

SUDARSHAN PARBAT — UNE BELLE MONTAGNE

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WE WERE a group of eleven, four French and seven Indian climbers. After a long and tiring rail journey the bus was a luxury. We halted at Tehri to finish the last of the delicious mangoes. We saw Col Sandhu going in the opposite direction in a jeep. Hubert and I shouted out to him but to no avail. Dejected we stood. Quickly we both turned to the bus to relish a further basket of mangoes we were carrying for Col Sandhu, and laughed at our instant mutual intuition. Well mountaineers think alike all over the world! We knew that the Swetvarn Indo-French Expedition would get on well!

Why this nationality mix? It all started two years ago. Jean Odier visited Bombay for training and decided to trek with us around Bombay in the rains. We all wondered at this Frenchman who preferred to roam in the mud instead of the exotic streets of Paris. But an idea was born. Though two of his brothers and friends could join us, it was irony that he could not do so.

Hectic letter exchanges and paper work began. This was to last till the end. The French just could not understand this at first till of course they had a brush or two with the Indian bureaucracy. I remember the cartoon. It showed a mountaineer with an ice-axe hanging on the wall, pounding on the typewriter on one side. The other side showed him sitting on a toilet seat with tissue paper hanging below. The caption said 'No expedition is started or . . . finished without the paper work being done!'

But the paper work had its advantages. First we had to find a mountain to climb and all about that mountain. After many considerations, Sudarshan Parbat became 'our' mountain. It had beauty as well as challenge. Situated above the Gangotri temple it was seen by millions of pilgrims and mountaineers through the ages. But the chief reason was J. C. Nanavati. In 1972 a Calcutta based group claimed a mistaken first ascent of this peak. They had climbed only Koteswar — 2000 ft lower. With his usual meticulous study, Nanavati brought out the mistake. He put at our disposal all the material, diagrams, photographs of this classic exercise. That settled it.

The final curtain-raiser was the arrival of the French. At the airport I was ready with those hard earned certificates which the Indian customs would have loved to stamp all over. But Bernard, Hubert and Jacques with *oui, non, monsieur*, mixture of expertise and innocence and shrugging of shoulders were out without any help from me at all! I was impressed. All the planning had been done at Bombay. Majority of the food and equipment was ready and packed. We added the French gear and the high-altitude food and were

ready to depart.

We had three major difficulties. The last was of course climbing the Sudarshan Parbat. But the first could have made us a non-starter. At the railway station on 1 May to our surprise we were informed that our tickets were not proper and we had no seats on this packed train. Kanu excels in such situations. Wave of hands, little hush-hush talks and we were comfortably settled soon. It was time after all for the Indian trick!

The history of Sudarshan is brief, spread over 19 years. It was attempted by about 5 expeditions. Mostly by the west ridge and once by the south ridge. The last attempt was in 1979 by the Himalayan Association, Calcutta. They reached high on the west ridge. After the study of the pictures and other material we decided to opt for the unseen and unknown east ridge exactly on the opposite side. It is steeper and more icy. But it offered a higher camp site. And if the mountain remained quiet, as it did, it would be a hard but safe climb. But for attaining the base of the east ridge, we had to circumvent the full mountain; coming from the northwest and going over some very bad moraine to the east. Much against the local advice we decided to try that.

The rail journey was simply terrible. Someone called it a 'lucky-train' to Dehra Dun. Sitting above in a packed compartment, Rodhan tried to find some 'aesthetic' beauty in the dress and songs of the pilgrim crowd. But in the ultimate analysis it was sheer torture of 48 hours! We changed to a comfortable bus, past the 'mango junction' to Uttarkashi. The bus dropped us at Darbani on the 4th. The mad rush began. We had to trek 8 km to Gangnani, travel by a local bus to Lanka and a trek 11 km to the Gangotri temple. This with 2000 kg of luggage was certainly a good challenge. Luggage was sent on the mules directly from Dabrani while we rushed to find seats in a bus full of the pilgrims at Gangnani. A ride of nightmares began. Seated next to the driver, the minute I dozed off, I was awakened by shouts of '*Ganga maiya ki jai*' by an energetic co-traveller. When I protested he promptly pointed to the sign that it was forbidden to sleep next to the driver! What else could I do, but join the chorus!

