

than 50m away. A final burst of energy came from somewhere, and minutes later we were posing on the mist-enshrouded top and recording a GPS altitude of 5,980m. We dubbed the peak a distinctly non-Ladakhi name, the Big Rock Candy Mountain.

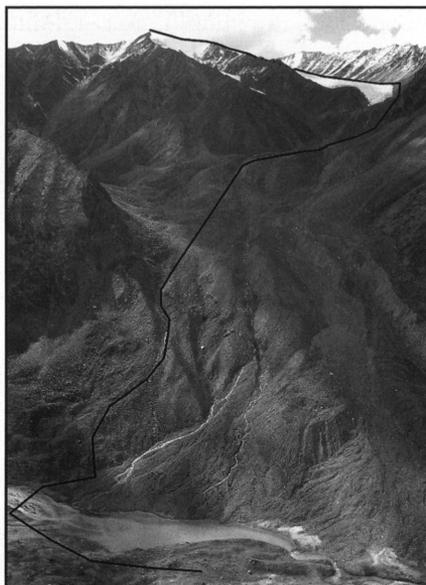
Over in the Sniamu Valley, Kangsaimathung (5,770m) and what is still known simply as Peak 2 (5,717m) lay within striking distance of advanced base. Both had been climbed in 2007, but our group was able to establish new routes on each.

A large group climbed Kangsaimathung from the northeast at PD+. (The mountain had previously been climbed from the south.) Leaders Matt Bridgestock, Andy Cowan, Sarah Lewis, and Sarah Major, with Harry Andrews, James Couzens, Luke Daly, Amy Forrest, Livvy Hampsher-Monk, Sarah Keane, Naill McLoughlin, Debbie Morgan, Henry Renninson, James Richardson, James Wood, and Yuan Yang took a diagonal line from the glacier to a point 80m from the summit, then climbed a final 50° snow slope to the top. They were accompanied by two Sherpas and a member of the cook team, who had never climbed a mountain before. On top these three celebrated with a chorus of beautiful Tibetan chants.

Peak 2 is probably the same as Yanchan Kangri, summited by the Jagged Globe expedition. Bridgestock and Lewis, this time with fellow leader Katherine Baldock, took Andrews, Couzens, Daly, Forrest, Hampsher-Monk, Morgan, Richardson, Wood, and Yuan Yang across a moraine field to a gully filled with loose snow yet liberally scattered with crampon-scratching scree, leading off to the east ridge. Once the cornice had been passed with care, the crest provided a gently angled ascent over snow to the top (F).

The expedition finished with a five-day trek south to Leh over the Lasirmou La (5,500m), from where we noticed a ca 5,600m peak to the east that would provide an easy but worthwhile goal for future parties.

ANDY RUCK, UK

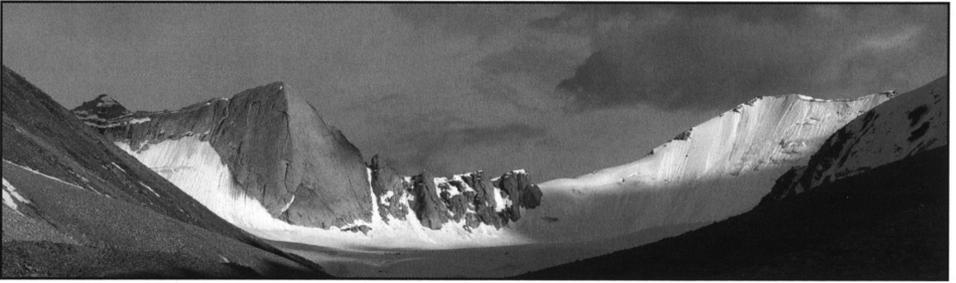


Big Rock Candy Mountain (5,980m GPS) from east, with route of ascent up north ridge. 2008 base camp was close to river at bottom of picture. *Matt Bridgestock*

