

NEPAL

New Peaks for 2014. The Ministry of Tourism planned to open 103 new peaks to permits (many of which probably were climbed earlier, without a permit). Altitudes range from 5,647m Yalung Ri in the Rolwaling to 8,077m Yalung Kang West in the Kangchenjunga Himal. The French guide Paulo Grobel, officially brought onto the “technical committee,” helped persuade authorities to standardize altitudes by using the HGM-Finn maps, and to add more summits to the permitted list in West Nepal. When all details are confirmed, the full list will be available at Himalayandatabase.com.

LINDSAY GRIFFIN, *Mountain INFO*



FAR WEST NEPAL

Api-Raksha Urai Himal, Raksha Urai III (6,609m), southeast face, east ridge, and south ridge. Christoph Kreutzenbeck and I left Kathmandu on September 25, 2012, for the Raksha Urai Range, with the intention of making a first ascent on one of the four Raksha summits, as designated by the 2001 British expedition (AAJ 2002). We flew to Nepalganj, took a 20-hour bus drive to Chainpur, and then made a nine-day trek through the Seti Valley to establish base camp at 4,150m on a

pasture east of Raksha Urai II and III. The military checkpoint in Chainpur informed us that we were the first Western travelers in this region since the French team that visited Raksha Urai in 2003 [though Americans were nearby in 2009.] Far West Nepal appears rarely visited by Westerners and the infrastructure for trekking is still poor.

It was not possible to find additional porters, yaks, or mules for our expedition, and we could only buy food in small amounts during the trek. For these reasons, we were forced to take a few rest days at Dahachar (a.k.a. Dalachaur, 3,700m) while our Kathmandu porters returned from their first food carry. This delay meant that by the time we arrived in base camp on October 8, we had only 15 days left to climb.

We first attempted unclimbed Raksha Urai II (6,420m), exploring a route up the east flank to the north ridge. On October 16 we left Camp 1 at 3 a.m. and climbed 60–70° ice and mixed slopes, leading to deep, unconsolidated 70° snow ca 100m below the ridge. We reached the crest at noon,

[This page] Looking along the north ridge of unclimbed Raksha Urai II. Beyond is the summit of unattempted Raksha Urai I. *Mirjam Limmer*

and as the snow on the ridge above was still deep, we decided not to continue.

In continuing poor weather and with only a few days left, we switched our objective to Raksha Urai III and the 900m southeast face attempted by the British in 2001. We started out at 3 a.m. on the 21st, climbing 16 pitches of 60–70° ice to the east ridge, where once again we found deep, unconsolidated snow. We followed the crest to where it meets the south ridge, and then continued north ca 300–400m, crossing several false tops as reported by the French expedition, before reaching the highest point. The south ridge had been mostly snow-covered, with sections of loose rock. On the 23rd we regained base camp, and then walked out to Chainpur. There is still much climbing potential in this region, though it is remote and serious. More information can be obtained at mirjam.limmer@gmx.de or from our website at Salon.io/mirjamlimmer/raksha-urai-expedition. 

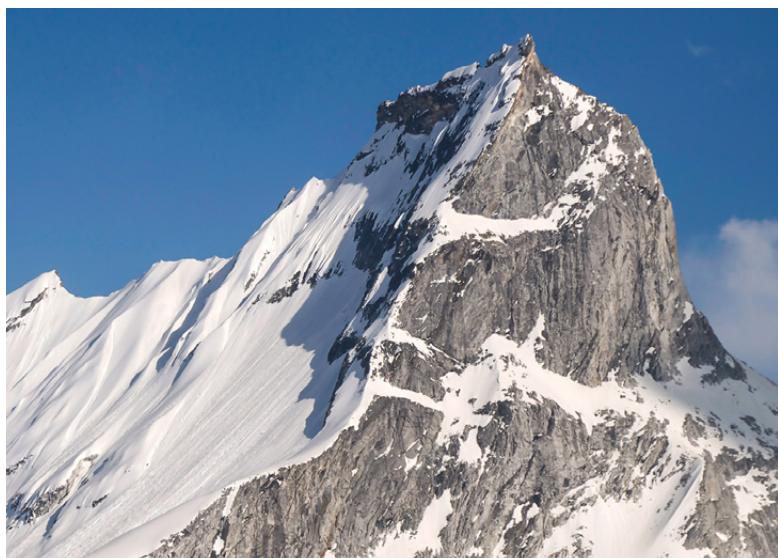
MIRJAM LIMMER, Germany

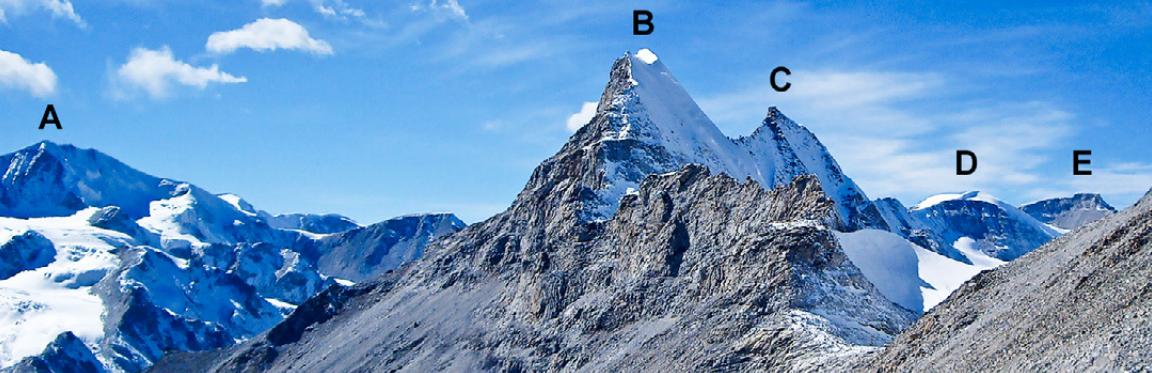
Editor's note: The first expedition to visit the Raksha Urai Range was a 14-member Austrian team in 1997, which observed III to be the easiest of the group, but failed before reaching the south ridge due to heavy snowfall. An Austro-German team tried again in 1999, retreating from 5,950m. The leader and four other Austrians returned in pre-monsoon 2001, this time following a different line to the south ridge, but got no higher than 5,800m. At the time, confusingly, these expeditions referred to this peak as Raksha Urai IV, defining the group as having six peaks, and designating them, from south to north, Raksha Urai I to VI.

A mostly British team tried the southeast face in the post-monsoon season of 2001, retreating from ca 6,500m, just below the east ridge. The 2001 expedition designated only four peaks in the Raksha Urai Range: I (6,370m), II (6,420m), III (6,609m), and IV (6,552m), a convention also adopted by the 2003 French expedition that made the first ascent of Raksha Urai III. Four members of this expedition—Arnaud Clerc, Catherine Coulaud, Gael Faroux, and Keshab Raj Gurung—climbed the south ridge, but Faroux and Keshab Raj fell to their deaths during the descent.

Phupharka Himal, Vendée Himal (5,488m). Northwest of Simikot, the principal airport of West Nepal, lies the remote valley of Limi (a.k.a. Takuche Khola) and its three villages: Jang, Waljie, and Til. They are Tibetan in culture, isolated in winter, but linked to China by a road

[This page] Unclimbed Phupharka Himal, with the elegant north ridge dropping toward the camera. *Paulo Grobel*





[This page] Close to the Tibet border, toward the eastern end of the Chandi Himal. (A) Changwatang (6,130m). (B) Peak 5,988m. (C) Peak 6,022m. (D) Peak 6,024m (Snow Dome). (E) Chandi Himal (6,069m). Guy Wilson

over the Lapche La (ca 5,000m) for three months of the year. Northeast of Simikot lies the Chuwa Khola Valley, descending from the Changla La, an ancient traders' pass across the border. Between the two there are ca 15 summits of 6,000m or above, all virgin and most unnamed.

We wanted to visit this paradise for exploratory mountaineering, ascending the Chuwa Khola before branching left and crossing the Nying La from the east. After this we planned to climb Ashvin, one of the 6,000ers. However, heavy spring snow blocked normal access routes to Limi. Desperate to reach Waljie and its four-faced Vairocana Buddha statue, unique in Asia, we decided to go west from Simikot to Yangar, and then cross the small Phupharka Himal to the north. Reaching a base camp proved easy with mules. We then left our Nepalese staff, crossed a snowy col (Phupharka La, 5,175m), and in passing a second ridge climbed a peak we named Vendée Himal. We reached the Limi Valley with just sleeping bags in our rucksacks. We were delighted with the statue and the hospitality of local villagers, but after we returned to a high camp on the Ardang Glacier, bad weather thwarted our plans to attempt Ardang (6,034m) or Tirawa Himal (5,876m). We forced a passage across the Ardang La (5,580m) and reunited with our Nepalese team.

Ardang, either by the easier south face or more directly from the north, presents an attractive objective. It should be on the list of new peaks opened by the government in 2014. I also suggest you look at Phupharka Himal (5,630m), especially its elegant north ridge. ☎

PAULO GROBEL, France

Chandi Himal, Peak 6,024m, northwest ridge; Chandi Himal (6,069m), southeast ridge, attempt. In November, Dave Chapman, Neil Warren, and I visited the remote Chandi Himal along the Nepal-Tibet border. As far as is known, no climbers had previously attempted any peaks in this range. Reaching base camp took five flights (ending at Simikot) and six days of trekking.

