

Two First Ascents in Damodar Himal, Nepal

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I got a permit to climb Gajiang (6111m) as it was the first object for my expedition. Gajiang has attracted me strongly. It soars like Machhapuchare in a less frequented area of Damodar Himal. However, this peak had very steep slopes. In spite of a 4-day investigation, I could not find any viable climbing route, so I gave up the attack. Instead, I was able to climb two unnamed peaks, 6084m and 6130m respectively.

1. Name of the Team 2004 DAMODAR HIMAL Climbing Team
2. Period of Expedition October 6 to November 21, 2004
3. Member
 - Leader-----Koichi Kato (63, Japanese)
 - Sherpa-----Pasang Tamang (36)
 - Cooks-----Durga Rai (26) and Dhan Kumar (23)
 - High porter-----Ang Dawa (33)
4. Climbing Itinerary
 - October 6-----Departure from Osaka, Japan
 - October 7 to 9-----Climbing preparation in Kathumandu
 - October 10 to 18-----Outgoing caravan
 - October 19 to November 2----Period of Climbing

Climbing Records

(1) Gajiang (6111m) October 20 to 23

I decided on a route with the help of a man. I was impressed by Gajinag because of its fascinating profile towering to the sky. I feared that it would be hardly possible to climb that mountain with my technique and climbing gear. But I decided to try as I had already paid a climbing fee of 1,000 US dollars. We set up BC at 4550m (keeping other mountains in mind), set up ABC at 5000m and started to reconnoiter. We first left for the north ridge from the 5200m glacier for investigation. But we gave up climbing from the north ridge, since it was hard to climb ice, and the lower part was very precipitous. Then we investigated another route via an adjacent lower peak and climbed up to 5608m but there was no going further on. As a result, I gave up climbing Gajiang from the north face.

(2) Unnamed peak (6084) (I called it Namy Peak) October 24 - 26

The snow-covered Namy Peak is located to the south of Jomson Himal and the greatest in this area. We went from BC to Labse Khola to the north and set up ABC (5000m) at the end of a glacier. Then we set up C1 at 5200m on the right of the moraine. There we could see the mountain ridges extending to the top. On the way, we stopped using the climbing rope under a cornice, and plodded in the knee-deep snow.

On the summit, I had my pictures taken, with Gajiang in the background. I measured the location of this mountain using GPS. I saw Pokarkan to the east, which I had first ascended two year before.

The date of arrival at the summit: October 26

Left C1-----5:40

On the summit-----12:00 - 12:45

Back to C1-----14:45

GPS data: 28° 49'18.8" N, 84° 08'14.1" E; H 6094m

(3) Unnamed peak (6130m) (I called it Yury Peak) October 29 - 30

The peak, snow-capped on the southern side, is at the dividing point of the Labse Khola Massif. From ABC (5000m) we followed the moraine on the left and reached the foot of Yury Peak. We climbed the rock ridge between a waterfall and a valley, then followed the valley, and went up 100 meters to a gully on the left side. Then we set up C1 (5480m) on a flat ridge at the top of the gully.

Looking up from C1, we caught a glimpse of the white snow on the summit beyond on a rock ridge. Above C1 there was a steep slope of 25 - 30 degrees, with small rocks and little snow. My feet slipped many times on the rocks and I began to pant. But I carefully climbed, minding the falling rocks. 200 meters below the summit there was much snow, but I managed to reach the top. There was little space there and only one person could stand.

From the top, I was able to see Jomson Himal in the south and, in the north, Khumjungar Himal which is the highest mountain in the Damodar area.

We took pictures and measured the location of this mountain using GPS, then returned to C1.

