

Wildlife Times



Contents

Editorial	2
The challenges and solutions for rhino conservation	3
Directive for wildlife damage relief 2066	7
Strengthening regional cooperation for wildlife protection	9
Pangolins on the verge of extinction due to illegal trade	10
Indian national held and then released with 27 kg pangolin scales	12
Wildlife skins for sale after Haj- Saudi Arabia	13
Ukraine parliament could legalize poaching	15
Wildlife News	17

Editorial

With political influences and increasing corruption in all levels, conservation of rhino has become a thorny task for the conservationists. The death of eight rhinos in two months in June-July of this year at Chitwan National Park is an example of how rhino poaching has become a serious issue of concern at national level.

In this regard, the initiative taken by the members of parliament is appreciable, as it has become necessary that government take action against illegal wildlife poaching and trade. The report prepared by the members of parliament show their effort to save the rhinos.

The rhinos are killed for medicinal purpose according to Chinese method, to make easy money, to make handles of daggers, knives etc. Whatever maybe the reason, the market of illegal trade is so high and well organized that it is difficult to control poaching. The nexus of the traffickers are well spread and so the conservationists, armies, police and the officers of national parks are not able to get grip of the situation. The lack of cooperation between the different departments is also a reason for not able to find a concrete solution to control poaching. There is lack of communication between concerned departments and the security agencies. This poses serious threats to wild animals, as there is no cooperation and sharing of vital information among them.

The national parks and reserves need to be self sufficient with installation of new and modern technologies for anti-poaching operations. As the poachers have become hi-tech with use of modern guns and communication, the national parks and the security are still reliant on older methods, which are not effective. An efficient surveillance technique is required for control of illegal poaching and trade for which government must show enthusiasm. The wardens should have the authority to operate and monitor the security forces. The wardens are the guardians of national parks and if their orders are not executed, the national parks cannot operate smoothly.

The laws of our country are poorly executed. The court has not shown seriousness in the matter of punishing wildlife offenders the result of which is early release of traffickers and poachers. Giving minimum punishments to traffickers like Yakche who have smuggled as many as 20 rhino horns show flaws in our judicial system. Judge Girish Chandra Lal who is criticized by the media and conservationists alike for his poor verdicts is promoted as permanent judge in the Supreme Court.

-

The Pangolin is widely hunted and trafficked for its alleged medicinal properties. It has gained high popularity in national and international markets. The Pangolin's scales are used for clothing items and meat for curing diseases. It falls under conserved species. In Nepal also, its trade has highly increased because of its monetary value. The recent capture of trader carrying pangolin scales in eastern Nepal and his release clearly shows the wide spread market of pangolin. It is necessary to save pangolin that has significant ecological value.

The challenges and solutions for rhino conservation

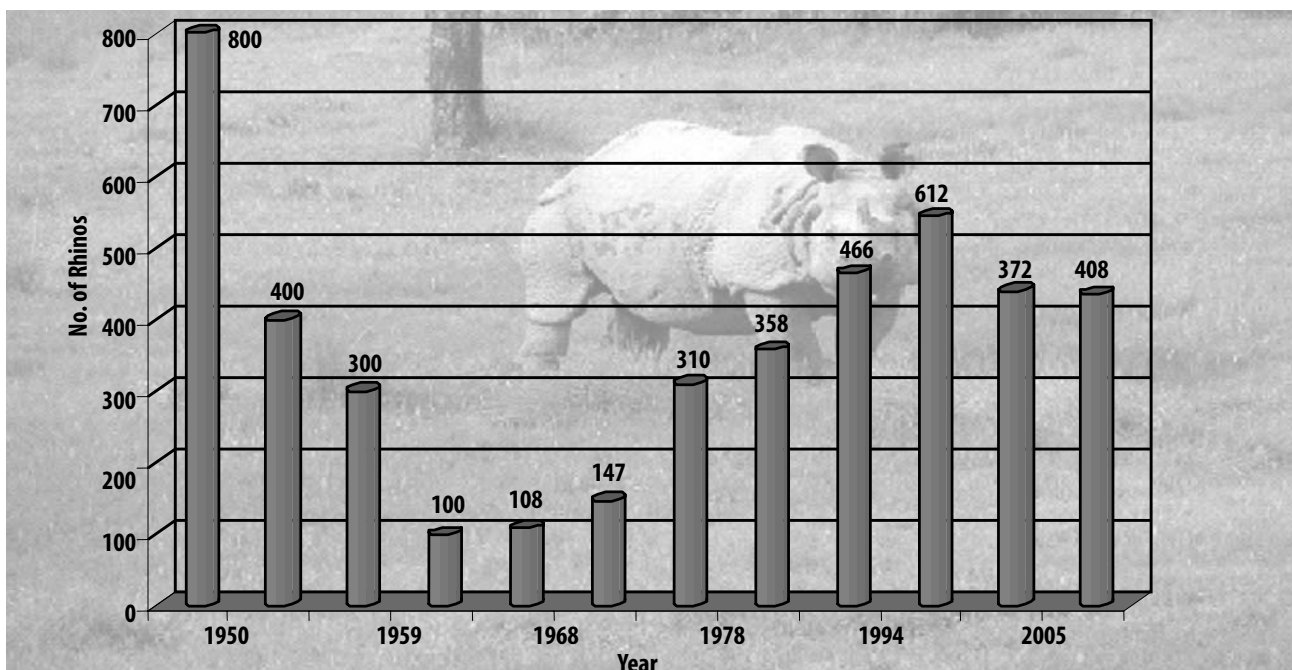
Frequent killing of rhinos take place inside Chitwan National Park and the media do their own analysis. The conservation organizations have weak influence. The government is not paying enough attention to this significant and endangered species. Also, the convicted poachers and traders are released easily. In 1950, there were 800 rhinos in the wild. It decreased drastically in the 1960s to almost 100. Many efforts were made to increase the rhino population to 612. Now the rhino population is 408 according to last census though the death of rhinos is prevalent due to illegal poaching and trade. In

this backdrop, the member of the Constituent Assembly intervened and made field visit to Chitwan National Park to understand the situation.

The members of Constituent Assembly did intensive study and investigation of death of rhinos in Chitwan National Park in June 16-19 2010. The result of the study was presented on November 3, 2010 amidst conservationists and forest ministry for feedback and advice. The field study was done by hon' Shanta Chowdhary, hon' Kul Prasad Nepal, hon' Chandra Dev Joshi, hon' Janak Kumari Chalise, hon' Padam Bahadur Rai, hon' Pattu Tharu,

hon' Laxman Prasad Ghimire and hon' Lalita Shah.

