

British Da Kangri Expedition

The First Ascent of Beu-tse 6270m

Supported by the Mount Everest Foundation and British Mountaineering Council

Members:

John Town, Derek Buckle, Martin Scott, Alasdair Scott

With thanks to:

Bikrum Pandey, Himalayan Expeditions, Kathmandu
and
Ming Ma, CITS, Shigatse, Tibet

GRANT APPLICATION FORM

The application will only be accepted as a hard copy of this form (or a same sized photocopy). If the form is sent by FAX, hard copies must follow by post immediately. Please type all applications and keep strictly to three pages (plus the fourth page appendix for scientific expeditions). Deviations from this or applications sent electronically will not be accepted. Provision of adequate detail may make an interview unnecessary, although in general the MEF wants to see all first time leaders.

1. Name of Expedition: 03/47 Revised name: British Da Kangri Expedition

Leader's details.

Name: John Town
Address: 146 Melton Road, West Bridgford,
Nottingham, NG2 6ER

Telephone number (day): 01509 222223
Telephone number (evening): 0115 923 3421
FAX: 01509 223900
Email: j.m.town@lboro.ac.uk

2. Country and region to be visited: Central Tibet – Tolung Dechen county

Objectives: First ascent of Da Kangri 6247m, from the north.

Duration (from-to): 5th to 26th May 2003

3. Expedition Members. Give name, age, nationality, occupation and relevant experience of each member. Please refer to section 5 in the Guidelines.

John Town, 49, British, University Administrator. Alpine Club. Climbing experience in the Alps; Himalayas; Caucasus; USA; Bolivia; Siberian Altai - first Brit. asc. highest pk., Bielukha 4506m; Tibet - led first British Expedition to Amne Machin which made first ascent of Amne Machin IX, 5690m; - first West. Expedition Jomo Gangtse 7048m; - first ascent Machag 6000m; - exploration of Wortse Chu area. Upper Kong-po; Mongolia - first West. asc. Mukhairkhan 4204m; Kamchatka - first Brit. asc. highest pk., Kluichevskaya 4800m. Yulong Shan, Yunnan - attempt on Satseto. Represented BMC on International Meet, Ararat, Winter 86

Derek Buckle, 58, British, Consultant Research Chemist. Alpine Club. Climbing experience in the Alps; Himalayas; Caucasus; Canada; and South America; Numerous first ascents in Greenland. Tibet - first ascent Machag 6000m. Jomo Gangtse area. - exploration of Wortse Chu area. Upper Kong-po. Caucasus - first British ascent. Chatyn Tau, Central Caucasus.

Martin Scott, 50s, British. Alpine Club. Alpine experience worldwide, including numerous first ascents in Greenland.

4. Budget

Expedition Costs:		Expedition Income:	
Travel - to Kathmandu	£2,010	Number of Members -	3
Food and Stores -	£600	Amount of Personal Contributions -	£2,500
Peak Fees and Liaison Officer -)	£6,000	Please give details of grants	
Hire of Labour -)		already approved -	
Insurance -	£375	Other sources -	£300
Other and contingency -	£1,500		
	-----		-----
TOTAL:	£10,485	TOTAL:	£7,800

5. To what organisations or sponsors have you applied for grants and with what results so far?

M.E.F./B.M.C only

If you wish to be considered for a BMC, MC of S or SC for W place a cross in the appropriate box.

BMC MC of S SC for W

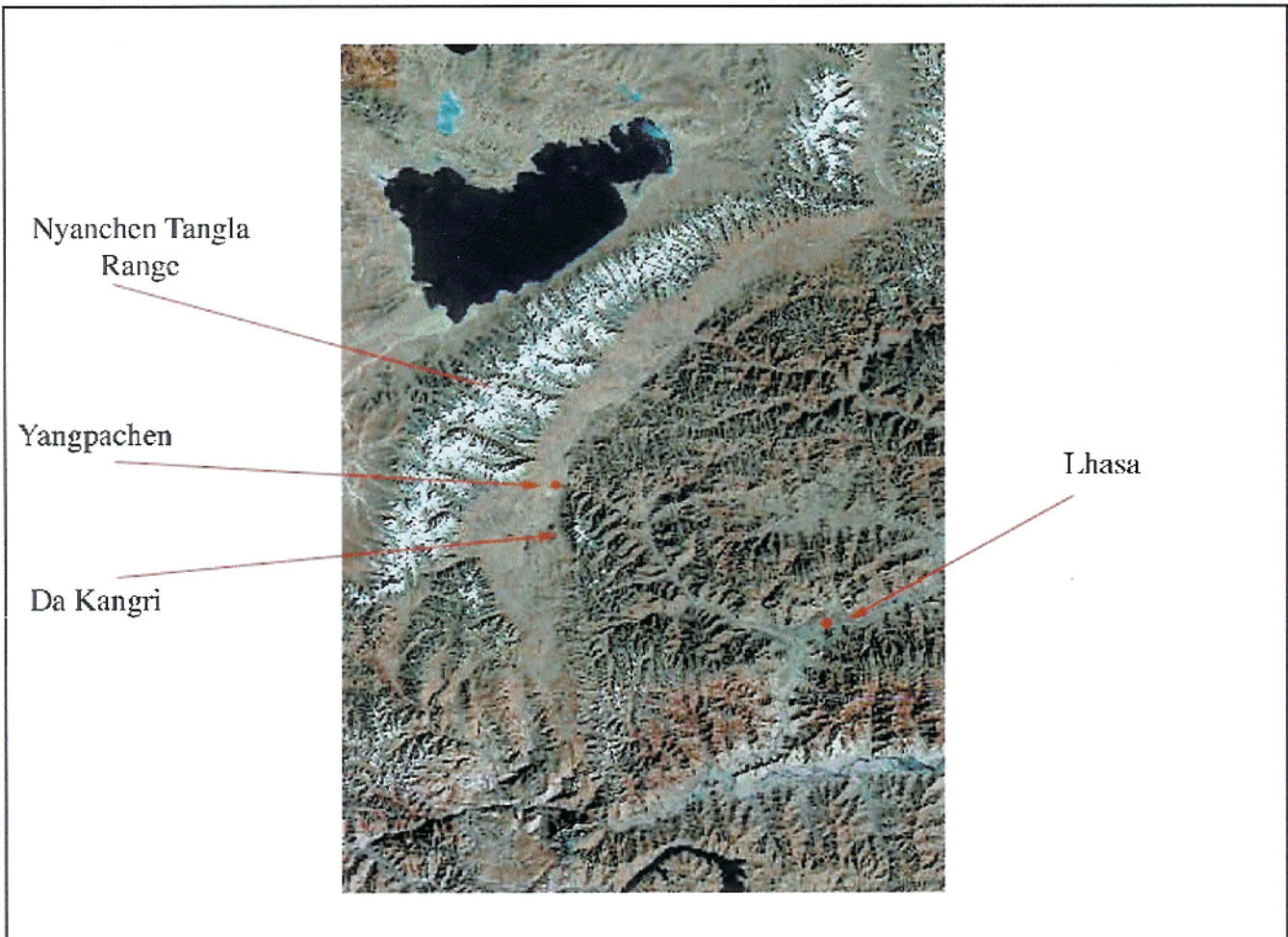
6. Permits.

