



AAC Publications

Martin Moran, 1955 – 2019

It is with a sense of deep shock that we received the news that Martin Moran had died while climbing in the Kumaon region of the Indian Himalaya, along with seven other climbers. Martin, a British and IFMGA mountain guide, had been leading an expedition to attempt Nanda Devi East. The climbers were acclimatizing on an adjacent unnamed peak (6,477m), where they were reported missing during last week of May.

Born on February 19, 1955, Martin grew up in North Tyneside, England. He met his future wife, Joy, when they were both 18. He took a degree in geography at Cambridge University and later qualified as a chartered accountant in Sheffield. In 1985, Martin qualified as a British Mountain Guide, and he and Joy started a mountaineering instruction and guiding business based in Lochcarron in the Northwest Highlands of Scotland. Martin ran summer Alpine mountaineering courses based in Argentière, France, and then in Evolène, Switzerland, for 20 years.

I first came in contact with Martin in 1990 while organizing an expedition for him, and our friendship continued for almost 30 years. In the year 1991, Martin started planning to take commercial mountaineering expeditions to the Indian Himalaya, and I was associated with him in this mission as his ground agent in India. After more than 40 successful (often pioneering) expeditions, the company Moran Mountain is known as one of Britain's most experienced mountain adventure companies.

Martin was a longstanding and trustworthy friend and ambassador for me and my organization. He was also an inspiration to many, and his talent as a climber was unquestioned, having pioneered numerous routes in the Himalaya. He was a man whose reputation for getting the most out of both clients and conditions was the stuff of legend. He was not after a leisurely breakfast but instead dawn-till-dusk adventures, making the most of the big mountaineering challenges.

In 2009, he attempted Nanda Devi East with clients and then returned in 2015 to try a new route on the same mountain (reaching 6,865m on the unclimbed Northeast Ridge). He and partners made the first ascents of the south face of Nanda Kot (6,861m) in 1995 and the west ridge of Nilkanth (6,596m) in 2000, along with a dozen other pioneering ascents. He also led trips to Kamet and Trisul.

Martin's enthusiasm for all things climbing went far beyond his work as a guide. It was his desire for exploration which gave the biggest rewards. As in all walks of life, it is not ability or drive but character that sets someone out as a good companion in the mountains. Martin's wry smile, dry humor, kindness, and encouragement will be missed by friends, colleagues, climbing partners, and clients alike. He was very emotionally attached with all his staff on his trips, and the bond which was formed between my staff and Martin is unexplainable. He was very careful with safety of staff along with team members while in the mountains.

Martin, you will always remain in my heart as a friend with whom I shared the same frequency of thinking, which made it possible to continue for 30 years of work and friendship in the promotion of adventure sports in the Indian Himalaya.

– C.S. Pandey

Images



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