

## Rhinos number increase in Chitwan

A total of 408 rhinos have been spotted during fresh census in Chitwan National Park. Rhino census was carried out in CNP from 8th to 23rd March 2008. Among the figure, 100 are male, 130 female and sex status of 178 rhinos could not be established. The report says that 277 fully grown up rhinos, 51 young ones and 80 newborns are counted.

DNPWC officials have said that the count is much reliable as direct count method has been applied with technically sound equipments and experienced human resources. Two hundred manpower equipped with GPS, binocular, cameras have counted the rhinos with the help 40 elephants during the 16 days long venture.

The result has gestured stable population of one-horned rhinos in CNP which is one of the world's potential rhino habitat. In 2005, 372 rhinos were counted in CNP, which is increased by 36 number now.

Analysing the age and sex wise distribution, number of breeding adults is increasing, many female rhinos are found in their prime and the female-male sex ratio is nearing which meant promising future of this endangered species.

Nepal listed one-horned Rhinos as an endangered species in the 1960s after the number of animals hit an all-time low of just over 60. Conservation efforts saw the population rebound to more than 600 in Chitwan National Park in the early 1990s. After 2000, the rhino population declined in an alarming way with two consecutive count in 2000 and 2005 had pointed out declining number.



<b>Comparison of last three counts in Chitwan National Park.</b>			
	Count 2000	Count 2005	Count 2008
a) Age distribution			
Adults	332	262	277
Sub-adults	87	42	51
Calves	117	68	80
b) Sex distribution			
Male	305	133	100
Female	223	173	130
Not known	16	66	178
Total	544	372	408

## NTNC money embezzled in millions : Report

Financial irregularities worth millions of rupees has been found to have taken place in the then National Trust for Nature Conservation (NTNC), when led by the King, Crown Prince and Prince.

The financial and administrative review sub-committee constituted under the convenorship of Manu Humagain, the board member of the Trust made its situation public on 25th March. The sub committee was formed following complaints that the NTNC was involved in misappropriating government funds to the tune of whooping millions in the past years.

Making the report public, prepared after the four months long study, member-secretary of the Trust, Bimal Kumar Baniya said the trust used to run as per a verbal order in the past, resulting in massive financial irregularities. According to the report, millions of rupees were released to the royal family for foreign visits including trips to England for Queen Komal's check-up, King Gyanendra's foreign visits and Crown Prince Paras' trips to Austria and France.