

Asian Rhino Project



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Welcome to ARP's May Newsletter

This issue brings encouraging news of progress made in Greater one-horned rhino conservation in Nepal (see page 6). An ARP-sponsored project directed by the Media Consultancy Group, has improved mutual understanding and appreciation between local communities and local and national authorities, of the complexities of rhino conservation in and around the Royal Chitwan National Park. Whether by consequence or coincidence, there has been an appreciable decrease in rhino poaching in the area. This outcome illustrates the vital role that engaging directly with local communities adjacent to protected areas plays in finding mutually beneficial solutions to what might have otherwise been viewed as intractable conservation problems.

Meanwhile, you might be able to assist us! We know that many large companies (like Macquarie Bank and others) only provide grants for NGOs their staff are members of. If you work for a large company, enquire as to whether they have a foundation or grant scheme and provide me – admin@asianrhinos.org.au – the details if you think ARP might be eligible to apply. You can do the same if you're aware of any other grants you know or suspect might help us!

Marc D Bowden
Editor

A Warm Welcome to New Members

The ARP welcomes Hugh Weaver, Helena Forsyth, Shirley Campbell, and Brenda Wilkinson as new members, and also thanks those members who have renewed their memberships during the last three months!

Adopt-a-Rhino Fundraiser

You can help us help save the Sumatran rhino by adopting one today – and it's tax deductible!

All funds raised through the Asian Rhino Project's adopt-a-rhino program will be used to support the Sumatran Rhino Sanctuary (SRS) in the Way Kambas National Park, Sumatra.

With each adoption you will receive an attractive adoption certificate including information on your rhino and the program – great for the wall!

You can also choose to receive quarterly updates on your rhino as well as an A4 sized photograph (extra costs apply for photos and updates).

More information on the rhinos and the program is on our website.



Sumatran Rhino Sanctuary (SRS) Way Kambas



This year the SRS's focus for breeding is between Ratu and Andalas (the young male bred in captivity at Cincinnati Zoo and relocated to the SRS in 2007). Ratu has good reproductive potential, but should fertilization between the two prove unsuccessful, an attempt to pair Rosa with Andalas will be made.



Breeding trials have already commenced, and involve introducing the two prospective mates on a daily basis, with each either side of a grill-style fence. Once positive courtship responses have been observed and Ratu's follicles are receptive, they will then be introduced in the absence of a physical barrier.



It seems that Andalas requires greater 'conditioning' with numerous introduction opportunities conducted in a gradual manner, as on previous occasions he has temporarily suffered from head wounds as a consequence of his 'bullish' behavior and Ratu's response! Similarly although very good courtship responses have been observed between Andalas and Bina when they were either side of a fence, when introduced in a situation without a barrier, Andalas's aggressive demeanor resulted in Bina becoming fearful and avoiding him.



An update on the health of each rhino at the SRS finds all females, Bina, Rosa and Ratu, in good health. Andalas, has however, and as noted above, suffered a head-wound after a brief pairing with Ratu. Fortunately the wound has healed after treatment. Torgamba, the older male, still suffers from anemia, and is undergoing 24-hour monitoring by both keeper and veterinarian in his enclosure (boma). Although Torgamba has exhibited positive breeding responses with Ratu and Bina, his sperm quality is, unfortunately, low.

In closing, the SRS, in its desire to become more environmentally benign in its operations, is investigating the use of enrichment planting, biogas production and manure composting. Furthermore, new mountain bikes have been purchased for staff use. These bicycles will help save fuel costs and are a lot quieter than vehicles.

Article and images: Dedi Candra, Animal Collection Manager (Veterinarian), Sumatran Rhino Sanctuary

From top to bottom: Torgamba mounting Bina; Andalas and Ratu; Torgamba mounting Ratu; Manure for research.

Far right and right: Enrichment planting



Changes afoot for SOS-Rhino

Almost all hope for the Borneo rhino had evaporated before SOS-Rhino began working in Sabah in 1998. SOS-Rhino helped protect the remaining Sumatran rhinos in Sabah, and return the species' plight to the fore among national and international conservation concerns. The extension by three years and \$600,000 to our original 5-year, US\$1 million commitment was critical to the success of our efforts, and as a result, local and international NGOs and corporations are now actively involved, and Sabah's government has called on rhino conservation experts to develop an Action Plan for this rhino. We are very pleased with this development, and the increased attention that Borneo's last rhinos are presently receiving.

