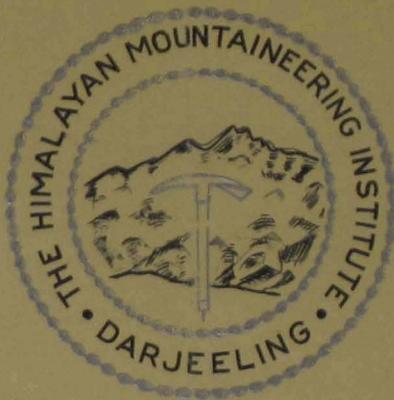


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सानो : सानोमारुहत्

HALF YEARLY NEWSLETTER No. 4

1st JANUARY, 1961

The Himalayan
Mountaineering Institute
Darjeeling



News letter No. 4

1st January, 1961

The Himalayan Mountaineering Institute

DARJEELING

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At a recent Meeting of the Executive Council of the Institute, the following Motto for the Institute was approved :

SĀNOH SĀNUMĀRUHAT

सानो : सानुमारुहत्

“ MAY CLIMB FROM PEAK TO PEAK ”

Basic and Advance Courses

2. The Institute's 23rd Basic Course was held from 10th September to 21st October, 1960. There were 29 students on this course. The standard achieved was high. All students completed the course which speaks well of the quality of trainees now coming on courses.

3. Amongst others on this course were a Physiologist who is now accompanying Sir Edmund Hillary's scientific team for Physiological Research. We also had two medical practitioners amongst the private candidates.

5th Advance Course

4. This was the first time an Advance course was organised to accompany the Basic course. There were three candidates on this course. They climbed Koptang, 20,162 feet, and also practised techniques on snow and ice on glaciers and icefalls. This course encountered very bad weather during their stay on

the mountain. They have thus acquired valuable experience of very difficult snow conditions. The three students acquitted themselves very well on the mountain and have qualified on the advanced course. We wish them good climbing.

5. In future each Basic course will be accompanied by an Advance course. The course capacity will be six trainees and duration for training will remain the same as for Basic courses, viz 42 days. This policy for Advance courses has been put into effect in order to give intensive training on subjects of technique and high altitude climbing. The advance courses have the following aims :

- (a) Training potential leaders for expeditions.
- (b) Imparting training in advance techniques on rock, ice and snow with particular reference to icefall.
- (c) Acclimatisation for high altitudes by staying in camps at 17,000 to 18,000 feet.
- (d) Academic exercises in organisation and planning of expeditions.

6. The passing out ceremony was presided over by Her Excellency Kumari Padmaja Naidu, Governor of West Bengal.

7. Addressing the students the Governor said, "The Himalayas have always been to foreigners a conglomeration of high peaks and snows—the highest in the world. But to us, they have throughout the ages, provided a formidable frontier and barrier. With the amazing advance of military science these barriers have become vulnerable and we must now be prepared to defend the Himalayas against all invaders. We have no wish to conquer the Himalayas. In fact, the word conquest is alien and a little vulgar to us; we only wish to live in peace and harmony with them and have a deep love for these mountains."

8. Speaking of the Indian Mount Everest Expedition, Her Excellency said, "So many people have eulogised our initial

effort on Everest that I must give due praise to the Leader and Members of the Indian team to Everest for their valiant effort. It matters little that we did not succeed in reaching the top. Fundamentally it makes little difference whether we reached 28,000 feet or 29,000 feet; the fact remains that it was in all aspects a splendid effort. It is not the fruits of experience but experience itself which matters most in life”.

24th Basic Course

9. The course had 24 students from all parts of the country and from different walks of life. In addition to the 24 students, two young ladies, also accompanied the Basic course.

6th Advance Course

10. Four students completed this course. They were presented the Institute Badge on their graduation for advanced mountaineering techniques, leadership qualities and expedition organising ability: They made a number of ascents on Koktang and Frey peaks.

11. The passing out ceremony of the 24th Basic and 6th Advance courses was presided over by Lieutenant General Sir Harold Williams, K.B.E., C.B., Director of Central Building Research Institute, Roorkee. Sir Harold who has been a keen mountaineer all his life, was the Engineer-in-Chief of the Indian Army from 1948 to 1955. He was responsible for initiating a number of young Engineer Officers including the late Major N. D. Jayal to mountaineering. He has been recently elected the President of the Himalayan Club.

12. This function was a particularly memorable occasion as, for the first time, the three premier mountaineering institutions were represented – the Himalayan Club by Sir Harold Williams (President), the Sherpa Climbers' Association by Mr. Tenzing Norgay (President), and the Himalayan Mountaineering Institute by the Principal, Brigadier Gyan Singh.

