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- [Sport](#)
- [Jobs](#)
- [Homes](#)
- [Cars](#)
- [Events](#)
- [Local Information](#)
- [Leisure](#)
- [Business](#)
- [Campaigns](#)
- [Features](#)
- [Forums](#)
- [District Guides](#)
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[<<Back to index](#)

Group raises thousands on trek

By **James Rush**

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A group of Bradford fundraisers managed to raise £13,000 for a humanitarian charity by trekking the Himalayas.



The group on the summit of Palam Peak

A party of ten Bradfordians, including the Shah family of Fairweather Green, spent months training for their holiday with a difference in Ladakh.

The family climbed Mount Kilimanjaro last year for charity and were looking forward to this year's challenge with great expectations.

Satish Shah, 54, and his wife, Nirmala, 53, took up the challenge with their three daughters Kalpa, 21, Rakhi, 20 and Shaila, 18.

Mr Shah said the group was thrilled to complete the trek, managing to raise so much money for Sewa International, who will use it to support an education project providing access to a learning for those unable to access mainstream education.

He said: "The first four days were spent in Leh to allow our bodies to acclimatise to the lower oxygen levels in the air.

"At 3,500 metres above sea level, we were left out of breath after climbing just 12 steps to the second floor of our hotel.

"Each morning we started with a yoga session at 6.30am, and spent the days taking trips to various ancient Buddhist monasteries and temples, and exploring the town of Leh."

As the group set off they had to leave two members behind who were suffering from mountain sickness.



Climbing Stok Kangri

Mr Shah said: "We stopped at the legendary Sri Patthar Sahib Sikh temple on the way to our starting point Choksi at the picturesque confluence of the Indus and Zanskar rivers.

"The group was aware that the trek was going to test our limits, both mentally and physically, but safety was always paramount."

The family was joined on their trek by other fundraisers from around West Yorkshire.

Mr Shah said: "On day seven, ten members of the group started the trek to the summit, waking up at midnight so that we could safely reach the top before the snow and ice started to melt.

"At 8.30am one member of our group successfully made it to the top, his achievement gave everyone a sense of pride, as this was a journey made together.

"The walk back to the base camp was the most rewarding part of the trip, as we were able to see in daylight the terrain that we had just ascended under starlight."

Another trek to Ladakh is already being planned for September 2008.

For more information on Sewa International visit www.sewainternational.com.

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9:43pm Monday 27th August 2007

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