – why did it matter? It was only later after Tenzin's death in 1986 that Hillary revealed that he was the first.



Born in 1915 in the Kama Valley of Tibet as the eleventh of 13 children, 'Sherpa Tenzing' was first known as Namgyal Wangdi before being renamed Tenzing Norgay by the head lama of Rongbuk monastery. As a boy yak-herder, in his autobiography he recalls seeing the Mallory expedition of 1921 pass through his village, awakening in him a taste for adventure.

He wrote: 'Usually Chomolungma is said to mean 'goddess mother of the world.' Sometimes 'goddess mother of the wind.' But it did not mean either of these when I was a boy in Solukhumbu. Then it meant "the mountain so high no bird can fly over it." This is what all Sherpa mothers used to tell their children – what my mother told me – and it is

the name I still like the best for this mountain that I love.'

Whilst still a child, Tenzing's family migrated to Thame village in the Everest region of Nepal where he was brought up. The adolescent Tenzing worked for a Khumjung household before running away to Darjeeling where he became much sought after for his mountain skills, choosing to make India his home for the rest of his life.

As a high-altitude porter Tenzing was valued for his warmth and good character, accompanying the 'Everest statesman' Eric Shipton to Tibet in 1935, and working with the British Everest expeditions of 1936 and 1938. He spent most of the war years in Chitral. Although never learning to read or write, Tenzin was fluent in several languages, had an enquiring mind, and was recognised as being exceptional amongst the Sherpas for his passion and interest in mountaineering, an uncommon trait in those days. 'The pull of Everest was stronger for me than any force on earth.'

In 1947 Tenzing was promoted to sirdar by a Swiss team following his courageous rescue of sirdar Wangdi Norbu who was injured after a mountaineering fall. He went on to climb Kedernath at 22,769 feet (6,940 m) in the western Garwhal Himalaya, his only major summit other than Everest, and also a first ascent. The year before Tenzing's triumph on Everest, as a full climbing member of the spring 1952 Swiss expedition team, he reached 28,200 feet (8,595 m) with Raymond Lambert on the same South Col route, before they were forced to turn back.

Tenzin was aged 38 when he summitted the world's tallest peak in 1953. After Everest, he championed the mountains he loved as Director of Field Training at the Himalayan Mountaineering Institute in Darjeeling, ran a trekking business, and travelled widely. With Lars Eric Lindblad, an adventure travel pioneer, I used to meet Tenzing escorting American tour groups through Nepal and India – he often stayed at Tiger Tops in the Chitwan jungles when I was working there, and together we went with Lindblad to Darjeeling and Kashmir. Tenzing died of a cerebral haemorrhage in 1986, aged 70 years.



Tenzing Norgay by Alfred Gregore



A proposed recent Tenzing biopic has faltered, but several books have been published about his ground-breaking life, including a ghost-written autobiography. He had three wives and four children - his grandson by his daughter Pem Pem lives in Kathmandu, and two sons by his third wife are frequent visitors, all with distinguished careers in travel, mountaineering, and development.



Regarded as a legendary national hero by both Nepalis and Indians, Tenzing Norgay GM OSN's many honours included the Nepal Tara and Britain's George Medal. Although awarded the highest British recognition available, there were critics who felt that Tenzing should have been knighted alongside Sir Ed.

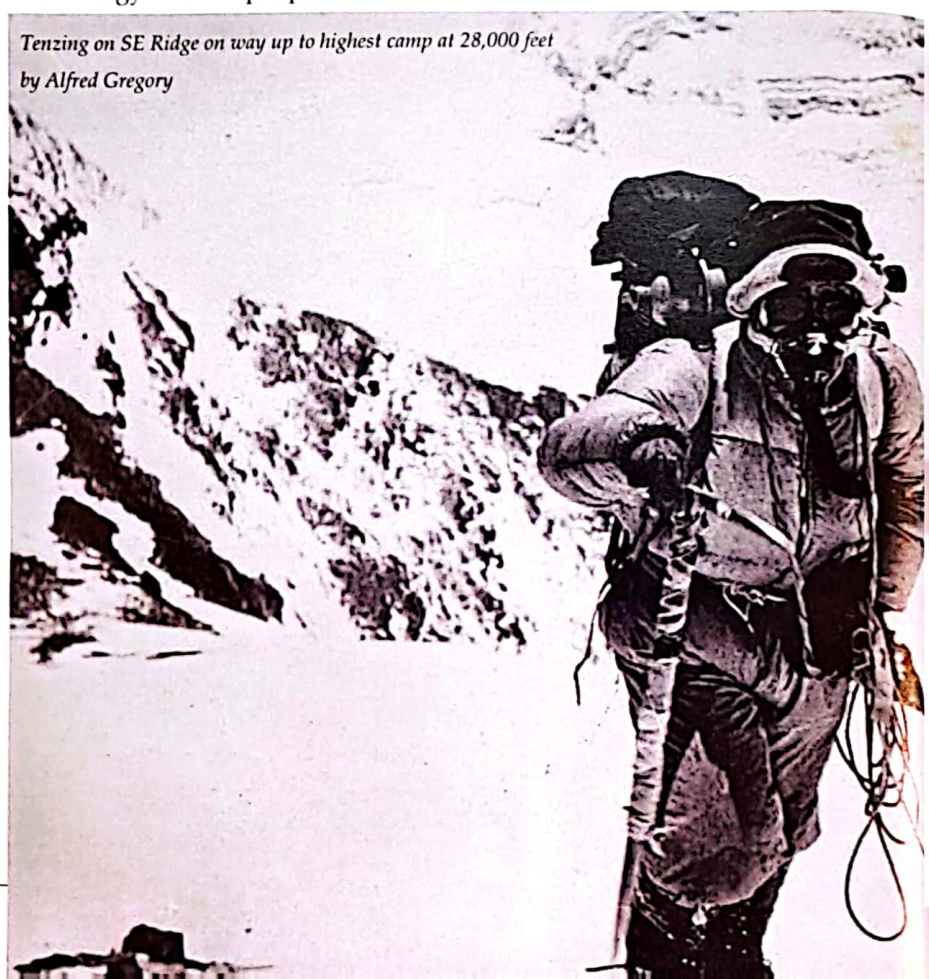
From his persona as a humble beekeeper and New Zealand mountaineer, Sir Edmund Percival Hillary KG ONZ KBE transformed into a celebrity explorer, writer, philanthropist, and Knight of the Garter, the gracious kind-hearted approachable Kiwi whose home number was listed in the Auckland telephone book. 'It's not the mountain we conquer, but ourselves,' he wrote. A national hero famed for his courage, but so painfully shy that he had to prevail upon his first wife Louise's mother to ask her to marry him.

Hillary's books were eloquent and even poetic, sharing with millions his love of challenge, and stories of his adventures to mysterious Himalayan ranges, Indian rivers, and Antarctic wilderness. He was the first person to reach both the north and south poles, and the summit of Everest. Sir Ed's distinctive profile squints into the distance on New Zealand's five-dollar bill, but his reaction was typically humorous and unassuming: 'I thought you had to be dead or royal to get onto a banknote!'

But if Everest defined Sir Ed, he preferred to be remembered for 'giving back', investing his time and energy in the people whom he found struggling for survival in the shadow of Sagarmatha, and without whose help he could not have reached the top.

He wrote: 'I believe that of all the things I have done, exciting though many of them have been, there's no doubt in my mind that the most worthwhile have been the establishing of schools and hospitals and the rebuilding of monasteries in the mountains.'

The Sherpas led an uncertain life, as farmers scraping a living from the poor upland soil with their traditional trade with Tibet and occasional expedition work reduced by external regional forces. It was only later that mountaineering, trekking, and tourism brought fame and fortune, along with reliable revenue. Sir Ed realised the necessity of education to enable his Sherpa friends to cope with the impending change in an encroaching modern world and to provide them with choices and alternatives.



Tenzing on SE Ridge on way up to highest camp at 28,000 feet
by Alfred Gregory

The story goes that in 1960 Sir Ed and Louise started the Himalayan Trust after asking the Khumbu people: 'If there was anything I could do for the Sherpa people, what do you think that would be?' The much-quoted reply was: 'Our children have eyes but they are blind and cannot see. We would like you to open their eyes by building a school in our village.'

With his own hands and family helpers, Sir Ed constructed the tin-clad shed that in 1961 became the first classroom of Khumjung school. More do-it-yourself practical Kiwi buildings followed to house the region's first medical clinics at Kunde and Phaplu. Several hundred porters were hired to carry supplies of shovels, pickaxes, hammers, and nails bought in Kathmandu's Asan Tole bazar over the tortuous trails to Solukhumbu. To support the schools and hospitals, Sir Ed built Lukla airstrip in 1964 on a steep hillside at 9,380 feet (2,860 m), mobilising a chorus line of Sherpa and Sherpani dancers to flatten and compact the earth with their stomping steps. By his own admission, Sir Ed was surprised and rather alarmed by the tourism influx that was unwittingly unleashed by the new airport.



After the 1961 expedition with writer Desmond Doig in search of the elusive yeti 'high in the thin cold air', Hillary wrote: 'Our yeti search gave us many exciting moments as we tracked down the threads that seemed so often to be leading to an astounding answer but never did. At the end of it all, we reached a definite conclusion that the yeti was a myth.' Together they toured the world with headman Konchok Chombi and Khumjung monastery's conical-shaped yeti scalp to tell the story, make scientific tests and raise support.



From these beginnings, personally hauling timber and hammering nails on annual visits between global fundraising forays, Sir Ed's Himalayan Trust grew, enabling the entrepreneurial spirit of the Sherpas to emerge and flourish, their innate highland hospitality well suited for tourism. Over the decades, millions have benefited from the schools, hospitals, clinics, water supplies, nurseries, airfields, and other facilities that the Himalayan Trust has contributed throughout Solukhumbu, and thousands of Nepalis have received direct scholarships and subsidies.

Sir Ed's philanthropic style was to listen and observe, then follow his instincts when it came to distributing grants and selecting projects. He relied heavily on the wisdom of his favourite sirdar, Mingma Tshering, and his wife Ang Doli, and in later years he came to depend on Ang Rita to punctiliously look after all Himalayan Trust activities. With the establishment of Sagarmatha National Park, it followed that New Zealanders served as technical advisors, whilst university scholarships trained future generations of Nepalis to become conservation leaders and the first Sherpa park wardens.

In a tragic accident on 31 March 1975, his wife Louise and their youngest daughter Belinda were killed in Kathmandu when their single-engine aircraft crashed on

take-off on their way to join Sir Ed and his brother Rex who were building the Phaplu hospital. Elizabeth Hawley, for decades manager of the Himalayan Trust office in Dilli Bazar, had to break to him the devastating news: 'It was the worst week of my life.'

But Sir Ed persevered with his charitable work. In addition to New Zealand and Nepal, he inspired sister organisations in Australia, North America, UK, and Europe. He regularly visited Nepal with June Mulgrew, a family friend and widow of climber, Peter Mulgrew, who had helped him through the dark times following Louise's shocking death. Assistance projects, schools, and clinics spread throughout Solukhumbu, and Sherpas were trained in New Zealand and elsewhere.

Ten years later, appointed New Zealand High Commissioner to India and Ambassador to Nepal, Sir Ed was able to broaden his practical influence to spheres of trade and development. New Zealand wool supplied Nepal's thriving hand-made carpet industry. He arranged for earthquake scientists to work with Nepali engineers on seismology, building codes, and disaster preparation. June accompanied Sir Ed during his four years in New Delhi and in 1989 they married on their return to New Zealand.

When the historic Tengboche monastery burned to the ground late at night on 19 January 1989, blamed on an electrical fault from the new micro-hydro, Sir Ed contributed to its rebuild. After the careful reconstruction of the Sherpa's most significant Buddhist centre, June invited me to join them on the auspicious day of the reopening. By this time Sir Ed was confined to travelling by helicopter from Kathmandu, having lost all tolerance to altitude and being unable to stay long in the high mountains. Nepal Prime Minister Girija Koirala was the chief guest at the ceremony with other Himalayan Trust supporters, but Sir Ed was struggling with his health and bad weather threatened as we landed in the meadow in front of Tengboche monastery, cradled beneath white peaks and perched on a steep saddle with views of Everest.



We sat cross-legged on carpeted cushions in the enlarged prayer hall beneath the repainted murals as Rinpoche presided, monks chanted, incense wafted, drums pounded and handbells chimed. Afterwards, colour-drenched dancers whirled in the restored stone-flagged courtyard and conches signalled the close of the celebrations, but Ang Rita's face was grave with apprehension. Thick clouds had descended and a heavy silence enveloped the ridge – we had no choice but to wait in the thin air under limp prayer flags wreathed in mist. Ed was not the only person looking grey and gaunt when the two helicopters finally found a gap to dive through the weather, just long enough to pick us up whilst the rotors roared, frantic farewells were waved, and rhododendrons bowed in the fierce gusts.

The Sherpas of Solukhumbu have been able to take the best from the many helping hands offered them, and Sir Ed is deeply respected as the first and most crucial of these. Revered as Burra Sahib, the great man, he was lauded under mounds of white kata ceremonial scarves wherever he went in Nepal. Sir Ed received the country's highest award from King Birendra and was ordained and robed as a Buddhist monk in Salleri Gompa. One humid evening in Kathmandu, at the golden jubilee celebrations of the scaling of the world's tallest mountain on 29 May 2003, he was conferred with honorary Nepali citizenship recognising his ascent as 'one of mankind's finest achievements'.

The first graduates of Khumjung's 'Schoolhouse in the clouds' are now in their early 70s, having set distinguished records as Sherpa elders and leaders. Ang Rita has retired from the Himalayan Trust, Dr. Lhakpa Norbu cultural and environmental activist was the first Sherpa to achieve a Ph.D., Mingma Norbu was director of conservation for WWF USA and set up the WWF Nepal and Bhutan offices before being lost in the Kangchenjunga helicopter tragedy. Dr. Kami Temba trained in Fiji and can be found running Kunde Hospital, having taken over from rosters of New Zealand and Canadian

volunteer doctors. Dr. Mingma Gyalzen handed over his Phaplu hospital duties to serve as director general in the Nepal government's Department of Health.

It was Sir Ed's vision that the Sherpas take over his humanitarian work and that the younger generation step up. Fifteen years since he died on 11 January 2008, peacefully in Auckland, his legacy proudly endures. Responsibility for the Himalayan Trust is now entirely shouldered by the Sherpa people themselves, and changing dynamics and evolving needs are expanding its scope geographically, beyond Sir Ed's original Solukhumbu priorities.

Today in Namche and villages throughout Solukhumbu there are many examples of Sherpa ingenuity, entrepreneurship, and aptitude for hospitality, both at home and abroad, both men and women, that testify to Sir Ed's vision. Having taken their place amongst the professional elite, Sherpas lead Himalayan mountaineering and trekking. There are Sherpa teachers, nurses, doctors, dentists, physiotherapists, hoteliers, engineers, scientists, singers, professors, and pilots. Sherpas serve as government ministers, ambassadors, honorary consuls, and political leaders. Sherpas own airlines, operate helicopters, and fly Boeings. Career choices and life decisions may take them all over the world, but some small part of every Sherpa soul still resonates with the rhythm of their high valley homeland.

During his lifetime Sir Ed never sought personal accolades, resisting statues and named tributes in his memory. He preferred that his actions and achievements speak for themselves. It was only after his death that Lukla was renamed Tenzing-Hillary Airport, statues of him and Tenzing were erected in the Nepal Tourism Board, Lukla and Khumjung school, and memorial Chortens consecrated high on a ridge above Kunde next to those of Louise and Belinda, forever contemplating the Everest massif.



Sir Edmund Hillary, Peter Mulgrew, Tenzing Norgay and Wife Daku

Sir Edmund Hillary, 'the greatest New Zealander', was honoured with a rare state funeral in Auckland cathedral led by Prime Minister Helen Clark, and his ashes scattered according to his wishes on the choppy waters of the harbour. The New Zealand ceremony took place by auspicious coincidence on the 49th day of his passing, whilst Sherpas performed Buddhist rites in Nepal's high places that he loved so deeply.

Seventy years after their historic climb, the legacy of Tenzing and Hillary is being celebrated in Nepal, New Zealand, India, and the United Kingdom during a series of events, receptions, unveilings, and openings in their memory (www.everest70.com). Echoing the past, by chance, the coronation of King Charles III takes place in the same month.

Looking to the future in a very different world from theirs, the combined achievements of Tenzing Norgay and Edmund Hillary continue to touch the lives of many and soar above their being the first persons to scale the unrivalled heights of Mount Sagarmatha Chomolungma Everest.

British-born Lisa Choegyal is a consultant in tourism and conservation based in Nepal since 1974. With Tiger Tops Mountain Travel for 25 years as marketing director until 1997, she remains an owner of Tiger Mountain Pokhara Lodge www.tigermountainpokhara.com. Lisa is a writer and editor, handles film logistics, works with a range of pro-bono initiatives, and since 2010 serves as the New Zealand Honorary Consul to Nepal www.lisachoegyal.com.

Risk and Reward: The Ethical Dilemma of Modern Mount Everest Climbing

"Changes have occurred for a variety of reasons and circumstances. In the earlier era, the terms 'mountaineering', 'climbing', and 'adventure' were well understood. Principles and ethics were well defined, even if not written down, as eluded to in the early Alpine Club Journals. However, in the current era, these terms are regularly misused, ethics and principles are not always transparent, and motivation is based on a completely different premise."



✍ *Ian Wall*

The ethics of high-altitude mountaineering on Mount Everest has changed, or has it? These assumptions are based on evidence found in Wade Davis' book 'Into the Silence'[1] and in a post on Kristin Harila's Facebook page, she distinctly sets out her sole mission is to beat Nirmal Purja's speed record for all the 8000m peaks.[2]

Jake Norton suggests that the members of the 1922 and 1924 Everest expeditions were not fixated only on the summit. They were also looking at the whole experience, Everest and its summit, to transform their lives in any meaningful, structural way. They were there for the journey, the adventure, the challenge, and to return home the better for it. (Norton J 2023)[3]

Changes have occurred for a variety of reasons and circumstances. In the earlier era, the terms 'mountaineering', 'climbing', and 'adventure' were well understood. Principles and ethics were well defined, even if not written down, as eluded to in the early Alpine Club Journals. However, in the current era, these terms are regularly misused, ethics and principles are not always transparent, and motivation is based on a completely different premise. In this modern age, Everest clients still experience the inherent risks associated with mountaineering. But have these risks been greatly reduced due to commercialism, while during the same time, possibly increased by personal ego, technology, and greed? There are many reasons why people ascend Everest, and in today's modern society this is complicated by potential financial rewards, sponsorship deals, fame, and in some cases, fortune. While there are potentially highly coveted rewards for summiting Everest today, this is motivating an increasing number of people to book commercial expeditions. Consequently, there is an increase in the number of agencies meeting this demand and offering



Heli rescue

[1] Davis W 2011, Into the Silence, Bodley Head

[2] Kristin Harila Facebook post 27 September 2022 www.facebook.com/kristin.j.harila

[3] Norton J 2023, The First Case of Everest Summit Fever https://jakenorton.com/the-first-case-of-everest-summit-fever/?fbclid=IwAR2D_xuWNZzVKiR7vr_Bp-p9VYP9Ln0ouiE4OeYwHYSD53vXsc52ypoPR0Y0

expedition expertise. In order to be more competitive, a greater level of service and comfort are provided at very competitive prices, as successful ascents greatly enhance a company's reputation.



Early morning, on June 6th, 1924, Mallory and Irvine left camp at 7000m on Everest, high above the East Rongbuk Glacier, in unsettled weather and developing monsoon clouds to the east would soon obliterate any view of their progress. Mallory remained optimistic saying, 'We are going to sail to the top this time and God with us, or, stamp on the top with the wind in our teeth'.

Norton was less optimistic, confiding in Noel, 'Mallory knows he is leading a forlorn hope'. No one had climbed Everest before, and thus, the mountaineers were in completely unknown territory. Mallory knew there would be no chance of any help should anything untoward happen, yet he was optimistic in the endeavor.

Mallory was famously asked why he wanted to climb Everest, and his answer, maybe a little trite, was, 'Because it's there'. However, people don't undertake any adventure just because they simply can. They are either highly motivated, inspired, or pressurized by either themselves or their peers, or certain situations.

Mallory's answer, "Because it's there", raises questions as to what motivates people to climb mountains and take on extreme adventures. Those adventures, more often than not, resulted in expedition members frequently going outside their comfort and adventure zones. In an attempt to support the modern trend of 'record chasers', more Nepali high-altitude workers are pushing the boundaries of safety. (Benavides A 2023)[4]. Mallory had, undoubtedly, his own reasons for climbing Everest. He was looking for Everest to change him, transform himself from a gifted man for lecturing and teaching into a household name, a conqueror of the highest mountain on earth, saviour of the spirit and soul of the crumbling British Empire. He was looking, hoping, yearning that his time on Everest (1924) would change his course, and set him up socially and financially so that he could be with his wife and children living a comfortable life and not have to return to Everest again. (Norton J 2023)[5]

For the early Everest expeditions, national pride was at stake. From 1921 to 1938, the British consistently organised expeditions to Everest. In 1950 an Anglo-American team and in 1951 a clandestine Danish expedition team arrived in the Everest foothills. The British returned in 1951, followed by the Swiss in 1952. Everest was finally 'conquered' in 1953 by a British expedition. The summit of Everest was reached on 29th May by Sherpa Tenzing and Ed Hillary. All of these expeditions were self-contained. Modern helicopters, trained pilots, and computer systems generating and communicating weather forecasts to Everest Base Camp were never even dreamed of.

From the pre-dawn, before the 'first ascent', the expeditions had been planned and climbed using 'siege tactics'. The route was pushed out by expedition members fixing ropes, establishing camps, and then retreating down the fixed ropes to the safety of Base Camp before the summit push. The South Col route took the easiest and safest line (from Nepal) for summit success, and the umbilical cord linked the high camps to Base Camp and provided a safety line to relative security. In the case of an accident, a link up in which team members could mount a rescue operation, all expeditions would be self-reliant, and all members knew of the risks they were taking.

By 1975, international expeditions were focusing on the big Himalayan faces, and the stakes were raised. Safety was a big concern based on perceived risks by the expedition members, but they were considered acceptable risks. Although 'siege tactics' were

[4] Benavides A 2023, Close Call on Manaslu Raises Questions https://explorersweb.com/close-call-manaslu/

[5] Norton J 2023, The First Case of Everest Summit Fever https://jakenorton.com/the-first-case-of-everest-summit-fever/?fbclid=IwAR2D_xuWNZzVKiR7vr_Bp-p9VYP9Ln0ouiE4OeYwHYSD53vXsc52ypoPR0Y0

still employed, the terrain was steep and technical, which meant climbers had to possess a high degree of technical competence and mountaineering experience. Team members were chosen from the upper technical levels of the leading national mountaineers of the day. Apart from considering the technical challenges of the route, one had to always keep one eye on the 'what if' situations such as changeable or sudden unseasonal weather, unstable rock and poor snow conditions, remoteness, the question of an accident and the potential for rescue. On Everest during that era, any form of rescue would have to come from within the team. There were no high-altitude helicopters with the appropriate technology or pilots with the required flying skills to launch a rescue from the air. Radio communications were almost non-existent, and appropriate Base Camp medical facilities were quite basic compared to today's technology. The expedition had to be self-sufficient in all areas. Expedition members who might not have been high on the mountain at the time of an accident could carry out a rescue, but basically, all accepted that if anyone had an accident high on the mountains, there was a high probability that they would die.

In 1975 Bonington led a successful expedition to the SW Face of Everest. The first climbers to reach the summit by that route on the 24th of September 1975 were D Scott (British) and D Haston (Scottish), Pertemba Sherpa (Nepali) and P Boardman (British) made the second ascent the following day while M. Burke (British) attempted the third ascent. Scott and Haston were forced to bivi above the South Summit while Burke fell to his death from near the summit. Sherpa and Boardman were lucky to survive a horrendous storm during their descent. All the expedition members accepted the risks their undertaking would incur, as there was never any thought of a potential rescue from such an extreme and hostile location.

The most significant ascent of Everest was probably made in 1978 bar the first ascent in 1953. With the developing world of Alpine-style expeditions, one man took this to extreme levels. Everest was considered too high, and the air "too thin", according to the medical community. But after some acclimatisation and stocking supplies on the North Col, Messner set off for the summit on August 18, 1980. Within a few hours after leaving Advanced Base Camp, he fell into a crevasse in the dark, and at over 7,000m, on climbing out of the predicament he continued upward along the North Ridge.

The following day he headed directly across the unknown ground of the North Face for approximately two kilometres to reach the Norton Couloir, where he bivouacked at around 8200m. Alone and out of reach, it seemed as if he might as well have been on the moon. In an exhausted but very focused state, he finally reached the summit at 1 pm the following day, the third day since leaving Base Camp. He became the first person to stand in isolation at the summit on 20th August 1980.

Alone, without oxygen, on dangerous terrain, without hope of rescue, and at the very limits of known human endurance, Messner risked it all for a dream, a fleeting moment on the roof of the world. Just him, the mountain, and his pregnant girlfriend at Base Camp. Not even a liaison officer on the East Rongbuk Glacier. He would be the solitary witness to his efforts, simply to prove it was possible.

In 1980 an audacious four-man expedition made a successful ascent of the Kangshung Face in Alpine Style. This image of Robert 'Mads' Anderson, taken by Ed Webster, ascending towards the summit, illustrates a mountaineer solely reliant on his own mountaineering skills and trusting in his own mental attitude and judgment.

In the winter of 1980-81, a British eight-man expedition, and the first winter expedition to Everest, set out to attempt the West Ridge without bottled oxygen or high-altitude Sherpa support. The expedition battled



Lhotse from Everest

extreme conditions in an 'Alpine Style', lightweight minimalistic approach. Fixed ropes were not used, and the lightweight style required expedition members to progress up the route carrying all essential equipment. It meant that the safety margins were reduced still further, retreat down the route was often extremely difficult and dangerous, and with an expedition comprising fewer members, all the risks needed to be mutually accepted. The reduced food supply and the unsophisticated radio communication technology only deepened the sense of isolation. (Snow D)[6]

In the early 1990s, there was another shift in Himalayan mountaineering with the introduction of commercial expeditions and the advent of high-dollar paying clients. Mountaineering had to take a step back, and instead of considering a minimalistic approach of high adrenaline adventurous challenges with its reduced safety margins, it had to turn to increase the safety margins, and in the name of commercialism, attracting a developing market of wealthy individuals paying top dollar to stand on the summit.

Although the technology was rapidly developing by 2009, sufficient infrastructure was not available to meet the demands of a fast-growing mountain tourism industry and the associated issues that prevailed. Helicopter Pilot Capt. Siddartha Gurung, now a rescue specialist, recalls 'when a Slovakian climber, Tomaz Humar got stranded in Langtang and needed to be rescued. Pilots had no training, nor the equipment to extract him from the mountains. A Swiss rescue team was called in, and they collaborated with Fishtail Air whereby a Nepali pilot would conduct the rescue under the supervision of the Swiss team. The team located the climber but he had already died on the mountain, his body had to be carried out from the mountains by a rescue team. This is how the first technical rescue was performed in Nepal'. (Capt Siddartha Jang Gurung)[7]



Tents at Everest Base Camp. Photo by Satish Man Pati



Luxury Facility at Everest Base Camp

Along with the dramatic improvement in, and thus the importance of, the use of helicopters in the mountaineering industry, communication systems improved, and so did the standard of services offered in Base Camps. 'Froffy coffee' and 'wifi' is now the norm, and clients expect them to be provided. Two-compartment tents, state-of-the-art kitchens that many café owners in Thamel would die for, carpets, heating, films, and lectures all contribute to making Base Camp life an enjoyable and acceptable experience for the less accomplished client.

These commercial ventures have been tailored to the wealthy who want 'summit bragging rights'. This is now a multi-million-dollar industry for Nepal that provides employment opportunities to many local people up and down the approach valleys, as well as on the mountain as high-altitude workers and guides.

Along with all these creature comforts, clients have high expectations for their money, reaching the summit, and being kept safe while on a commercial expedition. This raises the issue of

[6] Snow D. 1982 Everest's Winter Ascent
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_4OrxQBNywI

[7] Capt Siddartha Jang Gurung: Aviation rescue specialist 11 February 2023
https://theannapurnaexpress.com/news/capt-siddartha-jang-gurung-aviation-rescue-specialist-38215

risk reduction and rescuing. Risk is an essential ingredient in any form of adventurous activity, and fear of that risk is the safety button. Until the early 2000s, mountaineers took personal responsibility for their actions and accepted that things could go wrong. However, in today's commercial world, expectations are far higher and spread more widely. Understanding the motivation of would-be summiteers' demands has increased the supply chain based on success and safety. By 2023, the industry had created a situation of ego and reward along with commercial survival, equalling an ultra-safe image of climbing Everest. Thus, a more subjectively dangerous situation has evolved: overcrowding and lack of client mountaineering ability.

Clients are now cocooned in the comfort of Base Camp and protected to a certain extent from the elements. Once conditions become more hostile and stressful higher up the mountain, has their Base Camp experience reduced their mental ability to withstand the harsh reality of potential danger? Combined with, in most cases, inexperience on other mountains of a lesser altitude makes them a liability to themselves, their guides, and other people on the mountain. Are they accepting personal responsibility or relying on their guides and technology to get them out of difficulties?

In September 2022, numerous avalanches on Manaslu swept away fixed ropes, taking the lives of several guides and clients. Extremely crowded camps also created problems for pilots while trying to evacuate injured personnel, further compounded by politics and delays in obtaining National Park clearance permits. One guide admitted that many clients were trapped lower down the mountain as they did not have the mountaineering skills to descend without the fixed ropes.

Both clients and agencies rely heavily on external help to get people up and down the mountain and out of life-threatening situations. Should 'rescue' not arrive within a short amount of time, then additional fatalities could be expected. Cost is a big consideration in this commercially competitive world. Some agencies tightly control situations that impact client safety, oxygen supplies, qualified staff, and staff numbers.



The presence of the fear factor has always been a safety button. The situation is assessed, and the level of acceptability is agreed, upon whether to go or not. With the number of high mountain expeditions this decade has seen, that level of fear from the client's perspective has been virtually removed and replaced with the complete expectation and an acceptance that external support and rescue will always be available and almost on tap. The clients' drive to reach the summit, no matter at what cost or to whom, has created an increased risk for all concerned.

Over the 70 years since the first ascent of Everest, is commercial mountain tourism minimising clients' acceptance of risk for commercial gain and indirectly raising the risk factor to all on the mountain?

Ian Wall is from the UK but has been in Nepal for 20 years. He is the International Honorary CEO of the Kathmandu Environmental Education Project and actively supports trekking Porter and Guides welfare issues. Ian has been involved in adventure tourism since 1968 and has led groups on mountain activities in the UK, Europe, Scandinavia, Africa, Kashmir, Ladakh, India, Nepal, Tibet, and Sikkim. He has worked as an instructor at the UK National Mountaineering Centre along with other education centres. Ian has been the training officer for one of the UK's busiest Mountain Rescue Teams.

He operates Off the Wall trekking and writes for a variety of journals and magazines that include the Alpine Club Journal (UK), Nepal Parbat (Np), Voice of the Himalaya (Np), Journal of Tourism and Himalayan Adventures (Np), Journal of the Nepal Mountain Academy (Np). He has also written two books: 'The Training of Trainers' and 'Adventure and Mountaineering Tourism'. He delivers training programs on different aspects of Risk Assessment and is an Advisor on the Nepal Mountaineering Association committees. He is also an advisor for the Kathmandu International Mountain Film Festival.

Ian is now becoming increasingly involved in exploring Nepal on his e-bike.

Transforming Khumbu:
Mountain, Mountaineering and People

Tourism growth not only benefitted the locals of Khumbu, but a huge percentage of the profits went to places like Kathmandu. Along with the economic benefits also came the risks. Uncontrolled tourism can have negative impacts on the environment and indigenous culture.



✍ *Dr. Lhakpa Norbu Sherpa*

This year marks the seventieth anniversary of the climbing of Jomolangma (Mt Everest) which catapulted Nepal and the Khumbu region to the world's attention. Since then Khumbu has seen a great many changes including becoming a national park. Like Sherpas of my generation, I have been witness to these enormous changes and their impact on our local community.

Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay traveled through Khumbu 70 years ago with a British expedition and climbed Jomolangma on 29 May 1953. I was born a few months before this historic ascent in the pastoral settlement of Tarnga (4050m) located about 30 km west of the Jomolangma which is of personal significance to me. Sir Edmund and Tenzing's historic ascent had a sudden and lasting impact on the environment and society of Khumbu, by suddenly exposing the isolated Himalayan hidden valley and its little-known community of people to the world and attracting hundreds of thousands of international tourists. Khumbu became one of the fastest-changing places in the Nepal Himalayas. While change is natural, rapid change can have unpredictable social and ecological consequences. Recognizing this after the ascent of Jomolangma Sir Edmund Hillary dedicated his life to introducing initiatives to address the negative impacts. The establishment of Sagarmatha National Park in 1976 in Khumbu was one such measure aimed at minimizing the growing impact of tourism on its environment and culture. The world was changing and the 1959 political change in Tibet was a crushing blow to the subsistence farmers of Khumbu. My parents practiced substance agro-pastoralism and engaged in trans-Himalayan trade for a living with Tibetan salt being the key trading item. Our family also used Tibetan pastures on the north side of the Himalayas by paying grazing fees to the local owners. The Chinese takeover of Tibet not only affected the cross-border trade but sent an influx of Tibetan refugees and their livestock to Khumbu causing sudden overgrazing and livestock losses. Sir Edmund was one of the early Westerners to be aware of this problem. Luckily, by the time Thame School was open, most refugees left Khumbu to resettle in refugee camps elsewhere or returned to Tibet.



Mt. Everest south face in Sagarmatha National Park of Nepal.

The Hillary schools, health posts, reforestation, trail and bridge improvements, cultural site protection, etc made a difference in the lives of many in Khumbu. In his memoir, Sir Edmund Hillary mentioned that "it all began in 1960 when I asked the Sherpa friends if there is one thing I could do for you, what that would be?" Urken Sherpa of Khumjung suggested a school for their children and as a result, the first Hillary school was established in Khumjung in 1961. This obviously made the people in the adjacent villages envious. The elders of Thame Teng approached Sir Edmund Hillary with a petition saying "Although our children have eyes, they are still blind without modern education. Please help us build a school." The petitioners were Tshewang Rinji, Kirken, Drag Nuri (my uncle), and

Scanned with CamScanner

Konjo Chhumbi from Khumjung. A primary school was quickly opened in Thame Teng village in 1963 where I got enrolled at the age of 10. I had been learning the Sambhota alphabet from my father before joining the school which got discontinued because it was not permitted to be taught in formal schools.

In 1964, a deadly smallpox outbreak spread into Khumbu. Several families lost children to the disease. The school got temporarily closed. At this time the construction of Khunde Hospital by Sir Edmund was ongoing and there were no other health facilities in the region. Luckily, a foreign doctor arrived at our house with the vaccine. Instead of waiting in their own homes, people from nearby villages began to gather in our yard wanting to get vaccinated. A fight broke out amidst the panic and fear of contamination. Smallpox in Khumbu was a traumatic experience for us as children but the immunization saved many young lives. This outbreak was one of the last in Nepal and people with memories of smallpox will soon be a thing of the past.

After four years of schooling in Thame Teng, a few of us from Thame moved to Khumjung to continue our schooling. Initially, we tried going each day from home which soon became impossible because of the distance involved. Khumjung School had no hostels and rental accommodation was hard to find in the village. Water was extremely scarce and we quenched our thirst by drinking the water collected from the School's aluminum roofing. Sir Edmund Hillary's Himalayan Trust later improved the water supply by laying imported polythene pipes which was a huge relief for the students as well as the villagers. The students from distant villages had to spend all their spare time securing food, gathering firewood, cooking, and cleaning which naturally affected our grades and was a major cause of students dropping out. I scraped through and managed to get a Himalayan Trust scholarship to continue schooling in Kathmandu. This type of education migration is still ongoing and becoming a major cause of language loss and cultural erosion among younger generations.

One Mountain – Many Names

The world's highest mountain has four different names. Mt. Everest was given by the Royal Geographic Society of London in 1856. Sagarmatha (head of the sky) was coined and adopted by the Government of Nepal in 1929. To the local communities who lived around its base, it was called Jomolangma for many generations. Jomolangma is an abbreviated form of Jomo Miyo Langsangma, a protector goddess in Himalayan Buddhist mythology. Jomolangma is shared between Nepal and the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) China. The Chinese name is spelled Qomolangma. Its pronunciation is very close to Jomolangma. The diversity of names is a mark of respect by different nations and nationalities who desired to identify with it. While recognizing all the other nomenclatures, I will use the name Jomolangma for this article because it is part of my heritage language.



Writer with Tibetan nomads in Tibet QNP 1999

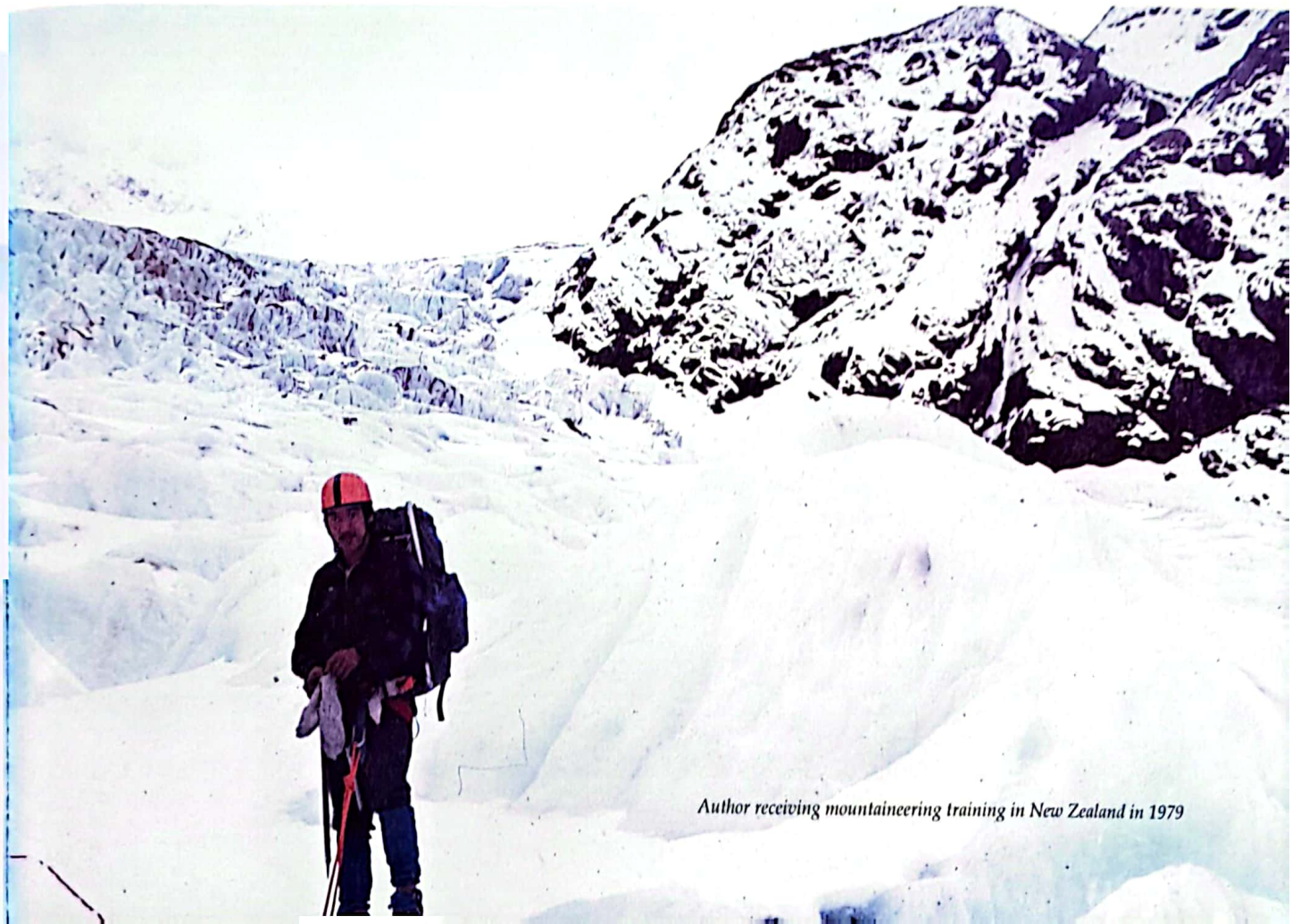
Before the 1950s, many young people from Khumbu left for Darjeeling in search of jobs. The fortunate ones got employed by British expeditions as porters. Tenzing Norgay was one such person. I later learned from local informants that Tenzing was born in the Kharta Valley on the north side of Jomolamga. His mother moved to Khumbu along with him, when he was quite young. Tenzing grew up in Khumbu and later went to Darjeeling in search of work. People moved freely between what is now Tibet, Nepal, and India in search of livelihood in those days. They were more like a citizen of South Asia rather than Tibetan, Nepali, or Indian. There were no national identification systems. People of my father's generation in Khumbu were issued Nepali citizenship only in 1981. Tenzing Norgay later settled in India to become the field director of the Himalayan Mountaineering Institute in Darjeeling but always identified Thame as his place of origin. I grew up hearing people talk about Au Tenzing Sherpa (Uncle

Tenzing Sherpa) with respect. New migrants from Khumbu to Darjeeling always sought guidance and support from Tenzing to find jobs. He was described as a humble and helpful person. I only met him much later in life after he married one of my cousins and came to visit his in-laws.

Sherpa men from Khumbu performed exceptionally well on mountaineering expeditions from Darjeeling because they were used to hard work at high altitudes in Khumbu. Some carried salt bags across 5716m Nangpa La pass before leaving for Darjeeling. The outstanding mountaineers were given a medal called the "Tiger Badge" by the Himalayan Club. According to their records, more than 70 Khumbu Sherpas received this medal between 1939 and 1965. Back home in Khumbu, these professional mountaineers were called "Artali" and were respected by the community. I later learned that the word "Artali" is an imperfect version of "orderly" a low-ranking soldier who carried out orders in the British military. Artali introduced new equipment and new names to our community such as "aichak" for ice-axe, "tarifan" for frying pan, and "fiskokok" for pressure cookers which enriched the Sherpa language.

