

PROJECT "LIGHT AND FAST"

PATRASI

A report by Vinayak Jaya Malla, Pasang Rinzee Sherpa & Pasang Kami Sherpa

June 18, 2024, Nepal



EXPEDITION OVERVIEW

From June 2 to 17, 2024, our team of three Nepali climbers embarked on an extraordinary adventure with the goal of achieving the first ascent of Patrasi Peak (6450m) in alpine style. Our journey began in the remote and beautiful Jumla district, nested in mid-western Nepal, where the true adventure awaited us.

Accompanied by a dedicated & strong support crew- four members from Kathmandu, an assistant local guide and three local porters, we set forth on a less travelled path.

The trek to the base camp presented numerous challenges, including difficult and steep trail sections, daunting river crossings and areas prone to rock falls. Adding to the complexity was the confusion over the mountain's name, which varies among the surrounding villages & locals. We honoured local customs and worshipped the deities, praying for safe journey ahead.

Our base camp was set up at 5050m, camp I at 5700m and camp II at nearly 6000m. Finally, on June 12, 2024 at 16:35 pm, our team successfully reached the main summit of Patrasi (6521m) among the three Patrasi Peaks, via the northwest ridge.

The climb was nothing short of gruelling, demanding three intense days. Each day, we faced long hours of strenuous activity, tackling multi-pitch climbs, mixed climbing routes, running belays, and a challenging summit ridge traverse. The strong wind and biting cold added layers of difficulty. The route from crampon point to the summit stretched approximately 2700 meters and we graded this peak "D" for its difficulty.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the <u>Mount Everest Foundation</u> (MEF) for this prestigious grant and believing in our project. This endeavour was more than just a climb, it was an opportunity to showcase our alpine climbing capabilities, to advocate for ethical and sustainable mountaineering practices, and to shine a spotlight on the lesser-known regions of Nepal.

We were technically supported by Peak XV | Petzl Nepal, Kailash Gear & Primus Sweden. Seven summit treks, a leading expedition organiser of Nepal, provided logistical support for this project.

This journey was a tale of perseverance, cultural respect, and a relentless pursuit of our dreams. We hope our journey inspires our Nepalese mountaineering community to explore & appreciate the lesser-known, yet breathtaking regions of Nepal.

We are deeply grateful for the support and encouragement from all those who believe in us and our project.

Sincerely,

Vinayak Jaya Malla, Pasang Rinzee Sherpa and Pasang Kami Sherpa

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EXPEDITION MEMBERS

Vinayak Jaya Malla (IFMGA GUIDE)- Trip Leader

- Winter Manaslu attempt in 2021, alpine style
- Summited Everest (4), Lhotse, Dhaulagiri, Manaslu & many 6000m peaks.
- Actively engaged in technical rescue missions in Nepal.
- Actively engaged in sport climbing development in Nepal



Pasang Rinzee Sherpa (Aspirant Guide)

- High altitude photographer
- Winter Manaslu attempt in 2021 with Simone Moro & Alex Txikon
- Lhotse West Face attempt with Mr Hong Sung-Taek in 2021
- Summited Everest, Kanchenjunga, Dhaulagiri, Manaslu, Ama Dablam & many 6000m peaks



Pasang Kami Sherpa (Aspirant Guide)

- 10 successful ascents of Mount Everest
- Sumitted Lhotse, Cho oyu, Ama Dablam and many other 6000m peaks
- In process to become IFMGA Guide





Support Crew:

- Amrit Nepali (Sarki)- Local Guide: From Jumla
- Pasang Norbu Sherpa (Cook)
- Dafinju Sherpa
- Prem Magar
- Bal Kumar Magar
- Dhan Bahadur Budha Jumla
- Surendra Bahadur- Jumla
- Madhan BK- Jumla

We were well aware that the locals of Jumla would be heading to the highlands to collect Yarsagumba (caterpillar fungus) during this time, making it difficult to find local porters. So, we had planned ahead and brought four support crew members from Kathmandu.

TRIP PLANNING

Our choice to venture into mid-western Nepal wasn't random. The remote and pristine landscapes of this region have long captivated us. It is less accessible, rarely visited, and promised a true adventure, exactly what we were seeking. None of us had previously trekked or climbed in that area before, making the adventure more thrilling.

