

Summary

On Tuesday afternoon, April 23, a Malaysian climber and Global Rescue member, Wui Kin Chin, summited Mount Annapurna. We've been told that shortly after beginning his descent, he became increasingly lethargic and collapsed in the snow and that his Sherpa guide, approaching the limits of his own endurance, left him with what little oxygen he could spare and descended to Camp four to find help. When he arrived, the other climbers he found were unwilling or unable to help (over 30 climbers had summited that day) and the camp was short on supplies, including oxygen, that was needed to climb back up the mountain to assist with a rescue (Global Rescue does not have visibility into why the expedition was not properly equipped with adequate oxygen and other necessary supplies; the expedition provider responsible has been under investigation by the Nepalese government for fraud and was recently fined for issuing fake climbing permits and participating in fake rescue scams. More details on this [site](#) and specific [article1](#) and [article2](#)). In addition, the altitude of their location prevented a timely resupply of what was needed.

Desperate to help Mr. Chin, we were told the Sherpa guide contacted his expedition company to tell them he had left Mr. Chin somewhere between Camp four and the summit and that he was in need of help.

Late that day, Global Rescue received the call that Mr. Chin had been abandoned by his expedition team and was alone somewhere below the summit of Annapurna at approximately 23,000 feet. Mr. Chin's actual location and grid coordinates were unknown. Although Global Rescue is not a search company (our membership services provide rescue from known locations only), we contacted our Nepal ground team and our vetted helicopter providers to determine if a search was possible the following morning as it was late in the day (no rotary wing aircraft fly at night in the Himalaya). All of our contracted helicopter providers, which include some of the most experienced high altitude / rescue pilots in Nepal, said they were unable to perform the mission for safety reasons because the altitude was above the limits of their aircraft. With that information, Global Rescue attempted to contact Mr. Chin's next of kin to discuss a ground search mission which could take several days to complete.

On Wednesday morning, Mr. Chin's wife paid a helicopter provider to search for her husband. The provider agreed to fly above the operating threshold of the aircraft in a mission that risked not only the life of the pilot but those on the ground. Global Rescue was not aware of this mission until it was already underway. It should be noted that Global Rescue, as a matter of policy, always complies with local and international law and cannot provide services that might violate them. Despite these issues, the pilot was able to locate Mr. Chin, whose movements indicated he was alive.

Upon receiving this good news and the coordinates of Mr. Chin's location, Global Rescue immediately initiated communication to provide a helicopter rescue, supported by a ground team, that would try and reach Mr. Chin and bring him to a location where he could be safely retrieved by helicopter. The only people able to perform these services were those already on the mountain, so Global Rescue retained the helicopter operators who had located Mr. Chin to ensure he was rescued (we found out later that Mr. Chin's wife was also solicited for payment for the cost of the rescue). Despite these transgressions and the fact that what was being demanded to perform the rescue far exceeded industry standards, the rescue was successfully completed on Thursday after a ground team was able to reach Mr. Chin. He was evacuated via a helicopter longline and transferred to a hospital in Kathmandu. After his arrival, Global Rescue monitored and supported Mr. Chin's care with an on-the-ground team deployed from the United States and Asia.

On Saturday morning, Global Rescue coordinated the medical evacuation of Mr. Chin to a hospital in Singapore, his home of record, via private medically equipped air ambulance. Mr. Chin remains in critical condition.

Global Rescue would like to thank all those involved in this complex operation as we continue to work with Mr. Chin's family and the broader community to support his recovery.

Q&A

There are many unanswered questions as to what happened on Annapurna. Although much is still unknown, we have attempted to clarify Global Rescue's role in the events surrounding Mr. Kim's rescue. Our intent is not to assign blame. There are inherent risks in what Mr. Kim chose to do and any rescues above 7,000 meters are extremely difficult and unlikely to be successful. Annapurna is arguably the world's deadliest 8,000 meter mountain where approximately 35% of climbers who attempt to summit lose their lives. Global Rescue has successfully completed more than a thousand rescues in the Himalaya over the last decade and this was among the most challenging.

1. What is Mr. Chin's current condition?

- a. Answer: As of 11am on 28 April, Mr. Chin remains in critical condition in a Singapore hospital after Global Rescue coordinated his transport by ICU equipped private air ambulance from Kathmandu.

2. Why wasn't there sufficient oxygen at Camp four and why didn't anyone there immediately try to help Mr. Chin after he was left by his Sherpa guide?

- a. Answer: Global Rescue does not have an answer to this question. We had no personnel on the mountain and we are not involved in supplying any of the expeditions with oxygen, mountaineering supplies or logistical support. These responsibilities are borne by the expedition companies.

3. Why didn't Global Rescue immediately initiate a search on Wednesday morning?

- a. Answer: Global Rescue's memberships do not include search as part of the services that are included in the membership. None of Global Rescue's contracted air providers were capable of flying the mission to search for Mr. Chin because of his location.

4. But Mr. Chin was found by a helicopter search. Why didn't Global Rescue do this?

- a. Answer: The helicopter company flew one of its helicopters above the altitude limits of the aircraft to conduct the search. This flight was against operating regulations and as such was extremely dangerous. While we're very glad that the search found Mr. Chin, Global Rescue must always (i) comply with all international and local laws and (ii) have aircraft operators who are willing to fly the mission. In this instance, neither of these criteria were met.

5. Once Mr. Chin was located, why didn't Global Rescue immediately send a helicopter to get him?

- a. Answer: As stated previously, Mr. Chin's location was above the operating limits of available aircraft so the only way to rescue him was to move him to a location that would be accessible by aircraft. The climbers on the mountain were the ones best positioned to do this.

6. There was a shortage of oxygen on the mountain. Why? Why didn't Global Rescue immediately resupply the oxygen?

- a. Answer: Global Rescue does not have visibility into why the expedition company had not provided sufficient supplies or why there was a shortage of oxygen. It is not within our capability to resupply expeditions (hundreds of expeditions companies are

operating in the Himalaya) that haven't been properly supplied when they run out of oxygen or other essentials.

- 7. Did Global Rescue delay in offering to provide helicopter support to a rescue mission?**
 - a. Answer: No. As soon as Global Rescue was informed of the coordinates of Mr. Chin's location we were in contact with our helicopter providers as well as the expedition company supporting Mr. Chin to determine how/where a helicopter might be able to rescue him. Global Rescue agreed to pay for the costs of the helicopter needed for the rescue. Throughout the day on Wednesday, additional and troubling information became known to Global Rescue. It was later discovered that Mr. Chin's wife had also been billed for his rescue (for the same amount that Global Rescue had agreed to), unbeknownst to us. Global Rescue was also subsequently contacted by the [expedition company](#) demanding to be paid for their help. These demands ranged from \$50,000 - \$100,000 USD. Global Rescue did not agree to these demands.

- 8. Why didn't Global Rescue offer to reimburse the ground teams and others for their costs?**
 - a. Answer: To be clear, Global Rescue is a services company, not an insurance company, and we have no ability to reimburse any parties for their expenses or provide open-ended financial commitments. We can and do pay our vendors and partners for their support in delivering our services, but cannot provide reimbursement. It should also be noted that Global Rescue does not bear financial responsibility for the cost of searching for its members.

- 9. How did Mr. Chin get transported to Singapore?**
 - a. Answer: Global Rescue arranged, coordinated and paid for an ICU equipped private air ambulance to transport Mr. Kim from Kathmandu to Singapore.

- 10. Are all the facts of this mission known?**
 - a. Answer: No. Our information gathering and investigation is ongoing and we will share information as it becomes available.