



# E-LETTER

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## Climbs and Explorations

## Climbs and Exploration in Rassa Glacier

**From Rassa to Sumur.....a journey of exploration and climbing.**

In 2001, a glimpse of Rassa glacier, during our expedition to Arganglas valley indicated a great opportunity for exploration and climbing. In July / August 2014, this turned to reality as our team from The Himalayan Club consisting of Rajesh Gadgil, Atin Sathe, Vineeta Muni and myself ventured into this remote glacier.

Due to security restrictions and their remote location, majority of the mountains, valleys and glaciers of the Eastern Karakoram Range are untouched by mountaineers. Rassa glacier is located off Nubra valley, northeast of the famous Khardung la and southeast of Siachen glacier. Except for a single visit to the snout in 2001, the glacier had not seen any mountaineering or trekking activity. None of the peaks on the glacier were even attempted before.

Our team left Mumbai on 15 July 2014 and flew into Leh, accompanied by an enthusiastic group of trekkers consisting of Ratnesh Javeri, Rajendra Wani, Dr. Kamal Limdi, Dr. Nandini Limdi, Dr. Kalpesh Jain and Dr. Sonal Jain. After acclamatising in Leh for a few days the team drove over Wari la (5290m) into Nubra valley.

The team trekked over the rugged terrain of Arganglas valley for three days before reaching near the proposed basecamp site, only to be stopped by a raging river originating from Phunangma glacier. All attempts to find a safe crossing point nearby proved futile so the team was forced to camp on the southern banks of the river for the night. They had to trek to the snout of Phunangma glacier and cross to the other side over its icy surface in order to establish base camp on 28 July at 4820m. Later a rope was secured across the river to transfer loads and the climbers for the rest of the expedition. Three precious days were lost in the process.



The next few days were spent in reconnaissance of the area and to find a route to the advanced base camp on Rassa glacier. On 2 August 2014, the trekkers made their way back whilst the climbers shifted to ABC (5220m) to start climbing in earnest.

Rassa glacier consists of many subsidiaries. The team entered the branch which was named 'Glacier I' and established Camp 1

(5780m). The panorama of peaks had opened out. We decided to climb P. 6219m first as it would provide an opportunity to view the routes for all the adjoining peaks of the glacier. On 8 August an attempt was made. Unfortunately, by the time we had fixed the first 150m of rope, the weather closed in. We decided to attempt it in better weather conditions.



Accordingly, we returned to the peak on 12 August and completed remaining 150m of the climb. After fixing almost 300m of rope, Rajesh Gadgil, Atin Sathe, Pemba Norboo, Phurba, Pasang and I were on the summit by 11.20 a.m. We were rewarded by grand views on all sides. This also gave us an opportunity to study the peaks around for possible routes of ascent. We had a complete view of 'Glacier II' of Rassa which served as an excellent reference for further plans. The peak was named 'Tusuhm Kangri' meaning 'triangular peak in the corner' in Ladakhi language.

Climbers seen on Tusuhm Kangri (6219m)

Having spent considerable time in Glacier I, we now decided to shift our attention to the peaks in Glacier II and III. Back to ABC, we now located a way to the entrance of Glacier II and III. The route took us through a maze of boulders and rocks between the snout of the northern part of Rassa glacier and the peak at the north western corner of Glacier I. There was a risk of rock fall, but fortunately, none took place.



Peak 6367m on Glacier I

Two days of bad weather kept us in our tents at ABC. The boulder field we had to cross had become treacherous due to the accumulation of fresh snow and we had to wait for it to melt before we shifted camp.

On 18 August, we were at our new camp, named Camp 2 (5635m) located near the northwest corner of Glacier II. A quick recce enabled us to establish our





Peaks on the Rassa Glacier. Rassa Kangri (6250m) seen in the center



Descending from the East Rassa La (6000m) into the Sumur Lungpa



Peak Abale (6360m)

next camp on Glacier III. In the limited time left with us, this would give us better climbing opportunities than Glacier II.

We shifted to this high camp, named Camp 3 (5810m) on 20 August, located at the base of P. 6250m and decided to make an attempt. This peak is one of the most prominent in the area and was constantly visible from the time we had entered Rassa glacier.

On 21 August, we were to start our climb by 5.00 a.m. but that morning the notorious Karakoram wind started lashing at us. It chilled us to the bones making it difficult to get out of the tents. We sat shivering, hoping there would be some let up. Finally we moved out by 7.00 a.m. We had to negotiate a 200m ice wall to the north to access the summit ridge. The ridge turned out to be knife edged with some sections heavily corniced. Since we ran out of rope, we had to pull up the lowest two ropes from the ice wall to enable us to safeguard the final stretch of the ridge leading towards west to the summit.



Team on East Rassa La (6000m) before crossing into the Sumur Nalla



Climbers on Summit of P 6219m (Tushum Kangri)

Rajesh, Atin, Vineeta and I along with our three Sherpas, Pasang, Phurba and Pemba were at the top by 2.30 p.m. with excellent views on all sides. Considering the prominence of the peak in the glacier, we decided to name it 'Rassa Kangri'.

We now had only two days left before winding up camps, so on the following day, we went for a recce to the head of Glacier III to look at the high peaks at the head of the glacier. A few hours on the glacier brought us to Shukpa pass (6110m) that leads to South Shukpa Kunchang glacier and further to Shyok River on the other side. The pass was fairly gentle and could be a possible alternative to Saser la linking Shyok valley with Nubra valley. The peaks around the pass looked promising and challenging. Unfortunately we had run out of time and resources to attempt any more peaks. The weather was also packing up, so we quickly made our way back to camp. We wound it up and with heavy loads retreated to Camp 2.

Our thoughts were now on exploring an alternative route back to Nubra valley. We had been eyeing a high col that would lead us to Sumur nala in the north. With just three days in hand, we decided to give it a go. We packed rations for three days and with bare minimum equipment started off across the glacier on 24 August. A gentle slope led to West Rassa la. We hoped an equally gentle slope would lead us to the other side but our hopes were dashed as we stood at the col (5930 m). A sheer icy drop of more than 200 m



On the summit of Rassa Kangri (6250m)

greeted us. We could not cross it with the gear we were carrying on our backs within the time available!