Patrasi Peak, in particular, captured our attention. An unclimbed peak with previous attempts, it was an ideal challenge for us—an opportunity to climb in an isolated area and leave our mark in Nepal's alpine history.

Trip Preparation:

We reviewed past expedition reports & photos from Garry Kennard and Bradley & Alex's attempt in 2014. We also reached out to local's to learn more about the region & the best approach route to the base camp. Based on their advice & reports, we planned to start our trip from Jumla, expecting to reach Patrasi Base Camp in three days from there.

We planned to attempt the summit via the northwest ridge.

Vinayak and Pasang Kami were scheduled to leave for the Everest Expedition, while Pasang Rinzee was heading to Dhaulagiri & Kanchenjunga, before heading to Patrasi.

Our plan was to begin this project, as soon as we returned from our guiding jobs. This way, we would be fully acclimatised and could attempt summit in one shot, after deciding our summit approach plan. Our plan was to climb and get back to base camp in 2 days.

LOGISTICS MANAGEMENT

Permits & Insurance:

Seven summit treks managed the administrative process for permits & Insurance, as well as the garbage deposit fund. This ensured compliance with government regulations and environmental protection measures.

Transportation:

- The support crew departed for Jumla by road on June 2, carrying food supplies, kerosene and climbing gears.
- The Climbing team & located assistant guide left on June 3, traveling by flight, and reached Jumla on June 4.

Food & Gas:

- We bought high altitude food & EPI Gas from Kathmandu.
- All other food items like rice, lentils, vegetables, fruits & Kersone were bought in Surkhet, Nepalgunj & Jumla.

Equipment:

Seven summit treks provided us following equipment:

- 2 Two Men tents for Base Camp
- 1 Kitchen Tent, 1 Toilet Tent & 1 Dome tent (for support crew)
- Provided cooking utensils & equipment
- Satellite Phone & 3 Radio Sets
- Camping Device

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Peak XV | Petzl Nepal provided us following equipment:

- 3- Lightweight Climbing Harness (SITTA)
- 3- Rechargeable Headlamps (Actik Core- 600 Lumens)
- 15- HMS Carabiners (Attache)
- Helmet (Meteor)

Kailash Gear provided us following equipment:

• 2 men single layer alpine tent (Kailas Dong Dong 2P)- 1.9 KG

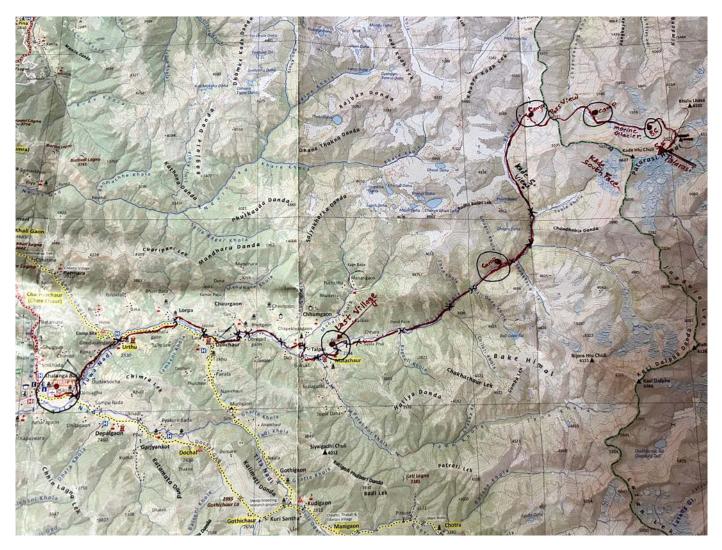
Primus Sweden provided us following equipment:

- . 1 Cooking set Kit
- . 3 Thermos
- . 1 burner
- . 1 Multi-fuel cooking stove

First- Aid Kit:

We carried a full first-aid kit for us and our support crew.

OUR ITINERARY



Map Source: Dunai to Rara Jumla (1: 150,000, NS506)

Day 1/June 2- Supporting Crew left for Jumla

Day 2/ June 3- Flight to Surkhet, Drive to Nepalgunj

The climbing team and local guide Amrit departed for Surkhet. Upon arrival, we met with provincial government authorities before continuing our journey to Nepalgunj in the evening.