Sherpa migration from Khumbu to Darjeeling slowed when mountaineering and trekking businesses began to develop in Nepal in the sixties. Kathmandu became a mountaineering hub and Sherpas came to Kathmandu instead. Khumbu tourism boomed especially after Sir Edmund Hillary opened an airstrip in Lukla in 1964. Our teacher walked us down to Lukla for the opening of the airstrip. This was not only just our first trip out of Thame but also a very memorable one as we saw planes, the Crown Prince Birendra in Nepali dress, Kiwis playing rugby, and heard people speaking English for the first time. The Lukla airstrip later got extended, improved, and renamed as Tenzing-Hillary Airport which has now become the most important driver of Khumbu tourism. The establishment of Private Airline Companies in the 1990s drastically increased the number of tourists in the Khumbu region.

Tourism growth not only benefitted the locals of Khumbu, but a huge percentage of the profits went to places like Kathmandu. Along with the economic benefits also came the risks. Uncontrolled tourism can have negative impacts on the environment and indigenous culture. Sagarmatha National Park was set up to manage these impacts. The Nepal and New Zealand governments collaborated on the creation of the park with Sir Edmund Hillary playing a role of a catalyst in this bilateral cooperation. The early planners decided that a park in Khumbu would not be sustainable without the involvement of the local people. I was one of the trainees selected to be trained as a park manager. After 5 years of



Author receiving mountaineering training in New Zealand in 1979

practical and academic training in New Zealand, my friends Nima Wangchu and Mingma Norbu and I returned to Nepal and worked with governmental and non-government organizations to create and manage protected areas.

Jomolangma is considered the third pole of the earth. Its surrounding ecosystem is unique because of its extreme altitude and climate. The birds, animals, and people who live here are considered unique and important for the global natural and cultural diversity. Therefore, a series of protected areas were established around Jomolangma by the governments of Nepal and the Tibet Autonomous Region of China to conserve the unique ecosystem. The Sagarmatha and Makalu Barun National Parks of Nepal and the Qomolangma Nature Preserve in Tibet jointly conserve nearly 34000 sq km area of outstanding landscapes. I am proud to have been involved in the establishment and capacity strengthening of all these three parks and reserves.

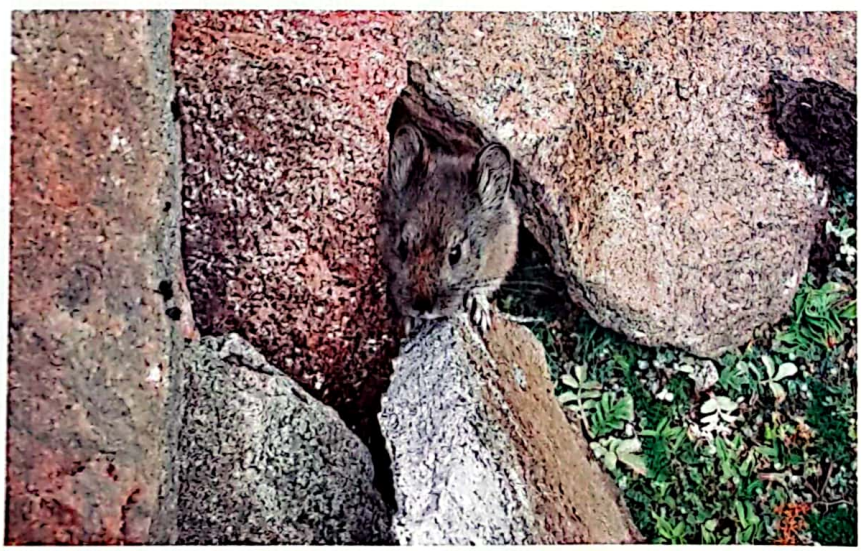
Regarding mountaineering, I belong to the Thamichho community from where Everest legends such as Tenzing Norgay, Ang Rita, Apa Sherpa, Kami Rita (current record holder), Nima Dorji, and others come from. Unfortunately, my own mountaineering credentials



Thame Teng Village (3900m) in Khumbu

are insignificant because my father and my ancestors were agro-pastoralists and never got involved in mountaineering. Amusingly, I did receive significant technical training in rock, ice, and snow craft while undergoing park ranger training in New Zealand but never actually applied this training back in Nepal.

There is a widespread public misconception in many foreign countries where the word Sherpa is assumed to mean a mountain guide or a porter. This came about because an overwhelming number of workers from the Sherpa community participated in trekking mountaineering during the 1970s and 1980s. This resulted in Western clients using the ethnic group name 'Sherpa' interchangeably with the work roles of trekking guides and mountain porters. Nowadays trekking guides are mostly from other ethnic groups. The number of Sherpa trekking guides has drastically reduced. Sherpas are still the majority in the dangerous profession of high-altitude guiding, especially on Jomolangma. Within the Sherpa community however, professional mountaineers are only a small fraction of the total population and the majority are farmers, herders, traders, shopkeepers, and lodge operators.



Himalayan Pika, one of the highest dwelling mammal in Everest Region

I am not a climber by Nepali standards. I have never climbed a peak in Nepal. What little recreational climbing I have done was done overseas. My first recreational climbing happened in Aoraki/Mt. Cook National Park of New Zealand where we climbed a 2764m high peak called Footstool. The next climb took place 18 years later in America when I was a student at the University of Washington, Seattle. A fellow graduate student invited me to join him on a climbing trip to Mt. Rainier. I sincerely admitted that my climbing skills have gone rusty and that I wouldn't make a strong climbing partner. "I have enough

climbing experience, you can just come along," he insisted. "I don't have any climbing gear," I added. "It can all be rented from REI", he replied. With no more excuses left, I reluctantly joined him. We drove to the base of Mt Rainier on the east side, climbed up to a dome, and set up a camp to take a few hours of rest. Climbing began around midnight. The climb went smoothly despite the yawning crevasses and obliterated trails due to the lateness of the season. We reached the summit around 2 pm. We had ascended from near sea level to 4392m in 14 hours.

On the summit, I handed the camera to my friend and asked him to take a picture. My friend seemed a little uncoordinated and was taking too long to press the shutter. "Are you alright?" I asked. "I am feeling a little nauseous," he replied. Immediately, I insisted we start descending. He was having trouble tying up his crampons. After tying the safety rope between us, I asked my friend to follow my lead down the slope. After descending for a while I heard him call, "Stop!" "What happened?" I asked. "You are leading me the wrong way," he accused. I said, "Look, even if this is the wrong way, don't worry, I will still get you down." "What if you couldn't?" he questioned. "Ok, you show me the trail," I said in frustration. To my horror, he pointed to a crevasse line on the horizon above and said that was a trail we had missed and began climbing up the slope. I followed for a little while but got really worried. I stopped him and tried to reason that it was getting late and if we continued going up we wouldn't make it down. If he did not want to come down with me, he would need to write his wife a note explaining the situation for me to take and I would unclip the safety rope and head down on my own because I did not want to die. He thought deeply as if the message was slowly sinking into his delirious mind. "Okay," he said and agreed to come to go down. We resumed the descent with no further conversation.



SNP Headquarter in Namche under establishment in1975.

We finally reached our base camp, packed up the tent, and headed down to the car park in the dark. By this time my climbing partner seemed lucid and normal. Extremely tired and somewhat relieved I fell asleep in the car, waking up to find he had driven all night and got us home in the wee hours of the next day as if nothing had happened. I never brought up the incident afterward. I did not want to embarrass him. But, I always wondered if he even had any recollection of the episode. I put this question to a medical doctor, who is used to working with cases of high altitude sickness. He said that the patient is unlikely to have a clear recollection of what took place unless encouraged to remember by discussing the event straight away afterward. It was a close shave. Before the climb, we both lived at sea level continuously for more than two years. Luckily, I was affected. If nothing else, this experience gave me a window into the difficulties that my Sherpa relatives who work on Everest and other Himalayan peaks face when trying to support people who are poorly adjusted to high altitudes.

It is not uncommon for western mountaineers to meet their Sherpa guides on a mountain and be surprised by their lack of technical skills. This is unsurprising given that a Sherpa does not receive any formal training before first joining an expedition. They learn on the job. This is where Tenzing Norgay's International Mountaineering Institute becomes valuable. Nowadays, there are internationally recognized mountain guide training available in Nepal under NMA's oversight.

From my experience, the greatest contribution of high-altitude guides in the Himalayas is not so much in the technical aspects. Their contributions in transporting equipment, food, tents, and oxygen upslope and staying alert and conscious under low oxygen conditions to take care of their less adapted clients when they become disoriented under the influence of altitude and exhaustion are key. These roles have been vital for the success of expeditions historically and continue to be invaluable for all mountaineers' success and safety in the future.

Dr. Lhakpa Norbu Sherpa has a Ph.D. in forest resources and devoted much of his career to protecting Himalayan biodiversity and culture.

Safeguarding Sagarmatha, the Mount Everest





✍ Ghana S. Gurung, PhD ✍ Rajendra N. Suwal, MSc

It was discovered that tourists required four times more fuel than the local population, along with four additional helping hands to cater to their needs. The construction of lodges, using local resources such as wood and stone, further exacerbated the situation. These pressing threats called for judicial intervention, the implementation of sustainable natural resource management practices, and active community participation.

The news of the successful scaling of Mount Sagarmatha by Tenzing and Hillary was expressed in the international newspapers as "A Crowning Glory", which coincided with Queen Elizabeth II's coronation, and became a trademark for Nepal tourism.

Mountaineers and trekkers followed the footsteps of diplomats (in the 50's), and hippies (during the 60's), beyond the medieval Kathmandu valley to the uncharted territory of Khumbu. The allure of witnessing Mount Sagarmatha up close and the promise of thrilling escapades beckoned primarily to Western visitors. However, the Khumbu region found itself unprepared for the sudden surge in tourist activity, and the strain on its infrastructure and resources was palpable. Nepal, at the time, lacked the necessary understanding of the pros and cons of tourism and had limited knowledge of effective destination management due to a lack of institutional capacity within the authorities.

The Khumbu Valley is a homogenous settlement primarily inhabited by the Sherpa people, who engage in subsistence farming, trade spices/salt, and partake in yak herding. Life at such high altitudes is arduous, prompting them to practice transhumance, migrating between summer (Yersa) and winter (Ghunsa) pastures to graze their yaks. Khumbu is a 'Beyul,' meaning a sacred Buddhist sanctuary. The Sherpa community embraces a devout Buddhist lifestyle, guided by principles such as Singinawa and Lotharnawa, which dictate the wise usage of natural resources and sustainable farming practices. These cultural values have ingrained indigenous conservation practices, fostering a harmonious coexistence with nature while refraining from harming or killing wildlife. In addition to their prowess in mountaineering, the Sherpa people warmly welcomed trekkers into their farmhouses, extending genuine hospitality, serving nourishing meals, and offering assistance to those in need. Impressions of their endearing personalities, exceptional mountaineering skills, and the heartwarming experiences





2005 Rajendra Suwal Sagarmatha NP 2

shared by visitors quickly spread through renowned publications, further enhancing their reputation. Enthusiasts from far and wide were enticed to explore the tranquil villages, entailing months of traversing idyllic villages, terraced fields, meandering rivers, rugged gorges, steep mountain trails, vibrant rhododendron forests, serene alpine meadows, awe-inspiring glaciers, icy cascades, and snow-capped peaks. Khumbu's villages became gateways for Westerners to immerse themselves in local communities, embrace the wonders of nature, and delve into the rich cultural heritage of the Sherpa people, leaving an indelible mark on their souls. Over time, advancements in transportation have shortened the once arduous journey, as airplanes and 4WD vehicles can now reach the lower regions, enabling easier access to this captivating region.

As the treks and mountaineering expeditions got popular the basic need for food, shelter, and fuel for porters and beasts of burden were in high demand. At a time when the need for toilets was unheard of, a western trekker's demand for a hot water bath and other amenities was far-fetched.

The reliance on porters and beasts of burden in the Khumbu area led to the excessive exploitation of natural resources. It was discovered that tourists required four times more fuel than the local population, along with four additional helping hands to cater to their needs. The construction of lodges, using local resources such as wood and stone, further exacerbated the situation. These pressing threats called for judicial intervention, the implementation of sustainable natural resource management practices, and active community participation. Furthermore, the indiscriminate harvesting of trees and rocks had detrimental consequences, including the occurrence of rockfalls, which raised concerns among local residents. The logging of trees for heating and infrastructure needs, coupled with the proliferation of pink trails leading to Everest, became focal points in Western media. The accumulation of waste at Everest Base Camp was a disgraceful blight upon the land of Everest. In addition to these challenges, the looming specter of global warming heightened anxieties, as Himalayan glaciers, known as the water towers of Asia, were rapidly retreating. The adverse impacts of climate change on these glaciers served as a cause for concern, emphasizing the need for urgent action to mitigate its effects.

The designation of Chitwan as the first National Park in Nepal in 1973 was eye-opening for Khumbu residents. They were inspired to preserve their homeland from the overharvesting of natural resources. It was a steep learning curve to designate Sagarmatha National Park in 1976. The Government modified the approach by allowing people to live in their village and practice farming by enacting Himalayan National Rules in 1979. Finally, a Buffer Zone Regulation was enacted in 1996 that enabled sharing of up to 50% of the park revenue with the local community. To benefit from these regulations WWF Nepal supported the local community for institutionalization and collaborative natural resource management and the declaration of an SNP Buffer Zone in 2002.

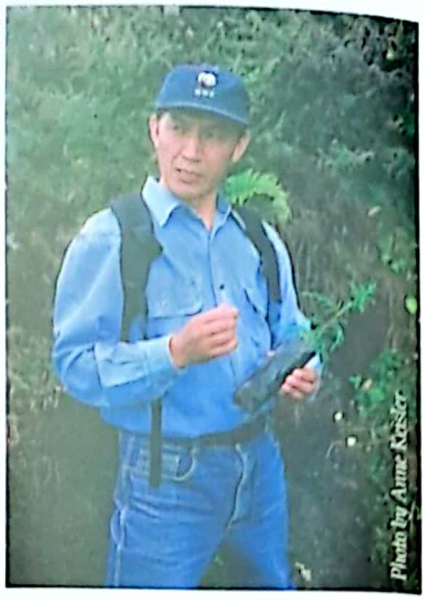
It was a way forward for sustainable management. Furthermore, SNP was also designated as the UNESCO World Heritage Natural Site in 1979. In 2007, WWF Nepal partnered with SNP to include the Gokyo and its surrounding lakes as Ramsar Sites. This smooth transition was made possible due to the demand, interaction, and suggestions put forward by the local populace with consent from the Monks, and in consultation with Everest Summiteers including Sir Edmond Hillary. The collaboration of monks from the

Buddhist Monastery, the Sherpa Community, and the Government of Nepal was noteworthy to inculcate the local ownership of the newly established national park with provisions and restrictions. A Khumbu-born youth Mr. Mingma Norbu Sherpa was appointed as the first Sherpa Chief Warden of the SNP. Nepal Government entrusted him with the responsibility to protect, restore and manage the Sagarmatha National Park by collaborating with the local community. He was one of the first few scholarship recipients from The Himalayan Trust established by Sir Hillary to study in Ananda Kuti Vidyapeeth. He graduated in Natural Resource Management from New Zealand.

WWF Nepal supported establishing and institutionalizing a non-government and nonprofit - Sagarmatha Pollution Control Committee in 1991. SPCC is now a full-fledged and self-sustained system supporting government and mountaineers to manage waste along trails and in the EBC and beyond. It also banned the sale of bottled beverages and encouraged canned beverages. They also managed to transfer tons of frozen night soil from EBC and beyond downhill, which is later composted and used as organic fertilizer. Currently, SPCC is also responsible for opening the Khumbu Icefall route and monitoring the waste of mountaineers.

In 1996, the Sagarmatha Community Agro-Forestry Project (SCAFP), a multifaceted community-based program, was launched to address the issue of deforestation in the Khumbu region. The program was implemented through a partnership between WWF Nepal, Sagarmatha National Park, and the Department of Forest, and in collaboration with the local community. Although tourism plays a significant role in generating foreign currency and providing job opportunities to the local population, it also exerts tremendous pressure on the slow-growing forest. The biotic pressure is particularly high in the Pharak area, accelerating the loss and degradation of forests and wildlife habitats. In response, the SCAFP program initiated large-scale tree-planting efforts to minimize the loss of forests. However, the program faced challenges when goats began climbing over the walls to feed on young saplings. The locals agreed to remove over 600 goats to prevent further damage to the saplings. As a result of these efforts, tall trees are now visible along the route to Kenjoma from Namche and other places.

The SCAFP project has yielded positive impacts, notably through the implementation of agroforestry initiatives, which encompassed the establishment of a greenhouse for organic vegetable cultivation. This approach significantly reduced the carbon footprint associated with airlifting vegetables to Lukla Airport, promoting local self-sufficiency and environmental sustainability. In addition to agroforestry, the SCAFP project focused on raising awareness among local communities regarding the importance of conserving natural resources and utilizing them in a sustainable manner.



Late Mingma Norbu Sherpa, Director WWF US



Photo: ©Nepal Army

Sagarmatha is the second most frequented mountain-protected area after the Annapurna Conservation Area. Each year more than 50,000 visitors are drawn to this breathtaking region, and with favorable conditions, this number may soon reach 100,000. This surge in tourism can be attributed to improved accessibility, increased personal mobility, greater affordability, and a deep-seated desire to explore among the Nepalese population. However, as the influx of tourists intensifies, there is a corresponding

rise in energy demand for lighting, cooking, and heating purposes. The heavy reliance of local communities on kerosene and forests for these needs is unsustainable. Notably, around the Chaurikharka area alone, 465 households annually consume approximately 6,473 tons of fuelwood. In response to this challenge, a kerosene depot was established with the support of WWF Nepal and is presently managed by SPCC, aiming to curtail the use of fuelwood. Efforts such as the establishment of the kerosene depot seek to address the pressing issue of unsustainable energy consumption while promoting more environmentally friendly alternatives.

Ghatte Micro Hydro Project (GMHP) was initiated with Technical support from WWF Nepal under the Climate Change and Energy Program and with the financial support of the Kadoorie Agricultural Aid Association-BGN, Sagarmatha National Park and Buffer Zone Management Committee, WWF - UK, and with active local participation. This 70 kW Ghatte Micro hydro Project benefitted 108 households from six villages in the Everest region.

Ani Sherpa, a resident of Junbesi, moved to Phakding to run a restaurant cum lodge. She relied on the forests and kerosene to meet cooking, heating, and lighting demands. Her consumption of fuel wood was about 20 tons per year and had to pay around US$ 900 annually. Her expenses on energy escalated as she had to purchase over 2,880 liters of kerosene paying about US$ 1 per liter. She made the energy switch from fuel wood and kerosene to electricity generated from the project. It was also inspiring for others in the area. The project uses water diverted from the Ghatte stream that runs a turbine coupled to a generator in the powerhouse, thus, generating electricity. The water then flows back into the stream. The environmental impact is very negligible.



Photo: WWF Nepal

After subscribing to the electricity generated by Micro Hydro, there has been a substantial change in Ani's kitchen. She has stopped using a wood stove and switched to hot plates, microwaves, mixers, rice cookers, refrigerators, and electric room heaters. By now, she must be using an induction cooker, an efficient and cost-effective technology. Her monthly electricity bill is only about US$ 35.00 per month. She claims that the micro hydro project has significantly reduced her expenses on energy and workloads due to a smoke-free kitchen.

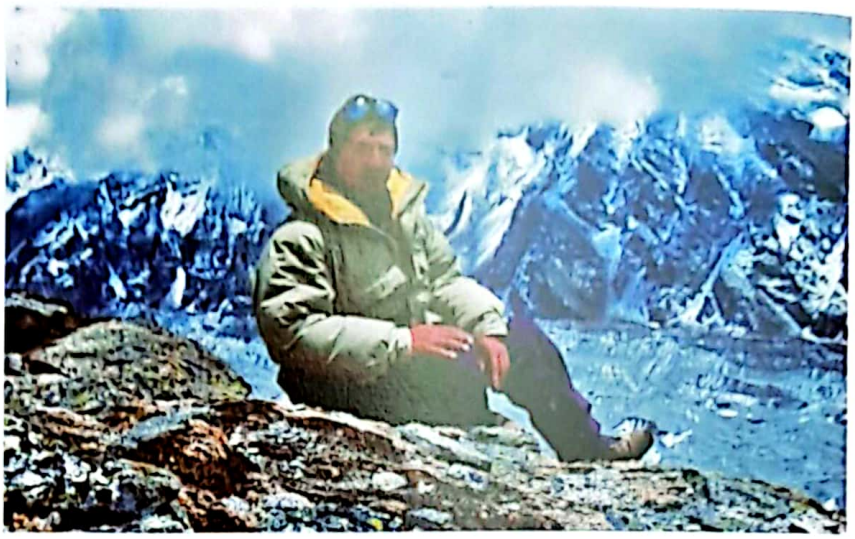
The availability of the latest efficient solar water heaters and solar photovoltaic panels for power and other electrical appliances shall be a game changer in this fragile remote landscape to reduce the carbon footprint. The economic empowerment of trekking tourism transformed the entrepreneurs willing to afford user-friendly, cost-effective, and leapfrog technologies.

Mr. Phu Nuru Sherpa, the representative of the local users' group, expressed his appreciation for the support provided by WWF Nepal and other partners,



recognizing it as an opportunity for the SNP Buffer Zone Management Committee to actively engage local communities in sustainable development and management of natural resources within the area.

As the garbage deposit in the Himalayas became a serious issue, Asian Trekking, North Face, Tara Air, and Reinhold Messner Foundation initiated lifting thousands of tons of garbage from Everest and other summit routes. And in the following years, Nepal Army took a lead role to bring back thousands of kilograms of decomposing, non-degradable and human skeletons from the high Himalaya chiefly Mt Everest, Mt Dhaulagiri, Annapurna, Dhaulagiri, Lhotse, Makalu, Ama Dablam, including Baruntse. The Nepal Army deployed helicopters and trained mountaineers to different peaks to bring waste to Kathmandu. The slogan is "Mountain Clean up Campaign". Under this campaign, Nepal Army has successfully transferred nearly 11000 kgs of waste in 2019, nearly 28000 kgs in 2021, and over 41000 kgs of waste in 2022 including two human skeletons. This year Nepal Army aims to collect and transfer over 35000 kgs of waste. The biggest challenge they face in high altitudes with low levels of oxygen is the difficulty in digging wastes from deep frozen layers of ice and transferring them in treacherous icy paths. WWF Nepal is privileged to be one of the many partners in the annual 'Mountain Cleaning Campaign' under the leadership of the Nepal Army. The transferred waste is segregated into biodegradable, recyclable, and upcycled as gift items in Kathmandu.



2005 Rajendra Gokyo Ri

Tourism can be considered a double-edged sword, as while it brings revenue, it also carries the risk of negatively impacting local culture and natural resources, including issues such as poaching and illegal wildlife trade. To strike a balance between supply and demand, it is recommended to adopt a middle path that incorporates new technologies, innovative approaches, effective surveillance, and collaborative strategies. Mount Sagarmatha, with its timeless allure, will continue to be a place of attraction and inspiration for generations to come, drawing people from far and wide. Although the demographic of visitors may change, and their motivations for visiting may evolve, the charm of Mount Sagarmatha will always remain steadfast. However, to ensure its enduring appeal, it is essential to protect the region from encroachment and deforestation and safeguard its diverse species from poachers. Responsible and wise destination management is key. Our authorities and entrepreneurs must remain vigilant and proactive in addressing new challenges while also exploring new opportunities that can benefit the local community, enhance visitor satisfaction, and uphold the Outstanding Universal Value of Sagarmatha, Mount Everest.

Dr. Ghana Shyam Gurung, Snow Leopard Champion of the WWF network, holds a doctorate in Natural Science from the University of Zurich, Switzerland, and has over 30 years of experience in participatory biodiversity conservation. His multifaceted conservation journey from humble beginnings in setting up protected areas, managing multi-disciplinary projects in the Conservation Areas, and supporting the establishment of transboundary conservation landscapes is an inspiration to many. As the Country Representative of WWF Nepal, Dr. Gurung leads conservation programs towards significant achievements, such as 365 days of zero poaching of the rhino on six occasions, understanding of snow leopards and the Tx2 – almost tripling of wild tigers, while also instigating community-based institutions such as local stewards of nature.

Rajendra Narsingh Suwal has four decades of experience in ornithological research, crane, biodiversity, wetland conservation, eco-tourism, and community development. For the past nine years, he has been working at WWF Nepal as the Head of Partnerships Development. He supports community-based homestay tourism, conservation travel, Sarus Crane conservation, and organizational networking. He is an avid birder, and a wildlife photographer, and holds MSc in Zoology.

Everest Forever – Sustaining Mt. Everest's Allure in the Face of Climate Change







✍ Tenzing Chogyal Sherpa ✍ Mark Perrin ✍ Pema Gyamtsho

There are steps that could be taken to limit the impact of climbers and visitors to the Everest region. These include the strengthening of waste management systems, regulating the environmental footprint of expeditions, and limiting the number of climbing permits issued each year.

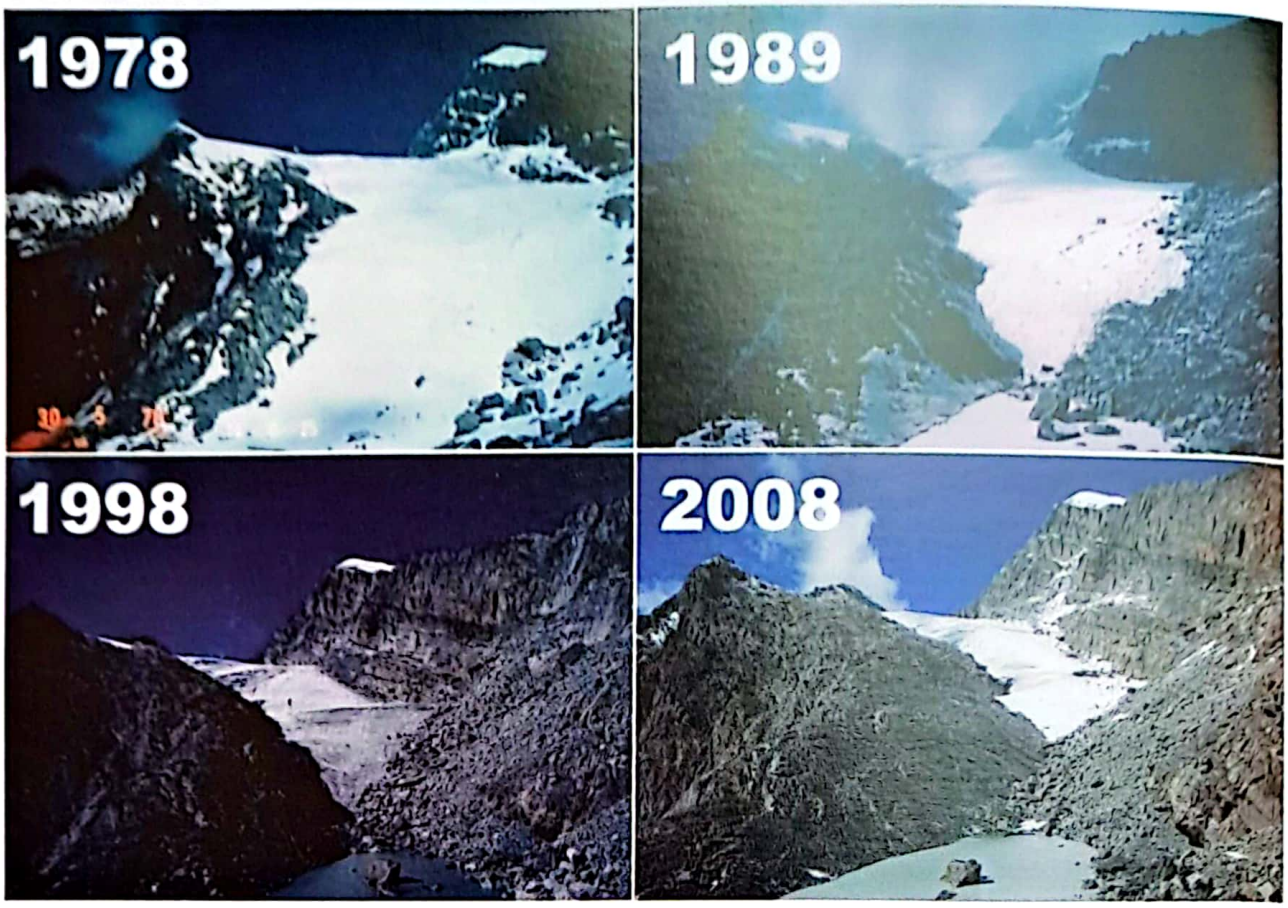
Just 70 years since Sir Edmund Hillary and Sherpa Tenzin Norgay became the first people on the planet to scale Mount Everest, the highest point on earth, the fragile, glacial landscape they would have surveyed from the summit is facing unprecedented threats. In the space of one human lifetime – the blink of an eye in geological time – this iconic region, which has grown into a global magnet for mountaineers, has already changed dramatically due to global temperature rises – and the trend is set to rapidly accelerate.

Climbers, alongside mountain communities, will be among the first to have seen the impacts of our changing climate on the glaciers around the world. The International Centre for Mountain Development (ICIMOD) has for 40 years worked across eight countries of the Hindu Kush Himalayas to protect the area's unique ecosystems and communities. In the teeth of the extraordinary threats the climate and nature crises now pose to these landscapes, we have set out to step up our efforts to protect them – and we call on the climbing community to join us in this fight.

While we are not yet seeing changes here, on the roof of the world, on the scale witnessed in the glaciers of the European Alps, which the United Nations State of the World Climate Report just revealed to be melting at a rate "literally off the charts," Everest is changing fast. And the implications for the 2 billion people downstream are immense. According to recent findings from the HIMAP report released by ICIMOD, the region is experiencing elevation-dependent warming, meaning that as altitude increases,



Overview of Everest base camp perched over the hummocky debris covered Khumbu Glacier with Mt. Everest rising majestically in the background. P.C. Tenzing Chogyal Sherpa



Visible changes seen in the terminus of Glacier AX010 from 1978 to 2008. Photographs were taken by Y. Ageta (1978), T. Kadota (1989), and K. Fujita (1998 and 2008).Source: Fujita et al., 2011

the rate of warming also increases. So, perhaps counter-intuitively, far from being immune from climate impacts, the mountain's altitude actually deepens its vulnerability to rising temperature trends. Meteorological observations from the Everest region indicate a mean temperature rise of 0.44 ◦C per decade. Exacerbating this is the fact that we are also seeing a significant reduction in liquid precipitation of 9.3 mm per year since 1994. This reduction is concerning because snow is the primary ingredient for glaciers. Furthermore, with increasing temperatures, the amount of precipitation that does fall is also more likely to fall as rain rather than snow, which could affect the glaciers' ability to replenish lost ice. As a result, glaciers surrounding Mount Everest have thinned by over 100 meters in just six decades, with higher thinning rates in recent decades. Among these glaciers, is the iconic Khumbu glacier, the glacier that flows from Mt. Everest itself and upon which much of the climbing route to the summit of Everest occurs.

The Khumbu Glacier is also the venue for Everest Base Camp, where the impacts of climate change are stark. In fact, it is close to Base Camp, where the Khumbu glacier has thinned to its maximum extent i.e. ~75 m. In the lower portion of the glacier, laden with heavy debris, the terrain becomes very hummocky and heterogenous with ice cliffs and surface lakes. These surface lakes, also called supraglacial lakes, act as hotspots that accelerate the melting process and contribute to the continued growth of the lakes until they coalesce to form a large glacial lake. These lakes pose a significant hazard, as they can cause glacial lake outburst floods, which risk lives and livelihoods and damage to infrastructure downstream. With continued global warming over the coming decades, the impacts of climate change are expected to worsen, threatening fragile ecosystems and risking the safety of those who visit and live in the region. The need for urgent action to mitigate these impacts cannot be overstated. Due to the presence of debris covering the Khumbu Glacier, the alterations to its surface area are less apparent compared to clean ice glaciers. Among the extensively researched glaciers in the area, glacier AX010, situated in the Shorong Himal, stands out. The changes in this glacier are stark, as you can see in the figure above. Since the 1980s, its surface area has dramatically declined, losing almost half its surface area in just the last three decades. This glacier

is set to continue on this course of rapid retreat.

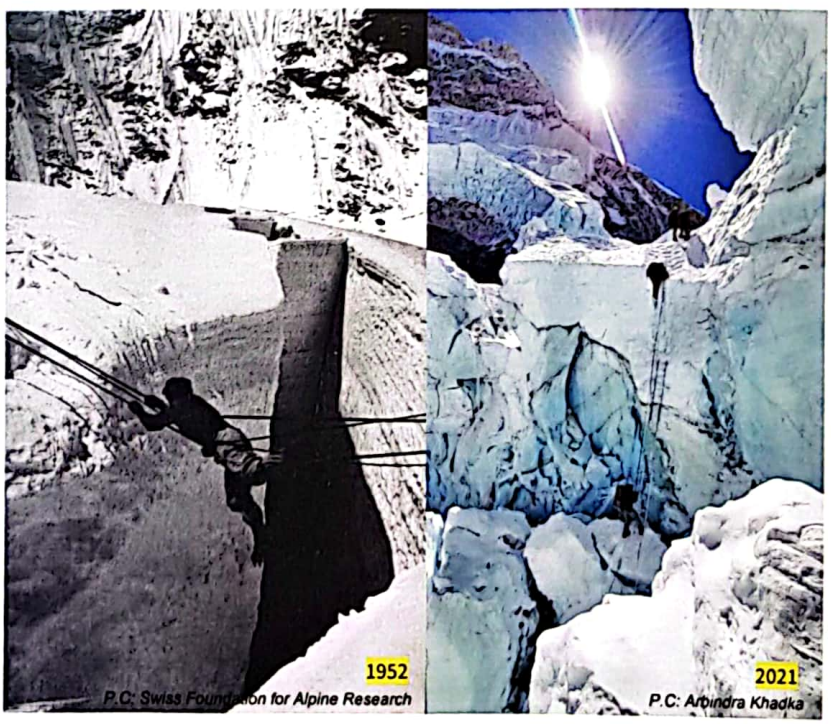
Impacts of climate change on climbing and vice-versa

The likely impacts of climate change bring added risks to mountaineering too, of course. These, on Everest, fall into two broad categories: safety and the climber experience. In terms of safety, thawing permafrost leads to less stable rock formations, more frequent rockfall, and the potential for greater avalanche danger. Over time, this may lead to repetitive changes to climbing routes. Mountain ranges such as the Alps are already witnessing such changes; in the summer of 2022 the slopes of Mont Blanc had to be closed to climbers due to a significant increase in loose rockfall from the highest reaches of the mountain, evidence of the prospect of such dangers increasing at higher elevations. A second significant safety concern is glacier travel. Glaciers have always presented objective dangers to mountaineers, and a significant aspect of successful mountaineering is learning the techniques and skills to mitigate and overcome the risks of moving across them. However, as the climate warms, the window for travelling across glaciers safely (best done at the coldest times of the day and night) will reduce, and this is of critical importance on Everest's Khumbu icefall, already the most dangerous part of any Everest ascent. Climbers generally start climbing the icefall between midnight and 2 am, hoping to complete it soon after sunrise, but the slowest, least experienced climbers can take up to 13 hours. As the sun hits the icefall it starts to melt and become more unstable. If - because of climate change – the melting process was to occur earlier in the day, there will be inevitable consequences for climber safety that are hard to overcome, given the length of the icefall and the current lack of a viable alternative route.

But perhaps the most significant climate-related threat to the mountaineering industry in the high Himalayas is the potential impact of changes in weather patterns. Persistent changes in the onset or duration of the monsoon would have a significant bearing on the summit weather windows for all 8,000m peaks in Nepal. Everest's summit season in May, sandwiched between the reduction in jet-stream winds and the onset of the monsoon, takes advantage of relatively predictable weather patterns that allow for commercial mountaineering trips to be planned and executed with extraordinary success. Were these weather patterns to change, so would the summit season itself, with unpredictable consequences.

The experience of climbing is also under threat from climate change. On Everest, at the top of the world, these changes may be slow to emerge, but at lower elevations, it is clear to see. Reaching Tent Peak, a once-popular snow- and ice-strewn trekking peak in the Annapurna region, now requires a less pleasant and harder approach through rocky moraine; Lobuche's permanent snowfield is restricted to the final few hundred metres of the climb; glacial melt on Island Peak is making for large sections of mixed (snow, ice and rock) climbing rather than experiencing the cryosphere as it used to be. These changes may affect the viability of climbing routes themselves. Some routes will become impassable; new ones will open up. Will they affect the viability and attraction of Everest? Possibly not. As the highest mountain on earth, Everest will always have a draw, no matter the changes in route or the climbing experience.

Amidst considerations of climate, it should be emphasised that many of Everest's challenges are man-made: the inexperience of some climbers; the at-all-costs desire to get to the summit; Everest's popularity but no attempt by authorities to limit



Crossing crevasses in the Khumbu ice fall then (1952) and now (2021)

the number of climbing permits, leading to overcrowding on the icefall and in the death zone during narrow summit weather windows. Such commercial and human factors are increasingly likely to intersect with climate-related safety concerns. And on Everest, those most vulnerable to the dangers she poses are those who repeatedly climb its flanks: the local people, the high-altitude sherpa porters who shuttle across the icefall on multiple occasions each year, paid to bring all the food, gear and oxygen necessary so that commercial clients limit their own vulnerability and achieve their goals.

While mountaineering in Nepal has grown into a vibrant industry that has transformed the lives of generations of Sherpas and other communities in Nepal and stimulated the growth of the overall travel industry, the constant stream of people making their way to the summit is now contributing to a degradation of what 70 years ago would have been an incredibly pristine environment – and one which the Sherpa people consider sacred and worthy of respect.

Every year, around 200-400 climbers head to the summit of Mount Everest, and this popularity has led to a huge rise in pollution on the mountain. To address this issue, the Sagarmatha Pollution Control Committee (SPCC), an NGO run by local Sherpa people, has been working tirelessly since 1991 to keep the region clean. The committee manages the waste in the area, ensures climbers have legal permission to climb, and educates visitors on environmental care. Employing 22 full-time cleaners who walk the trekking routes to pick up trash, the SPCC collects 14,000kg of human waste, 25,000kg of burnable waste, and 4,000kg of non-burnable waste annually. Expeditions are expected to play their part; they are required to bring 8kg of trash down from Camp 2 to Base Camp, or they lose their deposit. There is also a requirement for them to bring down their human waste, but they rarely do. From Base Camp, they are able to pay the SPCC to take it further down the valley for disposal. Although waste collection plays a role in addressing the issue, the SPCC goes further by segregating and categorizing collected waste. Combustible waste is incinerated, while recyclable materials are transported to Kathmandu. However, managing human waste, especially at Everest Base Camp, presents a significant challenge due to the potential for water source contamination and the spread of disease. To address this issue, the Mount Everest Biogas Project has been proposed. This initiative aims to design and implement a solar-powered biogas system near Gorakshep to convert human waste into fuel. If successful, this project could reduce water contamination and prevent the dumping of human faeces in local villages, while also generating employment opportunities. Such projects and initiatives are essential in promoting sustainable waste management practices in the region.

What should be done?

The challenges raised in this article require a response. The fight against climate change is of critical importance, requiring action at the global level. As with many attempts on Everest's summit, governments and businesses have a narrow window in which we might act. Now is that moment. The climate is at the centre of ICIMOD's purpose, as it amplifies the voice of the HKH and brings the mountain agenda to the table of those with the power to act. We urge mountaineers to raise their voices too at this moment, to



Dingboche village with Ama Dablam in the background, one of the iconic vistas that awaits climbers on their way to Everest. This village lies directly downstream of a potentially dangerous glacial lake i.e. the Imja Glacial Lake. Photo by Tenzing Chogyal Sherpa

encourage faster action to reduce emissions and limit warming to 1.5 degrees.

At the national level, there are steps that could be taken to limit the impact of climbers and visitors to the Everest region. These include the strengthening of waste management systems, regulating the environmental footprint of expeditions, and limiting the number of climbing permits issued each year. At the subnational and local levels, every business owner or municipal leader has the power to take positive steps towards a sustainable future for our mountains. Just as important, those who come to enjoy the mountains - the expeditions and visitors to our region - can all contribute, by ensuring their material footprint in the first place is low, and taking trash out when they leave.

Conclusion

Mt. Everest or Quomo Lungma is more than just an iconic mountain peak but also a sacred site. For thousands of years, people have revered it and respected its sanctity as an abode of the Goddess Quomo. However, in our quest to dominate nature and all that it represents, we may be edging towards a tipping point where nature's tolerance to our excessive abuse may be running out. Climate change, abetted by an unsustainable number of climbers, is accelerating the melting of snow and glaciers and changing the mountain from a white pinnacle to a grey pyramid.

Therefore, this is a clarion call for all of us associated with mountains and mountain communities to come together and find a balance between humankind's quest for adventure and material gains with nature's need for protection and recuperation.

We need local communities, entrepreneurs, local and central governments, and scientists and advocates to work together and listen to the voice of the mountains to advance sustainable mountaineering. Bold decisions need to be taken around pricing and introducing and enforcing stringent rules and regulations to ensure safety, and that the number of expeditions do not exceed the capacity of the mountain to bounce back to a stable state. ICIMOD, as the premier institute dedicated to mountain communities and the environment, is committed to working with all stakeholders to support progress in this critical arena.

Redesigning the systems that support human life, from energy to food and transport, so it does not harm our common human home may yet be the greatest adventure, the highest summit we collectively climb. I'd hope that making this ascent, conserving the integrity of Everest and earth's cryosphere for future generations would be an achievement that Hillary and Tenzing might applaud.

Tenzing Chogyal Sherpa, a cryosphere researcher, was born in Namche Bazaar, Nepal, and belongs to the Sherpa ethnicity. With a familial connection to mountaineering and glaciology, Tenzing's grandfather was the last surviving member of the first expedition to Mt. Everest. Currently working as a Remote Sensing and Geoinformation Associate at the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), Tenzing focuses on studying the dynamics of glaciers in the Hindu Kush Himalaya (HKH) region and their response to climate change.

Mark Perrin is a sustainability professional currently working with ICIMOD on a project to attract investment to the HKH. He now lives in Nepal where he balances work with exploring and climbing the mountains. Before his move to Nepal, he spent 16 years in the UK's military and 4 years in PwC, in several leadership, strategy and operational roles, at home and overseas. He takes a keen interest in all aspects of sustainability and holds a Master's in Sustainable Development from the University of Sussex.

Dr. Pema Gyamtsho is the Director General of ICIMOD. He had served the Royal Government of Bhutan for over three decades in natural resources management and planning; rural development; agriculture; forestry; livestock and food production; rangeland management; livestock development; participatory approaches; research and extension institutional building; climate change and environmental protection; biodiversity conservation; and organic farming. He also previously had led ICIMOD efforts in policy and partnerships and regional rangeland management work.

