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# SPOTLIGHT

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Exclusive Interview



PM Girija Prasad Koirala

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# Bull's Run



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# Trekking Trail

Although Gauri Shankar trekking area is one of the most fascinating mountain regions, it is not yet widely known

By A CORRESPONDENT

With the existence of places with natural beauty and cultural diversity, Nepal can gain a lot of benefits from tourism as it can be important component for the community development activities.

However, it is still confined to few areas and community is yet to get enormous benefits. Tourism not only generates employment but also contributes to enhance economic condition of the rural people.

With an objective to exploit the benefit of tourism, Eco-Himal, the society for Ecological Co-operation Alps-Himalayan, has been working with local grass-roots organizations on a range of social, ecological and cultural development projects aimed at bringing long-term benefits to the people of the Himalayan region.

Within the framework of promoting sustainable tourism and training, in 1996, Eco-Himal set up the Rolwaling Eco-tourism Project in the little visited areas of the holy mountain of Gauri Shankar.

Written by prominent scholars from foreign countries, this is a first book which focuses within the frame work of Eco-Himal's Rolwaling Project. This book highlights important areas and opportunities available in the Rolwaling region. Along with discussing the issues of natural conservation, five authors, Patricia East, Susan Voivik, Max Petrik, Sara Shneiderman and Mark Turin, all of them who lived Nepal for several years doing their research, discuss all important components regarding the trekking potential of the region.

Although Rolwaling is one of the most beautiful trekking routes of eastern Nepal adjoining Mt. Everest, it is yet to be popular destination for trekkers. Currently about 1500 tourists visit the

Gauri Shankar area each year. According to the authors, most come here as organized tour groups which adhere to the 'take noting but photographs, leave nothing but footprints' principle of minimal impact.

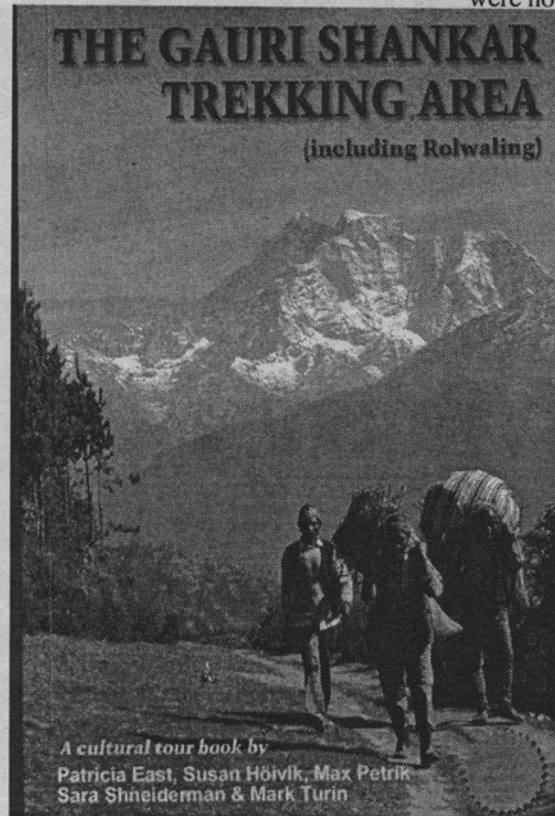
Thanks to the implementation of Rolwaling Ecotourism Project by Eco-Himal, one can see the changes. For the individual tourist, it was virtually impossible to trek there earlier as there were no hotels and restaurants along the trekking route. Now the situation has completely changed. Eco-Himal's project not only trained local population on hotel management and lodge management but also opened the trekking routes where tourists can enjoy local culture and nature.

After opening up Nepal for the foreigners five decades ago, millions of tourists from different parts of the world have already visited Nepal's various trekking zones and climbed numerous mountain peaks.

But, there are still some interesting and adventitious areas which are yet to be seen by many. Faced with increasing impoverishment, many people are forced to seek employment elsewhere, usually as unskilled laborers. Income from tourism could help improve living conditions and reduce rural out-migration.

For those who wan to visit the Rolwaling area, this book provides detailed information on trekking routes as well as an in-depth introduction to its rich culture and history. This book is very important for those who want to know about eco-tourism.

As a country known for its mountain peaks as well as cultural and bio-diversity, we must promote the experts who make important contribution by writing about different aspects of Nepal.



## The Gauri Shankar Trekking Area (Including Rolwaling) An Eco-Himal Publication

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Patricia East, Susan Hoivik, Max Petrik,  
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