

Nepal to strap some Everest climbers with GPS device

March 20 2017, by Binaj Gurubacharya



In this Nov. 12, 2015, file photo, Mt. Everest is seen from the way to Kalapatthar in Nepal. Some climbers attempting to scale Mount Everest during the upcoming spring climbing season will be strapped with a GPS device to locate them in case they are in trouble and to prevent false claims of reaching the summit, officials said Monday. (AP Photo/Tashi Sherpa, File)

Some climbers attempting to scale Mount Everest during the upcoming spring climbing season will be strapped with a GPS device to locate

them in case they are in trouble and to prevent false claims of reaching the summit, officials said Monday.

Hundreds of climbers are expected to attempt to climb the world's highest peak in April and May, but only a few will be fitted with the devices as an experiment.

The chief of Nepal's tourism department, Durga Dutta Dhakal, said the devices, costing about \$300 apiece, would help locate climbers who are in trouble on the mountain so rescuers can be sent.

The devices will also track the movement of the climbers while they are on Everest. The data will be checked after they get back from the mountain to determine whether they reached the summit and should be issued a [climber](#)'s certificate.

Last year, an Indian couple claimed they scaled the peak and received a certificate from mountaineering authorities, but it was later determined that they had altered their photo on the summit. It was a huge embarrassment for Nepalese mountaineering authorities.

Climbers only need a photo showing them on the 8,850-meter-high (29,035-foot-high) summit and a report from a government-assigned liaison official. The officials, however, rarely stay on the mountain to monitor the climbers.

Climbers are also covered with heavy clothing, climbing gear and oxygen masks, making it difficult for them to be clearly recognized in photographs.

The 2017 spring climbing season is expected to be busy on Everest. Hundreds of climbers were able to scale the peak last year following two years of disasters on the [mountain](#).

The 2015 season was scrapped after 19 climbers were killed and 61 injured by an avalanche at the base camp triggered by a massive earthquake. In 2014, an avalanche at the Khumbu Icefall killed 16 Sherpa guides.

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