

British duo to become the first to ski Penny Ice Cap

In March 2008 two British explorers will ski 200 km (124 miles) unaided across the Penny Ice Cap on Canada's Baffin Island where temperatures can reach as low as -65°C. This will be the first British expedition to attempt a ski traverse of the ice cap. The expedition is an International Polar Year Project (www.ipy.org) and is raising funds and awareness for the national youth development charity British Schools Exploring Society (BSES).

The intrepid duo called Polarventure are Antony Jinman, 26 years old and from Plymouth, and Vijay Shah, 26 years old and from East London.

The Penny Ice Cap covers over 5,000 square kilometres (approximately a quarter of the size of Wales) with ice as thick as 300 metres (984 feet) in places and is believed by many to be the birthplace of the last ice age. The Penny Ice Cap has seen increasing interest from the scientific community due to it being most southerly of Arctic Canada's ice caps making it the most susceptible to changes in climate.

Antony Jinman said, "The Arctic has been the home to the Inuits for thousands of years. Many explorers visit the Arctic making record 'firsts' to prove to the world the extent of human endurance. The people for whom the Arctic is home to are rarely acknowledged and the team aims to highlight examples of how climate change is affecting the Inuit way of life. We also aim to help form links between schools on Baffin Island and in the United Kingdom."

Antony is an International Mountain Leader during which time he has helped lead a Baffin Island trip for the Mitchemp Trust in 2007. He has spent six months living with the Sami People of Scandinavia as well as a summer enjoying the Inuit culture of Western Greenland. Vijay Shah is an aeronautical engineer with a strong passion for the outdoors having spent over two years traveling around the world. He has led expeditions for the British Schools Exploring Society and has climbed a number of Andean peaks.

BSES Expeditions provides opportunities for young people between the ages of 16 and 23 to take part in adventure projects that involve science research in wilderness areas.

www.ipy.org
www.bses.org.uk
www.polarventure.co.uk

- ENDS -

Interviews and photography are available on request

Notes to editors

For further details on the expedition and how to sponsor please contact Vijay Shah (vshah1@gmail.com) or visit our website at www.polarventure.co.uk.

The British Schools Exploring Society (BSES Expeditions) is a non-profit UK-based charity which last year celebrated its 75th anniversary. Founded in 1932 by the late Surgeon Commander G Murray Levick, a member of Scott's Antarctic Expedition of 1910-13, the BSES is one of the longest running organisations of its type.

Recently honoured by the Royal Geographical Society with IBG at their annual awards ceremony, BSES Expeditions received The Geographical Award for 'engaging young people with scientific fieldwork through expeditions' for the past 75 years.