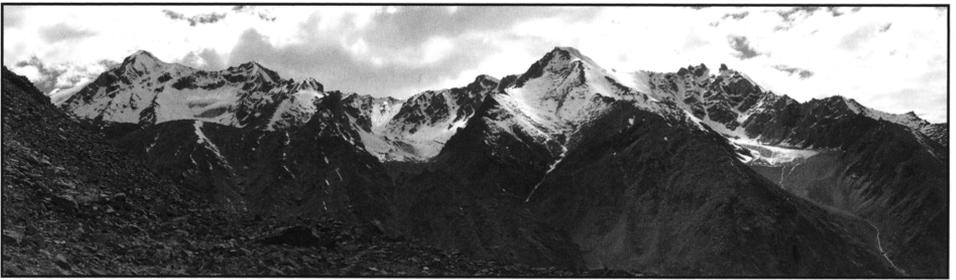
*Thanglasgo Valley, Peak 5,850m, northwest face and northeast ridge; Peak 5,995m, southeast ridge.* From 2007 to 2009 I led expeditions to the Nubra Valley for the British Schools Exploring Society (BSES), picking off a few previously climbed and unclimbed peaks in the Thanglasgo Valley south of Hundar.

Lying north of Leh in the rain shadow of the Himalaya, this region has seen few parties outside the main trekking routes; because of its proximity to the Pakistan border, it is regarded by the Indian military as being particularly sensitive. During the 2009 expedition plans were laid to attempt unclimbed Telthop (6,010m), which lies at the head of the Khalsar Dag Valley.

In 2010 our primarily British group arrived at the IMF offices in Delhi to discover that our intended approach from Hundar was impractical due to washed out bridges. After three days acclimatizing in Leh, we crossed the Kardung La to Desket, where we attempted to reach the mountain



Peak 5,850m (right) from northwest. First ascent climbed short snow face right of rock pillars, then up left skyline ridge. Rock summit to left is a little lower, unclimbed, but has easy access on hidden side. *Chris Horobin*



Looking west at Peak 5,995m, right of center. First ascent climbed ridge that slants down left toward camera. Shabib Chasser (6,050m) is peak on far left. *Chris Horobin*

over a high pass south of Desket Gompa. Although this would have worked, we retreated when we realized our horses could not follow through the steep rocky terrain.

Reaching Hundar, we shelved our disappointment and made alternative plans to access the mountain via the main Thanglasgo Valley. A three-day trek took us to Thanglasgo hamlet (ca 4,600m) and the mouth of an unexplored valley to the east that we hoped would lead to our peak. A reconnaissance next day showed this approach to be long and difficult, with much moraine and a steep glacier. Although we could access the mountain via this route, we realized we would not have time to make a realistic attempt. However, we caught sight of a peak at the head of the initial valley. It is marked on the map as 5,850m and was confirmed by our Sherpas to be unclimbed. We were also rewarded with views of a possible route to another reportedly unclimbed peak lying immediately to the north of Shabib Chasser (a summit climbed by the 2007 Jagged Globe expedition).

From a base camp at Thanglasgo hamlet we established a high camp in the valley leading to 5,850m, and the day after crossed incredibly unstable moraine and a long glacier to reach the northwest face. This gave 300m of climbing up to 60° and led to the snowy, sometimes knife-edge, northeast ridge. Andrea Bainbridge, Sarah Reynolds, Bob Shiels, and I climbed rapidly in deteriorating weather to reach the rocky summit, where a GPS reading gave the altitude as 5,870m. The ascent was graded F.

In the few days remaining we attempted the peak north of Shabib Chasser. Given the warm weather and poor snow conditions, we decided to reconnoiter the southeast ridge, which was mainly rocky. We placed another high camp, and after a few hours sleep the mandatory alpine start saw us scrambling in the dark up a loose scree/boulder slope to gain the ridge. The crest gave climbing up to British Severe, and after nine hours Reynolds, Shiels, and I reached the summit, on which we recorded a GPS altitude of 5,995m. The overall grade was AD+.

