

# Kedar Dome Expedition 1996

Organised by :

## South Calcutta Trekkers Association

14, Chakraberia Lane, Kolkata - 700020

### Leader's Report

- Name of the Peak** : **KEDAR DOME**
- Altitude of the Peak** : 6831 Mt. / 22,410 Ft.
- Location of the Peak** : Western Garhwal Himalayas in the Eastern side of the Gangotri Glacier.  
District - Uttarkashi, Uttar Pradesh.
- Latitude of the Peak** : 79°04'44"  
**Longitude of the Peak** : 30° 48' 31"
- Duration of the Expedition** : 19<sup>th</sup> May 1996 to 11<sup>th</sup> June 1996.  
It was our 11<sup>th</sup> Expedition.
- Route we followed** : Howrah – Luxar – Haridwar – Uttarkashi – Gangotri (3100 Mt.) – Transit Camp – I (3792 Mt.) – Bhujbas, Transit Camp – II (4420 Mt.) – Khara – Pathar.  
Base Camp (4792 Mt.) – Kirti Glacier.  
Camp – I (5000 mt.) – Camp – II (5550 mt.) – Camp – III or Summit Camp (6158 mt.) – Summit (22,410 ft. – 66830 mt.).
- Participating Members** : a) Sri Dipen Samanta (Leader)  
b) Sri Santanu Saha (Quarter Master)  
c) Sri Indranil Sarkar (Photographer)  
d) Sri Arupam Das (Equipment Incharge)  
e) Sri Partha Sarathi Dutta (Transport Incharge).  
f) Sri Gautam Giri (Photographer)  
g) Dr. Alok Sil (Medical Officer)  
h) Sri Rajib Samanta  
i) Smt. Sita Ghosh (Giri) (Treasurer).
- Name of the High Altitude Friends** : a) Raju Bhat  
b) Ratan Singh Negi  
c) Surban Bahadur  
d) Ram Bahadur (Cook)
- Summitters** : a) Dipan Samanta  
b) Santanu Saha  
c) Indranil Sarkar  
d) Arupam Das  
e) Partha Sarathi Dutta  
f) Raju Bhat  
g) Ratan Singh  
h) Surban Bahadur
- Date & Time of Summit** : 3<sup>rd</sup> June 1996 at 1.10 P.M. i.e. 8 hrs. 25 mt. time taken (4.45 AM start) – 1.10 Summit through North West Ridge.

**Planning** : S.C.T.A. is a mountaineering organisation, since its inception in the year 1983. Association is trying to promote mountaineering & adventure activities amongst the Youth of West Bengal like past, this year, the Association planned to climb 'Kedar Dome'. After long waiting we received the approval from I.M.F. but without financial grant.

Mt. Kedar Dome lies in the Gangotri Glacier. It originates from the North Western slopes of Chaukhamba Peaks, West of the Holy Shrine of Badrinath, with a length of 25 kms. It is one of the longest glaciers in India. Flowing in the North – West Direction, it terminates at Gomukh, where the water gushes out of the snout at a height of about 3892 mt. From Gangotri the snout of the Glacier at Gomukh is 18 km. and the distance has to be trekked along a foot track on the right bank of the Bhagirathi river. Beyond Gomukh we cross Main Glacier, then followed left lateral Moraine and reached Tapoban and then Kharapatthar, then Kirti Glacier. On the right bank of the Gangotri Glacier in its down-ward journey it met with four Tributary glacier Maindi, Swachand, Chaturangi, Raktavaran and two left side Glaciers are Ganohim & Kirti.

#### **19.5.96 to 21.5.96 – Arrangement of Journey :-**

On the eve of the venture on 19.5.96 Mr. S. B. Mukherjee, Hon'ble Barrister in his Chamber handed over the National Flag to me and wonderful send off by friends, patrons and well wishers, the team left Howrah station by 3005 UP Amritsar Mail and reached Luxar at 4.30 A.M. on 21.5.96. At Howrah Station our Honourable President Mr. Susobhan Basu handed over Club Flag to me. From Luxar at 5.30 A.M. by Masoouri Express we reached Haridwar at 6.30 A.M. From Haridwar by bus & we reached Uttarkashi at 3.30 P.M. We halted there at Hotel Laxmi. There were next one of the members, Indranil Sarkar. He joined the Expedition team after completion of his Advance Mountaineering Course.