To whom have you applied?

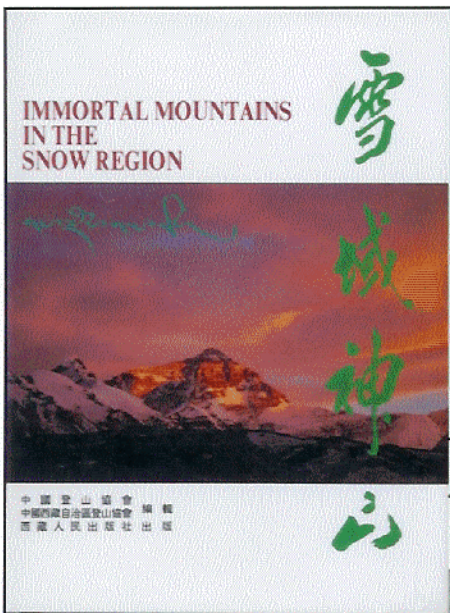
Our Tibetan Agents will apply to the CTMA for climbing permits on our behalf.

When do you expect a decision?

Agents confirmation expected by start of March 2003.



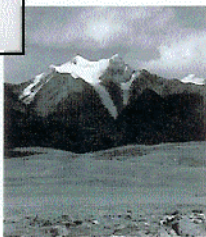
Landsat satellite image of Central Tibet showing position of the mountain



This was the only detailed reference to the mountain - pity they got its name wrong.



雪域神山



169.打紅日，海拔 6247 米。地處念青唐古拉山脈西段，東經 90.5 度，北緯 29.0 度。位於中國西藏自治區堆龍德慶縣境內，拍攝點海拔 4500 米，拍攝角西。拍攝于 1994.7。

169.Mt.Dagangri, rising 6247 m above sea level at 90.5° E and 29.0° N, is situated in the west section of the Nyainqentanglha Mountains. It stands within the boundaries of the Doulungdegen County of the China's Tibet Autonomous Region. Azimuth for taking picture: west. Altitude: 4500m. Time: July 1994.

7. Whom have you consulted about the expedition?

I have talked to others who have travelled in the area.

8. Give names, addresses and Email addresses if available of two referees who can supply details concerning the general standing and objectives of the expedition and its members (questionnaire proforma follows). Referees should not be members of either the MEF Screening or Management Committees.

Mr John Temple, Lockhurst Farm, Four Elms, Edenbridge, Kent TN8 6LU

Mr Miles Hillman, Providence House, 28 Croft Road, Cosby, Leics

9. Name of the bank account to which the grant should be paid:

a/c Mr J.M. Town, 80625957, sort code 40-47-80, First Direct, 40 Wakefield Road, Leeds

Grant cheques will be sent direct to the leader once the conditions under which the grant was offered have been accepted and a copy of the permit provided to the MEF.

10. Grants are awarded on the understanding that you have obtained and will comply with the latest regulations of the country to be visited. Information on expedition fees and regulations can be obtained directly from the MEF website <http://www.mef.org.uk>. (Scientific expeditions must also complete Section C of the Appendix.)

Which Ministry, Embassy or Tourist Department have you contacted?

Chinese Embassy

What arrangements are being made for local employees and have you provided for their compensation in case of mishap?
covered by local agency

The MEF cannot provide assistance for expeditions that run in to financial difficulty and you should therefore consider what support you could call upon in an emergency, since financial insolvency could damage the reputation of British mountaineering and harm future expeditions. Can you call on financial reserves in case of an emergency?

yes

Where applicable, have allowances been made for the deposit of money with (1) the customs authorities against import of equipment and (2) the Ministry against rescue expenses and an environmental bond?

not necessary

11. State what plans and experience you have to enable you to cope in the event of an accident or illness during the trip.

The Base Camp will be 1 - 2 hours from the town of Yangpachen, 2 hours north of Lhasa on the main road north to Nagchu. In theory, a land based rescue by Lhasa based climbers would be possible. Evacuation of casualties from Base Camp would be straightforward and mobile phones may work in this area. Facilities for helicopter rescue do not appear to exist in Tibet. We are trained in providing basic medical care, carry a full medical kit and have extensive experience of operating in such situations.

12. What steps have been made to research the area to be visited, in particular its geography, political situation and previous exploratory mountaineering or scientific work in your chosen field? For primarily scientific expeditions, list up to 4 key publications, maps or other materials used to develop your scientific objectives.

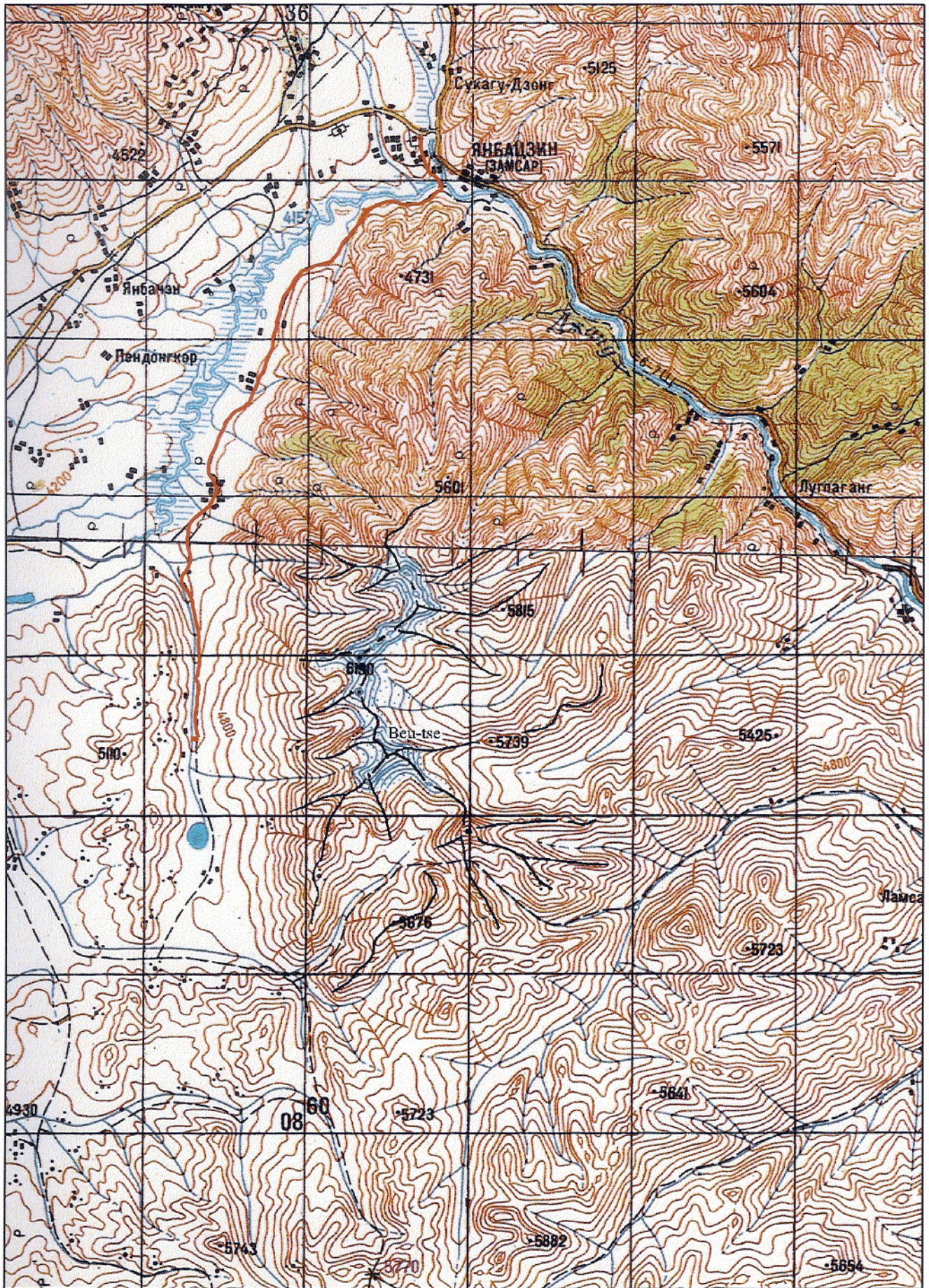
I have researched the topography of this area over a number of years and have climbed in this region on two occasions in the past: the mountain itself is very well seen from the main road and looks to be the highest point of a group of peaks which lie to the south of the Yangpachen valley, facing the main Nyanchen Tangla ridge. The political situation in Tibet appears reasonably stable and this area does not require special travel permits.

