



## AAC Publications

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### **Dagarpheth Kangri, East-southeast Ridge**

India, East Karakoram, Rassa Glacier

**With only two prior visits, the Rassa Glacier remains relatively unexplored.** The first expedition to this remote area was led by Divyesh Muni in 2014 (see report and map in AAJ 2015), and this inspired my own expedition two years later (AAJ 2017). Many attractive unclimbed 6,000m mountains border the glacier, and so I returned in the autumn of 2022 with Jamie Goodhart, Steve Humphries, Steve Kempley, and Howard Pollitt to further explore this complex glacier and attempt one or more of the unclimbed peaks.

Although we experienced considerable problems with our visa applications (related to the COVID-19 pandemic), the team eventually arrived in Leh at the beginning of September. We crossed the Khardung La (pass) to the Nubra Valley, and then made the three-day trek up the Tirit Phu to our base camp at 4,750m, just below the confluence of the Rassa and Phunangma valleys.

An advanced base camp, nestling within the Rassa Glacier's extensive terminal moraine, was established at 5,127m on September 13. Three days later, from a high camp at 5,500m, four members successfully reached the previously unvisited 6,035m col (GPS reading) at the head of Glacier 2 (as named by Muni) between Tusuhm Kangri and Peak 6,365m, the latter being our primary target.

The first attempt on Peak 6,365m failed due to poor conditions, but on the 20th Steve Kempley and Howard Pollitt succeeded in climbing the steep east-southeast ridge after making a cache just below the col. Roping up at the stash, they moved together until reaching the bergschrund, then pitched up 50° ice to reach the summit and panoramic views. The ascent took 5.5 hours.

After downclimbing to rocks, they made three full-length rappels to easier ground, from where they returned to high camp 13 hours after leaving. They graded the climb AD and named the peak Dagarpheth Kangri (Ladakhi for "Halfmoon Peak"; 34°39.38'N, 77°50.63'E) on account of the shape of the mountain and the moon rising above the summit at the time of the ascent.

Unfortunately, the onset of inclement weather precluded further exploration and the team was lucky to return safely to base camp before significant snowfall made crossing the moraine hazardous. We are grateful to the Mount Everest Foundation, the Montane Alpine Club Climbing Fund, the Austrian Alpine Club (U.K.), the Fell and Rock Climbing Club, and the British Mountaineering Council for their generous support, and to Rimo Expeditions for in-country logistics.

— **Derek Buckle, U.K.**

## Images



High camp at 5,500m on Glacier 2 with Dagarpheth Kangri (6,365m) behind. The route of ascent reached the col to the right and continued left up the ridge to the summit.



Ascending the east-southeast ridge of Dagarpheth Kangri above the 6,035m col.



Howard Pollitt on the east-southeast ridge of Dagarpheth Kangri. The ridge descends to the 6,035m col below, then rises to Tusuhm Kangri, the summit of which is off-picture. The glacier on the left flows down toward the Shukpa Tokpo valley.



Howard Pollitt on the east-southeast ridge of Dagarpheth Kangri. The ridge descends to the 6,035m col, then rises to Tusuhm Kangri, the summit of which is off-picture to the right. (A) Seemingly designated Peak 6,273m but more than 6,600m on Google Earth. (B) Peak 6,267m at the head of Rassa Glacier I. (C) Peak 6,444m. All three are unclimbed. The glacier on the left is the South Shukpa Kunchang, which flows into the Shukpa Tokpo valley and onward to the Shyok River.

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