From Simikot we walked up the Dojam Khola, and then branched left into the Nying Khola, which leads to the Nying La immediately north of Changwatang. The journey proved slow, as mules found life difficult picking a safe route between steep bands of moraine. We established base camp at ca 4,950m below unclimbed Peak 5,895m, a cold spot where the surrounding mountains masked the sun for most of the day. On November 6, Dave and I moved west up the main valley and established advanced base camp at ca 5,450m in the bed of a dried-up lake, due north of Changwatang.

Next morning, in clear but windy weather, we ascended moraine and the snout of the glacier to reach easy slopes leading to the ca 5,950m col southeast of Chandi Himal. The route up the frontier ridge looked straightforward, so we left all technical gear and set off unroped along the

rocky crest. At ca 6,000m we met an extremely loose section, and with disappointment, retreated to the col. Not wanting to leave empty-handed, we climbed the northwest ridge of Peak 6,024m on the opposite side of the col, an easy snow dome but the first peak ever climbed in the Chandi Himal.

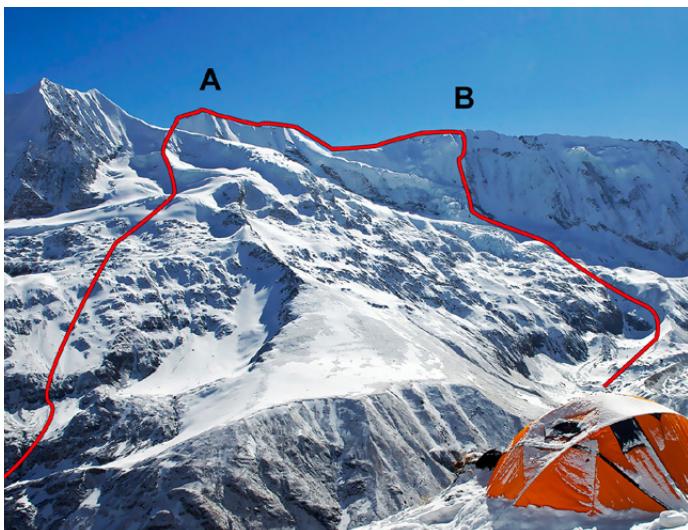
Despite a reputation for generally fine weather, the area was suddenly hit by prolonged, heavy snowfall. Several days passed, and there were no mules available. Abandoning most of our gear, and that of our local staff, we set off down valley carrying 30kg sacks. However, after three days we had covered only 15km, one quarter of the distance to Simikot. With further poor weather forecast, our agent stepped in with an offer of helicopter evacuation. The same day we were flown safely to Kathmandu. The expedition would like to thank the Shipton/Tilman Grant, Mount Everest Foundation, Alpine Club, and British Mountaineering Council for financial support. ☎

GUY WILSON, U.K.

KANJIROBA HIMAL

Strate Himal (5,323m), east couloir, and also by north ridge; Lambert Himal (5,100m), west ridge; Bijora Hiunchuli (6,111m), north-northwest ridge, attempt. Bijora Hiunchuli is a subsidiary summit on the northwest ridge of Kasi Dalpha (6,386m). The small, snowy top is clearly visible from Jumla airport, and access is relatively simple. In 2009, Sonia Baillif and I explored the approach to base camp in the Chaudhabise Valley, noting that the north-northwest ridge offered an elegant route to the summit.

The spring season suffered from the effects of a heavy winter snowfall, which blocked many Himalayan villages. This meant our team's base camp was low. The weather was also unstable, but the main trouble was a case of cerebral edema to one of the party. In the end we climbed several small tops: Strate Himal by the east couloir (5,323m, AD-, François Damilano and Jean-René Talopp); the same peak again, but this time by the north ridge and descent of the southeast flank (F+, Frank Bonhomme, Stephane Castex, Sonia Baillif, Dhane Magyer, Zangbu Sherpa, Yves Exbrayat, and me); Jagdula Peak (*see report by François Damilano below*); and Lambert Himal by the northeast ridge (F+, Yves Exbrayat and Jean-Louis Perrette). We only got a short distance up Bjora Hiunchuli, reaching the 5,272m col at the foot of the ridge and progressing up the crest to ca 5,600m. The beautiful north-northwest ridge of this peak is still there for the taking. ☎



[This page] The ascent, traverse, and descent soloed by François Damilano. (A) Peak 5,783m and (B) Jagdula Peak. *François Damilano*

PAULO GROBEL, France

Jagdula (5,764m) and unnamed peaks 5,783m and 5,750m. After having climbed Strate Himal on April 28 with Jean-René Talopp (see report above), I set out for a solo climb. Leaving base camp (4,021m) on the 30th, I walked up the lateral moraine of the Chaudhabise Glacier and then east to reach the bottom of the southwest face of Jagdula, a total of 7km. I then climbed this steep snow and ice face, with a tricky exit onto the summit ridge due to large cornices. From the summit I traversed the crest northwest to two more virgin summits (5,783m and 5,750m), before descending west down a beautiful unnamed glacier to rejoin the moraine, and so back to base camp, which I reached 22 hours after leaving. The overall grade was TD. I took only two bottles of water, some energy bars, and a 60m rope for rappelling and self-belaying.

FRANÇOIS DAMILANO, France

DAMODAR HIMAL

Chhubohe (5,640m GPS) southwest face and north ridge. In November, a team led by Brian Jackson did the first ascents of three 5,500–5,600m peaks in the Chomochomo Danda range, above the valleys of Nar and Phu, including Chhubohe (pronounced Chub Chay). The team's full report can be found at the AAJ website.  

BRIAN JACKSON, U.K., *Expeditionwise.com*

PERI HIMAL

Gyajikang and Nemju Himal, attempts. During the post-monsoon season, we found a useful new descent from the west ridge of Gyajikang and attempted Nemju Himal (6,404m). Our report is available at the AAJ website.  

PAULO GROBEL, France

ANNAPURNA HIMAL

Peak 6,505m, southwest couloir. While acclimatizing for their alpine-style ascent of the Steck route on Annapurna's south face in October (see feature article earlier in this edition), Stéphane Benoit and Yannick Graziani (France) made the first ascent of Peak 6,505m, south of Annapurna III. They climbed the southwest couloir (700m, TD with sections of 90°).

LINDSAY GRIFFIN, Mountain INFO

Singu Chuli (6,501m), historical correction. While acclimatizing before their ill-fated attempt on the south face of Annapurna in 1982, and to inspect the east ridge as a possible descent, René Ghilini, Alex MacIntyre, and John Porter are reported in most references to have climbed a new route up the steep, fluted, west face of Singu Chuli. This is incorrect.

Instead, the three climbed Singu Chuli's south ridge, which they followed over the summit and up to Tarke Kang (Glacier Dome, 7,168m), then on toward Kangsar Kang (Roc Noir) until stopped by wind slab above 7,200m. It is not certain who did the first ascent of the south ridge of Singu Chuli, but it had been climbed at least once before. The grade was about D.

Retracing their steps, the trio gained the saddle before Singu Chuli, and then descended to the west. The first part of their route down was not ascended until 1984, and the lower section not until 2002. See online for more details and a photo of the 1982 ascent and descent.  

LINDSAY GRIFFIN, *Mountain INFO*

Ghandarba Chuli (6,248m), southwest face and west ridge. Formerly known as the Gabelhorn, Ghandarba Chuli (a.k.a. Gandharva Chuli) lies on the ridge connecting Annapurna III (7,553m) to Machapuchare (6,993m), nearer to the latter. Before 2013 there had been no official attempt. The peak can only be attempted by a foreign team if it forms a joint expedition with Nepalis, so including cooks and helpers our expedition comprised two Romanians, Cristina Pogacean and I, and eight Nepalis. We reached base camp (3,857m GPS), at the confluence of the Modi Khola and the river that runs north from Singu Chuli (Fluted Peak), on May 2.

Next day, with three Nepalese companions, Pogacean and I made advanced base camp at 4,338m GPS on a grassy shoulder leading toward the glacier, on a ridge below “The Tower.” The following morning Pogacean and I left before 4 a.m. and, after circumventing the Tower, climbed moderate mixed ground up the left flank of a southwest-facing spur. At 2 p.m. we were hit by an electrical storm that produced heavy snowfall. We continued to make upward progress, eventually stopping around 10 p.m. to spend an uncomfortable night in a half-erected tent at 5,438m.

We left at 10 a.m. next day, after a night of snowfall, and decided to move up to a better campsite and evaluate snow conditions. After four or five pitches, but well below the point where the spur meets the west ridge at a triangular rock buttress, we were able to dig a proper ledge for the tent (5,586m GPS) and spend a day appraising the situation. Avalanches fell down gullies to either side.

The weather cleared during the night, and we left at 3 a.m. on the 6th. We avoided the triangular rock buttress on the right via a difficult traverse on unconsolidated snow overlying hard ice. Once on the west ridge, we followed the crest, which proved quite sharp in places. A steep snow pitch (75° at the exit) gained the flat top of a large cornice formation. Increasing afternoon wind and the consequential spindrift slowed us considerably on the final section, as the slope steepened from 55° to $65\text{--}70^\circ$.