Day 3/ June 4- Climbing Team & Local Guide, Flight to Jumla Overnight: Local Hotel

We arrived in Jumla in the afternoon. The support crew arrived much later, around midnight, after traveling approximately 400 km from Nepalgunj to Jumla and having to change buses along the way.

Day 4/ June 5- Drive Jumla- Pere (2700m) Overnight: Local Homestay,

In the morning, we did the necessary shopping for our journey ahead. We then headed to Pere on a local bus, which was very old and uncomfortable. The trip took us four hours delayed by numerous obstacles along the way. In Pere, we stayed in a local homestay with minimal facilities. It was not possible for our support crew from Kathmandu to carry all the weight, so we had to find local porters. This proved to be a challenging task, as most of the locals had left in search of Yarsa Gumba. Thankfully, Amrit, our local guide, helped us to manage three local porters.



Photo Credit: Pasang Kami Sherpa

Day 5/June 6- Pere-Khahare/Cave camp (3100m) Overnight: Camp, walked around 8 hours

The trails were fine, easy, with gentle slope, following Chaudhabise Khola. We followed the local traditions & worshipped local deities, by sacrificing two cocks, for safe passage ahead. We cooked the local vegetables found around that area for dinner and prepared for tomorrow.



Photo: Pasang Rinzee Sherpa

Day 6/June 7- Khahare-Tauliha (4100m) Overnight: Camp, walked around 7 hours

Today, we enjoyed our first view of Kande Hiunchuli's south face. Crossing the river proved to be quite challenging, prompting us to lend a hand to our support crew. Along the way, we had the opportunity to meet yarsagumba collectors, enriching our experience with local encounters.



Photo credit: Pasang Kami Sherpa

Day 7/June 8- Tauliha (4100m)-Tang Tang Pass (4950m)- Lower Base Camp (4100m), Overnight: Camp, walked around 7 hours



Photo Credit: Pasang Rinzee Sherpa

The terrain posed challenges, particularly for our support crew, with loose rocks, and scree. Crossing the river before reaching our campsite proved to be another significant challenge. Once there, we met the large group of yarsagumba collectors once again, highlighting the vibrant activity in the area.



Tent setup of Yarshagumba collectors, Photo Credit: Pasang Rinzee Sherpa

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Day 8/ June 9- Lower Base Camp- Patrasi Base Camp (5050m) Overnight: Camp, walked around 6 hours



On the way to base camp. Photo credit: Pasang Rinzee Sherpa





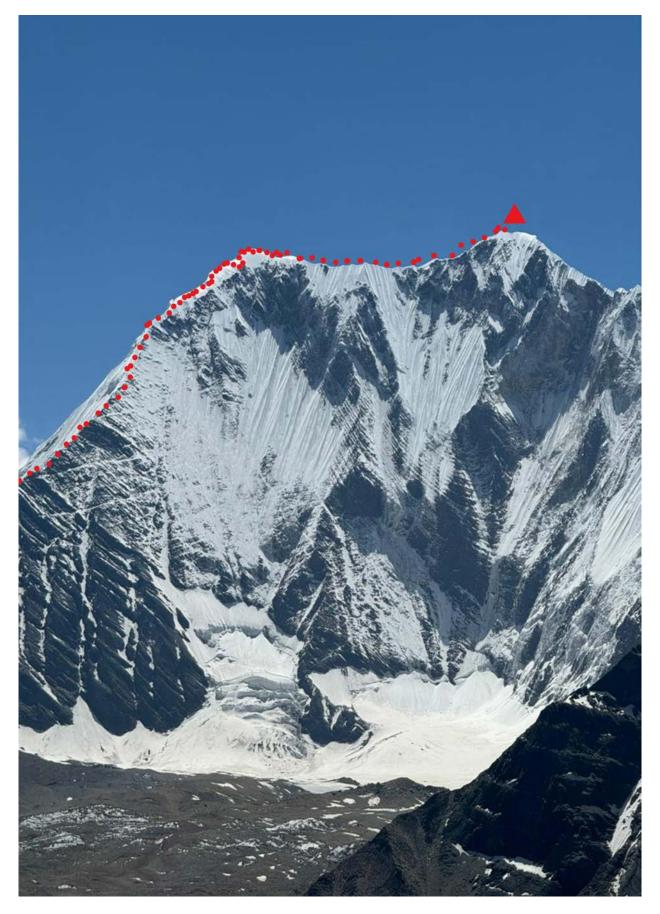
Patrasi Base Camp (5050m). Photo Credit: Pasang Rinzee Sherpa



