

ASIA

India—Arunachal Pradesh

Gorichen, Pachakshiri Range. A 12-man team from the Assam Regiment was led by Captains R.K. Bhardwaj and G.V.S. Prasad. Base Camp was set up at Merathang beyond Ghokarsomon on September 25. They established two high camps. On October 5, Captain Bhardwaj, Sepoys Salow Mao and Darwan Singh and Naiks Jogendra Singh and B.B. Thapa reached the summit (6328 meters, 20,762 feet) via the northwest face. The first ascent was made by an Indian Army expedition in 1966.

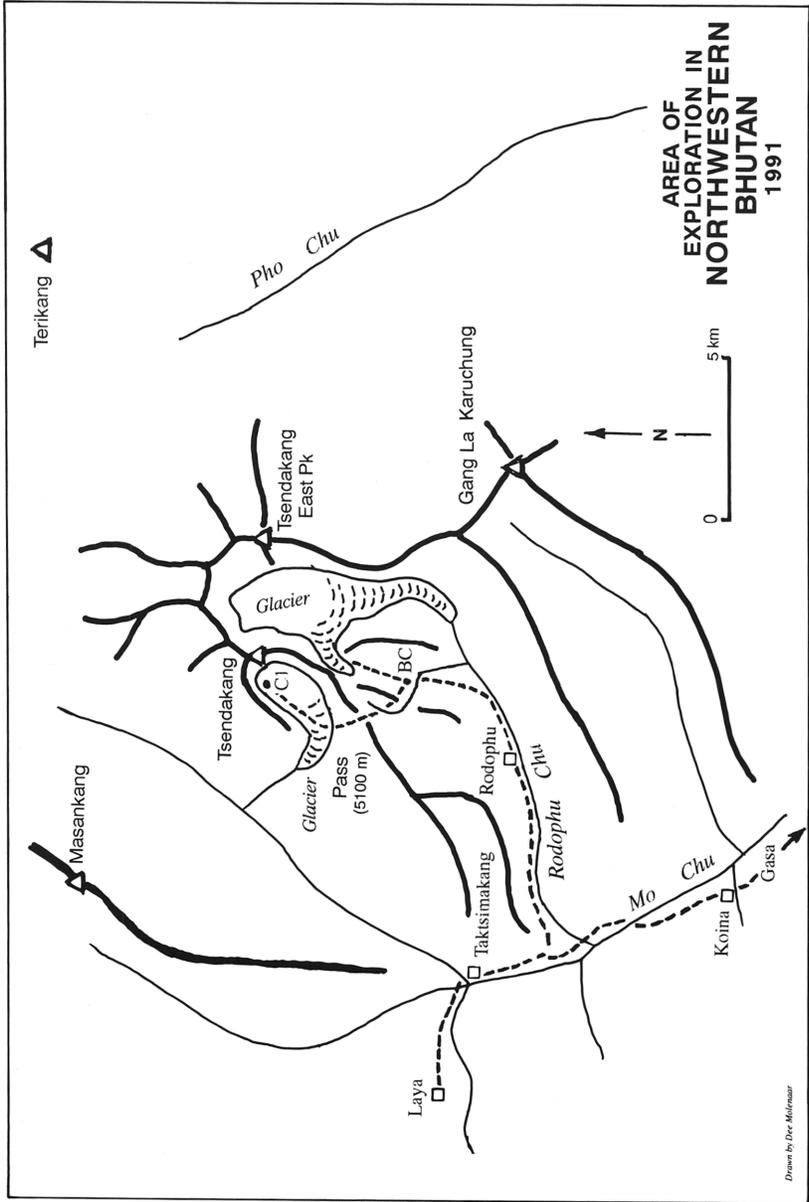
KAMAL K. GUHA, *Editor, Himavanta, India*

