

Rhino poaching in Gohpur

A rhino was killed by poachers in Gopalpur jaroni near Gohpur, Sonitpur district on 17 March 2002. One person was arrested. The animal had strayed from Kaziranga National Park.

Tiger killed

A full-grown tiger was killed by 'security' personnel at Lailuri near Samaguri in Nagaon district of Assam in mid-January 2002. (Source: The Telegraph 18 January 2002).

Tiger crushed

A full-grown tigress was crushed to death by a speeding vehicle while it was crossing the NH 37 near Kaziranga National Park's Panbari sector in the wee hours of 21 March 2002.

Tusker poached

A tusker was shot dead and its tusks taken in Manas National Park's Kahitema Beat area on 14 January 2002. Although the present field director is making all out efforts to improve but lack of armed guards inside has added to the problems.

Elephant electrocuted in Tripura

An elephant was electrocuted in Balurchara in Teliamura police station area of West District in November 2001. Such loss from a fast vanishing population of this state is alarming. It could be a case of poaching also.

Encroachment in Dibru-Saikhowa

Dibru-Saikhowa National Park (340 km²) in eastern Assam has continued to face threats from the Forest Villagers, especially of Dadhia Forest Village who have cleared a large chunk in Tongkrong area of the park. Conservationists have demanded immediate eviction to save the park.

Elephant census in NE states

An interstate elephant census was conducted in Assam, Arunachal Pradesh and Meghalaya in March-April 2002. The results are awaited. This census was significant in view of continued decrease in elephant population in northeastern India due to poaching, many of which go unreported.

Saramati expedition

Saramati, 3800m, the highest mountain peak in the subcontinent, south of the Himalaya was an

unexplored tract. S. Dillon Ripley, renowned ornithologist and Salim Ali's co-author in *Handbook of Birds* wanted to explore the area in 1950s but was denied access. Subsequently no attempt was made due to difficult terrain and insurgency.

An expedition was organised in October 2001 in which Dr Anwaruddin Choudhury of the Rhino Foundation, and Thomas Kent and Khekiho Sohe of Peoples Group had participated. Excellent subtropical and temperate broadleaf forest occurs in the slopes while the peak is barren with short grass (because of snowfall in winter). Presence of slow loris, stump-tailed macaque, capped langur, hoolock gibbon, dhole, black bear, sun bear, tiger, leopard, clouded leopard, gaur, Rufous-necked Hornbill, Blyth's Tragopan. Mrs Hume's Pheasant among many others were confirmed. Many of the older people are not unfamiliar with the Sumatran rhinoceros. Entire Saramati area should be accorded protection status may be as a biosphere reserve.

Good news from Mizoram

About a thousand families belonging to Mizo, Chakma and Reang (Bru) villagers were provided with LPG cylinders to reduce pressure of fuel wood on Dampa Tiger Reserve. This innovative scheme could be an eye-opener for many other protected areas in the region. Two new sanctuaries have been declared in 2001, these were Palak and Thorang.

Bird Census training workshop

A training workshop on techniques of bird census was held at NEIBM, Guwahati in 29-31 March 2002 with 35 participants. The workshop was jointly organised by the Bombay Natural History Society and Aaranyak. The programme was inaugurated by Dr Anwaruddin Choudhury, IBCN Coordinator for the North-East. Dr Asad Rahmani, Director of Bombay Natural History Society and Steve Parr, International Officer of the Royal Society for Preservation of Birds, UK had joined the participants on 30th and demonstrated bird banding techniques. (Source: Aaranyak).

A poaching free year in Orang

Since May 2001, there was no poaching of rhino in Assam's Orang National Park. In fact in 2001, only one rhino fell to poachers. Thanks to sincere efforts of the field staff and active support from police and significant inputs from NGOs such as Rhino Foundation and WWF-TCP (see pp.1-4).

The Rhino Foundation for Nature in NE India,
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