Getting ready for climbing. Photo Credit: Pasang Rinzee Sherpa



Before heading to upper camps. Photo Credit: Support Crew

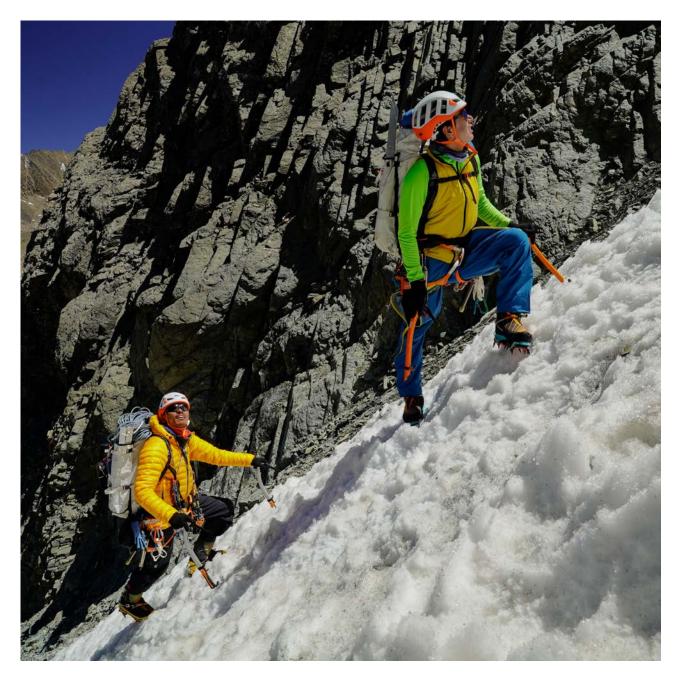


Our Summit Approach line. Photo Credit: Pasang Kami Sherpa

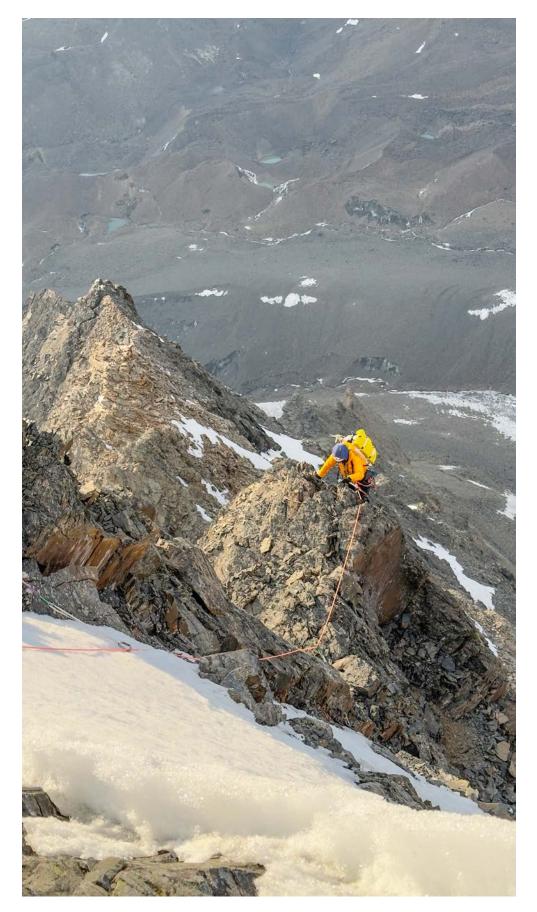
BASE CAMP- CAMP I (5700m)

We headed toward camp I around 8 am. We followed the gully, hard packed snow section for first 200 meters before following the ridge to avoid rock fall.

