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Uncover the secrets of enchanting Bhutan

Imagine a lost kingdom of stunning natural beauty, of soaring snow-clad peaks and tranquil valleys, where colourful prayer flags flutter in the breeze and welcoming mountain villages lie steeped in ancient traditions and beliefs. This is Bhutan, the hidden gem of the Himalaya.

Offering breathtaking scenery and a rich culture, without the commercialism of other Himalayan destinations, Bhutan is an undiscovered paradise for trekkers. Bart Jordans’ guidebook describes over 20 trekking routes throughout the kingdom, including the classic Lunana ‘Snowman’ Trek, the Druk Path and the Jhomolhari and Dagala Treks, plus other routes than venture into seldom-explored areas of the country. There is comprehensive advice to help you plan and prepare for your trek, and plentiful cultural information to enhance any visit.

You will find thorough coverage of all the practicalities, with notes on trekking seasons, outfitters, transport, accommodation and food, ethics and etiquette, equipment and medical considerations (including safety at altitude). The guide also offers a fascinating insight into Bhutanese mountain life. Discover the legends of the mysterious yeti. Read about the trusty yaks and their herders. Learn how to stay on the good side of the gods and spirits of the mountains.

Visitors to Bhutan can expect magnificent mountain scenery and unspoilt landscapes, a vibrant culture and genuine hospitality. Trekking here is a unique experience, promising memories that will last a lifetime.

What’s inside?
- 22 official treks – including the Lunana ‘Snowman’ Trek – plus variants
- transport, equipment, etiquette and medical considerations
- a fascinating insight into Bhutanese culture

About the author
Bart Jordans has been guiding and exploring treks and trekking peaks in the Himalaya, Karakoram, Hindu Kush, European Alps and on Kilimanjaro since 1984. Originally from the Netherlands, he lived in Bhutan for over four years and in Vietnam for two. Bart is now a freelance trekking guide for several well-known companies. When not in the mountains, he works in the outdoor gear business and writes articles on the mountains of Bhutan, on which he is a noted expert.
TREKKING IN
BHUTAN

22 multi-day treks including the Jhomolhari, Druk Path and Dagala treks

Bart Jordans
DR. JIGMIE WANCHUK BHUTIA

Sikkim University first mountaineering expedition 2018

In its first mountaineering expedition twenty eight students from Sikkim University successfully summited Mount Brumkhangse East on March 24.

**Situated in North Sikkim the height of Mount Brumkhangse East is 5635 meters.**

The expedition team was led by Dr. Jigmie Wanchuk Bhutia, Coordinator, Sikkim University Sports Board and was accompanied by instructors from Indian Himalayan Centre for Adventure and Eco-tourism, Chemchey in South Sikkim.

"This is the first Mountaineering expedition of Sikkim University. The students were selected through rigorous selection process and underwent twenty four days basic training imparted at Indian Himalayan Center for Adventure and Eco-tourism, Chemchey, South Sikkim before embarking for the expedition' said Dr Jigmie Wanchuk Bhutia. "With an objective to impart leadership training through involvement of students, the University believes in letting them experience risk-taking, problem solving, resilience and self-reliance through challenging activities", he maintained.

Everester Kunzang Gyatso, along with other instructors of Indian Himalayan Centre for Adventure and Eco-tourism accompanied the team during the expedition. Before departing for the expedition, the team was also addressed by noted Japanese explorer Mr. Tamotsu Nakamura. He made a power point presentation to illustrate the beauty and magnificence of the Eastern Himalayas. He also appraised the budding mountaineers the challenges these mountains posed and the respect and reverence it deserved.

During the Valedictory Function which was held on 28th of March 2018 at IHCAE, graced by the Chief Administrator Colonel (retd.) D. N. Bhutia and Administrator Mr. U.M. Rai, Mr. Sonam Gyatso Lepcha of Second Semester, MA Tourism, Sikkim University, was awarded the Best Trainee of the course. Medals were also awarded to the best team of the course.

