

India First Ascent Bouldering - Solo Expedition Winter 2023

Proposal



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February 2023

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1 Introduction

1.1 Aims and Objectives

Hampi, a UNESCO world heritage site, is the Ancient southern capital of the Vijayanagara Empire and in the 1400s was home to nearly half a million people, before being sacked in the mid 1500s by Muslims from the Deccan Plateau. It is now a small-town home to tourism dependant businesses and farmers. Climbers have been visiting Hampi since the 1980s, but the area only became popular after the film 'Pilgrimage' featuring Chris Sharma was made. Hampi is currently home to around 222 documented boulders and yet with the density of the boulders could have 10 times the number of boulders in Fontainebleau which is home to at least 7000.

Badami, also a UNESCO world heritage town in the state of Karnataka, is India's most frequented sport climbing destination owing to its world class climbing and fiery red sandstone rock. Despite having the potential for 1000s of routes and boulders, Badami has only 129 established sport routes and less than 15 documented boulders. The lack of boulders in these areas means that Badami often only appeals to experienced climbers with sufficient lead climbing equipment and confidence. As a result, the area lacks inclusivity for newer climbers within the Indian community who want an introduction to the area and don't have the means to sport climb.

Climbing and bouldering are still not widespread sports in India. All development till date has been a result of a few Indian and foreign climbers who have donated their personal time, resources, and experience to developing routes for the benefit of the entire climbing community. This provides a ripe opportunity not only for finding new boulders and climbing them but also for climbing harder boulders in areas with few established climbs. Since climbing has given me so much to be thankful for, this is an opportunity for me to give something back to the Indian community - so going forward, there are more routes for everyone! As an Overseas Citizen of India (OCI), I have been able to visit India just a few times with family but have hardly had the opportunity to travel freely and explore the culture outside the confines of city living and parent supervision. A trip last Easter to India took me to Navi Mumbai and Plus Valley for day trips where I got a taste of the potential climbing development in India. This longer, ambitious expedition would be an opportunity to not only climb but also connect to my heritage and learn the art of independent travel.

- Put up boulders (FAs) in grade ranges up to V6 (f7a) in a variety of styles while developing a unique set of skills in doing first ascents of boulders
- Gain independence and confidence to travel alone in India and learn about the nuances of the culture
- Pass on outdoor bouldering and trip organization experience to younger club members who want to do solo trips
- Document all new climbs for future climbers and build meaningful relationships with the current climbers in India
- Be environmentally conscious and self-sufficient
- Improve my spoken Hindi and learn basic Kannada

1.2 Location

1.21. Badami

There are currently 6 developed rock-climbing areas with bolted routes as shown in Figure 1:

1. Ganesh Area - 30
2. Saraswati Area - 16
3. Badami Deluxe Area - 26
4. Vatapti Area - 4
5. Temple Area - 37
6. Kanargavi Area – 13

In these areas, the opportunity to also develop boulders in addition to the pre-existing routes were numerous. Figure 2 shows the current documented routes on 27 Crag. All these areas, most notably the Ganesh Area, are within walking distance to the town centre of Badami which is home to a handful of hotels and lodgings. Since they were easily reachable on foot, I carried two pads and bouldering gear on two of the days to two different crags. and could be carried to at least three of these crags on foot where solo development would be a strong possibility.

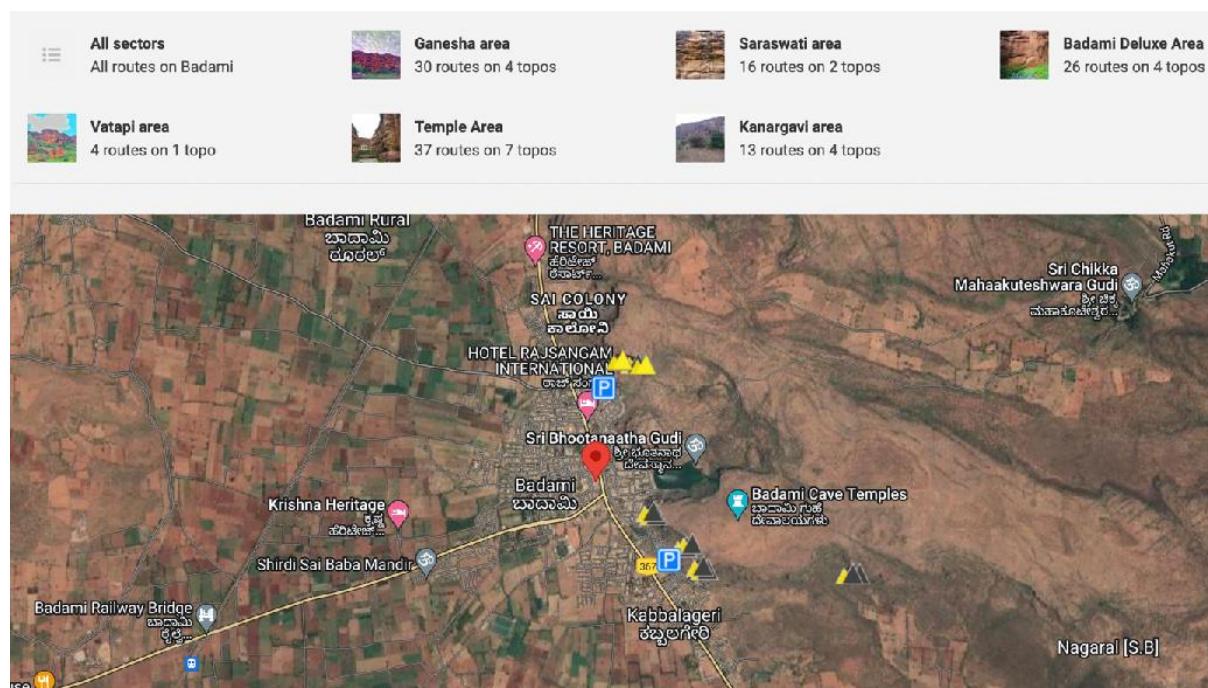


Figure 1

Upon my arrival and discussions with more of the community in Badami, there was a newly developed crag called “Power Star” which had opportunities for a few lead climbing FAs and also some tough overhanging boulders. This area is shown in the figure below. I was able to

visit the area on my third day in Badami where I found a local partner called Ravi who belayed me to try some of the project climbs.

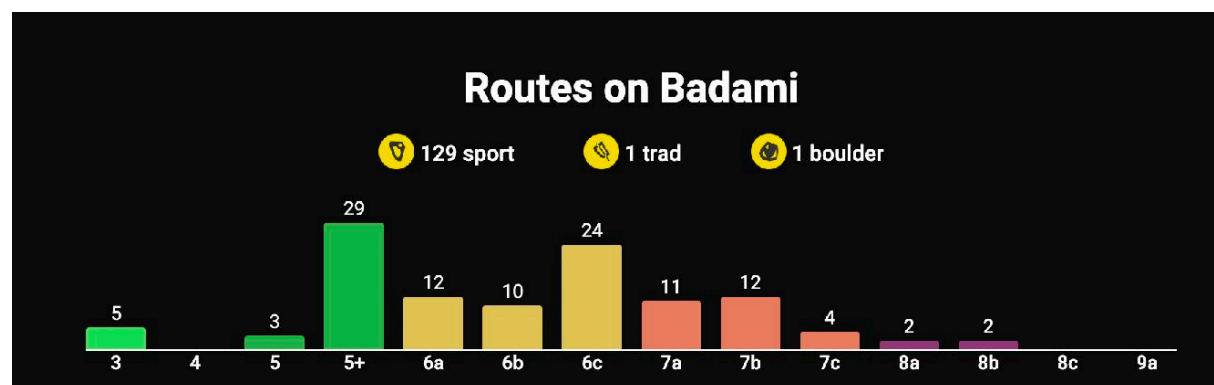
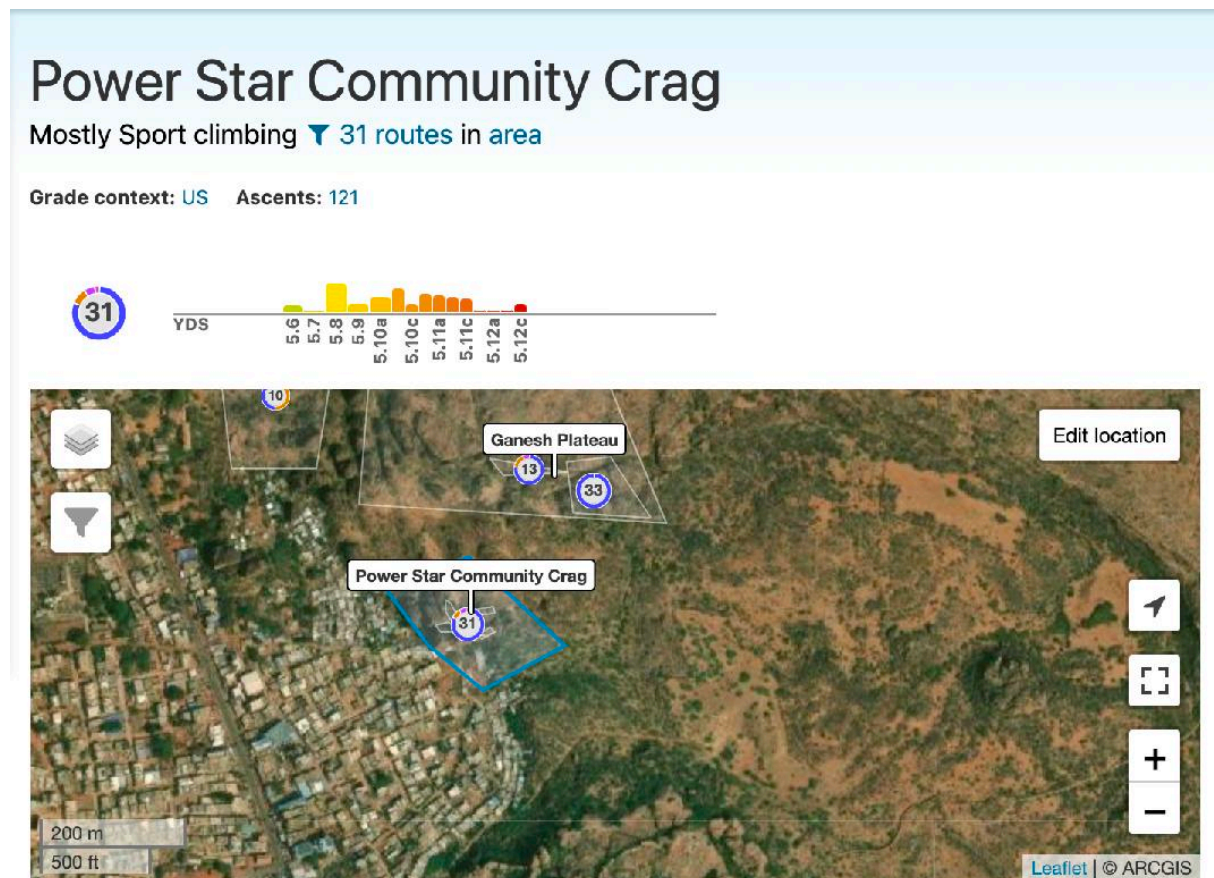


Figure 2

Although only one documented boulder existed, from discussions and research with various contacts within the Indian climbing community I was able to understand that several boulders exist and are used as warm-ups for many climbers, but the route and knowledge is only passed on by word of mouth or group trips. This helped reaffirm the importance of the aim of creating proper documentation for the boulders I climbed. I not only ended up helping document these already established boulders but used them as starting points for more FAs.

1.22. Hampi

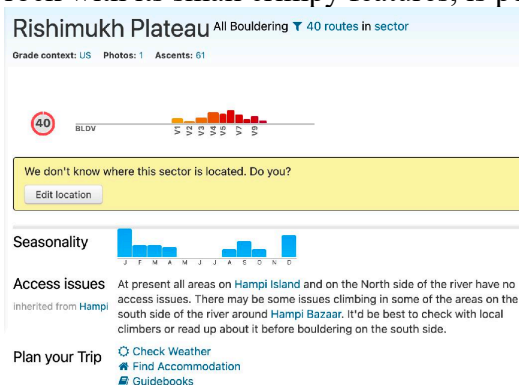
“The Golden Boulders” guidebook contains just over 200 boulders which are spread over several areas. These areas are quite highly developed but the potential for some first ascents in these areas is still there, but the quality may not match up to the pre-existing classic lines. As a result, three existing areas were selected from Figure 3 in relation to proximity of “Baba Café” a classic lodging known to most Hampi Climbers for development. They are all located in the Hampi Island area shown in Figure 4.

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Figure 3

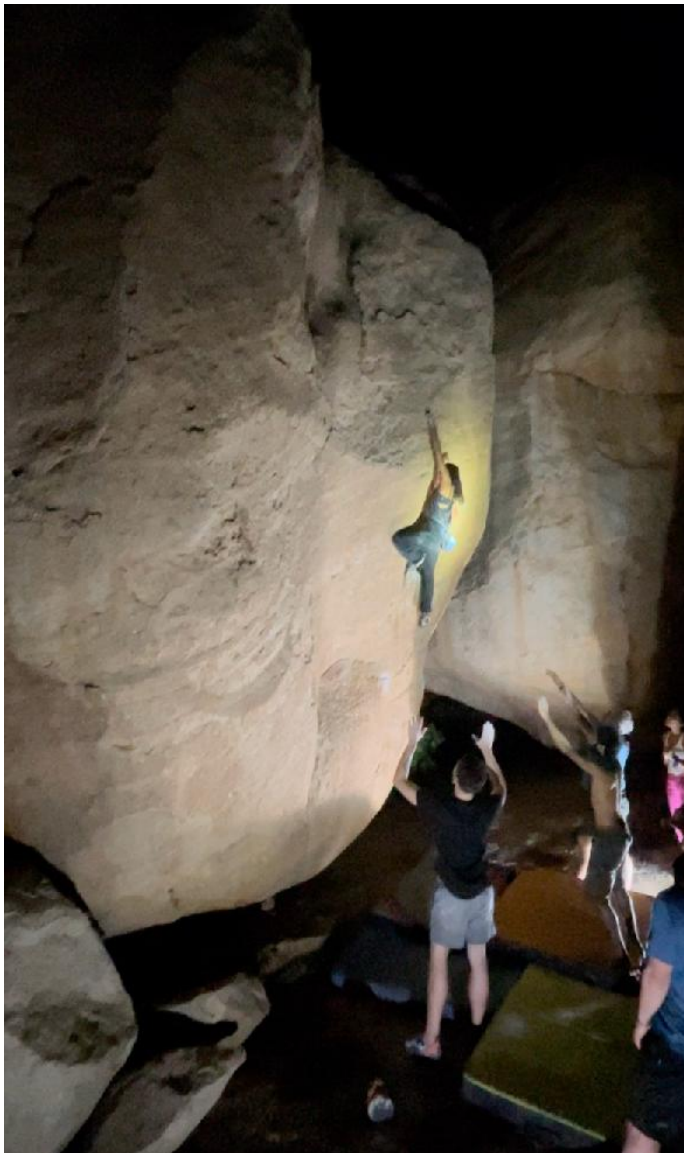
1.22.1: Existing Bouldering Areas:

1. Rishimuk Plateau – Walking distance is 15 mins. Potential for a few first ascents but as the most developed area in Hampi this was an ideal location to understand the current grade level of the area. I went here early in the trip and climbed a wide range of grades which allowed me to get a good idea of the grading in the area. I found the grading to be slightly softer than the UK but this could also have been down to Hampi rock with its small crimp features, is perfectly suited to my style of climbing.