We climbed 11 multi-pitch (5a), and did running belay in some sections. We did solo climbing in easy rock sections. The weather condition was good during daytime.



On the way to camp I. Photo Credit: Pasang Rinzee Sherpa



Phot Credit: Pasang Rinzee Sherpa



Camp 1. Photo Credit: Pasang Rinzee Sherpa

The weather started to get windy in the afternoon. We arrived at Camp I around 5pm, ascending 650 meters, which took us nearly 11 hours. There was no good place to pitch the tent safely, we slept with our harness on.

CAMP I- CAMP II (6000m)

We started the day around 5 am and climbed 11 pitch of mixed climbing (M4) and did running belay in some sections. The weather was cold, cloudy, windy and with snow showers.

The terrain was difficult, with loose rocks and no placement for protection like 10-15 meters.



Photo Credit: Vinayak Jaya Malla

We arrived at camp II around 4 pm, after nearly 11 hours of climbing. Setting up tent was quite challenging in the cold and windy conditions, requiring us to use ice blocks to anchor it securely.



CAMP II- SUMMIT-CAMP II

We started our summit push at 4 am. We followed the ridge with cornices, crossed the blue ice section (WI3) & crevasse and reached the snow field. Then we descended a bit and made a long summit ridge traverse.



Photo Credit: Pasang Rinzee Sherpa



Photo Credit: Vinayak Jaya Malla



Photo: Vinayak Jaya Malla



At Summit. Photo Credit: Pasang Rinzee Sherpa

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We arrived at the summit at 16.35 pm, 12th June. The weather was cloudy.

We knew it was going to be challenging to descend back to Camp 2. We needed to do 15 long rappels, as it was not possible to back climb due to vertical section.

It was a very long and tiring day. Our muscles were cramped. We arrived back at Camp 2 around 9.30 pm. We did not bother to cook and slept quickly.

CAMP II- BASE CAMP

We started descending at 8.30 am. The descent between camp II and Camp I was very difficult with loose rocks & tricky terrain. We arrived back at base camp at around 7.10 pm.



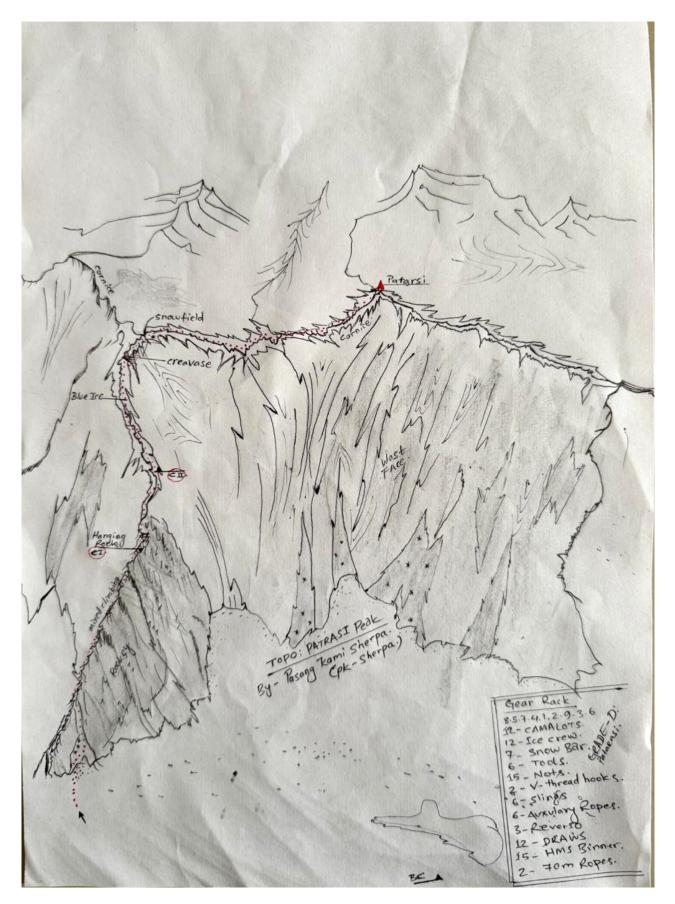
Team back at Base Camp

Day 14-17: BASE CAMP- JUMLA- KATHMANDU

We packed the base camp the next day and headed down to Jumla.