After much thought we decided to try the crossing into the inviting Sumur nala once more....this time from East Rassa la. That night, we camped at our Camp 4, located at the junction of both routes at the base of P. 6189 m. On 25 August, we made an early start and reached East Rassa la (6000m) by 11.00 a.m. A close scrutiny of the drop on the other side revealed a possible route across. We had to negotiate 75m of very steep ice and snow slope to reach the safety of the glacier on the other side. It took us considerable time due to the hard ice covered by an uneven layer of soft fresh snow, and the steps we made kept collapsing below our feet.

As we started our way down the glacier, we were caught in strong winds and snowfall. In low visibility we made our way down unknown territory. It was nearly sunset by the time we reached one of the most beautiful camping spots on the banks of Sumur Lake, thoroughly exhausted but satisfied with the adventures of the day. On 26 August, we trekked down Sumur nala, facing a two-hour snowstorm and then endless ups and downs and twists and turns over the 18 km route to Nubra valley concluding our expedition at the gates of Samsthaling monastery.

## Summary

### **Peaks Climbed: (Both were first ascents)**

- 1) Peak 6219m (Tusuhm Kangri) on 12 August 2014 by Rajesh Gadgil, Atin Sathe, Pemba Norboo, Pasang Sherpa, Phurba Sherpa and Divyesh Muni.
- 2) Peak 6250m (Rassa Kangri) on 21 August by Rajesh Gadgil, Atin Sathe, Vineeta Muni, Pemba Norboo, Pasang Sherpa, Phurba Sherpa and Divyesh Muni.

### **Passes Visited / Crossed:**

- 1) Shukpa pass (6110m) visited on 22 August by Rajesh Gadgil, Pasang Sherpa, Phurba Sherpa and Divyesh Muni.
- 2) West Rassa la (5930m) visited on 24 August by Rajesh Gadgil, Atin Sathe, Vineeta Muni, Pasang Sherpa and Divyesh Muni.
- 3) East Rassa la (6000m) crossed into Sumur nala on 25 August by Rajesh Gadgil, Atin Sathe, Vineeta Muni, Pasang Sherpa and Divyesh Muni.

Divyesh Muni - Leader

## Nanda Devi East (7434m) Expedition 2014

12th Ascent of Nanda Devi East was done in a semi-alpine style by a small team lead by Anindya Mukharjee. This year marked the 75th anniversary of the first Ascent of Nanda Devi East. This is a fitting tribute to the first ascent of Nanda Devi East by a Polish expedition in 1939. A short report by Anindya Mukharjee.

### **Background**

In May 2013, I had attempted to climb Nanda Devi East with a group of fellow Indian climbers. 4 days of non-stop snowfall resulted in limited climbing days and that in turn caused shortage of food and fuel. In spite of these limiting factors, we had made good progress on the mountain and even could manage one summit attempt from a camp at around 6600m. But during the summit attempt, extremely high wind above 6900m and poor gear conditions of the team added to the agony. I decided to turn back from below the summit pyramid putting safety of the team first. This failure inspired my desire to come back to Nanda Devi East and the 2014 expedition was born.

### **Approach**

The team left Delhi on June 10 and reached Munsiary on June 11. On 13 June, the team started for the Base Camp. Twelve low altitude porters from Munsiyari were hired to carry food and gear up to BC. After spending 5 nights enroute, the Base Camp at Bidalgwar (4250m) was established on 17 June.



Descending from Summit Ridge



## Route

The Nanda Devi Khal (Longstaff's Col) - South ridge route of Nanda Devi East in Kumaun Himalaya was climbed from the Lawan valley. Nanda Devi Khal was first climbed by Dr. T. G. Longstaff (along with two Swiss guides) in 1905 and the South ridge route was first climbed by the Polish team in 1939. Interestingly, there has been no other route established on this mountain since then. Thus, the Polish route remains classic and unique on Nanda Devi East to this date. Only the approach has been restricted to Lawan side due to the closure of the Nanda Devi sanctuary since the early eighties.

The team ferried load for a few days to the foot of Longstaff's col and established an Advanced Base Camp (4750m). Above ABC, another camp (Intermediate Camp 5000m) was established on a rock step on the lower slopes of the Longstaff's Col. This Intermediate Camp (5000m) was established to shorten the 1100m plus climb from ABC to Nanda Devi Khal. This approach proved to be very helpful. From the Intermediate Camp (5000m), Longstaff's Col (5910m) was climbed in only 5 hours and Camp I established.

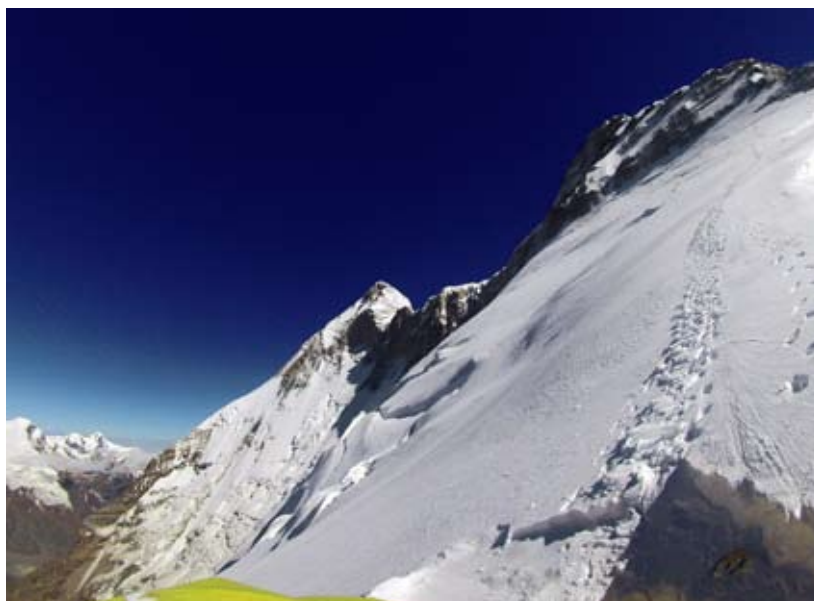
Beyond Longstaff's Col, 3 more camps were established respectively in altitudes 6100m (Camp II), 6400m (Camp III) and 6800m (Camp IV). Four camps were established on the south ridge.

