### **Nepal makes 97 mountains free to climb**

Nepal is making 97 of its mountains free to climb for the next two years. The government wants to encourage tourists to go trekking in two provinces in the far west of Nepal. They are among the country's poorest and least-developed areas. A tourism official said the peaks that will have no climbing fees are between 5,970 metres and 7,132 metres high. The director of Nepal's Tourism Department told The Kathmandu Post about the new plan. He said: "Despite their breathtaking beauty, the number of tourists and mountaineers here is very low as access is so difficult." He hoped the plan would "create jobs, generate income, and strengthen the local economy".

Nepal's government also announced a change in the fee it charges to climb Mount Everest, the world’s highest mountain. From the 1st of September, the cost of climbing Everest will rise from $11,000 to $15,000. This is the first increase in nearly ten years. Other popular peaks will also have higher fees. An additional rule to climb Everest was introduced earlier this year. Trekkers now need to prove they have scaled a peak in Nepal that is over 7,000 metres high. The government hopes this will encourage more people to attempt some of the 97 free mountains. The tourism director said the more remote mountains are "ideal training grounds" to reach the top of Everest.

**Homework:**

Write a full sentence answer for each question below.

1. For how long will it be free to climb the 97 Nepalese mountains?
2. Where in Nepal are the 97 mountains?
3. What is the height of the smallest of the 97 mountains?
4. What did a tourism official say was breathtaking?
5. What does an official hope making the mountains free will strengthen?
6. By how much will the fee to climb Mount Everest rise?
7. When was the last time the fee to climb Mount Everest rise?
8. When was an additional rule to climb Mount Everest introduced?
9. How high must trekkers have climbed to be able to climb Everest?
10. What are the 97 mountains "ideal training grounds" for?