Base camp packed. Back to Jumla. Photo Credit: Pasang Rinzee Sherpa



Topo of Patrasi by Pasang Kami Sherpa (AKA PK)

TRIP EXPENSE

DESCRIPTION	Days	Person/ Unit	Rate	Total (NPR)
Ground Transportation & Flights		,	,	
Kathmandu-Jumla (Support Crew)	3	4	2500	30,000
Jumla- Kathmandu (Support Crew)	4	4	2500	40,000
Flight KTM-Surkhet- Climbing Team & Local Guide	1	4	6500	26,000
Flight Nepalgunj-Jumla-Climbing Team & Local Guide	1	4	7100	28,400
Flight Jumla- Nepalgunj- Climbing Team & Local Guide	1	4	7100	28,400
Flight Nepalgunj-Kathmandu Climbing Team & Local Guide	1	4	6500	26,000
Total (I)		1		178,800
Food				<u> </u>
Food (Ktm-Jumla)- Support Crew	3	4	2000	24,000
Food & Accommodation (Ktm-Jumla)- Climbing Team	2	4	2500	20,000
Food during the Trek: From June 5-16	12	11	1900	250,800
High Food				30,000
Food (Jumla-Ktm)- Support Crew	4	4	2000	32,000
Food & Accommodation (Ktm-Jumla)- Climbing Team	1	3	2500	7,500
Total (II)			1	364,300
Gear & Equipment				
EPI GAS		5	2200	11,000
Climbing Rope		2	25000	50,000
Porter Equipment				26,000
Total (III)				87,000
Salary & Insurance				1
Salary for support crew member (June 3-18)	16	4	2000	128,000
Salary for local guide (June 3-16)	14	1	1500	21,000
Salary for local porter	6	3	2000	36,000
Total TIPS				110,000
Insurance for all team				175,000
Total (IV)				470,000
Total (I, II, III, IV)				1,100,100

TOTAL BUDGET

DESCRIPTION	TOTAL AMOUNT (NPR)
Grant Received from Mount Everest Foundation (4500 Pound)	756,000
Personal contribution from climbing team	344,100
Total Project Budget	1,100,100

Note: 1 POUND = NPR 168

SOCIAL IMPACT

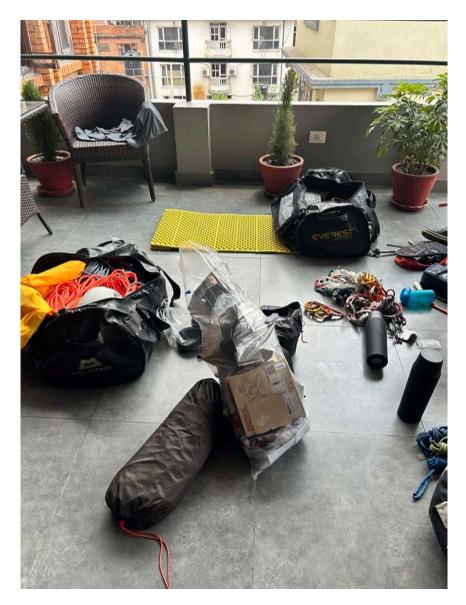
We prioritised social responsibility in our trip. Here are the key aspects of our impact:

- **Supporting local economy**: We prioritised local food. We did most of our shopping like food items & vegetables for our trip to base camp in Surkhet, Nepalgunj & Jumla.
- Local Homestay and Cuisine: We stayed in local home stays in Jumla and Pere, immersing ourselves in the community and supporting local hospitality. We enjoyed authentic local cuisine, contributing directly to the local economy.
- Employment of Local Guides and Porters: We hired one local guide and three local porters from Jumla. Our support crew were fully insured, fairly compensated, and provided with meals, recognising their essential role in our expedition.
- **Respect for Local Traditions:** We respected local customs and traditions during our stay. This included participating in local worship practices and honouring local deities, such as the traditional sacrificial offering of two cocks as per local culture.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

Throughout our expedition, we were committed to minimising our environmental impact and addressing the challenges we encountered. Here's how we approached these aspects:

• **Reducing Plastic Use:** From the beginning, we focused on minimising our plastic consumption. During our preparation in Kathmandu, we removed all unnecessary packaging and plastics from our gear, opting for more sustainable alternatives.