## Climbing Conditions

Compared to 2013 climb, the entire south ridge almost devoid of snow this year. The team was stuck in Camp III (6400m) for 2 extra nights due to bad weather. A lot new powder snow had fallen on the summit, making the summit day a slow and struggling affair.

## Style of Climb

Being a small team and a very low budget expedition, a limited amount of static rope to fix. Rope was fixed en route Longstaff's Col from Intermediate Camp and on the Pinnacles. Above and beyond the pinnacles, old rope was re-fixed. Loads were ferried up to Camp II. Rest of the ridge was climbed in 'carry, camp and climb' style.



View of Twin Summits from the Summit Camp





On summit of Nanda Devi East

### Team

George Rodway (USA),  
Thendup Sherpa (India),  
Anindya Mukherjee (India),  
Temba Sherpa (High altitude supporter),  
Dup Tsering (High altitude supporter),  
Lhakpa Sherpa (Base Camp Cook)  
and Himanshu Pandey (Liaison Officer)

### Summary

In June-July, 2014, a small, lightweight and semi-alpine style expedition succeeded

in climbing Nanda Devi East (7434m) in the Kumaun Himalaya, India. On 3 July, 2014, summit was reached by 4 members of the team. This year (2014) is the 75th anniversary of the first ascent of this mountain by a Polish team consisting of alpinists Janusz Klarner, Jakub Bujak, Adam Karpinski, Sherpa Dawa Tsering, Dr. JR Foy (British), liaison officer Major S.Blake and Stefan Bernadzikiewicz. The 1939 Polish team had reached summit on 2 July.

### Summiteers

Thendup Sherpa, Anindya Mukherjee, Temba Sherpa and Dup Tsering on 3 July, 2014.

### First Ascent of P6070 (L15)

The students of Gakushuin University Alpine Club (GAC) made the first ascent to P6070 (L15) in Lenak Nala of Zanskar on August 22, 2014 and came back safely to Japan on September 14, 2014.

In 2011, Lenak Nala and Giabul Nala were explored and the unknown virgin peaks in this area were introduced in The Himalayan Journal Vol. 67, 2011. Kyoto University Alpine Club, sent the expedition team to challenge P6070 (L15) 2012. But they gave up to climb P6070 (L15) because of the dangerous snow condition and made the first ascent to P6080 (L13) on the other side of Lenak Nala.

*Look for the full report in HJ Vol. 70*

### Avalanche on Shisha Pangma

On September 24, 2014 an avalanche on Shisha Pangma (8027m), Tibet, claimed the lives of Italian alpinist Andrea Zambaldi and German alpinist Sebastian Haag. Martin Maier, the third alpinist caught by the avalanche that triggered shortly below the summit, managed to survive.

### **The message sent by Benedikt Böhm from Base Camp:**

"In the afternoon of 23.09.2014 at 16:30, Benedikt Boehm (37) and Ueli Steck (38) started from Basecamp (5.600m) the speed ascent on Shisha Pangma 8013m. The plan was to reach the summit in the morning of the 24.09.2014, together with the team mates Sebastian Haag (36), who was starting from Camp 1 (6.300m) and Andrea Zambaldi (32) who started from Camp 2 (6.800m).

Benedikt and Ueli met Basti Haag at C1 (6.300m) as planned at 20:00 and paired up. At the same time Andrea Zambaldi left from C2 (6.800m) towards the summit. All climbers paired up below C3, at approx. 7.100m at 01:00 on 24.09.2014, reaching C3 (7.300m) at exactly 02:00.

Being the first climbers above C2, the team had to continuously break trail through rough conditions. At 06:50 the team was only one hundred vertical meters below the summit. The spirit and motivation was high, as the team was very well working together and moving at the same speed. They were sure reaching the summit at 08:00.

At 06:55 (Nepalese time) Sebastian and Andrea were caught in an avalanche at 7.900m, just 100m below the summit and were dragged for 600m vertical, over steep glaciers, into another section of the mountain.

Benedikt and Ueli immediately called basecamp for help and assistance, while descending to C3, the same route they were coming up, in order to traverse to the avalanche zone and search for the other three climbers. For over four hours they were trying to approach the avalanche zone from various sides, but turned around due to the fact that there was no access to the avalanche zone. Sebastian and Andrea disappeared with the avalanche and their bodies could not be found."

Andrea Zambaldi and Sebastian Haag were much loved and worked for the Salewa group.

### **First Ascent of Gasherbrum V (7147m)**

On July 25, after climbing in alpine style for three days, Koreans Nak-jong Seong and Chi-young Ahn became the first to stand atop Gasherbrum V, the third highest peak in the Gasherbrum massif at 7147 meters. Their historic feat ticks off one of the last remaining unclimbed peaks in the remote Gasherbrum range in excellent style.

In August of 1978 a 12-man Japanese team attempted Gasherbrum V's summit three times, with team members K. Mukaide, M. Sakaguchi, and T. Sato reaching the expedition's highpoint atop one of Gasherbrum V's sub-summits, East III (7006m). The day before, expedition leader Ryuichi Babaguchi had fallen to his death in a crevasse just below the East III summit. Two years later, a French team made an unsuccessful attempt, approaching from the South Gasherbrum Glacier. Then, in July 2010, a Korean team comprised of Kim Hyung-il, Im Il-jin, Jang Ji-myung



Nak-jong Seong, Chi-young Ahn and Hyoung-woo Choi below Gasherbrum V's looming mass.

and Lee Sang-woo set their sights on the unattempted west face. Deep snow, ice-layered faces, rock fall and, finally, a broken stove turned the team back from 6550 meters after three days. Two years later, Aymeric Clouet, Christian Trommsdorff and Patrick Wagnon made an attempt on the south ridge of Gasherbrum V's main summit after bailing on their original objective—Gasherbrum IV's Shining Wall. With unstable conditions and impending bad weather, the three turned around at 6700 meters. During their descent, the team was hit by an avalanche, which injured Wagnon's ankle. He was carried from base camp by mule.