According to one of the study team member hon' Pattu Tharu, eight rhinos died every two months i.e. 20-24 rhinos die each year. The committee went to Chitwan National Park (CNP) to find out the causes behind this increasing death. The interaction in CNP found that in buffer zone, the death is less while in the secure area, the death of rhinos is more. The poachers captured are bailed out by the court and the legal policies are weak. The objective of this interactive program is to collect suggestions to formulate strong policies and strategies.



Why are rhinos killed?

The rhinos are killed for many reasons. They have economic, social and medical values. They are killed for medicinal purpose according to Chinese method, easy way to make money. The traffickers taking advantage of poor people living around the national park by giving them some money, to make handles of daggers and knives. The presence of hotels inside the national park also poses threat. The army, police, officers and anti-poaching units are not performing strong role to safeguard rhino according

to the parliamentarian team. The rhinos moving towards community forests during pregnancy make them easy targets and the farmers making electric wire fence or holes to harm the rhinos coming to their fields

One of the major problems seen was the lack of cooperation. If there is cooperation among the concerned departments, the head of security, the warden, the poaching will be less. Otherwise, it increases. The present wildlife law, which is 40 years old, is

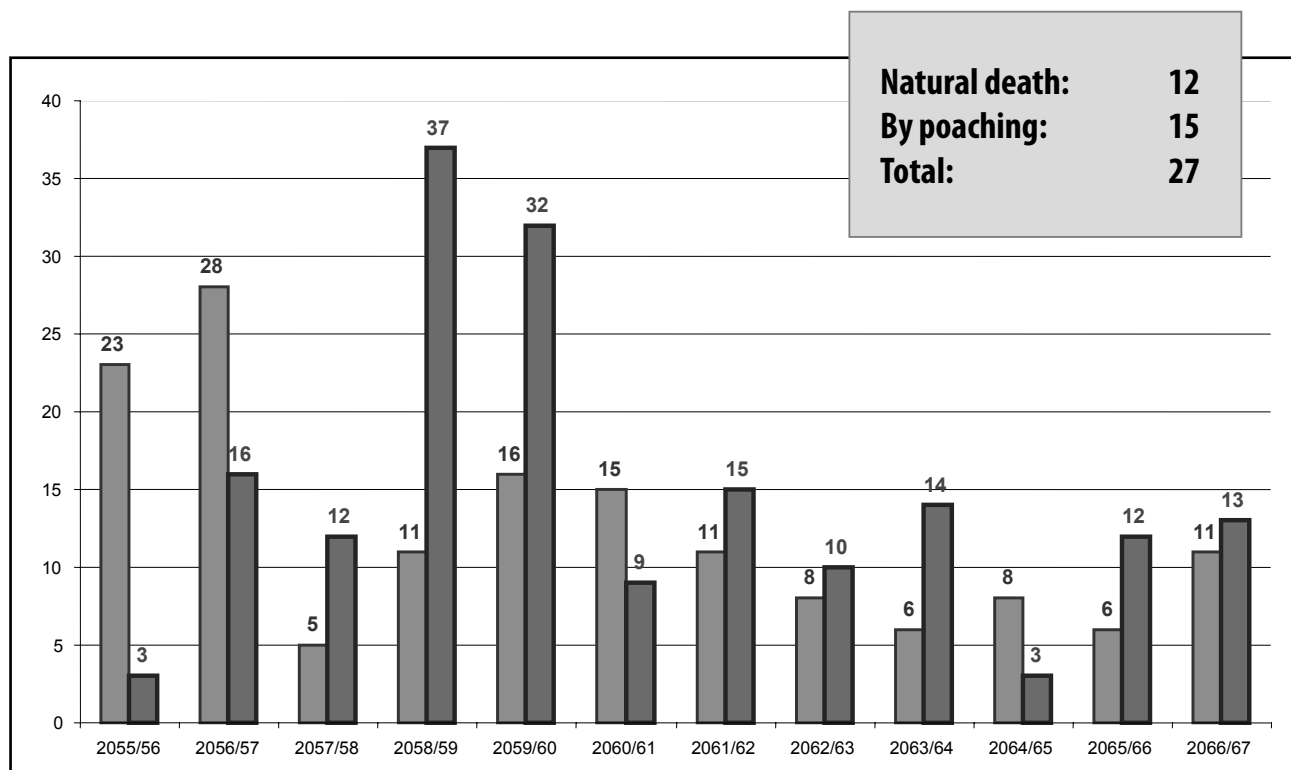
not sufficient to stop poaching. The new strategies and policies for conservation are made but they are not implemented. No proper investigation and no proper execution of the crime are done during the process of court verdict. The power of the traffickers to dominate the officers and local people prevent them from complaining. It is observed that the army often neglect the orders from the warden. No cooperation is seen between them and so the warden becomes helpless.

The problems in rhino conservation

The national park is dependent on the outdated equipments while the poachers use modern equipments for hunting. The politicians are pressurizing the legal authority to release the poachers. The number of

officers present on the park is not sufficient. In 2006, the government published an advertisement to cut off hundred army and to recruit 277 security personnel who will be trained. This action has not

yet been taken. The poachers and traffickers have such a vast network that they choose a place where there is no monitoring of the deployed security forces. The poachers stay at the hotels and move around the



jungle to locate rhino habitat. They then kill the rhinos after getting information from the paid informers sometime hotel workers.

Members of the parliament also observed some of the non-execution of rules and regulations of Park management. Of the revenues paid collected from the hotels, 50% was supposed to be used for buffer zone management but from 2007/08, the money has not been given to the buffer zone. In one of the incident cited during the presentation, in a hotel, an elephant was kept for guarding rhino but in the afternoon, the rhino was killed. This event aroused suspicion for involvement of even government officials in poaching. The maximum rhinos are killed near hotels and security check post but not around buffer zone and community forests. The traffickers illegally trade the rhinos' parts to China via Kathmandu, Nepalgunj, Dolpa, Darchula, Mahendranagar, Kakadvitta. The excess growth of *Micania (Micania mictantha)*, a type of grass which is South American invasive species, hampers the growth of food of Rhinos. The expenditure for the

management of national park exceeds the revenues collected. The pre-information about the poaching activities and the weak work of the intelligence leads to poaching of rhinos.

Actions way ahead

From the observation, the meeting made suggestions to control poaching and death of the rhinos as an outcome.

The regular and constant monitoring of the national park is necessary. A network of conservationists, police and local people should be made so that informants are wide spread and help to prevent poaching. Similarly, there should be strict quota for firewood and fodder collection for the local people.



