MT. SHIVLING (6543 M) EXPEDITION, 2005
ORGANISED BY: MOUNTAINEERS' ASSOCIATION OF KRISHNANAGAR, W.B.

Leader's Report

1. Name of the Association: Mountaineers' Association of Krishnanagar.

2. Name of the expedition: Mt. Shivling (6543 Mtr. / 21467 Ft.) Expedition, 2005.

3. Name of the Himalayan peak climbed and its height: SHIVLING - 6543 M / 21467 FT.

4. Date on which permit given by IMF: 15/8/2005 to 15/9/2005.

5. Nominal roll of the expedition leader and members:

I. Shri Basanta Singha Roy – Leader of the expedition and climbed Mt. Shivling.
II. Shri Debasis Biswas – Dy. Leader of the expedition and climbed Mt. Shivling – He was the camera man (Video Camera) of the team.
III. Asok Roy – He ferried loads up to Camp-I (17000 ft.).
IV. Shri Subrata Brahma – He was photographer of the team and also in charge of medicine. He reached up to 17000 ft. i.e. Camp-I.
V. Shri Bivas Sarkar - He stayed at Base Camp.
VI. Shri Asim Mondal – He was the Equipment Incharge and climbed up to 17000 ft.. i.e. Camp-I.
VII. Shri Tapan Roy – He was the Quarter Master and Manager of the expedition. He climbed up to 17000 ft. i.e. Camp-I.
VIII. Shri Bimalesh Das – He stayed at Base Camp.

6. Commencement of trek from rail head/road head: From road head – trek started on 17/8/2005 from Gangotri, Uttaranchal.

7. Number of camps en route up to Base Camp: Before reaching Base Camp, we stayed at Bhojbas (12000 ft. - Lalbaba Ashram) on 17/8/2005.

8. Inter-action with local administration en-route and assistance received/problems faced: We had submitted necessary papers to the Expedition Check Post (after trekking approx. 1 k.m. from Gangotri Temple towards Gomukh) which is under Forest Department, Uttaranchal. They charged Rs.40/- per member, Sherpa and HAP though we had deposited earlier Rs.11500/- to the Chief, Wild Life Warden, Dehradun for various charges like Peak Booking Fees, Handling charges, Environment fee etc. We had also deposited extra Rs.2000/- for Gangotri National Park to the ECP along with a draft of Rs.5000/- which is refundable after taking back non-biodegradable garbage from our expedition.

9. Establishment of Base Camp:

We hired 22 Porters to carry our loads up to Base Camp i.e. Tapovan (14800 ft.). First day, on 17th August, 2005 we moved towards Gomukh at 7.00 a.m. through the true right bank of Ganga river. Within 3 hours we reached Chirbas (9 k.m.) and then reached Bhojbas (5 k.m.) (12000 ft.) at 1.00 p.m. We stayed at Bhojbas (Lalbaba Ashram) that night. On 18th August, 2005, early morning we started from Bhojbas. We took 4 hours to reach Tapovan (14800 ft.) and established Base Camp.

10. Establishment of higher camps with routes marked on the maps/sketches: Enclosed.

11. Technical/Climbing difficulty on way to higher camps:

From Base Camp to Camp-I, the route towards south-south west. We proceeded through the true right lateral moraine of Meru Glacier. After a steep ascent of 30 minutes, we reached on the ridge and then a easy walk for an hour. Then we walked again one hour on the boulder zone. Then we crossed the glacier and reached Camp-I which was established on a subsidiary ridge coming down to north from the lower section of the west ridge where the Meru glacier takes a sharp left turn towards. We do not fixed any rope though the gradient was high. But we traversed it.

From Camp-I to II – The first half of the route from Camp-I was traversing and gaining height on the western side of a rock tower, which stood between Camp-I and the west ridge. Here we fixed about 300 ft. poly rope on the rock. In which about 50 ft. vertical rock wall climbed on jumaring. The second half of the route was a steep traversing over rock and then to gain about 500 ft. by the southern slopes of the ridge to pitch Camp-II on the crest of the ridge in between two rocky pinnacles. One 50 ft. vertical rock section and last 200 ft. of climbing before camp-II was the only major technical climbing in the whole route.

From Camp-II to III – Total climbing on the rocky west ridge of Shivling peak. After 600 ft. from the camp the ridge became steep. Gradient nearly 60 degrees. Three section on the ridge before Camp-III, which was vertical. the first is 25 ft., the second is 100 ft. and the third is 40 ft. Other than this three vertical sections there are some technical climbing even on 60 to 70 degree gradient.

