

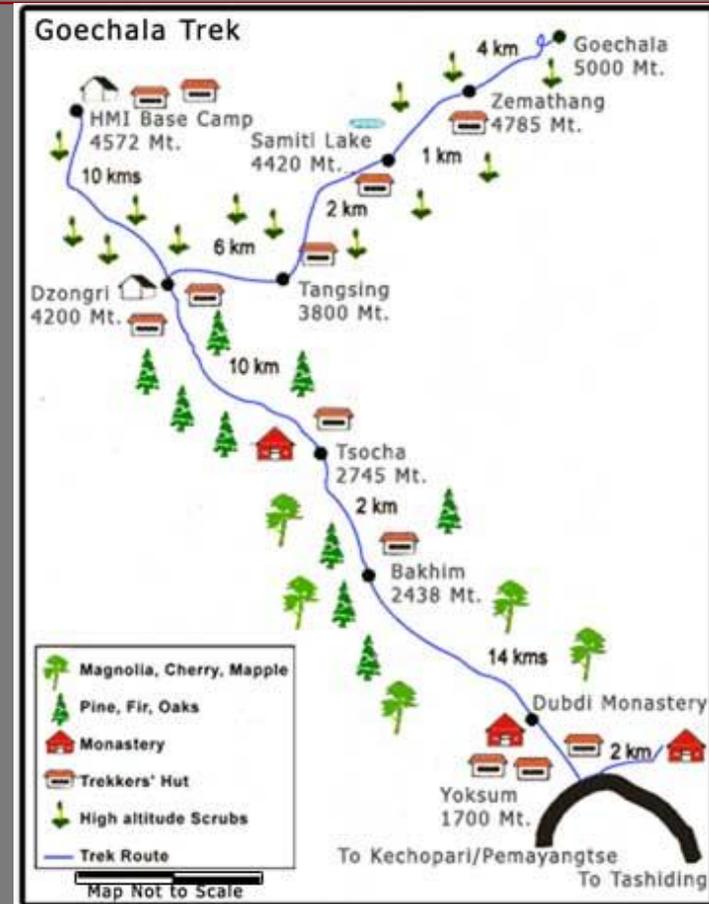
South Col Expeditions



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The Dzongri/HMI Base Camp Trek (10 days Bagdogra to Bagdogra)

- This is one of the finest trek in Sikkim famous for its superb mountain views, meadows, rhododendrons in summer and brings you right up to the Himalaya.
- This trek has been carefully planned by South Col to ensure that the trekker has the minimum discomfort and proper acclimatization which is most important. South Col has immense experience in this trek - Sujoy and our guides have done this route more than twenty times in all seasons.
- Our trail starts from Yuksam and follows the river valley of the Prek Chu - instead of going east from Dzongri we go west to the training base camp of the HMI Darjeeling surrounded by high peaks like Kabru, Ratong, Koptang and glaciers. From the viewpoint Dzongri top we have views of Kangchenjunga, Pandim, Jobonu and Narsing.
- The costs of this trek is **Indian Rs 55,000/-** Exclusions apply. For details please see page 8.



