

# Star HOLIDAY

DHAKA SUNDAY OCTOBER 28, 2007

**PACKAGE TOURS**

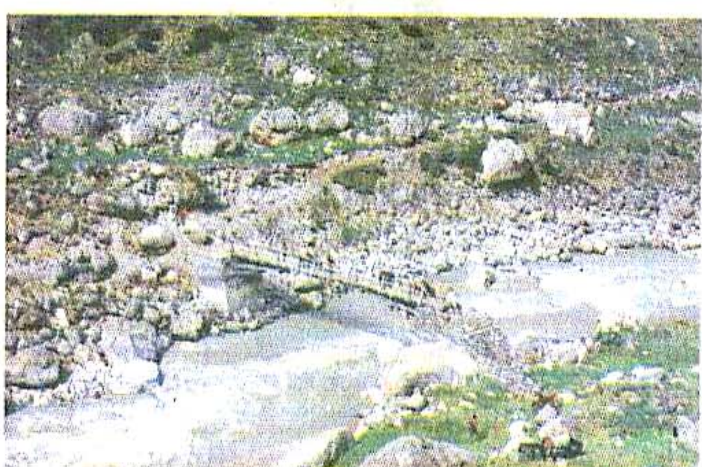


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Taj Caselina, 2nd Floor, 25 Gulshan Avenue, Dhaka 1212  
Tel: 9888055, 9885871 Fax: (880-2) 8815551  
E-mail: holidays@galaxybd.com