2. Cosmic Area – Walking distance is 18 mins. The most famous area with several highballs and difficult climbs. This had some potential for hard first ascents but I would have needed to be with fellow trustworthy climbers and more pads due to the height of the neighbouring boulders. I ended up heading to this area one evening with

several local climbers who were celebrating the new year on the rocks. The sunset was so beautiful from this vantage point, but the highball climbs were even more eye-catching under the headtorches. I ended up attempting to climb the famous kind line in the area, Cosmic Crimp, a hard 6b+ which is over 7m tall. It was extremely nerve-racking and, in the end, I struggled to commit to the higher crux and climbed down. Instead, I spent time projecting Japanese Jump 7b, a well know dynamic climb which I ended up performing statically with a Gaston move.



COSMIC CAVE 10 / 11

1 Cobra, 7B+

2 Cosmic Crimp, 6B+

Cosmic cave

All Bouldering

15 routes in area

Grade context: US

Photos: 6

Ascents: 6

15

BLDV

V1

V2

V3

V4

V5

V6

We don't know where this area is located. Do you?

Edit location

Seasonality

J

F

M

A

M

J

J

A

S

O

N

D

Access issues

Inherited from Hampi

At present all areas on Hampi Island and on the North side of the river have no access issues. There may be some issues climbing in some of the areas on the south side of the river around Hampi Bazaar. It'd be best to check with local climbers or read up about it before bouldering on the south side.

Plan your Trip

Check Weather

Find Accommodation

Guidebooks

3. Lands End – Walking distance is 15 mins. Nearing an ancient temple, this area has only 17 climbs documented but countless, accessible boulders to be developed. I ended up not having time to visit here but there is incredible potential here.

Lands end

All Bouldering

17 routes in sector

Grade context: US

Ascents: 6

17

BLDV

V1

V2

V3

V4

V5

V6

We don't know where this sector is located. Do you?

Edit location

Seasonality

J

F

M

A

M

J

J

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Access issues

Inherited from Hampi

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Plan your Trip

Check Weather

Find Accommodation

Guidebooks



Figure 4

1.22.2 Areas Explored to Establish exclusively FAs boulders:

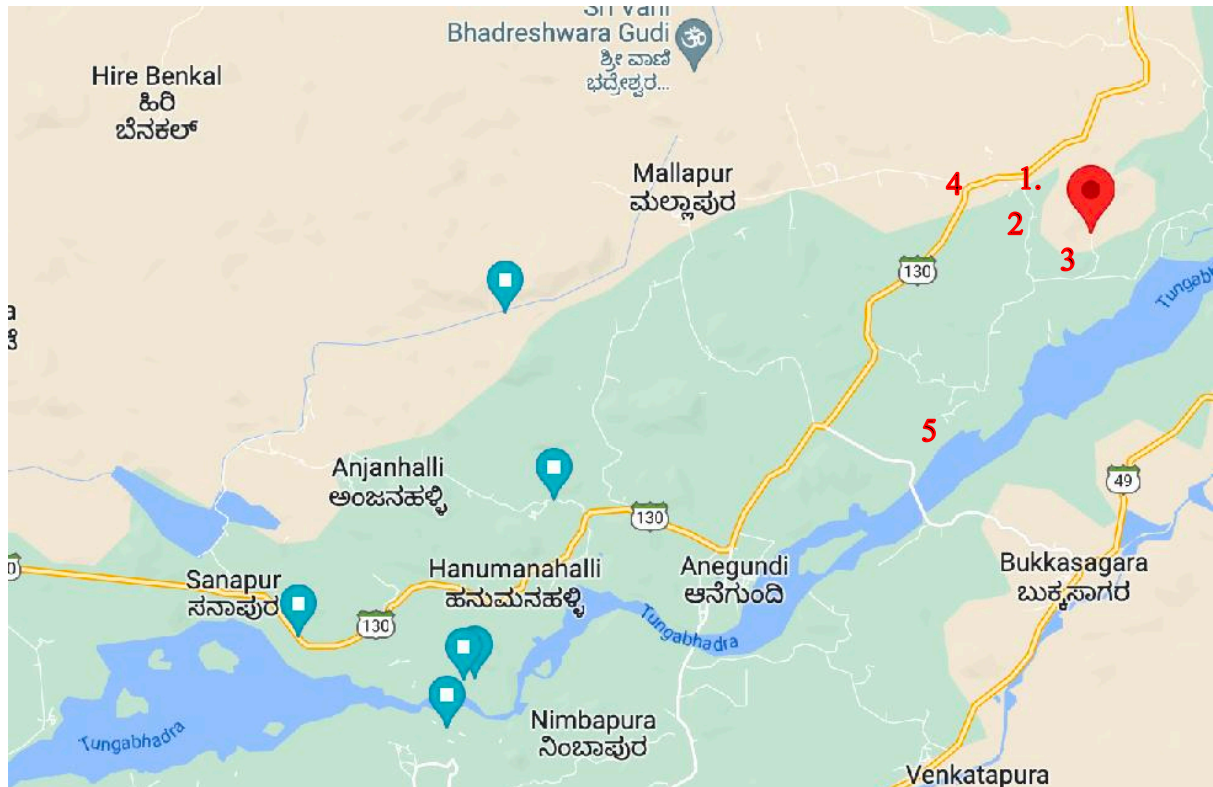


Figure 5

After discussing this expedition with local climbers, a list of areas which are only beginning to be developed due to residency issues and the moving of “The Goan Corner”, the old hub of Hampi climbing which was bull-dozed by government officials to due legal land ownership issues. The Goan Corner, now known as Sharmila’s Corner has moved 40mins away from the Hampi Island meaning a fresh area for development away from the town centre.

The red pin is Sharmilla’s Corner and the numbers of the new areas are placed on the map and documented in Figure 5.

1. Anegundi
2. Sangapur
3. Sharmila's Backyard
4. Roadside Attraction
5. Plateau near the Dam bridge behind Sangapur

I explored area’s 1, 2, 3 & 4 during my time in Hampi in which I developed around 12 FA’s. All four areas had new boulders to explore however, there was significantly more to develop and climb in “Roadside Attraction” and “Sharmila's Backyard” due to easier access and a less overgrown landscape. It can be noted that myself and two French climbers who I met at Goan Corner have now climbed on most of the worthwhile boulders in “Roadside Attraction” now. This did involve clearing some heavy foliage at times and cleaning several boulders to discover holds and make the rock climbable. There was also an incident where we found a beautiful crack boulder but with a sizable thornbush growing adjacent with a wasp nest imbedded inside! This ended up being a good enough reason to leave the boulder alone but there is potential to develop this boulder further in the future if the circumstances change. Areas 1, 2 & 3 are easily within walkable distance (~30min) but to save time, the French climbers gave me a lift on their moped to area 4 which of course, is easily accessible by car also.

1.3 Climate and Weather

December and January are the best times as it's the coolest time of the year and extremely unlikely to rain, therefore the best for climbing. However, heat was still an issue. “Throughout the December be sure to prepare yourself for the heat wave with warm weather and average temperature above 33°C. Do not stay in the sun too long especially not during the day.”

Most climbing therefore took place in the early hours and night, 6 – 10am and 5 – 9pm to avoid the sun and heat. Precautions were taken and this is documented in the medical section of the proposal. However, a funky bucket hat and sunglasses proved essential.



December Weather Averages

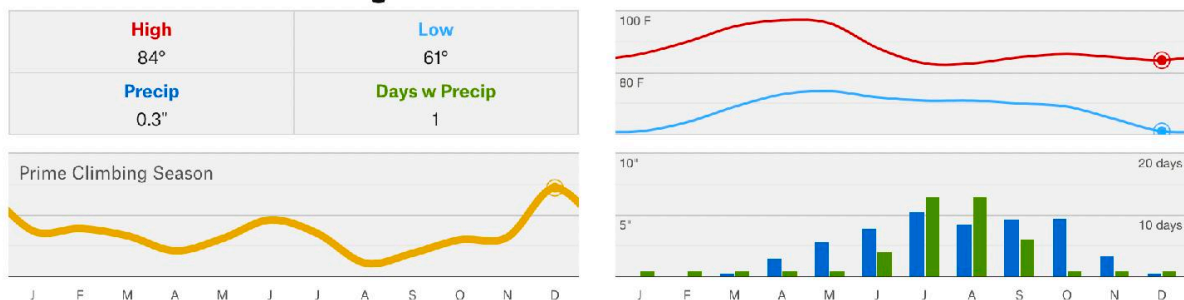


Figure 6

1.4 Rock Type

The rock in Badami is sandstone of bright orange colour. It was brilliant for climbing and although it can be rough on the skin, this can be avoided through rest and proper skin care. The rock in Hampi is Granite meaning it is sharp on the skin and crimps are very common. This rock was extremely easy to clean in both these areas for first ascents and was almost always dry due to the warm temperatures. However, during night climbing, which is very common in Hampi, it was difficult to clean and attempt FA's since visibility with a head torch was not sufficient enough. This meant most mornings were dedicated to FA's and most evening were spent resting or trying existing boulders.

The types of holds that appear on these rock types will vary greatly and so will the friction of each, therefore training in a variety of bouldering styles will be necessary to prepare for the different grip types that will be present on the rock.

1.5 Expedition Members & Experience

Asha Bakhai

Age: 20

Academic Background: 2nd Year Design Engineering



Relevant Experience:

- 2018 Summer: Climbed Mount Kilimanjaro for charity in 6 days, camping and carrying one
- 50L rucksack.
- 2019 March: Represented England in the World School's Climbing Championships in Aubenas, France and came third.
- 2020 - present: Climbed several v6 boulders around the UK and planned several multi-day trips to Wales, Peak District and Lake District
- 2021 December: Organised a week long bouldering trip to Fontainebleau, France and climbed f7a.
- 2022 Summer: Iceland FA Bouldering Expedition with the support of the Exploration board. 2 week-long tour of Iceland putting up 100+ FA boulders with a team of 6.
- 2022 Summer: Morocco, Oukaimeden, 1 week bouldering trip with one friend to the High Atlas Mountains exploring newly establish boulders and underdeveloped areas.
- 2022 Easter: India, Navi Mumbai and Plus Valley day trips route climbing with local Mumbai climbers.

- 2022 December: India, road-tripped from Mumbai down to Bangalore with two friends, staying and hiking in Hampi and passing through Karnataka gaining knowledge of the climbing potential in the area.
-

Relevant Positions:

- Athlete for Imperial College Mountaineering Club Competition team
- 2022-2023: Gear Secretary of Imperial College Mountaineering Club
- Tenzing Team, ZING Student Athlete Ambassador for Climbing

This was a solo expedition for a few reasons. Firstly, I had previously travelled around India, including twice in the past year, which gave me the confidence to take on the challenge of traveling solo in India. Secondly, I aimed to question the barriers that young Indian women often face by traveling alone, despite the risk of encountering misogyny, doubt, and hostility. Although this came with several dangers, these were addressed in the risk assessment. Thirdly, I sought to build relationships and networks within the Indian community through the flexibility that traveling alone provided. Using these relationships, I aimed to address many of the challenges associated with traveling alone without personal transportation (such as a car) in India.

Outdoor bouldering usually requires a spotter, so it would have been preferable to have a partner. However, I managed safely by considering my limits and taking precautions. As a result, I:

- Made sure to have two reliable climbing crash mats with me and avoided any risky moves beyond what these mats could protect.
- Only climbed problems with safe landing spots to ensure that, if I fell, I would land on the mat.
- In outdoor bouldering locations where others were also climbing, I occasionally asked them for a spot or additional pads.

This said, I met some incredible people and made some new friends while out there who I often ended up climbing with and establishing new routes with. Especially in Badami which is famous for its rope climbing and lead walls, I was lucky to be put in touch with Ravi

2 Logistics

2.1 Itinerary

I originally planned for the trip to happen during the last two weeks of Dec 2023 and first week of Jan 2024, from Monday the 18th December to Saturday 6th Jan. After assessing flight prices etc there were a few changes to the itinerary shown in the table below.

Dates	Plan
15 th December	Arrive at Bangalore Airport. Sleep at Gowri's house (climber friend).
16 th December	Take flight from Bangalore to Hubli Airport. Take a taxi to Golden Boulders, Hampi to pick up supplies (Pads, Cleaning

	materials) and settle into lodgings at Wanderlust Café, Hampi Island.
22 th December	Take taxi/ car share to Badami and settle into Badami Hotel
26 th December	Back to Hampi but in Sharmilla's Corner just outside of Hampi to focus on FAs
5 th January	Take rikshaw to Hubli, fly to Mumbai
6 th January	Fly from Mumbai Airport (BOM) to London

2.2 Transport

I flew directly from London to Mumbai Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport.

This was a 8h 55m journey.

Then I flew to Hubli Airport from Mumbai which takes 1hr 35mins

Then a taxi to Hampi is (3hr 20mins).

Transport from Hampi to Badami was via car pre-arranged with local climber Gowri Varanashi who was planning on making the same trip. (3hr 20mins) We travelled in her small van called "Teresa The Forager!" shown below and had a whole lot of exploration and fun.



From Badami to Hubli a taxi was be arranged (2hr 20mins)

2.3 Lodging

1. Mumbai - Family Friend's Home - Shivaun Chandiramani

Bandra, Heritage Apartments

2. Hampi – Wanderlust Hampi ([+91 78929 53916](tel:+917892953916)) and Rushimukh, parvat road, Hanumanahalli, Karnataka 583234, India
 - Food provided
 - Sufficient amenities provided
 - Reservation needed
 - Cheap



Me in my tent in the backyard of Wonderlust at a Discount Price!

Sharmilla's Corner ([+91 94482 12621](tel:+919448212621))
Goan valley, Rajapur, Karnataka 583227, India

- Food provided
- Sufficient amenities provided
- Reservation not needed
- Cheap
- Close to FA/ undeveloped boulders

3. Badami - Hotel KSTDC Mayura Chalukya Badami at Badami ([+91 83572 20046](tel:+918357220046))
Ramdurg Rd, PWD Compound, Badami Rural, Karnataka 587201, India
 - Food provided

- Sufficient amenities provided
- Reservation needed

2.4 Visas and Permits

There are currently no restrictions on travelling to and from India regarding COVID. As an OCI holder, a visa will not be necessary, but my OCI must be valid and presented with my passport.

2.5 Language

Although Kannada was the most widely spoken language in Hampi and Badami, Hindi was understood by most people, as was English. I was able to speak basic Hindi as well as Gujarati, so I did not encounter a major language barrier. I familiarized myself with some very basic words in Kannada, but I found that I mostly communicated in English or Hindi.

2.6 Environmental Impact

I rigidly adhered to a Leave No Trace (LNT) policy. This meant that I took all refuse and rubbish with me in and out of areas and disposed of it in bins at my lodging or in other appropriate designated areas. This also included refraining from shifting rocks at the base of boulders, as such disruption can accelerate ground erosion. However, I found one challenge was encouraging others to do the same.