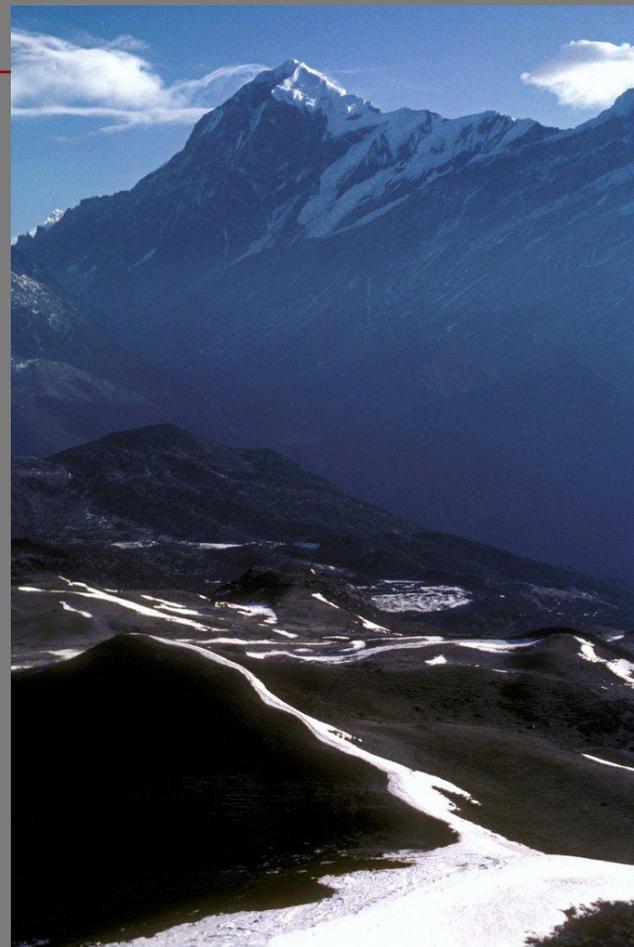
Who should join this trek?



- A good choice for regular hill walkers, moderate level of fitness required.
 - 1) Walking times: average 6-7 hours walking per day
 - 2) Altitude: up to 4850m
 - 3) Terrain: for some of the time following well-travelled trails although also likely to encounter rough and rocky conditions which could be across rocky scree slopes and can be snow covered.
 - 4) Remoteness: the trek is in a remote mountain area and mobile phones will not work other than at Yuksam.
- 5) This is a full support camping trek with tents no lodges are available.

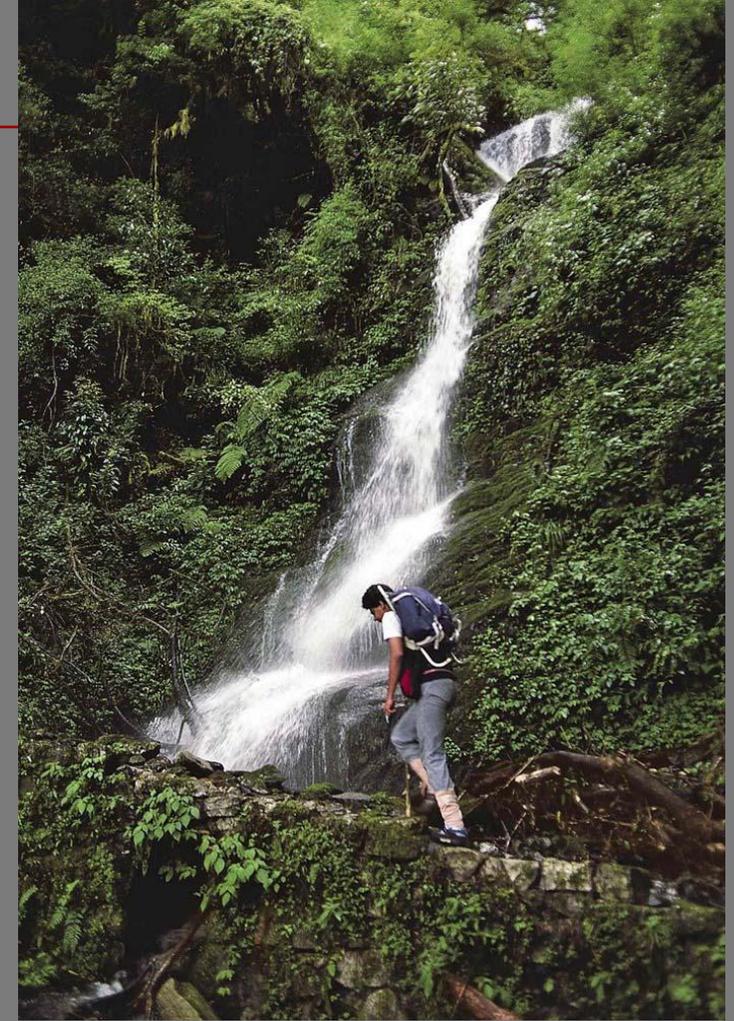
The Dzongri HMI Base Camp Trek Itinerary - 1