**22.5.1996** : All of us were very busy for arrangement and negotiations with Low Altitude Porter (L.A.P) and High Altitude Porter (H.A.P), last minute marketing, checking of equipment, utensils, fuel, packing and distribution of leads etc. We went to N.I.M. (Nehru Institute of Mountaineering) and met with the Vice Principal and inform him regarding our Expedition and received some idea from him & also collect some climbing equipments hired from DMF Stores.

**23.5.1996** : **Uttarkashi to Gangotri**  
We left Uttarkashi at 10 A.M. along with 15 L.A.P.s and 3 H.A.P.s and 9 members. We reached Gangotri at 4.30 P.M. We stayed at Bazoria Nibas.

**24.5.1996** : **Stay at Gangotri (10,000 Ft.)**  
We stay at Gangotri for acclimatization – whole day we spent by moving here & there and height gained. We took some photographs of Gangotri Temple and Sudarsan Parbat. At 9 A.M. we went to 'GANGA' Temple for paying our homage for safe and successful Expedition.

**25.5.1996** : **1<sup>st</sup> Transit Camp (TC 1) Bhujbas – Gangotri to Bhujbas**  
We started our first day's trek at 9.30 A.M. after Distribution of L.A.P.'s load. Morning weather was sunny. We reached Bhujbas at 3.30 P.M. and stayed at Khemsingh's Tent House. The distance of Gangotri to Bhujbas was 14 km. & Altitude 3792 m.

**26.5.96** : **2<sup>nd</sup> Transit Camp – Bhujbas to Kharapatthar.**  
Weather was fine in the morning. We had our breakfast and with Pack Lunch started for 2<sup>nd</sup> day trek to Kharapatthar at 9.00 A.M. Near 'Gomukh' Rajib, one of the junior-most members suffered from headache. Doctor checked very carefully and decided to get back to Gangotri for acclimatization. From Gomukh to Tapoban, route was very tough. We reached Kharapatthar at 3.30

P.M. There we met Pune Expedition team 'SAID Mountaineering Club'. They also came for 'KEDAR DOME' Peak. We took photographs of majestic view of Shivling, Bhagirathi Group of Peaks etc. At about 3.30 P.M. We reached Kharapatthar Camp. The distance between Bhujbas to Kharapatthar was about 10 kms. Altitude is 4420 m.

- 27.5.96** : **Kharapatthar to Base Camp (Kirti Bamak)**  
Early in the morning all L.A.P.s took their load and dumped at B.C. about 11 A.M. Doctor, DIDI & Gautam were not fit. They suffered from headache, they stayed at Kharapatthar Camp with one cook for Acclimatisation. We the other members and H.A.P.s reached to B.C. at 12.30 P.M. At B.C. we pitched our tents and make our kitchen in a previously made Kitchen area. B.C. was extremely right side of the Kirti Glacier, i.e. below the wall of Shivling Peak. From 4 P.M. Snow fall started, it continued up to 5.30 P.M. From B.C. we saw Kedar Dome 'Blathri Kunta' Kharchakund, Mandani, Choukhamba Group of Peaks, Kedarnath, etc.
- 28.5.96** **1<sup>st</sup> team Load Ferry to Camp – I**  
According to our yesterday's plan, we took our breakfast at 7.30 A.M. After Breakfast Ratan and Raju complete their Base Camp worship. We all participated and distributed Prasad with Kaju, Kismish, Chocolates, Lozenses etc. Then we took photographs of different sponsoring company's banners. At 9 A.M. H.A.P. Surban went to TC2 with 3 members. We, the 4 members and 2 HAPs went to ferry the load at C – 1. We diagonally crossed the Kirti Glacier, then crossed the right lateral moraine, dump our load at Conventional C – 1 area. From C – 1 we saw Thaylasagar, Bhrgupanth, Meru Parbat and many peaks in Jadganga area. It takes 4 Hrs. to reach C – 1. Most of the routes was through boulders zone. The altitude of C – 1 approximately 5000 m.
- 29.5.96** : **1<sup>st</sup> team Load Ferry to C – 1 and 2<sup>nd</sup> team TC – 1 to B.C.**  
Three members and two HAPs went for load ferry to C – 1, two members took rest at B.C. 2<sup>nd</sup> team reached B.C. at 11.30 A.M. on the way to C-1 dumping load ferry time blizzard started. We dumped our load 500 ft. before our C-1 area, then we get back to B.C. Snowfall started at 1 P.M. and continued upto 6 P.M.
- 30.5.96** : **Camp – 1 established**  
After breakfast we were the 5 members, 3 HAPs and one cook backed our Rucksack and moved to C-1 at 9.15 A.M. Weather was very good. We pitched our tent by beating soft snow. In the evening we discussed ourselves regarding our next day's programme.
- 31.5.96** : **Load Ferry Camp – 1 (C-1) to Camp – I (C- II)**  
After breakfast we are 5 members and 3 HAPs started for C-II at 7.15 A.M. except Cook with full load. From C-1 to C-II it takes 5 Hrs. Gradient of Snow slope about 45° to 60°. We crossed 3 Humps. On the way we saw Bhagirathi Group of Peaks, Kirthi Stambha, Bhatrikunta, Kedarnath, Thaylasagar, Bhrgupanth, Meru, Shivling and so many unnamed peaks. Height gain 5000 to 5550 mts. On the way to C-2 we doesn't see any Crevasses. Weather was very good. We spent the 2 ½ an hour and took some snacks and dump all loads and anchor it by snow stack. At 2.30 P.M. we came back to C-1.
- 1.6.96** : **Camp – II (C-2) Established**  
Taking bed tea at 6.30 A.M. with very clear sunny morning all 5 members, 3 HAPs and one cook started for C-2 at 9 A.M. with full load. We followed last day's route and reached C-2 at 12 p.m. We pitched our tent and made a kitchen with snow cube between our tents. We spent rest of the day with happy mood and hot coffee. At team meeting we decided that the Camp III i.e. summit camp will be established tomorrow with all members and cook. We entered into the sleeping bag at 8.30 P.M.