13. In addition to the Basic and Advance courses who were presented the silver replica of ice axe and the Institute Badge, 7 girls and 7 boys were also presented a memento for having successfully completed a nearly 80 mile mountaineering trek in Sikkim, followed by a short rock climbing course in Darjeeling.

14. Sir Harold Williams also presented the coveted "Tiger Badge" to Sherpas for outstanding work on French Jannu Expedition 1959 and Indian Mount Everest Expedition 1960.

15. In the course of his report Brigadier Gyan Singh said that a new innovation had been the introduction for the first time of two ladies into the Basic course, under the personal supervision of Shri Tenzing Norgay. The two ladies were Tenzing's niece Doma, and Aditi daughter of Appa Saheb Pant, Political Officer, Sikkim. The ladies' performance was really outstanding, for while Doma was a veteran of several climbs, Aditi Pant had never climbed before. Yet during her first attempt she reached the summit of Frey Peak, 20,600 feet, technically a difficult ascent and only the second occasion on which this Peak had been climbed. This was particularly encouraging in view of the fact that the Institute proposes to launch a yearly course for ladies only from April next year. The Principal hoped that the spirit and example of these two girls will be emulated by other young ladies. "It goes to prove", Brigadier Gyan Singh remarked, "that the fair sex is not necessarily the weaker sex." When asked how he had done in the mountain a student of 24th Basic course chivalrously conceded - "I climbed Frey Peak - but so did the girls".

16. Before presenting the "Tiger Badges" to the Sherpas who worked for the French Jannu Expedition of 1959 and the Indian Mount Everest Expedition of 1960, General Williams gave a short history of this award.

17. "Shortly after World War I a large number of expeditions went to the Himalayas. There were a number of achievements and successes as well as failures and grave disasters. But one

community always came out with flying colours - the Sherpas. Their courage, endurance and devotion to duty, and loyalty to the team was always of the highest order. Some of their acts bring a lump to our throats. Sherpa Gaylay staying with the dying Leader of the party, when he could have come down and saved his own life, - such acts add stature and dignity to the human race.

18. "The Himalayan Club, the then leading mountaineering Institution in India, decided that outstanding performances on the mountains should be given a reward which would have no intrinsic value, but which would be of deep worth to the man who received it. So was instituted the Tiger Badge, the head of a Tiger in relief on bronze.

19. "44 Tiger Badges have been given so far. For some years these were not presented but the Sherpas asked that they should again be given to those who climbed high in the Himalayas and were found worthy of their fellows".

20. The following were the recipients of the Tiger Badges :

- | | | | | | | | |
|-------|---------------------------|-----|---|---|---|---|---|
| (i) | Sirdar Wangdi
Sherpa | ... | French Jannu Expedition '59 | | | | |
| (ii) | Gyalzen Mikchen
Sherpa | | " | " | " | " | " |
| (iii) | Pano Sherpa | | " | " | " | " | " |
| (iv) | Sonam Girmey
Sherpa | ... | Indian Mount Everest
Expedition 1960 | | | | |
| (v) | Ang Norbu Sherpa | ... | " | " | " | " | " |
| (vi) | Da Norbu Sherpa | ... | " | " | " | " | " |
| (vii) | Pemba Sunder
Sherpa | .. | " | " | " | " | " |

21. To the trainees of the Institute General Williams said; "You have all in the past few weeks had an opportunity to prove yourselves to yourselves. You have discovered in yourselves powers of courage and endurance, the mental and spiritual satisfaction of travelling in the hills which has been the privilege of your people in countless generations".

22. The sharing of pleasures and discomforts, he was sure, had fitted the young people to be better man and women as a result of this experience. He congratulated all who had graduated from the "University of the Himalayas" and entrusted them to see that throughout their lives they remained worthy of the honour.

23. General Williams said the Himalayas were vastly larger and more dangerous than the Alps. Large expeditions were very expensive and mostly only possible when sponsored by Government, so he hoped in India climbers would develop the art of putting enthusiastic, small expeditions out into the various parts of the hills. He urged the students to develop a sense of values. He hoped that although the young men had done a course at the Institute they should not set out for some difficult peak with insufficient experience and equipment.

Ladies Courses

24. From time to time we have received a number of enquiries from ladies to join our courses. It has, therefore, been decided to organise 26th Basic Courses commencing Saturday the 22nd April, 1961, solely for ladies. It is hoped our ex-students will pass the news round and we will be hearing from their sisters and friends.

Services of our Instructors

25. This winter our Instructors have programmes for rock climbing courses at :

- (a) Santa Cruz, Bombay.
- (b) The National Academy of Administration,
Mussoorie, U. P.
- (c) Mayo College, Ajmer, Rajasthan.
- (d) Mountaineering Committee, Bombay, Maharashtra.
- (e) Government College, Chandigarh, Punjab.
- (f) Kerala Sports Council, Trivandrum, Kerala.