We descended steep and alarmingly soft snow on the northeast ridge, regained high camp, dismantled it, and returned to base, crossing a cold, unpleasantly high and fast-flowing river.

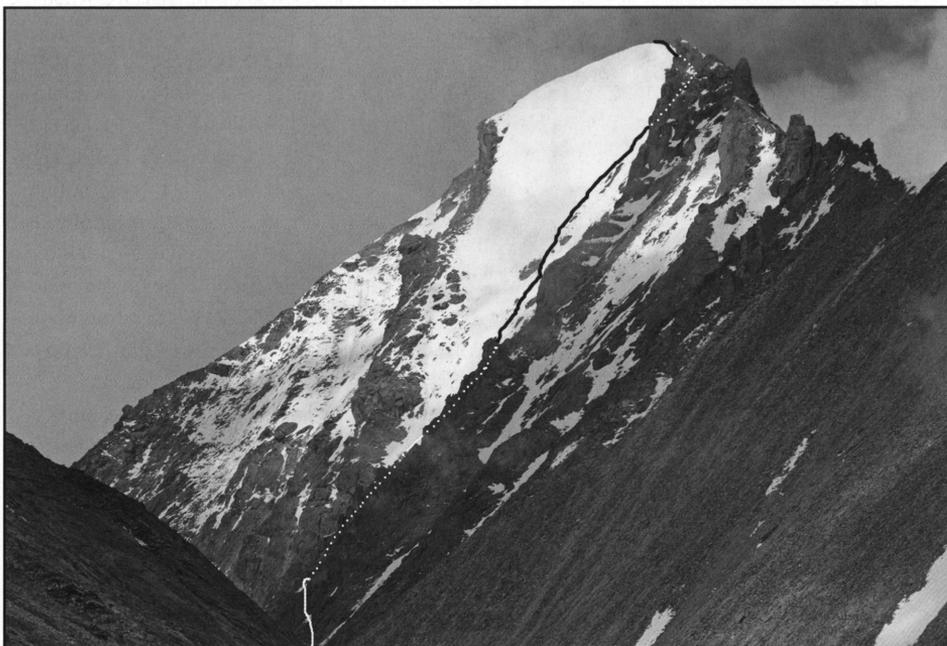
We ended the trip by reaching Leh via a two-day trek south over the Lassermola La (Lasirmou La, 5,550m). Soft snow prevented the horses from making the crossing, providing us with an unforeseen forced march, while they took the long way round. On our first night back in Leh, the unseasonable weather culminated in a cloudburst that devastated the city and surrounding area. Expedition members were unscathed, and after a 24-hour delay while the airport was cleared of debris, we were able to make our way to Delhi and connecting flights home.

Other members of the expedition were Colin Bainbridge, Henry Latti (Finland), David Moseley, and Matt Powell (US). Special thanks to Mr. J. K. Sharma, First Secretary of the Indian Consulate in London, for helping with the X Visa process, and support staff and Sherpas at RIMO expeditions in Leh for making the impossible possible.

CHRIS HOROBIN, UK

*Ibsti Kangri (6,340m), southeast face; Dzo Jongo, east (6,200m) and west (6,265m) summits.* We had initially hoped to attempt a peak in Ladakh's Angtung Valley, but due to bureaucratic difficulties in obtaining mountaineering visas for our American members, we decided to try one of the newly opened peaks that did not require the X Mountaineering Visa. We zeroed in on Pk. 6,340m in the Nimaling Topko region, southeast of Leh.

We flew to Leh and drove the Leh-Manali road as far as Lato, from where we trekked across the Puja La (4,930m) and a second, 5,354m, pass (sometimes referred to as Lalung La) to a 5,200m base camp at Nimaling Topko. During this approach we experienced fierce thunderstorms



Southeast face of Ibsti Kangri. Dave Adams