In discussions at Machapuchare base camp, the locals had appeared somewhat unhappy about



[This page] The southwest face and west ridge of Ghandarba, showing camps. *Cosmin Andron*

the idea of our ascent of a “sacred mountain” (as they seem to see Ghandarbha Chuli as just an appendix of Machapuchare). We therefore had made the decision not to set foot on the very top, as a sign of respect. At 4 p.m. we stamped out a small platform one body length below the highest point. The GPS recorded 6,302m. We regained the tent at 10 p.m. and descended to advanced base the next day.

On the morning of the 8th we were greeted by three of our Nepalese team, who helped us pack, descend to our base camp, and then move onward to Machapuchare base camp. Here we discovered that the locals had not been thrilled on hearing the news of our ascent, but they remained reserved rather than hostile. We did our best to assure them that the top remains untrodden, and although they did not warm to us, we feel we made the best compromise. We began the walk out to Pokhara the following day. 

COSMIN ANDRON, Romania

ROLWALING HIMAL

Gaurishankar (to Point 6,850m), south face, Peine Prolongée. Gaurishankar's twin summits were mistakenly considered by early explorers to be the highest in the world. For both Hindus and Buddhists, the peak has deep religious significance. To Hindus, Gauri, the name ascribed to the 7,010m south and lower top, is the goddess of fertility and beauty, while Shankar (the higher, northerly top at 7,135m) is not only the god of destruction but also of reproduction and restorative power.

The south face, above the Tongmarnang Valley, does not reach either summit directly, topping out on a rounded crest at ca 6,850m, behind which there is a slight dip before a long, gently angled snow slope rises to the south summit. The history of attempts on this steep and technical face is poorly recorded. Poles made the first significant attempt in the spring of 1983, reaching ca 6,000m. That fall, a 15-member Slovenian expedition made the first ascent of the face, climbing left of the impressive central pillar. They joined the 1979 British route at ca 6,500m, continued up the ridge, and bivouacked in a snow hole

at 6,600m, before reaching the summit of Gauri the following day. A Japanese attempt in 1985 ended with Kensaku Sakai's fatal fall, and a German attempt in 2011 barely started because of poor

[This page] A hard mixed corner on the south face of Gaurishankar. *Pamalade 2013*





[This page] The south face of Gaurishankar. (1) Southwest ridge (1979, to Gauri, 7,010m). (2) Polish 1983 attempt and high point on south face. A similar line was followed by a Japanese team in 1985. (3) Slovenian route (1983). (4) Peine Prolongée (2013). (5) Southeast ridge (1984, to Gauri).
Pamalade 2013

weather. [See the online version of this report for a more complete history of these attempts.]

In post-monsoon 2013 Mathieu Détrie, Pierre Labbre, Mathieu Maynadier, and Jérôme Para also experienced a long spell of bad weather, though this gave time for acclimatization. When it set fair on October 20, the four left their 4,900m bivouac and slanted up right above the bergschrund to gain the shallow couloir, stopping for the night at 5,900m. Next day they got up at 3 a.m. and climbed the couloir till 7 p.m., bivouacking at 6,500m. Above the couloir, a rightward-slanting ramp led to the base of the headwall. On the 22nd they were almost blocked two pitches below the top by a steep and difficult rock band. Here, they lost much time trying several options before winning through and reaching the small but distinct top at ca 6,850m, the apex of the south face. The rock had been universally poor, but fortunately the climbers had been able to stick to ice more or less throughout.

There was no time to continue to the summit of Gauri, so they rappelled. (Parties climbing the southwest and southeast ridges of Gauri most likely would have bypassed this high point, so the top was virgin.) The trials of the 1,900m French route are reflected in the name: Peine Prolongée or “prolonged pain” (ED WI5+ M5 A1). ☐

LINDSAY GRIFFIN, *Mountain INFO*, from information from Lech Kiedrowski, Mathieu Maynadier, and Tone Skaja

Bamongo (6,400m), second ascent, south face and west ridge, partial new route. On October 30 two strong Nepalese mountaineers, Mingma Gyalje and Pema Tshering Sherpa, and I made the second ascent of Bamongo. This is a pointed summit on the long west ridge of Kang Nachugo (6,737m); Bamongo was first climbed in 2008 by David Gottlieb and Joe Puryear en route to the first ascent of Kang Nachugo (AAJ 2009). Mingma was born in Na, directly below the mountain, and in Kathmandu he showed me a photo, saying he was looking for a climbing partner. I



[This page] Kang Nachugo from the south. (B) Bamongo. (1) Access to the west ridge used by Gottlieb and Puryear to make the first ascent of Bamongo and Kang Nachugo. (2) Chinese-Nepalese route to make the second ascent of Bamongo. The Gottlieb-Puryear start is marked; the Chinese Nepalese team followed the rock rib left of the icefall, then crossed the glacier to the foot of the face. (3) West ridge. (4) Gottlieb-Puryear attempt. (5) Kastelic-Santos completion of southwest face to 6,650m on south-southeast ridge. *Joe Puryear*

decided immediately to go with him.

From our base camp at 4,800m, we climbed a rock spur and wall to 5,440m (up to 5.8) on the 28th, then returned to base camp as a storm moved in. The next day we regained our high point and prepared for a single-push attempt on the face above.

We started at 5 a.m. on the 30th and reached the foot of the face through deep snow. The angle was between 40° and 60°, and conditions improved as we gained height. We needed to climb fast as we were traveling light (no bivouac gear), so we moved together with running belays. High on the face we climbed steep ice to avoid a rock band, and at 11:20 a.m. arrived on the ridge at an altitude of 6,000m. The crest above was sharp, the snow soft, and we were now exposed to a strong, cold wind from the north. With Mingma in the lead we made 10 pitches, and then continued for over an hour with running belays, occasionally stopping so one of us (mostly Mingma) could lead a steep step. My two companions moved so fast I had to ask them to stop a few times, just so I could catch my breath and take a few pictures. [Pema has climbed Everest 12 times.] We reached the summit at 2:35 p.m.

We reversed the route, and on the south face two of us rappelled, after which the third cleaned the belay and downclimbed. In this way we moved fast, reaching base camp by 9 p.m. It had been a round trip of 16 hours and we'd not stopped to eat or drink. Everyone was exhausted, and it's likely the fastest I've ever climbed at 6,000m. Our new route up the south face may also be the first by a Chinese on the south side of the Nepal Himalaya. Our line lies to the right of the 2008 ascent, and we named it Che Guevara (1,500m, 5.8 40-60°).

LIU YONG (A.K.A. DALIU), *China*

Kang Nachugo (6,737m), southwest face, Monsoon (not to summit). I went to Rolwaling in search of an area in Nepal that is off the beaten track, yet still offers unclimbed peaks and faces. In the autumn, Santiago Padros (Italy) and I spent one month in Na, living in a lodge owned by a warm Sherpa family, and we became close with the friendly local community.

During our first few weeks in the area, we acclimatized to 5,000m, then went up the Ripimo Shar Glacier and climbed the south ridge of Ripimo Shar to 5,650m. From there we were able to see the huge climbing potential of the region. During the following days the weather worsened, and we could only make an ascent of Yalung Ri (5,650m), which we did in a fast one-day climb from Na. One and a half meters of fresh snow limited our options and aborted another proposed climb up the Ripimo Shar Glacier.

Back in Na we had only five days left for climbing. Tired of long approaches, we decided to attempt a peak “in our backyard.” Kang Nachugo had only one ascent, and the southwest face remained unclimbed. It had been attempted by David Gottlieb and Joe Puryear, who in 2008 climbed for three days to 6,400m before forced to retreat in bad weather. A few days later they climbed the mountain by the long west ridge.

We reached the foot of the face on October 20 and pitched the tent. Next day we were able to climb around 1,200m. The first half of this we climbed unroped, but as the terrain became steeper we tied in and moved simultaneously. At around 3 p.m. we began to look for a place to pitch the tent, but the terrain forced us to continue to 6:30 p.m., when we finally found a poor ledge under a large rock barrier. There was not enough height for the tent, but it was enough for us to lie down and rest.

On the 22nd we climbed a few steep pitches on perfect snow and ice to the south-southeast ridge. We climbed up the crest a little way to a small, flat-topped prominence at 6,650m. It was midday, and although the distance to the summit, along an exposed, corniced ridge, was not great, we realized that continuing would require spending one more night on the mountain. We both agreed it would be best to go down, so we made 20 rappels and then downclimbed to the bottom of the face. We have named our line Monsoon (ca 1,500m, 75°). After our climb we decided to make a donation—the equivalent of the peak fee—to the Beding Monastery school, to support the education of kids in the valley. ☺ ☻

DOMEN KASTELIC, Slovenia



[This page] Emerging onto the south-southeast ridge of Kang Nachugo. Domen Kastelic



rope up the east flank of the north ridge to gain the crest at 5,950m.

Papert and Senf arrived in the Khumbu hoping to try a new line on the nearby north face of Tengkangpoche (6,487m), but lack of ice forced a change in plan. After a rapid acclimatization climb to the top of Parchamo, and a paraglide from a slightly lower altitude, the pair set off up the Likhu massif's north-northeast face, which leads to an eastern subsidiary top of 6,660m. Excellent conditions allowed them to climb half the 1,800m snow and ice face unroped. Above, sections up to 70° and waist-deep snow proved taxing, and a looming cornice forced them to bivouac just below

[This page, top] Ines Papert climbing the lower section of the north-northeast face. *Visualimpact.ch* | Thomas Senf **[This page, bottom]** Route of ascent of Likhu Chuli I with camps marked. *Visualimpact.ch* | Thomas Senf

Likhu Chuli I (6,719m), north-northeast face of Pt. 6,660m, north flank and north ridge. On November 13 Ines Papert made the first ascent of Likhu Chuli I, reaching the summit alone. Her partner, Thomas Senf from Switzerland, remained in their top camp, fearing he might get serious frostbite in his toes.