The date of arrival at the summit: October 30

Left C1-----6:05

On the top-----10:35 - 10:45

Return to C1-----12:00 - 12:30

Arrived at ABC-----14:40

GPS data: 28° 51'12.2" N, 84° 07'23.1" E; H 6143m



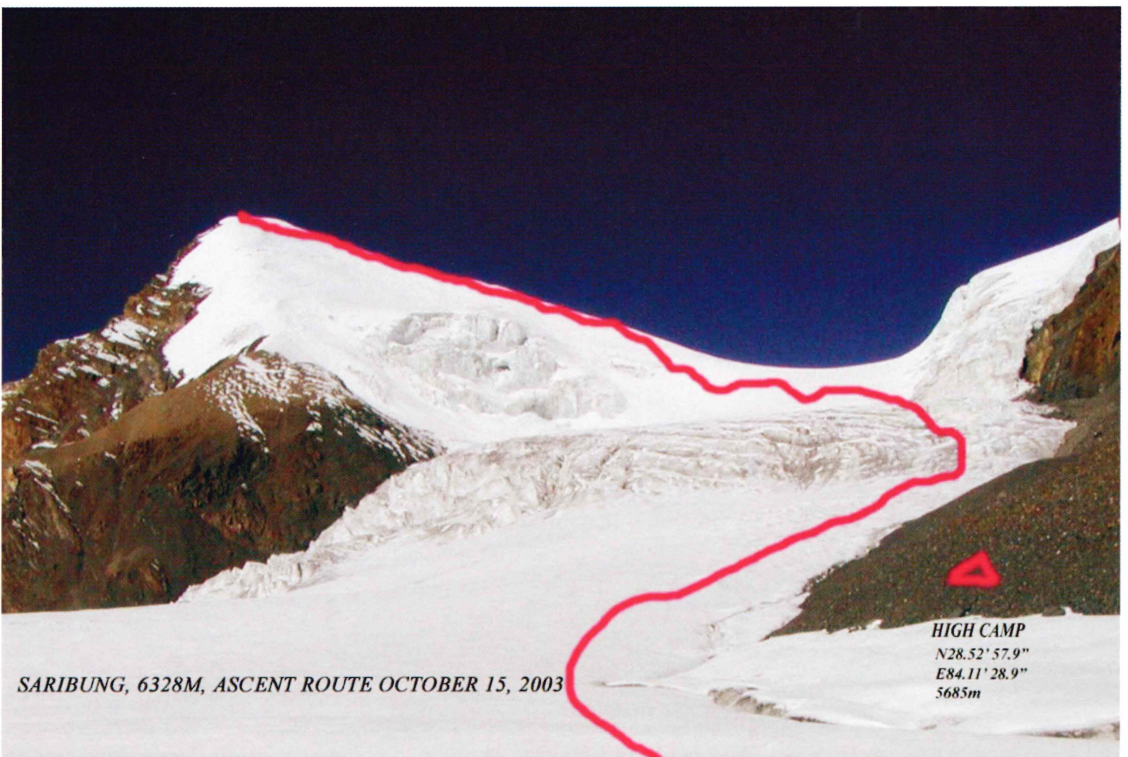
The north ridge of Pachyung Ham 6529m. Rock ridge continues to the summit. (Satoshi Kimoto) P3 — 6



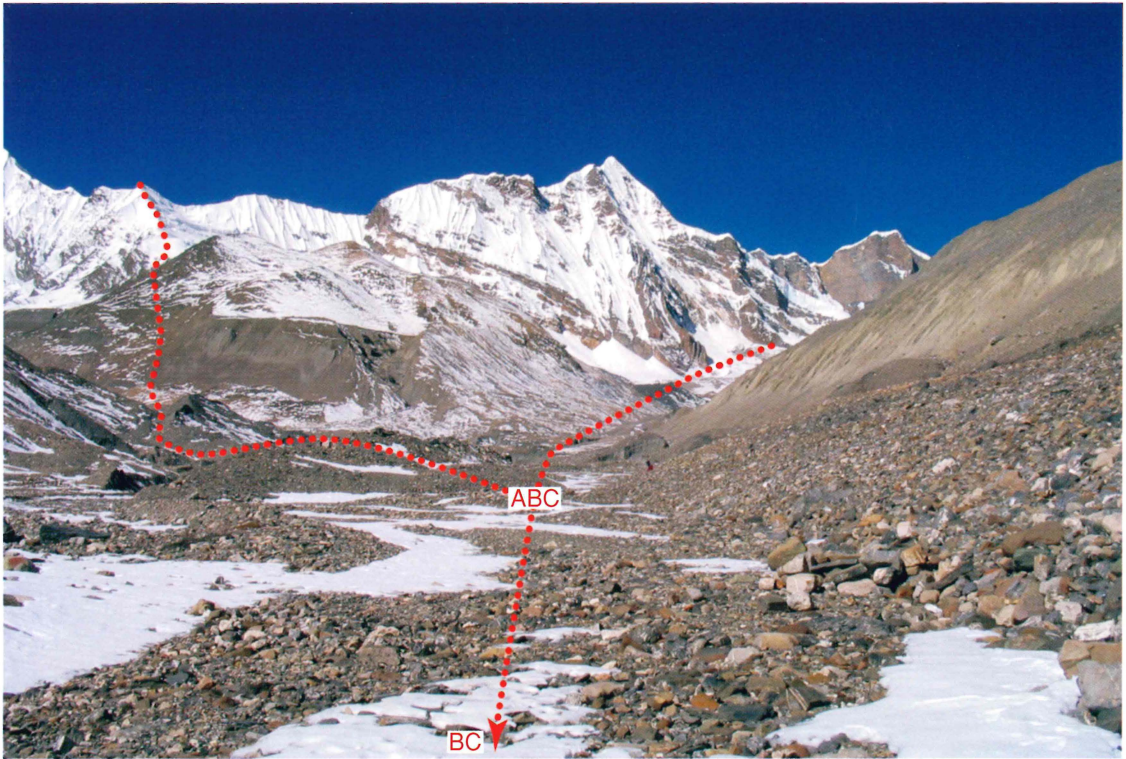
The south face of twin peaks called "Rock peaks of a couple", the right is a husband Gyang Dzong Kang 6123m and the left is a wife Genggo. (Satoshi Kimoto) P7 — 12