Along with Sudarshan Parbat we were to attempt six other peaks surrounding the Swetvarn Bamak. Saife (6161 m) was climbed in 1978 by 'Diganta', Calcutta. The Koteshwars were climbed many times. All the other peaks were virgins. Gangotri glacier itself is a sight beyond words. Flanked by beautiful and imposing peaks. It is fed by numerous side glaciers, which in turn are fed by other smaller glaciers. We were to proceed into the Raktavarn Bamak which joins the main glacier. Then to turn north to enter the Swetvarn Bamak. The route all along is one filled with moraine and colours which justifies the names of the Bamaks.

We reached Lanka. Spending the night there the first meal of the expedition of 'chapatti, dal and rice' was served. The French ate with delight. While they waited for the next 'course' we started

sleeping. They were to learn that we Indians eat all things together and there are no courses. They adapted very well to the Indian food and the living off the country. On 6 May we started trekking to Gangotri. The temple was to reopen on the same day after a closure of six months due to winter. We joined the colourful and musical procession. There is no denying the fact that the pilgrims on foot look far more genuine than the pilgrims in the bus. Particularly when you don't have to jostle and rub shoulders with them.

At Gangotri the local tourist chief invited us to tea. 'Only I serve tea made from cow's milk, all the rest use milk powder' he told us, secretly. Sipping the holy tea we heard the chants of the opening of the temple. Suddenly the clouds cleared. Behind the temple we saw, for the first time, Sudarshan Parbat—truly a beautiful mountain.

Any one climbing in the Gangotri area cannot but be impressed by the mythology. Sudarshan is a weapon which Lord Krishna or Vishnu holds in his hand. It is released in the ultimate crisis. When released the victory is certain. The whole area throbs with many such mythological tales. The other peaks in Swetvarn Bamak were named according to these stories.¹ We drank a toast in the holy tea and started off.

At Gangotri we ran into the second of our difficulties. This time it was the mules. A tilted bridge stopped the caravan which we disbanded. Immediately the 'sphagetti techniques' (pulling from the front—pushing from the back) were applied. Bernard, Rodhan, I and others started pulling from Gaumukh. Danthi, Hubert and Dr Desai pushing from Gangotri. By the time all 2000 kg of our luggage arrived at Gaumukh, we had reached a site for the base camp on the Raktavarn Bamak at 15,750 ft.

At Gaumukh the road ends for the pilgrims. Gangotri glacier showed its teeth in a full measure. The track went over moraines of the type to put anyone in problems. We turned east to enter the Raktavarn Bamak. It lived up to its name. Kami discovered a gully which avoided a long scree slope. We were established on the 12 May on a huge open plateau, covered with snow. We were 2 km ahead of the usual camp site near Thelu Bamak and 1 km before the turning into the Swetvarn Bamak. Except four, all other porters were discharged.

On 14 May we had the first look at the entrance to the Swetvarn. At once we realized why the local people had advised against it. A gigantic moraine slope followed by a series of steps in the glacier faced us. The route was non-existent and the slope was continuously bombarded by loose stones. The latter half was snow-covered. A long ridge ultimately led to the centre of the Bamak. Here it divided in two sections. We established ABC here at 17,720 ft. It was a most unpleasant and horrid climb to the ABC. And we had to repeat it many times. Slowly ABC was well stocked. Then we did not have to tread on this route. But kudos to Bernard. He

1. See note at the end.

courageously once went down to BC to rest and shave!

The scene at ABC was grand. To the northwest lies Sudarshan Parbat with its east ridge leading straight up. Saife was almost due west. A gentle yet deceptive peak. Koteshwar I was 'snowy' while Koteshwar II 'rocky' with a steep fall in the south to BC. This was the scenario towards the western section of the Bamak. Towards the east, the Bamak was gentler. On the dividing ridge at first rose Swetvarn and then Chaturbhuj. Shyamvarn Bamak was to the east with a peak on the watershed. Yogeshwar dominated the northeast, and the Shyamvarn Bamak.

