



AAC Publications

Chemma, Northwest Ridge

India, Himachal Pradesh, Spiti

An Indian Himalayan Club team comprising Rajesh Gadgil, Ratnesh Javeri, Vineeta Muni, Imran Pathan, and Ashish Prabhu, led by veteran Divyesh Muni, made the first ascent of the northwest ridge of Chemma (6,130m), which was probably also the first ascent of Chemma's main summit.

The climbers approached up the Karcha Nala from Batal, making a base camp at around 4,500m, where the Karcha splits, and a 4,900m advanced base camp at a further junction where the second and third (going east to west) of four glacial tributaries meet. After a period of poor weather and various reconnaissance trips from a Camp 1 at 5,400m, Gadgil, Prabhu, and the Munis set off on August 2 up the scree of the northwest ridge of Chemma, made a high camp, then reached the summit at 11a.m. on August 3. After descending to Camp 1 on August 4, the team decided to attempt nearby Ache (6,066m) and after a period of bad weather, they reached this summit at 11 a.m. on August 10, having climbed the east ridge from the 5,800m col between this peak and Chemma.

In 2011 a Japanese team led by Kazuo Hoshi reached the eastern peak (6,105m) of Chemma, climbing a route up the northeast face to the east ridge from a base camp in the valley to the east of the 2018 route (AAJ 2012). Ache was first climbed in 1956 by Peter Holmes in one of his extensive surveying and climbing missions in the area, and he was probably the first to reach the 5,800m col overlooking the Gyundi Nala, from where he climbed Ache. Thus the 2018 Indian team quite reasonably referred to this as Holmes Col, though many maps show a "Holmes Col" relatively nearby, between the Dibibokri and Parahio valleys. This latter "col" is really just a notch in a ridge, with a steep and dangerous descent on the western side, and was traversed by Holmes and his party in 1956, as they believed de V. Graaf and Snelson had reached this pass from the west in 1952.

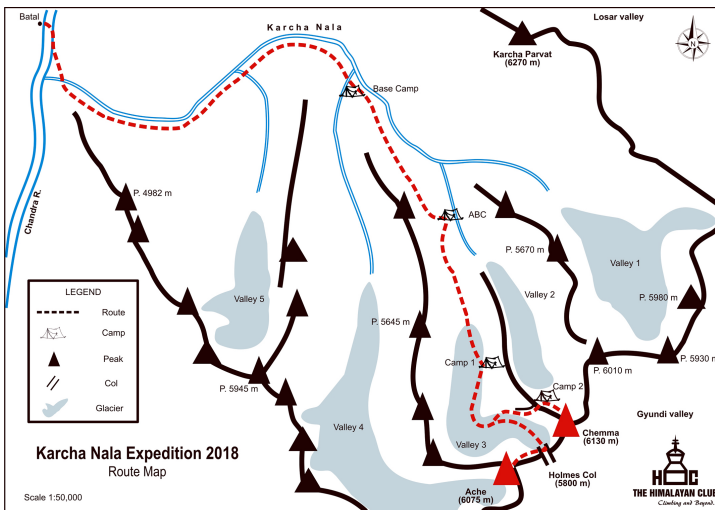
Ache had been climbed at least twice between 1956 and 2018, with a Japanese team climbing a new route up the north spur in 2009, and the 2018 team finding evidence on the summit of an additional Indian ascent from 2015.

– Damien Gildea, with information from Divyesh Muni, India

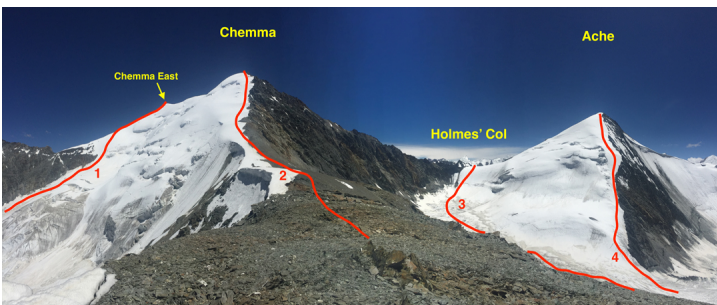
Images



Ascending to Holmes Col before climbing the east ridge of Ache.



Map of the 2018 Indian expedition to the Karcha Nala, making the first ascent of Chemma (6,130m).



Chemma and Ache from the north. (1) 2011 Japanese route up the northeast face to east summit. (2) 2018 Indian route on the northwest ridge of the main peak. (3) Ascent to Holmes Col. The route taken by Peter Holmes to make the first ascent of Ache (repeated by the 2018 Indian expedition) follows the skyline ridge up right from this col. (4) 2009 Japanese route on the north spur of Ache.

Article Details

Author	Damien Gildea
Publication	AAJ
Volume	61
Issue	93
Page	304
Copyright Date	2019
Article Type	Climbs and expeditions