



# HIMALAYAN ENVIRONMENT TRUST

## HIMALAYAS ONLINE

JOTVINDER SINGH  
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## **INDIA, CHINA, NEPAL JOIN HANDS TO SAVE MOUNT KAILASH**

(Indian Express, New Delhi, 12/4/2010)

India, China and Nepal are set to launch a joint conservation initiative for the Mount Kailash landscape. The conservation will be meant to tackle the issue of glacial melt, biodiversity conservation and interestingly also have a mandate for cultural conservation in the Himalayan region.

First of its kinds trans boundary conservation project will be launched under the guidance of International Centre for Integrating Mountain Development (ICIMOD).

## **SNOWFALL OVER HIMALAYAS SPELLS DROUGHT IN INDIA**

(Free Press Journal, Mumbai (26/4/2010)

Scientists have helped to explain why heavy snowfall over the Himalayas in winter and spring can lead to drought over India, especially in the early part of the summer monsoon.

As far back as the 1880s scientists have known that increased snow over the Himalayas can be linked with weaker summer monsoon rains over India. However the mechanisms explaining this link were never properly understood. Latest research shows that greater snowfall reflects more sunlight and produces a cooling over the Himalayas. This means a weakening of the monsoon winds that bring rain to India. The relationship is strongest in the absence of warm (El Nino) or cold (la Nina) conditions in the tropical Pacific, because these are normally the dominant control over Indian rains. The onset of timing of the monsoon is very important for agriculture: a lack of rainfall early in the growing season can have a devastating impact on crops.

These findings were published in Climate Dynamics.

## **SHEKHAR KAPUR, JULIA ROBERTS TEAM UP FOR FILM ON MOUNT EVEREST**

(Pioneer 23/4/2010)

Indian Director Shekhar Kapur is reportedly all set to join hands with Hollywood superstar Julia Roberts to direct a film on famous English Explorer George Mallory.

Mallory's remembered as having said "Because it's there" in reply to the question "Why do we want to climb Mt. Everest?" He and his climbing

partner disappeared in 1924 when they were 800 ft from the summit during the expedition.

This movie is definitely going to be a treat for all those who want to be there on Everest but can't because of the limitations.

### **HILLARY'S ASHES WONT BE SCATTERED ON MT EVEREST**

The ashes of Sir Edmund Hillary, the first man to summit will be kept at a memorial near the mountain and will not be scattered on the peak as had desired.

A Nepali Climber, Apa Sherpa, who hold the record for the most successful Everest ascents was to scatter Hillary's ashes, which have lain in a monastery. But Ang Tenzing Sherpa, Chief of Sherpa Citizen's Group Khumbu Civil Society said scattering the ashes on the mountain, considered God by the sherpa community, would be against their culture and tradition. "It is inauspicious", he said. Therefore, the ashes will be kept at the memorial during the golden jubilee of the first school Hillary opened in Khumjung next year.

### **THE HEIGHTS, EVEREST PEAKS AT 3 LEVELS.**

(Times of India 9/4/2010)

Mt Everest has four names and over a dozen routes. And now, Mt. Everest the tallest mountain the world has three heights as well.

1953

Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay became first men to climb Everest. Its height officially recorded by Nepal as 8848m

1996

American team measures the peak with latest equipment and records its eight as 8850m

2005

China sends a team to measure the peak finds the height to be 8844.43m

2010

Nepal agrees to use 2 official heights...its Own Version and Chinese Version

## **SUMMER HIGH: J&K TO OPEN 104 PEAKS FOR FOREIGN CLIMBERS**

Time of India 10/4/2010

For the first time India will allow foreign climbers to scale more than 100 high altitude peaks this summer in Jammu & Kashmir. The peaks to be opened for trekking and mountaineering are situated at an altitude ranging from 3000 metres to 78000 meters mostly in the eastern Karakoram mountain range of Ladakh.

## **NATION'S FIRST SPECIALIZED GLACIOLOGY SCHOOL LIKELY AT DEHRADUN**

The Uttarakhand Capital is likely to get a specialized institute of glaciology, a first of its kind in the country.

PMs study group on Himalayan glaciers has recommended establishment of a nodal institution for glaciology that could act as a repository of the currently available data with different knowledge institution in the country. The Union Government is soon expected to take a decision soon.

The group was of the view that the available field data are too short to arrive at any statistically reliable estimate of the impact of climate change on Himalayan glaciers. It felt that long term sustained monitoring of selected glaciers should be given top priority. It also recommended that an extensive network of observing stations for monitoring glacial phenomena and associated climate geophysical and biogeochemical processes should be set up.

## **ARJUN VAJPAI BECOMES YOUNGEST INDIAN TO CLIMB Mt. EVEREST**

16-year-old teenager from Noida, Arjun Vajpai became the youngest Indian to scale the 8,848-metre-high Mt. Everest. He took the traditional South Col route in Nepal.

