

Afghanistan

Koh-e-Maghrebi (6,040m), probable first ascent. Spanish mountaineers David Cejudo Fernandez and Luis Miguel Lopez made a rare visit to Afghanistan's Wakhan Corridor, where they made the probable first ascent of a 6,040m peak, subsequently named Koh-e-Maghrebi. This is one of the few first ascents made in Afghanistan's mountains since the Soviet invasion during 1979.

The two left Kabul by vehicle on July 29, entered the Corridor via Faizabad and Iskashim, and drove up it to the confluence of the rivers at Qala-e-Panja. It was then five days on foot to a base camp at 4,200m in the West Ali Su valley. They reached there on August 10, having taken time out to make a three-day side trip farther east to Elghunak. On the 12th they established Camp 1 at 5,050m on the West Ali Su glacier, south of Koh-e-Maghrebi. Next day they climbed a 700m couloir (40-55° névé) through the rocky slopes of the south face to reach the easier 300m summit snowfield. This led to the upper section of the west ridge, where the pair had to overcome a 60° section before reaching the summit (N 37° 6' 28"; E 73° 10' 23"). They returned to camp 10 hours after leaving and regained their vehicle on the 18th.

The Spanish note that this area of the Pamir has a dozen or so peaks above 6,000m, the highest being Koh-e-Pamir (6,320m) above the North Issik Glacier, a little northeast of their own peak. Some of these mountains were climbed during the 1970s. They also found the inhabitants of this region, mainly Wakhis, but in the extreme east Kyrghyz, very hospitable.

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