

Sherpi Kangri Attempt (1974).

(Reference AAJ: American Alpine Journal 1975)

After a few years border conflict, Pakistan opened Karakorum to mountaineers in March 1974. The Alpine Club of Kobe University had been continuing to apply a permission from the government of Pakistan and got it suddenly and fortunately. It was very short time slot to organize the expedition before June departure. ACKU decided to send a small party to find a possible route to the summit and they expected to reach the summit if possible.

The Kobe University Expedition 1974 was composed of Toshiho Tanaka, the leader, Takuo Kawamoto, Yoshikazu Hatta, Hiroshi Nishiuchi, Yukihiisa Yamaguchi, Toshinao Sakai, medical doctor Noboru Funatsu and Tatsuo Inoue as the deputy leader. This expedition was the first opportunity to aim a Himalaya unclimbed peak for ACKU.

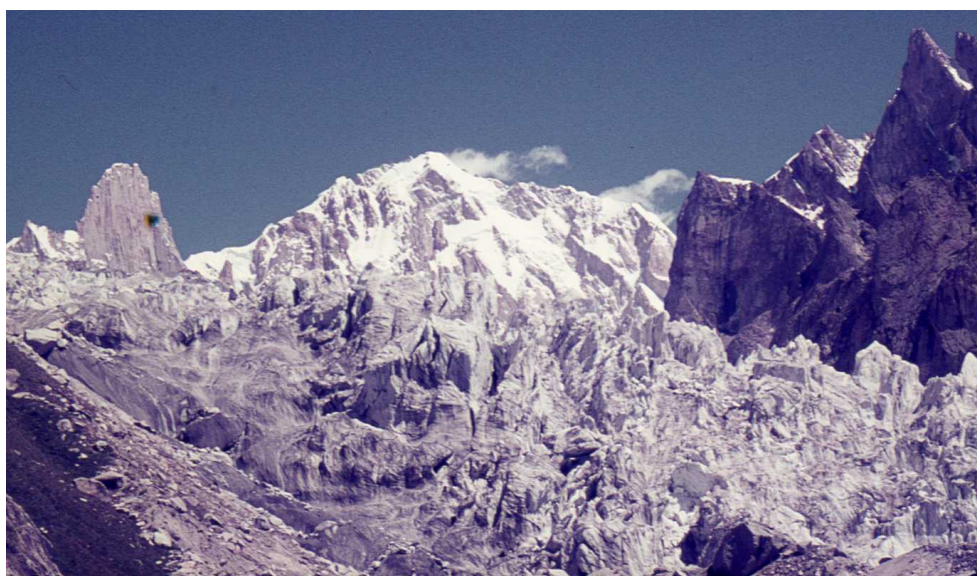


Photo: Sherpi Kangri 7380m

From Base Camp (4350m) of 1974 Expedition between 1st and 2nd Ice Fall

We left Khaplu on July 6th and established the Temporary Base Camp at 3,850m on the left bank of the Sherpi Gang Glacier on the 11th. In 1912, the Workman's Expedition visited this Khorkondus valley and tried to approach Sherpi Kangri through the Dong-Dong Glacier which is a branch of the Sherpi Gang Glacier starts from the west face of the big rock wall of Saltoro Kangri 7742m. The steep granite walls and the huge icefall of the Sherpi Gang Glacier prevented them from getting into the upper part of the glacier. Since then no party has tried to go up into

the deep part of the glacier. We could easily reach the Workman's campsite. We followed Workman's trace to find a pass which allowed us to come in to the snow field of the upper part of Sherpi Gang Glacier. We could not find it on the left bank of the glacier, but we could see a possible detour pass on the right bank to avoid very dangerous trial of direct climbing of the first ice fall .After a week of reconnaissance, on July 17th , we established Base Camp at 4,300m on the right bank of the glacier above the first big icefall. From there, we reconnoitered our way through the second and third icefalls, taking many days and using many gears and ropes.

The Sherpi Gang Glacier has eight tributaries. We tried to reach the west ridge of Sherpi Kangri following the fourth branch, but steep granite walls of the needle peaks prevented us from reaching the foot of the west ridge. We abandoned our plan to climb the south and west ridges. Remaining possibility was to follow the main stream of the Sherpi Gang Glacier and to reach the upper circ formed by Sherpi Kangri, Sherpi Kangri- II and a 6300m snow covered peak on the divide of the Siachen Glacier and the Sherpi Gang Glacier.