Likhu Chuli I and its lower western summit II (6,659m) also appear on maps as Pigpherago Shar and Pigpherago Nup, respectively. A long ridge running north from Likhu Chuli I eventually crosses the well-known trekking peak Parchamo (6,279m), before dropping to the Tesi Laptsa Pass, a popular crossing point between the Khumbu and Rolwaling

The Likhu Group was officially off-limits until 2003, though in 1960 a French expedition, led by Robert Sandoz and exploring various peaks in the Rolwaling, climbed the steep and difficult west-northwest ridge of Likhu Chuli II, making the first and only known ascent. They established two camps before Alain Barbezat and Nawang Dorje reached the top. The only known attempt on Likhu Chuli I took place in 2007, when Japanese Koichi Ezaki and Hiroshi Kudo fixed

the top. Next day they breached the cornice, gained the 6,660m top, and set up camp for a second, very cold night.

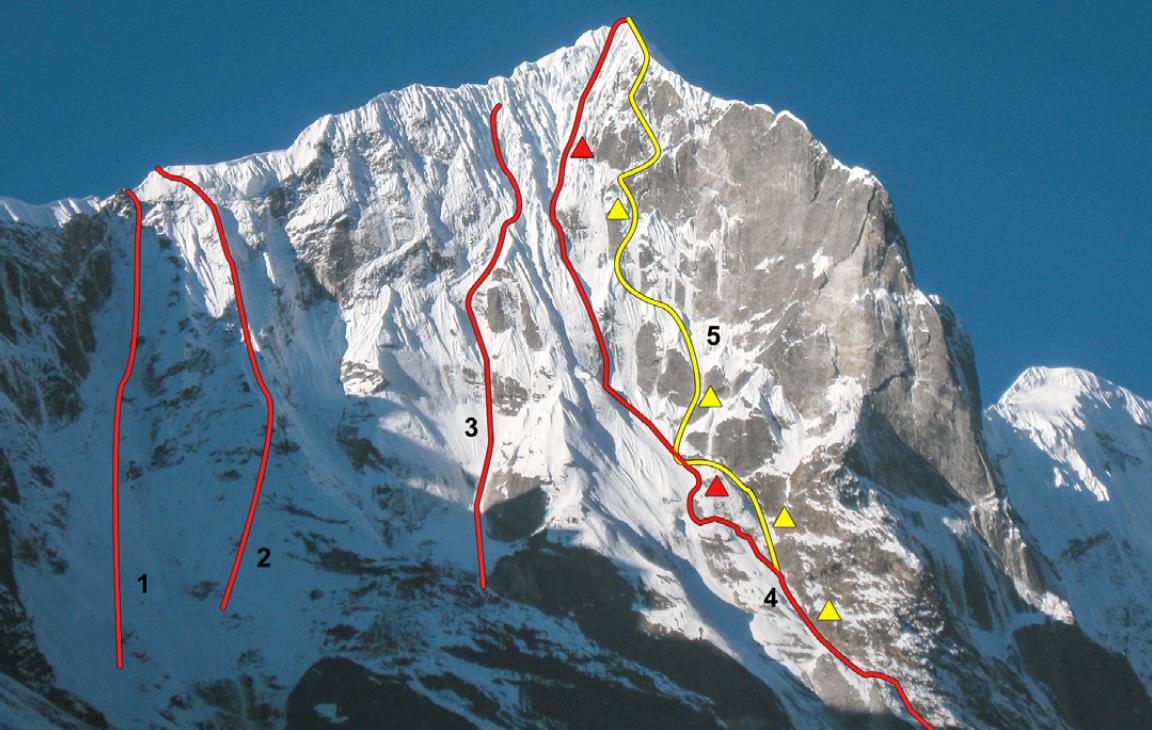
The following morning they realized climbing the east ridge to the main top would be impossible due to excessive amounts of powder, so instead they made a long traverse across the north flank of the summit pyramid and placed their third camp at 6,580m on the north ridge. Senf decided to wait, and on the following day Papert continued in high winds up 70° slopes to the summit, arriving at 2 p.m. The pair spent another night at the top camp before downclimbing the north ridge to a point where they could descend steeply east to the glacier. Both suffered some frostbite in fingers and toes.

LINDSAY GRIFFIN, with information from Ines Papert

Tengkangpoche (6,487m), northeast face, The Battle for Love (variant to Moonlight). In October, Galina Chibitok and Anastasia Petrova (Russia), and Marina Kopteva (Ukraine), climbed the 1,900m northeast face via a line they named the Battle for Love (VI 6b A2). The three started work on the route on September 23 and climbed for 18 days in capsule style, making nine camps, nearly all in a portaledge. The lower section of the face was characterized by moss-covered cracks and slabs, and the upper by ice-covered rock, which made protection and belays difficult to arrange.

At Camp 9, more or less out of food, they received a forecast for a three-day weather window, and so decided to climb nonstop to the summit. In a 52-hour return trip from their portaledge they

[This page] The upper section of the northeast face of Tengkangpoche. (1) Bullock descent route. (2) Nick Bullock, solo, 2003, as far as the east ridge. (3) Kenji Arai-Takaaki Nagato attempt to ca 6,250m in 2008. (4) Moonlight (2008). (5) Battle For Love, where different from Moonlight. Yasushi Okada



climbed 770m, reaching the top at 1:20 a.m. on October 9. By noon the following day they had descended to base camp. The three women climbed a total of 3,100m, placed 35 bolts, and endured snowfall on nearly all days.

At the time the women were not aware that this face had previously been climbed. In 2008, Japanese Hiroyoshi Manome and Yasushi Okada climbed in alpine style from November 12–15 to complete Moonlight (ED). The lower and middle sections of the Japanese and Russian-Ukrainian routes are more or less the same, but in the upper section the Japanese kept left, climbing steep snow and ice to the east ridge. The three women worked up rock to the right, eventually finishing up the final section of the northeast pillar.

LINDSAY GRIFFIN, *Mountain INFO*, from information provided by Anna Piunova, mountain.ru



MAHALANGUR HIMAL

KHUMBU SECTION

Lungaretse, south face, Colombian Direct (not to summit). On November 4, Camilo Lopez and I climbed a direct line on the south face of Lungaretse, a peak immediately north of Kyajo Ri that people on the west side of the mountain refer to as Umjo-tse (Lake Peak).

We accessed the peak via Marlung (Marulung,

4,150m), a small village north of Thame in the Bhote Kosi valley, which we reached after a four-day walk from Lukla. We set up high camp at 4,800m above Marlung in order to acclimatize and scope lines on surrounding peaks. Prior to our arrival, two meters of snow had fallen in the cirque below the west face of Kyajo Ri, giving full winter conditions, but the weather had turned stable, with clear, cold mornings and thick cloud coming up valley from Thame in the afternoons.

We spotted an aesthetic, steep couloir on the south face of Lungaretse and attempted it from our high camp, only to realize we had misjudged the length. After ca 700m of climbing we were forced to retreat due to extreme cold and short daylight hours.

After a short recovery in Marlung, we discussed the idea of placing a higher camp and decided to give the peak another go. On November 2 we regained our first high camp, and on the following day moved everything up to ca 5,200m. It was extremely cold, and we fought hard to keep fingers and toes warm. On the 4th, after strenuous work to reach the base of the couloir, we simul-climbed the initial 65° snow and then pitched 90° AI4 steps and mixed terrain. After ca

[This page] Colombian Direct on the south face of Lungaretse. Unclimbed west face of Kyajo Ri to the right. *Camilo Lopez*

500m the couloir led onto a snowfield below the summit block. We reached a saddle between the main summit and a sub-peak to the left, with only a moderately angled slope leading to the former. However, due to the intense cold we had already decided we could not remain on the mountain at night. We descended from this point, making around 10 rappels plus downclimbing. We returned to camp in a whiteout, barely finding the tent. We have called the line Colombian Direct (ca 1,200m of climbing from high camp, TD Al4 90°). We saw no trace of previous passage on this mountain, which has no documented ascent.

