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Team Miura Arrives Safely to Everest Base Camp

(May 28th, 15:55 Nepal Time; 19:10 Japan Time)

Yuichiro Miura (75), Noriyuki Muraguchi (51), Kazuya Igarashi (48), and 8 Climbing Sherpas all returned to Everest Base Camp (5360m) safely today at 15:55 Nepal Time.

Yuichiro Miura who had conquered the world's highest peak Mt. Everest (8848m) for the second time on May 26th at age 75 years and 7 months, descended to Camp 4 (South Col 8000m) on the 26th, to Camp 2 (6450m) on the 27th, and arrived at Everest Base Camp safely today after skiing down to C1 from C2.

Although Yuichiro is extremely tired, he comments that "it was well worth it". Also, after seeing his second son Gota sound and safe, he expressed his joy that he is "very happy to see Gota all in one piece, happier than myself summiting Everest."

Team Miura is scheduled to return to Japan in early June..

Update & Report on Gota Miura

Gota Miura who had forsake this time's ascent to the Everest summit due to HACE (High Altitude Cerebral Edema) experienced during the ascent to C5 on May 25th, has safely descended to Everest Base Camp on May 26th and is on his way to recovery.

Gota felt the first symptoms of HACE soon after departing C3 on May 24th. He first thought that his discomfort would soon alleviate after taking in oxygen, since he was on non-oxygen ascent up to 7600m. He was still feeling uneasy fatigue after reaching C4, but thought things would be okay after sleeping a night with enough supplementary oxygen support.

Gota woke up feeling much better, and was on the go for C5 in the morning of May 25th. However, as soon as he started climbing, he was greatly lagging behind the team even though he was taking 2 liters of oxygen per minute. His hands and legs started to feel numb and soon could no longer step further. His father was already far ahead of him but his teammate Igarashi waited for him sensing something was wrong. As soon as Gota met up with Igarashi, he asked him to increase the oxygen level. Still no sign of recovery.

Sherpas who had finished setting up the camp at C5 came down to see if Gota was okay. By the time sherpas arrived, Gota experienced series of blackouts, losing all senses of balance, thus knew he had to go down. He told Igarashi that he needed to get down, told him to take a good care of his father, and started his descent with the help of two sherpas.

Gota was already on a verge of being unconscious, but got to C4 nonetheless. When he checked his SPO2 (blood oxygen concentration level) at C4, it was down to 60% although he was taking in 4 liters of oxygen at that time. His body was not taking in oxygen.

He realized that his condition needed immediate action and told one of the sherpas to take out a

drug called Dexamethasone. He shot himself the drug on his thigh and called the doctor on stand-by in Tokyo via satellite phone. The doctor told him that his action was the correct thing to do and told him to shoot himself another shot in 2 hours and to decrease altitude as much as possible, as soon as possible.

Gota took the doctor's advice, and set off to C2 with 2 sherpas immediately. During the descent to C2, he was hearing "voices" as he reports, telling him to descend FAST. He reached C2 half carried by the sherpas, but felt his consciousness was coming back as oxygen concentration increased.

At C2, a doctor-accompanied Japanese expedition Team Yamamoto was on their descent to BC so Gota was able to seek help from their doctor, Dr. Shiga. Gota descended to base camp with the help of Team Yamamoto and the 2 sherpas on May 26th.

Doctor Naoko Shiga, the doctor of Yamamoto expedition, thoroughly examined Gota at the base camp and told him that if he hadn't taken the shot of Dexamethasone, "he would've been dead 120%".

It was almost ironic that all the preparations that Gota had done in case of his father's emergency had saved his own life. Yet, his experience would be valuable for future high altitude climbing medicine, being almost a case study of how enough preparation, knowledge, and most of all self-realization and courageous but quick decision-making could save lives.

But it is most of all a blessing that Gota is sound and safe, and his father Yuichiro is safely back to the base camp after fulfilling his dream of standing on the highest point on earth on a clear fine day.

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