- 2.6.96** : **Summit Camp established (5800 mt.)**  
 Morning started with a fine sunshine and spotless blue sky. As per last day's decision we all members, H.A.P.s and cook started with full load from C-2 to Summit Camp at 8.30 p.m. My plan was to climb the Peak next day if weather permitted. So I took with us 3 tents, one gas stove, one kerosene stove with full tank of kerosene, some food, utensils, personal equipments and climbing equipments. We followed the conventional route from Summit Camp. Gradient was 45° to 65°. Our movement was very much cautious because of hidden crevasses. Another problem was the reflection of sunrays from snow. We reached our C-III i.e. Summit Camp (6158 mt.) at 17.30 p.m. We pitched 3 tents and made our kitchen with snow cube. Most unfortunate news we received from kitchen that gas stove not working. We tried hard to repair it but failed. So one of the HAPs Surban went to C-II and collect kerosene and came back to Summit Camp. He took to perform this ups & downs only 3 hrs. At 4 P.M. we entered into our tents and wrote our daily diary. From 2<sup>nd</sup> tent Santanu continued his old jokes. Thalaysagar, Meru, Brigupanth, Twinshivling, Kirti stambha changes its view time to time in this sunny weather. We took photographs of different peaks. In the evening we discussed next day's movement and decided that if the weather permits then we would move all for our summit. That day ended with dinner at 7.00 p.m.
- 3.6.96** : **Summit (6830 Mtr.) from Camp – 3 (C – 3) (5800 Mtr.)**  
 We all 5 members, 3 HAPs & cook spent the night on the edge. We woke up at 2 A.M. Preparation of drinking water and some food took some time. The temperature was below freezing point. In such a chilling atmosphere we came out from our tents at 4.30 A.M. We were eight, in two ropes (in first rope myself, Santanu, Raju (H.A.P.), Indranil, and in other rope – Arupam, Partha, Ratan (H.A.P.), Surban (H.A.P.)) started with tie up crampon. For the first time we tied up ropes for safety.  
 Weather was fine in higher altitude, huge cloud concentrated in lower level which looks like a "Sea of Clouds". In that vast snow-field among the garland of white peaks we started for our ultimate destination. Our movement was slow because of gradient. We climbed zig-zag way to avoid crevasses. A stiff snow wall found having an average gradient of 70°. Snow condition was good, weather was helpful, we were gaining altitude smoothly. Our way of climbing was almost straight, except in some cases to avoid hidden crevasses. After 8 hours 25 minutes struggle and overcoming four humps we slipped on the top of Kedar Dome. All five members and 3 H.A.P.s summited at 1.10 p.m. We spent there 20 minutes. Took photographs, did rituals etc. The excellent partial views of Mt. Kedarnath, Kharchakund, Chowkhamba group of Peaks, Satopanth, Bhagirathi Group of Peaks, Mena, Chandra Parbat, Basukhio Parbat, Srikailash, Twin Shivling, Meru, Bhrigupanth, Thaylasagar, Jogin groups of Peaks, Bhatrikunta, Krithisthambe etc. At 1.30 p.m. we started our return journey. Very cautiously we descended through the same route. Our plan was to return to C – II. We returned Summit Camp safely at 4.10 p.m. I congratulated all my team members & H.A.P.s. Also congratulated Ram Bahadur who stayed at C-III. We, the 5 members and cook spent that night at Summit Camp because of very much exhausted and dehydrated. 3 H.A.P.s went to Base Camp. We spent a happy night.
- 4.6.96** : **Summit Camp to Base Camp**  
 Next day we followed the same Route and returned B.C. at 1.30 P.M.  
 The blue sky turned into white cloudy weather. After half an hour visibility became nil. Snowfall started and periodically we removed snow from tent side. We entered into sleeping bag at 7.30 P.M.
- 5.6.96** : **Stay at Base Camp**  
 We all 5 members and 3 H.A.P.s, 2 cooks stayed at B.C. because return low-altitude porters had not arrived. So we re-packed all our loads for return journey and entered into sleeping bags. Other 3 members already went to Gangotri on 3<sup>rd</sup> June.