SOS-Rhino believes that only a long-term commitment backed-up by appropriate action at the government level will improve the chances of survival for Borneo's subspecies of Sumatran rhino. The organisation's US-based operations will be transitioning out of Sabah as of June 30, 2008, though SOS-Rhino Borneo Bhd. will remain with a new board of highly skilled, qualified and dedicated community leaders. This is a positive development that has been further supported by Sabah's government's renewed enthusiasm for continuing its rhino conservation work.

In the field, Borneo's rhinos are declining in number compared with the results of surveys initially conducted 15-20 years ago. The current estimated rhino population in the Tabin Wildlife Reserve (TWR) is 15-20. Given that the population is not growing and considering the species' life span, this population could be crashing. The population does, however, demonstrate productivity in specific areas. For these reasons, the future of Sabah's rhinos will depend on securing Tabin. Increasing populations of rhino need secured land. Securing Tabin must begin now, and better information must be acquired and assessed within the next year so that effective decisions are made about creating a safe environment for this species.

The frequency and nature (use of guns) of unauthorised human entry into TWR poses a major threat to the presence and continued existence of this species in the region. The population can be seriously affected by a single incident of poaching. Tabin has been administered under Sabah's Forests Enactment 1968,

Wildlife Conservation Enactment 1997, and Firearms (Increased Penalties) Act 1971, but these laws have not adequately reduced the threat.

The lack of a community-wide sense of risk associated with unauthorised encroachment into Tabin does little to prevent it from occurring, and indicates that more effective approaches are required. SOS-Rhino has recommended that all relevant laws be strengthened. We believe that once this and a strongly supported campaign of commitment on behalf of the State and National governments – with unambiguously persuasive statements delivered by relevant ministries – has been undertaken, the attitude among law enforcement and judicial communities and the wider public will become more closely aligned with positive rhino conservation outcomes.

These broader efforts must be supported by more specific field-based operations. SOS-Rhino has recommended that rigorous security be implemented around TWR, with appropriately trained wildlife protection units operating on a continual basis within and around Tabin.

*Article: Cindy Salopek, Programme Manager, SOS Rhino.
Image of Tabin Wildlife Reserve: Daniel Scarparolo*



Field Report from Nepal and Assam

Earlier this year I was fortunate enough to meet the Empowering People for Rhino Conservation (EPRC) team in Nepal, and see first-hand the progress made on this ARP-sponsored project.

The EPRC project aims to educate, empower and involve Chitwan National Park's buffer-zone communities in conservation and grassroots policy level discourse on contentious issues. I visited some of these communities and witnessed many of the challenges they face. As most households are subsistence farmers, there is a heavy reliance on collecting firewood from the park, grasses for roofing, and grazing for cattle. This increases pressure on rhino habitat and when rhinos transgress park boundaries, they eat and trample crops, damage fences, and can also cause serious or fatal injuries to villagers brave enough to confront them.

A relief fund for injured persons, stock, and crops is operating, however it is too little to cover even minor injuries, and some landholders have resorted to selling parcels of land to pay for hospitalisation and medical costs. Another problem is that the

line demarcating the buffer zone inside which communities are eligible to receive compensation has not been scientifically assessed, and this has caused some disputes. EPRC has brought the communities together to investigate ways to institute a crop insurance scheme and other projects in an attempt to alleviate the problems caused by wildlife/human conflict. I believe long-term solutions will also involve providing villagers with alternative fuel collection and grazing sources, and strategic habitat regeneration. This will, however, require significant effort, especially on behalf of government agencies.

In late February, I joined a group hosted by the International Rhino Foundation (IRF) and travelled to Manas, Orang and Kaziranga National Parks (NP) in Assam to see the work conducted as part of the Indian Rhino Vision 2020 program. This project aims to increase Assam's Greater-one horned rhino population from about 2000 to 3000 and expand the species' distribution to include at least six protected areas with population of at least 50-100 individuals. These goals will be achieved by a combination of rhino translocations from two source populations to five target protected areas, and improved protection.

