

CORRESPONDENCE

43 Thurloe Square
London SW7 2SR
27 May 1985

Dear Mr Kapadia,

Your excellent and informative *Newsletter* 38 has just reached me, and I should like to take this opportunity to thank the Club for all the *Himalayan Journals* and *Newsletters* which have been received over the 32 years since I retired from the Geological Survey of India.

On page 4 of the latest *Newsletter* you refer to the height of Namcha Barwa being raised 6 m by a recent survey to 7762 m. Reference to the U.S.A. 1:1000,000 aeronautical sheet ONC H-10 shows that the American compilation of 1972 has lowered the height of Namcha Barwa from 25,445 ft (7756 m) to 24,440 ft (7449 m), a reduction of 1005 ft (306 m).

In the same aeronautical sheet ONC H-10 a high peak is shown in the 1972 compilation between the Salween and Mekong rivers with a height of 24,100 ft (7345 m) at coordinates 28°26'N: 98°41' E, some 135 km ENE of the tri-junction of India, Burma and China. In the 1978 revision the height of this peak has been reduced by 1760 ft to 22,340 ft (6809 m). This peak is in such an isolated position, difficult of access, that probably neither the original nor the revised heights can be accepted without further enquiry.

It would be interesting to refer the question of the height of Namcha Barwa to the Survey of India for, although the peak lies within Chinese territory, it comes within the orbit of the Survey of India triangulation. It is presumed that the peak of Namcha Barwa has also been surveyed by the Chinese triangulation across Tibet.

Kindest regards

Yours sincerely

J. B. Auden

Inquiries with the Survey of India and the Chinese authorities are not answered yet. However the above increase in the height was published by the Japanese who climbed in the area. *American Alpine Journal* and the 'Classification of Himalaya' by H. Adams

Carter (see in this issue) gives it a height of 7762 m. The Chinese are reported to have climbed a peak of 7043 m (Nai Peng) near Namcha Barwa in 1984. Is this the same peak mentioned in the above letter at 6809 m? It would be most fruitful to solve these riddles.—Ed.

3 June 1985

Dear Editor,

It is very interesting to go through the Everest story in the *Himalayan Journal* Vol. 41. It is good to relive Everest 1984.

The concluding paragraph of the article (p. 20) saying non-summiters are not happy may not be a factual observation. Summiting is vital yet the quality of summiting is equally important. As is apparent, summiting without oxygen, with oxygen beyond South Col, with 4 litres oxygen beyond Camp 2 is qualitatively very very different. Similarly summiting after opening route through Khumbu Icefall, Western Cwm, Lhotse Face and doing it without driving a single piton is qualitatively poles apart. I think non-summiters are not as happy not because of the summit but because of treatment meted out to them when the team returned to civilization. I know each one of us who did not reach the top did do our bit towards the final outcome. I am sure certain members' endeavours to rescue/help the Bulgarians from South Summit and that too without oxygen is a superior feat than reaching the top of the world, because rescue at that altitude is a real thing. At least this is what I firmly believe. It is pertinent to say here that the success and failure on any expedition depends upon team work more so in a mixed expedition.

The Everest expedition account should have been more accurate, had the leader debriefed the members/team in the presence of one another after each/all important events like route opening through the icefall, Western Cwm, Lhotse Face, South Col, summit attempt, failures, accident, rescue and so on. Unfortunately, this never happened on the expedition. Detailed debriefing in the presence of all participants would have helped the leader obtain a very true picture of the particular event. Writing an account, based on single member's impressions/experiences can be biased and at times away from truth.

Lt. Col Prem Chand
(Deputy leader: Indian Everest Expedition, 1984 and leader: Indian Army Mount Everest Expedition 1985.)