In his previous role as Minister of Agriculture and Forests, he was involved and often led the enactment of over 60 pieces of legislation and throughout his career he has also worked at the grassroots level where he has overseen the formation of over 400 farmers' groups and cooperatives.

Dr. Gyamtsho holds a PhD in Natural Science from the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich.

Everest has a mountain to climb: Climate change

We can't just say: Let the world first sort out the issue of carbon emissions, reduce them to almost zero and restore the climate, only then we will do things locally.



Navin Singh Khadka

For this write-up, as I try to recollect the many stories I have done on Everest over the years, particularly regarding climate change, two things keep coming to me.

The first is a conversation I recently had with a scientist in Ecuador who explained to me how a glacier on the Andes has totally melted because of global warming. He shared with me a picture that showed a plaque he and his team of scientists left on the location to mark the extinction of the Carihuairazo glacier.

And the other is a memorial service in 2019 organised to commemorate a glacier lost to global warming in the Swiss Alps. Dozens of people had taken part in the funeral march to mark the disappearance of the Pizol glacier.

Will the glaciers in the Everest region, and by extension in the Himalayas, face the same fate?

Apart from what is happening in the Andes or the Alps, much of my concern is also shaped by a raft of stories that I have done on Everest over the years – and each time I did a new one the situation seemed to have worsened.

There were times when I regularly covered scientific reports on retreating glaciers and rapidly filling up glacial lakes and what they could mean in terms of our drinking water supply, hydropower and safety of lives and infrastructure downstream.

And then I began reporting first-hand on-the-ground study by glaciologists and hydrologists who recorded ponds and small glacial lakes on the Khumbu glacier joining up and becoming bigger lakes.

"How will we cross the Khumbu glacier once all these ponds and lakes join, if we are climbing Everest and other mountains in the region?" mountaineers were asking me when I spoke to them for that report.

Dead bodies of mountaineers surfacing

Then came the day when I reported how dead bodies of mountaineers were surfacing from Everest's melting glacier and how that was becoming a matter of concern for expedition operators as climbers, particular new ones, were quite upset seeing that during their climb. We had millions of audiences for that piece and all major media in the world covered the story after our exclusive output.

Amid the stories of gloom and doom, I did get to report a positive development too: the draining of the Imja glacial lake in the Everest region by the Nepali Army to a "safe level" as it was filling up dangerously.

Sadly, there have not been many positive stories though, at least not in terms of climate change impacts.



Photo by C. Scott Watson

Scientists rather were finding that plants and vegetation were advancing to the altitude where they were never found before – thanks to the warming in the region, which is .. times more than the global average.

"The plants seem to be colonising the glaciers and snow fields in the region," one scientist told me when I was reporting that finding.

And then the deposition of black carbon -- mainly from incomplete combustion of fossil fuels and also other sources like brick-kilns, burning of agricultural residue -- on snowfields and glaciers further accelerating their melting has been another major issue for the region.

Base camp dilemma

One fine day last year I broke the story that the government was planning to move the Everest base camp because the Khumbu glacier, particularly the part where the camp sits on now, is becoming increasingly unstable.

While discussions seem to continue on whether to move the base camp, and if yes, to where, impacts of climatic changes have intensified worldwide, sometimes even surprising scientists who say we are now seeing flash-droughts just the way we have flash-floods.

If the impacts are such in "unsuspecting places" like, for instance, Europe, imagine what the risks might be in super-fragile ecosystems like the Himalayas.

Destabilised mountains

The devastating ice and rock avalanche following the collapse of a glacier in Chamauli of Uttarakhand in 2021 was an eye-opener for the kind of hazard



climate change has induced on our mountains – and Everest is not an exception.

It is no more just about retreating glaciers and dangerously filling up glacial lakes. As my investigation found out after the Chamauli disaster, the once glaciated mountains themselves are becoming hazardous because the fast-melting glaciers and permafrost that kept the rocks and mountain flanks intact are now destabilised. Which means not only the remains of glaciers can collapse but that can unleash the entire mountain sides.

Add to that the risks from earthquakes. Located as they are on active seismic zone, Himalayas are so vulnerable to quakes – as was evident in Everest region in 2015. Climate change don't cause earthquakes, but tremors can worsen the impacts of climate change. Think about a mountain flank destabilised by its already melted glacier and permafrost. A little quake could lead to huge damages at such locations.

Earlier this year UNESCO brought out a report on how fast the world is losing its glaciers. It highlighted the accelerated melting of glaciers in World Heritage Sites, with the Everest region as one of them.

The report warned that one third of the World Heritage Sites glaciers are set to disappear by 2050 due to unabated carbon emissions that have fuelled global warming.

The good news is the Khumbu glacier in the Everest region is not in that "soon-to-be-gone" list – for now.

It's not just about glaciers

But let's not forget, Everest is not just about glaciers. It also has snow-packs, icefields, seracs, among others, as its intimate features. And they all are being impacted by the rising temperature.

A study by an international research team led by University of Maine, published last year found that the thinning of the South Col Glacier is approaching around two metres of water per year, now that the glacier has turned from snowpack to ice.

"Once South Col glacier was regularly exposed, approximately

55 metres of glaciers thinning is estimated to have occurred in a quarter century – thinning over 80 times faster than the nearly 2,000 years it took to form the ice at the surface," says the study published in the journal Nature Portfolio Journal Climate and Atmospheric Science.

"The impacts of climate change on the glacier have been most intense since the late 1990s."

A study published in the journal "Weather" in March this year after the analysis of data from a weather station on the south-east ridge of Everest at the height of 8,430 metres showed that the combination of strong winds and low relative humidity during the wintertime is enough to drive significant sublimation on the upper reaches of Everest.

Sublimation is the transition of a substance directly from the solid phase to the gas phase without going through the intermediate liquid phase.

The latest synthesis report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change warned that some ecosystems may be reaching a point of collapse – and it had mountain ecosystem as the first example.

"Impacts on some ecosystems are approaching irreversibility such as the impact of hydrological changes resulting from the retreat of glaciers, or the changes in some mountain..." it said.

"Cryosphere-related changes in floods, landslides, and water availability have the potential to lead to severe consequences for people, infrastructure and the economy in most mountain regions."

Some studies have shown that rains have reached high altitudes where it only snowed before – and the rainwater is accelerating melting of icefields and glaciers and then loosening the soil and rocks underneath. Whether this is happening in the Everest region and if yes, its impacts are yet to be studied.

Mountaineering matters

These scientific findings are not just for academic discourse but have direct relevance to different parts of the society – the mountaineering industry being the foremost one.

When I did a piece for the BBC on how climate change is making adventure tourism riskier, mountain guides and climbers were sharing with me how cases of rockfalls, crevasses widening, avalanches, etc were seriously on the rise including in the Everest region.

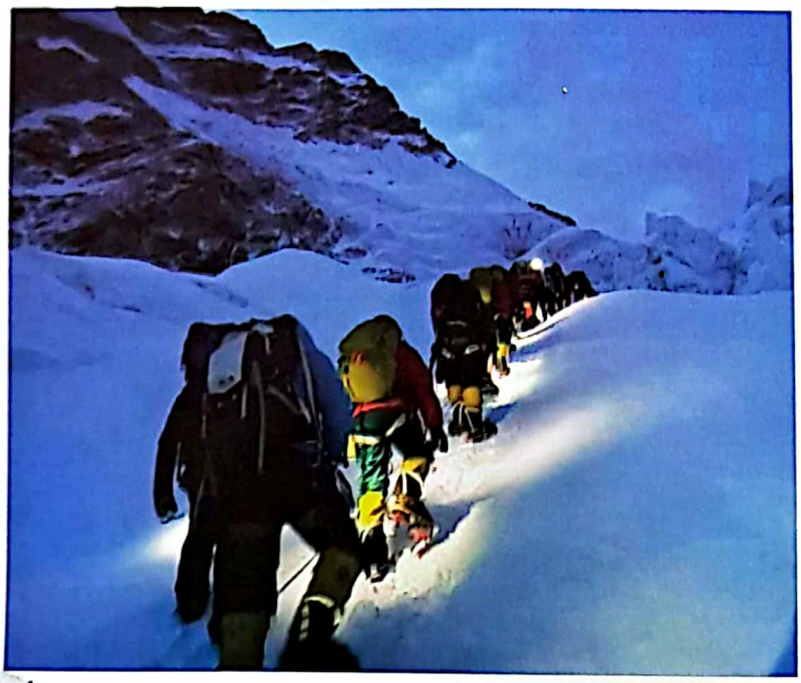
The chairman of Nepal's Mountain Guides Association, Ang Norbu Sherpa, for instance, says changes are occurring much faster than he and other professional guides had expected.

"You now see a stream flowing at Everest camp II. The rocks are exposed everywhere, and they are falling everywhere. Seracs are increasingly seen hanging precariously over climbers' routes in the Himalayas and Alps. Crevasses, meanwhile, are widening to the extent that some can no longer be crossed."

Scientists researching these issues and mountaineers have told me Mount Everest expeditions could become increasingly about climbing over more exposed bedrocks.

These issues are raised and discussed occasionally, usually in forums aimed at amplifying climate change impacts on our society.

But have the industry, administration and other stakeholders genuinely and meaningfully discussed these issues in terms of how to continue the business amid increasing intensity and frequency of such dangerous changes?



A usual line of argument we often hear is: We did not cause the climate crisis in the first place, so why are we expected to do things, and what can we do anyways?

There are two aspects to the problem. The first is the bigger issue of what is driving and fuelling climate change: carbon emissions that the world has miserably failed to reduce, as science tells us. The world needs to reduce emissions by 43% from 2010 level by 2030 if we are to attain the "safer" Paris climate goal of limiting temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius compared to pre-industrial period. But the last UN assessment found that we are increasing the emissions by 11% instead.

Which means warming will continue to go up and its impacts that we discussed above is going to get lot worse.

That takes us to second aspect of the problem: how do we continue even when the crisis continues then?

Adapting to the changes where possible

This is where and, this is why, the local stakeholders need to sit and discuss and work.

We can't just say: Let the world first sort out the issue of carbon emissions, reduce them to almost zero and restore the climate, only then we will do things locally.

We can't afford to say that – simply because we don't know when that is going to happen. And, meanwhile, doing nothing would be incorrect morally, economically, ecologically or from any other perspective.


Photo by C. Scott Watson

Something will need to be done in the meantime, which is widely known as "adaptation" in the world of climate change. I am not going to be prescriptive here; this will need proper on-the-ground studies, assessments, and expertise. Perhaps one of the things should be identification of the impacts and immediate threats and challenges. And perhaps based on that, plans can be thrashed out and then implemented.

These studies and assessments, particularly the loss of glaciers and other key components of the Himalayan ecosystem, can perhaps also help the country in making claims to loss and damage fund that was historically agreed during COP28 in Egypt last year -- although much remains to be done for the fund to have the purse and for the money to reach communities that have suffered climate-related losses and damages.

But there is no time to waste. The usual "functioning style in a developing world" is not going to be justified here – climate crisis is not going to be gentle and slow on us because we are a least developed country, in fact that status makes us more vulnerable to worse impacts.

The good news is Everest is a global asset. The highest peak of the world will draw both global attention and support if we tell the world properly what is happening there because of climatic changes – from whatever limited information we can get -- which could then perhaps help secure much needed technical support to understand what's really happening (Himalayas being the least studied in the cryosphere regions of the world).

But that does not mean we wait until the helping hands arrive. We will have to get to work right away because it is our "business" that will need to continue in the Everest region despite all the odds climate change has hurled towards us.

Khadka is a Global Environment Correspondent of the BBC World Service.

Scanned with CamScanner

Mount Everest 1976: A Pioneering Ascent by the AMA



✍ Colonel Henry Day

The descent must have been a nightmare. At dusk, they found the part-filled oxygen cylinders cached on the South Shoulder that morning and scraped a little shelter in the lee of the ridge only for the wind to change into their faces. Changing cylinders proved too great an effort, so they shared the last one between them few breaths each, and somehow, they survived the night.

The Army Mountaineering Association (A.M.A.) had eagerly awaited their opportunity to conquer Everest for five long years. After successfully ascending Annapurna I in 1970, the association promptly submitted an application to the Government of Nepal. Our esteemed Patron, HRH Prince Charles, corresponded with HRH Prince Himalaya of Nepal, graciously requesting the participation of the Royal Nepalese Army. Major Bhagirath Narsingh Rana assembled a team of four, accompanied by a support party comprising nine Gurkhas. The inclusion of Sherpas and porters meant that half of the expedition consisted of Nepalese members.

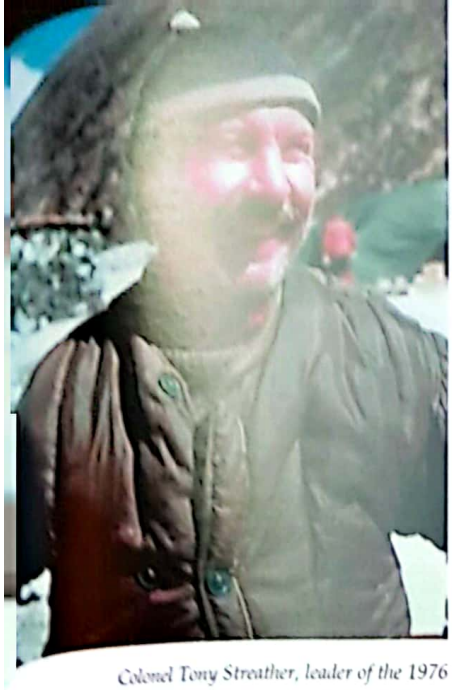
The A.M.A. boasted an impressive roster of mountaineers, many of whom had conquered numerous Himalayan peaks. Our esteemed leader, Col. Tony Streather, had achieved unparalleled feats with his ascents of Tirich Mir (1960), Kangchenjunga (1955), and his notable contributions to K2 and Haramosh. Major Jon Fleming had previously led A.M.A. expeditions to Tirich Mir (1969), Lahul (1973), and Nuptse (1975). Sadly, my dear friends Major Gerry Owens and Captain R.A. Summerton had perished during the Nuptse expedition, or else one member would have completed a grand slam of all A.M.A.'s Himalayan ventures. Captain Keelan and I stood as the sole representatives of the Annapurna I expedition. Our Medical Officer Lt-Col. Dick Hardie and Captain Pat Gunson had triumphantly conquered the arduous East Ridge of Indrasan in 1973. Corporal 'Bronco' Lane, who played a significant role in this year's expedition, had also participated in that particular journey alongside two other team members. The Nuptse party had a robust presence, with two formidable newcomers, Captain Phillip Neame and Lieutenant John Scott, who had previously scaled Lamjung Himal in 1974. Flying Officer Geordie Armstrong and Captain Meryon Bridges had concurrently embarked on the R.A.F.M.A. expedition to Dhaulagiri IV. In total, the United Kingdom contingent consisted of 35 climbers.



Camp 1 at the lip of the Wester Cwm

Undoubtedly, this was a substantial expedition party, but it distinguished itself with a unique approach compared to previous Everest teams. The climbers' primary focus was on establishing rope routes through the treacherous Khumbu Icefall, followed by the Lhotse Face and higher sections, with the assistance of 10 high-altitude Sherpas who would carry supplies beyond the Advanced Base in the Western Cwm. An additional 15 porters, accompanied by climbers, were designated to assist in traversing the icefall. Our support party, comprising 11 individuals, included mail runners and signalmen, whose duties were primarily based at Base Camp. Including the liaison officer and Sirdar Sonam Girmi (who had accompanied us on the Annapurna and Nuptse expeditions), the

Scanned with CamScanner



Colonel Tony Streather, leader of the 1976 Everest expedition.

expedition comprised a grand total of 73 individuals.

We walked into three main parties as soon as we arrived in Kathmandu and took three weeks to Pheriche which was the acclimatization base for some fine alpine-style climbing. By 6 April the whole team had reached Base Camp.

Crevasses were thinly covered as a consequence of little snow over the winter, making the Khumbu Glacier above the icefall a deceptively dangerous place. On 10 April Capt. Terry Thompson inadvertently strayed onto a concealed crevasse that divided Advance Base into two areas and fell to his death. This was a great shock to us all and set us back both mentally and materially. Despite some fine helicopter flying by Commandant Pierre Le Floch, we were unable to recover the body to Kathmandu and Terry was buried near the lip of the icefall.

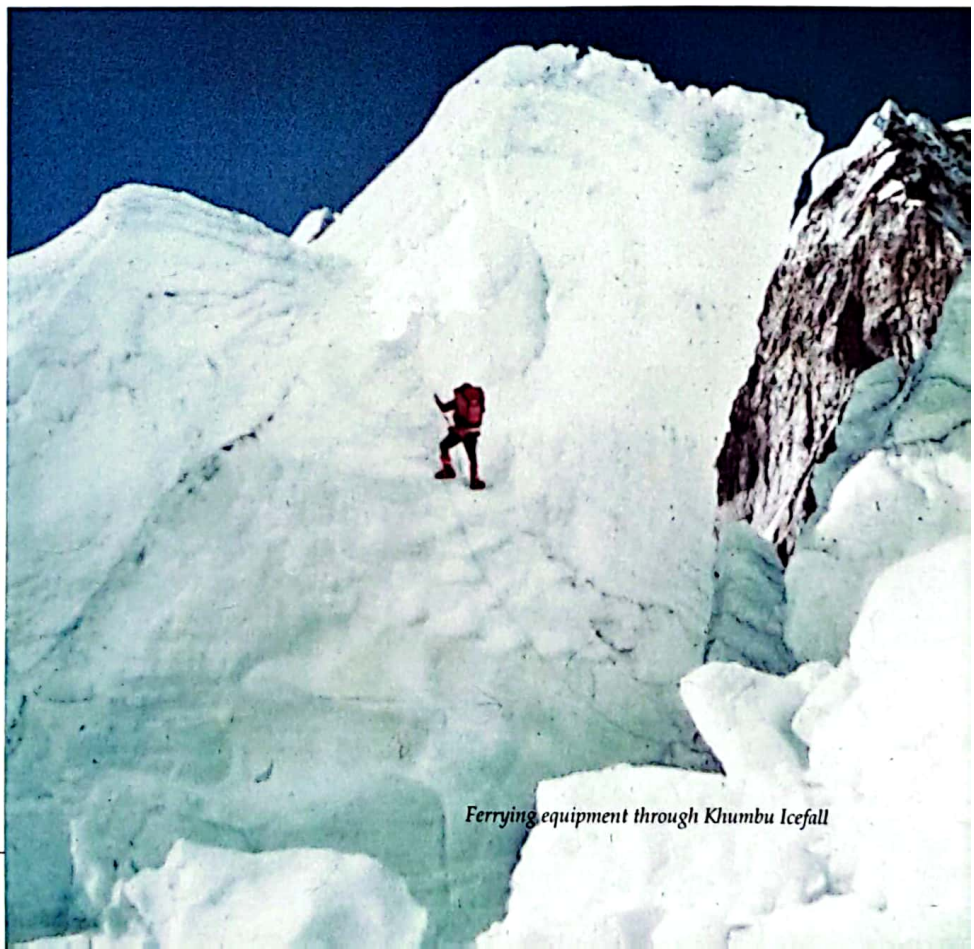
The lowest section of the Lhotse Face proved satisfyingly steep and was well-led by Geordie Armstrong. By now only 8 Sherpas and about 20 climbing members were fit so It is pleasant to be able to record that at least 17 members and 6 Sherpas carried loads to the South Col. Some oxygen practice was made on this section as very few had used the apparatus. Altogether we had mustered 14 sets of the sophisticated diluter-demand type and 10 sets of the well-proven constant-flow model made by L'Appareil Medical de Precision de Paris. Camp 4 was beneath an ice cliff to which clung the tattered remains of the Japanese Ladies' tents pitched the previous spring, at a height of 7500 metres.

A line of fixed rope left by the previous party was found to run straight from the place where the Sherpa Traverse ended at the crest line of the Geneva Spur to Camp 4. There was no rope left showing over the Band. It had chafed against the rock and fallen.

Four days' work fixing rope across the couloir and through the Yellow Band was done by Hardie, Scott, Chris Johnson, and Gunson. Then Geordie Armstrong and I took over with Phil Neame and Steve Johnson. It was cold and windy on the face, but Geordie bombed up from Advance Base in 3 hours with a full load of kit. The next day we picked up the line of Japanese ropes just as our own ran out and this pointed the way to the end of the Sherpa Traverse. Having excavated the Japanese rope to within 20 metres of a low crest on 4 May, we withdrew for the night

We left Camp 4 again the next day at 7.30 a.m. and were on the South Col by 12.30 pm. We found hundreds of cylinders, seemingly empty of oxygen. Later, I was to find quite a number that were usable and was particularly pleased that adaptors purchased from A.M.P. enabled us to use them all. Geordie and I arrived back in Advance Base in time for supper at 5.30 pm.

A week later we were back on the col as part of Tony Streather's summit plan. There were to be four summiteers (Bronco Lane and Brummy Stokes; John Scott and Pat Gunson). Camp 6 would be carried up by four climbers (Armstrong,



Ferrying equipment through Khumbu Icefall



Michael (Brummie) Stokes on the summit of Mt. Everest 16 May 1976

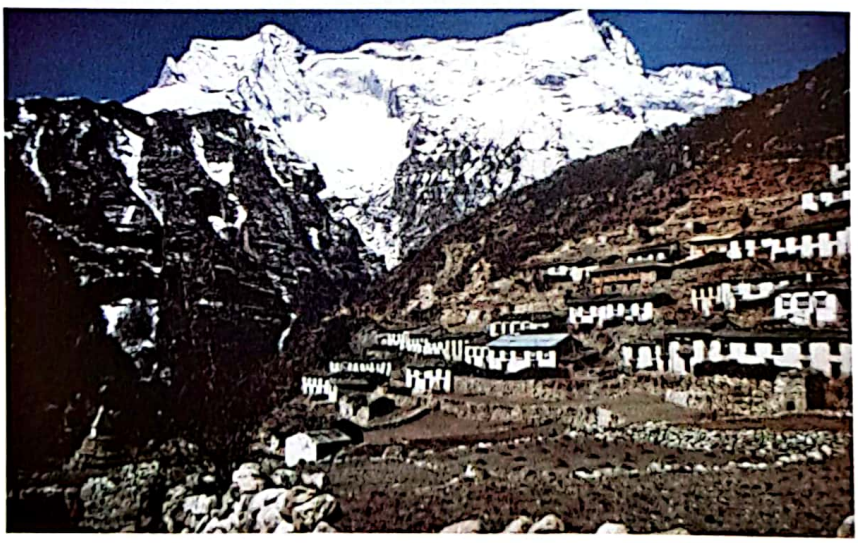
Fleming, Hardie and me) and the second pair would be supported by Steve Johnson and Phillip Neame. The support climbers could then have a go themselves as circumstances permitted. The logistics were finally calculated and there were 11 of everything with a small reserve.

Camp 6 went in at 8400 m on top of the tent left by the Americans in 1963 (empty cylinders nearby were date-stamped 1962). Bronco and Brummy led the route, being comparatively lightly laden. The top section of the couloir leading to the SE. ridge was hard, consisting of steep, deep, and insecure snow. The exit onto the rotten rocks was nasty as was the next 20 metres or so (to the point now called The Balcony). Geordie and I caught them up on the main ridge where the first Swiss expedition had placed a camp in 1952. The going by now was unpleasant. Unconsolidated powder snow lay over rubble and no footsteps were firm. Visibility by now was extremely poor; no longer could we see the elegant pyramid of Makalu nor Lhotse behind us.

The ridge line had become corniced, making it difficult to distinguish where the snow ended and the clouds began. It was possible for one of us to unintentionally cross into Tibet while carving out a platform for the tent. As I cleared the snow above a blue tent on the uniform slope, angled at approximately 40°, I uncovered yellow oxygen cylinders with a familiar wire-wound 920-litre pattern. These cylinders were sold by A.M.P and date-stamped as 1962, indicating that this was the American top camp in 1963. According to my altimeter, we were 400 meters above the South Col, which accounted for nearly half of the remaining distance (8848 m - 800 m) to the summit.

The loads had been meticulously planned. Brummy and Bronco had packed and were carrying their own rations and personal equipment, including the oxygen cylinders to be used during the ascent. Each of us also had an additional payload of 10 kg. Consequently, none of our packs weighed less than 19 kg or 42 lb. We left them with six full tanks of oxygen. The plan was that they would require one and a half tanks each for the summit push and one tank to share for the night. This meant we had two spare tanks, which we intended to leave for future climbing parties. Additionally, they had 24 hours' worth of reserve rations and fuel. As it turned out, this was fortunate.

I do not remember when the storm began, but it was still blowing gale force in the morning. Camp 6 lay exposed on the ridge, a metre from Tibet. The first radio call was depressing. The assault tent, fine at Advance Base, was not shaping well. Spindrift had filled it through an air event now clamped shut with a clip from the oxygen set. Poor night's sleep, morale low; I relayed this to Tony at Advance Base using another radio (that weighed 1.6 kg and hence not taken to camp 6). He had already appreciated the significance of the delay and wanted the first support party (us) down, leaving the second assault group on the col—John Scott and Pat Gunson supported by Steve Johnson and Phillip Neame. However, as the morning wore on, the radio messages from Brummy and Bronco cheered up—they had dug themselves out, the wind was dropping, and they hoped to reach the summit the next day. So we left the col at 2.45 p.m., arriving at ABC at 6 p.m., in time for supper.



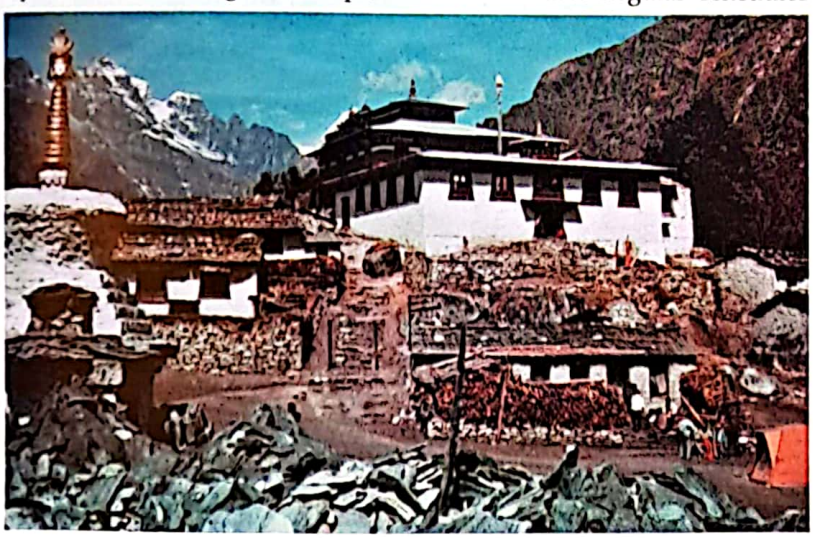
Namche Bazaar 1976

Throughout the following day, Sunday 16 May, tension mounted. After an early morning radio schedule with Phillip Neame on the south Col had established that the summit pair had set off at 6.30 a.m., no further news was reported until the second support pair returned to the col in the evening, having carried loads for the second assault pair to Camp 6. No part of the route above the south Col could be seen from Advance Base in the Western Cwm. The weather was indifferent all day with heavy snow falling in the cwm.

Bronco and Brummy made good progress up wind-hardened snow to the South Shoulder, where it once again became unconsolidated. Their account from now on becomes a little hazy. Several hours later, they rounded a rock pinnacle near the south summit. This was where Doug Scott told me he had bivouacked the previous winter. They found a cylinder (there should have been two—both empty). Photographs they took from there looking upwards show the whole route to the main summit—the Hillary Step having undergone yet another metamorphosis being part rock and part snow with no sign of a chimney. At its foot lay an 8-metre length of rope, attached to a Deadman belay. Pete Boardman had warned me not to rely on this line as it was poorly anchored. So to the summit where they must have shown great strength of will. For not only did Bronco take photographs with the mandatory pennants, but Brummy read my altimeter and took his heartbeat. The altimeter indicated an increment of 915 metres above the South Col (conventional survey computations indicate 848 metres). Brummy's heartbeat was 98 which seems impressively low.

The descent must have been a nightmare. At dusk, they found the part-filled oxygen cylinders cached on the South Shoulder that morning and scraped a little shelter in the lee of the ridge only for the wind to change into their faces. Changing cylinders proved too great an effort, so they shared the last one between them few breaths each, and somehow, they survived the night.

Meanwhile, all camps were again manned, and all communications opened. John Scott and Pat Gunson radioed to Phillip Neame and Steve Johnson on the col that there was no sign of the summit pair, and this was passed down to us at Advance Base. Regular schedules



Namche Bazaar 1976



Summiteer Michael (Bronco) Lane

the next morning contained some depressing news, and by 9 a.m., I and I suspect many others, feared the worst. The second pair set off prepared for the summit but also to act as a rescue party. At 10 a.m., we heard on the radio that John Scott and Pat had found them frostbitten and half-dead struggling out of their bivouac site. Dosing them with oxygen they began their laboured descent that was to last five days for one of them.

So, it was over, the 11th expedition ascent with the 52nd and the 53rd climbers to reach the summit of Mount Everest.

Prominent British Mountaineer Colonel Henry Day led a team during the triumphant 1976 Mount Everest expedition, which was organized by the Army Mountaineering Association (AMA). This article, originally written in 1976, has been abridged. After reaching the top of Tirich Mir (7747m) and then making the second ascent of Annapurna 1 (8045m) nine months later with the Army Mountaineering Association, the author prepared for the Everest SE ridge by climbing a new route on Indrasan in Kulu. Subsequently, as Tibet became more accessible, he led expeditions to Jiazi and the east face of Xiabangma and also took part in an attempt on the West Ridge of Everest.

Measuring Sagarmatha (Mount Everest): A Matter of Pride for Nepal

As the team leader, I knew I had to make a bold decision. I felt overwhelmed with emotions, lying on the snowy ground and shedding tears as I told Tshiring that we couldn't give up on this historical mission at the final moment.



✍ *Er. Khim Lal Gautam*

Sagarmatha, located in the Northeastern part of Nepal, is not just any mountain peak but also an iconic geographical feature of the earth. Before being discovered by British surveyors, Sagarmatha, also known as Mount Everest, was not a place of global attraction.

The British had traveled to South Asia intending to spread their colonial footprint and take control of the sub-continent. During the time of the Great Trigonometrical Survey (GTS) in northern India, surveyors from the British Empire observed mountains with snow-capped peaks. Just out of sheer curiosity, a team of surveyors led by Lieutenant Colonel William Lambton of the British Army initiated the GTS of India, the largest scientific mission of that era, to observe the majestic 'peak XV' and other mountains. Later, the survey scientifically established it as the tallest point on earth, and the scientific revelation popularized Sagarmatha, making it a global asset.

British Army surveyors were barred from entering Nepal while the GTS was taking place. Therefore, surveyors observed Sagarmatha and other mountains of Nepal from the British- Gorkha Border delineated after the Anglo-Gorkha War that was fought between 1814 and 1816.

In 1823, British surveyor George Everest replaced Lambton. Mount Nanda Devi in India was considered the highest peak in the world before George Everest reached the northern part of India. After 1809, it was assumed that Mount Dhaulagiri was the highest peak in the world. But nobody was talking about present-day Mount Everest or its actual height.

After arriving in northern India for



Author checking the equipment at Basecamp Khumbu Icefall in background

a survey mission, George Everest assumed the tallest peak should be somewhere on the eastern side of Nepal. To prove this, he planned to extend the triangulation series towards the Indo-Nepal border area. The army survey team established triangulation control points and started to observe the Himalayan range about 200 kilometers far from the control stations. The field books prepared by British surveyors named the world's highest point with different names, namely 'Peak Gamma', 'Peak H', and 'Peak B'. Ultimately, they named modern-day Sagarmatha 'Peak XV' as per the sketch of the British surveyor Hennessey.

In 1848, Survey Officer Logan and Surveyor General Waugh observed the Sagarmatha from the hilltop of Darjeeling and assumed that it might be the tallest peak. In the time between November 1849 and January 1850, precise observation was carried out by Nicolson's survey party just from the south part of Sagarmatha. Based on Nicholson's observation, it was almost declared in 1852, that Peak XV was the tallest mountain.

In March of 1856, surveyor General Andrew Scott Waugh officially announced that the height of Peak XV was 29002 feet (8839.80 meters).

In 1865, the Royal Geographic Society named the iconic peak after George Everest, who had retired from service, to honor his contributions to survey science. This is how Sagarmatha became known as Mount Everest and gained global fame.

Multiple surveys, conflicting results

From the mid-nineteenth century, several measurement expeditions were carried out on behalf of scientific organizations and tech-savvy countries. Records show that at least ten surveys were carried out to determine Sagarmatha's height, but the height value was never the same.

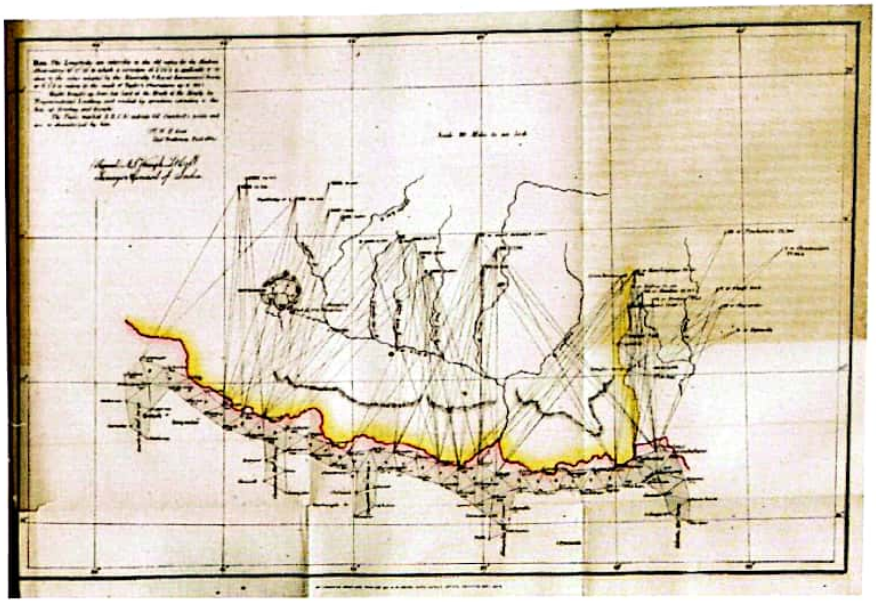
Following a rigorous British measurement in the 1850s, Sagarmatha was officially recognized as the highest peak. However, the peak was remeasured and recomputed several times after that. In 1880-83 and 1902, an additional observation was made from Darjeeling, and the height of Sagarmatha was recalculated. Sidney Gerald Burrard calculated the height of the highest peak by considering the refraction coefficient and arrived at the value of 29141 ft (8882.17 m). The peak's height was finally remeasured with precision in 1954 by the Survey of India, which declared the value to be 29028.2 ft (8847.795 meters). This value was widely accepted and rounded off to 8848 meters.

The Government of Nepal also accepted and recognized this height as the official height in line with the findings of the Survey of India. This continued until Nepal conducted its own measurement.

Because the northern part of this majestic peak lies in Tibetan territory, China also carried out a measurement. In 1966-68 and 1975, the National Bureau of Surveying and Mapping (NBSM) of China carried out two geodetic campaigns to measure the height of Sagarmatha. The height value computed by the Chinese



Foreign Minister Pradeep Kumar Gyawali and Land Reform and Management Minister Padma Kumari Aryal attending height announcement program organized at the Survey Department of Nepal.



A sketch diagram of GTS , where Sagarmatha was named as peak XV

expedition of 8848.13 meters was almost close to the Gulati's survey in 1954.

In 1987, 1992, and 2004 Italians gave more interest in research and re-determined the height of Sagarmatha with different values but not widely accepted.

In 1999, the Boston Museum of Science and the National Geographic Society surveyed to remeasure the height of Sagarmatha from direct GPS measurement. The new height of Sagarmatha was declared as 8850 meters and announced in the program of the 87th annual meeting of the American Alpine Journal.

Again, the Chinese measured the highest peak in 2005 and announced that the height of Sagarmatha hadn't increased as announced by Americans. Chinese measurements showed the height was about 4 meters lower than the commonly accepted value.

Chinese and Italians argued that the height of the Himalaya should be taken instead of the permanent snow surface. Geographers and Geospatial scientists discussed it as a new diplomacy of defining the height of Sagarmatha. They Began analyzing the height of Sagarmatha from a new perspective. Nepal didn't accept the heights determined by the Chinese and American surveys.

Again in 2010-11, the Technical University of Denmark (DTU) started a project to measure gravity, to define the precise Geoidal surface of Nepal. They collaborated with the Survey Department of Nepal for an airborne gravity survey and finally published an



Summit Observation team heading to Camp III from camp II.

Scanned with CamScanner



Author Checking instruments before heading to summit Observation.

'acquisition and gravity processing report'. DTU also published the height of Sagarmatha as 8848.06 meters in their report. The Geoidal undulation was calculated from the interpolated gravity model as they didn't take spatial data from direct measurement.

Even though foreign scientists were repeatedly involved in height measurement survey missions, Nepal was never involved in any height measurement expedition as described above. Some retired survey officials were part of foreign height measurement expeditions. Their involvement was just as support staff or independent consultants.

Sagarmatha (Everest) Measurement: Nepal's Efforts and Pride

Although Sagarmatha is situated in Nepal, the country had never initiated to measure it. Therefore, it was a matter of great pride for Nepal to measure the peak by mobilizing its own surveyors and resources. It was delayed mainly because of bureaucratic indifference.

In 2015, Nepal witnessed one of the deadliest earthquakes. With this, western media reported that the Sagarmatha height was shrunk. This news generated controversy and debate among geodetic scientists.

The then prime minister Puspa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' included the 'Sagarmatha height measurement program' in the government's annual policies and programs for 2017-18. Encouraged by the government move, the Survey Department organized an international workshop in Kathmandu in December 2017 aimed at making the updated Sagarmatha height globally acceptable. At the event, noted scientists from all over the world including India, China, Italy, and the US were present. The Survey Department simultaneously finalized the height measurement methodology incorporating all the feedback and suggestions at the workshop.

The seminar demonstrated that Nepal was not only eager to measure 'the peak of its pride', but also keen to prove that it could do so using its own resources and people.

After finalizing the measurement methodology, the Department established a secretariat for the height measurement mission and assigned surveyors to complete the mission on time.

Overall, the Sagarmatha measurement fieldwork was divided into four detachments- Precise Levelling, GNSS survey, Triangulation survey, and Gravity observation. Furthermore, the surveyors faced the daunting task of scaling Mount Sagarmatha for summit observation, which was an integral component of height measurement. For the first time in the measurement history of Sagarmatha, Nepal was going to send surveyors atop the summit with modern equipment. Due to my previous experience climbing Sagarmatha in 2011 and my survey background, I was chosen as the team leader for the summit observation.



Sagarmatha with Banner of Survey Department(background with GNSS equipment)

Story of Summit Observation

On April 10, 2019, my team left for Lukla from Kathmandu as assigned by the government of Nepal. We received best wishes for a successful expedition from Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli, who summoned us to his Baluwatar residence.

After spending 26 days at the base camp, our team set out for the summit of Sagarmatha on May 18, 2019. Unlike other climbers, our mission was not just to reach the top; rather, we were tasked with taking survey instruments and conducting observations once we reached the summit. These observations would be crucial in determining the height of Sagarmatha. To ensure accuracy, we needed to conduct GNSS observations at the summit while other survey teams were deployed to nine stations including Lukla as the reference point. The precise computation of our observations, along with those from other teams, would result in the final height of Sagarmatha.



Author at Jeneva Spur on the way to South COl

Our expedition team included four Surveyors from the Survey Department and four Sherpas. Fellow department surveyor Rabin Karki and I climbed Sagarmatha with the Sherpas, while Surveyor Yubaraj Dhital and Surveyor Suraj Singh Bhandari stayed at the base camp for coordination. The Sherpa team members were Tshiring Jangbu Sherpa, Lakpa Sherpa, Pem Ngima, and Dorji. Tshiring and Ngima had previously scaled Sagarmatha twice, while it was the first time for the other Sherpas. Pem Ngima gave up his summit from South Col.

After leaving Base Camp, we reached Camp II on the same day.



A Trimble GNSS Reference station at Lobuche-5050 msl

We stayed at Camp II overnight and then headed to Camp III. We reached Camp III at around 3 pm on 19th May and spent a night there before heading to South Col (Camp IV) in the morning. We reached South Col (7906 meters from MSL) at around 3 PM.

At South Col, it was quite windy with a lot of turbulence. Despite windy and turbulent weather conditions, I was more worried about the insufficient oxygen bottles stored at South Col. Normally, expedition operating companies would ferry the oxygen bottles to South Col in advance by the first week of May and store them for their combers to be used during the final summit push. Although I was told that enough oxygen bottles had been taken to South Col for my team, it was not the case on the ground. We found that not all oxygen bottles had reached South Col. Our head guide Tshiring stressed the impossibility of continuing the mission without sufficient oxygen bottles and urged that descend to Camp II, and wait for more bottled oxygen to arrive before attempting the summit all over again.

This was a challenging situation, and making the right decision was not easy. Considering our physical strength, short weather window, and traffic of climbers, it was almost not practical for us to descend to Camp II at around 6500 meters and hike back to South Col. This was a Catch-22, as the failure of the mission looked inevitable if we moved down and our lives could be endangered if we pushed further without sufficient oxygen.

