

# ASIAN ALPINE E-NEWS

Issue No. 47 February 2019



Photo: Kaori Inaba

## Contents

Asian Festivals invited apply for 2019 UIAA Rock Climbing Festival Award

Peter Bourne *Page 2 ~ 4*

Himalayan Enchantment – Humla Expedition 2018 – A Journey through the  
Far-flung North Western Corner of Nepal

Kaori Inaba *Page 5 ~ 36*



28/01/2019

In [Featured](#), [Media](#), [Mountaineering](#), [Rock Climbing](#)

## ASIAN FESTIVALS INVITED TO APPLY FOR 2019 UIAA ROCK CLIMBING FESTIVAL AWARD

Application is now open for the 2019 UIAA Rock Climbing Festival Award.

Since 2015, the Award has been dedicated to a different continent each year. After Africa, Europe, North America, Central and South America, the 2019 will focus on promoting events on the Asian continent.

UIAA member federations in Asia are encouraged to share details about the Award with festivals in their country or territory.

The Award offers 2,500 USD in prize money. This may be granted entirely to the winning festival or shared between different nominees. Benefits are not only financial and also includes promotion through the UIAA's international

communication channels as well as the opportunity to work closely with the UIAA and benefit from the expertise of its different Commissions.

The deadline to apply for the 2019 Award is 19 April 2019.

To qualify for the Award, festivals must be affiliated, recognised or supported by a UIAA member federation in that country. In countries which do not have UIAA representation, festivals may be considered for the development prize.

To be considered for the Award, festivals must:

- demonstrate that they offer opportunities for diverse types of climber (including experienced, youth, debutant and para-rock climber);
- organise workshops promoting safe climbing principles and practices;
- provide evidence of implementing sustainable climbing initiatives;
- create awareness and environmental education around rock climbing; and
- foster a community of rock climbing both within their region and actively encourage the participation of overseas climbers.

The winning festival and/or the nominated development festival will be visited by a member of UIAA Rock Climbing Festival Panel to ensure that on the ground the Award matches the pledges made in the application. The support or advice offered by the panel member is also an important factor whether that be in terms of development in that country or future relationship with the UIAA. Festivals may also be asked to help showcase charities or causes supported by the UIAA.

To apply please complete the following [form](#) and return to [rockclimbing@theuiaa.org](mailto:rockclimbing@theuiaa.org)

Past Winners on the Award:

‘The UIAA prize is a real recognition of our work and of the fact that we are developing climbing in Bolivia the right way’



2018: [Bloqueando \(Bolivia\)](#) – Development Award Winner (Main Picture)

‘Recognition by the UIAA affirms for us that we are achieving our goals.’

2017: [International Climbers’ Festival](#), Wyoming (USA)

‘The financial support will help us develop the Kalymnos rescue team and will be put towards making an even greater event next year.’

2016: [Kalymnos Climbing Festival \(Greece\)](#)

In 2018, the UIAA launched an international rock and ice climbing festival calendar where you can find details of an event near you. To visit the calendar please click [here](#).

For more details about the UIAA Rock Climbing Festival Award please visit our dedicated [page](#).

Interested in partnering the UIAA Rock Climbing Festival Award? Please contact: [rockclimbing@theuiaa.org](mailto:rockclimbing@theuiaa.org)