The main purpose of this trip was to assess the success of the recently translocated rhinos from Pabitora NP to Manas NP. Unfortunately, this aspect of the project had been delayed due to a drug importation issue. Manas NP has recently re-opened after years of conflict among local communities, during which time rhinos and other animals in the park became locally extinct (hence the need for translocation). While here we did, however, see



(Left to right) Tariq Aziz (WWF-India), Dr Jorg Vollum (Basel Zoo), Susie Ellis (IRF), Dr Olivier Pagan (Basel Zoo), Dr Freiderike von Houwald (Basel Zoo), Randy Reiches (San Diego Wild Animal Park), Ahmid (WWF-India), and Kristy Garard (Taronga Western Plains Zoo, ARP).

new roads, guard towers and rhino protection units (RPU) provided by the IRV 2020 project in preparation for translocated rhinos.

I also visited the boma (images on right) that ARP had sponsored through the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW). It currently houses four Greater one-horned rhinos rescued and hand-raised from Kaziranga NP. These animals will eventually be soft-released into the park, however they appear to be quite habituated to humans, so their future may be compromised if in the wild they seek human company or are pressured by wild rhinos. I estimate the possibility of eco-tours to this park being at least 5-10 years away once rhinos and other animals have been re-established.

We also visited Orang NP and saw the improved guard towers and communications used by RPU to monitor rhino (and tiger) populations. Riding elephants we saw a female rhino and calf, but she charged us which resulted in a couple of hairy moments as the elephants tried to run away! Few tourists visit Orang NP, and it would require some significant development (the first hotel is under construction) for eco-tourism to be of benefit to the local economy and wildlife conservation.

After being driven part of the way to Kaziranga NP with a police escort (some residual community conflicts still occur), we discovered the rhino population to be alive and well in this magnificent park, where we saw more than 70 rhino on one safari alone! Furthermore, all the females we encountered had calves. Unfortunately this park has probably reached its carrying capacity which makes it a prime source for translocating rhino to re-populate other parks. It was disheartening, however, to learn that over the last 18 months a significant increase in poaching has occurred here. Although rhino mortality has been noticeable, it has yet to directly impact the otherwise flourishing population. There is, however, no room for complacency when it comes to securing the Park's wild rhino population, especially while it remains a source for new populations elsewhere.

I believe that the Greater one-horned rhino's future is promising thanks to the IRV 2020 plan, however far greater attention is needed to help the species' situation in Nepal.

Article and images: Kristy Garard, NSW Branch Manager, Asian Rhino Project



Empowering People For Rhino Conservation (EPRC) – first phase complete

In August 2007 EPRC embarked on a project, the goal of which was to 'reduce rhino poaching in Chitwan National Park'. We have facilitated greater engagement and involvement of buffer-zone residents in conservation by providing education, motivation, mediation, and direct involvement in resolving conservation issues.

The project took what is essentially a two-step approach. First, community perceptions of and attitudes toward conservation were identified. Second, we intensified the discourse on conservation issues, strengthened dialogue between stakeholders, and circulated information more broadly than had previously occurred.

Communities where some residents have been vulnerable to engaging in poaching activities (or which have strong grievances toward park authorities and rhino conservation initiatives), were identified, and engaged in focus-group discussions, cultural programs, public debates, workshops, seminars and truth-sharing initiatives – involving science and environment teachers, Village Development Committee (VDC) chairpersons, buffer-zone user committee chairpersons, wildlife victims, lawyers, and political representatives.

These interactions allowed community views, aspirations and problems to be relayed directly to relevant authorities, and subsequently through EPRC reports and publications provided to the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation, Chitwan

National Park and key national and international stakeholders. Concurrently, communities received detailed information and advice regarding how conservation is important for biodiversity, how they can benefit directly from successful conservation, and how contentious issues could be better resolved.

Previous to our involvement, many communities had shied away from conservation related activities, fearing negative responses from their peers. Now 18 Community Buffer-zone Organisations (CBOs) from across five VDCs have received Training of Trainer instruction – many providing further training sessions to other CBOs and organising further awareness-raising activities in their respective communities.

Furthermore, school based programs were implemented and have greatly improved the knowledge of and motivation toward conservation of future generations. Five student rhino clubs have been established and have conducted competitions, participated in peaceful rallies, and assisted with further school presentation programs. They have also sought conservation libraries for their schools.

