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Missing Nepali ski racer found via Facebook

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PARIS (Reuters) - A teenage Nepali ski racer has been found in Paris via a campaign on social networking site Facebook two weeks after he disappeared from his team's base in the French Alps, the team said on Monday.

Uttam Rayamajhi, 17, vanished from the Nepal team ski base at Les Arcs without money or spare clothes on April 27.

"(He) has been discovered on the streets of Paris after members of the public recognized him from a Facebook campaign launched to find him," the team said in a statement.

"The teenager had been living rough after walking several hundred kilometers across France surviving through the kindness of local people ... Eventually a stranger alerted him to the Facebook campaign and

showed him the news on the Internet.

"Over 400 friends and well-wishers joined the (Facebook) campaign in less than a week."

Team manager Richard Morley told Reuters just after the boy's disappearance that Rayamajhi had been extremely distressed lately following the disintegration of the Nepal ski team in the wake of a funding row with the Nepal Olympic Committee.

"Uttam agreed to return to the team base when he learnt that his disappearance was jeopardizing the funding and participation of team mate Shyam Dhakal at the (2010) Vancouver Winter Olympics," the team said on Monday.

Morley, a British businessman and former skier, launched the Nepal Alpine skiing team in 1997 at the request of the Himalayan country's then ruler King Birendra.

(Writing by Bertrand Boucey; Editing by Sonia Oxley; To query or comment on this story email sportsfeedback@thomsonreuters.com)