Have your plans been discussed with any relevant scientific bodies?

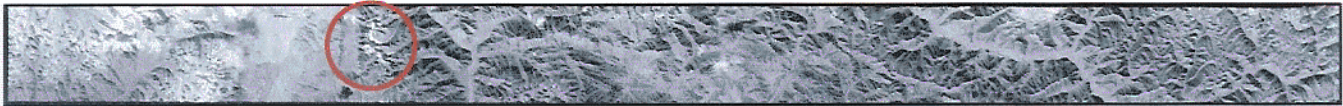
no

Apart from the Expedition Report, what plans do you have to disseminate and/or publish the results of the expedition?

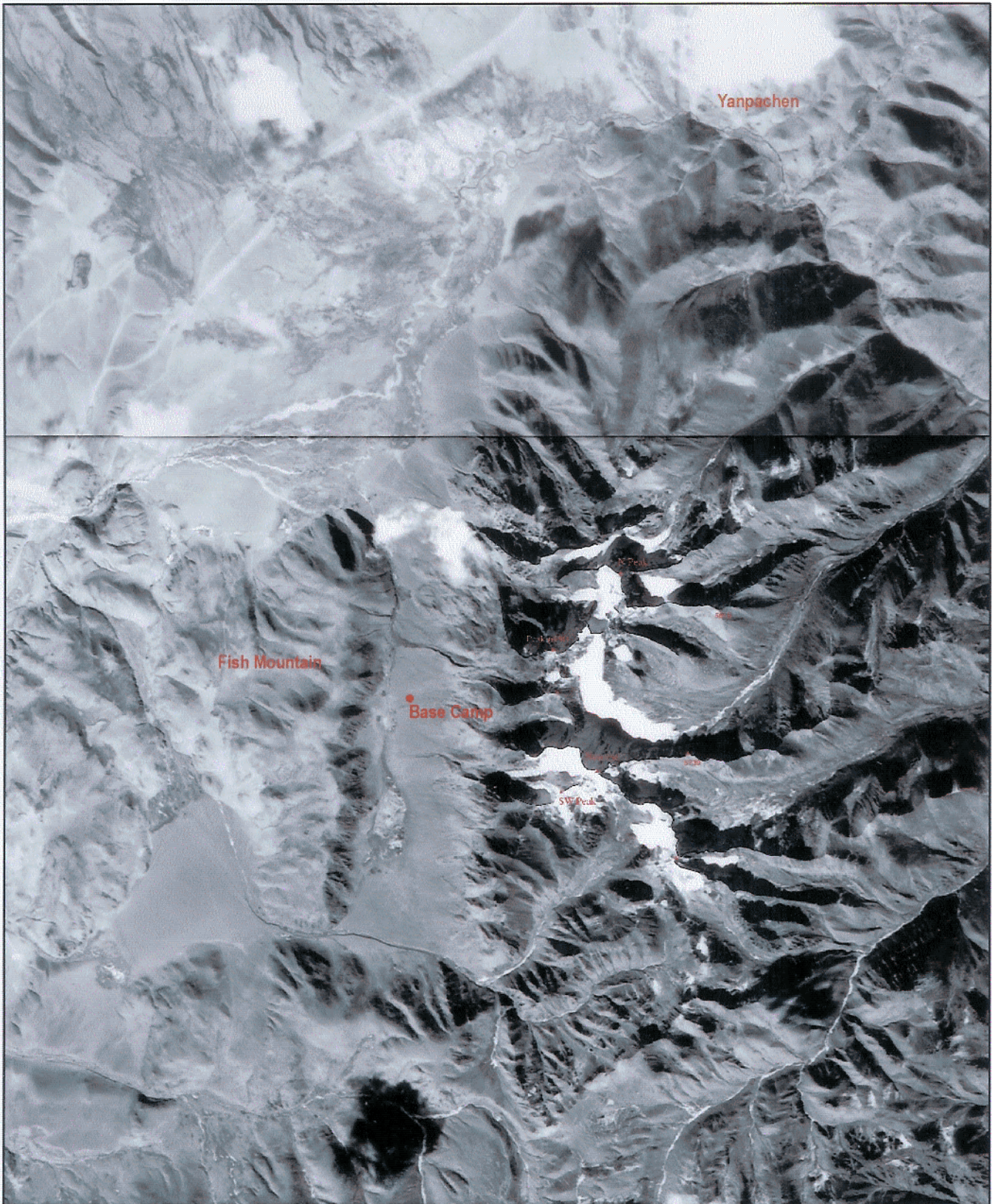
I will submit an article to the Alpine Journal.