"It was an experience of a lifetime as the expedition was adventurous and taught us survival skills, among other things", said one of the summiteers. "This experience taught me that I was capable of overcoming pain. I became self-reliant and independent in the process because in the wilderness, you don't have any gadgets or any tools, the environment pushes you to help yourself", echoed another.
They also thanked Dr. Jigmie Wanchuk Bhutia, and the Vice Chancellor of Sikkim University Professor J. P. Tamang for giving them this wonderful opportunity.

Students of Sikkim University listening to Tom Nakamura's lecture at Gangtok

Heading for the base camp
Expedition leader Dr. Jigmie Wanchuk Bhutia

Deputy Expedition leader Dr. Namrata
Trekking toward the base camp
Above – Instructors during the expedition
Below – Negotiation avalanche prone zone
Limbering up before summit attempt
Inching toward the summit
Summiteers hold aloft the Indian tri-colour

Moment of glory
Hotel Everest View is a spectacular property located in the Solukhumbu district of Nepal, being nestled on a ridge amidst the grand amphitheater of the Everest range.

Everest View is where impeccable service blends with the spectacular surroundings. Built with a vision to promote Nepal in becoming a world-class tourist destination and to serve as an important role in the economic development of the local communities, this hotel was a pioneer in introducing the hospitality business in the Everest region.

Opened in 1971, Hotel Everest View’s world class recognition has made it a destination in its own right. It was listed on the Guinness Book of World Records (2004) as the Highest Placed Hotel in the World at 13,000ft. Mt. Everest is visible all throughout the hotel and from each of the 12 comfortable rooms. The views combined with exceptional services make for an unforgettable stay at 3,880m.

Sonia Miyahara, Kathmandu May 2018
Hidden on a ridge overlooking the Everest range, Hotel Everest View is a remarkable establishment that blends gracefully with its spectacular surrounding.

Situated within the Sagarmatha (Everest) National Park in Nepal, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, the hotel offers a 360 degree view of the awe inspiring peaks. With a view of Mt. Everest from every room, visitors can immerse in this mesmerizing scene in luxury. Opened in 1971, **Hotel Everest View has been listed on the Guinness Book of World Records (2004) as the Highest Placed Hotel in the world at 13000ft.** Featured in numerous guide books and having received media coverage, the resort has become a destination in its own right. Hotel Everest View epitomises the adventurous spirit of the Himalayas. It is a perfect place from which to explore the nearby villages and enjoy the beautiful landscape filled with evergreen fir trees, shrubs and rhododendron forests. Our dedicated staff will provide you with excellent service and delicious cuisine to make your stay an unforgettable experience.

![Hotel Everest View](image)

**Takashi Miyahara** is a Nepalese tourism entrepreneur and politician. Miyahara has lived over 40 years in Nepal. Miyahara holds a bachelor's degree in Chemical and Mechanical Engineering from Nihon University, Tokyo. When he moved to Nepal, he began working for the Department of Cottage Industry of Nepal. Miyahara constructed the Himalaya Hotel in Kathmandu. Miyahara founded Trans Himalaya Tours in 1968 and later obtained Nepalese nationality.

Had he campaigned for the elections a bit earlier, Takashi Miyahara would have been elected as a member of the Constituent Assembly and Legislature Parliament. With a vision and planning, Miyahara lured a good number of voters and lost the elections by a thin margin.
Miyahara’s Story

“There is nothing impossible to him who will try”
-Alexander the Great

It was the spring of 1968 when Takashi Miyahara first laid eyes on the magnificent Everest range from a ridge in Syangboche. What he saw in front of him was absolutely breathtaking. The scene captivated his heart and from that moment, he dared to dream that one day he would build a world class hotel in that same location.

Even today, building a hotel at 3880m is no small task. To have built one in the ‘60s would have been extremely challenging. With no access to roads, the construction of Hotel Everest View relied on porters carrying the necessary items on a two week trek from Lamusang (80km from Kathmandu), or items being transported on a helicopter. Materials such as the sliding glass doors used in the rooms, the glass for the solarium, blankets and eating utensils were all imported from Japan. These were shipped to a port in Calcutta and then transported into Nepal.