It was a proud moment for Arjun and his family. His family was worried about his safety, as it was not an easy task to climb Mt. Everest. However, finally they gave the nod and Arjun made the country proud.

Arjun is a student of Ryan International School, at Sector 39 in Noida. He loves trekking, mountaineering, hiking, football and basketball. Arjun was part of a 12-member expedition team.

## **ROMERO THE YOUNGEST TO CLIMB MT. EVEREST**

(Internet)

Romero (born July 12, 1996<sup>1</sup>) is a U.S. mountain climber who, on May 22, 2010, became the youngest person to climb Mount Everest. He was 13 years 10 months 10 days old when he reached the summit.<sup>[3]</sup> Romero was accompanied by his father Paul Romero, his father's girlfriend Karen Lundgren, and three Sherpas, Ang Pasang Sherpa, Lama Dawa Sherpa, and Lama Karma Sherpa. He was inspired to climb the tallest mountains of each continent when he saw a painting in the hallway of his school that had the seven continents' highest mountains.<sup>1</sup> The previous record for youngest to climb Everest was held by Temba Tsheri of Nepal who was 16 years and 14 days old when he reached the summit in 2001.

The Seven Summits Jordan has climbed:

Africa- Kilimanjaro – July 22, 2006

Australia- Kosciuszko – April, 2007

Europe/Russia- Elbrus – July 11, 2007

South America- Aconcagua – December 30, 2007

North America- Denali – June 18, 2008

Oceania- Carstensz Pyramid – September 1, 2009

Asia – Mt. Everest – May 22, 2010

## **GRAVITATIONAL FORCE IN THE HIMALAYAS**

(Sentinel, Guwahati, 21/5/2010)

The Satellite GOCE (Gravity Field and Steady State Ocean Circulation Explorer) which has been orbiting the Earth for more than a year and surveying its gravitational field more accurately than any instrument previously. The main goal is to determine the gravitational force in precise details even in pathless places like the Himalayas.

Evaluation of the first data from satellite indicate that current models of the gravitational field in some regions can be fundamentally revised. On that basis the researches expect to develop a better understanding of many geophysical processes, including earthquakes and ocean circulation.

## **MELTING HIMALAYAN GLACIERS TO HIT INDUS, BRAHMAPUTRA**

(Hindustan Times (10/6/2010))

The melting glaciers in the Himalayas will have varying impact on the waters of Indus, Ganges, Brahmaputra, Yangtze and Yellow rivers, according to a new Dutch research.

Changes to the flow of meltwater due to global warming may have a “severe: impact on food security in some areas. However, they also point out that people living elsewhere are likely to see an increase in food productivity. Brahmaputra & Indus basins are most susceptible to reductions of flow threatening the food security of an estimated 60 million people. An accelerated melt peak may alleviate a shortage of irrigation water in the drought prone early stages of the growing season.

## **SEABUCKTHORN TO GREEN COLD DESERTS IN HIMALAYAN STATES**

(Sentinel, Guwahati)



The cold deserts of the Indian Himalayas where the survival of many flora species is minimal may soon see massive plantations of seabuckthorn a – medicinally rich plant in a move that is expected to check soil erosion and benefit farmers. Seabuck thorn afforestation will check the problem of soil erosion which is very acute in most rivers originating from the Himalayas like Satluj, Indus and Chenab, especially during the rainy season. Globally some 40 countries have in the past 20 years joined the race for seabuckthorn development and its commercial utilisation.

A long term national policy being jointly developed by Ministry of Environment and Forest and Defence Research and Development Organisation will also be commercially and economically beneficial for farmers because of its medicinal properties. Extracts of seabuckthorn is used for making life saving drugs for cardiovascular diseases, ulcer and cancer.