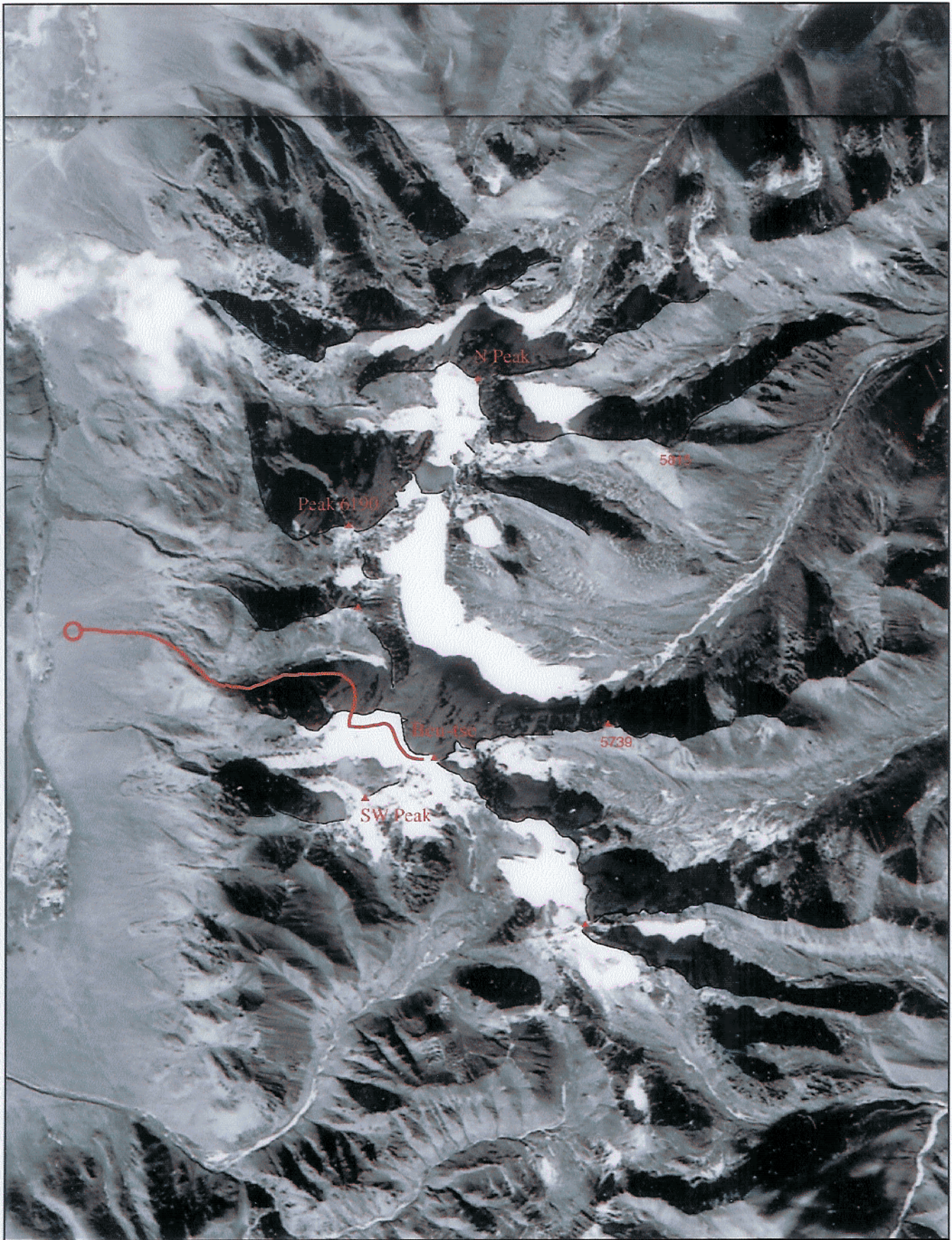
Russian 1:200 000 military map of the area showing Yanpachen (top) and route of approach from there to Base Camp marked in red.



Declassified intelligence black and white satellite image DS1049-2168F080 from the 'Corona' programme of the '60s and '70s. The mountain is marked in



Enlarged and enhanced section of DS1049-2168F080 and adjoining image showing Base Camp, Yanpachen and Fish Mountain.



Enlarged section previous image showing route of ascent from Base Camp

13. Please give details of how you plan to minimise your impact on the environment and in particular your strategy for Waste Management during the expedition.

We will carry out all non-degradable waste. Combustible waste will be burnt.

14. Please describe your project as fully as possible, in particular outlining any innovative features. Please provide at least one map and photograph of your objective. The Screening Committee will want to see additional maps and photographs if or when you come for interview.

The Nyanchen Tanga are a range of peaks about 180 miles long and up to 60 miles wide, containing hundreds of unclimbed 6000m peaks which runs in a great arc north and east of Lhasa. The well defined eastern half of the range runs from Jomo Kangri in the south west to Nagchu in the north east. The southern part of the chain rises directly from the northern side of the Yangpachen Valley, a high flat plain which lies at a height of 4000m.

To the south of the Yangpachen valley, Tolung Dechen county is a mountainous area which stretches south to the Tsangpo valley. It contains the Tsurphu monastery, the home of the Karmapa, Tibet's third most holy incarnate lama. The highest part of the region lie at its north eastern corner, above the town of Yangpachen, where there are a number of glaciated peaks above 6000m. The most prominent is Da Kangri 6247m, which is identified in the China Tibet Mountaineering Association publication 'Immortal Mountains of the Snow Region'. As far as we know no one has attempted the peak or others in the group.

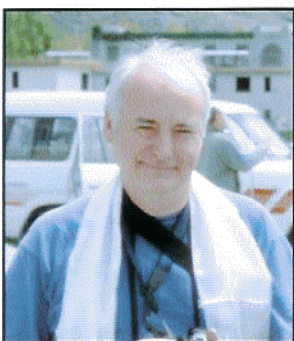
Da Kangri is an elegant double peaked mountain whose two northern arms hold a high glacier basin from which a steep glacier tongue falls towards the plain. The eastern summit, a pointed snow peak, appears to be the highest point and can probably be most easily reached up its E Ridge, from a col at about 5000m. A possible alternative may be to climb more directly onto the NE ridge, above the glacier basin, and follow it round to its junction with the E ridge at about 5600m.

A map and a photograph of Da Kangri is attached.

15. Declaration

The information submitted in this application is, to the best of my knowledge, correct at the time this application was made. Should any significant developments arise after this application is made, such as change of team members or official permits being refused, I will keep the MEF informed of such developments. I have informed my two referees that their statements should be returned directly to the MEF. Should this expedition be cancelled or postponed subsequent to receiving support from the MEF, I will return the grant awarded.

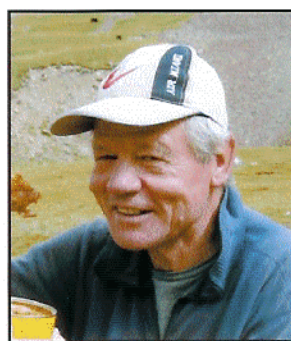
Signed..... Date.....