The building of the hotel was undertaken with the help of local Sherpas. The project took several years to complete due to the difficult conditions. The hotel was designed by Japanese architect Yoshinobu Kumagaya. To this day, the hotel receives praise for the simple yet elegant design that coexists beautifully with its pristine surrounding. Miyahara and his team's hard work and determination eventually paid off as Hotel Everest View opened its doors to visitors in 1971.
This hotel was built with a dream that guests from all over the world can come and enjoy a 360 degree view of the Himalayas, appreciate Mt. Everest from every room and be treated with great hospitality. It is this unparalleled location and experience that makes a visit to Hotel Everest View a once in a lifetime trip. For a few, it is a journey that is taken many, many times.

Photo Gallery of Hotel Everest View

(left) Everest 8848m (right) Lhotse 8516m south face
KEIO ALPINE CLUB
Ascents in the Shuangqiaogou, Qionglai Mountains
Three first ascents and repeat ascent of Eagle Rock Peak

Two teams of the Keio University Alpine Club climbed rock peaks surrounding Dagou and Xia Gou in Shuangqiaogou valley of the Qionglai Mountains, Sichuan, in August – September, 2013.

Team A (Students)
Period: August 3 – August 22
Members: Takaaki Morikami, Kengo Tagai, Yusuke Kimura, Kengo Nagano

Team B
Period: August 31 – September 22
Members: Kenji Onodera, Keita Kanehara
Record of Team A – Peak Surrounding Dagou

Route on Haobangah
Route on Fenghuang
Top of Fenghuang
Line on Shizi
Climbing Haobangah
On the summit ridge of Fenghuang
Climbing Shizi
Climbing lower wall of Eagle Rock Peak
On August 3rd, Morikami and Nagano set up base camp at 4,000m. They first reconnoitered the Dagou (branch valley) for two days and gave up an attempt on the 5120m peak because of danger of falling rocks. Instead a peak between Dagou and Changpingou was chosen as an alternative, and they succeeded in reaching the summit of Haobangah peak on August 9th.

The next target was Shizi peak on the ridge of 5,120m peak. Morikami, Tagai and Kimura succeeded in the first ascent of this peak on August 15th. In succession Morikami and Tagai made the first ascent of Fenghuang peak on August 19th and Xiao peak on August 21st. Fenghuang peak ranges from Shizi peak and Ohuchi peak. Xiao peak was discovered while reconnoitering the Changpingou.

No bolt was used for ascending Haobangah, Shizi, and Fenghuan peaks, but cam device, nuts, pitons, and slings were used. However only for Shizi peak, we drove in bolts for 10 pitches out of 13 pitches as anchors for descent and for fixed rope.

**Record of Team B – Opened New Route on the lower part of Eagle Rock Peak Route**

Onodera and Kanehara entered Shuangqiaogou right after Team A returned to Japan, but it rained for two weeks and temperature soon. It sometimes snowed at 4000m.
Route of Eagle Rock Peak
To their luck, nevertheless, a favor swung toward them from September 12th, a fine weather came back and temperature gradually increased. On the 13th, we climbed the of Niuxinshan for acclimatization to a high altitude. Because of snow, they changed their target from Potala Shan to Eagle Rock Peak. We set up base camp by Baihaizi, and headed to the summit on the following day. Even it was in the middle of the fine weather period, we got into Thunderstorm storm broke even during fine weather while they bivouacked on the 16th – 17th. The lower wall of Eagle Rock Peak has a height of about 400m (8 pitches). The followed a line in the middle of the wall with continuous cracks, flakes, and corners. There were some falling rocks and flowing water when it rained, but it didn’t hit the line as the face was too steep.

As corner on the lower-middle part of the line was wet and crack of the slab face on the upper-middle part was grassy, the ropes ran out. Since a bolting kit was left at the base camp, no bolt applied.