2.7 Documenting Climbs

One common way to document climbs in India is the <https://www.thecrag.com/en/climbing/india/hampi> website, where users can upload pictures and maps of bouldering locations, in addition to the path the specific climb/route takes up the boulder. I took geo-tagged pictures of each boulder problem that I ascend/ or establish an FA or project on and saved it with a set of GPS coordinates. If I could not get GPS coordinates for a given boulder problem, I drew a map and describe the location of the climb relative to the location of visible landmarks. I intend to upload these to thecrag.com when other local climbers have also approved the content.

2.8 Wildlife

As documented in <https://www.hampionline.in/city-guide/wildlife-in-hampi> the wildlife in Hampi is very wide ranging from birds to monkeys, bears, langurs and jackals and leopards. In Badami it is similar but monkeys pose a greater threat here. I saw a huge range of wildlife including eagles, monkeys and plenty of interesting insects.



Friendly monkeys who were munching on my peanuts!

3 Training Regime

Climbing Training

I will continue to climb indoors on a regular basis, with a focus on bouldering. Finger strength will be improved with safe use of finger boards and campus boards, and pull-ups, core strength and flexibility will also be trained before going to India. Outdoor bouldering trips will be attended as frequently as possible especially to learn how to grade boulders and outdoor difficulty levels. I plan on doing a few long hikes with weighted bags which will help when covering technical mountain terrain and increase endurance.

First Aid Training

I have taken a Outdoor First Aid course in 2022 in preparation for the Iceland Bouldering Expedition. I will refresh my knowledge through studying of my notes.

4 Finances

The budget for the expedition can be found in the Appendix. Discussion of the budget follows.

4.1 Currency

As of 08/02/2023, the current exchange rate from GBP to INR is 1: 99.86. Regardless, the use of contactless JioPay is widespread via mobile phone connected to Revolut or an ICICI Indian bank account which I have set up in Mumbai. However, cash will be needed to pay for travel in taxi and rikshaw as well as for food. This should be collected in Mumbai, prior to travel to Hampi.

4.2 Equipment

Equipment expenditure will be reduced by borrowing gear from the Imperial College Mountaineering Club and the exploration board. However, pads will need to be rented in Hampi and Badami where they are available cheaply.

4.3 Income

I have been approved for funding by the Imperial College Exploration Board. As long as we follow their guidelines and provide them with regular updates, I will receive £750 of funding and I also received £750 of funding from the Old Centralian's Trust.

I will seek additional funding by applying to:

- The Adventure Fund
- BMC Mountaineering Grant (deadline 1st March)
- Horizon Lectures Adventure Fund
- Moon Sponsorship
- The Next Challenge Grant

Furthermore, I will use the current discounts from Beta Order and Beyond Hope currently available to ICMC members. I spent around £500 in preparation for the trip on gear.

5 Equipment

5.1 General Equipment

5.1.1 Clothing

It is important I take appropriate clothes for the very hot days and slightly cool, mosquito ridden nights. This will include dry-wick t-shirts and appropriate breathable trousers and long-sleeve tops to stay cool but protected. Sun and bite protection will be vital.

5.1.2 Personal Equipment List

<i>Nutrition</i>	<i>Food (mentioned in consumables), 2l water bottles, spork, bowl/plate</i>
<i>Clothing Essentials</i>	<i>T shirts, jumpers, trousers, comfortable clothing for evenings (tracksuits, spare t shirts), underwear, socks, spare shoes, baselayers</i>
<i>Technology</i>	<i>Phone, 2+ portable chargers, cables</i>

Other	<i>Smaller backpack for day trips, head torch, dry bag, lightweight towel, toiletries, sunscreen</i>
-------	--

5.2 Climbing Equipment

5.2.1 Bouldering Mats

These were rented daily, 2 pads per day, from Goan Corner and from Golden Boulders. This should provide ample protection for most medium/ small height boulders. There was some assumption other climbers will also be present at many crags and pads will be available to “share” if needed. This ended up proving correct and several of the days I joined forces with other climbers with pads.

5.2.2 Climbing Shoes

Climbing shoes were an essential part of the expedition, as they enabled me to climb to my maximum level. I had at least one pair of high-level technical climbing shoes. It was important that these shoes were not too new and didn't require breaking in, as this would have limited the amount of climbing. Similarly, the climbing shoes were not too old to avoid the risk of a hole wearing through the rubber and rand of the shoe.

5.2.3 Chalk

I took climbing chalk to remove moisture from my hands when climbing, which improved the friction with the rock. To leave as little trace of our climbing expedition as possible, I brushed off any chalk marks to the best of my ability.

5.2.4 Rock Cleaning

I inspected each problem before climbing to ensure the holds were unlikely to break off (potentially causing injury), and I also brushed away dirt or loose debris from the rock if it was in the way of a potential climbing route, using a wire brush.

5.2.5 Other

For warming up my shoulders and upper body, I brought a TheraBand and a portable hangboard (with carabiner). I carried large portable flashlights for miscellaneous night activities. For skin recovery, I took skin balm, climbing (sports) tape, and files.

6 Consumables

6.0.1 Food

This was provided at all lodgings during the stay. It is part of the culture to offer all day dining restaurants as part of your stay and food supply was not an issue during the trip. However, in Hampi after night climbing or waking up late meant some cheaper options were closed and one night I had to skip dinner and tuck into my emergency meal.

Emergency meals and bars will be always carried regardless.

6.0.2 Water

This can be bought on the side of most roads in both Hampi and Badami. Only bottled water was consumed for the duration of the trip.

7 Medical

This section will consider any risks to the health and wellbeing of expedition participants, as well as provisional steps to mitigate these risks, in addition to practical and logistical considerations in the event of a medical emergency.

Whilst not exhaustive, an attempt has been made to summarise key areas of concern and ensure adequate provision for avoidance, treatment, and evacuation. Note much of this section has been taken and amended by the author from a previous expedition.

I will aim to maximise opportunity for successful evacuation by:

- Procuring adequate insurance
- Carefully following advice of local authorities (Mountain rescue, HEMS, local authorities)
- Monitoring weather
- Ensuring emergency communication is always at hand (satellite link telephone, emergency beacon)

7.1 Minor Injury

Minor trauma is a likely occurrence and will hopefully be treated in the field, within the scope of practice of participants, using our medical kit. It is conceivable that some minor trauma may require more advanced interventions, but in the majority of cases (e.g. injury requiring extensive cleaning, minor musculoskeletal injury) further medical attention can wait for a few days without major consequence. Some minor injury may have a more acute timeframe requiring immediate attention (e.g. ophthalmological complaints). In these cases I will follow our major trauma plans.

For Hampi, there is a Government hospital in Anegundi and a Hospital in Kamalapura.

For Badami, there is the Nilugal Hospital in Badami or a Government Hospital in the town centre.

7.2 Major Trauma

The risk of major trauma in mountain sports is unavoidable. However, we can mitigate these risks and increase survivability of any incident through careful planning. This will involve undertaking appropriate training, carrying appropriate major trauma equipment (collars, binders), and adherence to the major incident plan.

7.3 Environment

Environmental exposure is a major concern. Aside from planning to avoid poor conditions, care must be taken to ensure appropriate clothing and shelter. For this reason I have carefully considered the advice of guides and appropriate agencies (Golden Boulders) when compiling my kit and packing lists. Now, a focus on the following will be made:

- food and water safety
- sun safety
- avoiding insect bites
- preventing and treating animal bites
- respiratory hygiene

- hand hygiene

Courses or boosters usually advised: Diphtheria; Hepatitis A; Tetanus; Typhoid.

Other concerns:

- Malaria is a serious and sometimes fatal disease transmitted by mosquitoes. Since you cannot be vaccinated against malaria a plan documented by WHO will be followed should the symptoms of Malaria be felt.
- Dengue Fever is a viral illness that is transmitted to humans by mosquito bites.

These are all further explored in the Risk Assessment detailed later in the report.

7.4 First Aid and Medical Equipment

It should be noted this kit is based on both the outdoor first aid course's guidelines and the kit previously carried by the author on a previous expedition.

The personal first aid kit will be carried at all times on my person during the expedition.

The First Aid Kit below is used as an example (carried by the author on a previous expedition) and will be updated based on competencies and needs.

We plan to draft a final medical and first aid document in consultation with contacts including qualified expedition doctors.

Personal First Aid Kit Contents		
Medications		
Item	Amount	Indication
Paracetamol 500mg	16 tablets	Mild analgesia for headaches etc. (max. 1g every 4–6 hours, max. 4g per day)
Ibuprofen 200mg	16 tablets	Mild analgesia and anti-inflammatory for musculoskeletal injury (400mg every 6 hours)
Personal Medications		
Equipment		
Item	Amount	Indication
Dressing Scissors	1	Cutting bandages
Crepe Bandage 5cm × 4m	1	Compression for sprains and strains
Gauze, 8 ply, 5cm × 5cm	5	Absorbing blood and cleaning wounds
Open Woven Bandage 5cm × 5m	1	Securing dressings
Micropore Surgical Tape 1.25cm × 9.14m	1	Fixing bandages and dressings
2% Chlorhexidine Sachet Wipes	5	Cleaning wounds and killing bacteria
Low-Adherent Dressing 5cm × 5cm	2	Dressings for cleaned wounds
Assorted Plasters	20	Plasters for minor wounds
Blister Plasters	2	Plasters for blisters
Alcohol Hand Sanitiser 200ml	1	Maintaining hand hygiene and mitigating the impact of limited sanitation
Sun Cream 200ml	1	Protection against sunburn
UV Lip Balm	1	Protection against sunburn
Whistle	1	Signalling for help and indicating location

The following Main first aid kit will be kept in the nearby lodgings and on hand at all times.

Main First Aid Kit Contents		
Medications		
Item	Amount	Indication
Paracetamol 500mg	16 tablets	Mild analgesia for headaches etc. (max. 1g every 4-6 hours, max. 4g per day)
Ibuprofen 200mg	16 tablets	Mild analgesia and anti-inflammatory for musculoskeletal injury (400mg every 6 hours)
Loperamide 2mg	60 tablets	Anti-diarrhoeal (4mg, then 2mg after each episode of diarrhoea – usual dose 6-8mg per day, max. 16mg per day, max. 5 days)
Movicol 13.8g		
Loratadine 10mg	42 tablets	Non-sedative antihistamine for allergy (10mg OD)
Dioralyte	12 sachets	Oral rehydration salts for dehydration (1 sachet in 200ml water per episode of vomiting/diarrhoea, supplemented with homemade oral rehydration solution using salt and water (6 teaspoons sugar, 0.5 teaspoons salt in 1l water))
Ciprofloxacin 250mg	54 tablets	Antibiotic for prolonged diarrhoeal illness (>3 days) and UTI (500mg BD for 3 days for diarrhoeal illness and for female UTI)
Flucloxacillin 250mg	120 capsules	Antibiotic for cellulitis and wound infection (250-500mg QDS, 5 days usually sufficient)
Equipment		
Item	Amount	Indication
Tweezers	1	Removing splinters and debris from wounds
Safety Pins	20	Securing bandages, bursting blisters
Nitrile Gloves	4 pairs	Improve hygiene when dealing with more serious wounds
EMT Utility Scissors	1	Cutting bandages, plasters, etc.
Small Plaster Fabric Strip 4cm x 1m		
Large Plaster Fabric Strip 7.5cm x 1m	1	Plaster strip which can be cut to size
2% Chlorhexidine Sachet Wipes	28	Cleaning wounds
60ml Sterile Gallipot	3	Hold boiled water for cleaning deep wounds
Micropore Surgical Tape 2.5cm x 9.14m	1	Fixing bandages and dressings
Zinc Oxide tape 2.5cm x 9.2m	1	Immobilisation of joints
Gauze, 8 ply, 5cm x 5cm	22	Absorbing blood and cleaning wounds
Burn Gel Sachet 4g	4	Relieves pain and helps to prevent infection with burns
Medium Wound Dressing 12cm x 12cm	6	Dressings for cleaned wounds
Low-Adherent Dressing 5cm x 5cm	4	Dressings for cleaned wounds

Low Adherent Dressing 5cm × 5cm	4	Dressings for cleaned wounds
TraumaFix Dressings	2	Dressings for major haemorrhage
Wound Closure Strips	12	Strips placed over wounds to close them
Wound Closure Solution	1	Glue used to close head wounds
Open Woven Bandages 7.5cm × 5m	6	Securing dressings
Crepe Bandages 5cm × 4m	2	Compression for sprains and strains
Crepe Bandages 7.5cm × 4m	2	Compression for sprains and strains
Triangular Calico Bandages 90cm × 90cm × 127cm	2	Slings for broken arms
Flexible Splints	2	Splinting fractures
Stretcher	1	Movement of immobile casualty
Ice Packs	3	Reduce swelling in sprained or fractured limbs
Eye Pad Dressings	2	Dressing for injuries to the eye/orbit
Eye Wash Pods 20ml	3	Solution for cleaning eyes
Foil Blanket	1	Retention of heat in hypothermia
Pulse Oximeter	1	Measure heart rate and oxygen saturation to aid diagnosis of HAPE
16G Venflon Cannula (Grey, 1.8mm × 45mm)	2	Emergency decompression of tension pneumothorax
23G Needle	2	Draining wounds
50ml Syringe	2	Draining wounds, emergency decompression of tension pneumothorax

7.5 Accident and Evacuation Plan

(Amended by the author from a previous expedition)

Emergency Response Support System (ERSS) is a Pan-India single number (112) based emergency response system for citizens in emergencies, and it should be accessible through some combination of road ambulance, rickshaw or foot. The nearest major trauma center to Hampi is the “Sripathi Multispeciality Hospital” in Hospet (Bus Stand Rd, Hosapete, Karnataka 583201, India) and the nearest major trauma centre to Badami is Mulge Hospital which is a 24hr Emergency Hospital. Closer and smaller hospitals exist in the town of Hampi and Badami for minor injury.

BMC insurance covers the cost of Emergency Medical & Other Expenses and Search & Rescue Expenses after an accident.

In case of injury which cannot be safely resolved through first aid alone, or illness that is not safely self-treated using medications given or under a patient group directive by a medical professional, evacuation and medical attention will be necessary. Our emergency and evacuation plan detailed below is a worst-case scenario plan. Also provided a rough logistical guide to emergency healthcare provision in the region. In practice the nature of an evacuation will depend on severity of the injury/illness, remoteness, time sensitivity etc. For example, a badly sprained ankle nearby a road would require medical attention at the nearest hospital but may not merit involvement of emergency services.

Road ambulance should be available within 3 hours to the nearest road to any of our objectives or bases. In the event that hospital level care is needed, I assume that my

immediate actions will not be informed by which facilities may be appropriate. If SAR/road ambulance evacuation is underway, the relevant agencies will be able to convey the patient(s) to the most appropriate facility. If I decide to self-evacuate, I can assume that facility decisions will be made once at the roadside, most likely with signal and communication with emergency services. I will always seek professional advice if possible (112 or insurer hotline) before I decide to undertake our own evacuation or if I am unsure if hospital treatment is necessary.

