

Wildlife Times

मौसमीक काल/ ०६३/६४



Minister for Forestry and Soil Conservation Matrika Prasad Yadav said that the forestry and wildlife sector is one of the most corrupt sectors on April 22.

"The whole sector of forestry and wildlife is full of corruption. Hardly anybody can be spared from the chain of corruption which has been raging our ministry. It is the time to investigate how much money we have consumed, out of what was allocated for the forests," he said, adding, "May be, the minister's chair is the one which seeks the biggest share in all corruption and the former ministers were silent over corruption cases because the corrupt officials also had presented shares to them."

Yadav said that right from the very low-level staff to the secretary, all believe in feudal system of bureaucracy and they think that they can survive in the office just by making their bosses happy. "This is the time to bring the things into debate how much of 'fodder' the wardens served to the ministers from the jungles and how much the director generals consumed out of it," he said.

At the same time, he also charged the conservation experts of spending more time on seminars in luxurious hotels but producing no good result in the fields. "The so-

Minister Yadav admits that **corruption** rages ministry

called experts only talk about impressive achievements but they don't have update data. We must judge everything on practical grounds," he said, adding that even a commitment to be sincere on efforts and achievement would lead the people to make a new Nepal.

He also criticised the prime minister Girija Prasad Koirala for intervening his robust remark on the army violating laws in Shivapuri National Park. He said, "It is not justifiable that the prime minister was angry with men when I spoke the truth about the problems of wildlife conservation. We ministers of the cabinet are after all part of eco-system and interaction is needed among all, just like among the animals."

He was addressing at the regional seminar on managing protected areas.

This four-day conference was held with the objective of 1) sharing regional experience and knowledge in Protected Area (PA) management with prescription for effective management, 2) learning from best practices in PA management in the region, and 3) strengthening PA network in the region. This conference brought together PA managers, conservationists and lead scientists from 13 South and east Asian countries were present. The participating countries were Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Laos, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Vietnam and the members of

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The venue shifted under minister's order

The venue for the regional conference on PA management was shifted to Hotel Himalaya at the eleventh hour, which was earlier scheduled to be held in Hotel Soaltee due to the minister's intervention.

According to sources, the minister for forestry and soil conservation Matrika Prasad Yadav strictly prohibited the Department of National Parks not to spend money in luxury hotels to organize conferences. "The minister prohibited us to organize conference there and we later shifted our programme at Hotel Himalaya. And hard drinks had to be taken out from the dinner menu which we had already ordered for the guests," said the source.

Hosting a four-day conference on managing protected areas (PA) made a landmark achievement on the sphere of bridging conservation on ecosystem management, governance in PA management and economic tools for biodiversity conservation. The conference, included government officials, academics, representative of I/NGOs and local people associated with biodiversity conservation.

But as minister Yadav said, holding high-level conferences in starred hotel should not the end of conservation. We know that each and every PA of Nepal is followed by one or another kind of problem. Political will, assistance from technical resources and cooperation of the local community are needed to maintain the image Nepal has once gained in the field of PA management.

2. Hosting the fourth International Tiger Symposium was a great opportunity of Nepal to present its gracious history and projects for future to the international conservation community.

The three day workshop brought over three dozen well-known conservationists from all range countries including international organizations committed to tiger conservation like WWF and TRAFFIC organization. They had brought a golden chance of Nepal to present Nepal's status to the world community, to teach them our achievements and also to learn lessons from their experiences.

But Nepal's participation in the symposium was considered by low and disheartening. Nepal could not have enough time to present its status and it also lacked resource persons who have thorough knowledge on tiger conservation at the venue. The result was that instead being a role model, it remained a mere observer.

Presenting seven years old data and claiming that Nepal possesses 350 to 370 tigers, in the context that it has lots almost half of its rhino population in the same period, was not at all convincing.

Throughout the symposium, the debate on whether to lift ban on tiger trade in China was a major issue. The Chinese delegation and their behavior made a big impact on pro-sale lobby while pro-conservation panel turned out to be dormant. In this connection, Nepal government's role was objectionable. Nepal failed to show its clear stand on the debate. Even after completing five years of tiger conservation action plan and drafting second phase of action plan for tiger, Nepal could not clearly assert that Nepal government is strongly against lifting the ban. And the role of dozens of conservation NGOs also was hardly traceable in debate. To add, a controversial "symposium" organized by a business magazine Boss, raised several question on Nepal's stand on conservation. Though it was organized by a private, presence of two Nepali scholars from Tribhuvan University who indirectly supported farming of wild animals and selling them to meet "irresistible" demand also raised question on commitment of the government-funded university's commitment to wildlife conservation.

editorial

ITS key recommendations

The International Tiger Symposium (ITS) urged the GTF to recommend that methods of tiger estimation and presentation of results should be standardized – by the end of 2008.