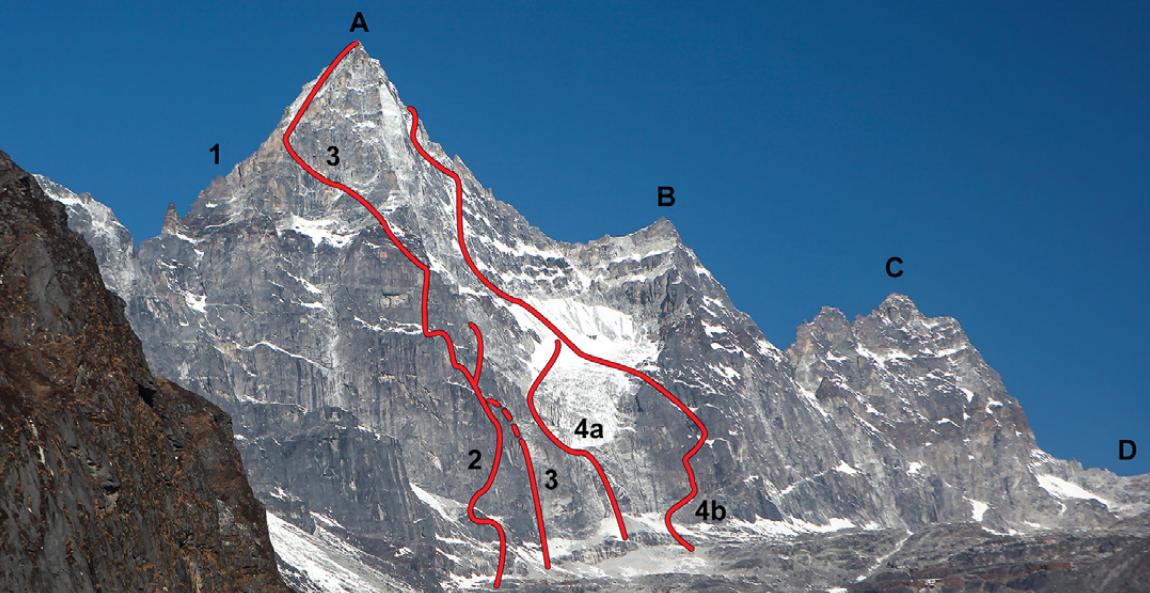
[Editor's note: Lungaretse, which lies roughly midway on the ridge between Kyajo Ri and Pharilapcha and is considerably smaller on the Machermo (east) side, has various quoted heights: The Schneider map gives 5,949m; NepaMap 6,070m; and Google Earth ca 5,870m (but also only ca 6,090 for Kyajo Ri, generally given 6,186m).]

ANNA PFAFF, USA

Kyajo Ri (6,186m), east face, Stealing Beauty. In May, Vladimir Belousov from Russia and Marina Kopteva, the accomplished big-wall climber from the Ukraine, made the first ascent of the east face of Kyajo Ri, a coveted objective that had seen off many parties since the peak was officially opened in 2002. The mountain is the highest in a small cluster of peaks known as the Khumuchu or Kyajo Ri Himal.

In 2003 a Dutch team comprising Andreas Amens, Paul Bielen, Peter Valkenburg, and Michael van Geemen were the first to take on the challenge of the huge rock walls that form the triangular east face. They made one bivouac after five or six pitches, then after nine pitches (up to 6b A2) realized they had neither the right rack nor food and time to complete the route. Van Geemen would return to the east face in 2011 with Niek de Jonge, but the pair was forced to descend after

[This page] (A) Kyajo Ri, (B) Pt. 5,900m, (C) Lungaretse (5,916m), and (D) Col 5,620m, seen from close to Machermo. (1) Southeast ridge (2006). (2) Dutch attempts on east face. (3) Stealing Beauty (2013). (4) Attempts on northeast face: (a) New Zealand (2011), and (b) Italian (2009). Vladimir Belousov, supplied by Anna Piunova



just three pitches when van Geemen fell ill.

In 2009, Germans Johannes Jahn and Michael Stacheder had another crack at this wall, and while it is not known whether their line was the same as the Dutch, the two climbed 700m over two days before tiredness and poor conditions forced a retreat. Their ascent to ca 5,800m involved difficulties of UIAA VII, M5, and aid. Attempts by Koreans are also strongly rumored, but no details are known.

Another Dutch pair, Roland Bekendam and Hans Lanters, attempted the face in late October 2012, but found that the sun disappeared from the wall by 11:30 a.m. and the temperature dropped rapidly to -10°C, making it rather chilly for rock climbing. They also found the wall completely devoid of snow and ice, and hence drinking water for their proposed three-day ascent. They quickly gave up and returned to Machermo.

In pre-monsoon 2013, Belousov and Kopteva arrived at Machermo lodge, and after three hours on a good path established a camp below the east face at 4,900m. From there to the foot of the ca 1,150m wall was just 30 minutes. Carrying a limited amount of food and fuel, the pair climbed the face, alpine-style, in five days, reaching the summit on May 14. A sixth day was needed to rappel the route.

The pair completed the line, named Stealing Beauty, in 28 pitches. The first four, up the steepest part of the lower wall, were 6b with one pitch of A2. The next three pitches in a corner system, leading to a sloping terrace at 5,300m, where they made their first bivouac, provided mixed terrain up to M6. Three more pitches (6b) led to a large scree terrace and a second bivouac (5,450m). Short rock walls and icy corners were followed to a couloir/ramp that slanted left across the lower headwall to reach the southeast ridge at around 5,800m. The climbing that day was nasty in parts, due to the poor snow and ice conditions and wet rock.

The Russian-Ukrainian duo was now on the 2005 American route. After a third bivouac, they kept to the left side of the crest on shattered rock and reached the top via a final 100m of icy slopes (65°, AI3). Some bolts were placed on the route.

LINDSAY GRIFFIN, *Mountain INFO*, with information from Roland Bekendam, The Netherlands, and Anna Piunova, *Mountain.ru*

Arakam Tse (5,904m), northeast face, Tatopani. Silvestre Barrientos, Alfonso Gaston, Ferran Rodríguez, and I (Spain) planned to try Cholatse's north face in the autumn. From October 2–16 we trekked in the Annapurna region and climbed Chuli Far East for acclimatization. We arrived in the Khumbu on the 18th to find that heavy snowfall above 5,000m had made many of the mountains dangerous. We tried twice to climb Cholatse, but there was a high risk of avalanche and huge cornices, so we gave up and moved northeast to Arakam Tse, which is lower and therefore had less snow and objective danger. We spotted a good line on the northeast face and set off from the village of Dzonglha at 2:50 a.m. on the 26th.

The approach to the face, through bad snow, took three hours, and we were expecting to find things just as unpleasant in the couloir. However, snow and ice conditions turned out to be perfect. We completed the first 400m unroped. The remaining 600m gave difficult snow, ice, and mixed climbing. It took seven hours to reach the summit and three hours to rappel our route, using nuts, pegs, and Abalakovs. We named the line Tatopani (1,000m, VI/5+ M5+). We returned to Dzonglha 21 hours after leaving. Local people said we were the first to summit this mountain. [Editor's note: The HGM Finn map is wrong, in that it marks Arakam Tse as the summit of Cholatse, and Cholatse as



[This page, left] Alfonso Gaston enjoys excellent ice conditions on Arakam Tse. Josep Maria Esquirol

[This page, above] Tatopani on the northeast face of Arakam Tse. Josep Maria Esquirol

Tawoche North. The true Arakam Tse, climbed by the Spanish, lies approximately 3km northeast of the true Cholatse. The true Arakam Tse is not on the Ministry list and appears to have no recorded ascents. It may be easiest from the southwest.] 

JOSEP MARIA ESQUIROL, Spain

Tawoche (6,495m), northwest ridge, attempt. In November 2012, after climbing Kyajo Ri, Hans Lanters and I moved to Pheriche and attempted the unclimbed northwest ridge of Tawoche. We had been able to see it from both sides: steep sections up to the still virgin north summit (ca 6,350m), then a long knife-edge for 1km to the main top. Due to the excellent snow conditions on Kyajo Ri, we were optimistic.

The climb to the Cholatse-Tawoche col from the east is not simple. We made camp at 5,050m but found no snow until 5,400m. Every boulder moved. We had never come across terrain as bad as this in the Alps, and it was so tiring we had to make two load carries. On our first attempt to climb the couloir below the col we found no ice, only vertical, frozen rubbish. We turned to drier rock on the right and were successful next day. But it involved a scary ascending traverse, dry-tooling frozen debris to reach steep powder snow. We reached the col in early afternoon. Only one party had been there before us—a British team in 1983. An ancient fixed rope was still visible.

Next day, November 5, we set out for the north top. It had taken two days longer than expected to get here, making us low on food. Despite the cold (down to -25°C), we felt strong and climbed fast and unroped up the ridge above. In early afternoon we encountered an 80m, almost-vertical rock step covered with powder. Iced, it would give two perfect pitches, but now it was almost unclimbable, certainly unprotectable, and therefore too dangerous. Disappointed, we turned around.

Although we failed on our main goals, we worked well together, always agreeing on strategy. We gained a lot of experience. In short, “successful failures.”

ROLAND BEKENDAM, The Netherlands



Ama Dablam (6,814m), northeast face, attempt. The experienced team of Shin Dong-seok (48), Yoo Hak-jae (52, leader), and Yoo Young-jik (43) made an alpine-style attempt on a new route up the northeast face of Ama Dablam. The team established base camp on October 12 at 5,090m but were then stuck there until the 21st due to heavy snowfall. The three began their attempt on the 22nd, following a line that was similar, but slightly to the right in parts, to that attempted in 2007 by fellow members of the Corean Alpine Club (AAJ 2008).

On the first day Shin, Yoo, and Yoo climbed eight pitches of rock and snow (UIAA IV-V, 60-70°) in 10 hours, bivouacking at 5,750m. On the 23rd they continued over difficult rock and ice for eight hours, climbing six pitches (V, 70-80°) to a bivouac at 6,125m. On the following day they made a further five pitches (V-VI, 80-85°) to a high point of 6,300m (total climbing distance ca 1,600m). From this point their aim would have been to reach the upper north ridge at its characteristic shoulder and then follow it to the summit, therefore avoiding the large mushrooms

on the upper east face. But while heavy snow cover was an advantage on the lower section of the face, once the angle increased the snow became soft and dangerous. It was also very difficult to find secure belays. Given the relatively slow progress on this upper section, they estimated it would take three more days to reach the summit.

