



AAC Publications

Honboro/Honbrok Group, Peak ca 6,120m, Attempts

Pakistan, Karakoram, Masherbrum Mountains

In 2019 and 2022, Korean expeditions attempted unnamed Peak ca 6,120m (35°28'48.74"N, 76°11'59.37"E) at the head of the Bukma Glacier. They found no previous record of attempts on this summit, though the Bukma Glacier had been visited in 2003 by Kim Chang-ho from Korea (see story [here](#)), and in 2007 by the trio of Lukasz Depta, Andrzej Głuszek, and Wojciech Kozub from Poland (AAJ 2008). Although Peak 6,120m is lower than other major mountains nearby (e.g., Honbrok, 6,459m, and Aling Peak, ca 6,400m), its summit forms an interesting geographic point of intersection. To the north its slopes fall into the Aling Glacier, which flows to the Aling River and eventually to the Hushe Valley. The west face falls to the Ching Kang Glacier, which flows to the Braldu Valley. The southeast face drops into the upper Bukma Glacier, which in turn flows southwest to the Thalle Valley.

In July 2019, Cho Beak-lae, Kim Tae-wan, and Kim Dong-ik established base camp in the Bukma Valley at 4,200m. They then spent two days negotiating the complex icefall that leads to the upper Bukma Glacier. They reached a point at 5,450m, where they concluded their brief attempt.

In 2022, Cho returned with five other Korean climbers: Lee Heang-soon (leader), Cha Jin-chol, Oh Jeong-hyun, Sung Gi-jin, and Hyun Jeong-ran. On July 11, this team established base camp below the glacier at 4,550m. Sung and Hyun did not climb above this point. Unfortunately, equipment cached in 2019 could not be found, as the Bukma Glacier icefall above had collapsed. This lack of gear would make progress more challenging.

Using a drone they were able to study the rock buttress to the right of the icefall and decided to take this route, fixing a series of ropes (15 rappel anchors established for descent). On the 16th, Cho, Lee, Cha, and Oh reached the upper Bukma Glacier and camped at 5,150m. Next day they camped again at 5,450m, below the southern flanks of the mountain. On the 19th, the four climbed 60° snow and ice up the south face to reach the southeast ridge at nearly 6,000m. Beyond, the ridge looked very sharp and initially would involve crossing a rocky couloir. It appeared too dangerous and the four retreated.

Cho reports a drastic effect on the landscape due to climate change over the last three years. In 2022, most days were clear and too warm, providing unexpected problems of sluggish slopes, falling icicles, and melting ice. Even at 2 a.m. the snow had still not crusted.

— Oh Young-hoon, Korea

Images



A drone photo of the upper Bukma Glacier, showing (A) unclimbed Peak ca 6,120m and the route of the 2022 attempt. The collapsed icefall is visible at the bottom of the image.

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