# Himalayan Enchantment –Humla Expedition 2018

## A Journey through the Far-flung North Western Corner of Nepal

Kaori Inaba 稲葉 香

Translated and compiled by Tamotsu (Tom) Nakamura

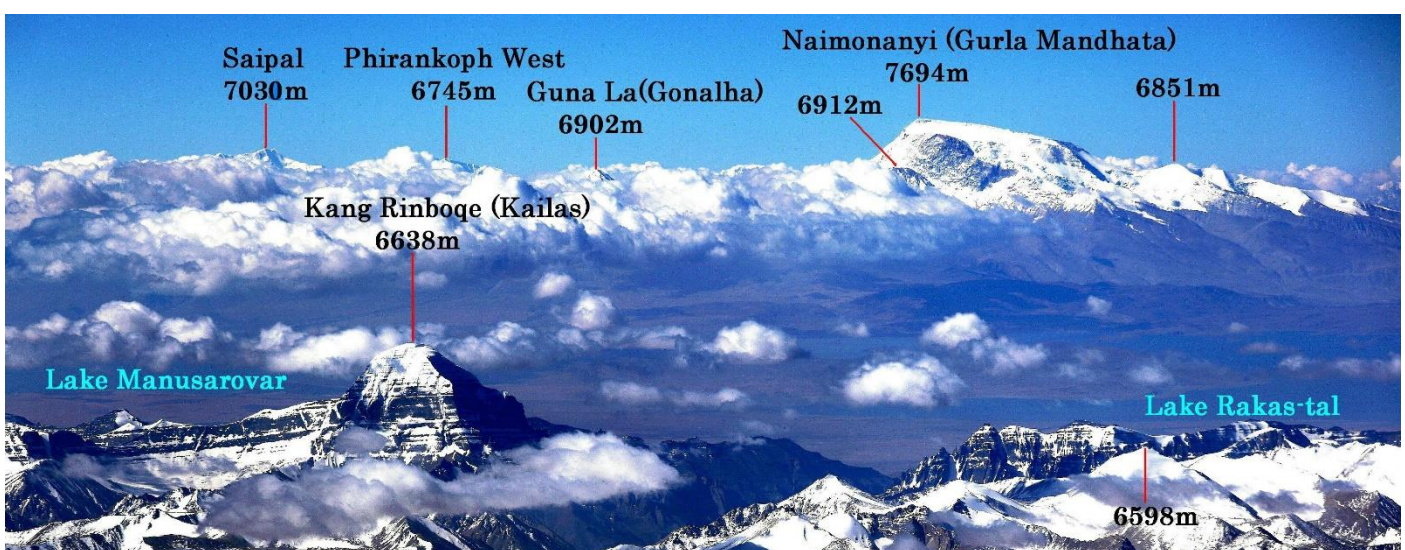
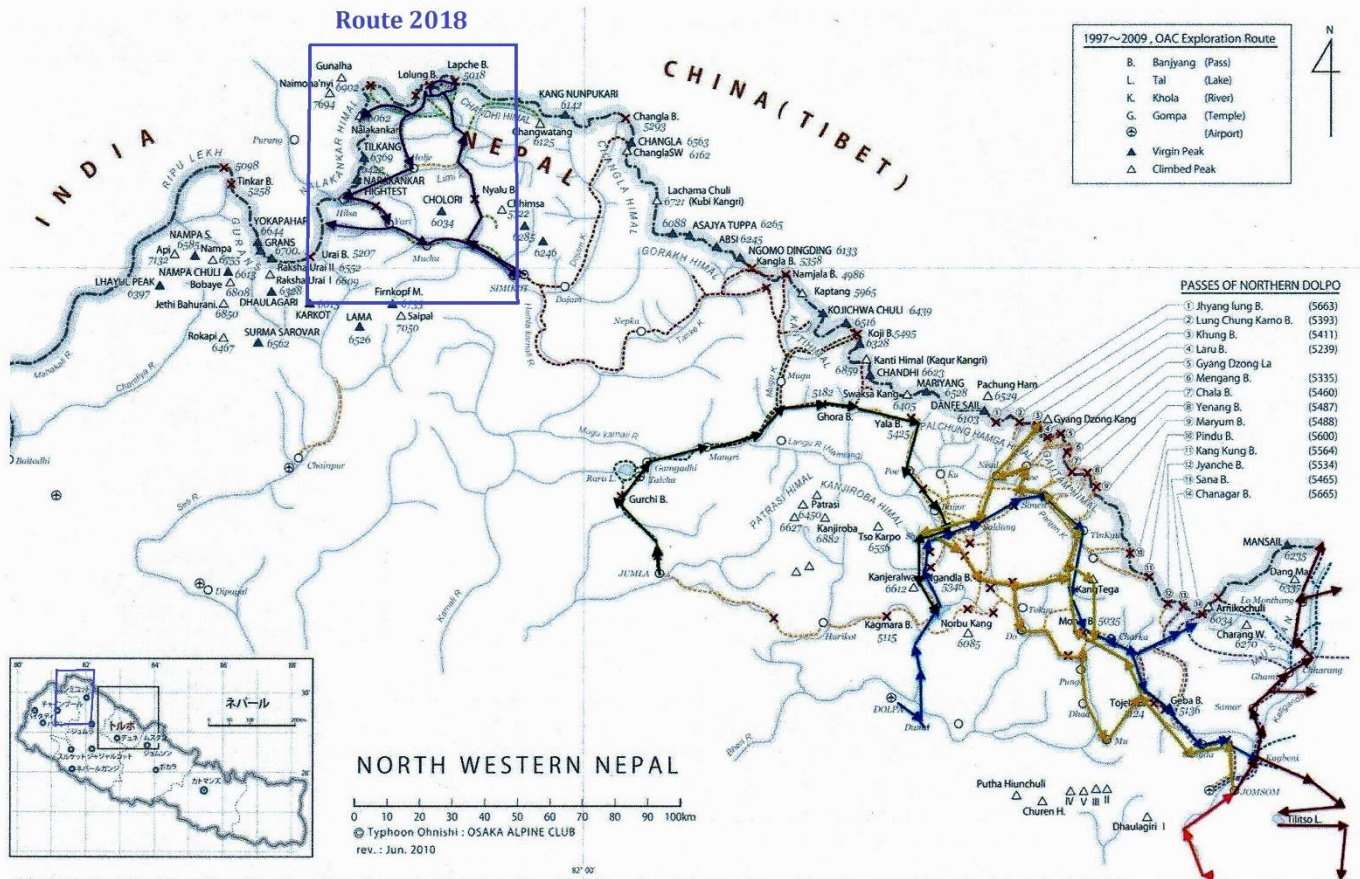
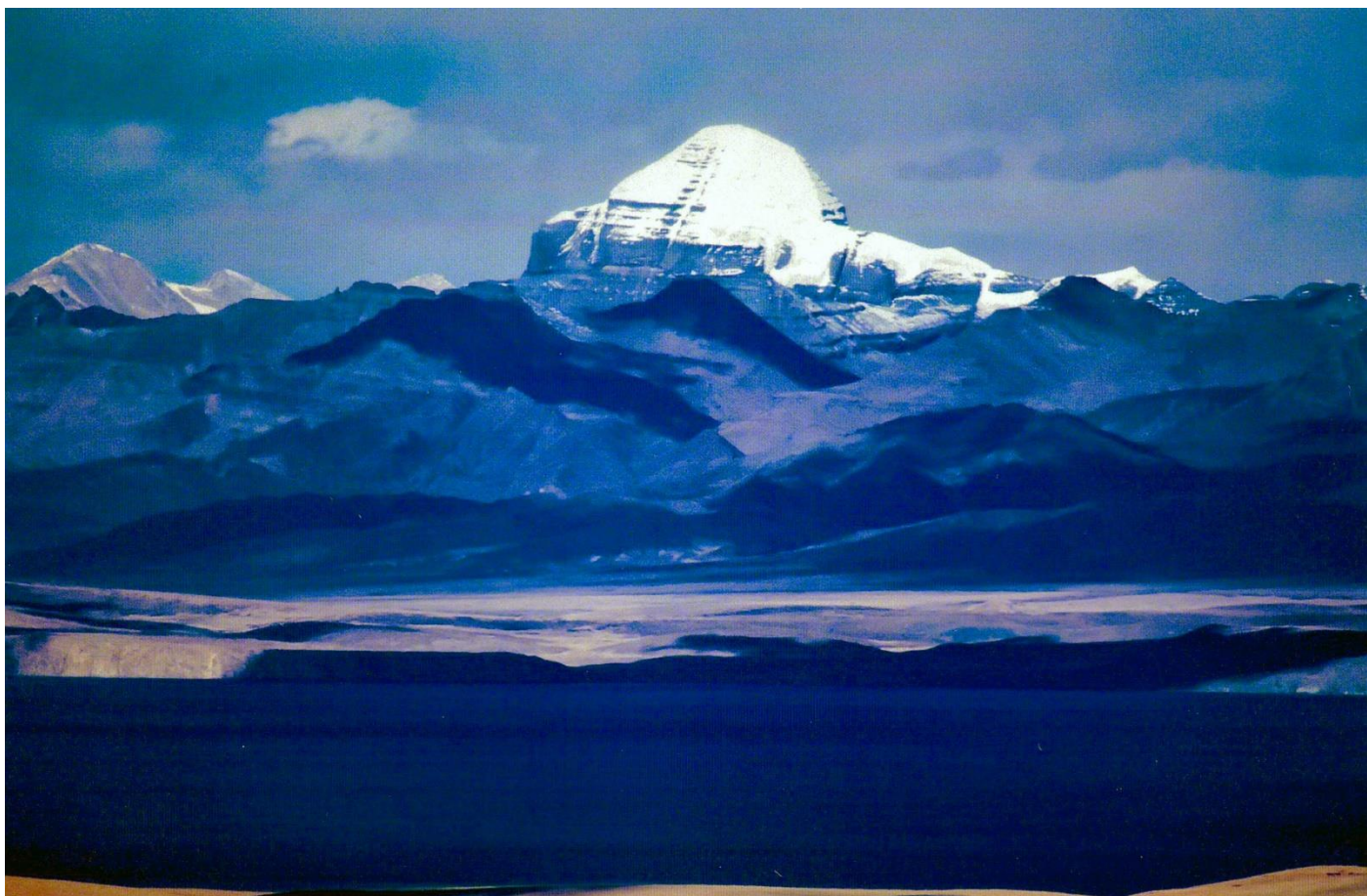


Photo taken by Liu Yuhong in Air China flight from Ali to Lhasa









A month journey though Humla like a dream ceased to satisfaction. I again followed the footsteps of my teacher, late Tamotsu Ohnishi, a pioneer of explorations of west Tibet.