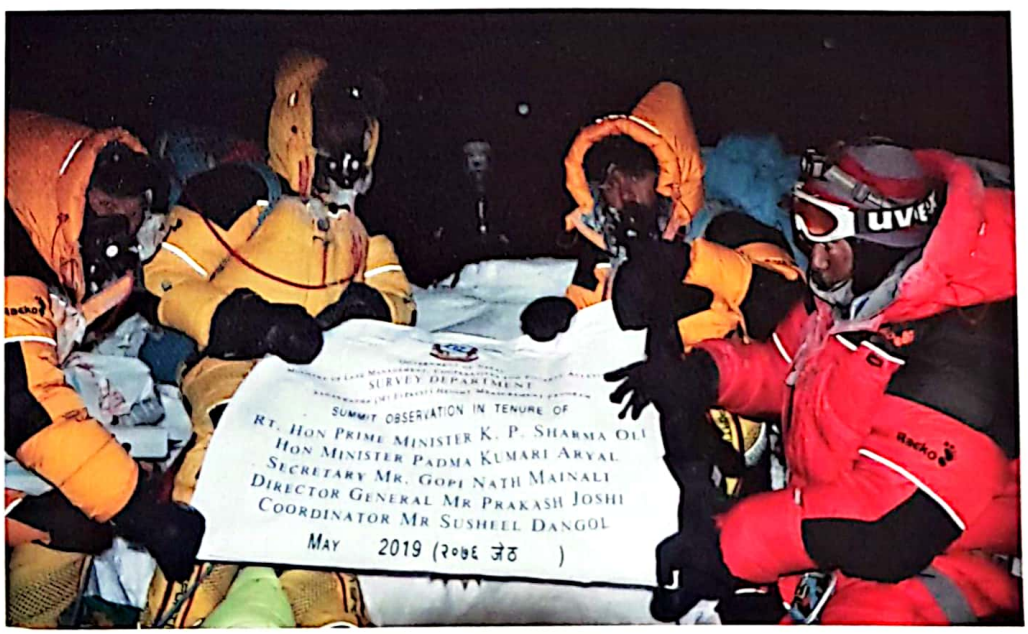
I was faced with a difficult decision that could potentially risk our lives, but giving up on the mission was not an option for me. As the team leader, I knew I had to make a bold decision. I felt overwhelmed with emotions, lying on the snowy ground and shedding tears as I told Tshiring that we couldn't give up on this historical mission at the final moment.

Despite the challenges we faced, I was determined to find a solution. We decided to stay overnight, and I contacted another expedition company for additional oxygen. Fortunately, our Sherpas were able to retrieve oxygen bottles from Geneva Spur.

The experience of previous expeditions taught me a lot about making wise decisions even in difficult situations. I had previous experience of a successful summit on Sagarmatha in 2011 as part of "Nepal civil servant first Mount Everest expedition-2011', hence became the first civil servant and surveyor to step on the top of Sagarmatha. Many of my well-known friends and Sherpa at that moment were also in South Col, who also helped me a lot in my sticky situation.

On May 22, 2019, after a 13-hour climb through the night on the 42nd day of the expedition, I successfully reached the summit of Sagarmatha for the second time at approximately 3 am. Despite exhaustion and nerves, I knew reaching the top and taking photos was not the only big thing for my team. The longest stay at the top might be a life-threatening situation, we still had to do final work for the precise height of the peak.

In order to collect the static data of the highest peak, we used the NetR9 Trimble equipment for the Base receiver, and R10 (GNSS rover), which we had carried with us to the summit. The GPR we used was the normal GPR provided by the National Geographic Society, USA. We scanned the surface around the top, about 15 to 20 square meters with GPR, which took about 10 minutes, without disturbing the GNSS antenna. For the very first time in history, the Survey Department utilized highly precise



Summit Observation team installing the GNSS equipment atop Sagarmatha summit.

tools and techniques to determine the height of Sagarmatha, inspiring us to undertake the daunting task of conquering the pinnacle ourselves. With the aid of approximately 50 positioning satellites and an observation duration lasting one hour and 16 minutes with a one-second epoch, we were able to collect sufficient data and achieve our mission objective. The satellite geometry and observation duration was optimal for our needs.



Summit observation team

Amid the harsh conditions at the summit, with darkness, wind, low temperatures, exhaustion, and limited oxygen, I remained focused on our work. Assisted by Officer Rabin Karki and Sherpa guides, we successfully recorded crucial data for determining the height of Sagarmatha. At 5 am, we began the challenging descent carrying the precious data safely to base camp.

Unfortunately, as we were descending from the summit of Sagarmatha, we got stuck at the Hillary Step due to the heavy traffic of record climbers at the summit. I even fainted at above 8200 meters, close to South Col, and suffered from severe frostbite, causing me to lose the left toe.

After enduring months of tribulations, our summit observation team fulfilled the immense responsibility that had almost led us to a brush with death. When I look back at those remarkable days, my heart still fills with pride. It feels as though death caressed me so close but didn't take me with it.

Spending two hours at the summit was no ordinary feat, but the mission compelled us to bear the risk. The rough conditions didn't limit us, and we stayed there for installation and observation. Despite the risk, we were excited and didn't even care about oxygen supply and time. Managing disturbances from other climbers was another challenge, which we tackled by summiting at night to avoid crowds.

Announcement of New Height

In mid-October 2019, Nepal and China agreed to jointly announce the height of Mount Sagarmatha/ Chomolungma, as Nepal was almost completing the task of the 'Sagarmatha Height Measurement Project'. The agreement was made during the visit of the President of China to Kathmandu. Despite conducting separate surveys, the two countries decided to make the announcement together. On December 8, 2020, a joint program was held through a webinar, during which the respective foreign ministers read the greetings of their presidents and announced the height of Sagarmatha as 8848.86 meters. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the announcement was made virtually via a webinar.

In 1954, India rounded the height of Sagarmatha to 8,848 meters, although the precise value was 8,847.795 meters (29,028.2 feet). Speaking at a discussion session during the Nepal Literature Festival in 2022, senior journalist Kanak Mani Dixit opined in favor of rounding Mt. Everest's exact height (the value of 8,848.86 meters) to 8,849 meters. I agree with this view, as using a figure with decimal places can be inconvenient.

In my opinion, Nepal and China should also round the value of 8,848.86 meters to the nearest whole number, 8,849 meters, for official use.

Khim Lal Gautam, Chief Survey Officer of Nepal, is the only surveyor and civil servant in the world to summit Mount Everest twice. In 2019, he led the expedition to settle the controversy over Everest's height. He has written a book 'Pandhraun Chuli' (Peak XV), a firsthand account of the Nepali surveyor's summit of Everest for measuring its height.

(Views are personal and do not necessarily represent the official view of the government of Nepal or of the office the author is associated with.)

Economics of Mt. Everest and Mountaineering in Nepal

The sustainability and environmental issues of Mountains including Mount Everest are of utmost importance and should be a top priority for all stakeholders involved in tourism, including tour operators, tourism entrepreneurs, and the government. Global warming, caused by excessive carbon emissions from various factories in developed countries, poses a serious threat to the Nepali mountains.



✍ *Mohan Lamsal*

When we review the economic impact of Mount Everest, we must look back to the time before the first ascent by Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay. In 1924, a British expedition team led by George Mallory arrived in Nepal with the aim of climbing Mount Everest. However, Mallory's expedition was marred by mysteries, as he was reported to have lost his life either during his ascent or descent from the mountain. Due to his sudden death, Mallory's expedition reports could not be confirmed, established, and recorded, leaving his expedition shrouded in mystery for the entire world.

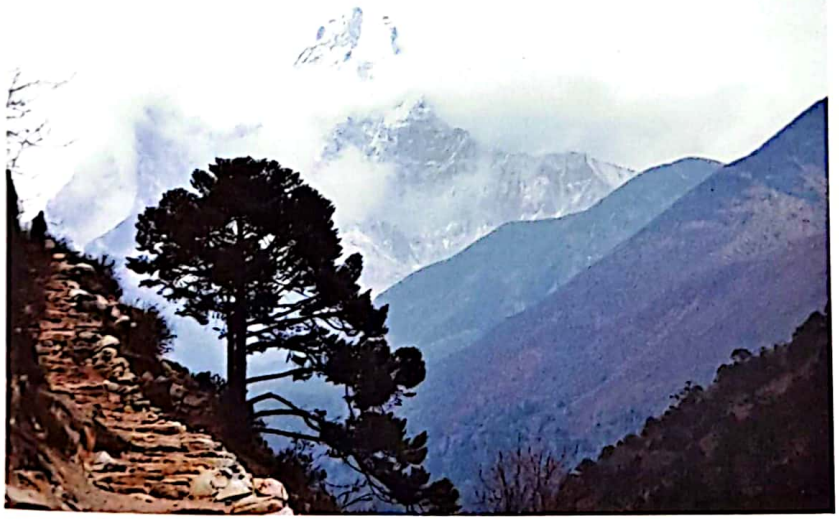
At the time of Mallory's expedition, the interest in trekking, travel, and expeditions among the Nepalese was very limited. There were no trekking and tour companies in Nepal, and most expeditions were carried out in groups led by Nepal army officials.

It was not until Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay successfully climbed Mount Everest in 1953 that the bulk of Nepali tourism began to flourish, marking the beginning of the era of tourism in Nepal. Subsequently, a British trekking pioneer established Tiger Tops Groups, a company specializing in mountain travel in Nepal. This group also established a trekking company called Mountain Travel in 1976. As a result, smaller travel and trekking companies started to emerge in Nepal, and even porters and guides eventually became tourism operators and entrepreneurs, contributing to the growth of tourism activities in Nepal.

The first ascent of Mount Everest by Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay and the subsequent establishment of trekking and travel companies have played a pivotal role in the development of tourism and mountaineering in Nepal.

Development of Entrepreneur

The development of entrepreneurship in the tourism and mountaineering sector has been a significant outcome of the first ascent of Mount Everest, bringing about opportunities for various individuals and businesses. The successful summit of Mount Everest not only opened up mountaineering and tourism in Nepal but also paved the way for the growth of entrepreneurship in the sector.



Following the first ascent of Mount Everest, many staff members of Tiger Tops Groups, a prominent hospitality and tourism company, went on to establish their own self-propelled trekking and tour agencies to attract more tourists to Nepal. This led to the emergence of numerous tourist hotels and restaurants in Kathmandu, creating employment opportunities and boosting the local economy. Many individuals, including myself, started their professional journey by guiding trekking groups on various routes in Nepal and later established my own trekking company.

In 1997, I established my own trekking company, which eventually expanded to include hotels and resorts. Over time, many individuals who had previously worked with us have gone on to establish their own trekking and travel agencies, showcasing the entrepreneurial opportunities that have arisen in the mountaineering and expedition sector. The guiding experience has provided a foundation for many renowned entrepreneurs in the industry, highlighting the progress and growth that has been achieved. The development of entrepreneurship in the mountaineering sector has not only created business opportunities for individuals but has also contributed to the overall growth and development of the tourism industry in Nepal.



Economic Benefits

The economic benefit of mountaineering, especially Mount Everest, is significant and multi-faceted. One of the main sources of income for tourism in Nepal is mountaineering. Up to May 11, in the spring season of 2023 alone, the Nepal government collected over $56.5 million as royalty from a total of 1123 foreign climbers. Out of this amount, Mount Everest alone contributed 49.6 million from 467 climbers. This shows the significant financial contribution of mountaineering to the economy of Nepal. This royalty is just one aspect of the economic benefits of mountaineering. The industry also provides employment opportunities to local guides, porters, cooks, and other support staff, which helps to create livelihoods and support local communities.

Furthermore, mountaineering also generates revenue through the hospitality industry, including accommodations, food, transportation, and other services. Climbers and tourists require various services during their expeditions, which leads to the growth of related businesses such as hotels, restaurants, equipment

Royalty for Foreign Climber per Person in American Dollar

- Everest Normal Route: $11000 (Spring Season), $5500 (Autumn Season), $2750 (Winter/Summer)
- Everest Other Route: $10000 (Spring Season), $5000 (Autumn Season), $2500 (Winter/Summer)
- Other Mountain more than 8000m: $1800 (Spring Season), $900 (Autumn Season), $450 (Winter/Summer)
- 7501m - 7999m: $600 (Spring Season), $300 (Autumn Season), $150 (Winter/Summer)
- 7000m - 7500m: $500 (Spring Season), $250 (Autumn Season), $125 (Winter/Summer)
- 6501m - 6999m: $400 (Spring Season), $200 (Autumn Season), $100 (Winter/Summer)
- Mt. Amadablam (6812M): $400 (Spring Season), $400 (Autumn Season), $200 (Winter/Summer)
- Less than 6500m: $250 (Spring Season), $125 (Autumn Season), $70 (Winter/Summer)

rentals, and transportation services. This creates a ripple effect in the local economy, benefiting not just those directly involved in mountaineering but also the wider community.

Sustainability and Environmental Issues

The sustainability and environmental issues of Mounts including Mount Everest are of utmost importance and should be a top priority for all stakeholders involved in tourism, including tour operators, tourism entrepreneurs, and the government. Global warming, caused by excessive carbon emissions from various factories in developed countries, poses a serious threat to the Nepali mountains. To address this issue, reducing carbon emissions should be a global agenda, and the Nepal Mountaineering Association (NMA) advocates for controlling carbon emissions worldwide and alerting governments about the detrimental impacts of global warming and climate change.

Garbage management is another significant challenge in the mountains. The Himalayas are plagued with garbage, including dead bodies, and all stakeholders, including the Nepal Army, NMA, and the Nepal government working together to clean up the mountains. Strict rules should be implemented, requiring climbers to bring back their garbage. Excessive commercialization, such as bringing large ovens, tents, and luxury facilities, should be avoided as it generates heat, poses risks, and spoils the natural environment.

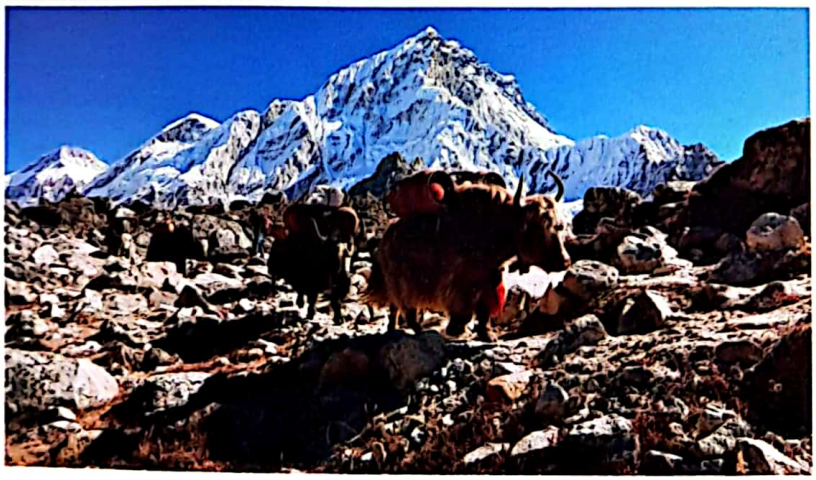
There is also a need to address issues related to alcohol consumption and late-night activities in base camp, which can pose risks to climbers and generate heat. The government should consider banning such activities to protect the region. Additionally, protecting trekking trails from encroachment and pollution caused by road expansion is crucial, as these trails are linked to the culture and heritage of Nepal and attract tourists.

Looking to the Future

Considering the future opportunities and challenges for Nepal's mountaineering industry, it is crucial to ensure the sustainability of Mount Everest and its surrounding areas, including its culture and trekking trails. Protecting the Himalayas from the negative impacts of global warming, such as avalanches and melting glaciers, should be a top priority for all stakeholders, including tour operators, tourism entrepreneurs, and the government. Additionally, measures should be taken to mitigate the environmental pollution caused by excessive garbage, including dead bodies, left on the mountains by implementing strict regulations and enforcement mechanisms.

In terms of infrastructure development, improving tourism highways and transportation systems, such as roads and airports, can provide a hassle-free and safe environment for tourists to travel within Nepal. For instance, constructing a reliable tourism highway from Kathmandu to Surke can promote tourism in Nepal and provide alternative transportation options in case of weather-related delays in Lukla, a common gateway for trekkers to Mount Everest.

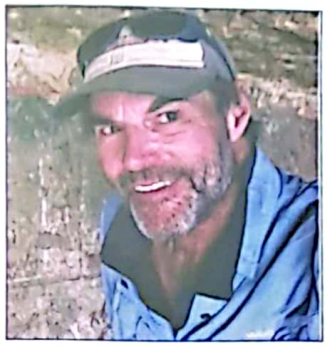
Furthermore, effective promotion of Nepal's natural beauty, culture, heritage, and adventure sports through various channels, including social media, travel marts, and international media outlets such as BBC, CNN, and Chinese channels, can attract more tourists to Nepal. Creating small videos and utilizing social media platforms can help raise awareness about Nepal's unique offerings and attract potential travelers from around the world. It is important to emphasize the country's natural attractions, including the Himalayas, as well as its rich cultural heritage, to position Nepal as a must-visit destination for global travelers.



Tourism entrepreneur Mohan Lamsal is the General Secretary of the Nepal Mountaineering Association.

Mallory and Irvine:
100 Years of Climbing on Mt. Everest

The question people still ask is whether or not we think Mallory and Irvine reached the summit in 1924. Everyone has a different opinion, but I think it was possible that at least Mallory did. We know Mallory was a very proficient rock climber and would have been able to lead the Second Step.



✍ *Eric Simonson*

I often say Mt. Everest is the world's biggest stage. Every year an eclectic mix of new actors and usual suspects deliver wild performances ranging from wonderful to disastrous. I've had the good fortune to survive my own lifetime of adventures as an international climber and guide for over 50 years. I have also witnessed the remarkable and ongoing evolution of climbing in the Himalayas and particularly on Everest.

We have now reached a fantastic milestone with over 100 years of climbing history on the world's highest mountain spanning back to Mallory and Irvine's fateful summit bid in 1924. This is a time to celebrate and reflect on their extraordinary accomplishments. I feel great respect for other climbers of later eras, but let's face it, the Everest pioneers had to work a lot harder for it. They faced untold adversity, personal costs, and physical risks, but I most admire their willingness to overcome those challenges while trying to achieve a daunting and uncertain goal and truly push the boundaries of exploration.



Tap Richards and Eric Simonson with Mallory's O2 bottle

Along the journey of climbing history, some significant dates stand out. Geopolitics played a very heavy hand in the history of Everest. The year 1952 marked the closing of access to the mountain in Tibet and the opening of access in Nepal instead. That singular year dramatically switched the entire script and venue. All collective knowledge about climbing routes, camp locations, and other logistics in Tibet was replaced by an unknown side of the mountain in Nepal that was yet to be explored.

The history of the first 60 years of Everest climbing from the Tibet side fascinated me as a young boy growing up in Tacoma with Mt. Rainier dominating the landscape as my backdrop. I devoured books about the early British expeditions

Summit Observation team installing the GNSS equpment atop Sagarmatha summit.

and other early, classic climbs and dreamed of my own path into eventual reality.

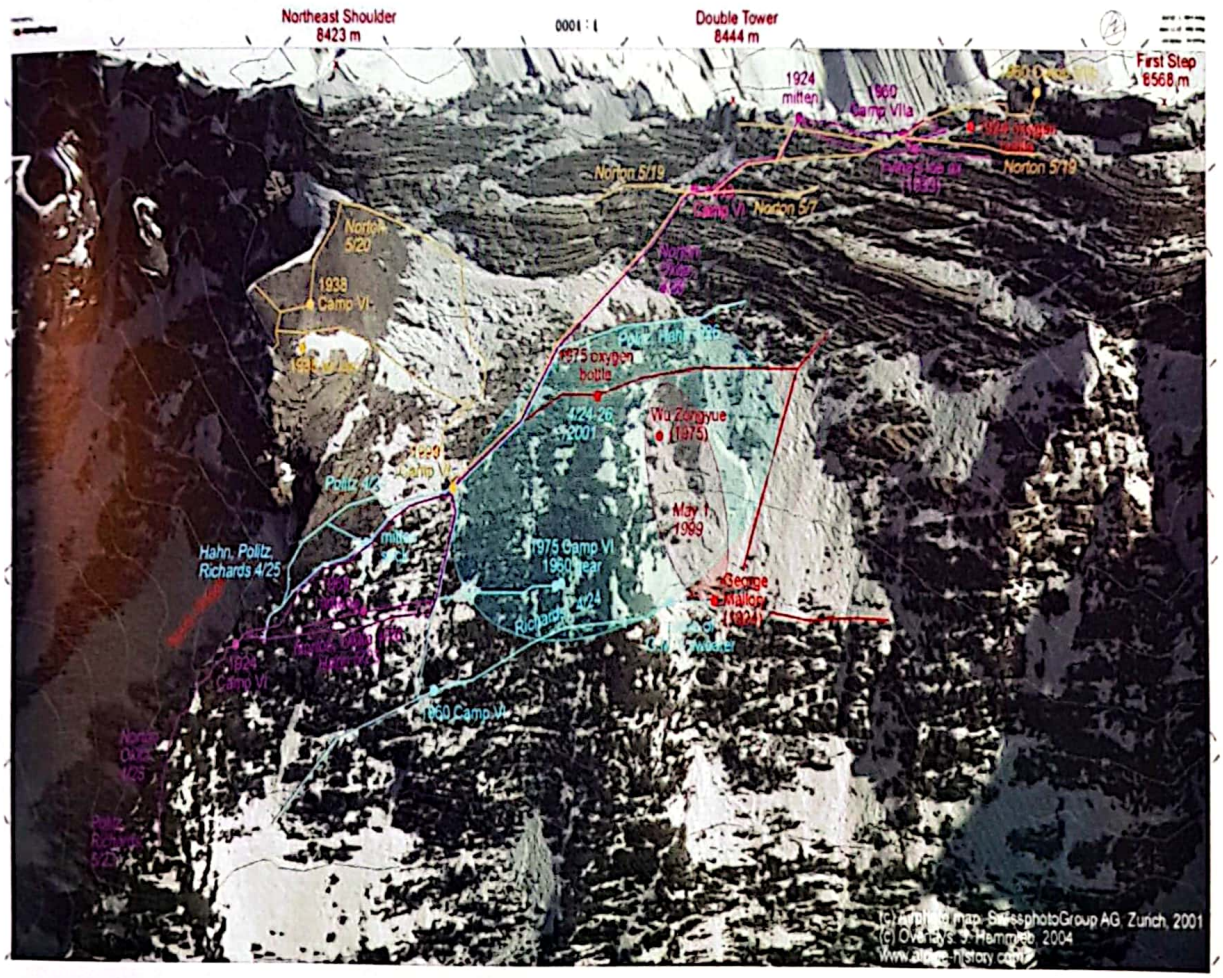
It was the stuff of legends to me until May 15, 1991, when I summitted Mt. Everest via the North Ridge and unknowingly touched some real climbing history with my own hands. I took a short rest break on my ascent just below the First Step near a prominent boulder, and I looked down to see an abandoned oxygen bottle of unusually old vintage. I picked it up, looked it over, put it back down, and quickly refocused on my own upward climb to the top. That abandoned cylinder would later prove to be my first discovery of an artifact of great significance to mountaineering research historians worldwide.

Fast forward to 1999. After leading and organizing several successful climbing expeditions to the North Side of Everest in the 1980s and 90s, I was quite experienced in the world of Everest climbs in Tibet. Two men I had never met approached me with their own extraordinary vision: a research expedition to search for clues to answer the still quintessential question: Were Mallory and Irvine actually the first humans to reach the summit of Mt. Everest way back in 1924?

Their research expedition proposal was such a bold venture in pursuit of mountaineering history that it was impossible to turn them away, so when Jochen Hemmleb and Larry Johnson asked me to organize and lead the 1999 Mallory and Irvine Research Expedition, I took up the challenge. We enjoyed welcome but unexpected support for our research and financial needs from various sources worldwide. I was greatly honored to assemble a team of top-shelf climbers, each very unique in their own right, but all strong mountaineers willing to go out on a shaky adventurous limb with me.

Naysayers gave us no chance of actually finding any evidence to solve the mystery surrounding Mallory and Irvine, who had disappeared into the clouds high on Everest during their summit bid on June 8, 1924. Our expedition was labeled a "sham" by some in the media and was dismissed without merit or any respect for our extensive research and preparation. This all served to make the entire team more determined.

I will never forget the day that radio calls came down from our search team up high on Everest with cryptic news of a major discovery using code words so



Mallory and Irvine Research Expedition search routes & findings 1999, 2001, 2004 (Jochen Hemmleb)

other teams eavesdropping on our radio comms frequency would be clueless and left to wonder if the entire world had underestimated our expedition. The world had done exactly that.

The events surrounding our 1999 Mallory and Irvine Research Expedition made history and ignited a global media frenzy we could never have imagined. Our epic journey has been well documented and there have been many excellent books and articles published about our expedition and the Mallory mystery.

Compared to George Mallory and his 1924 team, it was a cakewalk for us in 1999 to get to Rongbuk base camp via international flights and a bumpy drive across Tibet in a Toyota Landcruiser. The 1924 British Everest Expedition endured many weeks of hard travel by sea and land just to get from England to Darjeeling, India. Then they faced many more weeks of rough trekking on foot from nearby Kalimpong, north into Tibet, west to Shegar, and eventually south into the Rongbuk Valley.

The 1924 climbers were literally out of contact with their families and friends for many months, something that is impossible for modern climbers to fathom in today's technology world. Early expeditions were dependent on foot couriers running letters for weeks to post by snail mail from some remote villages and took weeks or months to arrive back home. In contrast, today climbers perceive crisis whenever the cell phone or internet doesn't work or the evacuation helicopter at base Camp is delayed for a few hours due to foggy weather.



1960 Chinese L-R Wang Fuzhou, Xu Jing, Jochen Hemmleb, Eric Simonson, Qu Yinhua in Beijing, August 2001

Our 1999 Mallory and Irvine Research Expedition enjoyed early-generation satellite phones and fax. At the time, it represented a huge advance in communications. We also did not need to rely on a journalist to tell our story for us. We did it ourselves and made an early foray into real-time expedition cybercasting via the internet which now has become an expectation of most expeditions on the mountain. Unfortunately, that "democratization" of news flowing from the mountain includes a wide variety of quality, accuracy, and integrity and has proven at times to be a double-edged sword.

In 1999 we went to the mountain early in the season to take advantage of very dry spring season conditions and we reached the North Col by the end of March. The next month we pushed higher, fixing rope and establishing camps until May 1, when the first search team unclipped from the fixed ropes and headed into the unknown west of the now 'normal' climbing route. The discovery of the remains of George Mallory became an almost miraculous chapter added to the fantastic climbing history of Everest.

I still had some unfinished business of my own stemming back to that antique oxygen bottle I found in 1991 but left behind in pursuit of my own summit. When our 1999 team prepared for summit bids, I gave location directions to climbers Tap Richards and Jake Norton, who located that cylinder exactly where I said it would be. They brought it down and it was ultimately identified as the famous cylinder "No. 9" that Mallory had described in his expedition notes and had used on his summit attempt on June 8, 1924.

In addition to things discarded and abandoned by the early British expeditions, our team recovered a collection of personal items belonging to George Mallory himself. We eventually met with members of Mallory's family and returned Mallory's personal items to them. It is my understanding that they in turn eventually transferred those items to the archives of the British Museum.

When our 1999 expedition team set off to find clues to the disappearance of Mallory and Irvine, we knew that climbers would be interested, but we totally underestimated the cross-over interest in popular culture, media, and money.

Scanned with CamScanner

Immediately after we went live on the internet with our discovery, the phones started ringing and didn't stop for months, maybe even years. I gained an unplanned education on the navigation of the world of media, photo rights, and attacks from critics.

After the 1999 expedition we published Ghosts of Everest, summarizing our findings and conclusions, but team historian Jochen Hemmleb and I knew there was still unfinished business. First, there was the whole question of what had happened to Andrew Irvine and the camera that Howard Somervell had reputedly loaned to him immediately prior to their 1924 summit bid. Could we find Irvine and the camera, develop the film in it, and perhaps find a summit photo? We knew someone had to go back and keep looking.

The 2001 Mallory and Irvine Research Expedition, which I also organized and led, accomplished over 20 climber days of searching above 8000m. It was a fantastic trip with a great group of fellow guides from Mt. Rainier. The team made many further discoveries, including the 1924 and 1933 British high camps, the 1960 and 1975 Chinese high camps, more old oxygen cylinders, and interesting items of discarded equipment, but no Andrew Irvine. Near the very end of that expedition, we diverted our final search team to 8690m at the base of the Third Step for what may still be the world's highest successful rescue. Two stricken climbers had summited late in the day, run out of oxygen on the descent, and ended up incapacitated after a night out at the Third Step. Sound familiar?

The question people still ask is whether or not we think Mallory and Irvine reached the summit in 1924. Everyone has a different opinion, but I think it was possible that at least Mallory did. We know Mallory was a very proficient rock climber and would have been able to lead the Second Step. We know that Mallory and Irvine had sufficient oxygen to have been able to take three cylinders each on their summit day, which would have provided them each over 10 hours of O2 at 2.2 liters a minute (and if they split up, perhaps Mallory would have taken some of Irvines?). The bottom line, it was enough to make the top, but not to get back down.



1999 Mallory and Irvine Research Expedition climbing team (L-R) Eric Simonson, Andy Politz, Thom Pollard, Jake Norton, Conrad Anker, Tap Richards, Dave Hahn

For me, perhaps the most compelling intangible factor is based on my personal experience taking three attempts to finally reach the summit of Mt. Everest. After coming up short in 1982 and 1987 via the Great Couloir on the North Face, I knew that on my third try in 1991 via the North Ridge, I was going to the summit "come hell or high water." 1924 was Mallory's third attempt also, and I suspect he too was not going to turn around without giving it everything he had.

Some of our best research took place off the mountain. In August of 2001, Jochen Hemmleb and I traveled to Beijing to interview the surviving members of the Chinese 1960 and 1975 Everest Expeditions. This was a very memorable meeting organized with the help of the Chinese Mountaineering Association, with Li Guowei and Wang Yongfeng translating for Jochen and me. We felt privileged to hear the first-hand accounts of Qu Yinhua, Wang Fuzhou, Xu Jing, and others. Meeting these men and listening to them tell their stories made me feel the same as I did the first time I met Sir Edmund Hillary and Reinhold Messner, truly in the presence of my heroes.

The ascent of Mt. Everest by the Chinese in 1960 is now undisputed and their story is one of the most compelling in mountaineering history. Qu Yinhua, Wang Fuzhou, and Gonbu reached the summit at 2:20 am on May 25 after climbing for 19 hours and using only a trivial amount of supplemental oxygen. This included five hours surmounting the steep and rocky Second Step. To lead the final pitch Qu Yinhua removed his boots and crampons, stood on Liu Lienman's shoulders, and made the ascent wearing only socks on his feet!

He subsequently paid the price, losing all his toes and parts of his fingers. Above the Second Step, Liu Lienman was unable to continue and bivouacked alone to wait for the summit team to descend. It was a long cold night for him, but the next morning he was rejoined by Qu Yinhua, Wang Fuzhou, and Gonbu on their way down from the top.

In addition to making the undeniable first round-trip ascent of Everest from the North in 1960, we now know that the Chinese also found the remains of Andrew Irvine. Xu Jing told us that he climbed two times to the Northeast Ridge during the 1960 expedition. Each time he took a different route since there were no fixed ropes and each climber just picked their own way. On his second trip up, he climbed to Camp 7, below the First Step, to join the summit team. The next morning, however, he had altitude sickness and was unable to continue, so he was replaced by Qu Yinhua, who had been planning to wait at the camp for the summit climbers to return. So, Qu Yinhua went up and Xu Jing descended, picking his route down through the rocky terrain at the east end of the Yellow Band. As he told us the story of his descent, Xu Jing suddenly put his arms to his side and took a ridged posture. A conversation in Chinese followed, and then finally, translated into English, we heard his story of finding a body at about 8300m, facing up, on its back, wrapped in a sleeping bag.

It was a remarkable moment that I will remember forever. I showed the Chinese climbers a photo of the area, with the location of Mallory's body marked, at which time Xu Jing turned and asked "but where is Irvine?" Simultaneously, all of us looked at each other and realized we had the answer. Back in 1960, there were only two dead climbers high on Everest, and Mallory had been found at 8155m. The only other dead climber up there was Andrew Irvine. For more on this, Jochen Hemmleb did a fantastic job describing the '60 and '75 Chinese climbs in Detectives on Everest. Mark Synnott's book The Third Pole also does some nice detective work trying to piece together what ultimately happened to Andrew Irvine and the famous camera, speculating that the Chinese eventually recovered both. Will we ever know for sure? Probably not, but that just makes the story more tantalizing!



Items recovered from the 1933 British expedition High Camp at 8380m

We went back to the North Side one more time, in 2004, to continue the search for Irvine. On this trip Jake Norton and Dave Hahn ascended into the prime search area above the Yellow Band, but unfortunately, the snowy conditions that year were not very conducive to searching, so the discovery of Andrew Irvine eluded our best efforts.

It has been said that one person's garbage is another person's treasure. Ironically, the future prospects for doing research on Mt. Everest are dwindling, in large part due to the increasing cleanup efforts on the mountain. Most of the old oxygen cylinders and interesting pieces of gear from the past have already been found, and large amounts of historic items have been disposed of as litter and garbage. It is good to have a cleaner mountain to climb, but hopefully, there are still some surprises out there to be recovered by watchful mountaineers. Keep your eyes open!

Eric has been a professional mountain guide since 1973 and has personally conducted over 100 major expeditions around the globe, including over 30 to the Himalayas. Eric is the owner of International Mountain Guides, LLC and directs the company's Himalayan Programs. A native of Washington State, he currently resides in Ashford, at the base of Mount Rainier.

Scanned with CamScanner

The First Attempt on Mount Everest



✍ *Mick Conefrey*

The 1922 expedition changed the lives of the Sherpa people irrevocably making them famous around the world and sewing the seed of the Nepali climbing industry that is so important today. As for the key British climbers, they were bruised and bloodied, but now more convinced that Everest could be climbed.

The story of Britain's involvement with Everest began in the summer of 1856 when Andrew Waugh, the Surveyor General of India, announced that his department had discovered the highest mountain in the world. Known initially as Peak XV, it had taken five years of painstaking calculations to confirm its height at 29,002 ft. Waugh ignored the usual practice of retaining local names, Sagamartha in Nepal and Chomolungma in Tibet, and instead named it after his predecessor, George Everest.

He and his colleagues did not even consider that one day Mount Everest might be climbed, but before long British climbers had decided that Everest was the world's greatest challenge. The first problem was political. Everest lay on the border of Nepal and Tibet, and both countries refused to let any outsiders in. It wasn't until 1920 that British diplomats finally secured permission from the Dalai Lama to send two expeditions via Tibet: the first a reconnaissance and the second a full-scale attempt.

Charles Howard Bury was appointed overall leader, with George Mallory taking a prominent role in the climbing team. Other members had respectable Alpine records, but only one person had previously visited the Himalayas. They trekked through Sikkim in the early summer of 1921 and then crossed the border into Tibet. In front of them lay mile after mile of arid plains, the temperature alternating from burning hot mornings to freezing cold afternoons.



On the way to Camp III By John BuppatistLuccius Noel 1922

When they reached the mountain, Mallory and his climbing partner Bullock systematically explored the various approaches from the North and the East while the others gathered data for the first map of Everest. When after several days of work, Mallory peered over a high pass southwards into Nepali territory and saw the Khumbu glacier below, he thought it looked even more impossible than anything on the Tibetan side. Eventually, he led a party to the top of the North Col, the narrow strip at 22,000 that connected Everest to nearby Changtse, but he went no further. After four months in the field, the members of the British team were exhausted but happy with what they had achieved. They had mapped the northern approach to Everest and found a possible route to the summit via the North and North East Ridge. They returned home, still doubtful that they could climb Everest but keen to make a proper attempt in 1922.

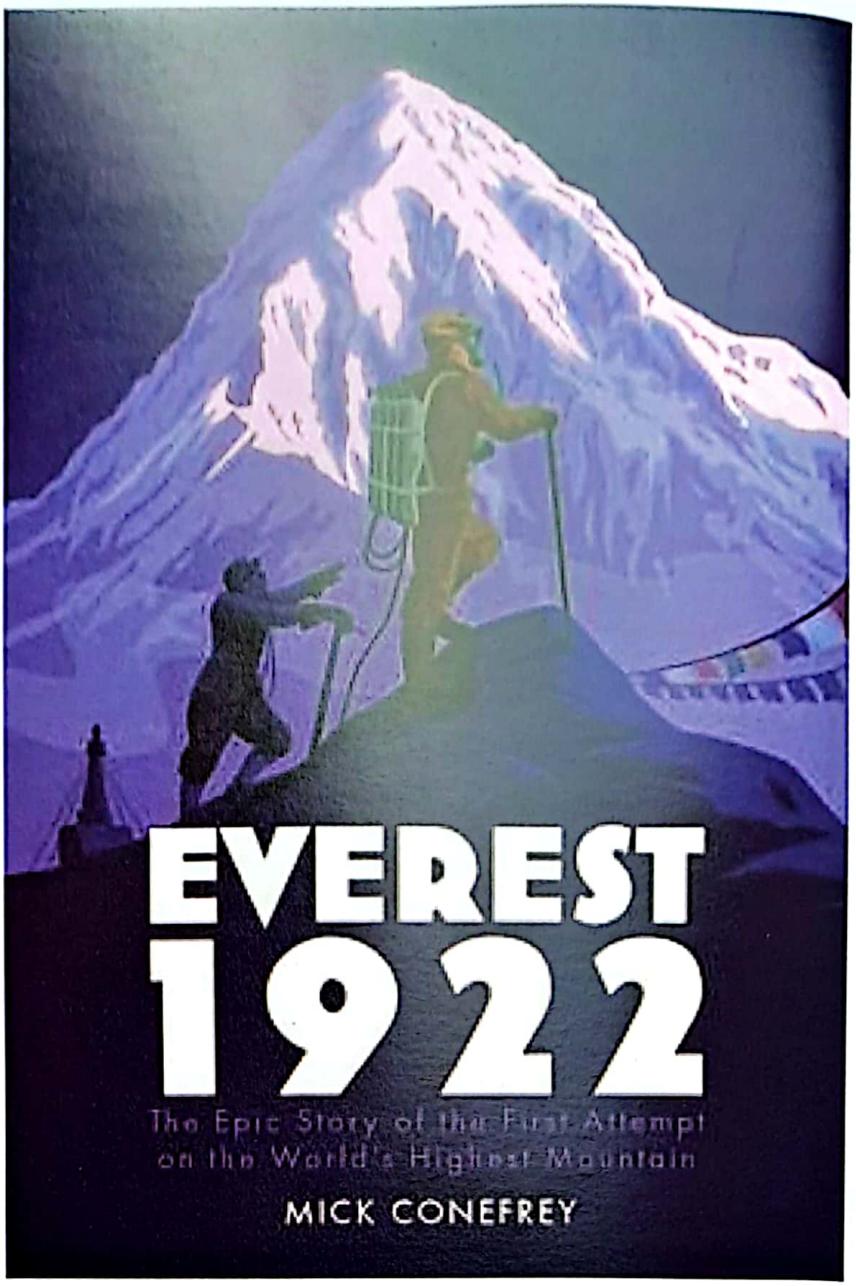
This time General Charles Bruce was in charge. He insisted on a much stronger team with Mallory joined by Edward Norton, Howard Somervell and George Finch, an Australian scientist who was both a skilful and daring mountaineer and an enthusiast for oxygen. In Darjeeling Bruce recruited a very strong team of Bhotias and Sherpas hand-picking 75 men.

They set off in late March and after a month-long trek, reached the Rongbuk Valley at the beginning of May. Bruce set up base camp on a windswept patch of gravel at 16,500 ft. There was plenty of water nearby, but for the first few weeks, most of it was frozen solid. Unlike the previous year when they had spent weeks examining different sides of the mountain, this time they had a single target: the North Col and then the North Ridge.

It took two weeks to establish three camps on the glacier, each with its own cook and porter shelters, but finally, they were ready. On May 13th, Mallory and Somervell climbed the steep slope leading up to the Col, supported by one Sherpa. A week later, after the Sherpas had carried up sufficient stores, George Mallory was ready for an attempt on the summit. At 5.00 a.m., as soon as the sun hit the edge of his tent, he rousted the others. If everything went according to plan, he and three other climbers would leave their camp on the North Col and keep going until 27,000 ft, just 2000 ft short of the summit. The next day, they would make a final dash.

After 1200 ft., they stopped to put on all their spare clothing, but it didn't amount to much. They carried on going, but with the weather deteriorating, they were forced to stop at 25,000 ft. The only place to pitch their tent was two steeply sloping slabs of rock, so no one had a comfortable night. The next morning they were up early, plodding slowly up the North Ridge.

By 2.15 p.m. they had reached 26,800 ft and smashed Duke of Abruzzi's altitude record on K2, but when Mallory announced that it was time to retreat, no one argued. They had left a sick member in a tent below and knew that if they carried on they would not be able to bring him down. Weeks later, when the story of their 'glorious failure' was told in the Times of London, it was described as 'one of the greatest feats of sheer human endurance ever recorded', but there was still over 2200 ft left to go.



Mick Confery's book cover

The second attempt was led by George Finch, accompanied by Geoffrey Bruce and Corporal Tejbir Bura, a Gurkha soldier. Assisted by several Sherpas, they managed to set up a small camp at 26,000ft, but the weather deteriorated, and they found themselves pinned down by a raging storm. The wind was so bad that Finch was afraid it would tear their tent clean off Everest, but they stayed put and two days later made the second attempt on the summit.

Tejbir heroically carried several extra oxygen cylinders up the ridge until he could go no further, leaving Finch and Bruce to make a final

push. Within an hour, they had passed Mallory's high point before they traversed out onto the North Face. At around 27,300 ft., they had to stop when Bruce's oxygen set developed a problem. Finch managed to repair it, but he knew that even to climb another 500 ft was to risk not being able to return. When he spotted ominously dark clouds on the horizon, he made his decision to retreat.

Back at Base Camp, the team doctor Tom Longstaff declared that no one apart from Somervell was fit to continue, but Mallory was desperate to have another crack at the summit, this time joining forces with Finch and climbing on oxygen. On June 3, he left camp for the third time, heading back up the Rongbuk Glacier towards the North Col.

Finch reluctantly turned back, but Mallory and the others kept going. On the morning of June 7, they began their ascent: three British climbers, Mallory, Somervell and Crawford, and thirteen heavily laden Sherpa and Bhotia porters. For an hour, they plodded steadily upwards toward the North Col until suddenly Mallory heard a sharp crack followed by what sounded like an explosion. He was thrown onto his back and engulfed in snow and soon felt himself sliding downwards to what would undoubtedly be his death. Remarkably, he and the other British climbers somehow managed to swim to the surface.

The first group of porters also emerged from the snow but the avalanche carried them and the others towards a forty feet high ice cliff. Nine of the porters went over, falling straight into a wide crevasse. When Mallory and Somervell reached them, they spotted a rope and began to dig frantically. Amazingly they managed to rescue two men, but seven others perished. Somervell wrote in his diary that night: "Why oh why could not one of us Britishers have shared their fate? I would gladly at that moment have been lying there dead in the snow, if only to give those fine chaps who had survived the feeling that we shared their loss, as we had indeed shared the risk."



A film poster about 1922 expedition

The 1922 expedition changed the lives of the Sherpa people irrevocably making them famous around the world and sewing the seed of the Nepali climbing industry that is so important today. As for the key British climbers, they were bruised and bloodied, but now more convinced that Everest could be climbed.

