



The Lingti Valley Expedition 1987

Eastern Spiti

1987 LIVE

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

The expedition explored the unknown Lingti Valley in Spiti, Himachal Pradesh, and climbed 6 peaks in the area. The expedition approached and returned by different routes covering 210 km. About 15 major rivers and nalas and 11 high passes were crossed in 45 days.

PEAKS CLIMBED : (All except Parilungbi are 1st ascents)

1. 'LAMA KYENT' (6040 m-19,820 ft.) 5 July 1987 (Harish Kapadia and Dhiren Toolsidas)
2. 'PARILUNGBI' (6166 m-20,230 ft.) 6 July 1987 (Harish Kapadia and Dhiren Toolsidas)
3. 'LABRANG' (c.5900 m-c.19,360 ft.) 12 July 1987 (Harish Kapadia, M. H. Contractor and Dhiren Toolsidas)
4. 'RUNSE' (6175 m-20,260 ft.) 18 July 1987 (Harish Kapadia, M.H. Contractor and Dhiren Toolsidas)
5. 'GELING' (c.6100 m-c.20,000 ft.) 19 July 1987 (Harish Kapadia, M. H. Contractor and Dhiren Toolsidas)
6. 'GYADUNG' (6160 m-20,210 ft.) 19 July 1987 (Harish Kapadia, M.H. Contractor and Dhiren Toolsidas)

PEAKS ATTEMPTED :

1. 'LHAKHANG' (6250 m-20,506 ft.) 7 July 1987 (M.H.Contractor and Harsinh reaching upto 5720 m).
2. 'SHILLA' (6132 m-20,120 ft.) 11-12 July 1987 (Harish Kapadia, M.H. Contractor and Dhiren Toolsidas - from north and east col, each reaching 5800 m)
3. 'GYAGAR' (c.6400 m-c.21,000 ft.) 18 July 1987 (Harish Kapadia, M. H. Contractor and Dhiren Toolsidas - reaching 6100 m).

An expedition by:

THE MOUNTAINEERS

72, Vijay Apartment,
16, Carmichael Road,
Bombay 400 026

Gram : Winterwear
Phones : 4940772
313227

PERIOD : 6 June to 9 August 1987

SPONSORS : The Mountainers, Bombay.

MEMBERS : Harish Kapadia (leader), M.H. Contractor, Dhiren Toolsidas and Ravi Mariwala with 4 porters from Kumaon.

DETAILED REPORT

Lingti Valley lies to the north-east of Kaza in Spiti, Himachal Pradesh. To the east of Lingti Valley is Tibet (Pare Chu Valley) while to the north lies Rupshu district of Ladakh. It has no known trade route with Tibet or Rupshu and hence local villagers do not venture into this valley. In 1983 we penetrated halfway through the valley and climbed 4 peaks - the first mountaineers to do so. With our knowledge of the area we returned this year and explored this still unknown valley fully.

Leaving Bombay on 6 June 1987 we were ready at Lalung village on 17 June after a long bus journey which itself was an experience. With 12 yaks we trekked for 9 days over Zingu top (4510 m), Sisbang top (5060 m), crossed Lingti at Phiphuk, over Kuli la (4880 m) to Chaksachan la (5230m). Locals have no knowledge beyond this point and never ventured ahead. We ferried all the baggage down to the river bank at 4280 m.

Lingti river, starting from the borders of Rupshu flows south-east and takes a huge turn to south-west after meeting Chaksachan Lungpa. Our first aim was to go down along the river to this junction and proceed north to the base of Gya (6794 m), the highest peak in Himachal Pradesh. In the next 3 days and after 6 difficult river crossings, we were back to where we started. Lingti was cutting through a deep gorge near the junction which was not fordable at that time. We decided to go upstream to the head of the Lingti valley and climb peaks in the side valleys. In 2 days we were established at 4940 m near the upper watershed.

