

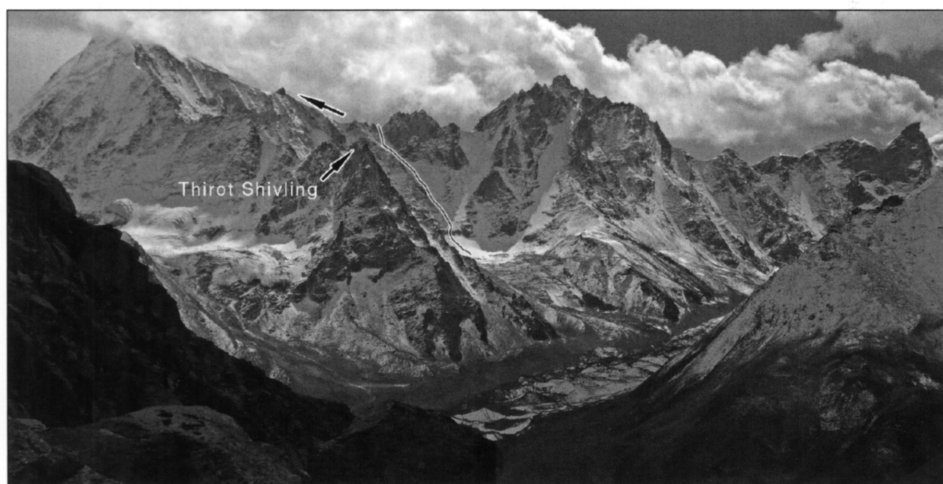
## HIMACHAL PRADESH

## LAHUL &amp; SPITI

*Gangsthang, lower west face; Thiroth Shivling (5,324m).* Our team of nine climbers met with cold, variable weather but discovered a magnificent new valley for mountaineering, the Thiroth Nala in the Lahaul district of Himachal Pradesh. Initial reconnaissances of unclimbed Nainghar Choti (6,094m) were hampered by heavy snowfall and poor visibility. However, the splendid pyramidal peak of Gangsthang (6,162m) offered a more accessible objective, and at 4:30 p.m. on September 30 six of us stood on the tiny summit, having made a new route up the west face before finishing up the normal southwest ridge. Peter Ashworth, Gustavo Fierro-Carrion, John Leedale, Arun Mahajan, Luder Singh, and I were the lucky summiteers, who then witnessed the kaleidoscope of a Himalayan sunset during the descent. The climb rates alpine D-, with pitches of Scottish III and IV in the 600m couloir used to access the final ridge. On September 28 Allan Clapperton, David Geddes, Frank Johnstone, Arun, Luder, and I reached the subsidiary rock peak of Thiroth Shivling (5,324m), at PD-.

The team also enjoyed a superb journey into the area, the night sleeper from Delhi, the amazing narrow-gauge railway to Shimla hill station, beautiful roads through the verdant valleys of Kullu and Manali, and a breath-taking drive over the 13,000-foot Rohtang Pass into the spectacular Chandra-Bhaga valley.

MARTIN MORAN, *Alpine Club*



Gangsthang (6,162m) and Thiroth Shivling (5,324m). The new route is on the west face, where it joins with the normal southwest ridge route. *David Geddes*

*Pangi Valley, Sersank Peak, attempt; Peak 5,027m, first ascent.* A small British expedition explored the upper Tiaso Nala and the area of the Sersank Pass in late June and early July 2007. The team, consisting of Rob Ferguson, Graham Little, Jim Lowther, and I, with a support team provided

by Rimo Expeditions, left Delhi by road on June 17 and reached Manali after a 16-hour drive. On June 20 we crossed the Rohtang Pass to reach Chery in the Chandra Baga Gorge, some distance beyond Kilar. The road had been swept away by a major landslide and looked as if it would be some time before it was rebuilt. The gear was ferried across in the dark, and the next morning two jeeps took the team to the roadhead by the village of Tajana Adwar, a beautiful campsite.

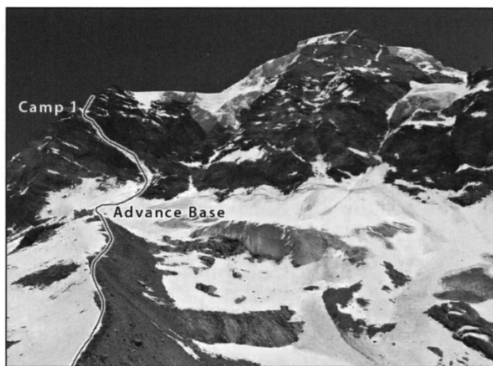
Two easy days of walking took us to base camp in the Hangrung Nala. There seemed two possible routes up Sersank Peak (Shib Shankar): the south ridge by a series of glaciers and snow slopes, or more directly up the northwest ridge, whose lower slopes were guarded by a steep rock buttress. We chose the latter, and established an advance base at the top of a moraine ridge below a gully that led to a ramp that reached up to half the height of the buttress. The ramp was fixed with rope by Rob and Jim, supported by our two Sherpas, Ang Tachei and Samghyl. Then the weather broke, and after four days of rain and snow the team dropped back to base camp.

On July 3 Graham, Jim, and Rob returned to the fray, while I went for a smaller, easier peak on the ridge to the northeast of base camp. On July 4 Graham, Jim, and Rob established Camp 1 at the head of the ramp on a large snow mushroom overlooking the northeast face and started climbing the steep rocks above. After three terrifying pitches on very loose rock, reaching 5,500m, they decided the route was too dangerous.

Meanwhile, Raj Kumar and I established a camp on the ridge above base camp at 4,674m, and on the following day scrambled to the highest point of the ridge, an elegant little peak at a height of 5,027m.

The team reunited at base camp that evening, and since there was no time to reconnoiter an alternative route, we started back toward the roadhead, reaching it on July 7. Heavy rain on July 8 caused over 20 major landslips on the road beside the Chandra Bhaga river, forcing us to walk out, covering 65km to Udaipur in two days. Raj Kumar, Samghyl, and Manbahadur did a magnificent job carrying loads of up to 40kg each. It was an eventful and enjoyable trip up a beautiful unspoiled valley. The local people were particularly friendly and helpful.

CHRIS BONINGTON, *Alpine Club*, from the *Himalayan Club Newsletter*



Sersank Peak, showing the northwest ridge attempt. Chris Bonington

## MIYAR VALLEY

*Point 5,930m (Rachu Tangmu), central summit, Secret of Thin Ice.* Two Slovak mountaineers, Andrej Kolarik and Juraj Svingal, climbed a new route to an unclimbed peak in the massif of Pt. 5,930m. This peak is situated on the other side of the main river in Miyar Valley, opposite Castle Peak. They called the massif "Rachu Tangmu" (Cold Horns) because the main summit looks like two horns. The first ascent of the main summit of Rachu Tangmu was made in 2005