## **MASSIVE DECLINE IN BUTTERFLIES IN HIMALAYAS**

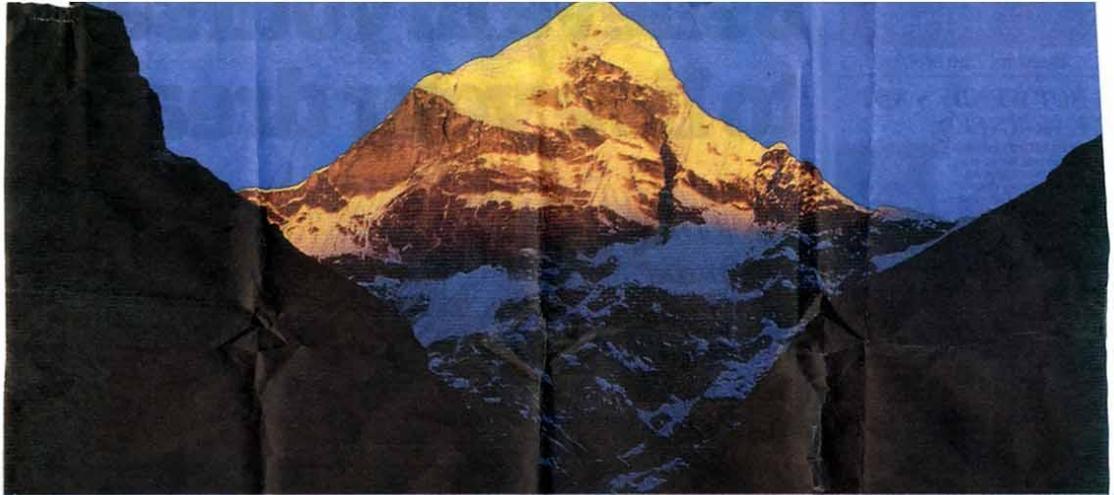
(Sentinel, Guwahati 5/6/2010)



The lofty western Himalayas are being slowly robbed of their butterflies, the culprit being human interference.

The population of 50 percent of the 288 species recorded in the Western Himalayas comprising areas of Himachal Pradesh and Jammu & Kashmir have declined more than half in just 10 years. A large number of butterflies were found dead on the Khardung La (the world's highest motorable road in Ladakh). It was due to a rise in vehicular traffic by the tourists.

A massive decline in the population of common snow Apollo Butterfly, a medium size white butterfly with black streaks, large green, common meadow blue, white blue linen and violet meadow blue butterflies is also reported. The decline is due to its rampant smuggling and lack of conservation measures by the Government.



(Top) Shivering in the Gangotri region of Uttarakhand; (Below, right) A photo of Nanda Devi, which looks strikingly similar to a Nicholas Roerich painting (bottom)

# CLIMB EVERY MOUNTAIN

*An enduring love affair with the Himalayas makes for a book splashed with bright colour*

**A**CCIDENTS, landslides, narrowly missing being crushed by descending boulders, being chased by bears and almost being shot at by Chinese soldiers perhaps don't count for much when all you want to do is to see and capture an incredible range of colours. Ashok Dilwali, a CA-turned-photographer, would know, having embarked on a 30-year-old love affair with the Himalayas, just to see the mighty peaks coloured a virulent yellow, a flaming orange, a sombre mauve, a fierce and forbidding brown, an austere white and a mellow, deep purple.

Dilwali, who has just come out with his 21st photography book, *Himalaya: Lens and Passion* didn't really believe a mountain is anything more than a snow-capped peak coloured white. Things changed in 1974, when the Bulgarian embassy asked him to photograph the paintings of the Russian painter-philosopher Nicholas Roerich. "I thought the mauve, pink and deep yellow peaks were works of his imagination," says Dilwali. Inspired, he went on his first trek to Sikkim. "I was 35 when I started trekking. My mother said, 'You can't even walk 5 km in Delhi. How will you walk 15 km in the mountains?' But we don't realise how much will power we have. I did 40 km a day."

All these years later, Dilwali, who manages Kinsey Bros, his family's photography shop in Connaught Place, has done

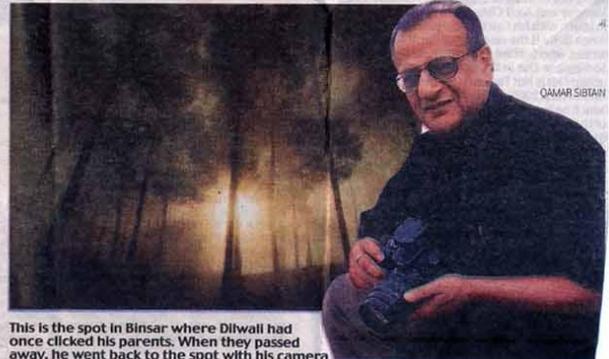


Nanda Devi adorned by a 'crown-like' cloud formation



By Neha Tara Mehta

over 300 mountain trips. The father of three and grandfather of five has been described as a bad companion by friends and family, and likes taking to the hills on his own with his loyal Nikon and Canon. Pointing to a photo of the Nanda Devi, he says, "I trekked 13 days for that one shot."  
As Delhi blisters in the hottest May in the last many years, Dilwali is planning his next great escape to the mountains. On his last trip to Sangla valley a month ago, he was stuck in snow and took two hours to drive 10 km to avoid slipping off the road. He still stopped to take photos. It's a love affair that shows no signs of waning.