Kaori Inaba' route in Map of page 1  
 Drawn by late Tamotsu Onishi

Yellow: 2007

Green: 2009

Orange + red: 2014, 2017

Orange + red + Yellow: 2016

Purple: 2018





# Humla

Humla region shares the southernmost rim of Changtang Plateau in Tibet. The southern Humla is wet being affected by monsoon of the Indian Ocean which fosters forests in lower part less than 4,000m. However, my fields of explorations are in the northern parts where high peaks and dried grasslands are dominant and attracts mountain lovers. Humla used to belong to Tibet. Ancient Tibetan Kingdom 吐蕃王国 once had been a military country to have occupied

Humla is the most remote district in Nepal, and one of the poorest. There are few tourists, and those you meet will most likely be headed to the border town of Hilsa, a stepping-stone to Mount Kailash in Tibet.

From the district capital of Simikot, spread across a ridge at 2900m, the Great Himalaya Trail follows the old salt trading route to Tibet. The trail threads along towering green cliffs above the roaring Karnali, the longest river in Nepal. You'll pass clusters of flat-roofed mud houses, encountering Thakuri women wearing heavy gold and silver jewellery, and Thakuri men leading flocks of long-haired goats up and down the muddy trail to Tibet.

As you approach Hilsa and the northwestern border, the landscape becomes drier, and the context, Buddhist. It's possible to turn southeast into the Limi Valley's incredible red rockscapes and mediaeval stone villages. Beyond lies aglacial valley below the 5000m Nyalu pass, with the aquamarine Tshom Tsho Lake providing remarkable contrast with the burnt sienna of the treeless expanses.

The Humli people, like Nepalis across the country, are incredibly diverse. About 85% of the 56,000 people who live in this sparsely populated district are Hindu. Buddhists, some of whom practice polyandry, occupy the highlands. According to anthropologist Carol Dunham:

Humla is one of the most culturally fascinating places in all of Nepal, a cultural tapestry woven from ancient Khasa kingdoms, ancestors of the grand Zhangzhung kingdom of the north, with Rajput and Thakuri blended into the mix.

(from American Alpine Journal 2001)

## Asia, Nepal, Western Nepal, Upper Dolpo, Changwatang and Nalakankar, First Ascents, and Exploration of the Chandi, Nalakankar and Takphu Himal

Tamotsu Ohnishi, Osaka Alpine Club

Changwatang and Nalakankar, First Ascents, and Exploration of the Chandi, Nalakankar and Takphu Himal. We were granted climbing permission for Nalakankar, but ours was the first expedition to the peak since 1963. Why? In the revised Climbing Regulations of 1989, Nalakankar is ranked in the "A" group, which means that an expedition must involve at least three Nepalese. Other factors that have dissuaded climbers for nearly four decades are that Nalakankar's height (6062m) is extremely low; such a remote objective entails excessive cost; and Nalakankar's name, which, though it sounds nice, means "human skeleton."

Three climbing friends and I started our trek toward Nalakankar from Simikot on June 4. We began by approaching eastward from Takche Karka along its northeastern tributary (Taisolu Khola), and, on June 26, established base camp at the frozen Taisolu Lake (5400m) on the divide between Taisolu Khola and Ning Khola. Ning Khola is one of the sources of the Dojam Khola of the Changla Himal, which had been explored by our expedition two years before. The next day, we placed a high camp at 5738 meters on the way to a peak called Changwatang (6150m, 30° 19' 35" N, 81° 53' 17" E). Starting from our high camp early the next morning, we stood on the top of this charming snow peak at noon.

Though the weather was unstable, from the summit we were able to identify the highest peaks of the Chandhi Himal: Kananu Pukari (6256m, 30° 20' 32" N, 82° 00' 27" E) and Changla (6563m, 30° 18' 11" N, 82° 07' 44" E) far to the east. To the north and northwest, along the Taisolu Khola, there are several border peaks exceeding 6000 meters, but the alpine nature of the peaks of the southern group that surround the Ling Khola (which remains completely unexplored) made them seem rather preferable to those of the northern divide between Nepal and Tibet.

We crossed the border passes of Lapche La (5018m), Lolung La (4953m), and a 4953-meter unnamed pass, enjoying fantastic views of Manasarovar Lake and Mt. Kailas to the north and north-northwest in the distance. Repeatedly crossing the cold waters of the Saja Khola, we advanced to the west along Gya Khola to

establish our base camp for Nalakankar at 5250 meters in the upper stream of a mostly dried up lake. We could see the gigantic east face of Naimona'nyi (a.k.a. Gurla Mandhata, 7694m) before us. From here, an easy one-and-a-half days' walk brings one over Nalakankar Bhangjyang (5514m) to Manasarowar Lake.

Climbing the Nalakankar (6062m, 30° 21' 27" N, 81° 23' 58" E) for which we had received permission was quite easy but confusing. On July 6, while some of the reconnaissance party was finding a route to the south col, they unexpectedly found themselves on the summit, without having used climbing boots or any other climbing gear. The summit ridge was almost free from snow and very easy. The next day, with a climbing friend and two Sherpas, I enjoyed a direct route of the icy east face of a peak to the south. We began to call this the official Nalakankar. In fact, this South Peak (6024m, 30° 21' 15" N, 81° 24' 20" E) is a neighboring peak that lies 0.7 kilometers southeast of the Nalakankar for which we had received permission. It is covered with more snow and ice. The remaining members of the expedition, slightly climbing dotards all, enthusiastically joined in the first ascent of the peak via its north ridge.

After the climbs in the Nalakankar group, we turned our attentions farther south to the Takphu Himal, the highest peak of which (30° 15' 05" N, 81° 23' 31" E) is 6422 meters. For ten days, we made a reconnaissance of this peak, but an attempt was prevented by the huge ice cliffs of the hanging glaciers. We crossed the Gya Khola at a confluence of its southern fork, and climbed up to a high, vast plateau with three beautiful lakes. Although our long trek at over 5000 meters was comfortable and very pleasant, the grand view we had expected of the entire Takphu Himal was unfortunately hidden by a thick cloud cover.

We crossed a pass at the eastern foot of Til Kang (6369m, 30° 16' 27" N, 81° 24' 16" E), then descended to Halji, the largest village of the Limi Valley. We enjoyed a couple of days in Halji, as well as in Jang and Til, two other Tibetan villages of the Limi Valley. These villages are unexpectedly modernized: we were astonished when we were invited into the clean rooms of their houses and welcomed with tea and some pieces of chocolate! However, we were impressed enough by their traditional Buddhist faith, their rather aristocratic appearance, and their high manner. At Simikot, our eight-week-long journey around the far northwestern part of Nepal came to an end.