A 200 ft. ice wall which called Serac is the most difficult part of west ridge to climb Shivling. It's north to south length was approx. 1000 ft. and is broken always and avalanches come down. Some portions of this wall was overhanging. We find a week portion of this wall where the west ridge met on the serac. We able to fixed ropes on this wall in two days. Ice-pitton used in this portion and 2 full-length climbing ropes were fixed. Above the serac, there was only high gradient hard snow up to the summit and we fixed ropes all along.

12. Snow and rock condition: We faced snow from the summit camp and it was soft. Rock was stable.

13. Weather condition: When our trek start from Gangotri weather was not good up to Tapovan. But after that throughout the expedition period, we got bright sunny weather except on 27th August, 2005.

14. Summit report:

On 30th August, 2005 myself, Debasis Biswas, Pemba Sherpa and Pasang Sherpa prepared ourselves for Shivling summit within 6.00 a.m. But we moved for summit at 7.00 a.m. After one hour climbing with the help of fixed rope on the last portion of snow/rock west ridge, we reached near the serac. The serac is a 200 ft. vertical ice wall. As rope was fixed earlier on the wall of serac, we able to reach the top of the Ice wall at 10.00 a.m. in two stages with the help of jumar.

Then we walked in a zig zag way towards southeast avoiding open crevasses in between the snowfield of the two peaks of Shivling. Then our target was to reach the south ridge of Shivling i.e. towards. After reaching the south ridge we turned towards northeast. As it was a cloudless sky, we were very cheerful. We took 4 and half hours to reach the snowy top of Shivling above the serac. We fixed ropes from the Col up to top.

We viewed all the peaks clearly and also identified them. Puja was performed and then we unfurled national flag and club flag. Taking panoramic photographs (both movie and still) we started climbing down after staying 15 minutes on the top of Shivling. At 6.30 p.m. we reached summit camp safely. Thendu Sherpa received us there.

15. Camp site cleaning activities and disposal of garbage:

Garbage from Camp-I, II and III area was collected and taken back at Base Camp. The area of Base Camp was cleared and all the bio-degradable garbage was burnt and left non-bio-degradable garbage taken back and deposited the same at Expedition Check Post, Gangotri.

16. Maximum height attained and its date: 21467 ft. (i.e. Summit) of Shivling Peak on 30/8/2005.

17. Names of summitters : 1. Shri Basanta Singha Roy, 2. Shri Debasish Biswas, 3. Shri Pasang Sherpa and Shri Pemba Sherpa.

18. Name of LO, if any: Not applicable.

19. Total expenditure incurred for the expedition (i.e. on food, porter, equipment etc.) along with Chartered Accountant's audited statement of accounts:

Chartered Accountant's Audit Report enclosed.

Food	-	20621.00
Sherpa/HAP/Porter	-	110420.00
Equipment hire charges	-	5680.00
Transport	-	18472.00
Photography	-	5492.00
Equipment purchase/peak booking fees & others	-	26117.00
Total expenditure	-	186802.00

20. Details of day-by-day events to be attached: Enclosed.

21. Suggestions/complaints: Nothing.

22. Survey of India Map or sketch marking accurately the route, campsite and their heights: Separate sheet enclosed.

23. Photo evidence: 31 Pcs of 4" x 6" colour print photo with caption enclosed.

Date : 23/10/2005.

(Leader's particulars and signature)

Name : Basanta Singha Roy
Address : Gharami Para Lane, P.O.Ghurni-741103,
Krishnagar, Dist. Nadia, W.B.
Phone No.03472 –255171 (R), 033-22271638 (O).

DETAILED REPORT OF DAY BY DAY EVENTS OF MT. SHIVLING (6543 M) PEAK EXPEDITION, 2005

Shivling is the most challenging peak in the Garhwal Himalayas. After climbing many Himalayan peaks by this association like Kamet, Choukhamba-I, Bhrigupanth and Indrasan we took the challenge to climb Shivling. The famous mountaineer Marco Pallis remarked on seeing Shivling from Gomukh in 1933, " … a horrid looking mountain with striking resemblance to the Matterhorn as it might appear in a nightmare. I have rarely seen anything that looked more unclimbed." Contrary to what Pallis said, Shivling is an ethereal mountain, demanding in its technical difficulties and yet lyrical in its beauty. There is controversy about the origin of the name Shivling, but there can be no mistaking its distinctive shape and its dominating presence over the source of the Ganga.

Mt. Shivling is a two summit mountain which rises not far from the snout of the Gangotri Glacier. It belongs to one of the most beautiful peaks in the Garhwal Himalayas. Due to its unusual shape and easy access, it is very popular among the climbers.