A poached rhino in CNP

The security personnel should be given training programs to enable them to carry out



Parliament team observing rhino death sites

the security operations. The security check post should have advanced communication kit, night vision and other accessories. The use of dogs and other modern mechanisms should be used for crime investigation. The hotels should be relocated outside the park so that the illegal activities and movements of the people are restricted. Most of the people of the Buffer Zone have requested to move the hotels outside the national park but no action has been taken. The photographs of the poachers and other related people should be posted at public places and newspapers. The issue of compensation is always an important issue as local people is promised compensation but they receive it either late or not at all. The compensation should be paid on time. In addition, the entry fee for foreigners should be

Rhino Translocation

S.No.	Translocated Year	Translocated National Park	Male	Female	Toal
1	1986	Bardia	8	5	13
2	1991	Bardia	8	17	25
3	1999	Bardia	4		4
4	2000	Bardia	8	8	16
5	2000	Suklaphanta	1	3	4
6	2001	Bardia	2	3	5
7	2002	Bardia	5	5	10
8	2003	Bardia	3	7	10
Total			39	4887	



increased from \$7 to \$15-20 for entry in the park which can be spent for security purpose. Public awareness program should be executed. The provision should be made to fulfill the need of extra officers sufficient for monitoring. The dedicated employee should be awarded.

The growth of *Micania*, which affects the growth of food of rhinos, should be restricted. In addition, the grassland needs to be managed for rhino habitat.

One-day decisions of Appellate court

One of the major problems to control poaching is the minimum punishment given to the convicted poachers and traffickers. Judge Girish Chandra Lal,




Judge Girish Chandra Lal

while serving as a Judge of appellate court of Hetauda gave decision of 42 cases in a single day and made headlines by giving minimum punishment. Judge Lal, just a few days before his retirement, gave decision for more than 100 people involved in wildlife cases. The detailed information of his verdicts was published on November 9, 2010 on a leading newspaper. According to the newspaper, his decisions were against the National Park and Wildlife Conservation Act, 2029. According to this Act, the person involved in the killing and the person helping both are given same punishment.

But Judge Lal gave only 5 years in prison to the people helping in the crime while the killers were given 10 years in prison. Also, Chitwan National Park had gathered

sufficient evidence against hard core poachers but Judge Lal mocked the court by not taking fine of one lakh from any of the criminals. He was completely biased and gave partial judgments. He did not even come clean in the media to speak for himself. He was considered for the position of permanent judge in the Supreme Court of which conservationist fraternities and Medias condemned. The judiciary council neglected the plead of the conservationists and now Judge Lal has been approved for the position of permanent Judge.




डिसिबिएल सम्पत्ति कारोवार बचत खाता

वाषिक 6.5%*

ब्याज

का दरले दैनिक गोजदातमा ब्याज दिईने

- घरजग्गा सरिद/बिज्री जदा नुसानी सिव/दिन सजिलो
- सि रूलक जुफ फर पेगेण्ट सेवा
- सि रूलक स्टिचम कार्ड
- सि रूलक चेकबुक सुविधा
- सि रूलक स्टेटमेण्ट
- ट्रान्सलर चेक तथा ड्राफ्ट बनाउदा बैक कमिशनमा 50% छुट
- ब्युततम गोजदात राख्नु नपार्ने




डिसिबिएल बैंक लिमिटेड
DCBL Bank Limited
(भोपाल राट, कैलाश टा कल्लो उपजकाकाज हात संस्था)

प्रमाण नमबरेक : प्रमाणित लेखा ब्यान्किंग प्रमाणित सेवा । ०१-५५२०००० ५५२०००० ५५२०००० ५५२००००
 फोन : ५५२०००० E-mail : info@dcbl.com.np, Swire : DCBLNPA


ग्राहक सेवा : २४ घण्टा सेवा । ०१-५५२०००० ५५२०००० ५५२०००० ५५२०००० । ०१-५५२०००००
 ग्राहक सेवा : २४ घण्टा सेवा । ०१-५५२०००० ५५२०००० ५५२०००० ५५२०००० । ०१-५५२०००००
 ग्राहक सेवा : २४ घण्टा सेवा । ०१-५५२०००० ५५२०००० ५५२०००० ५५२०००० । ०१-५५२०००००
 ग्राहक सेवा : २४ घण्टा सेवा । ०१-५५२०००० ५५२०००० ५५२०००० ५५२०००० । ०१-५५२०००००
 ग्राहक सेवा : २४ घण्टा सेवा । ०१-५५२०००० ५५२०००० ५५२०००० ५५२०००० । ०१-५५२०००००
 ग्राहक सेवा : २४ घण्टा सेवा । ०१-५५२०००० ५५२०००० ५५२०००० ५५२०००० । ०१-५५२०००००
 ग्राहक सेवा : २४ घण्टा सेवा । ०१-५५२०००० ५५२०००० ५५२०००० ५५२०००० । ०१-५५२०००००
 ग्राहक सेवा : २४ घण्टा सेवा । ०१-५५२०००० ५५२०००० ५५२०००० ५५२०००० । ०१-५५२०००००
 ग्राहक सेवा : २४ घण्टा सेवा । ०१-५५२०००० ५५२०००० ५५२०००० ५५२०००० । ०१-५५२०००००

Helping Reach Destiny Together



Directive for wildlife damage relief 2066



वन्यजन्तुबाट हुने क्षतिको
राहत सहयोग सम्बन्धि
निर्देशिका
२०६६



विषाद सरकार
वन तथा भू-संरक्षण पन्चायत
राष्ट्रिय निकुन्ज तथा वन्यजन्तु संरक्षण विभाग



Wild animals (elephants, rhinos, tigers, leopard, snow leopard, bear, wild boar and gharial) move from natural habitats (national forests, national parks, wildlife reserve and buffer zones) to human settlements destroying the properties, which is very frequent. The government does not have provision for compensation to the victims of wild animals' intrusion. This has led to conflict between forest/park/reserve and the local administration. The provision of relief for the families of the victim can surely help in the conservation process.

The entry of wild animals in human settlement has led to damage in the livelihood of the local people. The local people protest in front of offices and administrations and pressurize to take action such that conservation cannot take place smoothly. Taking into consideration the damages on properties and human lives, ministry of forest and soil conservation and department of national parks and wildlife conservation (DNPWC) formulated this directive.

Damage from wildlife: It includes harm to human lives,

livestock, crops, houses/sheds from elephants, rhinos, tigers, leopards, snow leopards, and bears.

