



The Parvat Abhiyatri Sangha team, which is set to undertake an expedition to a 6,502-metre peak in Ladakh

Independence Day above the clouds

JHINUK MAZUMDAR

Calcutta: A team of mountaineers from the city will embark on an expedition to a 6,502m peak in Ladakh in August, marking the 79th Independence Day in the rugged, cold, high-altitude landscape along the country's border.

A 16-member team, including two women, will leave the city for Chandigarh on Friday. The expedition, organised by the Parvat Abhiyatri Sangha, affiliated with the Indian Mountaineering Foundation, will begin from Shepherd's Camp at 16,269ft in Ladakh on August 12.

The team is scheduled to reach the base camp on August 15.

"The peak we have selected is an unnamed one adjacent to Mount Kula. We will spend

two nights at Pang in Himachal Pradesh to acclimatise to the altitude before heading to Shepherd's Camp, from where we will begin the expedition," said Shyamal Sarkar, joint secretary of the Parvat Abhiyatri Sangha.

Anandabazar Patrika is funding the expedition.

The Parvat Abhiyatri Sangha was founded by Asoke Kumar Sarkar, former chief editor of the ABP Group, in 1960.

In the early years, a group of mountaineers wanted to undertake an expedition to Nanda Ghunti (6,309m) in Garhwal but were unable to arrange funds.

"It was then that Asoke Kumar Sarkar gave them an appointment, and Anandabazar Patrika funded the expedition. Since 1960, the Anandabazar Group has con-

tinued to fund the Sangha's expeditions," Sarkar said. For the first time in 66 years, the Sangha's expedition will include two women — Purnima Guchhait and Tamasha Das.

Sarkar will lead the expedition. The other members are Subrata Banerjee (manager), Rabi Kar Pal (medical officer), Prasanta Das (deputy leader), Tamal Kanti Sasmal, Sangramee Samanta, Sourav Rajak, Sumit Das, Rohan Chattopadhyaya, Amiya Mitra, Supriya Sanpui, Yashanka Midya, Dipankar Ghosh and Kalyan Das.

Some of the major expeditions undertaken by the Parvat Abhiyatri Sangha in the past include the Lampak Group of Peaks in 1968, Kamet in 1984, Nandakot in 1991, Round Kanchendzonga in 1992, Nandadevi East in 2008, and Yunam Peak in 2025.