Once well entrenched at ABC, we started to look around. And the whole place came alive. We divided into many parties to do small climbs, skis and to get familiar with the surroundings. This trend was to continue all along the expedition. From ABC each team was on its own and only for Sudarshan Parbat we regrouped ourselves in full strength. It was a methodical madness—alpine style indeed. We had a pool of equipment for all to borrow from. A day was spent in 'snow-school'. Everyone grew familiar with the techniques and the equipment. We soon discovered that the major difference was of the equipment. Alain could use an ice-axe like an artist. By a mere feather touch it would hold in the ice. Whereas the Indian-made ice-axe, harder you bang more it will bounce back. Rest was a case of sheer stamina and of learning.

During these days we had many 'kitchen talks'. The subjects varied from Indian philosophy to French wines. But most of the time luckily remaining somewhere in the middle. That ensured the proper functioning of both the teams. These were truly, the great days.

Within a few days we had an *embarras de richesses* of mountains, more than we could deal with. With everybody properly acclimatized we started climbing.

Koteshwar

The first and the final honours were reserved for this often climbed peak. All the previous ascents were from the side of Thelu nullah. We were to the east of it. Alain and Jacques left early on 19 May followed by Bernard and Kanu. The route went up the gentle east face and then followed the south ridge. The first team reached the summit at 9 a.m. just in time to see Hubert on the adjoining peak Saife. The second team gave up the climb to run down due to Hubert's fall on Saife. This peak was then attempted on the last day of the expedition at ABC on 7 June by Boga and Vijay, who got within 200 ft of the top.

Saife

On 19 May, Hubert made a solo ascent. From ABC he proceeded on to the western glacier and climbed the snow-slopes to reach the ridge connecting Saife with Koteshwar I. At exactly 8.50 a.m. he was on the top to wave to Alain and Jacques on Koteshwar I.

Three of us were proceeding to Camp 1 on the glacier below. We

saw Hubert begin to ski from the summit of Saife at 9 a.m. In 2 minutes he was 100 ft lower and in the process caused a giant avalanche. It was scary for him as well as for us. Slowly after 15 agonizing minutes the small dot moved. He removed his skis and climbed down. He came out of the line of the avalanche debris. We were frantically waving hands to guide him to avoid the avalanche route. After 50 minutes he was with us sharing his charmed existence. Our reunion at ABC with the Koteshwar party was joyous. They had given him up for dead.

Saife was again climbed on 30 May by Kanu, Danthi and Kami. They had established a camp at the foot of the ridge, then followed the same route to the summit, leisurely watching the climbers progressing on the nearby Sudarshan Parbat.

The third time this peak received a blitzkrieg attack. On 7 June Alain and Jacques left ABC at 4 a.m. and reached the summit at 6.30 a.m. and were back in the camp for breakfast at 8.30 a.m.! A terrific speed even for a well acclimatized party. Thus the peak had three very different styled ascents. All the time while it was climbed some other climb was always in progress!

Koteshwar II

This is a peak south of Koteshwar I. On 24 May Vijay, Kami, Nawang and myself started from ABC to reach the Koteshwar col by 9.30 a.m. We proceeded on loose snow and to the final 500 ft section of the rocks. It was an enjoyable climb. But one had to be careful for a fall would lead down to the glacier. At 10.30 a.m. we were on the narrow top amazed at the magnificent panorama it unfolded. A few rappels and we were back at ABC.

Swetvarn

This peak at the centre of Swetvarn Bamak was the first to stop our line of successes. It has three ridges. North joins Chaturbhuj, southwest joins Sudarshan while southeast falls between the two branches of the Swetvarn. North and southwest ridges were found to be too sharp. On 25 May, Lakhpa, Kanu, Danthi and Jacques left early from Camp 1 (w). The ridge gradually rose to its full height. They slowly negotiated the sharp snow-ridge, always remaining on the east. But 300 ft below the top, the ridge became razor-sharp and corniced. A 1000 ft fall was under the thin icy crust. Even if this was crossed at great danger, the slope ahead was of verglas and rose almost vertically. It was impossible to go further. After various observations later on too, no route seemed feasible over this or the other ridges.