- Day 01 - Bagdogra to Yuksam by jeep 6-7 hours drive.
- Day 02: Yuksam 1850m to Tshoka 2950m 5 to 6 hours
- The trail from Yuksam climbs gently out of the valley and follows the Rathong Chu River which can be heard thundering through the gorge below. The trail meanders through dense forest and crosses four bridges around fifty minute-walks from each other. The last bridge is the longest and there is a camping spot here on the banks of the river. In the monsoon this part of the trail is inundated with leeches and salt is required to shake them off. From the fourth bridge the trail climbs steeply for an hour to the forest rest house at Bakhim which was the old halting point before trekkers huts were built at Tsokha.. From Bakhim, the trail continues to climb steeply through forests of magnolia and rhododendron to Tsokha, which takes an hour to reach. The Trekkers Hut at Tsokha has a large camping ground behind it and groups usually pitch their tents here. There are some private lodges in Tsokha which also provide accommodation.
- Day 03: Tshoka 2950m to Dzongri 4000m via Phedang 3650m 6 to 7 hours
- The trail climbs steeply through forests of rhododendron to the alp of Phidang (3650 m) and it takes around 2.5 hours to 3 hours. This is the steepest part of the trek as there is little respite in the form of descents. The clearing at Phidang is the generally used as a lunch spot and in good weather the peaks can be seen across the valley. During May and June this part of the walk is exceptionally beautiful as rhododendrons in their myriad hues flower of either side of the trail. The trail evens off a bit from Phidang before it climbs again for Mon Lepcha, a pass which is a little higher than the Dzongri Trekkers Hut. On a good day Mon Lepcha commands an exceptional view of Pandim. The trail descends from Mon Lepcha before climbing again and the Dzongri Trekkers Hut soon comes into view. The distance from Phidang to Dzongri should not take more than two hours.
- Day 04: Acclimatisation and Rest at Dzongri
- This day is reserved for you to take a break from the trek. Another purpose that it will accomplish is that it will allow you to acclimatise and get used to high elevations and low oxygen levels, before you climb any higher.



The Dzongri HMI Base Camp Trek Itinerary - 2

- **Day 05: Dzongri 4000m to HMI Base Camp 4580 m 6-7 hours**
- The walk from Dzongri to the base camp of HMI swing north west across the Dzongri maidan. It then follows the stream of the Ratong Chu climbing slowly and steadily across the valley with the peaks in the distance. The small clearing of Bikbari provides a convenient lunch stop and two hours from Bikbari is the huts of the Base Camp. Camping is not allowed at the Base Camp by HMI so we stop about 30 minutes below the Base Camp.
- **Day 06: HMI Base Camp to Dudh Pokhari Lake 4850m and back to Bikbari. 4100m 6-7 hours**
- We start in the morning climbing on the Ratong glacier and heading up to the waters of the emerald green lake of Dudh Pokhari surrounded by the mountains. We should reach in 2 to 3 hours steady walking and then we descend all the way to Bikbari in about 4 hours where we have a late lunch and spend the night.
- **Day 07: Bikbari to Dzongri 4 hours**
- We retrace our steps back to Dzongri and reach our campsite by lunchtime. If the weather is clear we can make an attempt for Dzongri top in the evening to see the sunset over the peaks.
- **Day 08: Dzongri to Tsokha 4-5 hours**
- We proceed down the valley to Tshoka which we should reach by lunchtime.
- **Day 09 Tsokha to Yuksam 5 hours**
- This is the last day of our trek and we can walk down in a relaxed fashion enjoying the mountains and the beautiful forest cover.
- **Day 10 Yuksam to Bagdogra by road 6-7 hours**



The Dzongri / HMI Base Camp Trek Costs 2020

- **For Indian Nationals Indian Rs 55,000 /-**
- The cost is per person for Bagdogra to Bagdogra (10 days) as per the itinerary given.
- Costs given above are at current rates and may change without notice. Changes if any will be notified 3 months before the trek.