John Town



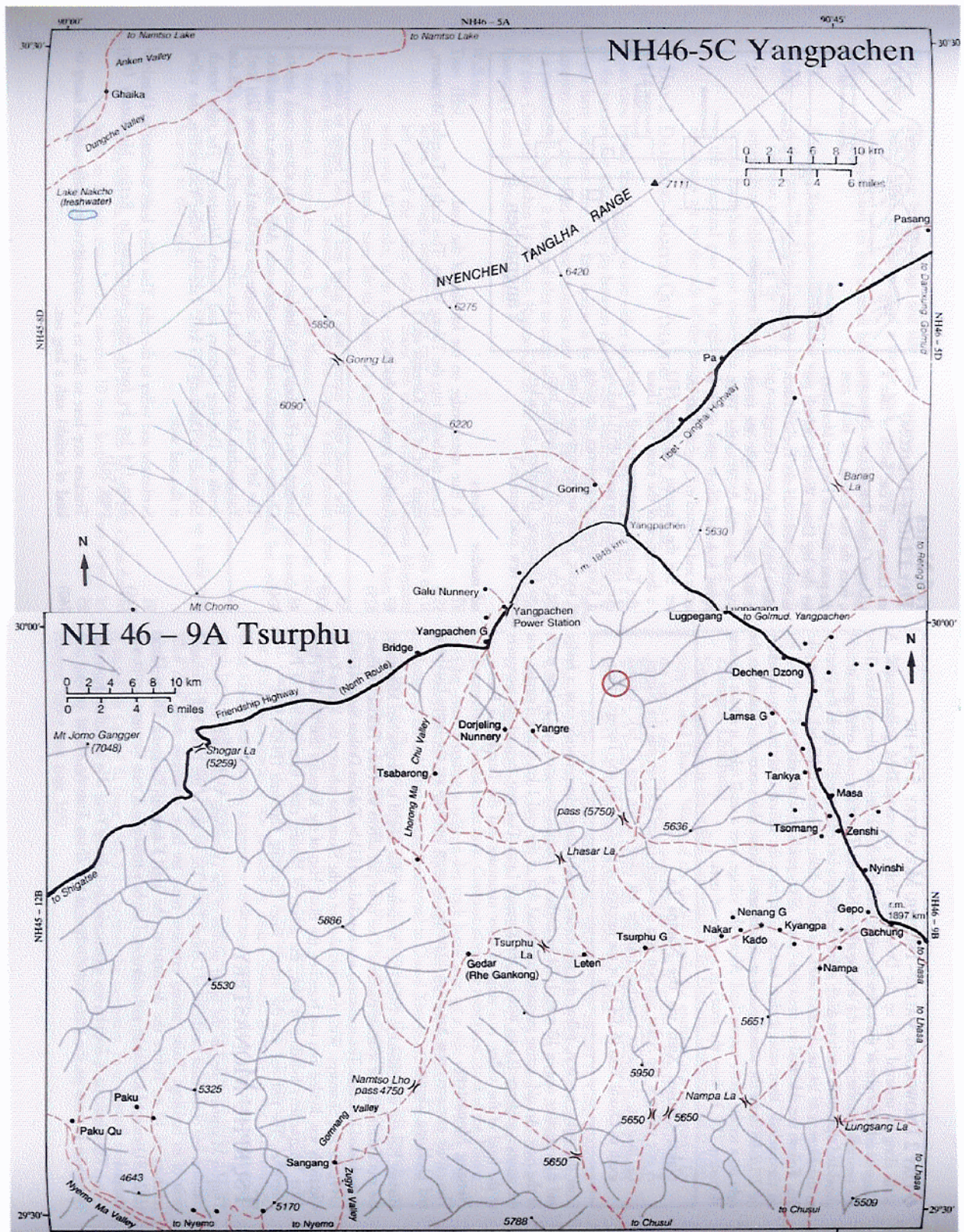
Derek Buckle



Martin Scott



Alasdair Scott



Map of the area from US military surveys, from Victor Chan's Tibet Handbook. Mountain is circled.

An Account of the Expedition

Photos by Alasdair Scott unless otherwise credited

With only three weeks available to us, choosing an unclimbed 6,000



metre peak in Tibet that we could realistically climb was something of a challenge. Fortunately though, two of us had previously climbed in the western Nyanchen Thangla and had sighted what we considered to be a suitable objective just south of the spa town of Yangpachen, about 75 km north-west of Lhasa, on the E side of the Yangpachen Valley opposite the main range. From

available photographs we even had a possible route planned, despite a substantial part of the mountain being obscured by prominent westerly ridges and hilly foreground. We chose to ignore these minor obstacles and concentrated on the first objective of actually getting to the foot of the mountain proper. We initially envisaged using either yaks or horses, as with our other forays into the Nyanchen Thangla, and built these into the overall plan.

Although in the monsoon rain shadow, it was our experience that this range still gets more than its fair share of the residual deluge that manages to sneak past the Himalaya. We therefore hoped to take advantage of the drier climate prevailing in May; even our flights were booked and our visas arranged. However, we had overlooked the spectre of SARS and the subsequent closure of the Tibetan border by the Chinese. Frantic rescheduling for September 2003 gave us a second chance, but only after forfeiting considerable sums in non-refundable deposits and expenses.

By September we were ready to leave by the traditional route from London to Kathmandu. A four hour delay at Heathrow gave us plenty of time to review the climbing options and an unplanned stopover in Doha allowed us to consolidate them further. Eventually we arrived



in Kathmandu to be whisked away to our hotel by Raju Thapa from Himalaya Expeditions. Despite rumours to the contrary, Thamel and its surrounds were relatively peaceful and the only suggestions that Nepal was in troubled times were the increased military presence and the dearth of unregistered porters at the airport. Two days later we were on our way to Lhasa.

On arrival at Gongga Airport the SARS legacy was still evident in graphic notices and the obligation to declare ourselves free of all diseases known to man; including those unmentionables acquired in places of disrepute. Signing the declaration was no problem but, for Derek, suppressing a chronic cough from a lingering chest infection was another matter. Still we passed the test – including being zapped by a thermo sensor – and were eventually allowed in to join our interpreter, Karma, and other members of our Tibetan support party. Surprising in a way since Alasdair promptly developed a high temperature requiring a spell in bed and Derek immediately collapsed into a fit of uncontrolled coughing. Later John also succumbed to some unknown digestive ailment which left Martin as the only 100% fit member of the team.

Having acclimatised in Lhasa we were transported by Land Cruiser to the town of Yangpachen. In contrast to the last time that we were here, when this road meandered between quiet hills and sleepy villages, extensive construction work to complete a rail link between the two conurbations was now well underway. Crossing to the E side of the river at Yangpachen we followed a track of variable quality that allowed us to drive up the Yangpachen Chu valley to the western foot of our chosen mountain. We had styled ourselves the British Da Kangri Expedition but the locals were insistent that our mountain was Beu-tse (Calf Peak) and that Da Kangri (Horse Peak) was stabled elsewhere.



Base Camp

At a height of 4,645m, and only three hours after leaving Lhasa, we eventually established base camp near to the nomadic village of Nya (Fish Village). Here we were immediately besieged by inquisitive villagers who wanted to help with the tents and other paraphernalia. Our Polaroid camera was an immediate success and before long John was in constant demand. Photo shoots such as these afforded brilliant opportunities to take our own snapshots as well as scenes for the video that John planned to make of the expedition. This area has a very large population of small picas (chipi), said to live at the highest altitude for any mammal, whose antics were to be a constant source of amusement while we acclimatised at Base Camp. Presumably on account of these rodents the Yangpachen Chu valley also has significant numbers of predators such as Tibetan red foxes and impressive Himalayan griffins with their extensive wing span.