The upper wall has a height of about 700m. They reached to the head wall via gentle face and band. The climbing line was the same as that of a Chinese party having climbed a couple of days ago. They used existing bolts in each belaying point. Descending route was on the same line on the head wall, and from the middle part of the line, they descended to the basal part of the upper half wall via right side of the ridge. They rappelled down 11 times.

It is noted that the team stood atop Eagle Rock Peak opening a new route “Hagoroamo” on the lower wall of the Eagle Rock Peak.

**Route summary:**

**Haobangah Peak 4870m**
Wall height to climb: 275m, 8 pitches, Grade: 5.8  
Pitch 1 – 60m, 5.5, Nagano, traverse scree to the fragile wall  
Pitch 2 – 40m, 5.8, Morikami, fragile wall to the ridge  
Pitch 3 – 40m, 5.7, Morikami, face to the ridge  
Pitch 4 – 25m, 5.8, Morikami, right side corner of the ridge to the terrace  
Pitch 5 – 20m, 5.8, Morikami, right side corner on the terrace  
Pitch 6 – 15m, 5.8, Morikami, corner to the terrace  
Pitch 7 – 50m, 5.6, Morikami, traverse to the right side of the ridge  
Pitch 8 – 25m, 5.6, Nagano, climb along the ridge to the top

**Shizi Peak 5057m**
Wall height to climb: 570m, 13 pitches, Grade: 5.10c
Pitch 1 – 60m, 5.10b, Morikami, traverse from the large flake to the crack on the right. (Tagai climbed this pitch later and made it a free route)
Pitch 2 – 60m, 5.5, Morikami, gully
Pitch 3 – 60m, 5.5, Morikami, gully
Pitch 4 – 20m, 5.10a, Tagai, a wall on the left side of the gully
Pitch 5 – 30m, 5.10c, Morikami, reversing phase slab
Pitch 6 – 50m, 5.10c, Tagai, traverse of the slab
Pitch 7 – 60m, 5.5, Morikami, straight up the scree
Pitch 8 – 30m, 5.5, Tagai, scree
Pitch 9 – 50m, 5.10a, Morikami, traverse below the overhung rock to the left, then right up to the terrace
Pitch 10 – 50m, 5.10a, Tagai, straight up the slightly concaved angle to the col
Pitch 11 – 30m, 5.9, Morikami, crack on the left side of the ridge
Pitch 12 – 50m, 5.9, Tagai, ridge
Pitch 13 – 20m, 5.8, Morikami, a small gap to the peak

**Fenghuang Peak 4984m**
Wall height to climb: 340m, 7 pitches, Grade: 5.10a
Pitch 1 – 50m, 5.8, Tagai, gully
Pitch 2 – 50m, 5.8, Morikami, gully
Pitch 3 – 50m, 5.7, Tagai, gully
Pitch 4 – 50m, 5.10a, Morikami, go across the buttress to the right and climb the face to the up right direction
Pitch 5 – 50m, 5.8, Tagai, straight up the corner
Pitch 6 – 50m, 5.8, Morikami, the face
Pitch 7 – 40m, 5.6, Tagai, ridge to the peak

**Eagle Rock Peak ca.5300m**
Wall height to climb: 1100m, Grade: 5.11, “Hagoromo” route on the lower part
DAVE ANDERSON
First Ascent of Mt. Dayantianwo, Qionglai Mountains

An international climbing expedition completed the first ascent of Mt Dayantianwo (17126ft) in the Shuangqiao Valley of Siguniang National Park in Sichuan China. On 09/15/2013 Chaohui Zheng of China, Szu-ting Yi of Taiwan and American Dave Anderson climbed the 2000 ft southwest face at 5.10 r/x, 60 degrees. The three climbers had been part of a larger expedition organized by Zheng that attempted the peak earlier in the month, but were forced to abandon their initial attempt after a series of storms covered the rock peak with several feet of snow. After week long period of good weather that melted most of the snow the three climbers, along with Tibetan climber Laoyao Xu returned to their high camp at the base of Dayantianwo. The next day they started climbing two separate routes on the southwest face. After 7 pitches the two teams routes intersected, Xu decided to descend and Zheng joined Yi and Anderson and climbed to summit and rappelled in the dark returning to their high camp in a 16 hour round trip push. Yi and Anderson named their route "Three Sheep Bring Prosperity" for the Baharal Mountain Sheep that ran past them through fifth class terrain near the summit. Zheng named his variation "Top of a Dream."

