



VOLUME-3 February 06

To encourage and assist Himalayan travel and exploration and to extend knowledge of the Himalaya and adjoining mountain ranges through science, art, literature and sport.

### ***BREAKING NEWS***

***The Himalayan Club, for the first time in its' history of 75 years got the CLUBHOUSE of its own in Mumbai on February 8<sup>th</sup> 2006. The dedication of our founding members, the determination of their successors and the inspirational efforts of present members, made the dream come true. This Abode of The Himalayan Club will be the seed of the tree of knowledge for generations to come.***

#### **AN APPEAL**

Divyesh Muni  
Hon. Secretary, HC.

I am very happy to inform that finally we have purchased the premises for the Club and taken possession of it on Wednesday 8th February. We thank to all the members, friends and companies who donated generously to make it all possible. A very special thanks to Dr. Gill, Mr. Tanil Kilachand and Mr. Harish Kapadia who were the motivators and movers and who spend lot of time and effort to make this dream come true. Thanks to Mr. Vinay Hegde, who helped with all the legal work. Thanks to Mr. Tanil Kilachand and Mr. Ravi Mariwalla who have given an interest free loan to the Club till the time we raise the balance amount.



We need to get together and raise the balance amount of Rs.15 lacs to repay them at the earliest.

Also we need to set up the place and move in.

## The affair of the year 2006

The affair started, when The Himalayan Club celebrated the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first ascent of Nanda Devi in the Annual Seminar in



January 2006, in Mumbai. Our President Dr. M. S. Gill inaugurated the

seminar with his inspirational remarks. The eminent mountaineers of the world were invited to share their mind-blowing experiences.

**Victor Saunders**, a leading mountaineer and a professional guide from

England illustrated the changing climbing scenes of the past 36 years with

his tongue in cheek humor. **Harish Kapadia's** 'In search of Takpa Shiri' in Arunachal Pradesh revealed many amazing stories of the tribes residing



there. **Divyesh Muni**, described his climb of five virgin peaks with

his Indian and American friends in Karakoram.

However, the gorgeous *Bliss Giving Goddess, Nanda Devi* took everybody's breath away. **Suman Dubey** filmed her territory recently, which shows many changes in present scenes. **Harish Kapadia** explored her past history, current issues and her great ascents till now. **Col. N. Kumar** talked about the first Indian ascent of Nanda Devi.

**Masahiko Kaji** from Japan narrated the magnificent, historic traverse between twin peaks. The audience was spellbound

with **Bill Aitkin's** innate study and a romantic approach towards beautiful Nanda. The

celebration ended after three days but ***the affair will continue.***



**REPORT ON PAPSURA [6451 MTR] EXPEDITION BY THE HIMALAYAN CLUB, Kolkata – 2005-  
AVM A K BHATTACHARYYA (Retd)**

The activities of 2003 and 2004 inspired The Himalayan Club, Kolkata Section Planning Committee decided to shift its focus from Sikkim to Himachal Pradesh. The selected peak was Mt Papsura [6451mtr], a peak that is 2-3 grades more difficult than Tingchen Kang that was climbed in the previous year. The peak offered a formidable challenge to the young members of the Club and they eagerly awaited the expedition to begin.

The team was to be led by me with nine trained climbers, two non-climbers and two Sherpas. It comprised Gautam Gosh (Deputy Leader), Debajyoti Bhattacharya, Dr Susanta Bhattacharya, Jayanta Chattopadhyay, Subrata Chakraborty, Surajit Biswas, Tapas Sanyal, Debraj Dutta and Biswa Rup Ray. Two late inclusions in the team were Subrata Santra and Subhasis Roy. Sherpas Pemba and Dabba from Darjeeling joined the team at Kolkata.

On 8<sup>th</sup> September 2005 the team left for Barseni, which has now been connected by a motorable road. At Barseni mules were arranged and on the 9<sup>th</sup> the trek began along the west bank of the Tos River. According to local people, the weather was inconsistent this year as there was hardly any rain during the heavier monsoon months of July and August. It caught up with us though in September with a vengeance. As the team crossed Tos village, it started pouring till the campsite at Budhaban was reached. It was no better on the trek to Saram and Samsi on the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>. Base Camp on 12<sup>th</sup> September greeted the team with rain and a fast flowing river to cross. The weather trend did look gloomy. At Base Camp we decided to alter our route plan from the SE ridge to the SW ridge. It was a shorter route though more difficult. The decision was taken to compensate for any day lost due to bad weather.

The team opened the route to Camp 1 and ferried load on the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>. On the 15<sup>th</sup>, established Camp 1 at about 15,500ft. On 16<sup>th</sup> the weather gratefully cleared and the team members were able to open the route to Camp 2 through the treacherous icefall. On the 17<sup>th</sup>, despite a return of bad weather, load was ferried to Camp 2. However, any plan to move to Camp 2 on the following day had to be cancelled due to heavy snowfall for more than 14 hours. By the time the weather cleared on the 19<sup>th</sup> there was nearly 12 inches of snow accumulation on the south face of Papsura. This excessive fresh snow could trigger avalanches if disturbed. The team avoided the slope and moved west to establish Camp 2 at an approximate height of 16,500ft. Gautam, Subrata, Debraj, Jayanta and Subhasis with the two Sherpas moved to Camp 3 at about 18,000ft on the 20<sup>th</sup> and went on to establish the Summit Camp at an approximate height of 19,000ft on the 21<sup>st</sup>. This rapid movement was possible due to the three clear days that we had and also because of the fitness of the young members.