After a bivouac at 6,250m, they retreated. All agreed that snow conditions on this face are the key: In perfect conditions, probably rare, the route wouldn't be too difficult, mostly mixed climbing with good rock protection. The central couloir is easier but too exposed to avalanche. This face has only received one ascent, in December 1985, by Carlos Buhler and Michael Kennedy, via the spur left of the central couloir.

RODOLPHE POPIER, *The Himalayan Database, France*, and Shin Dong-seok, *Korea*

Kusum Kanguru (6,370m), southwest face. Vyacheslav (Slava) Ivanov and I were really surprised to find such a beautiful mountain with an unclimbed face so close to Lukla. What a stroke of luck! However, at that time we knew nothing of its history. We planned a quick, three- to four-day ascent before moving on to Lobuche Peak. Life makes its own plans.

Three couloirs penetrate the lower wall. The left, leading to the center of the face, is the most dangerous, with the St. Petersburg to Moscow train rumbling down at frequent intervals. We chose

[This page] Dry-tooling at the start of the Korean attempt on the northeast face of Ama Dablam. The 1985 Buhler-Kennedy route takes the mixed spur top left. *Shin Dong-seok*

the right couloir, which rises toward the south ridge. The trains here only started at 1 or 2 p.m.

We started on October 10 and for the first two days were only troubled by small avalanches and a little rockfall. After lunchtime we would hide beneath rocks. Eighty percent of the terrain was covered with 5 to 7cm of snow. There was no ice, and both protection and belays were hard to find in the largely crackless granite. If we placed three pieces of protection a pitch, that was pure joy. Sometimes we didn't place any, even though we wanted to, badly.

The first day I led 10 pitches. On the second Slava took over and added another 10. We belayed where it was possible, not at the end of the rope, so sometimes our pitches were as short as 35m. We also stopped in plenty of time to construct a tent site for the night, in order to save strength. By the end of the second day we had moved left out of the couloir and onto the bordering rock buttress. On the third day we climbed seven pitches in thick mist, stopping beneath an overhang at ca 5,800m. One hour of work and we had a nice, safe spot—if we had known then about the coming storm, we would surely have stayed there.

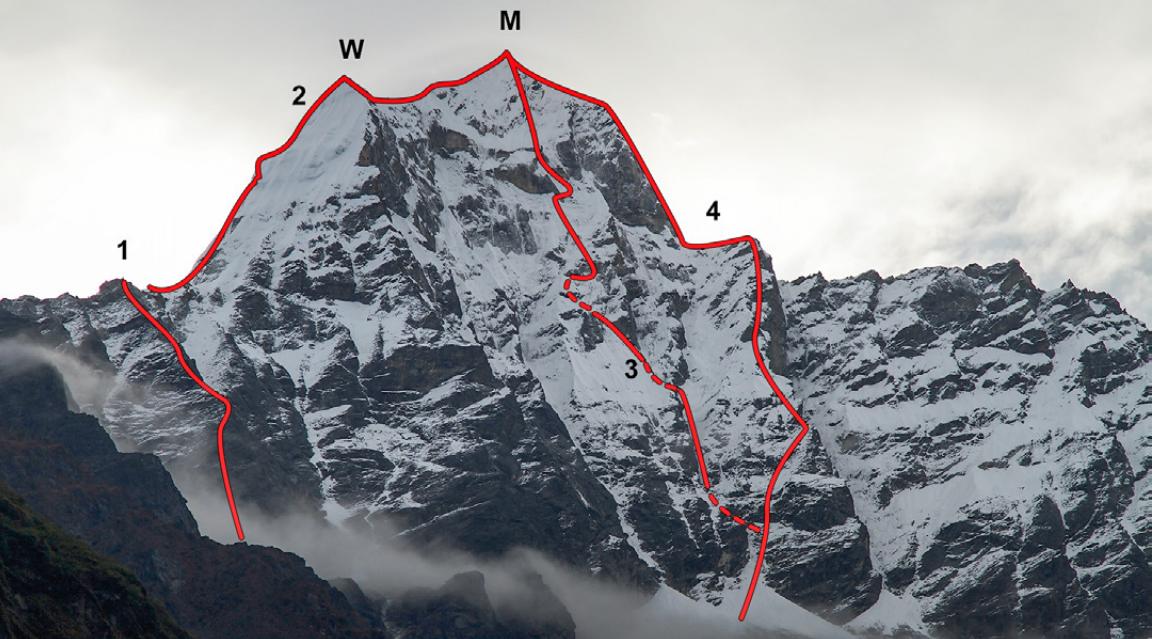
Next morning we traversed right to find a way through the rock barrier above. Snowfall accelerated rapidly, and Slava was hit by heavy spindrift. I followed the horizontal traverse with two sacks, and in the cacophony of roaring avalanches performed 10m pendulums, testing my bone strength against the rock. We had to hide as fast as possible, and managed to build a hasty, concave platform, the size of a bathtub. It would be our resting place for the next three days. Those days were terrible. Every three hours we had to get out and clear large amounts of snow between wall and tent—it threatened to tear us off the face.

Eventually we were able to continue. Slava climbed a hard, vertical pitch of dry-tooling, the only time his monopoints came in handy. (When the sun came out and the névé began to melt, they were useless.) Several times he took 5m to 7m falls, when snow over rock collapsed. The visions of Slava's falls are still in my mind. Once, he flew 7m and landed on his back, fortunately protected by his rucksack. He immediately got up as if nothing had happened and with a slight moan resumed climbing.

We had planned to climb fast, so had taken only a few days of food that did not need cooking, and only two 250g gas canisters. On the 19th, at an altitude of 6,145m, we ran out of both food and gas. The three-day storm had not only taken our supplies, but also our strength.

On the morning of the 20th we climbed 45–50° snow ridges to the summit—these were 45–50m pitches without protection. Our main belays were bags filled with snow and deeply buried, like deadmen. We continued along the crest toward the northeast summit (6,350m). Large snow mushrooms had formed on the ridge, and Sasha found it difficult in his monopoints and often flew, head down, into space. To belay him I had to dig a deep hole, like a mole, and sit in it. Finally, we





[This page] The southwest face of Kusum Kanguru. (W) West top. (M) Main (southwest) top. (1) New Zealand (2011, to west ridge). (2) Denz (1981). (3) Falling into the Void (2013). (4) Renshaw-Venables (1991). Alexander Ruchkin

reached the last summit and could see the descent onto the plateau. We had to make two rappels to reach it. The first was fine, but on the second I guess we were in too much of a hurry—it was extremely cold in a northerly wind. Our anchor was not buried deep enough and pulled. Riding a layer of snow, we both slid 20–30m onto the plateau. It was now dark, and we were fed up. We erected the tent and for the first time in five days we could lie flat. Next morning we continued our journey down the north face in knee-deep, or sometimes waist-deep, snow. We rappelled many times, and near the base narrowly missed being engulfed by a large avalanche.

We had now been without water for three days, just eating snow, but as we descended toward the valley the snow turned to small rivulets and we drank deeply. Unfortunately, crossing one of the bigger rivers, I slipped and plunged into the substance I'd dreamed of for so many days. I was immersed up to the neck, drowning my cameras. We finally reached a cairned trail that led to a clearing at 4,300m, which we presumed was the site of the north-side base camp. We had arranged for our sirdar to meet us here with food, but either due to a misunderstanding or the fact that we were lost, we never saw him. One trail led away from the clearing and we followed it for one hour until realizing it was definitely going uphill and not down. Sacha, who has less fat to lose than me, was very tired, falling behind constantly. We were unsuccessful in finding another trail down.

Next morning we spotted Monjo in the main Dudh Kosi valley, like a mirage 700m below. How were we supposed to get there? I suggested we try to rappel the steep, grassy slopes toward the village, but Slava, now nearing his limit, did not like the idea. We found later that he had lost 15kg, compared to my 12kg. We had one more option: a helicopter. Although we'd tried to the end, we phoned in our coordinates and a request to be rescued. We were evacuated to Lukla on the 22nd.

The southwest face is 1,400m, and our route had ca 1,600m of climbing (40 pitches). We named it Falling into the Void (Russian 6A, TD/ED WI5 M5).

ALEXANDER RUCHKIN, Russia, provided by Anna Piunova, Mountain.ru,
translated by Ekaterina Vorotnikova

Editor's note: New Zealanders Peter Hillary and Murray Jones were the first to have designs on the southwest face. They reconnoitered the Kusum Khola in spring of 1979, before deciding it was too difficult to penetrate with porters. They made an attempt from the north instead. Several teams subsequently used their northerly approach, getting as far as the northeast summit but not the main top, before the arrival in Nepal of New Zealand's Bill Denz in October 1981. In what is now acknowledged to be one of the most remarkable first ascents of the lower Himalayan peaks, Denz, climbing alone, spent one and a half days ascending a mixed buttress to the left of the southwest face to reach the west ridge. He followed this to a second bivouac on the west top, and the next day he made a trying ascent to the main (southwest) summit, bivouacked, and then traversed the narrow connecting ridge to the ca 6,350m northeast summit. From here he descended the northwest flank and spent a further two days bushwhacking down valley to Monjo.

