

Provision for more quarters for the staff was made during the year and several new quarters were constructed. Almost all the buildings in the Lakhimpur Division were damaged or washed away by the great Earthquake and the Subansiri flood.

There was a great setback in the market for evergreen sleepers during the year as the Railways considered the rate too high for this class of sleeper. Market for simul continued to be satisfactory. There was a "Mushroom" growth of plywood factories in the State particularly in Upper Assam. A fair quantity of plywood logs was exported outside the State.

All the Wild Life Sanctuaries of the State were duly maintained during the year and more amenities have been provided for the visitors by posting additional departmental elephants.

The Kaziranga Wild Life Sanctuary continued to attract visitors. During the year the Governor of Assam and Air Marshal Ivelaw Chapman visited the Sanctuary. Many rhino calves with mothers were noticed in the Sanctuary during the year under report.

Two young Rhinoceros were captured and sold to the Basle Zoo, Switzerland and Milan Zoo, Italy during the year. The number of elephants caught during the year was 299 and the total revenue received was Rs.3,31,148 only as against Rs.5,26,837 of the previous year.

There were 1030 new cases of Forest offence during the year as against 1970 of the previous. Out of these 227 were tried in Court and 183 resulted in conviction.

During the year under report Shri B. C. Sen and Shri G. C. Choudhury retired from service and Shri K. B. Mohonlal, I.F.S., continued to be on deputation.

Government have read the report with interest and record their appreciation of the work done by the departmental officers.

Government's thanks are also due to Shri P. D. Stracey, Senior Conservator of Forests for this interesting report.

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11.144. The writer therefore, request Government to consider the proposal with all the seriousness which it demands and sanction the creation of the 3rd post of Conservator of Forests, and a 2nd Working Plan Officer of Assam immediately.

145. *Working Plan Branch.*—The conditions of the Working Plan Branch of this Department and the urgent necessity for expansion of this Branch under a 2nd Working Plan Officer have already been brought to the notice of the Government and the writer as head of the Department feels it to be his duty to remind Government that if the revision of the Working Plans so long overdue is not taken up immediately the forests of the State risk being subjected to irreparable damages by unregulated work in the absence of sanctioned Working Plan. It is, therefore, of greatest importance that Government should consider the matter at the earliest possible opportunity and sanction the expansion of the Working Plan Branch as suggested in this office No.B.345, dated 17th/20th August 1951.

146. *Increase of permanent cadre of the A.F.S. (Class I).*—The proposal for the increase of the permanent cadre of the Assam Forest Service (Class I) is pending with Government for a long time and it is requested that the matter be given very early consideration by Government. In this connection a reference is invited to the correspondence resting with this office No.B.345, dated the 11th June 1951.

147. *Elephants.*—At present there are 26 elephants in this Department as against 26 at the close of the previous year.

General

148. The health of the subordinates and the ministerial staff was not very satisfactory though attempts have been made to improve sanitary conditions and provide better medical facilities. The present economic condition and the abnormal rise in prices of essential necessities of life, particularly of food stuffs has probably contributed to a great extent to this.

149. The housing problem in District towns continued as acute as before and Office Assistants in the Divisional Offices are experiencing great difficulties in hiring houses. This problem cannot be solved unless quarters for Office Assistants are constructed.

150. Relations between the Revenue and the Forest Officers continued to be good on the whole, but the Department would appreciate a greater awareness of, and assistance in solving, the problems that Divisional Forest Officers are faced with by Deputy Commissioners.

CHAPTER VIII

The preservation of Wild Life and Elephant Control

151. *I. The preservation of Wild Life.*—The Wild Life Sanctuaries of the State were maintained as far as possible during the year. Proposals for the improvement of the Kaziranga and North Kamrup Wild Sanctuaries have been submitted to Government along with the report of the Bombay Natural History Society. The constitution of Laokhowa Wild Life Sanctuary in Nowgong Division has not yet been taken up by the Deputy Commissioner, Nowgong inspite of several reminders.

152. A proposal for the reservation of a corridor connecting the Kaziranga Wild Life Sanctuary with the Mikir Hills on the southern side near Hatikhuli Tea Estate has been sent to Government. This will be a great help to the animals during flood times, because when water rises animals come out of the Sanctuary and fall victims to the public along the Trunk Road.

153. More amenities have been provided for the visitors by posting additional departmental elephants: there are now 3 in Kaziranga and one in North Kamrup Wild Life Sanctuaries for the use of visitors and patrolling. Improvements were made to the Inspection Bungalow at Baguri.

154. Several visitors including the Governor of Assam and Air Marshall Ivelaw Chapman visited the Kaziranga Wild Life Sanctuaries during the year. The number of visitors to this Sanctuary was 84 and the total revenue from view fees, etc., realised during the year was Rs.1,310. Visitors mainly see Rhinoceros and Buffaloes.

155. It is pleasing to note that many Rhino calves with mothers were noticed in Kaziranga Wild Life Sanctuary during the year under report. It is suspected that poaching of deer in the sanctuaries is clandestine and widespread inspite of every effort being made. The answer to the problem is an increased wild life staff with good pay and prospects under a Wild Life Warden. One gun was seized in the Laokhowa Reserve during the year and the license cancelled.

156. During the year a young Rhinoceros was caught for the Basle Zoo, Switzerland and a royalty of Rs.15,000 was realised. A second Rhino was caught in April 1951 for the Milan Zoo, Italy, on realization of a similar sum. The catching of Rhino has now been standardised and casualties do not occur.

II. Elephant control

157. (a) *Kheddah and Mela Shikar*.—Kheddah-cum-Mela and Mela Shikar Mohals were opened in several Districts during the year under report and the following statement gives the names of the Districts where Mohals were opened and the results of the operation.

158. As the result of crop damage in various parts of the State the demand for elephant catching continues, but it is definite that most of the crop damage is the work of large solitary male elephants for which mela or kheddah operations are of no avail.