## Journey 2018 (October 1~November 15)

### – Photo Gallery –

October 1: Osaka~ Shanghai

October 2: Shanghai~Kunming~Kathmandu



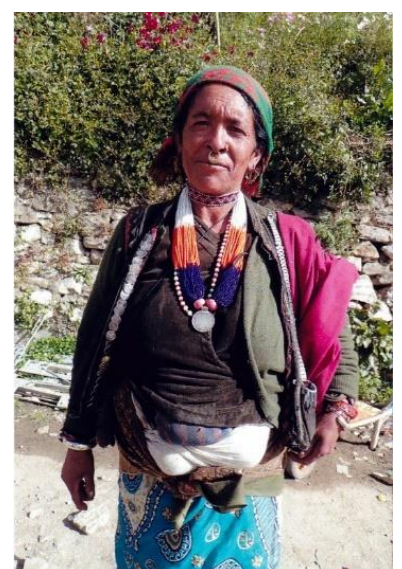
Gathering with late Ohnishi's old friends at Kathmandu

October 5: Kathmandu (1400m) ~Nepal gunji (1860m), drove 13 hours.

October 6: Nepal gunji~Simikot (2973m) by domestic flight.

October 7: Stay at Simikot. Arranged for foods, tents, supplies, porters and five horses.

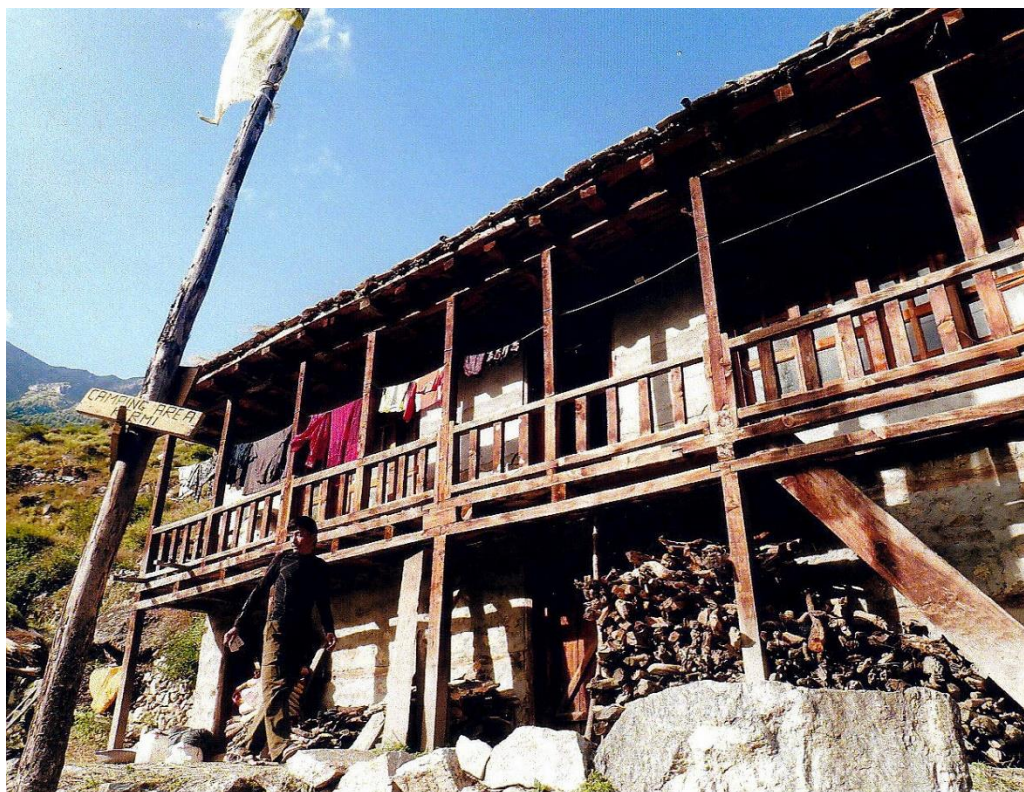
Rupees 1,500/day/horse. Met local tribes (Loca, Casia) as below.



October 8: Simikot (Gate to Kailas) ~Dhinga (2607m) 8km. Very scarce foreigners.



October 9: Dinga~Kermi (2755m) 7.5km. Marched along Framkarnari. Stayed at a lodge.





October 10: Kermi~Junction of Salli Khola and Takchi Khola (3698m) 12km. US party came. They attempted Andang Peak, but unsuccessful. There are unclimbed rock peaks as below.





October 11: Junction~Selima daha (4564m) ~Selima Khola (4557m) 8km. Marching up to the forestall boundary at 4,000m. Scenery is similar to Dolpo. It began to snow.





October 12: Selima Khola~Nyalu La (4977m) ~Talun Khola (4280m) 11km. It snowed 20m deep.





October 13: Talun Khola~Lake Takche Khola (4223m) 7km, the lake was turquoise blue, stunningly beautiful. Arudang 6034m attempted by US team is viewed from camp site.





October 14: Takche Khola~Sakya Khola (4524m) 8km. Crossed a pass at 4764m in noon time. Tibetan plateau spreads. Tops of Naimonanyi 7694m and Gunalha 6902m are in sight. Now reaching to Nepal-Tibet border.

October 15: Sakya Khola~along Chyakpolum Khola~near border (4894m) 6km.



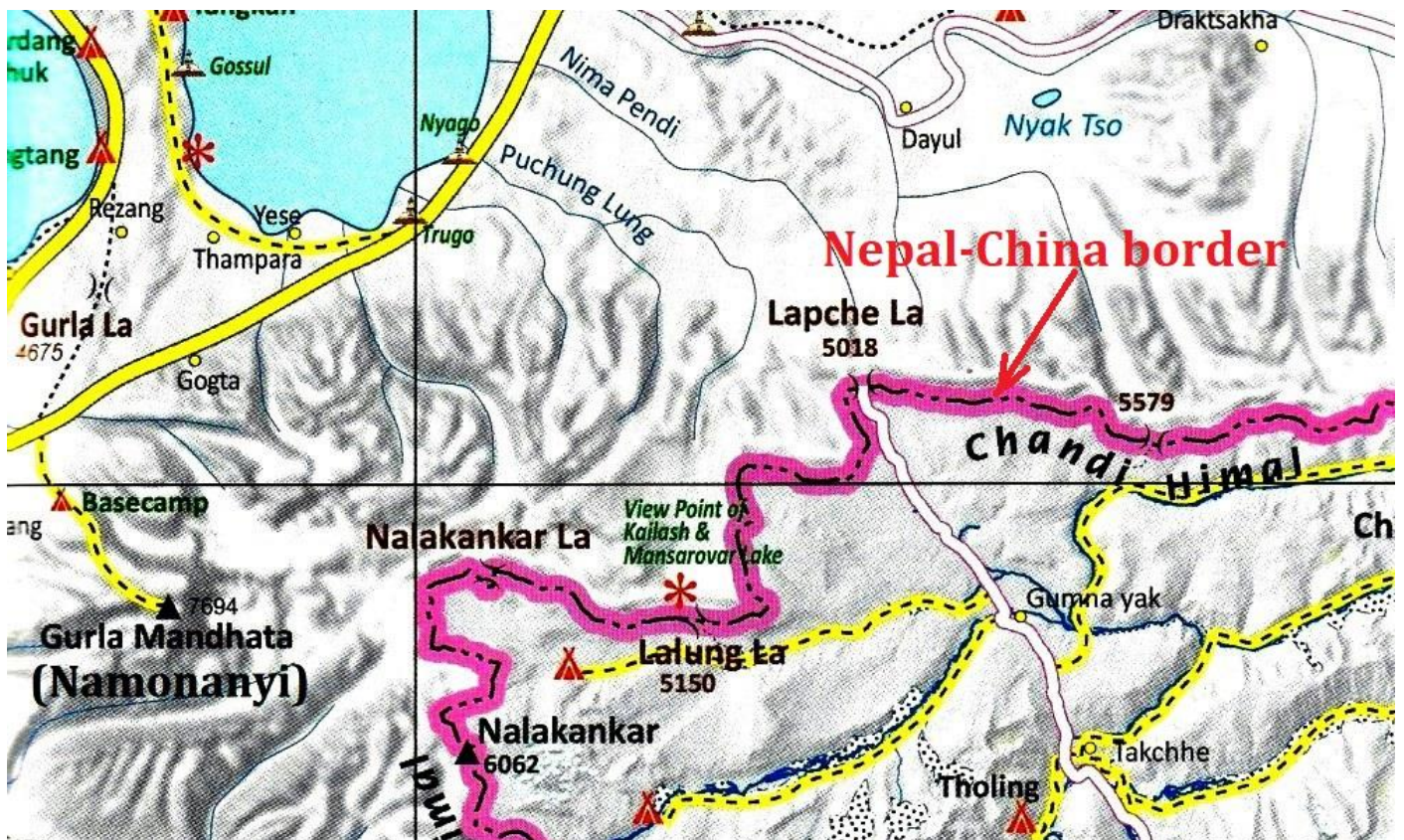
Marching northward. Winds were blowing fiercely. Forged Gyau Khola. Suddenly came across a vehicle road in desolate uninhabited zone.

