



AAC Publications

Jamyang Ri, West Face and Northwest Arête

India, Ladakh, Zaskar, Rangtik Tokpo

The Rangtik Tokpo is surrounded by towering granite walls that can be reached in one to three hours walk from base camp. Moritz Sigmund and I, together with five friends from the Dolomites, followed the call of these rock faces to explore their potential during a five-week trip.

We established our base at 4,900m accompanied by three Tungri locals, having spent the night in their village; they acted not only as our guides but also cooks, taking great pride in providing us with culinary delights. This expedition was as much about the journey as it was about the destination. The travel to base camp was an enlightening cultural experience that offered insights into the Buddhist way of life. Surprisingly, the sheer beauty and spirituality of the trip made me feel like I had experienced something valuable even before I set foot on any mountain. We thoroughly enjoyed the tranquility of base camp, shielded from the hustle and bustle of the world, and engaged in board games, literature, art, and just thinking.

Our main objective was to climb the northwest face of Jamyang Ri (5,800m, 33°27'58.67"N, 76°44'46.29"E), rising over the top of a subsidiary summit that was named Torre Fanni (ca 5,600m) by the 2017 expedition that made the first ascent. [Little Jamyang Ri would be a more appropriate name, respecting local language and culture.] The upper wall, above the Torre summit, shimmered in the evening sun, and its smooth facets and sharp edges earned it the nickname "mountain crystal." The northwest are te, which pointed directly toward the valley, provided a fascinating daily vision and made us dream of climbing it.

Our proposed line to reach the summit of Little Jamyang Ri (and thus the upper are te) via the ca 500m northwest face was far more difficult than expected, and we were forced to abandon it after three days, having climbed six pitches up to VIII+ A2. We changed plans, choosing to skirt the tower and reach the northwest are te via the steep west face of Jamyang Ri itself.

We set off from base camp at 4 a.m. on July 21, taking only minimal equipment but a lot of motivation, hope, and confidence. After an 80-minute approach, we started up the west face, following very similar ground to the first four pitches of the 2017 route Cunka (AAJ 2018). Where this route makes a long traverse right, we followed previously unclimbed terrain up to the left. Around 11 a.m., having covered about 400m (10 pitches), we were level with the top of Little Jamyang Ri at around 5,600m, just below the "crystal edge."

Once on the northwest are te, we found to our delight that the cracks we had seen from base camp were some of the most beautiful we had ever climbed. When the crack system ended, we made a bold rightward traverse. We only had two bolts and a hand drill, carried in case of a forced retreat, so we made the traverse without protection (and we wouldn't blame any party that wanted to add extra protection to this traverse). This brought us onto the west face, which turned orange in the sun and gifted us with an incredibly beautiful climb.

After some excellent free pitches and a pendulum, we finally reached the summit, full of emotion. While climbing the upper wall, we were pleased to see our friends Elisabeth Lardschneider and Markus Ranalter reach the top of Little Jamyang Ri after spending six days working on its northwest face (see report here).

Despite the happiness we felt, we were aware we still had a long descent. Since we knew little about the Slovenian rappel route in the center of the west face, we did not always find their anchors and were forced to drill one bolt. Nevertheless, after 18 hours we reached base camp, exhausted but infinitely happy. We named the route Nelim Lam ("Crystal Route," 700m-plus of climbing, 19 pitches, VIII+/5.12 A0).

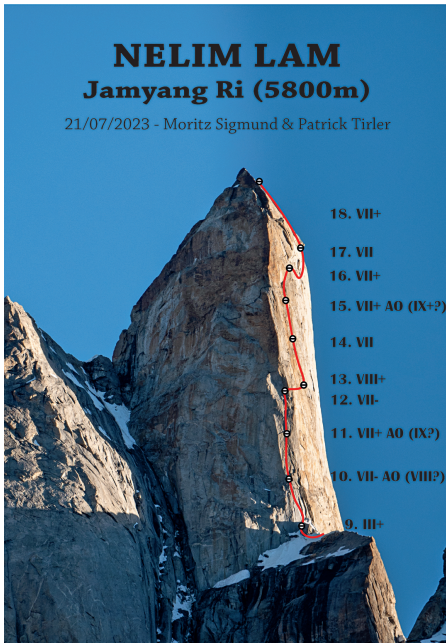
Our time in this mountain paradise taught us profound lessons. The cheerfulness and gratitude of the Tungri people left an indelible impression. The "mountain crystal" will forever remind us that truly precious treasures can only be stored in our memories.

– **Patrick Tirlor, Italy**

Images



Moritz Sigmund on pitch 17 (VII) after the pendulum traverse across the west face headwall of Jamyang Ri. Below is the Rangtik Tokpo glacier and the distant flat-topped summit of Chakdor Ri (H8, 6,193m, climbed in 2017).



Nelim Lam on the northwest arête of Jamyang Ri, established in 2023. The route began with nine pitches on the southwest face (hidden).



Jamyang Ri from the southwest, showing the approximate line of Nelim Lam. The first four pitches are shared with the 2017 route Cunka (Dusic-Jost, 2017), which then moves right to climb the southwest ridge. Little Jamyang Ri is the lower subsidiary top on the left with its very steep northwest face in profile (see AAJ 2018 for other routes).



Nelim Lam on the west face and northwest arête of Jamyang Ri (see AAJ 2018 for other routes).



Patrick Tirler on the crack system of pitch 12 (VII-) on the northwest arête of Jamyang Ri.



Moritz Sigmund on the headwall (pitch 16, VII+) of the west face of Jamyang Ri, with the top of Little Jamyang Ri (Torre Fanni) visible below. Far below are the moraines of the Rangtik Tokpo glacier.

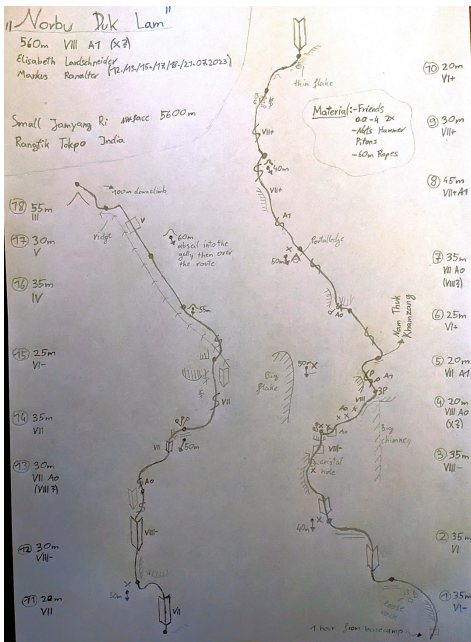


Moritz Sigmund near the top of pitch 18 (VII+) on Nelim Lam, just below the summit ridge of Jamyang Ri. Below and immediately to the right are the snow patches on the summit of Little Jamyang Ri

(Torre Fanni). The Rangtik Tokpo (glacier and valley) are below.



Moritz Sigmund during an unsuccessful attempt to climb the northwest face of Little Jamyang Ri (a.k.a. Torre Fanni).



Norbu Duk Lam (560m, VIII A1) on the northwest face of Little Jamyang Ri (a.k.a. Torre Fanni).



The northwest face of Little Jamyang Ri (a.k.a. Torre Fanni) with (1) the Sigmond-Tirler attempt in 2023, (2) Norbu Duk Lam, and (3) Lam Thuk Khamzang.

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