Two years later, they were back, hoping that with an even bigger climbing team, they would finish the job. General Bruce and his deputy, Edward Norton, were determined to get the best possible equipment and build on the lessons of the first attempt. They ordered bespoke clothing for both the climbers and the Sherpas, commissioned a new type of 'roarer' portable cooker and a dedicated mess tent and furnished it with portable tables and chairs. Mallory would again play a prominent role, but after an argument with the organisers, Finch stayed at home.

By late March, the new team had arrived in India and was ready to set off for Tibet. Once again, they had hired a large contingent of Sherpa and Bhotias, many were veterans of the 1922 expedition and two, to everyone's surprise, were survivors of the avalanche. Issued with new boots and windproof clothing, the Sherpas caught the mood of confidence that surrounded the team as they marched off on the long trek into Tibet.

Bruce wanted to reach Base Camp before the end of March and have more climbing time before the Monsoon hit, but he came down with an attack of malaria and had to turn back. Norton took over, vowing to work closely with Mallory. They spent hours together, trying to hammer out a plan of attack so that they wouldn't lose time on the mountain.

On April 29th, they arrived at

Base Camp and celebrated with champagne and a huge meal. The second battle for Everest had begun, but this time it was much harder, with appalling weather and temperatures that dropped as low as -39 centigrade. As deadlines passed, Norton and Mallory's carefully plotted plan was continually modified, with the first summit attempt delayed until the morning of June 2. George Mallory set off from the North Col with Geoffrey Bruce and eight porters, aiming to set up two further camps, at 25,000 and 27,000 ft. Almost immediately, they were hit by the ferocious North West Wind; it was so powerful it almost knocked Mallory over.

By the time they reached 25,000 ft, four of their Sherpa porters were so exhausted that they had to abandon their loads. Bruce and the sirdar, Lobsang, made two extra carries to bring all the gear up, but the effort left them both exhausted. Mallory realised that it was hopeless: even if they could set up another camp, they would not have the strength for their attempt on the following day. Once again he turned back, 1000 ft below his high point in 1922.

All the expedition's hopes now rested on the second pair, Norton and Somervell and their six Sherpas. Three of them- Semchumbi, Llakhpa Chedi and Narby Yishe - were hand-picked 'Tigers' who Norton hoped would be able to go very high. He wasn't wrong. While Mallory and Bruce retreated to the North Col, Norton's party pushed on up the North Ridge, fighting their way up 26,800 and setting a new world record altitude for the highest camp. Norton then sent the Sherpas down with a note praising their achievement and asking if they should be spared from any further work.

Mallory had always advocated climbing the Northeast ridge directly, but the next morning Norton decided to traverse across onto the huge North Face. At 27,500 ft., he began seeing double, but his partner Somervell was in even worse shape, eventually sitting down to allow Norton to carry on alone. Amazingly, Norton reached 28,100, the same altitude as K2 and Kangchenjunga, before he was forced to stop and turn back. There was just 1000 ft to go, but Norton knew that he would never make it.

When he and Somervell finally made it back to the North Col, they found Mallory who had come up with Andrew Irvine, the youngest member of the team, aiming to stage a third attempt, this time climbing on oxygen. Norton wasn't so sure this was a good idea, but he was in no position to argue. Having left his goggles off for much of the day, he was crippled with snow blindness. For the second year in a row, Mallory was going to push his luck as far as it would go.

Two days later, on June 6, at around 8.30 a.m., Mallory and Irvine left the North Col with 8 porters, a day's worth of food and nine oxygen cylinders. Mallory's plan was simple: set up two more camps and then strike out for the summit. 24 hours later, he sent back a note telling the expedition cameraman, John Noel, to look out for him on the summit ridge on the morning of June 8.

The sky was so cloudy that Noel



Advert for the sponsors of Everest 1922

saw and photographed nothing, but just before 1.00 pm, another climber, Noel Odell, who was higher up, saw two specks on the skyline, seeming to climb the Second Step, a prominent rock feature just below the summit. They were never seen again. Despite several journeys up and down the mountain by Odell, there was no sign of them.

Two days later, with monsoon clouds choking the horizon, Norton called a halt to the expedition. He was sure that Mallory and Irvine must have died in an accident and did not want to risk anyone else's life trying to find their bodies. He sent a coded telegram to send back to the Times in London: "Mallory Irvine Nove remainder Alcedo". Mallory and Irvine Killed, the remainder are well."

Back in Britain Mallory and Irvine were treated as national heroes, but one big question remained unanswered: how and where had they died? On the way up or on the way down? Norton wrote in his

Scanned with CamScanner

final despatch for the Times "Who will ever know?" but Mallory's friends were convinced that he had reached the top.

For Mallory's wife Ruth, widowed at the age of 33 and with three children to look after, it was unimportant. "It was his life that I so admired," she wrote, not his achievements. Irvine's family were equally distraught to lose their 22-year-old son, who hadn't even finished university. As for another British attempt, as the months went by, it began to look increasingly unlikely. The Tibetan authorities had been angered by an authorised trip that one member, De Vere Hazard, had made at the end of the expedition. Furthermore, when news filtered back of the first showings of the official film, they became even more hostile. Cameraman John Noel had included shots of Tibetan women eating lice out of their children's hair. In addition, without official permission, they had brought back to London a group of Tibetan monks who danced and played sacred music at film performances. When British diplomats asked the Dalai Lama for permission to return in 1925, their request was emphatically turned down. No British team would be allowed back in for another 9 years.

In the 1930s, five more British teams went out to Tibet, but none succeeded in getting higher than Norton had in 1924. There were no clues as to the fate of Mallory and Irvine, apart from an ice-axe found in 1933 just below the North Ridge. Then when climbing recommenced after the Second World War, Tibet was invaded by China. No further attempts on Everest were permitted by foreign climbers but in 1960 a Tibetan-Chinese team reached the summit via the North East Ridge. They weren't the first to reach the summit though. That honour went to Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay, who on the 29th May 1953, hauled themselves up the final summit mound and became the first men to stand on top of Everest, climbing from a Base Camp in Nepal. After pausing to take a photograph of Tenzing, holding his ice-axe up in triumph, Hillary craned out over the North Ridge and looked down on the route that Mallory and Irvine had planned to take in 1924 but he saw no sign of them. After fifteen minutes, he and Tenzing descended and within a few weeks they were back in Kathmandu, the capital of Nepal, telling their story to the world's press.

Tejbir heroically carried several extra oxygen cylinders up the ridge until he could go no further, leaving Finch and Bruce to make a final push. Within an hour, they had passed Mallory's high point before they traversed out onto the North Face.

The final chapter of this long saga took place in 1999 when a team of American climbers, accompanied by a BBC documentary team headed for Everest. By then it had been climbed many times from both the Tibetan and Nepali sides, and as well as abandoned tents and oxygen sets, there were rumoured to be dozens of corpses on the mountain. The American team had no plans to retrieve any bodies but had gained permission from Irvine's descendants to take tissue samples if their search yielded anything, and hoped that if they found a camera, might be able to process the film which might or might not have a shot taken on the summit.

After just a few days high on the mountain on May 1, the American climber Conrad Anker set out to examine a high terrace that looked promising. The weather was good and the wind had blown much of the surface snow off the rocks. Anker found two bodies almost immediately, but both were dressed in modern clothing. Then he spotted something that initially looked like a white rock in amongst a patch of a much darker screen. He carefully crabbed over and realised that it was the mummified shoulder of a body dressed in tweed and cotton. It was George Mallory.

As news flashed around the world, two members of the team returned with a metal detector to scout the area around the corpse, but though they found a broken wristwatch, there was still no sign of any camera. Before they left, another climber found a 1924 oxygen cylinder tucked between some rocks on the Northeast ridge, close to the site where the ice-axe had been found many years earlier.

Today, 100 years later, the mystery remains. Did Mallory and Irvine reach the summit or did they die before they reached the top? Perhaps we will never know the answer, but the bravery of those British climbers and the Sherpas and Bhotias who played such an important role in those pioneering expeditions remains unparalleled.

Mick Conefrey is an award-winning documentary maker and writer. His TV credits include Mountain Men and Icemen for BBC TV and the BBC's 50th-anniversary film for the first ascent of Everest. His books include Everest 1953 and The Ghosts of K2 and the Last Great Mountain.. He lives in Oxford.

Tejbir Bura:The Unsung Hero of the Nation

Tejbir's attempt to climb Everest has been forgotten, with no mention of it anywhere. After the expedition, Tejbir returned to his old 6th Gurkha Rifle unit. There is no further information about him has been discovered. It is unknown whether he returned to Nepal later in life or settled in India. His descendants must be out there, and his family might have information about him.



✍ **Sunil Ulak**

Tejbir Bura's name is not widely recognized, as the history of ordinary people, particularly in mountaineering, is often overlooked. Foreign climbers leading expeditions typically pay little attention to the contributions of their local team members. Millions of Nepalese have played significant roles in numerous successful and unsuccessful climbing attempts, yet their names are rarely mentioned in mountaineering history. Only a few Sherpas or team members who make a strong impression on their leaders gain popularity.



Tejbir Bura

One such unsung hero is Tejbir Bura. Although he never reached the summit of Mount Everest, he managed to climb up to an impressive altitude of 8,000 meters about a hundred years ago. Despite the lack of recognition at the time, Tejbir Bura later received international acclaim. The World Olympic Committee announced that all participants of the 1922 Mount Everest expedition would be awarded gold medals at the first Winter Olympic Games in 1924, held in Chamonix, France. This was in recognition of mountaineering, or Alpinism, as a challenging sport.

Initially, only the British and Australian climbers who participated in the expedition received gold medals. However, the Olympic Committee later decided to award gold medals to Tejbir Bura and seven Sherpa porters who tragically lost their lives during the expedition.

In this way, the World Olympic Committee acknowledged Tejbir Bura's efforts. Although the medal did not reach Tejbir's neck during his lifetime, it is now displayed at the Gurkha Museum in Winchester, which commemorates the bravery of British Gurkhas. Additionally, the Olympic Committee's historical records list his name among the gold medal winners, proudly representing Nepal. This achievement is a significant part of Nepal's proud history.

Tejbir Budha served as a Lance Naik in the Second Battalion of the 6th Gurkha Rifles of the British Army in India and his military number was 6449, L/NK. When anglicized, his name was written as Tejbir Bura. While there is no mention of his address in Nepal, unconfirmed information suggests that he was born in Okhaldhunga, eastern Nepal. From there, he was recruited as a soldier in the British army in India.

The British government confirmed Mount Everest as the highest peak in 1856, and the Alpine Club was formed in 1857. Since then, Britain made preparations to attempt climbing Mount Everest. As the highest peak is in Nepal and the Nepalese government did not permit any activity there, the

Alpine Club, under the British government, supported various climbing efforts. In 1883, an attempt was made to climb Mount Kabru, south of Kanchenjunga, with W.W. Graham, Emil Bose, and Ulrich Kaufmann reaching a height of 24,000 feet (7,000 meters).

In 1891, C.G. Bruce took Gurkha soldier Parbir Thapa to Switzerland to gain high-altitude mountaineering experience. Later, in 1892, the team that went to climb Mount K2 in the Karakoram Ice Range reached 23,000 feet (6,000 meters) on August 25, 1892. Lance Naik Amar Singh Thapa and Lance Naik Karbir Budhathoki were also in the Alps Mountain Range climbing with Martin Conway. According to Martin Conway's book "The Alps from End to End," the team crossed all 21 peaks and 29 valleys of the Alps, starting the thousand-mile journey on June 1, 1894, and completing it in three months.

As it was seen that Gurkhas could climb mountains, Captain Charles Bruce took some Gorkhalis with him on climbing expeditions. With the help of Lord Rawlinson, the then-Indian commander, Captain Charles Bruce, who was the commander of the second battalion of the 6th Gurkha Rifles, was to lead the climb. He suggested the names of five Gurkha soldiers from his battalion, but only Tejbir Bura was selected. Tejbir and the Sherpa team found it easy to work with Commander Charles Bush, who spoke Nepali and Tibetan languages fluently. On February 15, 1921, Tejbir Bura was selected to climb Everest after an interview and reached Darjeeling on March 1st with his officers and colleagues. Mr. Weatherall, the climbing agent in Darjeeling, had also prepared a team of 150 Bhotia and Sherpa porters, along with the kitchen staff.

Before leaving Darjeeling, the Lamas of the monasteries and the Pandits of the Hindu temples there worshipped and blessed them. After completing all the preparations, the team left for Kalimpong by train from Darjeeling on March 26. From there, the journey had to be made by walking towards Tibet via Sikkim. Permission was sought from the Dalai Lama to travel to Tibet, with the condition that they follow the laws of the country and not kill any animals or birds while on the road.

In 2012, British mountaineer Kenton Cool, who received the gold medal for difficult mountain climbing in the 1924 Olympic Games on the summit of Mount Everest, dedicated the gold medal they received to the top of Mount Everest in memory of the seven Sherpas who lost their lives in the same climb.

Preparations for the 1922 Ascent

In 1922, the head of the climbing plan, Lieut. Col. C.K. Howard spoke about the entire preparation for climbing Mount Everest. The climbing team leader was Army Brigadier Charles Granville Bruce, and other members included Lt. Col. Edward Lisle Strutt, George Mallory (climber), George Ingle Finch (climber), Henry Treise Morshead (climber), Major Edward Felix Norton (climber), Dr. Tom George Longstaff (team doctor),



The Assault on Mt. Everest, 1922 by Charles G. Bruce

Dr. Howard Somervell (climber and doctor), Dr. Arthur Wakefield (climber and doctor), John Noel (photographer and filmmaker), Geoffrey Bruce (interpreter), Major Charles John Morris (interpreter), and Colin Grant Crawford (interpreter). The team also had over 150 porters, most of whom were Sherpas. A few other trusted porters, including Tejbir Bura, were part of the team as well.

The team took state-of-the-art cameras to document the entire climbing activity. They carried three movie cameras, two panorama cameras, four sheet cameras, one stereo camera, and five pocket cameras, which were called vest pocket Kodaks at that time. Photographer John Noel used a black tent as a darkroom.

After the Nepalese government, led by Chanda Samsher, did not permit the climbers to ascend Mount Everest from the Nepalese side, the expedition team sought permission from the Tibetan religious leader, the Dalai Lama. With permission granted, the team planned to enter Tibet from Darjeeling/Sikkim through the Chumbi Valley and reach Tingri on the Tibetan road, then attempt to climb Mount Everest from the northern side. By the end of March 1922, all the team members had reached Darjeeling. On March 26, most of them traveled by train to the Tibetan border in Sikkim. Crawford and Finch stayed behind with some porters, awaiting oxygen bottles and essential supplies from Calcutta. The team reached Kampa Zhong on April 11 and waited there for three days to meet Crawford and Finch. On May 1, all team members reached the northern base camp of Mount Everest.

The team set up camps at different locations and progressed to the fourth camp. At 8:45 a.m. on May 19, Mallory, Somervell, Norton, and Morshead, along with nine porters, set out for the third camp without oxygen. They pitched their tents at 1:00 p.m. and decided to stay the night. The following day, only five porters were ready to proceed. The team of climbers and porters advanced, reaching a height of about 25,000 feet before pitching their tents. They could not progress further and named the site Camp 5. Over the next few days, they repeatedly attempted to advance but failed and returned to Camp 5.



Gold Medal at Gurkha Museum, Winchester

On the morning of May 27, George Finch, Geoffrey Bruce, and Nepali porter Tejbir Bura moved ahead. Tejbir lacked clothing to withstand the cold but continued to climb. With his help, the team reached a height of 26,000 feet for the first time in history. However, when they reached 27,235 feet, Geoffrey Bruce's oxygen cylinder malfunctioned. Finch turned back to help Bruce, while Tejbir continued to climb, probably reaching a height of 27,500 feet. Unable to cope with the cold due to inadequate clothing, Tejbir also returned. The three climbers reunited at Camp 3 about an hour and a half later.

The team was running out of food and oxygen, but on the 27th, John Macdonald arrived with new porters, oxygen, and food, providing much-needed relief. As the weather worsened, they decided to stay at Camp III for a few days. After the weather improved, they planned to attempt the climb again on June 7. However, on June 3, while approaching Camp 4 with some porters, they heard a loud, ominous noise, as if ammunition had exploded nearby. A sudden avalanche ensued, causing chaos. The team desperately tried to escape, and in the aftermath, they discovered that seven Sherpa porters - Norbu Sherpa, Lhakpa Sherpa, Pasang Sherpa, Pema Sherpa, Dorje Sherpa, Temba Sherpa, and Sange Sherpa - had died. The tragedy deeply affected the team, and those who survived decided to abandon the climb and descend.

The 1922 attempt to climb Mount Everest ultimately failed. The surviving team members returned to Darjeeling on August 2 with heavy hearts. On January 25, 1924, Colonel Strutt, representing all the climbers, received a gold medal



Hawaldar Harkabir-Thapa

at the Winter Olympic Games in Chamonix, France. The Olympic Committee awarded gold medals to 13 members of the climbing team: Charles Bruce, Edward Strutt, George Mallory, George Finch, Henry Morshead, Edward Norton, Tom Longstaff, Howard Somervell, Arthur Wakefield, John Noel, Geoffrey Bruce, Charles Morris, and Colin Crawford. The committee also decided to award gold medals to the seven Sherpas who died during the climb, as well as Nepalese Gurkha soldier Tejbir Bura, who played a significant role in the expedition. However, the gold medals were never given to Tejbir Bura or the relatives of the deceased Sherpas.

On the 90th anniversary of the ascent in 2012, British mountaineer Kenton Cool decided to bring the 1924 Olympic gold medal to the summit of Everest in memory of the seven deceased Sherpa porters. Cool eventually located the medal, which was in the possession of Arthur Wakefield's family in Canada. Wakefield's grandson, Charles, handed over the medal, which was securely wrapped in silk inside a wooden box, for Cool's endeavor.

Carrying the gold medal to the summit was no easy task for Cool. A special, watertight, and airtight box was created to protect the medal, which was wrapped in red silk cloth. The box was equipped with GPS and placed in a special bag with a prayer mantra given



Amarsing Thapa

by a Tibetan lama. At 5:45 a.m. (midnight UK time) on May 24, 2012, Cool reached the summit of Mount Everest with the gold medal. He displayed the medal to the world and the invisible souls of the deceased Sherpas, spending about half an hour at the summit with the medal. Cool then returned the medal to Charles Wakefield in Canada.

Ultimately, Tejbir's attempt to climb Everest has been forgotten, with no mention of it anywhere. After the expedition, Tejbir returned to his old 6th Gurkha Rifle unit. There is no further information about him has been discovered. It is unknown whether he returned to Nepal later in life or settled in India. His descendants must be out there, and his family might have information about him.

The Nepali government should search for and honor him posthumously. My efforts to gather information about Tejbir from the Gorkha Museum in Winchester and the Sixth Gurkha Rifle Regiment Association have been unsuccessful. It is disheartening that Tejbir Bura, who managed to reach the highest altitude in the world for the first time, is neglected by the government and remains unmentioned in history. A request is made to the Ministry of Sports to investigate this matter and bring to light the true story of this unsung hero of the nation.



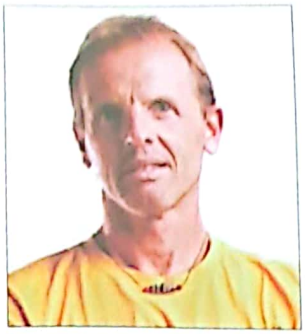
Parbir Thapa

References:

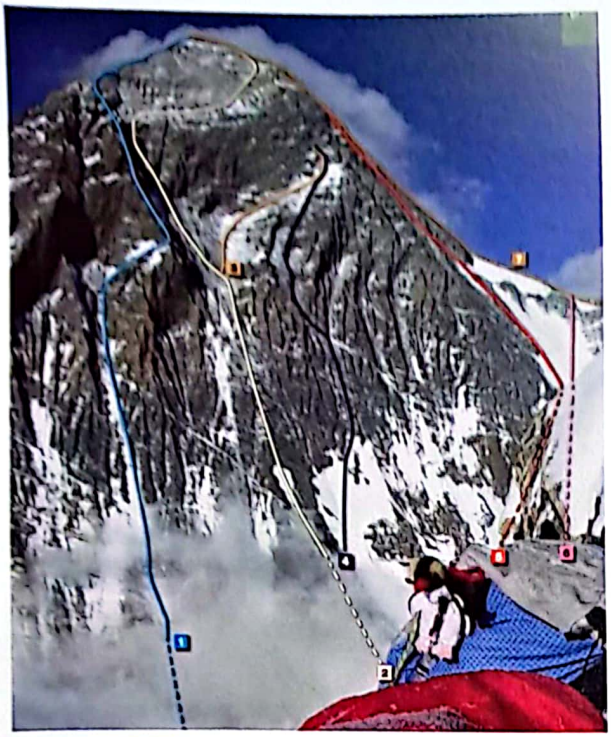
1. Climbing and exploration in the Karakoram-Himalayas by William Martin Conway
2. The Alps from End to End by William Martin Conway
3. The Assault on Mt. Everest, 1922 by Charles G. Bruce
4. 6th QEO Gurkha Rifles Regiment Association
5. 6GR Journal 98

Sunil Ulak, a permanent resident of Pokhara, has a keen interest in collecting vintage photographs. Additionally, he regularly curates exhibitions featuring these old photographs. Sunil is also known for his insightful writings on historical subjects.

Exploring Routes on Mt. Everest



✍ *Simon More*



Everest, South-West face

1 Russian route 1982
2 Route 1975
3 Japanese Attempt 1969, British attempt 1971
4 Czechoslovak attempt 1987
5 Polish route 1980
6 Japanese route 1970
7 Standard route 1953

I have visited Nepal 109 times, exploring this incredible country since 1992, appreciating and observing its culture and nature, and noting the environmental and economic changes with a focus on the great mountains and their associated tourism industry. I have been fortunate enough to climb Mount Everest four times using different styles and routes. In addition to Mount Everest, I have climbed many other mountains without oxygen, often during unconventional seasons like winter, which eventually became my specialty and a



Everest, Lhotse, Nuptse

1 Chinese route 1960
2 Messner Route 1980
3 Australian route 1980
4 Russian route
5 Japanese route 1980
6 Jugoslavian route 1979
7 American route 1963
8 Russian route
9 British route 1975
10 Route 1980
11 Standard route 1953

icon of my mountaineering career.

Being passionate about the history of mountaineering, I decided 18 years ago to write a book dedicated to the ascent routes of all 14 eight-thousanders. The research for this book was challenging but exciting. I began by examining Everest, gathering photographs of all its slopes and those of every other 8,000-meter peak on Earth. I then traced the ascent lines with various colors, described the pioneers, and added the names and years of these important explorations. Everest has ten different ascent routes on the Chinese side and five on the Nepalese side. However, 99.9% of the ascents took place on two itineraries, known as the normal routes of Everest: one in Nepal (first climbed by Hillary and Tenzing in 1953) and the other on the Chinese side (attempted by Mallory and Irvine in 1924 and finally completed by the Chinese in 1960).

The Nepalese route, being more well-known, photographed, and coveted, is the most popular despite being the more dangerous of the two. However, logistics, accessibility, comfort, and the possibility of helicopter rescue have transformed this route into the most frequented. There are still opportunities for new routes and explorations on Everest, and although most expeditions today are commercial and involve oxygen, Sherpas, and kilometers of fixed ropes, there are still untouched sides waiting for someone to pioneer new routes. The West Face of Everest, the North East Face, and the East Face on the Chinese side each have at least two potential ascent routes yet to be completed. Exploration and adventure have not disappeared beneath the guided and assisted tourist offers along the normal routes, but one must have the skill and courage, even to fail, to continue the path of true exploration. Today, mountaineers capable of this are as rare as days without wind on the highest peak on the planet.



Everest, Nepalese summit pyramid from the Nepalese side

1 Standard route (Hillary-Tenzing) 1953



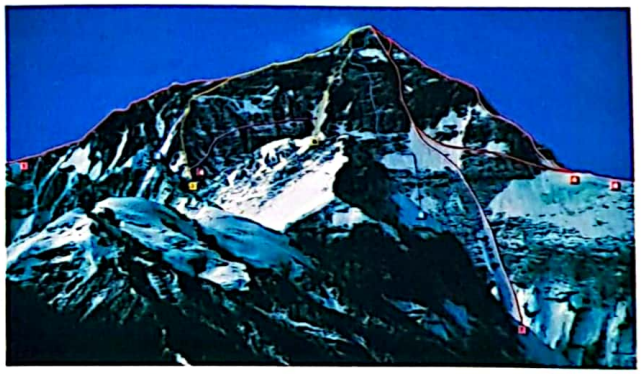
Everest, east face

1 International route (USA-UK-CAN) 1988
2 American route 1983



Everest, North-East face

1 Japanese route 1995
2 Russian route 1996 (Kuznetsov-Kakhanov-Semikolenkov)
3 Chinese standard route 1960



Everest, North face

1 Japanese route 1995
2 Russian route 1996
3 Chinese route 1960
4 Route 1980
5 Australian Route 1980
6 Russian Route 2004
7 Japanese route 1980
8 American Route 1963
9 Jugoslav route 1979

Late Junko Tabei

First Woman to Climb Mt. Everest





Photo by Jaan Kunnap in 1985

Junko Tabei, a Japanese mountaineer, left an indelible mark on the world of mountaineering as the first woman to reach the summit of Mount Everest. Born on September 22, 1939, in Miharu, Fukushima, Japan, Tabei's passion for hiking and mountaineering ignited at a young age, setting her on a path to incredible accomplishments.

In her early twenties, Tabei began climbing mountains, fueled by a deep love for the outdoors and a thirst for adventure. Her enthusiasm and determination propelled her to new heights, both literally and metaphorically. As her passion grew, she realized the need for a space that would empower women to explore the world of mountaineering. In 1969, Tabei established the Joshi-Tohan Club (Women's Mountaineering Club) of Japan, becoming the founder of the country's first mountaineering club exclusively for women.

Under Tabei's leadership, the Joshi-Tohan Club of Japan embarked on numerous expeditions that captured the world's attention. One such expedition, in 1970, achieved a groundbreaking feat—an all-women ascent of Mount Annapurna III in Nepal. The successful summit not only demonstrated the prowess and resilience of the women involved but also served as an inspiration for aspiring female mountaineers worldwide.

However, Tabei's most significant achievement was yet to come. In 1975, she led an audacious all-women expedition to conquer the daunting heights of Mount Everest. Undeterred by the mountain's formidable challenges and the prevailing gender norms of the time, Tabei and her team embarked on a historic journey. Despite the skepticism they encountered, their unwavering determination prevailed. On May 16, 1975, Junko Tabei etched her name in history as she became the first woman to summit Mount Everest.

Tabei's triumphant ascent of Everest was not only a personal victory but a resounding message of empowerment for women around the world. Her feat shattered the notion that mountaineering was an exclusively male domain, opening doors for countless women to pursue their dreams in the face of adversity. Tabei's bravery, perseverance, and unwavering spirit became a beacon of hope and a catalyst for change in the realm of mountaineering.

Beyond Everest, Tabei's thirst for adventure remained unquenched. She embarked on a relentless pursuit of new challenges and accomplishments. Notably, she became the first woman to conquer the Seven Summits, a feat that involves scaling the highest peak on each of the seven continents. Her remarkable achievement further solidified her status as a pioneer in the world of mountaineering.

Tabei's impact extended beyond her personal achievements. Through her books and public appearances, she shared her experiences, offering insights into the challenges and triumphs of a life dedicated to scaling mountains. Additionally, she founded the Himalayan Adventure Trust of Japan in 2001, an organization focused on promoting mountaineering and environmental conservation. Tabei's unwavering commitment to her craft and her dedication to preserving the natural wonders she cherished demonstrated her deep respect for the mountains and the planet.

On October 20, 2016, Junko Tabei passed away at the age of 77, leaving behind a legacy that will continue to inspire generations. Her pioneering spirit, unwavering determination, and ability to break barriers continue to resonate with individuals worldwide. Tabei's story serves as a powerful reminder that with courage, perseverance, and an unwavering belief in oneself, one can overcome any obstacle.

Late Pasang Lhamu Sherpa

First Nepali Woman to Summit Mt. Everest

Ganga Devi Gurung



Illustration: Anup Tamu

On April 22, 1993, Pasang Lhamu Sherpa etched her name in history as the first Nepali woman to summit Mount Everest and the 17th woman worldwide to achieve this feat. Her triumphant ascent on her fourth attempt was a testament to her unwavering determination, defying gender stereotypes in a domain largely dominated by men, both globally and within Nepali society, where women were often confined to traditional homemaking roles.

Pasang was born on December 10, 1961, in the Solukhumbu district, nestled in the shadows of Everest, to her mother Ang Daki Sherpa, and father Phurba Kitar Sherpa. During her upbringing, she was encouraged to remain at home, assisting with household chores and tending to the family's farm. However, her passion for mountaineering became apparent at the tender age of 14 when she eagerly wanted to join her father during his mountaineering expeditions. It was only after her marriage that she had the opportunity to fully pursue her dreams.

Pasang married Lhakpa Sonam Sherpa on January 12, 1979. At the time, she worked at a hotel along the Everest route, while her husband had already established himself in various roles within mountaineering expeditions. In 1984, the couple established their own trekking agency, Thamserku, named after a mountain that Lhakpa Sonam Sherpa had successfully summited.

By the end of the 1980s, Pasang was a mother to three young children, daughters Dawa Futi Sherpa and Diki Sherpa, and son Namgyal Sherpa. While raising a family, and helping with the family business, she was also making her push into mountaineering with unprecedented determination. In 1989 Pasang successfully summited Mt. Pisang (6091m). In 1990, she climbed Mt. Blanc (4848m). That same year, she embarked on her first Mt Everest (8,850m) attempt, managing to reach 8000m. She continued her training and in 1991 she successfully climbed Yala Peak (5800m) before making two attempts at summiting Everest and managing to reach 8750m and 8500m, respectively.

Ever more determined, Pasang then spent the next two years regrouping, training, fundraising, and organizing for her next Everest attempt.

Following a grand media event



in Kathmandu, specifically orchestrated to convey a resounding message of women's empowerment, Pasang embarked on her highly anticipated Everest expedition in 1993. Determined and driven, she set out on her mission. On April 22, accompanied by fellow mountaineers Sonam Tshering Sherpa, Pemba Dorje Sherpa, Lhakpa Norbu Sherpa, and Dawa Tashi Sherpa, Pasang successfully reached the summit of Everest, standing atop the world's highest peak. However, tragedy struck when the weather unexpectedly turned hostile during their descent. Pasang and Sonam Tshering lost their lives in the challenging conditions. After an arduous search, Pasang's body was eventually found near the South Summit 18 days later, on May 10.

Pasang's untimely death was undoubtedly a tragedy, but the impact of her remarkable achievements continues to resonate as she had envisioned. Her incredible journey has served as an inspiration for women seeking to pursue mountaineering and adventure, with numerous female Everest summiteers from Nepal crediting Pasang as a catalyst for their own aspirations. In a society still predominantly patriarchal, her unwavering determination and courage have become a symbol of women's empowerment, garnering widespread recognition.

To honor her legacy, Pasang has received well-deserved posthumous accolades. King Birendra bestowed upon her the esteemed "Rashtriya Bibhuti" (National Star), making her the first Nepali woman to receive such recognition. In 1996, Jasamba Himal (7350 m) in the Mahalangur Range was renamed Pasang Lhamu Peak as a tribute to her indomitable spirit. Furthermore, the Trisuli-Dunche road (117 km) was aptly renamed the Pasang Lhamu Highway, commemorating her extraordinary achievements. A commemorative postage stamp featuring her image was also issued in her honor.

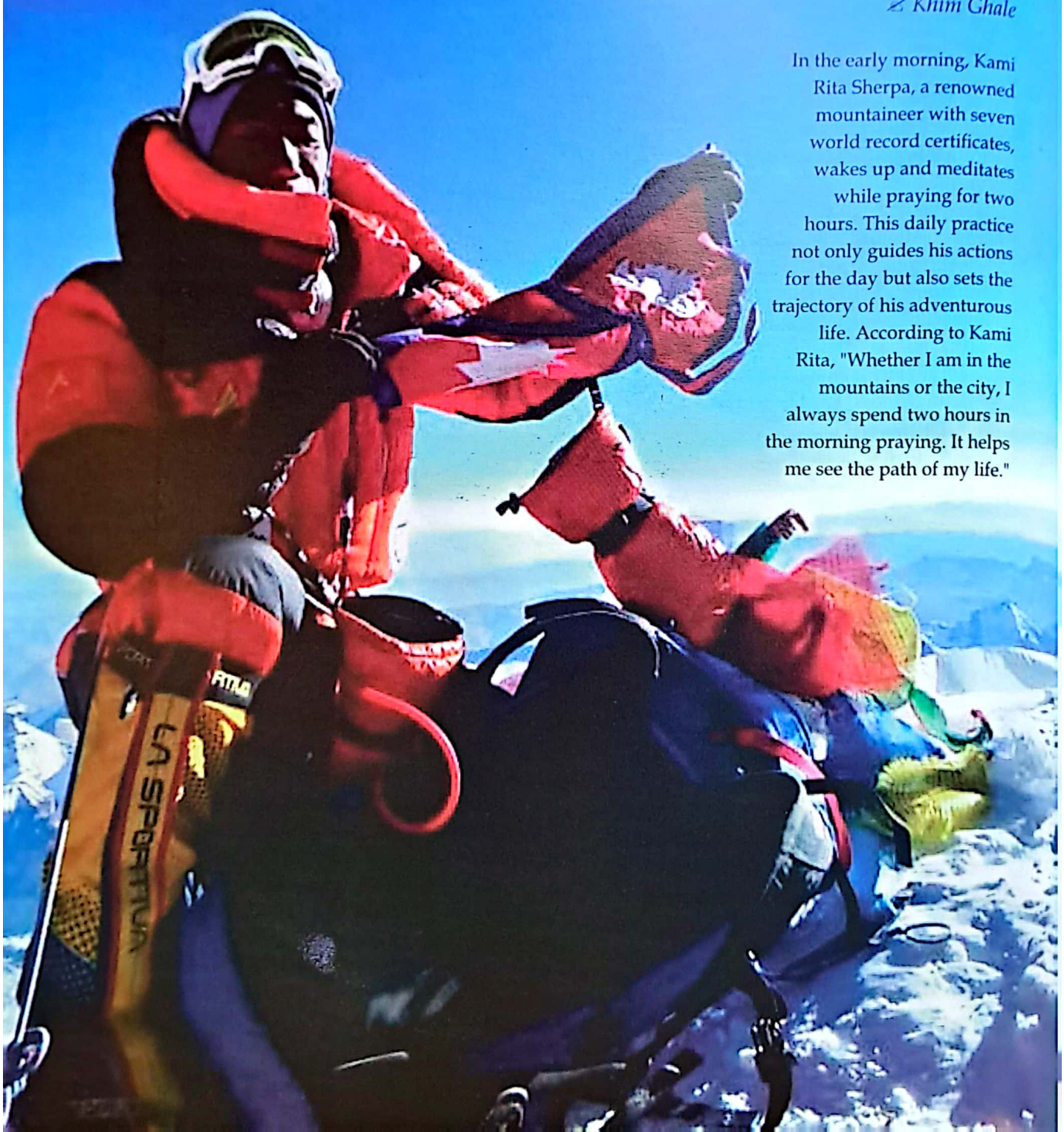
Pasang Lhamu Mountaineering Foundation, a registered non-profit, was established in her memory. The foundation is dedicated to upholding Pasang's interests by empowering women and children from the Himalayan region through education and livelihood support, perpetuating her legacy of inspiration and positive impact.

Kami Rita Sherpa

27-time Mt. Everest Summiteer

Kami Rita's exceptional achievements in climbing the highest peak multiple times and reaching the highest regions repeatedly are highlighted by his impressive world records. When asked about the secret to his accomplishments, he attributed his success to his unwavering concentration on his work.

Khim Ghale



In the early morning, Kami Rita Sherpa, a renowned mountaineer with seven world record certificates, wakes up and meditates while praying for two hours. This daily practice not only guides his actions for the day but also sets the trajectory of his adventurous life. According to Kami Rita, "Whether I am in the mountains or the city, I always spend two hours in the morning praying. It helps me see the path of my life."

In every conversation I have had with Kami Rita, he consistently emphasizes the parallels between mountaineering and warfare. As I write this profile, he has accomplished yet another remarkable feat, having successfully reached the summit of Mount Everest for the 27th time. This extraordinary achievement surpasses his previous record of 26 ascents of the world's highest peak.

Early Life

Kami Rita Sherpa, the world-renowned mountaineer, was born on January 17, 1970, in Thame, a remote village located in the Himalayan district of Solukhumbu. Thame holds historical significance as it is the birthplace of Tenzing Norgay, the first person to summit Mount Everest along with Sir Edmund Hillary on May 29, 1953. Kami Rita's father, Mingma Chhiri Sherpa, was also a member of the first generation of mountain guides in Nepal and worked as a porter on the Tenzing-Hillary Mt. Everest expedition. However, during that time, tourism in Nepal was not well-developed, and being a guide was not as lucrative a profession as it is today.

Growing up, Kami Rita heard stories of mountaineering from his father and started working as a porter at the age of 12 to support his family, which struggled to make ends meet with his father's meager income. He remembers his days, saying, "On one hand, there was no school in the village for me to study, and I had to walk for three hours to reach school. On the other hand, my father's income was insufficient for our family's needs." Despite these challenges, he managed to study up to grade four in the village and also learned Buddhism in the local monastery for a while.

Career and Achievements

After starting as a porter, Kami Rita Sherpa quickly progressed to become an assistant guide. Over time, he worked his way up to become a full guide. In 1992, he had the opportunity to work as an assistant guide on Mount Everest, but he was not permitted to reach the summit. He returned to the South Col of Mt. Everest several times as an assistant guide in 1992 and 1993. At that time, to be eligible to climb Mount Everest, one needed to have already reached the peak of a mountain at least 8000 meters high. This requirement was in place to ensure the safety of both the guide and the climber.

In 1994, at the age of 24, Kami Rita was finally permitted to climb



Mount Everest, and he succeeded. At that time, there were only 5-6 ascents in the spring season and 3-4 in the autumn season, so guides often struggled to find work. Thus, after reaching the summit of Mount Everest, the first thought that came to his mind was, "Now it will be easier for me to find work."

Following his first successful climb of Mount Everest in 1994, his reputation grew, and he was sent to climb the mountain every year by the company he worked for. His team had a good success rate, and except for a few years, he continued to guide climbers up Mount Everest almost every year. His fame began to spread in Nepal and around the world after he climbed Mount Everest for the 21st time in 2017.

Appa Sherpa and Phurba Sherpa held the world record for climbing Mt. Everest 21 times before they retired from climbing. Kami Rita Sherpa was speculated to break the record, which he did the following year by successfully climbing Mt. Everest for the 22nd time, setting a new record.

However, Kami Rita said that he did not know about the world record and did not pursue it. According to him, if he had wanted to work for the record, he would have done it



when he had many opportunities before. "It's not about climbing for oneself, it's about helping others climb, it's about guiding the way," he says. "I must fulfill the dream of a person who has spent millions of rupees rather than climbing for myself."

In 2019, Kami Rita achieved two new world records. He climbed Mt. Everest twice in a month, marking his 24th ascent of the mountain, and set the world record for reaching the region above 8,000 meters a total of 36 times. He had planned to climb Mt. Everest for the 25th time in the spring of 2020 as he would turn 50 that year and then retire from climbing. However, his plans were disrupted due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Initially, Kami Rita had decided to abandon his goal of climbing Mt. Everest for the 25th time due to two reasons. Firstly, all the climbers who were preparing to climb the mountain in the spring of 2020 had postponed their plans to 2021. Secondly, after he had announced his retirement, some climbers expressed their desire to climb because of him, and he felt responsible for them. He stated, "If someone is inspired to climb because of me, I have to climb for them too."



Advice to Young Mountaineers

Kami Rita's exceptional achievements in climbing the highest peak multiple times and reaching the highest regions repeatedly are highlighted by his impressive world records. When asked about the secret to his accomplishments, he attributed his success to his unwavering concentration on his work.

According to Kami Rita, climbing mountains is like going to war, where anything can happen. Climbers usually take out insurance policies to safeguard their families in case of any unforeseen incidents, including severe injuries. "If you're going to the mountains, you have to focus on it. If you start thinking about your home and family, it may affect your chances of success," he explained.

During the off-season, Kami Rita spends time with his family and engages in exercises and training to maintain his physical health and fitness. As the mountaineering season approaches, he meticulously checks and updates his mountaineering gear, from mountain clothes to shoes. If something needs repair, he skillfully handles it himself, or he purchases new gear if necessary.

"When I leave my home to go to work, I focus solely on the task at hand. I do not think about home and family during my expedition," he emphasized. "It's crucial to prepare oneself physically and mentally and stay focused on the work."



Kami Rita also places great emphasis on training for new climbers. He recalls that when he started climbing, there were limited options for formal training, and he received training much later in his career. Nowadays, with the availability of proper training, the risks associated with climbing can be significantly reduced. According to him, it's not just about physical strength, but also the body's ability to adapt to high altitudes, which plays a critical role in mountaineering success.

Moments of Sorrow

Kami Rita is not only renowned for his accomplishments on Mount Everest, but he has also experienced moments of great sorrow and helplessness. According to him, in this profession, sorrowful moments often arise. It is regrettable when climbers he has guided or accompanied are unable to achieve their goals for various reasons. Sometimes, porters abandon the journey midway, leaving the climbers with double the load to carry, which adds to the challenges.

However, the most heartrending moments for Kami Rita occurred in 2014 and 2015 at Mt. Everest. In 2014, an avalanche at Khumbu Icefall claimed the lives of 16 Sherpa guides, including his friends and relatives. Furthermore, in 2015, an earthquake caused the death of 12

individuals at the Mt. Everest base camp. These two incidents had a profound impact on him, and even to this day, when he reaches Khumbu Icefall, the memories of those events disturb him. He expressed a desire to traverse the area without stopping.

Witnessing Historical Changes

Throughout Kami Rita's illustrious career as a mountaineer, he has witnessed numerous changes on Mount Everest. One significant change he has observed is in the environmental landscape. The area where the base camp is currently located used to be covered in ice, and water had to be procured by melting the ice. However, now water can be found flowing naturally in the area, and it takes approximately an hour's walk from the base camp to reach the snowline.

Moreover, Kami Rita has noticed that water is flowing towards the second camp and the Khumbu Icefall below it, and the once-small rock visible towards Nuptse has grown in size. These environmental changes have also made climbing more challenging, as the increased presence of rocks can cause issues with crampons not adhering properly to the surface.