Photo: The P36 Glacier and peaks north bank of the Siachen Glacier from Sherpi La (5750m, A pass between the Sherpi Gang Glacier and the P36 Glacier)

We established Camp II (17,225 feet) on July 28 in front of crevasses of the 4th ice fall of the main glacier stream. It took us five days and 3000 feet of fixed rope to break through the ice fall and to place Camp III (5,750m) on the Sherpi La, a large pass where the circ ice field opens to the Peak-36 Glacier. The gentle and snow-covered P 36 Glacier descends to the east. The circ ice field was surrounded by steep ice walls. There were no possible direct routes to the top of Sherpi Kangri

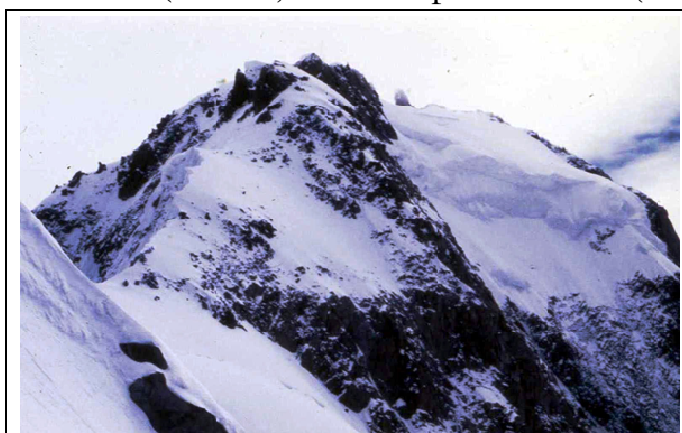
(7,380m) because avalanche danger prevented from our climbing to the high ridge between the peaks. The ridge between Sherpi Kangri and Sherpi Kangri- II (7,003m) looked a kind of jigsaw shaped sharp ice edge and we understood there was no chance to reach the top of Sherpi Kangri via Sherpi Kangri- II. Another possibility was to open a route on the East Ridge, but it was protected by combination of hard granite rock and ice blocks. We gave up the east ridge of the main peak, too. Finally we changed our plan to try the south ridge of Sherpi Kangri-II. On August 11, after consuming 900m of fixed-rope, we gave up at 6350m under many overhanging ice blocks on the ridge above us.

The people in the Khorkondus call Sherpi Kangri “Shere Gangri”.

TATSUO INOUE, Kobe University Alpine Club, Japan

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The Kobe University Karakoram Expedition consisted of the leader K. Hirai, T. Tanaka, M. Tsurutani, doctor N. Okamoto, M. Nakamura, T. Inoue, S. Ogata, K. Kimoto, C. Itani, K. Hiroishi, Liaison Officer Captain Asad Ullah Jan Mir . We started from Khapalu with 138 low-altitude and six high-altitude porters on June 16 and arrived at the foot of the first icefall of the Sherpi Gang (glacier) on the 24th. The transportation of loads to Base Camp at 4,850m (5120m, newly reported elevation) on the upper side moraine of the third icefall was finished on July 6. Two possible routes were considered: the east and west ridges. We selected the latter, as had been suggested by the 1974 reconnaissance. Advanced Base was set at 5250m (5420m) and Camp-1 at 5850m(6100m) feet just below the west ridge. It



Sherpi Kangri 7380m from the west ridge (6400m)
near Eagle Head.

took great effort to climb the ice wall up to Camp, being in places vertical. Camp II was pitched at 6355m (6500m) feet on the ridge.

The ridge was sharp and steep, both ice and rock. After a week-long storm pushed us back to the Camp- I, we initiated an attack formation.

We then crossed the “Eagle Head,” one of the hardest parts of the route and pitched Camp III at 6800m(6900m) in front of large rock wall. At 4:15 A.M. on August 10 Inoue and Ogata left Camp III and reached the summit (24,212 feet 7380m) at 9: 15. The weather was perfect and they could see all of the Karakoram.



Camp II was damaged by heavy snow, but we could repair it and continued the attack operation.



Inoue on the summit of Sherpi Kangri 7380m.

Far back sky line peaks are (from left to right); Shingi Kangri 7202m(First ascent by Tohoku University 1976), Teram Kangri7382m (First ascent by Hirosaki University 1977) and Apsarasas 7245m(First ascent by Osaka University 1976.)

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