The northwest face of Chhiv Himal 6550m, climbing line shown P7 - 12



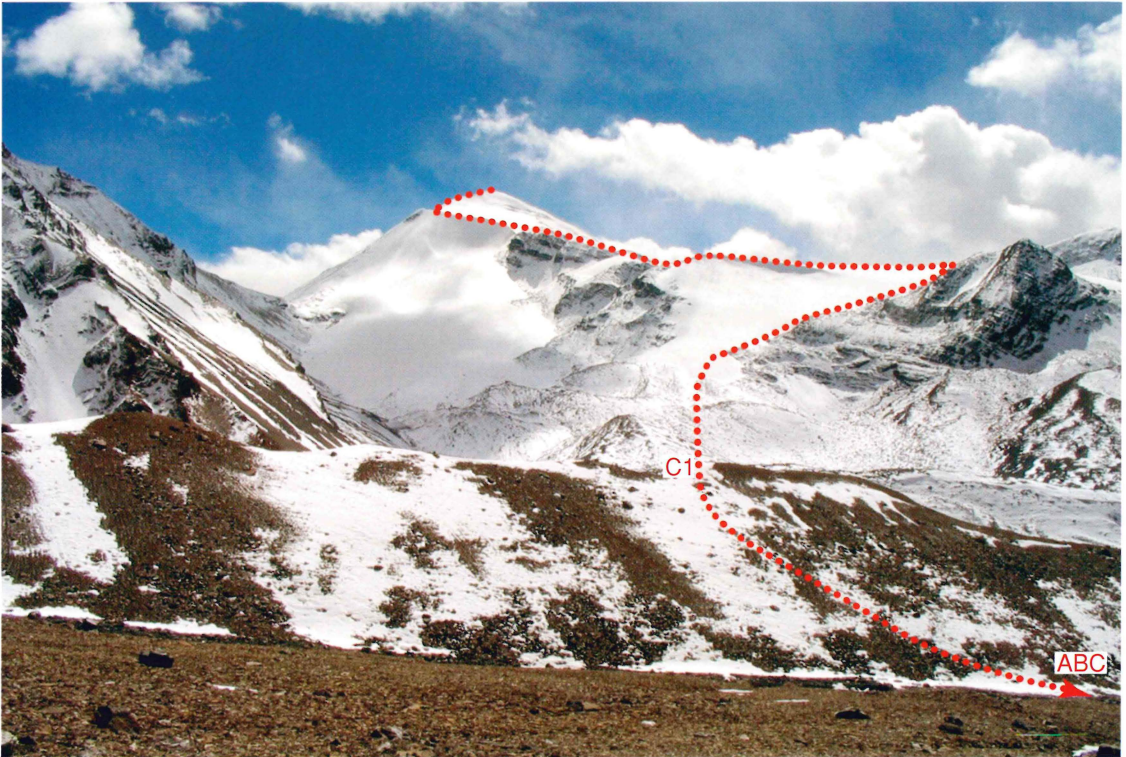
The east face and north ridge of Saribung climbed by an American party P7 - 12



The east face of Gajiang 6111m seen from BC, Damodar Himal (Koichi Kato) P 13 – 16