As a result of these changes, adjustments have been made in climbing practices. Unlike in the past when there were no shops for trekking equipment even in Thamel of Kathmandu, now all the necessary climbing gear can be found in Namche. There are now lighter and more comfortable clothing options available, unlike the olden days when climbers had to carry heavy clothing. Equipment has also evolved significantly, and today's weather forecasts are more accurate than ever. Additionally, there are now numerous training centers available for aspiring mountaineers to receive basic knowledge and training before embarking on their mountain expeditions.

Fearing Future

According to Kami Rita, achieving personal fame and recognition through climbing is not only a personal accomplishment but also promotes the nation and the tourism sector on the international stage. Climbers work hard for the country, but the government has not adequately looked after them, especially those renowned climbers who are unable to continue working. He believes that the government should provide respectable roles for these individuals in recognition of their contributions.

Kami Rita emphasizes that guides play a crucial role in the tourism sector. Some tourists come to climb mountains specifically because of the guides. Ignoring experienced guides and formulating new tourism policies without considering their expertise will not yield the desired results. Calling guides to meetings without proper remuneration and merely asking questions is ineffective. He has witnessed hundreds of experienced mountain guides leaving the country because they do not see a secure future in their homeland. Living in a place where their future is uncertain is not desirable, and as a result, there has been a dearth of competent guides in the field of Nepali mountaineering.

Kami Rita further adds that good and experienced guides have left Nepal and are living abroad, and the new generation of guides is unwilling to face similar uncertainties. In the past, guides used to seek out jobs, but now it is the company operators who are actively searching for skilled guides. Despite receiving offers from foreigners to settle abroad, Kami Rita has rejected them. However, he acknowledges that not everyone can afford to do so. Therefore, he emphasizes that the government must pay attention to the welfare and social security of the guides to safeguard and promote mountaineering, which serves as the backbone of tourism in Nepal.



Sanu Sherpa

Double Eight-Thousanders Summiteer

He claimed that he never experienced difficulties while climbing peaks and never suffered from altitude sicknesses, such as nausea, giddiness, or dizziness, unlike many of his friends.



✍ Hit Kham

This incident dates back to 2005 when Sanu Sherpa, who was 31 years old at the time and had no formal education, made a living by rearing yaks, sheep, and cultivating potatoes in the remote village of Makalu in Sakhuwasabha. One day, he decided to travel to the capital city of Kathmandu to work and earn some money to make life easier for his wife and children, and to buy them new clothes.

Sanu Sherpa is now a world-famous climber and holder of multiple world records. He asked his wife, Mrs. Dicky Sherpa, to lend him one thousand rupees for his expenses to go to Kathmandu and find a job. Mrs. Dicky borrowed one thousand and five hundred rupees from a villager and gave Sanu, but he gave five hundred rupees back to his wife for household expenses before leaving the house with one thousand rupees in his pocket.

He was inspired by his elders and neighbors who left the village to work as trekking porters and returned home with money, wearing new boots and clothes. Another source of inspiration for him was the expedition guides who wore fancy clothes and boots while preparing for expeditions to Makalu, the fifth-highest peak in the world (8,481 meters). Sanu had occasionally joined the team as a porter from the village.

Eighteen years back, Sanu left his village dreaming to make the lives of his family easier. Today he is not just an attraction to international brands but also an inspiration and role model for many people who want to pursue or continue mountaineering as a profession.

Last year, Sanu Sherpa set an unprecedented record in the field of mountaineering by successfully climbing all 14 mountains above 8000 meters twice. Since then, his workload has increased significantly. He receives numerous calls from abroad to attend the events and inquiries from mountaineers who want to climb the mountains. However, he does not believe it is necessary to publicize his achievements extensively. "It's natural to be happy when a task is completed, but I didn't set out to break records. If I had focused on setting records, I would have done it multiple times. These achievements happen as I go about my work, so I don't feel the need to publicize them much," says Sanu innocently.



Childhood and Life in Village

Sanu was born on 14th April 1975 in a remote village in Sankhuwasabha, Makalu-1. His father, Galzan, was a poor farmer who earned a living by rearing yaks and sheep in a remote hill village, far from Kathmandu. Due to the language barrier, Sanu did not have the opportunity to go to school as the teachers in the local school did not speak the Sherpa language, and it was challenging for Sherpa students to understand the Nepali language spoken by the teachers in those days.

He helped his family from a young age by working on farmland and herding yaks and sheep. At the age of 17, he got married to Dicky. They lived as an ordinary family in the same remote village, where they had three daughters and one son. However, it was challenging to provide enough clothes and food for his wife and children in that isolated area. Although he sometimes had the opportunity to carry loads with a group going to climb Mt. Makalu from their village, it was not sufficient.

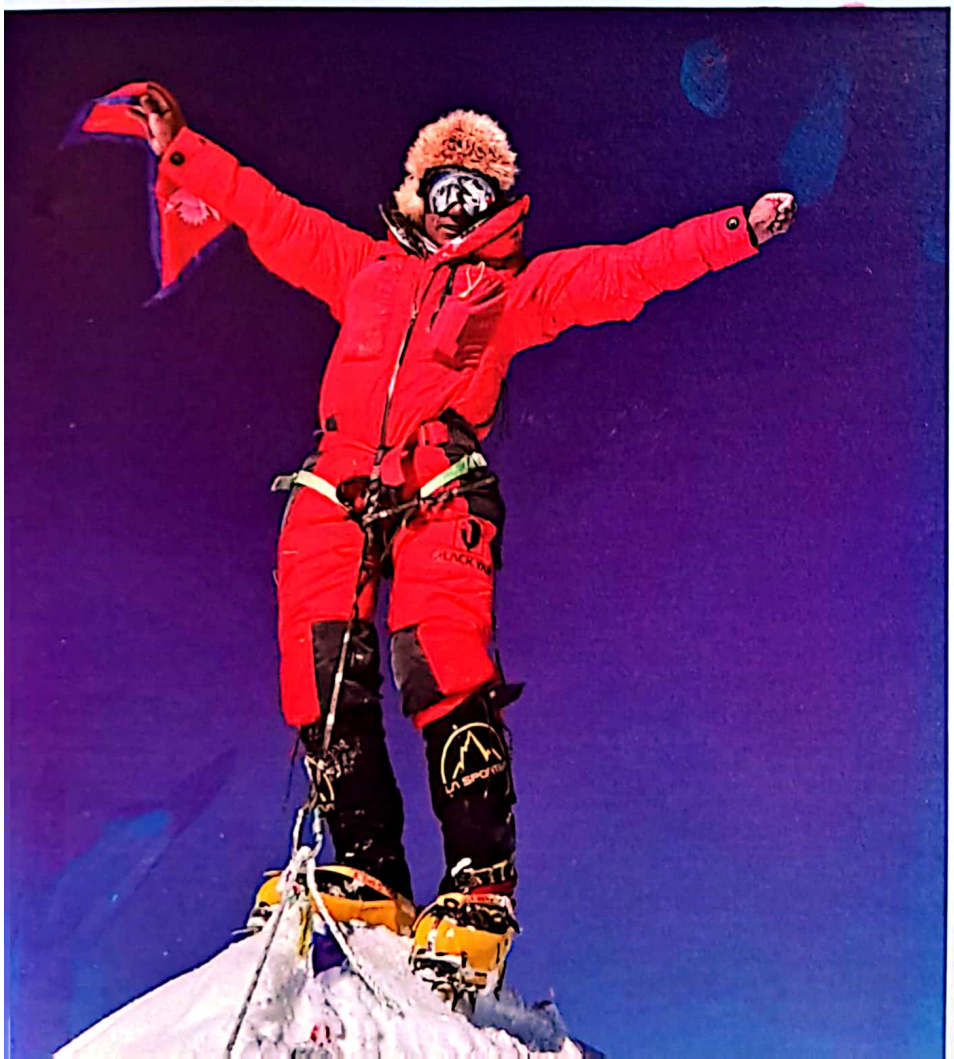
So, at the age of 31, he took one thousand rupees borrowed from his wife and left his village and family to walk to Kathmandu. He made the journey from the village, which would take others three days to walk, to Khandbari, the district headquarters of Sankhuwasabha, in just one day. For the first time, he bought slippers and wore them. He then traveled to Kathmandu, the city of dreams, through Hille in Dhankuta.

His wife, Ms. Diki, still lives in the remote village of Sankhuwasabha, taking care of their ancestral lands and home, while his children live and study in Kathmandu. Sherpa believes that his children should receive a good education, as he himself could not attain formal education.

Mountaineering Career

When Sanu left his village, he had no grand dreams and only wanted to earn money by carrying loads for trekking groups to support his family back home. However, his honesty, hard-working attitude, and fast learning skills brought him fortune and opportunities. He utilized these opportunities to a great extent, reaching heights that many people only dream of.

In 2005, Sanu arrived in Kathmandu and started working as a porter at a trekking agency. That same year, he got a chance to join an expedition group to Island Peak as a kitchen helper. During this time, he tested his strength on the peak, carrying loads and assisting with supplies during the expedition. After working as a trekking porter for nearly a year, he was fortunate to have the opportunity to climb Mt. Cho Oyu in 2006 (8,188 meters). He was included in a group as a climbing guide, although he had no prior experience with climbing gear or tactics.



"Initially, I was a bit nervous, but I watched carefully and learned how to use climbing gears such as ropes and crampons," he recalled his first mountain ascent. This successful climb opened up wider opportunities for him in the field of mountaineering. Despite not having formal climbing training, he also got a chance to climb Mt. Everest in 2007.

Ascent peaks and years:

Annapurna – 2016, 2021, 2022
Broad Peak – 2014, 2017
Cho Oyu – 2006, 2008
Dhaulagiri – 2019, 2021, 2022
Everest – 2007, 2008, 2009, 2012, 2013, 2016, 2017
Gasherbrum II – 2019, 2022
Gasherbrum I – 2013, 2019, 2022
K2 – 2012, 2021
Kanchenjunga – 2014, 2022
Lhotse – 2008, 2021, 2022
Makalu – 2019, 2022
Manaslu – 2010, 2011, 2016
Nanga Parbat – 2017, 2018, 2022
Shishapangma – 2006, 2011

Sanu also remembers how he suddenly became popular after climbing Mt. Everest, and how he received opportunities to join several other expeditions after his successful ascent. Opportunities continued to come his way, with expeditions in 2006, 2007, 2009, 2012, 2013, 2016, and 2017. In addition to climbing Mount Everest seven times, Sanu has summited 14 eight-thousanders twice, including Annapurna, Dhaulagiri, Gasherbrum I, Manaslu, and Nanga Parbat three times each.

Natural-born climber

When asked how he was able to

climb 14 peaks above 8000 meters, including Mount Everest, twice without formal climbing training, he pointed out that perhaps he was a natural-born climber, as he possessed the energy, courage, and adventurous spirit to challenge the insurmountable barriers of the world's highest mountains.

He claimed that he never experienced difficulties while climbing peaks and never suffered from altitude sicknesses, such as nausea, giddiness, or dizziness, unlike many of his friends. He also mentioned that he did not encounter any challenges in climbing peaks at higher elevations that would make other climbers think twice before attempting.

But he emphasized the importance of training for new climbers and suggested that the training not only gives them confidence but also equips them with life-saving techniques in the harsh mountain environment. "Back in the day, we didn't have the opportunity to receive training, but times have changed. Now, there are many institutions, including the Nepal Mountaineering Association (NMA), that conduct training. It's good to have training before heading to the mountains," he added suggestively. Sanu also conducts training for newcomers.

Uncertain Future

He views the future of mountaineering, which brings recognition to Nepal and Nepali tourism worldwide, as uncertain. According to him, this situation is a result of government neglect. Many promising climbers have left the country and chosen other destinations. This profession has lost its appeal to the younger generation of Sherpas as well. Sanu



himself has not encouraged his son to pursue mountaineering, as perhaps his son has not shown a desire to do so due to his father's hardships. If this trend continues, it will be challenging to find guides for climbing Nepali mountains in the next 10 to 15 years.

"For me, the mountains are like gods, and everything that I have achieved today is because of these mountains. So, I always respect the mountains and mountaineering, and that's why I have not chosen to live abroad. However, I see the future of mountaineering in Nepal as uncertain. How can there be mountain climbing without Sherpas?" he questions.

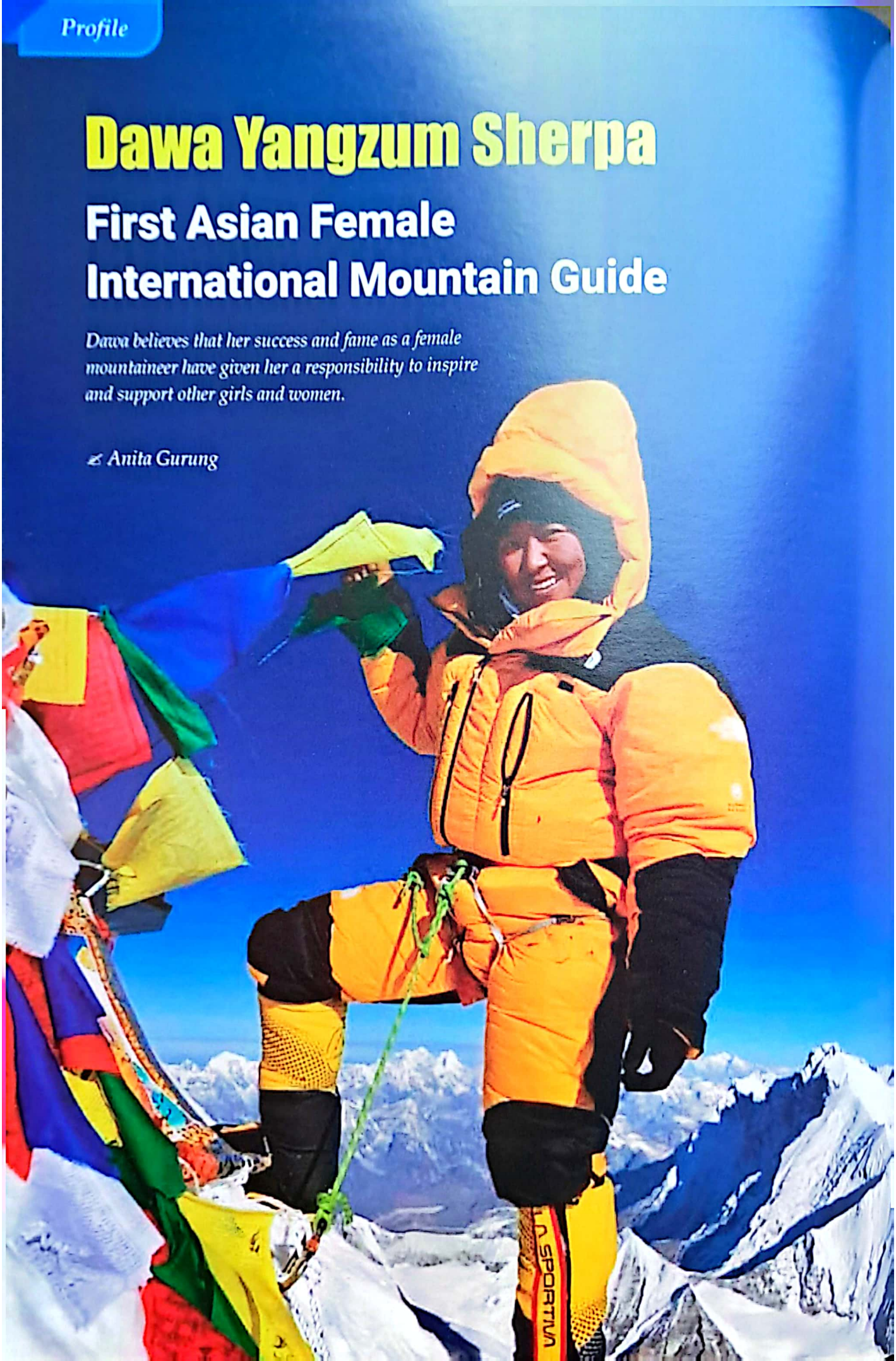
He also believes that the situation could be improved if the government takes action. Providing identity cards to climbers to introduce the country to the world and attract foreign climbers would be helpful. Climbers face comfort and convenience in foreign airports but are humiliated on their own soil. Another suggestion is to provide social security benefits for Sherpas in their old age and to arrange for education for the children of those who have died or have had amputations due to accidents. Sanu believes implementing these measures would reduce the number of people leaving the profession and residing abroad.

Dawa Yangzum Sherpa

First Asian Female International Mountain Guide

Dawa believes that her success and fame as a female mountaineer have given her a responsibility to inspire and support other girls and women.

✍ *Anita Gurung*



Dawa believes that her success and fame as a female mountaineer have given her a responsibility to inspire and support other girls and women.

Dawa Yangzum Sherpa spent her childhood listening to songs about heroic mountaineers such as Tenzing Norgay, one of the first people to reach the summit of Mount Everest and climb the rocks that symbolize it. She was determined to climb Mount Everest someday, and this determination started when she was only nine years old.

Now at the age of 32, she has earned a reputation as a skilled mountaineer herself. Dawa has become the first Asian woman to enter the elite club of certified International Federation of Mountain Guides Associations (IFMGA) guides, and she serves as an inspiration to many young girls who are determined to break traditional gender roles and pursue their dreams of becoming a guide in the mountains.

Childhood and family

Dawa comes from a humble and simple Sherpa family of Na village, located in the rustic Rolwaling valley situated at 4200 meters above sea level. Her father, Norbu, used to occasionally work with a Japanese team as a trekking guide, while her mother, Lakpa, is a homemaker who attends to daily domestic chores and looks after the family members.

Dawa has three sisters and two brothers, and she grew up in a village that lacked basic amenities such as electricity, good healthcare, and education. She used to graze the cattle with her sisters in the cowshed since there were no designated caretakers for the cattle. Due to extremely cold weather, it was difficult for school teachers to stay in the village school for more than six months. This resulted in irregular schooling for not just Dawa but all the children in the village. "I believe that we were the last generation to go through these challenges. Today's children do not have to face the same hardships," Dawa said.



Mountaineering maniac

As a young child, Dawa Yangzum Sherpa was inspired by the stories of Tenzing Norgay's Mount Everest climb and would play a game of climbing rocks with her friends, pretending to summit Everest. She witnessed male climbers returning to the village with great fanfare, bringing food and clothes for their families and relatives. This inspired her to climb Everest one day, even though she had no idea what the mountain looked like and thought it was different from the surrounding peaks.

At the age of 13, Dawa left her village without permission from her parents, tired of the routine life of producing potatoes and herding cattle. She decided to try her hand at being a porter with a trekking group that would pass through the Tashy Lapcha Pass near her village. This pass, located in the Rolwaling Valley of Nepal, is at an elevation of 5,755 meters (18,881 feet) above sea level and connects the Rolwaling Valley in the west with the Khumbu region in the east.

During the trek, Dawa got sick but did not give up. She crossed the pass and reached Khumbu, where her mother came from. Instead of going back home, she decided to go to Kathmandu, her city of dreams and a place of hope.

Growing up in Kathmandu with her sister, Dawa Yangzum Sherpa joined English language classes and developed an interest in mountaineering. In 2009, at the age of 19, she



completed basic mountaineering training, and in 2010, she completed advanced mountaineering training provided by the Nepal Mountaineering Association (NMA). During the training, she climbed Yala Peak (5,500 m).

Turning Point

In 2011, Dawa approached the Khumbu Climbing Center (KCC), where she caught the eye of Conrad Anker, the founder of the KCC. This was a turning point for her as a trainee, and when Conrad asked her to join their mission for Mount Everest in 2012, she immediately accepted, thrilled to fulfill her childhood dream. "I did not think twice, I accepted immediately," she said.

During the mission, Dawa was unaware of the goal or the team involved. She worked hard, carrying oxygen cylinders, fixing tents, and doing all the work that was needed for the expedition team. She became the youngest female Nepali Everest summiteer at the age of 21 and earned modestly good pay.

After completing the mission, Dawa learned that she had been part of a team of scientists and climbers tasked with installing a weather station on the highest point of the world. The mission successfully installed the weather station at an altitude of 7,940 meters.

After climbing Everest, Dawa went to the US and started working with rangers at Mount Rainier. It was during this time that she learned about the International Federation of Mountain Guide Associations (IFMGA), the importance of training, and the cost involved in it. In 2013, Dawa enrolled in the first part of the IFMGA training while continuing to climb mountains and guide clients when she wasn't training. However, she failed her final exam by a small margin. She didn't give up and re-enrolled in 2014.

Meanwhile, Dawa set her sights on K2, despite people advising her not to go. Along with Pasang Lhamu Sherpa Akita and Maya Sherpa, she reached the top of K2 in the summer of 2014, becoming the first all-women team to do so. Dawa spent most of 2015 in the US, switching jobs to pay her bills for the IFMGA training. She got a job as a mountain guide with Alpine Ascents International, a Seattle-based expedition agency.

In 2017, Dawa completed the final leg of the IFMGA training, creating history and becoming the first Nepali woman to become an internationally certified mountain guide. She has been guiding on mountains ever since.

In 2019, Dawa reached the top of Makalu, becoming the first Nepali woman to do so, and joined The North Face as an athlete, going on expeditions with the team. Despite having an injured anterior cruciate ligament from skiing, Dawa climbed Annapurna, Dhaulagiri, and Lhotse in the spring of 2021. It is also worth mentioning that she reached the top of Annapurna that year without using supplemental oxygen. In the autumn of 2021, she reached the true summit of Manaslu. As of today, Dawa has climbed eight of the fourteen 8000-meter mountains in the world.



In 2021, Dawa became an ambassador for Rolex, a renowned global brand. She has also done guides in the mountains of Russia, America, Alaska, and Argentina and completed a skiing course in Russia.

Overcoming Challenges: Moving Forward

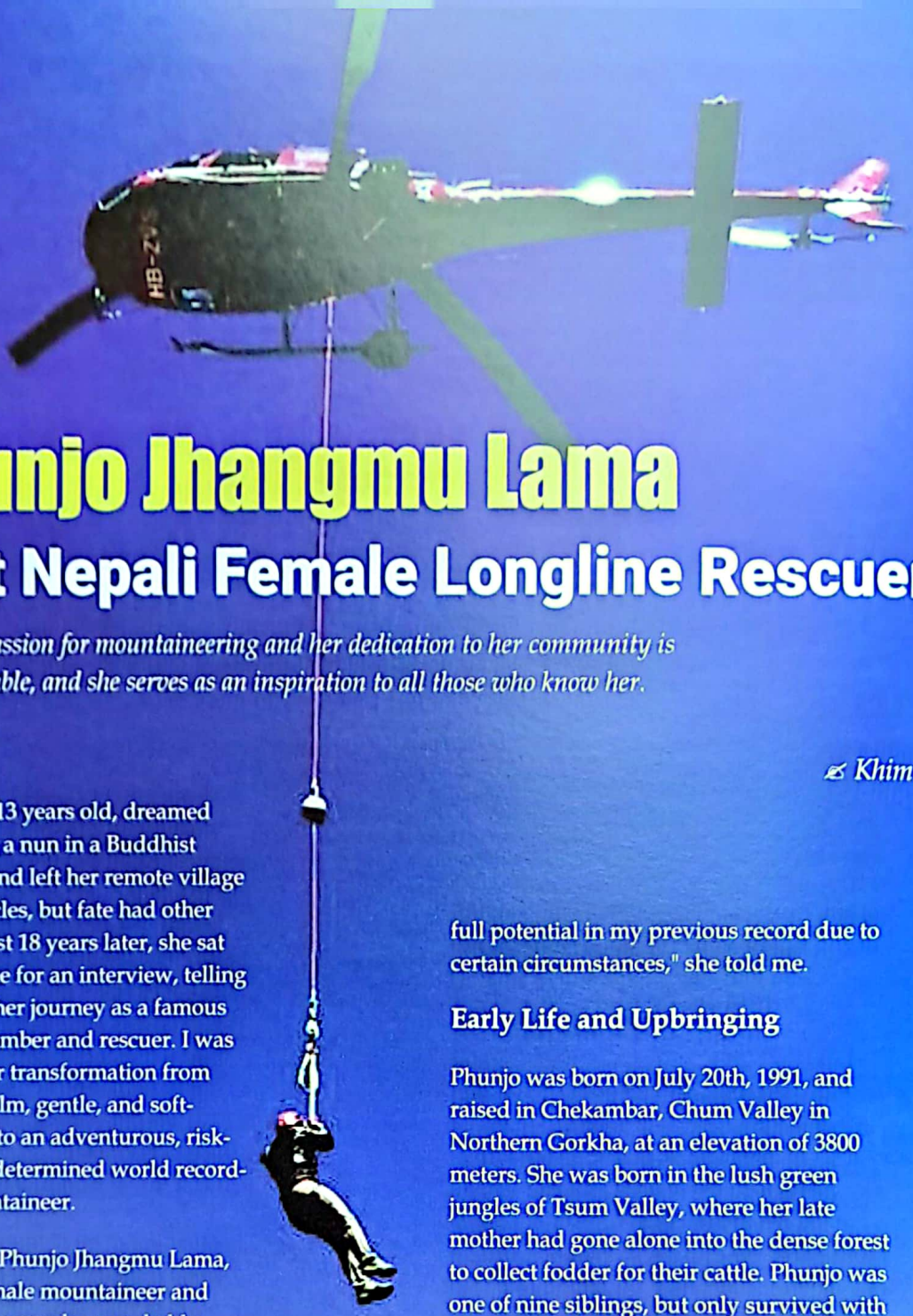
As a female mountaineer, Dawa encountered many challenges, including social prejudices and family restrictions. Despite coming from the Climbing (Sherpa) community, she found that mountaineering is still a male-dominated field, with most instructors and participants being male and very few females. However, she found some comfort in the fact that most of the instructors and participants in her training were from the Sherpa community, and they treated each other like family.

As an adult, Dawa was given full freedom by her family to lead her own life and pursue her career independently. She now actively works to empower girls and women in the field of mountaineering. In coordination with the Khumbu Climbing Center (KCC), she sponsors ten female trainees, including returnees from trafficking and single women. She also organizes orientation programs for interested girls occasionally.

Dawa believes that her success and fame as a female mountaineer have given her a responsibility to inspire and support other girls and women. She said, "I am an inspiration to many girls. Then I realized that I have to do something for them also. I started this sponsorship program four years back, and it has been giving good results."

Dawa Yangzum Sherpa is one of the most famous and trailblazing female mountaineers from Nepal who has achieved numerous milestones in her career. She became the first Nepali woman to become an internationally certified mountain guide. She has climbed eight out of fourteen 8000er mountains in the world, including the summits of K2, Makalu, and Everest. Along with her own achievements, she is also actively working to empower girls and women in the field of mountaineering through her sponsorship program and orientation programs. Her dedication, perseverance, and passion for mountaineering have made her an inspiration to many.





Phunjo Jhangmu Lama

First Nepali Female Longline Rescuer

Phunjo's passion for mountaineering and her dedication to her community is both admirable, and she serves as an inspiration to all those who know her.

✍ *Khim Ghale*

A little girl, 13 years old, dreamed of becoming a nun in a Buddhist monastery and left her remote village with her uncles, but fate had other plans. Almost 18 years later, she sat in front of me for an interview, telling the story of her journey as a famous mountain climber and rescuer. I was struck by her transformation from desiring a calm, gentle, and soft-spoken nun to an adventurous, risk-taking, and determined world record-holder mountaineer.

Her name is Phunjo Jhangmu Lama, a famous female mountaineer and long-line rescuer who once held a Guinness Book World Record for being the fastest woman to climb Mount Everest. As we spoke, she was preparing to reclaim her title, which had been taken by mountaineer Tsang Yin-hung from Hong Kong in 2021. "I want to reassess my strengths once again. I wasn't able to reach my full potential in my previous record due to certain circumstances," she told me.

Early Life and Upbringing

Phunjo was born on July 20th, 1991, and raised in Chekambar, Chum Valley in Northern Gorkha, at an elevation of 3800 meters. She was born in the lush green jungles of Tsum Valley, where her late mother had gone alone into the dense forest to collect fodder for their cattle. Phunjo was one of nine siblings, but only survived with two sisters and one brother, as her mother sadly passed away when she was only two years old.

Phunjo and her siblings were raised by their father and grandfather. Her grandfather taught her how to herd yaks in the highlands, where they grazed at elevations of 4500 to 5000 meters. Up to the age of 13, Phunjo worked as a shepherd and yak herder in the highlands with her grandfather, who always encouraged her to go to Kathmandu and do great things.

Journey to Kathmandu and Career in the USA

At the age of 13, Phunjo went to Kathmandu with the dream of becoming a nun at a monastery. She had a reason for this aspiration: "In our village, our parents did not have the ability to send daughters to school. So they used to send girls to the monastery to become a nun. My elder sister was in Kapan Monastery as a nun, so I was inspired to become a nun," she recalled.

During her time in Kathmandu, Phunjo stayed with her elder brother, an engineer working with a regional organization. One day, her brother asked her to accompany him to the United States of America while he was attending a conference there. They both obtained visas and traveled to America. While her brother returned to Nepal, Phunjo decided to stay in America and began working in a supermarket.

Phunjo reflected on her time in the USA, saying, "I went to America with the aim of studying, but it was not easy and I started working. In a short time, I became known for my strength in my workplace, as my work involved lifting and moving large items." However, she was not satisfied with her work or earnings. "I was searching for something, but what I wanted and needed to be was not clear. I consulted my dilemma and dissatisfaction with my brother, and he advised me to return to Nepal. So, I came back," she explained.

The first Nepali female Longline rescuer

She returned to Nepal and started a helicopter service to assist the people in her birthplace Chum Valley, the remote and underprivileged region with no road accessibility and basic healthcare and education systems. Her personal motivation to start the service stemmed from her mother's death during childbirth due to the lack of medical facilities in the area. While Phunjo initially started the helicopter business for profit, it also provided a vital service and facility for the villagers.

Phunjo went on to become Nepal's first female longline rescuer after completing rigorous training with Air Zermatt in Switzerland As a rescuer, she has been involved in notable missions, including the search and rescue team for missing Korean and Nepali trekkers in the Annapurna base camp trail in 2020, the search and rescue for a missing Dutch trekker in the Mardi Himal area in 2018, and the search and rescue effort to locate missing Dutch climber Christiaan Wilson in the Dhaulagiri Base Camp area in 2016. She also participated in





the search and rescue and relief effort for a month after the massive earthquake in 2015.

From passion mountaineer to the world record holder

During her rescue training, she met many mountaineers who encouraged her to climb mountains despite not coming from a mountaineering community and lacking prior experience. Her attempt to climb Mt. Everest in the spring of 2015 was thwarted by a series of earthquakes, forcing her to return from the base camp. However, she took it as a sign that everything happens for a reason and decided to continue climbing.

In 2016, she climbed Mt. Denali (6168 m), the highest mountain in North America, Mt. Amadablam (6812 m), Mt. Lobuche (6119 m), and the sixth-highest mountain in the world Mt. Cho Oyu (8201 m). In 2017, she climbed Mt. Manaslu (8163 m) with her Australian climbing partner Samantha. Initially, Phunjo and Samantha planned to climb both Mt. Everest and Lhotse at once in 2018, but she decided to climb Mt. Everest from the base camp to the summit continue. After making arrangements with other guides, she sent her climbing partner four days earlier and started her climb from the base camp on May 15th, 2018, at 3:30 pm. She reached the summit at 6:23 am on May 17th, setting a Guinness World Record for the fastest woman to climb Mt. Everest from the base camp, taking only 39 hours. Despite this accomplishment, she was not satisfied with her record.

In 2019, while climbing K2 in Pakistan, she and her team had to return to base camp due to an avalanche. She remembers this as a painful moment in her mountaineering career.

Inspiration for others.....

Phunjo is among the few female mountaineers who have taken it up as a profession and pursued it with continuity. Apart from climbing mountains, she also guides trekking groups in various places "I consider mountaineering as both a passion and a profession," she claimed, viewing it as a safe and suitable profession for women. Phunjo also believes that women have more opportunities than men once they enter this field.

Although coming from outside the climbing community poses certain challenges, it does not mean that women from the climbing community do not face difficulties. "In my view, mountains do not discriminate based on gender, ethnicity, or any other factor. In the mountains, everyone is equal, and success depends on your mental and physical readiness," she suggested, "so it's essential to be prepared mentally and physically."

Believing in giving back

Phunjo is committed to giving back to her community through various charitable activities, talks, and events. One such initiative was the building of a school in Chum Valley, her birthplace after it was completely destroyed in the devastating earthquake that hit Nepal. Despite repeated requests



Mrs. Phunjo Jhangmu Lama receiving **Janasewa Shree** form Rt. Honorable President of Nepal **Mr. Ramchandra Poudel** on 1st Baishakh, 2080 (14 April, 2023) as declared on Constitution Dya 2079

to government authorities, no action was taken. Phunjo took the initiative to raise funds for the school's construction by creating a GoFundMe page and reaching out to her friends. She was successful in raising the necessary funds and building the school, which was a significant achievement for the community.

In 2021, Phunjo was honored with the Tenzing Hillary Award, which included a cash prize of Rs. 50,000. She added Rs. 1,50,000 from her own funds and donated a total of Rs. 2,00,000 to the Everest Summiters Association to establish a fund for the welfare of needy climbers. Phunjo believes that the association is like a second home to climbers and that it does not have the necessary funds to support needy mountaineers and their families. She hopes that her contribution will inspire other climbers to join in and contribute to the fund so that the association can continue to support those in need.

Recognition and Awards

Phunjo has received various awards, recognitions, and appreciation for her outstanding contributions in the field of mountaineering, tourism, and social work. She was honored with the highest civilian award of Nepal, Prabal Jana Sewa Shree Padak, and was recognized by Rt. Honorable President of the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal, Mrs. Bidya Devi Bhandari. She has been appointed as the Tourism Goodwill Ambassador of Nepal for Switzerland for four years as per section (7) of the Goodwill Ambassador Procedure in 2022.

Phunjo has also been recognized for her achievements in the field of mountaineering. She was awarded the prestigious Tenzing Hillary Award in the year 2021, which is a significant recognition in the mountaineering community. In addition, she has been felicitated with a Letter of Appreciation at the 7th Mountain Festival and has been recognized and felicitated by the Prime Minister of Nepal as well as the Ministry of Culture, Tourism, and Civil Aviation.



In conclusion, Phunjo's story is an inspiring example of what can be achieved through hard work, determination, and perseverance. She has overcome numerous obstacles to reach the heights of success she has today, and she continues to push herself to greater heights. Phunjo's passion for mountaineering and her dedication to her community is both admirable, and she serves as an inspiration to all those who know her. Her accomplishments and recognitions speak to her talents and the impact she has had on the mountaineering and tourism industry in Nepal, and her story serves as a reminder that with hard work and perseverance, anything is possible.

Pasang Lhamu Sherpa
First Female Mountaineering Instructor

✍ *Anita Gurung*



Pasang Lhamu is saddened by the uncertain future faced by climbers who aspire to make a name for themselves and their country in the mountaineering world. She has seen many fellow climbers lose their lives in the mountains, and witnessing the condition of their families afterward breaks her heart.



Due to sharing the same name with the first Everest climber, Pasang Lhamu Sherpa, this schoolgirl used to face teasing from many people who would say, 'When you grow up, you too will climb the mountain.' This persistent question became challenging for her, and she started considering Pasang Lhamu as her role model. At the age of 9/10, she thought, 'One day I will also climb Mt. Everest.'

After growing up, the young girl Pasang Lhamu Sherpa, 38, not only successfully climbed Mount Everest 13 years after its first ascent but also gained fame in the field of mountaineering. She has climbed 9 out of the 14 mountains above eight thousand meters in the world. As Nepal's first female mountain climbing instructor, she has become an inspiration for hundreds of women who aspire to break social and family barriers.

Early Life and Family

She was born in Khumjung and raised in Lukla, Solukhumbu, the getaway of the Everest trek and expeditions. When she was a small girl, her father passed away and her mother took care of her and her younger sister operating a small tea shop in Lukla. She grew up in an ordinary Sherpa family, collecting firewood, carrying water, and helping her mother in the Kitchen besides schooling.

Her uncles were trekking guides and mountaineers. She grew up observing foreigners going to Mount Everest, serving them tea and snakes. Because of sharing the same name as Pasang Lhamu Sherpa, the first Nepali female to climb Mount Everest, many people would ask her when she would climb Everest. And she saw Pasang Lhamu as an idol and was determined to climb Everest one day.

At the age of 15, her mother also departed from this materialistic world that left her with the responsibility to take care of her younger sister. "It was the most difficult time for me, to continue my schooling and responsibility to take care of my younger sister, that moment taught me life, and now what I am, it is a reason for that too," she said.

She passed her secondary school at Lukla and came to Kathmandu, the capital city of Nepal, aiming to pursue higher secondary education. She completed higher secondary





education, but she could not study further due to the involvement of trekking and mountaineering. She started her job as a trekking kitchen team member while studying for higher secondary education. "It was rare in my time and condition to study up to the higher secondary level in our community, the credit goes to my mother, even though she was not educated, she always stood beside me for my education," she recalled.

Eager to Scale New Heights

Pasang Lhamu was determined to climb Mount Everest, and while studying in class 12, she started looking for mountaineering training. She heard that Nepal Mountaineering Association (NMA) provided mountaineering training, and she went ahead and got enrolled. In 2004, she completed basic mountaineering course and the next year she completed the advanced course.

When she completed the training courses, she learned that there were no female mountaineering trainers in the Country. This started her journey to be a trainer. She completed all necessary training in Nepal and applied for trainers training in France. She earned a diploma in mountaineering from France and became the first female mountaineering instructor in Nepal in 2006.

"At that time, I thought, being an instructor is easier than climbing or guiding in mountains as climbing needs a lot of physical energy, and instruction is a more skilled and respectful work," she said.

In the initial phases, it was not easy for people to accept a female mountaineer in a male-dominated field. But when she became an instructor, she earned the respect of the people in the fraternity. She taught courses ranging from basic climbing training to rescue training. While she was conducting training for the mountaineers, she was working as a trekking guide simultaneously.

Again back to Mount Everest

Despite being busy as a mountaineering instructor, Pasang Lhamu had almost forgotten her dream of climbing Mount Everest. However, fate had other plans in store for her. While conducting training for older and experienced climbers, she was reminded by them that the type of instructions she was giving would not suffice for climbing Mount Everest. This realization compelled her to gain more experience in higher altitudes, such as Mount Everest, as an instructor.

In 2006, Pasang Lhamu embarked on her climbing career in addition to her training peaks. She joined the Nepal-Japan friendship expedition and became the first woman to successfully summit Nangpai Gosum II (7321m). "It was my real climbing experience, besides the training peaks," she reminisced. "When I climbed Nangpai Gosum II, other climbers encouraged me, saying 'You can climb Mount Everest easily.'"

This significant achievement ignited Pasang Lhamu's

determination to pursue her dream of climbing Mount Everest. In 2007, Pasang Lhamu Sherpa successfully summited Mount Everest from the north (Chinese) side as a team member of a Japanese Mount Everest cleaning expedition. However, during her ascent, she suffered from a persistent backache that caused her discomfort and forced her to endure a week of bed rest. Despite feeling hopeless and thinking her mountaineering career might be over, she persevered and managed to summit Everest with the help of painkillers.

Upon reaching the top of the world, Pasang Lhamu was awe-struck by the breathtaking view of other mountains below, which appeared like small diamonds. She couldn't initially believe it and had to pinch herself. This was a dream come true for her, a childhood aspiration realized. In 2008, she received another offer to climb Mount Everest, but due to her struggles with back pain, she decided not to pursue it.

Pasang Lhamu's mountaineering career took her to the United States of America, where she went to fulfill her desire to go international. She began working as a mountaineering guide in the USA. She was inspired by the American working culture, which emphasized focusing on strengths rather than weaknesses and promoting a non-discriminatory workplace environment. Her experiences in the USA further enriched her mountaineering expertise and broadened her perspective on different cultures and approaches to mountaineering.

She has carved her name in the annals of mountaineering history as the first Nepali female mountaineer to successfully conquer 9 of the 14 highest mountains in the world that soar above 8000 meters. Her extraordinary journey began with her triumphant ascent of Mount Everest in 2007, followed by her historic summit of K2 (8611m.) in 2014 as part of an all-Nepalese women's expedition team, making her one of the first Nepalese women to climb K2.

Pasang Lhamu continued to push the boundaries of mountaineering achievements, becoming the first Nepalese woman to scale Mt. Dhaulagiri (8167m.) in 2021. She also made her mark as one of the first Nepalese women to summit Mt. Annapurna (8,091m.) in the same year. Her relentless pursuit of mountaineering excellence saw her conquering Lhotse (8,516m.) in 2021, Makalu (8,481m.) and Kanchenjunga (8,586m.) in 2022, and Broad Peak (8,051m.) in the same year. In 2023, Pasang Lhamu created history again as the first Nepali woman to summit Nanga Parbat (8,126m.), adding yet another remarkable achievement to her illustrious mountaineering career.



Awards and Recognitions

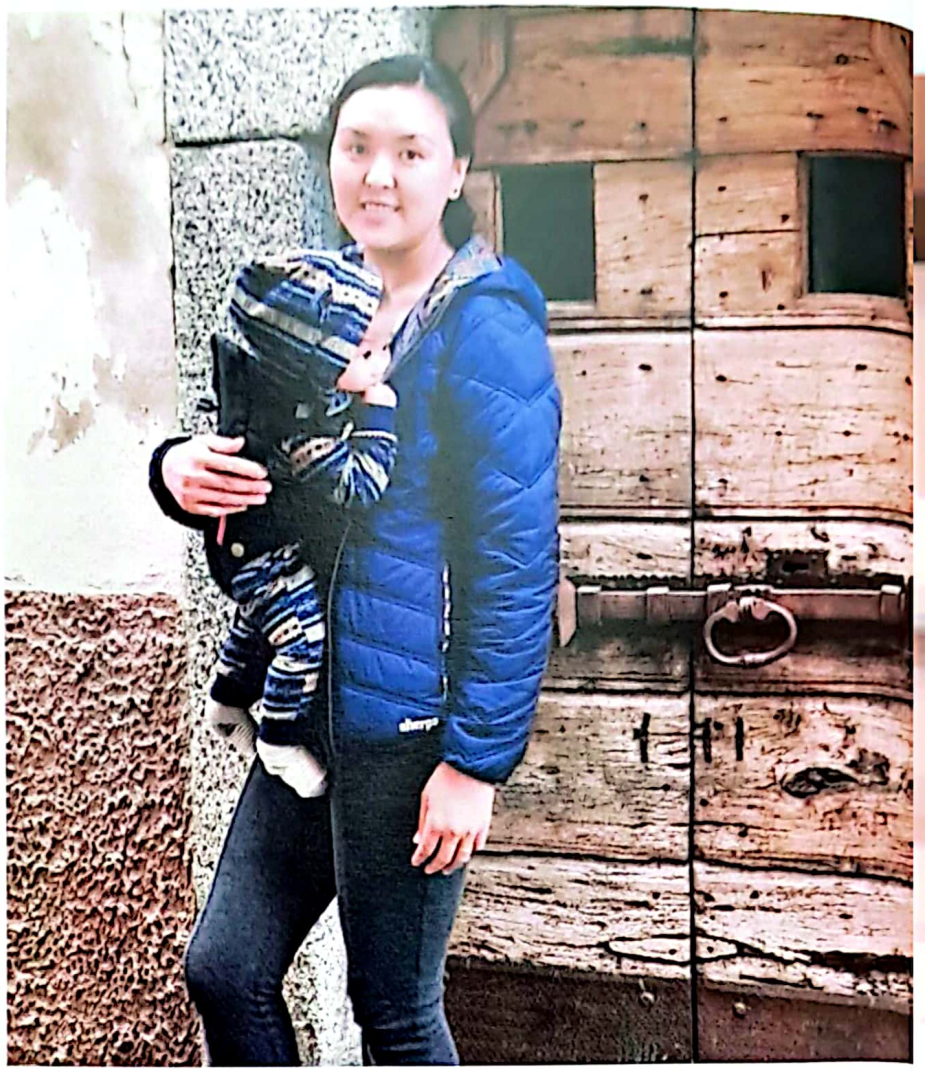
Pasang Lhamu's exceptional achievements in the field of mountaineering have been recognized and honored by various national and international institutions. In 2016, she was awarded the prestigious National Geographic Adventurer of the Year, a remarkable accolade that opened up new international avenues for her.