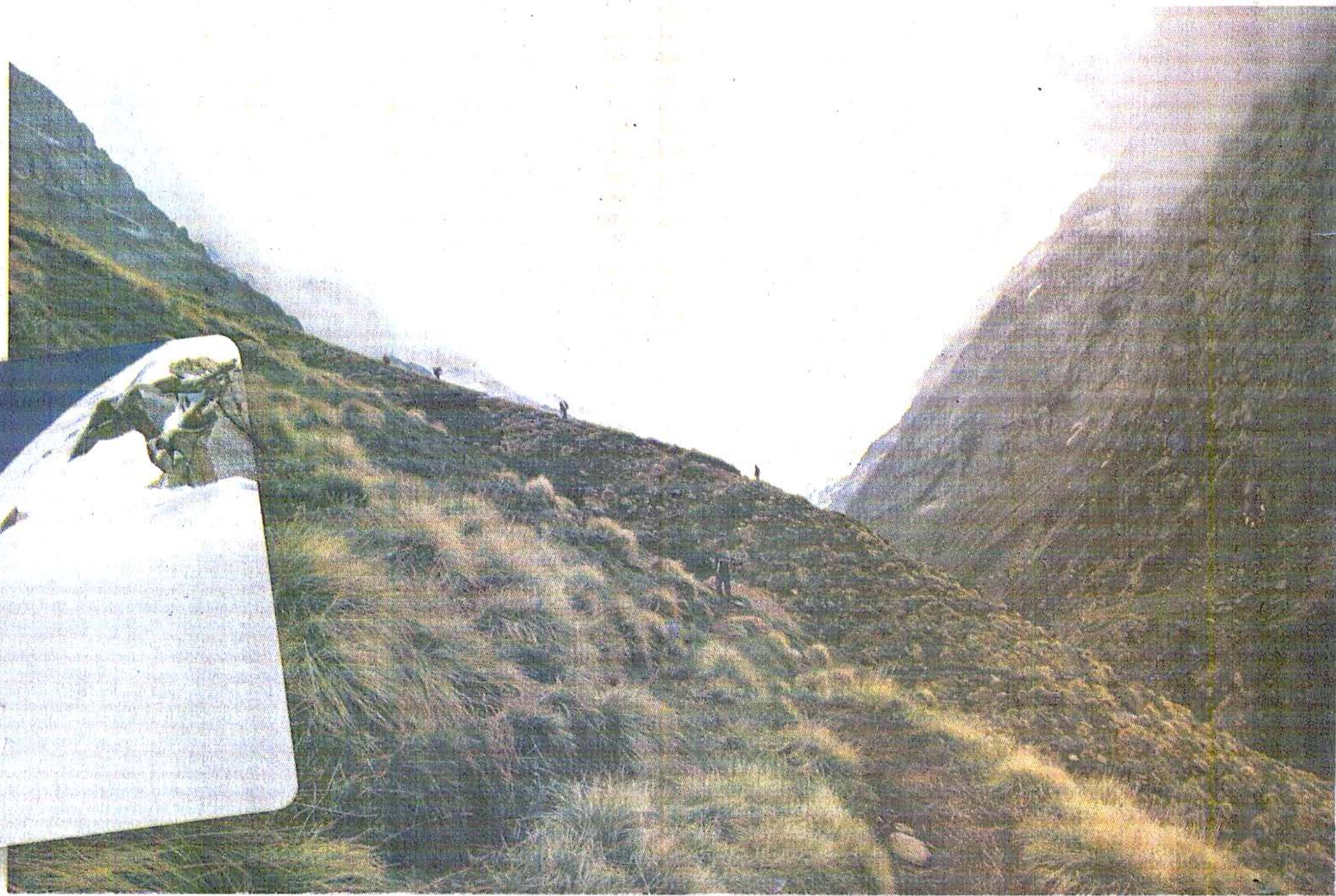


**BANGLADESH**



## Scaling dizzying heights

**M**OUNTAINEERING for Bangladesh it is a new concept. To hold on to a dream of getting higher and higher, to have a look at the world below from a place where very few people have ever been is something very tough here in Bangladesh. Geographically, we are inhabitants of a mostly flat alluvial region. So, one can easily understand how hard it is for someone to find a way to accomplish his dream of climbing snowy ridges; to be higher than anyone. But the exception is a few people who dare to stick to their cherished dream against all the odds for their mother land. And sometimes, it pays off.



The highest point of Bangladesh is just 3172 ft. high (Kewkradong; Bandarban). When someone reaches that height, there is nothing more Bangladesh can offer you regarding height. You are on the top of the biggest delta on earth. Then it's time to think higher, leaving Bangladesh behind. It means money. And a lot of it when it is a mountaineering expedition.

Kewkradong Bangladesh (www.kewkradong.com) has recently accomplished an endeavor of that kind. The

expedition was organized jointly with India. The target was massive, reaching a height of 6187 meters or 20300 feet. Organizing an expedition jointly with another nation and of that level from Bangladesh was the hardest part. The expense of an international expedition is really something to pay attention to. Bangladesh is a country where the average annual income per person is just 336.7 USD. To be a part of this expedition, we had to put together a total amount of 12,000 USD. Considering the

current socio-economic situation of Bangladesh, it was really a tough job for a few young people like us to arrange this huge amount of money to fulfill our dream for our nation. We had a few organizations by our side when we needed their help. We were honored to receive help and support from AB Bank, GMG Airlines, Bengal Foundation, The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, High Commission Of Bangladesh in Kolkata and Delta Outdoors. Then finally it was the time when we realized that we've



done it! We were on our way to India for a month long mountaineering expedition.

Bangladesh and India are two of the most significant countries in the South Asia. We wanted to enhance the mutual relationship between these two nations. So, we decided to make our climb for peace and prosperity.

Bangladesh India Joint Expedition for peace to Mt. Rubal Kang was first of its kind for Bangladesh. Mt. Rubal Kang (6187m); geographically located in Parvatee Valley, Himachal Pradesh, India, obliges contemporary mountaineering. And when it comes to peace and partnership, every single moment of this expedition period says it all when climbers

of two different nation share the experience of their lifetime.

From the very beginning of the expedition, members had to come face to face with the hardest challenges; ruthless weather and merciless terrain. Whatever element someone could ever ask for a mountaineering expedition; it was all there. But the real deal started after base camp at 140,00ft. The temperature fell to sub-zero level and the climbers had to face rock, ice and snow altogether along with blinding blizzard. Three camps were set after the base camp. The members were closing in on Mt. Rubal Kang climbing up through the Rotiruni Glacier.

Camp II was just at the gully of Mt. Rubal Kang. Expedition members had their first close

view of their destination, or destiny shall I say; the towering Rubal Kang with rock, ice and snow. Waiting to take on whatever challenge the climbers could offer. The five members of Team -A was about to attempt their summit on May 29.

The push for summit started at 0345 hrs local time. As the team climbed higher, the gradient grew to a staggering 65-70 degrees. There was loose snow, slick hard ice and the fear of all rock faces. After an agonizing 8 hr push, Team Kewkradong was just a few meters from the summit. At 1128 hrs local time, it was done. Team Kewkradong along with MAK (Mountaineer's Association of Krishnanagar, India) finally summited at Mt.

Rubal Kang. It was majestic up there. Tears of joy brought the prayers and promises together. Team Kewkradong carried the red and green Bangladesh flag up to a height very few of us had ever been and ever dreamt of.

This expedition was much more than a 5 men effort. Team Kewkradong had to keep the promise of their family, friends and most importantly of their motherland. It was a climb for peace, cooperation and partnership between two significant nations in South Asia. And we hope this will sustain a lifetime and enhance the regional cooperation internationally.

Story: SAAD BIN HOSSAIN  
photos: www.kewkradong.com