



AAC Publications

Nagoru Far East, South-Southeast Ridge

Nepal, Peri Himal

The 2022 route up the south-southeast ridge of Nagoru Far East. Photo by Wolfgang Drexler.

I first visited the Nagoru peaks in 2013, then again in 2016 and 2018 (AAJs 2017 and 2019). In October, I returned with Michaela Bohdalek, Lawang Tamang, and our trekking staff, this time for exploration of a valley further east, where satellite images showed a large lake while the HMG-Finn map still depicted a massive glacier.

Conditions in the fall were rather unusual, with considerable snow above 5,400m that did not diminish during three weeks of sunshine. We settled down at Nagoru Far East advanced base and decided to break trail from there. We cleared trails up to two different passes, both of which offered access to the valley containing Nagoru Lake (28.817982°N, 84.332840°E). Additionally, we prepared a route up to a glaciated saddle on the eastern side of Nagoru Far East.

On the 23rd we set out for a round trip to Nagoru Lake. We crossed one pass of more than 5,400m on the way to the lake and another on the way back, both in deep snow. There were stunning views of Himlung and the Annapurna range. Nagoru Lake, which does not have any direct access from below, was a magical place for us, being less than 50 years old. It seems unlikely to have been visited by anyone before us.

Two days later, at 6:30 a.m. Michaela, Lawang, and I started our attempt on Nagoru Far East (6,145m, 28.845451°N, 84.327712°E), opting for a new and rather more direct route. We followed a valley northeast to its head, where a rocky slope led up to the lower edge of the glacier. A very steep snowfield allowed us to reach an icy saddle, which we crossed to the west to reach the rocky south-southeast ridge of Nagoru Far East.

Finding our way up this ridge turned out to be more difficult than expected. We had to turn around twice to find alternative routes, but eventually reached a final steep ice slope leading to the broad and flat summit plateau. At around 1 p.m. we stood on the highest point of Nagoru Far East. Combined with our 2018 first ascent route, this new line would offer a complete traverse of the mountain. We left this project for a future party.

On the 26th we moved our camp to Nagoru Yak Kharka, a wide and almost flat area directly in front of Nagoru Central and East. At 6:30 a.m. on the 28th we set out for Nagoru East (6,116 m, 28.841366°N, 84.308181°E), following our 2013 first ascent route up the south ridge, but in entirely different conditions. The snow was deep, and it soon became obvious the glacier had significantly retreated: There is now only a short stretch of ice on the way to the summit. Lawang and I reached the top at around 1 p.m. My attempt to descend the northeast ridge was brought to a halt by deep snow only 50m down from the summit. I turned around and we returned via our ascent route. Under good conditions traversing Nagoru East would clearly be feasible.

— Wolfgang Drexler, Austria

Images



The 2022 route up the south-southeast ridge of Nagoru Far East.



A rock step during the ascent of the south ridge of Nagoru East.



Nagoru Lake, formed by glacial recession, is less than 50 years old. In the background is the south-southwest face of unclimbed Nagoru Lake Peak (6,374m).



Ratna Chuli (7,035m) from Nagoru Far East to the southwest.



Evening sun captures the upper section of unclimbed pillars on the north face of Gyaji Kang (7,074m) as seen from Nagoru East.



Gyaji Kang (7,074m) seen from the north. The large, flat-topped peak to the right is Kangguru (6,981m).



Annapurna I, seen from the route to Nagoru Lake to the northeast.

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