Also in the Shaungqiao Valley Yi, Anderson and Chinese climber Yunching Liu established “Playing with Fire” a 1500 ft route, 9 pitches 5.10- on the south ridge on Seerdengpu. The trio completed the route on 8/25/2013 with one bivy during the descent.
Map of Mt. Siguniang Area

Map drawn by Tom Nakamura
HIROO YONEZAWA

First ascent of the Central Pillar north of Baihaizi

The Central Pillar 5380m (GPS) ranges south of Potala Shan 5428m, east of Eagle Rock Peak ca. 5300m and west of Wargrusei ca. 5300m. They surround Baihaizi (White Lake) at 4600m to southeast. We tentatively call these peaks as “Baihaizi three mountains”. The Central Pillar soars about 100m higher than Eagle Rock and Wargrusei. See the map.

Climbing record of the Central Pillar

Expedition period: June 28 – August 24
Members: Naoki Ohuchi, Hiroo Yonezawa, Koji Sano, Yousuke Yamazaki

On July 30 Ohuchi and I set up a base camp near-by a beautiful blue lake, Baihaizi, at 4600m and after two days rest trial climbing started on August 2. Approach to the wall to climb took more time than estimated. We first ascended moraine and then three pitches on snow bed to the red-brown colored face which led to a starting point of climbing the wall. Ohuchi led climbing of the lower part of the wall negotiating narrow cracks and overhung using artificial aids and deposited loads on the upper terrace. Yonezawa carried loads. August 3 was a rest day. Climbing was resumed on August 4. After two bivouacs we reached a ridge between the Central Pillar and Wargrusei, where the trial climbing ended. We once descended to a lower village. We returned to Baihaizi and again set up a base camp there on August 13. All of four members gathered. We climbed six pitches to the highest point of the trial climbing an deposited loads there on August 15. August 16 was a rest day. On August 17 we continued climbing in two parties. First pitches 1 – 6 were led by Ohuchi, pitches 7 – 11 were led by Yonezawa and pitch 12 was led by Ohuchi. After pitch 12 we bivouacked. On August 18 Yamazaki led pitches 13 and 14. Yonezawa led pitch 15 and the last pitch was led by Sano. We finally reach a small peak just left of 15m rock tower like an obelisk and completed the first ascent of the Central Pillar at 12:10 on August 18.

Route summary
Wall height to climb: 510m, Climbing distance: 565m, 17 pitches, Grade: A1, VI+
Pitch 1 – 40m, couloirs with scree to red-brown face
Pitch 2 – 20m, A1, VI+, crack then overhung to terrace
Pitch 3 – 20m, A0, V+, face climbing from terrace to terrace
Pitch 4 – 20m, A0, VI−, face/hollow rock to stable terrace (1st bivouac at trial climb)
Pitch 5 – 20m, V+, face to small terrace
Pitch 6 – 45m, IV+, II, III, face then traverse (2nd bivouac at trial climb)
Pitch 7 – 45m, A1, V, face, overhung, hollow part, unstable belay
Pitch 8 – 45m, Hollow face to band, then to scree
Pitch 9 – 25m, IV, Hollow-unstable face
Pitch 10 – 50m, V−, Hollow face to band, then to terrace
Pitch 11 – 35m, V, 20m crack, 15m face to terrace
Pitch 12 – 50m, V−, face/crack/hollow to terrace, bivouac spot
Pitch 13 – 50m, VI−, face to crack
Pitch 14 – 50m, VI, face, crack, chimney, col then face
Pitch 15 – 50m, A1, VI+, crack, below overhung then hollow part
Pitch 16 – 20m, IV−, band, scree to terrace
Pitch 17 – 30m, IV−, vertical hollow face, crack, face to the summit 5380m (GPS)
WANG ZHIMING

New Route on Eagle Rock Peak, Qionglai Mountains, Sichuan

A Dream of 353 Years – 13 pitches. 5.11a, 650m

At 4:30pm on August 27, 2013, I was gasping with my back leaning on the rock. Heng Zhao and Jinyun Dong, my teammates, were thoughtfully looking at me. Cloud rapidly gathered around us as not unusually in this season. We were pushing the 11th pitch at least 500 meters above the base camp.

