

Gulia, approached via the village of Sumdo and the Ribil Phu Valley. They established base camp at 5,200m and a higher camp at 5,900m. From there they followed the west ridge to the top to make the second ascent of the peak.

Kula was first climbed in 1997 by Tsuneo Suzuki's Japanese team, which also approached via the Ribil Phu to the small glacier north of the mountain. The Japanese first climbed the glacier toward the summit, but as it seemed avalanche prone, they headed for the west ridge. They reached the crest and followed brittle rock (fixing a short amount of rope) to reach a final ice slope, which eased in angle to the summit. It took six hours from Camp 2 at 5,800m to the top. The Indians may have followed this route or made a minor variant by climbing the ridge more directly.

HARISH KAPADIA, *Honorary Editor, The Himalayan Journal*

HIMACHAL PRADESH

LAHAUL

Pangi Valley, Shib Shankar. A five-member Japanese expedition, led by Shoji Sakamoto, applied to the IMF for a permit to climb Shib Shankar (a.k.a. Sersank), a 6,000m peak immediately south of 5,239m Sersank Pass at the head of the Lugai Nala (valley). This pass links the Darlang Nala in Kishtwar to the Pangi valley but has become difficult to cross due to a complex icefall on the east side. Shib Shankar, which lies north of 6,142m Shivu, the main peak in the Pangi region, was attempted in 2007 via the northwest ridge by a British party (*AAJ 2008*). However, the IMF told the Japanese, "There's no mountain called Shib Shankar on our map." A permit was issued for an unnamed peak of 5,525m, but the IMF added, "If you find this Shib Shankar, you're free to climb it." On July 11, the expedition established base camp at 4,160m below the west flank of the mountain. Two days later members established an advanced base at 4,360m on the right bank of the glacier, and then on the 18th, Camp 1 at 5,050m on a rock ridge on the west face. On the following day Hidetaka Iizuka, Kazuo Kozu, and Reiko Maruyama, with three high altitude porters—Gisidhas (Ganu), Kamlesh Kumar (Lagu), and Vilendes Singh (Bill)—continued above the rock ridge to the crest of the southwest ridge, which they followed to the summit. They didn't reach the highest point but stopped 40m below the final rock outcrop in respect for the religious concerns of the local people. They recorded a height of 6,011m (GPS) and estimate that the true summit is ca 6,050m

TSUNEMICHI IKEDA, *for the Japanese Alpine News*

MIYAR VALLEY

Overview, history, and naming. The Miyar, north of the Chenab River at Udaipur, has evolved into one of the most popular Himalayan destinations for alpine rock climbers. Serious exploration first started here 40 years ago, and three main high peaks, Menthosa (6,444m), Phabrang (6,172m) and Gangstang (6,162m), have received sporadic attention. However, it wasn't until the early 1990s that a group of Italian rock climbers, encouraged by reports from previous trekkers, began to develop the excellent alpine climbing, particularly fine granite rock routes on sub-6,000m towers in the valleys that flow west into the Miyar just below the glacier snout. Italian pioneers named a few of these valleys, and these were used in older reports. Several years ago a British expedition discovered local names, which are used below. To avoid confusion, the four main valleys on the east side of the Miyar are now named, from north to south, Jangpar

(the formerly unnamed glacier flowing into the Miyar above its snout), Dali (formerly Thunder or Spaghetti, which flows into the Miyar just below the snout), Chhudong (formerly Tawa), and Takdung (formerly unnamed).

LINDSAY GRIFFIN, *Mountain INFO*

Trento Peak; Om Shanti; Col 5,630m; Bruno Detassis Peak; Fiamme Gialle Peak. In September I led an expedition that included a doctor and eight mountaineers employed in the Italian Guardia di Finanza Mountain Rescue. We explored little-known areas between the Miyar Glacier and the Zanskar Range, making five first ascents in alpine style. We reached the standard Miyar base camp at Dali Got (3,960m, N 33°01'57.08", E 76°48'36.44") on September 3, and began moving equipment up the Jangpar, Chhudong, and Takdung glaciers.