Rock climbing courses have already been organised in Kashmir and Darjeeling.

Gifts

26. The following gifts have been received for which we are grateful to the donors :

- (a) Imperial Chemical Industries—Perspex to make a case for the Model of the Himalayas.
- (b) Blue Star Engineering Company, Calcutta—a Water Cooler.
- (c) Imperial Tobacco Company—900 packets of Passing Show Cigarettes for Sherpa porters on Institute courses.
- (d) Jetmull Bhojraj & Co., Darjeeling - Children's Park Apparatus.
- (e) Japanese Ladies Alpine Club, Tokyo, Japan - 2 tents and some sets of cooking utensils and miscellaneous items of equipment.
- (f) Shri Hareshwar Dayal, Ambassador to Nepal, Kathmandu - Two Garden Umbrellas.

Indian Expeditions

27. (a) Nandaghunti Expedition :

A team of six young men from Calcutta most of whom ex-students of this Institute, climbed Nandaghunti, 20,700 feet, on 22nd October, 1960. The Expedition was financed by the 'Ananda Bazar Patrika'. This is a creditable achievement for these young climbers.

(b) The National Geographical Society of India from Calcutta took out a scientific expedition to Lahoul with the following aims :

- (i) To study the characteristics and behaviour of snow and glaciers.
- (ii) Make systematic survey of land forms, weather, soils, natural vegetation and mineral resources and collect specimens from the field for further analysis in laboratories.
- (iii) Prepare maps and explore possibilities of future development of high Himalayan valleys.
- (iv) Explore possibilities of developing tourism in Lahoul.

Foreign Expedition

28. Foreign expeditions in the Himalyas last autumn were :

- (a) Sir Edmund Hillary's Expedition to search for the Yeti and carry out intensive scientific study over a long period at their base camp, 18,000 feet and to climb Makalu, 27,790 feet without oxygen in summer of 1961.
- (b) Japanese Women's Expedition to Mount Deo Tibba, 20,000 feet which was successful. Leader Mrs S. Hosokawa.
- (c) French Expedition to Chobutse Peak, 22 000 feet in Rowaling Himal which was abandoned. They however climbed four "twenty thousanders", Pimu,

Singkar, Parchamo, Phera. Phera was climbed for the first time. The Expedition was led by Robert Sandoz. Mrs Sandoz was also a member of the team.

Expedition in Summer 1961

29. Britain, France, the U.S.A., Japan and India have been authorised to send expeditions next year to remote Himalayas.

- (a) A British Expedition will tackle the unclimbed Nuptse peak in the Everest group.
- (b) An American Expedition will attempt Everest this Spring.
- (c) Dr. Frenning James, a Briton, has been given permission by the Nepal Government to undertake gliding in the Himalayas. He proposes to bring out two tow planes and four gliders and operate in the Annapurna region.
- (d) A Derbyshire Expedition is to attempt to scale the unclimbed 20,500 feet Indrasan Mountain near the Valley of the Gods.
- (e) French climbers will once again come to grips with their 'old but magnificent adversary' the uncorquered Jannu Peak (25,400 feet) in East Nepal.
- (f) Three Indian Expeditions are scheduled to go to the Himalayas - Annapurna III to be led by Lieut. M. S. Kohli, I.N., Nanda Devi to be led by Mr Gurdial Singh of Doon School, and Neelkantha to be led by Capt. N. Kumar.

Activities of Ex-Students

30. (a) B. D. Misra, a Professor in Saugor University, who attended a Basic and Advance Course at the Institute, and was a member of the Everest Ex-

pedition, took out a party of students for a mountain-
eering trek and climbing training to Lahoul area
in September and October, 1960.

- (b) Capt. S. B. Motwani, A.M.C., a student of the 21st
Basic Course, was briefed by the Institute before
joining Sir Edmund Hillary's Expedition for
Physiological Research work.
- (c) Dr. S. Lahiri, Physiologist, Presidency College,
Calcutta, who attended the 23rd Basic Course, has
also joined Sir Edmund Hillary's Expedition for
research work in high altitude physiology.

Lecture Tours

31. Since his return from Everest Expedition the Principal has given six lectures in Delhi, including one to the Members of Parliament, five in Calcutta, four in Darjeeling and two in Deolali and Nasik. He also went on lecture tour of Maharashtra in the latter half of November and gave illustrated talks at Bombay, the National Defence Academy, Khadakvasla, and at Pona. He has lectured in U P. in December, and in January and February will tour Punjab, Madhya Pradesh and Assam. In February the Principal will attend the Vice Chancellors' conference of Indian Universities at Dharwar in Mysore State.