Sudarshan Parbat

With the acclimatization and the observations we had made, it was the time to tackle our *ennemi redoutable*. As we look up from ABC, this fat mountain stands up majestically and in a stupendous shape. The east ridge falls steeply from its summit to touch the

glacier floor at 19,000 ft. In portions it looked very sharp and steep. Our first move was to establish a Camp 1 (w) at the foot of the ridge. This was done after crossing heavily crevassed ground. On 21 May, Hubert and Alain started a climb on the rotten rocks at the bottom of the east ridge. After a series of very bad pitches they hit the upper snow. We could see them all along on this climb. They anchored a fixed rope from the ridge to Camp 1 (w). Next day we jumared up the fixed rope to the col on the ridge. It was a panting and breathless affair. The scenery, when one could spare a glance for it, was monumental. Dripping precipices soared for a thousand feet or more on the Sudarshan slope with a mighty ice-and-snow rampart above that.

Proceeding on the ridge, came a mixed terrain of rock and snow. Ahead was the crux of the climb. A narrow ice-ridge which connected the east ridge to the main massif. It was only about 20 m in length. One had to traverse it precariously on the southern wall. Below was the direct fall of at least 2000 ft to the glacier. Alain and Hubert negotiated this patch with great expertise and care. It took them a thoroughly exhausting day. But when they accomplished this and returned, the deed, too was done. The route was opened with a fixed rope. Ahead was a very steep ice and snow slope leading to a small plateau above the north ice-face of Sudarshan. Once there the route should be simpler. It was that satisfying moment that comes on any big venture when at last you have gone too far to turn back.

On 27 May it was decided to attempt Sudarshan Parbat from Camp 1 (w). Hubert and myself shared a tent and offered to wake up others at a little past midnight. The day died and the stars came out, pricking frostily through the darkening canopy of the evening sky. The snow froze in its ruts. To keep the time proved to be unexpectedly difficult. During the anxious night the hours crept like ghosts around the luminous dial of my watch and sleep totally eluded me. At 1 a.m. Hubert and I roused and in the effort to wake the others let forth such a chorus of yells that the ice-cliff above might have been tempted to respond in its own fashion. After a while all were ready but the sky was none too clear. The party left at 4 a.m. But by the time they reached the crux it was 10 a.m. The wind speed was high and the visibility became poor. The snow was too soft and the terrain dangerous. It was the east ridge after all. We all gathered back at the camp and went down to ABC for a rest.

On 29 May a strong well-rested party left for Camp 1 (w) for a renewed bid on Sudarshan. After a leisurely lunch at the Camp 1 (w) we decided to move the camp 1000 ft higher for one night. Nawang and I went up to this Assault Camp to help in whatever manner we could. Climbing in the evening on such steep soft slopes was rather exhausting. A small platform was cut out on the steep slope to pitch tents. Heart and lungs pounded alarmingly and a deadly fatigue encased the limbs as though one was working on a planet

of abnormal gravity. By the time tents were up, Nawang and I went down to Camp 1 (w) to wait for their return.

30 May dawned exceptionally clear with no wind. I could see below three tiny dots on Saife, which was climbed by 8 a.m. But all our eyes, at ABC or Camp 1 (w) were trained on Sudarshan Parbat.

2 a.m. saw them arise to a crisp morning. All dressed and equipped for the summit climb with crampons, jumars, harnesses and other hardware. After a breakfast of honey and biscuits with lots of tea, the first party left tents at 3.45 a.m. At the top of the first fixed rope they reached the col on the east ridge. They formed three ropes. Alain and Hubert in the lead, followed by Boga and Lakhpa and Jacques and Bernard. This initial climb was of 70 degrees for 300 ft and took 25 minutes per climber in darkness. On the top of the east ridge a crescent moon greeted them with the dawn not far away. The ridge flattened out for about 100 ft and then rose at an angle of 50 degrees over a mixed terrain. After a climb of 500 ft on this, they reached the crux, the razor-sharp section. On the fixed rope they moved on the southern side to traverse. With the earlier labours it was relatively easier but not simple in the usual terms. The route rose to 60 degrees on ice increasing to 80 degrees where it meets the large cornice which is the prominent feature of the northeast face. This cornice is topped by an easy-angled plateau of about 15 sq metre. Here they rested for a while. The route ahead rose again to about 50 degrees to follow a narrow ridge to reach a smaller platform on the west. They had traversed the full mountain once again!