October 16: Near border~Lolun La (4967m) ~Lapche La (5024m) ~near border (4894m) 11km. Accessed to Nepal-China (Tibet) border. View of Kailas from on the way wonderful.





Lapche la 5024m





October 17: Near border~Chhyolamkyok tal (5104m) 6km. Even guides didn't know a trail for two weeks uninhabited route.





October 18: Chhyolamkyok tal~Peak (5466m) ~Chhyolamkyok tal (5104m) 6km.

Morning weather was perfectly fine, but winds were strong. I carried on ascending to the Peak 5466m. There was a large cairn on the summit (see the previous page).

October 19: Chhyolamkyok tal~Gyau Khola (5182m) 9.5km. Gyau Khola getting frozen.





October 20: Gyau Khola (5182m) ~Gyau Khola (5384m) 8km.  
There were no good sites for camping.

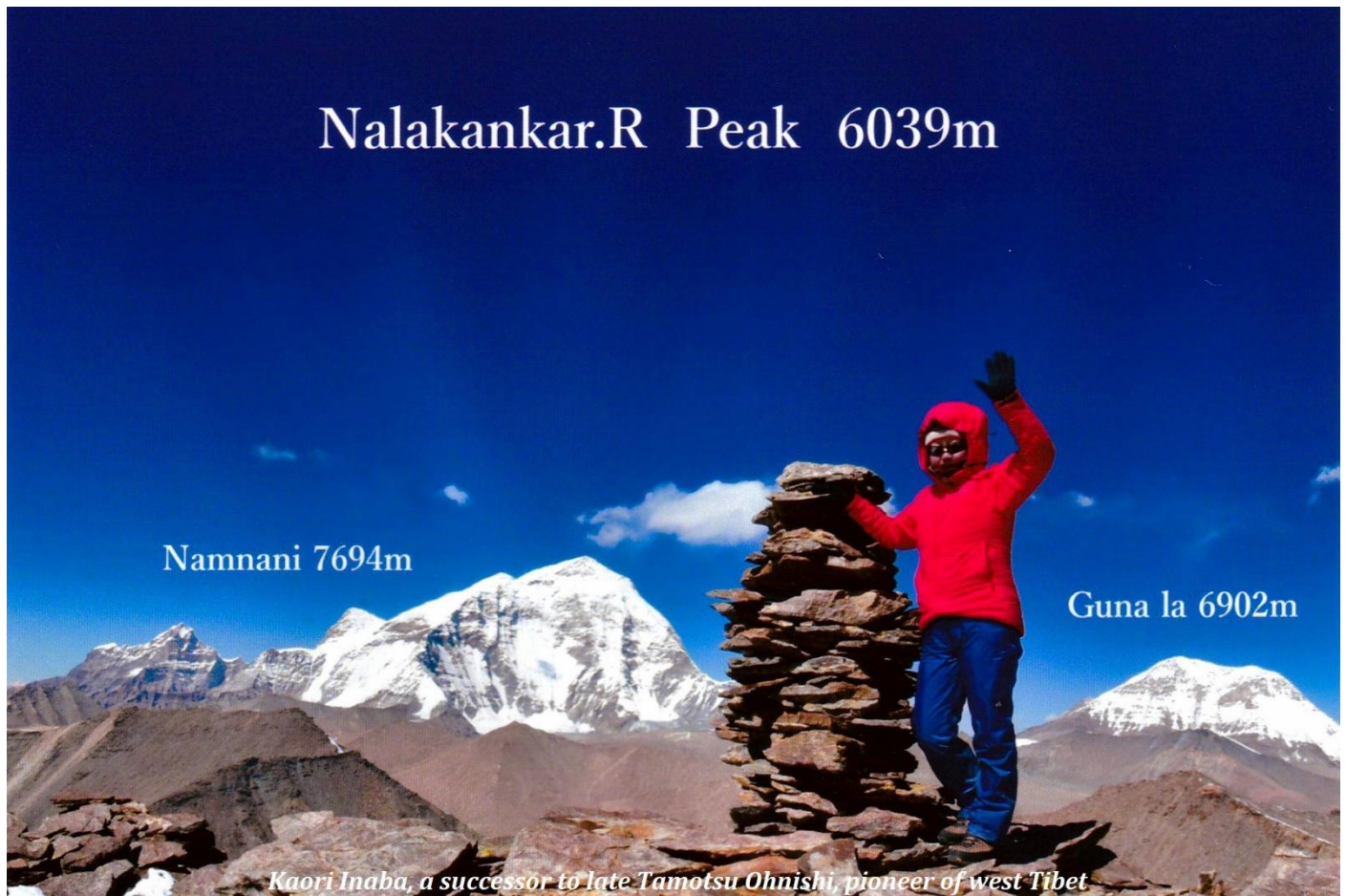


October 21: Gyau Khola (5384m) ~Nalakankar BC (5707m) 2.5km.  
Ascended confirming altitude by GPS. Distance to the lake shore for camping is rather short, less than 3km.  
I made a reconnaissance of Nalakankar. A cairn placed by late Tamotsu Ohnishi in 2000 was seen in distance.