CLIMBS IN THE UPPER VALLEY :

1. Harish and Dhiren with Balak Singh left on 4 July for a high pass leading to Rupshu. Camp 1 (5470 m) and Camp 2 (6000 m) were established. On 5th July 'YANGZI DIWAN' (a new pass) (5890 m) was crossed. This pass leads down in 3 different directions in the north and would easily lead towards Parang la or Chumar. From the pass peak 'LAMA KYENT' (monk's village) (6040 m) was climbed. Next day, 6 July, they left at 7 a.m. in extremely cold winds. The route, at first descended 250 m and climbed up the steep scree and snow slopes. By 10 a.m. they were on the summit of 'PARILUNGBI' (6166 m), standing above the Rupshu plains. They returned by the same route and directly to the base camp in a long day.

2. At the same time Muslim and Har Singh Jr. had entered Lhakhang nala in the west. They reached a col at 5720 m but Har Singh felt sick and they had to return without climbing 'LHAKHANG' (6250 m), which is the highest peak in the upper valley.

3. Another valley leading westwards was to the base of the legendary Shilla peak. All the 3 members first tried to gain the north col of SHILLA but were defeated by poor snow and cornices. Then the east col of Shilla was reached on 12 July but the conditions ahead were thought to be dangerous. Proceeding southwards along the ridge, the party climbed 'LABRANG' (Lama's house) (c.5900m). In 2 days, the party returned down the Lingti.

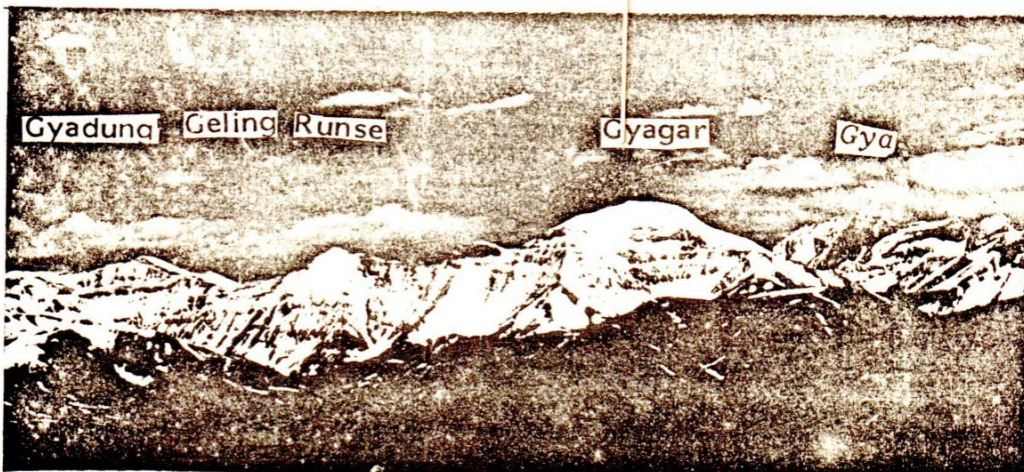
CLIMBS IN THE GYAGAR VALLEY :

