

CORRESPONDENCE

La Finquita Apto 78
Pollensa, Mallorca, Spain.

23rd November 1998

Dear Harish Kapadia,

While on leave in England in early 1951 from the Inter Service Wing, Clement Town, Dehra Dun, I came across the recently published *This My Voyage* by Tom Longstaff. Immediately after reading his account of the first ascent of Trisul in 1907, I wrote to Gurdial Singh suggesting this is just the mountain for us - a superb approach and within our capabilities.

In response Gurdial formed a team; Surindar Lall, Nalini Jayal, and myself. He booked Sherpas and set about organising an expedition for May/June of that year.

I felt then, and much more now, that I was greatly privileged and honoured to be the European member of an expedition that you, in an editorial, described as 'the beginning of mountain climbing as a sport for Indians'.

This inclusion of photos from Gurdial's collection in Volume 54 evoked many good memories for me.

In 1952 I also made the joyful pilgrimage to Tom Longstaff arriving at his home at 2.30 a.m. on a trade bicycle borrowed from an hotel in Ullapool. This was too late or too early to wake anybody, so I slept on his front door step becoming drenched by mist.

When the household awoke I was given a gentle chiding for not waking them up when I arrived. I was soon in a hot bath and borrowed clothes.

Later, we sat at a table looking at photos I had brought of our ascent of Trisul. Tom Longstaff, and his wife, showed intense interest. Carefully looking at each one, he made constant exclamations of recognition along the approach route and during the ascent. With growing excitement we reached the summit. We both stood again on the tip of the Trident of Shiva.

It was an exceedingly happy thing to be drawn into the delight of an illustrious mountaineer living his experiences of 44 years ago.

Perhaps it is something of an ongoing tribute to the pioneering of Tom Longstaff and his companions that Trisul is now probably the most climbed 7000 m peak in the Himalaya.

Yours sincerely,

ROY GREENWOOD REV.

Harish Kapadia
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The Himalayan Journal
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India.

False Claim on Nyegi Kangsang, 1995 : Correction

Col. M. P. Yadav, the leader, had claimed the first ascent of Nyegi Kangsang (N.K.) in his article published in the *Himalayan Journal* Vol. 52, 1996, (Pages 9 to 15)¹. A study of the expedition's photos and leader's report, together with supplementary information given by the climbers on the summit party has conclusively revealed that the five climbers had not set foot on the 6983 m summit of N.K. in Arunachal Pradesh, on 23rd October 1995, but had reached a point about 600 m below and one and a quarter kilometre away from the true summit which they mistook as the summit of N.K. From the vicinity of this point, they had taken photos towards the SW, which showed the upper N.K. massif rising to the true summit. This admittedly revealed that the climbers were away at a lower point on the N.E. ridge which they were following. The five member party consisted of Rattan Singh, Rajeev Sharma, Lopsang, Jagmohan and Nadre Sherpa all of them instructors/climbers at various mountaineering training institutes/TBP.

Photo No. 1 opp. Page 12 of H.J. 52 shows the N.K. and its satellite mountains.² The gentler lower snow peak on the N.E. ridge on right of the true summit of N.K. was the point reached, after crossing the 5600 m col the previous day after setting up Camp III on the other side some 200 m below the col. (See diagram on P. 11 H.J. 52). Photo No. 2 (opp. p.13) showed their summit ridge and Photo No. 3 show the peaks in the NE, on the Indo-Tibetan border.

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1. Also *Indian Mountaineer* No. 31 (1995) & 32 (1996).
 2. The height of N.K. in the recent SOI map is shown as 6983 m. and not 7050 m. as referred by the leader. The distinct snow covered peak in the left centre is Chomo (6878) and not 6425 m peak, as wrongly captioned. The tip of the latter is just visible behind the SW ridge of N.K.

The climbers brought photographs of the summit-day climb. These were critically examined and it was found out that the vertical and horizontal co-ordinates did not confirm the photo location to be the true summit.

I submitted a detailed study (45 pages + supplementary notes) to the Indian Mountaineering Foundation, who had sponsored the expedition in 1995. The I.M.F. set up a six-man sub-committee to look into the claim of ascent. The sub-committee consisted of Suman Dubey (V.P. IMF), Gurdial Singh, H.C.S. Ravat, Air Cmde A.K. Bhattacharyya (Hon. Sec. IMF), Col. J. P. Bhagatjee (Director, IMF), Mandip Singh Soin and Capt. M. S. Kohli, former President of I.M.F. was invited to participate in the investigation. The sub-committee unanimously came to the conclusion of non-ascent of the peak as pointed out in the Study Paper by me and also corroborated during their subsequent interactions with the leader and two summiters, Rattan Singh and Rajeev Sharma. The report of the sub-Committee was also unanimously accepted by the Governing Council of the I.M.F. and the President

The summit of Nyegi Kangsang (6983 m) was not reached by the Indian expedition led by Col. M. P. Yadav in 1995. The peak remains virgin. We request all to note the above facts and correct the records accordingly.

JAGDISH NANAVATI

3. For full note see the *Himalayan Club Newsletter* No. 52. A complete report is available with the Club, in various libraries and on the IMF internet site (www.indmount.com)