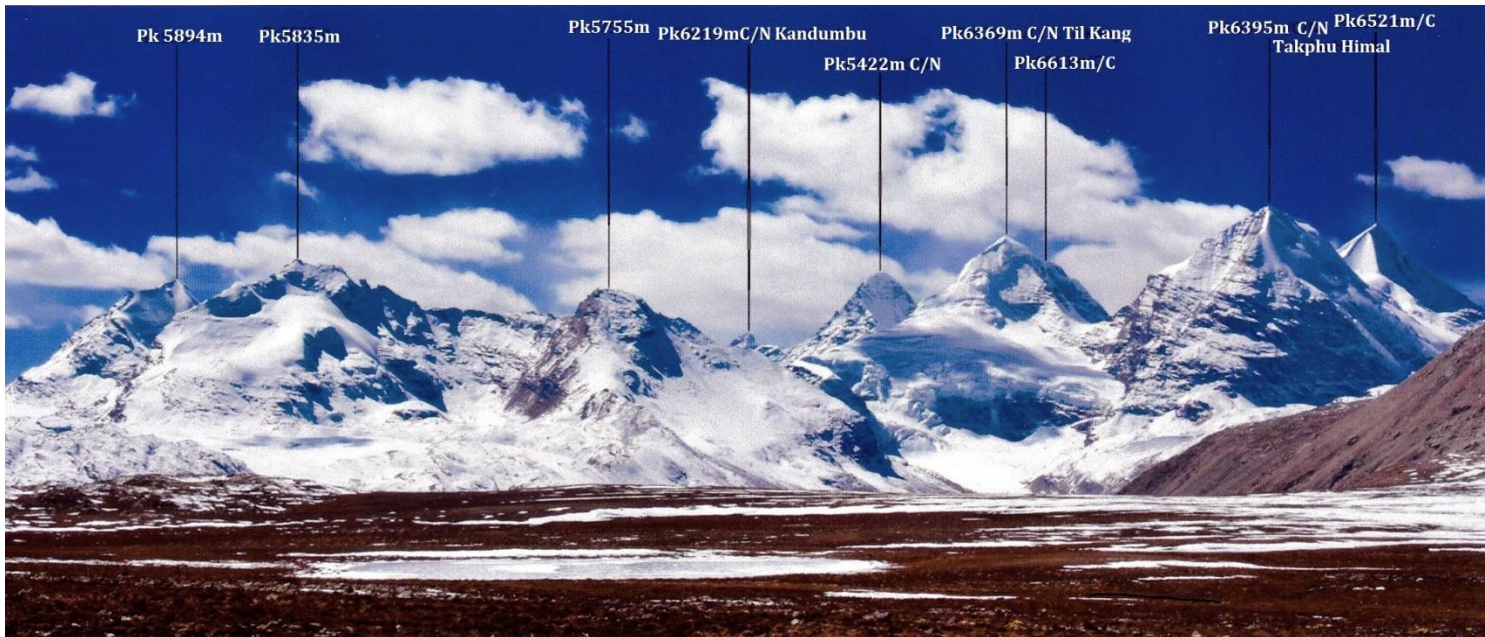


October 22: Nalakankar BC~Nalakankar.R (6039m) ~ col ~lake ~Gyau Khola (5384m) 7km.  
Directly ascended the east face of Nalakankar. Viewed Namonanyi, Gunalha, Kailas in distance.

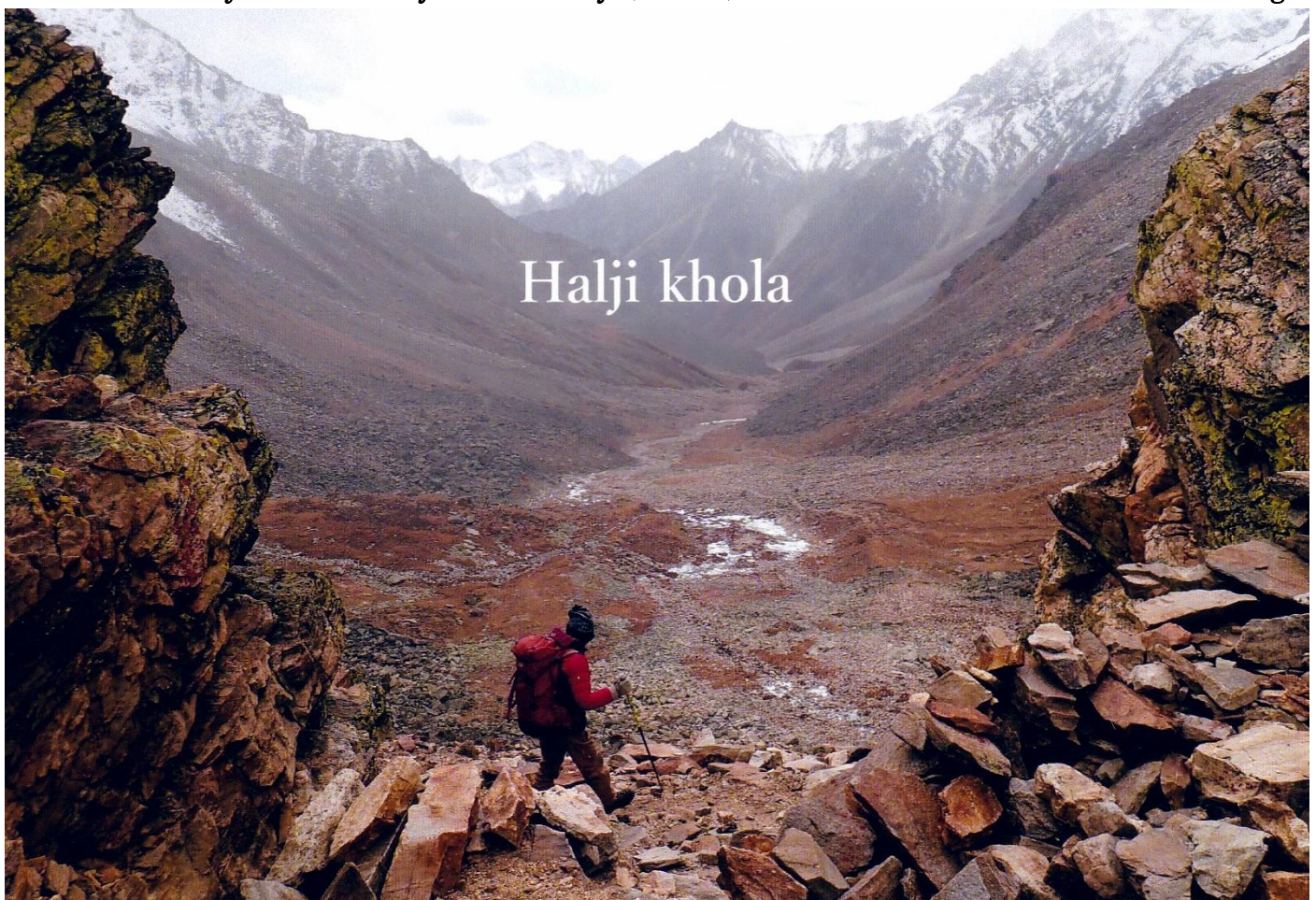




October 23: Gyau (5384m) ~ Confluence (4987m) 9km. No forging was required in late autumn.  
 October 24: Confluence~Lake~Sakya Khola (4870m) 5.5km. Temperature was minus 20°C.  
 Panorama view was alluring and informative.