Although Base Camp was conveniently situated for an assault on Beu-



Panoramic view of Peak 6190 and SW Peak of Beu-tse from Base Camp

tse, it was also rather close to ongoing Chinese manoeuvres in the adjacent valley. We required little inducement to keep well away from their activities, but at that stage we did not know how close we were eventually to get!

With help from the villagers, and meals being prepared by Pasang our cook, it was easy to settle down at Base Camp, but we still had to reconnoitre a significant section of our proposed route. The next day we therefore climbed the broad ridge of Nya-tse (Fish Mountain) to the west of our camp, with Derek just reaching the Central summit at 5,062m as lightning struck. Under such conditions it was not a place to linger, and the views of Beu-tse or indeed anywhere else, left much to be desired. At least it was possible to clarify which of the east-west aligned ablation valley systems we needed to enter to gain access to the lower part of the route. We retreated to camp with heavy hail and then rain adding to our speed of descent. Fortunately, while such showers were a common feature of our time in this area they tended to be short-lived and were followed by warm, clearer weather.

Later the following day we climbed the grassy tongue above our camp to reach a small fertile plateau at 5,185m from where it was possible to see the terminal moraine and the head of the ablation valley that we intended to explore. A steep climb took us to the top of the moraine and gave excellent views towards a small glacial lake and the lower part of the snowfield leading to Beu-tse's W Ridge. We believed that we could attain the snowy ridge either directly or via a steep snow-filled couloir to its left. At least there was now some hope that we might make significant progress from this direction and at least get to the high level col at around 6,000m.

The fourth day acclimatising at Base Camp was a fairly relaxed affair with only John making a significant effort by traversing all the tops of Nya-tse in order to get a good perspective on the upper reaches of Beu-tse. He also wanted to take pictures of Jomo Kangri, at 7,048m the highest mountain in the Nyanchen Thangla, and other mountains in the range. This tour de force was rewarded by clear views in all directions but, most importantly, of the summit of Beu-tse, recorded as 6247m by the Chinese. Now knowing that the impressive snow covered peak that we could see from Base Camp was not, in fact, the main summit but the SW peak it was possible to match earlier photographs to reality and to reinforce the best approach.

Camp 1 - 15th September

We planned to establish Camp 1 on the grassy plateau that we had visited a few days earlier and four horses had been organised to transport the food and equipment thought necessary for an effective assault. Two locals duly arrived with the horses and we were soon on our way, albeit taking independent routes of ascent. Cramped into one base camp tent it was quite chummy at Camp 1, but it could be argued that this would more than compensate for the 30C lower temperature at the additional altitude. Needless to say, the evening meal was a hurried affair and nobody stayed outside once the sun set.

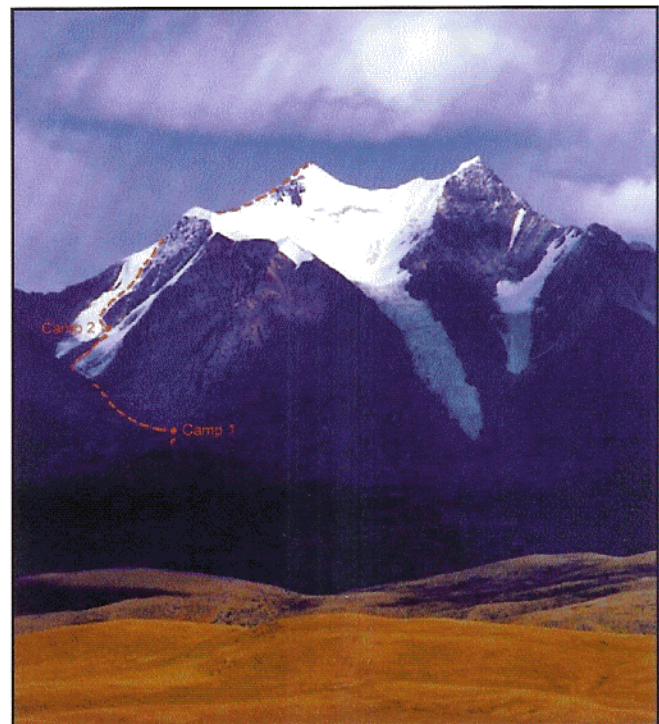
The weather deteriorated overnight and there was a layer of snow



Camp One - 5185m

when we awoke the following morning. However, like all other snow-fall in these regions, new deposits sublimed rapidly when the sun broke through and never seemed to build up on the surrounding slopes. This was to be a major advantage to us when finally we made our summit bid a few days later and we never saw any evidence of avalanche debris despite substantial precipitation.

Poor overnight weather meant that we had a later start than we intended, but it did provide an opportunity to see a herd of grey Tibetan antelopes (chiru) migrate across the valley. Since Camp 2 was to be sited somewhat higher up the moraine, and the uneven terrain would not allow the assistance of either yaks or horses to help with load carrying, a double carry was necessary. Tents and technical equipment



Route of ascent - Camps One, Two and Summit. SW Peak to right.



Panoramic view from near Camp One with Jomo Gangtse 7048m centre.

were therefore ferried to a stash at 5,600m just below the snowfield proper and about 50m below a prominent rock buttress. After some debate it was decided to position Camp 2 at the foot of this buttress, although in reality nowhere seemed an ideal location bearing in mind that we would have to occupy the site for several days. Like most mountaineers we deferred the final decision until we returned the next day.

Back at Camp 1 it snowed again overnight and the next day we had another late start. This was delayed still further by the desire to have a hearty meal before leaving. Opening a can of chicken, however, provoked a mixture of surprise, horror and general disgust when it was found to contain only those parts generally consigned to the bin (at least by those from the west). Alasdair confessed a taste for chicken feet, which he then proceeded to demonstrate, but the gelatinous heads seemed to have no takers, despite the lack of an alternative meat source and Martin feigning an interest. As these morsels remained on display for the whole time that we were absent from Camp 1 presumably the local carnivores were not too keen on the more exotic body parts of chickens either.

Camp 2 - 17th September

Eventually we all staggered uphill to the stash where a firm decision was made to establish Camp 2 at the foot of the buttress at 5,461m. Extensive excavations were needed before a platform suitable for two assault tents was prepared, but by this time we had unearthed substantial rock debris and we were beginning to doubt the suitability of the site. By consensus opinion it was eventually decided that we had insufficient time to relocate the tents, especially since another carry from the stash still had to be made. Moreover, an estimate of rock fall probability suggested a sufficiently low risk. Our decision seemed vindicated when it proceeded to snow.