Bhutan

Basingthang Peaks. During October, Peter Mould led a combined climbing-trekking expedition to northwest Bhutan which had permission to tackle unclimbed "trekking peaks" up to 5700 meters from a Base Camp at 4200 meters on Basingthang yak pasture, 12 miles southeast of Chomolhari. The climbers were John Blacker, John Innerdale and son Jonathan, Eric Langmuir, Jerry Lovatt, Peter Mould, Dr. John Nixon, Stephen Town and I. On October 12, Mould, Blacker, Lovatt, Nixon and I climbed P 5640 (18,504 feet) in the Ngum Tang Gang group from a camp at 4800 meters near the top of the Riburi Ridge. The peak lies 2½ miles west-northwest of Base Camp. A satisfying steep ridge of snow and ice led to an airy summit. There are two more unclimbed peaks in this group. On October 15, Nixon climbed P 5487 (18,002 feet) solo after his companion retired unwell. The north summit of this easy saddle-shaped peak was visible from Base with two small rocky summits of 5487 and 5450 meters at either end. We propose the name Ganae Gang, which means "Saddle Peak" in Bhutanese. On October 16, the Innerdales, Town and I climbed both summits in a 10½-hour round-trip from Base. On October 15, Wohney Gang (5589 meters, 18,337 feet) was climbed by Langmuir, Lovatt and Mould in a 12-hour round-trip from a camp 100 meters below the 4969-meter Wohney La to the north of the peak. It lies 3½ miles south-southwest of Base. This was the best climb. It went up a steep snow rib on the flank of the northwest ridge and led unexpectedly without further great difficulty to the summit. There are other fine peaks, but the rock is poor and so it is better to concentrate on snow-and-ice climbs.

GEORGE BAND, *Alpine Club*

Chatarake and Kang Bum. Bas Gresnigt and I made a climbing expedition to western Bhutan. Our first objective was a mountain that the Swiss trekking map of Bhutan calls Chatarake and is given as 6500 meters high. This is also called Djodrake by locals. From Paro we trekked via Drukgyal Dzong into a region probably not previously visited by Westerners. On October 27, we reached the foot of the northeast buttress on a 4800-meter pass. We climbed the next day to



the summit, which we reached at 1:10 P.M. The height was a little disappointing, in reality "only" 5570 meters (18,275 feet). From there we traveled to the region just previously visited by the British party, the Basingthang peaks. The British had suggested that there was a hidden "Andean-type" mountain which was probably the highest in the Wohney-Gang group. After heading up several wrong valleys, we finally found our "Andean" mountain. On November 5, we reached a crevassed glacier and got to the summit of the peak (5780 meters, 18,964 feet). However, it was not the highest of the group. This proved to be a sharp rock needle, further south. After traversing a narrow ice ridge, Gresnigt climbed to its summit, while I belayed. From there, we headed for Kang Bum, given on maps as 6494 meters. However, the mountain looks lower although certainly more than 6000 meters. We crossed into and ascended the Thimpu valley. Our horse driver, who had accompanied the Japanese first-ascent party, explained the route. On November 9, we were camped on Kang Bum's southern glacier. In order to reach the upper glacier, we had to climb threatened slopes and both steep rock and ice. On November 11, we left our Camp II before sunrise. After a steep section to a foresummit, we climbed on over several false summits to the summit at nine A.M. where we had a magnificent view all the way from Everest and Kangchenjunga to the 7000-meter peaks of the Lunana district to the east. We were back in Thimpu, the Bhutanese capital, on November 14.

RONALD NAAR, *Koninklijke Nederlandse Alpen Veriniging*

Tsendakang. Our members were Hiroshi Kodama, Kosuke Honma, Ryoji Takahashi, Takeharu Shumiya and I as leader. After an approach from Thimpu, which began on October 12, we arrived at Base Camp at 4700 meters on October 20 on the south side of Tsendakang. We fixed rope up to 5300 meters in the icefall for two days, but were stopped by crevasses. We changed to the west side and made Advance Base under the southwest face of Tsendakang at 5350 meters on October 28. To get there took five hours, which included crossing a 5100-meter pass. From Advance Base, we climbed a couloir threatened by rockfall to reach the west ridge. We continued up the snow ridge, fixing 750 meters of rope to the base of a steep rotten-rock step. After leaving supplies, we returned to Advance Base. At 8:30 A.M. on November 6, Kodama, Honma and I started from Advance Base, climbed to the top of the fixed ropes and another 150 meters of rock. We continued up the steep ridge on unstable snow. As night fell, there was no place to camp. We bivouacked at 9:30 P.M. on the snow face at 5950 meters. The next day, we continued along the ridge until we found a flat spot for Camp II. At 6:40 A.M. on November 8, we headed for the summit. There was first a 180-meter-high icefall. We kept on along the slope to the summit wall. In three pitches we got to a shoulder below the top and climbed three more pitches to the summit, which we reached at one P.M. My altimeter indicated 6310 meters (20,702 feet), although the official altitude was given as 7200 meters. It is certainly much lower than 7000 meters.

FUMITAKA SAKURAI, *Chiba University Alpine Club, Japan*