October 25: Sakya Khola~Hatji Khola~Halji (3731m) 10km. After two weeks entered a village.





October 26: Halji (3731m) Rest. Visited a temple, Rinchenling gompa.





# Rinchenling gompa





October 27: Halji~Till (3851m) 7.5km, October 28: Till, Rest



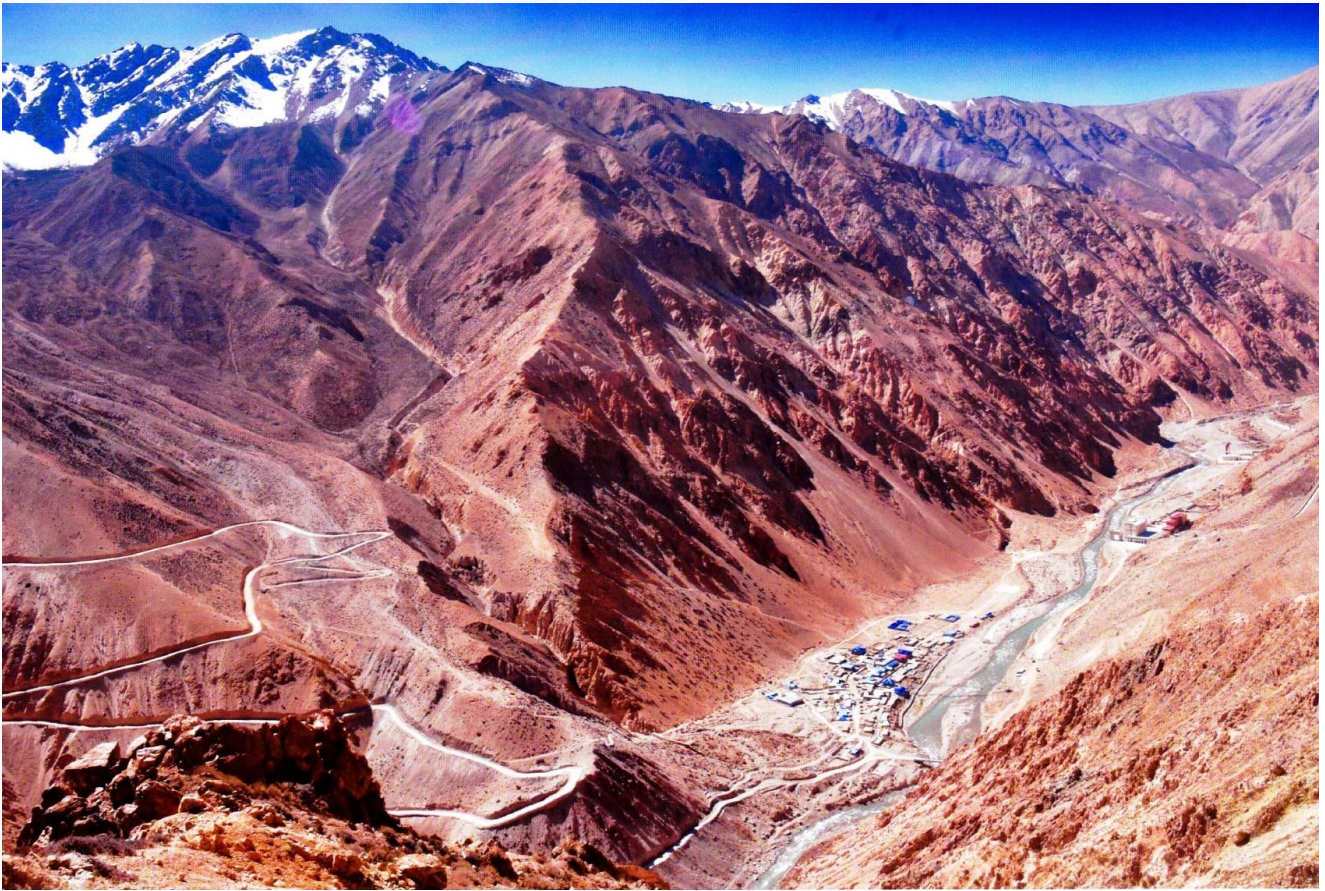


October 29: Till (3851m) ~Manepema (3914m) 10.5km. Traversing a large valley.





October 30: Manepema~Hilsa (3560m) 6km. Arrived at a frontier town of west Nepal, base for Kailas pilgrimage. Market is busy.

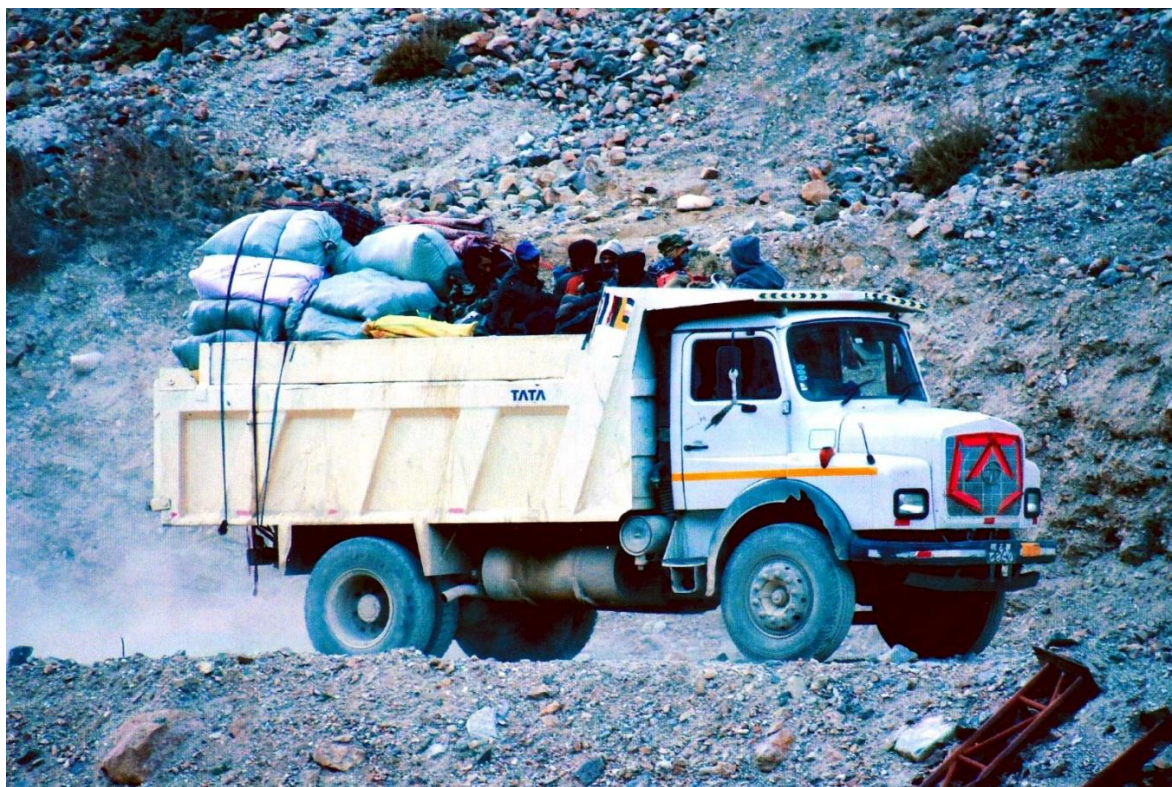




October 31: Hilsa~Yari (3742m) 10km.

