

BOUNDLESS HORIZONS

A peek into Mr. Kaikhushroo Naoroji's Diary.

The task of managing for growth and profits is very challenging in today's uncertain and demanding times. Perhaps we could learn a few valuable lessons from mountaineering where challenges and uncertainties exist. We are bringing to you experiences of one of our business leaders from the past who pursued mountaineering as a passion. Godrej Archives brings forth the adventurous Green Lake (Sikkim) expedition that Kaikhushroo Naoroji undertook in the year 1958 through black & white photographs and his diary notes that he used to maintain during every expedition.

A graduate from London School of Economics, Kaikhushroo (Kekoo) Naoroji joined Godrej as Export Director after a career in Indian Chemical Industries (ICI). While playing different roles of a loving husband, a doting father and a businessman, he also zealously pursued his passion for mountains. Around 1950s when Kekoo started exploring the Himalayas, Himalayan trekking was not as common as it is now. The Himalayas were untouched and not easily accessible in absence of network of roads.

He was the member of the Himalayan Club of which he later also became the President. Through few snippets from the pages of Kekoo Naoroji's Sikkim diary and few of his photographs let us experience the challenges and exhilaration of his Green Lake Trek (1958).

Kaikhushroo's Sikkim Diary

26th October-25th November 1958

26th October -Heavy cloud and drizzle not unpleasant for march but obscured views and definitely unpleasant at camp. Under the circumstances not unwise to have camped early specially as first camp. Tents are certainly not very good.....We are probably just over 10,000 feet and very likely snowing at Green Lake 4,934m and lower down....

27th October - Rained during the night and all tents leaked.....Water got through into the Contina and the whole film and all pictures up to this point are undoubtedly ruined....We are camped beside the Zeru Chu (river); guess 2 to 3 miles from snout....Route keeps changing due to slides and keeps getting higher and longer....Greater part of the route was through waterlogged bogs and involved continuous balancing on stones, rocks, thick and thin logs; one slip and you are sucked in up to the knees in mire with a "zwip" sound and need appreciable force to pull yourself out.What was not through bogs was steep ascents and descents through mullahs...Estimate we should be between 11,500 to 12,000 feet.....Cannot yet eat what I thought I would; intake so far poor but take milk and vitamins.



28th October- Dried out the camera with slow heat. However, shutter damaged and not working properly....This is the time when you wonder at the sense of punishing yourself so and wishes for the end of the day and also the end of the trek.....Camped at about 2 o'clock but it seemed a much longer day. Was miserable, tired and cold (strong wind).....



Kekoo Naoroji



Kanhanganga rising above Zemu Glacier with dry bed of Green Lake plain on right

29th October- Slow uphill grind- gradual ascent but altitude. Clear day, mountains close by made the march bearable....Expecting a long march, but little before midday Lachen men called a halt stating no water and firewood further up....Lachen men paid off. Then suddenly tragedy struck. Whilst lighting the kitchen fire the dry grass and dwarf rhododendron caught fire; our attempts to put it out were futile....Shifted camp to a safer spot and watched dejectedly our firewood supply go up in smoke...Sherpas collected enough for a roaring camp fire...Still it is a pity since it will take years for this valuable firewood to grow.....Decided to move camp to that point whilst some of us went further to investigate Green Lake.

30th October- Cold morning but sunny...The water I had discovered yesterday had all iced up....Went to Green Lake- there is no lake- it has all dried...Pasang discovered a pool on the glacier....The view from top of the moraine compensates for all the punishment taken so far. The giant Kangchenjunga 8,585m surrounded by its satellites forming a semicircle round you. Wherever you look there is beauty....Photographed and enjoyed the scene for an hour....this sight for the Gods. Nights are very cold- 5 to 10 below freezing. How the Lachen men endured this in the open is beyond me. Sleep fitful- may have to resort to sleeping pills higher up. Sleeping bags do not fit well into each other and not very comfortable. My fault for not trying out the equipment properly.

31st October- Rest, washing day and sorting out of stores in preparation for attempt to Nepal Gap. I shall be very happy if I can do it. Will be accompanied by three Sherpas.

by Vrunda Pathare, Godrej Archives

For further read, refer to the book in the Archives -
Himalayan Vignettes: The Garhwal and Sikkim Treks by Kekoo Naoroji, Published by The Himalayan Club, 2003.