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ASSAM

Progress Report of Forest Administra- tion in the Province of Assam for the year 1945-46

ASSAM FOREST DEPT

SHILLONG
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and Divisional Forest Officers are finding it difficult to tour in the interior as a result. The matter is being reviewed and a proposal will be submitted to Government shortly for increasing their present strength.

120. In the subordinate establishment, although the cadre has remained the same for a long time, a re-adjustment has been made in the different categories.

						Old	New
Rangers	...	...	...	...	...	48	80
Deputy Rangers	...	...	...	...	...	78	112
Foresters	...	...	...	...	...	193	127
Assistant Foresters	...	...	...	...	...	...	100
Forest Guards	...	...	...	...	...	543	443
						<hr/>	<hr/>
Total					...	862	862
						<hr/>	<hr/>

The position is not however as good as it appears to be on paper as at present the actual strength of the Rangers' cadre is only 61 and owing to lack of sufficient vacancies at Dehra Dun it will be some time before the cadre can be brought up to full strength.

121. The health of the subordinates is reported to be poor, as before, and an attempt will be made to bring about an improvement by improving sanitation, water supply and living conditions.

122. Relations between the Revenue and Forest Officers continue to be good.

CHAPTER VIII

THE PRESERVATION OF WILD LIFE AND ELEPHANT CONTROL

I.—The Preservation of Wild Life

123. All sanctuaries were maintained and there was no change in the number or area during the year. Trespass and poaching in the sanctuaries became less with the departure of the Military. Owing to lack of staff no gazetted officer could be found to hold charge of any of the sanctuaries as in the past. It is hoped that if the present proposals for the expansion of the cadre are approved this will again be possible. Due to the opening up of the surrounding country for cultivation right up to the sanctuary boundaries a number of animals which strayed out of the sanctuaries were slaughtered. One rhino was shot in protection of crops. Some have been reported to have died from natural causes and there were a few cases of rhino having been shot by poachers. One such case is pending in Court.

124. The Kaziranga Sanctuary, which is conveniently situated alongside the Trunk road, continued to be the main centre of attraction. There were 192 visitors during the year and a sum of Rs. 960 was realized as view fees and for elephant hire. The exact number of rhino in this sanctuary is not known but they are numerous and there are many calves to be seen. Visitors can usually be sure of seeing herds of 20 to 30 rhinos in a day as well as large herds of buffaloes, deer and occasionally a tiger or elephants.

125. The policy of allowing professional graziers to graze their herds in some areas within the sanctuaries and of selling the right to catch fish in certain beels was continued.

126. The Zoological Society of London have made an offer for a pair of rhino which we are attempting to capture for them.

127. There has been some agitation for disforestation of some of the Game Sanctuaries of the Province. These sanctuaries are a heritage of which the Province should be proud and only constitute a total area of 459 square miles much of which is quite unsuitable for cultivation. Rhinoceros are only found now-a-days in India in a few parts of Bengal and Assam and there is probably nowhere in the country where they can be seen so easily or in such numbers as at Kaziranga which offers unique opportunities for naturalists and scientists as well as being a centre of attraction to visitors. It is hoped that Government will continue to preserve them, particularly as the opening up of the Unclassed State forests for cultivation will soon result in an almost complete lack of areas suitable for such interesting animals. The average Reserved Forests is not suitable as such animals are not as a rule, contrary to popular belief, found in large numbers in tree-forests.

128. It seems that the educational authorities might make use of these sanctuaries for encouraging an interest in natural history amongst their pupils and it would be an easy matter to arrange camps and to provide elephants for their use.

II.—Elephant Control

(a) *Kheddah and Mela Shikar*

129. The following table gives the result of Elephant Hunting operations for the year :—

District	Method of hunting	Number of elephants captured including releases and shots			Numbers of elephants shot or released or death (Royalty payable)			Numbers of elephants shot or released (Royalty not payable)			Total No. of elephants on which Royalty is payable
		Tusker	Makhna	Female	Tusker	Makhna	Female	Tusker	Makhna	Female	
Murang	<i>Kheddah and Mela Shikar combined.</i>	22	15	41	..	..	2	..	..	..	78
Nowrangpur	<i>Mela</i>	12	13	35	1	1	1	..	..	..	60(a)
Shillong	<i>Mela</i>	4	7	7	..	..	1	..	2	..	16
Shillong	<i>Mela</i>	6	1	6	..	..	..	..	..	..	13
Shillong	<i>Mela</i>	8	12	15	..	..	1	..	..	..	35
Shillong	<i>Mela</i>	3	5	5	..	1	..	..	..	..	13
Shillong	<i>Mela</i>	6	1	16	..	..	3	..	..	1	22
Shillong	<i>Mela</i>	4	..	5	..	..	..	..	..	..	9
Shillong	<i>Kheddah and Mela Shikar combined.</i>	13	4	23	..	..	..	..	..	4	36
Total		78	58	153	1	2	8	..	2	5	282(230)
			289		11			7			

(a) Monopoly fee of Rs. 20,305 and royalty of Rs. 40,120 realized excluding royalty and monopoly fee on 1 female elephant and 1 makhna calf about which the case is pending in Court.

Statement of Wild Animals shot in Assam during 1945-46

All India serial number	Species	No.
1a	Tiger	52
1b	Tigress	13
2	Leopard or panther	51
3	Wild Cats (Species to be given if known)	35
4	Lynx	..
5	Hunting leopard or cheetah	6
6	Hyena	..
7	Wolf	..
8	Wild Dog	69
9	Martens	..
10	Ratel	..
11	Brown bear	..
12	Himalayan black bear	2
13	Malayan bear	..
14	Sloth bear	63
15	Wild Elephant	24
16	Rhinoceros Unicornis	4
17	Gaur or bison	..
18	Goyal or mithan	5
19	Banting or tsine	..
20	Wild buffalo	5
21	Urial or sharpu	..
22	Bharal or blue sheep	..
23	Ibex	..
24	Markhor	..
25	Tahr	..
26	Nilgiri wild goat or Nilgiri ibex	..
27	Serew or Himalayan great antelope	..
28	Goral	19
29	Nilgai or blue bull	..
30	Four horned antelope	..
31	Black buck	..
32	Indian gazelle or chinkara	..
33	Barking deer or kakar	409
34	Kashmir deer or hangul	..
35	Swamp deer or gond or barasingha	17
36	Brow-antlered deer or thamin	..
37	Sambar	54
38	Cheetal or spotted deer or axis deer	..
39	Hog deer or para	74
40	Musk-deer	..
41	Mouse-deer	..
42	Pangolin	..
43	Crocodile (muggar)	..
44	Charial	..
45	Python	9
46	Others (species to be given)	883
	Pigs	220
	Hares	10
	Porcupines	116
	Wild Monkeys	237
	Ape	32
	Squirrel	243
	Jackals	25