For the first time in the Chitwan National Park buffer-zone area, a Conservation Information Centre has been established, with conservation materials being provided by local, national and international organisations. Furthermore, local and national media have also been encouraged to provide significant coverage of conservation issues. Journalists were hosted for a conservation tour, and relationships with journalists cemented through the establishment of a conservation journalist network.

EPRC has facilitated greater co-ordination, communication and collaboration between the various conservation actors in Chitwan National Park. As a result, a national initiative involving buffer-zone committee members of three rhino dwelling protected areas (Chitwan, Bardia and Shuklafanta), concluded that there was a need for identifying common conservation issues and addressing these more cohesively in a collaborative spirit.

There are very encouraging results which indicate that EPRC project has successfully deterred buffer-zone



residents from engaging in rhino poaching. In 2006, poachers in the Chitwan National Park area killed 17 rhinos. From August 2007 to April 2008 (the EPRC project period), only three fatal poaching incidents occurred.

EPRC is now developing the scope of our project's second phase. We intend to provide a greater focus on capacity-building among buffer-zone communities – perhaps inspiring some to become involved in anti-poaching rhino patrols – furnish buffer-zone schools with conservation-based education materials, and work with education institutions and teachers to integrate and maintain rhino conservation issues into curricula.

Meanwhile, a rhino count in Chitwan National Park conducted over sixteen days in March this year found a total of 408 rhinos. Of these 100 were male, 130 female and the sex of 178 could not be determined. 277 adults, 51 sub-adults and 80 juveniles were identified. The



total number has increased by 36 above the previous count in 2005, which identified 372 rhinos.

Article and images: Deepak Acharya, EPRC/Media Consultancy Network.

Perth Zoo, Auckland Zoo and Asian Rhino Project

Perth Zoo Memorandum of Understanding

The Asian Rhino Project recently participated in Perth Zoo's Wildlife Conservation Action Workshop. The workshop's aim was to forge new and strengthen existing partnerships between the Zoo and Wildlife Conservation Organisations so as to generate more effective conservation outcomes. In recognition of the mutually beneficial role each organisation can play with regard to their missions, a Memorandum of Understanding between Perth Zoo and ARP has been renewed.

Perth Zoo provides outstanding support to the ARP, and our operations would be severely hampered without their continued generosity. We look forward to extending an already constructive relationship well into the future – one based on achieving positive and lasting outcomes in relation to public education of, and conservation outcomes for, threatened species and the natural habitat they need to thrive.

STOP PRESS!

The Auckland Zoo Conservation Fund has provided a very generous donation of \$5,000 to the ARP. Understandably, we're thrilled by their commitment toward our work! We have been able to quickly allocate \$5,000 to a recent request for funds to fill-in hundreds of old abandoned wells in an area of Way Kambas National Park in Sumatra. As the wells are now dangerously obscured by vegetation, they pose a high risk to the creatures inhabiting the Park, including the Sumatran rhino. Many thanks to Auckland Zoo's Conservation Fund for their donation, and to the zoo's rhino keeper, Nat Sullivan, for her tireless efforts in raising awareness of the desperate situation for Asia's rhinos. Well done!

**CONSERVATION
FUND** **AUCKLAND ZOO**

National Committee Update

I've just returned from a very full trip to Indonesia accompanied by Nat Sullivan, Rhino keeper at Auckland Zoo. Meeting up with ARP's Patron, Peter Hall, and International Rhino Foundation Director, Susie Ellis, we attended several meetings in Java and Sumatra, but the key reason for our visit was to participate in a meeting in Jakarta to assess progress made toward the current action-plans and strategies for Javan rhino conservation.

I'm pleased to report that participants at a meeting with representatives from the Directorate General of Forest Protection and Nature Conservation (PHKA) agreed that habitat surveys, and rhino and banteng censuses should be an immediate priority for assessing the location for establishing a second Javan rhino population. ARP is providing input for the Terms of Reference for those habitat surveys and subsequent assessments. The team set immediate goals for the surveys and assessments and will be meeting again in September to reassess our progress and set further actions.

Earlier this year, ARP's NSW Branch Manager, Kristy Garard, visited Nepal and Assam to assess the situation in the field, confirm the progress of projects ARP is funding, and check for work that could possibly be funded in the future (see her article on page 4).