The first ascent of Shivling was made by Indo-Tibetan Border Police under the leadership of Hukam Singh in 1974 through the west ridge and the south-west summit was first climbed by British climbers Chris Bonington and Jim fortheringham in 1983 through south-east ridge.

13th August, 2005 8 members and 3 Sherpas left Krishnagar and reached Howrah by local train and then availed Amritsar Mail at 7.10 p.m. Well wishers, friends and members were present both at Krishnagar Station and Howrah Station to convey their wishes for our safe return and success.

14th August We spent the whole day at train.

15th August Reached Lakshar at 1.30 a.m. and then availed local train for Hardwar. We could not board the first local train due to rush. At about 8.30 a.m. we reached Hardwar and availed bus for Uttarkashi. We reached Uttarkashi at 4.30 p.m. and stayed at Kali Kamli Dharamshala. We contacted with Highland Treks N Tour (Agency) and arranged Porters, High Altitude Porters and Cook.

16th August Debasis and Subrata went to NIM, Uttarkashi along with Pitambar Singh (Agency) for collecting equipments. Rest of the members were busy for marketing like kerosene, gas cylinder and other vegetables. Asok Roy and Tapan Roy visited the Forest Office for necessary information and permission. We felt earthquake at 9.30 a.m. at Uttarkashi. Peoples were panicked. We engaged 2 HAPs and 1 Cook from the agency. We availed bus for Gangotri at 2.30 p.m. with all loads and reached there at 7.00 p.m. and stayed at Dharamshala near the Gangotri temple. We performed Puja at Gangotri temple for our success and safe return.

17th August Trek began from Gangotri. We hired 22 Porters to carry the load up to Base Camp i..e. Tapovan. All of us started at 7.00 a.m. and reached Bhojbas at 1.00 p.m. (12000 ft. / 14 k.m.). As we entered in the Gangotri National Park we paid entry fees of Rs.40/- per head including Sherpas and Porters at the Expedition Check Post and exhibited all necessary permission papers. We had also paid a sum of Rs.2000/- as the entry fee of national park along with a refundable draft for Rs.5000/- which was purchased in favour of the Forest Department, Uttarkashi. Earlier we had paid Rs.11500/- to the Uttaranchal Govt., Dehradun as the peak booking fees, handling charges, environment fees. etc. We stayed at Bhojbas (Lalbaba Ashram) that night.

18th August At 7.00 a.m. all of us started from Bhojbas and reached Base Camp (14800 ft. / 8 k.m.) i.e. Tapoban at 11.30 a.m. Weather was not bright. We pitched tents on grassy grounds. Temporary kitchen was made. Water source was nearby the kitchen. We also re-arranged loads for upward journey. Porters returned to Gangotri. Now we were 14 (8 members + 3 Sherpas + 2 HAPs + 1 Cook).

19th August All of us except Bivas, Bimaleshda and Tilbahadur (Cook) ferried loads to Camp – I. The route followed through the true right lateral moraine of the Meru glacier. We started trekking towards south-west at 8.30 a.m. after performing Puja. First we climbed a steep scree zone for about 30 minutes and reached on the moraine ridge of Meru glacier. Then we walked about an hour on that ridge towards west on the same height. Below 500 ft. of the lower section of the west ridge of Shivling Peak we dumped our loads and returned to Base Camp at 3.00 p.m. Sherpas and HAPs ferried loads at Camp-I.

20th August Sherpas, HAPs and Cook ferried the same loads at Camp-I. Rest of the members took rest at Base Camp. We had found Himalayan Goats at Tapovan. Weather was very good.

21st August We decided to occupy Camp-I (17000 ft.). Due to shortage of tents we took the decision that only 2 members, 3 sherpas, 2 HAPs and the Cook occupy the Camp-I and others ferry load upto Camp-I, if necessary. Camp-I was established on a subsidiary ridge coming down to north from the lower section of the west ridge of Mt. Shivling where the Meru glacier takes a sharp U turn towards south. We did not fixed ropes though the gradient was high on the slope. Water source was far below the Camp-I area.

22nd August All of us except the Cook opened the route to Camp-II and also ferried loads to Camp-II. The first half of the route from Camp-I was traversing and gaining height on the western side of a rock tower, which stood between Camp-I and the west ridge. We fixed 300 ft. poly rope for a section which included a vertical 50 ft. rock wall. This is a major technical climbing in this route. The second half of the route was a steep ascent over rock towards north-east. We reached below the west ridge from where 500 ft. rope was fixed on steep gradient rock wall to reach the ridge We crossed the ridge and dumped loads in between the two rock tower. These towers are clearly visible on the lower section of the west ridge. It took 7 hours to ferry. Base Camp members ferried loads to Camp-I.