On 22<sup>nd</sup> September, in cloudy weather conditions, the five climbers attempted the summit. After a rigorous and at times a difficult climb of more than 8 hrs, when the summit was yet visible within around 40 meters, the weather closed on the climbers and there was a "white out" condition all around. After waiting for some time it was realised that there was no chance of the cloud lifting or clearing, the team decided to withdraw from the mountain and returned to the Summit Camp late in the evening. The team returned to Camp 1 on the 23<sup>rd</sup> in dismal weather and on the 24<sup>th</sup> September they came down to Base Camp. The mules arrived on the 25<sup>th</sup> evening and we left Base Camp on the 26<sup>th</sup> and reached Manikaran on the 28<sup>th</sup>, braving rain during all of the return journey.

**Malabi Das**

---Meher H Mehta  
Vice- President, HC

It is with deep sadness that I report the death of Malabi, which happened on Papsura on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2005. Malabi had elected to join the IMF sponsored ladies team to the mountain, which followed virtually in the footsteps of our expedition. Ms Vinita Verma led the ladies expedition.

Malabi was an active and popular member of the HC, Kolkata, particularly among the younger members. She was born on 1<sup>st</sup> August 1972 and became a member effective 20<sup>th</sup> April 2004. Mountaineering was a passion with her and scaling peaks became almost an obsession. Prior to Papsura, she had successfully climbed Chamser Kangri in Ladhak and Sudarshan in Garhwal, the latter climb also with a ladies team organized by the IMF.

The mountains that she so loved have ultimately claimed her. We all will miss her, as we pray for the peace of her soul.

## **Miscellaneous**

- **Tony Astill** has written and self-published the book **Mount Everest: The Reconnaissance 1935** which tells the complete story of the fifth expedition to Mount Everest which was led by Eric Shipton over 70 years ago. It has since remained untold and completes the history of the highest mountain in the world, which continues to captivate the imagination of climbers - young and old. His research over the past twelve years enabled him to discover the diaries of six of the seven-team members and these have been used to recount this delightful mountaineering adventure.

Audrey Salkeld, the author and leading expert on Mount Everest, has edited the book. The foreword is by Lord Hunt who led the first ascent in 1953 and there is an introduction by Sir Edmund Hillary. It is illustrated with over 125 photographs within the text (some full page) which have not been published before, some are from the "unlocked" archives of the Royal Geographical Society, whose mapmaker, Ted Hatch, has drawn 2 fine new maps which fold at the back of the book.. The size of the book is 265 x 190 mm with 380 pages, bound in a blue cloth case with gilt title and spine and printed on matt art paper.

The price of the book is £30 + post and is available from him. [alpes@supanet.com](mailto:alpes@supanet.com) or tel. [44](0) 23 80293767. Address; 'Arcadia', Hazel Grove, Ashurst, Southampton SO40 7AJ England.

- **Tim McEwen** is a 2nd Year Civil Engineer Undergraduate at Nottingham University. He is undertaking a dissertation project on the uses of GPS in hill walking and mountaineering and would appreciate if a few of you could take the time to answer some questions below. In particular:

*How has the accuracy of GPS improved peoples and mountain rescue?*

*Capabilities for mountaineering?*

*Are there any limitations to GPS that affect mountaineering?*

*Are there any particular conditions or areas where GPS may be vulnerable?*

*Break down?*

*How do you feel GPS will affect Mountaineering in the future and what improvements would you like to see?*

Please email him at [mcewen\\_tim@hotmail.com](mailto:mcewen_tim@hotmail.com)

- Our eminent editor **Harish Kapadia** is currently been invited by prestigious institutes like Wharton Business School and American Alpine Club for delivering lectures on Business Management and Mountaineering.

**Nicolas Clinch**, Hon Sectary of the HC for USA was awarded THE AMERICAN ALPINE CLUB GOLD MEDAL at the recently concluded conference on 12th Feb 2006 at New Hampshire. Last such medal was awarded by the AAC only in 1926. The medal consisting of a wood-artwork was presented by the President of the Club Mark Richey.

At the same conference **Harish Kapadia** was awarded the HONORARY MEMBERSHIP of the American Alpine Club. He is the first Indian to be honored with this.

**Our congratulations to both of them.**

**Club Activities;**

- HC in Kolkotta, organized lectures by Prof. Hasnain and M. S. Soin.
- Capt. Kohli and Dr. Jim Fotheringham were invited by our club in Mumbai to give slide-illustrated talks.
- AGM of the club was held in Mumbai on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2006.
- **Himalayan Journal Volume 61** 2005 and the **Consolidated Index** to the HJ volumes 1 [1929] to 60 [2004] were published.
- Our new **Club House** in Mumbai is situated at; 314-Turf Estate, Shakti Mill Lane, Off Dr. E. Moses Road, Mahalaxmi, Mumbai-400 018.

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***Designed and edited by Jasmine Hegde, with inputs from Harish Kapadia. Photo courtesy; Rajendra Vani, J. Raul.***