Denz's ascent remained largely unknown for many years, and the southwest face did not come to the attention of most climbers until after 1991. In autumn of that year, Dick Renshaw and Stephen Venables bushwhacked to the head of the Kusum Khola with their eyes on the face, only to find it regularly bombarded by rockfall. Instead they climbed 26 pitches up the right flank of a 900m buttress on the right, reaching the unclimbed south ridge. They finished up this via a magnificent rock pillar to the main summit. The 1,250m route was graded TD+.

In 2000, Bart Paull and Freddie Wilkinson also had designs on the southwest face, but like their predecessors saw it raked by incessant stonefall. Instead, they climbed an independent line up the center of the Renshaw-Venables buttress before following the 1991 route (pitches of 5.9) to 6,100m, at the start of the summit ridge. Here they were forced down by the onset of very high winds.

In 2001, Slovenians Jernej Bevk and Uros Samec were also put off the southwest face by stonefall, reaching ca 5,500m on the Renshaw-Venables. Also in the valley at around the same time were Pavel Chiznak, Ivan Foltyn, and Petr Strnadel, who completed Birthday Cake (5.8 M5 80°) to a 5,805m point on the south ridge, while fellow Czechs Roman Kamler and Slavek Vomacko put up West Buttress (5.9 90°), which leads to a 5,579m point on the west ridge.

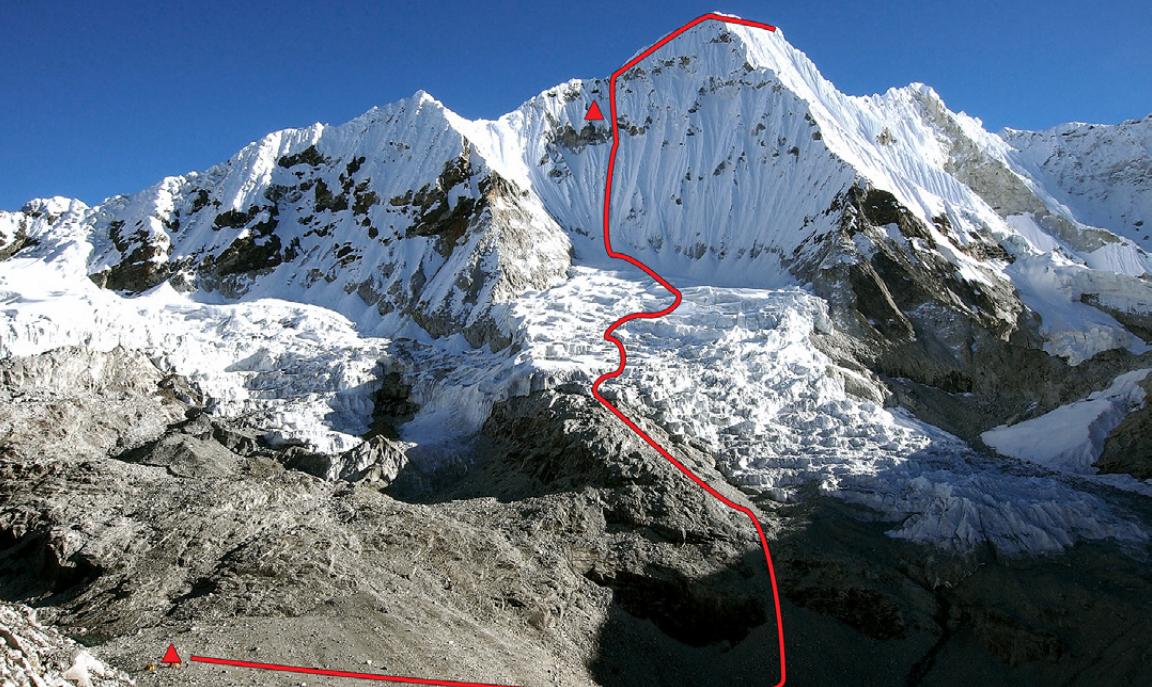
In 2004 heavy stonefall stopped two unpermitted young Alaskans from trying either the southwest face or Renshaw-Venables, so they moved well right and climbed a rightward-slanting line almost to the crest of the south ridge.

Finally, in 2011, three New Zealanders, unable to get established on the face, climbed a rib to the left that they believe to be left of the line followed by Denz (but well right of the Czech line). This gave 1,000m of mixed ground (M5) to the west ridge, from where they descended (AAJ 2012).

Amphu I (6,740m), first official ascent. In early October, An Chi-young, Kim Young-mi, and I made the first known ascent of Amphu I, which lies between (and east of) the Amphu Lapcha (a.k.a. Amphu Labtse, a popular 5,780m trekkers' pass) and Baruntse North. While the official height (HMG Finn map) is 6,740m, the Schneider map has an altitude 100m higher.

The peak was opened in 2002 and since then it appears only two permits have been issued, to a German expedition in 2008 and a Japanese team in 2012. Neither expedition succeeded on Amphu I, though the Germans climbed Point 6,146m, the highest and most northerly of three unnamed summits between the Chhukhung and Amphu glaciers. [No doubt to comply with the permit, the Germans later referred to their mountain by the name Amphu Middle.] We feel it is rather confusing to refer to these peaks as "Amphu," as they are far away and in a different group from Amphu I.

After acclimatizing on Mera, we established base camp at 5,250m by the Panch Pokhari (the collection of lakes south of Amphu Lapcha), arriving on September 27. After two reconnaissance



[This page] Southwest face of Amphu I showing route of ascent, including base camp and Alligator's Mouth. Oh Young-hoon

trips up to the glacier terrace below the face, which proved complex but not serious, we started our attempt on October 8. We planned to climb the southwest face via a deep couloir to the west ridge.

We crossed the bergschrund at 5,970m. Throughout the climb the wind was strong and we were troubled by snow showers and falling icicles. I led the first nine pitches, which were relatively easy, but the face got steeper as we progressed, and both An and Kim were hit by large falling icicles. Kim took over the lead on the 10th pitch. At 8:30 p.m. we found a small but ideal ice cave at ca 6,450m, in which to spend the night. Due to icicles in the roof, we dubbed it the Alligator's Mouth.

Starting next day at 8:30 a.m., Kim led, and then An, the face becoming almost vertical soft snow. The ridge, too, had soft snow and was quite sharp. Snow stakes sometimes gave no security. Higher, the angle eased, and we eventually reached the summit at 3 p.m. We had to belay down the dreadful ridge, as we could place no rappel anchors. We regained the Alligator's Mouth at sunset, and next day three hours of rappelling brought us to the glacier. We named the route Windy Couloir (1,300m, plus 500m glacier approach, TD AI5).

OH YOUNG-HOON, and Peter Jensen-Choi, Korea

JANAK HIMAL

Syao Kang (6,041m) first ascent, Chaw East (6,404m), attempt. In post-monsoon season 2012, a New Zealand Alpine Club expedition led by John Nankervis explored the rarely visited Yangma Khola region, west of Kangchenjunga. Permits had been granted for Syao Kang (also spelled Suaokang) and Chaw East. Both peaks are situated in the upper Yangma, Chaw East on the Nepal-Tibet border. There is no record of either peak having been attempted.

We accessed the region from the standard trekking route to the north side of Kangchenjunga. Branching left from the village of Lelep, a less-defined track follows the Yangma Khola to the village

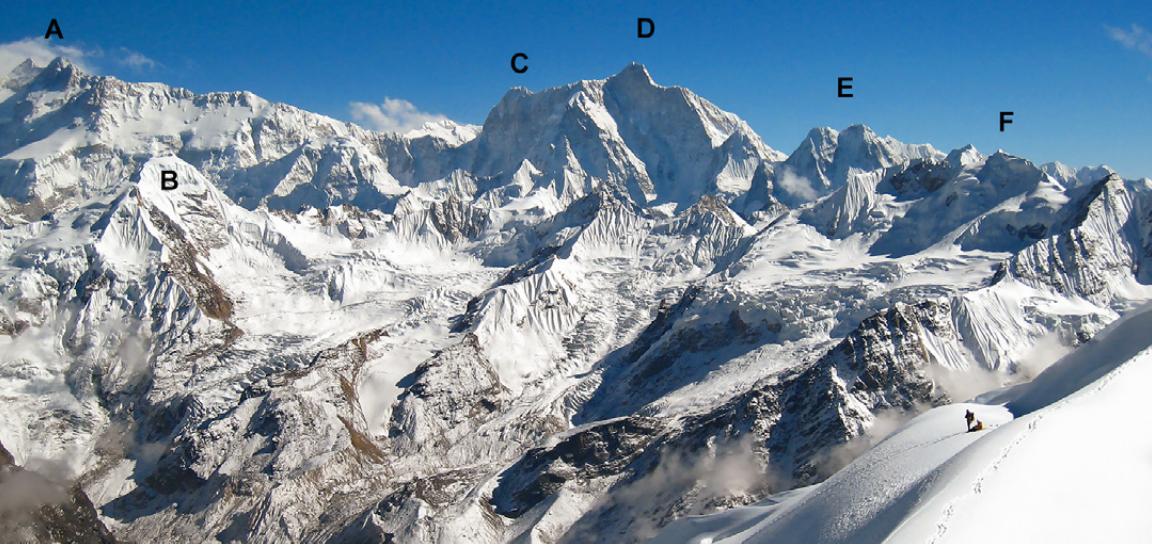
of Yangma (4,200m), where we arrived on October 18. This settlement of 11 families is situated on sunny, south-facing terraces above fertile river flats. From the village a reconnaissance established a site for base camp, and explored possible routes onto Syao Kang and Chaw East. On the 20th base camp was set up on a grassy yak paddock close to the summer grazing village of Syao (4,400m).