There are four different types of injury and damage: Human injury, livestock injury, storage damage, houses/shed damage, crops and fruits damage.

The document needed in case of injury due to wild animal attack, the documents needed are photo of the victim, doctor report, certificate from health post and medicine bills, certificate from related VDC or Municipality, certificate from buffer zone management committee or community forest management committee as per the requirement. The documents needed in case of death of Nepali citizen due to wild animal attack are same as the injury with addition of death

certificate, post mortem report and police report. Similarly, if the case is death of livestock or destruction of crops, fruits or sheds due to animal attack are letter from the owner, certificate from related VDC or Municipality, certificate from buffer zone management committee or community forest's management committee as per the requirement are needed document.

There is a provision for compensation for the victim. For minor injuries, the compensation is Rs. 5000 while for serious injury the amount is Rs. 50,000. If a person is dead, the family gets upto Rs. 1,50,000.

For the death of livestock, the owner gets upto Rs. 10,000. If a house or shed is destroyed by wild animal, the provision

is set to receive Rs. 4,000. For storage, it is up to Rs. 5,000. For destruction of crops and fruits, the compensation is Rs. 5,000.

Institutional set-up

The destruction and injuries due to wild animal attacks would be investigated by DNPWC and the money required for compensation should be managed before hand. The committee would be formed in every district to provide relief to the victims and injured. The committee would include one person from each of these categories; district forest office, member of buffer zone, member of community forest, representative from vdc or municipality, representative from agriculture development office or livestock development office (if available).

SAZARC Conference

On the bright sunny morning of 22nd November 2010, the inauguration ceremony of 10th Annual Conference of South Asian Zoo Association for Regional Cooperation (SAZARC) took place inside the Central Zoo premise at Jawalakhel. It was an event attended by national and international dignitaries. The SAZARC meeting is held every year with participants from SAARC countries; India, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Nepal. This year, Nepal was the host country. Central Zoo organized the conference in partnership with Department of National Park Wildlife Conservation (DNPWC) and National Trust for Nature Conservation (NTNC).

Sarita Gyawali, Program Manager of Central Zoo welcomed the guests. Honorable Speaker Subash Chandra Nembang was the chief guest and inaugurated the ceremony. The students from Gyanodaya Bal Batika School performed on the occasion.

Zoo management is not easy task. The zoo director and staffs have to deal with endangered animals, nervous animals that are very delicate and other emergencies everyday. Zoo director has a very critical position. She said that the zoo management has to do better. We are facing crisis in biodiversity. We will not be able to see many animals in the future except in zoos. She added that the conference of SAZARC would deal mainly three topics: emergency response that includes animal escape, attack to visitors, vets, zookeeper's strike, feeding animals, animals' emerging diseases etc. Another topic is climate change as zoos have animals from different climatic zones. With the recent change of the climate, the animals are having difficulty to adapt.

Phanindra Kharel, officiating Director General of DNPWC said that this is a platform to share information among the participants from different countries for conserving animals whether ex-situ or in-situ.

Juddha Bahadur Gurung, Member Secretary of NTNC delivered his vote of thanks. Ram Prasad Lamsal, Joint Secretary of Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation ended the ceremony by adding that this conference will set new dimension for zoo management.

SAZARC was founded on 4th August 2000 by Zoo Outreach Organization headed by Shelly Walker. She talked about her experience of first meeting of SAZARC, which was joint effort from Shelly Walker, R.K. Shrestha, founding member of SAZARC and other conservationists. The objective of SAZARC is to make zoos better.

Strengthening regional cooperation for wildlife protection

On 3rd November 2010, the 1st consultation meeting on Strengthening Regional Cooperation for Wildlife Protection, IDA project of World Bank was held at National Trust on Natural Conservation, (NTNC) Khumaltar, Lalitpur. Honorable Minister for Forest and Soil Conservation Mr. Deepak Bohara chaired the program. Dr. Siddhartha Bajracharya, Director of NTNC welcomed all the participants.

On opening statement, Honorable Minister Mr. Deepak Bohara, Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation, gave background information on the development of the project and highlighted the funding mechanism for the project. As it is fully government owned project, all the success, and lesson learnt of the past national parks and wildlife conservation initiatives were addressed. He also pointed out the hindrances and obstacles such as management of open border between India and Nepal; free movement of animals; encroachment of conservation land; wildlife trade.

Mr. Krishna Prasad Acharya, Head, Environment Division, MoFSC highlighted the issues and challenges of the project

such as illegal wildlife trade network, high demand of body part of animals, and Nepal used as transit of wildlife trade. He also discussed collaborative approaches and opportunity, joint action with experience and resource sharing; trans border coordination on execution of program with continuous, regular and rigorous consultation on the execution and monitoring of the activities of the project, implementation of conservation approach and strategies protecting the species, ecosystem and landscape under global coalition of conservation of national parks and wild life and plants. He also shared three component of the project as Capacity building, promotion of wildlife conservation and coordination of the project.

Under the MoFSC, there will be a National Steering Committee with the project secretariat at NTNC where as Project Management Committee PMC of the Department National Parks and Wildlife Conservation DNPWC and Department of Forestry NSC under Department of Forestry will do the execution of the project, he added.

After the technical presentation, the floor was open for discussion

on regional IDA project. During this session Ukesh Bhuj, Dr. Hem Sagar Baral and Dr. Tirtha Bahadur Shrestha put forward their concerns regarding involvement of China and India in the project; identifying international stakeholders; gap, necessity timeframe of the project and functioning mechanism of the forum (as IDA). As part of the clarification, it was informed that Bangladesh has initiated project of 12 million and that of India is 60 million as country-based program. In regional program Nepal, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka are jointly working on the Regional IDA project in which India will also become a member later.

Ms. Stephanie Borsboom, from World Bank also put forward her remarks followed by closing remarks from Juddha B. Gurung, Member secretary, NTNC. There were about 50 participants from governmental, non-governmental, army and police department and other concerns institutions present in the meeting.



Pangolins on the verge of extinction due to illegal trade

By Tan Cheng Li

The illegal trade in pangolin meat and scales has caused the scaly anteaters to disappear from forests. Catching pangolins requires no special skills; anybody who manages to locate a pangolin can easily capture it without the use of a weapon or trap. Fuelled by the voracious demand for pangolin meat and scales, mostly from consumers in China, pangolins are being wiped out from its native habitats in South-East Asia.



Eaten to extinction: A wildlife enforcement official showing frozen pangolins – from a cache of 41 live and 26 frozen animals – seized from a house in Jalan Raja Uda, Butterworth, Penang, in April.

