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## Destruction of forests behind man-elephant conflict



[Jayanta Kumar Das](#) · 16:11, 8 May 2009 · 9954 views · 3 min read



Unabated destruction of forests in Udalguri district has posed serious consequences to man and wild animals. Loosing their homes and food, most of the wild animals have either started visiting human locality or lost their lives. Although rhinos, tigers etc have been protected in wild life sanctuaries like Manas, Kaziranga and Orang National Parks, other species of wild life like pythons, crocodiles, bear, elephant etc. have been loosing their homes and food. Actually elephants have suffered most as they need larger areas for survival. But destruction of forests for the construction of roads, buildings and railway tracks have compelled elephants to venture out to human habitation in search of food, causing tragic deaths of both man and elephants. Several decades earlier, northern part of present Udalguri district had been the happy abode of all the wild birds and animals including wild elephants. But destruction of nearly ninety percent of forests lhad made herds of wild elephants homeless. It has now been quite impossible to find virgin forests land at the foot of Himalayan Ranges suitable for the elephants except a few National Parks. Fast growing human habitation have already started destruction of forests even deep inside Bhutan and Arunachal Pradesh causing untold damages to the ecology of NE. Anti social elements have openly been earning crores of rupees by illegal felling of most of the valuable trees. More over herds of wild elephants coming down from Bhutan and Arunachal Pradesh have killed several villagers in Udalguri district.

D.N.Hazarika, Circle Officer, Harisinga Revenue Circle (Tangla) told Assam Times that two people had been killed by wild elephants in the month of April 2009. In the first instance one 42 years old villagers was trampled near Paneri on April 7; while another 65 years old person was killed near Majuli TE. It is to be mentioned that areas of Khalingduar Reserve Forest (RF), the only reserve forest in Udalguri district has regularly been shrinking due to large scale human encroachment. Nature lovers had been pressing government for the up gradation of Khalingduar RF to a wild life sanctuary and to evict all the encroachers from the forest lands. Conservationists also condemned government for the failure for declaring several PRFs ( Proposed Reserve Forest ) as RF or sanctuaries so as to allow more rooms to elephants and other animals. Unfortunately most of the PRFs had already been converted to human villages. Moreover thousands of acres of forest lands had been illegally occupied by several tea gardens. According to nature lovers, if the illegal encroaches were evicted and PRFs were declared as Reserve Forests (RF) animals and birds could have been living with out discomfort.



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