The recommendation states that GTF should establish an effective information sharing system for range countries and other concerned with tiger conservation to share up-to-date information on poaching and seizure cases, legal measures taken and on innovative approaches to tackle illegal trade.

"GTF should provide a formal response to China's request for input to its review of its current domestic trade policy," the recommendation states. But strangely, the ITS itself did not open its view on the well-established notion on maintaining ban on tiger trade in China.

"GTF should be asked to help countries explore alternative compensation and insurance schemes" over growing human-tiger conflict and "GTF should be asked to assemble available reviews of various compensations and insure schemes, to assist range states in their planning and implementation efforts," it further states. To deal growing human-tiger conflict, it says that voluntary relocation of human



communities from core tiger habitat areas has been effective in some countries and is encouraged when appropriate.

And according to the recommendation, "GTF should work with the IUCN (SSC and Cat Specialist Group) to

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Sell the **TIGER** to save it?

It was an extraordinary symposium. The invitation card said it was an "international symposium" on "Sell the Tiger to save it". Before I got the card, I had never imagined that selling tiger can save it. An idea hit my mind - if this theory is going to work, I will first sell my motorbike because I want to save it!

I was surprised to see the people in the dais: They were all seven and two among them were Nepali. Generally, when we go to participate in symposiums, we make up our mind to see experts in the dais - who will come up with their ideas and discuss on various aspects. I could not say about the foreigners but the Nepali gentlemen were certainly not tiger experts. To be precise, they, picked up the scholars from Tribhuvan University who have nothing to do with tigers.

As it was written in the invitation card, there should be "presentation by a panel of international experts, including conservationists, economists and wildlife enthusiasts" but I saw only businessmen there. On the dais were Laxman Khanal, Mohit Satyanand, Hank Jenkins, Kirsten Conrad, Dr Madan Koirala, Rakesh Wadhwa and Jia Quian – all were ready tell the audience that government should allow people to sell everything which had market.

On the table, beside the magazines VOW and Boss, photocopies of articles by Pallavi Aiyar and Barun Mitra were on distribution, all of which said that selling is the solution. And a handout from Jia Qian states that legalization of the use of farmed tiger bone may meet the market demand and significantly reduce the illegal trade by cutting down its price. But, to my surprise, there was not a single-page document which supports that the wild animals should not be traded.

Being with tiger lovers for some days I had understood that:

- o There is a big gang of tiger tycoons in the world who use money from Chinese tiger farmers and make pressure that the ban should be lifted. Lifting of the ban will help the tiger farmers to sell their product to the world as easily as they sell goats and chickens.

Keeping the tigers in the farms has become really expensive for them. The tiger farmers want to sell them off as soon as possible.

- o The tigers in the farms have become as lazy as broiler chickens. They have lost all their natural instinct to hunt, to confirm their territory or simply, to be wild. And the farmers

are not sure if the tigers are really good enough to make balm or wine.

- o The tigers from the farms are going to be very expensive. And if the poached tigers could be bought at chicken's price, why would somebody go and buy tigers from the farm? They just want to make the water troubled so that anybody could fish there.

- o If the ban on illegal trade of tiger is lifted, the manufacturers of tiger products will easily buy smuggled tigers from Nepal and other counties and will say they are consuming the tigers from the farms. That would help them evade tax and also make big money.

- o The lift of ban will help the poachers in Nepal and other country to come up with their business even directly. That is, it is going to be "catastrophe" for Nepal's tigers, as it was said by Executive Director of TRAFFIC International, Steven Broad.

- o And, not necessary to say, big bunches of the Chinese money have arrived in pockets of so-called Nepali event managers, experts. That is why they are there to lobby for selling though Nepal is neither a consumer not a supplier (at least in legal eyes).

After the heavily sponsored presentation, the question-answer session was quite interesting. The whole of the audience was found against the selling scheme and they raised hair-raising questions from different angles -- WWF and Traffic International made a big team. I saw only some from conservationist's side while none of the government officials appeared at the scene. They asserted that raising the tigers in farm cannot be possible and the product is not going to help the ecology as the bred tigers have certainly lost the "wild" nature. They added that it would be a big threat for the wild tigers living in neighboring countries. It was just like the press conference of the king's minister Kamal Thapa when the journalists hurled burning question and he was compelled smile before answering them.

