

Nepal Increases Cost of Permits to Climb Everest

今回は、エベレスト登山許可証の料金引き上げに関するニュースです。ネパール政府は、環境保護や安全対策の強化を目的として、料金を約3割値上げしました。しかし、一部の登山会社は、この変更が登山者数の減少につながる可能性を懸念しています。本文には、**permit**（許可証）**facility**（施設）、**criticize**（批判する）などの単語が登場します。ぜひ本文を読んで、登山や環境保護について講師と話してみましょう。



1. Article

Read the following article aloud.

The government of Nepal has increased the cost of a **permit** to climb Mount Everest by about one-third. Officials say the price increase aims to help reduce pollution and increase safety on the world's highest mountain.

The director of Nepal's tourism department is Narayan Prasad Regmi. He told the French news agency AFP the cost for a permit in the popular spring climbing season will increase from \$11,000 to \$15,000. Regmi noted the price had remained the same for about 10 years, so the government decided it was time to make a change.

The costs, or fees, for climbing during less popular and more difficult times of year -- such as during winter or the summer **monsoon** rains -- have also increased. This includes an increase from \$5,500 to \$7,500 during the autumn climbing season.

Thousands of climbers come to Nepal each year. The country is home to eight of 14 of the world's tallest mountains over 8,000 meters. Everest is 8,849-meters tall and sits on the border between Nepal and China.

Foreign climbers spend tens of thousands of dollars on their efforts to climb Everest. More than 400 people bought climbing permits for Everest last year. This brought in around \$4 million to the government.

Nepal uses the money to remove waste from the mountain and to **finance** search and rescue operations.

Some mountain climbing companies worry the higher price could lower the number of climbers wanting to climb Everest from the Nepalese side. The companies warn that some climbers might decide to climb Everest through China.

"Some climbers might shift to Tibet where the **facilities** are much better," said Mingma G Sherpa. He runs the Imagine Nepal mountaineering company and says Nepal must use the money to improve conditions.

"Our government just increases the royalty, but doesn't do much. It needs to also provide support to the climbers and guides," he added.

Some groups have **criticized** Nepal for permitting too many climbers on Everest while not doing enough to keep the mountain clean.

Last year, Nepal's government ordered all Everest climbers to carry trackers and bags to remove their human waste. The government approved the fee increase in January, but it was first published on February 3.

I'm Andrew Smith.

Andrew Smith adapted this story for VOA Learning English based on reporting from Agence France-Presse.

2. Key phrases and vocabulary

First repeat after your tutor and then read aloud by yourself.

1. permit (n.) a paper that gives you the power to do something

You can practice driving after you get your driving permit.

2. monsoon (n.) a kind of wind; a type of rainstorm

It is better to visit after the monsoon season ends.

3. finance (v.) to pay for (a large project or a large item)

We need to get more money to finance our new restaurant business.

4. facility (n., often plural) a building with a special use or function

The school doesn't have the necessary facilities for research, like a lab or a large library.

5. criticize (v.) to complain about something or to find problems with

The gas station manager criticized the clerk for being careless.

3. Questions

Read the questions aloud and answer them.

1. Why is the government of Nepal increasing the cost of a permit to climb Mount Everest?

2. Why is Nepal such a popular place to visit?

3. Why are some people worried about the higher costs?

4. What things do you think climbers should do to help keep Nepal clean and safe?

5. What responsibilities do tourists have when they visit another country?