This summer, the Korean expeditions arrived at the base of Gasherbrum V, Seong and Ahn intending to climb the northeast face. They reached 6400 meters before descending in bad weather and avalanche conditions. Exhausted but determined, the duo set their sights on Gasherbrum V's south side, arriving at a new base camp on July 20, Seong and Ahn had almost no time for recovery. Yet the gamble paid off, and Seong and Ahn triumphed.

They picked their way through the fractured glacier for three kilometres on July 23 to reach the foot of the southeast wall. There, they roped up, reaching 6600 meters around midnight following an afternoon climbing in heavy avalanche conditions. Over 20 hours, they had climbed nearly 1900 meters.

The team spent the following day regrouping, exhausted from their efforts. They ate, reenergized and discussed strategies. Then, at 3 a.m. on July 25, they set forth from their bivy, climbing mixed terrain frequented by rock fall. They gained the summit ridge by the afternoon, and stood on the summit at 7:20 p.m. Only after a punishing, 24-hour descent through the darkness of night and daytime avalanches did the weary climbers rest easy in base camp.

*Adapted from the Alpinist*



## First Ascent of Payu Peak (6600m) South Pillar



Payu Peak (aka Paiju Peak), Karakoram.

On July 26, Alberto Inurrategi, Juan Vallejo and Mikel Zabala made the first recorded ascent of 6600-meter Payu Peak's south pillar. The trio spent 10 days on the mountain from base camp to base camp. Zabala, calling via satellite phone from the top of the tower, said the climb was the "hardest route I've done in my life."

Inurrategi later wrote in a press release, "We climbed to the very limit, the limit of our strength. We have not rested almost nothing during the entire expedition and

we have come to base camp to the last breath." They encountered difficulties up to 5.10d, A3 and M5 during their ascent.

Payu Peak, known for its vertical rock and steep ice, sits below Baltoro Glacier's tongue and was first climbed in 1976. Heavy amounts of rock- and icefall added to the danger of their ascent this month, the Spaniards said. The group did not continue onto the main summit of Payu, stating climbing the terrain from the top of the south tower to the summit would be "suicide."

During the ascent, Vallejo sustained a significant injury to his left shoulder when a "medium microwave"-sized block of granite fell on him close to the summit. Although the team thought the injury might hinder their progress, Zabala said Vallejo is "like granite" himself, and with some painkillers and anti-inflammatories, they continued.

"The truth is that the climbing cost us a lot in every way, physically and psychologically," Inurrategi wrote.

*Adapted from The Alpinist*  
([www.alpinist.com](http://www.alpinist.com))



The team rappels from the south tower.

## Russians Climb Unclimbed 1900m Face of Thamserku



Thamserku (6623m), eastern Himalaya, showing Shy Girl (6B, 70 degrees). Russians Alexander Gukov and Alex Lonchinsky authored the line in eight days, climbing in alpine style. [Photo] courtesy Anna Piunova/mountain.ru

As Russians Alexander Gukov and Alex Lonchinsky left a Nepalese hiking path frequented by tourists on May 3. They climbed for eight days to the summit of 6623-meter Thamserku and back down again. Their 1900-meter route marks the first ascent of the peak's southwest face.

Thamserku, in the eastern Himalaya, has only seen a handful of summits since its 1964 first ascent, and its prominent southwest face remained an unclimbed, intriguing line for many years. In 1980 a nine-man Japanese team reached

6300 meters on the face before escaping onto the western ridge and leading to the summit from there. Six years later, a Spanish foursome reached the same high point, but a leak in their gas lines leached all of their remaining fuel, and with no way to melt snow for water the group retreated. Climber Jose Manuel Gonzales lamented in the Himalayan Journal, "So near the summit and yet so far..."

Some 28 years after the Spaniards' failed effort, Gukov and Lonchinsky set out up the face on April 27. They carried a small tent, sans poles. After thieves absconded with their guylines prior to departure, undermining the structure of the tent, they planned to use it like a kind of hammock when the slope did not allow for the construction of a bivy ledge. The Russians made a total of six bivys during their climb. They ascended on a slope of an average 70 degrees, encountering snow, ice and mixed terrain. They graded their climb, Shy Girl, a hard Russian 6A (NCCS VI).

Writing to mountain.ru after their climb, Lonchinsky stated, "On the day when we



Thamserku Massif

planned to reach the summit, the weather got worse at 9:00 a.m., and it reached its climax when I got to the crest, three pitches from the top." But, rising the next morning at 3 a.m., they reached the summit in three and half hours. "Though it was windy, there was sun and excellent visibility," Lonchinsky wrote. The duo made a safe descent.

*Adapted from the Alpinist*

## The Himalayan Club - Pune Section

### The story of the club's youngest and a vibrant section.

If I were to pin one person for the development of Pune section, it would be Dr. Ragunath Godbole. A quiet, soft spoken doctor from Pune has made the Pune section a vibrant and an involved section of the club. I cajoled him to give us an informal account of what he has achieved in 8 years of Pune section's existence. He promptly agreed and gave a personal account of the Pune Section. Dr. Godbole has infused a great degree of enthusiasm for Mountains in the industrial city of Pune. The access to local hills of Sahyadris help him seed the interest of mountains in the Pune community. This translated into visits to higher reaches of the Himalaya. Here is the story of the Pune Section. A frugal beginning, a member centric outlook and a prudent approach has made them self-sufficient and a vibrant section of the Himalayan Club today.

### Journey over first 8 years from 2006 to 2014

By Hon. Local Secretary Dr. Raghunath Godbole

I have been trekking in Sahyadri since childhood and done more than 200 treks. I have also done more than 20 High altitude treks and expeditions in Himalaya since 1995 – most of them organized by myself. I was the founder, then Secretary and finally Chairman of Indian Medical Association, Pune Trekking Club from 2002 to 2014. I was not a member of any other club or organization in Pune during this period. In April 2004 I became member of The Himalayan Club, Mumbai.

I was appointed as Hon. Local Secretary of Pune in April 2006. At that time there were only 18 members of The Himalayan Club in Pune and no sectional activities. Initially, I called meeting of these members which included mountaineers like Surendra Chavan and Umesh Zirpe. We discussed organizing various activities of Pune section, fund raising for financial self-sufficiency and increasing membership by approaching members of trekking and mountaineering clubs already existing in Pune and around.