I could not believe my eyes that Nepali experts are so cheap to buy. The government officials remained as silent during the whole chaos of ITS over the issue as they used to

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WWF Nepal

GTF data on tiger statistics disappointed me

Dr. Susan S. Lieberman

Director, Global Species Programme,
WWF International

How do you access the threat to tiger in the world in the world?

We all know that the tigers are found in limited counties in the world – three species out of the eight have already become extinct. And it is a challenge to conserve the remaining species.

Along with the population growth and growing urbanization, people have been constantly attacking or encroaching upon the jungle areas. Similarly, logging in many jungles of range countries is also a problem. This has directly or indirectly caused disturbances to the habitat of sensitive animals. Habitat destruction is a worldwide threat for the tigers as well as other animals. When we are talking about the tigers, it is a major threat, we have to say.

The tigers have been victims of poaching and hunting for centuries. This is the time to think seriously about rescuing the tigers from poachers – as we know that only 5000 to 7000 tigers are alive in the whole world.

Thus, trade is a threat. But, in the new turn of events, what we see is that the possibility of lifting of ban on trade of tiger parts in China is going to cause havoc among the tiger as well as tiger conservationists. Once the ban is lifted, there will be no difference between the farmed tigers and the wild tigers in the market and this will only open a door for the Chinese smugglers who import poached tigers from neighboring countries.

I think the Chinese government itself is not positive to lift the ban but we observe that a strong lobby of selected businessmen is interested in it and they generate similar groups in many countries to support them in international conferences. Nepali conservationists must play a role in this dispute and vote for conservation, not for marketing of wild species.

Nepal's should act on tiger trade dispute: Broad

Steven Broad, the Traffic International (TI), stressed on April 16 that Nepal should play a vital role in making tigers and their parts available in the open market or banning it at this moment.

"Some influential businessmen in China, who have either link to tiger farming or tiger trade, is trying to provoke small counties to help them in lifting the worldwide ban on trade of wild animals. Nepal should show serious concern and intervene in the issue of legalization of trade and commercial farming of tigers," he said while addressing a press conference here.

He also said that lifting the ban on tiger trade could turn the efforts of Nepal and other countries meaningless as it will indirectly open all doors of smuggling and poached tigers would be sold in open market, attracting more people to the illegal trade.

The UK-based TI coordinates the world-wide traffic network, established to monitor trade in wild plants and animals, which works in cooperation with the CITES Secretariat.

During the ITS, a group of Chinese delegation is lobbying here to have tiger trade legalized as illegal farming of tiger and selling tiger parts to produce medicine and wine is a big business there.

Though China has a few wild tigers, it has over 5,000 tigers in captive breeding, according to a study done by TI. Tiger parts from such breeding places can be supplied to factories for production of medicines and wines, while some luxury restaurants even serve tiger meat. TI also presented a report done in China over the demand of tiger parts, supply for Chinese tradition medicine and condition of tiger farms.

Broad said that the lift is going to make a catastrophe for Nepal's tigers as the market opens, it is not sure whether the tigers from farmers will be sole or not but chances are there that wild tigers from Nepal's jungles will be openly marketed in China.

"Opening of tiger market in China means waste of the millions of dollars of investigation on tiger conservation in many countries, including in Nepal," he said.

However, Nepal is yet to make its official opinion on tiger trade. Though Nepal has made its commitment to fight against international trade of wild animals in CITES, it failed to fight with the proposal which all of a sudden came in the symposium and separate programmes in the capital at that time.

Director general of Department of National Park and Wildlife Conservation Dr KC Paudel only said during the symposium that Nepal is yet to make any official opinion on lifting of ban on tiger trade.

“ Still, we have to say that tiger conservation must means conservation of tigers in jungles, not in cages. ”

What is your opinion about the activities of range countries on tiger conservation?

It is encouraging for us to see some countries are doing fine in conservation of tigers. For example, the works on tiger population in India, Nepal and Russia can be assessed as not bad; Indonesia is trying its best while other countries are yet to come up with satisfactory results.

When many of the countries have even lost existence of tigers, the attempts of the range countries cannot be underestimated though we do expect them to come up with better results. But the whole world would appreciate if better results are seen in the range countries.