On the 9th Giampaolo Corona, Christian Gobbi, and Mirko Groff made a one-day first ascent of a previously unnamed peak close to the head of the Takdung Glacier, east of the famous Neverseen Tower. After a complex approach through crevasses and seracs, they climbed

the prominent southeast couloir, which was 800m long and featured deep snow up to 55°. At the top they emerged onto the knife-edge west (northwest) ridge at 5,800m and continued up it until they could move onto the steep north face of the summit spire. Here, they encountered mixed terrain up to 80° and slabby rock plastered with ice (UIAA V). Just below the top Gobbi was caught in a windslab avalanche, but with no serious consequences. The three reached the top at 3:30 p.m. and descended the same route. The 1,000m TD+ climb took 16 hours roundtrip from the glacier. They named this elegant summit Trento Peak (6,046m, N 33°04'15.29", E 76°54'42.95"; nearly all measurements in this report were by both GPS and Thuraya).

On the 11th, Corona and Groff climbed another previously virgin peak that they named Om Shanti (5,770m, N 33°04'42.45", E 76°54'21.66") meaning "mountain of peace" in Hindi. This lies a little west of Trento Peak (but is separated from it by a fine, unclimbed rocky



Trento Peak (6,046m GPS) above the upper Takdung Glacier, showing the line of the ascent: southeast face to northwest ridge to (hidden) north face. Bruno Moretti collection



Om Shanti Peak (5,770m GPS) above the upper Takdung Glacier, showing the line of the first ascent via the south couloir to southeast face. Bruno Moretti collection

summit of perhaps 5,900m). The ascent was made by the south couloir to southeast face. The 50° couloir was snow and ice, but the face proved more demanding, with icy couloirs alternating with slabby granite (80°, UIAA V). They graded the 750m route TD+.

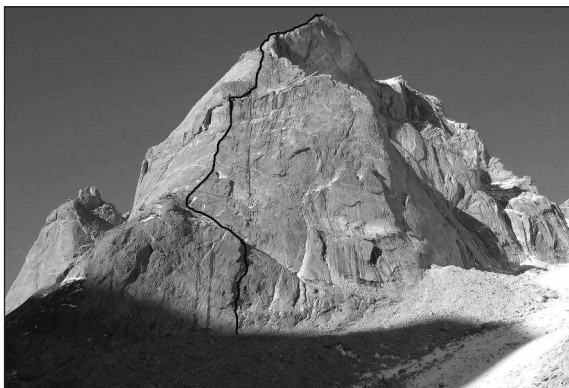
We believe this area to be previously unvisited, and that we were likely the first people to see the eastern faces of the better-known peaks of the Chhudong, such as Neverseen Tower, Geruda, and Lotos.

The middle section of the true left (southeastern) bank of the Takdung holds four great snow and ice peaks of 5,900m–6,000m. They were photographed from the Miyar Valley in 2002 by the Slovakian expedition and given names according to their similarity with famous peaks: Ogre III, Ogre II, Ogre I, and Mont Blanc. Ogre II, in particular, is a fine double-summitted mountain with an imposing northwest face. On the 16th Corona, Gobbi, and Groff made the first ascent of the northwest couloir of the 5,630m col (N 33°02'29.06", E 76°54'18.90") between the north and south summits.

The route, named Ice on the Rocks, is more than 1,200m long and in the lower part consists of two 85° icefalls and some technical 70° gullies. It continues with a dangerous hanging snowfield followed by mixed terrain (85°, UIAA V+). After reaching the col at 5:30 p.m. the three climbers started up the northwest ridge of Ogre II's south peak but gave up due to the late hour and the threat caused by windslab and unstable snow. They reversed the ascent route and were back in camp at 11 p.m. after a grueling 18-hour day. Daniele De Candido, Attilio Munari, and Riccardo Scarian operated in the upper Chhudong. On September 12 they reached the previously virgin southwest summit of Triple Crown, a three-summitted mountain, the highest point of which had been climbed the day previously by Australians Natasha Sebire and Gemma Woldendorp [see below]. Looking from the upper Chhudong, Triple Crown is the fourth peak to the left (north) of Neverseen Tower. We named our new summit Bruno Detassis Peak (5,760m, N 33°05'12.95", E 76°53'08.10") after the Italian mountaineer who died earlier in the