Thus far this year the ARP has agreed to fund three new projects:

- Installing 35 new remote infra-red sensitive camera 'traps' in Ujung Kulon National Park (Java) to help identify and monitor its Javan rhinoceros population. This will greatly benefit the establishment of a new population elsewhere in Java.
- Develop a system of non-invasive genetic monitoring of Greater one-horned rhinos in Kaziranga National Park (Assam). This will improve the genetic diversity of smaller or new populations by introducing genetically compatible stock from overcrowded populations.
- Filling-in hundreds of abandoned wells in a previously occupied area of Way Kambas National Park in Sumatra. This will prevent any further loss of or injury to the Park's megafauna – including the Sumatran rhino – from them falling into overgrown well openings.

As ARP's reputation continues to spread, we are expecting to receive many new proposals in the near future.

Article and images: Kerry Crosbie, Director, Asian Rhino Project.



In The News – Asian Rhino News Stories

A Born Free story, with a rhino twist 24 February 2008

She was just one-and-a-half-years old when her mother was shot dead. Rescuers found her hiding in a ditch, dehydrated and in a state of shock two days after she was orphaned. Around 11am today, when the Greater one-horned rhino calf walked out of a wooden crate into the wild, the Centre for Wildlife Rehabilitation and Conservation patted itself for having successfully taken care of one the most critical cases it had handled in recent times.

More: http://www.telegraphindia.com/1080225/jsp/northeast/story_8943215.jsp

Rhino and Elephants Returned to Wild in India, Protected Land Increased 25 February 2008

Today, International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) and its sister organization, Wildlife Trust of India (WTI) announced that two elephant calves and a one-and-a-half-year-old Greater one-horned rhino were successfully returned to the wild in Manas National Park.

More: <http://www.earthtimes.org/articles/show/rhino-and-elephants-returned-to-wild-in-india-protected-land-increased,290759.shtml>

61 poachers surrender in Assam 26 February 2008

Sixty-one poachers have surrendered before wildlife authorities at the Manas National Park in Assam. They deposited 26 country-made weapons before the Deputy Chief of the Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC), Kampa Borgoyari, at the Bansbari range of the park in Baksa District.

More http://www.thecheers.org/news/South-Asia/news_13263_61-poachers-surrender-in-Assam.html

Rhino Census to Begin Next Week: DNPWC 27 February 2008

The Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation (DNPWC) will launch a rhino census of Nepal's national parks and wildlife reserves in the first week of March. The result of the census is expected to give a clear view of what should be done to protect the endangered animal in the future, the DNPWC Acting Director-General, Shyam Bajimaya, said.

More: <http://www.thehimalayantimes.com/fullstory.asp?filename=aFanata0va2qzpc0Wa0pa.axamal&folder=aHaoamW&Name=Home&dtSiteDate=20080227>

Rhino bones prove ancient bridges to Anatolia — study 29 February 2008

A 25-million year old rhino bone shows that Anatolia, the bulk of modern-day Turkey, was not then encircled by water, as some geologists have contended, according to a study published Friday. The first evidence that a pre-historic rhinoceros from the genus Paraceratherium wandered the rugged hills and plateaus of Anatolia in the late Oligocene era proves that a land passage to Asia existed at the same time, said the study.

More: <http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/breakingnews/world/view/20080229-122048/Rhino-bones-prove-ancient-bridges-to-Anatolia---study>

Orphaned elephants and rhino return to wild 29 February 2008

Two orphaned elephant calves and a rare 18-month-old rhino have been returned to the wild in northeast India. The animals were released into Manas National Park in Assam after they were found orphaned and then hand-raised at the Centre for Wildlife Rehabilitation and Conservation (CWRC) near Kaziranga National Park.

More: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/earth/main.jhtml?xml=/earth/2008/02/29/eaeleph129.xml>

Female rhino calf translocated 2 March 2008

Manas National Park recently received a translocated fourth rhino, a one-and-a-half-year-old female, in the Kuribeel area of the Bansbari range. The rhino calf was rescued from a tea garden next to Kaziranga National Park after its mother was killed by poachers in 2007. It was transported over 300 km to its new home in Manas.