23rd August Sherpas occupied Camp-II and HAPs ferried loads to Camp-II. Myself and Debasis took rest.

24th August Sherpas started fixing ropes on the rocky west ridge from Camp-II. HAPs also ferried loads to Camp-II. Both of us took rest. Til Bahadur moved for Base Camp for some emergency items and returned to Camp-I.

25th August Myself, Debasish, Tilbahadur, Dilbahadur and Rathor occupied Camp-II (18400 ft.).

26th August Sherpas and HAPs ferried to Summit Camp. Pasang and Pemba fixed ropes on the remaining difficult vertical rock portion of the rocky west ridge with the help of old ropes. HAPs could not climb the last 40 ft. vertical rock wall and they dumped their loads there and back to Camp-II.

27th August Myself, Debasish and 3 Sherpas occupied Summit Camp (19600 ft.). Weather was not good. There were 3 sections on the ridge before Camp-III - all vertical. The first was 25 ft., the second was 100 ft. and the third was 40 ft. Other than these three vertical sections, some technical climbing was necessary even on 60 to 70 degree gradient. In the second vertical section we belayed our Ruck Sack. After climbing the third rock section we put on Crampons for the first time during this expedition. Up to this point we could not find any snow or ice. We reached summit camp at 3.00 p.m. It took 7 hours to reach here. We pitched two tents on a narrow snow ridge cutting snows. This was the only tent pitching spot.

28th August We started at 9.30 a.m. for route opening. After fixing 500 ft. poly rope on the remaining portion of the snow-rocky west ridge, Pasang and Pemba reached below the serac at 11.00a.m. We had already planned our probable route for rope fixing on the serac, because the whole stretch of the serac was overhanging. The direct line from the ridge to the serac, looked stable and gradient was below 90 degree. We started rope fixing on the ice wall. We are able to manage the hard task for rope fixing (approx. 120 ft.) on the ice wall with the help of Ice-screws and one climbing rope up to middle of the serac. It took 5 hours. We returned to summit camp at 5.30 p.m.

29th August Within 2 hours we reached upto the middle of the serac with the help of fixed ropes. Then again we started rope fixing on the overhanging ice wall which is approx. 60 ft. It took 5 hours to complete the task. At 5.00 p.m. we managed to reach the top of the serac. After finding the probable route to the summit, we moved in a zig-zag way on the snow field which is full of crevasses and returned to summit camp at 7.00 p.m.

30th August Myself, Debasis Biswas, Pemba Sherpa and Pasang Sherpa prepared ourselves for Shivling summit within 6.00 a.m. But we moved for summit at 7.00 a.m. After one hour climbing with the help of fixed ropes on the last portion of snow/rock west ridge, we reached near the serac. The serac is a 200 ft. vertical ice wall. As rope was fixed earlier on the wall of serac, we able to reach the top of the Ice wall at 10.00 a.m. in two stages with the help of jumar.

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We viewed all the peaks clearly and also identified them. Puja was performed and then we unfurled national flag and club flag. Taking panoramic photographs (both movie and still) we started climbing down after staying 15 minutes on the top of Shivling. At 6.30 p.m. we reached summit camp safely. Thendu Sherpa received us there.

31st August We struck summit camp and started our return journey at 10.30 a.m. Pasang, Thendu and Pemba started one hour later after cleaning the area and we reached Camp-II at 2.30 p.m. Tilbahadur (Cook), Dilbahadur (HAP) and Rathore (HAP) received us with hot tea. They informed that they had enjoyed the whole summit approach as binocular was with them. At 3.00 p.m. after taking some rest and food we cleared the area and carried all the garbage on our back and came down to Camp-I at 4.00 p.m. and reached Base Camp at 5.30 p.m. Asokda, Tapanda, Asim, Subrata and Bimaleshda and Bivas received us. It was a very joyful moment. We enjoyed our success and safe return.

1st September We sent down Rathore for arrangement of porters. Sherpas, HAP and Cook went for bringing back loads. Members took rest at Base Camp.

2nd September We enjoyed the whole day and also busy for cleaning and sorting of equipment and repacking.

3rd September We proceeded for Gangotri at 8.00 a.m. and reached Gangotri at 5.00 p.m. We had deposited the garbage, which we had taken back to the ECP and they also handed over the draft for Rs.5000/-. Porters also reached Gangotri at 9.00 p.m. with all loads.

4th September Early morning we left Gangotri by bus and reached Uttarkashi at 12.00 noon. We deposited equipments at NIM, Uttarkashi and payment made to the Highland Trek N Tour. At night we reached Hardwar.

5th September We availed Doon Express and reached Krishnagar on 7th September, 2005 safely.

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