



AAC Publications

Kyabura, First Ascent, Via South-Southeast Ridge

Nepal, Janak Himal

In October, I led a small international team to the Lhonak Glacier, northwest of Kangchenjunga.

Kyabura (6,466m), listed as an unclimbed peak by the Ministry of Tourism, is the smaller half of a border massif shared with Dzanye (6,581m), which was climbed by the 1949 Swiss expedition, led by Alfred Sutter, that made the first foray into the region. It lies southwest of Dzanye at 27°53'55.45"N, 88°1'0.42"E and a little northeast of the Chabuk La.

The six-day approach along the Kangchenjunga teahouse trek was uneventful, marked only by the regrettable departure of team member Matt Powell (USA), who was suffering from lingering issues related to a cycling accident. Our base camp was on the eastern moraine of the upper Lhonak Glacier. With no running water behind any of the lateral moraines that we traversed, the only reliable supply was on the glaciers themselves.

All of the hillsides and glaciers were similarly dry, and it was easy to acclimatize by hiking above 6,000m without touching snow. After a week of reconnaissance and shuttling loads alongside the Chabuk Glacier, we moved into a 5,600m camp by a small lake immediately west of Peak 6,214m.

On November 2, all five remaining team members scrambled up steep moraine and slabs to the 5,962m col on the south-southeast ridge of Kyabura. A loose and low-angle rock ridge led to almost 6,200m, where a firm snow crest, followed by 100m of 45° névé, led to the broad summit plateau. The top was reached by Thomas Heidt (Germany), Sarah Marti (Switzerland), Sébastien Moatti (France), Diogo Santos (Portugal), and me (U.K.). Unfortunately, the fine weather of our first week had been replaced by afternoon snow showers, and we were unable to see anything other than intermittent views of Dzanye in the mist.

Some team members also explored the upper Chabuk and Tsitsima (a.k.a. Tsisima or Chijima) basins, although most climbing ideas were stymied by strong upper-level winds. All the acclimatization peaks between the Chabuk and Tsitsima had reportedly been climbed before, except for Peak 6,170m (27°52'14.73"N, 88°2'37.66"E), which has a relatively steep, snowy west face and a less steep, rocky east face. The latter was climbed in a solo effort by Moatti, who encountered extremely poor rock.

— **Bruce Normand, Switzerland**

Images



Looking north-northwest to Kyabura from the summit of Peak 6,214m. The ascent route followed the foreground ridge; the summit lies about 500m behind the serac wall in the center. On the right are Dzanye (6,581m, climbed in 1949 by the northwest ridge, crossing into Tibet for the ascent) and then Peak 6,697m, the latter fully in Tibet. At far left is Peak 6,782m, also in Tibet.



Looking northeast to south from Peak 6,070m above base camp on the Lhonak Glacier. (A) Janak. (B) Jongsang. (C) Drohmo. (D) Tang Kongma. (E) Kangchenjunga. (F) Jannu. (G) Chhyatundinga (a.k.a. Broken) Glacier. (H) Lhonak Glacier.



On the ascent of the south-southeast ridge of Kyabura during the first ascent.

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