Trip Preparation in Kathmandu

- **Campsite Hygiene:** We maintained cleanliness at our base camp site. All our degradable wastes were well-dug and buried away from water sources.
- Waste Management: All non-degradable waste was brought back to Jumla for proper disposal. EPI gas bottles were returned to Kathmandu to ensure they could be recycled or safely disposed of. The Jumla District office accepted and authorised the garbage deposit clearance certificate.

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Garbage Deposit Clearance Certificate

• We had to leave behind 5 snow bars, 10 rock pitons, 2 slings, 2 auxiliary cords at the vertical section while rappelling down, as it was not possible to back climb. We had to do 15 long rappels during our descent and one of our ropes is completely damaged.

CHANGES IN OUR PLAN

Our journey to Patrasi Base Camp proved more challenging than expected, as our initial plan to reach the base camp in 3 days, was not possible. It took us four days to reach to the base camp from Pere, the last village, where we were dropped by bus from Jumla. We followed the same trail as described in Bradley and Alex's report.

Upon arriving at the base camp, positioned near the glacier for easy access to water, we started planning for our summit push. We headed toward higher camps the very next day, aiming to complete summit push without any prior acclimatisation climbs, as planned.

We followed the Plan A to approach the summit.



Google Earth image

Contrary to our initial goal of completing the climb in two days, it took us four long days to summit and descend back to base camp. The reality was much more demanding than we had planned, turning our expedition into a true test of endurance & determination. Among the three Patrasi Peaks, we made the first ascent of main Patrasi (6521m).

PERSONAL EXPERIENCES

Vinayak Jaya Malla:

It feels really great to share that our project has been successful. We really had a great team on this trip. Our support crew was incredibly strong. They were a significant part of this achievement.

After our Everest expedition, Pasang Kami and I had a few days to rest & recover here in Kathmandu. We were waiting for Pasang Rinzee to return from Kanchenjunga and in the meantime, we were making final preparations for Patrasi.

Right from the start, we anticipated the change in weather patterns & late monsoon in western Nepal. This allowed us a crucial window to safely complete the climb, even though we face some pretty cold and windy conditions. We were well equipped with all the necessary light weight gears & clothing.

Let me tell you, for passionate mountaineers there's nothing quite like the pure joy of alpine climbing in one of Nepal's most remote & off-the beaten area. Being the first team to successfully reach the summit- it was truly an amazing experience & something that I will carry with me forever.

However, this is not a classic, easy adventure. Far away from human settlements and with no communication networks at all, one must be well prepared in advance. Alpine Climbing is a whole different game.

Pasang Rinzee Sherpa:

I was physically exhausted after expeditions on Dhaulagiri & Kanchenjunga. But mentally, I was always ready & excited for this project, despite my body screaming for rest.

As I look back on this journey, I am deeply thankful for my team and the unique opportunity we had. For me, this trip was not about reaching just another summit. It was about pushing boundaries, having good time in mountains & experiencing the raw & untamed beauty of the Himalayas in a way I had never done before.

This was an hardcore alpine climbing experience, much different from the big mountain climbs that I was accustomed to. The technical challenges & the self-reliance required in alpine-style climbing brought a whole new dimension to my mountaineering experience.

Pasang Kami Sherpa:

This expedition has added an interesting chapter to my mountaineering journey. It was a stark contrast from my 8000m peaks experiences, where fixed rope, oxygen, well-stocked camps & support systems are the norms. Here, we were on our own with a small team, carrying only essential things, making our own decisions and adapting to whatever the mountain presented.

It was challenging and sensitive to lead climb on a knife-edge ridge with cornice. Walking those last few steps to the summit ridge sticks in my mind- the snow crunched under my boots and the sharp ridge required every bit of focus. We could hardly stand on the ridge or even in flat spot, due to strong winds, and the low temperatures meant that frostbite was a constant threat if our skin was exposed for too long.