So far as the statistics on tiger population of the range countries is concerned, what is your reaction on the reports of GTF?

It is extremely difficult to work on tiger population. It needs time, money and skill. And when I saw that GTF is using the same old reports, it made me disappointed. All the countries have presented very broad, vague and old data on tiger population. I don't say tiger counting is easy but things should have been better in past half decade. I have to say they could have done better.

It is not fair that WWF alone spends millions of dollar every year but you don't know how many tigers are there in the world and if they are growing in number. The range countries could have been invited to capacity building trainings and the results of the seminars and conferences should have been reflected in filed works too.

What is the availability of fund in tiger conservation?

Fund is not a problem in tiger conservation. The whole world is interested in conservation of tigers – may be because they do not have the tigers not there in all counties or simply because they are gracious. And we love to use the money in real conservation and tell the donors that their donation is working.

As a part of conservation of wild species, we are now stressing of conservation of whole ecoregions. Terai Arc Landscape is one of our high priority projects, which is now going smoothly in Nepal. Still, we have to say that tiger conservation must means conservation of tigers in jungles, not in cages. For us, tiger means the animal which lives in the jungle and we don't care if tigers are raised in cages or in farms.

New Publications of WWG

Recently Wildlife Watch Group (WWG) has published a publication **Cost of Conflict on Nepal's Conservation Efforts**. The publication is about impact of armed conflict on Nepal's biodiversity conservation caused by the prolonged conflict between the Maoist and government over the past decade.

It contains exclusive reports prepared on the basis of on-the-spot visit of the affected spots, meeting and interview with local administrators, park staff, local people, security personnel and also the Maoist commanders in the eleven protected areas and articles from the conservationist, concern government personnel, and stakeholders.

Last year WWG had published **Conflict & Conservation Himalayan Biodiversity on the Brink** which is prepared on the basis of same kind of field studies assessed in five protected areas and Conservation Area; and exclusive articles prepared by the conservationsits.

Interested distributors and parties are also welcome for distributing/selling the publications in Nepal and abroad.

Conflict & Conservation Himalayan Biodiversity on the Brink
 Editors: Mangal Man Shakya and Anil Chitrakar
 Price: NRS. 250

Cost of Conflict on Nepal's Conservation Efforts
 Editors: Mangal Man Shakya and Anil Chitrakar

Price:
 Hard Copy: NRS. 700, IC 440, US\$ 10, EURO 9
 Paper Back: NRS. 500, IC 315, US\$ 7, EURO 6

Please contact Wildlife Watch Group (WWG)



DNPWC meeting on CITES

refuses to probe the bird incident

A special meeting was held at DNPWC to discuss on strengthening the CITES implementation in Nepal. Several stakeholders including WWF Nepal and IUCN Nepal participated in the meeting on April 10.

DNPWC is the main agent for implementing the CITES which prohibits Nepal from importing or exporting any endangered species of flora and fauna from and to Nepal.

Despite the fact that Nepal is a CITES member state, the smuggling of prohibited wild animal and forest products are on the rise. Nepal is on the way to have the CITES Bill prepared.

In the same meeting, the DNPWC decided that the killing of rare wild birds was a sorry event but decided not to form any probe committee.

Dr Krishna Chandra Paudel, newly appointed director general at the DNPWC, said the meeting decided that the probe committee was not necessary.

Minister Yadav.....

organizing committee were Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation, DNPWC, ICIMOD, IUCN, WWF, IUCN/WCPA South Asia. The conference was supported by UNEP.

Dr Siddhartha Bajra Bajracharya, Member Secretary of NTNC, highlighted the objectives and expected outcomes of the conference.

Jeffrey McNeely, Chief Scientist, IUCN Headquarters then presented his key note speech. He said that threats to PAs are: habitat destruction, climate change, impacts of invasive alien species excessive harvesting of valuable species, and impacts of pollutants. He suggested that the Kashmir and the Siachen Glacier could be developed as an International Peace Park. Tirtha Raj Sharma, Secretary MoFSC, chaired the session.

Sell the TIGER.....

be silent in case of rhino poaching and smuggling of red sandalwood. There was none to speak about tiger conservation efforts of Nepal and the harm the selling in China could make on them.

A lavish dinner followed the meeting. I wondered how a magazine could spend that much of money to offer cocktails and dinners to over 50 participants in a starred hotel like Hotel Shangrila. Anybody can imagine, the money must have come from the Chinese businessmen.

