



AAC Publications

Temasa, Gompe, and Haptal valleys, exploration

India, Zaskar

South Zaskar is an exciting mountain area with many virgin peaks. In 2012 we did our third expedition to explore valleys in these mountains and identify unclimbed peaks.

Temasa Nala is the next valley north of the Raru, and has been used by locals to reach Udaipur via the Kang La (5,468m) and Miyar Valley, and also to go to Kilar via the Poat La (5,490m). The route over the Kang La is also used infrequently by trekkers, but it involves glacier travel and is nowhere near as popular as the route from Padam to Darcha over the Shingo La (5,045m). In 2007 my friend Satyabrata Dam trekked up the Miyar and crossed the Kang La and then the Poat La via the Tidu Glacier, publishing exciting photos of Peaks 6,294m and 5,995m [AAJ 2008]. These still appear to have no recorded ascent.

Gompe Tokpo is the second valley north of the Temasa and runs southwest from Padam. Though a fine panorama of the Gompe Tokpo peaks can be seen from the villages of Thonde and Karsha, I could find no evidence of them having been visited by climbing expeditions.

I planned to explore these valleys from late June to early August. The team comprised Toshihiro Katsumata (64), Mitsuhiro Okabe (71), Masaki Shibata (66), and me (72). We were accompanied by three kitchen staff, two horsemen, and 10 horses. As there are no official names for any of the peaks in Southern Zaskar, to aid identification I have labeled summits T1, T2, T3, etc., for peaks in Temasa Nala and Gompe Tokpo; H1, H2, etc., in the Haptal Tokpo; and M1, M2, etc., in Mulung Tokpo.

We followed the Temasa Nala to the Tidu Glacier, and originally planned to penetrate the Tsewang Tokpo to see T9 (6,107m) and T7. [Editor's note: T7, map height 6,022m, GPS 6,117m, was climbed by a British party in 2011 and named Evas's Peak.] However, the entrance was too steep and unstable for our horses, so we had to abandon the idea.

After visiting Gompe we had a little time to spare, so decided to look at the next major valley north, the Haptal Tokpo, which rises southwest from Sani Gompa on the Doda River. In the lower Haptal a canal was being built to supply water to the hydroelectric plant, and a small refuge stood on a large flat area. Our guide thought this might have been built for trekkers, to popularize the now seldom-used trekking route up the Haptal and over the Umasi La (5,342m) to Kishtwar. We were unable to visit the Chhogo Tokpo, the major southern side branch of the Haptal, as the river was too difficult to cross, even by horse.

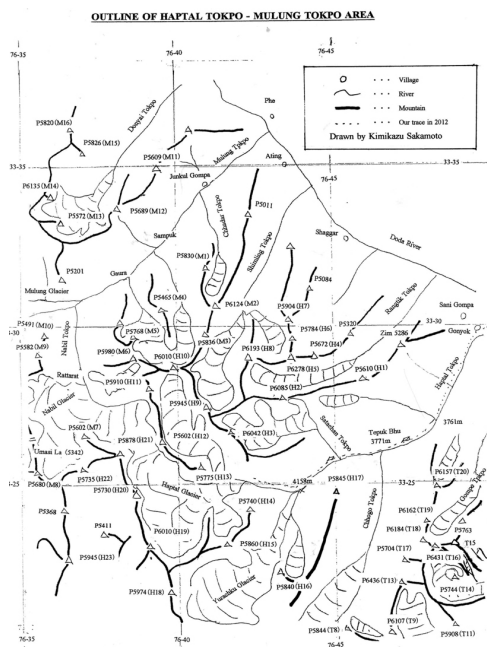
During our travels we identified 21 significant unclimbed peaks, most of which are open to mountaineers. We hope our exploration will help climbers attempt these in the future.

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Images



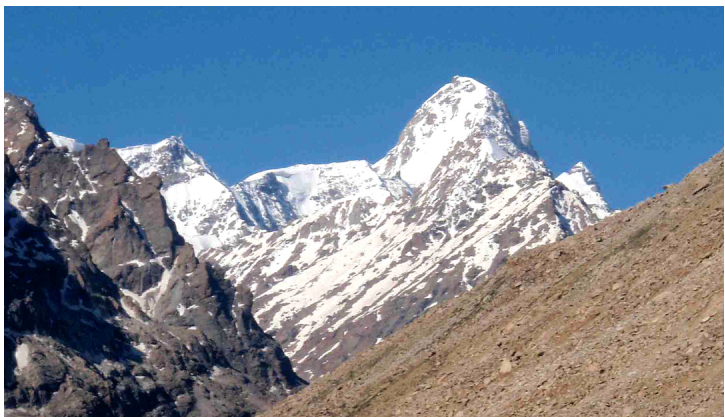
Unclimbed H26 (5,840m) in the Yurachku Glacier, Haptal Tokpo.



Haptal-Mulung map



Unclimbed T4 (6,294m) and T6 (5,995m) in the Tidu Glacier, Temasa Nala.



Unclimbed T4 (6,294m, centre) and behind and to the right T6 (5,995m).



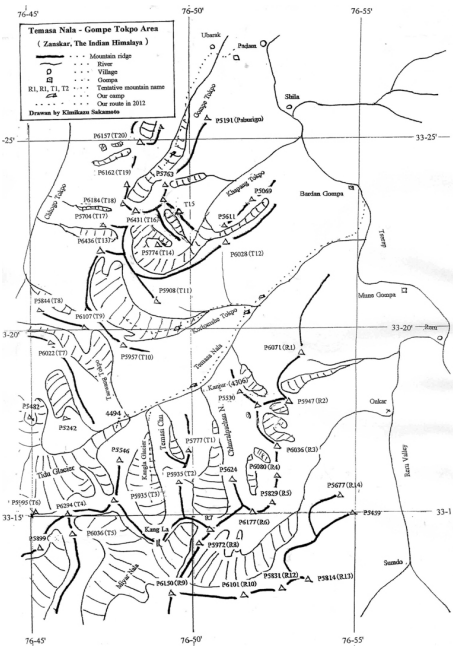
Unclimbed T10 (5,957m) in the Korlomshe Nala.



Unclimbed T3 (5,934m) rises above the Kangla Glacier.



Unclimbed T16 (6,431m) in Gompe Tokpo.



Temasa-Gompe map

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