

Mountain Legacy

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Namaste!

On behalf of Mountain Legacy and the Hillary family I am pleased to extend this invitation to attend the presentation of the Sir Edmund Hillary Mountain Legacy Medal to Dr. Harshwanti Bisht from Dehra Dun in India for her environmental and community work in the Gangotri Himalaya. The ceremony will be on the 17th of March at the new ICIMOD headquarters in Khumaltar, Kathmandu, and I will be there to speak and make the presentation. I look forward to seeing you there.

Best regards, Peter Hillary

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The Sir Edmund Hillary Mountain Legacy Medal was initiated in 2003 by unanimous resolution of the **Namche Conference: Parks, People and Mountain Tourism**. The Hillary Medal both recognizes Sir Edmund's life-long commitment to the welfare of mountain people and their environment and also encourages the continuing emulation of his example. It is awarded *for remarkable service in the conservation of culture and nature in mountainous regions*. For more information about the Medal, please visit HillaryMedal.com.

Professor of economics, conservationist, and mountaineer Dr. Harshwanti Bisht has been selected to receive the sixth Sir Edmund Hillary Mountain Legacy Medal. According to Dr. Beau Beza, Program Director in the School of Global, Urban and Social Studies at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology and chair of the Hillary Medal Selection Committee,

Dr. Bisht is an accomplished mountaineer. In 1981 Harshwanti Bisht, Rekha Sharma and Chandra Prabha Aitwal were the first three women to summit the main peak of Nanda Devi (7,816m). Bisht was also a member of the Indian expedition to Mt. Everest, in 1984. However, the Hillary Medal is awarded for philanthropic achievements, not for sports achievements.

For 25 years, since 1989, Dr. Bisht has labored to improve conditions in the Gangotri area of Uttarakhand, at the headwaters of the Ganges in northern India. Her Save Gangotri project has planted tens of thousands of saplings, organized eco-awareness campaigns, propagated endangered medicinal herbs, and introduced ecotourism standards to an area that had been ravaged by climate change and unregulated pilgrimage.

Dr. Harshwanti Bisht and Mountain Legacy are currently initiating a project to promote establishment of a network of women's mountaineering clubs at universities throughout the Himalayan region. Please visit MountainPower.org and send us your suggestions. Your participation and support will be invaluable.

At the Hillary Medal presentation, Dr. Bisht will speak on the Hillary model of development and the importance of women's participation in mountain sports and leadership training.

I wish to thank RMIT University and Sue Badyari, CEO of World Expeditions, a leader in responsible tourism, for major support of the Hillary Medal since its inception; and Dr. David Molden, Director General of ICIMOD and a member of the Hillary Medal Selection Committee, for graciously offering to host this event.

Kumar P. Mainali, President of Mountain Legacy