

The Awe Inspiring Nungshi And Tashi Malik

NEW DELHI-After having conquered the highest peaks in each of the seven continents in the world and having skied to the North and South Poles, the awe-inspiring achievement of a pair of young Indian twin sisters was expected to draw awards and recognition. But that has not happened in India till now.

Born on June 21, 1991, Dehra Dun-based Nungshi and Tashi Malik have become the youngest persons to complete what is known in mountaineering circles as the Adventurers' Grand Slam, including the Three-Pole Challenge, within a period of two years and one month, the second fastest timing among women.

The two sisters, who underwent mountaineering courses at the Nehru Institute of Mountaineering in Uttarkashi, started their feat by first conquering Mt Everest, the world's highest peak, on May 19, 2013.

They conquered Mt Elbrus, Europe's highest, on August 22 the same year.

In 2014, they conquered South America's Mt Aconagua on Janu-



Tashi and Nungshi Malik

ary 29, Australasia's Mt Carstensz Pyramid on March 19, North America's Mt McKinley (now renamed Denali) on June 4, and Antarctica's Mt Vinson Massif on December 16. On December 28 that year, they reached the South Pole on skis.

On April 21 this year, they skied to the North Pole and then conquered Africa's Mt Kilimanjaro on

July 3, thereby completing the feat aged all of 24.

So far their names have been included in the Guinness Book of World Records on three counts - being the first female twins to climb Mt Everest and the first siblings and twins to climb the 'Seven Summits', as the highest peaks of the seven continents are collectively known. They have applied

to Guinness for three more achievements - first siblings and twins to complete the Adventurers' Grand Slam and the Three-Pole Challenge; youngest persons ever to complete the Adventurers' Grand Slam and the Three-Pole Challenge; and first twins to reach the South Pole on skis. Impressed by their achievements, New Zealand Prime Minister John Key took them on a sports scholarship to his country - the land of Sir Edmund Hillary - where they are now doing a diploma graduation course in sports and exercise. This month, the US government is taking them for the 2015 Global Sports Mentoring Program. But an official recognition from the Indian government eludes them. After the two sisters met union Minister of State for Home Kiren Rijiju in July this year, their father Col. (Retd.) V.S. Malik met union Minister of State for Youth Affairs and Sports, Sarbananda Sonowal, on

Sept 10 and submitted a memorandum seeking the Tenzing Norgay Adventure Award and a recommendation for the Padma Shri. "Nungshi and Tashi's achievements have been widely recognised abroad but very few people in India know about them," the father of the Malik twins lamented. He said he also informed the union minister about the costs he had borne for his daughters' achievements.

"Supporting their dangerous and very expensive dream has cost us Rs.2.5 crore and they have achieved these milestones without any logistics support like army or paramilitary force do," the memorandum stated.

According to Malik, he was forced to spend his life's savings and borrow from relatives and friends to achieve their dreams.

He said the Mahindra group had made the biggest contribution of Rs.48 lakh to their efforts. (IANS)