Inauguration of the Pune Section. Mr. Harish Kapadia (L) and Dr. Godbole (R).

My consulting rooms on Apte Road, Deccan Gymkhana were used as the office of Pune section, my laptop computer and LCD Projector were used for all the meetings and I provided Rs. 25,000 as an advance.

Inaugural Function of Pune Section of HC was organized on 25th June 06 in Apte Sabhagriha- Hall of 500 capacity which was full with enthusiastic crowd of mountain and adventure lovers. Short films on Kailas-Manas Parikrama,



Everest Base Camp Trek & IMAX film of Everest climb were shown and Mumbai office bearers Divyesh Muni, Rajesh Gadgil, Rajendra Wani and Harish Kapadia talked about various aspects of The Himalayan Club.

A set of old Himalayan Journals and maps were donated by the Mumbai office and a set of 100 books was donated by myself to form the library of Pune section. Set of 60 new members' applications along with cheques was handed over to Mumbai office bearers – a record number on a single day in the history of our club.

It was declared that there will be a monthly meeting on last Sunday evening of every month and members were encouraged to do audio-visual presentations of their treks and expeditions. It was free for all members but guests were charged Rs.50 per head. Each member was encouraged to bring at least one guest to cover some expenses of the meeting and the presenter to bring a sponsor to cover at least hall rent for that meeting.

Members were also requested to donate books, maps, journals, CDs to the local library and those using any items in the library were appealed to give some voluntary monetary contribution to the club. All these things were deemed necessary because apart from Rs. 5000 given by Mumbai head office towards initial postage and printing expenses, Pune section would not get any yearly monetary help from Mumbai head office. We wanted our section to be financially self-sufficient.

In the first 4 years, 40 indoor programs in Pune and only 4 outdoor training or trekking programs in Sahyadri around Pune were organized. On reviewing these activities and also their financial audit, some observations and directions for future were drawn, which were

**Members' attendance and guest contributions for indoor programs** were gradually decreasing. Indoor programs incurred some loss while all outdoor programs had more attendance and resulted in economic self-sufficiency as well as a positive feedbacks from members.

**Sponsorships and donations for indoor programs** were difficult to get, while outdoor programs were financially self-sufficient and even profitable because of contributions from attending members and guests (guests were charged about 10% more than members)

**Indoor programs** are more attended and liked by older members who are not actively doing any outdoor activities while outdoor programs are more attended and liked by young members.

**Younger generation** prefers more outdoor activities over indoor activities, prefers more relatively safer trekking over difficult or technical climbing, prefers CDs and Internet over printed books and journals, and is more interested in present happenings & future developments about various events in mountains rather than history of climbing various mountain peaks.

**Although, some youngsters** attended our indoor programs and many participated in our outdoor programs, they were not enthusiastic about joining our club as members because they did not need club membership to get any information about any trek or peak. They could become members of other clubs at a much lesser cost or even free and without any qualifying criteria. They also have varied interests in mountains like wildlife, culture of local people, climate changes, environmental conservation, social activities to help mountain people, tree plantations, nature photography and videography apart from trekking and mountaineering.

At the end of these initial 4 years, we had a balance of only Rs.22,000 in our Bank account.

During Annual Meeting in May 2010, all the above points were discussed and following resolutions were passed

- Number of indoor hall programs will be reduced to only 1 or 2 every year
- Number of outdoor programs will be increased to 3-4 treks and training programs in Sahyadri and one High altitude trekking expedition in Himalaya every year.
- All the communications and invitations of various programs will be through email & not by printed letters by post, so as to save paper and money.

In next 4 years, only 8 indoor programs were held in Pune and as many as 20 outdoor training and trekking programs in Sahyadri and 4 High altitude treks in the Himalaya were organized.

Although older and inactive members have accepted this pattern of functioning as an inevitable change, younger and active members have welcomed it with more enthusiasm and participation.

Our current membership has recently crossed 100 mark with a healthy bank balance.

The Pune section is financially self-sufficient without any monetary aid from Mumbai head office and without any sponsors. As a consequence, we can hold 1 or 2 indoor programs every year.

I am happy that Pune section is doing well in its activities.

#### Glimpses of Programs of Pune Section of the Himalayan Club (2006-14)

**High Altitude Treks:** Annapurna Circuit in Nepal - Oct.2010, Gosaikund in Nepal – June 2011, Everest Base Camp in Nepal – May 2012, Manaslu Circuit in Nepal – Oct. 2013, Annapurna Base Camp in Nepal – April 2014

**Illustrated Talks:** Nanda Devi Sanctuary and Peak, Flowers of Himalaya, Doctors on Everest, Women on Everest, Reinhold Messner – All 14 Eight Thousanders, Tibet Exploration, Gangotri to Badrinath, North Everest Base Camp, Mt. Kailas & Lake Mansarovar, Adi Kailas and Om Parvat, Gokyo Peak and Lake, Roopkund, Leh Ladakh Jeep Safari, Himalayan Wildlife, Kedartal, Vasukital in Nandanvan



Members of Pune Section on a Trek to Everest BC.



Head Stand at Gosaikund.



Trek to Manaslu.

Mr. Rajesh Gadgil – Climbs in Uttarakhand & Eastern Karakoram

**Mr. Malli Babu** – World record of 7 highest summits of 7 continents in 7 months.

**Miss Krishna Patil** – Youngest Maharashtrian female Everest in 2009

**Master Arjun Vajpai** – Youngest Indian Everest in 2010

**Dr. Murad Lala** – First Indian Civilian Doctor Everest in 2013

**Films:** Films from Banf Film Festival, Canada, 80 Years of The Himalayan Club, Everest -May 1996 Tragedy, Acclimatization during mountaineering, Ganga River from Gomukh to Sundarban, Everest Base Camp Trek, Cycling in Kashmir & Ladakh, Waterfall Rappelling, Motorbiking Manali-Leh-Shrinagar, Mark Inglis-double amputee Everest.

