



AAC Publications

Lenak Nala, L8 (a.k.a. Lama Soo), East Face and North Ridge

India, Zaskar

In August a team of Japanese college students, Gakushi Eguchi, Satoru Miyachi, Yuu Nishida, and Ryota Takanezawa, drove from Leh over the Shingo La to Darcha, and then trekked into the Lenak Valley via the village of Thangso. They planned to climb the east ridge of L8 (6,020m, 33°09'27"N, 77°02'08"E), one of 104 peaks opened in Zaskar in 2010 by the Indian government. This peak lies immediately northeast of Skilma Kangri (5,979m), climbed in 2009 (AAJ 2010).

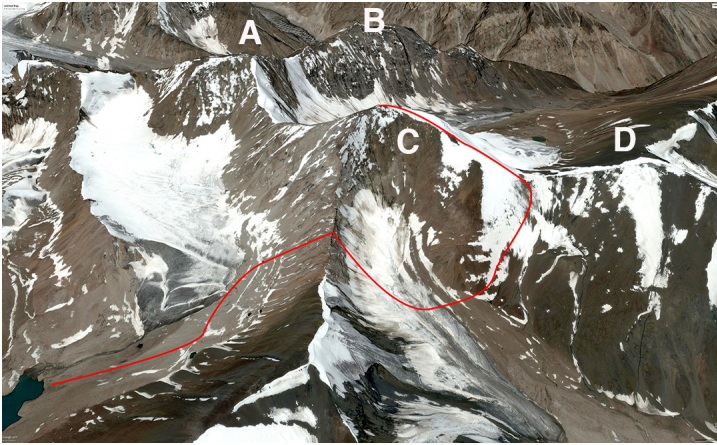
In a photo of L8, the east ridge looked gentle and wide. On August 28 the climbers established Camp 1 on the south side of the ridge, at 5,300m, but found the crest to be full of loose rock and steep pinnacles. They changed plan and decided to cross the ridge, descend north into another valley, and attempt the north ridge, a gentle snow crest.

It took two days to establish Camp 2, at 5,400m, below the northeast face of L8, the descent to this spot involving crevasses and some rockfall. On the 31st, all four set out at 7:30 a.m., crossing two glacial streams and climbing mixed scree and snow to the col at the foot of the north ridge. Just before reaching the crest, they climbed a steep, 5m ice wall. They reached the summit via the easy snow crest at 12:25 p.m. [L8 has two tops, the north, which they reached, being the higher; the ridge between the two is narrow and loose]. They regained base camp on September 2.

L8 was first climbed in 2012 from the Raru Valley to the west by Greeks Nikos Lazanas and George Voutiropoulos (AD, AAJ 2013). They measured the summit with an altimeter as 5,947m and named the peak Lama Soo (Monk's Tooth). These two then descended the north ridge, crossing L7 (measured as 5,820m) and one other top before going down to the Raru.

Lindsay Griffin, with information from Kimikazu Sakamoto and the Asian Alpine News

Images



Looking east at (A) Skilma Kangri (5,979m), (B) Peak 5,930m, (C) L8 (6,020m), and (D) L7 (5,890m). The Japanese approach to, and ascent of, L8 came from the Lenak Valley to the left, crossed the watershed (east) ridge, and climbed the east face to the col at the base of the north ridge. The glacial valley descending on the far side of L8 is a southeast branch of the Katkar Valley.



Camping in the southeast branch of the Katkar Valley during the 2009 British expedition. The flat-topped summit on the left is L8 (6,020m). The Japanese followed the north ridge from the left. The peak in the center is Skilma Kangri, climbed in 2009.



Climbing a short ice wall to reach the crest of the north ridge of L8.



Ascending the east face of L8 with the upper north ridge high on the right. The route to Camp 2 crossed a low point in the east ridge from the Lenak Valley



L8 seen from the col where the Japanese climbers crossed over the east ridge. The climbers descended to the right and eventually climbed the mountain via the right skyline. The peak to the left is Skilma Kangri, climbed from the far side in 2009.



The northeast flanks of L8 seen from Camp 2 at 5,400m. The final route of ascent, via the north ridge, is shown.

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