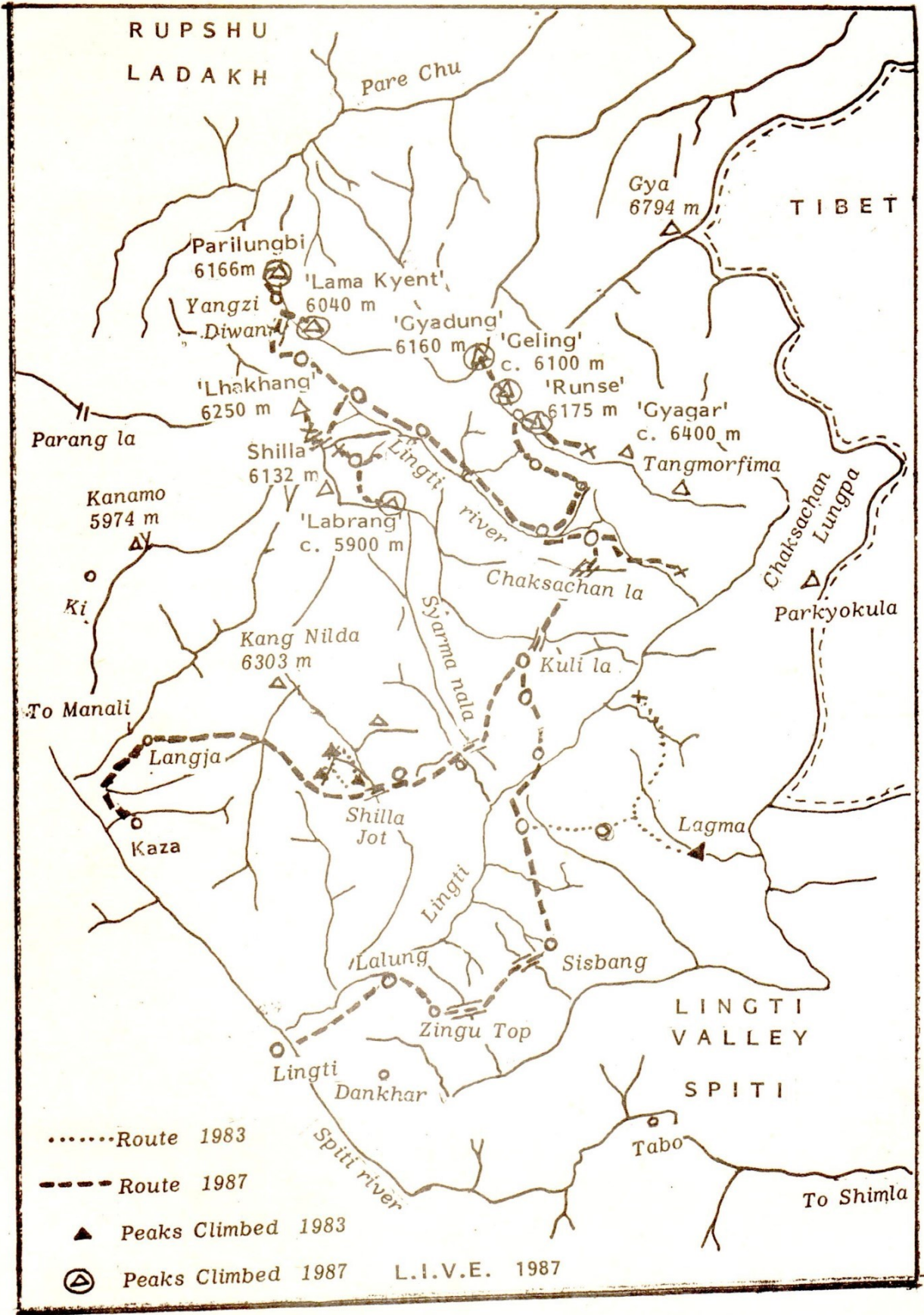
A valley to the east of Lingti river leads to the base of 'Gyagar'. It has a high ridge leading north-west to south-east with 6 peaks on it. By 15 July we were entering this valley. Camp 1 (4880 m), Camp 2 (5340 m) and Camp 3 (5970 m) were established after a very steep and exposed climb to a col between 'Runse' and 'Geling'. On 18 July, by late evening 3 members reached the summit of 'RUNSE' (monastery) (6175 m). Probing, the route ahead towards 'Gyagar' we were blocked by the solid rock massif of 'Goor'. Ahead, the snow ridge of 'Gyagar' looked heavily corniced. We reached 6100 m and realised that 'GYAGAR' (Indian) (c.6400 m) would need more time and support than we had at our disposal. Hence, we had to give up and concentrate on peaks on the north-west of the ridge. On 19 July, peak 'GELING' (piped instrument) (c.6100m) was climbed and traversing across by afternoon, 'GYADUNG' (long trumpet) (6160 m) was climbed. In the next 2 days we retreated to our main base camp and prepared to return.

RETURN OVER SHILLA JOT

All the expedition baggage was now to be ferried out between 3 members and 4 porters. Due to the flooding of Lingti, no yaks were expected. We returned via Chaksachan la and Kuli la to Shelatse. From here we followed a westerly route over SYARMA LA (5040 m), across the turbulent Syarma nala and up and across SHILLA JOT (5850 m), each stage taking 2 days. By 30 July, a tired but most satisfied party was eating momos at Kaza! We returned via Manali and Delhi to Bombay on 9 August.

