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Families are in despair after long search for three climbers on mountain K2 yields no results

Military helicopters have been searching for the climbers since Friday, but heavy clouds and bad weather forced them to pause the mission, which will be resumed when conditions for the search improve

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Families of missing climbers fear their loved ones might be dead as it is hard to believe that someone could survive at 8,000 meters after so many days. The search for their bodies however, continues. PHOTO BY CHHANG DAWA SHERPA/FACEBOOK

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Hope to find three missing mountaineers on the world's second-highest mountain is rapidly fading as a week-long search yields no results.

"There is no hope for anyone to survive at 8,000 meters after three days," Sajid Ali Sadpara, the son of one of the missing climbers, told The New York Times on Monday.

The missing climbers — 45-year-old Pakistani Muhammad Ali Sadpara, John Snorri, 47, from Iceland, and a 33-year-old Chilean Juan Pablo Mohr — lost contact with the base camp at K2 on Friday, Feb. 5, and were declared missing on Saturday, after their support team did not hear from them, Los Angeles Times [reported](#).

It was their second attempt to climb K2, located in northern Pakistan, since December.

The military helicopters continued the search over the weekend and on Monday but halted the operation on Tuesday due to poor visibility and bad weather conditions, Chhang Sherpa, the expedition leader at Seven Summit Treks, said on his [Facebook](#) page on Tuesday.

Chhang Dawa Sherpa about a month ago

- Due to the continuous bad weather (forecast) further seven days more, Our expedition is off and we all are returning from basecamp toward Skardu.
- Imtiaz and Akbar headed to high camp yesterday, cook, LO, kitchen boys from Jasmine tours (operator of John and Ali's expedition) are still at basecamp supplying the supports.
- Due to the bad weather, no helicopter search flight for today, when the weather permits the authorities will send more HAP for ground SAR.... [See More](#)

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The families also said in a statement on Monday that they made the “difficult decision” to wait for better weather for the search to continue, Los Angeles Times stated.

“The families are so gutted as weather and winds have stopped the search and rescue,” Vanessa O’Brien, the first American and British woman to climb K2, who is helping the search-and-rescue mission, told the Associated Press.

The families’ statement added that the search-and-rescue mission was collecting high-resolution satellite images that allow rescuers to view “areas inaccessible to helicopters because of harsh winter conditions and excessive winds.”

On Tuesday, Shah Mahmood Qureshi, a foreign minister of Pakistan, called his Chilean counterpart, Andres Allamand, expressing his “deep concern,” assuring “to make all possible efforts to trace the missing heroes.”

K2, which reaches up to 8,611 metres above sea level, is considered the second-highest mountain in the world and one of the most perilous cliffs to ascend, which is why mountaineers usually do not attempt to climb it in winter. K2 is sometimes referred to as a “killer mountain” because many people lost their lives trying to reach the summit.

The New York Times reported that in 2008, at least 11 climbers got lost during their expedition on K2. In 1986, 13 mountaineers died over a two-week span while scaling K2, one of the worst tragedies in mountaineering history.”

However, families of the missing climbers still hope to see them alive as the search expected to resume today after the weather conditions have slightly improved, Dawn Pakistani newspaper reported.

“FLIR will be used for the search mission. High altitude climbers are also engaged for ground search as a result of any location spotted through FLIR mission,” reads the statement by the Inter-Services Public Relations.

“All efforts are geared up for the search of national hero Ali Sadpara and his brave team, including John Snorri of Iceland and JP Mohr.”

Los Angeles Times stated that O’Brien said she has spoken with the families of the missing climbers as the time is running out, and every hour it is getting more impossible to find them.

Together, they made a statement where they thanked everyone who helped with the search, despite the harsh weather that complicated the operation.