Costs include

- All necessary permits and Kangchendzonga National Park permits as needed in Sikkim.
- Transport in a private vehicle Bagdogra to Yuksam and back.
- **Two nights hotel stay in Yuksam one night on the way in and one night on the way out.**
- Breakfast in Yuksam on the way in and out.
- **All meals on the trek are covered.**
- Cost of porters/guides yaks and other support staff on the trek is covered. Please note that porters will carry one duffel bag or backpack not exceeding 12 kgs in weight for each trekker comprising of personal items, clothing, sleeping bag etc.

Costs not included

- Flight Cost/Train costs to reach Bagdogra/New Jalpaiguri
- Lunch and dinner in Yuksam and en route to Yuksam from Bagdogra.
- Client travel and medical insurance of any kind. Emergency evacuation costs if needed.
- Personal clothing and equipment; sleeping bag; down/ goretek jacket, medicines for personal use etc.
- Air fare from residence country to India and back
- Tips to porters and guide at the end of trek - we will give a guideline on this before the trek.

Why trek to Dzungri/HMI Base Camp with South Col?



- South Col is a small, personalized firm specializing in treks in the Himalayan region. **Sujoy is one of the few trekkers to have visited Dzungri/HMI Base Camp way back in 1986! Our trek leaders have a huge experience with Sikkim and this trek.**
- We are keenly aware of the fragility of environment and cultures in which we trek and recognize our responsibility in maintaining them. "Take pictures, leave only foot prints" is our motto.
- Trekkers get personalized attention both in the planning stage as well as during the trek itself and put a lot of emphasis on the safety of our team.
- Support team of guides and porters as needed are personally supervised by the trek leader to ensure that the clients are comfortable and well looked after.

Special Note on Camping



- The Dzungri/HMI Base Camp trek is a full support camping trek with porters, guide, cook, helpers and yaks as needed.
- It is not a lodge or tea house trek.
- Tents with mattresses will be provided every night. Quilts and blankets will not be possible. You will need a warm sleeping bag at least three seasons.
- We will have a team of one cook and helpers who will cook all meals. Food will be basic like porridge, cornflakes, some eggs, chapattis, rice, dal, vegetables etc. All food will be carried from Yuksom. Three meals with morning and evening tea will be provided.
- Our bags and luggage will be carried by porters or yaks.
- **Toilets will not be available on the trail.** We will provide toilet tents.

The Dzungri/HMI Base Camp Trek FAQ #1

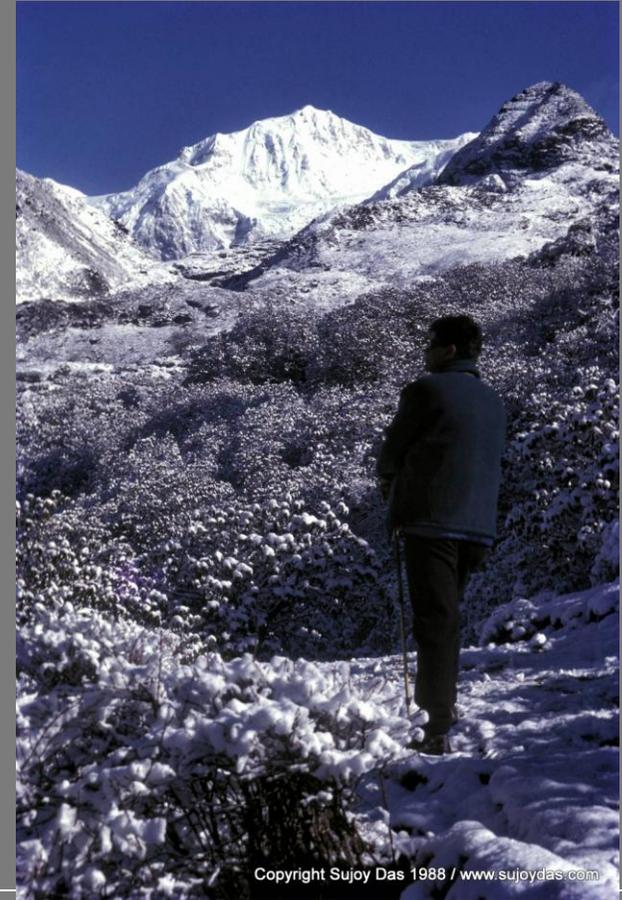
How fit do I have to be to do a trek? Whilst you do not need to be super-fit, you need to be fit enough to comfortably walk for 5-6 hours per day in the mountains on reasonable trails. You will definitely need to walk for around an hour at least every day to get fit. If you can spend some time in the gym it would help. Walking uphill/stairs etc also helps a great deal.

