



AAC Publications

Guide Ri, Northeast Face

India, Ladakh

The Ladakh Mountain Guides Association (LMGA) organized an expedition in September 2018 to the Skitmang region of southeast Ladakh, about 140km from Leh. Our objective was unclimbed Peak 6,364m. Participants were Dorje Angchuk, Kunga Dorje, Tsewang Gyalsen, Stanzin Norbu, Skalzang Rigzin, Rigzin Tsewang, Tsewang Tundup, and Jigmed Wangchuk.

From the beautiful village of Skitmang, we walked two hours with no porters, carrying packs between 28kg and 32kg, to reach our first camp below the Skitmang Gompa (a nunnery). The next day, September 30, we reached base camp at 5,250m in a further five and half hours, after having taken tea with young nuns at the gompa. We had a great view of three 6,000m peaks above, and in the opposite direction glorious Chakula, sometimes called the “Matterhorn of Ladakh.”

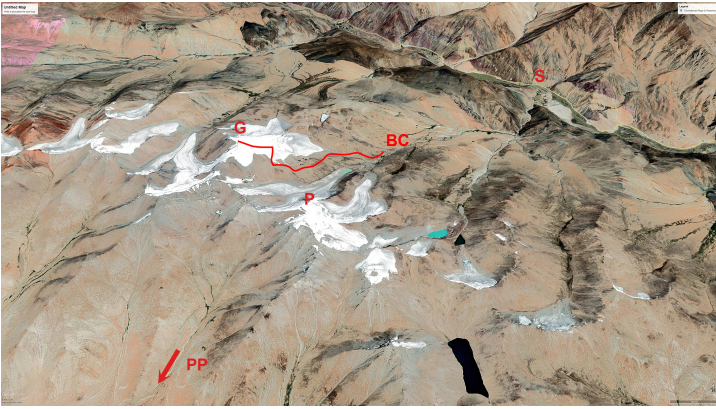
At 3:30 a.m., we had a light breakfast and set out for the summit via the northeast face. More than 60cm of new powder made it quite difficult, but after nine hours, with everyone taking turns to break trail, we were on top. The descent took four hours, the sun-softened snow now making it quite hard work. We were back in base camp that night. We named the peak Guide Ri.

– Ladakh Mountain Guides Association, India

Editor's Note: Guide Ri lies at 33°19'52.97"N, 78°10'47.38"E, north of the Pologongka road pass. It is just over 3km to the northwest of Pologongka (6,632m, 33°18'25.55"N, 78°11'52.44"E), first climbed in 1997, via the straightforward southwest ridge, by Mike Ratty's U.K. expedition (AAJ 1999). This same expedition attempted Chakula (6,529m, 33°23'51.26"N, 78°26'31.83"E), east-northeast of Skitmang, but were unsuccessful. However, a second Ratty expedition, in 2001, climbed this peak via the south face (AAJ 2002). A short distance to the west of Guide Ri lies Thugje (6,148m), climbed in 1998 by Japanese from the Pologongka road (AAJ 1999).

While the LMGA promotes Ladakh as a climbing destination, its main mission is to develop the standards of present and future mountain guides, in accordance with the criteria of the IFMGA. For this, they are looking for support from national organizations. They also organize the Ladakh Ice Climbing Festival in the village of Gangles above Leh.

Images



(S) Skitmang in the Indus Valley. (BC) 2018 base camp at 5,250m. (G) Guide Ri and route of ascent. (P) Pologongka. (PP) Pologongka pass.



Looking northeast from high on Guide Ri, across the deep Indus Valley. The conspicuous pyramid on the right is Chakula (6,529m).



Members of the Ladakh Mountain Guides Association at the nunnery above Skitmang.

Article Details

Author	Ladakh Mountain Guides Association
Publication	AAJ
Volume	63
Issue	95
Page	186
Copyright Date	2021
Article Type	Climbs and expeditions