More: <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/details.asp?id=mar0308/at05>

Manas park set to repopulate rhinoceroses 3 March 2008

Manas National Park, a UNESCO world heritage site, is all set to be repopulated with Greater one horned rhinoceroses seven years after poachers wiped out the species from the sanctuary. The Park's Director released the fourth rhinoceros, a one-and-a-half-year-old female, in the Kuribeel area of the Bansbari range Feb 24. Bansbari is part of the core area of the park, which is around 300 km from Guwahati.

More: <http://sify.com/news/fullstory.php?id=14613866>

Assam Govt. set up committee to inquire Rhino poaching 7 March 2008

The Government of Assam has constituted a 12 -member high- level committee to inquire into poaching of endangered Greater one-horned rhinoceros in different parks, including Kaziranga and Orang National Parks. The State Forest Minister, Mr. Rockybul Hussain, said that a total of 603 rhinos were killed in Assam during last seven years. Of these, 72 were killed by poachers. The Minister said 183 arrests have been made in relation to rhino poaching. The Minister informed the House that around three lakh 30,000 hectare forest area of the State have been encroached illegally. The Government is soon to begin evicting under the Wildlife Act in the encroached forest areas.

More: <http://www.newsonair.com/news.asp?cat=state&id=ST345>

More guards at Kaziranga to protect one-horned rhino 15 March 2008

With 23 rhinos being killed in Assam's Kaziranga National Park since last year, additional guards have been deployed for their protection. The Park's Divisional Forest Officer Bangkim Sarma said 100 homeguards equipped with .303 rifles have arrived to strengthen security for rhinos.

More: <http://www.hindu.com/thehindu/holnus/002200803151021.htm>

Five trained jumbos shifted to Dudhwa National Park to monitor rhino and tiger 23 March 2008

Five trained elephants have been shifted from Jaldapara Wildlife Sanctuary in Bengal to the Dudhwa National Park in Uttar Pradesh by the Forest Department to monitor the rhino rehabilitation centre and tiger reserve. Two males - Gajraj and Mohanlal and three she-elephants Madhu, Chameli and Sulochana were chosen for the purpose of patrolling.

More: http://www.thaindian.com/newsportal/world-news/five-trained-jumbos-shifted-to-dudhwa-national-park-to-monitor-rhino-and-tiger_10030354.html

Rhinoceros numbers rise in Nepal 24 March 2008

The number of the endangered one-horned rhinoceros in the animal's Royal Chitwan National Park habitat in Nepal has increased by 36 to 408, a new census showed. The count, which took 16 days to complete, placed the current population at 408, compared to 372 three years ago, Nepalnews.com reported Monday.

More: http://www.upi.com/NewsTrack/Top_News/2008/03/24/rhinoceros_numbers_rise_in_nepal/6506/

Rhino census underway in West Bengal 29 March 2008

The West Bengal Forest Department is conducting a census on the rhinoceros population of Gorumara National Park in Jaipauri District of West Bengal. The Forest Department has started collecting specific information about each rhinoceros so that the animals can be easily identified in case of emergency.

More: http://www.thaindian.com/newsportal/lifestyle/rhino-census-underway-in-west-bengal_10032592.html

Patna zoo on global map for rhino breeding 28 April 2008

Sanjay Gandhi Zoo in Patna holds a distinct place internationally for its rhino population and acclaimed breeding techniques. Recently, California's San Diego Zoo (which holds the world's top position for rhino breeding) sought two male rhinos in return for a rhinoceros and calf for genetic pool variation under an exchange programme.

More: <http://www.dailyindia.com/show/233151.php/Patna-zoo-on-global-map-for-rhino-breeding>

Cincinnati Zoo Says Happy Birthday To Rare Rhino 28 April 2008

Harry, one of Cincinnati Zoo's critically endangered Sumatran rhinos, celebrated his first birthday on 29 April. According to zoo officials, over 70% of the Sumatran rhino population has been lost in the last 20 years—mostly due to poaching and habitat destruction.

More: http://www.kypost.com/content/wcposhared/story.aspx?content_id=2d1e039f-1a6b-4486-9764-6180ed203db1

2 rhinos killed in Kaziranga 28 April 2008

After a lull, poachers killed two rhinos, including a calf, just as the Forest Department arranged to send 25 armed guards to Orang National Park where two rhinos were killed last week. An official said the adult rhino's nails and part of its tail were missing along with the horn. This corroborated another poacher's confession that buyers sought these body parts as proof the horn was genuine.