The massive scale of the illegal trade in the docile, toothless animal was revealed following an analysis of logbooks seized in February by Sabah Wildlife Department (SWD) from a trafficker's premises in Kota Kinabalu. The records revealed that an astonishing 22,000 pangolins and over 834 kg of pangolin scales were traded in Sabah over a 14-month period.

The SWD had given Traffic, the wildlife trade monitoring body, access to the logbooks, which detailed the volume, weight, source and prices of pangolins purchased by the syndicate between May 2007 and January 2009. The findings are detailed in the report, A Preliminary Assessment Of Pangolin Trade In Sabah.

The animals had been sourced from Kota Kinabalu, Keningau, Kota Belud, Kota Marudu, Ranau, Tawau, Tamparuli, Sandakan, Sipitang, Papar and Beaufort. The logbooks showed that the dealer paid around RM115 per kg for pangolins and RM180 per kg for pangolin scales. This means a pangolin averaging around 5kg in weight would have fetched the poacher or intermediary a lucrative RM575. Based on these prices

and data in the logbooks, the syndicate would have spent around RM571,214 per month to purchase trapped pangolins.

“The detailed record-taking by this criminal syndicate has given us a unique insight into the volume of endangered pangolins being illegally traded in the region,” says Noorainie Awang Anak, senior programme officer with Traffic South-East Asia, who wrote the report with Sandrine Pattel.

In decline

Pangolins play an ecological role in the wild. As natural controllers of termites and ants, they save us millions of dollars a year in pest destruction. There are eight species of pangolin worldwide. Four are found in Asia: the thick-tailed pangolin (*Manis crassicaudata*), Philippine pangolin (*M. culionensis*), Chinese pangolin (*M. pentadactyla*) and Sunda pangolin (*M. javanica*). Malaysia hosts only one species, the Sunda or Malayan pangolin.

The Sunda pangolin, found in much of South-East Asia, is protected under Malaysian law. No international trade in any Asian pangolin species

is permitted under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).



Prized for their meat and scales, the Sunda pangolin is being hunted to extinction. – Pic by Stephen Hogg

Despite this, pangolins are widely hunted and trafficked for their alleged medicinal properties. South-East Asia has a long history of consumption of pangolins. There were reports of Java sending pangolins to China even back in 1925.

Asian pangolins are currently collected and traded at an alarming rate throughout their range to meet the demand from consumers in China, who consider the meat a delicacy and use the scales as traditional cures for asthma, backache and arthritis. Currently, all pangolins in illegal trade are wild-sourced as they cannot be captive-bred on a commercial scale.

As few studies have been carried out on the species, little is known about its distribution and population. But because of their low reproduction rate – females generally give birth to only one offspring per year – and over-hunting, scientists believe pangolins are at high

risk of extinction. According to the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), numbers of wild Sunda pangolins have halved in the past 15 years.

The Sunda pangolin was added to the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species in 1996 under the category of “lower risk/near threatened”. As their numbers continue to decline, the species was pushed to the “endangered” category in 2008.

Previous studies by Traffic stated that as populations of the Sunda and the Chinese pangolin are depleted in Indochina, dealers are now sourcing the animals from their last remaining strongholds in this region: Indonesia and Malaysia. It also found that the pangolin trade had spread to Sabah and Sarawak due to a decline of pangolin population in Peninsular Malaysia. Recent seizures in China indicate that pangolins are being sourced from African countries.

The new report from Traffic included results of a survey of 13 pangolin hunters from the west coast of Sabah, who gave interesting insight into the illegal trade. Some have been poaching pangolins for almost 10 years.

The hunters are aware of the illegality of hunting pangolins, and that the animal could become extinct due to hunting and forest clearance. But one hunter admitted that the lucrative price made it difficult

to stop hunting. They sell their catch to intermediaries, receiving between RM50 and RM95 per kg for pangolins and RM150 and RM180 for the scales. One hunter said juvenile pangolins are preferred, especially newborns or fetuses, which can fetch up to RM2,000 each. In Peninsular Malaysia, prices of live pangolins range from RM30 to RM330 per kg, depending on season and location.



Born to be hunted: A one-day-old baby pangolin seeking refuge with its mother. Though totally protected, pangolins continue to be poached to feed a lucrative market.

Policing efforts

Pangolins are shipped frozen from Sumatra to China and Vietnam but in Peninsular Malaysia, they are generally transported alive by land through Thailand to China. The report says the transportation of live pangolins takes place under inhumane conditions, with the animals kept in tightly wrapped bags. When the animals are confiscated by authorities, they are weak and in poor condition. The subsequent release of confiscated animals is usually done without planning or monitoring, so chances of survival are low.



Pangolins have evolved their scales to protect themselves from predators but the scales are now contributing to the species' decline, as they are a highly sought-after folk remedy.

Traffic says the key to tackling the pangolin crisis is better enforcement and monitoring of the illegal trade. There have been successful prosecutions in all 19 pangolin-related seizures carried out between 2002 and 2008 in Sabah. The biggest

case involved the seizure of a container lorry carrying 100 polystyrene boxes filled with 530 frozen pangolins. The two men arrested in this case were each sentenced to six months' jail and a fine of RM9,000.

“The pangolin smuggling crisis can only be addressed through improved law enforcement and better information on the criminal syndicates behind the trade,” said Noorainie. However, enforcement efforts are now stymied by a lack of funding, capacity and staffing. For example, the authors were informed that patrol boats remained in harbor as there was no money for fuel. Short-handed, the department found

it difficult to patrol the whole of Sabah. Moreover, wildlife criminal syndicates are already well developed and can be dangerous.

The authors of the report also stressed the need for more information on hunting habits, local markets and links to the international trade. They urged for educational and awareness-raising campaigns to complement law enforcement efforts. For instance, local communities should be taught about the role of pangolins in the ecosystem and the threats they face, and could be roped in to report wildlife crimes.

Indian national held and then released with 27 kg pangolin scales

Dharan, Nov 11: Police have arrested an Indian national for possessing pangolin scales which he allegedly intended to smuggle to China.

Furchung Bhote, 40, of Mirik in Darjeeling district, India was nabbed by the police at the Tinkune check post in Dharan-8 Wednesday evening with 27 kilograms of scales of the endangered mammal during a routine check.

He had stuffed the scales in two sacks and was coming to Dharan from Itahari on a bus (Na 2 Kha 6777). According to the Chief of the Area Police Office Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) Deepak Regmi.

The Indian national, however, claimed that the scales did not belong to him. “The sacks are not mine. I was coming to Dharan to meet a relative. The conductor pointed toward me saying that I may have brought the sacks and the police arrested me,” Bhote told.

