

Telthop ~ Ladakh Expedition 2012



The old palace in Leh

**An expedition to climb the previously unclimbed peak of
Telthop 6160m**

Outline itinerary and costs



Ladakh is situated in the Indian province of Jammu and Kashmir. Regarded by travellers as part of the “real India” it is a cultural melting pot of Buddhist, Christian and Islamic religions. It is also home to one of the major Indian mountain ranges in the Greater Himalayas.



Due to border disputes with China and Pakistan the northern area of Ladakh was closed until the mid nineties with the checkpoint (line of control) based on the top of the Khardung pass (the highest motor-able road in the world) to the North of Leh. However due to thawing relationships with China the line of control was then moved back to Panamik and Turtok. This opened up a large swath of mountainous country that had not been easily accessible before this time. The newly opened area is still subject to permits as it is deemed beyond the line of control and is subject to military conventions, some areas requiring more in the way of permissions than others.

For the past six years we have been exploring this area and climbing many of the previously unclimbed peaks with the British Schools Exploring Society (affiliated to the Royal Geographical Society). The peaks we focused on were unnamed peaks in the main Thanglasgo and side valleys of this area which did not require specific permits.

In 2010 we took a private expedition to climb Telthop but were thwarted by bad weather caused by a particularly bad El Nino which washed away bridges and rendered the climbing conditions extremely hazardous.

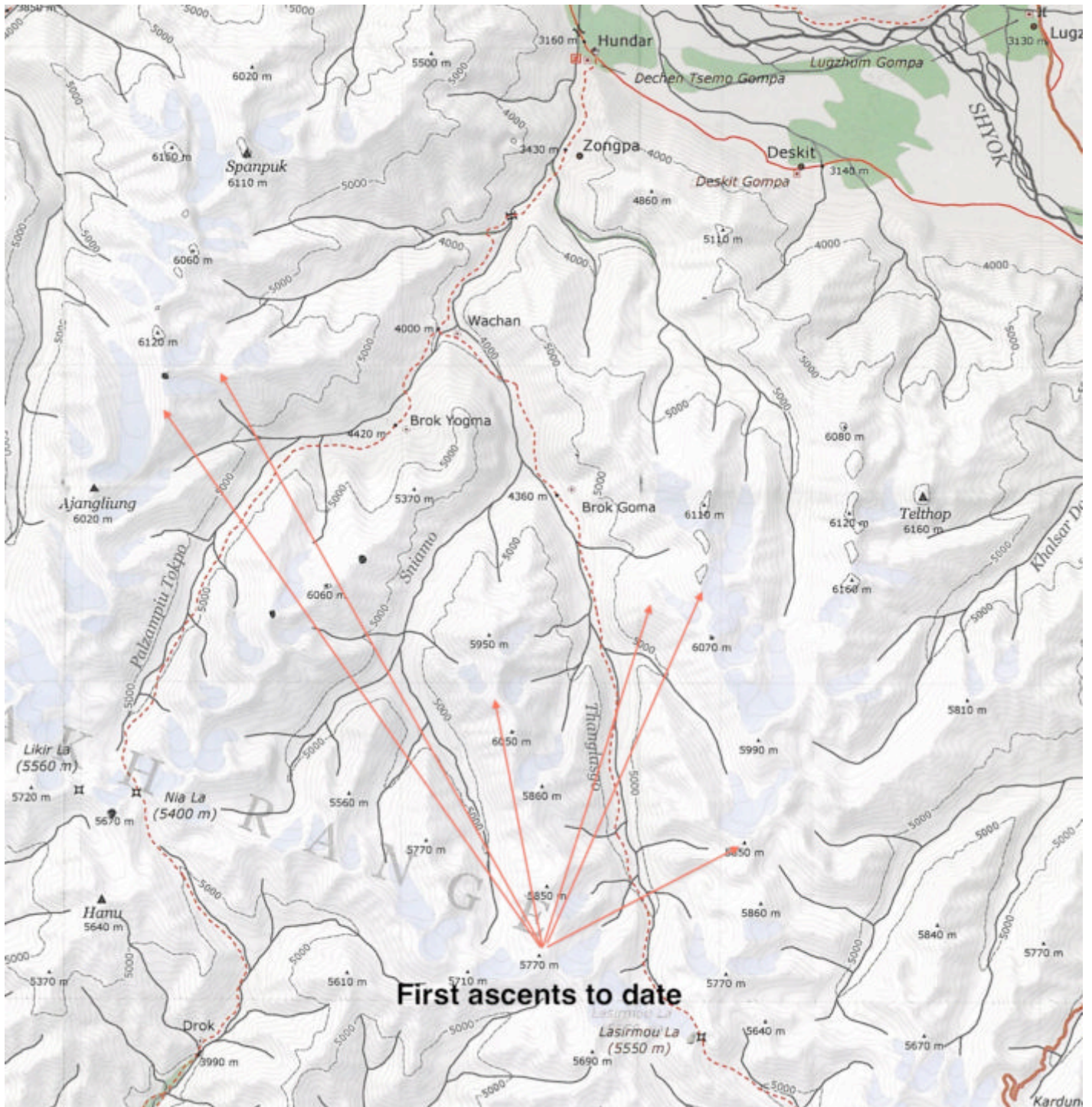
This unseasonal weather resulted in the deaths of many thousands in both Pakistan and Ladakh.