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Camp Two - 5641m

Lethargy reigned the next morning despite the need to complete the carry from the stash and to generally organise the site for an extended stay. Climbing gear was also sorted should the overnight weather prove suitable for a summit bid. Torrential hail and then heavy snow quickly quashed this idea, but it did provide us with an opportunity to explore the slopes bounding the left hand edge of the buttress. This foray confirmed our most recent view that a direct approach to the NW Ridge via the narrow couloir to the left was less favourable than the alternative of following the right hand edge of the snowfield to where it joined the ridge higher up. Either way, the slope steepened considerably as it got higher and was obviously considerably foreshortened. More encouragingly, unlike the slope to the right of the buttress, which was also long and steep, there was no capping cornice to contend with and little perceived objective danger.

Another night of snow left us all feeling rather depressed as the remaining opportunities to complete the climb diminished. By now we had only two spare days and we desperately needed a clear, precipitation free night. So much snow had fallen, however, that the almost continuous rock fall on the scree slope on the opposite side of the valley had now ceased. In its place we observed frequent cascades of snow sloughing from the steeper sections of the NW Face. Fortunately there were no significant avalanches. Moreover, close inspection of the snow conditions later in the day confirmed the stability of the snowfield and the viability of a summit attempt if conditions improved.

Two young girls who had climbed up the moraine to just below the stash provided a distraction as we wiled away the time at Camp 2. It was Alasdair, the only eligible bachelor, who climbed back down



Peak 6190.

to entertain them, however, although he had little privacy as we avidly watched the proceedings through binoculars!

The Summit - 21st September

At 4.00 am the following day we awoke to a cloudless sky sparkling



Peak 6190.



50 degrees

Mosaic of photos of the ascent by various team members.



MS

70 degrees ?



JT



with stars. In no time at all we were roped up in pairs and ready to leave. Kicking steps in the firm snow we soon reached the face proper, which was set at an initial angle of around 40-45°. Almost imperceptibly the slope steepened as we tried to find the best line close to the right hand side of the snowfield. Our pace gradually slowed, and the stops became more frequent, but there was no natural break in the slope for a prolonged rest. Fortunately the conditions were ideal and we could move together without the need for protection.

Just below the ridgeline disaster struck as Derek, who was leading with John at the time, broke a crampon. Hastily we cut a ledge in the now 60o slope as we pondered what to do with a fractured bail. Two prussic chords later, coupled with an impressive piece of rope work, and we appeared to have a solution. Martin and Alasdair took over step kicking as we climbed up the steepest section (~ 70o) onto a broad snowy plateau at around 6,000m. The views were tremendous, especially the crenulated, corniced arête leading to Beu-tse's summit. After a short break we made a rising traverse on the right hand (west) edge of the arête with impressive views of the snowy SW peak visible from the valley floor. In just under 6.5 hours we were on the steep corniced summit at 6,270m (N 29o57.152' E 90o32.260') having made the first ascent (Alpine D+) by the sustained NW Face. Only the distant rattle of automatic fire disturbed the peace as we admired the extensive view.



DB

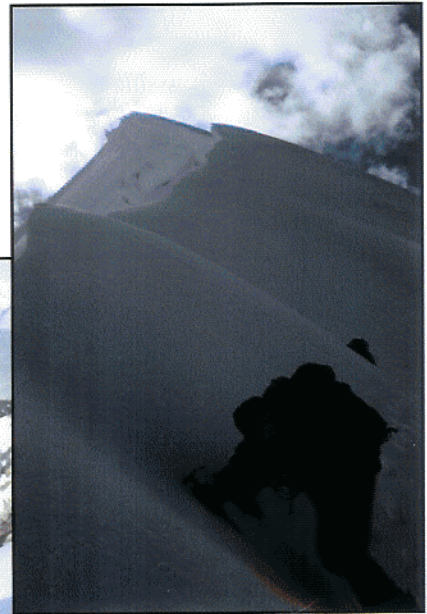
Alasdair and Martin harboured ambitions to traverse the fine ridge to the pyramidal SW peak, but these would not be realised today and our thoughts were firmly focused on reversing the route by which we had ascended. Returning to the high level plateau was a simple matter, but from there the main difficulties began. By a combination of abseils and protected down climbing we negotiated the first steep section, but with only two snow stakes between us and insufficient consolidation for ice screws the descent was a slow process. Indeed, it was not until well over 14 hours after leaving that we eventually reached easier ground and could dispense with the ropes for the final short descent to Camp 2.



JT

Our elation at reaching the tents was short-lived, however, when it was found that stone fall had taken its toll. One tent had suffered extensive damage caused by a 15 kg rock, while the other had fended its somewhat smaller brothers. There was considerable debate about whether we should decamp immediately, but with dusk approaching and tiredness prevailing we eventually planned to depart very early the next day.

Further fusillades in the morning encouraged even John to rise early but we managed to decamp without personal injury and to ferry our battered tents and equipment back to Camp 1. Again this required a double carry, the second of which was purgatory after our efforts the previous day. Perhaps wisely, John left his second carry until the next day. Having several hours to wait before the return of the horses, however, did allow time for Derek to climb the left hand spur (true right) of the Camp 1 valley to



DB above and left

around 5,645m from where most of the ascent route was clearly visible. Particularly impressive were our tracks on the final summit tower. Just after 5.00 pm the horsemen returned and it was not long before we were back at base camp, reliving this superb climb in relative safety with Karma, Pasang and, of



MS

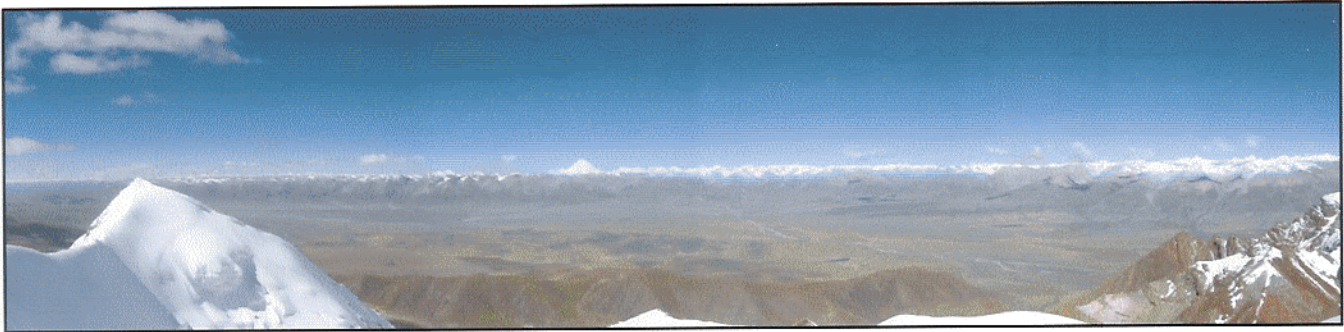
course, the local villagers!

Having one spare day before we were due to return to Lhasa, Alasdair and Derek took the opportunity to climb to the main summit of Nya-tse while Martin and John were pampered at Base Camp. It

is perhaps fortunate that they both decided to wander away from the camp just before a visitation from the Chinese army, for surely they would have complicated whatever negotiations took place. Clear views from the summit of Nya-tse provided another perspective on the com-



Mosaic of photos of summit and the descent by various team members.