But the conductor insisted that Bhote had brought the sacks on a rickshaw before boarding the bus.

“Bhote has said that the sacks don't belong to him possibly to avoid punishment. The conductor has given a statement that Bhote himself brought the sacks on a rickshaw, loaded them on the bus and paid the fare,” DSP Regmi revealed.

Police said the scales are traded at around Rs 15,000 per kilogram but the same scales fetch as much as Rs 60,000 per kilogram in China due to its use in medicines and jackets. Police have handed over Bhote to the Area Forest Office for further action.

The District Forest Office Sunsari gave permission to investigate the matter by putting Bhote under custody for 15 days. Bhote was under the supervision of armed forest security branch of Sunsari. Local Forest Office head Mohammad Jayanuddin said that the district forest officer himself came to the branch to add up the time for investigation.

Bhote still has denied that the sack containing pangolin scale is not his according to Jayanuddin. The investigation is going on. He said that a big nexus is involved in the trade.

One and half year ago, police had captured four people with about one quintal of pangolin scales. They bailed out after putting eight lakh rupees as bail payment.

Furchung Bhote has been bailed out. He was released after paying two lakhs rupees said Ambika Adhikari.

Furchung told the police he was from Mirik, Darjeeling but after the investigation, it was found out that he lived in Sankhuwasabha.

Pangolin falls under conserved species and anyone involved with its trade is fined 50,000 or 15 years imprisonment according to National Park and Wildlife Conservation Act 2029.

The police claim that the pangolin scales are transported to China via Sankhuwasabha.

Wildlife skins for sale after Haj- Saudi Arabia



Animal skins and leather products are offered for sale on a sidewalk in Mina.

MINA: The business of trading in animal skins – including skins of endangered creatures – was booming in the tent city of Mina.

Pilgrims were seen gathering at roadside shops to buy exotic animal skins and products made from them, including wallets, ladies' purses, handbags, belts, sandals, shoes and walking sticks.

Many of the species of animals whose parts have made their way into the after-Haj shopping frenzy are not only illegal to sell in Saudi Arabia but can also lead to stiff penalties and confiscations if discovered in luggage of people entering Europe, North America or other countries with a strict regime against the import of these products.

Still, the skins of these endangered or protected species are flaunted openly by merchants cashing in on the shopping bonanza that occurs as the Haj season winds down.

Among the products being sold are the skins of pythons and other reptiles, tigers and even the critically endangered Arabian leopard whose habitat has been reduced to mere pockets of remote terrain in Yemen. This leopard is listed as a (so-called) Appendix I critically endangered species, according to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, or CITES.

Saudi Arabia and Yemen are among the hundreds of CITES signatory countries, meaning they have pledged to crack down on the sale of endangered animal parts. The Kingdom signed the CITES treaty in 1996; Yemen signed a year later.

“The spotted leopard is virtually extinct and I have to wander for weeks in the jungle and mountains in the south of Yemen to find them. Then hunting them is very difficult and risky, as they are very intelligent, fast and dangerous,” said Abdul Samad Habshi, who says his nickname back home is The Skin Man.

“What we have brought here is just to cover our Haj expenses. Our main business is bigger. Processed python skin sells for about \$4 a square meter, while a crocodile pelt can bring in between \$40 and \$170 depending on its size — a leopard for \$300,” said Mahad Al-Habshi, Abdul’s 35-year-old son who said his father and he also tan the skins of crocodiles and pythons brought over from Africa.

The son said the meat is sold locally and the skins are exported to India, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Turkey and China.

The father admitted that the number of skins he has been able to acquire has declined over the years, but, “this is a business we can’t stop because it is very lucrative.”

This trade in Arabian leopard hides is restricted to a few tribes and nomadic groups in Yemen and at the border of Saudi Arabia. Some estimates put the wild population of the Arabian leopard at only 200.

Abdul Rab Al-Shammari, a security official manning the camps in Mina, said in all the years he has worked Haj he has “seen it all” when it comes to the illegal sale of endangered animal parts that are smuggled into the Kingdom, often with

little effort in disguising or hiding the items.

“We are not supposed to confiscate these items though we know they should not be here,” said Al-Shammari. “But this is not our job.”

Al-Shammari said some people smuggle the skins of exotic animals knowing that the items are illegal. Others do it unintentionally.

“But this lack of awareness is not just a Saudi issue,” he said.

Business was booming at Mina, but some pilgrims recognized that the sale of these products contributes to the demise of the species from which they derive.

“We should not buy such products,” said Wahaj Firdausi, an American pilgrim. “This will further give incentive to smugglers and hunters to kill these animals and push them to extinction.”

But other pilgrims had a different take on the sale of animal skin.

“Why should I bother when they are up for sale. I am not killing them,” said Turkish pilgrim Omaira Hameed. “If I won’t buy somebody else will.”

Ukraine parliament could legalize poaching

Ukrainian lawmakers, many of them avid hunters, could soon adopt a law that essentially legalizes poaching, environmentalists warn.

A draft law registered in parliament on Oct. 22 proposes amendments to existing legislation regulating hunting at protected nature reserves. Party of Regions parliamentarians Volodymyr Makeyenko and Leonid Klimov registered the bill that will allow hunting on so called “human landscapes” attached to nature preserves – areas where people have already altered ecological patterns toward servicing needs for food, fuel, fiber, timber, shelter, trade and recreation.

If adopted in its current form, environmentalists say the

legislative changes will only exacerbate widespread wildlife poaching and lead to further encroachment on what little habitat is left for Ukraine’s endangered species and vanishing wildlife.

Currently hunting is banned on all of Ukraine’s 7,607 nature reserves that occupy 3.3 million hectares covering 5.4 percent of the country’s overall territory, according to the United Nations Development Program.

“The law essentially legalizes poaching,” said Volodymyr Boreiko, director of the Kyiv Eco-Culture Center.

The environmental conservationist said that 20-70 percent of various game animals have disappeared in the last 15 years due to unchecked hunting.

Populations of elk have dropped by 70 percent, wild boar by 32 percent, wild duck by 26 percent, deer by 31 percent, moufflon by 60 percent, wild geese by 58 percent and foxes by 17 percent, Boreiko said.

Over the past 15 years, Ukraine’s “Red Book” of endangered

species has increased its listed species by almost a third, the UNDP said.

According to Boreiko, hunting is allowed on 78 percent of Ukraine’s territory for different kinds of wildlife, which he said, should be more than enough for serious game hunters.