More: http://www.telegraphindia.com/1080429/jsp/northeast/story_9200889.jsp

Rhino population threatened by illegal poaching in Bardiya National Park 29 April 2008

Three Greater one-horned rhinos were found dead in Bardiya National Park in the past two weeks, raising serious concern over the endangered animal's safety here. The bodies were found with their horns and tails removed. Park officials said that illegal poachers were taking advantage of a dent in the park's security arrangements. An estimated 30 to 40 rhinos are in the park.

More: <http://www.nepalnews.com/archive/2008/apr/apr29/news10.php>

One more rhino killed in Orang 29 April 2008

A male rhino has become the latest victim to poachers in Orang National Park. Forest security personnel recovered the rhino carcass found with three bullet injuries, early this morning. It is suspected to have been killed in the attack of April 27 near the Hathi Forest Camp in which Forest Guards retaliated, forcing the gang of poachers to flee under cover of darkness. The smart action of the forest team did not allow the poachers to take away the horn.

More: <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/details.asp?id=apr3008/at09>

Charge of the rhino brigade 1 May 2008

In another life, Peter Hall might have been a lifesaver at the beach, but for now the chairman of Hunter Hall is simply busy saving a few species facing extinction. He's Patron of the Asian Rhino Project and a Director of the International Rhino Foundation, an in coming weeks will travel to Java to hug some of the endangered horned beasts.

More: <http://business.smh.com.au/charge-of-the-rhino-brigade/20080430-29t1.html>

Rhinos Slaughtered in India's Preserve 2 May 2008

In January Indian newspaper readers and television viewers were horrified by vision of a wounded, dying female rhinoceros in the country's most protected preserve, Kaziranga National Park in Assam. For two days the rhino suffered from severe wounds on her mouth before succumbing to injuries. The rhino and its calf (which also died) had had their horns removed by poachers.

More: http://asiacentinel.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1179&Itemid=34

Forest office attacked 3 May 2008

Nearly 200 activists from the All Assam Students Union (AASU) attacked the office of the Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) here at around 12.30pm when AASU activists submitted a memorandum to the DFO as part of the union's statewide protest against the recent increase in rhino killings.

More: http://www.telegraphindia.com/1080504/jsp/northeast/story_9221490.jsp

CBI to probe rising rhino poaching cases in Assam 4 May 2008

Even as WWF-India expressed concern over recent rhino poaching incidents in Assam and Nepal, Assam Chief Minister Tarun Gogoi on Friday announced the State's decision to entrust such cases to the Central Bureau of Investigation. Five rhinos were killed by poachers in Assam and one in Nepal over the past week, three at the Rajiv Gandhi Orang National Park, and two at Kaziranga National Park.

More: <http://www.hindu.com/2008/05/04/stories/2008050455271000.htm>

Rhinos falling prey to greed 4 May 2008

Assam has always been popular with wildlife tourists but now it's attracting a different kind of visitor—one motivated by greed rather than a love for animals. As the value of rhinoceros horn spirals, so too has the price on a rhino's head. This year poachers have killed six Greater one-horned rhinos, alarming conservationists who fear a repeat of last year when 16 rhinos fell prey to poachers.

More: http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/Earth/Rhinos_falling_pre_y_to_greed/articleshow/3008707.cms

India tightens security to fight rhino poachers 7 May 2008

Authorities in India's remote northeast were increasing security in the world's biggest reserve for the Greater one-horned rhinoceros to save them from poachers. Poachers have killed at least 10 rhinos in two national parks in Assam state since January, and eight in Kaziranga National Park. "We are increasing the number of guards in Kaziranga because of a recent increase in poaching, and a probe has also been ordered," Rockybul Hussain, Assam's forest minister told Reuters.

More: <http://www.reuters.com/article/latestCrisis/idUSDEL160443>

Assam proposes laws to combat rhino poaching 13 May 2008

The Assam government has proposed tough laws including a 10-year prison term to tackle the menace of rhino poaching, officials said on Tuesday. "Chief Minister Tarun Gogoi has proposed an increase in the prison term for poachers from three to 10 years and doubling the quantum of fine on poachers to Rs 50,000," a senior Assam wildlife department official said, requesting anonymity.

