

## Business: Mt Everest Climber Beat up for not having 'climbing permit'

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A

Chinese climber was reportedly just a few thousand feet from reaching the summit of Mount Everest when he was forced back down the mountain for not having a permit.

Outside magazine reports that the unnamed climber, said to be a Han Chinese, was reportedly 25,500 feet up the mountain's North Col route when he was spotted camping alone, away from other expeditions.

That's when the climber was apprehended by members of the Tibet Mountaineering Guide School (TMGS), who forcibly removed him from the trail and physically assaulted him, witnesses say.

Two witnesses tell Outside that the TMGS members then subdued the hiker, who reportedly wielded his ice axe when confronted by them.

Permits for climbing Everest aren't cheap, with Outside reporting that they cost a minimum of \$25,000 "on the low end." And that's not including other substantial costs such as gear and tour guides. The Everest K2 News site provides more information on obtaining the proper paperwork before trying to climb the famous mountain.

Life's Little Mysteries writes that permits for climbing Everest typically cost upward of \$70,000, though an expedition team of 7 to 10 climbers usually splits those costs. Despite the large expenses involved, and the inherent risks, there is a virtual "traffic jam" of aspiring climbers wanting to make the Everest ascent.

Grayson Schaffer writes that the alleged treatment of the hiker could stoke further tensions between Tibetan and Chinese officials.

A second witness, Kari Kobler, claims to have filmed the beating but says he did not report the incident because he wanted to avoid igniting a confrontation between TMGS and the Chinese government.

"It's a tough one. It's really tough. I know all of them," Kobler says of his decision to not identify the TMGS members or release the video.

"The reason I made this video—if I don't have proof, nobody will believe me. [The TMGS grads] can lie and say nothing happened. But now I can go to them and say, 'Please, young boys.'

Kobler tells Outside he isn't sure exactly what became of the Chinese hiker but says he did voluntarily walk off the mountain.

"He's not killed," Kobler said. "They beat him only."