“Instead of creating new nature reserves, instead of expanding the territory of existing ones where wildlife can reproduce unhindered, MPs Makeyenko and Klimov want to reduce this insignificant area of their lives where they have sanctuary,” he said.

Makeyenko and Klimov could not be reached for comment.

Ukraine occupies 6 percent of Europe’s territory, but it possesses about 35 percent of Europe’s biodiversity, according to the United National Development Program.

According to Boreiko, some 150,000 annual cases of poaching are recorded by authorities. He said annually there are actually 15 million cases of poaching.



This photograph of a hunter with two dead wolves is seen on a website that offers hunting tours in Ukraine.

Black list of Ukraine's trophy game hunters

Name of politician	Alleged poaching act
Ihor Bakai	The former head of state-owned gas monopoly Naftogaz, Bakai is alleged to have organized Ukraine's first elite hunting club valued at \$2 million where the nation's top government officials shot at wild boar with automatic guns from hunting towers. The Trakhtemyrovske hunting entity is alleged to have more than 40 different hunting weapons valued at \$500,000.
Leonid Kuchma	Former President Leonid Kuchma in 2002-2003 allegedly organized poaching hunts in a Crimean nature reserve for then President Vladimir Putin. Environmentalists allege that during his presidency a network of "imperial hunts" were given sanction throughout Ukraine. Safaris were organized in protected nature reserves in Crimea and Azaov-Sivashky Natioanl Park.
Oleksandr Volkov	The Party of Regions member of parliament is alleged to own 30 hunting weapons valued at \$200,000. He is alleged to be an avid hunter favoring Ukrainian wild boar and deer as well as African safari hunts for giraffes, rhinoceros and zebras.
Valeriy Samoplavsky	A former member of parliament, Samoplavsky was also in the 1990s the minister of the forestry industry and is a reputed supporter and organizer of "imperial hunts" in Ukraine.
Leonid Kravchuk	Contemporary Ukraine's first president, Kravchuk is reputed to be an avid supporter of game hunting in Ukraine. In one interview, Kravchuk allegedly said: "A hunter kills a wild boar for Hr. 4,000. If the boar knows that he is being killed for this amount of money then he'd be happy...". It was during his presidency that "imperial hunts" blossomed.
Nestor Shurfrych	A former member of parliament and emergencies situation minister, Shurfych is credited for organizing one of Ukraine's first private safaris. He even tried making the Velykodobriansky National Zoological Wildlife Preserve into his own private safari hunting grounds.
Volodymyr Sivkovych	A former parliamentarian and aide to former President Leonid Kuchma, Sivkovych is a reputed game hunter. In one television show, he was shown killing a roe deer after which he was shown smiling while dragging its bloody carcass on the ground. He often voted against legislative bills that prevented poaching in Ukraine.
Yevhen Kushnyariov	Killed while illegally hunting in eastern Ukraine, this former member of parliament was an avid game hunter. He was shot dead accidentally while engaging in offseason hunting in Kharkiv oblast. Another member of parliament, Dmytro Shentsev from the Party of Regions was with him on the hunt.



Menace of the Blue Bull



Butwal, October 27. Twenty-nine passengers of Agni Air Jet Stream 49 were saved from the accident when a Blue Bull was seen on the runway. The pilot Roshan Koirala saved the passengers but could not save the Blue Bull. The animal died immediately after the rear wheel of the jet hit it. 'If the blue bull was hit by the front wheel, there would have been a major accident' confirmed Agni Air Bhairawaha Branch Head Sujit Shrivastav. 'Fortunately, even though the animal hit the rear wheel, the pilot did a safe landing' he added.

The grasses found in the vicinity of the Gautam Buddha Airport

in Bhairawaha has become hiding place for blue bull, boar and jackal who come out on the runway leading to possibility of accidents. On August 16, the airplane of Buddha Air flight number 856 flying Bhairawaha to Kathmandu was saved from an accident.

At six in the evening, the ATR plane of Buddha Air during take off was disrupted by the presence of blue bull on the runway. The pilot Pramod Prasad Thapa handled the situation by flying the plane before reaching the take off point and maintained the safety of 45 passengers.

The blue bull is seen during take off and landing of flights on the runway and the police and armies recruited have to take them off the runway. The airlines have complained to the Aviation Authority to remove the grasses. But the authority have been oblivious to their complains. 'The grassy bushes could lead to serious accident but the Aviation Authority does not show seriousness to the problem' said Darshan Ghimire, in charge of Buddha Air Bhairawaha.

The airport administration has grown tall grass (khar) near the airport as alternate income generating activity, so the habitat of blue Bull, boar and jackal has increased. The Administration sells khar to earn two lakhs yearly and so they have not given serious thinking to the increasing danger of accident. The head of Gautam Buddha Airport Devendra Upadhyay said that due to lack of machine to cut grass, the cleaning has not been possible. He also said 'we have not grown grass just for the purpose of profit; the problem won't arise from next year'.

The Gautam Buddha Airport was established in 1966 with

the help of Indian government and the Nepali government has planned to develop it as an international airport.

Rana period's documents in Deer's skin



Lamjung October 29. Seventy-seven years old official documents have been found covered in the deer's skin in an office in Lamjung.

In the office of district land revenue, there are three dozens of deer's skin for covering the documents. The Lokta (Daphne Bhoula) Nepali papers were used for writings in 1933.

The Rana regime (1846-1950) used deer's skin for cover and Lokta Nepali paper where bamboos were used to write and the documents have not been destroyed till date.

The head of Land Revenue Office of Lamjung Suresh Dhakal said that such old documents could be found only at Lamjung land revenue office. 'I have worked in many districts but these old documents are found only here. In other offices, the historical documents are not found in such good conditions,' he said.

The office has kept the official documents of 30 vdc in a very organized manner. The document has written about the owners of the lands and how the lands have been allocated in detail.

In 1964 and 1986, the land reform was done on the basis of these documents. 'These documents are very brief and easier to read, so the reform was done on this basis' said Ishwor Basaula, Assistant Officer of land Revenue Office. He added, the land measurement is done with the help of the writings.

The documents have become historical. Therefore, everyone pays attention to these documents when they go to the office. The deer's skin are durable for hundred of years. So the skins were used to preserve the documents.

Three operations of Army in Bardia National Park

Chisapani, November 2. The Army recruited as the security of the Bardia National Park, Jwala Dal battalion, has started three level of operation in the park. The army has started sweeping, search and destroy and ambushing.

The sweeping is the process of brushing up the overall area. Search and destroy includes destruction of any suspected materials. Ambushing is to wait for the poachers where poaching is frequent. Battalion Chief Prakash Deuja said that before the operation, there were

numerous poachers but now their number has decreased.