What is a typical group? Will I fit in? Groups range in size from 6 up to 12, and typically comprise a range of nationalities and experience. So far, all of our groups have got along very well. One of the attractions of such a trip is the chance to meet people with different backgrounds and personalities.

Do I need to buy special equipment? Usually our clients simply bring their existing clothing and equipment. However, if you do not have an item on our equipment list you will have to buy or borrow this.. Please check the equipment list which we will send out.

I am a single trekker. How does this work? Normally single trekkers have no problems fitting in with a group. Normally single trekkers share rooms or tents with other trekkers of the same sex, but if we have an odd-number we ensure that a room or tent is organized accordingly.

Will I be able to deal with the high altitude? Our itineraries are designed so that our clients ascend at a sensible and safe rate. The effects of altitude are felt by everyone, even the guides and Sherpas, but most people find that gentle acclimatization allows them to reach their high point without any problems. We will be monitoring this closely on the trek and in the event of any problems we will ensure that there is no compromise on safety. For details on AMS visit http://www.ismmed.org/np_altitude_tutorial.htm#prevention



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The Dzungri/HMI Base Camp Trek FAQ #2

Where do we stay on the trek? Tents are provided with mattress on this trek. You need to bring your own sleeping bag.

Where do we eat our meals? As this is a camping trek meals will be cooked by our crew and served at camp. Lunch will be usually given packed in the morning to have during the day. You are encouraged to bring chocolates, nuts, energy bars etc with you.

Where do we get water during the trip? It is our suggestion that in order to save money, trekkers carry iodine tablets or lugols solution or chlorine with them so that they can purify the water every day.

What type of shoes or boots should I wear? The proper foot wear depends on the trek. The Dzungri/HMI Base Camp trek should be done in boots with firm ankle support. Having said that you will find locals and porters trekking in sneakers! Shoes and boots are best purchased before your arrival for the trek with proper break in.

What will the weather be like? October November is the post monsoon season so we expect clear sunny days and cold nights. Temperatures in the day can range between 10 and 20 degrees Celsius while nights would be between 0 and 6 celsius. Higher up the temperatures will be less and being autumn snow is not likely though a freak snow storm cannot be ruled out! Dzungri/HMI Base Camp is likely to have sub zero temperatures at night which can go down to -5 to 8 celsius!

How should I give my gear to the porter? Ideally the gear should be given to the porter in a duffle bag locked and this will be returned to the client in the evening. As you may not be able to access the duffle bag during the day please carry the essentials like water, jacket, camera, sweets etc in your daypack.

Terms and Conditions #1

CANCELLATION POLICY

- The cancellation policy and refunds available are given below:
- 0-7 days before the start of the trek =75%
- 8 -15 days before the start of the trek = 50%
- 16-30 days before the start of the trek = 35%
- 31-45 days before the start of the trek = 30%
- 46 days and above = 20%



IN CASE OF LEAVING THE GROUP

- If due to illness or any other reason a client has to leave the group and go down or wait at a lodge for the group to pick him/her up on the way back, all expenses including lodging, fooding and any porter/guide related expenses if any are to be borne by the individual client over and above the trek fees paid for the trek. There are also no refunds for leaving a trek before completion.