**Workshops:** Mountain Photography, Stars and Planets gazing, First Aid & Mountain Medicine, Rock climbing and rappelling

### **Guest Lectures & Felicitations of Mountaineers**

**Mr. Gurdial Singh** – Climbs in Indian Himalaya post-independence

**Dr. N.S.Bhagwanani** – Doctor in First Indian Everest Expedition 1960

**Dr. Lala Telang** – Doctor in First Successful Indian Everest Expedition 1964  
Mr. Harish Kapadia – Explorations in & book on Siachen Glacier

**Mr. Vasant Limaye** – Leader of First civilian expedition to Kangchenjunga  
Mr. Surendra Chavan – First Civilian Maharashtrian Everest in 1998  
Mr. Rajan Deshmukh – Leader of civilian expeditions to Satopanth & Mukut Parvat.

**Mr. Umesh Zirpe** – Leader of civilian expeditions to Shivling, Everest, Lhotse, Makalu.

**Mr. Divyesh Muni** – Climbs in Uttarakhand & Eastern Karakoram



## The Himalayan Club – Kolkata Section

### Commemoration of Birth Centenary of Tenzing Norgay

The Kolkata Section of the Himalayan Club held a talk to commemorate the birth centenary of Tenzing Norgay. The talk was held on July 27, 2014 at Rotary Sadan, Kolkata. Priyadarshi Gupta gives a perspective on the event.



Reminiscing the lost 'Tiger of the Snows'... (Commemorating the birth centenary of Tenzing Norgay)

"I needed to go... the pull of Everest was stronger for me than any force on earth." - Tenzing

"...If there was ever anyone who deserved to get there first, it was Tenzing". - Hillary

ascended by Hillary and him in 1953, Tenzing had probably spent the maximum time on it, having been a part of several Everest expeditions prior to the successful 1953 climb...

Tenzing Norgay was an enigma! An intrepid Sherpa mountaineer obsessed with attaining the sacred summit of Mt Everest (8850m). He lived, slept and breathed Everest and till it was actually



Mr. Sujoy Das Presenting

In this backdrop, on the 27th of July 2014, at the Rotary Sadan, erudite mountain researcher and traveller, Sujoy Das rendered an articulate and well documented presentation on the life of Tenzing, its trials and tribulations as well as successes and triumphs.

The program started with Dr. Rupamanjari Biswas, the Hon. Local Secretary reading a note sent by Tenzing's son, Jamling Norgay on behalf of Tenzing's family. Mr. Das' presentation held the near full hall in rapt attention. The presentation was followed by a Question & Answer session. The program was attended by mountaineering enthusiasts as well as dignitaries from the Consulates of Italy, Germany and Nepal, amongst others.



Audience raptly listening to Mr. Sujoy Das' presentation



AVM (Retd) A.K. Bhattacharyya handing over the expedition ice-axe



AVM (Retd) A.K. Bhattacharyya with the expedition team

In the spirit of Tenzing' birth centenary commemoration, an expedition of The Himalayan Club Kolkata Section to virgin peaks in GompeTokpo in the South Zaskar region of the Ladakh Himalaya, was flagged off.

The Expedition Ice Axe was handed over by veteran mountaineer and ex-Vice President of the Himalayan Club, AVM (Retd.) Apurba Kumar Bhattacharya.

The team members are Rajeev K. Mondal (Leader), Subrato De (Dy. Leader), Adrita Paul, Ganesh Saha, Biplab Banerjee, Prasanta Gorai and Arun Sen. INTECH has sponsored the hardware for the expedition.

A minutes silence was observed at the commencement of the programme in memory of all those whom we lost on the mountains in the recent tragedies.

## The Himalayan Club – Mumbai Section

### Journey through my Lense - Photo Exhibition by Mr. Deepak Bhimani

Journeys through my Lens is not just an exhibition of photographs but a confluence of three different hobbies – Photography, Trekking and Amateur Astronomy, where Deepak Bhimani has captured through his camera the splendour of different peaks of the Majestic Himalayas and the beauty of the skies.

The Exhibition was held from 22nd September to 30th September 2014.

The proceeds of this exhibition will contribute to the Ladakh Institute of Prevention (for the study of Environmental, Occupational, lifestyle related & High Altitude Diseases)

### News & Views

#### The Himalayan Club Hon. Local Secretary in Kathmandu Ms. Elizabeth Hawley has a peak named after her

Ms. Elizabeth Hawley, the long standing Hon. Local secretary of the Himalayan Club in Kathmandu, has a peak named after her. The Government of Nepal, recognised her exemplary contribution to documenting the history of climbs in Nepal has named a 6182m peak after her. She is best known for the Himalayan Database where she



Ms. Elizabeth Hawley

chronicled the expeditions to the Nepal Himalayas over from 1905 through 2013 over a 5 decade long career as a journalist. (<http://www.himalayandatabase.com>).

For more than five decades, Elizabeth Hawley has been chronicling the highs and lows of Himalayan mountaineering.

From confirming the first ascent of Everest by a blind climber to raising doubts about a Korean woman's claim to have bagged a crucial, 8,000m summit, the American journalist has enjoyed a royal box seat to many of mountaineering's greatest dramas. And at the age of 90, she expresses no enthusiasm for giving up what she loves.

And this week, the authorities in Nepal underscored the contribution Ms Hawley has made to their country by announcing they were naming a mountain after her. They also said that Peak Hawley – at 6,182 metres, relatively modest by Himalayan standards - will for the first time be open to foreign climbers.

"I think it's a joke," Ms Hawley told The Independent from Kathmandu. "They should not name mountains after people."

Ms Hawley, originally from Chicago, first arrived in the Nepalese capital in 1959, less than a decade after Nepal first opened its borders to foreign visitors. Having left the US to travel in Europe and Asia, she had been offered a chance to write for Timemagazine and contribute any stories she discovered in the Himalayan kingdom. She found herself entranced.

One of her first scoops related to the 1963 US expedition to Everest. According to reports, Ms Hawley persuaded the US military attaché to allow her to use a secret radio set that was at the Everest base camp. As a result, she was able to file her copy about the successful attempt long before her rivals.

A graduate of the University of Michigan, Ms Hawley eventually landed the job of mountaineering correspondent for the Reuters news agency.

But it was her involvement with the Himalayan Database that has saw her assume a central position within the world of Nepalese mountaineering. Combining the skills of detective and a librarian, she has logged the ascents of all major peaks within Nepal. To this day, most climbers or expedition leaders arriving in Nepal will pay her a visit at her apartment in the city centre.