We decided to attempt Syao Kang first, as it looked to be the less problematic of the two peaks. Local knowledge indicated a possible access route starting from the foot of the Ohmi Glacier and following a small tributary valley onto the peak's eastern flanks. This valley provided comfortable campsites at 4,950 and 5,300m, with spectacular views of Kangchenjunga and Jannu from the top camp. A day was spent negotiating a route through steep walls of rock and glacial ice above camp and onto the crevassed slopes above. We only belayed one and a half pitches on the final section of exposed ridge. At 3:30 p.m. on the 25th, John Cocks, Martin Hunter, Geoffroy Lamarche, Nick Shearer, and I summited Syao Kang. Two GPS readings indicated a height of 6,041m. Syao Kang has three summits: the north is clearly the lowest, while the south summit appears to be of similar height to the central summit that we climbed.

Back at base camp, John Nankervis, still suffering from altitude sickness, decided not to join the rest of us for an attempt on the more inaccessible Chaw East. Three days were spent pushing a route onto the Phuchang Glacier, where, on the 31st, a high camp was established at 5,600m.

[This page] On the summit ridge of Syao Kang with the Phuchang Valley behind. *Nick Shearer*





[This page] From high on the east side of Syao Kang, a wonderful panorama looking toward (A) Kangchenjunga (8,586m), (B) Danga (ca 6,350m), (C) Jannu East (7,468m), (D) Jannu (7,711m), (E) Sobithongie (6,652m), and (F) possibly Nupchu (6,044m). *Nick Shearer*

To get there we had followed the outlet of the Phuchang stream, which enters the Yangma valley behind Syao. Steep, scrubby ground on the stream's true right was followed by several kilometers of demanding terminal moraine. Until about 40 years ago, Yangma residents had used the Phuchang as a trade route into Tibet, crossing the Phuchang La (5,700m). However, glacial recession clearly put a stop to this, as an ugly cirque with 40m rock walls now forms a serious obstacle below the col.

A short icefall also barred our intended route onto Chaw's west ridge. On November 1 we climbed two steep ice pitches through seracs. Lower-angled slopes then led onto the west ridge of Chaw at an altitude of 5,850m. We followed this ridge a short distance before deciding to abandon the attempt some 500m beneath the summit.

On November 3 most of us left base camp, though John, who had not sufficiently recovered from altitude sickness, was evacuated by helicopter the following day. The remaining members crossed the Marsan La and Nango La into the Ghunsa Khola, where we regained the Kangchenjunga trail.

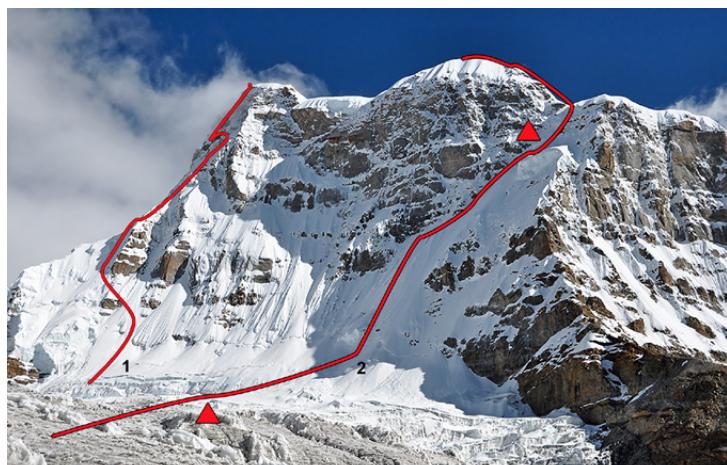
PAUL MAXIM, *New Zealand*

Janak East (6,987m), southwest face and southeast ridge. Janak (7,041m) was first attempted in 1998 by a British-Nepalese party that reached the upper Broken Glacier, climbed peaks to the south, and noted a potential line up a spur on the right side of the southwest face, leading to the southeast ridge and then over the east peak to the summit. This line was attempted in 2004 by Romanians, who reached ca 6,400m. The following year Miha Habjan and Andrej Stremfelj climbed the face to the left, reaching the shoulder on the southeast ridge at ca 6,700m, where a storm forced retreat. (Stremfelj returned in 2006 with Rok Zalokar and climbed the elegant southwest ridge direct to the summit.) In 2010 a six-member Japanese team from Aoyamagakuin University Alpine Club tried to complete the 2005 Slovenian route. Masayuki Murakami and a Sherpa reached 6,700m on the southeast ridge.

In September, climbers from Aoyamagakuin University returned, this time with me as leader. As in 2010 we employed climbing Sherpas and fixed ropes, as the team was not so strong and we had

young members. We established base camp on the 24th, Camp 1 below the upper glacier on October 1, and Camp 2 (5,800m) beneath the face on October 8. Camp 3 was placed at ca 6,600m on top of the prominent serac barrier. On the 10th we tried to summit, but the ridge above the shoulder was not an easy snow slope, as we had imagined, but steep and mixed. We began again from Camp 3 on the morning of the 11th and reached the previously virgin top of Janak East at 12:30 p.m. We did not continue to the main top. Summit members were Yuki Honda, Masayuki Murakami, Tul Bahadur Tamang, Kitap Shing Tamang, Ram Kaji Tamang, and me. 

HIROSHI HAGIWARA, *Rock and Snow, Japan*



KANGCHENJUNGA HIMAL

Anidesh Chuli (6,808m), northeast face to east ridge, attempt. Officially brought onto the permitted list in 2002, Anidesh Chuli (formerly known as White Wave) had no recorded attempts until April and May. The New Zealand team comprising Ben Dare, Andrei Dusschoten, Rob Frost, and Scott Scheele had planned to use yaks to reach base camp on the Ramtang Glacier. However, they were unable to move past the start of this glacier, and with porters unavailable, the team lost nearly a week ferrying loads to an upper base camp at 4,800m, and thence to an advanced base (5,100m) at the foot of the Ramtang icefall.

From here to Camp 1 (5,500m), the route went through the icefall, trending right toward the north-northwest ridge. One 30m section was left fixed. Above, the team climbed through a rocky buttress, then traversed flat névé below the northeast face (heavily threatened by a serac barrier) to place Camp 2 at 6,000m on a small snow rib north-northeast of Col 6,350m on the east ridge of Anidesh Chuli.

On May 2 all four climbers grouped at Camp 2, and two days later Dare and Scheele left for the east ridge. They planned to climb direct to the crest at ca 6,500m, place Camp 3, and the next day continue toward the summit. Dare and Scheele first climbed 200m of 30–40°, then linked snowy ramps separated by ice cliffs (up to 80°). On the last pitch below the ridge, transitioning from steep ice to snow, Scheele took an 80–90m fall, sustaining head injuries that left him unconscious for five minutes. It was 3:30 p.m. The cloud was thick and there was blowing snow. Dare reached Scheele and lowered him to 6,350m, where they bivouacked.

Still confused the next day, Scheele was lowered to Camp 2, which the pair reached at 2:30

[This page] Janak from the Broken Glacier to the southeast. (1) Slovenian Route (2006). (2) Japanese Route (2013). Hiroshi Hagiwara



[This page, top] Looking north across the Ramtang Glacier from Anidesh Chuli. (1) South ridge of Jaho (6,416m), climbed in 1974 by Danilo Cedilnik. (2) South face of Chang Himal (a.k.a. Ramtang Chang, 6,802m), climbed in 1974 by Janez Gradisar, Bojan Pollak, and Michael Smolej. (3) East Ridge of Ramtang (6,601m), climbed in 1930 by Erwin Schneider and Frank Smythe. (4) Mouse (6,260m), climbed in 1930 by J. Wieland. There are no other known routes in this panorama. *Ben Dare*

p.m. Dare activated an emergency locator beacon, registered in New Zealand. This resulted in a call to Dusschoten and Frost's satellite phone—they were resting in base camp, and this was the first they knew of the accident. This pair set out the same afternoon and reached Camp 2 at 3 a.m. on the 6th. The team used a satellite phone to call for a helicopter, which arrived at 10:30 a.m., and both Dare and Scheele were flown to Kathmandu, arriving only 45 hours after the accident, a great credit to the crew from Fishtail Air.

The team feels the east ridge provides the easiest route to the top, though in 2013 the summit was barred by a large ice cliff that would have to be circumvented either via the steep south face or below it to gain the north-northwest ridge. An ascent of the latter appeared broken by many ice cliffs. They also note that the original Slovenian route (1974) on Chang Himal (6,802m) was

very broken, and a better line would now perhaps be directly up the center of the south face. There is also an appealing line to the summit of Ramtang (6,601m) via a narrow couloir on the right side of its unclimbed southwest face.

LINDSAY GRIFFIN, *Mountain INFO*, from information provided by Ben Dare, New Zealand, and Rodolphe Popier, Himalayan Database, France



[This page, bottom] On the approach to Anidesh Chuli. The east ridge is on the left and north-northwest ridge descends toward the camera. *Ben Dare*