Panoramic view from the summit with SW Peak to right and Jomo Gangtse 7048m centre.

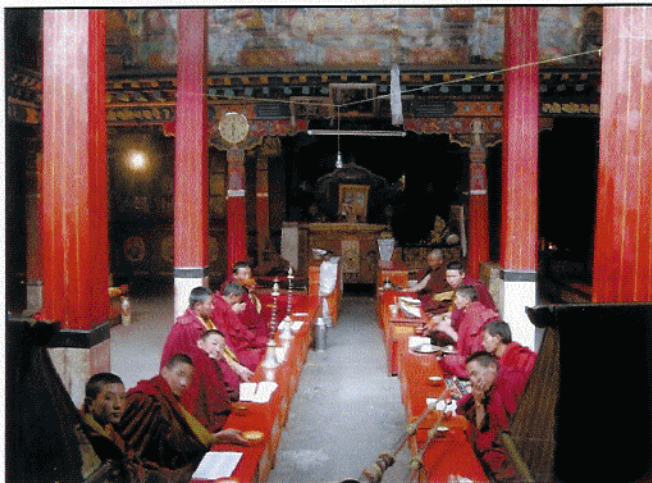
plex summit terrain of Beu-tse and afforded a fitting end to our sojourn in the Yangpachen Chu valley.

Return to Lhasa - 25th September

Our final day was somewhat chaotic. It seemed as though knowing that we were leaving all of the local villagers had dressed up in their finery for a full and extensive photo session. One family even brought their 8 week old baby to be dutifully recorded. The overall scene was very reminiscent of early Victorian prints in which everyone rigidly posed and nobody smiled. It was a unique occasion, and certainly one to be remembered.

Eventually, however, we had to depart. Despite his earlier warnings about keeping well clear of the Chinese army, Karma chose to take a 'short cut' to our first stop at the Yangpachen Monastery that at best would take us rather closer than we thought advisable to their manoeuvres. Unbelievably, it got worse. As we turned into the adjacent valley we could see row upon row of military tents and what seemed like a whole Chinese garrison. With nowhere else to go our driver then calmly headed through the first camp checkpoint! At first we tried our best to look nonchalant, but in the midst of rocket launchers and hoards of Chinese soldiers this strategy was difficult at best. Our next tactic was to smile effusively at every inquisitive face, while wondering how long it would be before we were stopped and had our cameras confiscated. It was difficult to discern whether we or they were the most surprised by the situation. Occasionally a soldier would run to a field telephone and there would be frantic activity covering up some equipment or other, but most simply stared with incredulity at foreigners daring to drive through their camp. It is a continuing enigma how we managed to escape unchallenged, but somehow we did – much to the relief of everyone.

The monastery at Yangpachen is relatively small compared with many

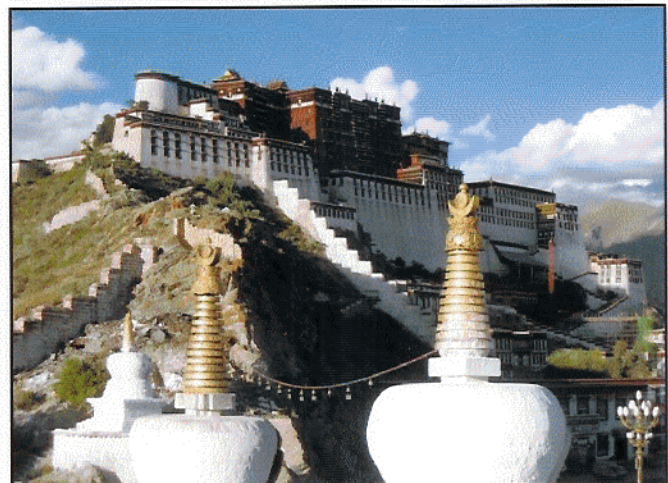


Yangpachen Monastery

in Tibet and suffered significant damage during the Cultural Revolution. Nevertheless, it has now been rebuilt to house a thriving Buddhist community. We were enthusiastically welcomed, even though the monks were still engaged in prayers, and once again both the Polaroid and video cameras were a focus of much attention and amusement, particularly amongst the novices.

Yangpachen is centred on an active geothermal area and one of its major features is the expanding geothermal power station that serves the residents of Lhasa. It also features a large thermal bath, although the outdoor pool was not in commission at the time of our visit. Instead we parted with a relatively astronomical sum to join a party of wealthy Chinese in the smaller inner pool. Despite the rather dilapidated surroundings we spent some considerable time wallowing in the warm spring water and generally soothing the rigours of the previous few weeks. In a way it was a pity that we had to leave as soon as we did, but we outlasted the Chinese contingent and there was still the return journey to Lhasa to make.

Like most tourists, when back in Lhasa we engaged in extensive bartering to acquire such exotic items as Tibetan horns, carpets and miscellaneous trinkets as souvenirs of our visit. The highlight, however, was clearly a trip to the Crazy Yak for a celebratory meal accompanied by traditional Tibetan dancing. As an added bonus it was Alasdair's birthday so our host, Migma, organised a few extras to help make the



Potala, Lhasa

occasion all the more memorable, particularly for Alasdair.

The trip back to the UK was relatively uneventful, although we nearly arrived without Alasdair after he fell asleep in the Doha transit lounge. Only the frantic efforts of the airport staff saved the day as he was eventually hauled onto the plane in a semi-dazed state literally seconds before take off.

Coordinates of camps and high points as determined by GPS measurements

Location	Height	Position	Duration
Base Camp	4,645m	N 29°57.048' E 90°29.007'	4 nights
Nya-tse Central Summit	5,062m	N 29°57.180' E 90°28.251'	-
Nya-tse Main Summit	5,160m	N 29°56.289' E 90°28.619'	-
Camp 1	5,185m	N 29°57.330' E 90°30.657'	2 nights
Terminal Moraine	5,400m	N 29°57.445' E 90°31.094'	-
Camp 2	5,641m	N 29°57.530' E 90°31.828'	4 nights
Da Kangri Summit	6,270m	N 29°57.152' E 90°32.260'	-
Camp 1	5,185m	N 29°57.330' E 90°30.657'	1 night

INCOME/EXPENDITURE			
Expenditure		Income	
Flights	£ 2,596	Members Contribution	£ 9,922
In-country Costs	£ 8,113	(£2,480 per person)	
Tips	£ 91		
Airport Tax (Tibet)	\$48 £ 32	MEF	£ 475
Freight	£ 231	BMC	£ 1,600
Customs (Kathmandu)	\$90 £ 59		
Excess Baggage KTM-LHA	\$175 £ 115		
Maps	£ 131		
Satellite photos	£ 52		
Office Costs & Report	£ 227		
Bank Charges	£ 23		
Stores	£ 93		
Polaroid Film	£ 35		
Tent Damage	£ 200		
	£ 11,997		£ 11,997