We still however managed to summit two previously unclimbed peaks and were indeed one of the only expeditions to achieve any success in this area in that year. This success was reported on the BMC website. <http://www.thebmc.co.uk/News.aspx?id=3975>

In 2011 we returned to the area to focus again on peaks in the main Thanglasgo valley complex and had success on three peaks



Climber descents from Samgyal peak, the unclimbed spires of Jundung Kangri in the background



Map showing Telthop range and our first ascents to date



The valley below the Telthop range was accessed in 2011 and this photograph was taken showing the Telthop ridge. Telthop is the snow covered peak at the far end of the ridge, however none of these peaks have been climbed to date.

Telthop is marked on the map as 6160m but is probably more in the region of 6200m because, as I have discovered, the majority of these peaks have never been climbed and GPS recorded, so the heights are inaccurate. In fact the heights vary on the mountains from reprint to reprint of the Swiss maps.

The climbing will be a mix of rocky ridges and reasonably steep snow. The expeditions objectives are to access the area from Hundar via the valley shown on the map to the south of Zongpa. This is the route that the group took in 2011.

This is exploration and mountaineering adventure at its best, along with a chance to summit at least one previously unclimbed and named peak.

The loose itinerary is as follows:

- Day 01: Depart UK.
- Day 02: Arrive Delhi. Transfer to hotel. Later IMF briefing and meet our Indian Army Liason Officer who will accompany us to Base Camp.
- Day 03: Transfer to airport for internal flight to Leh.
The flight to Leh takes us over the greater Himalayas in the early morning, a visual treat if the conditions are clear
- Day 04: Leh. A chance to enjoy the sights and sounds (not to mention the chocolate cake and coffees) of the capital of Ladakh
- Day 05: Drive to Hundar via the Khardung La, claimed as the highest motorable road in the world



View from the top of the Khardung La 5400m the Eastern Karakorum in the distance

- Day 06 to 09: Trek to base camp. The trek in will be a real experience; we can expect some forced river crossings, maybe with the use of a Tyrolean traverse
- Day 10 to 17: Climbing
- Day 18: Return to Hundar
- Day 19: Drive to Leh
- Day 20: Fly to Delhi. IMF debriefing . O/n
- Day 21: Fly home.

This itinerary will give us 8 days (all being well) in the valley to climb at least one (Telthop), hopefully two peaks.

The exact dates of the expedition are still to be confirmed but we will look to depart London at the end of July 2011.

The cost p/person is £2500, this does not include International flights to Delhi which are around £500.

What is included?

- British Mountain Leader (Chris Horobin)
- Full pre expedition support
- All Indian airport transfers
- Internal flights
- Peak fees and Liason officer costs
- 2 nights in a three star hotel in Delhi on twin sharing basis with breakfast
- 3 nights in a three star hotel in Leh with all meals
- Transfers to trek start point
- Fully supported expedition with tents, dining tent, kitchen tent, toilet tent, cook and kitchen staff, base camp manager, porters to carry loads to base camp and back, all meals at base camp

Expedition Ethos

We aim to climb these hills in good style, without the use of fixed ropes (unless necessary) and with the team members taking responsibility for themselves and their team members.

This is not to say that the British Mountain Leader and Sherpas will not be there to assist and advise and ultimate safety and climbing decisions will be with the British Mountain Leader.

What is not included (The honesty section)

- Visa fees
- UK Airport transfers and international flights
- Meals in Delhi
- Any additional costs incurred in Leh eg soft drinks, beers etc
- Any additional costs incurred by severe weather, evacuations, early finishing
- Tips (expect \$50)
- Personal Insurance

Fitness and experience requirements.

Expedition members should ideally have had previous altitude experience and be used to Scottish grade 2 or alpine PD.

The trek in will be tough with high temperatures over difficult ground, there are no real paths, there will be no real opportunity to take a rest day until we reach Base Camp and we have allowed four days of constant trekking at increasing altitude to achieve this.

However any regular walker with stamina will be able to manage the demands of this expedition.

This is a fantastic opportunity to access an area that is absolutely pristine, has some very unique wildlife and get into some fabulous previously unclimbed mountains. Success will be logged with the BMC, IMF and we will be listed as the first ascensionists of any peaks climbed.

If you would like any further information or have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me on 01373 455668 or at info@wildcountryconsultants.co.uk

Chris Horobin