November 1: Yari~Yansi gompa (3747m) 6km.

## Yansi gompa





November 2: Yansi gompa~Chimla.B BC (4843m) 10km. German team also visited here.





November 3: Chimla.B BC~Chimla.B (5106m) ~ Yansi gompa 11km.

November 4: Yansi gompa~Paniparuvan (3577m) 9.5km.

November 5: Paniparuvan~Yalban (3069m) 15km. Could see autumn leaves.





November 6: Yalban~Dhad Kermi (2503m) 13.5km. Arrived at the last camp.

Saipal III 6922m & Saipal chuli 7031m





November 7: Dhad Kermi~Simikot (3267m) 10.5km. Arrived at the final destination, Simikot.

November 8: At Simikot

November 9: Simikot~Jumla~Nepal gunji~Pokhara (800m)

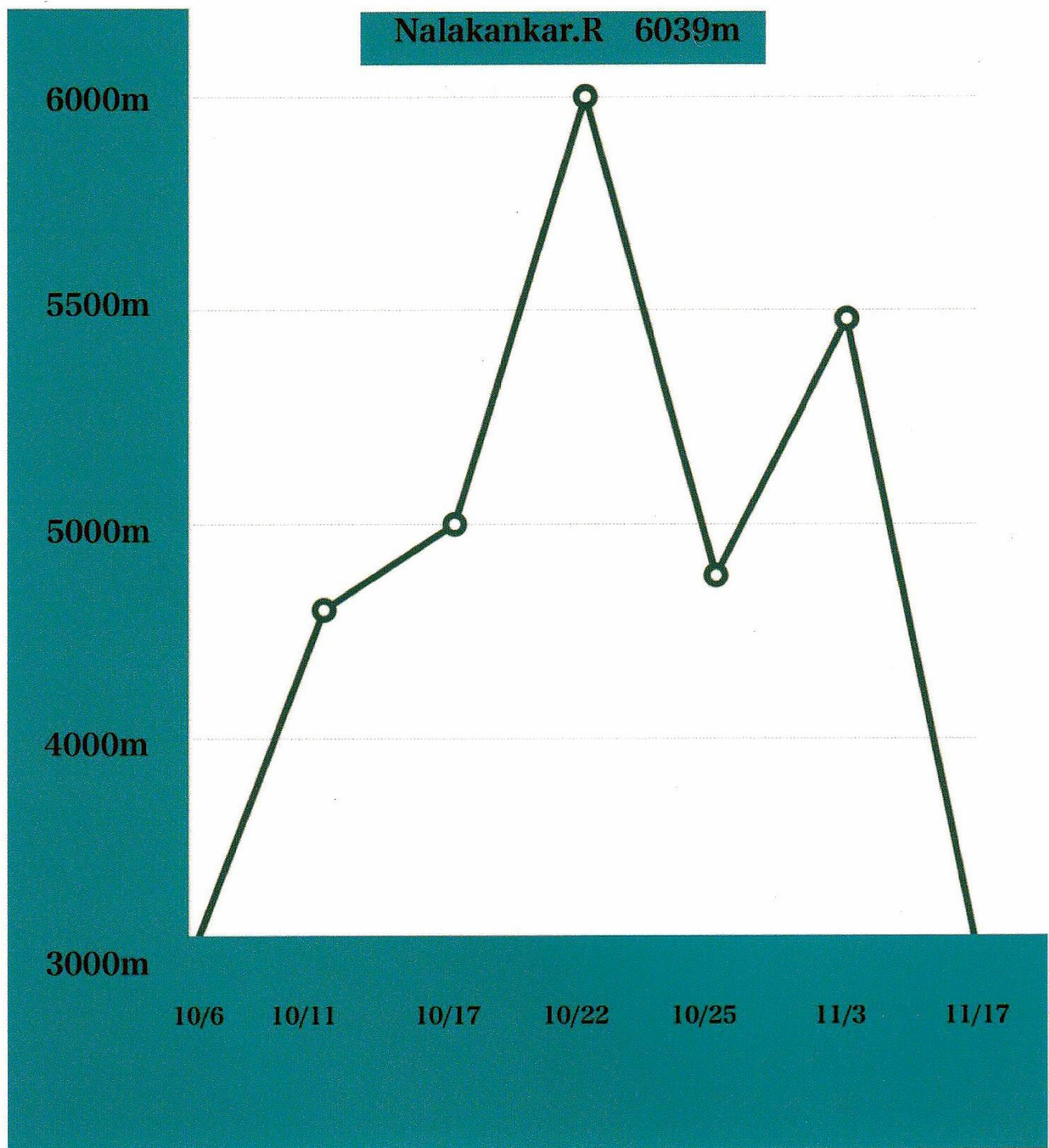
Public bus from Nepal gunji to Pokhara. End of journey.













## Members of Expedition-Humla 2018

### **Kaori Inaba**

Living in Osaka, Japan, 45 years old

Himalayan Association of Japan

2003 Pilgrimage to Kailas in the footsteps of Ekai Kawaguchi

2004 Pilgrimage to Mukhutinat in the footsteps of Ekai Kawaguchi

2007 In the footsteps of Ekai Kawaguchi to Dolpo, made first ascent of Kangtega 6060m

2009 Traverse from Muge to Dolpo

2012 Traverse of Dolpo, Shey Festival

2014 Upper Mustang

2016 Upper Mustang and Upper Dolpo,

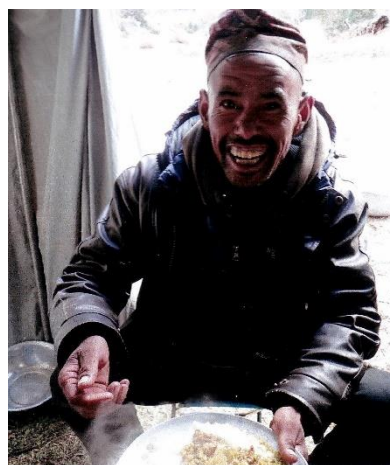


### **Pankha tamang**

33 years old from Makalu-Waulung

Guide cum cook

Ten times joined expeditions to west Nepal



### **Raru bhandari**

48 years old muleteer

From Humla-Simikot-Theh

Broad minded friendly fellow

### **Tasi lama**

40 years old porter

From Humla-Simikot-Hutik

Kind and friendly fellow

Helping to forge streams

