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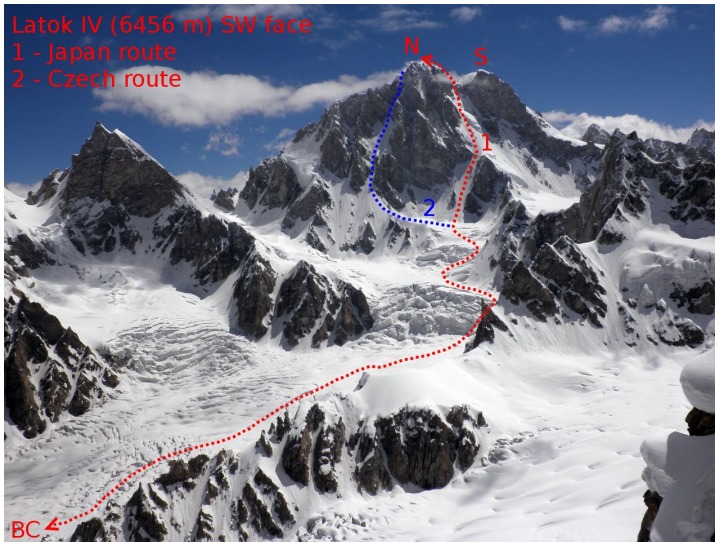
Latok IV, New Route to Just Below Northwest Summit

Asia, Pakistan, Panmah Muztagh

Ondrej Mandula and I climbed a new route on the southwest side of Latok IV (6,456m) in July. We established advanced base camp four or five hours up the Baintha Lukpar Glacier from our base camp by the Biafo Glacier. The next day we crossed the heavily crevassed glacier under the southwest face of Latok IV and bivouacked without a tent on a small ridge at about 5,600m. We began climbing at 3 a.m. in the obvious gully system splitting the left side of the face. The first 200m was easy 50° snow, which we simul-climbed. We roped up as it got steeper (60°–70°) and icier. About 100m below the top, an overhanging chimney blocked the way. To bypass this we climbed rock on the right (crux), followed by one pitch with a 5m vertical ice chimney and then a very nice mixed pitch to the summit ridge, which we reached at 2 p.m. From here it appeared to be no more than 50m to 100m of easy climbing to the top. However, the weather was bad and we decided to rappel; we reached our bivy below the face at 9 p.m.

Before our climb on Latok IV, Blanka Hercikova, Martin Horak, Mandula, and I repeated the west face route on Lukpilla Brakk (Catto-Wood, 1990) as far as the first summit. The four of us also climbed some smaller rock peaks and attempted the German route on the Ogre's Thumb.

Images



Latok V (left) and Latok IV above the east arm of the Baintha Lukpar Glacier. (1) The Japanese route (Okano-Omiya, 1980); during this climb, Motomu Omiya made the first ascent of both the northwest (main) and southeast summits of Latok IV. (2) Czech route (Mandula-Pliska, 2009).



The crux lead of the Czech route, just below the summit ridge on the southwest face of Latok IV.

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