More: http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/Earth/Tougher_laws_to_save_rhino/articleshow/3036295.cms

WWF-India calls for measures to save rhinos 16 May 2008

WWF-India is extremely concerned with the recent incidents of the rhino poaching in Assam and Nepal. In recent weeks five rhinos have been poached in Assam and one in Nepal. Three of the Rhinos poached in India are from the Rajiv Gandhi Orang National Park while two were poached from Kaziranga.

More: <http://southasia.oneworld.net/article/view/160500/1/>

Nepal army in dock over poaching of rhinos 16 May 2008

Nepal's army, partly responsible for conserving National Parks, is facing tough questions over poaching of at least eight Greater one-horned Asian rhinos with the suspected involvement of their 'custodians'. At least eight one-horned Asian rhinos were killed over the past one year -- four each in Chitawan and Bardiya National Parks -- and nine others are missing from Bardiya, Minister for Forest and Soil Conservation Matrika Yadav said.

More: <http://www.hindu.com/thehindu/holnus/003200805162221.htm>

People will be mobilised to protect wildlife: Yadav 16 May 2008

Minister for Forest and Soil Conservation, Matrika Prasad Yadav, has pointed out the need for a change in the way the forest and wildlife is protected since it is not possible with the old structure and method. Speaking with journalists, he said the conservation of the forest and the wildlife would be possible only through the concerted efforts of all the people.

More: http://www.gorkhapatra.org.np/detail.php?article_id=332&cat_id=4

Poaching threatens endangered wildlife 17 May 2008

As time passes by, Nepal's endangered wildlife population is decreasing thanks to unabated poaching even inside the national parks and wildlife centres. The officials at the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation (DNPWC) also accepted that the domestic and international poachers targeted the endangered wildlife with the threats of total disappearance of several species in the not too distant future in absence of effective measures to preserve them.

More: http://www.gorkhapatra.org.np/detail.php?article_id=398&cat_id=4

Rhino among factors for 'no' to coal-fired plant 21 May 2008

The continued survival of the endangered Sumatran rhino is one of the main reasons Sabah's Government shot down the proposed coal-fired power plant in Silam, Lahad Datu. State Tourism, Culture and Environment Minister Datuk Masidi Manjun, who disclosed this, said it was not an easy decision considering that Sabah is currently facing a power shortage problem.

More: <http://www.dailyexpress.com.my/news.cfm?NewsID=57670>

Assamese NRIs preparing white paper on one-horned rhino 22 May 2008

Assamese NRIs in the US who remain concerned over increasing incidents of rhino poaching in their native state are preparing a white paper on the one-horned rhinoceros. "We think volumes have been written and spoken about the ineffectiveness of the present measures to protect the rhinos in Kaziranga National Park and other sites. Now it is time to act," Rajen Barua, chief office-bearer of the Friends of Assam & Seven Sisters (FASS) with its headquarters in Houston, Texas, told IANS.

More: http://www.thaindian.com/newsportal/uncategorized/assamese-nris-preparing-white-paper-on-one-horned-rhino_10051351.html

Godmother of Sabah rhinos 26 May 2008

It is believed that only 30 Sumatran rhinos remain in the wilds of Sabah. But if Dr Nan Schaffer has her way, that alarmingly small number will soon increase. Being a rhinoceros reproduction expert who has dedicated 10 years of her life to preserving the highly-endangered animal, Dr Schaffer is also president of SOS Rhinos, a non-profit US-based organisation, which plays a crucial role in highlighting the plight of rhinos worldwide.

More: http://www.nst.com.my/Current_News/NST/Wednesday/National/2245655/Article/index_html

Cameras catch glimpse of world's rarest rhino: WWF 29 May 2008

Hidden cameras in the jungles of Indonesia's Java island have captured rare footage of the world's most threatened rhino, boosting efforts to save it from extinction, conservationists said Thursday. Two camera traps set up in the remote Ujung Kulon national park yielded new footage of the endangered Javan rhinoceros, said Adhi Hariyadi, leader of the project by the environmental group WWF.

More: http://afp.google.com/article/ALeqM5jnjR3wrvaL3GQH_bK9InBlpcERlw

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