

President's 2007 Report on GIGE and Related Activities

At the close of 2007, I send you my hearty greetings and hopes that our new year will be prosperous and productive. Noted here are the major activity of the Gondwana Institute for Geology and Environment (GIGE) in 2007 which was an Everest geo-tour in October and some other important topics.

From throughout January to December, I made effort in drafting the manuscript of a geo-tour guidebook of the Everest area. From February to March the preparation of the financial report of GIGE to submit to the tax office was a major concern of GIGE. In April, Mr. Y. Yonezawa, the director of the GIGE Tokyo office resigned, due to his advanced age. I appreciate his constant support to the GIGE activity since 2001.

From May 29th to June 3rd, I drove with my wife to Kochi and had a pleasant getting together with Profs. S. Yoshikura and M. Santosh. We then visited Ehime to join the International Forum of Development Efforts in Nepal conducted by the Ehime University. We enjoyed meeting with several recent and old friends including Profs. R. Yatabe, S. Hasegawa, B.N. Upreti, M. Komatsu, Mrs. Komatsu and others very much. On June 3rd, we escorted Prof. B.N. Upreti and his wife to the GIGE main office in Hashimoto.

On June 10th, a seminar on the geology of the Everest area was held in Tokyo, organized by the Geoplanning Co.. Many members of the geo-tour, planned for an October tour assembled, and I gave an hour's at the seminar.

From September 18th to 25th, I visited Sapporo and joined an assembly of old classmates for the 50 anniversary of our admission to Hokkaido University in 1957. Twelve of the 24 graduates from the Department of Geology and Mineralogy of the university attended. There, I worked as a field leader for an excursion to Mt. Apoi in the Hidaka mountain range, which is composed of the world famous Horoman Peridotite. I prepared a small field excursion guidebook, collecting recent academic data, which were provided through the courtesy of Dr. J. Maeda of Hokkaido University.

In October, I visited Nepal and conducted a field survey from 5th to 11th with Dr. S.M. Rai of the Tribhuvan University, on the Cenozoic geology surrounding Lukla. Then from the 12th to 21st, a geo-tour along the Dudhkoshi valley from Lukla to Gokyo was conducted, and we two worked as geo-guides and field leaders of the tour. I prepared a Japanese guidebook, *Geology and Natural Hazards along the Dudhkoshi valley, eastern Nepal Himalaya, Misc. Pub. No. 17 of GRG/GIGE*. Eighteen aged Japanese, mostly over 60 years old including Mr. Tatzawa, the president of the Geoplanning Co., joined the tour, and 14 members among them could reach Gokyo (4700m asl) and climb Gokyo peak (5357m). This geo-tour was the first trial for GIGE to collaborate with the Geoplanning Co.. The geo-tour was quite successful, and promised the continuation of



Yoshida and Prof. B.N.Upreti in front of the GIGE main office, June 3rd



Departing for the climb of Mt. Apoi, with the old classmates of the Hokkaido University, September 21st



At the Gokyo peak, October 18th.

future collaboration with the company for similar geo-tours in Gondwanan areas including the Himalaya. I am particularly thankful to six Koyamadai High school juniors; without their collaborative participation, the geo-tour would not have come about.

After returning to Japan from Nepal, I found that my review paper *“Geochronological data evaluation: Implications for the tectonics of East Gondwana”* appeared in the October issue of the *Gondwana Research*. This paper is a summary of my long-standing counterargument since 1992, mostly from the viewpoint of geochronology, opposed to the hypothesis, which stresses the Pan-African suturing orogeny of the Lützow-Holm Bay area, East Antarctica.

On November 1st, the GIGE Tokyo chapter reopened with Dr. Joseph Kokonyangi as the director. He is expected to take charge of GIGE activities in Africa as well. GIGE also started discussions with the Abundance Ecology Industrial Co. of D.R. Congo on a business contract for environmental research in the country, which culminated in a contract and came into effect in December.

On November 26th and 27th, there was the Fifth Nepal Geological Congress in Kathmandu. We delivered two lectures in the symposium of this congress, one on the geomorphologic evolution of the area around Lukla, and another on the basement geology of the Everest area. The former is the fruit of our field survey in October mentioned above, especially related to the new discovery of moraine boulders derived from the Tethys sediments, and the latter, a summary of our 4 years' field research in the Everest area.

From November 8th to 10th, there was the 4th international symposium on Gondwana to Asia, and 2007 annual meeting of IAGR (International Association for Gondwana Research) in Fukuoka. About 100 participants from over 20 countries assembled. About 65 oral and 35 poster presentations including 10 keynote talks and one special lecture were delivered. I gave a talk *“A commentary on the Pan-African Orogeny in the Himalaya”*, jointly with B.N. Upreti. In hearing various lectures and viewing posters during the symposium, I have realized that most Japanese Antarctic geologists have now come to understand that the Lützow-Holm Bay area is not a simple Pan-African suturing orogen, but a complex area composed of the youngest Pan-African and the older geologies. Thus, I am happy to say that there is now no need to argue among Japanese geologists on the above topics.

During the IAGR meeting, the first IAGR award for the best paper in 2006 *Gondwana Research* was given to Dr. Ben Coscombe and co-authors for their paper on Himalayan geology. I worked as the coordinator of the award and appreciate very much Prof. R. Goldfarb, the chairman of the Award Committee for his enduring and successful effort to bring this wonderful result.

Personally, I enjoyed very much the assembly, having met with many old friends who were in collaboration with me in one or more IGCP projects such as Nos. 236, 288, 368, 411 and 440.

On November 15th and 16th, I convened a meeting of OBs and their families of the 10th Japanese Antarctic Research Expedition at Kiimi Onsen (spa), a 10 minutes walk from the GIGE main office. Thirty-four people gathered including 17 of the 30 members of the Japanese Antarctic wintering team in 1969-70.



*Old friends assembled in Fukuoka,
November 5th*

During 2007, GIGE applied 3 projects to the Environment Restoration Conservation Agency (ERCA), the Sumitomo Foundation, and the Nissan Foundation for environmental researches in the Himalaya, and to the ERCA to join a training course of environmental activities in Vietnam. All the applications, however, were unsuccessful. I found that we have to continue further effort in submitting applications. GIGE also supported the Department of Geology, Trichandra Campus, Tribhuvan University in preparing a proposal for an environmental research project in the Langtang Himalaya to the Nippon Foundation, the result of the application will be announced early next year.

Sincerely,
Masaru Yoshida

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