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JOHN TOWN

## China & Tibet 2006

### Qonglai

The rock walls of the Siguniang National Park continued their popularity. Cosmin Andron, from Romania, and Wai Wah Yip, from Hong Kong, made the first ascent of the SW face of the **Fourth Sister of Siguniang Shan** in June 2005. Canadians Katy Holm, Aidan Oloman and Katherine Fraser visited the Changping Goa valley in the same year, making the first ascents of **Chiwen (5250m)** and **Chibu (5466m)**. Cosmin Andron returned with American Bob Keaty to make the first ascent of **Banji North (c5400m)** on 28 January 2006 via the north face. Dates appearing below refer to 2006 unless otherwise stated.

The following October, Americans Ben Clark and Josh Butson also visited the Changping valley, making the first ascent of **'The Falcon' (c5500m)**. Chad Kellogg and Joseph Puryear visited the same area in April 2007 making the first ascent of **'Lara Shan' (c5700m)** via the steeply glaciated W face.

A French Alpine Club expedition made the first ascent of **Siguniang North (5700m)** from the north, reaching the summit on 1 November.

### Daxue Shan

After many attempts in recent years, the British/New Zealand team of Malcolm Bass and Pat Deavoll made the first ascent of **Haizi Shan (5833m)** in October via a route on the N face direct to the summit. (See article *'Haizi Shan ~ A lot to be grateful for'*, page 40.)

### Shaluli Shan

An American-Canadian party visited the remote Genyen area of Western Sichuan. Dave Anderson and Sarah Hueniken made the first ascent on 20 October of **Shachun (5965m)**, a spectacular granite spire. Molly Loomis and Andy Tyson made the first ascent the next day of **Phurpa (c5600m)**.

In the same region, the well-known American climber Charlie Fowler and his companion Christine Boskoff died in an avalanche in November above the Lengyu Monastery.

In October 2005, a Japanese team led by Shigeru Akoi visited the Tsonatou Tso area of the Shaluli Shan, north of the Genyen massif and south of the Tibet-Sichuan Highway. In a short visit they made the first ascent of **Peak 5160m** and observed the highest peak (unnamed, 5870m) and the second highest, Xiangqiuqieke (5863m).

### **Nyainqentanglha East**

In April 2007 Mick Fowler returned to the Kajaqiao area with Paul Ramsden to make the first ascent of the striking **Manamcho (6264m)** in an eight-day push. Steve Burns and Ian Cartwright made the first ascent of neighbouring **Point 5935m**.

### **Nyainqentanglha West**

Christian Hass of Austria, who had made a number of first ascents in 2000 in the southern half of the chain, returned in October 2005. From the valley immediately south-west of the main Nyainqentanglha massif, together with Erich Gatt and Gerhard Grindl, he made the first known ascent of **Pajan Zhari (6221m)** on 1 October via the W ridge. The group also climbed '**Gompa Garpo Ri**' (**6232m**) which lies directly to the north-west. On 16 October Haas made a solo ascent of **Qungmo Kangri (7048m)** via the first ascent route on the S ridge and of **Qungmo Kangri WSW (6116m)**.

### **Kun Lun**

Between 9 September and 7 October 2005 the Russians Boris Malakhov, Paul Demeshchik, Otto Chkhetiani, Michael Bertov and Sergey Zajko made an impressive unsupported north-east to south-west crossing of the western Kun Lun. They passed near the active Achik Shan volcano and the remote peak of Aksai Chin (7167m) as well as attempting Peak 6903m.

### **Himalaya**

Marko Prezelj and Boris Lorencic made an impressive new route on the north-west pillar of **Chomo Lhari (7350m)** in a six-day round trip. At the same time, Rok Blagus, Tine Cuder, Matej Kladnik and Samo Krmelj climbed a steep couloir on the left side of the N face reaching the summit on 14 October. Team members also made an ascent of **Jangmo Gopsha (6706m)** which lies just to the east.

In the Cho Oyu area, the Catalan Jordi Tosas made a new route on the S face of **Palung Ri (7100m)**, climbing solo.

In April 2007 Slovaks Marek Hudak and Josef Kopold attempted the British route on the S face of **Shishapangma (8013m)**. Kopold reached the summit but Hudak, who had turned back earlier, disappeared on the descent.

### **Karakoram**

A nine-man German-Swiss expedition made the first ascent of **Gasherbrum II East (7772m)** from the rarely visited Chinese side via the East Nakpo glacier. Cedric Hahlen, Hans Mitterer and Ueli Steck reached the summit on 10 July.

## Tien Shan

### **Pik Voennykh (Military) Topografov (6873m)**

In common with Pogrebetsky, this now lies wholly in China due to the boundary change highlighted in AJ111. From 10-19 August a Moscow team led by A Dzholuy made the first ascent of its striking S ridge. In the CIS alpinism championships the ascent was assigned the grade 5B and awarded 3rd place, although the ascensionists report it as more like 6A. The team approached the mountain from Aksu in China.

On 15 August 2005 Isao Fukura, Hiroyuki Katsuki and Koichiro Takahashi of Japan made the first ascent of **Karlik (Harlik Shan) (4886m)**, which lies 70km north-east of the town of Hami.

## Pamirs

Muztagh Ata and surrounding summits saw a burst of mostly Russian activity in 2005. **Koskulak (7028m)** received its first ascent on 10 August via the W ridge by Leonid Fishkis, Dmitry Komarov and Alexandr Novik, and its second ascent two days later by seven climbers from the Moscow Aviation Institute. Valery Shamalo and Alexei Gorbalkov then made the third ascent via the N face from the Kalaxong glacier, a route which is capped by a horrendous sérac wall. This pair then made an ascent of **Muztagh Ata (7546m)** via the unclimbed S ridge, reaching the summit on 24 August. They were followed by Kazuya Hiraide and Kei Taniguchi of Japan who completed the second ascent of the same route on 5 September.

**Kalaxong (7277m)** is the south peak of Muztagh Ata, which was probably climbed at an early stage via a diversion from the first ascent route on the main peak. Its S ridge was climbed for the first time on 4 September by Dmitry Chijik, Vladimir Kagan and Petr Yudin of Alexandr Lebedev's expedition.

Russian activity continued in 2006 when Ivan Dusharin, Elena Lebedeva, Lev Ioffe (USA) and Alexander Novik made the first ascent of **Kokodak (7210m)** on 10 July.