This is the spot in Binsar where Dilwali had once clicked his parents. When they passed away, he went back to the spot with his camera



QAMAR SIBTAN

## **HIMACHAL PRADESH TO BE CARBON NEUTRAL STATE BY 2015**

(Pioneer, Lucknow (13/6/2010))

Nestled in the lap of the Himalayas, Himachal Pradesh has seen climatic aberrations in the last few years in the form of erratic rains, unpredictable dry spells, rising temperature and withering crops.

*Preserving the environment is critical for Himachal as it has direct bearing on the fragile Himalayan ecology. Sustenance of the Himalayan ecology is must for the survival of humanity. It is therefore necessary to conserve precious Himalayan flora, fauna and environment.*

Enough for Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh to take up the cudgels to make his state India's first carbon-neutral State. In the coming 5 years State Government will initiate various projects with funding from World Bank of Programmatic Environment Development Policy Loan. World Bank has shown interest in extending the Mid Himalayan Water Shed Development Project.

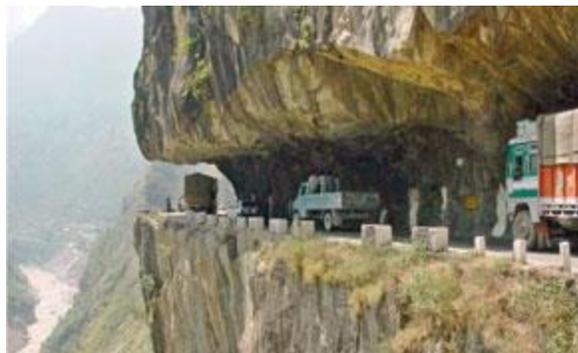
Ban on use of recycled plastic and polythene bags has been imposed. In order to become a carbon neutral state, the State will also be adopting the climate change policy and action plan and implementing the State's environment master plan.

The Government is also in touch with international experts to bolster Himachal's demand for payment for environment services (PES) a concept which has been adopted by many countries. The Planning Commission too, has assured all financial assistance to the State.

*A gargantuan task and only time will tell how and when Himachal's grand dream comes true.*

## **HIMALAYAN TUNNEL WILL BE ENGINEERING MARVEL**

(Internet)



The Rohtang tunnel is the world's longest tunnel at over 13,000 ft. The Himalayan tunnel is 8.8 km long and called as an engineering wonder, will be inaugurated by Congress President Sonia Gandhi. This engineering marvel was a dream of late prime minister of India, Rajeev Gandhi and it will give wings to dream of Sonia Gandhi's husband. The tunnel is located in Himachal Pradesh and might be ready by 2015 and will provide a center for the Indian Army to carry supplies to Ladakh.

A spokesperson of the defence ministry that is constructing the tunnel (engineering marvel) said, "It will be much longer than the present longest tunnels anywhere in the world at altitudes over 2,500 m. The nearest in comparison to the Rohtang Tunnel is the Anzob in Tajikistan which is five kilometres long at an altitude of 3,372 meter." The dream of Rajiv Gandhi was conceived by him about 26 years ago. The project of tunnel is about 1,495 crore rupees. The spokesperson of the defence ministry said, "The tunnel's design would be novel in many ways." Its distance and the rarefied atmosphere at the heights make the tunnel a 'landmark in the making'. The official said, "The tunnel would incorporate semi-transverse ventilation system."

According to the defence, the tunnel will complete over five years and the digging for the tunnel remains the most challenging and difficult task. The official said, "It will open up new vistas of trade and tourism and generate jobs for the benefit of the local population (in the Lahaul-Spiti valley)," The horseshoe shaped cross-section tunnel will be 11.25 meter wide at road level and offer more. It will reduce the road distance to Ladakh by about 48 km and about 4 hours of traveling may be saved.

### **Article/papers /research work for inclusion in our publication 'GREAT HIMALAYAN RESCUE'**

**Himalayan Environment Trust is in the process of bringing out a publication "Great Himalayan Rescue".** The Great Himalayan Rescue is an attempt to tell the world how the Himalayas were saved from the brink of an environmental disaster. The book is a compendium of efforts from multitude of people and organization who have been involved in conserving and protecting the Himalayas. The book also captures the mandate on which the Himalayan Environment Trust was founded and narrates different stories of different people and organizations who have dedicated their lives to save the Himalayas. The Great Himalayan Rescue traverses the Himalayan Range and captures interesting and worthy stores of people who in their own right contribute not just to protecting the Himalayas but also ensuring sustainable livelihoods for those who inhabit this region. The book will be collection of chapters from a legion of individuals not necessarily from the tribe of mountaineers or environmentalists but more importantly who have been able to

conceive the idea that is worthy of, in realizing the founding objectives of the Himalayan Environment Trust. The book which also outlines the future road map is meant to appeal to a range of stakeholders including students, corporate, the governments, non governmental agencies and above all lovers of the Himalayas.

**We would like our readers to send us related research work or an article/papers for due inclusion in our book.**