7.5.1 Plan

(Adapted from the author's previous expedition)

Step 1: Initial Response

- Initial assessment of casualty as per competency. This may include BLS and some additional non-invasive steps (i.e. hemorrhage control techniques, spinal stabilisation).
- CABCADE assessment:
 - Catastrophic Haemorrhage Control
 - Airway (and cervical spine control where appropriate)
 - Breathing and Ventilation (with oxygen where available)
 - Circulation and Hemorrhage Control
 - Disability or Neurological Deficit Extremity / Environment / Exposure
- **Call for help (112) as soon as possible (using satellite phone if necessary)**
- See 2A if contact with emergency services has been established. If self-evacuation is necessary: Is the casualty conscious and able to move safely? If so, go to step 2B. Otherwise, step 2C.

Step 2A: Communicating with, meeting, waiting for, and following instructions of emergency services

If contact is established with emergency services, clearly communicate the situation, cause and timeline of events and interventions, current assessment, and recommendations (this will be prompted by the receiver). Also consider communicating specific terrain and land- mark features, ground conditions, and the status of other team members. Update receivers as necessary.

Step 2A will follow instructions of emergency services. This may involve sheltering in place and keeping the patient(s) stable and warm, transfer to more accessible/sheltered terrain or closer to a road, or some guided interventions. Use of an emergency beacon, torches, whistles and bright clothing may aid SAR efforts. Go to step 3 prior to evacuation.

Step 2B: Mobile Casualty

Call for help (112) as soon as possible (using satellite phone if necessary)

- You have assessed the situation; formulate a plan and act upon it.
- Discuss the plan with the casualty, but consider the extent of his/her injuries and factor this into how much they contribute.
- If separated from other team members, consider whether their assistance is needed, and how far away they are likely to be.
- If their help is needed and they are within earshot, send out a distress signal by sounding six sharp blasts with a whistle. Repeat this every minute until you hear six whistle blasts in return from the other expedition team members.
- If you are unable to use a whistle, then send out six flashes every minute using a head torch.
- If you detect a return signal, continue sending out the distress signal so those responding can pinpoint your location.
- If it becomes dark, try to use both a head torch and whistle as this will make it easier to pinpoint your location.
- If you receive no response, continue to send out the signal
- Continue to assess the ability to get to your destination (this is likely to be the closest vehicle, the location of the main first aid kit, or the location of the satellite phone). Remember, a tired, injured casualty can easily become an immobile or a dead casualty.

Step 2C: Immobile Casualty

Call for help (112) as soon as possible (using satellite phone if necessary)

- Don't try to be a hero – it requires real manpower to move an injured casualty.
- Movement of the casualty will require one of the cars, and the help of other team members is likely to be needed.
- Movement may also require the spinal board, and this will be a necessity if a spinal injury is suspected.
- Stay where you are and apply all your efforts to keep the casualty alive. Sound six sharp blasts with a whistle. Repeat this every minute until you hear six whistle blasts in return from other team members.
- If you are unable to use a whistle, then send out six flashes every minute using a head torch.
- If you detect a return signal, continue sending out the signal so those responding can pinpoint your location.

- If it becomes dark, try to use both a head torch and whistle as this will make it easier to pinpoint your location.
- If casualty in pain, give the analgesia carried in the personal first aid kit.
- Get the casualty into shelter if necessary.
- Apply first aid.
- For a cold and/or wet casualty, wrap them in the foil insulation blanket from the main first aid kit, then a down jacket, then a sleeping bag if available. Erect a tent if possible.
- Make sure you're also warm enough and eat and drink plenty.
- Continually assess the casualty and document these assessments on the chart in the first aid kit; this information will be very important once evacuated.

Step 3: Medical Assistance and Evacuation

- Document the following to communicate to medical staff or when consulting the medical helpline:
 - Accident/illness description
 - Clinical description:
 - Conscious level - AVPU
 - Airway
 - Breathing – respiration rate, depth
 - Circulation – bleeding, skin colour, pulse rate/rhythm
 - Disability – obvious injuries
 - Treatment given (e.g. splinting)
- Establish casualty priority:
 - Priority 1A Immediate evacuation from the accident area if possible
 - Priority 1B Immediate evacuation but can transfer from accident area
 - Priority 2 Urgent evacuation
 - Priority 3 Evacuation needed soon
 - Priority 4 Evacuation not needed, advice required
 - Should evacuation be required, follow the evacuation procedure.

Step 4: Post-Incident

- Each team member will write a personal report.
- Document the list of decisions made with approximate times and locations. Use the list to discuss how you felt prior to, during, and after the incident.
- Complete Imperial College incident reporting form.
- If required, speak to UK contact to discuss incident.
- Any major incidents will involve a full debriefing on return to London.
- Debrief to be led by expedition leader.

7.5.1 Self-Evacuation Procedure By Road

Step 1: Obtain Medical Advice If Required

- If medical advice is required, call the Intana Global Line on +44 20 7902 7405 (emergency helpline provided by BMC insurance).
- Call relevant Indian emergency helplines i.e. Anti Poison -1066 or 011-1066

Step 2: Evacuate by car or rikshaw

- If needed, strap the casualty onto the spinal board and attach a cervical collar.
- Evacuate casualty by car or rikshaw
- Drive carefully, especially if dark, and avoid further accident.
- Follow medical advice and plan any further action (e.g. transfer, return to UK).
- While evacuating, proceed with steps 3 and 4.

Step 3: Contact Insurance Company

- Call insurance company (BMC, +44 (0) 1623 631331
- Inform them of the need to obtain medical attention, and give details including:
- Assessment/diagnosis of the casualty
- Treatment and transfer plans

Step 4: Contact Imperial College

- Leave message with Imperial College Security on +44 20 7589 1000, who will contact Dr Lorraine Craig.
- Include:

- Casualty location
- Your location
- Medical/physical action being taken
- If you have not spoken to insurers, instruct home contact to establish contact with and brief insurers

Insurance Company (BMC), +44 (0) 1623 631331, To contact if in a situation where a claim will need to be made. Imperial College Security, +44 20 7589 1000, To contact as part of the incident response protocol to inform Imperial College of the incident. UK Home Emergency Contact TBD To contact if emergency assistance from the UK is required

The risk assessment is documented in the Appendix.

Nearer the expedition a safety briefing will be held at a notified date and time to discuss aspects of the safety plan and procedures in detail to ensure the board and all home contacts are fully briefed.

7.6 Emergency Contacts

Key India Contacts:

- *NATIONAL EMERGENCY NUMBER-112*
- *POLICE-100*
- *FIRE-101*
- *AMBULANCE-102*

Other India Contacts:

- *Disaster Management Services-108*
- *Women Helpline-1091*
- *Air Ambulance-9540161344*
- *Anti-Poison New Delhi -1066 or 011-1066*
- *Medical Helpline in Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Uttarakhand, Goa, Tamil Nadu, Rajasthan, Karnataka, Assam, Meghalaya, MP and UP- 108*
- *Tourist Helpline: 1363 or 1800111363*

Service	Telephone Number	Purpose
UK Emergency	999	<i>To contact for emergencies in the UK</i>
<i>India Emergency</i>	<i>112</i>	<i>To contact in an emergency, police or medicine related</i>
<i>Satellite Phone Number</i>	<i>TBD</i>	<i>To provide to emergency services</i>
<i>Medical Emergency Helpline (Intana Global Line)</i>	<i>+44 20 7902 7405</i>	<i>To contact for emergency medical advice</i>
<i>Insurance Company (BMC)</i>	<i>+44 (0) 1623 645308</i>	<i>To contact if in a situation where a claim will need to be made</i>
<i>Imperial College Security</i>	<i>+44 (0) 20 7589 1000</i>	<i>To contact as part of the incident response protocol to inform Imperial College of the incident</i>
<i>British Embassy in India</i>	<i>+91 11 2419 2100</i>	<i>To contact if legal difficulties, etc.</i>

<i>(Urgent Assistance)</i>		
<i>UK Home Emergency Contact Ameet Bakhai</i>	<i>+447939035909</i>	<i>To contact if emergency assistance from the UK is required</i>
<i>Local Guides or Friends</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gowri - Varanashi - Jerry (Hampi Guide) - Shivaun Chandiramani 	<i>+917899796871</i> <i>+91 9482746697</i> <i>+919930161091</i>	<i>To contact the nearest people in the case of emergency in a difficult or unknown area.</i>

7.7 BMC Rock Insurance

To allow the serious incident safety plan to be carried out and to provide financial protection for a range of events, the “Rock” travel insurance from the British Mountaineering Council will be obtained for myself as a British Resident. A summary of coverage is shown in the table below. Full details of the plan can be found in these two documents [\[1\]](#)[\[2\]](#).

Different levels of insurance exist base, base + and base ++, covering up to different amounts. “Base ++” seems to be the best option because of the increased coverage it gives and the low difference in cost. India is part of “rest of world” so it will add an extra 50 pounds. The total cost would therefore be:

BMC Travel Insurance Coverage	
Section	Cover per person (up to)
Cancellation or Curtailment Charges	£5,000
Emergency Medical & Other Expenses	£10,000,000
Search & Rescue Expenses	£100,000
Hospital Inconvenience Benefit	£1,000 (£50 per day)
Death	£5,000
Loss of Limb(s)/Sight	£10,000
Permanent Total Disablement	£10,000
Baggage & Passport	£2,500
Baggage Delay (over 12 hours)	£300
Sports Equipment Delay (over 12 hours)	£350
Personal Money & Travel Documents	£750
Personal Liability	£2,000,000
Journey Disruption incl. Airspace Closure	£2,500
Delayed Departure (after 12 hours)	£120 (£30 each 12 hour delay)
Trip Cancellation (after 12 hours delay)	£5,000
Missed Departure/Missed Connection	£1,000
Hijack/Kidnap	£2,500 (£100 per day)
Mugging	£250
Catastrophe	£1,000

Legal Expenses	£50,000
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8 Diary & First Ascent Documentation

Dates	Plan
15 th December	Arrive at Bangalore Airport. Sleep at Gowri's house (climber friend).
16 th December	Take flight from Bangalore to Hubli Airport. Take a taxi to Golden Boulders, Hampi to pick up supplies (Pads, Cleaning materials) and settle into lodgings at Wanderlust Café, Hampi Island.
22 th December	Take taxi/ car share to Badami and settle into Badami Hotel
26 th December	Back to Hampi but in Sharmilla's Corner just outside of Hampi to focus on FAs
5 th January	Take rikshaw to Hubli, fly to Mumbai
6 th January	Fly from Mumbai Airport (BOM) to London

8.1 Day 1: 15th December

I left home for my flight with plenty of luggage and since I had the allowance of 2 check-in luggage I made the really last minute decision to take a Metolius Tri-fold Pad with me and likely sell it to a friend or leave it in India when I left. This meant the airport was a bit of a stressful fun experience since this pad was larger than me by a hell of a lot.





I took pictures of my bag tags after having bad experiences loosing luggage with Air India in the past and hopped on the plane relatively smoothly. I touched down at Bangalore Airport around 7pm and was instructed by Gowri to get a taxi from the official taxi stand (to avoid being scammed) to her place in the south east outskirts of Banaglore. She wanted to pick me up but her musician friend had also been visiting and was doing a gig in her local community followed by a little home performance at her Auntie's house. My taxi driver was lovely but spoke little English.

She picked me up at the gate to her community since I had quite a bit of exped luggage and we went straight to her aunties place to listen to some music.





*This is Gowri and her partner who is an avid Mountaineer Nikhil.
We went home and went to sleep around 2am!*

8.2 Day 2: 16th December

Gowri dropped me to the airport in the back of her van in the afternoon to take my flight from Bangalore to Hubli Airport.



The flight was pretty fast and easy but they were not happy with the size of my bouldering pad! I landed in the evening and found a few taxi options outside the airport to Hampi. After haggling a little – I loaded my luggage and was on my way. I ended up taking a taxi to Wanderlust Café from the airport and resolve to pick up supplies (pads, cleaning materials) in the morning since it was already 9pm.

When I arrive at Wanderlust, I eat dinner at the restaurant late around 10pm and the restaurant is almost closed for the night. I ate daal and rice especially since after such a long day I just wanted something simple and easy. I set up my tent behind the café in their backyard which was essentially a clearing in the trees. Since this was also where most the workers store their things and where the dustbins are kept, it meant the lodging was very cheap.

I briefly met a strong British climber who was exploring Hampi called Nathan and Ravi the owner of Wanderlust.

I sleep at 1am exhausted after a bucket shower in the shared toilets.

8.3 Day 3: 17th December

Woke up 6.30am with the sound of the cockerels and the Hindu temple on the loudspeaker. Got ready and left at 7.30am for breakfast and met Nathan at the breakfast place since he had offered to show me the cheapest place.

Ate dosa and peanut butter across the street from Jerrys Shop - Manjus Hotel. I picked up a guide book from Jerrys.



Nathan – An ex GB climber now travelling all over India climbing.

I spent most of the day at an area called Black Power area which Nathan was heading to. Since he was leaving Hampi in a few days I maximised the chance to climb with someone else since it is much safer and he knew a few boulders already. My first few days were going to be understanding the grading in the area. If we were lucky some local climbers could join in the late morning.