The technicals demands of the climb pushed me to expand my mountaineering skills. Climbing Patrasi was intense, with long hours of strenuous effort, right until the final day.

I feel incredibly fortunate to have experienced what I consider the purest form of alpinism. This has profoundly enriched my understanding of mountain exploration and bonds forged through shared challenges and triumphs.

This was indeed a true adventure, worth remembering.

PERSONAL OBSERVATIONS

Weather conditions:

The monsoon season has been delayed by nearly a month in Nepal, allowing to extend our climbing window until mid-June.

The best time to go around this mountain range would be in mid May- mid June. The snow condition in autumn can make the approach to base camp even more challenging especially for the support crew.

The terrain above base camp was rocky, with many rock fall sections and less suitable placement for protection.

We experienced dry winds during our climbing duration. It was surprising to have a very hot temperature, after descending from base camp.

Possibility of Commercialising:

This could be an ideal destination for someone, looking to trek & climb in completely offthe beaten path. The remoteness of this region adds logistical complexity, making the trip somewhat expensive. However, this kind of adventure could attract new type of client willing to spend for an authentic & pure adventure experience.

Future Exploration Possibilities:

There is still more to explore around the Kanjiroba Range. This area's untapped potential offers numerous opportunities for future expeditions & discoveries.

CONCLUSION

Our Project "Light & Fast" was a success, marking a significant achievement in Nepalese alpine ascent history. We are proud to contribute in the promotion of alpinism in Nepal.

Traditionally, Nepalese climbers have been renowned for their roles in carrying heavy loads and fixed-rope climbing on big mountains. This expedition, however showcased our capabilities in alpine climbing, highlighting the versatility and skill of Nepalese climbers in a different facet of mountaineering.

We were fully prepared with the necessary lightweight gear and adequately acclimatised after our recent expedition on big mountains. This preparation was crucial to our success and safety during the expedition.

We extend our deepest gratitude to the Mount Everest Foundation (MEF) for their trust and providing financial support to our project. Our sincere thanks goes to all our support crew and everyone who contributed in this project.

To sum up, this project marks a pivotal moment for the Nepalese mountaineering community. We believe that this ascent will inspire our Nepalese climbers to push boundaries and explore the vast potential of our Nepal Himalaya.

ANNEXES

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Permit issued by Department of Tourism

EQUIPMENT LIST

EQUIPMENT	Unit/Pairs
Helmet- Meteor	3
Harness- Sitta	3
Carabiners- Attache	15
Belay/Rappel Device- Reverso	3
Quickdraw- Ange Finesse & Spirit	12
Crampons- Sarken	3
Ice screw- Laser Speed 13 cm & 21 cm	12
Rope (70 metre, 7.7mm)- Paso guide	2
Ice axes- Gully & Quark	3
V-thread- Multihook	12
Knife- Spatha	2
Slings- Pur'Anneau (60cm & 120cm)	6
Headlamp- Actik Core (600 Lumens)	3
Alpine boots - Scarpa Phantom & La sportiva G2 Evo	3
Auxiliary Cord	6
Snow bars	7
Camalots	12
Nuts	15
Solar Panel	1
Power Banks	3
Sleeping Bag (-20)	3
Sleeping Mat	3
Personal clothing	

MEDIA COVERAGE

Our stories & photos of this project were featured in following social media accounts, magazines and local news media.

Personal Social Media Accounts:

- Vinayak Jaya Malla- @malla.mountaineer
- Pasang Rinzee Sherpa- @pasang_rinzee
- Pasang Kami Sherpa- @pasangkami sherpaguide

Sponsors Social Media Accounts:

- Mount Everest Foundation
- Peak XV | PETZL NEPAL
- Seven Summit Treks

Outdoor Magazines:

- <u>Explorersweb</u>
- Everest Chronicle
- Adventure Mountain | Germany
- Mongtanges Magazine | France

Guide Association:

Nepal National Mountain Guide Association (NNMGA)

Local News Media:

- The Himalayan Times
- Pahichan

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Patrasi, Northwest Face attempt- Bradley Morrell & Alex Zholobenko- 2014

Article on Patrasi- Buddha Air Magazine, Page 24 & 25

Nepal Himal Peak Profile