While she occupies no official position, an entry in the database she oversees has for decades represented confirmation of a climb to the mountaineering world. Likewise, her raising doubts about a climber's claims to have reached the top, or to have followed a certain route, can doom it.

Asked for some of the most memorable ascents she has catalogued, Ms Hawley referred to that 1963 US summiting of Everest, a vast expedition that saw American



Jim Whittaker and Sherpa Nawang Gombu reach the top. She also mentioned the first ascent of Everest by a blind climber, an undertaking achieved in 2001 by Erik Weißenmayer.

Less pleasant was acting as an arbiter in the hugely controversial record claim made by South Korean female climber Oh Eun-Sun, who in 2010 completed an ascent of Annapurna, and claimed as a result to have climbed all 14 of the world's 8,000m mountains.

There were widespread accusations from other climbers that Ms Oh had failed the year before to reach the summit of Mt Kanchenjunga, located on the border of Nepal, India and China. Ms Hawley looked into the matter and interviewed Sherpa's involved in the expedition. She marked Ms Oh's climb as "disputed".

Ms Oh later admitted that adverse weather had forced her to stop a few feet short of the summit of Mt Kanchenjunga. Edurne Pasaban, a Spanish climber is now recognised as the first woman climber to have successfully summited the 8,000m mountains, after having climbed China's Shishapangma in May 2010.

Officials may have been inspired to act over Peak Hawley by French climber François Damiénil, who made the first ascent of the mountain, located close to the border with China, six years ago. At the time, he unofficially named the mountain, in the Humla district of north-west Nepal, after her.

Ms Hawley, who still drives herself around Kathmandu, grumbled that Nepal's move to name mountains after individuals rather than using local names was not in line with practices elsewhere.

She pointed to the struggle by the US state of Alaska to officially rename Mt McKinley, the highest peak in North America, to Denali, the name used by the local indigenous tribes and which means "great one". Efforts to do so at a federal level have been blocked by the US Congressional delegation from Ohio. Ohio was home to William McKinley, the 25th president of the US.

Ms Hawley said she had no plans to give up her work. "Why would I stop? What would I do, sit around and watch TV? I don't even have a TV," she said. "Go home? I've not been to the US for 60 years and it has changed so much. Where would I live?"

She added: "I am happy with what I'm doing, as long as I can do the job and keep my wits about me."

*Adapted from the Independent August 20, 2014*

## Climbing Fees Reduced in India

The Indian Mountaineering Foundation has sent out the reduced fee structure for the 2014 and 2015 climbing season in accordance with the campaign “777 Days of Incredible Indian Himalaya” launched by Ministry of Tourism, Government of India.

The fee is charged by the Indian Mountaineering Foundation (IMF) for climbing peaks in Indian Himalaya to all Foreign/Joint Expeditions (Foreign Climbers):

Height of Peak	Existing Peak Fee	As per concession of peak fee 50% fee for the climbing season 2014 & 2015
Below 6500 M	I. US\$ 500 for party of two members.  II. For additional members up to seven, US\$ 200 each (i.e. total for 7 members US\$ 1500).  III. Thereafter, for each additional member US\$ 250 up to a maximum limit of twelve members.	I. US\$ 250 for party of two members.  II. For additional members upto seven, US\$ 100 each (i.e. total for 7 members US\$ 750).  III. Thereafter, for each additional member US\$ 125 up to a maximum limit of twelve members.
6501 M to 7000 M	US\$ 700 for party of two members.  For additional members upto seven, US\$ 300 each (i.e. total for 7 members US\$ 2200).  Thereafter, for each additional member US\$ 350 upto a maximum limit of twelve members.	US\$ 350 for party of two members.  For additional members upto seven, US\$ 150 each (i.e. total for 7 members US\$ 1100).  Thereafter, for each additional member US\$ 175 upto a maximum limit of twelve members
7001 and above	(1) US\$ 1000 for party of two members.  (2) For additional members up to seven, US\$ 400 each (i.e. total for 7 members US\$ 3000).  (3) Thereafter, for each additional member US\$ 450 upto a maximum limit of twelve members.	(1) US\$ 500 for party of two members.  (2) For additional members upto seven, US\$ 200 each (i.e. total for 7 members US\$ 1500).  (3) Thereafter, for each additional member US\$ 225 upto a maximum limit of twelve members.
For Trekking peaks  (i.e. Stok Kangri, Ladakhi & Friendship)	(1) US\$ 100 for party of two members.  (2) For additional members up to seven, US\$ 50 each (i.e. total for 7 members US\$ 350).  (3) Thereafter, for each additional member US\$ 100 upto a maximum limit of twelve members.	(1) US\$ 50 for party of two members.  (2) For additional members up to seven, US\$ 25 each (i.e. total for 7 members US\$ 175).  (3) Thereafter, for each additional member US\$ 50 upto a maximum limit of twelve members

**Note:** No change for Liaison Officer (LO) Equipment Hire charges.

## 104 New Peaks open for Mountaineering in Nepal

The Government of Nepal has recently opened 104 peaks for mountaineering. The motivation to open peaks is to develop and promote mountaineering activity in Nepal. The Government of Nepal named and opened Hillary Peak (7681m), Tenzing Peak (7981m), Herzog Peak (7555m), Lechenal Peak (7140m), UIAA Peak (6063m), UAAA Peak (6476)m and Peak Hawley (6182m). Four hundred and fourteen peaks are open for climbing in Nepal. The Nepal Government manages 384 peaks and NMA 33 peaks. The Government of Nepal has decided to give free access to all peaks below 5800 m.

The complete list can be obtained from

<http://www.asian-trekking.com/news-and-updates/item/341-government-of-nepal-officially-opens-104-new-peaks-for-mountaineering.html>

## Online Show on Yeti

The American Alpine Club has put up an excellent online show on Yeti. The show covers the history, origins and obsessions of Mountaineers with Yeti. The show is beautifully crafted from with photograph from the archives. The new format of on line show is also worth noting. A must see!