I tried 5 climbs:

1a) 7a Black Power 1 (Sent)

1b) ? Project, Sit Start into Black Power 1 (Potential FA)

2) 7b Black Power 2 (Could not send, especially since an important hold seemed to have broken off)

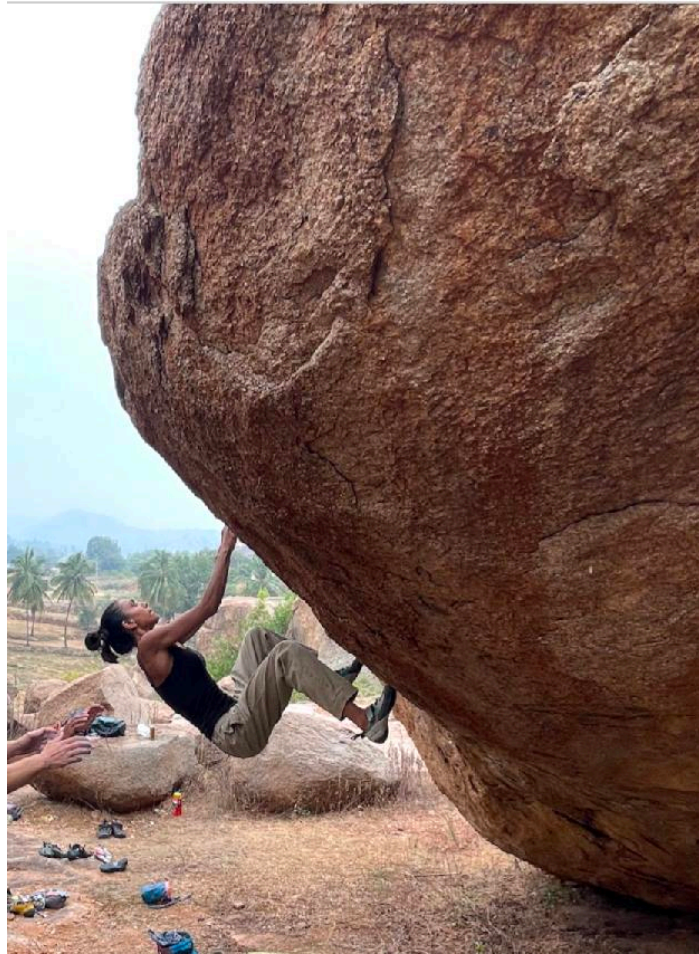
3) 6b Black Power 3 (Sent)



The lines on Black Power



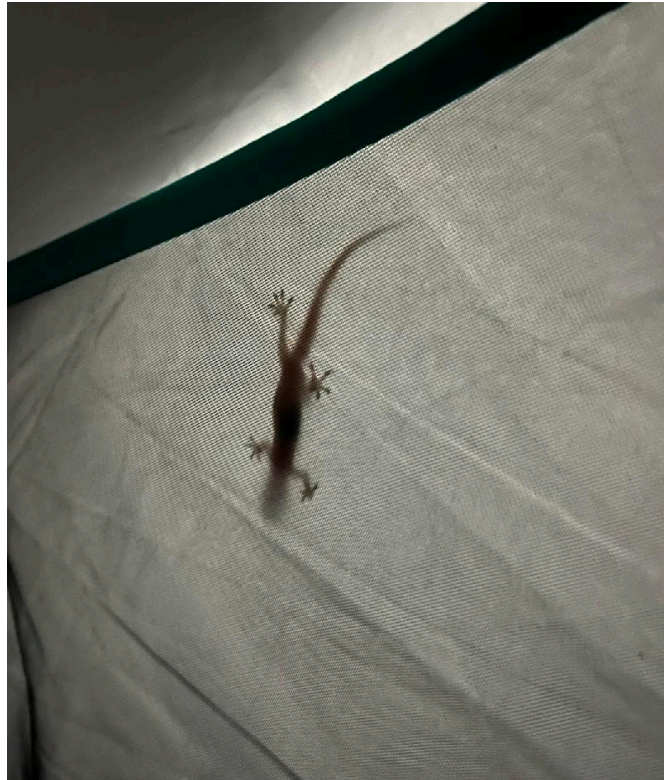
It was quite a tall boulder but the top was luckily an easy slab!



Me on Black Power 1 with Nathan and a local climber spotting in the late morning!

After this session we headed to “Lovely Family” for a thalli lunch, then I went back to wanderlust to work and rest.

I slept early after some work and saw a cute lizard in my tent!



8.4 Day 4: 18th December

Breakfast: Pancakes lemon and sugar at Wanderlust.



The front of Wanderlust Café with the nice huts for tourists and a slackline!

Then I learnt to ride moped/ scooter.

Nathan and I rode to Little Cave area near Rishimuk Plateau to try some easy boulders and I wanted to do some solo bouldering of grade 6s to get an idea of what it would be like when Nathan left.



Little Cave Area

I did a few easy climbs and one 7a called Don't Touch

I didn't know all the names but had an idea of some of the grades. From the guide book I did 6 climbs, 4 of them alone with just the Metolius Mega Pad in the range of 5 – 6b+.

The view here was amazing and it was much cooler in the cave so we stayed out most of the afternoon.



The views and sky!

We went back around 6pm for late lunch of Dosa and Idli.

Then I worked and rested and I decided to rest in the evening as all the travel was catching up with me.

8.5 Day 5: 19th December

This was the day Nathan was leaving but two American girls also arrived at Hampi. One was a non-climber and the other Nikki, was quite experienced. I went solo bouldering in the morning after saying goodbye to Nathan in an area called Baba Café. This was relatively safe since the falls were all on flat ground but the boulders were a little higher and harder than I wanted so I ended up downclimbing several boulders and not committing to moves higher up to be safe.

Late Lunch at Family Hotel - Got the Thali which is and so yummy
Went back to Wanderlust for lie down and faff
Rested for 1 hr.



Thali at Lovely Family

I cooked Biryani in the evening for myself in the Wanderlust kitchen after befriending the staff!



Went to sleep early around 10.30pm in my tent which felt a little easier now.

8.6 Day 6: 20th December

Wake up at 7am

Breakfast at 7.30am at Manjus again.

Long walk to relax area with the American Girls and a local climber called Chitro + scramble up to the boulders.

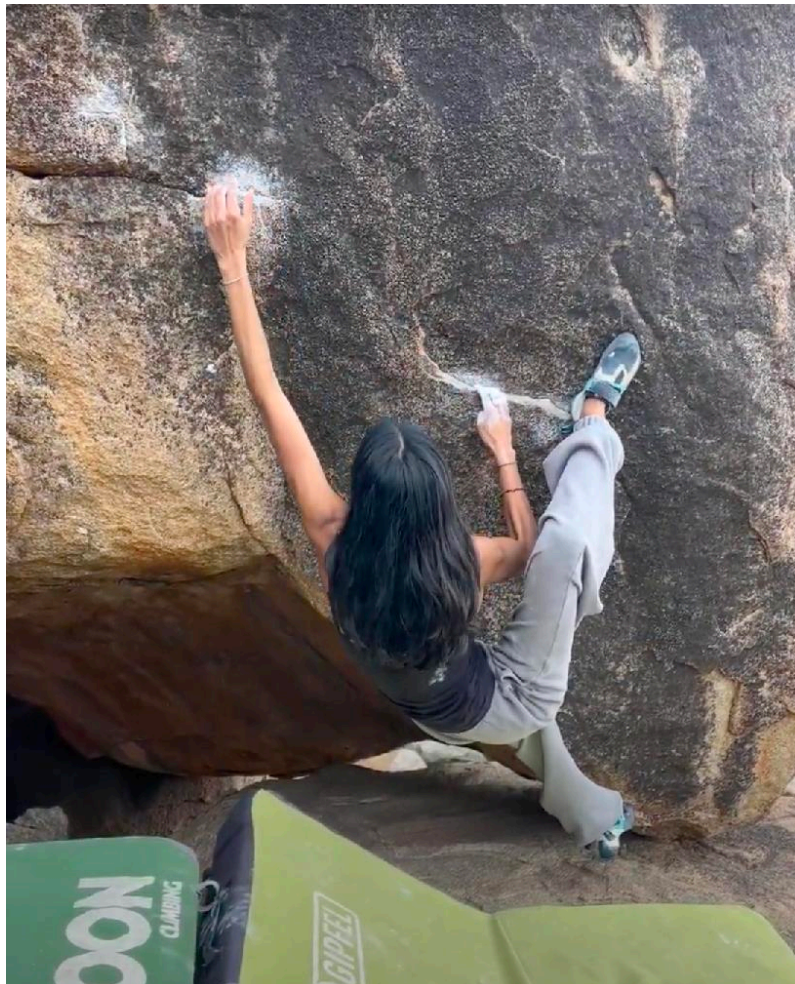
Scary scramble ish!

Relax Area:

1. 7c Surface Traverse (hard, scary, crimps, Nathan got it 3rd go, Gowri projecting 4th session)
2. 7c Klems Traverse (softish, crimps)



Chitro a strong local climber who showed us surface traverse!



Me on the first move of Surface Traverse 7c

The boulders were really hard today and so I didn't manage to send anything but I did a lot of hard moves and got a good idea of my own physical limits.

8.7 Day 7: 21st December

Slept in this morning and ate a late breakfast resolving to climb with the Americans in the evening at Kundalini Area.

4.30pm I left to meet Nikki to go to Kundalini area and 90 degree arête.



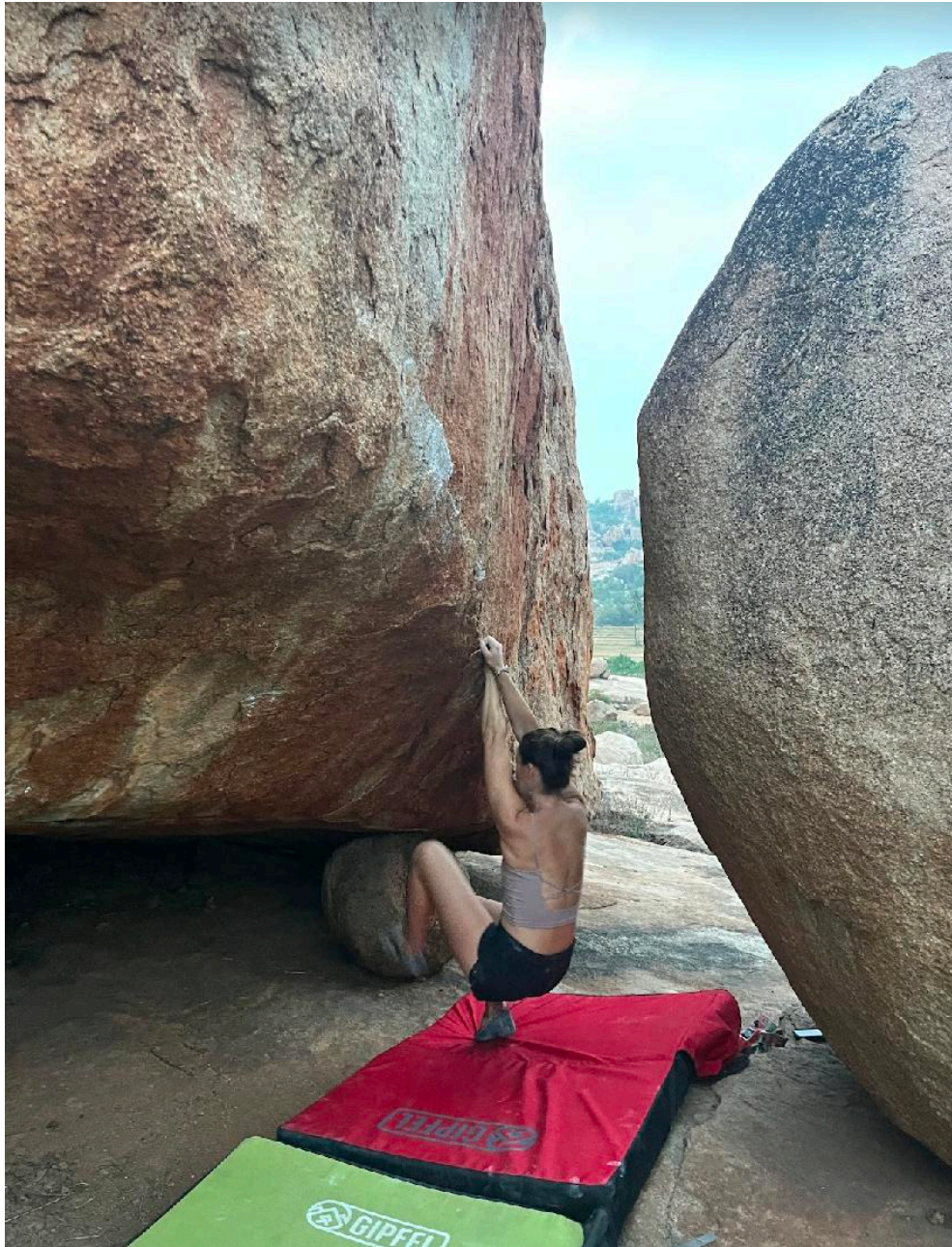
The beautiful 90 degree arete on the way to Kundalini Area. A bit of a highball and very scary fall and finish.

Her friend Mel also came, especially since it is better to have more people during eve/ night climbing due to leopard and also general safety when spotting etc.

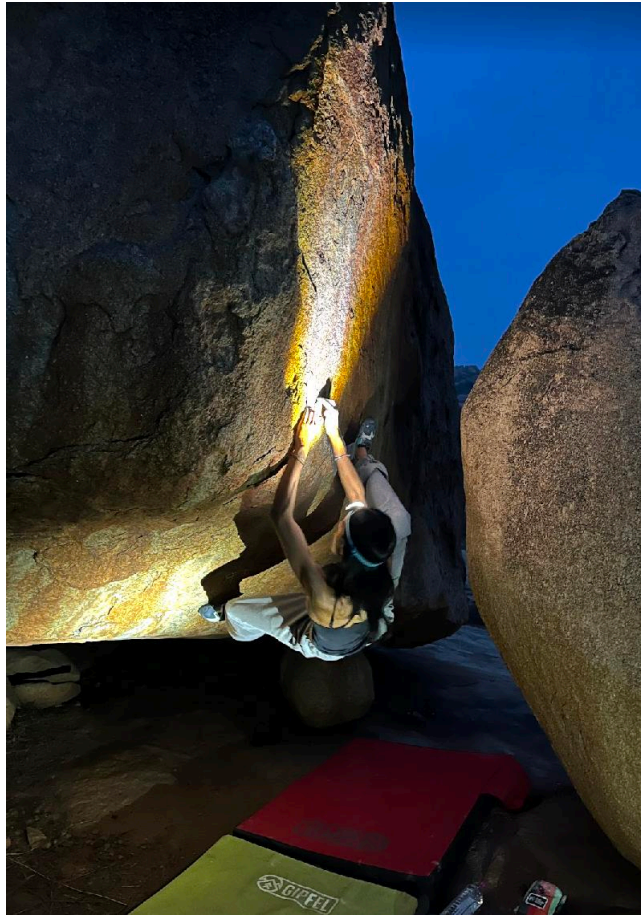
We started with Kundalini and said we might try the 90 degree area later but this was also a nice excuse to avoid the scariness of the boulder!

Kundalini:

1. 7a French Traverse (fell on last move - tired)
2. 6c Sloper Traverse (Sent)



Nikki on French Traverse



Me on French Traverse after the sun went down.

Hiked back to Family Hotel for dinner.

Slept around 11.30pm after dinner and some cards, happy knowing I would return to Hampi at the end of the trip to focus solely on FA's and development.

8.8 Day 8: 22nd December

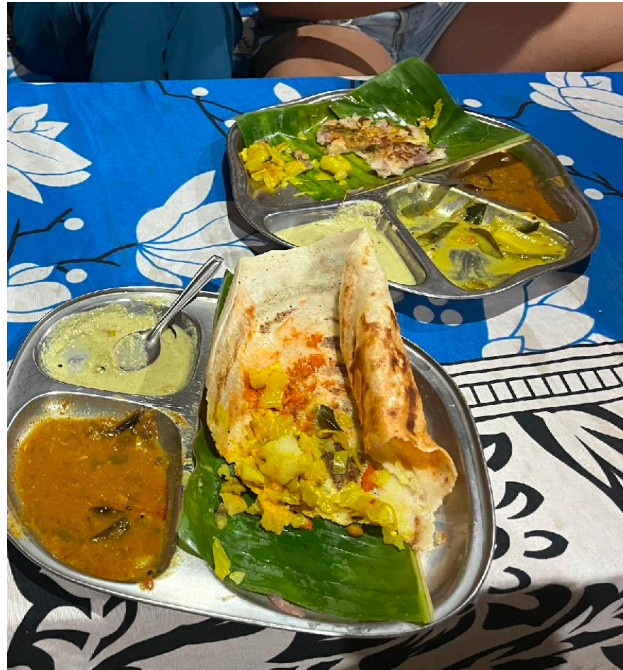
Today was the day I had to leave for Badami and Gowri was driving from Bangalore to join and offered to pick me up on the way if I met her in Hospete! I also mentioned that Nikki and another American climber were in Hampi and they were keen to check out Badami also! We all piled into a bus to Hospete at around midday and jumping in the back of Gowri's van!