HIRING OF PONIES ETC

- In the eventuality of a client needed the services of a pony to come down to lower altitudes, the cost of hiring the pony will be paid by the client.

EVACUATION BY HELICOPTER

- In the eventuality of not being covered by emergency helicopter evacuation insurance and an evacuation is considered necessary, the cost of the evacuation will be paid by the client in advance to the helicopter company/travel agent etc as deemed necessary.

Terms and Conditions #2

CANCELLATION OF LUKLA FLIGHTS (IF YOU ARE GOING TO THE EVEREST REGION)

- In case the Kathmandu to Lukla flight is cancelled, the additional cost for hotel accommodation in Kathmandu is to be paid by the client over and above the contracted days accommodation provided.
- In case the Lukla to Kathmandu flight is cancelled, the client has the following options:
- Continue to remain in Lukla at the client's cost (both fooding and accommodation) and try for a flight the next day or day after.
- Depart from Lukla if possible using the services of a helicopter usually US \$ 500per person. In this case the one way flight cancellation charges will be refunded to the client.

LODGES/CAMPING SITES ON THE TREK

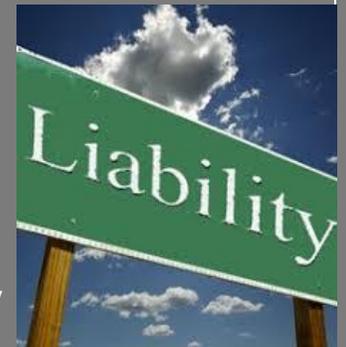
- The choice of lodges/camping sites to be used on the trek will be decided by South Col and clients will have to stay at these designated lodges/camps. Clients are not permitted to choose their own lodges on the route.

TREK ROUTE

- The trek route and day wise schedule will be fixed by South Col and will have to be followed by the client.

RISKS AND LIABILITY

- The trek is in a remote mountain area and has certain additional dangers and risks, some of which include: physical exertion for which the client should be prepared; weather extremes subject to sudden and unexpected changes; remoteness from normal medical services; evacuation difficulties.
- In the event of injury or illness South Col Expeditions (Sujoy Das) or its Staff can, at the clients cost arrange any medical treatment and emergency evacuation service as it or they deem necessary for the health and safety of the client.



South Col Founder Profile

Sujoy Das has been trekking and photographing in the Himalayas for more than thirty five years.

His notable treks include: Winter ascent of Kala Pattar peak (Everest region) Dec 2003; Everest Base Camp 18,500 feet (2001); Thorung-la pass/Annapurna Circuit 17,746 feet (2000); Annapurna Base Camp 14,300 feet (1999); Gokyo Ri peak Everest region 18,275 feet (1998); Rupkund Lake, Garhwal 16,200 feet (1996); Kangchendzonga Base Camp North and Green Lakes 16,875 feet (1987); Dorji La peak North Sikkim 18,644 feet (1986); crossing of Lhonak-la pass North Sikkim (1987).