In addition, Pasang Lhamu has been the recipient of several other prestigious awards, including the Tenzing Norgey Award, presented by the Explorer Club New York in 2017. She has also been honored with the George Mallory Award and the International Alpine Solidarity Award for her outstanding contributions to the field of mountaineering.

Furthermore, Pasang Lhamu has been a brand ambassador for Sherpa Adventure Gear from 2007 to 2018, a renowned outdoor apparel company that promotes and supports Sherpa culture and mountaineering in the Himalayas. Her association with Sherpa Adventure Gear has further cemented her reputation as a respected and influential figure in the mountaineering community.

Beyond the Summit

According to Pasang Lhamu trekking and mountaineering are lucrative and fulfilling professions for women. She believes anyone can earn a living while staying and working in their own country. Drawing from her own experience, she feels content with what she has achieved in life, having not only traveled throughout Nepal but also 12-15 other countries through her profession. "I want more and more women to enter this field, which is why I continue to pursue it," she states. In order to motivate women, Pasang Lhamu organizes all-women expeditions from time to time, where all members, including climbers and kitchen staff, are women.



However, Pasang Lhamu is saddened by the uncertain future faced by climbers who aspire to make a name for themselves and their country in the mountaineering world. She has seen many fellow climbers lose their lives in the mountains, and witnessing the condition of their families afterward breaks her heart. She believes that climbing is only a profession as long as one has physical strength, but in case of accidents, the government should provide support to the families for their livelihood and old age. Pasang Lhamu advocates for social security measures to be in place for climbers so that their later years can be easier. She laments that the lack of social security has compelled many promising climbers to seek opportunities abroad.

Pasang Lhamu's concerns highlight the need for support and safety measures for climbers, not only during their active climbing careers but also during their post-retirement years. Her efforts to promote mountaineering as a viable profession for women and her advocacy for social security measures reflect her dedication to the well-being of the climbing community in Nepal.

Key Highlights of Mt. Everest after the First Summit

May 29, 1953	The first summit on Mount Everest by Mr. Tenzing Norgay of Nepal & Sir Edmund Percival Hillary of New Zealand via the southeast ridge route. (Lhotse's face is to the southeast ridge).
May 20, 1965	Mr. Nawang Gombu Sherpa becomes the first person to summit Everest twice. Both of his summits were via the South-East Ridge, his first summit was as a member of Mr. Jim Whittaker's American expedition where he became the 11th person to summit Everest. Out of the first seventeen summits of Everest, Nawang had two of them.
May 16, 1975	Ms. Junko Tabei of Japan becomes the first woman to reach the summit via the south-east ridge.
May 8, 1978	First ascent without oxygen supplementary by Mr. Peter Habeler of Austria and Reinhold Messner of Italy via the south-east ridge.
February 17, 1980	First winter ascent by Mr. Krzysztof Wielicki of Poland.
October 14, 1988	Ms. Lydia Bradey of New Zealand successfully summited Mount Everest without oxygen supplementary and became the first woman to do so.
October 7, 1990	First married couple to summit together by Mr. Andrej & Mrs. Marija Stremfelj of Slovenia. Marija was also the first Slovenian woman to summit Mount Everest.
October 7, 1990	First father and son to summit together by Mr. Jean Noel Rochen and his son Roche Bertrand aka Zebulon. They flew together on a tandem paraglider from the south col. They landed at base camp on October 7, 1990. Roche Bertrand was 17 years old and became the youngest non-Nepalese person to climb Mount Everest.
September 25, 1992	The first two brothers to reach the summit together: Mr. Alberto and Mr. Alberto and Mr. Felix Inurrategui on September 25, 1992.
April 23, 1993	The first Nepalese woman, Pasang Lhamu Sherpa, summited Mount Everest but died while descending from the summit on April 23, 1993.
1998	Mr. Thomas Whittaker of the USA is the first handicapped (one-leg artificial) to climb Mount Everest.
1999	Mr. Babu Chhiri Sherpa of Nepal became the first and only climber to sleep on the summit. Babu spent over 21 hours on the summit of Mount Everest without oxygen supplementary. He established the fastest record of 16 hrs 56 minutes to reach the top on May 21, 2000.
May 18, 2000	Miss Lhakpa Sherpa of Nepal is the second Nepalese woman to successfully summit Mount Everest on May 18, 2000.
May 18, 2000	First ski descent by Davo Karnicar.
May 23, 2001	Mr. Temba Chiring Sherpa (16 yrs.) of Nepal is the first youngest mountaineer to successfully climb Mount Everest from the north side on May 23, 2001.
May 25, 2001	Mr. Erik Weihenmayer of the USA became the first ever blind person to summit Mount Everest on May 25, 2001.
2002	Miss Pemba Doma Sherpa is the third Nepalese woman to successfully climb Mount Everest from both sides. She first climbed Mount Everest from the north side on May 16, 2002.
May 22, 2003	Mr. Ang Chhiring Sherpa, a correspondent of Kantipur Daily from Nepal successfully climbed Mount Everest on May 22, 2003. He is the first Nepalese journalist to climb to the top of the world.
May 26, 2003	Mr. Lakpa Gelu Sherpa of Nepal successfully holds the world record for the fastest climbing on the top of the world on May 26, 2003, for only 10 hours 56 minutes, and 46 seconds.

May 26, 2003	Three brothers, Mr. Lakpa Gelu Sherpa, Mr. Da Nuru Sherpa, and Mr. Jangbu Sherpa scaled Mount Everest on May 26, 2003.
May 21, 2004	Mr. Pemba Dorjee Sherpa of Nepal successfully summited Mount Everest by setting a new world record for the fastest climbing. He completed the distance from Mount Everest base camp to the summit in 8 hours and 10 minutes on May 21, 2004.
May 30, 2005	Ms. Moni Mulepati (24 yrs) and Mr. Pem Dorjee (23Yrs) of Nepal scaled Mount Everest together and got married on top of the world on May 30, 2005.
May 24, 2006	Mr. Lakpa Tharke Sherpa (25 Yrs) of Khumjung-9, Solukhumbu climbed Mount Everest on May 24, 2006, and took rest for 3 minutes on the top in the naked position of the upper part of his body in a surrounding temperature of minus 40 degrees centigrade.
May 16, 2007	For the first time in human history, Mr. Appa Sherpa and Mr. Lhakpa Gelu Sherpa jointly released a book named 'Sagarmatha ko Adhar Sibirbata (From the Everest base camp)' at the top of Mount Everest on May 16, 2007, at 08:45 AM. The writer of the book is Mr. Prateek Dhakal of Kathmandu-35, Nepal. The publisher of the book is Makalu Publication of Kathmandu, Nepal.
May 16, 2007	Mr. Kami Sherpa, Mr. Sonam Sherpa, Mr. Lhakpa Gelje Sherpa, and Mr. Da Chhamba Sherpa jointly released another book named 'Seti Pani Kali Pani' (Seti as well as Kali) at the top of Mount Everest on the same day (May 16, 2007) at 09:45 AM. The writer of the book is also Mr. Prateek Dhakal of Kathmandu-35, Nepal. The publisher of the book is Sajha Prakashan, a government publication house in Nepal.
May 23, 2007	After Mr. Pema Tharke Sherpa successfully summited Mount Everest on May 23, 2007, a new world record was achieved by all seven sons of the same parents Mr. Nim Chhiri Sherpa (Father) and Mrs. Pema Buti Sherpa (Mother) of Lamabagar-03, Dolakha to have climbed Mount Everest. The successful climbers are the late Ang Chhiri Sherpa (once in 1999), Mr. Nim Temba Sherpa (once in 1992), Mr. Pema Tharki Sherpa (once in 2007), Mr. Nima Gombu Sherpa (12 times including China side during 1993-2007), Mr. Mingma Tsiri Sherpa (12 times including China side during 1995-2007), Mr. Thundu Sherpa (3 times during 2003-2007), and Mr. Pasang Tenzing Sherpa (4 times during 2003-2007).
May 22, 2008	Mr. Appa Sherpa (at the age of 48 yrs) of Nepal successfully climbed Mount Everest 18th time on May 22, 2008.
May 5, 2008	Mr. Min Bahadur Sherchan resident of Myagdi district, at the age of 76 years 11 months and 6 days successfully climbed Mount Everest on May 5, 2008. He became the oldest person in the world to reach the top of the world.
2008	All the members of the first inclusive women's Sagarmatha Expedition 2008 (FIWSE08) successfully reached the top of Mount Everest in the spring of 2008.
May 22, 2008	There was a record for the highest person (135) to reach the top of Mount Everest in a single day.
May 22, 2009	Mr. Appa Sherpa of Nepal successfully climbed Mount Everest 19th time on May 22, 2009.
May 22, 2010	Mr. Appa Sherpa of Nepal successfully climbed Mount Everest 20th time on May 22, 2010.
May 11, 2011	Mr. Appa Sherpa of Nepal successfully climbed Mount Everest 21st time on May 11, 2011.

May 18, 2011	9 Nepalese Civil Service Personnel of Nepal Civil Servant First Mountain Everest Expedition 2011 team led by the secretary of the Government of Nepal, Mr. Lilamani Paudel successfully climbed Mount Everest on May 18, 2011.
May 22 & 23, 2019	On 22nd & 23rd May 2019, a total number of 223 and 212 climbers have been recorded as the highest and the second highest numbers of climbers to reach the top of Mount Everest on a particular day.
May 22, 2019	'Sagarmatha Height Measurement Expedition 2019' team, led by chief survey officer Mr. Khimlal Gautam of the Government of Nepal, successfully climbed Mount Everest on 22nd May 2019 and installed the equipment on the top.
2019	Mr. Nirmal Purja of Nepal has successfully climbed all 14 mountains above 8000 meters in a record time of 6 months and 6 days and became the fastest person to do so.
2019	Mr. Mingma Gyabu Sherpa of Nepal at the age of 31 years has successfully climbed all 14 mountains above 8000 meters and became the youngest person to do so.
December 8, 2020	The foreign Ministers of Nepal and China jointly announced the new height of Mount Everest to be 8848.86 meters, which was initially calculated to be 8848 meters.
2022	Mr. Kami Rita Sherpa of Nepal successfully climbed Mount Everest 26th time.

Source: MOUNTAINEERING IN NEPAL FACTS AND FIGURES by Government of Nepal Ministry of Culture, Tourism & Civil Aviation Department of Tourism

Mount Everest Summiteers (1953-2022)

Year of Summit	Number of Summiteers
1953	2
1956	4
1960	3
1963	8
1965	9
1970	2
1973	9
1975	16
1976	4
1977	2
1978	27
1979	16
1980	12
1981	3
1982	17
1983	23
1984	17
1985	31
1986	4
1987/88	2
1988	46
1989	27
1990	50
1991	17
1992	90
1993	113
1994	45

Year of Summit	Number of Summiteers
1995	10
1996	57
1997	41
1998	45
1999	61
2000	80
2001	65
2002	90
2003	160
2004	166
2005	113
2006	194
2007	258
2008	385
2009	368
2010	365
2011	378
2012	408
2013	578
2014	6
2016	449
2017	425
2018	560
2019	643
2021	459
2022	658
Total	7621

Source: MOUNTAINEERING IN NEPAL FACTS AND FIGURES by Government of Nepal Ministry of Culture, Tourism & Civil Aviation Department of Tourism

NMA Peaks

The Government of Nepal (GoN), on 18 January 1978, authorized NMA to issue permits for 18 peaks between 5,583 meter to 6,654 meter in the Manang, Annapurna, Langtang and Khumbu area. On 16 sep 2002, NMA was shouldered upon by the GoN to issue mountaineering permits for 15 more new peaks to climbers and mountaineers. These peaks are also known as the NMA Peaks. Since the GoN decided to waive the service charge for the mountains below 5800 meter, 6 peaks have become service charge free, thus NMA has been managing 27 peaks. The service charges for these 27 climbing peaks are given below.

Service charge for foreign climber per person in US dollar

			Cost/Season	Spring	Autumn	Winter	Summer
SN	Mountain/Peak	Height (m.)	Himalayan Range	March-April-May	Sept-Oct-Nov	Dec-Jan-Feb	Jun-July-August
1	Chulu East	6584m	Damodar	USD 400	USD 200	USD 100	USD 100
2	Chulu West	6419m	Manang	USD 250	USD 125	USD 70	USD 70
3	Ganja-la Chuli (Naya Kanga)	5863m	Langtang Himal	USD 250	USD 125	USD 70	USD 70
4	Hiunchuli	6434m	Annapurna	USD 250	USD 125	USD 70	USD 70
5	Imja Tse (Island Peak)	6165m	Khumbu Himal	USD 250	USD 125	USD 70	USD 70
6	Khongma Tse (Mehara Peak)	5849m	Khumbu Himal	USD 250	USD 125	USD 70	USD 70
7	Kusum Kangru	6360m	Khumbu Himal	USD 250	USD 125	USD 70	USD 70
8	Kwangde	6086m	Khumbu Himal	USD 250	USD 125	USD 70	USD 70
9	Lobuje	6119m	Khumbu Himal	USD 250	USD 125	USD 70	USD 70
10	Mera Peak	6470m	Khumbu Himal	USD 250	USD 125	USD 70	USD 70
11	Mt. ABI	6043m	Mahalangur	USD 250	USD 125	USD 70	USD 70
12	Mt. Bokta	6114m	Kanchenjunga	USD 250	USD 125	USD 70	USD 70
13	Mt.Chekigo	6121m	Gaurishankar	USD 250	USD 125	USD 70	USD 70

			Cost/Season	Spring	Autumn	Winter	Summer
SN	Mountain/Peak	Height (m.)	Himalayan Range	March-April-May	Sept-Oct-Nov	Dec-Jan-Feb	Jun-July-August
14	Mt.Cholatse	6440m	Mahalangur	USD 250	USD 125	USD 70	USD 70
15	Mt.Kyazo Ri	6186m	Mahalangur	USD 250	USD 125	USD 70	USD 70
16	Mt.Langsisa Ri	6412m	Jugal	USD 250	USD 125	USD 70	USD 70
17	Mt.Larkya Peak	6416m	Manaslu	USD 250	USD 125	USD 70	USD 70
18	Mt.Lobuje West	6135m	Mahalangur	USD 250	USD 125	USD 125	USD 70
19	Mt.Nirekha	6159m	Mahalangur	USD 250	USD 125	USD 70	USD 70
20	Mt.Ombigaichen	6340m	Mahalangur	USD 250	USD 125	USD 70	USD 70
21	Mt.Phari Lapcha	6017m	Mahalangur	USD 250	USD 125	USD 70	USD 70
22	Mt.Yubra Himal	6048m	Langtang Himal	USD 250	USD 125	USD 70	USD 70
23	Paldor Peak	5903m	Langtang Himal	USD 250	USD 125	USD 70	USD 70
24	Pharchamo	6279m	Rolwaling Himal	USD 250	USD 125	USD 70	USD 70
25	Pisang Peak	6091m	Manang	USD 250	USD 125	USD 70	USD 70
26	Ramdung	5900m	Rolwaling Himal	USD 250	USD 125	USD 70	USD 70
27	Shigu Chuli (fluted peak)	6501m	Annapurna Himal	USD 400	USD 200	USD 100	USD 100

NMA Peaks

Service charge for Nepali citizen per person in Nepalese rupees

SN	Mountain/Peak	Height (m.)	Cost/Season Himalayan Range	Spring March-April-May	Autumn Sept-Oct-Nov	Winter Dec-Jan-Feb	Summer Jun-July-August
1	Chulu East	6584m	Damodar	Rs. 5000	Rs. 2500	Rs. 1250	Rs. 1250
2	Chulu West	6419m	Manang	Rs. 4000	Rs. 2000	Rs. 1000	Rs. 1000
3	Ganja-la Chuli (Naya Kanga)	5863m	Langtang Himal	Rs. 4000	Rs. 2000	Rs. 1000	Rs. 1000
4	Hiunchuli	6434m	Annapurna	Rs. 4000	Rs. 2000	Rs. 1000	Rs. 1000
5	Imja Tse(Island Peak)	6165m	Khumbu Himal	Rs. 4000	Rs. 2000	Rs. 1000	Rs. 1000
6	Khongma Tse(Mehara Peak)	5849m	Khumbu Himal	Rs. 4000	Rs. 2000	Rs. 1000	Rs. 1000
7	Kusum Kangru	6360m	Khumbu Himal	Rs. 4000	Rs. 2000	Rs. 1000	Rs. 1000
8	Kwangde	6086m	Khumbu Himal	Rs. 4000	Rs. 2000	Rs. 1000	Rs. 1000
9	Lobuje	6119m	Khumbu Himal	Rs. 4000	Rs. 2000	Rs. 1000	Rs. 1000
10	Mera Peak	6470m	Khumbu Himal	Rs. 4000	Rs. 2000	Rs. 1000	Rs. 1000
11	Mt.ABI	6043m	Mahalangur	Rs. 4000	Rs. 2000	Rs. 1000	Rs. 1000
12	Mt.Bokta	6114m	Kanchenjunga	Rs. 4000	Rs. 2000	Rs. 1000	Rs. 1000
13	Mt.Chekigo	6121m	Gaurishankar	Rs. 4000	Rs. 2000	Rs. 1000	Rs. 1000
14	Mt.Cholatse	6440m	Mahalangur	Rs. 4000	Rs. 2000	Rs. 1000	Rs. 1000
15	Mt.Kyazo Ri	6186m	Mahalangur	Rs. 4000	Rs. 2000	Rs. 1000	Rs. 1000
16	Mt.Langsisa Ri	6412m	Jugal	Rs. 4000	Rs. 2000	Rs. 1000	Rs. 1000
17	Mt.Larkya Peak	6416m	Manaslu	Rs. 4000	Rs. 2000	Rs. 1000	Rs. 1000
18	Mt.Lobuje West	6135m	Mahalangur	Rs. 4000	Rs. 2000	Rs. 1000	Rs. 1000
19	Mt.Nirekha	6159m	Mahalangur	Rs. 4000	Rs. 2000	Rs. 1000	Rs. 1000
20	Mt.Ombigaichen	6340m	Mahalangur	Rs. 4000	Rs. 2000	Rs. 1000	Rs. 1000
21	Mt.Phari Lapcha	6017m	Mahalangur	Rs. 4000	Rs. 2000	Rs. 1000	Rs. 1000
22	Mt.Yubra Himal	6048m	Langtang Himal	Rs. 4000	Rs. 2000	Rs. 1000	Rs. 1000
23	Paldor Peak	5903m	Langtang Himal	Rs. 4000	Rs. 2000	Rs. 1000	Rs. 1000
24	Pharchamo	6279m	Rolwaling Himal	Rs. 4000	Rs. 2000	Rs. 1000	Rs. 1000
25	Pisang Peak	6091m	Manang	Rs. 4000	Rs. 2000	Rs. 1000	Rs. 1000
26	Ramdung	5900m	Rolwaling Himal	Rs. 4000	Rs. 2000	Rs. 1000	Rs. 1000
27	Shigu Chuli(fluted peak)	6501m	Annapurna Himal	Rs. 5000	Rs. 2500	Rs. 1250	Rs. 1250

As per the decision of secretary level (MoCTCA) dated 2071/1/16, the insurance amount for sardar, mountain guide and high altitude worker is fixed as Rs 15 Lakhs. Similary, medical insurance is fixed as Rs 4 lakhs Mountain Heli-rescue of 10000 USD is also required.

Note: Maximum number of members in a team is 15

Garbage deposit to acquire climbing permit will be USD 500 for foreign climber and for Nepalese is Rs. 10,000. The refund shall be made as per the provisions of NMA.

Nepal Mountaineering Association

International Mountain Museum

Nepal Mountaineering Association (NMA)

Nepal Mountaineering Association (NMA) was established on 1st November 1973 (2030 Kartik 16) Thursday. It is a non-governmental, non-profit, and non-political organization working as a national alpine association of Nepal to promote mountain tourism, and climbing sports, protect mountain environments and preserve and promote the cultural heritage of mountain people. It is the only national alpine club authorized to issue climbing permits for 27 mountain peaks in Nepal. NMA is also a technical wing of the Government of Nepal for Mountaineering and Emergency Rescue. It is also an implementing agency of the Government of Nepal for organizing different celebrations of the Nepali Mountains including Mt. Everest and all the eight-thousanders.



NMA has the following 7 broader Objectives

A) Explore Mountain peaks and promote mountain & climbing tourism

B) Issue the climbing permits as agreed with the Government of Nepal

C) Protect and promote mountain people, culture, and heritage

D) Develop and promote skilled human capital for supporting mountain climbing

E) Develop Sports climbing tourism in Nepal

F) Emergency Rescue, Rehab, and Humanitarian support for needy individuals/community

G) Preserve the natural environment in the mountain region for a sustainable future.

What we do

1. **Production of skilled human capital:**

   The development of the mountaineering profession as a safe profession is one of the major objectives of NMA,

Details of training conducted by NMA (From 1979 to 2018)

Training	
Basic Mountaineering Training	1349
Advance Mountaineering Training	475
Mountain Leadership Training	93
Mountain Guide Training	33
Aspirant Guide Training	33

Scanned with CamScanner

therefore, it has trained 1983 mountaineers under different training categories since 1979. NMA in coordination with Nepal National Mountain Guide Association (NNMGA) has been conducting the Winter Aspirant Mountain Guide Course from 2007 This course is regarded as one of the highest courses in the field of mountaineering conducted in Nepal.

2. **Cleaning & Garbage management**

With the increasing numbers of visitors/climbers in the Nepalese mountains, the environment gets polluted day by day. Trails and base camp sites need much attention for cleaning and garbage management. NMA has been consistently engaging in such cleaning and environmental activities.

3. **Developing peak profile**

There are still hundreds of mountain peaks above 5,800 m. height in Nepal which are unnamed and yet to be explored. This is challenging, yet very important for the Nepalese mountain tourism industry. More products identified; more sales followed by more income. For that purpose, NMA has already prepared and published www.nepalhimalpeakprofile.org in coordination with the government of Nepal (Ministry of Culture, Tourism, and Civil Aviation).

4. **Building porter shelters**

Fulfilling the basic rights of mountain tourism workers



is necessary for the true development of sustainable tourism. During climbing activities, the porters and support staff need shelter for rest and a safe night. For this reason, NMA has been engaging in building porter shelters in high passes.

5. **Rope fixing & safety enhancement**

Some sections of the trails during climbing are very steep, rocky, and risky to cross. In such sections, NMA manages rope fixing and safety enhancement activities to minimize risks and support the climbers.

6. **New trail building**

As a major responsibility, NMA has been leading and providing every support in setting the route to the summit of new peaks. NMA strongly believes that this will help promote our expedition tourism.

7. **Policy building**

Based on practical experiences, NMA provides suggestions to the government to form tourism-friendly policies. Disaster preparedness, environment protection, safety enhancement, climate change adaptation, ethical tourism, and, overall, developing sustainable tourism policy are the concerns of NMA.

8. **Humanitarian support**

NMA supports children of mountain disaster victims, particularly the children of these guides, porters, and Nepalese climbers who succumbed to death during climbing activities. Currently, NMA has been providing a monthly allowance to disabled mountaineers and scholarships to the children of deceased mountaineers. NMA has been providing scholarships for the education of 52 children of such mountaineers and has also been providing medical allowances to three mountaineers who sustained serious injuries during the climbing activities. NMA also supports the people/communities which are victims of any natural disaster. NMA has also supported the rescue and rehabilitation of the 2015 mega earthquake victims.



9. Infrastructure Development Support

Construction and development of the International Mountain Museum in Pokhara, International Mountaineers Memorial Park in Kakani, Climbing Sports Training School in Manang, Porter shelters and toilets in high passes along the climbing routes of Mera Peak, new access trails to the newly explored peaks are some of the infrastructure development works carried out and completed by NMA. Being a responsible organization in the country, NMA has been planning many more mega projects to support mountain tourism in Nepal.

10. Promotional Events

NMA has been organizing different events to promote mountain tourism in Nepal. As an implementing agency of the Government of Nepal, NMA has been organizing golden and diamond jubilees of all the mountains above 8000 m of Nepal on the occasion of the first ascent. It has also successfully conducted General Assemblies of the International Climbing and Mountaineering Federation (UIAA) and the Union of Asian Alpine Associations (UAAA) and Himalayan Host Countries.

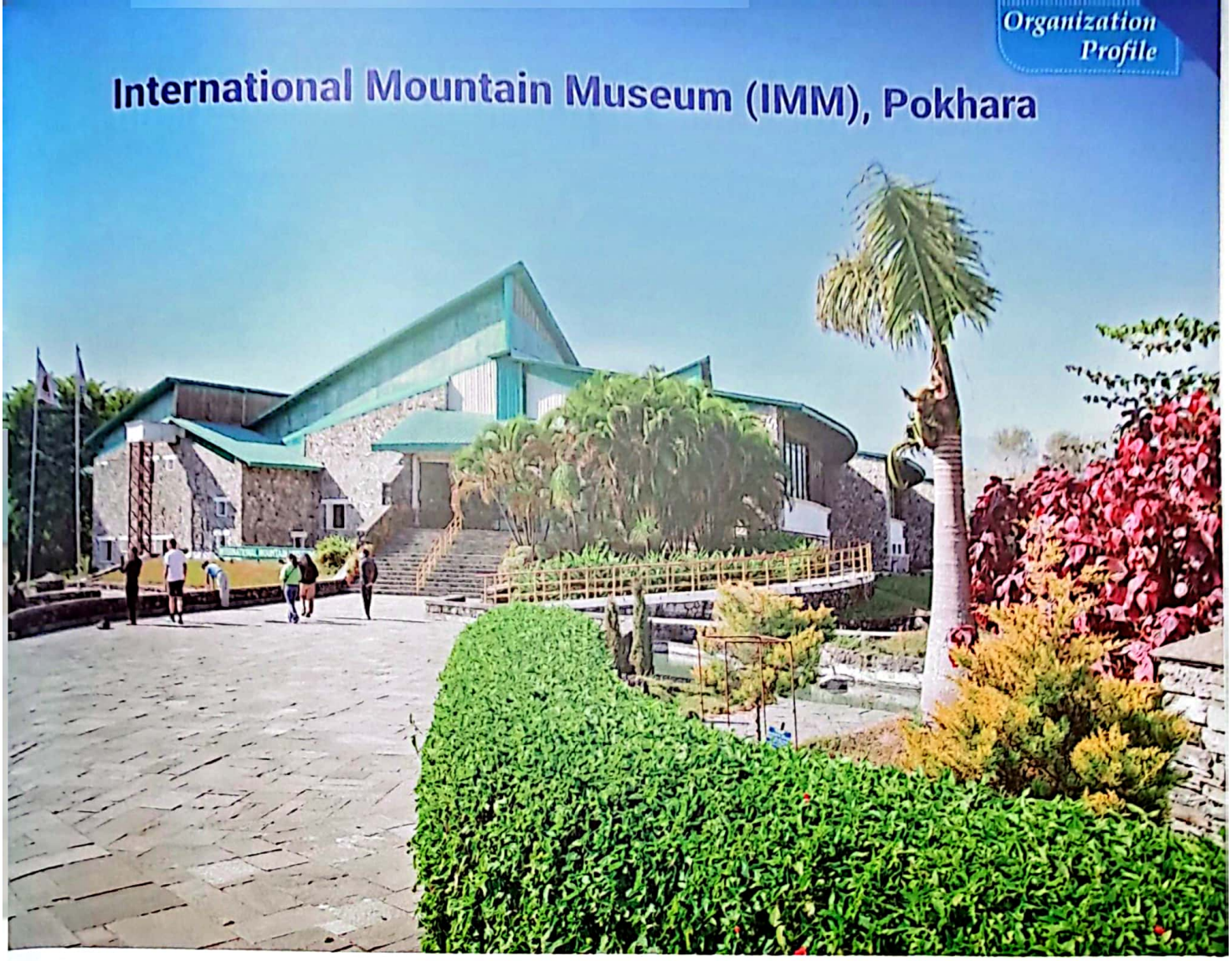
11. Exploring new peaks and destinations

One of the major responsibilities of NMA is to explore new peaks and promote them for climbing activities. To abide by this responsibility, with the approval of the Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation (MoCTCA), NMA has led the campaign of finding new peaks in Nepal and chronicling its data with its photos.

International relations:

NMA is an active member of the International Climbing and Mountaineering Federation (UIAA), the Union of Asian Alpine Associations (UAAA), and the International Mountain Tourism Alliance (IMTA). Through regular and active participation in the general assemblies, NMA has become successful in disseminating information about our mountain tourism policy and mountaineering training and voicing against the effects of global warming on mountains. NMA has also signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with various international organizations like the Alpine Club of Slovenia, Petzl Foundation-France, Chhungbuk Alpine Federation-South Korea, Seoul Alpine Federation of South Korea, and Alex Lowe Charitable Foundation- America to conduct various mountaineering activities.

International Mountain Museum (IMM), Pokhara



Nepal Mountaineering Association (NMA) established the International Mountain Museum (IMM), the only mountain museum of its kind in the world, in Pokhara, the city of Lake. It was officially inaugurated on 5th February 2004. The first disabled-friendly museum of Nepal has been established with the specific purpose of recording, documenting, and chronicling the various developments and changes that have taken place primarily in three areas namely people residing in the mountains of the world, the historic and scientific information about the origin of the global mountain system and the various activities which have established world records in the field of mountaineering and related activities. It is one unique place where Man, Mountain, and Mountaineering Activities meet under one roof.

In tune with the set of objectives, the museum exhibits include mountains, their people and culture, the world mountain system, their geological formation, mountain flora, and fauna, and those related to mountain such as mountaineering, skiing, etc. In addition, the museum also displays mountaineering history and the development of mountaineering techniques and equipment over the years.

The aim is to develop the International Mountain Museum (IMM) as the International Mountain Studies Centre (IMSC) by enhancing its archives which will prove helpful for the researchers in the above areas of study.

Location

Pokhara, where IMM is situated, is an idyllic city of 200km. to the west of Kathmandu, the capital of Nepal, and at an altitude of 827m. above the sea level. Pokhara is the ideal destination for the museum as it boasts of the serenity of the lakes and the awe-inspiring Himalayas in the background creating an ambiance of tranquility and magical spell.

Pokhara was chosen as the site for the IMM because of the scenic location and lies in the laps of the mighty Annapurna range and the first ascended above eight-



thousand m. peak Annapurna I (8091m) by Maurice Herzog and Louis Lachenal on 3 June 1950. Moreover, almost every visitor to Nepal has Pokhara on their itinerary.

Pokhara is also a starting point for mountaineering, trekking, and rafting destinations. A visit to Nepal without a sojourn to Pokhara is considered incomplete. And, while in Pokhara, a must-visit is the IMM which has spread over a total floor area of 4,242 square- meters on 12.5 acres of land.

Museum Layout

The International Mountain Museum has four exhibit halls open to visitors.

Hall of Mountain People (Basement Floor)

It has two sections and the museum starts from this hall.

Mountain People of Nepal

To familiarize the visitors with the customs, traditions, and culture of the mountain people of Nepal, the dresses, ornaments, musical instruments, household utensils and cultural activities of the Sherpa, Gurung, Tamang, Thakali, Chhantyal, Pun Magar, Yakkha, Rai, Limbu, and Sunuwar have been displayed in this section.

Mountain People of the World

This section introduces the visitors to mountain people of other countries e.g., Taiwan, Slovenia, and Japan, and compares images of the alpine mountain people of Europe from more than fifty years back and present-day Nepal.

The Mandala

In the center of the Hall of Mountain People, a Sand Mandala created by artist Lama Ngawang Kechha Sherpa has been exhibited. It is made of colored sand and is certain to attract visitors to the museum.

Mountain Festival

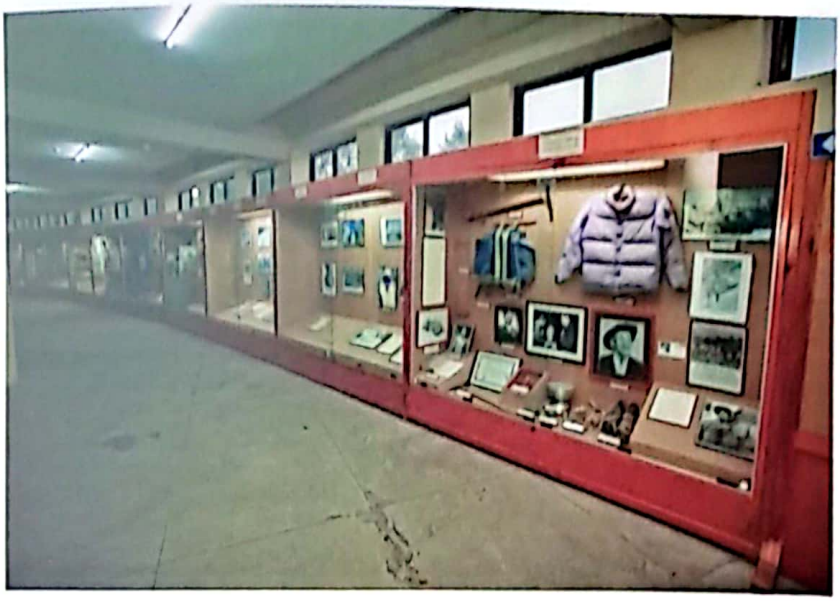
Mountains cover approximately 27 percent of the Earth's total land surface and are home to more than 12 percent of the world's population, yet the sustainability of mountains and mountain communities is rarely given priority in most national policies and frameworks. To raise awareness on this issue the United Nations designated December 11th as International Mountain Day, which was first observed in 2003. Since then, the international community has been organizing many events globally that have focused on issues specific to mountains and mountain people.

Building upon this worldwide promotion, an annual mountain festival is likewise being proposed in Nepal. Nepal Mountaineering Association (NMA) has been the major actor in organizing mountain festivals in Nepal.

The 7th edition of the Mountain Festival has been grandly organized on the premises of the



International Mountain Museum (IMM) from 10-11 December 2022. The festival itself has proved to be the best platform to showcase mountain products and discuss the issues and problems posed by global warming and encountered by mountain people.



Nepal is a landlocked country containing eight of the world's highest peaks within the vast Himalayan range that defines the country's Northern border. The importance of mountains and mountain sustainability is a critical socio-economic issue for the country. Mountains are a great source of natural resources but are also extremely vulnerable to current global challenges. Climate change, deforestation, land degradation, and natural disasters adversely affect the life of mountain populations. The Annual Mountain Festival proposes to be a venue to address these issues and create space to develop resources for sound environmental and economically viable opportunities, ultimately improving the living standard of mountain communities.

The main objective of the event is to help enhance the livelihood of mountain communities, climate change and adaptations, mountain farming and its importance for sustainable development, and the different sources of income. Mountain environments provide such as tourism, high-value mountain products, and handicrafts. The festival will also highlight the opportunities and constraints for mountain development and help build partnerships between relevant stakeholders that will bring positive changes to the Himalayan Mountains.



Manang Mountaineering School



Manang Mountaineering School is another major project of NMA. It was established on 12th November 1979 with the objective to provide theoretical as well as technical knowledge to young mountaineers of Nepal and Foreign countries. The school is situated at an altitude of 3400 m in a remote area of Manang district in West Nepal. The school was founded with the cooperation of the Yugoslav Mountaineering Federation of former Yugoslavia. The school building was inaugurated by former Rt. Hon'ble Prime Minister Mr. Surya Bahadur Thapa on Kartik 29, 2037 (November 14, 1980).

The Manang Mountaineering School at Humde, Manang is the very first mountaineering training school built in Nepal in 1979 to provide the knowledge for safe climbing to Sherpa and other Nepalese, who were a crucial part of foreign expeditions to summit the Himalayas.

History of the establishment of Manang Mountaineering School

Slovene alpinists summited the Annapurna II in 1964 and Kanchenjunga in 1969. Seven alpinists of then Yugoslavia summited the Makalu under the leadership of Mr. Ales Kunaver in 1975. After successfully leading the Yugoslav expedition to Makalu in 1975, Mr. Ales Kunaver was in a great dilemma to choose to lead the expedition to Mount Everest planned for 1979 or to establish a school for mountain guides in Nepal. He chose the letter requested by the Government of then Yugoslavia to establish a mountain guide school in Manang. The assistance of the Consulate General of Nepal in Slovenia, Mr. Aswin Kumar Shrestha played a vital role in making a bridge between NMA and the Alpine Association of Slovenia - PZS for mutual cooperation, especially in running the school for mountain guides in Manang. The Alpine Association of Slovenia was very keen to develop a Training school in Nepal to enhance the skill and knowledge of Nepalese in Mountaineering. To support such a great project Nepal Mountaineering Association fully supported by providing land and necessary legal guidance to establish the Mountaineering School at Manang.

In 1979, in Sabji Khola, Humde, Manang Mountaineering School was established with the financial support of then Yugoslavia and the Government of Slovenia and the great effort and selfless help of Mr. Ales Kunaver, Yugoslav Alpinist and leader of many expeditions.

International Mountaineers Memorial Park (IMMP), Kakani

NMA has always accorded deep respect and has kept its tradition of honoring mountaineers. However, the hazards of mountain climbing are always there. It needs no mention that tragedies do occur on the high mountains which sometimes proves unavoidable.

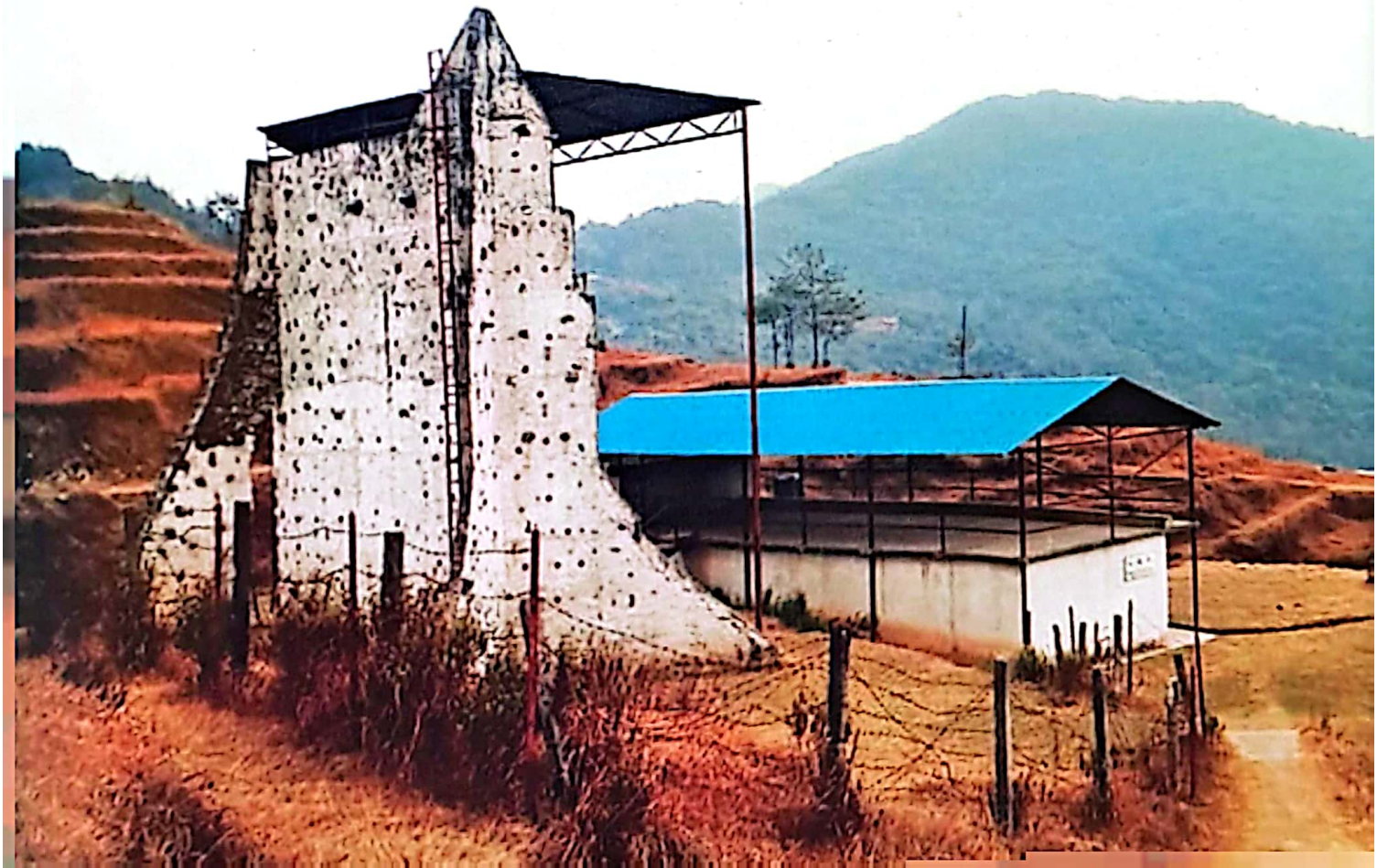
As an attempt to reduce tragedies of fatalities, NMA has been conducting mountaineering training for interested people. The mountain climbing training that NMA has been conducting for many years has reduced the number of accidents in the Himalayas. This is a great achievement for an association that promotes mountaineering activities.