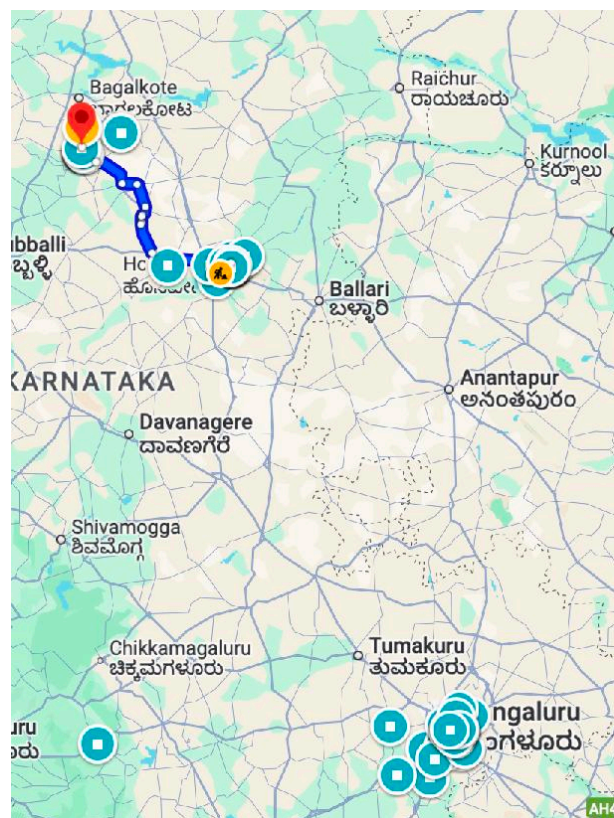
I literally mean piled in! There was NO space!



We stopped off for lunch at a small shack with homemade dosas!



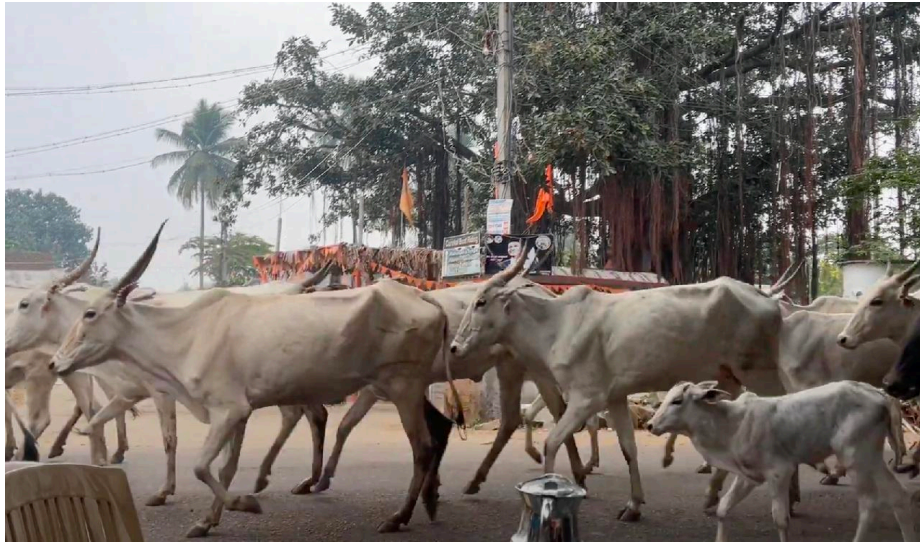
The Dosa was INSANE!



The journey from Hampi to Badami was only about 4ish hours.

When we arrived in Badami we settled into our hotel and explored the town a little and tried to see if there were any other climbers around. The town was notoriously

bad and unhygienic, with human faeces on the side of roads, pigs roaming free, large slum areas and plenty of drunk and disorderly men.

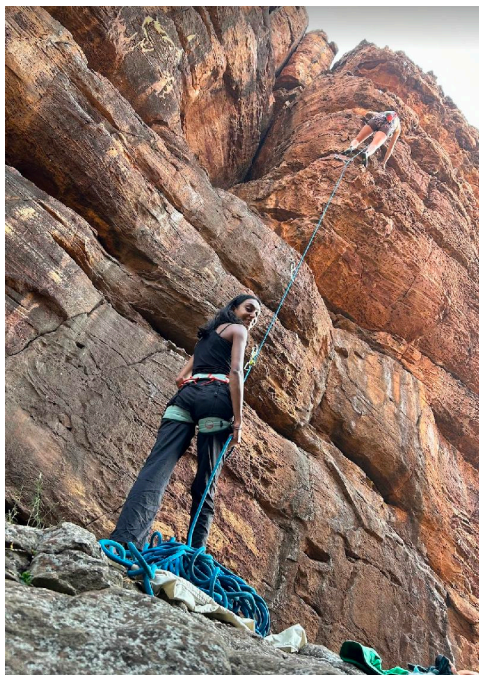


Some skinny cows running through town!

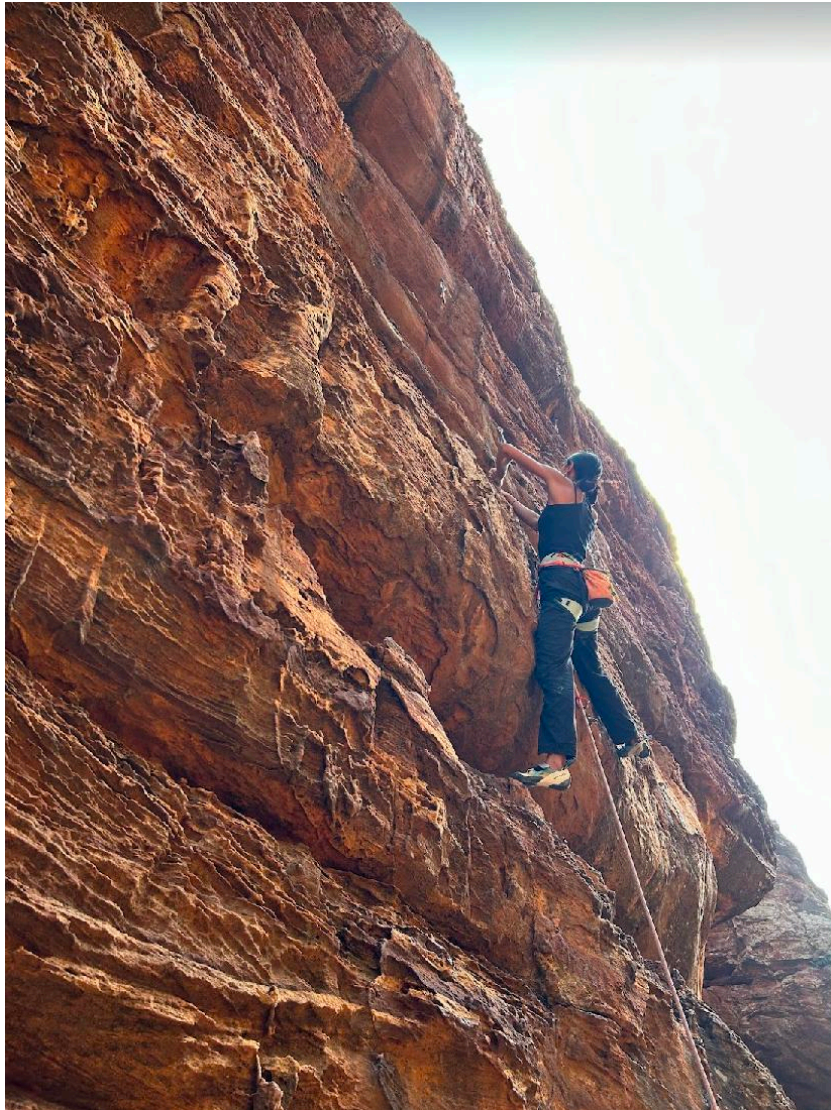
We went to sleep early.

8.9 Day 9: 23rd December

We woke up and I made the most of having other people in Badami (with gear) before I would likely be solo for a few days and solo in Hampi with only pads. We went to the new area called “Power star” only developed a few months before partly lead by Gowri and 2 other female climbers! We went there to try lots of easy routes and so I could get used to the rock, but also because there were still a few unsent hard projects in the area!



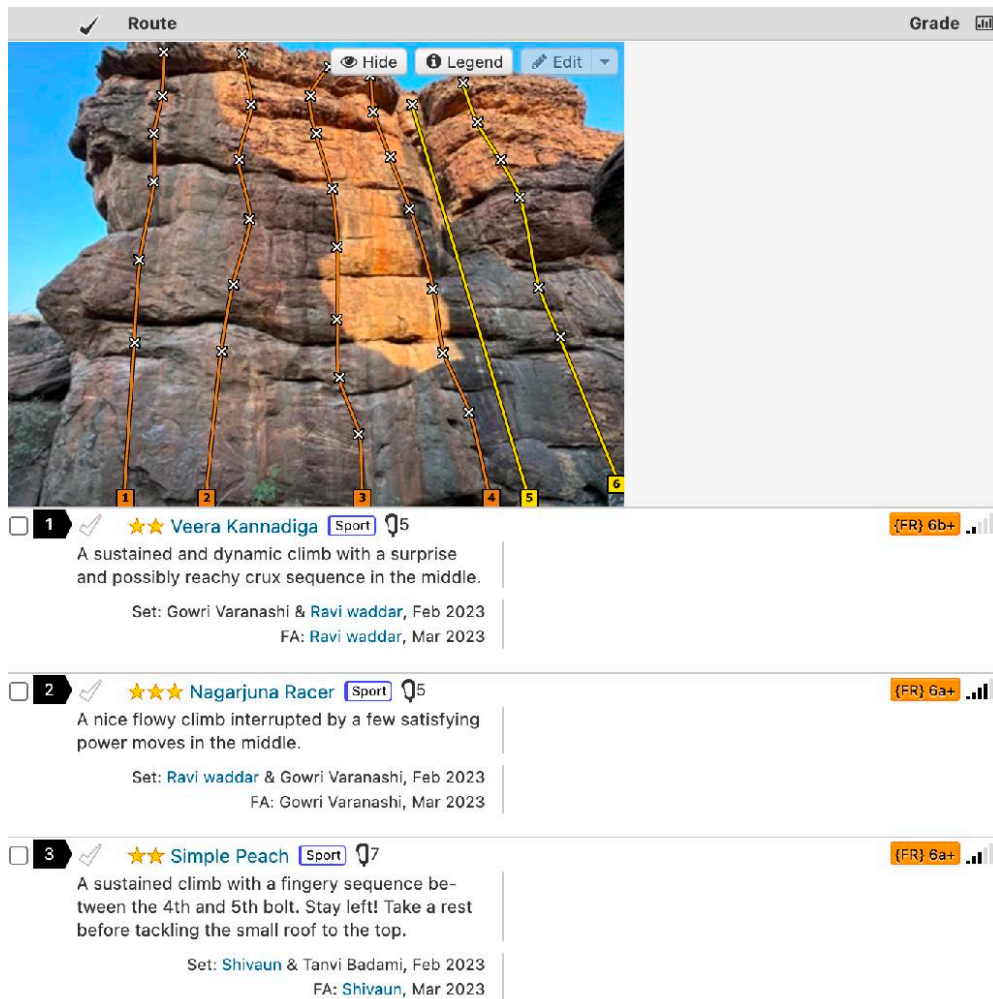
Belaying Nikki on no.5



Me on no. 6 on Grand Wall "Burfi" 5a.

The rock was a beautiful redish orange colour and the friction was truly insane! I had never climbed on Indian sandstone before so this was a real treat.

I ended up climbing 6 routes – none FA's but still very worthwhile. I also scouted the gully areas for potential boulders of note and pinned them on google maps.



Three routes I loved climbing on the main wall.

We ended the day around 5pm and walked back down the hill and to Gowri's van so we thankfully didn't have to walk through any sewage today!

After dinner, which was at a local family food place and was super spicy, I walked back to my hotel and crashed in bed early. I went to sleep planning my FA day for tomorrow.

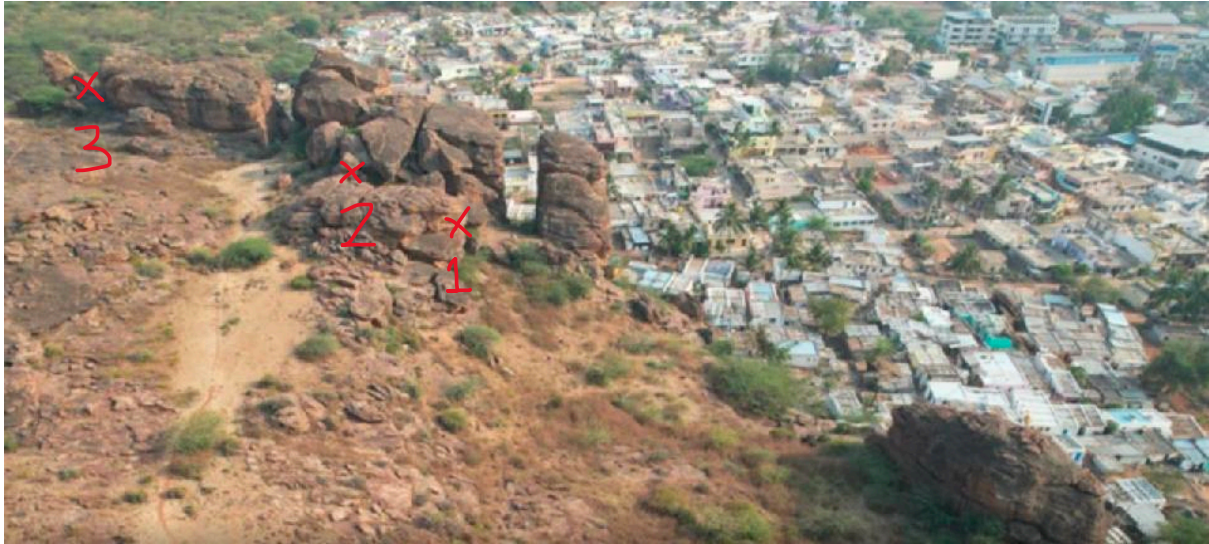
8.10 Day 10: 24th December

Christmas Eve! It felt strange not being with any family or anyone I knew well during this time of the year. Although I'm not Christian I've lived in London my whole life, so Christmas has always been celebrated in my family with presents, a good family meal and nearby hikes!

Regardless, today I felt like going on a solo adventure to focus on FA's in Power Star Area which I scouted the day before. I took the Metolius tri-fold and hiked over after letting the other climber know where I was and my exact plan as a safety back up. One of the climbers asked to meet me at midday at the Power star temple as a safe check-in.

Unfortunately, I have no photos from this day since I was alone and I completely forgot to take them while I was exploring but I hope to go back to take photos to document the 3 boulders I focussed on and put up routes on.

I put up two 6a's and one 6b+ on the first boulder I called "Langur" and I put up two 5s on another boulder called "Cheeky Monkey" and a 6c on another boulder I called "Board or Bored?". All three boulders can be seen from the approach to Power star crag so could easily be used as warmups for all the climbers. Three Xs were made on the drone shot below.