The Eagle Rock Peak ca. 5,300m dominantly towers southeast of Potala Shan in the Shuangqiao Valley. The only climbing record is Swiss team of Christof Looser, Martin Ruggli and Lukas Durr. They stood atop in October, 2005. The name of route is I Hate Camping: 21 pitch, VI, F7a (5.11d), A3, 700m.

On August 23
We set up the base camp at 4,400m south of the Eagle Rock Peak.

On August 25
We carefully studied logistic route and reconnoitered viable access to start climbing. Weather was easy to change, sunny, rain and cloudy.

Pitch 1: A gentle slab of 50° – 60° angle with crack could be soloed with no protection. Grade 5.7R.

Pitch 2: Angle increased to 70° with lose rock, but was soloed. Grade 5.8R.

Pitch 3: Real climbing started. Slab with no crack of Grade 5.7R. 8mm bolt and short rope left by Japanese having abandoned due to bad weather was found.

Pitch 4: Also slab with less crack of Grade 5.7R continued. Weather got worse with rain. 100m rope was fixed.

On August 26
Another party of our group climbed to “Switzerland terrace”. We had different approaches. We chose right way to an integrated crack that directed to the top of the Eagle Rock Peak. The other party returned to the base camp. They climbed three pitches of total 150m with 70° rock. The grades are 5.8R, 5.8R, 5.5. They also fixed ropes.

On August 27
I was the first that arrived to Switzerland terrace, above which is the main crack. The angle looked vertical.

At 12:30pm Dong and Zhao finally arrived to the terrace. I followed a crack from the platform to the right side. That was Pitch 8 Grade 5.7 with crack and smooth wall.

At 1:30pm Pitch 9 started. Climbing was really dramatic. We made a good choice. After Pitch 8 belay station, I moved 15m to the right side, then to the left by 10m and entered main crack. This was a wonderful route of Grade 5.10+. I put an anchor on small terrace, fixed ropes for Griff and Zhao.

At 3:00pm Pitch 10 was steeper with crack. As ascending the crack became narrow and harder to climb with Grade 5.10+. After about 35m climb we reached a terrace where we found two pitons and corrupted white nylon rope and small metal ring that
was put by Switzerland team for descending after they successfully summitted. At 4:00pm **Pitch 11** was traverse with Grade 5.9. At 5:00pm the initial push of **Pitch 12** was big challenge for two narrow vertical cracks, after them we entered easy chimney. When we found three remaining pitons in this pitch en-route, I was very much puzzled. Did we repeat the old route that any team already finished before? This was definitely not along the Switzerland route. Are they belonging to a Japanese or Korean team we met recently? We did not find any information about them online because of the language difference. Our goal was to open new route, thus these three pitons frustrated us a lot. This pitch was the toughest through the entire route. Grade is 5.11a.

At 6:00pm cloud appeared. We opened headlamps. Dong and Zhao followed me **Pitch 13** with 70° cracks and finally “Summit, we’ve got it”. At 7:30pm Looking around I was between the low summit and middle summit of the Eagle Rock Peak. The height gap was about 20m. There was a higher peak some 200m away hidden from the Shuangqiao Valley. At 8:00pm we continuously climbed 14 hours after departing from base camp. I cleaned up ropes for descent. We did not left any spare rock protection, nut, webbing, rope and other climbing gears and man-made rubbish on the route. (See the map and photo of Article “First ascent of the Central Pillar”.)