- 6.6.96** : **Base Camp to Gangotri**  
We started the journey for Gangotri at 8.30 A.M. and reached there at 7.30 P.M. Before leaving the B.C. we cleared and burnt all the garbages and tried to keep the B.C. as it was before our visit.
- 7.6.96** : **Gangotri – Uttarkashi**  
We started by Bus at 9.30 A.M. and reached Uttarkashi at 3.30 P.M. We stayed at hotel and took our grand dinner with all 9 members, 3 H.A.P.s and 2 cooks. We deposited the hired equipment to Nehru Institute of Mountaineering.
- 8.6.96** : **Uttarkashi to Haridwar**  
From Uttarkashi to Haridwar by Bus. Started at 8 AM & reached Haridwar with a hazard of tyre puncher of bus at 3.30 P.M.
- 9.6.96 to 11.6.96** : By Summer Special we reached Calcutta Via Lucknow.

No accident occurred during the period of Expedition. All the members and high altitude friends did their respective works with trust and sincerity. Members and altitude friends were strictly advised to follow the DO's and DON'Ts on the mountain which they followed in true sense of terms.

Behind the success – I express and convey my sincere thanks to my team members, high altitude friends and low altitude friends for their assistance to make the expedition memorable. Also thanks to I.M.F., Sports and Youth Service Department, Govt. of West Bengal; our Patrons, Friends and well-wishers, whose help enthuse us to attain the golden goal.

To make the venture memorable our acknowledgement to .....

- A) For Approval :
- i) Indian Mountaineering Foundation, New Delhi.
  - ii) Department of Sports & Youth Services, West Bengal.
- B) For Planning :
- i) PATHAYATRA, Budge Budge, 24 Parganas (S).
  - ii) Ordnance Factory Mountaineers and Trekkers, Rifle Factory, Ishapore.
- C) For Equipment :
- i) Nehru Institute of Mountaineering (N.I.M.), Uttarkashi, U.P.
  - ii) Santanu Saha.
- D) For Medicine :
- i) Dr. Alope Sil (Medical College, Calcutta)
  - ii) Mr. Basudeb Dutta
  - iii) Dr. Ashok Ghosh (Govt. Hospital, Naihati)
  - iv) Mr. O. K. Majumder
- E) For Special Inspiration :
- i) Mr. Sourendra Banerjee
  - ii) Mr. Arijit Mallick
  - iii) Mrs. Munmun Mullick
  - iv) Mr. Sumit Dey
  - v) Mr. Shyamal Dey
- Our Club Members and Well Wishers.
- F) For Finance :
- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) I.M.F. (New Delhi)</li> <li>ii) Youth Service (W.B.)</li> </ol>  | } | Amount is due till the report published. |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>iii) Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL)</li> <li>iv) National Plywood</li> <li>v) Marshall Trexim Pvt. Ltd.</li> <li>vi) S. B. Mukherjee</li> <li>vii) Dr. Bibek Bose</li> <li>viii) National Insurance</li> <li>ix) Arijit Mallick</li> </ol> |   |  |

- G) Donation in kinds :
- i) Britannia Industries Ltd.
  - ii) Switze Food Products.
  - iii) Keventors Agro Ltd.
  - iv) Tata Tea.
  - v) Santi Hosiery.
  - vi) O. K. Mazumder.

- H) For Loan :
- Club Members.
-