1. Langur

- Tail, 6a
- Teeth, 6a
- Nose, 6b+

2. Board or Bored?

- Carrom, 6c – FA Sent
- Project 7a?
- Project 7b?



3. Cheeky Monkey

- Sweet Heart, 5a – FA Sent
- Darling, 5a – FA Sent

I watched the sunset and head down the hill!



A Badami sunset!

8.11 Day 11: 25th December

Day off for Christmas! I went on a touristy trip to the Temple Caves of Badami and to see some of the old forts!

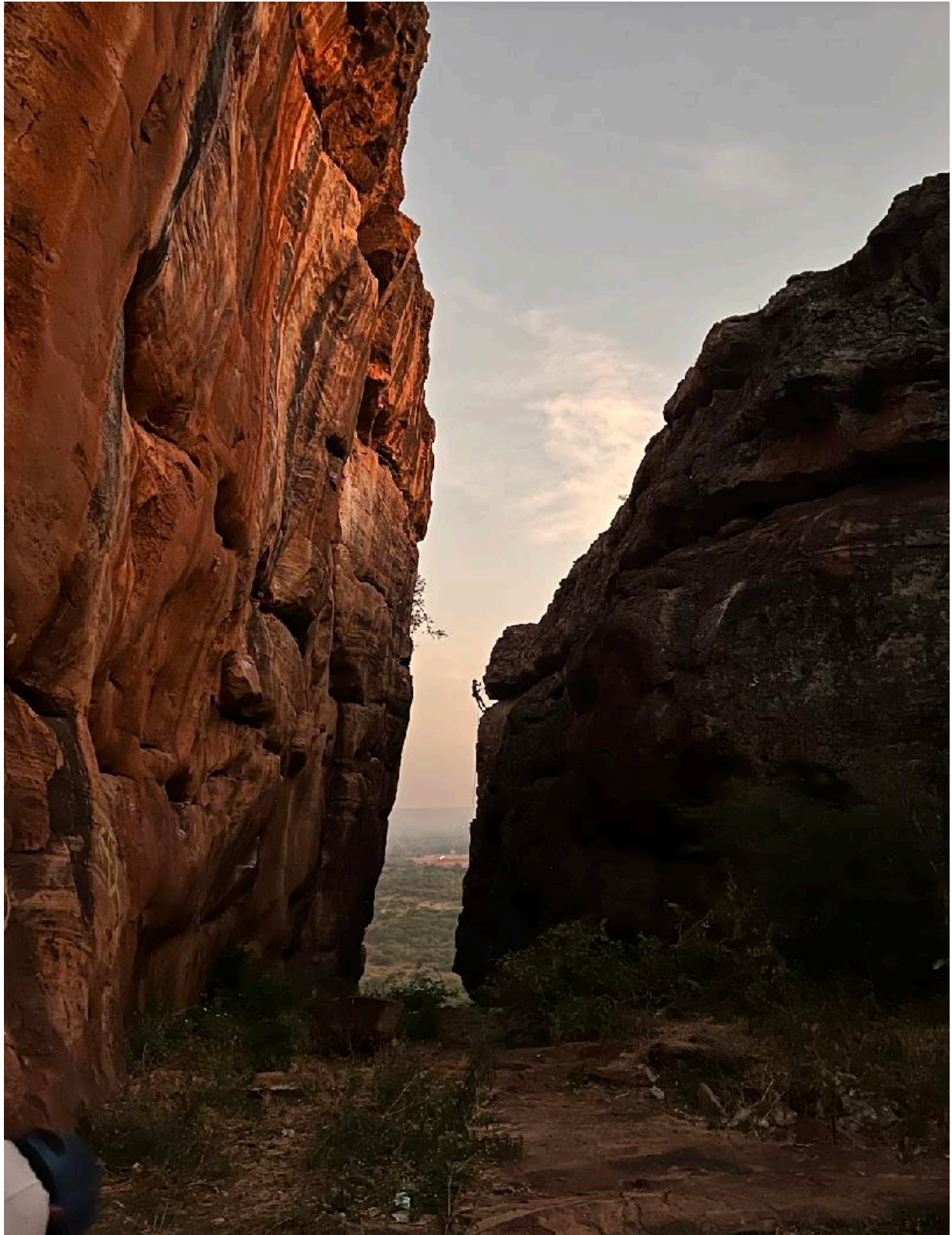




I tried to squeeze through a gap in an archway!



Gowri & I exploring the caves!



Nikki cleaning a route in Temple Area – My favourite photo of the trip

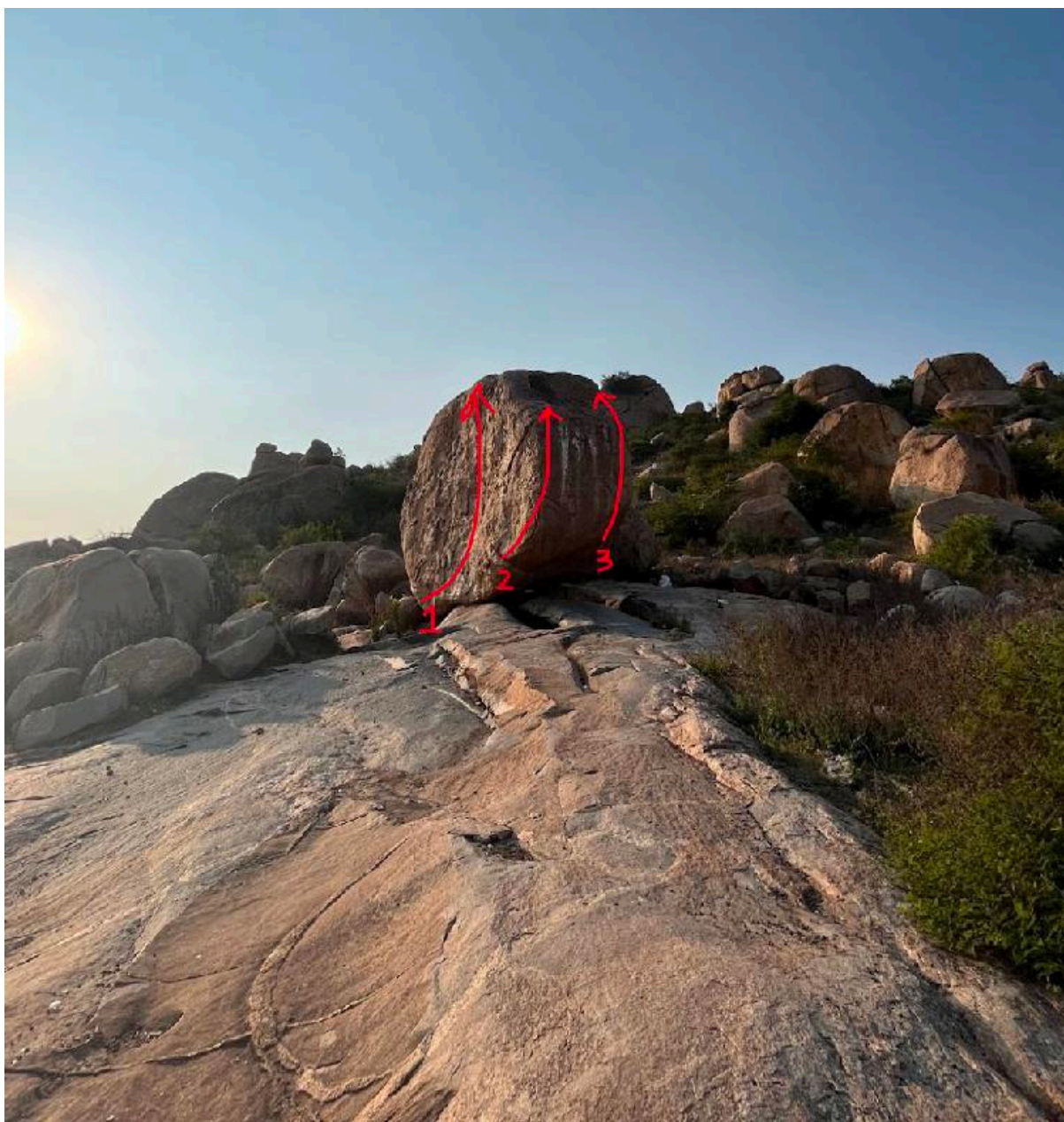
8.12 Day 12: 26th December

Back to Hampi in Gowri's van minus the others, but this time I was staying at Sharmilla's Corner just outside of Hampi to focus on First Ascents (FAs) away from any of the others I had met on the trip. We left super early and I arrived at Goan Corner around 2pm in time for a solo evening session.



The huts at Goan Corner and the boulderfield nearby called Sharmilla's Backyard with X marking Silent Boulder.

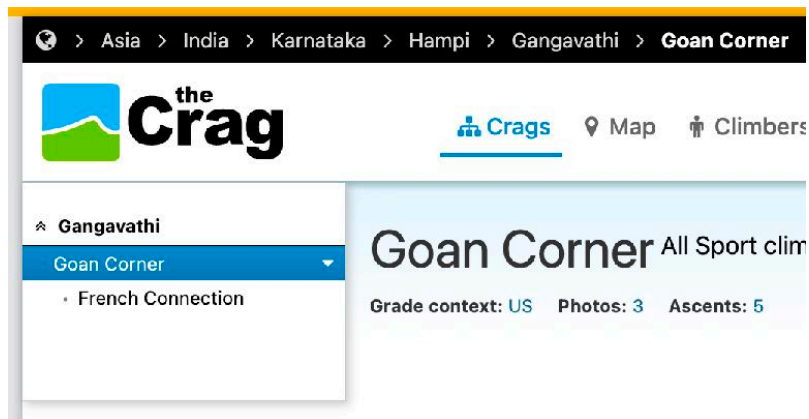
After hiking into the Sharmilla's Backyard boulderfield, there were so many options for FAs but I wanted to pick an easy approachable boulder for beginners with a safe landing. This is when I found the Silent Boulder marked with an X on the image above.



“Silent Boulder”, where I put up 3 FAs

1. 5+, Scoop Me Up
2. 6a, Hug Me
3. 6a+ sit, Big Spoon or 5 stand, Little Spoon

These will hopefully soon appear on TheCrag.com under Goan Corner.



Upon my return I bumped into some French climber who were also on an exped to establish FAs! This was brilliant news, especially since I needed more support if I wanted to establish any king lines! They said they wanted to go to Roadside Attraction the next morning. I went to sleep excited for the next day putting up harder boulders.

8.13 Day 13: 27th December

This morning, I woke up at 6.30am to get ready to go to Roadside with the French guys. They had mopeds so it made the approach much easier for me with my pad. We scouted 5 boulders we wanted to work on but this did involve clearing some heavy foliage at times and cleaning to discover holds and make the rock climbable. There was also an incident where we found a beautiful crack boulder but with a sizable thornbush growing adjacent with a wasp nest imbedded inside! This ended up being a good enough reason to leave the boulder alone but there is potential to develop this boulder further in the future if the circumstances change. I had borrowed gloves and a farming machete to help clear bushes but also we were careful to not damage the ecosystem and agreed to only clear small bushes or shrubs especially dying one!

I only FAed one great boulder of note today called Hips Don't Lie 6b.



Me doing the FA of Hips Don't Lie 6b



A local climber doing the first repeat of Hips Don't Lie!



We found an incredible wasps nest under a perfect crack climb boulder as we were clearing the bushes!



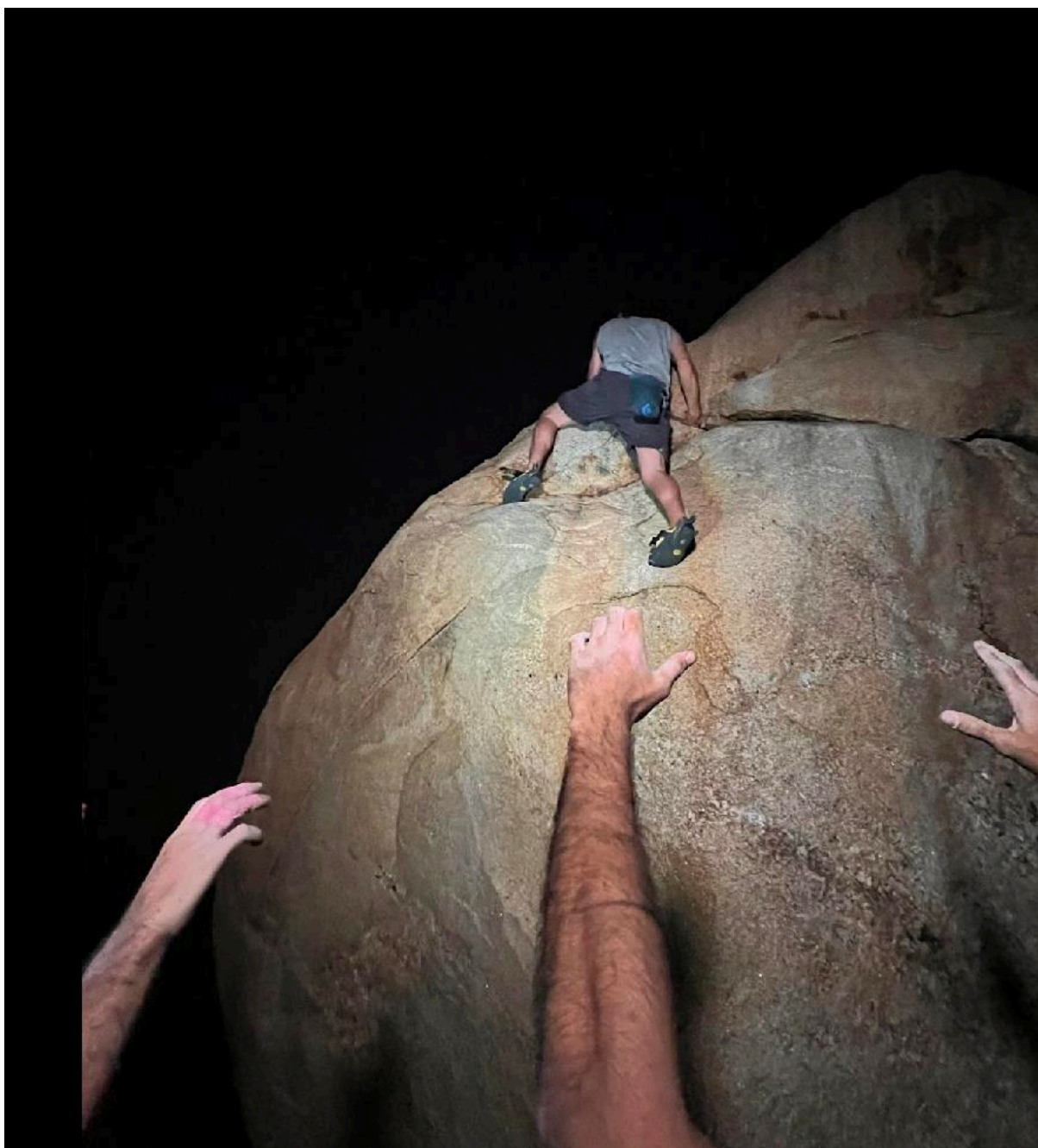
The French guys next to The Crack boulder!



The incredible rice paddies in Hampi and the women who work the land



A weaver bird's nest!



