



RHINO REINTRODUCTION PROJECT IN DUDHWA N.P.

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Dudhwa National Park was established on 1.2.1977. It is situated in Lakhimpur Kheri district of Uttar Pradesh on the Indo-Nepal border. In 1988, it was declared as a Tiger Reserve. Total area of the Park is 614 Sq Km (490 Sq Km. Core) and that of Tiger Reserve is 815 Sq Km. Out of the total N.P. area, grasslands and Wetlands & water bodies constitute 131 Sq Km.

The great one horned Rhinoceros (*Rhinoceros unicornis*) inhabited these forests some 150 years ago. On account of excessive human pressure on the forests, there had been reckless and uncontrolled hunting, flushing the creatures to extinction.

During the late seventies, a thorough survey was carried out in respect of this species. The population was found to exist in Kaziranga N.P. and in some small areas of North Bengal & Assam. To ensure better chance of survival of this animal, it was opined to have a dispersal of this species in probable and suitable habitats. Dudhwa being an old home of the species and the most suited site, was selected as the first place for its rehabilitation. Report of expert committee of IICN was put before the Indian Board for Wildlife which readily accorded its approval in 1978.

Preparations for the rehabilitation started thereafter and finally five Rhinos (Two males and 3 females) landed on the soil of

Dudhwa National Park on 1 st April 1984 from Assam. Chemical capture of animals was done in Pabitora valley adjacent to Kaziranga National Park. Due to stress and strains of transportation and pregnancy, two females died. Thus only two males and one female survived which hardly constituted a viable proportion and population for breeding.

Again arrangements were made to procure a few females from Nepal. They agreed to exchange four female Rhinos in exchange for 16 elephants. In April 1985, these females were shifted to previous group.

The capture and transportation of these females was very smooth and there was no casualty. The present situation of the strength of population is shown in the chart.

All the Rhinos are kept in an area of 20 Sq Km encircled by power fence. As the population increase, it is intended to increase the area of the fence. Activities and movement of Rhinos are watched and recorded everyday which will help in further research work.

The original plan was to introduce about 30 Rhinos but unfortunately only 7 could be introduced. Some more Rhinos need to be reintroduced to make it a viable population and also to avoid the dangers of inbreeding among them.

RHINO POPULATION IN DUDHWA N.P. (NOV, 1993)

Origin Name	Sex	Age on arrival	Date of arrival	Breeding			Death	Remarks
				1st	2nd	3rd		
1. Asm Bankey	M	7-8	31.3.84	-	-	-	-	-
2. Asm Raju	M	25	31.3.84	-	-	-	11.12.88	Fighting
3. Asm Saheli	F	30	31.3.84	'84 ab*	-	-	12.4.84	Abortion
4. Asm Asha	F	16-17	31.3.84	-	-	-	31.7.84	-
5. Asm Pavitri	F	3-4	31.3.84	'91	-	-	-	-
6. Nep Swayam	F	4-5	1.4.85	'89	10.8.91	-	-	1st calf died on 7.1.90
7. Nep Narayani	F	5	31.3.85	'87ab*	24.5.89	3.7.92	-	-
8. Nep Hemrani	F	4	1.4.85	'89	5.8.92	-	-	-
9. Nep Rapti	F	5-6	1.4.85	'89	91ab*	-	25.9.91	-
10. Kanpur Zoo Lohit	M	8	28.4.92	-	-	-	-	Returned to Kanpur Zoo after being wounded

SUMMARY

Male			Female			Calf			Abortion
Released	Dead	Alive	Released	Dead	Alive	Born	Dead	Alive	
2	1	1	7	3	4	8	2	6	3