And where have all the noted tiger experts have gone, who visit this or that country in the name of tiger conservation? And where have other NGOs, which visit newspaper offices to have their press releases printed on petty issues?

When I was coming back, a strange idea rode my mind. It is not only tigers of Nepal which has demand in neighboring countries. More than tigers, Nepali girls would be sold out if they are bred in captivity. Despite criticism from the whole world, we have not stopped exporting Nepali girls to Indian and other brothels. Then, I would like to suggest the businessmen to breed girls in their captivity and start lobbying for lifting ban on human trafficking. I'm sure they will become billionaires in several years.

[The Wildlife Times picked the above article in a website www.jyanmara.blogspot.com with slight editing]

Probe sought into TIA bird killing

Seven leading conservation organizations issued a public appeal demanding the government to investigate on the incident of killing of rare birds, imported from Pakistan under suspicious condition on April 6.

The WWF Nepal, Bird Conservation Nepal, National Trust for Nature Conservation, IUCN Nepal, Wildlife Watch Group, Nepal Forum of Environment Journalists and Lumbini Crane Sanctuary had demanded that a probe be carried out into the incident of the killing of rare birds.

"We strongly demand that a probe committee be formed at government level as we observed that several lapses were occurred at the process of importing the wild birds and also of letting the birds pass the costumes office," the statement said.

Over 250 rare birds at the Tribhuvan International Airport were seized and killed in the midnight at the premises of the Tribhuvan International Airport on March 30 in the name of preventing bird flu.

The customs officers at the airport let the birds in cages in, which were imported without any necessary documents.

As the meeting of DNPWC decided not to form any probe committee on the bird incident, the conservationists visited the Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation on April 11 to reiterate their demand to form a panel to investigate and to punish the wrongdoers.

McNeely links conservation and security

This is the prime time for Nepal to correlate between development activities and environmental concerns, said the chief scientist of the World Conservation Union (IUCN) Jeffery A. McNeely on April 20.

"It is going to cost this developing country a lot if the decision makers fail to take a wise and long-term decision on environment and sustainable development now," he said, while delivering a talk on peace, security and environment.

McNeely here in the capital to present his keynote speech in a regional conference on 22 April.

He said that mismanagement of environmental issues will lead the country ultimately to a conflict and the process of nation-building will again be delayed.

According to him, Nepal should continue its initiative on environment, peace and dialogue and consideration should be given to the development of flora for preventive dialogue and confidence building, conflict resolution and post-conflict restitution. "The peace and security will lead any country to environmental establishment. On the other hand, environment and sustainable development collectively lead it to security," he said.

McNeely has published over 40 books and some 500 technical and popular articles on a wide range of conservation issues.



UNDP Grant for wetland

The government of Nepal and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) signed a US \$ four million project on March 15 for conservation and sustainable use of wetlands in Nepal, to be implemented in the Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve in Sunsari and its buffer zone districts and the Ghodaghodi Lake Complex of Kailali district.

With this new initiative, the communities themselves will be involved in the management planning process and identifying practical and sustainable alternatives for harvesting and collecting wetland resources and forest products.

The new project will create awareness on and build the institutional capacity of the communities to conserve the wetlands which are being threatened by several factors such as poaching, cattle grazing, over-fishing, uncontrolled drainage, pollution and deforestation. The communities will also be able to influence local development policies supportive to wetlands, develop incentives for community-based eco-tourism activities, and promote sustainable utilisation of resources.

The local partners of the project will be Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation (DNPWC), Department of Forest (DoF), District Development Committees (DDCs) and Village Development Committees, while the implementing partners are Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation (MoFSC) and The World Conservation Union (IUCN) Nepal.

ITS key.....

convene an international workshop to develop a global tiger conservation strategy in a participatory process, involving range counties and other stakeholders – non-range states, international and national NGOs, and local communities as appropriate and feasible.

It pointed out that more stress is required to be given on protection and development of the habitat, and improvement of tigers' prey base. "In all tiger conservation work, there must be a balance between sustainable development, conservation and protection and due consideration of human livelihood issues. And there must be good consideration of habitat fragmentation and the management of habitat outside of protected areas," it said.

It also encouraged the range states with trans-boundary tiger populations to increase collaboration to jointly design and implement trans-boundary conservation plans. "It is recommended that the governments to harmonize the census period between range countries sharing a common border, in order to avoid duplication," it said.