Visitors

32 Amongst the distinguished visitors who came to the Institute were the Dewan of Sikkim, Shri Baleshwar Prasad; the President of the Japanese Alpine Club, Mr. Shinrokuro Hidaka; Major General T. R. Pahwa, Eastern Command; Mrs. E. Emmet; Member of the House of Commons, London; Members of the staff from the University of Illinois, U. S. A.; Brigadier M.M. Pillai of the Office of the Director General of Ordnance Factories, Calcutta; Shri Yadav Prasad Pant, Economic Adviser to the Government of Nepal; the Prime Minister of

Bhutan and Mrs. Dorji; the Political Officer, Sikkim and Mrs. Pant; Sir Edmund Hillary; Major General Gobinder Singh, Eastern Command; Lieut. General Sir Harold Williams; Brigadier and Mrs. E. P. Townsend of the British Gurkhas.

In all from 1st April 1960 we have had up to date 5,159 visitors.

Physiological Research Section

33. With the opening of the Physiological Research Section of the Institute we will now have facilities for scientific research and studies with effect from March, 1961.

34. Dr. Hiralal Saha, Professor of Physiology, Nilratan Sircar Medical College, Calcutta, has been appointed as Honorary Physiological Adviser to this Institute, and Capt. S. K. Das, A. M. C., an experienced mountaineer who also accompanied the Indian Mount Everest Expedition, 1960, has been posted on deputation from the Army to be in charge of the Physiological Research Section.

35. Since the appointment of a Doctor/Physiologist in July 1959, the students (apart from submitting their medical fitness certificate), have to undergo a thorough medical check-up in this Institute before they are sent to heights. A planned medical cover to the course with all prophylactic measures against the ill-effects of cold, altitude, solar radiation and exhaustion is given along with proper acclimatisation and subjective physiological observations in high altitudes. As a result the casualty rate has come down considerably and hardly any student has to be sent back from the mountains on account of medical reasons.

36. We expect to procure most of the Physiological equipment in March/April 1961. We are also trying to get a number of items of technical equipment manufactured indigenously. Systematic research work in high altitude physiology would start with the commencement of our next course in March/April 1961.

Medical Instructions to Expeditions

37. Medical instruction for expeditions has been prepared and will be sent to Leaders for guidance. A short first aid training course for members of an expedition can be organised in Darjeeling on request.

Welfare Centre

38. The Institute now has a population of nearly a hundred people including 38 children living in its campus. A Welfare Centre has therefore been organised where free medical advice is given to the people. Milk, Vitamins, Sharks' Liver Oil are also distributed free to the children and mothers with the help of the local Red Cross Society in this area.

39. On the Spot children's art competition was organised on 14 December. Three prizes for age group 3 to 6 years and three prizes for 6 to 12 years, were given by General Williams during the function on 15 December, 1960. All participants in the competition also received a consolation prize from the distinguished visitor.

Mountain Hut in Training Area

40. The Maharaja of Patiala has kindly donated Rs. 10,000/- for the construction of a Mountain Hut in our training area. Thanks to Sikkim Darbar, the Chief Secretary and the Dewan of Sikkim, permission has been obtained to construct the Hut. The Sikkim Darbar has also very kindly agreed to make available the timber required from their forests.

41. We expect to acquire a 16 mm Projector by early this year. When we get power from the Darjeeling Municipality we will be able to screen films and slides of training and mountaineering interest for the benefit of our students and visitors.

Recognition of Mountaineering as a Sport

42. It is encouraging to announce that Mountaineering has been recognised as a sport by the All India Council of Sport. A committee headed by General K. S. Thimayya has been set up to formulate a scheme for encouraging mountaineering in the country. Other members of the committee are Shri Jaipal Singh, M.P.; Shri N. N. Wanchoo, Secretary, Ministry of Finance; Shri P. N. Kirpal, Secretary, Ministry of Education; and Lt. Col. G. V. Raja of the Kerala Sports Council, Trivandrum. The Institute will also be represented on this committee.

"Lure of Everest"

43. Brigadier Gyan Singh, the Leader of the First Indian Expedition to Mount Everest, has completed his book "Lure of Everest" which is the story of his expedition. The book is being published by the Publications Division of the Government of India and is expected to be out by the middle of Jan. 1961.

Mount Everest Film

44. The Films Division of India is preparing a colour film in 16 mm of the Indian Mount Everest Expedition. The film was shot by Mr C. V. Gopal a photographer from the Films Division who accompanied the Expedition. The film will be of 30 to 40 minutes duration and is expected to be ready in the next two months.



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