HARISH KAPADIA
(leader)







The Lingti Valley Expedition 1987

Eastern Spiti

We are returning to the unknown Lingti valley in Eastern Spiti to mount a second expedition. An expedition was organised to this remote corner by us in 1983. Based on that experience and information we hope to explore the valley fully and climb Gyah (6794 m), the highest peak in Himachal Pradesh.

SPONSORS : The expedition is sponsored by 'The Mountaineers', Bombay, an association of mountaineers to promote and support advanced mountaineering activities for experienced climbers. In the past the association has sponsored many expeditions which climbed; Devtoli (6788 m), Chiring We (6559 m), Sudarshan Parbat (6507 m), Chaturbhuj (6655 m), five peaks in Spiti in 1983, Kalanag (6387 m), Bandarpunch West (6102 m). The Club organised the Siachen Indo-British Expedition in 1985 to the Eastern Karakoram and climbed Rimo III (7233 m), Sondhi (6480 m) and 3 other peaks and attempted Rimo I (7385 m). In 1986 we visited Kinnaur district and Manirang South (5888 m) was climbed. The association is very active, with members organising and participating in various mountaineering activities regularly both in Himalaya and Sahyadris. 'THE MOUNTAINEERS' is a registered association.

THE AREA : Spiti is a relatively unknown valley to mountaineers. Lying at the northern end of Himachal Pradesh, this barren land is not often visited. Spiti river cuts through the district and joins Satluj in the south. Towards Southeast, Lingti river is an important tributary of Spiti river. The Lingti river has four important tributaries - Khukhe nala, Sharma nala, Parilungbi nala and Chaksachan nala. Each of these nalas has many high, unnamed peaks which have not been attempted, seen or recorded. Some of the important peaks of the area are : Gyah (6794 m), Parilungbi (6166 m), Shilla (6132 m), Chau Chau Kang Nilda (6303 m) and Kanamo (5974 m).

To the north of Spiti lies the Rupshu district of Ladakh connected by Parang la (5578 m). To the south lies Kinnaur, connected by a motorable road. Towards the west are Lahul and Kulu valleys across the Kunzum la. Administratively, the valley lies in Lahul-Spiti district of Himachal Pradesh.

HISTORY : Very few expeditions have climbed in Spiti. Most of the early records speak of travel to Spiti but not much of climbing. In 1817 Capt. Alexander Gerard passed through the valley and in 1945 L. Schmaderer was murdered on his return from Tibet with H. Paidar. In 1939 J.O.M. Roberts climbed Chau Chau Kang Nilda (6303 m) and in 1952 Dr. Graaff and Snelson recceeded the area.

.....2.

An expedition by:

THE MOUNTAINEERS

72, Vijay Apartment,
16, Carmichael Road,
Bombay 400 026

Gram : Winterwear
Phones: 4940772
313227

The most important expedition was in 1955 by Peter Holmes and T. H. Braham, to Ratang nala. They climbed about 10 peaks and crossed as many passes. They brought back invaluable records of exploration and also Spiti shales and fossils. Peak Shilla had attracted attention due to a wrongly attributed height and a climb by a Khalasi of Survey of India in 1860. An expedition from Kerala University (India) climbed the peak in 1966.

The next major expedition to this area was organised by us in 1983. This was the first exploration of the Lingti valley which was not visited by any mountaineers. Entering along the Lingti, we were stopped by the Tangmor gorge. The expedition then climbed 5 peaks in the area around. Valuable photographic and exploratory records were brought back and published in the Himalayan Journal, Vol.40.

THE OBJECTIVES : Based on the past experience we will return to this still unknown valley. One of the main aims of the expedition is to climb Gyah (6794 m) at the head of the Lingti valley. This is an important peak at the tri-junction of Spiti, Ladakh and Tibet.

The other aims would be to attempt : Parilungbi (6166 m) (another virgin peak), to attempt the historic peak of Shilla (6132 m) and unnamed peaks around Gyah.