The summit was the end of the 75 degree rising ridge. One by one they moved over cautiously to the summit. It ought to have been an emotional moment. But weariness and altitude dull the emotions. There were too many dangers for any real demonstration of feeling—a rope to be tripped over, a cornice, equipment and cameras to be lost. But during those fleeting minutes of rest and success, while the body warmth drained away in cold gusts from space, there was a chance to reflect on and savour the climax to an incredible climb. At every moment the luck had held, the weather had obliged, all stood by each other and above all the mountain had quietly submitted in the days that we were there.

The view was grand. All the Gangotri peaks and the valley, a little of Tibet and all the neighbouring peaks were seen. It was a sight for Gods. The south and north ridges looked very bad, while the west looked rather easy.

The descent was made very carefully and all the lower ropes removed. By 1.30 p.m. I could see those tired tiny dots increasing in stature and we were together soon. Leaving all the equipment to be brought later, we walked down to ABC by the evening. All that remained was to clean our mugs thoroughly, and savour the French champagne!

Chaturbhuj

Sudarshan had two elderly neighbours. Both the peaks are hidden from view and hence perhaps not known. Otherwise they are both as challenging. During the early recce, a route was investigated over the eastern Swetvarn Bamak to the north col. Now Hubert, Alain, Jacques and Boga occupied Camp 1 (e) 5900 m. After the col, they had to descend 60 m of blue ice at an angle of 70 degrees to the north. After fixing the ropes and studying the route they returned. Next day Boga had to return to ABC due to a pain in his arm. A day before he had slaughtered and dressed a goat with a pen-knife. Kami all along nodded in disagreement to say that the Gods would be angry. The curse had effect.

On 5 June, others left Camp at 4 a.m. and reached the col over the fixed ropes by 5.30 a.m. After the icy descent they traversed on the upper snow towards the west over the hanging ice-blocks on the Guligad Bamak. They reached a little above the col with point 6381 m at about 6400 m at 9.30 a.m. It was a very tiring traverse over deep snow.

Now they were on the north ridge. They climbed three rope-lengths of 40 m each where steepness was 45 degrees with cornices on the east. The ridge becomes flat here till a little cornice 50 m below the summit. They traversed on the plateau over the cornice at 11 a.m. The summit was a conical pyramid, very steep, 15 m long and 2 m high. Hubert made steps on the pyramid and one climber at a time stood on the summit at noon. After 15 minutes they climbed down to traverse to the col. At 2 p.m. they started descending the col and after winding up the camp were at ABC at 6 p.m. A most prolific and energetic first ascent.

Yogeshwar

While others were at grips with Chaturbhuj, two Sherpas and myself proceeded to attempt Yogeshwar, the highest peak in our area. We had recce the route to the east col previously. Now we descended the col on the upper plateau of Shyamvarn Bamak on the 5th. That evening I sat watching Kami and Lakhpa at work, improvising many things which perhaps only the Sherpas are capable of at this height. If the stove was tilted, a biscuit went underneath to straighten it, if the tent was torn a needle and thread was pulled out from the cap to repair it. But with all these, one knows that in the days of the technical and alpine-style climbing they are a diminishing race and soon their likes will be rarely seen.

6th was cloudy. But as it cleared later, we left at 7 a.m. and climbing a steep ice-snow slope reached the southeast ridge. Then it was a long trudge along the ridge. About 1000 ft below the peak, Lakhpa stopped. He shouted back 'Ahead is a crevasse in which one could pitch 40 tents'. I came up, had a look and disagreed, 'Why only 40, it could certainly take 60 tents!' Withdrawal was imminent. The other lip of the crevasse rose steeply to the summit slopes. Anything falling from those slopes would make an icy grave

for the crevasse climbers. With more time, it could be overcome. But here we were on the adjoining glacier and too far away from ABC. These are the perils of the alpine style. This was the final *coup de grâce*.

