



AAC Publications

Harmukh, West Couloir

India, Jammu and Kashmir, Kashmir Himalaya

In August 2023, the Indian team of Vinod Chandra Joshi, Karn Kowshik, and Zeeshan Mushtaq climbed the 5,080m central summit of Harmukh, in alpine style, by a new route up the west couloir and upper northwest ridge.

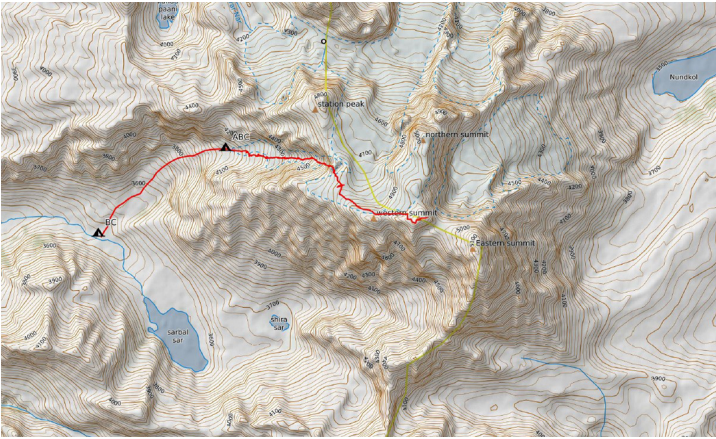
Around 35km almost due north of Srinagar, Harmukh (a.k.a. Haramukh, 34°24'13.49"N, 74°54'6.54"E) is a somewhat isolated massif with five summits. The northwest summit (Station Peak, 4,698m) was first climbed in 1856 by Thomas Montgomerie and the Great Trigonometric Survey of India. It was from here that Montgomerie first identified a very high peak far to the northeast that would become known as K2. The first recorded ascent of the east summit (main peak, 5,142m) took place in 1899.

From Kudar, on August 20, the climbers trekked to a base camp at approximately 3,500m, west of the mountain and close to Sarbal Lake. The next day, they camped a little below 4,100m. From here, the standard ascent from the west goes north via a glacier to reach Station Peak, then back southeast along a ridge to the west summit.

On August 22, the team shortcut the normal route by climbing a broad open couloir on the west face to arrive on the west ridge at around 4,800m. Finding hard blue ice in the couloir, the climbers traversed to the rock rib on the right side and climbed this (estimated at F6a) and the 60° slopes above. From the exit, they traversed over the west summit to the central summit, which they reached at 3 p.m.

—Lindsay Griffin, AAJ

Images



Map of the ascent route to Harmukh's west and central summits. The east summit is the highest point.

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