THE PLAN : We will follow the bus route from Shimla to Kaza. A route will then have to be explored in the Lingti valley in order to reach base camp at its head. The expedition will operate between 1st June to 31st July 1987. We will be accompanied by 4 porters from Kumaon and Yaks will be employed locally.

Appropriate equipment, food and medicines will be carried, based on our past experience.

THE TEAM : (All Indian Nationals)

1. **HARISH KAPADIA** : (Leader) Age 41 years. Businessman. Climbed: Ikualari (5790 m), Bethartoli Himal South (6318 m), Shiti Dhar (5290 m), Devtoli* (6788 m), Kalabaland Dhura* (6105 m), Lagma* (5761 m), Zumto* (c.5800 m), Tserip* (c. 5980 m) and Kawu* (c. 5910 m), (in Spiti), Koteshwar II* (5690 m), Kalanag (6387 m), Bandarpunch West* (6102 m). Attempted : Bhagirathi II (6512 m), Tharkot (6099 m) and Yogeshwar (6617 m). Leader of the Siachen Indo-British Expedition 1985. Trekked to Baspa valley (Kinnaur) 1986. Kulti valley (Lahul) 1986. Basic Course at H.M.I. (1964), Advance Course at N.I.M. (1967). Extensive high altitude trekking over high passes in North Sikkim, East Nepal, East Kumaon and Ladakh-Zaskar and winter climbing in Himachal Pradesh. Over 850 ascents in the Western Ghats. Asst. Hon. Editor of The Himalayan Club. Member of the Indian Mountaineering Foundation, and The Mountaineers (Chairman).

2. **ARUN SAMANT** : Age 38 years. Civil Engineer. Climbed : Peaks in Dhaula Dhar, Rudugaira (5818 m), Lagma* (5761 m), Kalanag (6387 m), Ruinsara (c.5480 m), Bandarpunch West* (6102 m), Sondhi* (6480 m), Sundbrar* (6300 m) and Safina* (5975 m) (in Eastern Karakoram - 1985). Climbed Manirang South (5888 m) in Kinnaur, 1986. Basic Course at N.I.M. 1969. Attempted : Bethartoli Himal (6352m), Trekked : Everest base, Dhaula Dhar and Pindari glacier. Trekking in the Western Ghats. Equipment Officer of The Himalayan Club. Member of The Mountaineers.
3. **MUSLIM H. CONTRACTOR** : Age 27 years. Executive. Climbed: Lagma* (5761 m), Safina* (5975 m) and Doab* (6045 m) (in Eastern Karakoram - 1985). Ascent of Manirang South (5888 m) in Kinnaur 1986. Expeditions to Manda, Kabru Dome, Chau Chau Kang Nilda, Dhaula Dhar and Kailash in winter. Basic Course at N.I.M. in 1978. Trekked to Bhillangna valley, Everest base and Darma valley. Trekk-ing and rock climbing in Western Ghats. Hon. Local Secretary (Bombay) of The Himalayan Club. Member of The Mountaineers.
4. **DHIREN TOOLSIDAS** : Age 23 years, Computer Programmer. Climbed : Kalanag (6387 m), Barasukha* (5530 m), Bandarpunch West* (6102 m) and Sondhi* (6480 m), Sundbrar* (6400 m) (in Eastern Karakoram - 1985). Trekked to Darma valley and around Kailash in winter. Extensive trekking in the Western Ghats. Assistant Compiler of The Himalayan Club Newsletter Member of The Mountaineers.
5. **MONESH DEVJANI** : Age 20 years. Student. Basic Course at N.I.M. 1985, Basic Course in skiing at W.H.M.I., 1985. Trekked to Pindari glacier, Khauli pass, Everest base, Kulti valley (Lahul). Rock climbing course at Bombay. Associate member of The Himalayan Club.
6. **MOHAN MARIWALA** : Age 20 years. Student. Trekked to Pindari glacier and Sunderdhunga valley in 1981 and 1985. Basic Rock Climbing course (1981). Advance Rock Climbing course (1982) and Rock climbing at Panchmarhi in 1983 and 1986. Extensive trekking in the Western Ghats. Associate member of The Himalayan Club.

* First ascent.