A great FA by Dave, up the left side of Crack Boulder (done a week after I left when the wasps nest has disappeared!)

I went to bed so happy with the number of boulders we cleaned and wanted to come back to tomorrow!

8.14 Day 14: 28th December

Same plan today, go to Roadside Attraction do more FAs!

No documentation from today as my phone died but since I was with the French guys there was no worries! We put up 7 FAs today.

I cleaned 2 boulders and only got one FA but it was a beautiful slabby 6b called “Roadkill”.



Roadkill 6b was the hardest line up this beautiful boulder eliminating all the good holds!

8.15 Day 15: 29th December

Sleep in for rest day. Rest day means healing the body and skin for the following climbing days and

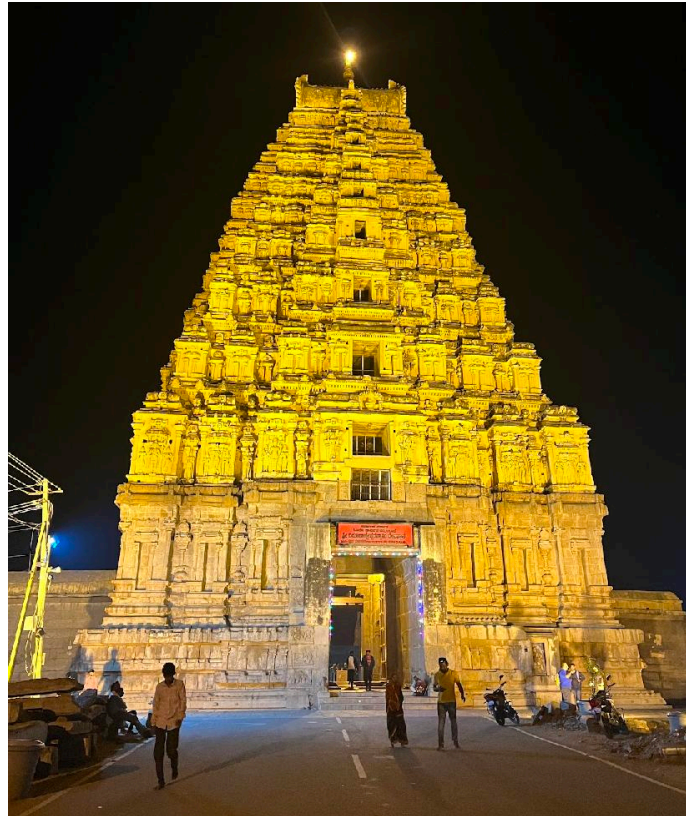
Worked in the morning on Robotics, watching a lecture.

Ate pancakes at wanderlust and felt a little sick.

Ate garlic naan which was a mistake.

We then went to Hampi Town by crossing the river which went up to our knees. It smelled awful.

We went to watch Hampi by Night at 7pm for 500 Ruppees, which was one of the best organised and beautiful shows I've seen. It teaches you the tradition and history of Hampi. We finished and headed through the Hampi Markets and Bazaar back across the river and home for sleep!



The famous Hampi Virupaksha Temple

8.16 Day 16: 30th December

Send day after rest day! 30th

Morning session early at Relax area working Klem's Traverse 7c. Mel drove the van instead of Gowri since she had S&C. Others also tried Alien 7b and I tried Sitting Buddha.

1. KLEMS TRAVERSE 7c
2. SITTING COW 6c
3. ALIEN 7b
4. SITTING BUDDHA 6c



Ready to conquer the day!

I got every move of Klems relatively easily but couldn't tie it together yet. We trekked back for lunch at Lovely Family and then went back for a quick break. We headed out super tired to Lockdown Area to see Gowri's new crimp project Sharingan. This area is gorgeous and was only developed in 2021 by Jerry. Loads of potential here for first ascents so I got started on putting up some easy undocumented FA's!

We watched the sunset with the whole gang and cheered Gowri on for Sharingan with head torches.



A Hampi Sunset

We head to the Hampi Delmont Resort for a crazy sharing meal.

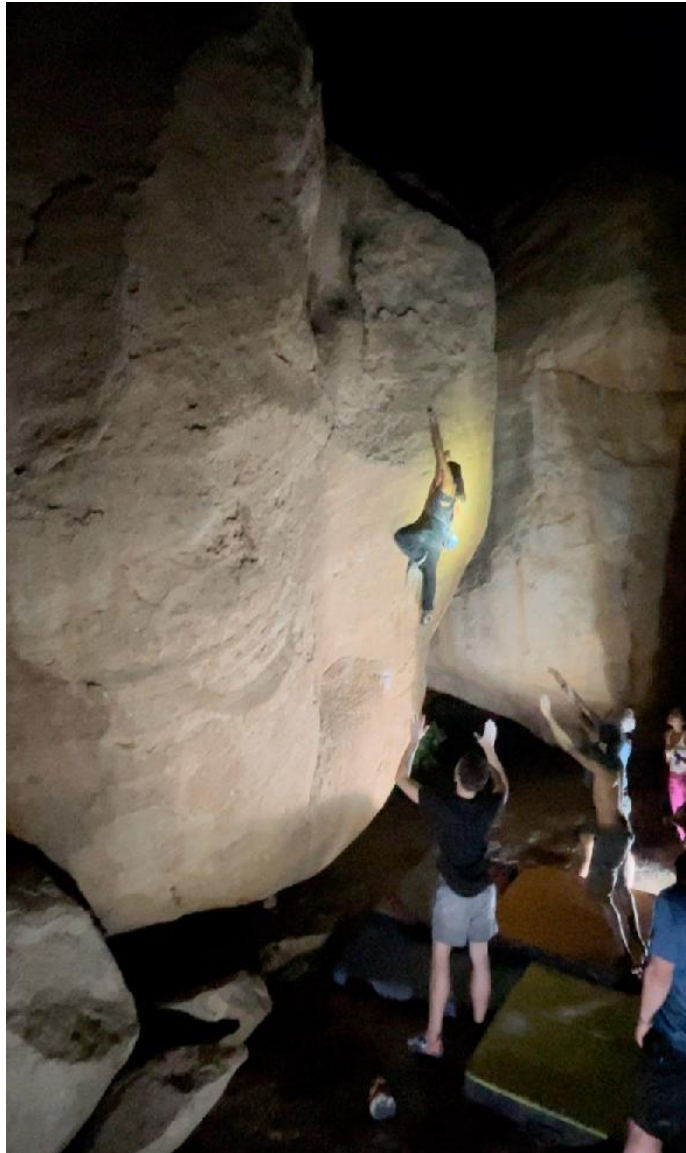
8.17 Day 17: 31st December

I ended up heading to cosmic this evening with several local climbers and a few foreign climbers who were celebrating the new year on the rocks.

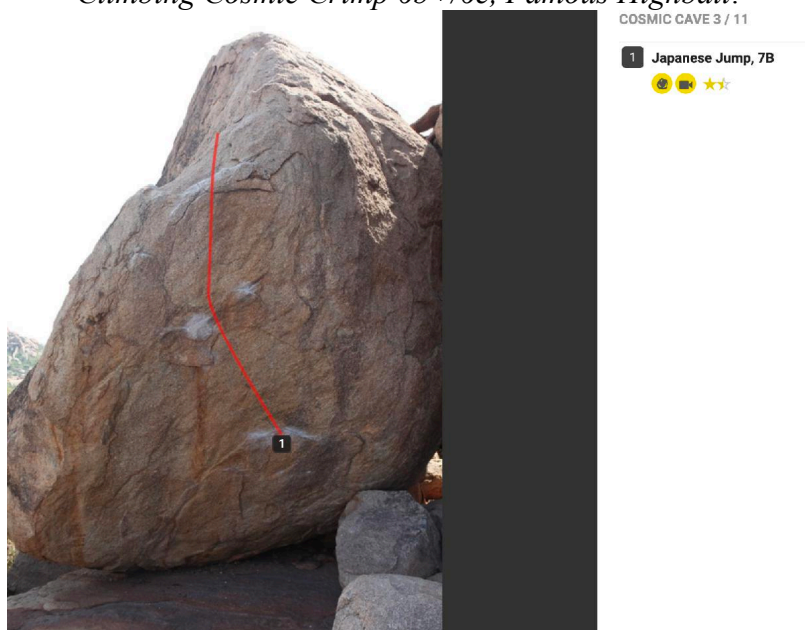
The walk across the paddies was brilliant!



The sunset was so beautiful from this vantage point, but the highball climbs were even more eye-catching under the headtorches. I ended up attempting to climb the famous kind line in the area, Cosmic Crimp, a hard 6b+ which is over 7m tall. It was extremely nerve-racking and, in the end, I struggled to commit to the higher crux and climbed down. Instead, I spent time projecting Japanese Jump 7b, a well know dynamic climb which I ended up performing statically with a Gaston move!



Climbing Cosmic Crimp 6b+/6c, Famous Highball!



Japanese Jump 7b, which can be done statically!

8.18 Day 18: 1st January

I ended up getting really sick today from a funny tummy! I assumed it was the water I had drank. The plan was originally to just do FA's in Sharmilla's Backyard but I had so little energy in the morning and was vomiting a little and felt really weak that I binned off the day.

8.19 Day 19: 2nd January

The sickness got worse today. I was throwing up everything I ate and felt really dehydrated. The French guys looked after me a little but I was mostly in the hut and eating rice and yogurt. In the evening I was really sad I couldn't go out and do any more FA's before leaving so Gowri came to see me and the French guys and we played cards and talked about everything I have to come back for. I felt a little better by the evening. I left my big Metolius pad in Hampi for a guy names Nishit who bought it off me!

8.20 Day 20: 3rd Jan

I took a taxi to Hubli with a funny tummy in the morning and flew to Mumbai which is only a few hours luckily.

I took a rikshaw to Shivaun's House – A family friend and ate with her and her husband.

8.21 Day 21: 4th Jan

I explored Mumbai and went to see some sights!

8.22 Day 22: 5th Jan

I worked most of the day today for my upcoming exams and writing some of the exped report. I also popped into a local climbing wall at Podar University. It was TINY! I met some really cool people here and it felt like a great community. I told them about the FAs in Hampi and encouraged them to try them out.

I left feeling sad my trip had come to an end but glad to go back to the land of not bottled water!

8.23 Day 23: 6th January

I flew from Mumbai Airport (BOM) to London super early in the morning and touched down in the afternoon. My father picked me up and the story telling began!

9 Conclusion

Reflecting on my solo expedition to India, I feel that I achieved many of the goals I set out for myself. From navigating challenging bouldering routes to integrating with the local community, this journey has been an incredible learning experience both in climbing and cultural immersion. My equipment choices, especially the decision to bring the Metolius Tri-

fold pad, proved invaluable in allowing me to safely explore the diverse climbing terrain of Hampi and Badami. I managed to meet other climbers along the way, which helped me push my limits safely and attempt some First Ascents (FAs) on my own.

This expedition also opened my eyes to the untapped climbing potential in India and the remarkable sense of adventure that climbers from around the world bring to these spaces. By exploring areas like Sharmilla's Corner and Roadside Attraction, I was able to contribute some new routes to the climbing community, and I hope these FAs can serve as a gateway for other climbers to discover the incredible bouldering opportunities in India. I've also become more aware of the need for sustainable climbing practices, such as carefully choosing which area to leave untouched to preserve the natural ecosystem.

Beyond the climbing itself, this journey gave me a chance to form meaningful connections with locals and other climbers, enhancing my language and cultural awareness. The support I received from climbers like Gowri, the friendships with the French team, and the kindness of the local community in Hampi and Badami added a depth to this experience that I will carry forward. I hope these interactions have fostered positive impressions of the climbing community and opened up opportunities for local guides, tourism, and increased interest in climbing from Indians themselves.

This trip has also inspired me to encourage others from Imperial College London to plan similarly adventurous expeditions and apply to the Exploration Board for support. Additionally, I hope other climbers take an interest in India, not only to enjoy the bouldering but to contribute to the local community and develop the climbing culture here.

I see potential for future expeditions to further assess:

- Whether the climbs in Badami can help diversify the profile of individuals in India who participate in bouldering.
- The extent to which climbing can improve the lives of locals, through climbing-related tourism, guiding, and other economic opportunities.

Despite a few challenges, including an illness toward the end, I feel this expedition was a huge success. I managed to lay down roots for future climbing exploration, and the journey has motivated me to return to India for more targeted climbs. For those seeking adventure in India, the beautiful landscapes and the kindness of the people offer a unique experience, on par with the challenges and rewards of the climbs themselves.

9 Risk Assessment

Hazard	Potential consequences	Chance	Severity	Risk	Precautions to mitigate
Minor traumas (Athletic injuries e.g. Fingers, elbow)	Pain, infection	4	2	8	Be aware of surroundings, sufficient rest days, warm up, use tape; disinfect and use plasters

Terrain, walk-ins, river crossings	Sprained/ broken ankle, bruises	2	3	6	Be careful where I step, follow paths, use appropriate shoes that cover ankles, move down river if current is too high. Take regular breaks
Major traumas (fall from potentially high boulders)	Serious injuries which can result in disabilities	2	4	8	Use bouldering pads with a well-thought configuration, check pads before leaving, be aware of the medical procedures
Climate/rapid weather change	Hypothermia, dehydration, sunburns	3	3	6	Take enough layers, drink plenty of water, use protections (hat, sunglasses, sunscreen) if sunny; waterproof clothing. Be prepared to turn around if necessary
Remote location	Getting lost	5	3	6	Carry GPS, satellite phone, inform members of family and friend where I am going
Diarrheal/ Vomiting Disease	Dehydration, tiredness	8	3	5	Cooking food thoroughly, only eating hot food, drinking plenty of water (only bottled)
Respiratory illness (pneumonia, Covid 19)	Difficulties breathing, general fatigue, sore muscles, headache	2	2	4	Cover sufficiently, daily check-ins, carry meds; check where local hospitals are if necessary
Covid 19 outbreak	Not being able to depart/ getting stuck in India	2	2	6	Check updates on the situation, all are vaccinated
Vehicle Crash	Serious Injury or death, loss of equipment	2	5	8	Use recommended drivers from uber or friends, remain alert during journey
Theft/Mugging	Loss of property, personal injury	1	2	2	Travel in towns according to FCO advice and use common sense. Remain contactable always (mobile service or satellite service)

Road Crossings	Injury or death	1	4	4	Take extra precaution whilst crossing the roads.
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10 Budget

Item	Quantity	Cost per Unit (£)	Total Cost (£)
<u>Transport</u>			
Return Flights LDN - BOM	1	700	700
Return Flights BOM - HUX	1	150	150
Taxis	5	15	75
Rikshaws	10	5	50
<u>Accommodation</u>			
Hampi Stay, Badami Stay	18	15	270
<u>Consumable</u>			
Estimated Food Cost	54	1.5	81
<u>Insurance</u>			
BMC Worldwide	1	300	300
<u>Medical</u>			
Personal First aid kits	1	38	38
Main first aid kit	1	80	80
Factor 50 Sun Cream	2	10	20
Insect Repellent	2	5	10
<u>Other</u>			
Satellite Phone Credit	1	130	130
Pads	2	90	180
TOTAL			2084

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