The locals said that before there were many cases of hunting and poaching in the Babai and Karnali regions while now the condition has improved. The security posts are re-established. There have been increase in two posts in the buffer zone. The number of posts is now 20. This has increased the efficiency of the security. Three months ago, the government handed over 'standard operation procedure' to the army after which the situation has improved.

The security army of Bardia National Park sought help from security of Banke National Park. According to Deuja, there will be increase in four more posts next year. He said that there is need of three posts in highly sensitive Babai region alone. Babai and Karnali are important habitats of rhinos and tigers.

Deuja said that Naditatiya panch post, Babai valley and area bordering Surkhet have high surveillance. In East-West Highway, the army has strict checking of vehicles. After the active involvement of the army, there is stop in the availability of dry meat in the market. The Park collects information from the four hundred boys of the local clubs.

According to Deputy Conservation Officer Ramesh Thapa, the crime has decreased after the vigorous involvement of the army. In the last winter,

a tiger was killed by poisoning in Katarniya ghat Wildlife Sanctuary of India. After the incident, no other wild animals' death has occurred. The increase in number of rhinos and tigers have been felt.

Wild animal's part not recognized

Kathmandu, November 3. National forensic laboratory could not recognize the bile of bear such that the traffickers caught red handed could be released.

Mingmar Tamang of Rasuwa, Goljud-4 and Kubad Gurung of Mustang, Marpha-4 were caught with rhino's horn and bear's bile in Gongabu. The rhino's horn has already been proven counterfeit. They have to be released, as the bear's bile has not been recognized.

National forensic laboratory, Natural History Museum and Department of National Park and Wildlife Conservation has not yet been able to prove the authenticity of the part. It has become a shame for the Forest Ministry not be able to prove the legitimacy of the part.

According to the DFO of Kathmandu Man Bahadur Khadka, the accused are in the Central jail. He said that if the crimes were not identified, the endangered animals would be more in danger.

The presence of "Orsoded oxocolic acid" determines the authenticity of the bear's bile. The government does not have

chemicals and the equipment to determine the identity. Scientist Jiwan Prasad Rijal said that the lab does not have hplc equipments.

Rijal said that the main problem is due to the communication gap between the lab and the conservation authority. Forest Secretary Yuvraj Bhusal said that he is unaware about existence of such problem. He added 'last year the Ministry gave animal's body parts to Singha Durbar Vaidyakhana, I will pull out the files and look at the matter. The only lab of the country is entitled to the body parts.'

According to scientist Rijal the lab should have the body parts of bears, rhinos and cats. He added that it is necessary to have sample of different animals as their analogy is different and it will help in advance studies.

The lab has also stopped the DNA testing of humans from July. It was stopped as the person needed to transfer the equipments to the new room has not come yet. Scientist Rijal said that the collection of the sample has now been stopped.

The DNA testing had started four years ago. The preparation has been done for the DNA sampling of the wild animals. Rijal said the lab has all the necessary equipments.

Vulture Conservation in thirteen districts

Dang, November 19. The thirteen districts of Nepal are initiating vulture conservation.

The vultures are in the brink of extinction in South Asian countries. The project has been undertaken in 13 districts from East of Nepal to the West with support from Bird Conservation Nepal.

The initiative for vulture conservation has been started in Dang, Kailali, Kanchanpur, Kapilvastu, Rupendehi, Palpa, Nawalparasi, Chitwan, Kaski, Ilam and Jhapa. Restaurants are opened two in Dang and one each in Kaski, Rupendehi, Kailali and Nawalparasi with Feeding Centre in remaining two districts.

Dang based local organization has opened separate vulture Restaurant in Salyapani and Kalika Forest User Group has opened vulture restaurant in Lalmatiya. Dilli Bahadur Rawat, chairman of the organization said they have established old age home for animals. The appeal for vulture conservation started four years ago and now it is going nationwide, said Anand Chowdhary, conservation officer at BCN. He said vulture conservation is on progress due to its extinction in South Asia.

Chowdhary said, "When this initiative was started, there were 60 vultures. Now the number has increased to 200". The number of vultures has stopped decreasing. The vultures move to safe regions now.

The vulture conservation has been incorporated with livelihood of the local people and tourism development

according to the conservationists, which will increase the participation of the people and increase their income. Chowdhary said that most of the tourists are bird lovers. Nepal has been able to send the message that it is the place to see vultures in South Asia. Vulture conservation can give important contribution for tourism year 2011.

The main reason for death of vultures is the use of diclophenic which is a medicine use to treat animals. The vultures feed on the corpse of the animals that have high level of diclophenic which leads to their death. The government banned the use of diclophenic from 2006. Bird Conservation Nepal said that the thirteen districts would be diclophenic free regions.

The vulture conservationists are united to conserve vultures. They visited vulture restaurants across the countries. The vulture conservationists have also established Vulture Conservation Initiative Network.

Fines only in Tiger's case

Chitwan, November 19. The District Forest Office of Chitwan has only fined accuse for killing tiger.

Chitwan police captured Chinimaya Tamang of Nawalparasi and Santosh Bahadur Pandey of Gorkha last year from Bharatpur. They were both released after paying fines of one lakh.

DFO Yam Bahadur Thapa fined them one-lakh rupees. In another case related to tiger, DFO Thapa only fined them. The police had captured them with tiger's skin. Ramesh Gurung of Chainpur Chitwan and Sonam Lama of Dhading were fined one-lakh. In the same case, Govinda Bote of Padampur and Balram Pariyar of Kumroj were fined fifty thousands. Pariyar is still in prison, as he could not pay the fine.

In 2065, three people were captured with musk deer's gland of which Pyari Gharti was imprisoned for five years and two were fined fifty thousand each.

According to National Park and Wildlife Conservation Act, punishment is given to those who kill or trade body parts of rhinos, tigers and other endangered animals. The punishment is fifty thousand to one lakh fine, 5 to 15 years imprisonment or both. DFO or warden has the right to decide and verdict. The government lawyer is re opening the case, as the verdict did not seem fair. DFO Thapa said that the verdict was fair and he decided as per the proof of the crime.

APPEAL

Dear valued readers,

The 27th issue of the Wildlife Times is in your hands. It is our small effort to raise various issues related with wildlife conservation. Please help us include the activities from your group or organizations of wildlife conservation by sending us the concerned information. We would love to find any suggestion and criticism. Please feel free to leave your feedback at info@citesnepal.org. We also seek support from your organization to continue this Wildlife Times. We look forward to your queries, comments and support.