The safety and welfare of the mountaineers have remained a major concern. But, at times, tragedies cannot be avoided and the fury of nature in the form of snowstorms, avalanches, and so on has led to the death of several mountaineers including the famous ones.

Those who succeed receive the limelight but those who die are forgotten after some time. This is why NMA has been working on the idea of establishing the International Mountaineers Memorial Park to perpetuate the memory of those mountaineers who have passed away. It is NMA's conviction that the deceased mountaineers must be paid respect even though they are not with us. Their endeavors and courage even during adverse conditions must receive attention. Likewise, many mountaineers have met unfortunate death while on the mountains. They also must be respected and honored.

The Government of Nepal granted us 144 ropanis of land at Kakani in 1996 for the purpose. The foundation laying ceremony was held on May 28 1998 on the occasion of Visit Nepal-98. Since then, with a limited budget, NMA has built a shed for gatekeepers, a 1000 m-long fencing wall, and toilets.

Presently, NMA is working on a master plan proposed to develop the park as one of the finest newly added tourism products in Nepal. The master plan includes a memorial park, recreation center, conference hall, picnic spots, helipad, etc. The International Mountaineers Memorial Park could also be instrumental in attracting tourists as well as people from within the country so that they would be able to learn the risks that mountaineers face while on expeditions. They will also realize that mountaineering involves great dangers and those who face it must be respected.



Annapurna Rescue Center

Annapurna rescue center is a primary search and rescue facility at Annapurna base camp, which will be staffed by supervisory personnel and equipped for coordinating and controlling search and rescue operations in the Annapurna region. This is a joint cooperation of Korean Telecom, Nepal Mountaineering Association, and Um Hong Gil Foundation for speedy action in rescue during the time of emergency.

In November 2019, Korean Telecom, Korea's largest telephone company, completed the construction of the rescue center incorporating cutting-edge information and communication technology at the main entrance to the base camp of Machhapuchhre in Annapurna.

Annapurna Rescue Center will help to provide safety in the tourism industry of Annapurna and other regions. This will improve quick response against emergencies with information technology for tourists in Annapurna and other regions of Nepal. This will enable tourists to get relief to travel and trek in Nepal. The center will use a specialized drone that has an infrared heat sensor so that it can effectively locate missing tourists. The drone will also have a camera and a medicine box. Solo trekkers will also be able to take a sensor with them which will be synced with the drone. The sensor will give the trekker's exact location to the rescue center.



Nepal Mountaineering Association Committees

NMA Advisory Committee

1. Ang Tshering Sherpa	Chief Advisor
2. Dr. Ganesh Gurung	Advisor
3. Buddhi Narayan Shrestha	Advisor
4. Dawa Phuti Sherpa	Advisor
5. Bikram Pandey	Advisor
6. Mingma Sherpa	Advisor
7. Krishna KC	Advisor

IMM Advisory Committee

1. Dipak Mahat	Chief-advisor
2. Purna Kunwar	Advisor
3. Nawaraj Dahal	Advisor
4. Kumar Thapa	Advisor
5. Mingma Gelu Sherpa	Advisor
6. Hari Dhoj Tulachan	Advisor
7. Rekha Bahadur Adhikari	Advisor
8. Agni Prasad Kadel	Advisor
9. Jeewan Raj Sapkota	Advisor

International Mountain Museum Committee

1. Thakur Raj Pandey	Convener
2. Shes Kanta Sharma	Member
3. Dharma Raj Panthi	Member
4. Amar Jung Gurung	Member
5. Babar Jung Gurung	Member
6. Ram Chandra Karki	Member
7. Dipendra Pandey (Kapil)	Member

Training & Expedition Committee

1. Ang Dawa Sherpa	Convener
2. Lal Bahadur Waiba	Co-Convener
3. Dawa Yangzum Sherpa	Member
4. Sanjib Gurung	Member
5. Pasang Lama	Member
6. Dawa Tashi Sherpa	Member
7. Ram Kaji Tiwari (Prayas)	Member
8. Vinayak Jaya Malla	Member
9. Hare Ram Khadka	Member

Welfare Committee

1. Mr. Da Gelje Sherpa	Convener
2. Nima Doma Sherpa	Co- Convener
3. Santosh Dhakal	Member
4. Bharat Sapkota	Member
5. Urja Tamang	Member
6. Jiwan Thapaliya	Member
7. Bishnu Pandey	Member
8. Kamala Gurung	Member
9. Kishor Nepal	Member
10. Puru Rimal	Member
11. Madhav Dawadi	Member
12. Rajan Acharya	Member
13. Gokul Sapkota	Member

Environment Conservation Committee

1. Singi Lama	Convener
2. Dawa Stephen Sherpa	Co- Convenor
3. Prakash Adhikari	Member
4. Sange Lama	Member
5. Chenga Tshering Sherpa	Member
6. Dipesh Thapalia	Member
7. Ramesh Lamsal	Member
8. Ritu Gyamdang	Member
9. Jeewan Thapa Magar	Member
10. Jiwan Thapaliya	Member
11. Rishi Prasad Nepal	Member
12. Kiran Dharel	Member
13. Sonam Yangji Sherpa	Member
14. Phurba Sherpa	Member
15. Gopal Gurung	Member
16. Japan Rai	Member
17. Jaya Babu Bhote	Member

Mountain Rescue Committee

1. Dinesh Tamang	Convener
2. Pasang Rinji Sherpa	Member
3. Lala Gurung	Member
4. Gagan Neupane	Member
5. Prakash Kapri	Member
6. Junga Bahadur Lama	Member
7. Rajesh Simkhada	Member
8. Subash K.C	Member
9. Gupta Bahadur Bhandari	Member
10. Babu Sitaula	Member
11. Dhurba Dharel	Member

IMM Park Committee

1. Diwas Pokhrel	Convenor
2. Dil Bahadur Gurung	Member

3.	Jas Bahadur Rai	Member
4.	Thakur Prasad Dharel	Member
5.	Shanta Kumar Baniya	Member
6.	Gopal Thapa	Member
7.	Ram Khadka	Member
8.	Bal Bahadur Samari	Member
9.	Rajendra Prasad Subedi	Member
10.	Shankar Adhikari	Member
11.	Diki Sherpa	Member

Code of Conduct Monitoring Committee

1.	Mohan Lamsal	Convener
2.	Karna Lama	Co-Convener
3.	Ishwari Adhikari	Member
4.	Prakash Kumar Acharya	Member
5.	Dandu Raj Ghimire	Member
6.	Rudra Singh Tamang	Member
7.	Mira Acharya	Member
8.	B.B Thapa	Member
9.	Baburam Karki	Member

Local Development Committee

1.	Nakul Devkota	Convener
2.	Arun Adhikari	Member
3.	Pawan Khadka	Member
4.	Shiva Gurung	Member
5.	Hari Sharan Sapkota	Member
6.	Nirmala Devi Sharma	Member
7.	Balaram Neupane	Member
8.	Arjun Tamang	Member
9.	Temba Lama Tamang	Member
10.	Lakpa Dorchi Sherpa	Member
11.	Sital Dharel	Member

Public Relation Committee

1.	Kishan Gurung	Convener
2.	Khom Raj Adhikari	Member
3.	Kabindra Sapkota	Member
4.	Dhurba Adhikari	Member
5.	Shiva Bhandari	Member
6.	Janga Bahadur Rai	Member
7.	Binod Ramu Acharya	Member
8.	Hom Bahadur Khadka	Member
9.	Ramesh Dhakal	Member
10.	Indra Bhatta	Member
11.	Madan Bhandari	Member
12.	Rajan Thapa	Member

Manang Mountaineering Training School Committee

1.	Tul Singh Gurung	Convener
2.	Basu Rimal	Member
3.	Laxman Aryal	Member
4.	Dhurba Khanal	Member
5.	Som Gurung	Member
6.	Simbir Ghale	Member
7.	Rajendra Bhatta	Member
8.	Mukunda Pokhrel	Member
9.	Madav Dhamala	Member
10.	Dipak Khadka	Member
11.	Ram Prasad Banjara	Member
12.	Lam Babu Sherpa	Member
13.	Pimba Tenzing Lama	Member

Peak Profile Committee

1.	Ang Norbu Sherpa	Convener
2.	Tilak Lama	Member
3.	Khim Lal Gautam	Member
4.	Rabin Karki	Member
5.	Milan Lama	Member
6.	Paban Shakya	Member
7.	Kisham Kumari Gurung	Member
8.	Som Thapa	Member
9.	Sanjib Gurung	Member
10.	Phu Doma Sherpa	Member
11.	Kalpana Maharjan	Member
12.	Keshar Shrestha	Member
13.	Lakpa Tenji Sherpa	Member
14.	Saroj Neupane	Member
15.	Tanzing Gyalzen Lama	Member
16.	Man Bahadur Khatri	Member
17.	Vinaya Shakya	Member

Publication & Publicity Committee

1.	Pitamber Gurung	Convener
2.	Pashupati Kandel	Member
3.	Lachhuman Tamang	Member
4.	Pemba Bhote	Member
5.	Rinje Sherpa	Member
6.	L.P Sherpa	Member

7. Chandan Thapa	Member
8. Puspa Raj Parajuli	Member
9. Maya Garbuja Pun	Member
10. Abir Malla	Member
11. Siddha Raj Rai	Member
12. Julee Gurung	Member
13. Satish Man Pati	Member
14. Dev Adhikari	Member
15. Bimala Gurung	Member
16. Danda Gurung	Member

Provincial Chapter Coordination Committee

1. Dhan Bahadur Gurung	Convenor
2. Suman Parajuli	Co-Convenor
3. Ambar Tamang	Member
4. Hari Adhikari	Member
5. Bheg Bahadur Gurung	Member
6. Umesh Danai	Member
7. Rajendra Dhamala	Member
8. Govinda Pathak	Member
9. Narayan Khanal	Member
10. Pradip Acharya	Member
11. Amrit Gurung	Member

Provincial and Local Committee

1. Bimal Naharki	Convenor
2. Kishor Rajbhandari	Member
3. Jaswa Pandey	Member
4. Pradip Tamang	Member
5. Rabindra Maharjan	Member
6. Sanat Bahadur Gurung	Member
7. Lekhnath Mishra	Member
8. Govinda Dahal	Member
9. Narayan Sundar Shrestha	Member
10. Swaraj Shakya	Member
11. Barun Mehata	Member

Relation Extension Committee

1. Ram Chandra Dhamala	Convener
2. Sumina Gurung	Member
3. Krishna Subedi	Member
4. Buddha Kumari Adhikari	Member
5. Ishwar Thapaliya	Member
6. Anisha Shrestha	Member
7. Ramesh Shrestha	Member
8. Binod Acharya	Member
9. Dilip Kumar Bhusal	Member
10. Ishwor Pokhrel	Member
11. Gopal Shrestha	Member
12. Pramod Baniya	Member
13. Gokarna Pokhrel	Member
14. Min Prasad Bhatta	Member
15. Pradip Pandit	Member
16. Sudarshan Nepal	Member
17. Keshab Gurung	Member

Event Management Committee

1. Namaraj Gauli	Convener
2. Rita Adhikari	Member
3. Keshab Prasad Sharma	Member
4. Ram Hari Adhikari	Member
5. Arun Sapkota	Member
6. Nawaraj Subedi	Member
7. Devi Gauli	Member
8. Kami Sherpa	Member
9. Pasang Ngima Sherpa	Member
10. Lakpa Dorji Sherpa	Member
11. Gokul Thapa	Member
12. Paras Mani Amgain	Member
13. Dayanidhi (Dipendra) Dhakal	Member
14. Amir Gurung	Member
15. Durga Bahadur Basnet	Member

Mountaineering Tourism Promotion Committee

1. Rajendra Bahadur Lama	Convener
2. Prakash Chandra Devkota	Member
3. Arjun Simkhada	Member
4. Karmajit Thapa	Member
5. Narayan Kharel	Member
6. Dipak Sapkota	Member
7. Thakur Khanal	Member
8. Dipak Dahal	Member
9. Subash Bhandari	Member
10. Bhim Bogati	Member
11. Gopal Shrestha	Member
12. sahadev Dhamala (Bimal)	Member
13. Pradip Acharya	Member

Rope Fixing and Mountain Rekei Management Committee

1. Pasang Dawa Sherpa	Convener
2. Lama Babu Sherpa	Co- Convener
3. Pimba Tenzing Lama	Member
4. Mingma T Lama	Member
5. Phunjo Lama	Member
6. Chhimi Gurung	Member
7. Tashi Ghale	Member
8. Man Raj Gurung	Member
9. Prakash Gurung	Member
10. Ram Gurung	Member
11. Kalyan Gurung	Member
12. Subash Gurung	Member
13. Bikram Karki	Member
14. Subba Lama	Member
15. Sarbajit Thapa	Member

International Relation Extension Committee

1. Bikram Pandey	Convener
2. Ngawa Ngima Sherpa	Co- Convener
3. Nawaraj Pandey	Member
4. Tej Gurung	Member
5. Dina Nath Panta	Member
6. Dev Raj Jaisi	Member
7. Krishna Bahadur Mahara	Member
8. Yadu Lamichchane	Member
9. Bidur Khatiwada	Member
10. Raj Kumar Dhamala	Member
11. Ram Chandra Dhauniya	Member
12. Rakesh Dhamala	Member
13. Bishnu Lamsal	Member
14. Dev Raj Dhakal	Member
15. Krishna Prasad Dahal	Member

Nepal Mountaineering Association Staff

NMA Secretariat, Nagpokhari, Naxal

Kul Prasad Rai- Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
Jinesh Sindurakar Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)
Radhika Syangwa- Chief Account Officer
Raj Kumar Tamang- Account Officer
Dipendra Gurung- Communication Officer
Laxmi Gurung- Program Officer
Kamala Katwal Thapa- Procurement Officer
Pramila Sigdel- Account Assistant
Rabina Gurung- Receptionist
Satya Narayan Raya- Office Asistant
Puspa Raj Dhakal- Office Assistant
Thulo Kanchha Tamang- Gardener
Rosha Bista- Intern
Shree Narayan Lama- Security Guard
Asta Man Tamang- Security Guard
Shyam Kumar Tamang- Security Guard

Kakani Memorial Park Staff

Sanu Tamang- Security Guard

Manang Mountaineering School Staff

Karma Gurung- Watchman

International Mountain Museum Staff

Nirmala Neupane- Executive Director (ED)
Rishiram Poudel- Administrative Officer
Rajan Joshi- Assitant Museum Curator
Ujjwal Adhikari- Store and Admin Assistant
Bhawana Sharma- Admin and Account Assistant
Lekh Bahadur Bhujel- Office Assistant
Bin Bahadur Nepali- Technical Assistant
Bijay Kumar Lama- Museum Guide
Sarita Kadel- Museum Guide
Pooja Tamang- Lakhang Guide
Shrijana Gauchan- Ticket Seller
Purna Dhoj Thakali- Ticket Checker
Samjhana Aryal- Ticket Seller
Bishnu Maya Devkota- Ticket Seller
Apsara Poudel- Ticket Checker
Ram Bahadur Thapa- Cleaning Supervisor
Om Bahadur Thapa- Gardening Supervisor
Juna Devi Kunwar- Cleaner/ Gardener
Devi Poudel- Cleaner/ Gardener
Saraswati Nepali- Cleaner/ Gardener
Maya Devi Sharma – Cleaner/ Gardener

Official Handover Program



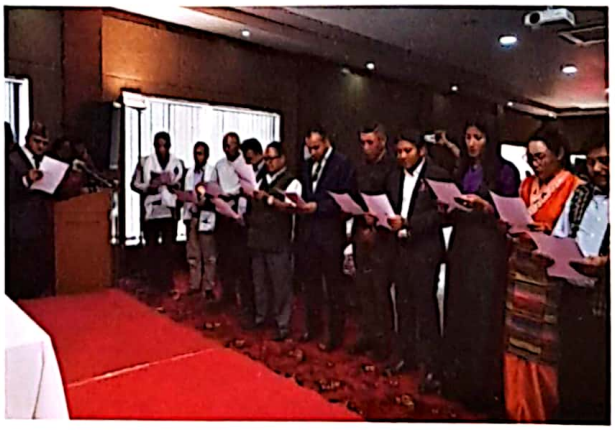
The newly elected executive body of the Nepal Mountaineering Association (NMA) assumed office on June 24, 2022, at a function held at Aranya Boutique Hotel and NMA Secretariat in Nagpokhari Naxal. Honorable Pushpa Kamal Dahal, the chief guest of the function, handed over the certificate of election to the newly elected executive body.

In the handover ceremony, outgoing President Mr. Santa Bir Lama handed over the Minute of the Central Executive Board to newly elected President Mr. Nima Nuru Sherpa. Likewise, outgoing General Secretary Mr. Kul Bahadur Gurung handed over the minute of the Central Secretariate to the newly elected General Secretary Mr. Mohan Lamsal, and outgoing Treasurer Mr. Sudarshan Neupane handed over the cheques and bank accounts to the newly elected Treasurer Mr. Mukti Pandey.

The 27-member NMA executive body was elected through an election held on June 10 and 11, 2022, at Nepal Academy Hall in Kamaladi, Kathmandu. Before assuming the office, the newly elected NMA executive team took the oath of secrecy from the chief election officer, advocate Dr. Gokul Prasad Burlakoti.







7th Mountain Festival at Pokhara

Nepal Mountaineering Association (NMA) successfully organized the 7th Mountain Festival on the occasion of International Mountain Day. The 7th Mountain Festival was inaugurated by Rt. Honorable Vice President of Nepal, Mr. Nanda Bahadur Pun at International Mountain Museum (IMM) premises Rato Pairo Pokhara. On the occasion, NMA awarded dozens





of renowned climbers with outstanding achievement medals. Among them, Mr. Kami Rita Sherpa holds the record for the most successful ascent of Mt. Everest, and Mr. Sanu Sherpa completed the double ascent of all the 14 eight-thousanders. Other climbers were also felicitated for their unique achievements. The festival showcased mountain products, documentaries, sports, and various sessions over two days.

Courtesy Call by Newly Elected Board

The Central Executive Board of Nepal Mountaineering Association (NMA) paid a courtesy call to the top brass of various political parties of Nepal including the then Rt. Honorable Prime Minister of Nepal Mr. Sher Bahadur Deuba, Chairman of CPN-UML Mr. KP Sharma Oli, Chairman of Maoist-Centre Mr, Puspa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' and Chairman of CPN Socialist Mr. Madhav Kumar Nepal.











Nepal Mountaineering Association (NMA) on June 30, 2022, paid a courtesy call to Honorable Minister for Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation Mr. Jeevan Ram Shrestha and congratulated him on his appointment. NMA's President Mr. Nima Nuru Sherpa, Senior Vice President Thakur Raj Pandey, Secretary Dhan Bahadur Gurung, Central Executive Committee Members Mr. Rajendra Bahadur Lama, Mr. Namgyal Zangbu Sherpa, Mr. Pitambar Gurung, Mr. Lal Bahadur Waiba, Mr. Singi Lama, Mr. Lama Babu Sherpa, Mr. Dinesh Tamang ,Ms. Doma Sherpa and Chief Executive Officer Mr. Kul Prasad Rai presented a frame of congratulations to the Honorable minister wishing him a successful tenure.



Nepal Mountaineering Association (NMA) congratulated the newly appointed Secretary of Culture, Tourism, and Civil Aviation (MoCTCA) Mr. Suresh Adhikari. NMA President Mr. Nima Nuru Sherpa, Senior Vice President Mr. Thakur Raj Pandey, and General Secretary Mr. Mohan Lamsal visited the Ministry at Singhadurbar and congratulated Mr. Adhikari with a Khada, bouquet, and a frame of the congratulatory letter on 30th August 2022.



The Executive Board of Nepal Mountaineering Association (NMA) paid a courtesy call to then Finance Minister of Gandaki Province Hon'ble Ramji Prasad Baral "Jeevan" at his office. The NMA team led by Senior Vice President Mr. Thakur Raj Pandey discussed various issues regarding the development and renovation of International Mountain Museum (IMM) infrastructures.



Nepal Mountaineering Association (NMA) on 8th August 2022 welcomed the newly appointed Director General (DG) of the Department of Tourism (DoT) Mr. Hom Prasad Luitel. NMA welcomed the DG during 6th Executive Board Meeting at NMA secretariat Nagpokhari Naxal. President of NMA Mr. Nima Nuru Sherpa welcomed the DG with a bouquet, khada, and a letter of appreciation. Senior Vice President Mr. Thakur Raj Pandey, first Vice President Mr. Ang Dawa Sherpa, General Secretary Mr. Mohan Lamsal, Secretary Mr. Dhan Bahadur Gurung, Treasurer Mr. Mukti Pandey, and all the board members also welcomed the DG with khada. Mr. Luitel has succeeded Mr. Taranath Adhikari at DoT. The chief of the DoT represents the government in NMA as a board member.

High Level Visit at IMM

Then Rt. Honorable Prime Minister Mr. Sher Bahadur Deuba visited the International Mountain Museum (IMM) at Rato Pairo Pokhara. Rt Honorable Deuba was welcomed at IMM Premises by the President of Nepal Mountaineering Association (NMA) Mr. Nima Nuru Sherpa and other dignitaries. One of the major tourism products in Pokhara, IMM is a major entity of NMA. Likewise, the Honorable Minister for Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation (MoCTCA) Mr. Sudan Kirati, then Honorable Chief Minister of Gandaki Province Mr. Khagaraj Adhikari, Deputy Speakers of Gandaki Province and Lumbinee Province Ms. Bina Kumari Thapa and Mrs. Menuka Khand KC, Deputy Mayor of Dharan Mr. Aindra Bikram Begha and Officer's group of Nepal Army Staff College also visited the IMM on various occasions. Also, President of UAAA (Union of Asian Alpine Associations) Mr. In-Jeong Lee and Secretary General Ms. Christine Pae and the consulate of the Republic of South Korea visited the IMM.









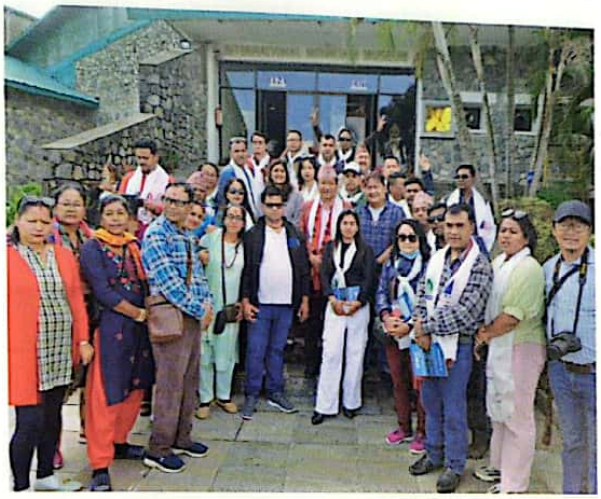














Scanned with CamScanner

International Participation (UIAA & UAAA)







Nepal Mountaineering Association (NMA) participated in the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the International Climbing and Mountaineering Federation (UIAA) on 29th October 2022 in Banff, Canada. On behalf of NMA, President Mr. Nima Nuru Sherpa and General Secretary Mr. Mohan Lamsal represented NMA in the AGM. Director General of the Department of Tourism Mr. Hom Prasad Luitel also accompanied the NMA delegation to the AGM. NMA delegates had requested UIAA AGM to allow it to host the 2025 UIAA General Assembly and 2024 Management Committee meeting in Nepal. The NMA team also presented the proposal for the joint expedition of Khangchung (UIAA peak) on the occasion of NMA's Golden Jubilee in 2024. However, UIAA AGM remained undecided on all these requests.



Nepal Mountaineering Association (NMA) participated in the Annual General Meeting of the Union of Asian Alpine Associations (UAAA) on 27th November 2022 held at Jaypee Vasant Continental Hotel in New Delhi, India. The President of NMA Mr. Nima Nuru Sherpa and General Secretary Mr. Mohan Lamsal participated in the AGM. The AGM, responding to its formal request, had awarded NMA to host the 2023 UAAA AGM in Nepal.



Nepal Mountaineering Association (NMA) celebrated its 49th anniversary on 1st November 2022, with representatives from various tourism organizations extending their best wishes. On NMA Day, an NMA flag was hoisted, a cake was sliced, and the guests remembered its founder members. Chief Advisor of NMA Mr. Ang Tshering Sherpa, Immediate Past President of NMA Mr. Santa Bir Lama, President of Trekking Agencies Association of Nepal (TAAN) Mr. Nil Hari Bastola, Director of the Mountaineering Department under the Department of Tourism Yubaraj Khatiwada and Deputy Superintendent of Tourist Police Suganda Shrestha, UIAA Management Committee Member and former General Secretary of NMA Mr. Kul Bahadur Gurung, UIAA Mountain Protection Commission member and advisor of NMA Dr. Ganesh Gurung, Former President Mr. Tashi Jangbu Sherpa, advisor Mr. Bikram Pandey along with representatives of various tourism umbrella organizations graced the event.

NMA welcomed its newly appointed advisors





Nepal Mountaineering Association (NMA) welcomed the chief advisor and advisors in a function at the NMA secretariat Nagpokhari, Naxal on 22nd August 2022. President Mr. Nima Nuru Sherpa handed over a letter of appointment and welcomed them with Khada and bouquet. Former President and Mountain Tourism expert Mr. Ang Tshering Sherpa was appointed as a chief advisor and Dr. Ganesh Gurung, geographer Mr. Buddhi Narayan Shrestha, former ambassador Ms. Dawa Futi Sherpa, tourism entrepreneur Mr. Bikram Pandey, 1st Nepali 14 eight thousanders summitter Mr. Mingma Sherpa and politician Mr. Krishna KC as its advisor.





NMA hosted a discussion program on the impact of global warming, with key speakers including BBC's Global Environment Correspondent Mr. Navin Singh Khadka, and NMA's Chief Advisor Mr. Ang Tshering Sherpa at Aranya Boutique Hotel on 4th April 2023. The program highlighted the impact of global warming and the need for urgent action to mitigate its impact. The program was attended by representatives from ICIMOD, WWF Nepal, and other tourism organizations, with Senior Vice President Mr. Thakur Raj Pandey as the chair of the program. The NMA Environment Conservation Committee Convenor Mr. Singi Lama welcomed the guests, while NMA President Mr. Nima Nuru Sherpa expressed his gratitude to all participants. The program was moderated by NMA's General Secretary Mr. Mohan Lamsal.



During a meeting on April 13th, 2023, ICIMOD officials at the Living Mountain Lab in Godavari expressed their commitment to supporting the development of the International Mountain Museum (IMM) as a research center for students. However, the ICIMOD will work gradually to live up its commitment. The meeting was attended by NMA's President Mr. Nima Nuru Sherpa, Advisor Dr. Ganesh Gurung, and Senior Vice-President Mr. Thakur Raj Pandey.



Nepal Mountaineering Association (NMA) organized a program on 23rd September 2022 to commemorate the 16th death anniversary of Dr. Harka Gurung, a renowned scholar, geographer, politician, and one of the founding members of NMA. Dr. Gurung's outstanding contributions in the field of population and geographical distribution of Nepal, migration, and study of Nepal's mountains were discussed at the event. Dr. Gurung's publications helped to identify many new peaks in Nepal, and he played a pivotal role in setting up a mechanism to professionally regulate the mountain tourism of Nepal.



Nabil Bank donated 5 lakhs to Nepal Mountaineering Association (NMA) for the welfare of the children of deceased mountaineers. The branch manager, Ms. Mona Sharma, handed over the dummy cheque to NMA's president, Mr. Nima Nuru Sherpa on 22 August 2022. NMA currently supports 50 such students and 3 differently-abled mountaineers. The donation was welcomed by Mr. Sherpa, who thanked the bank for its support. The program was moderated by the General Secretary and attended by several members of the Central Executive Board.

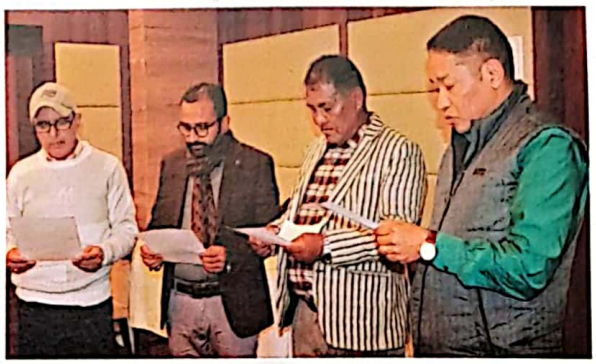


Nepal Mountaineering Association (NMA) established the statue of Late. Sakar Dahal in the premises of International Mountaineers Memorial Park (IMMP) Kakani, honoring his ascent to Mount Everest. The statue was unveiled on the same day of Late. Dahal's birthday on 1st July, 2022. The statue was unveiled by then Rt. Honorable Former Prime Minister and Chairman of CPN-Maoist (Center) Mr. Puspa Kamal Dahal "Prachanda". Apart from him Honorable Member of the House of Representatives Mr. Hit Bahadur Tamang, NMA Central Executive board and other tourism entrepreneurs were also present in the ceremony.





Nepal Mountaineering Association (NMA) extended its condolences to the bereaved family of late. Shambhu Tamang on 11th July, 2022. The famous climber, the 1st youngest Everest Summiteer, the founder member and also the advisor of NMA, Mr. Tamang was diagnosed with cancer and admitted to a hospital. President of NMA Mr. Nima Nuru Sherpa, Senior Vice President Mr. Thakur Raj Pandey, 1st Vice president Mr. Ang Dawa Sherpa, General Secretary Mr. Mohan Lamsal, Secretary Mr. Dhan Bahadur Gurung and Treasurer Mr. Mukti Pandey visited Tamang's home to extend the condolence to his bereaved family. Likewise, members of the NMA Mr. Pitambar Gurung, Mr. Singi Lama, Ms. Doma Sherpa, Ms. Nima Doma Sherpa, Mr. Rajendra Bahadur Lama, Mr. Dinesh Tamang, Mr. Ram Chandra Dhamala, Mr. Tul Sing Gurung and Mr. Lal Bahadur Waiba also visited Tamang's place to enhance their condolences.





Newly appointed members were sworn in to the central executive board of Nepal Mountaineering Association (NMA) by NMA President Mr. Nima Nuru Sherpa on 2nd December, 2022. The NMA constitution allows the president to appoint up to three members to the board, and Mr. Da Gelje Sherpa, Mr. Diwas Pokhrel, and Mr. Nama Raj Gauli were appointed to the board. The three attended the board meeting following their swearing-in ceremony, and their appointments completes the 31-member board.





Chungbuk Alpine Club (CAB) donated jackets and sports equipment to NMA at a function in Kathmandu on 4th January, 2023. CAB President Mr. Kim Young Sik also expressed interest in collaborating with NMA to promote climbing sports in Nepal and discussed the possibility of signing a MoU.



On September 26, 2022, the Nepal Mountaineering Association (NMA) and local government representatives of Kakani, Nuwakot, expressed their interest in collaborating to develop the International Mountaineers Memorial Park, Kakani (IMMP), as a new tourist destination during a formal discussion at the NMA Secretariat Nagpokhari, Naxal. NMA President Mr. Nima Nuru Sherpa expressed his desire to develop IMMP as a new tourism destination, while Chairperson of Kakani Rural Municipality Mr. Suman Tamang stressed the importance of collaboration between the NMA and the local government.





On April 20, 2023, the Nepal Mountaineering Association (NMA) and Jugal Rural Municipality of Sindhupalchok signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to collaborate on the promotion and protection of mountain tourism in the region. During an official event at the NMA secretariat in Nagpokhari Naxal, the President of NMA, Mr. Nima Nuru Sherpa, and the Chairman of Jugal Rural Municipality, Mr. Resham Syngbo, inked the MoU. The main objective of the MoU is to promote the mountains and mountain tourism of the Jugal Himalayan range, including the recent opening of five peaks by the Government of Nepal, three of which are over 6000 meters high. NMA and Jugal Rural Municipality will work together to promote mountain tourism in the area under this partnership.



On October 28, 2022, the Nepal Mountaineering Association (NMA) bade farewell to the Ganchenpo Peak exploration team, which had comprised 11 members from Italy and Nepal, including Italian Paralympic gold medalist Simone Salvagnin.





NMA and Khumbu Pasang Lhamu Rural Municipality had a discussion meeting at NMA on 1st March 2023 and agreed to collaborate for sustainable mountain tourism. They will incorporate major agreements into an MoU soon and work on possible projects. NMA President expressed gratitude and commitment to supporting, while the Chairperson of Khumbu Pasang Lhamu expressed readiness for any proposal. The meeting was attended by senior representatives from both parties. On the occasion, the Rural Municipality team also handed over the letter of appointment to the President of NMA Mr. Nima Nuru Sherpa as their advisor.



Nepal Mountaineering Association (NMA) successfully concluded its 31st and 32nd AGM on 14th August 2024, endorsing policies and programs for the fiscal year 2079/080. Reports were presented and approved. Likewise, Honorable Minister for Culture, Tourism, and Civil Aviation Mr. Jeevan Ram Shrestha inaugurated the AGM and handed over letters of appreciation to the numbers of climbers and top-ten agencies selected in terms of selling the NMA peaks the most.



On March 13, 2023, Nepal Mountaineering Association (NMA) and Bird Conservation Nepal (BCN) discussed possible collaboration at a meeting at NMA Secretariat, Nagpokhari, Naxal. Both teams agreed to prepare a joint proposal and working modality, find a donor, and NMA offered a space in the International Mountain Museum for bird watching. NMA also requested that BCN organize a regional bird festival and display mountain bird exhibits.



Nepal Mountaineering Association (NMA) and Seoul Alpine Federation (SAF) signed an MoU for the betterment of Nepali mountain tourism at NMA secretariat, Nagpokhari, Naxal on 24 October, 2022. In addition to signing MoU for the betterment of Nepali mountain tourism, Nepal Mountaineering Association (NMA) and SAF have agreed that NMA will build an emergency rescue center and upgrade Kim Migon's corner at IMM, with financial support from SAF. Furthermore, SAF will host NMA in Korea for a knowledge exchange program, and provide financial support for various mountaineering training and welfare funds. The heads of both organizations have hailed this act as crucial for the sustainability of Nepali mountain tourism, and NMA President Mr. Nima Nuru Sherpa emphasized the importance of establishing infrastructure and empowering mountaineers.



On 19th October, 2022 the photos of Polish climber Wanda Rutkiewicz were exhibited at the International Mountain Museum in Pokhara, Nepal, on her 30th death anniversary. Mayor of Pokhara Metropolitan City Mr. Dhan Raj Acharya and Ambassador of Poland to New Delhi His Excellency Adam Burakowski had jointly inaugurated the exhibition. Late. Rutkiewicz was the first European Polish woman to climb Mount Everest and has been recognized as an outstanding Polish woman. The event was attended by various dignitaries and tourism entrepreneurs. The exhibition will display her photos for a year.

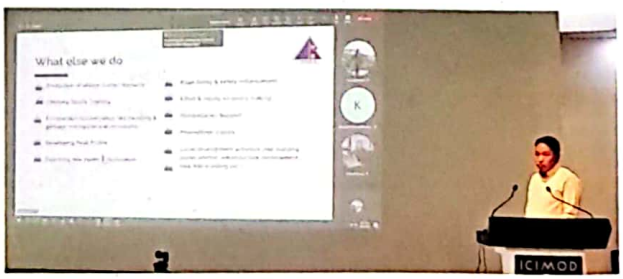


On the occasion of the 113th International Women's Day, Nepal Mountaineering Association (NMA) and Everest Climbers Association (ESA) jointly honored 35 women climbers who have successfully summited Mt. Everest. The event was held at the Nepal Tourism Board (NTB) hall in Bhrikuti Mandap, where Honorable State Minister for Culture, Tourism, and Civil Aviation (MoCTCA) Mrs. Sushila Sirpali Thakuri presented each of the climbers with a letter of appreciation for their achievement. The list of honored climbers included renowned names such as Ms. Phunjo Jhangmu Lama, Ms. Pasang Lhamu Sherpa Akita, Ms. Maya Sherpa, Ms. Kalpana Maharjan, Ms. Purnima Shrestha, Ms. Kanchhi Dolma Hyolmo, Ms. Nisha Bhote, and many others. The event was a fitting tribute to these brave women who have achieved such a remarkable feat in the field of mountaineering.





Nepal Mountaineering Association (NMA), on 20th August 2022, grandly welcomed and felicitated Mr. Sanu Sherpa, the world record holder for a double ascent of all the 14 eight-thousanders and the newest member of 14 eight thousander Mr. Nima Gyalzen Sherpa. NMA President Mr. Nima Nuru Sherpa including other NMA officials and Hon'ble Minister for Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation Mr. Jeevan Ram Shrestha received both the climbers on their arrival at Tribhuwan International Airport and led them to the program venue with a rally procession. The then Hon'ble Prime Minister Mr. Sher Bahadur Deuba, in the initiation of NMA, also welcomed and felicitated the climbers in his official residence at Baluwatar.



The Nepal Mountaineering Association (NMA), in collaboration with International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), celebrated World Tourism Day at the ICIMOD office on 27th September 2022. NMA and ICIMOD collaborated on a symposium to discuss sustainable mountain tourism, with NMA President Mr. Nima Nuru Sherpa highlighting their efforts and Dr. Arun Bhakta Shrestha of ICIMOD speaking on climate change impacts. The event also saw the launch of the Red Panda Trial and Green HKH digital aggregator platform and was attended by NMA officials.

नेपाल पर्वतारोहण संघ

NEPAL MOUTAINEERING ASSOCIATION

CENTRAL EXECUTIVE BOARD

(JUNE 2022 - JUNE 2025)



Nima Nuru Sherpa
President



Santa Bir Lama
Immediate Past President



Thakur Raj Pandey
Senior Vice President



Ang Dawa Sherpa
First Vice President



Dawa Yangzum Sherpa
Second Vice President



Mohan Lamsal
General Secretary



Dhan Bahadur Gurung
Secretary



Mukti Pandey
Treasurer



Ang Dawa Sherpa
Member



Ang Norbu Sherpa
Member



Kishan Gurung
Member



Doma Sherpa
Member



Tul Singh Gurung
Member



Da Gelje Sherpa
Member



Dinesh Tamang
Member



Diwas Pokhrel
Member



Namaraj Gauli
Member



Namgyal Zangbu Sherpa
Member



Nima Doma Sherpa
Member



Passang Dawa Sherpa
Member



Pitamber Gurung
Member



Hom Prasad Luitel
Director General
Department of Tourism



Rajendra Bahadur Lama
Member



Ramchandra Dhamala
Member



Lama Babu Sherpa
Member



Lal Bahadur Waiba
Member



Singi Lama
Member



Pasang Tenzing Sherpa
Invitee Member



Shes Kanta Sharma

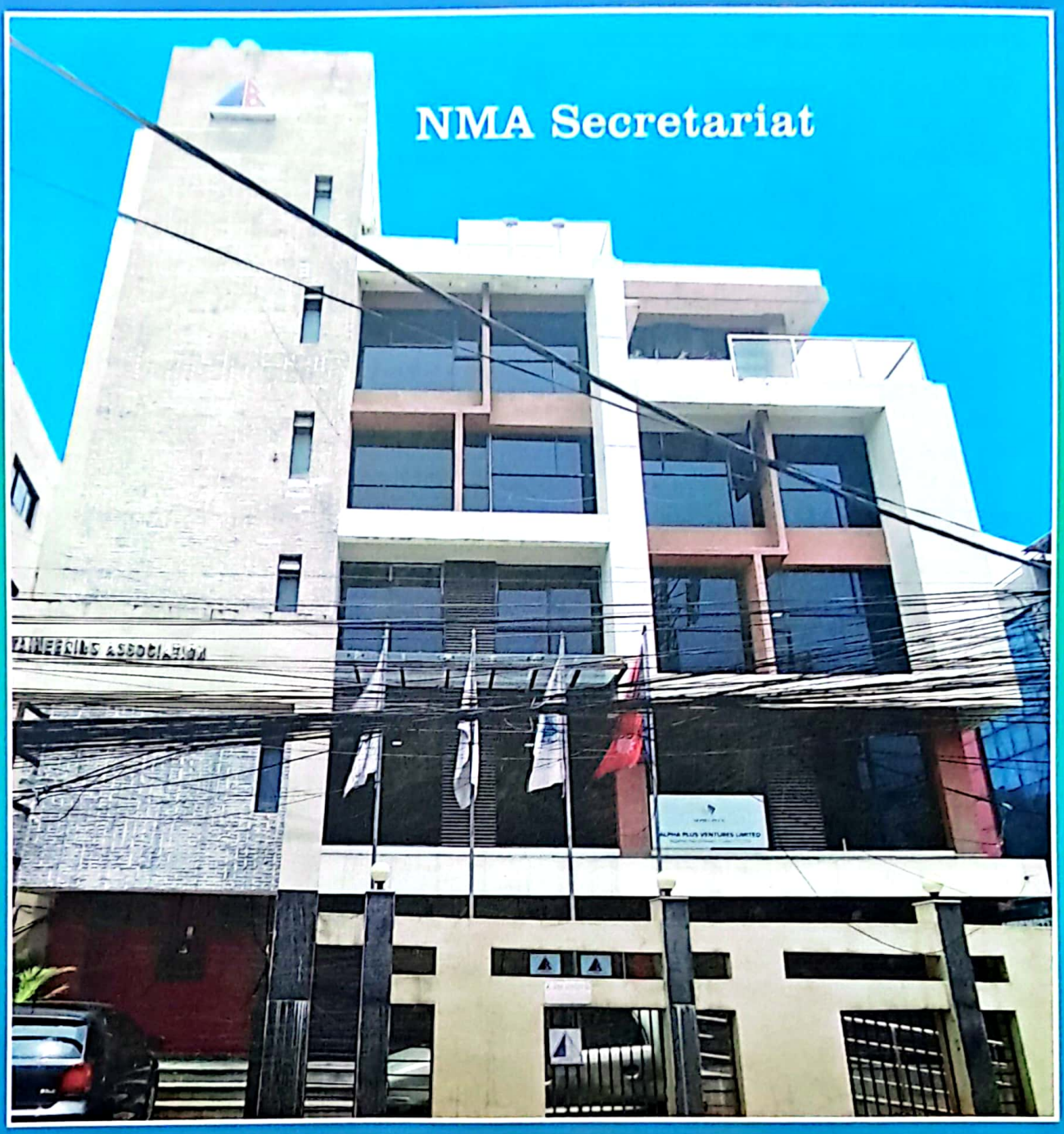


Dal Bahadur Gurung



Dev Singh Dhami





Celebrating 50 Years

Nepal Mountaineering Association Establishment

UAAA

UAAA Annual General Meeting
31st October 2023

NMA

NMA Golden Jubilee Celebration
1st November 2023