7 June was Dr Desai's 64th birthday and he decided to climb to 19,000 ft and scare us. While Boga and Vijay attempted Koteswar, he waited 5 hours on the ridge in some finest scenery. He fell and fractured his left wrist. As the climbers did not return till late we sent the Sherpas to help them. But they had just returned with me from the attempt on Yogeshwar and hence took things easy. Soon the sun disappeared and it was a mini-emergency. A thoroughly disgruntled Jacques led all of us up. We met Boga leading Dr Desai, who though in pain was cheerful. During the next hour Dr Desai was roped down in high spirits. Hubert kept on reminding him that the attitude that nothing has happened could lead to something happening! Anyway, ultimately it was a safe and happy birthday party at ABC.

As we sat watching the last sunset on Sudarshan, we could reflect on the happy days we had lived together. Whether it was the holy tea or the lucky train or the mangoes, we were fortunate! We said *adieu* to each other and the trip goes down the memory lane.

Note on the nomenclature

In this area of all the peaks attempted only one was named on the Survey of India maps, that is Sudarshan Parbat. It was confusing to refer to the various peaks by heights alone. Moreover in the recent survey maps the heights of the various peaks varies from the old maps. This added to the confusion. Hence the peaks around the glacier were named in accordance with the guide-lines by the Surveyor-General of India as published in *Himalayan Journal*, Vol. XXXI, p. 344.

- (1) It was ascertained that no local names exist for any of these peaks.
- (2) The names are appropriate to the surroundings and the nomenclature of the area as explained below.
- (3) The names have appropriate meaning in the local language.

The following peaks were named as under:

<i>Unnamed Peak (in metres)</i>	<i>Name Proposed</i>	<i>Map Reference</i>	<i>Location from Sudarshan Parbat</i>
6655	Chaturbhuj	53 N/1	North
6678	Yogeshwar	53 M/4	Northeast
6340	Swetvarn	53 N/1	North- northeast
6135	Shyamvarn	53 N/1	East
6161	Saife	53 N/1	South- southeast
5690	Koteswar II	53 N/1	Southeast

All the peaks lie between longitudes $79^{\circ} 5'$ to $79^{\circ} 10'$ and latitudes $30^{\circ} 55'$ to $31^{\circ} 0'$.

A point c. 6080 m southeast of Sudarshan Parbat is locally known as 'Koteshwar'—though not marked on the map.

Explanations for the names

All the peak names in the Gangotri area are based on Hindu mythology and Gods. Towards south names like Chaukhamba are for Brahma, the creator. Towards the west, Shivaling stands for Shiva, the destroyer. The only peak named in our area towards the east is Sudarshan Parbat. Sudarshan is the weapon of Lord Krishna or Vishnu, the preserver. Hence the peaks are named accordingly.

Chaturbhuj. 'One with four hands.' This is a name of Vishnu who has four hands and holds Sudarshan. This peak has four distinct ridges falling in four directions. Thus both mythologically as well as topographically the name is appropriate.

Yogeshwar, is a name of Krishna, in a serene mood. Thus it applies to this high snowy peak.

Saife, in local language and Hindi means 'sword'. This is the weapon carried by Rama, who is known as 'God with white complexion'—Swetvarn. This peak lies near Koteshwar—'God of the edges'. Thus with sword-edge-like ridge, the name is appropriate.

Swetvarn is named after the glacier. It stands in the centre and at the head of the glacier. The ridge from this peak divides the glacier.

Koteshwar II is the peak south of the main ridge of Koteshwar.

The glaciers in this area are named after their appearance—Raktavarn (with reddish complexion), Swetvarn (with white complexion)—and they conform to these names in reality. The glacier to the east of the Swetvarn valley was unnamed on the map. This is a large valley with many peaks and is as big as Swetvarn. Yogeshwar peak lies at the head of it. This valley is blackish in appearance due to lack of snow and black rocks. Hence it was named '*Shyamvarn Bamak*' (with blackish complexion). Shyamvarn is descriptive of Krishna also.

The peak on the watershed divide between the two Bamaks was named '*Shyamvarn*' after the glacier.

Summary:

1. *Sudarshan Parbat*—(6507 m—21,350 ft)
First ascent, 30 May 1981 by the east ridge. About 1500 ft of rope fixed and some very exposed and difficult sections of ice. Starting from the final camp at 0400 hrs, the summit was reached at 1000 hrs.
Summiters: Hubert Odier, Alain de Blanchaud, Zerksis Boga, Lakhpa Tsering, Bernard Odier and Jacques Giraud.
2. *Chaturbhuj*—(6655 m—21,835 ft)
First ascent, 5 June 1981. Starting from camp on Swetvarn Bamak (e) to a col in north. Descent of 60 m over ice to the

north and a long snow traverse to the north ridge. Then followed the ridge to the summit. This peak was never attempted before.