<http://www.americanalpineclub.org/clubhouse/yeti/>

## Forthcoming Events

The following events are planned for 2014-15. Please mark your calendars and await further details of the program and venue.

November 7, 2014 –Mr. Umesh Zirpe will give a talk in Mumbai on his experiences of climbing three 8000m peaks Everest, Lhotse and Makalu.

January 9-11, 2015 – Arun Samant Memorial Expedition Planning Workshop. This is a resident workshop to help members plan expeditions.

February 14-15, 2015– The Himalayan Club Annual Seminar. The annual function will be held in Mumbai. The theme this year is Everest and commercialization of mountaineering.

March 21, 2015 – Banff Mountain Film Festival to be screened in Mumbai.

## Jagdish C Nanavati Awards

Nominations for Jagdish C Nanavati award for excellence in mountaineering and Jagdish C Nanavati Garuda medal are open. Please contact the Himalayan Club Office to obtain nomination forms and to submit the nominations.



## **Himalayan Journal - Volume 69.**

**The Himalayan Journal Volume 69 is now published.**

**The contents of vol. 69 are**

### **Articles**

1. The story of the Climbing Sherpas of Darjeeling – first impressions (Deepa Balsavar and Nandini Purandare)
2. A Review of the Himalayan Journal Front Covers (W. M. (Bill) Aitken)
3. Treks to Passes on India – Burma Border (Harish Kapadia)
4. Trisul - the West Ridge (Brigadier Ashok Abbey)
5. First Crossing of Chaukhamba Col (Debabrata Mukherjee)
6. Exploring the Valley of the Jads (Ashutosh Mishra)
7. Lure of the Unknown (Divyesh Muni)
8. Plateau Peak -The last unclimbed bastion of the Saser Massif (Pradeep C. Sahoo)
9. Climbing in the Rongdo Valley (Joie Seagram)
10. Rongdo Valley Exploration May – Jun 2013 (Gp Capt V K Sashindran)123
11. Kishtwar Kailash (Mick Fowler)
12. Climbs in the Hagshu Basin (Dan Kopperud)
13. Portals to the Past - Trekking in Upper Mustang (Lakshmi Ranganathan)
14. Illusion in Mekong Headwaters and Enchantments in Highlands (Tamotsu (Tom) Nakamura)
15. Himalayan Heat (Dr. Harvey V. Lankford)

### **Expeditions and Notes**

1. Mountain Festivals of the World (Bernadette McDonald)
2. A Fortnight in Garhwal (Geoffrey Cohen)
3. The First Ascent of Kuchela Dhura (Dhruv Joshi)
4. Nanda Devi East (Anindya Mukherjee)
5. Durga Singh Martolia (Chinmoy Chakrabarti)
6. Exploration of Hanuman Khal (Partha Pratim Mitra)
7. Ramblings in Chhota Bangahal (Harish Kapadia)
8. Khhang Shiling and Other Climbs in Bara Shigri Glacier (Cosmin Andron)
9. The Prow of Shiva (Mick Fowler)
10. The Himalayan Bimble First Ascent of Cha Ri (6046 m) (Douglas Briton)
11. First Ascent of Nga Tsoey Kangri - Kyoto University Alpine Club Zaskar Expedition (Hiroaki Ogihara)
12. Exploration of Zaskar's Pensilungpa Valley (Derek R. Buckle)

## Book Reviews

1. Shipton & Tilman: The Great Decade of Himalayan Exploration (Jim Perrin)
2. My Father, Frank (Tony Smythe)
3. 8000 Metres – Climbing the World's Highest Mountains (Alan Hinkes)
4. Sacred Mountain (Robert Ferguson)
5. Among Secret Beauties – A Memoir of Mountaineering in New Zealand and the Himalayas (Brian Wilkins)
6. Dick Isherwood - Mountaineer (An Anthology compiled by John Ashburner)
7. Tibet: A History (Sam van Schaik)

## In Memoriam

1. Aspi D Moddie
2. George Lowe
3. Ian McNaught-Davis
4. Richard (Dick) Isherwood
5. R Martin Scott
6. Nawang Topgay Sherpa

## Obituaries

### John Tyson

JB (John) Tyson OBE, MC was born on April 7, 1928 at Patrick Scotland. He died on March 10, 2014 at the age of 85 years. He was brought up in London. He acquired a passion for climbing during family holidays in Scotland, France and Switzerland. He was a member of The Himalayan Club since 1952.



John Tyson outside a climbing hut in the Swiss Alps. Photo: Courtesy Tyson Family.

Tyson read Geography at Magdalen College, Oxford, and in 1952 led the first ever Oxford University Scientific Expedition to the Himalayas. In addition to work on several high-altitude scientific projects in the Tehri-Gahrwal region, the team made first ascents of Gangotri I and Gangotri III, both more than 21,000 ft. high.

In 1953 he joined the Scottish mountaineer WH Murray on an exploratory journey to the Api and Nampa region in the far north-west of Nepal, which had newly opened its borders to foreigners.

He was an English schoolmaster who made it his personal mission to map the Kanjiroba Himal, a remote group of mountain peaks in north-west Nepal — among the most rugged and forbidding in the Himalayas.

Tyson's quest began in 1961 when he led the first of several small surveying missions to the region, with the aim of mapping the principal mountain ranges and locating, and if possible climbing, the highest summit, Mount Kanjiroba (22,580ft).

The expedition succeeded in making the first ascents of several 20,000ft peaks which gave excellent views for map-making, but they were unable to locate a viable route on to the Kanjiroba Himal along the sheer-sided scree-covered gorge of the Jagdula river.

In 1963 the Royal Geographical Society recognised Tyson's work with the Ness Award; and three years later the results of his surveying — a map of the Kanjiroba Himal and the adjacent area in the Karnali region — was published in the Geographical Journal.

In 1964 he led another expedition via the Langu Khola, the gorge of the Langu River which, after rising in the gentle uplands of Dolpo, thunders between sheer walls through the Kanjiroba massif.

In 1957 he married Phebe Pope, who survives him with their daughter and two sons.

*Adapted from the Telegraph*

## Office bearers of the Himalayan Club for the year 2014

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## Overseas

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View of Glacier II from the summit of Tusuhm Kangri (6219m).

**Edited by  
Ravi Mariwala**

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