The south face of nameless 6130m, Damodar Himal (Koichi Kato) P 13 – 16



The north face of nameless 6084m, Damodar Himal (Koichi Kato) P13 — 16



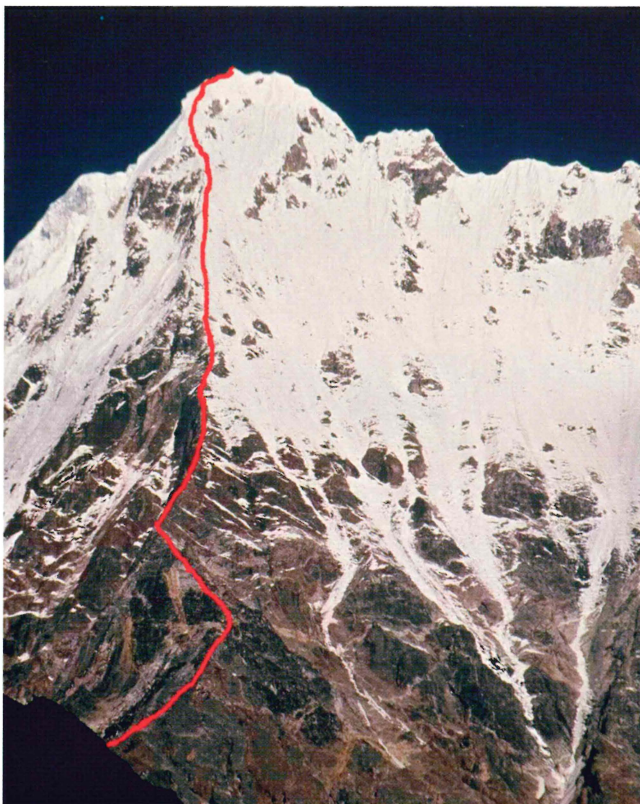
Ralin Himal, Nepal, seen from Phurkum Khola across the main valley of Lapche. The highest peak 6065m on the left and the second highest 5896m on the right (Kei Kurachi) P95 — 97



Nyanglong Kangri - Climbing route (John Town) P25 — 29



Nyanglong Kangri - Panorama viewed from BC (John Town) P25 — 29



Climbing line on the northwest face of Jieqinnalagabu 6316m
(Gabriel Voide) P 30 — 32



Jieqinnalagabu 6316m (right) and Lumbogangzegabo 6542m (left) viewed from Lake Basong to the northeast
(Tamotsu Nakamura) P 30 — 32



Fig 1. The western aspect of Longemain (6294m). The route climbed is shown along with the camps. ABC is obscured but its elevation indicated. Dotted lines indicate that the route is out of sight. P 33 — 39

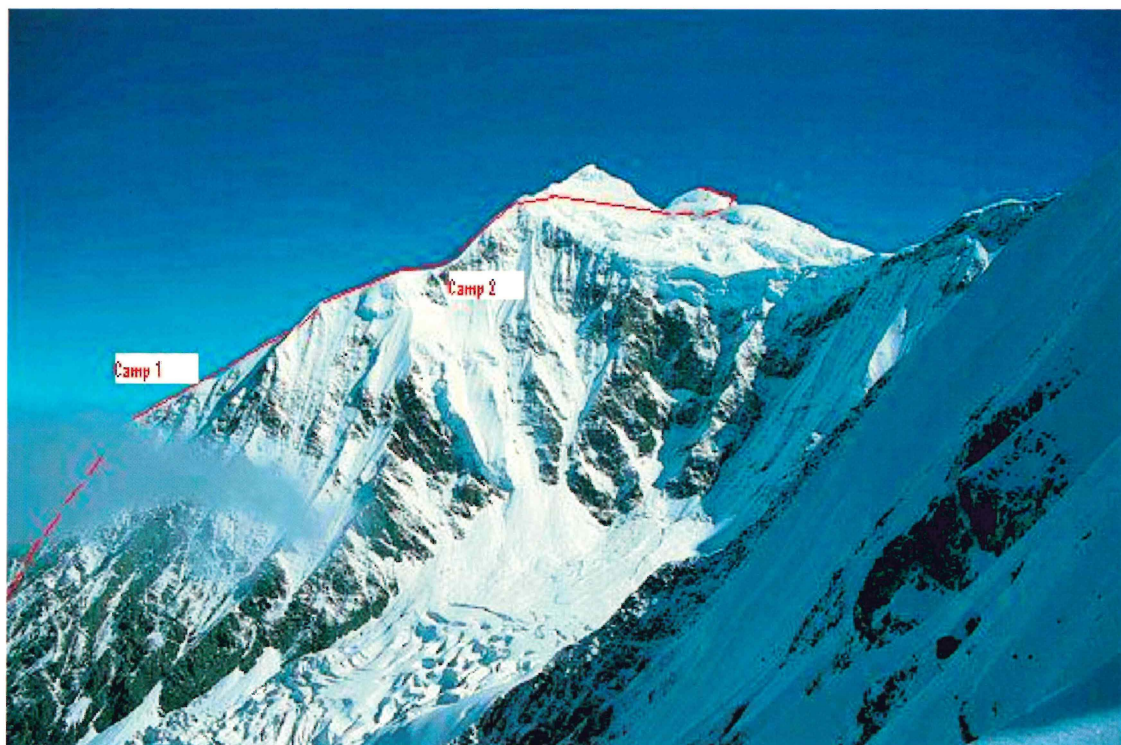


Fig 2. The southern aspect of Daddomain from the west ridge of Longemain. Approx route onto the west ridge is indicated by the dotted line. P 33 — 39



Climbing on the southwest ridge toward the summit of Kara Kunlun P43 — 44



The southwest face of Kara Kunlun 6355m seen between C1 and C2 P43 — 44