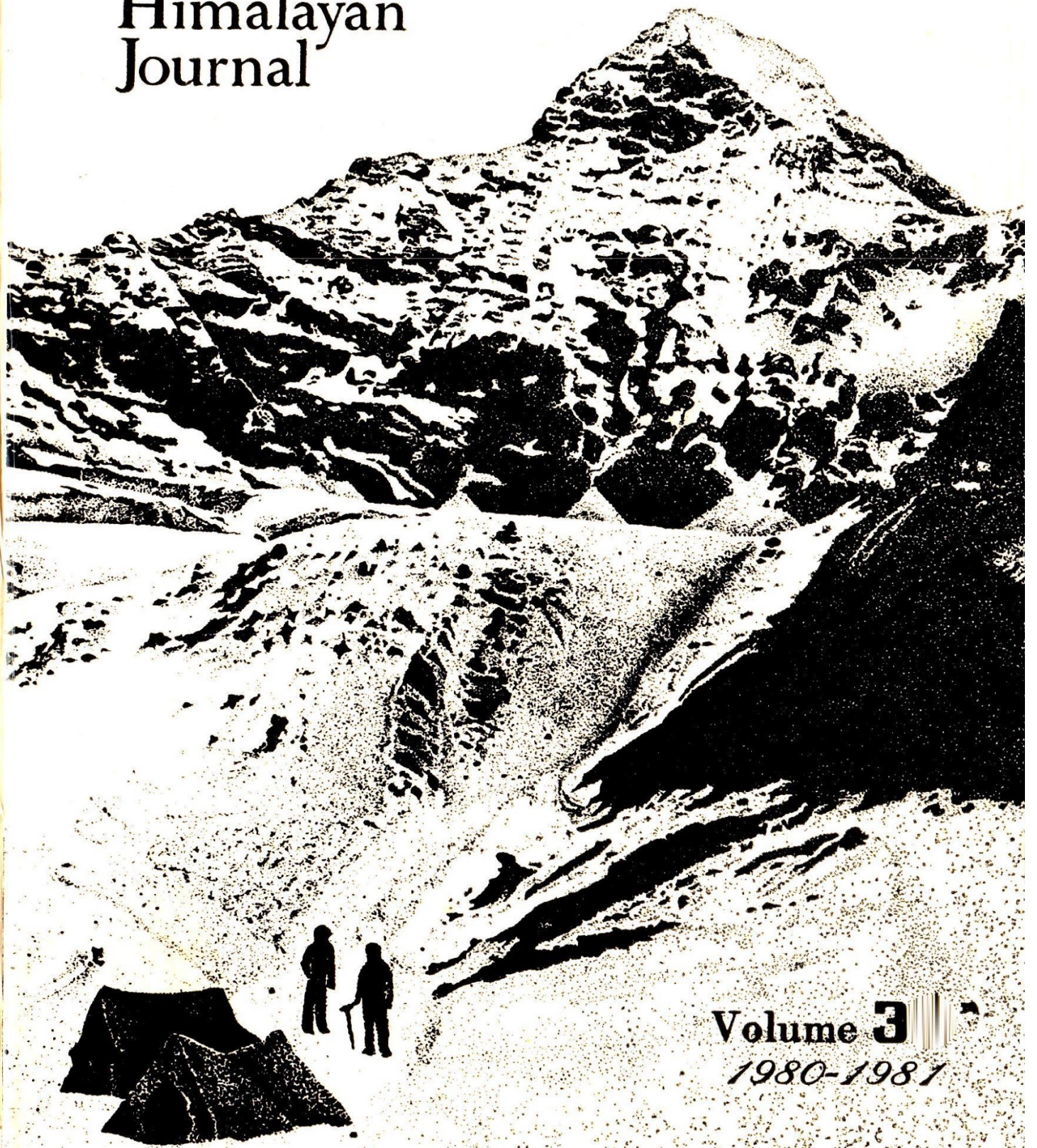
Summiters: Hubert Odier, Alain de Blanchaud and Jacques Giraud.