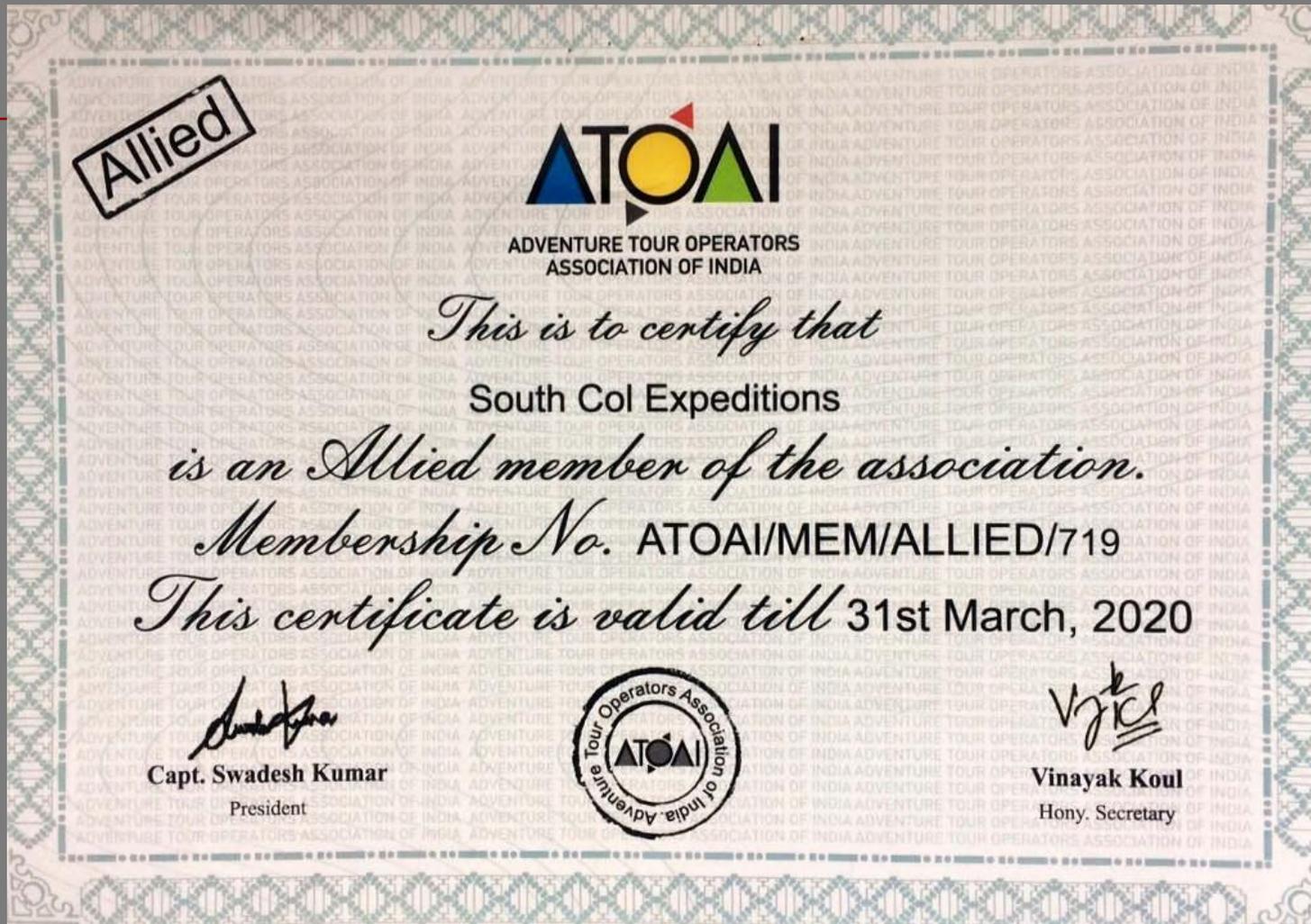
He has visited the Annapurna region a dozen times including three visits to the Base Camp and the entire circuit of Annapurna. He has trekked in the Everest region more than fifteen times including the winter of 2003-04. In the Eastern Himalaya he has trekked the Singalila ridge of Sandakphu and Phalut six times and made four visits to the alp of Dzongri in West Sikkim. In September 2009 he trekked across seven passes in Ladakh from the monastery of Lamayuru to Padum in Zaskar.

He has been an invited speaker at the Mussoorie Mountain Festival 2017 and Mountain Echoes - the Bhutan Literary Festival 2019.

He is the joint author and photographer of a number of books like Sikkim- A Travellers Guide, Nepal Himalaya - A Journey Through Time, Everest Reflections on the Solukhumbu, Lonely Planet - Nepal for the Indian Traveller. His essays and photographs have been published in books and magazines worldwide. To view his photographs of the Himalaya please visit www.sujoydas.com. He can be contacted at sujoyrdas@gmail.com



Membership



Om Mani Padme Hum!

