

Thalay Sagar, High Tension. Russian alpinists Alexander Klenov, Alexey Bolotov, Mikhail Davy and Mikhail Pershin established a new route on the north face of Thalay Sagar (6904m). *High Tension* (ABO, 7b A3+, 1400m) takes a line up the rock buttress to the right of the prominent couloir first climbed in 1997 by Andrew Lindblade and Athol Whimp. The climb was established from May 17-May 27. Davy's article on the ascent can be found earlier in this journal.

Dunagiri, North Face, New Route and Attempt, Previously Unreported. It was reported that in 1998, Spaniards Xabier Guembe and Jon Beloki completed a new route (80 degrees, IV, 1900 meters) alpine-style on the previously unclimbed north face of Dunagiri from May 15-21. A second Spanish group of Fermin Izco and Mikel Zabalza attempted a more difficult line on the face to the left of the Guembe-Beloki route but were forced to retreat 300 meters below the summit ridge after climbing 1000 meters of 60- to 80-degree ice. Guembe and Beloki descended the west ridge. Beloki was ill and Guembe was too exhausted to assist him; the pair had gone three days without food or water when Izco and Zabalza came to their rescue at 6400 meters. (*Desnivel*)

HIMACHAL PRADESH

Gya, Second Ascent. Gya (6794m), at the tri-junction of Himachal, Jammu and Kashmir and Tibet, had received eight expeditions but had no ascents, either due to misidentification or bad weather. The Indian Mountaineering Federation organized its second expedition to Gya from May to June. Expedition members were Chewang Motup Goba (leader), Nadre Sherpa, Cyrus Shroff, Lobzang Tsering and Amrish Jha. The team left Delhi on May 18, was in Leh until May 21 and reached Chumar on May 25. Base Camp was finally established on May 27 at 4800 meters at the head of the glacier. For two days, loads were ferried to the Advanced Base Camp (5350m), which was established on the 31st in bad weather.

In Leh we had heard of a three-member Bombay team who were attempting Gya ahead of us. On May 31, the Bombay team's local helper came to our camp to inform us of the help-less conditions of their team, who were unable to descend due to exhaustion and no food. Team members and Sherpas were sent despite the terrible weather to rescue the two members, who were brought back safely to our ABC. One member had suffered frostbite and we were also informed of the death of Arun Samant on his return from Gyasumpa.

The snowstorm did not deter our team from continuing the work of establishing Camp I and ferrying goods on June 2-3. The route was opened to Camp II, which was established on the col above Lingti Valley at 6200 meters. With photographs from past expeditions, it did seem that this route from the southeast would be the most viable. However, though the team and Sherpas worked hard at fixing ropes to open the route for four days, on June 9 we were stopped 80 meters short of the summit by a necklace of smooth hard rounded overhanging rocks that seemed impossible to cross. We traversed halfway across this rocky necklace to look for an opening but were unsuccessful. The particular route from the southeast that we attempted was technically very challenging and 1500 meters of rope had to be fixed. Tired but not defeated, we returned to BC and rested for another four days before deciding to attempt the peak again by the northeast ridge.

On June 13, the team again pushed back up the mountain to Camp I. The following day

turned out to be perfect weather. According to past expedition reports, it is rare to see such weather on this mountain. As planned, all members and Sherpas ferried loads with the first summit party to Camp II which was on a ramp, but safe under a huge rock below Gyasumpa at 6250 meters, where two tents were set up. The remaining team returned to CI.

Taking turns from here, the summit team worked extremely hard at leading and belaying as they traversed the steep slopes to fix ropes below Gyasumpa as far as the ramp between Gyasumpa and Gya North. The first summit party consisted of Nadre Sherpa and Lobzang Tsering with two Sherpas. Dawa Wangchuk and Nima Thendup, though exhausted after a long day's work of fixing ropes, felt that they would be able to work fast along the pitches with fixed rope and get to the summit the next day. The summit team returned to CII at 6:30 p.m.

On June 15, another perfect weather day, the summit team left at around 5 a.m. and traversed the slopes between Gya North and Gyasumpa by 11 a.m. The route ahead was totally exposed and impossible to negotiate without fixing ropes up to the summit. By 12:30 p.m., the summit team had done the gully which from CI looked difficult and steep. Here they found a rope probably left by the Army expedition.

At 2:24 p.m., Nadre Sherpa stood on the summit of Gya, informing us by radio. He was followed by Dawa Wangchuk Sherpa, who was on the summit at 2:30 p.m., Lobzang Tsering at 2:36 and Nima Thendup at 2:42. On the summit they found a piton! (See below.) After the success of the first party, it was decided that the second summit party should move to CII.

On June 16, another day of perfect weather, the second summit party of two members (Cyrus Shroff and Amrish Kumar Jha) with three Sherpas (Pasang Tenzing, Pasang Nurboo and Chomber Sherpa) left at 3 a.m. and summited at 8:10 a.m. All team members and Sherpas were down at CI by 5 p.m.

On June 17, everyone moved down to BC. An Indo-Tibet Border Police team was waiting for us, as they had failed to bring down the body of Arun Samant and were hopeful that the IMF team would help them to bring the body down. The next day, two members with four Sherpas were sent up with three ITBP members to bring down the body. After handing over the body to the ITBP team at ABC, our Sherpas brought down all the equipment from ABC.

On the evening of June 19, our horses arrived from Chumar and on the 20th the whole team with all the gear arrived at Chumar.

MOTUP CHEWANG GOBA, *India*

Gya, Correction. The Indian Army Expedition to Gya organized by Three Infantry Division during July-August, 1998, was scrutinized by Shri J. C. Nanavati, adviser to the Indian Mountaineering Foundation. Mr. Nanavati concluded that, on the matter of the lack of sufficient evidence, the Army Expedition may have instead climbed Gya North instead of Gya Main. This was complicated due to the fact that the expedition had not taken unobstructed views from the peak, misidentified the immediately connected peak of Gya North in summit photos, etc.

On June 15-16, the IMF-sponsored expedition led by Mr. Chewang Motup (see above) climbed Mt. Gya and brought the vital summit photographs from various directions. Mr. Nanavati, the adviser, again scrutinized the photographs and other details provided by the leader of the aforesaid Army Expedition vis-à-vis the details brought by the leader of the IMF Expedition and came to the conclusion that the Army Expedition indeed climbed the then-virgin Gya (6794m) in August, 1998. The IMF Expedition brought additional evidence in the form of a Stubai piton left by the Army Expedition, along with a piece of cloth with the names of the summiters dated August 12, 1998. The conclusion is clear that the Army Expedition