3. *Saife* — (6161 m — 20,215 ft)
 Second ascent. Three climbs, all by the northeast face to the east ridge and summit.
 19 May 1981 by Hubert Odier (solo) skied down partly and survived a giant avalanche.
 30 May 1981 by C. D. Danthi, Kanu Pomal and Kami Tsering.
 7 June 1981 by Alain de Blanchaud and Jacques Giraud.
4. *Koteshwar I* — (c. 6080 m — c. 19,950 ft).
 Climbed, 19 May 1981, by the east ridge.
 Summiters: Alain de Blanchaud and Jacques Giraud.
5. *Koteshwar II* — (5690 m — 18,670 ft)
 Climbed, 24 May 1981, by the northwest ridge.
 Summiters: Harish Kapadia, Vijay Kothari, Kami Tsering and Nawang.
6. *Swetvarn* — (6340 m — 20,800 ft)
 C. D. Danthi, Jacques Giraud, Kanu Pomal and Lakhpa Tsering reached within 300 ft of the summit from the east ridge on 25 May 1981. A narrow traverse and mixed terrain ahead stopped them.
7. *Yogeshwar* — (6678 m — 21,910 ft).
 Harish Kapadia, Lakhpa and Kami Tsering reached within 1000 ft of the summit on 6 June 1981. After crossing a high col to the adjoining 'Shyamvarn Bamak' attempt was made by the south ridge. A huge bergschrund cut off the ridge from the summit pyramid.
 Area: Gangotri glacier region in the Garhwal Himalaya. Swetvarn Bamak is a tributary glacier of Raktavarn Bamak.
 Members: Harish Kapadia (leader and liaison officer), Zerksis Boga, C. D. Danthi, Vijay Kothari, Kanu Pomal, Dr. V. N. Desai and Dr. R. H. Shroff (Indians), Bernard Odier (deputy leader), Hubert Odier, Alain de Blanchaud and Jacques Giraud (French).

The expedition organized by *The Mountaineers*, Bombay with *Groupe Universitaire de Montagne et de Ski*, Paris.



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—Chandrar Drakot
(6728 m — 22,073 ft)

—Suguanth
(7175 m — 23,533 ft)

—Nanda Parbat
(6739 m — 22,265 ft)

—Bhagirathi Peaks

—Shivachand
(6912 m — 22,685 ft)

—Kedar Dome
(6831 m — 22,410 ft)

—Kedarnath
(6840 m — 22,770 ft)

—Shivling
(5343 m — 17,546 ft)

—Meru Peaks

—Thalay Sagar
(6904 m — 22,632 ft)

—Bhuzamath
(6712 m — 22,213 ft)

—Maha Peaks
(foreground)

—Jagin Peaks
(background)

—Gangotri Peaks

—Srikanta
(6132 m — 20,129 ft)

—Koteswar
(c. 6980 m — c. 19,950 ft)

—'Salle'
(6161 m — 20,215 ft)

—Gangotri Glacier

—Thuli
(6902 m — 19,892 ft)

—Meru Glacier

PANORAMA I. Panorama from summit of Sudarshan Parbat, 21,350 ft.
Looking from southeast to west. Article 13 Photo: Z. Bopa

—Gangotri Valley



—Makhi
(6721 m — 22,041 ft)

—Tufang
(6595 m — 21,614 ft)

—Chaurahat
(6585 m — 21,583 ft)

—Pt. 6715 m (22,022 ft)

—Yaneshwar
(6678 m — 21,875 ft)

—Sri Kulland
(6512 m — 21,364 ft)

—Pt. 6537 m (21,444 ft)

—Pt. 6545 m (21,440 ft)

—Pt. 6706 m (22,298 ft)

—Mina Parbat
(6734 m — 22,251 ft)

PANORAMA J. Panorama from summit of Sudarshan Parbat, 21,350 ft.
Looking from northwest to east. Article 13 Photo: Z. Boga

—Svetvari
(6340 m — 20,800 ft)

East Col

—Shyanvari
(6135 m — 20,130 ft)

