

*Everest Tragedy.* A 39-man Indian Army expedition was to have been led by Colonel Prem Chand, who broke his arm shortly before the expedition left for Nepal and was replaced by Brigadier Jagjit Singh. The expedition planned to make a two-pronged attempt, the southwest face led by Major Jai Bahuguna and the standard South Col and southeast ridge route led by Major Kiran Inder Kumar. They reached Base Camp on August 29. There were some delays caused by late deliveries of tents, but the southwest-face team set up Camps III, IV and V at 7010, 7225 and 7775 meters on September 24, 27 and October 5. They were preparing the route to Camp VI, which would probably be at about 8320 meters. Major Bahuguna requested by radio to be relieved of his leadership on the southwest face and he joined the South Col party. Meanwhile Kumar's group had made good progress. Although weather reports were doubtful, they determined to go ahead. A first summit party of eight led by Kumar climbed to the South Col on October 6. A day behind them was a party of six led by Bahuguna. On October 7 six of Kumar's group led by Naik Subedar N.D. Sherpa set off for the summit, followed an hour later by Kumar and Lieutenant Ranveer Singh Bakshi. The weather deteriorated. The bigger group reported twice by radio, the second time at 2:30 from below the south summit. Under the weather conditions they could not make it that day. Kumar did not radio until three P.M., telling that his oxygen mask was leaking and that Bakshi had lost his goggles. A half-hour later, Bakshi incoherently reported that Kumar was "gone." He apparently fell from about 8500 meters. His broken body was found at the foot of the Lhotse Face in the Western Cwm two hours later. N.D. Sherpa's group overtook Bakshi during the descent and helped him slowly down to the South Col. Bahuguna and five climbers had climbed to the col and all spent an anguished night. On the morning of October 8 Sherpa and six others began the descent. Bahuguna kept two of his men, Captain Vijay Pal Singh Negi and Lieutenant M.U. Bhaskar Rao with him, as well as Bakshi, Havildar Ringzum Namgial and Naik L.K. Negi, who were exhausted and frostbitten from their summit try. The weather continued terrible. On the morning of October 9 they wanted to descend. Namgial and L.K. Negi started out at eight A.M. and made the descent. Following a little later, the other four could not locate the fixed ropes in falling snow and white-out. They made it back to the South Col by noon. On October 10 the weather was no better. Bahuguna radioed that they were leaving at eight A.M. but again they failed to find the fixed rope and returned. A rescue party tried to climb up to them but was beaten back halfway up the Lhotse Face. An urgent call on the morning of October 11 came from Rao, not Bahuguna. Their tents had collapsed in the night and they were in bad shape. Captain Prem Prakash, Havildar Indra Bahadur Gurung and two Sherpas again set out as a rescue team. Gurung and the Sherpas finally reached the South Col at four P.M. Inside a collapsed tent lay Bakshi and Negi, both dead. Outside another slumped Bahuguna and Rao, both barely alive. Gurung gave Bahuguna oxygen but he died almost immediately. Rao was barely alive and they tried to carry him down. He too died within minutes. The rescuers then had to descend. They met Prakash 400 meters below the col and finally got back to Camp II at

midnight. Despite this disaster, in late October two summit attempts on successive days got to 8400 meters—Major Kiran Kumar was well known to American climbers, having been a member of the Indo-American Nanda Devi Expedition in 1976. Major Jai Bahuguna was the brother of Harsh Bahuguna, who died on the 1971 International Everest Expedition, hanging from a fixed rope between the West Ridge and the Western Cwm.

*Everest.* Our Naomi Uemura Film Expedition had to wait until after the Indians had made their last summit bid. We set up camps and filmed, but we had to wait well below the South Col while the Indians made repeated unsuccessful attempts. Finally on October 28 we established Camp IV on the South Col and on October 30 seven went to the summit. We were Noboru Yamada (his second time but this time without supplementary oxygen), Hideji Nazuka, Mitsuyoshi Sato, Teruo Saegusa, Etsuo Akutsu and Satoshi Kimoto and me. Akutsu, at 47 years the oldest Japanese atop Everest, became snow blind and very tired. He and Kimoto made an unprepared bivouac at 8600 meters below the South Summit while another member, Kazunari Murakami, carried up oxygen to them very early the next morning, thus probably saving Akutsu's life. Kimoto was frost-bitten and has lost all ten toes.

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*Everest South Col Winter Attempt.* A Korean expedition led by Nam Sang-Tae attempted Everest by the South Col route. They were defeated by winter winds and cold. On December 21 Deputy Leader Kim Jong-Ho, Park Dong-Seok and Ang Rita Sherpa, who has been to the summit of Everest three times, got to 8300 meters. They turned back when Park's oxygen mask froze and was useless. Ang Rita took no oxygen and Kim had not yet begun using his. The next day Ang Rita went down to Camp II, while Kim and Park tried again for the summit, this time not using oxygen. They did carry one bottle each for use above the south summit. However, their ascent was so slow that after nine hours they were only at 8500 meters at three P.M. and they turned back. This was the highest point reached. Throughout the rest of December, all of January and the first half of February 1986, fierce winds defeated all other summit bids. The team found the body of an Indian climber frozen to ice below the Lhotse Face.

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*Everest Southwest Face Winter Attempt.* South Koreans led by Park Young-Bae tried to climb the Bonington route on the southwest face of Everest. The first winter attempt on this face was defeated by exhaustion of the climbers, their food and their replacement tents, a lack of climbing hardware and frequent bad weather with destructive winds. The highest point was 7700 meters, which Sherpas Pasang Dawa and Jimba Jimbu reached on January 13, 1986 and