The recommendations were prepared by the chair of the symposium, Dr Susan Lieberman (WWF International), and were submitted to the symposium participants in the final session. No objections were raised to these recommendations, and it was agreed to forward them to GTF.

Forest guard abducted

Activists of the Jwala Singh-led Janatantrik Tarai Mukti Morcha (JTMM) abducted a forest guard of the Rautahat District Forest Office on April 13.

Paltu Tamang, posted at Maidha range post in the district, was abducted while he was on way to his workplace. The security has not yet found the reason behind the abduction. Conservationists have worried that the attack on field level workers is yet not stopped even after the end of the armed conflict of the Maoists.

Leopard attacks girl in Thamel

It sounds strange but it is true that the densely populated capital city of Nepal also shelters wild animals.

A leopard attacked a 20-year old girl, Chandra Tamang, on the premises of a house in Thamel on April 22. Tamang worked at the house of Abhaya Subba as a domestic helper.

Surprisingly, the wild animal appeared unexpectedly in the crowded tourist hub of Kathmandu and after attacking the girl, it vanished in a government owned area nearby.

Tamang sustained injuries on her hand due to that attack, but she was said to be in normal condition after undergoing treatment at the local Bir Hospital.

Local believed that the leopard was illegally kept by somebody in the neighbourhood as pet or for trade.

Earth Day 2007 organized

Various conservationists showed their concern over the deteriorating landscape, wildlife habitat global warming in a programme organized here to mark the Earth Day on April 22. They stressed that trees should be planted to free the planet from pollution and help the human beings live healthier life. They were speaking at an interaction on 'Our Earth, Our Future'.

Students and representatives from eleven environmental science colleges, journalists, and environmental organizations took part in the workshop.

APPEAL

Dear valued readers,

The fourth 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 organization on 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.

International Tiger Symposium held in Kathmandu

The experts of tiger conservation from all the countries, where the tiger habitats are found, met in Kathmandu on April 16 to dig out some concrete and cooperative approaches to save the endangered species from being totally extinct. The International Tiger Symposium (ITS), was organized by Global Tiger Forum and hosted by DNPWC.

Speaking on the inaugural session, Minister for Forestry and Soil Conservation Matrika Prasad Yadav said that the political parties and the Nepal Army should be more responsible to control poaching and to preserve the country's wild life and national parks.

Out of the eight sub-species of tigers, only five species - Siberian tiger, South China tiger, Indo-Chinese tiger, Sumatran tiger and Royal Bengal tiger - are left these days and it is believed that around 5,000 to 7,000 wild tigers are left in the world these days.

SC Dey, the general-secretary of Global Tiger Forum, said that around 100 representatives from 12 countries participated in the symposium with around 20 papers, and sought a solution to protect the remaining species of tigers and their habitats.

"The tiger conservation in world-wide scenario is very deplorable. The tiger population in the world is on the decline and being the apex of the eco-system pyramid, extinction of tigers is going to create problem for all wildlife species and vegetation," he said.

Habitat destruction, shrinkage in prey base, man-tiger conflict, and global pressure of consumerism as well as unsatisfactory progress of some protected land are the causes behind the decline.

The chairman of the organizing committee Ananta Parajuli, a joint secretariat Ministry for Forestry and Soil



Conservation (MoFSC) said that ITS in Nepal was a golden opportunity to share the efforts of all conservation works in all the range countries and come up with a new and better solution for tiger conservation.

He said that the symposium, among others, encouraged range countries to prepare and implement their individual tiger action plans for protection and growth of the tiger population and its prey base.

Tiger population is reportedly stable in Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal and Russia; it is on decline in India, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand and Laos while, it is "extremely dangerous" in China, Vietnam, Myanmar and North Korea.

However, Nepal is yet to produce any update data on tiger population. On the basis of the data collected half a decade ago, it is estimated that Nepal has 350 to 370 tigers. Jhamak Bahadur Karki, an officer at DNPWC said that Nepal's tiger population has not been updated totally due to conflict and other problems since since 2000. Government is on the final stage of promulgating the second five-year action plan for tiger conservation, which will allocate a budget of around a million US dollars.

The ITS/ Global Tiger Forum (GTF) was organized by MoFSC from 16 to 20 April in cooperation with national and international conservation partners.

GTF is the inter-government forum of tiger range countries and they together formulate policies for conservation of the tigers in the whole region.



THE EYES OF THE WORLD
ARE WATCHING
END TIGER TRADE

