

It Took Woman Climber 7½ Hours To Go Last 1,100 Feet

KATMANDU, Nepal (AP) — It took Mrs. Junko Tabei 7½ hours to climb the last 1,100 feet and become the first woman to stand on the summit of Earth.

Details on the all-woman Japanese expedition that put Mrs. Tabei on the 29,028-foot peak of Mt. Everest were few as the team remained near the summit hoping that the weather will permit another assault on the top.

But down below, the accolades had already begun. "What wonderful news that a woman has scaled Mt. Everest in the International Women's Year," wired India's Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. "It is a tribute to women's courage, endurance and spirit of high adventure."

"My congratulations and

good wishes to Mrs. Junko Tabei and other members of the Japanese all-women's expedition."

Mrs. Tabei, a 35-year-old housewife and mother of three, and her male Sherpa guide Ang Tenzing, made the final climb from the expedition's No. 6 camp at just below 28,000 feet.

The Nepalese Foreign Ministry said the expedition of 15

Japanese women and nine male Sherpa guides, had used the southeast ridge route — the one used by Sir Edmund Hillary and Sherpa Tenzing Norgay in the first ever conquest of Everest in 1953. Thirty-five men had subsequently made the climb by various routes.

Previous climbers have usually spent a few minutes on the peak, planting flags and snapping photographs.

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