

Japanese team. The expedition approached from Darcha on the Manali to Leh Military Road and made base camp above Jankar Sumdo. From here they followed the glacier on the right flank and on August 8 achieved a maximum height of ca 5750m. Much bad weather and a constant danger from stonefall are cited as the reasons for failure. In 1999 another Japanese expedition had attempted this peak via the same route.

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*Baralacha Peak (6111m), second ascent.* This peak close to the Baralacha Pass received a second ascent on September 5 by three members from an Indian team led by Ms. Kalpana Mekherjee. The leader with Taponayan Ghosh and Partha Majumdar reached the summit. The first ascent took place in August 1999 when five Indian mountaineers from Howrah climbed the south ridge, which appears to have been a straightforward ascent over shattered rock, scree, and snow (see AAJ 2000).

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*Ramjak, attempt.* This is a challenging 6318m unclimbed mountain with a sharp icy summit. The peak is located near the Shingo La (ca 5100m), which is crossed on a popular trekking route from Himachal Pradesh to Zaskar. Prior to 2001 there had been at least three attempts on the mountain and one Indian climber had died on its slopes. The first attempt took place in 1994, when a ladies team from Mumbai approached from the west. Another Mumbai team attempted the peak the following year and again in 1996, when Dinesh Shertate died at 5400m due to medical complications.

This year a nine-member expedition organised and sponsored by the Indian Mountaineering Foundation and led by Lt. Col. S. Upadhyay reached the area in early August and trekked along the well-known route from Darcha to Palamo. Base camp was established a little short of Chuminakpo at ca 4620m. After a reconnaissance, Camp 1 (4880m) was set up beside a glacial stream. The next three days were spent exploring a site for Camp 2, which was ultimately established on August 11. On the 12th the climbers reached a rock wall and fixed 400m of rope through a gully. After surmounting the wall and reaching a high point of 5800m, they saw a long ridge running up to the summit. Deterred by the terrain above and the length of ridge still to be climbed, they retreated.

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*Unnamed Peak (6248 m), first ascent.* This peak lies southeast of Ramjak on the opposite side of the valley and was climbed for the first time on August 15 by Indians, Nitin Gandhi, Paresh Rathod, and Sudhir Raut. These three set up base camp at Chuminakpo (4660m) then continued up valley towards the Shingo La. Moving east, they climbed to a high camp at ca 5410m, from where they ascended steep slopes to a col. The summit was just 200m above them and was gained in poor weather.

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