The northwest face of Ogre II (north summit on left; south summit to the right), showing the line of Ice on the Rocks to Col 5,630m, and then part way up the north ridge of Ogre II south summit. Bruno Moretti collection



The southwest pillar of "Bruno Detassis Peak" (5,760m GPS)—the southwest summit of Triple Crown—above the Chhudong Glacier. Marked is the Fiamme Gialle Route. Bruno Moretti collection

year. The three reached the top via a route dubbed Fiamme Gialle on the southwest pillar, which rose above their advanced base on the Chhudong and gave 850m (14 pitches) of cracks and slabs on excellent granite. They climbed the line on-sight over two days, using removable protection except at belays, which they bolted. Maximum difficulties were 6c+.

On the 14th, after an odyssey, the last of our teams, Cristian Brenna and Massimo Da Pozzo, summited the previously unnamed Fiamme Gialle Peak (5,577m, N 33°05'30.30", E 76°50'24.05") in the remote Jangpar area. On the 5th, in a 12-hour round trip from base camp, they reached the Jangpar Glacier and left their haul bags under a conspicuous boulder in the middle of an oceanic moraine. When they returned a few days later, hoping to collect the bags and move to the upper Jangpar, they found that an enormous rockslide had buried their gear. After a cold night without equipment on the Jangpar moraine, they returned to base camp, picked up replacement gear and with a 35kg haul bag each, returned to camp close to the seracs of the eastern branch of the Jangpur, 7km of bouldery terrain up from its junction with the Miyar. Then in one day, starting at 4 a.m., they climbed Fiamme Gialle via its south-southeast face, which sits opposite the impressive north face of Three Peaks Mountain/Mahindra. They reached the summit after 14 roped pitches and 950m of climbing up to UIAA VI. A few bolts were placed at belays. They descended through the night, sitting out a snowstorm, and were back in the tent by 7 a.m. on the 15th. After the 16th bad weather prevented further climbing; during one night 40cm of snow fell at base camp and wrecked the tents at a high camp in the Chhudong. We eventually gave up and returned to Manali.

This activity might not have been possible without the help of our clever liaison officer Mr. Kaushal Desai and his Manali agency Above14000ft.com.

BRUNO MORETTI, *Italy*

Three Peaks Mountain (Mahindra), southeast summit, The Taming of the Shrew. Our four-man Russian team, Eugene Korol, Alex Soshnikov, Dmitrii Vlaznev, and I, intended to climb a virgin mountain via a route of the highest grade of difficulty (6B in the Russian system). We chose Three Peaks Mountain because base camp can be reached easily in just two days with horses, and the southwest face is the biggest rock wall (700m) on one of the highest peaks (6,000+m) in the valley. Sharratt and Wilkinson climbed to the central summit in 2007, but the southeast summit remained unclimbed. We reached the valley on August 22, set up base camp, and began moving equipment up the Dali Glacier. The approach was hard: almost 1.5 km gain in altitude and 10km in distance. Halfway up we climbed a 400m rock wall, not so steep but still requiring us to fix two ropes. The right side of the southwest face features a long vertical crack attempted in 2003 by Slovaks Kopold and Stefansky. However, we thought we would climb it too fast, and as we wanted to prolong the pleasure, opted for the central and most difficult part of the face, directly below the southeast summit. This had the advantage of three big ledges splitting the wall into four almost equal parts. The ledges were large and had enough snow to allow us to avoid hauling a portaledge and water.

Then the weather got bad. We waited through more than a week of rain and snow before realizing that another long spell of fine weather might not materialize. We either had to opt for a route climbable in one or two days or attempt the wall in poor weather. We chose the latter.

We started the face on the first sunny day, September 3, reaching the first ledge after 14 hours of hard free and aid (up to A4). Over the next few days we managed no more than two pitches a day. The aid was often hard, and we had to make extensive use of the drill and skyhooks.