

Bauli Khad. We made the first crossing (on July 3) of a 5,600m col to the Dibibokri Valley. Proceeding west we finally reached the Parvati Valley, thus creating a new route linking the Debsa and Parvati.

GERRY GALLIGAN, *Ireland*

KINNAUR

Rangrik Rang, west ridge. In October three French aspirant guides, Sylvain Audibert, Odilon Ferran, and Jeremy Rumebe, made the second ascent of Rangrik Rang (6,553m) by a new route up the west ridge. On the only previous attempt, in June 1994, Chris Bonington, Muslim Contractor, Jim Fotheringham, Graham Little, Jim Lowther, Divyesh Muni, Paul Nunn, and Pasang Bodh reached the summit by the northeast ridge, after fixing ropes up a steep snow face to the col at the base of the ridge separating Rangrik Rang from Mangla (5,800m).

The three French drove to Lambar, then following the footsteps of the 1994 team, walked for four days to arrive, on September 21, at base camp (4,200m) close to the start of the Racha Khad valley. The following day they established an advanced base on the Racha Khad Glacier at 5,000m, finding one meter of unconsolidated snow. They spent the next week at base camp trying to acclimatize, while hoping conditions would improve. The north face had been a possible objective, but it proved unfeasible, so on October 1 they set off from advanced base for the west ridge. Following the crest, which at first rises south before turning east, they camped on a small subsidiary summit, which they mistakenly referred to as 5,800m Mangla. Next day they abandoned some of their gear, including the tent, by throwing it down the north face. This set off an avalanche. The three continued up the crest, over a rocky buttress (UIAA III), and on to the summit, where they arrived at 5 p.m. They stopped here for the night.

On the morning of the 3rd the team made a cautious descent of the original route and reached base camp that day. Realizing that the mountains were too laden with snow for other ascents, they descended to Lambar and put up two rock routes on the surrounding granite cliffs: Taffonies (six pitches, 6c and A1), and a five-pitch route of 7b and A2, which terminated below the summit of a fine aiguille.

Adapted from www.kairn.com and notes provided by HARISH KAPADIA, Honorary Editor, The Himalayan Journal

WESTERN GARHWAL

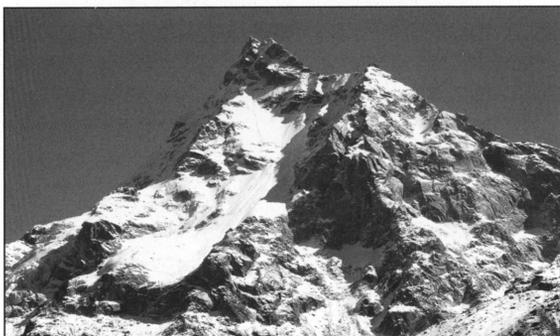
Obra Valley, Pt. 5,760m attempt; Pt. 5,165m. In the autumn a four-member team from the Alpine Club became the first climbers to explore the head of the little-known Obra Valley, an area of sub-6,000m peaks west of the Bandarpunch-Swargarohini group in far western Garhwal. After driving to the roadhead at Jakhol via Mussoorie, Derek Buckle, Toto Gronlund, Bill Thurston, and I made a three-day trek to a scenic, grassy base camp at 4,055m, arriving in early



The French expedition on the Racha Khad Glacier with (A) Mangla (5,800m), (B) Rangrik Rang (6,553m), and (C) Pt. 5,800m. The new route up the west ridge over Pt. 5,800m, and the descent of the northeast ridge via the 1994 Indo-British route (the only previous ascent of the mountain) are marked. *Jeremy Rumebe*



Looking northeast up the Devkir Glacier at the head of the Obra Valley. The low point is the 5,325m Devkyari Col. To the left stands Pt. 5,849m, and to the right Pt. 5,760m. Both are unclimbed, though Pt. 5,760m was attempted from the col in 2008. *Derek Buckle*



The western flank of unclimbed Ranglana (5,554m), one of the most attractive objectives in the Obra Valley. *Martin Scott*

of 5,849m to be steep, loose, and uninviting. Fortunately, the fine, corniced, snow arête forming the northwest ridge of lower 5,760m looked eminently climbable. Caching some gear, we descended to a lower camp, aiming to get established on the col the following day.

With the help of two Sherpas, we set up camp just below the pass early on October 14, but by afternoon snowfall was heavy. Next morning was no better, and after plowing through deep avalanche-prone snow for less than 100m above the col, we realized it wasn't going to happen. Zero visibility pinned us at camp until the morning of the 16th, when we were able to escape to base camp.

Two days later Buckle and Gronlund snatched a consolation prize, ascending the first valley north of base camp to a small col, then up the southwest ridge of Pt. 5,165m at PD. They suggest the name Lammergeyer Peak for this previously virgin summit, which provided a splendid viewpoint.

This area offers great potential for alpine climbing and further exploration. For instance, during 2006 Kapadia photographed impressive granite walls and towers northwest of the middle valley (but not visible from the valley floor), which he named the Jairai Rocks. And there is the attractive Ranglana, but it will not be an easy catch. Thanks to the Mount Everest Foundation for sponsorship and to Harish Kapadia for information on the Obra valley from the 2006 expedition.

October. The middle reaches of the Obra are dominated by the splendid icy Ranglana (5,554m), which had previously been the main objective of the only other climbing team to visit this valley: the British pair Gerry and Louise Wilson, with guru Harish Kapadia and seven friends. Conditions were poor during this 2006 visit and only a lower summit, Dhodu Ka Gunchha (5,130m), was climbed. They did not attempt Ranglana nor the highest peaks, Pts. 5,849m and 5,760m, at the head of the valley above the Devkir Glacier.

In 2008 access to the upper Devkir proved lengthy and complex, consuming much time in reconnaissance and failed attempts, as did the daily weather pattern of afternoon snowfall. When we finally reached the 5,325m Devkyari Col, separating the two high peaks at the head of the glacier, we discovered the rocky southeast ridge